

Warp & Weft



Aruna Reddy spun a variety of natural coloured wool fibres, and a skein of indigo dyed Beltex, and then used them to weave a tapestry to show off the variations in colour and texture. She was awarded the Beginner's Prize at the Christmas competition

**The newsletter of the
London Guild of Weavers
Spinners and Dyers**

February 2017 Issue 264



*Left: Lore Youngmark Prize - Colour & Weave. Brenda Gibson created three very different scarves from one warp
Below: Aruna Reddy was awarded the Beginner's prize for her tapestry which showed off the variation in shades of different fleeces she had spun*



Above left: Kennedy Cup for Spinning – won by Andrea Easey for using her gradient dyed fibre to create a honeycomb cowl



Left: Gwen Shaw Prize - a design on the theme of Fire. Val Palmer's tapestry of the London skyline in the Great Fire incorporated inventive techniques for textural effect

CHRISTMAS COMPETITION 2016 - WINNERS See p.7

CONTENTS

2	Christmas Competition Winners
5	Forthcoming Meetings & Guild News
7	2016 London Guild Competitions – Reports
10	Interest Group Reports – Dyeing, Spinning, Tapestry, Weaving
19	Selvedge – We Love Wool Symposium
19	The Song of the Low
20	2017 Guild Competitions – Themes
21	Imperial Purple to Denim Blue – Susan Kay-Williams
24	Master Class and Beyond – Janet Phillips
23	Themes for the 2017 Christmas Competitions
26	Calendar of 2017 Meetings

Warp & Weft copy dates for the May 2017 issue
28th April 2017, except for the report on the April meeting;
copy for that by 19th May please

WARP & WEFT ON THE GUILD WEBSITE

Remember to look at the Guild website version of Warp & Weft, which is fully in colour, and allows you to enlarge the photos on your screen. The PDF file should also allow you to click links in the articles to connect to websites.

You'll also find downloadable versions of many past issues of Warp & Weft there, and a list of books in the library that members can borrow.

The open area of the Guild website has lots of information about Guild activities, what's on, upcoming exhibitions, and a gallery of members' work.

www.londonguildofweavers.org.uk

If you have forgotten the password for the Members' Area, contact Helena Timms, the Guild Secretary (contact details overleaf).

The password changes at the end of the membership year, so if you are unable to open the Members' page, please check that you have renewed your membership! Renewal forms available on our website.

FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

You can also keep in touch with the Guild through Facebook and Twitter
[facebook.com/londonguildwsd](https://www.facebook.com/londonguildwsd) **twitter.com/londonguildwsd**

London Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

President

Wendy Morris – wendy@wendymorris.co.uk

Vice Presidents

Nancy Lee Child Mary Smith Melanie Venes Daphne Ratcliffe

Executive Committee

Chair Christine Eborall – christine.eborall@btinternet.com

1 Bruton Way, London W13 0BY

Tel 020 8991 0006

Treasurer Karen Firmin-Cooper – treasurer@londonguildofweavers.org.uk

Tel 07870 363 829

Secretary Helena Timms – secretary@londonguildofweavers.org.uk

Oak Villa, Gravel Road, Binfield Heath, Henley-on-Thames RG9 4LT

Tel 07812 175 368

Librarian Alison Clark – alisonfrus@hotmail.co.uk

Tel 07871 373524

Membership Rita Gallinari – membership@londonguildofweavers.org.uk

'Valerian', Ravenslea Road, London SW12 8SB

Tel 020 8673 5818

Visits and Events Roberto Campana – roberto_campana@tiscali.co.uk

Tel 07730 284258

Programme Secretary Joan Scriven – joan@allberry.org

Tel 020 8390 2019

Webmaster Madeleine Jude – webmaster@londonguildofweavers.org.uk

Editor Warp & Weft Lyn Duffus – lyn@lduffus.plus.com

Tel 020 8422 0005

Committee Members

Elite Bernet – eliteber@gmail.com

Tel 020 8230 7775

Andrea Easey – bacchusandariadne@gmail.com

Tel 07930 556509

Published by the London Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers
www.londonguildofweavers.org.uk

For editorial matters contact the Editor at
editor@londonguildofweavers.org.uk

For all other matters contact the Hon. Secretary at
secretary@londonguildofweavers.org.uk

Forthcoming Meetings

March 11th – AGM, plus Traveller's Tales

Members talk about textile experiences on their travels.

April 8th – Joyce Meader – History of Knitting, 1800 – 1945

Joyce's collection of historic commercial knitting patterns have been used to recreate items such as military clothing for re-enactors and museums, and in sessions of reminiscence therapy

May 13th – Louise Oppenheimer – Tapestry: A Tale of Wellbeing in Texture and Colour

Louise explains her attempts to celebrate the natural world in colour, form, and texture, and her belief in the power of wellbeing to be found in hand weaving.

GUILD NEWS

Guild Exhibition - November 2017

The theme for the London Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers' forthcoming exhibition will be:

The Thames and Southwark: Threads of London life

23 – 30 November 2017, Southwark Cathedral

The exhibition will present work by members of the Guild in all of the Guild crafts, and these items can be sold and made available to purchasers after the exhibition has closed. There will also be a display in the Refectory Gallery of bookmarks created by Guild members as a legacy for the Cathedral to keep and use; a Guild shop selling items for purchasers to take away with them on the day; and demonstrations of weaving and spinning with opportunities for tuition in the Guild crafts.

In the coming months, further details on this wide range of activities will be shared through Warp and Weft, on the website and at meetings. Stewards and demonstrators will only need to be at the exhibition for half a day. Every one will be needed to help make this exciting opportunity to publicise the work

and skill of the Guild into a success – so please consider volunteering for one of these roles.

Andrea Easey

Membership News

Happy New Year! It's that time of year to renew your membership if you haven't already done so. Full details of how to do this are available on the web site at <http://www.londonguildofweavers.org.uk/member/membership/> and you can download the membership form from there. Our secretary, Helena Timms, has also attached it to her monthly email updates to make it easy for you.

Already in 2017, we welcome eight new members: Jill Waite (W), Mary Wright (WT), Neal Poston (Knitting), Sarah Hannam-Deeming (D), Joy MacMahon (SD), Anne Doyle (WS), David Stokes (T) and Elena Orenchak (WD). Their main crafts are shown in brackets after their name.

