

# WARP



WEAVE A REAL PEACE

Volume 12, Number 1

Spring 2005

## *Traditional Use of Natural Indigo in West Africa*

Molly Martin

Participants in the 2005 WARP annual meeting will enjoy an opportunity to connect with the West African indigo dyeing traditions while visiting Ibile House on St. Helena Island.

For hundreds of years indigo and indigo-dyed cloth have been highly valued in West Africa. Archeologists have found 11<sup>th</sup> century textiles woven with indigo-dyed threads in the burial caves of the Tellem people, who preceded the Dogon in the Bandiagara Escarpment of central Mali. From Senegal to Cameroon, West Africa supports numerous long-standing traditions using natural indigo. The best quality and highest quantity of indigo cloth usually comes from regions where the various indigo plants proliferate in the wild or can be easily cultivated. Towns on major trade routes, such as St. Louis on the Senegal River and Kano in northern Nigeria, have historically enjoyed high numbers of indigo specialists as well.



### Places

1. Bandiagara Cliffs
2. St. Louis
3. Senegal River
4. Kano
5. Cross River
6. Futa Jallon
7. Labé

### Peoples

- a. Tellem, Dogon
- b. Tuareg
- c. Hausa
- d. Fula (Fulbe)
- e. Baulé
- f. Yoruba

Indigo in its harvested form is insoluble in water; it must be reduced (i.e., de-oxidized) in an alkaline solution to allow the indican (the dyeing agent that will be broken down into indoxyl and a sugar) to adhere to the fabric. When the fabric immersed in the dye-bath has absorbed the color, it is removed. Initially it appears yellowish-green, but oxidation quickly changes

*continued on page 10*

### *Mission Statement*

*To facilitate  
self-empowerment  
and betterment of  
women and  
communities-in-need  
through textile arts.*

### *Goals*

*To foster dialogue and  
support within the  
organization*

*To serve as a clearinghouse  
for information, resources,  
and technical assistance  
within the international  
textile community*

*To provide cross-  
cultural education and  
support within the  
textile community*

*To provide  
guidance in the realities  
of appropriate assistance*

*To promote appreciation of  
textiles which reflect a  
community's culture*

*To enrich the lives of  
individuals in the global  
textile community through  
cross-cultural exchange*

## ***From the WARP Office...***

***Cheryl Musch, Administrative Coordinator***

With the annual meeting fast approaching, I know many of us are excited about seeing one another again and meeting other members for the first time. The meetings are such a great opportunity to share what we're doing. To me, members at the meeting feel like old friends even if we've just met because of our common interests.

I also want to say thanks on behalf of our renewed and new Sister Member organizations and individuals. WARP members were very generous in providing memberships in 2005 for our international textile friends. We now have 15 sister members including groups from India, Kenya, Peru, Thailand, Lesotho and more. I am continually encouraged by members' support of the international textile community on so many levels.

### **WARP Governing Board**

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### ***Spin-Off Scarf Auction Benefits WARP***

The proceeds from the online sale of a "Scarf of Many Colors" were recently donated to WARP by *Spin-Off Magazine*. Amy Clarke Moore, editor of *Spin-Off*, said that the Winter 2004 issue announced the eBay auction of the "Scarf of Many Colors." *Spin-Off* readers responded with enthusiasm at the idea of an auction that would benefit WARP and bid generously throughout the week of February 14th. The auction ended on February 23rd and generated \$310.00.

Amy knitted the "Scarf of Many Colors" from nearly seventy yarns sent in by *Spin-Off's* readers for the Fall 2004 Your Yarn department, which features painted roving, locks, and yarn. Names of those contributing yarns for the scarf are listed on *Spin-Off's* website at [http://www.interweave.com/spin/events/Your\\_Yarn\\_Scarf.asp](http://www.interweave.com/spin/events/Your_Yarn_Scarf.asp)



"What a thrill to knit up a scarf that captures the diversity and skill of the *Spin-Off* readership," Amy said. "Sometimes it was hard to stick to my knitting because I wanted to go to my wheel and try to make a yarn like the one I was using at the moment. It was amazing to see how yarns of every shape, color, and fiber came together to create this wild and comfy scarf." To do the project, Amy used Charlene Anderson-Shea's pattern in her article "Spontaneous Knitting: Making the Most of Sample Skeins and Leftover Yarns," from the Winter 2002 issue of *Spin-Off*.

Amy writes that they hope to include a letter from the winning bidder in the Summer 2005 issue of *Spin-Off* about her plans for the scarf.

### **WARP on the Web**

***<http://www.weavershand.com/warp.html>***

## ***Nominations Submitted for WARP Board; Election to be Held at Business Meeting***

Nominating committee members Beth Davis and Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland have submitted the names of four candidates for consideration for board positions to be filled at the 2005 Annual Meeting. Terms are ending for three members, and the board has decided to expand the size of the board from five to six as allowed in WARP's by-laws.

