

WARP



WEAVE A REAL PEACE

Volume 11, Number 4

Winter 2004

Annual Meeting at Penn Center Promises Great Location, Content

Weave A Real Peace is pleased that our next annual meeting will be held at historic Penn Center on St. Helena Island, South Carolina, from April 15-17, 2005. Penn Center is located on the site of one of the country's first school for freed slaves and is one of the most significant African American historical and cultural institutions in existence today. Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1974, it is a part of the Penn School Historic District.

The mission of the Center is "to promote and preserve the history and culture of the Sea Islands. We serve as a local, national and international resource center, and act as a catalyst for the development of programs for self-sufficiency." (from the Penn Center website at www.penncenter.com)

Tentative programs for the WARP meeting will include a visit to the Ibile Indigo House, an indigo processing studio utilizing traditional West African organic indigo dyeing techniques. Indigo production began in the South around 1640 and by the mid-to-late 1700s was a boom crop. Sea Island indigo cultivation was labor intensive, depending on the dye processing skills of African slaves.

More than 50 varieties of indigo grow worldwide. Unlike other natural dyes, indigo is compatible with every type of natural fiber. We will explore African indigo traditions as well as learn about current indigo projects in other countries.

St. Helena Island is home to Sea Island Gullah culture, and we will hear about the historical connections of the Gullah people to their ancestors in Sierra Leone, West Africa. Many of us have long been fascinated with Gullah culture, and our meeting will give us a wonderful opportunity to visit the area and learn more.

The region is also known for Sea Island sweetgrass baskets. These intricate and beautiful patterned baskets originated on the coasts of West Africa, and the technique has been passed generation to generation.

All this is in addition to the best part of WARP meetings—a wonderful gathering of the most interesting people you'll ever meet from across the country. We hope you will plan to join us for what promises to be a great meeting! Watch for more information in a special annual meeting mailing soon.

WARP Board Member Hope Thomas writes about her recollections of the Gullah people, and there's info about a movie featuring this culture, on page 2.

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***

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From the WARP Office....

Cheryl Musch, Administrative Coordinator

Happy Holidays! We're looking ahead to an exciting year in 2005. Our next annual meeting promises to be an incredible learning opportunity (see page 1). I hope you can join us. Our meetings are always a highlight for WARP members.

It will soon be time to renew your WARP membership for 2005. Watch for your renewal mailing soon. When you renew, please share any feedback or ideas you have about WARP. Since our members **are** WARP, your input is vital! Also, consider an end-of-year contribution to sustain WARP's work.

Third Annual Online Auction Raises \$1000!

Marcia Bellas

Although the proceeds of WARP's annual auctions have declined each year, our third on-line auction still raised \$1,000 in support of the organization's operating expenses. This year, 53 beautiful items were offered for sale. They included a lovely jacket from Nepal, colorful Ewe kente placements, shimmering silk yardage from India, and pouches, purses, and scarves from around the world! WARP members made some of the items, but members purchased most of them in their travels or at fair-trade outlets. Please keep the WARP auction in mind as you travel, shop at fair trade outlets, or clean your cupboards.

This year, 25 people placed 68 bids on the items offered for sale. We again posted bids on the auction website so that bidders could monitor their bids. The most popular item was a print of a back strap weaver created by WARP member, Marilyn Anderson. After six bids, the item sold for \$80. Other favorites were a Guatemalan back strap loom donated by Alice Brown, and indigo yardage and placemats, both from Ghana and donated by Steve Csipke.

Thanks go to Mary Kelly for again creating a wonderful auction web page complete with music. Thanks also to those who bid and told others about the event. We are especially grateful to the following people for donating items to the auction: Marilyn Anderson, Marcia Bellas, Deborah Brandon (eleven items), Alice Brown (five items), Christina Conklin (two items), Steve Csipke (two items), Susan Schaefer Davis, Donna Duke (seven items), Elizabeth Hoffman, Lolli Jacobsen (two items), Mary Kelly (two items), Susan Loring-Wells (two items), Nicole McGrath, Candy Meacham, Janet Rodina (two items), Sarah Saulson (two items), SERRV International, Linda Temple (two items), and Susan Weltman (six items). Thank you all!

After three years, Mary Kelly and I are ready to pass the auction torch to other WARP members. 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 in box at left. Mary Kelly can be reached at 7 Hickory LE, Hilton Head, SC 29928; 843/785-8383 (phone); kellym13@juno.com (email).

