

**Weave a Real Peace**  
 3102 Classen Boulevard  
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# WARP



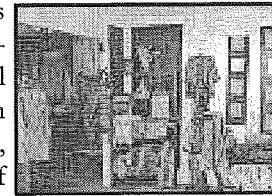
WEAVE A REAL PEACE

Volume 11, Number 3

Fall 2004

## Silk Moon Textile Arts Gallery Celebrates Art, Education, Culture

Walking into Silk Moon Textile Arts Gallery is like taking a step into a textile kaleidoscope. It is also a colorful portal to southeast Asia. Located on the small town square of Sebastopol, California, about one hour north of San Francisco, Silk Moon is a unique combination of art, education, culture, and craft. The gallery exhibits and sells elegant and interesting imported handwoven textiles, but it is so much more than a corporate "disembodied import store."



Sebastopol resident and owner of Silk Moon, Janet Rodina is not a weaver, but she calls herself a "weaver worshipper." She regards fine, complex textiles as art, and her vision for Silk Moon is to broaden interest here in the U.S. of the creative, cultural, and technical complexities of fine, complex handweaving that is created in developing countries, especially in southeast Asia. The array of textiles that she brings to Silk Moon from southeast Asia is stunning, from heavily brocaded supplementary weft shaman cloths to silk ikat scarves and shawls dyed with geographically-specific, natural dyes. Many pieces are truly museum-quality works of art, and others could be at home with any western interior design aesthetic.



*Ms. Dalounney Phonsouny, a Lao weaver now living in Berkeley, provides demonstrations.*

Because Janet's own travels and research have taken her primarily to Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand, she has opened Silk Moon with a focus on the rich textile traditions of those countries. The handwoven silks from these countries each represent their own distinctive weaving and dyeing techniques, and each weaver or co-op Janet buys from seems to have a signature style. While many of the weavers are carrying on age-old traditions and employing designs that have been passed down from generation to generation, others are forging new paths with subtle or dramatic and modern designs.

The young women who have formed OckPopTok, a weaving co-op in Luang Prabang, Laos, for instance, weave beautiful

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### 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*

## Online Textile Auction Begins October 1!

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## From the WARP Office....

Cheryl Musch, Administrative Coordinator

Welcome to all the new members who have recently joined WARP! It's exciting to all of us to see our network grow. As a networking organization, our potential expands as we share our knowledge and our passions. We look forward to your participation in empowering communities-in-need through textile arts.

We're looking forward to the WARP auction, which begins October 1. I hope you'll participate in this wonderful opportunity to support WARP and purchase gorgeous international textiles.

## Convergence 2004: WARP was there!

Deborah Chandler

This summer gave WARP another opportunity to make our presence known at Convergence, the big weaving conference sponsored bi-annually by the Handweavers Guild of America. Held in Denver this year, I heard the attendance was around 2,000. I don't know if they all made it to our booth, but a lot of people did.

Our presence primarily consisted of having a booth in the commercial exhibit area where we sold products from artisans in Afghanistan, Lesotho (Africa), Ghana, Guatemala, and in the U.S. both New Mexico and Arizona. In total we sold over \$10,000 worth of beautiful fiber crafts of all sizes, from rugs to coin purses. We also earned \$1300 for WARP, always useful.

Just as exciting, from an impromptu meeting of WARP (the planned meeting ran into glitches) and from talking with people in the booth, we have 30 new (and latent renewing) members!! Enthusiasm was high for what WARP is all about, no doubt in part a response to the increased tension the world is feeling these days. People want to do something, something constructive, and membership in WARP can lead to avenues to take action.

I want to thank the multitude of volunteers who came to help in the booth and to share what WARP means to them at the meeting. There were times when we had more volunteers than we could use, so especially thanks for your patience and willingness to back off so there was room for the customers. Anita Fletcher, Deb Brandon, Deborah Robson, Rebeka Robson-May, Jennie Wood, Joan Leon, Maria Navarro, Melissa Laffin, Ruth and Morris Johnson, Sarah Saulson, Sara Goodman, Linda Temple, and Lolli Jacobsen all pitched in, before, during, and/or after the show. We could not have done it without you. And thanks to Deb Robson, who has put together a mini-guide to running the booth that we will pass on to the WARP members who are willing to oversee booths at conferences in the future, Convergence and otherwise. It is indeed a lot of work, and it is also a lot of fun, and rewarding in many ways. Plus it gives you a great excuse to go to the conference. So look for an opportunity to take your turn helping introduce more people to the idea and possibility of Weaving A Real Peace.

