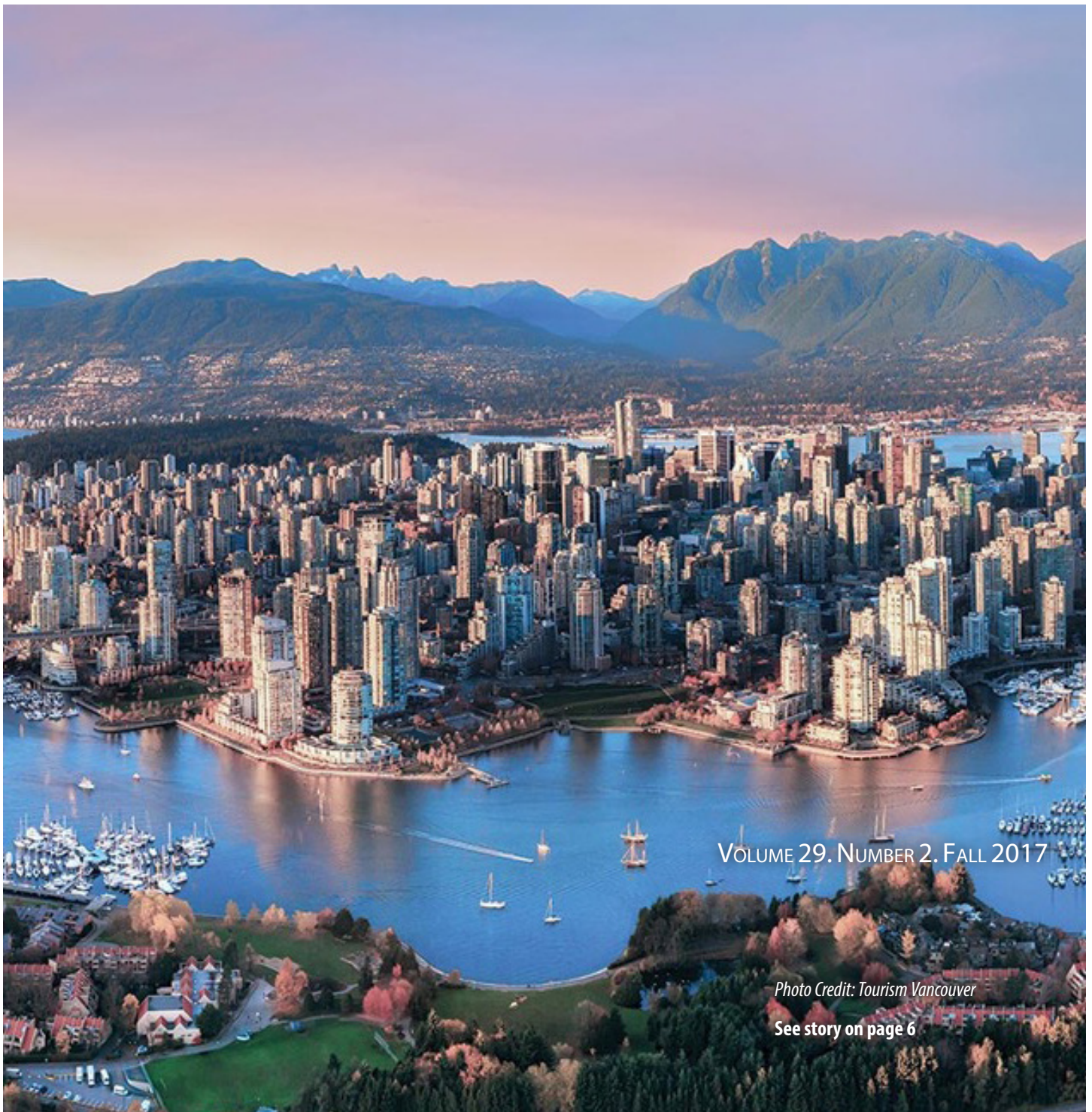


TEXTILE SOCIETY *of* AMERICA

Newsletter



VOLUME 29. NUMBER 2. FALL 2017

Photo Credit: Tourism Vancouver

See story on page 6

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Our Mission

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 members worldwide include curators and conservators, scholars and educators, artists, designers, makers, collectors, and others interested in textiles. TSA organizes biennial symposia. The juried papers presented at each symposium are published in the *Proceedings* available at <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/textilesoc>. It also organizes day- and week-long programs in locations throughout North America and around the world that provide unique opportunities to learn about textiles in various contexts, to examine them up-close, and to meet colleagues with shared interests. TSA distributes a Newsletter and compiles a membership directory. These publications are included in TSA membership, and available on our website.

About the Newsletter

The Textile Society of America Newsletter is published two times a year as a member benefit and serves to announce and report on the Biennial Symposia. In addition, the newsletter reports on TSA programs, international textile news, and lists conferences, courses, exhibitions, grants, job postings, and tours. Advertising space is available. Details are at: http://textilesocietyofamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/TSA-Paid-Advertising-Guidelines_7_8_2016.pdf.

Submissions are welcome.

Recent newsletters can be downloaded from the TSA website as PDFs:

<http://textilesocietyofamerica.org/news/newsletters/>

Newsletters dating from 1989 through 2004 are available on Digital Commons:

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/tsanews/>

Newsletter Submission Guidelines:

To submit content to the Editor please e-mail newsletter@textilesociety.org with the subject line, "submission." Text should be sent as Microsoft Word files and images should be sent as individual JPEG files. Please include image captions and a one to three sentence author bio for reviews and articles. Please keep articles and reviews to 600 words.

Stay in Touch

eNews: In addition to the PDF newsletter, TSA distributes regular e-mails with up-to-date news of programs and opportunities. Subscribe at <http://textilesocietyofamerica.org/news/subscribe/> to keep up with program registration dates, scholarship and award opportunities, and news from the field.



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Letter from the Editor

WE HAVE LOST TWO GREAT ARTISTS THIS YEAR.

In the 1960s, the Abakans of Magdalena Abakanowicz made a permanent impression on more than a generations of artists, influencing our conception of materials and how they can be used expressively, invoking visceral references to the body and emotional states. In the 1970s her work, *Seated Figures* and *Backs*, hollow shelled works composed of backs of figures, became haunting reminders of the horrors not only of World War II in Poland, but also spoke forebodingly of the larger human condition.

Both timeless and specific (with each figure crafted with unique detail and texture), the monumental scale and visual intensity of her work had to be reckoned with, posing more questions than answers. How do we, mere human individuals, deal with the challenges our collective humanity imposes on us? Magdalena Abakanowicz died April 20, 2017. Elsewhere in this newsletter Janis Jefferies pays tribute to her and Matilda McQuaid honors Junichi Arai. He too altered our relationship with materials, striving for new ways of creating and altering the fabric surface.

While Magdalena Abakanowicz reflected on human-kind in her work, Junichi Arai provided a vision of collaboration and innovation, embracing both the old and the new in his fabrics that reflect his deep knowledge of weaving, new materials and technologies, and surface manipulation. Their deep commitment to their work provides inspiration when today it is hard to maintain silence about our current political state, yet frustrating to feel a massive, impenetrable force that seems to resist dialog. Is the artistic act also an engagement in a political act?

Growing anxiety about a multitude of issues including nuclear brinkmanship, revelations of sexual power abuse in Hollywood, reversals of climate change policy and immigration policy for Dreamers, and the dismantling of access to health care are some of the issues that occupy my mental landscape. Internationally the brutal treatment of the Rohingya in Myanmar and the shift to far right populism in Europe agitate me. My frustration about how an individual can participate actively grows. Author Salman Rushdie spoke often before and after the November election about the importance of voting. As he attended post-inauguration events he asked people if they had voted and noted that a substantial number of people on the streets in protest did not, or if they did, they voted for a member

of a third party. In a democracy, the vote is a significant political act. It is not many steps then to say that art that engages, that wakens a person from slumber is political, even if the message is not overtly political. One act of engagement leads to another. Apathy is not an option.

To be engaged in life, actively and reflectively, is to consider these issues, to seek new solutions, to participate. As always, in the pages of this newsletter, where stories about textiles, the people who make them, conserve them, analyze them, present them to the public, are vital stories about life. Please take time to see what other members are writing about. Participate in our programs and volunteer to work on committees, take the chance to engage with people passionate about textiles. Engage with zest!



Wendy Weiss
TSA Director of Communications and
Newsletter Editor

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Textile Society of America will have open Board positions beginning in September 2018. A Call for Nominations with details about these positions will be posted this fall in TSA E-News. We would like to invite members who may be interested in serving to contact the nominations committee at elections@textilesociety.org by February 15, 2018.

Letter from the Development Committee

Fundraising for TSA: Why it is Necessary

TSA is embarking on its recently initiated annual fundraising campaign. This marks the fourth year that the organization has gone to the membership for support in this way. Each year, members have given extra, beyond their membership dues, to continue to support the programs and people that make TSA a valuable organization.

Why do we fundraise? Your membership fees pay the basic costs of assuring TSA is alive and well, keeping our website current, and assuring that we have an infrastructure in place to organize our symposium. In addition to regular and sustaining memberships, TSA continues to offer reduced membership rates for new professionals and students.

Our organization has no other "profit centers." Textiles Close Up (TCUs) earn a small amount of money for the organization, but again, we always offer scholarships for these events. Board members, who travel twice a year for meetings, do so completely at their own expense.

As a result of generous donations and fundraising efforts, we were able to bring international speakers to the symposia in Savannah and Los Angeles. As we approach our 2018 Symposium in Vancouver, fundraising becomes imperative in order to offer scholarships to presenters and others who need help to attend and share their research. Your gifts this year will be able to help us continue with these efforts.

In order to keep costs of our programs low, maintain and expand the diversity we desire, and continue the work we are doing, TSA needs your help. When your funding appeal letter arrives in the mail, please consider carefully and support TSA in whatever way you can.

Thank you for being a part of this community, we look forward to the next 30 years.

Catharine Ellis chairs the Development Committee with members Sandy Pienado, Vita Plume, and Maleyne Syracuse

Letter from the President

SEPTEMBER WAS NY TEXTILE MONTH: Susan Brown, through the **Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum** solicited short articles from thirty TSA members on exceptional textile artifacts in the museum collection. Each day in September, one object was shared online with all the Cooper Hewitt members and followers as the [Cooper-Hewitt's Object of the Day](#). If you know a project that TSA could affiliate with, where our members' textile knowledge could play a role, please contact me or any board member to discuss.

TSA Strategic Plan: When I last wrote a report to the membership we were working on getting information for the TSA five-year Strategic Plan. Thanks to all of you who took the time to answer questionnaires, provide feedback as well as participate in focus groups. Your input has formed the nucleus of this Plan. TSA learned much through the process about our members and what they value and also about potential members and what they might like TSA to be. The Plan comes forward with three basic goals:

Goal #1: Produce an outstanding biennial symposium that engages membership and advances the field.

Goal #2: Design an effective, streamlined program structure that capitalizes on the content of each symposium and engages members year-round.

Goal #3: Reorganize the TSA's administrative structure to be effective, diverse, and financially sustainable. This will require hiring an event planner, revamping staff positions, and re-organizing TSA's internal virtual filing/communication systems of Committee folders for the ease of communication, information, and continuity.

I want to thank the Strategic Planning Committee members (Chair: Maleyne Syracuse, Elena Phipps, Susan Brown, Roxane Shaughnessy, Owyn Ruck, Lisa Kriner, as well as Allison Trimarco) for all their dedicated work throughout this important process.

Awards: The recipient of the 2017 **R.L. Shep Ethnic Textile Book Award** is *Block Printed Textiles of India: Imprints of Culture* by **Eiluned Edwards** and published by Niyogi Books. Congratulations Eiluned! Thirteen books were nominated and this year's selection committee was Michele Hardy (Chair), Sarah Fee, and Eulanda Sanders.

The TSA Board is pleased to welcome **Anne Wilson** and **Louise Mackie** into the TSA Fellows circle, which honors them for their contributions to the field of textiles over the span of their careers. These awards will be presented at the Vancouver Symposium 2018. For more details, see the article on page 11.

Textile Close Up (TCU) Programs: Both amazing TCU programs this summer and fall were sold out, with waiting lists! Participants in **Bloomington Blues: Indigo in Indiana** (July) with **Rowland and Chinami Ricketts** spent two days learning about the hard work of farming indigo and the joys of dyeing with it. The participants in the September program, **From Ancient to avant-garde: Textiles in Montreal** visited ancient Peruvian

textiles at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts; the Textiles and Materiality Research Cluster and Sub-Tela at Concordia University; First Nations textiles and dress at the McCord Museum; and a behind-the-scenes tour at the Musée de la Mode. Thanks to all the gracious hosts who share their expertise with TSA members. You can read more about these programs in the articles beginning on page 13 and on the TSA website. Keep your eyes open for the next TCU announcements on the TSA website and in TSA eNews blasts. Also if you have ideas for a TCU in your area, please contact [Lauren Whitley](#), the TSA Program Committee chair.

Vancouver Symposium: Sept. 19–23, 2018: TSA has received a record number of submissions (over 250!). TSA is thrilled that the new Warp Speed Lightning talks attracted twenty-eight submissions! Thanks to everyone who put forward an abstract. A dedicated group of readers is currently reviewing these abstracts and then the Program Committee (**Michele A. Hardy, Jean Kares, Bettina Matskuhn**) will do the hard but exciting work of determining the final program. Please remember that the deadline for the [Member's Exhibition](#) is April 1, 2018!! Please see the website or look for details on page 6.

The Vancouver Committee has been working hard to finalize the details of the workshops and tours that will be associated with the program. It looks like an exciting schedule of events! A preliminary program will be posted and registration will begin around May 18, 2018.

Nominations for the Board: TSA is now celebrating its thirtieth year, and beginning on page 8, you will read about its history and formation. It has made a mark in the textile world diversifying and disseminating textile study and discourse primarily through the biennial symposia, but also through study programs, tours, and Textiles Close Up programs. A corps of thirty-five to forty dedicated volunteers who comprise ten committees and four sub-committees does the bulk of TSA's work. Two part-time employees assist this troupe of volunteers: the symposium planner and the administrative staff. We have no physical office or paper files. We store our files in a common Dropbox system and besides two annual Board meetings, we meet by phone, Skype, and computer. As President, I try to keep my eye on all the activities simultaneously—sometimes I do go cross-eyed! While we rarely meet in person, we form strong working ties and long-lasting friendships. It is truly a pleasure to work with this amazing group of textile experts and enthusiasts. I urge you to consider becoming one of the TSA team—consider how you could make an impact on this organization and bring your skills to the TSA Board. For more details, see the inset on page 4.

With special thanks to all the volunteers and our staff, who make TSA such an amazing organization!



Vita Plume
President, 2016-2018

TSA's 2018 Symposium

The Social Fabric: Deep Local to Pan Global



Textile Society of America 16th Biennial Symposium Vancouver, Canada — September 19-23, 2018

By Bettina Matzkuhn

Plans are well underway for TSA's 16th Biennial Symposium, **The Social Fabric: Deep Local to Pan Global**, in Vancouver, Canada! Our theme invites TSA members to explore how textiles sustain the local and enter the global. In this spirit, the 2018 Organizing Committee is designing an exciting range of activities that will take you around this multicultural city. Our home base, the Wall Centre Sheraton Hotel, which will give us a very competitive room rate, is in the center of downtown. You can explore and sample the many ethnic restaurants within blocks of your room. Fortified with sushi, curry, *mee goreng*, gelato, Swiss pastries, and delicious locavore fare from assorted food trucks, you can take in the creative and intellectual banquet of our conference.

Our opening reception will take place at the University of British Columbia's stunning Museum of Anthropology (MOA), a

building and collection that is a must-see for anyone visiting the city. Before the reception, you will have the opportunity to participate in study sessions of MOA's extensive textile collections, visit the Bill Reid Gallery to view indigenous art, tour local social enterprises that rescue/recycle textiles while developing worker skills, visit the studio of First Nations weaver extraordinaire Debra Sparrow, or enjoy a salon at the Maiwa Loft to see and touch the treasures in Charlotte Kwon's personal library of world textiles.

