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### Abstracts

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# Abstracts

Textile Society of America  
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## A

### **"Religion is Not the Only Label They Wear": Wearing *Hijab* in the Post 9/11 Western Environment**

Jeni Allenby

Life has become increasingly difficult for Muslim women in Western countries, who must face post 9/11 hostility towards Islam as well as discrimination derived from the West's confusion of religion with cultural practices. In the case of Islamic dress codes, this has led to government interventions such as the banning of *hijab* in Canadian (1995) and French (2004) schools and attempts in 2002 to enforce a "security" ban on *hijab* in all Australian public places "because it could be used by terrorists to conceal weapons and explosives" (The Age).

In response to the kind of comment documented by Katherine Bullock ("Muslim women in *hijab* are regularly told by Canadians 'This is Canada. You're free here. You don't have to wear that thing on your head'") frustrated Western *hijab* wearers find themselves stressing that they are NOT in need of rescue, nor wearing "traditional costume", and that their right to choose to wear *hijab* should be recognized and respected. What does it feel like to wear *hijab* in the 21st century? What types of personal decisions motivate its adoption (or discarding)? How have family and friends (and strangers) reacted? What motivates choices of style or fashion? And most importantly, how have individual perceptions of self and identity changed?

This paper explores how Western *hijab* wearers have responded to such issues, with a particular focus on public responses in Australia promoting educational discourses

challenging the negative stereotype of the veiled Muslim woman and providing unique insights into - and interaction with - the narratives and experiences of contemporary Muslim women, whose voices are so rarely heard in the West.

### **Talking about Textiles: The Making of *The Textile Museum Thesaurus***

Cecilia Gunzburger Anderson

The vocabulary for talking about textiles has always been rich and evocative, yet also varied based on the disciplines, geographic areas, and professions of those involved in textile conversations. The advent of computerized databases for managing museum collections accelerated the demand for a standardized textile terminology in order to enforce consistency in data entry and facilitate searching of the databases. In 1998, The Textile Museum in Washington, DC, embarked on a project to catalogue its collections in its electronic database. Since no existing vocabulary resource met the museum's need to deal with handmade textiles worldwide, or developed textile terminology to the level of detail necessary for textile specialists, the first step was to develop a thesaurus, or classified, controlled vocabulary, for textiles. In 2005 The Textile Museum published the resulting cataloguing vocabulary as *The Textile Museum Thesaurus* .

While *The Textile Museum Thesaurus* is specific to The Textile Museum's collection, software, data standards, and current curatorial staff preferences, as the first published thesaurus in the textile field it may be a useful model or reference for curators, scholars, collections managers, cataloguers, and others working with textile collections. In fact, we are very interested in the ways in which our colleagues at other institutions will adapt, expand, and/or draw from our Thesaurus to serve the needs of their collections.

In this presentation, I discuss the challenges we faced in the development of the content and form of the Thesaurus, how we apply it within our collections database to aid cataloguing and searching of our collections, and the ways in which the Thesaurus has evolved since its publication last year in response to changing institutional practices and to feedback received on the Thesaurus publication.

### **Changing Face of Ottoman Imperial Image: Carpets of Dolmabahçe Palace**

Elvan Anmac and Filiz Adigüzel Toprak

As a result of the Ottoman Westernization Act, Westernization flourished from the end of 18th century, causing essential alteration in the social and cultural life in the Ottoman Empire. Western influence asserted itself intensively as soon as Sultan Abdülmecid (1839-61) was enthroned; it was the Western style that was then imitated in State Governance as well as in every aspect of life, including architecture, architectural decoration, furnishings, clothing and home textiles such as upholstery fabrics and carpets used in the Sultan's palaces. One of the most striking references for this alteration is Dolmabahçe Palace, which was built in 1842-56. The Palace shows disparity from decorative and functional aspects compared to former palaces, such as Topkapi; in particular its interior decoration and textiles (carpets, draperies, and upholstery fabrics) show strong Western influence.

During the period of Westernization, the Ottoman Empire defined the visual images of authority in Western style so as to be accepted as a legitimate state in the international system. The Ottoman Empire, not willing to lose prestige against the prevailing political power of West, started to imitate it in the cultural domain consciously and used carpets with motifs of European style. This paper addresses visual images of imperial authority in the Ottoman Empire by looking at European-style carpets in the collections of Dolmabahçe Palace in Istanbul.

**Textiles - Math = 0; Textiles + Math = ∞**  
**Sashiko Workshop: Experiential Geometry**

Lucy Arai

*Sashiko* is an embroidery technique of white thread on blue fabric from Northern Japan's Aomori Prefecture. It is embroidery of highly geometric networks of running stitch patterns inspired from nature: waves, flowers, and fences. This technique flourished among agrarian commoners during the last feudal era of the Tokugawa Shogunate (17-19th centuries), when silk, wool, and cotton were strictly regulated. The commoners wore clothing made from indigo-dyed fabrics of bast plants, such as mulberry, wisteria, hemp, and flax. While indigo has a natural pungent odor that protects the fabric from insects, the characteristic white thread of sashiko stitching was used to quilt layers of fabric together for warmth, and to strengthen, reinforce and repair clothing that saw heavy wear and tear.

The seasonal agrarian lifestyle required that clothing be constructed and repaired during the winter months around the family hearth, while weaving and dying of the fabric could be done during the warm summer months. For this reason, the underlying grid of the patterns is stitched with efficiency of paramount importance: the longest, straightest lines of stitching before the shorter, discontinuous lines. This workshop teaches the essentials of sashiko pattern drafting and stitching, and is designed to facilitate experiential understanding of geometry and subdivision of the stitched plane. Each participant will utilize an underlying grid drafted on fabric to stitch a traditional pattern based on parallel lines and their intersections.

## **B**

### **Intimate Textiles**

Ingrid Bachmann

Textiles are one of the most intimate of materials. We wear them, sleep between them, carry our goods and our often our memories, in them. Recent innovations in industrial textiles and in the growing field of bio-materials challenge this intimacy in interesting ways. These developments provoke some interesting, and occasionally disturbing, observations and implications of our understanding and conception of the body and our complex relationship to human, animal and machine life.

In this paper, I will present the results of a research trip to a number of leading scientific laboratories in the eastern United States that specialize in advanced textile technologies. They invoke both fairytale and sci-fi wonders and horrors; Rumpelstiltskin spinning straw into gold, spiders spinning silk, woven gold antennas and sutured pig parts.

Industrial textiles and bio materials provide a fascinating field that touches on many questions – questions of boundaries between human/animals/machine/ organisms as well as ethical questions on what constitutes our notions of natural and unnatural. The French philosopher Michel Serres suggests that humanity should make a new nature contract to replace the old outdated social contract. Perhaps this contract could be one of integration rather than subjugation. As many scientists are increasingly becoming farmers and developments in bio materials, biomechanics and reproductive

technologies suggest a new relationship to nature is needed, one in which there is no radical separation of nature and society rather than the current view of nature as an exploitable resource for the benefit of human life alone.

*Le Monde des Mots: Une contribution significative de la linguistique dans la construction textile hors-métier*

Michelle Beauvais

Le langage prédominant en textile est l'anglais. La plupart des ouvrages sérieux dans le domaine de la construction textile sont publiés dans la langue de Shakespeare. Sans explication, dans la langue anglaise comme dans la langue française, le « fléché » est introduit dans le tissage. En effet, l'absence de vocabulaire pour décrire cette technique de tressage sans outils a engendré une dérive vers l'utilisation de termes reliés au tissage. La construction textile est un champ d'expertise concret et l'entrelacement en oblique appartient à une classification autonome en elle-même qui comporte un ensemble de règles logiques des plus intéressantes. Produire un matériel pédagogique et didactique dans la francité, sert à promouvoir les chances de réussite des artisans en tressage lors d'évaluations, mais aussi à fournir un matériel à d'autres formateurs en textile qu'ils soient régionaux, nationaux, voire internationaux. L'énoncé du problème qui vise à apporter un ajout aux connaissances déjà existantes en construction textile, permet ainsi de remplir un vide qui existe dans la classification des produits du textile. L'étude des différents types de textiles tressés et la terminologie qui s'y rattache, l'analyse de la structure de base du « fléché », la direction de ses éléments et la structure des motifs telles que développées dans cet exposé répondent à cet énoncé. Ce vide étant comblé, il est possible maintenant de dissocier le tressage du tissage et de classier adéquatement le « fléché » en utilisant une terminologie qui lui est propre. L'étoffe du « fléché » est membre de la famille des textiles tressés sans outils et cette large ceinture aux couleurs vives, composée de multiples éléments très longs est unique au Nord de l'Amérique.

**Sustainability of Handwoven Carpets in Turkey: The Context of the Weaver**

Kimberly Berman and Charlotte Jirousek

Turkish carpets have been prized the world over for their quality and beauty for centuries. This is an art form that has strong connections to the nomadic tradition that brought the first Turks to Anatolia, but today it is a disappearing art. This research focused on sustainability of various forms of production within the handwoven carpet industry, as well as the effects of globalization on both commercial and personal weaving. The removal of textile tariffs, the tourist trade and the availability of machine-made carpets have all had effects on who currently weaves and why.

This paper will focus on the impact of carpet weaving on the weaver. This will include the various kinds of work situations in which weavers produce rugs, which includes independent home production; community-based cooperatives, government sponsored cooperative workshops, and work for carpet production businesses. All of these circumstances can have advantages or disadvantages for the weaver.

Furthermore, through individual interviews and case examples we will attempt to describe the direct impact of carpet weaving on the weaver in some of the situations described above; as an art of her work load, her place in her community, her economic incentive to weave, and its relation to her personal, cultural, or aesthetic satisfaction. We will attempt to define the circumstances in which the weaver might find incentives to continue this craft.

## **Designing for Future Textiles - Challenge of Hybrid Practices**

Zane Berzina

This paper offers a case study of a cross-disciplinary Ph.D. research which dealt with issues across the fields of design, art, technology, biology, material science and psychology in an attempt to bridge the gap between aesthetics and technology. The artistic investigation examines skin as a naturally intelligent material on the premise that it can serve both as model and metaphor for creating innovative textile membranes, which look, behave or feel like a skin. Attention is focused on the living skin "technology", meaning its complex working mechanisms, and how these have been translated into a textiles vocabulary following the principles of a biomimetic design. The paper will examine a range of smart textile concepts for both the body and its various environments developed during this project. The presentation will also address the current textile practice and research of the author which deals with issues surrounding human biological senses (touch, smell, vision, hearing, taste) and how our

sensory experiences could be enhanced using smart design concepts. It has been proven that the environment has a huge impact on people's behavior, relationships, their physical and psychological wellbeing. The author is particularly interested in the emerging scientific notion - called sensism - of how 'subtle multi-sensory cues drive our perceptions, behavior, decisions and performance'. For example, visual images and olfactory messages influence peoples' minds in subliminal, emotional, subconscious ways and this can be successfully used in new poly-sensual and therapeutic design concepts that support people's wellbeing and interactions. This practice-led inquiry reflects on current developments within materials research and technologies by considering applications within design and arts to create new sensory environments.

### **Tale of the *Phad***

Vandana Bhandari

This paper studies *Phad*, a decorative and ritualistic cloth produced in Rajasthan in Western India. Such cloth has been used in India to illustrate stories and is employed as a means of entertainment and substitute for theater and other types of performing arts. This paper highlights the method of producing the Phad, and studies its alleged role for good fortune and that of warding evil. It also discusses the role of the Bhopa community who wander from village to village singing and dancing and narrating the religious tales painted on these scrolls.

In my fieldwork in Rajasthan I interviewed the Phad painters who belong to the Joshi clan of the Chippas. I also observed performances given by Bhopas and conducted interviews with these narrators and itinerant storytellers, who commemorate the deeds of Pabuji, a legendary hero of Rajasthan depicted in the Phad paintings.

The Phad is a pigment painted rectangular cloth suspended on bamboo poles by the Bhopa and his wife. They illuminate appropriate sections of the painting and sing and dance to the legends of Pabuji. The accompanying music is played on a string instrument. This is presented to the devotees of Pabuji who are the villagers living in rural areas of Rajasthan. These recitations are considered auspicious and sing of the triumph of good over evil and allegedly prevent disease and misfortune for the listener of the tale.



The Phad performance transmits the religious ideals and provides entertainment to the spectators. These narrators play a role in preserving and continuing a tradition as they move from place to place and link communities together.

*Textiles - Math = 0; Textiles + Math =  $\infty$  (organized plenary panel)*

Carol Bier and Dave Masunaga

This is a conversation about textiles and math: about how you can't have a textile that doesn't contain mathematics and about how mathematics renders the possibilities for textiles infinite.

The plenary session begins with a simple hands-on exercise to facilitate experiential learning about the Japanese embroidery technique, *sashiko*, and the mathematical principles that underlie its construction. The workshop component will be led by Lucy Arai, followed by a panel discussion led by co-chairs Dave Masunaga and Carol Bier. Participants include Mary Frame, Madelyn Shaw, Barbara Setsu Pickett and Gerda de Vries. Our goal is to present the manifold nature of textiles and the infinite possibilities offered by various textile technologies, exploring mathematical ideas and applications that underlie structure and pattern. Our conversation will touch upon the following topics: geometry of the body; folding; patterns in two- and three-dimensions; underlying grids; rigid motions; symmetry and symmetry-breaking; quilt patterns and velvet-weaving.

From the simple crossing of warp and weft in plain weave to the complexities of velvet weave structures, from the presumed linearity of a thread and the flatness of a plane, to the solid geometry of the clothed body and the higher dimensionality of movement, time, and light, this conversation will explore many intimate relations between textiles and mathematics.

**Nationalism: Public Voices, Private Lives**

Jerry Bleem

This presentation will focus on a developing body of artwork that examines, in part, the relationship between the public life of a nation and the individual lives of its citizens. By employing domestic crafts, one of the icons of a nation--the flag--is transformed into familiar surfaces associated with the home. Though a country's identity and actions on the world stage are rarely associated with the domestic sphere, these artworks seek to link the public to the private. The politics of altering a flag and the material qualities of the found object will also be considered.

For millennia, textiles have served as indicators of political affiliation and national allegiance. Flags are steeped in the foundational mythology of a country (or region), sum up a nation's moments of glory (while ignoring its ignominious history), and foster the kind of pride that can unite people. This symbolization process operates in the public realm. An individual's story may be fused to a national icon to bolster national consciousness and prestige. Flags are the stuff of swelled chests and Independence Day parades.

By the same token, countries are composed of individuals who have private histories, relationships, hopes and dreams. Some people (or their ancestors) know firsthand their country's failure to offer equality and justice to all its citizens. Though moments of crisis allow a country seemingly to speak with a single voice, often citizens do not agree with their government's choices that invariably shape the future of a nation.

## **High Style and Cleanliness: Oriental Rugs in Toronto Homes 1880 - 1940**

Neil Brochu

Oriental rugs have enjoyed wide popularity in the West over the past five hundred years. They have appeared in countless household inventories, artist's portraits, and interior views depicted in photographs and paintings. Academic scholarship pertaining to Oriental rugs, beginning at the end of the nineteenth-century, has concentrated on studying the cultures of origin and the peoples that have produced these items with a particular bias for items produced without the taint of Western influence. Little attention has been paid to the actual consumption of Oriental rugs in the West and the general influence of this trade on Middle Eastern and domestic rug production, the evolution of decorative taste, or changes in cultural and social attitudes. This discussion will explore Toronto during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, focusing on the decorative taste of middle and upper class households in order to understand the

various factors that influenced the consumption of Oriental rugs during this period. For most of the nineteenth-century domestic manufactured carpeting enjoyed popular preference as a common floor covering, however this status was challenged at the end of the nineteenth-century due to several competing interests. The simultaneous influence of Europe and America on the decorative taste of the City of Toronto coupled with changing attitudes toward domestic cleanliness and the work of retailers and the carpet trade all contributed to elevate the popularity of Oriental rugs to the point that they became commonplace floor coverings absorbed into the general lexicon of the *tasteful* interior.

