

WARP



WEAVE A REAL PEACE

Volume 18, Number 1

Spring 2011

Tinkuy de Tejedores: A Gathering of Weavers

Marilyn Murphy

A Gathering of Weavers took place in the Sacred Valley of Peru November 5-8, 2010. Tinkuy was organized by the Center for Traditional Textiles of Cusco (CTTC) under the leadership of the founder and director, Nilda Callañaupa. Her vision of bringing together weavers from the Americas was achieved—Canada, United States, Mexico, Ecuador, Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Peru, and Guatemala were all represented. Her desire to have weavers from the nine CTTC communities together, and for them to experience a wider world of what's possible, was accomplished as well.

Formal panel and individual Powerpoint presentations—some given by those who had never



spoken into a microphone much less used a computer—were accompanied with translations in English, Quechua, and Spanish. Topics covering fiber and natural dyes, ancient and traditional weaving, and the recovery and commercialization of textiles were crammed into two days. Representatives from the communities spoke alongside the scholars and other invited guests. Q&A time followed each presentation. For most of the first day, the questions came from the English-speaking participants. But slowly, the indigenous women's voices emerged.

The richness of Tinkuy went far beyond the speakers and their presentations. Textiles



Break Time - sharing

swathed the columns. Babies enveloped in *mantas* cried softly. The indigenous dress worn by each of the communities blanketed the room. The blowing of the conch shell by Chahuaytire men began and ended each session. The depth of activity during breaks and meals, as well as the evening's festivities of music, dancing, singing, and spinning races, eclipsed the event itself.

One of the primary goals of the gathering was for the weavers to relate what their community had experienced since joining CTTC. And so the stories unfolded...

In Chinchero, Nilda's home village, weaving activity began informally in the 1980s with



Chinchero Elder

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.

continued on page 8

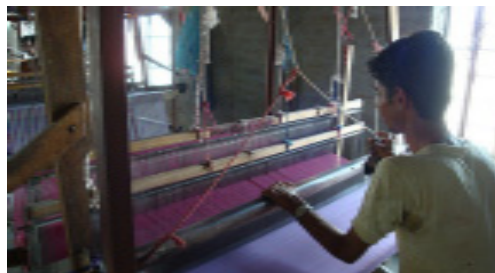
Wool Weavers of Western Rajasthan

Jaya Bhatt

Handloom weaving has been a primary source of livelihood for many rural communities in the northwestern regions (Rajasthan) of India for generations. Local weavers and their families have been engaged in sheep rearing, spinning, and weaving. This weaving region worked as a critical space for Mahatma Gandhi's *khadi* movement in pre-independent India, and it still maintains this legacy.

Bikaner was known to be one of the largest wool trading markets in Asia. Famous for its local sheep wool, the region was also a large supplier for carpet yarns to various carpet weaving regions of India. Today the local produce has been replaced by mill spun merino and other imported wool, preferred for its many color options, textures and varying yarn counts. With a decrease in local wool production and the demand for handwoven woolen products, the handloom sector today is facing challenges. Young weavers from the area are migrating to other towns and cities in search of alternative forms of livelihood.

Weaving in this region is carried out on a basic wooden loom known as "*khaddi*" in the local language. The looms are made of *Babool*



(Acacia) or *Sagwan* (Teak) wood, trees which are native to these parts of Rajasthan. The looms are usually made with two shafts for creating basic plain weave structures; depending on the design, extra shafts can be attached to these looms. The shafts have peddles which are tied together and are controlled by foot. Traditional reeds were prepared with slits/loops made of bamboo. What the weavers use today are metal reeds easily available in the market. The fly shuttle mechanism is controlled by a rhythmic hand movement.

There have been some dedicated efforts by NGOs in recent years (with mixed support from the government) to revive or maintain the

handloom weaving industry in the region. *Desert Craft* is one such initiative that was started in Bikaner in 2007. The main objective of the organization was to re-introduce the weavers of the nearby villages to the craft of weaving, to initiate the use of cotton yarns alongside the traditional wool, and to familiarize them with newer designs and products that would please modern consumers. This could also help find a consistent market. The *Desert Craft* program that started with a small group of four weavers, today boasts a strength of 30 weavers and a common weaving center with 28 looms and other equipment.

Desert Craft, like some other NGOs in the region, is training these weavers to create various weaves and structures in cotton as well as wool. Variations such as stripes, zigzags, and "short colors" (where warp and weft are in two different colors and create interesting color and weave effects) are a common feature in the fabric created by this group of artisans. The fabric structure varies between 20s - 60s counts and is used in garments as well as home interior products.

Initiatives like *Desert Craft*, however, have many challenges to overcome. One of the main challenges for *Desert Craft* has been finding a consistent market demand and continuous orders. The market for handwoven fabric in India is being fast replaced by competitive mill and power loom fabrics. Weavers in most parts of the country are either starving or migrating to cities for alternative livelihoods. The role of the government in promoting the handloom industry is far from being satisfactory. In a country like India where consumerism is fast growing, what we need urgently is perhaps mass education on the importance of buying handmade products, and strategies to attract more customers to these products.

