

MAAYA

In the tropical rainforests the Classical Maya civilization reached improbable heights and mysteriously collapsed. The bustling ancient cities in the lowlands of Guatemala, Mexico, Belize and Honduras were abandoned. Yet, Maya culture has never disappeared. Their descendants still live across Central America and Maya communities have succeeded in preserving their identity, languages and traditions. Taking a cultural-ecological approach, Maya, gives a holistic image of Maya culture and shows how it has developed over time in relation to its environment—from its classical peak to the present.

Presenting the latest archaeological evidence, the exhibition presents original artifacts of Maya artistry never seen outside Central America and made by masters of their craft, whose influence has stretched far beyond their own time and place. Their meaningful images and inscriptions tell the stories of kinglike rulers and everyday life.

Visitors can explore the awe-inspiring Maya architecture and astonishing cultural accomplishments in immersive exhibition spaces, decipher hieroglyphs, learn about the intricate Maya calendar or explore the ancient burial site of Uxul and, above all, get to know how this remarkably sophisticated civilization could built such complex cities in the middle of the jungle, why these cities were eventually abandoned and in what ways Maya culture has changed since then.



**THE FIGURAL TIQUISATE STYLE 'INCENSARO'**

This painted censer with a lid was inspired by the Teotihuacan style was found at the Pacific coast of Guatemala from the Middle Classic Period (approx. 350–450 AD). Typically for the Teotihuacan style, the lid is elaborately decorated with symbolic elements.

KEY OBJECTS



**STUCCO HEADS**

The two spectacular stucco heads were excavated in the Royal Palace of the ancient Maya city of Cancuen. The portraits show different facial features and have impressive headdresses with a central deity motif that were originally surrounded with feathers. Most likely, these portraits represent different kings of the Cancuen dynasty.



**LA CORONA ALTAR 5**

Altar 5 is the earliest dated sculpture thus far recovered from the La Corona; it was discovered in 2017. The inscription allows us to identify the portrait as that of an early local ruler named Chak Tok Ich'aak, who played an important role on the strategy for the Kaanul dynasty to eventually replace Tikal as the most important power in the Maya lowlands.



**CERAMIC FIGURES OF EL PERU**

Found in the burial tomb of an unknown ruler. The tomb from the Late Classic period (approx. 600–650 AD) and contained numerous artifacts that were to accompany the ruler on his journey through the underworld. Numerous figures show remains of the original colour. This group of figurines is unique in Maya art.



**CANCUEN PANEL 3**

This extraordinary stela shows the most important queen of the Maya, Lady Six Sky, or more correctly, Ixik Wak Jalam Chan Ajaw. Stela 24 shows her trampling a captive in the manner of any warrior-king. It portrays the queen in the guise of the young Moon Goddess; she wears a long skirt covered with a net made of jade pearls and tubes. The belt is adorned with the stylized head of a shark. Female portraits of this type are exceedingly rare in Maya art.



**NARANJO STELA 24**

Carved in 795 AD, at the end of the Late Classic Period and a few short years before the violent demise of the city of Cancuen, Panel 3 highlights the ruler Taj Chan Ahk. The ruler sits on a throne. A bubbling watery band encircles the scene, suggesting that the king and his attendants are displayed here as a “lord of water”. This is one of the most beautifully preserved examples of Maya sculpture.



## THE LA CORONA HIEROGLYPHIC STAIRWAYS

The eight carved stone panels originally formed part of hieroglyphic stairways. They carry spectacular sculpted scenes and hieroglyphic texts and contain important historical information.



## EL ZOTZ JADE MASK 2

This jade mask is comprised mainly of jade tesserae with additional fragments of shell and obsidian, which were found associated with the body of a king in Buria 9 of the El Diablo Pyramid in the archaeological site of El Zotz.

# EXHIBITION DETAILS

## ARCHITECTURE & CONTENT

- **Size** 7,500 to 14,000 sq. ft. (700-1400 m<sup>2</sup>).
- **Number of objects** app. 300 original objects, including nine stelas, 17 stone blocks and stone panels, two fragments of Stelas and 4 altars. Loans are dependent on approved Facility Reports and will be completed with the lending museums.
- **Exhibition furniture** All immersive structures including pyramid structures recreating the original Maya architecture such as 4 triangular structures for the 'Maya arch'.
- **Display cases** Approx. 45, come with the exhibition and have their own lighting and internal environmental controls. Normal museum gallery environmental conditions required at venue.
- **Graphics** Photos, graphic panels including all texts, which can be adapted for two languages.
- **Interactives** 5 interactives plus 16 touchable replicas. All furniture, displays and control systems included.
- **Films** 10. All Projectors, speaker systems, media players and control systems included.
- **Sounds** 4 different ambient sounds.
- **All audio/visual material** are available in two languages.
- **Carpet** Custom designed carpet with printed graphics especially designed for each thematic area.
- **Lighting** All showcases are equipped with light.
- **Catalogue/Book** Yes.

## LOGISTICS

- **Insurance and shipping.**
- **Installation and dismantling crew** from *MuseumsPartner* plus couriers from the lending museum, including travel and accommodation.

## PUBLICATION

- A **catalogue** is available on consignment. Venues can also produce their own with supplied content from our partners.

## MARKETING MATERIAL

- **High resolution images** of the key images, objects and the exhibition are available to the venue at no cost. All final graphic representations by venue are to be approved by *MuseumsPartner* to ensure adherence to proper citing of partners and lenders.

## ADDITIONAL COSTS FOR HOST VENUE

- Marketing and promotion
- Merchandise
- Maintenance during display period
- Gallery lighting, walls, wall painting
- Operational costs—ticketing, security, programming, etc.

# ABOUT THE TEAM



This exhibition is supported by the Ministry of Culture and Sport, Patrimonio Cultural y Natural Guatemala. The exhibition was **curated by Prof.Dr.Dr.h.c. Nikolai Grube** from the University of Bonn.



The National Museum of Archeology and Ethnology of Guatemala is dedicated to the conservation and exhibition of goods and artifacts belonging to the cultural and historical heritage of Guatemala. It has over 3,000 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space and over 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> dedicated to the research and restoration of a collection of over 20,000 archaeological artifacts and 5,000 ethnological pieces.



In cooperation with international museums, *MuseumsPartner* has conceived a range of travelling exhibitions that are informative and engaging for a multitude of audiences and easy to adapt to different spaces. We offer these exhibitions under a turnkey contract which ensures that our clients are guaranteed a secure investment customized for their own institution without any surprises. Drawing on our extensive experience in fine art transport, we provide full services to our partners and offer project management, logistics and financial management.

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