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HISTORIC PALESTINIAN EXHIBITION OPENS AT CAFAM

July 16 – October 8, 2006

The Craft and Folk Art Museum presents ***Sovereign Threads: A History of Palestinian Embroidery***, the first museum exhibition of Palestinian embroidery in Los Angeles. This exhibition traces the history and development traditional Palestinian costumes and provides a rare chance to see a diverse collection of ancient bridal dresses, jewelry, and contemporary home crafts. A tradition rooted in ancient times, and passed down from mother to daughter over centuries, the embroidered works are a potent visual symbol of national identity and reflect an enduring Palestinian cultural heritage despite a displaced population.

Featured will be costumes from different villages in the regions of historic (pre-1948) Palestine including Ramallah, Jerusalem (Al Qods), and Bethlehem from the collection of Farah and Hanan Munayyer, founders of the Palestinian Heritage Foundation. The bridal dresses, headpieces, and jewelry on display date as early as 1850 and are a rich display of colors, textiles, and handcrafted design.

Also on display will be contemporary works created by Palestinian women who currently live in Lebanese refugee camps. CAFAM has partnered with The Association for the Development of Palestinian Camps, a UN-recognized organization, to make the contemporary embroidery available for sale, with all proceeds going to support human services such as kindergartens and youth centers in the refugee camps. Founded in Lebanon in 1969, The Association aims to improve the living conditions in the camps by creating jobs for women and to preserve Palestinian cultural heritage.

Huguette Caland, artist and INAASH co-founder, who now lives and works in her Venice, CA studio, has been instrumental in organizing this international collaboration. “The motifs in Palestinian costumes and embroidery are some of the most beautiful in the world and have influenced textile and fashion designs for years,” Caland states. Adds Museum Director, Maryna Hrushetska, “*Sovereign Threads* is a testament to the power of folk art in the preservation of cultural identity. As a nation in waiting, an expression of Palestinian culture preserves not only their history, but also guarantees their future identity”.

The exhibition, co-curated by Hanan Munayyer and The Association for the Development of Palestinian Camps, opens on July 16, 2006 and runs until October 8, 2006. An opening reception for members and VIP guests was held on July 15th.

This exhibition is funded by Folk Art Council of the Craft and Folk Art Museum, Ibrahim AlHusseini, in honor of his father, Ameen AlHusseini, Anonymous donor, Palestinian American Women’s Association, and A. M. Qattan Foundation, supporting culture and education in Palestine and the Arab World.

About CAFAM:

The Craft and Folk Art Museum (CAFAM) is a Los Angeles nonprofit cultural arts organization dedicated to the public presentation and preservation of folk arts and contemporary craft. Founded in 1965, originally as “The Egg and The Eye” by the late Edith Wyle, who passionately promoted traditional artisans and the virtue of handmade art the Museum opened in 1974. As a local Museum with global reach, CAFAM seeks to promote international goodwill and global understanding among its citizens. The Museum works to preserve and strengthen the folk culture of our community based on its belief that the quality of urban life is directly related to the vitality and diversity of viewpoints and traditions.

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High and low-resolution digital images are available upon request.

Museum Information:

Craft and Folk Art Museum, 5814 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90036

Information: 323-937-4230 / www.cafam.org

Museum Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 11 am – 5 pm
Thursday 11 am – 7 pm
Saturday and Sunday 12 – 6 pm

Museum Admission: General \$5.00 / Students and Seniors 3.00 / Members and Children under 12 Free / Free 1st Wednesday of month



El Khalil region
Headscarf, circa 1930s
Linen fabric embroidered in silk crosstitch
F. and H. Munayyer Collection
Image (c) Palestinian Heritage Foundation



Jaffa region
Black ceremonial dress from Beit Dajan, circa 1940s
Linen embroidered in silk crosstitch; front silk panel embroidered in couching stitch
F. and H. Munayyer Collection
Image (c) Palestinian Heritage Foundation



Wiqayah headpiece from Ramallah, 1940s
Silk fabric, iron jewelry, Ottoman coins
F. and H. Munayyer Collection
Image (c) Palestinian Heritage Foundation



Sovereign Threads: A history of Palestinian Embroidery
Exhibition view at the Craft and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles