Learning to Weave in Ghana

By Emilia Karr

Upon arriving in Ghana, I did not know if learning to weave kente cloth was even a remote possibility since I was an American woman imposing on this art form carried on from generation to generation by Ghanaian men. My wondering did not last long after meeting my host mother in Accra, the capital of Ghana. She was involved in many art preservation and education projects around the country, one being teaching kente to Ghanaian women. She helped me set up an apprenticeship with an Ewe man named Seth. He lived in walking distance of where I was staying, making it very convenient to arrange long work days, five days a week for the next six weeks.

Seth comes from a family of weavers. The family compound housed at least six looms used by Seth, his brothers, cousins and uncle. All of his brothers had jobs besides weaving; two were going to school to learn electrical trades, one was a tailor, one a taxi driver, and another a nurse. When they wove, it was usually to help fill Seth’s orders for kente stoles to be shipped to the U.S.

We started from the beginning. I spent the first two and a half days watching various brothers weaving. My art background is primarily in dyeing cloths, with a small amount of time learning about general weaving. The first difference from the weaving I had done was the speed. Inches of cloth were woven in just a few minutes! Seth’s hands moved so fast, my eyes had difficulty keeping up.

Next, Seth went to the market to buy cotton yarn for the first project. It is sold in large hanks, making it necessary to spin it onto the bobbins [adding twist]. The next couple of days were spent starching the yarn and then learning and thoroughly practicing the art of spinning large and small bobbins. Seth stressed the importance of a “hard” bobbin and how it worked better for weaving. He explained that if a boy were learning the art of kente, he could spend nearly a year just spinning bobbins for his teacher.

The following steps of laying out the warp and threading the enoga, enoui, and exa (heddles and beater) took the longest and were the most tedious processes. The loom is noticeably different from a typical American loom in that the frame of the loom is separate from the other parts. This is necessary because most kente looms are outdoors, making it essential to be able to remove the weaving from the frame at night. The heddles and beater are unhooked from overhead beams, everything neatly wrapped to be taken inside.

After two weeks of observing, spinning, laying out, and threading, I was ready to start my first project of ten 74” strips of plain weaving. I was very slow to start. My toes felt awkward shifting the pedals connected to the heddles while my hands had a hard time finding the right rhythm for throwing the bobbin and beating the weaving. Seth never indicated that he thought it was strange for a woman to want to learn kente weaving, but I did have...
starting to spin bobbins for the next project: a few strips of "double weaving" [inlay] using traditional Asante designs. (I am partial to Ewe story cloth kente and its colors, but Seth primarily weaves pieces for the western market where Asante is more readily recognized.)

We spent just a few days preparing to weave. Already I felt confidence in being able to complete each step without too many mistakes. By the time I was ready to sit in the loom again, I had only a few more weeks in Ghana. Weaving patterns were much more time-consuming than I expected, taking the same amount of time to weave one strip as it had to weave ten plain ones. Together we finished four strips, two woven by me.

Seth and I took a day trip on one of our last meetings to go to Agbozume, his hometown and a weaving community. There we visited his older brother's family and bought weaving paraphernalia at the market. In Agbozume, market day is huge and starts before sunrise, when all the best things are sold. Agbozume was one of the most beautiful places I visited in Ghana. Sand covered the ground, hinting at water not too far away, and the sound of bobbins clacking surrounded me. Having the opportunity to weave kente was not as much about learning to weave as much as experiencing the rich tradition behind it in a culture where art is an integral part of daily life.

-Emilia Karr
lolag24@hotmail.com

More than 220 TSA Symposium registrants will be welcomed in style when they arrive in Santa Fe for a fantastasmagoria of textile and fiber-related activities. Pre- and post-conference tours have been arranged by Recursos de Santa Fe, described in the previous newsletter. The Santa Fe arts community is presenting special museum and gallery exhibitions, openings and receptions, and much more.

Among the galleries and museum spaces in Santa Fe that have mounted textile shows and will participate in Gallery Walks and receptions Friday, Sept. 22 from 3 - 7 pm are:

- El Museo Cultural, Full Deck Art Quilts
- Running Ridge Gallery, Porphyry Tapestries (Fabric Collages) of Amanda Richardson Clarke & Clarke Tribal Art, Mbuti bark cloth, antique & contemporary textiles
- Conlon Siegal Galleries, textiles
- Dewey Galleries, Ltd., Navajo textiles ca. 1900-1950
- Al Shariff, African artifacts and textiles
- Santa Fe Weaving Gallery, An Asian Influence: Ana Lisa Hedstrom and Chunghee Lee

You, too, can learn how to weave Kente cloth in Ghana. Master Weaver Gilbert "Bobby" Ahagble offers individual lessons and group workshops including lodging at his craft school: The "Ewe" Kente Weaving Institute in the town of Denu situated in the Volta Region near Agbozume, the center of Kente weaving, as done by the Ewe ethnic group. Information available online at http://www.africancrafts.com.

Lew Allen Contemporary, fiber works by Rebecca Bluestone and Ramona Sakiestewa
Patina Gallery, Textiles of Laura Foster Nicholson
Textile Arts/TAU, Indonesian textiles from the collection of Mary Hunt Kahlenberg
Thirteen Moons, Contemporary Art Quilts: Joan Rey Laury
Vita Marie Lovett & Kay Khan; Day of the Dead juried exhibition
Bellas Artes, Olga De Amaral Origins, The Transformational Designs in Ethnically- Derived Garments of Marsha Wiener Shibui, Japanese Folk Textile Museum of Fine Arts, Term Limits and other exhibitions

These efforts were coordinated by Jill Hepperheimer, Pat Hickman, and Barbara Goldberg.

