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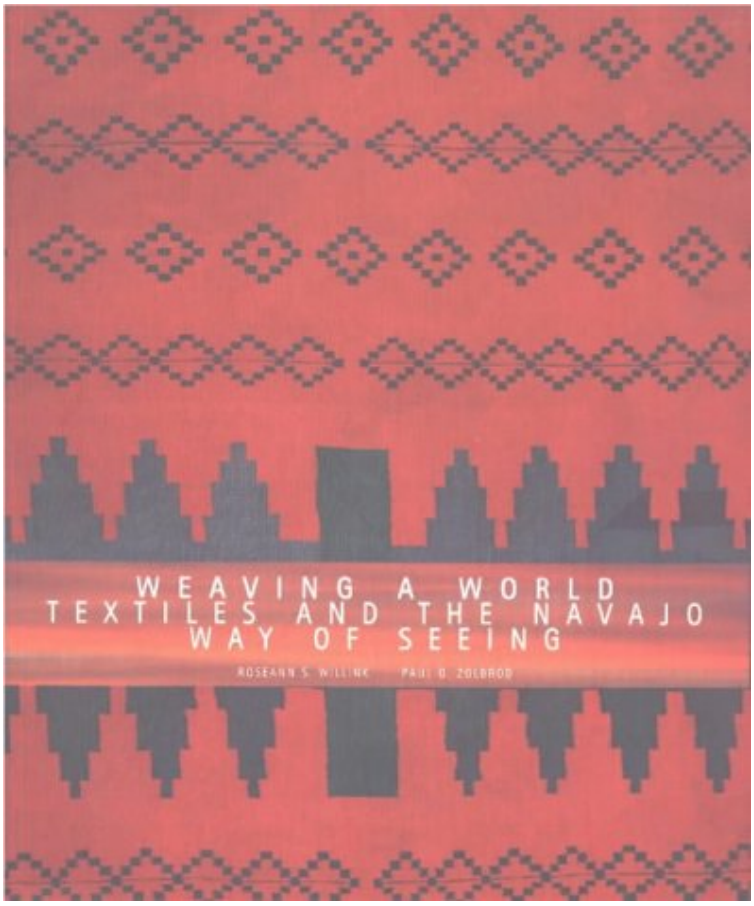

(Read and download) Weaving a World: Textiles and the Navajo Way of Seeing

Weaving a World: Textiles and the Navajo Way of Seeing

Paul G. Zolbrod, Roseann S. Willink : Weaving a World: Textiles and the Navajo Way of Seeing before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Weaving a World: Textiles and the Navajo Way of Seeing:

18 of 18 people found the following review helpful. Weaving as a Record of History, Art and ExpressionBy Wintu1Like Lila O'Neale in her early twentieth century study Yurok/Karok Basket Weavers, the authors of this book, Willink and Zolbrod, have set about to "read Navajo rugs" through the eyes and minds of Navajo, mostly older weavers and their families. What we, the readers, get is a somewhat anecdotal filtering of ideas, recognitions, myth and oral history that indeed does lend surprising information about some of the designs.But, the real jewels of this book are the weavings themselves. Forty separate color plates show rug after rug, over half predating 1900, from the School of American Research Collections in the Museum of New Mexico's Laboratory of Anthropology in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Each is magnificent in its own way. Accompanying text relates a separate story for twenty-seven of them, organized into: The Mythic Memory; The Collective memory; Ceremonial Practices; Harmony and Disharmony; and A World In Motion.What I personally love about this collection is the insight into balance, detail,

symbolic representation and the fact that each weaving is strictly individual. A great reference for weaver and collector alike, my only criticism is that there aren't more close-up photos.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy TrixieThanks0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Terri LindbloomExcellent book

Navajo weavings, long regarded for their remarkable aesthetics, have never before been investigated from the standpoint of the weaver's process and intent. This book explores the patterns and irregularities often overlooked or considered "flaws" in these beautiful textiles, and it seeks to identify the mythic symbols and historic and personal stories they contain. The inclusion of objects and the use of color, pattern, and weave variations are found to be significant symbols of the way a weaver thinks about the world. A weaver may pray her way into the center of the rug, where the most intricate work and color will appear. Patterns may portray a vision of the world animated by spirits and holy people, recounting the creation of the heavens, the earth, and the loom itself. Weaving a World includes seventy rugs from the celebrated collection of the Laboratory of Anthropology in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and documentary photographs of today's weaving culture on the Navajo reservation.