Letters...

The Gullah people...it was probably 25 years ago that my son was at a camp nearby and Bessie Jones came to spend some time at the camp. She taught and sang songs of her people, stories and also audience participation songs, clapping, etc. She also had baskets that the people make out of local materials. She made a big impression on the campers and my friend who runs the camp is still in contact with the family.

The Gullah people live on the islands off the coast of Georgia and South Carolina. They speak their own language, a combination of their African language and a sort of pidgin English.

Bessie has since died but her son and his family still are singing and travelling around the country. I have their address now and will try to contact them. Since they live in Georgia and we are going to be in South Carolina, I don't know how much contact there is between them. But I will find out.

Bessie was such a lovely lady. We also went to hear her one time when she was singing in Cambridge.

Hope Thomas, 374 Gleasons Falls Road, Hillsboro, NH 03244; 603/464-3015; hthomas@conknet.com (email)

"Daughters of the Dust" Gives Taste of Gullah Culture

Linda Temple

In anticipation of our 2005 Annual Meeting, I recently checked out the video "Daughters of the Dust." This film, by Julie Dash, was released in 1991 and is set on the Sea Islands off the Georgia coast. As described on the video cover, "Julie Dash's 'Daughters of the Dust' has become a landmark of American film. With great lyricism, 'Daughters' tells the story of a large African-American family as they prepare to move North at the dawn of the 20th century. Using this simple tale, the film brings to life the changing values, conflicts, and struggles that confront every family as they leave their homeland for the promise of a new and better future.

"In addition to this highly charged epic drama, 'Daughters of the Dust' explores the unique culture of the Gullah people, descendants of slaves who lived in relative isolation on the Sea Islands off the Georgia coast. As the generations struggle with the decision to leave, their rich Gullah heritage and African roots rise to the surface."

The strong Gullah dialect makes this film difficult to understand, but strengthens the feeling of other-ness of this distinct culture.

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 will be double the above figures.

All rates are for camera-ready copy.

Fiber Arts Workshops in Guatemala

Art Workshops in Guatemala offers 10 day educational travel programs in a wide variety of the arts, including backstrap weaving, loom beading, textile weaver's and craft tour (led by WARP member Karen Searle), handpainting on silk, and more.

For more information contact: Art Workshops in Guatemala, Liza Fourré/
Director, 4758 Lyndale Avenue South, Minneapolis MN 55409-2304; 612/825-0747 (phone); 612-825-6637 (fax); fourre@artguat.org (email); <http://www.artguat.org/> (web site).



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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.

Textile Society of America Conference in October Features Textile Legends

Philis Alvic

The Textile Society of America's conference held an allure to a long time weaver and lover of international fabrics like me. This was my first conference and this gathering of over 300 people, who shared my interest in textiles, did not disappoint me.

The objectives of the TSA conference are very different from WARP's annual meetings. TSA takes an academic approach, having keynote speakers and several breakout sessions where four or five people have 20 minutes for a presentation. Most presenters read papers accompanied by slides. This, however, is not like some academic conference where people come to enjoy the locality and neglect the proceedings.

The opening reception, held on the top floor of the hotel with an excellent view of city lights, served oriental finger food—spring rolls, pot stickers, dim sum, and a few other dumpling-type of things that I can't put a name to. People ate and renewed acquaintances while I walked around marveling at the jackets, scarves, and other exotic textiles worn by those assembled. It was hard to keep my hands to myself, as I recognized unusual weaving and dyeing techniques from all round the globe. The short program honored four textile legends of the Bay Area—Dominic De Mare, Kay Sekimachi, Lydia Van Gelder, and Katherine Westphal.

The next morning Jack Lenor Larson gave the Keynote Address on "San Francisco as the Fountainhead and Wellspring." He started by referring to the Gertrude Stein quote about Oakland, where she declared that there was no there there. After proclaiming that in textiles there definitely was a there there, Larson expounded on the many names and places that have distinguished the textile arts of the Bay Area. He listed ethnographic and anthropological museum collections, galleries showing both ethnic and contemporary textile work, legendary artists—Dorothy Liebes, Mama Gravandar, Ed Rossbach, Trude Guermonprez, Mary Walker Phillips, Lillian Elliott, Hal Painter—to the current generation—Sheila O'Hara, Lia Cook, and Candace Crockett. The next morning we gathered to hear five speakers talk in more detail about the area's educational institutions and individuals.

