



*Maria Cristina
Sincal and
Albertina
Patunayche,
weavers from
Patzun,
Chimaltenango.*

*Photo by Marta
Stroock. 1996.*

PRO-TEJE

Since 1994, PRO-TEJE, a committee of volunteers and staff of the Ixchel Museum, has been working to provide incentives for the weavers of Guatemala. Their objective is to make good quality weaving financially rewarding to the weavers in order to preserve their unique art, skills and traditions.

For centuries the Mayan women of Guatemala have been weaving exquisite articles of clothing using the back-strap loom. It can take as much as two to three months of six hour days for a woman to weave one huipil or blouse. Since many of them must care for their families and work outside the home, they have

little time for this slow process. How much easier to buy a piece of fabric in the market!

In order to enable the women to remain at home with their children while maintaining their weaving traditions, PRO-TEJE, backed by the Board of the Ixchel Museum and by the Friends of the Ixchel Museum, provides good quality thread to the best weavers in more than a dozen villages all over the highlands of Guatemala. Each village has its unique, colorful design which PRO-TEJE wants to maintain. PRO-TEJE also advises the weavers in order that their items will sell readily at the museum shop.

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The PRO-TEJE logo, designed on brown paper, that is attached to the weavings.



The threads, paid for by PRO-TEJE, are weighed when given to the weavers. The finished product is weighed when returned and the women are paid based on the same minimum wage as the men who work in the fields. When the item is sold, PRO-TEJE retains part of the profit in order to reinvest in more thread.

PRO-TEJE has brought about a renewed interest in "cuyuscate" a natural light brown cotton used in weaving in the past. It had become very scarce. Now a cotton grower is cultivating "cuyuscate" in both natural brown and green for commercial purposes. PRO-TEJE has introduced both these colors in their project.

As the word has spread within the villages, more weavers are joining the program. As resources permit, PRO-TEJE continues to reach out to other villages in the highlands.

In this manner, the skills, the art and the quality of traditional Guatemalan weaving are preserved while enabling more and more Mayan women to raise their standard of living.

The Friends of the Ixchel Museum congratulate PRO-TEJE and are delighted to be able to assist this very worthwhile and successful project.

by Marta Stroock



The PRO-TEJE Committee.

From left to right: Rosario Miralbés de Polanco, Ixchel Museum Curator; Lucía de Rodríguez; Joanna de Matheu; Thelma de Willemsen; Soledad Icu, Ixchel Museum Registrar; María Luz de Villavicencio. Absent: Mónica de Presa

Photo by Marta Stroock. 1996.



IN THE MUSEUM

THE FOUR PERMANENT EXHIBITS of the history of Mayan dress are now complete. Prehispanic Mayan Weaving--1000 B.C. to 1529 A.D.--was inaugurated April 24th. The exhibit mounting was funded by AVIATECA, S.A.

"IDENTIDAD," a large photographic exhibit of the varied ethnic groups of Guatemala, opened in March and will remain in the Alfred S. Clark gallery for a year. **PRENSA LIBRE,** which originally published the photographs as newspaper supplements, and **CORPORACION DE OCCIDENTE** funded its mounting.

A PRIVATE COLLECTION of over 100 weavings dating from the 1940s to the 1970s was donated to the Ixchel Museum.

112 MINIATURE HUIPILES, hand-made replicas of original weavings, were donated by Olga Arriola de Geng to the Ixchel Museum. They will be used in the children's museum to show the variety of Mayan textiles.

A JAPANESE TRANSLATION of the video "Mayan Costumes of Guatemala" was donated to the Ixchel Museum to be shown to visitors from Japan.

PRO-TEJE and the Ixchel Museum have taken a booth at **CONVERGENCE 96,** the July 17th to 21st gathering in Portland, Oregon, of the Handweavers Guild of America. **PRO-TEJE** is sending weavings; the museum will send textiles and English translations of research monographs which have been funded by Friends of the Ixchel Museum.

MUSEUM ADDRESS

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

FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM

THE YEARLY BOARD MEETING of Friends of the Ixchel Museum, Inc., was held Saturday, April 27th, in Philadelphia.

A VIDEO on the Mayan weaving villages of Lake Atitlan will be funded by Friends of the Ixchel Museum. Unlike "Cofradía Fiesta" and "Mayan Clothing of Guatemala," which run about 12 minutes and were created to be shown in the museum, the Atitlan video will be a 25 minute documentary. Samuel Franco will do the filming and Dr. Linda Asturias de Barrios the research and script.

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION of the Ixchel Museum research monograph edited by Linda Asturias de Barrios, "Mayan Clothing and Weavings Through the Ages," is being finished.

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



PRESERVING THE TEXTILE ARTS OF GUATEMALA



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P.O. Box 27283
Los Angeles, CA 90027

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*The work of
PRO-TEJE weavers in
natural white,
brown and
green cotton.*

*Photo by Marta
Stroock. 1996.*

