

PUBLIC LECTURE
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER
@ Morey 321
Thursday, November 29th, 5 PM.

**“THE MOCHE NARRATIVES:
Visual Media, Myth and History
in Pre-Hispanic Northern Coast of Peru”.**

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Almost 1500 years ago, in some of the fertile valleys in the desert north coast of Peru, the Moche civilization flourished as one of the first and most powerful states in the New World. The Moche leaders managed the construction of hydraulic systems which allowed intensive cultivation in extended agricultural fields, controlled a highly specialized production and distribution of wealthy goods within elite networks, mobilized an important military force resulting in the successful domination of neighboring regions, and built monumental pyramids that constituted the centers of political and religious power. Social order and the legitimization of the Moche state system demanded various power strategies, including the construction of a strong ethnic identity. Myth and rituals, transforming popular sentiments of fears and hopes into a symbolic discourse, constituted the foundation of Moche identity and an important factor in the consolidation of the Moche State. At the center of the mythical and ritual discourse lies a heroic character, arriving to the Moche world seeking the restoration of the cosmic order after chaos caused by supernatural creatures living in the mountains and the ocean. The saga of this Hero, properly contextualized in the history and the cultural development of the Moche agrarian communities and their neighbors, allows us to reconstruct a process of building identity, where the use of visual and performative media played a critical role in a context with no written records.

Sponsored by the Program of Archaeology, Technology and Historical Structures, and the Departments of Anthropology, Religion and Classics, and Art and Art History.



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 PRE-HISPANIC NORTHERN COAST OF PERU

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 DEPARTMENTS OF ANTHROPOLOGY, RELIGION AND CLASSICS, ART AND ART HISTORY

