

2017 Sponsorship Awards

We love this time of year when we get to announce the latest successful applicants for the weaversbazaar annual sponsorship fund. So we are delighted to share these five successful applications for 2017 sponsorship:

Sally Reckert and Janet Clark: building on an earlier project at the Tess valley YMCA, Sally and Janet are developing a tapestry weaving kit for use by children. These will be taken to several public events to encourage children to 'have a go'.

Julie Taylor: Julie launched her very successful Makeweaves project last year, with weaversbazaar support. This year we are continuing to support her as she widens the reach of Makeweaves. Originally a community tapestry arts project which set up a 9-week tapestry course for beginners, Julie has now been invited to run similar workshops for children, for those with English as a second language, for an Asian group and for the Cambridge Folk Museums Outreach Programme!

Gill Williamson: Gill is leading a community art event in her home village of Whitchurch-on-Thames this Spring. The beautiful Whitchurch Bridge will be bedecked with all sorts of yarn bombing, paintings, tapestry and many other forms of creative decoration from 29th April to 14 May 2017. weaversbazaar will be supporting this event and Matty will also be contributing a tapestry she has woven for the event.

Anne Jackson: Anne is planning a one-woman exhibition this year, in The Museum in the Park, Stroud (and possibly other venues) of her Witchcraft Series of tapestries. To accompany this there will be a high-quality catalogue which weaversbazaar will contribute sponsorship for.

Katie Russell: building on her very successful series of tapestries commemorating the Arctic Convoys of WWII, Katie is now embarking on a project to commemorate the submarines of Dundee with support from weaversbazaar.

As these projects unfold we look forward to sharing their progress in future editions of the Newsletter.

Weaversbazaar Library



This edition of the Newsletter contains another of our occasional articles – this one is a fascinating insight into the making of our artisan bobbins, by Andrew Dickinson. You will find it on Page 7.

Meanwhile, all the articles published so far are now available on our web site in [The Knowledge Zone Library](#). If you would like to write a short article about any aspect of tapestry weaving, then do please get in touch – we would love to hear from you!

Weaversbazaar colour range

As you will know if you regularly follow our Newsletter, we have been reviewing and revising our colour range of dyed worsted wools. The objective is to establish a wide range that, through 12 colour groups, covers the full colour spectrum. In addition we are aiming to offer a good choice of tones, pure colours, shades and tints within each colour group.



Buttermilk returns!



Some of our established colours are being archived as new colours are introduced that duplicate them whilst also being a key element in a graded range. One such colour was Buttermilk which had been on special offer and added to the Colour Archive as we ran down stocks. However, following feedback and popular demand we have decided to reinstate Buttermilk as one of our stock colours so please bear with us as we now rebuild the stocks. We are told that for many people it had become a really useful blending colour. You will find Buttermilk in our [Orange](#) colour group

Periwinkle Range expands



Last month we introduced the palest colour in the Periwinkle range. Periwinkle 1, 2 and 3 are tints (the pure colour plus the addition of white) Periwinkle 4 is the pure colour and Periwinkle 6 is the first of the shades (the pure colour with the addition of black). Currently available in Fine (18/2), you can find them all within the [Violets](#) colour group.

Weaversbazaar Poll

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| < 2 epc/5 epi | 10.0% |
| 2 epc/5 epi | 6.7% |
| 2.5epc/6.25 epi | 13.3% |
| 3 epc/7.5 epi | 6.7% |
| 4 epc/10 epi | 18.3% |

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| 5 epc/12.5 epi | 11.7% |
| 6 epc/15 epi | 5.0% |
| 7 epc/17.5 epi | 13.3% |
| 8 epc/20 epi | 6.7% |
| >8epc/20 epi | 8.3% |

Our last poll asked about warp sett preferences and we were delighted with the very high response we got! The results show a relatively even distribution across all options indicating that respondents are utilising a wide range of setts when planning their tapestries. There is a definite preference for two setts: 4 epc/10 epi and 7 epc/17.5 epi, but what is particularly interesting is that

10% of respondents prefer a sett of 2 epc/5 epi! We hope that the article on warp setts and weft choices, in last month's Newsletter, was helpful in making decisions around this often difficult area.

Our next poll explores how textile artists deal with moths (or not!)

Artist Profile: Ixchel Suarez



On her website, Ixchel Suarez says, "Tapestry is a traditional medium that after 30 years of experience has drawn me to explore the vision of applying it into different ways". Through a [YouTube](#) video, her [personal website](#) and a [World of Threads interview](#) you have the opportunity to see her work and to get an understanding of how she approaches it.