Other highlights for participants will include:
• 23 scholarly sessions
• Plenary Presentation and Keynote Lecture
• Site visits to museums, studios, gallery collections.
• Video showings
• Buffet breakfasts in La Fonda's terrace dining room
• Interest Group lunch and business lunch/meeting
• Banquet dinner
• Marketplace

A good time will be had by all!
Collection

News

African-American Quilts Enhance Study Center

The gift of 156 African-American quilts from the Cargo collection adds a new facet of American quilt history to the University of Nebraska’s James Collection. “The Cargo Collection superbly illustrates the ongoing role that African-American quilt makers play in the larger tradition of American quilt history.” Center director Patricia Crewes said. The quilts, primarily from Alabama, represent more than 32 quilt makers, including imaginative and expressive pictorial quilts by Alabama folk artists Yvonne Wells, Nora Ezell, Mary Lucas and Mary Maxton. Supporting documentation about each quilt maker is a unique strength of the collection. Several of the quilts were featured in Quilts: A Living Tradition by Robert Shaw. A selection from the new collection is on display at the University’s Sheldon Art Gallery through April 2001.

CHS Receives Grant for Textiles

Two grants totaling over $245,000 have been awarded to The Connecticut Historical Society to treat and document its Costume and Textile Collection. The first grant of $30,000 will be used for conservation and treatment of 23 extremely rare and important textiles and costumes of the Revolution-era. The second award, from the National Endowment for the Humanities, will enable us to improve access to and interpretation of the collection.

The CHS has been collecting textiles since the 1840s. Its holdings of over 8,000 examples range from the 17th century to the present. The collection is distinguished by its focus on objects with strong historical associations. The conservation project includes treating 23 rare items, including Prudence Punderson’s silk on silk needlework from 1783, “The First, Second, and Last Scene of Mortality” (pictured below). Conservation efforts will also be directed at a Tory officer’s uniform, ca. 1770s.

IMA’s Eiteljorg Gallery Reopens

Indianapolis Museum of Art’s Eiteljorg gallery of African art reopened this summer with a new presentation highlighting the arts of the entire continent. Exhibition themes are: the diversity of African cultures, the connections among African cultures, and the change and dynamism of African cultures. A Special exhibition presents contemporary exhibitions of African art. The IMA’s collection of over 2000 objects includes woodcarvings, ceramics, costumes, jewelry and paintings.

ATHM Names Director

Michael J. Smith was named Executive Director of the American Textile History Museum in Lowell, MA. Mr. Smith was formerly President and CEO of the Buffalo Museum of Science, Buffalo, NY. He has held a variety of positions in regional and national history organizations.

“The First, Second, and Last Scene of Mortality,” embroidery on silk by Prudence Punderson of Preston, CT, ca. 1783.

FALL 2000 3
Textile Studies at UMass

By Marjorie Durko Puryear

UMASS-DARTMOUTH offers expansive fibers studio facilities for undergraduate and graduate students at its New Bedford campus. Additional undergraduate classes in croquis pattern design, nature drawing, and introduction to off-loom textiles are taught at the main campus in North Dartmouth, 15 minutes from New Bedford. The substantial library collections, main art gallery, textile sciences lab, art history and academic classes across the five colleges of the University, are also located at the North Dartmouth campus. A shuttle bus operates between the two campuses. The satellite art campus in New Bedford is anticipating an exciting move into a state-of-the-art facility, with fully equipped art studios, lecture halls and gallery spaces. This historic renovation will be completed early in 2001.

Students may earn a BFA in Textile Design, an MFA in Fibers, or a graduate Certificate in Artisanry Textiles. The BFA program balances woven and printed textile design for industry with art in fiber and fabric for individual aesthetic expression and object production. The curriculum is based on the understanding that designers in industry and the practicing fiber artist both require the development of personal ideas and aesthetics.

Textile Design/Fiber Arts undergraduate programs encourage exploration of specific creative issues combining the complex weaving, printing and dyeing systems unique to textiles with a wide range of design sources. Student projects include garments, rugs, wall pieces, and site-specific installations, as well as design boards for industry portfolio. Undergraduate students also enroll in a basic sequence of textile technology courses concerned with industry production to complete BFA degree requirements.

Computer software systems such as Info-Vision and Monarch for specialized print design repeats and colorings, weave drafting, and jacquard weave design are used throughout the curriculum as adjuncts to the design process. Students are encouraged to participate in the AMOCO, ITMA, CITDA, and SURTEX student design competitions, as well as gallery exhibitions and professional portfolio reviews of their work. Internships with regional industry and museum programs are encouraged. Graduation results in a wide network of successful alumni and students in professional job placement.

The MFA program does not focus on design for industry, although graduate students have access to all areas of the undergraduate curriculum as a supplement to their graduate work. MFA course work includes graduate seminars for aesthetic issues, art history, philosophy of art and thesis writing. Teaching and service assistantships are available on a competitive basis. An MFA exhibition in the University Art Gallery and a written thesis describing the conceptual sources and future directions of the body of work complete the requirements.

The Artisanry Graduate Program prides itself on the on-going and intimate relationships established between students and their advisors and committee members. This student masters the creative development required for the level of professionalism expected of our students.

The MFA program in Fibers assists students interested in developing personal work in a wide range of fiber art areas and individual concepts. Our students generally pursue careers as studio artists, university and specialized workshop teachers, or in other fields that demand the self-expression and critical expertise developed through intense graduate study.

Facilities include undergraduate and graduate weaving studios, a graduate Surface Design studio, a Surface Design Print Studio, a Dye Lab and Kitchen, and a Textile Design/CAD lab.

