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this edition includes new discoveries from palenque mexico where architecture and sculpture reveal a dramatic eighth century to san bartolo guatemala where maya murals of this unprecedented complexity have been uncovered

mary ellen miller s rich visual and scholarly survey of pre hispanic art and architecture including the most recent archaeological finds expanded and revised in its sixth edition the art of mesoamerica surveys the artistic achievements of the high pre hispanic civilizations of central america olmec maya teotihuacan toltec and aztec as well as those of their lesser known contemporaries providing an in depth examination of central works this book guides readers through the most iconic palaces pyramids sculptures and paintings from the olmec colossal head 5 recovered from san lorenzo to the aztec calendar stone found in mexico city s zocalo in 1790 this book reveals the complexity and innovation behind the art and architecture produced in pre hispanic civilizations this new edition incorporates fifty new lavish color images and extensive updates based on the latest research and dozens of recent discoveries particularly in maya art where excavations at teotihuacan the largest city of mesoamerica and tenochtitlan the capital of the aztecs have yielded new sculptures

in unseen art claudia brittenham unravels one of the most puzzling phenomena in mesoamerican art history why many of the objects that we view in museums today were once so difficult to see she examines the importance that ancient mesoamerican people assigned to the process of making and enlivening the things we now call art as well as mesoamerican understandings of sight as an especially godlike and elite power in order to trace a gradual evolution in the uses of secrecy and concealment from a communal practice that fostered social memory to a tool of imperial power addressing some of the most charismatic of all mesoamerican sculptures such as olmec buried offerings maya lintels and carvings on the undersides of aztec sculptures brittenham shows that the creation of unseen art has important implications both for understanding status in ancient mesoamerica and for analyzing art in the present spanning nearly three thousand years of the indigenous art of mexico guatemala honduras and belize unseen art connects the dots between vision power and inequality providing a critical perspective on our own way of looking

over two decades this art historical tour de force has consistently proved the classic introduction to humanity's artistic heritage from our paleolithic past to our digitised present every continent and culture is covered in an articulate and well balanced discussion in this seventh edition the text has been revised to embrace developments in archaeology and art historical research while the renowned contemporary art historian michael archer has greatly expanded the discussion of the past twenty years providing a new perspective on the latest developments the insight elegance and fluency that the authors bring to their text are complemented by 1458 superb illustrations half of which are now in colour these images together with the numerous maps and architectural plans have been chosen to represent the most significant chronological regional and individual styles of artistic expression

the art of urbanism explores how the royal courts of powerful mesoamerican centers represented their kingdoms in architectural iconographic and cosmological terms through an investigation of the ecological contexts and environmental opportunities of urban centers the contributors consider how ancient mesoamerican cities defined themselves and reflected upon their physical and metaphysical place via their built environment themes in the volume include the ways in which a kingdom's public monuments were fashioned to reflect geographic space patron gods and mythology and how the olmec maya mexicana zapotecs and others sought to center their world through architectural monuments and public art this collection of papers addresses how communities leveraged their environment and built upon their cultural and historical roots as well as the ways that the performance of calendrical rituals and other public events tied individuals and communities to both urban centers and hinterlands twenty three scholars from archaeology anthropology art history and religious studies contribute new data and new perspectives to the understanding of ancient mesoamericans' own view of their spectacular urban and ritual centers

explore the architecture of ancient mexico and central america and discover the fabulous arts and crafts sculptures metalwork and textiles of these great pre industrial civilizations cover

the ancient mesoamerican city of izapa in chiapas mexico is renowned for its extensive collection of elaborate stone stelae and altars which were carved during the late preclassic period 300 bc ad

250 many of these monuments depict kings garbed in the costume and persona of a bird a well known avian deity who had great significance for the maya and other cultures in adjacent regions this izapan style of carving and kingly representation appears at numerous sites across the pacific slope and piedmont of mexico and guatemala making it possible to trace political and economic corridors of communication during the late preclassic period in this book julia guernsey offers a masterful art historical analysis of the izapan style monuments and their integral role in developing and communicating the institution of divine kingship she looks specifically at how rulers expressed political authority by erecting monuments that recorded their performance of rituals in which they communicated with the supernatural realm in the persona of the avian deity she also considers how rulers used the monuments to structure their built environment and create spaces for ritual and politically charged performances setting her discussion in a broader context guernsey also considers how the izapan style monuments helped to motivate and structure some of the dramatic pan regional developments of the late preclassic period including the forging of a codified language of divine kingship this pioneering investigation which links monumental art to the matrices of political economic and supernatural exchange offers an important new understanding of a region time period and group of monuments that played a key role in the history of mesoamerica and continue to intrigue scholars within the field of mesoamerican studies

