



Tapestry Topics

A Quarterly Review of Tapestry Art Today

www.americantapestryalliance.org

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Pamela Topham, WATERMUSIC, 35"x 34"; 2005; silk and wool. Photo by Reed's Studio. (See "Wednesdays in Florida: Just Tapestry" pg. 13)

From the Directors

As 2008 winds down, this issue of *Tapestry Topics* will look back on the broad range of international tapestry events and look forward to ATA's inaugural juried small format biennial exhibition, "Connections: Small Tapestry International" opening at the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles in May 2009. The entries have already started to arrive, and we are expecting many more to come by the November 30th submission deadline.

With the "Tapestry 08" exhibition and symposium in the UK and Australia's "Tapestry 2008" symposium, tapestry weavers have been able to gain insights into the work being produced in regions far from where they live. There appears to be a ground swell of excitement as we find more articles being written, more exhibitions and more interest from galleries and curators.

Tapestry seems to be at a point where it is ready
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to take its rightful place in the world of fine art/fine craft as more tapestry artists explore the conceptual boundaries, the integral structure and develop unique approaches to our strong tradition.

The Textile Society of America met in Hawaii generating presentations and exhibitions of fiber work. Also the Handweavers Guild of America's Convergence 2008 in Tampa brought additional attention to the broader field of textiles providing a venue where excellence in tapestry could be viewed in context. The spread of information about fiber and tapestry events for collectors and artists will be augmented by Friends of Fiber Art International's recent creation of a new website. It can be seen at: <http://www.friendsoffiberart.org/>

Perhaps this heightened interest is in part fueled by the tapestry exhibitions the Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC has hosted in recent times: "Art of Magnificence" in 2002 and "Tapestry of the Baroque" in 2007. Those events drew huge appreciative crowds. Recently, Thomas Campbell, the curator of those exhibitions, was appointed as the new Director of the Metropolitan Museum. Textiles are one of Mr. Campbell's passions so perhaps the future holds more tapestry at the Met. Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was a blockbuster show of contemporary artist woven tapestry on the Met's schedule?

After a year of stimulating events, we can use the quieter months of winter studio time to go back and find threads we want to follow, to research new ideas, to finish the work on our looms and to look forward. Let's take the energy, optimism and enthusiasm we have enjoyed through 2008 and make 2009 a pivotal year for the creation of our personal work and the increasing stature of handwoven tapestry in the worlds of art, galleries and collectors. Let's build on the connections we have forged between artists and between organizations to create a future where the idea of a contemporary tapestry exhibition at the Met is a dream we believe possible to achieve.

Happy Weaving!

Becky Stevens and Linda Wallace



Joan Griffin *ALONG THE BLUE RIDGE PARKWAY*
24" X 48" (See Kudos, page 23.)

Next Issue: Sustaining Creativity

Lyn Hart, coordinator of the **January 15, 2009** theme describes the focus: Creativity, *artistic or intellectual inventiveness*, according to Webster's, is as essential as air and water to an artist. We have all experienced the crystalline moment of inspiration that spawns a singular or serial tapestry design, but creative juices must be flowing at that moment so that we are open to receiving and acting upon those inspirations. Likewise, we have experienced the abject ebb of stalled motivation when sitting down to design or weave feels like torture. How do we stimulate, promote, nurture, and sustain creativity on a daily basis, and, when the thrill is gone, how do we jump start our creative drives?

April 1: The Materiality of Surface: commentary that highlights artists whose work has distinctive surface qualities.

July 15: Tips and Tactics: What clever ideas have solved tricky problems at the loom?

New Metropolitan Museum of Art Director

**By James Harper, Associate Professor,
University of Oregon**

Thomas P. Campbell, curator of "Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence" (2002) and "Tapestry in the Baroque: Threads of Splendor" (2007) has long been known among students of tapestry as a leader, innovator, and scholarly exemplar. But until September, when he was anointed as the next director of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, he was little known outside of our specialist field. Since the announcement of his appointment, however, international artworlds have made sure to learn his name, and have—inevitably—been paying a bit more attention to tapes-try as a result.

The Met's search for a successor to Philippe de Montebello lasted eight months, with rumors flying the whole time about which of an international cast of characters might win the job. The Metropolitan is, after all, the largest museum in the western hemisphere and its directorship is a position of corresponding influence. The aristocratic de Montebello, a forceful advocate of eternal values over ephemeral trends, leaves big shoes to fill. When New York Magazine ran an article on the international array of museum professionals thought to be the lead candidates (ranking them with a pseudo-scientific "snootometer" under the headline "Who's Snooty Enough to Replace Philippe de Montebello?"), Campbell was not even on their list. The museum's eventual choice of him surprised many, perhaps because he is the kind of self-effacing personality that lies outside the detection range of a standard "snootometer." Given more to droll understatement than self-promoting bombast, Campbell has

always seemed less interested in promoting his own persona or career than he is in trying to enable the art of the past to speak to the present. If it is true that people are formed by their studies, then one might be tempted to say that some aspects of Campbell's personality and *modus operandi* are related to the tapestry field itself. Tapestry historians (unlike, say, historians of modern and contemporary painting) study a collaborative venture that involves many hands, some of them nameless. The venture requires the coordination of designers, weavers, dyers and financiers; and excellence is attained by cooperation and subjugation of self to project. For Tom Campbell over the last two decades, that project has been twofold; to foster the growing field of tapestry studies, and to lead a wider public to stand in awe of these truly awesome objects.

Tom Campbell was not born a tapestry man. He took an undergraduate degree in English Literature at Oxford (1984) before entering the University of London's elite Courtauld Institute for an M.A. (1987) and Ph.D. (1998) in Art History. There, he came to recognize that tapestry studies was a relatively neglected field. Opportunity lay in the gap that exists between the extraordinarily high value that renaissance and baroque patrons placed on tapestry and the lesser value that modern tastemakers have placed on it. While the renaissance prince considered tapestry central to his self-fashioning and self-representation, the modern academy and museum worlds tend to marginalize it. And in the 1980's tapestry studies, which tended to focus more on technical issues than on broader questions of cultural history, were complicit in this marginalization. The work of Campbell and contemporaries like Candace Adelson, who was doing pioneering work on the Medici tapestry patronage while Campbell was writing on the English Royal collections in the Tudor era, marked a shift in the field towards the integration of tapestry studies into mainstream art history and cultural studies. This coincided, conversely, with art history's shift away from focus on the protagonistic artist-genius and towards contextual issues like art production, art markets, and the so-called Decorative Arts.

An expanding field required better research resources, as Campbell and those around him realized. So, while still working on his degree, Campbell collaborated with the London tapestry dealers S. Franses Ltd., on the creation of the Franses Research Archive. With an extensive library and 160,000 visual records compiled and cross-referenced to date, it is the world's largest scholarly resource on European tapestry and carpets.

In 1995, Campbell moved to the Metropolitan Museum, where he rose steadily through the ranks to become Curator of European Tapestries. He also became Supervising Curator of the Antonio Ratti Textile Center, dedicated to the care of the museum's collection of over 35,000 textiles. Campbell's colleagues at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York sometimes referred to him as "Tapestry Tom,"

a whimsical nickname of the sort that one can hardly imagine applied to a curator of paintings. Yet being a textile specialist actually placed him at a busy crossroads rather than in a gated community. The Ratti Center cares for objects from a dozen different museum departments, ranging from ancient Egyptian linen garments to Persian carpets to the celebrated medieval Unicorn Tapestries to the off-loom "textile sculptures" of Claire Zeisler. Requiring him to maintain productive relations with colleagues all across the museum, daily, Campbell's job was a sort of microcosm of certain aspects of directorship.

Campbell's most publicly visible work for the Met, of course, was the pair of blockbuster tapestry exhibitions that he mounted there in 2002 and 2007. Each drew accolades for its visual richness but also for its intellectual rigor and depth of research. For the catalogue of each, he assembled an international team of experts to write what would become the definitive reference work on the subject. The importance of these catalogues, the latter of which the New York Times called "seven pounds of pure information," is hard to underestimate.

Inviting me to write on Campbell's appointment, Linda Rees provocatively asked, "Do you see it possibly as shifting the dominance of painting in the world of art to some degree?" I think that there is a connection here, but rather than causing a shift, Campbell's appointment was made possible by a shift, a slow shift that has been underway for several decades now. Perhaps more significant is Campbell's role as an exemplary scholar. In a time when the museum world is widely acknowledged to be suffering a crisis of leadership, his appointment would seem to be an important vote of confidence for the model of the scholar-curator-director. While other museums have chosen M.B.A.s for a more corporate style of direction, or frenetic showmen for a more inclusive style, the Met's selection reflects a belief that the art comes first, before spreadsheets and spectacle, and that the finest directors are those who are able to profoundly understand a staff of scholar-curators, thereby commanding their respect, affection and loyalty.

ATA Student Award

The 2008-2009 ATA Student Award
Deadline is **April 15th, 2008.**

For full information and to view detailed requirements visit the ATA website.

www.americantapestryalliance.org

Teachers, please encourage students to apply.

North American Perspective on Australia's Tapestry 2008

By Linda Wallace

Travelling the vast distance from North America to Australia to attend Tapestry 2008 in Canberra turned out to be one of the best journeys I have ever made. Jane Kidd and I met at the Vancouver Airport, roomed together in Sydney, in Canberra and in Melbourne allowing those magical late night/early morning tapestry discussions to evolve as we shared our impressions of culture and place, the exhibitions, and the talks at the symposium.

The input was continuous and, at times, seemed almost overwhelming. From a North American perspective, it was a rare opportunity to meet tapestry artists from Australia, New Zealand, Laos, Japan, the UK and Europe, to see their work close up, to listen as they talked about motivation and engagement. Everywhere I went, tapestry artists were just glowing with the excitement of finding new ways of discovering the interwoven complex layers of understanding the past, present and future of our medium.

The representation from North America was small. Jane Kidd taught a Master Class and spoke at the symposium; Nancy Hoskins spoke twice about her research on Coptic textiles, and, of course, Archie Brennan and Susan Maffei taught a Master Class and then Archie spoke at the banquet dinner. I believe I was the only one who travelled there from so far away, just to attend (and then I ended up chairing a session and giving part of the surprise tribute to Archie Brennan's sixty years as a weaver).

While there were not many of us present in person, we certainly embraced the concept of the "Land" exhibition. It was a joy to find the work of friends from home in the maze on walls throughout the Australia National University Textiles Department. Familiar techniques or challenging mixed media; rich colour or subtle combinations of neutral textures and values; representational and abstract works; they were all displayed, in rows or suspended from balconies, some in plain sight or tucked into corners. Throughout the pre and post symposium master classes and during the symposium days, we prowled and exclaimed and discovered new pieces. The variety and excellence of the entries was inspiring, and I would have been very hard pressed to select a "best" one.

In the major invitational exhibition in the Australian National University School of Art Gallery, we were able to study the work of nine superlative tapestry artists: Archie Brennan, Yasuko Fujino, Aino Kajaniemi, Jane Kidd, Sue Lawty, Sara Lindsay, Susan Martin-Maffei, Susan Mowatt, and Fiona Rutherford. The enormous gallery space allowed each artist to exhibit several pieces and for the viewer to gain insights that only comes from seeing a body of work. The exhibition highlighted the diversity of the



Sue Lawty talking to students in her Master Class at the Tapestry 2008 symposium in Canberra, Australia

tapestry medium, exquisitely interpreted by artists from Australia, Canada, Europe, Japan, the UK and USA.

