



**South-East Asia:
Myanmar, Indonesia, Thailand,
Vietnam & Philippines**

Manitoba Crafts Museum and Library

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Dear Reader,

The document has been prepared to make all the works from the South-East Asia region in the Manitoba Crafts Museum and Library collection as accessible as possible to community, and contains information about the cultural objects currently in our care.

The information is accurate to the best of our knowledge as of May 2026.

We acknowledge that some information might be missing or incorrect. We welcome input and additional information from community members.

If you have any comments or questions, or if you would like to add information about any of these works, please contact me at:

204.615.3951 or mcml@c2centreforcrafft.ca

Best,

Andrea Reichert

Curator



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Scarf

Artist: Naw Kay Seng

Accession number: 2877.00

Object name: Scarf

Date: 2002 – 2008

Period: Early 21st Century

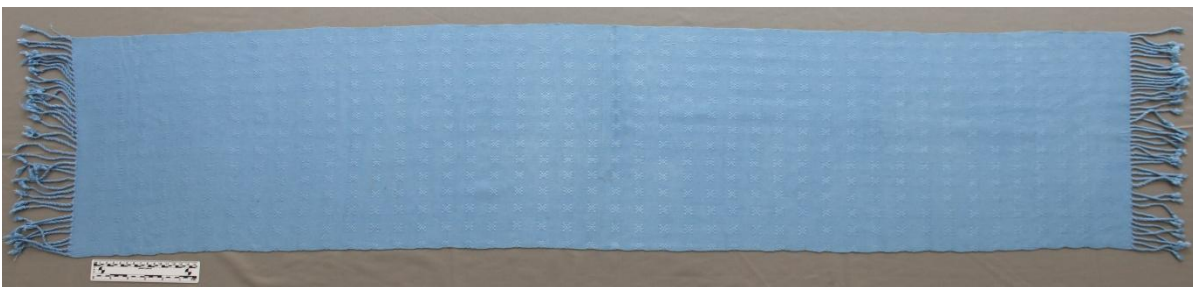
Description: Woven in back strap loom. With "X" pattern woven in rows. Twisted fringe at ends.

Narrative: This piece was made by Karen refugee, Naw Kay Seng. Kay created Naw Kay Backstrap Handwoven Designs as a means to preserve her culture and to support other Karen refugees, who are Indigenous to Myanmar. Traditionally, these textiles are made by harvesting and spinning local cotton and dyeing it with natural pigments. Since there are limited supplies in Canada, Kay makes her pieces using a cotton/polyester blend thread and naturally dyes the thread herself. Threads are left long for good fortune and they are tied together to symbolize unity.

Material: Cotton / Polyester

Measurements: 153 CM x 32 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia





Sarong

Artist: Naw Kay Seng

Accession number: 2878.00

Object name: Sarong

Date: 2002 – 2008

Period: Early 21st Century

Description: Fabric Sample. Cloth for a “nea” - a burmese sarong used by the Karen. Woven on a backstrap loom in two sections and sewn together with zigzag stitch. Edges irregular and unfinished.

History of Use: The sarong is worn by either twisting the fabric, tucking, or belted.

Narrative: This piece was made by Karen refugee Naw Kay Seng. Kay created Naw Kay Backstrap Handwoven Designs as a means to preserve her culture and to support other Karen refugees, who are Indigenous to Myanmar. Traditionally, these textiles are made by harvesting and spinning local cotton and dyeing it with natural pigments. Since there are limited supplies in Canada, Kay makes her pieces using a cotton/polyester blend thread and naturally dyes the thread herself. Threads are left long for good fortune and they are tied together to symbolize unity.

Material: Cotton / Polyester

Measurements: 168 CM x 101.5 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia





Shirt

Artist: Naw Kay Seng

Accession number: 3462.00

Object name: Shirt

Period: Early 21st Century

Description: This shirt is made from two lengths of woven fabric sewn together to form a square. There is an opening at the top center and at the top two outer sides to allow the head and arms to come through. A fringe of the red cotton is along the sides, front and back seams. Down the center of each panel is a 6.3 cm strip of white, bordered with a yellow and a green strip which is also running down the middle of the solid red panels. The armholes and neck opening have white and red braided finishing; the bottom edge of the shirt has a rolled hem. This shirt is constructed in the Karen Culture style.

