Resilience and Sustainability: What Are We Learning from the Maya and Other Ancient Cultures?

Institute for Advanced Study, University of Minnesota
University Symposium on Site and Incitement
November 7-9, 2013
Symposium Venues:

Thursday, November 7, Keynote Lecture, 4-5:30 p.m.
Cowles Auditorium, Humphrey Center, University of Minnesota
301 19th Ave. S. Minneapolis, MN 55455 (hourly parking in 19th Ave. ramp)

Friday, November 8, Symposium Day 1, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Discovery Hall, Science Museum of Minnesota
120 W. Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55102 (museum ramp parking included in registration)

Friday, November 8, Maya Society lecture, 7:30-9 p.m.
112 Anderson Center, Hamline University
774 Snelling Ave. North, St. Paul, MN 55104 (hourly parking in Anderson Center Garage)

Saturday, November 9, Symposium Day 2, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Cowles Auditorium, Humphrey Center, University of Minnesota
301 19th Ave. S. Minneapolis, MN 55455 (hourly parking in 19th Ave. ramp)

Saturday, November 9, Reception and Cash Bar, 5-6 p.m.
Republic at Seven Corners
221 Cedar Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55454 (hourly parking S. Washington Ave. & 19th Ave. S.)

Panelists’ introductory papers and bios are available on-line; lectures and symposium proceedings will be available at http://z.umn.edu/maya
This symposium, “Resilience and Sustainability: What Are We Learning from the Maya and Other Ancient Cultures?” was inspired by the Science Museum of Minnesota’s one-of-a-kind exhibition, Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed, the largest exhibit ever created on the topic. Program partners have used this special place and time to create a forum for archaeologists, earth scientists, and sustainability scholars to be in conversation about boundary-crossing research. Together we will share disciplinary perspectives, question established assumptions, and, we hope, contribute to real-time solutions to some of today’s pressing problems.

Our panelists bring various theoretical perspectives, research agendas, and institutional perspectives. Several are participants in IHOPE (Integrated History and Future of People on Earth), a global undertaking committed to employing the past to inform the present. Many have expertise in collecting and interpreting data about environmental changes and human-land interactions at varied temporal and geographic scales. And others study local and global decision-making today, seeking to understand, and perhaps influence, our human trajectory into the future.

Building on the question posed in the symposium title, we also ask these and other questions: What do we currently think we are learning from past societies and their descendents? What should we be learning? How do frameworks such as resilience, collapse, and sustainability—and the assumptions and values that we associate with them, such as causality, geographical scale, temporality, and desirability—affect our interpretations of the Maya and other ancient cultures?

Thursday, November 7, 2013 at the University of Minnesota Institute for Advanced Study Thursdays at Four, Opening Lecture

Cowles Auditorium, Humphrey School of Public Affairs
Free and open to the public

4:00 p.m. LiDAR, Water, and the Demise of Greater Angkor
Roland Fletcher, University of Sydney, Australia

Welcome by Ann Waltner, University of Minnesota
Speaker introduction by Phyllis Messenger, University of Minnesota

The 2012 LiDAR survey of Angkor offers fundamental new insights into the water crises of the 13th to 16th centuries. Tree rings have shown that during that time Southeast Asia was experiencing extreme and unpredictable variability in the monsoons from mega-wet to severe drought. Archaeology has revealed alterations to the great reservoirs, or baray, and damage to the southern canals of the network of Greater Angkor. Now LiDAR has shown that major defensive works were in progress and that severe erosion was occurring within the urban area. The demise of Greater Angkor offers insight into the vulnerability to extreme climatic instability of giant low-density cities that are dependent on huge and intractable infrastructure.

