INDONESIAN IKAT FROM THE COLLECTION OF JOHN HUNTER & ALAN WEISSBERG
Indonesia—a geographically and culturally diverse nation of over fourteen thousand islands of various sizes and ethnic profiles—stretches from Malaysia in Southeast Asia to the continent of Australia. It is the world's largest island complex. More than three hundred different ethnic groups make up the indigenous population. In addition, many foreign influences enrich the traditions of Indonesia, where ancient beliefs and practices coexist with Hindu, Islamic, and Christian ones. Irian Jaya, which is located on the island of New Guinea, just north of Australia, is part of the Melanesian culture area. The western islands of Sumatra, Borneo, Java, and Bali are probably the best known. Java and Bali are especially noted for their dance, theatrical, musical, and visual art traditions.

The artists of Indonesia produce a wide range of jewelry, metalwork, basketry, textiles, beadwork, as well as a variety of objects carved from wood, bone, and horn. Both men and women engage in the production of these craft items. Men, for example, are the metalworkers and the carvers; while women produce the textiles, pots, and baskets. Although the art produced by women is distinct from that of men, this division of labor is basically complementary rather than competitive. Weaving is a female occupation; yet men are involved in the dyeing process, especially in the more recently established small factories. The weavers of Indonesia employ a variety of loom types. The body-tension loom is the most widely distributed type. The meaning and purpose of Indonesian artistic expression must be viewed within the context of both local and regional developments.

The majority of Indonesian art functions within a ceremonial context. Masks, shadow puppets, and rod puppets, for example, are important components of Indonesian ritual and drama. Indigenous, Hindu, and Islamic myths and tales are the sources for these performances. In Java, the majority of the masquerades illustrate history by affirming the achievements of Javanese kings. However in Bali, masked performances focus on both historical events and sacred stories, such as the battle between “ranga,” the queen of witches, and “barong,” a positive underworld creature. Puppet plays are performed throughout Java and Bali for various religious celebrations and rites of passage. The social and philosophical implications of puppet plays can be either complex or subtle, reflecting both cultural ideals and the realities of life. Individual plays often function as part of a long cycle. There are definite regional differences in the style and context of the puppets.

Shadow puppets, made from painted and gilded leather, have small attached rods that allow a puppeteer to maneuver the arms. Shadow puppet plays are performed at night against a cotton screen that has a light source positioned behind it. The puppeteer both manipulates the puppets to create various types of shadows and sings or speaks the parts of the different characters. Usually a small orchestra also accompanies the performance. To be understood, both puppets and masks must be viewed within a specific ritual context. The actual performance, in fact, requires the involvement of many people. The musical accompaniment is frequently a gamelan orchestra, a musical art form that predates the seventh century. The term gamelan denotes a set of instruments which consists primarily of tuned gongs and metallophones. In the absence of a conductor, players enrich the performance not by gesture but by music alone. This produces a vibrant and dramatic kaleidoscope of sound.

Rich wood carving traditions can be found on the island of New Guinea, located at the eastern edge of Indonesia. Among the Asmat people of Irian Jaya, men’s ceremonial houses are elaborately decorated with wooden sculpture. Large carved poles which commemorate the victims of intergroup conflict are erected on the exterior of these communal houses. Smaller standing or seated versions are used as architectural elements within the men’s house.

Cloth is central to much of the traditional social life in Indonesia. It is usually needed for major rites of passage such as marriages and funerals. In Sumatra, a father will give some cloth to a daughter who expects a first child or to a daughter who requires a special blessing to become pregnant. Timor is still an area of considerable textile production in part because cloth is needed for marriage. Specific kinds and quality of cloth are usually given by the bride’s family to that of the groom. Various textiles are also buried with the dead in Timor.

