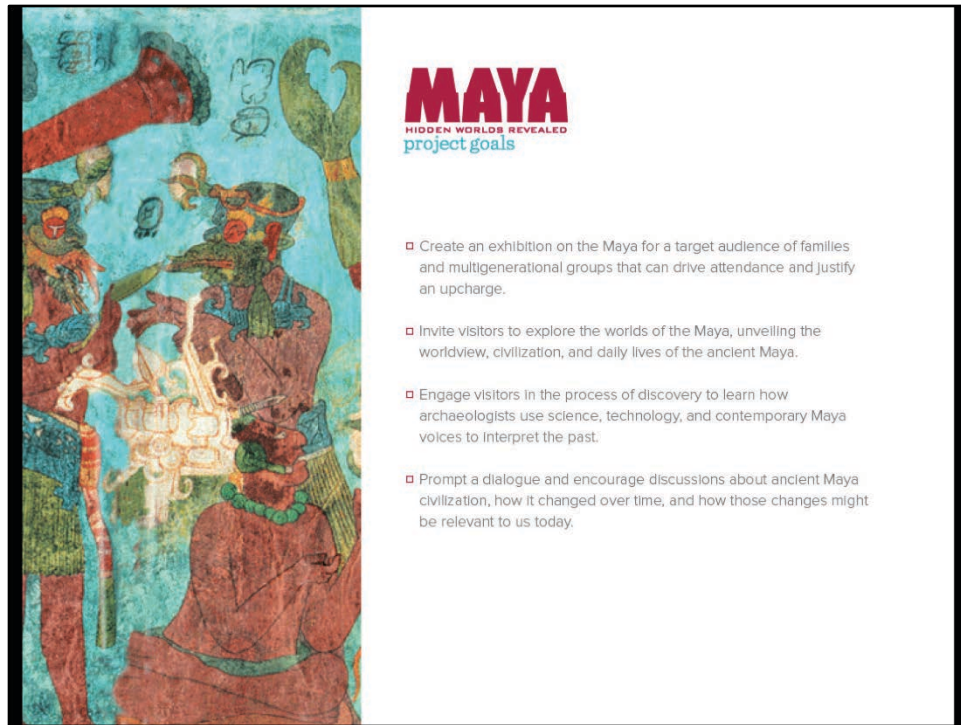




The Science Museum of Minnesota is pleased to present the 10,000 square foot traveling exhibition, MAYA: Hidden Worlds Revealed.



We have created an exhibition designed for families and multigenerational groups that will drive attendance and justify an upcharge. It will invite visitors to explore the worlds of the Maya, engage them in the process of discovery, and encourage dialog and discussion about the Maya civilization.



Visitors will leave the exhibition knowing...

