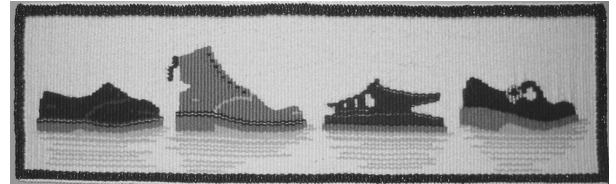


In this Issue

Thinking Small	
Thinking Small	2
By Mary Lane	
Small Format?	3
By Susan Martin Maffei	
Let's Get Small	5
By Lyn Hart	
Thinking Small	6
By Mary Dieterich	
Embracing Fine Threads	7
By Joyce E. Hayes	
The Value of Limits	8
By Ruth Manning	
Thoughts on Weaving Small	
Format Tapestries	9
By Kathe Todd-Hooker	
Embroidering a Small Canvas	11
By Ayelet Lindenstrauß Larsen	
Saving Memories	12
By Marjolyn Van der Wel	
Doors, Gates and Windows	12
By Mary Colton	
4 Australian Tapestry Weavers	14
By Anne Jackson	
Woven Gems	15
By Terri Stewart	
The Tapestry Handbook:	
The Next Generation	16
Reviewed by Judy Ann Ness	
Review: Land, Art And The Sacred:	
Three Perspectives	17
By Lyn Hart	
One Tapestry's Journey	18
By Elisabeth Quick	
Volunteers Make It Happen:	
Tommye McClure Scanlin	19
By Lyn Hart	
ATA Award: Jennie Lee Henderson	21
By Merna Strauch	
ATA Award of Excellence: Irisa Blumate	22
By Linda Rees	
Kudos	22



Joy Smith, THIS GOES WITH THAT - SHOES
10 x 34cm, (4" x 13") 2005

Greetings

We hope everyone had a great summer of time spent with family and friends, travel, beaches, picnics, gardening and some studio time. What a delight Tampa was! Three days of tapestry talk with friends old and new, and inspiring tapestries to view.

The "American Tapestry Biennial 7" exhibition opened at the Scarfone/Hartley Gallery with a record number of participating artists in attendance. Our juror, Susan Warner Keene, did a superb job selecting some of the best tapestry in the world, and the gallery space and lighting highlighted the excellence and diversity of her choices. The 177 small format tapestries in "Woven Gems" drew appreciative crowds to TECO Plaza. The ATA Forum, "Reinventing Landscape," with slide talks by Joan Baxter and Mary Zicafoose, and our first 'Digislam' were enjoyed by everyone attending. The workshop, "Channeling Your Muse," provided an additional three days of learning and interaction with Baxter and Zicafoose. Our dinner get together at Jackson's Bistro was a wonderful opportunity to network. There will be in depth reports in the next issue of *Tapestry Topics* and images on the website, but we wanted to extend a huge thank you to all who came and made the events such a success.

The past year's accomplishments were reviewed at the biennial general meeting in Tampa. The annual report and financial statements are available on line. One of the important aspects of the meeting was the ratification of our board elections. Returning are: Becky Stevens, Linda Wallace, Alex Friedman, Mary Lane, Janet Austin and Barbara Richards. We welcome

continued...

new board members: Mary Zicafoose, Sarah Swett, Marcella Fraker and Kathleen Marcel.

Our next major tapestry event will be our new juried biennial exhibition, "Connections: Small Tapestry International." The November submission deadline is getting closer, and we are truly excited about the possibilities the format will create. With this issue of *Tapestry Topics* focused on small tapestry, we hope you'll all be inspired and working on your submissions. Details and forms can be downloaded from our website: americantapestryalliance.org.

This year has been one of resurgence in the tapestry world, with major events and exhibitions. Tapestry 2008, with Master Classes, symposium and exhibitions took place in Canberra, Australia. Many of us, throughout the world, submitted pieces to the symposium's "Land" exhibition. (An ATA Award For Excellence in Tapestry was awarded at the "Land" Exhibition. Check the Kudos column for more information on that and other awards that have come to our attention.)

In West Yorkshire, UK, the British Tapestry Group curated their second national exhibition, Tapestry 08. Workshops, events and a national conference accompanied the exhibition.

Let's keep the energy going!

Becky Steven and Linda Wallace

Our Deepest Gratitude is extended to **Pat Spark**, studio partner of Kathe Todd Hooker, for saving the day with the loan of her digital projector for the ATA forum, Reinventing Landscape, in Tampa.

Bravo and Thanks! to **Lany Eila** for editing the last issue and to **Mary Lane** for spearheading the current theme.

Upcoming Themes:

October 1 deadline will feature **Conferences and Events** of the past year that we have not yet been able to cover. If you have seen tapestry shows, attended lectures or conferences or have had unique tapestry experiences in your recent travels, let us know about them. **January 15: Stimulating Creativity:** a discussion about books, disciplines and other resources to generate or sustain a fresh outlook. **April 1: The Materiality of Surface:** commentary highlighting work that has distinctive surfaces.

Thinking Small

By Mary Lane

Roman medals, coins, Egyptian scrolls, stamps. The history of making images within a miniature format is found in many cultures and within many different classes of objects. For contemporary small format tapestry weavers it might be the ultimate irony that the enormous tapestries of medieval Europe were, in most cases, based on the very small, highly detailed and often fanciful illustrations of illuminated manuscripts. The miniature sensibilities of its source material can be seen in medieval tapestry's elaborate use of anecdotal detail. This is an example of what Kathe Todd-Hooker, in her article, refers to as "large in format, but small in scale."

Miniatures are not a large image shrunk small. Small-scale work requires a special sensitivity, a fundamental shift in thinking about space and scale. The authors in this issue of *Tapestry Topics* refer to: a careful consideration of "the proportion between... design components and... fiber components" (Lindenstraus); the scale of the woven mark (Maffei); the miniature's ability to "suggest considerable expansiveness" (Dieterich) and "tak[ing] a very large subject and distill[ing] it down to its essence" (Hart).

By collapsing a world within the smallest of spaces, miniatures condense meaning, pulling us in to explore their fantastic and ever expanding world. Susan Stewart, in her essay entitled *Miniatures* says, "The miniature has the capacity to make its context remarkable; its fantastic qualities are related to what lies outside in such a way as to transform the total context... Amid such transformations of scale, the exaggeration of the miniature must continually assert a principle of balance and equivalence, or the narrative will become grotesque... The space is managed by simile and by the principles of equivalence existing between the body and nature. Scale is established by means of a set of correspondences to the familiar." (Stewart, Susan. *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1993. p. 37 ff)

In addition to the metaphoric and suggestive possibilities of small format work, many practical advantages accompany working small. Many of our contributors cited the ability to work through ideas more quickly, the ease in shipping work and the portability of small looms. Ruth Manning began weaving miniatures when she moved into a smaller home. She subsequently found that the limits of size and scale opened new avenues for artistic growth. Joyce Hayes reflects, "The act of weaving [in a small format] is physically comfortable, which is important because, at twenty ends per inch, my pieces take a long time to weave." In addition, Joyce feels her artistic sensibilities fit within the scale of miniatures.

A heartfelt thanks to all of the authors in this issue of *Tapestry Topics*. I hope you enjoy their unique insights. May they inspire you to explore small format tapestry. In the words of Marjolyn Van de Wel, "Working small is addictive."

SMALL FORMAT?

By Susan Martin Maffei

In considering the meaning of small format, what comes first to my mind are Persian and Indian miniatures. Is it their small size or is it the small scale of the imagery, or both? I have always found a strong connection between the mural and the miniature. The designers of medieval tapestries often used illuminated manuscripts as their models. Perhaps they too saw the connection. The mural surrounds the viewer; the miniature pulls you into its world. In Persian miniatures and illuminated manuscripts the term small format encompasses both the overall size of the work and the intricate and fine nature of the images depicted. In both cases, the images are narratives.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art owns "Still Life, Autumn," a tour de force of weaving by the Beauvais tapestry workshop in France. It was designed in 1845 by Theude Gronland and woven in 1846 by Rigobert Milice. It depicts a bouquet of flowers that are about life size, 25" x 21" (64cm x 53cm) and sett very finely at 30 warps to the inch (12 per cm). Is this small format? It certainly is not a miniature, but it is a small tapestry by the standards of the day. In today's tapestry world would this qualify as a small format work?

I go to the dictionary and look up the word format. Format, the shape, size, binding, type, paper, and general make-up or arrangement of a book, magazine, etc. I guess the etc. must be the tapestry part. According to this definition, small format would be the small shape, small size and small scale of the make-up or arrangement of our tapestry.

What historical tapestries might fit into this definition? Coptic tapestry is certainly well represented by small images woven into large garments. Here the vehicle is not narrative, but portraiture. "Hanging with heads of Dionysian group" from late 5th-early 6th century and attributed to Antinopolis comes to mind. It is 40.5" x 62.5" (102cm x 158 cm) and is composed of 12 portraits (originally 15) accompanied by decorative details. It is not small by most standards, but it is certainly small in terms of detail, warp sett and images. Is that considered general make-up, or arrangement? Would we consider this to be small format?

Shall we go to Asia? Silk tapestry, kesi, a new luxury art of 12th century China was used to make wrappers for precious scrolls. The "Admonitions of the Instructress to the Court Ladies" is a scroll attributed to Gu Daizhi and

surrounded by a protective outer-wrapper preserved from a Song (960 - 1279) mounting in the British Museum. It is approximately. 10" x 7.5" (25 cm x 20cm), small in size by western historical values, although the general arrangement of a peony amongst hydrangeas is not. Small format?

Ah, and my favorite subject, Andean historical tapestry. Does the very small general make-up of the repetitive patterning in the amazing tunics classify them as small format? For example, the Inca tunic in the Dumbarton Oaks museum called "All-t'oqapu Tunic" (1440-1540) is comprised of 312 small units, 156 on each side. The warp sett is 38-48 ends per inch (15-19 per cm) with the weft woven at an amazing 147-170 picks per inch (98-108 per cm). We can see depicted within these 312 units a miniature tunic of the

standard black and white checkerboard pattern. It appears 33 times. Does this general overall small arrangement make this a small format tunic? Or must we look to the individual miniature tunics, woven for children or dolls, or as gifts to the gods? "Miniature Tunic with Checkerboard Design" appeared in the Metropolitan exhibit "The Colonial Andes: Tapestries and Silverwork 1530-1830." It is 10.5" x 8" (garment dimension) with 22-23 warps per inch (9.5 per cm) and 80 wefts per inch (32 per cm.) Small format? Or miniature? Or both?

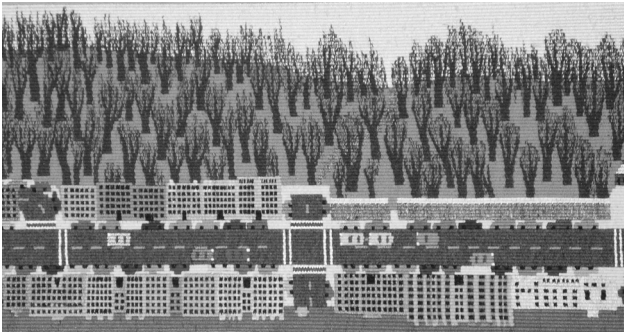
Have you ever noticed how small-scale items (miniatures) have a special precious quality, whether it is a piece of children's furniture in the antique world, a baby animal or a miniature version of just about anything, including a tapestry?