Sarah Saulson, a current WARP board member whose term expires in 2005, has agreed to serve a second term in this capacity. Sarah lives in Syracuse, NY, where she operates a small weaving and dyeing studio. She also teaches weaving at Syracuse University and for guild workshops. She has been weaving since childhood, and as an anthropology major in college has been interested in the developing world for many years. Sarah finds her involvement in WARP deeply inspiring and rewarding.

Deborah Brandon, from Pittsburgh, PA, was born in England, moved to Switzerland and then to Israel when she was six. She has lived in the U.S. since 1984. Deborah is married and a mother of two, a 12 year old and a 10 year old. She's also a mathematician and has been a faculty member in the Mathematical Sciences Department at Carnegie Mellon University since 1991. Deborah is primarily a weaver, but also knits, spins, felts, crochets, and likes to "mess around" with surface design and dyeing. Deborah has been the editor of the "Textiles Around the World" column for the past two years.

Adrienne Sloane, from Watertown, MA, is a knit artist who has shown her art-to-wear throughout the Northeast as well as serving on local arts boards including being a founding board member of Arsenal Center for the Arts, a theater and visual arts center. She has travelled extensively throughout Europe and Asia. Adrienne is excited to be nominated to the board and welcomes the chance to continue to marry her textile and third world interests through serving WARP.

Linda Temple, from Oklahoma City, OK, was a founding board member of WARP and has been editor of the WARP newsletter since 1999. She is a spinner and a weaver and is passionate about ethnic textiles and the people who make them. She is also an active proponent of fair trade. Linda recently completed a degree in Library and Information Studies and works as an reference librarian.

Departing board members are Marcia Bellas and Hope Thomas. Marcia has served almost two terms as a board member and has been instrumental in organizing and managing the annual WARP auction. She also coordinated Marketplace at Annual Meetings for many years. Hope coordinated the 2001 Annual Meeting in New Hampshire, has served as a board member since 2002, and has been a member of WARP for more than ten years.

The election of board members will be held at the Annual Business meeting on Sunday, April 17. Nominations can also be made at that time.

### **2005 Annual Business Meeting Agenda**

Sunday, April 17  
Penn Center  
10:00 to 12:00

- Approval of 2004 Minutes; discussion of year's activities
- Financial Report
- Election of Board Members
- Plans for coming year, including next meeting
- Other Business

Send additions or corrections to the Agenda to Cheryl Musch (contact information in sidebar on page 2).



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The deadline for contribu-  
tions to the Summer 2005  
WARP newsletter is  
**May 27.**

Send articles and copies of  
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Information about an  
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this newsletter does not  
constitute an endorsement  
by WARP.

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

## **Reviving Indigo Use in El Salvador**

*Maria Elena de Trabanino*

In September 2004, El Salvador had the great honor to host the first *International Indigo and Other Natural Colorants Congress*. It was a very enriching experience, being able to share with people from all over the world, all united by the same interest: indigo and natural colorants.

El Salvador has been an indigo producing country since pre-colonial times. From the 17th to the 19th century, it was the largest indigo exporter in the world. All this changed when synthetic colors appeared on the international market and indigo was no more in demand.

Presently, steps are being taken to give indigo back the importance it once had. Many institutions and growers are now joining forces to rescue indigo plantations. Because of its high quality and value as a natural colorant, Salvadorian indigo is responding well to the demands of consumers who prefer environmentally friendly products.

One of the highlights of the Congress was the sharing of experiences on subjects like cultural rescue, agricultural diversification, employment, market opportunities, and artisan development, among others.

In the last few years, local and international institutions have been promoting seminars and workshops to reactivate the indigo industry. As a result of these initiatives, a new association called "Amigos del Añil" (amigosdelanil@yahoo.com.mx) was organized in November 2002. This association was formed by people who attended the different workshops and are now working together in the promotion and development of indigo and other natural colorants.

Likewise, there are some artisans and designers who are working together to rescue the use of the natural dyes and finding new ways and techniques to apply them to textiles, wood, ceramic, paper, leather, and many other materials. We now have in El Salvador a few workshops that teach on-going courses on dyeing with indigo and other natural colorants. Also here in El Salvador, there are some workshops that teach courses on dyeing with indigo and other natural colorants using different techniques, like shibori, batik, paste, and knots.

On the west side of the country at the Casablanca Museum, people are now able to see how indigo is extracted and participate in a dyeing workshops. Casablanca is also an indigo research center where school children and university students can go and learn about indigo. There will soon be guided tours to visit indigo farms, where the process of extracting the blue colorant from indigo will also be shown.



**Indigo and  
natural colorants  
woven by Yuk**

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## ***Inuit Skin Embroidery***

The Inuit live within the Arctic Circle and still use skin apparel to meet the rigors of the Arctic environment. One of the main forms of embellishment for boots, mittens, pants, and parkas is known as skin embroidery (beadwork is also extremely common). Strictly speaking, this method isn't really embroidery—it is actually applique of fine strips of skin to form an intricate mosaic, at times interwoven. The patterns are handed down within the family, and are geometric in nature. The designs and motifs used can be traditional for the type of garment, for the age and sex of the wearer, or for the geographical location.