Jaya is a textile designer with wide experience of working with various artisans and NGOs across India, mostly specializing in textile craft techniques. She can be contacted via email jbbhatt19@gmail.com or by phone at 315/480-3950.



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Editor: Linda Temple

Send address corrections to:
WARP

3102 Classen Boulevard
PMB 249
Oklahoma City, OK 73118
or to

info@weavearealpeace.org

The deadline for contributions to the Summer issue of the WARP newsletter is **June 3, 2011**.

Send articles and correspondence for the newsletter to:

Linda Temple
1230 NE 70

Oklahoma City, OK 73111
lgtemple@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.

Report from WARP's Nominating Committee

At the 2011 Annual Meeting in May, Candy Meacham and Deborah Brandon will be leaving the board after years of dedicated service. We are fortunate that two outstanding candidates have been nominated to fill the vacant seats.

Teena Jennings is from Granville, Ohio. She is professor in the Department of Clothing, Textiles and Interiors at the University of Akron, in Akron, OH, where she has been teaching textile science courses and fiber art for the past ten years. Her research is multi-pronged. She is very interested in material culture research, studying textile collections that are housed in museums and comparing what she finds there with what is relevant today. She finds that it is crucial to convey to students that textiles do in fact remain relevant to many cultures around the world. Her research has placed her in contact with women's co-operatives in Bolivia and Madagascar, communities that she supports by selling their textiles for them. Teena is also a spinner and a weaver. In this capacity, she has been investigating the properties of the silk from the *Cecropia* moth, a giant silk producing moth indigenous to much of the US and Canada east of the Mississippi River.

Cindy Lair lives in Boulder, CO where she is the Production Manager at Schacht Spindle Company. Cindy has a longstanding

interest in issues relating to women and economic development and is a community activist. For ten years, Cindy served on the Community Development Committee for the city of Boulder, which facilitated the distribution of millions of dollars in grants, serving as chairperson for one term. She is currently active in the Boulder County Circles Initiative, part of a national campaign to eliminate poverty by generating opportunities for people to create better lives for themselves. Cindy has been responsible for the mailing of the WARP newsletter for the past several years. She has also helped support the work of a handicapped Eritrean bench weaver in Boulder by assisting with the woodworking portion of the bench through her position at Schacht Spindle. Cindy was profiled in the Fall 2009 Newsletter.

We are pleased to present this outstanding slate to the membership. Election to the board for three-year terms will be held during our annual meeting in May. Nominations will also be received from the floor. Many thanks to both retiring board members and our new nominees for their commitment to WARP.

If you have any questions, please contact Sarah Saulson at sfsaulson@twcnny.rr.com or Deborah Brandon at brandon@andrew.cmu.edu, who constituted this year's nominating committee.

Weave A Real Peace

Membership Information

2011 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

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From the WARP Office...

Judy Allen, Administrative Coordinator

Now that I have been through the WARP “year” twice, I have come to realize that this is my favorite time, from Winter into Spring. For me there is a lot of activity – members are renewing, new members are joining, and both are registering for the annual meeting. This means that my interactions with members increase. Pleasant problems present themselves to be solved – perhaps someone has sent in a duplicate check, or maybe I have not received a payment but I have the membership form or the other way around. All easily solvable with an e-mail conversation. And each interaction means that I get to know one more member a little better. Then comes the annual meeting when I am able to meet members face to face. Suddenly people jump out of the database and become real, someone to have a fascinating conversation with.

This is also the time of year that for WARP we close out the old year and begin the new. Many members have renewed already, a little



Judy Allen

over half of the 268 who were members at the end of December 2010. I want to encourage those of you who have not renewed to please do so. This is the last newsletter you will receive unless we hear from you. Rather than waiting until just before the next newsletter, which is Summer, and taking a chance you just might forget, as you read this column, why not stop to either make out your check or complete a Paypal payment online (at www.weavearealpeace.org). Either way, if any details have changed since you paid last year, don't forget to complete a membership form available on the WARP website membership page.

Another reason to pay for your membership right now is that I will begin work on the 2011-2012 membership directory so that information will be current by mid-April. The online edition will be published and a short run of a paper copy for the members who would like to receive the directory in paper. I hope to update the web directory every quarter.

I look forward to meeting some of you in Asheville in May and communicating with the rest of you via email.

WARP Governing Board

Jackie Abrams

Brattleboro, VT
802/257-2688
jackieabramsvt@gmail.com
Term expires 2013

Linda Bowden

North Ft. Myers, FL
239/218-0350
fatcatkaw@yahoo.com
Term expires 2013

Deborah Brandon

Pittsburgh, PA
412/963-7416
brandon@andrew.cmu.edu
Term expires 2011

Susan Schaefer Davis

Haverford, PA
610/649-7717
sdavis@uslink.net
Term expires 2012

Kathryn Keegan

Birchrunville, PA
610/827-7975
birchrunstudio@gmail.com
Term expires 2012

Candy Meacham

Bellingham, WA
360/671-9079
mchkee@earthlink.net
Term expires 2011

Administrative Coordinator

Judy Allen

info@weavearealpeace.org

Members write...

