

A Journey to the 13th Baktun Completion Through Three Countries Along the 15°-North Sacred Latitude: Izapa, Antigua, and Copan

John Major Jenkins. January 6, 2013



This will be an account of my experiences during an event-packed trip to Central America between December 14 and December 30, 2012. The main features are: 1) Izapa, the origin of the Long Count calendar that gives us the 2012 period-ending date, a pre-Classic site that is the source of my evidence-based reconstruction of what 2012 meant to the ancient creators of the 2012 calendar; 2) Antigua, Guatemala, where I did a talk at the Jades store and museum to a group of forty people; 3) the Classic Maya site of Copan, Honduras, where I gave a presentation with progressive Maya scholars at the *Great Return Conference* and spent ten hours at the archeological site of Copan on the 21st, with new observations that support my “2012 alignment theory.” These three locations are along the 15° latitude which, for astronomical reasons, identifies the likely origin zone of the Mesoamerican calendars. Thereafter, I returned to Antigua where I spent Christmas with friends and hung out for several days before returning home to Colorado through Atlanta, visiting my friend Jim Reed there.

The first destination was Izapa, a small early Maya site in southern Chiapas, Mexico, a few miles from the Guatemala border. I was going there on a last minute addition to my itinerary, filming a documentary on my work with two people from a company called Gaia. This was a fairly lucrative deal and I agreed to do it, despite the pressure it put on my already packed schedule. I left my house in Colorado at 2:30 am on December 14th for the early morning flight out. Meeting Anita (interviewer) and Kabir (camera guy) at the Denver airport, our plane was delayed in departing. This caused us to miss our connection in Houston. We thus arrived late to Mexico City and missed our connection there, on another airline carrier. Because of the separate airline booking, the airline would not simply transfer us the next available flight — we had to pay for another ticket. Unfortunately, the Gaia reps forgot to bring the company credit card. There was one seat left on the 11 p.m. flight to Tapachula (near Izapa). We decided I should take it, and they would fly in the next day. I had to pay for the flight myself. Arriving at 3 a.m. to Tapachula (after flight departure delay), I took a taxi to our arranged hotel, but they claimed the credit card on file, from Gaia, was applicable only to the reservation and could not be used to pay for the room. WTF? It was now 4 a.m. I paid for the three nights with my credit card. I had to get online to inform Tony, the driver I had set up, of the schedule change.

Three hours after I got to sleep my room phone rings. It was my friend Deborah Skye, who was meeting us there to tour the site and share the experience. I was

exhausted, but got up and met her downstairs. We had breakfast and I called Tony. He arrived at 11 a.m. and we went to Izapa. During this pre-filming reconnaissance, Skye revisited the old Olmec statue and the pregnant woman statue near the ballcourt, which she believes is a key to the entire site as a receptacle for cosmic energy. It does have an interesting astronomical orientation.



Skye with the reclining sky-looking pregnant woman at Izapa, receiving the solar energy infusion

It was good to have this time to revisit all three groups at Izapa, and scope out filming options for when Anita and Kabir arrived. I have seen attention to Izapa grow since my first visit to it in June of 1990. This has occurred exclusively through my work, as published in my various books and articles going back to 1994. A few professional Maya scholars had recognized that “the Izapan civilization” was very likely involved in the formulation of the Long Count calendar, but no scholar had explored the possibility that evidence for how the 13-Baktun period-ending was thought about — December 21, 2012 — might be found at Izapa. This became the main approach in my work. The evidence at Izapa integrates three disciplines: iconography (the carved monuments), archaeo-astronomy (alignments of buildings and monuments), and mythology (the Maya Creation Myth that is depicted on Izapa’s carved monuments). The union of these three fields of study is found in the Izapa ballcourt which embodies the central meaning of the ballgame in the Creation Myth.

I was the first investigator of Izapa to notice and publish that the ballcourt is aligned to the dawning December solstice sun. The throne on the west end of the

ballcourt symbolizes solar rebirth. We were at the ballcourt on December 15 and 16, and no one was around at the site. However, it was quite clear that celebration events were being planned for the morning of the 21st. My friend Tony was going to be there. I had put Izapa on the 2012 map, and I was interested in seeing what kind of turn out might occur for sunrise in the Izapan ballcourt.



JMJ in front of the ballcourt throne. December 15, 2012. Notice the four seating stones on the rise behind the throne. From those seats, viewers can see the dawning December solstice sun.

