

IMS Explorer

For the first time, our Explorer of the Month was a Spaniard and not a person interested in the Maya. In a strange twist of fate, this man headed downstream to discover the world's largest river, but who is he?

A monthly newsletter published by the **Institute of Maya Studies**



May 16, 2012 • Maya Long Count: 12.19.19.7.1 • 6 'Imix 4 Sip • G6

An affiliate of the Miami Science Museum

Editor's Corner:

Mundo Maya has a new website at:
www.mundomaya.travel/en

A new, very colorful and informative website has been initiated by the Mundo Maya group. They do a great job of describing and showing beautiful images of numerous ancient sites in the five countries that make up Mundo Maya: Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico (focusing on the states of Yucatán, Campeche, Chiapas, Tabasco and Quintana Roo).

There are also educational "tabs" that you can explore that are entitled "Countdown", "New Era", "Cosmovision", "Maya Archaeology", "Events", "Countries" and of course a really nice map of the whole Mundo Maya area. Tabs for promoting 2012 tourism to the region are found at "More Info", "Where to Eat" and "Where to Sleep".

The Editor is happy to note that their coverage of the 2012 phenomena is pragmatic, straight-forward and based on the most current scholarly and



The Izapa page on the Mundo Maya website features one of the best aerial photos of the site that the editor has seen. The "TMC" designates land that was recently acquired by The Maya Conservancy.



Jim Reed, Editor

archaeological points of view. A very interesting capability of the website is that you can download whatever page you are viewing in a PDF format. You can also "capture" the page in other formats and easily download all of the images. To facilitate the promotion of tourism, there are

links on each page to share the info and photos on Twitter, Facebook, and by way of Google's "Real Life Sharing" site.

Another timely aspect of the Mundo Maya website is that in every page header there is a "by-the-second" digital clock that counts down to December 21, 2012. Also in the page headers, the website features different videos with their own special music.

Top 10 Archaeological Sites

The editor first became aware of the website by way of his automatic notices from Google of any recently posted articles that relate to anything Maya. Released initially was their link to the Top 10 Archaeological Sites worth a visit in 2012. Featured this month are Calakmul, Chichén Itzá, Cobá, Comalcalco, Edzná, Tulúm, Pomoná, Palenque, Uxmal, and most synchronistically, Izapa.

The lead-in paragraph on the Izapa link says: "In the region of Soconusco, Chiapas, among warm natural landscapes that start in the Lowlands, multiply in the Sierra Madre, and culminate in the Coastal Plain, there is a jewel hidden amongst the coffee plantations and the cacao fields - A gem that is not nearly as valued as it should be: the archaeological site of **Izapa**".

The timing as to the choice of Izapa is important to the IMS because this month we feature a program and article by V. Garth Norman who has been investigating the little-known site for more than 35 years. See pages 6 and 7 for further details.

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IMS Presentation:

May 16, 8 pm



"Izapa: The Stela 5 Creation Story and World Ages"

with **V. Garth Norman**



Three portraits of Maya actors used in new and beautiful recreations of good and bad times at the site of Kiuc. Far right) National Geographic films (from left) George Bey, professor of anthropology and sociology at Millsaps College; Bill Ringle, professor of anthropology at Davidson College; and Tomás Gallereta, Millsaps Scholar of Maya Studies, at the site of Uxmal.

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Quest for the Lost Maya

This new PBS documentary, produced by National Geographic, first aired nationally on March 28, 2012. It was filmed in the summer of 2011 at Kaxil Kiuc Biocultural Reserve in Yucatán.

The Maya's soaring pyramids, monumental cities, and mythical mastery of astronomy and mathematics have captured our imaginations and spurred generations of explorers into the jungles of Central America and Mexico on a quest to understand them. After centuries of scientific exploration, we thought we had a pretty good handle on who they were. But in the past decade, researchers working in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula have made a series of startling discoveries that reveal a gaping hole in our understanding of the Maya. What we thought we knew about the Maya could suddenly turn out to be just half the story.

Although it has been usually assumed that the northern Maya kingdoms of the Yucatán were inferior in wealth and culture when compared to the southern kingdoms based in what is present-day Guatemala, new research is suggesting just the opposite. This documentary surveys the northern Maya experience and apogee, from the Pre-Classic era (c. 800 BCE) to the collapse of the Classical era (c. 900 CE).

