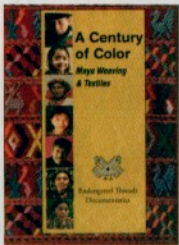


**A CENTURY OF COLOR: MAYA WEAVING & TEXTILES (DVD)**, by *Endangered Threads Documentaries*, 1530 Tuolumne Street, Vallejo, CA 94590. 2007. 53 minutes. \$25, includes shipping.



This extraordinary bilingual (English/Spanish) DVD speaks to a wide audience, but it is especially suited for those interested in fiber history, weaving, and the Maya of Guatemala. The overall theme is continuity and change in Maya clothing over the centuries, but the focus is on the twentieth century, specifically, "What has changed—and why?"

The DVD is organized into eleven chapters that focus on history, tools, and techniques, along with a variety of women's and men's everyday and ceremonial clothing being made and worn.

There is so much packed into this quick-paced DVD that it may be too much to take in at one sitting. Fortunately, the well-organized chapters are easily accessed for viewing separately.

Numerous incredible textiles and photographs from the 1902 Eisen Collection of the Phoebe A. Hearst Museum of Anthropology, University of California/Berkeley, are compared with later pieces throughout the presentation.

The articulate narration was scripted by Margot Blum Schevill, a well published textile scholar and exhibition curator, and Kathleen Mossman Vitale, a filmmaker and former journalist. Original music, insightful interviews, and informative captions make it both entertaining and a valuable research tool. The helpful credits at the end include the names of the weavers and embroiderers, as well as museums, along with the catalog numbers of the pieces and photographs shown.

The fabulous accompanying footage of ikat tying and dyeing, backstrap and foot loom weaving, brocading, and embroidery from many diverse highland Maya communities is very professionally presented. Obviously produced by people with an intimate knowledge of Maya textiles, the images depict some of the most complicated backstrap weaving techniques, including how to finish a cloth with four selvages. From pre-Columbian times to the present, we are shown and told about ancient textiles, the changes introduced during the Colonial period, and how new dyes, raw materials, and local fashion trends have contributed to changing styles over the years. Economic necessity and racism are rightfully blamed for the trend away from traditional dress.

I highly recommend this DVD. *A Century of Color* is a feast for the eyes!

**Reviewed by Carol Ventura**  
Cookeville, Tennessee