This year we are making an extra effort to make sure that the Guild records are accurate and up-to-date. Apart from the obvious reasons, the Data Protection Act puts an obligation on us to do so. For this reason, we will be asking you all to

complete and return a membership form. Those of you who use our new PayPal payment option will complete the form as part of the payment process.

We've also decided to remove members' postal address details from the contact list in the members area of the web site. We mostly use postal addresses for sending out Warp & Weft. If any member needs postal addresses for Guild activities, just let me know and I will send them to you.

Register of Members

When I took over as membership secretary I was intrigued to be handed a battered, hard-bound foolscap ledger (see p.25). It contains a record of the name of every member of the Guild as they joined since 1951. Each member is also given a number and I am now using that number as your unique membership number which will stay with you throughout your membership. So I joined in 2010 and was the 2337th person to join the Guild, and I have the membership number 2337.

I will bring the register to the AGM if you'd like to have a browse, and I'll tell you more in the next edition of Warp & Weft.

Rita Gallinari, Membership Secretary

Royal Festival Hall Spinning Group

The evening group that meets in the Royal Festival Hall on the third Tuesday of every month continues to get together from 6pm onwards on a casual drop-in basis. Email to spinners@londonguildofweavers.co.uk for any further information or to confirm upcoming dates over the holiday period.

For information about the new venue in Barnes for the former Wetlands group, see p.10

Return to Wonderwool!

Following the success of the Guild trip to Wonderwool in April, the Committee has decided to offer a bigger, better and cheaper trip to Wonderwool 2017.

We'll be offering places on a 49-seater coach for an inclusive price of £39 per person – this includes the cost of entry to the show. The trip will be on Sunday 23 April 2017, departing from Earl's Court at 8.30am and back in London by 8.30pm (traffic permitting).

The trip won't be restricted to Guild members, so friends and family can come along as well. Bookings are now open: you can book via the website, pay at Guild meetings, or send a cheque payable to London Guild of Weavers to the Chair (address on p.4)

Wonderwool is held in the Royal Welsh Showground, Builth Wells, Wales, and covers everything from exhibits of sheep, through raw and hand dyed fibres, yarn for knitting & crochet, embellishments, equipment, dyes and books to examples of finished textile art, craft, clothing and home furnishings. There is also a programme of workshops for which advance booking is recommended – see the Wonderwool website – www.wonderwoolwales.co.uk

Susi Dunsmore

We were very sad to hear of Susi Dunsmore's death as we went to press. Susi was one of the longest-standing members of the Guild, and in the next issue we will include a tribute from those who knew her well.

2016 Guild Competitions

The Kennedy Cup – Spinning

For the Kennedy Cup, spinners were required to think about creating a yarn that would produce a finished item with drape and flow – in preparation for 2017's Guild exhibition with the theme of the River Thames.

The brief was: 'choose any source fibre, or blend your choice of multiple fibres, to spin a yarn that will add drape and movement to a knitted, crocheted or woven finished item. Produce a 20g skein and a finished article, or a working sample, or a trial piece using the same blend and demonstrating the required qualities. Notes on the working process, method and fibre choice can be included, but are not mandatory.'

The competition had 14 entries – each demonstrating a depth of knowledge about fibre choices, dyeing and spinning techniques. Each spinner had the chance to describe their piece and their working method to the meeting to augment their written description. Hazel Will had produced a beautiful cross-body bag, made with Aran-weight yarn created from two breeds. Ryeland was selected for the cabled strap to give flow and drape across the body and softness against the neck and shoulders. An unidentified longwool was chosen for the body. The longwool was tie-dyed red to represent the flowing, muddy water of the Thames with undyed longwool to represent the river banks.

Christine Rowe had spun Ryeland fibre, home-dyed with Kool-Aid in grape and blue raspberry to give a

mauve colour. This was accompanied by skeins of wool in natural coloured fibres of white and two shades of grey. Christine had worked through a number of knitted lace patterns to create a watery design, then knitted the four fibres in separate strips and grouped to present a river bed - with flowing water complete with original clay pipes. All were presented on a glass plate with a bubble pattern.

Christine Barnes had made a quartet of skeins showing how silky banana fibre could be added to wool to add accents of colour and sheen, and the different effects of mordants when dyeing with natural dyes – in this case, sloes. Andrea Easey had also worked toward drape and sheen, but using John Arbon's Bluefaced Leicester and silk blend tops, spun worsted to compress the fibres and add sheen. The top was home-dyed in dark blue and navy acid dyes to give a ripple effect in the knitted sample including an open lace pattern. Helena Timms had used pure silk brick fibre that she had dyed with acid dyes, and in the Guild's indigo dye bath, spun to make a 2-ply laceweight yarn for a knitted lace scarf with a rippled effect. Jean Derby had used tussah silk, dyed an eye-catching vibrant blue, to make an openwork knitted lace silk scarf that would drape and flow with colour and movement.

Pat Wilson gained second place with her project using Bowmont fleece – hand washed and carded, spun and dyed to produce an elegant lilac skein. This had then been knitted into a lace shawl, which draped beautifully. Aruna Reddy had spun a variety of natural-coloured wool fibres, with a single skein in indigo-dyed Beltex, that

she had then used to make a tapestry displaying the variation in the shades. She was awarded the Beginner's Prize. Val Palmer had spun a thick yarn from merino tops, dyed in two shades of purple that was then crocheted into a shawl with a lacy openwork pattern to display the drape of the yarn. Alison Clark had also experimented with creating a thick yarn with qualities of drape by spinning yarn from John Arbon's merino and silk blend top that she carded into rolags and spun woollen. Alison presented a knitted sample with a lace pattern, and explained in her notes that she had begun with a standard knitting needle size for the pattern, but moved up a size to larger needles to bring out the drape she wanted the yarn to exhibit. Alison won third place for this interesting exploration of the different factors that influence drape.



