Hold Augmented Reality Artifacts that Emerge from Our Cases

Summer Solstice is a time of emergence: The earth emerges into a new phase of its orbit around the sun, farm foods emerge from the ground for upcoming harvest and our artifacts will (virtually) emerge from their cases for you to take a closer look and see more detail than if you were in the museum in person!

Complete the activity below then run an amazing augmented reality app on your phone to “hold” two of our objects:

**TAWERET**
The Egyptian hippo-headed goddess known as the Mother of the Sun

**MAYA PLATE FOR CHOCOLATE**
Made specifically for holding the seeds of a cacao tree (chocolate)
MATERIALS

• Printer and printer paper or white cardstock*
• Scissors
• Glue stick and/or clear adhesive tape
• A compatible device (iPhone, Android or Windows Surface)

* Don’t have a printer at home? No problem! You can still examine the 3D models of these artifacts on the museum’s Sketchfab site:
  Go to Taweret Sketchfab website
  Go to Maya Plate Sketchfab website

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Print and make your own MERGE Cube
   Download Instructions

2. Download “Object Viewer” app on your phone

3. Run the app and enter the following code:
   Taweret: 55B RJN   Maya Plate: YV6 EWQ   Enlarged version: 6RR G6K

4. Point your phone’s camera at your MERGE Paper Cube

Watch this video to learn how to make a MERGE Paper Cube!
TIPS FOR ENTERING THE CODES

Menu  Code Search  Enter Code  Play!

FUN FACTS
In the museum, our artifacts are protected inside cases, so it’s impossible to see all the details. But on our virtual versions you can really see everything! Below are descriptions and fun facts about these objects.

On Taweret Try to Find:
- Lion Paws
- Crocodile Tail
- “Sa” hieroglyph (“protection”)
- The museum number

On the Maya Plate Try to Find:
- A ring of glyphs (writing)
- The Maize God and a dwarf
- 12 Birds (cormorants)
- Holes in the support legs
ABOUT THIS ARTIFACT: TAWERET

This ancient Egyptian figurine was originally discovered in a tomb in Thebes, a city whose ruins are in the modern city of Luxor, Egypt, about 100 miles from Cairo. It is about 2,600 years old and came to the museum over 100 years ago in 1902, brought back by the museum’s founder, Professor David Gordon Lyon, who obtained it in Cairo during his expedition. It is made of faience, which is a type of ancient ceramic/glass. It depicts the fertility goddess Taweret, who is composed of three animals: a hippo (head), a crocodile (tail), and a lion (paws). Taweret is the protective goddess of pregnant women, women who are in the process of giving birth, and mothers of newborns and young children. Because of her association with birth, figurines of Taweret were often placed in burials to help people with their rebirth into the afterlife.

FUN FACTS

- Taweret is a good protector goddess because she is aggressive towards harmful or evil deities
- The actual meaning of “Taweret” can be roughly translated as: “She whose name we will not say out loud (out of respect and fear of angering her).”
- Taweret was a household deity. Unlike some other Egyptian gods who are only represented in temples, ordinary people had figurines of Taweret in their homes.
- She is an old goddess, appearing early in Egypt’s history for over 4,000 years
- Taweret is almost always shown with the hieroglyph “Sa” which means “protection.”
- In this figurine, she is holding “Sa” with her paws in front.
- The Sa hieroglyph commonly appears on amulets and necklaces.
- The form of “Sa” is supposed to represent a shepherd’s rolled-up protective shelter.
ABOUT THIS ARTIFACT: MAYA PLATE FOR CHOCOLATE

This ancient Maya ceramic plate was discovered by archaeologist Raymond E. Merwin over 100 years ago in 1912 in the tomb of an elite Maya lord at the archeological site of Holmul in Guatemala. Archaeologists describe it as a “polychrome tripod” plate, which means “painted with several colors and has three legs.” The plate is over 1,200 years old, and the writing on the inside of the rim says it originally belonged to a different ruler at the nearby Maya city of Naranjo. It was common for Maya kings to exchange valuable gifts like this to strengthen the friendship between their cities. The writing also says that this plate was made specifically to hold cacao, or chocolate, seeds. Cacao seeds were ground up into a powder and made into a drink for only the elites to enjoy. One reason cacao was considered so valuable is because of its rarity: the cacao tree can grow only in a few places because it needs very specific conditions to grow, including just the right amount of sunlight.

FUN FACTS

- The image on the inside of the plate shows a Maya king doing a ceremonial dance dressed as the Maize god. This is a common scene found on other Maya vessels, especially those made during the time when this one was created—about 800 AD—and is called “The Holmul Dancer” motif.

- The costume of the king shows his power: it has a “back rack” with supernatural beings from the heavens and the underworld, and represents the king carrying the cosmos on his back.

- There is a dwarf seen in the lower left of the image, and this links the scene to a story in Maya mythology where a supernatural dwarf assists the maize god who sets the three hearth-stones of creation into the heavens.

- The birds depicted on both the inside and the outside of the plate are cormorants, which are indicated by their hooked beaks. Cormorants appear on many pieces of Maya art.
• Cormorants are water birds, and this makes them symbolic of the Maya concept of the watery underworld, a source of elite power.

• The four cormorants painted on the outside are placed in the positions of the four cardinal directions: North, South, East, and West.

• Count the number of cormorants painted on the inside. What directions do you suppose they represent?

• The tripod feet are hollow and each contains a small clay marble. Can you imagine the sound this plate would make when it was shaken? This “musical” feature adds to the plate’s specialness as a gift between elites.

• The symbols painted around the entire inside of the rim are “glyphs” which is a form of pictorial writing.

• The glyphs explain who the plate was made for (a king of Naranjo), why it was made (to hold cacao seeds), and it lists the names and titles of the original owner, including the god he is associated with—a deity called “Seven-Centipede-Eagle Sun-Lord” (“Huk Chapat Tsikin K’ihnich Ajaw”).