Felicity Jeans, Facilitator, the Textile Workshop at Camphill Village Kimberton Hills:

Dear Friends at WARP,

We sent a message out earlier this year that the weavery at Camphill Village Kimberton Hills was running low on yarns and materials to weave. I have been so touched by the generous response that arose. Packages have been arriving through the mail and delivered in person that have been filled with the most wondrous fibers. Thank you all so very much who responded and who shared our request with their local weaving guilds and fiber groups. We will be able to continue to warp our looms.

New WARP Member Catherine Morley:

I learned about WARP from Philis Alvic and Teena Jennings at the Textile Society of America meeting in October 2011 in Lincoln, NE. While I am unsure what my contributions to WARP might be in time, I joined WARP because I wanted to connect with others interested in links between cloth produc-

tion and social justice...there are not many friends to play with in my daily work as a dietitian/researcher. My research explores family experiences of eating during illness (particularly when the mother is ill), and preparing dietitians and other health and human service professionals for their work in nutrition education approaches and evaluation. Looking for ways to expand the reach of research findings (far beyond the narrow confines of the peer-reviewed journal article), I completed a diploma in documentary film in 2009 and a certificate in textile arts in 2010 at Capilano University in North Vancouver, BC. My interest is in using visual and tactile media to invite conversations about [re]creating home and family (where food/eating, and textiles dominate). Hosting salons and *Dietitian-As-Artist* events to share my work and ideas with dietitian colleagues (and to encourage sharing of their creative efforts) has met with enthusiastic response. Catherine Morley, PhD, RD, FDC; West Vancouver BC Canada; catherine.morley@gmail.com

Member Profile

Jackie Abrams: "A Teacher in the Truest Sense"

Candy Meacham

Of course Jackie Abrams' basketry work is well known. She has exhibited this year at the Textile Museum in Washington, DC and the Textile Center in Minneapolis; previously in many wonderful galleries and highly respected craft shows; and she has had her work recognized in books and magazines. You can see her beautiful baskets on her website (www.jackieabrams.com).

But what struck me when I really listened to Jackie's answers to my questions was that she is a teacher in the truest and best sense of word. Albert Einstein had this to say about teaching and teachers: "It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge."

Jackie makes her living selling her work and teaching throughout the US, Canada, and Australia. Her work with her students is very special to her. She has been invited to teach and work in Australia six times, which has been a terrific experience.

Most wonderful of all has been her work in Ghana, West Africa, working with women to help develop small craft industries. Jackie's most recent project was teaching the women to crochet wallets and bags using the plastic bags that usually become part of the trash on the ground. It is her dream to remain involved with the development of craft industries, particularly in Africa. She is especially interested in using ma-

terials that are usually discarded and end up as litter on the ground.

Jackie started her working life as an inner-city classroom teacher with a Masters in Education. One day in 1975, she walked into the Basket Shop in Chesterfield, MA, and her life took a turn. After much pleading, Ben Higgins, an 81-year-old basket maker, took her on as an apprentice. She spent six months working with him, making functional baskets of pounded white ash trees.

Being a good teacher requires knowing (or remembering) how to be a student. Jackie says that since she has become involved in basketry, she has participated in numerous workshops and spent a lot of time experimenting in her studio.

Her life in basketry has been very rich in many ways. She was able to stay home when she had young children, travel when her kids grew up, and meet people along the way who are now friends. She has two grown daughters, both of whom grew up making things.

There is plenty more to tell about Jackie. She joined WARP because of a sense of kindred spirits and would love to share with those who understand what she is up to. The best way to contact Jackie is via e-mail at jackieabramsvt@gmail.com. Her website is www.jackieabrams.com

Candy Meacham is an educator, a weaver, and a WARP board member. She can be reached at candy.meacham@earthlink.net.

2010 Alice Brown Memorial Scholarship Recipient Announced

Sarah Saulson

WARP is pleased to announce that Emolyn Liden has been awarded a scholarship to attend the 2011 Annual Meeting. Emolyn has recently moved to Asheville, NC. She is a freelance writer and ardent fiber practitioner. A previous job at Ten Thousand Villages sparked her interest in world textile traditions. She says, "I have traveled off and on for many years and have sought out textile traditions, such as knitting in Shetland, dyeing in Morocco and India, and hammock making in Nicaragua."

Emolyn continues, "I have been around fiber arts my entire life because of growing up on a sheep farm, and with a mother who has

made a career out of spinning, dying, and knitting; but only recently have I started developing my own style and interests in the craft. This past year I taught knitting, created a knitting blog, and began selling my knitwear. I hope to meet people at the conference who love fiber as much as I do."

WARP is pleased to bring Emolyn to this year's annual meeting. Just as we hope WARP will enrich her knowledge, certainly her enthusiasm and broad interests will do the same for all the meeting's attendees. Follow Emolyn's fiber adventures at <http://emolynknits.blogspot.com>.

Donations Needed for Silent Auction

The Silent Auction that has become a traditional part of WARP's annual meeting has also become a fundraising event for the organization. The auction also gives WARP members an excellent opportunity to find good homes for their gently used ethnic textile treasures. All proceeds from the Auction go directly to WARP.