## Letters...

### First International Folk Art Market

Last July in Santa Fe there was a terrific event that WARP-ers may want to look for in the future. It was the First International Folk Art Market, bringing 75 folk artists from 40 countries to Santa Fe to exhibit their skills and sell their wares on July 17 and 18. Organizers expected about 3000 people, and over 5000 came the first morning. Artisans sold everything from woven and embroidered textiles [Mexico, Syria, Morocco, India, Uzbekistan—among others] to wood carvings [Sweden] to beaded animals [South Africa] to amber [Poland]...and many other things. There were demonstrations and discussions for adults and workshops for children. I was lucky enough to be invited to bring a Moroccan weaver to the juried Market, and my daughter and I translated for her as she met many American weavers and sold her flatwoven Berber rugs. The Museum of International Folk Art and the Museum Foundation in Santa Fe co-sponsored the event. The 2005 International Folk Art Market will take place next summer on Museum Hill on July 9-10.

Susan Schaefer Davis, [sdavis@uslink.net](mailto:sdavis@uslink.net)

### Chuvashia, Russia!

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tographs. Everyone loved her presentation and as she was leaving, she reiterated her invitation for us to re-visit Chuvashia for the annual Midsummer Night Folk Festival of the Volga Peoples. Needless to say, we were already mentally packing our bags.

Our second trip, two summers later, included a few additional people: folkdress collectors, relatives, and graduate students. Again, with Valentina's help, we celebrated the opening of our photo show, visited cities Yoshkar Ola, Kazan, and Saransk to see their folk dress collections and on Midsummer Night, we sweated in a Russian banya, jumped over our bonfire, and swam in the river. I recorded all of this on digital video.

This summer, with a full complement of 25 people, we again crossed the "bridge" to the Volga Bend. We stayed in a spa hotel on its banks and marched in the folk procession waving our American flags and dancing with Russians. Our visit was crowned by a trip down the Volga on the presidential yacht as guests of President Federov. We sipped champagne and watched the fireworks break over the city on the National day.

Each time I walk this bridge, the journeys get better. To see photos of these trips, please visit the project website [www.chuvusproject.homestead.com](http://www.chuvusproject.homestead.com).

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).

**The Third Annual WARP Online Auction**  
**October 1- 15, 2004**

## Thanks to...

The Tucson Handweavers & Spinners Guild for their generous donation and ongoing support of WARP.

The Creative Strands Conference held in July in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, which donated the proceeds of its raffle to WARP. Vendors at Creative Strands as well as industry leaders such as Denise Knitting Needles, Gingher Inc., and Dale of Norway donated the goods to the raffle.

WARP members who represented our organization at Convergence in Colorado, Creative Strands in Pennsylvania, and the Textile Society of America conference in California.

### WARP Governing Board

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WARP members Rachel Werling and Eric Mindling of Traditions Mexico Hands-On Tours are providing specialized tours in Mexico for spinners, weavers, and dyers.

**Fiber Arts of the Oaxacan Highlands**  
November 12-22 with silk cultivation and spinning, cochineal and indigo dyeing, rural markets and much more.

**Fiber Arts of the Oaxacan South Coast**  
December 4-13 with natural brown cotton, murex shell dyeing, backstrap, lovely beaches, etc, etc.

**Mayan Textiles and Culture**  
April 2-11 with highland Mayan textile expert and author Chip Morris, exquisite brocade and Mayan palaces.

Please note our new address: [traditionsmexico@yahoo.com](mailto:traditionsmexico@yahoo.com)

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## One Bridge, Many Journeys... Chuvashia, Russia!

Mary Kelly

Many of our members have experienced crossing a "bridge" from our country to another for the first time. Everything is new/exciting. But soon that bridge becomes familiar as it is re-crossed by experts coming back to our country from abroad to lecture/do demonstrations. Many journeys follow going both ways, our two countries are linked, and WARP's theme for this year celebrates this enriching experience.

I first read about the Chuvash Republic in a dusty library in Bulgaria. A slim volume on the folk dress of this region of Russia compared it to Bulgarian costumes that I was then studying on a Fulbright grant. Bulgarians descended from the Great Bolgar Nation on the Volga Bend, where the Chuvash now live. Back at home, I vowed someday to visit, and in 1999, persuaded two intrepid friends, Helen Baine and Helene Cincebeaux, with whom I had had adventures before, to travel with me. Although I wrote to museums in the capital, Cheboksary, we received no answer. We decided to go anyway.

By the time we got to Moscow, our friends were already trying to dissuade us...too dangerous, they said, and made us promise that if we got half-way there and felt afraid, we would return by train. Far from fear, we felt fascination as we arrived in Nizhny Novogorod and boarded a bus for the rest of the two day trip. I talked to a young Chuvash as we approached the city, who volunteered to help us find a hotel. Soon I was on the phone to the museum and the curator, Valentina Elem, who greeted me "But I have been waiting for you. Where are you?" She was quite surprised to find that we had already arrived.