While some of the sessions I attended had more appeal than others, the presenters all conscientiously prepared for their talks. I presented a PowerPoint presentation on Churchill Weavers of Kentucky. In the same session, a presentation reviewed articles on needlework and quilting in a women's magazine written in Norwegian that had been aimed at the new immigrant. One afternoon, they loaded my group onto a bus and took us to the home of Eli Leon. He put up and took down over a dozen

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Japanese Fish Printing

Gyotaku, or fish printing, originated in Japan about 150 years ago. Traditionally, *gyotaku* (ghee-yo-tah-koo) was used by fishermen to record their catch. The inks used were water based and nontoxic, so that they washed off easily, and the fish could then be eaten. Traditional *gyotaku* is done using black carbon sumi inks on rice paper or on silk fabric.

Today, Japanese fishermen often display *gyotaku* in their homes. *Gyotaku* has become very popular in the U.S. in the last 20 or so years. Acrylic paints in bold colors are often used to decorate T-shirts, bags, etc.

In preparation for printing, the fish is cleaned and dried to remove bodily fluids, and various orifices are sealed to prevent leakage. Next, the fish is laid on a flat surface and stabilized with supports. The fins and tail are spread and anchored with pins, and the mouth may be propped open.



There are two methods of fish printing—the indirect method, which is easier to control and yields a slightly abstracted result, and the direct method, which leads to bold prints with strong details. In the indirect method, paper is placed over a clean fish, a silk *tampo* (a cotton ball wrapped in silk) is then dipped in ink and dabbed onto the paper's surface. In the direct method ink is applied to the surface of the clean fish, paper is placed on top of the painted fish, and then rubbed gently to transfer the ink from the fish to the underside of the paper.

During the printing process, the eye is left blank. To "return the spirit" of the fish, the eye is painted—a band of colored iris around a large black pupil, and a glint of white.

Resources:

Natural Impressions: Taking an Artistic Path Through

Nature, by Carolyn A. Dahl, Watson-Guptill Publications.

<http://www.fredbmullett.com/mullett/index.htm>

<http://www.kondogyotaku.net/netindex.html>

http://www.northcoast.com/~fishhelp/edu_f/print.html

<http://bluewaterfishrubbings.com/history.php>

<http://nancygorr.freeyellow.com/whatisgyotaku.htm>

<http://www.chez.com/gyoan/anglais/history.htm>

<http://www.frsd.k12.nj.us/copperarts/relatedarts/visualart/>

[Fishstitchery.htm](http://www.fishstitchery.htm)

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

Weave A Real Peace

Membership Information

2004 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

Traveling to Peru the Fair Trade Way

Nicole McGrath, founder of Peri Dar, sent a fascinating account of her recent trip to Peru. Unfortunately, there is not space in the newsletter for Nicole's entire letter, but I've included some of the highlights of the trip—drastically edited. The entire article will be posted, along with this issue of the newsletter, on WARP's website at <http://www.weavershand.com/warp.html>.--LT

WARP Slide Show

The WARP slide show and video (VHS) are booked for January, February, 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).

This Fall, the slide show was shown in Massachusetts, Virginia, and to several weaving and spinning guilds in Arizona.

A new concept in tourism has just recently been launched in Peru: Fair Trade Tourism.

A joint effort between indigenous communities and Minka, a fair trade organization in Peru, the Minka Trail is a tour designed to bring tourists closer to rural and indigenous people, in fair and sustainable cultural exchanges. For our fair trade work, this tour is ideal: we would learn directly from the producers, and return with an understanding that will help us promote their products. We would do this without taking away precious working time from income generating activities. Also curious about this new fair trade idea, we wanted to see how it worked. All this we could count on. What we gained was far more than expected.

From Taquile Island on Lake Titicaca, our hosts Alipio and Elias greet us in Puno and take us by boat to the Huanalli community. Elias displays the local produce of various tubers and grains and the rudimentary tools still used to cultivate the stony soil. In a simple gesture when preparing tea, Alipio gives the first cup to mother earth. They talk of dreams and legends and daily life on our way to a spiritual place where people gather to pray for rain and harvest. All are dressed in their traditional clothing: the men in a red and white hat with finely detailed animal designs and an intricately patterned red and white cummerbund (faja). This is the daily dress code on Taquile, where the men knit and the women weave. They spend six to eight hours a day, for three months, knitting a single hat or weaving a single faja. The women's black skirts move in waves when moving, revealing a bright green skirt, complemented by a red top and black shawl. Tourism has helped maintain the traditions on Taquile Island, but when off the island to the public market, plainer clothes are worn to avoid discrimination.

