THE ARIZONA STATE MUSEUM:

Textiles in Tucson!

by Diane Dittemore, Ann Lane Hodland, Michael Jacobs, Nancy Odegaard, and Lynn Teague

While Navajo blankets and rugs readily grab people’s attention as symbols of the American Southwest, the Arizona State Museum in Tucson stands to deepen the public’s understanding of southwestern textile traditions through its broad collections and programs.

Currently, an exhibition focuses on prehistoric sandals, intricately interlaced, twined and wrapped with yucca cordage and other plant materials. A museum catalogue, titled “The Material World of the Tarahumara,” addresses the weaving traditions of northwestern Mexico, sometimes called “The Other Southwest.” And a long-term exhibition includes a full-scale diorama that depicts a contemporary Navajo extended family spinning and weaving, surrounded by the modern trappings of everyday life.

The oldest anthropological museum in the Southwest, Arizona State Museum was founded in 1893. Its collections are recognized internationally by scholars and native arts aficionados.

Holdings include more than 100,000 artifacts from excavations that shed light on the prehistoric Hohokam, Mogollon and Anasazi cultures of Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and Utah. Approximately 1,700 of these items are fabrics, sandals and other perishables. In addition, more than 26,000 ethnographic objects, including almost 3,500 textiles, document the lifeways of historic and living peoples worldwide. Approximately one-half hail from the Southwest, and include collections from the Tohono and Akimel O’odham, Yuman, Southern Paiute, Pai, Apache, Navajo and Pueblo communities in the U.S. and the Seri, Tarahumara, Tepehuan and Mayo territories of Mexico.

The material culture of Yaqui and Pima peoples from

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both sides of the border is also represented.

Prehistoric textiles in the museum’s collections are especially diverse. Geographically, the southwestern holdings include fabrics from excavations in sites from Chihuahua, Mexico, north to Colorado and Utah. Most major fabric structures known from the region are represented. Looped and knotted netting textiles are among the earliest in the collections, predating the acquisition of the true loom. Wild plant, dog hair and human hair textiles illustrate the southwestern fiber repertoire before the acquisition of cotton in about AD 700. Woven openwork and gauze fabrics in cotton document the preference for open, lace-like fabrics in the warm seasons of the Sonoran Desert, while rabbit-fur robes testify to the colder conditions of winter in the desert. Colorful tapestries are from the Verde River valley and other parts of the Southwest.

The “Tonto Shirt,” a sleeveless cotton garment made in the interlaced sprang technique is among the most spectacular items. Yucca string skirts illustrate an aspect of prehistoric southwestern costume that has many parallels worldwide.

In addition, numerous plain weave specimens of cotton, yucca and Indian hemp show the more common fabric styles. As comparative material, a small but diverse array of pre-Columbian Andean textiles includes a spectacular Chimú manta and a Warí tunic.

“Walking the Desert: Prehistoric Sandals of the Southwest,” an exhibition which continues through 1999, features footwear from ancient times to the present day. It showcases elaborately twined yucca fiber sandals made by Basketmaker III people of northeastern Arizona, c. AD 450–750. These sandals, decorated with both colored and textured geometric patterns, are the pinnacle of the sandal-maker’s art in prehistoric North America. The exhibition also contains examples of sandals from other prehistoric and historic cultures of the Southwest, including a more than 6000-year-old Archaic period sandal from southern Nevada and a pair of sandals made by a Tarahumara Indian from northwestern Mexico in the 1970s.

Although the main focus is the greater Southwest, the ethnological collections encompass material from all over the world. University professors have contributed field collections, such as the textiles and other materials that anthropologist Edward Dolsey brought back from the Philippines in the 1960s. Museum
curator Wilma Kaemlein collected over 30 Guatemalan fabrics in the field during the 1970s, lending a more modern component to earlier donations of 80-plus costumes and blankets from the same culture area.

In 1979, the University of Arizona Foundation provided funds to purchase a large portion of the Donald and Dorothy Cordry collection of Mexican Indian costumes. Numbering over 500 items, the Cordry collection dates from the 1930s to the 1960s and includes rare shellfish-dyed purple and cochineal red skirts, fine gauze huipiles, and leather and bark clothing from Chiapas. Asian textiles number over 150 and include Chinese and Japanese kimonos and other embroidered silk clothing, gifts to the museum from a number of donors. Polynesian tapa cloths, Bolivian woolen costumes and Peruvian carrying cloths are just some of the other ethnographic textiles at the museum.

Museum staff members who have textile expertise include Lynn Teague, Curator of Archaeology, whose new book, Textiles in Southwestern Prehistory, has just been published, and Diane Dittermore, Curator of Ethnology Collections, who studied with the late Kate Peck Kent at the University of Denver and has worked extensively with the Mexican Indian weaving collection. Teague and Dr. Laurie Webster, a University of Arizona alumna and Visiting Scholar, have taught textile-related classes through the Museum. Dale Brenneman, a University of Arizona doctoral candidate, investigated the production of cotton in the protohistoric Southwest using Spanish documents available at the museum. Through the Gloria F. Ross Center for Tapestry Studies (see box), southwestern weaving specialist Ann Lane Hedlund serves as a Visiting Scholar at the Museum.