History of Use: This shirt is typically worn by Karen men.

Narrative: This shirt was made by Karen artist Naw Kay Seng. She is a Karen immigrant from Myanmar, previously known as Burma. The long tassels on this piece represent good fortune.

Material: Cotton / Polyester

Measurements: 99 CM x 72.5 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia





Pants

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 3463.00

Object name: Pants

Period: Late 20th Century

Description: These pants are made from handwoven fabric and constructed in the Karen Culture style. All sewing is hand done.

History of Use: These are men's pants that are made and worn by the Karen people of modern day Myanmar.

Narrative: These pants were made in Burma, modern day Myanmar. There is no information of the artist who made these pants. They were likely made by someone in the Karen community.

Material: Cotton

Measurements: 86 CM x 122 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia





Shirt

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 3464.00

Object name: Shirt

Period: Late 20th Century

Description: This shirt is black on the top area and multi-coloured in the mid-drift area; fringes in the various colours are along the sides and bottom hem. The neck and arm openings are finished off with a white cotton braid that is left to form the fringe in those areas. The multi-coloured area has geometric designs on a red/black background.

History of Use: This shirt is worn by Karen women after they are married.

Narrative: This shirt would be worn by women in the Karen culture after they are married. It is constructed by sewing two handwoven strips of fabric together to make a square. There are openings left at the top and sides for the head and arms.

Material: Cotton

Measurements: 80 CM x 64.5 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia





Sarong

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 3465.00

Object name: Skirt / Sarong

Period: Early 21st Century

Description: This skirt is constructed of a single piece of hand woven fabric which is folded in half and sewn up the side. It would be tied at the waist with a cord and therefore "one size fits all". There is a black stripe running near the top and bottom of the skirt with bands of browns and pinks in between.

History of Use: This skirt/sarong is worn by Karen women after marriage.

Narrative: Karen women of Burma (modern day Myanmar) made this sarong.

Material: Cotton

Measurements: 79 CM x 69 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia





Shirt

Artist: Naw Kay Seng

Accession number: 3466.00

Object name: Shirt

Period: Early 21st Century

Description: There are openings left at the top and sides for the head and arms. This shirt is white with a woven band in the mid-drift area. The neck and arm openings are finished off with a red cotton braid that is left to form the fringe in those areas. There is also a band of red/pink woven near the bottom of the shirt that form a fringe in those areas. This a longer style shirt where the bottom is left fringed.

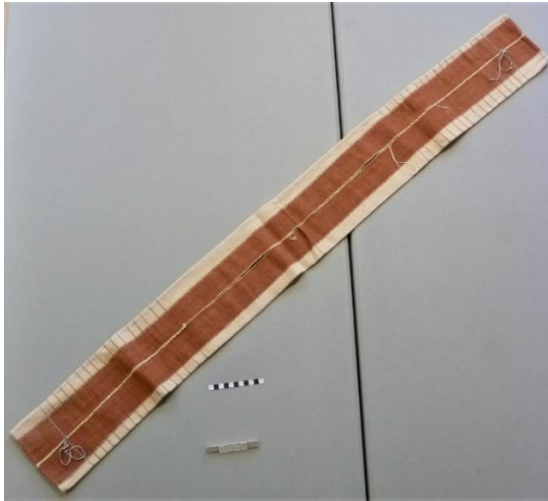
History of Use: Shirts such as these are typically worn by worn by Karen women of Myanmar (previously Burma) before getting married.

Narrative: This shirt was constructed by sewing two handwoven strips of fabric together to make a square. This piece was made by artist, Naw Kay Seng. The strings were left to make the shirt bigger or smaller. The long strings symbolize good fortune.

Material: Cotton

Measurements: 91 CM x 47 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia



Sleeve

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 3467.00

Object name: Sleeve

Period: Late 20th Century

Description: This sleeve is hand woven; each end has been sewn together to form the sleeves, the middle has been left open so that the arms can go through. There is a thread left in the middle section that can be used to make the opening smaller so that it's adjustable for various sizes. It is cream coloured with a 6 cm brown stripe on each edge and a 6 cm brown stripe down the middle of the fabric. The ends of the sleeve have a rolled hem finish. These type of sleeves are worn by both men and women.

