



Wax Fusion

Shary Bartlett

Pedro Cuní

Kelcie Bryant-Duguid

Anne Feller

Karen Frey

Deanne Row

Shannon Weber

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Prelude of Bullfighting Festival by José Cuní
Encaustic Cuní on paper



Encaustic Cuní

Replicating an Ancient Encaustic Formula

Pedro Cuní

Water-soluble Encaustic Cuní comes from the studies of my father, José Cuní, a painter and expert in ancient Greek and Roman painting techniques. He was fascinated by encaustic paint and in particular by the possibility that the ancient artists had been using a variety of cold, water-soluble encaustic paint on murals.

He had done extensive work using fresco for murals, and he concluded that the Pompeian wall paintings, once assumed to be fresco, were not fresco. After receiving a scholarship to go to Pompeii to study the paintings on site and studying the paintings closely, he was able to reproduce the original formula used by the ancient artists, a water-soluble encaustic.

Because he did not use a scientific method for his studies, he couldn't prove that his formula was the same used by ancient artists. After my brother and I grew up, we decided to try to prove that my father was using the same paint as the original artists. If we would be able to prove this, it would be one of the most important discoveries in history — the recreation of the lost encaustic paint, lost for almost 2,000 years.

Magnolias in a Vase

José Cuní

Encaustic Cuní on paper





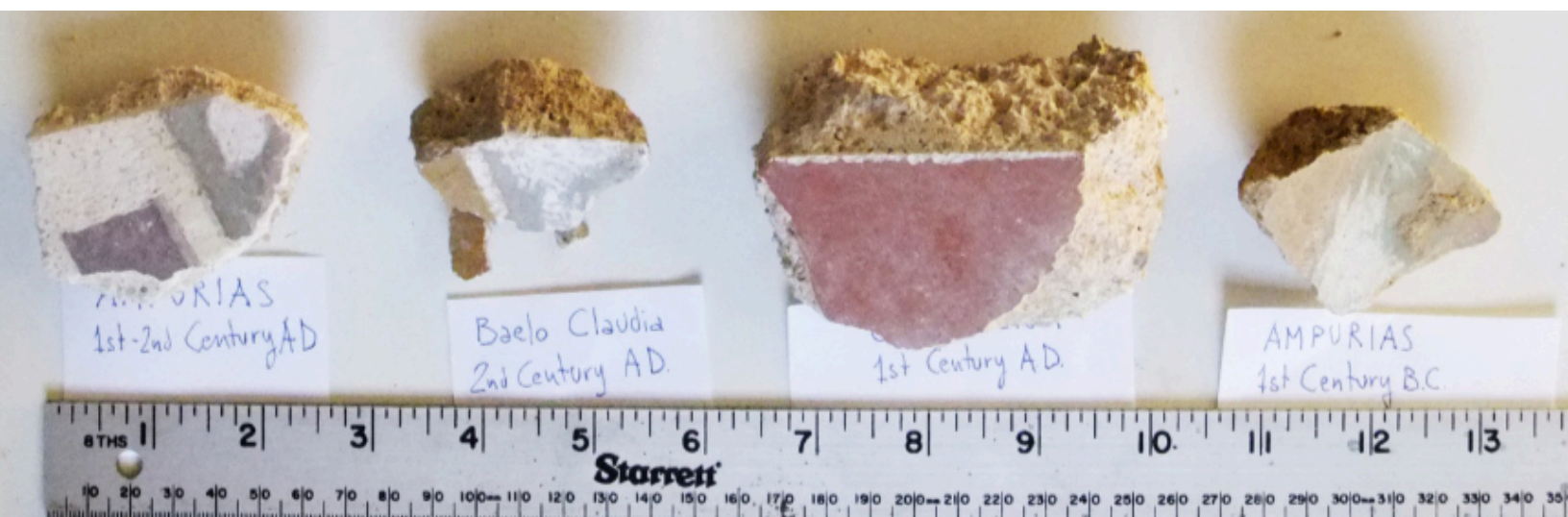
Juchitlan de Zaragoza, Mexico
Pedro Cuní
Encaustic Cuní on canvas
17.5 x 40.5 in

