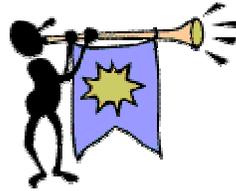




**BURLINGTON
HANDWEAVERS
& SPINNERS
GUILD**



Warped Perspective

Issue 23

January 2010

President's Message:

Ruth Thoem - President



Here we are, at the start of a new decade. Remember January 2000? All that worry about Y2K is now behind us. Y2K turned out to be friendly.

This is a good place to reflect on where we were, where we are and where we are going. What else was happening back in 2000? Or more importantly, what is happening today that wasn't happening then? Let's concentrate on the Guild.

- ✓ We now have a Weaver in Residence, thanks in large part to Joyce's vision and drive, and the unfolding talents of Laura Marotta, - our WIR.
- ✓ We have a fresh looking studio, paid for by money raised at our auctions. Thanks to Bonnie Sylvia's enthusiasm and gumption and our Guild's penchant for fun and support.
- ✓ We have a new teacher of weaving, Pat Hood. She follows two outstanding teachers from within the Guild. Lucy Slykerman and Diane Woods have both given the Centre and this Guild so much in terms of encouraging and developing weavers and Guild members.

Dates to Remember!

Feb. 1/10 – Guild Meeting – Bogolanfini-the Mud Cloth of Mali with Nancy Rose
March 1/10 – Guild Meeting - TBA
April 12/10 – Guild Meeting - TBA
May 3/10 – Guild Meeting - TBA
June 7/10 – Guild Pot Luck; Speaker Marie Payne Juror
Special Dates:

Feb. 3/10 – George Wale will be hosting an information session regarding the **Fire+Earth+Imagination** exhibition project at 5pm in the Fireside Lounge.

Feb. 6/10 – Dye Day – non-instructional hosted by Margaret Jane Wallace for Shibori Workshop members and others

Feb. 19/10 – Art Auction at the BAC

Feb. 27/10 – Nuno Felting Workshop with Maureen Harding. Cost \$60. + \$20. See Nancy Rose

March 20/10 – Weaver's Dream Auction with Bonnie Sylvia (see article in this issue)

April 23-25/10 - Kaleidoscope of Art at the BAC

April 17/10 - Dye Day for Five Counties Challenge

May 8/10 - Mother's Day Tea at the BAC

June 5-July 4/10 – Juried Show "Sand and Sea" in the Perry Gallery at the BAC

Nov. 13/10 - Wearable Art Sale at the BAC

November 25, 26, 27, 28/10 – Soup Bowl and Christmas Sale at the BAC

Meetings General: 7:15 pm, the first Monday of Oct., Nov., Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., May. Dec. and June meetings start at 6:30 pm. Sept. meeting on the second Monday. No meetings in July and August. Wednesday group and Thursday group meet at 12:30 pm each week.

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<http://www.weavingworld.ca/bwg.htm>

- ✓ Our library has grown and developed. Jennifer Earle and Ruthe Stowe have turned our much loved library cart into a newly catalogued and organized "real" library with bookshelves and spine labels.
- ✓ The Octado dobby loom was purchased several years ago to enlarge our opportunities to experience different looms.
- ✓ We have a Guild full of intrepid weavers and spinners, ready to tackle all three challenges this year.... Juried Show, BAC Show and Five Counties. Thanks here to Diane Woods for her positive encouragement and mentoring.

One thing I love about this Guild is the way we launch into opportunities to stretch our skills, or to show off the ones we have perfected. This year is a particularly good one for that. Please check out individual articles in this issue on the Juried Show, BAC show and Five Counties. Perhaps you will try something completely new, (if only weaving with purple and green); perhaps you will turn your already practiced hand to something you know you can do really well. Why not do both?! Calls for Entry are posted on the bulletin board.

Your incoming President feels she is involved in one of the best Guilds around. This is thanks to each and every one of you, in a myriad of ways. We are engaged, enthusiastic, and fun, ...and we are weaving and spinning!

Here's to a new decade, and the continued evolution of Burlington Handweavers & Spinners Guild.

OK! Let's get weaving..... (Meant in a generic, weaving, spinning, felting, basketmaking, and knitting etc way)

Ruth

More Dates To Remember:

June 12/10 - Fine Art and Craft Festival at BAC 10 a.m. to 6p.m. and Sunday June 13 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

June 11-13, 2009 – More on Wool: Back into the World of Warm, Winsome, Wacky, Wilful, Wearable, wonderful WOOL. Ontario Handspinning Seminar at Queen’s University, Kingston Ontario. For more info go to: <http://www.ohs.on.ca/>

Each month on the first Saturday after the General Guild Meeting participants in the Five Counties Challenge will gather at 11 a.m. in the studio to discuss their thoughts and give support.

Member News:

by *Fran Boisvert*

For those who do not know Blanca and her husband Leo Eijssermans, let me introduce them to you. Blanca was a member of our guild when I joined in 1987. She was very active holding numerous executive positions - among them guild president for 2 yrs. She also co-chaired an OHS conference in Burlington. After years of planning and dreaming in 2002, when Leo retired they began their adventure. In Sept. of that year they set sail from Burlington harbour for the Caribbean, where they sailed for five years. In 2007 they left Columbia travelled through the Panama Canal and on to New Zealand, where they spent one year, then on to Australia. In June of this year they left Australia and are now in Malaysia. We have been very fortunate to be able to follow their adventure. What follows is a letter received in 2009. Our guild has a foreign correspondent!