If you are attending the meeting, please bring items to donate with you.

If you aren't attending the meeting, you can send items to Judi Jetson
HandMade in America
125 S Lexington Ave, #101
Asheville, NC 28801
jjetson@handmadeinamerica.org

Whether you are bringing or sending items, please include a brief description of the piece (including the source) and a suggested minimum price.

Thanks for donating to WARP!

Fueling the Engine of Growth

Carmen K. Iezzi, Executive Director, Fair Trade Federation

Thanks to WARP

Donors

Susan Abouhalkah
Burton, TX

Nancy Berry
Weaving Indiana
Indianapolis, IN

Margaret Carlberg
Huntington Beach, CA

Deborah Chandler
Guatemala City, Guatemala

Sara Goodman
Lyme, NH

South Jersey Guild of
Spinners and Handweavers
Moorestown, NJ

Carol Ireland
Hockessin, DE

Kate Keegan
Birchrunville, PA

Lyn Lucas
Coweta, OK

Cheryl Musch
Madison, WI

Judy Newland
Tempe, AZ

Susan Weltman
Brooklyn, NY



This March, we marked the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day. *The Economist* has called women "the most powerful engine" of global economic growth.

Economic empowerment of women spills over into numerous other areas of sustainable development. The Women's Learning Partnership estimates that for every year beyond fourth grade that girls attend school: wages rise 20%, child deaths drop 10%, and family size drops 20%. World Bank research in Africa shows that reducing structural gender inequality can increase agricultural yields by more than 20% and, in 2001, the United Nations reported that "eliminating gender inequality in Latin America would increase national output by 5 percent."

Yet, the United Nations reminds us that "women are largely relegated to more vulnerable forms of employment" and its Economic and Social Council reports that "women make up a little over half of the world's population, but ... account for over 60% of the world's hungry."

Comparing these realities yields the question: do our daily choices fuel the engine of growth?

In North America, we mark the earliest days of Fair Trade with the actions of one woman, Edith Ruth Byler. Her work grew into Ten Thousand Villages, now the largest Fair Trade retailer in North America.

Through Fair Trade, women are brought into more formal trading systems as long-term relationships are built to address complex, long-term challenges. When you choose Fair Trade, you invest in:

- Empowering workplaces which respect and actively solicit women's opinions.

- Capacity building to help women develop their skills and independence.
- Fair wages that take into account the hard work needed to create the quality pieces you enjoy.

Women entrepreneurs and consumers, particularly in the North, and female entrepreneurs and producers in the South have a key role to play in harnessing this power. To charge up the engine, you can:

- Change your everyday choices to Fair Trade organizations that focus on women, especially those that are women-owned (see the Fair Trade Federation online directory for a one-click search)
- Tell women's stories by showing videos, hosting speakers, or emailing them directly. See the Federation's Get Involved section for ideas.
- Fundraise for a local women's shelter with Fair Trade organizations. See FTF's Fundraisers page for more information.
- Gather the women in your life together for a book club, investor's circle, home party, spa treatment, ladies night out at a local Fair Trade retailer, or other adventure.

The Economist calls investing in women "probably the single best investment that can be made in the developing world." So, shift into high gear. Throughout the year, shift your everyday choices to give women more power, build capacity, and create opportunities for them to improve their own futures.

Carmen Iezzi has recently resigned as Director of the Fair Trade Federation and will be leaving that position in the summer. We appreciate her many contributions to WARP and wish her well in her new adventures. She can be reached at cki@fairtradefederation.org

WARP 'slide show' now in CD format!

Carole Pierce reports that the WARP slide show is currently in North Carolina, and that a CD of the show is now available! To schedule the WARP presentation in your community, contact Carole at cpierce@mis.net.



Deb Brandon

Italy: Assisi Embroidery

What is now referred to as Assisi embroidery is the product of a movement that was initiated by a group of aristocratic ladies in 1870. Their purpose was to revive traditional crafts in Italy, hoping in the process to help supplement the income of women in impoverished communities. On St. Francis's Day in 1902, St. Anne's Convent in the town of Assisi founded a handicraft school for local girls, where embroidery was the primary focus.

Assisi embroidery is a form of counted cross-stitch, which uses a voiding method, where the outlined motifs are left blank while the background is filled in. The ground fabric is usually white or natural, the background is worked in a single color, typically red, blue, or green, with red being the most popular choice, and the designs are outlined in a contrasting, darker, color, often black or brown. The main design and the cross stitch background are surrounded by filigree scrollwork in double running stitch.

This form of embroidery is based on traditional needlework that was prevalent in medieval Italy, originating in the thirteenth century in monastic communities, and in the sixteenth century spread into the secular communities, but fell into a decline by the nineteenth century.

The motifs in the religious pieces consisted of animals and birds generally arranged symmetrically in pairs, whereas in the non-religious pieces, demons, satyrs, griffins, and other mythical creatures abounded. The background was usually worked in long-armed cross stitch,

an almost free-form variation on plain cross stitch, often yielding in denser embroidery.