The Gaian crew arrived late that afternoon, and we videotaped me discussing my work and got some stock B-role footage around the hotel. The next day we were up before dawn to get the sunrise near Izapa. It was the 16th, within five days of the solstice and therefore the horizon position of the dawning sun would not be much different. We also went to the coast and got footage of the ocean and the beach, and various context shots. It was going to be a long day. We then went to Izapa and were able to get footage, with camera. This was totally unheard of due to filming restrictions at Maya sites, but I had paved the



way the previous day. We visited all three of the main monument groups and also got footage of the jungle in the surrounding area.

We then drove over to the Parque del Chocolate Monument Park — a modern construct that emulates my “2012 alignment theory,” in that it arranges a huge symbolic game-ball and goal-ring *aligned with the solstice sunrise horizon*. This was designed by local architect Jorge Gonzalez Chong and it was a State of Chiapas funded project. I learned about it in June (2012), and discovered how my presentations at the university and the planetarium in Tapachula in 2007, 2008, and 2010, inspired the design. It was thus clear that my work was making an impact on the local appreciation of Izapa. This was also noted in a report written in 2010 by sociologist Renato Johnsson, “[Cultural Tourism at Izapa](#)” with, thankfully, an accurate presentation of my role in putting Izapa on the 2012 map and in critiquing misleading popular takes on the 2012 phenomenon.



*JMJ at the Monument Park that utilizes his “2012 alignment theory.”
December 16, 2012. The solstice sun rises through the goal-ring*

The Monument Park has a Creation Text carved into the sidewalk (near the tall light-pole on the left in the photo above). If you stand there to contemplate the Creation Text, which was modified to depict the December 21, 2012 date in the Long Count, you will be perfectly aligned to see the solstice sun rise through the huge goal-ring. Sr. Gonzalez Chong took a picture on the morning of December 21:



Pretty cool. There was a huge local celebration at this Monument Park, at sundown on December 21. My work at Izapa is ideologically supported by two non-profits, *The Maya Conservancy* (U.S.-based) and the *Izapa Cosmos* civil association (Mexico-based), with special support from Mary Lou Ridinger and my friends at the Jades S.A. museum and store in Antigua, Guatemala.

We next drove up the slopes of Tacana volcano to El Palomar, a beautiful natural area overlooking the Suchiate River — the border with Guatemala. There, we set up the camera and did an hour interview about my work. Then we went to the museum in Tapachula and got more footage, of me explaining Stela 25, followed by a few beers at the Luz de Luna restaurant on the central park. Wrapping it up by 9 p.m., after a 16-hour day, I had to pay Tony myself for his transpo services. We all departed on the 17th. This Gaiaam project was fast-tracked and a 38-minute presentation was edited and broadcast on December 21; it is offered for sale in DVD and download formats on their website. I have not yet seen the final result.

So, arising at 5 a.m. on the 17th, I took a taxi with Skye to the bus station. She was departing north to Palenque, and I was heading south to Guatemala City and Antigua. Crossing the border into Guatemala was smooth, and I arrived to Guatemala City by 2 p.m., followed by a hectic shuttle to Antigua by 4 p.m. I quickly met with Mary Lou from Jades, S.A. and got situated in a spare room. I had a 15-minute breather and then was taken to the Jades museum and store where I gave a one-hour talk to a group of about 40 people, including the group that Mary Lou's sister, Georgeann, was bringing to Izapa the

very next day. It went well, and was followed by a dinner at Panza Verde where I sat with Frank, Brett, Kirsten, April, and Carol. I was invited to visit San Miguel de Allende. The evening went a bit late, and I had to get up at 5:30 a.m. the next morning, to take the shuttle to Copan in Honduras, supposedly a six-hour trip but it actually took nine.

Mary Lou's night watchman woke me up, and handed me a cup of coffee. That was thoughtful, but sometimes thinking isn't involved in thoughtfulness. As I puked on the bus three hours later, I realized that the coffee was no doubt made in his little guard shack using the tap water. In many areas of Central America, you don't even want to clean your toothbrush with the tap water. I had been poisoned. My stomach revolted. By the time we reached the Honduran border at el Florido, a place I had passed through in 1988 and 2007, I was delirious. Having held onto continence for as long as possible, I retained the viral poison in my system for too long and now was processing it all through the permeable blood-brain barrier.

