

# HAND WOVEN

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on Your Loom! Page 24

East  
meets  
West

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Ethnic-  
Inspired  
Projects

Weave  
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Sakiori*

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MARCH/APRIL 2015  
ISSUE 174

**PLUS:**  
Shades of  
India Towels  
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# HANDWOVEN®

MARCH/APRIL 2015, VOLUME XXXVII, NUMBER 2

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Shades of India  
Kitchen Towels

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[interweavestore.com/weaving](http://interweavestore.com/weaving)





# From the Editor

ANITA OSTERHAUG

I love to visit weavers in other places, and I have had the good fortune to go on textile tours to Scandinavia and Latin America. (The Middle East and Far East are on my bucket list!) When weavers of different nationalities come together, there is always joy. First, there is the joy of knowing that, while we are a small minority in our own countries, we are part of a vibrant worldwide community. There is also the joy of sharing and being inspired by each other's designs, techniques, colorways, tools, and materials. Each encounter influences our future weaving in ways conscious and unconscious, subtle or striking.

This issue is dedicated to the joy of fusion weaving, with projects and stories of encounters between weavers and cultural traditions. Backstrap weaver Laverne Waddington tells of her travels and the weavers she has met. Amanda Robinette gives us a modern take on *sakiori*, traditional Japanese rag-weaving, and Anne Vitell tells us how contemporary Diné weavers (whom you may know as Navajo) are evolving the designs handed down to them. We have towels inspired by the patterns of imperial Russia and the bright colors of India, Japanese *noren* panels to grace your home, *shibori* scarves commemorating Colorado wildfires, and a contemporary jacket with an Asian flair that celebrates the breaking down of the borders that separate us. For the simple moments that are universal, we have a classic linen bag to hold fresh bread, and a baby wrap designed for a man's wardrobe. And Tom Knisely brings a smile while teaching us about our looms and the sweet spots thereon.

Part of my joy in being a part of *Handwoven* is the opportunity to tell the stories of indigenous weaving traditions so that you can help support and preserve them. One way is to support fair trade cooperatives, and traveling to meet distant weavers is another. I encourage you to try it if you can. Every encounter is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The admiration and interest of fellow weavers is a great source of pride to weaving communities, and the exchange of ideas enriches us all.

Weave in peace,

## FUTURE THEMES

### May/June 2015 Textiles with Texture

The "hand" of a fabric is part of what draws us to weave. This issue looks at the many ways we can create texture in cloth with our choice of materials, weave structure, shrinkage, and finishing. We'll also feature ideas for teaching weaving to kids of all ages.

### September/October 2015 Handwovens for the Home: Everyday Heirlooms

From an elegant runner to a humble kitchen towel, every handwoven household textile is a treasure. In our 2015 Reader Challenge, we'll celebrate everyday heirlooms from the loom.

### November/December 2015 2-Shuttle Weaves

Double your weaving fun with this issue devoted to two-shuttle weaves. From overshot to shadow weave and even deflected doubleweave, weaving with two shuttles opens up a world of new design possibilities. Learn tips and tricks for keeping track of your shuttles as you weave and how to keep your selvages neat and clean as you switch shuttles.

# HANDWOVEN®

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**SARAH H. JACKSON** tries to weave each day and feels blessed by her passion for weaving. When not weaving, she enjoys reading, knitting, and bike riding.

Pages 8, 38



**EVA HOVDE DOUTHIT** is the Oregon rep for the Handweavers Guild of America and an active member of the Portland guild. Inspired by Japanese aesthetics, her newest interest is eco-dyeing shifu.

Pages 15, 70



**ANNE VITELL** finds beauty in everyday creation. She knits, spins, embroiders, gardens, and writes about her experiences on her blog, [www.whispermoon.typepad.com](http://www.whispermoon.typepad.com).

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**MARGARET ZEPS** ignores the rain outside her Oregon studio, continuing her forty-five year love affair with weaving, inspired by travel and worldwide weaving traditions.

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**LAURA DEMUTH** of Decorah, Iowa, has been weaving for thirty-five years. She especially enjoys teaching, weaving traditional Norwegian textiles, and tending a small flock of sheep.

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**MICHAEL F. ROHDE** has been weaving for over forty years, most often rugs and more recently tapestries. His work uses yarns hand-dyed with natural dyes.

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**MARILYNN COWGILL** has been weaving for twenty-five years and still finds more to learn. She loves weaving luxurious fabrics and using them to make garments.

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**ANNE MERROW** is editor of *Spin-Off* magazine as well as a knitter and rigid-heddle weaver.

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**LAVERNE WADDINGTON** brings experience and inspiration gained from learning to weave alongside indigenous artisans to the pieces she creates on the humble backstrap loom.

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**TOM KNISELY** of East Berlin, Pennsylvania, teaches weaving at The Mannings Handweaving School. He was named 2011 Teacher of the Year by *Handwoven* and his textilian fans.

Pages 26, 67



**CATHY COATNEY** of Pueblo, Colorado, holds an MS in textiles/clothing from Colorado State University. She founded the Guild Garment Group and credits it for inspiring her to cut into her weaving!

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**CARL FRIEDLANDER** of Port Hueneme, California, is a retired computer scientist who loves weaving Jewish religious garments including prayer shawls and *chuppahs*.

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**TRUDY SONIA** discovered weaving when she received the pieces of her grandmother's loom, which she soon realized was actually two looms. They've been multiplying ever since.

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**CHRIS ROSSI** spends her days in her dye studio, creating magic with plants from her yard, and also spends way too much time hanging out with other natural dyers.

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**LAUREN MEYER** is a business student at Colorado State University. She was an intern at Interweave working with the *Handwoven* team.

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**AMANDA ROBINETTE** is a rag weaver who finds inspiration in waste textiles. When she's not weaving, she is blogging at [www.westernsakiori.com](http://www.westernsakiori.com) and teaching tai chi.

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**JENNY SENNOTT** of Centralia, Missouri, is grateful for the opportunity to share the magic of weaving with the students of Access Arts, Columbia, Missouri, for over two decades.

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**PEG MACMORRIS** is a retired molecular biologist who now finds time for weaving experiments with her Weavebird loom. Teaching weaving, activities in the mountains, and reading fill up a busy schedule.

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## THANK YOU

We at *Handwoven* would like to thank realtors Brian Fink, Courtney Tobey, Jill McGarity, and Donna Lu Gamberg for graciously letting us have our photo shoot in both of their beautiful low-maintenance, patio model homes at the Boulder Creek Neighborhood at The Lakes of Centerra. The website for the community is [www.livebouldercreek.com/communities/centerra/](http://www.livebouldercreek.com/communities/centerra/). Thank you for helping to make this issue so beautiful.

# Letters

## TROUBLING COTTON

I am deeply distressed by Alden Amos's article on the history of cotton in the January/February issue. While historically accurate, the article does not begin to convey the true costs of cotton production in the United States. To say only that "sadly, it also encouraged the growth of the plantation system based on slave labor," is to so sorely understate the historical facts. The invention of the cotton gin set off a period of forced migration of slaves, destruction of slave families, torture, incredible brutality, and death that has never been equaled in this country. For those who do wish to further their understanding, I recommend Edward E. Baptist's recent book, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*.

— Carol Lehman, via email

Handwoven's editors and some of its contributors lost their way in January's issue about cotton. They failed to even mention the serious negative environmental consequences of cotton production worldwide. Conventionally grown cotton requires earth-busting amounts of water for irrigation, and uses more insecticides and herbicides than any other single crop. I suspect most of us weavers live beyond our looms. We need to decide how much or how little we rely on this problematic fiber. Personally, I would like to see *Handwoven* incorporate environmental, including cruelty-free information, in every pertinent article—certainly in an issue dedicated to a single fiber.

— Carol Zurawski, Portland, Oregon

*Thank you, Carol and Carol, for writing to point out these issues. We did not mean to be facile on the issue of slavery or the cotton-producing economy which motivated it in the American South. When editing Alden's article, I struggled with what to say, because what words could express the misery of the millions of people who suffered under the slave system in America and the West Indies? I assumed, perhaps wrongly, that our readers are all aware of and deplore that history as much as I*

*do. Likewise, I think of our readers as environmentally conscious and assumed that they know the ills of unsustainable cotton production, so instead chose to focus on the pioneering work of Sally Fox. If I erred on the side of saying too little, I apologize.*

—Anita Osterhaug

## THE MEN OF WEAVING

*We received many wonderful responses, pro and con, about the possibility of an issue of Handwoven devoted to the men of weaving. While we have all our issue themes planned through 2016, we are going to do our part to feature more male weavers in Handwoven, in our eNewsletter, and on our Weaving Today blogs. Here are just a couple of the letters we received on this topic.*

—The Editors

In reference to the question about the "Men of Weaving" and the request for reader's thoughts, I, as a man and a weaver, would really like to see stories about men and weaving. I live in New Zealand, and I am weaving pretty much on my own with no contact with other weavers—especially men. I must admit that I do sometimes get some strange looks from people if I happen to mention that I am a weaver—not that it bothers me what other people think. It would be very interesting to read about other male weavers, to see what they are doing and what challenges they have, and why it hooks them in as it does me.

— Dave Graham, via email

Oh, please don't devote one whole issue to men in weaving! As a "liberated woman," I always hated it when they featured women in articles about nontraditional jobs, as if we were trained monkeys or because of the political expediency of showing how modern the company was. The best and least condescending way to do it is to feature male weavers in each issue as well as us gals.

— Terry Blair, via email

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# What's Happening

## Travel the World IN Santa Fe



Sita Devi Karna of the Janakpur Women's Development Center (JWDC), Nepal, at the Santa Fe International Folk Art Market.

PHOTO BY BOB SMITH

The International Folk Art Market in Santa Fe, New Mexico, is an experience like no other. Once a year, folk artists from around the world gather in Santa Fe to sell their traditional art. This year's market, which will be held July 10–12 at Santa Fe's Museum Hill, features over 150 artists from 57 countries. All of the artists featured in the market are carefully selected based on quality, authenticity, and the beauty of the pieces from among the hundreds who apply each year. The result is a marketplace filled with some of the best examples of folk art—including a wide variety of textiles—from around the world.

Of course, the market is not just a place to purchase art; it is also a chance to meet and talk with these talented artists about their work and their lives. Some of the featured artists for the 2015 market include Aroti Rani from Bangladesh, who sews beautiful quilts known as *khetas*. Rani specializes in shibori quilts dyed with organic indigo, just one of which can take six months to make.

Rangina Hamidi, founder of Kandahar Treasure, will be selling textiles embellished with *khamak*, a traditional Afghani embroidery. Hamidi founded Kandahar Treasure as a way to provide a source of income to local women in the Kandahar area as well as to keep alive an artistic tradition that had been nearly lost during Taliban rule.

The International Folk Art Market also features live music, a special Children's Passport Project event on the Sunday of the market, and an international food bazaar where visitors can indulge in delicious foods from around the world. Registration to the market and the opening ceremony opens online May 1. Tickets are limited, and discounts are available for certain tickets purchased before June 1. For more information on the market, the artists, and purchasing tickets, visit [www.folkartalliance.org](http://www.folkartalliance.org).

## Contemporary Handwoven Treasures

Founded in 1948, the Handweavers' Guild of Connecticut has been built around sharing ideas and stimulating creativity for nearly seventy years. As with many guilds, the organization welcomes not just weavers, but also spinners and other fiber enthusiasts of all levels. The works created by guild members reflect this diversity and community of sharing.

A selection of these works will be showcased in the guild's biennial show: Contemporary Handwoven Treasures. A wide variety of works will be on display April 4–26 at the Lyman Allyn Art Museum in New London, Connecticut. Juried by distinguished weavers Anita Thompson and Sarah Saulson, the exhibit will feature pieces both traditional and contemporary, including both household textiles and art pieces.

An opening reception will be held on April 11 from 1–4 pm, and on April 18, weaving demonstrations will accompany the exhibit. More information on the exhibit can be found at [www.lymanallyn.org](http://www.lymanallyn.org) and more information on the Handweavers' Guild of Connecticut, their show, and how to join can be found at [handweaversguildofct.org](http://handweaversguildofct.org).



Wild Rose by Garrett Weaver, one of the pieces featured in the 2013 biennial show. PHOTO BY JODY MACBETH BREWER

## Out and About

Are you looking for some fun fiber-related activities to attend? Check out this small selection from our online calendar. You can find additional information about conferences, festivals, classes, and more on [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com).

**April 16–19** The first-ever Interweave Yarn Fest will be held at the Embassy Suites in Loveland, Colorado. The event will feature workshops by *Handwoven* contributors, fiber demonstrations, a free-to-the-public marketplace, and much more. Information on how to register, the schedule of events, and other info can be found at [www.interweave.yarnfest.com](http://www.interweave.yarnfest.com).

**April 17–May 7.** Marigold Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, will be hosting *Expressions in Weaving: A Group Exhibition*, featuring handwoven tapestries by four New Mexican artists. More information on the exhibit and the artists can be found at [www.marigoldarts.com](http://www.marigoldarts.com) or by calling (505) 982-4142.

**September 18–20.** WyoFiber Live! is an event designed for people who are interested in all things fiber: fiber art workshops, demos, vendors and fiber animals. The event will be held on the grounds of the Wyoming Territorial Prison Historic Site, in Laramie, Wyoming. Information about the schedule and other details can be found at [www.wyomingwomen.org/wyofiber-live](http://www.wyomingwomen.org/wyofiber-live) or by contacting Deborah Amend at (307) 745-3733.

Come to [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com) to join our forums, sign up for your free *Weaving Today* eNewsletter, read Madelyn's answers to your questions, and get up-to-date weaving news and views and funky fiber facts. See you there!

## Connecting Online

BY SARAH H. JACKSON

**M**ore and more weavers are finding Facebook a place not only to interact with friends and family around the world, but also with other weavers. Some groups are even taking their online connections and turning them into real-world interactions.

The 4-Shaft Weaving page on Facebook was created by PattyAnne Caruso and Joyce Brisebois in 2012 "to provide a place where weavers of all experience levels can grow together." In less than two years, the group has grown to over 4,000 members from twenty-six countries. Members share projects, ask questions, dispense weaving advice, and engage in lively discussions ranging in topic from artistic versus functional weaving to the merits of warping back to front versus front to back. Tutorials, drafts, and resources too numerous to name are freely shared. Encouragement abounds.

Last May, group member Beth Dinoff posed the question, "Would anybody be interested in doing a towel swap project?" and there was a chorus of positive response. The theme "Summer Breeze" was chosen, and page administrator Margaret Coe helped develop the exchange rules regarding materials used, minimum towel size, etc.

Unfortunately, international postage rates made it prohibitive for those outside the United States and Canada. Participation was limited to thirty. Each weaver sent four towels to exchange coordinator Kate Schlieben. After collecting and dispensing the towels, Kate says her biggest challenge

was finding room for all of the packages in her small apartment. Her favorite part of the exchange was that such a variety of weavers participated, some with years of experience and others with very little. For one weaver, it was her first set of towels.

Drafts, yarn and project details, and photos were collected and shared with the group. Those who participated found the exchange not only fun, but a tangible way to connect with others who share a passion for weaving.



A collection of towels from the exchange.

PHOTO BY KATE SHLEEIBIN

# From Our Roving Reporters

## GETTING TO KNOW EWE (AND RAM)

Heritage Weavers & Fiber Artists are proud to introduce Jack and Jill, the sheep who live at the Historic Johnson Farm in Hendersonville, North Carolina. For the last two years we have carded, spun, and woven Jill's fleece for our sheep-to-shawl event, and this year we are using Jack's fleece. During a monthly gathering of spinners, members take part in preparing Jack's fleece by trimming, teasing, and picking the fiber. Next will come carding and spinning in preparation for the weavers at the Spring Festival in April.

—Susan Trotter



Jack and Jill.  
PHOTO BY RUTH HOWE

## SURPRISE STASH CHALLENGE

Last year, our guild's surprise stash-busting project was so popular that we decided to repeat it. Here's how it worked: Each person put a pound of yarns into a brown paper bag with his or her name on it. Because some people have allergies, fiber content was listed on the outside. Then we numbered the bags, and each participant drew a number. Bags could be traded if necessary or desired. At the May meeting we will each find out what was done with our fibers as the final product is returned to the owner. Exciting!

—Laura Robie

## Weaving Worldwide

On January 10, with power outages all across northern Scotland caused by what was called the worst storm in a generation, members of the Highland Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers (HGWSO) found a hotel in Beaulieu that still had electricity in order to make a Skype connection with the Crocus County Fibre Arts Guild in Alberta, Canada. The event was the Annual General Meeting of the HGWSO, and they invited the Crocus County guild to be their transatlantic speaker via Skype. Given the time difference, the Skype exchange began at 6 a.m. in Alberta (1 p.m. in Scotland). The Crocus guild presented a series of slides explaining the unique characteristics of the Alberta foothills and highlighting the work of the guild and individual members. This was followed by a time of sharing, with the Scotland and Alberta participants showing works of skill, artistry, and unique interest. The friendship is continuing between these two guilds as well as the Castlehill Spinning Group in Castletown, Scotland. A scarf exchange has been planned, with participating members from each country handcrafting a scarf, cowl, or shawl which will be sent to their counterparts across the ocean in early fall as a beautiful and lasting connection to like-minded fiber enthusiasts abroad.

—Robin Nixon

## MORE THAN WEAVING

The Whidbey Island Weavers Guild is happy to announce its 44th Annual Spin-In (yes, the weavers guild has lots of spinners, too), on March 28–29, in Oak Harbor, Washington. Featured artist/spinner Judith MacKenzie will grace us with her knowledge and great presentations, and it promises to be a wonderful weekend for both spinners and colorists. Plus vendors galore! Please consider making a fun weekend of it. For more information: [www.whidbeyweaversguild.org](http://www.whidbeyweaversguild.org).

—Liz Moncrief

*(Liz is a former member of the Northern Colorado Weavers Guild, and now very happily the Roving Reporter of the Whidbey Island Weavers Guild.)*

The Helena Weavers and Spinners Guild has been extremely busy this year, starting with classes by Joanne Hall on how to warp and how to understand a draft, as a way to bring our newest weavers into the “fold,” followed by a three-day workshop on “shadow weave” with Milly Dover. Let us not forget our members who are spinners as well. We had the great fortune to have Jane Fournier working with a group of our spinners who have wanted a challenge to increase their skills. And, here in the Montana “big sky” country is the perfect opportunity to work with different fibers and fleeces. Our next adventure is a two-day workshop with Robyn Spady. She is presenting the “Taming of the Hue” in early March.

—Jannine C. Vogley-Turner

Thanks to all of the *Handwoven Roving Reporters*. For more information on these stories and others, please visit [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com).

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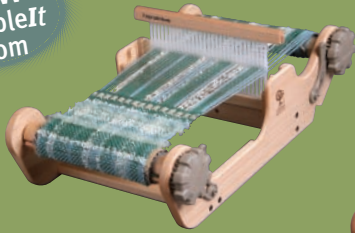
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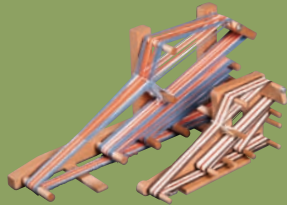
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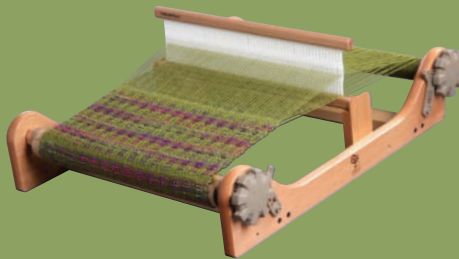
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# Spotlight

## WANDERING THE TAOS WOOL FESTIVAL

BY ANNE MERROW

The town of Taos, New Mexico, has long been known as an artists' haven. Georgia O'Keeffe found refuge and painted some of her most famous works in the area, and it's where Ansel Adams shot his first book of photography. The San Francisco de Asis Mission Church is considered one of the most painted and photographed churches in the world, while the nearby Taos Pueblo is a hotspot of Native American history and craftsmanship.



There are plenty of opportunities for loom talk at the Taos Wool Festival.  
PHOTOS BY BRIAN PERKINS

**T**aos is also a special place for fiber lovers. Near the northernmost point on the New Mexico Fiber Arts Trails tour, Taos has been the home of many weavers, including Teresa Loveless—who also owns the wonderful Weaving Southwest—and her late grandmother, tapestry weaver Rachel Brown.