Today small format exhibitions are usually defined by an overall size. (I wonder if this is related to the fact that we see images every day from either the TV or the computer screen in miniature format?) Requirements for these small format exhibits vary. The Anger miniature show in France stipulates under 4" square; the upcoming juried ATA small format show requires no more than 100 square inches; the recent Australian "Land" exhibit specified that the tapestry must be 4" high and could be any length. Some of the works in this exhibit were so long that they went half way around a large room. Are they still small format? I have never noticed any restrictions on the warp sett. It could be 4 ends to the inch or 24. Because of this the work may have large-scale mark making, or the marks may be miniature in scale. In the "Land" exhibit what I would call miniatures seemed more small format than the others.

Perhaps I should look up miniature: Miniature, a small painting or illuminated letter, as in a medieval manuscript. 2. (a) a small painting, especially a portrait, done on ivory,



ADMONITIONS SCROLL COVER *First Masterpiece of Chinese Painting: The Admonitions Scroll*, Shane McCausland, George Braziller, Publishers, NY, 2003, chapter 4, pg. 93-95 and pg.120



Susan Martin Maffei, IN THE WOODS IN INWOOD
(detail) 12" x 65"

vellum, et.; (b) the art of making such paintings. 3. a copy or model on a very small scale. *In miniature*; on a small scale; greatly reduced. Interesting! Does that mean that miniatures are small format, but small format is not necessarily a miniature? Perhaps we should just move on and leave these questions to ponder further.

And so how does my concept of small format apply to my work both in the making and the dissemination of skills? Small works have always been encouraged in workshops that teach the principals of tapestry. They allow students to progress through ideas fairly quickly. However, many times the small works are just samples of a bigger tapestry and not a completed idea conceived as a small format item. Are these small format samples or just samples?

Small format exhibitions, such as the one that accompanies Convergence, allow for an overview of current work within the small world of tapestry. More and more international organizations realize the practical advantages of small format shows, both in terms of cost (shipping and customs) and access to a larger audience. What was once a mural art only for the wealthy is now available to all on a domestic scale. (Is domestic scale considered small format in the European aesthetic?)

There are not many people that work in tapestry in a mural format, unless it is in a professional workshop like the Gobelines in Paris, the Victorian Tapestry Workshop in Australia, the Dovecot in Scotland or West Dean in Britain. Large works by artist/weavers in today's world tend to be of domestic size, up to, perhaps, 6' x 8', unless done by special commission for public spaces. And then there are the very small works, as small as 1.5" x 1.5", at the other end of the spectrum. (The winner of the main prize for the "Land" exhibit was close to this size). My work seems to fit in at the two extremes of size format. However, I do think of all of my work as a general miniature arrangement whether large or small.

Over the years I have woven many small format works. Some represented the exploration of ideas and the development of skills as I evolved a particular way of working freely on the loom with little help from preparatory drawings. Most have been conceived as complete compositions, not samples. My work tends to be narrative and for me small format means miniature in terms of the mark making, and in most instances, a finer warp sett and finer wefts. Perhaps that is why Persian and Indian miniatures began this bit of musing. They have had a big influence on how I create visual narratives, whether working in a large or small size.

Having established that there is a definite relationship between small and miniature in my work, I will explore the how and why. I begin with the attractions of working small. Time is one feature that has already been mentioned as an advantage in working small. Portability is another. My life style requires extended travel and because tapestry is the mainstay, passion and center of my life, I choose to weave while traveling. So, have loom, will travel, as I continually search for a language that speaks only through the medium and within my visual narrative.

A particular technique that has developed as a result of working small (although I also use it occasionally in large work) is the discipline of four selvedge weaving. For small items it has the advantage of not having warp ends add bulk to the finished work. It also eliminates additional finishing, which brings us back to the time factor and leads us into presentation. Large works hang well on their own without framing but small works are a bit more problematic. Since there is really no precedent for framing, it is an open journey. Often the requirements are set by the terms of an exhibit, which helps to unify a grouping of mixed pieces. In the past I suggested a way of mounting that was used by galleries and museums in the stabilization and presentation of small textiles that will hang on a wall (For information on both four selvedge and mounting see the educational pages on: www.brennan-maffei.com). Mounting a tapestry on a stretcher frame covered by fabric keeps the integrity of the textile and also provides a surrounding space, either by shadow or by a border that separates the small work from the wall, literally giving it a small wall of its own. Lately I have been looking at mounting methods that make small works more portable and less stiff. In particular I am looking at Asian works and the scroll format. And so another journey begins. We can find many roads of information and inspiration in historical works from all cultures. You know that old adage, "nothing new under the sun." I shall end my musings on that note and ask you to consider the question: what is small format for you?

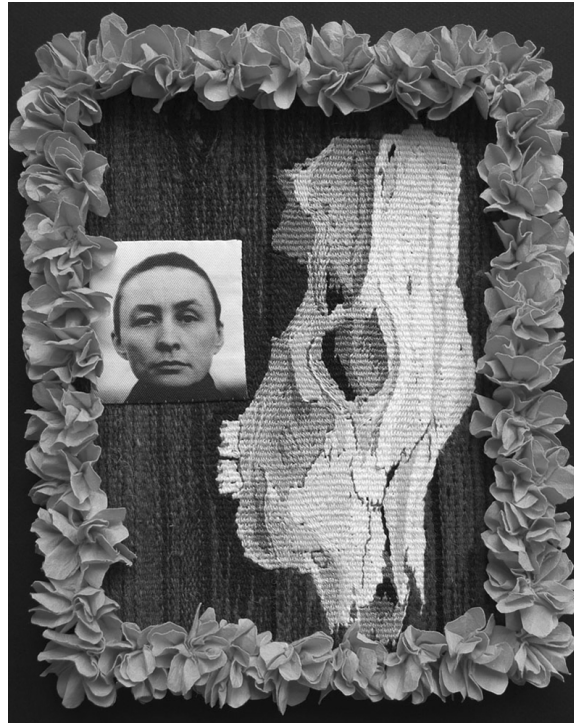
Let's Get Small

By Lyn Hart

Weaving small format wasn't a conscious choice for me; it happened through circumstance. Like most tapestry weavers, I learned to weave tapestry on a frame loom. I was unsure of whether I could afford, or even find, a large tapestry loom, and I also felt that perfecting my weaving skills would come more easily on a smaller loom. I really wasn't even aware at that time that small format was a "category." I tried several different types of small looms until I ended up choosing, and becoming very satisfied with, the 16" Mirrix on which I still weave my small tapestries. Another reason for me to work on a small loom was its portability; my husband and I make regular trips in a small camper to our mountain property in southern New Mexico to escape the blistering summer heat in Tucson. The loom had to be small enough to fit in with everything else we haul to this very primitive camping site. I have whiled away much happy time weaving in the fresh, cool, and balsam scented mountain air.

When I found the courage to enter my first exhibit, it was an open entry call from Tohono Chul Park for Arizona-themed fiber art postcards. Size was a strict requirement; all works had to be 4" x 6" and mailed to the exhibit sans envelope or container. I wove "Cactus Wren," which is our state bird. The tapestry portrays the bird larger than its actual size; I chose to weave just its head, trying to capture some of the inquisitive, investigative nature of this bird instead of depicting it sitting in the classical static "bird pose" on a branch. The experience of weaving, submitting, and then seeing my little tapestry in the exhibit was addictive. It also spawned the idea of a desert birds postcard series. I wove another 4" x 6" bird piece, Verdin, again representing only a portion of the bird much larger than actual size and capturing its very lithe nature. This tapestry was my first acceptance into a juried exhibit, HGA's "Small Expressions 2007." As I wove other pieces and submitted them for exhibits, I discovered not only was I enjoying having my works displayed, I also could design and weave these small works quickly.

I have continued to participate in group exhibits at Tohono Chul Park, and everything I have shown there has been small format. Using a card table to set up my weaving space while our garage was being renovated into my



Lyn Hart, RECUERDOS DE GEORGIA, 10" x 14", 2007; bamboo, natural & synthetic dyed wool, photographic image printed on cotton twill, silk paper

studio, "recuerdos de georgia" was woven for a Día de los Muertos exhibit. I wove landscapes for two other exhibits at the same venue, "desert island - espíritu santo," depicting sunset over the large island, Isla Espíritu Santo, in Baja California Sur and "earth & sky," a scene of the Vermillion Cliffs in northern Arizona. It was very interesting that as I wove them both I was actually feeling that maybe they would have been much better if they had been done on a large scale (by now I had acquired an old 45" Tissart that I was restoring and am still working the "kinks" out of). I had also read an article in an art magazine describing the difficulty of selling smaller works because the price point can be very high when compared to size. Some of the other works in those group exhibits were very large scale, and I was

thinking that maybe my little tapestries were getting lost in the shuffle. Interestingly, those two tapestries were the first pieces that I sold. In the exhibit in which "earth & sky" was included, it was displayed on a pedestal under a Plexiglas display box with two beautiful pieces of jewelry by other artists. I was struck and delighted by the wonderful juxtaposition that arrangement created. During the artists' reception, several people stopped to tell me that they had caught glimpses of my small tapestry from across the room and felt very compelled to come over for a closer look. The words of one person, which were later echoed by the exhibit curator, really helped dissolve any doubts I had about weaving "small" landscapes. She told me that I had taken a very large subject and distilled it down to its essence, accurately depicting its grandeur, yet creating an intimacy that drew the viewer in.

My weaving isn't focused solely on exhibitions. I am particular; the exhibit's theme has to speak to me, to spark an idea that I was already contemplating weaving. Life took me on a few detours before I was able to fulfill my dream of becoming an artist, and seeing my tapestries displayed in exhibits gives me a great deal of personal satisfaction. Becoming excited about an exhibit's theme stimulates me, having a deadline helps me stay motivated, and weaving small format allows me to formulate, design, and weave a piece in a timely manner so I can move on to the next idea hovering in my mind.

Thinking Small

By Mary Dieterich

"Small" is no stranger in my life. Having spent a great amount of time working in the biological sciences, viewing life behind a microscope, I am comfortable in the environment of things small scale. It was the "small" in my scientifically based experience that must have morphed into the small tapestries that I weave today.

To create images that easily measure within a hand's width calls for a special dedication. However, even images that suggest considerable expansiveness can be rendered in small dimensions. Visual emphasis is a critical element that must be considered in addition to all of the other design criteria. This is an aspect that greatly influenced my experience in producing small-scale works. As a beginning weaver I assumed that tapestries were large and formidable. Later I learned about the small-scale works produced by various cultures in the world - the Coptic and Andean especially. The size of these examples was more in keeping with my sense of scale.



Mary Dieterich, WATER SLIDE 5.75 x 7
1999 Photo by John H. Dieterich

Working in a small format demands close attention to the tapestry's restricted size. The weaver, as well as the viewer, is drawn close to the work through details: size, relationships between elements and compatibility with personal experience. I am drawn to detail and the subtle connections between form, color and size. When designing for a small-scale work I feel the design must maintain its own integrity. In my mind, the starting point is scale. Planning begins with the dimensions of the space I want to fill. I don't work with a large design that is then cut, compressed or shrunk to fit the space. Images are drawn at the size they will be woven so that I can judge the amount of detail possible within that format and balance detail with the overall composition.

I see as important the ability of the viewer to connect personal experience to the work. Weaving a tapestry of any dimension is an opportunity to encourage internal discussion and the small format contributes a visual component to a personal conversation. I work in the hope that my finished pieces will be viewed most often by one individual at a time, one who will use his or her own experience as a reference point for understanding the work. The individual's reactions generated by the tapestry make the work personal in a way that only begins with the woven image. We often speak of meaning within a work of art. But meaning is not always ordained. I hope that the personal experience of the viewer will invest additional meaning to my work. I hope to stimulate reaction, not direct it.