The Tapestry 2008 Symposium was an event Valerie Kirk and the other organizers can be truly proud of creating. In the space of two intense days, speakers took us from the antiquity of Greek tesserae and mosaics, of Coptic and Andean tapestry through to projections of how the medium might continue to evolve and integrate with contemporary, conceptual art. Interspersed with the theoretical talks, tapestry artists shared their work with us and, as the days evolved, there was a sense of growing intensity. We began to feel the layers of meaning and the connections between our contemporary work and the ancient artefacts. We struggled with the sometimes uncomfortable projections for the future of handwoven tapestry. We discovered similarities and integrated conceptual threads in work that originally appeared quite dissimilar.

A personal example of that discovery would be my realization of 'kinship' between the lyrical, poetic work of Aino Kajaniemi and the precise minimalism of Sue Lawty's. Both artists use the structure of tapestry to create work that could not have been done in any other medium. While Kajaniemi combines a loose, cloth-like structure with alluring, sketch-like images, and Lawty uses subtle textural differences and pattern to create examples projecting a sculptural solidity, both demonstrate a passionate engagement with their medium. Both artists explore the boundaries of woven structure to perfection in ways distinct and unique to their individuality as artists.

One dramatic difference I found at the Australian symposium, compared to any other tapestry based event I have been part of, was the inclusion of speakers whose work would not be readily classified as "tapestry." This was not an insular, inward looking event. There appeared to be an implicit understanding that tapestry is an integral part of the contemporary art world, and artists working in the medium are not isolated from other artists. Video and performance challenged preconceptions of tapestry's place in the art/craft world.

As the memories distill over time, I find two recurring thematic patterns emerging. The first is the understanding of connections: between artists, through time, within and without our medium. We do not stand alone but create art in a world where cross cultural and international communication is constant. Even when language seems to be a barrier, images, emotions and passion speak fluently.

The second is the realization that 'tapestry' is evolving. While we saw work and heard from artists who are continuing to produce image based, traditional tapestry, we were also introduced to artists who have found new ways of employing a deep understanding of tapestry to create innovative work. If we, as North American artists working in the medium of handwoven tapestry, want to remain engaged with this evolution we need to be aware of, and open to, the more challenging work being created internationally.

I came home from Australia exhausted, exhilarated and overwhelmed with all I had seen and heard. The getting together with old friends, meeting people I had only known by name and sharing experiences filled all the moments between scheduled events. Finding connections between object and theory, between historical and contemporary, I find my work has already changed.

It will be years before I really understand how pivotal attending Tapestry 2008 has been to my artistic path. I know studying with Aino Kajaniemi and Sue Lawty has shifted my understanding of tapestry structure—a shift begun several years ago, with Archie Brennan and Susan Maffei. I know tapestry has a place within the space of fine craft and contemporary art. I know tapestry has many voices, each distinct, complex and resonant. The strongest single impression I took home with me from Canberra was one of passionate creative commitment of artists working in ways unique to their individual development. I know my own journey will be richer as I continue to push boundaries, explore concepts and develop the skills needed to speak with clarity.



Example of Sue Lawty's work with metal.

The Evolving Nature of Tapestry

By Dorothy Clews

Various themes underpinned presentations at "Tapestry 2008" —transformation of the tapestry textile, space, time, and process.

Several artists are using metamorphosis of tapestry into cloth and textile by treating it in a manner not usually connected with the medium. Sue Lawty beats her finished raffia tapestries with a hammer in the same manner as tapa cloth is beaten. Aino Kajaniemi, transforms her tapestries into something with the drape of woven cloth by ironing them. Together with rather unusual techniques, including exposing the warps, she creates ethereal imagery with the appearance of cloth and lace rather than tapestry.

Techniques borrowed from other textile practices were used also by Sue Lawty. By weaving small strips of tapestry and stitching them together like a piece of patchwork, sometimes even ignoring the direction of the warp to place the strip sideways, a network of light and shade is created across the surface. Sue constructs weavings of lead which also come under her hammer. She described that using lead was like digging up the earth and weaving with it. She likened her methods to a building process similar to how the landscape is built: whether weaving, piecing, constructing digital images or mosaic-like stone drawings. This blurring of the boundaries of traditional tapestry with other techniques not usually found in the process adds another layer of meaning. Is it cloth, paper, bark, lace, metalwork or something else?

If building can be part of what tapestry is, could deconstruction be a new technique for tapestry? In the PowerPoint presentation by Jessica Hemmings, a glimpse of Shelly Goldsmith carefully unweaving parts of a very long strip of weaving that she had made for a performance work in her latest exhibition gives time a new dimension, as it would have taken longer to unweave, than to weave.

Jessica Hemmings also presented time as a theme in a video called "Walking the warp"—a visual art performance. A number of young women dressed in white made the warp for a piece of cloth in a shop front of a busy street. Passersby on their way to work could be seen hurrying by while an almost ritualized performance was taking place. One figure zigzagged up and down between the warping pegs of the outsized warping board, the golden warp threads slowly growing higher up the pegs as other figures gently pushed down each warp as it turned around the pegs. The feet and legs of the figure warping gradually disappeared in an ethereal golden cloud of thread as the warps built up. Two more performances are planned, dressing the loom and weaving. The ritualized performance underlined the ideas of investment of

time in craftsmanship and knowledge together with the time of myth, memory and dream, as well as the time kept by the ever-present clock: time as metaphor.

Aino Kajaniemi spoke of time appearing to be divided up—to weave you have to be present, but there are other levels of thought, planning future work, remembering the past. Brenda Goggs said that the question the viewer should ask is not 'how long did that take, but why did you do it'? What is the point? This is a question we should all ask ourselves.

Today, tapestry students are not always to be found in tapestry studios, and painting students can be found lurking outside tapestry studios. A growing trend in art schools is to let the students have more freedom not to feel constrained to use one technique or medium. Susan Mowatt from Edinburgh told of the abandonment of the tapestry studio and the introduction of an intermedia studio to replace it. Individual specialist studios are a thing of the past. This aspect of broadening the artistic language of students will, in the future, enable them to explore space and installation work, something that Fiona Rutherford has explored in her strip format tapestries, based on Japanese kimono fabrics which can be hung horizontally, or vertically depending of the requirements of the gallery.

It is clear that tapestry is not what it was. It can be other things too.

<http://tapestry2008.blogspot.com/> for news and images about Tapestry 2008, also transcripts of some of the talks, links to participating artists websites, and other links.

TAPESTRY 2008: THE FINE ART OF WEAVING

By Debbie Herd

The first major gathering of world tapestry to be held in 20 years was to be an event that may take several years to digest.

A two day master class with Aino Kajaniemi was a rare opportunity, too good to miss. The workshop challenged all my ideas of what tapestry is and can be in almost every way possible. Linen was used as warp and weft, eccentric weaving to produce tonal shading in areas of a single color or gradations of tone achieved by not beating the weft down to cover the warps. Her weft materials include cotton, linen, viscose, silk, hair, wire, ribbon, unspun fleece, hemp, jute and hay. Wefts freely carried across the surface like pencil drawn lines and tapestries with the drape of a piece of textile had the students in the class totally engaged in thought as to how to translate some of these techniques and materials into their own art.

Seminars on the Friday and Saturday provided a thought provoking mix of presentations from so many wonderful speakers, almost too much to take in at once. A round table discussion at the end of the seminars about the future of tapestry in today's fast modern world brought much debate. Many of the world's educational institutions are no longer teaching tapestry within their fine art departments. The pioneering teachers of contemporary tapestry are beginning to retire. With younger students seeming no longer attracted to such a slow medium, the future seems questionable. Archie Brennan commented that the future of tapestry may lie in the hands of amateurs, practicing their craft in their own studios, rather than with professional academics.

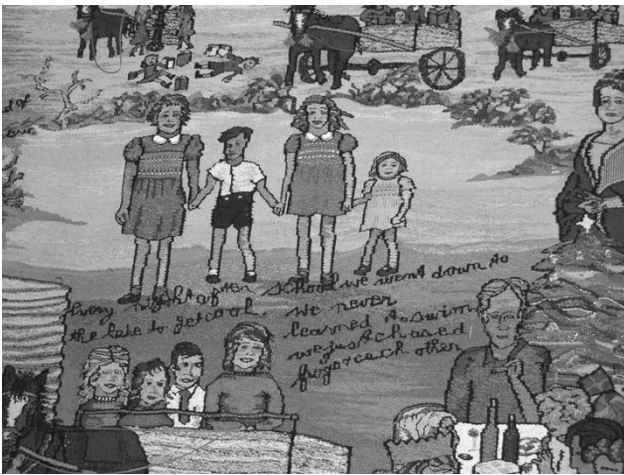
Sunday saw a range of outside activities with a tour of Parliament House to view the Arthur Boyd tapestry, which is the second largest tapestry in the world. Others took time to rest and recover or tour artists' studios. I spent Sunday afternoon at the seminar, "Community Tapestry - Education, Art and Public Service." It was a wonderfully casual afternoon presented by Cresside Collette with Kay Lawrence, Kirsty Darlston, Marie Cook and Stephnie Cantoni. The small and intimate group present engaged in informal commentary and discussion between each of the speakers. Melbourne artist Cresside Collette spoke of the many community tapestries that she has designed and coordinated for a vast range of public spaces. Cresside's current project at R.M.I.T "The Tree of Life" tapestry was shown in detail with some members of the volunteer weavers present to share their experience. You can read a blog about the making of this tapestry here. <http://treeoflifetapestry.blogspot.com/>

Marie Cook, a founding weaver at the Victorian Tapestry Workshop and lecturer in the Diploma of Arts, Tapestry at South West Institute of TAFE, presented a review of community tapestries produced in Warrnambool, Victoria. The brief and design process behind each of the tapestries was discussed at length. Designs that were to include aboriginal content were commissioned from local indigenous artists out of respect for their culture. Included in the presentation was the Elaine Hosking commemorative tapestry which hangs in the Tafe Library where Elaine worked. The project of three tapestries designed and coordinated by Mary O'Brien took eight years for the voluntary weavers to complete. You can read about this project in detail on the Tafe website at, http://www.swtafe.vic.edu.au/library/elainehosking/elaine_hosking.aspx

Kay Lawrence, a pioneer in Australian community tapestry, gave a presentation of the many tapestries completed in South Australia. Projects presented ranged from rural communities to the many tapestries woven in



Aino Kajaniemi MEMOIRE Detail



Community Tapestry, Panel 1 of 3: MALLEE, ELAINE THE CHILD Elaine Hosking 59" x 79" 1993-2001 tapestry at the TAFE Library in Warrnambool. Designed by Mary O'Brien, Photo by Marie Cook

schools by students, who often contributed their creative talents in the design process along with learning the new skill of tapestry weaving. Two large tapestries to celebrate the "Centenary of Women's Suffrage" in South Australia were discussed in detail. They now hang in the House of Assembly chamber of South Australian Parliament, the site where "votes for women" were first canvassed in Australia and where women were to become the first in the world to be granted the right to stand for Parliament. Information about these tapestries can be found here. http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/women_and_politics/mr17.htm

Stephnie Cantoni spoke of the ongoing commitment of a group of women in Western Australia who have been working tirelessly over the past ten years, with the many monumental projects completed now hanging in public display. Kirsty Darlston gave a presentation about a project in Melbourne that she coordinated. She is currently undertaking a PhD at the South Australian School of Art and as part of her research is conducting a new community tapestry in South Australia.