There are three major full-time faculty members and one computer design technician in the Textile Design/Fiber Arts programs. In addition, the Textile programs are richly supplemented with part-time faculty in Fiber Art, Textile History and Textile Design, and frequent visiting artists and designers offer critiques and technical workshops. Visiting artists in past years have included Tom Lundberg, Barbara Lee Smith, Christine LoFaso, Heather Allen, Randall Darwall, Christina Bechstein, Sonya Clarke, Michael James, Cyndy Barbone and Nick Cave. Visiting designer alumni from Quaker Fabrics, Warren Corporation, Joan Fabrics/ Mainstreet Textiles, and Brewster Wallcoverings, among many others, have helped to enrich the curriculum.

Professor Marjorie Durko Puryear teaches Textile Design, Weaving, CAD, and Graduate Fibers. Most of her recent work has focused on images of simple hand gestures, to describe human rela-
Surface Design Studio, UMass.

...and to enigmatically record personal history. Her latest work, enhanced by computer imaging, is jacquard-woven, with added hand-embroidered embellishment.

Professor Barbara B. Goldberg teaches Surface Design and Graduate Fibers, and was Director of the Graduate Programs in Fine Arts, Artisanship, and Design at UMass-Dartmouth. Her multi-paneled wall pieces in Japanese resist-dyeing techniques describe the nature of pattern as it has been recorded in the cloth. Her wearable work deals with issues of luminosity, luster and light.

Professor Carolyn A. J. Mills teaches Textile Design, Nature Drawing, and Off-Loom Weaving. She also teaches undergraduate textile design and portfolio classes pertaining to pattern and repeat, rendering systems, and sources for design. She is a freelance designer of apparel and home furnishings.

Paula Erenberg, Textile CAD Technician, heads the Textile Design Computer Lab and Design Imaging Labs, and teaches the Textile Design/Computer Design courses, and directs independent study work. Her experience in both electronic imaging and textile design allows her to create bridges between the different design platforms.

All applicants are encouraged to contact the Textile Design/Fiber Arts programs to arrange tours of the facilities, speak to faculty, and to arrange interviews. BGoldberg@umassd.edu Textile Design/Fiber Arts Office, 508 999-8916. Textile Design Fiber Arts Programs, 1213 Purchase St., New Bedford, MA 02740.

American Craft Council Awards

The American Craft Council announces its annual awards for excellence and achievement, to be presented Oct. 21 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe, NM. Receiving the Gold Medal are fiber artist and new TSA board member Cynthia Schira, Lawrence, KS; and metalsmith L. Brent Kingston, Makanda, IL. Fiber artists named to the ACC College of Fellows are Anne Wilson, Evanston, IL, and mixed media artist Joyce Scott, Baltimore, MD. Honorary Fellows include TSA member Christa Mayer-Thurman, Curator of Textiles, Art Institute of Chicago, and exhibition designer Theodore Cohen, Oakland, CA. Awards of Distinction will also be given to the John C. Campbell Folkschool, Brasstown, NC, and the Textile Museum, Washington, DC.

CAA Honors Christa Mayer-Thurman

Christa C. Mayer-Thurman received the College Art Association Heritage Preservation Award for Distinction in Scholarship and Conservation at the Association's February annual meeting. Ms. Thurman is Curator of Textiles and Textile Conservator at the Art Institute of Chicago. Educated in Germany, she received a BA from Finch College and an MA in art history from New York University. From her early career at the Cooper-Union Museum, she was imbued with an enduring curiosity about the structure, chemistry, and aesthetic interpretation of textiles.

Since her AIC appointment in 1967, Thurman has been responsible for two major development phases in the Department of Textiles. Her ideas on departmental design and function have been imitated nationally and internationally. In 1992 a curatorial chair was endowed and named in her honor, a first for an incumbent curator.

Her long list of publications, presentations and exhibits are a testament to her vigilant advocacy of an often under-appreciated material. She serves as a model of professional stewardship to which all curators should aspire.

-excerpted from the CAA Newsletter


**Letter from the President**

This is my last letter as President. Lisa Atkinson is taking over that job as of October (as you read this). Lisa and I have worked closely together over the last two years, working with many phone calls and emails going back and forth furiously through the “airwaves,” and I know we will have a smooth transition. I not only feel that TSA is in strong, competent hands, but that it is in a strong position overall, with newly streamlined procedures, systems, and other details of operations.

During my presidency we’ve been heavily involved with structural/administrative matters, such as making sure that a Policies and Procedures Manual is compiled, working out the logistics and legalities of various contracts, developing budgeting systems, etc.

We are very pleased with the arrangements we have continued to define with BMS Management Services (the people you reach at the office when you call, write or email—Kay Boyer and Kim Righi are our “miracle workers” and they are really terrific). Lisa has been helpful in getting our various publications under control (as Vice President, she chaired the Publications Committee), although we also all tip our hats to Karen Searle, who is not only doing a great job as Newsletter Editor, but has taken over many of the production details of other publications such as the Bibliography. Those of us on the Board who know how much the organization depends on her are extremely grateful for her excellent work. Charlotte Jurasek has taken over the administration of the TSA website, and now that she is back from a sabbatical in Turkey, will be able to keep it well in hand. We have also created the new position of Publicity/PR Coordinator, and are delighted that Zoe Perkins volunteered to take it on.

While I am sending out kudos and thank-yous, I want to acknowledge Ann Helllund, who wound up doing an unexpectedly huge job in coordinating the Santa Fe Symposium. She was unstintingly professional in every aspect of that undertaking, from seeing that we had a wonderful design/logo for the program to negotiating details about the hotel, all aspects of the program, the gallery shows, etc. etc. She deserves a much-needed rest at this point! Deep thanks are also in order to Blenda Femersås, who has contributed so much to TSA as both Treasurer and Membership Secretary for the last four years, and whose term has just ended.

Now that some of the mechanics of the organization are under better control, I look forward to seeing what happens in the next few years.