Leaving the shuttle with other travelers, I stumbled through checking out of Guatemala. Walking the mandatory no-man's land to the Honduran check-in building, a distance of 300 yards filled with cripples, beggars, money-changers, and hookers, I felt my mind disintegrating in a kaleidoscopic carnival of impending purging. Luckily, I spied a bathroom along the way. I exploded out of both ends. There was no toilet paper. I staggered out the door, and I guy walked by with a roll. I asked him for some. This purging and poisoning was very humbling. I had already puked into a bag on the bus, sitting among other travelers. It seemed somehow appropriate, to be purging in that liminal zone between realms. After checking out of Guatemala, and before officially checking into Honduras, I was officially NOWHERE. In the *gunungagap*, the crack between the worlds, in Xibalba — the Maya underworld. And it was surreal. I stumbled toward the immigration office, but felt another wave of purging come on, so I returned to the bathroom and hurled violently. I felt better now. I got in line, checked into Honduras, paid \$3, and continued on the shuttle toward Copan.

I was in Honduras just a few months ago, in late October, with film director Shannon Kring Buset, promoting and doing screenings and press conferences for her film, *2012: The Beginning*, which features my work. I didn't visit the Classic Maya site of Copan on that trip, since it is a bit out of the way, but attended events in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula in a turbocharged thirty-hour schedule, after which I flew directly to Canada for another screening and presentation.

Yeah, the last six months have been extremely challenging and busy. Shannon was instrumental in designing the *Great Return conference*, to which I was now going, and it included another screening of the film (over 1000 people came!) and talks by the most progressive Maya scholars and archaeologists: Barbara MacLeod, David Sedat, and Michael Grofe. Little did I know but new discoveries would occur during the conference and everyone would enjoy sharing the process of collaborative investigation.

Arriving to the town of Copan Ruinas, I felt the waves of purge rising again. I jumped in a little motorized trike-taxi (called a "took-took") and rode the bumpy road along the river and then into the hills to the San Lucas Hacienda. As my deliriums returned, I had the odd thought, "It's a good thing I hurled at the border otherwise this took-took ride would be hellacious." But it WAS hellacious. Arriving, I stumbled out and was greeted by the conference host, Flavia Cueva. I quickly also met Franklin and Barbara, but plead my case for an impending purge and was quickly brought to my room.

The poison was still with me, and for the next seven hours I worshipped the porcelain god, alternately from both ends of my being. I was struck by the physical and mental discomfort of the delirium, swimming in the bed-sheets, being tortured with odd, macabre, repeating loops of illogical thought-streams. I began to feel that my experience was oddly appropriate, and was really a gift, to purge me of any hubris or self-importance at this critical juncture on my long road to the December 21st date. It was 36 years since I first encountered the date. As I pseudo-slept in fevered hallucinations, I remembered how Tezcatlipoca betrayed Quetzalcoatl, but in so doing gave him the experience of limitation, of forgetting his true divine nature. Thus he could truly be an infinite being, having experienced the state of limitation and suffering. So too with Judas and Jesus — did Judas betray Jesus, or was he fulfilling God's will? My night-watchman, and his unexpected gesture of wake-up juice, may have been guided or goaded by unseen forces, intent on giving me this experience, necessary perhaps for creating a new receptivity and, coming through it on the other side, a direct experiential *feeling* of renewal and rebirth. You got to go to hell before you get to heaven. And you have to *feel* it all.



JMJ at San Lucas Hacienda, December 23

By 11 p.m. I did feel better. In the room next door, I heard my friend Kristian (KA) arriving, with his wife Susan. I decided to get up, to say hello and try to converse, as my presentation was to take place the very next day. I was able to form sentences, and felt the worst had passed. I felt renewed, having purged out toxins on many levels — personal life stuff, all the negative distorting projections onto me and my work from the media, rabid religious fundamentalists, professional scientists, and the marketplace, all of which have been indelibly infected by utter stupidity when it comes to 2012. I have advocated for many years that we should try to reconstruct what 2012 meant to the ancient Maya, and I have offered, and argued for, a likely picture of what the ancient Maya intended 2012 to mean, in astronomical and ideological terms. It's been a long

journey to reach this point, seeing 2012 progress from a total non-topic in academia to a place of respectable, rational treatment.

