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2015 Sponsorship Update

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Tees Valley YMCA



Despite being severely constrained by funding cuts, this project has progressed well with some delightful ‘dream catcher’ weavings created for display and enthusiasm for tapestry weaving taken forward into personal weaving activities.

Creative Sark



The design for this tri-panel community tapestry has been completed and yarns are now being selected. A training session will take place next month for those members of the Sark Community who wish to be involved with the weaving. Amanda Petrie has worked very hard, co-ordinating all aspects of this project as well as liaising between a number of supporting tapestry weavers. It is certainly shaping up well!

Heallreaf Exhibition

The inaugural exhibition of small-format tapestry art was launched with a Private View on 31st July. Margaret Jones delivered a feast of work from many artists. Some examples of these, plus details of how to obtain a catalogue can be found on the Heallreaf website (www.heallreaf.com).





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CDM & Fabric Residency



Cos Ahmet. www.cos-ahmet.co.uk. info@cos-ahmet.co.uk

Artist in Residence: Fabric Residency, Summer 2015

During the summer of 2015, Cos Ahmet received an invitation to become FABRIC & CDM's next Artist in Residence within a former textile mill in Manchester. His mission was split into two parts: the creation of new and experimental work, and the delivery of tapestry workshops. Cos began to create temporary site-specific installations and printed textile works that would serve and exist as pieces within a 'point in time'. Making use of an array of yarn left from the mill's previous life, Cos responded and commented on the more obscure aspects of 'mill life' that transpired from his research.

"I wanted to create a new body of work, where the 'fabric' and 'physical' space combine and extend the notion of the mill being a body or a container, that sustains memory or gestures of its past".

Secret languages emerged from his research, in the shape of communication developed by the mill workers known as 'Mee-Maw', This exaggerated speech was made up of a combination of sign language, lip reading and mime. These overly pronounced movements allowed the workers in the weaving sheds to communicate with each other. The noise from the looms rendered hearing impossible, so workers used mee-mawing to articulate themselves. Inspired by this, Ahmet employed this mode of speech in his works 'Spinning Yarns', 2015 and 'Hand Speak' 2015, with traces filtering into the work 'Kissing the Shuttle', 2015. These pieces made use of the mill's resource of yarns, incorporated with casts of the artist's hands and printed images of mouths to emulate dialogue.

"I saw these threads acting as lines of speech, with the cones of yarn, and makeshift pirn's representing abstract bodies, identities or even the mills themselves, and the mouths as transmitters".

To compliment Ahmet's main ideas during his residency, he also nodded to Manchester's textile heritage and reputable past, when it was known as 'Cottonopolis'. In the work 'When Cotton Was King' 2015, he comments on its rise and fall as a three part tale. Building towers of yarn, he represents the rise of the mills as a cluster red bricked chimneys. The fall of the industry is shown with cones of yarn, pail and reduced to piles; the strands of yarn trailing from them still connected to the chimneys, trying to hold on to its industry and identity. These 'connections' between the two parts represent the looms and the warps that made the millions of yards of cotton produced at its peak.

The secondary element to his residency was to introduce tapestry weaving as a new medium to a fresh audience in the form of workshops. With the kind loan of Weavers Bazaar's tapestry workshop workstations, Cos delivered a number of successful workshops during his residency period, gaining new creative's who discovered the many possibilities that tapestry could offer to their own practices. This also brought the act of weaving back into the mill, a once bustling environment of clattering looms producing cotton.

To end his month long residency in fashion, Cos presented his four installation pieces, his biggest works to date, not only to the public but also Frances Pritchard, Textiles Curator at The Whitworth Art Gallery, following their first meeting during his research of the textile archive and collection held at The Whitworth in preparation for his residency.

www.cos-ahmet.co.uk www.fabricresidency.wordpress.com www.cdmuk.org.uk



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Janet Phillips Masterclass

The latest group of students on Janet Phillips' Masterclass in Weaving Course, are undertaking an analysis of our new 9.5/2 and 5/2 yarns. This will provide us with detailed information on the types of fabric different sets produce, the way the yarn behaves when woven, shrinkage and felting details and a number of woven samples of twill and plain weave which we will be please to share when completed.

Talia Sommer – Colour Wheel

Talia has been sampling dyes and getting them just right to weave a colour wheel, along with others on the Ravelry Tapestry Weaving Group

(<http://www.ravelry.com/groups/tapestryweaving>)



Sarah McKinnon

Sarah is seeking to learn tapestry weaving herself in order to take the skills to a wider community, working especially with those suffering from autism, weaversbazaar is providing Sarah with equipment and yarns to facilitate her plan. She writes "Things are going well. A friend and I started a craft group called 'crafty carers' which is a craft group for anyone who has a caring role for someone else, partner, child, etc. I have taken my peg loom too and showed some people how to use it also taught a few members how to crochet. It's a fun group and been great sharing craft ideas.