Moving on to Unocolla, eight musicians and a crowd of 30 greet us with such fanfare that we're speechless. The joyful welcome is overwhelming. Mauricio's farm in Unocolla is surprising: despite the challenge to grow food, the place is irresistible. The homestead is a collection of small stone buildings around a courtyard; a loom is installed outside up the slope, a work in progress ready or a demonstration—it doesn't rain very often. Further down the road, alpaca are grazing. Their wool grows in many shades of brown and grey, black and white, and the local farmers and artisans are helping to preserve the less common color-coated alpaca. Here, the women knit and the men weave. They give considerable attention to the quality of the materials, working with organic cotton and alpaca, and using the softest fibers.

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Haoua Cheick Traoré:

Businesswoman and consultant in micro-enterprise and artisan entrepreneurship

"I've fulfilled one of my own dreams by owning an import-export business—I want to help other women do the same"

Ms. Haoua Cheick Traoré graduated in 1975 with a degree in Chemistry from the University of Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. She worked at l'Office Nationale de Formation Professionnelle, Ministry of Higher Education for three years before having a short stay in the U.S.A. to study English at the UCLA Extension Center in Los Angeles. In 1984, Ms. Traoré returned to the U.S. and later took various administrative positions in U.S. consulting firms to provide logistic support in African Countries with USAID Project for Development until 1995.



Haoua Cheick Traoré, **owner of African Creations, LLC is inspired by the talent and determination of the African woman.**

"I've always been impressed by the strength of the African woman entrepreneur!" said Ms. Traoré, "I am proud of watching her design her own products and support her family despite hardship conditions. I, too, struggled for many years, but was determined to take charge of my life and earn my own income. One of my dreams was fulfilled when I opened my own import-export business in 1998. I'm honored to market products, produced by African women, to clients throughout the world"

During her many trips to Africa, she was fascinated by the artistic talent of African women and she developed a great interest in marketing their products. In 1998, she created her own import/export business: **African Creations, LLC**, specializing in traditional textile arts. She successfully completed the Up and Running classes and the intensive marketing course in 1999 at the Women Business Center of Washington, D.C. She then

heard about FINCA USA (Foundation for International Community Assistance). She immediately entered the micro credit program and took the training in entrepreneurial skills. The FINCA micro credit program has helped her build a credit history of her company and overcame the obstacles of being rated as single woman in business without credit worthiness by various financial institutions. In November 1999, she joined **African Crafts Online**, www.africancraft.com, to feature her shop.

Ms. Traoré was honored as "**Entrepreneur of the Year 2002**" at the Women Business Center's Capital Award Gala in Washington, D.C.

Traoré presents motivational speeches to women artisans who want to be entrepreneurs. She was selected by FINCA (Foundation for International Community Assistance) International to serve as a representative and met with her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdulah of Jordan in year 2000 at her then gallery in Washington, D.C.

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At the Textile Museum

January

Saturday, the 15th, "A Contemporary Artist's Work: A Woven Journey" - Margaret Hluch

Saturday, the 22nd, "Through the Lens: What Artists Tell Us about Carpets" - Gayle Garrett

Saturday, the 29th, Public Gallery Talk & Tour: "Beyond the Bag: Textiles as Containers" Erin E. Roberts

February

Saturday, the 5th, "Woven Wonders: A Panorama of Indian Textiles" - Samyuktha Gorrepati

Arts for Families: "Indian Journey"

Saturday, the 12th, "Wagireh: Rug Samplers from Turkey, Persia and India" - Harold Keshishian

Saturday, the 19th, "Fine and Finer: Craftsmanship in 20th-Century Silk Turkish Rugs" Colin England

Lecture: "The Paisley in Paris and Beyond" Amita Vohra Sarin

Saturday, the 26th, "Carry-All: Khorjin of Kurdistan & Persia" - Gordon W. Priest, Jr.