Community tapestries, often woven in public spaces, have become a major voice in introducing tapestry to a wider audience in a country with such a new history of tapestry weaving. The many projects are often funded by government grants, artists in school residencies, or community donations. This funding provides materials and equipment along with securing a payment to the designer, along with a coordinator for the project, which is a huge undertaking in itself. Each of the tapestries, that often took several years to complete, has given to their communities a rich sense of pride and achievement. For many of the volunteers this has been their first introduction to tapestry weaving. I left the seminar inspired by all that I had heard and with an overwhelming sense of pride in Australia's history of volunteer weavers.

The symposium was an opportunity to meet up with old friends and to make contact with new ones. I traveled home inspired, tired and overwhelmed by the whole experience; I hope that I do not have to wait another 20 years for the next one.

As I Saw It: Exhibitions in Canberra

By Marilyn Rea-Menzies

In May this year I had the privilege of attending "Tapestry 2008," the tapestry symposium held at the Australian National University, School of Art, in Canberra. Before events started, three fellow tapestry weavers from Christchurch, New Zealand, and I went with Valerie Kirk to the Old Parliament House to see the large (146 x 120.2cm) tapestry, "Portrait of Dame Elisabeth Murdoch." It was designed by Christopher Pyett and Normana Wight, and beautifully woven by Merrill Drumbell in 2000. It is very delicate in colour and execution. The greens and browns of the foliage behind Dame Elisabeth have been woven in a simplified style that enhances and ties in with the floral patterns in her dress. The design is saved from 'busy-ness' by the softness of her face and hands, and by the dark areas that balance the pattern. Dame Elisabeth Murdoch AC DBE (b.1909), philanthropist and matriarch, was a Founding Member of the Board of Management of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, which opened in 1976 and is now regarded as a world centre of contemporary handwoven tapestry. (For images of the tapestry see; <http://www.npg.gov.au/gallery/portmth/dec00/index.htm>)

In the afternoon we attended a floor talk by the artists at the exhibition "The Fine Art of Tapestry Weaving." Jasuko Fujino stood in front of her large "Harmas de J.H.Fabre" (200 x 400cm) and had us all laughing with her insights claiming she has really 'no idea' why she weaves tapestry, just knows that she must do so. Her work is strongly influenced by her favourite reading

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material from childhood, the works of the French scientist/naturalist J.H.Fabre, best known for his series of texts on insects and arachnids collectively termed the *Souvenirs Entomologiques*. Jasuko's tapestry commemorates his life's work with delicate insects transposed onto bright colourful shapes. Her original design was created with oil pastels which have translated well into the tapestry medium.

The work that had me totally enthralled was the modular "Memoire" (144 x 242cm) by Finnish weaver Aino Kajaniemi. The 20 almost monochromatic small tapestries hung as one work, making a strong statement. Aino talked about her work as a fairytale, Aurora, Cinderella, Snow White—princesses looking to find their prince! The work was enhanced by the different textures resulting from the variety of fibres within a unit. She is able to find free forms through eccentric wefting, and through a flexibility of line that wanders here and there throughout the work. Her poetic images come straight from her heart to the heart of the viewer, leaving an impact that lasts.

It is interesting how many artists today are choosing modular formats, and Susan Mowatt is no exception. Her influences are many, creating layers of meaning in the images with much more behind them than initially appears. These modules were born of a necessity to find ways of working that would enable her to continue with her personal vision.

Sue Lawty's lovely textural work is very well known. During her talk she told us how her first visit to Australia changed her perceptions of landscape and largely influenced how she worked from that time on. From semi-representational, it changed to wholly abstract. Using simple materials such as raffia, hemp, and lately, lead, she developed her work in response to how the character of materials and the woven structure behaved as she wove, often reacting at a subconscious level. Another of her innovations was gaining the courage to cut into the woven pieces, reorganizing them into new structures.

And of course there was work by Archie Brennan and Susan Martin Maffei, the 'doyens' of tapestry throughout the world. Archie said tapestry creates the illusion of form and has its own particular surface and interest. His drawing series, some of which were in this exhibition, are strong linear images reminiscent of cubism, seemingly simple in concept but not necessarily easy to weave. It was when I looked at these works closely, I realised what Archie was meaning, that whilst drawing on paper the artist



Aino Kajaniemi MEMOIRE (144cm x 242cm)

only has to create the line itself, in tapestry not only the line but the background, the whole, must be created, so it is an illusion of drawing only.

In the evening we went to the Drill Hall for the floor talk by Cresside Collette about her exhibition "A Month at Bundanon." Cresside had spent a month as artist in residence there. It is property gifted to the NSW government as a legacy for Australian artists. The drawings were much more subtle and evocative than the tapes-

tries and had a great sense of atmosphere and emotion about them. "Singleman's and Grass," a drawing in pastel on paper, is super. The curve along the base of the trees and the dark shadows there complement the light on the grass, and it seems to me to be a perfectly balanced drawing. The small tapestry "Singleman's and Grass" is quite different, being broken up into three sections and focusing on the green grass in the foreground. There is much more detail in the tapestry and the tonal values do not have the strong contrast as in the drawing.

Cresside wove most of these tapestries outdoors, actually weaving in the landscape so they are very immediate, necessitating an almost instant response to the land, to the changing light and atmosphere in front of her at that moment. It seems an anomaly to try capturing a moment in time in such a slow medium as tapestry, but on the whole the tapestries are successful.

"South West," was an exhibition of tapestries woven by students from the Diploma of Arts Course TAFE, at Warnambool. I was impressed with the one woven by Millicent Easter entitled "3rd April, 2007." A strong horizontal work in understated greens, browns and blacks on an ecru background, this tapestry had 24 sections or blocks woven within a grid formation. Each block represented an area of bush as it appeared at every hour throughout a day. The quote "Quietness and emptiness are enough to pass through life without error" was woven above and below the blocks in a handwritten script. The same quote was woven in Japanese calligraphy on the left hand side. This tapestry captured the passage of time in a unique and powerful way.

I also liked Ruth Zegir's two tapestries hung side by side, "The Ancestor Scrolls (A Grace)" which also features text. She was inspired by the handwriting of family members and wove them in muted cream with black lettering, very simple and reminiscent of Chinese scrolls. Text has traditionally been incorporated into tapestries, and these artists are using words in an innovative and contemporary way.

The other item in this show that grabbed my attention was "Colour - My Friend" by Stephnie Cantoni. The images are abstract and colourful. The diagonals in the work provide an energy that leads into the larger section and the reds are balanced by the yellows in the right hand corner.

Yet another exhibition, "Inspired by Gardens," consisted of tapestries woven by Australian and New Zealand weavers. Instigators of this project were Australians, Yvonne Eade and Marie Clews and New Zealander, Heather Adlam who have organised a number of projects for tapestry weavers "Down Under." The weavers were asked to design and weave a small tapestry inspired by their garden, and then to send their design to a companion weaver who also wove the same design. Therefore each participant in the project wove two tapestries, one of their own design and one designed by their companion weaver. The tapestries were displayed together with the original design in the centre. It was fascinating to see the variety of interpretations that are possible when weavers are asked to weave the same design.

As we walked into Valerie's office to announce our arrival on the first morning, I was pleased to see my own small tapestry, "Beachcomber," displayed on the nearby wall along with many of the others in the "Land" Exhibition. We kept finding more wherever we went within the many sections of the School of Art Building, creating small surprises throughout the day, which was rather fun. The brief for the works in this exhibition was to weave a tapestry no more than 10cm high by as many centimeters as the weaver wished to the theme of "Land." The weavers chose many variations on this, with the smallest work



Cresside Collette: SINGLEMAN'S AND GRASS

being two 1.5" x 1.5" tapestries "Near Nhill 1 & 2" by Cheryl Clark Thornton. This work won the major prize. The judges, commented:

This tiny artwork presented the idea of vast physical and psychological spaces. The highly resolved composition embodied a pulse and rhythm of Land through varied scale of mark and a clear but subtle palette. The space in-between the two parts of the work added a conceptual edge, a nod to absence or a solitary humanity.

For me too, the work, though very small in itself, imbued amazing awareness and sense of distance and space.

The People's Choice award went to Maximo Laura for his colourful tapestry "Rituals and Visions in the Sacred." Maximo is Peru's preeminent weaver of contemporary tapestries and rugs. Beautifully woven, very detailed and rich in colour, this work certainly embodies his philosophy to rediscover "the rich, unique ... historical textile source of the Andes" superbly.

I could go on and on, choosing other works that made an impact on me. The tapestry exhibitions at "Tapestry 2008" in Canberra show that tapestry is alive and well around the world, that tapestry weavers everywhere are producing innovative and interesting work, and I was privileged to be able to see and comment on these works. Here's to the next Symposium!

Reinventing Landscape

By Katherine Perkins and Lynn Mayne

The tapestry workshop "Reinventing Landscape," sponsored by the American Tapestry Alliance, was held at Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Florida in June 2008. The workshop instructor, Joan Baxter of Brora, Sutherland, Scotland, came strongly into the consciousness of many American tapestry weavers with the tapestry "Migdale Kilt" that was a part of the American Tapestry Biennial Six. (See *Tapestry Topics* Winter 2006 p.13)

Perhaps the most compelling thing about Baxter's work, and what drew us to "Migdale Kilt," is her ability to tell parallel stories within a single tapestry. Her use of color, line, and, most especially, transparency gives her tapestries an ephemeral quality that invites the viewer to linger in contemplation.

Even the site of the workshop (elevation: 45 feet; temperature: 90 degrees; humidity: 98%) would become a part of the lesson in reinventing landscape for Kathy, a high desert resident. From the arid west this would definitely fit into the category of reinventing landscape, aside from also being an endurance test.

Joan Baxter's environment is so different from mine that the title took on yet another meaning. Just the nature

continued...



Becky Stevens at work on a design assignment for the Baxter workshop.

of the land itself and the kind of human occupation of the land made for very different ways of approaching design. The reds, yellows, and oranges of the land and extremely vivid blue sky of the arid west do not exist in the land of rain, humidity and lush vegetation. Even the greens of Joan's landscape are so different from the greens of mine that it led to interesting interchanges on the appropriate green to use.

Joan directed our class into approaching the idea of landscape in some new ways. When she showed slides of her work, she spoke of looking beyond the visual when weaving a landscape. She likes her work to be ambiguous, so it might involve more than one horizon line or it could be a bird's eye view from above. Transparency can give a feeling of history to the scene as if looking through a mist of time. Her working process involves collecting loads of information before beginning a design.

The first morning of class began with a group list of landscape qualities or things to think about when developing designs. Students had been asked to bring resource material for landscape designs. Joan had advised that the most useful resources would include a great many source materials such as memories, dreams, music, stories, thoughts, as well as drawings, photographs and diary extracts. As Lynn describes the task: the landscape was to have significance to the individual and could be real or imaginary, rural or urban. We chose a basic "core" color for our landscape and then wove a tiny two-inch or so weaving to sample colors for our design. This was a new concept to many: to weave colors of yarn before choosing paint or pencil colors. Later painting, drawing, and/or collage came into play. Participants developed ideas in their

chosen medium or wove samples of techniques to use in carrying out the future tapestry.

Joan moved about the class of twelve, consulting with us one-on-one. She dealt with the resource material and the goals of each student. Information was geared to the individual as she strove to teach what became necessary rather than following a set plan. The class atmosphere was relaxed and non-competitive. Joan's influence and the personal work attitude of each participant kept things mellow throughout. Joan set up times during our three days to meet singly with those who asked for a personal tutorial session involving a critique of work.