Particular events require special kinds of cloth or specific designs. Cloth designs and their meanings, however, are very localized. Java, Bali, and Sumatra also exhibit numerous foreign influences. On these islands, trade introduced gold, silver, and silk thread, the application of beads and sequins as well as new dye techniques. All of these new items enrich an already vibrant tradition. Batik and ikat are the best known of the traditional design techniques used in Indonesia. With the batik process, the design is reserved with wax either by using stamps or hand drawing. Batik is found in much of Indonesia. However, in Java it was developed to such an extent at the royal courts that it has displaced...
most other cloth types. Ikat produces a softer and less rigidly confined design than batik. In the ikat process, the thread is tied and immersed in dye so that the covered parts remain uncolored. This tying and dyeing process may be repeated several times. The cloth is woven only after the dyeing is completed.

The School of Art Gallery exhibition is especially significant because the textiles come from the lesser known outer islands such as Sumba, Kalimantan, Flores, Roti, and Timor. Sumba is known for its distinctive warp ikat and supplementary warp textiles which, in the past, were woven only by women of aristocratic households. Figurative designs reflecting the local physical and cultural environment characterize these spectacular weavings. Horses, deer, snakes, fish, and roosters are but a few of the figurative elements. Although a motif depicts a natural form, it also possesses a symbolic meaning. Roosters are associated with masculinity and deer are a royal symbol. A skull tree, which is found on some Sumba textiles, represents an old practice of suspending the heads of enemies on a tree at the center of a village in order to frighten away potential enemies and trouble makers. Although frequently part of a dress ensemble, textiles in the outer islands serve a multitude of social and symbolic functions. Cloth produced on the different islands is characterized by a great range of design, motif layout, color preference, as well as social significance.

Non-Indonesian collectors are now obtaining many fine textile examples, which are still being handmade with pride throughout the Indonesian archipelago. The arts of this diverse nation have constantly confronted new concerns, new inspirations, and even new patrons. It is also important to remember that textiles, in one way or another, have always been economic goods. The textiles of Indonesia are now being promoted as export items, and are part of the international market of textile enthusiasts.

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Fred T. Smith, Director School of Art Galleries and Coordinator of Art History

Indonesia is the world’s largest archipelago, or group of islands. It covers a vast expanse of land and water, including 13,677 islands that span three time zones, and cover 735,000 square miles. Indonesia has the fifth largest population in the world, (188 million) representing 366 ethnic groups, 250 languages and almost every known religious tradition.
A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE
ALAN WEISSBERG

After spending numerous summers in Europe, John and I decided to expand our world view by exploring Asia, too. Many of the countries we visited—such as India, Nepal, Thailand, and China—were friendly to tourists, were vastly more affordable than Europe, and were helpful in exposing us to cultures and art forms which were quite different from the Eurocentric forms to which we were accustomed. When we discovered Bali, Indonesia, we found it all: affordability, arts of every imaginable kind, and people who were especially warm to Americans. In Bali we were introduced to the wide array of textiles, including ikat, produced in the various islands of Indonesia. A limited number of art shops in the tourist areas of Bali specialized in ikat textiles.

Once comprehending the magnificence of the complexity of ikat—from hand-drawn thread made from wild-growing cotton, to the creation and drawing of the design on the threads wound on the loom, to the tying off and multiple dyeing, and then to the weaving on the backstrap loom—it became our obsession to seek out and possess as many of the finest and most beautiful examples affordable.

The amazing beauty of the textiles, as well as the potent smells from the natural dyes used, were factors in driving us to learn more about them, seek their loci of origin, observe the processes of their creation, and converse with their creators when possible. We sought information from books on the subject, from national and provincial museums, and from villagers involved in textile creation.

In our early visit to Bali, we discovered two helpful travel guides to the country—neither of which is permitted to be sold within the borders of Indonesia since both include unkind words about its government. Both are indispensable to ferreting out the popular and less than popular venues for ikat. The Lonely Planet Indonesia is useful in providing information on how to get from place to place, where to stay, where to eat, and what to see. Bill Dalton’s Indonesia Handbook is not only helpful in those areas but is additionally beneficial to the potentially ikat-obsessed because it explains the basic processes of creating different varieties of ikat, and provides the information to locate and travel to their loci of origin.