Working small is consistent with the way I view the immensity of the world around me. I am most able to find confirmation and challenge within the confines of a smaller format. I trust the nature of the small to inform me about the reality of the grand.

Among the challenges associated with the creation of a small tapestry is that of maintaining its integrity as a work of art. Small works can suffer if they are seen as "cute" or "precious." The weaving, as a whole, needs to be important in all respects in order to justify the attention that it deserves. Content is one part of this. What does the tapestry weaver wish to convey? Beyond content, other aspects arise, for example, exotic, textured yarns and unusual color combinations and usages. Surprising combinations of unique materials need to be carefully justified, visually and conceptually. What do these elements contribute? Are they to be taken seriously? One needs to keep in mind whether the choices are promoting a specific concept or indulging one's embrace of the unexpected, the off the wall and the reaction of "How did you do that?" This is not to say that this approach has no legitimacy. Presenting a feast for the eyes can be seen as a purpose. Indulging in fun and embracing surprise can carry a concept too. The audience is given permission to enjoy the laughter. So is the weaver. Working within a small format attracts an audience that shares this interest.

Weaving in small dimensions forms an intimate connection with kindred spirits - whether few or many. One hopes for that connection, works towards it and is inspired by it. As one viewer once put it: "Small tapestries are human-sized." I think she "got" it!

Embracing Fine Threads

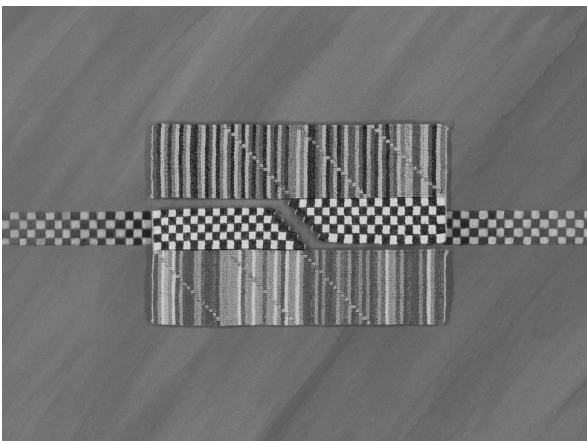
By Joyce E. Hayes

My journey towards small format tapestry looks much like a bell curve. I began small with prints and drawings, progressed to large paintings and bound-woven rugs, and back down again to my current small format tapestries. Reflecting back on my larger work, there was always a disconnect, a discomfort with the materials and tools. I didn't know what to do with the larger space and struggled to fill it with compelling imagery. Twyla Tharp, in her book, *The Creative Habit* (p.37), suggests that we all have a preference for "seeing the world either from a great distance, at arm's length or close-up" and that it is in our DNA, "and we generally don't waver from it."

As a student, I vividly remember stretching a 6' by 6' canvass with beautiful natural linen from Ireland, which I then primed with a clear acrylic medium instead of gesso. Although I proceeded with the painting, I recall feeling that the primed canvas was more beautiful and perfect than my painting. I loved the texture of the linen's fine weave, its subtle brown and gray color, and the polished finish that the medium created.

Miniatures have an intimacy and an economy of space. We invite the viewer in for a closer look. Because I don't want to distract from my message, the technique must be precise. Each pass of the weft counts. The physical space is small, so I home in on the details of a moment or a glimpse, then flesh out the fine points.

Small formats are a good fit for me. I enjoy the precision and detail oriented approach that it demands, and I appreciate that no space is wasted. Every square inch must count. The act of weaving is physically comfortable, which is important because, at twenty ends per inch, my pieces take a long time to weave. As I weave, I get into a rhythm and my attention never strays because there are always details that need tending to.



Joyce Hayes, BACH 2 PART INVENTION #3
12" x 16.25" Linen warp, cotton sewing thread and
metallics for weft on watercolor paper background, acrylic
paint and colored pencil. Photo by Art and Soul

My transition to tapestry weaving was not easy. For two years I did not weave and could not face the thought of creating another bound woven rug. I started painting watercolors and used those to create collages. While I found this interesting, I knew that it would be unfulfilling in the long term. I wanted to return to weaving but the shelves of wool in my studio bogged me down and my custom-made Macomber loom immobilized me. I closed the door on my past work and dragged out books on tapestry weaving. I was in a hurry and terribly impatient, so I skipped the sampling exercises and relied upon pictures and illustrations instead. Two weeks later I began my first tapestry based upon one of my watercolor collages.

The seeds for my renewed interest in tapestry were planted 15 years earlier during a course with four visiting instructors at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Diane Itter, an innovator in the art of knotting, not only taught us proper technique, but also discussed the creative process - where ideas come from, what catches your attention, and the importance of scale and detail. Because she worked in miniature, she emphasized that the materials needed to be fine and in harmony with the scale. Elizabeth Tuttle, another instructor, presented her pictorial crochet work that used cotton-sewing thread. I was enthralled with how she took several colors and moved from color to color by using 3-4 threads in a bundle; the energy in her work came from this subtle movement of color.

The materials I use in my own work have been carefully chosen. I prefer cotton sewing threads because I like their feel and look. There has been much trial and error finding the threads because they need just the right fineness, twist, and shine. The hunt for new and interesting materials is constant.

When I work with fine threads, the weaving surface influences the overall look of the piece. In my early tapestries, ribbing was a concern because of the stretchiness of the cotton seine twine that I used for warp. Once I switched to linen, the ribbing disappeared. The warp and weft ratio is also an ongoing conversation, which I revisit often. At this time I have settled on a smoother surface that needs fewer threads in the weft bundle, allowing me to create finer detail. This ratio not only affects the visual surface, it also affects the feel of the cloth. The result is a dense and intricate tapestry, which, for me, is more than a two-dimensional design. It becomes a three-dimensional object.

The tapestry has been woven, the warp has been dealt with, and the back has been trimmed. So what now? Is this just another pretty hot pad? Before a tapestry is complete, I must consider how the work will be finished and readied for display. Presentation is a big part of the piece and the ideas and possibilities never end. For me it is important to create an environment for the work so that it doesn't get lost on the wall, whether in a home or in a gallery.

continued...

During this process I also take care to use archival materials. Because I mount my weavings on watercolored paper, I need to consider the delicacy of the surface and often use glass (always UV rated) when framing which galleries and buyers prefer. Yet, since glass often detracts from the weaving's surface, I frequently go without, which viewers prefer. Fortunately, there are products available now that can be used to protect paper from the environment and fingerprints.

Finally, I choose the color of the mounting by placing the tapestry in a high traffic area of my house and glancing at it for several of weeks until an answer comes as to how the piece should look when it is complete. Ideally, the result is a well-designed and cohesive object.

The Value of Limits

By Ruth Manning

I used to weave large tapestries. In fact, I wove many pieces at once: five looms, all filled: a 4 x 6 foot tapestry on the standing frame loom my dad built, a 3 foot wide piece on the Shannock loom, a square foot on the Hagen loom and a few small pipe looms scattered around with ideas on them. I'm a person that likes to have many pans in the fire. That way you are always busy, but you can still give yourself time to look and ponder the next step on any given piece.

I used to have space, did I ever; 600 square feet of it with those walls of yarn that obsessive fiber people know about, organized in color groups, shelves of books, furniture from home, enough space for groups to meet, classes to be taught. I used to have time. Other than the needs of my family, I wove all day. Tapestry weavers know about getting lost in that "Zen state" of weaving. Before you know it, its time to wonder what's for dinner.

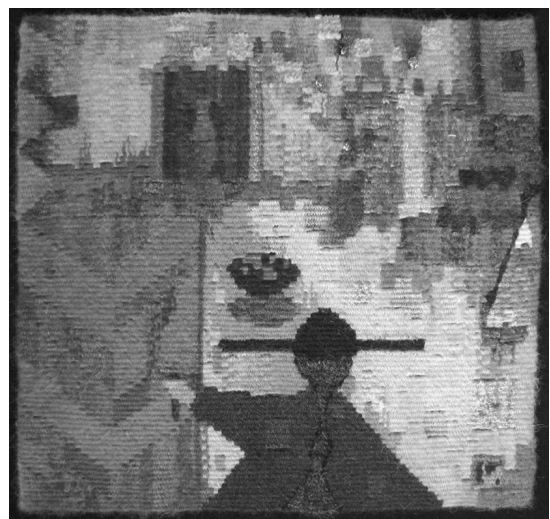
Life is always changing. Some might call this "opportunities for growth" and the more cynical among us might roll our eyes, but in the past six years that's what happened to me. As my life changed, so did the approach to my artwork, and, in the end, the pieces I'm surrounded by are better. Five years later I no longer have to struggle with deciding what size my tapestries will be; I only weave the very small. My looms are two 10-inch pipe looms, what we happily called the "Archie Looms" in past workshops. A few bobbins my dad made for me, scissors, a spool of gray thread, a needle and a dozen tote bags of yarn stuffed in various spots in my house complete the inventory. The studio is part of the house and did I mention the house is 800 square feet? My working space is one corner of the middle room with a window and a spot for my cup of coffee, probably 8 square feet of working space. It is here that I weave faithfully every morning for forty-five minutes. I'm a fulltime elementary art teacher.

Over the years I've approached tapestry design in a variety of ways. My first attempts as a young girl were actually charted out on graph paper, needlepoint being my only frame of reference, as I engaged in the practice of hit and miss in my tapestry development. Later I made drawings that were painstakingly inked on warps. I have designed from photographs and I've sat down to warps with a group of yarns I was attracted to and let them tell me where I'm going. Now I use what it takes, combining photographs, watercolors and those talking warps.

I've always been an artist who works in series. That first year of change I went back to my weaving roots, a one-inch warp of woven words. A tour to Mexico continues to be important in a lot of undefined ways, a focus on journeys taken, distance traveled in real time and in the mind. Lately I've been looking more closely at family pictures, thinking maybe that's all that really matters. A trip to Savannah by train brought back old memories of riding the Reading Railroad in high school. Ideas have never been a problem for me.

I take photos and collect them; most of them are not very good. This keeps me from becoming devoted to the photo. If it's part of my family series, I might see an expression caught that I realize I know very well, or in the case of my recent train series, I might just take random pictures out the window. I print them out quite small which keeps me guessing at the details. These photos become watercolors or at least parts of them do. The tapestry is always the end in mind; my focus is shapes and the value of the colors I'm placing in them.

Of course, we know tapestry is not watercolor. The watery nuances of the painting begin to disappear when I get to the loom; shapes are discarded that don't conform to the demands of warp and weft. The relationship between photo, watercolor and tapestry becomes more distant, more like second cousins twice removed.



Ruth Manning, VIEW OF UNA CASITA 10" x 9" 2008

But there is the wonder of pick and pick and the amazing difference between a chenille and a tightly twisted wool; throw in some silk and a piece of novelty yarn someone gave me twenty years ago and I remember why I'm still sitting here, after all these years picking up every other warp and passing through that piece of yarn. My students often call it "string." This affronted me at first, but there is a humble beauty about that idea, much like their lollipop trees and corner suns.

Yes, I am very limited these days, but somehow, some way, and perhaps because of that, my work has grown. Perhaps it's the slowing down (a silly thing to say - when is tapestry NOT slow....), no more deadlines to meet, a chance to take time to wonder, should I turn on this warp or the next.

One Convergence many years ago I took a workshop with Archie, Susan, Jean Pierre and Yael. I remember weaving a 1" warp with Archie as he led us through exercises that seemed pointless at the time, stripes that made little landscapes; one might have a slight bump, one used a novelty, another turned on the second warp rather than the first. So what?

