



NEW YORK THREADS

The Newsletter of
The New York Guild of Handweavers
Box 1623, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10159-1623
web: www.nyhandweavers.org e-mail: info@nyhandweavers.org

Meeting at The School of Visual Arts
214 East 21st Street, Room 206A
Between 2nd & 3rd Avenues

April 2009
social hour at noon
program at 1PM

“Mirrors, Pinwheels and More: The Cultural Meaning of Symmetry”
-Dorothy Washburn and Dr. Diane Humphrey

Saturday, April 25, 2009 1PM

Dr. Washburn has spent her career studying why a culture uses a particular symmetry and what that symmetrical structuring of pattern might mean relative to the culture. She will focus her talk on work she has done with woven materials – Southern Lao textiles, Bakuba raffias, California Indian baskets and Southwest prehistoric baskets and sandals. Dr. Washburn and Dr. Humphrey have been developing a cross-cultural test for symmetry preference. After the lecture they will ask the audience to respond to some patterns for them. It will be of special interest to them to see how a group of weavers think about symmetry (if they do.) And they promise that we will have fun! Dr. Washburn is an archaeologist who has written a great deal on the study of symmetry; in her early research she realized that different cultures preferentially use certain symmetries to structure their designs. She is an authority on form and color symmetry in ancient, tribal, folk and applied arts, including textiles. Diane Humphrey is on sabbatical from the department of Psychology, King's University at The University of Western Ontario. She has conducted empirical research in visual aesthetics while studying the perception of dance movement. She and Dr. Washburn have been doing research and writing together on the study of symmetry since they met in 1995.



MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

Museum of Art & Design, New York



In Print/In Process: Artist Talk with Kathryn Pannepacker

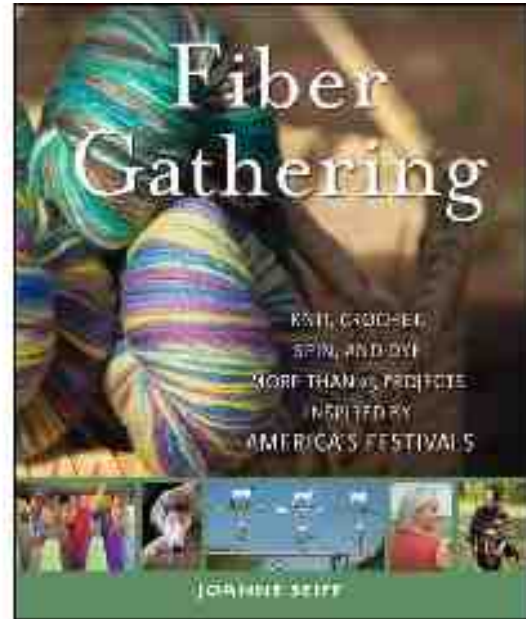
Thursday April 16, 6:30 pm

Free with Thursday evening pay-as-you-wish-admission

Weaver and painter **Kathryn Pannepacker's** urban interventions are featured in the April/May issue of [*American Craft*](#). Trained in the French tapestry tradition, Pannepacker has melded her love of traditional weaving and textile work with gritty public art – creating murals in West and North Philadelphia that integrate textile designs from around the world with the industrial architecture of her neighborhood. Pannepacker's work is subtly political, inherently social, and deeply invested in the art-making process. In part one of this two-part program, Pannepacker will provide an overview of her 20-year career and discuss her recent projects, including her guerilla weaving "tags" that are stealthily appearing in cities across the USA.

http://madmuseum.org/DO/Calendar/200904/Pannepacker_talk.aspx

NEW FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF



For fiber lovers, a festival is more than a setting for buying and selling materials—it's a gathering place where artisans, designers, farmers, and friends come together to teach, learn, share, and celebrate this timeless art in a unique 21st-Century marketplace.

In her new book, "Fiber Gathering", Joanne Seiff details the rich heritage, and unique flavor of eleven fiber events throughout the U.S. From the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival to Oregon's Black Sheep Gathering—and lots of others in between—you'll get a taste of what each festival has to offer through a rich mix of photography, essays, lore, and even a local recipe. Talented designers have contributed top-of-the-line patterns for you to knit, crochet, spin, felt, hook, and dye your own distinctive masterpieces using fibers that are ubiquitous to each festival. The twenty-five projects in this book are representative of the best of America's fiber festivals.

<http://tiny.cc/gRVVv> For \$18.47



For the first time, you can see color reproductions of the swatches Bertha Hayes had woven and design notes in her own handwriting in the new book, "Weaving Designs by Bertha Gray Hayes." In addition, each pattern was presented a second time, with full computer-generated drawdowns. And at the end of the book: thirteen never-before-published designs.

In addition to carefully documenting Bertha's designs, the authors researched her life and shared the story of a woman who wove name drafts and Morse code into her designs. Even at the end of her life, Bertha continued to create new weave designs. Some of her last drafts are poignant: they include name drafts of the hospital where she was treated, and the disease that ultimately took her life.

This book is a gorgeous encapsulation of Bertha Hayes' work. It was obviously a labor of love by the authors and the Weavers' Guild of Rhode Island. I for one am grateful to them for making this information readily available once again.