Reception to follow
Resilience and Sustainability Symposium Day 1

Friday November 8, 2013 at the Science Museum of Minnesota
8:30 a.m. Registration; coffee and light breakfast buffet

9:00 a.m. Welcome; opening remarks
Paul Martin, Science Museum of Minnesota
Ann Waltner, University of Minnesota
Phyllis Messenger, University of Minnesota
Diane Chase, University of Central Florida: Goals of the symposium; questions to be addressed
Kathy Quick, University of Minnesota: Introduction to resilience and sustainability
Alison Wylie, University of Washington: Introduction to collaboration across disciplines and communities

10:00 a.m. Coffee break

10:15 a.m. Panel 1: Making archaeologists and their data about the past relevant to today’s issues: Report from the Maya realm
Arlen Chase, University of Central Florida
Patricia McAnany, University of North Carolina
Vernon Scarborough, University of Cincinnati
Moderator: Mark Brenner, University of Florida

11:45 p.m. Lunch (on your own)

1:00 p.m. Panel 2: Beyond the Maya: Case studies of ancient cultures’ responses to natural and anthropogenically induced environmental change
Clark Erickson, University of Pennsylvania
Roland Fletcher, University of Sydney
Jason Ur, Harvard University
Moderator: Vernon Scarborough, University of Cincinnati

2:30 p.m. Coffee break

2:45 p.m. Introduction to MAYA: Hidden Worlds Revealed
Ed Fleming, Science Museum of Minnesota

3:15 p.m. Tour of MAYA: Hidden Worlds Revealed

5:00 p.m. Dinner (on your own)
Maya Society of Minnesota Public Lecture

Friday, November 8 at Hamline University
Free and open to the public

7:30 p.m.  *Heritage without Irony: Archaeologists, Indigenous Mayan Communities & the Democratization of Knowledge*
Patricia A. McAnany, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Maya cultural heritage is situated at the busy intersection of archaeological practice, local community, and remains of the past. Dr. McAnany approaches these lines of intersection from historical, ethical, and philosophical perspectives. Multi-year and multi-sited heritage programs ground these perspectives and also provide insight to a significant challenge of heritage conservation: building new epistemic communities that bridge the chasm between local and global and democratize the production of archaeological knowledge. Indigenous Maya peoples who have participated in heritage programs give voice to the complexity of a relationship with a past that has been re-created by archaeologists and epigraphers. Describing successful programs as well as initiatives that were “lost in translation,” this talk provides an honest appraisal of the challenges of transcultural dialogue when confronting the great irony between an indigenous people with a valorized past and a present state of alienation from that past.

Reception to follow
Resilience and Sustainability Symposium Day 2

Saturday, November 9 at the University of Minnesota
9:00 a.m. Registration; coffee and light breakfast buffet

9:30-11:15 Panel 3: Putting humans in their place: Viewing ancient, modern, and future climate change within the context of ongoing Earth processes
Mark Edlund, Science Museum of Minnesota
Emi Ito, University of Minnesota
Calvin Alexander, University of Minnesota
Mark Brenner, University of Florida
Moderators: Skip Messenger, Hamline University; Josh Feinberg, University of Minnesota

11:15 p.m. Break and lunch buffet in Humphrey Atrium

1:00 p.m. Panel 4: Contemporary sustainability: Theory, practice, and policy
Scott Shoemaker, Science Museum of Minnesota
Clint Carroll, University of Minnesota
Carissa Schively Slotterback, University of Minnesota
David Valentine, University of Minnesota
Moderators: Kat Hayes, University of Minnesota; Ed Fleming, Science Museum of Minnesota

2:45 p.m. Break

3:00 p.m. Closing session: Synthesis and next steps
Diane Chase, University of Central Florida
Kathy Quick, University of Minnesota
Alison Wylie, University of Washington
Lewis Gilbert, University of Minnesota
Moderator: Phyllis Messenger, University of Minnesota

5:00 p.m. Reception and cash bar at Republic
Speakers

**E. Calvin Alexander, Jr., Morse-Alumni Professor, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Minnesota.** Dr. Alexander carries out research on the environmental impacts of karst. An initial interest in karst hydrology has expanded into the whole range of non-Darcian phenomena such as preferential flow in soils, and flow in fractured and granular media. Recent karst projects include work on the distribution and prediction of new sinkholes in southeastern Minnesota, on spring-shed tracing and mapping, and on the design of monitoring systems in karst terrains.

