



Aid to Artisans

February 2016

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Success Story From The Field

The Baroque International Museum in Puebla



The [Baroque International Museum](#) (Museo Internacional del Barroco) opened its doors to the public in February 2016. This new cultural and touristic attraction in Puebla is also the home of a new shop, located on the lower floor of the museum, where dozens of beautiful pieces crafted by the magical hands of Puebla's artisans are displayed and sold.

In this brand new store, local artisans are displaying 142 different products that represent a diverse range of techniques and materials, from natural fibers and textiles to clay and blown glass. All these handmade products have been developed by the Aid to Artisans "Idea+Materia" project, with the support of the State of Puebla.

The Museum, designed by the talented Japanese architect Toyo Ito, was supported by Germany, Brazil, China, Spain, the Philippines, France, the US, Guatemala, India, Peru and Portugal, as well as 21 museums and Mexican collections. The museum was inaugurated by Mexican Secretary of Culture Rafael Tovar y de Teresa and by Puebla Governor Rafael Moreno Valle.





Built with the financial support of the federal and state governments and private investors, the 18,000 square meters International Museum of Baroque is dedicated to classic, modern and contemporary baroque, and is one of the most ambitious projects in the history of Puebla. The 2-floor building is home of many permanent exhibition rooms, including some devoted to science and nature, as well as an auditorium, a terrace and an outdoor patio.

Aid to Artisans is very proud of being associated with such an amazing project, which also serves as a great marketing avenue for our beautiful Idea+Materia artisans' products whose quality is drawing more and more buyers every day.





*An Inside Story With
Artemateria:
A Business of Heart*





[Artemateria](#), an alumnus of the Market Readiness Program™ (MRP), is a success story. We are happy to be partners in Artemateria's success. Artemateria's goal is to support Mayan artisans in Chiapas who integrate their millinery techniques into art products that are high quality, unique, environmentally friendly and functional. Since they attended the MRP in 2013, the organization has grown by exhibiting their product collection at the ATA booth for four consecutive NY NOW trade shows and reached a new milestone in their history in the February 2016 NY NOW. Artemateria received a remarkable amount of orders, Its sales grew by a factor of 16, including a recurring one for [Calvin Klein](#).

ATA is pleased to share Artemateria's success with you. We asked Artemateria about their experience at NY NOW their expectations for the future and their advice to others who want to improve their craft products and sell in the U.S. market.

ATA: Tell us about your experience at NY NOW with ATA. What is the most exciting part of going there for you?

Artemateria: After all the logistics and hard work, it is very exciting to see the products you've worked so hard to develop exhibited and be seen and appreciated by buyers, designers and the press. Interacting with this public and walking the show to feel the pulse of the market and trends is really exhilarating and it motivates us to keep moving forward, growing and eventually becoming an established brand.



ATA: What has been the most interesting/game changing contact you've made at NY NOW and why?

Artemateria: It has been a learning experience to interact with artisan leaders in the field and come out with enhanced products that are exciting and appeal to buyers and the public. We love having our favorite high-end boutiques buying from us. When major retailers like [Calvin Klein](#), ABC Home and Carpet, [Anthropologie](#), [The Citizenry](#), [The Sundance Catalogue](#) have placed orders we know we have done something right!

ATA: You have significantly increased your sales at NY NOW since your first participation in 2013. In what ways do you think the MRP and ATA have been a platform for these substantial improvements?

Artemateria: Working with ATA has definitely given us a seal of confidence in the eyes of the market. ATA is recognized for working and standing by people who are interested in enhancing artisan entrepreneurship and dignity and ensures that the result of their sales is directed at the betterment of artisan communities' living conditions and the continuity of their culture and craft. A lot of other organizations claim to do so but only as a marketing scheme. They don't really verify their claims and seasoned buyers in the artisan and handmade market know that.



ATA: What have been the biggest challenges for your organization and your artisans since your first exhibition at NY NOW?

Artemateria: When you start a small company with very limited capital you have to be the hub of everything! The logistics are less than ideal: your garage becomes a warehouse and your living room a packing station! You are your own accountant, database organizer, marketing advisor, project manager, etc. But we have learned so much! And it has definitely been cheaper and more fun than an MBA!

ATA: *What drives you the most in working with artisans?*

Artemateria: All the artisans we work with are amazing. They have a truly unique sense of humor and purity of heart, as well as an innate talent and ancestral connection to their craft. We love our connection to these communities, and ultimately to give back to the culture and land where we grew up and that gave us so much. Even though we have been living in the States for a long time, our hearts are always connected to Mexico.

ATA: *In your opinion, what is the main thing to grasp from participating in the MRP and NY NOW?*

Artemateria: Handmade and Artisan business, as every other type of business endeavor, require a lot of hard work, effort, structure, determination and - particularly characteristic of this field - patience, but in the end it is all worth it because it also involves a lot of heart.