An animal's fur color, length, and texture varies depending on its age and sex, the season, and the types of food it has consumed. Seamstresses use this natural variety to their advantage, and further expand it by shearing the fur to varying lengths, and by dyeing fur and skin in different colors using natural and chemical dyes (red being the most popular color). Attractive combinations for borders and inlays are formed by apposition of strips of varying fur length, texture, and color.

The pattern of the mosaic is made up of squares and rectangles approximately one millimeter wide that are pieced together by hand (similarly to patchwork quilts though on a much finer scale) in a wide variety of combinations. An accomplished seamstress achieves subtle color and textural combinations, and uses practically invisible stitches.

Another form of skin decoration, similar in appearance to skin embroidery but less work intensive, is known as slit weaving, where slits are made in a band of skin and contrasting strips of skin are threaded or woven through the slits. When textiles, braid, and tape became available, they were incorporated into the same decoration techniques.

### Resources:

Issenman, Betty Kobayashi. *Sinews of Survival: The Living Legacy of Inuit Clothing*, UBC Press.

Druchunas, Donna. "Needleworkers of the North: The Inupiat and Yup'ik of Alaska." *Piecework* January/February 2005

<http://www.aaanativearts.com/article359.html> (accessed 27 March 2003)

<http://www.educ.uvic.ca/connections/Conn95/01-zuk.html> (accessed 27 March 2003)

<http://www.batashoemuseum.ca/collectindex.html> (accessed 27 March 2003)

**Deborah Brandon can be reached at 412/967-1578 (phone); or at [brandon@asd6.math.cmu.edu](mailto:brandon@asd6.math.cmu.edu) (email).**

### **Weave A Real Peace**

#### Membership Information

#### **2005 Annual Dues**

\$10 (simple living)  
\$20 (U.S. and Canada)  
\$25 (international;  
sister memberships)  
\$30 (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 with information on members' interests and activities, and a quarterly newsletter.

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 U.S. funds payable to **WARP** to:

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

## ***Funding Connections***

*In response to Cheryl Musch's request for funding needs, Deborah Chandler, Guatemala country coordinator for Mayan Hands, sent the following wish list. Also note the needs of the Indonesian textile groups on page 13. Mayan Hands is a fair trade enterprise founded in 1989 which strives to provide a modest but regular income for traditional backstrap weavers in Guatemala. Currently Mayan Hands works with approximately 200 women in a dozen communities.*

### ***WARP Slide Show***

The WARP slide show and video are booked for March and April of 2005. It will be going to eight different states. Some are repeat showings.

Sign up now to be sure you can have the show when you want for your weaving or church group, friends, or family.

To reserve the show in slide, VHS, or CD format, contact Carole Pierce, cpierce@mis.net (email); 859/986-8666 (phone).

If you know of a textile group in need, maybe one with whom you've worked, let Cheryl 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.

Hmm, well, since you asked...

One of our biggest problems right now is transportation for Clemente and Micaela when doing their field work. Or coming into the city, for that matter.

Clemente has a car that was not designed for the kind of traveling he does, and the poor thing is very near death. We spent thousands of quetzales—and dollars!—last year keeping it going, but at this point the list of what it needs really soon, which includes a total overhaul, is horrific, and would cost far more than the car is worth. Not to mention, he would still have the wrong car for the job. It is a Nissan Stanza, and what he needs is a pickup, two or four wheel drive, with at least an extended (if not double) cab.

Micaela, on the other hand, has no car at all. She knows how to drive, so getting her one is reasonable. Right now she has to walk from her home on a mountain top above Nahualá down into town (there are no buses) to get to our rented space there, and when she is going to the villages where the women work must take a series of buses and then rent local pickups or whatever she can find when she gets close enough that there are no buses available. It makes for slow and difficult going, not to mention more dangerous. (A recent survey here came up with 60% of bus passengers having been robbed while on buses, and Micaela was robbed once while in a taxi!) She needs a four wheel drive vehicle just to be able to get to and from home reliably, and I would vote for something small and enclosed, like a Suzuki Something or the like.

In both cases, used vehicles in good condition would be better than new, as new vehicles are a screaming invitation to car thieves. They could be bought outside and shipped in, which would mean we had to pay the import taxes here, or they could be bought here. In general, used cars cost more here than in the U.S., so buying them there and shipping them is often a better idea, unlikely as that sounds. The government has a website where you can type in the age and model of car you want to ship in and it will tell you how much it will cost.

We want the vehicles to belong to Clemente and Micaela, not to Mayan Hands, for a whole assortment of legal and practical reasons. I don't know if that would bother any would-be donors or not. We have a foundation in the US who is funneling donation money to us, since we do not have a 501(c)3 there, and that might make a difference to a donor.

So that's what is on my/our wish list for this year.

