

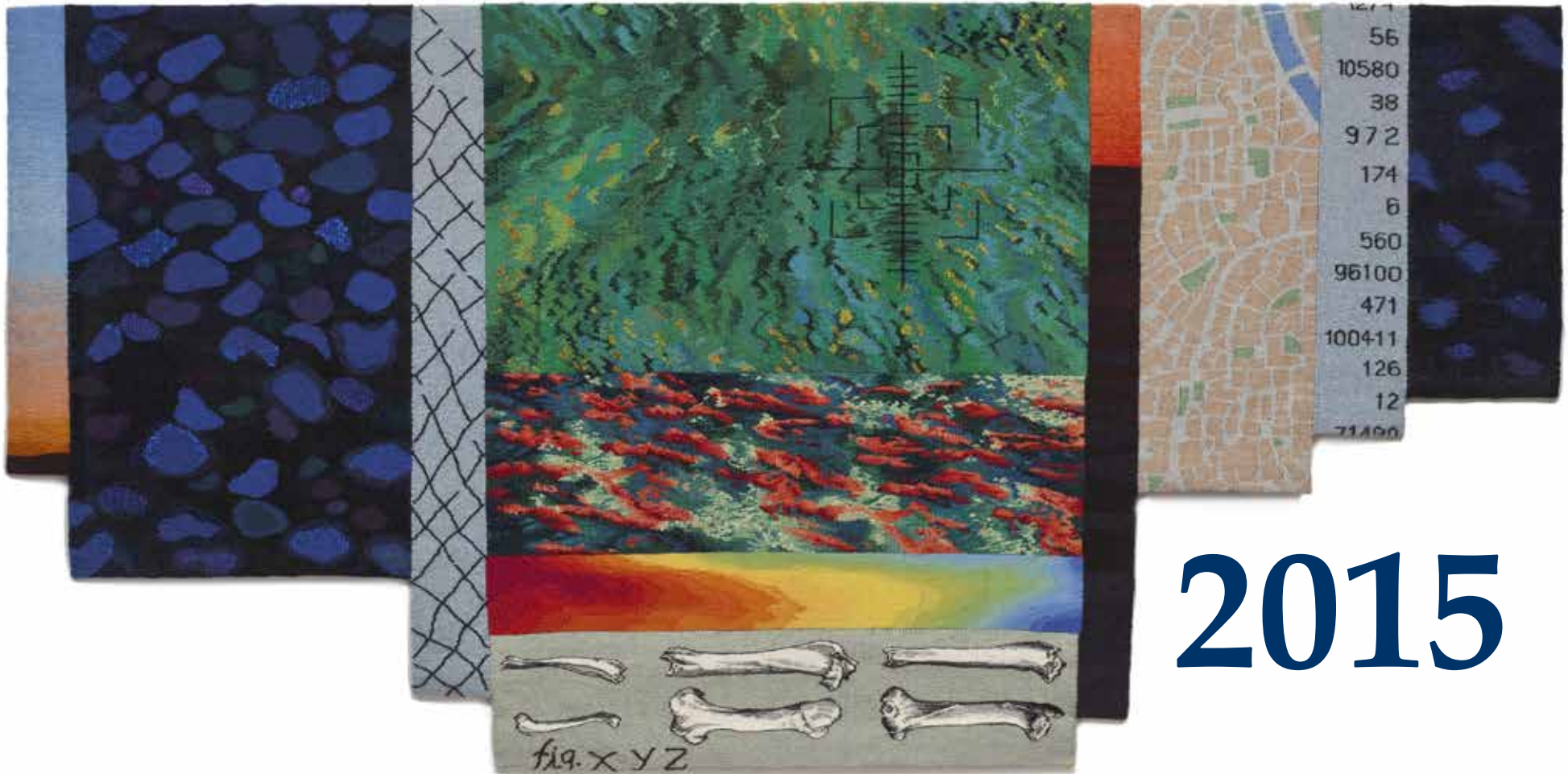
ATA

AMERICAN TAPESTRY ALLIANCE

CODA

A BIENNIAL CELEBRATION OF TAPESTRY ART TODAY

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2015

Cover Image:

Jane Kidd, "Land Sentence: Zoo", 2012,
woven tapestry, 99 x 200 cm.
Photo: Janet Dwyer



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CODA: A Biennial Celebration of Tapestry Art Today 2015
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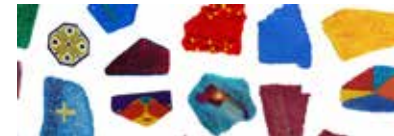
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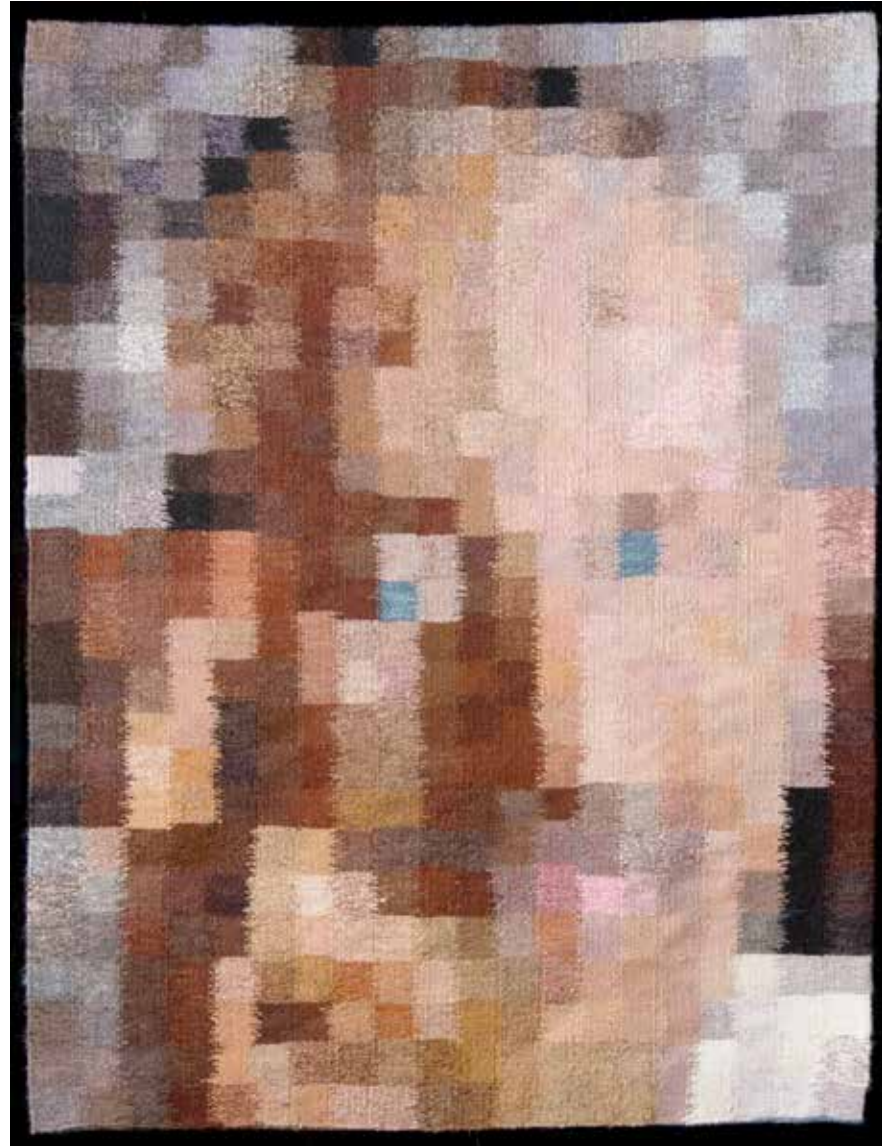
Introduction

