

## BASKETRY IN ARGENTINA

### RESOURCES

I included for each Province, the names of the precolumbian and actual native cultures. Those not necessary correspond to political limits.



## SALTA

This is a Diaguita-Calchaquí zone. The baskets made of **poleo** (pennyroyal, *Mentha pulegium*). The pennyroyal basket makers tell you when Pachamama (Mother Earth) guides them to find the appropriate plants of pennyroyal for their baskets. The baskets retain the aroma of the plant, and the basket makers too.



Craftman: Andrés Avelino López

## FORMOSA

Pilaga (pit´laxá) Nation



Material: *laqata* or *carandillo palm* (*Trithrinax biflabellata*)

Technique: Lo´ Onanagak (spiral). Craftwomen: Andrea Alegre. Pozo del Tigre, Formosa

The carandillo (*Trithrinax schizophylla* Drude) is an arecácea that grows in the mountains of the central-west of the territory of Formosa, where women go in groups to cut its central leaves and after breaking them down, dry them in the sun.

Two basic wefts are used in its preparation: the open one made with the twist of a bunch of carandillo; and the sewn, achieved with a bundle of lower weight joined by a mattress needle with a greener strand of the same fiber. On them we find different designs such as crosses of smooth leaves, vertical braids, alternating shapes of rhomboidal seams, among others. They are circular and rectangular.



Craftwoman: Micaela Sosa  
Pilagá Nation







Campo del Cielo, Formosa

Pilaga basketry (in Spanish)

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Marina-Matarrese-2/publication/264707568\\_Artesania\\_aborigen\\_cesteria\\_y\\_diseños\\_figurativos\\_entre\\_los\\_pilag\\_a\\_-Formosa\\_Argentina\\_Revista\\_Espacios\\_de\\_Critica\\_y\\_Produccion\\_N\\_45\\_6-11\\_Secretaria\\_de\\_Extension\\_Universih](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Marina-Matarrese-2/publication/264707568_Artesania_aborigen_cesteria_y_diseños_figurativos_entre_los_pilag_a_-Formosa_Argentina_Revista_Espacios_de_Critica_y_Produccion_N_45_6-11_Secretaria_de_Extension_Universih)



In some communities where migrations have occurred, in their new territories baskets are created using the same techniques but with new raw materials resulting from recycling urban waste, as is the case with PET bags reused by the Qom communities of Rosario in Santa Fe

#### CRAFT AND DESIGN COLLABORATION IN FORMOSA. THE CASE OF MAURO PESOA.

He works with his mother, who is a basket weaver, to include basketry on his fashion collections. The material is Caranday palm. Website in English:

<https://mauropesoa-impactopositivo.my.canva.site/ingles-colecciones#umbilical-zapatos>





## CHACO

Q'om Nation. The basketry of the Qom people has several types of productions, those of palm, those of totora, a thick and soft fiber that is woven at night, when the dew moistens it, and those of mats. The palm basketry of the Qom people of Chaco is very creative people.

If they worked as they wanted, all the baskets would be different, but demand puts a little pressure on them to make them all the same.

The Qom live in El Impenetrable gateway – an area of cultural exchanges between various communities –they decorate them with dyed chaguar threads, inheritances and contributions from the Wichí people.

This is the historical name given to the lands of the arid and semi-arid Gran Chaco between the Bermejo and Bermejito rivers, which have two main characteristics: a tight swarm of branches and stems that form the bushes in the undergrowth and limit the possibility of moving freely; and the scarcity or absence of water courses that prevents staying in the woods for long periods of time.



Material: carandá palm o *lagaxarai*  
Craftman: Facundo Romero  
Miraflores, Chaco

Since carandillo is not cultivated, the artisans only take part of the leaves of the plant so that other new leaves can continue to grow. After having collected the leaves, the defibering process begins. The leaves are converted into fine and soft fibers for weaving. The defibering is carried out with needles, resting the leaves on their legs. They then let the fibers rest in the sun for several days so that they take on a light color.