Alison Clark's sample

Helena Timms also looked at ways of making a chunky yarn with drape using Alpaca fibre spun worsted from commercially-produced tops to make a 7 wraps-per-inch super chunky 2-ply yarn to make a produce a long, warm scarf. Jackie Barley had worked with Alpaca fibre to make a neck piece with lapping water and fish with fibre

felted and knitted into a variety shapes. Some was left natural white and other samples were dyed in evocative shades of blue.

Val Palmer had also thought about drape as a quality for larger garments such as wraps and throws and had spun a fine yarn from silk and Shetland wool as a single to create a natural-coloured tablecloth – albeit for a doll's house. The Kennedy Cup was won by Andrea Easey for a project to create a long knitted honeycomb cowl by taking a braid of organic Corriedale fibre dyed in shades of blue, graded into shades from dark to light, and carded with increasing proportions of natural white Alpaca fibre. These made rolags that were sorted and spun in colour order to create a 2-ply gradient yarn from dark to light blue. Although the knitted material used a dense pattern, the drape was created by the Alpaca that was added to the base fibre.

Hopefully we will see some of these resulting projects among the exhibits at the Guild's 2017 exhibition at Southwark Cathedral.

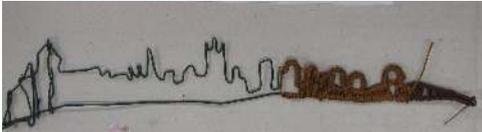
Andrea Easey

Gwen Shaw Competition – Design

The Great Fire of London turned out not to have inspired many members to design something appropriate for the competition this year. In fact, only one member did so. However, Valerie Palmer's enchanting felted scene of the fire itself eating away at the streets around the City was eminently worth the prize and would have stood up well against any other competitors. I particularly liked the flames licking out of the windows and the fact that the upper parts of the flames were

not felted into the main picture, giving it even more life and interest. Well done Valerie, and I look forward to more of your quirky pieces in the future.

Part of Val's design board showed how she made a wire frame for the skyline, covered it in crochet and fixed it to stand out from the tapestry



Eve Alexander

The Lore Youngmark Prize

This year the weave competition theme was Colour and Weave. The Weave Interest Group looked at what this meant and the definition from Ann Sutton's book is:

It can be argued that all woven fabrics involve both colour and weave, but the term colour-and-weave is reserved, by designers of textiles, to describe the infinite number of patterns which are created by the combination of colour sequence in warp and in weft, within the structure of what is usually a simple weave.

There were five entries for the competition.

Elite produced some fine work in two entries, one in black and grey and another in lovely combinations of green, blue and turquoise. Her samples showed how she arrived at these combinations.

Emma Hetherington-Sadler, working on a 'new to her' loom, entered some linen cloths with good examples of using different colours.

Shahnaz's work in Tencel had a lovely drape and showed off the yellow and

grey colour and weave well. She had made her woven cloth into a tabard and was able to show her samples and weave diagrams.

The first prize was awarded to Brenda Gibson. Brenda's three different weaves in light yellow and grey, woven on the same warp, showed the effect of small changes in making a significant difference to the colour and weave pattern. These were very attractive scarves woven in a soft wool and a lovely example of the brief.

Joan Scriven

Beginner's Prize

The Beginners' Prize is not necessarily awarded to a new Guild member, but to a person who has recently started out to learn a new skill.

This year there were only two entries, both of which were for spinning.

Luckily I had recruited Jenifer Midgley to help me judge as spinning is not my area of expertise. We were judging on behalf of Melanie Venes, who was not able to make the meeting in December.

The winner was Aruna Reddy, who I understand is not new to weaving, but is a new spinner. She had spun a variety of fleeces and yarns and produced an attractive tapestry with the results.

Aruna was awarded a tealight holder which acknowledges Melanie's mantra of 'not hiding your light under a bushel'.

Penny Brazier

Christmas Competitions 2017

Themes for the Guild competitions for 2017 will be found on p.20

Dyeing Interest Group

December 2016

Kool-Aid – Thanks to Alison, Helena and Marietta for the Kool-Aid dyeing session at November's meeting. Some good colours were obtained very quickly. We also learned some useful techniques for space dyeing fibre. The fruity smell does air off eventually and the results are colourfast.

Roberto took details of the ingredients to check the E numbers!

Calendar – Thanks to Hazel for showing us the attractive plant dye 2017 calendar available from <http://wooltribulations.blogspot.co.uk/2016/11/plant-dyes-for-all-seasons-2017-calendar.html>

For anyone interested in detailed notes on growing dyeplants – you might like to check recent posts by my partner Ashley at

<http://www.naturesrainbow.co.uk>

Madder project – To develop expertise dyeing bright reds with madder, the proposal is to dye wool according to two recipes and share results at the March special interest group meeting. One recipe is taken from the Ethel Mairet 1916 book. The centenary of this book is being marked by Ditchling Museum until 23rd April. We shared out chopped madder, alum and dyer's cream of tartar sourced from P&M Woolcraft. Use any wool fibre or yarn you wish. Try either or both of the recipes or try something from a different source. PDF handouts gave mordanting notes and two madder recipes.

Record keeping – We talked about how to keep good records. I offered to share with the group a template I have used, loosely based on

suggestions in *The Dyer's Companion* by Dagmar Klos. What other systems have people developed? What makes for a good record keeping system for dyeing projects?

Accurate Weighing Scales – We discussed the challenge of weighing accurately for small amounts of dye or mordant. Helena recommended jeweller's scales, which are not expensive and can weigh accurately down to 0.1g. Roberto is happy to lend the group pocket scales at lab quality. Susan recommended use of stock solutions at 1% or 10% for accurate measurement of mordant.

Next Time – Our next meeting is on March 11th, 11am, and we will have a show and tell with madder on wool, and share our systems for dyer's record keeping.

Susan Dye

Roberto Campana has added the following information:

The typical pack of unsweetened Kool-Aid contains ascorbic acid, artificial colour, BHA (preservative) calcium phosphate, citric acid, maltodextrin, natural flavour and salt. When heated, the citric acid acts to bind the colour to wool yarn (not cotton or acrylic). Further information at dyeyouryarn.com

Spinning Interest Group

November 2016

In November the spinning interest group looked forward to the 2016 Christmas competition of spinning for drape and also planned the interest group's activities for the coming year. The confirmation of the new venue for the Barnes spinning group as a

regular activity on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month was acknowledged as a significant achievement of the previous year. After free trial sessions, the meetings will continue in 2017 with a £2 per session fee for individuals, payable at the session. Pat Wilson is the main point of contact for spinners requiring directions for further details.

