

❖ Northwest News ❖

Association of Northwest Weavers' Guilds

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Special Conference Report Issue 2013

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SPECIAL EDITION

More than five hundred weavers, instructors, and vendors gathered at Western Washington University in Bellingham Washington from June 18 -23, 2013 for The ANWG Conference. Of these attendees, ten were fortunate to have been selected to receive one of the \$400.00 grants.

After careful consideration of the applications, the following recipients were chosen:

Diane Bigelow	(Anchorage Weavers and Spinners Guild)
Kaliope Creighton	(Methow Valley Spinners and Weavers Guild)
Lucy DeFranco	(Saturday Handweavers Guild)
Isabelle Fusey	(Richmond Weavers and Spinners Guild)
Susan Garvie	(Ponderosa Spinners, Weavers & Fibre Artists)
Louise Hamilton	(Chilliwack Spinners and Weavers Guild)
Sarah Nopp	(Olympia Weavers Guild)
Margie Preninger	(Mid Island Weavers and Spinner Guild)
Elinor Tapio	(Skagit Valley Weavers Guild)
Ilze Tomsevics	(Seattle Weavers Guild)

Alternates (in order)

Terry Standley	(Arachne Weavers Guild)
Lizzy Tegeler	(Portland Handweavers Guild, Inc)
Marg Harkness	(Desert Sage Spinners & Weavers)

Please enjoy reading their reports and seeing the conference through the eyes of a first time attendee. Feel their excitement and read their varying thoughts on the classes they took.

Barbara Taylor
ANWG Communication Chair

(All photos were taken by the conference attendee unless otherwise indicated.)

Isabelle Fusey Richmond Spinners and Weavers Guild

The 2013 ANWG conference in Bellingham was the first weaving conference I ever attended. What took me so long, I wonder now.

Weaving appeals to me because it calls on both hemispheres of my brain: the analytical, engineering side which enjoys scrutinizing weaving drafts and interlacements, and the less-developed artistic side which craves colour, texture, and design.

Weaving provides endless avenues to explore, and I was spoiled at the conference when it comes to exploration and learning. The week started with the workshop “Jumpstart Jacket” led by Daryl Lancaster and ended with three great seminars:¹

- Point Variations with Bonnie Inouye
- Coping with Harness Envy with Madelyn van der Hoogt
- Power of Block Design with Rosalie Neilson

Bonnie, Madelyn, Rosalie, and Daryl are world-class, intelligent, funny, engaging, oh so knowledgeable, and most of all inspiring instructors. It also strikes me that all four have highly harmonized left and right brains: they are clearly all very analytical and logical, and they are also highly creative individuals.

Bonnie showed us dozens of ways to design with points by changing point size, offset, direction, sequence, and so on. Rosalie shared her clever overlay technique for creating block designs. I can't wait for her book *An Exaltation of Blocks* to come out. Daryl piled on suggestions and tips on how to create fabulous clothing (great handouts, by the way). Madelyn provided much evidence with her slides that beautiful fabric can be woven on four shafts and then proceeded to give us the tools to reduce (or expand) twill and block drafts.

I of course spent a few hours drooling over the exhibits at the Western Gallery. So many ideas to explore...

Finally, I could not resist the temptations of the marketplace. I was not alone: I caught many of my friends in the act, clutching armfuls of skeins and cones. I jumped at the opportunity to go through the new (and old) weaving books, to fondle yarns, and to discover cool weaving tools. I spent more money than I intended, but was very truthful at the border back into Canada! I treasure the books from Eugene Textile Center and The Weaving Works, the unique yarns from Giovanna Imperia Designs, the loom gadgets and cotton from Lunatic Fringe, and more. As I'm looking at the recap slide show on the conference website, I wished I had done more shopping!

Attending the conference has helped me in a number of ways:

- **Artistically:** The exhortation to create my own designs is the loudest message I got from the conference. Bonnie encouraged us to go for Big Designs. Madelyn advised us to analyze pieces we like to understand what it is about the design that we like and then create our own designs, adapting as required. Daryl reminded us that it's not about the end product, it's about the adventure. Rosalie showed us what is possible with colour and geometry. I am ready to create my own designs and to discover what I really like. Am I a block person or a point person or something else?
- **Technically:** I learned about features of my weaving software; I learned how to use my sewing machine; I learned about creating fabric; I learned about fitting; I learned how to reduce and expand twill and block designs to suit my loom and my projects; I learned that there are only sixteen two block designs in the whole world; I learned that small enough advancing points create dark and light areas that show from afar and yet are pleasing from up close, and the list goes on.
- **Financially:** Madelyn has shown me the way: I will not be buying another loom – eight shafts is plenty! Madelyn's wise words struck a chord: a woven piece is so much more than interlacements: colour, drape, and yarn choices are not a function of the number of shafts. It is indeed possible to create beautiful designs with four or eight shafts.

