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TO Weave
AND Wear

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to fit every loom
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Silk
12 Projects
from Rustic
to Elegant

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2014
ISSUE 168

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HANDWOVEN®

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2014, VOLUME XXXV, NUMBER 1

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From the Editor

ANITA OSTERHAUG

Silk is the stuff of which dreams are woven.

Silk's own story is romance itself: Its discovery by a beautiful princess, its secrets smuggled by daring monks, empires built on such an exquisite foundation. In all the Chinese fairy tales I read as a child, the princesses and courtesans whispered through glorious palaces in the finest silks. On the walls of our home hung scrolls and paintings on fine silk fabric, and I was married in my mother's wedding dress made of silk brocade that her father brought her from Japan.

Silk keeps us warm in the cold, and sits lightly as a breath on the skin in hot weather. It is delicate, yet stronger than any other natural fiber. It takes color richly, but its natural colors are simply elegant. It can be fine as a reeled thread or thick and rustic as sari waste. And, yes, it can be costly compared to wool or cotton, but think of all the time you spend weaving. If you're investing your time, don't you deserve luxurious yarn to work with now and then?

This issue celebrates the beauty and possibilities of silk. Nancy Arthur Hoskins tells us how silk is woven through history. The experts advise us how to choose, weave with, and care for silk. Danish weaver Lotte Dalgaard tells us about her exploration of "magical materials," including silk, and we catch up with modern-day silk worker Cheryl Kolander. There truly are projects to fit every loom and budget: Betsy Blumenthal's cotton and silk waste runner would grace any table, and Tien Chiu and Allen Walck present little luxuries to weave with just a little silk. Many of the projects are plain weave, using color and the silk itself to add interest to the fabric—Susan Horton's shawl uses ombré stripes to create drama, Kiran Badola's shawl uses variable setts for texture, and Marilyn Murphy uses clasped wefts to mimic traditional Laotian ikat designs. Some use silk to advantage in sophisticated structures: crackle, doubleweave, and turned taqueté. And others, such as Ramona Abernathy-Paine's Elizabethan Sonnet shawl, are as romantic as silk itself. And we all need a little romance in our lives, don't we?

Enjoy.

FUTURE THEMES

March/April 2014 Cloth Inspired by Cloth

Do you analyze upholstery in a waiting room, planning your next weaving project? Do you have an old or interesting textile you want to recreate? This issue explores the weaver's favorite source of inspiration: other weaving.

May/June 2014 Designing at the Loom

Whether you like the efficiency of weaving multiple designs on one warp or you just like to play with treadling, tie-ups, color, and texture, this issue is for you. Join us to explore weave structures that give us options and the many degrees of freedom we have in weaving.

September/October 2014 Handwoven for the Home

From the perennial favorite, dish towels, to table runners and throw pillows, weavers love to surround themselves with handwoven textiles that are as useful as they are attractive. From pure décor to functional fabrics, our 2014 reader challenge celebrates weaving for the home.

HANDWOVEN.

VOLUME XXXV

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2014

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NANCY ARTHUR HOSKINS of Eugene, Oregon, is an author, teacher, and artist with a special interest in weaving, embroidery, color theory, and researching Egyptian textiles.

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MICHAEL COOK of Dallas, Texas, lives with his handsome husband, Chris; three dogs; three cats; and many silkworms. He weaves with silk often, and his website is www.wormspit.com.

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SUSAN DU BOIS of Lakewood, Colorado, is passionate about all things silk. She has been the owner of Treenway Silks since 2011 and loves sharing her knowledge of silk.

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MARION MARZOLF of Ann Arbor, Michigan, a retired journalism professor and author of *Shuttle in Her Hand*, keeps happily busy weaving and writing about weaving.

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BEVERLY WEAVER of Colorado Springs, Colorado, freely admits that she has a major addiction to rug weaving and a minor addiction to ply-split braiding.

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BETSY BLUMENTHAL of Boulder, Colorado, has been weaving, dyeing, and teaching since the 1960s and is addicted to exploring the infinite combinations of colors and textures with yarn.

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SUSAN WILSON of Arvada, Colorado, author of *Weave Classic Crackle & More* and busy workshop teacher, looks forward to a "sabbatical" in 2014 to get reacquainted with her looms.

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SANDRA HUTTON of Monument, Colorado, satisfies scholarly needs by studying weave structures on her Megado and Baby Wolf looms and her Glimakra drawloom.

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SUSAN HORTON of Villa Park, California, lives with her husband, dog, and cat, and a multitude of looms and yarns that seem to multiply without warning.

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ALLEN WALCK of Avon, New York, finds that although he is both a busy husband and diligent father, he somehow manages to make time for weaving each and every day.

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TIEN CHIU of Sunnyvale, California, weaves, dyes, and sews handwoven couture garments. She's also blogging a book about how to create original craftwork at www.creatingcraft.com.

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ROSALIE NEILSON of Milwaukie, Oregon, continues her exploration of structure and design in her newly published book *Kongō Gumi: A Cacophony of Spots—Coils—Zags—Lines*.

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RAMONA ABERNATHY-PAINE weaves color and structure, drawing inspiration from the world around her. She lives, weaves, and teaches weaving in north Florida.

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SARAH H. JACKSON of Santa Ana, California, is energized by weaving, teaching about weaving, and writing about weaving. She blogs about her work at sarahhjackson.blogspot.com.

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BETH ROSS JOHNSON learned to weave from students of Norman Kennedy and later spent time in Japan studying kasuri. She lives in western North Carolina where she weaves and teaches.

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MARILYN MURPHY is a blogger and managing partner at www.clothroads.com, a global textile marketplace. She is the author of the new book, *Woven to Wear*. When she's not traveling, she's in her studio in Fort Collins, Colorado.

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CEIL LAMBERT is an MFA graduate student at Colorado State University. When he's not weaving, he enjoys bird-watching, drawing, reading science fiction, and riding his bike.

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Letters



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NORTH SHORE SENIOR CENTER WEAVING GROUP

WEAVING CONNECTIONS

A quick review of textile history will show us how many times weaving has brought women together in new and surprising ways. It still happens. People started donating looms to the North Shore Senior Center in Northfield, Illinois. Due to the insight of some center members, a weekly weaving studio was formed. Decades later, the group supported by Rose Carroll, Associate Director of Lifelong Learning, continues to be a place of skill development, personal support, and friendship.

The studio is open free of charge to any center member and has a diverse membership—the weavers range in skill level from complete beginner to accomplished professional. Sharing of ideas and experiences and mentoring of one another has forged the group into an extended family—you must call in if you miss a session, or people will worry and track you down!

Recently, the group presented a gallery show, pictured here, at the North Shore Senior Center. This program could be a model for other community organizations considering bringing the fiber arts to their members. For more information, contact rcarroll@nssc.org.

—Linda Schoenmakers, Illinois

SCOTTISH WEAVING

I read with interest the Spotlight article “Scotland: A Landscape Woven into Art” in the November/December issue. Readers might be interested to read about the Great Tapestry of Scotland that was recently completed and on display in September at the Scottish Parliament building in Edinburgh. The tapestry is comprised of 165 handstitched panels that tell the history of Scotland from the

Ice Age to the present time. It is truly an impressive work of art! Details can be found on the website: www.scotlandstapestry.com.

—Carol McClennen, Holliston, Massachusetts

UZBEK SILK IKAT

Just now I read that the January/February issue will address “Weaving Down the Silk Road,” and I thought perhaps my visit to an ikat weaving business is of interest to your readers. In the northeast corner of Uzbekistan, silk has been produced and woven for centuries. Even today, almost every family owns mulberry trees and raises silkworms to sell the cocoons to the many weaving shops. I was so fortunate to visit an ikat weaving shop. First I learned that only men do the tying of the warps because their hands are much stronger. Places to be tied were nicely marked on the warp stretched between two rods. The tying is *always* done with cotton thread as it does not take the dye. Because it was a Saturday afternoon, only three young women were weaving on ikat warps. One was weaving tabby, the next one a warp-faced rep, and the third one an 8-shaft satin, which brought out the colors of the warp best—it was an order for Gucci. I wish all weavers could have seen the warp, as it was not on a loom’s beam; instead, roughly 3 yards away from the heddles, the bunched up warp hung over a beam with weights on it. Some other cultures do the same.

—Ulrike Beck, via email

BABYWEARING CONCERNS

A number of readers wrote with concerns that the photos of the Rosepath for Baby wrap project in the last issue showed an unsafe method of carrying an infant. We tied the wrap according to the directions we had, but we have since learned of two organizations that publish safety guidelines for baby wraps and babywearing. You can find the latest safety guidelines at www.babywearinginternational.org or www.babycarrierindustryalliance.org.

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Seguin Collection Pattern

*Special thanks to lighthouse keeper, Lawrence Denkers,
who wove the scarf to honor Seguin Island Light.*

What's Happening

SHIBORI SYMPOSIUM

The Ninth International Shibori Symposium, presented by the World Shibori Network and the China National Silk Museum, will take place in Hangzhou, China from October 31 until November 4, 2014. The symposium is held every few years in a textile-rich region, and is meant to be a meeting where artists, designers, academics, scientists, and others can engage in open dialogue about shibori and other resist-dye techniques.

Visitors to the 2014 symposium can choose to listen to keynote speakers and scholarly presentations, attend resist-dye demonstrations, learn about the latest textile conservation techniques, and go on a variety of field trips and tours. Planned excursions include visits to an indigo farm, a trip to see the Terracotta Warriors, and a tour of the Jin Ze Arts Centre.

Beyond the symposium's official tours and field trips there is an abundance of fiber offerings for symposium attendees in the host city of Hangzhou, which is famous worldwide for its silk industry. Visitors can tour the China National Silk Museum, browse the Silk Town market—the largest silk market in China, or watch silk being woven at the Du Jin Sheng Silk Weaving and Factory Museum.

More information on the symposium, its offerings, and how to register can be found at <http://9iss.wordpress.com>.

SAMPLE SUPPORT

The Special Sample Service has been selling weavers samples of handwoven fabric at the Conference of Northern California Handweavers (CNCH). Each sample includes a swatch, draft source, materials used, sett, and wet-finishing suggestions. More importantly, the samples have served to inspire countless weavers in their own weaving endeavors.

The Special Sample Service relies on donations of these swatches, and it's in need of more. You can send in scraps leftover from previous weaving or measure some extra warp next time you plan a project. Volunteers are more than happy to cut the samples and copy the information cards. All you have to do is send enough fabric for five to ten 4" x 4" samples (inkle and tablet-woven samples as well as those made of fine threads can be smaller) and information on the weaving. To find out what you need to include with your samples, email Tien Chiu at tienchiu@gmail.com. More information on the CNCH and the sample service can be found at www.cnch.org.

Handwoven for the Home Challenge

There's no denying it: weavers love to make fabric for their homes. From the perennial favorite dish towels to table runners and throw pillows, weavers love to surround themselves with handwoven fabric that is as useful as it is attractive. Whether you enjoy weaving hot pads or lap robes, you'll want to enter *Handwoven's* 2014 challenge Handwoven for the Home.

We're looking for all sorts of household textiles and cloth creations, from dish towels to tablecloths, pillow covers to coverlets. The only stipulation is that projects must be designed to serve a purpose inside the home, either functional (such as a bath rug) or aesthetic (such as a cover for a throw pillow). We're even looking for household garments such as aprons or bath robes.

The top entries will go on to become projects in the September/October 2014 issue of *Handwoven* and will be eligible to win one of five fabulous prizes in our sponsored categories: Best Table Linen (sponsored by Interlacements Yarns), Best Use of Knitting Yarns (sponsored by Trendsetter Yarns), Best Bath Item (sponsored by Halcyon Yarn), Best Use of Natural Fibers (sponsored by Imperial Yarn), and best Home Decor Item (sponsored by Mango Moon).

For more information on the contest, the official rules, and how you can enter, visit weavingtoday.com.



Table runners, like this one by Jean Sparkes (*Handwoven* November/December 2013), are just one of the types of household textiles we'll be accepting as entries for our 2014 Handwoven for the Home challenge.

Out and About

Are you looking for some fun fiber-related activities to attend? Check out this small selection from our online calendar. You can find further information about conferences, festivals, classes, and more on weavingtoday.com.

THROUGHOUT 2014. *Handwoven* is celebrating its thirty-fifth anniversary this year with a whirlwind of giveaways, everything from yarns to tools (like those shown below) to weaving kits. Keep an eye on our Facebook page and weavingtoday.com for more information.



MARCH 6–9. The twentieth annual RAGS juried wearable art show and sale will be held at Larson's Mercedes-Benz of Tacoma in Fife, Washington. The sale is put on by the YWCA RAGS guild and a portion of all sales will go to the Pierce County YWCA's domestic violence prevention and intervention services. More information can be found at www.ragswearableart.org.

MAY 19–20. The 8th World Congress on Coloured Sheep will take place in Paris, France. The conference will include presentations on colored sheep breeds, marketing of colored fleece, handicrafts that use colored fleece, and sheep coat-color genetics. For more information, please see users.iafrica.com/m/mw/mwdatru/COLOURED-SHEEP.htm.

A Weaver's Friend

In 1986, Theresa Trebon and Janet Meany founded the Newcomb Looms Historical Society. From 1887 until 1982, around 35,000 Newcomb looms were produced, and many remain in use. Through the society, weavers could register their looms and learn about their looms' ownership histories. Overtime, the organization and its mission grew, and in 1992, it officially became Historic Looms of America.

Nearly all factory-built looms originally came with a book of instructions on constructing the loom, warping it, and weaving on it. Sometimes the informational paperwork would also include suggestions for projects. Unfortunately, through the years, many of these bits of paperwork were lost or thrown out, and so secondhand looms often come without any instructions or paperwork of any kind. It's the mission of the Historic Looms of America's Loom Manual Library to collect, preserve, and share these bits of weaving ephemera.

Today, the library is home to a large collection of historical documents related to small loom manufacturers that have since gone out of business. This includes manuals, informational pamphlets, bills of sale, catalogs, photographs, and much more. Best of all, for a small fee anyone can order copies of most of these publications. This service has been a blessing both for the many who have purchased secondhand looms without paperwork and for weaving history buffs.

Over fifty loom manufacturers are represented in the library, which also includes information on how to restore handmade counterbalance barn-frame looms. Janet is also accepting contributions of information relating to factory-built looms to add to the collection. People can choose to send copies of their documents, send the original documents which will be copied and returned, or donate the original copies.

Have a secondhand loom, but no idea who manufactured it? The Loom Manual Library can also help you identify your loom. Photos of mystery looms can be emailed to jmeany@weaversfriend.com or mailed to the Loom Manual Library, c/o Janet Meany, 5672 North Shore Drive, Duluth, MN 55804. While there's no guarantee your loom will be identified, Janet will do her best to help you learn what you can about it (and she can suggest any relevant documents in the library).

A list of available documents can be found on the website www.weaversfriend.com along with information on contributing to the collection and ordering copies of documents. (Inquiries can also be mailed to the address listed above.) Anyone wishing to register their Newcomb loom can do so by emailing Theresa Trebon at trebon@comcast.net.

From Our Roving Reporters



PHOTO BY SALLY ORGREN

COLORFUL CAMARADERIE

Jockey Hollow Weavers Guild in Mendham, New Jersey, had its annual Dye Day in August. The event was organized by Caroline Hicks-Ellwood, and members were instructed to bring in T-shirts, garments, skeins, warps, scarves, and tote bags to imbue with rainbows of color. Under the excellent instruction of Elisa Mui Eiger, pictured wearing one of her own amazing tie-dyed T-shirts, members learned many specialized techniques for advanced tie-dye results. Everyone is already looking forward to Dye Day 2014!

—Sherrie Miller

A GENEROUS GIFT

The Handweavers Guild of the New River Valley (HGNRV) was the fortunate recipient of weaving equipment and resources from “Greatest Generation” weaver Allan Owen. Allan is ninety-two years old, a World War II veteran (a pilot, shot down over Germany in 1944 and a former prisoner of war), a retired instrumental music professor, and a prolific weaver. Allan moved from the Great Valley of Virginia in July to live with his son in Minnesota. The impending move prompted him to generously give a number of looms to his fellow weavers and to donate the majority of his weaving library to the NRWV Guild library. In addition, his stash was donated to the weaving program at Project Horizon, a local nonprofit dedicated to reducing violence. The HGNRV Guild is humbled by Allan’s generosity, and since he did not want to be paid, it has made a donation to the Eagle Rock Rescue Squad, an organization that is close to Allan’s heart.

An unfinished project has also presented itself as a challenge to HGNRV Guild members. Allan wove in the Theo Moorman technique fifty quilt blocks representing all fifty states. In addition, he wove the backing for the quilt and the strips to set the quilt together. His daughter was in the process of embroidering the names of the states on each block, when she passed away. The HGNRV Guild members will work on the project, hoping to complete it as a tribute to this skilled and generous weaver.

—Linda Wilder



Beth McMahon at the All School Exhibition and certificate reception. One of her pieces, Cliff, is in the background. PHOTO BY DONNA VAUGHN

CERTIFICATE CELEBRATION

The San Antonio Handweavers Guild (SAHG) would like to congratulate one of its members, weaver and artist Beth McMahon, for earning a Certificate in Fibers from the Southwest School of Art (SSA) on July 18. As a certificate student, Beth was asked to create a body of work that reflects her weaving and fiber arts skills and also reveals the journey she traveled as an artist. In the course of discovering the themes that she would use to tell her story, Beth happened to pick up a small Chinese scroll box at an estate sale. It led her to consider

the path that the object had taken as it traveled to San Antonio and the changing value and meanings that had been placed on it at different times by different owners. Based on these ponderings, Beth’s work came to reflect the themes of value as it changes over time and scale, as well as design elements and compartmentalization, both physical and emotional. Beth’s certificate works, along with those of her fellow certificate students, were part of a special exhibition at the SSA’s Russell Hill Rogers Galleries.

—Jeannette Wilson

GUILD ARTWORK ON DISPLAY

The Weavers and Spinners Society of Austin had its first exhibit at the ArtSpace Gallery in Round Rock, Texas in September. Twenty-four members had pieces on display including weavings made from everything from cassette tapes, VHS tapes, LED lights, and copper wire to silk, wool, linen, and fabric strips. The works also included felting and handspun yarn. The exhibit was so well received that ArtSpace Gallery has encouraged the guild to think about putting on a second exhibit in the near future.

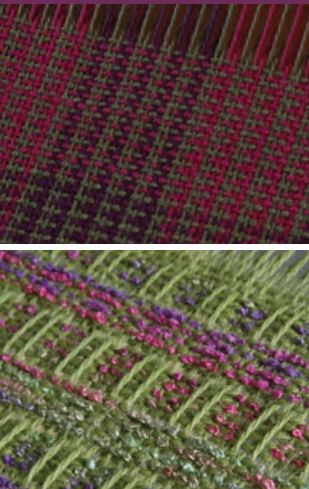
—Pam James

Thanks to all of the *Handwoven Roving Reporters*. For more information on these stories and others, please visit weavingtoday.com.