Once a year, Taos becomes a magnet for weavers, knitters, and spinners from the region and beyond. The Taos Wool

Festival, hosted each year by the Mountain and Valley Wool Association (MAVWA), draws vendors from Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas, and visitors from far and wide. With tools, yarns, and finished goods in vendor tents and a small group of sheep, llamas, alpacas, goats, and other fiber animals, the festival is a jewel in the busy fall fiber festival calendar. Spinner and weaver Norman Kennedy, formerly a master weaver at Colonial Williamsburg and

recipient of the National Heritage Fellowship, will be the featured guest at the 2015 festival, which will host at least one waulking (traditional group fulling of a wool fabric) during the event.

Incorporated in 1983, MAVWA hosted its first Wool Festival in 1984. Last year marked the thirtieth anniversary of the festival, which has grown in the ensuing decades but has retained a decidedly regional flair. One reason that the festival stays so close to its roots is the juried nature of the booths. Vendors are selected based on the quality of their offerings, the member's residency, the regional origin of animal fiber, involvement in the member states' animal fiber industry, the value added to the products, and the diversity of the products. Most booths contain only items produced in the association's member states; the selection criteria may limit the number of products for sale, but they add depth and richness to the offerings.

One thing you may notice at almost any wool festival is that it seems geared more for spinners, knitters, and even fiber animal breeders than for weavers. There is generally nary a cone of yarn to be found, and hardly anyone is bringing a floor loom to the fairgrounds or park. So what can a weaver see at a wool fest?

First, you can see, fondle, and learn more about all kinds of wool and other fibers. Sheep's wool and alpaca are the



Fiber animals are usually in attendance, including this llama from the 2010 festival.



An attendee from the 2009 festival shows off her shuttle tattoo.

primary fibers you'll see at a regional show such as the Taos Wool Festival, while other shows around the country might offer cotton, silk, flax, and other fibers. The properties of the yarns you use are determined by the fibers they start as, so seeing the source can help you better understand your weaving yarns. Meeting the people who produce fiber can also add a special dimension to your work.

Second, wool markets are excellent places to find unusual tools. There are often woodworkers with a variety of specialties at wool markets, and you might find unique shuttles, tapestry forks, warping items, needles, and more. And although major loom manufacturers don't tend to bring their full selection of wares to wool shows, you may find a deal on a secondhand loom that a vendor or fellow festivalgoer is trying to "rehome."

Third, you can find one-of-a-kind yarns. More and more booths at wool festivals include fun art yarns that would make a funky weft, and some yarns intended for knitting can make warm and wonderful fabrics for weavers.

Fourth, you can be inspired by (and buy!) some amazing finished goods. Rooted firmly in the American Southwest, the Taos Wool Festival draws vendors who carry Rio Grande and Navajo rugs and blankets, and some of the weavers who create them

are on hand to demonstrate their craft. In addition to traditional woven goods, wool festivals may include felt, hooked rugs, contemporary rugs, and knitted and crocheted items.

Fifth, almost every wool show includes a display of animals. The animal section of the Taos Wool Festival is somewhat limited, but even the few




The Taos Wool Festival also features shearing demonstrations where woolly ewes are given a much-needed haircut.

dozen sheep in attendance lend the festival a special touch. An expert shearer is on hand to give demonstrations to a few rather indignant ewes, and the animal display is a treat for children and adults alike.

At the Taos Wool Festival, Robert Donnelly roams the grounds, microphone in hand, to announce upcoming events and musical performances in a tent in the center of the grounds. Weavers and spinners offer demonstrations, and contests (from the longest thread competition to the dogs in sweaters judging) take place throughout the weekend. The Elsawool booth each year is made up of rolling carts filled to the brim with Cormo yarns—woolen spun and worsted spun, and in all natural shades—the space is soothing but simultaneously intoxicating. At the La Plata Farms booth, you can find Navajo Churro and other wool fibers, some purchased from a nearby Navajo reservation and processed for handspinning, along with spinning and weaving tools.

If your journeys take you to Taos, make it a point to visit the first weekend in October. While you're in the area, follow the New Mexico Fiber Arts Trails ([www.nmfiberarts.org](http://www.nmfiberarts.org)) to find both historic and contemporary fiber arts of all kinds. And plan to spend a weekend exploring the booths and demonstrations of the Taos Wool Festival.

More information on the Taos Wool Festival can be found at [www.taoswoolfestival.org](http://www.taoswoolfestival.org), or by writing The Wool Festival at Taos, PO Box 2754, Taos, NM 87571. 



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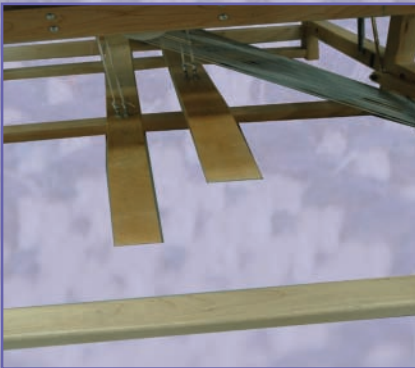


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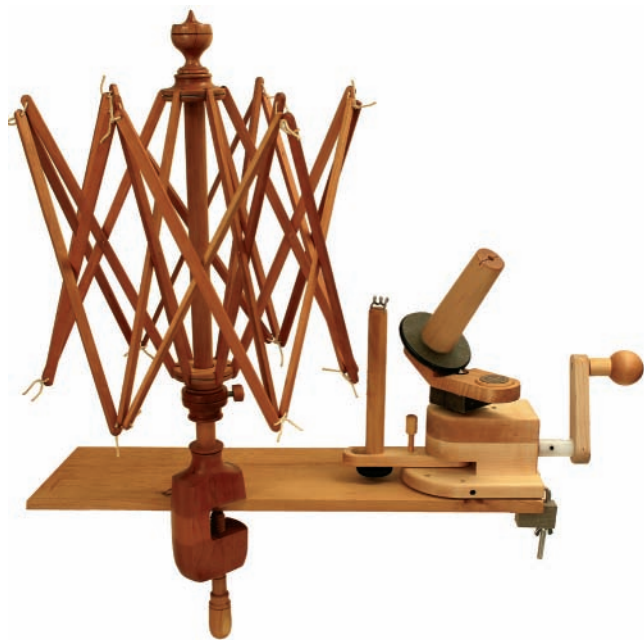
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# Media Picks



## THE HANDMADE MARKETPLACE, SECOND EDITION

Kari Chapin

MECHANICSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA: STOREY. 2014. PAPERBACK, 256 PAGES, \$15.95, 978-1612123356.

**M**any weavers have contemplated starting a business selling their handmade cloth, but don't know where to begin, much less how to set themselves apart from the competition. Following the success of the first edition of *The Handmade Marketplace*, Kari Chapin contacted more artisans who have successfully started their own businesses and asked them to share their own unique advice and insights.

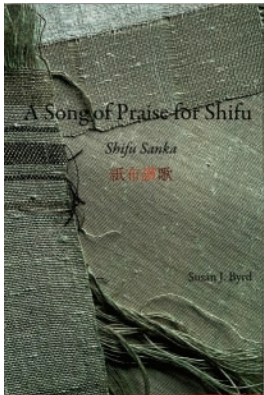
Though some might expect that in starting a business you should focus primarily on sales; in reality, selling is only about a third of the process. There are several questions to consider before the selling begins. How much work do you actually want to put into your business? How would you describe your company in just a few adjectives? What is the appeal and the aesthetic of your business as a whole?

Next you need to create a strong marketing plan that works with your audience. For some people, this may mean a focus on social media. Others may find more success in a community that spreads information by word of mouth.

Figuring out what is right for your company can be one of the longest stretches on the path to success.

Any craftsperson who might like to "go pro" should read this book. It gives an in-depth look at how much work goes into a business and what someone has to think about before even starting down that road. It can be discouraging to see so many craft businesses emerging as potential competition, but having a better understanding of how to run your business, make it more visible to the public, and keep it uniquely yours will greatly increase your chances of success.

—Lauren Meyer



## A SONG OF PRAISE FOR SHIFU: SHIFU SANKA

Susan J. Byrd

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN: LEGACY. 2013. HARDCOVER, 412 PAGES, \$80, 978-0-9797974-6-0.

**I**t is a delight to discover and review Susan J. Byrd's thoroughly researched and spirited celebration of *shifu*, the Japanese art of weaving with paper thread traditionally made from the inner bark of trees. As a college senior, Byrd's interest in making *washi*, Japanese paper, took her to Japan and to a live-in apprenticeship with Sadako Sakurai, a skilled shifu weaver. At the end of a year of shifu immersion, she approached the task of creating her own exquisitely beautiful shifu kimono using a 40/2 cotton warp and a 3 mm wide paper-weft thread. By publishing her book twenty-five years later, she has shared her lifelong commitment to help preserve the shifu tradition, now recognized by the Japanese government as an intangible and cultural property.

Shifu initially earned respect for being lightweight and breathable in heat and humidity, while also protecting the wearer against rain and wind. Shifu almost died out in Japan after the industrial revolution, but was fortuitously and somewhat ironically revived in the 1930s and 1940s, decades plagued by warfare and a shortage of natural resources. Byrd provides a complete geographic and historical overview of the development of shifu, giving credit to artists who helped revive the skills, as well as describing samples in museums around the world.

Byrd also answers all the questions that immediately come to a Western weaver's mind. Can you really wash paper without having it fall apart and, if so, does it survive a dyebath? Will it be strong enough for a warp? Byrd sees no reason why her readers cannot also sing the song of praise for shifu as long as patient care is taken to create good weavings that are strong, soft, and washable. She takes readers through each step of the process from papermaking

to weaving and everything in between. The text is generously supported by photographs, drawings, and tips for weaving success. While paper is not a forgiving fiber, it offers many rewards in return for overcoming its challenges.

Byrd's appendices stand on their own as models for good research, storytelling, and textbook standards. In addition to celebrating contemporary paper artists around the world, she includes instructions for natural dyeing; measurements and procedures for the fibers; and an exhaustive list of resources, suppliers, and museums. Every student of Japanese language and culture will appreciate Byrd's glossary of terms with both English alphabet and Japanese characters. The first edition of five hundred copies includes a sample of handmade paper as well as a shifu sample woven by Byrd's mentor Sadako Sakurai. Read, touch, and be inspired.

—Eva Hovde Douthitt

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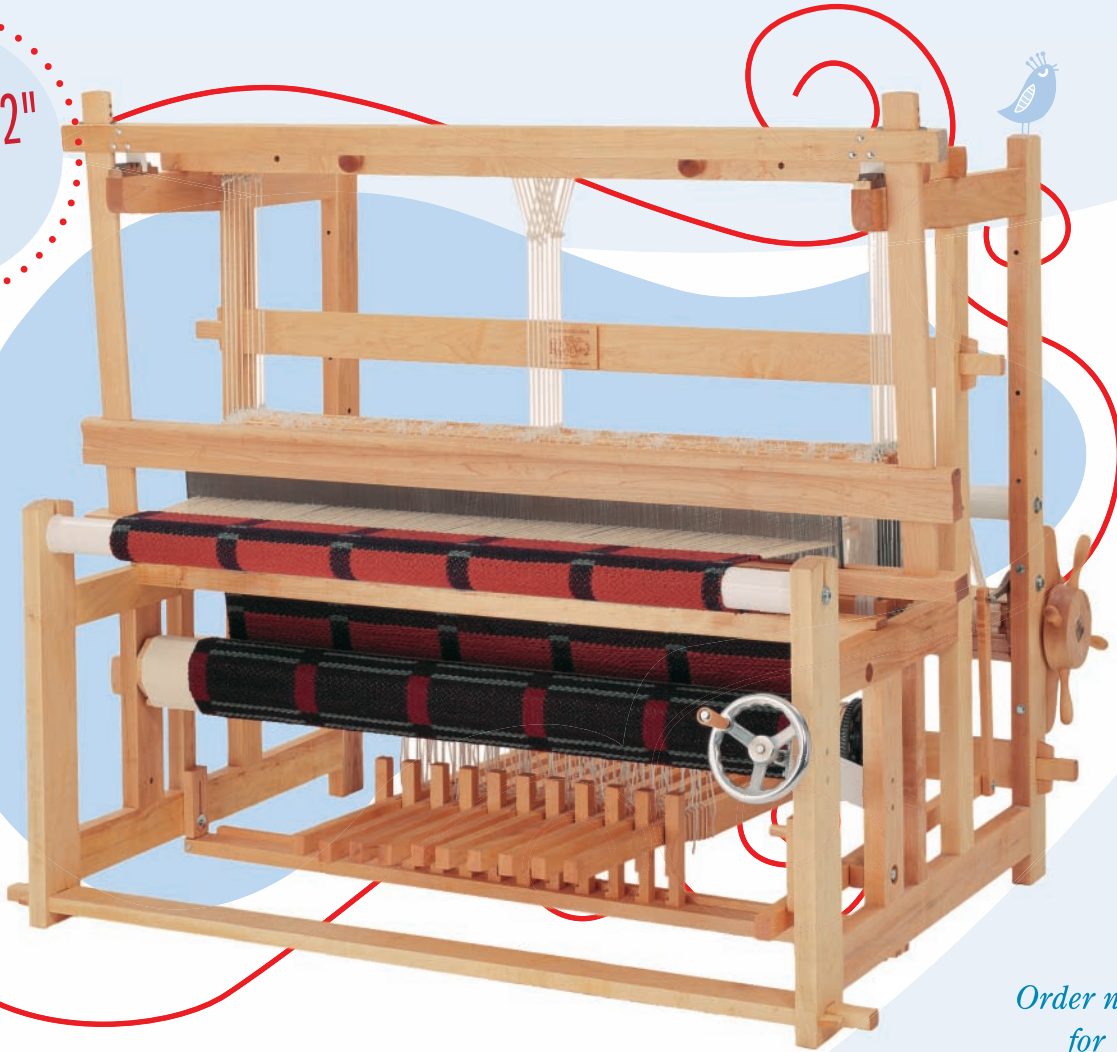
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# WEAVER *to* WEAVER, the World Around

BY LAVERNE WADDINGTON

In my home of Santa Cruz, in the eastern tropical lowlands of Bolivia, it is not enough to simply tell people that I am a *tejedora*. The Spanish verb *tejer* can mean both "to knit" and "to weave." In this lowland city, it will be taken as 'to knit' unless I clarify with gestures. Moving my index fingers like knitting needles distinguishes one kind of *tejedora*, while a beating action will show that I am the kind who works at a loom. However, many people in this area have no personal experience with looms or weavers, and my gestures are often met with quizzical expressions. Sometimes I just have to let them believe I am the strange gringa who knits sweaters in the tropical heat and humidity.

Showing people my work creates its own set of misunderstandings. In a culture where many people struggle to put food on the table and any precious free time is spent with family, it is beyond belief that I should spend so much time in solitude at my backstrap loom creating things that are not to be worn or sold. For many years, my weaving world here was very small and misunderstood.

I was working as an English teacher in Santa Cruz, but I took time off as often as I could, armed with my sticks and weavings, to travel to the highlands and visit weavers. I could go to any market in the towns and villages and find signs of the spinner and weaver—wool, llama and alpaca fiber, drop spindles, dye powder, cochineal, and *wichuñas*, the llama-bone tools that Bolivian weavers use to pick up threads, create patterns, and beat the weft into place. A small group of women would gather if I pulled out my weavings, eager to touch and ask about the mercerized cotton thread that I used, comment on my color choices, wonder at unfamiliar motifs, point out others that they knew, and offer advice to improve my work. In the cities, conversations with strangers would lead to talk of a grandmother who could weave beautiful cloth or a proud description of a mother who knows how to spin exceptionally fine yarn. People appreciated my interest in their textile traditions. I would eventually be connected with just the right person, and my weaving studies could begin.

I spent weeks on my knees bent over while learning warp-faced doubleweave on a horizontal ground loom in

Scarf with silk supplementary-weft inlay on cotton using techniques from Bolivian hatbands and from traditional Bhutanese textiles.



highland Bolivia. The two sisters who taught me made me very much aware of the highland weavers' admiration of stiff, well-beaten cloth. They would say *kella!* (lazy) and playfully threaten to slap me if I was not beating hard enough. Having stopped weaving many years ago, the sisters were excited to have a warp staked out in their yard again, to shop for yarn, and to have reason to take up their spindles and re-spin the yarn. They chose patterns and colors and talked about motifs they had learned as children, challenging themselves and competing to remember how to weave them. They wistfully described beautiful textiles, long gone, that they had woven as young adults and the occasions on which they had worn them.



Teaching Salasaca ladies in Ecuador a technique I had learned in Peru. It was part of the deal: "You teach us something, and then we will teach you."

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LAVERNE WADDINGTON

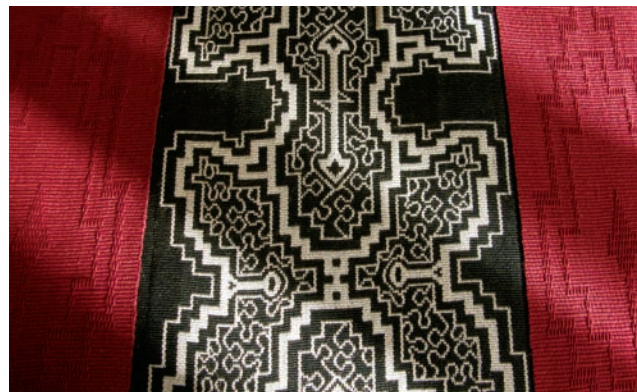


Backstrap weaving teacher and family in highland Ecuador



Learning the *kteh* weft twining with my Montagnard weaving teacher, H'Ngach Rahlan, in North Carolina.

BACKGROUND OLD PAPER COURTESY OF DEMILKED.COM/OFRUIN STOCK



**ABOVE:** I used the warp-faced doubleweave that I studied in highland Bolivia to weave this wall hanging. The center panel is inspired by the painted cloth of the Shipibo people of tropical lowland Peru. The outer panels use a single-faced warp float technique that I studied with Ecuadorian saddlebag weavers. The panels are connected by weft twining using the technique I learned from the Montagnard weavers.

**LEFT:** My three-part wall hanging series entitled *Textile Trails* show influences from the Chilean poncho called *chamanto* and *si'ira* belts made by the Wayuu people of Colombia and Venezuela.

Eventually I found a Guaraní weaver in Santa Cruz. We were able to connect immediately, as weavers around the world do, by comparing looms and tools and the cloth that we produced. I taught Angela to make continuous string heddles around a stick. She showed me the special chained heddles she uses when she weaves very wide pieces for hammocks. The connection was made, and we wove the traditional *Moisy* technique together on her vertical loom.

In the highlands and lowlands of Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, and Guatemala, I studied with indigenous weavers and brought new techniques, patterns, and ideas about color to my work at home in Santa Cruz. In the beginning, I largely limited myself to weaving replicas, then I gradually learned to combine techniques and patterns from the cultures and regions where I had studied to create my own unique pieces. However, I still longed to have people with whom I could share all these experiences.

In 2009, after thirteen years of weaving on my backstrap loom, I discovered online weaving groups and was able to make contact with weavers around the world who were interested in my experiences here in Latin America and who wanted to learn the techniques.

Some wanted to reconnect with their own ethnic roots. Others shared aspects of their own textile traditions with me.

For example, online connections led me to study with Montagnard (Vietnamese hilltribe) backstrap weavers in North Carolina. My teacher, H'Ngach, would sit by me and halt my questions with a stern look and the simple phrase "You look, you know." We would sit together at the twining frame in silence, accompanied by the soft clacking of the bobbins. But by the end of the days I spent studying with her, she was sharing with me the stories of her childhood and her overwhelming desire to learn the traditional *kteh* twining technique, the stories that only come when two weaving "sisters" are seated together at the loom. I could sense in H'Ngach the same feeling of isolation in her North Carolina home that I had so often experienced in Bolivia.

Now, weavers from east, west, north, and south, who have followed my online tutorials, share their backstrap weaving projects with me. We are connected across continents by a love of ethnic textiles and an insatiable curiosity.

Strangers send me pictures of Central Asian yurt bands, saddlebags from the Middle East, belts from Russia, skirt fabric from Indonesia, Native American sashes, Mexican shoulder bags, and Guatemalan hair sashes—textiles created on simple looms by weavers with strong backs and magic fingers using a variety of techniques, from soumak and ikat to brocade and doubleweave.

My own work is now a melting pot of structures and design influences. Ideas can come from a brief encounter with an Asian textile at a fiber fair or from stories told by one of my indigenous teachers as I kneel at her loom. I can draw from the sight of a spectacularly clear Andean starry night and Inca ruins silhouetted against a rising moon, or the memory of woven motifs rhythmically appearing and disappearing amongst the folds of a dancer's skirts. Disjointed images from a myriad of experiences move before my eyes as I contemplate a new warp. My backstrap loom gives me the means to connect them, as my weaving connects me to people around the world. 

