



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF AMERICA

Boulder, Colorado

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*All events at the University of Colorado Museum of Natural History  
unless otherwise noted*



14 September 2011, Wednesday, 7:00 pm

Dr. Nancy T. de Grummond (Florida State University)

**Perceptions of Prophecy: Images of Divination in Etruscan, Greek and Roman Art**

The lecture explores images of acts of prophecy in Etruscan, Greek and Roman religious art. Ancient Italian rituals of divination required certain gestures, postures, instruments and personnel, and these can be analyzed and organized to show a complete vocabulary of iconography utilized to depict oracles and prophecies. The inquiry starts with themes shown in engravings on Etruscan mirrors, which were themselves used as instruments of prophecy and which show some of the most famous instances of purely Etruscan prophetic myth: the story of the prophet Cacus and the Viperas Brothers, and the story of the child Tages, who sang out the principles of the *Etrusca disciplina*, which was then transmitted to all the Etruscans. What is surprising is that many of the motifs and themes found in Etruscan art of the fourth and third centuries BCE can be identified also in Greek and Roman representations. The famous Villa of the Mysteries at Pompeii has numerous prophetic motifs which long went unrecognized, but which, once identified, make a significant difference in the interpretation of the mytho-ritual depictions of the Mysteries.



5 October 2011, Wednesday, 7:00 pm

Dr. Arthur A. Joyce (University of Colorado)

**Human Impact on the Landscapes of Ancient Oaxaca, Mexico**

This talk summarizes 25 years of interdisciplinary research on the long-term history of human impact on the environment along the Río Verde drainage basin of Oaxaca. Geomorphological research in the Nochixtlán Valley of the Río Verde's upper drainage basin provides evidence for four cut-and-fill cycles from the Terminal Pleistocene to the present. The research indicates that after 2000 B.C. sedentary farmers cleared the valley of its natural vegetation increasing sediment transfers and the frequency of local cut-and-fill cycles. As early as ca. 1000 B.C. farmers modified streams by building cross-channel agricultural terraces known

as lama-bordos. The erosion in the highlands altered the drainage system and led to changes in the agriculturally productive floodplain of the lower Río Verde Valley on the Pacific coast more than 100 km downriver. Sediment discharged into the Pacific Ocean also contributed to the formation of bay barriers and back barrier estuaries. The implications for human settlement and subsistence in the lowlands are considered.



9 November 2011, Wednesday, 7:00 pm  
Dr. Diane A. Conlin (University of Colorado)  
[Villa of Maxentius](#)



7 December 2011, Wednesday, 7:00 pm  
Dr. Nicholas R. Rockwell (University of Denver)  
[The Other Greeks: Thebes and Boeotia during the Classical Age of Greece](#)

The history of ancient Greece traditionally focuses on Athens and Sparta, but the city-state of Thebes and its surrounding Territory of Boeotia played a central role in politics and warfare during the classical age of Greece (479-323 BC). Developing one of the most formidable armies in ancient Greece, while also implementing democracy in a typically oligarchic region, Thebes became the dominant power in fourth century Greece. This lecture will look at the sources of information, particularly archaeological evidence, for reconstructing a history of one of the leading states in classical Greece.



28 January 2012, Saturday, 7:00 pm  
Dr. Thomas L. Sever (NASA)  
Anthropology Department Distinguished Archaeology  
Lecturer. Co-sponsored with Department of Anthropology;  
**AT HALE SCIENCE 270, ANTHROPOLOGY, CU.**  
[TBA](#)



7 March 2012, Wednesday, 7:00 pm  
Dr. Tyler Lansford (University of Colorado)

### [The Theater of Pompey](#)

Built in 55 BC, the Theater of Pompey was not only the first permanent theater in the city of Rome but also a monument to the glory of its builder – Julius Caesar’s bitterest rival, Pompey the Great. In a time of political and social unrest, the construction of a building in which thousands of people could assemble was controversial: Pompey thwarted resistance to the idea by locating his theater on private property and by crowning it with a temple so as to suggest that the monument was of a fundamentally religious character. With a seating capacity of 11,000, it remained a dominant feature of Rome’s urban landscape for at least six centuries. In this illustrated lecture, Professor Lansford will explore the architecture of the building, its role in the projection of Pompey’s public image, and its ultimate fate in the medieval and modern periods.



4 April 2012, Wednesday, 7:00 pm  
Dr. Stephen H. Lekson (University of Colorado)

### [Mimbres: the Archaeology Behind the Pottery](#)

Mimbres pottery, displayed in museums around the world, was created in 11th century CE towns in today's southwestern New Mexico. Despite the pottery's fame, Mimbres archaeology lags behind the rest of the Southwest. Mimbres towns were remarkably large, supported by canal irrigation farming. Mimbres society was surprisingly cosmopolitan, with close connections to Hohokam, Chaco, and Mesoamerica. Recent research by the University of Colorado sheds new light on this famous yet poorly understood ancient culture.

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