



*Edited by Patricia Christy
February 2008*

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Letter from the Editor

Patricia Christy

Dear Members of TEXERE,

Welcome to our 2nd Newsletter as a Textiles Education Working Group within ETN. This important change in our organisation, thanks to ETN, has resulted in increased numbers of members from around the world and I am pleased to welcome new members from Canada, Australia, USA, Ghana, Romania, England, Scotland, France and Finland.

One of the common things which new members have told me is that they feel isolated and have to fight for their subject's survival. They are hoping that TEXERE will be able to support them and that they will receive advice and encouragement from other members. Pamela Hardesty from Ireland and Margaret Perivoliotis from Greece are two such members who have asked for your help in this newsletter. Mary Kroetsch from Canada is coming over to France in the summer for a few months to work as an Artist in Residence, near Paris, so she hopes to meet some of us then. This is a good start to the Working Group and I hope that in future you will be able to contribute some information or advice to other members when needed. Information about your work and textile experiences such as exhibitions, workshops and conferences is also always welcome. To be a successful Working Group it is up to you to make it work and not sit back waiting for something to happen. I am just the spokesperson and coordinator. I hope that by the next ETN conference in 2009 we will be able to show that our Working Group has made good progress and is working successfully

During our meeting in September we decided to send out a questionnaire to all members so that we could find out about your background and interests in textiles. In this way I hope that you will get to know each other and find members with common interests in textiles. Renata Pompas and Gina Morandini, from Italy, kindly compiled the questionnaire which I hope you will complete and return to me as soon as possible. It will also be available on-line so that you may return it to me by e-mail if you wish. The results of this will be placed on the Members Page of the website, so it will be confidential to members only.

I am very disappointed at the response to the Black and White Project as, so far, only one person, apart from my own group, has told me they will take part in it. Perhaps, as the last Newsletter was sent by e-mail, you did not notice this project or, maybe you are doing it but have not told me!! It is not intended to be extra work for you, but to be a theme which you could use in the normal course of your work with pupils, students, adult groups and workshops, as well as textile artists own work, the difference being that it would be in black and white, and shades of grey as well. My creative textiles group, Octopuss, are making an exciting variety of things using various techniques including felt, embroidery, patchwork, dyeing and printing which will be shown during our own exhibition in July. The idea of this project is so that we can all see the variety of work that is being done by our members and we hope the results will be exhibited either as a slide show and/or, a selection of the actual work, at a future TEXERE meeting and /or ETN conference as well as on the website. The original information is here again, partly for the benefit of new members, but also to remind you about what is required.

Finally I would like to call a meeting of TEXERE members so that some of us can get to know each other and discuss the future of TEXERE. At present I am organising things on my own and I would like to have proper discussions about TEXERE and share the decision making with you. The internet is quite good for sharing ideas but cannot replace proper face to face discussions between people. So I hope that some of you will be able join me later in the year at one of the venues suggested here.

The deadline for the next Newsletter is 31st May

Black and White Project

We invite all members of TEXERE, from every level of Textiles education, to take part in the first joint project of our Textiles Education Working Group. We hope that you will be able to work with your education groups using the theme “Black and White”. It can be a short or long project, but taking no more than 10 hours in total, and should be worked as a part of your normal curriculum. You may interpret the theme in any way, using any textiles designs, media and techniques according to those which suit your methods of working with your classes. We would like the work to be completed no later than the end of July 2008. A CD of the resulting work, with maybe some information about how the project was conceived and carried, out should be sent to me, Patricia Christy. We will then compile the results and put them on the website. In this way we hope that you will all be able learn about how each of us teaches textiles and design. Textile Artists may also take part so that we can see the way in which they work. If we manage to have our meeting in the Autumn I hope that there will be presentations on the Black and White Project in the programme

TEXERE Meeting Autumn 2008

I invite all those TEXERE Members who are able, to attend a meeting in the Autumn. I propose two possible venues and dates, but if anyone else would like to suggest a meeting at their school or University, in a place of interest to all, *please let me know as soon as possible*. My suggestions are, in Birmingham in September or London in October each of which would coincide with the Knitting and Stitching Shows which I think would be of interest to all of you. Some of you have may have already been to these exhibitions and know how fantastic they are. The main meeting of TEXERE would take place on the Saturday so that as many people as possible could attend without taking time off work. The Knitting and Stitching Shows run from Thursday to Sunday, so you could visit those on Thursday, Friday or Sunday if you are able to do so. **TEXERE will pay for the venue so there will be no conference fee. You will only have to pay for your travel and accommodation.** The dates of the shows are:- Birmingham 11th -14th September and in London 9th -12th October.

