

Basic Detail Report



Quilt (Ralli)

Date

late 20th Century

Medium

Cotton and silk

Description

Sindh Province in Pakistan is well-known for its textiles; the capital, Karachi, is an important center for textile production. Sindh embroidery utilizes an interlacing stitch

that may have been carried over from Germany and the Middle East when the state was conquered by the Umayyad Caliphate c. 695 AD. The practice of quilt making, however, may be as old as the 4th millennium BC. Ralli quilts are labor-intensive and culturally significant to the Sindhi people. The name comes from “ralanna,” a word meaning “to mix and connect.” Ralli are very personal to the women who make them, as designs and patterns are passed down through generations. Dyed cotton is cut into shapes that are joined together; often, the material will be recycled from other items, such as old clothing. Usually, one woman makes the top of the quilt; the process of stitching it together is the work of many women. Much like quilting traditions in other cultures, ralli assembly is a social event; songs, news, and conversation are shared in the process. There are a few different types of ralli: patchwork, appliqué, and embroidery. Embroidered quilts such as this one are only made by a select few nomadic groups and incorporate embellishments such as beads, mirrors, shells, and sequins.

Dimensions

29 1/2 × 39 in. (74.9 × 99.1 cm)