



Cyndi Bohlin
Communications & Marketing Manager
(202) 496-5061

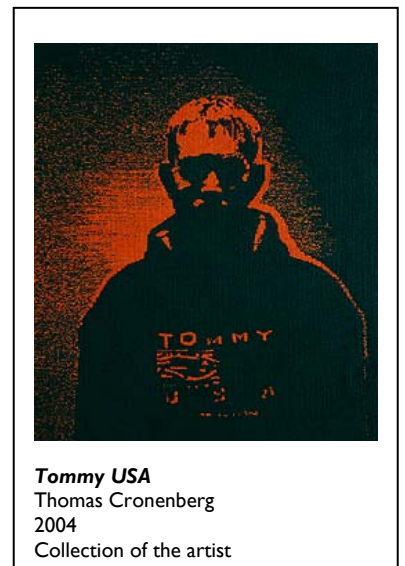
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Contact: Molly McMullen, Communications Assistant, (202) 496-5074
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**Upcoming Exhibition Explores Red in
Textiles Spanning the Globe & Millennia**
RED on View February 2 - July 8, 2007

January 19, 2007, Washington, DC—An upcoming exhibition at The Textile Museum explores the complex uses and meanings of red in textiles across time and place. RED will be on view February 2 - July 8, 2007. Included in the exhibition are 21 varied textiles from the Americas, Africa, Asia and the Middle East that delve into the significance of this bold color. The earliest object is more than 2,500 years old while the most recent is less than five. Complementing the textiles is a series of photographs depicting the use of red textiles in contemporary life, including an official portrait of Nancy Reagan standing in the Red Room of the White House.

From the pre-Columbian high Andes to the 21st-century streets of Washington, DC, red textiles are a potent symbol, used to convey status, power, love, death and much more. In ancient Peru, red was reserved for important religious textiles while in 16th-century Persia, red was used to pattern textiles with verses of love poems. Before the invention of synthetic dyes, achieving this evocative color was no easy task. Large quantities of dye material were needed to color a single piece of fabric, making red cloth expensive or impossible to produce. Such difficulties heightened the importance and allure of the color and it became a prestige commodity restricted by cost to the elite.

The textiles on view are drawn from The Textile Museum's collections of more than 17,000 rugs and textiles as well as other holdings. Contemporary objects in the exhibition include the tapestry-woven **TOMMY USA**, on loan from artist Thomas Cronenberg. Part of his "Identity Series," *TOMMY USA* is a self-portrait that explores the artist's identity as he moved from America, the land of his birth, to Germany, his ancestral country, and from



Tommy USA
Thomas Cronenberg
2004
Collection of the artist

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the “straight” to the “gay” world. In reflecting on his choice of color Cronenberg says, “The color red is central to this work for its visual and emotional impact.” The exhibition also includes a **Halston ballgown** from the 1970s and an **AIDS Awareness lapel ribbon** on loan from the Whitman-Walker Clinic. Together these contemporary objects demonstrate the continuing importance of red in the 21st century.

Historical objects in the exhibition include a **Peruvian border fragment** that dates to between 300 BCE – 500 CE as well as a **Coptic tapestry fragment** from 6th-century Egypt depicting a leopard in motion. Shown together are two **shawls from 20th-century Tunisia** that illustrate the tradition of dyeing red patterns into white cloth after a woman has been married. A 19th-century **Navajo rug** and a **Chinese wedding collar** provide contrasts in both the application and significance of red in textiles.

The exhibition is curated by Rebecca A. T. Stevens, The Textile Museum’s Consulting Curator for Contemporary Textiles. Working in consultation with the Museum’s entire curatorial staff, Stevens chose each object to represent a unique perspective on the use and significance of this bold color.

RED is presented with the support of Lloyd and Margit Cotsen, Leadership Gift; The Rosenfeld Rumford Steckler Family Foundation; Virginia McGehee Friend; and Neiman Marcus.