Qom women Alphi Cooperative  
<http://qomalphi.org/>



Material: carandá palm o *lagaxarai*  
Craft: Qomlashepi Onataxanaxapi.  
Impenetrable, Chaco



DESIGNERS + WOMEN COOPERATIVE IN CHACO



Arqom studio. IG @arqom.co  
Material: Caranday palm, ceramic, wood



**SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO.** Río Hondo hot springs (Termas de Río Hondo town)

The only region where people still speak Quechua language. Basketry is very popular here. It is an activity that has been carried out for more than 5,000 years. It is passed down from generation to generation and is an important economic resource for family sustenance. The materials they use are wild straw(paja brava, **Melica macra**), palm, unquillo (type of grass) and corn husk for decorating the basketry.



Materials: paja brava, palm corn husk.  
Craftwomen: Carla Median and her mom



In Río Hondo, the National Basket Festival is celebrated, which was born in 1979 after Renato Biron, an American priest from the French Congregation of Our Lady of La Salette, promoted it in order to support the work of the country man. In Spanish the name is Fiesta Nacional del Canasto.

This giant basket was made for the festival, it has 14.1 feet tall and 10 feet diameter. 30 basket weavers worked to do it.

The information appears on the Facebook and IG pages of Tourism of Termas de Río Hondo



Craftperson: Dionisia Juárez

The corn husk is dyed with aniline. At one point it was replaced by shiny candy paper or powdered milk paper, but, a craftperson said, “now we have returned to husk.”



Collaboration during the BAF Week, the national fashion week. The organizers talk with MATRA, the craft council there, and they included different crafts on the runaways and baskets, for the first time, with the hashtag #lusecraft



**CATAMARCA.** Santa María valley

This is a very rich textile zone, one of the most important cities of Poncho route is Santa María. They have every year The poncho festival, a hug craft meeting. Is the zone of vicuna weavers. Vicuña is considered a luxury fibre: it is one of the most expensive and finest in the world. It is process exclusively by hand and is obtained in a regulated manner by CAMVI (Andean Communities Managing Vicuña), communities organized to manage in a sustainable way the natural resources of the Puna. This event of capture and shearing, the Chaccu (from the Quechua arriar, to gather), reproduces an ancestral practice. The process of cleaning, de-hairing, spinning and weaving is entirely manual. The production of some garments (such as ponchos, for example) can take several months.

And the basketry is made of **simbol**, a fiber from an arid zone, native from that province. Today it is a popular activity in Santa Maria.



Material: simbol (Cenchrus pilcomayensis) Craftman: Lorenzo Reyes



Material: simbol (Cenchrus pilcomayensis) Craftman: Antonio Solano Condorí



Gabriela Nirino – [www.gabinirino.com](http://www.gabinirino.com) - @gabi.nirino – Northwest Basket Weavers

This fiber and type of work became very famous because of the collaboration of Cristian Mohamed a very well know designer (he lives between Argentina and Italy) and the basket weaver Lorenzo Reyes



This piece is part of a big installation during London Design Biennial in 2021



The Floating Towers were part of the exhibition Hybrid Territory (Territorio híbrido) In the Decoratif Art National Museum In Argentina

You can see more pictures and the complete installation in London here

<https://www.cristianmohaded.com/sitio/index.php/collectible-design>



## LA RIOJA



La Rioja is home of this unique technique, they use wool over vegetable fibers. The motif is designed in the same act of lifting the piece. They are known as baskets with “labor”. The attached image corresponds to one of the national pieces selected to compete in the World Crafts Council Latin America. Craftswoman: : Isabel Quinteros. (Ambil, La Rioja )



Materials: coiron (grass), wool. Technique: spiral (coiled). Craftswoman: Natividad Quinteros (Aguadita de Ambil, La Rioja)



## MENDOZA AND SAN JUAN

Huarpe culture tradition. In Mendoza, where is the wine route zone, basketry can also be embroidered with wool. Huarpes were a sedentary group during precolumbian times, dedicated to basketry, subdued by the Incas and after that mixed with spanish invasor. Their baskets were woven in a way that made them waterproof and thus served to transport water, and they also made - this can be understood as a variant of basketry - boats with which they navigated the almost disappeared lagoons of Guanacache; these boats were quite similar to the "caballitos de totora" that the Urus still use to navigate Lake Titicaca.