Her help was invaluable. We were able to visit small ethnographic villages, photograph valuable museum collections and interview folk art specialists. Our first steps over this particular bridge were easy because of her kind and hospitable attention. We reciprocated the following year by inviting Valentina to come to the United States for a conference on Eastern European Heritage that was sponsored by Tompkins Cortland Community College. Her trip over the bridge was funded by an IREX grant, and she brought with her many interesting folk dresses and pho-



A Chuvash woman wearing the traditional "Amazon" helmets

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### 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.

## WARP's Third Annual Online Auction to be October 1 - 15

Marcia Bellas

What do a wool poncho from Michoacan, Mexico, a block print by artist and WARP member, Marilyn Anderson, and a Vietnamese hemp purse have in common? These, and many other beautiful items, are all featured in WARP's third annual online textile auction! Auction revenues will help support WARP's operating costs since membership dues do not cover all of the organization's expenses.

If you'd like to help support WARP, acquire some textiles from around the world and have some fun, visit the auction website: <http://www.weavershand.com/warp.html> To enter the auction house, click on the auction button. This will take you to the education page, where you will click on a second auction button. If you'd like to bid on an item, send an email message to Marcia Bellas ([marciabellas@verizon.net](mailto:marciabellas@verizon.net)) with the item number and your bid. Marcia will post high bids on the web site daily, so you can monitor the bidding process. At the end of the auction, Marcia will contact high bidders, who will then send a check or money order to her. Then the donor will send you the item. Please join us, and let others know about this event too!

### Host a Holiday Sale for WARP

UPAVIM Crafts and Mayan Hands, Guatemalan fair trade cooperatives, make it easy to hold a holiday sales event at your local church, office, home, or guild meeting. These two groups have generously offered to consign pre-priced, fairly traded handcrafts from Guatemala to WARP members who wish to host a sale to benefit WARP. You get a box of handcrafted items, sell what you can, and return what is left with the income from the sale. All profits, above wholesale cost and shipping, will go to WARP. Help WARP, Guatemalan artisans, and your local community by having a consignment sale. Contact Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland at [UpavimMayanhands@comcast.net](mailto:UpavimMayanhands@comcast.net) (email); 301/515-5911 (phone).

### Lively Discussions, Info Exchange on WARP Listserv

The WARP listserv continues to be a source of lively discussions and exchange of information. If you aren't participating you might like to check it out. The listserv allows for the printing of longer articles than will fit in the newsletter--for example the recent fascinating stories by Eric Mindling: "A Perfect Red--the Tale of a Dye" and "In Search of the Velvet Huipil." Also, suggestions and resources for starting a cooperative were recently discussed.

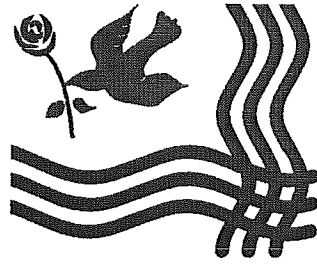
To sign up for the list, go to Main Page of the listserv on the Internet at: <http://www.yahogroups.com/list/WeaveARealPeace> and complete the requested information to register for YahooGroups! Don't forget your Password! Add the site to your 'bookmark' or 'favorites' list so you can find it again.

### AT THE TEXTILE MUSEUM

"Indian Textile Traditions:  
Exchange &  
Transformation"  
October 15 - 17, 2004

The elegant and distinctive artistic style that developed under the patronage of the Mughal Court had a marked influence on the textile traditions of Iran, the Caucasus, Central Asia, Turkey, and Europe. The weekend of **October 15 - 17** join fellow textile enthusiasts for "Indian Textile Traditions: Exchange and Transformation" - a conference exploring the enduring artistic appeal and influence of Mughal art as expressed in rugs and textiles. You will enjoy a rich program of lectures, receptions, exhibition tours, a "show-and-tell" of related textiles from private collectors and much more.

For more information, access The Textile Museum's web site at <http://www.textilemuseum.org/>



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

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

## Working with Artisan Groups in Other Countries Takes Time

To help us understand the process of working with small artisan groups, Deborah Chandler forwarded a letter she recently sent to a customer requesting modifications of the bracelets made by a group Deborah is working with in Guatemala. For those of us not living in developing countries, some of the challenges become apparent in this excerpt from Deborah's letter.

Deborah writes:

Just want to expand a bit, so you will understand this better. When you said you had no idea what all was involved, I realized that of course you don't. So let me give you some idea.

The notes [requesting changes] come to me. At this end they get translated into Spanish, and depending on when the information arrives, I may call our field workers by phone right away (if they will be meeting with the weavers soon) or I might hold the information until our monthly meeting.

The instructions are translated into Quiche, the language the weavers speak, and given to the appropriate woman/women, either in their monthly group meeting or by going to their homes (they do not have roads, much less phones, so it is a matter of walking dusty paths to wherever the women live). The yarn is provided (which we hope is on hand); otherwise the yarn could be purchased from the store we use as emergency backup—it is only an hour away over the mountain, instead of the three hours to our yarn warehouse.

