

Basic Detail Report



Blanket

Date

mid 20th Century

Primary Maker

Miao

Medium

Cotton and silk

Description

Many of the tribal minority groups of China and surrounding regions of Asian are prominent textile makers. Based on the similarities between the designs we see in this textile and other examples from the Bowers permanent collections, this was almost certainly made by the Miao people. The designs are primarily geometric, but a small blue element that is repeated several times may be an animal. The Miao are known to use more organic dyes and handwoven designs in the past. However, since mid-twentieth century, factory-made textiles became readily available and they were incorporated with traditional techniques. Miao girls learn to make textiles as early as six years old. With guidance from older sisters, mothers and grandmothers, numerous complex embellishing embroidery and dyeing techniques are learned, as are the foundations for producing textiles. These basics include picking and preparing cottons, raising silkworms and extracting their silk, producing yarns, dyeing fabrics and various special treatments to create textured, shiny and stiffened fabrics. By the time a girl reaches the marriageable age of sixteen, she will possess the skills to make clothing and textiles needed for herself and her family throughout life. The quality and skill of one's weaving and decoration is often a consideration for choosing a potential wife.

Dimensions

53 3/4 × 37 1/2 in. (136.5 × 95.3 cm)