I am going to be involved in a craft group for autistic women so plan to take the loom there too. That starts next month. I am also in the process setting up a group for girls with autism, their friends and family. So plan to use it there too. I am keen to make some very small looms so everyone can have their own, will be basic but would mean they could take it home adding to it when they like. So lots going on! "

Jennifer Bennett

Jennifer was aiming to set up a number of workshops to promote tapestry weaving and to encourage others to take it up. Here is her summary, with pictures, of what happened.

Museum of Art, Oxford. February 4-7.

Factory Floor drop-in workshop to accompany Jeremy Deller's exhibition, "Love is Enough" juxtaposing the work and methods of William Morris and Andy Warhol.



I was asked to conduct a drop-in workshop in the Yard to visitors of the exhibition over four days from Wednesday to Saturday (1- 5pm) and after attending the private view in December I made some drawings and with permission took a few discreet photographs to capture details of Morris' huge tapestry, "The Attainment of the Holy Grail" which filled one entire wall of the gallery upstairs. Opposite it was hung a rather smaller edition of one of Warhol's Elizabeth Taylor portraits woven in tapestry with a pile technique in the sixties.

Although there were many lovely examples of embroidery, printed fabric, printed books, stained glass etc. on display, I wanted my workshop to directly link to the weaving techniques used by Morris' Merton Abbey tapestry workshop as far as practicable and to help visitors better understand the process involved. Each morning I spread out all the colourful weft yarns, warp, Weavers Bazaar flyers and BTG postcards together with



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preparatory drawings and cartoons on the tables in front of the loom to attract and inform visitors.

I chose one of several small clumps of daisies from the Holy Grail tapestry as a detail on which to focus and demonstrate traditional high warp tapestry on a simple wooden loom using yarns from Weavers Bazaar in a suitably Morrisque palette. After taking photos of real daisies and drawing a cartoon I started weaving in December so that I would already have a reasonable amount woven to show visitors in early February.



I also thought it would be fun to try a loose interpretation of one of Warhol's pastel coloured camouflage prints as used on the gallery's flyers so warped up a second loom for visitors to have a go on which proved ideal for demonstrating tapestry's characteristic of building up small areas, rather like a mosaic.

It was fairly quiet during the first two afternoons, though I did have one group of interesting women who formed a kind of informal craft club based in Oxford and already had various textile skills- they asked lots of intelligent questions and tried out a few passes. I also met a lovely academic gynaecologist, with whom I discussed sutures and some young art students from Oxford Brookes who were fascinated by the process of tapestry and were inspired to learn how to use in their own work. I also got my fair share of eccentric students, one of whom was very keen to commission an A4 sized woven text page of the Bible, until I gave him an estimate of the time and cost involved!

Friday and Saturday proved much busier with more children coming in with their parents as it was half term. The children in particular were fascinated by weaving and at one point I had two girls side by side on the bench weaving on both looms! They proved less inhibited and often more adept than some of the adults, several of whom asked me to recommend suitable looms, yarns etc. I also had a visit from a photographer from the Oxford Times who took a photo of one of my first "students" and the Oxford Museum of Art took one of a little girl of about six weaving with me to post on their Twitter account. It was a very enjoyable experience, if slightly chilly! Oxford clearly loves tapestry!



Jubilee Hall Bishop's Waltham, Hampshire. May 16 Taster Day Workshop, 10-4pm



I am keen to try to establish workshops in my local semi-rural area, which has no history of tapestry weaving (despite the ruins of the Bishop's Palace which once housed many) so after extensive advertising of three separate workshops in April and May, I eventually had three students signed up for Saturday 16th. I also had interest from another lady who couldn't make the workshops at this particular time but would like to attend a future workshop.

I had hired a room in our local Jubilee Hall and had barely gone through the basics of fire safety procedures with the caretaker when the first of my students arrived! Shortly after my other two arrived so they helped me set and clamp up the ready warped frame looms on



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the tables. After that we just didn't stop, fuelled by tea and biscuits and each student wove a reasonably sized sample using basic techniques which I demonstrated to each student individually. I also recommended Weaver's Bazaar loom kits if they wished to continue at home.

But every sample was very different in terms of the very personal palette they instinctively chose from a huge selection of Weavers Bazaar yarns and the shapes and order of techniques woven. One was quite geometric and another was more adventurous with shapes. A



third was very soothing all in shades of sea greens and blues. Although there were only three students, I was kept fairly busy and there wasn't too much time for chat! But we were all pleased with the results so they didn't mind too much having their pictures! One student is a ceramic artist- and the other two already had quite a lot of sewing and embroidery experience but none had tried weaving tapestry before.

Bishop's Waltham Carnival, Hoe Road 13 June 2015



Our local Hampshire Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers put out a last minute call for help on their stall and seeing as the Carnival is literally on my doorstep I thought it a good opportunity to help out and raise the profile of tapestry! It fitted in well with this year's Medieval theme and the ongoing "Road to Agincourt" celebrations and events. So while Shirley spun, I wove and we had several visitors stopping to watch and ask questions about the cartoon, yarns used, etc.. But one lady was brave enough to have a try and was very interested in any future classes. I had very little space to display Weavers Bazaar yarns and flyers but I managed to distribute a few!