by Michael F Rohde
Co-Director, American Tapestry Alliance

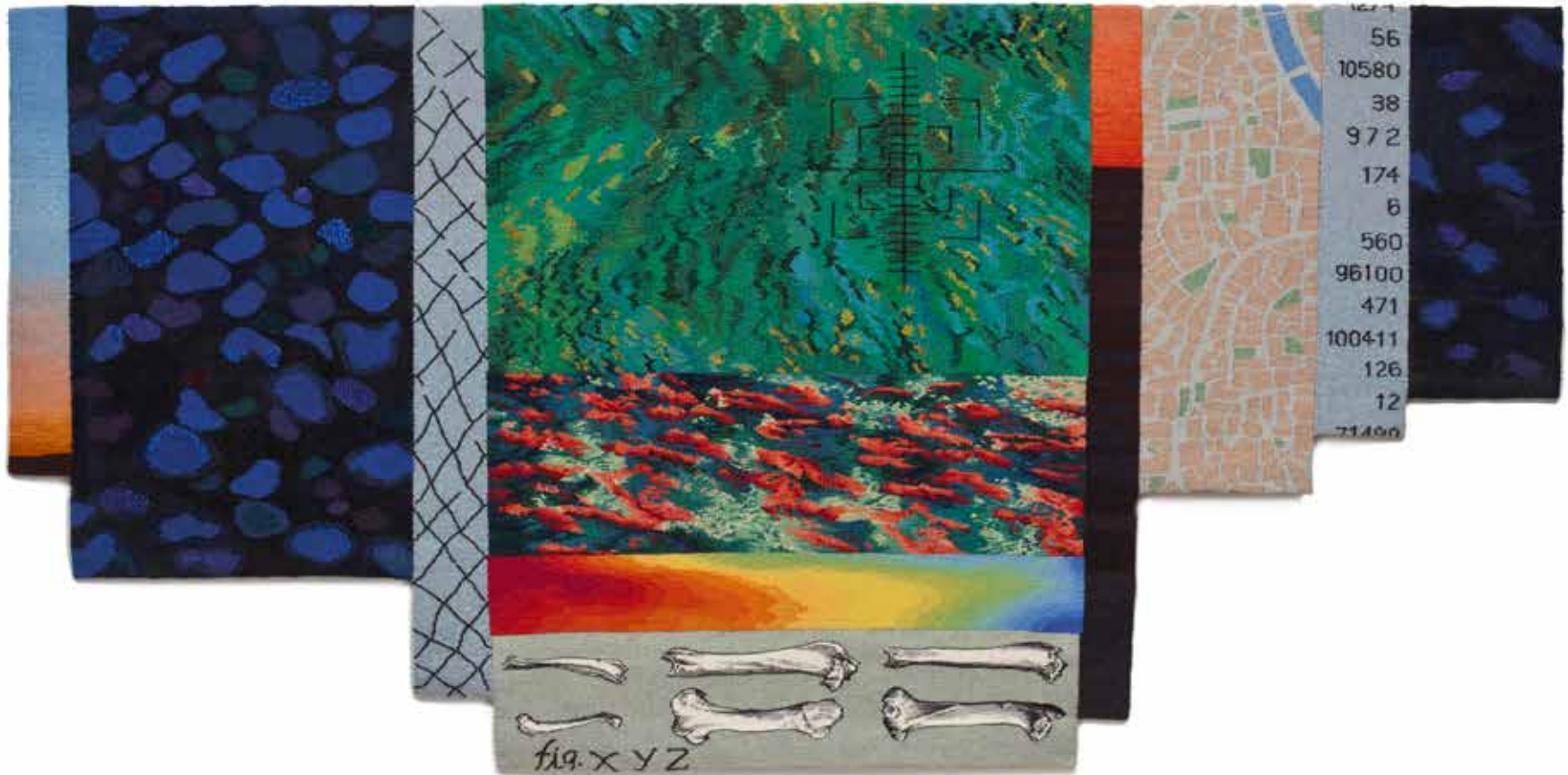
The American Tapestry Alliance is comprised of over 650 international member artists, who design and create their own hand woven tapestries. Every year we produce travelling exhibitions and catalogues of recent tapestries, selected by noted scholars.

The organization also produces *Tapestry Topics – A Quarterly Review of Tapestry Art Today* as a member benefit. A couple years ago, we recognized that the quality of the research and reporting deserves a wider audience. Therefore, the first digest was conceived and realized, and now we have decided to do it again.

The goal of CODA is to showcase some of the best writing and images of tapestries that have graced the virtual pages, heretofore only available to members. In view of your professional role, we hope you will find this publication enlightening and we freely give permission to share with your colleagues or anyone else who you think might be interested. We welcome your comments and questions.



Michael Rohde "Contemplation" 2013, wool,
natural dyes, 41" x 32"
Photo: Andrew Neuhart



Jane Kidd, "Land Sentence: Zoo" 2012, woven tapestry, 99 x 200 cm.
Photo: Janet Dwyer.

Translations: Jane Kidd's Recent Work in Tapestry and Negotiating Tradition: Five Approaches

by Virginia Stephen

July 14 – September 29, 2012
Feature Gallery, Alberta Craft Council
Edmonton, Alberta

This review was originally published in the Spring/Summer 2013 issue of Studio: Craft and Design in Canada.

The word 'tapestry' evokes images of 16th century fiber artisans spending months creating finely detailed, pictorial hangings from drawings and cartoons usually created by other artists. Their purpose was decorative and narrative as well as to provide much needed insulation for drafty rooms. The allegories, myths and biblical stories echoed contemporary painting and print conventions and communicated cultural information, which together with size and



Jolie Bird, "Hi, How Are You?" 2008,
wool, cotton & acrylics, 62 x 81 cm.
Photo: Jolie Bird

fine work reflected the owners' elite social status. Smaller pieces made by individuals adorned furniture and clothing of a wider range of owners.

The two exhibitions, *Translations: Jane Kidd's Recent Work in Tapestry* and *Negotiating Tradition: Five Approaches* hanging adjacent in one gallery, bring these traditions of tapestry into a present day conversation. A challenge for all artists who embrace a deeply rooted and demanding traditional medium is how to avoid being derivative yet honour the teachings of the past - a challenge well met in these exhibitions.

Jane Kidd (now living on Saltspring Island after 30 years in Calgary at Alberta College of Art + Design - ACAD) is both the artist whose work comprises *Translations* and the curator of *Negotiating Tradition*,

an exhibition of the work of five of her former students. Passion for working in fibre, the approach to the development of image and design and attention to mastery of the complex medium are clearly shared by all six artists and are a testament to the time honoured learning model of master/student/apprentice working alongside each other that is embedded in the fibre arts. Today the separation of image developer and maker does not exist. Remaining is the challenge of how to create strong and fluid imagery with a medium that is essentially a grid of warp and weft, and how to bring a historical practice into the arena of contemporary discourse.



In *Translations* Kidd presents a series of three works in her *Landscape Series*, which explores human/nature relationships. Each piece, a rectilinear collage of sections of imagery and pattern, presents in a form reminiscent of a wall hung kimono and is startling in its impression of being three dimensional layers of many pieces suspended over a bar. To draw attention to issues related to our often destructive relation with nature, Kidd

Left: Melissa Wong, "Repository", 2011, woven tapestry with needlepoint lace, 22.5 x 15 x 10 cm with 110 cm long lace.



draws upon images collected from satellite and aerial photography, technical data and historic scientific documents. These present stunningly beautiful and exactingly wrought visual objects and question what we are doing to our physical world. Some segments are clear and simple representations of the source documents while others, such as the largest section of

Above: Murray Gibson, "Visitation", 1999, Gobelins Tapestry, wool and cotton, 60 x 60 cm
Photo: Murray Gibson.

Land Sentence: Pool, are exquisite in their subtlety of pattern abstracted from close-in examination of the referenced images. In her artist statement, Kidd explains the series as “my attempt to take a scientific worldview and through the physicality and sensual nature of handwork draw it back in to the realm of the personal.”

Each of the five artists chosen by Kidd for *Negotiating Tradition* draws upon the teachings of the master and mastery of the medium, yet moves the work into distinct and highly personal practices. Judy Brown (Calgary, AB) is represented by six small (28 x 30.5 cm), deeply detailed works, each containing the word, which is its title – Found, Chance, Surface, Memory, Meander and Passage. The small-scale format and complex imagery of each piece provides the viewer with an intimate experience quite contrary to that of the grand scale tapestries of bygone eras. The pieces have an edgy, contemporary spirit taking full advantage of the traditional medium and more contemporary adaptations of materials and technique.

In contrast to the tight, intricate patterning of Brown’s work, Jolie Bird (Halifax, NS) works in a larger, portrait format for strongly narrative, loosely constructed, vividly coloured work. Her



imagery also includes words but with individual ‘head shots’ and is drawn from popular culture and personal experience. The highly stylized design has a quality reminiscent of comics and pictorial hooked mats. From a foundation of the highly repetitive and precise tapestry traditions, she is contemporizing the practice by introducing materials and conventions from other visual arts.

Melissa Wong (Calgary, AB) moves off the wall with *Repository*, a powerful and elegant three-dimensional piece using

Linda Wallace, “Diminishment of Hope: Non-Gravid 04 April”, 2005, handwoven tapestry, burial and hand stitching, 41 x 51 x 4 cm. Photo: Terry Zlot.

tapestry and needlepoint lace techniques and suspended from the ceiling. Wong’s work is intimate in its exploration the body as textile. Her two works in this exhibition are startling and beautiful interpretations of birth. In contrast to the fluidity of the sculptural piece, the wall piece, *Spill and Mend* is a disciplined, finely woven piece but with spare, nearly photographic imagery.

Also exploring issues related to birth, in this case infertility, are six poignantly haunting works in the series *Diminishing Hope* by Linda Wallace (NanOOSE Bay, BC). Created over 5 years, each of the small, monochromatic tapestries was buried in the soil of a wild area of her property on the same day, retrieved on different dates and titled *NonGravid* (not pregnant) with the date. The partially decayed pieces were reworked, repaired, overstitched and mounted. The ritual of traditional tapestry making combined with the ritual of the long process of burial (implanting), retrieval and reworking, a very contemporary approach to art-making,



Judy Brown, "*Meander*," 2011, wool and silk; 28 x 30.5 cm
Photo: Judy Brown

echoes the ritual cycle of infertility procedures. Together they tell a compelling, personal story.

Murray Gibson (Antigonish, NS) has made a commitment to mastering the Gobelin tapestry technique developed and employed in the 16th century. It is an intricate technique made more complex as weavers work on the back of the piece from a drawn 'cartoon' mounted behind the warp, necessitating the use of mirrors to enable the weaver to see the progress of the work. Gibson's imagery is grounded in research, exploring the stories of women of

history and myth who were practitioners of textile arts. The foundation of the imagery is representation of drapery referenced in historical images of these women. Overlaying this are symbolic images advancing the story. Visitation draws the drapery image from the 1528 painting of Mary and Elizabeth by Jacopo Pontormo. Overlaying the drapery is a stylized pomegranate symbolic of Christ's suffering and of fertility. The effect is that of looking at an image with a magnifying glass. The technique is fine, rich and polished and the image a contemporary

interpretation of culturally significant stories from the past.