The conference will begin Thursday morning with a keynote address by Meghann O'Brien, a First Nations weaver (and champion snowboarder) who eloquently discusses her weaving as both a traditional and contemporary practice. In the evening, you have the option of visiting the Roundhouse Community



Craftworks, Our Social Fabric, and Common Thread are non-profits working to recycle and upcycle textiles that would otherwise be discarded. Credit: Kaytee Kilgour



Maiwa Textiles on Granville Island: an important part of Vancouver's textile community, Charlotte Kwon's collection of textiles and books is pure heaven. Credit: Maiwa Handprints, Ltd.

Centre where Sharon Kallis, TSA's 2010 Brandford/Elliott award winner, has mounted an exhibit. Kallis founded the EarthHand Gleaners Society, a group of artists, makers, and educators who incorporate locally harvested materials which are featured in the work on display. We will also offer a tour of Emily Carr University's new hi-tech campus, which includes a textile lab and First Nations' centre.

On Friday, we will whisk you over the bustling Fraser River to the Surrey Art Centre. There, we'll tour a curated exhibition of contemporary Canadian textile art and participate in a plenary session, then return to the hotel for afternoon concurrent sessions. In the evening, tour artists' studios and shops on vibrant Granville Island, only a short bus trip or mini ferryboat ride away. For dinner you can visit a restaurant, nibble on goodies from the Public Market, or find a fragrant food truck.

Saturday, put your nose to the grindstone at a full day of concurrent sessions. But remember, the Marketplace will be open in the center of our proceedings, where it shares a large space with the members' mail-in exhibit. If your head is bursting and you just want to stare at the sea, the beach or harbour is a short stroll in either direction. Later, the Wall Centre will strut its culinary stuff at the awards banquet.

Post-conference tours include an overnight adventure to Saltspring Island, an island gem that is peopled by artists, craftspeople, vintners, and small farms all set in a blue and green archipelago. We are arranging a rare opportunity to work with a teacher flown in from Canada's remote Banks Island, Northwest Territories (where 68,000 muskoxen live) to work with qiviut fibre at the Emily Carr University Aboriginal Centre. The Bill Reid Gallery will offer workshops as will Sharon Kallis at the Roundhouse. And, of course, we hope you will stay to visit Vancouver's many galleries, museums, gardens, neighbourhoods, and parks.



Diana Sanderson Silk Weaving Studio on Granville Island: a wonderful space to see exhibitions, extraordinary silk weaving and find delicious supplies. Credit: Diana Sanderson

Keep in mind that if the Canadian dollar remains as it stands now in relation to the US dollar, US visitors can see it as a 20% discount! We look forward to seeing you!

Bettina Matzkuhn explores history, geography, and personal stories through contemporary embroidery. A TSA member since 2006, she exhibits, teaches, and writes on the arts.

Useful links:

Tourism Vancouver: www.tourismvancouver.com
Granville Island: granvilleisland.com
Sheraton Wall Centre: www.sheratonvancouver.com
Museum of Anthropology UBC: moa.ubc.ca
Emily Carr University: www.ecuad.ca
EarthHand Gleaners Society: earthand.com
Bill Reid Gallery: www.billreidgallery.ca
Meghann O'Brien: meghannobrien.com/page/2
Saltspring Island: www.saltspringtourism.com
Maiwa: maiwa.com

MEMBERS EXHIBITION

Deadline: April 1, 2018

TSA invites you to participate in the Vancouver 2018 Symposium members' juried exhibition of small works exploring the theme: **Social Fabric: Deep Local to Pan Global**. We are calling for an original textile artwork that is inspired by a specific landmark or object in your community or museum.

We especially encourage collaborations between researchers/academics and makers. One of the collaborators must be a TSA member. In bringing the TSA membership together in this way, we hope to visually display the diversity of TSA's broad cultural, geographic and theoretical reference points.

Finished work should measure 8" x 10" (20 x 26 cm) and be unframed.

Please see the Submissions forms for complete requirements and entry details.

All submissions must be made online at textilesociety.submittable.com/submit

Textile Society of America 30th Anniversary

The Textile Society of America: Its Foundation and Early Days

By Ruth Barnes

During the academic year of 1986-1987 I spent a year at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. I had just finished my doctoral dissertation on the ikat textiles of an Eastern Indonesian community, and as part of that research I had become well aware of the iconographic and social importance of Indian trade textiles in the Indonesian villages I had lived in. Now, to my surprise, I came across a collection of exactly the same Indian textiles in the University's Kelsey Museum, but these traded from India to Egypt, many as early as the twelfth or thirteenth century CE. The Kelsey Museum's director at the time, Elaine Gazda, invited me to research this material for the museum. I had always seen textiles as a way into the social, artistic, and economic history of a society, and this new research project confirmed this approach in new and rich ways.

At the time I was corresponding with Mattiebel Gittinger at The Textile Museum in Washington, D.C., partly to continue a conversation about our shared research interest in Indonesian textiles, but also to ask her advice about my newfound topic of investigating the early movement of Indian textiles in the wider Indian Ocean region. I mentioned that I would probably need the expertise of historians, economic historians, archivists, and art historians, as well as scholars who understood the textiles' making. Her reply was that she had just returned from a meeting with like-minded textile scholars who wanted to help create just what I was looking for: a forum where people from a wide range of disciplines could meet and explore the wealth inherent to textile studies. She was, of course, talking about the founding of TSA.

On April 3, 1987 a small group of curators and scholars met at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston to discuss possibilities for taking textile studies forward in North America. In the past, The Textile Museum's Irene Emery Roundtables had provided an occasional chance to bring together experts in the textile field, but these had been irregular and now were not to be continued. Several of those who met in Boston were members of Centre International d'Etude des Textiles Anciens (CIETA) and had asked that association to support a North American branch, but this had been declined.

Among those who gathered in Boston were Milton Sondag, Mattiebel Gittinger, Louise Mackie, Dale Gluckman, Lotus Stack, Christa Thurman, Ann Wardell, and Jean-Michel Tuchscherer. The group decided to found the Textile Society of America, with the aim to promote a broad spectrum of knowledge from many academic fields. Peggy Gilfoy, John Vollmer, and Rita Adrosko, who had not been able to attend, were contacted to inform them of the decision, and they were asked to join.

Membership was to be open to everyone. This was considered most important, to avoid the impression of a "club of insiders," and to be inviting to young and emerging scholars. Of course now came the need to give the association some form of structure: the initial officers and board were chosen, and Peggy

Gilfoy and John Vollmer were appointed President and Vice President, respectively.

The tradition of a biennial symposium was established when Lotus Stack volunteered to host the first symposium in Minneapolis in September 1988. Each symposium was to have a thematic focus, and for the first meeting John Vollmer organized the program on the theme of *Textiles as Primary Sources*. The symposium apparently was a great success. It also established the precedent to publish all papers presented, and to do so in an expedient manner. The first volume of *Proceedings* appeared four months after the September symposium.

At the 1988 symposium the first formal election of officers took place. Peggy Gilfoy remained President, and Milton Sondag was appointed Vice President. The board was expanded to include Elizabeth Barber, Susan Bean, Clarita Anderson, Arlene Cooper, Mary Landis, and Mokhtar El-Homossani. Clarita Anderson and Arlene Cooper took on the *Newsletter* which was to appear twice a year. From the very beginning it was a great source of information for members' activities, publications, exhibitions, and events of interest to the wider textile community, and remains so to this day.

Unfortunately Peggy Gilfoy died shortly after the first symposium, and Milton Sondag became President. Lotus Stack stepped in as Vice President. There can be no doubt that the founding members, and especially the remarkable group of founding officers and board members, set high standards and admirable goals that benefited TSA from the outset. The Society soon became the most important international sounding board for the latest research in textile scholarship, and many of us who attended the symposia in the first decade still remember the vibrant atmosphere, the excitement of sharing ideas and new discoveries.

The initial membership was made up primarily of scholars and researchers with an academic interest in textile history. Costume studies and fibre artists were initially not part of TSA. This changed in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and our members now come from a much wider field, including practicing artists. Some of the founding members have expressed a degree of regret at this development, including my two main sources for this short account of TSA's foundation, Mattiebel Gittinger and Milton Sondag. Both would have preferred for TSA to retain a tighter focus of its original purpose. For me it seems more important to maintain a high professional standard, and keep an open mind for new ideas and approaches.

Ruth Barnes is the Thomas Jaffe Curator of Indo-Pacific Art in the Department of Indo-Pacific Art at Yale University Art Gallery. She is a current member of the TSA board.

Textile Society of America: A Community Endeavor and a Personal Journey

By Lisa Kriner

Milton Sondag, TSA President, 1989-1992 wrote, “but, the bottom line is this: TSA will only be as good as you make it.” His words ring as true today as when the Textile Society of America was conceived and named in 1987, with an eleven-member advisory board. TSA has seen numerous changes over the last thirty years. Members have fueled transformation, as have changes in the textile field and shifts in the world around us. While we celebrate three decades as an organization, it’s important to look back at how we started, as a way to understand who we are, and to plan for the future.

The history of TSA is a history of people who love textiles and have worked hard to bring them to a broad audience. In September 1988 Lotus Stack hosted the first symposium in Minneapolis around the theme *Textiles as Primary Sources*. The event was a huge success. The membership elected officers and the original founders became members of the board. Volunteers Clarita Anderson and Arlene Cooper agreed to produce the organization’s *Newsletter*, which was initially mailed to members. Since 2009 it has been a digital publication.

Under the supervision of John Vollmer and with the help of Suzanne Baizerman, the papers from the first symposium were published and sent to the participants. Since this 1988 event, TSA has hosted fifteen symposia across the US and Canada, gathering together hundreds of members per meeting. At our symposia, members listen to papers on a wide variety of textile subjects and make connections with others in the field.

When I chat with members about why they come to a symposium, they express a desire to share knowledge as well as an excitement to learn about what others are doing. At both formal and informal gatherings, members connect with friends they do not often see and develop new friendships. What about those members who can’t join us at a symposium? To address this issue, TSA has continued the initial effort of publishing papers and making them widely available for study.

In 2009, The University of Nebraska Lincoln’s Love Library became the official home for the TSA Archives, both the paper archives as well as our digital archives. Digital Commons houses past [Newsletters](#) and [Symposia Proceedings](#). Each receives thousands of online visitors and provides access for textile research. Our web presence continues to expand. For the 2014 Symposium in Los Angeles and the 2016 Symposium in Savannah, several recorded presentations were [posted on our website](#). Members and nonmembers can access the wealth of information our excellent speakers bring to the symposia. We hope that these accessible talks will facilitate a wider community engagement with the symposia.

As the symposia grew, so did membership numbers. From the beginning membership has been open to anyone. TSA connects, represents, and is relevant to people with a broad range of textile interests. Our members have many skills and areas of expertise to offer. Connecting with each other is critical to individual research and to the field. During the mid-1990s TSA published and mailed a Membership Directory to members in the off-symposium years. Today we use an online Membership Directory which is both interactive and continuously updated—by you. Go online and complete your [member profile](#) so this continues to be a robust resource. We also are increasingly connected through social media. TSA has both a members and an open Facebook page and is available through Instagram and Twitter. Search us out!

In addition to online benefits, members have opportunities to connect in smaller gatherings around and between symposia. In 1996 at the Chicago Symposium, TSA began offering pre-symposium programs, including courses on historic textiles, how to look at textiles, and sources of inspiration for the textile arts. These workshops were very successful and often over subscribed. The following symposium, hosted at The Fashion Institute of Technology in NY, offered thirty-six site seminars throughout the area. Today, symposium co-chairs run both pre- and post-symposium workshops and tours. These continue to be popular among our members.

Between symposium years, TSA provides its members with other opportunities to convene. Some of these opportunities have been far flung, like the international tours to Peru, India, Ghana, Uzbekistan, and Turkey; others are closer to home like our current Textiles Close Up (TCU) program, which offers day-long seminars in the US and Canada. Each of these TCUs offers members time and focus to study and talk with each other. A scholarship program helps members to participate. Reports from our most recent TCU scholarship winners are here in this Newsletter and on the website.

Awards have also been critical to the development of TSA as an organization and have allowed us to recognize excellence in the field. Starting with the R.L. Shep Book Award and then quickly adding the Student/New Professional Award and the Founding President’s Award, TSA hopes to expand our support for professionals in the field and recognize excellence for a range of professional experiences. Our new TSA Fellows Award is intended to honor senior colleagues who have excelled in textiles scholarship, education, art, or in sustaining textile arts globally. The honor is made in special recognition of colleagues who have, over the course of their careers, made seminal, path-breaking contributions to the field. Through this robust

Please share your connection with the TSA community by submitting a short essay (up to 250 words) to Katherine Diuguid at KatDiuguidDesigns@gmail.com

Submissions will be published in the Newsletter. The due dates for the Spring and Fall Newsletters are April 15 and September 15, 2018, respectively. Thank you so much for considering a contribution about your important TSA history for publication.

awards program, we hope to encourage excellence in the field and broader participation.

As the current TSA Vice President, I have been thinking about how I got involved in TSA, my personal relationship with the organization, and how the organization has changed over the lifetime of my membership. I was introduced to TSA when working on my MFA at the University of Kansas. Both my thesis advisors, Cynthia Schira and Mary Ann Jordan, encouraged both the graduate and undergraduate students to become members. Joining felt like becoming an adult—a real artist and teacher. This feeling of inclusion in a professional organization solidified when I attended my first symposium in 1996 in Chicago. The range of scholarship and professional discourse stunned me. I went to everything I could and took pages and pages of notes. But what I most enjoyed as a young professional was the way that my advisors introduced me to the people they knew, and I began to develop both a professional network and friends whose company I still enjoy.

After graduate school, I was privileged to get a job first at the University of Kansas and then at Berea College in Kentucky. As the only fibers faculty member, and at the time the only woman in the studio and art history department, I desperately needed a network of mentors whom I could call upon to help me navigate questions about teaching, research, and, quite frankly, work politics. So when I was approached to serve on the TSA board as a Member-at-Large, I had no idea what I was doing except that I knew that I would, at least twice a year, have the perfect opportunity to learn from other professionals.

I remember long days of work around the TSA board table followed by walks and meals where the conversations would revolve around textiles and our personal and professional relationship with them. I can't tell you how much I learned and how critical it was for me to be able to spend concentrated time with such amazing peers. So it was with great pleasure that I

accepted another Board position in 2016. With great honor, I am able to give back to the textile community through my service now as TSA Vice President, and in the future as President and Past President.

Hearing stories of our past and planning for our future are critical activities that keep us strong. I would like to encourage you to think about how you got involved with TSA. Was there an important figure in your life who encouraged you to join or brought you to the organization? How does TSA as an organization connect you to the textile world and provide you with opportunities to learn? We want to hear from you! We are inviting each TSA member to write about their personal connections to TSA and to submit short 250 word essays for publication in either the Spring or Fall 2018 Newsletters to celebrate our 30th year. Remember, TSA is a member-driven organization and we can be "only as good as you make it." Please write to us about your personal connection to TSA so that we can share your experiences and better understand the "you" in Milton's quotation.

Lisa Kriner is the Morris B. Belknap, Jr. Chair in Fine Arts at Berea College where she teaches fiber art, printmaking, Appalachian weaving, design, and a global issues seminar called "Who Owns Culture?" She is TSA Vice President.



The TSA archives are housed on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus and are available to the public by appointment. Credit: Wendy Weiss

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries is the repository for the Records of the Textile Society of America (MS 335). The documents are located in Archives & Special Collections. The finding aid for the fifteen boxes of records is available at: <http://archivespec.unl.edu/findingaids/ms335-textile-society-unl.html>.

UNL also manages the digital commons site for the TSA *Proceedings* and newsletters. Individuals who would like to submit photographs that document the history of TSA may contact TSA Secretary Lesli Robertson: leslirobertson@yahoo.com.