(cont'd. on p.3)

1. Choosing these seminars was not easy. I spent many hours pouring over the program. I am happy to report I was thrilled with my choices.

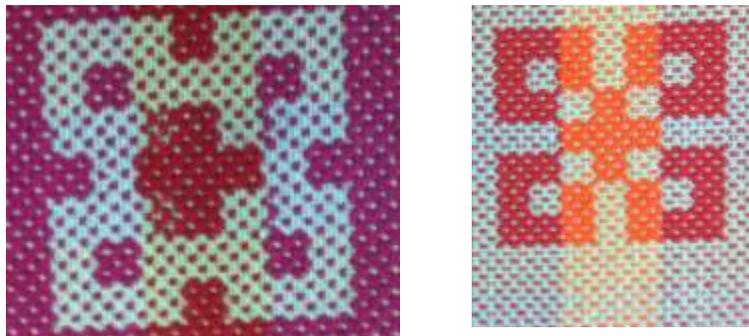
Isabelle Fusey (cont'd.)

I plan to share what I have learned at the conference with the Richmond guild members in a number of ways. For example:

- I am preparing a program for one of our monthly meetings which will provide an introduction to the techniques discussed by Rosalie, Bonnie, and Madelyn (not an easy task and certainly no substitute for the real thing).
- As a participant (and organizer) of a mug rug exchange, I plan to do a series of mug rugs in summer and winter blocks, putting in practice what I have learned from Rosalie.
- The guild's next challenge is a fashion show in June 2014: members are asked to wear something they've woven or made from their handspun. I'm hoping to start a study group (perhaps "support group" is a more appropriate name) for those of us who would like to move beyond towels and scarves and tackle garments. The material I got from Daryl will be invaluable.
- Finally, I will write a couple of articles for our newsletter that will chronicle two projects: a huck lace scarf² woven with MORA yarn I purchased at the conference, and a fabric for a skirt using one of Bonnie's advancing point drafts as a starting point.

I enjoyed everything: the workshop, the seminars, the fashion show, the exhibits. The web and books and journals are all great resources. However, weaving is physical: handwovens are meant to be fondled and three-dimensional constructions are meant to be admired both from a distance and up close. I was familiar with the work of my instructors through various articles I had read, but the photographs I have seen of their work do not do it justice: the pieces I saw and touched in class were stunning.

I offer my thanks to all those who have made this possible: Pauline Mullaney (president of the Richmond Weavers and Spinners guild) for writing such a nice letter, Gloria Lebowitz and her ANWG team for awarding me a grant, the conference's tireless organizing committee, the enthusiastic volunteers, the incredibly generous instructors, the tantalizing vendors, and my fellow participants.



Two blocks from a sample by Rosalie Neilson in her workshop
"The Power of Block Design"

² In fact, a huck lace study is in my future since I'm puzzled by two seemingly contradictory statements I heard at the conference. In my notes from the block design seminar, I wrote down that 6-block designs are possible with 8 shafts. In my notes from Madelyn's seminar, I wrote down that a 4-block huck lace design requires 10 shafts! I need to get to the bottom of this....

Louise Hamilton
Chilliwack Spinners and Weavers Guild

It has taken several days to come down from the high caused by this wonderful experience.

I trust the conference was a complete success. All the activities I took part in seemed to be very well organized and on time.

My choice of seminars was based on my need to enhance the very simple weaving and knitting that I do. Anita Luvera Mayer's Tour was spectacular, there was so much to absorb and it did complement her program the following night. She was so willing to share her talents, I feel really fortunate to have taken part.

Diane Villano's seminar on Polymer Clay buttons has opened a new field for me, she was an excellent instructor, and I wish I could have spent more time with her. This is a new craft for me and the possibilities are endless. Our Guild is always looking for new ideas and this will complete the weaving they do.

The seminars I took were great and I have been inspired, but I did get feedback from a few members who were disappointed that they had signed up for classes far too advanced for them. In the future, would it be possible to classify the workshops and seminars as beginners, intermediate or advanced?

The Guild Booths were most impressive, showing what can be achieved when people work together. This was teamwork at it's best. Our guild did not take part, but there is always hope for the future .

Our common denominator in weaving to me is, first and foremost, education, sharing knowledge to insure continued interest in fiber arts. Since our population is rapidly aging it is important to pass this knowledge on to the next generation. As I looked about the Conference halls I couldn't help but realize how few young people were present.

Perhaps in the future, ANWG could put forward a challenge to all weavers: to teach at least one new person per year. This would insure the art will continue, when we old timers can no longer weave.