This is a stunning and thoughtful pair of exhibitions that, with relatively few works, tells the story of the profound connection between traditional technique and contemporary expression.

Note: both of these exhibitions are available on-line on the Alberta Craft Council's website at <http://www.albertacraft.ab.ca>

Virginia Stephen is an arts educator, arts administrator, consultant, curator and artist living in Edmonton, Alberta. Formerly in senior positions at the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia and Edmonton Art Gallery where she championed the inclusion of fine craft in the exhibition and collection programs she is now Executive Director of Liberal Studies, Faculty of Extension at the University of Alberta. Stephen maintains an art practice in painting and fibre arts. Her work has been included in exhibitions across Canada and she has had two recent residencies in the Banff Centre Leighton Studios.





Marlowe Katoney,
"Survivor – Long Walk"
(no date), 31½ in x 32¾ in,
wool textile.
Photo: Tom Alexander
Photography.

Marlowe Katoney: Navajo Roots, Contemporary Expression

by Marlowe Katoney

I'm a Navajo Artist. I grew up in Winslow, Arizona. I come from a working class railroad family on both my paternal and maternal side of the family. Both of my parents are non-college educated. I was the first in my immediate family who went to college (University of Arizona). Although I have strong artistic roots on my dad's side of the family, only a couple of my relatives pursue art as a profession. I do not consider myself a "generational weaver" because neither my mother nor my father weaves. However, both of my grandmothers and my great and great-great grandmothers wove and might have been considered master weavers today.

Weaving was something I was hesitant to try because of the years I suspected I would need to cultivate the skill. I'm not the best technically; I sometimes make mistakes in my work, but for me it adds a kind of beauty. As any artist, I must always consider the medium, where it came from, what it was, and what it could be. I address the subject matter for my textiles in the very same way. I utilize something figurative by beginning with a sketch or non-objective shapes as a vehicle to nudge the subconscious into a particular direction. It's a good exercise for mind play



Marlowe Katoney, "Survivor—Long Walk",
detail, 31½ in x 32¾ in, wool textile.
Photo: Tom Alexander Photography.



when it comes to addressing subject matter from world news to music. I was a painter before I became a weaver and I found as a painter that you sometimes put a lot of effort into something and come out with nothing. Other times you can put very little effort towards something and surprise! – you find the aesthetic you were looking for. That's why I find it very important to utilize everything: pictures, patterns, old rugs, new rugs, pop culture. Somewhere along the way a light will go on.

For me, being an artist is an ongoing pursuit of freedom. It is not having to abide by the popular terms of beauty or to create something readily identifiable as being "Navajo." Instead, I deconstruct old ideas to create new ones. I found that often other people's notions of beauty are not necessarily my own. Under those circumstances, I find it necessary to examine "the other," which

Marlowe Katoney, "Eye of the Storm",
2013, 24 in x 20½ in, Wool Textile.
Photo: Courtesy of The Heard Museum.

Marlowe Katoney, "Winter Apparition," 2014,
24½ in x 35¼ in, wool textile,
Bahti Indian Arts Tucson.
Photo: Tom Alexander Photography.

some people may find unsavory or bland, and reinvent it, giving it new life. Addressing subject matter and composition in this way contextualizes traditional Navajo weaving into contemporary art.

As an artist I believe the capacity of the imagination is endless and the motions of daily life can be fuel for the imagination. It's through these ideals that I'm able to approach Navajo weaving with a fresh perspective.





Marlowe Katoney, "The Acquisition", 2014, 30 in x 43½ in, wool textile,
Collection of the Susan Jordan Law Firm.
Photo: Tom Alexander Photography.

Marlowe Katoney, "Concerto", 2014, 15 in x 21¾ in, wool textile, Private Collection.
Photo: Tom Alexander Photography.



Marlowe Katoney is a Navajo artist and weaver who resides in Winslow, Arizona. He studied 2D design and painting at the University of Arizona before becoming a weaver. Marlowe's contemporary art and his work in Navajo weaving have been recognized with numerous awards, fellowships, and scholarships. His weavings have been featured in publications and in the collections of the Heard Museum. He can be contacted at chaikatoney@hotmail.com and Marlowe Katoney Navajo Textiles on Facebook



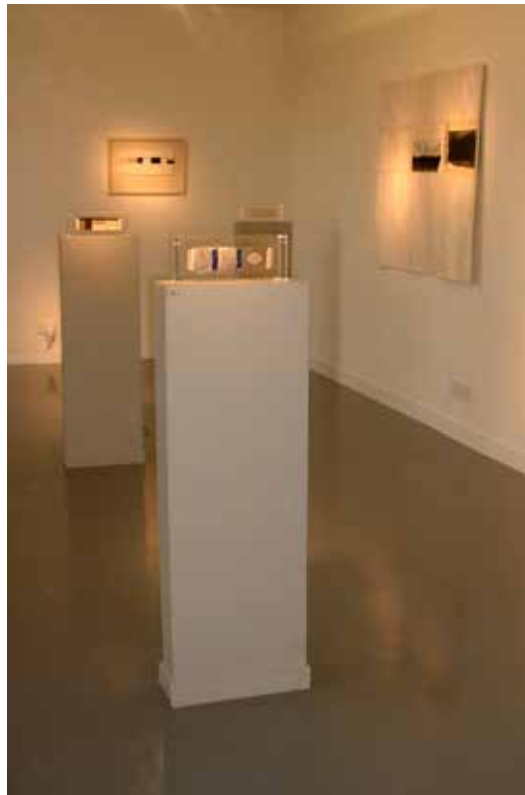
Jilly Edwards, "Ruthen Sketches", (9 pieces), 2011 5 cm x 12 cm.
Photo: Mei Lim

Off the Wall: Designing Tapestry that Defies the Gallery Wall

by **Jilly Edwards**

I checked the dictionary before writing about my work, and found I particularly liked these synonyms and definitions for “series:” “join,” “connect” and “related kind coming one after another.” Hindsight, of course, is wonderful, and looking back on my work as I prepared for a retrospective exhibition at the Ruthin Craft Centre, North Wales, I realized how much of my work fell into series.

Having initially trained at the West of England College of Art, Bristol, UK (now the University of the West of England) in textiles, I pursued my special interest in Woven Tapestry for 10 years, before going to Edinburgh College of Art, Tapestry Department. There under the tutelage of Fiona Mathison and Maureen Hodge, my working life began to include research,



Jilly Edwards, “Installation at Craft Study Centre”, Farnham, Surrey, UK, 2005/06.
Photo: Mei Lim

recording my findings in many ways: writing, drawings, and sketches. I can look back through my journals and sketchbooks and see the correlation between what I am doing now and what I was doing then, often to my own surprise! So much of my work has been about time and travel, a calendar of life.

Recently, I have been invited to do a series of solo exhibitions, which has required new developments in my work. In 2003 the Craft Study Centre, Farnham offered me the chance of a solo exhibition for 2005 in their new gallery (at that point under construction). Their invitation was a brave step, as my current work was purely in a test state of maquettes. I was developing work that was “off the wall.” I wanted the public to understand that



Jilly Edwards, “Ruthin Sketches” and a larger piece at the Kyoto Art Centre, 2012

Photo: Mei Lim

woven tapestry was rather like sculpture, three dimensional, and, therefore, can be displayed “off the wall.” I planned, also, to include drawings and maquettes in the show, which would be hung on the wall, the traditional way of presenting woven tapestry. This new work reflects my recent travels around the world, a journey that greatly influenced my approach to future work.

An exhibition at the Craft Study Centre, Farnham, Surrey, UK (December 2005 to February 2006), also toured to South Hill Park, Berkshire, UK. In 2007 I was offered the chance to extend my “off the wall” ideas for an exhibition at High Cross House, Dartington, Devon, UK. This 1930’s Bauhaus house, designed by William Lescaze was built for the first headmaster of the school at Dartington.

Totally of its moment, but on a medieval rural estate, it had caused quite a stir when it was built. The house had recently become the depository for the art collection, and archives of the family. I created work again to be displayed away from the wall, in clear, segmented acrylic boxes that could be stacked and re-stacked in multiples, changing when they moved to new destinations. The boxes contained a drawing, and a tapestry, rolled up, but also tickets from my journeys to the house from my studio, these I drew, collaged and stitched on, also paper printed with words, and collected ephemera that were relevant to the story of each box and the Lescaze house. I spent 18 months researching the estate, archives, and art collection. Fifty of my boxes, all different in content, were placed around the house, on windowsills, on bookcases, the piano, and in the fireplaces. I collaborated with a composer who created a piece of music that played on small screens around the house explaining the idea of the work.



Jilly Edwards, Installation at High Cross House, Dartington Estate, Devon, UK, 2009.
Photo: Mei Lim

In 2010 Ruthin Craft Centre, Ruthin, North Wales honoured me with a retrospective, beginning with my time at Edinburgh College of Art to the present. Ten years before Edinburgh College of Art was also acknowledged. This was with the help of the curator June Hill. It was an

amazing opportunity to take stock of my work, where it had taken me, and where it might take me next.

It was very evident at that point that my work did fall into series, and that the series overlapped, entwined, were woven in fact, into each other. Two essays were written about my work, one by Fiona Mathison who had been one of my tutors at Edinburgh, and another one by Ian Wilson, who writes for many international magazines about textiles. Again it was interesting to see what they critiqued in my work and their comments on how the pieces relate to each other. So, although preparing for the exhibition was mainly a job of retrieving work from its owners, public and private: it was an opportunity to see how it all fit together.