I hardly need to tell you about the attractions of London with its many museums and art galleries. The exhibitions at the V&A at that time will be Fashion V Sport:-the relationship between contemporary fashion and sport. Cold War Modern –Art and Design in a Divided World 1945-1970, explores art and design during the cold war period.

Birmingham has the advantage that the International Airport is very close to the National Exhibition Centre where the Knitting and Stitching Show takes place and accommodation there might be cheaper than London. There are many interesting museums and art galleries in Birmingham and if enough people wanted to go I could organise a visit to The Forge Needle Museum in Redditch which you can read about in this newsletter.

If you think you might be able to attend a meeting at either of these venues please let me know as soon as possible and no later than **1st April** stating which you would prefer, as I will have to book a room for our meeting. I will plan it according to the choice of most people. If you are not sure that you will be able to attend yet, then still let me know which venue you would prefer or state both if either would do.

If any of you have an alternative suggestion of a venue in Europe where other things of textile interest would attract members, please let me know by **March 31st**. It would need to be fairly easy and relatively cheap for most people to get to and have suitable economic places for accommodation.

Life Long Learning Erasmus Partnerships
Margaret Perivoliotis
Athens, Greece

My University, TEI, is currently seeking partners under the framework of the Erasmus Programme, *Lifelong Learning/ERASMUS*, for student and teacher exchanges, in all disciplines of Art and Design, including Textile Art and Design and possibly Fashion design. I hope that TEXERE members can be of assistance, indicating possibilities in the UK and other EU countries. If you are interested I can send you information about TEI. Please contact me by e-mail, or mail.

Associate Professor Margaret Perivoliotis
International and European Academic Coordinator
Faculty of Graphic Arts and Design
TEI of Athens, Greece
E-mail:- perivoliotis@teiath.gr

A Survey of Textiles Education Within Fine Art
Pamela Hardesty
Crawford College of Art and Design Cork
Republic of Ireland

Textiles Education within a Fine Art Context: What is its current status? What methodologies predominate? How is it categorised, named, delivered, within Fine Art curricula across Europe?

I would like to survey TEXERE colleagues teaching within fine art contexts in 3rd level programmes across Europe. My own institution, The Crawford College of Art and Design in Cork, (one of the principal degree-awarding art colleges in Ireland) is undergoing major changes in structure and ethos. I am seeking advice and examples as I formulate a case for the preservation of Textiles as an essential element of Fine Art education. Our general situation is this: that Textiles, along with other departments of construction and materials, such as Ceramics, Glass, and Metals, has been proposed for demotion as an “optional” element, in contrast to “essential” skills areas such as painting, print, and lens-based media. These “essential” elements have been grouped together in one large generalist fine art course, team-taught in year groups by a variety of specialists.

The Textiles course in the Crawford had previously always been a Subsidiary element, that is, a minor subject area to complement the major study options of Painting, Sculpture, Printmaking, and also Ceramic Design. The course had been structured as follows: Major study: 60%; Subsidiary: 20%; Academic Studies (art history and theory): 20%. Students who wished to concentrate more fully on Subsidiary processes and materials in their studio practice could have the option of a 50/50 ratio between Major and Subsidiary. Over the years I had many Textiles students, particularly from the Sculpture Dept., who opted for a 50/50 balance (who presented degree shows with a strong textiles focus). Overall we maintained a good interchange between departments, with subsidiary staff in dialogue with and in joint tutorials with major staff.

Within the past three years, this structure has changed, with the movement of the College into the more “generalist” Fine Art course. Conceptual development is emphasized over technical skills training. All processes and materials are supposedly possible in the major area, but technical depth is not available, or emphasised. Subsidiary courses remain, but in isolation and seemingly “redundant”.

