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Between Light and Shadow

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Between Light and Shadow

Video: 27 min. VHS color, 1996

Producer: Kathryn Lypke Vigesaa

Co-director: Kathryn L. Vigesaa and John McKay

Using a complex style of personal interviews and ethnographic documentary, visually rich in intimacy, lyricism, metaphor and sometimes startling images drawn from her subjects daily lives, the filmmaker looks at the role that textiles play in the lives of the Maya in Guatemala. Cloth is the first material that touches a child's body, it appears in every important event in a persons life and is the last to touch a person at their death. In Quiché cosmology there are strong connections between house (milpa) and the huipile, both have 4 corners and 4 sides, all are reflections of the "skyeearth"; the four corners and sides a boundary of earth and sky with the weaver/wearer at the center. To the Maya, cloth represents place, status and culture. Today some of these same Maya women are using images of their weaving patterns and textiles in paintings to express their hopes and dreams and to remember their culture, others wear *traje* from many different villages to identify themselves as part of the Maya Nation at the same time that they are studying to become experts in marketing, health care or teaching. Focusing on these changes to their life style, weaving, and textiles the filmmaker considers the impact on the Maya and their culture.

Professor Kathryn Lypke Vigesaa has been teaching in the Department of Sculpture, Ceramics and Fibres at Concordia University in Montreal since 1977. In 1988 she first visited Guatemala as a consultant to CAUSE CANADA, a non-governmental relief and development organization, to aid in the establishment of weaving cooperatives. She returned in early 1991 with John McKay to begin the filming for the video, *Daughters of Ixchel, Maya Thread of Change*, which has won numerous awards, including the Society for Visual Anthropology Award, American Anthropological Assoc. selection, Intl. Film & TV Festival of NY Award and the Canadian Intl. Film Festival honoree. She has served as a visiting artist and professor for numerous Universities and Art Institutions in the US, Canada, and Europe. Her art works have been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions in the US, Canada, Europe and South America. She received her M.A. from the University of California at Berkeley.