

# AZTEC MURAL

A CELEBRATION OF INDIGENOUS HERITAGE

## LEGEND

This mural pays homage to the indigenous peoples of Mexico and Central America, highlighting Tlaloc, the embodiment of rain and fertility for the earth. Tlaloc, known by various names such as Chaac (Maya) or Cocijo (Zapotec), is a widely recognized symbol throughout former Mesoamerica, with consistent meanings and symbols across diverse cultures.

*The mural's backdrop showcases patterns, reminiscent of ancient writing systems, alive with significance like the vibrant dresses of indigenous women, such as the Chinantec or Mayan huipiles, contributing to the rich tapestry of cultural representation.*

### The face of Tlaloc

is skillfully crafted using the pictogram Quiahuitl, where moth-like features and fangs evoke the image of a cloud with raindrops. Symbolically, the eyes and earrings, represented as circles, depict the cyclical nature of the earth, water, sun, and moon. The crown serves as a reminder of the significance of natural phenomena.



The mural features a sequence of symbols, each laden with cultural meaning:

**Seed:** Representing the opening of the earth in a traditional X shape, symbolizing the deposit of four seeds—an enduring motif found in the Mayan Calendar as the 8th Nahual.

**Place or Land:** A widely recognized pictogram in ancient Mesoamerica, symbolizing the earth with a variation of earth-related symbols.

**Earth:** Depicting the reptilian skin, akin to the crocodile in southern cultures or the turtle in northern cultures, with each scale symbolizing the five directions.

**Rivers:** Presented as a snake or a variation of feathered snakes, embodying the duality of earth and sky, knowledge, and the connection with nature.

**Atl Pictogram:** Symbolizing water, a crucial element in the cultural narrative.

**Modern Topographic View of Rivers:** A contemporary representation of the landscape, connecting past and present.

The mural design encapsulates the cyclical nature of the earth and the enduring significance of huipiles, garments still worn by indigenous people today, bridging generations and cultures in Omaha—the place we proudly call home.

This project was led by Sedra Casteneda and David Manzanarez and included work by: Anna Manzanares, Mike Giron, Anna Stojisich, and Aleexa Ramirez.



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