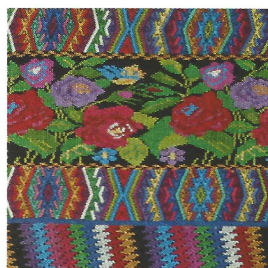
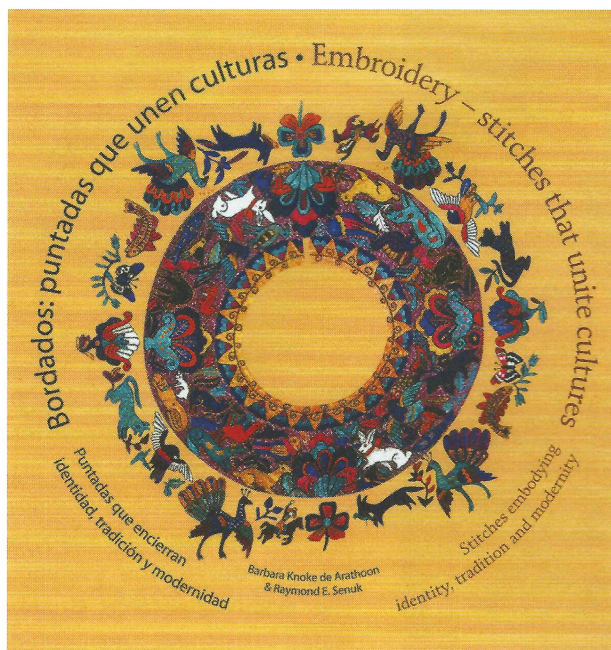
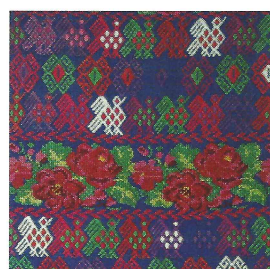
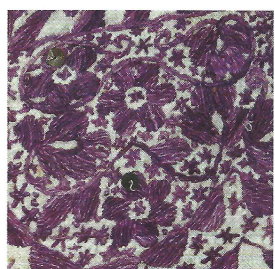
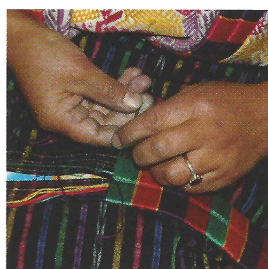


FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM

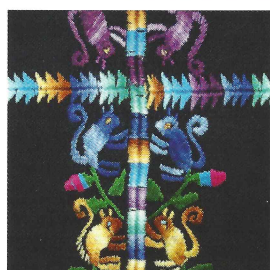
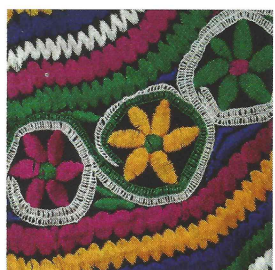
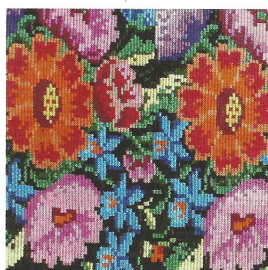
VOLUME TWENTY TWO • NUMBER ONE • JUNE 2010



A SALUTE TO STITCHES



A New Catalogue Celebrates Ixchel's Embroidery Collection



The Museo Ixchel has just published the most ambitious and informative catalogue in its history. The lavishly-illustrated 120 page book is the accompaniment to the embroidery exhibit, *Bordados: Puntadas Que Unen Culturas*, which opened in 2007.

Co-author Raymond Senuk, currently president of the Friends of Ixchel Museum, "says, "In my opinion, it was worth the wait, and I am sure that Barbara Knoke de Arathoon, the first and primary author (and the recently-retired curator of the museum), would agree."

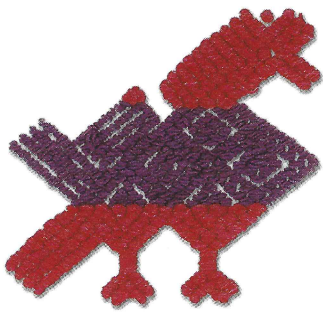
The exhibit and the catalogue are based on field research in nine highland villages known for their embroidery traditions, as well as historical and ethnographic research tracing Guatemalan embroidery from colonial times to the present. Twenty-two textiles, dating from

the late nineteenth century to the 1950s, have been selected from the museum's own collection for in-depth analysis. Full and detail images, thorough descriptions and, when available, archival photos and paintings by watercolorist Carmen Pettersen reveal how the textiles were made and used.

