AMERICAN TAPESTRY ALLIANCE

TAPESTRYTOPICS

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF TAPESTRY ART TODAY

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Collaboration

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Co-Directors' Letter, Fall 2014

This letter is being drafted on the hottest day of the summer following the 4th of July weekend. Many of the ATA Board, our advisors, volunteers, and members are preparing to leave for *Convergence* in Providence and will be reveling in great memories of the event at the time of this reading, including Co-Director of Member Services, Michael Rohde, and our Executive Administrator, Mary Lane. Hope you got a chance to talk tapestry to them both. Regrettably, writing advance commentary on events is just never as much fun as being there.

Collaboration is the theme for this issue of *Tapestry Topics*, led by volunteer theme coordinator, Susan Rubendall. This word and topic continue to enjoy great stature and create buzz in the art and exhibition world. The writers and articles that Susan has gathered illuminate underpinnings of collaboration in the contemporary tapestry field, showing how our membership is not only creatively working in current social modality but also deftly tackling projects of grand scope.

ATB 10 had its grand reveal opening and has completed its stay at Visions Art Museum in San Diego, and travels and re-opens this month on September 25 at Kent State University Gallery in Ohio, where the work can be viewed until January 4th, moving then to a February 6th opening at KANEKO in Omaha, NE. The KANEKO has planned three months of concurrent and extensive FIBER programming including lectures and workshops by textile notables Jessica Hemmings, Yoshiko Wada, and Jack Lenor Larsen. Please check ATA e-News and our website for further details.

Big thanks to all of our donors and members for participating in the Valentines Day Raffle and to the ATA Raffle team for managing this long fundraiser. And to all of the lucky winners, a big congratulations!

The thank yous continue and extend deeply to former Board member and tapestry dynamo Jan Austin and her outstanding team of volunteers for hosting the well done and very popular unjuried exhibition at Convergence, **Untitled/ Unjuried: Small Format Tapestry 2014**. This is a big, big job to take on and do well.

Kudos to Mary Lane and the ATA education team for organizing the Biennial Membership Meeting, **Digislam**, and Members Retreat featuring three days of tapestry workshops presented by weaving icons Marcel Marois and Susan Martin Maffei. These events were a study in careful planning, supreme flexibility, and massive collaboration. We hope much was learned, new friendships and connections were made, and a grand time was had by all.

A reminder that **Small Tapestry International 4, STI4**, entries are due October 31. Our juror, Kevin Wallace, is the Director of the Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts in Ojai, California. If you are a fast weaver, you still have time to commit inspiration to warp and weft and enter a piece for one of ATAs very popular exhibitions.

Happy Fall everyone. These are beautiful days to move outside to dream, draw, plan, and weave....or watch football.

Mary and Michael

Cover**: Michael Reed** (designer), **Marilyn Rea-Menzies** (weaver), "Living in the South Pacific," Tryptich, multiple setts, (16, 4 & 8 epi), 100 cm x 30cm each. Cotton warp, wool, linen

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Susan Rubendall, Theme Coordinator

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Creative Coastal Retreats All Levels of Learning

Pam Patrie hosts participants with a series of intensive creative work sessions through the year in her coastal cabin in Oregon.

2014 Schedule

February	21-24
March	14-17
April	11-14
May	16-19
June	20-23
July	25-30 (5 day retreat)
August	22-27 (5 day retreat)
September	12-15
October	10-13
November	7-10

All retreats cost $275.00 and include a sleeping place & dinners, except for the five day retreats in July and August, which are $350.00.

Contact Pam 503-250-1642 pampatriestudios@yahoo.com
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Introduction to “Collaboration”

by Susan Rubendall

Collaboration is such a soothing word. It suggests that someone else will share the responsibility with me, share the work, share the joys, and even share the sorrows connected with a project -- the weaving of a tapestry. It also suggests that a project will take half the time, allowing the weaver to move quickly to exciting new designs. That’s the ideal, but reality can be quite different.

As a weaver of fabrics for worship spaces, I have collaborated with clergy, worship committees, altar guilds, and occasionally entire parish councils. Sometimes it was a marvelous sharing of ideas. Other times, it was more like a battle — not so much between me and them but among them. I sat quietly and thought, “Please decide on something — anything. Just let me go home and weave.” Several of the articles submitted for this issue discuss historic collaborations between patrons, painters, tapestry designers, and weavers. Since I dislike controversy, negotiating those collaborations sounds intimidating to me. But somehow it worked, resulting in the exquisite tapestries that are now available for viewing in museums. Other articles describe collaborations between friends, family members, and guild members who shared ideas and worked together to produce work more beautiful and meaningful than any one person could have created alone. I hope you will enjoy reading about collaborating on the design and weaving of tapestries, and that you will consider whether it is a process that would work for you.

Susan Rubendall is a spinner and weaver who lives in Rockford, Illinois. By profession a book editor, she continues in retirement to help authors turn their words and pictures into published books. Bob Rubendall: photo.

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My Experiences with Collaboration in Tapestry - Primary Connections

by Marilyn Rea-Menzies

Collaboration between weavers and artist designers has a long history. In Renaissance times it was normal practice in the production of tapestries with social and political value. Tapestries were highly prized and remained in the province of kings and the wealthy hierarchy, providing a display of wealth and power to the general populace. The most famous artist who collaborated with weaving workshops to produce tapestries was Raphael, whose designs introduced new trends in tapestry. Previous to his involvement, weavers controlled much of the design of tapestries, for example in *The Lady and the Unicorn* mille fleur tapestries. The artist would design the main elements of the work, leaving the weavers to add their ideas to the backgrounds, resulting in wonderful rich tapestries. A restricted palette, between fifteen and twenty colours, was used in these tapestries. Raphael's depiction of space, atmospheric perspective, and subtleties of design necessitated new skills for weavers and the palette increased to over 300 colours and shades. Raphael's cartoons, some of which have been rescued and recently displayed in museums, were completed paintings the same size as the tapestries. The tapestries became mere copies of the paintings.

Today weavers in a number of tapestry workshops collaborate with artists to produce wonderful tapestries. These workshops include Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh, the West Dean Studio in England, the Australian Tapestry Workshop in Australia, and of course the Gobelin and Aubusson Studios in France. As far as I know, not many individual artists work collaboratively in this way.

I first collaborated with another artist in designing a tapestry a few years after my shift to Christchurch in the mid-1990s. A local artist, Michael Reed, approached me with the idea of working with him to create a tapestry. At that point I hadn't really considered working from designs created by other artists, but Michael's idea for a tapestry was amazing. I felt quite strongly that this would be an excellent way to introduce tapestry to artists as a viable art form, an alternative and addition to their art practices. In the last ten years or so collaboration between artists working in different mediums has become much more common. It is now taken for granted that collaboration is just one of many ways in which an artist can choose to work, but at the time of weaving the *Primary Connection* series, tapestry collaboration was unusual in New Zealand. I was most likely the first artist to work in this way. Two other tapestry weavers, Trish Armour and Leslie Nicholls, were weaving tapestries designed by the artist/designer Gordon Crook from Wellington. Gordon had learnt to weave tapestry and wove some himself, but he preferred to have others weave his designs. Gordon had full control of the interpretation and told his weavers how he wanted the tapestries to look. He controlled all aspects of the weaving process, so in that sense they were not collaborative works.

The artists I worked with allowed me to make all the major decisions regarding size, sett, colour, and texture; I had full control over the interpretation of the

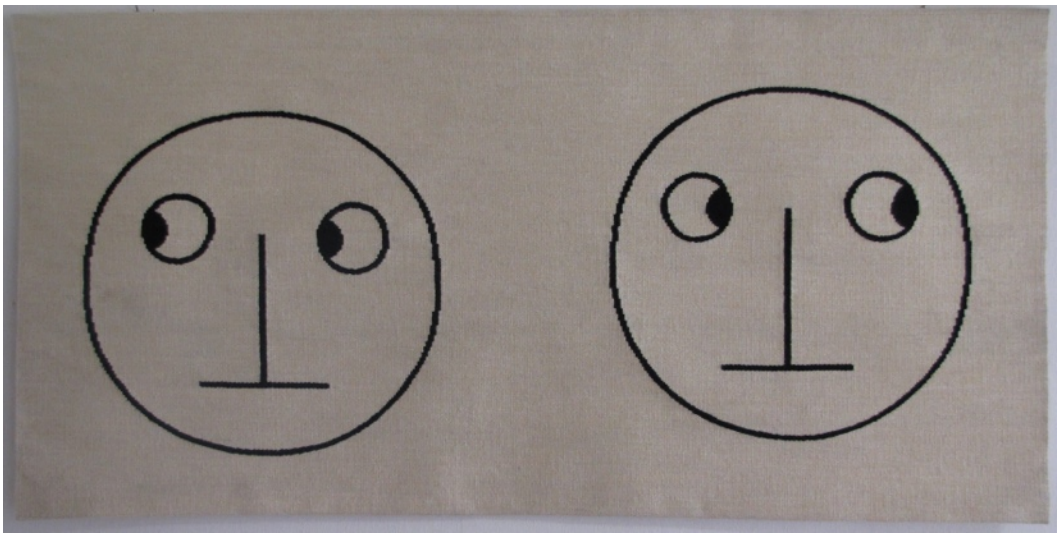
Right: **Rudolf Boelee** (designer), **Marilyn Rea-Menzies** (weaver), “Railway Cups,” 7 epi, 242 cm x 39 cm, 2001. Two pieces, cotton warp, wool, viscose weft.

designs. Once the designs were given to me—usually as collages, prints or small drawings of concepts and ideas, I spent time mulling them over and thinking about how they would be best translated into tapestry. Once this decision was made, the artist and I would enter into discussion. I would explain the process, talk about the looms, show them examples of previous work, and suggest what was possible in the interpretation of their design. We would talk about the yarns, the blending of colours if appropriate, the type of yarns to be used in the weaving, the sett to be used (multiple setts in some of the works), and the time frame for weaving. We decided when I would start to set up the looms. Once the weaving commenced, they were welcomed into the studio at any time they wanted to visit. This varied with different artists; some came in frequently to see the progress, and others came only three or four times during the whole time of weaving. Only one artist sat down to try his hand at weaving a little himself. Interpreting the designs was often quite challenging and I had to work out ways to do things I had never done before in my own work. It was a learning experience for me in many ways and helped develop my technical skills hugely.

I found that the artists I worked with put an amazing amount of trust and confidence into my ability to interpret their designs in a way that worked well in tapestry. Within these interpretations there was room for me to impart my own signature within the work. If another artist had interpreted the same design concepts, the resulting pieces would very likely have been quite different in scale, yarn choice, colour, etc.

As Warren Feeney, Director of the Centre of Contemporary Art (CoCA) in Christchurch, New Zealand, stated in the exhibition catalogue, “The mutuality of faith and confidence required, both from myself and from the artists, was critical to the success of each work. The artists put a lot of faith and trust into Marilyn's ability to interpret their designs and concepts in an honest and forthright way. She had to be true to their vision of the work whilst including something of her own in the interpretation. Primary Connections succeeds perfectly in such intentions.”

After six years of work, the **Primary Connections** exhibition was held at CoCA in December 2004/January 2005. It featured my tapestries woven from working drawings by Michael Armstrong, Graham Bennett, Rudolf Boelee, William



Above: **Paul Johns** (designer), **Marilyn Rea-Menzies** (weaver), “Do Not Stare,” 12 epi, 100 cm x 50 cm, 2003. Cotton warp, wool, viscose weft.

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Cumming, Don Driver, Paul Johns, Julia Morison, Michael Reed and Philip Trusttum. It was the first exhibition in New Zealand featuring only tapestry.