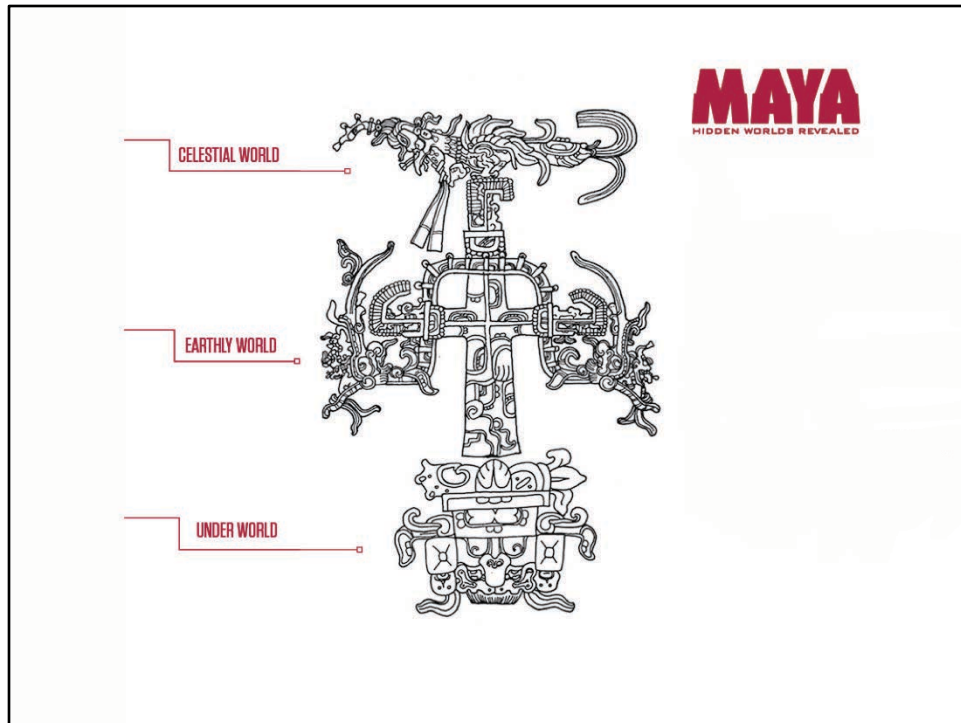


The Maya created one of the great civilizations of the ancient world and developed advanced writing, mathematics, timekeeping, and cosmology. The great Maya cities experienced a series of rises and falls and were eventually abandoned – yet the Maya people endure.





And that evidence and inquiry have allowed scientists and others to understand the ancient Maya world.

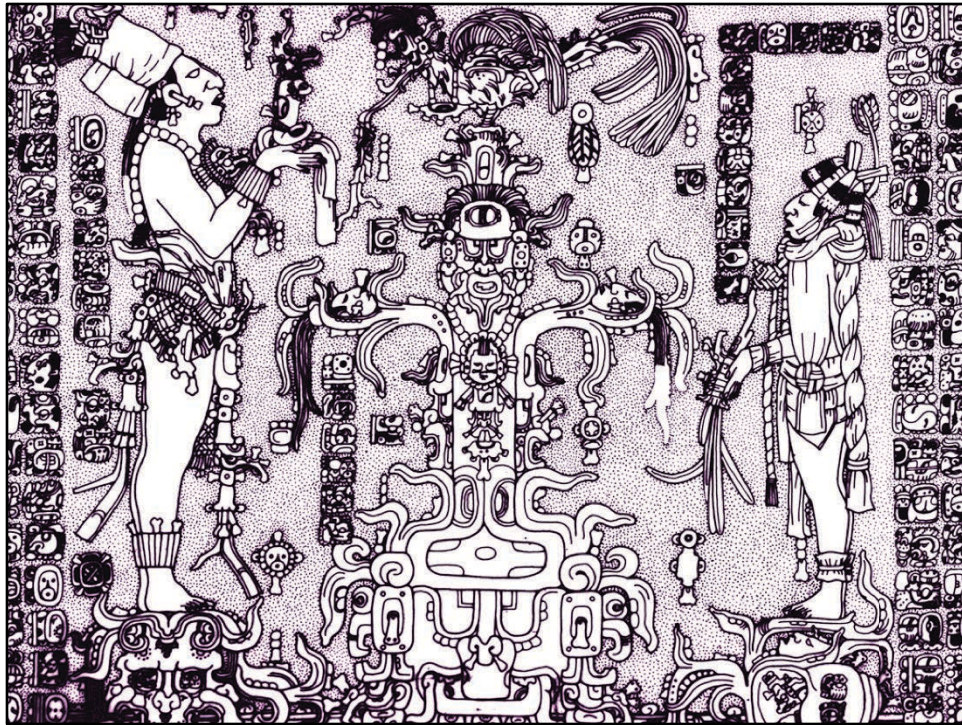


To the Maya, both ancient and modern, the ceiba is a holy tree. Its trunk is of this world while its roots plunge deep into the depths of the underworld below,



and its lofty branches reach into the heavenly, celestial realm above. In many ancient Maya villages and cities, the giant ceiba stood as a symbol of a connected universe.





The Maize God, one of the creators of the universe, is a central figure of ancient Maya mythology because the Maya people—created from maize—needed maize to survive. AS the maize is seasonally harvested, the Maize God dies. And just as sure as the maize returns with the rains, the Maize God is eternally reborn, transformed into a “world tree” that links all of creation.



