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# The Stuff That Matters. Textiles collected by Seth Siegelaub for the Centre for Social Research on Old Textiles

Sara Martinetti, Alice Motard, Alex Sainsbury

► **To cite this version:**

Sara Martinetti, Alice Motard, Alex Sainsbury. The Stuff That Matters. Textiles collected by Seth Siegelaub for the Centre for Social Research on Old Textiles. Sara Martinetti, Alice Motard, Alex Sainsbury. Raven Row, pp.70, 2012, isbn 978-0-9561739-3-5. halshs-00847312

**HAL Id: halshs-00847312**

**<https://shs.hal.science/halshs-00847312>**

Submitted on 23 Jul 2013

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*The Stuff That Matters*  
Textiles collected by Seth SiegelauB for the  
Centre for Social Research on Old Textiles

1 March to 6 May 2012

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Piece of multicoloured silk with floral pattern on white ground (close-up detail of front and back).  
Italy? France? 18th century. 25 x 54 cm. Silk, metal thread. [SSR 206]







## A Very Speculative but Brief Note on Textiles and Society

Textiles have played a very special role in the history of humanity because of their unique and contradictory dual character: they are at the same time very delicate and vulnerable to the natural elements and human use on the one hand, while on the other hand, they are very rugged, resilient and portable as objects of transport.

This latter characteristic has given textiles a unique place in history, especially silk textiles, in the interwoven history of ornament and the history of trade. The perfect combination of costliness, light weight and durability of silk made it a very profitable object of trade (along with spices, gems and other products which share these physical characteristics), and with this trade, an essential means of communication for motifs, designs, cultural values and ideas, as well as the power behind them. In this sense, the historical ‘durability’ of textiles is very similar to that of architecture, but instead of immutable monumental and heroic remains physically linked to a particular place, we have mobile textile fragments.

Although textiles are often thought of simply in terms of clothing (first for protection from the elements and later, for purposes of adornment), and in terms of interior decoration, it should not be forgotten that they have also been an essential element of housing, in the form of the tent (on which subject there is a remarkably small literature), and for travel itself, in the form of luggage, and especially, for sails for wind-powered water transportation.

The intimate relationship between textiles and society can also be seen in the fundamental role it played in the rise of the capitalist system, as the first large-scale capitalist industry (the production and export of wool in medieval Flanders); in the industrial revolution (the mechanisation of cotton spinning and weaving in eighteenth-century England); in architecture, as the object of the first multi-storied iron frame building (Bage’s flax mill in Shrewsbury, England in 1796); as the subject of the first working-class history (Henson’s history of the framework-knitters in 1831); or as the subject of the first semiotic text (Roland Barthes, *La Mode*, Paris, 1963); not to mention that the French word for loom is the same as the general word for profession or trade (*métier*), and the German word for textiles is the same as the general word for material or matter (*Stoffe*), which is also the case for the Dutch word *stof*, as well as in English, with the word ‘material’.

Perhaps it is by chance that Christopher Columbus, like his father, was first a wool weaver and wool merchant, but it is quite logical that the Jacquard loom in early nineteenth-century France was the inspiration for the work of Charles Babbage in England which lead directly to the invention of the computer in the twentieth century.

*Seth Siegelaub*



Piece of embroidery on red silk satin ground (close-up detail).  
Turkey. 19th century. 48 × 70 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen. [SST 110]











## The Silk Industry in Spitalfields

The silk industry was one of the later developers among England's great textile trades. It originated in the weaving of ribbons and other trimmings, and half silks (fabrics made from a combination of silks and other fibres), which had been made in London from the Tudor period<sup>1</sup>, and it was here, in the east of the city, that weaving of pure silk developed after the mid-seventeenth century. Until then, fashionable English men and women had worn and furnished their houses with silks imported from France and Italy. That time also saw increasing enthusiasm in England for more exotic textiles imported from Asia by the East India Company<sup>2</sup>. The enormously lucrative market for these imported goods acted as a keen stimulus for an English silk industry to develop. The market was helped by returning political stability under the restoration of the monarchy following the Civil War<sup>3</sup>, and the affluent consumerism of King Charles II's Court. Huguenots, arriving from the continent as refugees from religious persecution<sup>4</sup>, played an integral part in the development of the English silk industry, contributing both textile skills and business acumen. They were among large numbers of textile workers, from abroad and within Britain, attracted to London, in particular the area around Spitalfields. Mercers and master weavers inhabited grand premises in the Old Artillery Ground, controlling the journeymen weavers<sup>5</sup> who worked from their own more modest homes in neighbouring streets. Manufacture in this area developed as the mainstay of the English silk industry, and the combination of technical innovation and excellence in design contributed to a flourishing production and trade.

Between the 1680s and 1730s, the London Weavers' Company – the trade organisation that controlled weaving in the capital – had nearly 6,000 members. The industry was organised in branches, within which individual weavers specialised, mostly weaving silks for clothing rather than furnishings. By the rules of the London Weavers' Company, a boy entering the profession had to serve an apprenticeship of seven years, before he could be admitted as a journeyman weaver. Most journeymen would work for more than one master and would specialise in a type of weave, like damask<sup>6</sup>, or silks with metal thread. For the production of the most intricate designs, drawlooms were used, requiring a drawboy in addition to the weaver to operate them, until their eventual superseding by the Jacquard loom in the nineteenth century. The drawboy controlled the lifting of the particular warp threads required for the weaver to create the design,

and with this complicated procedure, less than a yard a day might be woven. This was in addition to the weeks it could have taken to mount (set up) the loom for the chosen design, all of this labour adding to the expense of the finished product. In 1765 *The Gazette and New Daily Advertiser* reported the words of a weaver: ‘before his loom will be ready to weave in, it will be three, four or six weeks before it will be mounted, in all of which time he earns nothing but has the additional hardship of keeping his drawboy in pay and victuals’.

Both Francis Rybot and Nicholas Jourdain, the mercers who retailed silks from the shops above which they lived at 3 and 4 Raven Row (now 56 and 58 Artillery Lane, the buildings of Raven Row), also had experience as weavers, which was very unusual for the time. Rybot described himself on his trade card as ‘Weaver and Mercer who makes and sells all sorts of rich brocaded silks...’ (see image opposite). This background would certainly have been an asset in the understanding of their commercial trade. Typically, a mercer would give his order for a particular type and design of silk to a master weaver. Knowing his market, and the taste of his customers, he may have commissioned the original design himself, from a local pattern-drawer like Anna Maria Garthwaite. The job would have been allocated by the master weaver to a journeyman specialising in that particular type of silk, who would return the woven length when completed. The silk could be sold in London from the mercer’s own premises, sent out of town, or exported to destinations across Northern Europe and America.

Silk was an intrinsically expensive commodity, and was not always produced for stock, but often to order, particularly if it incorporated gold or silver thread. The more expensive silks were also very exclusive. In a House of Commons Report of 1765 investigating the state of the industry, a weaver testified that normally, only a sufficient amount would be woven of a dress fabric in a particular pattern for four gowns. A woman’s gown would take between nine and sixteen metres of material, in the standard width of a half-ell, which was the equivalent of about 50 cm. This was a relatively tiny amount in relation to the time and labour expended in preparing the individual design – whereby the point paper<sup>7</sup> had to be squared up for transferring the pattern – and the loom. A fashionable Englishwoman, having paid a very high price for her silk, would presumably appreciate the relative exclusivity of its pattern, knowing that she was unlikely to meet another woman dressed the same.

For much of the eighteenth century, the cut of garments changed relatively slowly, so the designs of the silks were an important indication





*Francis Pybot*

**WEAVER and MERCER,**

*At the Cat, in Raven-Bow, & further end of Smock Alley,  
Spittle Fields, LONDON.*

*Makes & Sells all Sorts of Rich Brocaded Silks,  
Dutch, Genoa and English Velvets.*

Rich Damasks.	Armoz eens.	Mantuas.
Padufoys.	Ducapes.	Strip'd Tobins & Clouds.
Flow' Water'd &	Rich Sattins.	Luftrings.
Unwat'd Tabbys.	Pelings.	Black Silks.

*Brocaded, Strip'd & Plain Mezzinetta,  
Norwich Crapes.*

Dresdens	Buirbazeeens	Worst'd Damaskes	Strip'd & Plain
Poplins	Venetian Poplins	Camblets	Callimanco

*Rafels, Hair-Pruncellas & Princes Stuffs.*

*N.B. All Merchants Captains & others may be immediately  
supplied w<sup>th</sup> the greatest Variety of Stuffs, Norwich & Italy,  
Silk goods made purposely for the Foreign Trade.*

of the wearer's style and knowledge of the latest fashion. The complex patterns and variety of surface effects in the silks were fully exploited in clothing for both men and women. Satins, damasks, lightweight taffetas treated to achieve a high lustre (known as lustrings, or lustrings), the heavier paduasos and gros de Tours, cut and uncut velvets and tissues (complex weaves) with different textures of gold and silver thread. All of these could be brocaded, or 'flowered', in brightly coloured silks or with more gold and silver for extra visual impact. Women's sack-back gowns with their pleated lengths of silk falling from the shoulders, and men's long waistcoats – often the focal points of their suits – allowed the intricate, balanced designs to be seen to full effect. The Spitalfields designers and weavers, and the mercers who commissioned them, had to keep up with changes in fashion and technical advances in France in order to earn a share of the market, but English silks came to develop their own individual style. At the wedding of King George II's eldest son, the Prince of Wales in 1736, *The Gentleman's Magazine* noted that 'most of the rich clothes were the manufacture of England, and ... the few which were French did not come up to these in richness, goodness or fancy'.

Benevolent state intervention on behalf of the English silk industry, together with powerful and sometimes violent lobbying by the weavers themselves, secured some important trade legislation to support this home market. In 1699 the importation of Indian silks had been prohibited, and in 1721 a prohibition on the use and wear of printed calico was passed and was enforced the following year. Brightly coloured and colourfast calico had been extremely popular at the beginning of the eighteenth century for dress and furnishings, and had provided serious competition to the silk and wool industries.

More significant legislation was introduced in the second half of the century. In 1766 a total prohibition on the import of foreign woven silks became law, although the many French silks that managed to reach English customers after this date are testimony to the ingenuity of smugglers. In 1773 the first Spitalfields Act was introduced. Under this legislation, rates of pay for particular classes of work were agreed by deputations of journeymen and masters, and then ratified by magistrates. Lists of prices were published to guarantee the agreed rates of pay. A series of these Acts were passed, and they helped to secure years of relative industrial peace.

This stability occurred despite changes in dress fashions, which provided the principal market for the Spitalfields weavers' and mercers' wares. Alongside the developing taste for Neoclassicism in other forms



of decorative art, there was a move away from rich, heavily patterned silks towards fabrics that were more loosely woven, that would drape easily, and permit a more informal style of dressing. This requirement for softer, more lightweight dress fabrics directly affected the industry, which suffered financially from the fashion for smaller patterns and lighter fabrics, as rates of pay were dependent on the complexity of the weave. Nevertheless, reasonable stability was maintained until 1824. In that year the Act prohibiting the import of foreign silks, which had been in force protecting the market for the Spitalfields weavers for sixty years, and the Spitalfields Acts protecting their rates of pay, were repealed under Free Trade reform. This legislation, which was effective from 1826, marked a complete break in the history of the industry. It had immediate and crippling results. French silks immediately came onto the market, with a novelty and price that made them enormously attractive to customers, and the Spitalfields industry collapsed, with many facing bankruptcy. Partial recovery had to wait until much later in the nineteenth century, and the area was never again to regain its former pre-eminence in the production of fashionable silks.

*Clare Browne*

Curator, Textiles, Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A), London

1. 1485–1603.
2. Trading company that controlled trade between Britain and Asia from the seventeenth to mid-nineteenth centuries.
3. Civil War (1642–1651).
4. As a result of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in October 1685, which declared Protestantism illegal in France and led to an influx of Huguenots in Great Britain.
5. Weavers who had served their apprenticeships and were qualified to enter the trade.
6. Figured textile with one warp and one weft in which the pattern is formed by a contrast of binding systems. In its contrast form, it is reversible, and the contrast is produced by the use of the warp and weft faces of the same weave.
7. Point paper was by definition marked with squares, and the pattern copied onto a grid, so that the weavers could see square by square (thread by thread) how to proceed.

Painted tapa panel (detail). Tonga? Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 300 x 500 cm.  
Tree inner bark, black and red-brown pigment. [S1 399]











Nothing Personal... An Interview with Seth Siegelau

SETH SIEGELAUB Off we go, home James, and don't spare the horses.

ALICE MOTARD How did your interest in textiles come about?

SETH SIEGELAUB My interest in textiles? If you're talking about a date, as opposed to some mystical inspiration...

ALEX SAINSBURY Possibly mystical inspiration as well...

SS I don't recall anything dramatic in my life. I mean I didn't rip my mother's dress while breast-feeding or anything like that. Although I have a picture of me with a piece of lace when I was maybe two months old.

AS Well, was there a more practical starting point?

SS Yes, the practical starting point was probably in the early sixties in New York, when I started to look specifically at rugs, which was more or less coincident with my early experience in the art world. I wouldn't call these complementary by any means, but I think chronologically, it was at the same time.

AM Did you own these rugs?

SS No. I did try to buy rugs, but due to lack of money and also experience, I didn't make any serious effort. Much of that interest moved from actual rugs to books about rugs, which is what I really concentrated on and which at that time was more accessible, more practical, and probably more interesting – because you feel you are developing your expertise and your knowledge about certain things. In the case of rugs, it is to understand the history; how they looked or were used since antiquity. Methodologically that appealed to me more. Also there's absolutely no pretence to have every possible kind of textile in the world, but with books you can still have the illusion of finding every possible book on Coptic, Iranian or Islamic textiles and so on. So this seemed like a much more rational thing to do. Books also required less care, and were quite beautiful in their own right.

AM Is it through this channel that you got to meet your future business partner, Robert Gaile?

SS Yes, Bob Gaile worked for a small rug dealer in New York on Sixth Avenue, and we got on fairly well. He had experience in the carpet business, and was also a jazz pianist. As strange as it may seem, I was sort of the rich backer, in that I had the five hundred dollars or something that he didn't have, and he had the experience in identifying rugs and knowing their value to collectors and buyers, and so we put it together.

AM So when you started your art gallery in 1964<sup>1</sup>, was Robert Gaile part of it?

SS Not directly. He was only part of the rug-dealing attempt, a part of which was shown at the gallery.

AM In the first chapter of his book *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity* Alexander Alberro describes how your gallery dealt not only in fine art but also in oriental rugs, which would have been through this partnership with Robert Gaile. He speaks about the rugs being sometimes incorporated into shows. He writes: 'This coupling provided the dealer an appropriate setting to project the image of the art collector as a highly cultured individual surrounded by refined objects'. Was that what you had in mind?

SS Not exactly. He gives me too much credit for thinking 'strategically' about collecting which was not the case; it was more like a possible combination.

AM So the rugs and the art were well exhibited together?

SS Yes, they were definitely shown at the same time. Probably because at the beginning I didn't do any one-person shows, just group shows. So I was just looking at artists, consigning works, putting them on the walls, and trying to be an art dealer, whatever that meant to me when I was 23 years old.

AS But you'd regard that coupling as a coincidence?

SS Well, not a coincidence in the sense that we definitely showed oriental rugs at the same time as we were running an art gallery. If I recall, the rugs were put on moveable panels and there may have been three or four rugs up there at a time. Unfortunately I do not have any photographic record. There was even a sign on the door that said 'Seth Siegelau Contemporary Art' as well as 'Oriental Rugs', in a scroll-like hand. It is now in my archives, which I gave to The Museum of Modern Art in New York. It was our intention to do both at the same time, but after a few months, I stopped doing the Oriental rugs. It probably didn't look right, and it was a focus that didn't help. We also weren't making any money either so it stopped.

AM Did you continue buying books on rugs even when the business stopped?

SS A little bit, yes, I did. But at that time there was hardly any activity in the gallery. It was one of the most boring things I have ever done, in the sense of lack of contact with people coupled with an uncertainty about what I was doing. I probably did continue to buy books



but not many more, and at some point I stopped and loaned these books to Asia House Gallery<sup>2</sup>.

AS In the following years, after you closed the gallery<sup>3</sup>, you became a pioneer of an art that was of the least material kind.

SS Yes.

AS And then you moved into the examination of textiles, which by their very nature are material.

SS When you say 'moved into', do you mean fifteen years later? There was a period in between<sup>4</sup>, which I wouldn't exactly call a 'transitional period' because it had a life and character of its own. It introduced me to the theory and practice of bibliographic work, and more generally to political culture. The art world is of course less directly affected by political or ideological struggles or questions. I think my interest in textile history coming out of this experience in political research seems perfectly logical. Yes, if I evolved directly from Joseph Kosuth, Lawrence Weiner or Carl Andre into textiles that would be a far-fetched and dramatic jump. Of course you can change girlfriends or boyfriends from one day to the next, so it's not impossible, but it doesn't have the same logic that it has, to my mind, coming out of political research.

AM Actually, that was exactly the question I was about to ask. Was it via politics that you got back into textiles?