History of Use: These sleeves are a very old style of traditional Karen clothing. It is meant to be worn without a top and can be worn by both men and women.

Narrative: The specific artist is unknown, but the piece is said to be made in Myanmar (previously known as Burma) by Karen peoples.

Material: Cotton

Measurements: 73 CM x 16.2 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia



Purse

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 3468.00

Object name: Purse

Period: Late 20th Century

Description: This multi-coloured bag has a burgundy background with geometric designs along the top and bottom corners. It is a rectangular shape with a long strap so that it would be worn across the body. There are fringes at the base of the strap and bottom of the bag.

History of Use: These bags are typically made by women and worn by men.

Narrative: This bag was made by a person within the Karen community in what was previously known as Burma, modern day Myanmar.

Material: Cotton

Measurements: 82 CM x 25 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia





Shirt

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 3469.00

Object name: Shirt

Period: Late 20th Century

Description: This men's shirt is quite long but the typical rectangular shape of the Karen culture. It is made from two lengths of hand woven fabric that have been sewn together at the front, back and sides, leaving openings at the top for the head and sides for the arms. The openings are finished with a rolled hem on which there is a braid which ends at the bottom of the openings with a tassel.

History of Use: This shirt is typically worn by men.

Narrative: This shirt was made in Burma (modern day Myanmar) by women in the Karen community. This specific style of men's shirts is supposedly an older style.

Material: Cotton

Measurements: 115.5 CM x 72 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia





Shirt

Artist: Lantha (Seng ?)

Accession number: 3470.00

Object name: Shirt

Period: Late 20th Century

Description: Constructed by sewing two handwoven strips of fabric together to make a square. Openings were left at the top and sides for the head and arms. This shirt is grey on the top area and multi-coloured in the mid-drift area; fringes in the various colours are along the sides. The neck opening is finished off with a pink cotton braid; the arm openings are finished off in a hot pink cotton braid that forms the fringe in those areas. The multi-coloured area has geometric designs on a salmon/grey background. The bottom is finished with a rolled hem.

History of Use: This style shirt is worn by women after they have wed.

Narrative: This shirt was owned and made by (the donor) Naw Kay Seng's mother named Lantha. This style of backstrap weaving is a traditional art form within the Karen peoples of Myanmar, formally known as Burma.

Material: Cotton

Measurements: 67 CM x 63.5 CM

Culture: Karen (Burmese), South-East Asia



Sarong

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 338.00

Object name: Sarong

Period: Mid 20th Century

Description: Hemmed length of cotton fabric. It has a vine pattern with a narrow border printed on the salvages as well as triangular shapes along the borders. It is done in batik method of printing. Colorful floral pattern in the border of the piece.

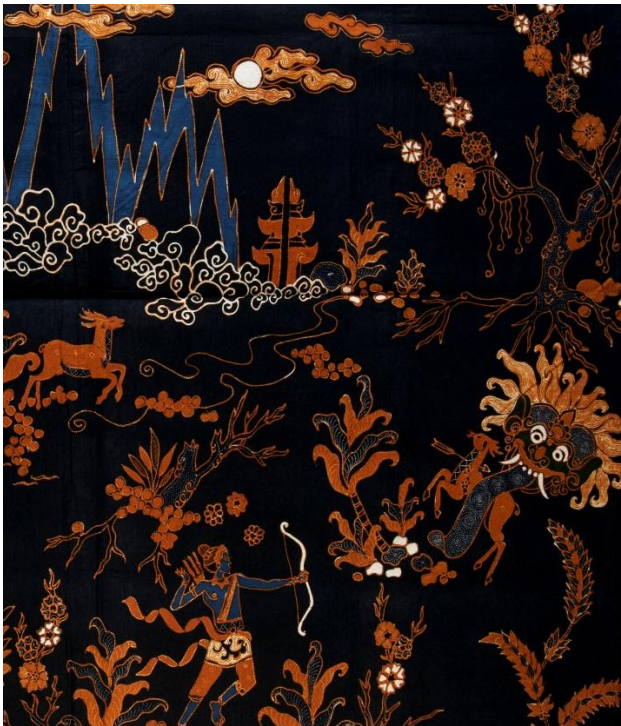
History of Use: It is unclear what the original intended use of this piece was, but based off research, it could have been used as a sarong, a skirt worn by men and women, or it could just be a piece of fabric meant to be made into another garment later on.

