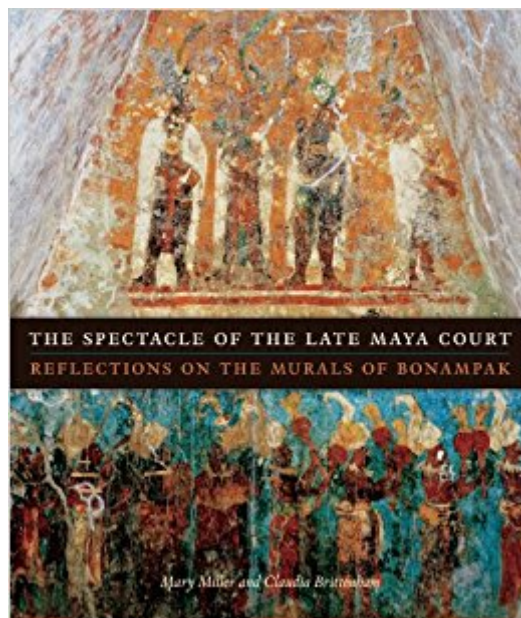


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The Spectacle Of The Late Maya Court: Reflections On The Murals Of Bonampak (The William And Bettye Nowlin Series In Art, History, And Culture Of The Western Hemisphere)



Synopsis

Located within the deep tropical rainforest of Chiapas, Mexico, the Maya site of Bonampak is home to the most complete and magnificent mural program of the ancient Americas. In three rooms, a pageant of rulership opens up, scene by scene, like pages of an ancient Maya book. Painted c. AD 800, the murals of Bonampak reveal a complex and multifaceted view of the ancient Maya at the end of their splendor during the last days of the Classic era. Members of the royal court engage in rituals and perform human sacrifice, dance in extravagant costumes and strip the clothing from fallen captives, acknowledge foreign nobles, and receive abundant tribute. The murals are a powerful and sophisticated reflection on the spectacle of courtly life and the nature of artistic practice, a window onto a world that could not know its doomed future. This major new study of the paintings of Bonampak incorporates insights from decades of art historical, epigraphic, and technical investigation of the murals, framing questions about artistic conception, facture, narrative, performance, and politics. Lavishly illustrated, this book assembles thorough documentation of the Bonampak mural program, from historical photographs of the paintings—some never before published—to new full-color reconstructions by artist Heather Hurst, recipient of a MacArthur award, and Leonard Ashby. The book also includes a catalog of photographs, infrared images, and line drawings of the murals, as well as images of all the glyphic texts, which are published in their entirety for the first time. Written in an engaging style that invites both specialists and general readers alike, this book will stand as the definitive presentation of the paintings for years to come.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The book is lavishly illustrated, and the photographic record within is invaluable. The latter part of the book consists of an extensive catalogue of color and infrared images as well as large-scale color reproductions of the reconstruction paintings, presented as inserts. Summing Up: Highly recommended." (Choice magazine 2014-01-01)"The Spectacle of the Late Maya Court is a comprehensive study of a single artistic program that greatly advances our understanding of the potential for images to picture noble power amid the turbulence of the southern lowland Maya collapse. ...Miller and Brittenham's volume provides a vital opportunity for scholars and advanced students to be enveloped by Bonampak's twelve walls and carefully examine a summative artistic program that vividly illustrates why depictions of courtly spectacle mattered for assertions of royal power in the Late Classic Maya world." (CAA Reviews 2017-02-02)"I can say without reservation that this book is destined to become a standard reference for future scholarship on the pivotal role of images in the highly charged political atmosphere of the Late Classic Maya realm. Just as the authors praise the Bonampak murals as a summary work of their era, the book is itself a kind of masterful culmination of over thirty years of engagement with these paintings, certainly on the part of Mary Miller. This comes across in the intimate, close reading of the murals written in eloquent, at times passionate, prose, obviously the result of deep familiarity and intellectual fermentation. . . . The book offers a number of theoretical discussions about Maya art, concerning, for instance, the construction of narrative and political rhetoric and artistic decision-making that are highly original and will establish benchmarks in the field. The publication of hundreds of illustrations will serve as a source of new data for future work on Maya art." (Andrea Stone, Professor of Art History, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and author of *Images from the Underworld: Naj Tunich and the Tradition of Maya Cave Painting*)

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This is the way books USED to be made - over-sized, heavy, fully documented with color photos, illustrations, and charts, and an authoritative text. I have not read this yet (which I will) but in scanning the contents, I know that it will provide an in-depth analysis of research on the Bonampak murals. It has been almost 20 years since I stuck my head in the temple and saw them in person, but flipping through the pages brought it all back. I am really looking forward to this read. Here is the trick - at a time when the prices even for paperback editions of Maya research have gone through the roof, or what at first appears to be of interest turns out to be a dry doctoral thesis or even worse, new age science, so many of my careful investments have yielded little return. This book was a shock when it arrived - how can they afford to print this? My prediction is this book will turn out to be like the *Sculpture of Palenque* volumes (with which it compares well) from about thirty years ago, that now are extremely rare and cost a fortune. Yes, they did remainder those books, but is it worth taking a chance? A word to the wise should be sufficient. Thank you, University of Texas Press.

This is an amazing account of Mayan culture, specifically artwork, that should be on everyone's coffee table in order to continually enjoy, share and learn. The photographs are truly breathtaking!! There are posters included in an envelope in the back of this book that further delineate the locations of the artwork. I highly recommend this book to all who quest for more knowledge about the Early Americans, thus our fellow man. I have never been to these archeological sites, but the information included in this book is the next best thing. This is definitely a classic. I encourage not only those interested in the Mayan world, but all of you who are interested in expanding your worldview of human history to purchase this book. I hope more sites such as these are discovered and uncovered in my lifetime and are as clearly represented as this undertaking has been. As an aside, one thing I did notice was that one of the rooms depicted looked almost identical, without the art, to the architecture inside of a particular Egyptian pyramid.

Amazing

Fascinating opus about the incredible murals of Bonampak. Hundreds of photos, many with infra red showing unseen details. A perfect book not just for experts, but also a great idea for the art lover in general.

A magnificently produced (and weighty) 260 odd pages detailing and illustrating the famous murals room by room. Splendid!

This is a spectacular production. The pictures are beautiful and parallels the text amazingly well. Elegantly written and thoroughly researched, it is readily accessible to the general reader as well as to specialists. Illustrations are ample; in addition to photos of the murals in several stages, there are diagrams, charts, maps, examinations of symbols, etc.

Great service. Book as represented.

The Spectacle of the Late Maya Court by Mary Miller and Claudia Brittenham is a beautiful, thoughtful book. Mary Miller is the definitive expert on the art at Bonampak. I am very biased, I will admit: I was one of Mary's imaging team. I recorded the Bonampak Murals in B&W infrared film while working at the site in Chiapas with Mary's scholarly team, a privilege I will always treasure. As I say in a blog post on my own website, Bonampak will never truly be done. I think we will be learning more from Bonampak in the future, but for now, this is the most spectacular record and analysis there is, and well worth the price. As for that blog post I wrote, here is a link: [...]

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