Material: wool, straw (junquillo). Craftwoman: Laura Romero. Mendoza

[https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064090899451&locale=es\\_LA](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100064090899451&locale=es_LA)





## MISIONES

Guaraní zone. The province of Misiones is on the East, in the limit with Brasil. Guaraní culture is very alive, we share the use of the Guaraní Language with Paraguay.

*Mbya Guaraní* basketry is made from **tacuara** (reed). Tacuara means caña (reed) en guaraní. Are dyed with seasonal dyes. The baskets are very old, they are in the founding myths of the Mbya people. Traditionally they were worn on the back, but in order to be able to market them better, the shape was adapted to other uses. In Mbya basketry, the weaving with *takuapi*, vegetable ribbons, extracted precisely from the takuara and the *guembepi*, another vegetable ribbon extracted from the **guembe** (paraguayan philodendrom), stands out.

Myth, religion, cosmology and ritual are the elements that explain the art of Guaraní basketry that visually represents the natural and supernatural world. Thus, the function of the snake design in the baskets that can be observed is protection and food security



Materials: tacuara (reed), güembé. Craftwoman: Sergia Ferreyra (Capioví, Misiones)



Another picture of the collaboration with the Fashion Week. Baskets: Pindó Poty community, El soberbio, Misiones. Masks: chané culture #YoUsoArtesanías. BafWeek 2017



Piece in the National Folk Museum “José Hernández”. Was made using a Guaraní technique that uses the entire palm tree in an extremely delicate work. The color of the flower motif is atypical.

About the blue: Guido Boggiani, quoted in Millán de Palavecino (1900 [1953:4] refers in the Paraguay area to the custom of men painting their bodies with *ñándypá* juice (*genipa oblongifolia* or *americana*), for war. When the liquid oxidizes, it stains the skin bluish black. It has an astringent effect. So I can guess that maybe that could be the dye.



This bag introduce my favorite fiber, from the wichi zone in Misiones, the *chaguar* or *caraguatá* (the fiber in the bellow)

Since pre-Hispanic times it has been part of the culture of the native communities of this area: Ayoreos, Chorotes, Chulupís and especially the Wichí. The mesh net technique used and its variations are considered to be among the oldest in South America.





Bags made with chaguar. An emblematic Wichi object is a type of bag that is omnipresent in everyday life and in mythical stories. Although it is known generically as a yica, in the Wichi language it has different names depending on its type: hile (square backpack) and sichet (semi-spherical bag) and their respective varieties. Some interesting pieces can be see at IG @claudia\_alarcon\_puntana, @silat.wichi, @tomariadelcarmen

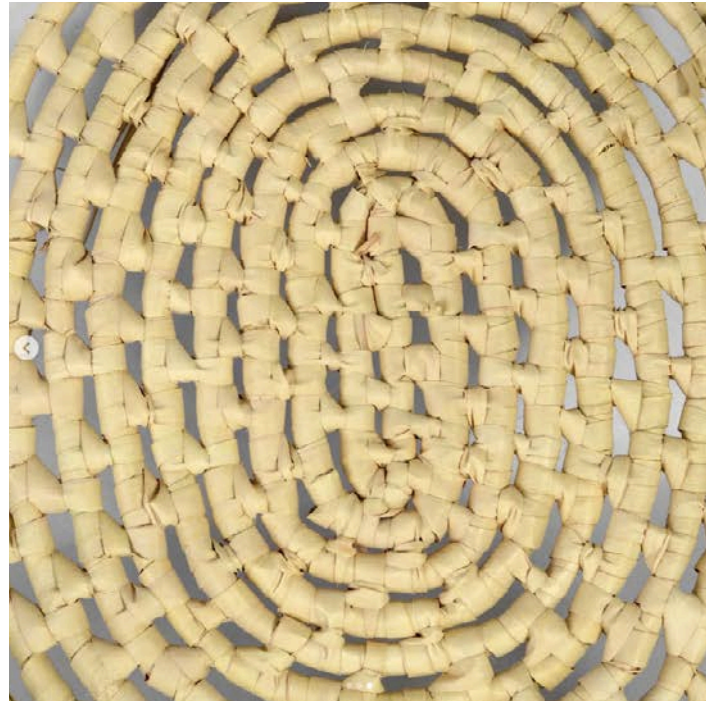


This is an example of a new project called Ser hilo (To be/being thread). Organized by 2 young designers of the University of Misiones. The plants are scarce, in order not to loose the technique they are working with polypropilen waste of a factory



**CORRIENTES.** Esteros del Iberá (Iberá Wetlands)

Iberá basketry is made from esparto grass (espartillo). The material is rolled and sewn together



Material: espartillo (esparto grass) and carandá palm. Craftwoman: Ana María Zaracho Parra



Craftwoman: Cristina Pelozo. Paraje Boquerón, Mercedes, Corrientes.

