


Batik textile with wayang figure

Southeast Asian Collection

Accession Nr.:	65.13.1 
Type:	textile; puppetry and shadow play; textile arts
Date of production:	19th century
Place of production:	Java, Indonesia, Southeast Asia
Materials/Techniques:	textile, batik
Dimensions:	height: 37 cm width: 30 cm

On a rusty red base, in the center of a bright frame a shadow puppet figure (wayang kulit) become visible.

The art of batik has developed a carefully elaborated palette of forms and colours that vary from region to region, but there are also motifs reserved exclusively for monarchs. Another form of batik is created by the use of printing blocks ('cap').

Undoubtedly, Java has long been a batik stronghold. The technique consists of first sketching the desired pattern on an uncoloured canvas, then using a special tool called 'canting' to wax the areas to be left uncoloured. The fabric is then dipped into the paint where the wax layer protects the area it covers. The wax is then melted off in hot water, allowing the empty part to be coloured.

