

In conjunction with the Mesoamerican Symposium  
organized by the Art History Society of CSULA



## ETERNAL REALMS OF REVELRY

The MAW Collection of Pre-Columbian Art

Curated by John M.D. Pohl, Ph.D.

In conjunction with the Mesoamerican Symposium organized by the Art History Society of Cal State L.A.

**APR 10 - MAY 2** OPENING RECEPTION  
FRI, APRIL 10<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

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# IN THE REALM OF THE VISION SERPENT

Decipherments and Discoveries in Mesoamerica



A Symposium in Homage to  
**LINDA SCHELE**  
Join Our Keynote Speakers  
April 10-11, 2015

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES

# In the Realm of the Vision Serpent

*Decipherments and Discoveries in Mesoamerica*  
A Symposium in Homage to

**Dr. Linda Schele**  
(1942 -1998)



April 10 - 11, 2015  
Presented by The Art History Society of  
California State University, Los Angeles

**Dr. Linda Schele** was a pioneer in the decipherment of the Maya Hieroglyphic Writing and an extraordinary professor of Maya and Mesoamerican Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. She was a very influential and passionate professor that mentored her students to excellence and inspired them to discover and interpret the diverse aspects of the Mesoamerican World with a critical approach. Many of them are today among the leaders in the field of Mesoamerican Studies. Mentored by Merle Greene Robertson, Schele worked with Peter Mathews and Floyd Lounsbury to decipher a major section of the list of Palenque kings, presenting her work in the 1973 conference *Mesa Redonda de Palenque*, organized by Robertson. Her work stimulated several later discoveries, by herself and others. Schele became a Fellow in pre-Columbian Studies at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C. in 1975. She focused on the study of word ordering in Mayan inscriptions for the next two years there. She produced a massive volume of drawings of stelae and inscriptions, which, following her wishes, are free for use to scholars. In 1977, she founded the annual *Maya Meetings* at the University of Texas at Austin, which became one of the most important forums in the world for the study of Mesoamerican cultures and the Maya Hieroglyphic Writing. She wrote more than one hundred articles and reports, and the following books:

- *The Blood of Kings* (Schele and Mary Ellen Miller 1986)
- *A Forest of Kings* (Schele and David Freidel 1990)
- *Maya Cosmos* (Freidel, Schele, and Parker 1993)
- *Hidden Faces of The Maya* (Schele and Jorge Perez de Lara 1997)
- *The Code of Kings* (Schele and Peter Mathews 1998)

On April 18, 1998, she passed away of pancreatic cancer at the age of 55. She was laid to rest on a hill top overlooking Lake Atitlan in Guatemala. For more details of her enormous contributions please read the following:

<http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/1998>

[1999/memorials/Schele/schele.html](http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/1998/1999/memorials/Schele/schele.html)

On April 11, 2015 Linda Schele will be presented posthumously the *Tlamatini Award* at California State University, Los Angeles. David Schele, her widower, will be there to receive the award on her behalf with the attendance of many of her former students, scholars and people coming from diverse parts of the world.

## In the Realm of the Vision Serpent

### *Decipherments and Discoveries in Mesoamerica*

SCHEDULE: Friday, April 10, 2015

Start	Finish	Event	Location
8 am	5 pm	Event Registration	Golden Eagle 3rd Flr
9 am	9:15 am	Introductory Remarks by Dr. Manuel Aguilar-Moreno and Ms. Claudia Camacho-Trejo	Golden Eagle Hall
9:15 am	9:30 am	Welcome by Provost Dr. Lynn Mahoney	Golden Eagle Hall
9:30 am	10 am	PRESENTATION: Standing on the Edge dreaming of the Center: Linda Schele's Vision of a Unified Maya Field by Dr. David Freidel	Golden Eagle Hall
10 am	10:30 am	PRESENTATION: Preclassic Sculpture and its Relationship to the Popol Vuh by Dr. Julia Guernsey	Golden Eagle Hall
10:30 am	10:45 am	BREAK	
10:45 am	12 noon	Panel Set 1A – Untold Stories of the Maya Royals. Life and Death among Kings and Queens of the Northern Lowlands Panel Set 1B – Mesoamerican Art and Royalty Panel Set 1C – Mesoamerican Religion Panel Set 1D – Maya and Mesoamerican Space and Ethnicity	Golden Eagle Rm 3 Montebello Rm 309 Student U Theater Pasadena Rm 307
12 noon	1 pm	LUNCH	
1 pm	1:30 pm	PRESENTATION: A Feathered Plate for the Afterlife by Dr. Mary Miller	Golden Eagle Hall
1:30 pm	2 pm	PRESENTATION: Abbreviational Conventions of Classic Maya Writing by Dr. Marc Zender	Golden Eagle Hall
2 pm	2:15 pm	BREAK	
2:15 pm	3:30 pm	Panel Set 2A – Breaking Borders: Interregionalism and Temporal Continuity in Mesoamerican Art Panel Set 2B – Maya Epigraphy Panel Set 2C – Body and Bones in the Ancient Americas Panel Set 2D – Power, Lineage and Fertility in Mesoamerica	Montebello Rm 309 Golden Eagle Rm 3 Student U Theater Pasadena Rm 307
3:30 pm	3:45 pm	BREAK	
3:45 pm	4:10 pm	DOCUMENTARY: Selection of Interviews with Linda Schele by Director David Lebrun	Golden Eagle Hall
4:10 pm	4:30 pm	PRESENTATION: The Drawings of Linda Schele by Dr. Diana Magaloni	Golden Eagle Hall
4:30 pm	4:45 pm	BREAK	
4:45 pm	6:00 pm	Panel Set 3A – Olmec Iconography and Symbology Panel Set 3B – Serpents and Mythology in Mesoamerica Panel Set 3C – Mesoamerican Astronomy and Calendrics Panel Set 3D – Iconography and Identity in Mesoamerica	Student U Theater Golden Eagle Rm 3 San Gabriel Rm 313 Alhambra Rm 305
6 pm	6:15 pm	BREAK	
6:15 pm	6:45 pm	PRESENTATION: Eternal Realms of Revelry: The MAW Collection of Pre-Columbian Art by Dr. John M.D. Pohl	Golden Eagle Hall
7 pm	9 pm	PRE-COLUMBIAN EXHIBIT - Eternal Realms of Revelry: The MAW Collection of Pre-Columbian Art & Reception	Fine Arts Gallery

SCHEDULE: Saturday, April 11, 2015

Start	Finish	Event	Location
9 am	9:15 am	Introductory Remarks by Dr. Manuel Aguilar-Moreno and Ms. Claudia Camacho-Trejo	Golden Eagle Hall
9:15 am	9:45 am	PRESENTATION: The Initial Series Group at Chichén Itzá Yucatan: Recent Studies and Interpretations by Dr. Karl Taube	Golden Eagle Hall
9:45 am	10:15 am	PRESENTATION: The Identity of Classic Veracruz Palma Figures by Dr. Rex Koontz	Golden Eagle Hall
10:15 am	10:30 am	Break	
10:30 am	12 noon	Panel 4 – Jaina Figurines and Beyond: Pursuing Linda Schele's Enduring Interests	Golden Eagle Hall
12 noon	1 pm	LUNCH	
1 pm	1:50 pm	DOCUMENTARY: Edgewalker: A Conversation with Linda Schele by Andrew Weeks, Simon Martin and Lori Conley	Golden Eagle Hall
1:50 pm	2:20 pm	PRESENTATION: From Texas to California: A Journey with Linda Schele by Dr. Manuel Aguilar-Moreno	Golden Eagle Hall
2:20 pm	2:50 pm	PRESENTATION: The Parentage Paper by Dr. Peter Mathews	Golden Eagle Hall
2:50 pm	3:05 pm	Break	
3:05 pm	4:20 pm	Panel Set 5A – Maya Relations with the Sacred Earth Panel Set 5B – From Aztlan to Tenochtitlan: Nahua Origins and Cosmology Panel Set 5C – Reciprocal Relations: Humans and 'landscape' in Mesoamerica	Los Angeles Rm 308C Student U Theater Los Angeles Rm 308AB
4:20 pm	4:30 pm	Break	
4:30 pm	5 pm	PRESENTATION: The Maya Hauberg Stela and the late Olmec-style sculpture The Young Lord: Middle Formative Origin of the Early Classic Period Maya Stela Cult by Dr. F. Kent Reilly, III	Golden Eagle Hall
5:00 pm	5:30 pm	PRESENTATION: The 8,000 Gods: An Examination of Sacred Beings and Categories in Classic Maya Theology by Dr. David Stuart	Golden Eagle Hall
5:30 pm	6:00 pm	ROUND TABLE: The Legacy of Linda Schele Moderated by Dr. Carolyn E. Tate	Golden Eagle Hall
6 pm	6:30 pm	Tlmatini Award Presentation to Linda Schele (Bestowed by Dean Peter McAllister and received by David Schele)	Golden Eagle Hall

Presented by the Art History Society of CSULA with generous contributions by the following including The Department of Art at California State University, Los Angeles; The College of Arts and Letters at California State University, Los Angeles; and private donors.



## Keynote Speakers



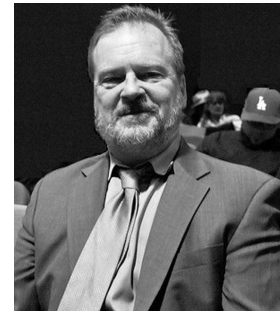
**Dr. Mary Miller**, Sterling Professor of History of Art, served as dean of Yale College from December 2008 until June 2014. Before assuming the deanship, Miller served as master of Saybrook College for nearly a decade. Miller earned her A.B. from Princeton in 1975 and her Ph.D. from Yale in 1981, joining the faculty in that year. She has served as chair of the Department of History of Art, chair of the Council on Latin American Studies, director of Graduate Studies in Archeological Studies, and as a member of the Steering Committee of the Women Faculty Forum at Yale. A specialist of the art of the ancient New World, Miller curated

The Courtly Art of the Ancient Maya at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco in 2004. For that exhibition, she wrote the catalogue of the same title with Simon Martin, senior epigrapher at the University of Pennsylvania Museum. Among her other books are *The Murals of Bonampak*, *The Blood of Kings* (with Linda Schele), *The Art of Mesoamerica, Maya Art and Architecture*, *The Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya* (with Karl Taube), and *A Pre-Columbian World* (co-edited with Jeffrey Quilter). She has most recently completed *Painting a Map of Mexico City* (co-edited with Barbara Mundy; 2012, a study of the rare indigenous map in the Beinecke Library) and *The Spectacle of the Late Maya Court: Reflections on the Murals of Bonampak* (with Claudia Brittenham; 2013).

### PRESENTATION:

#### A Feathered Plate for the Afterlife.

**ABSTRACT:** From at least 600 onward, plates painted with geometric feather designs form a critical element of funerary offering, and nowhere more so than at Tikal and Uaxactun; Tikal's famous "Tomb of the Jade Jaguar" had ten such vessels, almost certainly piled high with food for the dead lord. What do the feathers mean? How can we link this imagery with the other common subject painted inside plates, the dancing Maize God? In this talk, the feathered plates, Maize God plates, and muwan bird plates of Campeche and Yucatan will all be brought into one narrative frame.



**Dr. Karl Taube** is a Mesoamericanist, archaeologist, epigrapher and ethno-historian, known for his publications and research into the pre-Columbian cultures of Mesoamerica and the American Southwest. In 2008 he was named the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences distinguished lecturer. Dr. Taube received his B.A. in Anthropology in 1980 from Berkeley. At Yale he received his M.A. in 1983 and Ph.D. in 1988. Dr. Taube studied under several notable Mayanist researchers, including Michael D. Coe, Floyd Lounsbury

and art historian Mary Miller. Taube later co-authored with Miller a well-received encyclopedic work, *The Gods and Symbols of Ancient Mexico and the Maya*. Field research undertaken during the course of his career include a number of assignments on archaeological, linguistic and ethnological projects conducted in the Chiapas highlands, Yucatán Peninsula, Central Mexico, Honduras and most recently, Guatemala. As of 2003, Taube has served as Project Iconographer for the Proyecto San Bartolo, co-directed by William Saturno and Monica Urquizu. His primary role is to interpret the murals of Pinturas Structure Sub-1, dating to the first century B.C. In 2004, Dr. Taube co-directed an archaeological project documenting previously unknown sources of "Olmec Blue" jadeite in eastern Guatemala. He has also investigated pre-Columbian sites in Ecuador and Peru.

