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“Fowler in Focus: Courtly and Urban Batik from Java” Opens May 23 at the Fowler Museum at UCLA



Drawn from the Fowler Museum’s extensive holdings of Indonesian textiles, these eleven beautiful textiles offer fine examples of both courtly and urban batik from Java. The two contrasting styles—on view in *Fowler in Focus: Courtly and Urban Batik from Java* from May 23–Sept 5, 2010—equally testify to the remarkable free-form artistry that is the hallmark of fine hand-waxed batik.

Refined batiks from Java’s royal courts were highly localized cultural expressions made and used within the immediate neighborhood of the palace. In contrast, more brightly colored batiks made in urban workshops in the island’s North Coast trading ports demonstrate the highly cosmopolitan nature of those communities, serving such diverse purposes as Islamic banners for the Sumatran market (left) or altar cloths for Java’s Chinese residents.

The pieces on display range from an impressively large skirt cloth for a Javanese sultan to a slim and elegant silk scarf suitable for an itinerant entertainer or women of questionable repute. These works all date from the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries.

This exhibition is curated by Roy W. Hamilton, the Fowler Museum’s senior curator of Asian and Pacific collections, and is scheduled in conjunction with the major exhibition *Nini Towok’s Spinning Wheel: Cloth and the Cycle of Life in Kerek, Java* (on view August 1–November 30, 2010).

Fowler in Focus: Courtly and Urban Batik from Java will be on view in the Fowler in Focus gallery, the central space within the long-term exhibition *Intersections: World Arts, Local Lives*. Fowler in Focus is dedicated to rotating installations of new acquisitions, sub-collections, and particular artistic genres in the Fowler’s permanent holdings.

The Fowler Museum at UCLA is one of the country’s most respected institutions devoted to exploring the arts and cultures of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and the Americas. The Fowler is open Wednesdays through Sundays, from noon to 5 p.m.; and on Thursdays, from noon until 8 p.m. The museum is closed Mondays and Tuesdays. The Fowler Museum, part of UCLA Arts, is located in the north part of the UCLA campus. Admission is free. Parking is available for a maximum of \$10 in Lot 4. For more information, the public may call 310/825-4361 or visit fowler.ucla.edu.