This town, Mercedes, is super famous because is the home town of one of the most popular devotions in the country, Gauchito Gil. Not related with basketry, but I couldn't help to mention it, because it fascinated me and also because I did some art work based on this tradition.

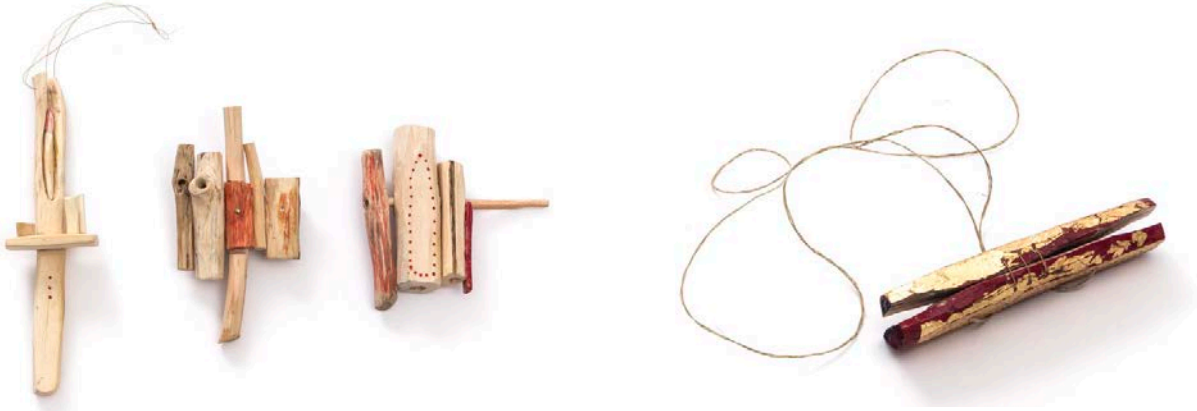
Legend has it that Gaucho Gil was a good-hearted outlaw who stole from the rich and gave to the poor. On January 8, 1870, he was hung upside down from a carob tree for refusing to go to the war against Paraguay. Before his execution, Gil told his executioner that his son was seriously ill and told him to pray for him in Gil's name. The executioner followed Gil's instructions and his son was healed. Days later, the executioner returned to the scene of the hanging to give Gil's body a proper burial.

Is it an inclusive cult, further from the institutional. There is a direct link, as in African devotions. It has the values of justice, of fighting for all those things that have always been denied to us.

There are thousands of sanctuaries throughout Argentina and other countries. The devotees ask the gaucho for what they need and leave offerings in exchange: cigarettes, drink, red candles, food. Many leave for others to take. There are those who leave a red ribbon and take, as a bracelet, another ribbon that they collect from those that someone previously left behind. It is a place of exchange where everyone is welcome.







This is one of the 3 installations I did, How To Make Your Own Sanctuary (and some details)

## ENTRE RÍOS

### Mención Honorífica Artesanía Tradicional en Madera/Cestería **Héctor Godoy**

Héctor es maestro artesano; lleva 61 años de oficio, que aprendió de su padre, el Gran Maestro Artesano Juan Pedro Godoy. También es dibujante publicitario, estudio que realizó en la Escuela Profesional de Cruce Varela. Trabaja de manera independiente con todo tipo de fibras vegetales y técnicas esqueletadas. Restaura muebles de estilo y dicta talleres a nivel nacional.

"Tatú" es una pieza en técnica esqueletada y mimbre trasfilado e igualado de 32 cm de altura por 20 cm de ancho total.