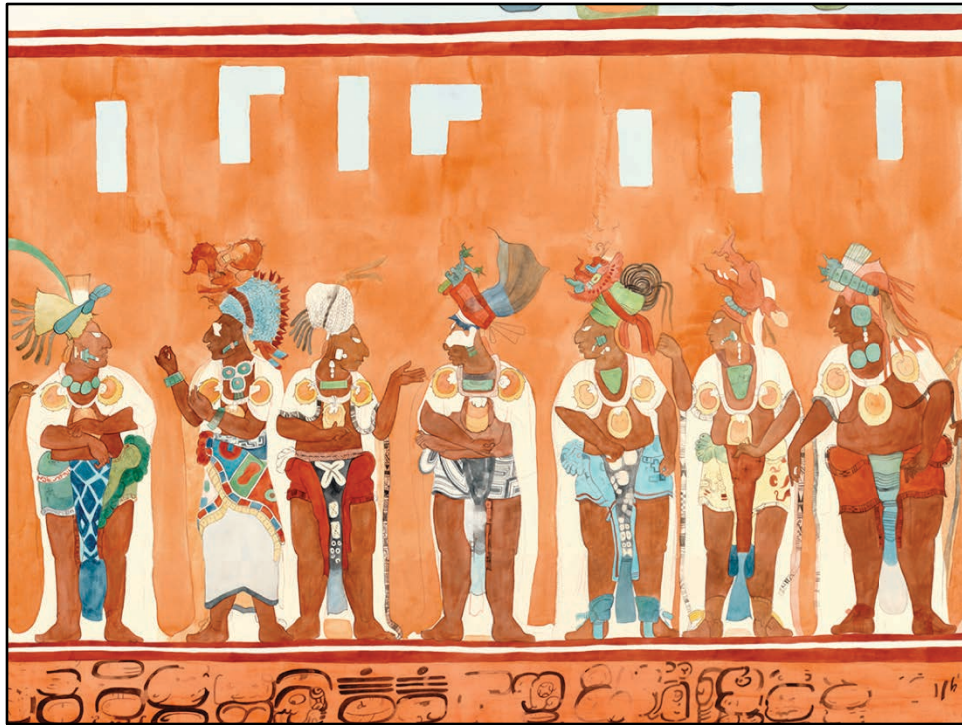
EXHIBIT SECTION



A video wall short presentation introduces, the visitor, to the Maya world and the major themes of the exhibit, quickly orienting you in space and time and acquainting you with Maya imagery:



excavations,



elaborate murals,



iconic artifacts ,





contemporary weavings,



modern rituals,



and pictures of Maya sites.



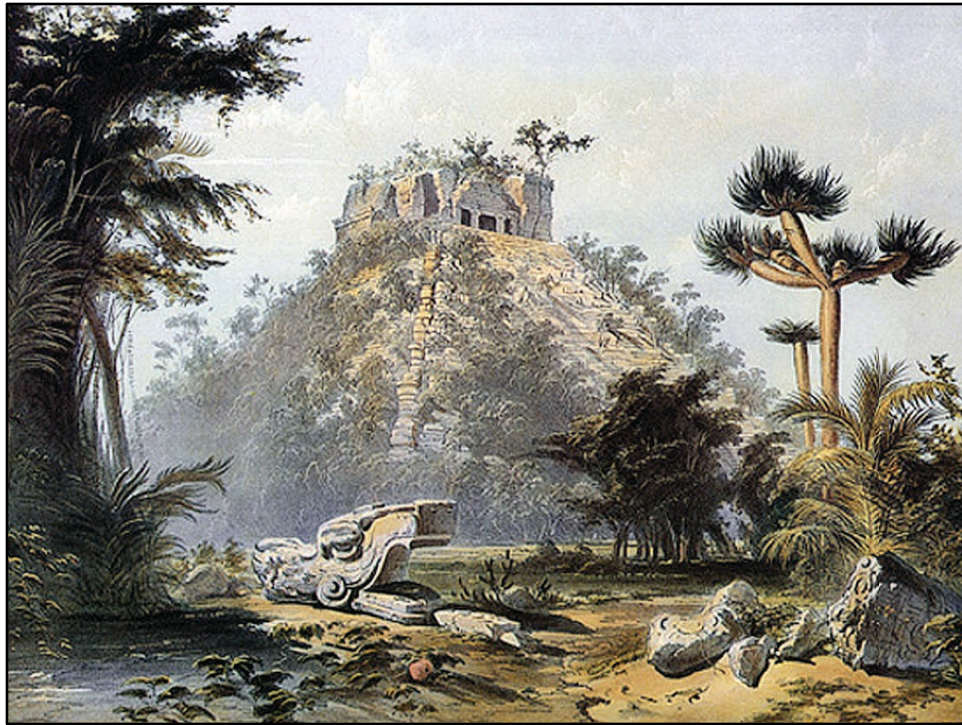
You'll also hear a variety of voices—stories from the Popul Vuh, as well as researchers and modern Maya people themselves.



