people, culture, the timeless touch of human hands
THRUMS BOOKS

bringing you the world in artisan crafts

For over a decade, Thrums Books has given voice to the stories of indigenous craft traditions from around the world. Our aim is to document the human stories behind the craft and to reflect the importance of craft traditions in the history and social evolution of a culture.

The content of our award-winning books ranges from cultural anthropology and history to intimate personal stories, and a bit of how-to. We have published twenty titles, focusing on textile artisans from Laos to Peru, from Mexico to Morocco, from Guatemala to Afghanistan, and beyond.

thrums: the row of warp thread ends left on a loom when the woven cloth is cut off the fringe.
Lynda Teller Pete and Barbara Teller Ornelas are fifth-generation Navajo weavers who have been weaving since they were young girls. Internationally acclaimed for their fine tapestry weaving, their lives and work have been featured in many publications and have been the subject of the *Craft in America* television program. Their weaving has been exhibited at galleries and museums throughout the world. Together, they teach Navajo weaving workshops at museums, galleries, and guilds, valuing the opportunity to serve as ambassadors for their Navajo culture and traditions.

How to Weave a Navajo Rug and Other Lessons from Spider Woman

*Lynda Teller Pete and Barbara Teller Ornelas; Illustrations by Mychal Yellowman*

*How to Weave a Navajo Rug* has detailed how-to instructions, meticulously illustrated by a Navajo artist, from warping the loom to important finishing touches. For the first time, master Navajo weavers themselves share the deep, inside story of how these textiles are created, and how their creation resonates in Navajo culture. This book is the only how-to book on Navajo weaving told by Navajo weavers. Their contribution to cultural understanding and the preservation of their craft is priceless.

Spiral bound with hard cover  •  $29.95
ISBN: 978-1-7344217-0-5  •  160 pages
October 2020  •  eBook formats available
Cultural Studies/Craft
Writer, colorist, and artisan activist Keith Recker has worked with makers from more than sixty countries to refine their products, tell their stories, find new customers, and gain the recognition they so deeply deserve. He was an executive at Saks Fifth Avenue, Gump’s San Francisco, and Bloomingdale’s; founded HAND/EYE Magazine; led Aid to Artisans; and has worked with the world’s foremost providers of color intelligence. He serves as Creative Director of the International Folk Art Market, Contributing Editor to TABLE Magazine, and Senior Consultant at the Pantone Color Institute.

**True Colors: World Masters of Natural Dyes and Pigments**

REVISED EDITION WITH NEW CONTENT

Keith Recker

*True Colors* is about artists who create color from natural materials and about the historical importance and environmental sustainability of this practice. Deep conversations with 26 artisans from every part of the globe reveal their wisdom, traditions, and know-how—and suggest that we ignore what they know at our peril. Traditional approaches to making color offer sustainable options to a fashion system badly in need of them and memorable cultural narratives to a world hungry for beauty and spirituality. *True Colors* provides an immersive visual experience and an inspiring travelogue of personal stories and practical information from artists who are leaving their mark on the world.

Trade Paperback • $36.95 • 252 pages

ISBN: 978-1-7332003-8-7 • April 2020

Cultural Studies/Fashion • eBook formats available
*Every Thread a Story* is a tribute to ethnic minority artisans of China’s Guizhou Province. It is also a tribute to the heritage craft traditions and techniques passed down through the generations of their families. The book introduces more than a dozen contemporary artists from four ethnic groups working in the techniques of their ancestors, including indigo dyers, embroiderers of varying techniques, weavers, a metalsmith, and a paper maker. A wide-ranging look to the future questions the effects of tourism and modern development on the craft and culture of southeast Guizhou Province.

160 pages, 200 color photos

*The Secret Language of Miao Embroidery* presents, for the first-time, expert interpretations of the Miao symbols and motifs embellished on traditional clothing of the Miao peoples of China. Using examples from pieces in a museum’s collection, the author provides clear descriptions and stories for the symbols and motifs found in highly collectible Miao textiles, focusing on southeast Guizhou Province. Detailed color photographs accompany each motif.

64 pages

**BOXED SET**

*Every Thread a Story: Traditional Chinese Artisans of Guizhou Province and The Secret Language of Miao Embroidery*

Karen Brock, Linda Ligon, Wang Jun

US price: $49.95 • ISBN: 978-1-7332003-9-4
April 2020 • eBook formats available
Asian Studies/Cultural Studies/Textile & Costume Design
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 40 years he 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, landscape, architecture, food, and especially handcrafted textiles. He lives with his wife and two dogs in Weston, Colorado.