ASHFORD KNITTERS LOOMS

New shawl width loom

New

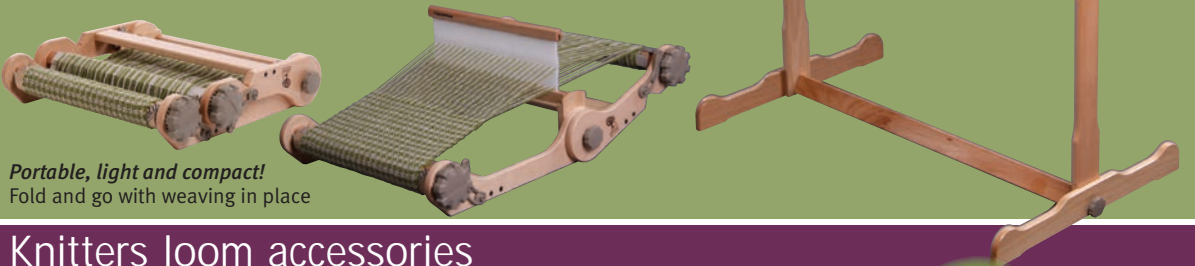


Knitters Looms now available in 3 weaving widths.

Choose 12 or 20 or the *new* 28 inch shawl width. Looms include 7.5 dpi reed, shuttles, clamps, threading hook and step-by step color warping instructions. Everything you need to weave - just add yarn!

Portable, light and compact!

Fold and go with weaving in place



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Spotlight

WEAVING FOR A QUEEN

BY ARNAB SEN

Situated on the northern banks of the Narmada River in Madhya Pradesh, India's central state, the small town of Maheshwar once shone as a jewel in the crown of the Holkar dynasty that ruled parts of central India for over two hundred years. The abundant natural beauty inspired Rani Ahilyabai (AD 1767–1795), the dynasty's famous queen, to build the royal Ahilyabai Fort in Maheshwar, and settle down there. To support the activities of her court, Rani Ahilyabai gathered artists and weavers to create a center of art and culture that flourishes to this day.



One of the Maheshwari weavers employed by the Rehwa Society, a non-profit organization dedicated to revitalizing the weaving community in Maheshwar. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE REHWA SOCIETY



Temple domes, like the one pictured above, inspired the Maheshwari weavers to create new motifs in their weaving. PHOTOS BY ARNAB SEN

A RICHLY WOVEN HISTORY

Among the many good things that happened to Maheshwar under the royal patronage was the elevation of weaving. Story has it that Rani Ahilyabai was a very religious queen, and a great patron of beautiful arts and crafts. It was a custom in those days to give out gifts, typically clothing, to one and all at the various religious festivities organized by the royal house. To meet the huge need for such gifts the queen arranged to bring a large number of weavers from different parts of what is now the Maratha region of western

India to Maheshwar, with their handlooms.

These weavers were experts in weaving on pit looms, handlooms built with a portion below the floor. They wove “silk-by-silk” fabrics (using silk yarns in both warp and weft) to create the rich texture, appearance, and drape that were a must for all royal articles. These fabrics were made into saris, draped garments worn by Indian women since ages past.

Besides being made of silk, these traditional saris had another typical characteristic: the use of zari yarns as weft. After a regular interval of a few

picks of silk yarn, the weaver would take a zari yarn (a fine thread traditionally made of gold or silver) and place it in the body of the sari as a weft, giving the cloth a ribbed effect. The amalgamation of fine silk yarns along with these zari yarns gave the Maheshwari, as these saris traditionally came to be known, a unique weft-ribbed texture that remains a characteristic today.

THE WOVEN DESIGNS

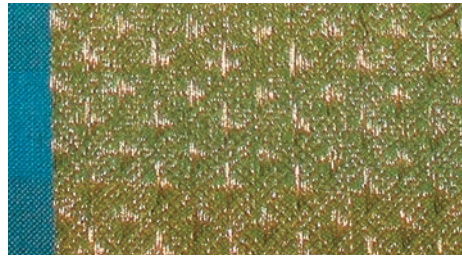
The Maheshwari saris were originally woven in plain weave. Later, some weavers felt a need to add aesthetic value to these saris by use of other weave structures. Due to the nature of

the weaving, the aesthetic features of Maheshwari saris were developed on the selvedge, and the body of the saris remained essentially plain weave. Looking around, the weavers pulled their inspirations from the nature. Some, for instance, found inspiration from the Narmada River while some other weavers used the floral motifs and patterns found on the walls of the Ahilyabai Fort.

Just as the waves of the Narmada River hit the shores in diagonal directions, so too flow the patterns created by twill weave; the weavers used variations of twill to replicate the waves on the flowing sari. Among the woven designs inspired by the waves of the Narmada River were the *Laheer*, *Jugnu*, and *Karwat* motifs. In all of them, the weaver creates the patterns through the extensive use of zigzag twills. In the case of the *Bugdi* motif, there is zigzag twill along with modified twills with small floats. The well-defined distribution of the repeats gives the fabric a very rich look.

Designs inspired by Maheshwari's natural surroundings are most prevalent on the saris woven there—in fact, they outnumber all the other types of woven designs! For example, the *Kumkum* motif is an attempt to replicate the saffron flower found in large numbers locally. Called *Kumkum* in Sanskrit, it is known worldwide by its scientific name *Crocus sativus* sp. Its abundance prompted even the architects of the Ahilyabai Fort to replicate it along the fortress walls. Here also, the pattern is essentially developed using twill weaves and their variations. Another popular and interesting motif derived from flowers is the *Chaman phul* motif. In Sanskrit, *phul* means flower, and the shape of the flower design is re-created by the clever use of floats.

Maheshwar also boasts a large number of temples, another remnant of continuous royal patronage. A distinguishing feature of these temples are



The Dum motif is meant to mimic the domes found in traditional Maheshwari architecture. PHOTOS BY ARNAB SEN



Both the Karwat (at top) and Laheer (below) motifs use twill to replicate the waves of the Narmada river. PHOTOS BY ARNAB SEN

their domes made of gold, which are still preserved as they were originally built. The aesthetics of these domes lend an awe-inspiring beauty to the temples and the fort. The *Dum*, *Boondi*, and *Boonti* weaving motifs were all inspired by these magnificent temple tops. While the Dum motif replicates only the topmost part of the dome, the other two incorporate portions of the lower support along with the top. In all of these architecture-inspired motifs the designs are cleverly developed using variations of twill weaves matched well with small floats to give prominence to the motifs.

WHAT LIES AHEAD?

While the Maheshwari weavers of the past may have been held in high regard, the weavers of today face many challenges. Under tremendous pressure from the power-loom sector, the only way for the handloom weavers of Maheshwar to survive the competition is to develop better technology, product



A modern example of a Maheshwari sari, produced by one of the weavers at the Rehwa Society.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE REHWA SOCIETY

diversification, and cost management. Fortunately, nonprofit organizations such as the Rehwa Society are working to improve the lives of Maheshwari weavers through employment and income, creating a broader international market for their handwoven goods, and helping to provide education, health-care, and housing to the weavers and their families. The Rehwa Society, which was founded by descendents of Rani Ahilyabai, employs over 150 weavers and runs a school for the children of weavers. (You can find more information on the Rehwa society, its mission, and how you can help at www.rehwa-society.org.)

Another hopeful sign is that quite a few of the youth today are choosing to stay at home and continue the family tradition of weaving. What Maheshwar needs are a few entrepreneur-designer-weavers, who will give the place the boost needed to reach the top levels of Indian weaving craft.



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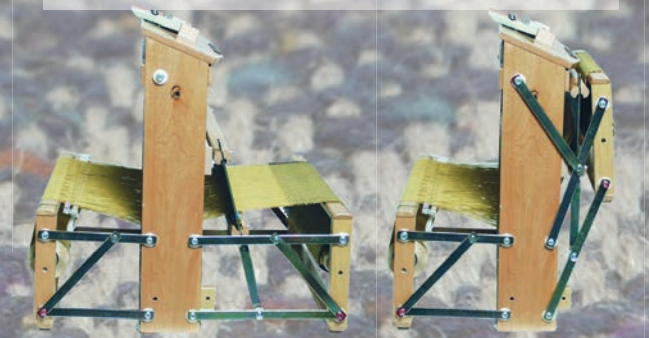
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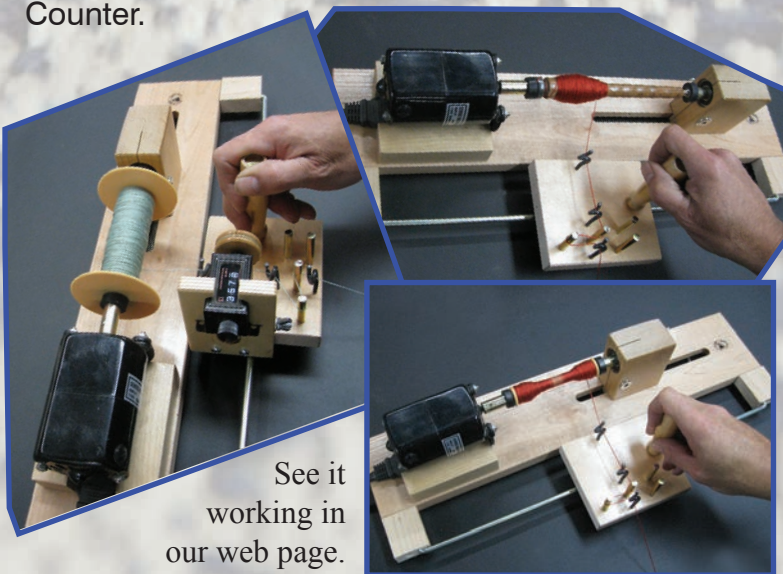


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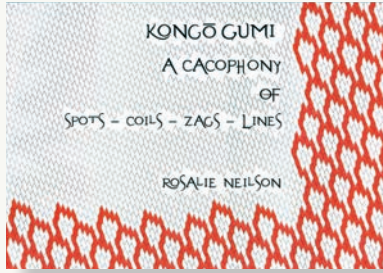
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KONGŌ GUMI: A CACOPHONY OF SPOTS - COILS - ZAGS - LINES

Rosalie Neilson

MILWAUKIE, OREGON: ORION'S PLUMAGE, 2013. SOFTCOVER, 132 PAGES, \$70, 978-0-9664863-2-2.

Rosalie Neilson, already well known and highly respected for her two previous in-depth studies on kumihimo, has truly outdone herself with her newest endeavor, *Kongō Gumi: A Cacophony of Spots - Coils - Zags - Lines*. Her newest book is truly a marvel of ingenuity. As Shirley Berlin says in her introduction, Neilson writes from a long history of braiding and “her books and articles always rise above the banal.” This book is no exception and, in fact, enters the realm of the sublime. It is a geometric expansion beyond

her two previous studies, *The Thirty-Seven Interlacements of Hira Kara Gumi* and *The Twenty-Four Interlacements of Edo Yatsu Gumi*, encompassing a stupendous 1,157 interlacements.

For anyone who has toiled over graphs and templates to create designs and translate them to the marudai or disk, this book is a godsend. Here, in an ultimately understandable and truly exhaustive format, is every single two-color design for a sixteen-element kongō gumi.

The fascinating preface of the book gives a detailed overview of Neilson’s process to arrive at this number—it’s not for the mathematical faint of heart, but it gives a clear view into her working mind. This is followed by an excellent historical view of the kongō gumi braid itself.

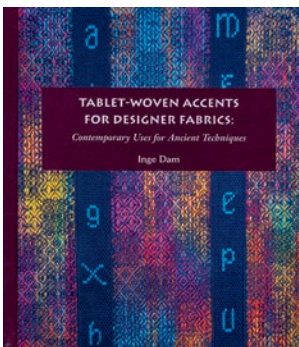
The braiding instruction section is simple and clear and shows how the numerical ordering of the elements corresponds to the template. The next section carefully leads

the reader through the template design process, then explains how to read and utilize the templates to follow. Neilson also includes a section for those who use a disk.

Each of the 1,157 designs is clearly illustrated with several repetitions, color placement, and design classification. It is the ultimate visual compendium, and as you progress from one to eight spots, you will see the spots, coils, lines, and zags begin to converge to create a myriad of lattices, filigrees, and motifs. Add a third or fourth color, and the sky’s the limit.

Kongō Gumi: A Cacophony of Spots - Coils - Zags - Lines is a must-have for any kumihimo enthusiast and is an invaluable contribution to the braiding world at large.

—Michael Hattori



TABLET-WOVEN ACCENTS FOR DESIGNER FABRICS: CONTEMPORARY USES FOR ANCIENT TECHNIQUES

Inge Dam

SCHOMBERG, ONTARIO: INGE DAM, 2013. HARDCOVER, 134 PAGES, \$34.95, 978-0-9917614-0-1.

Tablet-woven fabrics and their long history have intrigued generations of weavers. Inge Dam uses historical examples of tablet weaving as departure points to explore technical ingenuity, structural innovation, and artistic possibilities. The volume also contains plentiful pattern diagrams, weave drafts, instructional drawings, and garment schemes as well as a delightful and inspired section on finishes.

This is a how-to manual, but not for beginners. It features an introduction to warp-twined tablet weaving as well as detailed instructions for double-faced plain weave, double-faced twill, the “missed-hole” technique (where one hole in each tablet is not threaded), and pebble weave. For each structure, the technique is clearly detailed with turning diagrams, front and back photos of the bands, and directions for creating one’s own designs.

In the section on tablet-woven borders and selvages, the reader learns about loom-woven interlaced yardages complemented by simple tablet-woven edges, tubular as well as flat. A section of samples includes twenty-one ideas for adorning tablet bands woven with loom yardage with the addition of fringe, ribbons, buttons, knotted pile, and soumak, to name a few.

Throughout the book are photos of Dam’s stunning yardage with two or more integrated tablet bands in intricate geometric,

figurative, or lettered designs. While even seasoned weavers may be daunted by the demanding task of setting up a floor loom to include sections of tablet weave, Dam explains every step in simple terms, from preparing the loom to compatible yarns and sizes for warps and weft. (While there is little discussion about the loom itself, it seems that only looms with underslung beaters are suitable for this application.)

To conclude this remarkable and comprehensive treatise on tablet weaving, a statement on the virtue and relevance of this time- and labor-intensive practice could well be added. It would suit other concerns of our time that promote prioritizing life values beyond expediency. Dam’s modest prose is in tune with such principles, and her exuberant weavings speak expressively. Her book should serve as an enduring source for contemporary practitioners of an ancient art.

—Desiree Koslin

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The Lore and Lure of Silk

NANCY ARTHUR HOSKINS

A legendary Chinese princess unwound an infinitesimal, but infinitely long filament from a cocoon that fell into her teacup.¹ Several silken strands slightly twisted together, created a strong, shimmering thread that could be dyed in all the colors of the rainbow and woven into filmy, plain, or complex-patterned cloth as precious as gold. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Whether its origin story is apocryphal or authentic, the beginning of sericulture in China is lost in the mists of time. What we do know is that the practice of silk weaving reaches back thousands of years in the vast country of China and beyond. Archaeological excavations in Central Asia during the last hundred years have discovered decently preserved fabrics in cold, desert burial sites that are the subject of research by both Western and Eastern scholars. Textile treasure troves were found in ancient places with exotic names—Mashan, Turfan, Dulan, Dunhuang, Xing Pan, Shanpula, Pazyryk, Urumchi, and others. The earliest silk fragments are dated circa 3000 BCE. Even earlier,



A woven dragon with golden scales from a *kesi* or *k'o-ssu* silk tapestry from the author's collection. The Chinese textile dates to the late 19th or early 20th century. PHOTO BY NANCY ARTHUR HOSKINS

pottery sherds [Editor's note: for the laypeople among us, a sherd is a shard] and artifacts carved of ivory, jade, stone, or metal testify to an interest in the silkworm (*bombyx mori*), the mulberry tree, and archaic looms. By the fifth or fourth century BCE, silk looms with some form of patterning device seem to have developed, according to the Chinese textile archaeologists Wang Xu and Feng Zhao. Fabrics dated from the time of the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) are evidence of a well-developed and sophisticated silk industry.² Much later, painted scrolls of the tenth century CE illuminate the process of sericulture, the looms, and silk weaving.³

The creativity and complexity of the

ancient textiles is astounding. There are tabbies, gauzes, twills, tapestries, damasks, brocades, doubleweaves, satins, warp- and weft-faced taquetés, samitums, lampas, pile weaves, tablet weaves, and velvets. There are also painted, printed, resist-dyed, ikat, and embroidered textiles. Some fabrics are enhanced with peacock feathers and gold-wrapped yarns, and stamped with gold powder. The designs are delicate and diverse, with geometric patterns, magical animals, symbols, and skylines of floating clouds. The compositions may be traditionally Chinese or, surprisingly, related to Sasanian Persian styles created for export to the West.


The valuable textiles traveled across

Eurasia as gifts, trade items, and sometimes as bribes for protection from invading nomadic tribes. Chinese silks were carried from one oasis or caravan-sary to another across the treacherous Central Asian desert on intertwining northern and southern routes that became known as the Silk Road. Textile techniques, loom technology, and stylistic tastes traversed from East to West and West to East. Long before the secret of sericulture, strictly guarded by the Chinese rulers, was known in the Mediterranean world, the luxurious fabrics were imported. The clinging, softly draped fabrics worn by the goddesses on classical Greek statues and the flouncing skirts seen on a painted red-figure Greek vase are probably not heavy wools woven on warp-weighted looms or less supple linens from Egypt, but silk. Though there are scant archaeological fabrics found in Greece, a small number of silk remnants from a burial site were discovered.⁴ Some fabrics from China were even unraveled and the silken yarns rewoven into new cloth.

During the early centuries of the Roman Empire, elegant silk garments were considered excessive and frivolous. But during the reign of the Emperor Justinian (527–565 CE), silkworms smuggled from China launched a sericulture industry in the Byzantine Empire. From that time on, the powerful and wealthy wore gorgeous garments of intricately patterned silk. The warp-faced compound tabby common in Chinese silks became a weft-faced compound tabby in wool (taqueté) when woven in the Near East or Egypt. The first fragments of these taquetés and the weft-faced compound silk twills (samitum) were Coptic grave goods found in Antinoé, Egypt, dated circa 500 CE. The technique of weaving wool tapestries traveled in the opposite direction and was adopted as *kesi* or *k'o-ssu* (Chinese silk tapestry) by the seventh century CE.

Resplendently woven and embroidered Chinese silk textiles from the seventh century until the early twentieth century grace many museum collections and some beautiful recent publications.

Beyond mere fragments, there are complete costumes, accoutrements, and wall hangings. I am fortunate that the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art at the University of Oregon has an extensive collection of Chinese textiles and art—a never-ending source of inspiration. I was also greatly impressed by the diminutive and delicate sett of the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) *jin* silks (warp-faced compound tabbies) that I saw in the Jingzhou Museum in Shashi, China. In Chinese, *jin* represents a polychrome complex textile, which may be a warp-faced or weft-faced compound tabby or twill or even a brocaded satin.⁵ Weaving even a small 8-shaft sample of a warp-faced compound tabby in 60/2 silk was a humbling experience.

There are many excellent books on the woven and embroidered archaeological, ancient, and antique textiles from Western church treasuries, Central Asian sites, and China that are rich with information, illustrations, and diagrams of weave structures and embroidery stitches for those interested in further research. And then there are all those lovely, lustrous silk yarns for our next weaving project. For modern weavers, the Silk Road leads right to our doors. Aren't we lucky? 

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NOTES

1. Barber, 1991, p. 31.
2. Becker, 1987, pp. 21–78.
3. Zhao, 1999 pp. 23–25.
4. Barber, 1991, p. 32.
5. Zhao, 1999, pp. 339–340.



