

EXHIBITIONS AT A GLANCE 2018

This year we profiled contemporary and historic Japanese textiles with two major thematic exhibitions on the occasion of the 90th Anniversary of Japan-Canada diplomatic relations in 2018. *Diligence and Elegance: The Nature of Japanese Textiles* presented 50 traditional artifacts from

the Museums' collection with the work of two contemporary Toronto-based Japanese weavers, Hiroko Karuno and Keiko Shintani, to reveal the extraordinary craftsmanship sustained through generations of training and dedication. *Artistry in Silk: The Kimono of Itchiku Kubota* profiled over 40 world-famous tsujigahana-style kimonos by Japanese artist Itchiku Kubota (1917-2003).

Huicholes - A People Walking Towards the Light - an installation of contemporary, region-specific yarn paintings by José Benítez Sánchez (1938-2009) - strengthened our relationship to the local Latin American community through a rewarding partnership with the Mexican Consulate in Toronto. Furthering our investment in featuring Latin American material cultures, the technique of ikat dyeing and weaving was profiled in *Tied, Dyed and Woven: Ikat Textiles from Latin America*. This exhibition showcased items from our permanent collection alongside commissioned and borrowed contemporary textiles.

Curious, a solo exhibition of woven tapestries by Canadian artist Jane Kidd, was presented in conversation with a selection of global tapestries from our permanent collection to illustrate individual and cultural ingenuity in the technique of tapestry weaving. The artist's fascination with technical composition was shared through her selection and commentary on the historic textiles in the exhibition while her own masterful tapestries demonstrated the impact of the medium to convey urgent questions about the environment and scientific innovation.

Color Improvisations 2: An International Exhibition of Contemporary Quilts was curated by Nancy Crow (Baltimore, Ohio), one of North America's most celebrated and influential quiltmakers and teachers. The exhibition included twenty-five spectacular large-format quilts by twenty-five artists from Canada, Germany, Scotland, Switzerland, and the United States - including a piece by Nancy Crow.

Currently running is *Crosscurrents: Canada in the Making*, an exploration of the ongoing cultural exchanges, and interactions between Indigenous people, settler Canadians, and newcomers over the last two centuries. It examines shifting identities, intersections and contestations that inform textile expressions alongside the stories of those who make Canada their home.



Poncho, South America: Central South America, Bolivia, from the Opekar/Webster Collection, T94.0930, from Tied, Dyed and Woven: Ikat Textiles from Latin America, installation view, 2018.



Visitors at the opening of Color Improvisations 2: An International Exhibition of Contemporary Quilts view Madness by Brigitte Ammann

The Textile Museum has been fortunate to receive funding for these exhibitions from the William R. and Shirley Beatty Charitable Foundation, BMO Financial Group, the Hal Jackman Foundation, and the Japan Foundation.

IN THE COMMUNITY



Participant in the Block by Block, Thread by Thread workshop



One of the objects exhibited in Learning Through Touch: Enhancing the Awareness and Use of the Museum's Teaching Collections, with visitors' comments

We have invested significantly in our education department, promoting our Education Coordinator to the role of Curator of Education, supported by a newly created full-time Education and Interpretation Coordinator and a part-time contractual Community Arts Engagement Coordinator. This increased commitment to education supports our goal of expanded program development, creating an integrated approach to education that allows museumgoers of all ages to engage in purposeful learning, and offering a place for diverse voices within our programming while continuing to work closely with contemporary interdisciplinary artists locally, nationally and internationally.

Starting in October and running until May 2019, *Beads, they're sewn so tight* takes up the depths of social and political relations expressed through beadwork, including living traditions, family, and community networks – embedded in the visual language of pattern and surface design. *Beads, they're sewn so tight* will exhibit over 40 beaded works by artists Bev Koski, Katie Longboat, Jean Marshall, and Olivia Whetung, who employ distinct techniques in their approach to using beads and thread. From bead weaving to loom work and bead embroidery, their artwork threads through formal concerns of colour and design attending to critical issues such as language retention, stereotypes, and social/environmental injustices for Indigenous people.

In conjunction with this exhibition, the Museum will present a symposium to exchange and expand knowledge of contemporary Indigenous beadwork with participating artists and curator Lisa Myers in January 2019.

The Presenting Sponsor of this exhibition is BMO Financial Group.

In April 2017, we launched *Collective Threads*, a digital project designed to highlight aspects of day-to-day life common to all Canadians through video narratives of nine immigrants and newcomers. In March 2018 we hosted *Block by Block, Thread by Thread*, in collaboration with three partnering organizations: Paralia Newcomer Arts Network, the Toronto Ward Museum, and Myseum of Toronto. This was a series of three workshops in which newcomers were invited to share their migration stories with each other and design and print a scarf. This project was a model for collaborative programming that leverages community expertise and acknowledges the diversity of lived experiences. The project was integrated into the Myseum Intersections Festival program of events that explored what it means to have arrived in Toronto.

The *Melissa Levin Emerging Artist Award* successfully launched in Summer 2017 with three prizes awarded to emerging artists to further their practice. The award was established in honour of Melissa's passion for mentoring emerging artists and is made possible through donated funds from the artist's family, friends, and many other supporters. Recipients in this inaugural year were Hannah Epstein, Vanessa Dion Fletcher, and Omar Badrin. 2018 winners were Catherine Blackburn and Meera Sethi.



Bev Koski "Striped Robe in Blues, 1979" (2018), Beads and thread 3.5 x 3.5" from *Beads, they're sewn so tight*

OUR COLLECTION

We continue to advance meaningful access to the Museum's permanent collection through in-house and travelling exhibitions, loans, publications, and educational programs. Our database of 15,000 textiles is readily available online for public access, and we continue to deepen our understanding about the items in our care through ongoing research that ensures our collection remains dynamic.

We are always honored to be able to contribute objects to fellow institutions' exhibitions. Last year, we loaned two beaded pieces from South Africa to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights for *Mandela: Struggle for Freedom*, and two Thor Hansen textiles to the Gardiner Museum for *True Nordic*.

GOING FORWARD

Community Voices is a creative partnership program administered by the Museum and delivered in collaboration with several social agencies in Toronto. Building on our past successful collaborations with a number of agencies in the city, this community-engaged program highlights the longstanding connections between craft, social enterprise, and community development. Encouraging creative expression and skill-building for individuals from at-risk and underserved communities, the program engages participants in immersive four-week workshops led by professional textile artists and culminates with an exhibition of the participants' artworks at the Museum.

Generously supported by Ruth Mandel - WHO GIVES Fund and the TD Wealth Private Giving Foundation, HOOKED! the program will deliver two series of the program in November 2018 and Spring 2019. Each series will be delivered with several community organizations in the city and conclude with an exhibition of the participants' projects in the Museum's Community Gallery.