

Ruth Hardinger
Offering of Bundles

Culture can be understood as a code of symbols -- the ways people symbolize themselves --- language or dress. Culture, as a living entity, can reproduce itself. Tradition is something learned, passed through the generations. Tradition is not something firm that never changes, but is adapted to numerous factors and influences.

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My plaster sculpture, ***Bundles of Rights (#3)***, exhibited at Sculpture Center in 1997, is being re-imagining because intention and narrative is more crucial and timely in today's political climate. The large plaster circular rings, like count stones, were connected by my rope-knots that span around 25 feet from floor to ceiling top.



Bundle of Rights, (#1) 1993. Based on my full-scale cartoons (tapestry drawing name), this tapestry was woven by Alberto Vásquez J. who used organic dyes to color wool for the tapestry, including cochineal, indigo, logwood, and others, woven on a pedal loom.



Back-story: I spent one year in 1991-92 in Oaxaca, Mexico with the Institute of International Education grant sponsored by Fulbright Foundation. I met Zapotec family in Teotitlan del Valle who weaved beautifully. Years later, I am still working with them, although now the son, German Vásquez, does the weaving since Alberto, his father, passed away in 2002. I acknowledged these weavings as collaborations as we discussed these and each tapestry has both our initials and date.

In 1996, I asked Alberto Vásquez J. to make this same ***Bundle of Rights (#2)*** with all other colors he could like.



The images include my circular sculpture forms on the left with an image in an inner/outer spacious place, crossing back and forth with the Zapotec, Mixtec and Aztec ancient symbols on the right. Counting time, curing of illness, place symbols, blood offerings and a chain wrapped are looking at cultural concepts. Bringing together an art form from the rich cultured historic sequences of these life-forms mixed with my learning and aesthetics is the inspiration that created these works.

Rights in ancient history were social and religious; compare that to the contemporary business of land and house rights. I offer a vision of value for diverse cultures to respect and admire the life created, in particular a deep respect of the Earth's life.