The story line of the documentary follows three archaeologists – George Bey, Bill Ringle, and Tomás Gallareta Negrón – exploring the remains of a forgotten Maya kingdom in the Puuc region of Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula. Buried beneath an ancient pyramid deep in the Yucatán jungle, the team discovers an even more ancient royal palace complex. Then, they unearth a massive stone acropolis that rises nearly 30 feet above the jungle floor and is crowned with a massive ceremonial

platform. The editor was really impressed by the computer-graphic renderings of this amazing raised platform. It is the size of four football fields and could have held thousands of people. Later, nearly 300 feet underground, they discover cryptic cave paintings that may be among the oldest Maya iconography ever discovered in Mexico, dated to around 100 BCE.



Interesting cave drawing of a jaguar. All images courtesy of National Geographic Television.

All of these new finds in the Yucatán suggest the North was a far bigger, far more important and far older society than originally believed. Along the way, the team discovers another odd clue: a series of massive hilltop manors. Strange thing is, these extravagant houses were not royal residences, but appear to have been owned by non-royal farmers. Could this be evidence of the Americas' first-ever middle class, emerging a full millennium before 1776?

If you missed the TV airings of the documentary, you can watch the 50-minute film as streamlined video at: www.pbs.org/programs/quest-lost-maya/

Sources: Condensed from www.millsaps.edu; www.pbs.org and www.clarionledger.com



IMS Explorer of the Month: Francisco de Orellana

Considered a member of Pizarro's family, Orellana led his men down the eastern Andes in search of gold and cinnamon. Fate would play a heavy role as they battled starvation and hostile tribes, while at the same time, discovered the Amazon River. Robert Dawson portrays Orellana on May 9.

See page 7.

It's 2012...Time for Adventure! Visit Guatemala and Izapa!

July 30–August 6 • 8 Days–7 Nights

We'll visit the Highlands and Pacific Coast of Guatemala, then Izapa (located just across the border in Mexico).

See La Antigua, Tak'alik Ab'aj, Iximché, Mixco Viejo, Zaculeu, Mamut, Santiago Atitlán, La Democracia, El Baúl, Bilbao, Las Ilusiones and Izapa.



Tak'alik Ab'aj

Very economically priced. Includes meals and most everything except airfare.



Izapa

Contact Marta Barber at: imsmiami@yahoo.com or Beverley West at: 305-213-9631

This adventure is not officially sponsored by the IMS, but is organized by IMS members. Join with us now!

The Xalapa Museum

by IMS Member Janet Miess

Various IMS members were able to visit many beautiful museums on our recent trip to Mexico. On the afternoon of January 31, 2012, upon our arrival in the city of Xalapa, we drove directly to the Xalapa Museum where we were able to spend about an hour-and-a-half in the museum before it closed (Fig. 1). We returned to the museum the next day and spent a couple of hours to continue looking at everything.

The museum galleries cover Olmec, Central Veracruz, and Huastec cultures. The most memorable pieces in the museum for me were the life-size figures of the goddess Cihuateotl that were discovered at the site of El Zapotal (Fig. 2). The museum has about eleven of these figures on display, and a few of them are mostly complete. They represent women who have died in childbirth.

Cihuateotl is the wife of the god of death Miclantecuhtli. The figures were discovered together in a shrine to Miclantecuhtli in the 1960s after looters had disturbed the site and the authorities were able to trace some of the looted artifacts back to the site of El Zapotal.

The excavation group consisted of a team of archaeologists from the University of Veracruz (UV) in Xalapa headed by Manuel Torres. The researchers discovered an unfired clay image of Miclantecuhtli in the shrine that remains at the site, since it was too fragile to be moved (Fig. 3). Outside of the shrine, nineteen of these figures of the goddess Cihuateotl were found along with more than two hundred human skeletons, ceramics and musical instruments.



Fig. 1: Looking into the Xalapa Museum Galleries.



If you look closely at each of the Cihuateotl, they are dressed similarly in a skirt with a belt made of two snakes, but their faces and body types are different. Each goddess holds in her hand a censer with a sculpted human or bat head attached. All of the goddesses are portrayed with closed eyes to let us know they are dead, but each sculpture is shown with an open mouth, so they appear to be singing. I spent quite a bit of my time in the museum looking at these enchanting figures.

Many of the ceramics in this section of the museum were found in the excavation at El Zapotal including another of my favorite pieces, a ceramic jaguar (Fig. 4).

The artist has pulled the clay out all over the body of the jaguar with his fingers so the piece look as if it has ruffled fur. The expression on its face is just so lively you would expect the jaguar to continue his dance at any minute.

