

How Can I Connect?

# And Why Do I Want To?

- *...we believe that mutual respect between cultures is the foundation of a stronger and healthier world. Understanding, even just a glimmer, is the first step.*
- Chandler/Cordón, *Traditional Weavers of Guatemala - Their Stories, Their Lives*
- *I can remember I used to think that only my own North American culture had finally ridded itself of «customs» and adopted a simple, straightforward way of life. But then one day in a little corner bookstore in Kyoto, I ran across a book that spent over 500 pages explaining to the Japanese people the bewildering customs of the North American.*  
Roland Bunch, *The Highland Maya*

# Travel, esp. Tours

- Lots of people are offering textile tours now, all promising to take you off the beaten path. And it's true, they can take you places you are not likely to get to on your own, especially if you do not speak the language(s).
- ClothRoads (.com) has a good list, and also a free downloadable booklet: *How to Travel Sensitively and Sensibly in Textile Cultures*. Read it.

Ana Pu's family used to walk five hours to the nearest town. Now there is a road and pickups and they can get there in just two hours. Anita Osterhaug brought her spindle and some cashmere to share.



Lea went to learn to weave with a family in Alta Verapaz, staying in their home for three days. When shown to her room, Lea discovered there was no pillow, but there was a chicken on the bed. She wondered if she was supposed to pluck it to make her own feather pillow.





what Lea wove  
pjjbil (inlay over gauze)



Lake Atitlán, surrounded by artisan villages – weaving, embroidery, crochet, knitting, natural dyeing, wood, ceramics, painting...



# Fair Trade

- In addition to so much else, some fair trade ngo-s are now also investing in the establishment of sustainable tourism, helping artisans to learn to host visitors in their homes. It is a remarkable experience for all.



# Scholarships

- Many fair trade and other ngo-s are now providing scholarships and other aid to help the children of the women they work with go to school. The importance of this cannot be overstated; the future of the country depends on it. You can have a pen-pal relationship with the girl or boy you sponsor, and maybe more.

# A meeting with Mayan Hands scholarship girls and their moms in San Rafael, Rabinal





# Spending a day with their scholarship student...





...and the rest of the family.





At age 16 Pedro had a 4<sup>th</sup> grade education and sold pens on the street to tourists. Thanks to scholarships, he is now a nurse and the administrator and part owner of a health clinic in his village.





# Flat Stanley



# Flat Stanley visiting 6th grade in Chiquimula







These hats have the hatmaker's signature inside. They have been coming to Houston since 1979 and are a root cause of what brought me here in 1990.



# International Gatherings

- Tinkuy, Cusco, Peru
- Santa Fe International Folk Art Market, Santa Fe, New Mexico
- Natural Dye conferences all over the world
- Weaving conferences
- Art/Textile Shows worldwide



Tinkuy – a gathering of weavers  
(the next one is this coming November)



# Teach a Workshop





Learning needle felt changed their lives  
– and teaching it changed Fran's.



the path to the bathroom





# Natural dyeing using special efficient stoves





It's not like dyeing at home.



# The Dream Team(s)





Teaching afar requires great flexibility.



# Publications about Connecting

Textile Related:

Thrums Books

Wild Fibers Magazine

Hand/Eye online magazine

Includes many options:

*Volunteer Vacations*



People,  
Culture,  
The timeless  
touch  
of human  
hands.