### **Weaving Social Change: Berea College, Fireside Industries and Reform in Appalachia**

Sarah Stopenhagen Broomfield

The Appalachian subculture of America is well known for its tradition of handcrafts. Berea College in Berea, Kentucky, U. S. has played a seminal role in promoting that tradition throughout its 150-year history. This study looks at the first five decades of Berea College's renowned handweaving program, the beginning of what is known today as their Student Craft Program. It explores the connection between Berea College alumnae and the settlement school movement that promoted social change in Appalachia, specifically the contribution of Berea College's Appalachian Crafts Revival to reform in Appalachia. The focus of this paper will be on documenting the involvement of Berea College alumnae who returned to work and teach in the mountain settlement schools and on the social change initiatives that the settlement schools implemented in the Appalachian communities they served. The aspects of marketing hand-woven textiles and other crafts that were predominately produced by women from the southern highlands, and Berea College's commitment to this economic development project is a major focus of this research. The story of Fireside Industries of Berea College shares a place in history with today's Fair Trade movement for marketing traditional indigenous world crafts in ways that bring economic justice to communities in need around the globe.

### **Textiles from the Canadian Front**

J. Penney Burton

The craft of storytelling has all but disappeared from the Western cultural context and there remain few peoples whose oral traditions are still a prominent part of their everyday lives and culture. There are, however, many who believe that it is part of the artist's role in society to comment on and share their stories and heritage in an effort to fill this void. This paper will explore the textual or narrative content in the work of two prominent and emerging Canadian fiber artists: Anna Torma from Baie Vert, New Brunswick and Candice Tarnowski from Calgary, Alberta. The work of Anna Torma speaks of her close family relationships as she often incorporates ideas and drawings created by her children into her detailed and narrative quilt pieces. This intergenerational collaboration results in unique and engaging work. Torma's work also references her experiences as a Hungarian immigrant, now living and working in Canada. Candice Tarnowski creates tiny imaginary beings and worlds which speak of feelings of alienation and evoke longing for a social togetherness that is seemingly impossible in our world today. She is known for combining materials from her immediate environment with objects and materials that are imbued with her own personal meaning. Tarnowski is currently working towards her MFA at Concordia University. The voices of these women will be evident in this presentation, with images of their work being interwoven with their comments collected from personal interviews with the author.

C

**Woven Messages: New Directions in Andean Textile Research (organized plenary session)**

**A Panel in Honor of Ed Franquemont**

Nilda Callanaupa and Christine Robinson Franquemont

Transformations in the production and uses of Andean textiles, and in the study of textiles and their creators, are a theme that unifies the research of textile scholar Ed Franquemont. His research examined new directions in Andean textiles -- how and why some Andean weavers cease to make ancestral textiles due to widespread migration from rural areas to cities, while others maintain and revitalize their weaving -- and

suggests new directions in research and writing about textiles. Highland Andean textiles traditionally carry messages of identity for weavers, and reinforce a way of life understood by those who use and wear them in daily life and rituals. Tradition is dynamic and adaptive without destroying the bedrock of heritage from which textiles are created. Textiles in highland Peru continue to be messages communicating cultural and social values for weavers and their communities.

Textile forms may remain constant over time while design elements change; inversely, designs may persist within new forms created to meet market demands of tourism or sales abroad. Inventive messages may be woven into textiles stimulated by influences from collectors or tourists with differing aesthetics and values. Weavers -- individually and communally -- are making decisions affecting the messages they weave into textiles and the continuation of highland Peru's weaving heritage. New directions in Andean textile production challenge researchers to develop methods that include historical, economic, social and cultural analysis of the dynamic of change and the role of continuity reflected in the choices weavers have made or currently make.

### ***Yantra* - Stories of Mythicism on Cloth**

Lee J. Chinalai

Once upon a time and every single day people everywhere examine their place in the universe and within themselves. We are filled with questions and an urgent need for answers. In this endeavor we explore religious teachings and institutions and search within. Then, in every culture and religion without exception, we produce sound and visual art to support us in our goal toward spiritual transformation and divinity.

The manifestations of our searching and discovering are not always considered solely representational: certain creations are considered to *embody* the divine. When this is so, they may be perceived as being imbued with psychic and/or cosmic power. This is especially true when their creators are believed to be connected to the divine, or divine themselves, whether through trance or some blessed or acquired state of being.

In Thailand, Myanmar, Laos and Kampuchea, one type of visual spiritual art is *yantra* : in one form, *yantras* appear as mystical drawings, abstract symbols and sacred writing on cloth. Executed by monks or spiritually-empowered secular masters, *yantras* tell stories through Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism, animism; cosmology, mythology,

astrology, numerology; ritual, symbolism, mantras and the occult; and are believed to function as conduits for cosmic energy. *Yantras* represent humanity's quest for health, security, prosperity, charisma, love and compassion.

This presentation will explore individual *yantras* on cloth and stories they imply or tell. It will show how people in the above-mentioned countries relate these stories to the attainment of psychic goals through the unity of psychic and cosmic power.

### **An Ethnographic Interpretation of the Smoke Rising and Smoke Descending Ceremonial Attire of the Sa'dan Malimbong Toraja**

Maria Christou

This paper describes the social and symbolic significance of the supplementary weft patterned clothing used for funeral and wedding ceremonies by the Toraja people in Sa'dan Malimbong of South Sulawesi Indonesia. Based on data from my field work in South Sulawesi, I show how the weaver's knowledge of the back strap loom and the techniques of patterning gives clues into the world view of the Toraja. Abstract symbols of ancestry, flora and fauna have specific social and cultural meaning. These meanings are not spoken, but are instead visual indicators woven into the cloth of the Toraja by the women of Sa'dan Malimbong villages. Thus, it is a contribution to the ethnography of culture and material culture of the Toraja. The textiles are woven with patterns that symbolize the rites of passage called smoke descending and smoke ascending ceremonies. The ceremonial attire connects the participants to the past and the present, where they relate to their ancestors as well as establish and maintain relationships amongst the living. Birth, death, and regeneration, the cycle of life is interpreted by the weaver and expressed in the supplementary weft technique. Supplementary weft patterning appears on the ceremonial attire in the following areas: The neckline, cuffs, and hem of the blouse; the hem and side panel of the sarong; the shoulder cloth, and on the betel bag.

**D**

**Here... is the place where you are!**

Leah Decter

In my presentation I will discuss my use of material and process as conceptual elements for exploration in an ongoing body of work entitled 'here'. My work is rooted in intersections of memory, history and social/political issues that reverberate across boundaries. A desire to explore the conditions and interactions underlying these issues drives my practice. I approach my work as a process of inquiry using a common place, culturally charged material and visual vocabulary as a foundation from which to peel back layers of convention.

Highlighting complex issues of place, displacement and belonging, a chapter of my grandfather's story has been a touchstone for the works in 'here'. In 1917, at the age of 14, he narrowly escaped the destruction of his small Jewish village and the death of his entire family. After ten years of repeated dislocation throughout Eastern Europe he made his way to Canada on false papers and created a home in northern Saskatchewan. His story resonates with me for both its place in the narrative of my history and its relationship to broader issues that transcend specifics of time, location and the individual.

Through the process of working with the issues embodied in his story I arrived at an imperative of examining my position as a descendant of immigrants in the legacy of displacement that is embedded in Canada's colonial history. The works in 'here' use fundamental textile processes and video to trace fragmented and interwoven narratives through a landscape of community, displacement, loss and resilience.

**E**

**Sustainability of Handwoven Carpets in Turkey:  
Problems and Solutions Proposals in Relation to Standards and Market Issues**

Zeynep Erdoğan and Özlen Özgen

As the industrial revolution has come to Turkey the interaction between changing social conditions and technological improvements has been reflected in the production of hand-woven carpets. The recently emerging option of machine-woven carpeting in Turkey has caused reduction in the amount of hand-woven production for domestic consumption, once a major market for Turkish carpets. Furthermore, attempts to reduce costs have led to the deterioration of the quality of raw material and of colour and design characteristics, giving rise to more problems and further loss of markets.

Recent changes in tariff regulations have opened Turkish carpets to competition with cheap labor producers in central and eastern Asia. Even so, developments in international hand-woven carpet production do demonstrate that if high quality standards can be maintained, it should be possible to preserve a niche for genuine Turkish carpets. The expected admission of Turkey into the European Economic Union will require that products be marked as to the country of production; this will mean that in Europe at least only Turkish-made carpets could be sold as Turkish carpets-not currently the case. Therefore establishing a Turkish standard for the labeling of quality carpets is a realistic option. One way to do this would be to establish an appropriate mark that can be aggressively promoted as the guarantee of high quality hand-woven carpets. The sustainability of Turkish hand-woven carpets depends on the protection of the originality and authenticity of the hand-woven carpet tradition, and on the establishment standards that achieve world recognition as a mark of quality.

In this paper we will explore efforts that have been made to establish such quality standards and the form such standards should take. Solution proposals will be made in terms of quality standardization, expansion of standardization systems and making new legal regulations to support these changes.

**F**

### **Elza of Hollywood and the California Stylist-An Analysis of California Design in Mid-century America**

Michelle Webb Fandrich



In 1984, the department of Costume and Textiles of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art received a remarkable donation of textile designs by California designer, Elza Sunderland. This collection of over 1,800 gouache and watercolor designs represents a complete timeline of the designer's work and is perhaps unique in the fact that it documents some of the most important trends in American fashion textile design of the mid-20th century. By utilizing the unique resources of the Doris Stein Research Center, the researcher has attempted to place Elza's work in context - within the larger themes of market and style trends of the late 1930s, 1940s and early 1950s. The purpose of this paper is to present only one aspect of that research - the appearance of Elza's work in the California Stylist. By closely examining the periodic appearance of Elza's designs in this industry publication, this paper attempts to determine the exact roles of both the publication and the designer in forecasting style trends for the fashion industry in California and throughout the United States. Through the comparison of oral history with editorials found in fashion/fashion industry periodicals as well as advertisements featuring Elza's work, this designer's contribution will be used to illustrate the methods of operation of the fashion system/ textile industry of mid-century America.

### **"Tie it on tight, girls!" Speaking and Acting through Cloth in Southern Madagascar**

Sarah Fee

A large island situated at the crossroads of the Indian Ocean, Madagascar is home to a unique and little-known-- handweaving tradition. While the Malagasy people place great value on formal oratory, in daily social life, actions speak louder than words. Intentions and feelings must be made manifest, and cloth is a key idiom for doing so. This paper explores the four levels on which cloth serves as visual social discourse among the Tandroy, a cattle-herding people who inhabit the southern tip of the island. First, cloth is an expression of love. Women weave and present loincloths to husbands and sons. Husbands offer gifts of clothing at key points in the marriage. All adults make gifts of shrouds to revered ancestors. Secondly, these same gifts can serve to establish the relation for the public record. Tracing the trajectories of cloth gifts allowed the author in her fieldwork to map out the wider obligations of ceremonial gift exchange in Madagascar and women's central roles in them - key features of the society largely neglected in the literature. Thirdly, cloth is a key signifier for women who are otherwise excluded from public discourse. A focus on cloth shows women to be full social actors: they use weaving, dress and gifts of cloth to express their honor, command respect and

perpetuate the social institutions that protect them. Finally, conversations about cloth with individual women provided the author with an unexpected entry point for intimate and animated conversations on their personal experiences, their views on patriarchal society, and polygamy.

### **Reading Prisoner Uniforms: The Concentration Camp Uniform as a Primary Source for Historical Research**

Lizou Fenyvesi

This paper analyzes prisoner uniforms as source material revealing details of history that add to the findings of scholars whose research focuses on archival sources and survivors' testimonies.

To most people, the striped prisoner uniforms of the concentration camps are familiar from popular culture. The choice of striped fabric is significant because in European visual culture stripes have long had a pejorative meaning and have been associated with loss of freedom. Manufacturing details of the uniforms such as the choice of fabric and the tailoring tell us about some of the practical applications of Nazi ideology. Alterations made by prisoners point out the differences in status among them and testify about living conditions and the prisoner's adaptation to those conditions. Some of the damage on the uniforms such as wear patterns and stains suggest the prisoner's work assignments.

Postwar efforts at reinterpreting history in communist Eastern Europe as well as efforts to repair the uniforms have also left their mark.

### **A Case Study: The James Templeton & Co. Carpet Design Archive, Glasgow, Scotland, and the Re-creation of an 1860s Historic House Carpet Design**

Jacqueline Field

This paper presents the research, and design development process that facilitated the reproduction of a long lost 1860 Victoria Mansion carpet. The original 40 x12 foot hall carpet was part of the opulent, and only extant interior designed by Gustave Herter

(1830-1898). The Victoria Mansion curator, and project director, Arlene Palmer, ascertained that other, still in place, original (1860) mansion carpets were manufactured by James Templeton & Co., Scotland. This suggested the same source for the missing carpet. The only visual record, an indistinct 1895 photograph, shows a large medallion design resembling Templeton chenille carpeting, patented 1839, and perfected by the 1860s to provide luxurious large seamless, elaborately patterned carpets to fit any room. To coordinate with the integrated Herter décor the aim was to find the original design. The project stalled after the curator's exhaustive research found little of direct use. Retained to pursue further research, the author eventually discovered Templeton's archive at Elderslie, and Kilmarnock, Scotland. While the archive did not yield the actual hall design, other related Templeton patterns provided invaluable references. This information combined with interpretations of the photograph, and evidence from extant mansion carpets assisted the author's scaled reconstruction of the design, which was color keyed to the extant carpets. With this as a base, and with input and modifications at Hubbard Mills, a full size design was prepared for manufacturing. The finished carpet will be installed by Spring 2006. This presentation includes illustrations of: stages in the design reconstruction, making the carpet, Templeton archive material, Chenille carpet manufacture, and Victoria Mansion interiors.

## **The Sincerest Form of Flattery: Modern Art and the Kimono**

Valerie Foley

The history of fashion is the history of change, in Japan as much as anywhere else. With the growing westernization of Japan in the twentieth century, it was inevitable that western fashion and design would make inroads along with western technology, science and politics.

The kimono is one of the most visible symbols of Japanese identity, and comes with its own rich design tradition: flowers of the four seasons, birds, insects, flowing water, mountain and city views, and literary references, to name only a handful of the best known motifs. How to maintain Japanese dress and identity while embracing the new? Although the shape and cut of the kimono were all but immutable, design possibilities abounded. Western design wielded great cachet, and became a fresh source of inspiration.

One facet of western design that was mined for ideas was 20th century modern art, which transferred to great effect from the painter's easel to the large, flat canvas of the kimono. This paper will explore kimono that reinterpret or completely reject the entire Japanese design lexicon and instead directly quote lines, colors, textures and shading from masters of such western movements as constructivism, cubism, surrealism, neoplasticism, color field painting and op art, with examples of modern art shown for comparison.

Modern art kimono raise interesting questions about the possible economic, political and geographical origins of this cultural transference, as well as questions about the kinds of social occasions for which they might be worn.

### **Elemental Pathways in Fiber Structures: Approaching Andean Symmetry Patterns through an Ancient Technology**

Mary Frame

Ancient Andean artists developed elaborate and systematic approaches to symmetrical patterning that are particularly evident on fabrics. However, a group theory approach to symmetry analysis (e.g. *Symmetries of Culture: Theory and Practice of Plane Pattern Analysis*, D. Washburn and D. Crowe, 1988) yields limited results when applied to Andean textiles. A pattern classification based on this approach will not necessarily coincide with Andean categories.

An alternative approach argues that symmetrical patterns were conceptualized in terms of directional pathways in 3-D space. Andean people appear to have used several models (locomotion and fiber technology, for example) to generate systematic sets of patterns in different styles. To illustrate, I will focus on fiber technology, particularly those patterns that depict helical pathways (Z- or S-twist). The most recurrent patterns look like twisted cords; the most esoteric patterns combine four helical pathways to form frieze patterns. I will suggest that "axial rotation" (not point rotation in the plane) is the motion that generates these patterns. This approach deviates fundamentally from the group theory approach, which restricts the motions that generate patterns (translation, reflection, glide reflection, and point rotation) to motions in the plane, and does not recognize "axial rotation."

The limitation of the group theory approach in the case of Andean patterns indicates that specific approaches to symmetry, arising out of the cultural traditions that produced the patterns, may be required. Fiber was a universally practiced technology in the ancient Andes and, as such, is a promising model for investigating Andean symmetry systems.