The Human Thread: Photography of Joe Coca

Joe Coca

The Human Thread is a celebration of outstanding photography. Over 100 images represent photographer Joe Coca’s remarkable work, spanning forty years and five continents. Through evocative images and companion personal stories, he guides us on a global journey, weaving together place, people, craft, and story with the human thread that connects us all. Each section of the book features an array of exceptional photographs that shows a region’s people as well as surprising glimpses of culture and environment.

Hardcover • $36.95
ISBN: 978-1-7335108-6-8 • 188 pages
eBook formats available • September 2019
Photography/Cultural Studies
A Textile Traveler’s Guide to Guatemala
Deborah Chandler

The vibrant character of Guatemala is most visible in its handwoven textiles, which are still in everyday use and readily available in native markets all over the country. *A Textile Traveler’s Guide to Guatemala* is an excellent resource for discovering artisans, markets, shops, and those storied regional textile traditions. Geared to independent minded travelers, this guide presents the safest and most accessible methods of travel, where and when to go, where to stay, and what to eat. Expert advice helps the traveler know what to look for, how to distinguish high-quality work, and how to bargain intelligently and ethically. With abundant photographs, this guide celebrates the color, joy, and energy of folklife in Guatemala.

Trade Paperback • $24.95 • ISBN: 978-1-7323528-4-1
140 pages • eBook formats available • April 2019 • Travel/Guatemala

A Textile Traveler’s Guide to Peru & Bolivia
Cynthia LeCount Samaké

From weekly village markets in the Peruvian highlands to fanciful costumes of Bolivia’s Carnival, Samaké guides readers through the living legacy of two thousand years of textile tradition in the Andean highlands and beyond—an excellent resource for discovering artisans, markets, shops, museums, and festivals. Geared to independent-minded travelers, this guide presents refreshing and genuine descriptions for lodgings, restaurants, and transportation that only years of life on the road could inform. Expert advice helps travelers to know what textile treasures they’ll discover at each location, how to distinguish quality textiles, and shop ethically.

Trade Paperback • $34.95 • ISBN: 978-1-7323528-5-8
152 pages • eBook formats available • April 2019 • Travel/Peru/Bolivia/South America
Embroidering Within Boundaries: Afghan Women Creating a Future
Rangina Hamidi and Mary Littrell, photography by Paula Lerner

From the harsh and hidden lives of women in Afghanistan emerges a story of creativity, courage, and discovering a future through ancient textile traditions. *Embroidering Within Boundaries* chronicles the development of a remarkable inspiring business run solely by Afghan women. It is a poignant and clear-eyed presentation of the strength and persistence of women within Muslim society that will inspire women throughout the world.

- Silver Award winner, 2018 Benjamin Franklin Independent Book Publisher Awards

Trade Paperback • $34.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9984523-0-2 • 172 pages
eBook formats available. • October 2017 • Cultural Studies/Women's Studies

Traditional Weavers of Guatemala: Their Stories, Their Lives
Deborah Chandler and Teresa Cordón, with photography by Joe Coca

Against the backdrop of Guatemala, this book presents portraits of artisans working in the ancient traditions of the Maya paired with insights into the creation of the textiles and the events that have affected their work. Weaving, spinning, and basket making have sustained the Maya economically and culturally against the pressures of change and a 36-year civil war. Their persistence in continuing traditional art has created some of the loveliest, most colorful textiles the world has ever known. Artisans share their personal histories, hopes, and dreams along with the products of their hands and looms.

- Silver Award winner, 2016 Benjamin Franklin Independent Book Publisher Awards

Latino Book Award silver medalist.

Trade Paperback • $34.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9838860-7-5 • 140 pages
eBook formats available. • 2015 • Cultural Studies/Guatemala
Rug Money
How a Group of Maya Women Changed Their Lives through Art and Innovation
Mary Anne Wise and Cheryl Conway-Daly, Photography by Joe Coca

At the heart of Rug Money is the work of artist Mary Anne Wise and her committed team at Multicolores, the nonprofit rug-hooking cooperative they formed in Guatemala. Through a compelling narrative, the authors describe how they built a business framework from within the local culture and created successful teaching strategies that encouraged both artistic advancement as well as personal growth—all while establishing and maintaining their enterprise as a force in the global marketplace. Poignant individual profiles of several of the Maya artists and what participation in the project has meant to them bring the story from economics to heart.