*co-op. The money goes to the town and the individual weaver...no middlemen!
A girl starts to weave at about 10 years old, and by the age of 16 or so, she must have finished three major textiles; the songket for herself as a bride, her groom to be, and her mother-in-law to be. If a woman at the village couldn't weave, she couldn't get married, and as she couldn't help support the village she has to leave.*

In the picture the weaver is working at the co-op. They take turns working there, weaving and helping with sales.

*I thought about you all and how similar we are in a way, although their looms are very primitive compared to ours. Their work ethic is amazing!
Selamat Jalan (good bye)*



Selamat Siang (good day) all.

In the island of Lombok, Indonesia, entire villages are dedicated to one craft. For those villages, their craft is more than their livelihood, it is their life. We visited the traditional village of Sukarare dedicated to weaving “SONGKET” a beautiful and colourful overshot like pattern. The warp is very fine cotton and the weft is silk. They dye all their yarns in bright colour and use also gold and silver threads. The weavers work in their homes and sell their textiles in a village

**Leo and Blanca Eijssermans
Aboard “Promesa”**

Hello to everyone from Lucy, in Kitimat, BC



I'm two months into my Northwest BC Coast adventure, and there are still several boxes to be unpacked. Actually, boxes can be tables, and are starting to blend in with the furniture, so I'm not sure when they will disappear. Most of the moving bit has been dealt with, and now I am starting to get on with 'living' here. We had a lot of snow before Christmas, but it has been above zero for the past two weeks. The scenery is gorgeous, with snow-capped mountains, and eagles wheeling in the skies, looking for salmon in the open rivers.



My looms have been together for a month now. I put a chenille scarf warp on my 4-shaft counterbalance loom just before Christmas. It is half-woven now, and I plan to finish it this week. My big loom (60 inch, 16 shaft AVL) was assembled by Christmas, but I waited until last week to put a warp on it. I knew it



would need quite a bit of 'tweaking,' and this is best done when there is a warp and tension on the loom. After a couple of days of fine-tuning, it is now a pleasure to weave on!! I have gone to a couple of meetings of the local weavers and spinners - nothing as organized as in Burlington, but nice to meet people with common interests. I have made a couple of friends through that, which is helpful in these early days of getting to know a new place.

I miss you folks, but am never more than an e-Mail, phone call, or a couple of plane flights away!

Lucy Slykerman
29 Meldrum Street, Kitimat BC V8C 2L6

In Praise of Chenille Stems (P.C. for Pipe Cleaners)!

by *Pat Hood*

If you thought that pipe cleaners had disappeared with dwindling numbers of pipe smokers, you probably thought correctly. However, they have been resurrected as the ubiquitous "chenille stem" beloved of camp counsellors, craft kit designers, and now, perhaps, weavers!

Chenille stems are great tools for weavers, as attested by the list of uses below:

1. Want to transfer heddles between shafts? Insert a portion of chenille stem through the top and bottom of the group of heddles and twist close to hold the group of heddles in line as you slip them off and on the shaft. Remove the chenille stem when the heddles are safely transferred and save it for next time.
2. To centre your warp in the reed, mark the middle of your reed with a twist of chenille stem. You can mark the left and right edges for the width of your warp as well. When finished slewing, remove and save the chenille stem pieces.
3. You can use chenille stems to mark the centre and edges of your warp in your raddle, and twist them above the warp so that it doesn't jump out of the raddle slots.
4. Counting heddles? Mark groups with a twist of chenille stem so that you can quickly recount if you lose track. Remove twists before using heddles.
5. When winding your warp, you can use soft, smooth chenille stems to wrap counted groups of threads. A little twist over and around the threads is all you need, and it won't slip out.
6. If the leftover heddles on a shaft are rattling or sliding against your threaded warp you can bundle them together with a chenille stem to keep them quiet and tidy.
7. Lease sticks can be linked together with chenille stems so that your cross doesn't slide out.
8. A loop of chenille stem around a loose warp thread can be used to hang a weight that will slide smoothly as you advance your warp.
9. Finally, do you find it difficult to tie a repair heddle from string? Shape one out of chenille stems.

Study Group: Guild Challenge for 2010

by *Diane Woods*

GREEN AND PURPLE - these are the colours our Guild has been assigned for the Guild Challenge for Five Counties Seminar to be held in September 2010.

The theme of the Seminar this year is "Energize Your Yarns", and it is hosted by the Guelph Guild of Handweavers & Spinners. The challenge is: By using any of the techniques listed below, create something new – create something with colour – create something with a twist.

- ✓ Weave - anything and everything, using any fibre you want
- ✓ Spin - any fleece, any fibre – no skeins, please only finished items.
- ✓ Knit or Crochet – only handspun yarns, no commercial yarns allowed
- ✓ Felt – Nuno felt, wet felt, needle felt
- ✓ Bead – jewellery, free form, loom woven
- ✓ Basketry – reed, cane, metal, paper.

