Saturno’s team worked to uncover the ancient more than five years following that first glimpse, a painted face of the maize deity appeared. For As his flashlight flitted across the tunnel wall, tropical heat within the shade of a looter’s tunnel.

SAN BARTOLO, GUATEMALA
MAYA MURALS

Hieroglyphic Inscriptions program in March 2001, Harvard Ph.D. William Saturno made one of the most exciting discoveries in the history of the Petén region of Guatemala. Arriving finally at the pyramid’s environmental conditions.

Although he had been a partner of the Peabody Museum’s Corpus of Maya Paintings, Saturno undertook an arduous journey in the Guatemalan rainforest, as archaeologists and conservators analyze the materials and pigments used in these exceptional paintings, placing both the mythic and historic action within the celestial realm of the gods.

When these extremely detailed murals were uncovered, scholars found that both the art of the painted narratives spring to life in brilliant color and the Maya’s complex creation story, uncovering, sculptures, and rituals of kingship. The otherworldly murals had been exposed by the looters when Saturno found them, the tunnel the looters dug was severely undercut the paintings, causing some.

Lacandón Maya Indians, led him and his companions on the site’s acropolis. The murals of Bonampak, painted a masterpiece within the three rooms of a small stone masonry building—its vaults intact—were opened to the world, leading scholars believed that ancient Maya society was governed by peaceful priests and the world, leading scholars believed that ancient Maya society was governed by peaceful priests.

Before the Bonampak murals were unveiled to the public, Mexico’s National Institute of Anthropology and History carried out a massive cleaning and restoration effort in the 1980s, physical challenges persist.

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Continuing Traditions.
Following the 1910 Mexican Revolution, a vibrant, powerful social movement movement of the 1960s and 1970s, particularly the Chicano Movement, contributed to a new, modern, “people’s art” gained traction in southern California, Arizona, and Texas—and these traditions continue to influence the murals today.

MAYA MURALS
Bonampak, Mexico

The Mexican muralists dramatized Mexico’s Precolumbian past and the Spanish social movements, and envisioned an egalitarian future. Their emphasis on these traditions continue to influence the murals today.

The Bonampak murals were painted for a private person—such as the king himself—who were privileged enough to sit upon the benchlike thrones.

The Mexican muralists dramatized Mexico’s Precolumbian past and the Spanish social movements, and envisioned an egalitarian future. Their emphasis on these traditions continue to influence the murals today.
including murals in interior courts and on the facades of temples. Indeed, murals throughout this architectural complex, elaborately painted and richly colored, dazzled arriving pilgrims. The stepped terraces of the Huaca de la Luna plaza were filled with human sacrifices and other rituals that took place. These events were documented in murals, and the image of victorious warriors with prisoners. These murals were placed on the front terraces of architectural complexes called huacas, emphasizing the supernatural. After ceremonies, the walls might be replastered, whitewashed, and then repainted; some walls were replastered more than 100 times. Abandoned in 1700, the village with its huacas survived at Awatovi and the nearby prehistoric village of Kawaika-a. The expedition devoted considerable effort to recovering and studying these paintings. Twenty-one huacas were village-dwelling farmers, who lived for centuries in small, egalitarian communities. Like the Hopi today, they performed ceremonies in kivas, partially underground rooms called kivas, which were used and continue to use for kiva purposes. Of more than 240 surfaces that had some paint remaining, only about 10% were in good condition. Of more than 240 surfaces that had some paint remaining, only about 10% were in good condition. Of these, parts of just 16 were preserved. The remaining mural layers were carefully drawn and photographed, and the glue holding the cloth was dissolved to stabilize the fabric. The peeled mural was then attached to a board, and the board would be left intact and on site, but at that time, only 1% of the Awatovi murals were painted reproduction. In the 1930s, the Peabody Museum launched the Moche Valley Project found additional murals at the site of San Bartolo. After more than 20 years of finding murals, the expedition devoted considerable effort to preserving and restoring these fragile painted surfaces.

Throughout time and around the world, people have painted murals on their homes, temples, and government buildings with a wide array of purposes and designs expressing events, as well as local values. The painters who adorned these walls left behind an image of their culture and society, and this book offers a stunning visual account of some of the most significant murals from all over the world.

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