



Bright geometric
designs in
Chichicastenango
huipiles.
Ixchel Museum
Photo Archive.



3000 YEARS OF WEAVING

Prehispanic textiles of the Classic Era have disappeared with the Maya who wove and wore them. Jades, shells, pottery and stone survived the dampness of the Maya lowlands where the great tombs were discovered, but the burial textiles disintegrated over the years. Only a few fragments exist.

Research into Prehispanic weaving is thus based on wall paintings, lintels, stelae, clay figurines, and polychrome pottery.

A Late Classic figurine shows a Maya woman weaving on a backstrap loom. The Maya wove with vegetable fibers: cotton, for the elite, and agave, mostly for commoners. They used lengths of woven cloth for their clothing, fashioning them into long, brocaded *huipiles* for the women; into loin cloths and capes for the men. Warriors used a padded cotton armor.

Lintels from Yaxchilan show Maya women--Lady Xoc and a wife of Bird Jaguar--wearing heavily brocaded long *huipiles* with geometric designs--squares and romboids. A Late Classic polychrome pot shows God L wearing a patterned cape.

Today's Maya weave on backstrap looms as their ancestors did, they use striking geometric designs still, and many continue to wear long, brocaded *huipiles*. Their thread may be commercially spun and of acrylic fibers, their designs may be bigger and brighter, but the continuity of Maya weaving over three thousand years is striking and beautiful.



IN THE MUSEUM

PREHISPANIC MAYA WEAVING--1000 B.C. to 1529 A.D.--will be inaugurated in March, completing the four permanent exhibits of the history of Maya dress. The mounting is funded by AVIATECA.

JERI CORBIN, Exhibit Designer for 24 years at the Museum of Man, San Diego, California, volunteered at the Ixchel Museum for the month of August. She worked on the Colonial and Prehispanic exhibits and helped create preliminary designs for a regional and children's exhibit.

A PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION of early 20th century black and white photographs was bought by the Ixchel Museum. Reproduced by Anne Girard, the pictures are the work of several photographers and show the clothing and social customs of the Guatemalan Maya at the turn of the century.

TEXTURE AND COLOR is the title of the 1996 Ixchel Museum calendar. The photographs are by Jeffrey Foxx, well-known American ethnographic photographer, and the textiles are from the Ixchel Museum collection.

CAFE IXCHEL opened in the museum in September. Funded by ANACAFE, the cafe will serve and sell by the pound the best high-grown Guatemalan boutique coffees.

PRO-TEJE, the Ixchel Museum weaving committee, has expanded its work to eleven communities: Nebaj, San Juan Cotzal, San Antonio Aguas Calientes, Cerro de Oro, Patzún, San Lucas Tolimán, Chajul, Santo Domingo Xenacoj, Rabinal, San Miguel Chicaj, and San Pedro Carchà.

MUSEUM ADDRESS

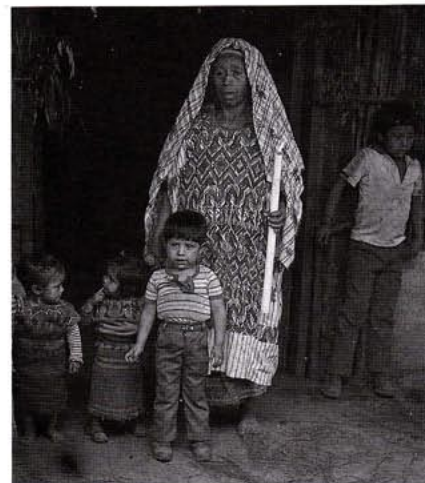
Museo Ixchel del Traje Indígena
6a. Calle final, Zona 10
Campus Universidad Francisco Marroquín
Guatemala Ciudad, Guatemala



From Lintel 15, Yaxchilan. 770 A.D. Now in the British Museum. Drawing by Ian Graham. The kneeling wife of Bird Jaguar wears a brocaded huipil.



From Lintel 24, Yaxchilan. 709 A.D. Now in the British Museum. Drawing by Ian Graham. Lady Xoc in a long brocaded huipil.



Woman wearing ceremonial brocaded huipil of Santa María de Jesús. P. Paiz. 1988. Ixchel Museum Photo Archive.



FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM

A MID-YEAR BOARD MEETING was held in San Francisco, October 26-27th. Margot Schevill, of the P.A. Hearst Museum, and photographer Jeffrey Foxx attended the meeting to discuss the possibility of mounting an exhibit to celebrate the New York City launching in March 1997 of Foxx's new book of Mayan Textiles.

A PRIZE FOR WEAVING EXCELLENCE will be funded by Friends of the Ixchel Museum. It will be given to a community of weavers chosen by PRO-TEJE.

MAYAN CLOTHING OF GUATEMALA, the video produced by Friends of the Ixchel Museum, was presented at the Women's Conference in Beijing, China. COFRADIA FIESTA, the first video produced by Friends, is being reissued.

WEAVERS CONVERGENCE 1996, a July gathering sponsored by the Handweavers Guild of America, in Portland, Oregon, will be attended by the Ixchel Museum. Jeri Corbin and Friends of the Ixchel Museum will work with the museum to present the work of the PRO-TEJE weavers.



Figurine of Maya woman weaving. Late Classic Period. 700-900 A.D. Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation. New York.



Romboid designs on woven belt from Chajul. Ixchel Museum. Photo Archive.



DONATIONS TO FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM

Please help Friends of the Ixchel Museum sponsor weaving projects, bring textile exhibits to the U.S., translate textile research, and fund videos that bring to life the tradition and artistry of Guatemalan textiles.

Friends of the Ixchel Museum is an American foundation and donations are deductible by the donor for U.S. general income tax purposes. Checks drawn to the name of Friends of the Ixchel Museum, Inc., may be mailed to:

Friends of the Ixchel Museum, Inc.
P.O. Box 27283
Los Angeles, CA. 90027



Romboid designs on a Comalapa huipil. T. Delrue 1985. Ixchel Museum Photo Archive.



PRESERVING THE TEXTILE ARTS OF GUATEMALA



Friends of the Ixchel Museum, Inc.
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Jeri Corbin
painting a fresco
for the
Prehispanic
exhibit. The roll-
out is from a Late
Classic poly-
chrome pot in the
Princeton
University
Museum and
shows God L
wearing a
patterned cape.

