



ART AND FABRICS

Precious velvet and silk fabrics have always been luxury goods. Their role was to set an artistic stage by means of clothing or interior decoration so as to emphasise the exceptional importance of their owners.

Elaborately patterned textiles for wall coverings, curtains or furniture upholstery were among the most expensive decorative elements used in castles, palaces and churches.

The "Kunst.Stoff" collection, which is part of the Textile Museum in Mindelheim, is dedicated to this area of cultural history and presents a lavish display of shapes and colours. It focuses on silk fabrics from France, Italy and England, as well as other precious textiles dating from the 17th to the 19th century.

WOVEN FABRICS

Weaving is one of the oldest textile techniques. It was used to make clothes to protect the wearer against the cold and other environmental influences. Woven fabrics soon gained another function – of visualising differences in rank. High-quality linen fabrics, fine velvets and imaginative silks are displayed in the Textile Museum to illustrate the skill of the designers and weavers.

At an interactive station, you can try your own hand at creative weaving.

PARAMENTS

Paraments are ecclesiastical vestments for Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. In addition to ceremonial robes made for secular rulers, paraments are among the most prestigious textile objects ever created, both in the past and the present. For this reason, the most expensive velvet and silk fabrics were generally used in the making of paraments, which were often additionally decorated with silver and gold threads. Consequently, they are considered highlights of textile art and are some of the most outstanding exhibits in the Textile Museum.

Translation: Catherine Taylor

Museums in the former Jesuit College building
 Textile Museum – Sandtner Foundation
 Swabian Nativity Museum
 Southern Swabian Archaeological Museum
 Carl Millner Gallery – Romantic Landscape Painting
 Opening hours: Tues. to Sun. 10 a.m. – 12.00, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
 and by arrangement

The Museum of Local History is temporarily closed

Swabian Tower Clock Museum
 in the former St Silvester's Chapel
 Opening hours: Wed. 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
 last Sunday in the month, 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
 and for groups by arrangement



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FANS FROM THREE CENTURIES

For centuries, fans had an important and special role in fashion. Since ancient times, they have been known as a sign of distinction for rulers. Fans first emerged as fashion accessories in Italy in the 14th and 15th centuries. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the folding fan developed into one of the most important and sophisticated elements of fashion. At the courts of the late Baroque and Rococo periods, the fan became an instrument of coquetry and covert discourse par excellence. The museum holds a collection of fans including folding, feather and brisé fans from Europe and Asia, dating from the Rococo period to the present day. Most of them depict little episodes in finest paintings on the fan leaves, which are supported by thin rods of ivory or mother-of-pearl in delicate openwork carving.

GOBELINS – TAPESTRIES

The small ceremonial hall of the former Jesuit College with its Late Baroque Wessobrunn stucco is an appropriate setting for displaying large gobelins – tapestries – from the 17th and 20th centuries. Tapestries served exclusively as wall decorations in churches, residences and castles. They were regarded as the most valuable of all decorative elements because their production was very elaborate and costly. They therefore enhanced the prestige and wealth of their owners. Tapestries are made on horizontal or vertical looms using the old technique of pictorial weaving, which had developed from the original weaving technique. Like paintings, they depict events from history or mythology, or show religious scenes. Not only tapestries, but also some examples of tapestry embroidery are on display, which appear similar only at first glance.



FASHION-CHARLES FREDERICK WORTH

The huge collection belonging to the Textile Museum covers all areas of textile art, including fashion. Bodices, dresses, "costumes" (two-piece garments), as well as festive robes and outfits are presented in the first department of the museum. The theme here is the development of women's fashion from the Rococo period through the Empire and Biedermeier eras to the sassy 1970s. Particularly noteworthy are several sophisticated robes created by the founder of haute couture, Charles Frederick Worth (born 1826 in Lincolnshire, died 1895 in Paris). His creations and new marketing ideas revolutionised women's fashion in the period after 1850 and made Paris the international centre of fashion development. His successors include famous fashion designers such as Dior, Heinz Oestergaard, Gucci and others, some of whose exhibits are also on display.

FASHION ACCESSORIES

What would women's fashion be without matching accessories? These small clothing enhancements – sometimes necessary, sometimes purely decorative – complete a lady's appearance throughout the respective eras. Changes in fashion penetrated into the smallest details of the garments and altered their appearance to suit the style of the day. The Textile Museum therefore also dedicates space to this important area of fashion. The items on display include the indispensable ladies' hats, elegant lace umbrellas with ivory handles, bags, pouches, stockings and shoes. In past centuries, gloves that were so tight that they had to be stretched before wearing were part of the basic wardrobe of an elegant woman. The accessories on display cover the eras from the Biedermeier period (early 19th century) through to the 20th century.

EMBROIDERY AND NEEDLEPAINTING

One of the most traditional and versatile textile techniques is embroidery, which has been known for about as long as weaving. For this reason, precious examples from this area of fashion and textile arts are displayed in the museum. Embroidery can also be described as painting with needle and thread, and is used exclusively for decorative purposes. The Textile Museum presents an opulent overview of the art of embroidery in all techniques from the 17th to the 20th century, from white embroidery to subtle works with gold threads. The exhibits include elaborate samplers, which served as proof of the artist's personal skill, robes, richly embroidered cloths as well as fashionable ribbons. These finest works created only with needle and thread, which include examples of what is known as needlepainting or silk shading, never cease to fascinate.

LACE IN ALL ITS VARIATIONS

Since the early 15th century, bobbin lace and needlepoint have been created as particularly delicate works of textile art. Starting from the early centres of lace making in Italy and Flanders, these techniques spread rapidly throughout Europe. They were so highly valued that, in the 17th century, a life without lace did not seem worth living. They gained a status comparable to that of precious jewellery. Even in the 19th century, lace was still considered to be an indispensable part of fashion. The extraordinary variety of lacework exhibited in the museum ranges from around 1600 to the 20th century. On display are delicate works of high aesthetic standards, as well as works commissioned by princely and royal courts. A comparison with paintings of the day clearly shows how lace was worn as a collar or as decoration for the décolleté.