ATA: Can you tell me about one artisan's story that continually motivates you to improve their outcomes?

Artemateria: Our Opuntia collection is produced by Miguel, an artisan from Hidalgo, Mexico, whose family was so poor that many years ago, when his mother picked a bunch of beautiful wild flowers from the surrounding fields, she didn't have a vase or container to place them. They live in a zone abundant with cacti so Miguel's father molded a vase out of cactus fiber and surprised her with the gift! That is how he originated the process, which he taught to his son, in order to make pieces to sell and support the family. Artemateria has been working with Miguel to continue to develop and improve this original and unique technique into functional quality products with elevated design.

search

ANTHROPOLOGIE

registry usd : english sign in

THE DRESS SHOP CLOTHING SHOES & ACCESSORIES HOUSE & HOME BEAUTY SALE BHLDN WEDDINGS TERRAIN

Opuntia Garden Pot *online exclusive*

\$14.95 - \$19.95 (S&H DD - \$75.00)

★★★★★ 3 REVIEWS

We're sorry. This product is no longer available.

— DETAILS

Nearly twenty years ago, Mexican ceramicist Jose Loaiza began experimenting with natural fibers from the Opuntia plant - a prickly, paddle-shaped cactus that grows abundantly in arid climates. What he discovered was a way to soften and mold their fibers into organic shapes, like this calcified vessel.

- By Jose Loaiza for Artemateria
- For indoor use
- Natural plant fibers
- Small: 8.5"H, 6.25" diameter
- Medium: 7"H, 9" diameter
- Imported
- Style No. 32044539

— RATINGS & REVIEWS

Average Rating: 3 of 3 reviewers recommend this product.

ATA: *What are the next steps for Artemateria? Are your artisans making plans for the future as well?*

Artemateria: Our first years were a learning curve that helped us set a structure and logistics; now we have our eyes set on growth!

Absolutely, the plans we make go hand in hand with the development of our artisans. There are various projects on the works within our different collections such as testing dyes for our Palm Leaf baskets, introducing new beautiful and richer colors, as well as launching new designs with leather. We also plan on training new artisan families to enhance production capacity. We have introduced our Opuntia artisan to an organic chemist and they worked together to enhance the product to better withstand the elements. We are also thinking of incorporating new threads and patterns such as metal and wool in our textile line. And much more!



We have also just registered Artemateria Mexico to establish an office there in order to expand our client base and help to better coordinate and expand our artisan base, as well as to find new talents and ventures. In addition to that, we partnered with [John Robshaw Textiles](#) to be their distributors in Mexico and build a client base for them there. Many exciting things to come!

ATA is proud to be Artemateria's long-term partner and to continue to support this amazing organization on its way to greater and greater success. Check out Artemateria's beautiful handcrafts, now available among the collection of internationally famous retail brands:

[Calvin Klein](#)

[Robert Redford's Sundance Catalog](#)

[Anthropologie](#)

[The Citizenry](#)

And stay tuned for the exciting upcoming projects of this organization that is only at the beginning of its boom, and that you will definitely hear about more and more in the future!



***Artisan Spotlight: Meet
Our Tibetan Artisans
in Chengdu, China***





Last fall, as part of the five-year Sichuan Market Development Activity (SMD), funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by [Creative Associates, International](#), Aid to Artisans conducted its Market Readiness Program™ in Chengdu, China for over 25 participants. The MRP was immediately followed by product development workshops with 13 artisan groups. Since the beginning of the year, these 13 artisan groups have been busy developing their new product collections, which will be exhibited in an ATA marketing Event in Chengdu in June.

Here are ATA's artisan exhibitors:





Tibetan Touch

Rain Pan and her father LI Pan are decorators/designers that are deeply invested in Tibetan culture. For over 20 years they have managed a Tibetan Art Gallery and the Kuzan Tibetan Hotel. They have developed handmade Tibetan tea products, stone jewelry, slate printing and ceramics. Inspired by the MRP, they are developing Tibetan tea jewelry for the marketing event in June.



Tibet Design

Kunchok Sherab, a field director and Lobsang Choegyal, an English teacher, are active members of the Khorwa Artisan Association and consultants at Conscious Business Consulting. They are growing their skills in horn work and leatherwork with the goal of becoming designers. They will exhibit their "Tibetan Design" products at the event including a large collection of Tibetan style leather bags and horn jewelry.



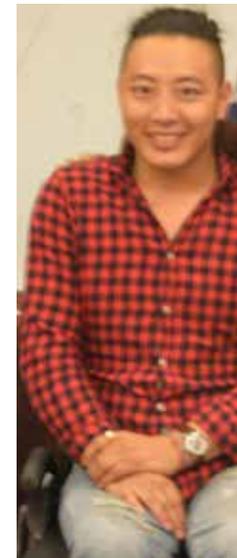
Magalam Craft

Lhapka Dolma “Lahkdon” is a motivated trainer who supported ATA designer Sophie Sauzeat on the field in the countryside during the first steps in this program. Later, she created Magalam Craft, which specializes in product development. She attended the MRP in Chengdu and plans to develop a baby carrier product line for the ATA Marketing event.



