



THE TEXTILE MUSEUM

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Press Tour & Reception: Thursday, August 31, 2006 • 2:00 pm

16th- and 17th-Century Persian Carpet Fragments to be Exhibited at The Textile Museum

Pieces of a Puzzle: Classical Persian Carpet Fragments

September 1, 2006 – January 7, 2007

August 24, 2006, Washington, DC – Pieces of a Puzzle:

Classical Persian Carpet Fragments, an exhibition featuring 16th- and 17th-century Persian carpet fragments made in the Iranian province of Khorasan, will be on view at The Textile Museum September 1, 2006 – January 7, 2007.

Classical Persian carpets of the 16th and 17th centuries have long been appreciated for beauty and fine craftsmanship, although their development and classification has been poorly understood. Only in recent decades, as scholars began to analyze specific types of classical Persian rugs, have the pieces of the puzzle begun to fall into place.

Pieces of a Puzzle features nine examples of one of these types, named after the historic Persian province of Khorasan. Classical Khorasan carpets are characterized by superior wool and dyes, a broad palette featuring particular color combinations and distinctive knotting variations. Even in fragmentary form, Khorasan carpets retain their delicate beauty and can reveal much about classical Persian carpets and their evolution.

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The exhibition includes three surviving primary fragments of a 16th-century Khorasan carpet, brought together from three different collections and reassembled into their original configuration. In bringing these fragments together, Pieces of a Puzzle aims to provide visitors with a sense of the scale and grandeur of the complete piece, and allow them to share in the process of research and discovery experienced by the curator.

The 9 fragments on view are drawn from The Textile Museum's own collections, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and from private collections. Daniel Walker, Director of The Textile Museum, is the exhibition curator.

Exhibition Curator

Daniel Walker became Director of The Textile Museum on May 1, 2005. Prior to his arrival he served as Patti Cadby Birch Curator in Charge, Department of Islamic Art at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Walker was head of the Islamic Department at the Metropolitan from 1988 to 2005 and became the first occupant of the endowed chair named for donor Patti Cadby Birch in 1997. From 1975 to 1988 he was Associate Curator and then Curator of Ancient, Near Eastern and Far Eastern Art at the Cincinnati Art Museum. Earlier in his career Walker performed military service that included intensive language training in Persian and a long tour of duty in Iran.

He has published and lectured extensively on diverse topics related to Islamic art, particularly carpets and textiles. He has made notable acquisitions for his institutions, including the early Turkish animal rug purchased by the Metropolitan in 1990. Over the course of his museum career he has curated 19 exhibitions, ranging from a small exhibition of etchings and drawings by Charles Meryon, the first exhibition at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art to be organized by an undergraduate, to the landmark Flowers Underfoot: Indian Carpets of the Mughal Era for the Metropolitan Museum, cited by both *The Art Newspaper* and the *New York Times* as one of the top exhibitions of 1998.

Related Educational Programming

GALLERY TALK & TOUR

Saturday, September 9 • 11:00 am

Join Cecilia Gunzburger Anderson, Assistant Curator of Special Projects, for a tour of the exhibition Pieces of a Puzzle: Classical Persian Carpet Fragments. FREE; no reservations required. Limited to 35 participants.

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GALLERY TALK & TOUR

Saturday, September 16 • 11:00 am

Join Museum Director and exhibition curator Daniel Walker for a tour of the exhibition [Pieces of a Puzzle: Classical Persian Carpet Fragments](#). FREE; no reservations required. Limited to 35 participants.

The 28th Annual Textile Museum Fall Symposium: “New Directions in Persian Carpet Studies”

October 20 – 22, 2006

Drawing inspiration from the exhibition [Pieces of a Puzzle: Classical Persian Carpet Fragments](#), this weekend conference will explore the history and current state of Persian carpet studies, and will consider new and original work of potential interest. Participants will enjoy a rich program of presentations by scholars and researchers, receptions, exhibition tours and a “Show-and-Tell” of related rugs and textiles facilitated by Textile Museum Trustee **Michael M. Seidman**.

Speakers include: **Thomas J. Farnham**, Research Associate, The Textile Museum; **Walter B. Denny**, Professor of Art History, The University of Massachusetts at Amherst and Charles Grant Ellis Research Associate for Oriental Carpets, The Textile Museum; **Hadi Maktabi**, Research Fellow, Christ Church, University of Oxford; **Jamshid Tehrani**, Research Fellow, Centre for the Evolution of Cultural Diversity, Institute of Archaeology, University College; **Jan Wouters**, Conservations Scientist, Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage; **Jon Thompson**, May Beattie Fellow in Carpet Studies, Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, St. Cross College, University of Oxford; and **Daniel Walker**, Director, The Textile Museum.

Early Bird Registration (by September 30): \$215/members; \$260/non-members (includes a one-year membership to The Textile Museum); \$75/student (valid ID required).

Standard Registration (after September 30): \$260/members; \$305/non-members (includes a one-year membership to The Textile Museum); \$215/student (valid ID required).

For further information and to register: visit www.textilemuseum.org/symposium.htm, call (202) 667-0441, ext. 64 or e-mail reception@textilemuseum.org.

Generous support for The Textile Museum Fall Symposium was provided by The American Institute of Iranian Studies.

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