

WARP



W E A V E A R E A L P E A C E

Volume 15, Number 4

Winter 2008

Indigenous Silk Weaving Among the Betsileo People of Madagascar

Teena Jennings-Rentenaar

Madagascar is an island of contrasts, from its grand beaches and lush rainforests to the rugged central plateaus. The Malagasy people mirror these contrasts through their varied origins and corresponding ways of life. The Betsileo of the central highlands are one of the many cultural groups that live here. They maintain strong ties with their ancestors who they believe move in a parallel world and largely determine the lives of the ones that remain. Fertility is largely left to the disposition of the ancestors. Therefore it is important to honor and care for the ancestors by building permanent tombs and by weaving *lambamena*, or shrouds, to wrap the remains of the ancestors.

The landscape is dotted with white stone tombs, where all of the members within a single family are interred. When a family member dies, the tomb is opened and plans are made to rewrap all of the bodies located therein. Burials include dancing, speeches, feasting, and drinking and can last for days or even months in the interest of ensuring that the ancestors are properly honored.

Often death comes quickly in Madagascar and so the women must always be ready by having woven many *lambamena*. Each body is wrapped in at least one, but often up to five, such shrouds. With so many cloths required at a burial, the women are constantly weaving.

The Betsileo women weave the best cloth that they can, both from a technical standpoint and by using the best fibers they can afford. The *lambamena* can be made from any material including raffia, bark, banana fiber, hemp, cotton, or nylon. That being said however, silk is the most prestigious material. This silk comes from the indigenous *Borocera madagascariensis*, a moth which has proven impossible to domesticate. The silk is a soft nutty beige with a wide range of variability. It is often left in its natural color, but is also frequently dyed using natural dyes – mud, leaves, mushrooms, bark, and flowers. The colors are incorporated in the warp direction, resulting in a muted striped effect that is very effective. The original variability of the silk shines through the natural dyed tones. Although expensive, this silk is deemed worthy because it has been used for centuries, thus tying the generations together. It

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Mission

WARP serves as a catalyst for improving the quality of life of textile artisans in communities-in-need. We provide information and networking opportunities to individuals and organizations who value the social, cultural, historic, and artistic importance of textiles around the world.

Core Values

Textiles are an important component of the human experience.

Providing support to textile artisans from communities-in-need gives them tools to shape their own destinies.

Networking and sharing information creates an environment for constructive action.

Making connections among textile artisans worldwide promotes positive social change.

Interacting with people who have similar values enriches our lives.

**WARP
Governing
Board**

Deborah Brandon
Pittsburgh, PA
Term expires 2011

Susan Schaefer Davis
Haverford, PA
Term expires 2009

Candy Meacham
Bellingham, WA
Term expires 2011

Cheryl Musch
Madison, WI
Term expires 2010

Adrienne Sloane
Watertown, MA
Term expires 2010

Linda Temple
Oklahoma City, OK
405/478-4936
413/622-1504 (fax)
lgtemple (at) juno.com
Term expires 2009

***Interim Administrative
Coordinator***
Cheryl Musch
***info (at)
weavearealpeace.org***

From the WARP Office...

Cheryl Musch, Interim Administrative Coordinator

As we near the end of 2008, we're already looking forward to our 2009 annual meeting in March in Pennsylvania. The year end is the time for renewing WARP memberships. Your membership runs through December 31 for the year on your address label. It's also the time that many non-profit organizations, like WARP, receive donations which help offset costs through the rest of the year. We ask that you consider a donation to WARP in 2008. It will help us carry on our work giving you information and networking opportunities throughout 2009.

Didn't get your last newsletter?

WARP has been changing the database we use, and we found that some members did not receive their Fall 2008 (Vol. 15, No. 3) newsletter. We apologize for this error. If you should have received the newsletter and did not, please email Cheryl at info@weavearealpeace.org and we'll get one out to you right away!

***Look for your 2008 WARP Membership
Directory later this month!***

---clip and save---

2009 Publication Information

Projected deadlines for receipt of copy -

Volume 16 (check page 4 of each issue to confirm deadline for next issue):

V16N1 - Spring WARP newsletter - **February 6, 2009**

V16N2 - Summer WARP newsletter - **May 8, 2009.**

V16N3 - Fall WARP newsletter - **August 14, 2009.**

V16N4 - Winter WARP newsletter - **November 6, 2009.**

Newsletters are normally mailed 10-14 days after copy deadline dates.

Author Guidelines

Length of articles

Because of the format of the WARP newsletter, articles can typically be ***no more than 400 words (with photos) or 500 words (without photos)***. If impossible to meet these limitations, please communicate with the editor to explore options ***prior*** to submitting an article for publication.

Photos or other graphics

Submit as .jpg or .tif files, saved at 300 dpi

*Contributions of unsolicited articles that meet
publication guidelines are encouraged.
Please email articles to LGTemple@juno.com*

Mark Your Calendar Now!

WARP 2009 Annual Meeting

March 13-15, 2009

The Welcoming Place Visitors' Center at the
Mennonite Central Committee Offices

Akron, Pennsylvania

Following our custom of having meetings in different parts of the country to enable all our members to attend a meeting 'near' them, we moved from the west coast last year to the east this year. Another reason that we are meeting near Lancaster is because many of our members have a very strong interest in American groups that maintain special identities, as do the Amish there, which are expressed through the fiber arts.

