

_boro bride 2018

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Anniversaries, like weddings, are happy occasions of celebration. I am thrilled and honored that my textile object *_boro bride 2018* was chosen to stand symbol to mark 60 honorable years of ICOM in 2022.

I found the historical “sleeves” at an antique store in Florence, Italy, in October 2013 when strolling in town after weaving class at Fondazione Lisio. The aura of the ragged and extremely worn out woolen over-pants (its original function), mended and patched on every inch, put me in awe. Today, the madly stitched knitted surface of my “bridal bolero” radiates calm, humility and reverence.

Back in Germany, after the Italian jacquard weaving sessions, I professionally removed unwanted dirt from the old pants at the Wuerttemberg State Museum. Coincidentally my 8-month traineeship in textile conservation took place just then...

Why *boro*? My education was in North East Asian Studies, mostly the study of culture in China, Japan and Korea. The unspectacular textile world of the common man in Japan, the *mingei*-tradition, is close to my heart. I especially admire simple ingenious references to surface-manipulation when material was scarce. It is said that the first *boro*-pieces were created by poor fishermen in Hokkaido sometime in the 19th century, out of pure necessity. The small pieces of indigo-dyed cotton fabric that traders brought as rags to the northern island were special and worthy of use, therefore used. Also the inherent Japanese principle *mottainai* plays a role in the textile philosophy of sustainability and frugality. *Boro* is literally multilayering: in meaning and technique, as well as visually. Today old *boro*-blankets or farmer’s coats are coveted objects in textile galleries and museum-collections. The awareness started around 2000 in France and quickly travelled to New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. Today there are art historians specializing in *boro*-items. Flea market merchants in Japan know to demand high prices when over 100-year-old patched pieces change owners.

In closing, if for my *_boro bride* “something new something old something borrowed something blue” needs clarification:

The boro-bolero is **old**. **New** is the ad hoc tulle-skirt I made of simple strips of tutu-fabric hung on an elastic band at the waist. I **borrowed**, for an undetermined time, the embroidered Indian silk blouse from a friend. And, **blue** is visible, though in a light and tender hue.

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