The new Board under Lisa’s presidency will bring enthusiasm, fresh ideas, and diverse perspectives to TSA. As always, we also ask each one of you to become involved. Contact any Board member and express interest, and someone will surely get back to you to take you up on your offer!

Thank you for your support during my tenure as President.

— Beverly Gordon

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**TSA News**

**R.L. Shep Book Award Established**

TSA is pleased to announce the establishment of the annual R.L. Shep Book Award, a $750 prize which the Society will give to the publication judged “best book of the year” in the area of ethnic textile studies. The first award will be made in 2001 for a work published in 2000. The main criteria for the prize-winning book is high quality research and scholarship, presented in an accessible, engaging manner.

Nominations are open to English language books (including bi- or multilingual publications in which all essential information appears in English). For the purpose of the award, “ethnic” textiles are defined as nonindustrial textiles of Asia, Africa, Oceania, and Native and Latin America, as well as those of identifiable cultural groups in Europe and North America.

Books in a variety of formats, including monographs, anthologies, and exhibition catalogs may be nominated. Nominations and review copies of the books must be provided to the Award Committee by March 1 of any given year, and the award will be made the following fall.

The Award Committee of three individuals with expertise in the ethnic textiles field, appointed by the TSA Board, will have a rotating membership. The first Award Committee consists of: Robert Hamilton (Chair), Suzanne Baizeman, and Lotus Stack.

Further information and detailed guidelines are posted on the TSA website and are available from the TSA office.

TSA is most grateful to Mr. Shep for endowing this award.

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Littrell

Dusenbury

Renne
New Board Members Installed at Sept. Meeting

New officers: Lisa Aronson, President; Mary Dusenbury, Vice President/ President Elect; Desirée Kodin, Recording Secretary; Mary Littrell, Treasurer; Barbara Sloan, Membership Secretary. Regional representatives: Cynthia Schira, East Coast; Elisha Renne, Midwest; Victoria Rivers, West Coast; Elayne Zorn, South; Lynne Milgram, Canada. Task Representatives: Barbara Goldberg and Pat Hickman, Fine Arts; Karen Searle, Newsletter; Zoe Perkins, Publicity, and Marjorie Senechal and Pamela Parmal, Symposium 2002 Co-Chairs.

The election elicited 209 ballots, including a blank ballot. There were 3 write in votes: 2 votes for Blenda Femenias for treasurer, 1 vote for Lynn Felsher for president. There were 11 incomplete ballots. The following comments were received: "Thank you for the concise presentation." "I really object to a slate of one choice for each position - how is this fair if you only have one to choose from?" "It would be nice to have alternatives to choose from. The nominations committee should work harder to broaden the slate." "I am protesting this ballot because there are no men on it." "As someone who specializes in western textiles and dress, I am concerned that this entire slate is composed solely of non-western specialty"

Newly Elected Board Members


Mary Littrell is a Professor in the Department of Textiles and Clothing at Iowa State University. Her research and teaching focuses on ethnographic textiles and on small and micro-business entrepreneurship. Her recent book, Social Responsibility in the Global Market, acknowledges the fair trade marketing system. Current research centers on a socio-economic audit of the 20-year impacts for a 300-person textile artisan group in Mumbai, India. She has attended all TSA symposia but one, and presented a paper at the 1998 meeting.

Elisha P. Renne is Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology and the Center for Afro American and African Studies. Her book, Cloth that Does Not Die, derives from research on hand weaving and the social uses of handwoven textiles in Nigeria, as do articles published in African Arts, Man, and in the edited volume, Ethnicity and Dress. She has been a member of TSA since 1993 and has organized several symposium panels on African textiles.

Barbara Bell Sloan is Assistant Director of the Center for the Study of Regional Dress at UCLA’s Fowler Museum of Cultural History. Her particular interest is in traditional cloth and cultural identity. She has done extensive research on Ghanaian kente cloth in Los Angeles and is currently interested in textiles from the former Yugoslavia. She recently installed a stunning display of textiles in the Center to accompany a "Textiles of the World" course. Barbara assisted Patty Anawalt and Louise Mackie in organizing the 1994 Symposium.

Cynthia Schira, Professor Emeritus of Textile Design at the University of Kansas, has been exhibiting her woven art internationally for over 30 years. She is represented in major public collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Museum and the Renwick Gallery of the National Museum of American Art. In recent years she has focused on integrating computer technology into the creation of her textiles; specifically a CAD program in connection with a Jacquard loom. She has attended three TSA symposia, presenting papers in 1994 & 98.

Victoria Z. Rivers is a Professor in the Department of Environmental Design at University of California Davis, where she teaches surface design, global dress embellishment, Eastern hemisphere textile history, and courses in the MFA Program. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. She recently completed The Shining Cloth: Dress and Adornment that Glitter (Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1999), and her research has been published in Haiti, Marg. Arts of Asia, Ars Textrina, Surface Design Journal, Ornament, and Fibrearts. Victoria’s interests include researching images, contexts and meanings of South and Southeast Asian textiles and dress; creating commissioned textile art; and disseminating design topics to K-12 teachers and students through Web sites and integrated lessons. Her most recent lessons are on-line at http://shiningcloth.ucdavis.edu
Conferences

American Tapestry Alliance Tapestry Retreat

JUNE 26-28, 2000

Following the annual conference of the Handweavers Guild of America, Convergence 2000, in Cincinnati, the American Tapestry Alliance held a smaller meeting of weavers, dubbed a “Tapestry Retreat.” This special gathering at Northern Kentucky University was led by master weaver Jean Pierre Larchette and designer Yael Lurie, and was organized by Judy Schuster, Jackie Wollenberg, and Kathy Spoering. Forty-five participants spent two and a half days sharing their work and viewpoints.