From Library JournalProfessors who have written widely on Navajo culture, the authors let Navajos speak for themselves, explaining how their rugs and blankets are related to their culture and mythology. Navajo unity with the earth and their harmony in life is shown in the symbols found in rugs, specifically in 70 illustrated here. Other photos of the landscape illustrate parallels with rug design. A new discovery is that weavers put tiny, barely visible slivers of animal skin or feathers or pouches of sacred pollen in the weft to insure strength or skill or to secure blessings. This is not a how-to book?go to Charles Amsden's Navaho Weaving: Its Technique and History (Rio Grande, 1964) for that?and myths are mentioned but not given in full. Still, this catalog, which accompanies Santa Fe's Museum of Indian Arts and Culture exhibit "Listening to Rugs," is a good introduction to the beauty and worth, both spiritual and artistic, of Navajo weaving.?Gay Neale, Southside Virginia Community Coll. Lib, AlbertaCopyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistNavajo weavings have long been highly regarded for their aesthetic beauty and great degree of technical expertise. Literature and linguistics are areas of knowledge that Zolbrod and Willink bring to this truly illuminating study of patterns and symbols found in Navajo textiles and their significance. Seventy works are included, gathered from New Mexico's Museum of Indian Arts and Culture/Laboratory of Anthropology, along with photographs chronicling the lives of contemporary weavers and the sacred landscapes that provide inspiration. Zolbrod's keen observations meld with collaborator Willink's understanding of Navajo culture to present an exhilarating perspective--the notion of "listening with the eye." A fascinating, splendid book that also serves to document the exhibit, "Listening to Rugs." Alice Joyce Understanding the textiles of another culture is always difficult, especially with a culture that is both rich in tradition and at the same time has a certain "hidden" or "closed" aspect to it. This understanding is something that most people I know who study textiles of other cultures strive for. I have read a lot of books about the Navajo people and have looked at a large number of Navajo rugs, but I do not pretend to really understand their meaning and the nuances that are woven into them. Here is a book that gives me a chance to take a great leap forward in my understanding, and that is always a good thing! Even opening the book is an adventure because the thread that you follow leads one into uncharted waters by the usual standards. We go from "Listen to the Rugs" to "The Mythic Memory," "The Collective Memory," "Ceremonial Practice," "Harmony and Disharmony," and finally "A World in Motion." And there is no index because this book cannot be approached in the way one is used to approaching a book. The thread must be followed. There is no chance to pick up the book, find a few interesting things and then leave it. It has to be read, or forgotten What the authors (who have the best of credentials) are trying to say is that the rugs themselves (if they are woven in the traditional way) are there to be read as one would read a piece of literature. The rugs embody the culture, or at least parts of it. . . One of the sections that really moved me says "Each rug is like a day . . .Look carefully and you can sometimes see emerging dawn where a weaver begins her work and where she finishes a touch of darkness." Poetic? Yes, it is, but look behind it to the meaning that is there. In another place a rug is shown with the statement "Rather than expecting symmetry in a diyogi, look for traces of asymmetrical balance, which may well support dawn's early brightness and evening's dying light." There are many statements like "Initiators of the art of weaving, the spider people occupy a central place in classic Navajo thought," followed by a detailed explanation of just what that means and a rug there for you to see and follow the thought. There are some 70 textiles presented in great color photographs and each one has something said about it to help you to see the meaning behind it. This book has to take a place in the upper echelons of books about not only Navajo weaving but weaving in general. I live in an area of people who often weave mindlessly and turnout "things" that lack depth, and are not even attractive. It seems that they strive for perfection, but often the pieces lack meaning. The Navajos strive for meaning, and the pieces are not perfect, but then life is not perfect. It reminds me of the attitude of people who weave oriental rugs: the rugs have to have at least one mistake because only God is perfect! I can only hope that this book will be read by weavers everywhere and cause them to think about what they are producing. I cannot recommend this book highly enough to anyone who loves textiles, weaving, Navajo rugs, Navajo culture, or

just wants to expand their own creative horizons no matter what media they work in. -- R.L. Shep, Rags: Quarterly of Costume, Clothing Ethnic Textile BooksWeaving a World cannot be construed as just another coffee table book about Navajo rugs because it evokes the spirit of a culture rarely found in "Art" books of this genre. Not only is it culturally sensitive and accurate with its subject, it is without a doubt one of the most visually beautiful publications of the year. Usually books of this sort are dry, dusty photographs of museum collections, captioned by curators without passion, and with running narratives that emphasize technique. They look good but do not persuade. Although the subject of weaving and textiles, on the surface, may seem not to have mass commercial appeal, this work surmounts the mainstream by its sheer power of culture and life. The force of nature and the land, the heart of the people, the emphasis of meaning over technique, or conversely technique as meaning, are combines with stunning photographs of the people, landscape, weavings, and other art forms in a collage that overwhelms the senses. This volume is highly recommended as a vehicle into the minds and spirits of the Navajo; it truly exemplifies the Native experience of art and life as inseparable. -- Joel Monture/Mohawk, MultiCultural , June 1997