The meeting will be held at the Welcoming Center, a Mennonite retreat center near Lancaster. You can read more about it at <http://www.mcc.org/welcomingplace/>. While designed mainly for Mennonite use, it dovetails well with our interests, for example having the residences each with a geographic theme, decorated with artifacts from that area. (The rates are excellent too – and we confirmed that there are no plastic covers on the mattresses, like last year!) The artifacts come from another Mennonite activity, the Ten Thousand Villages stores; you will want to visit their national headquarters in nearby Ephrata PA.

Another planned activity includes a visit to the Lancaster Quilt and Textile Museum. The museum is housed in a historic building in the center of Lancaster, and its permanent collection showcases quilts produced by Amish women in Lancaster County between the 1870s and 1940s (www.quiltandtextilemuseum.com). WARP member Deb Brandon has agreed to do a program surveying the history of quilting worldwide. WARP's focus groups, which last year included discussion groups about tourism, ecological issues, fair trade, and marketing, will also be a part of the schedule. More programs are in the planning stages.

Deadline for registration is January 25, so sign up now! Registration form is on page 15.

You can help WARP by

...providing financial support for the:

- Operating fund (includes staff salary, listserv and website costs, and WARP publications—the newsletter, brochure, and directory)
- Scholarship fund
- Sister Memberships
- Endowment fund

...volunteering to:

- Show the WARP slideshow in your community
- Write an article for the newsletter
- Help with annual meetings
- Solicit paid ads for the newsletter and/or membership directory.
- Encourage other textile organizations and guilds to link to the WARP website

If you are interested in any of these financial or volunteer opportunities, contact Cheryl Musch at info@weavearealpeace.org

Schedule WARP Slideshow Now

The WARP slide show continues to travel. It is currently in Los Angeles. Now is the time to reserve the show for 2009. The response to the revised show has been very positive. To make arrangements to borrow the slide show, contact Carole Pierce at cpierce@mis.net.

WARP Brochures Available

If you would like copies of WARP's brochure to distribute to your guild or at local conferences, please contact Cheryl Musch in the WARP office (contact information at left).



WARP Newsletter

published quarterly by
Weave A Real Peace
Volume 15, Number 4
Winter 2008

Editor: Linda Temple

Send address corrections to:

WARP
3102 Classen Boulevard
PMB 249
Oklahoma City, OK 73118
or to
info (at)
weavearealpeace.org

The deadline for
contributions to the Spring
2009 WARP newsletter is
February 6, 2009.

Send articles and
correspondence for
the newsletter to:
Linda Temple
1230 NE 70
Oklahoma City, OK 73111
lgtemple(at)juno.com
405/478-4936 (phone)
413/622-1504 (fax)

Information about an
organization or service in
this newsletter does not
constitute an endorsement
by WARP.

Submissions may be
edited or shortened at the
discretion of the editor.

WARP Administrative Coordinator Position Available

WARP is currently conducting a search among its membership for a new Administrative Coordinator to replace Cheryl Musch. This is a part-time contractual position, with much of the work concentrated from December to May. In peak months, work may total 30 hours, declining to about 10 hours per month during the summer. The coordinator will work from her/his own home. We would like the new coordinator to begin in early 2009. Compensation will be discussed during the interview process.

Primary responsibilities include: all bookkeeping and routine correspondence; production of annual membership directory; working with newsletter editor to coordinate its publication; overseeing all aspects of annual membership mailing and dues collection; working with board to organize annual member conference and board meeting; serving on board as an ex-officio member; coordinating all other WARP activities.

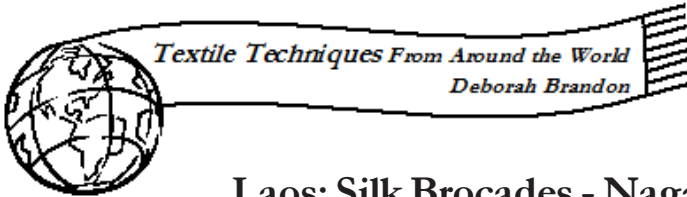
Qualifications include, above all else, a commitment to WARP and our mission. The coordinator must be able to serve gracefully as the public face of WARP. Reliable internet service and willingness to use it heavily, as well as comfort with basic accounting, word processing, and database management software are necessary. Accurate record-keeping and keeping track of details on an on-going basis are essential.

This is a wonderful opportunity for a WARP member with a flexible schedule and an interest in working in the non-profit sector. Please apply by January 15, 2009. If you have questions about the position, please call or e-mail Sarah Saulson at any time

Please submit a resume, cover letter, and contact information for two references by January 15, 2009
to:

Sarah Saulson, WARP Job Search Coordinator
Syracuse, NY 13224
sfsaulson(at)twcny.rr.com

Shop Fair Trade this Holiday Season.
If there are no shops in your community,
go to www.fairtradefederation.com to
find retailers who sell online.



Textile Techniques From Around the World
Deborah Brandon

Laos: Silk Brocades - Nagas

There is a very strong handweaving tradition in Laos. Many generations of Lao women have been weaving fine silk brocades in complex patterns since childhood. The traditional designs have been passed down from one generation to the next by word of mouth. Unfortunately, in many households these days, weaving is no longer an integral part of daily life. In order to counter this trend, weaving schools have taken on the role of teaching young girls to weave, with the hope of preserving the tradition.