We have now invested a minimum of two days, if no one had any other responsibilities and everything fell into place perfectly, which it almost never does. A week would be a good guess of things going favorably, and it could be more like three weeks.

The weaving itself is done on a backstrap loom, and since the bracelets are small, it goes pretty quickly. However, normally the looms are set up with at least two yards of warp, so to do only a few samples requires some change in process, not something that comes easily to these very traditional women. It is not economical to weave a lot less than two yards, as the work to set up the loom is nearly the same for a short warp as a long one. If the weaver is not already weaving something else (which we try hard for her to be doing, of course), and does not have any other obligations like harvest or trips to the market or ...then it may take her only a couple of days to weave your bracelets.

After being woven, the bracelets go to another village about two hours away by bus. Fortunately, that is where another field worker lives, so he can pick up the bracelets and take them home. There the process begins again, as the bracelets are given to the woman who does the embroidery. After however many days that takes, they are then delivered to me here in the city, four+ hours away.

There is no functional mail system in Guatemala, so they cannot be mailed. There is courier service like Fed Ex, or they can go by bus, but the cost of sending them cross-country that way—which is not door to door from and to our houses, but city to city,

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## Weavers and Dyers in Ghana

*continued from page 6*

the morning for the best ones but pay the lowest prices. Domestic and international orders don't come anywhere near meeting the capacity of the makers, for most of whom this is their only source of income to pay for school fees, medical care, and food to supplement what they grow.

Many international aid organizations are active in Ghana, especially in the north, where the needs are so great. Today they largely fund educational and structural development projects to local NGOs rather than providing outright aid. In Ghana, there are many sophisticated, well-educated university graduates, who often studied economic development. They largely founded and staff the organizations trying to aid poor craftspeople and work very, very hard doing so. They are a fascinating and inspiring group of people. But many of the rural people the NGOs seek to serve are so poor that they are unable to take advantage of programs like straw banks for basket weavers. Their extended families' needs for cash are so desperate that they are unable to repay even the smallest loans.

It's true that Ghana faces many challenges, but it's a wonderful country to visit. English is the official language and Ghanaians are extraordinarily gracious. The country has rich and diverse textile traditions. I shall never forget the beautiful sound of wooden shuttles gently clicking in the hands of Kente weavers. Street life is unendingly fascinating. The multitude of tiny shops are decked out with hand-painted, illustrated signs. The women passing by are dressed in a joyful explosion of bright colors, their hair beautifully braided. A true treat for the senses.

*Sarah Saulson can be reached at 105 Crawford Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13224; 315/449-9423 (phone); sfsaulson@aol.com (email).*

## Flora MacDonald: Working with Afghan Women

*continued from page 10*

Fifteen great years in humanitarian work followed an exciting and successful career in politics for Flora MacDonald. On asking her what special message she would have for women today, she responded with this invitation: "I've learned more about the world and its people from my activities in these past fifteen years than from anything else I've ever done." Her work continues.

*Nicole McGrath founded Peri Dar in November 2002, a Canadian fair trade company now on its second annual campaign promoting the work of CARE for women in Afghanistan. For more information: [www.peridar.com](http://www.peridar.com), 819/456-4724 and CARE Canada, [www.care.ca](http://www.care.ca) or 800/267-5232.*

### More New Members

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### WARP on the Web

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

## RUGMARK Update

Highlights from the RUGMARK Foundation e-News, Vol. III, Issue VII (July 30, 2004) and Vol. III, Issue VIII (August 27, 2004) include the following articles. To read the full newsletters, or to sign up to receive the e-Newsletter, go to the RUGMARK web site at <http://www.rugmark.org>.

**Nepal RUGMARK Opens Day Care Center For Children Of Weavers** - As a part of its comprehensive child labor prevention program, Nepal RUGMARK Foundation has opened and funded the start-up of 14 day care centers for the children of carpet weavers. The latest center—the Manhakal Day Care and Education Center—launched in April and now serves 36 children of carpet workers from six surrounding factories. The Center began with generous support from Arthur B. Schultz and additional assistance from RUGMARK licensee Nordic Textiles & Furnishings. Approximately 600 children attend pre-school in RUGMARK-funded day care programs. Nepal RUGMARK Foundation notes that school enrollment has increased as a result of this program, thus reducing the flow of children into carpet factories.

**RUGMARK India Expands Medical Assistance For Disabled** - This month, RUGMARK India completed the second step of a two-phase project to address the needs of those who are physically disabled in weaving communities. Last May, medical specialists identified 140 people with physical disabilities in Gopiganj (Badohi), Uttar Pradesh, a region of India rich in carpet production. On August 26th RUGMARK organizers distributed hundreds of aids, such as wheel chairs, crutches, and prosthetic limbs to those in need. The prosthetics were manufactured and donated by the Kanpur-based company, Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India.

