Le Cachemirien

Beauty is an inexhaustible source of joy

Indian Textile Art a personal interpretation from 1994 to 2014

Le Cachemirien was a discreet and elegant address of Saint Germain des Près, a gallery devoted to Indian textile art where women and men of refined taste held conversation over a cup of tea, discussing interlinked topics relating to art and life, in the way fabrics are woven. It had become a prized halt for a circle of initiated from New York, Milan, London, Berlin, Tokyo and of course Paris.

The gallery harboured treasures of Indian textile art, like the Tawiz shawl inspired by the talismanic fabrics of the Ottoman Empire, or the Dhardar stole in pure pashmina, with the checks of Karnataka's cottons, astonishingly modern.

Here khadi silk, symbol of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence, were neighbours with the organza embroidered by hand in Kerala's convents; unique Kashmir shawls were exhibited with the finest cotton muslins; silk brocades reflecting the lights of Benares, as well as Jamdanis, woven air from Bengal, mingled with spuruk and nambu, woollen felts from the Himalayas, rough and soft at the same time. All of them were spun, woven and embroidered by hand according to ancient tradition.

For the neophyte or the expert who stepped over its threshold, Le Cachemirien provoked strong emotions with the subtle alchemy that existed there between age old traditions and a modern, personal outlook.

Each season evoked a theme, put forward a region, gave preference to certain materials, perpetuating the soul of a deep crossover.

Passion & Inspiration

Here dwelled the spirit of an inspired designer, Rosenda Arcioni Meer, a graduate of the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York, who first went to India in the late eighties to marry the descendant of an old family from Kashmir.

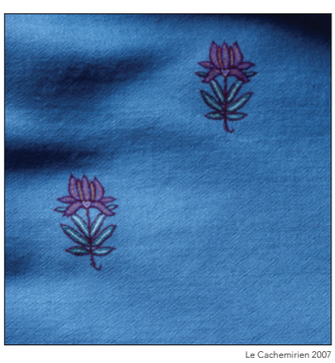
"As a wedding gift, I received the cultural heritage of a country previously unknown to me and I discovered a unique savoir-faire. In the course of my long stays and innumerable journeys, I have met master weavers, dyers, embroiderers and I have been fascinated not only by their knowledge, but also by the philosophy that sustains it, a devotion to the craft, a meditative approach of their work. Respectful of their genius and desiring to make it known, I have started submitting my designs to them asking and obtaining their best. Together we have given life to a modern yet timeless interpretation of their craft and make scarves, stoles, shawls, drapes, throws, as well as coats and jackets, out of the most exquisite quality of cashmere, entirely worked by hand.

And because India in its entirety is the reservoir of the most exquisite textile traditions, I have ventured into other regions in quest of beauty as if in a spiritual quest, and I have discovered rare gems of fiery brocades, loom embroidered diaphanous muslins and more. Often, I drape those fabrics, sculpting them into one-off garments made according to the intrinsic virtues of each textile, its character, its history, its fall, its finesse, the embroidery or motives it carries. One must tune in with those fabrics in order to express their truth avoiding denaturing them.

In this very physical relation with cloth, I reveal my interiority, constantly searching for the perfect balance between East and West, the feminine and the masculine, light and shade, looking to quench my thirst for harmony. Therefore I conceive clothes that breathe, vibrate and belong to the wearer like a second skin.

In my experience, interpreting Indian textiles is like pulling a golden thread between two worlds and stitching peace flags."

Textile Art



Le Cachemirien 2007

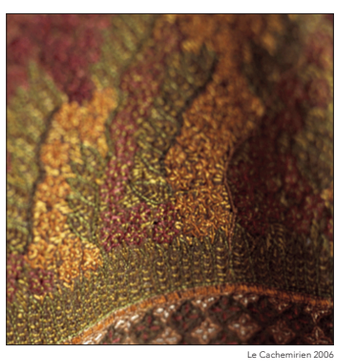
Spring

Iris, a Kashmir shawl made of pure superior cashmere called pashm, the undercoat of the hircus goat. It has been cleaned, carded and spun by hand by Kashmiri women, while male artisans have woven and dyed the pashmina, the cloth made of pashm. Finally, embroiderers have embellished it by hand with needle and silk threads following the original drawing we have submitted.

Le Cachemirien 2008

Summer

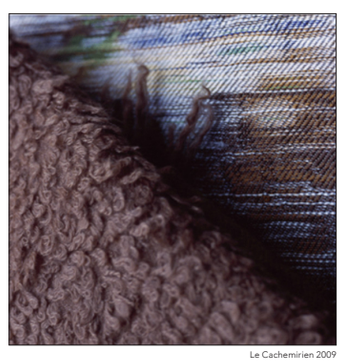
Pamposh, a summer coat made of pure, superior cashmere called pashmina. It has been embroidered by hand with silk threads by master craftsmen affiliated with Le Cachemirien because capable to interpret Rosenda's designs.
The Pamposh duster is lined with pale apricot caress silk and has taken two years for one embroiderer to complete.



Le Cachemirien 2006

Autumn

Jungli, henna green coat made of pure cashmere called pashmina.
This coat has been entirely made by hand according to a centuries' old tradition, heritage of the Kashmiri craftsmen who collaborate with Rosenda Meer.
She drapes and cuts each model and draws all the embroidery motives.
This one of design is lined with cherry red silk.



Le Cachemirien 2009

Winter

Ovis, a Kashmir shawl made of pure pashmina. This superior quality of cashmere has been cleaned, carded and spun by hand by Kashmiri women. It took each of them 2 days to clean by hand 50gr. of the fleece. Our male weavers have used a special technique to obtain the curly effect. Because of the sheer quantity of pashmina used for it, this particular weave is extremely warm.