Many of the traditional pictorial motifs represent Lao myths and legends. In particular, water serpents (or nagas) are very prominent in Lao mythology (portraying powerful deities who play crucial roles in the lives of the Lao people), which is probably why designs involving nagas are so prevalent in handwoven textiles. This in turn is likely the reason that weaving fabric is often equated with weaving nagas. Other common motifs include elephants, tigers, horses, birds, elephant-lions, horse-deer, birds, and flowers. Motifs often signify attributes; for example, serpents are a symbol of power, elephant-lions stand for long life, and birds represent the weavers' free spirit (or freedom, in general).

In a brocade, supplementary weft passes over the surface of the warp covering the pattern area, and passes under the surface between the pattern areas. A row of plain weave is woven between pattern rows. Continuing in this manner, the design is formed. Simple geometrical motifs are "programmed" into a separate set of vertical (string) heddles, by weaving in sticks as markers for pattern rows. The end result resembles a bamboo shade, which hangs above the warp behind the plain weave heddles. Once each stick is used it is moved from its position above the warp and slipped into place beneath the warp, preserving the pattern in the heddles for future weaving. More complex designs, such as pictorial motifs, are hand picked.

Resources

Kongthong Nanthavongdouangsy Saisanith, Director, Phaeng Mai Gallery, Vientiane, Laos

Weaving Cloth, Weaving Nagas: Lao Woven Textile Motifs, by Viengkham Nanthavongdouangsy, Dokked Publishing Co., LTD.

Legends in the Weaving, by Dara Kanlaya, Kongthong Nanthavongdouangsy Saisanith, Viengkham Nanthavongdouangsy, Chanthasone Inthavong, Douangdeuane Bounyavong, and Kiyoko Yasui, The Group for Promotion of Art and Textiles

The Key to Weaving, by Mary E. Black, Macmillan Publishing Company.

<http://silk-phaengmai.laopdr.com/>

http://www.seasite.niu.edu/lao/Lao_Folklore/lao_folklore_course.htm

<http://www.ockpoptok.com/index.php/home>

Deborah Brandon can be reached at brandon@andrew.cmu.edu.

Weave A Real Peace

Membership Information

2009 Annual Dues

* \$35 - Individual, U.S. and Canada

* \$40 - Individual, international and sister memberships

* Simple living - Choose an amount you can live with

* \$50 - Group/supporting

* \$100+ - Patron/donor

All memberships are based on the calendar year and expire on December 31.

Members receive all publications for the year joined.

Members receive an annual Membership Directory, a quarterly newsletter, and can participate in the WARP listserv.

Dues are used for printing, mailing, and office expenses. Weave A Real Peace (WARP) is designated a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization by the Internal Revenue Service. All donations to WARP are tax deductible in the United States.

For membership or additional information, please send your name, address, and telephone number with appropriate check or money order in US funds payable to **WARP** to:

Weave A Real Peace
3102 Classen Boulevard
PMB 249
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

or visit the website at weavearealpeace.org

WARP Nominating Committee Makes Recommendations for 2009 Board Positions

Sarah Saulson & Deborah Brandon, Nominating Committee

Susan Schaefer Davis, of Haverford, PA, is currently ending her first term on the board and has agreed to run for a second. Susan is an anthropologist and consultant on socioeconomic development. Since graduate school, Morocco has been Susan's passion. She lives there part of each year and works with traditional women weavers. Visit www.marrakeshexpress.org to see their beautiful rugs. Susan will lead a trip to Morocco in spring 2009.

Susan will be joined on the ballot by Kathryn Keegan of Birchrunville, PA. Kathryn will be running for the board position that has been filled by WARP co-founder, newsletter editor, and multi-term board member, Linda Temple. For the last 25 years Kathryn has served as the Financial Administrator of Camphill Kimberton, a village that cares for and lives with people with special needs. Kathryn is also a poet and fiber artist who likes to make floor cloths, spin and knit. WARP has a long relationship with Camphill Kimberton, and with Kathryn's special skills in the area of finance, would bring a wealth of experience to the WARP board.

We are pleased to present this outstanding slate to the membership. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor. Election to the board for three-year terms will be held during our annual meeting in March 2009. Our thanks to Susan and Kathryn for their willingness to put their names up for nomination. If you have any questions, please contact Sarah Saulson at sfsaulson@twcnny.rr.com or Deborah Brandon at brandon@andrew.cmu.edu.

RugMark's Traveling Photo Exhibit

As part of *The Most Beautiful Rug Campaign*, RugMark's traveling photo exhibition, *Faces of Freedom*, is designed to help consumers connect to the positive real-life impact of purchasing a RugMark certified rug. The images were captured by award winning photographer and human rights educator U. Roberto Romano during his travels to India, Nepal, and Pakistan between 1996 and 2007.

Through a collection of powerful images this exhibition brings the "field" into the showroom, depicting the carpet weaving process and its cultural context along with captivating images of former child weavers who are currently in RugMark schools and centers. RugMark invites you to visit the exhibition at a venue near you! To see the tour schedule and to view the full collection online, visit <http://facesoffreedom.rugmark.org>.

Morocco in the Spring - A Great Holiday Gift!

WARP board member and anthropologist Susan Schaefer Davis invites WARP members to join her cultural tourism trip to Morocco next spring. The small group will visit weavers in their village homes, as well as women social activists, a noted woman author, and ordinary women.