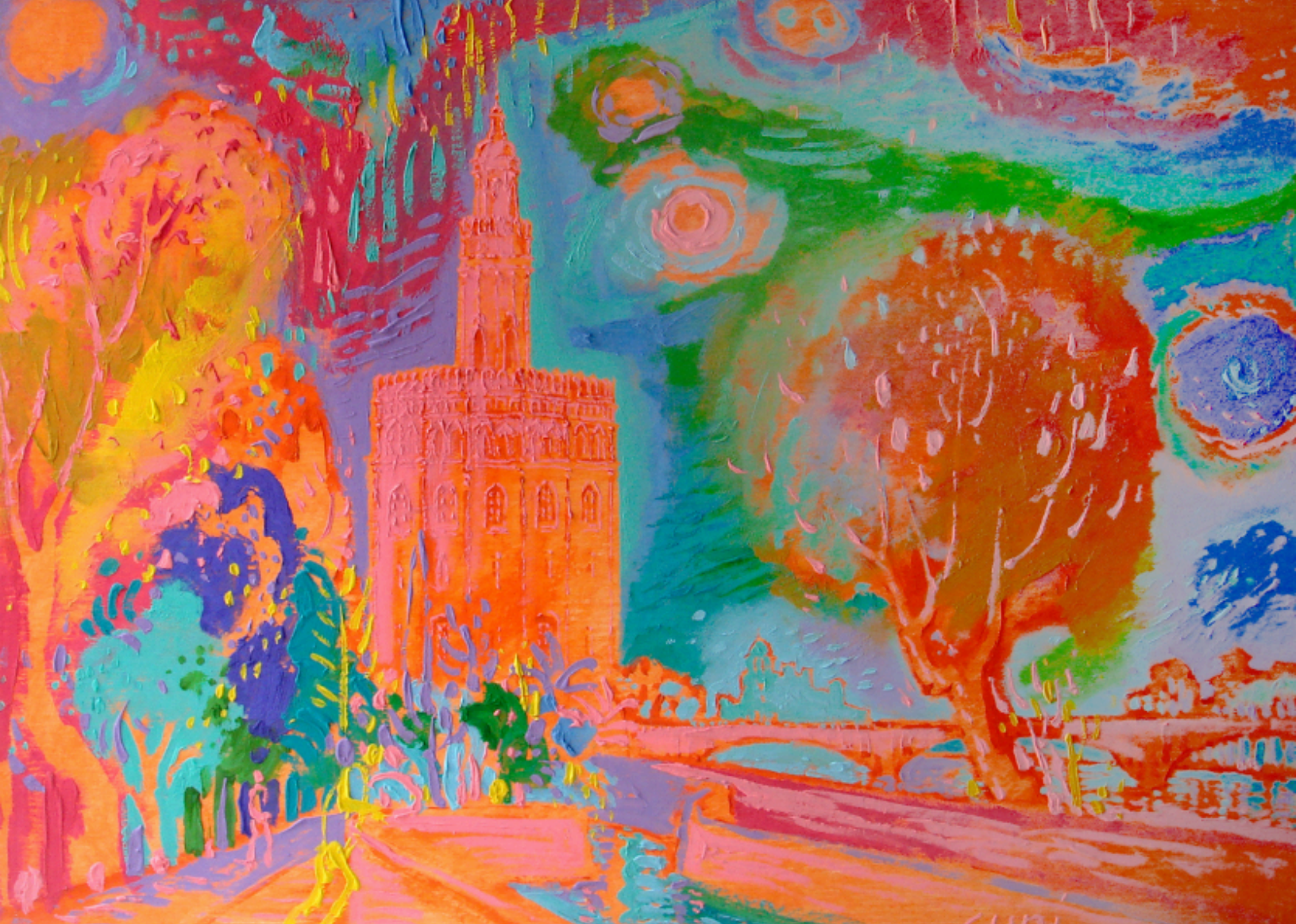
We received samples of Roman paintings donated by different archaeological sites and museums in Spain and began to retranslate all remaining ancient texts using experts in Latin and ancient Greek, as well as doing chemical analyses of the original samples. After extensive historical and chemical research that I carried out at the chemistry department of Cooper Union in New York, the results of the research were published in the paper, "Characterization of the Binding Medium Used in Roman Encaustic Paintings on Wall and Wood" by the scientific journal *Analytical Methods*. The research finally proved that my father's encaustic formula and the ancient one were exactly the same.