\$30.39 at <http://tiny.cc/0ZmpY>

-Syne Mitchell

TWILL TEXTILES

While searching *Architectural Digest's* recent Home Show for handwovens, I had the pleasure of meeting Suzanne Lovell, interior designer and principle in the firm *Twill Textiles*. Ms. Lovell has collaborated with weaver and friend Sam Kasten to create an elegant collection of handwoven home furnishing fabrics.



"For over 20 years, Sam Kasten has owned a handweaving studio near his home in Stockbridge, Massachusetts where he and a staff of 10 work on 15 looms. With a degree from the University of Iowa, where he studied under South African textile artist Naomi Schedl, Kasten later apprenticed in Nantucket with Andy Oates of Nantucket Looms. Oates, one of only 30 people to graduate from Black Mountain College, was trained in the Bauhaus aesthetic under Anni Albers. The Albers/Oates legacy continues through Kasten who likewise honors the ancient weaving craft with Modernist sensibilities, honesty to materials, and unadorned simplicity. Over the years, designers and architects such as I.M. Pei, Billy Baldwin, Peter Marino, David Easton, Thierry Despont, John Saladino, Victoria Hagan, and Calvin Tsao have collaborated with Kasten to obtain exquisite fabrics that they know only his mastery can create.

The translation of his hand woven masterpieces into industrially produced

textiles is something Sam Kasten has been contemplating for many years. Now, thanks to this collaboration with interior designer Suzanne Lovell and her strong editing and coloration skills, Twill Textiles has brought that dream to life. “- from the websites following. To see more of the luxurious hand woven textiles offered by these two design professionals, visit the Twill Textiles website at <http://tiny.cc/2HUhg> To visit Sam Kasten's studio, go to <http://tiny.cc/dr93K>
-Gail Gondek

GUILD MEMBERS IN ACTION



Elizabeth Starcevic will exhibit her rug weavings “Made in Mexico/Hecho en Mexico” at the Hebrew Tabernacle, 551 Fort Washington Avenue at 185th Street, New York, NY 10033
Friday, May 1, 2009 - June 2009
Opening reception: May 1, 2009 - 8:45 pm to 9:30 pm email: starccny@aol.com



Gail Gondek appeared in Suzanne Bocanegra's art performance piece, “Remember-er” at Judson Memorial Church on January 17, 2009. You can view a slide and audio show of Gail weaving Olmerdug on her amplified loom at <http://tinyurl.com/dlyjt6> or read about the performance in April 2009 issue of *Handwoven* magazine, page 35.

-Gail Gondek

SPRING OUTING

A Visit to Libby Kowalski's Studio

32 Union Square East, Suite 216
May 30, 2009 at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.
Our Spring Outing this year is a visit to Libby Kowalski's C T D Studio, a freelance textile consulting and design studio. The studio produces original designs woven on their 16 harness AVL looms as well as CAD images sold for “jacquard inspiration” which Ms. Kowalski will show us.

Four years ago Ms. Kowalski started Kova Textiles with her son, Greg, where she creates award winning, innovative textiles for commercial and residential uses. Her career as professor, artist, weaver, designer, consultant, and innovator has culminated in their business that creates crystal clear and white polymer fabrics for windows, dividers, scrims and many other uses. Kova Textiles sells their fabrics to Veritas where they are encapsulated in resin for Veritas' Resin-Art panels. Ms. Kowalski is a featured designer at Veritas.

Ms. Kowalski's background makes her an ideal person to talk to us about hand

weaving for industry. What are the similarities and differences in design, materials, techniques, looms, thought processes, etc. between craft and/or art weaving and industry? What can art/craft weavers learn from hand weaving for industry? To see what a treat we have in store, visit <http://www.kovatextiles.com> and <http://tiny.cc/yAhCU> We will meet in front of 32 Union Square East on Saturday, May 30 at 1 p.m. (group 1, already filled) and 2:30 p.m. (group 2).

Due to limited space in the studio, group size is limited to 15 people. Due to overwhelming demand, Ms. Kowalski has kindly agreed to host two back-to-back visits to her studio. When we announced the outing at the March 28 guild meeting, 15 people immediately signed up, so there will be a second visit at 2:30 p.m. Anyone signing up since the meeting will be in the 2:30 p.m. group.

Also due to limited space and high demand, we ask that guests not sign up until guild members have a chance to do so. A waiting list will be maintained for members and then guests.

To sign up for the 2:30 p.m. group of the Spring Outing, contact Carie Kramer.

WHY WE LOVE MACY'S

It's the Path to Peace Collection, a line of richly dyed sisal baskets and bowls, about 25 styles all together, handwoven by women who survived the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

The story began when Macy's CEO Terry Lundgren got a call from Willa Shalit, of Fair Winds Trading, who exports products from third-world countries to promote socially conscious entrepreneurship and cause-related merchandising.

Even after hearing Shalit discuss the genocide, in which as many as 1 million people, mostly men and boys of the Tutsi tribe were murdered, and her plan to help women in Rwanda earn money by basket weaving, Lundgren remained skeptical.