**U.S. Department Of Labor Releases Annual Report On The Worst Forms of Child Labor** - This month the U.S. Department of Labor released its 2003 report on the worst forms of child labor covering 144 countries. The report outlines the incidence and nature of child labor in each country, along with new governmental programs enacted to combat it. View the report on-line at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov).

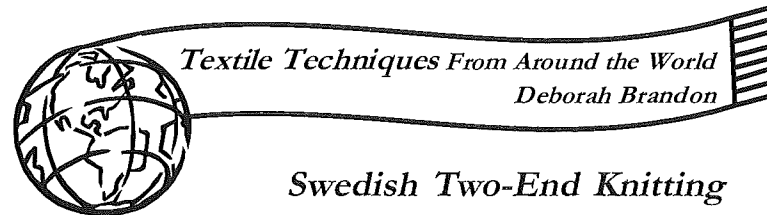
### Upcoming events:

October 12, Philadelphia. Stephanie Odegard, of Odegard, Inc., will discuss, "Weaving Together Art, Business and Social Activism: Odegard Carpets" as part of the International House's World Economic Lecture Series on October 12th. For more information visit [www.ihousephilly.org](http://www.ihousephilly.org).

October 12, Philadelphia. RUGMARK USA Director, Nina Smith, speaks at Philadelphia's own White Dog Café. For details contact the White Dog Café at 215-386-9224 or visit [www.whitedogcafe.com](http://www.whitedogcafe.com)

RUGMARK is a nonprofit organization working to end illegal child labor in the carpet industry and offer educational opportunities to children in India, Nepal, and Pakistan. The RUGMARK label is your best assurance that no illegal child labor was used in the manufacture of a carpet or rug.

RUGMARK Foundation, 733 15th Street, Suite 912, Washington, DC 20005; 202/347-4205 (phone); [www.rugmark.org](http://www.rugmark.org) (web site).



## Swedish Two-End Knitting

Two-end knitting (*tvaandsstickning* in Swedish) is a Scandinavian knitting technique, by which one knits with both ends of a ball of yarn, and the two strands are twisted around each other between every stitch. This method yields a firm and dense fabric—perfect for the Swedish winters. Traditional applications are generally limited to mittens, gloves, stockings, socks, and jacket sleeves.

*Tvaandsstickning* is best known for its textured surface patterns that are created by combining knit and purl stitches, and by twisting the strands around each other in different ways. For multi-colored knitting, two strands of contrasting colors are used at a time. The third form of embellishment for two-end knitting is embroidery, which is used mainly on mittens and gloves.

In two-end knitting, the two strands are held in the right hand (as in the English method). When knitting, the right needle is inserted into the loop (on the left needle) as usual. The right needle is then released, the back strand is picked up (with the right index finger), brought over the front strand, and thrown over the tip of the right needle and worked as in the English method. Note that the strand that was just worked has become the new front strand, and the old front strand is now the back strand (to be worked next). The working strand is knitted (or puled) using the English method.

Two-end knitting dates back to the mid 1600s, and is still practiced in the forested countryside of Sweden, mainly in the Dalarna Province and on Sollerön Island. There was, however, a decline in *tvaandsstickning* in the late 1800s and early 1900s, due to Continental knitting (where the yarn is held in the left hand) being taught in schools.

### Resources:

**Twined Knitting**, by Birgitta Dandanell and Ulla Danielsson, Interweave Press.

**Two-End Knitting**, by Anne-Maj Ling, Schoolhouse Press.  
"Swedish Two-Strand Knitting," by Linda D.Y. Sokalski, in *Knitting Around the World* from *Threads*, The Taunton Press.

"Colorful Tvaandsstickning," by Linda D.Y. Sokalski, in *Knitting Around the World* from *Threads*, The Taunton Press.

<http://bagateller.tripod.com/tips/twined.html>

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

#### 2004 Annual Dues

\$10 (simple living)  
\$20 (U.S. and Canada)  
\$25 (international;  
sister memberships)  
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\$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:

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## Teaching and Learning from Weavers and Dyers in Ghana a Rich Summer Experience

Sarah Saulson

Early in the summer I was privileged to visit Ghana to meet and work with craftspeople there. I was lucky to travel with a friend who, as a cultural anthropologist, has been going to Ghana for 35 years. I can hardly begin to describe how this enriched my experience. Through her I met and visited the homes of people from literally every walk of life, from the poor and marginalized Muslim immigrants of her research, to professors and artists.