SS Yes, it was definitely a factor. Although I'm constantly trying to figure out textile collecting, being about as bourgeois and 'apolitical' as you can imagine. You can come up with ideas about saving culture, and the sorts of things rich collectors and even poor collectors talk about: preserving, conserving, analysing culture. But essentially it involves people who have enough money to live and eat well, and are having a good time and enjoying themselves, maybe in a very sophisticated way. So I've always had a hard time understanding textile collecting. I can justify and understand doing bibliographic research on the history of textiles, which is a social and cultural and eventually political practice, but I've never been able to fit this logic into textile buying. I can buy the things that please me or that I can afford, but it's not like I have some pretext of saving the world. So I've never been able to find a justification – progressive political justification – for collecting textiles. It 'would be a stretch', as we say in English, to suggest that it has some meaning for humanity, not to mention political or class struggle. Maybe I'll come up with a story, but my recollection is that I had no such inclination at that time. Even today, when I continue to put so much more emphasis on book collecting than textile collecting

I have a very clear intention to work and develop a library. It is not only just possessing books in a materialistic or selfish way but it's also about making a bibliography, which is a social activity, providing access to this material via our internet database and presenting an understanding about textiles in economics or social life or amongst the different classes, and all sorts of other things. So I have a more or less clear political, social vision in collecting books and working with books on textiles. But on textiles themselves I have no such vision. Maybe one day I will understand this better.

AM But that's all about disseminating knowledge in a way?

SS Yes, it is. But that could mean anything too. I'm sure the worst collector or art dealer thinks he or she is doing that. You're talking about collecting?

AM I'm talking about this strategy that you have, the same that you have adopted for politics as well as for textiles, which consists of mapping a subject through its bibliography.

SS Yes, but it doesn't relate to collecting textiles. I mean, I really don't think I have the experience or the knowledge in that area to say that I'm doing any important, critical analytical research. I can't see myself having that level of knowledge. Whereas for books, I know *a lot* about textile books, probably more than anybody. But I have no such pretension about my knowledge of textiles as physical objects.

AM But when you publish a bibliography on textiles and when you make it available online, that's all about sharing?

SS Yes, it's also about sharing too, but you could say that about any rich person; 'aren't rich people nice?'

AM In the eighties were you collecting books about textiles and textiles at the same time?

SS In the early, mid-eighties when I re-started, I thought collecting textiles complemented the collecting of books about textiles. But I had no intention of collecting textiles comprehensively. The emphasis was on books, and I might say continues to be on books because I'm still fascinated by that history. I mean, I'm really into books; textiles were a subsidiary interest to the textile history.

AS Could this be somehow compared to your approach to book production when you were active in the art world, i.e. how you found a way to make the book (which is normally the secondary information about an artwork), the primary information, or even the artwork itself? I wonder in what way this strategy relates to your collecting books about textiles, which is also a larger project than your textile collecting?

SS In the art context at that time the emergence of a new type of art called for a new, different type of presentation, and in *that* sense we are speaking about the book as a primary work; as a primary vehicle for showing art or for communicating art. In the case of my textile research, the bibliography is basically about documenting the history of how the 'West' i.e. Europe or European language civilisations, thought about textiles, from whenever books first started to be produced probably in the early sixteenth century. My job – my self-created job – is to find these books, describe them and to try and put them into relationship with one another. I wouldn't even call it collecting. It's a much different kind of research than just arbitrarily buying or not buying certain textiles.

AS Did factors such as the availability of particular kinds of textiles at a certain moment play a role in your approach to textile collecting?

SS Absolutely. I bought certain kinds of silk and velvet textiles, especially Italian, in France because that's what I was seeing. However, there were also many others types of textiles, including Coptic, Islamic and African, etc. Then going to Belgium and looking there, I suddenly got struck by African textiles. Previously I hadn't wanted to get too involved with African textiles, although I recognised their beauty. But then I began to see many of them and said, 'these are great, why don't I get involved with collecting them?', which is what I did, but only on a small scale. Even now, out of 650 items – with exception of the African barkcloths – I don't think the CSROT owns twenty woven textiles from Africa. And later, after numerous visits to the Pacific region, I began to look at tapa from Oceania. The range of material has greatly opened up. Also my interests and knowledge is perhaps being pushed to other new areas. Frankly, I don't see many sixteenth or seventeenth century velvets anymore. The CSROT has a very good collection, I must admit. It's probably a good small museum collection. That's what I liked at the time, and I really found them to be extraordinarily beautiful, which I still do. But that's also what I was seeing around me which I could afford, so that's what I bought.

AS What kind of pleasure do you take from collecting textiles?

SS Oh, I love it.

AS Is it a different kind of pleasure to that of creating a bibliography?

SS It's really difficult to say. There's always the egotistical pleasure of possession.

AS A different kind of a possession to owning a book?

SS Yes. I don't know if it's that different really, but it is impressive to have 7,200 volumes on the history of textiles, that's very impressive.



But it's also – as Alice pointed out – about sharing this material too. So in other words, these textiles are now coming out from under our beds, our basements and warehouse, and this exhibition provides a means to share them. I'm very happy to do that, but I can't really say that's the purpose of buying textiles; to share all this beauty with the world. It's really a very personal thing. It's different to book sharing, or book information sharing, because with the books I have the impression that I really made a difference to the world of textile literature and how textile history is perceived. With textiles, my intention is not to produce the most important collection in the world even if I had the means.

AS So you'd describe it as a private pleasure?

SS Yes, it's just pleasure. I also love the hunt.

AS Do you like the barter as well? The negotiation with the dealer?

SS I don't really get excited about bargaining as such. The excitement is finding the object; hopefully with knowledge that is greater than the person who's selling it at a price that is incommensurate with what it is we are buying. Does that happen often? Sometimes yes, sometimes no, but it's not a reason for collecting.

AS Did you ever collect art per se? Would you ever have called yourself an art collector?

SS No, I never called myself that. Of course I do have an art collection as you know, a third of which is now at The Museum of Modern Art<sup>5</sup>. But I never went about collecting art. The art that I do have comes from people I worked with very closely for a number of years, much of it in lieu of commission because the artists were very free to go about doing their dealings with other dealers<sup>6</sup>. I never thought to even ask for a commission. In that sense, I do have a collection of works but I never went about making 'a collection'. I mean, there are lots of people whose work I thought highly of but I didn't go and buy from them. It wouldn't have occurred to me to go and buy work from even someone like Sol LeWitt, who I saw frequently. Although I did buy a painting from Ad Reinhardt, but that was my first 'big' deal (and my last one as well), and it was also a lot of money: 750 dollars. It was a pile of money for me and I think a little bit for Ad too. But if you look through the list of works the foundation owns they were from people I worked with, people I had regular contact with. There may have been one or two exceptions. I bought a small work by the painter Neil Williams from Dan Graham for 25 dollars or something, because Dan had even less money than I had at the time, if that was possible. But you couldn't call

that collecting really. The fact that this lack of art collecting many, many years later made the rest of my collecting possible, is a little twist of irony you might say...

AS Textiles are more affordable than art in that sense?

SS Yeah, absolutely. You get a better bang for your buck, so to speak; more value for money. But even then I'm not quite so sure if you're buying or speculating on young artists. It's probably just as affordable to buy contemporary art. It's how you want to spend your money, if you have any surplus. Although textiles as a field of collecting has become more appreciated, not just economically, over the last 20 or 30 years, it still remains a very arcane and very specialised kind of interest. In the major museums, textile collections usually have the lowest budget of any department. It's been the most minor of the so-called 'minor' arts. When you look at books of general art and cultural surveys, textiles are always the last chapter, if there *is* any chapter at all.

AM Is this because they have a use value in the first place?

SS We can speculate that they were so much thought of as practical things they weren't taken particularly seriously as 'art', and even when they *were* taken seriously it was only because of aspects exterior to their nature. For example, tapestries have been taken seriously because they were attached to kings and queens and castles, and liturgical garments have been taken seriously because of the importance and riches of the church. This is also the case for the increased value of clothing and costume worn by well-known historical figures. I remember a few years ago, the V&A bought an embroidered wedding suit that belonged to James II, for a six-figure sum, and although it was beautiful, this was only because it was attributed to James' wardrobe.

AM Do you think textiles have been taken less seriously than ceramics, for instance?

SS Oh yes, absolutely. Especially when you think that textiles are one of the most ubiquitous craft forms, and how little you really see about them in terms of exhibitions. For example, if you limit yourself to the auction record, I would say that for every textile sale there are probably about 50 ceramics sales. That's the downside in textiles, but it's also the upside in being able to collect them; they don't appear to have this kind of value. They are just bits of cloth. I mean, where else can you buy an antique Coptic or sixteenth century textile for a few hundred dollars or thereabouts? It's only with textiles. With ceramics this is not possible.



AM Do criteria such as rarity play a role in your acquisition of a textile or what is the balance between your taste and the fact that you are trying to assemble a collection which has historical pertinence?

SS I'm not too sure that I'm trying to assemble a collection that has some kind of pertinence, or what that pertinence could possibly be.

AS Can you name a favourite item or two in your collection?

SS Yes, I think so...

AM With their SST numbers<sup>7</sup>, please!

SS Recently I bought a Fatimid textile<sup>8</sup>, which is quite unusual, at least for me. It's from a well-known family of textiles but one rarely sees them. I bought it over the web from a Japanese dealer who I'd never even heard of; I took a wild risk. Some of the velvets I also find extraordinarily beautiful. Because these things were bought 20 or 30 years ago, I barely remember them in detail, but if you show me a list, I would go 'wow; that's fantastic!' Some of the Turkish towels, or table covers are extraordinarily beautiful even though they are probably from the fifties or thereabouts. Several of those would be top of the pops.

AM Will this exhibition be the first time you will really be able to see all your silks and velvets altogether?

SS Not all, but certainly an important part. Normally they get looked at for just a few days, mostly because I'm too busy to put them away. I put them out on the floor and hope someone doesn't spill coffee or a mouse doesn't run across them, and then I roll them up in acid-free paper to protect them and put them away, and that's about it.

AM Did you ever buy something you didn't like but thought it would be important for your collection?

SS Good question. I can't really say that I ever did. As the cat said: 'I never met a mouse I didn't like', I don't really think I ever bought a textile that I didn't like but felt was valuable and should be acquired. Because building a collection of textiles is not – and I've said this on several occasions – like building a library of books or a bibliography of books, in the sense that you certainly don't know all the history of textile books but you know something could fill a missing area, even if you've never seen the book, or it's totally new to you. Whereas with textiles there's an endless amount, so there's no way you can have all the velvets, or all the brocades, or all the printed textiles from a particular period; it's absolutely impossible to do that. So comprehensiveness is a futile thing.

AM That's why your book collection and textile collection are complementary?

ss Yes, definitely. I can probably say that our book collection has most of the major literature in the history of textiles since 1800. There are probably a few I know, a few that come to mind, which I don't have and I've never even seen for sale and probably if I did they would be outrageously priced. But it's a finite number. Because literature has been picked over, looked at and has been referenced in exhibitions and other bibliographies. But with textiles there is no way you can say you can have every type or every colour of velvet produced, say, in Florence in the sixteenth century. Every textile is unique, unlike most printed books.

AM We'd like to ask you some questions about the exhibition itself now. It seems to me that you are distancing yourself from curatorial decisions about it.

ss But that's a position that I used in the art world too. Little by little, over my life in the art world, I gave up curating or making certain kinds of decisions, called 'quality decisions': Who's better than this? Who's more important than this? This was a conscious decision I made; to create a sort of framework and then have other people make decisions, or choosing critics to choose artists, etc. Little by little, I tried to remove myself from the 'quality question' in art.

AS There's an interesting problem with the exhibition at Raven Row in relation to the comments you make in your introduction to the bibliography<sup>9</sup>. The exhibition orders your textile collection in a way that reflects the problems you describe with the literature of textiles. The exhibition will be divided into silks and textiles of the European rich and the church, archaeological textiles, and ethnographic textiles, these being something you are conscious of as a very biased categorisation based just on what has been preserved.

ss Is there another way to do it? I don't know. Perhaps by displaying an arbitrary mix of textiles by size or colour? In trying to build a textile collection I've never thought about how it could possibly be shown. It was and is a private pleasure. I'm not really focused so much on the presentation of textiles, although it is a very real practical problem.

AM So your ultimate goal in buying them was not necessarily to show them?

ss No, it wasn't to show them. Marja<sup>10</sup> and I had talked about the fantasy of, at some point, opening a small private museum. Yes, we kind of had the means to do it but it would be like a rock tied around our legs; we'd never be able to go anywhere. After my initial experience in the art world I was really not ready to be a shopkeeper, whether you call it a museum or



an art gallery. So it never occurred to me that one day I would show these things, or that if I did maybe my kids would have to worry about it if they wanted. Maybe an institution would take it and run with it. But the fun is definitely the hunt and the learning experience too, I must say.

AM But still, you are provisional caretaker of these textiles? *You* have to take care of them whether you like it or not.

SS But I try to do that within my means and within my knowledge. In practical terms we've lost remarkably few textiles; in fact mostly feather hats to moths; there's been at least two eaten. Moths really love feathers. And you know, I was really mad because one of them was a real favourite. Of course they became even more of a favourite once they were ruined.

AM But would you like to donate them to a museum?

SS Yes. This is definitely my intention, as it is with our other collections.

AM So, ideally, which institution?

SS I have no idea.

AM Where? A big museum, or a new museum?

SS Where? Maybe in the Far East: Japan or China. What about that? I have no idea; we'll just have to wait until someone walks in the door. But I'm not going to spend too much time worrying about this. The CSROT does have the means to be able to conserve and keep them and to continue to catalogue them, so it's not like there is a situation where the foundation has to get rid of the collection. This is true of all the collections. The foundation will just keep going on until I'm dead, or until I lose interest, which is highly unlikely. We'll just see what happens. But you're doing the exhibition and that will bring some attention to it; people will think about it.

AM Given the fact that people don't know so much about this activity of yours, although this is what you are devoting so much time to, are you excited that people will get to know this part of your activities, which has so far remained remote and quiet?

SS Yes, absolutely, you wouldn't go to all this trouble. I wouldn't and you certainly wouldn't. We wouldn't be doing it if it weren't for the excitement of being able to show them and to share them. But it's not my intention to say 'anybody want a textile collection for free?' There are also certain conditions if the foundation were to give it away: developing it, cataloguing it extensively, making acquisitions, keeping it open for the public where there's a study collection. So there are five or six criteria all of which can be discussed. Many years ago the Bibliothèque nationale de

France wanted the political media library, but all they were going to do was put it in the basement and wait until some day, when someone would catalogue it and make it available. So I kept it and later gave it instead to the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, because they agreed to catalogue it, and to provide access to it, and that's OK with me. I'd be a little more demanding about a textile collection or a library of our books on textiles.

AM I have a final question. Just out of curiosity, if you give your collection of textiles to a museum, would you like the books to be kept at the same place?

SS Although they are interconnected, they are two independent things. The problem with the books is that there would be many duplicates for any existing major library. There might be a 40 percent overlap, so if they are gifted 7,000 books, and they have 3,000 of them already, then what's the point? They would just take what they want and give the rest away. The other alternative is to find an institution that is just starting up, has a small decorative arts library, and wants to have the major textile library as a part of it. So far I have not made any effort to offload it, but I say very clearly on the website of the Stichting Egress Foundation that I would be very happy to do that. But like the textile collection, there would have to be some serious commitment to keep it going, to catalogue it and to keep it online, etc. It would have to involve a continuation of the project.

AM Great, thank you so much.

AS Shall we say now that we stop? Thank you so much.

SS That's it? I was just getting warmed up...

*Interview conducted by Alice Motard and Alex Sainsbury,  
London, 28 November 2011*



1. Seth Siegelau Contemporary Art was located at 56th Street, New York.
2. In 1969 Siegelau made a long-term loan of hundreds of rare books on rugs to the library of Asia House Gallery in New York.
3. Seth Siegelau Contemporary Art closed in 1966.
4. After leaving the art world and moving to Europe, Siegelau founded the International Mass Media Research Center (IMMRC), an open-access library of leftist and progressive books on communication and culture, publishing books on the subject between 1973 and 1986 while living in Bagnolet (a suburb of Paris).
5. In 2011 the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) acquired a major group of works from the collection of Seth Siegelau. In addition, Siegelau and the Stichting Egress Foundation donated his own extensive archives, containing correspondence, photographs, notes, exhibition proposals, and many other significant documents.
6. Including the gallerists: Leo Castelli, Konrad Fischer, Yvon Lambert, Paul Maenz, Gian Enzo Sperone and Hans Strelow.
7. The textiles assembled by Seth Siegelau for the CRSOT all have a SST (Seth Siegelau Textile) number. The collection starts with the item SST 001 and, as of January 2012, contains 654 items (SST 654 being the most recently acquired textile).
8. This is also known as a 'tiraz', which is a form of luxurious decorated linen with a line of inscription – usually a blessing – located on the upper sleeves of a robe or on a turban sash. They were given as a mark of honour in official ceremonies to a deserving subject by the caliph. It dates from the Fatimid Period (909–1171) in Egypt.
9. Center for Social Research on Old Textiles and Seth Siegelau (eds.), *Bibliographica Textilia Historie. Towards a General Bibliography on the History of Textiles Based on the Library and Archives of the Center for Social Research on Old Textiles* (New York: International General, 1997). [CRSOT 5100].
10. Marja Bloem, Seth Siegelau's partner since the early nineties.

