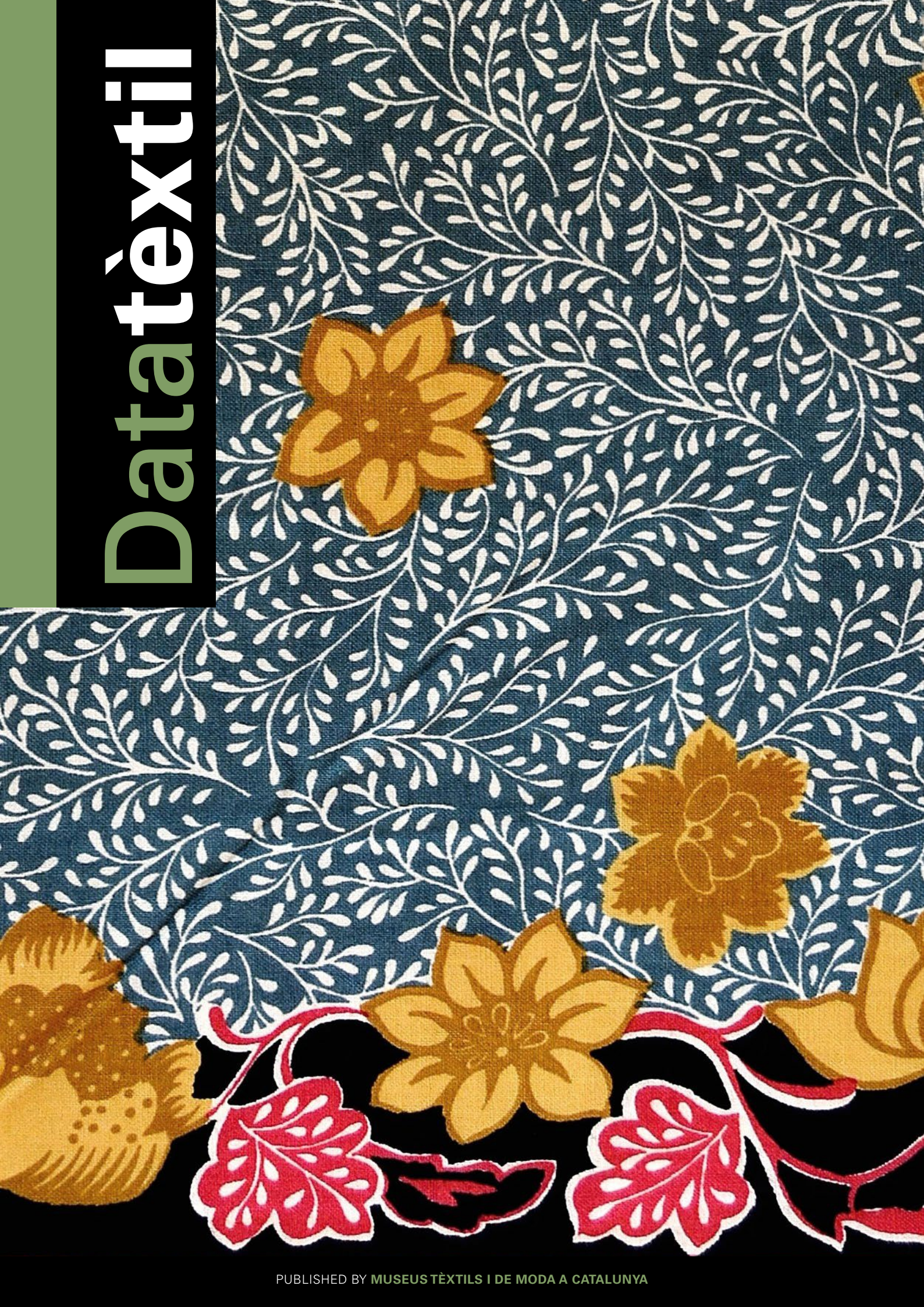
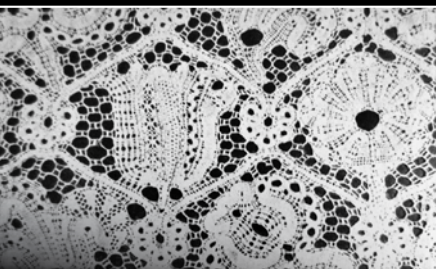


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Contents



02

Flowers in Lace Designs

MARIANNE STANG



12

Moda del Sol and Farreró prints

ASSUMPTA DANGLA



23

The Influences of Gothic and Renaissance Textiles on Sgraffito in Catalan *Modernisme*

DANIEL PIFARRÉ YAÑEZ



31

The sewing machine and the social history of women: parallel lives

SÍLVIA PUERTAS NOVAU



40

Unravelling Mythology: Mythological Figures Who Spin

MIREIA ROSICH



49

Tomàs Aymat's tapestry factory at the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition of 1923

JOSEP CAPSIR I MAÍZ



58

William Morris and the Arts & Crafts movement in Great Britain:

Fundación Juan MArch / Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya

MARIÀNGELS FONDEVILA

Flowers in Lace Designs

by MARIANNE STANG, Forum Alte Spitze

Flowers have always been a very popular design motif in the applied arts: wallpaper, ceramics, glass, ironwork, fabrics, prints, embroidery and, of course, lace have all teemed with flowers, at times in isolation and at other times in splendid gardens. Artists and craftsmen have found a source of inspiration for their work in these treasures of nature, with the symbolic power and beauty of flowers accounting, in part, for the prevalence of floral motifs.

Throughout the history of lace, the designs reflect an evolution. The earliest representations of flowers appear in Flemish and Italian lace in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, the stylised depiction of flowers draws inspiration from Rococo, while the Romantic style of the nineteenth century brings a naturalism to their representation. Art Nouveau in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries introduces a more symbolist version influenced by Japanese art. This paper, which is based on a lecture given in Sebourg, France, in June 2017, offers an overview of the chief representations of flowers in European lacework.

The Rose

The rose, which has been called the “queen of flowers” since Ancient Greece, is one of the most well-known on the planet. Roughly 100 species of rose exist, with most coming from Asia. The earliest representations in lacework date from 1640, when the rose appears in Flemish lace and in Italian needle lace produced in Venice and given the name rose point (*point de rose*) because the rose features in various designs. In the eighteenth century, roses appear in all types of lace, particularly those made in France and Belgium, such as Valenciennes lace and Mechlin lace.

By the nineteenth century, Romantic lacework abounds with roses. The English lacework of Honiton develops a representation of the rose that becomes its hallmark. Belgium needle lacework popularises a representation of the rose that has a three-dimensional effect and goes by the name of Brussels *point de rose*. Chantilly lace, which becomes highly popular in women’s apparel in the Romantic period, also features many roses, which may appear in isolation but

**Belgian point de gaze shawl,
second half of the nineteenth
century**

Arenys de Mar Museum,
reg. no. 11579.

Photography © Txeni Gil.



Flower with three-dimensional effect on a short cloak of Belgian point de gaze lace and Duchesse lace, second half of the nineteenth century

Arenys de Mar Museum, reg. no. 11588.

Photography © Txeni Gil.

[See detail.](#)



Mantilla of two-toned blonde lace, second half of the nineteenth century

Arenys de Mar Museum, reg. no. 1760.

Photography © Txeni Gil.

**Communion bonnet from
the City of Wertheim**
Marianne Stang Collection.



especially crop up in great bunches of flowers on shawls and ruffles that have a stunning effect against pastel-coloured clothing. In addition, the rose is a very common element in the design of blonde lace in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, on black and white silk alike, in a vast number of Spanish mantillas that frequently feature roses in large bunches.

The Peony

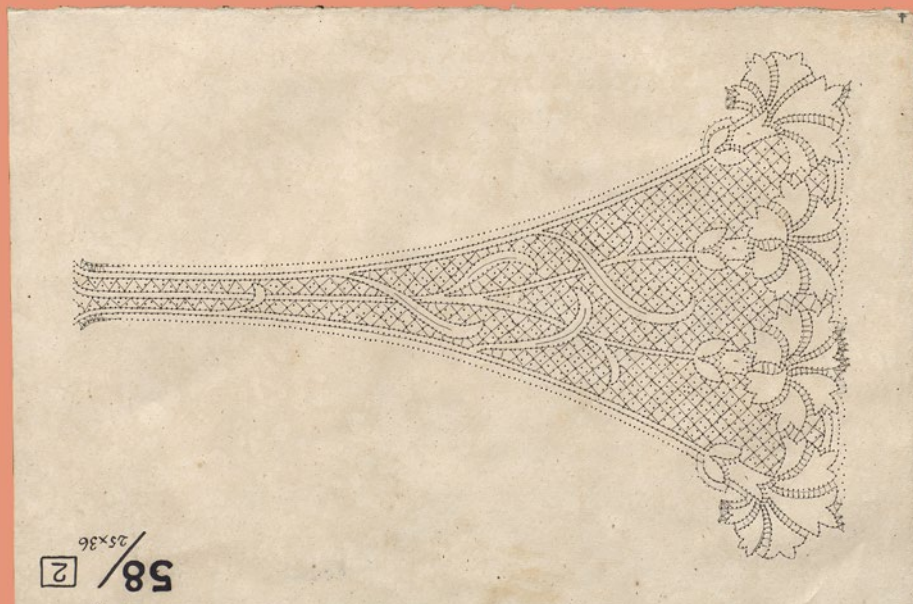
In lace designs, the peony is sometimes mistaken for the rose. The peony was already known to the Greeks and Romans and gets its name from Paeon, the physician of the gods in Greek mythology.

The peony is a flower without thorns. It is linked to the Virgin Mary and in some countries takes the name of “Mary’s flower”. In 1473, Martin Schongauer produced his painting *The Madonna of the Rose Garden*, in which the Virgin Mary is depicted in a garden. To one side appear three peonies symbolising wealth, salvation and the promise of love and a womanly life filled with love in the symbolic language of Christianity.

Unlike the rose, examples of the peony in lacework are few in number. In Spain, it was a highly applied motif on silk-embroidered Manila shawls.

The Carnation

Carnations were known as early as 500 B.C. in Ancient Greece, where they were used in ceremonial coronets. They were introduced to Europe on a massive scale thanks to the Crusades in the twelfth century and soon spread across the entire north of the continent. The scientific name of the flower is *Dianthus caryophyllus*, which is derived from the Greek words for divine (“dios”) and flower (“anthos”), corresponding to the term “flower of god”. As a symbol of divine and earthly love, the carnation is represented alongside the rose in many paintings. In Flanders, the red carnation was a symbol of betrothal and appears with this meaning in a number of paintings.



Lacework design, Marià Castells, 1917
Arenys de Mar Museum,
reg. no. 12050.



Photograph of tablecloth from Casa Castells, 1917
Photography by Joaquim Castells.
Arenys de Mar Museum.

The importance of the carnation as an ornamental plant in Europe also translates into its use in textile handicrafts since medieval times. The carnation appears in textiles of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and in silk garments of the seventeenth century. It is a common appliqué in Italian and French silk brocades, often standing upright in a vase, with symmetrically arranged motifs. The carnation motif frequently appears in relation to pomegranate and pine motifs in European textile art.

The depiction of the carnation in lacework can already be found in the sixteenth century alongside other flowers in the early work of the Genoese and Flemish. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, representations of carnations appear in Mechlin lace, Binche lace and various kinds of needle lace.

In 1917, Marià Castells (1876-1931), who worked as a lace designer for Casa Castells of Arenys de Mar, developed an Art Nouveau style of carnation that was used in a variety of home furnishings.



**Chantilly shawl, second half
of the nineteenth century**

Carmen Tórtola Valencia Collection.
Arenys de Mar Museum, reg. no. 1761.
Photography © David Castañeda.
[See detail.](#)

The Lily

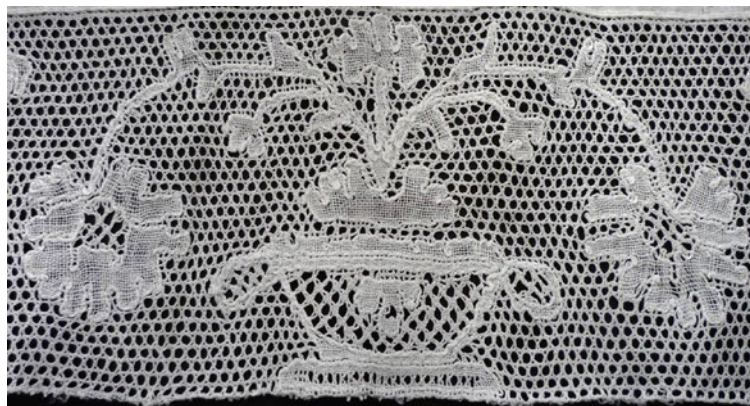
The lily (*lilium*) is one of the oldest flowers, known since the Minoan period on Crete. Roughly 120 species grow in China, North America and Europe. Lilies were highly prized in a variety of cultures because of their striking appearance. In European and Mediterranean cultures, the lily is associated with the Madonna, a symbol of purity and beauty, and it takes the name of Madonna lily. It appears in numerous paintings where it represents the theme of the Annunciation. In Christian tradition, it is also a symbol of fertility. As a result, brides used to carry bouquets of lilies in wedding ceremonies.

In Pottenkant lace, which emerged in Flanders in the seventeenth century, a particular representation was developed to symbolise the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary: a vase or pot would hold three lilies, one standing for the birth of Jesus and the other two standing for Mary's virginity and purity.

The representation of the lily has great decorative potential, which can be developed with a stylised and asymmetrical line that combines perfectly with more rounded flowers. The lily also appears in much lace appliqué work and Chantilly lace from the second half of the nineteenth century.

**Pottenkant lace from the
Antwerp area**

Marianne Stang Collection.





**Belgian point de gaze fan,
second half of the nineteenth
century**

Arenys de Mar Museum,
reg. no. 39.
Photography © Irene Masriera.
[See detail.](#)

The Iris

The Latin name *iris* means “good tidings” and refers to the flower’s vivid hues, which recall the colours of the rainbow. There are between 200 and 300 botanical species, all of which are found in the Northern Hemisphere. Various types of iris already appear in Roman mosaics. In the Baroque period, the iris was a very popular subject in the Netherlands and in the works of several German painters. It also featured in a variety of textiles and porcelain. In heraldry, the fleur-de-lis (*Iris pseudacorus*) was adopted by Louis VII, King of France, in his Crusade against the Saracens.

The iris appears in some Belgian and Italian needle lace and in Chantilly lace on black silk, principally on pieces from the second half of the nineteenth century in a Romantic style that combines the iris perfectly with other types of flowers. During the Art Nouveau period, the representation of the iris was also very popular among textile designers.



**Seraphina lace from Honiton,
second half of the nineteenth century**
Carmen Tórtola Valencia Collection
Arenys de Mar Museum, reg. no. 531
Photography © David Castañeda.

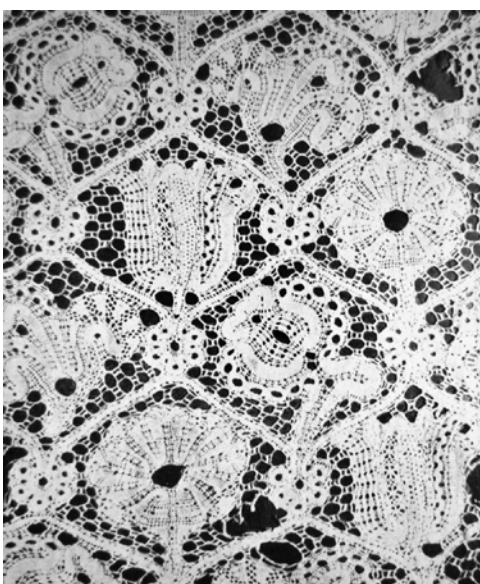
The Tulip

The tulip belongs to the Liliaceae (lily) family, whose various species are all found in the Northern Hemisphere. In her 1999 book *The Tulip: The Story of the Flower That Has Made Men Mad*, Anna Pavord writes that “no other flower has ever carried so much cultural baggage; it charts political upheavals, illuminates social behaviour, mirrors economic booms and busts, plots the ebb and flow of religious persecution”. Today there are over 5,500 different tulips. It is one of the oldest and most popular ornamental plants from Central Asia and it came to Europe in the sixteenth century by way of the Ottoman Empire. At that time, Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq served as ambassador to the Ottoman Empire and spent various periods in Constantinople at the court of Suleiman the Magnificent, who gave him tulip bulbs that he shipped back to the Netherlands. Very quickly, all the wealthy families of Leiden wanted to have what became known as the “Sultan’s favourite flower”.

The tulip rapidly turned into an object of prestige. As the tulip trade took off, prices hit absurd heights. Some people sold their belongings to purchase a single tulip bulb, even though it was uncertain whether the flower would actually bloom. The most expensive species was the *Semper Augustus*, which had a value on par with a house on the Amsterdam canals. Families that could not afford this luxury decorated their walls with tulip paintings. In the spring of 1637, the speculative bubble suddenly burst and prices plummeted overnight. Few had resisted “tulip mania” and most traders and speculators were reduced to poverty.