**Mark Brenner, Professor, Department of Geological Sciences, and Director, Land Use and Environmental Change Institute, University of Florida.** Dr. Brenner’s areas of specialty include limnology (the study of inland waters) and paleolimnology (the study of paleoclimate and paleoenvironments, using lake sediment cores). He conducts most of his research in tropical and subtropical lakes and watersheds. He has served as Co-Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Paleolimnology* since 2007.

**Clint Carroll, Assistant Professor, Department of American Indian Studies, University of Minnesota.** A citizen of the Cherokee nation, Dr. Carroll conducts his research at the intersection of Indigenous environmental governance and Indigenous environmental knowledge and practices—primarily, but not exclusively, in settler state contexts. He studies the ability of Indigenous nations to assert sovereignty over their lands and the extent to which this enables the perpetuation and continuation of unique ecological perspectives, knowledges, and practices.

**Arlen F. Chase, Chair and Pegasus Professor, Department of Anthropology, and Associate Dean, College of Sciences, University of Central Florida.** For more than 40 years, Dr. Chase has worked in the Maya area of Mesoamerica. For 30 years, he has co-directed excavations at Caracol, Belize. His research focuses on ancient urbanism, ceramic analysis, landscape archaeology, and the relationship between Maya hieroglyphic writing and archaeological data. With Diane Z. Chase and John F. Weishampel, he has also led pioneering efforts in applying laser-based remote sensing, or LiDAR, to the ancient Maya landscape.

**Diane Z. Chase, Pegasus Professor, Department of Anthropology, and Executive Vice Provost, University of Central Florida.** Dr. Chase’s primary focus of research is on the ancient Maya of Central America. Her research interests focus on archaeological method and theory in the Maya area with particular emphasis on complex societies and hermeneutics, ethnohistory, and osteological and mortuary analysis. For 30 years, she has co-directed excavations at Caracol, Belize. Her forthcoming book with A.F. Chase is *Maya Archaeology: Reconstructing an Ancient Civilization*.

**Mark Edlund, Senior Scientist, Science Museum of Minnesota.** Dr. Edlund’s research focuses on microscopic algae, especially diatoms, to understand historical environmental change. His work considers climate response timeframes ranging from analysis of Eocene “hot house” deposits, to rift lake sediment records (500ka-present), Holocene records, and consideration of recent warming impacts. He has studied biodiversity and ecological change in ancient lakes and landscapes in Mongolia since 1996, as well as in lakes in Canada and Russia.
Clark Erickson, Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Erickson works on raised fields in the Beni area of Bolivia, and is interested in how archaeology provides a long-term perspective on environmental change, biodiversity, and sustainable management. His Andean and Amazonian research focuses on the contribution of archaeology to understanding the complex human history of the environment and cultural activities that have shaped the Earth. His contributions include the human role in contemporary biodiversity, Indigenous knowledge systems, native agriculture, sustainable land use, and cultural landscape structure and aesthetics.

Joshua Feinberg, Associate Professor, Department of Earth Sciences, University of Minnesota. Dr. Feinberg’s research draws on the magnetic behavior and crystal orientation of minerals to understand questions about Earth processes operating on multiple scales. His research incorporates a strong multi-disciplinary approach including rock magnetism, mineral texture studies, scanning force microscopy, paleomagnetism, electron microscopy, fieldwork, and numerical modeling. He works on projects that explore applications to archaeology and anthropology, as well as climate records as chronicled by magnetic minerals in speleothems.

Ed Fleming, Curator of Archaeology, Science Museum of Minnesota. Dr. Fleming is curator of the Museum’s exhibit, Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed. His research focuses on the archaeology and material culture of North America, specifically the Upper Midwest during Late Pre-Contact times (ca. A.D. 1000 - 1400). He has done fieldwork in the Midwest, Ireland, and Belize; his current research focuses on the Late Woodland and Oneota presence at Spring Lake.