In preparation for February 2017's interest group, members swapped 25g samples of coloured fibre, so that members could leave the meeting with 50g to spin in whichever way they thought best.

The group also discussed setting the topic of 2017's Christmas competition for the Kennedy Cup for Spinning. The group decided on 'Blending for Effect' – taking at least 4 fibres or colours that have been selected for a specific effect, and spun to show this quality. Entrants will need to provide a sample of the original fibres, a sample skein of the completed spun yarn and a worked sample or finished item to demonstrate the desired effect.



Val Palmer demonstrates the use of a paddle spindle

In February the group will look at the yarns spun from November's samples and also look at 'What can I make

with my yarn?' using November's yarn or any skein they have previously spun, to find a knitting pattern that works for them. Comparison with commercial yarn grades and terms, plus ways of understanding differences in measuring handspun and commercial yarns will be explored.

In May the group will share ideas and inspiration for the spinners' contribution to the Guild's 2017 exhibition legacy project for Southwark Cathedral, of bookmarks for the clergy, choir and guests to use. 40 bookmarks will be framed and exhibited in the Cathedral restaurant for the duration of the exhibition, prior to being donated. Additional bookmarks can also be displayed in the main exhibition and can also be sold to the public through the exhibition shop.

In August the group will start to think about blending and there will be a 'make a blending board' workshop. Members will need to source their own baseboard, but if there is sufficient interest, a group purchase of carding cloth can be made and a heavy-duty staple gun will be provided to finish the process during the session as carding cloth must be tacked or stapled, but not glued.

In November the group will make final preparations for both the Guild exhibition at the end of that month and the Christmas competition in the following month when we will bring together our blending projects. Items exhibited at the exhibition can also be entered in the competition.

Andrea Easey

Tapestry Interest Group

December 2016

For our second meeting we discussed: News – any news of workshops, exhibitions, own weaving, etc.; our tapestry topic – the results of experiments with slits and texture inspired by Sue Lawty's book *Rock–Raphia–Linen–Lead that we looked at in the first meeting*; what's next – ideas on what the group could do going forward.

News – Several members had been up to Sleaford for the *Here & Now* exhibition at the National Centre for Craft and Design (NCCD). Catherine Walters was lucky enough to get up for the private view and so heard the talks given by many of the exhibiting weavers, which she found both fascinating and a privilege. I had been up a bit later in early December and so was able to combine it with seeing the smaller exhibition, *Soft Engineering: Textiles Taking Shape* which showed the works of Alison Ellen, Ann Richards and Deirdre Wood side-by-side. Both exhibitions were incredible and well worth going to. They both have excellent exhibition catalogues you can purchase.

Catherine had attended the first Tapestry Weaving Masterclass organised by Weaversbazaar and held at Jane Brunning's Studio. This first masterclass was led by Fiona Hutchinson and as you would expect, was an exploration in texture with an emphasis on warp wrapping in constantly changing warp groupings. Catherine was able to experiment with nettle, wool and cotton, and once finished and cut off the frame was encouraged to randomly push

wefts up the warps and see what happens! And of course there are lots of slits!!

Weaversbazaar have announced their second Masterclass to be held in April and led by Joan Baxter.

Tapestry Topic – As a reminder:

The tapestry pieces in Sue Lawty's collection use wonderful subtle colour palettes in a mixture of yarns. They are woven using textural weave techniques with a heavy emphasis on slits. As we all greatly admired this work we had decided we would set ourselves the task of creating our own interpretation(s). We decided there would be no set parameters, so we could use whatever materials we liked, at whatever scale we liked. The idea was to explore and have some fun doing it.

It was immediately clear everyone round the table loved Sue Lawty's work. While most sampling focused on her use of slits, there was some exploring her use of flat weaves over various warp combinations, and soumak to produce texture and depth.

Karen Firmin-Cooper had played with both slits and texture using wool and cotton warp on a tiny Hockett Loom.

Aruna Reddy's piece of slit work using paper yarn made from newspaper had us all fascinated.

This was made from pages of the *Metro* and *Evening Standard* newspapers; hand spun and then woven on a frame warped at 8epi. We all so desperately wanted to have a go that Aruna has kindly agreed to conduct a mini workshop on it at our next meeting – details below.

(Continued p. 17)



The Dyeing Interest Group studied madder in December; Susan Dye made this applique piece with different red shades from varying the mordant; the yellow fabric is weld dyed.

Left: Catherine Walter showed the Tapestry Interest Group her sample from an experimental workshop which emphasised wrapping groups of warps



Below: Eve Alexander made a set of six different pairs of place mats all on the same warp, varying the weft colour for each pair



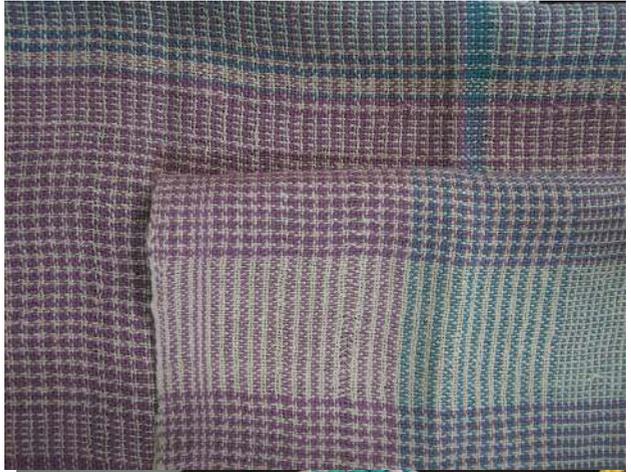
Valerie Harries' gradient dyed Merino shawl. She managed the colour changes during plying to ensure the colours in the gradient changed together without a 'barberpole' effect

Right: Two linen cloths by Emma Hetherington-Sadler

Below right: a bag by Joey Freeman in rep weave

Below: a scarf by Elite Bernet in black and grey Colour and Weave won second place in the Lore Youngmark Prize