The discovery was presented at the Smithsonian Conservation Institute with a lecture and an exhibition of paintings by my father and me. This article is just a quick summary of the research that took over 20 years to complete. I am currently collaborating with The Egyptian Museum in Cairo studying their ancient paintings and painting materials.

We make Encaustic Cuní using the exact same formula the ancient Roman artists used. It is an unmatched, water-soluble paint medium, which lends its attributes to the beeswax, and allows you to paint as thick as oil paint or as diluted as watercolor with beautiful results.

2,000-year-old Roman samples of wall paintings used in our chemical analysis





Seville
José Cuní
Encaustic Cuní on wood

Next page, *Taiwan temple*
Pedro Cuní
Encaustic Cuní on canvas
38 x 52 in







Keelung Taiwan
Pedro Cuní
Encaustic Cuní on canvas
21.7 x 31.9 in

Cuní Water-Soluble Encaustic comes in 47 colors and offers the unique sheen and translucency of wax that requires no heat. Heat may be applied to accelerate curing of the paint, and clean up is solvent-free using soap and water.

You can paint on various surfaces, including paper, canvas, and wood.

Ms. Hsu
Pedro Cuní
Encaustic Cuní on canvas
39.4 x 59.1 in





I was recently in Tulum, Mexico, and I became very interested in Mayan mythology, especially in the figure of the Mayan Goddess Ix Chel. I decided to paint on watercolor paper a version of Ix Chel because the texture the paper creates reminds me of stone, and I wanted to give it the feeling of an ancient wall painting.



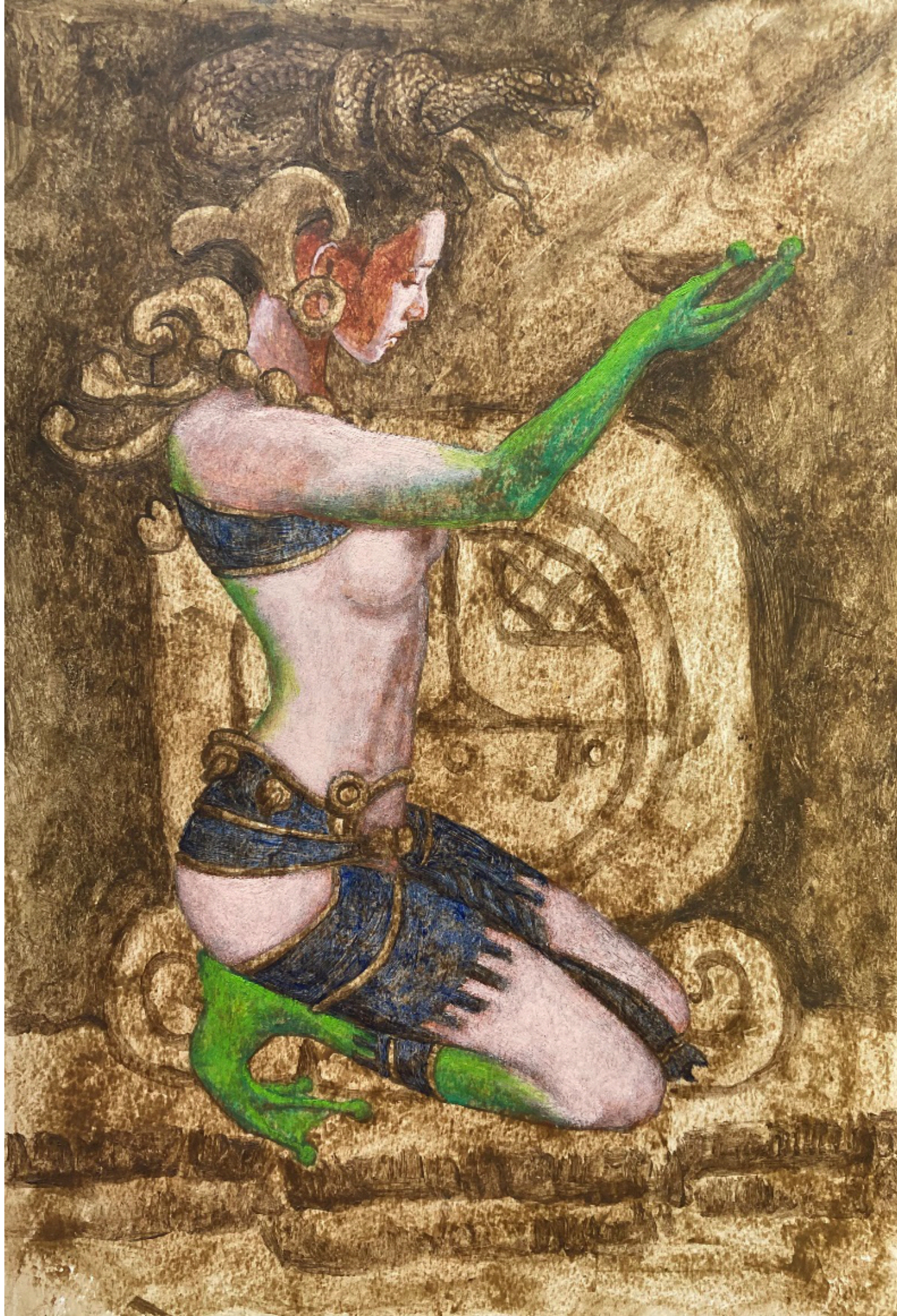
For the background, I chose burnt umber. I mixed it with Encaustic Cuní medium to make the color more transparent. I could have diluted the color with water to make it more transparent; but in this instance, I wanted the paint to have more body giving innate depth to the color.