The core of my trip was spending a week working with Lawrencia Akasga, a young professional weaver who runs a studio in the far northern town of Bolgatanga. The town is in the poorest region of Ghana. Literacy is estimated to be 40% in this largely subsistence-based agricultural economy. Villages usually have one well, most of them drilled by the Canadian equivalent of the Peace Corps.

Some of you may remember my many pleas for 18 dent reeds. They were for Lawrencia's studio, where about a dozen young women unable to complete their formal educations receive two years of training as weavers. Recently someone said to me that craft has the potential to enable people of the developed North and those of the underdeveloped South to meet as equals. No truer words were ever spoken. Lawrencia and I found that weaving immediately created a bond between us, as if we had known each other for years. She designs and weaves the beautiful striped cloth traditional to her region, on simple 2-shaft counter-balanced looms. She has a wonderful eye for color and proportion. With help from another WARP member, Lawrencia was able to purchase a 48-inch wide 6-shaft loom that she has long wanted. It will enable her to weave cloth that looks very much like Kente, but can be woven more quickly and efficiently. No one in Bolga weaves this kind of cloth, so she feels she will have a unique product. A good example of capacity-building, I hope.

I'm proudest of the dye work we did in the studio: I taught them how to easily create space-dyed skeins of yarn with dyes I brought. It was probably well over 90 degrees under the pounding afternoon sun on the balcony of Lawrencia's studio where we worked. There is no plumbing, running water, or electricity there!

Another deeply enriching part of my trip was to visit basket-making cooperatives for a fair trade organization. This is where I really started to get an education about what it means for those without formal education to try to earn a sustainable living through craft-making. Not easy! There is a healthy international market for the durable and colorful baskets of Ghana, especially "Bolga" baskets, so named because they originate in Bolgatanga. The Friday morning basket market is a glory to behold. Wholesale agents scour the market in the wee hours of

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### WARP Slide Show

Now is the time to reserve the WARP slide show for holiday showings. Consider having a sale of crafts from UPAVIM and Mayan Hands as well.

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

To make arrangements for UPAVIM/Mayan Hands items to sell, contact Mary Joan Ferrara-Marsland, UpavimMayanhands@comcast.net (email); 301/515-5911 (phone). Profits from sales (minus shipping expenses) benefit WARP.

This Fall, the slide show will be shown in Massachusetts, Virginia, and to several weaving and spinning guilds in Arizona. The schedule for 2005 already includes trips to Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, and California.

### Working with Artisan Groups Takes Time

*continued from page 4*

requiring trips at both ends of at least an hour and a half to send and retrieve the packages—is prohibitive. So we wait until we can get together, which usually happens twice a month somewhere.

When I finally have possession of the bracelets, I can get them ready to send to you. If we have a shipment going north right then, we can put them in the shipment and they can be sent on to you. But we send shipments only once every six weeks or so, usually longer than you want to wait. Because I have a U.S. mail forwarding service, I can send them up through that, at a minimum cost of \$14, and they usually get to you within a week to ten days. There are other faster ways I could send them, like UPS or Fed Ex, that would cost upwards of \$50.

Then, finally, you have the samples.

As you can see, what you think of as a small change—the color of blue, the location of the circle, etc.—is indeed small from a design standpoint. But from a “making it happen” standpoint, that is the least of the process. Each change you make requires all those steps all over again. And so far, we have charged nothing for the development process. But you can understand why we are about to institute such a fee.

Hope this helps explain why we can't send them as quickly as you would like. We live in a different world. Deborah

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

### The Changing Textile Traditions of Nigeria

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weaving at the narrow strip loom, which has always been reported as the sole territory of male weavers, has been widely practiced by women in those two cities for many years. I studied with Mrs. Afalabe, an *aso oke* weaver in her 30's who learned from her mother in Iseyin.

As I read about Nigerian textiles before my visit I feared that economic difficulties and the encroaching desire for western wear might have destroyed the textile professions. Although there are fewer active craftspeople than in the 1970's and 1980's when so much of the textile scholarship was written, textile craftspeople are still actively working in all the places made famous by that scholarship. I'm looking forward to a new generation of Nigerian scholars and the continually developing traditions of their rich textile heritage.

*Laura Strand is Associate Professor of Art, Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville. She can be contacted at 3 Burton Place, Edwardsville, IL 62025; 618/692-4170 (phone); lstrand@siue.edu (email).*

**Mark Your Calendar: WARP's 2005 Annual Meeting to be April 15-17 on St. Helena Island, SC**  
*Included in your newsletter is a flier telling about Penn Center. More information about the meeting will be coming soon.*

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## Canadian Flora MacDonald: Working to Change the Lives of Women in Afghanistan

Nicole McGrath

### Part II

Part I of this article discussed the work that Flora MacDonald, former Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, has been doing to help the women of Afghanistan. Part II describes programs of CARE-Canada that are furthering Ms. MacDonald's work.