And there I was at Copan, on December 19th, giving my final pre-2012 presentation. The audio for it is here, in full: <http://www.alignment2012.com/WS320253.WMA>.



John Major Jenkins giving presentation at the Gaia Pavilion, December 19, 2012. Photo by Barbara Baggett / JB Journeys

This audio can be matched or synchronized with the Power Point presentation, also online here for downloading: <http://www.alignment2012.com/COPAN2012.ppt>. It was held at the Gaia Pavilion at the San Lucas Hacienda, which overlooks the Copan valley and from which part of the site can be seen. In fact, from the Structure 22 “Milky Way” temple at Copan, you can look across the valley and see the Gaia Pavilion:



The Gaia Pavilion at the Hacienda San Lucas, where I gave my presentation, as viewed from Copan's Milky Way structure. December 21, 2012

I had slept okay the previous night. I lingered in my room, feeling a bit queasy and dehydrated, and worked on my presentation. It was a beautiful evening and it went well. All of the participants in the *Great Return Conference* were there, and many local people came too, friends and relatives of Flavia's. Dinner followed, and I sat with Barbara MacLeod and Michael Grofe. Barb is a veteran Maya scholar and epigrapher, with a sensitivity to astronomy. She was behind a lot of the breakthrough discoveries of the 1980s and 1990s, some of which were attributed to her friend and colleague Linda Schele. Barb continues to do cutting-edge work, and with archaeologist Sven Gronemeyer she thoroughly deciphered the text of Tortuguero Monument 6, which for six years was *the only* Classic Period text we knew about that mentioned the 2012 period-ending date.

The monograph they wrote was published in August of 2010 and constitutes the first offering by scholars that attempts to reconstruct what the ancient Maya thought about 2012. To this day, however, *there have been no full-scale books written by a "professional," degreed, Maya scholar* that attempts to reconstruct what the ancient Maya thought about 2012. There have more recently been (in 2011 and 2012) a few papers published that, in part, offer some suggestions — in addition to the MacLeod-Gronemeyer monograph — but no dedicated books. The trade books on 2012 by Maya scholars (Aveni, Stuart, Van Stone, Restall & Solari) were instead critical and debunking in nature, largely reacting to the doomsday refrain in the marketplace. My own *books* dedicated to *reconstructing what the Maya thought about 2012* now number seven.

Michael Grofe received his PhD from the University of California in 2007, with an astounding dissertation on astronomy in the Dresden Codex. In cutting-edge papers published by Cambridge University Press, the University of Texas Press, and elsewhere, his work continues to identify ways that the ancient Maya were tracking the tropical year, the sidereal year, and the precession of the equinoxes, with great accuracy. His work therefore addresses an astronomical premise within my own “2012 alignment theory,” which requires that the ancient Maya could calculate the precession of the equinoxes. In his presentation the next day, December 20, he presented new insights into some of the Copan monuments, apply a methodology for reconstructing the dates. It was amazing!

As I had written in my 2000 IMS newsletter piece, the dedication date of Stela C (9.14.0.0.0 = December 1, 711 AD) was clearly intended to target the alignment of the sun, on that date, with the dark rift/ Crossroads area of the Milky Way — echoing the solstice alignment on 13.0.0.0.0 in 2012. There’s more to share about Grofe’s, MacLeod’s and Sedat’s very interesting presentations, but I must keep this brief. At the site we enjoyed studying the eroded glyphs on Stela C closely, a monument that Frederick Catherwood had drawn in its fallen state in 1840:



“A Fallen Idol.” Frederick Catherwood, 1840. The glyphs in the vertical column on the still-standing portion of the stela are inaccurately drawn.



The same view photographed by Maudslay in 1885. The glyphs appear to survive in a decent state here, but Annie Hunter's drawings from the plaster casts made by Alfred Maudslay do not represent them very clearly.