TSA Honors Louise Mackie and Anne Wilson

By Linda Eaton

In 2015, the Textile Society of America instituted a new program to recognize and honor individuals who have, over the course of their careers, made path-breaking contributions to the field in textile scholarship, education, art, or in sustaining textile arts globally. Through this program, TSA aims to foster recognition and appreciation for those who have dedicated their lives and work to the study, creation, and preservation of textiles, and in doing so have inspired colleagues and transformed the field. Two fellowships are awarded biennially. We are delighted to announce that Louise Mackie and Anne Wilson have been chosen to be honored as TSA Fellows for 2017.

Louise Mackie

Louise Mackie's leadership as a founding director and past President of TSA (1996-1998), along with her curatorial work on the subject of Islamic textiles has contributed enormously to the textile field. Her research directives, field work, and curatorial focus on the details of textile making and meaning from a broad perspective have brought new insight, documentation, and understanding of the intricacies, beauty, and power of textiles from the Islamic world. She has led large

collaborative projects, engaged in international initiatives, conducted extensive research fieldwork, and developed exhibitions creatively and with aesthetic sensitivity that have had a lasting impact. Her kind nature has enabled an open dialogue with students, scholars, and members of the public, and her aim has always been to foster learning and knowledge sharing.

Mackie recently retired as Head of the Islamic Art Department and Curator of the Department of Textiles and Costume at Cleveland Museum of Art. Previously, she was the Department Head and Curator of the Textile and Costume Department at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada (1981-1998). She was Curator of the Eastern Hemisphere Collections at The Textile Museum in Washington, D.C. (1971-1980) where she trained in textiles and carpets under Irene Emery and Charles Grant Ellis.

Louise continues to serve on the Conseil de Direction of the Centre International d'Etude des Textiles Anciens (CIETA), based in Lyon, France (1985-1987, 1991-present), and previously sat on the Advisory Committee of The Textile Museum, Washington, D.C. (1982-1989). She holds a BA in art history from Wells College and an MA in Islamic art from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Additional studies included coursework for a PhD at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, and coursework in Islamic art at the American University in Cairo.

Mackie's most recent publication, *Symbols of Power: Luxury Textiles from Islamic Lands, 7th-21st Century* (Cleveland Museum of Art, 2015), received the R. L. Shep Ethnic Textiles Book Award. Mackie has also written numerous catalogues, chapters, and articles and contributed to large research projects. She was the video producer and project director of interdisciplinary fieldwork for *Threads of Time: Handmade Textiles for Weddings in Fez, Morocco*, a video documentary (1996) partially funded by the Barakat Foundation, which also led to conference papers and published articles. She served as the textile scholar for *IPEK: Imperial Ottoman Silks and Velvets* (2001), an extensive collaborative international research project on Ottoman Turkish silks of the 15th to 17th centuries, spearheaded by Prof. Dr. Nurhan Atasoy along with Dr. Hulya Tezcan and Prof. Walter B. Denny, and generously funded by the Turk Ekonomi Bankasi, Istanbul, Turkey.

Anne Wilson

Anne Wilson is a Chicago-based visual artist who creates sculpture, drawings, performances, and video animations that explore themes of time, loss, and private and social rituals. Her artwork embraces conceptual strategies and handwork using everyday materials—table linens, bed sheets, human hair, lace, thread, glass, and wire.

Wilson manages to balance a highly active studio and exhibition schedule with a busy teaching career. The Fiber and Material Studies Department at School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) is held in the highest regard and Wilson's contribution to the pedagogy there (1979-present) has been seminal in formulating the distinct balance this program promotes: expressing ideas and exploring metaphor and meaning through the medium of textiles.



Louise Mackie, former curator of textiles and Islamic art at the Cleveland Museum of Art. Credit: Cleveland Museum of Art.

She is an inspiring model of an artist/educator, addressing the medium of textiles (using stitching, sculpture, craft and art, performance, community engagement) and conceptual issues (gender identity, women's work, labor, feminism), as well as the history of textiles and textile production.

Wilson's art is housed in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Museum of Arts and Design in New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Detroit Institute of Arts, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester, England, and the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa, Japan, among others. Her work has been included in many exhibitions in the United States and abroad. The most recent exhibitions of her work include *Ruptures* at the Des Moines Art Center, *Thread Lines* at the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft in Louisville, *Weaving Europe: The World as Meditation* at the Othellos-Attikon Cultural Centre in Pafos, Cyprus, and a solo exhibition, *Anne Wilson: A Hand Well Trained*, at Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago (see review on page 27).



Anne Wilson installing *Topologies* (2002-ongoing)

Credit: Anne Wilson

Wilson was named a 2015 United States Artists Distinguished Fellow and is the recipient of awards from the Driehaus Foundation, Artadia, the Tiffany Foundation, National Association of Schools of Art and Design (Citation Recipient), Cranbrook Academy of Art (Distinguished Alumni Award), the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Illinois Arts Council. She is represented by Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago and Paul Kotula Projects, Detroit.

Linda Eaton is the John L. & Marjorie P. McGraw Director of Collections and Senior Curator of Textile at Winterthur Museum. Linda joined the TSA Board last year and serves on the Awards Committee, with responsibility for the TSA Fellows.

R. L. Shep Ethnic Textiles Book Award 2016 and Call for Nominations 2017

Block Printed Textiles Of India: Imprints of Culture by Eiluned Edwards won the R.L. Shep Ethnic Textiles Book Award for 2016. This volume brings decades of fieldwork in India to light in an extensively illustrated text. Both scholars and textile enthusiasts wishing to become better informed about the current state of block printing on the sub-continent will find the book fascinating. Throughout the text, the author weaves history, textile design, production, commercial markets, and trade with personal and archival accounts of significant players in these arenas. While the book is organized into eight sections, the complex intersections between caste, religion, water, economics, and market resonate throughout. The author deftly guides the reader through early trade textiles to the spice trade and the Mughal Empire alongside the English East India Company to the catwalk and contemporary challenges.

Nominations for the Textile Society of America's 2017 R.L. Shep Ethnic Textiles Book Award are now open and are being accepted through March 1, 2018. This prestigious annual award recognizes outstanding scholarship and accessibility in the field of ethnic textiles. Established by R. L. Shep in 2000 to promote the field of ethnic textile studies and the work of TSA, the award consists of a cash prize.

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. No author may be a current TSA board member, Shep Award Committee member, or recipient of the Shep Award in the previous six years. The prize-winning book will best present original scholarly research in an engaging and accessible manner.

For additional details and to nominate a book, visit the TSA [website](http://www.textilesocietyofamerica.org) and enter the book's title, author, publisher, and year of publication. Publishers must provide three review copies of nominated books to the Shep Award Committee in order to be considered for the award. The winning book for 2017 will be announced Fall 2018. For questions and further information about the award, please contact committee chair, Sarah Fee at sarahf@rom.on.ca.

Textiles Close Up

Bloomington Blues

By Jasmine Kornel

I arrived at the picturesque home of Rowland and Chinami Ricketts on a cloudy Thursday morning in Bloomington, Indiana where they convened the two-day Bloomington Blues workshop on July 13. The group consisted of fourteen participants who had traveled from around the country to attend. After we introduced ourselves, we walked over to a small field on their property where Rowland presented us with his indigo plants. The majority of the first day we spent dyeing with indigo in Rowland's studio. He shared his own natural fermentation vats while also introducing us to a technique using fresh leaves to dye that provided beautiful results on silk. Chinami also invited us into her studio where she spins her own yarn and weaves *yukata* cloth dyed with indigo using an ikat method called *kasuri*.

Rowland wanted us to come away from this workshop with a greater depth of knowledge about the stages of plant growth, processing, and dyeing. He designed the program to include



Rowland Ricketts in his indigo field explaining the growth cycle of the plant.

Credit: J. Kornel

every aspect of these processes. Drawing on his experience living in Japan as an apprentice, as well as years of practice and extensive research on the subject, Rowland was an open book. The process that he learned in Japan is the one that he practices today, a natural fermentation method called *sukumo*. The dried indigo leaf is composted in a shed for one hundred days and flipped every week; this begins the process of fermentation, which allows the dye to be extracted later in a vat of water.

The sun finally came out on day two and we started our morning with a visit to the textile studio at the Indiana University Bloomington where we had the great privilege of meeting William Itter, Professor Emeritus of Fine Art. He brought in a diverse array of gorgeous textiles from around the world to share with us, including some exquisite work from his late wife, fiber artist Diane Itter.

Next, we drove west nearly an hour outside of Bloomington to Hart Farm, where Rowland outsources the growth of more



TSA members harvesting indigo at Hart Farm.

Credit: J. Kornel

indigo in a much larger field. The hard labor began as our group harvested two massive rows of indigo. After bundling up the harvest we headed back to the Ricketts' home to lay the fresh indigo out to dry and winnow the previous harvest. The winnowing process involved stomping barefoot in the green house until the stems could be removed and the leaves were powder, ready to be composted.

It was a comprehensive two-day whirlwind workshop. All were eager to learn, lend a hand, and share their own knowledge, which positively enhanced the experience. It was an amazing and inspirational adventure. I have always been enamored with the indigo process. After this workshop, I have a much greater respect for the color and am eager to begin growing my own. I am especially grateful to the Teitelbaum Family Foundation for generously providing this grant through the Textile Society of America and to Rowland and Chinami Ricketts who so kindly welcomed all of us into their home, allowing us take part in their world of indigo.

Jasmine Kornel is an MFA candidate in Textile Art at Kent State University. She gained a deep interest in sustainable design practices while earning her undergraduate degree in Fashion Design. She studies traditional craft practices, natural dyes, and the use of up-cycled and non-traditional materials to create wearable pieces, art, and installations. She researches weaving, including Jacquard, and manipulation of materials for conceptual and visual impact.



Removing stems from the dried indigo, post winnowing

Credit: J. Kornel

TSA Welcomes New Contributors

Please welcome Caroline Charuk, Christy Norcross, and Meredith Affleck to the TSA team!

We are thrilled that **Caroline Charuk** has agreed to come on board as TSA's new full time General Manager taking care of the day to day workings of TSA. Many of you already know Caroline as TSA's Membership & Communication Coordinator a position she has held for two years. She earned her MFA in ceramics and sculpture from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University and has taught classes in textile and ceramics. She was a presenter at TSA's 2014 Symposium in LA where she presented the work of emerging Bay Area artists whose work draws on textile references or techniques but refuse the label "textile artist." Caroline is also a practicing visual artist living in Oakland, California and has exhibited her work in solo and group exhibitions across the US.

We also welcome **Christy Norcross**, National Account Manager for ConferenceDirect as Event Manager for the TSA symposia. Christy joins us with over 15 years' experience as a conference and event professional. Christy started her career as a Convention Services Manager in a large hotel-convention center in North Carolina. From there, she moved into the non-profit sector, working as the meeting planner for an association management company managing over 10 associations. She has worked with the American Institute of Architects National Convention, Charlotte NC (2002); the AIA Convention, Miami (2002); the AIA Convention for AIA|DC in Washington, DC (2012). In 2003, Christy moved into corporate meeting planning as a senior meeting and event planner for Wachovia, the 4th largest bank in the US at the time. Christy earned her Certified Meeting Professional designation in 2003, and was a Top Performer in 2007, 2009-2016 and was named ConferenceDirect's Conference Manager of the Year for 2015 and Rookie of the Year in Conference Management for 2007. Christy lives in Windermere, Florida.

This newsletter is the second that volunteer **Meredith Affleck** has designed; we are delighted to have her thoughtful approach and attention to design and detail as she brings the newsletter copy to life. Meredith is currently pursuing a career change, leaving behind project coordination for museum and university buildings at architecture and construction firms in order to pursue museum exhibit design. She has a wide range of museum experience gained through jobs, internships, and volunteering at varied institutions, such as the Peabody Essex Museum, American Textile History Museum, and Discover Portsmouth. She graduated from Hamilton College with a BA in Studio Art and French and earned a Museum Studies Certificate from Tufts University.

Woven Interiors: Late Antique Textiles In DC Collections

By Sarah Molina

On Friday, April 28th, two of Washington D.C.'s most storied textile collections, The Textile Museum and Dumbarton Oaks, opened their doors to members of the Textile Society of America. The two institutions are collaborating on an upcoming exhibition (scheduled to open in 2019), which will feature furnishing textiles produced in the Eastern Mediterranean region from the 4th-12th centuries.

Furnishing textiles from this period and region have previously been understudied—often overlooked in favor of dress textiles. This exhibition will provide a critical perspective in developing a richer discourse. For participants of the viewing session, including myself, this meant that many questions about these textiles had not yet been answered, making for a day of thoughtful discussion and inquiry.

Our day began at The Textile Museum, now housed at George Washington University. Curator and TSA board member, **Lee Talbot**, gave us a peek into the diverse permanent collection and special exhibitions of The Textile Museum, ranging from recent acquisitions like contemporary tapestry weaver **Jon Eric Riis'** jacket inspired by a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century Chimú tunic to the special exhibition, *Inspiring Beauty: 50 Years of Ebony Fashion Fair*.

We then took a trip to The Textile Museum's off-site storage center and conservation lab, where we had the opportunity to view some of the earliest extant textiles created in the Eastern Mediterranean. Most of these early textiles survive in fragments, which scholars have attempted to piece together. A particularly stunning fourth-century textile from the Roman period featured a design mimicking architectural elements. Other textiles, from the Byzantine and early Islamic periods, included repeating foliate motifs, human figures, and animals, highlighting the diversity of designs and the cultures that produced and exchanged them. In conversation with curator **Sumru Belger Krody**, many questions concerning the exact sites of production, the tools and techniques developed independently in various cultures, and other issues of attribution were discussed.

The issue of attribution is particularly complex for these early fragmentary textiles that were often excavated from sites not necessarily connected to their origins of production. During the second half of our day, we continued to encounter this issue at Dumbarton Oaks, where we had the chance to explore the museum's storage rooms as well as the recently re-opened galleries. Gudrun Bühl, curator and museum director of Dumbarton Oaks, and postdoctoral teaching fellow Elizabeth Williams gave us insight into the practices of early dealers who often cut up and pieced together these fragmentary textiles.



Textiles Close-Up in the storage rooms of Dumbarton Oaks (curtain fragment with two horsemen, late 9th to 10th century, wool and linen, BZ.1943.8).
Credit: S. Molina



Curator Sumru Belger Krody leads a tour at The Textile Museum's off-site storage and conservation center.
Credit: S. Molina

The afternoon allowed us to explore other objects from Dumbarton Oaks' extensive collection, such as metalwork, jewelry, and manuscripts, which provided other visual insights into this period of intense and diverse artistic production. Although we just glimpsed the beginnings of what will surely be a compelling exhibition, the curators and staff of both The Textile Museum and Dumbarton Oaks provided us with many fascinating insights and thought-provoking questions.

Sarah Molina is a Kress Interpretive Fellow at the Art Institute of Chicago, where she was previously an Andrew W. Mellon Undergraduate Curatorial Fellow from 2014-2016.

Camille Ann Brewer at The Textile Museum of America

By Wendy Weiss

Camille Ann Brewer has been working energetically to develop programs, outreach, and a curatorial vision since arriving at the George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum on October 10, 2016. She inherited three exhibitions in her position as the first curator of contemporary art at the museum and is developing a program for future exhibitions and collection development. A longtime member of the museum, with a deep commitment to the arts in general and textiles specifically, she understands her charge is to facilitate museum visitors to “discover Washington and the world.” Her goal is to honor the legacy of George Hewitt Myers, who founded the museum in 1925, while taking advantage of current technologies to engage twenty-first-century audiences.

At the end of a long day in the early stages of unpacking and installing the last of the three exhibitions, *Uncommon Thread: The Box Project*, September 30 - January 29, 2018, she paused to discuss her work at the museum with me, eleven months into the job. As she explained the installation decisions she made for *Scraps: Fashion, Textiles, and Creative Reuse*, (through January 7, 2018) organized by Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, it became clear that as curator she is juggling a myriad of responsibilities including exhibition design, project development, supervision of interns, public programming, outreach, and collaboration with colleagues across departments both within the museum and across the University.

