

HANDWOVEN LOOM THEORY

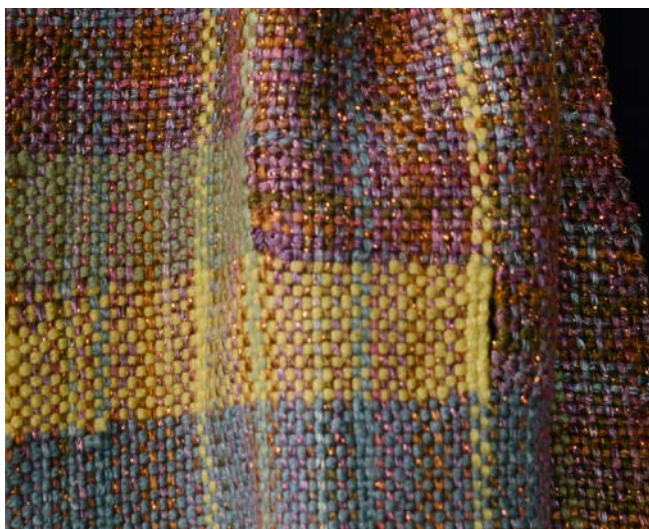
Rigid-Heddle Scarf Collection 2019

STEPPING OUT

SUSAN BATEMAN & MELISSA PARSONS



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RIGID HEDDLE

WEAVING ON A RIGID-HEDDLE LOOM isn't as fast as weaving on a floor loom—and that isn't a bad thing. The deliberate pace of rigid-heddle weaving invites you to consider hand-manipulation techniques as part of your weaving. In the planning stages of this scarf, we talked about ways to combine two colors in the same weft pick. We knew it would be time-intensive, but it would create a unique look. At first, we considered clasped weft, but decided that the slinky, supple effect we were trying to create for the scarf would be at odds with the doubled weight of the weft picks as well as the slight-but-firm ridge that the clasp can create. Instead, we tried a tapestry technique in which the two colors meet and then return to the selvages without clasping. We wanted to create a series of rectangles that stacked the meeting point for the yarns one above the other, making slits. By keeping the "steps" at 1 inch tall, the slits didn't affect the integrity of the fabric. You can stitch the slits closed, but we liked the extra boost of three-dimensionality they give to the scarf.

For the background warp and weft, we chose Metallic Rayon, a handpainted yarn in a subtle colorway that has just enough metallic shine in it to give the whole scarf a little bling. For the tapestry steps, we used Summer Silk in three solid colors that contrast nicely with the more subdued background.

STRUCTURE

Plain weave with slit tapestry technique.

EQUIPMENT

Rigid-heddle loom, 10" weaving width; 12- or 12.5-dent heddle; 4 stick shuttles.

YARNS:

Warp: Rayon Metallic (85% rayon/15% metallic; 550/8 oz; 1,100 yd/lb; Blue Heron; Yarn Barn of Kansas), Water Hyacinth, 278 yd. Summer Silk (45% silk/43% cotton/12% nylon; 240 yd/1.75 oz; 2,195 yd/lb; Berroco; Yarn Barn of Kansas), #4020 Madras, #4040 Picnic, and #4056 Pier, 17 yd each.

Weft: Rayon Metallic, Water Hyacinth, 230 yd. Summer Silk, #4020 Madras, #4040 Picnic, and #4056 Pier, 12 yd each.

WARP LENGTH

118 ends 100" long (allows 24" for loom waste and take-up; loom waste includes fringe).

SETTS

Warp: 12 or 12.5 epi (1 per slot and hole in a 12-or 12.5-dent heddle).

Weft: about 10 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Width in heddle: 9.5" in a 12.5-dent heddle; 9¹⁰/₁₂" in a 12-dent heddle.

Woven length: (measured under tension on the loom) 76".