Some of the most useful tools Joan brought to us were her photographs and samples. As we struggled with our designs, we could see how she incorporated similar concepts into woven pieces. Additionally, each evening Joan would sit down with one of us and critique the portfolios we had brought to class. Not all people participated in this exercise, but for those of us who did, it was a great learning tool and an extension of our classroom discussions.

The site of the workshop, beautiful Eckerd College, was truly the perfect location because it had classroom, lodging, dining and its own beautiful landscape all within about 100 yards of each other. We could eat, drink, and be merry, sleep and work, which went until 9 each night, without concerning ourselves with anything but tapestry. It was definitely a period devoted entirely to tapestry, the love of our lives.

We thank ATA and Mary Lane, Educational coordinator, for creating the opportunity for us to connect with Joan Baxter, educator, tapestry designer and weaver extraordinaire!

2008 ATA Workshop "Channeling Your Muse"

Mary Zicafoose: "Wake up Different!"

By Brenda Osborn and Ann Arndt

"If Mary Zicafoose comes to teach near your area, make sure you get into her class!" This was advice given to me when I enrolled for this summer's ATA Workshop, "Channeling Your Muse." How true it is!

One of Mary's opening remarks to us was, "It is better to have a great passion than to have talent." Through images and examples from artists' lives she demonstrated that while a talented person may never fully use his gifts, the passionate person will use whatever gifts he has to the fullest. As our three days of class unfurled,

Mary used many techniques to encourage us to find our passion, tell our own unique story, and get beyond the hurdles that prevent us from being the artists we want to be.

Day One, on creativity and design, was full of discussions, proposals, hypotheses with a wide variety of mental, physical and visual exercises that encouraged us to open doors and take risks. We were cutting, pasting, inventing and reframing, pushing, pulling, seeing and dreaming, stepping out of our comfort zones, and making waves by "throwing the stone *out there* and swimming to it".

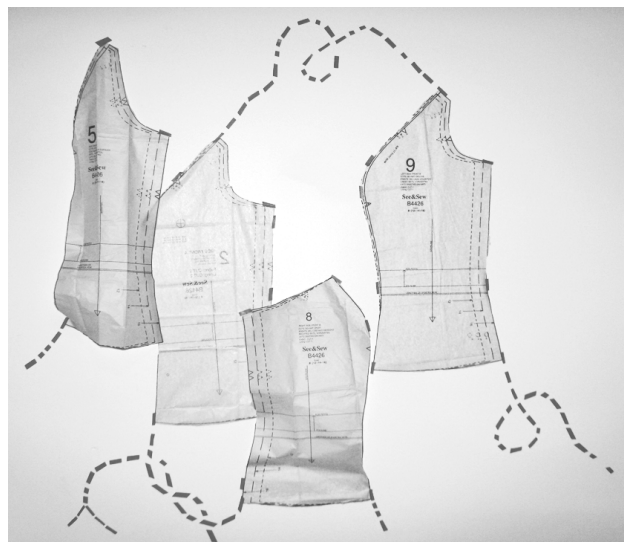
As we worked Mary read to us from sources she finds inspirational to her own artistic process like *The War of Art* by Steven Pressfield and *Art and Fear* by David Bayles, and included these quotes from Martha Graham on developing a good work schedule: "Practice is the means of inviting the perfection desired;" and for helping define our dreams and aspirations: "A goal is a dream with a deadline!"

Day Two focused on color, and we were each given a wonderful set of Color-aid papers with which to do exercises based on Josef Albers color theory. Most of us were familiar with his work and theories, but the physical acts of doing the exercises and using the Color-aid papers were invaluable to each of us. Mary continued to read to us as we worked, and in a particularly devilish but welcomed move, she even supplied us with chocolate to keep us energized!

Day Three was designed to put the two previous days' work to use. In Mary's words, this day was about "reinventing our landscape." She said, "Today we will reposition ourselves, focusing inward as we think, discuss, write and collaborate." She encouraged us "to look openly and intently, both backward and forward as we begin to reinvent the landscape of patterns, habits, and creative self-image." During part of the day we all collaborated on a time line of social, political, and cultural events that occurred from 1998 to the present, and then we projected what we *hoped* could happen in the world going forward to 2018. Individually we made a personal time line that also projected our goals into the future. It was powerful to make these kinds of projections for ourselves, and it brought back to mind that a goal is indeed a 'dream with a deadline.'

Each evening we gathered after dinner to share our work and our artistic stories. Mary encouraged such a sense of comraderie that this became the time when we truly began to get familiar with each other.

Mary's teaching style demonstrated her enthusiasm and creativity. She was relentlessly positive while also



Mary Lane, PATTERN Zicafoose design assignment
ATA workshop 2008 Sewing pattern, red tape.
Photo by Brenda Osborn

offering good criticism, and her sense of humor was always right out in front. At the end of each day she gave out a door prize: a copy of *Art and Fear*, a humorous book on the "colorology" of birthdays after each of us stated our birth dates and got our "color," and a lovely, hand-dyed scarf by Carter Smith. She brought a DVD of a PBS documentary about Andy Goldsworthy which we watched one evening after finishing our personal histories and sharing of work. She had thought ahead to plan something special for every facet of our time together.

At the end of our three days, our group of twelve tapestry artists with widely different levels of experience from all over the US, left as friends who carried home encouragement and a resolve to try something different, to tell our stories, to clean out the junk from our lives as well as our drawers, and to make goals, both for the short term and the long term.

From this workshop, we gained a better understanding that passion is the key ingredient to getting down to work. It is the best tool for conquering the hurdles that always get in the way of working. Daily work, that daily practice of inviting perfection, is the main ingredient in the life of a professional artist.

Channeling our Muse with Mary Zicafoose was a personal adventure with a passionate guide.

Make sure you look online for
more photographs.

Review:

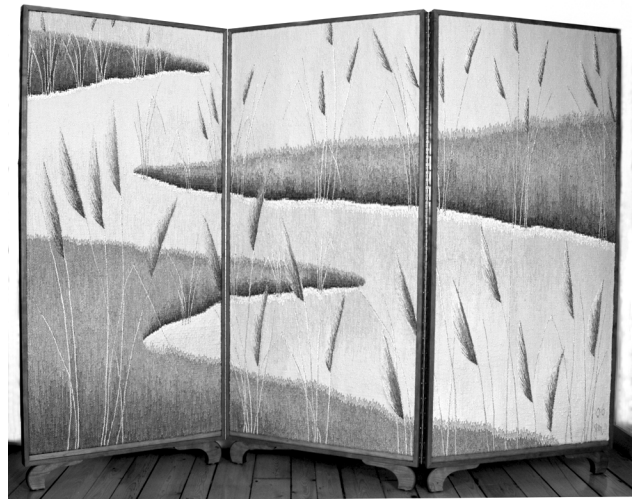
ATB7 Exhibition: From the Heart of a Weave

by Linda G. Weghorst

In her book, *Halo of the Sun*, Noel Bennett quoted this Navajo Chant: "With beauty before me, It is woven/ With beauty behind me, It is woven/ With beauty above me, it is woven/ And in beauty, It is finished." This timeless chant played over in my mind upon entering the Scarfone / Hartley Gallery at the University of Tampa. I became surrounded by the multitude of inspiring tapestries that represent the ATB7 Biennial Exhibition. I sensed the wealth of ideas, rendered painstakingly with exceptional skills by weavers at their looms. I found myself responding not with logic, but rather with instinct, heart and emotion, stimulated by the beauty in these tapestries.

The juror, Susan Warner Keene, stated: "In keeping with the spirit of a biennial, it was my decision to include a broad representation of approaches to tapestry, rather than to focus more narrowly." Ms. Keene took an inclusive approach, selecting a survey of contemporary tapestries which embody time honored traditions without disregarding innovations. The Scarfone / Hartley Gallery was spacious, well lit, and ideal in size for the show. The installation was sensitive, with respect to placement of tapestries in the space and relationships to neighboring works. One felt a rhythm and flow that unified the many individual expressions presented.

Outstanding choices were made when installing smaller works on support columns that did not overwhelm the artists' works. Each side of the support wall was used to isolate a small item for careful study. Mary Babcock's delicate three panel work, "Finding Center," features images of islands woven with maps and fishing line. These panels quietly spoke of isolation. Another column wall held Brenda Osborn's "Stone Buddha," equally quiet but opaque and solid in its presence. The importance of close study was clearly indicated in "So Sought After" by Kathe Todd-Hooker. Woven with highly detailed imagery and text, it is a complex blend of message and elegance. Other tapestries that benefited by intimate encounter included Jennifer Sargent's "Shift and Shift Again" which embodies a sense of action upon the cloth. "Shifts" in structures, materials, and forms combine as a record of time. Repetitive action is also the basis for "Conciliation - Peace" by Joyce E. Hayes, woven in grey scale color with emphasis on repetitive tapestry patterns, stripes, and hatching. Lany Elia's black and white diptych "And," employs visual texture to render facial imagery. Her intent is to have the panels viewed intimately and also at a distance to allow full perception of the images depicted.



Julia Mitchell THREE FOLD SCREEN, 3 tapestries
58" x 28" Wool and silk on linen warp.
Photo by Ron Hall Photography

Sensitivity again prevailed in providing a large individual wall for "How Calm The Wild Water" woven by Fiona Hutchinson. A large work, constructed of seven panels made of narrow strips held together by a complex network of fluid threads crossing and overlapping, it has both a sense of complexity and simplicity. The peaceful inspiration of the sea is embodied in the delicate color palette of blue and natural tones, yet the textural qualities are active. I noted a relationship between "How Calm the Wild Water" and Julia Mitchell's "Three Fold Screen." The placement of the screen in the middle of the room echoed the subtlety of Hutchinson's piece, featuring a quiet depiction of grasses and water and a subdued color palette.

Woven by Barbara Burns, "Blue Frida II" was displayed in a corner wall area allowing the viewer to absorb the strong facial image and appreciate the dimensional format for presentation. Adjacent to Burns tapestry was "Summer in Quincy" woven by Lialia Kuchma. The artist contrasts shades of black and white with bold flat areas of color to convey a figurative work resplendent with abstract details.

Moving around the gallery I continued to discover a rhythm of variety and relationships. The first tapestry placed near the entrance greeted the viewer with a richly colored, shaped tapestry by Lialia Kuchma "At the Gate." It was followed by the innovative "Flow I" by Alexandra Friedman, which also was a shaped tapestry using weave distortions, pushing technical limits to develop ropey elements in the flat surface. The pictorial peacefulness of "Blue Day" in the figurative work of Sarah Swett provides a resting spot for the eye and mind. The reflective sense is carried on in the neighboring piece, "Dream Sequence" by Susan Iverson. Woven with precision, her figures are stylized, symbolic representations of a conversation

between the dream and the real world. Like an exclamation point the wall was completed with "Gravity" by Line Dufour. It cascades down the space in folded forms, bearing analogous colors and abstract shapes, symbolizing the gravity of grief.

The quiet presence of traditions and histories are present in several tapestries. Connie Lippet's "Sacred Places: Emerald Pool" is based on the Navajo tradition of Wedge weave. Robin Reider's "Midnight Folly" also salutes Southwest traditions. The meditative repetition embodied in Michael F. Rhode's "Tibetan Prayers" and the use of symbols and pattern in "Ancient Text: Indigo and Ochre" by Mary Zicafoose, joined personal memories with cultural histories. Maximo Laura's "Camini Ardinete A La Luz," an example rich with color, addresses the iconographic language of the Peruvian culture.



