

Basic Detail Report



Shawl (Perraje)

Date

1912-1917

Primary Maker

Artist Unknown

Medium

cotton, silk and dye

Description

This piece has been identified as a perraje, or cloth wrap traditionally worn by Maya women. Collected in the village of Santo Tomás Chichicastenango, around 1932, the

garment is natural cotton with a silk randa or band, joining the two panels. The piece alternates colors of white, green, yellow, turquoise, and orange against a maroon background. The top band of flower lunettes incorporates an intricate square design. Although the exact iconography of this particular design is unknown, designs utilizing a square pattern traditionally symbolize the earth and the sky in Maya designs. The remainder of the design incorporates traditional geometrically based renditions of indigenous animals and human figures. The central band displays the double-headed eagle, a significant design in both Maya and Spanish folklore. This motif symbolizes the importance of birds in the Maya culture, believed to have been present at the beginning of the earth's creation, and an essential part of the overall lifecycle today. A myth from the town of Chichicastenango names the bird as "Glavicote."

Dimensions

Overall: 32 1/2 x 34 in. (82.6 x 86.4 cm)