Textiles have always held a special place in the museum’s collections and programs, although they are not singled out as a separate category. Integrated into the curatorial divisions of Archaeology and Ethnology, they are often combined with other artifacts for exhibits and public programs. The first specialized computer database for southwestern textiles was developed in 1979 with support from the National Endowment for the Arts. During the two-year project, Ann Hedlund analyzed and assisted with computerization of the museum’s Navajo and Pueblo textiles. Now, 20 years later, these textiles are accessible through that updated database, an excellent slide collection and improved storage units. The museum openly invites scholars to incorporate its textile collections into their research projects.
TSA Workshop

CHINESE COSTUME

With John Vollmer
Date: November 5–6
Location: Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Held at:
The Royal Ontario Museum
The Museum For Textiles
The Bata Shoe Museum

The workshop focuses on later imperial Chinese costume (17th–20th century). It explores the social, cultural and political history of Chinese aristocratic clothing using the incomparable Chinese collections at the Royal Ontario Museum. In addition, workshop participants will take part in behind-the-scenes programs at both the Museum for Textiles and Bata Shoe Museum. All three institutions are within easy walking distance of one another.

Topics and issues include: materials, textile and costume production, East Asian costume-making technology, urban and rural fashions, connoisseurship and the place of textiles within Asian art collecting.

The workshop will have limited enrollment with positions filled on a first-come first-serve basis. General registration will not begin until the detailed workshop registration form has been mailed to the TSA membership.
TSA Has an Archivist

Ellen Reardon, a relatively new member of Textile Society of America, has volunteered her services to archive the history of our organization. She reports to Lisa Aronson, chair of the Publications/Electronic Media Committee. Reardon's experience both in archival work and in textiles makes her an ideal candidate for this position.

After receiving her BA, she worked for five years as an assistant in the Harvard University Archives. Drawing on that knowledge, she later helped the Friends of the Lake Oswego Library establish a method of maintaining their history. She is now pursuing her second life as a BFA student in textiles at the Oregon College of Art and Craft.

As envisioned, the archivist's job will entail documenting (and indexing where appropriate) TSA's entire run of publications including Newsletters, Proceedings, Bibliographies, Directories and our Web site. She will also document materials such as minutes, conference/workshop reports, correspondence, newspaper articles, photographs and ephemera (i.e., programs, banquet menus) pertaining to the history of TSA. Finally, she will address the important, yet unresolved, question of where TSA archival materials ultimately should be stored. Anyone wishing to assist in this archival project can contact Reardon directly at 503-464-9824 or email: spirart@prodigy.net. Also, she requests that members send her any TSA-related articles, reviews, correspondence or other materials they may have in their files. Her address is:

Ellen Reardon
2646 SW Upper Drive Pl.
Portland, OR 97201
503-464-9824
spirart@prodigy.net

TSA Web Page Moves To a New Address

The Textile Society of America Web page is being moved to a new address: http://textilesoociety.org

The original page, created by Anu Liivandi, is being moved to a different server hosted by Cornell University. There are three advantages to this change. The Textile Society now has its own registered (and easy to remember) domain name or address, the new server will be free of charges and it is able to handle a large amount of traffic.

Once the existing site has been installed in its new location, Charlotte Jirousek will take over management of the Web page. The Society owes a great vote of thanks to Anu Liivandi for her efforts in establishing, designing and maintaining the Web site. She has created a presence for the Textile Society in the important new realm of the internet.

If anyone wishes to offer suggestions for updates, corrections or additions to the Web site hereafter, please contact Charlotte Jirousek at <cjjf@cornell.edu> or 607-255-8065.

During the summer, watch for changes, including new links to upcoming events, additional resources and the addition of images.

New Members (since 10/1/98)

Allerton, Nancy
Amidon, Catherine S.
Barrett, Annin
Barzilai, Yosi
Benjamin, Betsy Sterling
Boicourt, Eve M.
Bradehaw, R. Darden
Candee, Richard M.
Claxton, Cathy
Cohen, Steven
Corsini, Deborah
Crill, Rosemary
Dirks, Katherine
Edwards, Viki
Eldredge, Jessica J.
Fischer, Joseph
Friend, Mary Wronski
Friends of Fiber Art
Green, Katherine
Hardy, Michele
Hoffman, Jane
Iberti, Elissa Tatigikis
Johnston, Susan ("Susy")
Kaesgen, Susan
Kaufman, Suzanne
Kumra, Anuradha
Larson, Katherine
Lewis, Cynthia
Mallett, Marla
Maxwell, Robyn
McIntosh, Linda S.
McKnight, Lola
Morrison, Dorothy
Nagano, Nubuko Hiroi
Nelson, Edwina M.
Onipede, Olaperi
Pannabecker, Rachel K.
Research Library, Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Rhode Island School of Design
Root, Laura
Samuels, Helen
Schwartzman, Tamsen
Sneider, Lee
Soll, Valerie
Sudo, Reiko
Tarleton, Kathryn
Wallace, Alice Dodge
Williams, Gloria M.
Young, Carol H.
I really hope every one of you will come to feel this is your organization, and the best way to make this happen is to speak up, make yourself heard, and get involved.

One comment comes up repeatedly—that TSA should publish its own scholarly journal. As a university professor who is regularly looking for places to submit research articles, I am very aware of how much the field needs this (there are few if any journals that address the interests and concerns of all our members), and it is part of my own long-range vision.

The entire membership may not hold this as a priority, however, and it is a huge amount of work. At present we seem to have all we can do to keep up and move forward with the newsletters, bibliography, directory, symposia and symposium proceedings. Charlotte Jirousek, for instance, will oversee publication of the proceedings for the next symposium and will be working to make it a more professional-looking publication.

I would like to hear from more of you about this subject—would you like TSA to sponsor a journal, and if so, how do you envision it? What can we do toward that end? If there is anyone who would like to work toward this goal—exploring details about what would be involved, perhaps finding institutional support or sponsorship—please step forward. Many seemingly difficult things are possible when there is someone with a strong dream and lots of directed energy.