Within the next year a major Curriculum Review will be held within our Institute. Course structures will be examined. We are currently in the process of modularising, but other substantial changes in the substance and methodology of the College are also in debate. Subsidiary courses are under threat—particularly those involving materials processes: Textiles, Glass, Metals, and Ceramics.

One idea some of us “materials” tutors (tired of “fighting our corner”) have considered is to propose a new and alternative “Fine Art: Construction” degree emphasising object making, and team-taught with all of our materials specialists, along with stone-carving specialists from the former Sculpture dept. We all agree that we continually work with many students who “think” through contact with materials, whose conceptual path is intimately linked with their technical processes. These students feel frustrated and out-of-place in the new generalist College ethos, and could find a home within this new environment of “making”. Does anyone know of any course like this in Europe or elsewhere, and how it is named? We want to avoid words like “Design” and “Craft” because these indicate function and industry and that is not what our course (with the exception of Ceramics) has ever emphasised.

I would greatly appreciate contact with textiles colleagues in similar 3rd Level Fine Art programmes. What is the status of Textiles within your institute? How is it respected and accepted within Fine Art? How is it delivered within the curriculum? How is this changing? I would appreciate your advice and information by email-phardesty@eircom.net . I will gather all responses and offer an overview in the next Newsletter. I see TEXERE as my (our) best forum in which to find support, to join forces in preserving the teaching of Textiles, here in Cork and throughout Europe. Many thanks!

Lisio Foundation News
Eva Basile
Florence, Italy

This year Lisio has offered a scholarship to 15 universities with fibre art and textile design programs. The selected candidate will be awarded full tuition to our 7 week Jacquard design course. Universities with textile programs are welcome to contact the Lisio Foundation in order to participate in future scholarship selections.

Our course calendar for 2008 to 2009 features five new brief courses: a Jacquard workshop on art weaving held by Australian designer and educator Jennifer Robertson, a course on 17th century tassel making held by Thessy Schoenholzer Nichols, a workshop on the creative possibilities offered by the traditional vertical loom conducted by textile artist Luciano Ghersi, a course on the history of 16th and 17th century damasks and finally, a two-week practical course on designing silk damask to be woven at one of Italy's foremost silk mills.

We would like to take this opportunity to announce a new initiative, of interest to textile educators and artists, who would like to enjoy a residency at the Lisio Foundation: we are considering proposals for practical workshops having a length of 2 days to 2 weeks on a range of textile subjects. In exchange for teaching time, the tutor will receive hospitality and use of Lisio's labs and archives for double the time period of the teaching commitment. For information please contact the address below.

Below you will find a programme of our textile courses for 2008.

All courses may be organised for individuals or groups and will be held in Italian and/or English

Further updates and detailed programs may be found on our web site:- www.fondazionelisio.org

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Calendar of Courses 2008

Fondazione LISIO Arte della Seta, Florence, Italy

RECOGNITION, ANALYSIS AND CATALOGUING OF TEXTILES

2 sessions of 63 and 56 hours respectively

Instructor: Eva Basile

I - Plain and weave-patterned cloth

November 3 - 13, 2008

Recognition of various fibres; use of the harness loom. Cataloguing criteria, the C.I.E.T.A. card. Basic weaves and their derivatives: plain weave and taffeta, twill, satin. Compound weaves, double-faced weaves and double cloth. Gauzes. Fabric with multiple warps and wefts. Plain, cut and uncut velvets.

II - Patterned cloth

March 2009 (attendance 1° session obligatory)

The loom for weaving figured cloth: drawloom and Jacquard loom. Weft effects: liseré, lancé and brocade. Lampases with one or two pattern wefts. Brocatelles. Samites and taqueté. Patterned velvets. Student learns a method for observing and analysing textiles structure, from simplest to most complex. Samples are provided for analysis.

RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE ITALIAN SILK DAMASKS (16TH - 18TH C.)

5 day, 25 hour course

October 6 - 10, 2008

Instructor: Anna Maria Colombo

Technical construction of damask: weaves, point paper design, loom and harness-tie. Analysis of decorative motifs and their chronological stylistic succession. Manufacturers. Uses: private, liturgical, military.

Examples from paintings. Examples from archives.

Two projects for the documentation of liturgical damasks within the areas of Novara and Bologna. Examples from Italian collections and museums. Examples from international collections.

