

ACM WONDERS

Suitable for ages 13 and up

ACM

BREECHES

Tailored in Indonesia with silk patola made in Gujarat, India, about 200 years ago.

Background Information

These loose fitted breeches (knee-length trousers) have a wide waist band, and legs edged with gold and silver braids. They are decorated with an eight-pointed star pattern called *jamprang* in Indonesia. In India the same pattern is called *chhabdi bhat*, which means “basket of flowers”. The inspiration for the designs may have come from patterns found on buildings in Gujarat, where the fabric originated.

Tailored garments made from silk patola belonged to the wealthy elite of Indonesia and were worn by royals and officials at the royal courts. Such fabrics came a long way from India to Java through trade, and required great skill and time to produce, making them valuable luxury items.

Patola, a double ikat technique, is created with pre-tie dyed silk threads. This technique is used to create patterns on both the warp (lengthwise) and weft (crosswise) threads, from which the word “double” comes. The threads are then carefully aligned during the weaving process to reveal the final design.



Breeches: Eight-pointed star pattern
Tailored in Indonesia
Silk patola (double ikat): Gujarat, 19th century,
gold and silver thread
2009-01892

LET'S DISCOVER

Learn about the intricate processes involved in the creation of this garment, located in our Fashion and Textiles Gallery.

FUN FACT

Similar eight-pointed star patterns are sometimes imitated on block-printed cotton versions, which were more affordable. Can you spot an example near the breeches?

GLOSSARY

Ikat – A technique which involves tightly tying selected areas of threads before the dyeing process to create patterns on the threads. The threads are then carefully aligned in the weaving process to reveal the completed pattern.

Warp – Threads that run the length of the fabric.

Weft – Crosswise threads that go over and under the warp threads.

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LET'S LOOK CLOSELY

Use these guidelines to discover details about this object.

1. **LOOK** at the object closely. Small floral motifs join together to form larger shapes that make up the pattern. What kind of shapes can you see? Did you notice that they overlap with each other?
2. **COMPARE AND CONTRAST** the similar eight-pointed star patterns on the silk patola breeches with those on the woodblock printed cotton fabric to its right. What similarities and differences do you see?
3. **THINK** about how someone from the past in Indonesia would have felt when they encountered colourful and intricately patterned fabrics, imported from far away. Would you feel the same way now if you had something similar brought to you? Why or why not?

CREATE AT HOME

Continue the experience at home by doing this activity. Don't forget to tag us at @ACM_SG to share your work with us.

4. **MAKE** a patola inspired artwork.
 - Prepare two sheets of paper.
 - Cut strips along the long edge of one sheet of paper and cut strips along the short edge for the other one.
 - Lay the long strips out side by side.
 - Weave the short strips over and under the long strips.
 - Draw your design with a white wax crayon over the woven piece.
 - Paint a background colour over your design with watercolour and allow it to dry.
 - Once dry, take the strips apart and see if you can align and weave the coloured strips again to recreate your original design. This process mimics the patola (double ikat) weaving process.



Let us know what you think about our ACM Wonders activity cards through a survey here.