An 8-shaft warp-faced compound tabby weave in 60/2 silk that was sett at 96 EPI. 6" x 2½". PHOTO BY EMORY SOMMERS



From the author's collection, a Chinese embroidered silk gauze fabric from that was once an elegant sleeve band. PHOTO BY NANCY ARTHUR HOSKINS



A silk and gold *kesi* or *k'o-ssu* silk tapestry from the author's collection. PHOTO BY NANCY ARTHUR HOSKINS



A silkworm caterpillar preparing to spin a cocoon.
PHOTOS BY MICHAEL COOK

The DISCERNING WEAVER'S GUIDE to Silk

MICHAEL
COOK

Silk is amazing, luscious, shining, beautiful. Silk yarn comes in a huge variety of forms, and the resulting woven textiles can range from a tissue-fine fabric you can read through to tough, heavy fabrics suited to wall hangings, rugs, and coats. Silk can be an investment, so it's good to be an educated buyer when shopping for silk yarn. Although there are hundreds of different silk yarn names and brands, they can be divided into two main categories—reeled silk and spun silk.

THE REEL DEAL

Reeled silk (also called nett silk, thrown silk, filament silk, pure silk, or paat silk) is made of long, single fibers unwound from cocoons. The cocoon fibers are of immense length (a good Grade 1A bombyx silk cocoon should have around

1,500 yards of unbroken fiber) and are wound together into a filament that can be combined, twisted, and plied to make a variety of smooth, shiny yarns. Structurally, most silk filament yarns fall into one of three types:

- **Tram** is a singles yarn composed of one or more filaments loosely twisted together, giving the yarn maximum shine but minimum strength. Tram is used for weft in a lot of fabrics as well as for specialty applications like brocade and embroidery.
- **Organzine** is a family of balanced-plied yarns ranging from two plies to three plies or more and including multilevel yarn structures such as cabling. Organzine is the workhorse of the silk world—everything from

weaving warp to sewing thread is made of organzine. Depending on the degree of twist, organzine yarns can be very glossy or more pearly; the more tightly twisted versions are stronger, stiffer, and more matte in finish, while the less-twisted yarns are softer, limper, and more shiny.

- **Crepe** yarn is tightly twisted and typically overplied, so that it crinkles up in the fabric. Crepe yarns tend to have a matte finish and are somewhat elastic. They are used in making a variety of traditional fabrics such as crepe de chine and crepe georgette. Handweavers use crepe yarns for a variety of special effects.

The vast majority of filament silk yarns are thrown—this word is used specially



Cocoons in a bath, waiting to be reeled.



A dime with a small skein of silk yarn.

for the process of twisting filament yarn, to differentiate it from spinning. Spinning involves drafting out fibers and twisting, whereas throwing is simply adding twist.

SPUN AND PROCESSED

After the best cocoons have been reeled, the lower-quality cocoons, pierced cocoons (that have been allowed to hatch for breeding stock) and any waste or damaged cocoons from the reeling process, are all degummed, opened out, carded and combed, made into sliver, and spun. Because the fibers are very long, the silk is typically cut to a consistent length during the combing process. The longer the silk staples, the smoother and glossier the yarn and the higher the price. But if the silk will be blended with wool, cotton, or another fiber, it is often cut to match the other fiber's staple length to facilitate spinning.

The best spun silks can be very difficult to differentiate from reeled silks; they are made from very long, even fibers and are processed carefully to avoid or remove fuzz or lumps. Often these finer silks are gassed—passed at high speed past a series of small flames—to burn off any hairy spots and make the yarn lustrous and smooth. After the best and longest fibers have been removed, the shorter



A spool of reeled silk.



Reeled silk on the left (NS-18K from Habu) and spun silk on the right (30/2 silk from Mint Fabrics, India). Note the smooth texture of the reeled silk vs. the fuzzy surface of the spun silk.

fibers are used to make lower-grade yarns. At the end of this process are bits of fiber called noil, which are exceptionally short and lumpy and may even contain bits of insect. Silk noil fiber is spun into the yarn of the same name and used to weave a silk noil fabric that is fairly matte and drapery, useful for more casual garments.

BY THE NUMBERS

When shopping for silk yarn, it's also useful to understand the system of weights and measures. Reeled silk is counted by a unit called denier (pronounced "DEN-yer" or "den-YAY," the French pronunciation). A denier is an old French coin that looks like a thin dime. To determine the weight of a yarn,

a merchant would measure 80 skeins of yarn 120 aunes long (an aune is an arm's-length measure, similar to a yard), put it on the scale, and drop coins into the other side until it balanced. The modern version uses metric measurements; 1 modern denier equals 1 gram per 9,000 meters. Fine sewing silk is in the neighborhood of 100 to 200 denier. Buttonhole twist is usually around 1,000. Reeled silk carpet warp can be 2,000 or more.

GUM VARIATIONS

Silk cocoons are made of two proteins. Fibroin is the long, shiny fiber, and sericin is the protein gum that binds the cocoon together. Sericin is often called sticky, but it's really only sticky in the way



Shining silk, treasured by weavers and wearers for centuries.



Left: loose-twist tram; **middle:** a light sportweight yarn designed to simulate an old yarn called “purse twist”; **right:** raw (in the gum) size C sewing thread.

that starch is: If you get it wet, and then let it dry, it tends to bind together, but once dry, it's not tacky to the touch. Silk yarn with the gum on it tends to be wiry and tough, yellowish or ecru in color, and less shiny. Silk gum is essential to the reeling process and is left on the yarn through many of the twisting processes and sometimes even through the weaving because it acts like sizing, holding the yarn together and protecting it against shredding and abrasion.

Most silk yarns are degummed; the gum has been removed, typically by simmering in an alkaline solution such as sodium carbonate (washing soda, soda ash) and detergent, although degumming can also be done with enzymes. Degumming leaves the silk softer, shinier, and more supple. Degumming is a progressive process, and some yarns and fabrics are used with some or all of the natural gum left intact. For example, organza fabric is made from silk that is not degummed, giving it a stiff, crisp hand and a translucency that disappears if the gum is removed.

RAW SILK

The term “raw silk” means several different things, depending on the context and whom you ask. If you tell someone in the silk industry you want to buy 2 tons of raw silk, they will assume you want reeled filament in the gum, ready to be twisted into yarns. If you ask

for raw silk at a dressmaker's, you typically get silk noil or possibly one of the wild silks. If you ask an interior designer, they're likely to give you slubby douppioni (silk made from double cocoons and flawed cocoons), perfect for draperies and cushions. To me, as a silk worker, “raw” means the same thing it does if I'm referring to beef or broccoli: It hasn't been cooked. Silk that has been reeled from the cocoons and made into filament is raw—stiff and wiry with the natural gum intact. After doubling, twisting, redoubling, and plying, it's still raw. The gum left in place protects the fibers from abrasion during processing.

AVOIDING “THAT SMELL”

Silk yarns, specifically spun silk yarns, have a well-deserved reputation for stinkiness that is particularly noticeable when the yarns become wet or warm, for example, when the fabric is washed or when the wearer perspires. Many people assume the smell comes from the silk gum, but sericin actually has a bright, dry, grassy smell that's not unpleasant. The fishy smell comes from waste from the reeling process—spent cocoons, bad or flawed cocoons, snarled threads, carrier rod waste, dead bugs in the spent cocoons, etc., all of which go into the bin to await the spinning process. Much of this waste is wet, and it can ferment.

If a silk factory is very hygienic, changes the bins every day, and passes

the waste on to the spinning process quickly, the silk has very little smell. If they wait a few days . . . it really, really stinks. If you find a silk source where the yarn is stinky, you may want to avoid that source in the future. On the other hand, if the silk has a slight chemical or kerosene-like smell, that's likely a side effect of the dye processes, and it may wash out or diminish over time.

SOME FINAL TIPS

Silk fiber is washable, but often the techniques used to give it color, sheen, and texture are not. If you intend to wash a silk garment or textile, I recommend caution with the colors—many dyers overload silk yarn with color, never expecting it to be washed. The same is true of commercial silk fabrics. Fabrics can also be treated with rollers or other techniques to improve the surface sheen or texture, but these changes often won't survive water and the fabric may pucker, shrink, or change texture upon washing. In those cases, dry cleaning is recommended.

Both reeled and spun silk are pleasant to weave with, and give a fantastic sheen and drape to woven fabrics. Please do give silk yarns, and especially reeled silks, a try—they need a little special care in the working, but the dazzling beautiful results are worth it!

Got Silk?

All photography by Thomas Harrop

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Wearing and Caring for Silk

BY SUSAN DU BOIS

Bombyx silk yarn in different weights. Fabric draft adapted from *A Weaver's Book of 8-Shaft Patterns* (Interweave, 1991, p. 137, #499), designed by Susan Wilson and woven by Sandra Hutton. PHOTO BY THOMAS HARROP PHOTOGRAPHY

There's nothing else like silk. Its characteristic luster comes from its unique structure. Silk fiber, viewed under a microscope, is a long triangular prism. Its three smooth sides give silk its excellent light reflectivity and its soft hand, and when several filaments are twisted together, they create a number of facets that reflect light—similar to the way diamonds are cut to give maximum brightness.

SILK IS GOOD FOR SKIN

Silk, in its pure state, is also hygienic and nonallergenic. Silk is a protein fiber whose amino acid composition is close

to that of the human skin. (However, silk passes through various treatments during its processing, some of which may introduce elements that could cause skin irritation.) Silk can absorb up to 30% of its weight in moisture without feeling damp, making it comfortable to wear next to the skin, and silk breathes, making it a good material for both summer and winter.

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR WASHING SILK

Although you may be accustomed to buying silk clothing labeled “Dry Clean Only,” you can wash silk. After all, silk

has been in use for over five thousand years and the modern-day dry-cleaning process didn't begin until the mid-eighteenth century. Washing silk requires a bit of care but is not difficult.

One reason silk manufacturers recommend dry cleaning is that silk can lose its characteristic sheen with incorrect washing. Silk fibers are sensitive to abrasion, which can occur when the silk rubs against itself or other, rougher fabrics or against a metal washing machine drum. An abraded silk fiber will appear whitish or as though sprinkled with powdered sugar because the outer layer of the silk, which provides the light reflectiv-

reflectivity, has been roughed up.

When you wash silk, use a lot of lukewarm water (70°–90°F) in proportion to the silk. If the silk is floating freely in the water, it will be less likely to rub against itself or other surfaces, minimizing damage due to abrasion.

Washing can also affect the drape of silk. How many of us have washed a luxurious silk blouse or scarf only to be horrified by the stiff fabric that emerged from the wash? Well, fear not. Your silk fabric is not ruined. Here's an easy fix that I learned from Treenway Silks' founder, Karen Selk.

Step 1: When the silk is slightly damp, move the piece around in your hands for a few minutes. This will bring up the sheen and minimize the stiffness when the silk is completely dry.

Step 2: Take your dry silk item and whack it against the back of a chair a couple of times. Feel how soft your silk is again? It's that easy!

Here's what just happened. Even on degummed silk, there is a bit of residual sericin (water-soluble proteins that glue the cocoon together), and these proteins stiffen when the wet silk dries. Whacking softens the sericin, restoring the luster and hand of the silk. With use and washing, the residual sericin will come out of the silk over time and less finishing will be needed.


Here's a checklist for successful silk washing:

- Wash silk alone. (Do not combine it with other fabrics.)
- Use warm water (70°–90°F).
- Use a high ratio of water to silk.
- Use a mild, liquid detergent such as original blue Dawn or a gentle shampoo.
- While wet, swoosh gently. Do not rub the silk against itself, squeeze it into a tight ball, or wring it.
- Add a splash of white vinegar to the second-to-last rinse water. This returns the silk to the slightly acidic

state it prefers. The last rinse should be straight water.

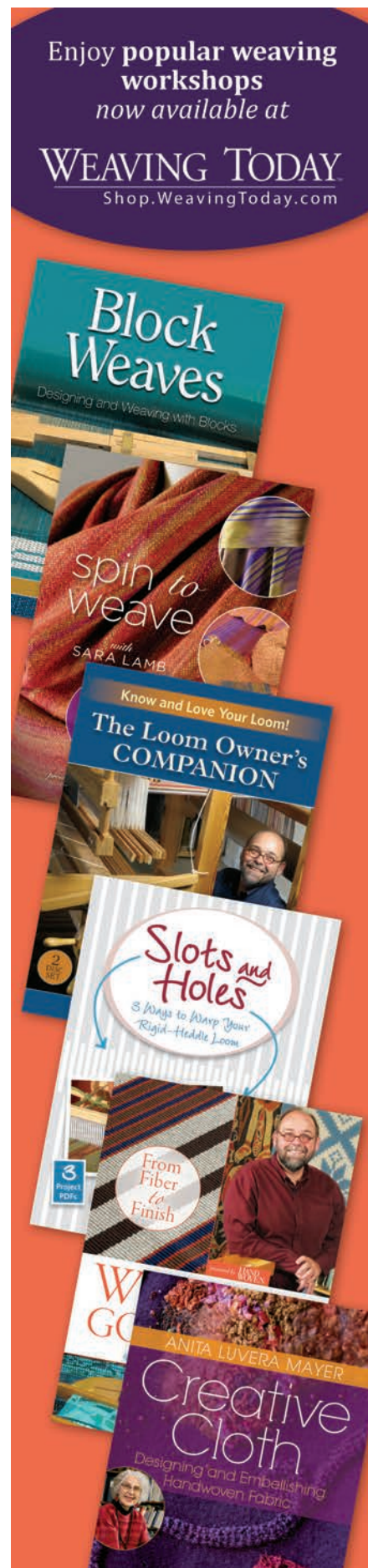
- Gently squeeze out excess water.
- Dry flat or line-dry over a padded line.
- Handle the silk for several minutes while slightly damp.
- Whack the silk against a smooth surface to soften its hand and restore the luster.

SEIZE THE SILK

With its illustrious history and its lovely properties, silk is undeniably a luxury. But it is also strong and meant to be worn and woven. How many times have I heard variations of "I'm saving my silk for a special project," or "I'm waiting until I'm good enough to use my silk?" Silk is strong enough to hold up to constant wearing, and you really are a good enough weaver to use silk now. There's a silk yarn and a silk project to fit every budget, and you'll never learn to weave with it until you try. How many of us have gone to an estate sale and found a weaver's treasured silk stash being sold for pennies on the dollar? So don't wait. Seize the day, seize the silk, and let the pleasure begin. 

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Magical Materials: A Profile of Lotte Dalgaard

MARION T. MARZOLF



Scarves from *Magical Materials to Weave*. PHOTOS BY OLE AKHØJ



A piece from the exhibit *Double Up*, designed by Ann Schmidt-Christensen and woven by Lotte Dalgaard.

Step into a dazzling white workshop with high ceilings and large windows, racks of swirling pleated and textured fashions in stark black or white or muted colors, worktables, and three large weaving looms at the ready. At her studio home in the Danish countryside, Lotte Dalgaard, author of *Magical Materials to Weave*, takes time to speak with us between giving summer workshops in Norway and Jutland and fall teaching engagements in Switzerland and Spain.

Fiber artist, teacher, and experimenter, Dalgaard began training in traditional weaving techniques in 1966, and for thirty years as a professional weaver, she created clothing, church textiles, and

flat-woven and rya rugs for public buildings. Then, in 1998, she became intrigued by the new high-twist fibers on the market and immediately began experimenting to find out what could be done with them. “I was fascinated,” she says, “and I fell in love with these magical fibers.” Soon she shifted from working in straight, precise lines to textiles that bubbled and rippled and fell into pleats.

In the 1960s, she had been taught “never to use wool or linen together,” but now she saw the new possibilities in this combination of fibers. “The linen stays stable and the wool pulls the linen into bumps and pleats. The weaving is flat on the loom, but when you remove it and

put it in hot water, it reacts.” Her experiments showed that “you could use this contrast to advantage, using wool with smooth stable yarns such as linen, silk, or nonshrink fibers to create ripples, pleats, ruffles, and wafflelike, bubbled surfaces. When you thread groups of wool followed by groups of linen, and then weave with high-twisted crepe wool, for example, the wool fiber will move and pleat while the linen resists, and the tension between the two creates a kind of ruffle.”

Dalgaard has experimented with various spinning factories, in Iceland, Switzerland, and Denmark, to obtain high-twist fibers, but the market is very

small. Plus the yarns must be steamed to make them easier to work with on the loom, and not many factories offer the steaming. (After weaving, the fabrics are washed in hot water to awaken the twist energy and create the texture.) The new fibers were difficult and costly to obtain, so in 1998, Dalgaard and her colleagues formed the Yarn Purchasing Association. Through their combined purchasing power, members have access to specialty yarns that are unavailable through retail outlets. Later, Paulette Adam formed a small company in Denmark (www.magiskegarner.dk) that offers small cones of wool, which encourages sampling and testing.

As she learned what the fibers could do, Dalgaard wanted to share her discoveries with her students. Friends warned her that she should be careful, keep her knowledge to herself, fearing she might “lose the fire of innovation . . . by telling too soon.” But Dalgaard persisted, and for the last decade, she has been spreading her knowledge through classes in Denmark and abroad. She delights in these opportunities to connect with other textile artists and with students around the world, “wonderful people I would never have known before sharing my work.”

“The design schools in Denmark have been changing their emphasis, moving from the craft tradition to working with computerized looms,” Dalgaard said. “The schools are more academic and more devoted to training textile designers than to developing craftsmen.” In the past, students apprenticed with an expert before launching their own weaving studios. Today, Dalgaard and others maintain the craft tradition through their classes and workshops at the Danish Textile Guild School (Laugets Vaevekursen) in Copenhagen.

Dalgaard’s workshop students are all weavers with varying degrees of experience in working with the new textiles and techniques. “Hobby weavers are increasing in numbers compared to ten or fifteen years ago,” she says, “and now the Yarn Purchasing Association provides them with new fibers and

experimentation possibilities. Young people want new ideas.”

Dalgaard notes that the Japanese led the way in developing and experimenting with the high-twist fibers, and more new materials and articles have appeared in recent years. But weavers now have access to two books devoted to the topic. Dalgaard first published her book in Danish in 2007. When the English textile artist Ann Richards, who was experimenting with collapse weave, saw Dalgaard’s work she called it “gorgeous” and invited her to hold a joint textile show at Handweavers Studio in London. Richards also encouraged Dalgaard to publish an English edition of her book and worked on its translation. *Magical Materials to Weave: Blending Traditional and Innovative Yarns* was published in the spring of 2012. Richards’s book on collapse weave, *Weaving Textiles That Shape Themselves*, came out the same year. “To be a colleague with Ann Richards has been a great enrichment and pleasure for me. Her book is so rich—it is just gorgeous,” Dalgaard says.

Collaborating with fashion designers to create stylish new garments from her weaving samples has also led Dalgaard to more ideas and more experiments. She brings her woven pieces to the designer’s studio and watches as dramatic clothing takes shape on the dress form, which, in turn, spurs her on to create a new textile.

Currently, she is working on an exhibition of experimental handwoven clothing with photographic interpretations called Double Up. The exhibit features Dalgaard, designer Ann Schmidt-Christensen, and photographer Ole Akhøj. The works on display were created especially for the exhibition and feature doubleweave garments designed both for the technical performance of the clothing and aesthetic interpretations of “double.” Dalgaard says the photographer, Akhøj, “has a special focus on the perception of space, objects in space, and the space of the landscape,” that beautifully captures the three dimensions of her pieces in the two dimensions of black-and-white photographs. Double Up will open in Copenhagen in March.