With a background in library sciences augmenting her history as a hand weaver and curator, Brewer is eager to make the collections available online. She realizes that to capture new and younger audiences, it is essential to tap into social media and reach out through Instagram and Twitter, meet-up groups, and Facebook. She understands that if she can react quickly and deftly, through new media and personal contact, others will step in to help spread the word. For example, she pointed out how visitors will find hashtags on exhibition labels that they can use in their social media posts or she will use the “mommy blog” phenomenon to reach out to a new audience for children’s programming.

A series of travel engagements will occupy a good part of her second year at The Textile Museum:

she has both international and domestic trips—from Japan and West Africa to the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan and the College Art Association in Los Angeles for a paper presentation.

She will welcome artist Faig Ahmed of Baku, Azerbaijan, to the museum for a week later this year to research The Textile Museum’s historic collections. Known for his reinterpretations of classical carpet weavings, he will create a new body of work based on his research. In the fall of 2018, the museum will mount a combination of his earlier work, works from the collection he selects, and his new works that responds to those textiles.

Reflecting on her accomplishments to date, Camille Brewer says she is excited about bringing new audiences into the museum. The exhibition *Inspiring Beauty: 50 Years of Ebony Fashion Fair*, which closed July 24, 2017, received the most [press](#) of any previous show to date. She worked with colleagues to develop exciting programming from a red carpet student night to a children’s ball replete with dance lessons. In October, The Textile Museum will host a runway fashion show featuring student models and designers from Howard University’s Fashion Design Program who have created nearly twenty eclectic, upcycled designs.



Camille Brewer, Curator of Contemporary Art at The Textile Museum, Washington, DC. Credit: Wendy Weiss

In Spring 2020, audiences will experience Brewer’s first major curatorial project for the museum. Working with faculty in mathematics and computer science, she is building an exhibition with work by artists from West Africa, tentatively titled *Knot Complex*. Her pending trip to Senegal where she will attend Dak’Art, the Biennale of Contemporary African Art, will inform additional choices for this exhibition.

Brewer earned her BFA in Interdisciplinary Arts with distinction from the California College of the Arts. Her MFA is in Fine Art from the University of Michigan. In addition, she holds a Masters Degree in Library and Information Science from Valdosta State University in Georgia. Prior to her work at The Textile Museum, she was executive director of the Black Metropolis Research Consortium, a membership organization of libraries, universities, and archives dedicated to making accessible materials that document the African-American and African diaspora. She has also worked at Detroit Institute of Arts as an assistant curator.

Wendy Weiss is an ikat weaver and natural dyer, cultivating most of the dyes she uses in her garden, with particular attention to madder root. She serves on the board of TSA and is newsletter editor.

In Memoriam: Junichi Arai

March 13, 1932 - September 26, 2017

By Matilda McQuaid

Textile artist and designer Junichi Arai passed away on September 26, 2017. He was a life-long explorer of materials and techniques that were based firmly within Japanese textile traditions and contemporary technology. He could magically transform two-dimensional cloth into highly textured three-dimensional surfaces by his keen understanding of a fabric's behavior when it was subjected to heat, chemicals, or simple hand-manipulation.

Arai was born in 1932 in Kiryu, a center of traditional Japanese silk weaving, where he lived and worked for his entire life. As a young boy, Arai trained in his family's textile mill where he learned techniques related to kimono production. By the 1960s, he was earning patents for new processes, and in the 1970s and 1980s began collaborations with many fashion designers, including Rei Kawakubo, Issey Miyake, and Yohji Yamamoto. In 1984, Arai founded NUNO, a company and retail store that produces and sells innovative functional fabrics, now under the leadership of one of his collaborators, Reiko Sudo.

Arai often called himself a textile engineer, and two textiles in the collection of Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum capture the range of his engineering ingenuity. He was an early adopter of computer-aided loom technologies, and in *Nuno Me Gara* (1981), Arai used just two colors—red and black—in a double-cloth construction, creating a woven image that is both illusionistic and abstract. The finished textile features an image of narrow fabric strips heaped in a pile. The image follows in a long tradition of using photographic imagery to showcase the loom's capabilities, but Arai focuses equally on the sensuous tactility of the subject. In *Reflecting Well* (2003) one sees Arai's extensive experimentation with his signature melt-off technique, a chemical process that changes the textile surface. In this instance, melt-off was combined with shibori to create transparent areas where the textile was left exposed, and metallic areas where

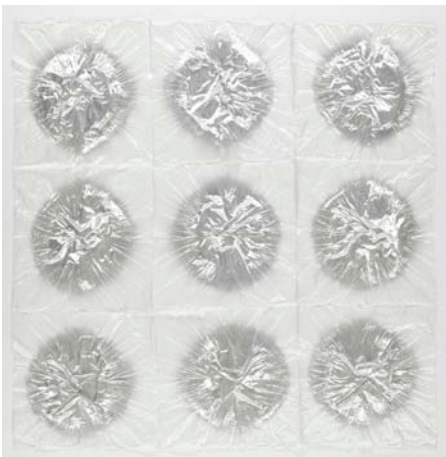
wrapping the textile protected metallic fibers from being removed.

Arai's versatility with textile techniques and processes remains unparalleled, and he forever changed the character of late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century textiles. He leaves behind not only a legacy of extraordinary work in museums and collections all over the world, but most importantly, the hundreds of students and devotees whom he has inspired and led over the decades.

Matilda McQuaid is Deputy Director of Curatorial and Head of Textiles at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum.



Junichi Arai, *Nuno me Gara* (Cloth Patterned Cloth), 1981. Jacquard-woven cotton double cloth, 102" x 47¼". Cooper-Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, gift of Junichi Arai, 1985-31-1. Credit: Matt Flynn



Junichi Arai, *Reflecting Well*, circa 2003. Polyester and aluminum melt-off and tied-resist-dyed (shibori), 57" x 57". Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, gift of Masako Dempo Yuke 2004-23-1 Credit: Matt Flynn

In Memoriam: Magdalena Abakanowicz

June 20, 1930 - April 20, 2017

By Janis Jefferies

It is with great sadness that I learned of the death of Magdalena Abakanowicz on April 20, 2017.

A body breathes, smells, tastes, hears, touches, and is touched. As we handle works with fiber we discover a language, we become our own storytellers. The pleasures of Abakanowicz's work have been rich and ambiguous, contradictory and painful for me. She helped me find the unguarded spaces of desire and I shall miss her.

As noted in the excellent *New York Times* of April 21, 2017:

Abakanowicz's art emerged from difficult circumstances. She was born Marta Abakanowicz on a country estate in Falenty, southwest of Warsaw, on June 20, 1930. Her mother belonged to a noble landowning family, and Marta grew up on an estate about 125 miles east of Warsaw left by her grandparents."

The trauma of the World War II was that war was not spoken about specifically and neither was her family background in the studio she ran at Poznań Academy of Art. I was a British Council scholar there in 1976, arriving during the Cold War across Europe. Abakanowicz did express, however, how difficult it was to articulate the powerful memories of childhood, of forests, strange spirits, a remembrance of things past that would haunt an increasingly technological world.

She further acknowledged Maria Laszkiewicz who had witnessed the fiber-art works that had been exhibited at the Kordegarda Gallery in Warsaw in 1960. Laszkiewicz allowed her to make use of her basement workshop and looms, and significantly added her name to a list of artists to be included in the first Biennial of Tapestries in Lausanne in 1962. For this Biennial, Abakanowicz submitted *Composition of White Forms*, in which she used old clotheslines to create a rough abstract surface. She transformed weaving, a rather "humble" practice, into contemporary sculpture.

For subsequent Lausanne Biennials she produced a series of fibrous, fleshy forms known as *Abakans*, for which she is globally known throughout the fiber and textile community. Although Abakanowicz would deny a formal alliance with both and with being identified as a female artist, she nonetheless inspired

many of us to think about how we could combine painting and sculpture with the simplest of means in sisal but which held architectural and conceptual challenges. For me, this included feminism since the work transgressed conventional and hierarchical boundaries. Irrational, anarchistic, petrified, and visceral, her early forms spoke of a gendered sensibility.

During the 1970s, through a cycle of work known as *Alterations*, she created groups of figures made of burlap that were often hollowed and bent. The stretched stitches and gnarled strands burst their wrappings in the *Heads* series of 1973–1975. This was followed by *Seated Figures* (1974–1979) and *Backs* (1976–1982), some of which I saw at her exhibition in 1975 at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, London, where organic materials of everyday use were woven and stitched to produce human coverings and bent bodies—hessian bones, and giant cast burlap gouges,



Magdalena Abakanowicz, *Embryology* (detail), 1978–1980. Burlap, cotton gauze, hemp rope, nylon and sisal.

Credit: Fondation Toms Pauli, photographer A. Conne

which resembled giant bandaged heads, broken limbs, organs slashed or gouged, sometimes reduced to non-beings, "hollow men," headless figures perched on metal armatures or gaged wooden structures. They seemed so fragile, temporary and yet were so powerfully solid. Each work spoke to mortality. "When the biology of the body breaks down, the skin has to be cut so as to give access to the inside, later it has to be sewn like fabric. The inside has the same importance as the outer shell."¹

¹ Abakanowicz, M. Magdalena. 1983. *Magdalena Abakanowicz Museum of Contemporary Art*. Chicago. New York: Abbeville Press, p. 74

Giant cloaks, monumental garments, were hung between ceiling and floor. Huge openings, wrapped protrusions and thick folded areas of sisal appeared as vaginal forms.

The *Alterations* series climaxed in *Embryology* (1978–1980), which is now in the collection of the TATE and fortunately fills its own room under the heading of Materials and Objects. *Embryology* is a collection of objects of varying sizes, made of various rough-hewn fabrics and stuffed. The boulder-like forms are accumulated into large group environments that you can walk into and around. While they appear firm and weighty, the seams and slashes in the fabric betray their softness.

Made in 1969, *Abakan Red* is also held within the collection at the TATE. It is suspended from the ceiling and falls into folds. *Abakan Orange* (1971) is also in the TATE and consists of a long orange rope-like form hanging from the ceiling, gradually diminishing in width to a thin thread connected to a large, roughly circular shape draped on the floor. I was fortunate to be able to hang both these seminal works at the first Hangzhou Triennial of Fiber Art, *Fiber Visions* in September 2013.

Gerhardt Knodel, the former president of Cranbrook Academy in the US sent me an email on April 26, 2017. He speaks for so many who remember how the work of Abakanowicz changed their lives.

So it is with a flood of memories that accompanied news of Magdalena Abakanowicz's passing on Thursday of this week. Suddenly with the news, I was once again 32 years old and remembering meeting Magda at her age of 40. I had never heard anyone speak as she spoke, or who made work with the degree of personal commitment generated from the most challenging life experiences. She inspired me to anticipate the age of 40!! She seemed as a beacon focused on future potential generated by complete commitment to life lived in pursuit of art. What generous inspiration!

Janis Jefferies, Professor of Visual Arts, Goldsmiths College, University of London is editing a special issue of *Textile: The Journal of Cloth and Culture* on the work and pedagogy of Abakanowicz. The issue contains essays by Mary Jane Jacob, Jasia Reichardt, Michał Jachula, Marta Kowalewska, Agnieszka Golda along with interviews and conversations between Marjan Boot and Leisbeth Crommelin, and numerous other contributions.

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis Group in *Textile: The Journal of Cloth and Culture*. Janis Jefferies (2017) "Magdalena Abakanowicz, 1930–2017", *TEXTILE*, 15:3, 332–334, DOI: 10.1080/14759756.2017.1348774

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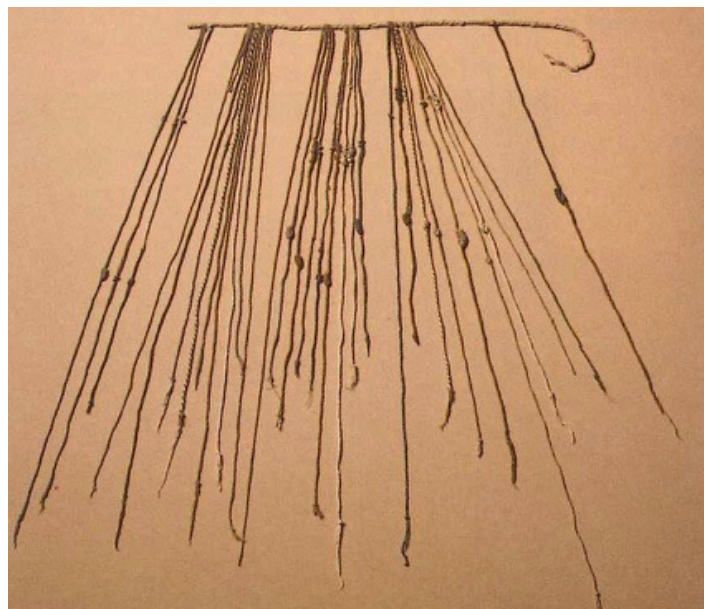
The Michael C. Carlos Museum

Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia

By Lynn Tinley

Nestled in Atlanta's historic Druid Hills neighborhood, Emory University sits on over 600 heavily forested acres. The truly impressive campus adheres to the original Beaux-Arts master architectural plan initiated with the creation of the Atlanta campus in the early twentieth century. One of the most interesting buildings, both for its architecture and its collections, on the University's main quadrangle, is the Michael C. Carlos Museum, designed by Michael Graves in 1993. The Museum's collections date back to 1876 when a general museum was established in the library of the original campus. The collection has been steadily developed over time and currently contains over 3,000 objects in the Americas alone, as well as a wide scope of Egyptian, Near Eastern, Classical, ancient American, African, and Asian art, as well as an important body of works of art on paper from the Renaissance to the present. Textiles represent approximately twenty-five percent of the museum's Americas collections, with additional pieces from Egypt and Africa.

The Egyptian collection, long the most beloved at the Museum, includes a significant assemblage of ancient Egyptian funerary art. Among this collection are a number of mummies and wrapping cloths. For the Americas, a large textile gift was the Bright Collection of Maya Textiles in 2009. This collection included over 350 pieces covering the period 1890 to 1980. The Museum has also been given *dulemolaguna* (molos) by Sherry Thorup, and many miscellaneous Bolivian pieces by an anonymous donor. The Museum's collection of ancient



Khipu (knotted recording device), Michael C. Carlos Museum (2002.1.130)

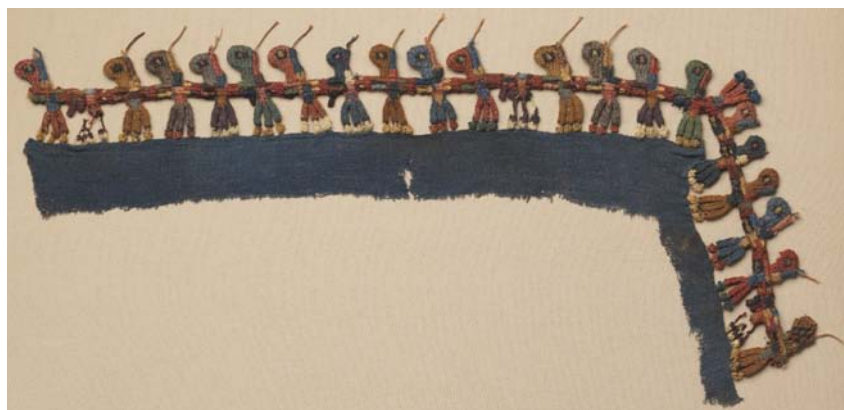
Credit: Bruce M. White, 2016

Andean textiles is particularly stunning. These textiles represent a wide range of techniques, such as Nasca three-dimensional embroidery, Wari tie-dye, and various Andean cultures' tapestry. Three *kipu* (Incan knot writings), a fine Chancay effigy figure, and a complete woman's head cloth are notable pieces. These beautiful and complex textiles underscore the importance of textiles and textile creation to indigenous cultures: they show creative and expertly employed techniques, designs, and subject matter that inform us of the makers' aesthetics and the importance of the natural and spiritual worlds to their people.