Gabriela Cristu, THE MIRAGERY,
260 cm x 161 cm wool and cotton
Photo by Marius Caraman

The use of pattern in imagery is masterfully implemented in Susan Martin Maffei's "Sport Series - Golf at Chelsea Piers." Aspects of pattern and delicate imagery are combined in Linda Wallace's "Homage to Aubrey." Pictorial traditions are evident in the works of Urban R. Jupena. His triptych "Blaze of Glory," based on a childhood memory, depicts a flaming forest. Intensity, fear and beauty co-mingle in his work. "The Shaman" was created by Barbara Heller using a mummified seagull as a model. The emotional expression in her work is powerful, a spiritual and political personal statement. Less emotional pictorials were represented in the bold, confident "Lady with the Red Hair" by Liev Beuten-Schellekens and the transformative diptych by Lynn Mayne, "Flower to Bird."

There were bold contrasts to note as well. "Poetic Line" by Bozena Pychova, a large scale tapestry, with a graphic, textural quality was presented next to the painterly "Girl II" created by Ann Naustdal. This colorful portrait is flat, finely woven and surrounded by a frame of natural linen. But the most outstanding opposition was found when comparing the work of Gabriela Cristu "The Miragery" with "Entrelacs" by Marika Szaraz. "The Miragery" is a surreal work, a triumph of color, form, image and imagination. I found myself lost in the intricacies of this tapestry. "Entrelacs" by comparison cuts into the visual space of the wall; its simple black and white forms and heavy weave structure carried a strong presence with a minimalist approach.

Each and every tapestry selected for the ATB7 Exhibition was integral in demonstrating the breath of this art form, and inspired the heart of this weaver. "And in beauty, it is finished."

Review: Wednesdays in Florida: *Just Tapestry*

By Carolyn Greber

Sarasota weaver and member of the Convergence Community Exhibits committee

The Wednesday Group includes 14 tapestry designer-weavers who have been meeting and collaborating since 1993. Converging from locations between Albany, NY and Washington, D.C., they meet once or twice a month on a Wednesday at the studios of Archie Brennan and Susan Martin Maffei in New York City.

This exhibit by the Wednesday Group was on view for the month of June 2008 at the Women's Resource Center in Sarasota, Florida as one of the Community Exhibits scheduled in conjunction with the HGA Convergence. It presented an outstanding variety of subject matter, styles and techniques, an eye (and mind)-opening treat for those unacquainted with the diverse scope of tapestry today, and a treat as well for those who are already appreciators of tapestry but rarely have the opportunity to take in an exhibit of such variety and size.

There were 29 individual pieces (at least one from each of the Group's members) and a themed group project, "Not Gone for Baroque" (2007), which consisted of 16 individual pieces mounted together on a single panel. The categories of landscape, portrait and figure, and abstract were all well represented.

Portrait and figure studies perhaps displayed the broadest scope and contrast, in size, stylistic choices and technique. The delicacy of line and color and subtlety of textural effects in Barbara Burns' "Standing Figure" held its own in contrast to Don Burns' "The Sitting, The Home Series," a large (37" x 30") vibrant composition with a strong still center anchoring a riotous collage of competing blocks of pattern and color.

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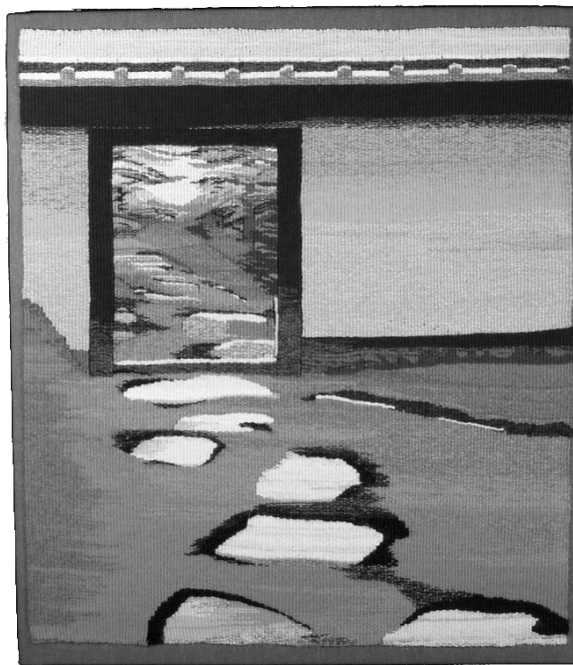
Rita Landau's "JAYZEE" and Barbara Burns' "Woman with Red Turban" could both be described as studies in mood and shadow, but Burns' piece takes a painterly approach in its use of dramatic, expressive color, while Landau relies on just black and cream and a starkly reduced image of high contrast for an equally dramatic impact.

Archie Brennan and Betsy Snope each reference medieval tapestries but in quite different ways. Snope's "Grape Pickers" is a lushly colored modernization of a typical scene from medieval art. Brennan's "Gypsy Woman - A Reconstruction" extracts a single figure from one of the Devonshire Hunting Series tapestries and distills her face and form to the essential elements that express her personality.

Landscapes as a category showed equal variety. Barbara Bettigole's "Rachel's Brook" came closest to realism, giving the rocks real substantiality and the water glimmering depth. Helen Gold's "Walled Garden" stepped away from realism in a beautifully edited and composed Oriental garden scene that exuded serenity and invited the viewer to stop for a contemplative respite. Pamela Topham's "Water Music" evoked the awesome interplay of light and reflection where water meets sky at the edge of a lake, the horizon line asserting itself just enough to balance the opposing energies.

"Susan Maffei's "View from Mme. Touitou's," a rooftop vista of a crowded Old World city skyline, is a tour de force in perspective and the handling of vertical blocks of color in weaving, as the architectural features of the roof tops, primarily myriad chimneys, recede into deep space. Her piece "Darts" from the Sport Series provided another example of drawing the viewer in through an unusual perspective. Here the viewer seems to be looking down into a room as if from a balcony high above. The patterned floor, tables and people below devolve into a geometric abstraction. When viewed from very close in the sense of the scene can be discerned but in stepping back just slightly, the piece appears to be an abstractly patterned textile, reminiscent of Japanese kimono fabric prints.

Other works in the exhibit straddled the line where representational becomes abstract. Alta Turner showed a group of five related pieces illustrating design process. Starting from an original drawing, "Alzheimer Schematic," focusing on just the eyes and nose of a troubled face, the series included another drawing, "Alzheimer Detail," of just the left eye accompanied by its woven counterpart, and



Helen Gold, WALLED GARDEN, 22"x 19", 2005.

then two more woven pieces, "Rendered Left 1 & 2" and "Pixelated Right 3 & 4," depicting each eye twice, with the image becoming progressively more abstracted through pixelation. Anna Byrd Mays' "Go - Figure" shows the progression from figure study to abstraction. Don Burns' "Lane's Island Study" turns a topographical map into an exercise in textural effects. Carol Bitner's "Scalloped Sunrise" barely references natural forms as it becomes an abstract exploration of form and color interplay.

The category of pure abstraction had few but dramatically different pieces—Brenda Osborn's "Detail of Life," with its vibrant colors and swirls of energy, and Alta Turner's "Black Box" and "The Out of the Box," each a 5" x 5" x 3" block completely covered with tapestry, one black with a silver line tracing around it, the other earth tones with textural effects from mixed fibers.

Annelise DeCoursin provided some whimsy with her bathing beauty under a friendly-faced sun in "Sunshower" and her colorful tree frog among the foliage in "My Paradise."

This show was also on exhibit through the month of October 2008 at the Jewish Community Center, Cherry Hill, NJ.

Review: Tapestry for the Tropics by Tapestry Artists of Sarasota

By Linda Rees

"Tapestry for the Tropics by Tapestry Artists of Sarasota" (TAOS) exhibited weavings by Lynn Mayne, John Nicholson, Becky Stevens and Terri Stewart at the Florida Craftsman Gallery in St. Petersburg during Convergence 08. It featured six series of tapestries—providing two related items can be classified as a series.

If working in series is about all images connecting together in some logical flow, then Becky Stevens' "Butterflies" is a successful example. The shifting colors of abstract shapes of the four close-up details of butterfly wing patterns create a movement of changing hue from left to right. Each tapestry informs the next. Terri Stewart's four reptilian "Critters" eyes are unified most strongly by

the impact of the smooth, curved forms and bold color combination. Black assumes an important role in integrating the graphic shapes of the small, 9" x 10" tapestries, giving us a very refreshing reminder of the varied colors that really do exist in nature. (See *Tapestry Topics* Spring, 2007.)

For other series, the logical flow is more obviously theme driven, with images that are similar in form and content. Two of John Nicholson's tapestries rely on vascular-like pathways of color, but they are polar in scale. The tangle of flaming colors set on a rich blue ground in "Arteriovenus" is spectacular in its complexity and its intricate interchanges of color. There is a subtle use of thin lines and texture to delight a close look, but the richness of the meandering elements are equally pleasing observed at a distance. A much larger tapestry, "Silhouette," magnifies an asymmetrical connection of gleaming red arterials on a fibrous background. John's third piece, "Emerald Spire," matches the vibrancy of the previous tapestries with its green and magenta interaction but it has a narrow vertical orientation where small congested shapes of color overlay each other and expand upwards creating a dynamic perspective from tight facets at the bottom to large angular planes in the top half. (See page 24, cover) These works and his entry in "Woven Gems" confirm that he is a colorist at heart. The newest member of the TAOS group, John studied with Georgie Beck (featured artist by gallery director, Dan de Graaf at the ATA seminar in Grand Rapids).

Lynn Mayne exhibited three tapestries with strikingly crisp black and white borders that contain a repetitive band of either flowers, birds, bugs or delicate lacy patterns. Two mid sized compositions honor the dragonfly for existing even longer than dinosaurs. The other tapestry is a wide rectangle displaying a heron and Bird of Paradise flower on a deep red background closely related in size and subject matter to Lynn's diptych, "Flower to Bird" in "ABT7." Its side borders are beautifully rendered.

In each series, for every artist, I see a range of success. It leads me to believe that an aspect of observing series is that they beg for comparison within their collective context. Why is it that within the parameters of the theme, one works better than others? I wanted to see dates on the labels. Would the first, original concept produce the most lively example? Is there a progression of insight that has the last image as its best statement?

Of the three pieces by Lynn Mayne, everything in "Metamorphosis" comes together with such clarity that it inexplicably outshines the other two very excellent tapestries. In Terri Stewart's "Shell" series, I see an innovative shaped tapestry "Set in Stone" that is well presented and the hermit crab legs coming out of a shell in "Shell Game" drew my attention into the tapestry, but as a series, the shell theme seems not to have the same vitality as her "Critters."

"Trouble in Paradise," the second group of tapestries by Becky Stevens, makes no attempt to keep all of its components in line stylistically or to scale. Of the five double portraits of a man and woman only three are similar in style and seem most closely to exist in the "Garden." Each individual title offers a statement presumably spoken by one of the participants. The words provide a starting point for interpreting each scene, but the visual detail is by far the source of the enigmatic narrative.