The tulip could be adapted perfectly to lacework appliqué, because there was no need to stylise the flower. The tulip was a very popular theme in the Ottoman Empire and it was introduced into European countries occupied by the Turks, such as Hungary. There are very old examples of the representation of this motif in lacework. For example, the Hungarian Museum of Applied Arts has a piece of lace from 1685 that features the tulip. The tulip can also be found together with other flowers in Belgian and British lace.

**Hungarian lace dating
from 1685**
Hungarian Museum
of Applied Arts
Photography © Marianne Stang.





**Empire-style lace appliqué
veil for hat, first quarter
of the nineteenth century**
Arenys de Mar Museum,
reg. no. 11576
Photography © Txeni Gil.
[See detail.](#)

The Thistle

The thistle (*silybum*) is a thorny plant whose name has Indo-European origins and means “pointed” or “prickly”. The milk thistle (which is called *cardo mariano*) is associated with the Virgin Mary and is grown as an ornamental and medicinal plant. It can be found in many countries in Europe, North America and South America. In heraldry, it is a common figure that appears, like the rose and the lily, in important coats of arms. For instance, the thistle is the national flower of Scotland and appears on the Scottish royal arms. It symbolises strength, longevity and steadfastness.

Representations of the thistle appear in a variety of English lacework and in some pieces of Belgian needle lace. Various Art Nouveau artists developed an interesting version of the flower in draperies and printed textiles.

The Edelweiss

The edelweiss (*Leontopodium alpinum*), which is probably one of the most well-known Alpine flowers, is actually a pseudo-flower. Its star-shaped appearance is created by high, densely white, felt-like leaves. The plant grows in small groups that are no taller than 10 cm in height, have fleshy, thick bracts covered in a fine fuzz, and are white with greenish or yellowish tones. The flower hides under the appearance of a single flower, when it is actually organised in groups of small individual flowers surrounding the centre of the star and forming a unity.

War lace was a type of lace produced in Belgium in the First World War. Its English name came about with a view to the US market. When Belgium was occupied by the German army, the country became the subject of a blockade. Lacemakers ran short of thread for their work and many struggled to carry on. Queen Elisabeth of Belgium took charge of promoting lacemaking, and the Commission for Relief in Belgium (CRB), led by future US president Herbert Hoover, collaborated by supplying thread and selling lace in participating countries. War lace bore the symbols of the Allied Forces: the bear for Russia, the

Needle lace cravat, depicting Queen Elisabeth of Belgium as a nurse

Photography © Marianne Stang.



rooster for France, the unicorn for England and the lion for Belgium. Edelweiss, however, became a patriotic symbol of Belgium, the flower of the Belgian queen, who was herself from Bavaria, and it was included in some war lace.

Throughout history, flowers have been one of the most popular representations in the applied arts and a source of inspiration for most designers. In isolated motifs or in large gardens, flowers make an appearance in most European lacework. ●

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Moda del Sol and Farreró prints

by ASSUMPTA DANGLA

Photographs © ESTHER DE PRADES, MUSEU DE L'ESTAMPACIÓ DE PREMIÀ DE MAR
and MUSEU DEL DISSENY DE BARCELONA

1 The Textile Printing Museum (MEPM) of Premià de Mar has a collection of 483 fabric swatches of Farreró prints, from 1960 to 1980, that reflect the trends proposed by the Moda del Sol group for each season. In addition, the MEPM has a collection of samples and two printed dresses. The MEPM document archive contains the Moda del Sol colour charts from 1972 to 1983.

2 MEPM. *Dossier de premsa de Jordi Joan Farreró* (Press file on Jordi Joan Farreró).

Moda del Sol was the first initiative to make Spanish prêt-à-porter known internationally. It provided a coordinated, fully up-to-date image of fashion, that guided the retail trade's purchases for the season. A group of industrialists joined together in 1963 to work as a team offering the same trends in colours, styles and fabrics. The project, led by designer Josep M. Fillol, brought together various companies with the common aim of internationalization. One notable textile industrialist who participated in the initiative was Jordi Joan Farreró, owner and director of Farreró, who, alongside his design director, Joaquina Masalles, revolutionized the print industry in Spain. In this article, we provide an overview of how Moda del Sol was founded and how it developed over its first twenty years, and of Farreró's trajectory during the period in which it formed part of the group.¹

Born in Girona, Jordi Joan Farreró was orphaned at an early age and started work in a shop. Later, he moved to Barcelona and was employed by a silk factory. He set up on his own in the post-war period, on the Ronda de Sant Pere in Barcelona, where he worked as an editor. His studio created drawings and interpreted or adapted original designs that had been purchased from abroad. Once each drawing had been approved, it was sent to be engraved in other workshops, where it was copied onto a photolith that was then used to engrave the screens. Screen printing was the primary system in the production of Farreró's prints.² The most accurate engravers of the time, based in Barcelona and the nearby town of Premià de Mar, were contracted to make the templates. They included prestigious names such as Estrada, a draftsman and teacher of engravers in Catalonia, as well as Puighermanal, Rotomarc and Virmit. The engraver produced a print on paper using the stencil to check the quality of the print. The photoliths were often drawn freehand, and it was vital to ensure that there were no imperfections and that the print would be successful. In addition, it was essential to check that no streaks could be seen, caused by the edges of the screen. When the stencils were ready, Farreró entrusted most of the production to other factories. He then sold the resulting fabric to clothing manufacturers and clothing stores, or he exported it. Farreró prints were

Printed *Mozart* gauze by Estampados Farreró, from an original design by Joaquina Masalles (circa 1970), MEPM.



▲ Printed cotton fabric
with Kao drawing (c. 1970),
MEPM.

◀ Printed cotton cretonne
(c. 1970), MEPM.



3 Interviews carried out by the author between 2016 and 2018 with the designer Joaquina Masalles.

available in all kinds of compositions: all-over print with motifs covering the entire background, non-repeating positioned images of exotic landscapes and figurative scenes, or one of the company's characteristic prints, the *degradé*.

Jordi J. Farreró had a passion for art and fine taste in prints, which led him to hire Joaquina Masalles Argilaga, a reliable person who brought innovation, precision and success to the business. Joaquina realised the importance of moving away from classic prints, particularly small floral designs. She joined the team to create innovative large compositions, known as *degradés*, which were exported to many different locations, from California to New Zealand and, of course, Europe.³ Prints in post-war Spain were not especially striking, but Joaquina Masalles had sufficient knowledge of printing and dressmaking



Cotton and printed polyester fabric, Montesol item with *Tropic* drawing (c. 1974), MEPM.

Printed fibranne, Gauguin item and *Sembrador* drawing (c. 1975), MEPM.



to adapt her designs to new trends in clothing. During the years of shortages after the war, Farreró broke the mould with large-format drawings, designed primarily for dresses that reflected the New Look of Christian Dior: corolla skirts with copious amounts of fabric of the highest quality, including the Karnak cotton that the company bought from J. Muñoz Ramonet. Masalles made sketches of the pieces according to the type of print: for dresses with large floral motifs near the hem that became smaller and more dispersed out on the fabric closer to the waist; or for outfits that featured a strong motif on the blouse but smaller motifs on the matching skirt. Farreró also innovated with colours, using striking, vibrant colours that caught the eyes of his customers.

As the design director at Farreró, Joaquina Masalles occupied a key position in the company. In interviews, she comes across as tireless, meticulous and a perfectionist, with a great passion for her work. She travelled frequently to learn first-hand about foreign trends and to meet draftsmen from other countries, visiting the foremost print design studios in Europe, including Farcas in Como and Rome and Vernet in Lyon. During these visits she found out about the latest innovations and purchased drawings that she then worked on in the Barcelona studio, along with a team of five draftswomen and Jordi Curós, who spent some time at the company. Some customers demanded exclusive drawings that were made to order: showy designs for the businessman Rares from Australia, gaudy pieces for clients in California, and more classic designs for England and for Switzerland, where Farreró exported regularly as a route to the great fashion houses of Paris. Masalles personally attended to the orders of the most exclusive clients, among them Zorrilla, who supplied the fashion designers of Madrid. Once the design was approved, she supervised the engraving of the flat screens and the printing itself, which was carried out at Catalan factories, including Fibracolor.

Kismet printed item with *Nepal* drawing for export (c. 1978), MEPM. [See more](#).



Moda del Sol fashion show
with prints by Joaquina Masalles
(c. 1980), private collection.



Jordi Joan Farreró was involved in founding the Moda del Sol group. He played a significant role as president of the entity and organizer of various events. With him, the group presented its first collection in 1963 – the same year as the group’s foundation – in the function rooms of the Spanish Embassy in Paris. The initiative was successful, and in 1964 the group of industrialists who had participated in the first collection opened a registered office on Carrer de Roger de Llúria in Barcelona. The group showed its second major collection at the Gran Teatre del Liceu, on the occasion of the II Lonja Textil de España (Second Textile Market of Spain). Joaquina Masalles can still recall the excitement and anxiety of the build-up to the show at the Liceu, which featured Teresa Gimpera, a leading model, and some of the other most highly regarded models of the time.

The Moda del Sol project was led by the designer J. M. Fillol, who remained at its head until 1993. He was born in the Balearic Islands and trained in Paris, where he was introduced to the world of fashion and established working relationships with *couturiers*. According to Gema Ranero, who has studied the history of the group, Fillol combined elegance, convenience and comfort, and was also capable of distributing his designs widely. He was a pioneer of Spanish prêt-à-porter, which focused on the trends emerging from Paris and Milan. Moda del Sol became a benchmark for Spanish fashion through a variety of channels that brought the group considerable stability: fashion shows, colour ranges for each new season, trend books, a magazine, media presence, and so on. This careful dissemination of trends, which served as a platform to the international markets for many Spanish companies, both consolidated the group and respected the essence of each firm. Fillol knew how to increase the impact of the collections, which reached the most prestigious catwalks across the globe, including New York, Paris, London, Cologne and Düsseldorf.

Printed cotton and polyester fabric, Subur item and *Dean* model (1982), MEPM.



4 Design Museum of Barcelona. *Report by the National Institute of Fashion in Clothing*, 1983.

From 1965 onwards, Moda del Sol organized two fashion shows a year, for the spring-summer and autumn-winter collections. The interest attracted by the first four collections was such that the following shows were held in Barcelona (in the Hotel Ritz, in the gardens of the Saló del Tinell during the Annual Assembly of European Clothing Manufacturers, and at the Spanish National Dressmaking Fair) and Madrid, which was subsequently established as the official home of the shows. In 1967, Moda del Sol achieved particular success and took part in the International Fair of prêt-à-porter for women in Paris. The Spanish and international press published in-depth articles on the group, and for the first time Moda del Sol appeared in *Vogue*. The seventh and eighth collections were also presented in both Madrid and Barcelona. In 1968, the group was present at the international fair Prêt-à-Porter Paris, where it put on a show for the international press in the function rooms of the Spanish Embassy. In 1970, the group travelled to New York to present its new collection during the Spanish Week organized by Gimbel-Saks, the prestigious US department store. The event was noted in the national and international press, and the French edition of *Vogue* dedicated thirty pages to the group. This had an immediate effect on sales, which reached new heights and continued to grow over the following years.⁴

Moda del Sol published promotional colour charts, in poster format, with new colours, fabrics and styles. This gave the group's collections their own unique character and was designed to project a uniform image whilst leaving room for each designer to choose between the various proposals. The Instituto Nacional de la Moda en el Vestir (National Institute of Fashion in Clothing) compiled in-depth reports on the decisions in which Moda del Sol was involved each season. Meetings were held, in the strictest confidentiality, to

Promotion Colour Chart
for Moda del Sol for 1974, MEPM.



5 MEPM. Colour chart spring-summer 1972.

6 MDB. Information on fabrics for the 1972-1973 autumn/winter collection, according to guidelines of the Instituto Nacional Coordinador de la Moda Española (National Coordinating Institute of Spanish Fashion) and agreements adopted by the Comité Internacional de las Industrias del Vestir Femenino (International Committee of Women's Clothing Industries). File in the National Institute of Fashion in Clothing.

establish motifs for knitwear, prints, women's, men's and children's clothing, colours, accessories and lingerie. The colour chart for the summer season of 1972 featured very bright prints and distinctive drawings with large, empty backgrounds, accompanied by narrative in the following style: *“the change is decisive and represents a return to happiness, which will make spring-summer 1972 a season bursting with the joy of life”*.⁵ For the following season, the group worked with abstract, geometric prints in the Persian style. Among the new lines there was always one particularly daring proposal. For autumn-winter 1972-1973, the concept of abstraction was proposed to create an *“Analytical, fantastical view of objects and things. A sensation of new dimensions, touching the frontiers of surrealism [...] An impression of movement, instability and weightlessness”*.⁶

The silk and print companies that formed part of Moda del Sol were from the city and province of Barcelona, with a few exceptions. The foremost companies in the sector belonged to the group, among them Vilumara, Viladomiu, and Farreró prints. The clothing manufacturers of Moda del Sol were spread out around Spain. The members of the group presented the autumn-winter

Yesinia Bambula dress and handkerchief. Light cotton gauze, rayon satin ribbons and fabric flowers. Kelson, Madrid (1976), Museu Tèxtil i de la Indumentària de Barcelona (MTIB 143.126).



7 MEPM. *Kelson and Moda del Sol*, 1976.

1974-1975 collection in the function rooms of the Paris Hotel Hilton, during a meeting of The Fashion Group, an entity that brought together creators from different countries. In 1975, Moda del Sol received special recognition: the Galena Award from television. The group won several editions of the RTVE award, on this occasion for the best footwear collection. The group was not solely focused on clothing, it also brought together companies specialized in footwear, accessories and even hairdressing. The company Kelson, for example, promoted the outfit “*Poncho made from rustic fabric, baggy trousers, cowboy boots, gloves and hat of thick tractor, so that the girl can cover the hard paths in the big city*”.⁷ The task of coordinating each of the catwalk models was exhaustive. Everything was considered, from hair to shoes, makeup, complements and accessories, and the results were broadcast on television. Fillol saw the opportunity that this new format provided to reach a wider audience, and although the full potential of

⁸ The Design Museum of Barcelona has a notebook of the journalist Magda Solé (R. 1989-56), in which she wrote her impressions of the fashion show of 1982 to later publish them in magazines with a wide audience.

the televisual medium could not be harnessed, the shows were reported in news bulletins. Another tool for dissemination was the group's magazine, promoted by Fillol with the publication of the first issue in 1976.

Moda del Sol set trends for all tastes, showing a clear commitment to diversity and bringing novelty to the fore. Several lines were combined in the same season. For example, in the spring-summer 1978 collection, the preference was for clear, clean designs. The proposal included prints with motifs imitating Ikat or warp printing; prints with large flowers; prints with very flat fruits and a very basic design; and prints inspired by the world of Broadway. The general effect was the use of simple drawings in pencil, charcoal or marker, outlined on fine, transparent fabrics; irregular forms which looked as if they had been cut out of paper and applied over a smooth, fine background, with discreet touches of neon in prints reminiscent of Broadway. In the 1970s, Kashmir drawings also became popular and were used to create clothing with a hippy aesthetic.

Joaquima Masalles spoke of her absolute dedication to obtaining the best effect in her designs. She spent long hours immersed in her work, creating designs with pencil, gouache, watercolours or Luma, a transparent paint. She paid careful attention to colours, searching until she found the right combinations. Masalles herself wrote the formulae for programming the colours. She oversaw five designers who interpreted her instructions: *"Raise the hue of the pink, lower that of the green..."*. Masalles remembers the passion and dedication of the team: "One is like that and enjoys it", she told us. She remembers the friendly relations with others she had dealings with in the company and in the group, and with engravers, printers and professionals from other countries. She also remembers meetings with other manufacturers and businesspeople in the Ronda de Sant Pere area of Barcelona, a place where many textile companies were located and where a convivial atmosphere existed between fellow professionals. Women who drew prints played a significant role in the industry at the time: Rosa Serrano, an independent professional, was one of the most renowned draftswomen in the country, as was Rosalia, who worked at the factory of La España Industrial in Barcelona. According to Masalles, it was an era in which being female never put her at a professional disadvantage; her skills were respected and she considers that success was merely a "question of setting your mind to it".

By 1979, fashion shows had become spectacles in their own right.⁸ The group moved its sales centre to the Certamen Imagen Moda, held for the first time that year in the Palacio Nacional de Congresos y Exposiciones. In 1981, Moda del Sol stepped up its publicity efforts again, presenting its first trend book to the specialist media, published in color with fashion illustrations, photographs of models, and fabric samples, all based on the concept of the latest trends.

Joaquima Masalles' work table with a trends notebook (c. 1980), private collection.



9 MDB. *Moda del Sol*.
Notebook of trends spring-summer 1982.

10 MEPM. *Moda del Sol*.
Trend book spring-summer 1983.

The publication of trend books expanded on the information previously transmitted through promotional colour charts, providing more detail and more samples, some of which were prints.

