

Recreating Ancient Mayan Artworks

The Maya is one of the biggest Mesoamerican civilizations that expanded through eastern Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize. It is estimated to have begun around 500-400 BCE. To this day Maya culture, language, and religion are still practiced. To achieve a deeper understanding of Maya artifacts, I employed a dual methodology: traditional research and "research through making." This latter approach utilizes physical recreation to overcome material loss and survival bias. Due to the monumental scale of original Maya structures, I produced these projects as sub-scale reconstructions, using plaster to simulate the formal qualities of traditional stone slabs. Overall, my study aims to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and the material reality of Maya craftsmanship.



Original



Recreation

I created this vessel out of ceramic and painted it in a style known as codex, a style in which small vessels are painted in very fine monochromatic lines on cream backgrounds.



Original



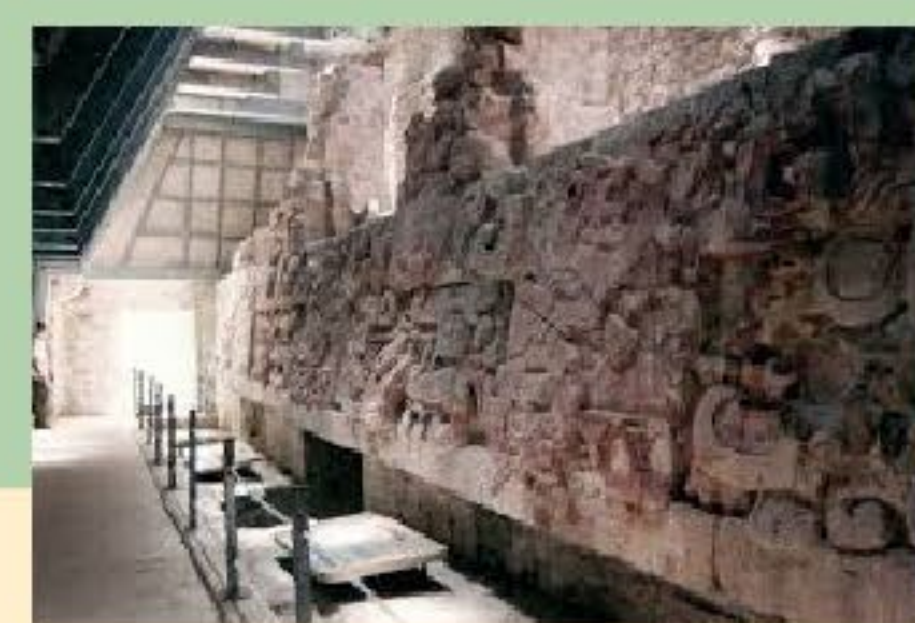
Recreation

The second is a jade figurine depicting a deity. This is thought to depict a humanized version of the Principal Bird Deity or a human individual wearing a Principal Bird Deity mask.

Balamku



The Balamku cave system, or "cave of the Jaguar god," is a Maya archaeological site of unknown length, as the explored section of the cave is 450 meters (1476.38 ft).



Samabaj



The Maya established a major settlement on an islet within Lake Atitlan, Guatemala. The water levels began to rise when Atitlan volcano erupted, and the lake reclaimed the islet within an unknown period of time.