### PRESENTATION:

#### The Initial Series Group at Chichen Itza, Yucatan: Recent Studies and Interpretations

**ABSTRACT:** Archaeological fieldwork performed by the Proyecto Chichen Itza under the direction of Peter Schmidt during 1999 to 2002 uncovered a remarkable series of bas-relief friezes from the upper portions of palace and temple structures. The focus of this study will be buildings featuring avian and floral imagery, including abundant representations of cacao. Many of the friezes contain scenes portraying an avian-headed figure playing music surrounded by floating elements pertaining to music and dance. The relation of music to precious birds is well known for Late Postclassic Central Mexico, as can be seen in the early colonial Nahuatl texts in the *Cantares Mexicanos*. In addition, these same songs as well other early colonial Nahuatl sources also relate music, flowers and birds to concepts of paradise. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that a very similar complex existed among the more ancient Classic Maya, including the wind deity — god of music and closely related to flowers as well as the embodiment of the breath soul. For the Classic Maya, there was also a duck-billed form of the wind god, forms of which can probably be traced to much more ancient periods, probably even to the Early Formative of south coastal Chiapas. In contrast to southeastern Mesoamerica, duck-billed anthropomorphic figures are notably absent until the Late Postclassic period

in Central Mexico, where he appears as the wind god Ehecatl, a being also closely related to music. In this study, I argue that the avian figure in the Initial Series at Chichen Itza constitutes an Early Postclassic form of the wind god and as such, can be considered as an ancestral form of Ehecatl. Moreover, the Initial Series Group has the most developed monumental program dedicated to the production of cacao in ancient Mesoamerica, with the immediate topography strongly indicating why.



**Dr. Marc Zender** received his PhD in archaeology from the University of Calgary in 2004. He has taught at the University of Calgary (2002-2004) and Harvard University (2005-2011), and is now an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Tulane University, New Orleans, where he has taught epigraphy, linguistics and Mesoamerican languages since September 2011. Marc's research interests include anthropological and historical linguistics, comparative writing systems, and

archaeological decipherment, with a regional focus on Mesoamerica (particularly Mayan and Nahuatl/Aztec). He is the author of several books and dozens of articles exploring these subjects. In addition to his research and writing, Marc is associate editor of *The PARI Journal*, and (with Joel Skidmore) co-maintainer of Mesoweb, a major internet resource for the study of Mesoamerican cultures.

## PRESENTATION:

### Abbreviational Conventions of Classic Maya Writing

**ABSTRACT:** Logosyllabic scripts frequently abbreviate phonemes and morphemes that are nonetheless critical to linguistic interpretation and translation. Abbreviational conventions therefore represent a particularly important field of study for those who propose to understand ancient texts. In the case of Maya writing, it is now well known that this script routinely elides word-final consonants and the first consonant of a cluster when they belong to a class of weak consonants: , h, j, l, m, n, w, and y (Lacadena and Zender 2001:2-3; Zender 1999:130-142). Another widespread abbreviational convention, shared with such diverse scripts as Egyptian hieroglyphic and Runic, has been termed haplography, whereby a given sign is recorded only once when it should be represented twice, as in ka-wa for ka[ka]w and AJAW-le for ajawle[l] (Zender 2010:4). We can recognize haplography in Maya writing because it alternates with double writing (e.g., ka-ka-wa and AJAW-le-le) and with a diacritical marker that apparently signals the presence of duplicate consonants (e.g., <sup>2</sup>ka-wa and AJAW-<sup>2</sup>le), sometimes also appearing with logograms that are CVC in shape (e.g., <sup>2</sup>K'AHK', <sup>2</sup>TZUTZ). Finally,

Maya writing also frequently elides essential morphological suffixes in the presence of logograms, such that BAJ alternates with ba-la-ja (bajlaj) and OCH with o-chi (och-i) (Zender 2010:4-5). These complex conventions now cast doubt on several previously accepted decipherments, but they also cast new light on others, and suggest procedures that will help to minimize their confounding influences in the future.



**Dr. David Stuart** is the David and Linda Schele Professor of Mesoamerican Art and Writing at the University of Texas at Austin. He received his Ph.D in Anthropology from Vanderbilt University in 1995, and taught at Harvard University for eleven years before arriving at UT Austin in 2004, where he now teaches in the Department of Art and Art History. His interests in the traditional cultures of Mesoamerica are wide-ranging, but his primary research focuses is the archaeology and epigraphy of ancient Maya

civilization, and for the past three decades he has been very active in the decipherment of Maya hieroglyphic writing. Over the past two decades his major research has centered on the art and epigraphy at Copan (Honduras), Palenque (Mexico), Piedras Negras, La Corona, and San Bartolo (Guatemala). Stuart's early work on the decipherment of Maya hieroglyphs led to a MacArthur Fellowship (1984-1989). His books include *Palenque: Eternal City of the Maya* (Thames and Hudson), and most recently *The Order of Days* (Random House), a popular account of ancient Maya calendars and cosmology. Stuart is also currently the director of The Mesoamerica Center at the University of Texas at Austin, which fosters multi-disciplinary studies on ancient American art and culture. In addition, he oversees the activities of the newly established Casa Herrera, UT's academic research center in Antigua, Guatemala, devoted to studies in the art, archaeology and culture of Mesoamerica.

## PRESENTATION:

### The 8,000 Gods: An Examination of Sacred Beings and Categories in Classic Maya Theology

**ABSTRACT:** Today we know a great deal about ancient Maya gods, especially their individual imagery and associated iconography. What we lack, however, is a sense of how gods were conceived and categorized within a larger theological system of sacred beings. Using new translations of several revealing texts I will examine the ways the Maya described and classified their own religious system. These sources hint at the internal structure of the animate Maya cosmos — a topic that was always central to Linda's research and to our own close collaborations.



**Dr. David Freidel** studies the emergence and florescence of government institutions among the lowland Maya of southeastern Mexico and Central America. Currently he is directing long-term research at the royal city of El Perú, ancient Waka', in northwestern Petén, Guatemala. Established in the Preclassic period by roughly 100 BC, El Perú-Waka' was the capital of a

kingdom and seat of a royal dynasty that endured more than five hundred years and boasted more than 26 successors to the throne, finally collapsing in early ninth century. The Waka' kingdom commanded strategic trade routes, to the west along a major river, the San Pedro Martir, and to the north overland to the central lowlands of the Yucatan peninsula. Major historical events at the city include its subordination to the principal imperial conquerors of the Maya world: Siyaj K'ahk' in the fourth century, and Yuknoom Chen II in the seventh century. Although not as large or imposing as the major regional capitals of the Maya world, El Perú-Waka' is historically important and a productive laboratory for investigating all aspects of Classic Maya civilization.

**PRESENTATION:**

Standing on the Edge dreaming of the Center:  
Linda Schele's Vision of a Unified Maya Field

**ABSTRACT:** When Linda and I were collaborating in the eighties she looked forward to the day when all students of the southern lowland Classic Maya civilization would participate in a common effort, their independent sources of information and insight embraced, as Evon Vogt would have said, by the collective intention of the ancient sages to inscribe a common history. She was clear in her own mind that the decipherment would reveal that the rulers and courtiers of Classic kingdoms addressed not only their own local constituencies but also their peers throughout the Classic world. Her efforts to articulate this view of the center from afar informed her books. I reflect on this effort and the current state of the center.



**Dr. F. Kent Reilly, III** is a pre-historian and his interests converge around religion, art, and visual validation of elite authority in New World chiefdoms and early states. His primary focus is Mesoamerican Civilization and has spent a great deal of research examining the art and symbols of the ancient Olmec (1200-400 BC), and Classic Maya (AD 200-900) cultures. In 1995 he was a guest curator and a catalog contributor to the Princeton University exhibition "The Olmec World:

Art, Ritual, and Rulership." He has published articles on the ecological origin of Olmec symbols, the influence of Olmec symbols on the iconography of Maya rulership and the origin and function of the Olmec symbol system. Interest in addition to the ancient Olmec and Maya, include the art and iconography of the prehistoric Mississippian Period of the Southeastern United States. In 2004 Dr. Reilly was a member of the advisory board and a catalog contributor to the Art Institute of Chicago exhibition "Hero, Hawk, and Open Hand; Ancient Native American Art of the Midwest and South." In 2011 Dr. Reilly was chosen as the Field Anthropologist Consultant for the Muscogee Nation of Florida. The tribe hopes Dr. Reilly will be able to offer fresh insight, research material and advice as they seek federal recognition. This is the final phase of a 63 year journey and the tribe asked Dr. Reilly for his assistance in this last step because of his extensive knowledge of Muscogee government, ceremonial cycles and traditions.

**PRESENTATION:**

The Maya Hauberg Stela and the late Olmec-style sculpture The Young Lord: Middle Formative Origin of the Early Classic Period Maya Stela Cult

**ABSTRACT:** The stela is a rare form of public monument in the Maya Lowlands before the Classic Period. Stela were, however, a prominent medium for recording ritual activity at such Middle and Late Formative Period sites as La Venta, in the Olmec heartland and Izapa, on the Pacific coast of Chiapas. The iconography and hieroglyphic inscription carved on the Protoclassic (A.D. 100-200) Hauberg Stela (H.83.8 cm) clearly illustrates that at this early date Maya rulers were validating their elite position through information carved on stela. Specifically, the Hauberg Stela (a Maya work of art near and dear to Linda Schele) depicts a standing, masked, male ruler engaged in ritual actions focusing on bloodletting, supernatural communication, and the establishment of a cosmological framework. A comparison of a Late Middle Formative, stela-like, three-dimensional sculpture from the Pacific Coast region of Guatemala with the Hauberg Stela demonstrates that all of the major themes carried on the Hauberg were fully functioning in a similar medium some 500 years earlier. Like the Hauberg, The "The Young Lord" or 'Slim" (65.5 cm) depicts a thin standing, masked, male figure incised with a complex set of secondary symbols.

A structural examination of these symbols reveals the same themes of bloodletting, supernatural communication, and cosmological framework which are used to validate the elite position of the ruler depicted on the Hauberg Stela. Furthermore, the relative size of the two sculptures and the similarities of the costuming strongly suggests that they are both fulfilling identical ideological and political functions.



**Dr. Julia Guernsey** received her Ph.D. from the University of Texas at Austin in 1997, and has taught ancient Mesoamerican art and culture history in the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Texas at Austin since 2001. Her research and publications continue to focus on the Middle and Late Preclassic periods in ancient Mesoamerica, in particular on sculptural expressions of rulership during this time. She also continues to participate on the La Blanca Archaeological Project, which is exploring this

large site that dominated the Pacific coastal and piedmont region of Guatemala during the Middle Preclassic period. Her publications include *Sculpture and Social Dynamics in Preclassic Mesoamerica*, published by (Cambridge University Press); *The Place of Stone Monuments: Context, Use, and Meaning in Mesoamerica's Preclassic Transition* co-edited, with colleagues John E. Clark (Brigham Young University) and Bárbara Arroyo (Francisco Marroquín University); and *Ritual and Power in Stone: The Performance of Rulership in Mesoamerican Izapan Style Art*, published by the University of Texas Press.

#### PRESENTATION:

##### Preclassic Sculpture and its Relationship to the Popol Vuh

**ABSTRACT:** This paper will consider the thematic continuities between Preclassic monuments and the text of the Popol Vuh. Numerous scholars have addressed these parallels, particularly as depicted in the sculpture of Izapa, Chiapas, as clear evidence of the duration of key and recurring narratives for well over a thousand years in Mesoamerica. While the continuities are clear and compelling, there are also differences in the narratives throughout time that are more difficult to understand. This paper will explore both of these aspects – continuity and difference – between the text of the Popol Vuh and monuments from the Preclassic period in Mesoamerica.