I also wanted to produce some work that was about this opportunity, about Ruthin Craft Centre. I visited several times before my own exhibition, to be able to see the space and to meet the people who work at the Centre. It was so different every time I visited, weather,

colours, not just at the Centre, but as I travelled from my studio up to North Wales. I created a sketchbook of drawings quick gestural lines, simple impressions, instant impressions. I created nine woven sketches and one large tapestry, especially for Ruthin Craft Centre, to be displayed in the retrospective exhibition. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/sarahgb/sets/72157626990532016/with/584532776/>

After the Ruthin retrospective, it was difficult to know where I was going to go next! It had been such a stupendous adventure and I was thrilled with its outcome, I felt that whatever I did next was going to be a bit of a letdown! So

Jilly Edwards, "Field Division", 2013, 1.8 cm x 8 cm.
Photo: Mei Lim





Jilly Edwards, Reconfiguration of 28 boxes from High Cross House in studio, 2010.
Photo: Mei Lim

I decided to throw caution to the wind and just play! Go out to see exhibitions and visit friends who I hadn't seen in a while, it had been 10 years of working towards big projects and maybe it was time to just not think, but play! Whilst "off playing," still with sketchbook/ journal at hand, plus, a new camera, I started working on drawings about field divisions and oilseed rape "yellow." I love the colour yellow in all its hues; it lifts my spirits! 2012 was a year to have ones spirit lifted; the weather certainly had its mind set on "gloom." Also, for nearly twenty years, I had coloured my hair with hues of red, but by the end of August 2012 and still no summer, I

changed my hair to ash blonde, it lifted my spirits and amused, even shocked many. My new "yellow" hair inspired an idea to make new pieces, using multiple hues of yellow, and my drawings of field divisions, including barb wire, hedges or stone walls. I have recently woven six small tapestries each 8 x 8cm and 2 slightly larger tapestries 9 x 12cm and I am about to finish a larger piece 80 x 80cm. One of the 8 x 8cm tapestries has been selected for an exhibition of international textiles in Gdynia, Poland. It will also travel to Lodz, Poland to be an annexed exhibition during the International Triennial of Tapestry exhibition. My tapestry will make its own little journey.

So when I think about my work, I DEFINITELY think in series. I may produce 50 sketches/ drawings, but only produce a few woven tapestries. Always the work has an element of the landscape, whether I am walking to the corner shop, or on the beach, or travelling through unfamiliar countryside, by train. However, it's not about the landscape, it's about my feelings, thoughts, memories that the sights, words, and sounds evoke in me. The series of thoughts bring about an understanding of myself and I hope, also, for the people that see my work.



Jilly Edwards. I was born, brought up and inspired in the UK. However, with an itinerant nature, and encouraged by my family, I have visited many places further away.

I was educated at the West of England College of Art, first in Bristol, and then to Edinburgh College of Art to specialize in woven tapestry. At Edinburgh, I acquired a strong ethos for research, and drawing was encouraged, a wonderful discipline to acquire for a lifelong helping hand.
<http://www.jillyedwards.co.uk/>



Nancy Jackson, "The Annunciation (The Ark)," detail 1.



Nancy Jackson, "The Annunciation (The Ark)," central panel in "Incarnation Triptych", 2003, 5 ft x 4 ft, wool weft, cotton warp. Photo: Nancy Jackson,



Nancy Jackson, "The Annunciation (The Ark)," detail 2.

Reading Green: An Art Historian's Approach to Nancy Jackson's Incarnation Triptych

by **Carolyn Furnish**

Incarnation Triptych: "The Annunciation (The Ark)" tapestry and its partners, "Consanguine" and "Incarnation" form a three-panel triptych. They were designed by artist Nancy Jackson, and woven by Jackson, Joan McColgan, Marielle Snyder, and apprentice Christina Rasmussen. The center panel is a combination of life-affirming greens. The two side panels are woven in various shades of reds and pinks with green accents. The design of the center panel is also a grouping of three, this time in a series of circular shapes, running vertically.

In my approach to Jackson's Incarnation Triptych, I had an urge to refresh my memory of the triptych in western art. The triptych form was widely used in western European art as altarpieces in medieval and Renaissance cathedrals. They were

most often comprised of three painted wood panels, joined by hinges. The hinges made a large altarpiece portable, when the three panels were folded together, creating a more compact form. Typically, these triptychs featured a "main event" on the center panel, and supporting events on the two side panels. Often, if there was a patron for the triptych, his portrait, and those of various family members, appeared on the side panels, and even on the reverse of the side panels. When the triptych was closed, it would offer, typically, a monochromic scene. The opening and closing of the triptych was, in itself, a sacred rite, always performed by a priest.

Part of the wonder generated by the rite of opening the triptych is the transformation from the monochromatic to glorious color on the inner three panels. Jackson's use of color has the same

effect. Color floods the viewer's world, sumptuous greens, reds, and pinks. The "main event" is the center green panel, full of enigmatic, and, yet, depending on the viewer, familiar iconography.

Both Jackson's tapestry, and medieval and Renaissance triptychs, suggest journeys and transformations. For example, Hieronymus Bosch's famous triptych, "The Haywain," c. 1516, (see <https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/online-gallery/on-line-gallery/obra/the-hay-wagon/>), depicts Adam and Eve and their expulsion from Eden on the left panel. The center panel, "life on earth," shows a multitude of people struggling with life choices, for the good or bad. In the right panel, the scourges of hell, brought on by sinful choices, are graphically spelled out. However, Bosch offers no scenario in which good choices



Nancy Jackson, "Incarnation Triptych",
2003, 8 ft x 14 ft, Wool weft, cotton warp.
Photo: Nancy Jackson,

are rewarded. His is a lesson in negative teaching, "Choose well, or else."

Part of Jackson's title prompted me to look at a French triptych, "The Annunciation with Saints and Donors," also called "The Latour d'Auvergne Triptych," (see <http://artnc.org/works-of-art/annunciation-saints-and-donors-called-latour-dauvergne-triptych>), circa 1497. The "main event" depicts the angel Gabriel announcing to Mary that she will be giving virgin birth to God incarnate. The left panel portrays John the Baptist, in his iconic hair shirt, with a lamb in his arms, symbolically foretelling the birth of Christ. Below him, in the same panel, is

one of the triptych donors. The right panel also portrays John the Baptist drinking poison, which he did, according to legend. Below, in the same panel, is the wife of the donor.

Iconography offers culturally understood symbols, informing the "reader" how to interpret the images and details. For example, the dragon on John the Baptist's chalice represents evil, in this case, the poison drink. Illiteracy was very high when these paintings were made. In most cases, these images in religious paintings and stained glass were the only way parishioners could learn the Bible. Even the religious services were in Latin.

Other portions of Nancy Jackson's titles spiral the reader back to the spiritual realm, both in western and eastern religious traditions. Jackson's titles: "Annunciation (The Ark)," "Consanguine," and "Incarnation" make it difficult to NOT think of iconographic references. Jackson's panels, woven in symmetrical designs, suggest universal symbols of fecundity: the womb, ova, seeds, and pinecones. Even the choice of color in the center panel, a sumptuous study in green, is a symbol for spring and fertility.

"Ark" also can send the reader on different iconic journey. "Ark" can refer to the Biblical story of Noah, creating a large container for future human and animal populations of the world, once the flood has subsided. Nancy Jackson's green world can also be read as a promise of future populations. "Ark" can refer to the Ark of the Covenant, an elaborate container that holds sacred truths, usually in the form of scrolls of text, found in many cultures (including Christian, Egyptian, and Hebrew).

Some of the curved shapes in Jackson's central panel suggest wings. I continue

to search for iconography, all the while chastising myself for my inability to allow the tapestry design to flow, giving up a need for concrete meaning, accepting an invitation for mediation. Nevertheless, I see wings, but it goes further. The striping in the wings also calls to mind sea creatures: turtle legs, crab claws, the brown and white striping on a nautilus shell. The wing shapes, really symmetrical curves, encircle three separate sections of the central panel, giving them an air of protectiveness.

All that said, Nancy Jackson shared her thoughts on her approach to Incarnation Triptych:

“The Annunciation (The Ark)” tapestry and its partners, “Consanguine” and “Incarnation,” together form the Incarnation Triptych. My intent was to address the feminine aspects of The

Sacred, as that relates to the Incarnation (Creation, The Earth, The Big Bang, or whatever someone might want to call it. In the central panel, “Annunciation (The Ark),” I was interested in worship rituals, especially ancient rituals, but not exclusively ancient. It was my aim to create a work of art that would engage any person, young or old, male or female, from any religious tradition, or no worship tradition, who would respond to the sacred in it. Of the times I have been present with the viewing public, I have seen that I achieved that goal beyond my imagination. Viewers have approached me with profound comments. One man waited two hours until the room cleared to talk with me and said, ‘When I saw your artwork, I began to weep.’ ”

Jackson goes on to say, “The Incarnation Triptych has quite often been

seen as a healing artwork. Sometimes people feel healed in their body, sometimes in their mind, and sometimes in their soul. I didn’t plan on that when I was creating the image.”

In the process of writing this article, I told Nancy Jackson about the iconography I see in her triptych. Her response was, “What you see is more about you than my intent.” I realized I was, in part, studying a beautiful Rorschach inkblot test.