Material: Cotton; Dye

Measurements: 240 CM x 103 CM

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia





Batik

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 1217.01

Object name: Artwork (Batik)

Period: Mid 20th Century; Late 20th Century

Description: Batik panel depicting story or legend; comes out of dyeing with the figures and scenes in brown, white and blue on a black background. Scene of hunter with bow, stag, maiden, temple and monster. Appears to represent a story or legend. Finished edges.

History of Use: Batiks are often made into pieces of clothing, but considering the size and the design on this piece, this was likely made as a decoration.

Narrative: This piece has depictions of flowers, clouds, and people fighting what seems to be the Hindu demon of Rakshasa. The style of the depictions are all typical Hindu motifs and designs. Considering this, it was most likely made in the province of Bali in Indonesia since the majority of the population in Bali is Hindu.

Material: Cotton

Measurements: 228 CM x 107 CM

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia



Fabric Sample

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 1217.02

Object name: Cloth Bolt (Batik)

Period: Mid 20th Century; Late 20th Century

Description: A length of yellow broadcloth printed in an all over pattern consisting of blocks, approx. 16.5 CM x 15.5 CM. Each block divided diagonally, a different pattern in each triangle. Designs are fantastic creatures and fanciful vegetation.

Printed in three colors. Raw edges.

History of Use: Since the edges are raw, and considering the size, this was likely a fabric sample meant to be made into a garment.

Narrative: The designs, motifs, and colours look similar to Surakarta Batik styles.

Material: Cotton Broadcloth

Measurements: 246 CM x 107 CM

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia





Fabric Sample

Accession number: 1217.03

Object name: Cloth Bolt (Batik)

Period: Mid 20th Century; Late 20th Century

Description: Length of cream color cotton fabric; design is printed width-wise in 18 CM. repeats. Raw edges. Repeating pattern of birds, fish, nature symbols in brown and navy on cream background.

History of Use: Since this piece was not hemmed, it's likely that it was intended to be made into a piece of clothing.

Narrative: The designs on this piece are similar to that of Surakarta or Pekalongan batik style.

Material: Cotton Broadcloth

Measurements: 234 CM x 104 CM

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia





Fabric Sample

Artist: Putriayu, R. K.

Accession number: 1217.04

Object name: Cloth Bolt (Print Dyed)

Period: Mid 20th Century; Late 20th Century

Description: Length of cotton fabric, stencil printed. One half of length is patterned with a stencil of yellow/burgundy and the other half pink/burgundy. There is a border pattern on either end. Ends not finished. Same pattern all over of interlocking flowers. Reversed on other side. Likely machine printed, possibly with some batik techniques used as well.

Marks/Label: Signed at one end "Putriayu RK"

History of Use: Considering the size and hemming on this piece of fabric, it was likely intended to be used as a Sarong or men's skirt of some sort.

Narrative: The designs and colours on this Batik are similar to the batik done in the Acehese culture of Indonesia.

Material: Cotton; Dyes

Measurements: 153.6 CM x 94.7 CM

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia



Printing Blocks

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 1217.06 and 1217.07

Object name: Fabric Block (Batik)

Period: Mid 20th Century; Late 20th Century

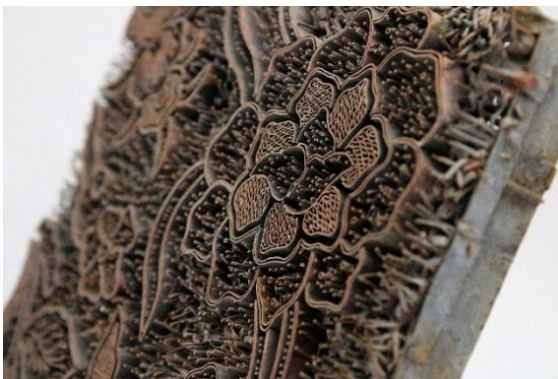
Description: Metal printing blocks with handles. Floral design. Pattern done in copper.