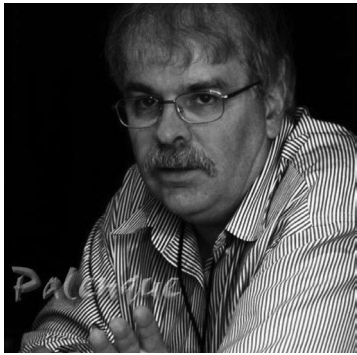
**Dr. Rex Koontz** is a Professor and Director of the University of Houston, School of Art. His work centers on the art of the Ancient Americas. He is currently investigating the portable sculpture tradition along the Gulf Coast of Mexico between A.D. 100-1000. These objects, known as yoke, hacha, or palma depending on their form, are important for the understanding of the place of artistry in Ancient Mexican politics and culture. More general interests include the construction of meaningful urban spaces

in this area and how the programs of sculpture, architecture, painting, and performance seen in the center of these cities helped shape and focus the ancient urban experience. Recent books include *Lightning Gods and Feathered Serpents: The Public Sculpture of El Tajin* and *Blood and Beauty: Organized Violence in the Art and Archaeology of Mesoamerica and Central America* (the latter edited with Heather Orr, both 2009). He has done fieldwork in Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras under the aegis of the Tinker Foundation, the University Research Council of the University of Texas, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, among others. He is currently working on a digital tool for visual analysis, VWire, that was awarded a Digital Humanities Startup Grant by the NEH in 2011-12.

#### PRESENTATION:

##### The Identity of Classic Veracruz Palma Figures

**ABSTRACT:** Palmas – the intricately carved portable sculptures that are closely associated with the Mesoamerican rubber ball game – are found chiefly with the remains of Late Classic Veracruz civilization. Many palmas contain single figures carved in full round who are dressed in complex costumes and hold important objects. Who do these figures represent, and how are they involved with the ball game and its place in Late Classic Veracruz civilization? This presentation will discuss the palma figures in relation to scenes in Veracruz ball courts and elsewhere, proposing that the figures are secondary-tier nobility who were important to rites of investiture of kings, and that the palmas themselves may have been status objects that indicated that noble office.



**Dr. Peter Mathews** is Emeritus Professor of Archaeology at La Trobe University in Australia. He received his BA from the University of Calgary and his PhD from Yale University. His specialization is Maya hieroglyphic writing, and in 1984 he received a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship Prize for his contribution to the decipherment of the script. Among his publications he co-authored with Dr. Schele the seminal publication, *The Code of Kings: The Language of Seven Sacred Maya Temples and Tombs* published in 1999.

**PRESENTATION:**

**The Parentage Paper: an unpublished paper by Linda Schele, Peters Mathews, and Floyd G. Lounsbury**

**ABSTRACT:** In 1975 Linda Schele, Peter Mathews, and Floyd Lounsbury saw a pattern in inscriptions from Yaxchilan that named the ruler and then appeared record his parentage. We then looked for similar patterns in the texts of other sites, and found numerous examples. (Christopher Jones had, unbeknownst to us, already discovered the pattern in texts at Tikal.) We proceeded to prepare an article for publication, including illustrations of all the examples we could find, but for various reasons the paper was never published. It was, however, widely circulated in typescript form among our colleagues. This presentation gives a brief history and description of what has come to be known as “the Parentage Paper”



**Dr. John M.D. Pohl** is an eminent authority on North American Indian civilizations and has directed numerous archaeological excavations and surveys in Canada, the United States, Mexico, and Central America, as well as Europe. He has designed many exhibitions on North and Central American Indian peoples, including “The Aztec Pantheon and the Art of Empire” at the Getty Villa in 2010, and co-curated the exhibit “The Children of the Plumed

Serpent: The Legacy of Quetzalcoatl in Ancient Mexico” at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Dr. Pohl is noted for bringing the ancient past to life using a wide variety of innovative techniques and his experiences have taken him from the Walt Disney Imagineering Department of Cultural Affairs to CBS television where he served as writer

and producer for the American Indian Documentary Series “500 Nations,” and Princeton University where he was appointed as the first Peter Jay Sharp Curator and Lecturer in the Art of the Ancient Americas. Among his various titles:

- \* *Children of the Plumed Serpent: The Legacy of Quetzalcoatl in Ancient Mexico*. J. Paul Getty Museum, 2012. Co-authors: Virginia Fields and Victoria I. Lyall.
- \* *The Aztec Pantheon and the Art of Empire*. Scala Arts Publishers Inc., 2010. Co-author: Claire L. Lyons.
- \* *Lord Eight Wind of Suchixtlan and the Heroes of Ancient Oaxaca: Reading History in the Codex Zouche-Nuttall*. University of Texas Press, 2010. Co-authors: Robert Lloyd Williams & F. Kent Reilly III.
- \* *Narrative Mixtec Ceramics of Ancient Mexico*. Stinehour Press, 2007.
- \* *The Legend of Lord Eight Deer: An Epic of Ancient Mexico*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2002.
- \* *Exploring Mesoamerica (Places in Time)*. Oxford University Press, USA, 2002.

**PRESENTATION:**

**Eternal Realms of Revelry: The MAW Collection of Pre-Columbian Art**



**Dr. Manuel Aguilar-Moreno** is a Professor of Art History at California State University, Los Angeles. He received his B.S. in Electronic Engineering and a certification in Education at the ITESO Jesuit University of Mexico. He also earned a degree in Mexican History with emphasis on the state of Jalisco from El Colegio de Jalisco. In 1997 he earned an M.A. in Latin American Studies and in 1999 received an Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Art

History and Anthropology from the University of Texas at Austin under the tutelage of the late Dr. Linda Schele and Dr. Karl Butzer. Dr. Aguilar-Moreno has made numerous cultural and research trips worldwide. He has been a professor of Mesoamerican and Colonial Mexican Art History, World History, History of México and Biblical Literature at such institutions as the ITESO Jesuit University and the Instituto de Ciencias, in Guadalajara, Mexico; the University of San Diego, California; the University of Texas at Austin; the Semester at Sea Program of the Universities of Pittsburgh and Virginia, teaching a complete semester on board of a ship around the world with fieldwork opportunities. At present he is preparing a comprehensive book based on his Proyecto Ulama 2003-2013. Among his recent publications:



- The Perfection of Silence: The Cult of Death in Mexico. Guadalajara: Secretary of Culture of Jalisco, 2003.
- Handbook to Life in the Aztec World. New York: Oxford Press, (2007)
- Utopía de Piedra: El Arte Tequitqui de Mexico. Guadalajara: Conexión Gráfica ,(2005)

## PRESENTATION:

### From Texas to California: A Journey with Linda Schele

ABSTRACT: This is a testimonial presentation and will help to explain what Linda Schele means for me and my students at Cal State LA. I will tell a moving story that as incredible as it may seem, it is totally real. This story proves that we live in a world where people and things exist for a reason and their interactions produce effects that change our lives forever. There are moments in which we just need to say Thanks, keep walking with faith and follow our destiny wherever it takes us. At the end of the road we will understand why things happen and who we really are. This story tells about how the spirit and legacy of Linda Schele came to Los Angeles to stay here.

## List of Panels

### **PANEL 1A: Untold Stories of the Maya Royals. Life and Death among Kings and Queens of the Northern Lowlands Chair: Dr. Vera Tiesler (UCR/UADY)**

*Face to Face with Kings and Queens. Countenance and Permanent Body Adjustments among the Royals of the Northern Lowlands*  
Dr. Vera Tiesler(University of California, Riverside / Universidad Autonoma de Yucatan )

This talk explores the physical attributes of Maya beauty and public portraiture of royals, some epitomes of the divine, along with a number of permanent body enhancements, such as the artificial head shaping, dental work, and mucous tissue expansion, which was generally performed in the ear lobes. I will confront the burial record with the imagery of well-known rulers of Calakmul, Dzibanché and Ek' Balam, providing food for thought for a more general discussion of the forms and occasions for permanent body enhancement and their roles in public display of aristocracy and power.

### *Noble Life Style and Health Afflictions among the Royals of Yaxuná, Ek Dzibanché and Calakmul* Dr. Andrea Cucina (University of California, Riverside/UADY) and Dr. Vera Tiesler (University of California, Riverside/UADY)

There is little doubt that royals, in a highly stratified society like the Classic Maya, were granted many benefits, which translated into access to food and resources and a lifestyle not easily accessible to commoners. Yet, they were not exempt from ailments related, to some extent, to their social condition. This presentation explores oral health, infectious diseases, congenital malformations, and age-related disorders that affected Classic period royals in the Maya northern lowlands. Results reveal substantial differences with the commoner sector of the society, and heterogeneous patterns between men and women; while they stress the benefits of being members of royalty, they also highlight unexpected postindustrial ailments and others related to endogamy. The confrontation of the skeletal evidence with the discursive reconstruction of rulers' lives not only reveals coincidences but also contradictions. Its joint interpretation provides enriching details and expands our knowledge on the ancient Maya courtly lifestyle.

### *The Coming of Kingship at Yaxuná: Contextualizing Burial 23* Dr. Travis W. Stanton (University of California, Riverside)

During the 1990s the Selz Foundation Yaxuná Project recovered two Early Classic royal burials from the North Acropolis. Given the ceramic complex reflected by the grave goods, it was clear that Burial 23 was the earlier of the two burials, although there was evidence for a later reentry and smoking ritual prior to the end of the period. Recent isotope analysis suggests that the individual found in this tomb was not from Yaxuná. In this paper I discuss evidence collected by the PIPCY project, researching the site since 2007, which indicates that the appearance of royal kings at the beginning of the Early Classic reflects a larger pattern of political and social upheaval at the site. The king buried in Burial 23 likely usurped power at Yaxuná and purposefully reoriented the practice of public gathering for social and ritual events.

### *Maya Queens of the Northern Lowlands* Dr. Traci Ardren (University of Miami)

Royal women comprise a significant percentage of the individuals found in the mass grave known as Burial 24 from Yaxuna. This sacrificial event may have been an attempt to eliminate an entire dynastic line. Violence was deliberately deployed to terminate the reproductive potential of these young royal Maya women. This paper will review the Burial 24 context with special attention given to the figurines and ornaments associated

with royal female occupants, and place these women into a broader context given what we know about the lives of Maya queens at nearby centers such as Coba and Chichen Itza. Artifacts associated with the royal women of Burial 24 relate to broader patterns of how queenly power was materialized in death throughout the Classic Maya lowlands, despite their brutal end. A careful reading of these materials illuminates the motivations for this dynastic massacre as well as the personal lives of select Maya rulers.

### **PANEL 1B: Mesoamerican Art and Royalty**

**Chair: Dr. Carl D. Callaway (La Trobe University)**

#### *Service, Storage, and Sipping – Observing the Formalities of Finery for the Classic Mayas*

*Dr. Jennifer A Loughmiller-Cardinal (SUNY New Paltz)*

The long-standing interpretation of Mayan cylindrical vessels that bear hieroglyphic text specifying chocolate, particularly those in which that specification occurs in a PSS, has been that these vessels were used for direct drinking consumption of chocolate-based beverages. Analytic methods of residue detection failed to turn up a single case where such text and content matched for these vessels, and technological evaluation and experimental trials produced outcomes which suggest other problems with direct usability. Although chemical detection of alkaloids (found in such foodstuffs as chocolate, chili, and tobacco products) has been attested for other types of Mayan vessels, these have only been non-labeled or storage-form containers. The mismatch indicates that a new interpretation is necessary for these presumed “chocolate” pots, and suggests a new understanding of the use, purpose, and functioning of both these vessels their texts.

#### *The “Bone Codex” of Jasaw Chan K’awil I*

*Dr. Carl D. Callaway (La Trobe University) and  
Dr. Péter Biró (Friedrich-Wilhelms Universität, Bonn)*

Linda Schele opened new lines of inquiry into Maya art and epigraphy by posing bold new questions. In honor of her influential research, this paper examines a remarkable burial cache of inscribed bones from the royal tomb of Jasaw Chan K’awil I (682-734 AD) from Tikal Temple 1, cataloged as Burial 116. Aubrey S. Trick the excavator of Burial 116, first speculated if this cache was a ‘bone codex’. Trick’s collaborator Linton Satterthwaite deduced that several bones could be aligned vertically, side-by-side in single columns, and their respective texts linked via corresponding dates. Advances in Maya epigraphy now allow for a fuller reading of the bones in question. Some texts reveal subjects and themes like-in-kind to those found in existing Maya codices while others are unique in character. Death scenes and texts connecting Jasaw Chan K’awil I to the sinking of the

Maize God’s canoe presage the king’s own the death journey. Additionally, drawings on several bone ‘pointers’ allude to the mythic origins of hieroglyphs and display patron deities of writing.