Some of my other favorites are the "smiling faces" sculptures. Displayed together in one section of the museum, there is a collection of small figurines and ceramic heads

One of the first artifacts that you see upon entering the Museum of Anthropology of Xalapa is giant Olmec head number eight from the site of San Lorenzo, Mexico (courtesy of George and Eve DeLange). The museum presents almost 30 centuries of art and history while it guards the most important collection of pre-Columbian works produced by the groups who have been living in the state of Veracruz. Among 18 galleries, 6 rooms and 4 patios, 2,500 artifacts can be seen.



Fig. 2 (left): Life size statue of Cihuateotl. Fig. 3 (right): The unfired clay Miclantecuhtli at El Zapotal, courtesy of: www.famsi.org/research/diehl/section02.html



Fig. 4 (left): Ceramic Jaguar from El Zapotal. Fig. 5 (above): Smiling faces from El Zapotal and surrounding areas. All images above taken or submitted by Janet Miess.

created during the Classic period (250–900 CE) (Fig. 5). They appear to all be smiling or laughing out loud, and when you look at those little faces, you cannot help smiling and laughing back at them!

The Xalapa Museum is a real gem and a great place to spend a day looking at all the wonderful treasures on display.

References

A Guided Tour Xalapa Museum of Anthropology, 2004 Editora de Gobierno del Estado de Veracruz de Ignacio de la Llave y Universidad Veracruzana
Death Gods, Smiling Faces and Colossal Heads: Archaeology of the Mexican Gulf Lowlands, by Richard Diehl, available at: www.famsi.org/research/diehl/section02.html



The name of El Adivino Pyramid (Temple of the Magician) comes from a legend that was able to transcend from Pre-Columbian times to the present day, through oral tradition. In the March Explorer, we introduced you to Friar Estanisleo Carrillo. Using a pseudonym, Carrillo released a book named Two Days to Noh Pat in which he was probably the first to recount this ancient legend. We also offer a comparable account authored by John Lloyd Stephens.

The Legend of the Dwarf and El Adivino Pyramid at Uxmal

Submitted by **Marta Barber**

It is said that in the 16th century, Friar Estanisleo Carrillo started from the town of Santa Elena in search of the ruins of Uxmal. Along the way, he met a farmer and together they continued their journey, Carrillo passing the time, totally entertained by this old *milpero* story.

Carrillo's tale of El Adivino:

"An old sorceress lived at Kabah, rarely leaving her chimney [*sic*] corner. Her grandson, a dwarf, by making a hole in her water-jar, kept her a long time at the well one day, and by removing the hearth-stone found the treasure she had so carefully guarded, a silver Innkid and zool, native instruments. The music produced by the dwarf was heard in all the cities, and the king of Uxmal trembled, for an old prophecy declared that when such music should be heard the monarch must give up his throne to the musician.

"A peculiar duel was agreed upon between the two, each to have four baskets of *cocoyoles*, or palm-nuts, broken on his head. The dwarf was victorious, and took the dead king's place, having the *Casa del Adivino* built for his palace, and the *Casa de la Vieja* for his grandmother.

"The old sorceress soon died, and the new king, freed from all restraint, plunged into all manner of wickedness, until his gods, or idols, abandoned him in anger. But after several attempts the dwarf made a new god of clay which came to life and was worshipped by the people, who by this worship of an evil spirit soon brought upon themselves destruction at the hands of the outraged deities, and Uxmal was abandoned."

Stephens' tale of El Adivino:

"There was an old woman who lived in a hut on the very spot now occupied by the structure on which this building is perched, and opposite the Casa del Gobernador, who went mourning that she had no children. In her distress she one day took an egg, covered it with a cloth, and laid it away carefully in one corner of the hut.

"Every day she went to look at it, until one morning she found the egg hatched, and a criatura, or creature, or baby,



The upper west facade of the Adivino Pyramid, Uxmal (ca. 1841). Drawing by Frederick Catherwood.

born. The old woman was delighted, and called it her son, provided it with a nurse, took good care of it, so that in one year it walked and talked like a man; and then it stopped growing. The old woman was more delighted than ever, and said he would be a great lord or king.

"One day she told him to go to the house of the *gobernador* and challenge him to a trial of strength. The dwarf tried to beg off, but the old woman insisted, and he went. The guard admitted him, and he flung his challenge at the *gobernador*. The latter smiled, and told him to lift a stone of three *arrobas*, or seventy-five pounds, at which the little fellow cried and returned to his mother, who sent him back to say that if the *gobernador* lifted it first, he would afterward.