"How can you say that?" stands alone in the context of a civilized cultural environment. An Asian couple in a room holding a sheer fabric in front of themselves look askance like they are trying to conceal a dispute. (See *Tapestry Topics* Spring 2007)

"Be Careful What You Say," the other nonconforming work confirms that Paradise is, indeed, in trouble. Its scale is dramatically shifted to reveal only half of each head in the largest tapestry in the series (32" x 29"). Looking sad yet vacant and unyielding, the pair face forward with disturbing gauze filters over their mouths and noses. A separate slender banner contains accusations woven in cursive letters that are only partially visible within the folds of the fabric that drapes down the two sides loosely framing the tapestry. There is only a remote glimpse of what might be the edge of the "Garden" bridging the distance between the two figures.

The dual portraits in the three "Garden" tapestries are small, taking up the central 8" surrounded by plants that dominate the space. The first of the tapestries woven in the series, "I Will Always Love You, If You Promise..." gives the viewer an exciting perspective, as if right at ground level. Sensitive lighting on the lifelike fern fronds enhances a feeling that we viewers are witnessing a very private though likely jaded moment.



Becky Stevens, I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU, IF YOU PROMISE... 27" X 24" 2003.

continued...

There is a sizzling tonality to the essentially two-color composition of "Will You Still Love Me...?" that glows on the couple. They appear almost camouflaged behind the lush peach and olive profusion of flowers and large leafed foliage so strident that it exudes passion. Yet as the title suggests, this tension of mistrust or lack of confidence holds the image in an uneasy balance.

The environment of "Can We Talk About It?" appears much cooler with its softer blue-green thicket mixing with the exotic lavender and peachy backdrop. However, it resonates as immediately in terms of sensations. Succulents, specifically the intricately depicted thorny agave and prickly pear, symbolically are survivors and/or inflictors of pain. Even the scraggly weed conveys a toughness as the couple have their backs to each other perhaps looking to find a way out. The emotive environmental props in this tapestry and the others cut right to the expression of conflict, which is the unifying factor within the "Trouble in Paradise" series.

Working in series has allowed us to see the visual prowess of mature artists, who confidently present pieces that reveal individualistic interests. These artists are beyond worrying about skill level; there is a freedom to render exotic hair configurations, fluid curves, lacey wings, and dynamic architectural towers. This is the level of competency seen in many tapestries exhibited throughout the Tampa area this summer, including several others by these dedicated artists.

CHRISTINE LAFFER: Tapestry and Transformation

Review by Sarah Swett

ISBN: 9781432715823

Title: *Christine Laffer: Tapestry and Transformation*

Author: Carole Greene

Publisher: Outskirts Press December 2007

Paperback; Color photographs; 126 pages

Dimensions: 11.05x8.49x.41 in. 1.05 lbs

Personal and direct, intimate yet universal, reading *Christine Laffer: Tapestry and Transformation* by Carole Greene is like having an extended conversation with a much admired mentor. It is a well organized conversation, I grant, and proceeds in a more time sensitive fashion than most, but this only serves to keep the material refreshingly accessible, for Greene uses Laffer's words—and only Laffer's words—to give us a first person account of an artist's evolution undiluted by authorial overtones.

Laffer shares her decisions, her experiments, her questions-- what is it about the surface of tapestry that makes it so compelling? How does it relate to architecture? Is it important to emphasize the essential clothness of the medi-

um, and if so, how might it be done? This is no dry history, no list of events, but a true and thoughtful tale in which larger than life characters from tapestry myths become people Laffer has met and with whom she has worked.

Chapter headings such as Looms and Knots, Elusive Masters, Commissions and Ateliers, Studio Economics and Ink Drawn Wefts enticed me to read on. I learned of Laffer's time at The San Francisco Tapestry Workshop and la Manufacture nationale des Gobelins. (Can a weaver find an affordable place to live in Paris?) She describes life as a solo weaver, then the pros and cons of directing a workshop complete with apprentices and a budget. We are privy to the thoughts behind her decision to return to school for a masters in fine art and her exploration of the nature of tapestry—the very energy within the cloth.

But here I must stop for I see that in just three paragraphs I have become guilty of something Carole Greene avoided, which is "summing up" what I have read. Greene never puts in her voice, tells us what it all means or hints at what will happen next, and I am loathe to do so myself. So rather than say another word about the content, I will only recommend that every tapestry weaver get hold of a copy of *Christine Laffer: Tapestry and Transformation*, and read.

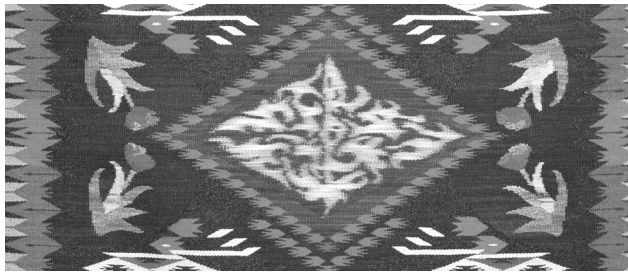
Ikat within a Tapestry structure

By Irvin Trujillo ©2008

Ikat is a technique that resists a group of threads before dyeing. It can be done on either the warp or the weft thread. In some traditions it is seen on both the warp thread and the weft thread in the same piece and called complex ikat.

The origin of ikat in the East is believed to be India or Indonesia. In Japan, ikat is called *Kasuri*. *E Gasuri* means figure or picture ikat. *Tane Ito* is the Japanese word for "mother or guide thread." In the West, ikat is believed to have started in Peru over 1000 years ago. In the Rio Grande Tradition that I work in, there are about twenty historic, blanket-sized weavings woven with weft-faced ikat. Most of them were woven of wool dyed with indigo. I wondered why there were so few pieces of weft-faced ikat.

I became interested in ikat after attending a lecture on textiles from India given by Nora Fisher, an expert on Indian textiles, who was the textile curator at the Museum of International Folk Art in Santa Fe at that time. In her lecture she talked about the ikat of Orissa and described how two men were weaving a brocade and ikat thread in the same piece. That made me think about combining ikat with tapestry in the same piece. Here is how I worked it out. The method I will describe here is for a diamond shape woven within the tapestry, but it works with other shapes.



Irvin Trujillo, TATU, detail Photo by Mesa Photo Arts

Jig width: First, you weave several rows of weft on your loom at the widest width that you want the diamond to reach. Include the same kind of bubbling that you use in your tapestry. Mark the edge of the weft thread where it turns around the warp on both sides. Unweave the thread and average the distance between marks. This distance represents the woven width plus the slack. I call this the "jig length".

Making a Jig: To make the jig you will need a flat board larger than the shape you intend to weave in the tapestry. Draw horizontal lines spaced about 1/8" apart representing each pick of weft.

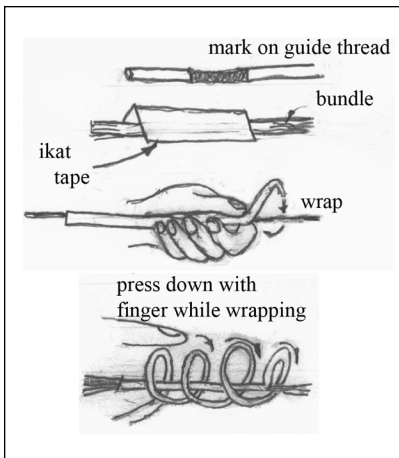
The Diamond Shape: I usually draw a vertical line straight up from a starting point of the diamond on the jig. You will need to determine how many picks you want to weave to reach the center of the diamond. The "jig length" is then plotted on the horizontal line representing that number of picks up from your starting point. It should be centered around the vertical line on the board. Now draw lines from the starting point of the diamond to the ends of the plotted "jig length". When you reach the "jig length", in this case the maximum width of the diamond, draw a diagonal line back to the vertical line with the same number of picks as the first half. This is the ending point of the diamond. Place small nails on the board where the drawn diamond intersects each horizontal line. Each nail is now positioned where the weft thread would turn around the warp in the tapestry. With the jig complete, you can now make the designs you want that will fit within the diamond.

The Cartoon: Cut and fold a piece of paper to fit inside the nails making the diamond shape on the plywood jig. Take the folded paper out of the jig and draw your design onto the diamond shaped paper. Remember that the horizontal part of the design will look substantially thicker than

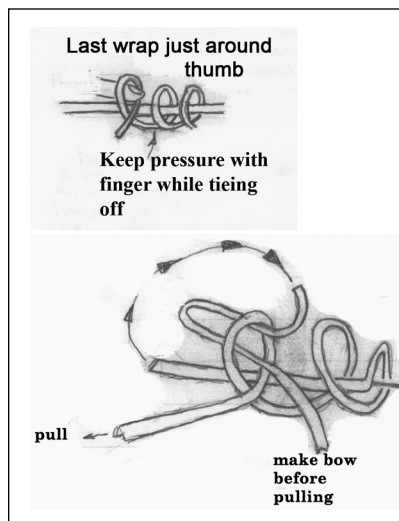
a vertical part of the finished design. For example, a circle drawn in the cartoon will look like an oval standing on end. This is because the weft rows are expanded and, when woven, the rows will be compacted.

The Guide Thread: Place your cartoon with your design back into your jig. Then wind your guide thread back and forth across the nails to simulate a weft thread. Leave some thread at the beginning to give you some weaving leeway and mark the start of the diamond. The tension of the guide thread should be consistent as you place it on the jig. Now, mark the cartoon from the paper onto the simulated weft thread taking care that the edge of the design is well defined on the thread and that every part of the design is on the correct row of the guide thread. Take the guide thread off of the jig and wrap it on a spool.

Tensioning: The threads in the yarn bundle to be resisted will have to be tensioned the same. They will also have to withstand the resist process, water and heat in the dye pot, handling, drying, and the removal of the resists. Each thread in the bundle represents one rendition of the design. Each thread will have your design transferred to it according to the marks on the guide thread. To do this, spread the individual threads around a swift or something similar keeping each thread's tension equal. Tension your guide thread and the bundle of design threads so that they are side by side. Leave about 18" of the bundle ahead of the first mark on the guide thread to produce yarn for breaks and splicing. Keep in mind that an overly thick bundle will prevent dye from penetrating to the edge of the resist. Differing tension of individual threads will also distort the design on that thread.



Irvin Trujillo, Diagram 1
Ikat tape placement



Irvin Trujillo, Diagram 2
wrapping the resist

Resists: Start making the resists with plastic ikat tape. I will call the beginning side of the group the "front." The width of the tape should be about the length of the resist. For longer resists the full width of the tape will be used. The length of the tape needs to be long enough to leave 3" before the front end of the resist, wrap around the group for the length of the resist, and make the tieoff (see diagrams). Make sure you make the wrap and tie tight enough to resist the dye. The tie off knot is as shown in the diagram. Transfer all the marks on the guide thread over to the bundle of design threads. Make sure you do not resist the guide thread in the group so that you can use it again.

continued...

Dyeing the bundle: Skein, dye, and rinse the bundle. As long as the resists are tied tightly, most dyes shouldn't penetrate the resist. When the fiber is dry, take the resists off.

Prepare for weaving: Wind the individual threads in the bundle on separate bobbins for weaving. The length of the thread in the group may have to be cut to fit your bobbin. Use the extra thread that you left at the beginning of the bundle to overlap and splice the cut when you are weaving. Make sure the cut thread matches end to end and that you maintain continuity of design.

Weave: Weave the thread in the (compressed) shape of your jig with the correct number of pics. Use your cartoon to lay the weft in the correct place. If the thread you dyed is too long for the design, you can double back a few warp threads until the design lines up correctly. If the thread is too short for that row, the adjacent weft threads will have to take up the slack. Happy weaving!