In a similar vein but more immediately, let me remind you that if you have programmatic ideas or requests for the Fall 2000 TSA Symposium in Santa Fe, or if you would like to work on the organizing committee (you can contribute even if you live far from Santa Fe), contact our co-chairs, Ann Hedlund (520 908-0386; email <ahedlund@U.Arizona.EDU>) or Margot Schevill (605 652-2767; email <margot.3@sfoArts.org>) as soon as possible. They will welcome your input.

In sum, please let us know what you want, and what you can offer! Help make TSA an even more vital and responsive resource for all of us.

— Beverly Gordon

Letter from the Editor

When I joined the TSA Board as Newsletter editor five years ago, TSA was preparing to publish its first Textiles Bibliography with The Textile Museum. Each year it has grown in length, a marker perhaps of the health of the world of textile study. This year, for the first time, it has become an independent publication with a new, small format design created by Gilbert Design Associates, the designers who have given the Newsletter its sleek new look. Mary Mallia continues to do a superb job in pulling all these references into a coherent bibliography—with members’ contributions. Please continue to help her make this annual publication bigger and better.

With every issue of the Newsletter, too, the listings of events related to textiles have expanded, as has our coverage of them. The Newsletter has relied on your broad participation. I have gotten faxes, email and snail mail from all over the world, bringing news of events, offers to review conferences, ideas for features. Your writing has been thoughtful and entertaining and you meet deadlines like you were pros! You have made my job more exciting. I am sure you will do the same for my successor.

This is my last issue as editor. It is with regret that I leave the Newsletter and the TSA Board, but preparing for a major exhibition on “Pearls” at the American Museum of Natural History occupies all my time (textiles, of course, will be included).

I have greatly enjoyed working with all of you.
Thank you.

— Kathleen Moore
**SHAW JOINS RISD MUSEUM**

The Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, has appointed Madelyn Shaw as its new Associate Curator of Costume and Textiles. She comes to the RISD Museum from the Textile Museum in Washington, and was co-chair of the TSA symposium in New York last year. She will be originating exhibitions, taking an active role in the teaching of classes and overseeing the Costume and Textiles department's role in the Argus system, as well as working on the forthcoming exhibition based on the Tiepolo dressmakers' shop collection scheduled for Winter, 2001.

**COLEMAN, KRODY MOVE UP AT TEXTILE MUSEUM**

Carol Fleming Coleman has been promoted to Director of the Lloyd Cotsen Textile Documentation Project at The Textile Museum. Lydia Fraser has moved up to Curatorial Associate on the Project, and Cecilia Gunzburger Cash has joined the museum as Curatorial Assistant for the Project.

Sumru Belger Krody has been promoted to the position of Assistant Curator, Eastern Hemisphere Collections, at The Textile Museum, Washington, DC. Her research interests are Ottoman embroideries and their cultural context and she is developing an exhibition of them for 2000 at the museum. She is also coordinator of the Collections Gallery, and managing editor of *The Textile Museum Journal*.

**FIT NAMES HOTTA**

Harumi Hotta has been named Textile Educational Associate at the Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York. She reports to Lynn Felscher, Curator of the Textile Collection.

**MOORE JOINS AMNH**

Kathleen Moore has joined the American Museum of Natural History in New York as Content Coordinator for a major exhibition on "Pearls.” The exhibition, being developed in cooperation with The Field Museum, Chicago, will open at AMNH in October 2000. It will mix natural and cultural history and will include textiles.

**WATT IN NEW POST AT MMA**

At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Melinda Watt has been named Research Assistant to Thomas Campbell, Associate Curator, European Sculpture and Decorative Arts department, and Supervising Curator of the Antonio Ratti Textile Center.

**CARMEL AT JEWISH MUSEUM**

Lorna Carmel has joined the Jewish Museum in New York for a 17-month Mellon Fellowship for documentation and research of non-Western textiles. She had been an associate curator at The Textile Museum. At the Jewish Museum, she will complete the term of the three-year fellowship begun by Denny Stone, who is now Curator of Costumes and Textiles at the San Diego Historical Society.
Textile Society of America

The theme of the Seventh Biennial Symposium of the Textile Society of America, Approaching Textiles, Varying Viewpoints, is intended to bring out presentations and discussions about the many ways in which textiles can be explored and understood.

Approaching Textiles reflects TSA’s interest in textiles as fascinating objects that draw our attention and reflect their cultural, geographic and temporal settings. Varying Viewpoints emphasizes the ways in which scholars and others investigate textiles through a wide range of methods and theories. Viewpoints also invites exploration of differing cultural perspectives. In the American Southwest, the location for the 2000 Symposium, American Indian, Mesoamerican and European textile traditions have influenced each other over hundreds of years even as they have continued to develop distinct identities. TSA encourages presentations from all parts of the globe and from textile-related disciplines including, but not limited to, anthropology, archaeology, art, art history, conservation, cultural geography, design, economics, history, linguistics, theater and the physical and social sciences. Direct involvement in the program by indigenous scholars and textile producers/users is especially welcomed.

The symposium is organized to include structured sessions with slide-illustrated presentations by individuals, panel discussions with discussants, video presentations and demonstrations, and informal gatherings of participants. The Santa Fe setting offers unique opportunities to utilize local resources, including native demonstrations, museum exhibitions, behind-the-scenes museum tours and studio and gallery visits.