I hope to see Incarnation Triptych “in person” someday, put my art history/iconography ways aside, and accept the invitation to relax, and simply meditate.

Visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTIO-724AY0&sns=em> for a sense of the scale and beauty of Incarnation Triptych, and to hear Jackson’s comments on her work.



Carolyn Furnish lives in Canfield, Ohio. She was introduced to tapestry weaving in the early 1970s, in Sacramento, CA, as part of an art history BA. After earning an MA in English from the University of Oregon, teaching English composition and Shakespeare plays for years at the community college level, she quickly returned to tapestry weaving after retiring



“Fate, Destiny and Self Determination”: an international tapestry installation co-created by many people all over the world with Line Dufour, 2014, 12 ft x 10 ft, assorted epi.

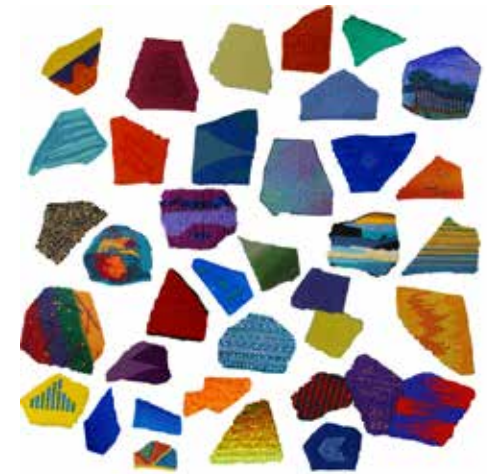
international tapestry installation project

by **Line Dufour**

Social media was constructed to allow the creation and exchange of user generated content. It provides a highly interactive platform through which individuals and communities share, co-create, discuss, and modify. Not only has it precipitated substantial and pervasive changes to communication between organizations, communities, and individuals but it has profoundly impacted our practice as tapestry weavers and artists. Social media has connected us together virtually, has diminished our sense of isolation endemic in our practice and has been instrumental in my being able to connect to other tapestry artists all over the world. This has transformed my work, my growth and development from a solitary practice, to a collaborative and community building one. Consequently, I was able to launch the *Fate, Destiny and Self-Determination/Le Sort, Destin et l'Auto-determination*, an international tapestry installation project, which could not have been as successful without it and in a sense was formed by it.

Real connection with others, however, comes in the physicality of doing, in materiality, in actions, interactions, processes and events shared by an assortment of individuals and groups. Weaving is an appropriate metaphor for engagement and activity with others. Both can be described as a means of producing a coherent united whole or collaboration through the combining and interlacement of various elements. Tapestry weaving is a slow, labourious and manual practice, a contrast to the speed at which social media weaves word threads of connection to others.

Weaving is an activity where one exercises a fair amount of control and in my attempt to mirror life, I wanted to give over some of that control to others. I also invited the element of risk into this work by having others contribute in an expressive, authentic and creative way. I also took a risk by deliberately having unwoven areas in the larger tapestry panels, not even sure about how I would resolve these issues technically. I learned from



A collection of shapes by artists from an assortment of countries: Berard Ossant, Carole Neely, Katia Wittock, Janette Meetze, Louise Lemieux Berube, Eموke, Arlette Schulman, Susan Middleton, Stephnie Cantoni, Aruna Ready, Bernadeta Nowak, Ewa Bartosz, Carole Seeds, Maximo Laura, Rosemary Horton Anzicek, Jacqueline Kellor, Therese Jarry, Aliona Carpov, Marie Thumette Brichard, Stephnie Cantoni, Anton Ventsra, Yvonne Eade, Merna Strauch, Katia Wittock, Emma Jo Webster, Debbie Herd, Louise Lemieux Berube, Thomas Cronenberg, Torunn Sondenberg, Sue Weir, Noella Kyser, Elaine Duncan

this as well as from how others resolved the technical dilemmas that presented themselves in weaving irregular shapes, so in this way, aspects of the installation were left to chance – fate and destiny. In the past, my tapestry weaving has been a solitary practice, as many contemporary tapestry weavers do. Much as I cherish that, it is also isolating. Having others weave a tapestry references historical periods

and traditional practice where artist and weaver were/are separate roles.

Inherent in the idea of Fate is that one has no influence over events and outcomes. Fate is defined as a force, energy, principle, element or power that prescribes to each person a set of limits, boundaries and confines. In Islam it is called *Kismet*. The Greeks called Fate, *Moirai*. Greek Mythology speaks of the three Fates: Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos who supposedly controlled each person's fate. The youngest, Clotho, is a spinner and she determines the time of birth and spins the thread of life on her distaff. Lachesis measures the length of the thread to determine the length of one's life; the time of death is decided by Atropos, who cuts the thread. Mythology and psychology distinguish between Fate and Destiny. Destiny is considered an expanding field of possibilities alluding to our potential to influence our Fate. This makes Destiny kinetic. "The lives we construct are an inextricably woven fabric of influences, possibilities and accumulated consequences of choices made." (James Hollis)

I had come to observe that many people who are successful in life are all too eager to take all the credit, but it has become very clear to me that a person's success is built by the love, support, cooperation and good will of many people. Often these people are unacknowledged



Part of the gallery installation: a table set up with frame looms and yarn to invite visitors to weave shapes and co-contributors. An audio-video component showing those who contributed to the weaving and finishing of the 2 main tapestry panels.

and this project was a way to demonstrate how many people are part of a successful endeavour. I wanted to list every person who so willingly participated without really knowing what the outcome was to be. To me their willingness to be a part of this is nothing short of remarkable, if not miraculous.

Fate, Destiny and Self-Determination/Le Sort, Destin and l'Auto-determination was generously funded by the Ontario Arts Council and is a tapestry installation composed of three sections. The first panel measures 5 ft x 3 ft and exemplifies the contemporary practice of tapestry weaving, where artist and weaver are one and the same. It is woven entirely by myself in my studio. The second panel, measuring 5 ft x 18 in and was woven on the Gobelin loom at the Toronto Weaving School. Participants ranged from the inexperienced and amateur to the professional.

Having others contribute to the weaving of the tapestry makes reference to traditional tapestry practice and historical conventions in that many weavers worked on the tapestry at the same time or at various stages and that weavers, often, did not create the tapestry design. As many of you know this still happens in well-known tapestry making enterprises. I documented those who wove this section both in pictures and video and as the project progressed, I kept participants updated via Facebook and emails.

The final section is composed of irregular shapes positioned between the two main panels, floating freely in space, as though the tapestry is pulling apart or coming together, like two tectonic plates. Propelled by social media, its function parallels the creation and exchange of user generated content. As each shape arrives at my home, I photograph each one, post it to my Tapestry blog, as well to as to the Facebook page for the project. I also include information about the participants such as their website if they have one, and other comments they have made about the project or about their work. 193 completed shapes have been received from 18 countries, and a total of about 150 people have participated in the entire project thus far. The project continues to accept woven shapes and will do so indefinitely, meaning that the installation will keep

growing and building community. If you or anyone you know would like to participate by weaving a shape, please contact Line Dufour at linedufour.tapestry@gmail.com or go to the Facebook page for the project of the same title - www.facebook.com/pages/Fate-Destiny-and-Self-Determination-An-international-tapestry-project. I will send you a shape or as many shapes as you like as well as the information sheet.

At the launch and for the duration of the first exhibition of the installation at Craft Ontario in Toronto, Ontario Canada, volunteers, many from various weaving guilds who had some experience with tapestry weaving, helped visitors to the gallery learn how to weave a shape. This is a great way to engage the local community and perhaps entice new members to the guild or organizations such as the American Tapestry Alliance or other similar organizations in other countries. A compilation of both video and still images are part of the exhibition of the

completed installation, and a large section of a gallery wall is devoted to listing the names of the participants, as well as the countries they come from. We are looking for other venues to exhibit the installation and if you would like to recommend a gallery or museum, I can send a prospectus to you or the person I am directed to. Anyone hosting the installation is

welcome to also feature their own work if they want to.

Threaded together by social media, individuals are woven into a community fabric through this one shared activity, a permanent reminder of our shared history, cultural practices and multicultural origins.



Line Dufour has been building weaving community for the last 25 years through her teaching of weaving at the Toronto Weaving School as well as through community weaving projects. You can learn more about her work at www.tapestryline.com.



Anton Veenstra, "Everyman Clown," 2005, 25 cms x 17.5 cms, 8 epi, . Cotton warp, wool, silk, linen, synthetic wefts.

To lead & shape the direction of the weaving. there was a lot of impatience in my mode of working, which soon had to be resolved.

Why Miniatures?

by Anton Veenstra

I would like to talk about large and small tapestry, and the differences I've experienced while engaged in both types of projects. Living in Australia, I've visited the amazing Victorian Tapestry Workshop in Melbourne, which undertakes large-scale commissions of woven tapestries. The workshop also runs an annual competition of miniature tapestries, called the Kate Derum Competition, which I won last year with the portrait of a carnival clown. Each workshop tapestry is a large project. The decisions about the project are made by the person commissioning the work, the artist whose image is to be translated into fibre, and the workshop staff. What concerns me about this situation is that all the big creative decisions seem to have been made before the weaving commences.

In no way do I want to sound judgmental about the work of other artists. We all work through unsatisfactory situations during our careers, and hopefully find situations that suit us personally. As the English poet William Blake said, the eagle never lost so much time as when he submitted to learn of the crow.