Assisi embroidery is a simplified version of the medieval needlework, rendering it a more practical means to supplement the income of families in need. At the convent workshop, the silk thread was replaced with cotton embroidery thread and the patterns that were free-drawn in the Middle Ages were modified for counted thread embroidery, which nowadays are drawn on graph paper. In addition, plain cross stitch was used for the background instead of the long-armed version, and the filigree scrollwork was added to the borders. Also, marketability considerations led to the production of embroidered table cloths and napkins, rather than pieces used for religious purposes, such as altar cloths.

The convent workshop proved extremely successful, leading to a flourishing home industry in Assisi. To this day, women in Assisi produce their distinctive embroidery for the local cooperative embroidery shop.

Resources

Assisi Embroidery by Eva Maria Leszner,

B.T. Batsford Ltd, London

<http://tinyurl.com/4lm8hu6>

<http://tinyurl.com/5c4qwz>

<http://tinyurl.com/4l9zmao>

<http://tinyurl.com/4ofchv5>

<http://tinyurl.com/4nz5uj9>

Deborah Brandon is a multi-talented mathematician and President of WARP's board of directors. She can be reached at 412/963-7416 or at brandon@andrew.cmu.edu

2011 Annual Business Meeting

Agenda

The 2011 WARP Annual Meeting will be held at The

Blue Ridge Assembly YMCA in Black Mountain,

NC from May 6-8. The Summer issue of the newsletter will provide a complete report of the meeting

WARP 2011 Annual Business Meeting -

Agenda

Sunday, May 8 -
Black Mountain, NC

- Presentation and request for approval of 2010 Minutes
- Discussion of year's activities
- Presentation and request for approval of 2010 Financial Report
- Election of Board Members (see page 3 for more information about board election)
- Plans for coming year, including 2012 meeting
- Old Business
- New Business
- Other Business

Send additions or corrections to the Agenda to Deb Brandon at brandon@andrew.cmu.edu

WARP on the Web - www.weavearealpeace.org

features WARP history, annual meeting information, member access to the directory, past newsletters, and a new 'Hand to Hand' page. You can join or renew your membership online, or sign up for WARP's ListServ.

WARP also has a group on ravelry.com, the knitting networking site; on Weavevolution, <http://www.weavolution.com>; and on Facebook.

Introductions...

(Excerpted from an essay by WARP member Deb Brandon. The entire essay can be accessed on the WARP website, www.weavearealpeace.org)

One of my favorite parts of our annual meetings is the Friday evening introductions, where new bonds are forged, often giving rise to successful networking opportunities. We come away revitalized, our commitment to our ideals reaffirmed.

Finally, last year I found my story. I told of my journey to the WARP circle, I told of my childhood in Israel. I spoke of the life-changing experience when as a thirteen-year-old, I encountered a soldier who had been trapped in

a burning tank, and my subsequent growth as a person, when “peace” transformed from an abstract concept to an almost tangible notion.

After the circle broke up, several women thanked me for sharing my story. A friend looked at me askance. “I’ve never heard you tell that story before.”

“I guess I hadn’t been ready to tell it before.”

WARP is a networking organization, and networking begins with stories. We talk about who we are, what we have done, what we plan to do, what we hope to do. We read each oth-

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More Online

The WARP website features **more complete coverage** of

three articles in this issue:

Deb Brandon’s essay,

Introductions; Marilyn

Murphy’s report on Tinkuy

de Tejedores; and Philis

Alvic’s presentation at the

2010 Textile Society of

American Symposium,

“Textiles and Traditions in the Marketplace.”

Visit the website at

www.weavearealpeace.org to read more.

Coming Soon...

Marilyn Murphy, former president of Interweave Press, will be launching a new online textile-handcraft retail experience in April.

ClothRoads is dedicated to supporting makers, mostly women, across the globe who want to preserve their cultural cloth-making heritage while adapting it to the modern global marketplace.

The site will specialize in artisan-made cloth-related products, such as handspuns from locally-sourced fibers, handwoven cloth and accessories, and associated materials (natural dyes, tools, books, accessories). For more information, contact

Marilyn at

murphy@clothroads.com; or 970/685-4964. Updates will be forthcoming.

Tinkuy de Tejedores: A Gathering of Weavers

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a small group of weavers using synthetic yarns for daily use and selling product at the local market. Little by little, the group strengthened without a governing board. They demonstrated weaving for tourists to illustrate the production process. The experiences of this group inspired the creation of CTTC. They were the first to reintroduce natural dyes and have rescued more than fifty designs that originated in the community.

Now with governance in place, the weavers of Chinchero elect the board every two years. Work commissions are decided by four officials who determine prices for the next two years. Monthly production schedules are set and sanctions given to those who don’t make deadlines. Much effort is spent on maintaining high quality. They outlined the advantages to being part of the community—training and capacity-building workshops, support for the construction of the center, and an avenue for selling textiles monthly to CTTC. The disadvantages—they must respect decisions made by the community, work is planned for them and governed by sanctions that they set themselves.

Eight more of the communities who are members of CTTC related their stories, giving the powerful histories of the reclamation of their weaving traditions, which had all but disappeared (read about these on the WARP website at www.weavearealpeace.org).