In order to make this a more personal experience, the trip is limited to 14 travelers. The value is exceptional, as there are few out-of-pocket expenses. The trip is for 15 days, and you can see the full itinerary of the trip on Susan's web site at www.marrakeshexpress.org.

Click on "Travel" at the bottom of the home page.

May 16-30, 2009
\$3195 per person, based on 11-14 travelers, not including international airfare

If you would like more information, or wish to discuss the trip further, please contact Susan Davis at 610/649-7717 or sdavis@uslink.net, or Joan Noble, trip organizer and escort, at 800/566-9228 or jungljoan@yahoo.com. Personalized trips to Morocco can also be arranged.

Consider WARP in your end-of-year giving plan.

All donations to WARP are tax deductible in the US.

The KamiAmi Women of Pokuase, Ghana

Jackie Abrams

In the local Ga language in Pokuase, Ghana, “kami ami” translates to “don’t make it too tight, keep it loose.” It was the first crocheting instruction I learned as I worked with a group of women, teaching them to crochet the plastic bags (called “rubbers”) that usually litter their environment. We became the KamiAmi Women; we are a community development project of WomensTrust, a micro-lending organization in Pokuase, about an hour north of Accra.



My first trip was for three weeks in January of 2008. It was a skills building trip. We gathered together, learned to crochet, and talked about design development and consistent, high quality work. We had simplified business classes and talked about fair trade, about being paid for your time. We made initial contacts with tourist galleries in Accra, the capital of Ghana. We talked about being a cooperative, and identified the leaders and the teachers within the group.

I returned in August of 2008. The women had been practicing. They met every Thursday and Friday, and crocheted over 100 bags. They were not all wonderful bags, but they all learned and practiced. And they were proud.

On this trip, we designed our first official KamiAmi bag – called Mami Akua. It is a double-handled oval bag, crocheted of the ubiquitous black rubbers and an accent color. All of the KamiAmi Women can now make this bag, the exact size, with good quality. And they can make many of them. We have started to place them at the Accra galleries; each bag has an attached tag with the KamiAmi story, signed by the maker.

We have been joined by several teenage girls who live around the compound. At first they were just tolerated by the adults, and asked to do errands. It quickly became apparent that they also can develop good crocheting skills. They are now the KamiAmi Girls. Staying in school, studying hard, and doing their household chores is of prime importance, but crocheting the rubbers in their



“leisure” time is a good way for them to earn some money. Each one of them got her very own crochet hook.

There is still much left to do. We want to expand our network and involve more women. We need to increase our styles and develop appropriate markets. And we need to involve the schools in collecting the used rubbers. It is all done with the spirit and joy that is typical of these Ghanaian women.

For more information on WomensTrust visit <http://womenstrust.org/>

Jackie Abrams is a studio artist, basketry teacher and frequent traveler to Africa. You can see her work and read more about her travels at her website, www.jackieabrams.com. She can also be contacted at 802/257-2688, [jackieabrams\(at\)verizon.net](mailto:jackieabrams(at)verizon.net)

How to Help KamiAmi

Jackie writes “We would welcome donations of scissors, crochet hooks (about size J or K), tape measures, and colored plastic bags.

Send them to Jackie Abrams, 21 Howard Street, Brattleboro VT 05301

Know of Potential Sister Members?

WARP is always seeking new Sister Members. Currently, WARP members are sponsoring memberships for groups in Lesotho, Pakistan, India, Kenya, Nigeria, Japan, Bolivia, Thailand, and India. If you know of a group you would like to recommend for a Sister Membership, please contact Cheryl Musch at [info\(at\)weavearealpeace.org](mailto:info(at)weavearealpeace.org)

Visit Highlights Fair Trade Difference

Carmen K. Iezzi, Executive Director, Fair Trade Federation

"I am different inside." Emmi Myers says. "My life is different. My husband is different. We have a partnership, because of my work. We go through life together."



Emmi is one of the founding women of Global Mamas, a non-profit Fair Trade Organization based in Minneapolis, MN and Cape Coast, Ghana. From October 8–14, I had the opportunity to visit Ghana and meet with many artisans there, including Emmi and other batikers and seamstresses who work with Global Mamas.

Founded in 2002 by two former Peace Corps volunteers and six Ghanaian women, Global Mamas works to validate women's economic independence by exporting their high-quality handmade goods. Thanks to a grant from another FTF member, BeadForLife, I was able to visit seven cities and villages and observe firsthand the remarkable organization into which Global Mamas has grown. Presently, they work with 70 small businesses in the Global Mamas network. Including all employees, over 400 women earn a fair trade living from Global Mamas.

Their lines of children's clothing, ornaments, jewelry, and décor can be found at museum stores, boutiques, Fair Trade shops, and other venues in the US, Europe, and Australia.

My primary objective during this visit revolved around understanding from the artisans how working with a Fair Trade Organization differed from working on their own or with other NGOs. Even in a culture with a rich tradition of textile work, women complained about cheap foreign copies flooding Ghanaian markets and about customers' and international companies' lack of appreciation for their time, skill, and effort. Yet, in town after town, when asked about working with Global Mamas, the answers were the same: "They treat us with respect and ask our opinions." "We have consistent work." "They pay on time and don't try to cheat us."

