

**SPRING BREAK  
ART EXTRAVAGANZA**

**Artwork of the Day: Vessel with  
an Enthroned Ruler and Seated Figure**

Kimbell Art Museum



## Vessel with an Enthroned Ruler and Seated Figure

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This ancient Maya container is only about 9 inches tall, but it has a lot to tell us! The elegant incised decoration was added with a fine-pointed tool when the gray clay was mostly dry.

**Notice the symbols** in the top horizontal band and the vertical columns on either side of the figures. These hieroglyphs tell us that this handmade vessel was used for serving either cacao or a corn mixture—two important crops in the Maya world.

**Compare the outfits** of the two figures. The young Maya lord seated on a low throne has a very impressive costume—with a large headdress made of feathers and a stuffed monkey! What do you think is happening here? Who is the other person?

Scroll down for SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES inspired by this vessel.



## Vessel with an Enthroned Ruler and Seated Figure

*Art-Making Connections*

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The hieroglyphs also tell us that this container was dedicated on February 20, 765. **Decorate your own vessel with an important scene from your life!** Follow these simple steps:

- Cut a piece of paper to fit a disposable cup.
- Use available drawing supplies to record what happened on a special date in your life. How will gestures, expressions, and clothing help to tell your story?
- Experiment with different types of lines to create patterns and texture.
- Add glue to the reverse side of the paper and wrap it around the cup.
- Celebrate with your favorite beverage in your decorated cup!

**Share** your artwork online! #kimbellkids #kimbellfromhome



## Vessel with an Enthroned Ruler and Seated Figure

*Write, Compare, Research*

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**Record their conversation.** Write a brief dialogue inspired by this scene. What do the Maya lord and his loyal follower say to each other? What will happen next?

[Zoom in on the Kimbell's website](#) to explore the wonderful details in this scene—like the spots of the leopard skin atop the Maya lord's throne or the figures' delicately drawn hands and feet. Up close, you will see lightly scratched lines in front of the monkey's face. It's a rare instance where we can see how the artist changed the design!

The ancient Maya built great cities and temples, but they also produced many beautifully decorated containers and other portable artworks which were often bestowed as gifts. **Create an artwork to present as a gift** to a loved one.

## Art

*Vessel with an Enthroned Lord and Seated Figure*, Maya culture, Late Classic Period (A.D. 600–900), A.D. 765, incised ceramic (fine grayware) with traces of red pigment. Kimbell Art Museum

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