Le Cachemirien 2008

Dawn

Kanderdar, this Kashmir shawl in natural ivory colour made of pure pashmina is a perfect marriage gift. Exquisitely hand embroidered with silk threads by her artisans, the rosette motive conceived by Rosenda Meer evokes the rose windows of the cathedrals, nonetheless showing its inkling to Islamic art.

Le Cachemirien 2006

Waking Up

Kashir, the kani shawl in the background is a true feat of textile art. The abstract landscape, representing the valley of Kashmir, has been woven following an original drawing by Rosenda Meer who, in this case, took liberties with tradition.
On the floor, **Agra**, a silk jacquard weave from Benares.
The young woman wears a reversible silk muslin tunic called **Hawa** with hand rolled hem.
On her shoulder a draped **Axi**, a pure pashmina reversible stole, woven and embroidered by hand with a reversible silk motif.

Dreams

Girasole, a dress in muga silk, hand spun and hand-woven material that owes its golden hue to nature.
This one of dress is worn over a silk crepe bias cut underdress.

Le Cachemirien 2008

Le Cachemirien 2005

The Dragon

Persepolis, a silk crepe night blue dress with jewel like cuffs, embroidered by hand with silver thread by one of the last masters of a disappearing art in Kashmir.

Le Cachemirien 2006

The lions of Kashmir

Sher-y-Kashir, a pure pashmina mauve shawl. After having been cleaned, spun and woven by hand the material has been embroidered by hand as well. The motif is a free interpretation by Rosenda Meer of a miniature that belongs to the Agha Khan's collection.

Little White Riding Hood

Chanddar, cut in a white cotton muslin jamdani sari, hand brocaded with silver thread, this hooded short jacket is embellished with a series of small mother of pearl buttons and handmade loops on its front and sleeves. It belongs to a one of two-piece outfit.

The Moon Dress

Under the hooded short jacket, this long dress, with wide silver straps and a drape in the back, envelopes the body like a cloud.

Le Cachemirien 2005

Le Cachemirien 2007

The Princess

Galliera, timeless elegance for this one of dress and coat outfit, draped and cut by Rosenda Meer in a satin silk sari with brocaded roses and golden borders from Benares.

Le Cachemirien 2008

The Quest for the Golden Thread

Shabnam, as delicate as morning dew, this dress made of an iridescent silk sari, hand brocaded with gold thread in Benares, testify of the house true know-how, namely the "translation" of the sari into western wear that does not betray the oriental costume, nor wastes any of its precious fabric.

Le Cachemirien 2004

The Shepherd girl

Sani, in śpuruk lined with natural pashmina, this one of coat is entirely made by hand.
On the background, **Char Mosoom**, the fours season coat in pure natural white pashmina is a perfect interpretation of Rosenda Meer's drawing. Completing its embroidery done by hand with silk threads has taken almost three years.

The Philosopher

Nagar, a Tibetan red jacket made of śpuruk that means fur in Zanskari. This non-violent fur is a rare material that Rosenda Meer finds in the Himalayan region of Ladakh. It is hand śpun and hand-woven wool that

is then boiled, brushed and beaten to obtain a narrow weave as warm as fur. This unique jacket is lined with khadi silk, the cloth of freedom.

Le Cachemirien 2009

Le Cachemirien 2008

The Dance

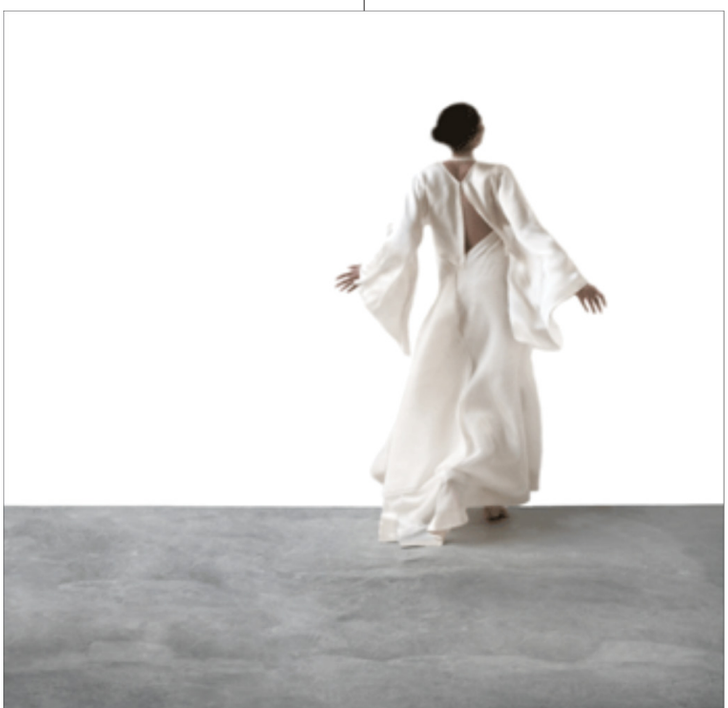
Dervish, a three-piece outfit made of a side open shirt with jewel buttons in turquoise and gold, a wide skirt with a finely pleated waist and a large white hem and a short jacket in natural white śpuruk and khadi silk

The Cloud

A headgear, worn with the wedding dress in silk satin and brocaded organza.

Freedom

La Sposa. A wedding outfit consisting in a silk satin bias cut sheath dress, a short jacket with butterfly sleeves closed in the back with a row of numberless real pearl buttons, a long skirt and a headgear cut in a brocaded organza silk sari.



Le Cachemirien 2006

Le Cachemirien has turned off the lights of the gallery Rue de Tournon
in 2014 and ceased all commercial activity.
The content above bears witness to the power of the creative process,
when life is the inspiration.