Coffee Break Moment

Restoration of The Lady and The Unicorn



At almost an hour in length, this is a rather long Coffee Break (but we think you deserve it)! The insights and information shared by Dr Élisabeth Taburet-Delahaye's lecture, detailing the restoration of The Lady and the Unicorn tapestries, are fascinating. It was delivered at the

Australian Tapestry Workshop in Melbourne. Widely considered to be the quintessential tapestry work of the Middle Ages, there is so much to gain from Élisabeth's unique insight as Director of Musée National du Moyen Âge, formerly Musée de Cluny. [Enjoy this lecture here.](#)

Courses

Colour & Hatching Workshop 6 - 8 March 2017 Sussex



In this workshop, Caron Penney will examine colour theory in relation to hatching. Hatching has evolved from the medieval technique of hachures – a means of blending colours horizontally.

Hatching is probably one of the ground rock techniques of contemporary tapestry weaving and is evidenced in the work of a great many tapestry artists. It enables subtle shifts of colour and tone and helps create a sense of depth to an image. [Details here.](#)

Weaving Taster Day: Stripes & Zigzags. 8th April. Ardington, Oxfordshire. UK



Gain an insight into the fascinating craft of weaving. Each student will create two samplers; one will be woven in plain weave on a rigid heddle loom, the other will be woven on a 4-shaft loom

on which patterns are produced by lifting the shafts in various sequences. This course is suitable for complete beginners as well as those with some weaving experience. [Full details here.](#)

Tapestry Weaving: Art at the Loom. 6th/7th May. Great Missenden, UK



The aim of this course, led by Matty Smith, is to provide direct experience of the process of creating woven tapestry art: developing an image to be woven, translating it onto the loom and approaching the weaving process with an understanding of how the basic techniques can be

used to achieve the desired outcome. [Full details here](#)

Weaving water. 17 – 21 July. Fife, Scotland, UK



Led by Joan Baxter, this course is based on the banks of the lovely Tay River where the inspiration for the class stems from. Participants will spend time by the river, watching and photographing the water and subsequently exploring different ways of interpreting the rhythms, reflections and

transparent qualities they see, in the medium of tapestry. [Full details here](#)

Events



Donna Loraine - Interwoven Mesas. 3rd – 24th February. Albuquerque, New Mexico. USA

The introduction of a new series to an artist's body of work is a momentous affair in the life of their career. Donna Loraine has now added a new series, called the INTERWOVEN MESAS

Series. This series borrows from her early career images which featured the New Mexico landscapes in large detail, like the Triptych that she created for the City/ County Building in Albuquerque. [Details half way down this page.](#) A gallery of the tapestries to be shown [are here](#), if you are unable to see them in person.

CHSI: 19th – 21st February. Birmingham, UK



This claims to be Europe's largest trade show for the creative crafts industries. There certainly seems to be a great deal going on. Full details of exhibitors and how to get there [here](#).

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The Fabric of Being. 22nd February – 17th March. London, UK



This exhibition, at the Bethlehem Gallery, presents the textile works and processes of artists, patients and staff from the Occupational Therapy department at the Bethlem Royal Hospital, London. The Fabric of Being considers the social and therapeutic value of individual and collective textile making. [More Here](#)

Embroidered Tales and Woven Dreams. Until 25th March. London, UK



The exhibition of this extraordinary collection consists of traditionally embroidered textiles found along the Silk Road and is comprised of examples of historical embroideries from the lands bordering the Indus, Afghanistan, Turcoman, Sogdiana and the Near East. These hand-woven articles, record the colours of natural dyes, stitches, patterns, motifs and the trade of woven cotton, wool and silk along the ancient trade routes. In a sense, these embroidered articles are stitches in the tapestry of the Silk Road. [Details here.](#)

Garden Tapestries. Until 31st March. San Diego. USA



For the first time worldwide, the garden-themed tapestries from the Ramses Wissa Wassef Art Centre in Egypt will be on display at a prominent public garden, the San Diego Botanic Garden located in Encinitas. The Egyptian artists vividly celebrate the flowers of the desert, villages and Nile River in their work. [Full details here.](#)

Semitones. 10th March – 8th April. Edinburgh, Scotland



The joint exhibition *Semitones* will feature subtle colour transitions in wool and crystalline glazes and showcase works by tapestry weaver Louise Oppenheimer from Argyll and ceramicist Maggie Zerafa from Skye. [Details here](#)

Paolozzi Tapestry at the Whitechapel Gallery. 16th February – 14th May. London, UK



The large scale Whitworth tapestry, designed by Sir Eduardo Paolozzi and woven at Dovecot in 1967, will be on show at the Whitechapel Gallery as part of their new exhibition dedicated to the artist who lived and worked in Edinburgh. This major Paolozzi retrospective will span five decades and features over 250 of his works, varying from bronze sculptures and paper collages, to textile and fashion designs. [Paolozzi Tapestry at Whitechapel Galley | London](#)