RECOGNITION OF EMBROIDERY STITCHES AND TECHNIQUES

2 day, 16 hour course

December 5 - 6, 2008

Instructor: Thessy Schoenholzer Nichols

One-dimensional stitches in a continuous direction: running stitch and variants.

One-dimensional stitches: back-stitch and variants. Two-dimensional stitches. Combined stitches; stitches creating fabric. Stitches for embroidering sequins, beads and other material.

The various stitches will be demonstrated in practice and with diagrams. Teaching of correct terminology and of use of different stitches from various geographical regions.

LINEN TASSELS FROM THE 17TH CENTURY

2 day, 16 hour course

November 21 - 22, 2008

Instructor: Thessy Schoenholzer Nichols

The art of knotting and tassel making for 17th century linen tassels, worn mostly by men.

Power-point presentation on history of tassels such as: tapestry, tablecloth, collar and more. Analysis, annotation and tassel construction.

Students learn all necessary knots, their applications and variations, using very simple tools and different quality yarns and threads:-

the creation of variety of base shapes such as the heads and cords; creation cords and gimps; demonstration of assembly of all elements; individual work.

HISTORICAL DYEING TECHNIQUES

2 day, 14 hour seminar

October 17- 18, 2008

Instructor: Stefano Panconesi

Traditional dyestuffs: their characteristics, history and sources. Instruments and materials necessary for dyeing. Testing dyes derived from vegetable and animal sources on various fibres.

RECOGNITION, STUDY AND CATALOGUING OF HAND-MADE AND MACHINE-MADE LACE

Two 3-day sessions, 21 hours each

Instructor: Thessy Schoenholzer Nichols

I - Bobbin lace

Spring 2009

Bobbin lace: with braids of continuous thread; with continuous or additional tapes; *à pièces rapportées*; with different grounds; with continuous threads.

II - Needlepoint lace, laces of varied techniques, machine-made lace

November 27 - 29, 2008

Needle lace: various techniques. Lace making from picage to joining. Mixed laces: needle and bobbin. Hosiery frame/loom, for horizontal and vertical knits; Raschel, Bobbinet, Cornely, Bonnaz, Leaver, Barmen, hand-operated embroidery machine, Schiffli, Multihead; perforated, cut and chemical lace; lace fabrics, frame for Nottingham curtain lace. Other techniques: filet, macramé, tatting, crochet etc.

DESIGNING JACQUARD TEXTILES

7 week, 250 hours course

May 26 - July 11, 2008

Instructors: Eva Basile, Julie Holyoke

Different mountings and types of looms for figured textiles. Organization of figured textile design by hand and using textile CAD: sketch, point-paper, reading note, warp and weft drafts, simulation of fabric, take-up and float control. Sampling of projects on 5 Jacquard hand-loom and one computer piloted loom. Students will complete a portfolio of woven samples and data for each project.

SILK DAMASK: ONE WARP, INFINITE SOLUTIONS

2 week, 70 hour course

July 14 - 25, 2008

Instructors: Julie Holyoke, Eva Basile

Course participants design a project to be woven in damask at prestigious Italian silk mill. Study and analysis of historical and contemporary damasks, elaboration of projects in computer lab, use the Foundation's library and archives for research and inspiration. Students receive a finished sample of one meter; optional purchase of additional metres at production cost.

The course is open to designers, textile students and instructors with basic weaving knowledge. Experience with graphic software is required.

JACQUARD FLORAL WORKSHOP

1 week, 40 hour workshop

September 29 - October 3, 2008

instructor: Jennifer Robertson

Investigate the poetry of Flora in Jacquard textile design. Students elaborate images of their favourite Flora with textile design software. Using a computer piloted Jacquard loom, individual projects are woven in silk using damask, lancé and brocade techniques. Each student will use a computer with textile software and will weave by hand his or her own project, aided by the Anglo-Australian designer Jennifer Robertson.

FIGURED PANELS WOVEN ON COMPUTER OPERATED LOOM

1 week, 35 hour seminar

October 27 - 31, 2008

Instructors: Julie Holyoke, Eva Basile

Elaboration of designs using textile CAD. Production of woven textile sampler, with a variety of weft materials. Experimentation of woven effects. Further elaboration and definition of the final project. Weaving of panels.

