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**The Textile Museum Launches Online Exhibition
Devoted to Classical Khorasan Carpets**
www.textilemuseum.org/pieces/index.html

February 5, 2007, Washington, DC —The Textile Museum has launched *Pieces of a Puzzle: Classical Persian Carpet Fragments*, an online exhibition that features a relatively little-known type of classical Persian carpets. The Web site serves as a permanent record of a recent Textile Museum exhibition on the same topic and makes the exhibition content available to a broader audience. A resource for people with different levels of expertise and knowledge, the site provides a cultural, aesthetic and historical view into a textile tradition unique to the Persian Safavid dynasty, who ruled during the 16th and 17th centuries. *Pieces of a Puzzle: Classical Persian Carpet Fragments* is online at: www.textilemuseum.org/pieces/index.html.

The online exhibition *Pieces of a Puzzle* features nine carpet fragments that were on view at The Textile Museum from September 1, 2006 to January 7, 2007. Named for the historic Persian province of Khorasan, the northeastern province of present-day Iran, these carpets are characterized by superior wool and dyes; a broad color palette including blue-green, orange and a bluish-red; exquisite drawing; and distinctive knotting variations.

The *Pieces of a Puzzle* Web site includes numerous full-color images, maps and photographs as well as explanatory text. Visitors to the site are guided through an overview of the exhibition, then to more specific information about Khorasan's history as a weaving center, with maps illustrating its location. The Web site also provides details about the distinct knotting technique that distinguishes Khorasan carpets from other classical Persian carpets, complemented by photographs and drawings. Another section of the site discusses Khorasan

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design, followed by in-depth examinations of nine specific Khorasan carpet fragments drawn from private and institutional collections. This part of the Web site includes reconstructions of the original carpets as well as detailed information about the techniques and materials used.

One page of the site shows the three principal surviving fragments of one spectacular 16th-century Khorasan rug, which now reside in three different collections, reassembled into their original configuration. These pieces fit together like a puzzle, allowing us a glimpse of what the original carpet must have looked like.

The online exhibition shows that despite their fragmentary nature, Khorasan carpets retain their delicate beauty and can reveal much about the complete rugs and about classical Persian carpets as a whole. It aims to serve as a resource for scholars, students, textile collectors and others who share an interest in Persian carpets and Iranian history.

Funding & Credits

The *Pieces of a Puzzle: Classical Persian Carpet Fragments* Web site is made possible through the generosity of Jeremy and Hannelore Grantham. The exhibition of the same name was on view at The Textile Museum from September 1, 2006 to January 7, 2007 and was underwritten in part by gifts from:

Persepolis Foundation
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Lenders to the exhibition, who have also given permissions for the Web site images, include:

H. M. Keshishian
Marshall & Marilyn R. Wolf Collection, New York
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Private Collectors

Chaves Design designed the Web site and carpet reconstructions. Photographs: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, David Sharpe.

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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 Molly McMullen at 202-496-5074, or by e-mail at mmcmullen@textilemuseum.org or visit www.textilemuseum.org/about/pressroom.htm.