The Maya at Copan were interested in a quadripartite cosmology using the sun's position. On December 21, our group assembled before dawn in front of Stela C, a circumstance unplanned but intuitively set up by Leah Glatz, who led the sunrise meditation. It was cloudy but we felt the warming and lightening all around us. Eventually, the sun broke through:



Franklin LaVoie and I hung out, and he kicked the foam head of One Hunahpu in the ballcourt until the guards stopped him:



Meanwhile, let's take a look at what was going on at Izapa, at the same sunrise moment. Incredibly, over 1500 people assembled, and *they were there to see the solar-rebirth throne illuminated by the dawning solstice sun!*



The celebration of the 13-Baktun turning at Izapa. Photos by Antoine Pottier

Seeing this, and the reports in the local newspaper that mentioned my alignment theory, brought tears to my eyes. What was also occurring, at the far eastern end of the court, was a fire ceremony by Maya Spiritual Guides that was organized by Georgeann Johnson for

her group of tour participants. As it turned out, it ended up being three women of the Quiché Maya and other groups, whose male counterparts were in a car accident and subsequently could not get through (everyone was okay). So, the female energy was bringing in the new cycle, so appropriate given the rebirthing and world-renewal symbolism that I identified at the site, and that Deborah Skye also intuited.

The fire ceremony tradition is now firmly established at Izapa, which I had conceived with Mary Lou Ridinger in 2007 as something that we should work toward reviving, and it did come to pass in June 2010 with the work of *The Maya Conservancy*, Georgeann Johnson, Jim Reed, and Rodolfo Juan in Tapachula. I've written elsewhere about how bringing in the Maya to do ceremony at Izapa was a miraculous achievement, reopening the site ritually after centuries of neglect, its initiatory qualities having been forgotten in the steep attrition of time. And we did it again in June of 2012, during the *First Izapa Round Table Conference*, with a different group of Maya Spiritual Guides.

There were many validating things that happened at Copan, with support from new friends and comments of support and agreement from Grofe, Sedat, and MacLeod. It was beginning to feel like a very good culmination to my 26 years of effort. Through all of this, increasingly so after my purging and arrival in Honduras, I felt like I was being drawn into a mythic landscape of archetypal import. In fact, I was struck by how many of the themes I was experiencing were clearly echoing episodes I had crafted into my fictional novel that I had written in early 2005. It is currently unpublished, called *Remembering 2012*, and it documents the journey of a character named Marko, loosely based on me. The novel ends with his arrival in Copan to speak at a conference with scholars, resulting in the validation of his work. And there were other episodes I also experienced in compressed form on this recent trip, from Izapa to Antigua and to Copan.

The novel also involves Marko's experience of betrayal and redemption, framed in the book as his separation and divorce from his wife of many years. In this context, his life-crisis (ending of a marriage) is reinforced by a terminal illness that he is diagnosed with at the same time, which is the subject of the final events of the book. Brace yourself: in "real life" my wife of 13 years moved out of our house on December 11. She stayed on to take care of our cat while I did this final trip of my pre-2012 career, during which she moved other things to her new condo. For some reason in her process this had to take place *now*, which was painful and difficult to deal with amidst all the other challenges of late-2012, but I suppose there is poetic justice in it, since it forces a renewal and reinvention — 2012 themes I have written about and talked about extensively for many years. Ellen was with me during the completion and publishing of *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012* in 1997-1998. And she has moved on, following her own call for happiness and fulfillment, exactly 16 years, or two eight-year Venus cycles, since we fell in love.

After Copan, on December 23rd I traveled to Antigua by shuttle with Michael Grofe, to spend Christmas with Mary Lou, Georgeann, and their family and friends. I discussed with Michael how his new discoveries could be fleshed out and augmented. He would now be meeting with his own tour group, many of them his students. It was good to have a few days in Antigua to reflect on the journey and what had transpired. I was able to get online a few times, and noted that the typical media stupidity about 2012 was continuing unabated. Little did the mainstream media know, or care, about what took place at Copan and Izapa. And what more can I do about it? It's been an uphill battle, and despite major validating progress that support my pioneering work to understand 2012,

we read that “ha! nothing happened” and therefore “the Maya were wrong,” or that 2012 expectations have now been officially disconfirmed. Journalists and writers even named me as being one who had prophesied something to occur, “prophets” who were now exposed as hoaxers — but I didn’t do that. My work was never about something prophesied to happen on the specific day.

I’m very hopeful about new developments, but I remain cynical about the ability of the media, astronomers, and most professional Maya scholars, to understand and accurately report what is centrally important about the 2012 topic, and what will continue on as a permanent contribution. I did find a few moments to post announcements to Facebook while I was in Copan, including the following:

December 21, 2012, Copan Honduras.