Silver Award winner, 2019 Benjamin Franklin Independent Book Publisher Awards

Trade Paperback • $29.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9990517-8-8 • 160 pages
eBook formats available • September 2018 • Cultural Studies/Business and Economics: Nonprofit

Silk Weavers of Hill Tribe Laos: Textiles, Tradition, and Well-Being
Joshua Hirschstein and Maren Beck, photography by Joe Coca

What began as a couple’s backpacking adventure with their young sons in Southeast Asia transformed into a thriving fair trade business and a renewed sense of well-being. Part travelogue, part silk-weaving primer, Silk Weavers of Hill Tribe Laos is a tender portrait of an American family’s travels in Laos’s remote Houaphan Province. As they learn about the ancient silk weaving traditions in the hill tribe community of Xam Tai, so too they gain a profound appreciation for Lao culture and traditions. Engaging personal stories and intimate photography bring it all into focus: the patience and skills of the artisans, the steady pace of village life, and a deep commitment to honoring the old ways.

Gold Award winner, 2018 Benjamin Franklin Independent Book Publisher Awards

Trade Paperback • $34.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9972168-9-9 • 224 pages
eBook formats available • October 2017 • Travel/Cultural Studies
Oaxaca Stories in Cloth: A Book about People, Identity, and Adornment

Eric Sebastian Mindling

Eric Mindling has been traveling the back roads of Oaxaca, Mexico, for over two decades. *Oaxaca Stories in Cloth* shows not only his love, but his respect for that dramatic geography and the people who have made it their home. More than 100 sensitive, full-color portraits of traditional people offer rare glimpses of Oaxacan village life. The companion vignettes are a beautiful blend of villagers’ personal stories and Mindling’s praise song to vanishing cultural traditions of Mexico.

*Gold Award winner, 2017 Benjamin Franklin Independent Book Publisher Awards*

*Latino Book Award silver medalist.*

Trade Paperback • $36.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9838860-8-2 • 280 pages
eBook formats available • October 2016 • Photography/Social Science

Maya Threads: A Woven History of Chiapas

Walter F. Morris, Jr., Carol Karasik, Photography by Janet Schwartz

Destined to be the definitive guide to the history, meaning, and evolution of Chiapas textiles. Through the pages of this highly researched book, the world of the Maya lives on through the lens of its culture and costume, still seen today in the state of Chiapas in southern Mexico. The Maya continue to celebrate and sustain their heritage in extraordinary traditional dress and festivals that are both riotous and sacred. Two Maya experts and a photographer painstakingly record the remnants of influence from the Aztecs, Spanish conquistadors, Catholic missionaries, and the unseen gods and spirits that guide Maya culture.

*Gold Award winner, 2016 Benjamin Franklin Independent Book Publisher Awards*

Trade Paperback • $34.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9838860-6-8 • 214 pages
eBook formats available • 2015 • Cultural Heritage/Mexico
Textile Fiestas of Mexico: A Traveler’s Guide to Celebrations, Markets, and Smart Shopping

Sheri Brautigam

A smart and fun resource guide for discovering the safest and most accessible regional markets, artisan festivals, and fairs throughout Mexico. Sheri Brautigam is an expert guide in finding the finest quality traditional textiles and offers clear advice about shopping ethically. She offers smart advice on where to go and how to get there, focusing on safety and comfort for visitors who don’t want the stresses and schedules of traditional tour groups. Rich cultural background and vibrant photos illustrate the adventure and will inspire you to travel along.

Silver Award winner, 2017 Benjamin Franklin Independent Book Publisher Awards

Latino Book Award silver medalist.

Trade Paperback  •  $24.95  •  ISBN: 978-0-9964475-8-4  •  120 pages
eBook formats available  •  October 2016  •  Travel/Mexico

Maya Gods & Monsters: Supernatural Stories from the Underworld and Beyond

Stories by Carol Karasik, Illustrations by Alfonso Huerta

Through captivating stories and lush illustrations, Maya Gods and Monsters draws on ancient myth and lore of the Maya people and gives life to wild and quirky gods, magical monsters, and strange creatures. Fifteen stories blend the natural and the supernatural into one alluring realm, reflecting the heart of the Maya people— one of the greatest civilizations in the New World.

Trade Paperback  •  $16.95  •  ISBN: 978-0-997216851  •  116 pages
eBook formats available  •  April 2017  •  Folklore/Mythology/Mexico
Women Artisans of Morocco: Their Stories, Their Lives
Susan Schaefer Davis, photography by Joe Coca

*Women Artisans of Morocco* tells the stories of twenty-five women practicing ancient textile traditions with an inspiring pride and fortitude. In rural Berber villages, in bustling cities, and in a remarkable desert oasis, you will meet extraordinary women who honor their cultural traditions as well as those who carve new roads in the social landscape through political office and entrepreneurship. Each is guided by her fierce determination and hope for economic stability. Joe Coca’s photography brings the women, their work, and the colorful richness of Morocco to life.