For the 1982 spring-summer season there were various proposals: small flowers characteristic of fabrics for patchwork, flat flowers in the Nordic style, informal American-style prints for young fashion, and Oriental drawings of Chinese-Japanese inspiration, with graphic designs and drawings typical of the East that were sometimes used as large non-repeating motifs taking up an entire item of clothing.⁹ In the 1982-1983 autumn-winter season, various clothing manufacturers participated, some of them long-standing members of the group: Africa, d'Orsay, Drape Coti, Famira, Francine, Gene Enrich, Himalaya, Indra, Kelson, Pipers, Pret Dam, Sanloret and Vegaski. For this season, textile firms proposed baroque fashions, British sports style, pioneer and small plant motifs. Prints were less prominent than in cold seasons, the motifs generally smaller and more discreet, and the colours usually muted. In 1983, *Moda del Sol* presented four lines for the warmer seasons: holidays, sports, romantic and sophisticated.¹⁰ By spring-summer 1983, clothes manufacturers had become more widely distributed across Spain and some textile companies left the *Moda del Sol* group. After twenty years, the fabric printers and textile manufacturers that remained in the group were Baher, Comercial Anónima Vila, Creaciones Malbor, Farreró, Francisco Pavón, Gelansa, Industrias Casacuberta, Lion Textil, Manufacturas Iborra, Manufacturas Soler, Mas Molas, Rosson Moda, Sedunion, Soleil, Sweetnit, Textil Caspe and Textil Dobert, all based in Barcelona or its province, and Textil Lizard from Béjar, close to Salamanca.

Moda del Sol would continue on its path, but without Farreró prints. Josep M. Fillol remained at the head of the group until 1993. He was succeeded by Nacho Ruiz, who held the position until 1998, and later by Miguel Marinero, until the group was dissolved in the early years of the twenty-first century. Joaquina Masalles began to work with the businessman J.M. Soler in 1983 and retired in 1998, after three decades of absolute dedication to fashion. René Metràs, father of a well-known art gallery owner and introducer of new trends in prints, said to her on more than one occasion: “*You’re the person who knows most about prints. You brought about the revolution*”. Farreró prints was at the forefront of fashion for years, breaking moulds and crossing frontiers. ●

The Influences of Gothic and Renaissance Textiles on Sgraffito in Catalan Modernisme¹

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¹ This article is the fruit of extended research deriving from a previous study for the catalogue MALLART, Lucila (ed.), *Josep Puig i Cadafalch: visió, identitats, cosmopolitisme*, Museu de Mataró, Mataró, 2018. It also forms part of the research project *Entre ciutats: paisatges culturals, escenes i identitats (1888-1929)*, funded by the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (HAR2016-78745-P).

² This is the central theme of the author's doctoral thesis. See PIFARRÉ YAÑEZ, Daniel, *Els esgrafiats del Modernisme a Barcelona. Obres i repertoris ornamentals*, Universitat de Barcelona, 2015, doctoral thesis available online.

Some of the most renowned names in Catalan culture and artistic creation have emerged from the *Modernista* period, with Catalan architecture becoming one of the most recognisable and most admired forms of the discipline at home and abroad. The role of the architect in Catalonia in 1900 is crucial to the story. The architect exerted creative control over the entire decorative programmes of his buildings, either designing them himself or delegating the work to specialists in different disciplines. Out of the wide range of decorative arts available to professionals for the embellishment of façades and interiors, the technique of sgraffito became one of the most commonly utilised to cover the surfaces of walls, with the world of nature providing the most typical source for ornamental compositions. The aim of this paper is to show clearly that the artists and craftsmen of the *Modernista* period, when they created sgraffito, very frequently found an extremely rich field of decorative solutions in early textiles, primarily those of the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance, because they were an ideal source of inspiration. This is because the two artistic disciplines, sgraffito and textiles, share a number of specific formal and sensory characteristics that foster good dialogue between them.

The sgraffito of *Modernisme*² is applied in a variety of different ways: as a frieze, as a ceiling rose or mimicking tapestry. Sgraffito appears on façades and in interior spaces in common or domestic use. As mentioned above, the designs feature plants of all sorts. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, we can find sgraffito primarily representing flowers and other motifs from Gothic textiles, particularly from the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. From 1900 onwards, with the introduction of the *Modernista* style, sgraffito depictions of flowers and plants tended to become more sophisticated and refined. One of the clearest influences appears to be textiles from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It should be recalled that architects and craftsmen who make sgraffito are aware of the aesthetic and sensorial qualities that the technique conveys when it is applied to the facing of a wall in the style of tapestry. With this decorative approach, sgraffito no longer centres on a single specific figurative or architectural element, but covers the entirety of the wall surface, setting up

³ One of the first authors to link textiles and *Modernista* sgraffito was Josep Casamartina. Referring to the *Modernista* sgraffito work on façades and interiors he says: “They are a sort of giant covering, and they bear a very close relation to worked velvets, damasks and brocatelles for upholstery”. CASAMARTINA I PARASSOLS, Josep, *L’interior del 1900. Adolf Mas fotògraf*, Centre de Documentació i Museu Tèxtil and Institut Amatller d’Art Hispànic, Barcelona, 2002, p. 59. On sgraffito designed in the style of a wall hanging, see also PIFARRÉ, 2015, pp. 112-118.

⁴ CARBONELL I BASTÉ, Sílvia, and CASAMARTINA I PARASSOLS, Josep, “Creadors de somnis”, in *Les fàbriques i els somnis: modernisme tèxtil a Catalunya*, Centre de Documentació i Museu Tèxtil, Terrassa, 2002, p. 59.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 59.

⁶ BARELLA MIRÓ, Albert and BARELLA CIVI, Fátima, *Iniciación a la historia del arte en el tejido*, Costura-3, Barcelona, 1984, pp. 49-53. On the subject of Venetian textiles, the authors note that they are the most varied example of the art over these centuries in Italy, and indeed across Mediterranean Europe in general, thanks to its strong links with Turkey and the Orient.

⁷ The late-nineteenth century Catalan collections containing medieval textiles are those of Francesc Miquel i

an aesthetic interplay of reliefs and colours. In this case, it is always based on the repetition of the same ornamental motif, which is known as a rapport, and it reflects a clear desire to achieve a continuous overlay in the style of a textile hanging on a wall³.

The relationship between medieval textiles and *Modernista* sgraffito can be seen in the works of particular architects, extremely important figures in *Modernista* architecture who not only designed some of the major works of the movement, but also demonstrated a strong link to the medieval past and the elements of medieval art. Josep Vilaseca, Lluís Domènech i Montaner, Antoni M^a Gallissà and especially Josep Puig i Cadafalch are four of the most prominent figures who employed sgraffito with medievalising connotations, specifically drawing on the Gothic period in their architectural projects, primarily those of the eighteen-nineties and the early years of the twentieth century. All four men showed a keen interest in early textiles⁴, from which they took many of the ornamental motifs that they would later use not only in decorative solutions involving sgraffito, but also in low reliefs, wrought-iron grilles, ceramic tiles, hydraulic tiles and mosaics⁵.

If we analyse examples of sgraffito on display in these architects’ buildings, it becomes apparent that they share features in common. For example, most bear a resemblance to tapestry and draw inspiration from textiles characteristic of courtly Mediterranean Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, particularly Venice. Such textiles were basically made of silk and velvet, luxuriously crafted, featuring the embellishments of wall hangings based on the repetition of ornamental motifs such as the leaves, flowers and fruits of pineapples, pomegranates, artichokes and thistles, or branching stems, or small floral elements. Typically, the motifs cover the entire surface of the textile and are arranged in transversal bands or framed in diamond and scalloped shapes⁶. During the period of *Modernisme* in Catalonia, direct contact to such textiles was possible thanks to public and private collections that contained a number of examples, while others could be found in the illustrated catalogues of foreign museums⁷. As a result, it is easy to deduce which architects and other

Badia, Josep Pascó and Emili Cabot i Rovira. ALSINA, Laia, *Francesc Miquel i Badia (Barcelona, 1840-1899): crític, tractadista i col·leccionista d’Art*, UAB, 2015, doctoral thesis available online. The principal European museums

whose catalogues also included textile collections in this period were the Victoria & Albert Museum, in London, the Musée des Tissus et des Arts Décoratifs, in Lyon, and the Musée du Louvre, in Paris.



8 MONNAS, Lisa, *Renaissance Velvets*, London, V&A Publications, 2012, pp. 74-75.

9 *Silk Gold Crimson. Secrets and Technology at the Visconti and Sforza Courts*, Silvana Editoriale Spa, Milà, 2009, pp. 70-71.

10 As with many *Modernista* architects, Gallissà reused his sgraffito designs in subsequent projects. The floral sgraffito, for example, was can be seen on the exterior of the *Fàbrica de la Compañía General de Alumbrado por Acetileno* (1904?), in Cassà de la Selva.

professionals at work on their buildings took inspiration from the ornamental motifs that adorned the textiles and provided such a wide range of models. In addition, the garments depicted in Catalan Gothic paintings produced from 1450 onwards had a direct influence on the adoption of decorative solutions.

If we focus on specific examples of sgraffito that reflect the influence of late medieval textiles, one of the most illustrative cases is that of Gallissà and the façade of Casa Carlos de Llanza i de Carballo (1897-1898, refurbished) in Barcelona. Of the various applied arts that Gallissà put to use, a sgraffito in the form of a large tapestry makes the greatest contribution in terms of colour and plasticity. The serially repeated ornamental motif features a large flower with a broad, rounded corolla and a sinuous stem tilted at an angle. While the inside of the motif is not very descriptive, possibly because it is an artichoke flower, the lobed and scalloped shape of its profile coincides with how it is represented in Gothic and Renaissance textiles. More specifically, based on the configuration of the sgraffito, Gallissà borrowed directly from worked velvets produced in Venice in the second half of the fifteenth century and the early sixteenth century, which featured decorations of vivid, multi-coloured rosettes. The sgraffito can be linked on the one hand to a red and green silk velvet embroidered in gold that is now housed in London (V&A:859-1894)⁸ and on the other to a glossy red velvet embroidered in gold and currently preserved in Lyon (MT31231)⁹. In both cases, the floral motifs have a lobed profile and appear with stems and foliage at an angle.¹⁰

In addition, Gallissà oversaw the refurbishment of Can Camps (1898-1899), a Gallissà family home in Barcelona. The entrance hall features various sgraffito compositions, including a large St. Anthony of Padua designed by Josep Maria

Sgraffito rosette in the entrance hall of Can Camps (1898-1898, refurbished), in Barcelona.
© Daniel Pifarré.



¹¹ MONNAS, 2012, pp. 80-81.

¹² <http://goo.gl/t2gUcA>
(23/01/2018).

Jujol and two large artichoke rosettes. The flower is depicted in great detail, with a superior flourish, and is surrounded by a lobed corolla. In this case, the textile connection must be sought in embroidered motifs in which plant details are prominent and the central part of the flower is the ornamental focus. Poring through the many examples of textiles with these characteristics, we can cite the blue-velvet chasuble of Canon Franz Bock (third quarter of the fifteenth century, V&A:8704-1863)¹¹ and a piece of red and gold velvet preserved in Barcelona (MTIB-28331)¹².

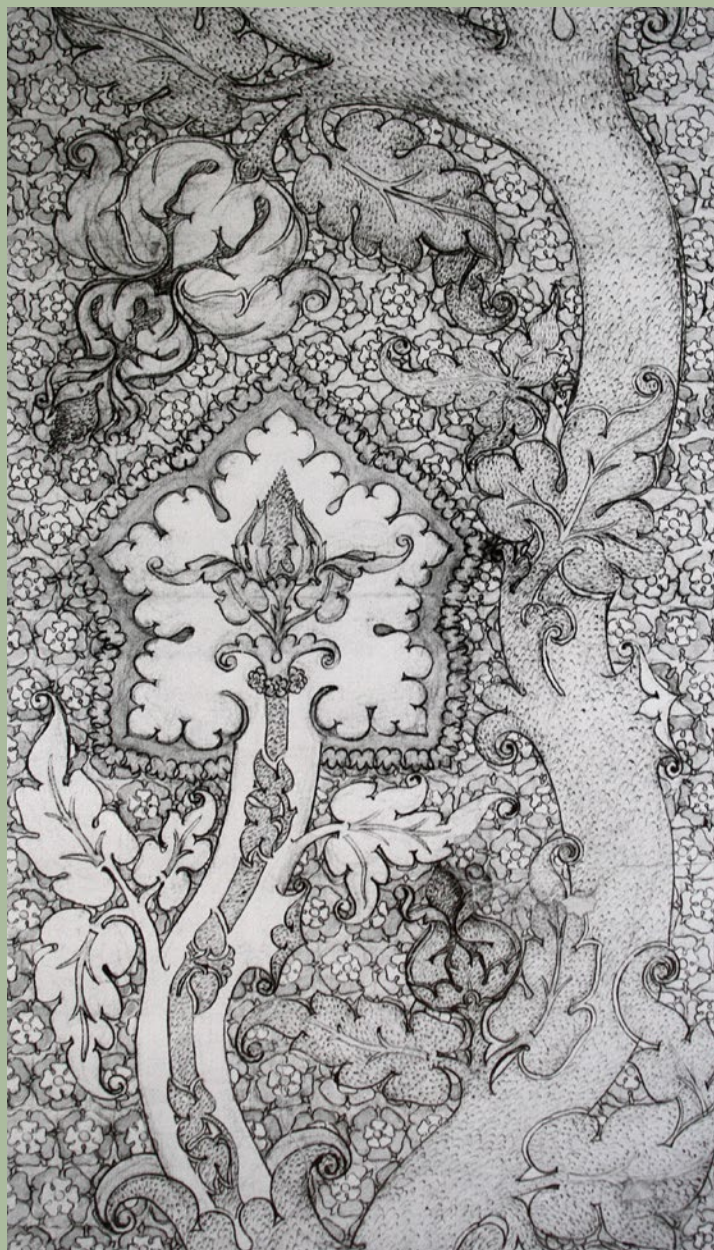


Velvet with gold thread (c.1475-1525), ©MTIB-28331.



▲ Detail of sgraffito in the entrance hall of Casa Pia Batlló (1892-1896), in Barcelona. © Daniel Pifarre.

► Design drawing for worked velvet produced by Pisanello (c. 1395-1455), ©Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques, 2537.



¹³ MONNAS, 2012, pp. 76-77.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 27-29.

In the case of Vilaseca, highlights include the sgraffito in the entrance halls of Casa Pía Batlló (1892-1896) and of one of the two Casa Cabot (1901-1904), both in Barcelona's Eixample neighbourhood. In each case, the interior walls feature large, vertical, sinuous stems with sprouting leaves and flowers of fantastical conception. All of the elements take direct inspiration from textiles with motifs of very similar characteristics, such as an Italian velvet brocaded in burgundy and gold, housed in London (V&A:774&a-1900)¹³ and a design for a brocaded velvet made by Pisanello (c. 1395-1455) and housed in Paris (Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts Graphiques-2537)¹⁴.

Turning to sgraffito in the work of Domènech i Montaner, we find two examples that originally come from decorative solutions for textiles and closely resemble one another: the sgraffito in the entrance hall of Casa Navàs (1901-1907) in Reus and the stucco fireplace surround in the drawing



▲ Stucco on fireplace surround in the drawing room on the main floor of Casa Lleó Morera (1902-1906), in Barcelona.
©Daniel Pifarré.

◆ Green silk velvet of Italian provenance, possibly from Venice (second quarter of the fifteenth century).
©V&A:T.117-1911.

15 The interior sgraffito work of the Casa Macari Golferichs (1900-1901), by Joan Rubió i Bellver, also used a similar design, depicting a Phoenix motif within the scalloped form.

16 *Silk Gold Crimson...*, 2009, pp. 80-81.

17 MONNAS, 2012, p. 71.

18 Puig had used this motif previously for the tomb of the Dam i Montells family (1897), in Montjuïc, and to adorn the tunics of the female figures on the façades of Casa Coll i Regàs (1897), in Mataró, and Casa Amatller (1898-1900), in Barcelona.

room on the main floor of Casa Lleó Morera (1902-1906) in Barcelona. Both compositions are laid out in the style of tapestries with diamond and scalloped shapes that each contain bunches of flowers, although the sgraffito in Reus is more complex because it includes corollas and other plant elements¹⁵. The models for these examples may have been taken from any number of European late medieval textiles, such as a red silk tablecloth preserved in Venice (Centro Studi Tessuto e Costume, Palazzo Mocenigo, n.210)¹⁶ and a fragment of Italian green silk velvet, possibly Venetian, housed in London (V&A:T.117-1911)¹⁷.

The most obvious examples of the relation between the technique of sgraffito and textiles, however, appear in the work of Puig i Cadafalch. While there are many cases, space here limits us to two. The first is the sgraffito façade of Casa Martí i Puig (1898, refurbished), on the Carrer de la Boqueria in Barcelona. To update the original eighteenth-century house and bring it in line with the Modernista style, Puig created a tapestry-like sgraffito with a principal motif: a shape partway between the scalloped diamond that we have seen before and a heraldic shield. The motif is fleshed out with a thistle flower and foliage in the interior and a crown in the upper part¹⁸. The general idea of the design can be found in a variety of versions in many Italian silk textiles of the sixteenth

Detail of sgraffito in the entrance hall of Casa Garí (1899-1900), in Argentona. ©Daniel Pifarré.



Crimson velvet worked in gold thread, of Ottoman provenance (late fifteenth century). ©V&A:T.359-1977.



¹⁹ MONNAS, 2012, pp. 126-127.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 130-131.