For more information, www.textilemuseum.org

New Members

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Common Thread Plans Romanian Trip

New members of WARP, Common Thread Cultural Connection co-founders Karen Sutherland and Shari McMahon, are seeking advice and support for a trip to Romania planned for next spring. Common Thread is a group of musical and visual artists and educators who have come together to create music and art with people living in other regions of the world. They sing and play original and traditional American folksongs and dance tunes with an emphasis on the Champlain Valley area of New England. Their hope is to cross cultural barriers by doing tasks like hand spinning with far away neighbors. Local fibers collected and spun along the way will be woven into a "common thread blanket." This blanket, along with artwork and music will become part of their traveling exhibit.

Ms. Sutherland, a multi-instrumentalist, voice teacher, and folk and classical singer, writes that the group is booking one paid gig per three or four presentations locally so that expenses are covered as they move through the first stage of this three stage project. All the concerts done overseas—in hospitals, orphanages, schools, nursing homes, refugee camps and women's shelters—will be at no charge. Then, there is phase three: when they return to the same audiences in Vermont. Again, some of the return concerts will be paid, but most will not.

Common Thread is seeking support for their trip in many areas. Besides funding for travel, they need art supplies—stockmar crayons and chubby colored art pencils, water color trays, tape, paper, etc. They are also looking for two very portable, lightweight treadle spinning wheels to pack. They will be carrying instruments, backpacks, and a "theater in a suitcase." They have been told there will be a van, a driver, and an interpreter, and that they will be enjoying home-stays in villages where felting and spinning are active.

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

Threads Of Life Hosts Indonesian Tours

Hosted by William Ingram of Threads of Life, this tour helps sustain a traditional craft and the skills of the women of Bali! Threads of Life works with Alila Hotels and Resorts and weavers on Timor, Lembata, Flores, Sumba, Sulawesi, and Bali to empower women, to facilitate dialogue between weavers and dyers of different traditions, to commission natural-dyed textiles, and sell the textiles thus produced through its gallery in Ubud. It respects fair trade and labour practices, conserves the environment, and improves the lives of low-income textile artisans by increasing their access to markets and resources. At the same time, learn the secrets of this natural fabric whilst enjoying the splendour of Bali.

Eight days/seven nights @ USD 881+ /person/package; First tour: 13-20 February 2005, second tour: 27 Nov - 4 Dec 2005. Contact ALILA at ubud@alilahotels.com (email); +62 361 975 963 (phone); or +62 361 975968 (fax).

WARP Members Teach Papermaking Workshops and Assist Development of Paper Factory in Ghana

In August 2005, WARP member Jackie Abrams, a basketmaker from Vermont, and Marta Herbertson, an Australian papermaker, will present workshops in Ghana on making paper with local materials and then using the paper to make objects that can be sold to tourists. Jackie and Marta will work with local Ghanaians to exchange information and techniques, and they invite others to join them in an environment where all can exchange ideas and find universal connections.

Abrams and Herbertson hope to create a workshop where participants can share ideas, be creative, and in the long run participate in setting up a grassroots paper factory that will offer employment to Ghanaian artists.

The workshops will be in Accra, at Cross Cultural Collaborative, an educational nonprofit that invites people to Ghana to promote cultural exchange and understanding through the arts.

Ellie (Aba) Schimelman of Brookline, MA, president of the nonprofit, and WARP member Steve Csipke of Boston are helping Jackie and Marta with the planning.

For more information, contact Cross Cultural Collaborative, Inc., 45 Auburn Street, Brookline, MA 02446; 617/277-0482 (phone); paper@culturalcollaborative.org (email); www.culturalcollaborative.org (web site).

Haoua Cheick Traoré: Businesswoman and Consultant *continued from page 7*

Traoré's story of persistence and determination inspires other women to take action. Her mission, she feels, is to encourage women to start businesses—especially those who may not have the confidence!

Ms. Traoré is a U.S. citizen and is fluent in French, English, and Bambara. She now accepts assignments as a **Volunteer for the International Executive Service Corps (IESC VE)** to different African countries. Her most recent work was in Ghana to provide a three week training to two weaving centers of Kente at the Volta region in developing well-integrated product lines and set up wholesale pricing strategies, learning to present their company and products effectively to potential buyers, with emphasis on packaging and marketing materials, and sales techniques suitable for the U.S. market.

