



AMBAR PAST, MARUCH MENDES PERES, TAMANA ARAKI: «WHEN THE SUN WAS STILL A CHILD» A PICTURE BOOK FROM MEXICO. RETOLD AFTER A MAYAN MYTH



Illustration: Tamana Araki
Text: Maruch Mendes Peres and Ambar Past

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Spanish/German

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Ages: 5 and up

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SYNOPSIS

Once upon a time, a mother lived in the shadows of the rainforest with her three sons. NeNe, the youngest, has magical powers. He can awaken animals to life, and that's not all ... This poetic myth of creation of Mexico's Tzotzil-Maya people tells the story of the beginning of time. In the end NeNe transforms himself into the sun, and brings light and life to the world.

The Tzotzil, an indigenous Maya people, live in the highlands of the Mexican federal state of Chiapas. They are considered direct descendants of the original Mayas.

THE ILLUSTRATOR

Tamana Araki was born in 1970 in Tokyo where she studied at the Musashino Art University. She visited Mexico 1993 for the first time as a student, from 2004–2005 she was a guest scholar of the Art School of Mexico City. That is when she came in touch with the indigenous communities of Chiapas. Ever since, Araki has committed herself to the intercultural dialog between Mexico and Japan, and most of all for the recognition of the indigenous people of Mexico.





THE AUTHORS

Maruch Mendes Peres was born around 1960 in Chamula, one of the main Tzotzil communities in the highlands of Chiapas, Mexico. She has worked as a sheperdess, a weaver, potter, charcoal maker, and is a midwife, a healer, and a singer. Mendes Peres is a respected community leader and has been engaged for many years in the founding and facilitating of a number of cooperatives, including Taller Leñateros in San Cristóbal des las Casas.



Ámbar Past was born in North Carolina in 1949. She immigrated to Mexico in 1974 and later became a Mexican citizen. For almost 40 years she has made her home in the Highlands of Chiapas where she learned to speak Tzotzil Mayan. Past is the creator of the Mayan graphic arts collective Taller Leñateros in San Cristóbal de las Casas and has collected, recorded, and translated Tzotzil ritual songs and poetry. Past's own poems and stories have been published in books, anthologies and magazines in Spanish as well as several other languages.

