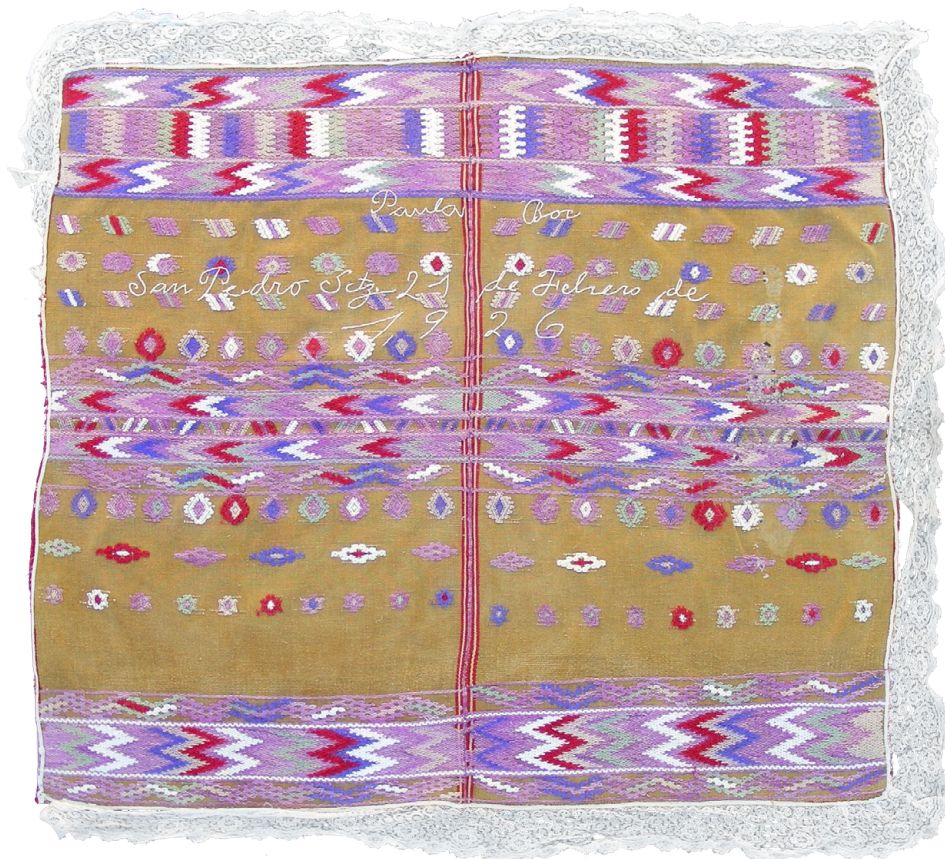




# FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM

VOLUME THIRTY TWO • NUMBER ONE • SPRING 2021



San Pedro produced many textiles for ceremonial use – *ofrendas*, insignia sleeves, *huipils*, and *servilletas*. Because many of these textiles became the property of the *cofradía*, the donors would often inscribe them with their names to mark service, the value of the threads to demonstrate the size of their donation, and the date of their service. This is one of the few textile traditions in Guatemala that gives us a text specific to the textile. I have chosen to show two *servilletas* from consecutive years – 1926 and 1927. Murex appears in the *servilleta* from 1926; however, in 1927 and every year after there is never a stitch of murex. In examining over 200 dated textiles from 1917 through the 1980s, I have observed no murex after 1926. For the textile researcher or enthusiast, having a definitive date for the use of murex is an important dating mechanism. All the neighboring Kaqchikel communities in the departments of Guatemala have similar textile traditions and used murex in their textiles, so one can with some comfort extrapolate dating

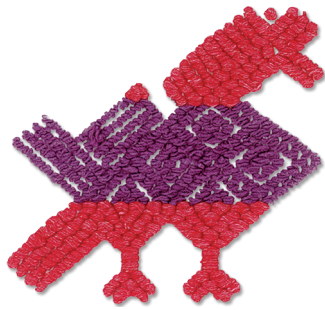
## THE LAST YEAR MUREX WAS USED IN SAN PEDRO SACATEPÉQUEZ

by Raymond Senuk

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

In the June 2020 Newsletter, I wrote about early dyes used in Guatemala. I would like to expand on one of the dyes – murex. If you remember, murex is a very fast dye for purple that comes from a large genus of sea snails. One would always like to say something definitive about a subject that interests them. For me, it has been a challenge to say something definitive about Guatemalan textiles, because there always seems to be an exception. Well, in San Pedro Sacatepéquez, weavers used murex in ceremonial textiles in the early 20th century, and I can say with a great deal of certainty that 1926 was the last year murex was used.

of textiles in these towns. One does not know the reason for the abrupt cessation of its use. Some possibilities could be high expense and/or no availability. In the early 1920s, the first pre-dyed cotton purple thread was imported to Guatemala and called *morado de carrizo*; this is the purple thread we see in the 1927 *servilleta*. Murex was always expensive and was traded to Guatemala via the Pacific coast from the state of Oaxaca in Mexico. We will never know the actual reason for the abrupt cessation, but we do have an excellent dating mechanism for San Pedro textiles and surrounding communities that do not bear an inscription.