Peter Collingwood (1922-2008)

By Linda Rees

The weaving world is deeply saddened by the news of Peter Collingwood's death on October 9th, 2008. He was working in his studio at the time, surely the best way to go for such a dedicated craftsman. It is likely that all weavers have been touched by his immense understanding of weave structures, a knowledge he gained while a military doctor who discovered a passion for figuring out how weaving was accomplished. He made so many techniques accessible: shaft shifting, his own invention, and all the rug making techniques, ancient techniques like sprang and so much more.

My one encounter with him in person was at a lecture he gave for the Seattle Weavers' Guild in the mid 1970s. He did the entire lecture with his back to the audience. I think he knew he could never get through it if he had to face the packed room and that sharing the information was what mattered. I purchased *The Techniques of Rug Weaving* in about 1973, and it has been the most influential book in my weaving career. Simply looking at the myriad of examples pictured at the end started me on a love affair with two and three color patterns for weft faced weaving.

The following Jane Patrick web site gives an excellent account of his career. <http://www.schacht-spindle.com/blog/2008/10/peter-collingwood-weaver-maker-artist>.

Kate Derum 12/14/1943 - 8/6/2008

By Sue Walker

Kate Derum's many friends will be sad to hear of her death on August 6th at her home in Melbourne, Australia. Diagnosed with Gall Bladder cancer early in the year and with gradually diminishing energy, she made the most of every day through her last months, maintaining until just before she died her life-long involvement with art and ideas—drawing, reading, talking with friends, contributing work to exhibitions, and keeping in touch with the life she had lived so vibrantly.

Art was central to Kate's inner life. Her many small diary-like sketch books, her accumulation of found objects, and the carefully gathered quotations, words, and visual ideas built over many years were at the core of her art.

She was a thinker and an ideas person with a brilliant mind and an ability to cut to the heart of an issue in a highly individual way. It was this quality that Kate brought so refreshingly to the world of tapestry.

Her introduction to tapestry came when she joined the Victorian Tapestry Workshop as the Co-ordinator of the International Tapestry Symposium held in Melbourne in 1988. Although she made prints and drawings and had always been interested in textiles, she describes her discovery of tapestry as "a jolt of recognition" and "something really interesting" at a time when her own art-making was dormant.

She became fired with amazing energy and direction. Her family life now gave more space for art—her three beloved daughters growing up, her husband Brian a supportive and encouraging partner, the family home having light-filled rooms for working—her art could flower.

And flower it did. In twenty short years from 1988 to her death Kate packed more into her life as an artist than many do in a life-time. She taught herself the basics of tapestry weaving, observing the Workshop weavers, asking questions, and trying it on a small loom.

I have a vivid memory of Kate in her quiet and determined way working on her first small piece of tapestry; her distinctive



Kate Derum photographed in 1997 at her exhibition 'Prayer Rugs From the Antipodes'. Photograph by Craig Abrahams published in The Age newspaper, Melbourne, 12 Feb 1997.

palette of greys and mauves and browns already in place and a robust weave that shaped ideas with speed.

She went on to complete a Masters degree at Monash University where she subsequently spent eleven years as Head of the Tapestry Studio. As a teacher and lecturer she was inspiring, encouraging and open-minded. She believed in the great traditions of tapestry but encouraged her students to explore contemporary ideas, a philosophy that was central to her own art.

As a member of the Board of Management of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop, she brought art ideas, and principles based on tapestry traditions to the meeting table. In 2005-06 as Workshop Manager and for several months as Acting Director, she introduced a new group of exciting artists to tapestry and brought a refreshing energy to the Workshop floor.

Her own output was prodigious; her art provocative, questioning, symbolic; she held numerous solo exhibitions and her work was shown and collected both within Australia and in many parts of the world. She travelled widely looking at art, meeting other tapestry artists and maintaining a world-wide friendship circle. Kate had a global view of art. Her interests were international as was her influence.

She edited the *International Tapestry Journal* for several years and subsequently transformed it into a thoughtful, scholarly and wide-ranging *International Tapestry Year Book*. Her knowledge of tapestry artists in many countries and her interest in contemporary artists both at home and abroad was the subject of much of her writing which she undertook with insight and conviction.

Kate was a remarkable conversationalist and a stimulating colleague. Always refreshing but respectful of others, always encouraging to young artists, always excited when new ground was broken or beauty revealed, Kate was a special person in our midst. She loved the placing of disparate objects including the arrangement each day of what she would wear. Her home, her conversation and her presence were a joy to experience.

Her funeral service celebrated all these qualities. More than two hundred friends, family members (including her treasured young grandson Hemi), artists and tapestry weavers gathered in the beautiful grounds of Montsalvat artists' colony outside Melbourne to farewell Kate and to celebrate a remarkable life and one that contributed in no small measure to the world of tapestry today.

Sue Walker was the founding Director of the Victorian Tapestry Workshop from 1976 to 2004 and a close friend of Kate's since 1986.

Ildikó Dobrányi (1948-2007)

By **Ibolya Hegyi**

Vice-President of the MKE, 2001-7

The life's work of Ildikó Dobrányi is a document of that change of view in Hungary which, in the wake of Noémi Ferenczy and her activity, sees tapestry as an autonomous fine arts genre.



Ildiko Dobrani, "Fragments !!!"
47" x 79", 1985 wool, silk

Ildikó Dobrányi graduated in 1972, from the Department of Tapestry at the Hungarian Academy of Applied Arts. In this department, which had been founded by Noémi Ferenczy, in line with tradition, Ildiko first and foremost mastered the designing and weaving of tapestry, besides drawing, painting and theory. Later, she continued her studies at the École d'Art Décoratif at Aubusson in France where she got to know Jagoda Buic, an important textile artist whose experiments linked to the Lausanne Biennales initially exer-

cised a great influence on Ildiko's thinking. However, the Lausanne experiments, which were orientated towards materials primarily, led to a rejection of traditional tapestry. One prominent reason for this was that this genre was unable to break with its original time-consuming technique.

Nevertheless, in a paradoxical way tapestry could be renewed, by a rethinking of the tradition, namely of the traditional "language," the weaving and the use of materials, 'spoken' by the genre. Later on this was recognised and done by Ildikó Dobrányi, too. In one of her catalogues, the artist wrote the following on the transformation of her way of thinking:

In the first two years after finishing the Academy, I used materials and colours almost with abandon. When weaving, I attempted to try out natural threads of all kinds, thicknesses and qualities, along with the most various weaving techniques. I almost wallowed in the materials and in the colours; the subject itself was not even important to me. However, in time the need arose in me to find out what was really exciting in this vocation. I tried to turn over a fresh page, and attempted to start from nothing, from the basics. (Dobrányi, Ildikó: *Details*, exhibition catalogue, Budapest, 1997, p. 17)

In the spirit of starting from the basics, with her tapestry entitled 'Detail' she reflected on the issues fundamental to the production of a colour picture, namely she produced an image of the crown of a tree, exploiting the raster character of the structure of the weave and using wool in three primary colours: blue, yellow and red. In

continued...

'Detail' there appears a theme that is almost constant in her later tapestries, a detail of nature: the tapestry depicts vegetation reminiscent of the classic Aubusson verdure, the crown of a tree pierced through by light. Nevertheless, the critics of the time spoke only of the 'quivering' of the boughs, although recognition expressed in this tapestry concerning the correspondence between weaving, colour printing and photography could also have been discerned.

In the subsequent 'Detail' tapestries, Ildikó Dobrányi's attention turned towards ever more intimate and imperceptible details. In 1997, at the Hungarian Institute in Paris, she presented her tapestry series entitled "Grass." Recalling the backgrounds of the *millefleurs* tapestries of the Middle Ages, this transposed into weaving the complex spectacle and structure of her photographic designs, called 'picture definitions' by the artist. The synthesis and conclusion of the "Grass" series of tapestries was the large, celebratory, red 'Nomadic Rug' that was made in 1996. Through the *millefleurs* mobility of its background and the small green horse alone in the middle, this recalls the tapestries featuring unicorns. However, in her next works—'Forever' and 'Alternative Renaissance' - her attention again turns to the crowns of trees, towards the sky, as a kind of frame for the conclusion of her oeuvre.

Ildikó Dobrányi declared with profound conviction, and also proved it with her works, that in tapestry art design and execution are inseparable since weaving breathes life into the ideas behind a work. In 1996, giving voice to her conviction, she put herself at the forefront of this linkage and for ten years served as President of the Association of Hungarian Tapestry Artists (MKE), which set as its goal the elevation of contemporary Hungarian tapestry and its international integration.

Volunteers Make it Happen: Kathy Spoering

By Ann Arndt

In this issue we salute Kathy Spoering, chairperson of ATA's new small format, juried exhibition, "Connections: Small Tapestry International 2009." Kathy chaired the first ATA Biennial, and she remembers the delight of seeing a new creative endeavor mature and take on a life of its own. She sees great potential in this top-quality new event that the directors have wanted for a long time, to feature small tapestries, and to alternate with ATB. "It is a privilege to help nourish it at this beginning stage," says Kathy. Then she hopes she can step back and "watch it blossom." She is grateful for the excellent group of committee members who will help. And she highly recommends volunteer work like this, saying, "It's a great learning experience - for free!"

Kathy Spoering has been a member of ATA from its beginning. Like many of us, she felt isolated, as if she were the only tapestry artist in her part of the world. When she saw ATA's first ad in a weaving magazine, she immediately became a charter member. She is still excited about making connections with others who understand and share "this thing that we do!"

Originally weaving clothing and blankets on a 4-harness loom, after frequent trips to the University City Public Library in a St. Louis suburb, a haunting memory of its tapestries by Muriel Nezhnie lingered in her mind, and Kathy became determined to put images into her weavings.

Weft Off the Loom

By Ronda Karliukson

It was Friday. Another week of work was over, or was it? I carefully inspected the six inches of tapestry weaving I had woven during the past week. It had taken me an average of two hours to weave one inch.

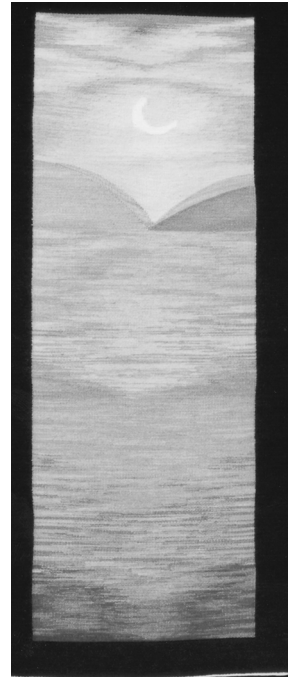
That is when I realized something was wrong. The last four inches were all wrong. The transition point between the dark navy blue of night and the midnight blue of evening was not working. I could feel the disturbed equilibrium beginning to burn inside of me. With each passing minute it was growing like an out of control wildfire. I knew that familiar feeling. I also knew that if I ignored it, the further I wove the more my disillusionment would increase.

The week was supposed to be over I told myself. I am supposed to be doing something else. Laundry, errands all awaited my attention. I am supposed to be going elsewhere I said aloud.

Conviction seized me. I sat back down at the loom. My fingers began nimbly unwinding yarn. Racing. Couldn't they go any faster?

Against my better judgment I grabbed the scissors. If I could cut it out, it would be faster than pulling it out, I reasoned. After all I have more yarn than time. But the weaving rebelled and so did the yarn. There were too many joins. What if I cut my warp my worried self interjected? I put the scissors away. Everything about weaving is labor intensive and time consuming. Weaving and unweaving.