Roland Fletcher, Professor of Theoretical and World Archaeology, Department of Archaeology, University of Sydney, Australia, and Director of the Greater Angkor Project. Dr. Fletcher’s fields of expertise are the theory and philosophy of archaeology, the study of settlement growth and decline, and the analysis of large-scale cultural phenomena over time. Over the past 30 years, his teaching and research have created a multi-disciplinary research team of local and international research students and staff. He established and directs the Greater Angkor Project, which undertakes a wide range of projects in the region, from LiDAR mapping to planning for heritage management.

Lewis Gilbert, Managing Director, and Chief Operating Officer, Institute on the Environment, University of Minnesota. Dr. Gilbert’s career as an academic entrepreneur has focused on the design, implementation, and management of complex interdisciplinary activities in large research universities. He was a key architect in the creation of the Earth Institute at Columbia University and a central figure in the revitalization of the Nelson Institute at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has also worked on creation of the International Research Institute for climate prediction and creation of the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts.

Katherine Hayes, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, and affiliate in American Indian Studies, University of Minnesota. Dr. Hayes’ research, based in various North American colonial contexts, stems from a challenge to the dominant narratives about the inevitability of colonial outcomes. She is interested in issues of agency, negotiation, resistance, and opportunistic power, and has pursued these issues, most recently, at sites in New York and Minnesota. Her work addresses the tension between history and archaeology, memory and forgetting, and in conflicting notions of heritage. She is co-convener of the IAS Teaching Heritage Collaborative.
Emi Ito, Professor, Department of Earth Sciences, and Director, Limnological Research Center, University of Minnesota. Dr. Ito’s current research has two related areas of focus. One is centered on the reconstruction of past climate (especially moisture balance) using mainly stable isotope and trace element composition of inorganically formed and biogenic carbonates. The other seeks to gain a better understanding of processes that “connect” climate to proxy records of climate preserved in lake sediments.

Paul Martin, Senior Vice President, Science Learning Division, Science Museum of Minnesota. Mr. Martin leads a staff of exhibit and education professionals whose work to “turn on the science” has been widely recognized throughout the museum world. He has a long and varied career in museum programming and is known nationally as an innovator in creating physically, emotionally, and intellectually interactive visitor experiences.

Patricia McAnany, Kenan Eminent Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Dr. McAnany studies the intersection of ritual and economy, as well as cultural heritage issues for descendant Maya peoples. She serves as principal investigator of InHerit: Indigenous Heritage Passed to Present and co-director of Proyecto Arqueológico Colaborativo del Oriente de Yucatán. She is the co-editor with Norman Yoffee of Questioning Collapse: Human Resilience, Ecological Vulnerability, and the Aftermath of Empire (2009).

Phyllis Mauch Messenger, Grants Coordinator, Institute for Advanced Study, University of Minnesota; and President, Maya Society of Minnesota. Dr. Messenger is an anthropologist whose scholarship has focused on archaeological ethics and the management and preservation of cultural heritage. She has carried out archaeological research in Mexico, Honduras, and Minnesota. She is co-convener of the IAS Teaching Heritage Collaborative and program chair for the Resilience and Sustainability symposium.

Lewis C. Messenger, Jr., Professor, Department of Anthropology, Hamline University. Dr. Messenger’s research focuses on human-environment relationships over time; gathering climatic analog data for paleoclimatic reconstruction; and understanding emergent cultural complexity in moist tropical environments. He has carried out archaeological field research in southern Mexico, Belize and Honduras.

Kathryn S. Quick, Assistant Professor, Public and Nonprofit Leadership area, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota. Dr. Quick studies how managers in public and nonprofit organizations create opportunities for communities to address public issues together. She uses ethnographic research, interviews, and case studies to document how communities organize and support civic engagement.