²¹ *Mostra de le Antiche Stoffe Genovesi dal secolo xv al secolo xix*, Ente Provinciale del Turismo di Genova, Genova, 1941, p. 77.

²² <http://goo.gl/JQpMZp> (24/01/2018).

²³ MONNAS, 2012, pp. 146-147.

century: in a double stole of crimson velvet (V&A:587-1892)¹⁹, in an amber velvet brocaded in silver thread (V&A:715-1907)²⁰, and in a cope known as “crown damask” (Cathedral of San Lorenzo, Genoa)²¹. All of these textiles have a principal motif based on a central form in scalloped profile with a crown and plant decoration inside. The second example in Puig’s work appears in Casa Josep Garí (1899-1900) in Argentona. Among the various sgraffito designs, many of which are inspired by late medieval textiles, the one in the style of a tapestry in the entrance hall repeats a large rosette from which pomegranates and thistles bloom. The connection to Italian velvets featuring lobed floral subject matter is plain to see. Of the many textiles that may have inspired Puig, we can cite a Genoese piece preserved in Barcelona (MTIB-22637)²² and a crimson velvet of Ottoman provenance (V&A:T.359-1977)²³.

By way of epilogue, it should be noted that the dialogue between Gothic and Renaissance textiles and the buildings of the great masters of Modernista architecture stands as a thought-provoking precedent for other architects of the same period, who are sometimes called “minor architects”. Sgraffito designs in their works appear to derive from the designs carried out by the master architects under discussion rather than from drawing their own inspiration directly from the textiles. The cases are quite heterogeneous. Examples include Domènech Boada and Casa Joaquim Cairó (1900), Murici Augé and Casa Josep Filella (1901-1903), and Frederic Soler i Catàrneu and Casa Joan Vila (1902), all located in Barcelona’s Eixample neighbourhood. ●

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The sewing machine and the social history of women: parallel lives

by SÍLVIA PUERTAS NOVAU, graduate in Geography and History

¹ DERRY, T.K. and WILLIAMS, I., *Historia de la tecnología. Desde 1750 hasta el 1900*. Vol. II, Ed. S.XXI, Madrid, 1980.

The sewing machine entered into the history of technology in the last third of the eighteenth century, with a prototype created by the Englishman Thomas Saint in 1790. The design was refined in 1826 by the German-born inventor Charles Fredrick Wiesenthal. Three years later, in 1829, the French tailor Barthélemy Thimmonier invented a more efficient model and formed an association with the engineer Auguste Ferrand. In 1830, the corresponding patent was registered under the name Thimonnier&Ferrand¹.

On the other side of the Atlantic inventions were also appearing, with varying degrees of success. Elias Howe introduced significant innovations in stitching. Disappointed at the lack of success, however, he moved to the British Isles. In 1851, the American Isaac Merrit Singer, improved and patented a new sewing machine based on Howe's model, which he had manufactured and distributed to the US and European markets. This machine could be paid for in instalments, which boosted sales and brought considerable commercial success, establishing a formula that would be imitated by other manufacturers.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the sewing machine was a common sight in the homes and workplaces of industrial societies, including Catalonia. In 1862, Miquel Escuder Castella, a native of Terrassa established in Barcelona, manufactured and sold the first Spanish sewing machine with the model name "Aurora", based on the Wheeler & Wilson model, and distributed other brands.

At this time, textile machinery was used in factories and no longer found in domestic settings. By contrast, sewing machines occupied both old and new workplaces: the small workshops of dressmakers, tailors and others in the sewing trade, clothes factories, and homes.

The sewing machine in homes

Sewing machines were invented with two aims: to meet the needs of industrial production and to satisfy domestic requirements. Models now found in museum collections illustrate the fact that these machines were designed with aesthetics in mind. Decorative details in the wood, coloured flowers on the

Singer sewing machine, 1880.
Museu de la Ciència i de la Tècnica
de Catalunya





2. Aurora sewing Machine,
Miquel Escuder, Barcelona,
1862.
Museu de la Ciència i de la
Tècnica de Catalunya

2 CORTADA, Ester and SEBASTIÀ, Montserrat, “La dona i la institucionalització de l’educació” in *Mès enllà del silenci*, NASH, Mary (coord.), Generalitat de Catalunya, Barcelona, 1988, pp. 210–211.

metal framework, and the designs as a whole testify to this dual function as both practical and beautiful objects.

Initially, the domestic sewing machine was conceived as a luxury object, but it gradually began to find its way into more modest settings, among the sewing tools of young women who were preparing their trousseaux and housewives who bought them to sew their linens and clothes and, if necessary, to work for themselves or others.

Sewing machines made (and continue to make) it easier to learn needlework, embroidery and dressmaking. This was essential training for young girls who were expected to become competent housewives, as tradition demanded.

By the nineteenth century there were any number of handbooks of good manners and good housekeeping, aimed at a female readership. Publications of this type stressed that knowledge and skills for dressmaking were essential and inescapable, irrespective of social class. Hands occupied by needlework were considered a sign of virtue, and they also provided a means of dressing appropriately for those women without the financial capacity to contract the services of tailors and dressmakers or to buy ready-to-wear clothes. Sewing skills also provided an opportunity to carry out paid work.

Needlework became prominent in primary school programmes for girls in the second half of the twenty-first century. The first legislation to establish compulsory schooling of boys and girls in Spain, known as the Moyano Act (July 1857), established different syllabuses for each sex. Esther Cortada and Montserrat Sebastià² cite the handbook of girls’ education written in 1898 by Pilar Pascual, a schoolteacher from Barcelona, who recommended that “of

Màquina de cosir model *Princes of Wales*,
Newton Wilson Co., Birmingham, 1870.
Museu de la tècnica de l'Empordà.



Màquina de cosir *Bijou*
E. Brion Frères, Paris, 1870.
Museu de la Tècnica
de l'Empordà.



the 36 teaching hours per week in girls' public schools, 8 should be devoted to religion, 14 to needlework, and only 14 to other subjects". The situation changed little throughout the first third of the following century, until educational reform was brought about, with figures such as Rosa Sensat, who introduced mathematics and science into girls' education.

The end of the Spanish Civil War and the ideological context of the Franco dictatorship saw a return to the learning of traditional handicrafts and the establishment of a discourse enshrining domesticity and the return of women to the home.



Postcards.

3 MARTÍN I ROS, Rosa M^a, "Blanc sobre blanc: treballs de dones per a dones" in *El fil invisible. Dones que cusen*, Catalogue 2, Museu de Lleida: Diocesà i Comarcal, Service Point FMI, S.L., Lleida 2015, pp.15-21.

4 MONSERDÀ DE MACIÀ, Dolors, "La calamitat de lo barato" *Revista La Tralla*, Year V, 15/1/1907.

Learning of needlework continued outside the school in the family environment and in dressmakers' workshops in the neighbourhood or town, where girls made their own trousseaux³. They sewed by hand and learned to use sewing machines at home and at the dressmaker's. If the opportunity arose, the family added a sewing machine to the dowry. At the same time, sewing machine distributors began to take a part in the education of young women, offering free machine sewing classes in their commercial premises, which were generally at street level. Thus, these companies implemented a two-pronged strategy to promote sales.

The sewing machine and the work of the seamstress

The introduction of the sewing machine into the production of consumer goods was not entirely seamless. Just as the mechanisation of nets and textiles was met by the opposition of craftsmen and workers, various documents from the time highlighted the hazards of this new device. Job losses due to machines replacing manual labour were forecast, as was the closure of businesses that could not compete with mass production at low cost.

The first mechanical dressmaking workshop is attributed to Thimonier, who equipped it with 80 machines of his brand. However, the place was plundered by tailors who opposed mechanisation of the trade, as they felt their products and jobs were under threat.

In Catalonia, Dolors Monserdà de Macià wrote the following in her 1907 article "La calamitat de lo barato"⁴:

If we focus on just one branch of women's production, we should say that when the first sewing machines arrived in Barcelona, we believed in good faith that the new inventions would be a beneficial item in the field of women's work; but after long years of practice we must confess that the sewing machine has been a real calamity (...) Thirty years ago, working on linen in her own home,

"Manual de Modisteria práctico y sencillo para todas las edades" by Laura Noves, with illustrations by Elena Ramos. Ametller Ed. Barcelona 1955.



5 VENTOSA, Sílvia, *Modelar el cos. Treball i vida de les cotillaires de Barcelona*, Altafulla, Barcelona 2001. 266 p. CAPDEVILA, Fiona and SOLANO, Rosa, *Dones visibles invisibles*. Casa Elizalde. Gràfiques Alpes, Barcelona, 2016.

a woman sewing by hand earned on average four or five *reales* a day. Now, the cost of living has tripled in Barcelona, and a woman working the same number of hours would obtain the same wage, but would have to have invested at least 25 to 30 *duros* in purchasing a machine. Undoubtedly, those who consider just this information, will find it bad enough that, to earn the same amount of money, women have had to add the trials that raising or rather struggling to raise this money represents for a poor person. But worse than this, the invention is so wonderful that, as you sew, it produces consumption so that, sooner or later, it will bring an end to the arduous life of the undernourished women who use such machines continuously.”

The sewing machine bore witness to the harsh conditions endured by seamstresses, who were poorly remunerated, subject to the whims of bosses and mistresses, the seasonal nature of the consumption of their products, and self-exploitation⁵. Craftspeople and needleworkers struggled between peak periods when their sleep and health suffered due to the long working days or slack periods when demand dropped and they had no work or income.

Garment production took place in workshops and factories, using a female workforce, and some of the processes were transferred to the home. Working from home was presented as an ideal solution as it provided cheap labour, with

9 ZABALA, Iris M (coord.): *Breve historia feminista de la literatura española (en lengua catalana, gallega y vasca)*. Vol. VI, Rubí (Barcelona), Anthropos, 1993-2000, p. 81.

The sewing machine has continued to be prominent, both in Spain and further afield. Occasionally, it is the subject of headlines, due to the collapse of precariously built factories and workshops. Such news articles illustrate, once again, the difficult living and working conditions of women employed in this sector. This situation has been common since the emergence of the sewing machine in the history of technology.

Literature has also left a record of the prominent role of the sewing machine in the life of women. Benito Perez Galdós and Carme Monturiol⁹ are two of the authors who have addressed this topic in their works. To conclude, we cite a novel by Rosa Regàs *La canción de Dorotea* (2001). The purchase of a sewing machine in instalments enables the author to unleash a series of passions that sweep along the main characters, and demonstrate, with subtlety, the importance of this device in daily life at a time that is not so distant from our own recent history. ●

Unravelling Mythology: Mythological Figures Who Spin

by MIREIA ROSICH

¹ See CIRLOT, Juan Eduardo, *Diccionario de símbolos*, Ed. Siruela, Barcelona, 2016.

² HOUSTON, Jean, *La diosa y el héroe*, Editorial Planeta, Buenos Aires, 1993, p. 18.

³ HESIOD, *Theogony*. Chief source for exploring the cosmogony and theogony of Greek culture.

⁴ HESIOD, *Theogony*, 217 and 901f. Hesiod describes them as the daughters of Night and Darkness and also as the daughters of Zeus and Themis. It is common to find more than one version.

⁵ *Idem*.

⁶ Their original names are Μοῖραι, *Parcae* and *Nornir*, respectively.

⁷ Homer speaks of the Moirai, or Fates, as destiny, while Hesiod speaks of three figures.

⁸ The sisters of the Moirai are the Horae, who also number three. Other figures like the Graces and the Gorgons are further examples of the many female triads.

⁹ It is also catalogued as “Las Parcas”.

In many myths and fairy stories, spinning appears as a symbol of creation: it is to fashion the very thread of life. In these tales, spinning, singing and dancing¹ are magical actions that create and sustain life. Mythologies and religions are packed with symbols of this sort that must be disentangled exactly as if we were unravelling a thread. As Jean Houston says, “A myth is something that never was but that is always happening”². The poetic and symbolic language that is used in all traditions when trying to address subjects of great importance is the only one that takes us to the boundary between the human and the divine, the visible and the hidden. Spinning and unravelling are highly symbolic in their own right. This paper sets out to look closely at the mythological figures who spin and to give examples of how they have been represented at different periods in the history of art.

The Moirai: Spinners of Destiny

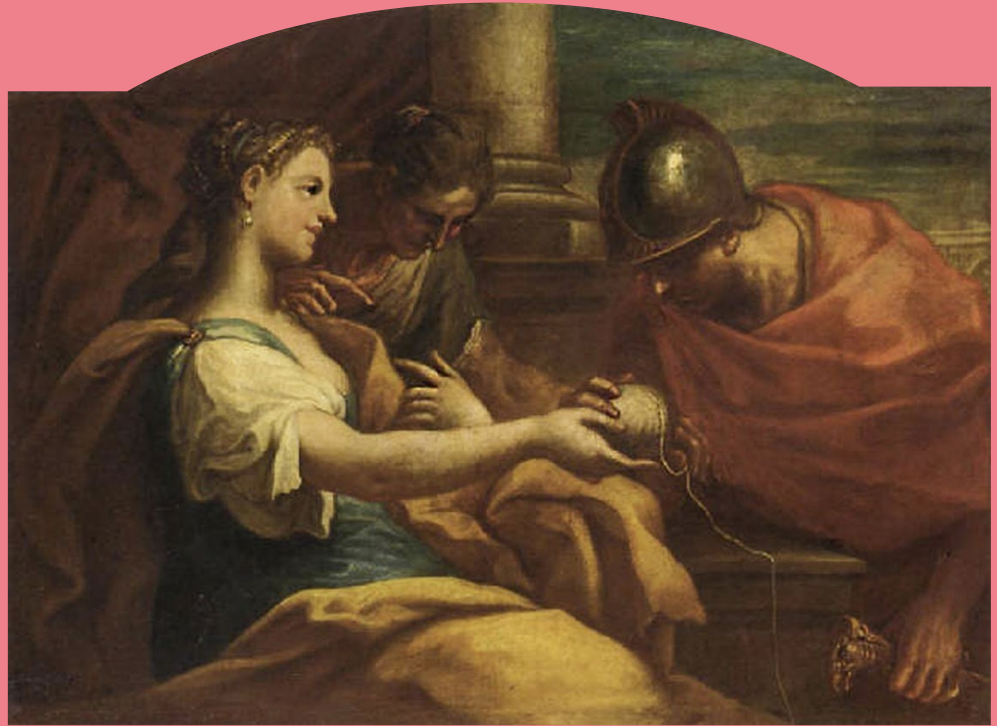
In Ancient Greece, the symbology of thread is part of the very mystery of life. In their account of the creation of the universe³, everything emerges from chaos. From out of the chaos came the original creatures, which gave human form to abstract concepts that frightened human beings as they stood helpless before the immensity of nature. The Moirai, or Fates, were the first spinners. They were the immediate daughters of Night (Nyx) and Darkness (Erebus)⁴ and they personified the destiny of each person. No law or god, however strong he or she might be, could change destiny because the natural balance of the universe cannot be upset. As a result, even Zeus feared the Moirai⁵. The three Greek Moirai have a Roman counterpart in the Parcae and a Norse counterpart in the Norns⁶. These three⁷ female deities – triads are very typical⁸ – are tasked with regulating the life of mortals as symbolised by a thread. Clotho would spin the thread with a spinning wheel; Lachesis would spool and measure the length of the thread; and the third and most fearful sister, Atropos, would raise her golden shears to snip the end of the thread. *Atropos*⁹ is the title of



Atropos, or The Fates, Francisco de Goya, 1819-23. Museo del Prado.



The Fates, Alfred-Pierre Joseph Agache, 1885. Palais des Beaux-Arts de Lille.



Ariadne and Theseus,
Niccolò Bambini, c. 1680-1700.

¹⁰ Originally, it hung in the house known as the “Quinta del Sordo” (Villa of the Deaf) purchased by Goya on the outskirts of Madrid. For more information, see SÁNCHEZ CANTÓN, Francisco Javier, *Goya y sus pinturas negras en la Quinta del Sordo*, Barcelona, Vergara, 1963.

¹¹ Goya painted his series of “Black Paintings” in the Quinta del Sordo. *Idem*.

¹² Alfred-Pierre Joseph Agache (1843-1915) was a French academic painter. See MARTIN, Jules, *Nos peintres et sculpteurs, graveurs, dessinateurs*, Flammarion, 1897, p. 11.

¹³ The symbol of the wheel of fortune is frequently used in antiquity and the Middle Ages. See CHEVALIER, J. and GHEERBRANDT, A., *Diccionario de los símbolos*, Barcelona, Herder, 2003.

¹⁴ Between 3000 and 1200 B.C., the culture known as Minoan emerged on Crete. The culture was called Minoan because its discoverers connected it to the ruins of King Minos’ Palace of Knossos and the well-known legend of the Minotaur.

a Goya painting, now hanging in the Prado Museum¹⁰, in which the Moirai appear represented with the painter’s hallmark style, familiar from his “Black Paintings”¹¹. In a work by Alfred Agache¹² entitled *Les Parques* (or *The Fates*), the onlooker can see the three different tasks and the spinning wheel, which is also analogous with the wheel of fortune¹³. Is it chance, coincidence or the divine will that lies behind everything? Whichever it may be, it always turns, like a wheel.