Two exhibitions showcased works that provided reference points for numerous conversations during the Retreat: American Tapestry Biennial III, a juried show, and The Butterfly Effect, a show of unjuried submissions under 10” by 10”. (Both exhibits were accompanied by catalogues ($20 and $15 respectively, available from ATA).)

Informed by thoughtful introductions by Larchette, Wollenberg and Spoering, participants learned from each presenter even before talks started or slides were shown. Each speaker acknowledged the particular evolution of her or his career. Many showed slides reflecting a progression of woven works. (One recurring joke was that early pieces were almost invariably photographed on painted garage doors, while later works were photographed in more professional settings). Current work and tapestries in progress were previewed.

One evening, Spoering and Larchette, as organizers of the American Tapestry Biennial III exhibition, presented all of the juried slides submitted for the exhibition. This gave participants successful and unsuccessful, a chance to compare their own accomplishments with those of other artists.

Themes emerged during the three days of meetings and “nourishing” school cafeteria meals. In contrast to the weavers’ approaches enlivened the discussion. Some themes were the use of geometric, figurative or hybrid styles; European or Southwestern American tapestry techniques; upright or horizontal looms; artist-applied natural dyes or store-bought synthetic ones, or combinations; handspun wool or commercially available ones; and perhaps most important among tapestry weavers, weaving sideways or from the bottom up and weaving from the front or back of the fabric.

Ultimately, the Retreat proved to be a supportive environment for an exchange of ideas and images. For some of us, it also reconfirmed that contemporary American tapestry weaving is alive and well, and perhaps even growing stronger.

-Anne Lane Holland

Native American Textiles and Dress

MASHANTUCKET PEquot MUSEUM AND RESEARCH CENTER
APRIL 15, 2000

This one-day conference, a joint effort of the Textile Society of America and the Costume Society of America, consisted of papers in the morning and tours of the conservation and research facilities of the museum in the afternoon.

Virrina Coronado, in “The Personal Power of Ceremonial and Powwow Regalia,” described the more private nature of ceremonial regalia as opposed to the more public and Pan-Indian powwow regalia. She showed slides of some very interesting examples, including a high school boy’s regalia that incorporates a CD.

Blaire Gagnon, in “Analysis of a Seminole Male Doll: Tourist Art as a Window of Seminole Cultural Identity,” showed how the style of clothing and the patchwork patterns in Seminole costume can be used to date a doll in the University of Rhode Island collection. She also described the cultural significance of traditional costume to the Seminole people.

In “Relics of Forest Life: Costuming the Indian Doctor,” Lynne Bassett described the research into the costume of travelling Indians that guided her design for the costume of an Indian Doctor interpreter at Old Sturbridge Village.

Margaret Ordonez discussed the “Analysis of Textile Fragments Slated for Reburial: Seventeenth Century Mashantucket Pequot Burial Cloths.” Using various analytical techniques, she was able to identify the bast fiber used for these fabrics, the weave structure, and the dyes and mordants.

Stephen Cook, Curator of the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center, described how he and numerous researchers went to great lengths to produce the many mannequins used in the exhibits. The mannequins were life cast and hand painted, and native people were contracted to make the costumes and artifacts.

The afternoon tours of the impressive conservation and research facilities were very interesting. The storage area was also on the tour, and it was possible to see some of the collection of artifacts not on view.

This was a very intriguing opportunity to see the Mashantucket Pequot Museum exhibits and get a look behind the scenes, as well as to hear some interesting papers.

-Deborah Bele

Textile History Forum

COOPERSTOWN, NY
JULY 7-8, 2000

This meeting dealt with North American textiles in broad terms, offering papers on dress, fashion colors, hand-weaving and spinning, upholstery and quilts, as well as prosopographical material based on account books, patent research, periodicals, and land records. Concurrent sessions featured tours of nearby textile storage facilities for small-group sessions and special displays. The Forum was master-minded by S. Rabbit Goody, and held on the premises of the Farmers’ Museum, Pequot Burial Museum, with cooperation of the New York State Historical Association.
fashion, participants were presented on registration with a volume of the Proceedings of the Textile History Forum, compiled by Jacqueline Atkins. Many examples were on display and (gloved) hands-on examinations were invited. A lively Works in Progress session far exceeded its time limit, to the delight of many, especially admirers of Gail Bagnard’s Arcadian blankets in white and natural brown as well as indigo-dyed cotton.

An enthusiastic and stoic audience took in the presentations in the well-chilled Art Museum auditorium. Suitably, quilts predominated in several ways: as themes for research papers, displayed as objects, and even covering certain listeners! Quilt presentations ranged from monochrome examples, Marseilles Quilts by Jacqueline Atkins, to stunningly and starkly colored ‘Utility’ quilts in Rhode Island-manufactured fabrics, presented by Linda Welters. Ann Wiss examined the use of dyes in fashion, natural, mineral, and synthetic, in 19th-century periodicals. Other clothing-based presentations included Susan Greene speaking on quilted hoods, Nancy Britton giving a fascinating account of the challenge to re-invent Victorian star-tufting, and Jay Ruckel surveying glove-making patents. Liz Cherry Jones’s important paper met with a particularly appreciative response. It traced the multiple and parallel histories of African-American hand-weaving at the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, now Hampton University.

—Desiree Kostin

Anni Albers

The Jewish Museum
New York, NY
May 28 - August 20, 2000

Upon first entering the Anni Albers retrospective at The Jewish Museum, one is face to face with a giant snapshot of the artist, handsome, with windswept hair - an unusual and welcome introduction to the person, not just the work.

