



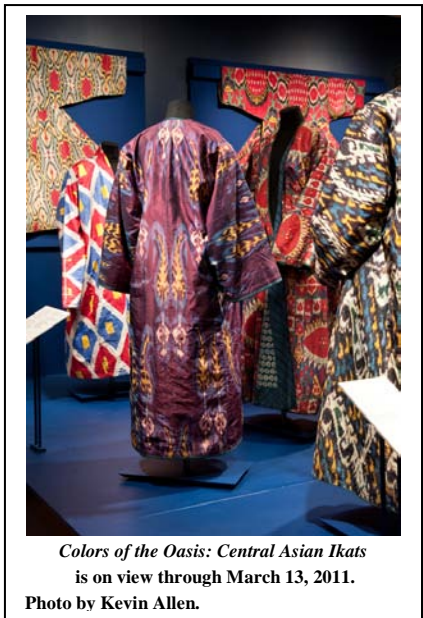
THE TEXTILE MUSEUM

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CONTEMPORARY DESIGNERS REINTERPRET A UNIQUE ARTFORM

The Textile Museum Explores the History Behind the Ikat Trend
in *Colors of the Oasis: Central Asian Ikats* on view through March 13, 2011



Colors of the Oasis: Central Asian Ikats is on view through March 13, 2011.
Photo by Kevin Allen.

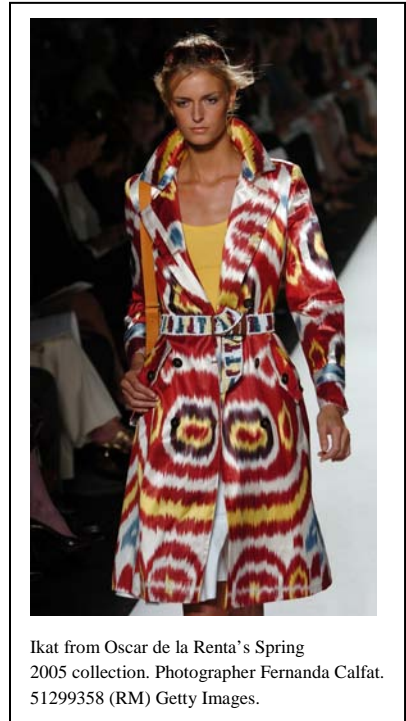
February 9, 2011, Washington, D.C. — The striking colors and bold patterns of ikat have earned these fabrics international recognition as the latest trend in fashion and interior design. Visitors to *Colors of the Oasis: Central Asian Ikats*, on view at **The Textile Museum** through **March 13, 2011**, will recognize the trademark nature-inspired patterns, bold colors and “soft-edges” of this artform. Ikat fabric, woven from pre-dyed thread, has been considered a cultural treasure and fashion statement in Uzbekistan for over two centuries. After near extinction of this art form during the Soviet era, this exhibition heralds the recent revival of the ikat technique and growing global popularity of this aesthetic through popular design houses such as Oscar de la Renta, J. Crew, and Pottery Barn.

Described by viewers as “overwhelming” in richness of color and pattern, this exhibition showcases a selection of 19th-century ikat

garments and textiles from the museum’s Megalli Collection in a beautiful installation that situates ikat production, use and aesthetic significance to Central Asian culture within a socio-historic context. The more than 60 garments and other textiles in the exhibition have never been exhibited before. The exhibition is accompanied by a full-color comprehensive catalog, published by The Textile Museum, which presents new scholarship and illustrates the collection in its entirety.

About the Exhibition

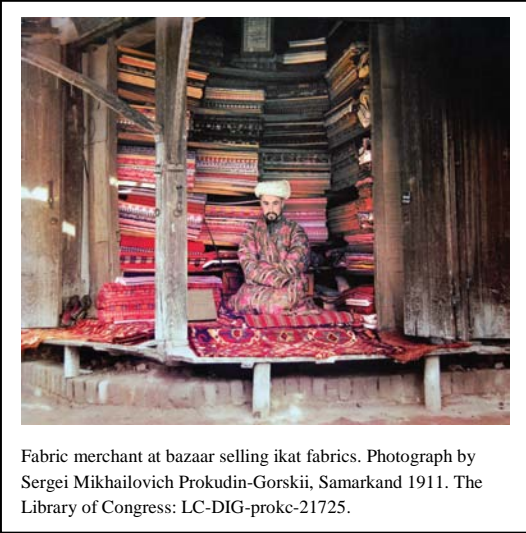
Unlike a majority of textiles that are woven with solid-colored thread or are printed or dyed after weaving, ikat is produced using the reverse process. Individual threads are first dyed with several colors that, when woven together, produce the energetic patterns unique to this textile tradition. Successful application of this complex technique requires extensive forethought and teamwork between various craftsmen and the designer. For this reason, ikat has been celebrated in Central Asia as one of the region’s great arts. In the 19th