#### *Shall You Know Them by Their Deeds or Their Title?*

*The Akj’uhuun in the Classic Maya Royal Court*

*Dr. Robert F. Wald (University of Texas in Austin)*

Clarity concerning the title of the important courtier written as AJ-K’UH-na could well serve the broader purpose of gaining insight into how the Maya rulers and their courts functioned. Despite twenty-five years of near unanimity on the title’s usual signs, there is still no consensus on its correct interpretation or translation. While different renderings of Classic Maya words are not rare, seldom have so many been offered as for the particular title of this denizen. While the various lexical arguments will be discussed, the main emphasis will be on a nearly exhaustive set of pictorial representations and on the contexts in which the title appears in written texts. Considering the differences among the various scholars, it is only by examining all the pictorial and linguistic evidence that agreement can finally be reached.

#### *Staircases and Experience in the Northern Maya Lowlands:*

*The Architecture of Political Control*

*Dr. Maline D. Werness-Rude (ECSU) and*

*Dr. Spencer Kaylee (UW River-Falls)*

In northern Yucatan, builders in the ancient Maya world delighted in varying their approaches to structural orientation. Some focused on creating buildings with a single face designed to send clear directional signals. Other architectural forms, however, present two or more faces, thereby engaging with multiple, distinct spaces. Whether these associated spaces are intended to be seen as contiguous or not can impact the types of faces presented and whether or not there is visual accord across different buildings. Focusing our analysis here, we concentrate on how stairs impact such orientations between structures and how they literally structure use patterns. Certainly stairs were important locations for display and ceremony in the ancient Maya world, as many scholars have discussed. We hope to contribute to this discussion an examination of how differences in stair types, riser heights, vantage points and other formal qualities impact the viewer’s experience of space and performance.

## **PANEL 1C: Mesoamerican Religion**

**Chair: Dr. Gabrielle Vail (New College of Florida)**

*The Maize God and World Renewal Rituals among the  
Postclassic to Contemporary Maya  
Dr. Gabrielle Vail (New College of Florida) and  
Dr. Allen Christenson (Brigham Young University)*

This highlights the connections between prehispanic world renewal rituals highlighted in sources such as the Maya codices and those performed by contemporary Maya people living in highland communities in Guatemala. In this community, elaborate ceremonies designed to renew the world take place during the week preceding Easter. Many of the elements incorporated by traditionalist Maya during Holy Week ceremonies have parallels with those undertaken by their ancestors during Wayeb', the five final days of the prehispanic solar year. The Holy Week celebrations coincide with a critical juncture in the seasonal year—the early spring, marking the end of the long dry season in the Guatemalan highlands. During this dry period, the lack of rain causes the earth to become barren and incapable of germinating seeds. Traditionalist Tz'utujil Maya believe that the world dies during Holy Week. To bring the world back to life requires a complex cycle of ceremonies, processions, prayers, and ritual offerings, the end result of which is the birth of the rains, which provide the nourishment needed to grow new crops and sustain human life.

*Cradling the Sacred: Image, Ritual, and Affect in  
Mesoamerican Material Religion*

*Dr. Jennifer Schepher Hughes (University of California, Riverside)*

The common ritual posture that I identify with the term “cradling” embodies, evokes and performs the emotions of tenderness and affection for objects of the material world and the numina within them. In particular, the ritual act of cradling infant or infantilized effigies of deities elicits in the devotee specific religio-affective postures including warmth, nurture, care, and tenderness for the sacred. The pre-Hispanic material cultural record, in particular from the Olmec and Maya worlds, includes visual imagery and figurative traditions that indicate that diminutive images of deities were held, embraced, and otherwise engaged devotionally as if they were infants or toddlers. The sources examined here suggest that cradling is among the earliest religious rituals practiced in the Americas for which we have evidence. I identify cradling as a devotional posture--the cradler and cradled object constituted a dyadic pair that was a locus of Mesoamerican sacred power. I explore the relationship between materiality and affect and the ritual actions that bind one to the other.

*Inside the World of the Otherworld: Notions of Cause and Effect in  
Curing Rites of the Ch'orti' Maya  
Dr. Kerry Michael Hull (Brigham Young University)*

Traditional curing among the Ch'orti' Maya addresses illness by identifying its cause and treating its symptoms. While this approach sounds familiar to most societies, the methods of identifying and healing a sickness are tightly bound to Ch'orti' understandings of Otherworld beings and their malevolent influences on people. In this paper I describe unique Ch'orti' practices and conceptions related to sickness and healing. I examine the process of divination (niroj) to identify which of the myriad of Otherworld spirits is causing the sickness. I also describe the ritual paraphernalia used by healers to assist in their efforts to divine and heal. Furthermore, I detail from first-hand experience the nature of Ch'orti' healing rituals for various types of afflictions. Finally, I locate healing practices into a broader ideological framework of Ch'orti' worldview regarding the supernatural and the tenuous equilibrium that is thought to exist between worlds that requires both reactive and proactive ritual observance to maintain.

*Cosmology, Origin and Parallelisms in the Popol Vuh  
and the Christian Bible  
Dr. Nicholas R. Alemán-Zaldivar (Whittier College)*

Algo se ha escrito ya acerca de la cosmología, origen y similitudes del Popol Vuh con la Biblia cristiana. Por tanto, mi ponencia sobre el tema será, más que todo, una continuación de lo que otros críticos han dicho al respecto. Quizás lo “nuevo” que yo aporte o pueda aportar sea la búsqueda del momento histórico en que ocurren ciertos acontecimientos o catástrofes antes que pasaran a formar parte de las leyendas o las mitologías que leemos hoy en día en ambos textos sagrados, como es el caso de “El diluvio universal”. Evidencias arqueológicas muestran que esta historia narrada en el Popol Vuh y en la Biblia cristiana se trata del mismo acontecimiento histórico al cual hace también referencia Platón, según se lee en Los diálogos de Platón.

**PANEL 1D: Maya and Mesoamerican Space and Ethnicity**  
**Chair: David Schaeffer, M.A.**

*Exploring an Important Hypothetical Connection through Space and Time:  
Contemporary Rilaj Mam (a.k.a. Maximon/San Simon/"Abuelo")  
and Classic Period God L  
David M. Schaefer, M.A. (Independent Scholar)*

Rilaj Mam plays an important role in the traditional beliefs of Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala,

and has been likened to the jaguar-merchant God L, a deity found in the context of Maya creation mythology. Comparisons, however, have been based more on iconography than epigraphic evidence, which this paper looks to expand upon. Among several perspectives, it considers Atitlaneco views on Mam's role in origin beliefs, particularly through the local conception of nuwales, which is compared to the Classic wayob' complex. It focuses on animal "avatars" of Mam and the beasts to which God L seems to relate, including a rare calendar name ("4-Dog"). It gives Tz'utujil traditionalists interviewed during 2013-'14-'15) a voice and discusses locally-held relics. It also builds on interpretations from the nearby Samabaj archaeological site which emphasize the three Atitlán volcanoes as a symbolic "magnet" for ancient pilgrimage and residence (while forming the setting for Linda Schele's resting place).

*Los Rituales de los Antiguos Mayas y la  
Espiritualidad Contemporánea  
Lolmay Pedro Garcia (Ethnic Maya and Maya Linguist,  
Chimaltenango, Guatemala)*

A partir de 1980 ha habido en el area maya, una proliferación de "guías espirituales" con diferentes tendencias, lo cual he cuestionado mucho basado en las mismas palabras de los "guías" quienes dicen que no todas las personas poseen el DON de ser guía o de realizar trabajos rituales (guía espiritual, comadrona, huesero entre otros). Últimamente también se puede notar que hay una lucha de poder entre las diferentes tendencias actuales, situación que en algunos casos tiene orígenes desde la época precolombina por la diferencia ideológica entre diversos grupos mayas como los k'iches y los kaqchikeles por ejemplo. El problema que se ve en la actualidad es que los llamados "guías espirituales", a través de los contactos que han tenido con otras culturas y sectas religiosas, han mezclado la espiritualidad maya tradicional con ideas externas que en muchos casos tienen influencia del "New Age", lo cual se refleja en el uso de cristales, la meditación de tipo oriental y la creencia en la presencia de extraterrestres. A pesar de esa situación distorsionada, se mantienen formas, curaciones, predicciones, y uso del calendario cholq'ij, entre otras actividades que se usaban en el pasado. En este trabajo pretendo mostrar la supervivencia y la continuidad de algunos conceptos originales mayas y las transformaciones que han tenido.

*New Perspectives on Ancient Maya Trade: Educating the Public  
Through the Museum's Collection  
Stephanie K. Lozano, M.A.  
(Los Angeles County Museum of Art)*

This paper presents new perspectives on ancient Maya trade from museum collections, and secondly demonstrates how to educate the public regarding information contained

in museum collections. The iconographic analysis of several museum pieces from the Los Angeles County Museum of Art reveals various ways trade occurred within the Maya area. The first analysis was of a set of Maya incense burner stands with imported Maya blue pigment. The second analysis focuses on a Maya vessel's carved image, which notes the gift giving of the valued quetzal plumage between two Maya kings that aided in developing social and political relationships. The third analysis is of a pair of quatrefoil-shaped earrings, which illuminates the constant exchange of ideas such as world view and cosmic order. Museums' collections are valuable and informative but often stay dormant as pieces sit in galleries without much exposure to the public.

*The Mesoamerican Clay Figurine Project of Rio Hondo College:  
Modeling Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Culture Among Community  
College Learners of Suburban Los Angeles  
Santiago Andres Garcia, M.A. (Rio Hondo College)*

In Mesoamerican archaeology, clay figurines represent an important medium of inquiry because they offer archaeologists a window into the daily activities and identities of common people that large stone works do not. In the summer of 2014, I asked students to model their own views of race, ethnicity, gender, and culture in clay. Ostensibly, to bridge the ancient Mesoamerican past with the present, I facilitated the making of clay figurines, following Gloria Anzaldúa's borderlands paradigm; a theory that seeks to understand the human condition from a mestiza/o experience. This theory has been used by urban educators to understand the lived experiences of people of color in borderland states such as California and Mexico. More so, I sought to understand student experiences in light of migration, assimilation, segregation, patriarchy, and survival. In this paper, I will present the students' clay figurines as the material representations of their narratives of which are based on a recall of their own borderlands experiences.

*The Pyramid of the Moon and the Sun: Model of an  
Inclusive Gendered Anthropology  
Dr. Theresa Yugar (CSULA)*

In Mesoamerican Thought the Pyramid of the Moon and the Pyramid of the Sun are central religious and historic icons. In this presentation, I will reflect on, and examine, these two temples from a gendered perspective. Drawing on research by Mesoamerican ethnographer, Sylvia Marcos, I will offer a reflection of these temples in light of gendered pairs that are peppered in Nahua Thought, traditions, and songs. I am interested in ideologies, myths, and/or traditions that underpin the representation of the Pyramids and pairs themselves. I argue that these temples hold wisdom that could lay the foundation of an inclusive gendered anthropology. In this way, I will reclaim the wisdom of this highly sophisticated civilization that was senselessly destroyed by barbaric uncivilized Spaniards who came to this bioregion.

**PANEL 2A: Breaking Borders: Interregionalism and Temporal  
Continuity in Mesoamerican Art**

**Chair: Jeremy D. Coltman, M.A. (CSULA)  
and Andrew Turner, M.A. (UCR)**

*The Skull and Cross Bones Motif: A Mesoamerican Perspective*  
*Jeremy D. Coltman, M.A. (California State University, Los Angeles)*

Recent scholarly discussions of dismembered and disembodied body parts have been couched in terms of ritual violence and warfare, particularly the taking and displaying of these as trophies. Disembodied heads as decapitated trophies dominate most studies in the literature, particularly the well-known tzompantli (skull rack) of the Aztec. There are other body parts to consider. Skulls, crossed bones, and disembodied eyes frequently appear juxtaposed to one another on platforms, skirts, wings of bats, and capes. Other body parts are served up in bowls and plates as the sumptuous repast of sinister beings. Often associated with death, sacrifice, and the underworld, this arrangement of macabre motifs may express a certain degree of ambiguity in which the intertwined realms of creation, birth, and curing intersect. This discussion will focus on how the skull and cross bone motif was articulated among the Classic Maya and will suggest possible alternatives to interpretations that have broadly defined it as one strictly of death and gore. Furthermore, this motif likely influenced later Mesoamerican styles.

