

GARDEN OF COLORS

ART OF BULGARIAN TEXTILES

Bulgarian textiles along with other traditional crafts date back to the time of the Thracians and Romans who once lived on the land we call Bulgaria today. Bulgarian textiles include carpets, covers, clothing, and other weavings of intricate design and exquisite craftsmanship. Bulgarian carpet weaving is believed to have migrated from the nomads of central Asia. Over time, the skills, techniques, and designs they developed spread into Bulgaria, which, since it is adjacent to Turkey, functioned as a gateway for textiles from central Asia to Eastern Europe. Historians have found evidence of carpet making in Bulgaria dating back as early as the 9th Century, but a true industry for large carpets was established in the 18th and 19th Centuries. The art of weaving carpets and other kinds of textiles in Bulgaria thrived during Ottoman rule when textiles were



BULGARIAN TEXTILES consists of about 50-55 objects which represent traditions and culture of people living in Eastern Europe. Many of the textiles were handed down from generation to generation. Even today the tradition of a mother and grandmother giving a daughter a dowry including textiles is common practice.

immensely important both as decorative items and as practical floor coverings, insulation and blankets. Bulgarian carpets are known as kilims, a name universally given to flat tapestry-woven carpets. Kilims were first made in people's homes, but gradually transcended domestic production to a higher form which today is referred to by some as an art unto itself. Picasso, for example, once said, "If you're looking for something as beautiful as my paintings it would be a kilim." Materials for Bulgarian textiles traditionally came from the land and livestock exclusively, e.g., flax for linen, hemp, cotton, sheep and lamb's wool, etc. Bulgarian embroidery today remains particularly beautiful, with intricate geometrical figures, differentiated by localized decoration, techniques, colors, and design, with plant and geometric patterns and skilful technical needlework. Smaller Bulgarian textiles vary from aprons, waist-brands, towels, pillow-cases, bags, and belts.

BULGARIAN TEXTILES is being co-curated by the Bulgarian/American team of Kirilka Tsvetkova Pavlova, of Vidin, located on the Danube River in the region where Bulgaria connects with Romania and Serbia; and Neli Ljudmilova Ninova-Wagner, who lives and works about one hour north of Chicago, which is home to one of the largest population of Eastern Europeans residing in the U.S. today.

Contents: Fifty to Fifty-five Objects from Bulgaria, Labels, Introduction Panel
 Rental Fee: Eight-week venues or longer plus pro-rated transportation
 Gallery Space: Approx. 350-400 linear ft.; or +/-3,500 sq. ft.
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