**THRUMS**  

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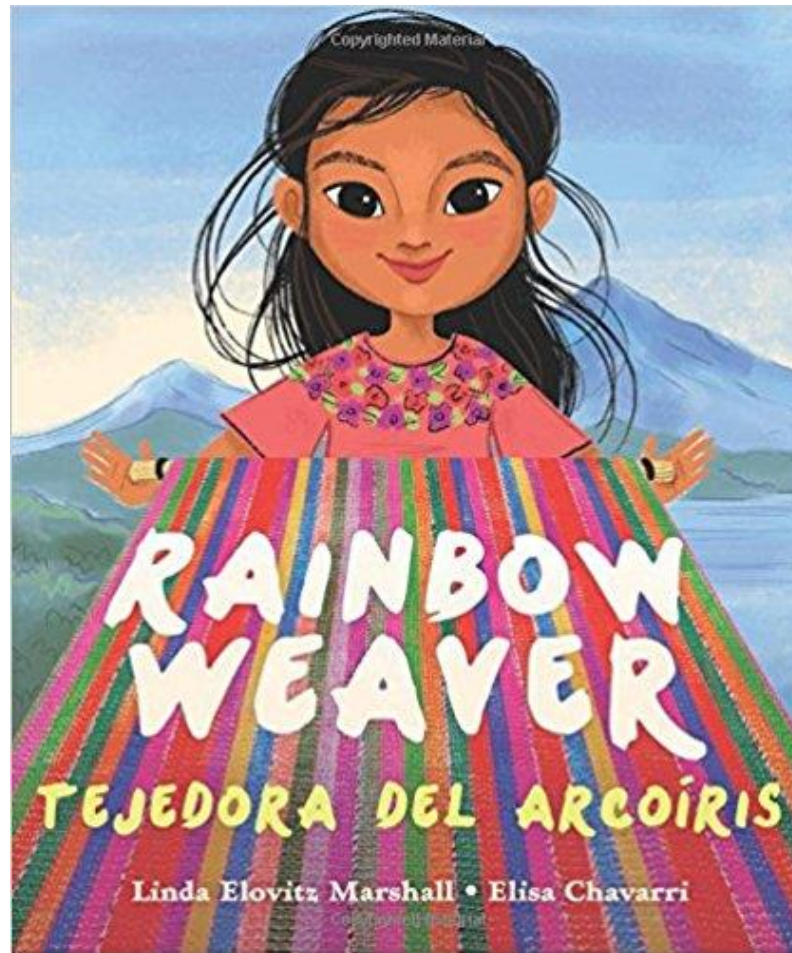
**B O O K S**



Linda went to research a story idea, and now...



...you can buy her children's book.





Orphanages need support. And they love to have visitors.





There are lots of medical brigades that need support staff as well as doctors.



Low tech physical therapy room,  
supported by donations.



Church mission programs abound. You can go visit the recipients.





# Weave A Real Peace

- Creating a Connected Textile Community
- WARP was conceived in Houston, hatched at Convergence '92 in Washington, DC, and came to life in Colorado. This year we will celebrate its 25th Anniversary in Oaxaca, Mexico – next weekend! Amazing!

**Mission:** to foster a global network of enthusiasts who value the importance of textiles to grassroots economies

**Core Values:**

Textiles are an important component of the human experience.

Networking and sharing information creates an environment for constructive action.

Making connections between textile artisans worldwide promotes positive social change.

Interacting with people who have similar values enriches our lives.

# WARP Meeting 2016 Santa Fe, New Mexico







# Museums, esp. Textile

- Collections, libraries, shops
- Secondary projects – eg Proteje
- Educational offerings, direct or sponsored
- Tours
- Publications of all kinds, large and small
- They often welcome volunteers

Built to match the brocade in a huipil.









# Some are very specialized.



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## Save Somali Culture: A Fundraiser for the Somali Museum of Minnesota

🕒 Tuesday, March 28 2017, 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM [CST]

📍 2600 Park Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States

[REGISTER NOW](#)

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# Social Media

- Google, facebook, twitter, instagram, blogs, youtube, etc.
- You know more about this than I do, but there are countless groups dedicated to all things textile, MANY with videos of traditional textile production from all times and all places.
- I actually have a facebook page dedicated to Guatemalan weavers and a few other things that I believe in.



# You don't have to leave the US to connect to other cultures.



Remember the Hmong Embroideries?





# Somalis were welcomed to Minneapolis



Falkin  
Falko  
FalRada

Somali Women battle boredom  
and bad Civil war memories  
by making carpets.



Many immigrants were artisans at home before they had to flee.

- Depending on whose statistics you read, there are approximately 40,000 Guatemalans living in the Houston area. Some of them are displaced weavers who might really welcome being recognized as weavers instead of only as immigrants. (The rest are the sons of weavers.)

# Real Live Friends

- Look around, see who is doing something interesting to you, ask how you can join in.
- The Houston guild is especially good at that, and I can imagine that the rest of Texas just might be also.