Now I know. This little tiny space, the time spent staring, sorting through the little balls in the corners, the choices and the possibilities: can you show the feeling of riding the Palmetto Train from Wilmington to Georgia with 25 warps and a handful of string?

If it doesn't happen on this warp, perhaps it will on the next.

Thoughts on Weaving Small Format Tapestries

By **Kathe Todd-Hooker**

Presently, I don't think of the size of a tapestry when I am designing. I design the image I want to create and then weave it in the size appropriate to the design. However, while in school, most of my professors insisted that I weave large format work in order to be an "artist," even though bigger was never comfortable for me or more desirable. It took me years to understand that in the long term, what they thought didn't matter. I should weave for myself and think of others (the critics) later.

Since childhood I have loved handwork that I can carry with me. My Grandmothers - one raised in a subsistence culture and one who was considered "upper crust" - believed that a person should stay busy. They always had projects that could be shoved in a pocket, creating both what one would call women's "fribble," those items that seem to be created from nothing, and objects made with the best materials. It was important to create beauty and harmony in all the items of everyday existence.



Kathe Todd Hooker, HOME 7.5" x 5",
Weft-sewing thread-embroidery floss-cotton
Warp-dual duty craft thread Epi 20-22

I am a child of my grandmothers. When I began weaving, my love of small handwork transferred to small format/small scale pieces. Please note that I said small format/small scale. Small format pieces woven in large scale, with their coarser rib structure, lack of detail, and overly simplified design are not what I wish to weave. However, there are others who do it well and create beautiful small pieces in larger scale.

I also love small things because they can easily be moved from place to place; more of them fit into small and mobile spaces. Large format work has many limitations. Modern homes with low ceilings are not conducive to very large pieces unless the work is hung horizontally or in a stairwell. Tapestries can be overwhelming and oppressive without the proper space around them.

Small work invites you to stand closer, to become intimate with the piece. Small things are precious in many ways. Large format work can be imposing, looming, even intimidating. Small format work is often deceptively non-imposing; the size makes it precious and intimate, approachable. One's experience with the work is more private.

Many people think that small works are a sampler for a larger work or that one weaves smaller because it's faster. Others believe that small format is less complex, less meaningful, less narrative, less symbolic or a second choice because you don't own a large loom, can't afford the materials, your body is falling apart or a large piece would be too difficult to exhibit. In some cases this may be true, but not in mine. I have never found small format/small scale tapestry to be more limiting than large format tapestry. Limits are in the mind of the artist, not in the format.

I believe that the following three things must be considered when weaving tapestry in any format: There is a difference between scale and format. To me format has to do with size - the amount of territory a piece covers. Size can vary from two warp threads wide to thousands of warp

continued...

threads wide. Scale, on the other hand, defines the rib structure and perhaps the amount of detail possible in a given space. A piece can be large in format, but small in scale, for example, an intricately detailed dragon robe.

Tapestry is a technique not defined by material or size or shape. The materials must allow the tapestry to fulfill its function, whether it be a wall piece, a pair of Coptic shoes, a small cloth worn under the clothing to declare one's personal connection to God or a lover, or a patch on the seat of a pair of trousers. Tapestry can be woven with wool, silk, linen, sewing thread or any material that can become a strand and is pliable. For example, in medieval France tapestry slippers were woven with a straw warp and wool wefts. As late as early 19th century Coptic weavers made them from cotton, silk, and silver threads. Shape conforms to function and perhaps symbolic need, for example a shaped Navajo rug.

I weave both large and small format. I weave large and small scale. My preference in personal work is small format/small scale. I use the exact same tapestry techniques in both large and small format and in large and small scale. It takes me just as long to weave a small format piece as a large format piece because of the denser warp sett. Large format pieces are 10 epi. Small format/small scale work is 20-22 epi. The time invested in labor is the same.

My materials are often the same for either format or scale. I have used sewing thread and embroidery floss and rayon at both setts though I prefer wool for large setts and sewing thread for the smaller setts. Usually I don't like the fuzzy surface of wool in my smaller pieces because I want the more defined edges of shapes that cotton gives. This preference is beginning to show itself in my larger wool pieces. I am switching from woolen threads to worsted wool, whose longer staple produces a flatter surface. My choice of materials, therefore, depends on the surface that I want. I find that four threads of sewing thread or embroidery floss rayon at 20 epi is equivalent to 4-6 strands of wool at 10 epi. I keep that in mind when designing and deciding on the techniques I will use to create my images. I am more likely to use hatches in small-scale pieces than hachures. I am less likely to use a bobbin with small format/small scale weaving.

I design and weave in two styles: colour studies that deal with the sky and atmospheric light; and personal images that are narratives of my surroundings and life. The images in both styles are often photo realistic and slightly stylized. I combine many images within a piece. When I design a new piece, I journal, collect images and create lists of things I know about the subject - images, symbols, colour, the story I wish it to tell. Scale and format are decided after the piece is designed. Some stories demand a certain size. My preference is usually to weave small format. But the large format/large scale piece (10 epi/6'by 4') I have on the loom now has its own story and a

challenge that includes transparency and drapery. I find that I weave about ten small tapestries to one large piece - always scheduled with deadlines, which in itself says something about preferences.

The small piece that I am just beginning on my other loom tells a story that the viewer needs to stand closer to, feel more intimate about. The design for the larger format tapestry is more stand-offish and almost oppressive when compared to the small format pieces that I weave. The small size becomes an invitation to create meaning or empathy within a small area. It's more personable: a complex story of bewilderment and chaos- those things barely understandable, or not understood by me at least.

My small format work often appears to be decorative, but usually has highly charged personal symbols and speaks metaphorically of my life experiences. Small format work allows me to do this almost surreptitiously. I prefer images that have double meanings, such as those in Tarot cards, or meanings that are conflicted because of the three different cultures to which I belong. My images all have meanings. You may recognize my intent or you may choose your own understanding. This possible confusion in meaning can be a wonderful outcome; your meaning might be more relevant than mine in the understanding of an image.

I would hope that the viewer would first see the design of my work and only consider the technique, medium, and size after deciding about the appropriateness and meaning of the design. To me everything breaks down to a simple question: Does the design reflect what I am trying to say?

I wonder if there is a gender issue surrounding format, materials and appropriate sizes for tapestries? I know from experience there is a gender issue surrounding flowers and decorative work in galleries and exhibits. When I first started weaving tapestry in the late 70's, small format tapestry wasn't allowed in tapestry shows. Lack of acceptance of small format always reminded me that large format tapestries weren't necessarily allowed in "art" shows. Some time in the mid-90's this began to change. I produced my first small format pieces in the late 80's and early 90's. Finding venues to show small tapestries was difficult. Small Expressions, an ITNET small format show and "It's About Time" all helped make small format tapestries more acceptable. People's perception and expectations of tapestry are changing because the world is changing rapidly. Tapestry is becoming more grass roots and is no longer tied to large looms, large commissions, workshops, etc. People may not have the time or the space for large tapestry, but they may be able to weave a small tapestry on a small loom. The Internet and the sheer amount of information available allow anyone to try small format tapestry.

Embroidering a Small Canvas

By Ayelet Lindenstrauss Larsen

As I embroider, I think a lot about the surfaces and textures I am producing; I want each stitch to be there for a reason. In restricting my work to a small format, I try to get the viewer to look at my work from up close, the way I do.

Textiles are unique among the craft media in having miniatures as a well-developed, oft-exhibited sub-genre. The traditional dichotomy in European textiles was between art - public, large and formal, and craft - private, small and possibly more spontaneous. The art-fabric movement sought to break this dichotomy by uniting the roles of designer and maker, pushing material and technique to the fore. This led to artists exploring different fibers and methods of construction in new and wonderful ways. These textiles were large, sometimes monumental. Sheer size was used to make the viewer aware of the particular qualities of the textile.

The modern genre of miniature textiles evolved in the 1960s and 1970s as a reaction to these larger works. Confident enough to jettison size as a means of validation, some artists were ready to call attention to the nature of the fibers within a very small, rather than a very large, format. The new work commanded viewers' attention like an exquisite seashell, rather than a towering rock face. For practical reasons, more people could produce such work, and it was easier to exhibit. So the genre prospered.

The British sculptor Henry Moore said:

"If you photographed it against a blank wall in which you had nothing to refer it to but itself—or you photographed it against the sky against infinite distance—a small thing only a few inches big might seem, if it had a monumental scale, to be any size. Now this is a quality which I personally think all really great sculpture has; it's a quality which, for me, all the great painters have - Rubens, Masaccio, Michelangelo - all the great painters, artists, and sculptors have this monumental sense." (*Henry Moore: Writings and Conversations*, ed. Alan Wilkinson, University of California Press, 2002).

Moore says that a truly successful form, or image, is compelling on any scale. This is not the same as saying that it is scale-free, and should affect us in the same way whatever its actual size. A textile, in particular, always has a scale set by its materials. We expect certain materials to be certain sizes. When they are otherwise they are surprising and make us question their use. The ideal miniature textile should satisfy Moore's test of being successful at any scale, but it should best fit its actual dimensions. Its small size should be determined by the proportion between its design components and its fiber components, or by external references to objects whose



Ayelet Lindenstrauss Larsen, LOVE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC 4.5" x 6.5" 2002 cotton, silk, and found doily on silk organza and cotton canvas

scale is familiar. These references often involve people, either explicitly, for example, when the object is a glove, or implicitly, for example, when the work uses the fact that the viewer would dwarf the object. Miniature works might reflect the object's true dimensions, or they might make their point by distorting sizes. Some very successful miniatures, in fact, monumentally magnify an object that in real life is smaller.

This last paragraph describes my goal in making miniature textiles. En route to achieving this goal, I would like to describe three miniatures I have made, about which I can at least say this: they really had to be small. The first, "Maxwell's Demon," is named after a hypothetical device that would sort molecules into slower ones on one side, and faster ones on the other. A thought experiment shows that such a device cannot exist, since if it did, it could be used to contradict the Second Law of Thermodynamics. But it is an amusing idea to try to visualize, anyway. Molecules were a little too small to portray, so I got the hypothetical demon to fix mixed-up rainbows. I tried to capture his industrious business with the small things he was sorting.

The second, "Love Across the Atlantic," is a silk embroidery in which the canvas was cut in the shape of an airmail envelope. On this canvas, I embroidered small tokens that my grandmother, my mother and I have sent each other across the Atlantic at different times.

The third piece, "Workman's Lunch and Tea," was made as part of a series about the Banjara people of India and their traditional nomadic lifestyle. Its shape is somewhat reminiscent of Banjara bags, important elements in a traveling household. The imagery depicting road construction refers to a traditional Banjara occupation. My piece is not very functional, but if it were, it

continued...

would be a combination lunch bag/teapot/emergency road sign; the compactness is that of the traveler's material possessions.

All three pieces are embroidered on canvas—I do not weave much tapestry, but of all other crafts, I feel that the aesthetic of tapestry weaving is closest to that of canvas embroidery. Which is why I am a member of the ATA!

A longer article Ayelet wrote on miniature textiles in the Summer 2003 issue of Fiberarts is available online at http://www.fiberarts.com/article_archive/genres/bigger.asp

Saving Memories

By Marjolyn Van der Wel

In 1984, when I was warping for my first tapestry, I put on extra warp. This was the beginning of a long friendship with small tapestries. It came at the perfect time, because, after weaving large tapestries for the American School and the American Church of The Hague, The Netherlands, I could not lift my arms anymore, but I still loved weaving tapestries.

