

INTIMATE PORTRAITS OF 20 GUATEMALAN TEXTILE ARTISANS SHARING THE WORK OF THEIR LIVES

Traditional Weavers of Guatemala: Their Stories, Their Lives to be Released in September 2015—the newest book in the award-winning series from Thrums Books, celebrating stories of indigenous textile artisans worldwide.



“Cloth lives an experience,” says Lola Sapalú, a Guatemalan weaver and embroiderer, one of twenty artisans whose personal portraits Deborah Chandler and Teresa Córdón present in **Traditional Weavers of Guatemala: Their Stories, Their Lives**. Through each artisan’s portrait, we live the experience of that cloth as it’s inextricably connected to geography, culture, family, and terrible political upheaval. The book is a story of tradition, innovation, and survival, embellished with the colors of a profound cultural heritage.

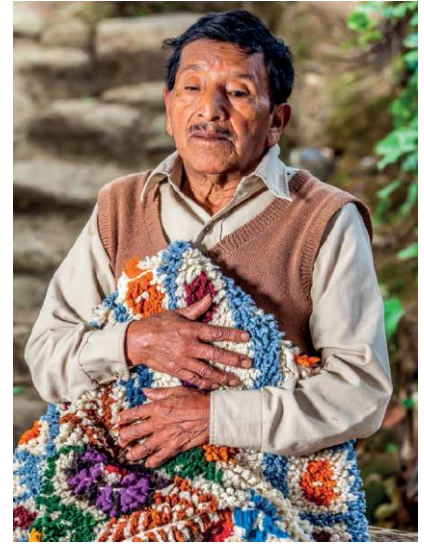
Chandler and Córdón introduce a diverse range of fiber artists, including men and women and spanning generations, from thirty-three to eighty-nine. A few are weavers who exhibit their work in galleries and museums, earning significant prices for the sale of their traditional handwoven garments. Others are widows



who struggle against poverty to support their children and grandchildren through the work of their hands. More are artists who, through necessity and creative expression, have evolved traditional weaving techniques and design. They explain subtle but significant regional differences in the use of patterns, colors, and styles.

Throughout all the portraits, the artisans convey a deep

commitment both to their craft and to their families. Despite hardship and tragedy, they continue to be uplifted by their work, a livelihood that sustains them economically and spiritually. In addition to the poignant conversations with weavers, the authors share the stories of spinners, dyers, basketmakers, and embroiderers who provide insight into their craft traditions, techniques, and tools.



Photographer Joe Coca captures brilliantly the heart of his subjects and the beauty of their land. Through over 200 photographs, he tells a story of the physical beauty of Guatemala, of the diversity of a landscape that has shaped its people, of the Maya culture, and of the textiles themselves. Several opening pages are devoted to images of place: from waterfalls to farm fields, from bustling marketplaces to religious festivals, all lit with the vibrant colors of Guatemala.

“A land,” Chandler and Cordón write, “as colorful and varied as its weaving.” The opening imagery prepares for the artisans’ stories—as difficult, diverse, and enchanting as their country.



Traditional Weavers of Guatemala will appeal not only to textile artists, but to travelers, historians, anthropologists, and to any reader intrigued by the history of Guatemala and the cultural traditions of its people. ***Traditional Weavers*** is the most recent publication from Thrums Books, once again, masterfully exploring the compelling traditions of indigenous textile artisans throughout the world.

Author & Photographer Bios



Deborah Chandler, author of the phenomenal bestseller *Learning to Weave* and co-author of *Guatemalan Woven Wealth*, has lived in Guatemala since 1999. Since then, through her own business, *Weaving Futures*, and her nine years as Director of *Mayan Hands-Guatemala*, she has had the pleasure and honor of working with many Mayan weavers, learning new things from them at every encounter. She is a graduate of Allegheny College and a well-known weaving teacher. She lives in Guatemala City.



Teresa Cordón was born in Zacapa in the eastern part of Guatemala. Her first trip to the Highlands was in 1965; that was when she first met the Mayan culture. After living in the United States for several years she returned to Guatemala, and since 1988, through both non-profit organizations and her own business, *Comercial Naleb*, she has provided both education and markets for the work of Maya artisans. She has been cited as Exporter of the Year, Artisan Sector. She lives in Guatemala City.



Joe Coca grew up in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of southern Colorado. After graduating from Colorado State University, he studied photography at Art Center College of Design in Los Angeles. For the past thirty-five years he has maintained a studio in Fort Collins, Colorado, but his work has taken him to cities and rural areas of five continents. He has photographed people from all walks of life, industrial products and installations, architecture, food, and especially handcrafted textiles and other artisan goods.

Book Details:

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