### **Weaving Independence from a Distant Cottage Industry**

Fenella G. France

In support of scientific studies of American flags, research into the origins of early 1800 flag fabrics wove a fascinating tie to England, where the wool fabric was made, and why it survived while the weaving industry was mechanized during the industrial revolution. In the late 1700s, the specialty fabric for flags, wool bunting was perilously close to extinction. Men traditionally did most wool weaving, since wool fabrics were heavy and bulky. However, the bunting was a lightweight, narrow fabric, manufactured on small looms that could easily fit in the cottage kitchen. The very survival of this fabric was dependent on its production by women and children, and was of such a high quality that fabric of high enough quality was not produced in the United States until the late 1860's. There was high demand for military flags in the States, and since silk flags became fragile so quickly, wool flags that allowed the breeze to move the fabric were more robust. A number of extremely large wool garrison flags were made during the War of 1812, including that of Ft. Niagara just across the lake from Toronto. Ironically the flags that represented the newly independent and revolutionary USA were made of fabric created by the local working class in England. This interconnection of the social fabric between two countries that were at war extended further as we unravel the trading links and the impact of the industry in keeping alive the small town of Sudbury in Suffolk, England.

### **Stemming from the Lotus: Sacred Robes for Buddhist Monks**

Sylvia Fraser-Lu

In one small village, Kyaing Kan on Inle Lake in the Shan State of Burma, Buddhist monks' robes are woven from the fibers of lotus stems. Weaving takes place from June

to November when the water level is high enough to induce the lotus plant to produce sufficiently long stems. Once cut, the fibers are drawn from the stems. Threads are formed from the twisting together of 5-6 fibers which are wound into skeins and then reeled for warping and for placement on bobbins prior to weaving on a traditional Tai-Burmese floor loom.

Although producing thread for monks' robes from lotus stems is extremely tedious and labor-intensive, it is recognized as an act of great merit imbued with enormous significance due to the special symbolic position occupied by the lotus in Hindu-Buddhist mythology. Not a scrap of this precious fabric is wasted. Remnants of monks' robes are decorated to clothe Buddha images in public shrines at pagodas. Even left-over threads are used as wicks for votive candles.

This beautiful bast fabric has also caught the attention of Japanese textile connoisseurs who have prevailed upon local entrepreneurs to produce items of clothing, accessories and table linens for a growing tourist trade. Although the secular uses for this unique fabric have been increasing, the weaving of monks' robes from lotus bast fiber continues to be an important and honored activity in deeply religious Burma.

## G

### **Weaving Generations Together: Evolving Creativity in the Maya of Chiapas**

Patricia Marks Greenfield

This presentation examines the impact of the economic transition from subsistence and agriculture to money and commerce on the transmission of weaving know-how, textile design, pattern representation, and the creative process of Maya weavers, following a large group of families in Chiapas, Mexico over a period of two decades. With the development of commerce, a relaxation of traditional "textile rules" and increasing innovation took place. Part of this process involved a shift in the definition of creativity from a community concept – in which the goal of clothing design was to demonstrate that the wearer was a member of the community – to an individual concept – in which the goal of clothing design was also to identify the wearer as a unique individual. Supporting this shift in the nature of creativity and textile design was a shift in the

apprenticeship process. Learning to weave changed from a learning process carefully guided and modeled by the older generation, usually the mother, to one of more independent learning, trial-and-error experimentation, and peer input. While these changes all took place in one small village, the analysis sheds light on changes taking place all over the world, as the global economy develops and spreads. The starting point for this presentation is the book, *Weaving Generations Together: Evolving Creativity in the Maya of Chiapas*, which reports on developments through 2003. However, the timeline will be extended into the present with a new case study of a young Zinacantec woman, as she learns how to participate more effectively in the world of textile commerce.

## H

### *Bast and Leaf Fiber Weaving: Cultural Preservation in the Asia-Pacific Region (organized session)*

Roy W. Hamilton

While Asia is renowned for its lustrous silks and fine cottons, weavers in many Asian and Pacific cultures have also made loom-woven cloth from a variety of bast or leaf fibers (including hemp, ramie, abaca, piña, and many others). Today most of these little-known weaving traditions, often on the verge of extinction, have become the subjects of revival efforts of one kind or another. This panel of three speakers and one video presenter will introduce several of these traditions and explore the links between bast/leaf fiber weaving and broader issues of identity and cultural preservation, drawing on new research from several locations in the Asia-Pacific region.

While most of these weaving traditions originally developed as subsistence production, in which weavers made cloth for local use from locally available materials, this is almost never the case in the context of globalization. Each of the cases presented in this panel shows how weavers have responded to changing markets for their products. While adapting to global markets is perhaps the most widespread adjustment that weavers of bast and leaf fibers have made, far more complex transactions are also taking place. These involve emerging senses of local identity, deliberate programs of state intervention, and evolving trends in popular religion. Ultimately weavers exercise their

own agency in reifying particular types of textiles as they navigate choices while responding to changing demands.

## **Contemporary Bast and Leaf Fiber Weaving in the Asia-Pacific Region: An Overview**

Roy W. Hamilton

This talk presents an overview of a project of the UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, which will lead to the publication of an eight-essay volume dealing with the current state of the Asia-Pacific region's bast and leaf fiber weaving traditions, later this year. With the advent of synthetic fabrics, growing industrialization, and increasing volumes of international trade in textiles, many such traditions over the course of the twentieth century hovered on the brink of extinction. Yet, as the cases presented in this panel testify, they have not vanished altogether. Rather, in recent times many of these weaving traditions have been subjected to a variety of efforts of revival or preservation, and in some cases they are thriving in newly globalized situations.

Issues of identity and authenticity must be considered against a background of the marginalized status of weavers based on their gender, ethnicity, and economic standing. According to one view, such weavers skillfully navigate the constantly evolving pathways of opportunity that globalization presents to them, in the process proclaiming their own cultural identity. From a different point of view, they can equally be portrayed as being manipulated by much more powerful and organized economic forces beyond their control, leading to the ultimate appropriation of their local identity to suit the needs of urban national and international elites. Efforts to preserve bast and leaf fiber weaving traditions provide ample evidence for both points of view. Currently weavers find economic opportunity and identity in producing bast and leaf fiber textiles, while distant buyers use the textiles in shaping their own very different sense of identity.

## **Historical Memory and Empathy in Studio Art Classroom**

Karen Hampton



During fall 2002 I created a course at California College of Art, titled "Slavery, Internment and Transcendence". I exposed students to a number of artists of color who use historical memory within their artwork. Students were taken inside the artist's world, learning to analyze artwork from the perspective of historical memory. By using "sense of place" curriculum, which included an understanding of landscape and power dynamics, students learned the skills necessary to deconstruct the artist and his or her artwork. Armed with a deeper sense of self in society, students were then challenged to tell their own stories within the medium of their choice. My goal was to see if students could use historical memory as a source of inspiration for artwork. I was concerned that my students develop the skill set necessary to understand and use intuitive empathy as a tool for developing their own artwork. They learned to harness an emotional response to a subject and develop a connection between artist and subject. The bond that was created carried over and was felt between artwork and its viewers. Students shared papers and original artwork containing powerful stories from their childhoods, of their communities, and of their cultures deeply rooted in their souls. I believe that the synthesis of historical research and empathetic vision is a powerful tool when developing historical narrative in art. This teaching experience has confirmed for me that awareness of and the ability to use historical memory is central to classroom instruction in studio art.

### **Swept Under the Carpet: Subtle Tales from the Back Room**

Michele Hardy

Women weavers, particularly nomadic or cottage weavers, feature prominently in accounts of carpet weaving. They are frequently represented, however, as either slaves of tradition, unrecognized artist-geniuses, or worker drones – their voices and the stories they might offer about carpet weaving largely absent or muted. While field work is needed to document carpet traditions and women's roles (planned for early 2007), the artifacts themselves suggest subtle clues that challenge these representations and offer alternative storylines. They suggest negotiations with external market forces, with changing traditions, economic and political conditions. They also speak to bodies, ways of working, of surviving, and occasionally resisting. In this illustrated paper I juxtapose these stories, drawn from the popular and scholarly carpet accounts as well as carpets themselves, discussing the voices represented, the authority they command, and what they suggest for the field of carpet studies.

This paper offers preliminary findings of my study of the Jean and Marie Erikson Collection of Oriental Carpets held at The Nickle Arts Museum, University of Calgary. My present research involves working with the Collection's donor to document stories about the carpets and other textiles that comprise the collection and review the relevant literature. My research also involves examining the artifacts; recording details about their condition, structure, distinguishing features, and evidence of the people who produced and or used them.

### **Colorful Messages: The Revival of Natural Dyes in Traditional Cuzco Textiles**

Andrea M. Heckman

Many weavers living near Cuzco, Peru are reviving the use of natural dyes in their traditional textiles. Since the introduction of chemical dyes in the late 19th century, the knowledge and practice of natural dyeing has declined dramatically for numerous reasons, including convenience, color preference, and environmental problems that have reduced the availability of natural dyestuffs. However, in the long heritage of Andean textiles, this epoch of chemical dyes is relatively short.

This paper is based on two decades of research in the Cuzco region by an anthropologist on the communication of cultural and social values as woven into textile messages. The current resurgence of natural dyeing marks an historical change in weavers' choices about the dyes they use and in the communication of cultural values through textiles. This revival is partly a response to market demands of tourists and foreign collectors, since natural-dyed textiles command higher prices, yet it has had a wildfire effect as many weavers are inspired to revert to natural dyes. Older weavers are providing the dye recipes and sharing dyeing knowledge facilitated by several indigenous Quechua leaders, the Center for Traditional Textiles of Cuzco, and the weavers themselves. Though many of these textiles are destined for foreign collections, textile producers continue to weave traditional design messages that reinforce their ethnic identity. This paper examines how cultural communication of Quechua values continues to take place through the use of traditional textiles in new ways or by renewing their work with old practices like natural dyeing.

### **Speaking When No One Else Can: Textiles and Censorship**

Jessica Hemmings

Textiles from around the world are capable of conveying sophisticated narration. But in regions where censorship is longstanding, the ability of textiles to narrate becomes a crucial tool in the preservation of a collective voice. Ironically, part of the reason why these textiles go unnoticed is precisely because of the "innocent" materials in which their messages are rendered. A growing "illiteracy" to alternative modes of narration such as those offered by the crafts offers an ideal foil to keep dialogue alive. These textiles reveal that attempts to stifle free speech in fact do little to suppress public outcry. Instead, artists seek alternative materials such as thread and cloth to record subjects otherwise that may otherwise remain unspoken. But do textiles ever impose their own forms of self-censorship? Are there subjects that remain untouched by narrative textiles? Is the audience that responds to narrative textiles as broad as that touched by literature or television, or do narrative textiles that speak out against censorship only reach an audience "literate" in the techniques of narration available to the textile?

### **Wife's Works, Husband's Words: An Album of Gu Family Embroidery from Late Imperial China**

I-Fen Huang

This paper examines a set of eight leaves of Chinese pictorial embroidery by Han Ximeng (17th century), entitled *Album of Eight Embroideries of Famous Song and Yuan Paintings* (dated 1634) and a long narrative inscription by her husband Gu Shouqian. Famous for its integration of painting and embroidery, the Gu family embroidery turned elite women's elegant pastime into a family industry in financial difficulty. With masterful techniques of using embroidery to compete with painting, it became the most valuable and prestigious luxury objects of its kind in late imperial China.

Han's album has long been considered the epitome of the Gu embroidery. At the end of the album, Gu Shouqian elaborated on how and why his wife created this masterpiece. According to him, she chose eight famous paintings of the Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1279-1368) dynasties and recreated them in embroidered rendition. The outcome was superb. Even Dong Qichang (1555-1636), the leading literati artist and connoisseur of

that time, praised it as "beyond human's capability" and wrote inscriptions for every leaf.

However, a careful analysis of these works and the inscription shows another side of Gu's story. The Gu family took advantage of the luxury aesthetics of late Ming's urban visual culture by stressing the unique value of embroidery and may have manipulated the art market to advertise their own brand name. This album thus exemplifies not only a late Ming's understanding/construction of ancient painting, but also Gu family's tactic for claiming cultural capital and transforming it into luxury commodity.

## **Contemporary Hemp Weaving in Korea**

Min Sun Hwang

*Sambe*, a hemp cloth, is used for everyday summer wear in Korea. The production of hemp fabrics there had traditionally been for family use, but since the 1950s, that tradition has ceased to exist. The present status of hemp production is limited to the rural regions, and practiced by only a small number of the elderly in the villages so that the output continues to decrease.

The study of hemp culture in Korea has been approached thoroughly from the historical point of view, but field research was neglected or scarcely done at all. Of the ten hemp cultivation areas, the Andong county developed a unique technique in hemp fiber-making. This video presentation, which was filmed in Andong county in Kyungsangbuk province from 2004 to 2006, covers hemp cultivation and production as well as hemp fabric business in the market. In particular, it will show hemp fiber making in the traditional way combined with contemporary and modern techniques. Also, the difference between two hemp fiber making methods and how this difference affects the quality of the hemp cloth and the price in the market will be discussed. As the video concentrates on the hemp cloth produced in Andong, its use and competitiveness among other hemp cloths in the market will be addressed. Lastly, the future of Korean hemp will be covered.

J

## **Text and Textiles: New Writings from Spam Tales**

Janis Jefferies

Recognition that "text" and "textile" are cognate, from the Latin, *texere*, to weave, is now commonplace. We spin a yarn, string words together, follow a thread of narrative or get, entangled in character and plot, tie up any loose ends, fabricate or embroider a tale and dismiss something as a tissue of lies. Double talk, speech cancelling itself out, was the equivocating argot of patriarchy and empire. To weave a good story is always to be forked tongue; to spin a yarn is always to turn a story, a garment of grammar inside out. Language and textile production share a pliability which facilitates building relationships; between words and things, senses and selves, folds and fibres. Thread technologies - stitch, weave, knit - made into cloth and a multitude of diverse fabrics are markers of life, the everyday as well as providing traditional images of social connection; bonds as well as distinction. This paper will examine different ways in which text has been embedded in textiles of word in weaving to suggest different ways of writing - also a different fabrication of history of telling one's own tale; to create an 'archive' of stories that both reflect experience and the contradictions of society. I will draw on specific cross-cultural studies in post-colonial literature through to the project Electronic Cloth (with Barbara Layne) which proposes the ability of fabric to impart meaning through the narrative of as a form of communication or what I call: *New writings from Spam Tales*.

## **Narratives among the Mola Blouses of the Kuna: A Blending of the Old and New Worlds**

Teena Jennings-Rentenaar

The Kuna women of Panama make colorful blouses in a technique referred to as reverse appliqué. This technique, possible only through the introduction of European supplies, involves the layering of cloth followed by deliberate cutting through of the upper layers to reveal the various colors below. Regular appliqué and embroidery often embellish the designs for a dramatic outcome of vivid colour and complex patterning.

Through the careful analysis of mola blouses, categories were delineated. Mola blouses within each category relied on common colour palettes, used specific methods to establish the designs, had similar subject matter and came from the same decorative tradition. One of the categories was clearly of a narrative style, depicting village stories of the day, stories of mythological importance, characterizations of Kuna history or stories that delineated the Christian message.

Mola blouses in the narrative style not only present keys to understanding the Kuna, some also demonstrate the integration of Christian and Kuna stories. They were reluctant to accept Christianity, yet they identified with the Christian stories, absorbing some as if of Kuna origin. Some of the mola blouses studied demonstrate this dichotomy.

Prior to European contact until now, the Kuna have relied on pictographs as the form of their written language. Those within the community of elevated status draw complex manuscripts, which are hung in the meetinghouses during critical meetings and celebrations. The style of these manuscripts demonstrates not only the use of this medium but also their link with the narrative mola panel.

***Sustainability of Handwoven Carpets in Turkey:  
Issues Affecting Preservation of an Endangered Textile Art (organized panel)***

Charlotte Jirousek

As Turkey achieves industrialized status, it is also moving away from the unique cultural patterns of its traditional past. These social shifts are reflected in the artifacts of the society. In Turkey without question one of the most important artifacts of the traditional culture is carpet weaving, an art form with centuries of history in the world textile trade, and with fundamental meanings in the Turkish context. This textile tradition is now succumbing to the economic, cultural, and material changes currently taking place in the country. Particularly since the international agreements resulting in abolition of protective textile tariffs in January 2005, Turkish carpet production has come under acute threat.