The main criteria are that the finished project must contain a minimum of 3 colours, with 50% being made up of the 2 colours assigned to your Guild. (More details to follow.)

The Burlington Guild has decided to combine this particular challenge with a Study Group. To get started, at a couple of meetings (by passing small bits of paper around) everybody got a list of suggestions for techniques, fibre, use for item, and colours to use with the purple and green. From this list each person was to choose one technique (new to that person) and one other item on the list to use in their creation.

So where does the "Study Group" come in? The Guild has recently been having Saturday get togethers (10 am – 2 pm) in the studio, so on the Saturday after each general Guild meeting starting at 11 am. We will get together and talk about our challenge projects and how they are coming. This will be an opportunity to get inspiration, suggestions and help if you need it with your project, and also to see how everybody else is doing and what new techniques we are all learning.

So get your list of suggestions together (if you don't have a list we can take care of that at the Study Group meeting), and collect any ideas you have and join us on February 6, March 6, April 10, May 8 and June 12.

Think **green** and **purple** and

Guild Auction:

by *Bonnie Sylvia*

Weaver's Dream Auction

Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 20, 2010.

Our annual auction is becoming super-sized! A fantastic opportunity to build your stash or pick up incredible fibres, books or equipment at unprecedented prices. We are spreading the word far and wide!

This year's auction will incorporate items from two prominent local weavers, Lucy Slykerman of Lucy Slykerman Designs, and Cristel Wille, from CW Textile Design. Both these ladies have stellar careers as excellent artisans, but now have to part with their fibre inventories and in Cristel's case - her entire studio.

A taste of the fibres on offer - 24/2 merino's in a myriad of shades, put up on 2 kg. cones; 2/10 mercerized cottons in multiple shades; acrylic/wool blends; cotton/viscose blends; linens; silks; Bokkens cottons; novelty fibres; lurex; unique elasticized yarns; rayon chenille and so much more. All fabulous fibres for weaving!

Cristel will be parting with two unique looms. The first, an original handcrafted 60" - 12 harness jack-loom by Metiers Clement Inc. from Maskenonge, QC. Originally purchased in 1987 this has been Cristel's primary production loom and is a simplified draw loom, with a horizontal chain tie-up. It has two sectional beams with 2 brakes and a fly shuttle attachment. She swears by the simplified tie-up system and smooth workings of this loom.



Draw tie-up for Clement loom



Clement unique chain tie-up and ergonomic treadles



Sectional back beam for Clement



The second is a 140 cm (~54") Glimakra counter-march loom with 8 harnesses and sectional beam.

The looms will remain at Cristel's studio and may be viewed prior to the auction by appointment with Cristel (pwille@sympatico.ca, 905 845-1291). Assorted reeds, shuttles, bobbins and sundry items will also be sold at the auction, and will be present for the previews. These looms are in perfect working order, and Cristel has offered to assist the successful bidder with their re-assembly upon purchase. This is a fabulous opportunity for 2 very unique looms!



Harness details of Glimakra

Our guild will be the beneficiary of proceeds from the sales of fibres, looms, accessories and books. Due to the volume of the items involved we will only accept additional submissions for sale on a case-by-case scenario. No drive by dumpings this year! Please contact Bonnie Sylvia, bonnie0211@live.ca, if you would like to donate an item.

The event will be held in the Shoreline Room of the Burlington Art Centre. Previews for the event will begin at 10:30am - 12:45pm. The auction will start at 1:00pm sharp. Your auctioneer will be Bonnie Sylvia. Those interested in bidding on an item will purchase a bidding paddle for \$2.00, and must register with the cashier. Terms of sale are cash or cheque payable to the Burlington Handweavers and Spinners Guild. All purchases are to be removed from the studio on March 20th. We need your help to spread the word - e-blast, text, voice mail and good old fashioned word of mouth. For further information contact Bonnie Sylvia, bonnie0211@live.ca or Ruth Thoem, rthoem@redbourne.ca.

Perry Gallery Juried Show 2010: Sand and Sea Call for Entry

by *Jo Holden*



Sand and Sea is the theme for the 2010 Juried Show. To be more specific, the criteria are the following:

- ✓ The item must be or original design and exemplify the theme " Sand and Sea" - **inspired by or having to do with Sand and/or Sea.**
- ✓ All items must be executed in one or more of the techniques listed as acceptable in the "Burlington Handweavers and Spinners Guild's Standards for Shows and Sales". There is not restriction as to fibre type or article type.
- ✓ Items must be of appropriate size for display in the Perry Gallery.

Entry forms can be collected from the studio, or contact me at adh@rogers.com and I will email you a form.

I'm hopeful that you have already started on your project, if not get in gear!!!

Take in day is Wednesday May 19th 1 - 3 p.m. and 7 - 8:30 p.m. in the Textile Studio, BAC.

I will continue to promote and harass you, so just give in and participate!!

The Juried Show Committee is made up of the following, Lois Wyndham, Chung-Ja Jackson and myself, Jo Holden, please feel free to contact any of us with questions or concerns.