One of CARE's newest and most impressive projects is directed at teenage girls: the Accelerated Education for Out-of-School Girls project. "This is one of the best organized of CARE's projects in the country," claims Ms. MacDonald. "The girls are learning very quickly, the first three years of regular schooling are condensed into one year to allow them to integrate into the schooling system at a more appropriate level, and give them the tools to earn a living." The 2,200 students are thirsty for knowledge, eager to learn, and show exceptional grades averaging 96%. More girls are hoping to participate in this project.

CARE-Canada's Asif Rahimi called the CARE-Afghanistan office on International Women's Day when large gatherings and celebrations took place in all parts of Afghanistan, "a very special day for Afghan women who seek fairness and social justice for themselves and their future generations." Mr. Rahimi insists it is essential to address women's needs in Afghanistan, "working towards their achievement is right, is possible, and is strategically wise." He is intent on continuing CARE's Accelerated Education for Out-of-School Girls project despite a new funding challenge. Recently the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) announced they would no longer fund education projects in Afghanistan.

"I don't understand this decision" Ms. MacDonald replied, "unless CIDA doesn't understand the situation in Afghanistan. How can hundreds of thousands of widows survive without education or training?" Their decision not to fund education projects in Afghanistan does not take into account the important role of women in community building. Without education, the situation could deteriorate.

What can be done to help? CARE-Canada is actively seeking donations for the Accelerated Education for Out-of-School Girls project, and a contribution would certainly help. CARE does excellent work, Ms. MacDonald states. They put funding directly into projects for women and the operating costs are low. She would like to see media representatives venture outside Kabul to be able to report on the real Afghanistan; women are making changes for themselves and their families.

Ms. MacDonald also highly values learning about the lives of people in developing countries, and about people immigrating to Canada. She encourages visits to the websites of humanitarian organisations.

## Member Profile

### Miriam Leth-Espensen:

### Weaving and Working for Peace

Tori Derr

Miriam was born in Denmark and started knitting as a child. By age 10, she was doing production knitting for a woman who exported sweaters to America. For almost 10 years, Miriam continued production knitting, earning about 10 cents an hour.

Around age 20, she decided to study weaving as a way to make a living. She moved to Jerusalem, where she studied art and design at the Bezalel School of Design. Eventually she found her way to Santa Fe, New Mexico, where she designs fabrics, creates women's clothes, and operates a small artisans' gallery. Over time, she has expanded to selling looms and luxurious yarns; she started the Santa Fe School of Weaving in 1999.

Through her work, Miriam hopes to inspire people to become more creative and to develop an appreciation for handmade things as opposed to commercial products: "I really believe that if people have a few good quality items, their need to consume will be diminished." Through fiber arts, Miriam hopes to move people toward a more organic lifestyle. "Natural fibers give a sense of interdependence and connectedness to other people around the world." These connections, Miriam believes, help people to feel better about themselves and their lives.

Miriam also sees strong links between fiber arts and peace. "We live in a period of destruction. People have an innate need to rebuild, but feel powerless... Miriam helps support many artisans through WARP contacts by selling goods in her Santa Fe shop. You can reach Miriam at 505/982-6312 (phone); miriamSF@aol.com (email); or via www.sfschoolofweaving.com (web site)

being involved in weaving, knitting, any creative process, is a way to balance this destruction." Miriam says that many customers don't know what to do [about world events], "so they just knit."

Yet Miriam feels there is an important role for people who want to support international artisans, like those involved with WARP. "We need to be much more respectful of the lives of people whose work we are promoting, so that they can live secure lives, so that they can live with human dignity." How can we affect this? Miriam suggests that "the powers in the U.S. affect [artisans'] lives significantly. We should be helping them [by] supporting politicians who will change the way we interact within the world."

Through all her efforts—teaching weaving; selling artisan products, handmade goods, and beautiful yarns; and advocating for peace and just U.S. policies—Miriam inspires and gives a sense of purpose to all she meets. As a former student of hers, I can testify to Miriam's compassion for people, policies, and the groundedness that comes from working with natural fibers.

*Tori Derr, the column editor for Member Profiles, is a teacher, a weaver, and a community development worker who has recently moved to Gainesville, FL. Her profile of Miriam was sent despite hurricanes and a crashed computer. She can be reached at tori\_derr@hotmail.com (as soon as her computer becomes functional).*

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## The Changing Textile Traditions of Nigeria

Laura Strand

For seven weeks this summer I was privileged to take part in a faculty exchange project initiated between Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, Illinois, and the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. I found the University of Ibadan to be an intellectually engaged and collegial campus. In fact, since most of the 30,000 students, faculty, and staff live on the campus it is a virtual city within Ibadan, which is the second largest city in West Africa.