Unfortunately, it did not attract reviews or discourse, not even a write-up in the arts pages of the local paper. This was hugely disappointing to me but was probably symptomatic of the way in which textiles were viewed within this country at the time —and still are, on the whole. Textile artists have found it hard, and still find it hard, to be recognized as serious artists in this country. Galleries seem to feel that textiles are not 'art,' that they are difficult to look after, and almost impossible to sell.

Anna Tibbutt says in her 2007 thesis, *A Matter of Passion*, "The exhibition which was the result of these many collaborations was visually dramatic and did much for the image of tapestry in Christchurch. Rea-Menzies did regret that so few of the works were sold and was disappointed that the show was not critically reviewed or included in main-stream art reportage in the news media. It is unfortunate that this exhibition was not seen elsewhere in New Zealand at the time. It could have raised the profile of tapestry as fine art in this country if it had been exposed to a greater number of people. The inevitable conclusion is that tapestry remains a little understood and largely unknown artistic medium and much education is still required to have it accepted and supported by art galleries and the wider public….."

Above: **Graham Bennett** (designer), **Marilyn Rea-Menzies** (weaver), "A Matter of Degrees," 7 epi, 303 cm x variable measurements, 2003/04. Cotton warp, wool, cottolin, linen weft.

Collaborations bring up the issue of who owns the work – to whom does it belong and who is the artist? It can be a difficult question to answer. I financed the making of the tapestries myself after I submitted three unsuccessful grant applications over three years to Creative New Zealand for ongoing funding. The only artist who contributed financially to the weaving was Michael Reed, who gave a small amount towards purchasing some yarns. The agreement I had with each artist was that upon sale, and after the gallery commission had been paid, they would receive 10% of the price. They retained 10% ownership of the tapestries and the copyright. However, whenever Christchurch Art Gallery publishes anything about the tapestries, they always ask me for copyright permission as well as asking the designer. Only three works have been sold: two to the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna O Waiwhetu, and one to my brother Peter Rea. The funds from these sales allowed me to complete the remaining tapestries. I retain 90% ownership of these works, though two of them are now displayed in the designer's homes. Graham Bennett recently showed the tapestry, "A Matter of Degrees," in a retrospective exhibition of his work at the Suter Gallery in Nelson. It received a lot of interest but again, did not sell in spite of its being such a unique work.

In conclusion, would I do it again? Most definitely yes! The interchange between the artists, the friendships formed, the experience gained, and the challenges overcome, all made this project a most worthwhile experience.

Left: *Marilyn Rea-Menzies* has been painting and drawing all of her life and started to weave tapestry over 30 years ago. This quickly became her main practise though she kept up her drawing skills and has recently started to paint again. Her work has been exhibited throughout the world and within New Zealand and is in many private and public collections.

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Tapestry Collaborations: a Glance through History

by Candace J. Adelson, Ph.D.

The weaver-artist who may freely choose to execute alone (or not) every step of a tapestry's production—from idea to design, to selecting and even possibly spinning and/or dyeing yarns, through final execution—is essentially a phenomenon of the latter 20th century. No doubt, earlier instances of such complete creative control probably happened over the past thousand years or so, for instance in medieval convents, but it was not the norm for professionally woven tapestries. The existing documentation for the medieval to modern tapestry industry points to complex, standardized patterns of collaboration involving numerous individuals which became codified in the European guild system by the late 15th century.

A tapestry commission such as the *Angers Apocalypse*, ordered by Duke Louis of Anjou about 1373, probably already involved many of the types of collaborators who would participate in similar commissions for the next 500+ years: a patron (the duke); one or more advisors (learned clergymen probably) who advise on the subject(s) and precise inscriptions; a resident manager (a courtier or secretary) to keep tabs on the project; a designer (Hennequin de Bruges, who, for the *Apocalypse,* may have based his work partly on an illuminated manuscript by yet another artist); an entrepreneur (usually identified as Nicolas Bataille) who contracts to oversee manufacture and handle financing; one or more cartoonists to interpret and enlarge the designs to size; one or more weaving workshops (depending on the size of the commission) run by master weavers; spinners (probably not part of the weaving workshops); master dyers (often within the weaving workshops as time goes on, with jealously guarded recipes, but this is unclear for the period of the *Apocalypse*); journeyman weavers and boy apprentices (most professional weavers were men, although some women from weaving families did learn professional-style tapestry weaving) working side-by-side with the master weavers to complete the project (rarely was a tapestry woven by a single person); weavers' wives, daughters, and other women, who kept track of the yarns, wound bobbins, sewed slits and in some cases probably added strapping or linings and rings for hanging (although this was also often done by the patron's personnel after delivery); not to mention messengers and shipping agents over the course of the project.

Master weavers and their skilled assistants were highly trained artists. Until the early 1500s, the cartoons given to tapestry weavers had limited actual coloring and little surface detail. Weavers were trusted to choose the precise hues and add fabric textures and designs and landscape details. As the tapestry industry gained in prominence and profitability over the course of the 1400s, and weavers became ever more proficient, professional painters wanted to make certain of their roles as designers and cartoonists. In 1476 in Brussels, the painters' and tapestry weavers' guilds came to an agreement which forbade master weavers to design and/or draw cartoons with figures. Weavers' creative license was officially limited to textile designs, animals, small boats, and vegetation, although they could modify their own verdure cartoons (ones with only vegetation, including "millefleurs"). If a workshop owned the rights to a cartoon set, it might also change the size or format of individual pieces or the borders. If it did not own the desired cartoons, another collaborative layer was added. The patron might obtain them either from a merchant investor or even borrow them from the likes of the emperor himself, as a special privilege.

This model of multi-person collaboration prevailed throughout the heyday of European tapestry, becoming ever more complex, with greater and greater specialization both among cartoon painters (with figure, animal, ornament, and landscape specialists often all working on a project) and within the weaving workshop. Account books from the Beauvais manufactory in France around 1700 show that weavers had become very specialized and worked only on specific areas in each tapestry. One person wove clothing. Another wove faces, flesh tones, and rocks (very highly paid). Still another wove landscape, etc.

In the 20th century, added types of collaborators are seen in popular reproduction tapestries. A recent *New York Times* article by David Netto illustrated a tapestry copy commissioned for Nelson Rockefeller's Fifth Avenue apartment of New

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York Museum of Modern Art's (MoMA's) famous Picasso painting *Les demoiselles d'Avignon*. Netto writes, "in a solution worthy of both Nelson the businessman and Nelson the politician, three were made: one for him, one for Picasso and one to sell to pay for the production"). They were woven in Calavaire, France, by Madame J. de la Baume Dürrbach, with Picasso's collaboration in selecting colored wools. Fifteen other Picasso copies, woven from 1955 to 1975, are displayed at the former Rockefeller estate Kykuit, [scroll down] overlooking the Hudson River.

Tapestry copies of preexisting paintings existed by the 15th century. The *Trajan and Herkinbald* tapestry (Historical Museum of Bern, Switzerland) was woven about 1450 after Rogier van der Weyden's now-lost painting that decorated the Brussels town hall. Seventeenth and 18th-century Italian and French tapestry workshops produced highly detailed copies of portraits and other paintings, and the practice continued in France into the 19th century. As Sheila Gibson Stoodley notes, this practice reemerged in the 1930s with copies of contemporary art commissioned by Parisian entrepreneur Marie Cuttoli. Stoodley cites Ann Lane Hedlund, who points out that producing this type of tapestry added another type of collaborator to the mix, "what she calls the *éditeur*, the person who chooses and brings together the artist and the atelier," pointing out that for this type of work, the cartoonist also becomes critical for translating a painting's aesthetic into a model that will work in fiber.

Although this brief glance at some 600 years of Western tapestry cannot be comprehensive, hopefully it gives some idea of the traditions and evolution which preceded the latter 20th-century fiber art revolution and the emergence of today's independent tapestry weaver-artist.

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Candace J. Adelson, Ph.D., is Senior Curator of Fashion & Textiles at the Tennessee State Museum in Nashville. She has written extensively about the history of European tapestry.

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Orchestrating a Tapestry

by Nicki Bair

I am a member of the Seaside Weavers tapestry group from Los Angeles. Our members include both award-winning artists who exhibit nationwide and some who only exhibit as part of a collaborative Seaside project. Their tapestry experience ranges from novice to members who have woven over fifty years. The group has a reputation for creating challenging, often humorous collaborative projects. I have selected three of my favorites to illustrate how tapestries can be woven effectively in a collaborative setting.

The key to a successful collaborative project is allowing for individual creativity, spontaneity and excitement to generate participation, while achieving a unified and high quality result given the members who choose to participate. Our group projects are voluntary so it's important to generate excitement at the beginning and maintain that interest through completion. In our experience, there must be someone to grab the baton to lead the project; otherwise, that momentum is lost.

The ATA's *Untitled*/*Unjuried Small Format Tapestry* exhibits are a continuing source of inspiration. We have participated as a group in the last six exhibits following an agreed upon set of parameters. Some parameters are more controversial than others. The decisions on the overall theme of our entry as well as tapestry size are easy. But there are lively debates. Some members want lots of limitations on the design, loom set up and weft selection; others argue for none. Some believe that increasing the number of parameters spurs creativity and assures a unified group appearance. Others believe the greater the freedom, the greater the individual and group creativity. These dialogues are needed to define the project, but more importantly, they stimulate and focus the group in the right direction.

Seaside works best when there is a deadline, so projects tied to a conference exhibit work well. For one such weaving conference, we pushed the definition of collaboration by creating one tapestry, "Poppy Fields," woven by multiple artists. There was no cartoon to follow — just a photo of a California poppy field for inspiration and the portion of the tapestry already woven. Each artist wove as long as it seemed right and then turned the loom over to the next weaver. In the end, one tapestry integrated the vision, yarns, techniques, and styles of nine artists.

Right: **Nicki Bair**, **Janie Cochran**, **Margie Fine**, **Judi Freed**, **Hilda Grayson**, **Anne Heinemann**, **Carollee Howes**, **Karen Leckart**, **Merna Strauch**, "Poppy Field," 10 in x 14 in, 10 epi, 2009, Nicki Bair: photo. Cotton warp, variety of weft including dyed shoelaces. From the collection of Margie Fine.

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In our most ambitious project, “Rita’s Excellent Adventure,” 20 tapestries woven by six artists illustrated a children’s story told in verse. The concept started with a proposal for a Convergence Community Exhibit, which included the following exhibit description: “*Once Upon a Time” is a whimsical coming-of-age story told pictorially with 18 tapestries woven by a variety of tapestry artists. Each artist has been encouraged to focus on a specific tapestry technique and/or color palette to convey their portion of the storyline.* When we wrote that proposal, there were no tapestries woven, no color palette selected, no story written, and no plot or main character imagined. Yet Convergence was but 14 months away!

I volunteered to write this coming-of-age story. My first challenge was to create a story composed of scenes our group would want to weave. Upon discussion, I discovered landscapes, seascapes, beach scenes; anything without people would interest our members. This obviously placed some limits on the plot. I also needed a hero. No one was interested in weaving children or anything too realistic. An early contender for the main character was a chameleon that could blend into any landscape.

Next we negotiated a set of parameters for our tapestries to create a cheerful and bright, yet uniform look common in children’s book illustration. Our focus was on a standard size, a common palette of yarns, recurring colors and a woven frame for each tapestry. Since two of our members are allergic to wool, yet many others love to weave with wool, we required at least half of the weft be from a common stash of cotton and silk yarns. Although the list of parameters was a page long for this project, it afforded an enormous amount of leeway and flexibility in the final tapestries, while assuring the unified look we wanted to achieve.