While still living in The Netherlands, I found four green, square wooden frames and decided to weave a small tapestry for an exhibition that was part of Convergence, Cincinnati. It became the first in a set of 4 poppy tapestries. The fourth piece was woven, with permission, from a photograph of Ingrid Boesel's, showing the poppies in her garden in Guelph, ON. Ingrid had



Marjolyn Van der Wel TOGETHERNESS 9" x 8" 2006
cotton, hand dyed wool and silk

bought the seed from the McCrea House in Guelph, a museum dedicated to John McCrea, the soldier who wrote the poem, *In Flanders Fields*.

That experience set me on a path of weaving memories. The next set of tapestries depicted the hands and feet of my day old cousins. Later, I wove the face of my granddaughter in turquoise; she was born with a smile on her face. We moved to Chicago, where I wove *Crossroads*, a composite image that includes the farm in Holland where my husband was born, The Sears Tower in Chicago and the cottage we loved on Georgian Bay. Looking over the water after our move back to Canada, we found geese always around us and, hence, *Togetherness* was born. My most recent tapestry was part of the exhibition Woven Gems in Tampa. It shows my daughter playing the saxophone on the beach, during a sunset. A saxophone is difficult to weave in small format!

I usually scan my pictures into the computer, print them in black and white and then add color with colored pencils. I weave these tapestries on a small loom that I can take with me on holidays. My yarn is thin, hand dyed wool. I blend three differently colored strands together in weft bundle. The warp is cotton sett at 5 to the centimeter, or 12 to the inch. Recently I have been stretching my tapestries over a sheet of plexiglass, rather than framing them.

Working small is addictive; I am always searching for the next design. My hope is to inspire other weavers. After you find a good design, it does not take that long to complete a tapestry.

Doors, Gates and Windows

By Mary Colton

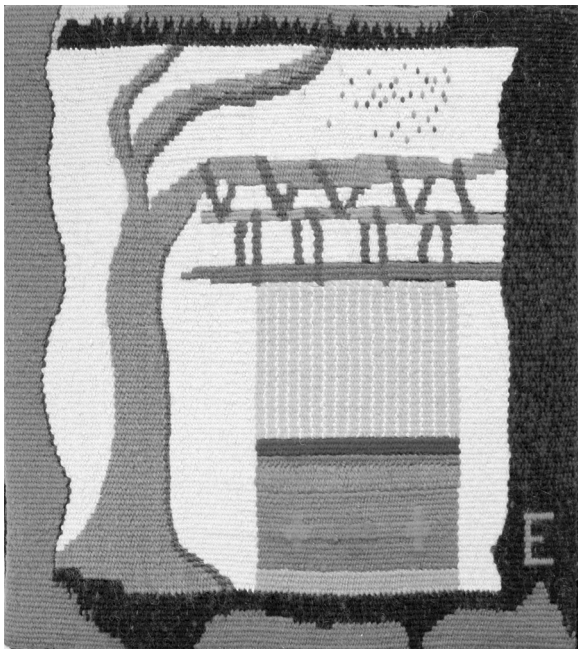
The tapestry project "Doors, Gates and Windows" (DGW) began with a simple question: what project would challenge everyone in our group to weave a tapestry?

Our tapestry study group is one of several interest groups of the Las Arañas Spinners and Weavers Guild of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Started by 3 weavers, the group has studied and shown together for about a decade, with a changing membership. When DGW began two years ago in 2006, we had a dozen active weavers. In the group were near-beginners as well as tapestry weavers of many years who have studied with well-known teachers. What kind of project would appeal to that range of background, challenging the experienced without intimidating the inexperienced?

Several ideas from other groups started our discussion: cutting a picture into squares and giving each person a section to weave, weaving tapestry post cards from New Mexico, weaving a streetscape of adobe houses, and doing something related to the "Vamps to Visages" show of the



Ann Blankenship, PORTAL TO ONE'S PASSION
9" x 8" (original) Albuquerque, NM



Elaine Duncan, SONG OF THE LOOM
10" x 8 3/4" (response) Errington, B.C

*Be sure to look online for
more photographs for all articles.*

Tapestry Weavers of Vancouver Island (TAPIS) at the 2002 Vancouver Convergence. Each TAPIS member had woven a head or a pair of feet and then exchanged their tapestry with a partner who wove feet or a head that related to the original one. At the Vancouver Convergence, I stood, fascinated, in front of that exhibit, matching the randomly arranged heads and feet.

Our group spent two meetings discussing options, which allowed us to arrive at a plan that appealed to all of us and gave each person a sense of ownership of the project. That was key, we discovered, when a small part of the group later tried to start another project, which the rest of the group rejected.

Another key was choosing to adopt the 10" x 10" rules of the ATA "Woven Gems" exhibit, which fit into our busy schedules (we chose 9" in the vertical dimension and no more than 10" wide). The rules also gave us a deadline and the promise that everyone could be shown, since the show would not be juried.

The plan was for each of us to weave a door, gate or window we found in New Mexico. That would give us subjects we really knew but a whole state and several cultures from which to choose. At a subsequent meeting we brought our cartoons and marveled at the variety of ideas that were developing.

While these tapestries were still being designed, several of us went to Santa Fe for a workshop that also attracted three weavers from Vancouver Island. When we described our DGW project, one of the Vancouver weavers produced the last copy of their "Vamps to Visages" catalog and asked if they could join our project. We went back to our group to see if they agreed.

At that moment our project grew from a dozen tapestries and one show to 48 or more tapestries, several shows and a catalog. The TAPIS weavers would each weave a door, gate or window from Vancouver Island. Then we would pick partners from the other guild, exchange photos, and all weave responses for a total of two weavings apiece. The Las Arañas group had the task of defining the terms of the exchange and pulling names from a hat to choose partners.

Again, the terms grew from an extended group discussion. We wanted to be specific enough to give direction without limiting creativity. The response was expected to be a "recognizable complement" to the original door, gate or window, with the following suggestions: It could imagine the other side of the wall, or look farther into the distance. It could be a "portal" of a similar shape from the locale of the partner weaver or relate to the original by using the same colors or shapes or design style. It could be an abstract response to a representational image, or vice versa. It could have a different sett or weft size, but it needed to include the basic beige and purple yarns that we had selected to include in every tapestry.

Because we had a head start, we prepared most of our original DGWs for a local fiber festival in May of 2007, eleven months after our initial project discussions. A second gallery show in September 2007 included all of our originals, many of the TAPIS originals and even a few partner responses.

continued...

A blow to our plans came in fall 2007 when we learned that no exceptions could be made to the one-tapestry-per-person limit at the 2008 ATA Small Format show, "Woven Gems." We met to select which tapestry from each person should go. We chose pairs, trying to send a representative group of originals and responses from each guild. Those entries are in the "Woven Gems" catalog.

Because our group is fortunate to include a photographer and a graphic designer, we were able to produce a catalog of the entire collection in the spring of 2008. Fifty of the tapestries will be in a final show in Albuquerque in September and October 2008. Then the tapestries will travel to Canada for two or three shows before the collection is dispersed.

How important was our choice of a small format and what did we mean by it? Most significantly, the size seemed doable to our members. Small would not take as long as big, and, in a number of cases, it could be woven on a second loom without interrupting a larger tapestry on a primary loom. Although everyone wove a complete image, and not just a section from a larger tapestry, designing for a small piece was simpler. Our only definition of "small format" was the size restriction. We were free to choose our setts, which ranged from 8 to 12 epi, and weft appropriate to each sett. We did not define a 1-inch-to-1-foot ratio, which one finds with miniature paintings. We used the tapestry techniques most comfortable to each of us: French-style from the side and the back with double-weft interlocks; Southwest-style from the bottom and the front with slits and single-weft interlocks; or other combinations of techniques. Thus we have an eclectic show that resulted from challenging a diverse group of weavers.

Success came because we made each decision as a group, step by step as the project evolved. We also succeeded because different individuals were willing to undertake leadership of specific parts of the project, but we found that one person from each group had to be willing to lead from start to finish. At the beginning we did not foresee how extensive the project would be, so a few of the tapestries have sold and have been promised to their buyers before the entire exhibition schedule is completed. We may display photographs of the missing pieces at the last shows. Customs made exchanging across borders a bit more complicated, but in most cases we have been able to send photographs or to find someone who could hand-carry the tapestries to avoid the issue. As one should expect, over two years the groups have changed, with former members moving or no longer weaving and new people being recruited. Finally, it is hard to find two groups of identical size; I had the pleasure of exchanging with two partners to make up the difference.

After two years everyone in our tapestry group is more experienced and a better weaver than when she or he began. The growth of our least experienced members is the most noticeable, the creativity shown by everyone is amazing, and we have just had fun.

4 Australian Tapestry Weavers

By Anne Jackson

Woven tapestry is often described as a medium that "enriches space." The intensity of skill and thought that goes into each work communicates itself to the viewer, consciously or unconsciously. This is true whether the work is large or small-scale. As well as being a rich and resonant medium, tapestry is also supremely portable; the exhibition in Exeter, Devon UK of work by four artists based in Melbourne, Australia is testimony to this.

The BSW Gallery is a new venture in improving the visibility of woven tapestry as an art form. While tapestry is often included in mixed exhibitions, this is currently the only gallery in the UK which provides an opportunity to focus on this medium alone.

Contemporary tapestry, historically used to adorn high walls in churches, palaces or state buildings, is now also bought or commissioned by private individuals, often on a domestic scale for their own homes. The BSW Gallery is located in a space that elegantly navigates the line between public and private spaces, showing large, miniature and three-dimensional works in a restored Georgian merchant's house. The gallery rooms are welcoming, with high ceilings and graceful proportions. Large-scale tapestries have room to breathe, and small works beckon the viewer closer.

The artists represented in "4 Australian Tapestry Weavers" are all based in Melbourne and have all worked at the prestigious Victorian Tapestry Workshop. Most of the work in the show is miniature, a feasible strategy for participating in an exhibition on the other side of the world. Portability doesn't compromise quality; the work is intense and potent. The vibrancy of colour and the sheer evidence of time spent and skill exercised results in each tapestry creating a small world.

All the works shown are woven tapestries, with the exception of one on paper by Sara Lindsay. Entitled "Trade: China Spice," it is a sequence of deckled paper rectangles, striped with mapping pens. Referencing stripes in woven cloth, it has resonances of Agnes Martin and Ben Nicolson, and provides evidence that medium matters less than the intention of the artist. It fits perfectly with the vision demonstrated in her four small, quietly insistent tapestries hung on the adjacent wall. Each of the "Cinnamon and Ticking" pieces comprises a narrow horizontal band of delicately striped tapestry above a tightly aligned row of rolled cinnamon bark that forms strong, vertical lines. As well as eliciting echoes of trade and colonial-

ism, the rhythm of the warp in tapestry is made explicit in the regularity of these organic shapes.

Joy Smith is well known in the tapestry world for the wit and richness of her small-scale, jewel-like tapestries. Here, three works entitled "This Goes with That," inspired by earrings, shoes and clothing found in charity shops, exhibit her extraordinary attention to detail in everyday things. The contrast stitching depicted on tiny blue jeans and shoes is meticulous and perfect, and the beaded earrings are truly 'beady,' rendered in individual picks of weft. There is a sense of the artist exploring these ordinary objects with loving attention.

The two tapestries entitled "West Dean Topiary: Summer" and "...Autumn" are a humorous take on the effort and perseverance required to shape growing shrubs into that peculiar European art form, topiary. The artist may be drawing a parallel with making exquisitely fine woven tapestries; in any case, the medium seems appropriate to the message.

