



Smithsonian

*National Museum of Natural History*

Donald Bush Cordry photographs of  
Indigenous peoples of Mexico, 1937-1972

Sarah Ganderup

2012 October 24

National Anthropological Archives  
Museum Support Center  
4210 Silver Hill Road  
Suitland, Maryland 20746  
naa@si.edu  
<http://www.anthropology.si.edu/naa/>

## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	1
Administrative Information .....	1
Local Call Number(s).....	2
Scope and Contents note.....	2
Biographical/Historical note.....	2
Bibliography.....	2
Names and Subjects .....	2
Container Listing .....	

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Anthropological Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Donald Bush Cordry photographs of Indigenous peoples of Mexico
<b>Date:</b>	1937-1972
<b>Identifier:</b>	NAA.PhotoLot.87-38
<b>Creator:</b>	Cordry, Donald Bush
<b>Extent:</b>	8 Color transparencies 93 Mounted photographs (silver gelatin)
<b>Language:</b>	Undetermined .

---

## Administrative Information

### Provenance

Donated to the Smithsonian in 1984 by Dorothy Cordry, through Jane Walsh, as part of accession 361232. Transferred from the Department of Anthropology to the National Anthropological Archives, circa 1987.

### Location of Other Archival Materials

Additional photographs made by Cordry can be found in the National Anthropological Archives in Photo Lot 82-14.

### Location of Other Archival Materials

Donald Cordry and his wife, Dorothy Mann Cordry, also donated clothing and musical instruments from Mexico to the Department of Anthropology in accessions 361232 and 355866.

### Location of Other Archival Materials

The National Museum of the American Indian Archives holds the Donald Bush Cordry collection of photographs and negatives, 1933-1940, as well as artifacts collected by Cordry.

### Location of Other Archival Materials

Photographs of the Donald Cordry Mexican mask exhibit can be found in the National Anthropological Archives in Photo Lot 80-3.

### Location of Other Archival Materials

The Donald Cordry Mexican mask collection can be found in the Department of Anthropology in accession 355867.

### Other Finding Aids

Inventory available in repository.

### Preferred Citation

Photo Lot 87-38, Donald Cordry photographs of Indigenous peoples of Mexico, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

## Restrictions

The collection is open for research.  
Access to the collection requires an appointment.

## Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

---

## Biographical Note

Donald Bush Cordry (1907-1978) was an artist and photographer who studied the art of Indigenous peoples of Mexico. In 1931, Cordry made his first trip to Guerrero, Mexico, where he became interested in contemporary mask making. In 1934, Cordry moved to New York to work as a marionette designer for puppeteer Tony Sarg. While there, he contacted George G. Heye to learn more about Indigenous Mexican art. This led to a series of collecting expeditions from 1935 to 1938, during which Cordry collected Mexican masks and other artifacts for the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation.

---

## Scope and Contents

Enlargements of photographs made by Donald Bush Cordry during his time in Mexico. These were mounted for a 1970s Bellas Artes-sponsored traveling exhibit based on Cordry's collection of Mexican Indian costumes. Included are images of Indigenous peoples of Mexico, fiestas and dances, pottery, boats, weaving, spinning, masks, vendors and markets, churches, and shrines. Depicted groups include the Huichol, Mestizo, Tarascan, Seri, Mayo, Tepehua, Totonac, Nahuatl, Mazatec, Cuicatec, Chinantec, Zapotec, Mixe, Amuzgo, Huave, Mixtec, Chapanec, Zoque, Tzotzil, and Maya. Additionally, there are some self portraits of Donald Cordry and his wife Dorothy.

---

## Bibliography

Photographs published in Donald Bush Cordry and Dorothy M. Cordry, *Mexican Indian Costumes*, The Texas Pan American Series, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968.

---

## Local Call Number(s)

NAA Photo Lot 87-38, USNM ACC 361232

---

## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

- Amuzgo (Amuzgo)
- Chiapanec
- Chinantec
- Clothing and dress
- Cuicatec Indians

Dances -- Mexico  
Ikood (Huave)  
Indians of Mexico  
Markets -- Mexico  
Masks -- Mexico  
Mayas  
Mazatec [Huautla]  
Mestizos  
Mixe  
Mixtec  
Nahua  
Pottery -- Mexico  
Purepecha (Tarasco)  
Seri  
Spinning -- Mexico  
Tepehuán (Tepehuan)  
Totonac  
Tzotzil Maya  
Weaving -- Mexico  
Wixarika (Huichol)  
Yoreme (Mayo)  
Zapotec  
Zoque

Cultures:

Amuzgo (Amusgo)  
Chiapanec  
Chinantec  
Cuicatec Indians  
Ikood (Huave)  
Indians of Mexico  
Mayas  
Mazatec [Huautla]  
Mestizos  
Mixe  
Mixtec  
Nahua  
Purepecha (Tarasco)  
Seri  
Tepehuán (Tepehuan)  
Totonac  
Tzotzil Maya  
Wixarika (Huichol)  
Yoreme (Mayo)  
Zapotec  
Zoque

Names:

Cordry, Donald Bush -- Exhibitions

Places:

Mexico