This Conference reassured me that people can work together, they can share their talents and not only cross borders, but remove them as well.

With deepest gratitude I thank you and your committee for the opportunity to attend. I promise to share my experience with my guild .



Anita Luvera Mayer shares her home studio with tour participants.



Polymer Clay Buttons from Diane Villano's workshop.

Lucy DeFranco
Saturday Handweavers Guild

I attended the workshop on Deflected Doubleweave with Madelyn van der Hoogt. I had a great time learning about doubleweave, why this is called “deflected” and practicing on various looms. I came away with 11 samples and some more warp to weave. The various types of yarns, patterns, and what they did when fullled at the end is really interesting. I am really happy that I have so many samples that I can share with my guild. I am hoping to be able to weave a couple of small projects to show at the September meeting. I will be thinking while doing that about how I can present what I learned in a program for my guild. I also totally enjoyed the fact that we had a brief introduction the first day on what was going on, and a more in-depth theory session the morning of the second day. This really helped in my understanding of what the weave was doing because I had already been weaving and could see what she later described.

I attended Daryl Lancaster’s “Fashion Show Know How” seminar and came away very inspired to put some things in a show somewhere in order to practice what I learned. The information she gave from the paperwork that comes before a show to the actual show pieces or garments and what a judge might be critical of were very useful tips. I think I could make a very good program for my guild on this information. I may practice what I learned with entries for the county fair this summer.

I also attended Madelyn’s seminar on blocks. I did not understand all of it, which she warned might happen. As a result I will be trying to figure it out during the summer. I think one of the reasons I didn’t understand was someone wanted to know how to do it backwards (I was struggling before that question), and at the same time my lack of sleep caught up with me. My thoughts went into a quicksand hole at that point. This is something I want to understand, so I will keep at it until I do. I’m a morning person, so theory in the afternoon gets mushy!

Other useful things I learned while visiting with other attendees: I asked lots of people how many people are in their guild and how many usually show up at a meeting. It didn’t seem to matter what the number of members was, the majority of guilds have on average half of their members show up for the meetings. I also asked how guilds find new members, to which many answered that sales in weaving guild shows seem to draw the most new members in to learn how to weave.

Thank you SO much for the scholarship. I would not have gone otherwise, and now I know that it was worth every penny! The enthusiasm I had for weaving has been re-kindled by clothing people were wearing, and the many things I saw in the art gallery. This last week was the highlight of this year! I am so appreciative of it all. Thank you again,



Lucy’s finished samples from her Deflected Doubleweave workshop.



Lucy wove the remaining warp into this project, a dresser scarf. This shows both sides.

Susan Garvie
Ponderosa Spinners, Weavers, and Fiber Artists

First of all, thank you for awarding me one of the \$400.00 grants to attend the 2013 conference. It was the first conference I have been to, and I was impressed by how organized everything was, especially the fact that the Fashion Show, Banquet and Awards presentations all started at the designated times. I enjoyed the “busy”ness of the conference, the seminars, the shopping, and the food. The one addition I would like to see, at the Awards presentation, would be pictures of the winning items, flashed on the screen, as a person is handed their award. In this day of digital cameras and computers I think this would be very easy to do.

The first seminar I attended was “The Flowing Line” with Bonnie Inouye. Bonnie mentioned that there are curves everywhere you look, you just have to be looking for them; and I have found this to be true. Although I only have a 4 harness loom, I am looking forward to experimenting with various patterns and seeing if I can make curves. A computer program is useful as you can draft out the curves before the item is woven and see what the finished project is going to look like. However, Bonnie also likes to watch the item while it is being woven and adjust the curves as she weaves. Many patterns I see, from now on, will make me wonder what they would look like forming curves instead of diagonal lines. I did take notes and the handout should refresh my memory, but I would like to have taken some pictures of the samples and next time I will remember to bring my camera.

Seminar number two was “Coping With Harness Envy” with Madelyn van der Hoogt. I found Madelyn to be a very good instructor, and the take home message from her seminar was that sometimes a simple pattern can be just as pleasing as a complicated one. This class also showed the benefit of a computer weaving program. It certainly would be easier to get a computer to reduce a draft from eight harnesses to four but we achieved the same results with pencil, paper, and eraser. One of the sample photos, Madeline showed, a shawl she had woven in huck Lace, inspired me to go to the Marketplace, purchase the yarn, and I will weave it, hopefully, in the not too distant future.

