

FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM

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DOÑA CARMEN DIES

At the age of 70, Carmen Pettersen began to paint a record of the traditional Guatemalan Indian costumes and, in five years, she finished the 61 watercolors that form her book, "Maya of Guatemala."

Doña Carmen's close friend, Julia Plocharski, had a textile collection and was fascinated with weaving. She and Carmen realized that there was no complete documentation of the costumes of Guatemala; no one knew even how many different costumes there were. They began to compile a list of about 120 Indian villages which had their own costumes and then Doña Carmen began to paint.

For most of her life, Doña Carmen lived on their farm "El Zapote" on the slopes of the volcano "Fuego" and it was there she painted her watercolors. Her daughter Sylvia was her mainstay, bringing costumes to her.

"I'd send four or five costumes at one time, sometimes from one town--like for her painting of the Sololá market. I took photos and made sketches, anything that would help show how the costumes were worn," says Sylvia. "But all the painting was done at home."

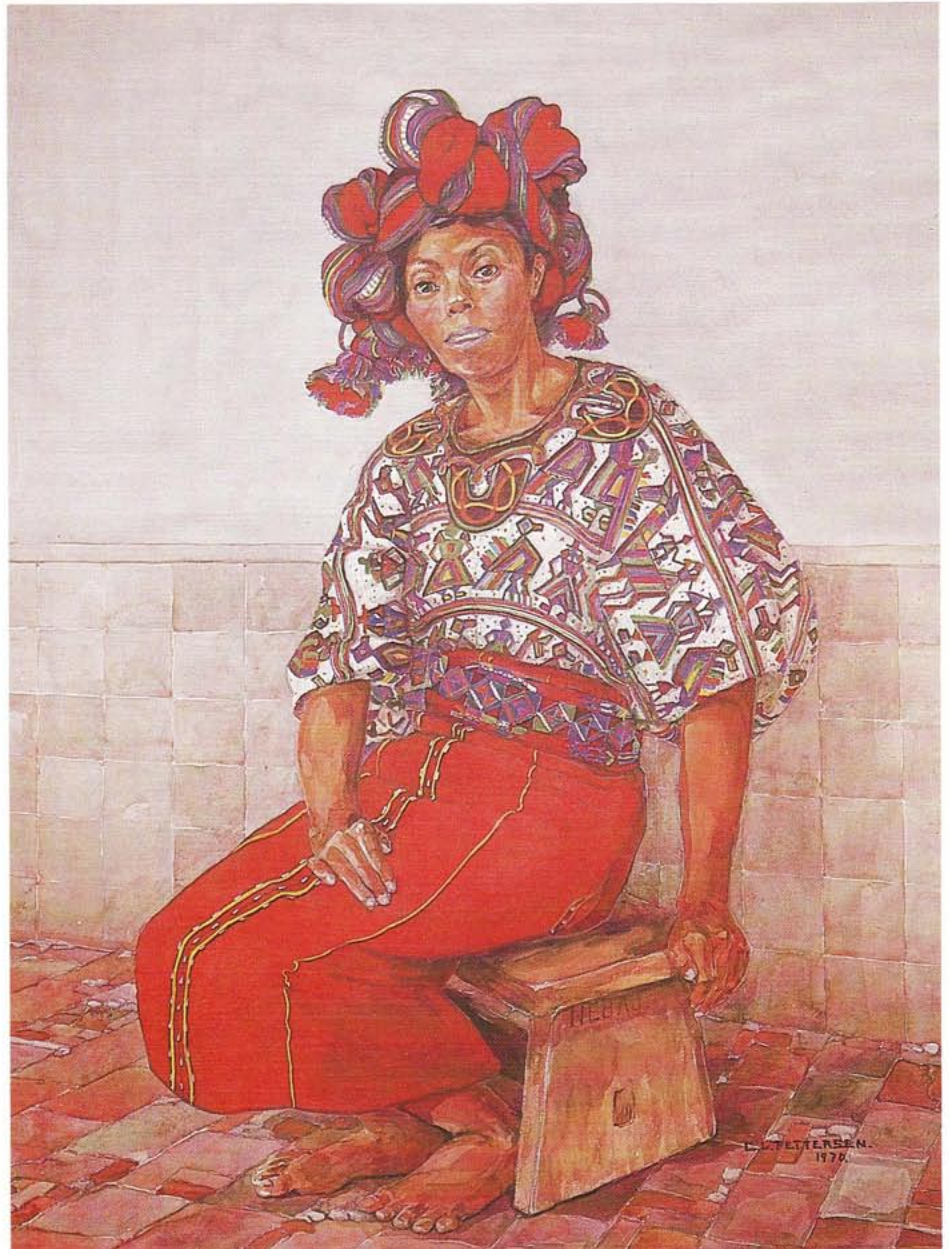
"After Julia died, we depended on Olga Mirón," explains Sylvia. "It was not easy. Few people knew how to arrange the costumes correctly, how to fold the skirts, or how the different cloths were used and folded."

As paintings were finished, the family began to give showings and talks for friends, and almost immediately, it became apparent there was a need for a book.

"Writing was not easy for her nor as pleasurable as painting," says Sylvia. "She had no wish to write a technical book about weaving and costume, but rather wanted to paint a verbal picture of the people she knew so well, of their lives and traditions, their vigorous, creative and tenacious personalities."

Doña Carmen's husband Pete had the book printed in Germany by a firm which used a six color separation that allowed for more precise reproduction of reds and purples, so important in the Indian Costumes.