Weaving Magic. 26th April – 28th August 2017. London, UK



Commissioned by The Clothworkers' Company, Chris Ofili has been collaborating with the Dovecot Tapestry Studio weavers since 2014 to see his design translated into a hand-woven tapestry. The tapestry will be the centrepiece to this exhibition at the National Gallery. [Chris Ofili:](#)

[Weaving Magic at National Gallery | London](#)

Found on the web

American tapestry Biennial 11



This video captures all the entries in the 2016/2017 ATB11 exhibition. This is now at its third and final location. Rebecca Mezoff has put together this video which enables those who cannot get to see it, a chance to get a flavour. [See it here.](#)



Scottish Art Goes online



The entire collection of works held by the National galleries of Scotland can now be accessed online through a very well presented website. Browse by artist, by subject or by gallery. Read short articles. Be inspired by collections. [Read more here](#)

Lotus Threads Myanmar



How do the people of Myanmar (Burma) make rare fabric from the lotus flower? Inle Lake in Myanmar is the only place in the world to make this textile by hand. Lotus threads are taken from the lotus stem and hand woven into sustainable fabrics and scarves. It is an extraordinary process. [See it here](#)

European Tapestry Forum



The European tapestry Forum has now launched an 'Artist of the Month' page. In addition photos of all works included in Artapestry 4 can be viewed and the catalogues of all four Artapestry exhibitions can be ordered. [Explore it here](#).

Updating carpets as Art Objects



This short article details the work of Faig Ahmed, who takes traditional objects (in this case carpets) and updates them as modern art objects using the 'visual language of surrealism'. Interested? [Then read more here](#).

History of textile art: Gunter Stölzl



This is a short article about the hugely influential German textile artist, who played a fundamental role in the development of the Bauhaus school's weaving workshop. Well-illustrated and with links to further information, this is an informative introductory article. [Read it here](#).

Textile Gallery



This lovely 'work in progress' was posted on Frances Crowe's Facebook page. It is another in her series of 'reflections'. We were especially delighted to see it as these are weaversbazaar yarns she is using! She says that she counted 52 bobbins on the go at one time!

It is a lovely image and we are really looking forward to seeing it finished!

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Back in July 2016 we shared an image of a tapestry 'in progress'. This was being woven by Lynn Haldy and she had incorporated our nettle yarns. Lynn has now sent us an image of the completed work. She says "I am a self-taught tapestry weaver greatly influenced by the work of Kristen Glasbrook. I incorporated some of her designs in this weaving along with a few of my own. I especially wanted to attempt the creation of a Hubble nebula image as I experimented with nettle yarns. I fell in love with the vibrantly coloured nettle yarns offered through weaversbazaar". We were delighted that the nettle yarns proved so useful to work with.



Stop Press: Metal Tipped Bobbins!



A limited selection of **Andrew Dickinson's bobbins with brass tips** now available on our website. These are approximately 16 cm long by 1.2cm diameter. [Find them here](#)



Happy Weaving



Article #4: Bobbins

Andrew Dickinson

Having worked over a broad series of disciplines ranging from patternmaking, industrial sculpting and musical instrument making/repairing the opportunity came my way to think about Tapestry Bobbins. Living on the West Dean Estate and working occasionally at the college I am privileged to know the weavers in the Tapestry department. With theirs and other weavers' advice I slowly developed the form that I am currently working with. There were 'tweaks' – mostly to do with enlarging and reducing radii on corners – and I was ready to go to the next stage.

I work with talented engineer, John Peskett of Aston Products, developing the bobbin shapes. After the drawing stage John spends some time programming one of his CNC lathes to perform the task of turning the basic form as well as turning the tips. It is unusual for an engineer to turn wood on one of his machines but the dust and shavings are contained and all is well. The turning process is quite different to turning on a woodworking lathe. You would be forgiven for thinking that you put the wood in one end and bobbins are spat out at the other end. This is far from the case. There is a constant input as each bobbin is turned. Every piece of timber is different and feed speeds and spindle speeds are constantly adjusted to attain the optimum result. In some cases a second programme is used which has a very different approach. With this programme I turn heads from burr wood.

One of the most enjoyable tasks is visiting timber merchants. From my early days as a musical instrument maker I have always enjoyed searching for the timbers that peaked my interest and imagination. The market has changed over the years with more timber coming from the African Continent than ever before. I am always thinking about the 'palette' of woods that I can use. As well as the practical issue of 'turnability' there is both colour and texture. Colour is rarely a solid colour. It could be a 'spalted' boxwood with blue/grey mottling in it, Cocobolo or Kingwood with fine, darker contrasting lines or Olive wood, which has random veining in it. Choice of wood is restricted to a piece that will speak well on such a small object. I have a soft spot for English Ash but unless it has a very fine tight grain then its beauty is lost. Similar with Yew (technically the only 'softwood' that I use). One of the few exceptions to this is the open grained black Bog Oak. I love the notion of a bobbin made from 5000 year old wood.

