

Basic Detail Report



Batik hip wrapper / kain panjang kepala tumpal

Date

Early 20th century

Primary Maker

Artist not recorded

Medium

cotton

Description

This Kain panjang (hip wrapper for men and women, meaning literally “long cloth” in Malay) is an example of

kompinasi technique, a combination of wax resist using both hand-drawing (batik tulis) and copper stamp techniques (batik cap) in a single textile. This hip wrapper is arranged in a traditional design format (kain panjang kepala tumpal) and classic color scheme (red and blue-black) for the north coast of Java (batik Pasisir). Designs from this area incorporate multiple cultural influences, including Chinese, Hindu, Islamic, and European imagery. For this reason, historically, most US museum collections of Javanese batik have prioritized styles from the central region, stereotypically considered more nationally pure than those from the more multicultural north coast (See Gluckman in Heringa and Veldhuisen 1996, 15). The background colors of the kepala (border ends) are opposing (one red, one blue-black / known as kain panjang sisihan, or “long cloth with dissimilar halves”). This asymmetrical style makes it appropriate throughout a woman’s life; often acquired just before marriage, it could be worn with the red end exposed when young and as a newlywed, then later in life, wrapped with the dark end outside. The kepala is decorated with stylized floral vines (Islamic influence), star-shaped motifs (“star flowers,” Indian influence), and phoenix-inspired birds of paradise (Chinese influence), and includes a single/half row of tumpal (sawtooth / triangular pattern). The very outer bottom edge of the textile is trimmed with a single row of vertical stripes called a seret or “cricket’s teeth (gigi walang) and said to serve a protective function like a fence (keeping out). The central field (badan) depicts a festival procession scene. Four buildings evoke Chinese-style architecture with one at center right appearing to be a Buddhist temple or wealthy home with an ancestors’ altar. Surrounding the buildings, revelers carry kites, lanterns, banners, parasols, and the flag of the Dutch East Indies (1800-1942). Some carry gamelan instruments. Others appear to be dancing, while others ride horseback or in horse-drawn carriages. Many of the individual figures are further adorned with intricate hand-drawn filler designs. Nice and unusual example. Unlike anything in our collection. Good storytelling device for exploring cultural diversity and the history of trade routes in Java/Indonesia and how these have impacted artistic development (CHertz 2024). See Reference: Heringa, Rens and Harmen C. Veldhuisen. 1996. Fabric of Enchantment: Batik from the North Coast of Java. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Dimensions

40 3/4 × 98 1/4 in. (103.5052 × 249.5555 cm)