

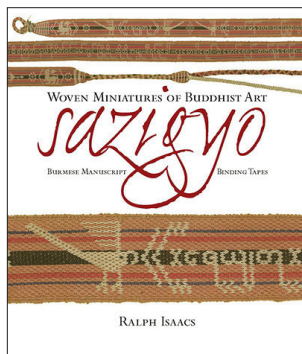
TEXTILE SOCIETY *of* AMERICA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: RALPH ISSACS RECEIVES R.L. SHEP ETHNIC TEXTILES BOOK AWARD TSA Announces 2014 Winner and Issues Call for Nominations

Berkeley, CA—The Textile Society of America is pleased to announce that Ralph Isaacs is the recipient of the 2014 R.L. Shep Ethnic Textiles Book Award for his book titled *Sazigyo, Burmese Manuscript Binding Tapes: Woven Miniatures of Buddhist Art*, published by Silkworm Books of Chiang Mai, Thailand.

This book is a celebration of a craft, now extinct, and a tribute to the skill and adventurousness of Burmese weavers. *Sazigyo*, Burmese tablet-woven bands for binding palm-leaf manuscripts, are both textile and text. This comprehensive book introduces their bright colors, long lines of elegant script, and miniature woven pictures to a wide readership while elucidating the Buddhist social and religious context in which the weavings were commissioned, woven, donated and used.

Photographs and paintings of scenes and ceremonies provide context for the double-faced weaves. The publisher comments “nine hundred beautiful illustrations show parts of over two hundred sazigyo found in museums and private collections in Britain, Southeast Asia, and throughout the world. In addition, more than two hundred excerpts of sazigyo texts are quoted, and twenty are quoted in full in English translation”. The volume is dedicated to the late Peter Collingwood, who championed this work, and includes a sample analysis of a sazigyo by Collingwood.

Ralph Issacs worked in Burma from 1989 to 1994 with the British Council.

In 2000 the Textile Society of America established the R.L. Shep Ethnic Textiles Book Award, through a generous donation from R.L. Shep. This prestigious award, presented yearly, recognizes a book on ethnographic textiles for its outstanding scholarship and for furthering our understanding of textile traditions. This year the award committee was composed of Pat Hickman, chair, Cecilia Anderson, and Michele Hardy.

Nominations for the 2015 R.L. Shep Ethnic Textiles Book Award are due March 1, 2016 for books published in 2015. The 2015/16 Committee will consist of Cecilia Anderson, chair, Michele Hardy, and Sarah Fee. Anyone may nominate a book, including TSA members, non-members, authors, and publishers. The award is open to English-language books (including multi-lingual books in which all essential information appears in English) on the topic of ethnic textiles. For the purpose of the award, “ethnic” textiles are defined as the non-industrial textiles of Asia, Africa, Oceania, Native and Latin America, and identifiable cultural groups in Europe and North America. Monographs, anthologies, exhibition catalogs, and other book formats are eligible.

For complete details and to nominate a book, visit the TSA website at <http://textilesocietyofamerica.org/shep>. Publishers will be asked to provide three review copies of nominated books to the Shep Award Committee in order to be considered for the award. The winning book for 2015 will be announced at an awards banquet during the 15th Biennial TSA Symposium in Savannah, Georgia, October 19 – 23, 2016.

Contact 2015 Shep Award Committee chair Cecilia Anderson at ceciliaganderson@gmail.com with any questions.

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The Textile Society of America is a 501(c)3 nonprofit that provides an international forum for the exchange and dissemination of textile knowledge from artistic, cultural, economic, historic, political, social, and technical perspectives. Established in 1987, TSA is governed by a Board of Directors from museums and universities in North America. Our 800 members worldwide include curators and conservators, scholars and educators, artists, designers, makers, collectors, and others interested in textiles.