Coptic tunic fragment (close-up detail of back). Egypt. 6th century? 8 × 9 cm. Wool, linen. [SST 030]











*I am currently looking for ways to get some rather curious books to you that were sent to me from Holland. The commerce of thoughts is somewhat interrupted in France. It is even said that it is forbidden to send ideas from Lyon to Paris. The manufactures of the human mind are seized like forbidden fabrics.*

Voltaire, Letter to Jean-Baptiste-Jacques Élie de Beaumont,  
13 January 1765<sup>1</sup>

Seth Siegelaub's manifold activities – redefining the exhibition catalogue, running a publishing house, selling rare books, building libraries, compiling bibliographies, putting databases online – are closely linked to books and the rationale that underpins them. Similarly, his relationship to ideas passes through books, from which he acquires all his knowledge. At the beginning of the sixties, when he was in his early twenties, he discovered and explored, page by page, the art of the twentieth century in New York's public libraries, notably the open-shelf Donnell Library on 53rd Street, opposite MOMA.<sup>2</sup> His later work with conceptual artists derives directly from this experience and the acknowledgement of the importance of books in the perception and dissemination of art.<sup>3</sup>

In an interview published in 2004 as an appendix to Jonathan Monk's artist book *Cover Version*, Siegelaub evokes his thousands of books on the history of textiles:

[...] when I was actively working on the subject, I purchased one book per day, i.e. 365 books per year starting in the mid-1980s, and now the library is around 6,300 books from 1470 through 2002. You can work it out, it must almost be a book a day including Sundays and bank holidays. When I was young I must have thought that 'A book a day keeps the doctor away' instead of the proverbial 'apple a day'. But I must say I also really like buying books; most arrive by post and it is like getting a Christmas present everyday.<sup>4</sup>

Here, the logic of numbers meets the logic of collecting. But something to do with sharing transcends this slightly extravagant statistical survey. If Siegelaub receives books as 'presents', it is with the aim of putting them back into circulation: they constitute a research library, feed into a bibliography and a database, and serve to document a collection of ancient textiles. Researching, selecting, buying, annotating, citing, organising, translating, editing, amending,



printing, distributing, selling, stocktaking, locating, consulting, giving or even photocopying are essential stages. By facilitating readers' access to books through his publishing activity, Siegelau publicly promotes ideas. Following this hypothesis, his work, in all its continuity, appears like a vast and complex intellectual commerce that takes as its model the economy of books.<sup>5</sup>

### *Books*

After leaving the art world in 1972, Siegelau conducted two extensive bibliographic research projects, both of which organised according to the same economy: a research centre, a library, a bibliography and published books. In 1973, pursuing his interest in communication and ideology, he founded the International Mass Media Research Center (IMMRC), which comprised a library of 3,000 documents, a bibliography with 825 entries entitled *Marxism and the Mass Media. Towards a Basic Bibliography* that was published in various issues between 1972 and 1989<sup>6</sup>, and eleven published books. In 1986, based on his research on textiles, he launched the Center for Social Research on Old Textiles (CRSOT), which today encompasses a library of 7,250 books, a bibliography with 9,225 entries entitled *Bibliographica Textilia Historiae. Towards a General Bibliography on the History of Textiles Based on the Library and Archives of the Center for Social Research on Old Textiles* (published as a book<sup>7</sup> in 1997 and an online database in 2010), a facsimile reprint of a historic book on textiles<sup>8</sup>, and a collection of 650 textiles and headdresses. His latest project, an online dictionary started in 2000, is concerned with theories of time and causality in physics. An institutional framework brings together his various projects: the publishing house International General (IG), founded in 1970, and the Stichting Egress Foundation, founded in 2000 and based in Amsterdam. These two projects are entirely and exclusively run by Siegelau, and are 'without walls', existing only through their respective websites.<sup>9</sup> All these dazzling acronyms refer to the work of one man. For Siegelau, establishing himself as a research centre is a way of undermining the figure of the author and endorsing the role of a compiler or, more generally, an organiser – a mediating function he discussed as early as 1969 in an interview with artist Patricia Norvell: 'I'm [...] rather interested in the idea of creating, [...] of being a point through which a lot of information goes in and out of, in a way.'<sup>10</sup>

The first stage of this far-reaching enterprise consists of reuniting what has been dispersed. The *Bibliographica Textilia Historiae*, for instance, is a sum of knowledge. A modern classic, it takes the shape of a learned publication while also betraying the author's taste for books as objects, and his

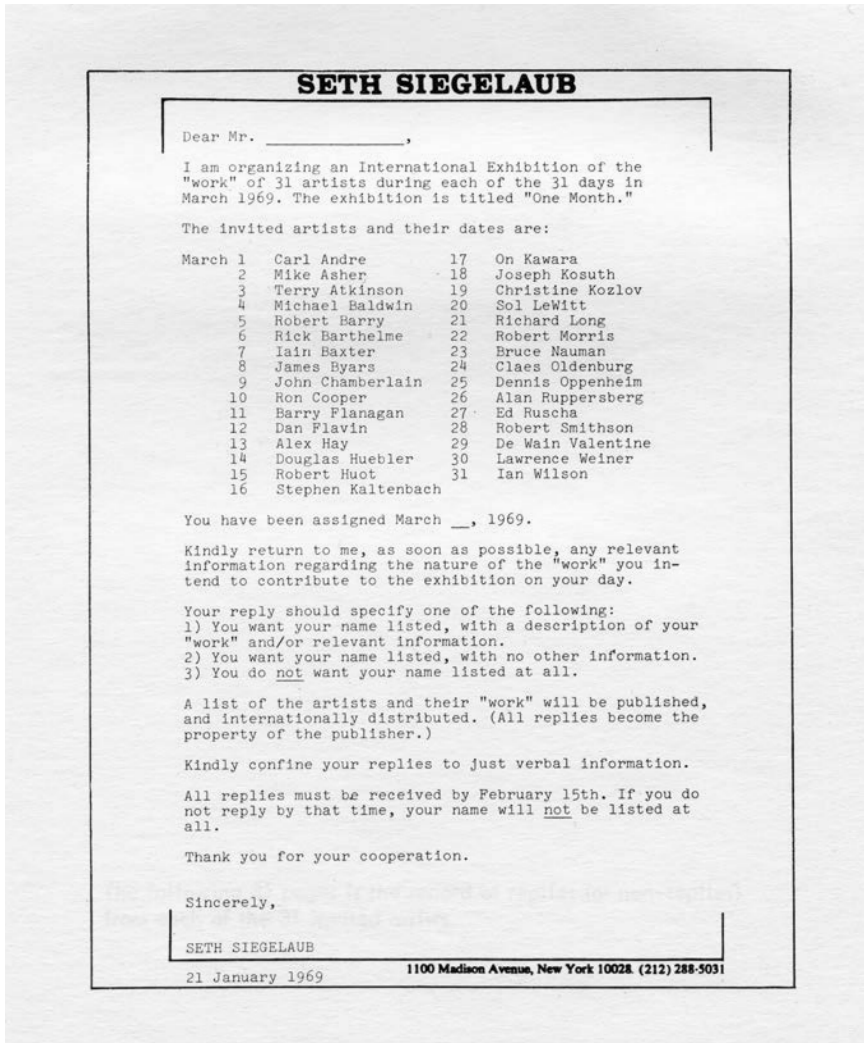
attention to layout and typography. The Latinised title asserts its erudition, before we find out that it makes no sense. Library methodologies make it possible to survey a virtually unlimited number of books, assess their contents and address a given subject critically. In the same way, the map is a possible representation of these networks as a geographic depiction of the production and dissemination of ideas, art and books. Maps are found on the cover of different books published by Siegelau: a map of the United States on Douglas Huebler's catalogue-exhibition in 1968, a world map on the catalogue-exhibition *July, August, September 1969/Juillet, Août, Septembre 1969/Juli, August, September 1969*, the outlines of the American continent forming the face of Donald Duck on Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart's essay *How to Read Donald Duck. Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* in 1975, the outlines of Portugal and the African continent on two special issues of the bibliography *Marxism and the Mass Media* planned for publication in 1976, and the shores of the Mediterranean that can be made out in the traces of wear on a sixteenth-century velvet on the *Bibliographica Textilia Historiae*.<sup>11</sup> These images illustrate the condition of existence of bibliographical continents: while the map directs the knowledge, it gives only a fragmentary representation of the contents emerging on the surface of oceans yet to be explored. The research, then, tries to embrace something that is essentially open-ended and never ceases to grow. The inventory numbers are infinite; *et cætera* induces a sense of vertigo. Libraries and bibliographies as comprehensive, stable and definitive forms are impossible to attain.

As the volume of data increases, questions relating to the processes of organisation become crucial if access, research and consultation are to be guaranteed. The second stage in the economy of books therefore concerns the management of stock. Lists and bibliographies are two central systems of accumulation and classification in Siegelau's projects. More generally, this 'bookkeeping' aspect manifests itself in the neatly kept archives of his commerce – the collection of address books, letters, photographs, administrative documents, accounts, working notes, scale models of projects and various papers and lists.<sup>12</sup> It is not surprising that Siegelau, when talking about the role of textiles in history, mentions the inventories of the fourteenth-century businessman and great merchant draper Francesco di Marco Datini, who ensured that all his ledgers were preserved after his death.<sup>13</sup>

### *Lists*

From 1964 to 1971, following his growing awareness of the importance of context in art, Siegelau reconsiders the systems through which artworks

are disseminated by exploring the potentially infinite variations between exhibitions, books and art. The catalogue becomes the exhibition, and no longer refers to anything beyond itself. In the catalogues he *organises*, and in the exhibitions he *publishes*, the list becomes synonymous with the display of works. For instance, for the catalogue-exhibition *March 1969*, also known as *One Month*, he invites 31 artists to create one work each for the day of the month that has been assigned to them.



Based on the characteristics of books, the organising principle of this project combines two systems well known by readers: the nomenclature of names in alphabetical order and the numerical order of the Gregorian



calendar. In terms of accessibility, the list allows for simple consultation, easy reading and efficient presentation. Siegelaub's lists converge with a more general interest in forms and files evidenced in the formats used by many conceptual artists: Robert Morris's card files, Mel Bochner's ring binders, Ed Ruscha's photographic inventories, Robert Barry's lists, On Kawara's 'countdowns', and Art & Language's indexes. The works resulting from this approach are generally characterised by serial formats, while providing methodically classified information. Simultaneously a geographer, historiographer and bibliographer, Siegelaub keeps an inventory of inventories, and as such, his contribution to Conceptual Art should be seen in the light of his interest in taxonomy.

In the case of *March 1969*, all he needs to do is to follow his predefined protocol and, according to the list<sup>14</sup>, insert the artists' works into the pages of the catalogue, which takes the form of a calendar. In some instances, where the artist didn't reply or didn't want to take part, a page is left blank that signals the artist's presence by its materiality. These catalogue-exhibitions therefore record the bookkeeping operations related to the distribution of art. Putting art into books is to initiate a new form of dialogue with the artist, a new way of mediating the work, a new approach to commerce.

From one project to the next, the number of artists grows: 'My real interest in art is the artist, the social dimension of art marketing. [...] So in my personal story there is a very clear trajectory moving from the specific artists I was involved with to a much more general socio-political kind of concern, especially in the area of culture in general.'<sup>15</sup> In his last project, *The Context of Art/The Art of Context*, implemented in 1990 in collaboration with Marion and Roswitha Fricke, the table of contents lists the names of 115 artists – roughly the number of participants in a biennale.<sup>16</sup> The list seems to derive from a sociological field research: chosen because they have participated in at least one of five major exhibitions in 1969, the artists are asked to answer three questions on the time after the sixties. The arbitrariness of the alphabetical classification undermines any notion of hierarchy. It is left to readers to browse the publication and decide where to start.

Siegelaub also writes another kind of list, which is more of a mixed bag. In 1991, for instance, as part of a polemic with Benjamin Buchloh on the history of Conceptual Art<sup>17</sup>, he drafted a plethoric list that occupied an entire page of *October* magazine:

As one can see, I have not even begun to question Buchloh's subjective choice of specific facts and their ordering in time and space; this will

have to wait for a more thorough and serious study of ‘Conceptual Art’ and its relation to its historical moment. For our moment, I will limit myself to a random list of some actors ‘missing in action’ – dematerialized? – who contributed, in one way or another, to the formation of the art historical moment called, for lack of a better term, ‘Conceptual Art’: Carl Andre, John Baldessari, Robert Hout, Jack and Nell Wendler, Hollis Frampton, John Chamberlain, Ron Wolin, Harald Szeemann, VHI01, Jean-Luc Godard, Edward Kienholz, Lucy Lippard, Jan Dibbets, Prague 1968, Eugene Goosen [sic], Art & Project, Dennis Oppenheim, ‘Art and Industry’, Gian Enzo Sperone, Christo, Wim Beeren, Richard Serra, Art Workers [sic] Coalition, Robert Smithson, Walter [sic] König, *Avalanche*, Vito Acconci, Germano Celant, Robert Irwin, Jennifer Licht, Lotta Continua, Stanley and Elyse Grinstein, Joseph Beuys, Ray Dirks, Yvonne Rainer, Prospect, Niele Toroni, Donald Burgy, ‘Process Art’, Woodstock, Giuseppe Panza, Peter [sic] Townsend, ‘Art of the Real’, Willoughby [sic] Sharp, Keith Arnatt, Michel Claura, Konrad Fischer, May ’68, Frederick Barthelme, Jack Burnham, Peter Downsborough, Barry Flanagan, Christine Kozlov, Pulsa, Hamish Fulton, Guerrilla Art Action Group, Stanley Brouwn, John Chandler, Enno Develing, N.E. Things Co., the Black Panthers, David Askevold, Hanne Darboven, Richard Long, Terry Fox, ‘Land art [sic]’, Billy Kluver, Johannes Cladders, Michael Asher, Gilbert & George, Piero Gilardi, Peter Hutchinson, Michael Harvey, Al Hansen, ‘Antiform’, Luis Camnitzer, Michael Heizer, David Lamelas, Allen [sic] Kaprow, Ger Van [sic] Elk, Stephen Kaltenbach, Artist’s [sic] Rights Movement, the Rosario Group, Bruce McLean, Mario Merz, Ursula Meyer, Walter de Maria, Barry Le Va, Roelof Louw, Adrian Piper, Gerry Schum, Les Levine, Franz Erhard Walther, The [sic] Bay of Pigs, Ian Wilson, Klaus Rinke, Keith Sonnier, William Wiley, Michael Snow, ‘Video Art’, William Wegman, John Gibson, Tony Shafrazi, James Lee Byars, Abbie Hoffman, Sigmar Polke, Herman Daled, the U.S. Servicemen’s Fund, Tomasso [sic] Trini, Eugenia Butler, Gene Beery, Lee Lozano, John Perrault, Marjorie Strider, Alan [sic] Ruppertsberg, John Latham, Gene Swenson, Kent State, the [sic] Beatles, and, lest we forget, the Vietnam War.<sup>18</sup>

Contrary to a genealogy or hit parade, this random enumeration of 121 items unsystematically juxtaposes the names of well-known artists from the time alongside other cultural agents. It breaks open the traditional notion of lists as an ordering or classifying device. While Siegelaub is often presented as the

‘impresario’ of four trendy artists – Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner – he uses this opportunity to include *the whole world*. In contrast with Buchloh’s ‘formalistic and idealistic’<sup>19</sup> analysis, he expresses his vision of Conceptual Art as ‘a real mess, a *pot-pourri*, a *foutoir*, [...] all in the same room, sharing a sort of *air du temps*, a certain *esprit*, a certain questioning, a sort of theme for the art-making process’.<sup>20</sup> Some conspicuous intruders – political events, bands, artistic movements – give this list the complexity that is indicative of a moment in history.

### *Bibliographies*

Siegelaub’s progressive interest in books led to him turning his attention to the bibliography as an instrument of knowledge and an applied method. Between 1970 and 1973, he began research on two projects, a left-wing newspaper and a news agency, which never took off. Exploration of this new field became the project, i.e. collecting books and ephemeral documents on communication and its relationships with ideology.

Throughout Siegelaub’s statements we find the leitmotifs of the ideal bibliographer: an inquisitive erudite, he works in isolation, stresses that he benefits from the research that others before him have undertaken, is obsessed with meticulousness – which absorbs him in a never-ending process of research aiming for the most comprehensive result possible – and apologises to his readers for his errors, asking that they help him fill the gaps. There are two sides to this activity: he applies rules in order to rigorously establish the identity of publications, and also has the capacity to unearth documents and relate them to each other. His bibliographical approach does not aim to be the science of the organisation of libraries, rather the study of the transmission of ideas through print as part of a social history of communication. In order to enhance and attempt the completion of the IMMRC’s bibliography, Siegelaub contacts the numerous international organisations working in this field. The research form, which he sends out, is indicative of his methods of investigation and the way in which he builds his networks, page for page:

[...] the nature of this research requires the continual exchange of material and information from many people from different countries, areas of work and specializations, if it is to reflect the past and the present reality of communications throughout the world. Principally, materials are received through exchanges, gifts, or loans to our library. But this is not always possible, and the [...] RESEARCH FORM has been developed to



facilitate the flow of bibliographic information. This form is a ‘master’ ‘original’, and can be reproduced as needed: one copy per bibliographic item. Once filled out, it provides us with the basic data needed to index and organize the information for use by other researchers.<sup>21</sup>

How, then, does he organise the ‘flow’ of the bibliographic commerce? By categorising the books according to specific fields<sup>22</sup> he reflects the ways in which they can be identified and their materiality understood. In addition to this inventory work recording the specifications and the physical state of the books, Siegelau has always tried to comment on their content<sup>23</sup>. In order to allow readers to navigate in this ocean of references, he has also produced, for each bibliography, a general taxonomy of themes besides the index of inventory numbers, authors or countries. Given the sheer quantity of books, Siegelau started to use computers and databases, which offered solutions for these indexing systems with their intricate ramifications.