# Sakiori

## A JAPANESE RAG-WEAVING TRADITION

BY AMANDA ROBINETTE

It's easy to imagine that people have been weaving with rags since the first woven cloth became, well, raggedy. Indeed, some form of rag weaving is nearly ubiquitous across cultures and national boundaries. In North America and Europe, we mostly picture cheerfully colored rag rugs made from old clothes and bedding. These items are associated with thriftiness and comfort and are found across socioeconomic boundaries. In Japan, rag weaving is called *sakiori*, from the verbs *saku* (to tear or rip) and *oru* (to weave), and it was used by the peasant class to make clothing from the mid-18th century to the mid-20th century.

Sakiori was born in the homes of poor laborers as a response to dire need. The islands of Japan are devoid of native fleece-bearing animals and cotton plants and are subject to brutal winters, particularly in the northernmost areas. Historically, the rural people worked outside as farmers, fishermen and foresters, exposed to the elements. Their work provided little for them besides ensuring a meager existence.

Until the late 15th century, most Japanese clothed themselves exclusively in fabric made from bast fibers taken from plants such as wild hemp, linden, paper mulberry, nettle, and wisteria. These fabrics soften after much wear, but would have started out very rough and uncomfortable against the skin. They also would have done little to insulate against cold. (Imagine spending hours outside on a cold winter's day wearing nothing but a few layers of linen shirts and pants.)

Although silk had long been available to wealthier Japanese and cotton began to be imported from China in the 15th century, common people did not have access to these more comfortable



Half of an unmade *sodenashi* (vest); cotton rag on hemp warp, early to mid-20th century. (Author's collection)

PHOTOS BY AMANDA ROBINETTE



Detail of a work coat from Sado Island; indigo-dyed cotton rag on cotton warp. Note how fine the rags were cut for the weft. (Sri Gallery)



Work jacket with cotton sleeves and extensive wear and patching. Sleeves like these would have been replaced when worn or removed when a vest was preferred. (Sri Gallery)

fabrics. It was not until the 19th century that cotton cloth finally became available to most of the Japanese population. When it did, it was not in the form of pristine bolts of cloth ready to be cut and sewn. These went to the wealthy, and it was only when their garments were worn out that they were finally sold to the rag merchants who carried them to the rural population.

We do not think of cotton as being scarce or a luxury item, nor is it a fiber we consider to be particularly warm. But to the peasants of rural Japan, it was all of those things. Cotton is far superior to bast fiber in terms of keeping warm. It has air pockets to retain heat and can be woven tightly enough to reduce the effects of wind. It is no wonder that its arrival was greeted with much enthusiasm and not a little ingenuity.

Bundles of cotton rags were sorted for different purposes. Large rags may have been pieced and stitched together in layers to form a solid rectangle of cloth, which could be used just like a new bolt of cotton. Other medium to large pieces may have been used as patches when clothing and other textiles developed holes. The stitching used for these purposes was *sashiko*, a form of running-stitch embroidery. The stitches sometimes take the form of simple lines or geometric patterns but are also found in more elaborate designs or symbols. *Sashiko* was also done to reinforce garments in areas where a lot of wear was expected, such as across the shoulders and upper back where a burden might be carried. *Sashiko* stitching resembles that found on quilted fabric with which we are familiar. A fabric that has been layered or repaired in this way is called *boro*.

The smaller and more damaged rags would have been used for *sakiori*, along

with any of the larger pieces that the weaver decided to use for that purpose. In each home, the woman was responsible for making all of the cloth that her family needed. This work was done after her other jobs were completed. She might have spent all day working in the fields or carrying logs down from the mountains to the harbor, preparing food for the family meals, and caring for children before sitting down to her weaving or sewing.

The usual weaving loom in these circumstances was the *jibata*, a type of modified backstrap loom with harnesses in a frame. The shed was changed by moving the foot, around which was a loop of fabric connected by a lever to the top of the harnesses. Sakiori was typically woven in "full-width" panels 33–36 centimeters wide (13"–14"), or sometimes in "half-width" panels for children's clothing or work vests (*sodenashi*). The cotton rag was cut very fine, sometimes as fine as 3 millimeters, and woven in between picks of the warp material, which was usually hemp or another bast fiber. As cotton yarns became more available in the early 20th century, they were also used as warp threads.

By the mid-20th century, manufactured clothing became available and affordable for most Japanese, and techniques such as sakiori came to be seen as old-fashioned or mark of poverty. Only recently has there been a new interest in the history of everyday people and in preserving the crafts that they used to survive. This interest coincides with a widespread interest in "green" products and recycling, so boro textiles and sakiori are gaining a new popularity.

## RESOURCES

*Mottainai: The Fabric of Life: Lessons in Frugality from Traditional Japan.* Exhibition catalog, Art in the Garden, Portland Japanese Garden, 2011.

Yoshida, Shin-Ichiro and Dai Williams. *Riches from Rags: Saki-ori and Other Recycling Traditions in Japanese Rural Clothing.* San Francisco Craft & Folk Art Museum, 1994.



Sri Gallery, Brooklyn, New York. There are very few opportunities to see rural Japanese textiles, especially outside of Japan. Sri is a one-of-a-kind gallery located in Brooklyn, NY, founded by Stephen Szczepanek in 2001 in order to share his passion for the beauty and meaning to be found in these textiles. Stephen visits Japan several times each year to find more of these hidden treasures. Sri's website, [www.srithreads.com](http://www.srithreads.com), has an ever-changing sampling of textiles for sale.



# Navajo Weaving Today

BY ANNE VITELL

The warp in a Navajo rug is made of one single, continuous thread. Similarly, the tradition of Navajo weaving extends to today's native weavers through their mothers and grandmothers before them. And while the difficult techniques of handweaving a Navajo rug remain unchanged through the generations, today's weavers are truly modern, freely expressing themselves in their work. Like many of us, Diné women who weave today are also pulled in different directions by the demands of family and work and craft. (Diné is the Navajo's name for themselves, and it means simply "the People.") But these soft-spoken yet matter-of-fact ladies find a way to return home to themselves through the joy of weaving.

## LEARNING BY HAND AND EYE

Many Diné weavers start learning to spin and weave at a young age, sometimes as early as five years old. Because the loom is just a set of posts and crossbeams, the entire shape of the rug to be woven is created by hand and eye. This takes many years of practice and training as well as guidance and help from one's grandmother or mother, aunt, cousin, or sister.

Marilou Schultz is one of a large family with many fine weavers. She travels often, giving courses in Navajo weaving and selling her family's rugs. Marilou taught me that not only does each warp pair need to be evenly spaced but very careful attention must be paid to the tension with which it is wrapped. There are no guides: the warp is just wrapped in figure eights around two evenly spaced large dowels. If the warp



Storm rug by Gloria Cody  
PHOTOS BY ANNE VITELL

tension changes—perhaps loosening toward the end of the process as one's attention wavers or hands and arms tire—then the rug will be taller at one side than the other, and this cannot be fixed. One has to simply accept it and finish the rug, a well-loved though imperfect creation.

Once the warp is prepared, the two sheds are saved with a bit of cotton twine, and the ends are carefully wrapped and spaced with special wool edging cord. (The ends of these become tassels at the four corners of the finished rug.) The warp is then taken off the dowels it was wrapped around. In an

instant, the freed warp kinks up into a tangled mess. It looks like it can never be orderly again, but it is, carefully straightened out and attached to the loom. Then each thread of the back shed is found and attached by cotton twine to a stick, and weaving can finally begin. The sheds cross from front to back across the middle of the weaving, the middle of all those figure eights. From time to time the woolen warp threads stick to each other and the weaver will strum them with the back of her hand to separate them and make room for the batten to be threaded through. Weft is pounded down with

handmade hardwood weaving combs, and a room full of concentrating weavers fills with thrums and beats as each person creates a rug.

## PATTERN AND MEMORY

Diné weavers typically have their patterns memorized. I remember Marilou teaching us how to weave what she called a “crystal” pattern, because the look of it is like light refracted through a crystal (not the same as a Crystal rug, which is associated with Crystal, New Mexico). Written out, the pattern is really complicated. I tried it anyway, very slowly working on a small rug. Because a skilled Navajo weaver knows her patterns by heart, she is free to improvise, experiment with color, and expand in new, unexpected directions. Younger weavers sometimes try out surprising, vibrant variations that defy categories.


In contrast to most other Native American peoples, the Diné still live where their ancestors did, amidst some of the most stunning natural beauty of the American Southwest—places like Canyon de Chelly, Shiprock, and Monument Valley. Navajo rugs often follow set patterns, related to their environment, with intriguing names such as Storm, Two Grey Hills, Burntwater, and Wide Ruins. But contemporary weavers sometimes find themselves taking departures into a new designs. The rug pictured here was made by Marilou’s sister Lola Cody, like her, a highly skilled and extraordinary weaver. This rug has a fine weft and closely spaced warp. She was weaving a Burntwater-type rug, which emphasizes colors from vegetal dyes but with her own unique addition, a black scroll border running up the sides of the rug.

Then there is an extra special rug, woven by a woman who is legally blind. It is a Storm pattern, often worked in more somber colors. This rug’s colors are completely unique. While the pattern shows a few wiggles here and there that another weaver would have corrected in passing, overall it is woven extremely skillfully.

That she could execute this complex pattern at all is amazing.

There are also weavers like Marilou who branch off into the realm of contemporary art. She has, for example, woven a rug in the pattern of a computer microchip for the collection of a large corporation. She has woven one rug that looks like several different Navajo rugs, each in a different traditional pattern, laid out as if they were spread on top of one another diagonally, this way and that. Given the constraints of vertical warp and horizontal weft, this effect of strewn minirugs must have been very difficult to achieve and a true labor of love.

## COLOR AND PLACE

In the old stories, Spider Woman taught the Diné how to weave. For today’s weavers, as for the generations before, the act of weaving can be a meditation and a spiritual practice. The weaver sits on the ground, legs folded to the side, back upright, focused on weaving for long periods of time. A lifetime of preparation has gone into this moment. Beauty and deep spiritual connection can arise out of it. The rug is the physical expression of the weaver’s experience, and within each rug resides the dedicated energy of generation after generation of skilled artisans, a priceless, timeless gift of beauty and harmony. 



Burntwater rug  
by Lola Cody

# Notes FROM THE Fell

## Applying the brakes!

TOM KNISELY

I've noticed that a number of new car models claim the ability to automatically apply brakes when the car senses danger. Sensors located in the front and rear bumpers can anticipate a collision and start to brake before the driver can put a foot on the pedal. Now I think this is absolutely ingenious. If only a loom manufacturer could invent a sensor to remind me that I have woven beyond the

sweet spot and it is time to advance my warp. How cool would that be? Not a loud obnoxious foghorn-type sound, but maybe a sweet little ping like the sound of a tuning fork. My better sense tells me this is not going to happen, and even if it did, I know I would try to outwit the sensor and weave those last twelve picks to finish the treading repeat. Weavers love the rhythm of throwing the shuttle

back and forth. Breaking that rhythm to advance the warp just seems wrong, and I wish all looms came with an automatic advancing system. But they don't, so it is up to us to become familiar with our looms' braking systems and learn to use them well.

I find this to be especially important at guild workshops taught in a round-robin format. You know what I mean? Oh, here comes Esther Marie. She signed up for another workshop and still insists on bringing that old dinosaur of a loom that Uncle Herman made for her as a child. Esther proudly quotes Uncle Herman to all the new guild members: "If I can build a chicken coop, I should be able to build you a loom, honey. All we need are some wood, some coat-hanger wire, and maybe an old saw blade to make you a brake." Heaven help us all this weekend.

To find the sweet spot on your loom (or Esther's), first go to the back of your loom and look at the warp beam. On one side, you will find the brake mechanism. I find that most floor looms today have a friction brake—a strong cable held tightly against a metal or wooden brake drum by a heavy-duty spring to prevent the warp beam from moving while you are weaving. To advance the warp, you step on a brake pedal located toward the front of the loom, releasing the tension on the cable so the warp beam can move and the threads can be advanced forward. A ratchet-and-pawl brake looks like a circular saw blade with a metal bar that engages with the teeth of the ratchet, locking the warp beam in place. When the pawl is lifted up and away from the teeth, the warp beam can be advanced. This system has been used for years and works well. I find it rather funny that



Use a bobbin to check the fell's distance from the breast beam when advancing your warp.

PHOTOS BY  
CAREENA EMRICH



A ratchet-and-pawl braking system.



Friction braking system.



Tom advancing the warp from the side of the loom, to help maintain his "youthful physique."

you will see this braking system used on small rigid-heddle looms and large floor looms such as Glimakra and Cranbrook. A few looms will have a worm gear, but these are mostly on large, high-end looms.

I am a lucky man because I have the opportunity to weave on a variety of different looms in the studio. The friction brake is so convenient to use. I just step on the brake pedal and I can advance the warp from my bench. On big Glimakra looms, I prefer to get up from the bench. Glimakra does provide a means to release the brake from the front of the loom, but I still have to stand up and pull on a handle, so I just prefer to get up and advance the warp from the back and side of the loom. I don't mind. I'm the kind of guy that looks at life as a cup always half full, and getting up from the loom bench helps me maintain this youthful physique.

Now, how to find the sweet spot for weaving and beating? First, sit at your loom and look at the distance between the inside of the front beam and the reed when your beater is at rest. I try to visualize this space in thirds, and I also

find the halfway point. I like to start out weaving at the point one-third of the way between the beam and the beater at rest, then weave up to the halfway point. This area is what I would consider the sweet spot. When you weave beyond the two-thirds point, you find the shed is getting narrow, and it becomes hard to throw the shuttle. You are now in dangerous territory! You are more likely to get unwanted floats in your fabric because your shuttle picks up warp threads from the lower and upper parts of the narrow shed. It's so unpleasant when you notice these floats after you have taken the piece off the loom. The answer is to advance your warp frequently.

Here is a tip for advancing your work that works on most looms. Step on the brake to release the warp. With your foot still resting on the brake pedal, start ratcheting the warp forward onto the cloth beam. Take a 4-inch plastic bobbin, place one flange against the inside of the front beam, and advance the warp so that the fell line is even with the other flange. Release the brake, and tighten the warp. There will be enough

room for the fell to come forward as you tighten up the warp, and it will not be so close to the front beam that the beater hits it when you bring it forward.

But what if it does? Don't panic! You just need to back up the fell by putting some of the warp back onto the warp beam. Step on the brake pedal again to release the tension on the warp. Now release the ratchet and pawl on the cloth beam, unwind some of the warp off the beam, then wind the loose warp back onto the warp beam. Try it. Easy, right?

I hope this advice is helpful when you are working with new or unfamiliar looms. I see this so many times here in the studio when a student is asked to weave on an unfamiliar loom. And now let's be perfectly honest with ourselves: if you are the Esther Marie in your guild, please take a moment before the workshop to explain your braking system to your classmates, and make yourself available to help them with your loom. Or just leave it home and use another loom. Keep some friends.

Peace to all and happy weaving.



# Handwoven's Guide to Workshops and Events



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September 5-6, 2015

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[www.montereycountyfair.com](http://www.montereycountyfair.com)

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[www.VistaFiberArtsFiesta.com](http://www.VistaFiberArtsFiesta.com)

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September 12-13, 2015

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[www.salidafiberfestival.org](http://www.salidafiberfestival.org)

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(563) 920-7704

[www.IowaSheepAndWoolFestival.com](http://www.IowaSheepAndWoolFestival.com)

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#### —Lexington

May 16-17, 2015—workshops and festival

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[www.kentuckysheepandfiber.com](http://www.kentuckysheepandfiber.com)

## Maine

### Weaving Retreat at Nezinscot Farm—Turner

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(207) 225-3231

[www.nezinscotfarm.com](http://www.nezinscotfarm.com)

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## Maine Fiber Frolic—Windsor

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[www.fiberfrolic.com](http://www.fiberfrolic.com)

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June 12-14, 2015

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### A Wool Gathering—Yellow Springs

September 19-20, 2015

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(937) 325-7781 [www.awoolgathering.com](http://www.awoolgathering.com)

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November 6-8, 2015

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(541) 308-0002 [www.columbiagorgefiberfestival.com](http://www.columbiagorgefiberfestival.com)

## South Dakota

### Black Hills Fiber Arts Fair—Rapid City

April 23-25, 2015

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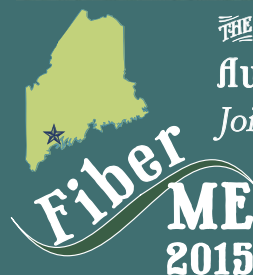
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## Tennessee

### R&M Yarns Annual Fiber Education Festival—Georgetown

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April 17-19, 2015

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[www.smokymountainfiberartsfestival.org](http://www.smokymountainfiberartsfestival.org)

## Virginia

### Shenandoah Valley Fiber Festival—Berryville

September 26-27, 2015

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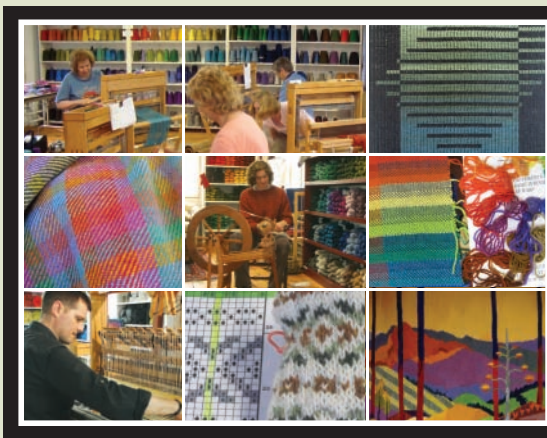
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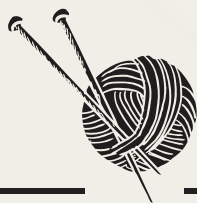
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# NIGHT & DAY

From the “white nights” of Russia to bright, bustling Indian days.

## Moscow Nights Tea Towels

JENNY SENNOTT

Over the years, my weaving explorations have led me down some unexpected paths. In early 2014, I was browsing the Ralph Griswold Archives via [handweaving.net](http://handweaving.net) when I came upon the *Album of Weaving Patterns*, published in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 1912. Having majored in Russian in college, my curiosity was piqued by this publication from the pre-Soviet era. Who were the weavers of czarist Russia, and what were they weaving?

I belong to the Complex Weavers Early Weaving Books and Manuscripts study group, and so I decided to weave my swatches for the study group using one of the drafts from this publication. Most of the drafts are easy for a weaver with some experience to understand, but the Russian language and Cyrillic alphabet have changed over the past 100 years, making it a challenge to translate the text.

I chose draft #87 for my swatches. The threading is an advancing twill/satin combination that many weavers will recognize as a “snowflake” design; however, in the Russian album, the treadling given is a simple point-twill arrangement rather than the tromp-as-writ treadling that yields the snowflake. The text states that this weave is suitable for towels. The authors also caution that this is a complex pattern, so one must pay careful attention to avoid threading mistakes.

I wove my exchange swatches in natural and white linen yarns and then wove several towels with the remaining warp. For these towels, I



### STRUCTURE

Snowflake twill with point-twill treadlings.

### EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 22" weaving width; 12-dent reed; 1 shuttle, 4 bobbins.

### YARNS

**Warp:** 8/2 cottolin, 60% cotton/40% linen (3,360 yd/lb; Yarn Barn of Kansas), #8264 Wine, 1,724 yd; #8265 Burnt Orange, 360 yd. **Weft:** 8/2 cottolin, 60% cotton/40% linen, #8263 Chocolate, #1316 Rust, and #1418 Old Gold, 570 yd each. Weft for hems: 100% cotton sewing thread in matching color, 300 yd.

### WARP LENGTH

521 ends 4 yd long, following the warp color order in Figure 1 (allows 7" for take-up, and 38" for loom waste).

### SETTS

**Warp:** 24 epi (2/dent in a 12-dent reed). **Weft:** 30 ppi for body; 36 ppi for hems.

### DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 21¾". **Woven length (measured under tension on the loom):** 99" (33" each towel). **Finished size after washing:** 3 hemmed towels, 18¼" × 26".