With great generosity, Pete and Carmen Pettersen donated the first edition of 20,000 volumes to the Ixchel Museum in 1976 and, with



Nebaj. Ixil linguistic group.
Watercolor by Carmen Pettersen 1970.

great wisdom, designated the money exclusively for a building fund. Because of their generosity and foresight, the Ixchel Museum can begin to build today.

Now in a second edition, "Maya of Guatemala" has endowed the Ixchel Museum. Pete died in 1977, and Doña Carmen

died in February of this year at age 91.

Isa Smith, one of the founders of the Ixchel Museum, said in a tribute: "Doña Carmen has been our inspiration and our fairy godmother."

And Sylvia Leonowens adds: "Mother was just someone very special."

IN THE MUSEUM

RESEARCH MONOGRAPH PRESENTED

The first edition of "Trajes de San Juan Sacatepequez y San Raymundo" by Rosario Miralbés de Polanco and Guisela Mayen was presented to the Ixchel Museum August 28th by Jorge Devoto, General Manager of Tabacalera Centroamericana, S.A. This is the first volume of a new series called "Weavings of Guatemala" and it is the eighth Ixchel Museum book published by the Guatemalan affiliate of Philip Morris Companies, Inc.

COSTA RICA SEMINAR

June 25-28, Curator Rosario Miralbés de Polanco and Dina Fernández, research department assistant, attended the workshop, "Conservation and Care of Collections," sponsored by the U.S. Information Service, the Smithsonian, and the Museums of the Central Bank of Costa Rica.

IXCHEL CURATOR AT METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

Rosario Miralbés de Polanco, Curator of the Ixchel Museum, has a 5 month Fulbright Scholarship to study at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. After she won the Fulbright, the U.S. Information Service arranged that she work with the Metropolitan Museum Conservator, Nabuko Kajatami, considered one of the foremost textile conservators in the United States.

WENNER-GREN FELLOWSHIP

Linda Asturias de Barrios, Director of Research at the Ixchel Museum, has won a Doctoral Research Grant from the Wenner-Gren Foundation. When she was Curator, Barrios won a Fulbright to study for her doctorate at SUNY Albany and, on returning to finish her thesis, she won an Inter-American Foundation grant.



Construction begins on the new Ixchel Museum. September 1991. Photo by Arturo Paz

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AMONG MUSEUMS

The Ixchel Museum has been chosen as a semifinalist in the American Association of Museums program, which encourages inter-institutional ties by developing joint projects. The U.S. Information Service originally nominated the Ixchel Museum for the competition.

VISITOR FROM MUSEE DE L'HOMME OF PARIS

Dr. Francoise Cousin, Director of the Department of Comparative Technology of the Musee de L'Homme of Paris, spent August in Guatemala, working with the Ixchel Museum textile collection and library for her research and publications. Her main interest is to study the relationship between weaving and the tailoring of traditional dress.

PROJECTS SUPPORTED BY THE FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM

AUDIO TOUR FOR EXHIBIT

Friends of the Ixchel Museum donated four cassette players, extra earphones, cassettes and batteries, for an English language audio tour of the regional exhibit.

SANTA MARIA DE JESUS MONOGRAPH AVAILABLE IN ENGLISH

The revolving fund set up by Friends of the Ixchel Museum has made possible the English translation of "Santa Maria de Jesus: Costume and Cofradia." It is the third translation of a museum monograph that Friends has funded.



Carmen and Leif Lind (Pete) Pettersen on their 50th wedding anniversary.

Donations to Friends of the Ixchel Museum

Friends of the Ixchel Museum, Inc., is an American foundation that funds projects to bring the museum's research and exhibits to the attention of Americans. The foundation's aims are to bring Guatemalan textile exhibits to the United States and to translate the museum's research monographs into English.

You can become a supporter of the Ixchel Museum's work by contributing to the Friends of the Ixchel Museum. Friends of the Ixchel Museum is incorporated under the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law of the State of New York and has qualified under the rules of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as an organization to which donations may be made which are deductible by the donor for U.S. Federal income tax purposes. Checks drawn to the name of the Friends of the Ixchel Museum, Inc., may be mailed to:

Friends of the Ixchel Museum, Inc.
P.O. Box 340
Peck Slip Station
New York, NY 10272

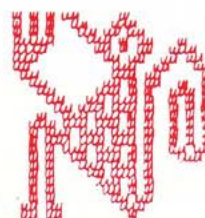
SAN DIEGO MUSEUM OF MAN STAFF VISIT IXCHEL

Grace Johnson, Assistant Curator, Jeri Corbin, Exhibit Designer, and Jo Anne Heaney came to Guatemala to discuss the exhibit of Guatemalan *cofradía* textiles which will be at The Museum of Man in San Diego, California, December 1993 to May 1994.

Friends of the Ixchel Museum will fund the research and publishing of the catalogue, and the shipping and mounting of the exhibit.

The catalogue will be approximately twenty pages of glossy paper with ten full color photographs and twenty black and white photographs. The text will be in English. It will describe the history and present status of *cofradías* and *cofradía* costumes, and will include textile descriptions of 20 selected garments.

Friends of the Ixchel Museum also plans to put out a package of 12 color slides and an exhibit description to be sent to interested museums.



Friends of the Ixchel Museum
P.O. Box 340
Peck Slip Station
New York, NY 10272

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Santiago Atitlán. Tzutujil linguistic group.
Watercolor by Carmen Pettersen 1972.