EXHIBIT SECTION



The ancient Maya world lay hidden for centuries, but today scholars are revealing its secrets



The Classic Maya civilization has captivated popular imagination since the mid-1800s, when illustrated accounts of explorations through the Maya lowlands were published.



A set of View Masters let you follow in the explorers' footsteps and discover the gorgeous cities of the ancient Maya.



A variety of experts describe what archaeology is and why their work is valuable.





Spin your way through an interactive timeline of glyph decipherment and learn why scholars and Maya people alike are excited about our ability to read the glyphs. And try your hand at some Maya mathematics.



In the center of the room are two massive replica stelae—once unreadable, but now a wellspring of information about Maya rulers and their relationships.

EXHIBIT SECTION



Stones elaborately carved in Maya hieroglyphics, only recently deciphered, tell of great and powerful dynasties.

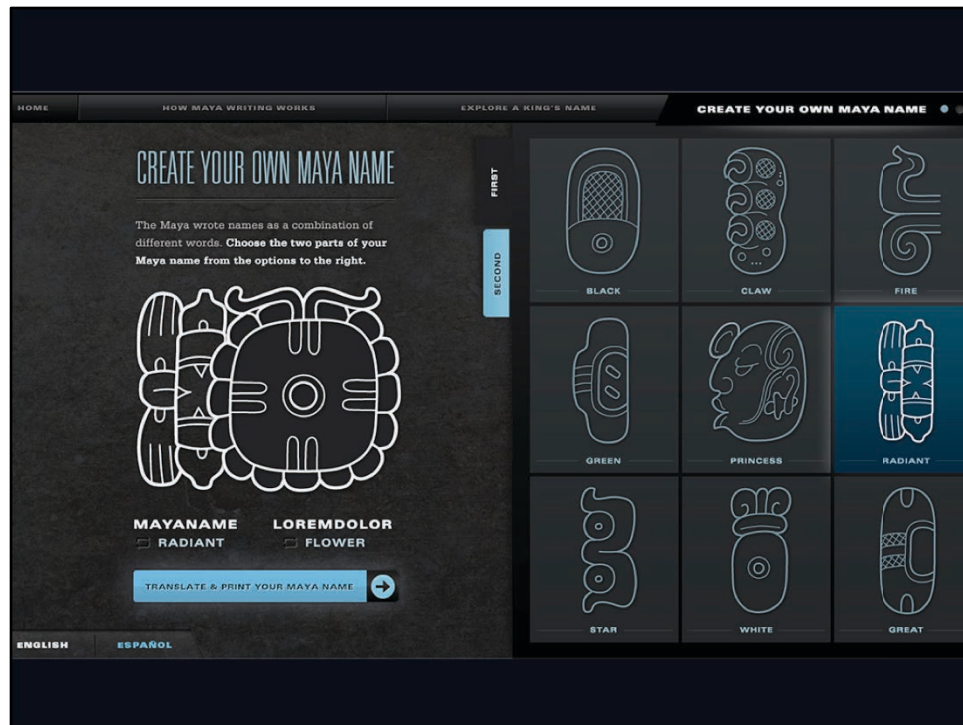


Take a good look at a series of carved monuments from Copan, Quirigua, and other sites.