Ariadne: The Thread of the Labyrinth

Crete is a large island that was home to the enigmatic Minoan culture¹⁴, which is related to King Minos.¹⁵ Ariadne gave a thread to the hero Theseus that saved his life because it helped him to find his way back through the intricate tunnels of the Minotaur’s cave after he had slain the beast. Ariadne and her thread are crucial because they enable Theseus to accomplish his feat and break the curse by tying one end of the thread to the labyrinth door and unwinding it as he goes forward. Curiously, few artists have depicted Ariadne herself carrying the thread. She is shown doing so, however, in a painting by the Italian Niccolò Bambini, where we witness her giving the spool of thread to the hero in the foreground¹⁶. Most painters and sculptors, by contrast, have frozen her at the moment when she awakens on the island of Naxos and realises that Theseus has abandoned her¹⁷. Yet the importance of Ariadne’s thread should not be forgotten, nor should what it symbolises about the inner labyrinths of all human beings.

¹⁵ See GRIMAL, Pierre, *Diccionario de Mitología Griega y Romana*, Paidós, 1981. For classical sources on Ariadne: see Apollodorus, Plutarch, Pausanias or Ovid, to name but a few.

¹⁶ Niccolò Bambini (1651-1736) was a Venetian artist of the early Baroque period.

¹⁷ Ariadne escapes with Theseus, but he leaves her behind on the island of

Naxos. Most artists depict her abandonment: Tiepolo, Angelica Kauffman, Frederick Watts, John William Waterhouse and others.



Athena: Patron of Weavers

18 In fact, she is the daughter of Zeus and Metis, the goddess who personifies intelligence. Zeus had devoured Metis while she was pregnant. GRIMAL, *Op. cit.*

19 The chryselephantine sculpture, which was made to represent Athena in the Parthenon, stood more than 12 metres high. It was the work of Phidias (fifth century B.C.), who is regarded as the greatest sculptor of Ancient Greece.

20 Athena “symbolises wisdom, civilisation, the political community of the city, the spiritual and manual activities that must be carried out with intelligence: philosophy, poetry, music, and she is also the patron of handicrafts, such as the art of weaving”. MOORMANN, Eric M, *De Acteón a Zeus: temas de mitología clásica*

One of the most important gods in the Olympic pantheon is Athena, who sprang directly from the head of Zeus¹⁸. She gives her name to the city of Athens, over which she presides as protector. Venerated in the Parthenon with a gigantic sculpture made by Phidias¹⁹, she is a complex goddess linked to a host of myths and characters. Of interest here is her role as the patron of arts and crafts²⁰, specifically of weavers and spinners. Athena is a master not only of literal weaving, using threads, but also of symbolic weaving, as a weaver of thoughts. She instils cunning in Odysseus and Penelope, among others²¹.

The Panathenaic Games, which were held in her honour, were one of the most important festivals in the Greek world. The most solemn and splendid part of the ceremonies was the procession to the Acropolis. A special robe (a *peplos*)²² was brought to the goddess as an offering. Months before the ceremony, virgin girls known as *arrēphoroi*²³ were selected to take part in the weaving of the garment²⁴. Making textiles stood as the quintessential example of women’s work and great care was taken in the training of girls and in the sanctification of the art.

en literatura, música, artes plásticas y teatro, Madrid, Akal, 1997.

21 Athena appears at various points in *The Odyssey* to give them instructions. This is analysed symbolically in

HOUSTON, *Op. cit.* p. 222.

22 This is a common garment worn by women throughout Ancient Greece.

23 This is addressed in great detail in BURKERT, Walter, *El origen salvaje: ritos de*

sacrificio y mito entre los griegos, Barcelona, Acantilado, 2011.

24 To finish the work, many other women would later join in. *Op. cit.* Burkert.



Arachne: The Invisible Thread

25 The myth is set out in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, VI, 5, among other sources.

26 The scene of the fable of Arachne appears in the painting's background. Athena is the figure wearing the metal helmet, her chief attribute.

27 This painting has been addressed by many authors. See: ANGULO, Diego, *La mitología en el arte español: del Renacimiento a Velázquez*, Madrid, Real Academia de Historia, 2010, pp. 215ff.

28 King of Orchomenus. Eponymous with the Minyans, a name borne by the inhabitants of a region of Boeotia at the time of Homer. Op. Cit. GRIMAL.

29 Dionysus was also called Bacchus (Βκχος in Greek, *Bacchus* in Latin).

30 The Bacchantes, also known as *Bacchae* or *Maenads* or

As a great weaver, Athena is linked to the myth of Arachne²⁵, a mortal who dared to challenge Athena to a contest and boasted that she was a better weaver. The insolence of a woman is usually punished by the gods with violence. Even though Arachne's ability was proved in the contest, Athena took offence and struck the girl with a shuttle. Distraught, Arachne tried to hang herself. The goddess, however, stopped her and turned her into a spider. Now she will always spin a beautiful, but invisible thread. A famous work by Velázquez known as *Las Hilanderas*²⁶ (*The Spinners*) depicts the scene in the background, where the viewer can distinguish Pallas Athena by her helmet²⁷.

The Minyades: Challenging Dionysus

Clearly, the gods were not to be angered, because their wrath would fall inexorably on human beings. Precisely because they remained at home embroidering, the three daughters of Minyas²⁸, known as the Minyades, were punished by Dionysus (or Bacchus)²⁹, who would not stand for their failure to attend the festivals of his worship in the role of Maenads or Bacchantes³⁰.

Thyiades, were part of the large and frenzied following of Dionysus. The name Bacchant comes from Bacchus (see previous footnote). In the

world of art, the Bacchantes have been highly represented, often covered in animal skins, wearing a crown of ivy like the god, and brandishing a

thyrsus. In classical literature, a key example appears in Euripides' play *The Bacchae*, an Attic tragedy of the fifth century B.C.

Philomela, Edward Coley Burne-Jones, 1896. British Museum.



31 For more information on the Maenads and their rituals: PAUL VEYNE, François and LISSARRAGUE, Françoise, *Los misterios del Gineceo*, Madrid, Akal, 2003 and BURKERT, Walter, *Cultos mistericos antiguos*, Madrid, Trotta, cop. 2005.

32 There are different versions of the sisters' punishment. See GRIMAL *Op. cit.*

33 The myth of Philomela is set out in PAUSANIAS, I, 41, 8f., APPOLODORUS, *Bibliotheca*, III, 14, 8. OVID, *Metamorphoses* VI, 426.

34 Procne, Philomela's sister, was able to sacrifice her own son Itys to punish her husband Tereus. She cooked her son and fed him to her unwitting husband. When he learnt what had happened, he snatched up an axe and pursued Procne and Philomela, who were rescued only when the gods turned them into birds. Sources cited in the previous footnote.

35 Edward Coley Burne-Jones (1833-1898) was an English painter and member of the Pre-Raphaelite

The festivals sacred to Dionysus were one of the few public appearances in rituals that were allowed to high-born women³¹. The punishment meted out by the god of wine for scorning him was to make vines and ivy grow from the chairs of the Minyades to give them milk and wine. Once they had imbibed, the young women fell deep into a mystical madness that led them to tear apart one of their own sons as if he were a stag³².

Philomela: Embroidering Misfortune

A young child was also the scapegoat of a tale of adultery related to sewing. In this case, the protagonist is Philomela, an Athenian princess³³, who was raped by her sister's husband. To conceal his attack, the brother-in-law cut out Philomela's tongue and shut her away in a cabin in the woods. Rendered unable to speak, she nevertheless wove a tapestry to tell her tale. When it reached her sister Procne, Procne took revenge by cooking her own son by the rapist and serving him as a meal to the man³⁴. In a wood-engraving, Edward Burne-Jones³⁵ depicts Philomela shut away and standing by her loom.

Homer's Weavers

Penelope is the most celebrated of the female figures who weave. To prepare a shroud for her father-in-law Laertes, her husband Odysseus' father, she weaves by day and unravels her work by night. With this activity, which was unimpeachable because it represented women's work par excellence, Penelope

Brotherhood, which was a British school of art in the late nineteenth century that reinterpreted many ancient myths and medieval legends.

Penelope and the Suitors,
John William Waterhouse, 1912.
Aberdeen Art Gallery.



36 In the book by MOSSE, Claude, *La mujer en la Grecia clásica*, Madrid, Nerea, 1990, there are many reflections of this sort on the female characters in Homer.

37 Circe was a magician or enchantress who lived on the island of Aeaea. She had magical powers and could turn men into animals. HOMER, *Odyssey*, X.

38 Calypso was a nymph and queen of the island of Ogygia. She held Odysseus captive there for seven years, offering him immortality. *Ibid.*, X.

39 Arete was the wife of Alcinous and mother of Nausicaa. They reigned over the island of the Phaeacians, *Ibid.*, VI.

40 Helen, who was the wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta, was kidnapped by the Trojan prince Paris. Her kidnapping set in motion the Trojan War, which is recounted in *The Iliad*. When the war ended, Helen was returned to the House of Menelaus. In *The Odyssey*, she is found back in Sparta.

41 Telemachus, son of Odysseus, had gone to the court of Menelaus for news of his father, *Ibid.*, IV.

deceived her suitors for years³⁶ and was able to buy time for Odysseus to return home. The cunning of the hero has its equivalent in the cunning of the wife. Her iconography in works of art was established very early and the loom is the element that allows us to identify her at once. John William Waterhouse represents her at work on her weaving and besieged by her suitors. The archetype of the perfect wife and mother is fully joined to the fine art of weaving.

But the discreet and prudent Penelope, faithful wife of Odysseus, is not the only woman to appear at the loom in Homer's verses, although the plastic arts have not left as much evidence of the others. In *The Odyssey*, characters as enigmatic as the enchantress Circe³⁷ and the nymph Calypso³⁸ engage in weaving as well. Arete³⁹, Queen of the Phaeacians, also spends her days weaving rich fabrics. Helen⁴⁰, when she is taken back to the House of Menelaus, appears with a wicker basket of wool fleece and a spindle during the visit made by Telemachus⁴¹.

In *The Iliad*, Helen is weaving a large purple cloth depicting the Achaeans and Trojans⁴². Andromache is counselled by her husband Hector to return to her spindle and orders the slaves to join in the work as well⁴³. Spinning and weaving are an intrinsic part of what is regarded as the female realm.

⁴² HOMER, *The Iliad*, III, 125ff.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, VI, 490ff.



Ulysses, Mercury and Circe,
Giovanni Stradano, 1572.
Palazzo Vecchio. [See detail.](#)

Hercules and Omphale, Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1537. Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum.



Heroes Disguised as Women

⁴⁴ In the artistic iconography, Queen Omphale is represented with a lion's skin and club, typical attributes of Hercules, as if she has usurped his powers while the hero, by contrast, appears wearing women's clothes and weaving linen. One of the sources is DIODORUS OF SICILY, IV, 31.

⁴⁵ The painting *Hercules at the Court of Omphale* (1537) (*"Hercules am Hofe der Omphale"*) has one version in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid and another in the Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum in Brunswick, Germany.

⁴⁶ Marc Gabriel Charles Gleyre (1806-1874) was a painter of Swiss birth living in France.

⁴⁷ GRIMAL, *Op. cit.*

Precisely because of the inextricable association between women and the loom, men have picked up thread or spinning wheel when they need to disguise themselves among women. This is the case of Heracles (also known as Hercules) during his stay at the court of Queen Omphale⁴⁴, where the great hero of twelve labours spends three years dressed in women's clothes and is represented weaving linen at the monarch's feet. The scene is also reflected in works by the artists Lucas Cranach⁴⁵ and Charles Gleyre⁴⁶.

One might further ask whether Achilles engaged in weaving when his mother concealed him at the court of Lycomedes in Sciros⁴⁷ so that he would go unnoticed and not be carried off to the Trojan War. It is likely that he did. In this case, however, art has left no trace.



Hercules and Omphale, Charles Gleyre, 1862.

⁴⁸ See FERNÁNDEZ, Olaya, *El Hilo de la Vida: Diosas tejedoras en la mitología griega*. Paper from the National University of Distance Education (UNED) in Spain.

⁴⁹ Carl Gustav Jung, Joseph Campbell, Marie-Louise von Franz, Christine Downing, Anne Baring, Jules Cashford, Marion Woodman and Jean Houston, to name but a few. There are many others.

⁵⁰ In Jungian psychology, this is the anima in the case of men and the animus in the case of women.

Conclusions

Spinning wool into yarn, weaving, managing servants and receiving visitors were all on the list of basic household tasks for women in Ancient Greece. The tasks reflected the social role of women. Generally, their lives unfolded within the home, which was known as the *oikos* and included not only the house itself, but also the entire estate, which would vary in size according to social status. As a result, many female characters used textile work for expression, coping, protection, worship and more. It was their territory and a host of studies have examined the subject from a feminist perspective⁴⁸.

A more psychological approach to mythology, which is supported by many authors⁴⁹, sees the act of weaving as a symbol for making the great tapestry of life. In this sense, the weave of fibres, both the warp and the woof, is fashioned out of life's great double dance: the male and the female (e.g., Penelope/Odysseus, Andromache/Hector and Hector/Omphale), the human and the divine (Athena/Arachne), the rational and the irrational (Minyades/Dionysus), and so on and so forth.

In addition, female figures appearing as silent weavers have been interpreted as corresponding to a person's anima⁵⁰. While the hero's ego may be focused on frenetic action at the moment, he must return and merge again with his inner anima at some point. Both elements are fundamental to the story. Viewed under this prism, Penelope is Odysseus' anima and Ariadne is Theseus' anima (while Beatrice is Dante's and Dulcinea is Don Quixote's).

In short, unravelling mythology is a task that has no end. We can always return to it from a multitude of disciplines. ●

Tomàs Aymat's tapestry factory at the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition of 1923

by JOSEP CAPSIR I MAÍZ

Curator of Decorative Arts at the Design Museum of Barcelona

¹ DENGRA, Andreu. *Tomàs Aymat. L'artista. La manufactura*, Museu de Sant Cugat - Casa Aymat, Sant Cugat del Vallès, 2007. This is the most comprehensive publication on the trajectory of Tomàs Aymat's tapestry and rug factory.

² Leaflet, invitation and catalogue of the exhibition from 12 to 23 February 1921, at Galeries Laietanes.

Tomàs Aymat's tapestry factory in Sant Cugat del Vallès

Tomàs Aymat Martínez (Tarragona, 1892–Barcelona, 1944) took up his creative interests at a very young age. In 1912, he contributed to the Fine Art Exhibition of the Art Circle of Tarragona, at which he exhibited several watercolours. That same year, he travelled to Paris where he contacted the Gobelins Manufactory. There, he learned the craft of tapestry-making, knowledge that he subsequently expanded in Madrid, at the Santa Bárbara Royal Tapestry Factory. In 1918, he began work as a teacher of tapestry and rug weaving at the Arts and Crafts School of the Industrial University of Barcelona, where he coincided with Francesc d'Assís Galí, who gave drawing classes.

In 1920, by now a seasoned professional, Tomàs Aymat set up his tapestry and rug factory in Sant Cugat del Vallès, a town close to larger cities with a tradition of textile manufacturing, such as Sabadell, Terrassa, and Barcelona. Francesc d'Assís Galí accompanied Aymat on this great business adventure, taking on the role of the factory's artistic director, as the entrepreneur became technical director.¹

We know that months after setting up in Sant Cugat del Vallès, Aymat and Galí held the first public exhibition of their works. The chosen location was the Galeries Laietanes in Barcelona. Although the published catalogue was very basic, from it we can determine that at this exhibition, which was open to the public from 12–23 February 1921, the following samples of the factory's output were displayed: a high-warp tapestry made with a drawing by Tomàs Aymat, and a hand-knotted rug, commissioned for a Dutch Renaissance-style dining room, and created from a drawing by Francesc d'Assís Galí.²

In an article published in the press, Joaquim Folch i Torres, an art critic and museologist, wrote enthusiastically about the factory and particularly about the exhibited rug. The information is eloquently expressed:

Recently, Galeries Laietanes has exhibited an extremely beautiful rug, hand-made by the new Catalan tapestry and rug factory that two artists of the new generation, Francesc Galí and Tomàs Aymat, have established in Sant Cugat del Vallès.

3 FOLCH I TORRES, Joaquim. “Una manufactura catalana de tapissos i catifes a mà”, in *Pàgina Artística de La Veu*, number 528, 19-2-1921, p. 5.

4 Anuari del Foment de les Arts Decoratives 1923, (1924). Unnumbered pages. Here we can find the coloured design by Santiago Marco, as well as two images of the interior of the tea room. The lacquered panel by Lluís Bracons, of which there is an image in the publication, has formed part of the heritage collections of the Design Museum of Barcelona since 2017.

The exhibited item, made by the emerging Catalan factory, was commissioned by an American magnate, who chose our works after examining the production of various European factories, some founded many years ago, if not with a centuries-old tradition.

Clearly, we can see that the choice was appropriate when we contemplate the splendid work of Galí and Aymat, where the question of colour is resolved marvellously and (given the lack of tradition) in a way that is superior to the eastern manufacturers. This has enhanced the interest of the figurative composition that constitutes the subject of this work, without overlooking the nature of a flat object that a rug must necessarily have, a problem that is certainly extremely difficult. This has been achieved while giving the subject and the craft all its prestige, all its noble presence, and shunning the affected styling of certain manufacturers who draw ornamental elements on a fabric, rather than making rugs.