Critical Path for Sand and Sea

Dates of Show: June 5 to July 4, 2010

Exhibition Reception & Opening: Sunday, June 6, 2010, 2 pm

Entries Received: Wednesday May 19, 2010, 1-3 pm and 7-8 pm, Textile Studio

Unaccepted Works Returned: Monday, June 7, 2010 after the Guild meeting

Pick up of Accepted Works from the Show:

Monday, July 5 in Perry Gallery, 6-8 pm

OR Wednesday, July 7 in Textile Studio, 1-3 pm.

Juror: Marie Payne



Start spinning: the Video by Maggie Casey with Eunny Jang

by *Nancy Rose*

This could be the DVD that brings spinning to the masses! Watching this DVD feels like having a close friend in your living room teaching you how to spin. Maggie Casey establishes instant rapport with her student, Eunny Jang (and by extension, you), empowering you to believe that you can learn this skill and starting you on the journey.

Early in the DVD, Maggie shares with you why you need to learn to spin. In a matter-of-fact manner she confides that not only will you make the yarn of your choice for spinning or weaving but, more importantly, spinning completes your life, gives you balance, leads you on the path. . . Who can resist that!!!

By the time you have watched the first DVD in this 2-DVD set, you will have been introduced to wool fibre, familiarized with the basics of both an upright wheel and the more familiar Saxony wheel, and guided kindly through the tasks to complete your first plied yarn. By the end of the 2nd DVD, you will be able to prepare your fibre for spinning, become knowledgeable about variations on the basic spinning method, and explored spinning of the exotic fibres of your dreams.

Maggie Casey demonstrates at a comfortable pace using logical and manageable steps. She answers her student's questions and anticipates problems you might experience, solving them quickly and confidently. Her tone is calm, reassuring and authoritative. Her explanations are clear, precise and memorable; describing the fibre drafting process, she comments that "the front hand is like a traffic cop" and referring to the amount of wheel tension required on the fibre during spinning, she describes this as similar to "walking on the edge of a cliff".

On a technical level, the DVD is excellent. The camerawork is superb. The close-ups capture Maggie's hand movements, foot movements and the fibre from many angles, leaving no doubt in the viewer's mind about how to proceed.

Criticisms on this excellent resource are scant. The wheels shown in these DVDs are Schact wheels and some prospective spinners may look at the sleek modern upright wheel on the DVD with alarm as they try to adapt the wheel handling techniques in the lessons to their own spinning wheels. The use of the Schact wheels is understandable given the clearly labelled sponsorship by Schact Spindle Company to produce this DVD but a survey of several other brands of upright wheels would have been helpful. My other criticism of this DVD is general to all video based learning which is the awkwardness (or inability) for the student to have an instruction repeated because they missed or misunderstood a point and are now unable to proceed.

This DVD package is useful to both new and experienced spinners. Watching this DVD may help experienced spinners review the basics and correct any bad habits they may have developed over time or it may help them remember things they have forgotten. The 2nd DVD is an excellent resource, as well, for intermediate spinners who want to increase their skills. For spinners who haven't found the time recently to enjoy their craft, this DVD clearly communicates a passion and love of fibre that will find them dusting off their wheels.

Words from the Library:

by *Jennifer Earle*

The library has purchased the following books this year:

- ✓ Collapse Weave, Creating Three Dimensional Cloth by Anne Field (\$23)
- ✓ The Essential Guide to Colour Knitting Techniques by Margaret Radcliffe (\$25.17)
- ✓ The Weaver's Companion by Interweave Press (\$18.87)
- ✓ The Intentional spinner by Judith McCuin MacKenzie (\$19.81)
- ✓ Nuno Nouveau by Liz Clay (\$24.62)
- ✓ Spin Control by Amy King (\$18.15)
- ✓ Start Spinning: The Video by Maggie Casey (\$44.58)
- ✓ Teach Yourself Visually Hand Dyeing by Barbara Perry (\$17.38)

The following books/videos were generously donated by members:

- ✓ The Craft of the Weaver by Sutton & Collingwood
- ✓ Hand Weaving Patterns From Finland by Pyysalo & MeriSalo
- ✓ Tartans & Their Art by Sutton & Carr
- ✓ Knitting on the Loom by Barron
- ✓ Indigo – a World of Blue (DVD)
- ✓ Through the Eye of a Needle (DVD)
- ✓ In Search of Lost Colour (DVD)

We have reached #1302 in our accession numbers, which includes both magazines, DVD's, and books. During the year, all books (B) and book/magazines (B/M) have been issued a subject code. Labels have been attached to each volume to enable shelving according to number and author. We used the system outlined by the Interweave Press resource entitled Pourrey Cross Textile Library Classification Schedules.

Classification Schedules: general categories

- 00: Generalities for Textiles
- 10: Dyeing
- 20: Spinning
- 30: Weaving
- 40: Cloth and Needlework
- 50: Related Techniques

Each label contains three pieces of information: Subject Code; Three Letter Author Surname; Guild Accession Number.