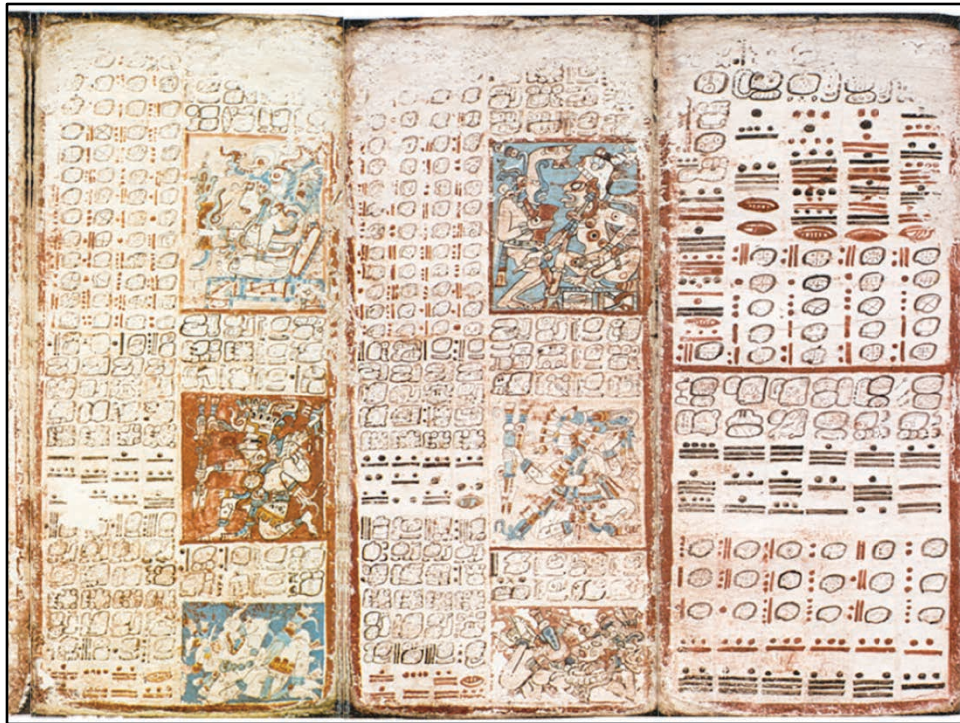




The glyphs and sculptures contain written histories that commemorate the achievements of Maya kings



A name glyph generator allows you to title yourself, Maya style.



Begin to see how the Maya script was deciphered by researchers, and how powerful written words were to the Maya.



Get a sense of how to read a stela and how Maya rulers placed themselves at the center of the cosmos—as living “world trees.”



EXHIBIT SECTION



Maya sky-watching contained elements of both astronomy and astrology.



Here you see the night sky. A video, set against a star field and cityscape, describes how and why the Maya charted the 365-day solar cycle, predicted solar and lunar eclipses, and precisely tracked the complex orbit of Venus. Astronomical phenomena were closely associated with seasonal changes, and knowledge of the skies could ensure a good harvest—and power.



Examine replicas of two surviving books written by the Maya,

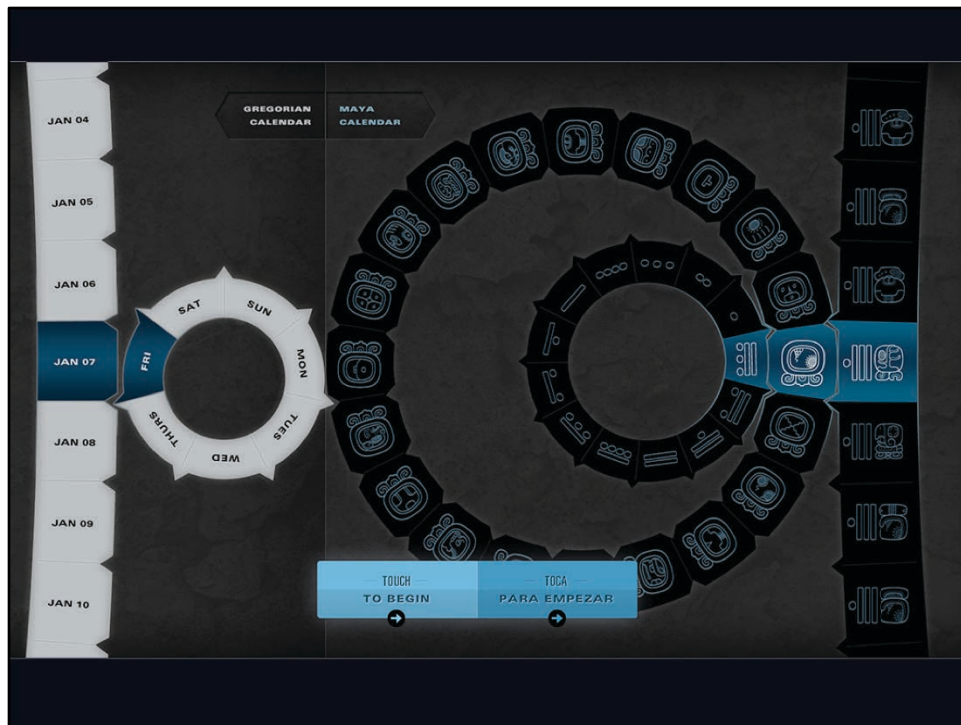


in which scribes recorded the movements of celestial bodies to determine appropriate action here on earth.