This Call for Papers solicits proposals for sessions, papers, panels and all other presentations. The deadline for receipt of submissions is December 1, 1999.
Seventh Biennial Symposium

I. CATEGORIES OF PRESENTATION

- Individual papers are generally slide-illustrated, with a strict time limit of 20 minutes.
- Organized sessions should include 3 or 4 paper presenters, a chair and, when feasible, a discussant. Times for speakers are flexible. In general, total time of 1½ hours is recommended for sessions.
- Panel discussions might involve 2 to 4 individuals and a moderator who poses questions to which panelists respond (generally without prepared papers). Times for speakers are flexible. In general, total time of one hour is recommended for panels.
- Video presentations. Screening time for videos and films will be structured around the proposals that are submitted and accepted.

II. SYMPOSIUM GUIDELINES

All submissions should be clearly related to the symposium theme and, in general, papers should be based on original scholarship, reflecting material not previously published. The Selection Committee may group individual submissions in any category of presentation into sessions. A moderator may be added to a group of individual papers by the Selection Committee to facilitate discussion.

Sessions usually focus on a subject related by theoretical interests, geographic area, time period or other common element, but, in keeping with the symposium theme, may also provide contrast among differing points of view (e.g. a session devoted to a single class of textiles, but approached from the perspectives of a conservator, historian, cultural geographer and designer).

To encourage discussion and stimulate audience participation, all speakers must send a copy of their working papers to both the chair and the discussant of the session in which they are participating by August 15, 2000.

III. ABSTRACTS

Prospective speakers in all categories must submit a 250-word abstract and a short, one-paragraph biography.

- Individual proposals must contain (1) a title page that includes the title of the proposed paper, the speaker name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and email address, and a one-paragraph biography, and (2) the abstract, containing only the title of the paper and a 250-word abstract. The name of the speaker should not appear on the abstract page.
- Organized Session proposals, submitted by the prospective chair, should include the session title, an abstract that addresses the relationships between papers, the title and abstract of each paper, plus the name, address and one-paragraph biography of the chair, discussant and each presenter. Speakers in organized sessions must submit their abstracts to the session chair who will submit them to the Selection Committee as a part of the session package.
- Panel proposals, submitted by the prospective moderator, should include the panel title, an abstract of the topic to be discussed, plus the name, address and one-paragraph biography of the moderator and each panelist. Panelists must submit their materials to the panel moderator who will submit them to the Selection Committee as a part of the panel package.

IV. PROGRAM SELECTION

TSA follows a policy of peer review and merit consideration for acceptance and inclusion on the symposium program. Initial review of the abstracts by the Selection Committee members and outside readers will be done without author identification. Final selections will be juried. The final program will be organized to assure the inclusion of a variety of geographic regions, subject matter and scholarly approaches, and to encourage new speakers.

V. REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

All program speakers must be paid TSA members for 2000 and must register for the Symposium. Non-members will be invoiced upon acceptance of their proposals. [TSA dues are (US dollars) $45.00 for U.S.A. and Canada; (US dollars) $55.00 for all others, except students who pay (US dollars) $25.00 in U.S.A. and Canada and (US dollars) $35.00 elsewhere.] If extenuating circumstances exist, an explanatory letter should be sent to one of the Symposium Coordinators.

VI. PUBLICATION OF CONFERENCE PAPERS

The deadline for submitting manuscripts for inclusion in the Conference Proceedings is October 31, 2000. If a full-length manuscript is not submitted by this date, the 250-word abstract may be printed instead. Format guidelines for manuscripts will be available by Spring 2000.

VII. DEADLINE AND MAILING INSTRUCTIONS

All submissions must be received by December 1, 1999. Faxes and email will not be accepted. Send five (5) copies of each page, unfolded, without staples, in a large mailing envelope to:

Ann Lane Hedlund and Margot Blum Schevill, Co-chairs
TSA 2000 Symposium
The CAF Center for Tapestry Studies
Arizona State Museum
The University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721-0026

The Selection Committee will inform all submitters of its decisions by March 10, 2000.

VIII. FINANCIAL AID

Limited subsistence stipends, based on financial need, may be applied for with proposal submissions. On a separate page provide a concise statement of need and how participation in the Symposium relates to your professional goals. Financial aid applications will be reviewed by the Selection Committee. Requests for financial aid will not figure in the selection process. Recipients of aid must deliver a copy of their symposium presentation to the program chair on September 22, 2000.

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Cleveland Museum of Art Textile Conservator

The Cleveland Museum of Art is seeking a textile conservator. Working closely with the textile curator, the conservator will be responsible for storage of the 4,000-object collection and supervision of the textile conservation laboratory. In addition to treatment, activities include examination of objects for treatment, acquisition, loan, and research of special and traveling exhibitions. The incumbent will also be responsible for setting and monitoring environmental, storage, exhibition and transit standards for the textile collection. This position reports to the chief conservator. Applicants should have a bachelor's degree and have graduated from a recognized conservation training program. Candidates with at least five years museum experience are preferred. In addition to excellent conservation skills and judgment, the position requires excellent written, verbal and interpersonal skills along with creative thinking and problem-solving ability. Competitive compensation and benefits accompany this position. Title and salary commensurate with experience. Send letter of interest and resume to Human Resources (cons.), The Cleveland Museum of Art, 11150 East Boulevard, Cleveland, OH 44106. No phone calls please.

Volunteers Wanted For Dye Research in Canada

Earthwatch Institute Australia is seeking volunteers to join teams researching and identifying natural dyes in Manitoba, Canada. Teams will spend two weeks in the field during June to August with Dr. Sheila Chmuhalek. Contact: 03 9682 9828 in Australia or <www.earthwatch.org>.