Our group arose before dawn and entered the Classic Maya site of Copan before sunrise. There were very few people around. We first went to Stela C, where we encircled the stela and did a breathing meditation, feeling the centering of the world axis, the sun in the highest center of consciousness, and the alignment of ourselves with the larger cosmos. This sense of unity with all is a goal of meditation, and some sense of it is easily felt if sincerity is cultivated. The daylight grew as anticipation grew. The assemblage of humanity was about 35 attentive souls, about 15 from our Great Return tour/conference. Leah Glatz led the mediation. Stela C was a most appropriate, though unplanned, location for this sunrise meditation, because it was dedicated on 9.14.0.0.0, a date in 711 AD that placed the sun right at the Crossroads of the Milky Way and ecliptic — where the sun also is located on December 21, 2012. And we were there, on that morning. Amazing!

Generally, in the buildup to this moment over the previous two weeks, I had felt an increasing immersion in a mythic landscape. Synchronicities and trials and breakthroughs all mingled together. I gave my talk at San Lucas Hacienda in the Gaia space overlooking the Copan valley, on the evening of the 19th. Michael Grofe and Barbara MacLeod gave their talks on the 20th. Also on the 20th we, and the whole town it seemed, watched Shannon Kring Buset’s unparalleled documentary *2012: The Beginning* at a huge outdoor event in town. Sponsored by Tigo with a humongous screen and countless chairs set out, over 1000 people were estimated to be in attendance. A beautiful night. More on these things later.

On the morning of our sunrise meditation, it was cloudy at Copan, but finally the sun broke through and illuminated a stela on the far side of the plaza. People dispersed, some did yoga. Franklin LaVoie and I wandered the site and shared stories. For the next ten hours, I was immersed in Copan. Shared some moments of fun with Dina and Murietta and Franklin. I also wandered with Kristian and Susan, who had recorded many of the conversations taking place, especially the stimulating ones between David Sedat, Grofe, and MacLeod. The group had met up with David Sedat at 8:30 am, Michael Grofe and Barbara MacLeod were there, and we learned much from David and his progressive work at Copan, including his interesting theory about the last Copan ruler, Yax Pashaj. It was an incredible day.

Meanwhile, far to the west along the sacred 15° North latitude, about 1500 people assembled at Izapa. They watched the sun rise in galactic alignment over the far end of the Izapa ballcourt — this is centerpiece of my 2012 alignment work, as reconstructed at Izapa. And a mile away, more people watched the same sunrise alignment in the Monument Park in Tuxtla Chico, a designed space with a huge goal-ring and game-ball constructed last year in emulation of my 2012 alignment theory. It was designed by local architect Jorge Gonzalez Chong. This was reported in the local newspapers and on Chiapan TV. At Tortuguero, I understand people assembled under the demolished bluffs to celebrate the return of Lord Jaguar and the myth of sacrifice and worldrenewal recorded on Tortuguero Monument 6, which I had written about in my 2010 SAA paper. In Guatemala, the traditional Maya

assembled at Lake Atitlan and Takalik Abaj for fire ceremony and renewal. Other more unfortunate events happened at Tikal, where a temple was damaged by over 7,000 visitors. I am currently not informed about other events at other sites, except that it rained at Palenque and Zapatistas marched in the streets there.

Our day ended with a midnight fire ceremony at San Lucas, and the next day I arose early to feel the new day dawn, the first day of the next 13-Baktun cycle: 0.0.0.0.1 = December 22, 2012. I am now in Antigua, resting after an increasingly turbocharged schedule since August. I breathe deeply, in gratitude, fulfillment, and acceptance. Thank you to all beings, all allies and enemies who with there various lessons have taught me much. And I thank my family, friends, and loved ones who were all with me here in spirit. Blessings and peace, John Major Jenkins

The final post-Christmas days were enjoyable, hanging out at old haunts in Antigua and visiting with the early arrivals in Michael's group. I saw Michael's presentation at the hotel Candelaria on December 28 — amazing; he is a great teacher. I had some free time to collect my thoughts at the old Rainbow Reading Room, now called the Rainbow Café, which I remember from 1987. This place is also featured in an episode from my novel. Perhaps there is time for one final "2012" book, one that transcends the limits of research and argument and instead presents insights, human experience, and the challenges of betrayal, loss, life-and-death, and redemption, in a literary form.