Bottom: Shahnaz Nasr showed Colour and Weave samples in soft Tencel: on the right part of the tabard made with her preferred fabric





Hazel Will's sling bag made from aran weight yarn spun from Ryeland fleece for the strap, and a longwool fleece for the body

Pat Wilson hand washed, carded, spun and dyed to knit a soft elegant lace shawl



Christine Barnes spun four skeins, two dyed with sloes using vinegar [L] and citric acid [R] as mordants, and two incorporating banana silk with wool



fine art & craft supplies from
george weil



Visit our showroom:

Mon - Fri : 9:30 - 4:30

Saturday : 9:00 - 5:00

www.georgeweil.com

Old Portsmouth Road, Peasmarsh,
Guildford, Surrey, GU3 1LZ

Tel: 01483 565800 Fax: 01483 6565807

Email: sales@georgeweil.com

(Continued from p.12)

What's Next – We all felt we had barely scratched the surface in exploring slits so decided we would continue with this as our topic for the next 3 months. However this time we thought we would use slits to create patterns. One of the tapestry books we looked at was Kathe Todd-Hooker's *Line in Tapestry*. Pages 29-33 explores slit techniques and background patterns. This inspired us to want to play. Again – we set no limitations on scale or material – the more the better for us all to learn from.



A detail of Aruna's slit tapestry from spun newspaper strips shows some of the random marks made by print and images

As mentioned above – at our meeting in March Aruna will be taking us through how she created her newspaper slit tapestry. If you would like to take part you will need to bring the following with you:

A small loom warped at 8epi (3-3.5epc), 10 to 15cms wide; spindle if you have one, otherwise there will be spares; tapestry tools.

The newspaper should be torn in strips for spinning approx. 1.5cm wide: *Metro* and *Evening Standard* – long horizontal edge strips, *Financial Times* – vertical strips. You do need to tear the strips rather than cut them for a more textural result, and to help the strips bind to each other when twisting together. Choose what and

how to tear depending on the look you want to achieve. If you want it plain (like Aruna's) then use just the plain edges of each page. If you want a random black type effect then use the whole page for strips. If you want dashes of colour then make sure you tear strips across the images or incorporate colour images from other publications. These strips will be twisted so the final effect will probably be a surprise, and of course you can get really creative and paint / dip-dye the pages before tearing up.

If you are interested in joining the group we now have a page on the website where updates will continue to be posted:

<http://tinyurl.com/lgwsd-tapestry-group>

Any questions, drop me an email at tapestry@londonguildofweavers.org.uk

Karen Firmin-Cooper

Weaving Interest Group

November 2016 – Rep Weave

Rosemary Kitchingman had warped her loom for a rug; however as the loom was quite narrow, and so difficult to tension correctly, therefore used weights. She used linen for the warp and thick knitting yarn for the weft. Rosemary used 4 or 5 different samples on the same piece using an 8-shaft loom threaded in 4 blocks. Procion dyes were used to get different shades for the samples. 400-500 threads were used in the warp at 30epi.

Brenda Gibson had had 3 attempts at rep weave over the years. On her second attempt she used a portable loom and made table mats. She was not very happy with the result, not keen on the contrast between thick

and thin, although found it useful to discover the potential and the pitfalls. On her third attempt she used bamboo skewers as part of the weft. The piece was densely sett – 300 ends for the 3 strips. Both 2/16 and 2/20 mercerised cotton were used in the warp. One problem she discovered was that the warps migrate out across the skewer. This piece of rep weave was produced on an 8-shaft loom.

Elite Bernet brought samples she had made from Jim's cotton – both 3x2/16 and 2x2/16 cotton were used. Elite questioned the group about how to start new yarns on the weft.

Marilyn Burton had attended a course run by Rosalie Neilson, who has produced a booklet with point twill threading and developing designs. Marilyn made table mats using mercerised cotton at 30epi, and also used the same warp to make a cell or honeycomb rep. Marilyn had a sample of grey/black/white but the full piece was in an exhibition. She also brought samples from her Master Class with Janet Phillips, all of which were produced from the same warp which produced both rep weave and balanced shadow weave using 6/2 mercerised cotton. Marilyn also attended a 2 day course on tied weaves; she started with summer and winter, then a 3-shaft twill, 1:5 twill then 5:1 twill. She used applied reel silk (not spun), 450 denier.

Joey Freeman brought a sample from Sardinia; it was created using a single twist yarn so that when it was washed it created a pattern in the plain weave (tracked). Using an 8-

shaft loom, she made a sample herself and then created a bag.

Eve Alexander brought in some table mat samples she made a while ago and also a sample made at a study group. She found it difficult due to the number of heddles required, the sett was 40epi and it was a very dense structure. The sample behaved like doublecloth, the reverse was on the back side. She also felt that rep weave didn't lend itself to a sense of weaving rhythm. She also brought in 12 table mats she had recently finished. They were a 4 colour doubleweave on echo threading. The sett was 30epi. She used 2 colours in the warp; all 12 mats were made from the same warp but the weft was varied, giving 6 pairs of different mats. The design was from Marion Stubenitsky's book, and the mats were made using a 24-shaft loom.

Towards the end of the session Elite wanted to discuss the format of the weaving group and wondered if people wanted to continue the meetings as they were (i.e. choosing a weave structure to experiment with for a few months) or to change the format, and people could bring in what they were working on at home. It was agreed by everyone to continue with the current format as it gave people a chance to try new ideas and to learn from each other.

The next weaving interest group, in February, will look at deflected double weave.

Jill Waite

Selvedge – We Love Wool Symposium - 15 October 2016

Five Guild members responded to Selvedge Magazine's request for spinners to demonstrate and teach our craft to participants. Their celebration of Wool Week was held in the beautiful Georgian building of the Art Workers' Guild in Queen Square in London.

Helena Timms, Hazel Will, Toad (Sarah Tozer), Christine Barnes and Christine Rowe were invited to attend the morning talks and take a part in the rest of the day in return for our labours.

The first speaker was Christien Heindertsma on her research project into the comparison of different fleeces with the same breed type. The result was an installation of a hundred machine knitted sweaters each with its own sheep passport. She had been surprised at the difference between each one, but we were not!