For other weavers interested in diving into the new high-twist fibers, Dalgaard’s book offers a wealth of instructions and tips on the process, gleaned from years of testing and trial and error. One can use the book and follow the directions for creating a sample or a finished product, but Dalgaard advises that “This is only a starting point. Experiment, observe the results, figure out what could be changed, and create new possibilities.” Possibilities have been guiding Dalgaard’s work for more than a decade, and the allure of magical materials continues for her, unabated. As we talk, during this rare pause in her busy life, she affirms, “It’s always the feeling and the textiles themselves that lead me forward.”

RESOURCES

- Dalgaard, Lotte. *Magical Materials to Weave: Blending Traditional and Innovative Yarns*. North Pomfret, Vermont: Trafalgar Square, 2012.
- Richards, Ann. *Weaving Textiles That Shape Themselves*. Marlborough, United Kingdom: Crowood, 2012.
- The Yarn Purchasing Association (www.yarn.dk) is open to international members.
- Habu Textiles (www.habutextiles.com) carries an extensive line of active Japanese yarns.
- Handweavers Studio in London (www.handweavers.co.uk) and Zürcher-Stalder in Switzerland (www.zsag.ch) are good European sources for these active yarns.



Lotte in a rare quiet moment at her studio home.
PHOTO COURTESY OF LOTTE DALGAARD

BEAUTY IN COLOR

From shining filaments to rustic noil and even sari waste, silk brings us a perfect marriage of light and color.




“Hit and Miss” Runner with Sari Strips

BEVERLY WEAVER

I am primarily a rug weaver, so weaving something using silk presented me with a special challenge. Having woven “hit and miss” rag rugs in the past, I thought a table runner using silk fabric strips might be fun to try and that alternating the silk fabric strips with a silk yarn using plain weave would show off the silk fabric to its best advantage.

I selected warp yarn in two alternating colors of silk so that the runner would be reversible and show a slightly different color on each side. The ribbons used for the weft are made up of strips of old silk saris that have been cut up and sewn back together randomly. The sari strips are about 1" wide with differing lengths. Some of the fabrics have embroidery or other surface embellishment. The various colors and textures—thin fabrics and thick fabrics, bumps caused by the seams, and loose threads caused by raveling—all work together in a surprisingly harmonious way.

- 1 Wind a warp 3 yd long of 185 ends and thread the shafts for plain weave as shown in Figure 1. (You might choose to wind the warp 2 threads at a time, holding a finger between the 2 colors to keep even tension. If you do, wind 186 ends and just set aside the extra tan warp thread.) Make sure that all warp ends have equally tight tension. Tension for weaving with the silk fabric strips should be tighter than you would normally use for a balanced plain weave.
- 2 Leaving at least 6" of warp free to be used for a braided fringe, spread the warp with scrap yarn or fabric. Weave 8 picks using the 20/2 silk weft and hemstitch the edge in groups of 4 threads. Then weave the main body of the runner, alternating picks of the silk yarn and the silk sari strips. (See the Project Notes for weaving tips.) When you have woven nearly 67", weave 8 more picks using the 20/2 silk weft and hemstitch the edge in groups of 4 threads.
- 3 Remove the runner from the loom, making sure that you have at least 6" of extra warp for fringe. Prepare fringe using groups of 8 warp ends and either braiding or doing a twisted fringe. (Beverly did a 4-strand braid.) Tie a knot in each fringe bundle 2" from the edge of the fabric. When fringes are complete, cut all fringes to the same length about 1" below the knot.
- 4 Wash in cold water, roll in a towel, and then lay flat to dry. Some of the brighter colors might bleed a bit, so use old towels around and under the runner until it is dry. 

STRUCTURE

Plain weave.

EQUIPMENT

2-shaft or more or rigid-heddle loom, 16" weaving width; 12-dent reed or rigid heddle; 1 shuttle with bobbin; 1 stick or rag shuttle.

YARNS

Warp: 20/2 silk (5,000 yd/lb, Kiku 100% Bombyx Spun Silk, Treenway Silks), #226 November Maverick (tan) and #952 Pheasant Green, 280 yd each.
Weft: 20/2 silk (Kiku), #952 Pheasant Green, 190 yd; 100% Sari Silk Ribbon (about 275 yd/lb, Treenway Silks), 172 yd.

WARP LENGTH

185 ends 3 yd long (allows 8" for take-up, about 33" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe).

SETTS

Warp: 12 epi.
Weft: 12 ppi combined (6 thick weft picks and 6 thin).

DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 15 $\frac{1}{3}$ ".
Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 67".
Finished size after washing: 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 62" plus 3" fringe at each end.

On the
web



Go to weavingtoday.com to download instructions for the 4-strand braid that Beverly used for the fringe.



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All Above	Yes	No

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Festive Dresser Scarf

BETSY BLUMENTHAL

Recycled silk yarn has been available for at least a decade. I am attracted to its bright colors, but as it is a relatively dense singles yarn, I have pondered how to use it effectively. Then I was inspired by a handwoven jacket from India, which combined the heavy silk with a fine cotton yarn. Using the recycled silk yarn as an accent weft gives a nice weight to the final textile. While I created a piece that can double as a dresser scarf or table runner, it would have a wonderful hand for a shawl, too.

The soft brick color of this cotton background weft made an interesting contrast to the many colors in the silk. With a simple plain-weave structure, you can choose to place the accent yarn at whatever intervals you want. I made my choices as I wove and then repeated the first half in reverse to make the pattern symmetrical. 



1 Wind a warp of 420 ends 3 yd long. For ease in warping, wind a second ball of yarn from the cone; hold 2 ends together separated by your fingers to prevent twisting. Use your preferred method to warp the loom following Figure 1. Note that the ends are sleyed 2/dent in the 15-dent reed for a total of 30 epi.

2 Weave the runner following the treadling and weave plan in Figure 1.

3 Remove the fabric from the loom. Machine zigzag both raw edges.

4 Handwash in cold water with mild soap, then line-dry. Press with a warm iron on the wrong side.

5 For the hems: Press $\frac{3}{4}$ " under on one end. Turn again $\frac{3}{4}$ " and machine stitch or hand-stitch in place. Repeat for the second hem.

STRUCTURE

Plain weave, 1/3 twill.

EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 14" weaving width; 15-dent reed; 2 shuttles.

YARNS

Warp: 16/2 unmercerized cotton (6,720 yd/lb; Yarn Barn), #1316 Rust, 1,260 yd.

Weft: 16/2 unmercerized cotton, # 1316 Rust, 600 yd; recycled sari silk yarn (270 yd/lb; Treenway Silks), 40 yd.

WARP LENGTH

420 ends 3 yd long (allows 4" for take-up, 32" for loom waste).

SETTS

Warp: 30 epi (2/dent in a 15-dent reed).

Weft: 20 ppi plain weave (cotton), 9 ppi twill (silk).

DIMENSIONS

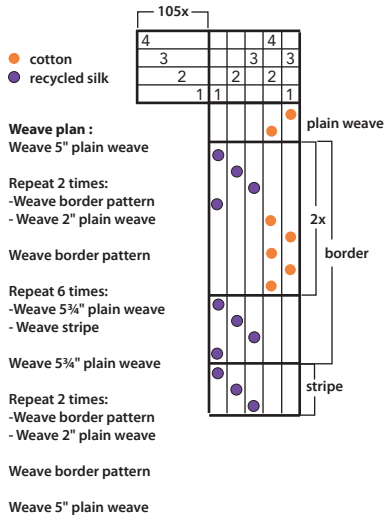
Width in the reed: 14".

Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 72 $\frac{1}{4}$ ".

Finished size after washing: 13" × 68" (hemmed).



1. Draft



STRUCTURE

Crackle weave.

EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 8" weaving width; 12-dent reed; 3 shuttles, 4 bobbins.

YARNS

Warp: 20/2 silk (5,000 yd/lb, Kiku, Treenway Silks), #1 Midnight Blue (blue-violet), 990 yd.

Weft: 20/2 silk (5,000 yd/lb, Kiku, Treenway Silks), 156 yd each color.

For Tranquil Tones scarf: #995 French Blue, #40 Winter Sage (green), #24 Sadie (red-violet).

For Bold Brights scarf: #6 Lapis Lazuli (blue), #9 Emerald Dream (green), #209 Wild Bordeaux (red-violet).

For hemstitching on both scarves, #1 Midnight Blue (blue-violet), 7 yd.

(Available as a kit from Treenway Silks).

WARP LENGTH

198 ends 5 yd long for 2 scarves (includes 2 ends for floating selvages; allows 7" for take-up, 41" for loom waste and fringe).

SETTS

Warp: 28 epi (2-2-3 in a 12-dent reed).

Weft: 32 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 7½". **Woven length (measured under tension on the loom):** 156" (2 scarves 66" each with 6" on either end and 12" between them for fringe).

Finished size after washing: Two scarves, 6" × 62" plus 4" finished fringe at each end.






Wilson, Susan. *Weave Classic Crackle & More*. Atglen, Pennsylvania: Schiffer, 2011, p. 53.

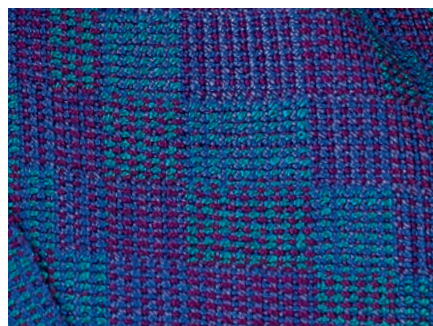
1 Wind a warp of 196 ends 5 yd long. Measure 2 floating selvages and set them aside. Centering for a weaving width of 7½", use your preferred method to warp the loom following the draft in Figure 1. Note that the ends are sleyed 2-2-3/dent in the 12-dent reed for a total of 28 epi. Sley the 2 floating selvages in their own dents and weight them over the back beam.

2 Spread the warp and weave 6" (to be used for fringe) with waste yarn. Weave 3 picks with the Midnight Blue warp yarn, leaving a 1 yd tail at your preferred side for hemstitching.

3 Wind three bobbins of each weft yarn for your chosen colorway (see the project specifications). Following the treadling and weft color order in Figure 1, weave one repeat of the treadling. Use a light beat, just a gentle tap, to place each weft. After weaving one repeat of the treadling, hemstitch the warp ends in bundles of 3. Weave the scarf for a total length of 66", checking the consistency of your beat frequently to make sure blocks are ¾" high. Weave the last block to its full height. End by weaving 3 picks of warp yarn, hemstitching in bundles of 3, and weaving 12" with waste yarn for fringe at the end of this scarf and the beginning of the next. Repeat for the second scarf, following the weft color order in Figure 1.

4 Remove the scarves from the loom and cut apart, allowing 6" at each end for fringe. For each fringe, remove the waste yarn, then prepare a twisted fringe by combining two bundles of hemstitched warps. Measure down each twisted fringe 2½", tease out 1 warp end from the twist, and secure the twist with that warp end, using the knot shown in Figure 2. Open up the twist below the knot and leave those warp ends untwisted.

5 Handwash in warm water with mild detergent. Hang to dry and steam-press on both sides with iron on low setting. Shake or "slap" the scarf to soften the silk. Trim the fringe to 4". 



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SUBTLE, AFFORDABLE ELEGANCE: Handpainted Shawls in Silk Noil

SUSAN DU BOIS AND SANDRA HUTTON

Made of 100% bombyx silk noil, this shawl possesses all the characteristics of spun silk except the price and the shine. This nubby, soft yarn was designed by Treenway Silks to create spectacular textiles just like this. Silk noil is comfortable in both winter and summer and is wrinkle resistant. It washes easily and dyes well with natural, acid, vat, and fiber-reactive dyes.

Characteristics of the yarn and natural dyes used in this project create a muted elegance by bringing two different warps to the front and to the reverse at different times. The warp is sett closely for warp emphasis, and the painted warps are prominent. The scale of this design gives visual impact from a distance and additional interest when close at hand.

The threading consists of two twill sequences, each one a different color and beginning on a shaft as far from the other as possible. The two sequences are threaded alternately. The alternate sequences com-

bined with the warp-dominant sett create a versatile threading that can produce several different weave structures. Here, the shawl is woven in integrated doubleweave to produce a shawl the perfect weight for chilly evenings. The same threading can be used to weave turned taqueté or echo weave for a lighter-weight shawl. (See Resources for information on echo weave.)

RESOURCES

Inouye, Bonnie. "Two Patterns for Two Scarves on One Warp." *Handwoven*, January/February 2008, pp. 64-67.

WARP PAINTING WITH NATURAL DYES

1 The key to making two painted warps work together is value: make one warp predominately lighter (the rose warp) and one warp darker (the purple warp). If the values of the two warps are similar, the design will appear to fade. (This fading can be very effective when similar values in the two warps appear side by side in small areas.)

2 To prepare for dyeing, wind 6 sections of natural 20/2 silk noil 7¾ yd long with a cross at each end of the warp. Make 4 sections with 133 ends and 2 sections with 134 ends for 800 ends total. Tie the end loops of each section tightly, but secure the crosses and ties along the warp very loosely to allow the mordant and

dyes to penetrate. Mordant the silk with alum at 20% weight of goods.

3 Assemble the warp sections into two groups of three: 2 sections of 133 ends and 1 section of 134, a total of 400 ends in each warp. One warp will be painted rose and the other, purple. When laying out the warps to be painted, stagger the sections by a few inches so that the color changes do not create a horizontal stripe across the warp.

4 I usually start with two or three dye colors that I use straight in some areas and mix as I work in other areas. As there is no measuring involved and only enough color is mixed for the next section of the

STRUCTURE

Doubleweave.

EQUIPMENT

8-shaft loom, 21" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 2 shuttles.

YARNS

Warp: 20/2 bombyx silk noil (980 yd/100 g skein, 4,500 yd/lb, Alirio-Thinner, Treenway Silks), natural, 6,200 yd. (Warp to be handpainted with natural dyes in 2 colorways, light rose and dark purple. Handpainted warps are also available from Treenway.)

Weft: 20/2 bombyx spun silk (1,100 yd/100 g skein, 5,000 yd/lb, Kiku, Treenway Silks), #1001 Thistle (red-violet) and #1004 Red Saffron, 1,870 yd each.

(Amounts given will weave two shawls.)

OTHER SUPPLIES

Natural dyes: cochineal, lac, brazilwood, and logwood (Table Rock Llamas, tablerockllamas.com); alum; equipment for warp painting and immersion dyeing.

WARP LENGTH

800 ends (alternating 1 dark purple, 1 light rose) 7¾ yd long (allows 10" for take-up, 65" for fringe and loom waste).

SETTS

Warp: 40 epi (20 epi per layer; 4/dent in a 10-dent reed).

Weft: 28 combined ppi (14 ppi per layer).

DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 20".

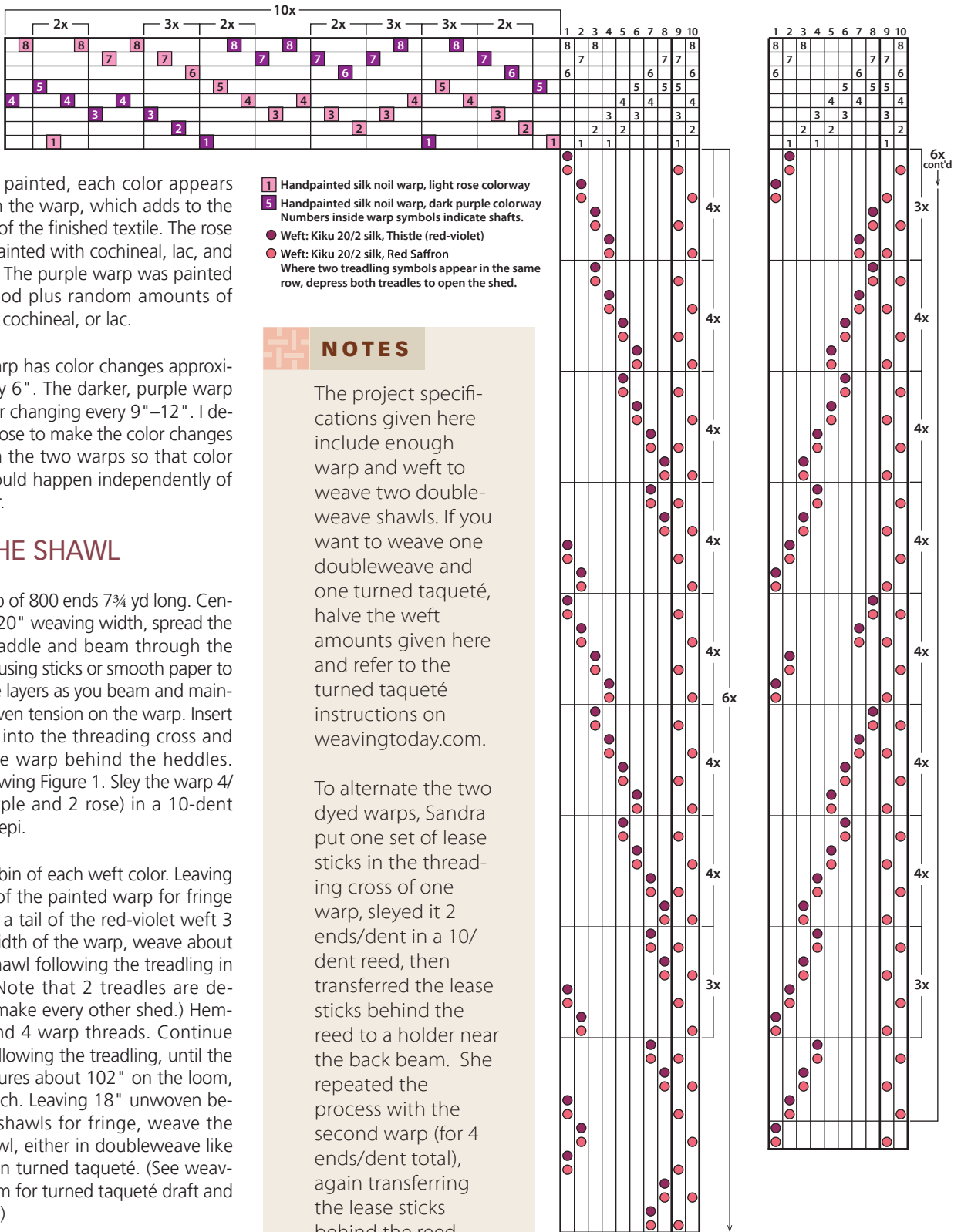
Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): about 204" (about 102" each shawl).

Finished size after washing: 2 shawls 18" × 91" plus 7" fringe at each end.



For instructions on weaving the turned taqueté version of this shawl (inset photo above), visit weavingtoday.com.

1. Draft




warp to be painted, each color appears only once in the warp, which adds to the uniqueness of the finished textile. The rose warp was painted with cochineal, lac, and brazilwood. The purple warp was painted with logwood plus random amounts of brazilwood, cochineal, or lac.

5 The rose warp has color changes approximately every 6". The darker, purple warp has the color changing every 9"–12". I deliberately chose to make the color changes different on the two warps so that color changes would happen independently of one another.