She has recently had several articles published in The Crafts Center Newsletter: "The Weavers of the Volta Region" (Vol. 15, Issue 58 July 2004); "When the Going Gets Tough, Get Tougher" (Vol. 14, Issue 55); and "10 Tips for Exporting to the U.S." (Vol. 13, Issue 52 Summer 2002).

Haoua Cheick Traore can be reached at AFRICAN CREATIONS, LLC; 5125 Columbia Pike, #1, Arlington, VA 22204; 202/321-0517 (cell phone).

WARP on the Web

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

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Traveling to Peru the Fair Trade Way

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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:

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warp@yachana.org (email)

[We then go to] the handsome Niños Hotel in Cuzco, a tourism project that helps abandoned children with daily meals. Starting the next morning, we're in the care of Vicente Rayo of the Cuyo Chico community, ready to 'plunge' into the Valley of the Incas. We are the first group of tourists to Vicente and Casimira's adobe house, recently finished in smooth redish earth, with perfectly rounded edges, wood trim and plasterwork on the inside. The skilled handwork and tasteful details are admirable, and the beautiful home is in perfect harmony with the landscape. The men greet us in traditional clothing and place vine wreaths, fruit still attached, around our necks. The women sprinkle fresh rose petals on our heads, and a musician plays the flute: a warm welcome that has us completely charmed.

Vicente walks us through the harvested grain fields, and to the clay 'wells.' This resource is abundant in this region, and the locals are known for their painted ceramic flutes. Flutes, chess pieces and beads are fired in a handmade oven built inside the workshop. With Vincente we visit the ceramic workshop in Cuzco. Now counting 17 people, the members of Comunidad Cuyo Chico work together diligently and the effort has been worthwhile. Challenges remain and there are not yet enough sales, especially at fair prices, but there is support for those who work together to improve their lives

The tour, bringing valuable income to the artisan communities, is an opportunity for them to share their lives and culture with dignity, on their own terms. It is also an opportunity for them and tourists to understand each other, replacing assumptions with appreciation. Where the usual tourist route brings you no closer than a market stall, the fair trade alternative opens another world of real people, their issues, and their ingenious and sustainable solutions to social and environmental challenges. Throughout the trip, questions and answers from hosts and tourists went back and forth, our guide translating everything. In addition to the many things we came to learn, conversations touched on the topics of relationships, adoption, medicinal properties of plants and tea, the influence of new religions on old beliefs, spiritual needs, that we sell our houses and they build theirs for their children, and the age when one starts to work. The conversation has just started, but the experience has left us with a fresh perspective on the world and our place in it. Inspiring and unforgettable.

Photos of our trip and the artisan products from Peru are posted on Peri Dar's website at www.peridar.com. For a full itinerary and to travel on the Minka Trail, visit Minka Fair Trade at www.minkafairtrade.com (web site), or turismo@minkafairtrade.com (email).

With warm thanks to our guide and hosts, Nicole McGrath, Founder, Peri Dar Inc.

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Textile Society of America Conference

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quilts by African-American artists that he had collected over the years. He eagerly told us stories about the quilts and their makers as he pinned them up on the front of his house.

Most of the sessions dealt with textile traditions in different parts of the world. Among my favorite sessions was one about Japanese utilitarian futon and table covers that had been transformed into art with their many delicate mendings and patches. Also, I enjoyed learning about the British industrialist that developed the technique for dyeing tussah silk, worked with William Morris, and organized businessmen to work together.

In this formally organized program, some spontaneity crept into the schedule. After an engaging talk by Julia Parker, the second Keynote speaker, a field trip was added during the lunch break to view an exhibition of her baskets. Parker, a Coast Miwok and Kashaya Pomo, described how she learned to gather materials and make baskets from older women of her husband's tribe after being asked to demonstrate at Yosemite National Park. Seeing over 100 baskets from several decades of production gave her words context and added dimension.

One parallel between WARP and TSA conferences is the Marketplace. While one can be nicely tempted to spend money by the offerings at WARP, you can really drop a bundle at the TSA Marketplace. TSA attracts vendors who offer historic pieces and fabrics from many corners of the globe—many of them museum quality.

Several of us WARP members wore large buttons with the invitation, "Ask me about WARP" and many people did. To those interested we handed out brochures and newsletters. While there are many similarities between WARP and TSA, they are unique enough in mission for the textile lover to benefit from membership in both organizations.

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