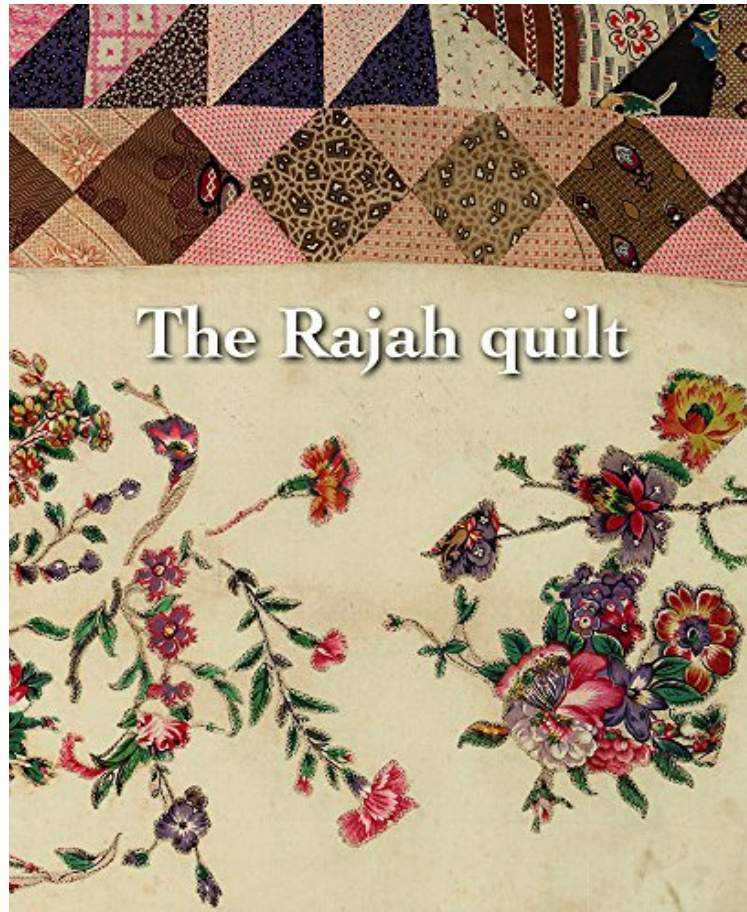


The Rajah Quilt

Robert Bell

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Robert Bell : The Rajah Quilt before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Rajah Quilt:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Deborah A. Junglingnice

One of the world's most important textiles, the Rajah quilt is a major focus of the National Gallery of Australia's textiles collection. The quilt was made by women convicts on board the ship Rajah while being transported from England to Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) in 1841. While it is a compelling document of convict life, it is also an extraordinary work of art? a product of beauty from the hands of many women who, in the most abject circumstances, were able to work together to produce an object of hope. From the moment The Rajah quilt entered the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, its significance was obvious to the textile conservation staff. Part of a longstanding tradition spanning over a millennium, quilts evoke an interest that extends beyond the special place they hold in the history of women's artistic endeavours. They embody technical and decorative skills, patience and, most importantly, an individual story of the time and personality of its creator. The inscription on The Rajah quilt confirms its

importance in Australian history as a physical link to transportation and early European settlement. Uniquely, this quilt also holds significance for the thousands of Australians who are descendants of the 179 women prisoners who arrived in Tasmania on board the *Rajah* in 1841. The publication features details of the quilt showing varying stitching, patchwork bands, broderie perse (a French term used to describe appliqué patterns comprising cut-out sections of floral motifs from printed chintz imported from India) construction and previously unseen reverse details.