Efforts are being made to preserve this tradition, both in the public and private sectors, aimed at all aspects of production: technical, aesthetic, economic, and cultural. The panel presentations explore issues affecting sustainability of Turkish carpet production,

including the changing characteristics and use of materials, dyes, looms and tools and their impact on the quality of the carpets. In addition, we examine the commercial and economic aspects of carpet production, including the growing impact of offshore weaving of "Turkish" carpets for Turkish businesses. In addition we examine various modes of organization that exist to support production and marketing of carpets. We discuss the impact of carpet weaving on the weavers themselves. Weaving is done under widely varying circumstances, from individual village home production, through various types of cooperatives and businesses, any of which may be highly exploitive or fairly supportive of weavers. We attempt to distill from this information a model of sustainable carpet production in Turkey that could carry this art form into a new industrial era.

## K

### **The Troyes Mémoires: A Translation of a Script for a Late Medieval Choir Tapestry**

Tina Kane

The main subject of this paper is a rare piece of primary material which a book I have written for Notre Dame University Press will make available for the first time in English. It is a forty folio manuscript entitled, *Mémoires fournis aux peintres chargés d'exécuter les cartons d'une tapisserie destinée à la Collégiale Saint-Urbain de Troyes représentant les légendes de St. Urbain et de Ste. Cécile*. ["Directives for painters commissioned to make the cartoons for a tapestry destined for the Collegial Church of Saint Urban of Troyes representing the legends of St. Urban and St. Cecilia."] It is handwritten on paper by the Canon of the church of Saint Urban and is considered to be the original document. The manuscript is not dated but is believed to come from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century.

It comprises detailed instructions for an iconographic program depicting the lives of St. Urban and St. Cecilia, in twenty-two scenes, distributed over six tapestry panels to hang in the choir of the church. The author, using authoritative texts such as the *Acts of Saint Urban*, translates written word into legible dramatic image to be used by cartoon painters, and then, tapestry weavers to create a woven visual narrative. This complete

script for a tapestry is of great value specifically to tapestry scholars and more generally to medievalists, narratologists, as well as students of text-image relationships.

### **Constructing Social Relationships through Clothes in Kutch, India**

Miwa Kanetani

This study examines the manner in which an *odhani* - a head cover used by women in the Kutch District, Gujarat State, India - is worn, in order to explain how clothes create boundaries between the Hindus and Muslims.

The *odhani* is commonly found in Gujarat, including Kutch. The *odhani*, which refers to a cover for the head in Kutch, is made of two square meters of cloth, with a remarkable variety of materials, designs, and colors based on castes, age, and localities. The *odhani* functions as an *amdhal*, whereby women hide their faces behind the veil from their husband's father and elder brothers; the custom is traditionally practiced by married women both Hindu and Muslim in Kutch. The *odhani* was symbolic of a married woman with a living husband (*suhagan*). On her wedding day, the husband presents the bride with a tie-dyed *odhani* of special significance -- known as *cumdadi* -- and she can wear it as long as she is a *suhagan*. *Cumdadi* is considered to be auspicious, and is great significance to the *suhagan* in the Hindu context.

While both Hindus and Muslims have shared the significance of the *odhani*, they now assign new meanings to it. This paper discusses the process of how visible boundaries are created by clothes, in order to complete the traditional discussion on Muslim society, in which the Muslims are considered separate from Hindu society.

### **The Narrative Scheme of a Bengal *Colcha* Dating from the Early 17th Century Commissioned by the Portuguese**

Barbara Karl

The paper will discuss the narrative of a fascinating group of textiles from Early Modern East India. The sumptuous large size textiles, called *Colchas*, measure about 250 to 300 cm and were commissioned by the Portuguese from about 1550 to the first



half of the 17th century. Local Bengali craftsmen produced them in local workshops. The techniques employed are simple: chain stitch on a taffeta cotton ground. The Colchas were used for decorative purposes in palatial and church context in India as well as in Europe and were in the second half of the 17th century absorbed by the production for the British market. The textiles are witnesses of the intense exchange between East and West and as such characterized by a mixture of European, Indian and Islamic elements. Narratives from the Old Testaments (Solomon, Judith and Holofernes) were mixed with stories from Greek Mythology (Hercules, Arion). The different scenes were fused to a harmonious whole, in the centre of which stands the concept of ideal rule of the perfect king and allusions to the Golden Age. In my paper I will present the organization of the narratives of these specific group of textiles, show their models and development.

### **Imagined Books: Case Studies**

Susan Warner Keene

The form of language and the format of the book are significant conceptual and visual components of the work of several Canadian artists working in textile media. This presentation considers the underlying relationships between language, pattern, process and representation that can be discerned in these works.

My perspective is from my own fibre art practice in which I have been interested in the pattern of language and the format of the page as an organizing principle. My work in flax paper has been based on structural patterns created by internal and external inscriptions and more recently on the inherent shapes and rhythms of particular historical texts rewritten in cursive.

For several years Sylvia Ptak has been producing delicate works of drawn and inked threads that suggest written language without actually replicating it. While literal reading is impossible, the rhythm and organization of Ptak's looping threads on white cloth propose other meanings. In her 2004 exhibition, *Commentary*, Ptak displayed her cloth works in the University of Toronto's Fisher Rare Book Library alongside ancient manuscript pages that inspired them.

In Dorothy Caldwell's textile wall works dyed, discharged, appliquéd and stitched cloth evokes a poetic vision of landscape. The link between narration and mapping is clear. In

her 2004 exhibition, *In Good Repair*, at the Textile Museum of Canada, Caldwell showed scroll-like works inspired by her research into mending, in which sequences of stitched or dyed motifs evoke the lessons and repetition of domestic handwork, often taught by pattern book.

Operating in a zone between cloth making and book making, such works reflect the deep connection between telling and textiles.

## **Brides and Grooms: Embroidery of the Epirus Region**

Sumru Belger Krody

It is possible to trace the style and motifs of embroidered textiles from the Greek mainland and islands back to the political powers that held these lands under their control for centuries. Among these regions, Epirus has a special place in the study of Greek embroidery. Because of its geographic location among trade routes and its political and artistic history, Epirus presents an entirely different embroidery style from that of the Greek islands with which it is often associated. A history of influences seen in Epirus embroidery can be constructed through studying a specific representation, a group of people in festive costumes.

The major domestic textiles of Epirus region were home furnishings. Long rectangular pillows with representation of women and men in festive costumes are among the most famous Epirus embroidered textiles. The pillows often depict a couple in the center. The couple is often accompanied by a male and a female figure on either side. The male is often depicted on horseback. Who are these people? Does the scene represent a specific event or ceremony? Is this a representation of a wedding? What does this scene tell us about Epirote society? Are there any clues in this representation that would suggest or reveal influences to Epirote society?

Epirus had more direct contact with Ottoman artistic ideas than many other regions of Greece and integrated these ideas more successfully into its local artistic tradition. Epirus embroidery tradition is a good example of an artistic tradition that was developed within its current political and cultural climate as well as its existing geographic realities.

## ***Mata ni Pachedi* : Shrine Canopy of the Mother Goddess in Gujarat**

Anuradha Kumra

Amongst India's rich tradition of textiles is the category of magnificent painted temple cloths - lesser known and still struggling to survive these are attributed to be successors to the illustrations on palm leaves on which the ancient texts were written. It was during the committee meeting in New Delhi in 2004 for the prestigious National Awards to Master Craftpersons sponsored by the Government of India, that I chanced upon three absolutely exquisite painted hangings from Gujarat popularly called *Mata ni Pachedi* or *Matano Candarvo* . While much has been written about temple and ritual cloths from Kalahasti and Chikkanaicanpetta in Andhra Pradesh and *Pichwais*, the *Vaishnava* influenced temple hangings of Nathdwara, Rajasthan; *Mata ni Pachedi* stands out being unique amongst narrative textile traditions from Western India. These imposing textiles are used as canopies over the image of the mother Goddess. The central character is *Mata*, the goddess seated on a throne or an animal, brandishing weapons to destroy the purveyors of evil. Scenes from other epics find expression in the *Pachedis* , but always surrounding the central figure of *Mata*. Every aspect of the *Pachedi* is divine and evokes awe, trance and even fear.

My field visits to the region in last two years brought me in close proximity to the homes of 36 surviving *Vaghari* families, a former nomadic community now settled around Ahmedabad in central Gujarat. The paper proposes to explore the current status of these temple clothes and looks at the emerging trends in materials, techniques, aesthetics and narrative forms with special focus on the cult of Mother Goddess. Recent work of master craftsman Manubhai Chitara uses indigo dye instead of traditional madder which reaffirms the need for creative innovation and more importantly while there is continuity of skills and technique, the socio-economic context is dramatically changing. The paper will also address these new found avenues of expression which not only strive to preserve the generations old tradition but are also finding economic and artistic viability.

**L**

## **A Study of Velvet Weaving: Past, Present, and Future in Dynamic Interactions**

Wendy Landry

Research among contemporary textile designers is typically oriented toward their individual creative goals or repertoire of aesthetic effects or techniques. Exposure to the historical past of textiles helps us to understand the evolutionary trajectory that produced historical textiles and led to our present practices and attitudes. This accumulated historical knowledge becomes an available resource that may inspire or be useful in contemporary works. My presentation discusses an inverse and complementary approach to practitioner research, rarely undertaken by contemporary textile craftspeople and underutilized in academic scholarship to illuminate questions of historical making. My ongoing research into ancient velvet making illustrates how, through experimental archaeology, experienced textile makers can contribute significantly to historical research as well as to expanding possibilities for contemporary and future practice. The research and experiments done, planned, and projected for this project highlight the complementary interaction of past, present, and future that is possible and valuable in textiles research. The potential value of experimental archaeology is an underdeveloped rationale for maintaining and valuing craft knowledge. This requires emphasis in the light of craft education in visual arts programs, which (in Canada at least) tend to subordinate technical knowledge to visual design and reinforce divisions between studio practice and academic scholarship. In addition to sharing the observations from my research to date, this presentation will argue for the validity and increased use of experimental archaeology as an academic research tool and an acknowledged way for craftspeople to contribute to textile scholarship through the particular insights derived from practitioner knowledge.

### **Integrated Circuits: Studio sub TELA at the Hexagram Institute**

Barbara Layne

Barbara Layne's presentation will discuss new projects being developed at Studio Sub Tela, part of the Hexagram Institute for Research and Creation in Montreal. The lab is a dynamic site for artists, scientists and graduate students to conduct innovative explorations in the development of interactive textile systems. Over the past two years, Layne has been collaborating with Electrical Engineer and Telecommunications expert, Dr. Mohammed Soleymani (Concordia University) in the development of intelligent cloth structures for the creation of artistic, performative and functional textiles. These fabrics incorporate microcomputers and sensors to create surfaces that are receptive and responsive to external stimuli. Recent explorations feature an array of Light Emitting

Diodes that are woven into the structure of the cloth and can be programmed to present changing patterns and texts. Wireless transmission systems are being used to support real time communication through the surface of the fabric.

The nature of cross disciplinary collaboration will be addressed with examples of Layne's current partnerships with other Hexagram members; with the Textile Translations project including artists and scientists at the Digital Studios at Goldsmiths College in London; and the Twining performance with choreographer/dancer Yacov Sharir (University of Texas) that involves the development of a garment capable of interacting with virtual characters. The training of graduate researchers (in Engineering and Fine Arts) is an essential goal of the lab. To achieve an integration of the processes and facilitate communications, all research assistants develop skills in weaving, electronic circuitry and programming.

### **Narrating Morality on Textiles: A Case Study of a Chinese Taoist Robe**

Yuhang Li

This paper examines one unique object from the Field Museum textile collection, a pseudo Taoist Liturgical Robe from 18th century China. Common Taoist liturgical robes contain images of immortals and auspicious symbols, but this object combines religious motifs with a secular moral story called "Pearl Pagoda." The story expresses the moral ideal of altruism through depicting a young official's interactions with his female relatives including two wives. Since the narrative articulates how to be a righteous mother, aunt, wife and daughter in-law, the moral clearly concerns female fidelity. This art object provides an unusual opportunity to examine the ways in which religious ideals and the narrative forms of secular morality are artistically embodied on the surface of textiles. This tale was rewritten in different literary genres, such as verse novel, drama and Taoist story telling, because it presented a model for sincere action that overcomes worldly class distinctions. Its verse novel or tanci form became especially influential among female audiences in the Suzhou area, where this robe was made. I will compare the literary versions of this story with the way in which the narrative is organized on the form of the Taoist robe. In particular, we can see how the material medium of textile serves to reconstitute the literary narrative and examine the new temporal structure that the creator of the textile uses to recreate the narrative.

## **Batik at World's Fairs, Translating Traditions East to West**

Abby Lillethun

At the turn of the twentieth century batik textiles figured prominently in world's fair exhibits promoting resources and indigenous arts of the Indonesian archipelago. Javanese batik associated with Java's Hindu and Buddhist influenced Moslem courts and characterized by limited dye colors and patterns, signified the island's exotic and unfamiliar culture. These textiles received limited formal display. Instead, they were made, worn, and sold in human exhibits of recreated Javanese villages in Amsterdam (1883), Chicago (1893), and Paris (1889 and 1900). Another form of batik used designs and colors reflecting interconnections among Chinese, Arab, Dutch, and other European tastes. Called batik Belanda, women entrepreneurs of European and Indo-European heritages with links to Western aesthetics oversaw its production. In Paris (1900) batik Belanda crafted into Westernized products, such as table runners and piano covers, was presented as trade goods in the East Indies exhibition hall. Batik, appropriated and redeveloped by Nieuwe Kunst artists in the Netherlands in the 1890s, emerged in the modern design movement as a Western improvement on ancient Asian tradition. This third form of batik, Western decorative art, received display in decorative arts palaces from Turin (1902) to Paris (1925). I will trace the transformation of batik at world's fairs from an exotic and unfamiliar Asian polyglot into Western idioms. This study broadens understanding of Javanese influence in Western decorative arts and expands scholarship on the role of world's fair exhibition in the formulation of cultural value in textiles.

## **From Cloth of Poverty to Art Cloth: Travel to America Transforms India's *Khadi***

Hazel A. Lutz

During India's struggle for independence, Mahatma Gandhi made homely hand-crafted cloth of rural Indian peasants the symbol of impoverishment experienced under colonialism and hopes for a socially just future. An independent government of India subsequently established the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) to oversee a massive cottage industry producing inexpensive hand-crafted fabric to clothe the nation's lower classes and their allies in pursuit of social justice.

Under the KVIC umbrella more than 6,000 independent khadi societies each provide work for cottage industry workers in anywhere from one to three hundred villages. Each society produces its own designs. This multitude of khadi designs is retailed through a network of khadi stores reaching into every small town in India.

Touring American sewers and fiber artists entering khadi stores in India see not the cloth of poverty, but a cloth of exceptional beauty. Khadi is characterized by highly slubbed yarns in denier ranging from 20 to 300. Yarn dyeing facilitates production of organic-textured colors of cloth through tie-dyeing in the hank, ikat, complex color patterning in loom warping, or doubling colors in weaving picks. Weave occurs in a variety of plain, basket, and complex structures, combining yarns of different deniers. These characteristics and the unique context in which the cloth is produced inspire production of art wearables and fiber art in the US.

This presentation focuses on the range of designs produced in khadi for the Indian poor and its manner of incorporation into American fiber art.

## M

### **Stories, Saints, and Stitches: Pictorial Narratives of Josephine Lobato**

Suzanne P. MacAulay

Narratives linked to miracles connote wondrous and significant events, which can be used to legitimate and affirm the collective lived experience of place. This presentation examines two embroidered pictorial narratives created by San Luis Valley artist, Josephine Lobato. These embroideries depict how social memory and narrative implicate kin relations in light of a religious miracle, and how memories and stories of ancestral heritage become the basis for upholding traditional, customary Spanish land rights in the face of outsiders' power and wealth. This presentation examines the imagery of two pictorial narratives as representing native perceptions of the legacy and the right to not only be rooted in a certain place but to be inseparable from that place.

*El Milagro de San Acacio* is inspired by a local folktale of religious intervention and the miraculous salvation of a settler community from being slaughtered by a band of Ute

Indians. Enduring memories of the religious faith of these people and stories of individual families constitute a legacy of kinship located in an inimical landscape maintained through generations as a sacred inheritance.

*La Sierra* portrays a scene of contemporary political environmental protest staged in the alpine meadows of a traditional Spanish Land Grant, originally bestowed in the 16th century and validated again in the 19th century. This tract of land was privately purchased and made inaccessible to Spanish descendants in the Valley during the 1960s. After decades in the court system, grazing rights were re-established in 2003. *La Sierra* represents one scene in a long period of disfranchisement as well as highlighting the potency of individual narratives and collective memories of ancestral rights embedded in the landscape.

