The textile designed by AISSA DIONE TISSUS is woven by Manjack master craftsmen.
West Africa consists of the countries located to the south of the Sahara dessert (image 1). It has been a flourishing center of trade for gold and salt since the ancient times. One of the first kingdoms built here was in 1000 B.C along Guinea coast by Nok culture. From 1st century AC to 3rd century AC, the Ghanaian kingdom flourished in southeastern region of current Mauritania and western parts of Mali. Until 16th century, many kingdoms such as the Mali kingdom and Songai kingdom were founded, flourished, and deceased in the history of West Africa.

The woven textile culture has existed in West Africa from ancient times. Its has its roots in the hand-woven textiles of ancient Egypt. The few available records show that there was a tradition of weaving in the Kante culture from around middle of 15th century. (image 2) Hand-woven textile have been used for the ceremonies, and are considered a spiritual object. These textiles were woven by only select group of people hence they were precious as such, and were used as money, and as a representation of wealth. (image 2)

In Senegal, there has been hand-woven textile tradition in Manjack people who emigrated from Guinea-Bissau 27 years ago. A French and Senegalese artist and designer, Aissa Dione, who exists at the crossroad of two cultures, started a workshop with one of the last remaining groups of these craftsmen and a single hand-weaving machine of Manjack weaving; thereby creating Aissa Dione Tissus. She has applied the technical knowledge she acquired through her study in fine art, to the traditional hand weaving. Working along with these craftsmen, she widened the width of the textile which was traditionally only 15cm - 20cm, to 90cm - 140cm to make it commercially viable. In addition, she adopted a sophisticated color palette and developed newer patterns for the textile, while improving the quality of the traditional raw materials such as cotton and raffia. All of this mixed with her innate artistic sense and design knowledge now gave the Manjack weaving an added nobility, brightness and opulence. This propelled Manjack weaving to new heights of success as a textile for decoration and furniture upholstery. Aissa Dione Tissus has today grown to be large successful atelier, with about 40 machines, 80 people on staff, and has received orders from the likes of Hermès, Fendi Casa, and other renowned designers like Jacques Grange, Christian Liaigre, Peter Marino. Nowadays in Africa where these fabrics were imported, it shows that the continent is rich in materials, know-how of textiles. Aissa Dione Tissus utilizes the best materials, the skills and knowledge that is originally from West Africa, while at the same time being to adapt to the industrialized nature of the Western world. Aissa Dione’s vast knowledge of the local textile industry, and her ability to collaborate with large number of notable artists from around the world, has created new designs which have led Aissa Dione Tissus to be one of the few real success stories from Senegal. That said, the hand-weaving tradition have been steadily decreasing for a number of years. Aissa Dione has been actively working with the government of Burkina Faso and Togo to develop and save the existing weaving cultures by creating sophisticated designs, improving quality, and training the weavers in order to propel those traditional weaving arts to the heights of textile for the commercial use while maintaining the uniqueness which each culture has.
Raffia is a variant of a palm tree. This fiber is traditionally used for weaving in West and Central Africa. Found in forest country.

Kinaf is a herb. Since the fibers are long, it can be used for wide textiles. Imported from Mali and Burkinafaso.

The mud used for dye is from Nboro located 100km north of Dakar. It’s collected in the dry season from the bottom of the lake.

Haye, a source of red

Cashew tree, a source of brown

Ngagne, a source of indigo

NEEM, a source of yellow

The facility was built for French army in 19th century, which then became a peanuts factory, then an ice cream factory, and then finally became the atelier.

Mr. Diene is the technical director (left), and N’Diaye, is the quality control director (right) manages the weavers and operations of the factory.

Mr. Ndoya is a dyeing specialist. With his wide knowledge about plants, he creates new colours everyday.
Textiles from the collection of **AISSA DIONE TISSUS** have been selected by Hermès for their project “Year of Africa” in 1997 and for other projects during the following years.
EXHIBITIONS

Organic Textile Exhibition
Saint Louis, Senegal 2013

20th Anniversary of Aissa Dione Tissus
Dakar, Senegal 2012

International Contemporary Furniture Fair
New York, 2011

Biennale des Editeurs de la Décoration

Expo “M’Afrique” MOROSO
Salon del mobile, Milan 2009

La Lune Bleue
with Aboubakar Fofana, Dakar 2007

Salone « Fibres et Matières »
Ouagadougou, 2006

Stand « Fleur de Coton »
Ouagadougou, 2006

Rooms on View
Johannesburg, 2003

Takashimaya
New York 2002

SIAO, Ouagadougou
1990 - 2008

& many more

PAMELA V BY HAKVOORT SHIPYARD
Aissa Dione Tissus provided textile for their furniture. Netherland 2012

BARNES FOUNDATION
Aissa Dione Tissus provided textile for their furniture. Philadelphia, USA 2012
ROSE TARLOW
Aissa Dione Tissus has been carrying a collection for them. Los Angeles, USA 2013
HOTEL SAXON
Aissa Dione Tissus provided textile for their guest room furniture. Johannesburg, South Africa

THOUMIEUX, JEAN-FRANÇOIS PIÈGE RESTAURANT
Designed by India Mahdavi, Aissa Dione Tissus provided textile for seating. Paris, France

OMONO HOTEL GROUP
Aissa Dione Tissus provided textile for their furniture for Omono Hotel in Senegal, Gabon, and Ivory Coast.

HOTELS
Hotel Saxon
Johannesburg, South Africa

Hotel Cap Est
Martinique, France

Hotel Meridien
Bora Bora, France

Hotel Meridien
Tahiti, France

Hotel Troigros
Roanne, France

Hotel Aurelio
Lech, Austria

Hotels Onomo
Dakar, Senegal
Libreville, Gabon
Abidjan, Ivory Coast

Hotel Radisson Blu
Dakar, Senegal

Hotel des Almadies
Dakar, Senegal

Hotel Djoloff
Dakar, Senegal

Hotel Lagon 2
Dakar, Senegal

& many more
Assa Dione exists at the crossroads of two cultures. Part French and part Senegalese, this highly acclaimed textile designer and artist applied the technical knowledge she acquired through her work and study in fine art, textiles, ceramics and jewelry design to traditional African hand weaving. Working with local craftpeople, she has transformed the customary narrow bands of fabric into wider widths, more applicable to Western needs.

The fabrics are entirely hand-made, from weaving to dying. Assa uses only cotton and sari in clean yet complex patterns derived from age-old motifs. Rich in texture and color, her designs reflect her own unique heritage, combining the raw character of Africa with a modern sophistication. Her fabrics have won international competitions and are in great demand by Christian Lacroix, Fendi, Hermès andคลANCED Eslée.

Takashimaya is proud to offer bags, scarves, babouches, pillows and throws by Assa Dione. Her collection will be featured on our First Floor throughout the month of June.

q : Who taught you your most valuable lesson?
   a : Life, as it goes.

q : Which artist do you most identify?
   a : It would be fantastic to identify myself with Ruhlmann.

q : What is your favorite color?
   a : Dark red ochre.

q : What is your idea of perfect beauty?
   a : An alliance of raw material, generous shape and my favorite color.

q : What is the first thing you see in the morning?
   a : Rays of light.

q : What is your favorite journey?
   a : Going through the Sahara desert, towards Mopti or Ouadane.

q : Which ancient civilization intrigues you most?
   a : Nubia, for being very mysterious.

q : Whom do you want for your desert island companion?
   a : Lots of toasts, paper, pens and paints.

q : What is your most treasured possession?
   a : The house I have conceived and built.

q : What would you like to leave as your legacy?
   a : My enterprise, and all the style and spirit attached to it.