

Indonesian Textiles at the Tropenmuseum by Itie van Hout

The Tropenmuseum Amsterdam holds an internationally renowned collection of textiles from Indonesia. Numbering approximately 12,000 objects, the majority of these textiles were acquired during the period that Indonesia was a Dutch colony. These textiles originate from all over the archipelago, from Aceh on Sumatra, to Tanimbar in the east. A small part of the collection was made in the Netherlands for artistic or commercial reasons. Indonesian Textiles at the Tropenmuseum examines the stories of those who made and used these collections, those who collected and brought them to the Netherlands, as well as those who have studied and exhibited them.

During the book launch, we will explore questions such as: what is the importance of these collections today and what do they tell us about the material worlds in which they were created and used? How might a study of these collections help us better understand Dutch colonial and scientific histories and relations? In addition, in what ways have the study of textiles in ethnographic museums related to the discipline of anthropology in general and its subfield of material culture studies?

About the author:

Itie van Hout is former Curator of Textiles of the Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam, and is now retired. She is the author of *Batik Drawn in Wax: 200 Years of Batik Art from Indonesia in the Tropenmuseum Collection* (2001) and *Beloved Burden: Baby Carriers in Different Countries* (2011).

Program book launch starts at 14:00:

1. Opening
Dr. Wayne Modest (Research Center for Material Culture)
2. Textile Collections of the Tropenmuseum
Itie van Hout (Tropenmuseum)
3. Anthropological Theory, Material Culture and Textiles in Museum
Dr. Haidy Geismar (University College London)
4. Honoring Rita Bolland
Pauline Kruseman (Supervisory Board Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen)
5. Panel Discussion: The Future of Curating (Ethnographic) Textiles

While textiles have played an important role within ethnographic collections, they have often been marginalized. Indeed, many ethnographic museums have closed their textile galleries. Moreover, there are fewer and fewer curators for textiles in ethnographic museum, giving way to curators of fashion. What, therefore, is the future of curating textiles in ethnographic museums? What role do these collections play? How do the theory and practice of textile curation join up with curating fashion? In this panel discussion, curators and makers will think critically about these questions.

Confirmed speakers: Itie van Hout (Tropenmuseum); Rachel Esner (Universiteit van Amsterdam); Sophie Berrebi (Universiteit van Amsterdam); Daan van Dartel (Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen) and Dr. Sarah Cheang (Royal College of Art)

6. Handover of the book
7. Closure with drinks