"The *gobernador* lifted it, and the dwarf immediately did the same. The *gobernador* then tried him with other feats of strength, and the dwarf regularly did whatever was done by the *gobernador*. At length, indignant at being matched by a dwarf, the *gobernador* told him that, unless he made a house in one night higher than any in the place, he would kill him.

"The poor dwarf again returned crying to his mother, who bade him not to be disheartened, and the next morning he awoke and found himself in this lofty building. The *gobernador*, seeing it from the door of his palace, was astonished, and sent for the dwarf, and told him to collect two bundles of cogoiol, a wood of a very hard species, with one of which he, the *gobernador*, would beat the dwarf over the head, and afterward the dwarf should beat him with the other.

"The dwarf again returned crying to his mother; but the latter told him not to be afraid, and put on the crown of his head a *tortillita de trigo*, a small thin cake of wheat flour. The trial was



A view of the Nunnery Quadrangle and the Adivino Pyramid, Uxmal (ca. 1841). This drawing by Frederick Catherwood was probably made when the author/illustrator duo first got to the site and workers were busy cutting and clearing everything to prepare for their drawings and photos.



The majestic Temple of the Magician as it appears to visitors today.

made in the presence of all the great men of the city.

"The *gobernador* broke the whole of his bundle over the dwarf's head without hurting the little fellow in the least. He then tried to avoid the trial on his own head, but he had given his word in the presence of his officers, and was obliged to submit. The second blow of the dwarf broke his skull in pieces, and all the spectators hailed the victor as their new *gobernador*. The old woman then died; but at the Indian village of Mani, seventeen leagues distant, there is a deep well, from which opens a cave that leads underground an immense distance to Mérida.

"In this cave, on the bank of a stream, under the shade of a large tree, sits an old woman with a serpent by her side, who sells water in small quantities, not for money, but only for a criatura or baby to give the serpent to eat; and this old woman is the mother of the dwarf."

– John Lloyd Stephens, *Incidents of Travel in Central America*, Vol. II, pp. 423-425. Illustrations by Frederick Catherwood.

The Case Against Sham Shamans: Counterfeit Artifacts by Mark Cheney

As a collector of Mesamerican artifact replicas, I have a great interest in the simulation of such items and was excited to read the book *Faking Ancient Mesoamerica* (2010) by Dr. Karen Olsen Bruhns, archaeologist, and Dr. Nancy L. Kelker, art historian, who together also wrote *Faking the Ancient Andes* (2009). I was not disappointed and learned a great deal about artifact forgeries, as well as the variety of methods of authentication (or non-authentication!) made by museums, collectors and potential re-sellers in the Precolumbian artifact market.

In a telephone interview with the amiable Dr. Kelker, at Middle Tennessee State University, she impressed me with the fact that their main purpose was to make people aware of the problem. She indicated that at one museum where she was asked to give an appraisal on the authenticity of their collection, that 95% of the approximately 50 items in their Precolumbian collection were indeed "fakes". She also said that the 19th century racist conceptions of culture which Europeans had as they looked at the art of other societies had an influence on the present ideas that are reflected in forgeries.

These misconceptions have the effect of confounding our knowledge in fields such as art history, archaeology and anthropology.

Three poignant statements from the book further state their purposes: "We must recognize forgeries for what they are, lest they compromise research to the point that a very large percentage of Precolumbian art studies is not scholarship at all." (p.44) Further that, "... the problem of fakes in museum collections is much more complex, and at its core is the incestuous relationship among museum curators, art dealers and collectors." (p.46) And "We must have the courage to recognize forgeries for what they really are: a pollution of the historic and artistic records." (pg.128)

With chapter titles like "Between a Rock", "A Hard Fake", "Feat of Clay" and "Skullduggery", one can detect the wry sense of humor that the authors display in making reading about this scholarly subject more enjoyable. My favorite is in the chapter "Feat of Clay", when discussing Teotihuacan/Veracruz/Zapotec-style mix of large scale

figures: "A new refinement is that the ballplayer gets a little tray on his hip, as if he were a twisty Chacmool! Numbers of these have appeared on the market, and one wonders why the prices are so high, since they are obviously fakes and not very attractive. Plus, the cocktail figurine is not a category known in Precolumbian Mesoamerican art." (p.158)

The authors talk about the various kinds of media used in counterfeiting artifacts, and the fact that some "fakes" are pastiches from various areas and cultures, sometimes including parts of real artifacts, and thereby easily discovered as phonies. The "parts" were no doubt derived from the illegal looting of graves and other ancient sites.