Although the contemporary bibliographer inherits a general method of inventory and classification, the questions relative to his organisation are still present in the practice and manifest themselves in the introductions of the bibliographies. When speaking about the *Bibliographica Textilia Historiæ*, Siegelau points out:

Despite all these important reference works, to our knowledge, there is no single bibliographic reference source – whether published, unpublished, library file cards, or electronic database – which attempts to weave together on one bibliographic loom, so to speak, the entire ‘fabric’ of the literature of the history of textiles: the history of fibers and cloth, such as wool, cotton, linen, etc., as well as the history of fine, luxury, decorative textiles, such as silk; the fine art of weaving as an industry and object of trade; the technology of textiles as well as its aesthetic, ‘fine art’ aspects; ie, the social-economic-practical aspects along with the artistic, decorative and beautiful aspects, which is precisely the purpose of the Center for Social Research on Old Textiles and its *Bibliographica Textilia Historiæ*.<sup>24</sup>

If we take this remark seriously, we see that the bibliography and the loom are two systems that allow the concatenation of individual elements. Applied in one work after the other, page after page, the rules of bibliographic inventory, like the weaving of threads, constitute lists as long as a roll of cloth. In his book *The Domestication of the Savage Mind*, anthropologist Jack Goody looks at the notion of intellectual technology applied to writing and

proposes a definition of the list based on its graphic representation: ‘The list relies on discontinuity rather than continuity; it depends on physical placement, on location; it can be read in different directions, both sideways and downwards, up and down, as well as left and right; it has a clear-cut beginning and a precise end, that is, a boundary, an edge, like a piece of cloth.’<sup>25</sup>

It therefore appears that the problem of organisation is similar to the problem we find in weaving. This ancient and recurrent image for the *texture* of order is also found in two systems of classification: the list and the diagram. Ravius Textor (ca. 1480–1524) received his name because of his dexterity in ‘butting’ fragments, i.e. compiling and juxtaposing hundreds of quotations borrowed from ancient writers. Slowly, the logical organisation of texts became a new requirement: how to make the coherence of ideas emerge from the disorder of texts?<sup>26</sup> Humanist Pierre de la Ramée (1515–1572) speaks of dialectical operations as *textere historiam*, or ‘weaving history’: in order to classify separate elements in an index, he invented a system of diagrams which functioned by dichotomous divisions whereby each definition was split into two fundamental constituents, and so on.<sup>27</sup> Classifying and weaving means arranging, ordering and connecting by positioning an element and putting it into a relation with others so as to form an entity. This technical approach presents the act of thinking as work, a network of ideas, a configuration of warps and wefts of notional connections. The artisan, then, is the blueprint for this work.

‘*The manufactures of the human mind*’

What has captured Siegelau’s attention in textiles besides their beauty is their central role in business: they interweave cultural and commercial contexts. In the *Bibliographica Textilia Historiæ*, the royal or governmental acts, statutes, laws and treaties on commerce inscribe the study of these objects in the flows of economic and political exchange. This aspect is what interested the bibliographer in Francisque-Michel’s *Recherches sur le commerce, la fabrication et l’usage des étoffes de soie, d’or et d’argent et autres tissus précieux en Occident, principalement en France, pendant le Moyen Âge* (1852/54), a book on the production, trade and use of textiles in medieval France, which he reedited in facsimile. The nineteenth century author collects and analyses the literary and narrative sources, as well as the inventories, ledgers, tariffs and regulations in order to estimate the value – both commercial and intrinsic – of textiles.

All his work meets and extends what Voltaire has termed ‘the manufactures of the human mind’ quoted at the beginning of this essay: to the

extent that the commerce of thoughts concerns the commerce of books and textiles alike. In the eighteenth century these two trades ran up against ideological censorship and laws governing imports, respectively, and in both areas, smuggling had become a major industry. Helping these works to be disseminated was equivalent to affirming the liberating qualities of exchange and trade against the absolutist institution, and to opening up the space of political thought. Tellingly, the Enlightenment stressed the necessity for open and universal access to books.

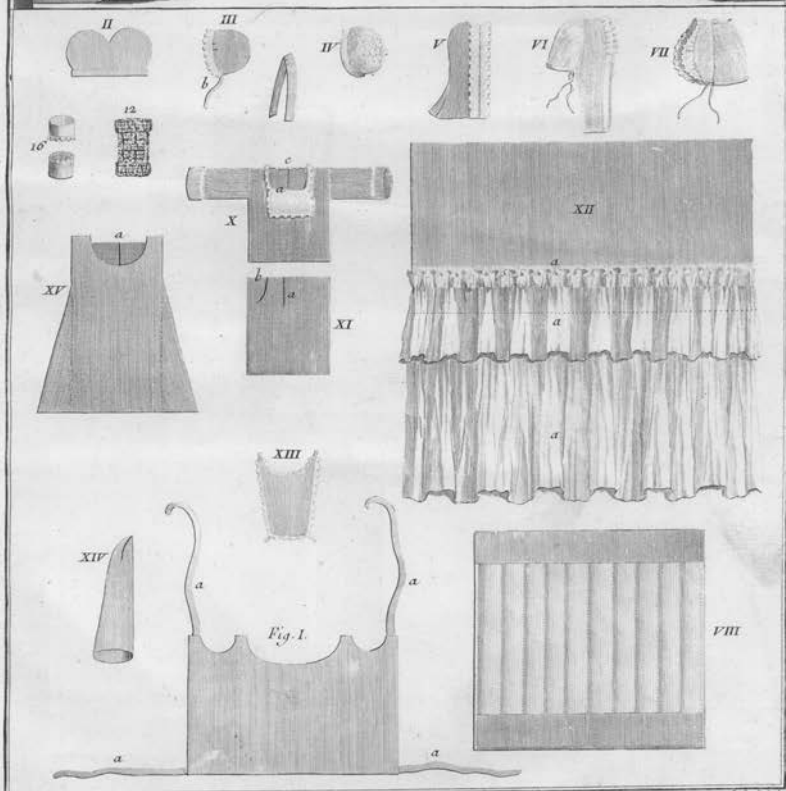
Thanks to his acute political awareness, Siegelaub has of course been attentive to the ideological conditions underpinning the presentation of art: the use of communication and the distribution of books. In relation to the challenges faced by Voltaire, he is running up against other barriers that impede the mobility of ideas: the freedom of political criticism. In ‘A Communication on Communication’, the preface to the first volume of *Communication and Class Struggle*, published in 1979, he notes:

[...] capitalism does what it can, systematically and organically, to minimize, marginalize, and deform the production and distribution, and thus consumption of left, critical and progressive theory in communication as elsewhere. [...] One reflection of the overall level of these antagonisms of our society, however, is precisely the degree of circulation of left and progressive theory and who, where, when, and on what level it is exchanged: by oral, written, printed and/or broadcast means. [...] One link in this circulation process, for example, is the bookstore, one of the primary means for the movement of published marxist, critical and progressive theory (in communication and elsewhere), of local, regional and international production.<sup>28</sup>

Book trading is undoubtedly a form of political militancy and is often seen as part of the intellectual origins of revolutions.<sup>29</sup> An editor, bookseller and librarian, Siegelaub always organises the distribution of books ‘in negotiation’ with the context. Books, although sometimes tucked away on shelves and in storage or burned in public rituals, are hard to ‘erase’ precisely because of their inherent mobility – the transition from the original, extended, revised, critical, erudite, illustrated, translated or bilingual edition to the posthumous reissue, paperback or coffee-table edition.

In 1969, the year Siegelaub organised nine catalogue-exhibitions, he mused on the fast, large-scale and simultaneous distribution of art through books: ‘People who have [art] galleries can show their object only in one place at a time. I am not limited. I can have my ideas in twenty different





places at once. Ideas are faster than tedious objects.’<sup>30</sup> Books appear to be the most adequate means to formulate a practice of exchange and a theory of economics. Conceptual works of art, on the other hand, are by no means as ‘dematerialised’ as is often claimed. Rather, they circulate in the form of paper, a traditional and fundamental material in the economy of books. By addressing the issue of the materiality of communication in its full complexity, the conceptual artists with whom Siegelauub worked undermine the traditional autonomy of the work of art and the rationale of the art market. In other words, the contention that the commerce of thoughts, by confronting artists with the materiality of the work, is akin to selling out becomes anachronistic if we admit that the conceptual work of art is essentially the sum of the interactions it prompts. Its circulation and dissemination is therefore a remarkable opening of the definitions of art.

These movements – bibliographic endeavour, distribution of art and sociability of the book – are commonly summed up by the beautiful word ‘commerce’. Above all, commerce is the exchange and the conversation by which objects and ideas are passed on from one person to another. The commerce of values, and its main vehicle – money – are merely particular forms of exchange. Touching upon the ambiguities of commerce, Siegelauub is sometimes assimilated with the archetypal figure of haggling – the carpet dealer. As a gallery owner, editor and librarian, he does indeed belong to this line of trade. But rather than seeing it a means to an end, he displaces and questions it through books and printed matter. In his essay *On the Commerce of Thinking*, philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy makes an enlightening remark on the role of libraries in the transactions of our intellectual life: ‘[...] the commerce of our thoughts, by means of which we are kept together, however loosely or badly that be, relies on the circulation of a currency whose incalculable unit is named “book”.’<sup>31</sup>

Siegelauub was once asked whether he left the art world without any regrets. A dealer who undermines trade as much as a bibliographer who undermines classification, he answered:

No, *je ne regrette rien*; it was an important part of my life. But it began to become too business-like and I never thought of it as a business; just something you believed in and fought for. Crazy concept, no?<sup>32</sup>

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*Translated from the French by Boris Kremer*











1. 'Je cherche actuellement les moyens de vous faire parvenir quelques livres assez curieux qu'on m'a envoyés de Hollande. Le commerce des pensées est un peu interrompu en France. On dit même qu'il n'est pas permis d'envoyer des idées de Lyon à Paris. On saisit les manufactures de l'esprit humain comme des étoffes défendues.' Voltaire, 'Lettre 866o. À Jean-Baptiste-Jacques Élie de Beaumont', in Theodore Besterman (ed.), *Voltaire. Correspondance VII. Janvier 1763–mars 1765*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1982), p. 1001.
2. Seth Siegelaub in conversation with the author, 19 October 2011, Amsterdam.
3. In 1969 he explains: 'For many years it has been well known that more people are aware of an artist's work through (1) the printed media or (2) conversation than by direct confrontation with the art itself. For painting and sculpture, where: the visual presence – color, scale, size, location – is important to the work, the photograph or verbalization of that work is a bastardization of the art. But when art concerns itself with things not germane to physical presence its intrinsic (communicative) value is not altered by its presentation in printed media.' Quoted in Charles Harrison, 'On Exhibitions and the World at Large. Seth Siegelaub in Conversation with Charles Harrison', *Studio International*, vol. 178, no. 917 (December 1969), p. 202.
4. Jonathan Monk, 'Conversation with Seth Siegelaub', in *Cover Version* (London: Book Works, 2004), p. 61.
5. It is interesting to note that Siegelaub's work as a producer of libraries and bibliographies has been the subject of few interviews and no analysis – particularly in light of the obvious links to his role in Conceptual Art in relation to methodology, distribution of ideas and political activism. The only monograph on Siegelaub was written by the US historian Alexander Alberro and focuses on the time between 1964 and 1971. Alexander Alberro, *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2003).
6. International Mass Media Research Center (ed.), *Marxism and the Mass Media* (New York, Bagnolet: International General, 1972–1986).
7. Center for Social Research on Old Textiles and Seth Siegelaub (eds.), *Bibliographica Textilia Historie. Towards a General Bibliography on the History of Textiles Based on the Library and Archives of the Center for Social Research on Old Textiles* (New York: International General, 1997). [CSROT 5100].
8. Francisque-Michel, *Recherches sur le commerce, la fabrication et l'usage des étoffes de soie, d'or et d'argent et autres tissus précieux en Occident, principalement en France, pendant le Moyen Âge (1852/54)* (New York, Amsterdam: International General, 2001). [CSROT 5831].
9. <http://www.igeneral.org> and <http://egressfoundation.net>.
10. Patricia Norvell, 'Seth Siegelaub. April 17, 1969', in Alexander Alberro and Patricia Norvell (eds.), *Recording Conceptual Art. Early Interviews with Barry, Huebler, Kaltenbach, LeWitt, Morris, Oppenheim, Siegelaub, Smitson, Weiner by Patricia Norvell* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2001), p. 31.
11. Douglas Huebler (New York: Seth Siegelaub, 1968); Seth Siegelaub (ed.), *July, August, September 1969/ Juillet, Août, Septembre 1969/ Juli, August, September 1969* (New York: Seth Siegelaub, 1969); Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, *How to Read Donald Duck. Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* (New York: International General, 1975); preparatory documents for a special issue of *Marxism and the Mass Media* on Africa and the Middle East (Amsterdam: International Mass Media Research Center, International Institute for Social History, folder 78) and on Portugal (folder 88); Center for Social Research on Old Textiles and Seth Siegelaub (eds.), *op. cit.*
12. Siegelaub's main archives consist of the documents covering the years from 1962 to 1972, donated to MOMA in 2011, the IMMRC library, donated to and freely consultable at the International Institute for Social History (IISG) in Amsterdam, and the CSROT archives, owned by the Stichting Egress Foundation in Amsterdam.
13. Seth Siegelaub in conversation with the author, 20 October 2010, Amsterdam–Paris. In the *Bibliographica Textilia Historie*, he mentions Iris Origo's bestselling popular science book *The Merchant of Prato: Francesco di Marco Datini* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1957). [CSROT 984].
14. Note that the word 'listed' appears no less than four times in the letter he addresses to the artists.
15. Maria Eichhorn, 'Interview with Seth Siegelaub. 4 April 2005, Berlin', in Gerti Fietzek (ed.), *The Artist's Contract. Interviews with Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Paula Cooper, Hans Haacke, Jenny Holzer, Adrian Piper, Robert Projansky, Robert Ryman, Seth Siegelaub, John Weber, Lawrence Weiner, Jackie Winsor* (Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2009), p. 39–41.
16. The project *The Context of Art/ The Art of Context* was published, partially or integrally, in various formats. Marion Fricke, Roswitha Fricke and Seth Siegelaub (dir.), '69/96. Avant-gardes et fin de siècle. 75 artistes racontent leur parcours', *Artpress*, special issue no. 17 (1996); 'The Context of Art. The Art of Context', *Kunst & Museumjournaal*, vol. 7, no. 1/2/3 (1996); *The Context of Art. The Art of Context* (Trieste: Navado Press, 2004).
17. Benjamin Buchloh, 'De l'esthétique d'administration à la critique institutionnelle (aspects de l'art conceptuel, 1962–1969)', in *L'Art conceptuel, une perspective* (Paris: exh. cat., Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, 1990), republished in Benjamin Buchloh, 'Conceptual Art 1962–1969. From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions', *October*, no. 55 (Winter 1990), p. 105–53; Joseph Kosuth and Seth Siegelaub, 'Replies to Benjamin Buchloh on Conceptual Art', *October*, no. 57 (Summer 1991), p. 152–7; Benjamin Buchloh, 'Reply to Joseph Kosuth and Seth Siegelaub', *October*, no. 57 (Summer 1991), p. 158–61.
18. Joseph Kosuth and Seth Siegelaub, *op. cit.*, p. 157.
19. Joseph Kosuth and Seth Siegelaub, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

20. Sophie Richard, 'Conversation with Seth Siegelaub. Amsterdam 27 April 2005', in *Unconcealed. The International Network of Conceptual Artists 1967–77. Dealers, Exhibitions and Public Collections* (London: Ridinghouse, 2009), p. 467.
21. From a research form located at the Archives of the International Mass Media Research Center, International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam (folder 78).
22. For each book Siegelaub establishes the following fields: 'AUTHOR LAST NAME, First name. Title. Subtitle. Edition. Volumes. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date. [CSROT Number]. Volumes (with subtitles). "Series title" number. 1st edition or publication (if not the edition catalogued herein). Collation: Pages, Size (width × height; in cm). Our binding. Illustrations; Plates; Maps; Charts, Tables; etc. Special edition information. Annotation (What, Where and When; Illustrative matter). Other editions or directly related works. Author biographical information (first entry only). Our copy: specific characteristics of our copy, or if not our copy, the place and shelfmark of copy catalogued'. Seth Siegelaub, 'Notes Towards a Critical History of the Literature of Textiles', Center for Social Research on Old Textiles and Seth Siegelaub (eds.), p. 17.
23. Siegelaub regularly refers to the English historian and bibliographer Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell (1879–1974), an expert on Islamic art, for his particular attention to annotations, which could sometimes extend over several pages. See the various volumes and editions of *A bibliography of the architecture, art and crafts of Islam*. [CSROT 1112, 1116, 2119].
24. Seth Siegelaub, 'Notes Towards a Critical History of the Literature of Textiles', *op. cit.*, p. 16.
25. Jack Goody, *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (Cambridge, London, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 81.
26. On the origins of bibliography, see Alfredo Serrai, *Storia della bibliografia. 1. Bibliografia e Cabala. Le enciclopedie rinascimentali 1* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1988) and *Storia della bibliografia. 11. Le enciclopedie rinascimentali 2. Bibliografi universali* (1992).
27. The author would like to thank Patricia Falguières for her precious historic guidance. See also Patricia Falguières, *Les Chambres des merveilles* (Paris: Bayard, 2003), p. 27–35.
28. Seth Siegelaub, 'A Communication on Communication', in Armand Mattelart and Seth Siegelaub (eds.), *Communication and Class Struggle. An Anthology in 2 Volumes. 1. Capitalism, Imperialism* (New York, Bagnolet: International General, 1979), p. 16.
29. It is remarkable to see that a revolution can engender a bibliographical project. Siegelaub visits Portugal in 1975, shortly after the Carnation Revolution, to collect material to be included in a special issue of *Marxism and the Mass Media* (never published).
30. Seth Siegelaub quoted by David Shirley, 'Impossible Art – What It Is', *Art in America*, vol. 57, no. 3 (May–June 1969), p. 39.
31. Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Commerce of Thinking. On Books and Bookstores*, translated from French by David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), p. 46.
32. Christophe Cherix, Phone interview with Seth Siegelaub. Geneva and Amsterdam. September 10, 1996', *3rd Artist Book International. Hotel Wassertum, Cologne, 15, 16, 17 November 1996* (Paris: Artist Book International, 1996), p. 19.