*Understanding the Artistic Legacy of Early Classic Interactions*  
*Dr. Claudia Garcia-Des Lauriers*  
*(California State Polytechnic University, Pomona)*

The question of Teotihuacan abroad has been an important one since the discoveries of burials at Kaminaljuyu that showed significant contacts between this Central Mexican metropolis and the Maya region. While there are significant quantities of data of diverse kinds, one of the most debated is how to interpret the artistic exchanges between Teotihuacan and other regions. Among the questions not yet answered is how to understand some of the artistic paradoxes that these interactions left behind. For example, stelae carved in Teotihuacan-style appear in the Maya region, Pacific Coast, Oaxaca, Veracruz and other parts of Mesoamerica, yet the sculpted stelae does not seem to have been a significant part of the Teotihuacan visual repertoire. At Teotihuacan, murals and more small-scale objects took on a greater role. This paper seeks to address some of this artistic complexity and what it reveals about Teotihuacan interactions as well as how local responses to these contacts are materialized in artistic form.

*The Maya in Central Mexico: Tracing the Stylistic and Iconographic  
Origins of the Cacaxtla Murals*  
*Andrew Turner, M.A. (University of California, Riverside)*

In the centuries that followed the collapse of Teotihuacan, known collectively as the Epiclassic period (AD 650-900), several smaller sites in Central Mexico such as Cacaxtla, Tlaxcala rose to take advantage of new economic opportunities and make claims Teotihuacan's former power. Since the murals of Cacaxtla came to the attention of scholars in the mid-1970s, there has been much debate surrounding the anomalous occurrence of Maya-style paintings some 700 km from the Maya region. While there has been considerable speculation about the identities of the painters, whether they were foreigners or local artists working in a foreign style, there has been little discussion about the distinctive and nuanced Maya-style traits found in the paintings. This presentation compares Maya features that appear in the murals and other media of Cacaxtla to specific examples found in the Maya region and suggests a probable point of origin for the painters of the Cacaxtla murals.

*The Bringers of Cacao: Portrayals of New World Primates  
in the Art of the Aztatlán Culture of Postclassic  
West Mexico, Ad 850/900-1350*  
*Dr. Michael D. Mathiowetz (Centro INAH Nayarit)*

The Aztatlán culture was the most socially complex development in far West Mexico during the Postclassic period and was characterized by the formation of city states along the Nayarit and southern Sinaloa coastal plain with clear social hierarchies, elite polychrome pottery, copper metallurgy, Mesoamerican ballcourts, Plumbate wares, and depictions of Mesoamerican deities. Yet despite evidence of interactions with Pueblo cultures of the U.S. Southwest and societies in highland Central Mexico and Oaxaca, the Aztatlán region has received relatively little attention by scholars. In Aztatlán art, the portrayal of spider monkeys (*Ateles Geoffroyi*)—a New World primate—in a geographical area located between 800-1200 km. from their known historic range is a significant anomaly that deserves attention. This study examines portrayals of spider monkeys in relation to the use of cacao in prehispanic West Mexico and in the context of a new religious complex centered upon the solar deity Xochipilli.

*From the Epiclassic to the Aztec-Mexico: the Presence and  
Use of the Past in Stone Sculptures*  
*Ángel González López, M.A. (University of California, Riverside)*

The ways in which human societies create a sense of history and incorporate it into daily life vary in time. In the Basin of Mexico for example, during the Late Postclassic, each one

of these groups included certain parts of the stories of their ancestors. The uses, causes, and reasons for this social construction depend on the combination of many factors, and as an archaeologist, I am particularly interested in the use of the past and how it was conceived and incorporated into the perspective of the Mexica of Tenochtitlan during the expansionist phase. For many years, the scientific literature has been dedicated to exploring this topic, in particular Mexica objects depicting the “ancient” Xochicalco style, such as the clear examples of fire serpent heads. Despite these much-cited examples, this topic needs to be reexamined by scholars, principally because recent archaeological research has uncovered new and valuable information about the curation of these Epiclassic art styles for hundreds of years. In this paper I will analyze a number of other examples, specifically fragments of stone sculptures that are unpublished, recovered from within the ancient imperial capital.

## **PANEL 2B: Maya Epigraphy**

**Chair: Dr. Bruce Love (MAM)**

*Mayas Teaching Mayas the Glyphs and the  
Calendar: the Linda Schele Legacy  
Dr. Bruce Love (Maya for Ancient Maya)*

In July, 1987, in an old ruined church in Antigua Guatemala, Linda Schele (along with Nick Hopkins and Kathryn Josserand) taught the first Maya glyph workshop for indigenous Maya students. More than two dozen attended, representing seven Maya languages. That same year, she and Nikolai Grube began to bring indigenous Maya students and scholars to her famous Maya Meetings in Texas, held annually in Austin since 1977. After Linda’s passing in 1998, Nikolai continued the practice. In 2004 Friends of the Maya Meetings was formed to support those efforts, and that group has now grown into MAM (Mayas for Ancient Mayan or Maya Antiguo para los Mayas). Today our mission is “Mayas teaching Mayas the glyphs and the calendar,” and this is happening on an international scale. Please visit our table to learn more and visit our web site at [www.discovermam.org](http://www.discovermam.org). We consider Linda Schele to be our founding mother.

*Beyond Decipherment: A Challenge to Maya Epigraphy After Linda Schele  
Dr. Nicholas A. Hopkins (Florida State University / Jaguar Tours)*

In the decades from the 1970s to the end of the millennium the work of Maya epigraphers was focused on decipherment, extracting Maya texts from the inscriptions on stone and other media. This entailed theories of Classic Maya orthography, lexicon, grammar, and syntax. While there remain many points of disagreement among specialists, there is a consensus that we can “read” the great majority of inscriptions in a reasonable semblance

of Classic (or Epigraphic) Maya, the language of their creators. The decipherment of Maya hieroglyphic writing, then, is largely accomplished. However, once the texts can be read, an entirely new challenge emerges: the study of the literary styles of the Classic writers, the genres of created texts, the rhetorical strategies employed, the “schools” and regional variants of the literary tradition. Significant steps have been taken in these directions, and some of the results will be discussed here. Among other discoveries is the fact that many of the aspects of Classic literature have been preserved in formal and sacred speech among the contemporary Maya.

*The Sun in the Water: A Proposal for the Reading of the  
ha’-k’in Maya Hieroglyphic Sign  
Dr. Rogelio Valencia Rivera (Universidad Veracruzana, Xalapa) and  
Dr. Alejandro Sheseña (Universidad de Ciencias y Artes de Chiapas)*

The present paper offers a possible reading for the ha’-k’in sign (no Thompson number assigned) that appears in very few examples in the Maya inscriptions. This sign is usually used to refer to locatives or places of origin for people from the Maya Lowlands. This sign has been the subject of studies involving names that designate groups of people. Recent discoveries pointed towards a possible reading for the sign, such as the tomb at Cahal Pech, but this reading does not fit the readings of the other uses for the sign. We use evidence from a vast group of examples which point towards a possible relationship of the sign with caves.

*A Glimpse into the Teaching of Linda Schele  
Dr. Mark Van Stone (Southwestern College)*

As a student of Linda Schele, I want to show in this presentation, through video fragments of her classes, the charisma and methodology that she had as a skilled educator to teach about the Maya Glyphs.

**PANEL 2C: Body and Bones in the Ancient Americas**  
**Chair: Martin Berger, Ph.D. Candidate**  
**(Museum of Ethnology at Leiden)**

*The Cosmos within the Body, Embodied Spiritual Energies and  
Body Modifications among the Classic Period Maya  
Dr. Erik Velásquez (UNAM) and Dr. Vera Tiesler (UCR / UADY)*

The Classic period Maya projected cosmic dominions in the human body and its anatomical constituents. In this scheme, the body of heavy matter (tissues) encapsulated the animic

entities, such as the o'hlis, b'aahis, wahyis, k'ahk'is, and ch'ab'is-ahk'ab'is, and the animic forces k'ihn, sak saak(?), and sak ik'aal, the last of which probably circulated in the blood (ch'ich'). Their somatic dimensions provided a powerful space of cosmic convergence and ritual performance centered around the face. The face was targeted by a wide range of Maya physical adjustments and permanent modifications, designed to protect, to gain strength, to impersonate, to epitomize the divine or simply to acquire native identity. In this vein, we'll explore the the spiritual roles of dental mutilations, head flattening and piercings. These give way to a number of ideas on their motives, forms of ritual enactment and public display.

*Royal Bones, Calendar Round Dates and Epigraphy: A Historical Perspective on the Controversy over the Age of the Bones of K'inich Janab' Pakal I*  
*Dr. Elaine Day Schele (UT Austin)*

The tomb of K'inich Janaab' Pakal I, an important Classic Maya king of Palenque was discovered by Alberto Ruz in 1952. Also discovered were Calendar Round (CR) dates on the edge of the tomb's lid. There were no Long Count (LC) dates to anchor them in history. According to physical anthropologists, the kingly skeleton was that of a 40 to 50 year old. In every subsequent report, Ruz anchored the first CR date, 8 Ahau 13 Pop to 603 CE. He called the deceased 8 Ahaw, knowing that in some Mesoamerican cultures, people were called by their day name, implying that Ruz thought that 603 CE was the birthday of the occupant of the tomb. However, 16 years, Ruz re-anchored the 8 Ahaw birth date to 665 CE. That same year, Schele and Mathews presented newly deciphered readings on the kings of Palenque at the First Palenque Roundtable, contending that the age of Pakal was 80. This is the story of the debate that developed between scholars that lasted for several decades.

*Tale of Two Cities: Revelations from Pakal and the Warrior Priest's Tombs*  
*Helen Burgos Ellis, Ph.D. Candidate (UCLA)*

The archaeological discoveries of Pakal's tomb (circa seventh century) in the Maya area at the site of Palenque, and the Lord of Sipán's tomb (circa fourth century) in the Moche area at the site of Sipán, reinvigorated scholarly interest at each of the sites. These tombs have significantly increased our understanding of burial practices of the upper echelons of Maya and Moche society. Most scholarly attention has focused on the sheer display of wealth. I will briefly introduce those, but extend the discussion and explore other issues. In this presentation, I will show how an art historical compare and contrast examination of the apparent function of burial practices, art, and architecture at each of these sites can provide additional information about these societies. In particular, the information relates to the political and religious aspect of the world of the dead and their relationship to the living in both civilizations.

*Mosaic-decorated Human Skulls – a Mesoamerica Artifact Style?*  
*Martin E. Berger, Ph.D. Candidate (Museum of Ethnology at Leiden)*

In 1932, Alfonso Caso and his team found a human skull decorated with turquoise mosaic tesserae, in their well-known excavation of Monte Albán's Tumba 7. To this day, this is the only artifact of this type to have been found in a documented excavation. Nevertheless, at least twenty turquoise mosaic-decorated human skulls are currently held in museums and private collections. Many of these have been considered forgeries, others are considered authentic. Within this group, there are clear iconographic and stylistic differences, an indication that these 'mosaic skulls' were not all made by the same original culture, or forger. In this presentation, I will present an overview of the corpus of mosaic skulls known to date and trace their object biographies. Through this study of provenance and iconography, I will try to answer the question "Are mosaic skulls a twentieth century invention, or are they a genuine Mesoamerican artifact type?"

