



# FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM

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## TEXTILE CARE IN PLACE

by Amy DiPlacido



It's November, which means it's been eight months since Shelter in Place began due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. You most likely binge-watched some shows on Netflix, made sourdough starter, killed sourdough starter, and cleaned out objects from your home that didn't 'spark joy.'

But have you cared for your textiles? Consider using this time of social distance to turn your focus inward to your home and cast a critical eye on how you store your textile collection.

Of all the artforms, we have possibly the most intimate relationship with textiles. Textiles have the ability to conjure an array of memories. They remind us of the places we have travelled (one of the many limitations of the world right now) – and yet, they can trigger very intense, nostalgic feelings of home by the comforting nature, warmth or even coolness they bring through touch. Now is an appropriate time during social

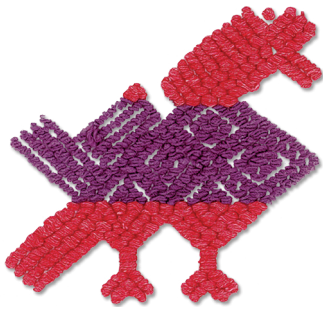
distancing to revisit some of those memories and focus internally on you, your home and your textile collection.

Through this article, I've outlined some introductory steps you can take in your textile preservation and conservation efforts, with a focus on the beginner or casual home collection.

### Store like a professional

If possible, consider purchasing acid-free tissue and archival boxes – you can find these on Amazon, U-line or Gaylord Archival websites. Gently wrap each textile in acid-free tissue and then place it in the archival box. In the box, you should always put the heaviest textile at the bottom and the lightest one on top. (You never want to store cloth in a plastic bin or in cardboard.) If your *huipil/blusa* or other clothing item has thin or delicate shoulders, avoid using a hanger.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



# and out of IN THE MUSEUM



by Maya Fledderjohn

Above: A backlog of *Fajas* (Sashes) was recently photo-catalogued. Concepción Chiquirichapa

✚ No one could have predicted how 2020 would unfold and how it would require a complete pivot to the way the Museo Ixchel operates. Unique challenges and opportunities have presented themselves, notable among them an acceleration of our plans for a digital presence. We can proudly say no other cultural institution has been more relevant and present in Guatemalan culture; we are taking the lead and are playing a prominent role in keeping our audience informed and entertained, while moving forward with our mission. Also, with a much broader and international following than we have had in the past.

✚ FOIM projects are still moving forward -- research, education and “registro” are on track, and we are hoping to get out in the field soon, depending on how comfortable people are with outsiders visiting. The Education department has a new proposal ready to present at FOIM’s interim meeting.

✚ Violeta and her department have done an outstanding job, working tirelessly on 18 virtual conferences, 10 e-workshops and several private virtual tours. The *chachal*, pompom and embroidery workshops have been filled to capacity and sometimes we’ve had to offer a second and third round to meet demand. Physi-

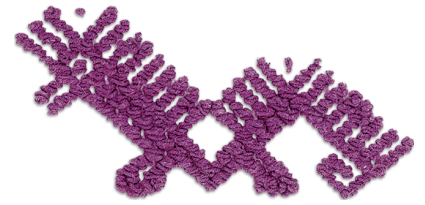
cal materials enable hands-on participation and are distributed prior to the e-workshops as a kit.

✚ Most of the lectures are free, but we solicit and often get donations. Talks are also available on YouTube for those who wish to watch them at a later date. There have been many collaborations with international scholars from the Louvre, San Luís Potosí and the Oaxaca Museum, to name a few. Joint presentations with Guatemalan academics, anthropologists and archeologists have also attracted numerous viewers. The 2020 Rabín Ajau pageant for the Mayan Princess had to be cancelled, so we held a special conference with the photographer who has been documenting it for more than 10 years. It was a tribute to the Rabín Ajau tradition even though the event itself was cancelled. The Seminar on Pre-Hispanic Attire featured three PhDs discussing the evidence of Mayan dress in archeology. And Barbara Arathon did two lectures on *chachales*; they in turn generated interest in the workshops.