JMJ at the Rainbow Café, Antigua Guatemala, December 28, 2012

Finally, it was fitting that I was able to visit with Jim Reed, the irrepressible Mayaman, on an overnight flight itinerary through Atlanta, Georgia. Jim was instrumental in bringing me to give a presentation at the Institute of Maya Studies in Miami back in 1997, and again in early 2011. He has published my reports and articles in the Institute of Maya Studies newsletter, has joined me on a trip to Izapa in

2001 (and many times thereafter), and organized tours to Maya temples that I spoke at in 2007, 2008, and 2010. He has been a great friend, and it was great to see him on December 29-30.

I flew home to Colorado after 17 days on the road, to a different home/house and a new life, my 2012 mission completed. 2012 is now a past-tense “set-piece.” I can only hope that my work and efforts have contributed to understanding what it is really about, *if what the ancient Maya thought about 2012 means anything at all to the modern world.*



left to right: John Major Jenkins, Michael Grofe, Barbara MacLeod, Shannon Kring Buset, David Sedat. December 20, 2012, 10 pm. Photo by Barbara Baggett / JB Journeys.

Gallery of Photos from the Trip:



JMJ at the Portada of La Concepcion in Antigua,
written about in his book *Galactic Alignment* (2002)

Full scale newspaper reports: <http://alignment2012.com/news-report-izapa.jpg> ;
<http://alignment2012.com/news-report-izapa2.jpg>



Franklin and I in front of the Milky Way portal, 12-21-2012



Barbara MacLeod and Michael Grofe reading Tortuguero Monument 6. December 20, 2012



Michael Grofe, Barbara MacLeod, David Sedat. Copan. December 21, 2012



The Milky Way portal at Copan. December 21, 2012



The Milky Way plaza from the portal: Place of the final plunge in *Remembering 2012*



Rosalila Temple, Copan Museum. December 21, 2012



Franklin LaVoie and Leah Glatz at Los Zapos, Hacienda San Lucas. Dec 22, 2012



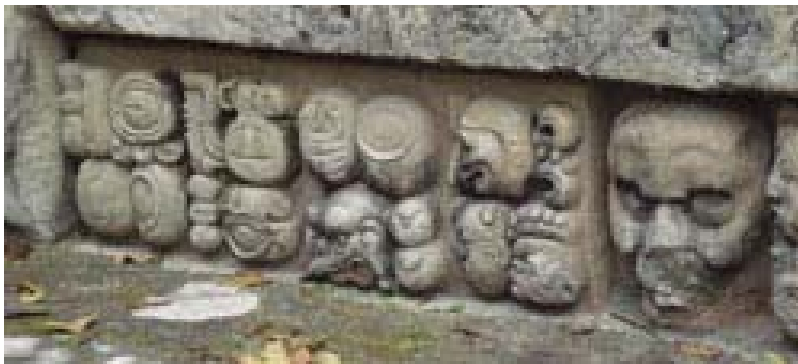
The frog effigy, Los Zapos. Other carvings show a birthing woman and an alligator



5 Ajaw, 18 Uo on north side of Copan Stela C



Michael Grofe and John Major Jenkins



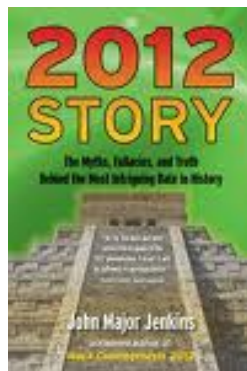


Leah Glatz and John Major Jenkins. At Hacienda San Lucas. December 22, 2012. I am wearing the T-shirt Grofe designed and gifted me with.





John Major Jenkins in front of Stela 11 at Izapa. December 15, 2012



<http://the2012story.com>



Izapa ballcourt plaza, direction of solstice sunrise

Tryptagonals from the Trip

Since 2005 I have been in the habit of writing six-line poems I call tryptagonals (“tryp” sounds like “rip”, not “ripe”, and it is pronounced with same emphasis on the second syllable as in **diagonal**). I am usually inspired to write these when I travel and visit Maya temple sites. I have hundreds now, and they’ve been used in various books I have self-published in limited editions, such as *From the Wanderer’s Notebooks* (2007) and *Sonnets from the Sands* (2005). On this trip I wrote about 54 tryptagonals. I’ll share below a few examples.