Vernon Scarborough, Distinguished University Research Professor and Charles Phelps Taft Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Cincinnati. Dr. Scarborough’s work emphasizes sustainability and global water systems. By examining past engineered landscapes, he addresses both ancient and present societal issues from a comparative ecological and transdisciplinary perspective. He is co-editor with Arlen Chase of a forthcoming volume on resilience and vulnerability in the Maya lowlands, to be published by the American Anthropological Association.
Scott Shoemaker, Ethnology Research Assistant, Science Museum of Minnesota. A citizen of the Miami Nation of Indiana, Dr. Shoemaker carries out much of his scholarly work in the context of his work in Miami language, culture, and corn revitalization. He is interested in the relationship of sustainability to colonialism, Indigenous knowledge, and Indigenous agriculture, including his work with the Science Museum’s Ethnobotany Collection of Indigenous heirloom seeds.

Carissa Schively Slotterback, Associate Professor, Regional Policy and Planning area, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota. Dr. Schively Slotterback’s expertise includes environmental and land use planning, public participation, planning decision-making, plan implementation, and sustainable development. She is the founder and faculty director of the University of Minnesota Sustainability Faculty Network, and director of the Resilient Communities Program.

Jason Ur, John L. Loeb Associate Professor of the Social Sciences, Department of Anthropology, Harvard University. Dr. Ur specializes in early urbanism and cultural landscapes in the ancient Near East. His research focuses on the impacts of early urban communities on their landscapes using field survey and satellite remote sensing techniques, including declassified intelligence satellite photographs, in particular. His remote sensing studies have considered the extent of imperial irrigation systems in northern Iraq and northwestern Iran, and revealed pastoral nomadic landscapes in Iran and southeastern Turkey.

David Valentine, Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Minnesota. Dr. Valentine is a cultural and linguistic anthropologist with interests in gender, sexuality, U.S. social movements and politics, and conceptions of the future. His current research project extends his interest in imagination and human futures by focusing on commercial outer space entrepreneurs where he is investigating the social consequences of imagining the human species transformed by permanent settlement off world.

Ann Waltner, Director, Institute for Advanced Study, and Professor, Department of History, University of Minnesota. Dr. Waltner’s research interests lie in the social history of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century China, comparative women’s history, and world history. She is a former editor of the Journal of Asian Studies, and is coauthor, with M.J. Maynes, of Family: A World History (2012).

Alison Wylie, Professor, Departments of Philosophy and Anthropology, University of Washington. Dr. Wylie’s areas of specialization are philosophy of the social and historical sciences, specifically archaeology, and feminist philosophy of science. She is interested in how archaeologists establish knowledge claims about the cultural past, and in whether (or in what form) ideals of objectivity can be sustained given feminist arguments for recognizing the central role that contextual values play in the research process.
November 7, 2013

Dear Colleagues:

It is a great pleasure to welcome you to the Institute for Advanced Study at the University of Minnesota for the symposium “Resilience and Sustainability: What Are We Learning from the Maya and Other Ancient Cultures?” which we are hosting in collaboration with the Maya Society, the Science Museum of Minnesota, and Hamline University.

The Institute for Advanced Study, an interdisciplinary University-wide institute, hosts research scholars (both graduate students and faculty), funds research and creative collaboratives, and organizes a range of public programs. We collaborate with scholars from across the university and around the world on a variety of topics, ranging from “Crisis Economics” to “The Choreography of the Moving Cell.” The Institute’s 2012-14 University Symposium theme, “Site and Incitement,” provides a special opportunity to convene this international workshop to investigate ancient and present-day societal issues from comparative ecological and transdisciplinary perspectives.

Collaboration and interdisciplinary work are hallmarks of what we do and this symposium is a stellar example of both. It was of course inspired by the exhibit “Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed” at the Science Museum of Minnesota. It has been a pleasure to work with them on the development of this symposium. Much of the intellectual legwork was done by a terrific planning committee. This collaboration has been made easy by the fact that Phyllis Messenger, the president of the Maya Society, is a staff member at the IAS. Messenger and two colleagues, Kat Hayes from the Department of Anthropology and Josh Feinberg from the Department of Earth Sciences, have convened a faculty seminar on the topic of “Resilience and Sustainability,” with an enrollment of 25 faculty, students and staff who are eagerly awaiting this conference.