The catalogue is in both Spanish and English, a change from the museum's former practice of publishing first in Spanish and later in English. The catalogue will therefore reach a larger audience sooner.

Although supplementary weft patterning or brocade continues to be the Guatemalan weaver's primary method of adding pattern to cloth, research for the exhibit revealed that embroidery techniques have become increasingly important in indigenous textiles.

Continued inside



THE MUSEUM



The Museo Ixchel is located on 6a Calle final, zona 10, on the grounds of the Universidad Francisco Marroquín in Guatemala City. The museum is open from 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, and from 9 am to 1 pm on Saturday. Admission is Q35 for adults, Q15 for students and Q8 for schoolchildren. For further information on library access and holiday closings and more, please visit museoixchel.org or telephone 502 2331 3622

May 11th was the presentation and celebration of *"Embroidery - Stitches That Unite Cultures"* by Barbara Knoke de Arathoon and Raymond Senuk, with photographs by Anne Girard. The book, researched and written to accompany the Ixchel Museum embroidery exhibit, was initially funded by Friends of the Ixchel Museum. A generous donation by Annette Merle-Smith made it possible to double the number of pages and color photographs and make the book even more appealing to both textile experts and textile novices.

Weavings by 5th graders from San Juan Sacatepéquez and Mixco were exhibited at the Ixchel Museum in May. The pieces were woven in the revitalization project of Education Director, Fabiana Flores Maselli and were displayed in their own schools before being brought to the museum. The students came to enjoy the exhibition of their work and to tour the museum. These two programs were sponsored by the Daniele Agostino Derossi Foundation.

Exhibit Designer María Pilar Cruz, an architect, has begun the refurbishing of the permanent exhibit galleries. She has painted the walls tangerine and gold to give a lift to the area and she will renew the signage and change the textiles on exhibit. The funding has come from Friends of the Ixchel Museum.

In February, more than 300 people came to the museum for the opening of a collective art exhibit. Renowned Guatemalan artist Ramirez Amaya was drawing during the evening. The event celebrated Guatemalan artists and encouraged a young public to get to know the museum. Other activities at the museum that month

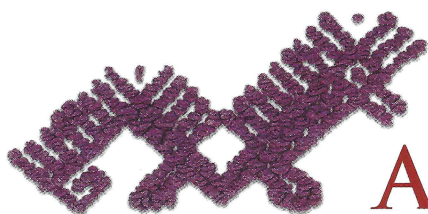
included a wine tasting and several lectures.

In March, the museum held its annual fundraiser at El Zapote, the family farm of doña Carmen de Pettersen. Also in March, Peter Gieseemann, one of Guatemala's leading architects, offered museum members a detailed discussion and tour of his most recent work to benefit the museum.

At their meeting in Guatemala in March, Friends voted to fund the printing of a bingo game designed by Fabiana Flores Maselli using huipiles from different villages. Friends will also fund the further renovation of the permanent exhibit halls as well as the creation of several lightweight, easily transportable museum exhibits to put in hotels or tourist centers.

In June the museum will publish two children's story books in K'iche and in Kakchiquel, with funding from the US Embassy in Guatemala.

In August a travelling exhibit of Navajo art will come to the museum in collaboration with the US Embassy in Guatemala.



A SALUTE TO STITCHES Continued



To order the
Bordados catalogue,
please go to the
museum's web site,
museoixchel.com

Moreover, the weaver's exposure to needlepoint pattern books has changed the designs of supplementary weft patterning.

For example, embroidered yokes around the neck were traditionally reserved for ceremonial garments in many villages. However in Patzún, the yoke of the daily huipil is now as elaborately embroidered

as the ceremonial huipil. Although the design elements differ between the two, the line between daily and ceremonial garments has blurred. In other villages, such as Santiago Atitlán, where embroidered elements were used only sparingly, huipiles are now heavily embroidered.

Another example of the changes in the living art of Mayan textiles has been the appearance of a generic huipil referred to as a blusa in the highlands. Commercial bolt cloth, typically damask, in a wide range of colors, is purchased at local markets, fashioned into huipiles and then decorated with hand or machine-embroidered yokes. As a result, it is no longer always possible to identify a woman's village by looking

at her traje. Women now freely choose color combinations and styles that suit their own taste rather than the prescribed costume of the community.