- Gold Award winner, 2019 Benjamin Franklin Independent Book Publisher Awards

Trade Paperback • $34.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9990517-1-9 • 168 pages
eBook formats available • March 2018 • Ethnography/Women's Studies

A Textile Guide to the Chiapas Highlands
Walter F. Morris Jr., Alfredo Martínez, Janet Schwartz and Carol Karasik

A richly illustrated, bilingual book, this guide visits twenty villages in the Chiapas Highlands to showcase their stunning handwoven cloth while also providing an insider’s look into the history, folklore, festivals, traditions, and daily lives of the region. Also included are dates of special festivals and local markets. For the textile enthusiast and the traveler alike.

*Published in cooperation with Na Bolom Museum and Study Center in San Cristóbal, Chiapas. Bi-lingual, English-Spanish*

Trade Paperback • $24.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9838860-0-6 • 152 pages
eBook formats available • 2011 • Cultural Heritage/Mexico
Spider Woman’s Children: Navajo Weavers Today
Lynda Teller Pete and Barbara Teller Ornelas, Photography by Joe Coca

Over twenty profiles representing weavers from ages sixteen to eighty-eight illustrate the beautiful and complex world of contemporary Navajo life, art, and family. The authors are fifth-generation Navajo weavers who tell each weaver’s story with an authentic voice, in-depth perspective, and a treasured kinship. They deftly explore a world shaped by history and rich cultural traditions and offer an intimate view into the life of today’s Navajo weavers that will inspire and surprise.

Trade Paperback • $34.95 • ISBN:978-0-9990517-5-7 • 160 pages
eBook formats available • September 2018 • Cultural Studies/Regional West

Faces of Tradition: Weaving Elders of the Andes
Nilda Callañaupa Alvarez, Christine Franquemont, Photography by Joe Coca

The powerful visual expressions of Joe Coca’s photographs introduce dozens of elder weavers and the landscapes that they occupy in the Cusco region of the Peruvian Andes. A revealing cultural study presents personal stories and brings to life decades of endurance, skill, fortitude, and natural pride honed from the time-honored textile traditions of the region and its people. Intimate photographs capture each of the elders, some of whom had never seen a picture of themselves or even looked in a mirror, revealing the life, strength, character, and experience of these men and women.

Gold Award winner, 2014 Benjamin Franklin Independent Book Publisher Awards

Trade Paperback • $34.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9838860-4-4 • 152 pages
2013 • Cultural Heritage/Peru/Biography
Weaving in the Peruvian Highlands: Dreaming Patterns, Weaving Memories
Nilda Callañaupa Alvarez

The most authoritative guide to understanding and appreciating the Peruvian highlands’ wealth of textiles and the inventive weavers who create them. The book details many of the intricate patterns found in traditional Peruvian textiles and explores the personal histories of the Quechua people who sustain this tradition.

Published in cooperation with the Center for Traditional Textiles of Cusco.
Trade Paperback • $19.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9838860-3-7 • 112 pages
eBook formats available • Cultural Heritage/Crafts

Secrets of Spinning, Weaving, and Knitting in the Peruvian Highlands
Nilda Callañaupa Alvarez

Ten years after publication of her seminal book Weaving in the Peruvian Highlands, twenty years after founding the iconic Center for Traditional Textiles, Nilda Callañaupa Alvarez offers an inspirational new view into the world of Andean textiles and rare insight into what textile work means as a living heritage of the Quechua people.

• Artisans of all ages share tips and tricks
• Poignant and detailed descriptions of Andean cultural traditions.

Silver Award winner, 2018 Benjamin Franklin Independent Book Publisher Awards
Trade Paperback • $24.95 • ISBN: 978-0-9984523-5-7 • 144 pages
eBook formats available • September 2017 • Cultural Studies/Craft
Beyond the Stones of Machu Picchu: Folk Tales and Stories of Inca Lives

Elizabeth Conrad VanBuskirk
Paintings by Angel L. Callañaupa Alvarez

An intimate look at the intriguing and environmentally attuned Inca people in the high Andean villages near Machu Picchu and Cusco, Peru. This thoughtful collection of traditional tales explores Inca customs, everyday lives, incidents of change, and profound appreciation and celebration of the natural world. Vivid paintings and stories provide a rare glimpse into Inca peoples’ creative work, especially the famous Andean practice of weaving and other textile arts.
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PO Box 685, Loveland, CO 80539
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