After investigating the extensive variety of ikat available in the art shops of Bali, traveling to the village of Tenganan, Bali, where double ikat is still produced, talking with travelers and Indonesians, and further reading about the mind-boggling methods of designing and weaving the different kinds of ikat, John and I decided to visit some of the islands noted for their ikat production. Our return visits to Indonesia have tended to focus upon those areas of islands or those remote islands which produce ikat. Two areas which we return to with regularity are West Timor and East Sumba.

Timor appears to have the widest variety of textiles, including ikat (Catalog, numbers 5-11), while East Sumba seems to have the most spectacular, sensual, appealing, and finely engineered ikat (Catalog, numbers 21-25). East Sumba is a favorite place to visit since one can view much of the physical materials necessary to the production of warp ikat: cotton plants, indigo plants, cotton thread, dyes, patterns, and women who sit under their traditional houses weaving the ikat. [The creator, in an extremely complex mental task, must visualize the end product in terms of size, pattern or design, and colors or shades of colors.]

In many cases, the cotton needs to be picked and processed into threads. After it is drawn, it is then wound on a loom and a design is drawn upon it. Then the threads are tied and removed from the loom for dyeing, a process that is repeated one or more times in order to obtain the correct depth of color. This process can take years depending upon the availability of materials for the making of natural dyes, the complexity of the design, and the number of tyings, retypings, and dippings.

Since the people on Sumba were very friendly, I was encouraged to ask questions. “Why?” In many instances this “Why?” was answered with “It is adat.” Adat means tradition about which no one seeks the origin. It just is! Ages ago, spirits handed down a set of unchangeable laws—tradition—which are overseen by the spirits of the living and of the dead. These laws need to be obeyed if all is to go well. In Sumba and many other places, adat determines the layout of the village and the architecture of the houses. It commands certain rites of passage and dictates who can marry whom. It may control funeral rituals of the tribe. Adat may also control the types of symbols incorporated into the textiles, limit their use to certain functions and to specific classes of person, and direct that the...
very exquisite pieces be buried with the king, or raja. This adat may be quite different from village to village, tribe to tribe, and island to island. If Sumba is the place to go to see the process of creating ikat, West Timor is the place to go to see ikat modeled. In East Sumba ikat is woven mostly for ceremonial wear and display; however, in parts of West Timor it is apparently worn on a daily basis. Early in our study of ikat, John and I noted that Timor had the largest variety of ikat available. After talking with a friend and anthropologist, Ed Powell, we headed out on a six hour bus trip to the town of Kefamenanu (upon our first arrival in Kupang, the capital of Timor). Although we did not find great amounts of the textiles in Kef, as the locals call it, on the way back we saw many men gathered at the Wednesday market in the town of Niki Niki. The next year, we visited Timor with an objective of going to this Wednesday market and have scheduled it each year since.

The men and a few women of this area travel—some from great distances—to sell their wares, mostly textiles that they have grown. Some bring textiles, including ikat and other souvenirs to sell to pickers, who purchase the best textiles for shops in Bali and Jakarta, and for tourists. Many of the men wear two or three selimut (also called binggi or sarong) and perhaps have one or more thrown over their shoulders (Catalog, numbers 5–11). Others will very timidly pull a corner of a textile out of a bag and hope for your permission to show more of it. Then the bargaining begins. “Berapa barga (how much)?” “100,00 rupiah!” “40,000 rupiah?” “90,000 rupiah!” The haggling continues until a bargain is sealed or an impasse is met. Many times the man looks to his wife for final consent.

Further explorations have been the result of studying the travel guides in conjunction with seeing textiles in museums, stores, or books on Indonesian textiles. An interesting quest was the result of seeing a textile in an art shop in Kupang, Timor. It was a warp ikat sarong with an elephant in the design. The dealer identified its origin as the island of Alor, an hour flight from Kupang. Later, in Jakarta, we saw a similar textile—elephant and all—again attributed to the island of Alor. The attraction for this piece centered on disbelief that there were or had been elephants on Alor, at least for hundreds of years. So, off to Alor we flew the next year. To our chagrin, we found neither elephants nor elephant ikat on Alor. We discovered that it was produced on a small island called Little Ternate off the coast of Alor.