### **Peacocks in the Sands of Palm Beach: The Vogue of Men's Beach Robes**

Diane Maglio

Palm Beach, Florida, touted as the most perfect beach in the world in the 1920s, was the place that "quite startling beach robes" for men made their first appearance. One journalist described the energetic effect of these robes: "Take all the colors you're able to conceive, mass in heroic flowers..., reproduce them on chintz or silk, and you have the effect." A photograph from *Men's Wear Chicago Apparel Gazette* shows a man preening like a peacock in a flamboyant printed beach robe next to a soberly attired woman who assumes the role of peahen.

The purpose of this paper is to document the dynamic patterns and textiles used for beach robes worn by fashionable men in Palm Beach in the nineteen twenties and the impact these robes had for men on beaches in other parts of the country. From the textile collection of the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York, I examined textiles similar to those photographed on the sands and clubs of Palm Beach. I researched the topic in trade journals, newspapers and consumer publications.

Dramatic beach robes in Palm Beach rivaled those seen at fashionable European resorts of Deauville, Biarritz and Cannes. While clothing in the city called for quiet hues, on the beach bold robes allowed the conservatively attired businessman to indulge his innate craving for color. Men in Palm Beach displayed sartorial self-assurance as they took the



lead in colorful beachwear which would then be adopted in other parts of the USA and the world.

## **Nature Fancywork: Nineteenth Century Women Tell Stories about the Natural World**

Andrea Kolasinski Marcinkus

The topic of this paper focuses on a subset of late nineteenth century American women's crafts I label nature fancywork. This fancywork is three-dimensional, made with feathers, seeds, shells, preserved animals, and the like. To date, I have researched over 150 extant objects and over 300 prescriptive literature references. Eliminating fancywork for personal adornment (e.g. hats, jewelry, etc.), I focus on items designed for home display.

Nature fancywork tells a unique story about women's attitudes toward nature. Borrowing from literary genres, I categorize these objects based on their implied function and meaning: scientific the sketch, and fantasy. With scientific nature fancywork, the maker participates in the emerging world of natural science. Although most women could not participate professionally in scientific endeavors, domestic fancywork allowed exploration of this area in a culturally acceptable fashion. Examples include hand-drawn birds coloured in with feathers from the same ornithological subject, or full scale taxidermy specimens encased in miniaturized versions of natural surroundings. The sketch mimics the nineteenth century women's literary genre describing daily life in an informal style much like a personal letter or diary. Albums of seaweed specimens collected on vacation or fashion plates pasted over with collected shells portray an interpretation of the creator's interaction with nature. The last category, fantasy nature fancywork, alters natural objects into new, often whimsical items that are particularly humorous or bizarre. For example, electric blue flowers placed in an otherwise staid brown seed wreath or lobster shells rearranged into a crone carrying a basket of matchsticks.

## **Nasca Needlework and Paracas Procession**

Lois Martin

My paper focuses on a 2,000-year-old ceremonial cloth from ancient Peru in the collection of the Brooklyn Museum, known as "The Paracas Textile," and especially on its cross-looped, three-dimensional border. The border shows a procession of 90 fabulously costumed and brightly colored figures. Each tiny figure only stands about four inches tall, yet is so carefully worked that details as small as the motifs on their clothing and colors of their painted toenails are visible. Some hold vegetables; others brandish weapons; others lead haltered llamas. Together, their parade offers a tantalizingly vivid glimpse into an ancient, lively world. Although this cloth has been studied and published since the 1920s, the crowded, overlapping structure of the border prevented a clear understanding of the figures until 1990, when I produced a complete set of line drawings of the border figures for The Brooklyn Museum of Art, published in 1991. Production of the drawings required a close, sustained study of each figure, and teased out many previously illegible details. My current research builds on the drawings. In my paper, I will present a new typology of the border figures, and demonstrate with photos, drawings, and diagrams how the figures fall into groups, and how the shared features of each group relate to issues of gender and hierarchy. Like an anthropologist at a festival, I have been finding individual voices and order in the midst of chaotic abundance.

## **The Swedish Presence in 20th-Century American Weaving**

Marion T. Marzolf

Swedish weavers who arrived in the United States in the early 20th century before World War I found handweaving a dying art in the United States and their own skills much valued. Textile mills produced inexpensive and vast quantities of fabrics, but there was also growing interest in reviving the lost arts and crafts. Sweden had retained a strong craft tradition through the creation of a nationwide system of preservation societies and craft education in the folk (free public) schools. Swedish weavers of the 1930s taught in Appalachia at Berea College, Kentucky, the Penland School of Handicrafts in North Carolina, in other small communities, and in fine arts and crafts schools. Loja Saarinen's weaving studio at the Cranbrook Academy of Arts in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, hired Swedish weavers to produce tapestries and rugs. Some American weavers traveled to Sweden to take courses at Handarbetets Vänner and Sätergläntan. Swedish and other Scandinavian exhibits were publicized in the American craft journals and decorating shops. Swedish yarns, tools and books were

popular in the USA. After World War II, Swedish fiber artists like Malin Selander, Ulla Cyrus, Bittan Valberg, Astrid Stampe, and Helena Hernmarck came to lecture, give workshops, or to stay and sell their works. They introduced the new ideas of Scandinavian Modern design and emphasized learning the craft but then creating original work. Swedish weavers have been a continuing but little-noticed presence in 20th-century American handweaving.

### **The History and the Present of a Traditional Textile of Okinawa, Japan: A Narrative of the People in Miyako Island and *Miyako-jofu* Textile**

Yuka Matsumoto

This study aims to clear the role and the meaning of *Miyako-jofu* for the people of Miyako Island, Okinawa, and to show the relationship between textiles and people. *Miyako-jofu* is a hand woven textile of hemp threads spun by hand and dyed with plants such as indigo. In an interview with Miyako Textile Cooperative Association, I discussed the present state of *Miyako-jofu* with ten weavers from Miyako Island in August of 2002 and 2005. The people of Miyako Island recognize the *Ayasabi-fu* (rusty colored woven textile), which was woven by Toji Inaishi in 1583 as the origin of *jofu* in Miyako. After that, from 1609 to 1903 *Miyako-jofu* had been the used for bartering purposes from Miyako Island to Ryukyu and Satsuma, Kyusyu. In the Taisho Period *Miyako-jofu* was an important highlight of Miyako Island. However, after the World Wars, the demand for *Miyako-jofu* for kimonos decreased remarkably leaving the future of *Miyako-jofu* in crisis. This paper considers the following three points of view: The first is about the positions of Miyako Textile Cooperative Association and the weavers, the second is the preservation of the threads' spinning technique, and the third is a resurgence of the traditional practices by the inhabitants of the island. Textiles have always been related to this island's society and culture and remain an important aspect of the inhabitants' lives.

### **Cartography, Cloth and the Embroidered Tale**

Bettina Matzkuhn

I will discuss my research and new textile works that explore the narrative qualities of maps. I am intrigued by the historic connection between cartography and cloth. In Latin, *mappa* means cloth. The traditions of mapmaking and embroidery share decorative aspects and extreme detail as well as terrain that is haptic, cerebral, and emotional. The process of how biased visual information is incorporated into maps could be adapted to the embroidering of tales.

My work in textile utilizes embroidery and surface design with a strong focus on narrative through serial imagery. *Navigating*, a new body of work to be shown in 2007 uses imagery around marine architectural drawings, charts and navigational symbols. I am also producing a series of maps which will trace narrative journeys using historical and contemporary symbolic devices found in cartography.

Growing up around sailboats, learning to read charts seemed a normal part of childhood. I am reassured by the specific rules that govern charts and shipping, as they seem all too absent or unclear in my day to day life. Perhaps in approaching 50, I rely more on the navigational aids and warnings from others who have preceded me. I also long for the wishful, predictive quality a map can have. But patterns of expectation and outcome are rarely compatible. My approach is that maps have ample room for pathos and humor – elements which are on very familiar terms in much of my work.

### **Constructing Garments, Constructing Identities: Home Sewers and Homemade Clothing in 1950s/60s Alberta**

Marcia McLean

This paper explores the meanings of homemade clothing and home sewing to home dressmakers in 1950s/60s Alberta and how these meanings impacted their identities. In the post war years, prevailing notions of femininity returned to quasi-Victorian ideals of modest respectability and devotion to home and family. Publications for women portrayed femininity as best expressed through the practice of three essential virtues: thrift, practical creativity and attention to appearance, all of which were frequently related to sewing clothing at home. Through analysis of my conversations with 15 Alberta home sewers I found that while in the 1950s sewing was a survival skill, producing well-made clothing at home was also a source of pride and a creative outlet that gave women a position of strength within the family. By the late 1960s, however, ideas about femininity and women's role in society were changing. Because home

sewing was so linked to ideas of 1950s femininity, women who wished to distance themselves from these ideas had difficulty seeing sewing positively. "Home sewer could no longer be integrated into their identities because of its perceived negative connotations. This led some women to reject home sewing altogether, or at least to stop sewing until they were able to give the activity a more positive meaning. Despite their obvious skill and the complex items that many women were able to produce, they overwhelmingly described their homemade clothing as "plain" or "simple," a reflection of the conservative cultural heritage that informs the identities of Alberta women.

### **Messages from the Past: An Unbroken Inca Weaving Tradition in Northern Peru**

Lynn A. Meisch

The only documented surviving Inca textile tradition exists in the Huamachuco region of northern Peru, where females still weave belts chronicled by a Mercedarian Friar in 1611. He wrote a 24-line code of letters and numbers containing the weaving instructions for "a famous belt of the highest quality cloth only worn by *coyas* [Inca queens and princesses] at the fiestas called *çara* [ *sara* , Quechua: "maize," or "corn"]." French scholar Sophie Derosiers broke the code in 1984, and then found a pre-Hispanic example in the American Museum of Natural History. No contemporary examples were known until 2002, when I recognized the belt in Peru. The weavers of these belts call them *fajas de sara* ( *sara* belts), although they no longer speak Quechua or realize that *sara* means "corn." In one area, however, they do call a motif within the belt *puntos de maíz* [Spanish: "points" or "tips of maize"]. In this paper, I argue that we can analyze textiles for dyes, patterning, and structure, but meaning and even technique are often opaque. I question the extent to which textiles can convey certain messages without the presence of the textiles' makers to explain the techniques used their manufacture, as well as the textiles' meaning, significance, and how they are used or worn. Nearly five centuries after the Spanish conquest of Peru, followed by colonial campaigns to extirpate native religions and extensive social and cultural change, to what extent can we understand the *sara belts* messages from the Inca past?

### **Transforming Craftwork and Cloth for Global Markets: Bast Fiber Textiles in the Upland Philippines**

B. Lynne Milgram

Within our globalizing economy, textiles and clothing continue to perform multiple roles in daily and ceremonial life telling stories of identity, economics and social change. In this light, women in the northern Philippines build on their historic engagement in artisan trades to refashion bast fiber textiles within the context of dramatic social and economic shifts. Rural artisans continue to combine farming and domestic tasks with weaving while seizing new opportunities to establish transnational markets and develop goods that resonate with global fashion.

In this paper I explore the alternative economies of women's craftwork in bast fiber textiles within home-based and piecework practice in Banaue, Ifugao, northern Philippines, the area renown for this unique production. I argue that bast fiber weavers incorporate cultural parameters into an economic arena marginal to state influence. Through local cloth production, they reproduce their ethnic and cultural identity and customary institutions; and through risk-taking ventures in commercial production, they fashion spaces of agency, innovation and resistance to secure positions in "modernity" despite the potential of these positions to shift.

Realizing such opportunities disputes the steamroller model of global capital arguing that with economic expansion women often loose the autonomy they had as producers and traders. Rather, Banaue weavers transform textile products and design and reach global markets by forging new linkages with alternative markets such as fair trade organizations. These innovative initiatives mean that weavers operationalize options to ensure the life history of this dynamic textile well into the twenty-first century.

### **Stories Underfoot: Reconstructing a Filipino-American Identity from a Patchwork Rug**

Rachel Morris

Between 1906 and 1946, over 6000 Filipinos immigrated to Hawaii to work the sugar plantations. In a study of Filipinos in Hawaii, Luis Teodoro suggests that third-generation Filipino Americans know little of their family history (Teodoro, *Out of This Struggle: The Filipinos in Hawaii* [Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1981], 66). Even with increasing scholarship in Asian American studies, Sucheng Chan observes, "[There is a] complete absence of any in-depth studies about the historical and current

experiences of Filipino Americans" (Chan, "The Writing of Asian American History," *Organization of American History Magazine* , v. 10, no. 4, 2). As a third-generation Filipino American and textile historian, I bring together in this project the material culture and oral history of my own family in order to contribute to a larger discussion of the Filipino American experience. At the core of my research is a small chevron-patterned patchwork rug made by my grandmother. Each textile fragment of the rug is a remnant of a household linen or garment that passed between her hands from 1946 to 1980. To better understand the significance of the cloth and its maker, I interviewed family members and friends that survive her and ask them to identify the remnants of the rug. The cloth allows the interviewees to recall personal memories of growing up as a Filipino in Hawaii. Just as my grandmother stitched together the remnants of her life into a patchwork rug, I salvage the memories of our family to present a Filipino America narrative.

### **Confessions of a "Thread Bandit Queen": Ten years of Fieldwork with Narrative Embroidery**

Skye Morrison

Stories from the field of the makers of narrative textiles are often different from what appears on the walls of a museum or in the shops and stalls where the work is sold. This paper presents some of the challenging experiences of building relationships and lives through making, promoting and understanding narrative textiles. In 1996 the author traveled in India with a colleague to research *kantha* , stitched narrative textiles and found at an NGO a new form of the art, *sujuni* , as well as narrative appliqué embroidery, *khatwa* . The 'threads' of the story take the work from Bihar and Jharkhand to New York, Toronto and London. While the work continues the "threads of the maker's lives" are being hijacked by the NGO's who have not paid wages to the makers. This paper follows the stories of two groups. The first is Hindu women in rural Bihar who have formed a new business, *Sujuni Mahila Jeevan* . The second is a new group of Santal tribal women in Jharkhand, *Sirali Santal Khatwa* , "Thread has a life of its own," established in 2004. Although both groups have been able to exhibit work internationally they are having great difficulty establishing reliable markets in India and managing to pay wages. As much as design development is required, human development and capacity building is equally important. The work they do is exceptional in depicting their lives and it must still be marketable. Real empowerment,

fair trade, sustainability and authenticity are all critical to the success of these groups. What kinds of support can a "thread bandit queen," (a foreign facilitator and fieldworker) offer that are appropriate for sustainable development of these groups? The presentation questions the textile stories through the lives of narrative artists.

### *Textile Narratives in Book Form (organized panel)*

Robin E. Muller

Many textile artists work with the idea of narrative. It is seen in medieval tapestries, North American quilts, and traditional Indonesian textiles to name a few. Some contemporary textile artists are part of an emerging trend that takes this a step closer to the literal by using the book as a form for their artworks.

This panel discussion will include history of these connections between textiles and the book, a discussion of overlapping media/technical/conceptual concerns and a survey of contemporary work. All panelists work in the area of narrative/book arts/image sequencing.

The panel will begin with a presentation of the historic context of medieval silk and velvet bindings and a short survey of artists since incorporating fabric and the book including Sonia Delauney, Kay Sekimachi, and Lenore Tawney's book collages.

Discussion will cover parallel histories and ways of working, perceived value of the medium among museums and collectors, and publication and creating multiples as an alternative to exhibitions.

**N**

### **Uzbek Long Pile Rugs and the Nomadic Rug Weaving Tradition of Asia**

Natalia Nekrassova



Long pile rugs, *julkhirs*, of Central Asia of the late 19th - mid 20th century are a unique example of ancient nomadic rug art, which represent the earliest stages of rug art produced by Central Asian nomads. The rugs were woven on the narrow-beam horizontal loom, the most archaic rug loom known from this area. Composed of individual strips, these rugs demonstrate an ancient weaving practice and an imagery system comparable with the earliest known Anatolian rugs dating to the 14th - 16th centuries.