TSA Seeking Lawyer

Textile Society of America is seeking among its membership a volunteer with legal experience willing to give us a legal opinion from time to time on matters pertaining to TSA. Please contact Beverly Gordon, President: email: <gordon@macz.wisc.edu>; 608 262-2015; fax: 608 262-5335.

Nettie K. Adams is cataloguing a collection of burial wrappings from two Christian cemeteries in Sudanese Nubia. She would be interested to learn of parallels from the Nile River or elsewhere. The graves range in date from c. 700 to c. 900 AD. Among the 468 pieces are three plain weave mats, two with complete dimensions. They are: L 106 x W 69 cm and L 135 x W 77 cm. The third mat has an incomplete length of 86 cm and a complete width of 126 cm. All three are made entirely of S-spun human hair. Many of the cords, strings and braids used to tie up the body bundles are also made of human hair. Please send any information to Nettie K. Adams, Webb Museum of Anthropology, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0024; email: <wadams@pop.uky.edu>; tel: 606 257-2710.
Structure and Surface: Contemporary Japanese Textiles

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK, November 12, 1998 to January 20, 1999
ST. LOUIS ART MUSEUM, June 18 to August 15, 1999

For the past 20 years the Japanese have wedded textile design with scientific innovation. The prowess of their capacity to imagine and manipulate unlikely pairings is evident in “Structure and Surface: Contemporary Japanese Textiles,” the first exhibition devoted entirely to textiles at the Museum of Modern Art. While the museum presented them as objects of modernism, they can also be seen, of course, as cloth. When one is familiar with some of the recent Japanese design achievements before seeing the show, the displayed yardage acts as reminder and as inspiration.

Having been fortunate enough to see Junichi Arai unwrap a length of gossamer stainless steel, I could anticipate what I might see at the Modern. There were weave structures that exploited the best Japanese technology but depended on the thermoplastic or chemical properties of the materials (rubber, plastic, aluminum) to realize their end. One could see, as well, how textiles with multiple layers of dye and discharge were further enriched by industrial finishing processes acting in expanded roles. It is this combination of handwrought effects with those formerly confined to the factory that Japanese designers have so skillfully controlled.

Included in the exhibition were examples of Japanese fiberart in the form of indigo-dyed banners and handwoven linens smeared with earth and rubbed to destruction with stones. While Japanese fiberart is an enormous field in itself, these delicate objects for contemplation made the full scope of Japanese textiles apparent.

The curators provided samples that one could touch and, immediately, one was grateful for these. Textiles, of course, cry out to interact with skin and in the way that this show was organized at the Modern, the viewer felt quite removed from the actual elements on display. The lengths of cloth, while not encased, were generally lit from above, which acted to remove them from our world. A curious tension is established between an artifact of such familiarity and its museum setting: the overwhelming desire is to romp freely amidst these yards of beauty and invention.

— Charlotte Hamlin

Contemporary Japanese Textiles: From Tradition to the Avant-Garde

JAPAN SOCIETY SYMPOSIUM, NEW YORK, November 14, 1998

Once while traveling in Asia I visited a textile workshop, and spying a tub of twigs I asked what color the dyestuff produced. “We don’t know yet,” was the response. That spirit of discovery suffused this entire one-day symposium, held in conjunction with an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, “Structure and Surface: Contemporary Japanese Textiles.”

The morning session consisted of slide lectures and the afternoon of concurrent lecture/demonstrations.

Matilda McQuaid, co-curator of the exhibition, began by introducing the work of the 29 artists included in the show. Yoshiko Wada, of the University of California-Berkeley, offered a cogent review of the widely disparate types of contemporary Japanese textiles, and Sharon Takeda of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art used her observations of traditional Japanese textiles to shed light on today’s innovations.

Trends in contemporary fiber arts in Japan, including a recent move toward three-dimensionality, were discussed by Keiko Kawashima, Kyoto International Contemporary Textile Art Center. Akiko Fukai, Kyoto Costume Institute, traced Japanese fashion designers from the 1970s to the 1990s, noting a tendency in their work for fabric to take precedence over shape, and Jun Kanai, Miyake Design Studio, showed three works from the longstanding inspired collaboration of fashion designer Issey Miyake and textile designer Makiko Minagawa.

In the afternoon, Michiko Uehara wove with gossamer-fine silk, yielding a type of textile that has received international recognition. Meanwhile, Amanda Meyer Stinchem, independent scholar, gave an overview of the too little known history and textile traditions of Ryukyu (Okinawa), after which Akiko Ishigaki and Chiaki Maki demonstrated and discussed traditional Okinawan techniques and materials. Fibers and dyes from the Okinawan island of Iriomote had been used to create cloth that Michiyoyo Masago, costume
designer, had formed into simple garments.

The third concurrent session was a feast for the senses. Junichi Arai and Jack Lenor Larsen's discussions were skillfully moderated by Yoshiko Wada. Mr. Larsen's textiles draped the stage, and Mr. Arai passed his through the audience — some of the pieces of such length that an entire row of the auditorium could simultaneously handle the textile before passing it back to the next row. Among Mr. Arai's smaller pieces was a gamen with spot-welded seams designed by Yashiki Hishinuma and made of Alphatex stainless steel cloth, a textile included in the exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art.

— Joyce Denney

Textile/Techstyle: David Brackett, Barbara Layne, Margo Mensing

THE ARTS CENTER GALLERY, SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK, February 25 to April 8

For me, as a modernist art historian and nonspecialist in textiles, "Textile/ Techstyle" demonstrates an exciting range of approaches to textiles in contemporary art.