After much bargaining—mostly trying to explain to the Alorese where we wanted to venture and return to Alor from—we boarded a dugout canoe for an hour ferry ride and attempted, as natives, to walk on the razor sharp coral reef to the shore. While bailing out water in the canoe on the way over, I threw out a couple of fish which had somehow gotten into the boat. The captain of the canoe appeared to be somewhat disturbed by my act and jumped out of the boat into the water to retrieve the fish. On reflection, I realized that they were his dinner! The village on the island appeared to have possibly 500 people who apparently brought in all of their staples from Alor. There was no electricity, no TV, and almost no vegetation on the island. No elephants either. But elephant ikat it had (Catalog, number 16). It is hard to understand why they did not have goats on their ikat. It is difficult to fathom how elephants could ever have lived on this precipitous mountain jutting out of the sea. On returning safely to the shores of Alor, we paid the captain of the canoe double the agreed upon fee.

Another objective for endlessly traveling the islands is to return—after studying and learning the “real value” of a tribe’s work—to purchase that piece which was too expensive to go for the first time around. This is especially true when browsing in Jakarta or Bali reveals an asking price five or more times that of the local price. Another “purpose” for ikat pursuit could be described as an obsession with the magical and mystical properties woven into the ikat. While I feel these powerful qualities in the cloth from Sumba, I feel them even more powerfully in the pua cloths from the Iban tribes of Kalimantan, Indonesia, and Sarawak, East Malaysia (Catalog, numbers 1, 2). The mental engineering required to produce many of these cloths is just mind boggling. Knowing that the complex designs of the Iban pua cloths were revealed to women in dreams and when the cloths were completed, warriors used them to bring home freshly severed heads influences perception of these textiles. The fact that the finest Sumbanese textiles were buried with the king or raja enriches my fantasies concerning these cloths.

From the city of Medan on the island of
Sumatra in the far western end of Indonesia to the city of Jayapura on the island of New Guinea in the most eastern region, we have used public transportation of all sorts—the domestic airline and boat ferries and, most of all, the public buses within the cities, towns, and rural areas. Usually, all of these modes of transportation, as well as foot-power, have been extremely dependable. Sometimes, however, there are surprises. In several instances, we found that there was a bus which traveled from the “big city” in the early morning and then returned in the early afternoon. And that was the only transportation that day unless one chartered a private car for a return trip. The alternative was to stay over and return the next day.

On one of our recent day trips, John and I decided to travel out of the general tourist paths in the south of Bali to the city of Singaraja on the northern coast. Our trip there was a synopsis of many other excursions in Indonesia. We wanted to expand our knowledge and experience of parts of Bali which we had not previously seen. The travel guides mentioned that Singaraja, a port city and first “capital” of Bali, had two weft ikat cooperatives. From the map, it easily appeared to be a day trip from our starting point. One factor that we did not project into our planning was that the journey was all uphill for the first four or five hours. With people, pigs, goats, and produce packed into and hanging out of the doors, the bus made very slow progress for most of the trip. Also, while the bus waited, Balinese would alight from the bus and make pilgrimages to shrines along the way, taking incense and other offerings. All of this stopping and reshuffling of passengers and goods added considerably to the time. It also brought new insight into how Indonesian culture works.

So, we traveled north across the mountains and were entertained by witnessing Gunung Batur, an active volcano, erupt. Gunung Batur put on a very interesting, if somewhat frightening show for us. When we got to Singaraja, we visited two factories where weft ikat was made. While not as complex and time-consuming a process as warp ikat, it still requires an extraordinary amount of creativity and labor. Weft ikat can be beautiful and is woven of both silk and cotton threads. We bought several examples of both.

Although we had left southern Bali early in the morning and had seen what we thought we wanted to see in Singaraja by early evening, we found that the last bus returning to the south had already departed. We had no choice but to stay overnight and found ourselves in a Bali that was markedly different from that which we were accustomed to in the south. Such an unexpected sojourn increased our knowledge and appreciation of the incredible variety in Indonesian culture and encouraged us to return for further adventures.
Most Americans would be without a clue as to what was meant by Indonesian ikat. Indonesia, which is one of the largest countries in the world in terms of population and area, conjures no indelible visual image like China or India, and ikat, well, is just a strange word. From personal experience I have encountered such responses from friends and colleagues, and I have grown accustomed to describing Indonesia, as well as the type of textile known as ikat. Both are enormously complicated subjects that, fortunately, can be summarized to satisfy casual interest. However, to understand and appreciate the full complexity of the country and its textiles, much more would need to be provided than can be included in these few pages. Therefore, the following should be considered nothing more than the briefest outline of vast and fascinating topics.