WEAVING THE SHAWL

1 Wind a warp of 800 ends 7¾ yd long. Centering for a 20" weaving width, spread the warp in a raddle and beam through the raddle only, using sticks or smooth paper to separate the layers as you beam and maintaining an even tension on the warp. Insert lease sticks into the threading cross and suspend the warp behind the heddles. Thread following Figure 1. Sley the warp 4/dent (2 purple and 2 rose) in a 10-dent reed for 40 epi.

2 Wind a bobbin of each weft color. Leaving at least 9" of the painted warp for fringe and leaving a tail of the red-violet weft 3 times the width of the warp, weave about 1" of the shawl following the treadling in Figure 1. (Note that 2 treadles are depressed to make every other shed.) Hemstitch around 4 warp threads. Continue weaving, following the treadling, until the shawl measures about 102" on the loom, and hemstitch. Leaving 18" unwoven between the shawls for fringe, weave the second shawl, either in doubleweave like the first or in turned taqueté. (See weavingtoday.com for turned taqueté draft and instructions.)

3 Cut the warp from the loom, leaving 9" of unwoven, dyed warp ends at each end for fringe, and cut the shawls apart at the center of the unwoven section between them. Make twisted fringe, dividing the warps so the fringes are either all rose or all purple. Handwash each shawl in warm water using original blue Dawn liquid or another mild detergent and line-dry. 

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Ombé Silk Shawl

SUSAN E. HORTON

Although I have been weaving for almost twenty years, only last year did I try a rigid-heddle loom. I was certain it wasn't for me, but now I'm a firm believer that it's a valuable tool in a weaver's repertoire. This silk shawl worked up beautifully on a rigid-heddle loom, and using direct warping eliminated the need for a cross and all the other time-consuming aspects of traditional warping. Weaving on a rigid-heddle loom also let me weave anywhere. This shawl was woven partly on my terrace with a glass of wine on the table next to me.

When I started this project, I wanted a striped shawl that was interesting and brought out the contrast between the bouclé and smooth yarns. I turned to a new book in my library, *Color and Texture in Weaving* by Margo Selby. The ombé stripe caught my eye as a way to create drama when worn and simplicity in the warping. Knowing that I would be doing direct warping, I designed my stripes to work mainly in even numbers.

Sampling showed that just twisting a fringe was going to leave me with ragged edges, so I decided to use the knotted hemstitch (see Resources) to tighten them up. This hemstitch is simple, easy to learn, and quick to do.

Although the literature steers you away from using bouclé in the warp on a rigid-heddle loom, I found that it worked well in an 8-dent heddle. If I did find the occasional thread getting caught, a quick smoothing out with my fingers solved the problem. Bouclé is strong, but the ends do require

some careful handling. I found sharp scissors helped avoid pulling the bouclé apart when cutting. I used Fray Check on the ends during the fringe twisting process, and I placed the fringe twister clips a little further up on the fringe than I normally do to avoid fraying the ends. After tying the knots and washing the shawl, I pulled lightly on every bouclé end to release the bouclé ply and stretch it out before trimming.

Weaving this shawl was a joy. It was simple to warp, simpler to weave, and it gave me the opportunity to try a new technique and a new design, and to problem-solve.

RESOURCES

- Selby, Margo. "Ombé Stripe." *Color and Texture in Weaving, 150 Contemporary Designs*. Loveland, Colorado: Interweave, 2011, p. 34.
- Hoskins, Nancy Arthur. "Knotted Hem Stitch K-3." *Universal Stitches for Weaving, Embroidery, and Other Fiber Arts*. Atglen, Pennsylvania: Schiffer, 2013, p. 108.

STRUCTURE

Plain weave.

EQUIPMENT

Rigid-heddle loom, 20" weaving width; 8-dent rigid heddle; 1 stick shuttle.

YARNS

Warp: silk bouclé (1,480 yd/lb, Gemstone, Halcyon), #104 taupe and #112 purple, 190 yd each; 2/5 silk (1,188 yd/lb Gemstone, Halcyon), #104 taupe and #112 purple, 65 yd each.
Weft: 2/5 silk, #104 taupe and #112 purple, 135 yd each; #114 magenta, 220 yd.

OTHER SUPPLIES

Fray Check.

WARP LENGTH

160 ends $3\frac{1}{8}$ yd long (allows 4" for take-up, about 28" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe).

SETTS

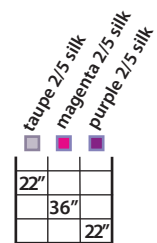
Warp: 8 epi.
Weft: 10 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 20".
Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 80".

Finished size after washing: $17\frac{1}{4}$ " x 76" plus 6" fringe at each end.

2. Weft color order

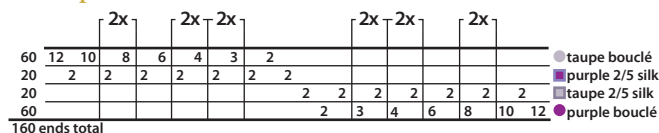


1 Either direct warp or wind 160 warp threads $3\frac{1}{8}$ yd (about 113") long and warp your loom, using the color sequence indicated in Figure 1, the warp color order.

2 Leaving a tail of weft 3–4 times the width of the warp on the right side of the loom (or the left side if you are left-handed), begin by weaving 2" with the purple silk weft. Thread the tail onto a tapestry needle, tie a knot around the selvedge thread, then make a knotted hemstitch hem (see

Resources), knotting pairs of warp threads across the width and including the selvedge threads in the first pair. After knotting the last thread, leave the tail to be incorporated into the fringe.


1. Warp color order





3 Continue weaving, following the weft color order chart in Figure 2. When you have completed the last weft pick, cut the weft, leaving a tail 3–4 times the width of the warp, and knot the ends as described in Step 2.

4 Remove fabric from the loom. Cut fringe to 7½" using sharp scissors. Apply a drop of Fray Check on the bouclé warp ends ½" from the cut end. Allow to dry, then make twisted fringe by twisting two groups of the paired knotted threads tightly in the same direction. Tie a knot at the end and let go for a cabled fringe. Include the weft tails in the edge fringes. The bouclé stretches more than the 2/5 silk during the twisting process, so the ends will not be even in those groups that contain both bouclé and 2/5 silk. Tie the knots to be parallel to each other across the width.

5 Handwash in cool water, blot out excess water in a large towel, and hang over a rod to dry. Steam-press lightly if needed, being careful not to crush the bouclé. Pull lightly on each bouclé end to untwist it and stretch it out. Trim the fringe ends ½" from the knot. 



SMALL LUXURIES

A vintage tie, an elegant evening purse, a lovely sachet. A touch of silk gives grace to life's special moments.



Gatsby Does the Laundry

ALLEN WALCK

A STUDY IN FINISHING SILK

One day, Gatsby's maid was on vacation. Daisy wanted him to wear a stunning gold and navy bow tie to his party that night, but drat, the darn thing had a spot on it. So he washed it, and a strange thing happened. The gold turned a silvery green and the blue stayed blue, but lightened. Daisy saw what he had done, liked those colors better, and washed her evening bag to match.

That's not what really happened . . .

I have wanted to weave a set of his and hers evening accessories for a long time. I love working with silk, and Halcyon's Gemstone line was perfect for this project. It is easy to weave, and the resultant fabric has a wonderful hand. By turning a 4-shaft draft, I was able to make the warp narrower and thus make the project more economical.


When it came time to finish my fabric, I read the care instructions on Halcyon's website. I was cautioned to dry-clean, steam, or wet-finish in cool, clear water in order to prevent strong colors from running. Ever curious, however, I decided to wash the cloth, just to see what would happen. The gold turned a silvery green, and the blue lightened a bit. The pattern really stood out, and the colors became more subtle and took on a vintage look that I found even nicer than the original.

There is room to sample on this warp, so you, too, could cut some sample swatches and play around with finishing. See what happens!

RESOURCES

- Davison, Marguerite. *A Handweaver's Pattern Book*, Swarthmore, Pennsylvania: Marguerite P. Davison, 1944. "Rose Path Project #1," p. 17.
- Fry, Laura. *Magic in the Water: Wet Finishing Handwovens*. Prince George, British Columbia: Laura Fry, 2002. www.laurafry.com





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Little Luxuries: Silk Bag and Sachets

TIEN CHIU

One of the delightful things about silk is its strength, which makes it suitable as warp even when the yarn is very thin. Because it is reeled or spun from filaments almost as fine as a spider's web, silk is available in finer yarns than almost any other natural fiber. I love to weave almost exclusively with fine silk warps because they are strong, lustrous, and easier to work with than other fibers at such fine weights, but I know many weavers are unaccustomed to weaving at setts greater than 30 ends per inch. And many of us are hesitant to try weaving with fine silk thread because of its cost.

If that's your situation, start with narrower pieces, such as the purse and sachets in this article and work your way up to wider ones.

You'll quickly find that threading a fine-thread warp is just like threading a warp of thicker threads; it just takes longer! And while it also takes more time to weave off, that just means you get more weaving entertainment for your money. Projects in fine threads usually take only a few ounces of thread, so even though silk is expensive, projects using fine silk thread often cost less than ones made with heavier threads.

This project is designed to give you the pleasure and experience of working with fine silk thread and to give you plenty of little luxuries at a very reasonable cost. I hope that once you try it you'll be as hooked on fine silk as I am.



1 Wind a warp of 500 ends $2\frac{1}{2}$ yd long. It is best to warp fine threads back to front with 2 crosses, making a 1x1 cross in the threading cross. Centering for a 10" weaving width, spread the warp in a raddle and beam through the raddle only, using sticks or smooth paper to separate the layers as you beam and maintaining an even tension on the warp. Insert lease sticks into the threading cross and suspend the warp behind the heddles. Thread following the threading in Figure 1 for the 8-shaft patterns or Figure 2 for the 4-shaft pattern. Sley the warp 5/dent in a 10-dent reed for 50 epi. (If you are weaving the 8-shaft pattern, tie up the treadles for the huck diamonds pattern first.)

2 Wind a bobbin of orange rayon embroidery thread for the bag and weave about 22", following the treadling in Figure 1a for the 8-shaft draft or Figure 2a for the 4-shaft draft. For each sachet, wind a bobbin of one of the seven other weft colors. For the 8-shaft patterns, repeat the diamond pattern in 1a for 4" each with four of the weft colors, then re-tie the treadles as shown in Figure 1b and weave that treadling sequence for 4" with each of the

STRUCTURE

Huck lace.

EQUIPMENT

8-shaft or 4-shaft loom, 10" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 1 shuttle, 6 bobbins.

YARNS

Warp: 60/2 spun silk (15,000 yd/lb; RedFish Dye-Works), lemon yellow Y4A, 1,250 yd.

Weft: 40/2 rayon machine embroidery thread (16,800 yd/lb). For bag fabric and 1 sachet, Gütermann #1770 orange, 400 yd. For sachets: Sulky #1192 fuchsia, #1231 medium rose, #1147 red, and #1051 green, 62 yd each; Madeira #1296 deep turquoise, 62 yd; and Gütermann #6655 blue, 62 yd.

OTHER SUPPLIES

Sewing machine and matching sewing thread. McCall's pattern 5722, View C for bag; lining fabric, zipper, and buttons or beads as specified by pattern. For each sachet, 18" of $\frac{1}{4}$ " ribbon, and lavender buds to fill sachet bag.

WARP LENGTH

500 ends $2\frac{1}{2}$ yd long (allows 4" for take-up, 36" for loom waste).

SETTS

Warp: 50 epi (5/dent in a 10-dent reed).

Weft: 50 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 10".
Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 50" (22" for bag, 4" for each of 7 sachets).
Finished size after washing: bag fabric $9\frac{1}{4}$ " \times 19"; fabric for each sachet, $9\frac{1}{4}$ " \times $3\frac{3}{4}$ ".



1. 8-shaft huck draft

10x										1a. Huck Diamonds									
										8	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	6	6
										6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	4	4
										4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	2
										2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

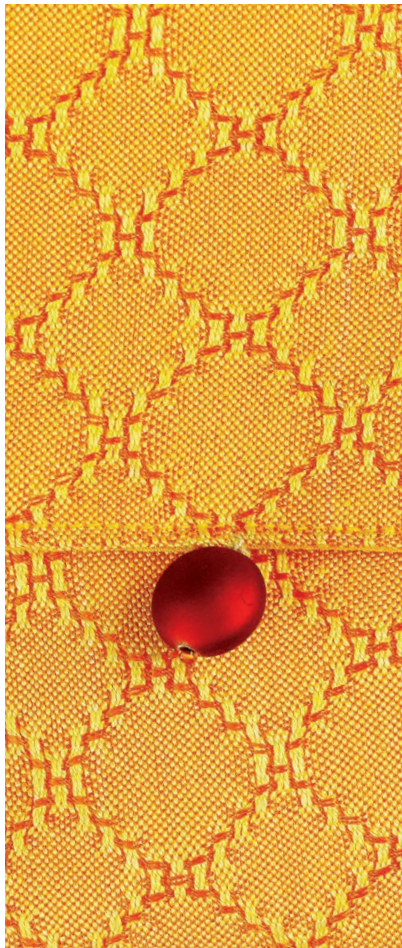
10x										1b. Huck Stripes									
										8	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	6	6
										6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	4	4
										4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	2
										2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
										1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Weave Plan:

For the bag, repeat the Huck Diamonds treading 22x, using orange rayon embroidery thread (Gütermann #1770).

For sachets in the Huck Diamonds pattern, weave the treading 4x for each sachet, using 4 colors of rayon embroidery thread, one for each sachet.

For sachets in the Huck Stripe pattern, re-tie the treadles to the tie-up shown in Treading 1b and weave 1 complete treading sequence for each sachet, using each of the other 3 weft colors for one sachet.




three remaining weft colors. For sachets on the 4-shaft threading, follow treading 2b for all seven sachets, weaving 4" with each of the seven colors. (By changing weft colors between the bag fabric and each sachet, you will be able to tell where to cut the fabric apart.)

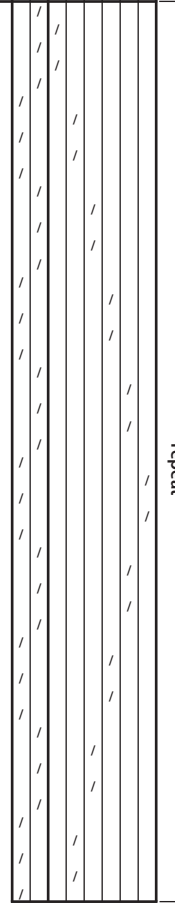
3 Cut the fabric from the loom and secure the raw edges with narrow machine zig-zagging. Handwash in warm water with Dawn dishwashing detergent or another mild soap. Rinse and roll in a towel to extract most of the water, and hard-press with the iron on a silk setting until dry.

4 Assemble the bag following the instructions for McCall's 5722, view C.

5 For the sachets, cut strips of fabric about 3½" long, to make rectangles 9¼" wide by 3½" long. Center around one of the huck lace stripes to cut the striped pattern and include 4 diamonds in the huck diamond pattern. Secure all cut edges with machine zig-zagging.

6 Fold each strip in half so that the two selvages are at the top of the bag. (This step is "wrong" side out, so decide which side you want for the right side when you fold it.) Stitch up the sides (with the zigzagged edges) using a ½" seam allowance. Press seam allowances to the right side of the seam, and turn bag inside out. At the top of the bag, turn the selvages inside about ½" and stitch about ⅜" from the folded edge to form a little channel for the ribbon closure.

7 Using a seam ripper, pick out a little bit of one of the side seams just above the stitched channel and open up the seam above the stitching. Using a safety pin attached to the end of an 18" length of ribbon, thread the ribbon through the channel. Fill the sachet with lavender buds, pull the ribbon tight, and tie the ends in a bow. 



repeat

2. 4-shaft huck draft

50x										2a. Bag treading									
										4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	2
										2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
										1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

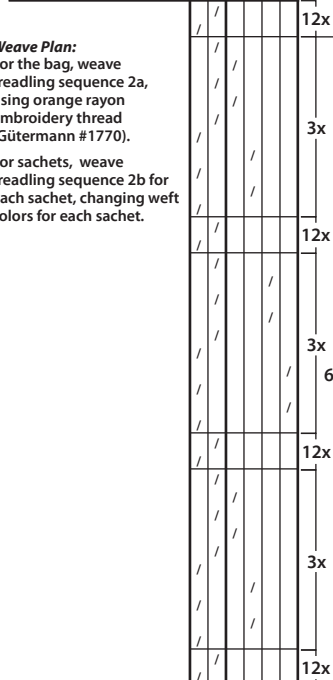
Weave Plan:

For the bag, weave treading sequence 2a, using orange rayon embroidery thread (Gütermann #1770).

For sachets, weave treading sequence 2b for each sachet, changing weft colors for each sachet.

2b. Sachet treading

10x										10x									
										4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	2
										2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
										1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1



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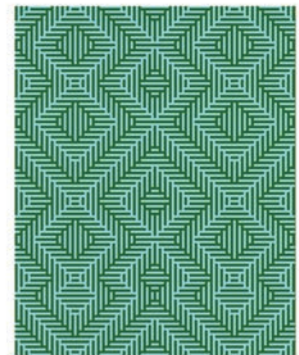
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Masa's Spring Green: A Kumihimo Neckpiece

ROSALIE NEILSON

In 1980, I took a textile tour of the Orient with Russell Groff. (Russ was a weaver, publisher, and cofounder of the Robin and Russ yarn store.) Our tour started in Japan . . . and that's where I learned about kumihimo. Our first stop was a Tokyo kimono academy for a demonstration of kumihimo braiding on the marudai and the kakudai. That afternoon, while other weavers toured the Ginza shopping area, I asked a private tutor to teach me how to braid on both stands.

Returning to Oregon, I began studies in the Japanese tea ceremony and also had the opportunity to teach several workshops in kumihimo. One student, Masa, a Japanese gardener, always chose silk in his favorite color, a fluorescent spring green. I continued to study braid structure, but my main interest turned to color and design. Designs in kumihimo braids are determined by the initial placement of the multicolored elements before the braiding commences,

and I was curious how many different designs are possible in a particular braid structure.

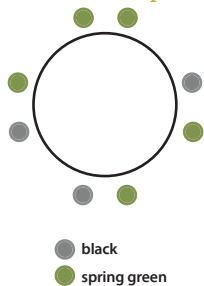
This project is a neckpiece formed by interlinking two cords. Each cord has an 8-element loop at one end and a 16-element braid at the other.

RESOURCES

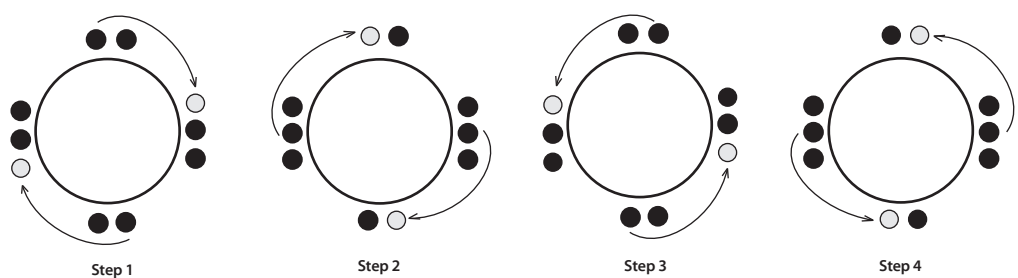
- Berlin, Shirley and Goodwin, Carol. *Sixty Sensational Samples: A Kumihimo Collection*. Seattle: Shirley Berlin, 1994.
- Carey, Jacqui. *Creative Kumihimo*. Somerset, England: Carey Company, 1994.
- Neilson, Rosalie. *The Twenty-Four Interlacings of Edo Yatsu Gumi*. Milwaukie, Oregon: Orion's Plumage, 2011.
- _____. *Kongō Gumi: A Cacophony of Spots – Coils – Zags – Lines*. Milwaukie, Oregon: Orion's Plumage, 2013.
- Owen, Rodrick. *Braids: 250 Patterns from Japan, Peru & Beyond*. Berkeley: Lacis, 2004.