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# Shades of India Kitchen Towels

SARAH H. JACKSON

From the eighth grade until she graduated from high school, my sister Susan corresponded with a pen pal from India. Over those years, she wrote many letters and sent things that Amit asked for. He wanted “American” chewing gum and candy so she sent boxes of Chiclets, Juicy Fruit and Doublemint, and Hershey bars. An Elvis Presley record also made the nearly 9,000 mile journey from our small town in western Kansas to Bombay (now Mumbai), India. One year, Amit asked for several yards of all-cotton gingham fabric for his mother. In return, she sent my mother a silk sari. My family was stunned. It seemed a vastly unbalanced trade—elegant, finely woven silk for humble, inexpensive cotton—but Amit’s mother was very happy with the gingham, which was unavailable in India.

Beyond being intrigued by the silk, I was fascinated by the colors of the sari: deep jade green and almost iridescent yellow that was unlike anything I’d ever seen. Was my fascination a foretelling of my current

penchant for color? Possibly. Vibrant, saturated colors are what I most enjoy weaving with, so it’s not surprising that the colors of India came to mind when I was thinking about the theme for this *Handwoven* issue. A Google search for “textiles from India” turned up brilliantly colored, striped fabrics, luxurious silk as well as utilitarian cotton. The cotton fabrics reminded me of one of my favorite scarves, woven in India in magenta, hot pink, red, orange, and burgundy, with touches of green and purple. The scarf inspired a yarn wrap for bumberet, which seemed a good weave structure choice, considering the variety of colors. Changing the weft color for each towel resulted in a wider range of color for my Shades of India towels.

## RESOURCES

Lancaster, Daryl. Leslie, Ruby. "Fabric Forecast: Fashions for Fall/Winter '04-'05.." *Handwoven* March/April 2004, p. 77. Download available at [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com); Free Resources; Projects, p. 3.

## STRUCTURE

Bumberet.

## EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 21" weaving width; 8-dent reed; 1 shuttle.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 8/2 unmercerized cotton (3,360 yd/lb; UKI and WEBS), UKI colors: Beauty Rose #24, 274 yd; Old Gold #34, 216 yd; Orange #43, 294 yd; Rose #27, 488 yd; WEBS colors: Tobacco #7327, 274 yd; Red #3611, 352 yd; Burgundy #3794, 988 yd. **Weft:** 8/2 unmercerized cotton, UKI: Orange #43, Lipstick #61, Magenta #30, Lt Red #29, 450 yd each; WEBS: Burnt Sienna #7198, Royal Lilac #6394, 450 yd each.

## OTHER SUPPLIES

Synthrapol, a textile detergent formulated to prevent color migration (available from Dharma Trading Company).

## WARP LENGTH

443 ends 6½ yd long (includes 2 floating selvedges; allows 9" for take-up, 27" for loom waste).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 22 epi (2-3-3-3/dent in an 8-dent reed). **Weft:** 22 ppi bumberet; 16 ppi plain weave.

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 20⅞". **Woven length (measured under tension on the loom):** 198" (about 33" each towel). **Finished size after washing and hemming:** 6 towels, 17" × 26" each.

**1** Wind 441 warp threads 6½ yd long, using the color sequence indicated in the warp color order, Figure 1. The color sequence may seem a bit slow initially but there is no need to cut the thread for every color change. Rather than cutting the thread to change colors, after you wind 3 ends of one color, wind it temporarily around an unused lower peg on the warping board and set the cone to the side. By shifting the cones as you use them, the threads will remain untangled. Note the regular sequence using Burgundy and Rose; I never cut these two colors, but I did cut some of the other colors when there was a significant gap between sections using them. Measure 2 floating selvedges of Burgundy and set them aside.

**2** Use your preferred method to warp the loom, and thread following the draft in Figure 2. Sley 2-3-3-3 per dent in an

8-dent reed for a total of 22 epi. It’s easier to keep track of your threading sequence if you notice the threading pattern: 2-3-2 for one color, 1-4-1 for the next, and so on. Sley the floating selvedges in the two outermost dents and weight them over the back beam.

**3** With the first weft color, weave 24 picks of plain weave for the hem. Weave 30" in the pattern, then another 24 picks of plain weave. Weave 2 picks of scrap yarn. Weave the remaining towels following the same treadling, each with a different weft color; weave 2 picks of scrap yarn between each towel.

**4** Remove the fabric from the loom. Machine zigzag the raw edges and on both sides of the scrap yarn. Machine wash with a small amount of Synthrapol in hot water. Machine dry on low heat



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## Japanese Noren Door Panels

MARGARET ZEPS

**N**oren are Japanese curtains made of cotton that hang in storefronts. Traditionally, they serve as sunshades as well as advertisements, often featuring the store's name or trademark. Today, they are also used indoors in doorways or windows or as wall decoration. I made my noren to hang in the doorway to my studio.

I saw many noren outside of businesses on a trip to Japan several years ago and decided to weave my own. My guild, the Portland Handweavers Guild, did a yearlong study of Japanese textile techniques, and I participated in two study groups: weaving and *sashiko*, a Japanese embroidery technique. I combined ideas from the two studies, using a variation of a 6-shaft supplementary-warp-and-weft pattern from *Sixty Scarves for 60 Years* to create a woven fabric reminiscent of two traditional sashiko patterns, persimmon flower and mountain form.

Brown Sheep Cotton Fine in the Cotton Ball color approximates the white thread used to embroider on indigo-dyed cotton fabric in traditional sashiko. I used the Cotton Fine and a navy 10/2 pearl cotton to weave three panels, which would make my noren wide enough to fit the doorway to my studio. I wove one panel in the persimmon flower design, one in the mountain form design, and one panel in navy plain weave for



### STRUCTURE

Plain weave with supplementary warp and weft.

### EQUIPMENT

6-shaft loom, 14" weaving width; 12-dent reed; 2 shuttles with bobbins.

### YARNS

**Warp:** 10/2 pearl cotton (4,200 yd/lb; UK1), #15 Navy, 1,060 yd; 80% cotton/20% wool Cotton Fine (1,000 yd/lb; Brown Sheep), #100 Cotton Ball, 260 yd.

**Weft:** 10/2 pearl cotton, #15 Navy, 784 yd; Cotton Fine, #100 Cotton Ball, 76 yd (yardage will be cut from the warp).

### OTHER SUPPLIES

Strong sewing needle to match the size of the Cotton Ball yarn; fusible, lightweight, white, non-

woven interfacing; navy sewing thread; hanging rod.

### WARP LENGTH

406 ends 3¼ yd long (includes 324 ends plus 2 floating selvages of Navy, 80 ends Cotton Ball [white]; allows 4" for take-up, 33" for loom waste).

### SETTS

**Warp:** 24 epi (2/dent in a 12-dent reed) plus 6 epi for supplementary warp (white).

**Weft:** 24 ppi.

### DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 13¾".

**Woven length (measured under tension on the loom):** 2 panels, 21"; center panel, 37".

**Finished size after hemming:** 3 panels 12½" × 18".



Download the plum blossom motif on weaving today.com.

the sashiko embroidered plum blossom. I chose not to wash them in order to keep the crispness of the fabric. You will need to allow extra yardage for shrinkage if you prefer to wash them. The size of the panels is based on traditional noren but could be made to fit any door or window.

The advice and support of fellow guild members in these study groups helped me create a successful project. The year of studying Japanese textiles has made me eager to continue learning more.

## RESOURCES

Weavers Guild of Greater Baltimore.

*1949-2009, Sixty Scarves for 60 Years.*  
Baltimore, Maryland: Self-published, 2009.

<http://sashikostitchers.com/3-ways-to-transfer-a-sashiko-design-to-your-fabric/>

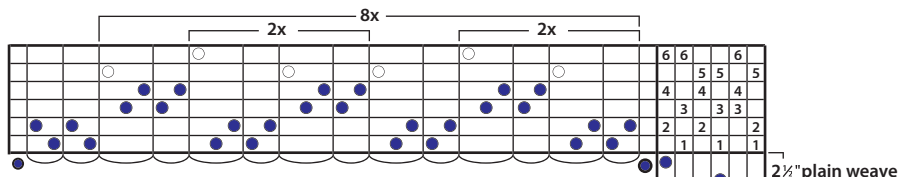
<http://sashikostitchers.com/how-to-sashiko-stitch/>

**1** Wind 324 Navy warp threads  $3\frac{1}{4}$  yd long. Measure 2 Navy floating selvages and set them aside. Using the front-to-back method to warp the loom, sley 2/dent in a 12-dent reed for a total of 24 epi. Wind 80 white (Cotton Ball) warp threads  $3\frac{1}{4}$  yd long. Starting with the second dent from the right, sley 1 white thread in every other dent across the width of the warp. Thread following the draft in Figure 1. Wind all the threads together onto the back beam. Sley the floating selvages in the 2 outermost dents and weight them over the back beam.

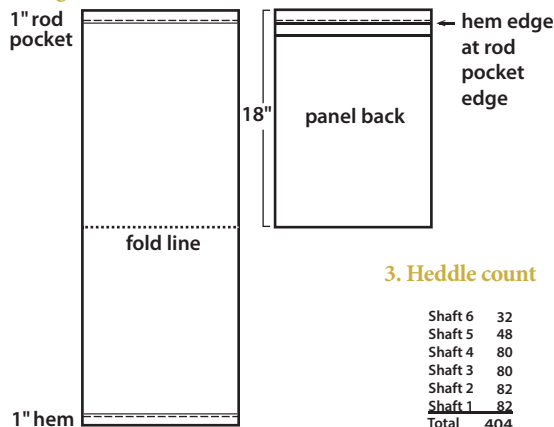
**2** Wind 1 bobbin with Navy and 1 with white. Spread the warp with scrap yarn. Begin by weaving  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " of plain weave with navy for a hem allowance. Weave the first panel following the treadling and color order in Figure 1 for Panel 1. When you have woven to the end of the pattern area, end by weaving a hem of  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " plain weave using navy. The woven length for the pattern areas (not including the hem) of the panel is approximately 16". Release the tension to measure the length. Weave 2 picks of scrap yarn. Weave the second panel in the same manner following the treadling and color order for Panel 2. Weave 2 picks of scrap yarn.

**3** Before weaving the third (center) panel, you will need to carefully clip the white warp ends at the end of the plain-weave hem just woven and remove them from the reed. Secure them neatly at the back

### 1. Draft



### 2. Diagram fold



of the loom; you will use them later for the sashiko stitching. Weave 37" in plain weave with Navy for the center panel. The extra length will serve as self-lining for the back of the panel. (See Figure 2.)

**4** Remove the fabric from the loom. Machine zigzag the raw edges and on both sides of the scrap yarn. To retain the crisp finish of the fabric, do not wash. If pressing is necessary, place the fabric right side down on a terry-cloth towel and press with a warm iron on the wrong side only. Cut between the picks of scrap yarn.

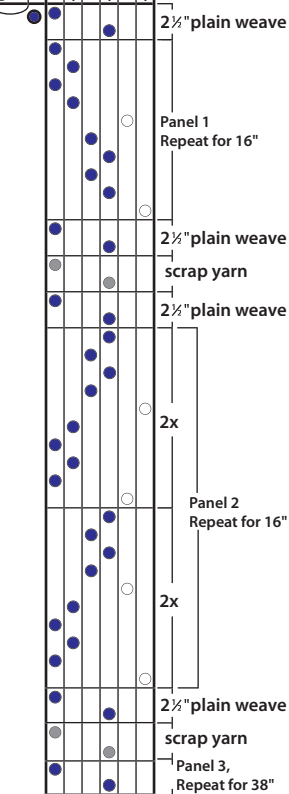
**5** For the hems and rod pockets on all three panels, press the plain-weave hem allowance under  $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Turn under again 1". Press and handstitch.

**6** Fold the center panel wrong sides together so that the hemmed edge of the lower side meets the handstitched edge of the rod pocket on the back of the panel. Press lightly to mark the lower edge. Unfold. Refer to the photo for suggested placement of the plum blossom motif. (The plum blossom motif can be downloaded at [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com) under Free Resources/Projects.) Transfer the motif to the wrong side of the front. (See Resources for instructions on how to transfer and stitch the motif.) Stitch the design with the white thread saved from your warp.

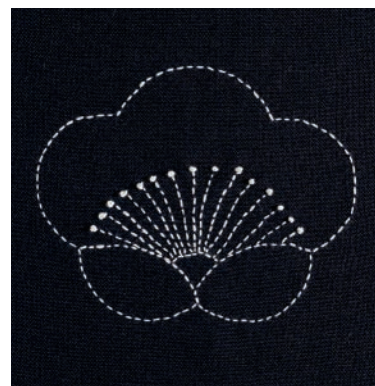
**7** Fold the center panel along the pressed lower edge, wrong sides together, and handstitch in place. Sew the side edges closed.

### 3. Heddle count

Shaft 6	32
Shaft 5	48
Shaft 4	80
Shaft 3	80
Shaft 2	82
Shaft 1	82
<b>Total</b>	<b>404</b>



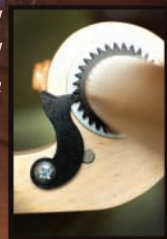
- floating selvage (use Navy)
- 10/2 cotton, Navy #132
- Cotton Fine, Cotton Ball #100
- scrap yarn
- ⌋ dent together



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Model: Hillary Muehle  
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# Western Sakiori Scarf

AMANDA ROBINETTE

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Japanese peasants from the mid-18th to the early 20th centuries used *sakiori* (rag weaving) to recycle old fabric into new cloth for warm, durable work clothing. The best available material for this was used cotton items cast off by wealthier people. What interests me about *sakiori* is the concept of using the best available waste material to make something that preserves its desirable qualities. We live in a time when there is an overabundance of clothing, and the thrift shops are overflowing with cast-off textiles. The gold standard for cloth has always been silk, and I have found it to be readily available in thrift stores.

The qualities of silk that I seek to preserve are its softness and drape. Through experimentation, I came up with a rag-woven fabric that is so soft and supple it can be used as a scarf. The rich colors and patterns in the manufactured cloth add wonderfully to the rewoven project.

For this project, I started with a wrap skirt (size 10–12) in shades of wine, mauve, burgundy, and red. I used Gray Mauve Tencel as my warp and fine weft because its almost metallic sheen acts to pull together the other colors and to enhance the blending effect. This project really shows one of my favorite aspects of rag weaving: the way that a patterned fabric looks when it is broken down and rewoven. The lighter areas of the pattern show up like stars across the scarf, and the contrast between the bright red and the more muted colors gives it a lovely dimensionality. Although the original fabric in this case was reasonably attractive, you will find that even the most discordant and hideous patterns can make beautiful *sakiori*!

Stop by your local thrift shop or look in the back recesses of your closet for outdated or damaged silk clothes just waiting to be reinvented by you!

## STRUCTURE

Plain weave.

## EQUIPMENT

2-shaft loom, 8" weaving width; 8-dent reed; 1 boat shuttle; 1 stick shuttle; 1 bobbin.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 8/2 Tencel (3,360 yd/lb; WEBS), Grey Mauve, 378 yd.

**Weft:** 8/2 Tencel (3,360 yd/lb; WEBS), Grey Mauve, 212 yd; ½" lightweight silk rag strips, 106 yd (approximately 2 women's blouses).

## WARP LENGTH

126 ends 3 yd long (includes 2 floating selvages; allows 7" for take-up, 29" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 16 epi (2/dent in an 8-dent reed).

**Weft:** 18 ppi (6 ppi rags, 12 ppi Tencel).

## DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 8".

Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 72".

Finished size after washing: 6⅔" × 67" excluding fringe.


**1** Wind 124 warp threads 3 yd long. Measure and set aside 2 ends for floating selvages. Use your preferred method to warp the loom, and thread for plain weave. Sley 2 per dent in an 8-dent reed, centering for a weaving width of 8". Sley the floating selvages in separate dents and weight over the back of the loom.

**2** Directions for preparing the silk strips can be downloaded at [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com) under Free Resources. Wind a bobbin of Tencel, and wind the silk strips onto a stick shuttle.

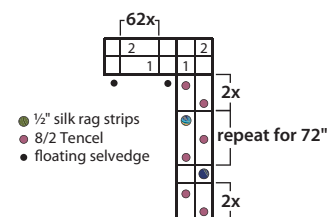
**3** Allowing for 10" of fringe, leave a tail 3 times the width of your warp for hemstitching and weave 4 picks with your weft. Weave the body of your scarf by alternating 1 rag pick with 2

Tencel picks. Overlap the tapered silk strip ends in the shed when adding a new strip. After you have woven 1", hemstitch the beginning of your scarf. Weave until your scarf reaches 72" or the desired length; weave 4 picks in Tencel, and hemstitch.

**4** Remove the fabric from the loom leaving 10" for fringe at each end. On each end of the scarf, prepare a twisted fringe using 8-end groups for the center 14 fringes and 7-end groups at each selvage.

**5** Machine wash on delicate (preferred method) or handwash in warm water. Place in dryer on the air or low cycle and check every 20 minutes until dry. Press on low or medium setting. 

## 1. Draft





Instructions for preparing silk for sakiori can be found at [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com) under Free Resources/ Tips and Tricks

# Broken Borders Jacket

CATHY COATNEY

**A**s a teenager, I was fortunate to be chosen as an exchange student to Germany. The generous family I lived with enjoyed showing me a few sights and we visited “Checkpoint Charlie.” At that time, this active barrier existed between West and East Germany. We have seen that barrier demolished and only remnants now remain of the border.

I recently purchased a beautiful edition of Oscar Beriau’s *Tissage Domestique*. I speak very little French, but amazing online translation apps helped me understand any text that was not obvious. Modern technology has made our world smaller. In this age of electronic communication, we are able to interact with people easily from all over the globe. On Facebook fiber groups, I communicate with like-minded souls in Italy, England, Mexico, and all over the United States. It truly feels as if borders have eroded in many aspects.

In an attempt to illustrate this feeling of partial borders, I used several techniques to integrate color onto a matte black

yardage. I devised a simple tie-up to allow for better exposure of the decorative colored silk and particularly like the look of faux ikat that occasionally appears. Once you become familiar with the process, the weaving is straightforward and obvious. The creative process of building the colored accents is fun. Enjoy the process and perhaps devise even more unique combinations of yarns.

## RESOURCES

- Beriau, Oscar. *Tissage Domestique*. Quebec, Canada: Ministère de l’agriculture, 1943.
- Erickson, Johanna. “Tapestry Rag Rugs.” *Handwoven*, May/June 2007, pp. 52–54.
- McFarland, Sue. “Clasped Weft Scarf.” *Handwoven*, January/February 1995, pp. 31, 85–86.
- Murphy, Marilyn. “A Riff on Weft Ikat: Clasped-Weft Scarf.” *Handwoven*, January/February 2014, pp. 67–68.
- Selander, Malin. “Warm and Fuzzy: Freeform Pattern for Scarves.” *Handwoven*, January/February 2007, pp. 36–38.
- Selk, Karen. “Natural by Nature: A Five-Silk Scarf.” *Handwoven*, May/June 2009, pp. 36–38.

## STRUCTURE

Plain weave with clasped-weft accents.

## EQUIPMENT

8-shaft or 4-shaft loom, 34" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 1 shuttle; multiple knitting or tapestry bobbins (optional).

## YARNS

**Warp:** 60/2x2 bombyx spun silk (7,500 yd/lb; Gekko, Treenway Silks), #57 Raven Black, 3,202 yd. **Weft:** 20/2 bombyx silk noil (4,500 yd/lb; Alirio, Treenway Silks), #57 Raven Black, 3,350 yd.

## ACCENT WEFT

8/2 reeled silk thread (2,790 yd/lb; 10 yd/skein; Serenity, Treenway Silks), #12 Pomegranate (deep red), #11 Sea Lyric (light blue-green), #213 Celadon (light yellow-green), #47 Cherry Blossom (dusty rose), #201 Golden Aspen (gold), #212 100-Acre Wood (forest green), #46 Peony (magenta), #7 Bachelor’s Button (medium blue), #10 Malachite (teal green), 2 skeins each, 180 yd total. (Although less luxurious, 6-strand embroidery floss can be substituted for the accent weft.)

## OTHER SUPPLIES

Butterick Pattern #5567, View B (available online); notions, thread, etc., per pattern instructions.

## WARP LENGTH

674 ends 4¾ yd long (includes 2 floating selvages; allows 7" for take-up, 29" for loom waste).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 20 epi (2/dent in a 10-dent reed). **Weft:** 22–24 ppi.

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 33⅝". **Woven length (measured under tension on the loom):** 135". **Finished size after washing:** 124½" × 29".

**1** Wind 672 warp threads 4¾ yd long. Measure 2 floating selvages and set them aside. Use your preferred method to warp the loom, and thread following the draft in Figure 1. (You can download a 4-shaft version of the draft at [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com).) Sley 2/dent in a 10-dent reed for a total of 20 epi. Sley the floating selvages in the two outermost dents and weight them over the back beam.