The success of the new factory is a gem for us, as we have constantly followed the training of our leading tapestry maker, Tomàs Aymat. Our magnates, who place their orders outside of Catalonia, have the duty to help him to flourish.”³

The “tea room” as a standard of modernity

In a short time, Tomàs Aymat’s factory in Sant Cugat del Vallès gained substantial momentum. The decorator Santiago Marco considered the quality of Aymat’s creations when he presented his innovative design for a circular room, known as a “tea room” or boudoir, in the Modern Furniture and Decoration Section of the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition. The space, which occupied an entire stand, contained two works produced by Aymat’s factory: the tapestry *Diana caçadora* (Diana the Hunter), and a rug that depicted hunting scenes to match the tapestry. The exhibition installed in the Palau d’Art Modern and the Palau d’Art Industrial, known subsequently as the Alfons XIII and Victòria Eugènia palaces, designed by the architect Josep Puig i Cadafalch, opened in Barcelona on id. data 13th September 1923.

The stand was accessed through a curtain between two black marble columns. On the right, following the guidelines for the decorative design published in the press of the period, was a sofa embedded between two black marble pilasters, at the head of which was exhibited a lacquered panel with geometric elements entitled *Sant Genís dels Agudells*, by Lluís Bracons.⁴

Design for the “tea room” or boudoir, by Santiago Marco for the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition of 1923. Image: Anuari del Foment de les Arts Decoratives.

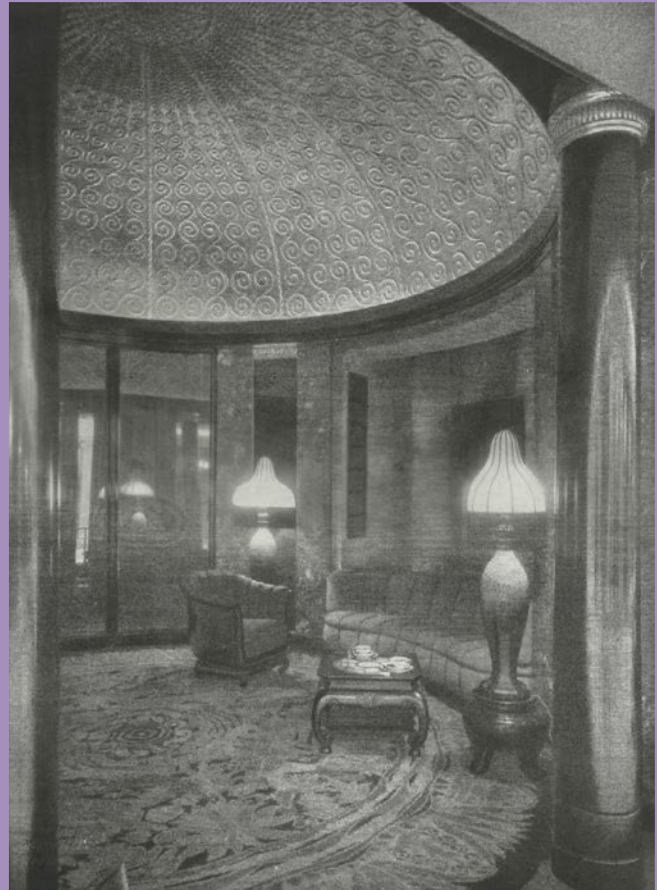


The panel *Sant Genís dels Agudells*, by Lluís Bracons, decorated the section of wall dominated by a sofa. 108.3 x 83.3 cm. MDB 1.431. Museu del Disseny de Barcelona. Photograph © Estudio Rafael Vargas.





In the tea room, the *Diana the Hunter* tapestry, between two marble pilasters, as well as the rug from Casa Aymat, were highly prominent. Image: Anuari del Foment de les Arts Decoratives



Two black marble columns flanked the entry to the stand that reproduced Santiago Marco's decorative design. Image: Anuari del Foment de les Arts Decoratives.

5 VENTOSA, Sílvia. "Tapís *Diana caçadora*", in *Extraordinary! Collections of Decorative and Author-Centred Art*, Ajuntament de Barcelona, 2014, p. 382-387. This is the most detailed, comprehensive and monographic article on the *Diana the Hunter* tapestry.

Then, a glazed door preceded the *Diana the Hunter* tapestry, flanked by two black marble pilasters. On the circular rug were four spectacular floor lamps on pedestals, designed by Santiago Marco and decorated with lacquer and applications of eggshell by Lluís Bracons. There were also three original arm chairs and a low table. The ceiling, in the form of a dome, spectacularly displayed its striking gold colour, which contrasted with the black background of the rug, and the four marble pilasters and two columns, crowned by their respective capitals.

Diana the Hunter was made with wool threads and a Turk's head knot, using the same technique as the rugs; if necessary, it could also be used for this function.⁵ However, it was described as a tapestry, given its situation and strictly ornamental use. In the upper left part, the quadrangular tapestry bears the inscription *T. AYMAT*, and on the right *Sant Cugat*. The scene of Diana, a young red-haired woman holding a bow and arrow, symbols of her status as goddess of hunting, and surrounded by plants and animals of clearly Mediterranean inspiration, is framed by a border comprised of alternating squares and rhomboids. It is a work with great visual and colouristic strength, a clear example of the *Noucentisme* art of the period, which is also connected to the emergence of Art Deco. We believe that the author of the tapestry drawing must have been Aymat himself, in collaboration with Galí. Notably, Galí created the image that would be used for the English version of the poster advertising

The *Diana the Hunter* tapestry is a clear example of the perfectionism and creativity of Tomàs Aymat's factory. 263.5 x 236.5 cm. MADB 16.816. Museu del Disseny de Barcelona. Photograph © La Fotogràfica. [See detail.](#)



the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition, which depicted a half-nude figure of a young red-haired lady. At the bottom of the scene is a pavement or rug that alternated rhomboid and square elements, in a very similar way to the tapestry's border.

We can see some similarities between the rug exhibited in the Galeries Laietanes and that which formed part of Santiago Marco's decorative design. In addition to containing strictly ornamental motifs, the Galeries Laietanes rug also contained figurative and three-dimensional elements, like the hunting scenes rug. Such elements are not always easy to incorporate into a rug given its nature as a flat object, as Joaquim Folch i Torres had observed.

The circular rug, created with thick strands of wool and Turk's head knot, shows hunting scenes that complement the narrative of the *Diana the Hunter* tapestry. The drawing for the rug must have involved Santiago Marco in some capacity, perhaps in collaboration with Tomàs Aymat or even Francesc d'Assís Galí. The design has circular, concentric iconographic registers, on a



The original rug with hunting scenes synthesised the aesthetic of Noucentisme, with the incipient and ephemeral Art Deco. 503 x 477.5 cm. MDB 892. Museu del Disseny de Barcelona. Photograph © Ignasi Prat. [See detail.](#)

black background that is characteristic of Art Deco. The background is most noticeable in the centre of the rug, where the sky and clouds are represented geometrically, despite being figurative elements. Nature, clearly inspired by the Mediterranean, is present in the next register, where there are numerous animals such as birds, rabbits and wild boar as well as four hunters standing as if preparing to shoot, surrounded by agave plants. We can also identify the carline thistle (*carlina acaulis*), which is a highly characteristic species in Catalonia. In the past, this thistle was planted at the entrance to country houses to ward off evil spirits. At the edge of the rug is a magnificent border decorated with schematic, geometric representations of plants that nod to Art Deco. In the same way as *Diana the Hunter*, and in harmony with the tapestry, the rug has a wide colour range.

One of the four floor lamps, designed by Santiago Marco, lacquered by Lluís Bracons, which stood on the rug by Tomàs Aymat. 190 x 46 Ø cm. MDB 25. Museu del Disseny de Barcelona. Photograph © Estudio Rafael Vargas.



The Queen's *boudoir* at the Palau de Pedralbes

6 The work by Santiago Marco won the first Grand Prize for Modern Art. In addition, Tomàs Aymat, as owner and director of the rug and tapestry factory that bore his name, won a Grand Prize. The lacquerer of the four floor lamps with pedestals and the decorative panel won the same award.

After the closing of the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition on id. data 2n December 1923, Santiago Marco apparently found the way to give continuity to his original work, which had received many awards.⁶ The decorator was working at the time on several designs for the Palau de Pedralbes, the new Barcelona residence of the Spanish monarchy, represented by King Alfonso XIII and his wife Victoria Eugenie of Battenberg. Due to this circumstance, Santiago Marco had the opportunity to install his creation in spaces for the Queen's personal use, adjacent to her bedroom and bathroom. Although the same objects were present, the arrangement differed from that of the original designed exhibited at the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition, which had just ended. The most notable change was the new position of the *Diana the Hunter* tapestry, now placed between the two black columns. The space that was originally designed by the decorator as a tea room, hall, or boudoir, ended up as the latter in the Palau de Pedralbes. However, it did not have a dressing table; a piece of furniture that was essential in a room designed for this purpose. In fact, the Queen already had a large, comfortable room situated beside the boudoir, dominated by a dressing table and in which there were also a walk-in wardrobe and a three-piece mirror.

The Palau de Pedralbes was first occupied when Alfonso XIII and Victoria Eugenie visited the Catalan lands in Spring 1924. The Palace, like many residential buildings, underwent various alterations with the passing of time



When the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition of 1923 had closed, Santiago Marco's design was incorporated into the Palau de Pedralbes, as the Queen's boudoir. Photograph © Arxiu Mas.

7 LYCEVM, 31 (1924), p. unnumbered.

8 This tapestry, presented in the tea room area of the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition of 1923 and transferred in 1924 to the Queen's boudoir in the Palau de Pedralbes, as well as the rug and the four floor lamps with pedestals, which were held by the Barcelona Museum of Decorative Arts, form part of the heritage collections of the Design Museum of Barcelona. There is a very similar version of the tapestry, which may have been created in 1924, which has the inscription *AYMAT Sant Cugat* in the upper right part and is conserved in the Museum of Sant Cugat - Casa Aymat.

9 CASANOVA, Rossend. "Las lámparas de pie de Santiago Marco en la Exposición Internacional del Mueble de 1923", p. 53-63; CAPSIR, Josep. "La alfombra de Tomàs Aymat y el *boudoir* de la Reina en el Palau de Pedralbes en 1924", p. 65-74 in *Art Déco. Història, materials i tècniques*, Associació per a l'Estudi del Moble - Museu del Disseny de Barcelona, 2018. These articles document the works presented on the stand designed by Santiago Marco at the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition of 1923.

and as its users saw fit. Unfortunately, in the summer of 1926 the Queen's boudoir, an oasis of modernity among the vast number of spaces decorated according to historicist criteria, was radically transformed into a small sitting room in the style of Louis XVI, with Louis XV furniture.

We do not consider that Victoria Eugène, a woman of her time who followed fashions, would have been indifferent to the boudoir; she is likely to have admired Santiago Marco's decorative design. Rather we are inclined to think that the rigid protocol to which she was subjected would have advised the transformation of the "*boudoir of the Queen, highly imaginative and in a modern style, which is reminiscent of lavish Persian architecture and decoration*", as defined in the press of the period, into a more classical space that projected a formal, regal image, becoming of the sovereign.⁷

In the summer of 1926, the only element of the former decoration that was kept in the same space was the *Diana the Hunter* tapestry, which no longer presided over the room but was moved to the floor where it would be used as a rug.⁸ The rest of the items of furniture were dispersed and placed in other rooms in the palace. Documents indicate that the floor lamps were used to decorate the former daily dining room, which had been made into a sitting room.

Unfortunately, Santiago Marco's proposal to give continuance to this magnificent creation that had aroused so much admiration at the International Furniture and Decoration Exhibition was not successful. In this case, Art Deco, which was often sandwiched between *Noucentisme* and the avant-garde, was surprisingly overthrown by historicism.⁹ ●

William Morris and the Arts & Crafts movement in Great Britain

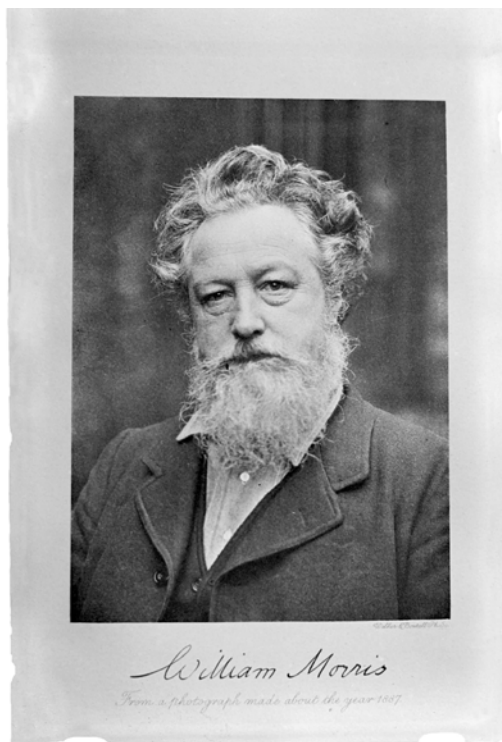
Fundación Juan March /
Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya

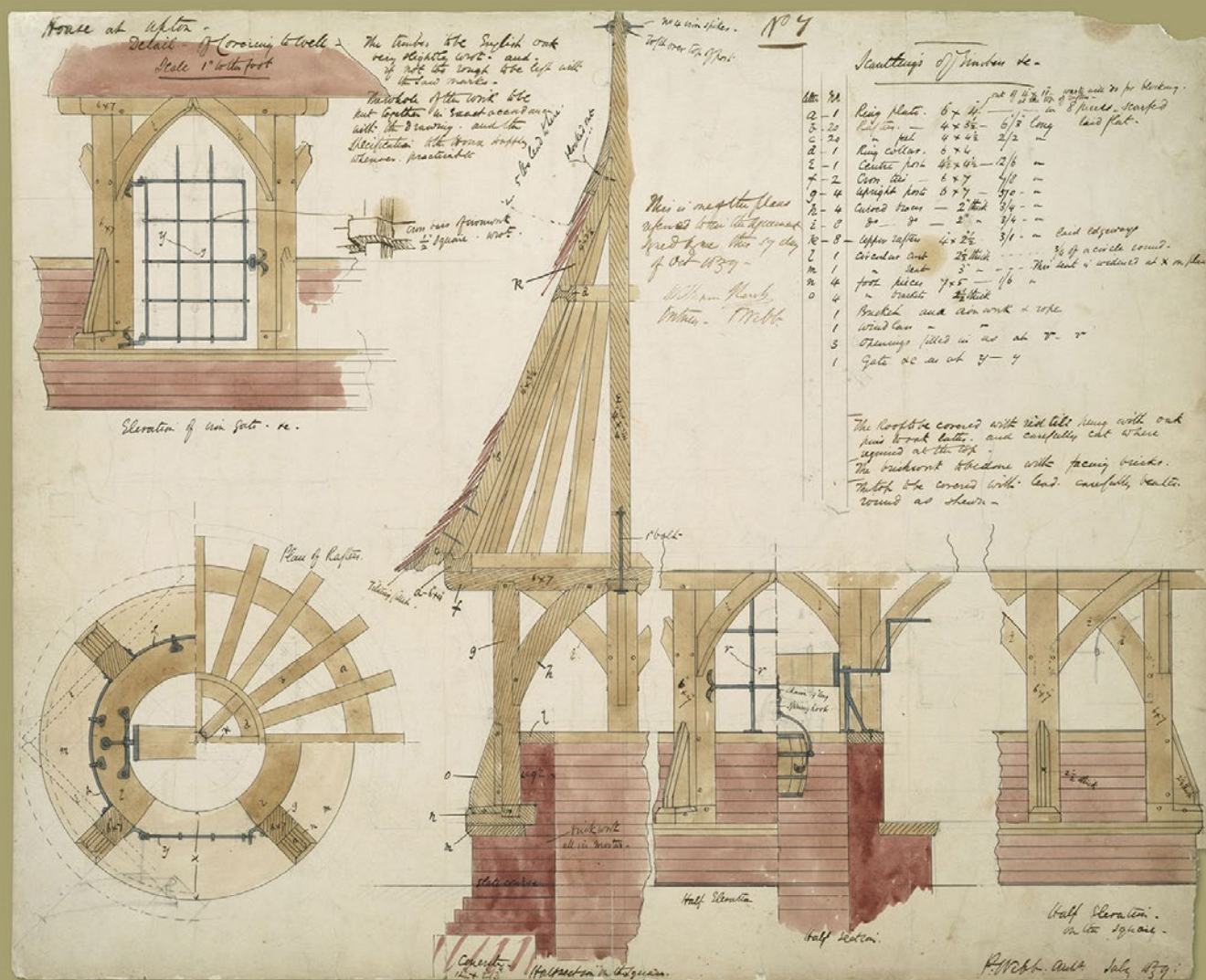
by MARIÀNGELS FONDEVILA

Modern Art Curator, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya

The exhibition William Morris and the Arts & Crafts movement in Great Britain features nearly three-hundred pieces from 50 different sources at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya. This museum is home to a multi-faceted collection that touches on a mosaic of specialisations and moments in history, from Medieval times (which William Morris extolled) through the splendour of modern decorative arts, which despite their idiosyncrasies express reflections of the former. Some creations like furniture, jewellery, stained-glass windows, gates, doors, rugs, lamps and ceramics that were made for everyday life are now on display for all to see, as Morris believed: art is for everyone to enjoy.