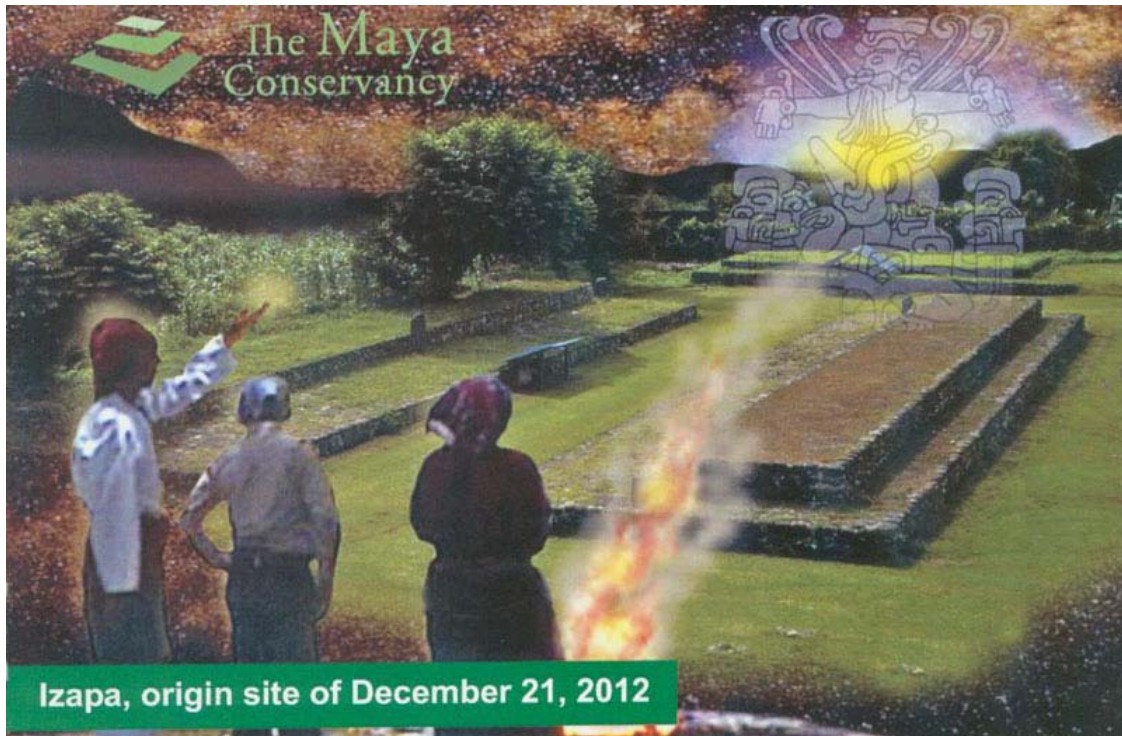
The final day of the 13th Baktun
is dawning on our hearts
We waited long for this moment of Truth
followed the moon
to celebrate youth
And practiced the magical arts

Of scribal scrying and looking within
opening to the sky
To fly into the underworld
where we have been
with hearts unfurled
No need to question why

A place of silence between the Ages
sitting on the stones
In sacred sentience of the Now
dissolving cages
that don’t allow
The healing of broken bones

The essence of life that bonds the two
together now as one
Bodies and spirits caressing lightly
the things that we do
daily and nightly
Is the play of Earth and Sun

The final chapter of this work
involves the serpent tail
The sap of the tree fulfills the deed
be sure to shirk
the vice of greed
And follow the endless trail



The Izapa ballcourt, pointing to the galactic alignment in era-2012, as symbolized by First Father (One Hunahpu at Izapa) born from the Milky Way's dark rift (the frog mouth) on Stela 11. Note the Milky Way at the horizon in this graphic, created by Jim Reed. Depicted are Maya Spiritual Guides Tat Rigoberto Itzep Chanchavac, his son and wife (who officiated the fire ceremony at the ritual re-opening of Izapa in June of 2010). The fire ceremony on December 21, 2012, also sponsored by [The Maya Conservancy](http://themayaconservancy.org), took place on the eastern end of the ballcourt, officiated by three traditional Maya Spiritual Guides, all women, an interesting and unplanned circumstance that is appropriate given the solar rebirth symbolism of the ballcourt monuments. This reiterates how the creators of the 2012/Long Count paradigm thought about 2012: world-renewal and rebirth. This work was first published in my 1996 monograph called *Izapa Cosmos* and expanded in my 1998 book *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012*.

Websites:

<http://thecenterfor2012studies.com>
<http://alignment2012.com>
<http://update2012.com>
<http://the2012story.com>

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