**2** For ease of treadling, separate the plain-weave treadles from the accent treadles as shown in the tie-up in Figure 1.

**3** Wind 1 bobbin with the black weft yarn and use bobbins or butterflies for the accent colors.

**4** Spread the warp with waste yarn using the plain-weave treadles. Weave 6" of

black plain weave before weaving with the accent colors. Weave the fabric, referring to the photo for suggested placement of the accent colors. The colors can be woven in any one or a combination of the following techniques:

- Treadle 1 or 4 and throw a single pick of colored silk. Return to the subsequent plain-weave shed with the next pick, using black.
- Treadle 1; throw a colored pick. Treadle 4 and return with the same or a different color.
- Treadle 1 or 4 and throw one color across the shed to the opposite side; wrap it around another colored yarn on that side and pull it back toward the middle of the shed. Manipulate the placement of the join by pulling



On the  
web



A 4-shaft version of the draft, Figure 1, is available at [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com).



### 1. 8-shaft draft

- floating selvedge / 20/2 silk noil, black
- accent weft
- \* dashed line indicates clasped wefts woven over 1 or 2 picks

84x							
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
7	6	5	4	3	2	1	8
6	5	4	3	2	1	8	7
5	4	3	2	1	8	7	6
4	3	2	1	8	7	6	5
3	2	1	8	7	6	5	4
2	1	8	7	6	5	4	3
1	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
1	8	7	6	5	4	3	2

#### Weave Plan

Weave 6" plain weave, then begin weaving accent wefts, using any or all of the accent treadlings here in conjunction with the specific instructions given in the project steps.

Space accents by weaving plain weave for the length desired between accent rows.

When beginning or ending accent wefts, be sure to maintain plain-weave order in the black background wefts, as shown in treadlings.

End by weaving 6" plain weave.

	1	2	3	4	
6" plain weave	/	/	/	/	repeat as desired
Accent a (on Treadle 1)	●	/	/	/	
6" plain weave	/	/	/	/	repeat as desired
Accent a (on Treadle 4)	/	/	/	●	
6" plain weave	/	/	/	/	repeat as desired
Accent b (Treadle 4, then 1)	●	/	/	●	
6" plain weave	/	/	/	/	repeat as desired
Accent b (Treadle 1, then 4)	●	/	/	●	
6" plain weave	/	/	/	/	repeat as desired
Accent c (clasped weft on 1)	●	/	/	/	
6" plain weave	/	/	/	/	repeat as desired
Accent c (clasped weft on 4)	/	/	/	●	
6" plain weave	/	/	/	/	repeat as desired
Accent d (clasped weft on 1, then 4)	●	/	/	●	
6" plain weave	/	/	/	/	repeat as desired
Accent d (clasped weft on 4, then 1)	●	/	/	●	


on one weft or the other, using care to avoid draw-in. Beat, change sheds and continue with the plain-weave sequence. (Or add more color!)

- d. Treadle 1 or 4; throw the colored yarn only partially through the shed then bring the bobbin or butterfly up out of the warp. Close the shed. Open the subsequent plain-weave shed (treadle 2 or 3) and bring the plain-weave shuttle up out of the warp at the same point. Clasp the two wefts by winding one around the other; close the shed. For the next pick, return the wefts toward the selvages where they originated using the corresponding opposite shed. For example, if the colored yarn was inserted using treadle 1, return it using treadle 4. If the tabby shot met the colored silk using treadle 2, the return shot should be on treadle 3. Note: It is important to continue the background plain-weave sequence in order or it will appear as a treadling error.

- 5 Remove the fabric from the loom. Machine zigzag the raw edges. Handwash

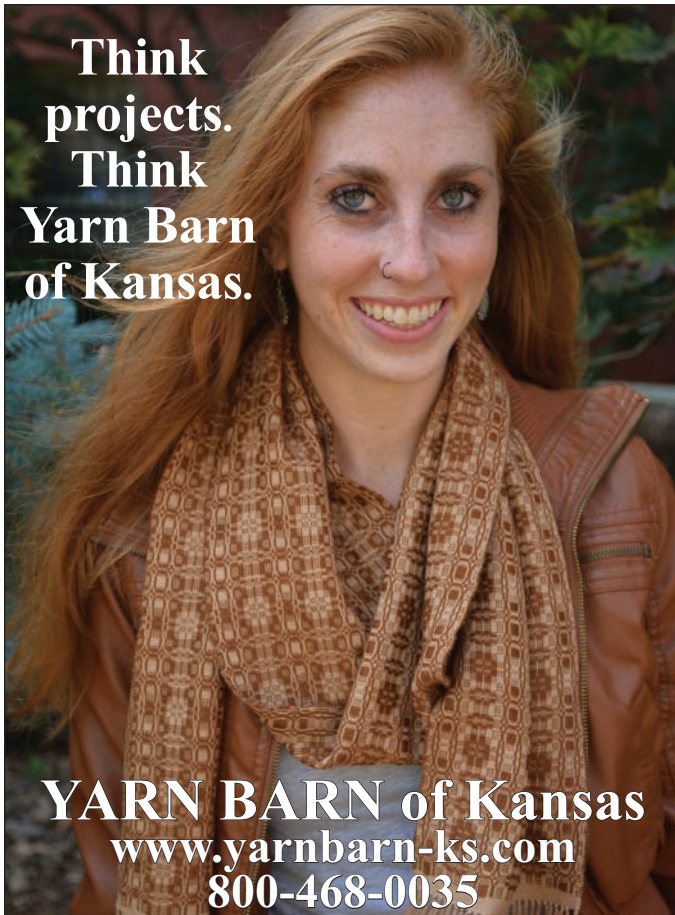
with silk wash or mild soap in warm water. Rinse well and gently spin for a few seconds in an automatic washer. Lay flat to dry, making sure the fabric is lying square. Steam-press lightly on the wrong side only.

- 6 Before cutting into the handwoven fabric, make a muslin to test your pattern for fit. The muslin can be made in a commercial fabric similar in weight and drape to the handwoven fabric.

- 7 The jacket was assembled according to the pattern instructions with two exceptions: The lower pieces of the jacket front and back were cut on the cross-wise grain so the accent weft stripes run vertically, and in addition to the interfacing used on the collar and front facings, a 1 1/4" strip of interfacing was added to the entire width of the hems on the sleeves and the lower edge of the garment. Steam the seams open using a press cloth. Use your preferred method to finish the raw edges. Add decorative buttons or charms if desired. 



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# CLOTH OF LIFE

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## Wildfire Scarves: Colorado Shibori

PEG MACMORRIS

One day after the 2012 summer wildfires in Colorado, I began to imagine making a woven shibori pleated scarf in which the wrinkles (or crinkles) mimicked flames. I designed flamelike colors of red-orange, gold, and brown in stripes for the warp, using supple threads of Soysilk and bamboo. The scarf's texture is created using the woven shibori technique introduced first by Catharine Ellis (see Resources). The weft was polyester sewing thread—red, brown, and black, used in a series that gradually shaded from one color to the next. I wove the scarf in twill with the sewing thread for a soft hand and after every eight picks of polyester weft, I wove in a heavier gathering thread to create the pattern of the shibori pleating. After weaving, the nylon gathering threads were pulled tight, then steamed to set the fabric in permanent patterned pleats. These pattern threads pointed up the scarf, then in gently shifting folds, then in a crinkled pattern at the neck.

After weaving the first scarf, I decided to try something entirely different for a second scarf, an alternative that could be produced more simply and quickly. Turned-twill blocks, with the stripes woven in alternating 1/3 and 3/1 twill with a single red-orange Soysilk weft, gave the impression of a rich mix of different colors in the alternating blocks of twill. The result was two very different scarves from the same warp threaded in a straight draw.

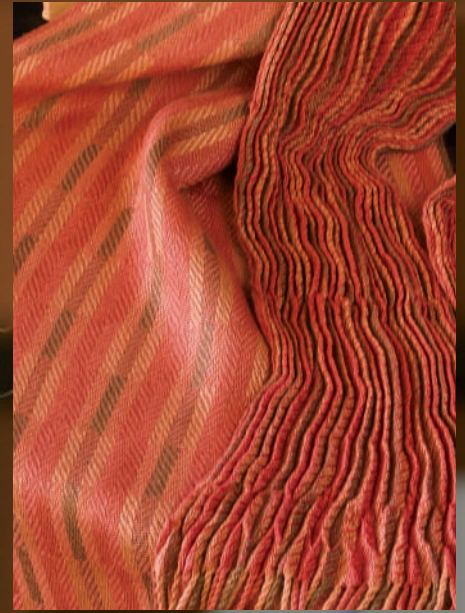
(Note: The scarves shown were woven on a 16-shaft loom threaded in a straight draw. The 8-shaft draft given here produces an identical turned twill scarf, while the woven shibori pattern produces diagonal pleats instead of flame-point pleats. An 8-shaft version of the woven shibori scarf that includes flame-point pleats at the ends can be found at [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com).)

### RESOURCES

Ellis, Catharine. *The Weaver's Studio: Woven Shibori*. Loveland, Colorado: Interweave, 2005.

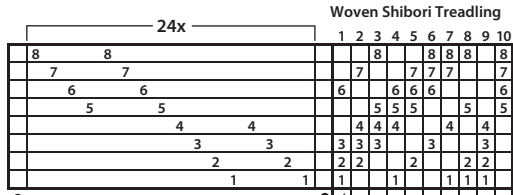
- 1 Wind 384 ends, 5½ yd long for two scarves, following the warp color order in Figure 1. Measure 2 extra threads of Red-Orange Soysilk for floating selvages and set aside. Use your preferred method to warp the loom and thread following the draft in Figure 2. Sley 4/dent in an 8-dent reed, centering for a weaving width of 12". Sley the floating selvages into empty dents on either side of the warp, and weight them over the back of the loom.
- 2 To weave the woven shibori scarf, wind a bobbin of each color (red, brown, black) with polyester sewing thread, and a fourth bobbin with the thread that will be used for pleating. Have 3 shuttles available for weaving.
- 3 Weave a plain-weave header using scrap yarn, allowing approximately 8" for fringe. Begin weaving with the red polyester thread following the treadling for the shibori scarf in Figure 2. Weave 8 picks of the twill with the polyester thread, followed by one pick with the nylon shibori weft (pull thread) woven alternately on treadles 9 and 10. The weft colors in the woven shibori scarf change gradually from the ends to the middle, as shown in the weft color





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draft available  
on weaving  
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## 2. Draft



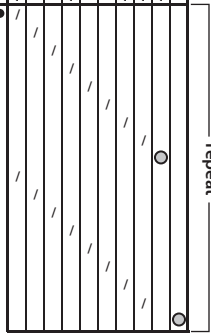
### ● floating selvedge

The weft color order in Figure 3 shows only the threads used in the ground cloth. When weaving the color gradations in the ground, continue to insert a pick of the shibori weft after every 8 picks of ground weft, alternating treadles 9 and 10 as established.

## 1. Warp color order



384 ends (not including floating selvages)



/ polyester ground weft (see Figure 3 for color sequence)  
 O nylon shibori weft (pullthreads)

order in Figure 3. Note that although the weft color order shows only the polyester wefts and not the nylon shibori weft threads, the shibori weft must still be inserted after every 8 picks as established.

**4** As you change colors of polyester weft, take care that the threads make neat selvages and are not caught around the shibori weft. The shibori wefts can hang out in loops at the edges; they need not be tidy.

**5** After weaving the woven shibori scarf, leave 16" unwoven (or woven with scrap yarn as a spacer) for fringe between the two scarves. Change the tie-up to turned twill blocks. Wind a bobbin with Red-Orange Infinity Soysilk and weave the turned twill blocks scarf following that treadling in Figure 2.

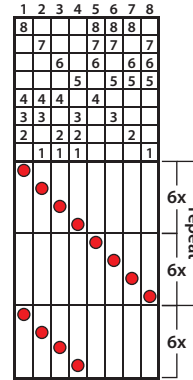
**6** Remove scarves from the loom, leaving 8" of warp at the ends for fringe. Cut the two scarves apart at the center, allowing equal amounts for fringe. Remove waste yarn and make twisted fringe by plying 2 groups of 4 warp threads each.

**7** To finish the twill blocks scarf, wash in cool water, hang to dry, and then iron for a smooth, silky finish.

**8** To pleat the woven shibori scarf, pull pairs of the nylon pleating cords at the selvages and knot securely with the next pair of cords using square knots. Tie all cords on one selvage edge, then proceed to the other edge and tie similarly, pulling the cords as tightly as possible. (This is why a strong, smooth fiber is needed.)

**9** Once the scarf is tied, steam it on a steamer rack in a large pan with a tight lid for 20–30 minutes to heat-set the pleats. Allow to cool; carefully remove the pleating cords. The scarf can then be washed and hung to dry without removing the pleats. Do not iron!

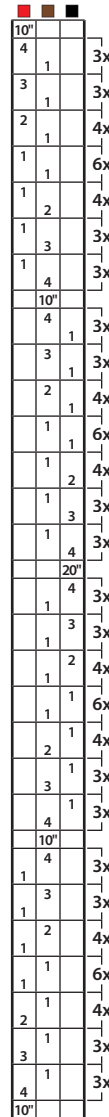
## Turned Twill Treadling



● Red-Orange Infinity Soysilk

## 3. Shibori weft color order

Red Brown Black



This weft color order shows only the polyester weft. The nylon shibori weft should be thrown after every 8 picks of pattern weft, as shown in Figure 2.

## STRUCTURE

Twill pleated using woven shibori; turned twill.

## EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 13" weaving width; 8-dent reed. For woven shibori scarf, 3 shuttles, 4 bobbins; for turned twill scarf, 1 shuttle.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 16/2 Soysilk (6,400 yd/lb; Infinity; Village Spinning and Weaving), #503 Red-Orange, 847 yd; 16/2 bamboo (6,720 yd/lb; Yarn Barn of Kansas), #5182 Mari-gold (gold-orange), 836 yd; #8024 Brown, 440 yd.

### Weft for woven shibori scarf:

100% polyester serger thread, brown, 292 yd; red and black, 258 yd each. Strong 100% nylon, Ten-cel, or cotton thread for shibori weft (pull threads), 101 yd.

**Weft for turned twill scarf:** Infinity Soysilk, Red-Orange, 786 yd.

## OTHER SUPPLIES

Steamer rack; large pan with tightly fitting lid.

## WARP LENGTH

386 ends 5½ yd long (includes 2 floating selvages; allows 8" for take-up, 43" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe between the two scarves).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 32 epi (4/dent in an 8-dent reed).

**Weft:** 30 ppi for woven shibori scarf (not including nylon pull threads); 28 ppi for turned twill scarf.

## DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 12¼"

Woven length (measured

under tension on the loom):

72" for woven shibori scarf; 75" for twill blocks scarf.

Finished size after washing:

woven shibori scarf, 5" (pleated)

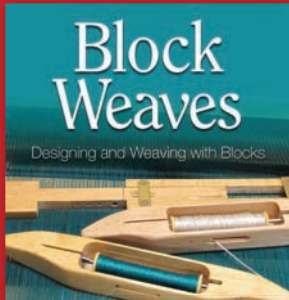
× 67" plus 3" twisted fringe at

each end; turned twill scarf, 11"

× 72" plus 5" twisted fringe at

each end.

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# Baker's Bread Bag

LAURA DEMUTH

IF BAKING BREAD IS YOUR BAG, HERE'S A PROJECT FOR YOU!

I suspect that many a weaver is also a baker. Bread is the stuff of life in much of the world. The pleasure of creating the perfect crumb in a loaf of bread is much like the satisfaction of achieving the desired “hand” in a well-woven textile. And opening the oven door to freshly baked loaves has much of the same appeal as unrolling a completed weaving from your cloth beam. Both events are little births.

I have been a baker of sourdough loaves for as long as I have been a weaver. The two activities flow well together in my day, and there is great pleasure in moving from loom to oven, patiently watching my creations develop. I take care to spray my loaves with water after placing them on a

heated baking stone in a steamy oven to achieve that wonderful sourdough crust. And it is always a disappointment to have to put my cooled loaves into plastic bags for storage, compromising my carefully achieved chewy sourdough texture.

With this problem in mind, I decided to weave a bread bag that would be worthy of my fresh loaves. I chose the doubleweave structure because I liked the idea of making a bag from a woven tube, and I chose twill because it is a more dense weave than plain weave, making it more effective at keeping air from moving around the loaves while still allowing the bread to breathe. Finally, I chose linen in clean, Scandinavian-style colors because I

## STRUCTURE

Doubleweave.

## EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 13" weaving width; 12-dent reed; 1 boat shuttle; 16 cards for band weaving; 1 belt shuttle.

## YARNS FOR BAGS

**Warp:** 16/2 line linen (2,400 yd/lb; Bockens), #0000 unbleached, 968 yd; #603 blue, 280 yd. **Weft:** 8/1 tow linen, (2,400 yd/lb; Bockens), #0000 unbleached, 668 yd.

## YARNS FOR BAND

**Warp:** 16/2 line linen (2,400 yd/lb; Bockens), #0000 unbleached, 228 yd; # 603 blue, 156 yd. **Weft:** 8/1 tow linen, (2,400 yd/lb; Bockens), #0000 unbleached, 16 yd.

## OTHER SUPPLIES

12"–16" temple (optional); hand mirror; sewing thread.

## WARP

**Warp length for bag:** 624 ends 2 yd long (allows 2" for take-up, 35" for loom waste). **Warp length for band:** 64 ends 3 yd long (allows 8" for take-up, 24" for loom waste).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 48 epi (4/dent in a 12-dent reed); selvages 24 epi (8 threads per selvedge sleyed 2/dent). **Weft:** 48 ppi (24 ppi in each layer).

## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 13". **Woven length (measured under tension on the loom):** 35". **Finished size after washing and hemming:** 2 bread bags 11½" × 12" each.







love its natural strength and the way it gets softer with use. My loaves keep quite well in my linen bags for 2 or 3 days, especially if I put them in the bags cut side down.

Even if you are not a baker, a bag like this would make a wonderful gift for someone who is, and who knows, a fresh loaf might just find its way to you in gratitude . . .

## RESOURCES

O'Connor, Paul R. *Loom-Controlled Double Weave from the Notebook of a Double Weaver*. St. Paul, Minnesota: Dos Tejedores, 1992.

Crockett, Candace. *Card Weaving*. New York: Watson-Guptill, 1973.

**1** Wind 624 warp threads 2 yd long, using the color sequence indicated in the warp color order, Figure 1. Use your preferred method to warp the loom, and thread following the draft in Figure 2. Sley the first and the last 8 ends at 2/dent and the rest of your warp at 4/dent. Do not use floating selvages.

**2** Wind a bobbin of the 8/1 tow linen and begin weaving according to the draft, Figure 2. Use a mirror frequently as you weave to check that the lower layer is without error. Weave until your piece measures 15".

**3** You will now weave the casing of your bag using the treadling indicated in the draft, Figure 2. This section is woven open on one edge. You have been weaving top, bottom, top, bottom, but you will now weave this section top, bottom, bottom, top, top, etc. Weave in this way for 2½".

**4** If you are weaving multiple bags, weave in 2 picks of contrasting yarn as a cutting line and repeat steps 2–3.

**5** Remove fabric from the loom and machine zigzag the raw edges. Machine wash in warm water using mild soap.

Lay flat to dry. Lay flat to dry. Machine stitch or apply Fray Check to both sides of the cutting line and cut apart.

**6** To finish the bottom of the bag, turn the bag inside out and sew across the bottom 1" from the raw edge. Finish the raw edge as desired.

**7** Sew the casing with the bag turned inside out. Turn the top raw edge in ½" and press; turn in again to the point where the edge opening begins and handstitch in place. Thread the card-woven tie through the casing.

## WEAVING THE TIE

**1** Measure a 3 yd warp and thread the cards following the draft, Figure 3. Take care to match your color order to each lettered hole and follow the threading direction indicated by the arrows.