The last seminar was “Shimmering Colours” with Bobbie Irwin. We learned the definition of iridescence – a fabric that will appear to change colour as it moves, and the value of a colour gamp. She also explained the common beliefs about iridescence and why there are exceptions to all of them. It will be challenging to experiment with various colours and patterns to see which ones produce iridescence. In this seminar I learned that fine threads produce the best iridescence. The finest yarn I have used so far is 16/2 so it will be interesting to try something finer. I’m not sure I want to go as far as 120 epi, which is Bobbie’s goal.

I hope to inspire others simply by telling them what I have learned in the seminars and encouraging those able to attend a conference in the future.



A beautiful sunset from the campus
Photo by Sarah Nopp

Ilze Tomsevics Seattle Weavers Guild

I would like to thank the committee again for the ANWG grant which enabled me to attend the conference and take a pre-conference workshop. I was able to take John Marshall's three day class on Exploring Kyoukechi. Seven days of weaving immersion was great!

I would also like to thank Patrice Riordan for all the great name instructors she got for the Conference. It was hard to choose which classes to take.

My first seminar was "*Fashion Show Know How*" with Daryl Lancaster. I had listened to her talk about fashion show garments at Convergence in 2010 when I was one of her helpers. This time she really let it rip! She was brutal about the Fashion Show business. After listening to her, I don't know how I got my first handwoven jacket into this ANWG Fashion Show.

Daryl's tips included how to fill out an application including a personal history, comments a narrator can use for the article, and a title of the item. She talked about making your garment to please a specific judge, *i.e.* play the game. Daryl also discussed the proper quality of photos to submit with the application, making sure the judges can see the runway appeal of your garment.

The next seminar was "*Ties: Practical, Decorative and Unconventional*" taught by Kay Faulkner. This was about supplementary pattern threads and how to anchor them. Her sample works were gorgeous and the kind of things I have been dreaming of doing. She talked about using Summer and Winter weaves using two tie units, three tie units and four tie units. She showed slides of many variations of unit ties. Faulkner also discussed designing unit ties drafts. I did well until that last quarter of the seminar. Then I seemed to get lost. Some very knowledgeable weavers from my guild were also in the class and had difficulty toward the end. She is writing a book on unit ties. I guess we all need to wait for her book to come out.

Pat Spark's "*New Trends in Felt Making*" was my third seminar. Pat's seminar was mind boggling. She had handouts listing websites for general felting information, specific types of felting, and specific felting artists. She named names of who is who in needle felting, Nuno felting, pre-felting, textured/ruffled felting, mixed media/jewelry felting, and more. Spark's showed slides of a lot of the various felting techniques and the works of many of the artists. What people are now doing with water and fiber is phenomenal. Pat also had samples of her own work demonstrating the various techniques. She had so much information in the seminar it could easily have gone on all day.

How the seminars helped me: I really enjoyed having my garment in the fashion show....I am hooked....Lancaster's seminar will help me to get into more shows, take better photos for shows and, in general, be able to play the Fashion Show game with better results. Faulkner's seminar gives me something to stretch my mind. I really need to figure out the missing part of the *Ties* program so I can weave the designs I can now visualize. Spark's Felting seminar helped me to see that the possibilities of felting are endless. Whatever I can visualize, can be done. It gave me a totally different perspective of "felting".

Spark's Felting seminar helped me to see that the possibilities of felting are endless. Whatever I can visualize, can be done. It gave me a totally different perspective of "felting".

How I will share and inspire others: I will share what I have learned by showing other Guild members, work that I have produced with the aid of these seminars. We have a Show and Tell every month, where people show and discuss what they have made. Last time I showed a bracelet I had made using Randall Darwell's thrums. One woman came up to me and said "now I know what to do with my thrums". I share and inspire by showing what I have done.

I do not know how I inspire others, but I seem to do that naturally. I have been told to go on a speakers circuit, because I so inspire others. The fact that I have survived breast cancer twice, last time I was diagnosed a stage 4, seems to inspire people. I inspire others by being me and doing the weaving work that I do. Show people something interesting, and they can be inspired by it. Lead by example....

Elinor Tapio
Skagit Valley Weavers Guild

First of all, I would like to say that I feel very fortunate to have been one of the ten chosen individuals to attend the ANWG Conference with a grant. I had heard so many good things about the conference. It was wonderful to be around so many individuals all having one thing in common, textiles. I could sit down next to anyone and strike up a conversation.

Andean Tubular Bands and Embellishments with LaVerne Waddington

- We were provided with the following:
- A Booklet “Weaving an Andean Tubular Band Ñawi Awapa”
 - Two backstrap warps and weft ready to weave
 - Two pre-woven pieces on which to attach tubular weaving and embellishments.

This backstrap method of weaving uses a clamp on the table to anchor one end of warp, and a string around the other end which is tied around the waist. Weaving and pattern is produced by picking up and dropping of warp threads and pulling some through to create a distinctive eye shape. The weft goes in a continuous circle; around the bottom of the warp from the right side and through the shed from the left to the right.

