





Piece of the Month 2018


Month	Description	Image
January	<p>Overblouse Mixco, Guatemala Mayan language: Poqomam Collection: Julia R. de Plochanski P-74 Year of manufacture: circa 1900</p> <p>This is a ceremonial cofradía huipil made with three cloth panels woven on a backstrap loom and sown together by hand using backstitching. The edges of the neck and sleeves feature handmade natural cotton and wool bobbin lace. The upper border of the garment is hand embroidered with hand spun natural white cotton dyed with purpura pansa snail (purple). These decorations are enhanced with metal sequins, which were commonly used at the time.</p>	


Month	Description	Image
February	<p>Salcajá, Quetzaltenango Mayan language: K'iche' Colección Museo Ixchel: MI-03746/090 Year of manufacture: 1980</p> <p>This corte or skirt is made of one cloth panel woven on a treadle loom using acrylic fibers and mercerized cotton. It is worn in the wraparound style. The thin yellow, red and green stripes of the warp (or vertical threads of the fabric) contrast with the complex and varied jaspe designs woven in the warp and weft (or horizontal threads). Jaspe is a tie-dye technique: threads are knotted to create the figures and the knots prevent the dye from penetrating, thus keeping the threads' original color. After dyeing, the knots are dried and undone and the designs are woven using the undyed parts of the threads.</p>	

Month	Description	Image
March	<p>Ceremonial Pants Almolonga, Quetzaltenango Mayan language: K'iche' Collection: Museo Ixchel: MI-01516 Year of manufacture: circa 1900</p> <p>These are ceremonial cofradía trousers woven on a backstrap loom and sewn together by hand. The red threads dyed with alizarin were used in the warp and weft stripes and on the supplementary weft brocaded motifs. The red silk threads, dyed with cochineal (obtained from the body of the dried insect <i>Dactylopius coccus</i> Costa) were only used for the embroidery (B. K. de Arathoon and R. E. Senuk: 'Embroidery: Stitches that Unite Cultures', p.92).</p>	 <p>The image shows a pair of ceremonial trousers laid flat. The fabric is light-colored with a fine grid pattern of red threads. The lower portion of the trousers features several horizontal bands of red and purple stripes, with intricate brocaded motifs in red and purple threads. The waistband is elasticated.</p>

Month	Description	Image
April	<p>Ceremonial table cloth Quetzaltenango, Quetzaltenango Mayan language: K'iche' Collection: Museo Ixchel MI-00662 Year of manufacture: circa 1930</p> <p>This table cloth is used for cofradía ceremonies. It is made with two cloth panels woven on a backstrap loom and sewn together by hand using a basting stitch. This piece was made according to the style norms of the Quetzaltecan textile tradition, using yellow, purple and red cotton and silk threads, which are characteristic of the place. Almost all of its supplementary weft brocaded motifs are geometric and zoomorphic. It features small fringes on its edges.</p>	

Month	Description	Image
May	<p>Chachal – Charm Necklace San Miguel Chicaj, Baja Verapaz Mayan language: Achi</p> <p>This is a traditional necklace consisting of a single thread and made with red plastic beads, coins and rhombus shaped trinkets. Fuchsia, green, yellow and blue cotton pompons hang at the center as a pendant with a cylindrical cross at the end. It is distinctive of this place and worn on special occasions.</p>	

Month	Description	Image
June	<p>Morral Nahualá, Sololá Mayan language: K'iche' Collection: MI-05998 Year of manufacture: 1975</p> <p>This morral or shoulder bag was knitted using a circular needle and hand spun black and white natural wool thread. On the front, 'Miguel Hixmata Canton Chuipa Tuj De Anu 1975' can be read, which is probably the owner's name, place of birth and year in which the shoulder bag was made. Both sides feature geometric motifs, such as rhombus shapes and meanders. Its central figure has been identified as a stylized horse. The strap was woven on a backstrap loom and sewn onto the bag by hand.</p> <p>(Source: Guisela Mayén de Castellanos, <i>Tzute and Hierarchy in Sololá</i>, 1986).</p>	

Month	Description	Image
July	<p>Ceremonial Gola or Collar, and Ceremonial Mangas or Sleeves San Cristóbal Totonicapán, Totonicapán Mayan language: K'iche' Year of manufacture: 1920-1940</p> <p>The ruff or ceremonial neck-collar (top image) is applied to the huipil that is traditionally used for cofradía rituals. The neck's base fabric is made with two layers of commercial tulle that was hand embroidered with twisted silk threads, silk ribbons and applied sequins. Its edges feature crochet needlework using twisted silk threads</p> <p>Pairs of sleeves (bottom image) such as these were sewn onto the huipiles that were traditionally worn by cofradía women. The base fabric is commercial tulle embroidered with twisted silk threads, silk ribbon applications and sequins. Its edges feature crochet needlework made with twisted silk threads. The sleeves are a part of the European attire that was adapted by the Maya in colonial times.</p> <p>(Source: Barbara Knoke de Arathoon and Raymond E. Senuk: 'Embroidery: Stitches that Unite Cultures', p.78 & p.80).</p>	

Month	Description	Image
August	<p>Su't or Cloth San Antonio Aguas Calientes, Sacatepéquez Mayan language: Kaqchikel Ixchel Museum Collection: MI-04135 Year of Manufacture: 1927</p> <p>This su't or cloth is made of two cloth panels woven using cotton threads on a backstrap loom and sewn together by hand. It features floral, geometric and zoomorphic motifs which include stars and deer among others. All of them were brocaded with double faced supplementary wefts, a complex technique used only in this community. On the textile, the initials "RM" can be read, which probably belong to the person who wove it, and "AÑO DE 1927", the year in which it was made.</p>	