**PANEL 2D: Power, Lineage and Fertility in Mesoamerica**  
**Chair: Claudia Camacho-Trejo (CSULA)**

*Conquering the Land of Clouds: Eight Deer Jaguar Claw the Usurper of Tilantongo*  
*Claudia Camacho-Trejo (California State University, Los Angeles)*

In the year seven house, Lord Eight Deer Jaguar Claw conquered thirty five towns that extended his exceptional warrior reputation through the surrounding towns of the Mixteca Alta and Nahua regions. This distinction allowed him to achieve legitimization by Toltec priests to become Tecuhtli, a ceremony that is depicted in band four folio 52 of Codex Zouche-Nuttall. This legitimacy permitted him to continue his conquering journey, and return to Tilantongo where he was received by 112 Lords of different regions of Mesoamerica. This presentation aims to do an attire iconographic analysis to determine where are these peoples native to, and proposing that Mixtec Codex Zouche-Nuttall is not only a Mixtec genealogy tale, but a pictorial description of Mixtec activities of trade and alliances through Mesoamerica.

*The Significance of Water within the Sacred Landscape of the P'urhépecha of Michoacán*  
*Cinthia Marlene Campos (California State University, Los Angeles)*

The P'urhépecha, a unique indigenous group, inhabited Western Mexico of what is modern day Michoacán. The P'urhépecha, after the Spanish conquest, were also known as Tarascans. Within this geographical region, various bodies of water including lakes, springs, and rivers played important roles within the society. Sixteenth century Spanish

chroniclers document Pre-Colombian use of water related sacred landmarks for rites of foundation, authority, warfare, and subsistence. Modern ethnographic research has documented continued use of bodies of water in Western Michoacán for religious rites. This paper will compare ethnohistorical records to contemporary use of these sacred features to assess the degree of continuity.

*The Plumed Serpent and the Political Factions of Teotihuacan*  
*Hector Cordova (California State University, Los Angeles)*

Virtually all ancient civilizations have used myths to rationalize world order and human actions. Myths affirm systems of stratification in societies, sovereignty, and actions against self-interest. While the exact form of political organization at Teotihuacan remains elusive, information gained from examining the archaeological record and symbolic evidence in monumental art suggests that cults rooted in myths supplied the ideological basis for the foundation of authority for priest-rulers as well. This paper focuses on the schism that many scholars affirm took place in this primate city with roots in the Early Classic (200-400 AD) and climaxing at its greatest affluence and power by 600 AD, but is not yet understood. I submit that factions aligned with the cult of the Temple of the Sun and those that embraced the Plumed Serpent waged a struggle for supremacy invoking divine righteousness. In analyzing the characteristics of the respective temples, the probable theological arguments utilized by these two powerful factions in their struggle for legitimacy, both on a cosmic and secular plane become apparent.

*Animal Sacrifices - A Ritualistic Way to Appreciate Life and Death in Ancient Maya Culture and Modern Afro-Brazilian Candomblé*  
*Marina Vilhena (California State University, Los Angeles)*

Despite geographic and cultural variations, certain aspects of human behavior have been repeated from ancient to modern civilizations. Although the practice of human sacrifice is focused on in Mesoamerican studies, animal sacrifices are equally dramatic. By comparing and contrasting rituals of ancient Mayan civilization with traditional ceremonies of the modern Afro-Brazilian Candomblé, we will explore and discuss the patterns of religious beliefs and human behaviors related to the practice of Animal Sacrifice within both cultures. It will also allow us to identify elements of this practice that still influence or serve as parameters for our social-anthropological view of our own world.

*Impact and Results of the Teaching of Linda Schele in the present Maya communities of Guatemala Antonio Cuxil (Ethnic Maya and Tourist Guide)*

Linda Schele started a program in Antigua Guatemala where she taught Maya epigraphy and created a group of Maya instructors with the purpose that they could teach the ancient Maya writing to the Maya of today. This allowed the possibility for contemporary Maya to write their languages with the characters created by their ancestors, the Classic Maya. This paper will discuss how this learning has helped to reinforce the Maya identity in Guatemala.

**PANEL 3A: Olmec Iconography and Symbology**  
**Chair: Dr. F. Kent Reilly III**

*The Influence of Linda Schele in Olmec Studies*  
*Dr. F. Kent Reilly III (Texas State University in San Marcos)*

This paper will discuss how the approach and methodology applied by Linda Schele in Maya Studies has influenced the iconographic analysis in Olmec Studies.

*An Olmec Vision of Infinity: An Iconology of the Las Limas Monument*  
*John Grant Stauffer, M.A. (Texas State University in San Marcos)*

As mysterious masters of the Olman microcosm, Olmec rulers oversaw the creation and projection of their cosmic visions through both massive and miniscule forms of media. Believed to be incarnate gods, these stewards of life and death exercised authority that transcended the natural world. Acting as a surrogate ruler, the Las Limas monument is charged with a supernatural aura, manifested in the cryptic symbols its incised visage exhibits. As such, this inanimate object bears all of the markings that signify its membership within an elite politico-religious caste. Therefore, this brief analysis constructs a three-tiered interpretation of the monument itself and the iconography it projects to a multi-generational audience. It attempts to both account for the symbolic language it bears and identify the intentions behind its construction. The purpose is to communicate how the Las Limas monument exists as the embodiment of an Olmec perspective of rulership that extends into infinity.

*The Mountain and the Mirror: Bivalent Ontology and Chalcatzingo Monument 1*  
*Jesse Nowak, M.A (Texas State University in San Marcos)*

Chalcatzingo Monument 1 in Morelos, Mexico is an artistic masterpiece that encapsulates



many Olmec and Mesoamerican religious themes. By conducting an iconographic structural analysis that focuses on the expression of a bivalent ontology, this work will explore Olmec ideological tenants of a philosophy of duality, the connection between religious beliefs and the natural world, and the relationship between classic Olmec themes and secular styles. This analysis will explore the question of regional continuity of central Mexico formative cultures with Olmec heartland cosmology and religion. I argue that Monument 1 shows a regional variant of a classic Olmec theme of “presentation”, which focuses on the interplay between the control of natural forces and agricultural proliferation.

*The Identification and Transmission of Olmec Directional Motifs*  
*Celsiana Gera, B.A. (University of California, Los Angeles)*

The Cascajal Block was recently reinterpreted by Reilly and Freidel as depicting images of a ritual layout as opposed to an early Olmec writing system. This new understanding of context, in combination with archeological, historical, and ethnographic sources, will be used to show signs 19 through 22 at the center of the Cascajal Block as representing early forms of directional motifs based on narrative elements incorporated into later pan-Mesoamerican religious thought. These signs, though studied elsewhere in the Olmec record, have received relatively little attention for their position on the Cascajal Block. With regard to this recently interpreted context, they may be seen to lend new levels of insight into Preclassic representational strategies. This makes possible the identification of these signs in the work of later groups, particularly that of the Classic Maya, where elements of the Cascajal signary may be seen in directional contexts originally presented by Linda Schele.

*A Middle Formative Artifact Excavated at*  
*Arroyo Pesquero, Veracruz*  
*Dr. Carl J. Wendt (California State University, Fullerton)*

During a recent underwater archaeological survey of the Arroyo Pesquero, members of the Proyecto Arqueológico Arroyo Pesquero (PAAP) discovered an extraordinary and unusual archaeological specimen made of mottled brown and white jadeite. This artifact, most likely dating to the Middle Formative period, is significant for two reasons: first, because the object is the first find discovered at the site during a systematic archaeological investigation and thus has archaeological provenience, and second, because of the iconographic elements it possesses and its one-of-a-kind form. This article begins with a short background on the Arroyo Pesquero site, including its discovery, history of looting, and archaeological investigations. We then briefly describe the present investigation and the discovery of the artifact. This is followed by a description of the artifact – its form, iconography, and its possible functions. We conclude with some comments on the specimen within the framework of Middle Formative Olmec iconography.

**PANEL 3B: Serpents and Mythology in Mesoamerica**  
**Chair: Dr. Carlos Rincón-Mautner**  
**(College of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas)**

*Serpents as Vehicles* Dr. Maria Teresa Uriarte Castañeda  
*(Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México)*

Ancient Mesoamericans were able to get transported across different spheres through narcotic consumption or auto-sacrifice. Within these contexts, we know that in the Maya area snakes have taken the role of the “Vision Serpent”, with clear examples such as Yaxchilán Lintel 15. Nevertheless, serpents do not appear only during the vision of some characters, but also serve as vehicles transporting characters standing on the feathered serpent across different places and times. We can see an example of this at Cacaxtla, on the mural painting of Pórtico A. In this presentation we will look over examples of serpents as vehicles in Maya culture, particularly at Cacaxtla and La Huasteca.

*Altepetl, Xicalcoliuqui, and Tlalocan: A Cosmological*  
*Reassessment and Reimagining of the Water Mountains and*  
*“Feathered Serpents of Mesoamerica”*  
*Dr. Ruben G. Mendoza (California State University, Monterey Bay)*

The altepetl (-tl, water, and tep-tl, hill) constitutes the central toponym or topographical reference point designating the cities, Nahua communities, kingdoms, and or city-states of Postclassic Mesoamerica. As such, the altepetl or “water mountain” was central to defining those cosmological associations attributed to the sacred geography, and thereby, teocalli or god houses, of the central highland Nahua, and Mexicanized or lowland Maya. With the altepetl as the focal point of this analysis, this presentation will reimagine, and thereby reevaluate, the correlated and symmetric cosmological associations obtaining between the altepetl or “water mountain,” xicalcolouqui or “stepped fret,” and the netherworld or shamanic realm identified with tlalocan, or the “Place of Tlaloc.” As such, the iconographic reappraisal of monuments long thought identified with either tlaloc or quetzalcoatl at Teotihuacan, Chichen, and Tenochtitlan here constitute those case studies central to this reassessment of the symbolism of the altepetl, and thereby, the “water mountains” of Mesoamerica.

*On the Trail of the Shaman and the Serpent – Recent Discoveries on the Sacred Geography of the Northern Mixteca and Tehuacan Valley*  
Dr. Carlos Rincón Mautner (College of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas)

In pre-Hispanic times, serpent imagery symbolized both earth and water, elements associated with fertility and sustenance. Such symbols were recorded on boulders, rockshelters and caves, and projected onto landforms, constituting nodes of power in the landscape to which ritual specialists, including rulers, would retreat to perform propitiatory rituals. Evidence for these rituals includes pictograms, petroglyphs and cached artifacts. Recent discoveries at Mixteca and Tehuacan Valley sites will be described and interpreted within the context of local subsistence, timing of appearance, changing social complexity. Such artifacts and associated imagery would in time, be incorporated into a broader canon of beliefs and symbols that reflect the Mesoamerican worldview.

*In the Realm of the Interlocked Serpents’ – Mesoamerican Centers as Metaphorical and Real Places of Memory in the Codices*  
Dr. Viola Koenig (Ethnologisches Museum, Berlin)

Mesoamerican codices, lienzo and maps are full of place signs. In the last decades, many of these could be identified with real geographical places. However, tentative identification of some of the most prominent place signs such as “Place of the Interlocked Serpents” shown in the Coixtlahuaca group, or “Place with Frame, Jaguar and Eagle” in the Codex Egerton e.g. could not yet be confirmed and remain tentative suggestions. On the other hand, important centers such as Cholula seem to be exclusively represented in the early colonial documents. The number of existing preconquest codices to examine is limited; however, places signs representing important centers might have been overseen in the past.

**PANEL 3C: Mesoamerican Astronomy and Day Signs**  
Chair: Dr. Gerardo Aldana (UCSB)

*Deciphering Discovery: Accessing Mayan Astronomical Innovation through the Hieroglyphic Record*  
Dr. Gerardo Aldana (UCSB)

The Dresden Codex is one of three surviving hieroglyphic manuscripts written by Mayan scribes before contact with Europe. Its partial decipherment early in the development of Maya Studies led to its importance for the interpretation of ancient Mayan culture and in particular the role of astronomy and calendrics within it. The reconstructed accuracy of

the “Dresden Codex Venus Table” as ephemeris was also found to be useful in correlating the Mayan and Gregorian calendars. This paper argues that the latter effort pulled the interpretation of the Venus Table away from the internal logic and hieroglyphic text of the manuscript. When we return to the Table on its own terms, we find that the logic underlying the mathematical content of the “Preface” is held together by the Mayan discovery of a numerical Correction Factor. In conjunction with the Venus Table’s consistency with an independent hieroglyphic record of Venus at Copan, the new interpretation suggests that this discovery occurred in the “Observatory” of Terminal Classic Chichén Itza.