See objects that make up a divination kit, and see how modern Maya daykeepers use these objects and the calendar to advise their petitioners.



A calendar translator shows you how the Maya calendar cycles intersect, lets you map important dates in our time to the cycles of Maya time,



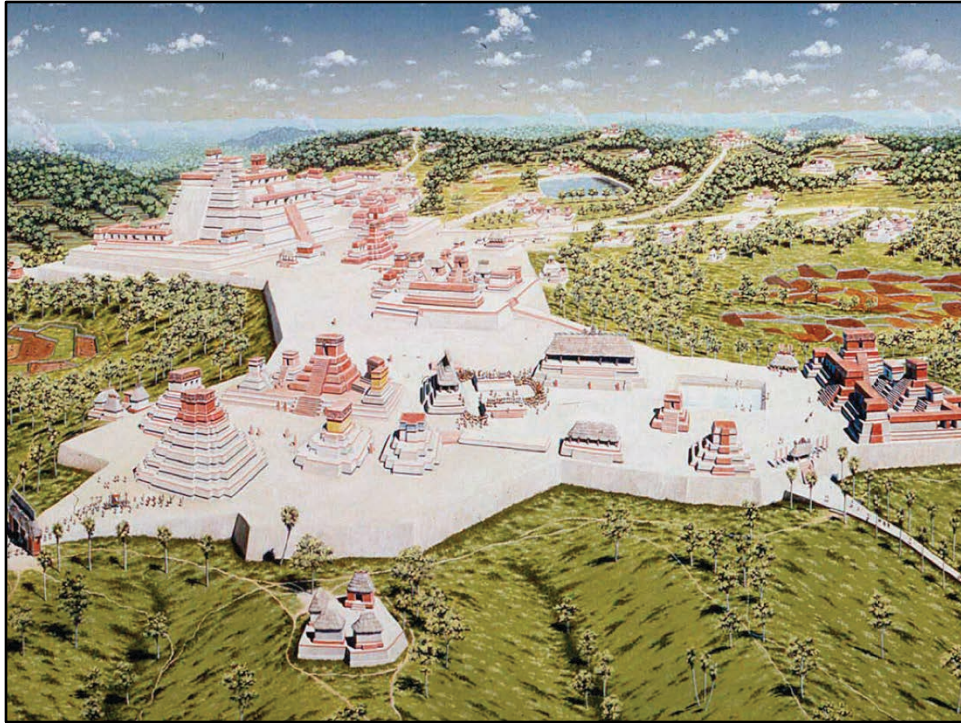
and print out a personalized stela.

EXHIBIT SECTION



The ancient Maya were excellent urban planners, organizing their cities according to practical needs, environmental constraints, and religious beliefs.





Architects, artists, and laborers incorporated the Maya worldview and social hierarchy into the city plan.



Without metal tools, wheels, or beasts of burden, they designed and built the causeways, terraces, and reservoirs that allowed tens of thousands of people to live in the cities and traders to move between them.



See construction techniques,





try wearing a tumpline,





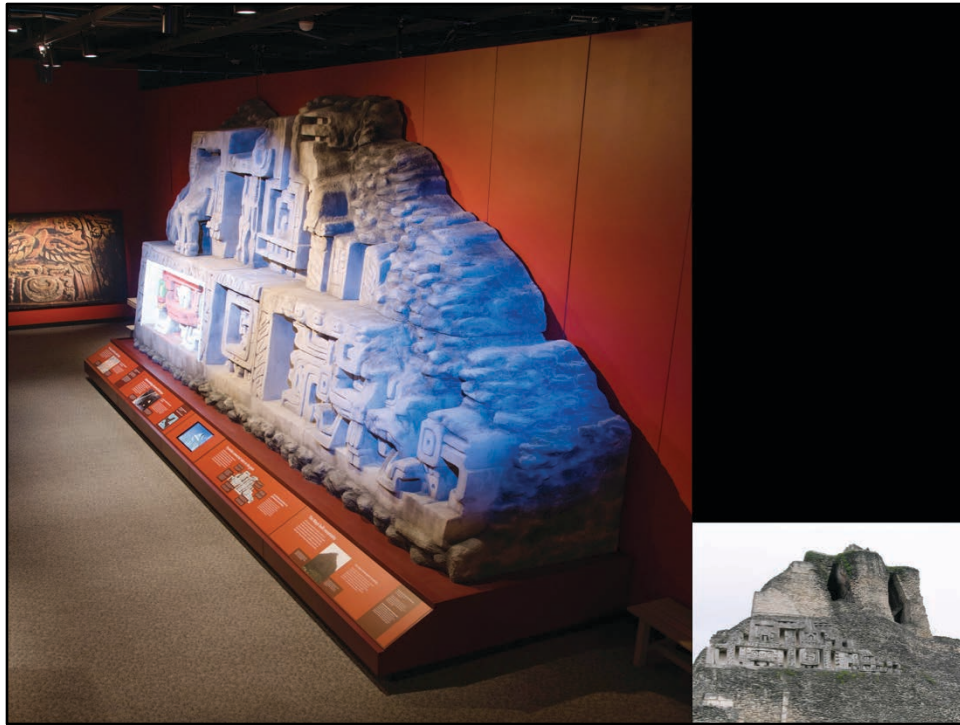
and build a Maya arch.