I will share this method of weaving with members of our guild by giving a demo.



Tubular band being woven

Woven Andean Tubular Band



Attaching tubular weaving to a pre-woven piece

(cont'd. on p. 9)

Elinor Tapio (cont'd.)

Understanding Blocks with Marilyn van der Hoogt

We were provided with a booklet (Block Weaves Handbook) which was utilized throughout the seminar.

Learning to use blocks is the ideal tool to making original designs. In the handbook, we practiced doing many draw downs of various profile blocks. We also learned how to design our own profile blocks.

The pattern created by the block can be substituted from many unit weave structures such as summer and winter, huck lace, Atwater-Bronson lace, Swedish lace, twill blocks and doubleweave to name a few. Each of these weaves has their own threading unit, and may be repeated as desired. Those units can be combined to form blocks and combining blocks creates the pattern/shape. A bonus is that it also creates a shortcut for writing the threading. Limitations come with the number of shafts required. Below is an example taken from the cover of Madelyn van der Hoogt's "Block Weaves Handbook". Notice how one can get different looks from the same pattern by substituting blocks from various unit weave structures.



Copyrighted material used with permission of Madelyn van der Hoogt

The handbook includes templates for unit weave threading, tie-up and treadling to be used in conjunction with profile block design.

Since this is a basic "getting started or introduction to blocks" seminar, I will continue to learn more and be able to apply that knowledge to my weaving in the course of time.

I will incorporate what I learned into my own "draft of a flower" and weave it in a couple of structures. I plan to review and share my knowledge with other weavers. It would be a good addition to this seminar for me to review Madelyn van der Hoogt's "Block Weaves DVD" to help digest more about blocks.

Thank you so much for the ANWG Conference scholarship, and it was as great as what I had heard.

Margie Preninger
Mid Island Weavers and Spinners Guild

I am so excited and grateful to have attended the ANWG 2013 conference - Crossing Borders, Crossing Threads - in Bellingham, Washington. Many thanks to ANWG for awarding me the grant, to the guilds that stepped forward to organize the conference, and to the MIWS guild, the West Coast Weavers and Spinners, and the Qualicum Weavers and Spinners guilds, who all wanted me to receive the grant and attend!

I was especially excited to take the “Deflected Doubleweave” workshop with Madelyn van der Hoogt. As a professional Fashion Designer, I am interested in designing unique fabrics for my own fashion designs. I knew that this course would set the stage for this. I already knew that Madelyn was a fantastic teacher with a great sense of humour, and I was looking forward to learning about fancy double weaves. Taking this course inspired me on many levels; the most important of which was to make my first warp, and to warp my loom by myself. Who says one needs to first make plain weave table runners? I am thrilled that my first warp was for Deflected Doubleweave!

Under Madelyn’s tutelage I succeeded in weaving on almost all 16 looms in the round robin course. It was interesting to try different looms, with different yarns, colours, shuttles, and most importantly patterns! As a new weaver, it boggled my mind, and challenged me in such a good way!!

The “Woven Wire Cloth with Flair” workshop with Marilyn Moore, was of interest to me because of my work with mixed media. As a member of the Surface Design Association, I actively show my fibre art work in group gallery shows. I am very interested in combining fibre art with media of opposite hand like wire, wood, glass, etc. During the workshop we watched a demonstration on how to create patterns with a propane torch on the purchased ‘wire cloth’. The next thing I learned was how to make a hem on the wire cloth. This was particularly ironic to me because I make hems regularly for my customers in my sewing business! I enjoyed the familiar consideration of the ‘grainline’ on the ‘wire cloth’. During this workshop I also learned about using a split ring tool. I made a beautiful bracelet for my son using ‘wire cloth’ and split rings with beads.

Having been duly impressed by the work of Bhakti Ziek, I was inspired to take her morning seminar on “The Woven Pixel Methods for Jacquard and Dobby”. Bhakti’s work is completely awe inspiring, and amazing. She is also a great teacher; caring deeply about sharing her knowledge, and ensuring that her pupils fully understand the processes. I had my laptop with me and I followed along with the instructions about how to modify images within the Adobe Creative Suite programs (*i.e.*, Photoshop, and Illustrator). I aspire to be fluent with the Adobe Creative Suite programs, and this seminar inspired me with more reasons to learn. The Jacquard and doobby processes are beyond the scope of anything I will likely accomplish immediately, but I am excited to have the knowledge. I was also happy to learn that Capilano College in North Vancouver, BC has a loom capable of accomplishing this type of weaving. Now if the BC government would reinstate the funding for this long running textile arts program... but that’s another topic!



