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Batik, Traditional Textiles Of Indonesia: From The Rudolf Smend & Donald Harper Collections



Synopsis

Batik occupies a special place in Indonesian culture. Each fabric has a rich story to tell—â•as a reflection of the nation's religious beliefs, sophisticated court cultures and cosmopolitan history. The extraordinary textiles in this book are from the collections of Rudolf Smend and Donald Harper. Most date from the period 1880 to 1930 when the art of batik reached its apogee. Having collected historic batik for over thirty years and published two books on the subject, Rudolf Smend has invited his friend and fellow batik specialist Donald Harper to contribute his fine collection to this publication as well. None of the batik in this book have been published before. They represent an exquisite cross-section of the batik production of Java—â•the most important batik-producing region in the world. The cloths are complemented by vintage photographs from the first quarter of the 20th century demonstrating how the batik were worn at court and at home. Three are from museums in Dresden and Cologne, while three are from the private collection of Leo Haks. The others have been collected over the past 30 years from private sources in Java. The captions are by Maria Wronska-Friend, an ethnologist and batik expert who frequently visits Indonesian batik centers and has worked for many years as an anthropologist in Papua New Guinea. Her contributions provide fundamental knowledge for lovers of this art form while at the same time providing new insights for experts. Rudolf Smend has invited other batik aficionados of his generation to share their passion for batik in this book. Inger McCabe Elliott, author of the bestselling *Batik: Fabled Cloth of Java* has contributed her lifelong experience. Other authorities like Annegret Haake, Brigitte Khan Majlis and Jonathan Hope share their views and expertise in these pages. This book represents a labor of love and a lifetime of friendship for the two authors, who hope it will provide inspiration to a whole new generation of batik lovers.

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Customer Reviews

"The extraordinary textiles in this book are from the collections of Rudolf Smend and Donald HarperÃ¢â€‌They represent an exquisite cross-section of the batik production of Java Ã¢â€‌ the most important batik-producing region in the worldÃ¢â€‌This book represents a labour of love and a lifetime of friendship for the two authors, who hope it will provide inspiration to a whole new generation of batik lovers." Ã¢â€‌ •Carpet Collector magazine

Rudolf Smend is a passionate batik collector and the owner of Galerie Smend in Cologne. He was first introduced to batik in 1973 at Yogyakarta in Central Java. His gallery exhibits the work of international textile artists and recently celebrated its 42nd anniversary. Smend has edited and published numerous books on silk painting and batik: in the year 2000 Batik from the Courts of Java and Sumatra: The Rudolf G. Smend Collection and in 2006 Batiku75 selected masterpieces'. Donald Harper is an American collector of traditional textiles, particularly Indonesian batik. He has lived in Southeast Asia since 1975. Donald Harper has sourced many textiles which are now part of a number of important museum collections, such as the National Museum of Singapore, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, The Fowler Museum at UCLA, The Rautenstrauch-Joest Museum of Ethnology in Cologne and the Textile Museum in Krefeld.

Smend and Harper are veritable marathon men in their noble efforts to promote appreciation and understanding of the batik traditions of the Indonesian archipelago. A finely realized book with lovely illustrations of many stellar and heretofore unpublished pieces. A superior addition to the literature on Indonesian textiles in general and batik in particular. Primissima! Bravo! More please!

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