With the engineered approach that I work within I can create a 'composite' bobbin made from several pieces. This has a knock on effect as regards the materials that I can choose to use. Burrs like Thuya, Jarrah and the stunning Masur (Karelian) Birch can all be utilised. Because of the compound construction of the more elaborate bobbins then a material that may be weak on its own is not a structural problem anymore

and the extreme grain patterns are not a problem.

I have just started working with a 'stabilized' wood. This is a process that stabilizes an 'unstable' material. Submerged in a very low viscosity resin a piece of wood is subjected to cycles of high pressure and vacuum until the tissue has been saturated with the resin. It is then cured in an oven and the result is a piece of wood that is stable. Often part of the process uses a coloured resin, which tends to infiltrate the softer sap wood and reflect the structure of the material, accenting the original growth pattern. I recently found a supplier that does it with both pine-cones and..... Sweet corn cobs! (perhaps not). Other materials that I use include Buffalo Horn, Silver, polyester resins and 'Casein Ivory'. This is a resin made from the milk protein casein. It can be polymerised and piped into moulds as two distinct colours and the resulting material has a 'grain' similar to that of Ivory.

I choose from several finishes – oil, wax, lacquer or nothing. Sometimes the choice is dictated by the wood used and other times by the choice to create a particular effect. Sometimes, just simply to give purchasers an option – one Bubinga oiled, one plain or waxed.

Some woods have little 'depth' in their surface, others have patterns created by grain and contrasting texture within the wood. Panga Panga and Mango each have a mixture of very hard resinous material and a softer, more graining one. Imagine looking at a tree trunk lying on the ground. Look at the end with its growth rings and think of it sliced into planks, each cut parallel to the surface it lies on. The planks cut through the centre of the tree have growth rings perpendicular to the cut surface of the plank and the grain lines run the length of the face these pieces of timber are known as 'quarter sawn'. The planks on the top and bottom of the stack have growth rings that are more parallel with the face of the plank and tend to exhibit a more florid grain pattern. This timber is known as 'slab cut'. With a turned object you get the whole gamut of grain patterns. On one axis slab is opposite slab and on the axis you see quarter opposite quarter. Within a tree you have particular cells that weave in and out of other cells in a radial direction. On a quarter sawn surface these cells or 'rays' are bisected. On some woods these rays appear as a delicate bloom (Bubinga, Maple, Satinwood for instance). On others, such as oak they appear as large ribbons, floating across the surface. In some woods the slab face has a very pronounced grain pattern. One in particular has feather like markings on the slab face, hence it's common name of 'Partridge Wood'. When you consider that side grain reflects light and end grain absorbs it you can see what is happening with some woods. With a curl in the grain a particular point in the wood may appear dark because you are looking straight into the end of the grain. As you move the wood you are looking increasingly at the side of the grain and it gets lighter and lighter (look at the back of a violin). A beautiful effect. A burr wood is a complete mish-mash of end and side grain and displays a very random dance. Some Mahoganies and in particular Satinwood have a visual movement in the grain that is a consequence of the spiral growth of the tree changing direction every few, subsequent, years. The resulting 'ply' creates a stunning effect. One of the most frustrating woods is Birds eye maple. Each 'eye' has a surrounding grain distortion, which moves as you twist and turn the bobbin. 'Frustrating' because, no matter how dense the eyes are on the plank to start with, the chances of hitting any as you cut up the plank are low. Still, very attractive when you get some.

A further development of the bobbins is to go beyond their functionality and use them as an armature for



something more sculptural. I have always wanted to do a piece as a memorial to people who lost their lives anonymously in war. I always thought this would take the form of bas-relief, terracotta panels with faces and hands emerging from tree roots and rocks. This has never quite happened but bobbins came to the rescue. John re-designed and programmed tips that look like bullet heads. The body and stem of the bobbin is wrapped in linen putties with a bleached bone protruding (the button reshaped in casein ivory) and where the yarn would be wrapped is now rusty barbed wire.

Seed forms are a possibility and, at present, I am working on a piece that will have a horn and casein ivory 'barcode' inlayed with the whole packaged in a cellophane windowed box ('Commodification of Art')

Lots of fun to be had with such a simple form.

Thanks for reading and hope to see you some time.

Andrew Dickinson of Artisan Bobbins.