

Within the long-term programme on the Collector, Marres presents a new exhibition, this time exploring the elaborate collection of historic textiles assembled by Seth Siegelaub (1941, The Bronx) for the Center for Social Research on Old Textiles (CSROT). Currently comprising around 650 pieces, the collection includes woven and printed textiles, embroideries and costume, ranging from fifth-century Coptic to Pre-Columbian Peruvian textiles, late medieval Asian and Islamic textiles, and Renaissance to eighteenth-century European silks and velvets. At Marres, a selection of 50 items will be shown alongside art works.

After running his own gallery in New York from 1964 to 1966, Seth Siegelaub played a pivotal role in the emergence of what became known as Conceptual Art, which resulted in a series of 21 art exhibitions in groundbreaking formats he organised between 1968 and 1971. In 1972 he turned away from art and moved to Paris. In the early eighties he began collecting textiles and books about textiles, and in 1986 founded the Center for Social Research on Old Textiles, which conducts research on the social history of hand-woven textiles.

As Siegelaub has explicated, the intimate relationship between textiles and society can be seen in the fundamental role textile played in the rise of the capitalist system and the industrial revolution. While the form and aesthetics of textiles are generally determined by the way they are manufactured, the specific selection of items in the exhibition at Marres is based on the abstraction of forms related to function. Amongst the items on display will be Barkcloth (tapa) and headdresses from the Pacific region (especially Papua New Guinea) and Africa.

The textiles in the exhibition will be shown alongside the works of three internationally acclaimed artists, Willem Oorebeek, Lucy Skaer and Christopher Williams. Their conceptual work reflects on notions of craftsmanship, industrial (re)production, modernity, appropriation and representation. Amongst the exhibited works will be a wall filling print work by Oorebeek and a rarely exhibited multi screen film installation by Lucy Skaer.

Tradition is the result of a collaboration between Marres, Centre for Contemporary Culture, Maastricht; Kunstverein Amsterdam; and Grazer Kunstverein, Graz, Austria. The exhibition will travel to Grazer Kunstverein in June 2013.

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