Explore a floor “map” of the city of Caracol, in Belize, and compare it to a 3-D model of the city’s center.





Marvel at a replica of a section of the frieze that once surrounded the top of the El Castillo pyramid at Xunantunich, in Belize.





Explore the Maya ballgame—believed to be one of the first team sports in human history. It was a complex ritual based on religious beliefs, and the survival of the players and the spectators depended on the outcome.



Examine a variety of objects— images on artifacts, and equipment—related to the game.



Watch a video of the ballgame as it's played today, see a recreation of how archaeologists think it was played,



and pick up a ballgame ball—it's heavy!



EXHIBIT SECTION



Households were the engines of the ancient Maya economy, producing food and items for trade.



Explore a model of an ancient Maya neighborhood.



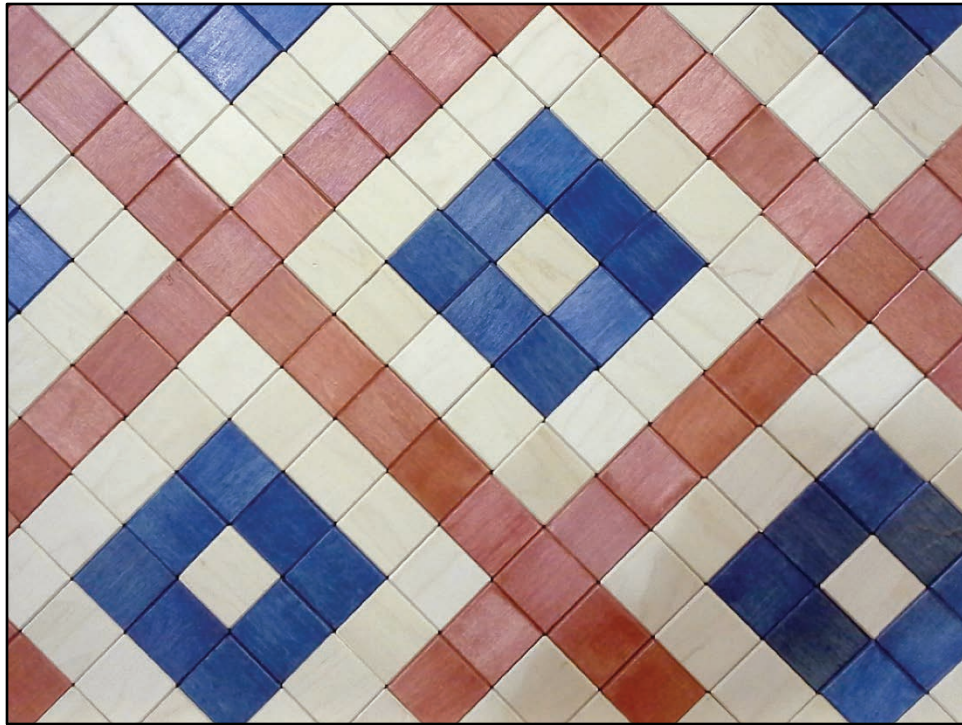
Home artisan produced this shell hat.



And beautiful weavings among other items. These artisan traditions continue today

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try your hand at creating a brocade pattern with blocks.



Traditional Maya still practice similar domestic rituals today.



Then, as now, gardens and orchards, as well as busy markets, supplied other foods, but maize was central to the Maya diet, and life in the lowlands ultimately depended on the harvest.