Material: mimbre (willow). Craftman: Héctor Godoy. Nogoyá, Entre Ríos

## BUENOS AIRES. Delta del Tigre (Tiger Delta)

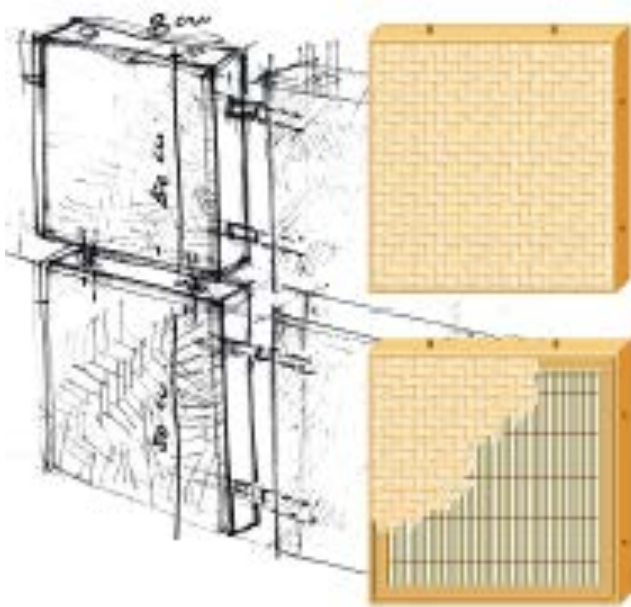
It the Delta there is a lot of work with willos. There is a cooperative, "Los mimbreros". The Metropolitan Center of Design organized a series of workshops with different materials, trying to incentivate their use, and one was willow. The aim of the workshop is to explore and identify new possibilities for using wicker and its derivatives through design and innovation, proposing a new personality for them and thus promoting access to new marketing channels.

Here are some results of the Wicker Laboratory.





Modular bench by Hernán Freto and Damián

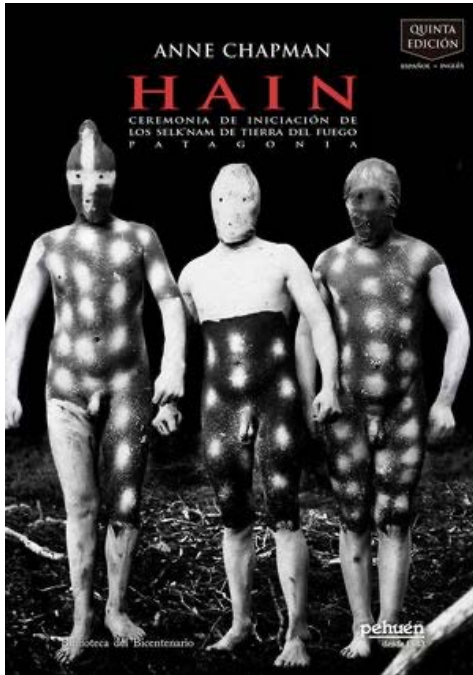


Construction panels  
By Silvina Babich



## TIERRA DEL FUEGO. Selk'nam and Yagan people

In the extreme south, close to Antarctica, the descendants of the Selk'nam community and the Yagan community work baskets with *mapi*, the native reed (*Marsippospermum grandiflorum*) from Tierra del Fuego. These are the southernmost indigenous people in the world, with at least 6,000 years of history. There are 3 different techniques



Stæpa or Stèpa steapa: This is the most common and simple; the bases were 5 to 8 cm in diameter and were made around a central ring of rushes of just over 1 cm in diameter. The existence of baskets of up to 20 cm is also recorded. They were used to collect and store wild fruits. These are from Navarino Island, Chile.



Navarino Island, Cabo de Hornos, Chile. Material: *mapi* (native reed) . Technique: Ulon steapa, it had a similar function to the stèpa, but with greater resistance, also called by the Yagan weavers "turn and turn"





Navarino Island, Cabo de Hornos, Chile. Material: *mapi* (native reed)

Technique: Kéichi/Cíjim/Keijims

They are made with a knotted interlacing and do not differentiate the base from the sides, so the container is soft and flexible

Its traditional function was to be used in baskets to store the collected marine resources.