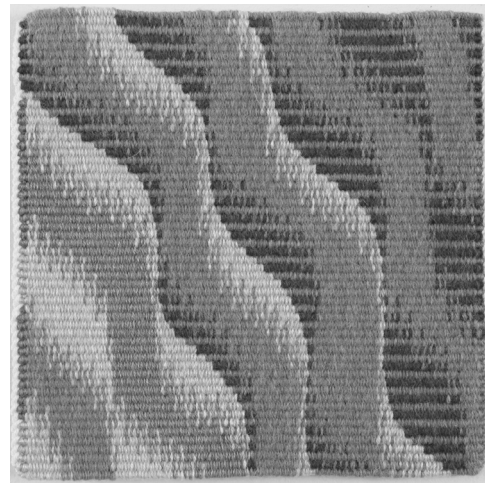
Robyn Mountcastle's main contribution is a series of fourteen miniature works. "Via Dolorosa" lies within the ancient tradition of woven tapestry in ecclesiastical decoration. The series depicts the "Stations of the Cross," more usually seen carved in stone on the walls of churches or cathedrals. The intense emotion of the theme draws the viewer into each of these tiny tapestry worlds. One finds oneself trying to read the symbolism of the abstract shapes caught within the warp and weft.

Tim Gresham's work shows the influence of his other medium, photography. The tapestries included in this exhibition hold resonances of Modernist architecture, focussing on abstract rhythms and patterns-within-patterns, executed in a palette reminiscent of concrete and modern building materials. These works defy the usual convention of tapestry being richly seductive, jewel-like and approachable in colour. However, on closer inspection, the eye is rewarded with rich, optical colour blending, creating both harmony and dissonance.

The four Australian artists in this exhibition are skilled weavers. Through their chosen medium their voices and intentions speak clearly in the gallery space. The exhibition has balance and rhythm, representing the strength of woven tapestry, this portable and potent art form, in a worldwide context.



Robyn Mountcastle, WIPE NO.6 (Veronica wipes Christ's brow) 10cm x 10cm, 20cm x 20cm framed.



Tim Gresham MAQUETTE II
15x15cm 2007 wool cotton

Woven Gems

By Terri Stewart

I think that this exhibit by far has had the largest variety of works of all subject matter and skill that I have seen in years! Kudos to all who entered their work.

The group challenges have really taken off and there are more of them now than ever before. However, many of the pieces that struck me as outstanding came from the non-group entries. Odette Brabec's "Reflections" has the impact of a large painting with its subtle changes in color and lighting and the movement of water. Trena Coulter's "Equus In Aequora" is a true gem of a piece! I really feel like I am looking into a fish tank watching this beautiful little sea horse move about. Lany Eila's works are consistently impressive in their simplicity of color choices - black and white. "Haley at 10" is just one such example. Eموke's "Eclectic" took a simple idea and added a twist - zippers! - something that I didn't notice in the catalog photo and that was a delightful surprise when seen in person.

continued...

From the group challenge pieces, the one that I enjoyed the most was Pat William's "I Couldn't Find the Garden." I truly laughed my head off at this, and when I took my mother to see the show, she had exactly the same reaction. I love Pat's sense of humor. Having so many groups enter this exhibit gives members new contacts for study groups from a variety of regions and countries that they may have not previously known about.

There were many good pieces in this show, but I must say that there are a few entries that I question as to whether they are tapestry and perhaps should have been entered into Small Expressions or one of HGA's other exhibits. By and large, this was a most enjoyable exhibit; even the staff of the Teco Building seemed to have a good time viewing them.

The Tapestry Handbook: The Next Generation

Reviewed by Judy Ann Ness

By Carol K. Russell
2007, Schiffer Publishing LTD
978-0-7643-2756-8 \$59.95

A classic, *The Tapestry Handbook* by Carol K. Russell, has come back into print. The first edition from Lark Books in 1990 became a standard for teachers and students. An updated and expanded edition has been reissued by Schiffer Books as *The Tapestry Handbook: The Next Generation*. The reader can follow step-by-step instruction to create an amazing ten-foot sampler containing at least 30 specific tapestry techniques. The systematic approach offers lessons presented in a logical manner, with each newly learned procedure becoming the basis for the next experience. Black and white pictures, rather than drawings, provide clear images for visual reference to each lesson. 300 color photographs offer a stunning collection of the best of contemporary tapestry weavers, as well as precious museum textiles for a historic perspective. Close-up photographs are especially helpful in showing the practical application of a specific technique.

The book starts with a short orientation describing the history of tapestry and a general definition of the weave structure, followed by a brief overview of loom set up, yarns, and preparation. The author offers thoughtful suggestions on how the book might be used to greatest benefit. The philosophy integrates a hands-on learning experience with an introduction to design principles and conceptualization. Each chapter starts out with 'General Directions' (the how-to) for a specific process such as verticals, shading, interlocks, etc. Photos accompany the text to show the yarn action, where it is coming from and

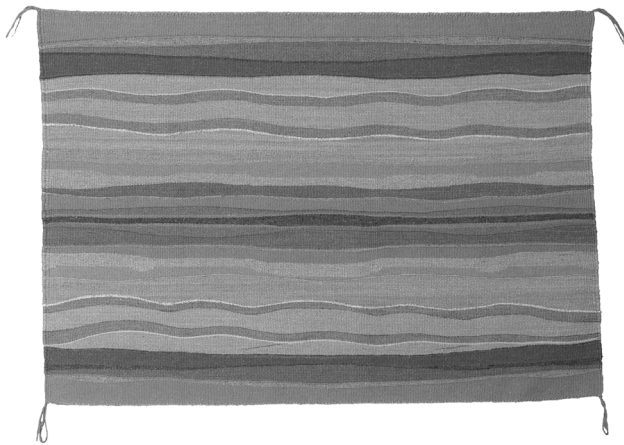
where it needs to go. Every technique has a 'Summary' that details how it works to help create a composition. The 'Tips and Advice' feature provides notes on common problems, the value of the technique (why it works), with possible variations for expanding the basic idea. The weaver gets a solid understanding of the mechanics of tapestry and encouragement to explore design elements. This lightens the task of the thousands of tiny decisions that are required to interpret a composition. This book makes it easier, with study and practice, for artists to realize they have the tools and ability to bring their designs into being. Like a self-taught tutorial, you can take it at your own pace, work on one chapter to refine a specific technique, or go from start to finish and complete the amazing technical or sampler and get a broad introduction to the art form.

In eight enjoyable chapters we go from a single pass to eccentric wefts, outlining, twining and chaining. Chapter Nine describes blocking, finishing, and mounting. Chapter Ten focuses on design properties specifically for tapestry, and includes crucial discussion on value and contrast, and a section on color theory. Direction or movement in design and its corresponding contribution to mood and meaning are addressed. Quotes from artists sprinkled throughout provide intimate vignettes into their thought processes, intent, and spiritual connections to art. Helpful resource materials towards the back of the book offer a glossary, a list of Resources for Tapestry Artists, and a good Bibliography.

To sum it up, this book has several roles: it is about doing - a nuts and bolts solution to learning to weave tapestry, while gracefully dovetailing practical design studies with inspirational motivation. This manual will work marvelously well in the classroom for students and teachers, and excels in its ability to support weavers studying on their own. Frequently, weavers refer to *The Tapestry Handbook* as their 'tapestry bible.' The new edition has kept all the goodness of the first, and made it better. It shines, with highest recommendations for school, guild, and library collections.

Notes from the reviewer: As a graduate student, I was assigned to teach a college studio class in tapestry. With little experience in tapestry, and no time to take a class, I learned the basics from the first edition of *The Tapestry Handbook*. The ten foot long sampler became a beloved helper and workhorse for that first tapestry class. It still makes appearances, and with the same lovely result - it gets used.

Carol K. Russell is an artist, curator, writer, and teaches tapestry weaving, design, and color theory. She is presently writing the biography of her own tapestry teacher and mentor, the late Margareta Grandin Nettles of Sweden and Nantucket, MA.



D.Y. Begay, POLLEN PATH, 26" x 36.5" wool

Review: Land, Art And The Sacred: Three Perspectives

By Lyn Hart

Curated and conceived by Claire Park, head of Tucson's Pima Community College Art Department's color and fiber areas, the exhibit "Land, Art And The Sacred: Three Perspectives" at the Louis Carlos Bernal Gallery on PCC's West Campus, presented a collaboration of three artists: Claire Park, Gabriella Possum Nungurrayi and D.Y. Begay. It sprang from Claire's dismayed perception of psychoanalytical approaches to art creation noted during her world travels to lecture. The work of these artists from Anglo, Aboriginal Australian, and Native American cultures reveals their reaction and connection to the beauty of cherished lands as conceptualized from the cultural and spiritual foundations in their lives.

Claire's five vertical weavings glowed with horizontal shifting striations of colors, vibrant color contrasts, and interminglings of subtle combinations of relatively intense hues. Coupled with an under palette of colored warps that shimmered intermittently beneath the surface of the weft, a result of her controlled beating technique, the weavings possess unimaginable depth. Making color decisions "strand by strand," Claire unweaves areas if choices do not coalesce while maintaining awareness as areas disappear around the beam of her floor loom. After teaching color theory for 30 years, Claire wanted to create a body of work embracing that part of her life and also represent her perspectives regarding the sacredness and meaningfulness of land and life. She recounts the impetus for creating her work.

"The Red Center:" My Australian artist colleagues told me I must see Uluru (Ayers Rock) and Kata Tjuta (the Olgas) the red center of the Australian outback that is now a national park run jointly by the National Park

Service and the indigenous Anangu people. Uluru and Kata Tjuta are sacred to the Anangu. The marks on the rocks, their crevices and formations are the stories that teach them how to live, created by living ancestral beings. The land, stories and ancestral beings are one, inseparable. Anthropologists believe that the Aborigines of Australia have the longest undisturbed culture on earth.... Is it any wonder then, that the Anangu people say their sense of time is in the past, present and future all at once—also inseparable. As I was walking through the Kata Tjutas in the late afternoon I was struck with how every branch, every leaf, the air itself, was vibrant with burgundy light, rendering distinctions of form, of time, unimportant. As I wove this work I reflected on the eternal sacredness of life.

"Two Continents: One Pacific:" I am fascinated by how our experience of creation, beauty, life is inseparable from our beliefs. I love to learn from others and focus on what is universal, although seen from distinctly different perspectives. Looking across the Pacific Ocean from our separate shores we see our immutable unity--two continents: one Pacific.

Gabriella Possum Nungurrayi's three *Grandmother Country* paintings explode swirling, dynamic, organic earth colored shapes representing the people, their tools, the land formations, and the activities involved in going out to gather Bush Tucker (food). The paintings very naturally formed an amalgamation of the exhibit's concepts with the woven works, balancing, complementing, and supporting them. Gabriella, a second generation Anmatyerr painter from Melbourne, Australia, is responsible for painting specific stories handed down by her paternal grandmother, continuing a traditional cycle of inheritance from many previous generations. These stories holistically interlock spiritual and community life, strength and beauty, the land upon which they live and the universe in which they exist.

D.Y. Begay's five horizontal weavings interpret landscapes which are indivisible from her soul and Navajo culture. A fourth generation Navajo weaver, she grew up raising and shearing sheep, carding and spinning wool, harvesting plants for dyeing, and weaving. She designs as she weaves, perhaps beforehand sketching or photographing the indescribable beauty of Navajo reservation lands. She uses mostly vegetal dyed or natural colored wools. Her weavings undulate with subtle and at times almost elusive blending of earthen hues, forming silhouettes of the mesas and hills of high desert topography; virtually indiscernible lines of soumak provide fine definition. Her distinctive style, developed over time, includes elements of tradition, but discards restrictions of design, color, or pattern. Weaving defines D.Y., merging beliefs, family, and community...