Ikat from Oscar de la Renta’s Spring 2005 collection. Photographer Fernanda Calfat. 51299358 (RM) Getty Images.

century, when costume indicated an individual's social rank, wealth, domestic role, tribal affiliation and geographic origin, ikat was considered the most prestigious material to wear.

With an appreciation for the textile's increasing global popularity, *Colors of the Oasis* traces the historic development of ikat production and its contemporary revival. The exhibition is divided into three sections that guide the visitor through **ikat design and artistic principles**, **the stories of the people who used them and how**, and **the technical aspect of ikat making** and the people involved in this craft.



Fabric merchant at bazaar selling ikat fabrics. Photograph by Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii, Samarkand 1911. The Library of Congress: LC-DIG-prokc-21725.

Dynamic installations, including a setting inspired by a 19th-century Uzbek interior, and life-like displays using dress forms and historic photographs situate the collection within a socio-historic context and encourage the visitor to appreciate the textile's versatility and significance to Central Asian culture. Models demonstrating the dyeing process constructed by MICA (Maryland Institute College of Art) students provide insight into how these fabrics are made.

Colors of the Oasis: Central Asian Ikats is curated by Sumru Belger Krody, Curator of Eastern Hemisphere Collections at The Textile Museum.

About the Catalog

The accompanying book, *Colors of the Oasis: Central Asian Ikats*, is the first significant publication on Central Asian ikats produced in the U.S. in over a decade. The book, edited by Sumru Belger Krody, introduces the latest research on ikat aesthetics and costume history with a concise narrative of ikat production in Central Asia by contributing authors Feza Çakmut, Mary M. Dusenbury, Kate Fitz Gibbon, Andrew Hale, Sumru Belger Krody, Sayera Makhkamova and Susan Meller. Beautifully illustrated with high quality images and historic prints, including a detailed catalog of the entire 160-piece Megalli Collection, the catalog is available through The Textile Museum Shop: www.textilemuseumshop.org.

Related Programs

While *Colors of the Oasis* is on view, The Textile Museum will host a number of exhibition-related events. The museum's popular lecture series, **Evenings at the TM**, continues on **February 24th** with a discussion on explorer Robert Shaws's ikat collection by Yale University Art Gallery curator of Indo-Pacific Art Ruth Barnes. On **March 3**, the series concludes with a presentation about the trade of textiles and other goods across the Silk Road by Scott Levi, associate professor of Central Asian History at Ohio State University. Upcoming programs include even more demonstrations, interactive family programs, performances, gallery talks, lectures and the popular after-hours "PM @ The TM" series. For updates and a complete listing of upcoming events at The Textile Museum, visit <http://www.textilemuseum.org/calendar/calendar.htm> or call (202) 667-0441.

About the Curator

Sumru Belger Krody, curator of Eastern Hemisphere Collections at The Textile Museum, is considered the leading authority on Ottoman Turkish and Greek embroidery. She has been with The Textile Museum for over 15 years and has served as head of the Eastern Hemisphere curatorial department since 2001. Krody's previous exhibitions include *Flowers of Silk & Gold: Four Centuries of Ottoman Embroidery* (2004-5); *Floral Perspectives in Carpet Design* (2006); *Harpies, Mermaids and Tulips: Embroidery of the Greek Islands and Epirus Region* (2006); and *Ahead of His Time: The Collecting Vision of George Hewitt Myers* (2007-8). Krody has

previously authored two exhibition catalogs, *Harpies, Mermaids, and Tulips* (2006) and *Flowers of Silk and Gold: Four Centuries of Ottoman Embroidery* (2000). Krody also serves on the board of the Textile Society of America.

About The Textile Museum

Established 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 18,000 textiles and rugs, 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, D.C. The Museum is open Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free with a suggested donation of \$5 for non-members. For more information, call (202) 667-0441 or visit www.textilemuseum.org.

For more information or images, please contact Katy Clune at (202) 667-0441, ext. 77, or by e-mail at kclune@textilemuseum.org or visit www.textilemuseum.org/about/pressroom.htm.