

# Huichol Yarn Paintings from Mexico

## The History of Huichol Yarn Paintings:

Huichol Yarn Painting comes from the Huichol (pronounced “wee chol”) Indian people, who live in western Mexico in the Sierra Madre mountain range. The yarn paintings traditionally depict Huichol myths and ceremonies, but modern works can represent stories of today’s world. These works paint a picture that expresses the beauty and wisdom of traditional Huichol culture. Nature is a common theme in the yarn paintings, as the Huichol Indians rely heavily on the Earth for their needs. Without a written language, this is how the Huichols pass on their stories of creation, floods, and the birth of their Gods.



Photo by Flickr user Kelly Hart

Traditional Huichol artists apply multicolored yarns to a thin layer of beeswax, to adhere the yarn to a piece of wood. The beeswax is laid in the sun to warm up before the yarn is applied. Artists use a thin stick to “sketch” out their design.

These intricate designs are no longer considered folk art. Instead, many major museums have now recognized these highly detailed designs as fine art, displaying them in exhibitions, and selling them in galleries around the world.



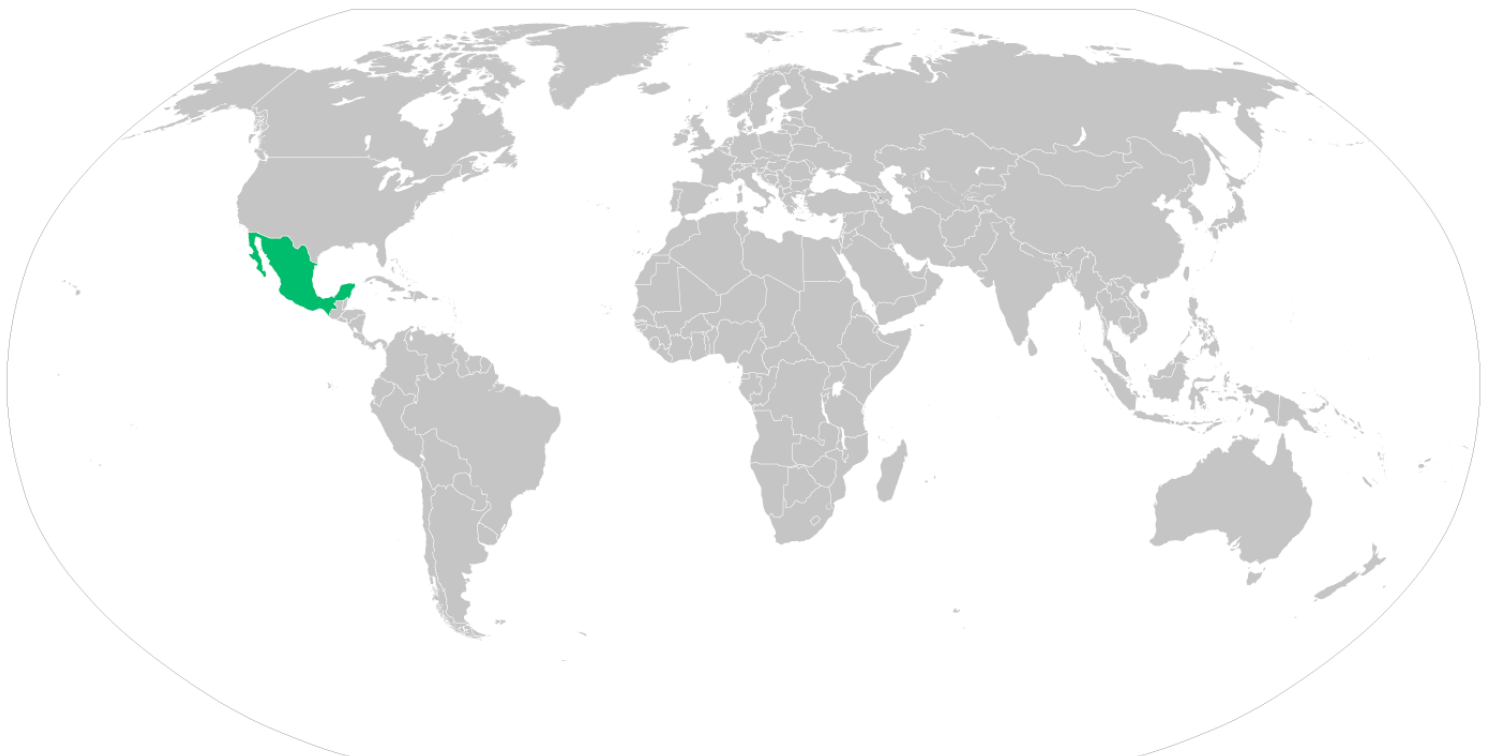
Photo by Flickr user patti haskins



Photo by Flickr user fontplaydotcom

## Where in the world are the Huichol Indians?

Mexico is the largest Spanish-speaking country in the world!



# Make Your Own *Huichol* Yarn Painting

You can make this yarn painting in: **1 hour**

## What you will need:

- Cardboard (roughly 8x8")
- White glue
- Colored yarn, of various colors, cut into short lengths (1 to 8")
- Pencil

## How- To:

1. Draw out your design using pencil on the cardboard surface. You can also create your design free hand, without a pre-drawn design. You may use a template for inspiration, or to trace. Be creative! Tell a story that is important to you.



2. Apply glue to the section you want to work on first, and apply the yarn working with small areas at a time. Trim excess yarn as needed.





3. Push the yarn closely together, so there isn't any white space, you can use a bent paperclip for this instead of your fingers. Keep adding yarn until your paper is completely covered.



4. After you're finished, display your Huichol Yarn Painting!



### **Think about this:**

1. What story did you illustrate in your yarn painting?
2. Why is this story important to you?
3. What about the Huichol traditional of yarn painting makes it interesting?
4. Can you think of other cultures that tell their stories through pictures?
5. How do you like to tell your own story? Through music? Art? Writing?

*This Creativity Corner activity has been brought to you by*

Ann Arbor  Center

*The Ann Arbor Art Center is a non-profit organization dedicated to engaging the community in the education, exhibition and exploration of the visual arts. Offering studio art classes, workshops, exhibitions, summer camps and more, the Art Center is celebrating over 100 years of being the place where creativity and community meet. For more information please visit [www.annarborartcenter.org](http://www.annarborartcenter.org) or stop by the Art Center located at 117 W. Liberty in downtown Ann Arbor.*