"Pollen refers to corn pollen that we use for praying. We collect the pollen in late summer when the tips start

continued...

pollinating and it is collected in the very early morning before the sun rises. *Pollen Path* reflects peace, beauty and gratification in life.

I am absorbed with the meaning of the color lichi'i', red. Lichi'i' encompasses many ideas and beliefs. To the Dine' lichi'i', red symbolizes the first world. The dwellers in the red world consisted of twelve kinds of black insects. Lichi'i' is also a color of danger and war. This is a reference to pre-human creatures when they were struggling in the lower world and seeking in vain for harmony in another place. Black has many references in Navajo ceremonies. Black is considered to adorn the north where it is believed evil and danger dwell. Black is important because it represents the origin of all things.

The *Land, Art, and the Sacred* exhibit created thought provoking awareness of the beauty of our planet. Through their abstract interpretations, the artists shared their community and spiritual values. Their diverse artworks reflected their diverse cultures, creating synergy of beauty in life and art.

The artists' web sites: www.navajo-indian.com,
www.boomerangart.com.au,
<http://web.mac.com/clairpark>

One Tapestry's Journey

By Elisabeth Quick

When Monique Lehman began her most recent tapestry commission, a 13' x 8' torah ark curtain, a full year lay in front of her to conceive and execute the piece. The commission for the ark curtain (known as a parochet) came from Temple Beth El in La Jolla, California, and was to be the focal point of their new sanctuary. The trajectory of such a large weaving project took a challenging and sometimes frustratingly circuitous path. Monique began her research for the design in the library, searching for photographs of antique ark curtains. She requested photos of parochets from Jewish museums in Krakow, Prague and New York, although the most help came from a Norwegian collection.

The client, Ryan Stone, had an idea in his own mind of how the design should look. As Monique put it, "The only way for me to extract this image from his mind was by designing over 20 detailed images." After three months of finessing, Stone emailed his agreement, "I love your last design."

The image chosen is a contemporary interpretation of an 18th century traditional parochet.

Monique used a range of deep reds in the body and warm reds in the border as the tapestry's primary color impression to evoke the remembrance of blood in the Jewish people's history, one that is laden with tragedy and profound grief. The motifs of vines and flowers run throughout, abstracted so as not to resemble any particular species, but to refer to the many roads and interwoven journeys that the Jewish people have traveled over the centuries. At the bottom of the tapestry Hebrew letters emerge from the flowers, to read, "Awesome is this place," while remaining entwined with the background and its calling forth of times past.

Monique began weaving the tapestry in August of 2007, and I joined her in September on the weekends. Over the course of 8 months of weaving, a few other weavers joined us for shorter or longer periods of assistance. The vast majority of weaving, however, was accomplished by Monique herself, often working 8-10 hours per day, 7 days a week.

Her 6' wide vertical Glimakra tapestry loom was expanded to 10 feet for this project, replacing all horizontal elements with 10' equivalents, while the hardware and vertical elements were left unchanged. The warp was 17 feet long, sett at 10 ends per inch to achieve maximum flexibility in detail.

Her European training as a painter is reflected in her weaving technique. She prefers working with thin yarns, mixing several strands together in a spontaneous selection of shades as she weaves, which creates a dynamic textural surface with a lively modulation of tone. In addition to the reds, she utilized a rich palette of ivory, sienna, amber and gold, with intense accents of cobalt and cerulean blues that add a significantly Eastern quality to the treatment of the colors, reminiscent of ancient tribal prayer rugs. Also trained in sculpture, Monique approached the tapestry as a sculptor might, working one area at a time:

When I work on a big tapestry, I never think about it as one piece. The work is divided in my mind into sections. I have certain production goals per week and try not to get



Monique Lehman
TAPESTRY ARK CURTAIN
13' x 8' 2008 commissioned for
Temple Beth El in La Jolla, California

distracted by the rest of the tapestry. When I work on a blue flower, I put away all my reds and golds so the colors I am not using don't distract me. It always surprises me to see other artists' studios with the entire palette of colors on the wall.

The weaving progressed in what sometimes seemed to me excruciatingly slow increments, with Monique weaving more than twice as fast as I could. Her meticulous attention to detail requires demanding care, and she used numerous different tapestry techniques to keep herself entertained and focused. Every time we advanced the tapestry, there were significant tension problems that necessitated adjusting the warps in groups or individually to hold the tension as evenly as possible as the weaving progressed.

By the end of January, we were not quite half finished, and I seriously doubted our ability to achieve the May 1 deadline. Monique, however, was not daunted nor discouraged, and urged me not to indulge in negativity. She had no intention of coming short of the due date. In the end, those of us who worked on the project in the late stages seemed to hit warp speed (no pun intended), and the weaving was finished several weeks ahead of schedule. That timing allowed for sewing up slits, finishing, and backing with fabric, so the tapestry was completed with days to spare.

Installed at the end of April, the parochet is the central visual element of the starkly modern, new Temple Beth El sanctuary. Dedicated with the temple the first week in May, this ark curtain hangs as both a reminder of the Jewish people's historical journey and an evocation of their place in today's world.

Volunteers Make It Happen: Tommye McClure Scanlin

By Lyn Hart

Tommye McClure Scanlin joined ATA twenty years ago this year. During that time, she has committed a great deal of her time, energies and talents fulfilling crucial volunteer roles. I interviewed Tommye to learn more about her history with tapestry weaving and ATA.

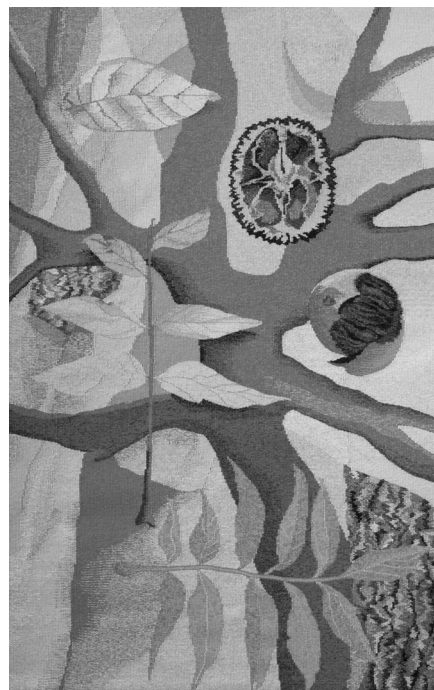
How did you first become involved in weaving and/or tapestry weaving?

TS: My 'real' weaving life began in 1969 when I was student teaching; my supervising teacher introduced me to a small cardboard loom as we were preparing to do a weaving unit in the elementary school. The next year, when I was a full-time art teacher at a high school, I checked out a library book showing a simple frame loom, built a few for my classes and taught myself a bit more about weaving to share with my students. I felt I'd finally found my medium of choice. Most of my studio courses at the university had been drawing, painting and printmaking but the manipulative nature of the simple weavings we were doing at the high school really appealed to me.

How would you describe your personal connection to tapestry?

TS: Because of my love for imagery, I tried to find ways that would allow me to weave pictorially. Overall pattern, so easily accomplished through loom controlled weaving, didn't hold as much interest for me as did a combination of the technique with image creation. I used many woven techniques to try to create images: painted and printed warps, inlay weaves, pick-up weaves, multi-shaft weaves. I was staying far away from tapestry. I didn't think I had the discipline to weave tapestry; I would never be able to develop the skills needed to make that simple plain weave sing!

Several things finally came together for me in the same year: 1988. I went to Chicago where I was part of two panels at Complex Weavers Association conference held before Convergence. One of the things I heard myself saying at one of the panel sessions was that I felt the 24-shafts and the computer assisted loom didn't yet give me enough potential for image.



Tommye Scanlin
TO THE ESSENCE OF EVERY NATURE
53" x 33", 2007 wool, cotton

continued...

Maybe, I said, I should weave tapestry, instead! Ase Blake, a wonderful tapestry artist [and friend], said to me that I should really consider trying tapestry since I was doing other things with weaving that were really harder.

I remember the impact the World Tapestry Today exhibit had on me when I saw it during 1988 Convergence. What absolutely incredibly beautiful textiles those were-- I'd never experienced such range of images, wonderful technique and rich, woven surface before. There was an ATA information booth in the vendors' hall with a loom set up for demonstrations, and I picked up an application for membership from someone there. I left Convergence determined I'd give tapestry a serious try; if I couldn't do it, then I'd at least have made the effort, and I would stop whining about wanting to do tapestry but not feeling that I would be able to master it well enough to create the images I wanted. I also filled out that ATA application and became a member then.

Now, twenty years into this process of trying to weave tapestry I feel some confidence in my ability to weave almost anything I'd like to in the way of images. And I can thank time passing and the fantastic teacher/mentors I've had along the way for that. Most of my training has been through short workshops but through those I feel I've had a chance to be in the presence of some of the best tapestry artist/teachers in the world: Archie Brennan and Susan Martin Maffei; Jean Pierre Larochette and Yael Lurie; Marcel Marois; Sharon Marcus; Jane Kidd; Christine Laffer.

What was it like to be involved in the revitalization of ATA?

TS: That was so exciting! When I was contacted by Jim Brown in late 1992 and asked to be part of a committee to consider a revitalization of ATA, I couldn't believe it! I'd only been weaving tapestry and been an ATA member since 1988 but I'd replied to a questionnaire Brown had sent out in 1990 asking thoughts about the future of ATA. I was among several folks who'd indicated that they were '...willing to put time and effort into attempts to reorganize and revitalize ATA.' From those few, a committee formed in 1993 with that goal in mind. Marti Fleischer took on the role of director, I was membership chairperson, Courtney Shaw did the newsletter. We contacted whomever we could, asking for their time and energy. Many people came forward to play a role in helping ATA continue as an active organization. Looking at ATA's vitality and importance to the tapestry world now it's hard to believe it was at such a low point in the early 1990s. that [vitality and importance] only continues because of the tireless efforts of so many volunteers.

After the small format exhibit debuted in '96, what influenced you to help keep it alive?

TS: The small format show was at Convergence in Portland, OR. Called "It's About Time," Kathe Todd-Hooker and several others from the Northwest Coast area brought that exhibit about. The works in that show were so full of life and energy, I came back from that conference determined to see that the small format, non-juried concept be continued in Atlanta in 1998 when Convergence was to be held there. Other tapestry artists in the southeast also felt the same way. We decided to finally put into action what several of us had talked about for a few years: forming a regional group that became Tapestry Weavers South, and the first goal of TWS was to organize and hang the next edition of the small format, non-juried exhibit. The second version we called "Encore!" was held at the Atlanta International Museum of Art & Design in 1998.

Now you are working on ATA's Distance Learning program. What attracted you to taking on that role?

TS: I was asked to fill in when Linda Weghorst, who was chairperson for DL, became ill last summer. I didn't hesitate too long in saying "YES!" because the educational potential of ATA is important to me. I've spent over forty of my sixty years of life as a teacher. I personally feel the impact of great teachers each day as I weave tapestry. I hope I can share some of that joy of learning and growing in a skill through my own teaching. I like the challenge of pairing mentors with students in the [DL] program. The program has so much to offer, I feel. Not everyone can have the time, money or energy to attend a workshop or a class. But the year-long process of working with one person, having feedback from someone with a bit more experience as one develops, has many rewards. ATA Distance Learning possibilities have now been enhanced with the work of two more volunteers [Joyce Hayes and Jeanne Bates] as the Helping Hands distance learning program for beginning tapestry weavers has gotten underway.

Volunteers are the heart, soul, and hands of the American Tapestry Alliance. This organization is only as strong as those who are willing to share a bit of their time every so often. I'm very happy to have been able to work with ATA in a few ways since I became a member in 1988. I'd encourage anyone to also consider what help they might lend by playing some role in the organization.