At the university I worked with graduate students to document and begin repairs to the nearly 50 fabrics in the collection of the Institute of African Studies. A considerable amount of my time was spent in the libraries reading the Masters and Ph.D. theses in art history, African studies, anthropology, and archaeology that focus on textile traditions. A stunning amount of excellent research is being done by these students who are, in many cases, researching the traditions of their own families and villages. This first person research conducted by student scholars is an incredibly valuable record of Nigerian textile culture. I hope that publishing opportunities can be made available to bring these works to a wider audience.

I travelled primarily in the Yoruba regions of the southwest and in the Edo regions on the southwestern edge of the confluence of the Niger and Benue rivers. Everywhere I found craftspeople actively engaged in ever evolving textile traditions. In Ibadan and Abeokuta the indigo dyers produce stitch and fold resisted textiles in 4, 5, and 6 yard lengths to be sewn into matching wrapper skirts, blouses, and headscarves for women, and into pants and long tunics for men. The ground fabrics of largely imported damask are usually 36"- 45" wide and are stitched into shaped clothing rather than joined in pairs to form a single sheet of cloth used as a full body wrapper dress, as was the tradition 30 years ago. Although the designs have also changed to keep up with fashion, the stitching continues to be well done, though is less elaborate than in the past. In addition, the enlarging profession of tailor/seamstress has led to the development of very exciting machine stitch resisted fabrics of bold geometry unlike any I have seen before.

Indigo dyeing in natural fermentation vats continues but the dyers have added commercial vat dyes, which are chemically like indigo, to their repertoire to increase their color palette. The brightly colored results are often worked over commercially dyed brocades, many of which have evidently been dyed with fiber-reactive dyes. The vat dye discharge technique using vat dyes (including indigo) over fiber reactive dyes both adds in the new color and removes the original color at the same time. This trick of chemistry that I have been teaching at SIUE for several years is to be seen all around the Abeokuta market. They found the technique by accident but have quickly learned to take great design and color advantage of the discovery.

In Ibadan and Iseyin I interviewed and studied with narrow strip weavers. In Nigeria these fabrics are called *aso oke* meaning "cloth of the loom" in Yoruba. The first thing I noted was that

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## Silk Moon Textile Arts Gallery

*continued from page 1*

scarves and wallhangings that employ geometric and hypnotic abstractions reminiscent of minimalist art. OckPopTok means "east-meets-west" in the Lao language. This group of twelve spunky young women in their twenties have created unique designs that appeal to many young and not-so-young here in the west. In fact, several clients of Silk Moon have suggested that OckPopTok weavings belong in the New York or San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.

From Taykeo Gallery, in Vientiane, Laos, Janet brings to Silk Moon the luscious naturally-dyed ikats and heavily brocaded silk ceremonial cloths that reflect the rich cultural heritage embedded in Lao textile traditions. Taykeo Sayavongkhamdy is a weaver who is working hard to create a Lao textile museum in Vientiane, to bring greater attention to what many consider to be an endangered textile art form. There will always be inexpensive souvenir-grade textiles in markets everywhere, but both Taykeo and Janet believe that we need to make a concerted effort to preserve the more labor-intensive, complex ethnic weaving traditions.

The people of Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia have been ravaged by war, poverty, and now by urbanization. Young people are drawn away from their villages when there is no work, and they find it is more fun and lucrative to serve cappuccino to tourists in the urban centers. So the next generation of potential weavers may indeed be lost in the transition.

Janet has built relationships with the weavers over the past several years and is proud to call many of these hardworking, gracious women her friends. Janet buys textiles from these friends and friends of friends at fair prices that honor the weavers' skills, time, and art. Without multiple layers of importers each taking their profit, Janet is able in turn to sell the textiles to customers in the U.S. for reasonable prices.

Silk Moon is founded on the idea that the love of textiles and handicrafts weaves connecting threads of friendship. Silk Moon is a proud member of WARP, and Janet considers education to be an important vehicle for accomplishing the gallery's goals. It will be a lively place for weavers, weaver-worshippers, and those who just want a special gift that was created with heart, soul, and skill. There is a growing schedule of talks and demonstrations planned for the gallery. Although there will be no how-to classes, Silk Moon will be bringing in weavers, authors, culture and travel experts, and textile scholars to teach, demonstrate their art, and build enthusiasm for fine handwoven textiles and the people who create them.

Janet Rodina can be reached at Silk Moon Textile Arts, 6932 Sebastopol Avenue, Suite A, Sebastopol, CA 95472; 707/824-4300; [www.SilkMoon.org](http://www.SilkMoon.org) (web site); [jrodina@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jrodina@sbcglobal.net) (email).

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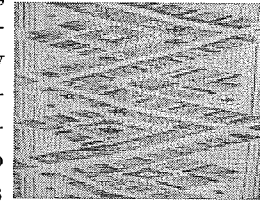
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