

February 2007 Newsletter



Rubia Selected for Prestigious Santa Fe International Folk Art Market

Rubia has been chosen by a panel of leading folk art experts to participate in the fourth annual Santa Fe International Folk Art Market. The event will take place July 14 and 15, 2007. The panel reviewed hundreds of applications from artists around the world and selected 100 artists from 34 countries for this year's event based on the quality and authenticity of their artwork.

The Santa Fe International Folk Market is the largest event of its kind. It's an unparalleled gathering of the world's finest folk artists in which market goers will have a rare opportunity to purchase one-of-a-kind pieces from the juried participants. More than 20,000 visitors are expected to attend this cultural exchange. Other market festivities include colorful and lively musicians and dancers from dozens of cultures. A wide variety of international foods will be served, and a multitude of activities including mask-and-headaddress making will be open to visitors of all ages.

In recent years, international folk art has become so popular that major cities now devote entire museums to the genre. Along with the general public, art buyers from around the world come to the market to add to their collections. The market is also popular with interior designers and decorating enthusiasts. Santa Fe itself is world-renowned for its museums and galleries, and was recently appointed one of the first three official UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Creative Cities.

The Market is presented by the Santa Fe International Folk Art Market Committee, the State of New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs, the Museum of International Folk Art and the Museum of New Mexico Foundation, with the enthusiastic support of a New Mexico community committed to international art and culture.

For more information about the Santa Fe International Folk Art Market go to www.folkartmarket.org



VOICE OF THE WOMEN:

Jahan's Story

Since Rubia's formative days with refugee women in Pakistan, Jahan and her daughters have been active embroiderers. Moving back to Kabul in 2003, Jahan sought out Rubia and was able to return to work. Now she is a daily visitor to the Kabul office and workshop. Jahan embroiders quickly by dividing housework with her daughters. Known and respected for her fine embroidery, Jahan is often asked to test new design and colors combinations. Her signature proudly adorns her handwork and our new hangtag. Jahan is relieved to be living in her home city but worries constantly about her family's income and security

EDUCATION:

Baby Chicks Distributed in Darrai Noor

On a misty September morning, the first day of school was extra special for the Amla village school children in Darrai Noor. The town loudspeaker announced "all children come to school Rubia is distributing chicks" and so began the conclusion to a 2-year journey to deliver chicks and school supplies to rural Afghan children. The 'give a chick' project was started by the students and staff of Hancock Elementary School in Hancock NH, who have taken on the Amla village school as their sister school. Their enthusiasm, energy and commitment spilled into the communities around them and then around the country. In all, nearly \$5000 was raised to provide school supplies and chicks to school children in Afghanistan. In concluding this initiative thousands of chicks, notebooks, pencils, blackboards, uniforms, and cupboards were supplied. The Amla village school, like most rural schools in Afghanistan, is still an open-air school with no buildings, chairs, or other facilities.



Barakat, Inc Provides Education Funding:

There are still many girls who cannot go to school and women who have never had that chance in rural Afghanistan. For some, family concerns about security keep the girls home, for others it is the dictates of social traditions that prevent young women from leaving the home. Rubia is committed to providing education for these girls and young women. Barakat, Inc of Cambridge, Ma, a non-profit organization promoting education in Afghanistan and conservation in NH, has been a major donor for this program. For the second year, home-based classes are providing women and girls in Darrai Noor with literacy skills that will transform their lives, enabling them to participate in a wider range of activities. This year 8 courses are being offered in the villages of Sutan, Shemul, Amla, and Mamalik.

SALES:

Rubia's Market Presence in New Hampshire

Rubia's new approach to marketing is reaching a wider audience with an increased public presence. Rubia's embroideries were available weekly at the Portsmouth Farmers Market in the summer, at European Home in Portsmouth for the fall and at Little River Oriental Rugs in Concord for the winter.

In Afghanistan Rubia has been selling embroideries at CAFE, Royah Boutique and Oasis Salon. We plan to expand our product sales through trunk shows and focused sales events as well as through our website.

This summer, Rubia's Afghan artisans will be selling their embroideries at numerous events, markets, and gatherings.

TASHAKUR:

Thank you! Thank you!

Rubia would like to thank Susann Foster Brown for her generous donation of embroidery materials, Wendy Freedman of European Home and Angela Fortier of Little River Oriental Rugs for hosting Rubia fall sales, Craig White for graphic design, David Black for web design, and Elise Moran for loaning studio space and a model for our new catalogue photography.

CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS:

From Kabul to Portsmouth artists are finding ways to work with Rubia.

Gabriella Ghidoni of Royah Boutique in Kabul is employing Rubia embroiderers to embellish her high-end line of clothing, designed and created in Afghanistan. In Portsmouth, artist Anna Birch has created spiral-bound journals with a uniquely Afghan theme that



fit perfectly with Rubia's k-bags and makes a wonderful gift.