With each community story, the importance of the elders and the children was a common thread. It was fitting that the closing celebration started with recognition of the Elders and the Children and ended with special fiesta

dances by the children and a dramatic poem performed by the Guatemalan women.

Nilda opened the evening with these words: “Our pleasure in the naming of this night is special for the elders, the children, our aunts and sisters, for our ancestors to continue our rich patrimony of our textile culture. . . We recognize the importance of the leaders in each community that conserve the tradition of the weaving. . . The niños receive the tools for textiles, to protect, to continue, to show history, to show our customs. . . The recognition to our elders as it is thanks to them for the revival and we will continue.”

Not all the elders could attend the event but two representatives from each community received the gifts of large sacks of grain and other essential food-related items. Special recognitions were given to Anne Rowe and Mary Frame for their years of research; to the ASUR foundation, Chris Franquemont, the villages, Nilda’s mother, Betty Doerr, Linda Ligon, all the volunteers, and others.

And all through the presentations, the fourteen children who are carrying on the weaving tradition stood to the side of the stage, arms wrapped around their weaving tools. Slowly, many crumpled to the floor but never once did the tools leave their embrace.

Marilyn Murphy has combined a passion for, and knowledge of, the textile arts for her entire career. She is the former president of Interweave Press and lives in Fort Collins, CO. Presently “retired,” Marilyn is spearheading ClothRoad (see box at left). A special thanks to Joe Coca for providing photography.

Hand to Hand: Kenyan Weavers and Basket Makers Seek Markets and Design Assistance



We are pleased to present information to allow our members to work Hand to Hand with fiber artists in other parts of the world. If you or your group would like to work with one of the groups below, please contact Judy Allen, WARP's administrative coordinator, at info@weavearealpeace.org, who will facilitate the efforts.

Kenyan handweavers fall into two categories, loom weavers and basket weavers. The groups Janice Knausenberger works with have a proven track record of benefiting the community as well as promoting the individuals associated with the group.

The **Ngurunit Basket Weavers Group** of northern Kenya has 270 women members with about 140 currently active. They weave a basket of doum palm in a style originally used to make camel milking baskets. Their baskets help increase household incomes in this remote pastoral area.

Friends of Kinangop Plateau, Njabini Woolspinning Workshop, located about one hour north of Nairobi, spin, weave, knit, and crochet wool, thus providing income for the local community members. They use part of the profits to educate local residents about conservation and about the endangered birds that live with the sheep in the high pastures.

Pangani Lutheran Children's Centre in Nairobi uses the money from sales of woven cloth and baskets directly to support PLCC as needed. They want to generate income to expand their project of getting young girls off the streets and into school.

Beacon of Hope, an hour south of Nairobi, offers training in home-based care and

sustainable income generating activities for women affected and infected by HIV/AIDS in poor communities. BOH addresses the needs of the individuals and their families in a holistic way. Production ranges from loom produced products to baskets made by grandmothers.

The newest exciting event is that the Ngurunit Basket Weaver's Group will be participating in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival on the Mall, June 30–July 4 and July 7–11, 2011 (<http://www.festival.si.edu/>). They have had the help of a Peace Corps Volunteer for the past year and will be with part of the PCV exhibit.

Needs

1. Marketing outlets are the primary request from these groups. No matter how great the quality, if the product cannot be sold, then the group suffers.
2. Development strategies are the second point of interest.
3. Product design is a third area of need.

These are the three critical areas. Management and quality control can always benefit from more input. Basic working capital is often very low with these groups and this lack of funds slows down the groups' ability to expand and grow. Janice has been working with these groups for years and is impressed with the self-sacrifice of the leaders and the dedication of the members because they all believe in what they are doing. She has seen these groups expand and move forward.

If you are interested in knowing more about these or other groups of handweavers in Kenya, or if you are interested in providing assistance in any of the needed areas, contact Janice at Janice@jgkdesigns.com or check out the blog or articles on her website www.jgkdesigns.com

Introductions...

continued from page 8

ers' stories in the newsletter and listen to each others' stories at our annual meetings.

Through our stories, we move beyond the labels. We become individuals.

When I tell my stories, I am allowing you to see my inner self, with all my strengths and weaknesses. When I tell my stories, I am showing you that I have faith in you, and that I trust you. By telling my story, I am also opening

myself to your stories, hoping that you, too, will open up and allow me to see you as an individual, not as a label.

Stories have a life of their own. When I open my mouth at the next WARP meeting, I'm not sure what story I'll tell or where it will go. Perhaps I will tell this story. Perhaps not.

I do know that I will open with a label: "Hi, my name is Deborah Brandon. I am a board member"—but I won't end there.