Fuled Marshmallow Deflected Doubleweave



Woven wire cloth bracelet with split rings and beads.

Kaliope Creighton
Methow Valley Spinners and Weavers Guild

I would like to thank ANWG for awarding me one of their generous conference grants. I would not have been able to go to a conference without it! The conference was definitely the highlight of my summer, and I feel so blessed to have had the opportunity to attend.

I took two seminars and a one-day class, and got so much out of each of them! First was Rosalie Neilson's "Power of Block Design" seminar. Block design being applicable to such a variety of weave structures, ways to play with her ideas could keep a weaver busy for a lifetime! It was quite interesting looking at how, with a symmetric two block design, you can never have more than sixteen possible variations. Yet, extrapolating out to just a very few more blocks in the design, you suddenly end up with well over two million possible variations! She also had some great handouts for us – pages with accompanying transparencies that allow lots of "playing" with block design possibilities in an incredibly quick and simple way.

I spent the second half of the day in Madelyn Van der Hoogt's "Coping with Harness Envy" seminar. She had a workbook where we learned things such as contracting and expanding twill drafts over different numbers of harnesses (which I had great fun filling out – I guess it was that "structure person" side coming out!). She also shared with us an excellent slideshow sampling the wide variety of things that can be done on 4-harnesses, and another that illustrated the difference the tie down pattern can make. All in all, another great seminar!

Saturday was my one day class with Daryl Lancaster, "Exercise and Inspiration for the Color Challenged". I definitely got a LOT out of this class, especially with color being my weak area. Daryl started by taking us through some basic color theory, and some interesting offshoots of that such as how the color forecasts are done, and a variety of other things. Then we got more hands on! She would give us an assignment, and we would be given a certain amount of time to make a yarn wrap. She called the wraps "sketching for weavers." I came away from the class with nine wraps just that day, and plan to continue the practice and add to my collection for future weaving inspiration! Going through the exercises, and seeing how each person interpreted it, was a simply eye opening experience. I'll certainly never look at color the same way again. I look forward to doing a program at my guild soon, and taking them through some similar color exercises (though, of course, without the invaluable expertise Daryl had to offer all of us in the discussions following each exercise!).

While that summarizes all my classes, it doesn't even begin to touch on all the other wonderful experiences that were part of the conference: the inspiration from seeing amazing pieces in the shows and displays, visiting with weavers from the world over, perusing the wonderful and oh-so-tempting vendor hall, and so much more. Not to mention a whole weekend I could concentrate on nothing but weaving (*with multiple young children running about the house, that alone was a novel and valued opportunity!*)!

Again, my thanks for providing this chance to go!



Terry Standley

Arachne Weavers Guild

I want to thank you for the great opportunity to attend the ANWG Conference this year in Bellingham. It was incredible. I had no expectations, since I had never attended before and I did not have any weaving friends that spoke about their experiences, and I had not really paid much attention when my spinning/weaving guild talked about ANWG. Since I was not a weaver, it did not apply to me. But was I wrong. There are many things for non-weavers to do at the conference: classes, shopping, eating, visiting and making new fiber friends and getting inspired.

When I first arrived, I had a little difficulty locating the building but not too much. The campus was very nice and without even trying we all got our daily dose of exercise. There were volunteers at the building where my workshop was to be held and they were excellent. They helped unload and bring in all my goodies. I was attending Bobbie Irwin's "Shimmering Colors" workshop, and I am so glad I did. She was wonderful. She was well organized, efficient, pleasant, willing to answer questions and share ideas, well spoken and just such a sweet lady and an amazing weaver. The class was designed so that we had some lecture time and then time on the looms both before and after lunch and we could stay and work late if we chose. Her presentations were easy to follow, very logical and she had good handouts. I have taken a few other classes that were one week in duration and I feel like I learned more from Bobbie's three-day workshop than I learned in some of the week long classes. I have a beautiful gamp that has twenty-four colors and many of them shimmer, which was the object. I feel much more comfortable with color now and this was my goal when I originally decided to take a workshop.

I really enjoyed being able to visit the other workshops and see what I was missing. It was so difficult to choose which workshop/class/seminar I wanted to attend before the conference started so this gave me a good idea of what I want to take in the future. There were so many wonderful options for learning at the conference. Whoever chose all the instructors did an amazing job. Thank you.

On to the vendor hall: I was very impressed with all the different vendors that were at conference. There was a wide variety and plenty of shopping to be done. Of course, I spent more than I should have, but it was great being able to touch and feel all the yarns before I purchased anything. I loved seeing baskets, rugs, weaving tools, software, handmade bags, and especially the vendors from outside the US.