The exhibit begins with Albers’ woven samples for industry from her years at the Bauhaus, which are framed and placed on angular tabletops. Longer yardage samples hang from upright wooden elements, vaguely reminiscent of looms, which punctuate the tabletops. This arrangement limits the view of the wall hangings and gouaches beyond, and the ubiquitous blond wood tends to mute the samples’ diversity. There is no basic weaving information for those unfamiliar with weaving and for the familiar, the samples have no structural information. Granted, Albers wove simple structures and focused on variations in materials, juxtaposition, texture, and color, but it seems an odd bit of information to be left out.

Beyond these limitations, the samples betray a curious mind and a love of discovery and invention. One can sense the pleasure Albers found in the loom making simple changes to structure or spacing, substituting raffia or celophane for linen and all the while maintaining a clean, spare, modern aesthetic. Her gouache sketches from her Bauhaus days demonstrate her careful planning, but “[a] design on paper, however, cannot take into account the fine surprises of a material and make imaginative use of them” as Albers wrote in Constructing Textiles, an inspiring article reprinted in the show’s catalogue. She embraced both the hand and the machine and believed in their complementary nature.

To contemporary weavers the samples themselves may not appear extraordinary. As the viewer navigates the exhibit, one becomes aware that the underlying way of thinking was completely new at the time. Albers conceived of weaving as an expressive and innovative technique that could incorporate function while capturing emotion and subtlety. As one encounters her singular works of art, such as the depth and color of “Pasture” (1958), one is drawn into an environment where the tiny hand manipulations and hue variations are so integral to the whole that no other medium could capture the moment. In “Ancient Writing” (1936), the thread employed as text creates a sense of mystery and speaks of quiet revelation, a woven Rosetta Stone.

A separate room was dedicated to “Six Prayers,” a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust.

In the last room of the exhibit, the walls are crammed with letters, scraps of Peruvian cloth, sketches, photos – artifacts and memorabilia of the person whose image first greeted the viewer. Each element is intriguing but ultimately frustrating in its fragmentary nature.

Fortunately, the catalogue to the show provides the biographical information necessary for a full appreciation of Albers’ life and work.

—Charlotte Hamlin

New Members

as of 8/1/00
Heather Marie Akou
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Christina Alphonso
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Jacqueline Atkins
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Margaret Young-Sanchez
myoung@denverartmuseum.org
Nina Suntzeff Zagaris

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS

Mesoamerican Study

GETTY RESEARCH GRANTS

Colaborative Research Grant, Postdoctoral Fellowships and Curatorial Research Fellowships are also available. See www.getty.edu/grant/research/ or write Getty Grant Program, 1200 getty Center Dr., Ste. 800, Los Angeles, CA 90049-1685. 310/440-7703 fax; researchgrants@getty.edu.

VERONIKA GERVERS FELLOWSHIP
March 30, 2001: The Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) Veronika Gervers Research Fellowship in Costume and Textile History provides Up to CAN$9000 to a scholar working on any aspect of textile or costume history. Research must incorporate, or support, ROM collections, which cover a broad range of time and geography. See: www.rom.on.ca; or write to Chair, Veronika Gervers Memorial Fellowship, Textiles & Costume Section NEAC, Royal Ontario Museum. 100 Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2C6 Phone (416) 586-5790 Fax (416) 586-5877 textiles@rom.on.ca

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS IN ART HISTORY

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART CONSERVATION FELLOWSHIPS

FRIENDS OF FIBER ARTS
Organizations receiving Friends of Fiber Arts grants in the US and abroad sponsor important programs, fostering FFAI's goal of making the world aware of contemporary fiber art. FFAI has granted over $100,000 since its founding in 1991. For grant guidelines and applications, phone or fax 708/246-9466, or write to: Friends of Fiber Art International, PO Box 468, Western Springs, IL 60558.
**Norwegian Textiles**

Oct. 2, 2000: Proposals for Presentation at the Second Conference on Norwegian Woven Textiles, October 5-6, 2001, Seattle, Washington. Topics on traditional Norwegian weaving and related areas of interest will be considered. Contact Kay Larson for details, 9390 Miller Rd. NE, Bainbridge Is, WA 98110. kaylarson@hotmail.com.

**Call for Manuscripts**

Oct. 1, 2000: The Chicago Art Journal, annual publication of graduate student scholarship, seeks material from all disciplines for the Spring 2001 special edition on ritual and visual culture. Papers may focus on any historical period or geographical area in which ritual practices figure into the production and use of objects, images and structures. Reviews of relevant books, exhibitions, conferences, plus art and architectural works that engage the theme are also sought. Chicago Art Journal, Dept. of Art History, The University of Chicago, 550 S. Greenwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60637.

**Andean Textiles**

Denver Art Museum
Center for Latin American Art and Archaeology
Immediate: A symposium on Andean textile traditions, both ancient and historic, Jan. 27-28, 2000, invites papers on all aspects of indigenous Andean weaving traditions. Presentations should last 20-30 minutes, and should be accessible to an educated general audience. Speakers will have an opportunity to revise their papers for an illustrated conference volume to be published by the Center. Please send one-page proposals to: Margaret Young-Sánchez Curator, pre-Columbian Art Denver Art Museum 100 West 14th Ave. Parkway Denver, CO 80220.