It should be noted that currently volumes designated as a B/M will be found in the bookcase by the dye kitchen, rather than being integrated into the larger book collection. Audiovisual materials (also designated as B/M) are on the upper shelf of the back wall bookcase where they were before. In the Guild index both (B & B/M) kinds of resources have been given a subject code to aid in research. Members using the index will be able to see the item designation and the subject code and should hopefully have no problem finding resources on a topic. It is hoped that this new system will enable members to find and resshelf books more easily. Thanks should be given to the hardy volunteers who came in after the room painting and sorted out the books and got them in their correct places.

Ode to Our Guild Library

(with apologies to ode writers everywhere)

by **Pat Hood**

*How I do love our guild library!
It keeps my disposition from being contrary.
When weaving and spinning books I seek to find
Then it's our library I keep in mind.*

*For masterly tomes considered quite pricey
Or rare-to-find books whose acquisition is dicey,
I run to the library housed in our guild
At no cost (for one month) my needs are fulfilled!*

*When funds are low and needs are many,
I know in our guild library I will find most any
Book or magazine with advice that is classic
Or even for first-timers tips very basic.*

*When tartan was requested, my head in a spin
I found in our library 6 books therein
That ordered my thoughts and gave me the setts
To weave hundreds of tartans, even McGarets!*

*Books are easy to find now that they have been
"decimal-ed".
Each item with author and number is labelled.
Dear Guild members think of the use of this resource,
As a monthly tradition, or weekly, of course!*

*Oh there's beading and dyeing
And sewing handwoven cloth
And felting and fulling,
Our library knows both!*

*And how could I forget to talk about spinning,
With books and DVDs our library is winning!
On our shelves you'll find the most recently published
So that we as a guild can't help but be accomplished!*

*While this ode to a library may be tongue-in-cheek,
About our guild library you don't need to be meek.
Glance over its shelves, there's a wealth there to
borrow.
I've signed out six, back for 4 more tomorrow!*

Inventory for 2009

While putting on the new labels it was possible to do an inventory of the books and book/magazines. The following items were not found on the shelves, and did not have a card signed out.

Subject	Author	Guild #	
35.3	OHS	160	OHS Tartan Collection
6	VIC	183	Textiles – Victoria & Albert Museum
41.2	ZIM	253	Knitting Workshop
36.1	OEL	780	A Handbook of Weaves
10	WIP	926	Colour Trends '90
24	VAR	1093	Spinning Designer Yarns

Please look through your book stashes and check for Guild books. After a reasonable time these items will be declared lost and replacements will be obtained if desired.

Future Plans

Plans are to print out indexes for the collection in the following categories: Master List; List by Author; List by Title; List by Subject Code.

Guild Workshop: Loom Controlled Shibori

by *Jennifer Earle*

In the middle of October last fall, *Ellen Good* came to town from Ompah, Ontario and led a class in the wonders of loom controlled Shibori. Our instruction started on Friday night at Ruth Thoen's house. Over cups of tea, we listened while Ellen outlined the process followed for this dyeing technique. We had been sent instructions on preparing a warp and made individual decisions regarding whether we would do weft or warp Shibori. Each method creates slightly different pattern effects, as does the weave structure, and the sett. Ellen cautioned us to use strong thread for the weft or warp floats, which are used to gather the material into tight folds. Fran was the only one among us who chose to do warp Shibori using a supplementary warp of monofilament 6 lb fishing line. As our "homework" we were to go home and decide what weave structure we were going to use. Our choices for four harnesses were monk's belt, overshot, and Bronson lace. Those with more than four could do extended point twill as well.



Saturday saw us busy at the looms threading like mad so that we could weave our first sample that day and dye it. Fran can fully describe the challenges of threading transparent curly monofilament. After weaving and cutting off the cloth and gathering it very tightly to form a resist, we were ready to dye. Briefly the process involves the following steps: scour the cloth in hot water and rinse, pre-soak in soda ash solution, apply the dyes and "batch" or cure the dye. Ellen had prepared a sodium alginate thickener at home and thinned it to the consistency of warm honey on dye day. The measured amounts of dye powder (Procion MX), urea, and some hot water are added to a given amount of the thickener. We used sponges to apply the dye and then wrapped it in plastic to sit over night. In Shibori, the resist created by the gathering threads allows you to use a different colour on either side of the fabric. At the end of the day we thankfully returned to Ruth's hospitality once more and enjoyed Chinese food and a little wine.

Sunday saw us gathered in the parking lot comparing samples. Although Ellen said that the gathering threads would be easier to remove we were too eager to wait for the sample to dry. Our work assignment on Sunday was to plan and experiment more fully with variations of the structure in order to manipulate the Shibori pattern. Once again we wove like mad to get some more fabric to dye. Ellen produced some samples of her own work and shared the different dye techniques used. The scarves displayed had been over dyed, discharged or immersion dyed in various combinations. She has had good results with cellulosic fibres as well as fine wools.



Many thanks to Nancy Rose for facilitating the workshop and Ruth for being the hostess with the mostest!

For those of you didn't attend, but are interested, our library has a great book by **Catherine Ellis** entitled **Woven Shibori**.