After the background dried, I proceeded to create a chiaroscuro effect by doing velaturas (additional thin layers of color) with brush and more raw umber mixed with medium to keep consistency and transparency.



Once this layer was dried, I started applying colors using glazes of cinnabar green, ultramarine blue, burnt sienna and burnt sienna mixed with white for the skin color.





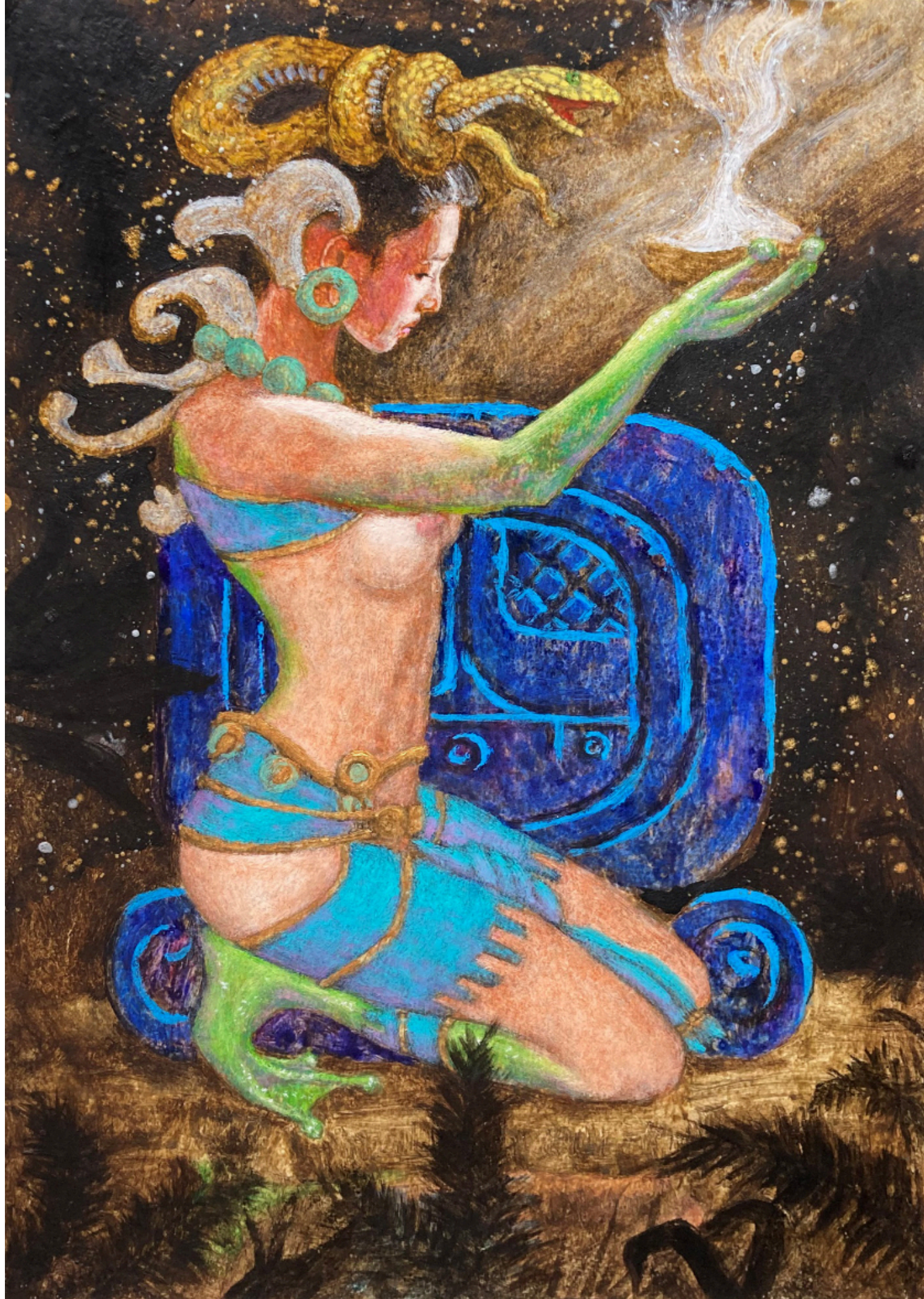
In the background, I decided to change the texture by using the colors diluted with water applied with a watercolor brush to avoid brushstrokes being visible. By changing the texture and the way colors are applied, I enhanced the feeling of depth and space. I used ultramarine blue and carbon black for this stage.