warfare ritual human sacrifice and the rubber ballgame have been the traditional categories through which scholars have examined organized violence in the artistic and material records of ancient mesoamerica and central america this volume expands those traditional categories to include such concerns as gladiatorial like boxing combats investiture rites trophy head taking and display dark shamanism and the subjective pain inherent in acts of violence each author examines organized violence as a set of practices grounded in cultural understandings even when the violence threatens the limits of those understandings the authors scrutinize the representation of and relationships between different types of organized violence as well as the implications of those activities which can include the unexpected such as violence as a means of determining and curing illness and the use of violence in negotiation strategies

the untold chronicles of the looting and collecting of ancient mesoamerican objects this book traces the fascinating history of how and why ancient mesoamerican objects have been collected it begins

with the pre hispanic antiquities that first entered european collections in the sixteenth century as gifts or seizures continues through the rise of systematic collecting in europe and the americas during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and ends in 1940 the start of europe s art market collapse at the outbreak of world war ii and the coinciding genesis of the large scale art market for pre hispanic antiquities in the united states drawing upon archival resources and international museum collections the contributors analyze the ways shifting patterns of collecting and taste including how pre hispanic objects changed from being viewed as anthropological and scientific curiosities to collectible artworks have shaped modern academic disciplines as well as public private institutional and nationalistic attitudes toward mesoamerican art as many nations across the world demand the return of their cultural patrimony and ancestral heritage it is essential to examine the historical processes events and actors that initially removed so many objects from their countries of origin

many ancient civilizations have influenced and inspired people in the 21st century the greeks and romans continue to fascinate the west today but of all the world s civilizations none have intrigued people more than the mayans whose culture astronomy language and mysterious disappearance all continue to captivate people in 2012 especially there has been a renewed focus on the mayans whose advanced calendar has led many to speculate the world will end on the same date the mayan calendar ends the focus on the doomsday scenario however has overshadowed the mayans true contribution to astronomy language sports and art mesoamerica s greatest civilizations discusses the mayan calendar within the larger context of their astronomical advances while also providing a comprehensive analysis of their history empire and culture along with a description of mayan life and pictures of mayan ruins and art the mystique of the maya is traced from the height of their empire to the present day in an attempt to understand a civilization often been best described as an enigma from the moment spanish conquistador hernan cortes first found and confronted them the aztecs have fascinated the world and they continue to hold a unique place both culturally and in pop culture nearly 500 years after the spanish conquered their mighty empire the aztecs are often remembered today for their major capital tenochtitlan as well as being fierce conquerors of the valley of mexico who often engaged in human sacrifice rituals ironically and unlike the mayans the aztecs are not widely viewed or remembered with nuance in

part because their own leader burned extant aztec writings and rewrote a mythologized history explaining his empire's dominance less than a century before the spanish arrived naturally cortes and other spaniards depicted the aztecs as savages greatly in need of conversion to catholicism while the mayans are remembered for their astronomy numeral system and calendar the aztecs have primarily been remembered in a far narrower way despite continuing to be a source of pride to mexicans through the centuries as a result even though the aztecs continue to interest people across the world centuries after their demise it has fallen on archaeologists and historians to try to determine the actual history culture and lives of the aztecs from the beginning to the end relying on excavations primary accounts and more

this book is the first comprehensive study and reinterpretation of the unique arts of teotihuacan including architecture sculpture mural painting and ceramics comparing the arts of teotihuacan not previously judged artistic with those of other ancient civilizations ester pasztory demonstrates how they created and reflected the community's ideals most people associate the pyramids of central mexico with the aztecs but these colossal constructions antedate the aztecs by more than a thousand years the people of teotihuacan who built the pyramids as part of a city of unprecedented size remain a mystery

presenting the most up to date coverage on our knowledge of this society the oxford encyclopedia of mesoamerican cultures is the first comprehensive and comparative reference source to chronicle pre hispanic colonial and modern mesoamerica written for a wide audience it is an invaluable reference for interested lay persons students teachers and scholars in such fields as art archaeology religious studies anthropology latin american culture and the history of the region organized alphabetically the articles range from 500 word biographies to 7 000 word entries on geography and history to the legacy of the arts writings architecture and religious rituals an extensive network of cross references blind entries and annotated bibliographies guide the reader to related entries within the encyclopedia and provide the groundwork for further research

in this collection prominent scholars provide new interpretations and useful syntheses of many of the most significant mesoamerican architectural traditions from the preclassic to the postclassic periods the essays examine the built environment as a carrier of cultural meanings the many

pyramid temples palaces and ballcourts comprising mesoamerican centers were constructed in the context of hierarchical societies and provided monumental expressions of elite authority the design of individual buildings as well as the layout of site plans often embodied mesoamerican beliefs about the structure of the cosmos natural forces or the numinous power of landscape forms thus providing sanction for the sociopolitical order

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