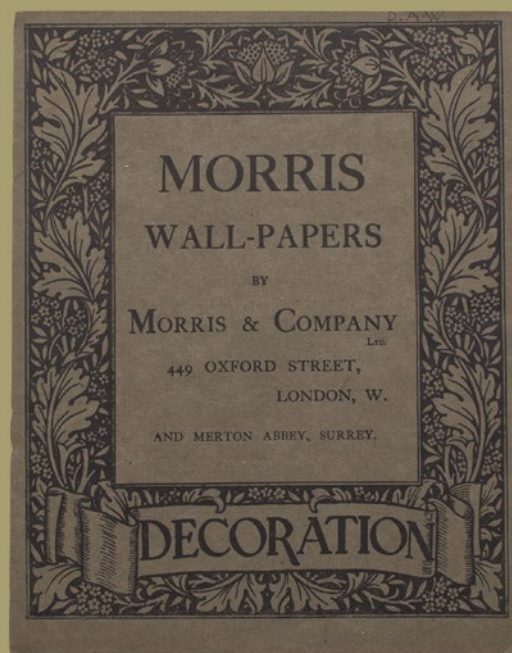
Photograph of William Morris taken by Emery Walker, c. 1887.
© Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas, Madrid.





Philip Webb. Architectural details for the cover of the well at Red House (Upton, Bexleyheath). Pencil, ink and gouache on paper. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

Morris & Co. London. Morris
Wall-Papers sales catalogue.
Lithograph on paper. © William
Morris Society, London.





William Morris. Embroidery
by Jane and Jenny Morris.
Drapery "Honeysuckle", 1876.
Printed linen with silk embroidery.
© William Morris Gallery, London.
© Borough of Waltham Forest,
London.

The exhibition presents keys to understanding this fascinating artist, a multi-talented rebel, whose legacy is still current today. Likewise, it also covers his influence on a whole generation of British and European artists who celebrated the art of life, even blurring the lines of what is considered art. A figure and a movement that have been the focus of numerous exhibitions in England, America, and Europe, but in our country (except for an exhibition at the Museu d'Art Modern de la Ciutadella in 1984) had not been seen in the depth it deserved. However, this exhibition wanted to go further than just presenting a grouping of decorative arts that Morris redeemed from their status as 'lesser arts'. So, a mural by British artist Jeremy Deller, representing William Morris throwing the magnate Roman Abramovich's luxury yacht into the lagoon in Venice (a testimony to the beauty of Medieval building and the work of the artisans that created them), acted as the frontispiece. And it reminded visitors that Morris's ideas on social inequality, protecting heritage and the environment are still current today.

The first section of the exhibition focused on his aesthetic references: John Ruskin, Pugin, the Pre-Raphaelites, neo-Gothic revival and, also, eloquent images of the Victorian age. An industrialised England, with tall chimneys vomiting smoke, with a mechanised system that subjected children, men and

William Morris. Wallpaper pattern, "Fruit" (or "Pomegranate") for Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., 1864. Block-printed. © William Morris Society, London.





Morris, William, for Morris & Co. Drapery, "Strawberry Thief", 1883. Indigo-discharged and block-printed cotton. © The Whitworth. The University of Manchester.

women to contemptible conditions and a wave of poor taste without precedent. And, as Morris shared Ruskin's disgust for modern Western civilisation and began a movement to humanise the work conditions that mechanisation had degraded, he created the firm that put into practice their ideals of beauty and justice, as the guilds had in the Middle Ages. The precedent was the Red House, a neo-Gothic home that Morris commissioned architect Philip Webb to build for his wedding to a young Victorian beauty and muse to the Pre-Raphaelites, Jane Burden. A palace of art procured with help from his friends, Pre-Raphaelite painters, who in this case contributed some of the most representative works.

After that, came stained-glass windows, ceramics, furniture, wallpaper, prints, tapestries, rugs, and published papers from his firm. They excelled at splendid tapestries with Arthurian legends, inspired by Medieval tapestries; furniture with a certain extravagant flair and other simpler pieces, like the Sussex chairs in varnished wood with a rush seat; their painted and printed wallpaper, some of which were on loan from the Museo Nacional de Artes Decorativas in Madrid whose former director acquired them on a trip to London at the turn of the century. Works, on the other hand, that Morris was able to create thanks to the financial stability afforded him by his father's



William Morris, for Morris & Co.
 "The Orchard" (or "The Seasons"),
 1890. Tapestry woven in wool,
 silk and mohair on a cotton warp.
 © Victoria and Albert Museum,
 London.

fortune, amassed from copper mining, meaning exactly the sort of moral slavery he dreamt of eradicating. It is well known that William Morris's idea of reliving the simplicity and beauty of artisan objects useful to everyone was inviable as a result of the high prices of the objects his firm made, which became popular among the upper classes, an extreme that led them to reconsider their attitude to artistic creation and embrace the socialist cause. In 1884, he founded the Socialist League based on the belief that socialism was the only hope, as a society based on exploitation and profit would never be able to create good art.

Morris inspired the Arts and Crafts movement in Great Britain, which brought together architects, designers and artisans who shared a deep concern over the negative impact of industrialisation on traditional trades, joined by many female artists, including his daughter, May Morris, director of

Walter Crane. Membership
 card for the Hammersmith
 Branch of the Socialist League
 issued to William Morris. Printed
 on paper, 1885. © William Morris
 Society, London.



William Morris. Design for membership card of
 the Social Democratic Federation. Printed on paper,
 1883. © William Morris Society, London.

M.H. Baillie Scott. Three-panel screen, 1896. Embroidery by Baillie Scott, Florence. Cotton and hemp with silk, silk and linen appliqué, silver braid. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



the embroidery department at her father's firm. It was an urban movement sustained by a network of schools, guilds and exhibitions that revitalised the pre-industrial trades, such as wallpaper, enamel, leather wallpaper, fabrics and furniture, which are now on display in the final section of the exhibition. Finally, the exhibition finished up with a summary of Morris's influence in Europe.

In Catalonia, it must be said that Morris's influence arrived two decades late to Barcelona, and extreme dealt with in depth by design historian Anna Calvera. His Pre-Raphaelite precursors were known here years after the constitution of this collective of Victorian artists. Their influence, tinged with French symbolism and especially that of Puvis de Chavannes, arrived during the 1890s with the decorative paintings of Tamburini, Gual, Brull and some fabrics by Santiago Rusiñol. Painters of a later generation, including Néstor Martín Fernández de la Torre, Julio Romero de Torres and Miquel Viladrich, profoundly admired the Pre-Raphaelites and spent long stretches in England to study their legacy. However, it is well-known that Paris was the cultural hub for Catalan artists at the end of the century, so England was not a popular destination. It has been said that the bohemian artists of Catalan Modernisme who met at Els Quatre Gats were avid readers of the French satirical magazines that could be purchased at the news stands on the Rambla. These magazines, according to Ricard Opisso, brightened up the end-of-the-century artistic life



William Morris. Wallpaper pattern, "Willow Bough", 1887. Pencil and watercolour on paper. © The Whitworth, The University of Manchester.

William Morris, for Morris & Co.
Textile fragment "Rose", 1883.
Block-printed cotton taffeta.
© Museo Nacional de Artes
Decorativas, Madrid.



amidst the academic torture and routine of the La Llotja art school: “they were trophies we carried in our pockets.” Ramon Casas followed Whistler, one of the public enemies of John Ruskin, who he even took to court. But one day things changed, when an English magazine arrived that fascinated a whole generation of designers and decorators: *The Studio*. Alexandre de Riquer, ambassador of British artistic culture, brought it back with him after a stay in England in 1894. This awoke a devotion to English culture that also made its way to the province of Girona, with architect and designer Rafel Masó. However, what brought British art in direct contact with Barcelona was the International Expo of 1907, as highlighted by historian Eliseu Trenc. The aforementioned poet/artist/artisan Alexandre de Riquer was the curator of the English section at the Expo and handled loans and acquisitions to the Museu Municipal, including the creations of Edward Burne-Jones, A. Rackham, A. Woodward, Brangwyn, León Solon and Arts and Crafts designer and enameller Alexander Fisher. Enamelling that inspired Marià Andreu, who trained in London, to create his giant enamelled pieces like the triptych *L’orb*, which is now at the Mataró Museum.

The spirit of Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement also reached the workshops of ceramicists, glaziers and cabinetmakers in Catalonia. Although without the same zeal, our decorative arts, too, advocated for a nostalgic renaissance of the trades, as can be seen in the carvings, marquetry, stained-

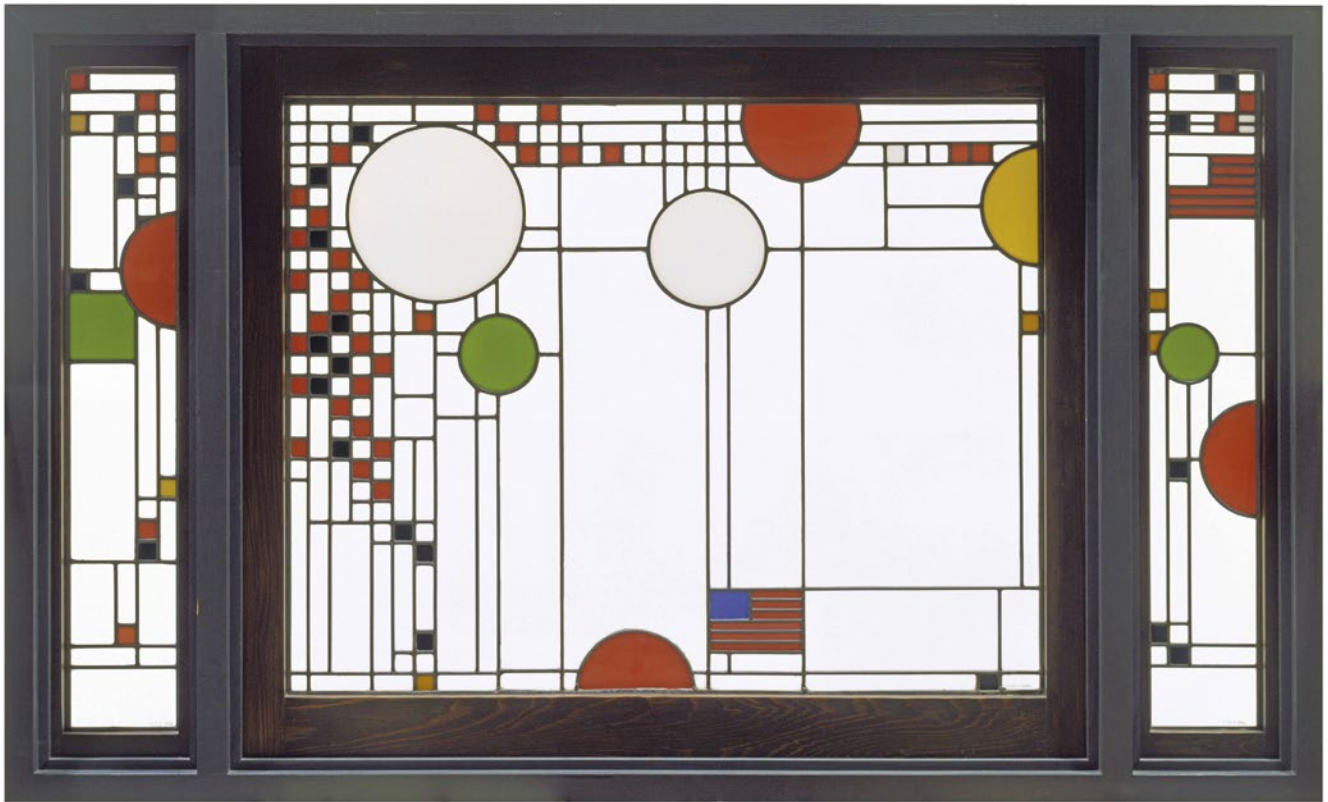
Charles Francis Annesley Voysey,
for Essex & Co. Wallpaper design,
"Glade", 1897. Woodblock-printed.
© Morris & Co.



glass windows, grisailles, enamels, metalwork, tapestries, jewellery and interior design, poetic tributes to the beauty of every-day items or new golden cages to protect against the flogging of society. But it is also true that Catalan Modernisme found a way to reconcile the ideals of beauty with new technology and mass production in order to optimise and make the results profitable. The new civil and religious architecture built on the immense plot of land that is Barcelona and the growing cities nearby offered a unique opportunity

Godfrey Blount, made at the
Haslemere Peasant Industries.
Damask, 1896. Linen with linen
appliqué and satin stitch edging in
linen thread. © Victoria and Albert
Museum, London.





Frank Lloyd Wright.
Kindersymphony (window),
1912. Clear, opaque and coloured
flashed glass. © Victoria and
Albert Museum, London.

for trades and techniques to come together. A moment of splendour that did not go unnoticed by English author of *Brideshead Revisited*, Evelyn Waugh. The writer came to Barcelona and was fascinated by Gaudí's ceramic cladding on Casa Batlló, among others. Also worth mentioning is the successful formula of architect Rafael Guastavino (nothing to do with the socialisation of art Morris proposed, which was totally unsustainable), who lived in New York from 1881 and popularised the flat brick vault, an old local building technique, in America. As well as the work of Evel·lí Dòria, who used *duroxilia* (an affordable, industrial replica of mosaic tiling); the decorative uses given to cheap tiles, plaster and papier-mâché tiles patented by Ermenegild Miralles, who decorated interiors like the smoking room at Gaudí's Casa Vicens and the now-defunct Bar Torino. To go no further, the workshops of '*ensemblar*' Francesc Vidal, a contemporary of the Arts and Crafts movement and meeting point for the most eminent figures of Modernisme, brought swarms of operators using cutting-edge technology. The workshops were well equipped with power saws and an English steam engine (Alexandre), which made it possible to create low-cost veneers for cladding or siding, manufacture moulding and, as a result, mass produce items. These workshops were inseparable from the din of noise, in the heart of Barcelona's Eixample district, while at the Merton Abbey Mills, the former silk and textile factory along the river where Morris had his workshops, calm silence reigned.

With the turn of the century, English art became popular in interior design. Minton ceramics, sold by furniture designer Francesc Vidal in his shop, filled sideboards and hutches in Barcelona. And, above all, England had a huge impact on the textile world, as was further made apparent during the recent restoration of Puig i Cadafalch's Casa Amatller, which uncovered Harry Napper's designs for Liberty velvet in the music room. ●

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Exhibition

A new exhibition on fashion and Catholicism. *Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination*

New York Metropolitan Museum of Art

■ Silvia Ventosa

The Costume Institute at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York hosted an impressive exhibition entitled *Heavenly Bodies: Fashion and the Catholic Imagination*, based on the idea that fashion and religion are intertwined and that they inspire and engage each other, in the words of Curator in Charge Andrew Bolton. This researcher explains that the starting point for the exhibition was an article published in *Newsweek* on 20 November 2005 entitled *The Pope wears Prada*, referencing the designer red loafers worn by Benedict XVI. And the conceptual framework for the exhibition comes from the book by Catholic sociologist Andrew M. Greeley, *The Catholic Imagination*, which looks at a uniquely Catholic awareness or sensibility, which has its own visual representation and narrative.

Although it could have been controversial to create an installation of clothing and other pieces associated with 20th and 21st century fashion in the Medieval, Byzantine and Renaissance halls of the museum, as well as the possible criticism of the Catholic religion and its influence on dress style, the script and set-up were both extremely respectful of Catholicism. The curator says most of the designers represented in the exhibition come from a Catholic background. Only the somewhat hidden projection of the ecclesiastical fashion shows from Federico Fellini's 1972 film *Roma* in one corner of the room sheds a slightly more ironic light on the topic.

The exhibition is divided into three sections. In the basement, where the Costume Institute halls are, is a selection of forty holy vestments from the Vatican, most of which had never before left Rome. The work of fashion designers from



the 20th and 21st centuries is on display in the Medieval, Byzantine and Renaissance halls of the Fifth Avenue Metropolitan Museum, as well as in the far-off Cloisters, where the pieces co-exist with gardens, cloisters and Medieval chapels from France and Spain. Apart from the pieces from the Vatican, more than 150 contemporary dresses engage in a dialogue with the pieces in the permanent collection. In some cases, the dresses are displayed on the same level as the other items in the room, but in others they are on tall posts, hanging over visitors' heads.