Detailed analyses of material, weaving method, colour and imagery of the rugs from the Textile Museum's collection identify them as belonging to a group of rugs described by Valentina Moshkova in *Carpets of People of Central Asia*, published by George O'Bannon (1996). Her ethnographic field research discovered that these rugs were produced by the semi-nomadic Uzbek and Arab groups of the Samarkand region of Uzbekistan. Based on Moshkova's work, a technical and stylistic comparison of the ornamented and unpatterned examples of the long pile rugs from the collections of the Textile Museum of Canada was undertaken. This paper will present the results of an attempt to separate rugs produced by the semi-nomadic Uzbek groups from the rugs woven by neighboring Arab population.

These types of rugs are extremely rare in museum collections. Bringing this rich collection of the *julkhirs* from the Textile Museum of Canada to the attention of textile scholars will attract more interest in the research of these distinctive rugs which will contribute to our understanding of not only the origin and the early stages of the development of rug weaving in Uzbekistan but the history of pile rugs in general.

## **Re-Creating a Nasca Cross-Knit Looped Edging**

Rebecca Nelson

Re-creating an ancient textile forges an intimate bond between the modern researcher and artisans in the forgotten past. It requires assiduous academic detective work and a leap of the imagination to produce an educated guess in tactile form. Most of what we know about the textile techniques of preliterate Andean cultures has come from experimental re-construction work by researchers such as Lila M. O'Neale and Raoul d'Harcourt. The Nasca of the Early Intermediate Period of Peru, 100- 600 A.D., manipulated alpaca fiber with a skill that is difficult to emulate, creating extravagantly labor-intensive, richly symbolic edgings for their ceremonial tunics. I have re-created a

fragmentary Nasca tunic edging in order to understand more fully how it was made. In the process, I gained respect for the ancient artisans who made the edging and chose to employ some modern technology to compensate for my lack of traditional knowledge. This paper explores the creative, humbling process of re-creating a Nasca cross-knit looped edging, with a description of their techniques based on the literature about the Nasca and study of the original, housed in the collection of the Textile Museum of Canada. It discusses the symbolism of trophy heads and the iconography of the design as well as the archaeological conjecture about the creators of these textiles and who might have worn them in ceremony or ritual. The paper concludes by addressing more broadly the concept of re-creation and what it means for the researcher or artist.

## P

### **Anni Albers' "Coalition of Form": Labor, Jewishness, and Modernist Materiality**

Becky Peterson

In literary study of the modernist period, the links between writing and material culture have developed as a topic of growing scholarly interest. In these conversations, several previously neglected women artists – including Bauhaus writer and weaver Anni Albers – are beginning to be viewed as important figures in early twentieth-century art. I identify Albers and other artists as women who explored visual self-expression through the traditionally feminized modes of textiles and dress. As dress is a visual medium, one that has historically been used as an instrument of humiliation and domination (one example is the yellow star), I read these artists' use of textiles and material objects as political acts. I argue for the complicated role of textile labor in modernism; in particular, I see the intersections of formalism, textiles, and secular Jewish identity as an especially rich area for scholarship. One aspect of this problematic that fascinates me is the number of Jewish women at this time who are drawn to "exotic," often folkloric, dress in their lives and their art. Many of these women identify themselves as avant-garde and are uneasy about explicit expression of their Jewishness – their complex relations to ethnicity are enacted and performed in highly stylized, often primitive dress. Most recently, my research has involved analyzing the pieces of Peruvian dress and tunics Albers gathered in her visits to South America – and

discussing how Albers and other modernist women artists use textiles to express ethnic identity during this time period.

## **Investigation of a Colonial Latin American Textile**

Elena Phipps and Lucy Commoner

This paper follows the investigation of an intriguing textile belonging to the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum (Smithsonian Institution) in New York. Catalogued as Colonial Peruvian, acquired into the collection in 1902 through a notable donor, J. P. Morgan, the small tapestry band with European-style quatrefoil and interlace designs, was woven with extraordinary materials, including downy bird feathers spun with cotton and rabbit hair yarns. The use of these materials has been documented in Pre-Columbian and Colonial era Mexico, but to date, little information as to their use in the Andes has been available. The textile was originally considered for the 2004 MMA exhibition, *The Colonial Andes: Tapestries and Silverwork 1530-1830*, but because of the questions regarding the origin of the textile, it was not included, as further research was required.

Hybrid artworks attributed to Colonial cultures tend to reflect the complexity of the cross-cultural society, integrating both native and foreign traditions. These circumstances create a challenge for the art historian, and underscore the important contribution of conservation and science professionals to aid in the fuller understanding of the work of art. Various strands of research, drawing on the skills of conservators, scientists, mammologists, ornithologists, curators and cultural historians, were conducted on this extremely rare textile and the results and questions regarding its origin and composition will be presented. Of particular focus in the discussion of this unusual textile will be the role of defining cultural traditions in relationship to the use of particular materials and techniques in the manufacture of works of art.

**Textiles - Math = 0; Textiles + Math =  $\infty$**

**Design Sources: The Edges of Fiber Geometry**

Barbara Setsu Pickett

Velvet has never been the cloth of the humble masses; rather, it has been synonymous with luxury. Garments cut from it have dressed the elite, and opulent interiors embellished with it provided habitats and backdrops for those with status, power, and wealth to display their privilege. For the past twenty-five years I have researched the handweaving traditions and techniques of silk velvet. I have explored the seemingly endless possibilities of this woven structure at fourteen ateliers in Italy, France, England, Japan, China and Turkey, and through my own studio efforts. The skill, ingenuity, and sheer determination needed to create these richly textured surfaces is amazing. Variations in cultural esthetics and emphasis have stimulated each atelier to devise different methods to deliver the goods. For example the strong bilateral symmetry of the Italian Renaissance lingers in the ateliers in Florence, Venice and Zoagli; the asymmetry revered in Japan required a unique method of cutting the pile; and in Islamic velvets it is often the ground not the figure that receives the tufted surface. All velvet designers and weavers play with the same variables and questions:

What is the correct balance and proportion of pile and voids?

Which piles need to be cut or left uncut?

What ground weave structure is best for the design?

What role does color play?

How much time and materials would this design demand?

The mathematics of proportion, scale, symmetry, and visual rhythm are the tools the designer wields to create visual and tactile delights.

### *Breaking Technological Boundaries: Conversations and Collaborations (organized panel)*

Vita Plume

This panel invites textile educators and artists, who have recently chosen to work in collaboration, to discuss the process, products, successes and difficulties inherent in this approach to creativity and production.

Many exciting, new and innovative products are a result of cross-disciplinary endeavors. This trend recognizes that acts of creativity, invention and product development need not be the result of individual genius, but could be the cross-fertilization of diverse fields of study. Working in partnerships or teams, this interaction

results in both an expansion of the individual disciplines as well as allowing opportunity for a new synthesis of creative thinking and problem solving.

Janis Jeffries and Barbara Layne (collaboration with electrical engineering and telecommunications) discuss electronic cloth as a means of fabricating history, narrative and meaning. Vita Plume (collaboration with industrial production) discusses the transitions in methodology from hand production to mass production. Zane Berzina (collaboration with biology) uses skin as a model and metaphor for creating innovative membranes.

Building on a firm foundation of craft, tradition and history these five artists contribute their knowledge of the practice and history of textiles to these cross-disciplinary explorations. Working with new partners, their aim is to create not only groundbreaking processes and products, but also to challenging themselves and others to think in innovative ways about age-old processes and traditions.

### **Collaborations through Academia into Industry**

#### **Vita Plume**

Textile artists have long been concerned about the gap between the world of hand production and industry. This presentation will examine two textile projects attempting to bridge academia and industry. The first includes two hand-weaving instructors and two textile marketers who have undertaken to industrially reproduce a hand woven and dyed product. This presentation will outline this collaborative process (the excitement as well as the problems) attempting to bridge this gap. The product-concept is based on a combination of woven and dyed processes. The results convinced two textile marketers that the beauty of the irregularity in the repeat pattern could result in a viable product to bring to market. This team of four has worked over the past two years to try to develop a process to produce a product that could be industrially reproduced and commercially successful. The second project includes a multi disciplinary team of six students who worked with a carpet design company to come up with a new contract carpeting design. The students worked with designers and product developers at Lees Carpets and the result was not a carpet, but a prize winning new flooring product.

Both these projects have been based in academia where interaction with industry is being encouraged. The result is a new way of thinking about making and designing for all participants. There have been successes as well as pitfalls and this presentation will outline some of these.

## R

### **Women's Work and Narratives of Feminism in Contemporary Art**

Elizabeth A. Richards

The artists of the feminist movement reintroduced many previously rejected forms of art making into the art mainstream, such as sewing, embroidery, and lace making as a uniting symbol of the hardships women faced within the art world and within the domestic sphere. These art forms, which historically were viewed as domestic duties and heralds of modesty and purity, became the outward symbols of upheaval in the patriarchal hierarchy. Art forms previously rejected by the avant-garde as mere decoration and functional objects lacking in conceptual significance, women's work grew ripe with meaning. Female artists had found an expression of their gender and a historic precursor in these art forms.

The manipulation of cloth as a political and social reference to the construct of femininity became fodder for contemporary artists working with issues of gender and identity. While contemporary artists continue to find women's work a source of strength and expression in their artwork they now struggle to convey contemporary women's issues through a medium strongly connected to the specific feminist movement of the 1970s. Artists like Ghada Amer, Anne Wilson, Elaine Reichek and Jill Snyder Wallace employ traditional women's work techniques in non-traditional ways by utilizing them to express a narrative of gender identity that coincides with their ideological concerns. My paper questions how these artists represent varied contemporary social interests through techniques associated with an outmoded artistic movement.

## **Tracing the Temporary Thread: Decorative and Functional *Devoré* Textiles of the Early Twentieth Century**

Andie Robertson

The *devoré* ("burn out") technique of fiber removal, now so familiar to contemporary textiles and surface designers, has a rich but little known history of scientific and technological development. The basis of the *devoré* process and a principal reason for its continuous adaptation over the previous hundred and fifty years has been the *devoré* designer's ability to add and then subsequently remove, though heat or chemical means, a temporary thread from the structure of a constructed textile. Employed primarily as a supportive element, the temporary thread stimulated the creation of innovative yarns and the patterning of knitted, woven and stitched textiles that otherwise were unattainable to a breadth of American consumers.

The paper will present an overview of temporary thread employment in the manufacture of utilitarian and decorative fabrics of the early 20th century. Examining both decorative *devoré* techniques, as used on metallic thread pile fabrics and satin weave fabrics, and functional processes used to make rubber textiles and elastic products for corsetry and dress accessories.

Drawing upon my Ph.D. thesis research I will reveal how the *devoré* technique not only facilitated the manufacture of innovative textiles using modern materials such as rayon and acetate, but also hugely impacted the creation of *devoré* dress textiles of the Art Deco period. In presenting surviving examples of 1920s and 1930s woven *devoré* textiles, currently held within archives in America and London, I aim to raise awareness of this distinctive economical approach to textile designing.

**S**

## **A Textile Narrative: Through the Eye of a Camera / Through the Eye of a Needle**

Jennifer E. Salahub

Hannah Maynard (1834-1918) was a British-born photographer working in Victoria, BC, at the end of the nineteenth century. That she was successful is unquestionable – an American newspaper (1878) described her as not only attending "to the taking of pictures" but enthused that "she also manages her business and a household!" What strategies allowed this middle-class Victorian woman to negotiate a path between the private and the public spheres in this outpost of Empire? How does Victorian handwork feature in her work and what tale is being told by these textiles? While the B.C. Archives hold a large collection of negatives from the Maynard Studio there are few business or personal documents to provide insight into the life and work of this artist. Of the images themselves, the majority were meant for public consumption and to fulfill contemporary expectations regarding portraiture and photography; nonetheless, a good number of unusual works also exist.

Many of these are autobiographical – images of Hannah and her immediate family – some within a studio setting and others within the parlor. Others defy description but are equally insightful – presenting fastidiously manipulated images and narratives that utilize innovative techniques and unexpected imagery judiciously balanced by the familiar – the decorative – the domestic. In fact, I would suggest that her success was dependent upon her familiarity with the language of fashionable domestic textiles. This underlying narrative becomes evident not only in the unsettling photographs that include handwork but more importantly in those that rely on textile genres for their composition. For instance, in a series of promotional cabinet cards Hannah Maynard metaphorically stitched together hundreds, even thousands, of photographs of babies and children. The language is familiar – how Maynard used it, is not.

### **Transformation of *Sarita* and *Mawa* : The Impact of Market Trade on the Textile Culture of the Toraja People**

Sandra Sardjono and Christine Giuntini

Considered as sacred cloths to the Toraja people from the mountain of central Sulawesi, Indonesia, *Sarita* and *Mawa* were kept as family heirlooms and displayed only at traditional rituals--both life affirming and funerary ceremonies. Their presence signifies the blessings of the rituals as well as status symbols of the family. Up to that time, *Sarita* and *Mawa* were both made locally and obtained from abroad through trade. The indigenous *Sarita* and *Mawa* carry imageries of people, buffalo and geometric



abstraction that symbolize the origin of life, ancestors and afterlife; some are directly related to images seen on local archaeological finds, wood carvings on old coffins and traditional houses, as well as Indian *Mawa* and Dutch *Sarita* . One of the oldest types of imported *Mawa* are is from India and bears comparative examples have been found in Fustat and date to the 14th century hand-drawn resist printed Indian cloths found in Fustat. Many varieties of Indian *Mawa* exist, with later examples done with block hand-drawn or stamped mordents and resist prints, and sometimes on machine made cloth. In the 19th century, the Dutch filled the market for *saritas* for a short period of time. These imported Dutch types were completely factory-manufactured, albeit of a high quality. The indigenous *Sarita* and *Mawa* carry imageries of people, buffalo and geometric abstraction that symbolize the origin of life, ancestors and afterlife; some are directly related to images seen on local archaeological finds, wood carvings on old coffins and traditional houses, as well as Indian *Mawa* and Dutch *Sarita* . This presentation will explore the relationship among *Sarita* and *Mawa* that were produced by the native Toraja, Indian craftsmen, and the Dutch manufacture: stylistic distinctions and essential symbolism including narrative features will be discussed, and technical difference in materials and method of manufacture will be explored. The later will be accomplished by creating a database in order to quantify the differences and, hopefully, to group these seemingly disparate variety.

### **Suellen Glashausser: Books as Revelation**

Pamela Scheinman

The posthumous exhibit *Suellen Glashausser and the Book: Enduring Delight* (April 24-June 2, 2002 at the John Cotton Dana Library, Rutgers University, Newark, NJ), a year after her death at the age of 59, proved a revelation to those who knew her fiber wall hangings and sculpture. Not only did it confirm the artist's prolific imagination, inventive use of materials and playful humor, but the presentation of some seventy one-of-a-kind books showed how much personal narrative infused her work. Glashausser focused on mundane objects and domestic themes enriched by travel. The books record her ever-changing "obsessions."

Like Picasso, who similarly suppressed a natural gift, she was after a spontaneous, child-like response. Glashausser rejected her own consummate skill with a sewing machine to draw with thread and needle, awkwardly, by hand. Collage was her

preferred method and "messy" stitching her glue. Basting and French knots also served as a sort of code or shorthand. Occasionally she scrawled on or embroidered pages in her distinctive cursive handwriting. Folk art intrigued her. She freely layered dishcloths, garters, netting, glassine, cellophane, printed ephemera, sheet metal, screen mesh and paper products (cups, towels, tags, etc.). More was always more.

Yet each book is a rigorous exercise in process. Undoubtedly inspired by three Berkeley mentors--Ed Rossbach, Lillian Elliot and Joanne Segal Brandford--who encouraged improvisation on historical and/or ethnographic textiles, Glashausser's books explore structure (from simple accordion folds to intricate flexagons), patterning and repetition. Her bound edges and finished corners evidence a profound love of textile traditions.

### **Mapping New Textile Territory: Memory, Materiality and Process (organized session)**

Ruth Scheuing

Five artists present research that informs the creation of new art works. Research topics focus on maps, samplers, family history, bio-engineering, and satellite and GPS technologies. The presentations explore historical knowledge, personal stories, recent industrial experimentations in bio-materials and global issues; they explore and question assumptions of textiles as a comforting domestic setting and open up new territories for textiles.

Textiles matter as objects, through their process and their material. Context is shaped by history, society, culture, gender or technology. Stitching and weaving have unique voices as narratives, samplers or maps. The narrative potential is also evident in myths and fairy tales, as well as in history and personal memories. Penelope, after all, was a weaver, and a sweater can keep you warm and also hold conflicting memories.