1. 8-strand setup

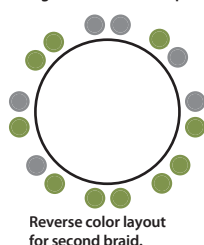


2. 8-strand braiding step by- tep

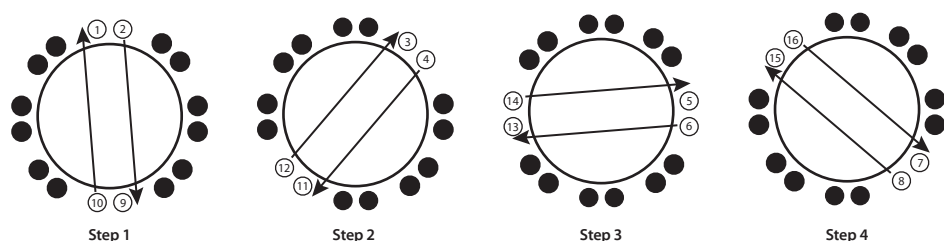


3. 16-strand set up

Fig 3 - 16-strand set-up



4. 16-strand braiding step by step





STRUCTURE

8- and 16-element kumihimo braids.

EQUIPMENT

Marudai; 16 tama or spools; weight bag; S-hook for securing weight bag to loop; chopstick; extra string (5/2 doubled or 3/2 cotton) for string loops and cinch knots to keep braid from raveling.

YARNS

Fine silk, S11 spring green and S23 black, one package each (4 elements/package, www.braidershand.com).

ELEMENT LENGTHS

Cut each element in half, making lengths of 55".

DIMENSIONS

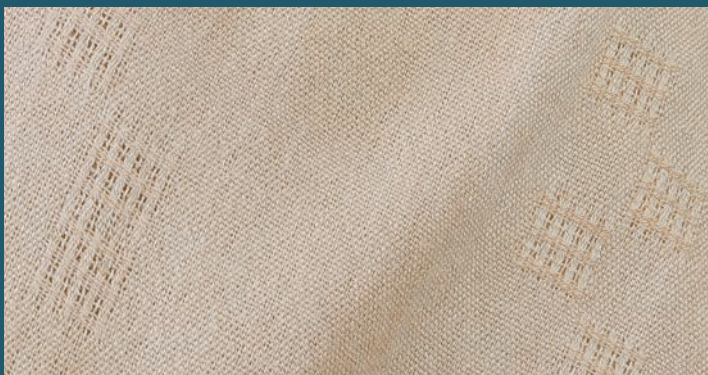
Each 8-element braid made with the 25" will be 16" long; when folded in half, it is 8". The 16-element braid made with elements 15" long will be 6"-7" long. Overall length is 22"-23".



Go to weavingtoday.com to download detailed braiding and finishing instructions for this project.

SIMPLE ELEGANCE

Caressed by light, caressing the skin, silk imbues the simplest cloth with elegance. It is a precious gift from nature to us.



An Elizabethan Sonnet in a Shawl

RAMONA ABERNATHY-PAINE

Over years of study, I've found that plain weave is most often the basis of very lightweight fabrics, and this isn't surprising if you think about it. Plain weave has the maximum number of interlacements a cloth can have, so it allows us to weave stable cloth with the least amount of fiber: the finest threads, the widest setts, and the fewest picks per inch. The less fiber in a cloth, the lighter it is. Lace weaves are a natural choice for weaving these ethereal fabrics—a stable base of plain weave embellished with airy blocks of lace.

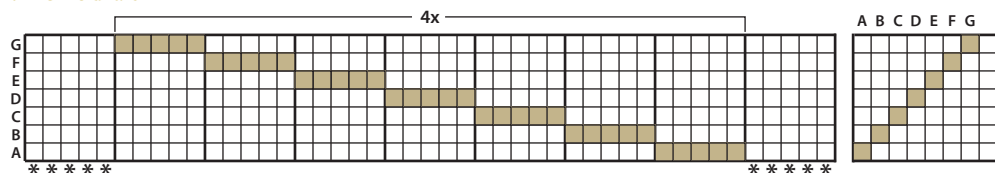
My love of fine threads and fine fabrics draws me to silk yarns, and my love of color draws me to the vendor's description of muga silk as "golden," the natural color of the cocoons that are gathered after the moths have emerged. Variations in the cocoons are evident in the yarn, too, adding subtle color variations to the organic feel of the woven cloth.

The design of this shawl began with a comment from one of my weaving students. I was teaching a group to use profile drafts and blocks. We'd been talking about arranging blocks in repetitive sequences like ABABA and CDDC. One of my students, Wyatt Nocera, commented, "Sounds like a poetry rhyme scheme." That comment carried me back to high school English class where my wonderful teacher, Barbara Hughes, introduced us to Shakespeare's sonnets. We learned the rhyme schemes for several types of sonnets, and the Elizabethan scheme is still with me: ABAB, CDCD, EFEF, GG. Atwater-Bronson lace can produce lots of blocks on relatively few shafts. My 10-shaft Macomber loom easily accommodates the arrangement of seven blocks of Bronson lace based on the Elizabethan rhyme scheme. (If you don't have nine shafts, you can weave a version of this shawl with six blocks on eight shafts, as I did, by leaving off the final G block.) So here's to Shakespeare, observant students, and dedicated teachers everywhere.

1 Wind 900 warp threads 3 yd long. For ease in warping, hold 2 ends together separated by your finger to prevent twisting. (With fine silk threads like this, I prefer to warp back to front with two crosses.) Thread the heddles using the profile draft in Figure 1 and the block draft in Figure 2:



1. Profile draft



Each square in the profile draft represents one unit of Atwater-Bronson lace. Thread or weave one corresponding unit from the block draft in Figure 2 for each square in the profile draft.

* = plain-weave unit (6 threads)

2. Block draft

Unit G	Unit F	Unit E	Unit D	Unit C	Unit B	Unit A	Plain Weave	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
9	9							9						9
	8	8						8						8
		7	7					7				7		
			6	6				6			6			
				5	5			5		5				
					4	4		4		4				
						3	3	3		3				
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

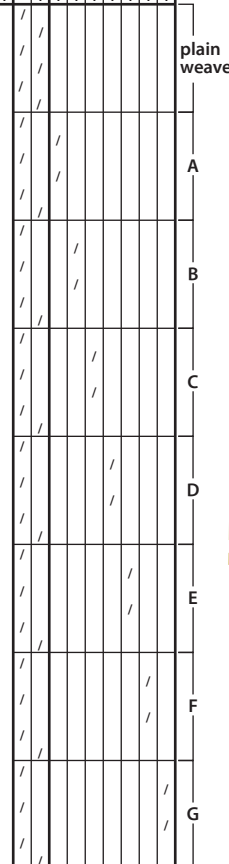
(Note: This tie-up weaves pattern of warp floats on the face in order to lighten the weight of the pattern treadles.)

For each square in the profile threading, thread the corresponding unit of 6 threads from the block draft. (For example, if there are 5 squares on the row labeled A in the profile threading, you would thread 5 repeats of the 6 threads given as Unit A in the block threading.) Note that there are 6 units (30 warp threads) of plain weave on each side for a border.

2 Sley 2/dent in a 15-dent reed, for a total of 30 epi, centering for a weaving width of 30". (Note that there are no floating selvages.) Tie up the treadles as in Figure 2. (The pattern will weave with warp floats facing up. The tie-up is given this way in order to lighten the pattern treadles. Because one of the plain-weave treadles raises 8 shafts, you might consider rearranging the treadles so that the heavy treadle is close to your dominant leg.) Spread the warp with waste yarn, allowing 16" for fringe, including the amount used for tying on.

3 Wind a bobbin of the Golden Muga silk for weft. Weave 3 picks of plain weave, leaving a tail 3 times the width of the warp on your preferred side for hemstitching. Next, hemstitch across the width of the warp, stitching around 6 warp threads and taking the thread below the 3 picks just thrown to create decorative openings just above the fringe.

4 Weave the body of the shawl, following the profile treadling and weaving one treadling unit of the block for each square in the profile treadling. Note that you weave five 6-thread units of plain weave (30 picks in all) as a border at the beginning and end of the shawl.



5 To end the shawl, insert a piece of slippery yarn as a spacer, and weave 3 more picks of plain weave. Cut the weft, leaving a tail 3 times the width of the warp, and hemstitch as at the beginning. Remove the spacer.

6 Cut the shawl from the loom, leaving 16" at the end for fringe. Prepare a twisted fringe, using two 6-thread groups for each fringe. Knot the fringe 1" above the desired finished length. After all fringes are twisted, use a rotary cutter or scissors to trim the fringe to an even length.

7 Handwash in cool water with mild dishwashing liquid. Rinse and squeeze out water, but do not wring. Roll in a large towel to absorb excess water, then hang to dry. Press with a dry iron on the silk setting.

STRUCTURE

Atwater-Bronson lace.

EQUIPMENT

10-shaft loom (9 shafts used), 30" weaving width; 15-dent reed; 1 shuttle.

YARNS

Warp: 30/2 spun silk (7,350 yd/lb; Golden Muga, Georgia Yarn Company, www.handweaver.us), natural, 2,700 yd.

Weft: 30/2 spun silk, natural, 1,595 yd.

WARP LENGTH

900 ends 3 yd long (allows 3" for take-up, 45" for loom waste; loom waste includes allowance for fringe).

SETTS

Warp: 30 epi (2/dent in a 15-dent reed).

Weft: 29 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 30".

Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 60".

Finished size after washing: 27" x 55½" plus 8" plied fringe at each end.

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Subtle Shades of Silk Top

SARAH H. JACKSON

The study of color in weave structure is endlessly intriguing. As I wove a series of plain-weave color gamps last summer, I marveled at the magic that happened when one color of weft crossed several colors in the warp. Some of the combinations were muted and soft, some were striking and bold.

Inspired by those gamps, I designed the fabric for this vest using plain weave—one color in the warp and three related colors in the weft. In this combination, the warp color becomes the unifying element for each subtly shaded section of the top. Separately, each color is unremarkable, but . . . woven together, they tell another story. Each color impacts the others, adding a depth of shade and richness that none can achieve on their own.

1 Wind 756 warp threads $4\frac{1}{2}$ yd long. For ease in warping, hold 2 ends together separated by your fingers to prevent twisting. Measure 2 floating selvages and set them aside. Use your preferred method to warp the loom following the draft in Figure 1. Note that the ends are sleyed 2-2-3/dent in a 12-dent reed for a total of 28 epi. Sley the floating selvages and weight them over the back beam.

2 Wind three bobbins of your three weft colors.

3 Weave 32" with light blue weft. Weave 2 picks of scrap yarn. Weave 66" alternating lavender and light blue; weave 2 picks of scrap yarn. Weave 34" of dark blue.

4 Remove the fabric from the loom. Machine zigzag both raw edges and on both sides of the scrap yarn dividers. Machine wash with mild soap in warm water on the delicate cycle. Machine dry on low heat with a terry-cloth towel until barely dry. Press with a warm iron.

5 Sarah recommends that you always make a muslin from your pattern to check fit before cutting handwoven fabric. Cut between the picks of scrap yarn. Cut the right front from the light blue fabric. Cut the left front and back from the light blue/lavender fabric, cutting the back as follows: Pin the pattern right side up and cut around all edges except the center back. Flip the pattern, folding along the center back and pin. Cut the remaining edges. Zigzag all cut edges and press with a warm iron.

6 Before cutting the collar, add a $\frac{1}{2}$ " seam allowance to the center back. Cut two pieces from the dark blue fabric; sew the seam. Cut the armhole binding from the dark blue fabric.

7 Assemble the top according to the pattern instructions. 

STRUCTURE

Plain weave.

EQUIPMENT

2- or 4-shaft loom, $27\frac{1}{8}$ " weaving width; 12-dent reed; 3 shuttles.

YARNS

Warp: Gemstone 2/30 silk (7,500 yd/lb; Halcyon Yarn), #115 green, 3,412 yd.

Weft: Gemstone 2/30 silk, #107 light blue, 1,512 yd; #117 lavender, 768 yd; #105 dark blue, 792 yd.

OTHER SUPPLIES

The Sewing Workshop Collection (www.sewingworkshop.com), Mimosa Top pattern; notions per pattern instructions.

WARP LENGTH

758 ends $4\frac{1}{2}$ yd long (includes 2 floating selvages; allows 3" for take-up, 27" for loom waste).

SETTS

Warp: 28 epi (2-2-3/dent in a 12-dent reed).

Weft: 28 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: $27\frac{1}{8}$ ".
Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): light blue, 32"; lavender and light blue, 66"; dark blue, 34".

Finished size after washing: light blue, 28"; lavender and light blue, 59½"; dark blue, 31".

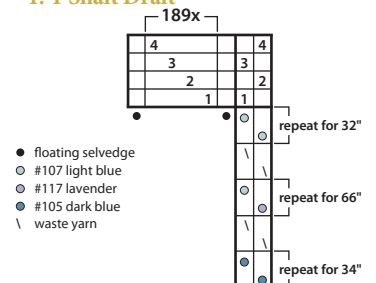


TIP

Project Notes

- Pay close attention to the number of picks per inch as you weave this cloth. Being off by more than a pick or two will affect the finished cloth.
- Pad the cloth beam for the first couple of turns to avoid distorting the fabric as it winds on the beam.

1. 4-Shaft Draft





A Woven Wonder

KIRAN BADOLA


Spaced warps have fascinated me ever since I studied them during my weaving classes at the National Institute of Fashion Technology in India. The thick-and-thin textured stripes excited me. So here I am again designing the same structure using Eri silk yarn. Eri silk is a fine-spun silk that comes in two beautiful natural colors, cream and pale reddish beige. The silkworms that produce it are found in the Indian state of Assam. The moths are allowed to emerge before the cocoons are processed, so Eri is thought to be a green or “peace” silk. The yarn I use has been put through a process called gassing. This process burns the tiny stray fibers off the yarn, so the silk has a wonderfully lustrous, smooth finish.

Eri silk yarn inspired the scarves I designed and wove for Mountain Handicrafts. Because Eri silk can be difficult to find outside India, a similar-sized bombyx silk has been substituted in the instructions. The scarves are unisex and can be worn as a casual accessory or for a formal event. Because of the wonderful properties of the silk yarn, the scarves are light, warm, breathable, and soft, making them special gifts for any recipient.

RESOURCES

Badola, Kiran, and Richard S. Peigler. *Eri Silk Cocoon to Cloth*. North Canton, Ohio; Badola and Peigler, 2013.

Hoskins, Nancy Arthur. “Why Not Knot?” *Weaving Today*, August 28, 2013. Instructions for the knotted hemstitch. www.weavingtoday.com/blogs/weaving-today/archive/2013/08/28/why-not-knot.aspx

- 1 Wind 840 warp threads of the natural-colored silk 4½ yd long for two scarves. Use your preferred method to warp the loom and thread following the draft in Figure 1. Sley 4/dent in a 20-dent reed, skipping 1 dent after every 12 ends as shown in the threading, and centering for a weaving width of 13⅞". Do not use floating selvages.
- 2 Wind a bobbin with the white bombyx silk.
- 3 Leave a length of weft 3 times the width of the warp and use Nancy Arthur Hoskins's knotted hemstitch (see Resources) around groups of 12 warp threads. Draw up each knot tightly around each group of threads to make the decorative opening between the knots (you may need to slightly loosen the tension on your warp). Weave 62" for the first scarf according to the treadling in Figure 1, ending with the knotted hemstitch as at the beginning. Leave 4" unwoven warp for fringe between the two scarves and weave the second scarf.
- 4 Remove fabric from the loom. Cut the scarves apart, making sure that each scarf has at least 2" of fringe.
- 5 Gently handwash using a mild detergent and hang to dry. 

1. Draft

6x				66x 3x				6x			
4		4		4		4		4		4	
3		3		3		3		3		3	
2		2		2		2		2		2	
1		1		1		1		1		1	
4/dent				4/dent				4/dent			
empty dent				empty dent				repeat			

STRUCTURE

Plain weave.

EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 14" weaving width; 20-dent reed; 1 shuttle.

YARNS

Warp: 60/2 spun silk (15,000 yd/lb, Georgia Yarn Company, www.handweaver.us), natural, 3,780 yd.

Weft: 60/2 spun silk, white, 1,788 yd.

WARP LENGTH

840 ends 4½ yd long (allows 6" for take-up and 32" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe).

SETTS

Warp: 60 epi (4/dent in a 20-dent reed threaded in stripes of 12 threads separated by 1 empty dent).

Weft: 34 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 13⅞".
Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 124" (2 scarves, 62" each).

Finished size after washing: 2 scarves 13" × 61" plus 2" fringe at either end.



IDEA GALLERY

Working with Fine Threads

TIEN CHIU AND BETH ROSS JOHNSON

Deterred by visions of tangled warps and myriad broken threads, many weavers shy away from working with fine threads. But weaving with fine yarn gives us the opportunity to make lighter cloth, to have more pattern definition, and to expand our weaving skills and repertoire. Here, two fine-thread enthusiasts share some of their secrets for problem-free fine weaving.

TIPS FOR WARPING AND WEAVING WITH FINE THREADS

TIEN CHIU

I find working with fine threads rewarding because I love intricate patterns and lightweight fabrics. Because fine threads can be spaced more closely than thicker ones, I can create drafts with long repeats and still get a tiny, delicate pattern. Fine threads are also more suitable for indoor clothing; thicker threads produce heavy fabrics suitable for outerwear, but fine threads weave up into beautiful blouses, dresses, and other lightweight clothing.

Fine threads do pose a few challenges. Some people feel intimidated by the larger number of warp ends to thread, and fine warps also require special handling to avoid problems when weaving. Even tension is a must, and it's important to keep the threads from tangling as they are wound and beamed on. Here are some techniques I've found helpful in working with fine threads.

- **Beam back to front if possible.** Back-to-front warping is easier on fine threads because in winding the warp onto the warp beam, the threads pass through the wide spaces in a raddle, which causes less wear and tear than passing through both the reed and the heddles as they do in front-to-back warping. You can also use a trapeze when warping back to front, which speeds up the process immensely. (Read about how to build

and use a trapeze in Kati Meek's book, *Warp With a Trapeze and Dance With Your Loom*, listed under Resources).

- **Use a paddle to wind from multiple cones.** Winding a fine-thread warp can feel like it takes forever, but winding from multiple cones speeds up the process immensely. I usually wind from three or four cones at once. A paddle can help you make a 1×1 cross quickly and easily when winding multiple threads at one time. Peggy Osterkamp (see Resources) has instructions for using a paddle

on her website.

- **Keep the warp under tension at all times** to help prevent tangling. Instead of chaining your warp, use kite sticks to keep the bouts under control. Peggy Osterkamp has instructions for using kite sticks on her website and in her excellent book, *Weaving for Beginners*.
- **Use a 1×1 cross to make it easy to separate the threads.** Separating fine threads can be difficult, especially if you have stubby fingers like mine! If you wind the warp with a 1×1 cross, at threading time, you can alternately



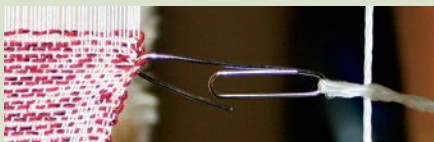
Lights mounted underneath the castle of Tien's loom.