*Meteor Showers in the Maya Script: Evidence for Specific Showers at Palenque and Copan*  
James H. Kinsman, B.S. (Independent Scholar)

Observations of annual meteor showers have been recorded in the historical record since 687 BC, although until now no date-specific observations exist in the Americas. Recently the author provided evidence<sup>1</sup> that the Maya recorded at least two showers in the Dresden and Madrid codices. Having now investigated over 800 extant dates in the hieroglyphic inscriptions, the author believes viable dates for a few specific meteor showers are found on prominent carvings from Copan and Palenque. Some meteor shower outbursts may have been connected to mirror events and the Triad Deity GI. The author presents physical evidence for these meteor outbursts, including some of the implications for these showers in light of information previously offered by Linda Schele and Peter Mathews, especially Copan Stela D (1998:165-169)<sup>2</sup>.

*Calendrical Fate in Mesoamerica*  
Robert Gloria, M.A. (Environmental Charter Middle School)

In Mesoamerica during Pre-Columbian times the calendar was interpreted by the soothsayers to determine the fate of newborns. This interpretation was based on a complex relationship between the day numbers, day signs, and patrons and this relationship was manipulated to ensure the best possible outcome for the newborns. The way in which these relationships were interpreted provides additional evidence in favor of the argument developed by various scholars that Mesoamericans maintained a pantheistic view of the world. The influence of the calendar on people as discussed in the Telleriano-Remensis, the Florentine Codex: Book 4, and the ancient calendar by Diego Duran reveals to us the interconnected way in which Mesoamericans perceived the world. Analysis of the above sources demonstrates that a person intimately shared the qualities of the day numbers, day signs, and the associated patrons. One example of this intimate connection is that it was said of drunkards born on 2-Rabbit, that his rabbit manifested itself on him.

*The Power of Venus: Iconography of Visible Planets in Maya Ideology*  
Lauren Copeland (California State University, Los Angeles)

The significance of astronomical features and their influence on Maya rulership and settlement have been examined by archeologists and anthropologists in order to show how celestial bodies influence the command of a region. However, it is crucial to understand both the respect and fear that the Maya had for planets, stars, and other celestial objects. The particular importance of Venus in Maya supremacy is apparent with special observation of the culture's admiration and utilization of the planet in art and writing. Specifically, the various glyphs of Venus in the Maya codices linked with the observations of A.F. Aveni, Victoria Bricker, David Freidel, and Linda Schele show that the alignment and luminosity of the planet and the belief in its powerful influence shaped Maya actions. Although Venus' power was feared, the reverence for the planet is shown through its affiliations with rulers, conflict, and communal organization. Through examining the various glyphs referencing and depicting Venus, it is apparent that the use of prominent celestial bodies in rulership, warfare, and settlement is prevalent throughout Maya culture.

**PANEL 3D: Iconography and Identity in Mesoamerica**  
Chair: Dr. Carey C. Rote

*Pan-Mesoamerican Iconography and Symbolism in the Late  
Formative Teuchitlan Tradition of Western Mexico*  
Dr. Joshua D. Englehardt (Colegio de Michoacán) and  
Dr. Verenice Y. Heredia Espinoza (Colegio de Michoacán)

The ceramics of the western Mexican Teuchitlán tradition, although well-defined archaeologically, remain relatively understudied. This paper addresses that lacuna through an examination of Teuchitlán ceramic iconography. The presence of pan-Mesoamerican symbols on many examples yields insight onto processes of intercultural contact, suggesting that interregional interaction involving western Mesoamerica was more complex—and occurred in earlier temporal contexts—than many previous treatments consider. Shared motifs were, however, incorporated into localized representational canons with regionally unique symbolism, suggesting that Teuchitlán artisans were both continuing an areal tradition and exercising artistic agency. Thus, the evidence may simultaneously indicate a cultural cosmovision shared through incorporation into broader pan-Mesoamerican symbolic complexes and a material reification of regionally specific cultural configurations. In the absence of secure archaeological contexts for many Teuchitlán ceramics, this comparative iconographic approach offers an alternative path to accessing the meanings encoded.

*Behind the Veil: The Probable Groups who  
Composed the Mixtón Confederation*

Ricardo Garcia, Ph.D. Candidate (University of California, Los Angeles)

During the Mixtón War (1540-1542), a confederation of Indigenous groups almost expelled Spanish settlers from Nueva Galicia and numerous scholars have examined this event. They have written about how this confederation killed Pedro de Alvarado, how the Cazcanes were the most prominent hostile group, and how the Indigenous leaders Acaitli and Tenamaztle fought on opposite sides. Nonetheless, the composition of this confederacy remains shrouded in a secrecy that this study examines by relying on extant Spanish and Nahua sources. The initial conclusion is that Tenamaztle and other Indigenous leaders managed to integrate the Cazcanes, Tecuexes, and Coras into a confederation to oppose the Spaniards, but they failed to overcome rivalries with the Cocas who aided the Spaniards and the Huicholes who remained neutral.

*The Utilization of O-Signs and Q-Signs in the Danzantes  
Sculptures at the Pre-Columbian Zapotec Site of  
Monte Alban, Oaxaca, Mexico*  
Dr. Carey C. Rote (Texas A&M)

The Danzantes sculptures at Monte Alban have undergone a number of interpretations since they were first discovered in the late 19th century. They are known as "Danzantes" due to the early attribution of their contorted poses to dance movements frozen in stone (Leopoldo Batres: 1902). Subsequently these denuded and stylized "dancers" were interpreted as representations of medical anomalies and diseases (Mario Pérez-Ramírez: 1963). Another researcher has categorized these sculptures as images of elite Zapotecs performing bloodletting from their genitalia (Javier Urcid: 1992-1993). Other scholars, including Dr. Linda Schele, have interpreted the figures as images of warriors who have been taken in battle. The supposition is that they are shown here, bound, nude and mutilated, in preparation for sacrifice (Michael Coe: 1962 and Heather Orr: 1997). This paper will examine a medically based approach that confirms the Coe/Orr/Schele analysis based on a discussion of the utilization of O-signs and Q-signs as indicators of impending death for the tortured and mutilated prisoners in stone. Arcane death signs as signatories supporting recent analysis by other scholars will be presented within a variable systematic convergence system.

*The Quadripartite Emblem: Ritual, Power, and Royal Maya Women*  
*Dr. Karon Winzenz (University of Wisconsin- Green Bay)*

A study of the Maya Quadripartite Emblem (Badge) reveals a shift in the gender associations of this quintessential cosmological symbol. In the Early Classic period it is depicted as the headdress of male deities and kings. In the Late Classic, as royal women rose to unprecedented power, the Emblem is most often portrayed with Maya queens and goddesses, worn as a headdress or carried in rituals. An analysis of the Emblem's four motifs reveals that this shift in gender association was compatible with the layered symbolism of this significant icon. Each component was metonymically linked (in part) to biologically female menses and birthing, and to female gendered roles of child care, ancestor veneration, and weaving that developed well before the rise of hereditary Maya kingship.

**PANEL 4: The Figurines of Mesoamerica**  
**Chair: Dr. Mary Miller (Yale)**

Among Linda Schele's enduring interests in Maya and larger Mesoamerican were figurines, especially those from Jaina and Palenque. In this session, students and colleagues of Linda's will look at the figurines of Mesoamerica, with particular attention to new discoveries over the past twenty years. What has long been thought to be characteristic of Jaina Island will be looked at within the larger context of Central Mexico, the Gulf Coast, and Maya archaeology broadly. In this session, Mary Miller will return to Linda's project, Hidden Faces of the Maya, to address the frameworks in which figurines occur across Mesoamerica.

*Mesoamerican Figurines in Historical Perspective*  
*Dr. Khristaan Villela (Santa Fe University of Art and Design)*

In 1838, a year before John Lloyd Stephens and Frederick Catherwood left New York on their first expedition to Mexico and Central America, J.F. Waldeck published the earliest known illustrations and discussion of the Maya figurines from the necropolis of Jaina, Campeche. In spite of their diminutive scale, the figurines fashioned by the Maya and other ancient Mesoamerican peoples have played important roles in the history of the studies of American antiquity. This paper will outline that history, focusing on the role of Mesoamerican figurines in the development of our understanding of Precolumbian chronology, as well their significant place in Maya iconography studies.

*Classic Veracruz Figurines of the Lower Papaloapan Basin*  
*Dr. Cherra Wyllie (SUNY, Fashion Institute of Technology)*

South-central Veracruz was the center of unparalleled ceramic artistry applied to architecture, relief-carved ceramics, and medium to life-sized sculpture. Figurines are an abundant and integral part of this ceramic inventory, although discussion of them is often relegated to archaeological appendices. We see their larger counterparts, on the other hand, viewed as 'works of art' irrespective of contexts. This paper attempts to bridge this divide, examining Classic Veracruz figurines with respect to relative scale, aesthetic properties, archaeological contexts, and proposed function.

*Figurines at Teotihuacan*  
*Dr. Matthew H. Robb (de Young Museum)*

Ceramic figurines at Teotihuacan are often understood as a visible and material representation of Teotihuacan society. Their abundance - both as whole figures and body parts - in archaeological contexts and museum collections around the world poses daunting challenges for exploring these representations beyond broad generalizations. This paper will take two sets of figurines with precise contexts as a starting point for more detailed interpretations. One, recovered from salvage archaeology at the eastern periphery of the city, includes a number of polychromed female figures. Another, from the Tlajinga 33 compound, includes an enigmatic 'host' figure. Combined, these sets offer insight into how Teotihuacanos may have used such arrays to help preserve social memory of specific events.

*Let's Play!*  
*Justin Kerr (Mayavase.com)*

The identification of the meaning of figures has been an ongoing task for art historians and iconographers for many years. This paper will speculate on a group of figurines that may represent individuals involved in what we moderns consider as "sport." Eliminated from this group are figures identified as ball players. That is, those persons wearing yokes at waist or chest or carrying hand stones and other paraphernalia that is involved in the ball game. There may be a certain amount of overlap in the distinction between "sport" and "combat." For example we may consider "boxing" a sport, but in Maya terms it is deadly combat. We will examine some objects that may not be considered figurines, but contain a similar message.

*Questioning "Jaina": Figurines Across the Maya World*  
*Megan E. O'Neil (Los Angeles County Museum of Art)*

This paper questions the ubiquitous use of the label "Jaina" in museums and art historical literature to refer to Maya figurines without archaeological context. Although figurines were scientifically excavated from Jaina Island, and although there is evidence of looting

on Jaina Island, it undoubtedly was not the only source of Maya figurines that entered the art market in the twentieth century. Nonetheless, Jaina became the primary label for categorizing Maya figurines, but this designation created a category that in reality does not exist. Indeed, several facets of research suggest that Maya figurines designated as Jaina came from a variety of places not only in Mexico but also in Guatemala and other countries. In this paper, I explore the history of the use of the label Jaina, critique its use, and encourage studies to re-evaluate these attributions.

## **PANEL 5A: Maya Relations with the Sacred Earth**

**Chair: Dr. James Brady (CSULA)**

*The Translation of a Maya Cosmogram onto an  
Uncooperative Terrestrial Landscape*

*Dr. James E. Brady (California State University, Los Angeles)*

Smith and Schreiber, in their review of New World archaeology, state, “For the Classic Maya, studies of sacred landscapes are dominated by research on caves.” While this may be true for much of the southern Maya lowlands, little work has been attempted in northern Belize because the area’s soft dolomitic limestone does not support the formation of large caves that might have attracted archaeological attention. As a result, archaeologists have given little thought to the possibility that small subterranean chambers might have played an important role in the ancient sacred landscape. The first detailed cave study in northern Belize, Spider Cave at the site of Maax Na, confirmed that a shrine in the central plaza was built in relation to the cave with the discovery of a blocked passage that surfaced near the doorway to the shrine. A second field investigation by the Rio Bravo Archaeological Project has documented another cave located in the midst of public architecture. Finally, a Cal State L.A. field survey in 2014 documented a type of terrestrial feature within the Programme for Belize project boundaries that had not been previously investigated. These discoveries have verified extensive use of the landscape by the ancient Maya.