Duoji Dzi Beads

Four years ago, Wangyal Phuntsok suffered a spinal cord injury that put him in a wheelchair. Today, he is a social worker and a leader of an association of 18 people with similar disabilities. Most of them are victims of the 2010 Sichuan earthquake. Wangyal develops vocational trainings on creating simple handmade items. These products, made by disabled people, include beaded jewelry, felted items, woven or leather bracelets. For the exhibition in June, Wangyal will develop bracelets, and accessories such as belts, headbands, and nomad jewelry bags with brocade.





Mothers

Melah, who began her career at the Door to Tibetan Arts Company is today a trainer and leader of the women in her native village, running a program called “Mothers”. Everything produced at Mothers uses these women’s sewing and knitting skills. Melah is working on a collection based on the principle of Re-born, using left over felt and yak wool. “Mothers” makes Tibetan style toys, knitted jewelry, and cushions. Melah will exhibit recycled toys at the June marketing event.



Blue Sheep Crafts

Blue Sheep Crafts offers a diverse selection of products handmade by people with disabilities from disaster struck areas and poor rural ethnic minority communities, in China. Blue Sheep, initiated by Dr. Rachel Pinniger, seeks to help these disadvantaged communities to maintain a basic standard of living.

Blue Sheep Crafts is preparing a sheep wool selection of products for kids for the upcoming exhibition.

Dancing Yak

Dancing Yak Handicrafts promotes women artisans who create traditional Tibetan and yak-based natural products such as yak milk soap, yak wool bags, and iPad covers. The organization, founded by Katja Nyima Forrer, trains and helps Tibetan women to produce and sell their amazing products in their Chengdu shop. For the exhibition, Dancing Yak will showcase yak wool felted cases.



Splendid Tibet

Splendid Tibet is a contemporary brand bringing a large range of modern Tibetan shirts. As a young stylist and manager of Splendid Tibet, Tsewang Namgyal (Dunzhu) works with 4 other Tibetan men and women to empower the Tibetan community and create income opportunities through modern designs. With his staff, they are producing a shirt collection named: "Dorje is a rebel" They are successfully selling on "We Chat" to retailers and people on social media. They will exhibit modern Tibetan shirts at the marketing event.





Phayul Tibet

As Founder of Phayul Tibet, Basang Dundrub works with 4 Tibetan men and 2 Tibetan women in innovate styles in Tibetan clothing. They develop modern Tibetan style clothing including jackets, coats, and dresses.

At the exhibition, Phayul will showcase a modern collection of Tibetan clothing and accessories.



Kangariwo

Kangariwo is a Chengdu-based trademark owned, managed and operated by a Tibetan family of 15 members. They have 10 stores in the region and have a showroom in Chengdu. In addition to creating casual traditional products they specialize in the wedding industry from traditional costumes to music and videos. At the exhibition, they will showcase a collection of modern Tibetan style striped scarves and coats.

Tibetan Qiang Embroidery

The Tibetan Qiang Embroidery is composed by 200 women who specialize in the delicate art of Qiang embroidery using nothing but needle and thread. Among them, Yong Tso is a designer and university teacher who creates a wide range of products such as bags, purses, cushions and table pads. Yong Tso's focus is on mixing silver work and embroidery in order to craft beautiful pieces from brooches and necklaces to pocket mirrors.

During the exhibition, she will showcase a Tibetan embroidered jewelry product line, and embroidered accessories as cuffs and headbands.



Shang Dyok

Working in a deeply rural area Rupchok Nyima is the founder and stylist of Shang Dyok workshop where he trains and leads a team of 5 women and 2 men in refining felt crafts such as hats, bags and purses, and cases. Rupchok's goal is to increase the income of farming communities by engaging in alternate livelihoods activities. They will exhibit a very refined accessories line in felt.





Zhenma Cultural Arts

Zhenma Cultural Arts was founded by Khaedup Nyima and Wendy Thangka. They teach their art to over 30 students in a school run by Khaedup Nyima, who is also a monk and has been painting since he was 17. They specialize in the very fine Thangka paintings, which are traditional Tibetan Buddhist paintings on cotton, or silk appliqué, usually depicting a Buddhist deity, scene, or mandala. They are looking to develop more casual, fashionable products with contemporary designs.

They will exhibit painted fans and embroidered hoops and earrings.





What's Coming Up



[Click here to see the Video](#)

Join us this August for the 2016 MRP. This program is a unique hands-on training experience for all those associated with the artisan sector. The program provides intensive preparation for entry into the US market and vital information for building successful export businesses.

Apply [here](#) or [aquí](#)



Thank You

To help support the many ATA programs,
please donate [here](#).

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