

Kashmir Heritage

Press release

Chintz - The textile gold of the VOC

Amersfoort (NL), 10th of January 2017

Chintz back in The Netherlands after 100 years

We are proud to announce the scoop of the first handmade chintz in over 100 years that was made for the Netherlands. After six month of work it arrived last December. It concerns a reproduction of an 18th Century tree of life and garland taken from a quilt, which is in private ownership of Ms. Joes Meester. The depiction of the tree of life is hand painted in India by a small workshop that revived this century-old technique. Using time consuming and intricate methods of natural dyeing like impregnating the cotton with mordants, bleaching it in sunlight and resist dyeing techniques.

Between the 15th and the 19th century, chintz was the textile gold for the VOC (Dutch East India Company). It was for the Company the most important cornerstone in becoming prosperous. Chintz was very popular among the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy in the West, and it was a challenge to obtain adequate supplies of the hand-painted floral fabrics. Often tree of life, flowers and garlands were chosen as motifs. The cotton was prepared and hand painted in India with natural dyes like indigo, using time-consuming and specialized mordant and resist dyeing techniques. Already soon traders in the West saw the potential of this beloved painted cotton with great color fastness from India. With some adjustments in taste, chintz became immensely popular first as home textiles, later also in clothing and in (traditional) costumes. In India, chintz existed already since the 5th Century. Chintz fell out of favor in the West after it was widely copied and printed start of the 19th Century. The popular handmade chintz was even banned to protect the European market. In The Netherlands however chintz stayed popular in regional costumes well into the 20st Century.

Nathalie Cassee of Kashmir Heritage in July 2016 commissioned the first chintz in approx. 100 years in The Netherlands. It is handcrafted in India in a small workshop which specializes in chintz reproductions. We are proud to announce that both the original 250 year old quilt as well as the recent reproduction of the tree of life with garland are on display during the exhibition: Sits, katoen in bloei' (Chintz, cotton in bloom') in the Fries Museum Leeuwarden (NL) from 10th of March until 10th of September 2017.

If you want more information on this project, please contact Nathalie Cassee / Kashmir Heritage
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