New Members

Kathleen Boyle
715 W Market St #302
Akron, OH 44303

Kathleendesigns99@gmail.com

Margaret Carlberg
17422 Lido Lane
Huntington Beach, CA
92647-6144

714/842-5619 home

714/272-0547 work

714/842-5619 fax

mcarlberg@ix.netcom.com

Sara Caswell
1630 N Lindendale Ave.
Fullerton, CA 92831
714/879-4255
sarajcaswell@gmail.com

Beth Coughlin
701 E Prospect Avenue
Lake Bluff, IL 60044
847/615-1564
beth.a.Coughlin@gmail.com

Mary Jo Daines
723 N Beatty St
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
412/725-6849
maryjoknelly@gmail.com

Mary Deming
1725 Sunset Lane
Fullerton, CA 92833
714/879-7267 (h)
626/302-9528 (w)
demingmb@hotmail.com

Kathleen Grugan
1911 Conwell Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19115
215/483-5347
k8grugan@yahoo.com

Hand to Hand: How One Guild Assists Artisans

Sandy Carr



The Florida Tropical Weavers Guild has an annual conference where we provide selling opportunities for artisan groups in developing countries who supplement their income by works in the fiber arts (basketry, weaving, spinning, dyeing, etc.). We focus on fiber work as our interest lays in seeing to the continuation of these arts.

The guild itself works on a zero budget, providing only a venue for the sales and donating labor. We are unable to purchase items on consignment, so we pre-arrange with groups who will send the items to the Guild and allow remaining pieces to be returned at their expense. But since we keep none of the proceeds, as opposed to most distributors who withhold monies to support the distribution and marketing process, paying postage is less of a hardship for the artisans. We cannot buy from foreign groups directly since customs and import licensing prevents us from doing this, so we have researched and found sources that take care of bringing the goods into the country and then on to us. One hundred percent of monies collected go to the artisans. Part of our research when we do order from distributors is a requirement that they receive NO profits from the sales of the goods.

In past years the Guild has also donated monies acquired through our conference auctions to help with equipment needs of the artists—spinning and weaving aids and sewing machines, to name a few. We have also made members aware of groups unable to send their items by setting up a display and directing people to the group.

Currently we are working in conjunction with UPAVIM; Mayan Hands; a fair trade shop in Gainesville, FL; a church group in China; a Navajo group; and just this year added a new group called Arbor House.

This process has worked for us for several years. This last year we collected nearly \$4000 for distribution to three groups from a convention of 75 attendees. We generally average this amount of profit depending on the size of the conference.

We are always looking for US groups to support. We'd love to find local people working with spinning yarn, weaving, basket making or other fiber arts that could use our help. Please contact us if know of such artisans. Keep in mind, we are working with and looking for those people supplementing their income, not just trying to support their hobbies.

For more information contact Sandy Carr at 727/784-1905, turnweave@tampabay.rr.com; or Joan Furci at 321/383-3037; jfurci@gmail.com

More New Members

Jenny Heard
3109 Shore Ave.
Everett WA 98203
425/743-9839
jennyheard@yahoo.com

Nancy Mefee
246 Van Cortland Road
Brandon, VT 05733
802/247-5613
njmefee@gmail.com

National Basketry
Organization
PO Box 277
Brasstown NC 28902
828-837-1280
info@nationalbasketry.org

Therese Randolph, RSM
383 Green Ridge Dr #3
Daly City, CA 94014
650/243-7329 H&W
650/243-7329
trand68124@aol.com

Laura Rockwell
7901 N Raider Road
Middletown, IN 47356-9401
765-623-3975
ugogirl@post.com

Aimee Russillo
255 Swiss Hills
Berea, KY 40403
202/657-4908
arussillo@liseed.com

Kim Schlauch
1962 Andrew Court
Marriottsville, MD 21104
410/552-1917
kimschlauch@comcast.net

Travel Opportunities...

Sharing the Dream Tours (Information from diane@sharingthedream.org)

Weaving and Textile Crafts Course,

April 2–10. The course provides one indigenous Guatemalan teacher per pair of students, a back strap loom, and all materials. Limit 4 people.

Visit Cooperatives, Schools, the Elder Center, and share with our brothers and sisters in Guatemala, June 27-July 7. Limit 7 people.

15th Annual Sheep is Life Celebration,

June 20-24. Diné College, Tsailé Campus, Navajo Nation. Information at www.navajolifeway.org.

The Mexican Rebozo: Heritage & Techniques, July 29-August 7. Explore the Rebozo Weaving Centers and Master Artisans

of Mexico. Information at http://tiastephanietours.com/more_info/trip25.html; photos at <http://tiastephanie.phanfare.com/4523482>.

WARP member Karen Searle is leading two tours in upcoming months:

Art Workshops in Guatemala: Weaver's, Textile and Mayan Culture Tour - Lakes Villages During the Feast Day of Santiago. July 21-30.

Information from Liza Fourré, 612/825-0747; fourre@artguat.org.

TSA Tour - Traditional and Contemporary Textiles in South Korea,

September 15-26. Information at www.textilesociety.org/tours or contact Karen at 651/642-9897, ksearlear@gmail.com.

Saganishiki: A Uniquely Japanese Weaving Technique

Linda Bowden

Saganishiki—what in the world is that? I have been asked that many times and love to give an explanation. Saganishiki is a Japanese weaving technique. *Saga* (located in the island of Kyushu) is the name of the city where it achieved recognition and *nishiki* is roughly translated to brocade.