One of the reasons Indonesia remains unknown to Americans is the nature of its landmass. Unlike China and India, which are sizable chunks of the Asian continent, Indonesia is an archipelago of 13,000 islands sprawling across the equator between southeast Asia and Australia. Although Indonesia includes some of the largest islands on the planet, none of these islands creates a memorable geographical image comparable to the continents immediately to the north and south. Despite the fact that the modern-day country is not very well known in the western world, Americans have long been familiar with many of the major islands bearing such evocative names as Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Celebes, Maluccas, Bali, and New Guinea. In fact, the Maluccas, or Spice Islands, were the object of Christopher Columbus's voyages when he unexpectedly encountered the continents of the New World while searching for a westward ocean route to Asia. Other Europeans, particularly the Portuguese and Dutch, did find an eastward ocean route to the Spice Islands and initiated, in the sixteenth century, the colonization of Indonesia which continued up to the mid-twentieth century. European rule ended after the Second World War when, with armed revolution and rebellion, the Indonesians expelled the Dutch and established their own central government whose efficient control reaches from the capital Jakarta, which is located on Java, to the remotest village of the remotest island.

Spanning the crossroads between the continents of Asia and Australia and the Indian and Pacific oceans, Indonesia has sheltered many of the races of the world. Indeed, the fecund islands nurtured some of the earliest humans on earth. Remains of *homo erectus*, a precursor to modern humans, *homo sapiens*, were recovered from central Java. Present-day Indonesians are descendants of various ethnic stocks, including Africans, Asians, and Europeans, all of whom migrated to the archipelago and hybridized to produce an amazing variety of people. With the exception of Europeans, the various ethnic groups entered the archipelago in successive waves many millennia ago and occupied the larger islands. It is among these Ancient People, such as the Iban Dayak of central Borneo, the Torajans of south Sulawesi (Celebes), and the indigenous fold of Nusa Tenggara, that ikat is widely practiced.

Although a highly developed form of artistic expression, ikat serves the function of portraying the spiritual beliefs of the Ancient People. Like other Indonesians, the Ancient People may belong to one of the numerous organized religious faiths. Officially, Indonesia is a Moslem country, but its people embrace all the major religions. Long before the Islamic conversion, Buddhism and Hinduism from India won numerous converts, particularly on Java and Bali. Major structures devoted to these religions are Borobodur, the largest Buddhist monument in the world, and Prambanan, a sprawling complex of Hindu temples, both of which are located on Java. After the fall of the Hindu Majapahit Empire in the fifteenth century, Moslem traders from India and Arabia brought Islam to most of the major islands, especially Sumatra and Java, and many local rulers adopted the new faith. Christianity arrived with the European colonists, first the Portuguese in the sixteenth century and then the Dutch in the seventeenth century. The Moslem traders following mercantile routes and Javanese who settled on other islands carried their faith to the Ancient People. Likewise, the European colonialists proselytized among the islanders in the remote areas of the archipelago.

However, among the Ancient People the forces of nature and the spirits of the dead represent spiritual powers far more potent and real than those of the imported religions. These animistic beliefs are entwined with the constant threat to human existence posed by the volcanoes, earthquakes, and floods that are a fact of life in the archipelago. The elemental forces of...
nature, the supernatural posers imputed to certain wildlife, and the spirits of human dead sustain the animistic beliefs located beneath the veneer of other religions.

For the Ancient People, the creation of ikat is an expression of animistic beliefs. Although the Ancient People weave ikat into cloth for bodily adornment and other decorative functions, ikat serves spiritual and social needs. Through its motifs, patterns, and colors, ikat underscores the stratification of society of Ancient People—royalty, nobility, commoners and formerly, slaves. Ikat is an essential part of ceremonies—as a burial shroud for a funeral and gift exchange in marriage. Ikat preserves local history and legends. Additionally, it embodies magical poser and is a vehicle for the transmission of power.