The second speaker was Adam Atkinson from CHERCHBI showing leather goods using his local Herdwick fleece on bonded surfaces, and retailing in three figures.

Brigitta Varadi was the last, researching into markings on sheep in Ireland. The results were large areas of fleece presented as impressive wall pieces or cosy seating structures sprayed with familiar sheep identification symbols.

What stole the show for all of us was Christien's flash mob videos of dancers, each wearing a hand-knitted sweater by the elderly and prolific Gebreid Tussen. She had never seen them worn before, just stockpiled

them. Each was different and unique, including the marching band all wearing black and white knits. Magic.

Christine Rowe

The Song of the Low

Gilly Beton found this gem in the *New Oxford Book of Victorian Verse* – it was written in 1852 by Ernest Jones, a prominent Chartist, and became a popular pub song. There are five verses, for farmers, miners, builders, weavers, and soldiers, each profession pointing out how the rich take unfair advantage of their labour. Thanks to Gilly for finding such an interesting piece of social history!

The chorus is –

We're low – we're low – we're very
very low,
As low as low can be;
The rich are high – for we make them
so –
And a miserable lot are we!
And a miserable lot are we! are we!
A miserable lot are we!

And the weavers sing –

We're low, we're low – we're very
very low,
Yet from our fingers glide
The silken flow – and the robes that
glow,
Round the limbs of the sons of pride.
And what we get – and what we give,
We know – and we know our share.
We're not too low the cloth to weave
But too low the cloth to wear!

Guild 2017 Christmas Competition Themes

Lore Youngmark Prize – Weaving

Deflected double weave

In standard double weave, the two warps are woven one above the other. But in deflected double weave, groups of threads from each warp are arranged next to each other, so that the weft for one group floats over the warps of the other group and vice versa, creating interleaved bundles of warp and weft floats which have the possibility to deflect, collapse or felt, depending on the exact structure and materials used.

Please use Deflected Double Weave for a woven piece, or at least a significant part of it. You should present a swatch that is still loom-state, and a swatch of the finished fabric large enough to assess its suitability for purpose. (Finished items are also acceptable, but it is the cloth that is important, not the item itself.) You should also include enough technical information about your yarn, weave structure and finishing methods for the cloth to be recreated.

Kennedy Cup – Spinning

For 2017, the Kennedy Cup for Spinning will have the theme of 'Blending for Effect'. Entrants should take at least 4 fibre types, or colours of fibre that have been selected for a specific effect, and spin them to show this quality. They will need to provide a sample of the original

fibres, a sample skein of the completed spun yarn and a worked sample or finished item to demonstrate the desired effect.

Gwen Shaw Competition – Design

This competition is in memory of Gwen Shaw who was the driving force behind the founding of the London Guild in 1950. It is open to all Guild members because its focus is on design, as applied to any of the Guild's disciplines – weaving, spinning or dyeing.

For 2017 the theme is 'River'. This dovetails with the theme of our exhibition at Southwark Cathedral (see p. 20), so you can produce a piece for the exhibition in November which can then be entered for this competition in December. In 2016 there was only one entry for the Gwen Shaw Competition, so we hope that this cunning dovetailing plan will encourage many more entries this year.

Your entry should be a finished item which is handwoven, tapestry woven, hand-spun, hand-dyed or any combination of these. Because it is a design competition, you must accompany your entry by material clearly showing how your design was developed from the initial concept or visual source to the finished item.

Imperial Purple to Denim Blue: The Colourful History of Textiles

Dr Susan Kay-Williams- January 2017

Dr Susan Kay-Williams is the Chief Executive at the Royal School of Needlework, based at Hampton Court. When she has any spare time she is a dyer. Some Guild members may know her as she is also a former member of the LGWSD. She is author of *The Story of Colour in Textiles*

Susan's special interest is in the history of dyestuffs and the process of dyeing, and the social history of dyeing from prehistoric times up to the 19th century.

Susan's talk was a fascinating journey through time in which she discussed how ideas about colour and power, particularly in Royal apparel, have run alongside the discovery of new dyes and techniques. Interwoven into this tale were wonderful snippets of history and legend.

Our talk began with an image of a 17C plaque in Dordrecht, Holland, which shows the sequence of processes in a professional dyeworks, which would already have been common, and in some places remained unchanged into the 20C.

Susan pointed out that in prehistory human beings would have approached every plant with the same question – 'What use is this?' The earliest known dyed textile fragment dates to around 2600 BC and was found in the Indus Valley. The cloth had been treated with a mordant.

Paintings of early 5C to 6C Coptic clothing show that red, yellow, blue and green dyes were already

common; but due to war, famine and disease, dye recipes and processes would have been discovered and lost many times over.

So to the dyes themselves...

Purple

Extracted from a tiny gland in a tiny mollusc, and activated on exposure to oxygen, it took 12,000 of these tiny creatures to produce 1 oz of dyestuff. No wonder then, that Tyrian Purple became the power colour of Roman Emperors and their Imperial families.

Red

Centuries later, for the Crowned Houses of Europe red was the power colour of choice for their royal robes. Susan discussed three natural sources of red.

The first was madder, grown in vast quantities by the Dutch whose land favoured the growing of their desirable long roots. Henry VIII loved to wear robes dyed with this wonderful colour, complemented by fabrics either woven or embroidered with gold thread, and his portraits always show him in various combinations of these two colours.

Susan then talked about other sources of red. Kermes, an insect found in countries of Eastern Europe, was dried and sent to Venice where it was known as 'kermes berry' because the dyers were unaware that it was in fact an insect. The dye was used to colour only the very best of cloth which became known as Venetian cloth, and the colour, Venetian scarlet.

Later, in the New World, the Spanish discovered another insect, Cochineal, abundant on cacti in Mexico and Peru and harvested to give the red dye in

their textiles. Susan explained how this was also dried and shipped back, this time to Seville, where it was again thought to be a berry. This was a wonderful gift for dyers as it yielded vastly more red colour than kermes, and may go some way to explaining the increase in portraiture depicting noblemen and other important figures dressed predominantly in red.