I first learned of Saganishiki when I visited a Japanese co-worker's home in Sagami-hara, Japan where I lived. Her grandmother, a 98 year old woman, still did the weaving that she learned as a young girl. It was fascinating to see some of her weaving as well as the finished products. She made obi, purses, and jewelry.

I first learned to weave in 2002. One of the next things I wanted to learn was the Saganishiki weaving. When inquiring about classes in the US, I found that very few people

know and do this type of weaving. I was able to locate one woman who was willing to introduce me to the basics. In the 1990's, Convergence had classes for Saganishiki. The few who do this weave in the US learned from Mihoko Karaki at Convergence.



Lamp of washi paper and saganishiki

Today, I take lessons in Saga. My teacher has been weaving for more than 40 years and is more progressive than most Japanese Saganishiki weavers.

The weaving itself is done on a small, 15 x 17 inch loom. The warp is washi paper that has been lacquered with a persimmon tannin to give it strength, then laminated with gold, silver, or platinum. Imitation gold and silver are also used and are much cheaper. The paper is solid at both ends but the center is cut lengthwise. The cuts are measured in 2 cm

increments; 35 is most commonly used by beginners and 45 for more advanced. There are



50 cuts but that is very fine work and not seen much.

The weft is silk thread and is sized according to the cut of the warp. Weaving is twill, plain weave or a combination of the two. The pattern is either done by pick-up or with the use of heddles. Heddles are made each time and have to be lightweight.

Geometric patterns are most commonly woven. More contemporary weavers weave pictorial designs with the geometric pattern as the background. Weaving is slow; maybe one inch per day if weaving intricate designs.

Most weaving done today is used to make jewelry, purses, and small decorative items. In years past, it was used to make obi and even kimono. The cost to make those items today is prohibitive. My first teacher in Japan makes purses for the Empress, who was born in Saga and gives the purses to visiting dignitaries to promote the crafts from her home region.

Today in Japan, Saganishiki weaving is a dying art due to cost of materials and the long time it takes to produce fabric. My goal is to promote and facilitate this weaving in the US. I started a blog that explains the basics in English as well as provide links in Japan to obtain the materials. www.saga-nishiki.blogspot/

Linda Bowden can be contacted at fatcatkaw@yahoo.com

More New Members

Kathryn Simmons
3256 West 99th Street
Cleveland, OH 44102
330/289-8218
Ktd26@hotmail.com

Todo Como Pueblo Indigena
Margaret MacSems, Project

Director
Hidalgo #2
San Felipe del Agua
68226 Oaxaca MEXICO
mdmacsems@gmail.com

Sister Membership from
Eileen Hallman

Gayle Vallance
4122 Cokatyo Road
Fernie, B.C.
CANADA V0B 1M4
250/423-6473
vallance@elkvalley.net

Maryanne Wise
Cultural Cloth
N301 250th St
Stockholm, WI 54769
715/48-2511
info@culturalcloth.net

Charlotte Zerof
14477 Cypress Trace Ct.
Fort Myers, FL 33919
239/415-7757
czerof@comcast.net

Textiles and Traditions in the Marketplace

Philis Alvic has made her presentation from the 2010 Textile Society of America Symposium, titled Textiles and Traditions in the Marketplace, available to WARP members at www.weavearealpeace.org. The presentation explores whether it is possible to respect a tradition in a commercial venture

and discusses the challenges that arise in going from a "tradition" to a "product."

Philis has extensive experience as a design and craft marketing consultant in Peru, Morocco, Nepal, India, Armenia, and seven countries in southern and eastern Africa.



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

*Is this your last newsletter? Check the date on your mailing label...
 (If it has a '2010' date, renew now!)*

More from A Gathering of Weavers

WARP members Jennifer Moore and Lolli Jacobsen also attended the Gathering of Weavers in Urubamba, Peru last November. Lolli sends more details of that weekend.



There were 325 participants, 240 of which were Quechua speakers from the nine communities that are members of CTTC, in addition to the international participants.

During breaks in the presentations, demonstrations took place in the courtyard. All of the Peruvian weaving communities were spinning on spindles and weaving on backstrap looms. All were intrigued by the Ecuadorian spinner with her large walking wheel, and by D.Y. Begay's Navajo spindle.

Evening activities included numerous spinning contests. Nine-year-old Maggie Smith competed on a spinning wheel against a young Peruvian on a hand spindle. The spinning wheel won



for length, but the spindle won for fineness.

One of the more moving events was the honoring of the elder weavers from each community and the passing on of weaving tools by each of them to members of the younger generation.

Following the Tinkuy were two days of workshops held at the Chinchero CTTC weaving center. Nilda Callanaupa taught natural dyeing and tubular woven edges. Carolina Concha Huarhua taught hat knitting and backstrap weaving.



Twenty-eight participants continued on for ten days of tours throughout the Cusco region. We visited several of the weaving villages and numerous Incan ruins including Pisac, Ollantaytambo, and of course, Machu Picchu.

Jennifer Moore, WARP member from Santa Fe, is the author of "The Weaver's Studio: Doubleweave." Lolli Jacobsen is a WARP member from Mendocino.

All photos by Joe Coca.