As the weaving parameters were being set, I created a story in verse about a sand crab named Rita who moved from place to place in search of the best purple plankton in Santa Monica Bay. Six weavers (Margie Fine, Judi Freed,

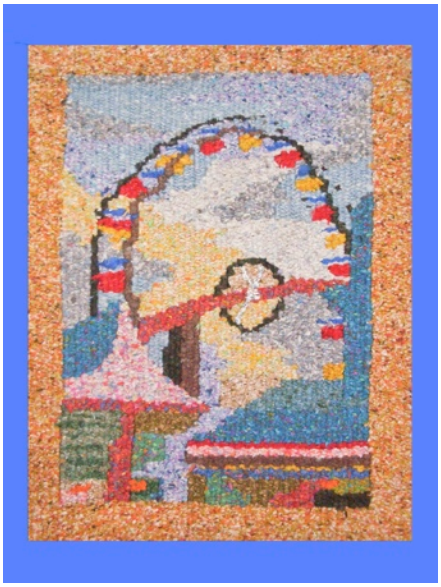
Above Left: **Merna Strauch**, “Page 2 – Rita’s Swash”, 9 in x 12 in, 2012, Nicki Bair: photo. Cotton warp, at least 50% of the weft from a common stash of cotton and silk yarns. From “Rita’s Excellent Adventure.”

Above Center: **Carollee Howes**, “Page 4 – The Venice Canals”, 9 in x 12 in, 2012, Nicki Bair: photo. Cotton warp, at least 50% of the weft from a common stash of cotton and silk yarns. From “Rita’s Excellent Adventure.”

Above Right: **Karen Leckar**t, “Page 6 – Venice Beach”, 9 in x 12 in, 2012, Nicki Bair: photo. Cotton warp, at least 50% of the weft from a common stash of cotton and silk yarns. From “Rita’s Excellent Adventure.”

Carollee Howes, Karen Leckart, Merna Strauch, and I) took up the challenge to weave at least two pages of my story. As tapestries were completed, we would lay them out sequentially by page number, creating discussion and interest in filling the empty spots. When we heard we were accepted for a Community Exhibit in Long Beach we were easily motivated to finish the last eleven less popular and unselected scenes in less than two months.

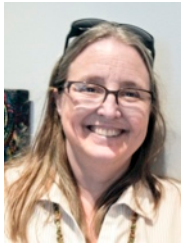
The fun of collaborative exhibits is the journey. But since all journeys come to an end, an important aspect of any collaborative project is defining the end. With *Rita's Excellent Adventure*, we agreed up front as to duration, expense sharing, and ownership. We also published an exhibit catalog composed of the entire story illustrated with photos of the tapestries for purchase at exhibit openings and on Amazon. The exhibit has been shown at a variety of venues over the last few years and will retire gracefully this fall with an exhibit at Concordia University in Irvine California. When the exhibit closes in October, another Seaside collaborative project will come to an end.



Above Left: **Margie Fine**, "Page 10 – Visiting a Tide Pool", 9 in x 12 in, 2012, Nicki Bair: photo. Cotton warp, at least 50% of the weft from a common stash of cotton and silk yarns. From "Rita's Excellent Adventure."

Above Center: **Judi Freed**, "Page 13 – At the Amusement Park", 9 in x 12 in, 2012, Nicki Bair: photo. Cotton warp, at least 50% of the weft from a common stash of cotton and silk yarns. From "Rita's Excellent Adventure.".

Above Right: **Nicki Bair**, "Page 15 – So Many Plover Birds", 9 in x 12 in, 2012, Nicki Bair: photo. Cotton warp, at least 50% of the weft from a common stash of cotton and silk yarns. From "Rita's Excellent Adventure."



Nicki Bair enjoys weaving with words and weft, combining fiber with her creative musings, whether it is a poem, a children's story, a mystery novel or simply a pithy phrase. She continues to be inspired by the unique shapes in nature and enjoys portraying them in unexpected ways. Circles and beetles are recurring themes in her work. Visit www.nickibair.com for more information.

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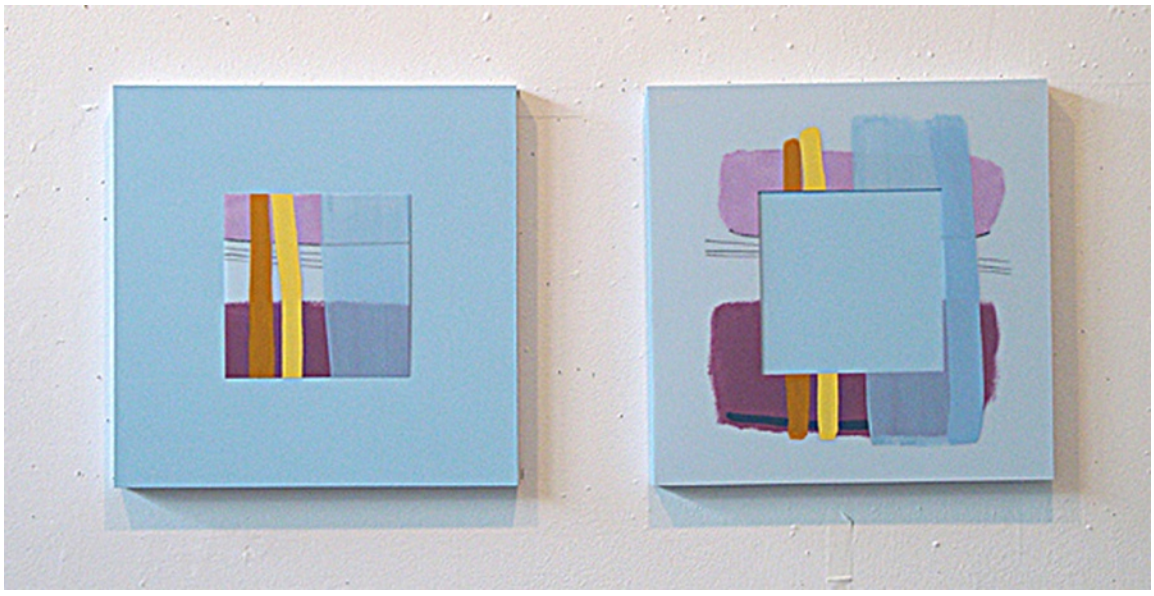
A Weaver and a Painter Find Their Way in Collaboration

by Katie Hickey

In 2010, I was invited to participate in an exhibit of artwork that was to be a collaboration of local painters and weavers who live on Cape Cod, as I do. The intention of the exhibit was to mark the 100th anniversary of the Katherine Lee Bates' poem, "America the Beautiful." Bates had lived on Cape Cod. For this exhibit, the curator, Shawn Nelson Dahlstrom, paired together 11 painters and 11 weavers. Each pair was given a line from the poem to interpret as a piece of weaving and as a painting. The decisions about how we would interpret our lines were left solely up to us. As a result, the collaborations that emerged from each pair of artists were as unique as we were.

When I met with my painter partner, Jane Lincoln, we were both a little baffled about what we would do with the line "And crown thy good with brotherhood." The truth was, although we had agreed to be part of this project for the artistic possibilities that it offered, the theme of "America the Beautiful" didn't especially resonate with either of us. This was a song we had learned to sing in grade school, which over time had come to represent a particular brand of patriotism that neither of us always agreed with. (It turned out this was true for many of the painter/weaver pairs in the project.) So we had to begin by stripping away that uncomfortable layer, in order to find fresh eyes for the words and the sentiments expressed when Katherine Lee Bates wrote her poem.

Our starting point, then, was the simple thought that this place we call America is a very beautiful place, in all its geographic diversity. Our particular reference point was that we happen to live in, arguably, one of the most beautiful places in this country, Cape Cod. Jane and I live on nearly opposite ends of the Cape, but both us are inspired by its landscape in the artwork that we make, so this was our common ground, our meeting place for collaboration.



Above: **Jane Lincoln**, "Marigold, Purple Lake, and Powder Blue," diptych, each 12 in x 12 in, 2010. Acrylic and graphite on mylar and gessoboard.

Jane and I didn't know each other before we began this project, but we quickly found that, as artists, our pieces often began with an exploration of color. This, then, was where our conversation began. We talked about the colors of the Cape, and after looking at some of the pastel landscapes that Jane had been painting, we chose a palette for our work. One landscape in particular seemed to represent the color feeling we wanted to convey, so I took that painting home with me and began thinking about how I would interpret this feeling in tapestry.

At this point, it seemed that the process was simple and straightforward. I had a piece of Jane's to work from for my colors. For the shapes in the image, I had an idea from a collage I had made sometime earlier, which I knew I wanted to weave somehow. I was good to go. I warped the loom, chose the yarns, made a cartoon, and got to work. But I soon realized that something was missing.

I was nearly 10 inches into the tapestry, using Jane's painting as a stricter guide than I had intended. I was trying to abstract her landscape into the shapes I had already decided on, and it wasn't working. It wasn't making any sense. It was losing its meaning and feeling as a landscape, and the colors were getting muddied. On top of that, where was the whole idea of "brotherhood," from the line in the poem that we were supposed to be addressing. In fact, Jane and I had more or less agreed to ignore that part of our charge when we turned our focus to landscape and color. But it was starting to feel important to me to include it. I realized that I wanted and needed this piece to be about something more than a lovely landscape.

So I started over—no easy decision to make as a tapestry weaver after nearly a month of work! I put away Jane's painting. I took the palette we had chosen—red-violets, golds, a range of sky-blues—and re-worked the image with the shapes to which I was still attached. Then I saw something I hadn't quite seen before; my original collage, itself an abstracted landscape, had a crown shape in it! So there was a reason I was intuitively holding onto this image. The crown had to stay. But how would I work in the idea of "brotherhood"?

Above: **Katie Hickey**, "And Crown Thy Good," 18 in x 36 in, 8 epi, 2010. Cotton warp, wool weft.

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I began weaving again, working my way up to the central image, which was now cleaner and sparer. As so often happens in the weaving process, I one day found myself wanting something in there, a border element of some kind maybe, that I hadn't already planned. The tapestry was starting to talk to me—I love when that happens! What emerged from this "conversation" was a Navajo motif, called the squash blossom, that I had learned when I studied with Jennie Slick and Mary Walker of Weaving in Beauty a couple of years earlier. There was the human element that this tapestry needed—a piece of the deep beauty of Native American weaving, generously offered and respectfully received.

Was my tapestry now about brotherhood somehow? This is a complicated concept when it comes to Native people and the rest of us who became the faces of present-day America. Since creating a work of art to fit a given title is a rather backward way of working, it may be that I just gave myself permission to say that yes, this image represents some aspect of brotherhood. What I knew for sure, however, was that this tapestry now felt right.

By this time, Jane had left the Cape for her winter home in Florida, so our only communication was by email. She hadn't seen my first attempt, even though we were both working on the assumption that her landscape, which I still had, was going to be her contribution to the exhibit. I emailed her to let her know that the plans for my tapestry were changing. She emailed back to say that she thought that she didn't want to submit that painting after all. Her artwork, by then, was going in a different direction, away from the representational, towards more abstracted explorations of color. So we agreed that I would just continue on, and when she got back in the spring, she would then make a new piece in response to my tapestry. What started as the weaver responding to the painter became the painter responding to the weaver. Interesting.

When my tapestry was finished and Jane returned to the Cape, the common thread in our collaboration was still the color palette we had chosen at the beginning, now embodied in my piece. That summer, Jane was studying at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown, making paintings that were about pure color. She took samples of my yarns, and made her diptych painting titled "Marigold, Purple Lake, and Powder Blue." Besides incorporating the colors, she also referenced the variety of lines that she saw in my tapestry. As I did, she used this piece to explore what was most interesting and compelling to her in the development of her artwork at that particular time. Our collaboration gave us our starting points, but we each had to find our own journeys in the art-making process.

The exhibit, America the Beautiful: A Collaboration Between Painters and Fiber Artists, was shown in four different venues over the next several years, including the State House in Boston and the Cape Cod Museum of Art. While it was at the Cape Cod Museum of Art, someone saw my tapestry and fell in love with it. She told me that it spoke to her because of her adopted son, who is of Native American heritage. My tapestry, "And Crown Thy Good," now belongs to her.