Seth Siegelau in his gallery at 56th Street, New York, ca. 1964.  
Courtesy of The Siegelau Collection and Archives at the Stichting  
Egress Foundation, Amsterdam

## Chronology

*I don't like to repeat myself too much – which is of course the essence of success – and I was in the fortunate position to be able to evolve into different projects fairly easily.*

Seth Siegelaub, 2005<sup>1</sup>

[The following document is based on the available bibliography of Seth Siegelaub's projects and publications, his archives, and conversations with the author.]

### 1941

Seth Siegelaub is born in the Bronx, New York, the first of four children. Raised in an intellectually curious lower middle class family.

### 1947–1959

Attends public grade school P.S. 102, the Henry Hudson Junior High School in the Bronx, and then the Stuyvesant High School. Discovers art and the world of ideas through his frequentation of local public libraries, and later, the Donnell Library on 53rd Street in Manhattan.

### 1959–1960

Completes his military service obligation in the New York State Air National Guard.

### 1960–1964

Leaves home and moves into an apartment at 59 West 90 Street in Manhattan. Briefly attends Hunter College in New York but soon loses interest in his studies. Works as a plumber, and also as a part-time gallery

assistant at the SculptureCenter in New York.

Develops an interest in Oriental rugs. Begins buying specialist books on carpets from second-hand bookshops.

### 1964

Opens his gallery, Seth Siegelaub Contemporary Art, at 56th Street, New York, where he shows the work of Pierre Clerk, Michael Eastman, Arne Hendin, Alfred Michael Iarusso, Herbert Livesey, Dennis MacCarthy, Lawrence Weiner and Edward Whiteman. Exhibits the work of Weiner twice, showing the paintings he was making at the time. For several months the gallery also deals in Oriental rugs in partnership with Robert Gaile.

### 1965–1966

Frequents openings and bars such as Max's Kansas City near Union Square. Makes the acquaintance of many people including gallerist Richard Bellamy and art historian and curator Eugene C. Goossen, whose critical and active support of artists impresses him. Meets artists Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth and Sol LeWitt, with whom he develops close working and personal relationships.

### 1966

Organises 25, an exhibition with paintings and sculptures by John Chamberlain, Joseph Cornell, Willem de Kooning, Philip Guston, Al Heid, Hans Hofmann, Ellsworth Kelly, Franz Kline, Martin Maloney, Robert

1. Maria Eichhorn, 'Interview with Seth Siegelaub. 4 April 2005, Berlin', in Gerti Fietzek (ed.), *The Artist's Contract. Interviews with Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Paula Cooper, Hans Haacke, Jemmy Holzer, Adrian Piper, Robert Projansky, Robert Ryman, Seth Siegelaub, John Weber, Lawrence Weiner, Jackie Winsor* (Cologne: Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, 2009), p. 41.



Motherwell, Louise Nevelson, Barnett Newman, George Ortman, Jackson Pollock, Kenneth Price, Ad Reinhardt, David Smith, Jack Tworkov, Lawrence Weiner, Adja Yunkers and Larry Zox. Buys a work by Ad Reinhardt from the exhibition entitled *Timeless Painting* (1960–61).

Closes the gallery after eighteen months for financial reasons and doubts about its artistic direction. Moves into a three-room flat in a high-rise at 1100 Madison Avenue, where he tries to work as a private art dealer, while organising exhibitions, events and debates at which artists, friends and collectors meet.

Familiarises himself with the theories of Marshall McLuhan and Vance Packard on communication, culture and mass media.

#### 1967–1968

With friend and collector Jack Wendler, founds Image. Art Programs for Industry Inc., a public relations company aiming to bring together artists and industry via the use of new industrial materials.

#### 1968

His son Yves is born on 29 February. Critics John Chandler and Lucy Lippard publish their seminal essay on the burgeoning Conceptual Art scene, 'The Dematerialisation of the Art Object', in *Art International*.

4 February–2 March

Organises *Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Lawrence Weiner* at Bradford Junior College, Bradford, Massachusetts,

an exhibition and a symposium advertised by a four-part printed announcement in an envelope.

30 April–31 May

Organises *Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Lawrence Weiner* with Chuck Ginnever at Windham College, Putney, Vermont, an exhibition and a symposium moderated by Dan Graham and advertised by a poster mailing. As Windham College does not have a dedicated art space, the artists create site-specific outdoor works.

4–7 October

Organises a week-long *Benefit Exhibition for the Congressional Election Campaign for Edward Koch* with works by artists including Andre, Barry, Huebler and Weiner at Richard L. Feigen & Co. in Lower New York.

November

Publishes *Douglas Huebler*, a catalogue-exhibition with works from the artist's series of *Variable Pieces* and *Duration Pieces*. For the first time, the catalogue *is* the exhibition.

December

With the support of the Louis Kellner Foundation, New York, publishes Lawrence Weiner's *Statements*, a catalogue-exhibition with 25 text-based works.

Together with Jack Wendler, publishes *Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, Robert Morris, Lawrence Weiner*,

also known as the *Xerox Book*, a catalogue-exhibition with a 25-page work on standard paper by each artist, photocopied and then offset-printed.

### 1969

- Gives a long-term loan of his hundreds of rare books on rugs to the library of Asia House Gallery in New York, under the responsibility of Gordon Bailey Washburn.
- Participates in the discussions of the Art Workers' Coalition (AWC), which was founded after a dispute between artists and curators at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York. Intervenes during the Open Hearing, a public debate on the relationship between art and the wider institutional and political context.
- Travels for the first time to Europe in preparation for *Prospekt '69*, an exhibition organised by Konrad Fischer and Hans Strelow at the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf. Visits Harald Szeemann's exhibition *When Attitudes Become Form* at the Kunsthalle Bern. From this time onwards, through travelling and ongoing correspondence, stays in contact with European artists, collectors, gallerists and critics such as Daniel Buren, Michel Claura, Herman Daled, Konrad Fischer, Yvon Lambert, Marisa Merz and Mario Merz, Giuseppe Panza, Gian Enzo Sperone and Hans Strelow.
- Works alongside Lippard in the preparation of the catalogues for 557,087 and 955,000, the two exhibitions she organised at the Seattle Art Museum and the Vancouver Art

Gallery respectively, with works by 72 artists at the forefront of 1960s contemporary art.

- Charles Harrison, the assistant editor of the London-based magazine *Studio International*, publishes a manifesto interview 'On Exhibitions and the World at Large'.
- Discusses his role in art with artist Patricia Norvell as part of a series of ten interviews with artists.

### 5-31 January

- Organises *January 5-31, 1969*, an exhibition and a catalogue with work by Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner. The exhibition, which takes place in a temporary space in the McLendon Building on 52nd Street, New York, is the guide to the catalogue. Each artist presents two works in the exhibition and designs four pages in the publication.

### March

- Publishes *March 1969*, also known as *One Month*, a catalogue-exhibition in the shape of a calendar with a text-based work by a different artist for each day of the month. Invited artists are Carl Andre, Michael Asher, Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, Robert Barry, Frederick Barthelme, Iain Baxter, James Lee Byars, John Chamberlain, Ron Cooper, Barry Flanagan, Dan Flavin, Alex Hay, Douglas Huebler, Robert Huot, Stephen Kaltenbach, On Kawara, Joseph Kosuth, Christine Kozlov, Sol LeWitt, Richard Long, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman,

Claes Oldenburg, Dennis Oppenheim, Allen Ruppersberg, Ed Ruscha, Robert Smithson, De Wain Valentine, Lawrence Weiner and Ian Wilson.

Organises *Joseph Kosuth and Robert Morris*, a catalogue, exhibition and symposium at Laura Knott Gallery, Bradford Junior College, Bradford, Massachusetts.

April

Organises Robert Barry's *Inert Gas Series*, a project staged in the Mohave Desert and advertised by a poster mailing detailing the address of a post box in Los Angeles and a telephone number that, when dialled, leads to an answerphone message describing the work.

19 May–19 June

Organises *Catalogue for the Exhibition*, an exhibition at the Centre for Communication and the Arts at the Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, and a symposium linking participants in Burnaby, New York and Ottawa by telephone. Artists Terry Atkinson, Michael Baldwin, Robert Barry, Jan Dibbets, Douglas Huebler, Stephen Kaltenbach, Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. and Lawrence Weiner exhibit in different parts of the campus. The artworks are not identified during the exhibition, and the catalogue is only made available once the exhibition has ended.

9, 12 and 30 May

Organises *Jan Dibbets*, a performance occurring at the same time over three

days that sees the artist making a gesture from the window of a building in Amsterdam. The photograph indicating the site of the performance serves as the announcement, and is sent from New York in the form of a printed postcard in four languages.

July–September

Organises *July, August, September 1969/ Juillet, Août, Septembre 1969/ Juli, August, September 1969*, an exhibition and a trilingual catalogue-exhibition with projects in different parts of the world. The catalogue describes each work and its location. Participating artists are Carl Andre in The Hague, Robert Barry in Baltimore, Daniel Buren in Paris, Jan Dibbets in Amsterdam, Douglas Huebler in Los Angeles, Joseph Kosuth in New Mexico, Sol LeWitt in Düsseldorf, Richard Long in Bristol, N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. in Vancouver, Robert Smithson in Yucatan, and Lawrence Weiner in Niagara Falls.

September

Conceives and organises the participation of Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner in the exhibition *Prospekt '69* in the form of interviews published in the catalogue.

October

In collaboration with Dwan Gallery, New York, publishes Carl Andre's *Seven Books of Poetry*, with the artist's early poetry and journals.



2 November  
Organises 'Art Without Space', a debate with Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner broadcast on the progressive radio station WBAI FM.

17 November  
Organises and moderates 'Time: A Panel Discussion' with Carl Andre, Michael Cain (Pulsa), Douglas Huebler and Ian Wilson at the New York Shakespeare Theater in support of the Student Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam.

1970  
Founds International General, which publishes and distributes his past and future publications as well as, until 1971, artists' books by N.E. Thing Co. Ltd., Allen Ruppersberg and Ed Ruscha.  
Lives in Amsterdam for six months, a city he regards as an ideal base for traveling within Europe. Works on various exhibition and publishing projects and spends time with Jan Dibbets.

January  
Publishes Jan Dibbets's *Roodborst territorium/Sculptuur 1969*. *Robin Redbreast's Territory/Sculpture 1969*. *Domaine d'un rouge-gorge/Sculpture 1969*. *Rotkehlchenterritorium/Skulptur 1969*, a book in four languages documenting the artist's attempt to change the ecological environment of a bird living in Amsterdam's Vondel Park.

April  
Publishes *18 PARIS IV.70*, a catalogue in three languages of an exhibition organised by Michel Claura in Paris. Artists Robert Barry, Marcel Broodthaers, Stanley Brouwn, Daniel Buren, Jan Dibbets, Jean-Pierre Dijan, Gilbert and George, François Guinochet, Douglas Huebler, On Kawara, David Lamelas, Richard Long, Ed Ruscha, Robert Ryman, Sol LeWitt, Niele Toroni, Ian Wilson and Lawrence Weiner are invited to propose two projects before making a work for the exhibition.

July–August  
Publishes a catalogue-exhibition for *Studio International*, later issued as a hardcover edition entitled *July/August Exhibition Book*. *Juillet/Août Exposition Livre*. *Juli/August Ausstellung Buch*. Six art critics – David Antin, Germano Celant, Michel Claura, Charles Harrison, Lucy Lippard and Hans Strelow – are each offered an eight-page section of the magazine, for which they select the artists.

5–6 October  
Organises 'The Halifax Conference', a two-day programme of discussions held at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Invited participants produced exercises and propositions for students to experiment with. Participants include Carl Andre, Joseph Beuys, Ronald Bladen, Daniel Buren, John Chamberlain, Gene Davis, Jan Dibbets, Al Held, Robert Irwin, Roy Lichtenstein, Mario Merz,

Robert Morris, Robert Murray, N.E. Thing Co. Ltd., Claes Oldenburg, Larry Poons, Robert Rauschenberg, Richard Serra, Richard Smith, Robert Smithson, Michael Snow, Jean Tinguely and Lawrence Weiner.

#### 1971

After sending a questionnaire to over 500 people from the art world, drafts and publishes 'The Artist's Reserved Rights Transfer and Sale Agreement' with lawyer Robert Projansky. Also called 'The Artist Contract', it is distributed as a free fold-out poster in various languages and aims to improve, amongst other things, the protection of artists' rights, by demanding that the owner of a work ask for the artist's permission when it is publicly exhibited and that artists receive a 15% share of the profits when their work is resold.

#### July

Conceives the catalogue-exhibition documenting *The United States Servicemen's Fund Art Collection*. The USSF is an organisation promoting free speech within the US military and actively opposing the Vietnam War through cultural activities.

#### 1972

Withdraws from the art world. The Leo Castelli Gallery agrees to take on artists Robert Barry, Douglas Huebler, Joseph Kosuth and Lawrence Weiner. Following his growing interest in politics, does research into press organisations. Considers publishing a left-wing

newspaper in New York and opening a radical news agency in France, neither of which are realised.

Moves to Bagnole in the Paris suburbs to live with Rosalind Boehlinger, an art book distributor.

In the post-May '68 context in Paris, meets political activists and journalists with the intention of researching communication and culture.

Compiles and publishes the first issue of the bibliography entitled *Marxism and the Mass Media. Towards a Basic Bibliography*.

#### 1973

Founds the International Mass Media Research Center (IMMRC) in Bagnole, which publishes and collects books, magazines, manuscripts and documentation on left and progressive communication and ideology in over 50 countries. Situated in the office-warehouse owned by his partner Rosalind Boehlinger, the library is open to researchers and occasionally serves as a meeting place. IMMRC communicates and exchanges documents with international left organisations specialised in mass communication. Several of its publishing projects involve sociologist Armand Mattelart.

Receives the first item of his textiles collection – an arpillera sewn by the families of political prisoners in Chile – from art historian and friend David Kunzle. The collection now comprises 650 items including 15th- to 19th-century European silks, Peruvian and Coptic tapestries, Chinese and Japanese textiles,

barkcloth from Africa and Oceania, embroidery from around the world, headdresses and costume.  
A dialogue with Michel Claura is published in the French magazine *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire* under the title 'L'art conceptuel'.  
Compiles and publishes the second issue of *Marxism and the Mass Media*.

**1974**

Compiles and publishes the third issue of *Marxism and the Mass Media*.  
Publishes *Karl Marx & Frederick Engels on Literature and Art*, a compilation of 57 texts edited by Lee Baxandall and Stefan Morawski.

**1975**

Takes part as member of the French branch in the 11th Congress of the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IACRM) in Warsaw, an organisation advocating the protection of journalists, the right to free information, and the development of research and systematic study of communication and media.  
Travels to Portugal one year after the Carnation Revolution, where he talks to soldiers active in the revolution and tries to collect documentation for the library.

Publishes the first English translation of the essay *How to Read Donald Duck. Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* by Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart.

**1976**

Prepares the publication of two special issues of *Marxism and the Mass Media*, the first focussing on Africa and the Middle East and the second Portugal, which are not realised.  
Deposits his stock of Conceptual Art catalogues at Printed Matter, an independent bookshop, publisher, library and art space in New York.  
Compiles and publishes the second volume of *Marxism and the Mass Media* 4-5.

**1978**

Publishes the first volume of *Marxism and the Mass Media* 1-2-3.