Needlepoint pattern books, widely available in Guatemala for decades, have also changed supplementary weft patterning. At first glance, the textiles look as if the ornamentation has been done in needlepoint. In fact, the indigenous weavers developed a more complicated technique called double-faced brocade. Known locally as *marcador*, the technique produces a design that is identical on both sides of the base cloth. Needlepoint designs first appeared in the 1930s in the town of San Antonio Aguas Calientes. Since then double-faced brocade has become a major element in the textiles in other villages, including Tecpán, Comalapa and San Martín Jilotepeque. In the 1950s, the weavers added to their traditional repertoire of designs by embroidering huge floral elements straight out of needlepoint design books.

All of these examples of the vibrancy and creativity of Maya weavers come brilliantly to life in the new catalogue, whose authors signed copies at a celebratory party at the Museo Ixchel in May.

✦ Story by Raymond Senuk

GENEROUS ENDOWMENTS FOR THE MUSEUM

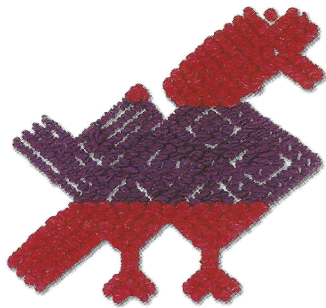
Two families closely linked to Guatemala have pledged to establish significant endowments to strengthen the important positions of Museum Director and Director of the Photo Archive at the Museo Ixchel.

The position of Museum Director will be named for Carmen Herrera by her family. Carmen Herrera was born in France and spent her formative years in Europe before settling in the United States just before World War II. She loved Guatemala very much and regularly returned to maintain connections with her mother, Stella Powers de Herrera, and a large group of extended family and friends.

The position of Director of the Photo Archive will be endowed by the family of Hans Namuth, a photographer born in Germany who became a United States citizen. He became known

internationally for the photographic portraits of many of the world's most creative artists, taken between 1950 and 1980. He brought the same intensive eye to his book, *Los Todos Santos*, a series of portraits of the men, women and children of the town of Todos Santos Cuchumatán, taken over a twenty-year period.

The donors feel that the work of the Asociación de Amigos del Museo Ixchel del Traje Indígena (the museum's Guatemalan board) needs to be supported by trained professional management in order for the museum to continue to thrive in today's highly competitive environment. They have asked the Ixchel Museum to raise funds to match their donations, and they hope that their pledges will encourage other families to donate to the endowments or to endow museum positions.



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SUPPORT FOR FOIM

The more you travel around the world, the more you appreciate the miracle of Maya textiles. On every continent, millions of people, men and women alike, dress in an anonymous uniform of T-shirts and jeans, often culled from huge bundles of clothing sent by Western charities. Only an occasional artfully-tied head scarf or a distinctive print hint at rich clothing traditions of the past.

In the face of this clothing globalization, the sight of a cluster of Guatemalan women in village-specific, hand-woven garments is a moment to be treasured. Their clothing is vivid proof of skills and traditions that have been passed on from mother to daughter for centuries. It's also a statement of pride and courage in a country where discrimination against the Maya culture has led to unfortunate situations where women in traje have been turned away from restaurants.

The Friends of the Ixchel Museum supports both the extraordinary textiles and the peo-

ple who make and wear them. The museum's research, preservation and exhibition activities celebrate both historic and contemporary textiles. In addition, the museum sponsors programs to encourage the continuation of the tradition. One long-established program teaches fifth-graders to weave, first showing them historic garments from their own villages, then exhibiting their work. The children also learn about their heritage from ingenious games and books created by the museum's education director, Fabiana de Saenz. The Pro-Teje program gives desperately-needed work to skilled weavers, providing them materials and selling their products. In addition to Pro-Teje's products, the museum's first-floor shop is a successful outlet for other artisans' work.

Please consider a donation to the Friends of the Ixchel Museum. Your contribution, large or small, will help us maintain one of the world's unique cultures and contribute to the beauty and diversity of our world.

Our growth is only possible through your generosity! Join Us Now!



FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM

PO Box 545

Blue Bell, PA 19422 USA

foiminfo@gmail.com

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