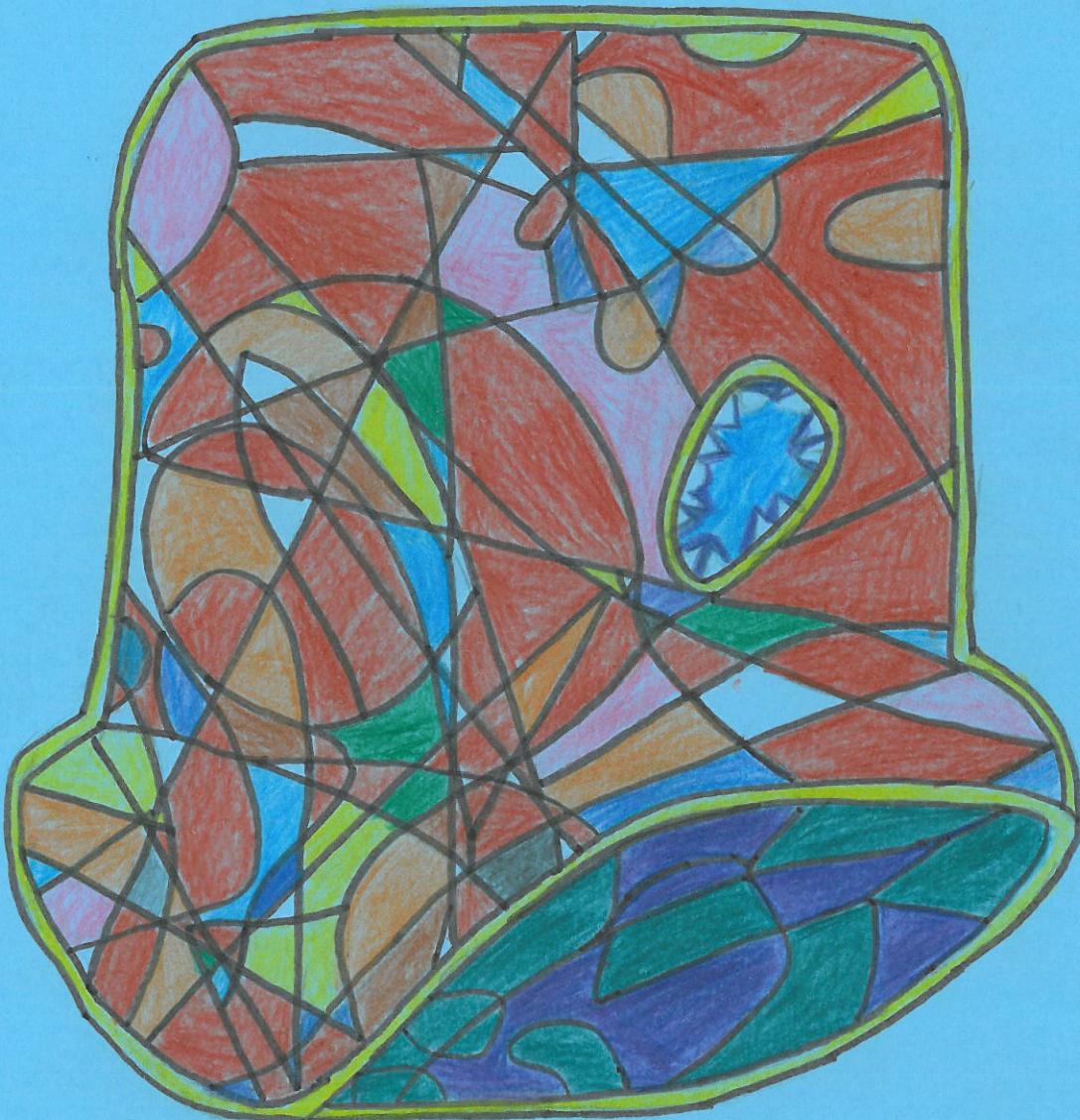


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MONTEHERMOSO'S
HAT.

Montehermoso



Montehermoso is a municipality located in the province of Cáceres, Extremadura.

The town is famous for its craftsmanship, where the hats of Montehermoso and the bells stand out; as well as for its folklore, of which "Los Negritos de San Blas" stand out, declared a Festival of Regional Tourist Interest.

"LOS NEGRITOS DE SAN BLAS"

On February the 2nd at sunset, "los Negritos", a group of six dancers dressed in traditional clothing, go to Saint Bartolome's hermitage. There's where "la vela" takes place, in which "los Negritos" dance in Saint Blas' honor.



The "negritos" and the "Palotero".
~Saint Blas~

On the 3rd of February in the morning, "los Negritos" dressed in the formal dress, then they go to the "mayordomos'" house, where they paint his face with burnt cork. Then they go to Saint Bartolome's hermitage, where the mass takes place. After that, the image of saint Blas is carried in procession to the main square, where "los Negritos" dance in his honor.



