Recognizing the contribution art has had in the Mayo Clinic environment since the original Mayo Clinic Building was finished in 1914, Mayo Clinic Proceedings features some of the numerous works of art displayed throughout the buildings and grounds on Mayo Clinic campuses as interpreted by the author.

Suzani is the Persian word for “needles.” Such textiles — as with Mayo Clinic’s sampling of Suzani Cloth — were created by first having the pattern drawn on the cloth and then dividing the cloth into several pieces so multiple people could simultaneously work on the embroidery. When completed, the pieces were sewn back together. Often this was done by mothers and daughters with the goal of the finished piece becoming part of the daughter’s dowry.¹

The utility of the cloths was multi-purpose in function as protective wrappings for belongings, or for prayer mats and bedding in a yurt, the dwellings typical of a nomadic lifestyle. Historically, these pieces likely first appeared in the 1500s, although because of their hard use and fragility, most current examples date from the 1900s.¹

This Suzani Cloth example consequently dates from the late 19th century, and is
from the Bukhara, Turkestan region. Its dimensions are 175 x 145-inch, (descriptive plaque) and the pattern included reflects those indigenous to the Bukhara territory.1

Suzani Cloth is located in the elevator alcove on the 14th floor of the Mayo Clinic Building, Rochester, Minnesota Campus. It was donated to Mayo Clinic in honor of Dr Vicente Torres from the Al-Bahar family of Kuwait.

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