This wasn't the end of my collaboration experience, however. Last year, Shawn Nelson Dahlstrom curated another collaborative exhibit that was shown at the Cape Cod Museum of Art, called All About sEVEn (spelling correct). This time I was one of 49 women artists, working in a variety of media—but this is a story for another time. For now, I am declining invitations to participate in any more themed group shows, as gratifying as it is to be able to show my tapestry work in the company of other fine arts. I need to discover my own inspiration and starting points, as I continue to explore my vision in weaving.

Katie Hickey lives and weaves in beautiful Wellfleet, Massachusetts, on the outer shores of Cape Cod. She is a member of TWiNE (Tapestry Weavers in New England) and the Weaving Network of Cape Cod. She is also an elementary school teacher, who specializes in mathematics. Jim Rohrer: photo.

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Mug Shot to Painting to Tapestry

by Tommye McClure Scanlin

For several years I've wanted to weave a tapestry based on an artwork by my niece, Megan Smith Noble. She works figuratively and frequently uses sources for imagery from various popular media. In referencing her sources she doesn't copy; rather, she makes modifications of color and form to fit her compositional ideas. For instance, she has based a number of paintings on mug shots that are found both online and in tabloid publications. Her work "Probation Violation" was one from those.

When I saw Megan's series of paintings based on the mug shots, one of them kept pulling me back to it. In this painting the young man seemed to have both an attitude of defiance but also of regret. I felt that she'd given the person a dignity beyond what he'd thus far given to himself. She'd seen the potential of the person beyond that mug shot and captured the core of his humanity.

In the painting she'd simplified and abstracted from the source photo. I wanted to take the simplification even further in the tapestry design. To do so, I photographed her 12" x 9" artwork, and then projected it to enlarge to 32" x 24" for the weaving. I did further detail reduction as I drew from the projected image of the painting. As I wove I combined several wefts to make the various greens for the prisoner's head and the bright orange for the jumpsuit seen at his shoulders. The background was a mixture of warm and cool grays woven with lazy lines in diagonals that move in opposite directions at each side. At the top right I included a signature that was a combination of Megan's and my initials.

Left: **Megan Smith Noble**, "Probation Violation," 12 in x 9 in, 2013, photo: Tim Barnwell. Gouache on paper. Collection of Megan Smith Noble.

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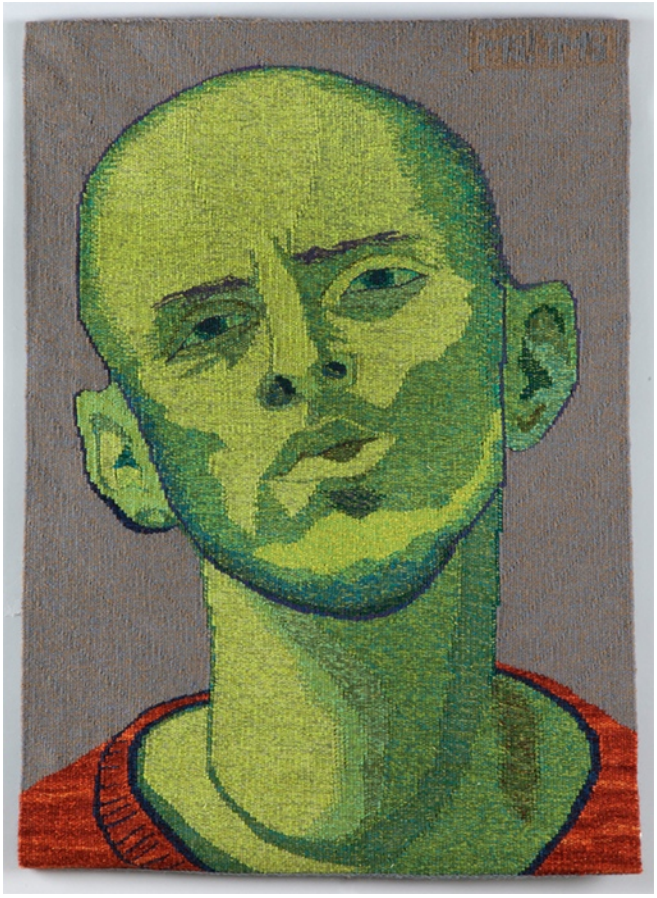

Above: **Tommye Scanlin**, “Probation Violation in Green,” 32 in x 24 in, 8 epi, 2014, Tim Barnwell: photo. Cotton warp, wool and linen weft. Collection of Megan Smith Noble.

I didn’t see the original mug shot reference from the tabloid she’d used for her painting until after the tapestry was completed. I found it very interesting to notice that the demeanor of the person had changed at each step—from the actual mug shot in which the fellow looked angry and defiant, to Megan’s painted interpretation in which he seemed much younger and a bit afraid, and finally to my tapestry in which there seemed to be more acceptance and perhaps regret in his face. Through the transformations that happened it was as if the essence of the young offender’s inner self was being recognized and, in a way, honored. One can only hope that he will someday find the core of self-worth that is surely there and begin to honor it himself.

This was a challenging process for me. On one hand, I wanted to be sure Megan approved of my translation of her painting into a tapestry, since it was being done as a gift for her. Yet I wanted to make something other than a copy of her artwork—I wanted the tapestry to reflect my abilities as a tapestry maker as I designed in responses to her painting. Perhaps one might not call this a true collaboration, but in the end we were pleased with the result—and that’s what mattered most to both of us.

Tommye McClure Scanlin (left in photo) is a tapestry artist who lives in Dahlonega, Georgia, USA. Her tapestry works are frequently exhibited, and she teaches tapestry throughout the U.S.

Megan Smith Noble (right in photo) is a visual artist living in northeast Georgia. She holds a BA in Art from the University of North Georgia. Her work is in several private collections.

Thomas Scanlin: photo.

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The Inevitable Collaboration: The Art of Tapestry = History and Creative Process

by Andrea Theisson

Perhaps because I worked in libraries and Museum Studies, I teach Tapestry with a capital T. I always emphasize the history, its evolution from Neolithic times, along with the process as a collaboration between the right and left brains –- the meditative rhythm of weaving plus the constant problem-solving when that building-block logic is challenged by the unpredictable! Absorption of the pace of the techniques while thinking about the history can invite more personal identity with old traditions of design or cultural trends. Then, the artisan weaver can depart from original symbols and purposes, or connect new materials with old techniques.

While historic structure defines Tapestry — the simplicity of covering a warp, and a heritage of functionality – rugs, saddle blankets, wall-coverings, wearables - the decorative and symbolic designs provide a richer aspect to this art. Functionality is never a bad thing, yet humans inevitably desire something more. Release a creative soul who loves color, shapes, textures, and imagery into the process and you will have spontaneous, versatile possibilities. The slow, deliberate, and disciplined process can collaborate with creativity and allow for spontaneous changes in design, fun with colors, and a playful approach with embellishments. Anything is possible with tapestry – extensions, inlays, textures.

The more we know of historic tapestries, the more creative we can be. Indeed, Craft can be Art. And it should be Art. Even the most humble functional object once held great symbolism and ritual value to the first craftspeople. Turkish prayer rugs have a tradition: the more borders woven, the deeper the devotion. We have lost this sense of devotion or meditation while weaving, arguably a very real human need, over the years of evolution into mass-production. Yet we are beginning to notice, once again.

In Scandinavia, weavers of the Bronze Era mimicked fur in their rya knotting, yet all was not form and function. A love of color triumphed into a rich regional heritage of tapestry, especially the flatwoven Swedish rugs of the early 20th Century, such as those woven by Märta Måås-Fjetterström, and the more current large body of work by Helena Hernmarck.

Tribal rugs of the Middle East have a long tapestry tradition. Knotted or kilim rugs are worth studying, a key reference for any tapestry artist. Jack Lenor Larson enthusiastically lectured on the flatweaves at the Textile Society of America Museum in DC, where regular study groups and files are available for deeper inspiration.

Jumping geographically, and to the early Renaissance, the Italian mathematician known as Fibonacci had a great influence on Western design, relating proportions and balance of shapes with numerical sequence. Da Vinci utilized his theories with the Golden Ratio, followed by a continuum of artists, including our own Donna Lorraine Carpenter. One of my students, a very left-brained soul, a physicist, became totally engaged once this method of design was introduced to her.

Above: **Andrea Theisson**, "Winter Sun," 40 in x 33 in, 5 epi, 1978. Swedish wool, rya rug.

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Above: *Tapestry—Tactics, Tangents and Techniques!* workshop at The Mannings Handweaving School, taught by Theisson; note the Fibonacci afficionado, and a free-style student's experimental techniques amid myriad examples and piles of resources.

At the time of the Unicorn Tapestries in the late Middle Ages, weaving was an independent art form. Tapestries were considered objects in the Renaissance view, as paintings were thought of as “windows.” However, tapestries were often cut with holes, or slits left unstitched, to allow for functionality as doors, bed-hangings, and curtains, while paintings would never have been compromised in that way. Raphael, painter and architect of the High Renaissance in Italy, created images to be both painted and woven into tapestry, including woven picture frames.

Perhaps the most striking collaboration between Art and Craft was the historical turning point of the Gobelin dye director Michel-Eugene Chevreul’s color theory book, published in 1839. A friend of the painter Seurat, he was most influential with the Impressionists, including Gauguin. What is tapestry but broken color? The knots on the backs of carpets were pointillist color theory in another medium. Today, my students may relate more to pixels, but the draft is the same as the theory.

The Navaho weavers and Spanish traditions via Mexico meshed into a delightful, yet individually distinctive style, exemplified by the Chimayo weavers such as ATA members the Trujillo family, generations of weavers! The Weaving Southwest family of Rachel Brown has encouraged and shown the exciting contemporary art tapestries of the region, along with the many galleries of New Mexico.

There is not a select geographical influence. We must study and collaborate with inspiration and technical information globally. Ancient Incan feather-capes have wrapped embellishments, but are tapestry woven. Coptic tapestry-portraits have been found to prove more early evidence. There are no limits to sources.

William Morris played on the inherent flatness of patterns. Joseph Albers commissioned tapestries of his work relating to his color theories, described in his words: “will readily remind us of textiles, and we may read and interpret them as fabrics…” His wife, Anni, however, had a fresher and simpler approach to her designs, as noted by Julia Mitchell, tapestry weaver: “…form following function, no decorative frills, letting the materials do what they want to do, letting the design flow organically from the materials.” Micala Sidore reported for ATA, in Responding to Julia Mitchell’s tapestries, Mitchell’s theory of not trying to weave a daisy when an iris was what wanted to appear.

The Renaissance of the Artist-Craftsman was the theme of a Southeastern Conference of the American Crafts Council in1985. A large number of craftspeople met in Virginia to hear the long traditions of beauty and art evoked as the ultimate survival of Craft. We cannot compete with the mass-produced, and we should not try. "The mark of the hand" remains what collectors and artisans look for. Jon Riis spoke on tapestry commissions and collaboration with clients as the future market.

The collaboration of traditional ateliers with artist-designers, dyers, and weavers continues. Ethnic traditions remain strong; Ten Thousand Villages' Rug Gallery has made an excellent video of their work over 30 years with Pakistani artisans. Fine art venues include the Egyptian Wassa Wissef workshop; Dovecot Studio, Scotland; Portalegre Tapestry, Portugal; and, of course, the listings of ATA tapestry artists, most of whom would be happy to work with patrons on commissioned pieces!

Modern tapestry is a highly evolved mix, yet each piece is distinctly the individual creator's. Scale is relative, and perhaps not important; the quality of the work remains vital. Historians may not have emphasized the collaboration of art and process in these great Tapestry traditions, but all are interconnected, interwoven. Global materials and techniques have combined with the indomitable human energy of creativity. History is not yet complete.