***Deborah Chandler lives in Guatemala City and can be contacted by mail at PO Box 591828/M131, Miami, Florida 33159-1828, or by email at mhands@intelnett.com***

# Empowering Traditional Communities in Indonesia

Jean Howe

The global response to the tsunami that struck Sumatra on 26 December 2004 continues to be incredible. Donations have poured into Indonesia, and domestic and international agencies have brought all their resources to bear upon the emergency. This, however, has unavoidably drawn personnel and the attention of decision makers away from other areas of the country.

"My heart breaks for my brothers and sisters in Sumatra," said Daniel Landu Praing of Sumba. "And I am sad for us as well as more years will now go by and we will be forgotten."

Daniel was sharing ideas during a five-day photographic documentation training the Yayasan Pecinta Budaya Bebal organized in February in Bali. Thirty participants were invited from weaving communities on seven islands. They learned how to take pictures using a simple \$20 point-and-shoot camera, and how to tell a story using photographs.

Sustainability of the traditional textile arts is intimately related to the continuation of traditional culture and the preservation of oral traditions that carry the culture. As oral traditions begin to fail, one way to catalyze renewed interest is to develop an appropriate means of documentation that re-stimulates conversation within the community and encourages the participation of young people. Photography provides this means while maintaining room for the diverse threads of an oral tradition to flourish. Having a community record its own events gives people the freedom to capture what is important from their perspective. Where the local, traditional point of view is so often ignored, this process can be incredibly empowering.

Since the February workshop participants have turned in assignments with some exciting results. Patrecia Siba, a weaver in Kalimantan, photographed the revival of an important ceremony performed during the red dye process. Daniel David, leader of the Bliran Sina Cooperative in Flores, documented traditional medicinal plants used to treat cysts and diabetes.

Before the workshop was even over, the participants had formed themselves into the Assosiasi Fotografer Budaya (Association of Photographers of Traditional Culture), and it is towards the development of this organization that future work will focus. Two highly qualified and passionate Indonesian professional photographers, Poriaman Sitanggang and Beata Bernia, will continue to work with the association's members and are now developing further curricula. Funding is being developed to cover operational expenses, including film and processing costs.



photo by Patrecia Siba

## At the Textile Museum

April 2, 11:00 a.m.  
Public Gallery Talk & Tour;  
April 17, 10:30 a.m.  
Special Exhibition Tour:  
"Textiles for This World  
and Beyond:  
Treasures from Insular  
Southeast Asia"

April 9, 10:30 a.m.  
Rug & Textile Appreciation:  
"Potpourri: Carpets  
from the Middle East"  
Gerald Thompson

April 16, 10:30 a.m.  
Rug & Textile Appreciation:  
"Cloth Containers  
from Turkey, India and  
Japan"  
Sheridan Collins

April 23, 10:30 a.m.  
Rug & Textile Appreciation:  
"A Contemporary  
Artist's Approach to Rug  
Design"  
Sara Schneidman

April 30, 10:30 a.m.  
Rug & Textile Appreciation:  
"Indigenous Textiles  
of Mali"

For more information  
about these and other  
events, go to the Textile  
Museum website at  
[www.textilemuseum.com](http://www.textilemuseum.com)

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## ***Alice Brown: Weaver and Traveler One Bridge, Many Journeys...***

**Mary Kelly**

Alice Brown, weaver, traveler and networker, perfectly exemplifies our idea of a “bridge builder.” In her long and fruitful life, she has visited many countries, knitting in hand. Language barriers were bridged and lasting friendships forged through her interest in weaving.

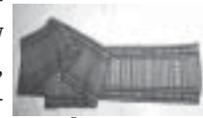
Alice crossed her first bridge to the international community after graduation from college. She accepted a job teaching children of American missionaries for three years in the Belgian Congo. On her return, she married a high-school classmate whose work took them to Des Moines, IA. There, her experience in a weaving class at the local art center left her “hooked” on weaving. In the late 50’s a revival of weaving was underway and Mary Meigs Atwater, Marguerite Davidson and others were prominent in this effort.

She often accompanied her husband to sites where he had research projects in seed genetics. While he visited the corn fields, she was left with employees who, seeing her knitting, showed their own handiwork or took her to a weaving site such as a rug factory in Romania, a factory in India where silk saris were woven, and the Aubusson and Gobelin tapestry works in France. She also visited local museums such as the National Handicrafts and Handlooms Museum in New Delhi, and The Coptic Museum in Cairo. A trip to New Zealand inspired her to purchase fleece to share with local spinners. Her husband suggested that she buy a large quantity and set up her own shop. Coincidentally, her friend Kathy Barth, author of *Traveling Bolivia through the Wonders of Weaving*, was selling her craft shop at that time, so in 1982, Alice bought the shop and gave classes in weaving, tatting, knitting, and spinning.