ATA Award of Excellence: Jennie Lee Henderson

By Merna Strauch

The Conference of Northern California Handweavers (CNCH) honored Jennie Lee Henderson of Gualala, California, with the ATA Award for Excellence in Tapestry for "Reflections." Her work starred in the "Spun Treasures" exhibit, held at the DoubleTree Hotel in Sacramento in conjunction with the CNCH conference in May, 2008.

Jacquetta Nisbet, a neighbor and ATA member, introduced Jennie to Navaho weaving. An experienced floor loom weaver at the time, Jennie found a reso-



Jennie Henderson, REFLECTIONS
38" x 60", 2006
Jennie's handspun wool, linen warp

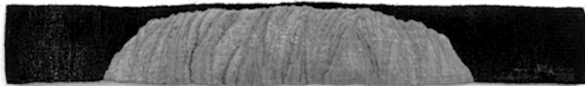
nance in working this way. It allowed her a kind of freedom in her rug making that she hadn't experienced with loom controlled designs. She works at the loom now without a cartoon, just an idea. The design usually develops in the first three to six inches, the texture and colors of the wool blending with her idea to guide the pattern. The "Reflections" tapestry rug was woven in this way. Jennie says she envisioned a push and pull between the colors, creating an impression of reflections on water.

Jennie has a long history of working with fiber and cloth. She learned to knit, tat, and sew as a child, and by the time she was in high school was designing, sewing, and selling hand-dyed dresses. Attending college in Denmark in the 70's, she discovered weaving, and the rest of the story was written. She came home to California with her first Glimakra loom and learned to weave with the help of Davison's A Handweavers Pattern Book and lots of enthusiasm.

She learned to spin and was soon selling her handspun, handknit wool sweaters at local craft fairs. Over the years she has spun everything from her pets' dog-hair to the lint from her clothes dryer. She has gathered mushrooms, moss, lichen, flowers, and bark to use in dyes. Now she spins only wool and no longer uses dyes because she can buy a wide range of beautiful, natural-colored, locally produced Romney fleeces. She prefers to spin in the grease with a little flicking but no carding. Her method is to spin a number of fleeces and then weave until the yarn is gone, making two or three rugs and several throws each year from her handspun wool.

Jennie's eclectic lifestyle is mirrored in her textile arts and weaving. In addition to tapestry-style, handspun, natural-colored wool rugs, woven on either a Navajo loom or a large eight-harness Glimakra loom, she weaves scarves, throws, and shawls in brightly colored silks, rayon, and tencel on both four and eight harness looms. She works in bound weave, shadow weave, and with supplemental warps. She makes whimsical, rainbow-colored ribbon scarves utilizing a trapped fiber technique. And she has a wild idea for a huge outdoor installation: a Navajo rug woven of colored rope or coated wire.

You can see Jennie's studio and more of her work at www.jleeh.biz.



Irisa Blumate, ULURU 10 cm. X 44 cm.
2008 wool, synthetics

ATA Award of Excellence: Irisa Blumate

By Linda Rees

Irisa Blumate of Riga, Latvia, won the ATA Award for Excellence for her tapestry "Uluru" in the "Land: Tapestry Foundation of Victoria Award Exhibition" in conjunction with the Tapestry 2008 symposium in Canberra, Australia in May.

Wendy Teakel commented on the item she and fellow juror, Sara Lindsey, picked for the award:

Our choice here has a touch of irony about it. It seems fitting that an emblem of Australian land with all its complexities of meaning should be awarded the ATA Prize. We felt this work has a sense of celebration about it. Visually luscious colour and texture presents us with a tactile immediacy appropriate for the wonderful hands-on experience of tapestry. The symbolic imagery of Uluru fulfills all aspects of the intentions of the "Land" prize referencing spirit, ownership, ecology, society and economy.

Linda Wallace recounted her impression of the work:

The background, which shows as uniform black, was actually quite a rich surface, and then the rock itself was 3D, projecting out from the flat background. The fibre looked to be, perhaps chenille - it was quite light reflective. The tapestry was mounted inside a glass case, with a light shining on it, and it just glowed. It seemed to have captured the same kind of light magic that happens when the setting sun shines on the real Uluru. Quite arresting.

Irisa has an M. F. A. from the Art Academy of Latvia in Riga, and is a member of the Association of Latvian Textile Art and the Artists' Union of Latvia. She has had two solo exhibits (1998 and 2008) in the Latvia Gallery Rudolf's and the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design and has exhibited in international group shows in at least a dozen European countries and the USA. Her work is in museums and collections in almost as many countries as well.

Kudos

Compiled by Merna Strauch
mstrauch@mac.com

Terri Stewart was awarded First Place in HGA's Small Expressions 2008 for "Old Man," a tapestry mounted in the manner of a Hindu Prayer Wheel. It was woven at 26epi with a quilting thread weft. Juror John Marshall told Terri "I really like the thoughtfulness you put into the finishing. It is simple, like the weaving, but presented in an elegant way. The weaving itself was well-done and the presentation shows it off as a piece of art."

Connie Lippert is featured in an article by **Deb Erikson** in *Fiberarts*, September 2008 issue, p.28-29.

"11,000 Words: Tapestries and Cartoons by **Sarah Swett**" will be at Montgomery College in Conroe, Texas from August 28-September 30, 2008.

California Fibers members' work is on exhibit in "Forms in Wood and Fiber" at San Diego's Mingei International Museum until January, 2009. Included are pieces by **Susan Hart-Henegar** and **Michael Rohde**.

Linda Rees will have a one person show, "Putting Content to Color" at Downtown Initiative for the Visual Arts (DIVA) in Eugene, Oregon from Nov. 25th - Dec.23, 2008.

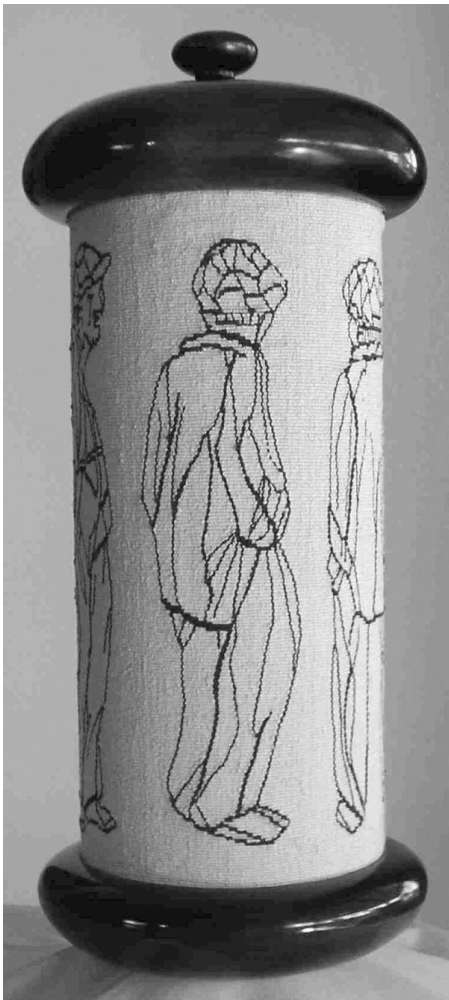
Suzanne Pretty was selected at the New Hampshire 2007 Governors Arts Awards as an Individual Arts Patron Award recipient to create a piece for the Bloomfield Family. Suzanne worked with the theme of the fractured landscape in her paper weaving, "Soaring Above the Divided Landscape." The multi-layered paper weaving is a stack of forest-blocks precariously stacked on gravel against the forest background with a soaring eagle.

A detail of "Promethean Dreams" (ATB6) by **Linda Wallace** was selected as the cover illustration for *Minds of Our Own: Inventing Feminist Scholarship and Women's Studies in Canada, 1966-76*. Published by Wilfrid Laurier Press, the book contains short autobiographical essays by women who played a pivotal, pioneering role in establishing Canadian feminist scholarship.

Tommye Scanlin and **Pat Willinas** are invited artists in the initial exhibit at the new Kryder Gallery in Dahlonega, Georgia. The ribbon cutting was held in June; works in the exhibit include installation, photography, painting and tapestry.

Michael Rohde was July artist of the month at Weaving Southwest in Taos, New Mexico. A meet-the-artist reception was held for him on July 5th. **Robin Reider** will be the September artist of the month.

Tapestry Weavers West (TWW) Members' Showcase, "Contemporary Tapestry in the 21st Century," is on exhibit at the Craft & Cultural Gallery in Oakland, California, until August 29th. Most of the twenty-one exhibiting artists are members of ATA.



Terri Stewart, OLD MAN
14" x 6" diameter 2007

Contact ATA

PO Box 28600 San Jose, CA 95159

www.americantapestryalliance.org

Director of Member Services

Becky Stevens stevensreb@gmail.com

Director of Resources

Linda Wallace yellowcedar@shaw.ca

Treasurer

Barb Richards barbrichards@airbits.com

Member Chair

Ellen Ramsey ew.ramsey@comcast.net

Education Committee: Distance Learning

Tommye Scanlin tapestry13@yahoo.com

Ed. Com. Coordinator, Events & Online study groups

Mary Lane marylane53@mac.com

Library Chair, Archives & Slide Registry

Joyce Hayes joyce.hayes@comcast.net

ATB7

Alex Friedman alexfriedmanata@gmail.com

Woven Gems Small Format Exhibition

Janet Haase haase@ufl.edu

ATA Awards

Elisabeth Quick ataaward@americantapestryalliance.org

PR Chair

Elaine Duncan elaine@elaineduncan.com

Volunteer Coordinator

Joan Griffin joan@joangriffintapestry.com

Web Editor

Christine Laffer christinelaffer@gmail.com

Webmistress

Jeanne Bates aBates@3-cities.com

Web Exhibits

David Johnson urbanwild@earthlink.net

Artist Pages

Michael Rohde mfrohde@mac.com

ATA MEMBERSHIP FORM

	1 year	2 years
Individual	\$35	\$65
Studio Circle	\$60	\$110
Curator's Circle	\$125	\$225
Collector's Circle	\$250	\$450
Student*	\$25	\$45

*enclose copy of current student identification card with payment

Please contact me about volunteer opportunities

Send payment to: ATA Membership
c/o Barbara Richards
2160 Devil's Gulch Rd
Estes Park, CO 80517
(970) 577-9728

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Postal Code _____ Country _____

Phone _____

Fax/Alternate phone _____

Email _____

Visa/Mastercard number

Exp. Date

card holder's signature

American Tapestry Alliance
PO Box 28600
San Jose, CA 95159-8600

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Tapestry Topics

Guidelines for submitting articles to *Tapestry Topics*:

Next Deadline: **October 1**: Conferences and Events of the Year

January 15: Stimulating Creativity

April 1: The Materiality of Surface

Send all items to: Linda Rees: lerees@comcast.net

--Or--

1507 Elkay Drive

Eugene, OR 97404

Phone: 541-338-8284

All photographs and electronic images should be accompanied by the following information: size, date completed, and photo credits.

Articles should be under 2000 words. Submissions will be edited for clarity and space requirements.

Exhibition reviews: We seek articles that describe the show with insight and critical observations. Describe the overall sense of the exhibit and explain the parts that contribute to this sense.

Newsletter committee: Proofreader: Mary Colton, Layout: Elinor Steele, Distribution: Ellen Ramsey. Online excerpts: Lyn Hart, Web posting: Christine Laffer.



Ruth Manning, TURNING
PAGES 9" x 18" 2008

visit our website
www.americantapestryalliance.org