Yagan basketry

<https://www.museoyaganusi.gob.cl/galeria/trenzado-en-la-cesteria-yagan>

Yaghan, explorers and settlers: 10.000 years of Southern Tierra del Fuego Archipelago History (e-book)

<https://www.museoyaganusi.gob.cl/publicaciones/yaghans-explorers-and-settlers-10000-years-southern-tierra-del-fuego-archipelago>

## CONTEMPORARY BASKETS MADE WITH PET

### Pet project - Jail Brand (Marca Cárcel)

A project of the industrial designer Alejandro Sarmiento with inmates of a women jail



He re-design a tool used by the people who braid raw leather, to cut the stripes



PET cutter

Here the instructions to make one  
<https://www.instructables.com/Pet-Cutter/>

Video with process

<https://fablabbrc.wixsite.com/fablab/copia-de-instrumental-meteorologio->

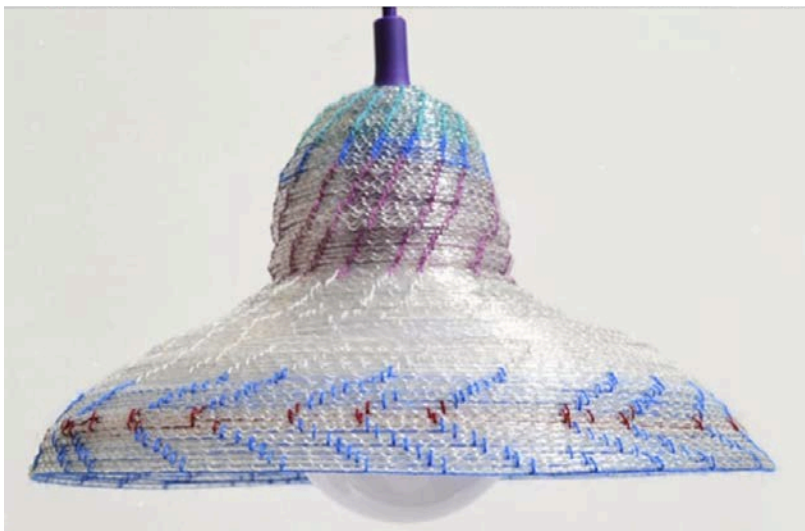


Following this idea, one of my former students at the University created this graduation project, REXICLA. She use a similar tool, more simple, and made a collection of yarns, weavings and products

**REXICLA.** *Albana Scotti* graduation project

Textile Design Degree, School of Architecture, Design and Urbanism, Buenos Aires University





Some products made by Albana Scotti. She learned the technique from a craftswoman who weaves with palm in Córdoba province



Gabriela Nirino – [www.gabinirino.com](http://www.gabinirino.com) - @gabi.nirino – Northwest Basket Weavers

## Other websites

Catalogue of the Argentine National Arts Foundation( a lot of baskets and also another crafts)

[https://issuu.com/fnaargentina/docs/libro\\_patrimonio\\_artesan\\_as\\_issuu](https://issuu.com/fnaargentina/docs/libro_patrimonio_artesan_as_issuu)

Folk Art Museum “José Hernández”

<https://buenosaires.gob.ar/cultura/museos/museojosehernandez/la-coleccion-de-cesteria-del-map>

Cultural Industries Market. Is a website with an extensive catalogue and sections with different types of crafts from Argentina. Just scroll. Is in Spanish, but is mostly images

<https://mica.gob.ar/usuario/5563>

They have a small shop, you can see a video here with some of the pieces

<https://centroculturalborges.gob.ar/tienda-matria/>

Issuu have several catalogues of the Argentine National Arts Foundation (Fondo Nacional de las Artes) and its Craft National Competition

[https://issuu.com/fnaargentina/docs/cat\\_logo\\_de\\_la\\_muestra\\_de\\_artesan](https://issuu.com/fnaargentina/docs/cat_logo_de_la_muestra_de_artesan)

[https://issuu.com/fnaargentina/docs/cat\\_logo\\_de\\_artesan\\_as\\_2018](https://issuu.com/fnaargentina/docs/cat_logo_de_artesan_as_2018)

<https://issuu.com/fnaargentina/docs/muestradeartesanias2022>

About my work, you can read the e-book about Chala Project in my website

<https://www.gabinirino.com/>

and message me to [gabinirino@gmail.com](mailto:gabinirino@gmail.com), if you want to exchange ideas or information.

Thank you very much!!

Gabi