In 1994, Alice moved to a retirement facility in Haverford, PA. Their craft room, fully equipped with looms and warping boards, made it possible for her to continue weaving and teaching. She also demonstrated spinning and weaving to school children, her favorite audiences. Usually Alice began her program with a question - “Where do your clothes come from other than the store?”

She hopes they were enlightened as she showed them plants and fibers, how to card, spin, and weave. She recalls a memorable experience while spinning when a student who could see the wheel turning but not her foot on the treadle asked “Where is the battery?”

Before moving to Asheville, NC in 2002, Alice had time and energy left for a few more trips, but one was special - celebrating her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in Bhutan with a Textile Museum tour. This involved going around the world in three weeks via Los Ange-



***Handwoven runner from Bhutan, which Alice donated to a recent WARP auction.***

### ***New Members***

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## **RUGMARK USA Awarded \$440,000 to Expand Consumer Awareness**

Washington, DC – March 18, 2005 – Rugmark USA announced today that it has won the 2005 Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship in the amount of \$440,000.

Rugmark's mission is to end illegal child labor in the hand-made carpet industry and offer educational opportunities to children in India, Nepal, and Pakistan. The Skoll funding, which covers a three-year period, is for expanding U.S. consumer awareness about Rugmark-certified, child labor-free rugs. The project is expected to result in the rescue of thousands of South Asian children from forced labor and offer them the chance to go to school.

Rugmark is one of 13 organizations receiving a total of \$7.3 million from the Skoll Foundation through an open competitive process that identifies social entrepreneurs who have piloted innovative programs and are ready to take the next steps toward systemic social change. The awards will be presented on March 31st at the second annual Skoll World Forum on Social Entrepreneurship at Oxford University in England. Nina Smith, Rugmark USA's Executive Director, will join other leaders in social entrepreneurship from around the world to set the future agenda for visionaries who want to transform society.

"It's an incredible honor to be selected as a Skoll Foundation awardee," said Smith. "The grant funds will enable us to reach consumers on a much broader scale and offer them the choice to purchase rugs free from child exploitation." Smith believes Rugmark's specific mission will also draw attention to broader human rights concerns in overseas manufacturing.

The Skoll Foundation's mission is to advance systemic change benefiting communities around the world by investing in, connecting and celebrating social entrepreneurs, who are individuals dedicated to creating new solutions that result in lasting improvements to complex social problems.

***Rugmark is dedicated to ending illegal child labor in the carpet industry. Its program certifies child labor-free carpets, rescues and rehabilitates working children, and gives consumers the choice to purchase carpets bearing the Rugmark label. Rugmark offices are located in the U.S., U.K., Germany, India, Nepal, and Pakistan. More information is available at [www.rugmark.org](http://www.rugmark.org).***

### **Alice Brown: Weaver and Traveler** *continued from page 8*

les to Bhutan and stopping over in India on her own. Although weaving is universal though not fully appreciated, she poses this question: "Why should weaving be so important to everyone?" Her answer: "If spinning and weaving didn't exist, we would all be wearing the 'Emperor's new clothes.' Weave on !!!," says Alice.

Alice will join us in April for the WARP meeting. Do sit down and talk to this dynamic lady while you are there.

**Mary Kelly can be reached at 7 Hickory LE, Hilton Head, SC 29928' 843/785-8383 (phone); [kellym13@juno.com](mailto:kellym13@juno.com) (email).**

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## **Traditional Use of Indigo in West Africa**

*continued from page 1*

### **More New Members**

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#### Places

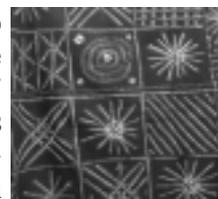
1. Bandiagara Cliffs
2. St. Louis
3. Senegal River
4. Kano
5. Cross River
6. Futa Jallon
7. Labé

#### Peoples

- a. Tellem, Dogon
- b. Tuareg
- c. Hausa
- d. Fula (Fulbe)
- e. Baulé
- f. Yoruba

it to blue. In the book *Adire Cloth in Nigeria*, Nancy Stanfield thoroughly describes the complex steps of Yoruba women in creating mordant ash balls; these are used in preparing the fermented alkaline water that will be added to the water in the dye-pot. She also describes the production of the dye balls from the *elu* leaves. Clear diagrams illustrate the kiln and pots. The resulting coldwater dye lasts approximately five days. Cloth is immersed 3-4 times and then dried in the sun; this procedure is repeated until the correct color is achieved. Subsequent dyeing in a new pot yields a darker (more prized) blue and results in a more expensive textile. Ulli Beier relates that women who keep their dye 'alive' a long time have 'a good hand.' The dye needs constant testing and those *alaros* whose dye gets tired too soon and dies (!) have 'a bad hand'.