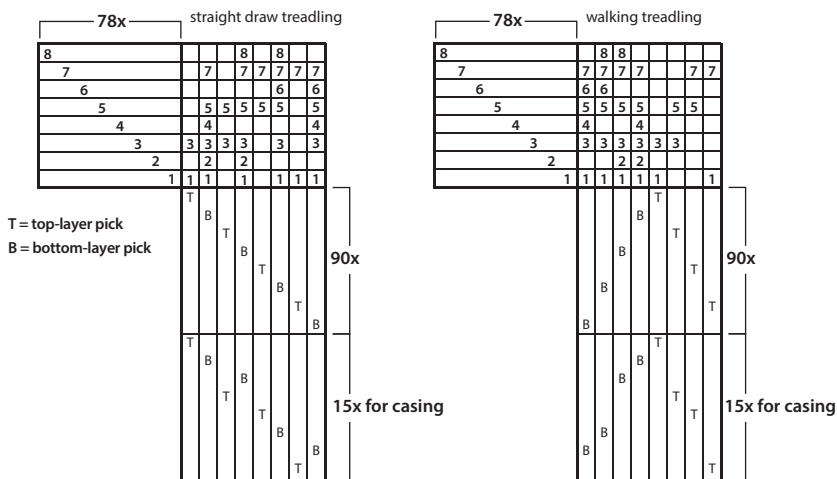
**2** Wind 8/1 tow linen on your belt shuttle and begin weaving with your card oriented so that "A" and "D" are on top. Weave by rotating your cards forward (away from you) 4 times, then turning the cards backwards (toward you) 4 times. Weave in this manner for 72" (36" per bag) maintaining a width of approximately ½". Cut the ties apart and thread through bag casing. Whipstitch the tie ends, leaving 1" for fringe.



### 1. Warp color order

140	8	30	8	8	30	8	16/2 linen, blue #603
484	194	8	8	16	8	8	16/2 linen, unbleached #0000
624	ends						

### 2. Draft



### 3. Cardwoven band draft

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
A																
B																
C																
D																

← ← ← ← ← ← → → → → → →

■ 16/2 linen, blue #603  
□ 16/2 linen, unbleached #0000

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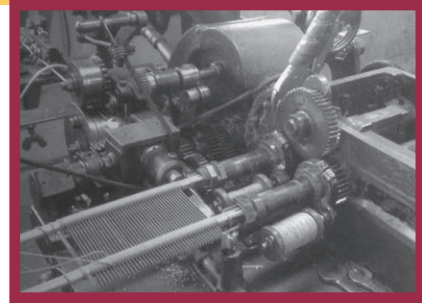
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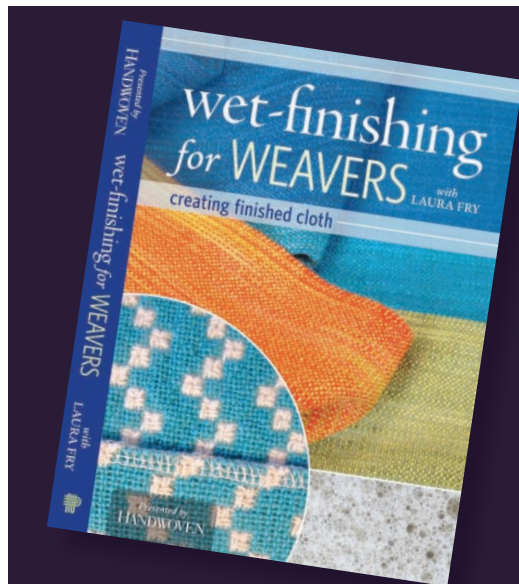
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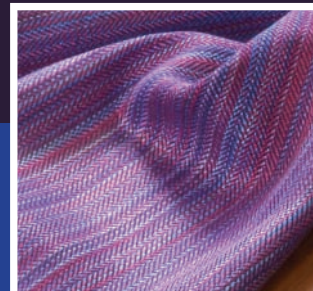
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# Baby Wrap to Fit a Man's Wardrobe

CARL FRIEDLANDER

In 1981, my wife and I had our first child. I was in the midst of finishing my dissertation and teaching at a university. My wife was working, and I used a denim baby wrap that matched my blue jeans to carry our son to the university. From Midwest university professor to East Coast business manager, my clothes changed from blue jeans to suits. Thirty-four years later and moving from east to west, from manager to retired grandpa, and from living in the city to living by the ocean, I have not yet given up my appreciation for somewhat more formal clothes.

Last year, I became a grandfather for the first time. At my daughter-in-law's request, I wove a baby wrap carrier, based on her color selections, using plain weave. The bright colors and pattern suited her perfectly. I soon knew that I wanted a baby wrap carrier for myself, but with a more masculine appearance.

A class in shadow weave showed me a way of creating subtle yet complex patterns with a masculine look. I chose a pattern that was not especially difficult but took advantage of very fine threads to produce a lightweight, strong cloth. By using black and white in both warp and weft, I created a subtle gray pattern that works well with both formal and casual male clothing.

Baby wraps vary in length from 3 to 6.5 yards to accommodate the size of the person carrying the baby. Their widths vary from 28 to 36 inches, depending on the size of the baby being carried. For this carrier, I chose a midrange width and planned for a 6-yard finished length.

## RESOURCES


United States Consumer Product Safety Commission recommendations on babywearing: <http://preview.tinyurl.com/krjsvyo>

**1** Holding 1 end of black and one end of white, wind 1,210 warp threads (605 white, 605 black) 7½ yd long, keeping the two colors separated by your fingers to avoid twisting. Before warping your loom, use the heddle count in Figure 1 to be sure you have enough heddles on each shaft. Use your preferred method to warp the loom, and thread following the draft in Figure 2. Sley 4/dent in a 10-dent reed, centering for a weaving width of 30¼". Do not use floating selvages.

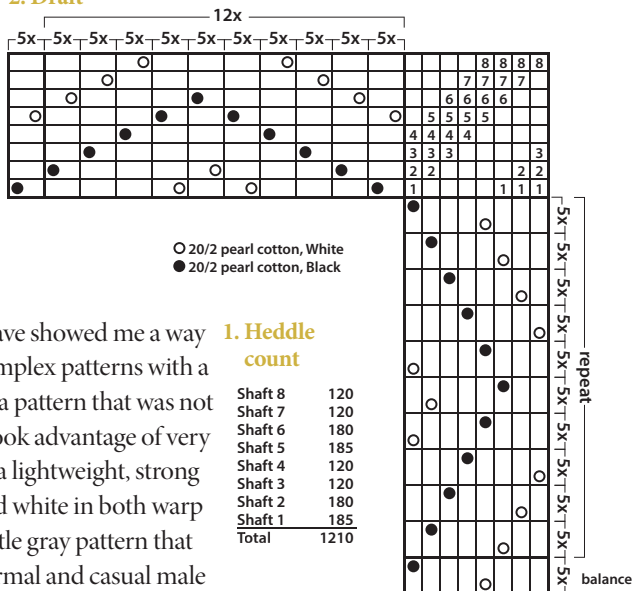
**2** Wind 1 bobbin of each of the weft colors.

**3** After spreading your warp, weave the wrap following the treadling in Figure 2 for a length of approximately 234", ending with the 2 balance picks indicated in the draft, so the two ends will match. Note that the wrap is sett closely in the reed. Aim for a beat of 32 ppi but don't be discouraged if even with a firm beat, you can't beat to square.

**4** Remove the fabric from the loom. Machine zigzag the raw edges to secure.

**5** Machine wash in warm water and machine dry on a medium setting. Steam-press using the cotton setting on your iron. Fold under the raw edges on each end ¼", press, turn under again, press, and machine stitch. 

## 2. Draft



## STRUCTURE

Shadow weave.

## EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 31" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 2 shuttles.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 20/2 mercerized pearl cotton, (8,400 yd/lb; UKI), #000 White, 4,538 yd; #116 Black, 4,538 yd.  
**Weft:** 20/2 mercerized pearl cotton, White, 3,460 yd; Black, 3,460 yd.

## WARP LENGTH

1,210 ends 7½ yd long (allows 12" for take-up, 24" for loom waste).

## SETTS

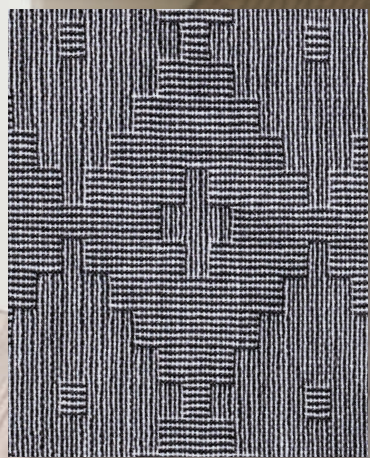
**Warp:** 40 epi (4/dent in a 10-dent reed).  
**Weft:** 32 ppi.

## DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 30¼".  
Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 234".  
Finished size after washing and hemming: 28" × 213".



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# IDEA GALLERY

## Bringing It Home

MICHAEL F. ROHDE AND TRUDY SONIA

Two weavers take inspiration from other cultures, east and west, to create their own very personal expressions in tapestry.

### KEEPING MY EYES OPEN

MICHAEL F. ROHDE

**M**ost of my tapestry designs come from keeping my eyes open to what I encounter as I move through the day and the world. I look for ideas that work on a grid because, many years ago, I elected to honor the grid of the loom in my designs and not aspire to emulate perfect circles or even organic curved lines. Often I will see something in another medium that calls out to be reinterpreted as a weaving: a tile pattern in a floor or the geometric pattern in a piece of pottery. My tapestry *Acoma* came out of seeing an Acoma pot in the deYoung Museum in San Francisco. It was designed to emulate the geometry and approximate the colors of that

round form, but in a flat, loom-woven tapestry.

I especially keep my eyes open when I travel, and I often find textiles in other cultures that speak to me. I take it as a challenge to honor the original but transform it to something of my own version of that design or idea. When we displace anything from its original environment, use, and intent, we can be called to look at the original with new eyes. What I weave can never be the same as the textile that inspired it, but rather it is a meditation on something in that first object.

For example, take *boro* cloth from Japan. *Boro* is made by re-using pieces of older worn-out textiles, most often scraps of indigo-dyed cloth. While the tradition is born of necessity, making use of cloth that has worn out in its original function, it

also pays respect to the value of cloth and the memories stored in its years of service in the original function. One can see the evidence of wear even in the pieces chosen to be reassembled into a new fabric, and the pieces are usually not joined by invisible stitches, but with contrasting white threads, evidence of their new life.

When I set out to make my interpretation of this tradition, I dyed several wool yarns, of different textures in assorted shades of indigo. While weaving, I elected not to try to use tapestry to show the sewn lines, but after weaving, I added light blue silk yarn as the "joining" threads of a tapestry that had been woven as one piece.

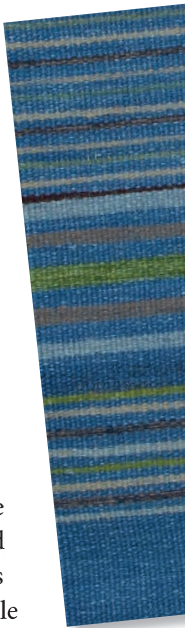
I've also been fortunate enough to travel in Guatemala, in the highlands and to some of the villages around Lake

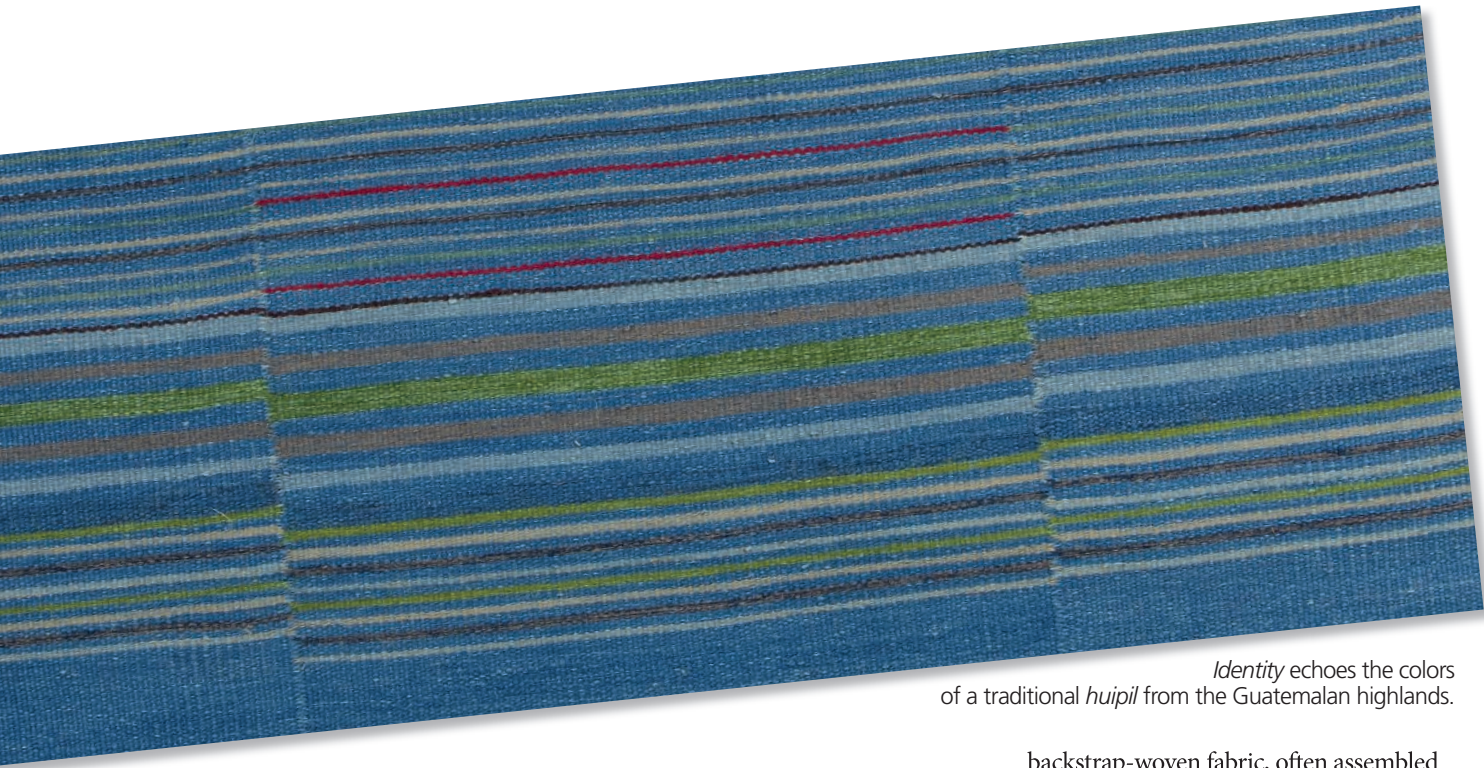


*Acoma* was inspired by an Acoma pot in the deYoung Museum.  
PHOTOS BY ANDREW NEUHART



Entitled *Boro*, this tapestry echoes the patches and lines of a type of Japanese *sashiko* cloth.





*Identity* echoes the colors of a traditional *huipil* from the Guatemalan highlands.

Atitlán. In that area, weavers from a given village usually stick to one style of *huipil*, a square blouse, with individual variations on the local design. If you are familiar with the *huipil* styles, you can tell at a glance where the wearer lives.

Clothing becomes a mark of identity. To me, one of the more appealing villages is that of Santa Catarina Palopó, where the predominant colors are blue and green, with inlaid patterns that include bits of red, darker blues, or even purple. Each *huipil* will be made from three lengths of

backstrap-woven fabric, often assembled with stripes of pattern that don't quite match, a characteristic that adds to their beauty. My tapestry *Identity* pays tribute to these color choices and refers to the method of assembly, but only by allusion to the complex patterns in the simple stripes that I wove.

## IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO WEAVE A CUFF

TRUDY SONIA

I never set out to weave tapestry cuffs. I'm primarily a floor-loom weaver, but in 2010, I joined the Seaside tapestry study group, thinking that I should become more rounded in my weaving skills. Merna Strauch, a wonderful tapestry weaver and a generous mentor, told me that you could learn all the tapestry techniques you needed through Peter Collingwood's *The Techniques of Rug Weaving*. I put a warp on my table loom with the specific intention of working through Collingwood's techniques on small rug weaves. (The small format makes it less scary for me!) I stopped at the Najavo-inspired wedge-weave section because that's what the really talented tapestry weavers I knew, Merna and Michael Rohde, wove. But I figured it was beyond me.

Still, admiring Michael and Merna's work stimulated my curiosity. So when we went to Scotland for my son's college graduation, I photocopied the three pages on wedge weave from Collingwood's book and tossed them into my suitcase, along with a very portable Good Wood pocket loom and some yarn. During long car rides or wait times, I wove my first wedge-weave piece. I had to go shopping for more yarn so I could do a second. Before I got back from our trip, I was hooked on the technique and continued to play with it, enjoying the angles and the colorplay. I was also enchanted by the scalloped edges that show up when the piece is removed from the loom. A guild workshop with Michael cemented my interest. When someone in my tapestry group told me I could use my

floor-loom thrums as filler, I was thrilled.

In 2013, I signed up for an online class with Claudia Chase for weaving tapestry cuffs. My hope was to get more experience weaving standard tapestry. The class was on sale, but the materials kit was ten times the cost of the class. After several days debating with myself, I bought the kit, vowing to make absolutely every project to justify the expense.

When I finally got to the tapestry cuff section, I was plagued by what always plagues me in tapestry: What images do I weave? (Cartoons terrify me!) I wondered if I could make one in wedge weave rather than "traditional" tapestry (even though that defeated my initial goal for taking the class), but was worried about those scalloped edges on

the brass cuff base. So I sent off an early morning email to Merna, who is beautifully generous with her advice, asking how to minimize those scallops. She immediately had the answer, but my question sent her on to several exploratory projects in angle size using wedge weave. I, on the other hand, wove one virtually scallopless wedge-weave cuff, decided I liked the scallops more, and started weaving, scallops and all. I soon ran out of Claudia's kit silk, but I had done some dyeing with my weaving buddy, JoAnne Cook and had taken a dye class with Michael Rohde, which gave me the confidence to dye my own silk.

So now I'm an addict—weaving these little wedge-weave cuffs with hand-dyed silk and beads. I have done and will do more standard tapestry in my cuffs, but I love those angles and scallops in wedge weave.



Trudy's new addiction: silk wedge-weave beaded cuffs. PHOTO BY TRUDY SONJA



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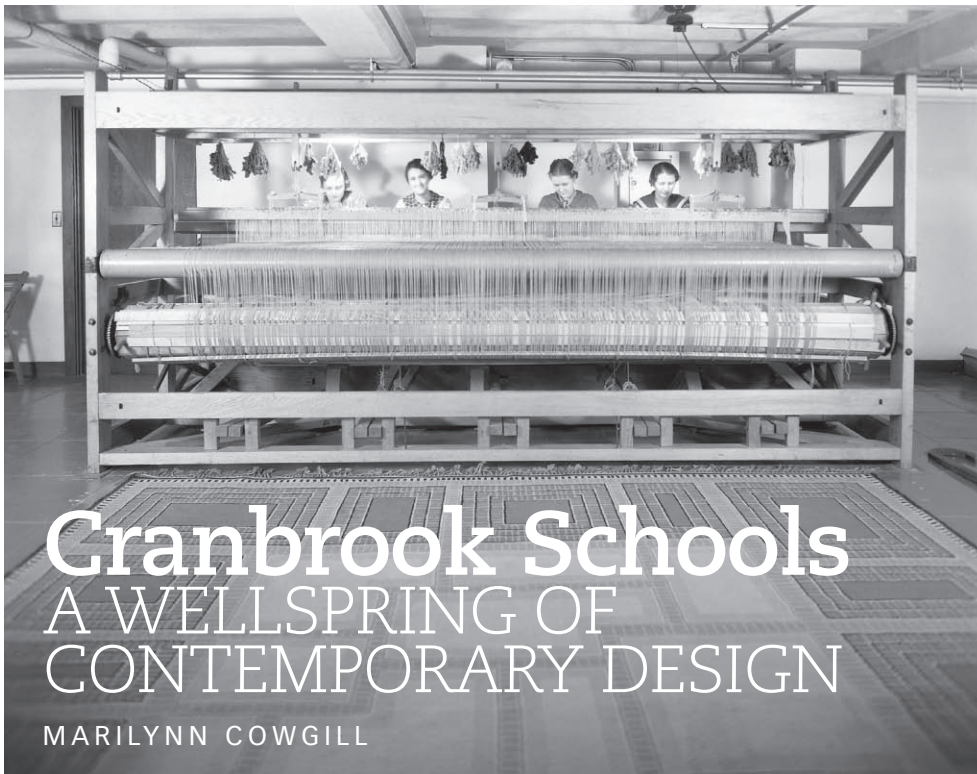
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# Traditions



Swedish weavers in the lower level of the weaving studio. From left, Elizabeth Edmark, Marie Bexell, Peggy Broberg, Gerda Nyberg. The rug in front of the loom is in the Saarinen House today.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CRANBROOK ARCHIVES

**I**n 1923, Eliel Saarinen, a well-known Finnish architect, and his wife, Loja, visited the United States and met George Booth, a Detroit philanthropist who believed that honest craftsmanship would help integrate daily life, social values, and the act of production. Booth wanted to turn his farmland near Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, into a school and community, an American equivalent to the Bauhaus, that would foster a new aesthetic and produce tasteful designs and products, including textiles. Eliel and Loja Saarinen shared the same values and sensibilities, and out of that vision, Cranbrook was born.