**1979**

His daughter Nelly is born on 5 April.  
After four years of legal procedures, International General wins the lawsuit brought against it by Walt Disney Productions, on the grounds of fair use and First Amendment, for copyright infringements concerning the images reprinted in *How to Read Donald Duck*.  
Compiles and publishes *Communication and Class Struggle. An Anthology in 2 Volumes. 1. Capitalism, Imperialism*, the first volume of an anthology of 64 texts, with Armand Mattelart.

**1980**

Publishes *Marx & Engels on the Means of Communication (The Movement of Commodities, People, Information & Capital)*, a selection of 26 excerpts of texts edited by Yves de la Haye.



1982

Starts collecting books for a library and drafting entries for a historic bibliography of textile literature, focussing on the economic, social and political role of textiles as well as their aesthetic aspects. Researches this area independently for twenty years, with occasional advice from Dorothy Shepherd, Curator of Textiles at the Cleveland Museum of Art, and his friend Alan Kennedy, an antiquarian and expert in Asian textiles.

Starts buying textiles from antique dealers and at flea markets on a regular basis. Acquires a series of European silks, velvets, brocades and damasks dating from the 15th to the 19th century.

To finance the aforementioned collections sells rare books on the history of textiles and Islamic art to museums and private customers through International General. Holds a stock of nearly 1,500 titles, grouped in 24 categories.

1983

His daughter Jessica is born on 7 January. Compiles and publishes *Communication and Class Struggle. 2. Liberation, Socialism*, the second volume of an anthology of 64 texts, with Armand Mattelart.

Publishes *Rethinking Ideology. A Marxist Debate*, an anthology of 36 texts edited by Sakari Hänninen and Leena Paldan.

1984

Is asked by UNESCO to take part in a cooperative research programme on the social, economic and cultural

aspects of new communication technologies.

Publishes *Rethinking Marx. Toward a Dialectic Understanding*, an anthology of 51 texts edited by Sakari Hänninen and Leena Paldan.

1986

The IMMRC ceases its activities.

Founds the Center for Social Research on Old Textiles (CSROT), which groups together the library, bibliographic project and textile collection.

Publishes *Communicating in Popular Nicaragua*, an anthology of 13 texts compiled by Armand Mattelard.

1987

Publishes *Commodity Aesthetics, Ideology and Culture*, a compilation of 10 essays by Wolfgang Fritz Haug.

1989

Plans the publication of several books including *Catalogue of the IMMRC Communication Research Library. Volume 1*; Jean-Guy Lacroix and Benoît Lévesque, *Communicating in Quebec. The State of the Art*; Armand Mattelard, *Communication and Class Struggle. 3. New Historical Subjects*; Kazen Motamed-Nejad, *Communication in/on the 'Third World'. 1. National Development: A Critical International Bibliography*; André Pâquet, *Film and Politics. Toward an International Left Bibliography. Special Issue of Marxism and the Mass Media 8-9-10*; Fernando Perrone, *Portugal. Political Struggle and the Mass Media*. None are realised.

Wari woven textile fragment with priest figures and small bird pattern (close-up detail). Southern highland region, Peru. Ca. 1000. 57 × 36 cm. Alpaca wool. [ssr 576]











Compiles and publishes the third and last volume of *Marxism and the Media* 6–7. The complete series comprises 825 annotated entries listed by inventory number, subject, author and country.

Publishes *The Capitalization of Cultural Production*, an essay by Bernard Miege.

#### 1990

Moves to Amsterdam to live with Marja Bloem, Curator of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam.

Donates the IMMRC library to the International Institute for Social History (IISG) in Amsterdam with the aim of making it accessible to researchers. It comprises 1,760 books and documents as well as working notes for *Marxism and the Mass Media*.

Lends artworks from his collection to the exhibition *L'Art conceptuel, une perspective*, organised by Claude Gintz at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Gives an interview for the catalogue of the exhibition, which is generally considered to be the first major retrospective of Conceptual Art.

In collaboration with Marion and Roswitha Fricke, two art dealers in Düsseldorf, conducts the project *The Context of Art/The Art of Context*, in which 115 artists involved in one of the five most important exhibitions in 1969 are asked to reflect on changes in art, their lives and the art world since the 1960s. The results are published in various magazines in four different languages.

Starts using a computer.

#### 1996

Alexander Alberro, Doctor of Art History at the Northwestern University in Chicago, defends a thesis on *Deprivileging Art. Seth Siegelaub and the Politics of Conceptual Art* (published in 2003 under the title *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity*). As part of his PhD, he undertakes the crucial task of classifying Sieglaub's archives from the Conceptual Art period (1964–1972).

#### 1997

Compiles and publishes *Bibliographica Textilia Historiae. Towards a General Bibliography on the History of Textiles Based on the Library and Archives of the Center for Social Research on Old Textiles*, which comprises over 5,000 entries listed in the alphabetical order of the authors' names, with a general thematic index. It is an attempt at a world history of hand woven textiles.

#### 2000

Founds the Stichting Egress Foundation in Amsterdam, which brings together all his projects and collections.

Starts charting the bibliographical field and collecting books on theories of time and causality in physics, two topics which have fascinated him since his adolescence.

From 2000 onwards, is regularly invited by museums or magazines to discuss his role in the emergence of Conceptual Art.

2001

Publishes a facsimile of *Recherches sur le commerce, la fabrication et l'usage des étoffes de soie, d'or et d'argent et autres tissus précieux en Occident, principalement en France, pendant le Moyen Âge*, a book on the history and use of textiles written by Francisque-Michel and published in 1852/54.

2003

Between April 2003 and January 2004 travels to New Zealand and Australia, following the successive instalments of the exhibition *Colin McCahon A Question of Faith*, organised by Marja Bloem for the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam in 2002. Begins collecting tapa (barkcloth), during this prolonged trip.

2005

Prepares a CD-ROM version of the *Bibliographica Textilia Historica* allowing searches by keyword, which is not realised. Starts collecting headdresses together with Marja Bloem, from the Americas, Africa, the Middle East. Oceania and Asia.

2006

Stichting Egress Foundation gives support to various projects, including Primary Information, a publishing house for artists' books in New York; Kunstverein, an independent art centre in Amsterdam; and the contemporary culture index (ccindex), an online, open-access bibliographical database of international journals and periodicals.

Accepts a residency at the Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) in Oslo.

2007

Participates in the roundtable discussion 'From the Specific to the General. The Publications of Seth Siegelaub', with Alexander Alberro, Robert Barry and Lawrence Weiner, organised at the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), New York, by Christophe Cherix, Chief Curator of Prints and Illustrated Books.

2008

Launches the website <http://egressfoundation.net>. Is interviewed by Hans Ulrich Obrist for his book *A Brief History of Curating*.

2009

Sets up the Egress Art Law Resource Center, with lawyer and curator Daniel McClean, which focuses on critical legal issues around contemporary art and provides a forum for discussion. Lends 22 rare books on textiles and one poster to the exhibition *Art and Social Fabric* at the Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst Antwerpen (MUKKA). Gives a talk about his interest in textiles as part of the exhibition.

Artist Maria Eichhorn publishes *The Artist's Contract. Interviews with Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Paula Cooper, Hans Haacke, Jenny Holzer, Adrian Piper, Robert Projansky, Robert Ryman, Seth Siegelaub, John Weber, Lawrence Weiner,*

Jackie Winsor, discussing the impact of 'The Artist's Reserved Rights Transfer and Sale Agreement'.

*Chronology compiled  
by Sara Martinetti*

*Translated from the French  
by Boris Kremer*

2010

- Launches the *Bibliographica Textilia Historiae Database* on the website of the Stichting Egress Foundation, comprising 9,225 entries which are continually updated.
- Begins work to create a visual open-access database of the textile collection to be hosted by the Stichting Egress Foundation website.
- Accepts an invitation from Raven Row, London, to exhibit a selection of textiles from the CSROT collection at their exhibition space in 2012.

2011

- Presents 'How Is Art History Made?', the first project of the Egress Forum for Critical Art Studies, a research project on the socio-economic aspects of the art world, organised in association with the Kunsthalle Basel during the Basel Art Fair.
- The Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), New York, acquires 21 works from his collection of conceptual artworks and receives a donation of four works along with his archives of the period.
- Supervises the cataloguing of the CSROT historic textile collection by conservator Emmy de Groot in Amsterdam ahead of the exhibition at Raven Row.



# List of items in the exhibition organised by: Textiles, Barkcloth and other natural fabrics, Headdresses, and Books

## Textiles

- [SST 004] Woven chalice veil with multicoloured and gold floral motifs on white ground. France. Early 19th century. 57 × 55 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 005] Woven kaftan with embroidered pattern of flowers and knotted ribbons on striped ground. Turkey. Mid-19th century. 165 × 135 cm. Silk, cotton, metal thread, linen
- [SST 010] Woman's blouse with short sleeves, buttoned neck and white motifs on red ground. Romania, Hungary? 20th century. 53 × 70 cm. Silk, beads, metal snap buttons
- [SST 015] Embroidered panel with floral bas-relief pattern and arabesques on salmon-coloured ground. Germany? 15th–16th century. 26 × 240 cm. Silk, metal thread, paper, linen
- [SST 019] Lady's purse in Iranian silk with floral pattern. Iran, France. Early 19th century (textile), 1920s (purse). 14 × 24 × 10 cm. Silk, metal thread, cotton flannel
- [SST 020] Velvet gambling purse with embroidered floral motifs on red ground. Italy. 17th century. 15 × 6.5 cm. Silk, metal thread, spangles, wood
- [SST 021] Valance with embroidered floral pattern on red ground. France? 19th century? 28.5 × 252 cm. Silk, metal thread, spangles, linen, cotton
- [SST 022] Coverlet with geometric embroidered border on white ground. Scandinavia? Ca. 1900? 44 × 97 cm. Linen, cotton
- [SST 023] Embroidered coverlet. Scandinavia? 19th century? 48 × 48 cm. Linen, cotton
- [SST 029] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 20th century. 99 × 51 cm. Silk, metal strips, cotton
- [SST 030] Coptic tunic fragment. Egypt. 6th century? 92 × 9.5 cm (band), 5.5 × 6.5 cm to 9 × 25 cm (nine floral fragments), 10 × 5 cm to 17 × 6 cm (four plain fragments). Wool, linen
- [SST 032] Chasuble in green silk damasks with passementerie. Italy. 16th–17th century. 122 × 70.5 cm. Silk, linen
- [SST 033] Coverlet with geometric design. Greece? 19th–20th century? 44 × 33 cm. Cotton, linen
- [SST 034] Embroidered velvet bands (and seven loose ornaments) with yellow and white floral pattern on red ground. Spain. 17th century. Four bands from 5.5 × 111 cm to 5.5 × 323 cm. Silk, linen
- [SST 039] Pieces of chair upholstery (four seats, two backs) with floral pattern in stamped red wool (aka 'velours d'Utrecht'). France. 19th century. 65 × 72 cm (seats), 45 × 37 cm (backs). Wool
- [SST 041] Maniple in green silk damask with gold trimmings and twined fringes. France? Italy? 18th century. 106 × 25 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen
- [SST 043] Silk cannelé panel with small floral pattern on striped green ground. France. Mid-late 18th century. 66 × 63 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 044] Matching set of chasuble and dalmatic in red silk damask with passementerie. Italy? Turkey? Early 18th century. 123 × 74 cm (chasuble), 124 × 155 (dalmatic). Silk, metal thread, linen
- [SST 050] Embroidered piece of cotton with stylised red and green pattern. Rajasthan, India. Late 19th century. 199 × 119 cm. Cotton, floss silk
- [SST 051] Velvet panel with multicoloured pomegranate pattern on white ground. Italy? 19th century. 64 × 61 cm. Cotton
- [SST 053] Blouse with embroidered sleeves, neck and cuffs. Greece? Ca. 1900. 56 × 58 cm. Cotton, silk, buttons, hooks
- [SST 054] Piece of ciselé velvet upholstery with red floral pattern on cream ground. Italy. 17th century. 33.5 × 41 cm. Silk
- [SST 055] Chalice veil with red floral pattern. Italy. 18th century. 52.5 × 52 cm. Silk, linen, metal thread
- [SST 057] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 20th century. 80 × 43 cm. Cotton, silk thread, metal strips
- [SST 058] Embroidered coverlet with multicoloured floral motifs. Turkey. Late 18th century. 57.5 × 27.5 cm. Linen, silk, metal thread
- [SST 061] Tailored jacket (underjacket? bodice? camisia?) with long sleeves, embellished edge and small black heart motifs. Italy. 16th century? 53 × 28 cm. Linen, silk thread, modern buttons, hooks
- [SST 062] Backrest with velvet cushion with multicoloured floral pattern. Genoa, Italy. 17th century. 59 × 48 × 7 cm. Wood, silk, vegetal matter, linen, nails
- [SST 063] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 20th century. 109 × 43 cm. Linen, silk, metal strips
- [SST 064] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 20th century. 110 × 42 cm. Linen, silk
- [SST 065] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. 20th century. 159 × 21 cm. Silk, cotton
- [SST 067] Woman's headscarf for after a bath (aka 'benîqa') with multicoloured floral gold pattern. Algeria. 1800? 232 × 18.5 cm. Silk, cotton, metal thread
- [SST 068] Coptic tunic fragment with figures. Egypt. 4th–5th century? 39 × 20.5 cm. Wool, linen
- [SST 071] Book cover in brocaded silk with floral pattern and passementerie edging. Italy? 17th–18th century. 20 × 28 cm. Linen, silk, metal thread
- [SST 072] Embroidered coverlet with red floral pattern on white ground. Hungary? 1900? 37 × 36.5 cm. Linen, silk
- [SST 073] Piece of silk cannelé upholstery with multicoloured striped floral pattern on cream ground. Lyon, France. Late 18th century. 68 × 48 cm. Silk
- [SST 075] Chasuble in white silk damasks and a column and cross of multicoloured lampas with floral patterns. France. 1800. 113 × 68 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen, paper
- [SST 076] Chalice veil with red floral pattern on cream ground. Italy. 17th century. 57 × 52 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen
- [SST 078] Embroidered bib with floral pattern in relief on purple ground with lace, plaited bands and sequins. France. 17th century. 28 × 37 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 079] Multicoloured silk panel with floral pattern on white ground. France. 18th century. 114.5 × 27 cm. Silk
- [SST 080] Panel in shape of Christian cross with multicoloured floral pattern on red ground (probably from a chasuble). France. 18th century. 94 × 50 cm. Silk
- [SST 081] Green chalice veil. France. 18th century. 56 × 59 cm. Silk (perhaps synthetic), metal thread, chintz
- [SST 082] Red chalice veil with embroidered appliquée yellow and gold cross and gold lace border. Italy, France? 18th century. 57 × 53 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen
- [SST 083] Dalmatic with white and floral pattern and passementerie. France. 18th century. 118 × 104 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen
- [SST 084] Velvet panel with large gold pomegranate pattern on red ground. Italy. Late 15th century. 66.5 × 54 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen
- [SST 086] Portfolio with 50 samples of Japanese textiles. Japan (textiles), France (album). 16th–19th century (textiles), 20th century (album). Ca. 18 × 11 cm (each textile sample), 31 × 27 × 4 cm (album). Silk, metal thread (textiles), cardboard, paper (album)
- [SST 088] Silk panel with multicoloured floral motifs inside gold medallions on pink ground. France. Ca. 1800. 90 × 52 cm. Silk, metal thread, twill cotton