References to the body and the self inform most of the works, directly or indirectly. Involvement with processes includes the use of tools; from pens and needles to computers. This raises issues about the ways we use and experience different technologies. Every tool has complex associations with gender, history, science, economics and military technology. How do drawings made by satellite tracking devices inform the work and how are traditional maps and samplers transformed in contemporary practices?

## **Walking a Line: GPS and Satellite Technologies as Narratives**

Ruth Scheuing

Global Positioning System (GPS) and satellite images of the earth are now widely available. Satellite images deliver a global view of the world to our living rooms via satellites and the WWW, while handheld GPS devices allow us to record various journeys as 'tracks' and drawings. These linear narratives record my body moving through space by walking, biking, driving, kayaking, etc., and create patterns of my daily activities.

As an artist I am interested in these new technologies and in blurring lines between a global perspective and domestic space. I look at GPS/satellite technologies and their histories as military application and spy technologies and explore potentials for fictional journeys and ordinary daily activities. I also draw on 'walking' as a conceptual and meditative practice by artists such as Richard Long and Hamish Fulton. In addition textiles and traveling are connected through global trade and journeys to the Silk Road and explorations of Canada's north.

This research connects to my earlier work with Jacquard weaving, which draws inspiration from historical floral patterns, technology, computers, Ada Lovelace and Cyborgs. Recent Jacquard weavings combine floral designs with travel via satellite images to remote places, mountains, lakes and glaciers, and views of 'natural' events, such as fires, cyclones and ice breaking up in the North Sea.

## **Continuity and Change in Maya Weaving: White on White Cobán Cloth**

Margot Blum Schevill

As seen in the murals of Bonampak, Chiapas, Mexico, depicting ancient Maya court scenes, Maya women wore diaphanous white long huipiles or blouses. Colored designs do not seem to be present, but there may be white on white supplementary weft brocading in the textiles. Today, in the Maya communities around Cobán, Alta Verapaz, Guatemala, women in Samac continue to weave and wear white on white short huipiles with supplementary weft brocaded white designs woven on backstrap looms as their

ancestors did. Innovations, however, have occurred over time. Some women are weaving colored designs into the white background, others are weaving colored backgrounds with colored designs, while still others are buying commercial cloth and embroidering elaborate designs around the neck but continuing with the accepted form of the garment. What has contributed to the continuity of this Cobán white on white huipil style? Based on recent fieldwork in February 2005, this paper explores the context of several weaving cooperatives in the Cobán area, with whom Peace Corps Volunteers are working, as well as what is being produced for local markets. It appears that Maya weavers are adapting their skills and producing quality controlled textiles for export and sale within Guatemala, as well as for their own personal use.

### **Textiles as Indicators of Social Economy in Pre-Spanish Peru: Isotopic Analysis of Camelid Fibre (Llama, Alpaca) to Determine Source of Fibre**

Roxane Shaughnessy, Christine D. White, Fred Longstaffe and Andrew Nelson

Ancient South American textiles often come to Museums divorced from their physical, social and cultural settings. How do we reconstruct and understand textile production and its role in the social economy of ancient societies?

Among the lines of inquiry that have been used to identify and contextualize pre-Spanish textiles is fibre analysis. Work has been done to analyze the dyes and dye sources used on camelid fibres. Another method is isotopic analysis of camelid fibre to determine diet, an indicator of the habitat of the animals. This paper will present the results of isotopic analyses undertaken in partnership with researchers at the University of Western Ontario. Samples of camelid fibre from textiles in a museum collection, where provenance is attributed to coastal Peru from stylistic and structural analysis, are being tested through isotopic analysis for information on diet.

We know that vertical or complementary relationships existed between Andean groups, facilitating the redistribution of goods. It is accepted that camelid fibre was traded from the highlands to the coast in pre-Spanish times. It has also been suggested that llamas and possibly alpacas were raised on the coast as well as the highlands. The most important fibre producers for fine textiles are alpaca. If alpaca fibre can be shown to evidence a corn diet this suggests they were raised on the coast, as corn can only be grown at lower elevations. Results will inform current thinking regarding textile

production methods, trade, and the relocation of animals or specialists to produce textile goods in the northern coast and highlands of Peru.

**Textiles - Math = 0; Textiles + Math =  $\infty$**

### **Textiles and the Body: The Geometry of Clothing**

Madelyn Shaw

*In 1868 the Italian mathematician Beltrami had described a surface called a pseudosphere, which is the hyperbolic equivalent of a cone. He actually made a version of his model by taping together long skinny triangles - the same principle behind the flared gored skirts some folk dancers wear* (Margaret Wertheim "Crocheting the Hyperbolic Plane: An Interview with David Henderson and Daina Taimina" *Cabinet*, Issue 16, Winter 2004  
<http://www.cabinetmagazine.org/issues/16/>).

Those who make clothing from cloth must always take into account two geometries: the geometry of the cloth and the geometry of the body. The inherent structure of cloth reflects mathematical principles. Interlaced threads create square or triangular grids, techniques such as knitting or crocheting can make grids of any shape, from triangular to polyhedral. The interstices between the threads affect the fall and movement of the cloth as much as the threads themselves. Garments can be created without tailoring, or with a single seam, by using a single plane figure—a square, rectangle, circle, or circle segment—or by combining planar elements through cutting and seaming. Knitting and crocheting allow the formation of complex geometric forms without seams, modeling hyperbolic space. Whether a garment follows the contours of the body or imposes a shell upon the body without regard to the human substructure beneath, mathematics and geometry are at work.

### **Sustainability of Handwoven Carpets in Turkey:**

#### **The Importance of Technical Distinctions between Regional Carpet Styles**

Feryal Söylemezoğlu and Sema Özkan Tağı

Carpets are an important element of Turkish traditional culture worthy of preservation. They still provide income for many. In almost every region hand-woven carpets are still

produced. Regional production distinctions are very important, since carpet designs are generally known by their regional names. Each region uses distinctive combinations of raw materials, colour, designs, and is characterized by distinct modes of construction and density of knots.

Maintenance of regional styles of production is dependent on the survival of the raw materials and the dye traditions. Traditional breeds of sheep and goats are becoming scarce, and there has been a widespread shift to the use of imported wool yarns that differ markedly in quality and technical characteristics from traditional Turkish wool. Natural dyes are more work and so commercially dyed yarns are widely used. Efforts are being made to preserve traditional dyeing information as it was practiced in different regions, and encourage its use in regional workshops and cooperatives. In addition, conversion to new types of looms also alters the weave and tends to homogenize the weave structure and knot count-particularly since standardized imported wool yarns are most commonly used.

In this paper the situation in regard to the sustainability of unique regional styles will be discussed. Currently there is a homogenization of hand carpet weaving occurring in low-end production across Turkey; this production threatens unique regional traditions. Information about carpet production and trade will be given in relation to the regional carpet production centers. Some characteristics of regional carpets such as their raw materials, colour, design, and other technical features will be explained in the context of their relevance to the sustainability of hand-woven carpets in Turkey.

## **Unraveling the Story: Art Holmes' War Correspondent Uniform**

Courtney Stewart

This paper will explore an object from the CBC Museum collection, a war correspondent uniform that belonged to CBC journalist Art Holmes during WWII. Interested as much in the broader notion of uniformity, as in the strong symbolic value of this particular piece, this paper will address the significance of this object within the CBC Museum collection, a compilation that contains very few textiles.

War correspondents have, and continue to risk their own safety to communicate information from the front lines. Art Holmes was an engineer who produced valuable programming, which allowed news from the front to be communicated to those at

home. World War II saw the first uses of technology to transmit war reports, a time that began a revolution in radio recordings and broadcasts. Thanks to his relentless determination to capture a story, Holmes produced the finest collection of London Blitz recordings ever made, and created numerous reports and programmes that informed millions about the war. Although these correspondents did not engage in battle, they took similar risks and vested themselves in the same attire. Yet, they were not soldiers.

Addressing the notion and function of uniform, this paper will examine how Art Holmes' costume vested him in the very stories he was portraying. It will also illustrate the complexities involved in outfitting military garb while not actually involved in combat. As a woven archetype, this uniform is a symbol for the values of journalism, the allied forces, and the timeless ritual of battle, embodied in a 20th century material culture artifact.

## **Ultrasonic Exhaustion**

Janet Stoyel

The exhaustion of dye colorant, whether natural dye or chemical dye, from a textile dye bath solution is a continual problem for environmental ethical reasons, for commercial dyers facing pollution legislation, and, for the dyer-craftsman a major concern of economic viability. Common sense therefore dictates a total absorption of all dye colorant from a dye-bath, with no colour in effluent or wet waste. This is the optimum solution. But, is this possible?

An in-depth investigation into ultrasound technology has suggested it is feasible to employ low-tech ultrasonic solutions to increase the uptake of mordant and/or dye into textile fibre, and to dramatically reduce the amount of residual colour in a finished dye-bath in an economically sustainable manner.

This presentation will discuss ultrasound technology, the methods and equipment necessary, and suitable, for both commercial and craft based textile dyeing solutions resulting in an increased exhaustion of dye liquor, improved depths of colour and enhanced visual aesthetics.

A romantic colour story: investigation and exploration of historical mordanting, recipes and colors with futuristic technology.

## **Textiles as Text**

Laura Strand

The Latin word *texto*, meaning "to weave," is the root word from which the words textile and text enter the English language. The visual and metaphorical links between textiles and text are myriad and rich with potential. As the textile field increasingly serves as an umbrella discipline encompassing papermaking, and book arts as well as weaving, dyeing, screen-printing and basketry we see the linkages between disciplines increasing.

My first interest in this theme developed through experiences with Trique weavers in Oaxaca, Mexico. The lines of symbols that make up their cloth are unmistakably lines of symbolic texts that can be "read" within Trique culture. Returning to my own studio practice I found that increasing the interactive qualities of my work with language also increased viewer's interest in decoding my symbolic language. That realization led to research with my students and to other contemporary textile practitioners whose work blurs the boundaries between textile and book.

In this talk I am presenting the rich variety of these relationships discovered in the work of several of my students, Rachel Hayes, Luanne Rimel and Erin Vigneau-Dimick each of whom embroiders text into their textiles. Also, I am presenting the work of papermakers.

Karen Stahlecker and Jo Stealey work in sculptural book forms; Christine LoFaso uses jacquard woven texts as upholstery; Sandra Turley's *devoré* silk book entitled, *This Original Self*, uses textile process to replace language.

Through these examples of contemporary textile practice I am shining a light on the relationships between textile and text in an effort to restore their conflated origin.

## **Preserving Provenance: Collaborative Conversation with a Textile Collector**

Susan M. Strawn, Mary A. Littrell, and Linda Carlson



Donations of textiles are of critical importance to universities and museums that rely on historical and ethnographic textiles as a basis for research, teaching, and exhibitions. In turn, textile collectors who have amassed substantial numbers of pieces during life-long international travel often seek appropriate donation venues. Much of the provenance for individual textile pieces may be lost, however, before a donor selects an institution and the donation is accessioned into a collection. A museum or university often receives a donation after the demise of a donor who did not document individual textiles in a scholarly fashion. Loss of provenance limits the story-telling ability of individual textiles used for teaching, publication, and exhibitions. This paper describes a method that assures provenance will be retained for each textile in a living collection bequeathed to a university's historical costume and textile collection. Well in advance of actually receiving the collection, a collaborative photo- and text-documentation procedure in the donor's home not only recorded each of more than 300 extraordinary textiles but initiated a conversation between donor and university educators and curators. Nurturing this ongoing conversation assures provenance for each textile and records the most salient design elements applicable to current teaching and exhibition opportunities. The donor gained an understanding of scholarship that is shaping her subsequent choices and documentation of the textiles she selects into her living collection, a personal narrative of her collecting life.

### **The Documentary Value of Repairs to the *Hwarot* , the Korean Bridal Robe**

Kisook Suh

This study examines the Hwarot, the Korean bridal robe, from the Joseon dynasty (A.D. 1392-1910). Most extant Hwarots in Korea and abroad have this in common by stitching and sewing patches to repair them. They are all mended with several different textiles. These repairs were made and have retained over generations to prepare this special robe for a wedding ceremony. The different patches and stitches that remain on the robes represent a dialogue and story of a part of women's culture through these generations. The origin of the Hwarot is the costume of the Tang dynasty (A.D. 618-906). It retains the structure of an ancient ceremonial robe that is made of fine silk and embellished with embroidered flowers and auspicious motifs. Since it was very costly to make the Hwarots they were reused for many generations by attaching patches and adding stitches. The robes descended to the next generation and were also worn by townspeople, sharing community property. While the elaborately embroidered

symbolic motifs convey the idea of women's hope and longing for marriage, the patches and stitches contain the repairer's, usually a family member, care and personal wishes for the bride. A conservation issue is whether or not to remove the old repairs. In many cases, repairs were coarsely done and often deformed the robe. However, considering the historical and ethnographic value of these repairs as material documentation, it is hard to decide to remove the previous repairs unless it is thought they might cause fatal further damage.

### **Remade and Recovered: A Garment as Personal Narrative**

Bobbie Sumberg

A narrative textile can operate at many levels of meaning, from the recounting of the experience of a social, cultural or national group within the global context to a profoundly personal account of an incident or period within a single lifespan. JE was in a serious motorcycle accident in 1973. During her recovery from the injuries she sustained she re-made the jeans she was wearing at the time of the accident--jeans which had to be cut to remove them during her rescue-into a skirt. JE used the sewing and embroidery skills she acquired as a child to embroider and appliqué the newly fashioned garment. Working her injured hands was essential to her recovery. Although this garment represents something unique to its maker and her personal history as an individual, she (and it) is also rooted in time and place. The 1970s was a fertile period for creativity in the needle arts among young people. Embellished garments were common and popular. Needle work and craft magazines were shifting their focus from projects for the home to projects that appealed to younger women and teens. Using information from a focused life history of JE in reference to sewing, embroidery, dress, the motorcycle accident and her recovery, this paper will explore the iconography and techniques she used in this particular garment and its intersection with the popular practice of needle work in the mid 1970s. Personal meaning and aesthetic choice are analyzed in reference to signs of the times.

**T**

## **Symbolic Embellishment of Ritual Textiles used in Native American Burial Mounds**

Harriet J. Taylor and Stephen A. Taylor

In 1977 deep within the strata of what has come to be known as the Augustine Mounds, textiles adorned with rich copper beads and intricate pattern structures were discovered among the burial remains of an ancient Native American people. Now, the 2500 year old artifacts are being re-examined for the powerful history they contain.

This paper describes the textile embellishments found on the Native American artifacts from the Archaic Period, in the Augustine Burial Mound in Miramichi, New Brunswick. The textile fragments are compared and contrasted to artifacts from other Native American groups from an historical perspective, the ceremonial and ritual context in which these textiles were created as forms of empowerment and symbolism, and the religious, political and ethical constructs within the Native American cultural experience. Discussed is the symbolism in the construction methods of these textiles, the forms and functions of the artifacts for the culture that created them, and the present context in which these burial objects are being reviewed.

Scholars have hypothesized the existence of chiefdoms and multiethnic stratified social systems evidenced in prehistoric textiles associated with mummies and burial mounds, through examination of yarn characteristics, dyes, surface embellishments, form, and style. This paper examines how burial mound textiles throughout the Americas hold decorative elements that include animal hair, metals, shells, bone, and precious and semiprecious stones to adorn clothing and headdress, and how these embellishments communicate messages of ritual, magic, and power.

## **Stitching Cultures Together By Hand: Norwegian Hardangersøm Embroidery and Norwegian American Ethnic Identity**

Susan J. Torntore

Cloth can be an important means to accommodate and express individual identities in the process of making it and displaying or using it in dress or household furnishings. Hardangersøm is a distinctive counted- and drawn-thread openwork type of embroidery that has been closely identified with a traditional Norwegian ethnic identity. Originally taking its name from the Hardanger geographic region in Norway,

hardangersøm was used to decorate the linen collars, cuffs and aprons of the regional folk dress called *bunad*. Hardangersøm became fashionable in American embroidery at the turn of the 20th century. Known as "Norwegian Drawn Work" or as "hardanger," the technique crossed borders from regional ethnic expression to American popular craze. Within this context, Norwegian immigrants to the United States used hardangersøm to articulate their ethnic identity and pride in their heritage, whether or not they came from the Hardanger region. In particular, one garment made circa 1906 by Mary Aamodt Opsahl, a Norwegian American dressmaker in North Dakota, is a masterpiece of hardangersøm and dressmaking that was used to transform the ethnic embroidery technique into a very fashionable American statement of style. This paper presents a cultural biography of this garment and how it creates an intersection between two cultures. Multiple sources and research methods were utilized, including those of material culture, history, ethnography, immigrant studies, and genealogy. I analyze not only the embroidered cloth but the dressmaker's specific historical and cultural contexts, in order to understand the construction and expression of ethnic identity, using cloth, within the complexity of the immigrant experience.