Blue

Susan's discussion of the introduction of blue into our colour consciousness was fascinating. Seen initially as a mere background colour, this changed during the 14C when Mary assumed a greater place in the story of Christ. She was essentially 're-branded' as the Mother of the Christ Child and nativity paintings show her dressed in wonderful clothes of an ultramarine blue, made possible through the introduction of a new pigment made from lapis lazuli. This was so costly that those who commissioned these works were asked how much of the colour they wanted to be used in the painting. It was, however, just a pigment. Blue as a dyestuff came from indigoferous plants such as woad and indigo. And again, Susan wove a fascinating tale of how these plants were subsequently grown in vast quantities to meet the fashion dictates of the day.

England was one of these woad growing countries; woad was stored for later use by making it into balls and slowly drying it. English weather was too damp to guarantee the balls would not rot, so the industry moved to France. Among the many wonderful slides that Susan shared was a picture of a woad processing building (looking

like a church) in the centre of a village surrounded by fields all dedicated to the production of woad.

Unsurprisingly, the French adopted this colour as their royal power colour, along with the gold Fleur de Lys.

Yellow

The story of yellow is far less successful; Susan explained that this is because it is a far more fugitive colour, as can be seen in tapestries depicting trees which have faded to blue due to the yellow colour fading away in the overdyed yarns. The only successful yellow dye was created by the Chinese, and was used in making the clothes for the Emperors. Sadly this knowledge was subsequently lost.

Green

Green as a dye colour was really the preserve of the master dyer as the process of achieving green was one of over dyeing blue and yellow. Getting a consistent green over large lengths of cloth, as you may yourself know, was not easy. Only in Peru were there people who had dye materials that would produce a good shade of green and not the greenish-yellow colours of most European plant materials.

Black and White

Here again we learned of the association of colour with power. Black became the colour of choice from around 1500 after Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, began wearing black after the death of his father, continuing this for the rest of his life; all his later portraits show him wearing black. The fashion for black quickly spread. The colour itself was achieved with plant materials like walnuts along with tannins which darkened the colour.

The fashion for white appears in the time of Elizabeth I when bleaching works developed new and improved processes. Linen, grown in the damper climates of Ireland and the coastal strip around northern Europe, went through a complicated process of being laid out and exposed to combinations of sun, dew, and stale urine to bleach the natural browns to white. In the case of silk it required sulphurisation.

Elizabeth I chose for her dress a combination of black and white, and of course plenty of gold, and her many portraits show her in various combinations of black silks and velvets combined with crisp white silks and linens. These white garments would have needed to be frequently re-bleached to retain their whiteness. It was not until the late 18C that factory processes using chlorine were invented that achieved a truly bright white.

And the rest

Lastly, Susan took us through the introduction of a few other important dyestuffs and colours, many of which came from the Americas. Quercitron – a yellow dye from the bark of the Eastern black oak found in North America, was invented by Edward Bancroft, who by Act of Parliament in 1785 was granted special privileges in regard to the importation and use of the substance. Logwood, another American tree, gave us a new source of blacks and purples.

These were dyes that were often a product or even by-product of chemistry, experimentation and the industrialisation of manufacturing

processes. Another colour was Turkey Red, a carmine red made from madder but involving a very complex sequence of processes. It was called Turkey Red because, although it was initially developed in India, it came to us via Turkey and Greece.

And finally, we came back to blue. Made popular by the Romantic Movement of the 19C, popularised by Robbie Burns and others, it became the most used dyestuff, produced on a massive scale for the dyeing of uniforms, not only of soldiers or sailors but of postal workers and train drivers among others – hence 'blue-collar workers'. Masters were distinguished from workers because they wore the more expensive black.

In America it became the workwear of many in the form of denim, and finally, a fashion staple when the post war 1950s teenager found in denim jeans a signifier of the gap between them and their parents and re-invented denim workwear as a symbol of rebellion, danger and freedom.

Madeleine Jude

*Kay-Williams, Dr. Susan (2013): The Story of Colour in Textiles. London: A & C Black Publishers Ltd
ISBN-13: 978-1408134504*

Master Class and Beyond

Janet Phillips – November 2016

Janet studied Textiles in Glasgow and has been weaving since then. She started to teach when she lived in Oxfordshire but has expanded and developed this on her move to Nether Stowey, Somerset.

The Master Class in Weave design started in 2011. The aim was to help students understand Design; and to clarify this, Janet quoted from the Wikipedia definition, which says *'Design is the creation of a plan or convention for the construction of an object, system or measurable human interaction... necessitates considering the aesthetic, functional, economic, and sociopolitical dimensions of both the design object and design process... may involve considerable research, thought, modeling, interactive adjustment, and re-design.'*

Another aim of the course was to help students to aim high. Originally the course was called a Masterclass, one word, but Janet analysed what she wanted the course to provide, and felt that the definition of Master – which is 'to execute with skill and acquire complete knowledge' was a more accurate description. It is not a class in weaving, but in weaving design, and involves the students in acquiring the skills of research and interactive adjustment from sampling.

Students may have been weaving anywhere from years to only a few months, but most say they want to learn to design from their own heads, not relying on books or computer

software, which in fact is only introduced in session 7, when it can be seen as a useful tool, not a necessity.

The Master Class groups set out with 4 or 5 students in each cohort. The great strength is that all learn from each other, sharing the weaves, setts used etc. There were to be no secrets, and each student had to be able to tell all the others exactly how the end result had been achieved. This developed a bond between them and a respect for each others' work.

The students are encouraged to keep good records, with a yarn file, for example, with their own samples plus those from all the other students, showing a record of each yarn used, the sett it was woven at and uses of the final product. This creates a body of ideas wider than if they were working at home on their own.

The course has been run as eight 5-day sessions, over two years, with year 1 covering design methods and in year 2, students complete a formal design brief. This is combined with interviews with Janet to assess progress.

The design process takes place through sampling, having an enquiring attitude, and not being afraid to challenge the teacher or to make mistakes – the ethos of the course is 'Try it!' The cloth may not look like the one we dreamed of, but the cloth will emerge! It is not a course to weave at home but rather to design and weave to a fixed time/deadline in the way a professional would have to do – students may go on to earn their living from weaving.