Saint Blas'
"procesión"



"La Vela".



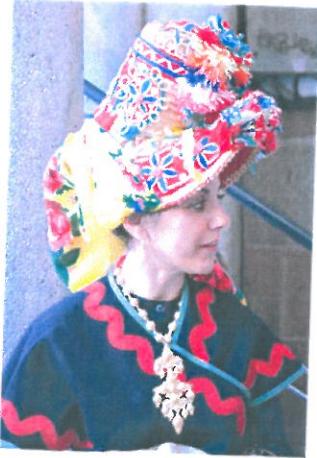
"Los Negritos"
dancing in the
main square.



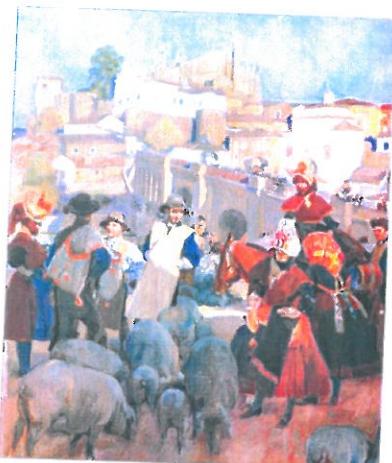
"Los Negritos"
dancing in the
main square.

Montehermoso's hat.

The first information found is from 1888. In 1917 the painter Joaquín Sorolla made a commission on behalf of the Hispanic Society of America in which four women, four men and a girl wear the typical costume of Montehermoso.



"Montehermosena"



"El Mercado"
by Joaquin Sorolla

"IT HAS BECOME
A SYMBOL OF THE
ENTIRE REGION".

Flat function

At the beginning of the 20th century, the cap was part of the daily attire and dress of the Montehermoso's woman. The main function of the cap was to protect from the sun and get rid of the heat, so we have to understand that they were not just ornamentation.

The use of the mirror was motivated by the use that women made of him to preen after the daily tasks of the field.

The women wore it when they go to the Plasencia market on Tuesdays, where they sold the products of the fields that they collected in the rich lands of the fertile valleys of the Alagón river.



Montehermoseña

Elaboration of the hat

The beginning of the whole process began with the sowing of rye in September, after almost nine months after harvesting with the heats of the month of June. It's then when they had the raw material of vegetable fiber for the preparation of the cap.

Once reaped, the rye was taken to the beds to be threshed and the straw separated from the grain. The next step was to make the bundles of the rye grass and then weed them and classify the straws into bunches of different sizes with which they are made. To make the mold of the cap you need at least 12 to 14 meters of twisted straw of rye that needs to be made with braids made with seven straws. Then they are sewn to give the final shape of the cap and left to dry for a certain time.

The last step culminates with the embellishment, a process by means of which the ornaments are added, composed of colored fabric or felt lining, mother-of-pearl buttons, multicolored wool and sequins.



Cap ornaments



Women sewing
the cap



Craftwoman
of caps

Typical costume



Men and women
typical costume



Montehermoseñas
with the typical
costume



Typical Montehermoso
costume

The mirror cap

The mirror cap had an ornamental function since it was used by Montehermoso's women to important occasions. But it has also been used by both single and married.

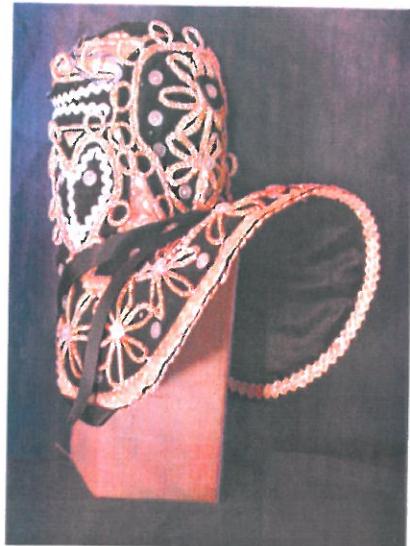
Throughout the years it was gaining in color as it was adorned with multicolored buttons and wool to be more attractive and beautiful. The mirror is on the forehead of the cup and is adorned with fringes made of colored wool that give a striking and original touch to the cap.



Widow's cap

If the women were in mourning instead of using them more striking, they used in black, both single and widowed. Formerly the mourning was 3 years for parents, 2 for siblings, 1 from grandparents and months for cousin.

The widow's cap was more widespread among older women, not only necessarily among widows, so it was used interchangeably both in the ritual of mourning for the deceased relative, as well as by adapting or adjusting to the woman's age. In this way, women who were older used to wear hats with darker colors, while younger women wore hats with more cheerful and striking tones.



widow's cap.