

# MEXICAN YARN PAINTING

by Shelley Harrison Rae

Petra Jobst introduces summer visitors to the unique, original, yarn paintings of the Huichol Indians of Mexico and their neighbours, the Tepehuano.

The Huichol and Tepehuano are indigenous tribes whose pre-Hispanic culture still survives in the remote Sierra Madres ranges and live a life woven of magic and sacred mythology. Their earthly representatives – corn, peyote and the deer – sustain them both symbolically and daily, renewing their divinity. These women and men keep alive their ancient traditions, which remain a precarious reality for an indigenous people still relatively unaffected by Western civilization. In this land of canyons, sparse rainfall, and uncertain crops, these Indians depend on their close, psychic connections with Nature to survive.

The yarn paintings called "Nierikas", or mirror images of God, are creative manifestations embodying the shared beliefs of the two tribes, that we all make our own realities. Such works, empowered by the visionary cactus peyote, are magical talismans, which serve to restore a fusion with lost, natural forces.

Each colour, every line, every symbol, no matter how abstract, has a meaning carried out in the artwork they create. White is the Cloud Spirits. Blue is the South, the Pacific Ocean, Water, Rain and Femininity. The Rabbit and Serpent represent Fertility. Red is the East, Grandfather, Fire, and Masculine. Green is the Earth, Heaven, Healing, the Heart, and Grandfather growth.

The Eagle is a divine guardian. The Two-headed Eagle is God looking all ways at once. The figure, with what appears to be long protrusions from his head, is a Shaman talking with Gods or the Spirits. The Deer represents Peyote, and the Elder Brother Deer, and the link between the Shaman and the Great Spirit.

Flowers, which mirror the Spirits into the World, always adorn the Huichol and Tepehuano artwork and act as the passageway to the heart.

Petra Jobst endeavours to support the work of a pair of Irish nuns, in the remote area of Santa Maria del Oro, who originally went there to learn local healing practices and share their information with the community. They have come to know the spiritual importance of the local artwork.

Let your heart lead you on a mythical journey into the culture of the Huichol and Tepehuano and weave yourself into the magic of the yarn paintings.



Yarn paintings from the Huichol Indians of Mexico

WHO: Petra Jobst presents The Huichol and Tepehuano of Mexico

WHAT: Yarn Painting

WHERE: Seymour Art Gallery, 4360 Gallant Ave., Deep Cove

WHEN: Opening Reception Thursday August 9 7-9 show continues  
until September 9

INFO: email: [info@seymourartgallery.com](mailto:info@seymourartgallery.com) Tel: 604.924.1378