Batik is not the only textile tradition in Ghana. I also visited a village in northwest Ghana which was set up by a Peace Corps volunteer as a sustainable tourism project to preserve the skills of kente weaving. Kente is native to the Ashanti people who first developed the technique in the 12th century. Each kente design of interwoven cloth tells a story of the heritage of the Ashanti. Master weavers celebrate the migration of their people, different cultural values, and/or the history of Ghana as a whole with the designs that they choose. When I visited eShopAfrica.com, another member of the Federation, I learned about their work with kente weavers to custom order cloths for clients. Kawther El Obeid, eShop's CEO, displays kente stoles woven for colleges and universities, companies, and other groups in North America interested in supporting individual artisans.

After witnessing, in a new way, the impact of Fair Trade Organizations on individuals and communities, I left Ghana with an even deeper appreciation for the work that FTF members do. Global Mamas, eShop, and others offer partnership, dignity, and respect for the complex and difficult work of textile creation. Thanks to their work, everyone involved in the creation, import, and selection of beautiful items has the opportunity to find great products which create a tremendous impact on communities.

Carmen Iezzi can be reached at [cki\(at\)fairtradefederation.org](mailto:cki(at)fairtradefederation.org)

Visit these great resources for more information on handmade products from Africa

BeadForLife

(www.BeadForLife.org) –

BeadforLife works with women in Uganda living with HIV who turn recycled paper into beautiful necklaces, bracelets, and earrings, as well as elegant jewelry bags from hand printed cotton fabrics. They also sell bags of loose beads. BeadforLife also sponsors community development projects in the areas of health, education, vocational training, affordable housing, and savings programs.

eShopAfrica.com

(www.eShopAfrica.com) – A

fair trade website based in Ghana that sources traditional African arts and crafts direct from artisans in several African countries, including recycled glass, wood carvings, and custom orders.

Cooperation for Fair Trade In Africa

(www.COFTA.org) – The Federation's counterpart in Africa; currently composed of over 60 member organizations from 18 African countries, COFTA acts as a regional network of IFAT and caters to the particular needs of the African continent.

Field Notes from Peru

Judy Newland

During the summer of 2002 I embarked on a trip to the South Coast of Peru to study archaeological textiles in a field school sponsored by the California Institute of Peruvian Studies. The study of textiles is still relatively new in the field of anthropology and the field school in Peru is unique. With a newly minted MS degree in museum studies and anthropology from the University of Colorado in Boulder in hand and a background in Southwestern archaeology, I found the Peruvian field school provided a way to integrate my interest in archaeology with a passion for weaving and commitment to textile scholarship. One of the main teaching tenets of the textile field school in Peru was the importance of understanding the technique and underlying structure of a textile in order to analyze artifacts recovered in the field. To facilitate understanding, one needs to actually learn textile techniques using hands-on practice, as well as how to document textiles using fiber analysis, determination of yarn twist and fabric construction. In addition to textile analysis, field school study sessions and lectures presented a thorough overview of the iconography and cultural affiliation of common ancient Andean textile structures.

In the ensuing years, I have continued to ponder and develop this idea – that the “making” component was a critical aspect of learning about textiles. I spent another summer working in the field school in Peru in 2005, learning more about the country, assisting in the field conservation of textiles and analyzing textiles both technically and visually. I developed a successful course at Beloit College (Beloit, WI) based on this concept. “Weaving Cultural Connections” encouraged students to explore a variety of cultures through both text and technique (see the Winter 2005 issue of WARP news). This was the beginning of my interdisciplinary approach to studying and teaching about textiles, which found its expression in the exhibition, *Discovering Ancient Peru: Why Textiles Matter*. This exhibit enhanced visitor knowledge about Ancient Peru through a study of selected textiles from the permanent collections of the Logan Museum of Anthropology at Beloit College.

My exploration of Peruvian textiles continues at the Arizona State University Museum of Anthropology. A research project on the south coast of Peru near Ilo will begin an investigation into mortuary textiles excavated from several archaeological sites in the area. In addition to technical analysis of textiles, a stylistic analysis will begin to address issues of ethnicity and identity in the region. An initial survey was to take place this December but has been moved to next July. Before that research project begins, a colleague and I will offer an archaeological textile program on the north coast. It will also be sponsored by the California Institute for Peruvian Studies and will involve textile analysis and field conservation near Trujillo during the first year. A second year study is planned to introduce

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Sweetgrass Basketmaker named MacArthur Fellow

Mary Jackson, a fiber artist whose intricately coiled vessels preserve the centuries-old craft of sweetgrass basketry and push the tradition in stunning new directions, was awarded a 2008 MacArthur Fellowship. An excerpt from the press announcement says, “A descendent of the Gullah community of coastal South Carolina, Jackson learned to make baskets at the age of four from her mother and grandmother, who passed on skills brought to the United States by their West African ancestors. Developed originally as domestic and agricultural tools for cotton and rice production, sweetgrass baskets have traditionally taken such utilitarian shapes as storage containers and rice fanners. With masterful technique, Jackson translates these practical designs into finely detailed, sculptural forms. While preserving the culture and history of her ancestors, Jackson infuses this inherited art form with a contemporary aesthetic and expressiveness all her own.” More information is available at <http://www.macfound.org/>

Guatemala Scholars' Network Conference Held at Vanderbilt University in October

WARP member Carol Ventura (at right in photo below) recently participated in a panel discussion at the Guatemala Scholars' Network Conference held at Vanderbilt University in October. The panel, **Guatemala's Changing Social and Economic Landscape**, focused on the changes in the handweaving industry in the Guatemalan highlands since the 1970's. Carol writes, "From 1976-80, I worked with the Jacaltequita weaving cooperative of over 400 women in Jacaltenango, Huehuetenango, as a Peace Corps volunteer. I still keep in touch with my Jakalteq friends and returned in June and July of 1986 and 2002."