Pricing Your Stuff – Weaving

by *Joyce Newman*

What's the most common question a weaver is asked about her work? Most would agree it's "How long did it take you to make that!?!?"



Do you know how many hours you put into a piece? Do you know how much your materials cost? If you have no idea of time and materials, how can you set a fair price for your work?

When I was doing production weaving, I bought a stopwatch with a stop/restart button. It was kept in a visible spot in my studio, so I would remember to track my time. When I took a break, I clocked off. When I came back, I clocked in again. From that, I know that my time to prepare the warp and dress the loom ranges from 2 to 2.5 hours per 100 threads. The main variables are warp length and threading complexity.

Add weaving and finishing time - include fringing or hemming, washing, pressing, and labelling.

Since tea towels are our biggest seller, and I had a file on my computer for the towel warp we put on the Octado when we first got it, I thought I'd look at the costing for a run of 10 towels.

- 13. Warp in 8 shaft point twill threading, between 21.5" and 22" in the reed, in 2/8 cotton, 24 epi. 37 repeats, + 1 thread to balance + 2 threads for floating selvedge = 521 ends, 21.7" wide.
- 14. 10 towels at 1 yard each, plus 1 yard loom waste = 11 yard warp.
- 15. Total warp used = 5740 yd. = 1.71 lb.
- 16. Camilla Valley's current price for coloured 2/8 cotton = \$14.30 a pound.
- 17. Replacement cost for the warp materials = \$24.50, or approximately \$2.45 per towel.
- 18. Weft, at 24 ppi, 22" per pick, woven 36" long, weft per towel = 530 yards = .16 lb. = \$2.25 per towel.
- 19. Total materials cost per towel = \$4.70.



Now, let's look at time:

- ✓ Using my median time of 2.25 hours per 100 threads to prepare the warp and dress the loom, 521 threads will take about 12 hours, or 1.2 hours per towel.
- ✓ Add 1.25 hours to weave each towel
- ✓ Add a half hour to hem, wash, press, and label.
- ✓ Total time is about 3 hours.

This is weaving time only, without any allowance for design, selecting and purchasing materials, sales time in the guild studio, or business administration.

At the Christmas Sale, tea towels sold for \$20. After deducting 25% commission to the guild and Arts Burlington for running the sale and materials costs, the weaver is left with \$10.30 - under \$3.50 an hour. Even increasing the price to \$30 (as charged by another local guild) will only give the weaver a net of \$17.80, still under \$6 per hour.

Are we charging enough for tea towels? Considering how quickly they sell, we need to rethink our pricing! Aren't your work, your experience and knowledge, (never mind your investment in space, equipment and materials) worth more than the current price?

Pricing Your Stuff – Handspun Yarn

by *Sharon Gowland*

First Scenario:

You've been bitten by the spinning bug and have been happily spinning fibre into fabulous yarn. You may have even used some of the fabulous stuff to make yourself something to wear. People "ooh" and "aah" over your creations and beg you to let them have some of your yarns for themselves. You're certainly not going to give it away...after all, you've had to wash, pick, card, dye and spin the fibre to make this luscious yarn, or, like many of us who want to skip these labour-intensive steps, you've spent quite a lot of money buying prepared fibre. You want to get something for all this work. How do you decide what to charge?

Second Scenario:

You have been spinning for quite a while now and accumulating quite a lot of yarn which is overrunning your living space. There is only enough room to walk through the room to get to the bathroom due to the baskets of handspun yarn lived up everywhere. So you decide to go onto EBay or Etsy to sell what you have in order to make more room for more stash. How do you decide what to charge?

Third Scenario:

You have been taking spinning courses and have read everything ever written on the craft and figure you are a good enough spinner to give up your day job and make your living selling your yarn. How do you decide what to charge?

It may seem that the 3 scenarios above are unrelated, but in actual fact they are intertwined and actually the same thing. One fact rings true in all 3: it's very important to not undervalue or under price your product to the extent that you can't pay yourself a living wage for what you're selling. The hobby spinner may not even concern herself with those selling on the internet or those selling in craft shops, since after all, she is just selling bits and pieces, not trying to make a living. And the person selling on the web may not appreciate the hobbyist practically giving her wares away because that interferes with the price she feels is fair, and the craft shop seller wants to be able to pay the rent with her earnings and if others are undervaluing their goods who would pay a fair price for her work?

Several professional spinners have come up with formulas for what they consider to be the cost of producing their yarn

The first one considers:

1. The initial cost of the fibre, plus any processing cost.
2. The hourly wage she wants to earn.
3. The cost of any added materials, such as dyestuffs and labels.
4. Equipment cost. Eventually your wheel and any other equipment are going to either break down or need repairing or replacing. Some spinners figure this cost into their pricing. She calculates how long it takes to spin a given amount of yarn, how long it takes to finish and package it and then figures out from the above how much that skein cost to produce. This is not the selling price. This is just what it costs to make the skein and selling below this price is not affordable. I don't know how she calculates her selling price but it's not going to be below her production cost.