Related Programming

GALLERY TALK & TOUR

Saturday, February 3 • 11:00 am

Join exhibition curator Rebecca A. T. Stevens for a tour of RED, featuring 21 red textiles spanning the globe and millennia. **FREE; no reservations required. Limited to 35 participants.**

FAMILY FIRST SATURDAYS: “RADIANT RED”

Saturday, February 3 • 2 - 4 pm

Bring the whole family to explore the exhibition RED, featuring 21 red textiles spanning the globe and millennia. Held the first Saturday of every month from 2 – 4 pm, this free drop-in program includes scavenger hunts, hands-on projects, visits from local artists and performances that vary each session. In this installment, visitors can take a self-guided tour of the exhibition and create their own Valentine’s Day cards. **FREE; no reservations required.**

VALENTINE’S PARTY: “THE POWER, PRESTIGE AND ROMANCE OF RED”

Wednesday, February 7 • 6 - 8 pm

In anticipation of Valentine’s Day, celebrate the new exhibition RED at The Textile Museum. Learn about the history of this special color by viewing the exhibition, enjoy music and refreshments and make your own textile valentine. Listen to a gallery talk by artist Thomas Cronenberg, whose tapestry *TOMMY USA* is included in the exhibition. Participants who wear red receive a special exhibition postcard to send to a friend. Attendees will be entered in a drawing to win a gift certificate for a romantic retreat at D.C.’s Hotel Rouge! A portion of this evening’s proceeds will go to the Whitman-Walker Clinic, lender to the exhibition and event co-sponsor.

Fee: \$8/members; \$12/non-members

Advance registration required. Call (202) 667-0441, ext. 65.

“ASK ME” DOCENTS

Docents will be on hand in the galleries as noted below to answer any questions that you may have as you visit the exhibition.

Friday, February 23 • 12 pm – 1:30 pm

Friday, March 30 • 12 pm – 1:30 pm

Friday, April 27 • 12 pm – 1:30 pm

Friday, May 25 • 12 pm – 1:30 pm

Friday, June 29 • 12 pm – 1:30 pm

FAMILY FIRST SATURDAYS: “SPINNING TEXTILE STORIES”

Saturday, March 3 • 2 - 4 pm

Bring the whole family to explore the exhibition RED, featuring 21 red textiles spanning the globe and millennia. Held the first Saturday of every month from 2 – 4 pm, this free drop-in program includes scavenger hunts, hands-on projects, visits from local artists and performances that vary each session. In this installment, celebrate the art of textiles and storytelling! Join us for a journey through RED with storyteller Judith Gravitz. Listen as she weaves a colorful tale inspired by the exhibition and create your own textile storybook. **FREE; no reservations required.**

RUG & TEXTILE APPRECIATION MORNING: “RED IN RUGS AND TEXTILES”

Saturday, March 10 • 10:30 am

Explore the color red in textiles with R. John Howe with examples of various rugs and textiles. The audience is invited to bring clean, well-vacuumed examples related to the program. Please arrive early, as program seating is limited. **FREE; no reservations required.**

FILM: “SMALL HAPPINESS”

Saturday, March 24 • 10:30 am & 2:30 pm

“To give birth to a boy is considered a big happiness. To give birth to a girl is a small happiness. Well, you can say it’s no happiness,” says a grandfather from Long Bow Village in the film *Small Happiness*. Planned in conjunction with the exhibition RED, the film explores sexual politics in rural China with segments on love and marriage, foot-binding, childbearing and birth control. A discussion will follow the film screening. *Small Happiness* is produced by the LongBow Group and directed by Carma Hitton and Richard Gordon, 1984. *Co-sponsored by the Environmental Film Festival.*

FREE; reservations required. Call (202) 667-0441, ext. 64.

The program is 1½ hours in length and is repeated in its entirety at 2:30 pm.

TEACHER WORKSHOP

Saturday, April 14 • 10 am – 1 pm

Planned in conjunction with RED and Architectural Textiles: Tent Bands of Central Asia, this program includes exhibition tours, gallery activities and demonstrations of pre- and post-visit activities. Participants explore dyeing and weaving techniques, receive a teacher packet with information on the textile-producing cultures represented in the exhibitions and enjoy refreshments.

FREE; reservations required. Call (202) 667-0441, ext. 64.

CELEBRATION OF TEXTILES

Saturday, June 2 • 10 am - 4 pm & Sunday, June 3 • 1 - 4 pm

Visitors of all ages are invited to explore the textile arts and cultures of the world through a multitude of activities and demonstrations in the Museum’s exhibitions, historic buildings and gardens. Inspired by the exhibition RED, a special display of artwork by students from District of Columbia Public Schools will open during the weekend event. *Presented in connection with the Dupont-Kalorama Museums Consortium’s Museum Walk Weekend.* **FREE; no reservations required.**

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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.