There are many reasons why I found large scale tapestry weaving unsatisfactory. One of the most important for me is why I begin a new work. I may find a particular design or an idea begins to be interesting. I will draw the cartoon and warp up the loom. As my mind develops the idea, it may focus on a part of the design, which, if it cannot be woven immediately, becomes a source of frustration. Obviously, the solution is to explore drawings and sketches of that part of the work currently being woven. But the subconscious mind is often not so amenable.

I no longer feel guilty if I do not complete a lot of work at any one time. I certainly do not insist on working for long stretches; just the back and forth motion of weaving has the danger of becoming mechanical, so that the imagination is not engaged. The largest tapestry I completed was a wall-sized image of a rock pool. It took a year to complete. When I submitted it to an international competition I was a little daunted by the convenor's description of it as a tiny work, which would be dwarfed alongside the larger pieces.

I attended an exhibition by South Australian/ Scottish academic, painter, and weaver, Kay Lawrence, who described how she wove a portrait of her daughter from a blurred, out of focus photographic image. A third or so into the weaving, a fault happened which began to obsess her. Finally, she was no longer able to go on, so she cut out the offending wefts and corrected the fault. However, she also decided to ignore any further details she perceived as faulty, until the weaving was finished. I have had this experience. By the time a work is finished there is an orchestral grouping, a greater number of details that are arranged, giving a complex unity. Perhaps a detail that stood out before now looked different within the completed perspective. Often, what I saw as faulty while I was weaving, managed to blend in on completion. All of this affects small works as well as large ones.

I began weaving tapestry in 1975. My first method was to interlock shape and colour, but often, in an attempt to create movement in my design, my patterns would be reduced

to zigzag shapes. I then decided to leave vertical areas unattached, the slits that Archie Brennan advises his students to sew up, line by line. His advice was sound. The gaps, while allowing the work to progress quickly, were gaping and unattractive on completion. However, I did not feel at home with the idea of sewing gaps. To my mind it meant alternating between textile media, somehow not concentrating completely on tapestry. In a sense I deliberately slowed down the process of weaving about a decade ago, by developing the patience to persist with a hound's tooth join. Adjacent areas share the same warp, along which colours alternate. This can create interesting blurred effects, depending how colours are worked.

The speed of weaving was no longer a consideration. Small works still took a long time. The greatest painter of our civilization, Leonardo da Vinci, would often go to his studio but merely stare for hours at an unfinished work. Sometimes he overpainted a detail; sometimes he just contemplated. A contemporary Australian painter, Ben Quilty, works on canvases roughly 5 X 8 feet in size; he finishes one a day. In fact, he emphasizes that a work left unfinished overnight and having to be addressed and possibly re-interpreted the next day, causes him extraordinary anguish and mental turmoil. None of these observations are meant to indicate that I believe one method is superior to another.

I am a solitary worker, and a secretive one. For me there would be a problem openly discussing the plan for a tapestry about to



Anton Veenstra, "Self portrait drowning,"
1977, 60 cm x 24 cm, 8 epi, cotton warp,
wool weft.
Photo: Jill Crossley.

be woven. An idea is a bundle of energy. To discuss this with others prematurely carries the danger of disbursing that energy. Nor would I survive in the collaborative atmosphere of a workshop. The current project that I am completing has grown from several unforeseen insights and moments of inspiration. Last night in bed at 3 a.m., I suddenly worked out how a particular corner could be worked. I cannot explain how I arrived at that thought - perhaps Jungian analysis might help.

Since my first days as a weaver, I've experimented with different media: applique, embroidery, macrame. Slowly, over the course of my career, I've tried to combine these where possible. Increasingly, over the last decade, I've completed works where small panels of woven tapestry sit alongside areas of button mosaic. More and more, this combination has forced me to examine what qualities each medium can contribute. In my current work, while the button assembly is sculptural, lustrous, and tactile, my small panels of woven tapestry seem to spark the motor of ideas, the conceptual focus. The fact that woven tapestry has such a long history, in all cultures, seems to make this possible. The shuttling motion of weaving tapestry, laying down separate wefts of colour, seems to parallel online technology, the scanner/printer.

To summarize: large scale and miniature tapestries have different qualities. In every age critics of culture have compared different

art forms. As a student, I had to study John Milton's epic poem, "Paradise Lost." My tutor described writing a large poem like squeezing toothpaste from its tube; consistency was the important quality. Similarly, on a huge loom uniform weaving is to be desired. By comparison, the small lyric or sonnet can

be an intense spark; the miniature tapestry is a detail. The problem with comparing large and small works, in words or fibre, is that in today's art world the spectacle is important; artistry is not necessarily desirable. The colossal spectacle is needed to make a strong statement on museum walls. So size

and monumentality are valued. The implied domesticity of small work might have been prized in Victorian times. Perhaps we need new conditions to re-value small work. Only time will tell.



Anton Veenstra. I began weaving in the mid 1970s, aware that textiles were a part of my Italo-Slovenian background. Among my teachers were Ian Arcus, Lyn Curran, Archie Brennan, and Susan Maffei. My initial style involved small angular marks that directed the growth and flow of the weaving. Later I preferred an interlocking style that avoided the gaping slits of adjoining colour areas. As my parents came to Australia as refugees after World War II, much of my recent work has expressed a social conscience. I was awarded the Blake Prize for Religious Art in 2007, and exhibited in the New Social Commentary shows at the Warnambool Art Gallery in 2006 and 2008. In 2005 I taught and demonstrated woven tapestry at the Australian National University in Canberra. Mary Schoeser, in her recent lavish volume, *Textiles: The Art of Mankind*, included one of my works, "Blonde Boy with Bike" (2005)

Gallery - selected works from Tapestry Topics 2014-2015

Photographs by the artists if not stated.



Muriel Nezhnie "Imprints",
detail, 1971, collection of the
University City Public Li-
brary. St. Louis, Missouri.
Photo: Sheldon Helfman.



Peter Horn "Danger Is at the
Gates of Town", 1968, 235 cm x
100 cm, linen warp, wool weft.
Photo: Renard Kiel



Barbara Burns "King Amenhotep II", 2010, 11 in x 11 in, 9 epi, seine twine warp, linen weft, weaving techniques include flying shuttle.

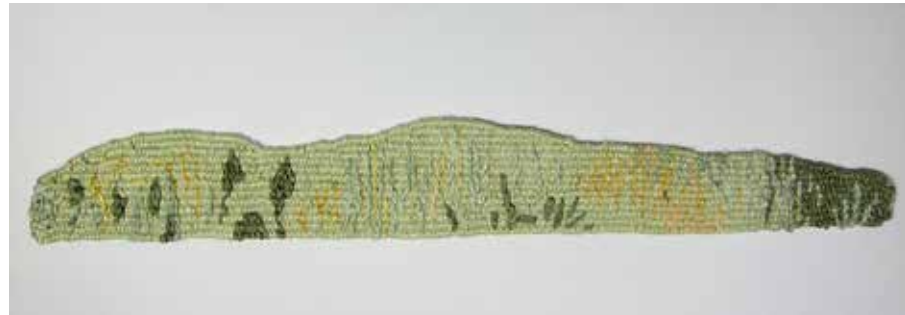
Barbara Burns "GOLDA I", 2004, 9.25 in x 9.25 in, 9 epi seine twine warp, wool weft.



HONORING TRADITION, INSPIRING INNOVATION



Nancy Jackson "Lakota Creation Myth II", 2010, 48 in x 22 in, cotton warp, wool weft.
Photo: Judy Schuster.



Louise Martin, "There was a Light Breeze through the Trees," 2013, 10 in x 1.5 in, cotton warp, wool, linen, and silk weft.
Photo: Louise Martin.