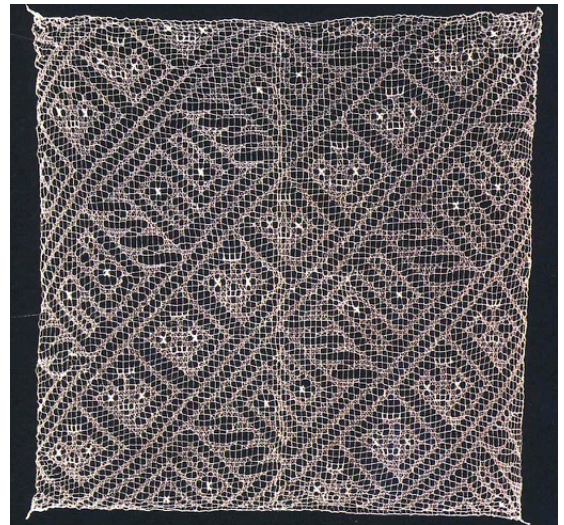
The Central Andes entailed a vast territory that was well organized. Khipu knotted string devices were used to count population, record tributes and accounting transactions, and write history and poetry. Khipu have a main string that runs horizontally and is read from left to right. Dangling down from it are pendants, made from various colors of thread (beige, brown, and blue, which could be combined to look mottled or striped and even change halfway down the thread). Blue threads were dyed with indigo and are thought to represent rare and/or prestigious elements. Knots tied in the pendants divided numbers into decimal units (ones, tens, hundreds) with the "ones" placed farthest from the main cord. These numbers might represent quantities (235 potatoes) or they might be a code (235 signifies potatoes).

Perhaps one of the museum's finest ancient Andean textiles, a Chancay woman's head cloth, is made with the technique known generally as openwork, in which a grid of fine threads is embroidered to fill in certain squares more than others. The diagonal design bands were made up of two patterns, the wider a series of interlocking birds and the narrower a motif that can be read as either a feline or, alternatively, a snake head. These motifs are prevalent in art from the period 1000-1470 CE. The motifs are discernible only when the textile is under tension. It is characteristically Andean to create a complex image not easily discernible to the human eye. Works of art were first and foremost complete and meaningful in and of themselves, since they were often directed toward supernatural powers. The head cloth designs seem to sanctify or protect the wearer, rather than make themselves clear to the viewer.

The Museum is currently showcasing its remarkable textile collection in an exhibition titled *Threads of Time: Tradition and Change in Indigenous American Textiles*. Curated by Dr. Rebecca Stone, the exhibition opened August 19, 2017 and runs through December 17, 2017. The fiber arts, ranging from weavings in cotton and camelid hair to featherwork and items made from plants, were of the highest importance among the indigenous peoples of the Americas. The exhibit will display nearly 150 of their textiles, many for the first time. Ancient Andean, as well as modern Andean, Panamanian, and Guatemalan cultures



Fragment of an early Nasca mantle, Michael C. Carlos Museum (2002.1.3), featuring three-dimensional embroidered borders which depict hummingbirds in flight. The Andean coastal desert preserved the very ancient fibers of this textile, which is nearly 2000 years old.
Credit: Bruce M. White, 2014



Openwork Andean Headcloth with Bird and Snake/Feline Motifs, Michael C. Carlos Museum (1989.8.163)
Credit: Michael McKelvey, 2017

will be featured. Visitors may enjoy a Guna mola of the Trix Rabbit, a contemporary Bolivian belt featuring R2D2, and Maya brocaded blouses from nearly every decade between 1910 and 2010 from the famous market town of Chichicastenango. The [online catalog](#) includes zoomable color photos, eight essays, and catalog entries with detailed technical entries.

Dr. Lynn C. Tinley is an independent scholar and adjunct history professor at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta. Her primary research focuses on early American material culture with an emphasis on textiles and embroidery. Samplers and female education are an important component of her research, which includes an examination of the influence of religion on each.



The Guna of coastal and island Panama maintain a link to age-old indigenous design in their cut-cloth blouse panels (*dulemolaguna*), yet they incorporate contemporary imagery such as the Trix™ Rabbit. On loan to the Michael C. Carlos Museum (L2014.18.1).

Credit: Michael McKelvey, 2017

Book Reviews

Embroidering within Boundaries: Afghan Women Creating a Future

Author: Rangina Hamidi and Mary Littrell. Photos by Paula Lerner
Published by: Thrums Books, Loveland, 2017. 172 pages
ISBN: 978-0-9984523-0-2

Review by Elena Phipps

The genesis for this book, according to co-author Mary Littrell, was the overwhelmingly positive reception to a presentation Rangina Hamidi gave at the 2014 Textile Society of America Symposium in Los Angeles. As a member of the audience, I can attest to the powerful, articulate, and heart-breaking story Rangina unveiled during her presentation in which she pieced together a strategy for cultural survival and enrichment. She described the large number of widows in war-weary Afghanistan after decades of conflict, left behind in a society that offered little chance for self-sufficiency: a large swath of society had few options within the confines of the culture. She spoke about engaging in a process to enable women house-bound by Muslim social custom to find safe harbor and productive work to ensure the support of their families while building a sense of self-worth. She walked us through the process of building a project based on artisan revival of khamak embroidery that required cultural sensitivity, creative skill, logistics, politics, and financial savvy.

The book *Embroidering within Boundaries* takes us through these issues, one by one, and introduces us to a broad array of related subjects including the philosophical foundations of Muslim society, the limitations and cultural constraints in the roles of women, the revival of artisan production and standards of practice, the delicate negotiations for the education of girls and the opportunity for women to work, and the history of khamak embroidery. Some of this is discussed chapter by chapter revealing the history and ideas that envelope the society, much as the women themselves are enveloped in public, completely covered by their burqas.

Photographic portraits, beautifully taken by the late Paula Lerner, a photojournalist who traveled extensively with Rangina in the country, bring to the forefront the women of this book. A poignant note by the authors indicates that the photographs show women's faces only with the permission of the subject—many remain veiled. Narrative portraits reveal even more about the daily lives of the women who engage with this

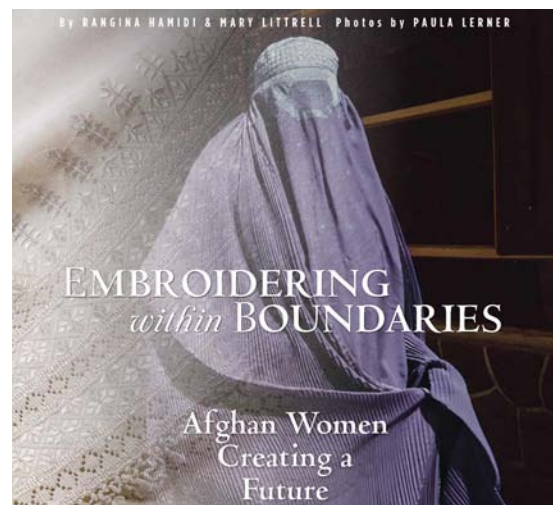
project: the difficulties of their marriages as child-brides, their husbands who abandon them for second and third wives while keeping the children as society dictates, the tensions between family and social responsibilities, and the issues they have in negotiating their working lives. At the same time, this work helps them gain confidence and pride in their abilities and provides the security needed to support their families' basic needs.

We also learn about Rangina's personal history, born in Afghanistan at a time of Russian insurgency, escaping to Pakistan and then to the United States, and the family whose father took pride in his daughters' education and development. Her striving to develop a program to engage women in a process of economic, artistic, and personal development became [Khandahar Treasure](#), an artisan-based enterprise for the making and selling of refined, high-quality traditionally embroidered garments both in the country and abroad.

Co-author Mary Littrell, former Textile Society of America Board member, is highly experienced in the issues of global artisan practice and enterprise, having worked and traveled in Latin America, South East Asia, India, and Africa. She is engaged with artisans from around the world with her involvement in the International Folk Art Market in Santa Fe. Mary brings her understanding of sustainable development after years as the Chair of the Design and Merchandising Department at Colorado State University. Her contributions to the broad context and implications of the story and its day-to-day components are evident in the book.

The authors state that this is not a "how to" book on embroidery. Nor is it extensively historical in nature. It is, however, a glimpse into contemporary Afghanistan and its entangled history. Culturally, it can be difficult to understand for those of us on the outside: with the extremely circumscribed position of women in Afghan society it can be hard to imagine how to move forward. Yet the nuance of the book reminds us of the very human condition of individual lives and how they can impact others. Stitching thread by thread, it presents not only the making of textiles but also the making of a future through creative and productive work and global enterprise.

Dr. Elena Phipps is a Lecturer of World Arts and Culture at UCLA; a Senior Museum Scholar, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and past president of TSA.



Oaxaca Stories in Cloth: A Book about People, Identity, and Adornment

Author: Eric Sebastian Mindling

Published by: Thrums Books, 2016, 280 pages

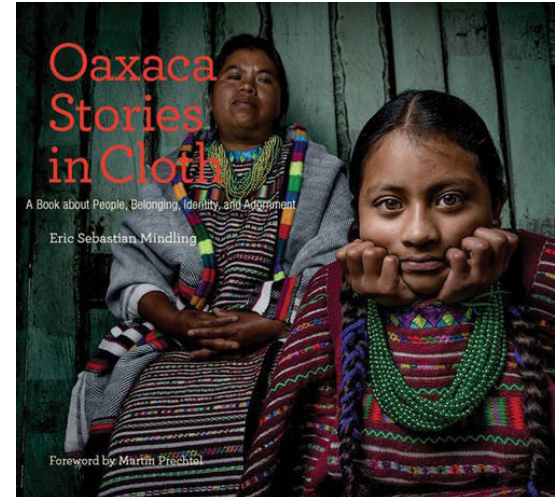
ISBN: 978-0-9838860-8-2

Reviewed by Faith Hagenhofer

Photographer Eric Sebastian Mindling has lived and worked in Oaxaca for twenty-five years. His love for the place is obvious in this large format book, *Oaxaca Stories in Cloth*. He presents stories of rural villages, told through images of Oaxacan indigenous people. The two sections — “Living Threads” and “Last Generation” — have chapters generally organized by village names. Each chapter has one to two pages of text followed by four or more full-page color photographs. His models are primarily women. In 2015 Mindling authored *Fire and Clay: The Art of Oaxacan Pottery*. On the reputation of this work, the publishers at Thrums Books asked him to produce a volume on Oaxacan textiles. He found his way into the work by viewing the textiles as “expressions of ancient living cultures...creating contemporary portraits of traditional people.”

The models are all dressed in their traditional garb, often having changed from work clothes into these clean, special-occasion garments. Mindling seems to have applied the Western lens of “authenticity” to Oaxacan textiles. This romantic and nostalgic idea of people frozen in time, living in their time worn, often poor, self-sufficient, and subsistent ways is troubling. It mirrors the photographic traditions of Edward Curtis. In Mindling’s own words, he wanted to capture “intimate views into a way of being, once common around the globe, but now extremely rare.” While he sees the sartorial textile work as “creative genius, collective wisdom (and representing) some of our most valuable human traits,” he does little to support the continuation of these maker-traits and skills in a way that a book is able to do. We have no information about how the textiles are made or embellished: no close-ups of the thread-work or information on how recently they were produced, or how long it takes to produce them. It is also confusing that many of the places named in photo captions and chapter headings don’t correlate to the map provided on the end papers.

The women are beautiful. The textiles are exquisite and the photographs do honor to those sitting for their portraits. Mindling’s love and appreciation is most evident and delicious. In some ways he absolutely succeeds in offering viewers a way to “view the culture that dreamed their textiles into being” through this carefully chosen and curated selection. In other ways he fails to honor the ingenuity and resilience required of indigenous people the world over as they have faced the exploitive forces of settler colonialism. While acknowledging that “foreign domination” can erode traditional ways, his book fails to see the genius of adapting to change, some of which are present in the very



garments worn by his models: use of plaid fabrics, aniline dyes, commercial embroidery threads, store-bought lace, and, quite possibly, machine sewn seams. In one chapter the costumes (and they ARE costumes here) are clearly colonially “imposed” — Mindling’s word.

Clothing, while persistently representative of culture over time, is also subject to the whims of fashion and practicality. It is appalling to read the author/outsider’s pronouncement that “in hundreds of villages in Oaxaca community fashion will die with the elders.” And even while writing that, Mindling photographs and describes two garments that appear the same but have different construction using somewhat different cloth, one more contemporary than the other. Here one wonders how, with shared aesthetics but different methods of production, the author could fail to see these as signals of a culture adapting, not dying. An exception to this viewpoint is the brief chapter on Zapatepec cotton, which has quite a lot of detail on contemporary practices.

In the author biography Mindling is said to operate a tour company that offers “culturally intimate experiences for adventurous travelers.” No doubt there are those that would see this book and want to visit Oaxaca, in much the same way that a book on disappearing polar bears might provoke a person’s to desire to visit Churchill, Manitoba. The tourist gaze, sadly, has much invested in seeing cultures not-their-own as rare, disappearing, exotic, forever unchanged in a predictable way.

I would welcome views of roof thatch, baskets, mats, belts, rope, fans, brushes, hats, maybe fewer worn textiles, that might have been more immune to style changes or the urges of an outsider’s gaze, trying to fix heritage in an authentic past of the reader’s own making. *Oaxaca Stories in Cloth* presents us with a conundrum of gorgeous photography, of beautiful people and textiles, in striking landscapes, written from a decidedly skewed scope and viewpoint.

Faith Hagenhofer is a textile artist and shepherd. She recently retired from a thirty-year career as a public librarian, mostly in service to the Nisqually Indian Tribe in Washington State.

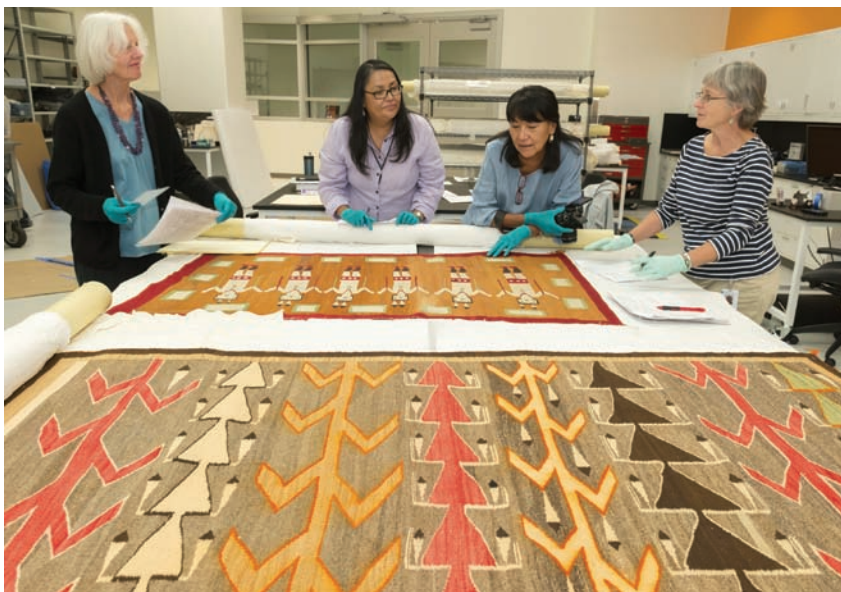
Navajo Textiles: The Crane Collection at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science

Author: Laurie D. Webster, Louise I. Stiver, D.Y. Begay, and Linda Teller Pete, with introduction by Ann Lane Hedlund
Published by: University Press of Colorado, 2017, 400 pages
ISBN 978-1-60732-672-4

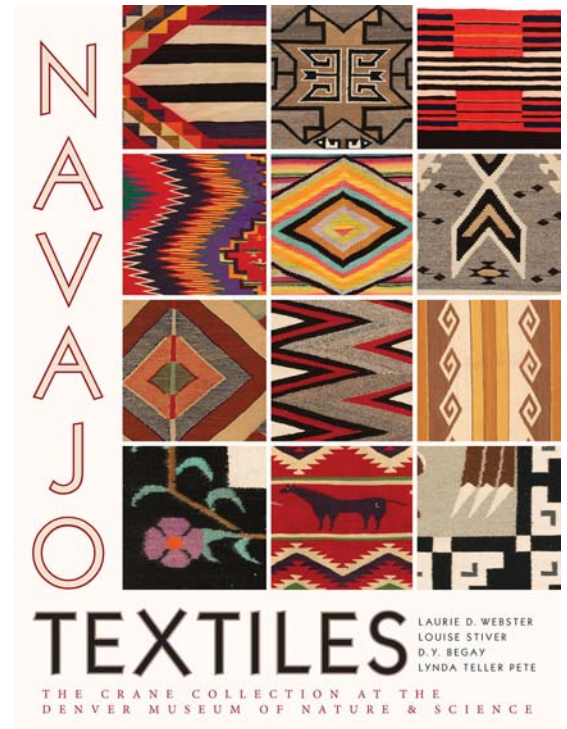
Review by Judy Newland

With textiles and museums, it is all about the stories. In this book you will find the story of a museum staff dedicated to collaborative anthropology, the story of Navajo weavers engaging museums, and the history of changing markets. The collecting story of Francis and Mary Crane illustrates how textiles emerge within a culture and travel to new homes with new people. The story of two Navajo weavers and artists who have observed change in their culture and their country over time, adapting to each new challenge, brings a generous spirit of collaboration to the presentation and expression of these Navajo textiles. The two Navajo weavers, D.Y. Begay and Linda Teller Peat, and anthropologist Laurie Webster further expand the object story through their commentary on the featured textiles in the collection catalog.