From a distance David Brackett's large pieces resolve into clear organic patterns determined by vibrant colors. Up close the patterns break down into the horizontal and vertical fabric strips that comprise each work: handwoven and commercial fabrics, some stitched, others printed or painted with imagery that often includes butterflies, bugs and ambiguous embryonic creatures. At this distance each fabric becomes compelling. Brackett's work may be easily grasped at first glance, but a close look reveals a greater complexity, mirroring, for him, a tendency toward pattern and disorder in nature.

In "Red Bibs," Margo Mensing dramatically places knitted red baby bibs against vibrant yellow walls. The bibs appear to come from all over: ancient China, Japan, the contemporary United States. Carefully mounted in wood frames, sandwiched between Plexiglas or laid out in a display case, accompanied by lengthy text, the bibs and their installation compete for the viewer's attention. These bibs become meaningful through their installation and text; yet Mensing has created not only the bibs but the accompanying narratives as well. This tactic may encourage one to question the authoritative power of texts in any textile installation.

Barbara Layne's "Drawing Threads" continues the theme of museum display raised in Mensing's piece. Layne selected mostly textile objects from the McCord Museum in Montreal and made drawings of them on a digital tablet. These drawings were electronically transmitted to the University of California, Davis, Gallery, where they were printed and displayed. These printouts, and a large printout showing Layne at work with tablet and object at McCord, make up the installation here. The sketchy, stark, black-and-white printouts make the textile objects accessible to a wider audience even as their indistinct, unsatisfying visual quality points to the necessity of seeing the original objects.

— Katherine Hauser

JUNE

June 3–18: Tour of Lapland and Finland led by Fred van Oss (email: <Fred.vl.ass@wxs.nl>). Preconference event for European Textile Network 8th annual conference (see below).


June 21–24: The National Museum, the Department of Tourism, Art and Culture and UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), Bali, conference: To promote continuation of traditional textile arts and crafts and offer new perspectives on traditional art forms. Most textile arts such as weaving, ikat patterning, embroidery and making batik are done by women. Textiles from Indonesia and other countries such as Thailand, Laos, China, India and Japan have also become well known in the international market. Collectors seek high quality old textiles but in recent years there has been an increased demand for new textiles including textiles for home furnishings and apparel. The
recent economic situation in Asia and specifically in Indonesia poses a serious threat to the continued production of textiles due to the rising costs of materials (i.e., fiber, fabric, dyes) and to the recent decline in tourism. In some areas of Java, for example, batik production is slowing down or in some villages almost ceasing. This is a continuation of conferences in Jakarta 1994 and in Jambi in 1996. Preconference tours will include field trips to Sideman where silk songket is woven on back strap looms and to Tenganan Pegringingan, the village famous for geringsing double ikat weaving. Contact: Ms. Suwati Kartiwa or Ms. Ernawati, National Museum, Jalan Merdeka Barat No.12, Jakarta 10110; tel: 62 21 3812346, 3811551, 3868771; fax: 62 21 3811076, 3447778; email: <kusumas@hotmail.com> or <skartiwa@hotmail.com>; or Kaye Crippen, email: <jogoskeye@yahoo.com>.

**JUNE 24–27:** Diné College, Navajo Nation, Tsilil, AZ. "Sheep Is Life: A Celebration of Shepherds and Weavers," bringing together representatives from many cultures who love sheep, weaving and wool, and recognizing the central role that sheep play in Navajo spirituality, philosophy and daily life. A special exhibit from the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Badia Programme that works with Bedouin tribes will spotlight the oldest sheep culture in the world. Sheep were first domesticated in the Middle East about 1,000 years ago; goats were domesticated about 1,000 years later. The Bedouins in Badia maintain their traditional nomadic lifestyle, in a landscape very similar to that of the Navajo Nation. "Sheep Is Life" will be the occasion for these relatives to once again share their cultures. Other activities include hands-on arts projects, exhibits of Navajo-Churro sheep and other rare livestock breeds, lectures and panel discussions, and sales of crafts, weavings, wool and supplies. Workshops include Navajo weaving and wool processing and fiber arts techniques such as felt making and dyeing with plants. Contact: Recursos de Santa Fe, 800 732-6881.


**JUNE 24–28:** St. Petersburg, Russia, 4th International "White Nights" Textile Symposium, a European Textile Network-affiliated event.

**JUNE 25–27:** Arts Textrina, University of Minnesota - Twin Cities Campus, conference: "Many Textiles, Many Worlds," 17th Annual Conference on Textiles and Costume. Contact: Marilyn DelLong, 612 624-4909; email: <mdellong@ch2e.che.umn.edu>.

**JULY**

**JULY 13–18:** Indiana University, Bloomington, weavers' conference. Contact: 812 334-3571.

**JULY 17–22:** International Felt Symposium, Central Finland Arts & Crafts Institute, Millutte Z. "The Wandering of the Midnight Sun."

**JULY 22–23:** Costume Society of America Region VI, San Juan, Puerto Rico: Annual Meeting and Symposium. Suggested themes for papers and panels are lace and masks and Caribbean, Spanish, African and Indian costume.

**AUGUST**

**AUGUST**

**AUGUST 12–22:** Crochet Guild of America, West Coast Bellevue Hotel, Bellevue: Crochet Conference. Contact: 847 776-7941; email: <gL99@crochet.org>.

**AUGUST 17–22:** Fiber Artists / Basket Makers International Conference, Lake Ainsworth, Australia. Will include major exhibition. Contact: Melissa Hirsch; tel/fax: 02 66244622; email: <jerith10@iscu.edu.au>.

**AUGUST 26–SEPT. 5:** "International Batik Gathering, Now and Then," Ghent, Belgium. Contact: Ria Trefois, tel: 32.081.229.15.49; fax: 32.081.229.15.28; email: <ARKADA@Virtual.es>.