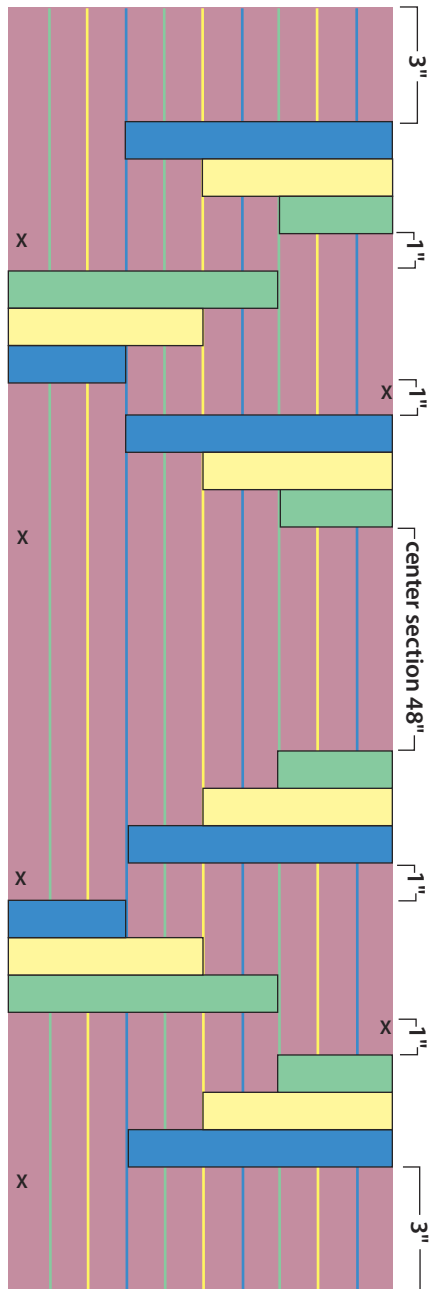
Finished size: 8½" x 72" with 4½" fringe. **Note:** Dimensions are based on weaving with a 12.5-dent heddle.

- 1 Wind a warp of 118 ends 100" long following the warp color order in Figure 1 and starting from the right side of the loom when viewed from the front. Center for a weaving width of 9.5" in a 12.5-dent heddle or 9¹⁰/₁₂" in a 12-dent heddle, tying bows for tensioning. The bows will leave enough warp length for twisted fringe.
- 2 Wind one stick shuttle each of Water Hyacinth, Madras, Picnic, and Pier. Very little yarn is needed for the Summer Silk colors, so shorter shuttles work best for those.
- 3 Weave a 1–1½" header with scrap yarn to space the warp. Begin weaving following the diagram in Figure 2, using the slit tapestry technique where indicated. Weave your tails in as you go. Start with 3" of Water Hyacinth (main color or MC in the weave plan), ending with the shuttle at the left selvage.
- 4 To weave the first color block, open the shed and insert the shuttle with Pier (blue) from the right selvage to the leftmost blue warp thread, bringing the shuttle out of the shed between the Pier warp end and the MC end to its left. In the same shed, insert MC from the left and bring it out of the shed at the same point. Change sheds. Insert shuttles

1. WARP COLOR ORDER

	3x				
6	2				#4040 Picnic (Summer Silk)
6	2				#4020 Madras (Summer Silk)
6	2				#4056 Pier (Summer Silk)
100	10	10	10	10	Water Hyacinth (Rayon Metallic)
118 ends total					

2. WEAVE PLAN



- #4040 Picnic
 - #4020 Madras
 - #4056 Pier
 - Water Hyacinth (main color or MC)
- x end with Water Hyacinth (MC) on this side before starting color blocks


Read weave plan bottom to top.

where they exited the shed so that they catch the same-color warp end where they came out, and bring them back to the edges. Repeat for 10 more picks for a total of 12 picks per block, ending with the wefts at opposite sides. Weave all color blocks using this same technique and following the weave plan. See photos on page 4 for how shuttles exit the shed in the color blocks.

5 Weave 11 picks of MC (about 1") between color blocks, ending at the correct selvedge (labeled as X in Figure 2) to begin the next set of color blocks and weave those as you did before in step 4. After weaving 3 sets of 3 blocks, weave with MC for about 48". Weave 3 more sets of blocks according to the weave plan and end with 3" of MC.

6 When you have completed the scarf, weave several picks of scrap yarn to protect your weft and remove the fabric from the loom, leaving at least 8" on both ends.

7 Remove the scrap yarn and tie the fringe in overhand knots in groups of 4 ends next to the fell line; the last 2 groups will have only 3 ends. Twist the fringe to desired length.

8 Handwash the scarf in cool water. Either spin out excess moisture in a washing machine or roll in a towel and press out excess moisture. Put in dryer for 3–5 minutes and then let air-dry. Trim the fringe tips and iron the fabric on cotton setting. Ironing will increase the drape and sheen of the fabric. 



1. Bring the 2 wefts out of the shed in the same spot. Beat.



2. Change sheds. Put the 2 wefts back through the next shed, leaving a slit where they meet. Beat.

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