The first chapter is a condensed overview of the Navajo and their interactions with museums and markets: scholar Ann Lane Hedlund leads the reader through the history of the past half century in "Consultations, Collaborations, and Curation by Navajo Weavers: A Celebration and History." If you are not familiar with this critical history of connection and collaboration, this selective review provides excellent background, including key exhibitions of Navajo textiles. Hedlund echoes the goals made clear by the museum staff at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science (DMNS): to honor a people's view of their origins and history helps us understand how they see their place in the world, a place shaped by the past and traditional values, and often expressed in textiles.



(Left to right) Louise Stiver, Lynda Teller Pete, D.Y. Begay, and Laurie Webster discussing two ye'ii rugs from the Crane textile collection, Denver Museum of Nature & Science Anthropology workshop, 2014.



Mary and Francis Crane built a museum for their collection in Marathon, Florida—the Southeast Museum of the North American Indian—that was opened in 1958. Louise Stiver lays out the life story of these artifacts in chapter two, "Francis and Mary Crane and the Making of a Navajo Textile Collection." The couple's story reads like a collecting novella, traveling the West to acquire the finest examples of Native American art for their museum. These savvy negotiators created a wide-ranging collection, including the nearly 400 Navajo textiles (mostly unstudied and unpublished) that are the core of the anthropology collections at DMNS, donated in 1968. Stiver illustrates how objects move through time and change with each new owner, carrying their own stories in cloth and revealing how material culture holds a key to the past.

Laurie Webster takes us on a journey through the history of "Changing Markets for Navajo Weaving," beginning with intertribal and Euro-American trade to the trading posts and beyond. She covers the influence trading posts had on the development of Navajo weaving styles and gives us a peak into the future. This chapter, like Hedlund's, is a treasure of historical information gathered in one concise review.

D.Y. Begay and Linda Teller Peat both grew up with the sounds of weaving resonating in their lives, surrounded by family and community. Begay's narrative, "Crossroads and Navajo Weaving,"

offers a personal look at her development as a weaver and the influences that came to bear on her current work. Existing in the crossroads between home on the reservation, the trading post, and the wider world of museums and art galleries, Begay broadened her weaving experience through travel that exposed her to other weaving traditions around the world. She studied museum collections and broke out of weaving regional styles, creating her own lyrical spirit that emerged from the southwestern landscape. Linda Teller Peat's concluding chapter, "A Weaver's Path," describes life immersed around the Two Grey Hills Trading Post and generations of weavers making Two Grey Hills masterpieces. She and her sisters found new markets outside of the trading posts by entering large shows and working with museums. She continues to forge new paths in the weaving world. Both weavers add cultural depth to this collaboration.

The catalog includes fifty-seven color plates with commentary by Webster, Begay, and Teller. The insight this group offers creates a well-rounded and thoughtful commentary. An appendix of textile technical information is also included.



Woman's modified third-phase wearing blanket or rug, unidentified weaver, ca 1885-1905. AC.6369 Crane textile collection. Credit: Denver Museum of Nature & Science.

The Crane Collection at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science joins the other outstanding published regional Navajo textile collections at the Denver Art Museum and University of Colorado Museum of Natural History. The strength of these collections is a treasure for researchers and lovers of Navajo textiles worldwide.

Judy Newland is a lecturer at the University of Colorado-Boulder and former director of the Arizona State University Museum of Anthropology. She curated Navajo Weaving: Diamonds, Dreams, Landscapes, on exhibit in 2009 and 2010 at the Colorado University Museum of Natural History.

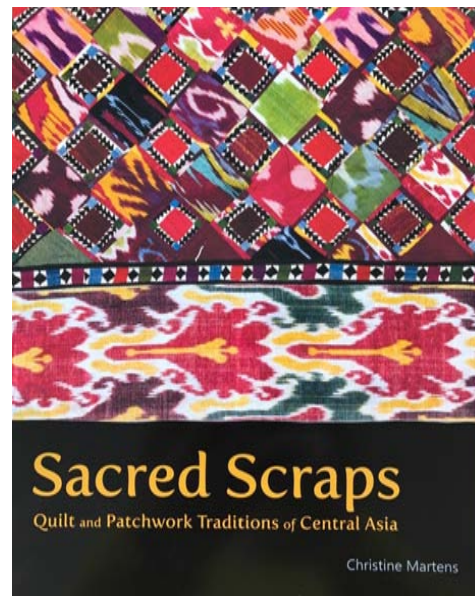
Sacred Scraps: Quilt and Patchwork Traditions of Central Asia

Author: Christine Martens

Published by: International Quilt Study Center & Museum, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2017.

Review by Carol Bier

Drawing upon years of extensive travel, field research, and personal interviews with craftsmen and scholars in Central Asia, Chris Martens has produced a magnificent book to accompany the 2017 exhibition at the International Quilt Study Center & Museum in Lincoln, Nebraska, for which she served as guest curator. This book, and the exhibition, documents the prolific quilt and patchwork traditions of Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Funds for travel, research, and systematic collecting came from the museum, with the support of the Robert and Ardis James Foundation; she also received support from The International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) for travel in Turkmenistan.



By juxtaposing historical photographs with her own stunning visual documentation of these craft traditions today, Martens has constructed an important cultural narrative based on her field notes and personal experience as traveler, artist, and scholar. The book is brilliantly designed, with text, documentary image, and object working together to establish a contemporary lens with which to view and understand the functional objects she collected, now among the holdings of the International Quilt Study Center & Museum. The museum's photography beautifully illustrates each object, labeled by name (with local terminology), ethnic identity, and its geographic location of use.

The book is organized thematically by cultural context, explaining both meanings and uses of objects, and giving names by which objects are known locally. A preface introduces the sacred significance of textile fragments that are used in religious contexts related to spiritual practices. A poignant Turkish lullaby precedes the introduction:

*May my daughter learn to sit
May she wear a thimble
On a white felt carpet may she sit and sew.*

A regional map, illustrating today's geographic boundaries of the five Central Asian republics (which gained independence in 1991) and their neighbors (Russia, Iran, Afghanistan, and China), is followed by a brief introduction

to the complex relationship of geography and people. This is especially important where nomadic pastoralism has been the historical norm, always in precarious balance with political entities, settled populations, and mercantile exchange. In such perilous settings, subject to the ongoing vagaries of politics and weather, the concomitant role of protective amulets and talismans is pervasive in warding off evil spirits and ensuring health and prosperity, a motivating force that underlies the production of many of these patchworks and quilted textiles.

The text proceeds according to a logic that is culturally based, addressing key rites of passage, including weddings, births, and childhood, followed by illness and death. Pilgrimage and saint worship are discussed in relation to shrines and burial spots, but pilgrimage to Mecca is not mentioned, likely reflecting the occlusion of its significance during the seventy years of Soviet rule. From my own recent visit to Uzbekistan (with Chris Martens), we observed that the role of the *hajj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) is resurfacing, although it remains under strict governmental control. The section for weddings is longest, describing a bride's dowry, and all manner of household goods and furnishings that incorporate quilting or patchwork (hangings, covers, pillows, cradle covers, bedding, storage containers for food, scissors, mirrors, and salt, pads for baking bread, potholders, horse and camel trappings). Sections follow on quilted clothing and design. The book concludes with a sequence of four very brief case studies of contemporary manifestations of these cultural traditions, which are otherwise quickly disappearing, illustrating the work of the Art Group Tumar, South Tribes of Kyrgyzstan, Aigul Diushenalieva, and Central Asian Craft Support Association, which seek to protect and sustain such quilt and patchwork traditions.

An afterword offers an apt quotation from the Kyrgyz filmmaker Aktan Abdukalykov, relating *kurak* (patchwork) to the aesthetic of Kyrgyz cinema with reference to the patching together of fragmentary memories:

It is not important if I assembled it in a correct way. Traditional craftsmen never over-analyze their designs. It's an unexplainable and spontaneous think—it either flows along or not. I think this is the essence of kurak.

Kurak as a form of cultural expression relies upon the very simple technologies of cutting and sewing, requiring scissors, a needle and thread, along with a thimble and pin, all easily transported from place to place. The sewing machine was introduced from European Russia in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Very often, the fabrics that went into the construction of patchwork were reused, but they carried meanings relating to history, memory, and an individual's aspirations.

As an exhibition catalog, this is a beautiful and substantive volume, well-illustrated with twelve full-page, full-color bleeds, several of which depict traditional cultural practices. Many additional images provide ample details of patterns, designs, and construction. The visual documentation of cultural traditions, now vanishing, is especially welcome, as is the amazing

variety of quilting and patchwork that has sustained these lifestyles. The book addresses important cultural themes of craft, technology, ceremony, and practice that are too often omitted from scholarly literature that draws upon either written or oral traditions. As a scholarly contribution, the extensive endnotes provide full bibliographic citations. The presentation would have benefited from a table of contents and an index. Also missing are object dimensions. The distinct languages of the region (Slavic Russian, Iranian Tajik and Persian, and several Turkic languages) and their complicated social and historical interaction that has led to the sharing of vocabulary (such as *suzani*, needle) is implied in the text, but a fuller discussion might provide greater insight into the dynamic complexity that so characterizes the peoples of Central Asia, whether sedentary, nomadic, or semi-nomadic. A cross-referencing of tribal names to ethnicities, languages, and geographic ranges would also be beneficial, but probably beyond the scope of this exhibition and its outstanding publication.

Carol Bier is Research Scholar with the Center for Islamic Studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley CA, and Research Associate at The Textile Museum, Washington DC, where she served as Curator from 1984-2001. She was President of the Textile Society of America from 2006-2008.

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Featured Exhibitions

Sacred Scraps: Quilt and Patchwork Traditions of Central Asia

International Quilt Study Center and Museum

May 12, 2017 - December 16, 2017
Lincoln, Nebraska

Review by Pat Hickman and Gail Hovey

A road trip in August brought us to Lincoln, Nebraska for a spectacular coincidence: the solar eclipse and the exhibition *Sacred Scraps: Quilt and Patchwork Traditions of Central Asia*. Watching the moon slowly cover the sun, we could appreciate anew the power of natural forces. That humans, throughout the ages, have needed to act in the face of the unknown and have attempted to placate potencies not understood seems nothing but sensible.

Walking into *Sacred Scraps* at the International Quilt Study Center and Museum (IQSCM), it was easy to imagine the entire exhibit as a whole cloth in a domestic architectural environment, with the vibrantly colorful textiles functioning as patches themselves on the brightly colored walls. Guest curator Christine Martens explains the role of these textiles in the excellent exhibition catalog: "In times of difficulty and uncertainty, whether from illness, war, or the inexplicable, people sought answers," and the amulets and talismans embedded in the cloth are evidence of this searching.



Christine Martens at speaking June 2, 2017 at the exhibition reception.

Credit: Wendy Weiss



Foreground: Inlaid felt carpet (*shyrdak*), by Begimbaeva Zamirgul, Naryn, Kyrgyzstan, 2015; patchwork mattresses (*juurkan*), by Kyimat Abdulkadyrova, Karabulak village (top) and maker unknown (below), Batken, Kyrgyzstan; and padded patchwork pad for baking (*raffida*), maker unknown, Tajikistan; Background: patchwork tent hanging (*tush ki'iz*), Osh, Kyrgyzstan, c. 1960; assorted patchwork pillows, Kyrgyzstan. Credit: Wendy Weiss

Christine Martens is an intrepid traveler and, beginning in 2001, she has made multiple trips to Central Asia. In 2009, the IQSCM began sponsoring her research and acquisition trips. The result of these eight years of collaboration—unusual in that IQSCM served as an institutional art patron—is evident in this extraordinary exhibition and companion catalog.

Sacred Scraps, both the exhibition and the catalog, is clearly organized around the role these quilts and patchwork textiles play in people's daily lives. The catalog begins with a brief history of the region and a map of the five Central Asian Republics—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—connecting geography and people. In a defining page titled "Amulet and Talisman," Martens presents the distinguishing role of patchwork in Central Asia "to guard against sorcery, sickness, and malevolent spirits."

With striking photos of textiles accompanied by text and archival photographs that show the textiles in use, the catalog moves through the life of the family and community. Subjects illuminated include the wedding, dowry, tent hangings, tablecloths and utensils, cradles, circumcision and clothing, illness and death.

Design elements of *Sacred Scraps* are addressed in the section that follows, with attention to tools and equipment, pattern, color, and fabric. Photographs in this section are stunningly brilliant and varied. Finally, *Sacred Scraps* concludes with "The Tradition Continues." Contemporary artists, some of them organized into groups and associations, are using bold, fully saturated color in geometric shapes, making their own distinct works but clearly drawing on recognizable meaning and familiar tradition. *Sacred Scraps* remains alive in the culture.

Martens's *Sacred Scraps* will enrich the study of textiles even beyond Central Asia, as Turkic peoples came into Anatolia from Central Asia, bringing with them similar folk beliefs and uses of patchwork to ward off the evil eye or evil spirits. These deep beliefs survive despite profound political changes and altered geographic boundaries. Surrounded by these quilts and patchwork cloth, the enduring spiritual power of these splendid textiles is palpably evident. What we do and do not understand is made visible yet again.

The exhibition *Sacred Scraps: Quilt and Patchwork Traditions of Central Asia* continues at the International Quilt Study Center and Museum in Lincoln, NE through December 16, 2017.



Amulet (*tumar*), Yomut people, Turkmenistan, c. 1930-1950

Credit: Wendy Weiss

Pat Hickman is a studio artist in the Lower Hudson Valley, emeritus professor of Art, head of the Fiber program at the University of Hawai'i and past president of the Textile Society of America.

Gail Hovey is a writer who, among other things, goes on road trips and looks at textiles with Pat Hickman.

