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Over One, Under One, and Much More...

July 2, 2004 – January 2, 2005

June 1, 2004, Washington, DC — On view at The Textile Museum from July 2, 2004 through January 2, 2005, the exhibition Over One, Under One, and Much More... explores the diversity of plain-woven textiles from Asia to the Americas. With objects drawn from The Textile Museum's collections, the exhibition highlights the array of patterning possible by using the plain weave technique within different cultural and artistic contexts.

Patterns in plain-woven textiles are created through the interplay of the yarns used and the order in which they are interlaced (the weave structure). By altering the physical characteristics of the yarn – such as color, size, fiber, or pliability – many interesting striped, plaid, or textured patterns can be created. Included in this exhibition is a striking Bolivian shawl with a bold striped design created by grouping together different colors of yarn in the warp. Weavers can also juxtapose yarns of different fibers, such as silk and linen, to create a varied texture on the cloth's surface. By simply varying the physical nature of the yarns used, the weaver can lend rich visual and textual patterns to the finished cloth.

Weavers can also create diverse patterns in plain-woven textiles by varying the placement of the yarns – their spacing, sequence, continuity, or angle. A common variation is the use of discontinuous weft yarns – yarns that reverse direction partway across the textile rather than moving from one edge to the other. In this method, yarns of different colors are placed only where needed to create a design. An Iranian kilim in the exhibition was woven this way – its intricate, multicolored figural patterning was created without varying the simple alternating interlacing order of plain weave.

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Plain Weave

Plain weave is the simplest method of interlacing yarns in a textile. It is a technique found in every weaving tradition across the world. To create plain weave, a loom is set up so that every other warp yarn (the set of parallel yarns held taut on the loom) goes up as the alternate warp yarns go down. This creates an opening, called a shed, through which the weft yarn (cross-wise yarn) can pass. On the next pass of the weft yarn, the weaver changes the shed so that the warp yarns that were down are now up and vice versa. This simple alternation is repeated throughout the entire textile.

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Founded in 1925 by George Hewitt Myers, The Textile Museum is an international center for the exhibition, study, collection and preservation of the textile arts. The Museum explores the role that textiles play in the daily and ceremonial life of individuals the world over. Special attention is given to textiles of the Near East, Asia, Africa and the indigenous cultures of the Americas. The Museum also presents exhibitions of historical and contemporary quilts, and fiber art. With a collection of more than 17,000 textiles and rugs and an unparalleled library, The Textile Museum is a unique and valuable resource for people locally, nationally and internationally.

The Textile Museum is located at 2320 'S' Street, NW in Washington, DC. The Museum is open Monday - Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm and Sunday 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Admission is free; suggested donation is \$5.00. For further information, call 202-667-0441.

For more information or images, please contact Cyndi Spain at 202-667-0441, ext. 17, or by email at cspain@textilemuseum.org or visit www.textilemuseum.org/about/pressroom.htm.