I also liked seeing the variety of ideas from each of the guilds. Again, I had no idea what to expect, except for hearing my various guilds discussing the plans for the booths, which I was not involved in so I really had no idea how this would look. Some of the work was quite amazing and others were very creative in their displays. Some were simple and some were elaborate. It was quite inspirational. I liked the fact that there was more than one award, and I especially liked the People's Choice Award so I was able to vote for the one I liked.

Classes: I attended one full day class and one half day class. One was excellent and one was not what I was hoping for. I will give you the positive feedback first. I took Madelyn Van der Hoogt's block weaves. It was amazing!!!! I loved this class and the instructor. I could repeat the same thing I said about Bobbie Irwin; she is well organized, pleasant, funny, easy to understand, logical in her presentation, willing to answer questions and willing to repeat herself when we did not understand the first time. She sincerely wanted us to learn something in her class. She was not just promoting her DVD's or books. She was actually reluctant to mention them. I had watched her video twice before the workshop and was not having as much trouble as some of the other students understanding/following the process when we got deeper into the subject after lunch. Some of the students sitting near me were asking me why this seemed so easy for me to understand so I told them about the DVD I had watched. They encouraged me to tell the class about Madelyn's DVD. I told them that it was extremely helpful to me and that I had watched it twice before attending the class and now on the third time around, it was finally starting to make some sense. That was when she mentioned that she did bring a few of them if anyone was interested. She has such a great attitude about teaching and is so concerned that she does not lose anyone as the class progresses. She is an amazing teacher and weaver. I hope I can take some classes at her studio one day. I would recommend this class and Madelyn to everyone.

The other class I took, "Flowing Line" by Bonnie Inouye, did not satisfy me as well. Bonnie is an incredible weaver from whom I had hoped to learn how to make a curved line in weaving. Although many of the pieces shown in her slide show

(cont'd. on p. 13)

Terry Standley (cont'd.)

included curved lines, she never actually explained how to do it. During the break, we saw many samples of work she had done. I would like to learn more about the technique.

The fashion show was unbelievable. I loved seeing all the beautiful pieces in the show and the commentary was really interesting. I loved hearing comments from the creator on problems he/she had to overcome to complete the piece or about the process used to choose the yarns or fit/construct the piece. The headpieces were amazing! What an incredible amount of time they must have taken. There were so many amazing entries I was glad I was not expected to choose a winner.

Along with the amazing fashion, was the incredible food at the dinner on Saturday. They did a great job of feeding everyone. The food was tasty, hot and the lines moved very quickly. I guess they get a lot of practice since they probably feed many more students on a daily basis. Anyway, it was really tasty.

I really enjoyed the fashion show they did at the dinner. However, I was sitting behind one of the dividers toward the back of the room and we could not hear one word or even see the podium. We had no idea what was going on at the front of the room but we had great food and some wine and, we had a good time visiting with some new friends. It was pretty obvious that we were too many for the size of the room which was the biggest problem. We did get to see some of the models when they finally made it back to our neck-of-the-woods and it was fun being able to talk with them about their pieces.

With the exception of one class, my overall experience was excellent. I think the group of people that organized the conference did an incredible job. It was a huge success and I have heard many people repeat this sentiment many times since I have been home. Thank you so much for the opportunity to attend an ANWG conference. I plan to share my experience with weavers and spinners at my guilds and to let them know that the ANWG conference is not just for weavers. Now that I know more about the conference I think I would like to be an ANWG rep for one of my guilds. I am also planning to make a presentation to at least 2 guilds about the wonderful workshop I attended and all the valuable info I learned. I plan to continue learning more about block weaves and hopefully create something using block weaves and iridescent colors.

Thanks for this great opportunity.



A sample in yellow, golds, and oranges in Bobbie Irwin's "Shimmering Colors" workshop.

Photo by Barbara Taylor

Sarah Nopp
Olympia Weavers Guild

I am a newer weaver, with little time to become an experienced weaver. I am a student, working toward my Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and Fine Art, and have been lucky to devote some time studying the history and mechanics of weaving and textiles. My experience in weaving is more broad than deep, and I am just now layering the lessons into a complex understanding of the traditions and the craft. My expectations for the conference were that it would be primarily skills-building. It was a much deeper experience than that, and I will be carrying observations and inspirations from this conference forward into my studies, as well as my work.

I attended a full schedule during the conference, with lots of walking back and forth!

