



Wool-on-wool Colcha Embroidery

Date

Before 1860

Primary Maker

Artist not recorded

Medium

Wool, natural dyes

Description

Colcha stitch. Support, handspun wool, plain weave, 1 ply warps and wefts. Embroidered solidly allover in 1 ply h.s. yarns stitched in two strands or double. Stitching, "Colcha" in all solid areas, chain stitch outlines. The earliest examples of colcha textiles in New Mexico are handwoven sabanilla (balanced plain weave wool cloth) solidly covered with handspun wool yarn embroidery.

These dense wool-on-wool colchas often featured

geometric checked patterns, zigzags, or stylized florals and scrolling leaves influenced by Asian and Middle Eastern textiles. This example depicts religious imagery associated with Santa Cruz de la Cañada Church (now Holy Cross Church), including a Maltese cross at the center and double-headed eagles similar to a symbol for the Confraternity of Our Lady of Carmel founded in Santa Cruz in 1760.

Dimensions

85 1/16 × 61 in. (216 × 155 cm)