The book also makes the point that it makes little difference whether an item is a forgery or an illegally acquired artifact with no provenience; both are fraudulently brought to market with or without false provenance. I quote the authors when they say that, "... unprovenanced (is) a euphemism for 'looted'." According to the authors, forgeries have probably been produced as far back as when Cortes' men wanted to bring home souvenirs from their adventures in the New World, but at least as early as the 18th century.

Perhaps the most controversial purported artifact debunked in the book is the "Olmec Wrestler", a piece in the collection of the Museo Nacional de Antropología in Mexico City (Fig. 1). It has been declared to be authentic by such well-known scholars as Mary Miller and Michael Coe, but the authors find that the "contrapposto pose" and the "keen anatomical detail", as well as many other features, belie its supposed authenticity. (pg.122-8) A recent article in the official INAH publication, *Arqueología Mexicana* (Cyphers and Cisnersos, 2007) claims authenticity for the Wrestler, but after the Mexican government paid 250,000 pesos for it in 1964, that is hardly surprising.

While reading the book, I also saw online some year-old news

Fig. 1: The Olmec Wrestler, courtesy of Karen O. Bruhns.

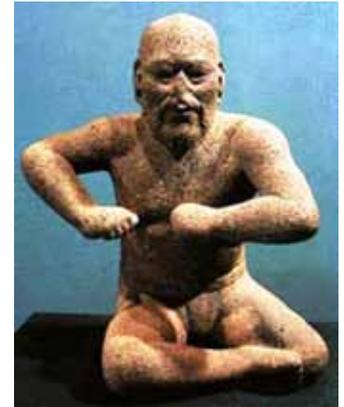


Fig. 2: A controversial fake "Mayan" artifact was recently billed as an "authentic" treasure at a Paris auction house.

reports about a five-foot-tall "Mayan" statue (Fig. 2) that had been sold at a Paris auction for the hefty sum of 2.9 million euros (\$4.2m). The Mexican foreign ministry informed the French authorities that Mexico's Institute of Anthropology declared that "The figure tries to recreate the Pre-Columbian features of the Maya region in southeastern Mexico, but the height, the posture and the flexed legs and the boot straps are not characteristic of the culture."

The French expert in Pre-Columbian art, Jacques Blazy, of Drouot Auctions responded that "Mexico's accusations are totally ridiculous. They are completely baseless. It is a well-known artifact that has been thoroughly analyzed" according to the AFP news agency. (www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-12830964)

The selling auction house, Paris based Binoche Et Giquello, is evidently claiming that the claim by the Mexican government is an attempt "to shake confidence in the auction market for pre-Hispanic artifacts." During our interview, Dr. Kelker expressed some wonderment that anyone would think this was an actual artifact since the figure wielded a tomahawk and had laced-up leggings, neither of which are typical in Pre-Columbian Maya art.

In the concluding chapter of the book, "Epilogue - A Word to the Wise", the authors encourage museums to write ethical collection policies, and to implement them, as well as promote scholarship by helping countries whose art is being looted and smuggled, "in an effort to eliminate the market for smuggled and forged antiquities ... by arranging a worldwide system for the long-term loan and conservation of antiquities." (p.223)

Getting to Know the pre-Maya site of Izapa with V. Garth Norman

Izapa has become a household name in the Maya world for exploring the origin of the Maya calendar with particular interest in understanding Izapa's calendar and the end of the Maya five World Ages on winter solstice, December 21, 2012. The Maya creation base date of August 13 (3114 BCE) is the sun zenith passage at Izapa. This fact drew geographer Vincent Malmström in 1973 to propose Izapa as the birth place of the Maya calendar known as the "Calendar Round" (Fig. 1).

Since that time, V. Garth Norman published his comprehensive *Izapa Sculpture Album* (1973), *Izapa Sculpture Text* (1976), and *Astronomical Orientations of Izapa Sculptures* (1980), along with the Izapa excavation study in 1982 (Lowe, 1982). With these reports, John Major Jenkins, an astute freelance Maya researcher, seized the opportunity to explore Izapa as the possible place where the Maya Calendar was born and the World Ages came to be.

New precession evidences at Izapa sustain Jenkins' thesis that the World Ages end date in 2012 could have been calculated and plotted anciently, but other cyclical dates measured the start of the Calendar Round creation date at autumn equinox 3120 BCE from which the Long Count was later created.