Carol's presentation chronicled her own experiences as well as providing input from other long-time supporters of Guatemalan weavers, including WARP members Brenda Rosenbaum, Deborah Chandler, and Marilyn Anderson. Carol went on to describe the difficulties currently facing the weavers - the need for new designs, the challenges of obtaining materials, the difficulties of shipping, and the increasing competition of goods from India. The full text of Carol's presentation can be read on the WARP website, www.weavearealpeace.org

Carol Ventura is an art historian at the Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, TN. She can be reached at 931/520-3962; cventura@tntech.edu

Thank You

...to the Des Moines Spinners & Weavers Guild, Des Moines, IA, for their donation in memory of WARP member Alice Brown.

...to the South Jersey Guild of Spinners & Handweavers, Moorestown, NJ, for their donations. The guild is asking for donations to WARP in lieu of honorariums for demonstrations given by guild members.

Funding Connections

If you know of a textile group in need, maybe one with whom you've worked, let Cheryl Musch know specifically what they need and what it will cost, and we'll get the information into the next newsletter. Contact information for Cheryl is on page 2.

Peru Field School Next Summer June 16-30, 2009 - \$1950.00

Join WARP member Judy Newland and Andean archaeologist Gail Ryser for a north coast Andean Archaeology Textile Program.

The textile program offers two-week sessions with hands-on experience in the analysis, written documentation, and field conservation of perishable archaeological materials. In **Year I**, students learn to analyze textile artifacts and document key features and conditions. A textile sampler will be woven to aid in understanding ancient textile structures and lectures will be provided on Andean culture and woven iconography. **Year II** focuses on plant materials and their uses in the production of textiles and woven artifacts including ropes, baskets, and nets. Botanical samples are identified and quantified following current archaeological methods; study of naturally colored cottons including spinning and dye plant analysis.

Year II will be the same price and held at the same time of year, 2010. Each session is accompanied by fieldwork associated with textile artifacts and/or perishable materials and a north coast tour of archaeological sites and museums. Minimum number of participants required. International airfare not included in price.

For more information and program details contact:
Judy M. Newland at newland.judy@gmail.com
Gail Ryser at ryser.gl@gmail.com

Textile Society of America 2008 Symposium

Judy Newland

Aloha! Gentle breezes and swaying palms provided the enticing backdrop for Textile Society of America's recent symposium in Honolulu, Hawaii – *Textiles as Cultural Expressions*. A record number of papers were presented and well attended despite the constant pull of the ocean. TSA attracts a wide array of textile scholars, artists, collectors, and enthusiasts and this was reflected in the diversity of the seminars, ranging from archaeological textiles (my personal favorite) to contemporary art and cultural explorations.

The symposium opened with a moving keynote address by Kimsooja entitled, *A Needle Woman*. Kimsooja truly stitches together cultures of the world through her performance art and installation using herself as a metaphor for the needle. Native Hawaiian speakers welcomed participants to explore the native arts of ancient Hawaii including feather work, bark cloth (kapa), netting, and makaloa mats. A session on Hawaiian prints discussed the multi-ethnic origin of the Hawaiian shirt as a graduate student slowly peeled away nine layers of Hawaiian prints beginning with kapa cloth. The unique approach was more fun and creative than the typical PowerPoint presentation!

Galleries, museums, palaces, and cultural centers throughout Honolulu were filled with textile exhibitions of all types, filling in any spare gaps of time in a schedule bursting at the seams. The most stunning exhibit was a vast collection of textiles collected from the Miao people in Southwestern China. *Writing with Thread* is currently on exhibit at the University of Hawaii. The indigo was deep, dark, and richly embellished, with silver ornamentation fit for a queen. Visitors to the opening reception wound through a maze of traditional garments created through a myriad of exacting techniques. An organized session by scholars the next morning allowed an even deeper look into the textile history of a culture that is still migrating, changing, and losing some textile traditions.

Because my research interests often take me to the south coast of Peru, a marathon session on Andean archaeological textiles was a highlight. A panel of researchers who work in southern Peru and northern Chile discussed extraordinary textiles from this area, including twined shrouds of the Chinchorro, string or grass skirts from the same area, several talks on trapezoidal tunics, their construction, weaving techniques, and meaning, plus a new book on the identification of red dyes in the ancient Andes. Curators, conservators, and archaeologists presented a variety of strategies and approaches they use in their research. Subject matter for other sessions ranged from ethnicity, status, identity, economics and authenticity. I gave a paper on my work with undergraduates in textile and exhibit courses that focus on using textiles as cultural teaching tools. A popular Saturday session covered the latest textile news from Uzbekistan and a talk on scented textiles won honors for outstanding research and presentation.

TSA is a diverse organization, supporting textile scholarship and art. You can find the symposium description and information about the organization at the TSA website, www.textilesociety.org. The next biennial symposium will be held in Lincoln, Nebraska in 2010.