Anne Wilson: *A Hand Well Trained*

Rhona Hoffman Gallery

July 7, 2017 - August 11, 2017

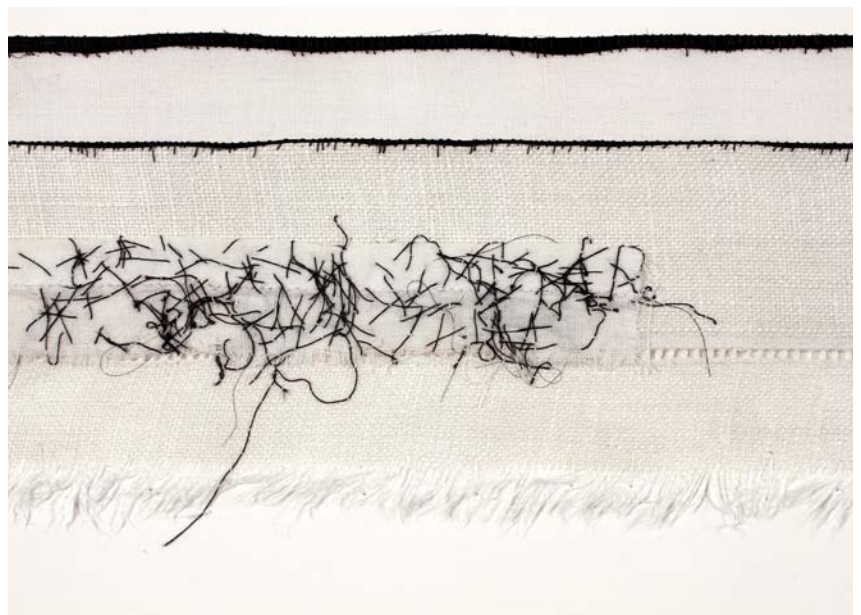
Chicago, Illinois

Review by Rebecca Houze

For more than twenty years Anne Wilson has produced evocative objects and installations that question our relationship to body, memory, domesticity, intimacy, and the passage of time. Her subtle embroideries on repurposed linen, in varying shades of white, are quiet and contemplative, while also unsettling and sometimes powerfully jarring. In this most recent solo show at the Rhona Hoffman Gallery in Chicago, *A Hand Well Trained*, Wilson revisits many of her familiar themes with fresh new approaches.

These pieces are a welcome respite in our increasingly loud and anxious world today, full of busy images. They recall the delicacy of eyelashes or the microcosm of insect appendages. And yet, they are also worrisome, raising questions about the role of gender and sexuality in our lives today. *Body into Culture*, a group of fourteen material drawings of cloth, hair, and thread, appears as a collection of human figures assembled around the room. Tall, attenuated, slit, and traced with hair, they hang on the wall amidst carefully looped cords that tether the viewer, psychologically and uncomfortably, to the interior space of the gallery. Similar cords of hair, in colors that range from pale blue to deep red, form the tapered seams of elongated horizontal material drawings, which the gallery compares to "decrescendos" in musical scores. The interplay of vertical and horizontal objects, including the framed inventory drawings and practice pieces arranged on small tabletops—activates the space, inviting the viewer in for closer inspection.

The theme of the exhibition, "a hand well trained," alludes to embroidery as education, not only in the Victorian training of girls to practice skills of proper womanhood with precise and accurate stitching techniques, but also in the



Anne Wilson. *Scribble*, 2017. Cloth, hair, thread. 11½ x 55½ x 2". Detail.

Credit: Rhona Hoffmann Gallery, Chicago.

act of handwriting, which was once an essential part of the elementary school curriculum. The framed wall pieces in particular recall pieces of lined paper on which a child learns to form letters. But the letters—some embroidered and others found stamped on the linens themselves—are disoriented, crossed out, upside down. Wilson's subversive stitches confound accepted language structures. She describes the linguistic traces in her work as asemic, a form of wordless writing without semantic content.

It is tempting to view the delicate tracteries of *Scribble* as decoration—an embroidered seam that beautifully holds together a garment or a text with complicated ornament. But the asemic scribble defies such meaning. As music it is a dissonant note pattern rather than a familiar melody. As writing it suggests madness. The seams of the horizontal material and inventory drawings, like those of the tabletop textiles, reveal ruptures and

translated into seventeen languages. The pale and worn pieces of old tablecloths and bed sheets in this exhibition, however, softened by many washings and marked with inventory numbers, one of which announces itself as the property of the "Continental Motel," remind the viewer of a different kind of female labor. They represent the service work of the underprivileged, or the immigrant, rather than the leisurely domain of bourgeois privilege to which Dillmont originally catered.

Practice (no. 1) and *Practice (no. 2)*, produced in collaboration with studio interns Caroline Gerberick, Ashley Hamilton, Carolyn Marcantonio, Claire Bartlett, and Erika Ray, reveal the collective labor of six pairs of hands, including Wilson's. They underscore the performative aspect of the artist's oeuvre over many years, which plays with elements of social relationships, including those of collective art practice, audience engagement, and transmission of knowledge from mentor to student.



Anne Wilson, *Inventory Drawing Continental Motel*, 2017. Cloth, hair, thread. 12½ x 15½".
Credit: Rhona Hoffmann Gallery, Chicago.



Anne Wilson, *Inventory Drawing G*, 2017. Cloth, hair, thread. 12½ x 15½".
Credit: Rhona Hoffmann Gallery, Chicago.

contradictions in the strips of linen and cotton fabric they stitch together. The language expressed throughout the installation by a hand well trained is not only that of writing, or of written music, but also of repair and re-use. The corded seams are like soft lips, or rather scars, which silently mend the torn edges of cloth.

Proper Behaviors features a line of obscured, written-over text, embroidered with hair in a cursive script that reads, "a hand well trained, bent forward, enclosed between two folds of the stuff, lying between the third and fourth fingers, rubbed in the hands to soften, slipped in so as to pierce between." Wilson draws attention to the implicit eroticism that infuses these words from the *Encyclopedia of Needlework*, by Austrian embroidery teacher and entrepreneur, Thérèse de Dillmont. First published in 1886 in French as *Encyclopédie des ouvrages des dames* (a more direct reference to needlework as women's work) the influential text was subsequently reprinted in newer editions and eventually

Anne Wilson's work converses with a long established history of textile art. We remember something ancient in these fragments, like the bits of woven cloth that survived ancient Egyptian entombment or Viking burial, centuries ago. They underline the difference between individual handicraft and anonymous mechanical production, while also complicating practices of sculpture and design. *A Hand Well Trained* is a timely exhibition that reveals the importance of the visual arts, and of art education, in addressing some of today's most pressing challenges, including the politics of sustainability and fair labor, of literacy and communication, and our deepest expressions of identity.

Rebecca Houze is Professor of Art and Design History at Northern Illinois University. She is author of Textiles, Fashion, and Design Reform in Austria-Hungary Before the First World War: Principles of Dress (Ashgate, 2015), and serves on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Design History.

Omar Victor Diop: *Project Diaspora*

SCAD FASH Museum of Fashion + Film

Atlanta, GA

February 17 - August 18, 2017

Review by Lila Stone

SCAD FASH Museum of Fashion + Film recently hosted Omar Victor Diop's photography exhibition titled *Project Diaspora*, curated by Storm Janse van Rensburg, SCAD Head Curator of Exhibitions. *Project Diaspora* was on view from February 17 - August 18, 2017, and was the first solo show for the young photographer born in Dakar, Senegal in 1980. The exhibition featured eighteen large-scale portrait photographs created in 2014 and printed on Hahnemühle paper. Diop captures himself dressed as luminaries from African history. For example, in *Dom Nicolau*, circa 1830-1860, he dressed as the Prince of Kongo, who was considered the earliest African leader to protest colonial commitments in his home country.

In the style of West African studio photography, Diop utilizes a strong visual language that is



Omar Victor Diop, *Dom Nicolau* (Circa 1830-1860).

Credit: MAGNIN-A Gallery, Paris, France

inspired by post-colonial Africa. In *Project Diaspora*, Diop embodies African diasporic modernity as he interrogates what it means to be an African outside of Africa by recreating scenes from the 15th-19th centuries and adding touches of urban life using contemporary fabric designs and soccer props. In each photograph, Diop is elegantly posed and dressed in stylish garments—rich in texture, color, and pattern. Upon entering the dark blue walled and dimly lit exhibition space, I could feel Diop's presence with his strong gaze in each of the photographs.

Situated on Savannah College of Art and Design's Atlanta campus, SCAD FASH Museum of Fashion + Film serves as a teaching museum dedicated to celebrating "fashion as a universal language, garments as important conduits of identity, and film as an immersive and measurable medium." *Project Diaspora* is accompanied by a 24-page digital teaching resource, [Curriculum Guide](#), designed for grades 9-12 and replete with learning activities, including ways to analyze qualities inherent to portraiture, tools for investigating the aesthetics of cool (a reference to University of Arts London Professor Carol Tulloch's recent book on the diaspora and coolness entitled *The Birth of Cool: Style Narratives of the African Diaspora*), and instructions with diagrams detailing methods of composing a formal portrait. Included in the *Curriculum Guide* are Educational Standards for high school art courses as well as *Curriculum Connections*, which contains supplemental learning guides with suggested further readings.



Omar Victor Diop, Exhibition View, *Project Diaspora*. Credit: SCAD FASH: Museum of Fashion + Film, Atlanta, Georgia

Lila Stone is the volunteer Social Media Marketing Coordinator for Textile Society of America. She holds a BA in German and an MA in Art History from the University of Florida.

Conferences

The Cultural Legacy of Uzbekistan in World Collections

By Michele Hardy and Carole Bier

In May 2017, over 370 scholars convened in Tashkent and Samarkand, Uzbekistan, to share their research and mark the publication of an important new series of handsomely produced volumes. Among the participants were former TSA President, Carol Bier, and past TSA Board Member, Michele Hardy.

The Cultural Legacy of Uzbekistan in World Collections is a ten-volume series that documents the richness and diversity of Uzbek tangible and intangible heritage, particularly in the collections of international museums. The volumes—each lavishly illustrated, trilingual (Uzbek, Russian, and English), and beautifully bound—examine some of the richest collections of Uzbek art and culture: the Tretyakov Gallery and the State Museum of Oriental Art in Moscow, the Kunstkamera of Peter the Great and the Russian Museum of Ethnography in St Petersburg, the British Museum in London, and the Louvre in Paris, etc. The volumes' titles convey the span of the works held in different international museum collections (e.g., *The Musical Legacy of Uzbekistan*, *Embroidery and Carpets in Foreign Collections*, *Carpet Weaving in Uzbekistan*). With chapters written by leading scholars, publication of the series represents a tremendous collaborative achievement and—as many of the participants noted—is likely to be of great benefit to future generations. Of particular interest to TSA members, *Volume 4 - Embroidery and Carpets in Foreign Collections*, explores the breadth and exceptional skillfulness of Uzbek textiles. It also features chapters by both Carol and Michele.



The Congress, *The Cultural Legacy of Uzbekistan*, drew international scholars to Uzbekistan to discuss Uzbek culture and launch the series, *Cultural Legacy of Uzbekistan in World Collections*. Among the delegates were (left to right) Carol Bier, USA; Lale Uluc, Turkey; Irina Bogoslovskaya, Uzbekistan; Michele Hardy, Canada; and Elmira Gyul, Uzbekistan.



Uzbek *gagari-ghilam*, wool, circa 1900, Jean and Marie Erikson Collection, Nickle Galleries, University of Calgary.
Credit: Dave Brown.



Suzani. Present information suggests that this piece was acquired in India, during Doris Duke's honeymoon in 1935.

Credit: Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art.



Doris Duke and Sam Kahanamoku play guitars at Shangri La in 1939. The suzani pictured on the previous page is visible on the wall behind. Pillows and couch are also covered with *suzanis*. Photographed by Martin Munkácsi.

Credit: Doris Duke Charitable Foundation Archives.

The congress, The Cultural Legacy of Uzbekistan As the Path to the Dialogue Between Peoples and Countries, took place in both Tashkent and Samarkand on May 15 and 16, 2017. It involved representatives from over forty countries, including scholars from a variety of disciplines, members of diplomatic missions and international organizations, state and public organizations, as well as representatives from Uzbek and foreign media. Selected participants were asked to give short summaries of their research, providing a unique opportunity to share and learn about Uzbek culture from different perspectives.

Carol and Michele presented papers on May 16 in the historic fifteenth-century Madrassah of Ulughbeg at the heart of Registan Square in Samarkand. Carol summarized her research, comparing local symmetries and global symmetry in the Uzbek *suzanis* in the collection of Doris Duke at Shangri La in Honolulu, Hawaii. Hardy's presentation told the story of how Nickle Galleries in Calgary, Canada

came to acquire its collection of *okenli-ghilam* and *gagari-ghilam* textiles. Composed of narrow, supplementary warp-patterned bands stitched together selvedge to selvedge or similar bands stitched to plain-woven embroidered bands, these textiles are both sophisticated and vivacious if not well known outside Central Asia.

The Congress offered a welcome opportunity for us to learn, share, and meet new colleagues from around the world. It concluded with a series of resolutions aimed at preserving Uzbek culture through improved international cooperation and education, including providing better access to cultural sites for researchers, and access to museum collections through digital catalogues. It was a privilege to receive such an invitation and to be able to participate in this important international venture sponsored by the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Michele Hardy is a Curator with Nickle Galleries and Program Coordinator for the Museum and Heritage Studies Program, University of Calgary. Her ongoing ethnographic research examines the changes affecting rural Muslim embroiderers in India as well as changing textile traditions across Asia.

Carol Bier is Research Scholar with the Center for Islamic Studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley CA, and Research Associate at The Textile Museum, Washington DC, where she served as Curator from 1984-2001. She was President of the Textile Society of America from 2006-2008.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Please join the TSA team. TSA membership is required and a one year commitment requested.

Membership Committee seeks input from members: Our committee meets monthly via conference call to discuss important issues relevant to how we approach and organize membership. Join us for one call, or several. Bring us your ideas! Contact Sandy Peinado, Chair, if you are interested, scpeinado@gmail.com.

Fundraising/Development Committee seeks assistance with aspects of fundraising. Previous experience an asset. Tasks include writing and distributing fundraising asks, developing fundraising programs. Please send questions and letter of application to Catharine Ellis, catharine@el-listextiles.com.

Inaugural National African American Quilt Convention

By Dawn A. Williams Boyd

The city of Lawrence, Kansas is alive with colorful flower gardens, sidewalk cafés and restaurants, and small shops featuring handmade goods. Known for its historic associations and cultural amenities, Lawrence gained another feather in its cap for hosting the inaugural National African American Quilt Convention (NAAQC), July 12-15, 2017. The brainchild of visual narrative artist and quilter Marla Jackson, founder of The African American Quilt Museum and Textile Academy, the NAAQC “celebrated the history and legacy of African Americans in Lawrence, the African American quilting traditions and contemporary art in various mediums by African American Artists.” Quilters from all over the U.S. descended upon this vibrant college town for four days of textile art exhibits, lectures, workshops, classes, and tours.

The week began with a ribbon cutting ceremony and Vendors’ Market in the Carnegie Building. Many Black owned and operated small businesses were represented at the Vendors’ Market offering everything from polymer clay artifacts from Debbie Jackson and beautifully scented skin creams by DeBorah Yeboah, to African inspired dolls and quilts from Kiangia Jinaki and fabrics, accessories, and beads from Lisa Shepard Stewart.

Several of the nation’s premier visual and textile artists provided original artwork for citywide exhibitions: Dr. Carolyn Mazloomi curated the touring exhibition [And Still We Rise: Race, Culture and Visual Conversations](#) which shared space with [Narratives of the Soul](#) featuring Patricia A. Montgomery, Faith Ringgold, Marla Jackson, Viola Burley Leak, Sonie Ruffin, Marvin Crum, Sherry Whetstone, and Sara Bunn. This exhibition was curated by Susan Earle, Spencer Curator for European and American Art. Both exhibitions were held at the Spencer Art Museum at the University of Kansas. Awe-inspiring work by Hollis Chatelain, Carole Harris, Valerie White, Bisa Butler, Sonji Hunt, Alice Beasley, Valerie Scruggs-Goodwin, and Lola Jenkins graced the walls at the [Lawrence Art Center](#). Aisha Lumumba’s *Women Who Fly* made a last minute move to the [African American Quilt Museum and Textile Academy](#). *Cloth Paintings* by Dawn by artist Dawn Williams Boyd was featured at [Wonder Fair](#) on Massachusetts Street.