**Calendar of Conferences & Symposia**

**October**

Oct 17-20 2000: FRIENDS OF DARD HUNTER, annual conference of artists, conservators, historians, educators and other devotees of handmade paper at American Museum of Papermaking, Atlanta, GA. Exhibit. Amanda_degener@mn.mead.edu

**November**

Nov. 8th – 10th 2000: LAO TEXTILE FESTIVAL 2000. Hosted by Ministry of Information and Culture. Co-sponsors: Ministry of Industry and Handicraft, Lao Women’s Union, UNESCO. Held at The Cultural Center, Vientiane, Laos. The Festival is open to textile artists, experts, researchers, curators and textile lovers. One focus of the Festival will be to help textile producers learn ways to preserve their weaving traditions. Meets concurrently with World Craft Council Asia Pacific. Regional Crafts Contest featuring basketry, exhibition and sale of textile works from Laos and invited countries, textile demonstrations. Speakers include: Prof. Victoria Z. Rivers. Organizers: Phaeng Mai Gallery, 117 Nongbounathong Tai, Sihottabong, P.O. Box 1790, Vientiane, Laos. Fax / Tel: 856 21 217341 vียง@pan-laos.net.la

**January 2001**

Jan. 14-16, 2001 TEXTILES AT HOME: FROM QUILTS TO DRAPERY TO UPHOLSTERY

Jan. 17-19, 2001 TEXTILE ART STUDIES AT COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

Explore the important role textiles played in furnishing the home during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Featured speakers include Lynne Bassett of Old Sturbridge Village, author of Northern Comfort: New England’s Early Quilts, Linda Eaton, curator of textiles at Winterthur Museum, and Kimberly Ivey of Colonial Williamsburg, author of In the Neatest Manner: The Making of the Virginia Sampler Tradition.

Textile Art Studies sessions will extend the week of educational opportunities with a variety of classes in a broad range of topics relating to domestic furnishings and clothing. www.history.org E-mail: scountryman@cw.org
United States

CALIFORNIA

COLORADO
Snook Gallery, Adams State College, Alamos, CO. DATES "On/of Paper" juried exhibition. 719 587-7823

Denver Art Museum. TO OCT 8: "Church Textiles." www.denverartmuseum.org

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

FLORIDA

GEORGIA

IOWA

KENTUCKY

Yeiser Art Center, Paducah. TO OCT. 8: "Body of Evidence," by Judy Zoelzer Levine.

MARYLAND

MASSACHUSETTS
Harvard Graduate School of Design, Loeb Library. TO OCT. 15: "Fanciful Flowers: Botany and the American Quilt." www.intr.wlu.edu/tclquilts

Sheldon Art Gallery, University of Nebraska, Lincoln. TO APR. 2001: Quilts from the Cargo Collection.

MONTANA
Museum of the Rockies. TO OCT. 15: Family Quilts from Southwest Montana.

NEBRASKA
University of Nebraska State Museum, Lincoln. TO JAN. 31, 2001: "Fanciful Flowers: Botany and the American Quilt." www.intr.wlu.edu/tclquilts

NEW JERSEY

MINNESOTA

NEW MEXICO

NEW YORK

Gail Martin Gallery. NOV. 1-18: "Evolving Tradition: Ikat Paintings in Silk by Polly Barton." Also traditional ikats from Central Asia, Indonesia and Japan. 212/864-3550

Stone Quarry Hill Art Park, Cazenovia. TO NOV. 1: "The Nature of Fiber." Invitational exhibition of fiber works showing affinity with nature. SQUAP@aol.com

OHIO

Ohio Craft Museum, Columbus. TO NOV. 5: "Men of Cloth." 614/486-4402.

OREGON


PENNSYLVANIA

University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology, Philadelphia. TO OCT. 1: "Pomo Indian Baskets."

WISCONSIN


International

CANADA


THE NETHERLANDS

Netherlands Textile Museum, Tilburg. TO DEC. 3: "Hot Cool Strong Light." 013-536-7475. textilemuseum@tilburg.nl

SWITZERLAND


Tours/Courses

ANCIENT PERUVIAN TEXTILES 2001: 2-week session on weaving techniques, cultural iconography, documentation, conservation. At Universidad Nacional de San Augustin Museo, Arequipa, Peru, Session 1, JUNE 2-15; Session 2, JUNE 16-29. At Museo Regional de Ica, Peru, JUNE 6-29. Special sessions for textile conservators will also be given at these times. Nanette Skov, PO Box 13465, Tucson, AZ 85732. Fax 520-393-7331. nanetteskow@hotmail.com

CRAFT WORLD TOURS


ART WORKSHOPS IN GUATEMALA features week-long courses in fine arts, photography, writing, fibers, in historic Antigua. FEB. 16-26, 2001: Textile tour with Karen Streat. Lisa Fourt, 814/475-0757; info@artguat.org; www.artguat.org/

WASHINGTON

Seattle Art Museum. ONGOING: Weavings from the Northern Northwest Coast.

"Blue Bow" by Polly Barton, 1999, Courtesy of Gail Martin Gallery, New York.


ITAA's site, http://www.ittasite.org, offers information on research and development in textile and apparel vocations. A web-searchable Media Resource Directory is being created to contain media reviews prepared by textile and apparel professionals, and an Annoted Resource Directory to assist in locating literary, electronic and video resources on textile and apparel topics.

The Materials Innovation Database, a collection of recent developments in fiber, textile, and apparel subjects that can be adapted in classroom materials, was posted in early 2000. The first topic is the perceptions and use of American alligator and rattie leather goods.

ITAA is a global organization of textile and apparel scholars dedicated to providing opportunities for interaction among textile, apparel, and merchandising scholars in education, business, government, and industry.

For more information, contact Dr. Nancy Cassill, Nancy_Cassill@uncg.edu

Virtual Textiles

Textile & Apparel Resources Funded

THE FIRST YEAR OF A 3-YEAR GRANT (1998-2001), awarded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to a multi-university team of textile and apparel faculty, expands textile and apparel resources. Several web sites are being developed to provide textile and apparel information. All project investigators are members of the International Textile and Apparel Association (ITAA) and work closely with the ITAA leadership in developing the web sites.

Publication

New Titles

Down by the Old Mill Stream: Quilts in Rhode Island, edited by Linda Walters and Margaret T. Ordonez. Connects history, culture, and technology to quilts in Rhode Island. Kent State University Press. Cloth, $75.00. 328 pages, color and b/w photos. Fax 330 672-3104.