Above: **Andrea Theisson**, "Midnight Calling," on the loom, 40 in x 33 in, 5 epi, 2012, Navaho wool.

Andrea Miller Theisson, paintweaver, has a BFA in Textile Arts and Painting from Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia, and has studied under Leora Stewart, and Adela Akers. She has been weaving, painting, teaching and networking in both California and Pennsylvania for over 40 years. "Art is Life, Life is Art." Andrea Theisson, Paintweaver: Studio A on Marsh Creek, Website Blog .

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On Beautifying the Commandment and Remembrances: A Mother-Daughter Collaboration

by Tamar Shadur

My mother, Yehudit Shadur, a Wisconsin-born, Jerusalem artist, was renowned for her exquisite and intricate papercuts and wrote two definitive books about Jewish papercuts with my father. She designed a tapestry for me to weave with Paul Maynard, my former husband, soon after our move to New Hampshire in 1980. First she made the prototype "Tzadik" papercut, white on a warm brown background (later to be made in different variations and sizes). Her symmetrical papercuts involved a process of designing images on half of a folded paper and cutting the negative shapes with a small sharp knife through the two sides of the paper. In designing the mural-size tapestry, she painted areas of color and their gradations, applying brush strokes as in hachure, to which I introduced her. For the cartoon, I transferred the image with a crayon on the fabric side of sections of wallpaper, reversing the image, since I weave from the back. I then designed a combination of yarns and mill ends we picked up around New England to match the painted colors in the design. We needed a large loom wide enough to weave "Tzadik" on its long side.

Our six foot wide, low-warp Aubusson loom was built by Paul's brother, Peter Maynard, modeled after the one we used in the Jerusalem Tapestry studio run by George Goldstein in the late 1970s. One of my first tapestry weaving assignments there was to weave sections of a large rooster by Jean Lurçat. On the loom bench next to me sat another weaver working on another section of the same tapestry. Hundreds of hues of the fine, French tapestry yarn were wound onto fluted wooden bobbins with a spinning wheel by a part-time employee at the studio. She would often wind together three or four hues on one bobbin to meet the specifications of the coded cartoons of four or five large tapestries.

The gold highlights and inscriptions in my mother's papercuts were inspirations for weaving biblical verses in gold, copper, and silver metallic threads wound with rayon, silk, and fine wool yarns. These appeared in the "Tzadik Ka'tamar Yifrach"

Above Right: **Yehudit Shadur**, "Tzadik Ka'tamar Yifrach," papercut, Vladimir Naikhin: photo.

Above Left: **Yehudit Shadur** (designer), **Tamar Shadur** and **Paul Maynard** (weavers), "Tzadik Ka'tamar Yifrach", 64 in x 57 in, 12 epi, 1981, T. Shadur: photo. Cotton warp, wool, metallic, rayon weft. On loan at the Jewish Community of Amherst, MA.

tapestry and in two smaller biblical tapestries based on card-size papercuts that followed in 1981. Hovering over the roller beam and pressing treadles during the sixth month of my pregnancy was a physical challenge.

"Tzadik Ka'tamar Yifrach*"* was the first of three biblical tapestries with Hebrew inscriptions that I wove, based on her papercuts. The tapestry, which includes recurring motifs from my mother's papercuts, hangs in the sanctuary of the Jewish Community of Amherst, Massachusetts. "Tzadik Ka'tamar Yifrach,*"* Hebrew for "The Righteous Shall Flourish as the Date Palm," from Psalm 92, is sung in the Friday night liturgy at the synagogue. In the tapestry, two deer flank a central date palm (Tree of Life) and are surrounded by five kinds of birds, vines, and pomegranates.

When weaving "How Beautiful Upon the Mountains are the Feet of the Messenger," an Isaiah 52 peace prophecy, I enjoyed beating down the metallic weft threads combined with silky rayons in and around letters, vines, and the Dove of Peace over the walled City of Jerusalem. In *"*He is Like a Tree Planted by Streams of Water*,"* referring to the righteous man whose "leaf shall not wither" in Psalms 1, woven silver threads among the greens in the foliage of the Tree of Life gave it the rich effects one sees in my mother's papercuts in the right light.

I employed the devotion or holy act of "beautifying the commandment" in these tapestries and in the mural-size *"*Tzadik" tapestry, with its gradations of greens, reds, crimsons, metallic threads, metallic threads, and intricate border. The same Jewish tradition is observed in papercut plaques, ceremonial objects, and embroidered Torah covers. The tapestry gracefully radiates the message to strive for righteous living as it hangs on the sanctuary wall to the right of the *bimah*—the raised platform and focal point of the synagogue where the holy Torah is kept in its ark.

Above Left: **Yehudit Shadur**, "How Beautiful upon the Mountains," papercut, Vladimir Naikhin: photo.

Above Right: **Yehudit Shadur & Tamar Shadur** (designers), **Tamar Shadur** (weaver), "How Beautiful upon the Mountains", 20 in x 26 in, 12 epi, 1981, Tamar Shadur: photo. Cotton warp, wool, metallic, rayon weft. Private collection.

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In 1994, my mother designed the *"*Yizkor - Holocaust Memorial Tapestry*,"* the last of our collaborations. The "cutting off" celebration when I finished weaving "Yizkor"in February 2013, exactly two years after her passing, was a good time to honor and commemorate her contribution to contemporary tapestry, as well as to the Jewish art world. Yehudit Shadur had been instrumental in the revival of the rich traditional folk art form of Jewish papercuts, nearly lost with the Holocaust.

The single inscription *Yizkor* (Remembrance), in the center of the baroque Menorah in the "Yizkor," 68 in x 57 in, refers to the *Yizkor* prayer Jews recite in commemoration of the victims of the Holocaust. My mother's inspiration for this elaborate design was the 18th century ornately painted wooden synagogues of Poland and Ukraine that were destroyed by the Nazis. The two Lions of Judah stand on the columns, suggestive of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem, the focus of Jewish worship and nationhood. Beneath the Menorah is a gazelle, *Tzvi Yisrael*, encompassed by grapevines with their deep-running roots, both symbolic of the Jewish people. The seven burning flames of the Menorah converge upward into the Crown of Torah, *Keter Torah.* These symbolic elements with their multiple layers of meaning have been recurrent themes in Jewish ritual and folk art through the ages.

My weaver's marks in the border of the tapestry add yet another layer of commemorative meaning. Working at my loom while listening to the ongoing radio reports after the horrors of 9/11, 2001, I was moved to weave the letters WTC[1] in the top border above the crown. On a more personal level, I wove the Hebrew letters to spell the names of my father , Yossef, and my only brother, Raphael, both deceased, along the vertical left side border (near my mother's and my woven initials)—a spontaneous decision I made just before finishing this project that saw the passage of almost a third of my lifetime.

I only wish that my parents, who saw a good part of the progress of the "Yizkor" weaving over many years, had lived a few more years to join the wonder of its completion and see it displayed in galleries. Blessed are the memories.

Left: **Yehudit Shadur** (designer), **Tamar Shadur** (weaver), "Yizkor-Holocaust Memorial Tapestry," 68 in x 57 in, 10 epi, 2013, Pivot Media: photo. Cotton warp, wool, chenille weft.

Tamar Shadur has been a tapestry weaver since 1978. She holds BFA.Ed and MEd.ESL degrees from University of Massachussetts, Amherst, and for many years has taught ESL, Adult Basic Education, and Hebrew, as well as conducted papercut and tapestry workshops. Tamar is a member of the American Tapestry Alliance and Tapestry Weavers in New England (TWiNE).

[1] WTC - World Trade Center

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Collaboration in Late Antiquity Egyptian Workshops

by Ulrikka Mokdad

Introduction

The so-called “Coptic” textiles of first millennium AD have attracted the attention of a growing number of scholars in the past thirty years or so. Unlike most parts of the world, Egypt has rich and abundant archaeological textile collections as a result of its exceptionally arid soil conditions. Since the last part of the 18th century an enormous corpus of well-preserved textiles has been excavated, and many more textiles are still waiting to be uncovered in the necropolis of Egypt.

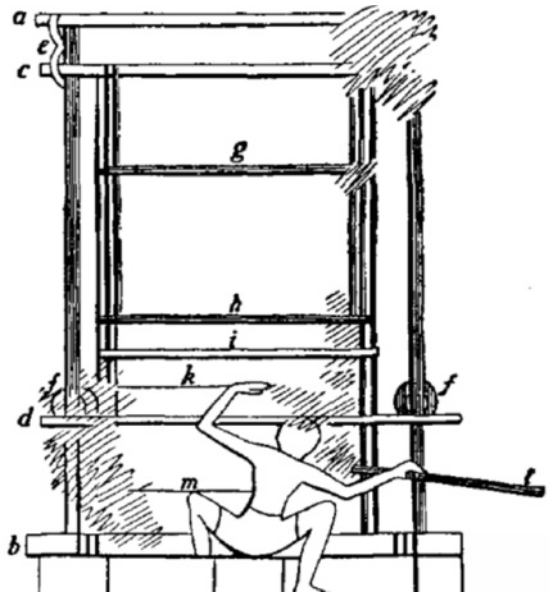
Late Antiquity Egypt was an integral part of the Late Roman Empire. Since the time of Constantine the Great in the 4th century AD, the new monotheist faith of Christianity had for the most part replaced the ancient Egyptian religion, which was characterized by its large number of zoomorphic gods. Christianity, which the country shared with the rest of the empire, caused changes in Egyptian burial customs. As Christianity took hold during the 2nd century, the pharaonic tradition of mummification died out and was replaced in the 3rd century by Christian burials, where the deceased were dressed in everyday clothes, wrapped in blankets and buried in the ground, often without coffins.

The ancient Egyptian tradition of preserving the deceased bodies for the afterlife persisted. The Greco-Roman tradition of cremation did not influence the local burial customs, even though the practice of burying the deceased fully dressed was criticized by leading churchmen in the 4th century. To a certain degree, the Egyptians continued to preserve their deceased, and thanks to the arid climate a great quantity of textiles have survived. In recent years, scholars from different academic fields have shown a growing interest in the study of textile remains as a way of gaining insight into ancient technology and production, as well as socio-economic aspects of that time.

The Looms

Archaeologists have found evidence that four different looms were known in the Mediterranean during Late Antiquity: the warp-weighted loom, the horizontal ground-loom, the two-beam vertical loom, and the raised horizontal loom. However, the warp-weighted loom has not left much evidence of its existence in Egypt and the raised horizontal loom was probably not generally known in Egypt before the late third century AD. A literary source dating back to the 5th century BC may reveal what kind of loom the Egyptian weavers were using. “Not only is the climate different from that of the rest of the world, and the rivers unlike any other rivers, but the people also, in most of their manners and customs, exactly reverse the common practice of mankind. The women attend the markets and trade, while the men sit at home at the loom; and here, while the rest of the world works the woof up the warp, the Egyptians work it down… ” [1]

Herodotus (c. 484 – c. 425 BC) must have been familiar with the warp-weighted loom, which was used all over Greece, Italy and Asia Minor. The weaver of the warp-weighted loom always beat the weft up towards the cloth beam while weaving. One can conclude that if Herodotus, during his



Above: Ancient Egyptian loom: an illustration from the Encyclopaedia Biblica, from 1903; an image of an upright loom — the labels are referenced at various points of the encyclopedia text. This is one the oldest surviving depictions of a loom. The image is based on a wall-painting in the tomb of Thutnofer at Thebes and proves that the vertical two-beam loom was known in Egypt as early as late 15th century BC during the New Kingdom’s 18th Dynasty.