In Finland, Saarinen's designs had reflected a tension between rural and urban aesthetics. His commissions included country houses as well as the Helsinki Railway Station and the National Museum of Finland. Saarinen was concerned not only with architecture but with the whole gamut of the

applied arts, making him an ideal partner for George Booth.

In 1925, Booth asked Saarinen to design the campus of the Cranbrook Educational Community. (Saarinen taught there and, in 1932, became the president of the new Cranbrook Academy. Eventually, Cranbrook would encompass three schools, separate science and art academies, and a church. Among its graduates were giants of 20th-century design, including Charles Eames, Florence Knoll, and Alvar Aalto.

## THE WEAVING WORKSHOP

Loja Saarinen, a respected sculptor and weaver, started the weaving studio at Cranbrook in 1928. Booth had asked Mrs. Saarinen to design the rugs and curtains for her husband's buildings, assuming she would send the designs to Finland to be woven. But Mrs. Saarinen wanted them to be woven at Cranbrook,

and so the workshop began with Loja and one loom. Over time, it grew to more than thirty looms and many weavers.

Called Studio Loja Saarinen in her honor, it became a commercial weaving enterprise, producing table textiles, rugs, curtains, and tapestries for both the Cranbrook community and outside clients. Most of the highly accomplished weavers were Swedish women who came to the United States during the 1920s and 1930s.

To fill the studio with looms, Loja turned to the husband of one of the weavers, Marie Bexell. Marie's husband, John, had trained as a skilled woodworker in Sweden. He accepted the challenge and built looms according to Loja's exacting specifications.

## A CONTEMPORARY SPIRIT

During the 1920s and 1930s, art deco design was popular. This style looked to the new industrial landscape for rectilinear shapes and inspiration. But Cranbrook's weaving designs were more subtle, more pastoral, than the usual art deco designs, with a soft color palette, asymmetrical patterns, graceful geometric arrangements, and stylized nature figures. At times the soft color palette was accentuated by a more vibrant color. For example, a rug commissioned for a Fifth Avenue showroom in New York was woven with cool lemon yellow plus grays and browns. In other designs, rust and reds, greens, cool steel gray, and sometimes a warmer yellow were chosen, with accents of white or black.

Around 1930, Florence Davies, art critic at the *Detroit News*, wrote: "The rugs from Studio Loja Saarinen bespeak the contemporary spirit in their clean, logical patterns, which

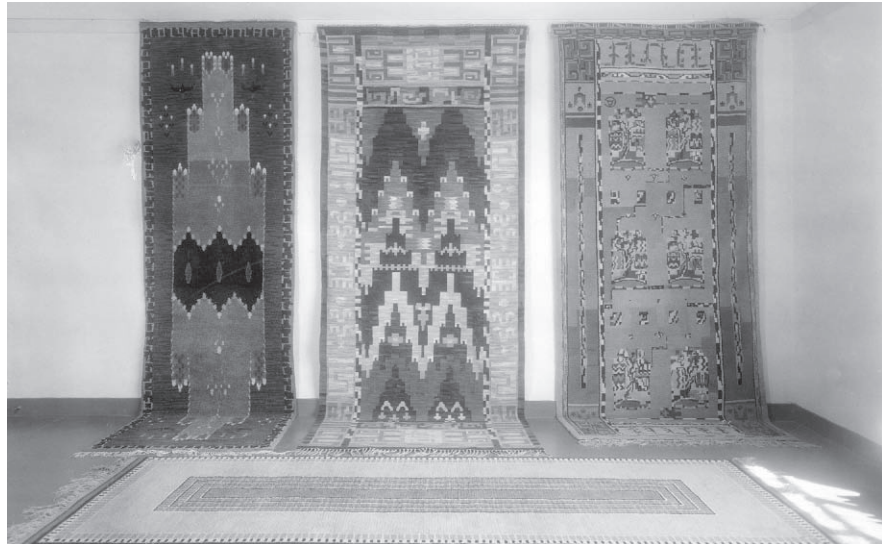
impart a sense of great beauty and strength because of their definitely architectural quality.” This contemporary spirit influenced the American textile world as the Cranbrook schools graduated leading weavers and designers, including Ed Rossbach and Jack Lenor Larsen.

## THE CRANBROOK LOOM

When Loja Saarinen approached John Bexell with her loom specifications, he made one loom for the Cranbrook workshop and another to sell. The looms sold well, and John’s son, Bert, joined him in the business. As loom sales slowed down, Bert decided to redesign the Cranbrook to be more efficient, enlisting the help of Robert Kidd, a Cranbrook graduate. When Bert retired, he sold the loom business to Les Hudson, who in turn sold it to Norwood Looms. Along the way, the design was modernized and the braking system was upgraded. In 1996, rights to the Cranbrook loom were bought by Schacht Spindle Company. Schacht made additional improvements to the design, enabling a larger shed, and adding Texsolv cords and an optional worm gear to aid in high-tension weaving.

## A LOOMING LEGACY

In 1989, Cranbrook was designated a National Historic Landmark. Today, it is one of the world’s leading centers of



Studio Loja Saarinen rugs. The three rugs on the wall were designed by Maja Andersson Wirde and the one on the floor by Loja Saarinen.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CRANBROOK ARCHIVES

education, comprising a graduate Academy of Art, contemporary Art Museum, house and gardens, Institute of Science, and pre-K through 12th-grade independent college preparatory schools. Cranbrook welcomes thousands of visitors and students to its campus each year. And the Cranbrook loom lives on through Schacht Spindle, giving us access to a loom that has inspired and enabled great weavers since the early 20th century.

## RESOURCES

Brown, Ashley. “The Art Deco Rug: Loja Saarinen and the Cranbrook Tradition.” Detroit, Michigan:

Detroit Art Deco Society, 2000.

<http://www.daads.org/modern/1401/rug.htm>

Clark, Robert J., and Andrea P.A. Belloli. *Design in America The Cranbrook Vision 1925–1950*. Abrams, New York: New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1984.

*Cranbrook Kitchen Sink* blog. <https://cranbrookkitchensink.wordpress.com/tag/studio-loja-saarinen/>

Davies, Florence. “The Weavings of Loja Saarinen.” *The Weaver*, circa 1930s. [https://www.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/articles/tw\\_2\\_1-04.pdf](https://www.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/articles/tw_2_1-04.pdf)

Patrick, Jane. “The Cranbrook Loom.” *Handwoven*, September/October 2002, p. 67.

# A Rep Rug to Honor the Cranbrook Legacy

TOM KNISELY

**T**he Cranbrook Academy was established to be the American equivalent to the Bauhaus. In 1925, George Booth asked Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen to design the Cranbrook campus. Saarinen taught there and later became the president of the Cranbrook Academy. His wife, sculptor and weaver Loja Saarinen, started the weaving studio at Cranbrook and commissioned the original Cranbrook loom.

Now the name Saarinen is not a common name. I wondered if the

famous midcentury furniture designer Eero Saarinen was related to or associated with the Cranbrook Saarinens. I found that Eero Saarinen was the son of Eliel and Loja and studied furniture design along with fellow students, Charles and Ray Eames. Eero Saarinen, Charles Eames, and Ray Eames went on to design some of the most recognized furniture of the mid-20th century. The Eames’s molded and bent plywood and leather chairs are now midcentury classics,

and I think everyone knows of Eero’s molded fiberglass chairs that could be found in every school classroom and cafeteria. Another of Eero’s well-known designs is an easy chair known as the “Womb Chair.”

I have always loved the Saarinen and Eames style of seating, so as a tribute to these designers, I decided to weave a rug in Cranbrook colors. I wanted it to be bold and graphic and to reflect the Cranbrook style. So here is the rug. I’m not sure if I will put it on the floor. I

just might put it on the wall and enjoy it from my chair. I have come full circle. Thank you, Cranbrook, for planting the seeds that grew the designers that have touched my life as well as the world's. I love weaving on my Cranbrook loom, and

when I do take time to relax, I love to read *Handwoven* in my Eames chair.

## RESOURCES

Patrick, Jane. "The Cranbrook Loom." *Handwoven*. September/October 2002, p. 67.


**1** Wind 1,200 warp ends 3 yd long using the color sequence indicated in the warp color order, Figure 1. For ease in warping, hold two ends together separated by your fingers to prevent twisting. Use your preferred method to warp the loom. Use the profile draft in Figure 2 for the number of times to thread each block and the block draft in Figure 3 for the threading and color order of each block. Sley 4/dent in an 8-dent reed for a total of 32 epi.

**2** You will need two shuttles: a boat shuttle to carry the thin weft thread (8/4 Moody Blue cotton carpet warp) and a rug or ski shuttle to carry the thick weft. This thick weft is made up of four strands of Williamsburg

Blue mop cotton wound together on the shuttle. (Spread the warp with waste material and weave a plain-weave hem for approximately 1½" using the thin weft.

**3** Weave the rug by weaving the treadling blocks given in the block draft in Figure 3 the number of times indicated in the profile treadling Figure 2. A trick that I like to use is to weave the thin weft into the sheds with the thick weft. This puts the fine thread into every weft pick and helps to control the selvages. Traditionally, rep weave alternates a thick pick followed by a thin pick. I like to weave a little differently. When the treadling indicates a thick pick, I open that shed and weave the thin weft into that shed first and beat it into place; then I throw the thick weft. In the next pick, I weave only the fine weft. In this way, the fine weft is included in every pick and the selvages are locked nicely. Notice that when changing from one block to the other, the ending thin thread and the beginning thick thread of the next block fall into the same shed. Simply weave them together. Thin and thick wefts weave together anyway in this method.

**4** Weave the rug to your desired length and then finish with a 1½" plain weave hem as you did at the beginning. Don't forget to weave a little waste material at the end to hold those last few picks in place. This will keep everything in place until you get around to hemming your rug.

**5** To hem the rug, fold the hem allowance twice so that the first folded edge is against the first heavy pick of the rug. Handstitch the edge and steam press. 

## TIPS

- I recommend that you weave this project on a sturdy loom that can take a tight tension and a firm beat. This rug was woven on a Cranbrook loom with a weighted beater, but you can weave your rug on any loom so long as it has a sturdy frame.
- If you have a spool rack, I recommend placing the four spools of mop cotton on the rack as you wind the four ends together onto the rug shuttle.
- There is no need to wash your rug until it is soiled. Then simply wash it in the bathtub in an inch or so of warm water with a mild soap. Rinse it and hang it over the wash line or clothes rack to dry. (Your rug will be too heavy to put into the washing machine.)

## STRUCTURE

Warp rep.

## EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 38" weaving width; 8-dent reed; 1 rug or ski shuttle, 1 boat shuttle.

## YARNS

**Warp:** 8/4 cotton (1,600 yd/lb; The Mannings Handweaving School), Moody Blue, 1,800 yd; Grass, 504 yd; Forest Green, Dark Jade, and Myrtle Green, 432 yd each.

**Thick weft:** Mop cotton (420 yd/lb; The Mannings), 4 strands used as 1, Williamsburg Blue, 1,296 yd.

**Thin weft:** 8/2 cotton, Moody Blue, 700 yd. (In addition to hem and thin weft picks, amount given allows for weaving a thin weft with each thick weft pick.)

## WARP LENGTH

1,200 ends 3 yd long, following the warp color order in Figure 1 (allows 17" for take-up, 35" for loom waste).

## SETTS

**Warp:** 32 epi (4/dent in an 8-dent reed).

**Weft:** 10 combined ppi (5 thick/5 thin ppi) for body of rug; 16 ppi for hems.

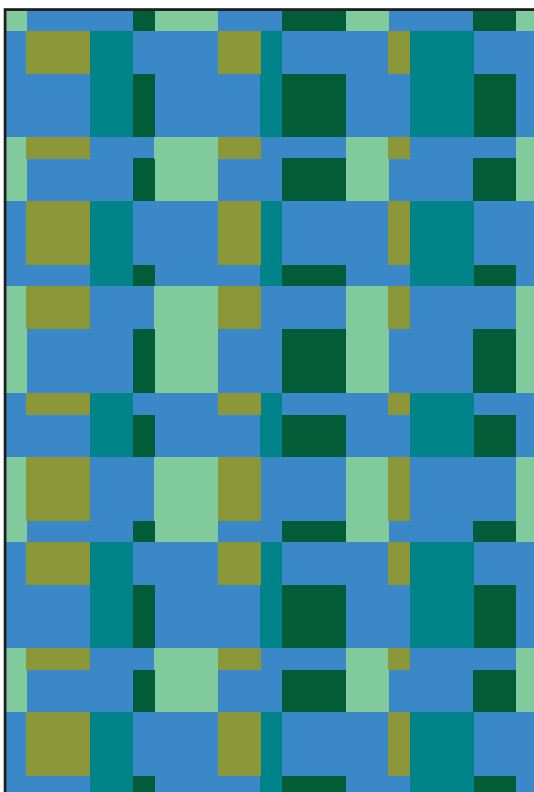
## DIMENSIONS

**Width in the reed:** 37½".  
**Woven length (measured under tension on the loom):** 56".

**Finished size:** 1 hemmed rug 37½" x 49".



### 2a. Profile drawdown



### 1. Warp color order

	24x	72x	48x	24x	72x	48x	24x	72x	48x	24x	72x	48x	24x	
144		1				1				1				
144			1				1				1			
144				1				1				1		
168	1				1				1				1	
600	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

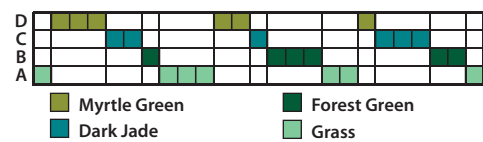
1,200 ends

- Myrtle Green
- Dark Jade
- Forest Green
- Grass
- Moody Blue

### 4. Heddle count

Shaft 4	288
Shaft 3	288
Shaft 2	312
Shaft 1	312
	1,200

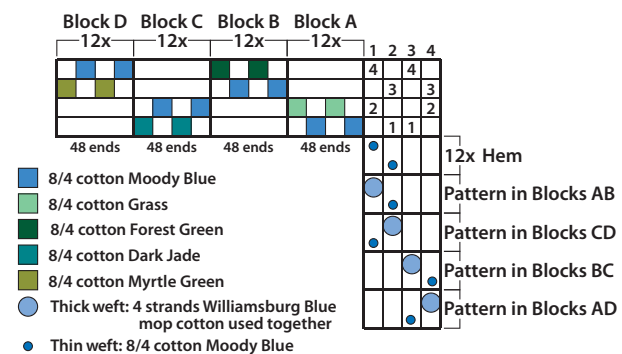
### 2. Profile draft



Pattern in

A	C	B	A
+	+	+	+
B	D	C	D

### 3. Block draft



	4x
	8x
	12x
	4x
	8x
	12x
	4x
	8x
	12x
	4x
	8x
	12x
	4x

Each threading block is made up of 48 ends (24 ends of a pattern color alternated with 24 ends of the background color).

Weave each treading block the number of times indicated in the profile treading in Figure 2. Tom recommends throwing a pick of thin weft into the shed with each thick weft pick to help control the selvages.

# The Many Sides of Shifu

By Eva Hovde Douthit

Looking for a way to combine my interests in weaving and in paper, I became intrigued by the Japanese tradition of *shifu*, using paper yarns in warp or weft. However, having spent the better part of a workshop day making a genuine sheet of *washi* (wa=Japanese, shi=paper) I knew I would never cut into this work of art to make yarn. I found the solution to my dilemma when I came across an intriguing skein of paper yarn from Habu Textiles. The yarn is light as a feather, with a subtle sheen, and it rustles softly when handled. It is also available in many beautiful colors.



## Shosenshi Linen Paper

**THE YARN:** Habu Textiles Shosenshi linen paper (A-60), 100% linen with viscose sizing, 476 yd/1.7 oz. Paper yarn is often made by cutting paper sheets into strips that are twisted in a spinning motion or plied with another fiber for strength; however, for this project, I chose to stay with untwisted tape yarns. Habu's Shosenshi linen paper is flat 100% linen paper tape 4 mm wide, sized with viscose for strength. While traditional shifu yarn was made from recycled papers or created from the inner bark of trees, today's commercial papers are made with more easily available cellulose sources such as cotton, linen, or rayon. Habu in New York City is a good source for contemporary yarns and the Internet offers a choice of international vendors.



**LEFT:** Linen paper in straight-draw twill and plain weave, unwashed;  
**RIGHT:** Linen paper in straight-draw twill and plain weave, wet-finished and ironed.

### Straight Draw Twill

For this sample, I wanted to see how the yarn would work for a functional fabric. Although somewhat stiff and independent, the warp rolled on easily from front to back through my heddles. However a bundle snapped when I tied it to the front beam, so I was careful to beat gently and advance the warp frequently. The tape held its position without twisting. Off the loom, I agitated the weaving too much in hot, soapy water. Light ironing smoothed the bumps and tamed the fringe, but setting it at 10 epi might give it more strength. This thin, very light and crisp textile will make a wonderful contemporary-looking table runner, placemat or, even better, a shawl for a hot summer evening.

**Sett:** 8.

**Dimensions:** *Width on the loom:* 12"; *width off the loom:* 12"; *width after wet-finishing:* 12"; *draw-in and shrinkage:* negligible.

## Plain Weave with Silk

For the next sample, I was curious to see if the paper yarn was strong enough to be crossed with thin strips of silk, the *sakiori* way. I tried both thin strips cut from old kimonos and heavier strips cut from new silk noil fabric. Weaving went smoothly, and after handwashing the fabric in warm, soapy water, I was pleased to see how well the tape warp showed against the fabric strips. My first big project with this paper yarn using the shifu/sakiori technique will be a

Christmas table runner. I plan to make a warp long enough to finish off the project with fabric for a handbag and a couple of placemats.

**Sett:** 8.

**Dimensions:** *Width on the loom:* 12"; *width off the loom:* 11.5"; *width after wet-finishing:* 11"; *draw-in and shrinkage:* 5%. *Length on the loom:* 12.5"; *length off the loom:* 12.25"; *length after wet-finishing:* 12.25"; *take-up and shrinkage:* 4%.



**LEFT:** paper linen and silk noil in plain weave, unwashed; **RIGHT:** paper linen and silk noil in plain weave, wet-finished and ironed.

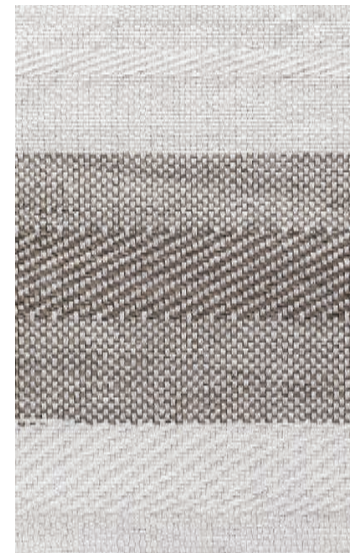
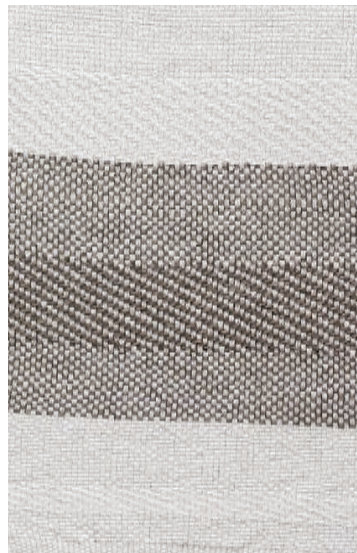
## Linen Paper as Weft

For the weft in this final sample, I used both the Habu yarn and a flat paper yarn 2 mm wide supported by rayon thread brought back from Japan by my friend Yoko. The warp went on stiffly but easily, only a couple of ends twisted, and the weft beat in flat and evenly through all yards. The finished textile was stiff, but after washing, it draped softly. The section using Habu Shosenshi linen paperas a weft yarn re-

tained more stiffness. This combination makes a stunning fabric to be used for interior design or clothing. And knitters might note that the Japanese yarn would make a gorgeous summer sweater.

**Sett:** 8

**Dimensions:** *Width off the loom:* 9"; *width after wet-finishing:* 8.75"; *draw-in and shrinkage:* 4%. *Length off the loom:* 14.5"; *length after wet-finishing:* 14"; *take-up and shrinkage:* 4%.



