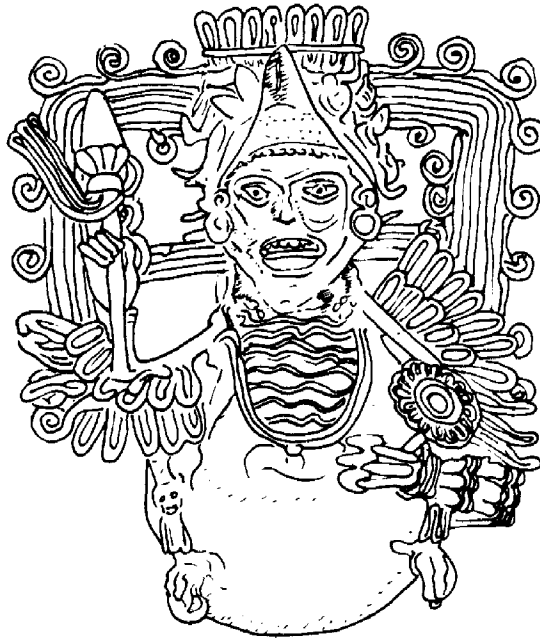


ARMANDO RASCON



PENDANT BELL WITH EAGLE WARRIOR

Provenance unknown, possibly Tenochtitlan
circa 1500
Gold; height 9 cm. (3.5 inches)
Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

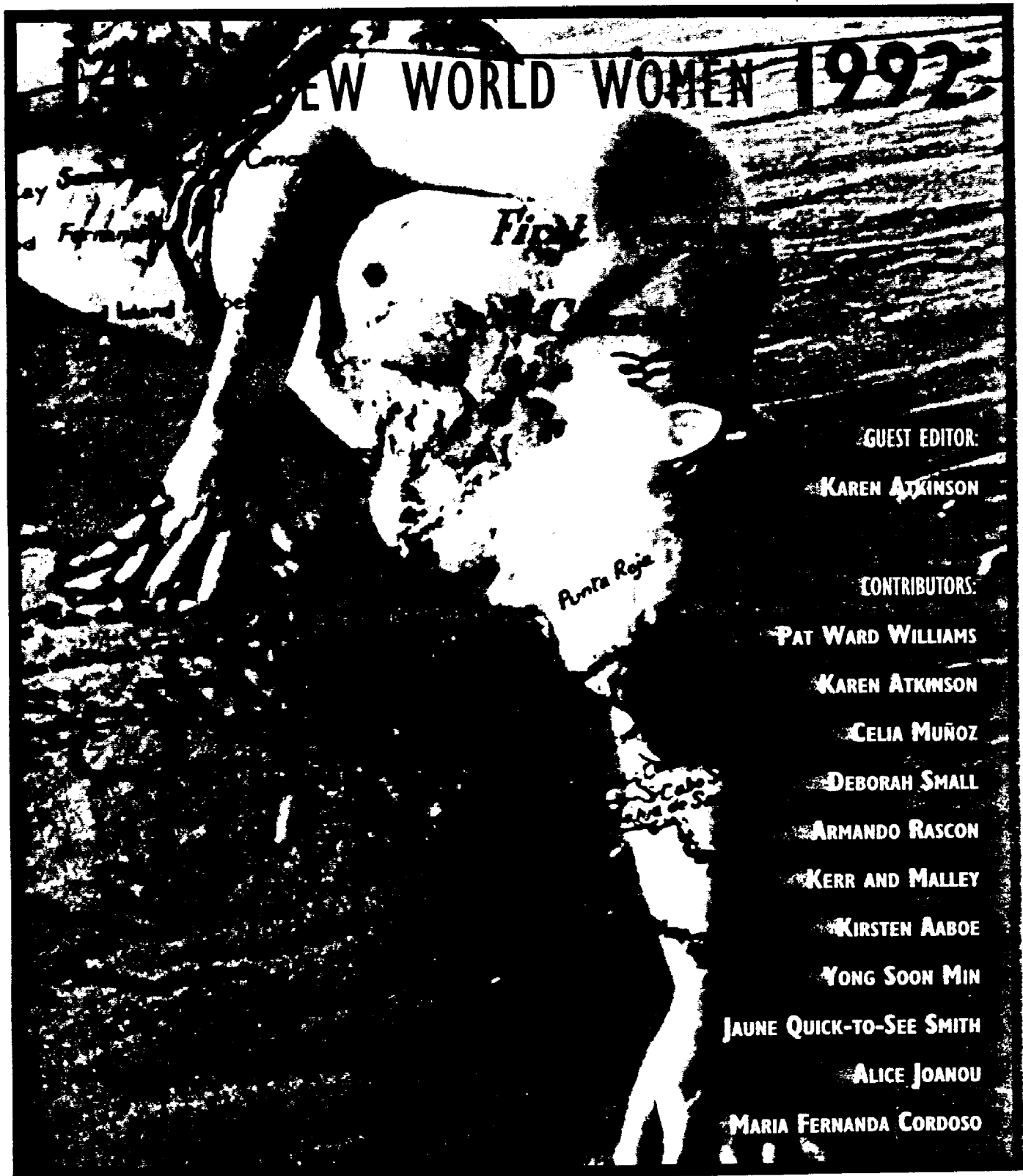
The piece has come to be known as *Pendant Bell with Eagle Warrior*. It dates from 1500 A.D. (circa), and is a splendid specimen of unmatched quality in fine condition for its type and class. It measures three and one half inches in height and is displayed in a glass vitrine, museum issue. The handwork is a magnificent example of Mesoamerican goldsmithing of the era and is on loan from the Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, U.S.S.R. At this writing, the work is on view in Los Angeles at the L.A. County Museum of Art in an exhibition titled *MEXICO: Splendors of Thirty Centuries*, a traveling show organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City. The specificity of the installation of the work within a vast field of objects ranging in form, function, scale and historical location – the works in the show begin in the Formative Period of Mesoamerica (1500 B.C.) continuing through the Forties and Fifties (works by Frida Kahlo et al.) – is significant in terms of this show in that its suspension between the period that marked the Fall of Mesoamerican Civilization and time frame best defined as orientation period which introduced Imperialism to the Continent endows this gold object with the incredible power to project its innate Metanarrative. *Pendant Bell with Eagle Warrior*, in the company of a precious few

exceedingly rare indigenous ornaments that survived the wholesale incineration of Mesoamerican culture at the moment of Conquest, stands witness to the overwhelming near invisibility, within the context of this exhibition, of the **historical fact** of the **Conquest**. The curators of the exhibition are correct in keeping to a bare minimum examples of gold ornamentation, handwork, and jewelry, a form of evidence of popular consciousness of the time: only precious few specimens such as *Pendant Bell with Eagle Warrior* remain in the world, the vast majority having been melted down to gold bullion, an international form of currency which obtains to this very day. *Pendant Bell with Eagle Warrior*, ad hoc spokesperson/representative/semiotic timetraveler/cultural historian by proxy to the missing chapter of the master narrative: Fifteenth Century Template to Mass Annihilation Covert Activity Directive Prelude to World War Holocaust. Or else, *Pendant Bell with Eagle Warrior*, extant Pre-Conquest gold object within glass vitrine, museum issue.

Armando Rascon is an artist currently living and working in San Francisco, California. He has curated numerous exhibitions, and currently is the co-director/owner of Terrain gallery in San Francisco.

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