✚ On September 24, we hosted our first Virtual Gala, with a private concert from the band that has played at our previous events. For those interested, wine and cheese was delivered. We had prizes and an art sale to boost funding for the museum. **Our doors may be closed, but our reach is wide and growing.**







# TEXTILE CARE IN PLACE

CONTINUED FROM FRONT



Museum storage provides extra protection by using washed muslin

## Unfold & roll

A typical mistake that home collectors make is folding their textiles. Professional conservators prefer rolling textiles, as opposed to folding, so the fabric does not become damaged at the crease. (A pool noodle wrapped in archival tissue works well.) If you need to fold due to space limitations, pad the folds with bunched archival tissue, remembering to routinely refold in the opposite direction. Pad a three-dimensional textile, such as a hat, so it retains its shape. Clothing can be hung on a padded hanger covered with washed muslin.

## Display your textiles

Consider taking your textile collection out of the attic or other hidden storage and carving out space to display it in your home. An abundance of creative ideas and best practices are on the internet dependent on what kind of textile you'd like to display. In finding the perfect place, opt for an area of indirect sunlight. Typically professionals hang textiles so the center point of the piece is 58" from the floor. We're considering a future article on ways to display – send us your examples.

## Catalog your collection

Take this time to start an excel spreadsheet of your home collection. You can keep track of the year the item was made/purchased, provenance, price and current value, condition, and especially a small photograph – this may also come in handy if you need it for insurance purposes, or if you intend on giving your collection to an institution/museum at a later date. Looking at a piece of cloth can bring you back to the country you found it in, the interaction of the purchase, who you were with, and this may be a fitting place to document these stories.

In the time of Shelter In Place, our homes are our sanctuaries. Take a weekend to check in with your textile collection to first make sure its storage or method of hanging is not leading to any damage, then instill a plan to check on their condition at certain times of the year. (A quarterly schedule could be in line with US Holidays: Christmas, Easter, July 4th and Labor Day.) Consider these action steps to preserve your home textiles as a way to ensure they can enrich the lives of future generations.



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## The FOIM board welcomes Luciana Jabur and Amy DiPlacido



We met Luciana in Guatemala when she served on the Museo Ixchel board from 2015-2017. Her efforts there were focused on developing partnerships with international academic researchers examining how innovative technologies could combine with traditional textile methods to open more global market opportunities.

Now living in the US, she works with the Parsons School of Design lab (Artisan Sector) as an affiliated researcher – and also via (Hand)Made to Market, LLC, an applied research initiative for the makers' market with the goal of enhancing value and competitive advantage.

Brazilian-born, Luciana holds a bachelor of Business Administration from Faculdade Armando Álvares Penteado in São Paulo and an MA in Marketing Communications from The London Institute.

Luciana's perspective on weavers as artisans seeking broader markets will bring a new dimension to our work on preserving the Mayan textile tradition.



Amy is a visual artist and curator based in Northern California and was our partner during the *Mayan Traje: A Tradition in Transition* exhibit. Her steady and supportive hand was greatly appreciated! As the Curator of Exhibitions at the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles, she has collaborated on shows involving both historic and contemporary fashion and textiles. As a fiber artist, she has exhibited her own work at Westmoreland Museum of Art, Fuller Craft Museum and Interlochen Center for the Arts.

Amy has an MFA in Fiber from Cranbrook Academy of Art and a BFA in Fiber from Massachusetts College of Art and Design. She volunteers at the Textile Society of America as the Digital Content Editor and we look forward to her participation in the bulletin and website.

We are confident that Amy's perspective as an artist coupled with her experience in museum exhibit design will be a tremendous add to our capabilities.



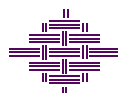
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