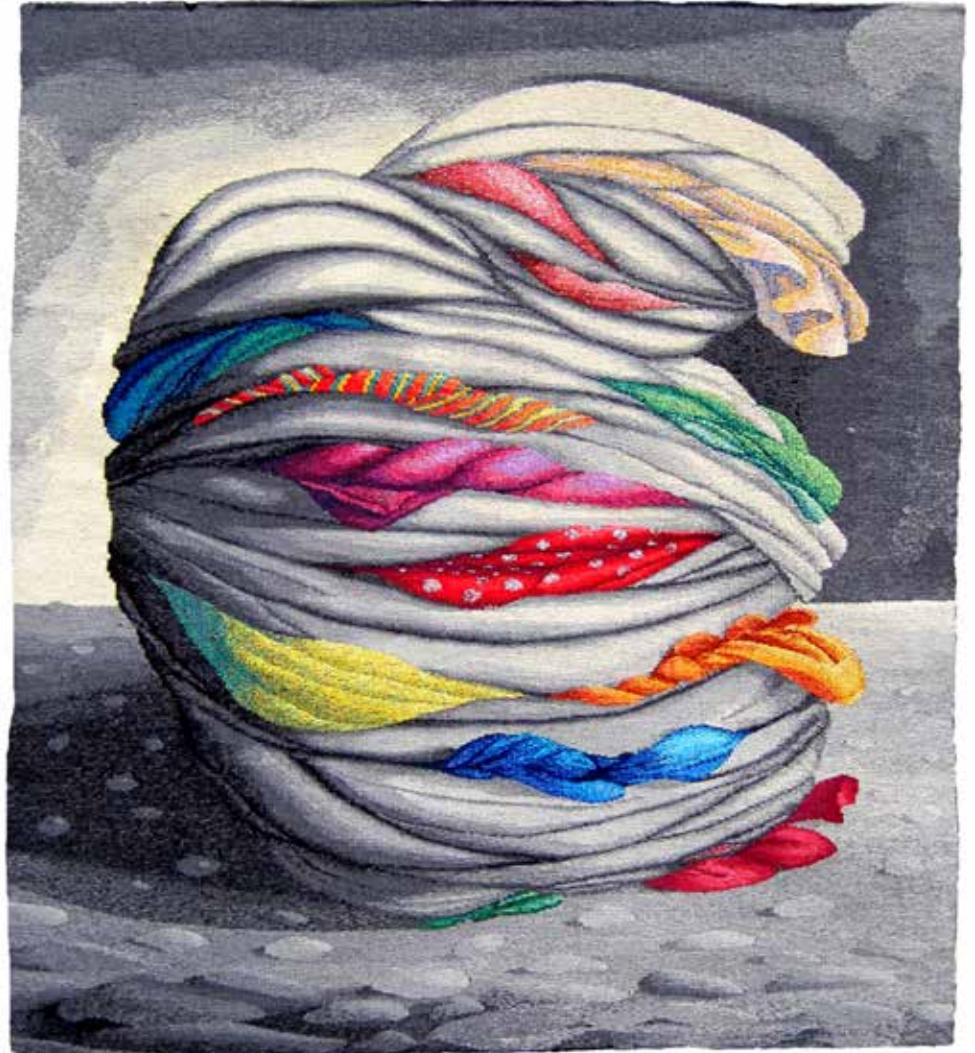


Sarah Warren "Spring into Winter", 12.5 in x 23 in, 8 epi, cotton seine warp, hand-dyed wool weft and metallic sewing thread.
Photo: Michael Walsh.



Deann Rubin "A is for @ Block", 2009, 10 in x 10 in x 10 in, 10 epi doubled, cotton, wool, silk, metal wire.

Christine Sawyer, "Yesterday's Must Haves", 2011, 130 cm x 140 cm, American cotton and English worsted cotton. An analogy about overproduction and waste in the fashion and textile industry – today's trend is tomorrow's discard.





Rebecca Mezoff
"Emergence VI", 2013,
16 in x 49 in, cotton
warp, wool weft. Private
collection.

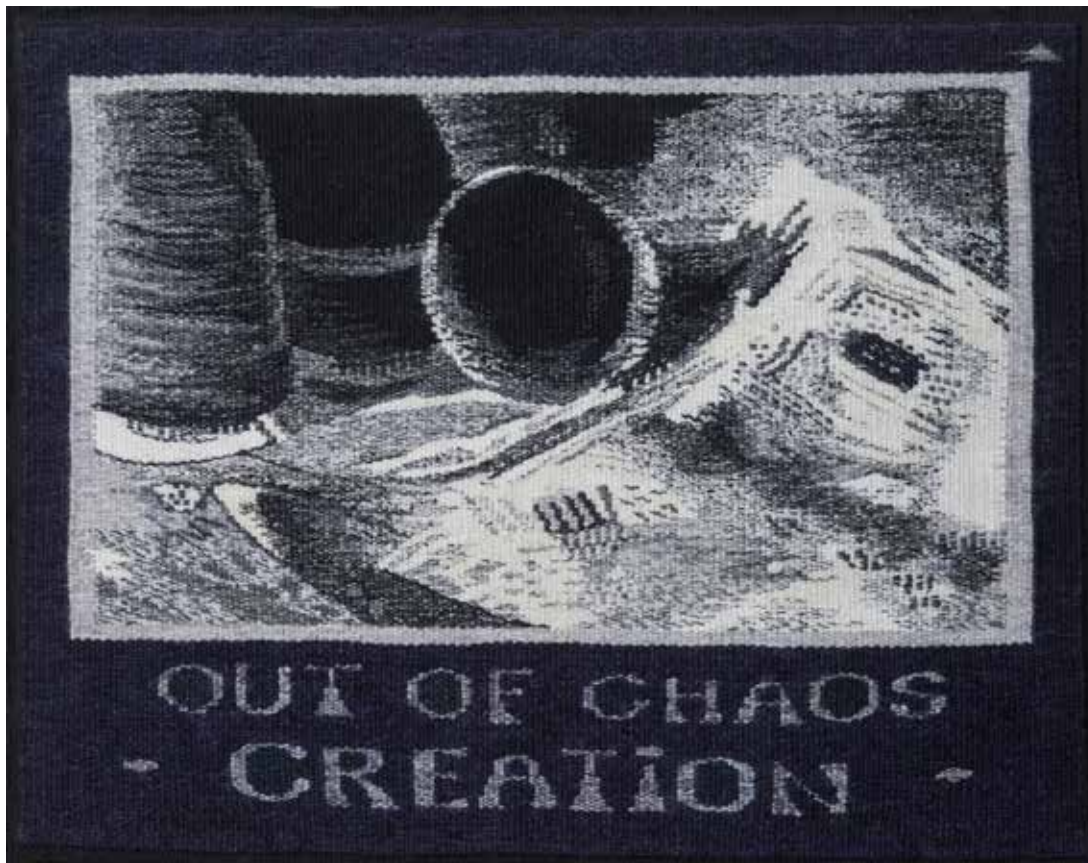


Mary Zicafoose
"Mountain for the Buddha - Caution",
2013, 60 in x 60 in,
weft-faced ikat tapestry,
wrapped, dyed and
woven wool on linen
warp.

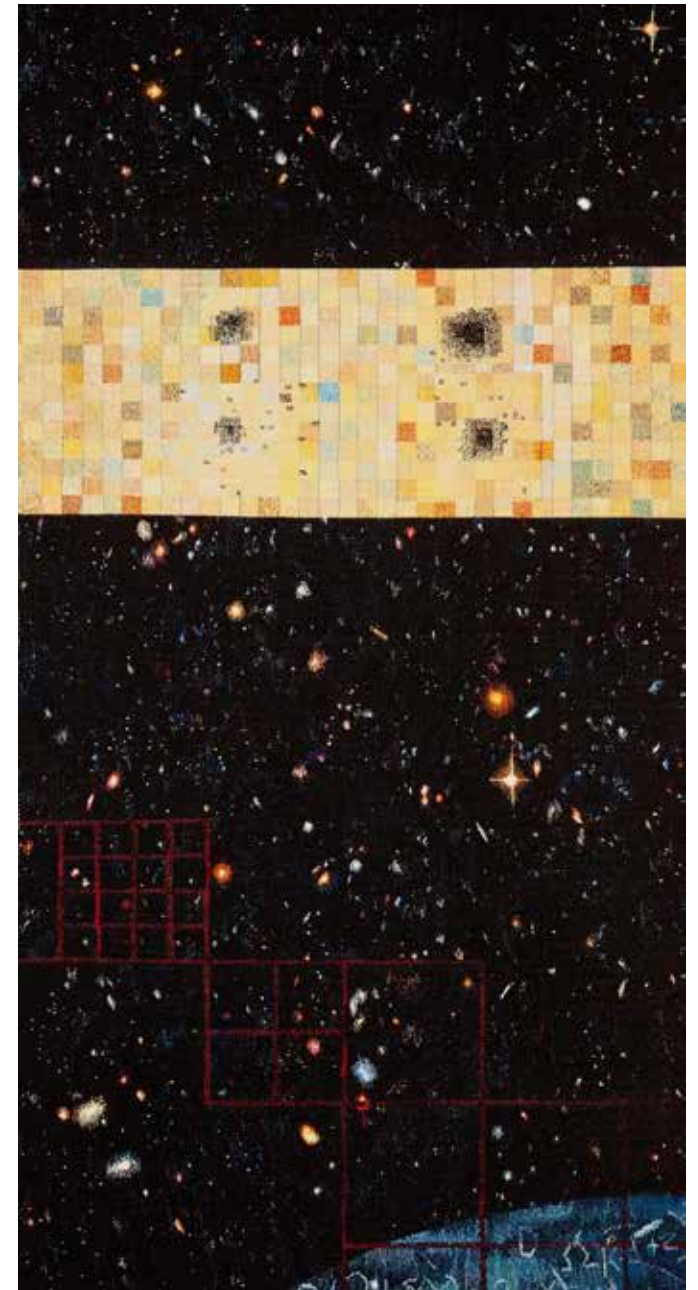


Katie Russell "Ice
Flow", 2014, 16.5 in
x 21 in, Cotton and
wool.

Katie Hickey "And Crown Thy Good", 2010, 18 in x 36 in, 8 epi, cotton warp, wool weft.



Janet Austin "Chaos" 2007, 18 in x 24 in, wool warp, wool, linen, silk and rayon weft. Photo: Steve Mason.



Valerie Kirk "The Brian Schmidt Tapestry", 2013, 94.5 in x 47.2 in, 8 epi, cotton warp, wool weft. Collection of University House, The Australian National University, Canberra. Photo: Stuart Hay.