*The Cave at Las Cuevas: A Ritual Journey*  
*Dr. Holley Moyes (University of California, Merced)*

Archaeologists have paid little attention to architecture in ancient Maya cave sites, though many, if not most caves exhibit some degree of modification. Nowhere is this better exemplified than at the site of Las Cuevas. On the surface, Las Cuevas appears to be a typical Late Classic, medium-sized, center. But, this site has something that most others do not—a large cave system that runs beneath the main plaza. The mouth of the cave sits within a sinkhole directly below the eastern pyramid of Plaza A. The

massive cave entrance exhibits formal architectural modifications including platforms with plastered surfaces, stairs, and terraces. These surround a cenote with a natural river flowing at its base. The tunnel system begins at the rear of the chamber, twists and turns, and eventually circles back to the dimly lit entrance culminating at a high window that overlooks the cenote. Throughout the tunnel system blockages and walls restrict access to the deepest and most remote areas. I suggest that architectural modifications to the tunnel system were designed to create a performative space that guided participants through an underworld journey.

*A Reconsideration of Maya Ritual Landscapes: Chultuns as  
Man-Made Caves in the Southern Maya Lowlands*  
*Toni Gonzalez, M.A. (California State University, Los Angeles)*

Chultuns were investigated at three small groups representing the settlement zone, public space, and core near the main plaza of Ka’Kabish. Puleston asserted that chultuns must have a utilitarian function because they are overwhelmingly found in rural, domestic contexts. This processualist logic denies the possibility of domestic ritual that is so prevalent in Maya ethnography. At Ka’Kabish, Uaxactun, Nakum and other sites. All the chultuns excavated at Ka’Kabish contained multiple burials and objects that were likely left as mortuary offerings. The mortuary function of chultuns was noted by early investigators (e.g., Tozzer, Gann, and Ricketson) but was described as an “occasional” or “secondary” use. While the use of chultuns for burials is a secondary function that terminated further use of the feature, it occurs more frequently than previously appreciated. The presence of multiple individuals suggests the repeated performance of mortuary rituals, which constitutes a process of sacralization of that space. The regular use of these spaces as burial sites is consistent with our hypothesis that chultuns served a ritual function.

*Landscape Archaeology in the Maya Area:  
A New Lens on an Old Problem*  
*Melanie Saldaña, M.A. (California State University, Los Angeles)*

Non-cave Maya archaeologists appear to be at a loss on how to engage sacred landscapes because they are mired in an ecological materialist mindset. More speculative studies often attempt to read meaning into the built environment by drawing on plans from traditional archeological investigations that were conducted with little or no interest in sacred landscape. This presentation details the results of investigations carried out by the California State University, Los Angeles Archaeological Project at the site of La Milpa in northern Belize in the summer of 2014. The project focused on a sinkhole that had been previously interpreted as a trash pit, possibly serving a lithic workshop. Initial inspection noted a discontinuous line of rocks at the same level in the sidewalls of the

sinkhole. Excavations along the side of the sinkhole, in its floor and within a cave-like enclosure revealed a heavy concentration of ceramic, obsidian and other artifacts. The Maya clearly formalized the space surrounding this sinkhole leaving no doubt that this was a noteworthy sacred landmark. Such features abound in the karstic landscape providing surface archaeologists with great opportunities to empirically document the sacred landscape within their site boundaries. Clearly a rethinking of current practices is required.

**PANEL 5B: From Aztlan to Tenochtitlan:  
Nahua Origins and Cosmology  
Chair: Dr. Danny Zborover (UCSD)**

*The Tongues of Aztlan: Tracing the Nahua Migrations Through Dialectology  
Magnus Pharao Hansen, Ph.D. Candidate (Brown University).*

In this paper I use our knowledge of Nahuatl dialectology and the methods of historical linguistics to trace the population movements of Nahua speakers in the classic and postclassic periods. I argue that it is a mistake to equate the mythical concept of Aztlan with the proto-Uto-Aztecan homeland, because Aztlan should rather be considered only the homeland of the proto-Nahuatl people. The migration model supported by Nahuatl historical dialectology sees two main waves of proto-Nahuatl migrant populations leaving an area north of the Valley of Mexico. One wave traced the gulf coast and the other the pacific coast, and both finally converged in the central valleys, creating by their fusion the dialect that we today call "classical Nahuatl". Finally I look at the archeological correlates of the posited migration routes.

*The Coaxalpan of the Main Temple of Tenochtitlan: The Set of Reliefs from  
the Plaza during Motecuhzoma Ilhuicamina times  
Ángel González López, Ph.D. Candidate (University of California, Riverside)  
and Dr. Leonardo Lopez Lujan (INAH-Mexico)*

In the middle of the 15th century, a magnificent pavement extended from the foot of the Great Temple of Tenochtitlan, directly in front of the main façade. Primarily related to myths and rites associated with Tlaltecuhli, Tlaloc, and Huitzilopochtli, these stone reliefs will be examined in this work. The analysis of this group of sculptures recently excavated by the Great Temple Project (INAH) will provide a new understanding regarding the functions and meanings of this ceremonial space identified as the coaxalpan.

*Did the Aztecs conquer the Chontalpa? Evaluating  
the Historical, Archaeological, and Linguistic Evidence  
Dr. Danny Zborover (University of California, San Diego)*

As demonstrated well by Linda Schele and others, Mesoamerican political and territorial statements often invoke symbolic figures from the past to unite a factionalized public in the present. In the case of the Chontalpa in southeastern Oaxaca, pictorial and alphabetic documents from the Colonial period highlight the Aztecs' involvement in local affairs just prior to the Spanish conquest. Contemporary documents from core of the Aztec empire, however, neglect to reference the region in their conquest narratives and lists of tributary/strategic provinces. This talk will consider the plausibility of such a hegemonic intervention in the context of local geopolitics, and will further evaluate the historical claims in light of archaeological and linguistic patterns emerging from recent studies in the region.

*Mayahuel and Maguey as Teotl: Establishing a Visual Grammar for  
Reading Directional Tree Panels in the Codex Borgia  
Felicia Rhapsody Lopez, Ph.D. Candidate  
(University of California, Santa Barbara)*

Mesoamerican scribes created a wide variety of texts (from historical to topographical to ritual) containing maguey iconography, which draw upon the cultural significance and scientific understanding of the plant and on the teotl Mayahuel. Using these texts, post-contact Nahuatl sources and Nahuatl linguistics, I identify patterns in meaning and association to present new methods of reading the Codex Borgia directional tree panels, thereby providing tools for further research and decipherment of pictorial texts. Specifically, I identify visual grammatical structures on the Codex Borgia directional tree panels, which allows for the identification of the primary tree on panel 51 as Mayahuel/maguey, rather than corn. In the process of identifying this visual grammar, I draw upon various stories, myths, and histories related to Mayahuel/maguey in order to understand her role as teotl and the nature of "deity" within Mesoamerica more generally.

**PANEL 5C: Reciprocal Relations: Humans and  
'Landscape' in Mesoamerica  
Chair: Dr. Carolyn Tate (Texas Tech University)**

*Symbolic Landscape as a Container of Knowledge  
Dr. Carolyn Tate (Texas Tech University)*

Middle Formative Mesoamericans built stepped and conical mounds and low-lying U-shaped platforms of clay at La Venta. Were these specific shapes created as symbols

of natural features within the biosphere? Were these large three-dimensional forms that served as settings for arrays of similar sculptures the precursors to semasiographic pictography among later civilizations such as the Zapotec, Teotihuacanos, Mixtec and Aztec? This paper draws upon studies in neurobiology and cognitive psychology that investigate human perception of three-dimensional scenes and how the perceptions become long-term visual memory. It argues 1) that the strategy of creating shaped mounds as settings for large, simple sculptural forms was intended to generate shared knowledge and long-term memory and 2) that the basic 3-D forms employed at La Venta between 600 – 400 BC appear in the earliest 2-D semasiographic writing.

*Sacred Geography in the Formative Period:  
The Water-Mountain at the site of El Manatí  
Jordann Davis, M.A. (Texas Tech University)*

Archeologists and art historians have increasingly recognized the importance of spatial relationships of objects, monuments, and landforms in the construction and expression of meaning in ancient Mesoamerica. The Gulf Coast site of El Manatí (1700-1000 B.C.) is one of the earliest examples in Mesoamerica of a stylized deposit intentionally placed in relation to a spring or water source and a mound or hill. Drawing upon studies of sacred geography and three-dimensional narratives in ancient Mesoamerica, this paper will explore why Formative Period peoples chose the water-mountain configuration at El Manatí as a site for ritual practice and spectacular deposits. It argues that Mesoamerican concepts of sacred geography, spatial planning, and layered meanings initiated in the Formative Period emerged as a recognition of and reverence for biological interconnectedness and the necessity of reciprocal relationships between humans and the natural environ for the continuation of human life.

*Poetics in Architecture: The Aesthetics of Space at Palenque  
Jamie Lynn, M.A. (Texas Tech University)*

Historians continue to explore the intricate relationship between visual representations and texts in the Maya world. Maya artists used both texts and images as a means of creating a larger visual program with multiple layers of meaning in form and composition. This paper expands our understanding of Maya compositional strategies by analyzing the next appropriate level of visual compositional planning, architecture. It examines the carefully constructed spatial relationships in architectural complexes at Palenque, arguing that the architectural complexes employ specific compositional strategies similar to the poetic devices found in Maya hieroglyphic inscriptions. The analysis considers a range of architectural attributes, including: structural form, alignment, spatial relationships to adjacent structures, and function (conceptually and practically). I will demonstrate that architectural complexes erected during the Late Classic phase at Palenque carefully

combined poetic compositional strategies in order to communicate cultural ideologies.

*Ritual Landscape at Chichén Itzá:  
Recontextualizing the Cenote Sagrado  
Francesca Vega, M.A. (Texas Tech University)*

A recent National Geographic article, “Secrets of the Maya Otherworld” (Nicklen 2013), reports on some newly-discovered cenotes and affirms that Chichén Itzá’s cosmologically-significant features and alignments extended further than previously recognized. This paper considers the impact of these recent discoveries on our understanding of the cosmological role of the cenotes in of the site’s design. It contends that the ritual use of the four cenotes and the Castillo, or Pyramid of Kukulcan, was based on a quadripartite cosmological design and an astronomical orientation that appeared in the Terminal Classic period. During this era of social change, when newcomers arrived at Chichén, a new worldview must have taken shape. This paper includes some of my research onreconstructing the Terminal Classic worldview at Chichén, for which I have analyzed and compared reconstructions of Classic Maya worldview with Late Postclassic ethnohistoric accounts, and modern anthropologicalstudies. This proposed Terminal classic worldview serves as the context in which we can view the four cenotes of Chichén.

**Exhibit: Eternal Realms of Revelry:  
The MAW Collection of Pre-Columbian Art**

We are also adding a very special event in conjunction with the 2015 symposium: all attendees and participants are invited to the inaugural viewing of a special Mesoamerican Art exhibit in the Fine Arts Gallery at California State University, Los Angeles after the closing of Friday’s Symposium presentations. The title of the exhibit is: *Eternal Realms of Revelry: The MAW Collection of Pre-Columbian Art*. This collection is intended to be donated to California State University, Los Angeles with the intention to be used for educational purposes and to be an integral part of a center for the advancement of Mesoamerican Studies in our campus.

**Participants**

- Dr. John M.D. Pohl – Curator of the Exhibit
- Prof. Karin Lanzoni – Director of the Fine Arts Gallery of CSULA
- The MAW Collection of Pre-Columbian Art
- Laura Tu, Peter Hoffman and Ana Ramirez – All Graphic Design for the Exhibit
- Loreinne Helena - Student Assistant
- Anabel Garcia - Romo - Student Assistant

This 2015 Mesoamerican Symposium was organized by the  
**Art History Society of CSULA**

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- Laura Tu, Peter Hoffman and Ana Ramirez – Designers of the Brochure Back Cover Art.
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Our heartfelt gratitude is extended to Jose C. Ambrocio-Aguilar, Loreinne Helena, Ulysses Ozaeta and all the volunteers who worked diligently to make this event a great success.