The afternoon passes. Slowly I unwind each piece of yarn that made up the four inches. I do not think about how painful it is. Instead I look forward to the restoration of equilibrium inside of me when the transition is rewoven perfectly.



Ronda Karliukson GEM LAKE, 55" x 23" 2008

She bought Peter Collingwood's book on rug weaving and figured out all the techniques he listed as discontinuous weft. With two small sons at home and a husband starting his pediatric practice, she couldn't afford any workshops or conferences, but Kathy persisted. "We worked it out - just me and Peter Collingwood," she says, "and that was before the books on tapestry came out."

Today Kathy's tapestries are lovely, colorful, and thoughtful, filled with skillfully drawn images of things she really sees. Events in her life are caught up in the warp and weft of the tapestry she's working on—so much that, looking at any of her tapestries, she can tell you what was happening in her life while she was weaving it. Her very best ideas come "unbidden, as gifts" when she is doing something else, that is, not purposely looking for an idea.

Kathy sees herself not so much as an artist, but a weaver of personal stories that people can connect to, because they are recognizable and valuable narratives of our time. She loves the old storytelling tapestries, historically the ones that illustrate familiar tales for the people of their age, like the medium of tapestry was known to be at the height of its popularity. That tradition is what she wants her work to be.

For the daily work at the loom, her self discipline, priorities, and persistence come into play. Kathy says she works best with deadlines. She sets realistic expectations for inches- woven per day, does the math, and allows for weekend days off, for her family and her Life.

Kathy Spoering is in love with the creative process, and energetic about it, too. She learns a lot from watching her grandchildren, cooks without recipes, teaches beginning and intermediate classes, paints in watercolor and oils, directs a group of women who sing together, and loves the company of weavers who visit her blog. Not really knowing how to make a website, she does it anyway. She shares her thoughts freely in her blog, called "My Life Is But a Tapestry".

When asked what, exactly, is meant by that, she explained, "It's a work in progress!"



Kathy Spoering, FEBRUARY, 18" x 18", 2008

ATA Award of Excellence to Kathy Spoering

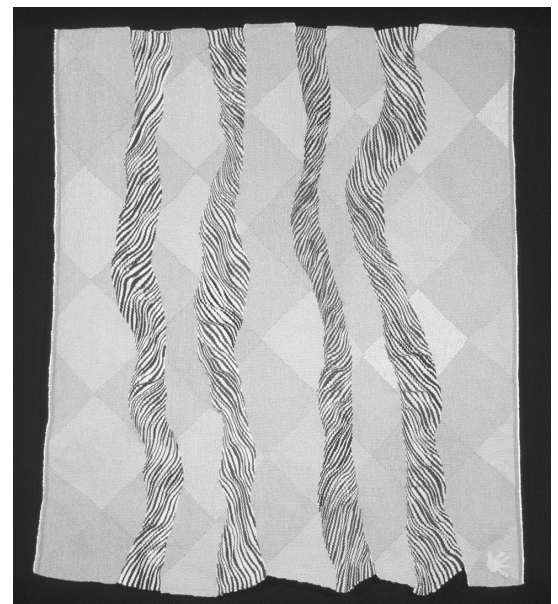
Kathy received this award at the Pikes Peak Weavers Guild's "Living with Beauty: Handwoven Textiles for the Home" Exhibition displayed at the Hagnauer Gallery, Business of Art Center in Manitou Springs, Colorado. It was for the "The Gift/Fall" tapestry in her "4 Seasons" series. (See *Tapestry Topics* Summer, 2008 p.3)

ATA Award of Excellence to Alex Friedman

Working from a studio in Sausalito, California, Alex Friedman, with a wall of multi colored yarns nearby to inspire her, hand weaves vibrant tapestries that explore non-traditional themes.

She initially became a tapestry weaver when she was hired to work on a large commission to weave a set of tapestries for a fleet of jumbo jets. Finding tapestry to be a very interesting medium to explore, she has maintained a studio for over 30 years producing tapestries on commission for commercial, liturgical and residential customers as well as creating speculative pieces that she has exhibited internationally.

She says: The Flow Series represents a change in direction in my work. For a long time I have been aware of tapestry as a construction project with the accompanying sculptural possibilities. By keeping within the traditionally defined boundaries of tapestry (weft faced, discontinuous weft) and exploring the process of tapestry weaving, I am experimenting to see what happens when the boundaries are pushed, technically and materially. The third dimension is not fully realized until the tapestry is cut from the loom and the shapes, released from a long period of increasing tension, begin to form.



Alex Friedman, FLOW 3, 50" x 43" x 3"
2007 Wool on cotton warp.

MEMBER NEWS

Back issues of *Tapestry Topics* available:

Spring 2004 vol. 30 no.1 (no theme)

Winter 2004 vol.30 no.4 (Shaped tapestry)

Spring 2005 vol. 31 no.1 (no theme)

Fall 2005 vol. 31 no.3 (no theme)

Winter 2005 vol.31 no.4 ("Pushing Technique")

Spring 2006 vol. 32 no.1 (no theme)

Winter 2006 vol. 32 no.4 (Transitions as Design Element)

*Summer 2007 vol.33 no.2 (Color Anniversary issue: ATA Then & Now)

Spring 2008 vol. 34 no.1 (Dyeing)

All issues are free with payment for postage, except Summer 2007 which costs \$3 due the cost of color printing.

Postage: Send \$1.50 for the first issue and add .50 for each additional issue requested, up to \$5 maximum. Quantities are limited. For most issues there are ten or fewer copies available, so act soon!

Last chance to renew at 2008 Circle

Membership rates: Until December 31, Studio Circle rates of \$55 (\$100 for two years) still apply for renewing members. Renew early and save! Effective January 1, 2009 all Studio Circle memberships will cost \$60/\$110. Don't forget that memberships are fully tax deductible.

Thank you to the following members who renewed their memberships at the Curator's or Collector's Circle level between April 1 and October 1, 2008. Your generosity makes a significant contribution to the continued vitality of ATA: Marcia Ellis, Joanne Park-Foley, Tommye Scanlin, and Frances Williamson.

Be an ATA Promoter: Postcards and brochures are available for workshops, regional conferences and events. Be our link to the larger weaving community! Request your stash at membership@americantapestryalliance.org.

It's Holiday time: Don't forget that Gift Memberships and free catalogs are available! Visit the website for order forms. Phone orders: Ellen Ramsey 206 440 8903.

Kudos

Send items to: mstrauch@mac.com

Connie Lippert was awarded 2nd place in "Salsa y Salsa," an international juried exhibit featuring multimedia fiber arts in conjunction with HGA's Convergence, May 23 - August 23, The Arts Center, St. Petersburg, Florida

Beverly Walker recently won recognition from the Parkersburg Art Center, in Parkersburg, WV. The exhibit in July was entitled "Red, White, and Regional 2008" with 157 entries in multiple mediums. Her 5-panel tapestry "El Nino" won 3rd Place in the 3-Dimensional category. Beverly teaches tapestry classes in Marietta and Belpre, Ohio

"Tattered Cultures: Mended Histories" at the Academy Art Center in Honolulu, September 6 - 28, included a piece by **Sharon Marcus**. This invitational exhibit showcased works by twenty-two international fiber artists and explored how dominant ideologies of a specific time and place often tatter the cultural heritage of the less dominant and culturally diverse.

"TWiNE 2008: A Contemporary Look at Tapestry" was a juried exhibit of 40 tapestries by 21 artists, at the Rivertree Center for the Arts, Kennebunk, Maine, September 5 - October 4.

"Intertwine: A Selection of Hawai'i Fiber Art," works from the Art in Public Places Collection, September 6, 2008 - January 17, 2009 at the Hawaii State Art Museum (HISAM), includes tapestries by **Archie Brennan and Susan Martin Maffei**. The exhibition showcases work spanning several decades, with a mix of styles, media, and techniques expressive of both tradition and innovation.

Joan Griffin had a piece accepted into the US Department of State Art in Embassies program. Her tapestry "Along the Blue Ridge Parkway," 30" x 47," will be on exhibit at the US Embassy in Managua, Nicaragua for 2 1/2 years. This program with the State Department places various artworks by American artists in our embassies throughout the world. They also produce a color catalog.

Shelley Socolofsky Commission

In January of 2008 Shelley Socolofsky completed a commissioned tapestry titled "Fatana Morgana" to join the stunning art collection of Shaul and Catherine Levi of Portland, Oregon for their Pearl District condominium. The 5' x 6' tapestry references the optical illusion that occurs out at sea from a temperature inversion where objects on the horizon appear elongated and elevated, or they appear to be hovering or inverted at the horizon. It also refers to Morgan Le Fay - the mythical half-sister of King Arthur. Shelley worked on the design with Catherine, using many of the symbols she wanted to include to reflect her Scottish heritage and her husband Shaul's Jewish heritage. All symbols are woven into the piece but some are discreetly placed, as requested by Catherine. The architectural arches in the tapestry were appropriated and fashioned after the Sauvre Terre Roman arches of Southern France where Catherine's aunt lives.

The majority of the work was done while Shelly was completing her MFA at the University of Oregon, taking more time on the tapestry than originally anticipated (2 years instead of 1 to complete it). She states:



Shelley Socolofsky, FATANA MORGANA 60" X 72" 2007

"Luckily, the Levi's were wonderful and understanding clients - and (thankfully) felt it was worth their wait." Kathe Todd Hooker helped in the final stage under Shelley's direction, weaving on some of the upper regions (cloth, sky, and rock areas) in order to complete the project by year's end and due to the pace of Shelley's schedule. The tapestry was woven from bottom to top.

And yes, Shelley completed her MFA on schedule in June 2008, with her culminating project "Piecework," an installation reflecting the labor of making a tapestry. It will soon be posted on her web site. She will be teaching again as an adjunct at the University of Oregon winter term (Jan - March). The course will be based on weaving images—and will have a unit focus on tapestry—but will also include imaged based weaving in the "expanded" field—which means she will also include some less traditional approaches to working with the woven image.

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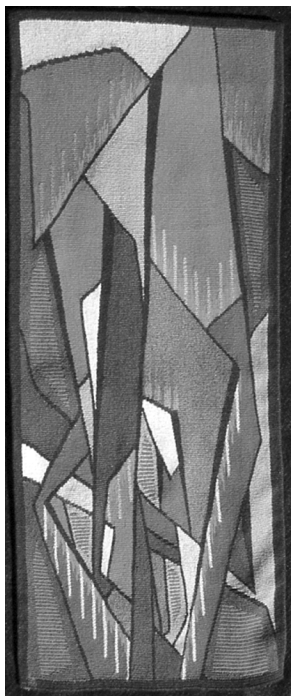
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Tapestry Topics



John Nicholson EMERALD
SPIRES 35" x 14" 2006

Guidelines for submitting articles to *Tapestry Topics*:

Next Deadline: January 15: Sustaining Creativity What reference material or practices are helpful? For more information contact Lyn Hart; desertsonghart@msn.com. **April 1:** The Materiality of Surface Commentary that highlights work that has distinctive surfaces qualities. **July 15:** Tips and Tactics What clever ideas have solved tricky problems at the loom?

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: Newsletter committee: Proofreader: Mary Colton, Layout: Elinor Steele, Kudos: Merna Strauch, Distribution: Ellen Ramsey, Online excerpts: Lyn Hart, Web Posting: Kathy Marcel

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