# and out of IN THE MUSEUM



by Maya Fledderjohn

Workshops!

Above left: Iberomuseo-sponsored weaving workshop

Above right: Red *Chachal* output

Lower left: Patzún neck example

We continue to work on a variety of projects and look forward to welcoming you back to the museum. Meanwhile, please visit us on our website and Instagram.

After almost a year of taking the lead in Guatemala and operating as a virtual museum, the Ixchel has reopened its doors to the public. It was also featured in a best practices video from the tourism board about how museums can safely reopen following certain standards and bio security protocols. Everything is now in place and visitors are beginning to trickle in.

As we navigate these new times, nothing seems to stand in the way of Violeta Gutiérrez and her team. Their projects continue to make us proud.

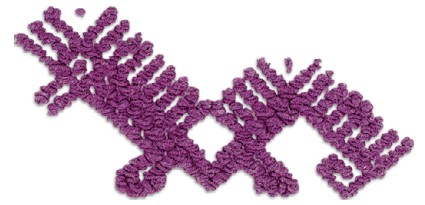
The Ibermuseo grant we received last year will provide scholarships for thirty (30) girls and women from different Maya communities in the metropolitan area in order to motivate them to connect or reconnect with the weaving arts tradition which, due to various circumstances, they have stopped practicing or never learned. It began with hybrid classes on back-strap weaving in March and will continue for three more months.

We've held two very successful workshops on Patzún neck embroidery and Red Chachal. Interest has spiked in embroidery, beading and workshops that include materials that are delivered. We also have workshop students all around the world that procure their own materials.

## Conferences:

- Bárbara Arathoon, always a conference favorite, delivered two: one on Mayan symbols in textiles along with a beautiful coloring book produced by her; and another on the evolution of the chachal.
- Another conference highlighting three Guatemalan UNESCO world heritage sites—Tikal, Quiriguá and of course Antigua—was held to commemorate Guatemalan Heritage Day.

Finally, we are very proud to have completed the FOIM-funded Glossary, a much-anticipated and very valuable resource.



## THE LAST YEAR OF MUREX

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

One can clearly see the difference in the threads employed by looking at the two detail photos where the variegated purple cotton called *morado de concha* (murex) is in the 1926 *servilleta*, whereas the dark purple cotton is *morado de carrizo* in the 1927 *servilleta*.



Front page and Left:  
1926 *servilleta*  
Right: 1927 *servilleta*

## THE FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM RECEIVES BEQUEST FROM ANA-MARÍA ORIVE ZAUGG

by Ana-María Zaugg

We received a welcome gift from the estate of my mother, Ana-María Orive Zaugg, who followed the museum and its work from her home in California. She was born in Antigua, lived there until after her university studies, then went with her sister Lilly Orive to Boston... where she met and married John Zaugg. She did not “collect” textiles, but our house was decorated with them and she made sure we each had *trajes* to wear for special events. She was very proud of what the Museo Ixchel was doing. Her gift will be used to support the planned refresh of the Museo’s *Core Sala IV* – updating which will feature contemporary textile display content and innovative technology in that exhibit space.



**Please remember the FOIM has an *Ofrenda Society* and we hope you will consider filling the offerings plate with a bequest or designated gift. We also accept textiles, and acknowledge with thanks the recent donations made by Dr. Isabelle Mandell from her parents’ collection (Drs. Richard and Betty Mandell) and by Ardis Koester from her own.**



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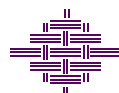
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**Always!** on [ixchelfriends.org](http://ixchelfriends.org) website

**Now on Instagram!** Follow us and share our posts with artisans, makers, fiber artists, textile designers, and friends so we can reach new audiences!

[instagram.com/ixchelfriends\\_textiles](https://www.instagram.com/ixchelfriends_textiles)

**In the Works!** A portion of our *Mayan Traje: a Tradition in Transition* traveling exhibit will be on view from Sept. 24 through Dec. 31, 2021 at the Wheaton Arts and Cultural Center in Millville, New Jersey. Their *Down Jersey FolkLife* programs speak to diverse audiences and include exhibitions, demonstrations by artists/tradition bearers, performances, festivals, classes, training for educators, lectures and seminars. Activities at the Center have ranged from Pinelands basketry and Native American drum-making to Japanese origami and Ukrainian *pysanky*; from African American doll-making to Palestinian embroidery and Guatemalan weaving.



## FRIENDS OF THE IXCHEL MUSEUM

15 Roszel Road, Suite 10, Princeton, NJ 08540

Members receive free entrance to FOIM exhibits in the U.S.

Also entrance to the Museo Ixchel in Guatemala,  
with discounts on select purchases in its shop.

Custodia	\$5,000	Faja	\$100
Huipil Ceremonial	\$1,000	Cinta Seda	\$50
Huipil	\$500	Cinta	\$25
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