History of Use: Batik 'stamps' for 'mass production' of pattern, as opposed to hand drawing entire pattern.

Material: Metal; Copper

Measurements: 20.5 CM x 20.5 CM

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia





Guidebook

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 1217.08

Object name: Guidebook (Batik)

Date: 1963

Period: Mid 20th Century

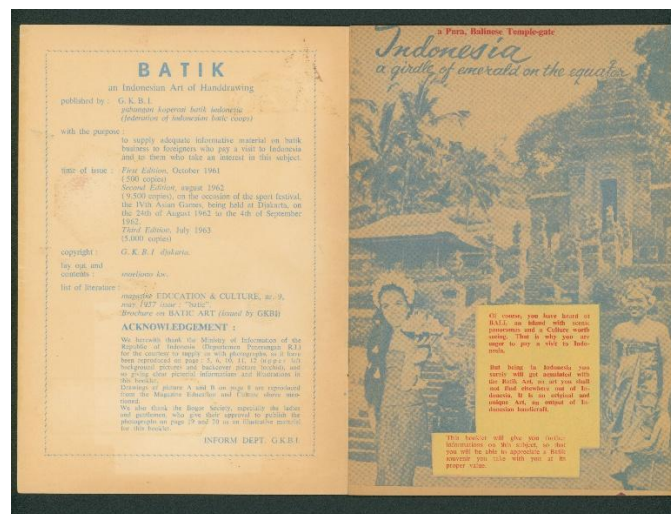
Description: *Batik: Indonesian Art of Handdrawing.*

Informational book containing history of batik, images of batik designs and clothing, cultural information on batik, and instructions for making batik designs. Intended to educate foreigners visiting Indonesia to increase tourists' knowledge and appreciation for batik. Third edition, published 1963 by G. K. B. I. (Federation of Indonesian Batik Co-ops), Djakarta (Jakarta), Indonesia.

Material: Paper

Measurements: 15 CM x 21 CM

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia



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Parasol

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 1610.00

Object name: Parasol

Period: Undetermined

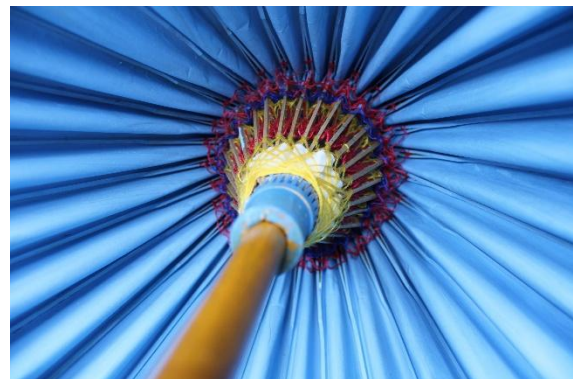
Description: A lacquered and painted parasol, with yellow and pink flowers on a gradient blue base. Gold/brass tip.

Marks/Label: Small sticker on the wooden handle reads "Handmade in Indonesia"

History of Use: Parasols/umbrellas are often worn by women in traditional Indonesian attire for ceremonies and special events. Considering the provenance this umbrella was likely specifically made for tourists to purchase, as opposed to the traditional ceremonial use by Indonesian locals.

Material: Wood; Paper; Paint; Brass

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia





Printing Block

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 1611.00

Object name: Fabric Block

Period: Late 20th Century

Description: A copper stamp with floral design.

History of Use: Bought in Quebec City in 1981.
Stamp for block printing.

Material: Wood; Copper

Measurements: 9.4 CM x 6.1 CM x 3 CM

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia





Printing Block

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 1612.00

Object name: Fabric Block

Period: Late 20th Century

Description: Irregular shaped wooden block with small flowers, leaves and ferns in copper.

History of Use: Bought in Quebec City in 1981.
Stamp for block printing.