Designs found on West African indigo cloths vary from the solid deep blue of the nomadic Tuareg (known as the 'Blue Men' because the excess indigo of their garments rubs off on their skin) to the extremely intricate patterns of the St. Louis cloths from Senegal. Among the most well known indigo patterned cloths are the resist-dyed *adire* (meaning 'to take, to tie and to dye'), which have used factory-woven cotton for almost 100 years. Methods of resist include *adire oniko*, in which designs are tied with strands of raffia; *adire alabere*, a stitch resist; and *adire eleko*, on which traditional designs are expertly applied with cassava paste using a chicken feather and other simple tools before dyeing. Individual design elements as well as the overall cloth are given names with cultural meanings. Men are involved with design when metal stencils are used with the cassava paste.



***Adire cloth - Traditional designs used by Yoruba women by stitching with raffia thread on commercial cotton fabric.***

Spirituality and healing are significant elements of the indigo cloths and the indigo itself. Indigo on the skin of the Tuareg was thought to have medicinal benefits. For Yoruba women, a newly dyed indigo wrapper was believed to help one overcome problems of conception. Indigo is the color of the Yoruba deity Yemoja and Yoruba *adire* specialists honor Iya Mapo, the goddess who protects women artisans.

Other established indigo regions include peoples of the Cross River area of southeastern Nigeria. There men who belong to the Leopard Society commission *ukara* cloths characterized by quadrants of ideographs called *nsibidi*. Women specialists tie the *nsibidi* symbols into the cloth with raffia before dyeing the cloth in indigo.

Among the Hausa of northern Nigeria, men are the indigo dyers. Their famous outdoor dye pits in Kano have been in use for more than 500 years. Most of the indigo cloth worn throughout the Sahara Desert up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century is said

*Continued on page 11*

## ***A Short Reading List of Gullah Culture***

Those attending the annual meeting April 15-17 on St. Helena Island off the coast of South Carolina might want to visit their local library or bookstore to read up on the area.

One book, recommended by Tori Derr and seconded by Linda Temple, is ***Mama Day*** by Gloria Naylor. Set on one of the Sea Islands that has remained in the ownership of its black residents as an almost separate entity from the mainland, this novel focuses on the lives of the island people, particularly the women, and on a young woman who left. The story captures a feeling of magical realism that makes for great reading.

Molly Martin recommends ***Legacy of Ibo Landing: Gullah Roots of African American Culture***, edited by Marquette L. Goodwine. This book is described on Amazon.com as "A rich potpourri of articles and paintings on Gullah art, history, fiction, recipes, and language along with social commentary which clarifies the struggle for cultural survival mounted over time by this most African of African American cultures."

## **Traditional Use of Indigo in West Africa**

*continued from page 10*

to have originated in Kano because of its location on the trans-Saharan trade routes, according to John Gillow. Certainly the Tuareg were major clients.

At the 13<sup>th</sup> Triennial Symposium on African Art held in April 2004, Professor Tavy Aherne of Indiana University presented a paper on her research into indigo and its surrounding culture in the Futa Jallon highlands of Guinea. There the town of Labé gains its prestige in indigo from the Fula (Fulbe) dyers.

The Baulé of the Ivory Coast dye warp threads in an *ikat* resist; this use of indigo greatly enhances their strip-woven cloth.

Throughout West Africa, indigo has a long and fascinating history. The skill, labor, creativity and passion involved in its use have produced cloth as stunningly beautiful as any textiles in the world.

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**Molly Martin can be reached at 38 Eaton Road, Lexington, MA 02420; 781/861-0190 (phone); mollymartin@hotmail.com (email)**

## ***More New Members***

Judith Simon  
1712 Livingston  
Evanston, IL 60201  
simonyes@aol.com

Sue & Chris Smith  
4 Oak Creek Dr.  
S. Burlington, VT 05403

Kristin Sponsler  
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Malvern, PA 19355

Vermont Weavers Guild  
2464 Sanders Rd.  
Bethel, VT 05032

Deanna Wagoner  
8 Blaine Ct.  
Charleston, SC 29407  
843/556-7779  
clownsazaar@netzero.com

Susan Weaver  
Warp Seed Studio  
111 Wellington Rd.  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
717/392-2143  
warpseedweave@aol.com

## **Common Thread Thanks Friends, Neighbors for Support for Trip**

Karen Sutherland reports that friends and neighbors have responded generously to Common Thread Cultural Connection's fundraising campaign to send four musicians to Romania to forge new friendships through folk music, fiber art, visual art, and written word to nursing homes and orphanages in the Carpathian Mountains of Transylvania.

The group set a fundraising goal of \$12,000 which they hoped to attain by the end of March. "We now have enough to buy four round-trip plane tickets to Budapest, mostly from private donations," says co-founder Karen Sutherland. "The number of concerts we can provide and the way we document the project will depend on gaining the rest." The group departs for Romania on March 28 and will return home on April 16.