Students start with a Spot the Difference exercise, which we also tried. It's a good example of what's needed for weave design – look at a black and white picture, which is where every weave structure starts, with black areas as warp, and white as weft. You look at images of possible variations on the weave structure, how many warp interlacings, how many weft interlacings – and spot what's changed and what's the same. Then they work first on a 4-shaft twill sample and a 4-shaft colour and weave sample before going on to weave an 8-shaft twill sampler. After acid dyeing batches of wool, they produce a colour gamp. Sett samples, card winds and designing the weaves all combine to give the tools for weave design. The assignments consolidate this learning.

In Year 2 all changes, as the students teach weave structures to each other, from stitched doublecloth to deflected doubleweave and pleats. Their final assignment is set to show how all these skills come together, as they design original woven items to a brief. Janet showed a presentation of many of her students' samples, and her students who were present at the meeting had brought in a most inspiring array of completed work.

Beyond

After graduating from the Masterclass students have gone on to selling their weaving, exploring weaves and designing for a project. Groups 1 and 2 meet regularly to support and encourage each other.

All the graduates were invited to contribute to a Calendar where each

month is a weave design inspired by photos that Janet's husband, Nigel Phillips, had taken for his book on tidal rockpools. This project was stretching and fun, and raised about £3000 for Diabetes UK. You can see it on Janet's website, www.janetphillips-weaving.co.uk/ Another calendar, a print only version, is planned for 2018.

Janet told us she is taking a rest from the Master Class for the time being; many aspiring weavers will hope this is not the end of her inspirational Master Class.

Joan Scriven

Editor's note – You can book one of the 2018 calendars by emailing Maggie Roberts - plashfarm@gmail.com - and this will help them plan how many calendars to print. They will cost approx £10.



The Guild Register when the Guild was first founded as the London and Home Counties Guild – see Membership News on p.5

London Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers Programme for 2017

Entry charges for Guild meetings are £3.50 for members, £7.00 guests
Full time students free on production of a current student card

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| January 14th | Dr Susan Kay-Williams: Imperial Purple to Denim Blue – The Colourful History of Textiles |
| *February 11th (W&S) | Kathleen Groves: Carried Away: Handwoven Wraps for Carrying Babies and Children |
| *March 11th (D&T) | AGM — plus Travellers' Tales |
| April 8th | Joyce Meader: The History of Knitting, 1800 to 1945 |
| *May 13th (W&S) | Louise Oppenheimer: A Tale of Wellbeing in Texture and Colour – Tapestry |
| *June 10th (D&T) | Rosemary Crill: Curating the <i>Fabric of India</i> Exhibition |
| July 8th | Anna-Louise Meynell: Weaving Ethnographies: Silk Artisans of North-East India |
| *August 12th (W&S) | Ask the Panel: Members' Questions Answered by Our Experts |
| *September 9th (D&T) | Wendy Morris: Eco-ethics and Yarn Choices |
| October 21st | Catherine Walter: Why Am I Doing This? Tapestry |
| *November 11th (W&S) | Susan Dye and Hannah Sabberton: The Lost Madder Recipe of Norwich |
| *December 9th (D&T) | Christmas Competitions and Party |

All meetings are held at

St Stephen's House, 48 Emperor's Gate, LONDON SW7 4HJ

There is a map on the Guild website – www.londonguildofweavers.org.uk

**Meetings start at 2.00 pm with Members' Show and Tell and notices
Speakers' talks begin at 2.30 pm**

*Dates with **(W&S)** include the Weave and the Spinning Interest Groups in the morning; **(D&T)** dates include the Dye and the Tapestry Interest Groups.

Interest groups all start at **11.00 am**



Christine Rowe used the handspun and hand dyed skeins above to make the piece above left for the Kennedy Cup competition on the theme of flow

Below: Rep weave samples from the November weaving interest group; left is a detail of Brenda Gibson's experiment with using skewers as weft





the handweavers studio & gallery



**25-26 February - a weekend with Fiona Rutherford:
Tapestry - mark-making and texture**

8 April am: Young Persons Modern Tapestry

22 April pm: Modern Tapestry - for beginners

to find details; www.handweavers.co.uk>classes and workshops
to book; phone 020 7272 1891 or email info@handweavers.co.uk

browse online, or call in to see our extensive range of
yarn, fibre, equipment, books and more!

Open Monday–Saturday, 10:00–6:00

140 Seven Sisters Road
London N7 7NS
Tel: 020 7272 1891





Right: Two Colour and Weave samples entered for the Christmas Competition by Elite Bernet

Below: The patterns on the front and back of the same warp look different, giving Eve Alexander a pair of co-ordinating place mats from the same weft



Marilyn Burton brought a sample of honeycomb rep weave to the Weave Interest Group in November



Left: Jackie Barley used alpaca fibre, in both its natural colour and dyed in shades of blue, for a neckpiece on which knitted and felted fish swim in rippling water

Below left: One of the samples of Kool-Aid dyed fibre being spindle spun (and apologies for not naming the maker!)





These three photos left are an object lesson in the problem of taking accurate photos of blue/purple colours. They are all of the same skein, spun and dyed with KoolAid by Christine Rowe – the top photo taken downstairs by artificial light, the middle one outside against a background of brownish leaves, and the bottom one outside on the grey stone.



Below: Christine Barnes has continued experimenting with hand dyeing her handspun yarn. These samples were dyed with beetroot, using either vinegar or citric acid, giving a range of colours from pale pink to dark red





Left: For the December Dyeing Interest Group, Susan Dye brought in a selection of pieces which incorporated yarns and textiles she had dyed with madder using different mordants. The results are displayed using a variety of sewing and embroidery techniques

Right: Kathleen Groves presented a 4.5 metre baby wrap made for a client in their family tartan



Below: Two pieces that Karen Firmin-Cooper brought to the Tapestry Interest Group; the one on the left shows the beautiful wood of her little Hockett loom





Above: Members at a dyeing day at Barnes in 2008. Back: Jan Slater, Penny Penton, Karen Dolling. Middle: Jean Glaspool, Jenifer Midgley, Jean Derby, Sonia Tindale, Daphe Ratcliffe. Front: Pat Wilson
Below and left: The group created a tapestry showing off the natural colours of British sheep breeds