Material: Wood; Copper

Measurements: 7.5 CM x 6.5 CM x 2.7 CM

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia





Printing Block

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 1613.00

Object name: Fabric Block

Period: Mid 20th Century

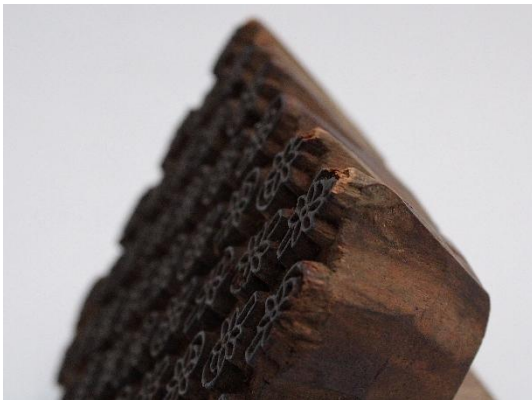
Description: Wooden handle nailed to back of block. Stylized floral pattern in diagonals carved onto block.

History of Use: Bought in the Eastern Townships, Quebec. Possibly late 19th – early 20th century. Stamp for block printing.

Material: Wood; Metal

Measurements: 12.5 CM x 11 CM x 8 CM

Culture: Indonesian, South-East Asia





Doll

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 811.00

Object name: Doll

Period: Mid 20th Century

Description: Siamese dancing doll on black wood base. Gown of brocade in turquoise and gold on bronze. Black silk collar with gold metal trim and gold stars. Brocade cape in red, blue, pink on gold. Lined with red silk and held on with two lilac sequins. Tin headdress with six dangling bead and tin ornaments. There is one silver tin flower on the front of the headdress with a central red bead. Tin "flame" on back of head.

History of Use: Originally created as plaything, representing living person. Brought back from Siam (Thailand).

Material: Silk; Metal; Glass Beads; Wood; Nylon; Brocade

Measurements: 85 CM x 20 CM

Culture: Thai, South-East Asia





Wall Hanging

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 1211.00

Object name: Wall Hanging

Period: Late 20th Century

Description: Wall hanging with 10 cm fringe on bottom, braid hanger 5 boxes. A different stylized multicolour animal in each frame.

History of Use: Donated September, 1990 by the sisters of the Good Shephard. The Weaving is typical of the work going on in the village West, Nong Khai, Thailand.

Material: Cotton ?

Measurements: 149 CM x 33 CM

Culture: Thai, South-East Asia





Fabric Sample

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 3431.00

Object name: Cloth Bolt

Period: Late 20th Century

Description: Two pieces of black cloth with multi-colour stripes going across, as well as some geometric designs made with small white beads woven into the textile. Each cloth is slightly different.



History of Use: Acquired in Thua Thien Hue, Vietnam in the 1990s. Usually, a Ta Oi/Zeng cloth that is simple with colorful stripes is worn for everyday use, whereas a cloth with more intricate designs like beads woven in is worn during festivals, weddings, ceremonies, used as a decoration in the house or holy places. They can also be given as an A Riu which is the giving of thanks to the ancestors.

Narrative: Ta Oi traditional "Zeng" cloth

Material: Cotton; Glass

Measurements: 292 CM x 61 CM

Culture: Vietnamese, South-East Asia





Pouch

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: 3241.00

Object name: Pouch

Period: Undetermined

Description: This container is completely woven in cream, pink and green 1/4 inch strips of grass from the Philippines. Lid fits snugly over the bottom section and when removed we see a complete lining in the cream woven strips.

Material: Palm Leaf

Measurements: 9.5 CM x 14.2 CM

Culture: Filipino, South-East Asia





Shirt

Artist: Unknown

Accession number: CR2024.29.1

Object name: Dress Shirt

Period: Undetermined

Description: Sheer, cream-coloured Barong Tagalog, a Filipino cultural dress shirt. Intricate monochrome (cream) embroidery in two panels on either side of front buttons. Sparse, curved T-shaped embroidery accents covers entire shirt. Buttons on front and cuffs are white pearl circles with gold-coloured border.

Material: Sheer Cloth; Thread

Measurements: 71 CM x 56 CM

Culture: Filipino, South-East Asia

