



THE TEXTILE MUSEUM

THE TEXTILE LEARNING CENTER

The Textile Learning Center is designed to teach visitors about handmade textiles, the people who produce them, and their artistic and cultural significance. It is also intended to strengthen the Museum's efforts to build a broader audience and to enhance existing ties with local schools through curriculum development and Museum visits.

The Textile Learning Center consists of two galleries: the *Activity Gallery* where visitors are encouraged to look, touch and try hands-on activities, and the *Collections Gallery* where visitors can see a diverse selection of rugs and textiles from The Textile Museum's permanent collections.

Handmade rugs and textiles contain stories about the people who make and use them. The *Activity Gallery* of the Textile Learning Center begins to relate some of these stories through task-oriented activities, looking exercises, and photo-murals. Text and activities in the room are designed to help visitors develop a textile vocabulary, thereby gaining a better understanding and appreciation of the textile arts. Activities are captivating and educational for both children and adults.

In the center of the room are six Textile Diagrams, based on actual ethnographic textiles and made by contemporary fiber artists, illustrating specific structures and textile techniques such as plain weave, embroidery, tapestry and supplementary-weft patterning. Visitors are encouraged to touch these textiles and to try some of the techniques themselves. The Textile Diagrams represent a variety of textiles ranging from a pile rug to an embroidered blouse. Some of these textiles illustrate the process used to achieve design and pattern while others are made on a larger scale so that the visitor can closely examine how it was made.

Activity stations in this gallery explore textile-making techniques through the keywords **Color**, **Fiber**, **Structure** and **Pattern**. For example, the **Color** activity station examines where color comes from in nature. Visitors have the opportunity to learn how plants, minerals and even insects can produce dyes providing a range of colors and explore a few of the ways to apply color to textiles.

Textiles communicate about cultural traditions and the joyful spirit of human creativity. The *Activity Gallery* also looks at **tradition**, **lifestyle**, **environment** and **economy** and how these factors can determine materials and use when making textiles.

The adjoining *Collections Gallery* highlights, on a rotating basis, textiles from the Museum's collection. The objects in the *Collections Gallery* illustrate many of the choices and techniques used and shared around the world when making handmade textiles. Exhibitions in this gallery rotate every six months around three themes: "How Are Textiles Made?" "Who Makes Textiles?" and "Why Are Textiles Important?"