East Meets West: Warp Faced Weaves, taught by Kay Faulkner

This three day class was a whirlwind activity from the very beginning. Because we had to design our project in class, we came without a dressed loom, or even a premeasured warp! We learned about the fundamentals of the sosis weave structure and then measured warp, dressed the loom and got started right away! Peppered throughout the hands on portion, Kay showed us samples of weavings from Southeast Asia which utilized the structure. She also showed us ways to incorporate surface designs independent of the structure. Kay was very informed about her subject, and I am very happy I chose such a complex subject to dive into. Kay possesses strong structural understanding of weaving in general, provided good hand-outs, and she delivered a very deep level of information in a short period.

“Ripped” About Rep, taught by Rosalie Neilson

This was a lighthearted afternoon playing with colors and values, doing the classic wrap exercise. Rosalie’s experience as a teacher was apparent during her slide presentation on Rep design and color theory and value theory.

As Seasons Change: Weaving Summer & Winter on a Rigid Heddle Loom, taught by Liz Walker

Liz has developed a good formula for warping Summer and Winter’s tied structure on rigid heddle. Her handouts helped me to understand the possibilities of the set up. I have tried other multiple rigid heddle designs, but I just didn’t catch on to those explanations like I did with this one day class. This class helped me understand enough of how it works that I am well set to investigate other multi-rigid heddle weaving structures.

My guild is having show-and-tell from conference as our September meeting program. We will bring the items we worked with, and the paperwork, to share and discuss the mechanics of what we learned, including our experiences with the teachers and what we recommend others interested in the areas of study can look for. For example, there is a small study group for band weaving. I will make sure to direct my comments to them about the similarities between Sosis and pebble weave, and recommend it as a potential for study. There are also other newer weavers in my guild, ones who have not been to Conference, and I will definitely encourage them to apply for the grant. The grant application process allowed me to take stock of the activities I perform for my guild, and I am more confident about the value of my voice within the group.

I was the chairperson for my guild’s booth too. This was an interesting experience from a planning and curatorial perspective. I had a very limited knowledge of what other booths at other conferences looked like, and less understanding of how the judges would respond to them. The items we collected together for display were specifically diverse. We chose a very simple arrangement for our booth, which allowed the pieces to stand out. The curatorial lessons, as well as the lesson about the audience, will be valued in my future studies. How to tell a story with just a few items collected from many people- -that is a fascinating field in its own! And it will inform my surface design work in the future as well.

One element that surprised me during conference was the emphasis on the fashion. In hindsight, I should not have been surprised, as textiles are the basis of fashion, and fashion is the primary way in which textiles are exhibited in the world. Apparently I carry some unexplored attitudes about the value of my garments. I had not considered how important the connections between fashion and contemporary weavers are, or how important they should be. I am now reading two books about textiles and fashion as a direct result of the conference, and I am seriously considering, for the first time, making wearables for myself. I do not know if I am as brave as Anita Mayer, but I think I can start small, with her work and philosophy as an inspirational guide.

(cont’d. on p. 15)

Sarah Nopp (cont'd.)

One thing that disturbed me during Conference was the lack of diversity: almost everyone there was over 50 years old, white and a woman. This caused me to consider more deeply how weaving, and craft in general, is an element of a narrow social strata. How does the lack of diversity by practitioners relate to perspectives and opportunities within the field. How do we, as Western weavers, see our art and craft developing? Shall it remain a pursuit for only the retired, idle and relatively wealthy?

Obviously, questions like these are the basis for years of study and contemplation and debate and thesis, but I believe they should be asked at a very practical level too. The Olympia Weavers Guild offers a demonstration booth at the Thurston County Fair each year. We have been a presence for twenty years. There are people who wove with us over a decade ago who bring their children to the fair to weave. They return to weave, year after year, and we watch the children grow up. There is a curiosity about weaving, and desire to be part of it, seen specifically in this small segment in my small community. So I circle my mind back to the question of what should weavers do about it? Should we, can we, make weaving a more approachable craft, perhaps similarly to quilting and knitting? And if we can and do, how do we overcome the cultural barriers to invite and encourage people of color, men and young people to become weavers? Obviously I am not the first person within our community to ask these questions, but now that I am more confident of my value to the community, I will be asking this question more and in different ways.

Thank you for the gracious grant to attend the 2013 ANWG Conference in Bellingham WA. I am very happy that my first time at any weaving conference was so well organized, well planned, and taught by such quality teachers. It was a very positive experience, I learned a lot, I found a lot of questions to ask, and I will be back for more next time!

I do have a bit of advice for other attendees: Make the week all about the weaving! I work remotely as a graphic designer, with one week each month of focused production. Unfortunately, the week of the conference coincided with my production week. There was nothing for it but work after classes, and before. But other than that, read the list of items closely, bring snacks, bring comfortable walking shoes and try to get as much sleep as possible! Oh, and you will spend more than you budgeted, accept it, be happy about it!



Color wraps from “Ripped About Rep”



My conference loot