Bisa Butler’s work at NAAQC solo exhibit Legacy at Lawrence Art Center.

Credit: Dawn Williams Boyd



Faith Ringgold at NAAQC event at Lied Center of the University of Kansas.

Credit: Dawn Williams Boyd

Inestimable artist, civil rights and women’s rights activist, Faith Ringgold, of *Tar Beach* and *Who’s Afraid of Aunt Jemima* fame, kicked off the week of lectures by noted historians, authors, curators, and storytellers. The octogenarian’s keynote speech, at the Lied Center of the University of Kansas, included a retrospective of her 68-year career as a painter and author of numerous children’s books.

Other notable NAAQC presentations at the Lied Center included Dr. Myrah Brown Green who spoke on the use of African symbols in African American quilts; Denise Valentine discussed “how enslaved peoples found ways to express what they could not say or do outright...through stories, music, song and dance.” Phyllis Lawson, author of *Quilt of Souls*, spoke about how her grandmother, master quilter Hula Horn, reared her on an Alabama farm. Dr. Daniel Atkinson spoke about Lawrence’s own native son George W. Walker, who in collaboration with playwright Will Cook, director Jesse



Artist Sara Bunn with guest at NAAQC event at Lied Center of Kansas.

Credit: Dawn Williams Boyd

Shipp, and lyricist Paul Lawrence Dunbar produced a musical titled *In Dahomey*, the first all-Black play to appear on Broadway.

The NAAQC offered four days packed with classes and workshops for the amateur quilter as well as the professional artist, taught by top notch masters in the fields of fabric manipulation and surface design: Sandra Johnson and Lori Triplett offered a range of instruction in natural dye and resist techniques; Aisha Lumumba presented a scrap quilt workshop; Jan Hollins demonstrated mosaic fiber art; Lola Jenkins and superstar Bisa Butler taught portrait collage workshops. Sherry Whetstone concentrated on organic embellishments and Victorian crazy quilting. All of the classes and workshops, which were held at citywide locations such as the Carnegie Building, the Lawrence Art Center, and the Spencer Museum, were sold out months in advance.

Aside from some minor hiccups concerning transportation and the last-minute communication of venue changes, this inaugural event was a roaring success. Kudos to Marla Jackson of Marla's Quilts, Inc., the African American Quilt Museum and Textile Academy, the youth of the Beyond the Book Program and the city of Lawrence, Kansas for a job well done.



Artists Dawn Williams Boyd and Faith Ringgold at NAAQC event at the Carnegie Building.

Credit: Dawn Williams Boyd

Dawn Williams Boyd is a visual artist who changed her primary medium from acrylic paints on various mediums to fabric in 2001. She graduated from Stephens College in Columbia, MO (BFA studio) in 1974 and lives with her husband, artist Irvin Wheeler and two cats in Atlanta, GA.

CROSSOVER: 18th ETN Conference

By Cynthia Schira

CROSSOVER, the 18th European Textile Network (ETN) conference took place in Borås, Sweden, September 12-19, 2017. Textiles—the subject of this incredible gathering of more than 180 participants from thirty different countries—turned us into compatriots. It was, at least to me, an open, evocative, and intense time as we went from workshops to tours, to lectures, to conversations with old friends, to meeting new friends, to enjoying fine meals, especially the amazing Swedish breakfasts. Much of this was facilitated by the incredible Textile Fashion Center—the name does not come close to indicating the



Aclaimed Azerbaijani artist, Faig Ahmed's solo exhibition *Equation* at The Textile Museum of Sweden.

Credit: ©Enrique Moreno

breadth of what the building so beautifully encompasses. This repurposed textile mill contains areas of research, education, entrepreneurship, and innovation under its roof. The textile museum, the university labs and lecture rooms, innovative new businesses, stores, restaurants, and meeting spaces comprise the Center's amazing totality.

The ETN program fully matched the quality of its surroundings. The overall conference focus on sustainability, creativity, and innovation was realized through workshops, lectures, meetings, and exhibitions, as well as the interactions of participants.

Lidewij Edelkoort, the famous trend forecaster and intuitive thinker, was the keynote speaker. She energized everyone with

her dynamic “Talking Textiles” lecture, giving listeners much to consider. Dr. Marjan Kooroshnia, a textile designer and senior lecturer at the Swedish School of Textiles, University of Borås spoke about her PhD research, which explored the design properties and potentials of leuco dye-based thermochromic inks at the Smart Textiles Lab. Christina Leitner and Andreas Selzer, from Textile Zentrum, Haslach, Austria considered what will happen with the ETN conference and textile culture in the coming years. This subject is of great relevance to all of us. Linda Fagerstrom from Linnaeus University in Sweden moderated a session about gender, identity, and nationality in contemporary textile art. Faig Ahmed, a well-known textile artist, spoke about his ideas and work. Luckily, he had a fine exhibition in the Swedish Museum upstairs. The excellent brochure in that gallery, which included Ahmed’s drawings, explained some



Entrance to the large multi-floor Textile Museum of Sweden in the Textile Fashion Centre in Borås. Credit: ©Enrique Moreno



Grethe Sorensen, *Wave Structure 1* (detail), 2017. Jacquard-woven cotton, tevira, CS, polyester, 64¼" x 94½". Unique piece. Featured in the artist's exhibition *Out of Pixels* at the Abecita Art Museum in Borås. Sorensen is the winner of the esteemed 2017 Nordic Award in Textiles.

Credit: Courtesy of the artist

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD

TSA is a member-based and member-led organization. Ideas, questions, and critical observations providing a diversity of opinions are essential in forming an engaged, critical environment. We urge you to conduct crucial conversations through the TSA blog, TSA social media pages. TSA welcomes your ideas. Vita Plume, President, and TSA Board members are available to offer help if you have an idea you want to develop.

Board member e-mails are available at the front of the newsletter and on the TSA website:

<https://textilesocietyofamerica.org/about-us/>

of the ideas in the work. Jun Tomita, the revered artist and teacher of Japanese kasuri, warmed the audience's hearts with his quiet focus. Grethe Sorensen, the Nordic Award in Textiles prizewinner, added a depth of understanding for the viewers of her extraordinary work so beautifully displayed at the Abecita museum. **Catharine Ellis** and **Joy Boutrup** described their collaboration of science and art. They clearly communicated their project, both the process and the aim in a tightly structured informative talk.

Additionally, the ten-minute network talks, to me, were a brilliant addition to the conference. The time limit forced everyone to be explanatory yet concise. These talks happened one after another like clockwork, allowing glimpses into the work of additional participants. Of course, I particularly liked the concept as I was part of it. I certainly appreciated the individual responses and questions I received afterwards and think it was an essential part of the program.

This excellent conference was fascinating in all aspects—something not to be missed. The enormous amount of work, time, and detailed organization by all the sponsors and the city was greatly appreciated, especially the years of work bringing this conference into being by ETN president Lala De Dios along with the Swedish committee. There is great anticipation for the next ETN conference after the fascinating days in Borås.

Cynthia Schira has been exhibiting internationally for over forty years. Her work is represented in major public collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery. She is a past TSA board member.

Member News

Awards and Honors

Maria Davila and **Eduardo Portillo** have been awarded Fellowships at the Smithsonian Institution's Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum and the National Museum of African Art. They will conduct research on ways of visualizing the universe and creating imagined Cosmos and how these methods have been perceived and interpreted in textiles, prints, drawings, objects, and graphics.

Member Exhibitions

California

Artful Basketry: Beyond Traditions Bay Area Basket Makers
San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, San Jose, CA
September 6, 2017 - October 15, 2017

Traditional techniques get contemporary interpretations as artists from the Bay Area Basket Makers Guild transform a variety of natural materials, found objects, wire, and uncommon fibers into vessels, baskets, and sculptural forms. **Barbara Shapiro** is a participating artist.

www.sjqquiltmuseum.org/current-exhibitions

Fiber Trails

Branch Gallery for the Fiber Arts, Inglewood, CA
October 7, 2017 - November 3, 2017

Fiber Trails features work by Los Angeles fiber artist, **Cameron Taylor-Brown**. This exhibition contains several series of artwork inspired by her travels to Bhutan, India, and the Galapagos Islands. Taylor-Brown's creative expression encompasses mixed media fiber collage, weaving, and site-specific installation.

Thread Heads: Bay Area Fibers Now

Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA
October 21, 2017 - November 26, 2017

Thread Heads: Bay Area Fibers Now, juried by **Marion Coleman**, **Karen Hampton**, and **Tali Weinberg**, examines the current state of Bay Area fiber arts and poses the question: "What social and political circumstances are influencing the craft movement of the new millennium?" The following artists were selected from a pool of over 140 talented Bay Area fiber artists: Alice Beasley, **Lia Cook**, Alexander Hernandez, Lily Homer, Karrie Hovey, Renee Owen, Laura Raboff, Ruth Tabancay, LaQuita Tummings, Ama Wertz, Alice Wiese, and NIAD Art Center.

Massachusetts

Cut the Edge, Weave the Line: Exploring the Vision and Creativity of Contemporary Textile Art

Mobilia Gallery, Cambridge, MA
September 8, 2017 - October 20, 2017

Cut the Edge, Weave the Line: Exploring the Vision and Creativity of Contemporary Textile Art includes TSA member **Lia Cook**.

North Carolina

Forging Futures: Studio Craft in Western North Carolina

Blue Spiral 1, Asheville, NC
June 29, 2017 - August 25, 2017

Forging Futures: Studio Craft in Western North Carolina surveys twenty-four emerging and established artists shaping the future of studio craft in this region. Their work represents the range of forms, techniques, and materials employed to create handmade works of art, including functional and sculptural works in wood, metal, clay, glass, and fiber. Exhibiting Textile Society members include **Rachel Meginnes** and **Amy Putansu**.

Ontario

Diligence and Elegance: The Nature of Japanese Textiles

Textile Museum of Canada, Toronto, ON
July 12, 2017 - January 21, 2018

Curated by Natalia Nekrassova. Explore the time-honoured artistry that has placed Japanese textile arts among the most refined and revered expressions of world cultures.

Tied, Dyed and Woven: Ikat Textiles from Latin America

September 20, 2017 - February 25, 2018
Textile Museum of Canada, Toronto, ON

Curated by **Roxane Shaughnessy**, *Tied, Dyed and Woven* presents the conceptual and technical mastery of ikat dyers and weavers from six Latin American countries over the last 125 years, highlighted through two traditions: the weaving of ponchos in Chile, Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru, and the weaving of women's shawls in Ecuador, Peru, Guatemala and Mexico.

Oregon

Crossing Generations: Past, Present and Future, Surface Design Association at 40

Hoffman Gallery, Oregon College of Arts and Crafts, Portland, OR
July 10, 2017 - August 6, 2017

Crossing Generations: Past, Present and Future, Surface Design Association at 40 is held in conjunction with the Surface Design Association's biennial conference, *Making Our Mark: SDA at 40*, in Portland, Oregon, August 3-6, 2017. As part of the conference, OCAC will be hosting an exhibition honoring SDA's 40th Anniversary. Exhibiting Textile Society members include **Lia Cook**, **Michael James**, **Glenn Kaufman**, **Gerhardt Knodel**, TSA Fellow **Jack Lenor Larsen**, and **Karen Hampton**.

Excavated Pattern

On display at the Making Our Mark, Surface Design Association at 40 conference
Oregon College of Arts and Crafts, Portland, OR
August 3, 2017 - August 6, 2017

Excavated Pattern is an installation by TSA Board member **Wendy Weiss** of thirteen digitally-cut vinyl patterns based on Indian block-printed textiles found in Egypt. Board member **Ruth Barnes**, as curator of the textile collection at Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, undertook the task

Member News

of cataloging well over 1000 textile artifacts from the Newberry Collection. Weiss's work was based on artifacts from this catalog, available online here:

jameelcentre.ashmolean.org/collection/7/10236/10295/all/

Texas

Small Expressions

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, Houston, TX
May 26, 2017 - July 29, 2017

Small Expressions is sponsored by the Handweavers Guild of America, Inc., to showcase small scale works created using fiber techniques in any media, not to exceed 15 inches (38 cm) in any direction. Michael Rohde's weaving *Radiant* was the recipient of the Contemporary Handweavers of Houston Award in recognition of a handwoven entry that represents exceptional craftsmanship.

Washington

All Things Considered 9: Basketry in the 21st Century

American Art Company, Tacoma, WA
July 20, 2017 - August 26, 2017

Presented by the National Basketry Organization, *All Things Considered 9: Basketry in the 21st Century* is the ninth in a series of juried biennial exhibitions intended to show the full spectrum of work currently being executed by well-known and emerging artists in the United States. Past President **Pat Hickman** is represented among the exhibiting artists. The exhibition travels to two other locations:

Peters Valley School of Craft, Layton, NJ. Sep 16 - Oct 29, 2017
Society of Arts + Crafts, Boston, MA. Mar 29 - Jun 9, 2018

Coded Threads: Textile and Technology

Western Washington University, Bellingham, WA
September 27, 2017 - December 8, 2017

Coded Threads: Textile and Technology brings together fourteen visual artists who use new textile technologies in their art. Exhibiting Textile Society members include **Lia Cook**, **Barbara Layne**, and **Anne Wilson**.

Washington, DC

The Box Project: Uncommon Threads

The Textile Museum, The George Washington University
September 30, 2017 - January 29, 2018

Collector and former Textile Museum trustee Lloyd Cotsen challenged thirty-six leading fiber artists worldwide to create a three-dimensional work to fit inside a standard box. Includes works by TSA members **Virginia Davis**, **Gerhardt Knodel**, **Cynthia Schira**, and **Sherri Smith**.

Member Workshops and Lectures

Sara Pedlow

"Hungarian Written Embroidery"

De Young Museum, San Francisco, CA
September 10, 2017

Sarah Pedlow of ThreadWritten Textiles led a Hungarian Written Embroidery workshop in conjunction with the Textile Art Council. She also shared her knowledge of the culture and history of Transylvanian textiles and her travel experience in Hungary and Romania.

Elaine Lipson

"Slow Cloth, Fast Forward"

San Antonio Garden Center, San Antonio, TX
September 11, 2017

Fiber Artists of San Antonio hosted "Slow Cloth, Fast Forward", a lecture by **Elaine Lipson** on the past, present, and future of the Slow Cloth Movement. Lipson has provided her slides and lecture notes online for anyone who would like to view them: tinyurl.com/yehulweh

Laura Camerlengo

"Changing Hats: French Millinery in Degas, Impressionism and the Paris Millinery Trade"

De Young Museum, San Francisco, CA
September 16, 2017

Laura Camerlengo, Assistant Curator of Costume and Textiles at the Fine Art Museums of San Francisco, presented Changing Hats: French Millinery in Degas, Impressionism and the Paris Millinery Trade in conjunction with the Textile Arts Council.

Pat Hickman

Peters Valley Lecture Series
Pike County Public Library, Millford, PA
September 24, 2017

Past President **Pat Hickman** presented her work as the first of a series of artist talks mounted by Peters Valley School of Craft. Pat's lecture coincides with the Peters Valley Gallery exhibition *All Things Considered 9: Basketry in the 21st Century*, a traveling exhibit put together by the National Basketry Organization.

Lee Talbot

"The Art of the Inner Quarters"

Korean Cultural Center, New York, NY.
September 27, 2017

Lee Talbot, current board member, reviewed a selection of fabrics from Korean and American museum collections, alongside period literature and other visual arts. This lecture explored the role of textiles in the lives, modes, and manners of women in elite households during Korea's Joseon dynasty (1392-1910).

Wendy Weiss

"Pattern and Motif: Warp Ikat with Natural Dyes"

Penland School of Crafts, Penland, NC
June 11-22, 2018

Wendy Weiss will lead a two week workshop guiding students to create patterns and singular motifs using ikat warp resist and natural dye.