- [SST 090] Cope in red silk damask with multicoloured brocade ophreys and hood with floral pattern and passementerie. Italy? France? 17th century. 132 × 276 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen
- [SST 091] Embroidered hood from a cope? France. 19th century. Silk, cotton, linen, cardboard, metal thread
- [SST 092] Candy box from luxury Parisian confectionery ('A la Marquise de Sévigné') covered with floral patterned textile. France. Mid-19th century. 28.5 × 17 × 8 cm. Cardboard, silk, metal thread
- [SST 093] Front sections and collar from woman's embroidered vest with floral motifs on white silk satin ground. France. Mid-19th century. 50 × 22 cm (1/2 and 2/2). Silk, metal thread, beads, spangles
- [SST 094] Piece of cut voided green velvet with pomegranate pattern. Italy. 15th century. 37 × 58 cm. Silk
- [SST 096] Offcuts of green velvet with floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 74 × 100 cm. Silk
- [SST 097] Stole with embroidery on both sides on white and red moiré ground with twined fringes. France. 17th century. Ca. 1800. 240 × 25 cm. Silk, wool, cotton, metal thread
- [SST 098] Chalice veil with multicoloured and gold floral pattern on cream ground with double metal lacework border. France. 18th century. 53 × 60 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 100] Front part of dalmatic with white, gold and silver pomegranate pattern on yellow and silver ground. Spain. 15th–16th century. 72 × 54.5 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 101] Part of chasuble in blue silk damask with floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 123 × 29 cm. Silk
- [SST 102] Panel in red silk damask with floral pattern (probably from a chasuble). Italy. 16th century. 154 × 54 cm. Silk
- [SST 103] Parts of voided ciselé velvet chasuble with red floral pattern on gold ground. Italy. 17th century. Each 107 × 22 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 105] Panel of needle lace. Tunisia? Morocco? 19th century. 16.5 × 50 cm. Cotton
- [SST 106] Valences in red and white silk damasks with scalloped edging. Italy? 17th–18th century? 62 × 220 cm (1/3), 36 × 174 cm (2/3 and 3/3). Silk, linen
- [SST 115] Matching parts of velvet chasuble with red pomegranate pattern on white ground. Italy. 16th century. 111 × 28 cm (1/2), 62 × 19 cm (2/2). Silk, metal thread
- [SST 116] Piece of ciselé velvet upholstery. Italy. 17th century. 60 × 52 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 117] Part of green velvet chasuble with floral pattern. Italy? Spain? 15th century. 62 × 50 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 118] Panel in red silk damask with floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 94 × 23 cm. Silk
- [SST 119] Panel in red silk damask with floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 44 × 59 cm. Silk
- [SST 120] Panel in purple silk damask with floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 67 × 55.5 cm. Silk
- [SST 121] Green velvet panel with floral pattern on pink ground. Genoa?, Italy. 17th century. 33 × 57 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 122] Green velvet fragments with floral pattern. Genoa?, Italy. 17th century. 32 × 18 cm (1/6), 33 × 18 cm (2/6), 41 × 21 cm (3/6), 43 × 25 cm (4/6), 43 × 60 cm (5/6), 29 × 19 cm (6/6). Silk, metal thread
- [SST 123] Velvet panel with red floral pattern on white ground. Florence?, Venice?, Italy. 17th century. 84 × 32 cm. Silk, cotton lining, metal thread
- [SST 124] Coptic tunic fragment with decorative square and band with figures. Egypt. 5th century? 22 × 60 cm. Wool, linen
- [SST 125] Decorative band from Coptic garment. Egypt. 5th century? 58 × 14.5 cm. Wool, linen
- [SST 127] Maniple in yellow silk with multicoloured floral pattern. France? 18th century. 86.5 × 23 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 128] Fragment from embroidered appliqué panel with blue and white floral and gothic pattern. Italy. Early 16th century. 18.5 × 67 cm. Silk
- [SST 129] Front part of red velvet chasuble with pomegranate pattern. Italy. 15th century. 65 × 46 cm. Silk
- [SST 130] Panel in green silk damask with floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 99.5 × 18 cm. Silk
- [SST 131] Pieces of velvet with red floral pattern on gold ground. Genoa? Italy. 17th century. 101 × 33 cm (together). Silk, metal thread
- [SST 132] Woman's embroidered sleeveless blouse with white floral motifs on red ground and yellow edges. India. Late 19th century. 54 × 57 cm. Silk
- [SST 134] Chasuble of red and green silk voided ciselé velvets and lampas with passementerie. Italy. 17th century. 113 × 67 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen
- [SST 136] Matching parts from chasuble with white floral pattern on pink ground. Spain? Italy? Ca. 1600. 143 × 34 cm (1/2), 93 × 27.5 cm (2/2). Silk
- [SST 137] Coverlet with green floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 39 × 37 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 138] Piece of printed wool or cotton with green floral pattern (perhaps a 'velours d'Utrecht'). The Netherlands? 17th century. 88 × 19.5 cm. Wool or cotton, linen
- [SST 139] Piece of velvet wall covering with red floral pattern on cream ground. Italy. 17th century. 44 × 56 cm. Silk, linen
- [SST 142] Embroidered scarf with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 20th century. 80 × 80 cm. Linen, silk thread, metal thread
- [SST 143] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 20th century. 84 × 47 cm. Cotton, silk thread, metal strips
- [SST 144] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 20th century. 60 × 35 cm. Cotton, silk thread
- [SST 145] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 20th century. 82 × 59 cm. Linen, silk thread, metal thread
- [SST 147] Embroidered towel or sash with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. Early 20th century. 186 × 26 cm. Cotton, silk thread, metal thread
- [SST 148] Woven towel with multicoloured geometric floral edging and fringes. Turkey. 20th century. 120 × 47 cm. Cotton
- [SST 149] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 19th century. 135 × 42 cm. Linen, silk thread, metal strips
- [SST 156] Embroidered towel or sash with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 20th century. 155 × 21 cm. Cotton, silk thread
- [SST 157] Embroidered towel or sash with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 20th century. 144 × 22 cm. Cotton, silk thread, metal thread
- [SST 159] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. 19th century. 68 × 41 cm. Linen, silk thread, metal thread
- [SST 161] Embroidered towel with multicoloured stylised floral edging. Turkey. Early 19th century. 114 × 67 cm. Cotton, silk thread, metal thread
- [SST 163] Woven silk panel with green peacock and floral pattern on yellow ground. Spain? Italy? 17th century. 125 × 41 cm. Silk
- [SST 164] Pieces of woven silk with blue floral pattern on purple ground. Italy. 17th century. 102 × 51 (1/4), 80 × 25 cm (2/4), 46 × 25 (3/4 and 4/4). Silk
- [SST 165] Piece of red cut voided velvet. Italy. 16th century. 25 × 15 cm. Silk, linen?
- [SST 169] Woven silk fragment with stylised birds. Central Asia? Ca. 14th century. 17.5 × 27 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 170] Chasuble with floral pattern and passementerie. Spain? 17th century. 126 × 72 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen
- [SST 171] Pieces of yellow silk damask with pomegranate pattern. Spain. 17th century. 145 × 75 cm (1/4), 114 × 43 cm (2/4), 39 × 37.5 cm (3/4), 31 × 37.5 cm (4/4). Silk
- [SST 172] Dalmatic in red and orange silk damasks and passementerie. Spain. 18th century. 110 × 142 cm. Silk, linen
- [SST 175] Velvet coverlet with multicoloured floral pattern. Iran. 16th century? 60 × 44 cm. Silk

- [SST 176] Panels in silk damask (aka 'bizarre silk'). Italy? France? Early 18th century. 100 × 51 cm (1/2 and 2/2). Silk
- [SST 177] Panel in red silk damask. Italy. 17th century. 66 × 133 cm. Silk
- [SST 178] Piece of printed wool (aka 'velours d'Utrecht') with orange floral pattern. The Netherlands? 18th century. 92 × 50 cm. Wool, linen
- [SST 179] Coptic tunic fragment with decorative square and band. Egypt. Ca. 5th century? 61 × 51 cm. Wool, linen
- [SST 180] Chasuble in several multicoloured lampas with floral patterns and passementerie. France. 18th century. 107 × 67 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 181] Fragment of silk brocade with multicoloured floral pattern on gold ground. Krefeld? Germany? Northern Europe? 18th century. 21 × 24 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 182] Fragment of silk brocade with multicoloured floral pattern on gold ground. Krefeld? Germany? Northern Europe? 18th century. 19 × 16 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 183] Fragment of silk brocade with multicoloured floral pattern on gold ground. Krefeld? Germany? Northern Europe? 18th century. 15 × 17.5 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 184] Fragment of silk brocade with multicoloured floral pattern on gold ground. Krefeld? Germany? Northern Europe? 18th century. 20.5 × 17 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 185] Fragment of silk brocade with multicoloured floral pattern on gold ground. Krefeld? Germany? Northern Europe? 18th century. 39 × 26 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 187] Part of green chasuble with floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 104 × 25 cm. Silk
- [SST 188] Piece of woven silk lampas with multicoloured pattern on green ground (probably from a cope). France. Early 18th century. 79 × 72 cm. Silk
- [SST 189] Piece of purple silk damask with floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 69 × 51 cm. Silk
- [SST 190] Part of chasuble with red pomegranate pattern on cream ground. Italy. 16th century. 61 × 28 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 191] Part of chasuble with blue pomegranate pattern. Italy? Spain? 16th century. 60 × 42 cm. Silk
- [SST 192] Piece of silk and metal brocade with gold floral pattern on green ground. Russia? Ca. 1700? 27 × 32 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 193] Piece of silk damask with white floral pattern on pink ground. The Netherlands? 18th century. 64 × 50 cm. Silk
- [SST 195] Piece of yellow silk damask with floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 33.5 × 56 cm. Silk
- [SST 196] Piece of brocatelle wall covering with light brown floral pattern on yellow ground. Spain? Italy? 17th century. 86 × 32 cm. Tussah (wild silk)
- [SST 197] Velvet panel with red and gold pomegranate pattern. Italy. Late 15th century. 82 × 70 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 199] Silk and cotton satin coverlet with central brocaded motif of a triangle with a Hebrew word, surrounded by a wreath of clouds, rays and floral motifs. France? Ca. 1800? 132 × 35 cm. Silk, cotton, metal thread, fleece
- [SST 200] Embroidered pillow case. Fez, Morocco? Late 19th century. 54 × 130 cm. Cotton, silk thread
- [SST 201] Chasuble in different silk damasks with gold passementerie. France. 18th century. 117 × 64 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen
- [SST 203] Chasuble in green silk damask with gold passementerie. Italy. 17th century. 102 × 62 cm. Silk, metal thread, cotton
- [SST 206] Piece of multicoloured silk with floral pattern on white ground. Italy? France? 18th century. 25 × 54 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 207] Red velvet fragment with embroidery. Italy. 15th century. 16 × 20 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 208] Piece of green silk damask with floral pattern. Italy. 17th century. 30 × 43 cm. Silk, wool
- [SST 209] Fragment of multicoloured silk lampas. France? 18th century. 34.5 × 21.5 cm. Silk
- [SST 211] Panel in silk damask with yellow floral and crown pattern on red ground. Spain? Italy? 17th century. 86 × 54 cm. Silk
- [SST 212] Velvet panel with multicoloured floral pattern ('jardinière' motif) on white and silver ground. Genoa? Italy. 17th century. 72 × 46 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 216] Piece of silk damask with silver and gold floral pattern on blue ground. Venice? Italy. 18th century. 48 × 66 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 217] Piece of silk damask with yellow floral pattern on green ground. Spain? Italy? 17th century. 51 × 53 cm. Silk
- [SST 218] Piece made from small fragments of multicoloured silk with floral pattern on repped brown ground. Eastern Europe? 18th century. 34 × 49 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 219] Strip in blue silk damask with floral pink, white and gold pattern. Italy. Early 17th century. 15 × 210 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 220] Strip of silk velvet with red floral pattern on gold ground. Italy. Late 15th century. 81 × 10.5 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 221] Piece made from small fragments of silk damask with multicoloured floral pattern on white ground (probably from a cope or a chasuble). Spain? France? 18th century. 127 × 61 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 222] Piece of silk damask with multicoloured floral pattern on light red ground (probably from a religious garment). Venice, Italy? Spain? 18th century. 69 × 61 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 223] Part of velvet chasuble with small green stylised floral pattern on tan ground. Italy. 17th century. 79 × 33 cm. Silk
- [SST 224] Part of purple velvet chasuble. Italy. 17th century. 115 × 20 cm. Silk
- [SST 225] Decorative tapestry band from Coptic garment. Egypt. 8th–10th century. 43 × 18 cm. Wool, linen
- [SST 226] Coptic tapestry panel with a leopard and a tree. Egypt. 6th century? 21 × 21 cm. Wool, linen
- [SST 227] Coptic tapestry panel with warriors and a centaur. Egypt. 4–5th century? 15 × 15 cm. Wool, linen
- [SST 228] Coptic tapestry roundel with rabbits, a dog-like animal, and an angel. Egypt. 5th century? 26 × 26 cm. Wool, linen
- [SST 229] Woven striped Islamic textile fragment. Egypt. 12th–13th century? 17 × 25 cm. Silk, wool?
- [SST 230] Fragment of embroidered red silk. Assisi, Italy? Sicily? 17th century. 13.5 × 12.5 cm. Silk, linen
- [SST 231] Coverlet with embroidered border in red silk and lace. Assisi? Italy. 16th century. 32.5 × 41.5 cm. Silk, linen
- [SST 233] Tea cosy embroidered by Marja Bloem. The Netherlands. Ca. 1960. Silk, cotton or linen?
- [SST 234] Stole in green damask with floral pattern and silk fringes. France? Spain? Mid-18th century. 250 × 17.5 cm. Silk
- [SST 237] Chasuble with cross on the rear and embroidery of a lamb. France. 18th century. 109 × 64 cm. Silk, metal thread, linen, cotton
- [SST 238] Chancay woven textile fragment with bird pattern. Peru. Ca. 14th century. 41 × 23 cm. Wool
- [SST 239] Chancay woven textile fragment with blue thread in key fret pattern on brown ground. Peru. Ca. 1100–1300. 22.5 × 6.5 cm. Cotton
- [SST 240] Embroidered textile fragment with puma head pattern. Peru. Ca. 16th century? 13 × 29 cm. Wool
- [SST 241] Nazca printed gauze textile fragment with white square motifs on brown ground. Peru. 11th–12th century. 15 × 22 cm. Wool
- [SST 242] Woven textile fragment with geometric motif in red, green, blue and black on yellow ground. Peru. Ca. 16th century? 9.5 × 6.3 cm. Wool, cotton

Woven silk panel with green peacock and floral pattern on yellow ground (close-up detail). Spain? Italy? 17th century. 125 × 41 cm. Silk. [SST 163]











- [SST 243] Piece of red cut voided velvet with pomegranate pattern. Italy. 16th century. 55.6 × 21.3 cm. Silk
- [SST 244] Liturgical collar in green silk damask. Italy. 17th century. 24 × 59 cm. Silk, linen
- [SST 245] Woven Islamic? Textile fragment with blue stripes on white and blue diamond-shaped ground (probably from a burial site). Mediterranean. Ca. 10th–12th century? 18 × 30 cm. Linen
- [SST 246] Piece of red cut voided velvet on yellow ground. Italy. 16th–17th century? 26 × 58 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 247] Piece of red cut voided velvet with pomegranate pattern. Florence? Italy. 19th century. 27 × 62.3 cm. Silk
- [SST 271] Liao textile with seated Buddhas on lotuses. China? Tibet? 10th century? 33 × 26 cm. Silk, gilt leather strips
- [SST 272] Embroidered apron with multicoloured floral motifs on yellow ground. Sweden? France? Early 18th century 60 × 87 cm. Silk
- [SST 273] Silk lampas band with lotus pattern. China. 13th–14th century? 42 × 9.3 cm. Wool, cotton, linen
- [SST 275] Panel of cut voided velvet with red floral pattern on white ground. Turkey. Ca. 1800. 105 × 26 cm. Silk, cotton
- [SST 276] Fragments of silk with floral pattern. Italy? Spain? 17th century. 15 × 49 cm (1/4 and 2/4), 29 × 13 cm (3/4), 7 × 4 cm (4/4). Silk, wool
- [SST 277] Velvet panel with large floral pattern in green, red, blue and yellow on white ground. Genoa, Italy. 17th century. 172 × 60 cm. Silk
- [SST 278] Mamluk woven patterned band with blue geometric motifs. Egypt. 14th century. 25 × 2.8 cm. Wool, linen
- [SST 280] Strip of silk velvet with green floral pattern on pink ground. Italy. 17th century. 82 × 16 cm. Silk
- [SST 288] Embroidered piece made from several red silk fragments. Italy. 17th century. 26 × 66 cm. Linen, silk
- [SST 289] Piece of velvet made from several fragments. Italy. Ca. 1500. 24 × 51.5 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 290] Piece of dark red velvet with floral and arabesque pattern. Italy. 17th century. 54 × 47 cm. Silk
- [SST 291] Velvet panel made from several fragments with dark blue floral pattern on gold ground. Italy. 17th century. 82 × 41 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 362] Fragment of woven chiné à la branche silk ikat with stripes and multicoloured floral pattern. France. 18th century. 107 × 58 cm. Silk
- [SST 363] Piece of printed silk with lace pattern on beige satin ground. France. 18th century. 95 × 22 cm. Silk, pigment
- [SST 436] Piece of silk orphrey with images of the Annunciation. Siena, Tuscany? Northern Italy. Early 15th century. 18.5 × 52.5 cm. Silk, linen
- [SST 440] Piece of brocade silk border. Florence, Italy. Early 16th century? 46 × 20.5 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 443] Printed wool fragments sewn together (probably from a burial site). Gansu province, China. Six dynasties period (220–581 AD). 23 × 64.5 cm. Wool, pigment
- [SST 444] Woven silk fragment with lotus pattern. Gansu province, China. Six dynasties period (220–581 AD)? Liao period (916–1125)? 20 × 46 cm. Silk
- [SST 470] Printed silk crepe kimono with floral pattern. Japan. Ca. 1930s? 141 × 120 cm. Silk
- [SST 556] Chancay sack or handbag with animal pattern. Peru. Ca. 1300. 16 × 20 cm. Wool
- [SST 562] Chancay woven textile fragment with duck and bird pattern on brown ground. Peru. Ca. 900–1450. 59 × 28 cm. Wool
- [SST 566] Woven band with red castle, lion and griffon pattern on white ground. Perugia, Italy? 15th century? 9.8 × 35 cm. Silk, linen
- [SST 576] Wari woven textile fragment with priest figures and small bird pattern. Southern highland region, Peru. Ca. 1000. 57 × 36 cm. Alpaca wool
- [SST 578] Chancay tapestry-woven textile made from square fragments with geometric pattern. Peru. 12th–15th century. 47 × 23 cm. Wool
- [SST 615] Painted tapa vest (aka ‘Kalambi’). Dayak people, Borneo. 20th century. 64 × 46 cm. Tree inner bark, cotton
- [SST 623] Fatimid textile fragment (aka ‘tiraz’) with small bird and calligraphic pattern. Egypt. 10th–12th century. 25 × 36 cm. Linen, silk
- [SST 627] Chancay woven loincloth with stylised heads of ray fish pattern. Peru. Ca. 1000–1200. 37 × 33 cm. Cotton
- [SST 630] Embroidered face veil with multicoloured stylised patterns, ikat edge, cords and tassels. Tajikistan. Early-mid 19th century. 77 × 58 cm. Cotton, silk
- [SST 631] Ceremonial royal indigo dyed robe. Bamiléké people, Western Grassfields, Cameroon. Mid-20th century. 173 × 200 cm. Cotton
- [SST 638] Piece of dark blue silk with scrolling lotus and peonie pattern. China. Ming dynasty (1368–1644). 94 × 51 cm. Silk, metal thread
- [SST 641] Chancay woven textile made from square fragments with anthropomorphic figures. Peru. 900–1400. 48 × 37 cm. Wool
- [SST 654] Woven silk panel with embroidered multicoloured floral pattern on white ground with yellow band. Portugal. 18th century. 87 × 25.5 cm. Silk, linen
- Barkcloth and other natural fabrics**
- [SST 308] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 54 × 106 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 323] Woven and painted sack. Asmat people, Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 49 × 36 cm. Vegetal fibre
- [SST 390] Shaman’s woven net sack. Jali people, Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 67 × 40 × 2.5 cm. Nettleing, cocoons, animal fur, bones, claws
- [SST 391] Shaman’s woven net sack. Asmat people, Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 23.5 × 27 cm. Netting, feathers, shells, bones
- [SST 392] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 55 × 79 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 398] Painted tapa panel. Samoa? Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 300 × 500 cm. Tree inner bark, black and dark brown pigment
- [SST 399] Painted tapa panel. Tonga? Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 300 × 500 cm. Tree inner bark, black and red-brown pigment
- [SST 430] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 50 × 80 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 432] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 46 × 77 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 433] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 45 × 100 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 434] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 59 × 88 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 435] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 43 × 95 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 449] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 38 × 88 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 451] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 37 × 90 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 452] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ituri Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 46 × 74 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment



- [SST 453] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 47 × 87 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 454] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 43 × 68 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 498] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 46 × 89 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 501] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 54 × 86 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 505] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 46 × 89 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 506] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 53 × 89 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 510] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 52.5 × 78 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 512] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 45 × 94 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 514] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 49 × 102 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 518] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 44 × 78 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 520] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 54.5 × 62 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 521] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 45 × 88 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 525] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 57 × 82 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 528] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 35 × 88 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 548] Painted barkcloth panel. Mbuti people, Ilturi Forest, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 49 × 80 cm. Tree inner bark, black pigment
- [SST 616] Painted tapa sash. Sulka region, New Britain, Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 408 × 26 cm. Tree inner bark, pigment
- [SST 617] Painted tapa sash. Sulka region, New Britain, Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 270 × 29 cm. Tree inner bark, pigment
- [SST 618] Painted tapa sash. Sulka region, New Britain, Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 377 × 20 cm. Tree inner bark, pigment
- Headdresses**
- [SST 056] Embroidered velvet cap. Italy. Early 16th century. 18.5 × 17 × 4 cm. Silk, metal thread, spangles, linen
- [SST 296] Prestige ceremonial knitted headdress (aka 'Ashetu'). Bamiléké people, Western Grassfields, Cameroon. Mid-20th century. 20 × 25 × 25 cm. Cotton, wooden pegs (aka 'burls')
- [SST 300] Royal ceremonial headdress. Bamiléké people, Western Grassfields, Cameroon. Mid-20th century. 36 × 49 × 50 cm. Feathers, raffia
- [SST 303] Prestige ceremonial knitted headdress (aka 'Ashetu') with embroidery of a spider on front and rear. Bamiléké people, Western Grassfields, Cameroon. Mid-20th century. 19 × 25 × 22 cm. Cotton
- [SST 307] Ceremonial headdress on woven cap. Bamiléké people, Western Grassfields, Cameroon. 20th century. 12 × 35 × 35 cm. Feathers, raffia
- [SST 311] Ceremonial headdress on plaited conical hat. Naga people, Northeast India. 20th century. 21 × 18 × 18 cm. Animal hair, boar's tusks
- [SST 313] Headdress with animal hair on woven round structure. Bamiléké people, Western Grassfields, Cameroon. 20th century. 24 × 21 × 21 cm. Goat's hair?, raffia
- [SST 314] Ceremonial headdress with dyed red hair on plaited padded flat hat with tassels. Zulu people, South Africa. 20th century. 12 × 43 × 43 cm. Animal or human? hair
- [SST 321] Ceremonial embroidered headdress for carrying a water jug. Rabari people? Gujarat region, India. 20th century. 17 × 20 × 7.5 cm. Multicoloured dyed wool, mirrors
- [SST 325] Woven headdress. Bamiléké people, Western Grassfields, Cameroon. 20th century. 15 × 20 × 20 cm. Raffia
- [SST 327] Woven helmet. Mumuye people? Northern Nigeria. Early 20th century. 30 × 25 × 37 cm. Sisal
- [SST 328] Prestige ceremonial knitted headdress (aka 'Ashetu'). Bamiléké people, Western Grassfields, Cameroon. 20th century. 15 × 17 cm. Vegetal fibre, porcupine quills, feathers
- [SST 336] Royal multicoloured beadwork crown (aka 'Adenla' or 'Ade') with nine sculpted birds on conical structure. Ijebu, Idowa, Yoruba people, Nigeria. Mid-20th century. 77 × 23 cm. Beadwork, fibre
- [SST 341] Female headdress (aka 'Chi Wara' or 'Ci Wara Kunw') in form of stylised antelope mounted on basket-woven hat. Bamana people, Baninko region, Mali. 20th century. 111 × 28 × 35 cm. Carved wood, metal, cloth, string, cowrie shells, leather, horn
- [SST 343] Conical headdress (aka 'Kajawur') made of human hair spun into rope and wound onto bark frame. Aboriginal people, Mornington Island, Queensland, Australia. 20th century. 40 × 38 × 20 cm. Human hair, bark, clay, coloured pigments
- [SST 347] Cap made of small heavy round seeds woven together. Fali people, North Cameroon. Mid-20th century. 9 × 20 × 20 cm. Seeds, thread, pigment
- [SST 348] Painted calabash gourd woman's headdress. Goudour people, North Cameroon. 20th century. 14 × 22 × 27.5 cm. Calabash gourd, pigment, thread
- [SST 351] Crown made of indigo dyed hemp and beadwork on basketry woven structure. Bamiléké people, Western Grassfields, Cameroon. 20th century. 38 × 30 × 35 cm. Hemp, vegetal fibre, beadwork
- [SST 356] Hunter's headdress (aka 'Apatani') made of woven basketwork. Naga people, Northeast India. 20th century. 35 × 16 × 15 cm. Vegetal fibre, clawed foot, animal horn, hornbill feather
- [SST 359] Mitre-shaped crown or ceremonial headdress. Baule people, Ivory Coast. 20th century? 49 × 18 × 18 cm. Cotton, lion's claws, teeth
- [SST 373] Pointed hat. Columbia? 20th century. 53 × 15 × 16 cm (with an upturned brim of 11 cm). Natural fibre and form grown on a tree, i.e. not 'man-made'
- [SST 374] Feather headdress. Amazon Region, Brazil. 20th century. 47 × 36 × 31 cm. Multicoloured bird feathers
- [SST 394] Tiahuanaco? feather headdress. Peru. Ca. 100 BC–750 AD? 23 × 16 × 18 cm. Bird feathers
- [SST 395] Ceremonial dance headdress on painted wood structure. Tami Island, Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 54 × 17 × 46 cm. Wood, rabbit fur, feathers

- [SST 408] Embroidered cap. Uzbekistan? Central Asia. 20th century. 16 × 16 × 16 cm. Cotton, silk
- [SST 418] Embroidered cap. Turkmenistan, Central Asia. 20th century. 12 × 16 × 16 cm. Cotton?
- [SST 419] Embroidered ikat cap. Central Asia. 20th century. 26 × 16 × 16 cm. Silk
- [SST 442] Woven painted headdress. Vietnam. Early 20th century. 14 × 28 × 28 cm. Vegetal fibre, pigment
- [SST 445] Hunter's headdress or helmet. Lega people, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th century. 17 × 18 × 18 cm. Animal skin, leather straps
- [SST 457] Headdress with red dyed hair and feathers. Naga people, Northeast India. 20th century. 57 × 20 × 24 cm. Wicker, animal hair, hornbill feathers, boar's tusks
- [SST 480] Pair of chief's headdresses (aka 'Botolo'). Ekonda people, Democratic Republic of Congo. Early 20th century. 33 × 20 cm (1/2), 37 × 20 cm (2/2). Raffia, hammered copper
- [SST 486] Shinto headdress. Japan. 19th century. 35 × 22 × 22 cm. Sharkskin
- [SST 488] Carved wood helmet headdress (aka 'Kponiugo'). Senufo people, Ivory Coast. 20th century. 18 × 22 × 88 cm. Wood
- [SST 555] Ceremonial headdress. Kuba people, Democratic Republic of Congo. 20th Century. 23 × 34 × 30 cm. Wood, cowrie shells, beadwork
- [SST 559] Painted tapa hat. Eastern Indonesia? Papua New Guinea? Mid-20th century. 12 × 15 × 30 cm. Tree inner bark, pigment
- [SST 560] Woven fibre rain hat. Hill tribes, China? Japan? 20th century. 60 × 23 × 23 cm. Vegetable fibre (hemp?, coir?)
- [SST 561] Painted tapa headdress folded and held in shape by thin wooden sticks. Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea. 20th century. 35 × 27 cm. Tree inner bark, pigment
- [SST 593] Painted tapa headdress-mask stretched across wood frame. Baining people, East New Britain, Papua New Guinea. Early 20th century. 71 × 81.5 × 74 cm. Tree inner bark, black and red pigments, cord, wood (bamboo?)
- [SST 635] Bridal headdress with fibre surface and glass beads on wood structure. Miao people, Southeast China. Early 20th century. 35 × 57 × 33 cm. Bamboo (or bark?), cotton (or hemp?)
- [SST 642] Ceremonial headdress. Naga people, Northeast India. 20th century. 31 × 30 × 18 cm. Vegetal fibre, boar's tusks, dyed horse hair
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- [CSROT 2872] William Webster, *The Consequences of Trade, as to the Wealth and Strength of any Nation* (London: printed and sold by T. Cooper at the Globe in Pater-Noster-Row, 1740)
- [CSROT 2910] Clinton G. Gilroy, *The History of Silk, Cotton, Linen, Wool, and Other Fibrous Substances* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1845)
- [CSROT 2992] François-Alexandre-Pierre de Garsault, *L'art de la lingère* (Paris: De l'Imprimerie de L.F. Delatour, 1771)
- [CSROT 3026] Giuseppi Antonio Borgnis, *Traité complet de mécanique appliquée aux arts*, 2 volumes (Paris: Bachelier, Libraire, 1818/1820)
- [CSROT 3233] Charlotte Leander, Minna Korn, Louise Ockel (et alii), *Album der nieuwste en sierlijkste brei- haak- en knoopatronen voor huis en schoolgebruik* (Gorinchem: A. van der Mast, 1846?)
- [CSROT 3350] Malachy Postlethwayt, *The Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce*, 2 volumes (London: printed for John and Paul Knapton in Ludgate-Street, 1751/1757)
- [CSROT 4095] J. Decaisne, *Recherches anatomiques et physiologiques sur la garance, sur le développement de la matière colorante dans cette plante, sur sa culture et sa préparation, suivies de l'examen botanique du genre Rubia et de ses espèces* (Bruxelles: M. Hayez, 1837)
- [CSROT 4105] Anno Regni decimo septimo GEORGII III. CAP. XXXV. An act for further continuing an act (...) to prohibit the importation of foreign wrought silks and velvets, for a limited time; and for preventing unlawful combinations of workmen employed in the silk manufacture (London: printed by Charles Eyre and William Strahan, 1777)
- [CSROT 4200] Marx Ziegler, *Weber Kunst und Bild Buch* (Gedruckt zu Augsburg bey Jacob Koppmeyer in Verlegung Mattheus Schultes in Ulm, 1677)
- [CSROT 4250] Margaretha Helm, *Kunst- und Fleiss-übende Nadel-Ergötzungen oder neu-erfundenes Neb- und Stick-Buch* (Nürnberg: J.C. Weigel, ca. 1700)
- [CSROT 4305A] C.E. Jullien, E. Lorentz, *Nowveau manuel complet du filateur ou Description des méthodes anciennes et nouvelles employées pour la conversion en fils des cinq matières organiques, filamenteuses et textiles, savoir : le coton, le lin, le chanvre, la laine et la soie* (Paris: A la Librairie Encyclopédique de Roret, 1843)
- [CSROT 4690] Natalie Rothstein, *Silk Designs of the Eighteenth Century in the Collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, New York: Thames and Hudson, 1990)
- [CSROT 4800] Polydore Vergil, *Polydori Vergilii Urbinate de inventoribus rerum libri tres* (Impraessum Venetiis per Iohannem de Cereto de Tridino alias Tacuinum, 1503)
- [CSROT 5100] Center for Social Research on Old Textiles and Seth Siegelau (eds.), *Bibliographica Textilia Historiae. Towards a General Bibliography on the History of Textiles Based on the Library and Archives of the Center for Social Research on Old Textiles* (New York: International General, 1997)
- [CSROT 5113] Denis Diderot, Jean le Rond d'Alembert (eds). 'XVII. Découpeur et gaufrer d'étoffes', an unbound extract from: *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une société de gens de lettres* (Neufchâtel: Société Typographique?, 1779?)
- [CSROT 5264] Polydore Vergil, *Polydori Vergilii Urbinate de inventoribus rerum Libri VIII. Et de prodigiis Libri III* (Amstelodami: Apud Danielem Elzevirium, 1671)
- [CSROT 5550] Polydore Vergil, *Polidori Vergilii Urbinate de Inventoribus Rerum Libri Tres operosissima nuper cura emedati & severiore Lima q accuratissime expoliti* (Paris: Olivier Senant, ca. 1506?)
- [CSROT 5831] Francisque-Michel, *Recherches sur le commerce, la fabrication et l'usage des étoffes de soie, d'or et d'argent et autres tissus précieux en Occident, principalement en France, pendant le Moyen Âge* (New York, Amsterdam: International General, 2001)
- [CSROT 6060] Denis Diderot, Jean le Rond d'Alembert (eds.), 'Soierie', an unbound extract from: *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une société de gens de lettres* (Paris: Briasson, 1772)
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- [CSROT 6558] John W. Parker, *The Useful Arts Employed in the Production of Clothing*, 2nd edition (London: John W. Parker, West Strand, 1851)
- [CSROT 6854] Jean Paulet, *L'art du fabriquant d'étoffes de soie*, 2 volumes (Paris: Imprimerie de L.F. Delatour, 1773 et Chez Moutard, 1789)
- Ariel Dorfman, Armand Mattelart, *How to Read Donald Duck. Imperialist Ideology in the Disney Comic* (New York: International General, 1975)

All items courtesy the CSROT Historic Textile Collection and Library at the Stichting Egress Foundation, Amsterdam



*The Stuff That Matters*

Textiles collected by Seth Siegelaub for the  
Centre for Social Research on Old Textiles  
1 March to 6 May 2012

Curated by Sara Martinetti, Alice Motard  
and Alex Sainsbury

This publication complements the first  
exhibition of the CSROT Historic Textile  
Collection by considering the biography  
of its founder, Seth Siegelaub, whose  
lifelong interests, besides conceptual art  
practice and the politics of communica-  
tion, include the social history of hand-  
woven textiles.

The exhibition reflects, among other  
things, on the geographic and historic  
context of its setting. Situated in the former  
silk-weaving district of Spitalfields, Raven  
Row is housed in buildings on Artillery  
Lane, which in 1754 were converted by  
two Huguenot silk merchants into shops  
when the street's name was Raven Row.  
In 1766 an import ban on foreign woven  
silk helped develop a lucrative textile  
industry in Spitalfields. The end of this  
embargo in 1824, together with other  
factors, led to its collapse, leaving the area  
to fall into poverty until its proximity  
to the burgeoning financial services district  
allowed it to prosper again.

Exhibition designed by 6a architects

Publication coordinated by Kate Stancliffe  
Designed by John Morgan studio  
Printed by Lecturis

The colour images throughout this  
publication are details of textiles from  
Seth Siegelaub's collection for the CSROT.  
Courtesy Emmy de Groot.

Thanks to:  
Owen Watson, 6a architects  
Adrien Vasquez, John Morgan studio

Seth Siegelaub would like to thank:  
Dr Marja Bloem, Deputy Director  
of the Stichting Egress Foundation  
Emmy de Groot, Conservator of  
the CSROT Historic Textile Collection

Sara Martinetti would like to thank:  
Céline Flécheux  
Patricia Falguières

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& *Exhibitions Organiser*  
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Wednesday to Sunday 11am–6pm

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by guarantee number 5789471

ISBN 978-0-9561739-3-5

Woven silk panel with embroidered multicoloured floral pattern on white ground with yellow band  
(close-up detail of front and back). Portugal. 18th century. 87 × 25.5 cm. Silk, linen. [SSR 654]