EXHIBIT SECTION



Maya mythology held that a dead person's soul could travel through the underworld to an afterlife.





Caves were physical portals to the underworld and prayers and sacrifices were offered inside.



Artifacts in this area include material recovered from caves and cenotes, objects decorated with underworld imagery,



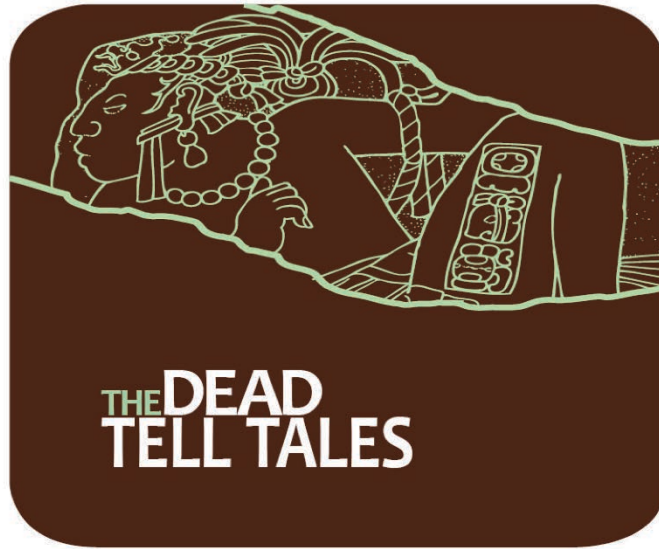
and ritual paraphernalia including bloodletting implements. Explorations of Maya burials tell us about the structure of ancient Maya society, their worldview, and even their diets and lifestyle. Studies of human remains and tomb offerings reveal not only the status and relationships of once-living people, but also provide insight into health and diet, living conditions, life expectancy, and human migrations.



A recreated tomb of Great Scrolled Skull, ruler of Santa Rita Corozal, in Belize features spectacular objects that accompanied elites on their journey through the underworld to rebirth.



EXHIBIT SECTION



Learn how objects from an unusual burial hint at political relationships between far-flung places



A touch table allows you to digitally explore a royal tomb,



Find artifacts



And then identify the real ones in nearby cases.





Examine photographs of human skeletons with pathologies—find out what the histories written in our bones tell archaeologists about us.

EXHIBIT SECTION



The murals of Bonampak provide an unparalleled view of elite life and warfare in ancient Maya society.



The vivid murals inside three rooms of a temple at Bonampak, Mexico—with scenes of both courtly ritual, battle, and sacrifice—changed the way scholars viewed the ancient Maya.



We've matched objects with their counterparts in the murals, using them to examine themes of elite privilege, ceremony, responsibility, connection, and competition.





Take a photograph of yourself and see how you'd look with, ear flares, and head dress.



Assemble a bow drill



and imagine using one to create dental inlays.

EXHIBIT SECTION



Today's Maya are heirs to a culture that has survived thousands of years of transformation, adapting to environmental change, political turmoil, and conquest.





Many still speak the languages of their ancestors, wear traditional dress and keep their sacred calendar.



Nourished by tradition, Maya culture flourishes, season-to-season, generation to generation



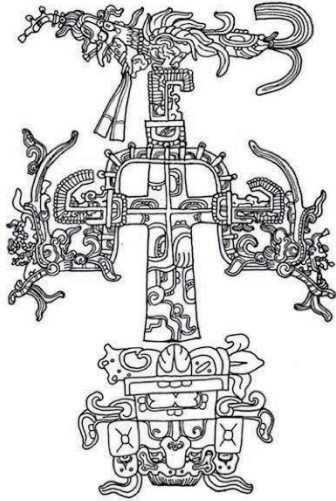
Images attest to the continued importance of the Maize God as a creator and provider.





In short videos, modern Maya people describe those connections and the meaning they attach to their Maya identity. Through the efforts of scientists and the Maya themselves, a lost history is being recovered.





# MAYA

## HIDDEN WORLDS REVEALED

Development of *Maya Worlds* is being led by the Science Museum of Minnesota in conjunction with the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Museum of Science, Boston, and the San Diego Natural History Museum. The images shown in this plan are for reference purposes only. While many of the objects shown may be included in the exhibition, a final list is still being developed. Objects will be featured from the collections of the National Institute of Culture and History, Belize, Harvard University's Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, the Penn Museum at the University of Pennsylvania, the Science Museum of Minnesota, and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