Izapa priest-astronomers had to pick a date that they could measure back in time to start this Maya Long Count calendar on a creation base date in a year when Izapa's August 13 zenith would permit calculating forward 5200-tun years (360-day years) so that

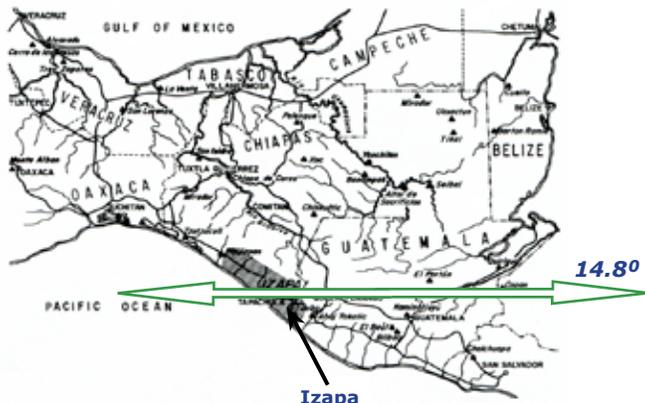


Fig. 1: The Zenith line crosses Izapa at 14.8° North Latitude measuring the 260-Day zenith sun passage at August 13 and April 30 (after Lowe et al, 1982).

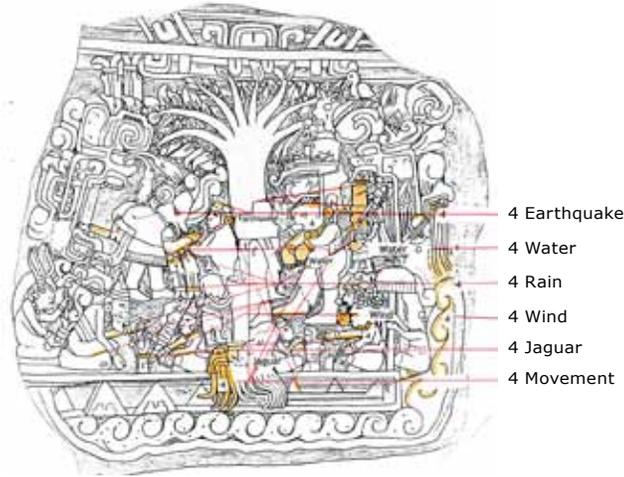


Fig. 2: The detailed imagery carved on Stela 5 in Group A at Izapa perhaps represents creator characters involved with rituals to initiate the creation of the current World Age. The vertical World Tree appears to have cut marks that designate the previous World Ages.

the World Ages in the Long Count destruction end would fall on a winter solstice.

The cosmovision that the later Maya inherited started with creation on August 13, 3114 BCE, and according to the Long Count, will "transition over" to the next Bak'tun on winter solstice of 2012. However, Izapa's early calendar is the Calendar Round with a fixed commemorative date of September 21, 176 BCE, as recorded on Stela 12.

The standard measure used to plan and create monuments at Izapa is the 49.5 cm cubit. It can be detected along with its doubling and halving divisions and proportional repetitions on monument carvings and architecture as well as in the layout of the entire temple center complex, confirmed in field studies from the 1980s to the present.

The Stela 5 Stone of Creation

Also known as the "Tree of Life" stone, the complex religious imagery of Izapa Stela 5 (Fig. 2) has led to different theories and speculations concerning its subject matter, including the possibility it suggests Pre-Columbian trans-oceanic contact. Documented by Smithsonian

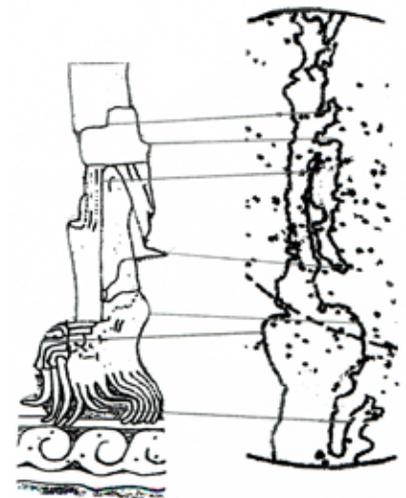


Fig. 3: The Stela 5 Tree, in the image of the Milky Way (N-S position), records the full precession within the ancient Izapa Calendar Round and World Ages.

archaeologist Matthew W. Stirling in 1941, Stela 5 is composed of volcanic andesite and weighs around 1-1/2 tons. Stela 5 presents the most complex imagery of all the narrative stelae at Izapa. Garth Norman, for example, has counted "at least 12" human figures, a dozen animals, over 25 botanical or inanimate objects, and 9 stylized deity masks. Like much of Izapan monumental sculpture, the subject matter of Stela 5 is considered mythological and religious in nature, executed with multiple overlapping scenes with zenith calendar connections.