[1] Herodotus: II, 35

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journey to Egypt, had observed an Egyptian weaver working on a warp-weighted loom, he probably would not have mentioned such an everyday event. But he carefully noticed all the differences between Greek and Egyptian customs. Thus, when Herodotus, who wrote his Historia in 440 BC, mentioned the Egyptian weaver's loom and wrote that the woof (weft) is beaten downwards, he obviously spoke of a vertical two-beam loom or simply a tapestry loom.

Wall paintings in the tomb of Thutnofer at Thebes show that the vertical two-beam loom was known in Egypt as early as late 15th century BC during the New Kingdom's 18th Dynasty. By securing the beams on two uprights and placing the heddle bar above the weaver's head, he could choose as many heddles as needed to open the shed for tapestry weaving. Thus, by raising the loom from the ground, the weaver no longer had to open the counter shed from selvedge to selvedge. As the depiction shows, several weavers could work side by side at the same loom and collaborate on large commissions. Though no depictions dating from the Late Antiquity showing this loom-type have yet been discovered in Egypt, and literary evidence also fails us here, many scholars still agree that the Coptic textiles should be connected to the vertical two-beam loom and that the large one-piece-woven tunics must have been woven on this type of loom.

The Tunic

The tunic was the main garment worn by men, women and children in the Late Antiquity Mediterranean area. A tunic can be roughly described as a cylinder-formed or conic tube of fabric of various length reaching from the shoulders to somewhere between the hips and the ankles and made either with or without sleeves. Because of the dry desert climate in Egypt and the Christian burial practice of dressing and wrapping the deceased in clothing and cloth, thousands of these garments have survived. Many preserved tunics and fragments of tunics are included in museum collections all over the world. It has been established that the early tunics from the Roman and Byzantine periods were made of cloth that was woven to shape either in one loom piece or in three pieces that were stitched together.

Tunics could be woven in several ways. There was a strong tradition of weaving the cloth to shape on the loom instead of cutting the woven cloth to shape after weaving. Sleeved tunics were generally woven to shape in one piece which meant that the weaver started at the end of the first sleeve, then wove the entire garment in the full width of the vertical two-beam loom, and finally went on to weave the second sleeve; the straight neck opening was woven into the cloth by means of internal selvedges. When finished, the large piece of cloth being as wide as three meters or more, would then appear cruciform with a woven slit forming the neck opening in the centre. After the piece had been taken off the loom, it was simply folded down the middle to a T-shape and stitched together under the sleeves and on each side to create a tube of cloth. There was no need to cut the cloth to shape. Not only did the weaver weave the entire tunic to shape in one piece, he also wove in the decorative manicae, clavi, orbiculi or tabulai in tapestry technique as well. All tunic decoration was strictly symmetrical. The ground weave of the tunics was usually a tabby.

There is reason to believe that several weavers would be working together on the large woven-to-shape tunics. One person threw the shuttle through the tabby sheds, while another highly

Above: Coptic tunic, LACMA (Los Angeles County Museum of Art); Egypt, Coptic Period, 4th-5th century AD; Wool, tapestry woven decorations. Purchased with funds provided by Mr. and Mrs. William T. Sesnon, Jr. (M.65.30). Center back length is 48.5 in (123.19 cm).

specialized and skillful worker would carefully weave in the tapestry decorations. Analysis has proved that in some cases, decorations such as tapestry medallions and clavi were woven in by several weavers on the same tunic.

The methods of weaving to shape probably came to Egypt with the Romans, since surviving textiles have shown that this tradition was prevalent in the Roman world. The later tunics from the early Islamic period were made of cloth that was cut to shape and were sometimes provided with gores to form a conic shape. The typical Coptic cloth was a combination of tabby and tapestry, sometimes called inserted tapestry. Tapestry decorations were used on clothing and on secular and sacred cloths including wall-hangings of tapestry. Found in Egypt and a few other sites, this type of cloth was worn and probably woven all over the Roman Empire.

The Tools

When weaving very large textiles such as Coptic tunics with inserted tapestry ornaments, both the tension of the warp and the opening of the sheds were important for the final result. The weaver also had to carry the weft back and forth through the open sheds and beat it down to cover the warp ends as well. A dolly or a butterfly of yarn could easily be shot through the large sheds of the warp-weighted loom. But the vertical two-beam loom, which held the warp taut between two rollers, had much narrower sheds. The Coptic textiles, especially those made with linen warp, usually had very high thread counts. Therefore, the weaver could neither separate the thin, closely set warp threads nor beat the wefts down with his fingers. He definitely needed equipment, such as spools and beaters, to avoid tearing his fingers raw from the sharp linen threads. Only a few such tools have survived, since they were made of wood. Literary sources describe a small, pointed wooden stick called a radius, which was used to carry the weft through the sheds and to beat the weft closely together. According to researchers in the field, the radius corresponded to the pointed bobbin of our days, while the pecten was synonymous with the comb used to beat down the weft after changing the shed. It is not known, however, how the radius was able to carry the weft yarn through the sheds. Was the yarn wound around the radius as it is on a present day pointed bobbin? Or was it more likely used as a hook to pull the weft through the sheds? We know that the Egyptian weavers had cartoons made of papyrus for weaving the inserted tapestry decorations. Such cartoons are preserved in the papyrus collections of Museo Egizio in Turin and Museum für Spätantike und byzantinisches Kunst in Berlin. Many of the Coptic textiles have identical or very similar tapestry decorations – a fact which tells us that the most popular cartoons must have been copied and used in several workshops.

Conclusion

Most evidence from the analyzed textiles as well as from the scarce secondary sources points to a large, well-organized textile trade in Late Antiquity Egypt. The weavers were probably working in professional workshops where collaboration between them was essential while carrying out large commissions such as tunics, wall-hangings and curtains for temples and churches.

Ulrikka Mokdad is a 42-year-old tapestry weaver who lives and weaves in Copenhagen, Denmark. She has recently received an MA in art history from the University of Copenhagen after finishing her thesis on dating and provenance determination of Coptic textiles.

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Thoughts on Collaboration

by Kathe Todd-Hooker

“The lightning spark of thought generated in the solitary mind awakens its likeness in another mind.” —Thomas Carlyle

There are many different ways to collaborate—with many different possible endings and scenarios. Over my career as a tapestry weaver, I have been involved in three very distinct styles of collaboration, each with very different goals and outcomes.

The first two types of collaboration are more what I think of as true collaborative efforts. The first involved the production of “The Portrait Tapestry” and “The Convergence Tapestry” by the *Tapestry Forum* in Portland. This collaborative effort ended in 1996 when the tapestries were shown at the Portland Convergence. “The Portrait Tapestry” was created by the seventeen members of *Tapestry Forum* and woven by weavers from all over North America. The members each designed and wove a diamond with a portrait.

The second type of collaboration, and perhaps the most satisfying, is when I collaborate with Pat Spark in the production of books on tapestry. We both have our strengths and weaknesses and are able to blend them in such a way to produce well-written technical books about tapestry.

Weaving with Shelley Socolofsky was a third type of collaboration. Over the years, I have worked on four large tapestries with Shelly. Unlike my usual weaving, which is in the 15 in x 15 inch range, these were large tapestries. The two “smaller” ones were 5 ft x 6 ft. The largest two were in the range of 5 ft x 12-13 ft. Oddly, size was not as important as the doing. Each had its own level of design complexity and challenges.

Above: **Shelley Socolofsky** (designer), **Kathe Todd-Hooker** (weaver), “Fata Morgana,” about 60 in x 49 in, 2012.

Some might call it collaboration, but I do not think that either Shelley or I would classify our working process in that way. To me collaboration is defined as *to work together, especially in a joint intellectual effort.* Note the word *joint* implies an equal partnership in all aspects of production, which is not what we were doing. I was labor and she was management and design. I was never part of the design process. I never wanted to be, nor do I regret not being part of it. Generally, when I began to weave on Shelley's tapestries she was well into the weaving. Design and color decisions had been made. I supplied the physical labor and my expertise as a tapestry weaver. I was being paid to duplicate or translate her detailed cartoons into wool. I wove three or four days a week, sometimes more when deadlines loomed. I usually wove from about 9:00 am to 4:00 pm while Shelley was teaching. Depending on our schedules, we wove together about one day a week. But just by necessity, we usually wove at different hours.

Each morning I wove on Shelly's tapestries, I consulted a small notebook or list of where I was to weave, and details of things that I might need to weave in special ways. There might be bobbins filled with specific color blends to use in certain areas or small quick pictures to illustrate something. On the days I wasn't weaving on Shelley's large tapestries, I was weaving eight hours a day on my small format, small scale pieces. I used the exact same technique, but a totally different design style and a totally different scale.

The process that we created to weave worked well for me. I loved escaping the hectic life in my studio: no phones, no interruptions. It was often like being on a vacation or a retreat. I checked my ego at the door and tried to shadow or channel Shelley's weaving sensibilities. When I felt uncomfortable, I would stop and move to another space on the tapestry until I could communicate by leaving notes and get an answer from Shelley.

Shelley and I approach our designs very differently. While her cartoons are very detailed, I work from a black outline on white paper, usually without detail. Shelley generally works at 10 epi and I work at 20-22 epi. But, there were several things that enabled us to weave in this fashion. Technically, we are much more similar then dissimilar. We "speak" and weave the same language based on Gobelin technique, making communication easy. Our color palettes and sensibilities are similar, so our choices for bobbins, chiné [1] and melanges [2] were not at odds. Both of us are phobic about perfecting technique and flat surfaces. Shelley is one of the best technical weavers I have ever been around, which challenged me to be a better weaver. Both of us are speedy weavers and weave at about the same rate (0.5-1.5 feet in a day) allowing us to stay pretty even. Occasionally, on the days we wove together, we used the same treadles and wove in sync, an interesting way to weave. I learned long ago that tapestry weaving is like handwriting and I am able to mimic others' styles of weaving. For instance, Shelly doesn't beat as hard as I do and her bubble is slightly less than mine, creating a very slight difference in texture. But this was easy to mimic once I was aware of the differences. One technique that I was constantly trying to duplicate was her rya bundles; she tended to make them smaller, so there was a constant adjustment on my part.

I became more proficient at weaving several techniques through working on Shelley's tapestries. These include transparencies with written words, which I used in "Fata Morgana," and various uses of pick and pick. The second piece we wove together led me into working with and researching bunnmonstre[3] because of the pulled slits that morphed out its process. I know I would never have explored rya to the extent that I have after working on "The Hybrid Bride," which includes at least a square yard of rya. I would go home and work rya at 22 epi in ribbon and embroidery floss. I taught myself about rya height, thickness, and how to make it lie in the direction I wished. I discovered that human hair, which stretches when wet and then shrinks as it dries, can be controlled by working it wet. Horse hair can be woven with wool for overlay and used to create rya-like veils and float across the surface in stitches. I knew how to do these techniques, but might not have done them in my own studio without this working experience.

[1] Chiné - mixing colors of dissimilar value and / or hue together on a bobbin.
[2] Melange - mixing colors of similar value and / or hue together on a bobbin.
[3] Bunnmonstre - a technique that uses the space created by the turn backs on either side of a slit to create a pattern of shadowed dots.

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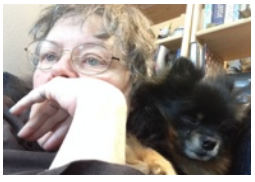
The most challenging of the four tapestries we wove together, and my favorite, was the last, “Trade Blanket (Hybrid Bride).” The transparencies and letters in “Fata Morgana" run a close section. The most challenging period was the first two weeks working on the first tapestry, when I had to come to terms with what Shelley needed me to do. It is so different weaving for someone else, rather than in your own studio.