Extra light helps avoid threading mistakes. PHOTOS BY TIEN CHIU

tug to the right on the group of threads that come over the bottom lease stick, then tug to the right on the threads behind the bottom lease stick to help separate the next threads.

- **Use good lighting.** The brighter the light on the threads, the easier it is to see individual threads. I have LED strip lights glued to the underside of my loom's castle to give the best possible light, but a lamp clamped to the loom works well, too.
- **Use a temple.** I use inexpensive paper-clip temples consisting of a weight attached to a piece of string, with a paper clip at the other end of the string to attach it to the selvage. I use two paper-clipped weights as a temple, bending the outer wire of the paper clip out slightly and then pushing it through the selvage edge very close to the fell. The string passes over the bars at the side of the loom, pulling the edges straight out. More detailed instructions for making and using a paper-clip temple are available on the Woolgatherers' website (see Resources).



A paper-clip temple. PHOTO BY TIEN CHIU

RESOURCES

- Meek, Kati Reeder. *Warp with a Trapeze and Dance with Your Loom*. Alpena, Michigan: Penannular Press International, 2010. <http://katimeek.blogspot.com/p/warp-with-trapeze-and-dance-with-your.html>
- Osterkamp, Peggy. *Weaving for Beginners: An Illustrated Guide*. Sausalito, California: Lease Sticks Press, 2010, pp. 25-27. (Directions for using kite sticks.) Also, <http://peggyosterkamp.com/peggys-weaving-tips-kitestick-chain-ing-warps/>
- _____. "Why use a paddle?" <http://peggyosterkamp.com/why-use-a-paddle/>
- "Simple Temple to Make." The Woolgatherers. <http://www.woolgatherers.com/id105.htm>

REINING IN FINE THREADS

BETH ROSS JOHNSON

Fine threads will cooperate with you but sometimes need a little more encouragement to behave. Single-ply threads might have more twist in them and be more fragile. The smaller scale might make them more difficult to keep track of and more prone to wander into the wrong heddle. Above all, we want to keep them from getting tangled. Here are a few tricks from the Japanese tradition to keep them lined up and happy.



Skeins suspended in a dyebath. PHOTOS BY BETH JOHNSON



Squeezing indigo dye out of the chain.

DYEING WITHOUT TANGLES

Throwing skeins of fine yarn, smooth or textured, into a dyepot, then stirring them around while dyeing and rinsing can create tangles, snags, and breakage. To prevent this, keep your skeins organized in the dyepot by placing a smooth dye rod across the lip of the dyebath and hanging them over it. Use a second rod to rotate the skeins around the first about as often as you would stir if the skein were immersed in the dye bath. Also, periodically flip your skein from inside to outside. You'll be amazed to see that your yarn will dye evenly without being fully immersed, and this works for indigo, too. To prevent oxidation, just squeeze each skein at the water level as you rotate it around.

If you are using a dye procedure for which the skeins simply must remain immersed, tie a loop of smooth cord long enough to reach just below the water level, put it through the skein loosely, and rotate the skein from where the loop passes through.

After rinsing, wring the skeins out, hold the ends of each one in your hands

or with dowels and snap it a few times to straighten out the threads. Rotate and repeat several times. Dry over a pole or dowel with a large diameter so they don't dry with a crease in the yarn.

AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE WARP CHAIN

Chaining is fine for most warps, but it gives fine threads another opportunity to catch on one another. An alternative is to make a warp ball. Mainly used for fine silk or cotton warps, this also works for wools, but there is a limit to how large you can go with this. A warp ball will sit on the floor obediently while the warp is pulled from its center.

To make a warp ball, take the loop from the end of the warp (the end you will attach to the warp beam) off the warping board. Hold the loop in your right hand and use your left hand to wind the warp into a ball around your hand as it is removed from the frame, then tuck the tail into the ball. Put the ball down and carefully extricate your hand from the center of the ball, pulling



Winding a warp ball.



A finished warp ball, ready for beaming.

the loop out. The warp unwinds from the center as it is beamed.

ROUND LEASE STICKS

Just try them. You'll like them.

GUIDE THREADS

Fine warp threads can be hard to see if they are the same color as your heddles, and they can fall down into the heddles and twist around, especially if they are tightly spun. When threading multishaft looms, threads coming to the front of the loom from different shafts can become disorganized. To keep the warp ends organized and visible, tie a piece of yarn across the front of your first shaft at heddle-eye level. Threads drape over it after they have been pulled through and will not sneak back into the heddle space.

WARP WITH A FRIEND

Lining up the right heddle while pulling the right thread from the cross can be difficult, leading to mistakes, especially when threading very small, curly, almost-invisible threads into a complicated pattern.

We are rugged individuals, but sometimes it is good to have a friend. Two people can thread two looms faster together than they can separately and with fewer mistakes. One person is in

charge of picking a heddle from the correct harness and placing the threading hook through. The second person sits by the lease sticks and pulls the next thread and presents it to the threader, holding it under tension using index finger and thumb. The second person can be a complete ignoramus about weaving

whom you can bribe with money, food, or wine (for later). If you have a weaver friend to help, you have another set of eyes to catch mistakes, and perhaps you can return the favor some time.



A guide thread keeps fine warp threads visible and tidy at the front of the shafts.



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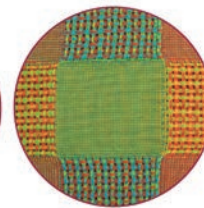


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Traditions

Weaving Weft Ikat in Laos

MARILYN MURPHY

Southeast Asia is well known for its ikat fabrics, ranging from warp and weft to double and compound ikat. Influences from India, Indonesia, China, and Japan are prevalent in this textile-rich region. While visiting the Ock Pop Tok Living Crafts Centre in Luang Prabang, Laos, I learned the basics of weft ikat, a form of weft-resist patterning that can be used to create simple to complex designs. It's a technique practiced by many different Lao ethnic groups throughout the various provinces.

Ikat weaving, or *matmee* as it's called in Laos, means to "tie in a row." Weft ikat is a tie-and-dye technique requiring weft threads to be dyed before weaving. It's generally woven in silk as a weft-faced or weft-dominant weave structure with a solid-color warp, usually dark and thinner than the weft. With more weft threads per square inch than warp, the weft visually dominates the fabric.

Weft ikat is mainly used for shawls or skirts, although skirts are rare as not every weaver is proficient in this art. When used for a tubular skirt, such as a *pa sin*, the fabric may be woven of silk,



Weft ikat cloth made by the Ock Pop Tok weavers.
PHOTO BY JOE COCA

for ceremonies, or out of cotton for everyday use. A *pa sin* consists of three parts: the waistband (*hua sin*), a main body (*puen sin*), and a border (*tiin sin*). Certain details communicate things about the wearer such as marital status, social class, and aptitude as a weaver.

Here's how the weavers at Ock Pop Tok taught me to make weft ikat cloth.

Wrapping the frame: The first step is to wind the silk weft on a wooden frame

designed for ikat wefts. The size of the frame is the same as the width of the warp for weaving. Every weft motif is formed by the layering of row upon row; the row is called a *louk*. The wrapped silk is a continuous yarn.

Tying the pattern: Next, each pattern section is tied off with a dye-resistant material, such as plastic, forming a resist where dye can't penetrate. In former times, the Lao weavers



Winding weft on a frame.
PHOTO BY MARILYN MURPHY



A tied weft, ready for ikat dyeing.
PHOTO BY MARILYN MURPHY



Ikat-dyed weft. PHOTO BY MARILYN MURPHY

used a resist made from the jungle banana tree to tie the pattern. To make the resist, they would cut the trunk of the jungle banana tree and leave it to dry for one day. Then, the innermost part of the trunk, which is very sticky, would be peeled, dried, and sliced into string.

Dyeing the silk: After the resist has been tied, the silk is released from the frame and placed in a pot with water and alum, a mordant used for natural dyeing. After mordanting, the skein goes into its first dyebath. Depending

on the number of colors to the pattern, the silk may be dyed and dried, have resist removed, then be re-wrapped, and dyed again. Or dye may be painted into various parts to create the pattern.

Preparing the silk bobbins: Once the weft silk is totally dried, it is wound from a yarn swift onto spools for weaving. Since the yarn is one continuous thread, it is imperative that the pattern is kept in order. If the order is lost, it is impossible to weave the pattern. The weaver achieves this by threading

the spools onto string.

Weaving the cloth: Now the weaving can commence. During weaving, it is critical to position the weft yarn precisely in relation to the preceding weft shot and to all others that follow. Any unplanned shifting will alter the design. If you look closely at Lao ikat, you may notice small loops at the selvedge where the weaver shifted weft threads to create the design.

2- OR 4-SHAFT

Project

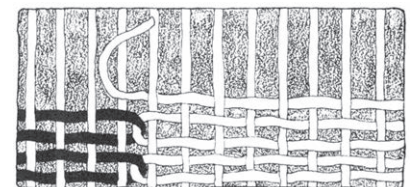
A RIFF ON WEFT IKAT: Clasped-Weft Scarf

MARILYN MURPHY

In Laos, there is a tradition of weft ikat weaving using silk yarn. The artisans at the Ock Pop Tok weaving cooperative in Luang Prabang continue to weave weft ikat but have simplified it and modernized the designs. When I visited there a few years ago, I had the good fortune of learning some of the weft ikat techniques, naturally dyeing my two-tone weft, and weaving a very simple silk scarf. Aligning the ikat weft pattern so it produces the

planned design is not easy.

However, just as the Ock Pop Tok artisans were inspired by traditional, intricate Lao weft ikats, their scarves inspired me. How could I obtain a similar effect without going through the process of tying and dyeing my weft? Using two silk colors and a tapestry technique of clasped wefts, I improvised to create the arrowlike design for this silk scarf.




Clasped weft.

RESOURCES

McFarland, Sue. "Clasped Weft Scarf." *Handwoven* Jan/Feb 1995, pp. 31, 85–86.

- 1 Wind a warp of 200 ends 2¾ yd long. Use your preferred method to warp the loom as shown in Figure 1 (a straight-draw threading). Sley 2/dent in a 10-dent reed, centering for a weaving width of 10".
- 2 Weave with scrap yarn for about 2", leaving at least 6" for fringe before starting the weaving.
- 3 Wind a bobbin with each of the 2 weft colors, and weave ½" header with the navy blue weft.
- 4 Using a contrasting sewing thread, insert 10 thread markers as follows (see Figure 2): Starting 2" from the left selvedge, insert a 3 yd length of the sewing thread through a dent and its corresponding heddle. (The design markers show you where the clasped wefts will occur.) Pin the thread markers into the heading of your cloth, then weight the marker off the back of the loom. Add more markers every ½" across the width of the cloth, leaving 2" in the center without markers and ending 2" from the right selvedge.
- 5 Using both weft colors, weave the clasped-weft pattern as follows: Insert wefts from opposite edges to the joining point indicated in Figure 2 using the marker threads as a guide. Clasp the wefts around each other, then bring

the shuttles up through the warp and set on top of the cloth. Change sheds and beat. Take shuttles back into the cloth and out to the selvages. Change shed again and beat. Repeat these steps, placing a measuring thread at the selvedge every 5".

- 6 After weaving the first 5", release the design thread markers from the pins. At the back of the loom, gently pull the markers forward through the first few inches of weaving but do not remove them. Keep the threads weighted off the back, pulling them out of the weaving every few inches. The woven fabric will hold them in place without repinning.
- 7 Continue following the diagram until scarf measures 60½" under tension, ending the pattern at the same point as the beginning.
- 8 Using the navy weft, weave a ½" heading. Remove marker threads. Weave in filler for about 2". Remove cloth from the loom, leaving at least 6" of warp for fringe.
- 9 Steam the scarf to soften the silk and remove any small bumps from the clasped-weft areas. For future, dry cleaning is recommended. (If you wish to handwash your scarf, first test a piece of the yarn for any color bleeding. Marilyn's navy weft did bleed.)
- 10 Remove the waste yarn and make a 3" twisted fringe using 5 ends per bundle. Trim ends. 

STRUCTURE

Plain weave with clasped wefts.

EQUIPMENT

2 or 4-shaft loom, 10" weaving width; 10-dent reed; 2 shuttles.

YARNS

Warp: 30/2 100% silk (7,500 yd/lb, Gemstone, Halcyon), #107 (light blue), 550 yd.

Weft: 12/2 100% silk (2,800 yd/lb, Gemstone, Halcyon), #104 (beige) and #113 (navy blue), 210 yd each.

OTHER SUPPLIES

Contrasting sewing thread.

WARP LENGTH

200 ends 2¾ yd long (allows 6" for take-up, 32" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe).

SETTS

Warp: 20 epi (sleyed 2/dent in a 10-dent reed).

Weft: 22 ppi.

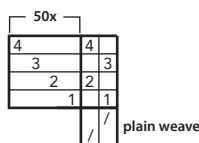
DIMENSIONS

Width in the reed: 10".

Woven length (measured under tension on the loom): 61" (not including waste yarns at each end).

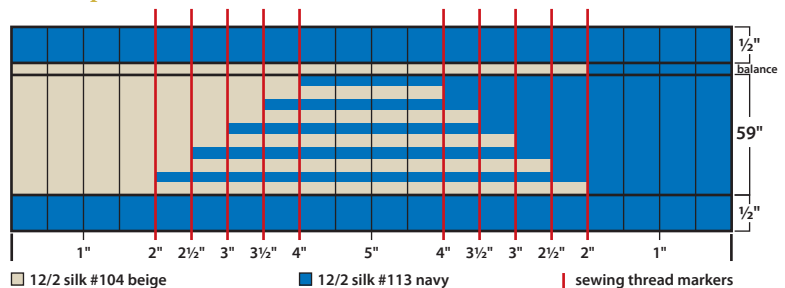
Finished size after washing: 9" × 58" plus 3" fringe at each end.

1. Draft



Note: This project can also be woven on a 2-shaft or rigid-heddle loom. A rigid-heddle weaver will need to use two 10-dent heddles to get the sett of 20 ends per inch.

2. Weave plan



Weave Plan
Weave ½" header in plain weave with navy weft.
Place sewing thread markers through dents and heddles at positions marked in red.
For each clasped weft in the pattern: Insert beige and navy shuttles from opposite sides, bringing them out of the shed at the marker indicated. Clasp the wefts around one another, change shed, and take shuttles back to their respective selvages. Repeat clasped-weft pattern for the desired length, ending with the balance.
Weave ½" header in plain weave with navy weft.

Weave more and fuss less!

Life After Warping: Weaving Well on Your Rigid-Heddle Loom with Liz Gipson



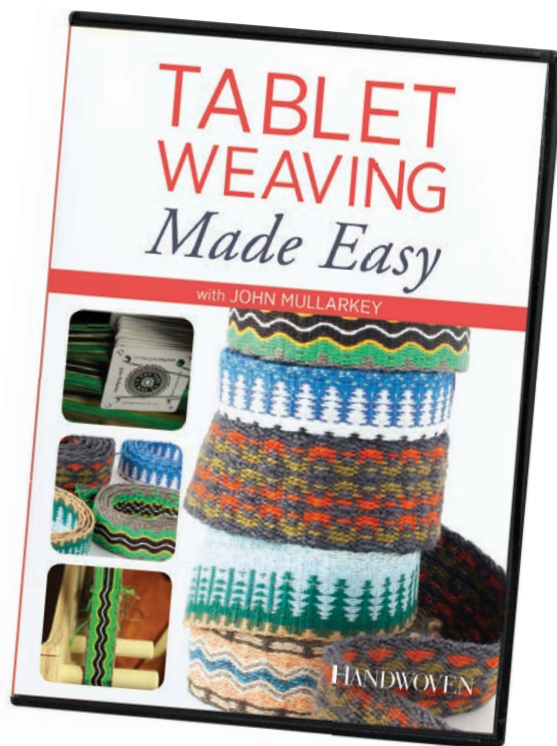
In this weaving workshop, weaver Liz Gipson shows weavers of all skill levels tips and techniques to get the most out of weaving on a rigid-heddle loom. Learn techniques for tidy selvages and color transitions, easy ways to handle broken warp threads or tension problems, finishing techniques, and more. Soon you'll be weaving cloth for every purpose!

Practice your skills with a free woven blanket pattern, included with this workshop.

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This weaving workshop covers the tools and materials needed for tablet weaving, instructions on how to read a tablet-weaving draft, how to warp with cards, techniques for successful tablet weaving, how to fix common mistakes, finishing techniques, and even how to design your own woven bands.

John Mullarkey makes tablet-weaving easy and fun! Join him on this 120-minute workshop to celebrate this ancient art.

This workshop is available on DVD or as a video download at InterweaveStore.com.



Surprising Silks

Cei Lambert

For this Yarn Lab, I was asked to experiment with a selection that represents the wide variety of silk yarns available to weavers. When I think of silk, I tend to think of extremely fine, consistently plied yarns woven at a dense sett. Most of the yarns I sampled, however, defied my notions of silk, and required me to think outside the box. For my samples, I tested undulating twills, straight twills, and how the silk behaved when sett lower than recommended.



Halcyon Gemstone Silk in undulating twill

Gemstone Silk

The Yarn: Halcyon 30/2 Gemstone Silk, 100% silk, laceweight, 250 yd/mini cone or 7,500 yd/lb. I tried the yarn sett at 24 epi, aiming for a lightweight and silky fabric. The sett was not ideal for the yarn, but with gentle coaxing and after washing and blocking, the resultant fabric is lovely, light, and an absolute joy to touch.

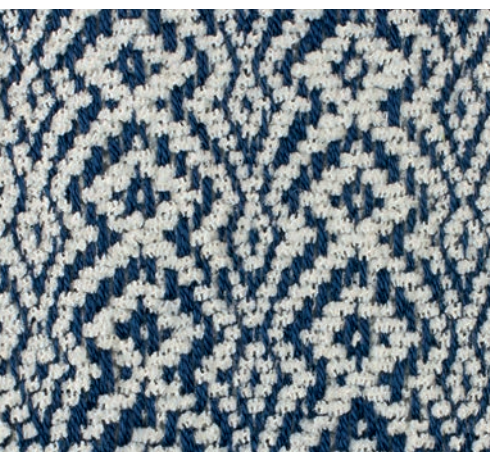
Undulating Twill

For this sample, I quadrupled the silk for the weft using three threads of natural and one of navy to add visual interest. I hope to make scarves out of the same yarn sometime in the future, and if my budget ever allows I would jump at an opportunity to make a throw out of this silk. A suit jacket has also certainly crossed my mind!

Sample Yarns: Halcyon Gemstone Silk (113 and 110)

SETT: 24 epi

DIMENSIONS: *Width on the loom:* 6"; *width off the loom:* 6"; *width after wet-finishing:* 5"; *draw-in and shrinkage:* 17%. *Woven length:* 7"; *length after wet-finishing:* 5"; *take-up and shrinkage:* 29%.



Treenway Silks Kumushi Silk Chenille and Halcyon Gemston Silk in undulating twill

Silk Chenille

The Yarn: Treenway Silks Kumushi Silk Chenille, 95% silk/ 5% synthetic core, approximately 410 yd/skein or 1,700 yd/lb.

