

The other side *across* the surface

Lesley Millar, curator of the British leg of last year's successful *Through the Surface* British-Japanese touring exhibition, examines the consequences to culture and creativity of cross-cultural textile practice

'While seeking for the universality of beauty, I also want to remain aware of the importance of individuality, and through my works, I hope to raise awareness of this important fact that the universality of human beings should and must accommodate diversity.'

Teruyoshi Yoshida
Through the Surface catalogue¹

The pervasive nature of globalisation means that it is now almost impossible for any one culture to be unaware of another. The project *Through the Surface* examines tensions between what could be described as 'hybridity',² a mixture of cultures and identities, and the virtues of 'localisation', the strong cultural identity shared between people from the same place. These tensions can be further examined through the creative involvement of people from different places but who are connected through a particular activity, in this case textile practice. Textiles are a particularly apposite medium for the research of this. Techniques and materials move across and between cultures, nations, art, industry, design and architecture; yet the same piece of cloth can