While the carbon black was still wet, I splattered gold and silver to make the stars.

Encaustic Cuní Colors Used

Azo yellow and titanium white. The head ornaments — silver. The earrings and necklace — phthalo green with titanium white and cobalt turquoise blue. The snake — yellow ochre, cadmium yellow medium and titanium white.





Macys NYC
Pedro Cuni
Encaustic on canvas
22 x 32 in

Next page, *1 Train*
Pedro Cuni
Encaustic Cuni on canvas
29 x 43.5 in

Queens Boulevard NYC
Pedro Cuní
Encaustic Cuní on canvas
20 x 30 in







Cuni. FAYO



About the Author

Pedro Cuní is a visual artist, painter, and muralist with expertise in paint media technology, color theory, and pigments. Cuní has exhibited his art internationally and at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. and the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Spain. He is not only an expert in landscape painting, but also Cuní is known for his work with ancient painting materials, having conducted chemical research at Cooper Union on ancient Greek and Roman paintings. He currently collaborates with the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities in Cairo, researching ancient Egyptian painting techniques.

Mural painting by Pedro Cuní
El Señor de la Misericordia
Monterrey, Mexico,
Encaustic Cuní on wall

Cuní is the founder and director of Encaustic Cuní paint company, which produces paint that similarly was used by Greco-Roman artists 2,000-years ago. Cuní is a professor at Parsons School of Design in NYC and is involved in running and teaching workshops in major institutions across the world, including Taiwan, China, Spain, Italy, Mexico, and the U.S. He is also a stage designer for Ninja Ballet in NYC.



You can view Pedro's work at
cunip.myportfolio.com

Scientific publication

“Characterization of the binding medium used in Roman encaustic paintings on wall and wood”

pubs.rsc.org/en/content/articlelanding/2012/ay/c2ay05635f

Encaustic Cuní tutorial at

www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vOqkHtIZGo&t=224s

You can purchase Encaustic Cuní at

custom-encaustics.com/product-category/water-soluble-encaustic

www.paintclub.co.uk

www.cuni-encaustic-asia.com

Special thanks to Shoko Tamai for modeling for the painting.