Warp Ikat

Ikat is a resist-dye process, probably developed among the Ancient People during contact with the bronze age culture called Dong-Son of northern Viet Nam. Resist-dye means that the threads are bound so that portions of them will be impervious, hence resistant, to dyeing. The individual threads are dyed according to a predetermined pattern before the cloth is woven, unlike batik, another popular process, in which the woven cloth is resist-dyed. The process of creating ikat cloth is time-consuming and labor-intensive. In some areas of Indonesia, locally-grown cotton is harvested and handspun into thread. Usually, machine-made cotton thread is purchased. Skeins of cotton thread are wound onto a loom. In Nusa Tenggara, these threads form the warp, or length-wise fibers, of the cloth. When all of the thread is wound onto the loom, a predetermined design is often sketched onto the threads. This design takes into account the anticipated color scheme of the cloth so that the location of the traditional colors, red, blue, and brown, are determined in advance. The weaver then calculates which areas of the warp thread are to be bound with palm leaves, coconut leaf fibers, and plastic string. The binding seals the thread from the dye, hence, a bound area is either not dyed at all or dyed once red or blue. The unbound areas are either dyed once, red or blue, and then bound to prevent further changes in the color, or dyed twice to produce brown. The entire design of the ikat is thus planned in advance and is achieved through exposing the thread to, or concealing the thread from, the dye.

Of the two principal colors, blue comes from indigo plants grown locally and red, called *kumbu*, is extracted from tree bark. Often synthetic dyes substitute for natural colors, and synthetically-dyed thread of various colors sometimes is used to create solid-colored bands between sections of ikat thread. While cotton spinning, arranging warp threads, and designing and binding threads are generally tasks completed by women, other members of the family, especially children of both sexes, assist. Dyeing in indigo is strictly a woman’s work and is shrouded in taboo. However, pregnant women are not allowed to use indigo dye. Once the dye-process is complete and the warp threads completely dried in the sun, they are rearranged on the loom.

A back-strap loom is preferred in Nusa Tenggara. Only women weave and they usually work in the shade beneath a house raised on pillars. The weaving process proceeds quickly. The weft thread is shuttled back and forth across the warp. With the use of heddle sticks, the weaver raises every other warp thread to create a shed through which the weft passes. When weaving is complete, the cloth is removed as a continuous loop from the loom and the warp threads are cut producing a rectangular piece of cloth with fringed ends.

WARP IKAT DESIGNS

**Borneo** (Catalog, numbers 1, 2)
The Iban Dayak are former headhunters who live in family clusters in the remote interior of Borneo. Their homeland straddles the Indonesian and Malaysian portions of Borneo. (Indonesian Borneo is called Kalimantan.) Their ikat is created for ceremonial functions, serving as burial cloths, marriage exchanges, vehicles for the transmission of power, and formerly as wrappings for severed heads. Motifs favored by the Iban Dayak are abstract and geometricized humans and animals. Red and brown predominate in their ikat textiles (*pua kumbu*).

**Sulawesi** (Catalog, numbers 3, 4)
The Torajans are rice farmers in the highlands of south central Sulawesi. They use ikat for ceremonial func-
tions, particularly funerals, which are the most important events in Torajan society. Like the Iban Dayak, their motifs are abstract, geometric, and often without reference to humans or animals. Red and brown predominate.

**Nusa Tenggara**

An archipelago in southeast Indonesia, consisting of the islands of Flores, Sumba, Savu, Rote, and Timor, Nusa Tenggara remains relatively remote from the rest of the country. Comprised of Ancient People, descendants of Neolithic groups, the inhabitants produce some of the most distinctive and varied ikat of Indonesia.

Although some inhabitants have adopted Islam or traders and Javanese and the Christianity of former colonialists, the Ancient People are often also animist. The central stabilizing feature of their communities was the king or other hereditary ruler. Particularly on Sumba, the kings, whose monumental graves remain a striking feature of the landscape, were at the literal center of society.