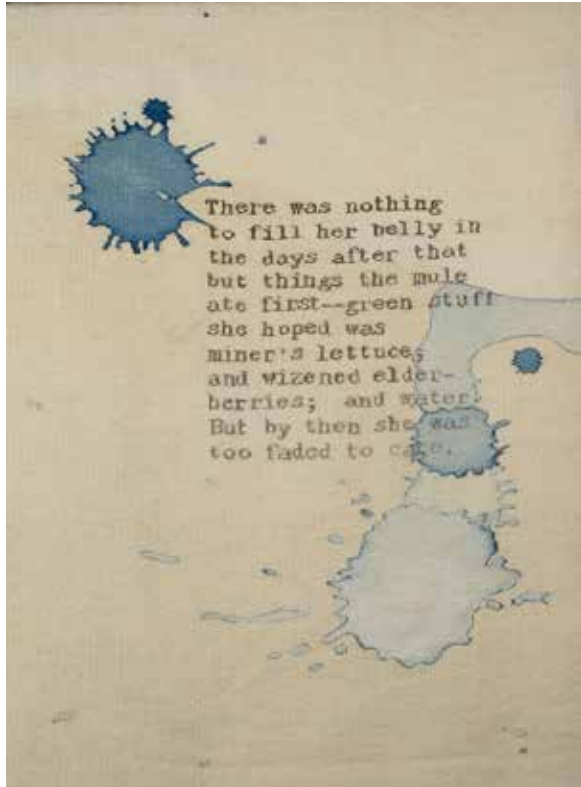
Clare Coyle, "Runes II", 1992,
26 cm x 40.5 cm, wool, cotton,
linen and silk.



Urban Jupena "Spark,
"Blaze, Afterglow", 2011,
three tapestries, 24 in x 32 in
each, cotton, linen.



Sarah Swett "Rough Copy 5: There Was Nothing", 2010, 40 in x 30 in, 8.5 epi, wool warp and weft, indigo. Photo: Mark LaMoreaux.



Marcia Ellis "No Limits", 2013, 11 in x 15 in, cotton warp, wool and cotton weft. Photo: Judy Schuster.

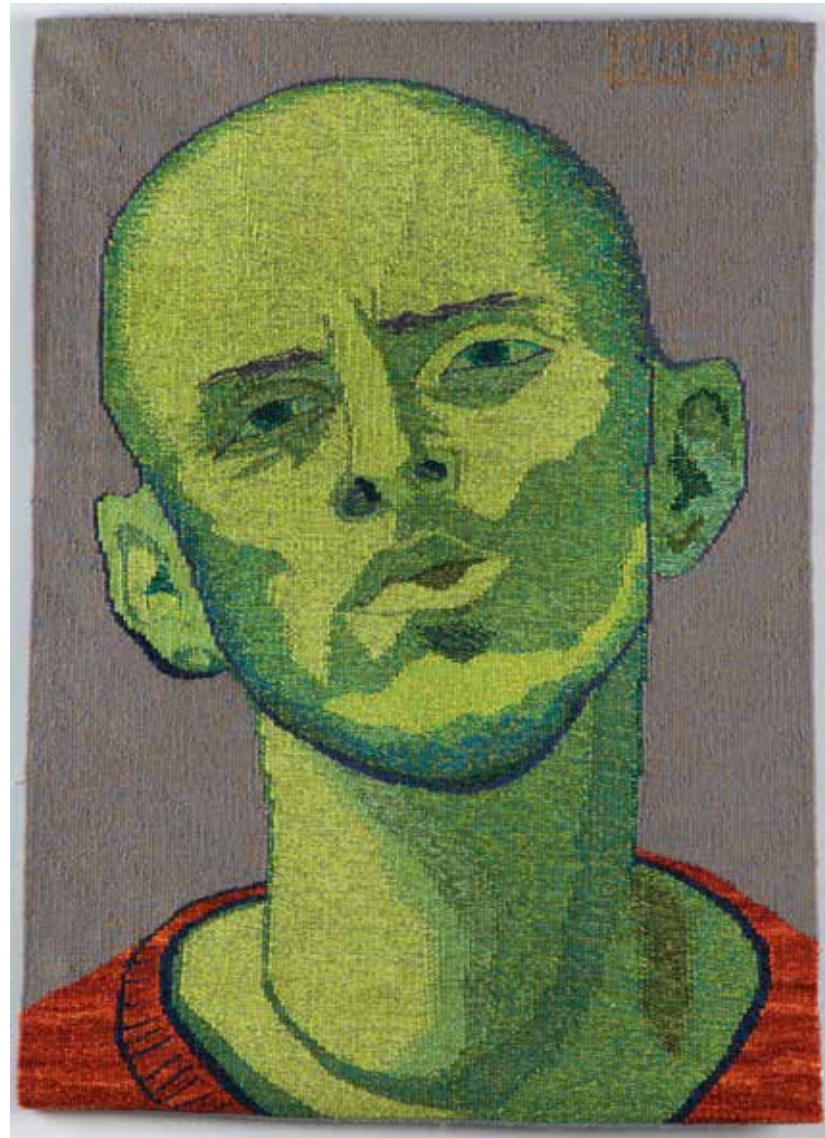


Tricia Goldberg "Postcard for Angela", 2011, 60 in x 40 in, cotton warp, wool and silk weft.
Photo: Rory Alcantar.



Mardi Nowak, "You Know Me Better", 2012, 28 cm x 26 cm, wool, cotton, silk, and linen.

Pat Williams "American Melting Pot Mother Goddess", 2014, 60 in x 36 in, cotton warp, wool weft.



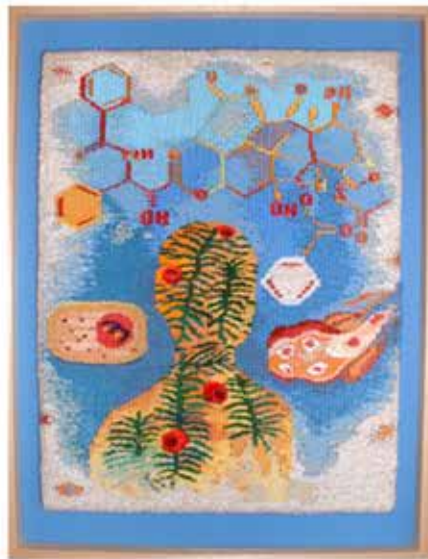
Tommye Scanlin "Probation Violation in Green", 2014, 32 in x 24 in, 8 epi, cotton warp, wool and linen weft, collection of Megan Smith Noble, from an original painting, "Probation Violation", Megan Smith Noble. Photo: Tim Barnwell.



Thoma Ewen "Offering at Spider Rock", 2007, 60 in x 84 in, 4 epi cotton warp, wool weft.
Photo: Ken Ewen.

Christine Sawyer "Kill or Cure – 'Morpheus', 'Taxus', 'Digitalis'", 2006, 150 cm x 50 cm, cotton and mixed yarns.

Three plants which yield drugs used in contemporary medical practice that have alkaloids so complex they cannot be fully synthesized and are therefore grown in large quantities for the pharmaceutical industry.



Gerda van Hamond "Memories Grow 3", 2013, 30 cm x 30 cm, cotton and wool.



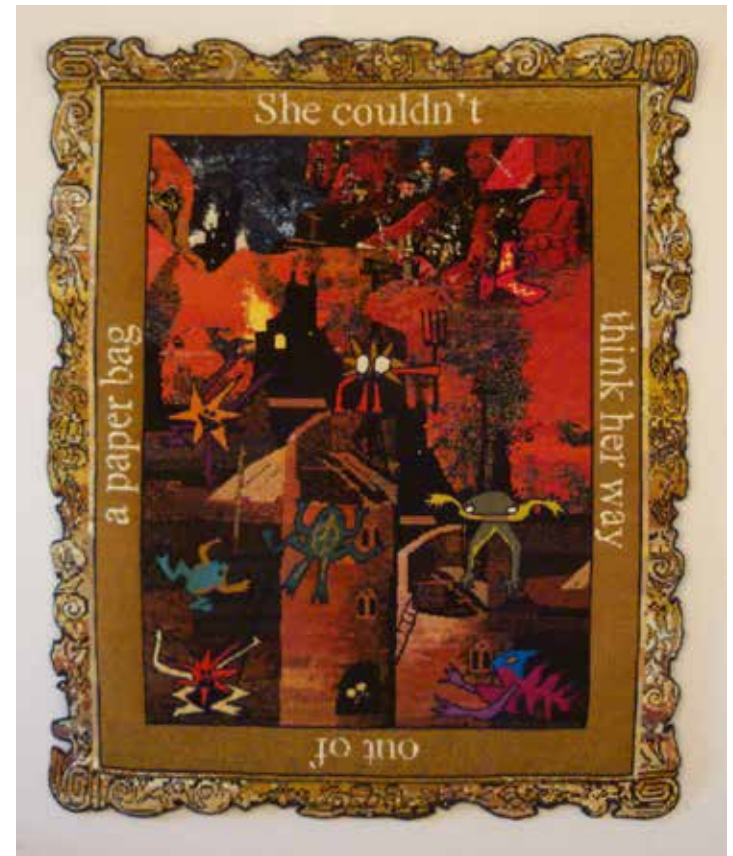
Rudolf Boelee (designer), Marilyn Rea-Menzies (weaver), "Railway Cups", 2001, 7 epi, 242 cm x 39 cm, two pieces, cotton warp, wool, viscose weft.





Margaret Jones "Red", 2014, 18 cm x 10 cm, cotton warp, weft-faced discontinuous weft with supplementary warps, and wool and lurex weft.

Photo: P Jones.



Anne Jackson "The Old Masters Series: After Bosch", 2002, 132 cm x 108 cm, cotton, linen and synthetic yarns.



Robyn Mountcastle "Green Altar Fall", 2004, 100 cm x 100 cm, cotton warp, wool weft. Photo: Tim Gresham.

Gerda van Hamond "Walk Talk 1", 2012, 128 cm x 132 cm, cotton and wool. Photo: Debbie Herd.