Mainstream Maya researchers agree with Norman's identification of the central image as a Mesoamerican world tree, connecting the sky above and the water or underworld below. The seated figures may be Izapa's first ancestral family that compares to the Popol Vuh's first family after creation (Norman 1976). Gareth Lowe, Linda Schele, Mary Ellen Miller and others also generally agreed that the stela records a creation myth. Julia Guernsey Kappelman similarly sees the seated figures as Izapan elites conducting ritual activities in a "quasi-historical scene," which is framed by, and placed in the context of, the "symbolic landscape of creation".

Follow the journey of discovery with V. Garth Norman as he shares his latest book, *Izapa Sacred Space - Where Time Began* (pub. 2012) at his program for the Institute of Maya Studies on May 16 (see page 7).

Institute of Maya Studies Line-up of Presentations!

May 9, 2012: IMS Explorer Session:

"Amazon River Explorer Francisco de Orellana"

portrayed by **Robert Dawson**



Robert Dawson, dressed in period attire, portrays famous astronomer Tycho Brahe.

Robert Dawson is a researcher, actor, historian, stage fight choreographer, make-up artist, costumer, instructor and writer. He has been the lead science lecturer for the Miami Science Museum for 15 years. He has researched and created 50 historical presentations for educational institutions, museums, festivals, corporate events, etc.

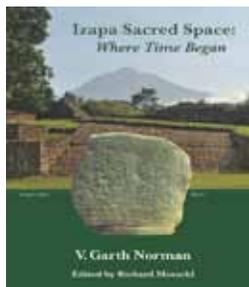


On May 9, Dawson will become Francisco de Orellana (1490-1546), discoverer of the Amazon River. Orellana was a relative of Francisco Pizarro's family. He undertook an expedition with a small group of men to go down an Andean river searching for food and supplies to take back to his comrades. Due to the current, Orellana's men were unable to return – they were forced to follow the river, which was a tributary of a much larger river. Unknowingly, Orellana and his men became the first Europeans to traverse the river, now known as the Amazon; previously, it had been given the name Orellana River.

May 16: IMS Presentation:

"Izapa: The Stela 5 Creation Story and World Ages"

with **V. Garth Norman**



Izapa Sacred Space – Where Time Began: Featuring Stela 5 from Group A superimposed over a view of Tacaná volcano from Group F. Editor Jim Reed is proud to have designed the cover of Norman's latest book.

Izapa is a large Formative site located in the far SE corner of the State of Chiapas, Mexico, immediately adjacent to the Guatemalan border. Izapa, which David Stuart calls "an enigma", was once a thriving cultural and commercial center, and the birthplace of early Mesoamerican calendar development. Norman has studied and worked at Izapa for 40 years. He has a lifetime of research to share – and a new book.



Garth Norman is recognized as the leading authority in iconographic research of the early Izapan culture. He worked with the New World Archaeological Foundation (NWF) at the site of Izapa for 11 years and has published books and papers on that

culture. Garth is President of the Ancient America Foundation and is Director of Archaeological Research Consultants. He began his professional archaeology career in 1965 and worked as a research associate with the NWF's Izapa Project, completing the major work on the Izapa Sculpture Project in 1976, which includes the Stela 5 "Tree of Life" stone. His most recent project has been exploring a natural temple center at the Parowan Gap in southwestern Utah where he has discovered an observatory.

All meetings are 8 pm • Institute of Maya Studies • Miami Science Museum • Maya Hotline: 305-279-8110

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Coming up next month:

"Earth Monsters at Campeche's Tohcok Structure 2" with Antonio Benavides C. and Sara Novelo O. of INAH – Campeche, MX

This dynamic duo of INAH archaeologists have submitted a new article that documents the results of their excavations between September and November (2011) around Structure 2 at the site of Tohcok. The site is located six km west from Hopelchén, in the northeastern Campeche Chenes region. The southern side of the Structure 2 platform conserved three mosaic-stone masks; their features indicate they are representations of Earth Monsters, that are also called Cauac or Witz Monsters. A stone human head, a flint knife and some very interesting Post-Classic graffiti were also uncovered.