Villagers live in practical and sturdy houses, often elevated on pillars above the ground. The women of the village weave ikat to generate income for the family. They produce sarong, a tube-like skirt worn by women, selimut or hinggi, a rectangular cloth worn by men around the body and over the shoulder, and selendeng, a narrow rectangular cloth draped over the shoulder. IKat sarong, selimut, and selendeng are worn for ceremonial purposes, such as burials, wedding gift exchanges, and transmission of power, as well as for ordinary everyday dress. Ironically, very few of the Ancient People wear ikat today as ordinary dress, except in central Timor.

**Timor** (Catalog, numbers 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)

Timor is one of the largest islands of Nusa Tenggara. Until the mid-1970s, the Portuguese controlled the eastern part of the island. Today, the two parts of the island are still divided administratively and militarily. The western part of Timor produces a great range of designs which are often of banded patterns. In the west central market town of Niki, Nikis, clans or villages favor their own particular ikat designs, usually with geometric or stylized animal motifs bordered by broad bands of vivid solid colors. The lizard is a favorite image symbolizing wisdom. Catalog number 10 is not ikat, but a striking example of a supplemental weft selimut.

**Rote** (Catalog, numbers 12, 13)

A small island lying off the southwest tip of Timor, Rote produces a very distinctive ikat with geometric and floral patterns. Blue predominates in Rotenese design. A spearhead motif, called timplal, caps the top and bottom edges of these ikat.

**Savu** (Catalog, numbers 14, 15)

Savu lies between Rote and Sumba. Savunese ikat bears solid banded patterns with floral designs. Blue predominates. The individual patterns are said to relate to different clans, and the larger patterns are associated with the island’s nobility. Savunese ikat sarong are extremely popular with women of other islands.

**Alor** (Catalog, numbers 16, 17, 18)

Tiny Ternate off the coast of Alor creates very striking ikat with elephant and sea-creature motifs on blue or brown backgrounds. The curious feature of these designs is that there are no elephants in Nusa Tenggara. The design must have been adopted from imported cloth, perhaps from India.

**Flores** (Catalog, numbers 19, 20)

Like Timor, Flores is a relatively large island with diverse ethnic groups. Although much of Flores is Christian, Moslem communities are numerous. The diversity of the population explains the great variety of ikat designs. Stylized animal and vegetal motifs of red and brown predominate. Ironically, the Moslem town of Ende produces ikat with images while the Catholic village of Sikka is noted for its nonfigurative banded designs.

**Sumba** (Catalog, numbers 21, 22, 23, 24, 25)

The most popular and famous ikat comes from Sumba, the southernmost island of Indonesia. While West Sumba produces a banded selimut without ikat patterns, the villagers of East Sumba make highly decorative figurative designs that are famous throughout Indonesia and much of the world. Sumbanese ikat and design are rooted in animism and ancestor worship.

The “big man” motif represents the king, a deity, or both. The skull tree (andung) is a reminiscence of headhunting and the display of enemies’ skulls on trees. Although kingship remains an important concept in Sumbanese life, the Indonesian central government prohibits hereditary kings.

Sea creatures constitute a prominent group of motifs in Sumbanese ikat. Shrimp, which represent longevity, and lobsters, turtles, and crocodiles, which symbolize after-life, populate designs. Other animal life is featured in ikat. Snakes suggest rebirth as well as magical powers; birds, especially roosters, are symbols of masculinity; peacocks and dragons also appear frequently.

A favorite abstract motif is a geometric lozenge, called patola ratus, which derived from Indian ikat cloth known as patola or silk textiles, with motifs copied into Indonesian ikat. Gujarat, India, was a source of patola, or silk textiles, with motifs copied into Indonesian ikat. The patola ratus symbolizes the king. Sumbanese motifs are often organized in layers; the central layer represents royalty at the center of the village. Successive layers symbolize the nobility, commoners, and slaves.

Some of the most outstanding examples of Sumbanese ikat are compendia of motifs, including kings, warriors on horses, skull-trees, birds, sea-creatures, fantastic animals, deer, rampant lions, and framed pictures from Dutch sources. It is a cloth worthy of a king, made to adorn a king’s body, and buried with the king in his megalithic tomb.