The question that I am most often asked is whether it is difficult to go from weaving at 10 epi to 22 epi. Not really. It's the same process. My fingers sometimes felt odd, but that was more of a textural thing from using sewing thread rather than wool. What was difficult was the constant negation of self and ego that it takes to weave another's design, to not add or subtract to the process or be part of the collaborative design process. On the other hand, Shelley's incredible cartoons and strong design sensibilities could be terribly freeing. In fact, it could have been easy to lose my own self and sense of design and end up as a pale imitator of Shelley's beautiful tapestries.

Right: **Shelley Socolofsky** (designer), **Kathe Todd-Hooker** (weaver), “Trade Blanket (Hybrid Bride),” 90 in x 60 in, 2012.



*Kathe Todd-Hooke*r teaches tapestry and related subjects. She has written four books and is finishing up a fifth on tapestry weaving, and written numerous articles on textiles, tapestry technique, colour theory, Old Believers, and braiding. She is co-owner of Fine Fiber Press and Studio. Visit http://kathetoddhooker.blogspot.com to read about her life as a tapestry weaver and other odd bits.

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Review - Awake, Wide Awake / Despierto, Despierto

by Andrea Butler

In January, I had the great pleasure of traveling to Zacatecas, Mexico to see Patricia Dunn's solo exhibition **Awake, Wide Awake / Despierto, Despierto**. The exhibition and free standing installation of the same name were inspired by words from an Antonio Machado poem. The exhibition was held at the Museo Zacatecano and included over 40 works and a full catalog in Spanish and English. While at the museum, I found myself standing in the presence of a beautifully displayed impressive body of work. I felt awake, wide awake.

Patricia has a profound comprehension of how color appears in nature and how it fuses with fibers. Geography and surroundings, where color is a ritual through the day and season, play an integral part in Patricia's palette. The subtlety of color found in her tapestries and sculptures reflects the layers of color and substance in rock, earth, and sky. Her work sometimes includes delicate color changes and in other cases a contrast of complementary shades. A great example of her lovely color treatment is in *"*Aren't we, after all, stardust? No.1 and No. 2." The value gradation of purples to golds as they range from light to dark is impeccable. These tapestries also display a deep understanding of the use of complementary colors, as the hues are used to give shape to the content and focus the eye on smaller details, such as the shapes of objects within objects, or the small bits of color floating on the surface like particles of stardust.

Above Left: **Patricia Dunn**, "Aren't We, After All, Stardust? No. 1," 54 in x 34 in (137 cm x 86 cm), 2012. Hand dyed silk and wool yarn. Linen warp.

Above right: **Patricia Dunn**, "Aren't We, After All, Stardust? No. 2," 54 in x 34 in (137 cm x 86 cm), 2013. Hand dyed silk and wool. Linen warp.

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Patricia's tapestries and sculptures are collections of colors, stories, and cycles in life. She follows the paths and connections between ritual, habit, and routine. She weaves the earth's rituals, nature's routine, and our habits into abstractions of color, shape, and content. We see this in both the tapestries and the sculptures. In experiencing the installation of sculptures and pods called “Awake, Wide Awake,” we glimpse Patricia's inspirations. We see this also by reading the text mounted on the wall next to the tapestries, or the words painted on the pods of the installation, as they hang and spin. We even witness it in the carefully repetitious, but open forms of her suspended sculptures. We are introduced to snippets of poems and individual words that invite us to enter into the world of awareness. In particular, the installation forces the viewer to be present in the moment in the way that it moves and shifts with the movements of air and individuals in the space.

Above: **Patricia Dunn**, “Awake, Wide Awake”, 114 in x 37 in, 2013, Mark Dunn: photo. Copper wire, hand dyed silk, seed pods of flame tree, acrylic paint.

The structure of weaving is as tangible as the warp and weft. In Patricia's work, it is the linen warp of the tapestries, the metal wire in the sculptures, and the wool and silk used as weft that creates the structure. The treatment of weft in the wall hangings is much more complicated than that of the silk used as weft for the sculptures. The employment of wool and silk in different sheds adds great depth and abstraction to the surface of the tapestries, whereas the simplicity of the silk weft in the sculptures helps define the shapes. The viewer can see progress and growth with the background treatment. In the series S*ilent Voices On the Mountain,* the painted board feels like a background, while in the series *Memories of Dawn in the Land of the Maya,* shapes peek out from the background, much like they do when you visit and observe the same places again and again— much like static change. It integrates the background and becomes part of the completed piece. However, after experiencing the flow and ever changing presence of the sculptures in “Awake, Wide Awake,” it seems the framed sculptures need more space around them. As they are fixed in one place, they need room to breathe.

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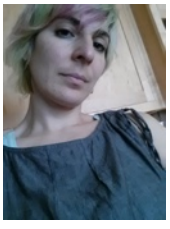
The masculine and the feminine, which are represented in “Aren't we, after all, stardust? No. 1 and No. 2,” are found in both the tapestries and the sculptures. The tapestries are feminine in material and masculine in structure. The weft fibers of wool and silk are soft and inviting. The process of meticulously dyeing the fiber and the production of the delicate colors is also a feminine attribute. The masculine traits are seen in the calculated structural grid, and in the geometric and static images. The sculptures show feminine traits in their organic shape, and the ability to manipulate their form. Yet, the rigid wire of the sculpture structure is male. These feminine and masculine elements are fused together beautifully in the sculptures and tapestries. One could not exist without the other.

Above: **Patricia Dunn**, “Silent Voices. On the Mountain. No. 14,” 10 in x 10 in (26.5 cm x 26.5 cm) 2011. Copper wire. Hand dyed silk yarn. Acrylic on MDF board. Cut tacks. Acrylic display box. From the Series

Right: **Patricia Dunn**, “Yaxchilan, Chiapas. MX Song of the Howler Monkeys,” 18 in x 11 in (46 cm x 28 cm) 2013. Mark Dunn: photo. From the Series *Dawn in the Land of the Maya.*

In **Awake, Wide Awake / Despierto, Despierto**, Patricia asks us, the viewers, to stop, look, and be present in the moment. We are to be aware of what is happening directly in the environment regardless of where we are geographically. Patricia prompts us to experience that which surrounds us and is within us. We are asked to engage with the mundane and to allow the unremarkable to be exceptional. We are reminded to look at up at the sky, down at the earth and into our ourselves.



Andrea Butler is a tapestry weaver living in Saint John, New Brunswick, Canada. Traveling to Zacatecas, Mexico has added great influence and inspiration in her life.

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ATA News

Emerge Grant - Katie Russell

Katie Russell, from Castle Douglas, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland, has been awarded an Emerge: Membership Grant for New & Emerging Artists. Emerging artists are defined as those not older than 40 years who are in the early stage of their career, who have garnered some achievements, but not an extensive record of accomplishments. Currently, Katie is involved in producing tapestries for an exhibition on the Russian Arctic Convoys from WWII. She is a member of The British Tapestry Group, The Weavers, Spinners & Dyers Guild, Craft Scotland, and Intertwine - a Galloway Textile Collective.

Above: **Katie Russell**, “Ice Flow,” 16.5 in x 21 in, 2014. Cotton and wool.

Award for Excellence - Don Burns

Don Burns received ATA’s Award for Excellence for his tapestry “Fauvist Woods” exhibited in **TWiNE 2014,** at the Feinstein Gallery at the University of Rhode Island from July 8, through August 8, 2014.

Don says this about his tapestry:
“Fauvist Woods is an adaption / abstraction of a BFA portfolio pastel. My tapestries evolve from the simplification of a drawing into flattened shapes. I am driven by color and what this means to tapestry. How one color plays off another in wool - the excitement, the tension, the movement - this is the stimulus behind my work.”

Don Burns is an Interior Designer, Tapestry Artist and Instructor living in Vinalhaven, Maine. His work was featured in *Tapestry Handbook, The Next Generation* by Carol K Russell. He is a member of the “Wednesday Group.” Don exhibits nationally and internationally. He has work in public collections in France and Washington DC.

Above: **Don Burns**, "Fauvist Woods," 31 in x 28 in, 2004, photo: Don Burns. Wool weft, cotton warp.

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Award for Excellence - Deborah Corsini

Deborah Corsini received ATA's Award for Excellence for her tapestry "Rip-Tide" exhibited in **Water Water,** an exhibit sponsored by Tapestry Weavers West at the East Bay Municipal Utility District in Oakland, California from July 17, through August 29, 2014.

Deborah says this about her tapestry:
"I have always been drawn to the Navajo weaving aesthetic and became fascinated by the unusual (experimental) wedge weave technique that was used by some Navajo weavers (among other cultures). For the past decade I have been exploring this technique—where the weft yarns are woven at an angle to the warp—and its variations. I like the rhythm of the weaving across the warp and the buildup of the linear growth of the design bands. I like the scalloped edges that are created, the result of weaving at an angle, which draws attention to the method and adds dynamic movement and energy to the work. The process of wedge weave and the design of my work are intuitive and intertwined.

I live by the ocean with its ever changing colors and moods. The ocean is a source of life and inspiration. Yet underneath the sometimes calm surface lies another infinite world with layers of currents, movements, and change. Rip Tide is an abstracted view of the power of this strong force, capturing the energy of this dangerous tide."

Deborah Corsini has pursued a lifelong passion for weaving. Tapestry is her primary art, but her multi-faceted artistic career has spanned a variety of pursuits including teaching weaving and designing fabrics. Recently retired from an eight year tenure as the curator of the San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles she is an advocate for contemporary textile art. Known for her wedge weave tapestries her work is in corporate and private collections and exhibited internationally.

Above: **Deborah Corsini**, "Rip Tide," 43 in x 23 in, 2008, photo: Bruno Corsini. Wool weft, cotton warp, wedge weave.

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2014 International Student Award - Christine Thomson

Christine Thomson has been selected for the 2014 International Student Award. Christine is in her graduating term in the Bachelor of Fine Arts Program at Alberta College of Art + Design (ACAD) in Calgary, Alberta. She came to ACAD after a twenty-five year career in costume design for theatre and film. Having worked with textiles and their three dimensional form in a design context, she wanted to further explore the medium of fibre within a conceptual and artistic framework. She enrolled in her first tapestry course in the fall of 2012 and was seduced by the art form of the medium. Christine states that she is happiest when immersed in the complicated joys of building a textured narrative.

Christine views her immediate surroundings and the larger global picture through the eyes of the tapestry medium; how one could interpret and comment on the state of food production, a pattern in nature, or a remnant of war? These are all abstractions or stark narratives to be employed and interpreted. In her art practice, she explores and embeds social meaning, investigating topics of social and political interest. Her intent is to illustrate a discourse on current and historical social conditions, and realize the relationship between a vision, a haptic process, and an expression of empathy.

In Christine's tapestry series, *In Memoria*, she embodies imagery of detritus that remains after traumatic events. The shoe is a symbol of the individual who wore it, and is a human referent to anthropogenic acts; a consequence of religious bombings, genocide, or nuclear catastrophes.

Above Left: **Christine Thomson**. *In Memoria*: "Pripyat." (detail). 2013. Photo: Elisa Sereno-Janz. Wool and cotton.

Above Right: **Christine Thomson**. *In Memoria*: "Bali." (detail). 2013. Photo: Elisa Sereno-Janz. Wool and cotton.

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2013-2014 Annual Report

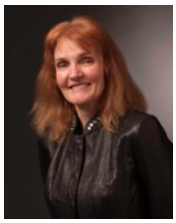
Every year ATA's Co-Director's write an Annual Report, a review of the previous year's accomplishments and a general statement on the health of the organization. Visit http://americantapestryalliance.org/about-us/information-about-atas-programming/ to read the full text.

Board of Directors Election

Thanks to all of you who participated in the 2014 Board of Directors Election. We are very happy to announce that Margo MacDonald and Michael Rohde will be continuing as Exhibitions Chair and Co-Director of Member Services, respectively and that new Board members Kimberly Brandel and Barbara Brophy will be Awards Committee Chair and Education Committee Chair. Please read the profiles below to learn more about our new Board members.