One of the masks with sprigs ending with human heads.

fourteen years before the passing of Chan K'in Viejo who was the *To'ohil* or prophet-leader of Najá (Great Water House village). Hiler gifted the man with three bottles of red wine and in so doing became a friend of Chan K'in's whole extended family. In the conversations that ensued, Hiler got an intimate view into old Maya belief systems and how to endure life in the jungle.



The late Chan K'in Viejo, the last traditional leader of Najá.

"Between Two Volcanic Eruptions: The Ancient Maya Village of Cerén, El Salvador" by Payson Sheets, Ph.D.

Payson Sheets, will be with us on June 13 to share his latest research and discoveries at Cerén. Archaeology at Cerén is often compared to that of Pompeii, where a sudden volcanic eruption "froze" a whole village in a moment of time that we can study in exceptionally rich detail.



They established a surprisingly successful adaptation, life style, and exuberant religious life within the household and at the community level. Sheets will explore their successes in the middle of the Classic Period.

"Part 1: My Visits with the Lacandon" by Hilario Hiler

In 1974, Hilario Hiler, our good friend and spokesman from the field, visited and spent a week living in the Lacandon village of Lacaná, located deep in the Chiapan rain forests of southern Mexico. In 1984, he returned and stayed in the village of Najá. This was

Upcoming Events at the IMS:

May 2, 6 pm: **IMS Board Meeting**

May 9, 8 pm: **IMS Explorer Session**

"Amazon River Explorer Francisco de Orellana" – Researcher, actor and historian **Robert Dawson** will don period attire to portray Spanish explorer Francisco de Orellana, who led an expedition full of trials and mishaps, as well as fights with hostile Amazonian tribes.

May 16, 8 pm: **IMS Program**

"Izapa: The Stela 5 Creation Story and World Ages" –

V. Garth Norman presents his research and insights from 40 years of investigations at Izapa.

June 13, 8 pm: **IMS Explorer Session**

"Between Two Volcanic Eruptions: The Ancient Maya Village of Cerén, El Salvador"

with **Payson Sheets**, Ph.D., University of Colorado, Boulder.

July 18, 8 pm: **IMS Program**

"Bolon Octe and Venus in the Dresden Codex" – with **Victoria R. Bricker**, Ph.D., Tulane University and University of Florida.

Upcoming Events and Announcements:

Through May 20: **Art Exhibition**

"Exploring Art of the Ancient Americas" – An exhibition of 135 artworks from cultures that rose and fell in Mexico, Central America and Andean South America from 1200 BCE–1530 CE. Drawn from the collection of John Bourne, the exhibition is at the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, MD. Additional info at: <http://thewalters.org/eventscalendar>

Through June 30: **Art Exhibition**

"Aztec to Zapotec II: Selections from the Ancient Americas Collection" – Featuring more than 180 works and representing a time period of more than 3,000 years, the exhibition gives a rare glimpse into the life of various pre-Columbian cultures including the Aztec, Maya, Moche, Nasca, Inca and Zapotec. At the Orlando Museum of Art, Orlando, FL. Get more info at: www.omart.org/exhibitions/aztec-zapotec-ii

Through July 1: **Museum Exhibition**

"Children of the Plumed Serpent: The Legacy of Quetzalcoatl in Ancient Mexico" – The exhibition will explore the extraordinary wonders in fresco, codices, polychrome ceramics,

gold, turquoise, textiles, featherwork, shell, and other precious materials that were produced by a confederacy of city-states in southern Mexico, largely dominated by Nahua, Mixtec and Zapotec nobility. Calling themselves the "Children of the Plumed Serpent," because of their belief that Quetzalcoatl, the human incarnation of the Plumed Serpent, had founded their royal lineages, they resisted both Aztec and Spanish subjugation between 1200 and 1500 CE. At the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA. More info at: www.lacma.org/art/exhibition/children-plumed-serpent-legacy-quetzalcoatl-ancient-mexico

Through November 4: **Art Exhibition**

"Verdant Earth and Teeming Seas: The Natural World in Ancient American Art" – This exhibition highlights the Harn Museum of Art's collection of ceramic figures and vessels, stone sculptures, jade ornaments, and textiles from diverse cultures of Ancient America including, Mesoamerica, Central America, and the Andes. At the Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, Gainesville, FL. Info at: www.harn.ufl.edu/exhibitions