*For more information, contact Karen Sutherland at P.O. Box 123 Monkton, VT 05469; karensu@sover.net. Tax deductible donations can be made to: The Willowell Foundation, c/o Common Thread Cultural Connections, P.O. Box 314, Bristol, VT 05443*

### **More New Members**

Weavers Guild of Rochester  
PO Box 18703  
Rochester, NY 14618  
www.weaversguildof  
rochester.org

Joan Williams  
63 Ocean Crest Dr.  
Ormond Beach, FL 32176  
386/441-3117

Lynda Faye Winslow  
1442A Walnut #373  
Berkeley, CA 94709

### **New Sister Members**

Please see WARP directory  
for contact information

Alola Foundation  
East Timor

Bridge of Hope Fair Trade  
Project  
Peru

Elelloang Basali Weavers  
Lesotho

Thai Tribal Crafts  
Thailand

Women's Education for  
Advancement  
and Empowerment  
(WEAVE)  
Thailand

---clip and save---

### **WARP Newsletter - Author Guidelines**

#### **Article lengths**

Lead story (up to two pages, with one-two small photos)

- 600-750 words

One page (with one small photo) - 400-500 words

1/3 page - 150 words

Side-bars - 100 words

#### **Photos or other graphics**

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

#### **Deadlines for receipt of copy - Volume 12**

(subject to change):

V12N2 - The deadline for contributions to the Summer WARP newsletter is **May 27, 2005**. The Summer newsletter will be mailed by the end of May.

V12N3 - The deadline for contributions to the Fall WARP newsletter is **August 12, 2005**. The newsletter will be mailed in mid-September.

V10N4 - The deadline for contributions to the Winter WARP newsletter is **November 4, 2005**. The Winter newsletter will be mailed in mid-November.

#### **Advertising Rates on page 13.**

*Unsolicited information for publication that will be of interest to WARP members is encouraged. Please email articles to LGTemple@juno.com*

## ***Please Send Photos for WARP's Website***

Board member Melinda Lowrey writes: "As you may have heard, your WARP co-members are revising the web site. We expect to complete our work soon but in the meantime are in need of photographs of weavers, spinners, textiles, and/or textile workers. Would you like to contribute some of your photos to help adorn our web site? If so, please send your photo in jpg format to [rosegerstner@directway.com](mailto:rosegerstner@directway.com)"

**Contact information for Melinda is on page 2.**

## **Empowering Traditional Communities in Indonesia** *continued from page 7*

What is clear is that many participants will soon outgrow the limitations of their point-and-shoot cameras. Depending on local circumstances, the next step will either be a 35 mm single lens reflex camera or a simple digital camera. As many in the West have been buying new, more advanced cameras in recent years, we are seeking donations of film cameras or old digital cameras to fulfill these needs.

The wish list includes: Digital cameras and 35 mm SLR camera bodies; lenses for the 35 mm SLR cameras, such as 50 mm lenses, macro lenses, 17-135 mm zoom and 70-200 mm zoom lenses; and tripods.

If you have any cameras that you would like to donate, please send them to Beata who will bring them to Indonesia in June:

Beata Bernina; 847B 12th Street; Santa Monica, CA 90403

Send the Yayasan Pecinta Budaya Bebali your name and address so we can thank you and show you how your camera is being used.

In peace, Jean Howe and the staff of Yayasan Pecinta Budaya Bebali and Threads of Life

*Threads of Life is a fair trade business based in Bali, Indonesia, that works directly with hundreds of weavers to empower women through the commissioning of natural-dyed textiles. The Yayasan Pecinta Budaya Bebali is an Indonesian nonprofit that researches traditional textile arts and records, tests, adapts, and teaches traditional dye recipes; and facilitates an ongoing dialogue between weavers and dyers of different traditions. Kubu Roda, Jalan Bisma #3, Ubud, Bali, Indonesia 80571; [tac@threadsoflife.com](mailto:tac@threadsoflife.com) (email)*

## ***Welcome Back...***

Dorothy Gill Barnes  
33 Wilson Drive  
Worthington, OH 24450

Dorothy asks WARP members, "Can we help weavers in Iraq? How?"

She also has a granddaughter who is her third month in the Peace Corps in Moldova. She asks, "Are any of you WARP folks knowledgeable about weaving projects in Moldova?"

## **WARP Newsletter Ad Rates**

For WARP members:

Business card - \$6/issue; \$22 for 4 issues;

1/4 page - \$11/issue; \$40 for 4 issues;

1/2 page - \$18/issue; \$65 for 4 issues;

Full page - \$30/issue; \$108 for 4 issues;

Classified - \$1.50 per line for members (50 spaces)

Rates for non-WARP members are double the above figures.

All rates are for camera-ready copy.

## Sister Memberships Available

We have six sister memberships that are still available for 2005. You can be a sponsor by funding a \$25 membership for an international textile organization. If you know of an international group who is involved in textile arts and could benefit from connecting with WARP and receiving our newsletter, please send complete contact information to Cheryl Musch (contact information on page 2), including group name, contact name, mailing address, email address, phone, fax, and web site. A sentence or two about the group would also be very helpful.

### **Thanks to...**

Jackie Abrams, Marcia Bellas, Carolyn Collins, Donna Duke, Helen Dunbar, Sara Goodman, Carol Hayman, Brecia Kralovic-Logan, Melinda Lowrey, Carole Pierce, Printha Platt, and Kathleen Waln for their sponsorship of sister memberships.