Kimberly Brandel: "When I moved to Idaho 19 years ago, I built a house. My sister came from California to install the electrical system. After she went home, the building inspector failed the system. I was beside myself. My friend, Tom, volunteered to correct the items that had failed. I decided I would weave him a saddle blanket to repay his kindness. First, I tried to weave it on a 4-harness floor loom but I couldn't get the tension correct and the warp threads kept breaking. Next, I tried to felt the blanket but I couldn't get the felt thick enough. Finally, 15 years later, I bought a used Fireside tapestry loom, a how-to book on tapestry weaving, and finished it. Tom refused to put the saddle blanket on his horse and hung it on the wall. I've been weaving tapestry ever since.

My favorite quote is from J.R.R. Tolkien - "Not all those who wander are lost." I went to 18 schools before I graduated from high school. After I finished high school, I took off to travel the world. I started with living in a tree house in Hawaii and then went on to surf in Mexico. Next, I headed to Europe and ended up in West Africa where, after trying to ride a bicycle across the Sahara, I stowed away on a British cargo ship from Dakar, Senegal to Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. I stayed a few months on the coast and then travelled by myself north through Niger, Algeria, and Tunisia. Sometimes, I look back on those times and think I'm lucky to still be alive.



Barb Brophy studied tapestry with the late James Koehler of Santa Fe and began weaving as a student of Judy Steinkoenig of Boulder. Her tapestry, “Inspired by Rothko” is part of the current ATB10 exhibition. Areas of tapestry study focus include: Mark Rothko in the 1940s; the works of the Bauhaus era artists, specifically Paul Klee, Vasily Kandinsky, Johannes Itten and Josef Albers; and multidimensional physics/mathematical concepts and principles as applied in art. She was a guest artist for the Denver Art Museum MakeARTTalk Untitled #60 (Signature), Figure to Field: Mark Rothko in the 1940s (August 2013) and Untitled Meet Here annual event (November 2013). In addition to membership in ATA, she is a member of the Handweavers Guild of America (HGA) and Handweavers Guild of Boulder (HGB).

Barb is a firm believer in community service and initiatives and she has held many leadership positions in family school organizations, community projects, service clubs and other organizations. Her past career experience includes consulting in financial modeling, forensic accounting, interim Chief Financial Officer, and asset tracing, along with employment as a Chief Financial Officer, Grants Coordinator, Business Development Center Director, Credit Union Manager, and Special Projects Coordinator. Her personal hobbies are fiber arts, hiking, reading, gardening, and collecting fiber petit-point.

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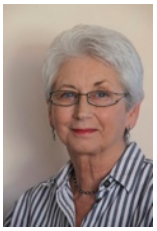
Retiring Board Member Thank Yous

ATA's Board members are critical to our success. Each Board member serves as a Committee Chair, coordinating all of the programs within that committee and working alongside the volunteers who make ATA's programming happen. They are dedicated, hard working and generous and we want to extend them a huge thank you.

As a Board member **Elaine Duncan** served as Promotions Committee Chair. Eight years ago Elaine began doing PR work as a volunteer and six years ago became a member of the Board. Elaine hails from Vancouver Island, where she maintains an extensive dye plant garden. She also enjoys living part of the year in Mexico. Steady is the word for Elaine. Her diligence and commitment expanded ATA's promotional efforts considerably. She built our email lists and sent a steady stream of announcements for exhibitions, workshops, awards and the many other programs that ATA sponsors. In addition, Elaine handled the ads we take out in various magazines. She also developed our presence on Facebook, initiating the popular Tapestry of the Day feature. Elaine's consistent and logical input on the board email list served not only our promotional efforts, but ATA business and events in general.



Becky Stevens has been a guiding light for ATA for the last eight years. Jumping immediately into the position of Co-director, Becky applied herself to learning about every nook and cranny of ATA programming. The thoroughness of her attention and preparation and the considered nature of her responses made her opinions very valuable and incredibly respected. After six years as Co-Director Becky stepped down and Michael Rohde took her place but Becky kept her commitment to serving ATA by becoming the Education Committee Chair. In that position she has overseen a group of dedicated volunteers making educational opportunities available for our members. Becky has been our primary liaison with HGA, building a relationship with the HGA leadership that has served us well. In the midst of her commitments to ATA, Becky has found time to weave, to work in watercolor and to enjoy the warmth, bounty and nature in her home in Florida.

Tal Landeau served as a Board member for two years. Hailing from Virginia, Tal was the first person to chair the newly minted Awards Committee and as its lead, she developed a consistent and accountable method for determining awardees. She worked with each Awards panel to insure that a fair and transparent process was followed. Tal also offered help on drafting models for other committees' communications, and we were all inspired when she sent tapestry news from her regular visits to Paris.

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New Stories: Tapestry and Ikat Techniques for Weavers
March 4 – 7, 2015

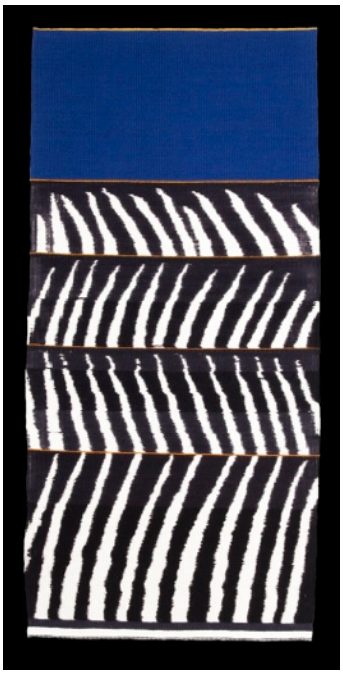
ATA members are invited to attend a three-day intensive tapestry workshop led by Nebraska weaver **Mary Zicafoose**, who will be sharing the foundational elements of her art/weaving practice. Instruction will focus on:

- Mary's signature tapestry and weft faced ikat embellishment process
- Discussion of elements of scale and the development of design
- Instruction in wool & silk dye process
- Finishing techniques for exhibition and sale

This workshop will be a condensed, but comprehensive, requiring previous weaving experience. The three day workshop will be held in conjunction with Jessica Hemming's (ATB 10 juror) lecture at the Kaneko, where **ATB 10** will be on display.

Artist **Mary Zicafoose** uses the flat woven surface as her canvas, blending weft ikat, a complex design dye process, with classic tapestry techniques. She unfolds her visual stories at the loom, rendering archetypal icons and symbols with a contemporary hand, creating powerful statements in cloth. Her signature tapestries and fine carpets are represented internationally including the **13th International Triennial of Tapestry**, Lodz, Poland and the collections of two dozen United States Embassies on four continents. Mary also translates her ethno-contemporary image making into annual editions of colographic monoprints.

Above: **Mary Zicafoose**, “Mountain for the Buddha - Caution,” 60 in x 60 in, 2013. Weft faced ikat tapestry, wrapped, dyed and woven wool on linen warp.



Mary received her BFA from St. Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana. Graduate studies include the Art Institute of Chicago and the University of Nebraska. Her work has been reviewed in publications such as *The Smithsonian Magazine*, T*he Washington Post, Fiberarts Magazine, Fiber Ar*t now and *American Craft*. She was a 2008 Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts resident artist, is Co-Director of the American Tapestry Alliance, chairman of the board of the Omaha Union For Contemporary Art, former board member of RugMark USA and the Robert Hillestad Textiles Gallery, and exhibition chair for the 2010 Textile Society of America Conference. She weaves and teaches from her studio in Omaha, Nebraska.

Left: **Mary Zicafoose**, “Prairie No. 2,” 60 in x 28 in, 2011. Weft faced Ikat, wool on linen warp.

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Important Dates

September 25, 2014 **ATB 10** opens at Kent State University Museum. Opening reception.

October 1, 2014 Submissions due for *Tapestry Topics,* Winter Issue. Theme: Tapestry: for Ceremonial Settings. Theme Coordinator: Robyn Mountcastle.

October 31, 2014 Entry deadline for **STI 4: Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Innovation**.

November 2014 Registration for **New Stories: Tapestry and Ikat Techniques for Weavers,** workshop with Mary Zicafoose opens for Curator's and Collector's Circle members.

December 2014 Registration for **New Stories: Tapestry and Ikat Techniques for Weavers,** workshop with Mary Zicafoose opens for all members.

January 4, 2015 **ATB 10** closes at Kent State University Museum.

Jan 15, 2015 Submissions due for *Tapestry Topics*, Spring Issue. Theme: Small Format/Small Scale Tapestry: Subversive, Destructive,or...? Theme Coordinator: Ashli Tyre.

February 6, 2015 **ATB 10** opens at Kaneko Opening reception.

March 4-7, 2015 **New Stories: Tapestry and Ikat Techniques for Weavers,** workshop with Mary Zicafoose.

April 1, 2015 Submissions due for *Tapestry Topics,* Summer Issue. Theme: Native Traditions and Modern Interpretations. Theme Coordinator: Ashli Tyre**.**

April 18, 2015 **ATB 10** closes at Kaneko.

June 8, 2015 **STI 4: Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Innovation** opens at Northwestern State University.

August 15, 2015 **STI 4: Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Innovation** closes at Northwestern State University.

October 2, 2015 **STI 4: Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Innovation** opens at Biggs Museum of Art.

November 22, 2015 **STI 4: Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Innovation** closes at Biggs Museum of Art.

January 15, 2015 Submissions due for *Tapestry Topics,* Spring Issue. Theme: Small Format/Small Scale Tapestry: Subversive, Destructive,or...? Theme Coordinator: Kathe Todd-Hooker.

January 16, 2016 **STI 4: Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Innovation** opens at Artspace.

March 5, 2016 **STI 4: Honoring Tradition, Inspiring Innovation** closes at Artspace.

Tapestry Topics Committee: Theme Coordinator: Susan Rubendall, General Editor: Pat Williams, Copy Editor: Robbie LaFleur, Layout: Kimberly Brandel, and Proofreader: Katzy Luhring

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Tapestry Topics Themes & Deadlines

Tapestry: For Ceremonial Settings **Deadline: Oct 1, 2014**

This theme offers an opportunity:

- to discuss how you answer a request for a tapestry to hang in a place of worship or academic setting.
- to analyze ways of deepening an alliance with and respect for the client's concept, together with one's own aesthetic ambitions, and
- to examine how the apparent limitations of working to a specific brief
    - introduces a possibility of discovering new visual territory,
    - stimulates a wider personal creative repertoire, and
    - increases an appreciative audience for tapestry.

If you plan on submitting an article, please contact Theme Coordinator, Robyn Mountcastle.

Small Format/Small Scale Tapestry: Subversive, Destructive,or...? **Deadline: Jan 15, 2015**

What is small format/small scale tapestry? Is it "tapestry," or isn't it? Why are so many people weaving small format/small scale at this particular time in the history of tapestry? Ideas to think about:

- The history of small format/small scale tapestry past, present, and the future.
- What excites you about small format/small scale tapestry?
- What can the format do? What can it not do?
- What are the technical advantages, or restrictions, for this format?
- Coptic weaving, K'o-ssu, Kesi, 16th century lowland small format, devotional tapestries
- Exhibits of and about small format/ small scale-past, present and future.

If you plan on submitting an article, please contact Theme Coordinator, Kathe Todd-Hooker.

Native Traditions and Modern Interpretations **Deadline: April 15, 2015**

Native weaving traditions are woven into the rich history of the Americas-a history in danger of being lost with modernization.

- Are you a native weaver?
- Do you study native tapestry traditions?
- Does your work employ traditional native tapestry techniques?
- Or, is your weaving inspired by native traditions, symbols or philosophy?

If so, please share your story. For more information, contact Theme Coordinator, Ashli Tyre.

Do you have an idea for a theme? Would you like to be a Theme Coordinator?
Contact the Editor: newsletter@americantapestryalliance.org.