Water (or the lack thereof) forms a prominent theme in a number of your papers. Water is of special interest to us here at the University of Minnesota—the Mississippi River runs through campus, and one of the signature programs of the Institute for Advanced Study is River Life. We have received funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for a 2014-15 Sawyer Seminar for a project entitled “Making the Mississippi: Creating New Water Narratives for the Twenty-first Century and Beyond.”

Thus you can see that even before you arrived here, your work has touched on a number of things important to us, both as ways of working across disciplinary lines, and in the topics you have selected. I welcome you to Minnesota. I am confident that you will have a splendid conference, and I look forward to meeting you.

Yours,

Ann Waltner
Director, Institute for Advanced Study
Professor, History
November 4, 2013

Dear symposium participants,

On behalf of Hamline University and our faculty, staff and students, I want to welcome you to the Resilience and Sustainability Symposium and in particular to the Maya Society lecture by Dr. Patricia McAnany, being held at Hamline on Friday, November 8, 2013. This lecture is part of the series of public programs carried out as part of the collaboration among the Science Museum of Minnesota, the Maya Society, the University of Minnesota, and Hamline University, all inspired by the Museum’s wonderful exhibit, “Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed.”

Hamline University has a long and rich history of collaboration with these partners. Our students have interned and volunteered at the Science Museum, and some of our graduates are now on the staff there. We have been involved with the Maya Society of Minnesota for most of its 35-year history, providing a home for the organization’s annual lecture series and hosting its webpage. One of our anthropology faculty, Professor Skip Messenger, serves as advisor to the society, and has shared his enthusiasm for Maya studies with hundreds of students over the last three decades. Our connection with the Institute for Advanced Study in this project has been especially rich and rewarding, and we look forward to our continued partnership.

We value the opportunity that this long-term relationship with other institutions provides for our students to move out of the classroom and be involved in research and scholarship, and the opportunity to create new knowledge. We are especially glad to be part of this symposium, “Resilience and Sustainability: What Are We Learning from the Maya and Other Ancient Cultures?”

I commend you on this program and wish you success in your discussions and planning for future scholarly endeavors.

With all good wishes,

Eric Jensen, Provost
November 4, 2013

On behalf of the staff and volunteers of the Science Museum of Minnesota, I want to welcome you to the “Resilience and Sustainability” Symposium, to be held across the Twin Cities from November 7-9, 2013. As part of the symposium, you will be spending the full day at the museum on Friday, November 8th, where you will have the chance to explore our 17,000-square-foot temporary exhibition gallery and five permanent galleries which cover the topics of paleontology, physical science, technology, the human body, and peoples and cultures.

We are proud to be part of this very successful partnership with the Maya Society of Minnesota, Institute for Advanced Study – University of Minnesota, and Hamline University to present public programs in conjunction with the museum’s special exhibition Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed. Since June 2013, we have jointly held monthly lectures and workshops featuring leading Mayanists – many who were consultants on development of the exhibition.

Maya: Hidden Worlds Revealed explores the fascinating social, natural and spiritual realms of the ancient Maya through the eyes of powerful kings and queens and the lesser-known people who were the backbone of Maya society. It features immersive environments, authentic artifacts, and hands-on activities that tell the story of the ancient Maya and their modern descendants, while showcasing some of their most remarkable achievements in mathematics, writing, astronomy and calendars.

The Science Museum of Minnesota is committed to presenting the most scientifically sound principles in its exhibitions and educational programs and to helping its audiences stay informed about the latest scientific insights that will shape their lives. Because of this commitment, the museum presents information about global environmental change as a fundamental element of scientific literacy and critical thinking. Future Earth, our newest Science Museum of Minnesota-produced exhibition, explores the fact that humans – all 7 billion of us – are both the dominant agents of global change and the innovators who have the power to keep our planet thriving well into the future. What will Earth be like in 2050 with 9 billion people? No one knows. But as the healthiest, wealthiest, most educated and most connected population in Earth's history, we're in a good position to face the challenges ahead. As you can see, the connection to this symposium is very appropriate.