### **"When This You See, Remember Me": Sampler Making as a Material Practice of Identity and Selfhood**

Mary Lou Trinkwon

As a historical form, Samplers have acted as a container for individuals, families and the self. Encompassing all the essential elements of storytelling, including a subject, time and place, Samplers have been stitched, handed down across generations and collected by curious individuals and institutions. The interconnectedness, between individuals, families and collectors, between those who made them and those who viewed them, makes samplers stand out as unique objects, storage devices that hold inordinate amounts of information, narratives and stories.

My presentation will include research on historic Samplers, made by my students and exhibition pieces from a community project at the Britannia Gallery, which I curated in August 2005. I will discuss Samplers in terms of how they function as narrative, the multiple narrative aspects they contain and the diverse content, materials and formal aspects that makes each of them unique. Samplers lend themselves to a reading of multiple narratives leading us (the viewer) to our own stories, through the intimate

interaction between maker and viewer. Sampler making and viewing allows for the location of the self within a broad cultural, social and personal context. Given the historic backdrop of Sampler making, where Samplers were generally not seen as an opportunity for self-expression, this theme is, I believe, compelling and worthy of discussion within contemporary Textile Art practice.

### **Marie Cuttoli: Patron of Modern Textiles**

Virginia Gardner Troy

Marie Cuttoli (1879-1973) was an editor, collector, proprietor of her boutique Myrbor, and patron of the arts par excellence from the 1920s through the 1950s. She contributed to modernist developments in cross-cultural discourses in textiles through her work with Algerian textile artisans who produced finely crafted embroidered and woven work based on designs by European modernists such as Natalia Goncharova. These works were subsequently sold at Cuttoli's Parisian boutique, Myrbor, primarily during the 1920s. During the 1930s and after, she played an essential role in reviving the rich pictorial tapestry tradition in France through her innovative and collaborative work with modern artists - such as Pablo Picasso, Fernand Léger, Jean Lurçat, and Le Corbusier - and skilled Aubusson weavers. She played a particularly important role in inspiring the artist Jean Lurçat to devote most of his long career to tapestry; their collaborations in the 1920s led both of them to envision modern tapestry in completely new ways.

Cuttoli's contribution to modern art has been sadly neglected. Her collection of tapestries was received with great acclaim in Europe and America in the late 1930s, but after that the art of pictorial tapestry and the work of Marie Cuttoli seem to have taken a backseat to other developments in modern art, particularly those involving Abstract Expressionist painting. This paper will provide a much-needed summary of Cuttoli's work, and will present a fully researched compilation of the objects d'art, carpets, fashion, and tapestries that she supported. Attention will be paid to her instigation of new visual forms, techniques, venues and interior design through the textile media and how her ideas shaped the ideas of her artistic collaborators.

U

## **Cotton to Cloth: An Indian Epic**

Uzramma

India's skill in making cloth from cotton was legendary in ancient times. India 'clothed the world' in cotton, and was pre-eminent in textile export from Roman times up to the end of the eighteenth century. With the invention of textile machinery in England she lost that advantage. However, the handloom continues even today in the twenty-first century to employ vast numbers in the country, most of them weaving on their own looms in their own homes.

Weavers depend for their yarn on spinning mills. Large spinning mills are resource intensive; they use huge amounts of power and water, and need standardized, long-staple cotton. This cotton can be grown in India only on irrigated land with huge applications of chemical fertilizer and pesticides, unlike the traditional rain-fed varieties. Cotton is grown in India by smallholders and the expense of irrigation and of the chemicals is ruinous if the crop fails.

It is the aim of Dastkar Andhra's small-scale yarn making project to link cotton farmers and hand weavers by eliminating large spinning mills. The advantages of the small scale are ecological, social, and technical: Dispersed production avoids pollution and over-use of resources. Distributed ownership promotes democracy in production. Technically the slow speed of the processing chain retains the valuable qualities of the cotton fibre: absorbency, colour-holding, elasticity and durability.

At present we have one pilot unit working, producing 1000 meters of cloth a month. In the next three years we hope to set up more such units in different parts of the country.

V

**Textiles - Math = 0; Textiles + Math = ∞**  
**Mathematical Approaches in Quilt Design**

Gerda de Vries

This paper is inspired by the question addressed to the author in the plenary panel discussion Textiles - Math = 0; Textiles + Math =  $\infty$ , namely 'What is the relationship of mathematical ideas to your quilts?' The quilts of the author are mathematical because their designs are the result of structured, logical thought processes, primarily revolving around the enumeration of all possible ways to satisfy a set of self-imposed rules or restrictions, such as restrictions on the placement of color, or the combination of fundamental units. To illustrate this mathematical approach to design, three quilts by the author are deconstructed, and the mathematical questions underlying the designs highlighted. The three quilts serve to demonstrate that recognizing the mathematics in design decisions leads to endless possibilities: textiles plus math is infinity.

### **Quilts as Mathematical Objects: From Traditional to Contemporary**

Gerda de Vries

What is a mathematical quilt? In a sense, every quilt is mathematical, by virtue of the fact that it has shape and dimension. But some quilts are more mathematical than others, and in different ways. In this paper, I will show examples of a number of ways in which quilts can be understood to be mathematical objects. Some quilts are mathematical by serendipity. For example, many traditional quilts are constructed with repeated blocks that are arranged in pleasing, often regular, patterns. Such patterns can be analyzed and classified into one of seventeen symmetries of the plane. Curiously, although the variety of patterns seen in traditional quilts seems infinite, only four of the seventeen symmetry groups are used commonly, leaving much room for further exploration. Some quilts are mathematical because the maker purposely makes use of a mathematical concept in his/her design. Examples include quilts depicting a fractal (a geometrical object that is self-similar at all scales), quilts whose design is based on a sequence of numbers such as the well-known Fibonacci sequence, quilts based on isometric perspective, and so forth. Yet other quilts are mathematical because the design is the result of a mathematical thought process. For example, the quilt maker may establish a set of rules dictating the shape, color, and combination of simple elements that are sufficiently loose to allow variety, yet sufficiently rigid to provide structure. The final design then might illustrate all possible ways to satisfy the rules. Regardless of

the degree to which a quilt is mathematical, recognizing a mathematical idea in a quilt can lead to endless designs.

## W

### **The Never-Ending Possibility in Textile Art Education**

Jan-Ru Wan

Combining various techniques used in other disciplines, I create sculpture/installation within which images and inspirations from various cultures, religions, and even sciences are intertwined to express my ideas. I use a fiber art medium to intuitively question, reflect, and respond to the environment around me while connecting with my viewers' emotion and memory at the same time.

My art is a labor of love, involving the meditative processes of weaving, stitching, and printing, incorporating different techniques and unusual materials, and evoking deep emotional responses. In this panel I will first briefly address how I was inspired to start my career as a textile artist, followed by the teaching approaches I use in my classroom. Because textile art is filled with different techniques and possibility, I push students to learn by building a solid technical foundation, guiding them onto their own path, and helping them to find their true passion in art making. In this panel I will focus on how I use different techniques and projects to induce students to initiate contemporary concepts and realize the possibilities while learning some of the traditional techniques. My hope is that every technique would become magical and meaningful for my students, enabling them to find their own paths using textile media.

### ***La Mode à l'Écossaise: Textile of Diplomacy***

Seta K. Wehbé

Textile design can provide an immediate expression of intent, a visual communication. Tartans were made and used in Scotland for centuries before the big revival in the early



nineteenth century; the great promoter of tartan fashion was the poet and novelist Sir Walter Scott. In 1822 when King George IV of England went on a reconciliatory visit to Scotland he wore a Highland wool tartan kilt and impressed his hosts. This started an interest for tartans in England, which was continued by his niece Victoria; the Queen became very partial to these patterns, and even the royal children were seen playing in tartan kilts. In 1855 the Empress Eugénie, for a state visit to England wore a vivid silk tartan dress as much to please her hostess, Queen Victoria, as to emphasize her own Scottish heritage. The vogue for Scottish tartans spread through France leading to the production of silk tartans and the development of "*La Mode à l'Écossaise*." The popularity of tartans was further enhanced with the discovery of bright colored aniline dyes; these were the first synthetically produced basic dyes from the distillation of coal-tar. The invention of the Jacquard loom made the weaving of complex tartan patterns even faster and cheaper, and accessible to middle class consumers. Silk tartans and other manifestations of *La Mode à l'Écossaise* were at their peak in Europe in the mid-1850s and early 1860s, and even made it across the Atlantic. Textile designs, such as the tartan, can be powerful yet discrete means of communication.

### ***Culture and Context: Innovations in Education (organized session)***

Wendy Weiss and Jennifer Angus

Three artist/educators explore ways in which they use the larger culture to inform how they encourage students to develop a creative process that interconnects with history, intuition, culture, religion, politics, and science. Each artist will discuss her particular way of establishing resonant themes. All three artists work from their areas of passion to develop teaching strategies and how they share and explore their own pre-occupations with the students. One speaker will discuss how she guides students to find their own voice and passion as she builds a solid technical foundation in the basic textile art forms, while another will show how she integrates historical research, intuitive empathy (the ability to sense what is going on in others as if it were happening emotionally and physically to oneself) and personal stories. The third speaker will discuss how she combined contemporary craft theory with practice to generate exhibition quality work on culturally challenging subjects. Providing specific models, this session is designed to initiate a conversation among the members of the Textile Society of America about how we teach and how we can foster an ongoing conversation about our teaching in the textile studio.

## **Difficult Subjects**

Wendy Weiss

This graduate seminar in a Master of Arts program combines theory and practice as it broadly explores issues in textile art and design, culminating in a departmental gallery exhibition. The strength of the gallery programming allowed the seminar participants to have regular contact with visiting artist/makers over the semester. The seminar theme for fall 2005 was craft history, craft in a cultural context and craft makers. The readings for the course examined the historical role of craft and how the meaning of craft has changed over time. Participants examined the role of institutions, such as the museum space, in framing this debate. They considered the relationship of the maker to the object and the object as an entity that exists in the world apart from the maker. They examined the relationship between craft and culture and how some practitioners of craft use their making of objects to connect to larger current issues.

Prior to the start of the course, I invited three nationally recognized artists who have worked explicitly with politically engaged imagery, to anchor the exhibition and converse with the students. Students identified and developed their own "difficult" themes to explore in their creative work, which includes aging, balance, cytogenesis, death, economy, environment, gender, heritage, identity, pay-inequality, politics, racism, roles, sexuality and war. The discussion about the meaning of making objects in concert with generating work on personally compelling subjects forms the substance of this paper.

## **Delineating Women's Historical Lives through Textiles: A Latvian Knitter's Narrative of Memory**

Eileen Wheeler

In this interpretive study I demonstrate that "textile narratives" are historical sources, together with the study of objects and oral history, which provide more delineation of women's lives that enhance our knowledge of women's history. I bring aspects of this under-explored history into sharper focus by examining the close relationship with textiles that has featured in the lives of many women through their creative work. The

associated stories imbedded in the experience of those who negotiate particular historical circumstances that include political resistance and dislocation are also examined. The narrative, on which I focus, revolves around a knitting machine and its place in the history and survival of Latvian refugee Anna Samens and her family in their desperate flight to Canada in World War II. Her story is partially revealed through my study of archival records, interpretation of photographs and interview with the knitter/businesswoman/refugee's daughter. Placed against the backdrop of war ravaged Europe, it unfolds from a precise moment in 1944 when the skilled knitwear designer and factory owner, faced with annihilation, sees her knitting machine as the key to her family's survival. By drawing on the conceptual framework of memory that identifies agency as pivotal in the selection of memory and its articulation, I demonstrate how this textile narrative can be used as a means to communicate knowledge, history, culture and identity. The narrative at the heart of this paper, and its analysis, gives evidence of the value of textile study as a vehicle to shed light on marginalized histories and a means to hear more women's voices to ameliorate a marginalization of the past.

*White Snake; Black Snake :*

### **Folk Narrative Meets Master Narrative in Qing Dynasty Sichuanese Cross-stitch Medallions**

Cory Willmott

In contrast to the imperial silk embroideries of the Qing Dynasty, the "blue and white" cotton cross-stitch embroideries of rural communities throughout West China have remained relatively obscure. Passed from generation to generation of women as bed valances in the wedding procession, the embroidered 'medallions' of this cross-stitch tradition enacted the social relations of patrilineal kinship reckoning and 'patri-local' residency that determined the parameters of women's lives.

Frequently occurring motifs include both the emblems of fertility and conjugal happiness expected in such a context, and also representations of the wedding procession itself and the procession attending the triumphant return of a successful son who gained scholarly, military or civil service honors. As stories that embody the defining moments of women's status, these episodes may be considered the master narratives that encapsulate the ideal roles for women's lives. But what happened when

these honors were not achieved? What effect did these pressures to attain prestige have on women's everyday lives?

Two cotton cross-stitch wedding bed valance medallions depicting the folk narrative of "White Snake; Black Snake" express the anxieties produced by the constraints of the patriarchal social structure on rural women's lives. This paper examines the relationship between, on the one hand, the motifs of this folk narrative in oral tradition and cross-stitch embroidery and, on the other hand, the role of the embroideries in real life social action and their reflection of the ideals portrayed in the master narratives.

### **Dorothy Liebes and the Textiles of American Modernism**

Alexandra Griffith Winton

This paper will locate mid-century textile designer and weaver Dorothy Liebes (1899–1972) within the context of American modernist design, presenting her as a case study demonstrating the importance of textile design to the modern design movement in America. The California-born Liebes made an enormous contribution to both mid-century modern architecture and textile design, connecting them directly, thereby helping to create a unique American modernist aesthetic.

While textiles played a key role in the development of mid-century modernism in America, their role has been largely neglected by architectural history. Liebes was a major figure in textile design during this period. Over the course of her long career, Liebes worked with many of the era's most prominent architects and designers, including Frank Lloyd Wright, Henry Dreyfuss, Donald Deskey, and Edward Durrell Stone; she contributed designs to the United Nations in 1952 and Wright's Usonian House exhibition at the Guggenheim in 1953, among other important commissions. She also immersed herself into industrial design, creating mass-produced fabrics for use in cars and electronic equipment. Additionally, Liebes occasionally designed bespoke textiles by fashion designers, notably the American women designers Bonnie Cashin and Pauline Trigère.

I will argue that textile design, as exemplified in this case by Liebes, provided an essential visual texture to modernist architectural environments; this texture was key in introducing an architectural idiom to an often-resistant American clientele. Through her

extensive work on both hand and machine-woven textile design, Liebes exerted an indelible influence on American design.

## Z

### **Weaving Messages Today: Three Decades of Belts in Taquile Island, Peru (1976–2006)**

Elayne Zorn

In studying the past, archaeologists examine change and continuity over time, but physical processes that affect the preservation of material remains make fine sequencing, at the level of decades, difficult or impossible. Cultural anthropologists and others who study present-day material culture frequently conduct short-term fieldwork, which makes it difficult or impossible to reliably study transformations over time. One solution to this problem is long-term ethnographic fieldwork, combining synchronic and diachronic data collection, to study processes of change and continuity in the production of individual weavers and extended families over generations.

This paper examines three decades (1976-2006) of belt weaving on Taquile Island, in Lake Titicaca, Peru, based on ethnographic fieldwork by an anthropologist. Taquile is one of the few communities in highland Peru where indigenous, Quechua-speaking people still produce and wear handwoven textiles on a daily basis. The community has experienced enormous changes recently, resulting from the commercialization of their textiles starting in 1968, and the development of tourism starting in 1976. This paper traces two topics, technology and symbolism, through the textiles woven by the women of one extended family. The analysis of weaving technology examines modifications to the traditional loom made when Taquileans taught a weaving workshop in New York City. The study of symbolism analyzes the development of the so-called "calendar belt," created when Taquileans first traveled abroad, to London. Long-term ethnographic research is essential to understand the messages that Andean weavers communicate.