**AUGUST 27–SEP. 4:** Danish Association of Arts & Crafts, Tukkse Culture Center, Jutland, workshop and symposium: "Northern Fibre II: Hidden Treasures," meeting of European textile artists. Contact: Paul Jensen, email: <pj@post.tele.dk>.

**OCTOBER**


**OCTOBER 14–17:** Victoria, BC. Native American Art Studies Association meetings.

**NOVEMBER**

**NOVEMBER 2–6:** Santiago, Chile: Third International Shibori Symposium: Conference, exhibitions, workshops, fashion show. Hosts include Catholic University of Chile Extension School, Chilean Museum of pre-Columbian Art, National Museum of Fine Arts and Duoc University. Symposium themes: amarras (shibori) in pre-Columbian textiles; shibori craft traditions from Japan, India and Africa; shibori expression in contemporary art; wearable art & fashion use of high and low technology; Yoshiko Hishinuma, one of the most avant-garde fashion designers of Japan. Contact: Yoshiko I. Wada 510 527-3432; fax: 510 527-0231; email: <yiwada@pacbell.net>; <www.tv.c/ajbitori> (Spanish); <www.shibori.org/home.pacbell.net/yiwada>.
United States

ARIZONA

West Valley Art Museum, Sun City. To June 20: "Beadwork I: Up Close."

CALIFORNIA

Bedford Gallery, Dean Lesher Regional Center for the Arts, Walnut Creek. To June 13: "Needle Art," featuring work by more than 50 contemporary artists.


Los Angeles County Museum. To Sept. 26: "Common Threads: Pueblo and Navaho Textiles in the Southwest."

M.H. De Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco. To November: "Contemporary Crafts from the Dorothy and George Saxe Collection" and "Fiber Art from the Permanent Collection."

Palo Alto Cultural Art Center. Through July: "The Narrative Thread: Women's Embroidery from Rural India."

San Francisco Craft and Folk Art Museum, June 5 – Aug. 8: "African Textiles."

COLORADO
Rocky Mountain Quilt Museum, Golden. To May 29: "Spring Fever: Jumping to Conclusions."

CONNECTICUT
Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford. To August: "Bonnets to Berets: 20th Century Hats."

DELAWARE

First USA Riverfront Arts Center, Wilmington. To Sept. 6: "Splendors of Meiji: Treasures of Imperial Japan."

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art. To July 28: "Dominic Di Mare: A Retrospective."

The Textile Museum. To Aug. 1: "How Are Textiles Made?" May 26 – Sept. 6: "Costume and Identity in Highland Ecuador," the first U.S. exhibition on the rich indigenous costume tradition of this region. Book. Oct. 8 – Jan. 23: "Peter Collingwood: Master Weaver," a retrospective of this major figure in the 20th-century world of handmade textiles. One of the most accomplished European weavers of his generation, he is also internationally known as a teacher, inventor of revolutionary textile techniques, researcher and writer on both textile techniques and structures.

GEORGIA
Atlanta History Center. To Sept. 5: "Georgia Quilts: Piecing Together History."


One Buckhead Plaza Lobby, Atlanta. To July 23: "Georgia Martha Donovan Odpahl: Wall Hangings."

HAWAII
Linekona Art Center, Honolulu. To May 15: "Fiber Hawaii," sponsored by Hawaii Craftsmen, juried by Junco Pollak.

Honolulu Academy of Art. July 22 – Aug. 22: "Artists of Hawaii 1990." The Academy has invited 3 leading fiber artists — Reiko Brandon, Pat Hickman and Claudia Johnson — who have made significant contributions to the visual arts in Hawaii. Their invited work will be featured along with the all-media juried exhibition. Juror: Lucina Barnes.

ILLINOIS
Art Institute of Chicago. To Aug. 1: "The Twentieth Century Textile Artist."


INDIANA

KANSAS
Salina Art Center. May 29 – Aug. 7: "Different Voices: New Art from Poland."

KENTUCKY

To June 26: "New Quilts from an Old Favorite."

MAINE
Firehouse Gallery, Damariscotta. To May 39: "Fiber with Imagination."

MARYLAND

MASSACHUSETTS
Fuller Museum of Art, Brockton. To June 6: "To Honor and Comfort: Native Quilting Traditions."

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. To July 25: "Fashions and Fabrics in the Classical Mode."


MISSOURI

NEBRASKA
International Quilt Study Center, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Morrill Hall. To Jan. 2001: “Fanciful Flowers: Botany and the American Quilt,” with quilts rotated every 6 months. Contact: Carolyn Ducey, 402 472-6301.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

NEW JERSEY

NEW MEXICO
Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, Santa Fe. To Dec. 31: “Weaving at the Margins: Navajo Men as Weavers.”


NEW YORK


OHIO

OKLAHOMA
Kirkpatrick Center, Oklahoma City. To May 30: “Fiberworks ’99.”

OREGON


Pennsylvania


RHODE ISLAND

TENNESSEE
Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts. To May 15: “Arrowmont National.”

VIRGINIA

WASHINGTON

WISCONSIN
Rock County Historical Society, Janesville. To June 20: “Apron Strings: Ties to the Past.”

International
CANADA

Museum for Textiles, Toronto.

DENMARK
Textillorum, Harning.
Sept. 4 – Nov. 28: “Hidden Treasures.”

ENGLAND


Shipley Art Gallery, London.


Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester.
To mid-September: “Fortuny Textiles.” September to early November: “Common Threads.”

GERMANY

ITALY
Museo Nazionale Arti e Tradizioni Popolari, Rome.