The chenille is soft as a cloud but more challenging as warp than I thought it would be. In the end, I decided not to use it as warp in my sampling. I worked all of these samples either on a 4-shaft Schacht Wolf Pup or on four shafts on a Macomber loom with string heddles. In both cases, when I attempted to warp with the chenille, I found that it shed most of its fluff during weaving

Undulating Twill

This yarn works very well as weft and adds both body and softness to a weaving. When washed, it retains the softness of chenille and takes on the trademark silk trait of being strong and sturdy. I'd recommend this yarn for a scarf, as part of the patterning in a throw blanket, or as the weft in a woven bag.

Sample Yarns: Halcyon Gemstone Silk (113) and Treenway Silks Chenille (natural)

SETT: 24 epi

DIMENSIONS: *Width on the loom:* 6"; *width off the loom:* 5.25"; *width after wet-finishing:* 4"; *draw-in and shrinkage:* 34%. *Woven length:* 7"; *length after wet-finishing:* 7"; *take-up and shrinkage:* 0%.

Over-Twisted Silk Crepe

The Yarn: Habu Silk Crepe, 100% silk, fingering weight, 88 yd/cone or 1,408 yd/lb. This is a fantastic yarn to work with. As the description on the Habu website says, the overtwist yields very interesting results when the finished fabric is washed. I used this yarn in sampling for both warp and weft and found it to be easy to wind on, easy to weave with, and a pleurably sturdy yarn overall. This yarn is well suited for any project the weaver has in mind.

Twill

Because of its sturdiness, this yarn could have excellent applications as a woven fabric for a unique jacket or even as an upholstery fabric. Combined with the Gemstone silks from Halcyon as either warp or weft, I think it would make lovely pillow covers or even a unique and soft throw blanket to accent the home.

Sample A Yarns: Halcyon Gemstone Silk (113) and Habu Silk Crepe (green)

SETT: 24 epi

DIMENSIONS: *Width on the loom:* 6"; *width off the loom:* 5.5"; *width after wet-finishing:* 4.25"; *draw-in and shrinkage:* 29%. *Woven length:* 7"; *length after wet-finishing:* 6.5"; *take-up and shrinkage:* 8%.

Sample B Yarns: Halcyon Gemstone Silk (113) and Habu Silk Crepe (green).

SETT: 15 epi

DIMENSIONS: *Width on the loom:* 2"; *width off the loom:* 2"; *width after wet-finishing:* 2"; *draw-in and shrinkage:* 0%. *Woven length:* 3.5"; *length after wet-finishing:* 3.5"; *take-up and shrinkage:* 0%.



Sample A: Habu Silk Crepe and Halcyon Gemstone Silk in undulating twill



Sample B: Habu Silk Crepe and Halcyon Gemstone Silk in straight-draw and switch twill

Recycled Silk

THE YARN: Dharma Recycled Silk from Mango Moon, 100% recycled silk, DK weight, handspun, 150 yd/ skein.

This was by far the most challenging yarn to work with of the yarns that I sampled. The skein is enjoyable to touch and the texture is magnificent, but the variegated gauge of the yarn makes it unsuitable for warp and a bit of an adventure as weft.

Undulating Twill

This yarn is impossible to use as warp, and as weft it is very inconsistent. It is a beautiful yarn, however, and used sparingly in a weaving project, I think the Dharma Recycled Silk would make a great accent yarn. (It would also be fun to use in knitting and crocheting; a loosely knitted scarf in this yarn would have textural interest and be enjoyable to wear against the skin.)

Sample Yarns: Halcyon Gemstone Silk (113) and Mango Moon Dharma (thyme)

SETT: 24 epi

DIMENSIONS: *Width on the loom:* 6"; *width off the loom:* 6"; *width after wet-finishing:* 5"; *draw-in and shrinkage:* 17%. *Woven length:* 7"; *length after wet-finishing:* 6.25"; *take-up and shrinkage:* 11%.



Mango Moon Dharma Recycled Silk and Halcyon Gemstone Silk in undulating twill

PROJECT DIRECTORY

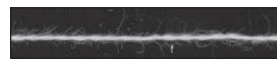
DESIGNER/WEAVER	PROJECT	PAGES	WEAVE STRUCTURE	SHAFTS	LEVEL
Ramona Abernathy-Paine	Elizabethan Sonnet Shawl	54	Atwater-Bronson lace	9	I, A
Kiran Badola	Woven Wonder Scarf	60	Plain weave crammed and spaced	4	AB, I, A
Betsy Blumenthal	Festive Dresser Scarf	32	Plain weave	4	All levels
Tien Chiu	Fine Thread Bags	48	Huck lace	4, 8	AB, I, A
Susan Du Bois and Sandra Hutton	Silk Noil Shawls	38	Doubleweave or turned taqueté	8	I, A
Susan Horton	Ombé Striped Shawl	42	Plain weave	RH, 2, or 4	All levels
Sarah H. Jackson	Subtle Shaded Silk Top	58	Plain weave	2 or 4	All levels
Marilyn Murphy	Clasped Weft Scarf	67	Plain weave with clasped wefts	2 or 4	All levels
Rosalie Neilson	Kumihimo Neckpiece	52	Kumihimo	n/a	All levels
Allen Walck	Bowtie and Purse	44	Twill	6 or 8	AB, I, A
Beverly Weaver	Sari Silk Runner	28	Plain weave	RH, 2, or 4	All level
Susan Wilson	Crackle Scarves	34	Crackle	4	I, A

Levels indicate weaving skills, not sewing skills
 AB = Advanced beginner (some experience reading a draft, warping, and weaving); I = Intermediate; A = Advanced. "All levels" includes very new weavers.

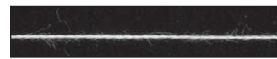
YARNS

This chart gives yards per pound, meters per kilogram, and a range of setts (from wide as for lace weaves, medium as for plain weave, and close as for twills; no setts are given for yarns not suitable to use as warp). For a com-

plete directory of yarns used in *Handwoven*, see the Master Yarn Charts under Resources at weavingtoday.com. Suppliers for yarns used in this issue are listed below. Wholesale suppliers are noted with an *.



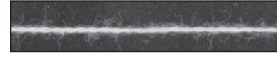
16/2 unmercerized cotton; 6,720 yd/lb (13,560 m/kg); 24, 30, 36



60/2 silk; 15,000 yd/lb (30,028 m/kg); 40, 50, 60



30/2 silk; 7,500 yd/lb (15,088 m/kg); 24, 32, 40



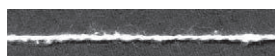
30/2 muga spun silk; 7,350 yd/lb (14,786 m/kg); 24, 30, 40



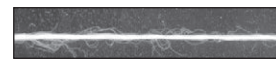
60/2/2 Bombyx Spun Silk; 7,500 yd/lb (15,088 m/kg); 24, 32, 40



20/2 silk; 4,900 yd/lb (9,880 m/kg); 22, 26, 30



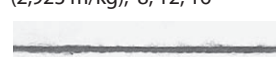
20/2 noil bombyx silk; 4,500 yd/lb (9,020 m/kg); 22, 26, 30



12/2 spun silk; 2,800 yd/lb (5,850 m/kg); 15, 18, 20



Silk bouclé; 1,480 yd/lb (2,923 m/kg); 8, 12, 16



5/2 silk; 1,188 yd/lb (2,390 m/kg); 30, 32, 34



Recycled silk; 270 yd/lb (544 m/kg)



Sari silk ribbon



Machine embroidery thread 2,000 yd/lb (44,400 m/kg)

SUPPLIERS

BraidersHand, (866) 821-4613, (360) 678-4788, www.braidershand.com, braidershand@earthlink.net (Neilson 52–53).

Georgia Yarn Company, 4991 Penfield Road, Union Point, GA 30669, (706) 453-7603, www.handweaver.us/georgia_yarn_company.htm, whpenfield@hotmail.com (Abernathy-Paine 54–56, Badola 60–61).

Halcyon Yarn, 12 School St., Bath, ME 04530, (800) 341-0282, www.halcyonyarn.com (Horton 42–43, Jackson 58–59, Walck 44–46, Murphy 66–68).

RedFish DyeWorks, (800) 916-0353, (661) 269-0010, www.redfishdyeworks.com (Chiu 48–50).

Laura Fry Weaving Studio, www.laurafry.com (Walck 44–46).

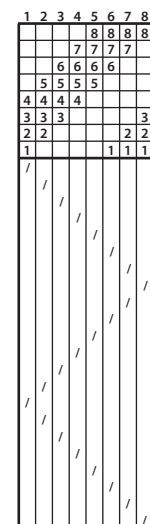
Treenway Silks, 2060 Miller Court, Lakewood, CO 80215-1325, (888) 383-7455, (303) 383-7455, www.treenwaysilks.com (Blumenthal 32–33, Du Bois 38–40, Weaver 28–30, Wilson 34–36).

Yarn Barn of Kansas, 930 Massachusetts, Lawrence, KS 66044, (785) 842-4333, (800) 468-0035, www.yarnbarn-ks.com (Blumenthal 32–33).

CORRECTIONS

In the March/April 2013 issue, there is an error in the treadling of Laura Demuth's Telemark-steppe runner, page 54. At the top of the third column, there should be a block of 2 purple pattern picks between the third and fourth blocks.

In the November/December 2013 issue, there is an error in the treadling of Marilyn Cowgill's twill bag, page 51. The correct treadling is shown at right. Full corrected drafts are available at weavingtoday.com.



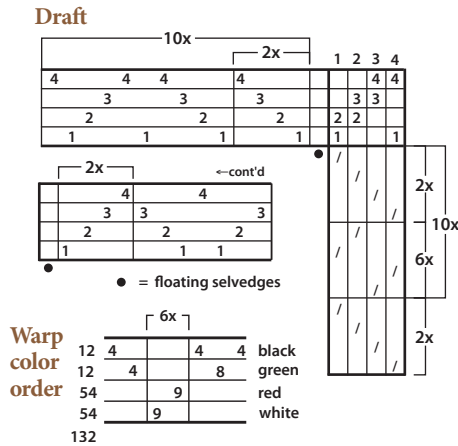
Corrected treadling for Cowgill purse, Nov/Dec 13, p. 51

READING DRAFTS

Some drafts for weaving are very, very long if they are written out thread by thread. To save space, wherever any section of the threading or treadling is repeated, a bracket is placed above it with the number of times to do that section.

For example, in the threading draft shown here, there are two levels of brackets, one marked 2x and one marked 10x. To thread: Start at the right side and thread (after the floating selvedge) 1-2-3-4. Since the 2x is directly above these threads, you will thread that two times. Then continue, 1-2-3-4-1-4-3-2-1-4. You are now at the end of the 10x bracket, so you'll do everything under that bracket (including the 2x section) ten times. When the threading continues to another row, you also read that row from right to left.

Repeats in the treadling and in the warp color order are treated in the same way. Note that the color order chart looks like a threading



WARPING NOTES

To save magazine space for projects and articles, project instructions do not include specific warping steps. If the materials used in a project will work equally well with any warping method, instructions will say to use your preferred warping method. For yarns that are especially fragile, sticky, or overtensed, warping back to front is usually recommended. Instructions for both methods are available at weavingtoday.com (click on Resources).

FINISHING TECHNIQUES

TWISTING (OR PLYING) THE FRINGE

Divide the number of threads for each fringe into two groups. Twist each group clockwise until it kinks. Bring both groups together and allow them to twist around each other counterclockwise (or twist in that direction). Secure the ends with an overhand knot. (Use the same method to make a plied cord by attaching one end to a stationary object.)



group of ends. Pass the needle under the same group, bringing it out through the weaving two (or more) weft threads below the fell. Repeat for each group of ends across the fell. Needle weave the tail into the selvedge and trim.

DOUBLE (ITALIAN) HEMSTITCHING

Weave several picks of plain weave (or the basic structure of the piece), ending with the shuttle on the right side if you are right-handed, the left side if you are left-handed. Measure a length of weft four times the warp width, and thread this tail into a blunt tapestry needle.

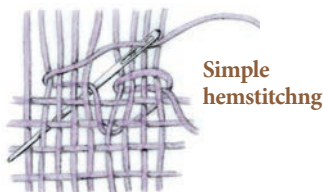
Take the needle under a selected group of warp threads above the fell and bring the needle back to encircle the ends. Next, pass the needle under the same ends but come up two or more weft rows down from the fell. Then bring the needle back around the same group of ends below the fell. Repeat, encircling the next group of ends.

LADDER AND ZIGZAG HEMSTITCHING

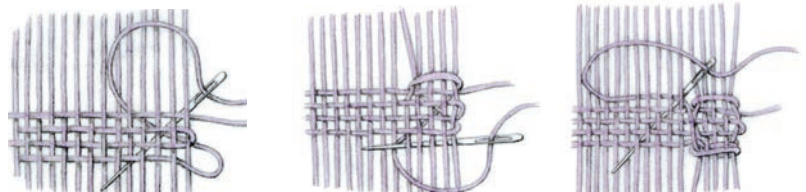
For ladder hemstitching, work a row of simple hemstitching. Insert a spacer of heavy yarn or yarn bundle. Leaving a tail three times the warp width, weave four picks of plain weave. Thread the tail in a needle and hemstitch over two rows above the spacer, encircling the same groups of ends as for the first row.

For zigzag hemstitching, encircle groups of ends in the second row starting at the midpoint of the ends encircled in the previous row to offset the two rows of stitches.

Hemstitching tip: To hemstitch the first end of a piece, weave a header, weave four or five picks of plain weave (or of the basic weave structure used in the piece), and hemstitch over the top two or three weft rows. Weave the piece and then hemstitch the other end over the last two or three weft rows. Remove the fabric from the loom and discard the header and weft threads placed below the first hemstitching.



Double hemstitching



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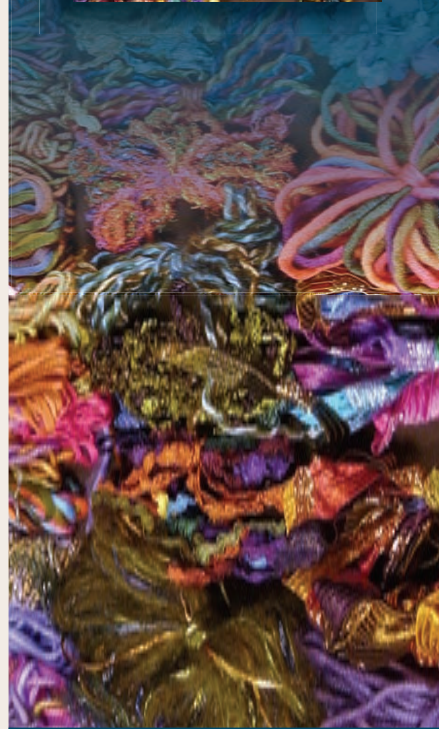
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A Silk Worker's Journey

ANITA OSTERHAUG

Born a Berkeley Quaker, Cheryl Kolander grew up wanting to be a doctor. But the weaver, natural dyer, and author of *A Silk Worker's Notebook* decided that modern medicine didn't fit her own style of healing, and so began a journey that led to weaving, then to silk, and back to healing again.

Cheryl says she has always been a weaver. She loved beautiful textiles and fine threads even as a small child, and while going to high school in Sweden, she fashioned herself a loom out of orange crates. Later she got a Dorothy table loom and figured out how to weave with it, but as she grew up, she longed to weave patterns in damask with fine thread, so the search began for a drawloom and for sources of fine silk yarn to weave with.

"You have to remember," she says, "this was the 1960s. We had almost no equipment, no weaving yarns, and very little information available to us. I began natural dyeing because a friend told me I ought to learn and handed me a volume of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and that's where I started." Cheryl eventually acquired two floor looms and managed to rig one of them up as a drawloom. (Years later, she was given an unused drawloom from University of California at Berkeley.)

Weaving at setts around 60 ends per inch, Cheryl "went to every consulate in San Francisco" looking for sources of fine silk yarn and eventually began importing and dyeing her own from all over Asia. She became so skilled at natural dyeing that she was approached to dye yarns for the restoration of antique rugs, a business she practices to this day, as well as dyeing silk for embroidery. She proudly points to a photo of a robe worn by Pope John Paul II, for which she dyed both the gold embroidery thread and the lining fabric.

In the 1970s, Cheryl and her husband and baby moved to Oregon, and she continued her weaving and dyeing. Ironically, it was only after a student at one of her natural dye workshops asked, "Don't you raise silk?" that her next adventure began. A "vegetarian of conscience," Cheryl decided she would let the silk moths hatch before using their cocoons, and Peace Silk was born.

Cheryl says silk is healthy for the wearer. She cites authors who credit silk for taming China's barbarian invaders and then rulers. "Silk requires one to be gentle of motion. One's stature must be elegant and refined." She praises its warmth (she was barefoot on the cold November day when we met, yet appeared perfectly comfortable in her silk clothing) as well as

its abilities to wick away moisture and to let the skin breathe. She points out that raising silkworms takes no water and no pesticides, and processing silk takes no more than a couple of gallons of water per pound, making it one of the most eco-friendly fibers. She also lists the antimicrobial properties of natural dyes, saying they add to the health benefits of the silk.

Cheryl recommends weaving with silk, for its beauty, for the sheer joy of working with it, and for the pleasure of wearing it.

Today, Cheryl custom dyes silk fabric and silk embroidery thread for designers around the world through her business, Aurora Silk. She block prints on silk with natural dyes, and she is creating space for her big drawloom. But she is also deeply involved and concerned with healing. She worries about the survival of wild silk moths in the face of diminishing habitat, and she works to educate the public and the fiber community. Her book, first published in 1979, is in its fifth printing.

Cheryl is also exploring other beneficial and therapeutic qualities of silk. She is breeding her own moths now for their natural fluorescence. She's not sure yet what benefits it may have for the wearer, but she reasons that "if it's good for the worms, it ought to be good for us." She is also breeding to provide chemical-free silk for use as medical scaffolding for stem cell research.

Cheryl Kolander may not have made her career in medicine, but with her lively intelligence, her restless curiosity, her loving humor, her boundless energy, and her beloved silk she is still working daily to make the world a better place.



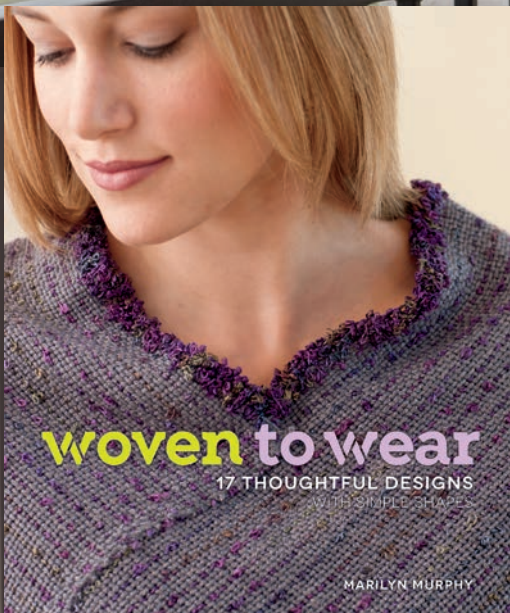
Design of eucalyptus leaves in natural tussah and natural-dyed brown tussah, woven by Cheryl in doubleweave on a drawloom.



Above: Cheryl posing in her silks. Below: Silk moths and COCOONS. PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHERYL KOLANDER

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