**LEFT:** paper linen and paper rayon in straight twill and plain weave, unwashed; **RIGHT:** paper linen and paper rayon in straight twill plain weave, wet-finished and ironed.

# SHIFU STAYING POWER

Japanese fishermen have stayed warm and dry inside their shifu garments for centuries. Haute couture designers all over the world are today experimenting to make cutting-edge fashion with this ancient, now rediscovered technique. As handweavers, we are lucky to draw upon both tradition and innovation for inspiration. The commercial market has an intriguing array of paper yarns for us to choose from, but because they are new to many of us, we would do well to read labels and to sample. That said, it is good to know that this time-honored material is enjoying a renaissance today for the same reasons it has been popular for centuries.

## PROJECT DIRECTORY

DESIGNER/WEAVER	PROJECT	PAGES	WEAVE STRUCTURE	SHAFTS	LEVEL
Coatney, Cathy	Broken Borders Jacket	48–50	Plain weave with clasped weft	4 or 8	AB, I, A
Demuth, Laura	Baker's Bread bag	56–58	Doubleweave with tablet woven band	8, tablets	AB, I, A
Friedlander, Carl	Baby Wrap to Fit a Man's Wardrobe	60–61	Shadow weave	8	AB, I, A
Jackson, Sarah H.	Shades of India Kitchen Towels	38–40	Bumberet	4	All levels
Knisely, Tom	A Rep Rug to Honor the Cranbrook Legacy	67–69	Warp rep	4	AB, I, A
Macmorris, Peg	Wildfire Scarves: Colorado Shiori	52–54	Turned Twill and Pleated Twill	8	AB, I, A
Robinette, Amanda	Western Sakiori Scarf	46–47	Plain weave	2 or more	All levels
Sennott, Jenny	Moscow Nights Tea Towels	34–36	Twill	8	All levels
Zeps, Margaret	Japanese Noren Door Panels	42–44	Plain weave with supplemental warp and weft	6	AB, I, A

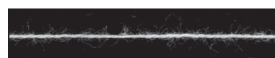
RH = rigid-heddle loom. Levels indicate weaving skills, not sewing skills.

AB = Advanced beginner (some experience reading a draft, warping, and weaving); I = Intermediate; A = Advanced. "All levels" includes very new weavers.

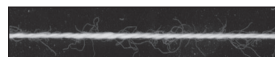
## YARNS

This chart gives yards per pound, meters per kilogram, and a range of setts (from wide as for lace weaves, medium as for plain weave, and close as for twills; no setts are given for yarns not suitable to use as warp). For a com-

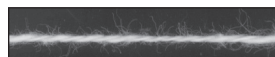
plete directory of yarns used in *Handwoven*, see the Master Yarn Charts under Resources at [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com). Suppliers for yarns used in this issue are listed at right. Wholesale suppliers are noted with an \*.



20/2 unmercerized cotton; 8,400 yd/lb (16,950 m/kg); 30, 36, 48



10/2 unmercerized cotton; 4,200 yd/lb (8,470 m/kg); 20, 24, 28



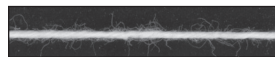
8/2 unmercerized cotton; 3,360 yd/lb (6,775 m/kg); 16, 20, 24



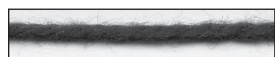
8/2 cottolin (50% cotton, 50% linen or 60% cotton, 40% linen); 3,360 yd/lb (1,397 m/kg); 15, 20, 24



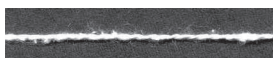
80% cotton, 20% wool (Cotton Fine); 2,000 yd/lb (4,040 m/kg); 12, 15, 20



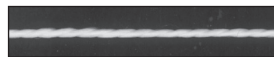
8/4 cotton carpet warp; 1,680 yd/lb (3,390 m/kg); 10, 15, 18



8-ply (8/16) mop cotton 420 yd/lb (848 m/kg)



20/2 noil bombyx silk; 4,500 yd/lb (9,020 m/kg); 22, 26, 30



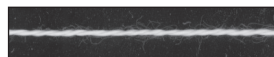
8/2 silk; 2,800 yd/lb (5,650 m/kg); 14, 18, 22



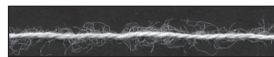
60/2/2 Bombyx Spun Silk; 7,500 yd/lb (15,088 m/kg); 24, 32, 40



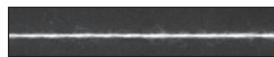
16/2 linen; 2,400 yd/lb (4,840 m/kg); 15, 20, 24



8/2 Tencel; 3,360 yd/lb (6,780 m/kg); 16, 20, 24



16/2 soy yarn (Soysilk); 6,400 yd/lb (12,895 m/kg); 20, 24, 36



16/2 bamboo; 6,300 yd/lb (12,690 m/kg); 20, 30, 36

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NE 69357, (800) 826-9136, [www.brownsheep.com](http://www.brownsheep.com) (Zeps 42–44).

Glimakra USA, 50 Hall Ln., Clancy,  
MT 59634, (866) 890-7314, (406)  
442-0354, [www.glimakrausa.com](http://www.glimakrausa.com) (Demuth 56–58).

Halcyon Yarn, 12 School St., Bath,  
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42–44).

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[shuttlesspindlesandskeins.com](mailto:shuttlesspindlesandskeins.com)  
(MacMorris 52–54).

Treenway Silks, 2060 Miller Court,  
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[www.treenwaysilks.com](http://www.treenwaysilks.com) (Coat-  
ney 48–50).

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686-1192, [www.villagespinweave.com](http://www.villagespinweave.com) (Jackson 38–40,  
Friedlander 60–61).

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son 38–40, Robinette 46–47).

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(785) 842-4333, (800) 468-0035,  
[www.yarnbarn-ks.com](http://www.yarnbarn-ks.com) (Mac-  
Morris 52–54, Sennott 34–36).

## CORRECTIONS

In the January/February 2015 issue, there is an error in the tie-up of the Belle Creole bed runner, page 36. The tie-up for treadle 1 should be 2-8, not 1-2-8. The corrected draft is available at [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com) under Free Resources/Corrections.

We also received some questions about the Rose and Compass Napkins from the November/December 2104 issue, page 38. Technical editors made the decision to turn the draft to make the treadling easier. Weavers wishing to weave create the cloth exactly as shown in the photos may simply turn the published draft.

## READING DRAFTS

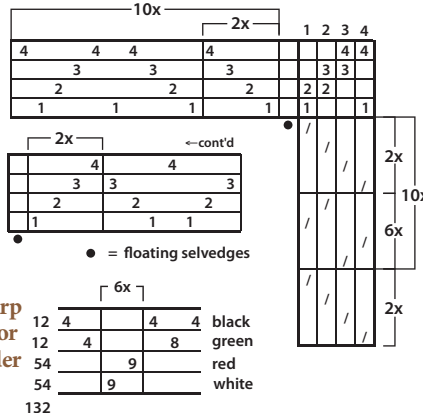
Some drafts for weaving are very, very long if they are written out thread by thread. To save space, wherever any section of the threading or treadling is repeated, a bracket is placed above it with the number of times to do that section.

For example, in the threading draft shown here, there are two levels of brackets, one marked 2x and one marked 10x. To thread: Start at the right side and thread (after the floating selvedge) 1-2-3-4. Since the 2x is directly above these threads, you will thread that two times. Then continue, 1-2-3-4-1-4-3-2-1-4. You are now at the end of the 10x bracket, so you'll do everything under that bracket (including the 2x section) ten times. When the threading continues to another row, you also read that row from

right to left.

Repeats in the treadling and in the warp color order are treated in the same way. Note

### Draft



that the color order chart looks like a threading draft but indicates the order in which to wind warp colors (4 black, 8 green, 4 black, then 9 red and 9 white six times, 4 green, 4 black).

## WARPING NOTES

To save magazine space for projects and articles, project instructions do not include specific warping steps. If the materials used in a project will work equally well with any warping method, instructions will say to use your preferred warping method. For yarns that are especially fragile, sticky, or overtwisted, warping back to front is usually recommended. Instructions for both methods are available at [weavingtoday.com](http://weavingtoday.com) (click on Resources).

## FINISHING TECHNIQUES

### TWISTING (OR PLYING) THE FRINGE

Divide the number of threads for each fringe into two groups. Twist each group clockwise until it kinks. Bring both groups together and allow them to twist around each other counterclockwise (or twist in that direction). Secure the ends with an overhand knot. (Use the same method to make a plied cord by attaching one end to a stationary object.)



back to the starting point, encircling the same group of ends. Pass the needle under the same group, bringing it out through the weaving two (or more) weft threads below the fell. Repeat for each group of ends across the fell. Needle weave the tail into the selvedge and trim.

### DOUBLE (ITALIAN) HEMSTITCHING

Weave several picks of plain weave (or the basic structure of the piece), ending with the shuttle on the right side if you are right-handed, the left side if you are left-handed. Measure a length of weft four times the warp width, cut, and thread this tail into a blunt tapestry needle.

Take the needle under a selected group of warp threads above the fell and bring the needle back to encircle the ends. Next, pass the needle under the same ends but come up two or more weft rows down from the fell. Then bring the needle back around the same group of ends below the fell. Repeat, encircling the next group of ends.

### LADDER AND ZIGZAG HEMSTITCHING

For ladder hemstitching, work a row of simple hemstitching. Insert a spacer of heavy yarn or yarn bundle. Leaving a tail three times the warp width, weave four picks of plain weave. Thread the tail in a needle and hemstitch over two rows above the spacer, encircling the same groups of ends as for the first row.

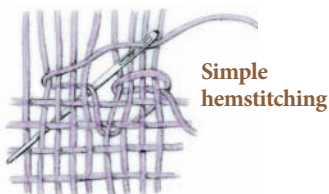
For zigzag hemstitching, encircle groups of ends in the second row starting at the midpoint of the ends encircled in the previous row to offset the two rows of stitches.

*Hemstitching tip: To hemstitch the first end of a piece, weave a header, weave four or five picks of plain weave (or of the basic weave structure used in the piece), and hemstitch over the top two or three weft rows. Weave the piece and then hemstitch the other end over the last two or three weft rows. Remove the fabric from the loom and discard the header and weft threads placed below the first hemstitching.*

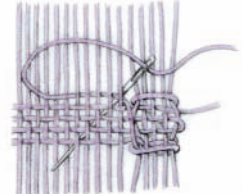
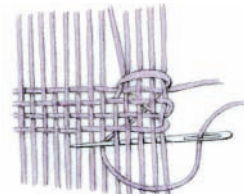
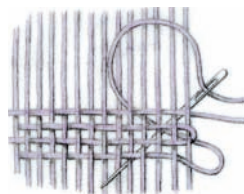
### SIMPLE HEMSTITCHING

Weave several picks of plain weave (or the basic structure of the piece), ending with the shuttle on the right side if you are right-handed, left side if you are left-handed. Measure a length of weft three times the warp width and cut, leaving the measured length as a tail. Thread the tail into a blunt tapestry needle.

Take the needle under a selected group of ends above the fell and bring it up and



Simple hemstitching



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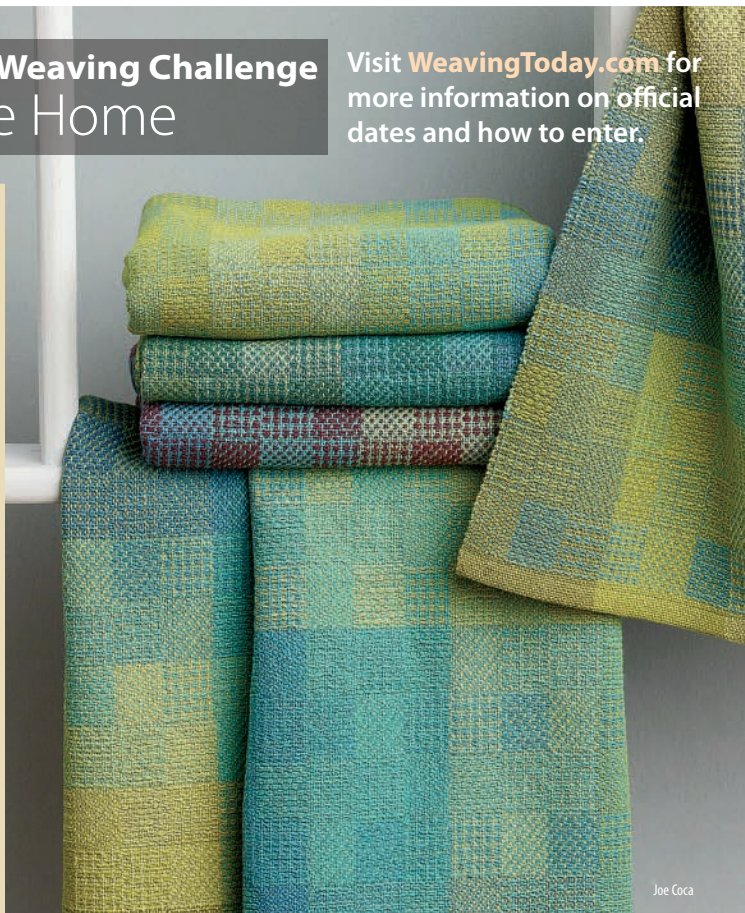


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Joe Coca

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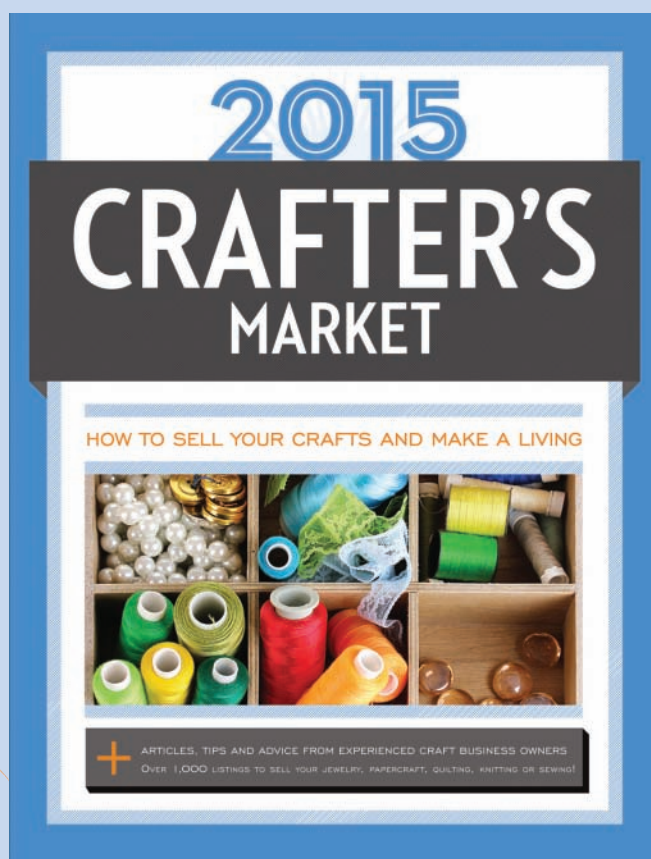
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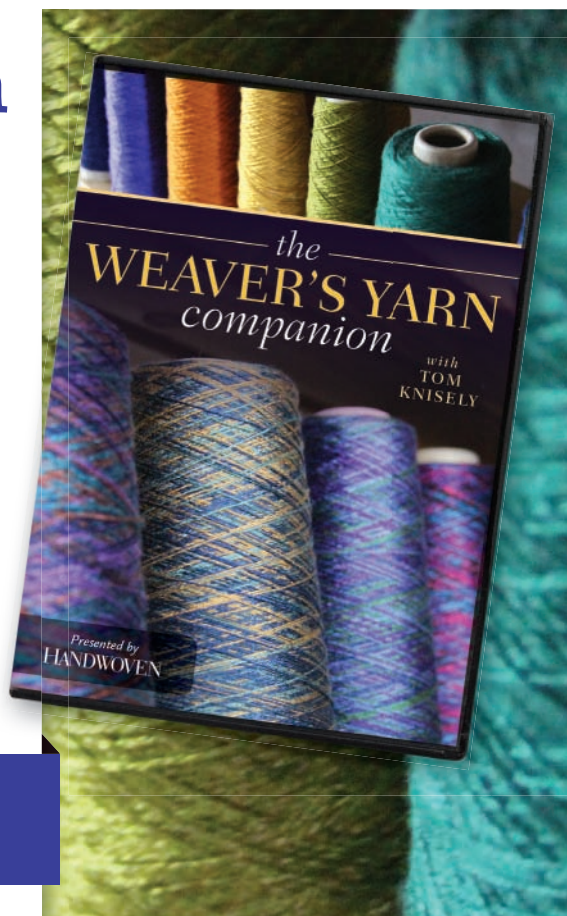
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# Crossing Borders

BY CHRIS ROSSI

Inspired by the “Crossing Borders, Crossing Threads” theme of the 2013 Association of Northwest Weaving Guilds (ANWG) Conference, the Portland Handweavers Guild (PHG) adopted “Inspired by Japan” as our 2013 Theme of the Year. Our goal was to involve as many members as possible in learning about the textile techniques and traditions of another country.

We created four year-long study groups that would provide most of the items for the ANWG booth. They covered four main areas: Japanese weaving techniques, including *sakiori* (weaving with strips of cloth, preferably strips of kimono); *kasuri* (tied-warp resist-dyeing and weaving); indigo dyeing; *sashiko* (stitching); and *kumihimo* (braid/cord making). Study groups gave monthly updates at guild meetings.

Many guild members wanted to participate but did not choose to join a study group, so to help them work on their own, our librarian made a collection of books on Japanese textile techniques and traditions.

Indigo dyeing, so central to Japanese textiles, became a great source of community. Some members had expressed frustration at not knowing how to dye with indigo, so we established a monthly “open indigo vat” at a member’s house, available to any member from 10 am to 3 pm on the third Saturday of the month. Many people stopped by to dunk something in the pot, in the process meeting other members they did not know and catching up with old friends they had not seen for a while.

While all the creative activities were going on, a committee was formed to put together a cohesive booth and get it from Portland, Oregon, to Bellingham, Washington, for the conference. Committee members were phenomenal in their dedication and hard work. We wanted the outside of the booth to look like the front of a Japanese dry goods store, so we researched the interior and exterior of Japanese stores. Our booth would reflect Japanese ideas of beauty and be calm, softly lit, and spacious. A committee member wove panels for the front of the booth that looked like *shōji* screens. She also created an entry banner with the Japanese word *musubu* painted on it. One of the meanings



The Portland Handweavers Guild booth expressing *musubu*, “the ties that bind.” PHOTOS BY KATE DOBBINS

for *musubu* is “the ties that bind,” which reflected everything we wanted to express.

To gather and share everything members had made for the booth we turned our April meeting into a giant show-and-tell. Members were instructed to fill out a registration form with information on the piece they were submitting: technique, fibers, etc. We expected about forty-five pieces and received eighty-six. People just kept bringing things! When people shared what they had created, over and over we heard “I have never done anything like this before but . . .” It was a night of joy and tremendous pride.

Faced with almost double the number of items we had planned to display, we had to overhaul our booth layout. Our sparse, calm space became filled with a multitude of items that somehow all worked together. Luckily we had arranged to have two booths open as one, and we were able to display everything. Each item had a tag of indigo-dyed paper that gave the artist’s name, the technique used, and any other relevant

information. Booth visitors were given a glossary with explanations of Japanese textile techniques.

By the end of the conference, we were glowing with pride at what a guild could accomplish when so many members worked together. We won a number of awards, and were justifiably proud of them, but our main goal had always been to foster guild involvement, and that goal was met and exceeded.

Words of advice to guilds wanting to tackle a similar big project? Just do it! ➡



Examples of *itajime* (clamp-resist dyeing) and *sakiori* (rag weaving).

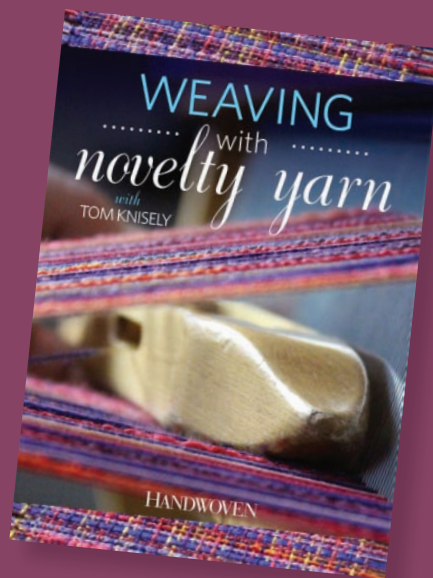


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