Ecclesiastical Pomp and Aristocratic Circumstance, A Thousand Years of Table-Woven Bands by Nancy Spies, foreword by Peter Collingwood. Brocaded tablet weaving from 6th to 18th century. Arelate Studio. Paper, $40 plus shipping. 8.5 x 11, 320 pages; patterns, illus., index, glossary, bibliography, catalogue of bands. ISBN 0 615-11681-7. spies@juno.com


Bizarre Seiden: Ein Exotismus um 1700, Hans Christoph Ackermann, ed, weave analysis by Vendulka Otavská. Catalog to The Abegg Foundation's collection of sumptuous "bizarre silks" produced in Europe between 1680 and 1720. Published in German by Riggisberger Berichte. Cloth, sFr. 280.00 plus postage. 440 pages, 120 color photos 133 b/w photos, 20 drafts. ISBN 3-905014-16-5. www.abeeg-stiftung.ch
Membership Application

Membership is for the calendar year and dues received will be applied to the current year, unless otherwise specified.

☐ New membership  ☐ Renewal

NAME

STREET OR MAILING ADDRESS

STREET

CITY

STATE

ZIP + 4 OR POSTAL CODE

COUNTRY

HOME PHONE

WORK PHONE

FAX

EMAIL/INTERNET

Dues

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For university students in degree programs, enclose copy of current identification card.

Institutional $60.00 $70.00 $100.00

Supporting $150.00 $150.00 $250.00

Corporate $5,000.00 $5,000.00 $7,000.00

SUB-TOTAL MEMBERSHIP: $1,000.00

Additional Contributions (Optional)

☐ $25.00  ☐ $50.00  ☐ $100.00  ☐ $250.00  ☐ $500.00  ☐ $1,000.00  ☐ $2,000.00  ☐ $5,000.00  ☐ $10,000.00  ☐ $25,000.00  ☐ $50,000.00  ☐ $75,000.00  ☐ $100,000.00  ☐ $250,000.00  ☐ $500,000.00  ☐ $750,000.00  ☐ $1,000,000.00

SUB-TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS: $100.00

Publications Order

Symposium Proceedings. For the contents of all volumes, consult the TSA website. Books are paperback (P) or spiral bound (S) as noted. Textiles as Primary Documents (1986), Textiles in Trade (1990), and Contact, Crosswinds, Continuity (1994) are out of print.

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<td>Creating Textiles: Makers, Methods, Markets (1996, P, available Summer 1990)</td>
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<td>Sacred and Ceremonial Textiles (1996, P, 256 pp.)</td>
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<td>1993 Membership Directory (for sale to members only. Free to 1993 members)</td>
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SUB-TOTAL BOOKS: $10.00

SHIPPING AND HANDLING: $5.00

ADD U.S.: $4.00 for 1st book, $1.00 for each additional book.

ADD CANADA/MEXICO: $5.00 for 1st book, $3.50 for each additional book.

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SUB-TOTAL PUBLICATIONS: $5.00

TOTAL Membership + Contributions + Publications: $1,015.00

Method of Payment

☐ Check in U.S. dollars drawn on U.S. bank.  ☐ Visa  ☐ American Express

Make check payable to Textile Society of America.

SIGNATURE

Basic membership rates are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes; however, they may be tax deductible as ordinary and necessary business expenses. Donations above the price of basic membership rates may be deductible as charitable contributions to an extent provided by law.

Membership Directory

The following information will be listed in the Directory:

GEOGRAPHICAL (check one only)

☐ East and Central Asia

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☐ Sub-Saharan Africa

☐ North America

☐ Australia, Pacific Islands

☐ South America

☐ West Asia, North Africa

☐ Europe

☐ General (many/most of above)

TOPICS OF INTEREST (check all that apply)

☐ Early textiles (before 15th century)

☐ Historical textiles (15th - 19th centuries)

☐ Contemporary (20th century)

☐ Audio, visual, and computer resources

☐ Colors, dyes, resists, paints and processes

☐ Clothing and accessories

☐ Conservation

☐ Fibers and fiber processing

☐ Gender

☐ Graphics: patterns and motifs

☐ Interiors, environment, and shelter

☐ Meanings: iconography, ritual

☐ Non-woven methods, tools, and equipment

☐ Weaving methods, tools, and equipment

☐ Political economy (production, distribution, trade)

☐ Stitchery, embroidery, quilting, and appliqué

☐ Weaving methods, tools, equipment

SPECIAL INTEREST (no more than 3 words):

Send Completed Application to:

Textile Society of America  Phone: 410 275-2330
R.O. Box 70  Fax: 410 275-9366
Earleville, MD 21919-0070  Email: tsa@del.net

Please send information about TSA membership to:

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP + 4 OR POSTAL CODE
TSA Calendar

2000

September: Publication of the fall TSA Newsletter
September 21: Meeting of the Board of Directors, Santa Fe, NM
September 21–23: TSA Seventh Biennial Symposium, Santa Fe, NM: “Approaching Textiles, Varying Viewpoints”
November 15: Deadline for submissions for winter TSA Newsletter
December 31: Deadline for submitting bibliographic entries for the 2000 Textile Bibliography produced by the Textile Museum and the Textile Society of America
January, 2001: Publication of Winter TSA Newsletter
February, 2001: Meeting of the Board of Directors

Detail, “Variations on a Theme,” 1958, by Anni Albers. Cotton, linen, plastic, 87.6 x 77.5 cm. (34.5 x 30.5 inches). Collection of Dr. and Mrs. Theodore Dreier, Jr. Courtesy of The Jewish Museum, New York.

TSA Newsletter
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Textile Society of America

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