



Highland mermaids: Interwoven stories of a tapestry from the Victoria & Albert Museum

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The *Sheikha Amna Bint Mohammed Al Thani* Gallery is devoted to Europe between 1600 and 1815. 1100 objects are displayed across seven galleries, including some of the most magnificent works held by the Victoria & Albert Museum. In the Room 7, Level 1, there is a red tapestry labeled as follows:

“Portion of a tapestry. 1650-1720. This tapestry was made with Chinese silk imported to Mexico via Manila. The red color was made from crushed cochineal insects, which were native to South America. The bird in the centre is the mythical Asian phoenix, which is shown with the brand wing-span of the Andean condor. The mermaids play lute, and some of the flowers resemble Chinese chrysanthemums- Peru-Coloured wools, silks and gilded thread, tapestry woven. 1901”

These lines reveal the complexity of the materials and components of the warp and weft of this singular textile and the trade that connected the most distant geographies from Asia and the Americas.

From, *DESUBICADOS, Rosario: Beatriz Viterbo, 2022 -forthcoming.*

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Details

Tuesday 25 October 2022, 4:30PM

Al-Falasi Theatre, Centre for Arabic and Islamic Studies (CAIS),
127 Ellery Cres ACTON

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