

COLOMBIA: IN FOCUS

A WEEKLY UPDATE FROM THE EMBASSY OF COLOMBIA

June 28, 2013

In Case You Missed It...

Colombia's Arhuaco Culture Featured at 2013 Smithsonian Folklife Festival



Photo: Ati Janey (Johana Marcela), Photo Credit: Ministry of Culture of Colombia; Photo: Arhuaco family, Photo Credit: Flickr user ca.millionaire Photo: Arhuaco weavers, Photo Credit: Proexport

During this year's Smithsonian Folklife Festival, which kicked off Wednesday on the National Mall, the Arhuaco – one of Colombia's many indigenous language communities – are featured as part of the Festival's program, "One World, Many Voices: Endangered Languages and Cultural Heritage."

Arhuaco Facts

- The Arhuaco live in the **northern part of Colombia** on the Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta, and they view themselves as "Older Brothers," **protectors of the world and nature**.
- The Arhuaco **language is linked to the Chibcha linguistic family and, while stable, is considered in danger** according to UNESCO's Language Vitality Index.
- The Arhuaco people have **ritual specialists, called Mamos, who are responsible for having knowledge of traditional healing and customs**. The *Mamos* use a different, sacred language during their ceremonies.

Ati Janey (pictured above) is an Arhuaco poet, storyteller, basket and *mochila* (backpack) weaver, and is at the Festival representing Arhuaco culture.

The Festival is currently underway and its hours are 11:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., today – June 30 and July 3 – July 7, 2013. The Colombia tent is close to the Smithsonian Metro station (Mall exit). For information on Colombia's participation, click [here](#). For general information and a full schedule of Festival events, click [here](#).

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