



OBJECT ID	2010.30.22
OBJECT NAME	Blouse
DATE CREATED	circa 19776
MATERIAL	Linen; Cotton
OBJECT ENTITIES	Salimbene, Suzanne (owned by) Salimbene, Suzanne (is related to)
ACCESS POINTS	c. 1976 Sarakatsani WilliSmith Women's shirt

OBJECT DESCRIPTION

Cream blouse (manufactured), women's, with attached embroidered linen sleeves. Ecru linen with black, navy, royal and green cross stitched designs. Scalloped black details at cuffs.

The body of the shirt is made from white linen, but the sleeves are made from wool with a pattern on them. The sleeves are made from a wool material. On the ends of the sleeves is a large black border that ends with scalloped cuffs. The scalloped end is outlined in blue string. Above the black border is a diamond/triangle pattern created out of green and blue threads. There are two large diamonds outlined by the cream wool background color. The diamonds are filled in with a blue and green pattern. There are a green and blue diamonds in two vertical rows of diamonds. The diamonds alternate green and blue. Each diamond is outlined in white. Also, each diamond has a pattern within it. There is a white line that forms a square and a hook. The square is filled in with the opposite color of the triangle. Under the square is a cross with the same color. There is a diamond inbetween the four diamonds, the diamond is blue with a green cross in the center. On the sides within the large diamond, there is a lighter blue cross with green threads coming out beneath it. In between the two diamonds, there are two triangles that are on top of one another. A white thread creates a heart in each triangle. The heart is half green and half blue. In the heart there is a white line creating a hook in each side with an outline of a cross. The cross is blue.

Above the diamond pattern there is a gap of tan wool. Then there is a wave pattern of a wave connecting to a outlined circle then a wave again. This pattern alternates between blue and green. Above and below the pattern is a single blue line. Above this wavy pattern, looks like two geometric "S"s connected by a "v." On the bottom of the "S"s there are two little triangles and on top there is a small cross-stitch pattern. Also, on the lower outer sides of the "S"s is a half circle. In the triangle there is a pattern above it. There are two small filled in green triangles on the bottom with a line of blue going inbetween them. Above there is a geometric pattern made with triangles, the top of the pattern is pointed with a circle in the center and a small cross-stitched pattern on top.

The rest of the shirt is cream linen. The collar of the shirt is a V-neck. The sleeve holes and collar are outline with white braided thread and cream colored shiny cotton thread is woven throughout the braid. On both sides of the top of the V-neck there are long cream shiny threads that come down. One of the threads is tied together and the other string has come undown. On both sides there is a pleat that starts at the bottom of the sleeve whole and comes to the bottom about a third into the shirt. The bottom of the shirt has about an inch the cream linen and above that about two inches of see-through mesh. In the mesh there are two woven white cotton lines.

There is an invisible zipper sewed down the middle of the back. There are two pleats that come down from the bottom of the arm holes and go down about a third from each side.

There is a black tag with white writing on the back collar of the shirt. The front of the tag has "WilliSmith, L, 91043 MYSS, 100% Linen, Made in China, RN 75343, Care on reverse" On the back is "Handwash with care, No bleach, Dry flat reshape, Cool iron, or, Dry clean."

ORIGIN

The donor lived in Greece from 1965-1982 and wore and owned the Sateataski costume.

The shirt was made by the clothing company WilliSmith. The late Willi Smith was a young African American fashion designer. At the time of his death he was regarded as one of the most successful African American designers. In 1976, he founded the WilliWear Company with Laurie Mallet.

This style of shirt came from the Sarakatsani people. Sarakatsani are indigenous people from Greece. They are nomadic people who live half the year in the mountains. Their art (song, pottery, dance, clothing design) resembles the geometric art of pre-classical Greece. Furthermore, Sarakatsani still practice traditional folk medicine. They are Greek Orthodox Christians and associate with Church of Greece. They begin their migration up the mountains on Saint George Day in April and return to the low plains on Saint Demetrius in October. Sarakatsanians have lived in countries surrounding Greece (Bulgaria, Albania, Republic of Macedonia). However, now there are only measurable numbers of people in Greece and Bulgaria. For women's outfits there are thirteen parts. Most items are made from hand-woven wool.

The shirt is called a Poukamiso and the cut comes from the Balkans. Traditionally, the hem has white hemstitch and crochet trim and the sleeves have black cross stitch embroidery with black braids sewn onto the end. Usually, it is made from cotton.

There have been significant decreases in the population of Sarakatsani due to urbanization. Many have willingly left; however, others have left because there is not enough open land to support their lifestyle.

CITATION

Blouse, circa 19776, *National Hellenic Museum*, <https://collections.nationalhellenicmuseum.org/Detail/objects/>. Accessed 04/26/24.