Mexico Textile Travel Programs

Tia Stephanie,
Textile Tours to Mexico
Stephanie Schneiderman,
[info\(at\)tiastephanietours.com](mailto:info(at)tiastephanietours.com)
734/769-7839

The Textile Traditions of Oaxaca:

February 6 – 15, 2009
Learn about the indigenous
textile traditions of the
Oaxaca region; meet
weavers and coop members
in remote communities of
Pinotepa de Don Luis San
Juan Colorado; travel with
the murex dyers to see
them extract this scarce
purple dye; learn about the
history and evolution of
“traje” from the Isthmus
of Tehuantepec; learn
about ancient dyes
(cochineal) and native
cottons (coyuchi).

The History and Use of the Mexican Rebozo: Jaspe (Ikat) Techniques, Threats and Revivals:

April 17 – 26, 2009
Tour Leaders and program
consultants: Virginia Davis,
Fiber artist and Textile
Historian, Berkeley, CA
Marta Turok, Textile
Anthropologist, Mexico
City, Mexico

Learn the history of the
rebozo and its multiple
uses; visit communities
who produce silk and
cotton rebozos; also visit
the Museum of
Anthropology

Indigenous Silk Weaving in Madagascar

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is believed to last at least 30 years while wrapped around a body because of its strength and its purity. It is also thought to be less likely to decay and take on bad odors as well.

Weavers may be satisfied with the plain weave structure, but are as likely to incorporate other design elements such as thicker bands of weft to create decorative ribs, changing weft colors at the ends of the cloth, handpicking to create warp and weft floats, weaving beads into the structure, and adding weft wrapping designs that resemble embroidered chain stitches in the weft direction. These decorations help to identify the ancestors later as well as honoring them.

Due to the ritual relevance of the *lambamena*, the silk is processed in the same way and using the same tools as it has for generations. The cocoons are spiny and therefore are soaked in water or, for an even softer and more lustrous result, stored within the compost pile where hot water is added intermittently and the heat of the compost helps soften the sericin and the spines. Once the silk has dried it is ready to spin using a spindle that is rolled along the thigh. Once spun, some of the yarns are dyed. Ash is sometimes rubbed in to brighten and enhance the color. When dry, the warp yarns are sized using a rice water soak.

The loom is pinned between the walls of the upstairs room, above the livestock and beneath the staircase that leads to the cooking area. Interestingly, all houses have the same dimensions, so this position results in a fixed warp length. The warp is continuous and can therefore be pulled forward to the weaver's position as needed. The warp is cut from the loom when finished, washed to remove the sizing, and then pressed using an iron with hot coals in its belly.

In the interest of re-establishing the indigenous tapia forests of the highlands, the Betsileo are selling their silk cloths, reconfigured in the shape of shawls and scarves. The silk larvae eat only tapia leaves, so to encourage the nurturing of tapia seedlings, financial returns must be realized from silk products. The ancestors must be pleased.

For further reading:

Green, Rebecca. "Betsileo textiles: Negotiating identity between the living and the dead." In Kusimba, C., Odland, J. C., and Bronson, B. (eds.) *Unwrapping the Textile Traditions of Madagascar*, p.73-91. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, 2004.

Jennings-Rentenaar, Teena. "The Traditional Methods of Malagasy Indigenous Silk Producers and their Contribution to the Country's Reforestation." In O'Donoghue, M. (ed.) *Global Sustainable Development: A Challenge for Consumer Citizens*, Ref. 38. Ireland: The CDVEC, Curriculum Development Unit, Ireland and the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE), 2008.

Teena is an associate professor of textile science at The University of Akron. She can be contacted at tj9(at)uakron.edu.

Upcoming Textile Museum Programs

Interwoven: Business, Artisanal Design and Social Responsibility

Thursday, March 5

6:30 pm

Stephanie Odegard,
Founder and President,
Odegard, Inc.

That's a Quilt?!

Tracing the Lineage of Contemporary Quilt Art

Thursday, April 16

6:30 pm

Kate Lenkowsky, Author

Reinventing Quilts in a Digital Age

Thursday, May 7

6:30 pm

Michael James, Chair,
Textiles, Clothing and
Design Department,
University of Nebraska

For more information
about these programs,
go to
www.textilemuseum.org

Educational Slideshows and Articles on Mexican Weaving And Dyeing

Traditions Mexico has recently added new educational slideshows and articles on weaving and natural dyeing to our website. Here are a few links to explore:

You'll find an image-rich slideshow of a trip to visit one of the last ancestral Murex (purpura) shell dyers on the planet on the coast of Oaxaca at: http://albums.phanfare.com/traditionsmexico/2402728_2606447#imageID=38397362

An in-depth article on purpura shell dyeing can be found at http://traditionsmexico.com/Featured__Tales-purpura.html

A visit to the last traditional cultivators of Spanish silk in Mexico can be viewed at <http://albums.phanfare.com/4211287/2477499#imageID=42401401>

And for those who'd like to see scenes like this in person, we offer workshops and tours in southern Mexico....

Our Zapotec Tapestry Weaving Workshop, is an 11-day workshop with master weavers in Teotitlan del Valle, Oaxaca. Participants will work on Spanish floor looms, and will be introduced to natural dyeing techniques.

We have two natural dyeing workshops this season. Both explore the preparation and use of cochineal and indigo, among other dyes. Our *Murex, Cochineal and Indigo* tour takes you to the Pacific coast to learn about Murex. *Natural Dyes of the Oaxacan Highlands Workshop* includes an outing to learn about silk production.