Some craftspeople don't want to bother with all these calculations so they have come up with set prices per yard, according to the grist (yards per pound) and type of fibre. The number of plies is factored in as well. For example, one spinner charges 10 cents per yard for 2-ply worsted wool, 12 cents a yard for 3-ply wool worsted. For finer yarns she charges 15 cents a yard. For exotics she doubles the cost of the fibre and charges 20 cents per yard for a fine 3-ply. She is able to sell a one ounce, 150 yard skein of 3-ply cashmere for \$54 without any trouble.

A third spinner charges by the yard as well, but she starts with singles at 12 cents a yard, 36 cents a yard for 2 ply (because there are 3 operations involved here: single A + single B + plying) and adds 12 cents a yard for every additional ply involved. To this she adds the cost of the fibres, processing and extra finishing.

A fourth charges the price of the fibre plus an additional cost per ounce:

- Worsted - \$5 per ounce
- Sport - \$5.50 per ounce
- Baby - \$6.50 per ounce (whatever "baby" is)
- Lace - \$7.00 ounce

Still, a fifth spinner charges \$25 for 4 oz. of 2 ply worsted dyed wool, \$30 for the same size skein of wool blended with silk, alpaca or other exotic, and \$35 for a 4 oz. skein of exotic fibre. In my opinion this is still not enough. These are 2006 prices and maybe she has adjusted her prices by now.



A website for commercial spinning of pet hair advertises prices of:

Yarn, pure, \$8.75 per oz.

Yarn, blended, \$10.75 per oz.

These are US prices and don't include shipping.

I think the bottom line here is: don't under value your work. Put your modesty aside and pay yourself a fair wage. One spinner said it very well: "*If you are scraping the bottom of your bank account to buy supplies (roving) can you afford to give money to someone richer than you so they can buy a high quality handmade item from you that you yourself could not afford? Under pricing your wares just to get a sale is doing just that*". And it makes it hard for other sellers to get a fair price for their yarns as well.

From The Editors

We thought you might be interested in Laura Fry's pricing and her strategy. This is from her blog.

This particular towel is about 22" in the reed, and being woven about 34" long including hems. The retail price for these towels will be \$36.00.

Towels with less linen content of about the same size (i.e. cottolin weft) are priced at \$32.00. Towels made from 100% cotton are priced at \$28.00.

How did I arrive at those numbers? Partly by looking at the prices of smaller towels, partly by pricing expensive towels of similar quality, partly by deciding that I wanted that much for them to reflect the size and quality. My towels are hand hemmed, not because I object to machine sewing per se, but because I'd rather sit and hem as a TV watching job than drag out my sewing machine.

Laura Fry

"Establishing a Fair Price"

summarized by *Pat Hood*

Selling What You Make: Profit from your Handcrafts by James E. Seitz, Ph.D
TAB Books, division of McGraw-Hill, Inc. 1993
ISBN 0-8306-4144-0 (pbk.)

Pricing crafts fairly and profitably uses a cost-oriented equation:
Price = fixed costs + variable costs + profit

Fixed costs, or overhead, include the use of space (rental or mortgage costs for the space used in one's home) as well as heat, light, electricity, water, as well as insurance, internet and telephone costs, office supplies.

Once you have added up your fixed costs on an annual basis, (or even an monthly or quarterly basis, how do you reflect those costs in pricing a single item? One method has you dividing your fixed costs by the hours spent working in that time period, to generate an overhead cost per hour worked. Then, this overhead cost per hour is added to each item based on the amount of time required to make the item. 24

Variable costs are those that vary with producing each item, such as materials, wages and benefits (you should pay yourself!), packaging, advertising, transportation, handling of inventory, marketing and taxes. If you add up all these costs, you can reduce them to an hourly rate using average hours worked per month and add this variable cost per hour to each item you have made.

At this point you will have priced your item to "break even". This is what it cost you to make and sell the item. The final factor to determine is a percentage of profit to allow you to maintain your business.

A mark-up of 100% is common for craftwork. Many retail establishments work on a 200% mark-up, which is why they still make a profit when they have a 75%-off sale! Add the fixed and variable costs of an item, then calculate your percentage profit on this amount. The total of these 3 amounts should be your *tentative* price.

You may need to adjust this price to be competitive in your marketplace. However, if you need to sell your item at less than your fixed and variable costs (i.e. at a loss) then you either need to find ways to reduce your costs or need to reconsider the profitability of the item you are making.

Above all, be practical. Be aware of buyers' motivations, perceptions of price and value, and market demand. Consider the costs involved and the prices others are charging for the same/similar items. Be prepared to modify prices as the market dictates.

Did you know?

Guidance on Labelling Textile Articles Derived from Bamboo

Enforcement Guidelines March 11, 2009

The Competition Bureau is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the *Competition Act*, the *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*, the *Textile Labelling Act* and the *Precious Metals Marking Act*.

Labelling Law

The [Textile Labelling Act](#) (TLA) and the [Textile Labelling and Advertising Regulations](#) (TLAR) are statutes relating to the labelling, sale, importation and advertising of consumer textile articles. They require textile articles to be labelled accurately in order to help consumers make informed purchasing decisions. The statutes set out specifications for mandatory label information, such as the generic name of each fibre found in an article and the dealer identification.