A fastidious two-volume hardbound catalogue in a slipcase accompanies this exhibition. The first volume features the pieces from the Vatican, most from the 19th and 20th centuries. It has an introduction by the president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art explaining that this is the first time the Vatican and the Costume Institute have ever collaborated. This is followed by a text by Marzia Cataldi Gallo on the history, types, colours and shapes of the liturgical items. This volume also features large photos of the pieces that travelled to New York for the exhibition, with a long description of each one. The second volume has two parts: Fashioning Worship and Fashioning Devotion. The first features the items on display in the Medieval and Byzantine sections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and compares them to dresses from different eras of the 20th and 21st centuries, establishing a dialogue that aims to compare the images, shapes, colours, etc. The second part focuses on the habits of Catholic congregations, tying them to the pieces and interior of the churches at the museum's The Cloisters building. The outstanding work of photographer Katerina Jebb must be noted. She has de-constructed the image of each dress in separate photographs that she later juxtaposes to represent the dress and its mannequin again. All of the photos were done this way, which meant the pieces had to be in New York six months before the inauguration. For this exhibition, the Museu del Disseny de Barcelona loaned the Met three dresses by Cristóbal Balenciaga, which are compared to the clothing of virgins and saints, with their shiny stoles, that can be seen in the paintings in the Renaissance room.



The exhibition is ambitious and surprising without being provocative, as the tranquil rooms of Medieval and Byzantine art make room for huge, tall mannequins with extraordinary dresses that display a different language from that seen in the permanent collection, given their proximity to our time and their connection to the human body. And, curiously, when you look at the tags, you can see that there are many pieces selected that were designed after

2015-2016 and you have to wonder whether they were designed expressly for the exhibition. And this question leads to another when you walk down Fifth Avenue and look at the windows of the top fashion brands featuring garments with Catholic iconography and clear nods to the exhibition at the Met. Not to mention the famous Metgala: the inauguration of the exhibition, when celebrities from all walks of life parade around in dresses from the same designers, this year with clear allusions to Catholic iconography.

This exhibition will be at the Met from this May to 8 October. It is in two locations, the main Fifth Avenue museum and The Cloisters. ■

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Exhibition

Posem fil a l'agulla. La indústria del gènere de punt a Arenys de Mar ***Threading the needle, industrial knitting in Arenys de Mar***

Arenys de Mar Museum

From 28 January to 23 December 2018

■ Neus Ribas

The exhibition and catalogue *Posem fil a l'agulla, el gènere de punt a Arenys de Mar* (Threading the needle, industrial knitting in Arenys de Mar), produced by Museu d'Arenys de Mar, are a labour of love to save the history of a sector that was essential in Arenys de Mar and the whole county of Maresme. But, above all, they are a tribute to the businesspeople and workers associated with industrial knitting, who were the true stars in this story.

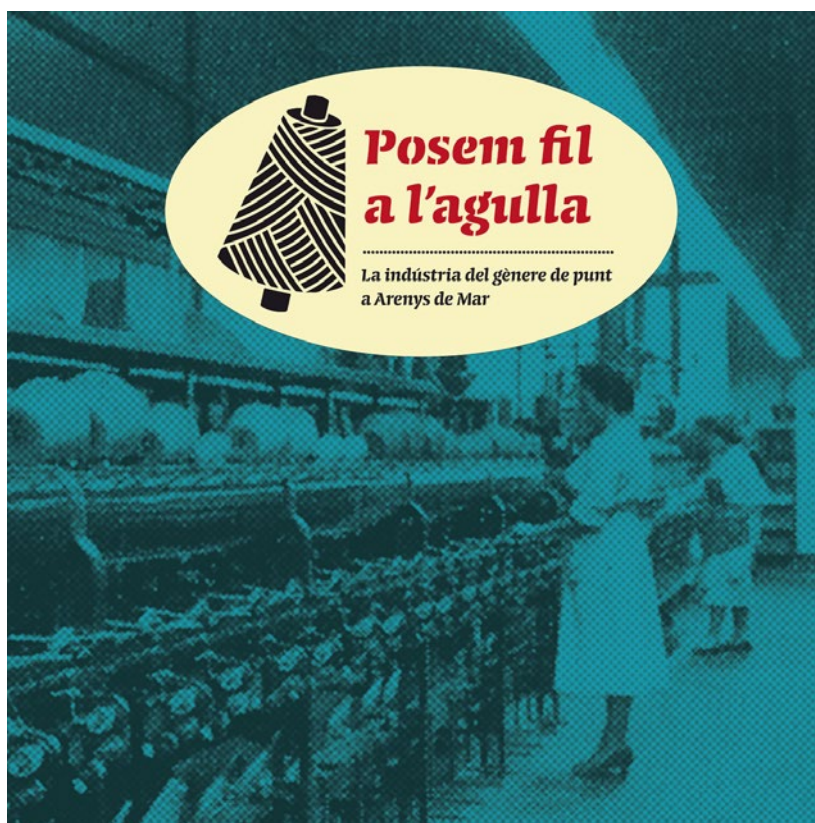
The articles in this catalogue were written by experts or researchers who focus on the topic, as well as people with professional ties to the sector, to show the deep roots it has in our town. Montserrat Llonch, who has published several papers on industrial knitting in Maresme, is one of the authors, providing a general overview of the history of this industry. Jordi Julià, curator of the exhibition and descendent of one of the most important knitting factories in Arenys de Mar, now defunct, covers the history of this industry in Arenys de Mar from the early years through the crisis in the 1980s.

The other articles sought a more local, experimental vision from two generations. The first comes from Joaquim Cassà, a worker and businessman in the knitting industry for more than 50 years, and the second, from Mireia Bibolas, daughter of an engineer at the company Jumberca who still works in the knitting industry,

which has given her a look at all the changes this sector has seen lately.

The exhibition and its catalogue aim to raise awareness of the history of the textile industry in Arenys de Mar in the 20th century and its influence on social life, culture and sports. An industry that has practically disappeared today, but still survives in one of the oldest companies: Cónдор, which is celebrating its 120th anniversary this year. ■

<http://museu.arenysdemar.cat>



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Exhibition

Pedro Rodríguez. The art of dressing. Carme Ensesa de Bencomo Private collection

Calella Old Town Hall

From 19 Mai to 2 September 2018

■ Carmen Torm

Over the course of his career, designer Pedro Rodríguez met and dressed the most elegant women of the time. The close relationship between the designer and his clients led to lifelong friendships. One such case was with Ms Carme Ensesa de Bencomo, a client and friend of the designer. Over the years, this relationship materialised in the exclusive outfits and accessories created for the social events attended by this lady of Catalan high society. The exhibition displays just some of the creations in the extensive private wardrobe of Carme Ensesa de Bencomo

and will be at the Calella Old Town Hall through Sunday 2 September, organised by the Museu de Calella.

Pedro Rodríguez was born in Valencia in 1895. After his father's death, the family moved to Barcelona. In the first few years of the designer's training, he learned the basics of the trade from Barcelona's most important tailors. In 1919, he and his wife Anita opened the first high-fashion house in Spain, following the strict guidelines set out by the *Chambre syndicale de la haute couture parisienne* (Haute couture trade union of Paris).



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This is when the designer's professional career really took off.

When the Spanish Civil War broke out on 18 July 1936, it put a stop to fashion production in Barcelona briefly, although he continued to work with an extensive list of foreign clients, mainly in the Americas and Europe. The firm's success allowed them to open two more fashion houses, one in Madrid in 1939 and the other in San Sebastian in April 1937.

From the beginning, a cosmopolitan vision of fashion was always part of Pedro Rodríguez's creations. His curious nature and passion for his trade brought him international renown, for the most part in Europe, the United States and Mexico, and Asia, mainly in China, the Philippines, Japan and Thailand. It wasn't until the 1950s, however, that Pedro Rodríguez made his first incursions into the US market. The success of his proposals opened the door to collaborations on many films

in the 1960s. This introduced him to US celebrities, adding actresses like Ava Gardner, Bette Davis and Rita Hayworth to his already extensive list of prestigious American clientele.

The peak of his career, in terms of both productivity and creativity, was the 1950s and 1960s. In this period, he was recognised as one of the top designers in the world of haute couture, winning awards, medals and many distinctions and recognitions that highlighted the value of his innumerable contributions to the world of fashion.

Despite the changing trends brought about by prêt-à-porter, Pedro Rodríguez continued presenting elaborate creations in luxurious fabrics of the best quality without sacrificing the creativity or exclusiveness of haute couture until he closed his doors in 1979. ■

Exhibition credits

Carme Torm i Elies. Direction and coordination.
 Victòria García i Vila. Documentation and texts.

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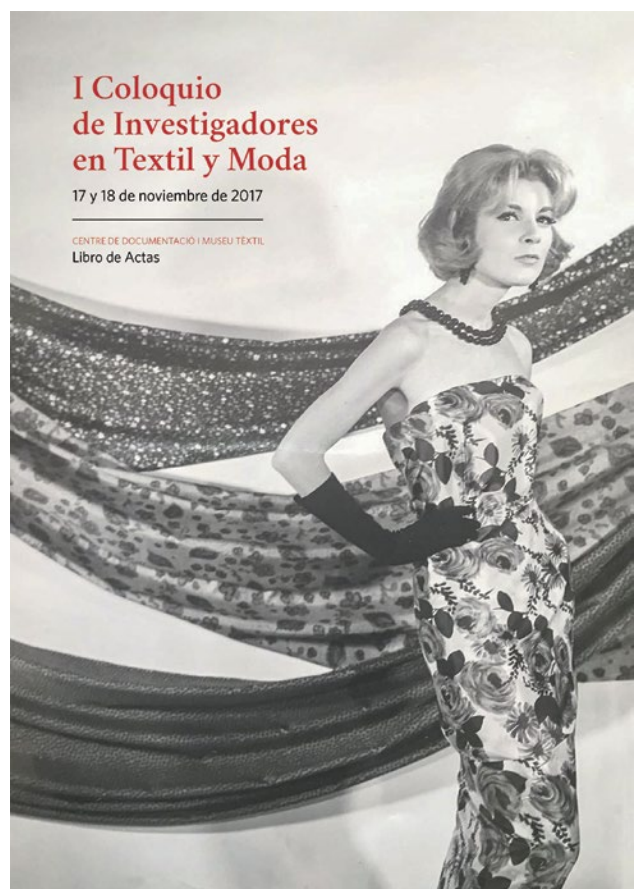
Proceedings Book of the I Colloquium of Researchers in Textile and Fashion.

Centre for Documentation and Textile Museum
Terrassa, 17 and 18 November 2017

ISBN 978-84-697-7760-2 | 232 pages

The Textile and fashion research group, as part of the Design History Foundation, and the Centre for Documentation and Textile Museum in Terrassa, organised the I Colloquium of Researchers in Textile and Fashion in November 2017. The event saw a great turnout, with some 50 speakers from universities and teaching centres, museums, archives and study groups or independent researchers. The research group was created in 2016 to join forces and share experience and knowledge. Soon afterwards, they began working on the I Colloquium. Leslie Miller gave the keynote speech, *Interwoven stories: 30 years of textile research*, sharing her long career in academia and museums. It was a first-hand testimony that can guide researchers in future studies, which has been included in this publication.

The aim of the Colloquium was to share recent research on fabrics and fashion in Spain, promoting synergies among all participants. The growing interest in these two fields of study was reflected in the great response to the call. Given its transversal nature, these topics are covered by various disciplines, from history, art history and design history to anthropology and sociology, among others. In this regard, other institutions that also collaborated on the colloquium included Museu del Disseny de Barcelona, Museu d'Arenys de Mar, Fundació Institut Industrial i Comercial de Terrassa and the University of Terrassa, with participation from the National Museum of Science and Technology of Catalonia. The two-day event dealt with topics like collecting, textile art, preservation, musicology, popular clothing, religious clothing, theatre costumes and haute couture, among others. The chronological range



encompassed everything from antiquity to present day. The works presented were previously unpublished or had a new focus, as well as the latest noteworthy projects in preserving and disseminating textiles. This was proof of the growing interest in the topic in the field of history, which also demonstrated the effort being made to bring this knowledge to a wider public. Given the great success of this event, the Textile and fashion research group is now working on the II Colloquium, which will take place in 2019. ■

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Design History Foundation Textile and fashion research group

■ **Dr Isabel Campi**, President of the FHD

The Design History Foundation (FHD, from its initials in Spanish), was established in Barcelona in late 2006 and has been active since 2008. It is a non-profit organisation that is focused on research, or generating new knowledge on the history of design; dissemination, meaning spreading this new knowledge on design; and promotion of design history, supporting this activity so it reaches the same level of importance as other branches of history. Although the Foundation isn't a museum or an archive, it also works to preserve design's documentary heritage, which is often endangered.*

Along with these scientific goals, the Foundation also aims to raise awareness and encourage cohesion among design historians, who are often separated and spread out among different academic institutions and museums. In this regard, it is following in the footsteps of institutions like the British Design History Society (DHS), which was founded in 1977 with similar aims and today is a world-renowned institution with members around the globe.

The Foundation is governed by a board of trustees, appointed periodically, made up of experts in design history from Catalonia, Spain and the world. This ensures the body has ties with foreign institutions that can contribute in terms of contacts and projects, as well as the vitality of their members.

The Foundation's activities focus mainly on scientific events (congresses, colloquia and symposia), research publications (their own or on

commission) and training (conferences, courses and workshops).

In 2016, the FHD hosted a symposium called *Modernos a pesar de todo* (Modern in spite of it all) at the Museu del Disseny de Barcelona. The title was broad enough to encompass most research on the history of design conducted in Spain. The call was quite successful and the speakers were broken down into the following workgroups: Architecture and spaces (4), Archives and heritage (3), Graphic design (4), Teaching (3), Historiography (2), Furniture and objects (4) and Fashion (6). The last one was the biggest, with conferences by Núria Aragonès, Ester Barón, Laura Casal, Francesca Piñol, Sílvia Roses and Sílvia Ventosa. It was also the most dynamic group, with the most initiative, as the participants immediately began promoting the idea to create a textile and fashion research group (Grup d'Estudis de Tèxtil i Moda - GETM). Through periodic meetings, the GETM began to take shape, specifying its aims and finally requesting to join the Foundation. This gave them the tools to hold activities and mobilise resources.

This collective was created with the desire to bring rigour and depth to the study of textiles and fashion, to safeguard its historical heritage and to be seen as a benchmark in the field of research. Its founding goals are identical to those of the Foundation, but with an even more specific focus, and they are:

“The Textile and fashion research group, as part of the Design History Foundation, aims to be a place of sharing conceived to promote research and dissemination of knowledge

* Since 2015, the foundation has been the provisional home of the professional archive of designer Jordi Vilanova, which was in imminent danger of being destroyed.

Library novelties and news



in the fields of textiles and fashion through joint projects. Likewise, it aims to safeguard textile heritage, as well as raising awareness of private and public collections and archives. It also provides guidance to other researchers or institutions interested in these topics.

The study of the world of textiles and clothing is done from a multidisciplinary perspective, looking at history, art, technology, sociology, design and museology. GETM also plans to participate in national and international meetings and congresses on textiles and fashion, as well as organising trips to learn about these topics around the world.”

The group’s work areas are both general (fabrics, clothing and fashion as universal phenomena) and specific, contributed by each member of the group: industrial fabric swatches; dyes and colourings; raw materials; fabric design; knitwear; lace making; prints; popular clothing and costumes;

new fabrics; textile collections; creators, producers and designers; the fashion system; socio-economic history and clothes aesthetics; fashion media and circulation; fashion images; international trade, relations and flows; technology transfer.

The methodology and tools the GETM proposes to work with are exchanging knowledge through physical or virtual meetings; studying items in public museums or private collections, studying documents; creating glossaries and terminology, etc. The activities its members aim to carry out include periodic scientific events; monographic displays and exhibitions; digital and print publications; travel and any others that come out of the members’ initiative.

The group is promoted by Dr Sílvia Ventosa, curator of the textile and fashion collections at Museu del Disseny de Barcelona, member of the Design History Foundation board of trustees and group leader; Dr Sílvia Carbonell, managing director of the Terrassa Textile Museum and Documentation Centre; Dr Assumpta Dangla, museologist and PhD in architecture and design

Library novelties and news

from the UIC; Neus Ribas, director of the Museu de la Punta d'Arenys de Mar; and myself, with my teaching experience, as I have always believed that the history of fashion and textiles is a very valuable and dynamic part of design history.

In April 2017, the group proposed to the Foundation to host its first national scientific event. The I Colloquium of Textile and Fashion Researchers was organised in record time in close financial and logistics collaboration with the FHD, Terrassa Textile Museum and Documentation Centre, Museu del Disseny de Barcelona and Museu de la Punta d'Arenys de Mar.

The conference took place at the Terrassa Textile Museum and Documentation Centre on 17-18 November 2017, with more than 100 participants from all over Spain and 41 speakers. To kick off the event, Dr Lesley Miller, curator of the textile collection at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, was invited to give the keynote speech, entitled *Interwoven stories: 30 years of textile research*. After the colloquium,

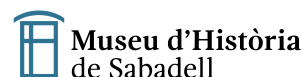
a beautiful catalogue was published, which can be downloaded from the websites of the Foundation and the Terrassa Textile Museum and Documentation Centre or purchased in print from the secretary of the Foundation.

The unexpected success of this colloquium was proof that a platform is needed to raise awareness of research being done throughout the country. So everyone was up for hosting another one. Now, we're all working on the 2019 colloquium, which will be called "Noms a l'ombra" (Figures in the shadows).

The GETM has a commitment to history and an encouraging future, and we hope to put together enough human resources and drive to keep it going. Because there's no lack of desire and motivation. To become a member, just join as a friend of the Design History Foundation and you'll be put on a specific list. ■

<http://www.historiadeldisseny.org/amics>

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