Our *Mayan Backstrap Weaving and Natural Dye Workshop* is based out of San Cristobal de las Casas in Chiapas, and includes focused instruction in backstrap, brocade weaving, and natural dyeing, with visits to Mayan villages and markets.

Fiber Arts of the Oaxaca Coast explores remote areas of the coast that hold the most traditional and varied indigenous weavings, hand-spun brown and white cotton, intricate brocade, and murex shell dyeing. *Fiber Arts of the Oaxacan Highlands* explores the cool uplands of the Mayan weavers, guided by Mayan expert, Chip Morris.

And finally, *Mayan Fibers and Culture* takes you from the humid jungle lowlands of Chiapas to the misty highlands to explore some of the most exquisite traditional weaving in the Americas, woven into daily life in Mayan villages.

For details on all our tours, go to www.traditionsmexico.com.

New Members

Virginia Coolidge
Grantham, NH 03753

Nancy Hopkins
Zionsville, PA 18092

Joanne LaFontaine
Harrisville, NY 13648

Helen Ruddy
Kentville, NS B4N4K9
Canada

Avril Sheppard
Pender Island, BC
V0N2M2
Canada

South Jersey Guild of
Spinners & Handweavers
Moorestown, NJ 08057
www.sjgsh.org

Karen Stromberg
Scottsville, AZ 85254

WARP on the Web

<http://www.weavearealpeace.org>

You can join WARP's Listserv from the

'Contact Us' link on the website

Textile Society of America Selects 2007 R. L. Shep Ethnic Textiles Book Award Winner

From a press released issued by TSA, September 4, 2008

The Textile Society of America is pleased to announce the recipient of this year's R. L. Shep Ethnic Textiles Book Award, ***Material Choices: Refashioning Bast and Leaf Fibers in Asia and the Pacific*** by Roy W. Hamilton and B. Lynne Milgram, editors, published in Los Angeles by The Fowler Museum at UCLA. Chosen from a field of 17 nominated titles, this book exemplifies the goal of the award to recognize exceptional scholarship in the field of ethnic textile studies.

While many books earned high scores and strong positive comments from the committee, ultimately ***Material Choices*** was selected for the stellar quality of field research and its vital contribution of new material to the field. Two books tied for second place: ***The Worldwide History of Dress*** by Patricia Rieff Anawalt, published by Thames & Hudson Ltd., and ***Uzbek Embroidery in the Nomadic Tradition*** by Kate Fitz Gibbon and Andrew Hale, published by Art Media Resources, Ltd.

Material Choices reminds us in an elegant and erudite manner that before cotton and artificial fibers subsumed the textile field, societies used a range of other materials from bast to leaf fibers. Many of the customs associated with these fibers remained embedded within those societies, but over time their use largely dwindled and only marginalized segments of populations retained their use. Today these weavers are reinterpreting their positions in terms of ethnic, gender, and national identities given the new opportunities presented by globalization. This book takes these textiles directly to the heart of current cultural studies and anthropology, fields which are re-examining such marginalized segments of a society.

Given annually to a publication judged to be the best book of the year in the field of ethnic textile studies, the award consists of a cash prize, funded by an endowment established by R. L. Shep in 2000.

Nominations for the 2008 R. L. Shep Ethnic Textiles Book Award will be accepted in March 2009.

For additional information visit the TSA website at <http://www.textilesociety.org>

Field Notes from Peru

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plants and fibers of the region, including botanical analysis, dye plants of the Andes, and naturally colored cotton. For more information on this field school check the notice on page 10. We welcome students and enthusiasts of all ages and backgrounds who want to discover Peruvian culture, both ancient and modern.

Judy M. Newland is a Faculty Associate and Exhibit Developer at the ASU Museum of Anthropology School of Human Evolution and Social Change at Arizona State University in Tempe, AZ. She can be reached at 480/965-4314 or at [Judy.Newland\(at\)asu.edu](mailto:Judy.Newland(at)asu.edu)

More New Members

Elly Sturgis
Minneapolis, MN 55405

Prue Thorner
Charlottesville, VA 22903

Verena Wieloch
Concord, MA 01742

WARP Annual Meeting

MCC Welcoming Place Visitor's Center
Akron, PA - near Lancaster
(in the heart of Pennsylvania Dutch Country)

March 13 - 15, 2009

Registration Form

(due to WARP with payment by January 25, 2009)

Name _____

Address _____

phone _____ email _____

_____ Yes, sign me up for the **2009 WARP Annual Meeting** .

I will attend the full meeting. My check for \$195 is enclosed.

(This is the member rate; see page 5 for how to become a member) -
double occupancy rate.

_____ I am attending Saturday only; my \$50 is enclosed

_____ I plan to participate in Marketplace; please reserve a table
for me.

_____ I would like to contribute to WARP's scholarship fund to help pay for
students to attend the meeting.

***January 25 is the deadline for registration. Space available, registrations will be
accepted after January 25 with a \$25 late fee. Full reimbursement can be made
for cancellations prior to February 10. Unfortunately, after that date, no
cancellation refund is possible because WARP will have
committed the number of attendees with the Conference Center.***

Please list special needs below. Be specific.

Questions? Contact Adrienne Sloan, [aonels\(at\)yahoo.com](mailto:aonels@yahoo.com)

Complete this form and send it, with your check or money order
(U.S. funds) made out to **WARP**, to:

Adrienne Sloane
Watertown, MA 02472



Weave a Real Peace
3102 Classen Boulevard
PMB 249
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

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