

## Fairs

### SAN FRANCISCO TRIBAL & TEXTILE ART SHOW

Fort Mason, San Francisco, CA  
8-11 February 2018  
Reviewed by Malin Lonnberg

The San Francisco Tribal & Textile Art Show, now in its thirty-second year, is an institution in the world of rugs and textiles. This was my first visit, and as one of the newer members of the HALI editorial staff, it was an opportunity to meet with dealers, enthusiasts and HALI readers from the west coast and across the USA.

Across the 70 or so stands with objects from Asia, Africa, Oceania and the Americas, textiles were the focus of a chosen few, but appeared among the offerings of many. I found one of the main advantages of the fair to be the chance to see cloths, examples of costume and other weavings in the context of works in different media—sculpture, ceramics, metalwork—from the same cultures. Not viewing textile production in isolation is bound to add to our understanding.

This fair is an excellent place to learn, but it is of course also a place to sell. For Thomas Murray, who was conducting a special sale of more accessible pieces, one of the first things to fly off the wall was a Central Asian ikat panel (4), once in the Jack Lenor Larsen Collection. Murray kindly lent the HALI stand a Naga textile with

cowrie shell circles and a human figure, which garnered almost as much attention as HALI 194: *The China Edition*.

Vicki Shiba had a selection of Chinese rugs artfully arranged on the floor of her booth, and Wenhua Liu provided both Chinese textiles and expert knowledge of the country and its art history. Completely devoted to textile art was John Ruddy, who exhibited good-quality Indonesian material, including a *kepala* headcloth (5).

When it came to rugs, Hagop Manoyan, who can normally be found in New York, showed a wealth of fine Caucasian carpets, which proved very popular on Instagram (@halimagazine). From Istanbul, Anatolian Picker had a stand filled with Turkish woven goods as well as rugs from further afield. Fazli Solak, exhibiting his on home turf, also offered a wide choice of pieces from most of the major rug-producing areas.

The special exhibitions are always a big draw, and this year was no different. After a successful outing in 2017, Peter Pap presented another edition of 'Artful Weavings', this time with tribal and village rugs from the collection. Elsewhere, in the centre of the hall, Kim Martindale's dazzlingly bright Germantown Navajo weavings represented another aspect of what is possible in the textile medium.

There was a general feeling



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that the show had now found its feet since coming under new management last year. San Francisco has a history of being a hub for non-western art, and there is a clear love for and knowledge of the subject among visitors. What is needed, however, is to add to that group, particularly in the form of a younger audience. The key probably lies in associated

exhibitions and events.

Nearby in the Fort Mason Chapel, the exhibition 'Sanctuary' (2), organised by the For-Site Foundation, was taking place. Thirty-six contemporary artists, including big names such as Ai Weiwei, Cornelia Parker and Mona Hatoum, had been invited to design hand-knotted rugs, with the results displayed on the chapel

floor. Spending some time there, and taking part in a discussion panel with two of the artists, Ala Ebtekar and Sanaz Mazinani, academic Minoo Moallem and San Francisco Fine Arts Museums curator Jill D'Alessandro, it became obvious to me that the willingness to engage with this kind of material exists, and only needs to be harnessed.

1 Karabagh rug, southwest Caucasus, first half 19th century. 0.99 x 1.91 m (3' 3" x 6' 6"). 'Artful Weavings' by Peter Pap, San Francisco

2 Installation view of 'Sanctuary', organised in the Fort Mason Chapel by the For-Site Foundation

3 Fachralo prayer rug, southwest Caucasus, ca. 1870. 1.40 x 1.92 m (4' 6" x 6' 3"). Hagop Manoyan, New York

4 Silk ikat panel (detail), Uzbekistan, 19th century. Thomas Murray, Mill Valley

5 *Kain kepala* headcloth (detail), Lampung, south Sumatra, Indonesia. Silk and pineapple fibre, ikat centre ground and embroidery. John Ruddy, Santa Fe