### **Volunteer(s) needed to Coordinate WARP Online Auction**

Marcia Bellas and Mary Kelly have been working together for the past three years to coordinate the fantastic WARP auction, a major fundraiser for the organization. They are now retiring and we need volunteers to keep this great tradition going. If you are interested in creating the auction website (Mary's job), or in coordinating donations, bidding, and purchases (Marcia's job), please contact the appropriate person.

*Contact information for Marcia Bellas is 489 W. Hill Rd.; Worcester, VT 05682; 802/223-5158 (phone); marciabellas@verizon.net (email). Mary Kelly can be reached at 7 Hickory LE, Hilton Head, SC 29928; 843/785-8383 (phone); kellym13@juno.com (email).*

### **Reviving Indigo Use in El Salvador** *continued from page 4*

In El Salvador the foot powered loom was introduced by the Spaniards. By tradition only men weave with this kind of loom. On the other hand, the back strap loom of pre-colonial origin is used exclusively by women.

In 1997, our workshop **Taller textile Aracne** was born. We are a group of non-traditional women weavers who, working with rigid heddle and the traditional foot powered looms, have developed a unique weaving project in our country. From the beginning, in our workshop we have introduced weaving techniques that were not known here at the time.

Since the indigo and natural dye boom started, our work as weavers has been very much enriched. For weaving some of our products like placemats, runners, napkins, pillowcases, shawls, throws, scarves, etc., we use yarn dyed with natural colorants. Our textile project is of great value in the national and international market because our products are woven entirely with yarns dyed with natural colorants. While other products offered in the market are made with industrial materials ours are completely handmade and environmentally friendly.

*Maria Elena de Trabanino is a WARP member who lives in El Salvador. She can be reached at metra263@msn.com*

## ***Nabuur Coordinates Virtual Volunteer Opportunities***

An article in the January 27 issue of the *New York Times* by Douglas Heingartner, gives information about Nabuur, a Dutch nongovernmental organization begun in 2001 that “strives to be an anti-hierarchical, self-organizing, open-source network whose volunteers help people in the developing world directly, based on what those people ask of them.”

“I’m interested in a new organizational concept,’ said Nabuur’s founder, Siegfried Woldhek, ‘where a local community calls the shots’ in determining the advice or assistance they want.

“As for the volunteers, Mr. Woldhek said: ‘People want to connect more directly to a cause, but the institutional forms that exist can’t let them in. They would like to, but they don’t know how.’

“The Internet ‘has now made it thinkable to connect hundreds of thousands of places, directly, to millions of people,’ he added. ‘But we don’t have the systems to help hundreds of millions of people, and that is the sort of scale we need to look at.’

“By embracing the open-source concept (other popular examples of which include the Linux operating system, the Firefox browser, and Wikipedia, an online encyclopedia), Mr. Woldhek, who previously directed the Dutch branch of the World Wildlife Fund, hopes Nabuur will eventually take on the self-organizing characteristics of a real neighborhood, eliminating the need for a central controller. (The organization’s name, he pointed out, is an old Dutch word for neighbor).

“Each new Nabuur village gets help establishing an Internet connection, often through a satellite phone link, either in the village or in a specially equipped jeep that makes local rounds. Mr. Woldhek said that in some areas, villagers will walk to a neighboring village once a week to reach a phone line.

“Villagers appoint representatives to communicate with Nabuur’s virtual volunteers, on projects like how to start a youth computer-training center, improve local water quality or better integrate the village’s disabled people. The assumption is that small communities can carry out many public-works projects by themselves if provided with the right information.”

The full text of the article is available online at <http://www.artcamp.com.mx/Nabuur/NYT/> The website for Nabuur is [www.Nabuur.com](http://www.Nabuur.com)

### ***Thanks to...***

Marcia Bellas, Peggy Coffey, Lucy Daley, Bonnie Eadie, the Memphis Guild of Handloom Weavers and Joan Leon, Monica Milam, and Denise Richards for their support of WARP and Guatemalan weavers by hosting UPAVIM and Mayan Hands sales. More than \$1900 was contributed to WARP as a result of these sales. Also, a big thank you to Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland who donates generously of her time and energy to make raising funds for WARP possible through these sales.

*Spin-Off Magazine* for their generous donation of \$310, the proceeds from the sale of the “Scarf of Many Colors.” See page 2 for more information.

### **WARP Brochures Available**

If you would like copies of WARP’s brochure to distribute to your guild or at local conferences, please contact the WARP office:  
Cheryl Musch, 3209 Atwood Avenue,  
Madison, WI 53704; 608/244-7817 (phone); 305/768-8470 (fax);  
[warp@yachana.org](mailto:warp@yachana.org) (email)



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

**See you at the 2005 Annual Meeting on the Sea Islands of South Carolina -  
 April 16-17!**

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