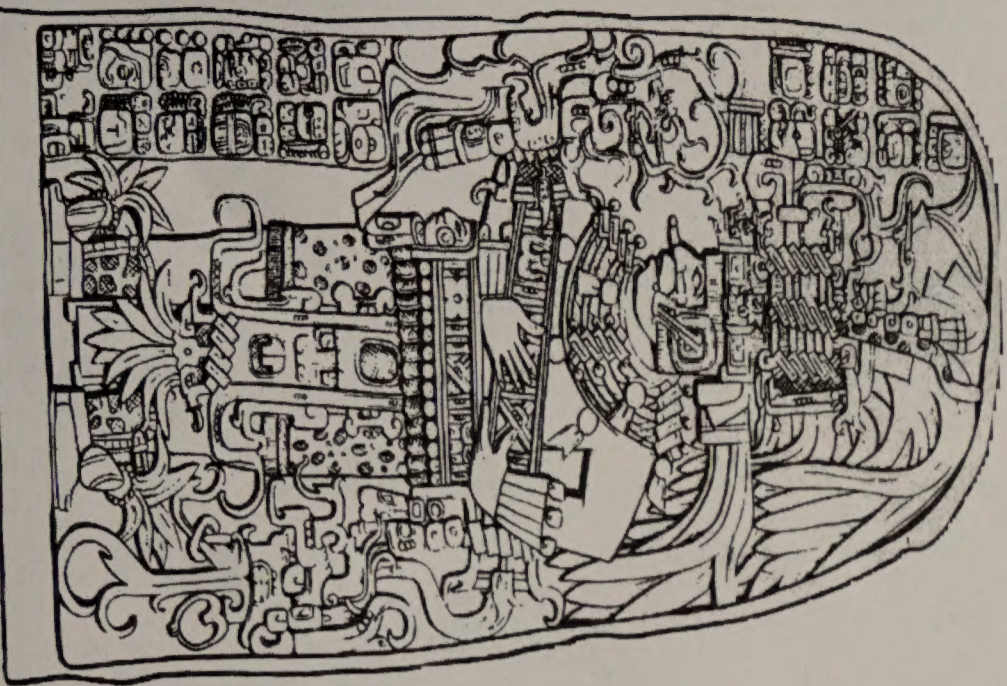


# Cultural Encounters

## Spain and the New World: A Collision of Cultures

### Weekend

On October 23-25, the Exploratorium and Humanities West present *Spain and the New World: A Collision of Cultures*, a weekend-long series of lectures, performances, panel discussions, and films that explores the epic encounter between Europeans and the "New World." This exciting symposium takes place in the Palace of Fine Arts Theater, next to the Exploratorium. Lecture topics include investigations of Native American, African, Spanish, Mayan, and Aztec cultures and their interactions, focusing on the way people in all parts of the world have been touched by the events following Columbus's arrival in the Caribbean in 1492.



This image of a Mayan ruler is replete with images that denote his place in Mayan cosmology. Hear professor Grant D. Jones speak about Mayan concepts of history and cosmology, and how the Hispanic conquest fit into those views, on Saturday, October 24.

The characteristic interdisciplinary approaches of the Exploratorium and Humanities West are reflected in this weekend symposium by the inclusion of a broad variety of perspectives. Lecturers representing many cultures and disciplines address issues around the politics, geography, history, science, and literature of the era. Musical performers examine the new rhythms and patterns that have emerged from the meeting of diverse cultures. Panel discussions allow for an exchange of ideas and viewpoints. And the widely praised film *Cabeza De Vaca* presents an imaginary reconstruction of an actual conquistador's experiences in the New World.

Friday night's opening reception sets the stage for this thought-provoking, multifaceted symposium, and all-day programs on Saturday and Sunday provide a panorama of compelling and colorful viewpoints of this momentous historical period.

#### Friday, October 23: 8pm - 11pm

- Opening night includes a lecture by UCLA Professor of History Gary Nash, entitled "Two Worlds Meet: The Confrontation of European and Native American Cultures," followed by a musical performance by the Ensemble Alcatraz. Afterward there is a reception for the speakers and audience with refreshments and a musical performance by Conjunto Social y Folklorico. Guests can also enjoy a private viewing of the Exploratorium's current exhibition, *Finding Your Way: An Exploratorium Festival of Human Navigation*.

#### Saturday, October 24: 10am - 4:30pm

- William McNeill, Professor of History at the University of Chicago, addresses the pivotal encounter of cultures which has affected biological and cultural systems on a global scale.

- Professor Emeritus Jan Carew, from the African-American and Third World Studies Department at Northwestern University, examines powerful collaborations among such diverse peoples as African Americans with Indians in Hispaniola, and Scots with African Americans, Cherokees, and other Native Americans in Florida, all of whom met as a result of the Columbian encounter.

- Combining images, geography, and history, UCLA Professor of Geography Norman Throver explores early indigenous Amerindian mapping, and goes on to discuss European portolan charts and Ptolemaic maps.

- Grant D. Jones, Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at Davidson College, introduces "The Last Maya Kingdom," describing the Mayan prophecies that depicted the European conquest as but a single stage in a grander cycle of history.



Professor Michael Coe, from Yale University's Department of Anthropology, depicts the devastation of Aztec culture caused by Hernán Cortez's conquest of central Mexico.

#### Sunday, October 25: 11am - 4:30pm

- History Professor Stuart Schwartz, from the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, discusses Columbus's vision, its context in Spanish history, and its contribution to the destruction of the peoples of the Caribbean.

- Francisco Alarcón, Chicano poet and professor in the Spanish department at the University of California, Davis, presents a view of the Mesamerican concepts of Time and Self, as well as an interpretation of the encounter between Aztecs and the Spanish, in poetry, song, and narrative drawn from the Aztec calendar.

- The widely praised, feature-length film *Cabeza De Vaca* portrays the adventures of the Spanish explorer in his transformative journey across Florida into Mexico.

- Professor Clara Sue Kidwell, from the University of California, Berkeley, Native American Studies Department, moderates a panel discussion with the lecturers, which includes questions from the audience, to critique *Cabeza De Vaca* in the context of the various disciplines represented by the speakers.

Poet and professor Francisco Alarcón interprets the meeting of the Aztecs and Spaniards in a presentation that includes poetry and song, Sunday, October 25.

#### Tickets

- Friday night, October 23 (includes reception): \$30,
- Exploratorium members \$27, students/seniors \$15
- Saturday, October 24: \$10
- Sunday, October 25: \$10

Tickets are available from City Box Office (392-4400) or the Exploratorium Store. Further details are available by calling Humanities West at (415) 387-8780.

Have a delightful lunch at the nearby St. Francis Yacht Club and celebrate Spain and the New World: A Collision of Cultures with our honored speakers. Space is limited to "Friends of Humanities West" and Exploratorium Contributing Members. To assure your place, call (415) 387-8780.