The TLA and the TLAR also prohibit false or misleading representations. The TLAR specifically prohibits a representation that "detracts from, qualifies or contradicts any representation in the disclosure label".

As part of its mandate to inform industry of the proper application of the TLA and the TLAR, the Competition Bureau wishes to clarify the proper labelling of textile articles derived from bamboo.

Competition Bureau Calls on Textile Dealers to Accurately Label Textile Articles Derived from Bamboo

OTTAWA, March 11, 2009 — The Competition Bureau is taking steps to ensure that textile [dealers](#) comply with the *Textile Labelling Act* (TLA) and its regulations as they apply to fabric labelled "bamboo".

Following an increase in the number of articles claiming to be made from the plant, the Bureau is working with the [Retail Council of Canada](#) and the [Canadian Apparel Federation](#) to facilitate the compliance process for textile dealers.

Until August 31, 2009, textile dealers will be permitted to sell existing stocks of textile articles that were in production, manufactured, labelled or packaged, in the ordinary course of business, prior to March 11, 2009. After August 31, the Bureau will conduct marketplace surveillance to ensure compliance with the TLA.

The Bureau has published a document entitled: [Guidance on Labelling Textile Articles Derived from Bamboo](#) to assist textile dealers with compliance. **While many products are labelled “bamboo”, this is not an acceptable generic name for a textile fibre unless natural bamboo has been mechanically processed in a manner similar to the process for making flax into linen-like fabrics.** Most of the products currently in the market are, in fact, man-made fibre derived from bamboo using a chemical process, which produces a rayon fibre from bamboo pulp.

An increase in claims of textiles being “bamboo”, “made from bamboo” or containing “bamboo fibres” has prompted the Competition Bureau to reaffirm its position that, **whenever an article is made of man-made rayon fibres derived from bamboo, the generic fibre name must first make reference to “rayon”** or the corresponding chemical process outlined in the [Textile Labelling and Advertising Regulations](#) and can be followed by the words “from bamboo”. **You can also find more discussion at www.fashion-Incubator.com**

Opportunities:

Here's your opportunity to get rid of odds and ends of cotton chenille. Pat Hood is looking for small amounts of cotton chenille in colours suitable for flowers, e.g. greens, pinks, oranges, reds, blues, purples, yellows. Quantities less than 10 yards are fine. Willing to pay reasonable price. Contact Pat at 905-825-5098 or pat.hood@utoronto.ca.

We are looking for artists and artisans to participate as hosts or guests on the 2010 Art in Action - Burlington Studio Tour this November 6 & 7. Entry deadline is March 15, 2010.

If you are interested please go to www.artinaction.ca for an application form and more details or phone #289 337 2621.

*Kristina Kirkwood,
Teresa Seaton
Art in Action committee*

Notice: If guild members are not receiving the BAC monthly E blast about what's on at the centre, they can be added to the mailing list by sending a note to: email@burlingtonartcentre.on.ca

Editors' Note: Just a BIG thank you to all the contributors to this newsletter. It could not happen without you!



"Silence is music. You must hear it."

"Imagination is the only place and means (in this world) in which we enjoy complete freedom."

Hot Websites:

If you are interested in participating in Dr. Ann Collier's study: "**Exploring the Role of Textiles and Handcrafts in Women's Lives,**" visit the survey link at: <http://uweauclaire.qualtrics.com/SE?SID=SV-6JTCQdZqcCVgnRy&SVID=Prod>

Dr. Collier is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Psychology department at the University of Wisconsin-EauClaire. Her website is: <http://www.uwec.edu/psyc/Who/collier.htm>

A neat site for enthusiasts of **heritage finger woven sashes** can be found at : www.sashweaver.ca This is the home site of **Carol James**, weaver, author and researcher.

Are you interested in **Canadian knitting patterns**? Take a look at www.patternfish.com for interesting patterns to buy and download.

Kitimat, BC: where Lucy lives now!
<http://www.city.kitimat.bc.ca/>

Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipelines Kitimat Marine Plan Part.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xoj7Z-9u3VY&feature=related>

Constantine Issighos, ... a fibre artist.

Located in Vancouver Island, B.C., Canada, just north of Qualicum Beach. All my pictorial tapestries, both Canadiana and Aboriginal, are handwoven on a loom.
<http://fibreartists.com/index.php>

As is common throughout Scandinavia, the **Faroese do not wear shoes in the house**. They leave their shoes at the door and pad around indoors in woolen "footlets". They may also be worn under boots for warmth, or even over boots to help prevent slipping on the ice. And, of course, they make excellent bed socks. Many of these look like socks without cuffs. Others have a more unusual modular construction. We shall consider both types, the second type is "**Eli's Footlets**".

<http://www.schoolhousepress.com/kalf09f.htm>

ScienceDaily (Sep. 11, 2009) — A team of archaeologists and paleobiologists has discovered flax fibers that are more than 34,000 years old, making them the oldest fibers known to have been used by humans.

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2009/09/090910142352.htm>

Temples: Try this link for a detailed description on how to use a temple (amusing blog):

<http://dustbunniesundermyloom.blogspot.com/2009/03/templeslove-em-or-hate-em.html>

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