"When I met with Willa, she reached into her canvas bag and pulled out these baskets. I was immediately impressed by the design and quality," Lundgren says, as he shows off a basket given to him by a Rwandan weaver when he visited the country. The basket's black-and-white pattern symbolizes the need to lead a balanced life. He received a note with the basket that read, "Thank you for all you have done for the women of Africa. With love and gratitude." Other baskets in the collection have different patterns, and each basket comes with a picture of the weaver.



"They take a lot of pride in making these baskets," says Lundgren, who set in motion the new business model that makes money for Macy's. "It's trade, not aid," he says.

Macy's supplies the materials for the baskets and supports a training center in Rwanda where women, live temporarily at the training center and return to their homes to do the weaving.

The Macy's program started with 25 women in a village about 20 minutes outside Kagali, the capital of Rwanda. In the first year, Macys.com sold \$50,000 worth of baskets. "Once we could tell the story, it became an easy sell," Lundgren says. In 2008, Macy's sold \$1.5 million worth of the baskets, online and in four flagship stores. The collaboration currently employs about 2,000 weavers, who earn a living wage and are able to afford necessities.

"They had this skill that was never exported before," Lundgren says. "There's a very deep, long history of basket making in Rwanda. The baskets were always done for personal use, not for selling. Or they were used as barter."

"Frankly, this is more powerful than any check I've ever written as a donation," Lundgren adds. "It's a fantastic feeling when you change the way a person lives."

- David Moin

THE DRAFTING PRIMER

Originally published in 1978, The Drafting Primer is an excellent introduction to drafting for hand weavers. The Drafting Primer introduces Reading Drafts and the structure of twills, block designs and profile drafting, overshot, crackle weave, summer and winter, lace Bronson, Swedish lace, M's and O's, shadow weave, Krokbragd and Rosepath in a workbook

format. \$15 by Susan Guagliumi
<http://tiny.cc/8hSse> -Gail Gondek

IKAT ON THE RUNWAYS



SELLING YOUR HANDWOVENS ONLINE

Housewarps is an online consignment shop for handwovens for the home. Items must be juried for acceptance, the site has minimum prices it will ask for items and suggested sizes for towels, blankets,



placemats, etc. All items must have woven labels, and napkins and placemats must be sold in sets.

Housewarps will photograph your items and post your biography on their site, if you like. Even if you do not choose to submit your weaving for sale, the site is a

useful merchandising tool for those who would like guidance on pricing their handwovens. Housewarps charges 35% commission on the item's sale price.

<http://www.housewarps.com/> -Gail

Gondek

PRESIDENT OBAMA, PLEASE SUPPORT THE ARTS

You can sign a petition requesting that President Obama appoint a Secretary of the Arts for the United States at

<http://tiny.cc/6rtNG> -Gail Gondek

UPCOMING PROGRAMS 2009-2010

September 26, 2009 – Cynthia Alberto is an artist and teacher. In 2007 she founded Weaving Hands, a Brooklyn-based studio for children and adults. Her studio focuses on the weaving styles of countries such as Guatemala, Nepal, Morocco and the Phillipines. Cynthia has exhibited her work internationally; she recently was a guest artist at the Open Studios of the Museum of Art and Design. She will describe her current work and interests.

<http://www.weavinghand.com/>

October 31, 2009 – Susan Davis is an anthropologist who has continued her involvement with Morocco since she was there with the Peace Corps in the 1960's. She has written about her work there and returns frequently with groups who are interested in Moroccan textiles and the weavers with whom Susan has had a long friendship. Her talk will focus on a group of Berber women in southern Morocco with whom she has developed an online

web shop (www.marrakeshexpress.org).

She will give an overview of varied types of Moroccan rugs and bring samples to examine.

December 5, 2009 – Holiday Party & Sale

January 30, 2010 – Sara Goodman is a textile artist with a studio/school, House of Dreams, in Lyme, New Hampshire.

Her work has been featured in *Handwoven* and *Shuttle, Spindle and Dyepot* and her one-of-a-kind garments have won awards from Complex Weavers and the New England Weavers Seminar. Over the last several years she has been traveling to several fabulous textile "hot spots" (Bali, Guatemala and Japan to name a few); she will be showing images from these adventures and talking about how these experiences have influenced her work as a fiber artist. <http://tiny.cc/1LkGN>

February 27, 2010 – Show and Tell

March 27, 2010 – Yarn Tasting- A hands-on afternoon where everyone will have an opportunity to try sample weaving with a variety of interesting yarns, as both warp and weft.

April 24, 2010 – Susan Edmonds, a weaver of rugs and tapestries, will talk about Lines of Color, an illustration of her design process, focusing on color choices. She is inspired by the infinite variation of color and light that is at play in the surface of almost any object in the world around her. Her "Striped Rug #5" received the Michigan Surface Design Award at their 2006 exhibition; her tapestry, "Aran Islands Kilim", appears in *Tapestry Handbook: the New Generation* by Carol Russell.

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Closing date for the May 2009 issue will be May 1. The Newsletter will be distributed mid month.