THE NETHERLANDS
Museum voor Volkenkunde, Rotterdam. To Dec. 31: “Woven Worlds, Ikat from Sumba.”


PORTUGAL
Museu Nacional do Traje, Lisbon. To Dec. 31: “Fashion Thru This Century.”

MAY

May 7–9: Hawaii Craftsmen, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, lecture and surface design workshop by Junco Pollak, in conjunction with the "Fiber Hawaii" exhibition.


May 17, 6 p.m.: Bard Graduate Center, New York, gallery tour and reception: "Life and the Arts of the Baroque Palaces of Rome: Ambiente Barocco."


May 20–21: Textile Museum, Washington, Rug Restoration Workshop: David Zahripour on repairing selvedges, ends, holes and splits as well as re-piling. Participants should bring a well-vacuumed carpet that needs restoring. Contact: 202 667-0441, ext. 33 (Tuesday to Saturday).


May 21, 10 a.m.: Bard Graduate Center, lecture and exposition tour: "Baroque is Back," on the basics of Baroque style with Kate Bonansinga, followed by a trip through SOFa NYC exhibits looking for examples of the Baroque aesthetic.

JUNE


June 13: Textile Museum, Washington, Electronic Fabric Workshop: Maggie Orth of MIT's Media Lab will teach participants how to work with conductive textile materials to build sewn electronic circuits. At the completion of the workshop, participants will hook up their finished textile circuits to an electronic component, and watch their fabric "work." Limited to 10 participants who must bring their own sewing machines. Contact: 202 667-0441, ext. 12.


June 25–27: Museum of Indian Arts and Culture, Santa Fe, festival: "Museum Fiber Arts Festival '99," juried invitational textile, clothing and basketry show featuring traditional and contemporary work of Native American and Hispanic fiber artists, including special provisions for exhibition of children's work. Contact: Patricia House or Joyce Begay-Foss, 505 827-6344; fax: 505 827-6347.

JULY


AUGUST

Aug. 4: Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, all-day program for "From the Rainbow's Varied Hue: Textiles of the Southern Philippines."


OCTOBER

Norwegian Folk Art Weaving

Participants in a Norwegian Folk Art Workshop and Tour will stay at a folk art school in Hallingdal, a region in central Norway known for its strong traditions in folk art. In textiles, weavers will learn the techniques for an all-over bound weave pattern or for a geometric tapestry style characteristic of the region, plus working on a smaller band-weaving project. Other workshops will cover woodcarving, rosemaling and knife-making. The sponsor is the Vesterheim Norwegian American Museum, Decorah, IA.

Contact: Carol Hasvold, 319 382-9681; fax: 319 382-8828; email: <versterheim@versterheim.org>.

Southwest China Tour

Don Cohn of the Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., will lead a tour of Guizhou and Yunnan in southwest China, home to the Miao, Dong, Yao, Li and Dai peoples. These ethnic minorities have lived their lives cut off from the Han Chinese majority as well as the world at large.

Contact: Experience Abroad/The Ticket Counter, 800 247-7651 or 301 986-0790; fax: 301 913-0166; email: <tickctoun@iaol.com>.

About TSA

When you become a member of the Textile Society of America, you join a network of specialists and enthusiasts brought together by a common love of cloth. Members participate in educational activities including symposia and workshops, keep up with current scholarship through symposium proceedings and bibliographies, and interact in multiple media through a newsletter and Web site. Although based in North America, TSA has more than 500 members worldwide whose interests are equally international.

The TSA approach to textile studies is multidisciplinary, spanning the arts, humanities, and sciences. The society provides leadership in textile studies through activities and publications which further its mission to expand knowledge about textiles. A nonprofit educational organization, TSA was established in 1987.

Membership Benefits

- Symposium: Even-numbered years. Members receive advance notice and pay a special registration fee.
- Workshops: Members receive advance notice and pay a special registration fee.
- Symposium Proceedings: Odd-numbered years. One free copy of the proceedings of the previous year's symposium. Discount on purchase of other volumes.
- Directory: Even-numbered years. One free copy.
- Newsletter: Annual, three issues. One free copy.
- Textile Bibliography: Annual. One free copy.

Benefits listed above are for Individual, Institutional and Student members. Supporting members receive two copies of the proceedings and directory. Corporate members receive two copies of the proceedings, directory and bibliography and may register two representatives at the symposium at the member's rate.
Membership Application

Membership is for the calendar year and dues received will be applied to the current year, unless otherwise specified.

- **New membership**
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**SUB-TOTAL MEMBERSHIP:** $

**Additional Contributions (Optional)**

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**Publications Order**

Symposium Proceedings: For the contents of all volumes, consult the TSA website. Books are paper back (PB) or spiral bound (SB) as noted. Textiles in Trade (1990), Textiles in Trade (1999), and Contact, Crossroads, Continuity (1996) are out of print.

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**TOPICS OF INTEREST**

- Early textiles (before 15th century)
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- Contemporary (19th century)
- Audio, visual, and computer resources
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- Fibers and fiber processing
- Gender
- Graphics: patterns and motifs
- Interiors, environment, and shelter
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- Non-woven methods, tools, and equipment
- Weaving methods, tools, and equipment
- Political economy (production, distribution, trade)
- Stitchery, embroidery, quilting, and appliqué
- Weaving methods, tools, equipment

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Please send completed application to:

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Please send information about TSA membership to:

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Prehistoric sandals from the current exhibition, "Walking the Desert: Prehistoric Sandals of the Southwest," at the Arizona State Museum, Tucson.

Fragment of prehistoric sandal, showing weave structure.