Frequently, Sumbanese ikat is bordered with a supplemental weft design that is woven simultaneously with the rest of the cloth.

All of the textiles presented in this exhibition were obtained in Indonesia from the islands where they were produced. Our research indicates that virtually all of them are of relatively recent vintage. Some of the most painstakingly created designs from Sumba and Borneo are, to our knowledge, becoming rarer. One of the saddest facts of the modernization of Indonesia is that ikat textiles are being created increasingly, out of an economic incentive, primarily for tourists and collectors such as ourselves.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 6'-6&quot; x 3'-11&quot; 1/4&quot; From Kalimantan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Made in Kalimantan, stylized human figures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 5'-9&quot; x 3'-4&quot; From Kalimantan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Made in Kalimantan, stylized human figures, fish patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 5'-6 1/2&quot; x 3'-9 1/2&quot; From Sulawesi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 5'-9&quot; x 4'-6&quot; From Sulawesi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, synthetic dyes; full cloth: 7'-3&quot; x 3'-10&quot; From Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From west central Timor, stylized creature with tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, synthetic dyes; full cloth: 7'-4 1/2&quot; x 3'-9&quot; From Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From west central Timor, stylized creature with tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut with Supplemental Weft</td>
<td>Cotton, synthetic dyes; full cloth: 6'-1&quot; x 2'-6 1/2&quot; From Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From west central Timor, stylized creature with tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural and synthetic dyes; full cloth: 6'-1&quot; x 2'-9&quot; From Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From west central Timor, stylized creature with tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural and synthetic dyes; full cloth: 6'-2&quot; x 2'-10&quot; From Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From west central Timor, stylized creature with tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Supplemental Weft Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, synthetic dyes; full cloth: 5'-10&quot; x 3'-2&quot; From Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From west central Timor, stylized creature with tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, synthetic dyes; full cloth: 7'-3&quot; x 3'-9&quot; From Timor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>From west central Timor, stylized creature with tail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, synthetic dyes; full cloth: 6'-10 1/2&quot; x 2'-2 1/2&quot; From Rote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selendeng</td>
<td>Cotton, synthetic dyes; full cloth: 4'-7 1/2&quot; x 1'-3 1/2&quot; From Rote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 5'-11&quot; x 2'-7 1/2&quot; From Savu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 4'-7&quot; x 2'-1 1/2&quot; From Savu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Sarong</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 4' x 2'-3 1/2&quot; From Ternate (Alor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Elephant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Sarong</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 4'-4&quot; x 2'-5&quot; From Alor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Sarong</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 4' x 2'-6 1/2&quot; From Ternate (Alor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selendeng</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 6'-3&quot; x 2'-1&quot; From Flores, Ende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selendeng</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 6'-4&quot; x 2'-3 1/2&quot; From Flores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 8'-5 1/2&quot; x 3'-10&quot; From Sumba, Rende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indigo, sea motifs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, synthetic dyes; full cloth: 9'-4&quot; x 3'-6 1/2&quot; From Sumba, Rende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Skull tree, rooster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Made by Tamu Rambu Tupadua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, synthetic dyes; full cloth: 9&quot; x 3'-4 1/4&quot; From Sumba, Rende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Crocodiles, shrimp, riders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selendeng</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 11'-8 1/2&quot; x 1'-9&quot; From Sumba, Rende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes; full cloth: 11'-8&quot; x 4'-4&quot; From Sumba, Rende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Warp and Weft (Double) Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton (handspun), natural dyes From Bali, Tengana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes, folded cloth, uncut From Rende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27a</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes, unfolded cloth, uncut From Rende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27b</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes, unwoven From Rende</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Sarong with Embroidery</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes From Sumatra, Lampung District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Sarong</td>
<td>Cotton (handspun), natural dyes folded cloth, uncut From Lembatai, Lamalera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Warp Ikat Selimut</td>
<td>Cotton, natural dyes, unwoven From Malaysia, Sarawak, Iban Dayak</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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GALLERY

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