We are very excited to be part of the “Resilience and Sustainability: What Are We Learning from the Maya and Other Ancient Cultures?” Symposium. Thank you for attending and I wish you well throughout the event!

Sincerely,

Paul Martin
Senior Vice President, Science Learning Division
120 West Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102
tel. (651) 221-9444 fax (651) 221-6777
www.smm.org
November 5, 2013

Dear Symposium participants,

On behalf of the Maya Society of Minnesota, thank you for your participation in this symposium. Whether you are a panelist, an instructor or student attending with your class, a staff member or volunteer from one of our partners, or you have a general interest in the topics we will discuss, welcome! We look forward to a stimulating conversation.

The Maya Society is an enthusiastic partner in the series being presented in conjunction with the Science Museum’s amazing exhibit, MAYA: Hidden Worlds Revealed. When we were approached several years ago to discuss a possible collaboration, we immediately said yes! After all, the Maya Society was founded 35 years ago by interested students of Maya culture in collaboration with Science Museum staff and volunteers. We partnered with the Museum and the University of Minnesota to present the 1983 conference, “The Ethics of Collecting Cultural Property: Whose Culture? Whose Property?” And we have enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with Hamline University in hosting an annual lecture series on topics ranging from Maya archaeology and epigraphy to immigration issues today.

This symposium and the lecture and workshop series that began in June could not have been carried out by any one of our organizations alone. Each brings unique resources to the table, especially the creativity, vision, and dedication of the people involved. We are in awe of the talents of the Science Museum staff; they are on display in the exhibit, but they are also apparent in the way the staff builds relationships with diverse communities and pays attention to the details that make visitors feel welcome. Hamline University has embraced the opportunity to host the lecture series in the new Anderson Center, and we have had the support of everyone from the provost to anthropology students. My colleagues in the Institute for Advanced Study continue to display their multiple talents, good humor, and expertise in putting together a scholarly symposium. And the project has benefitted from the many generous contributions of other University colleagues.

Finally, I want to express my personal thanks to the planning committee and to the Maya Society executive board. This symposium truly would not have come to pass without their tireless work and support. We look forward to good conversation, new and strengthened relationships, and possibilities for future collaborations in research and public programs.

With warm regards,

Phyllis Mauch Messenger, Program Chair
President, Maya Society of Minnesota
This symposium is organized by the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS), University of Minnesota, with co-sponsor support from the Science Museum of Minnesota, the Maya Society of Minnesota, and Hamline University. Additional funding and support from these University of Minnesota sources: GPS Alliance Travel Fund; the Imagine Fund; U-Spatial; the Imagine Chair in Humanities, Art & Design; the Minnesota Center for Philosophy of Science; the IAS Teaching Heritage Collaborative; the Department of Anthropology; the Department of Asian Languages & Literatures; the Department of Earth Sciences; the Department of History; and the Institute on the Environment.

Symposium planning committee members include: Arlen Chase, Diane Chase, Josh Feinberg, Ed Fleming, Lewis Gilbert, Kat Hayes, Beth Mercer-Taylor, Phyllis Messenger, Skip Messenger, and Naomi Scheman.

Special thanks to the staff of the Institute for Advanced Study; the board of the Maya Society of Minnesota; staff and volunteers at the Science Museum of Minnesota; and faculty, staff and students at Hamline University. Thanks to members of the Fall 2013 Site and Incitement IAS Faculty Seminar on Resilience and Sustainability, facilitated by Josh Feinberg, Kat Hayes, and Phyllis Messenger. Thanks to staff and students at U-Spatial for organizing a special luncheon for Roland Fletcher, and for assistance with symposium maps.

Cover illustrations show segments of LiDAR 2.5 images from Caracol, Belize: Front--The central part of Caracol looking north into the site epicenter with the Conchita Causeway (right) and Pajaro-Ramonal Causeway (left) in the foreground passing by residential groups and through terraced fields. Back--Ancient Maya terraced fields and residential groups near the Guatemala-Belize border west of Caracol's Ceiba Terminus. Used with permission of A. and D. Chase, Caracol Archaeological Project.
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