Materials provided by the Lisio Foundation. Students may bring additional yarns for use as weft.

COMPUTER TEXTILE DESIGN

CAD for Jacquard fabrics

1 week, 35 hour course

October 20 - 24, 2008

Instructors: Julie Holyoke, Eva Basile

The design. Transfer to pointpaper. Definition of weaves, warp and weft drafts. Simulation of yarns. simulation of cloth, finishing effects. The harness-tie, electronic card, transfer of data to loom.

Applicants must be able to use graphic software.

KENTE WEAVING ON THE AFRICAN LOOM OF THE EWE PEOPLE

5 day, 35 hour course

June 16 - 20, 2008

Instructor: Luciano Gherzi

Theory and practical use of the African treadle loom. Analysis of the encyclopedic "icon of Klikor" and other traditional woven pieces.. Samples, pictures and original documents, supplied in collaboration with the Blakhud Museum of Klikor, Ghana. Each student will weave on an authentic Ewe pedal loom and experience the entire weaving cycle: warping and threading the loom; weaving with ground, pattern and brocading wefts. Experimentation of new motifs and materials.

CREATIVITY AND THE TRADITIONAL VERTICAL LOOM

5 day, 35 hour course

November 10 - 14, 2008

Instructor: Luciano Gherzi

'Art is not what we think it is; it is what occurs in the making, an acceptance of the accidents of improvisation. Creative weaving must therefore be inspired by the direct and loving exploration of the loom's frame, without recourse to an established itinerary or plan.' During the course, vertical rug looms will be set up and their creative potential used, with the guidance of the instructor, to explore 'organized textile coincidences' that grow out of the direct practice of weaving, without relying on preliminary drafts.

WEAVING WITHOUT A LOOM

2 day, 16 hour course

December 2008

Instructor: Angela Giordano

Ancient hand-weaving technique from South America, capable of producing splendid belts, borders and bands in single colours or with small decorative detail. The technique is not widely known but is simple and makes it possible to produce cloth without any equipment whatsoever.

SHIBORI TECHNIQUE FOR WEARABLE ART

2 day, 14 hour seminar

June 27 - 28, 2008

Instructor: Patricia Black

The seminar covers traditional *shibori* techniques for tie-dye, stitch-dye, fold-dye, pole wrap-dye, etc. as well as tri-dimensional effects, appropriate for creation of garments having great impact and artistic interest. Silk fabric used for all techniques.

WOVEN SHIBORI

3 day, 20 hour course

April 10- 12, 2008

Instructor: Eva Basile

The technique combines hand-weaving and resist dyeing. Three-dimensional variegated effects, typical of Japanese *shibori* produced by weaving. Fabric woven on Jacquard looms or 4-to-24 shaft looms.

The Workshop/Showroom/ Gallery of Julia Astreou-Christoforou, Cyprus

Patricia Christy and Julia Astreou

I met one of our new members, Julia Astreou- Christoforou, at the ETN conference in London last year and was impressed by the account of her workshop and work for textiles in Cyprus. In the latest ETN newsletter there is news about the Cyprus Textile Route which has been developed by Julia, so I thought you might find it interesting to learn more about her and her workshop.

She lives in Kaimakli, Nicosia and has a BA Hons in Art and Design specialising in textiles and fashion. Her workshop/showroom/gallery, housed in a 19th century traditional building, is a fine example of local architecture, in the centre of Kaimakli, next to Saint Barbara's Church. At the entrance there are three big arches overlooking an inner garden and there one can read information about the evolution of the house and its owners. The house has been passed down through several generations of the family, who each in their turn added extra rooms and archways. Her Great



Grandfather was the Muhtar or Mayor of Kaimakli and had such influence over the Turks that he could save somebody from hanging. He was a well known builder and built the Levention Municipal Museum of Nicosia. The house originally, known as Bonaparte House, later became known as Monoportis House, named after her other Great Grandfather, who was an important rich and just man.

Julia inherited the house from her sister Cleo, who was a civil engineer and who preserved the house in the old traditional ways. Before her the house was owned by their mother, Androniki, who was a teacher at the local elementary school for many years. At the beginning of the 20th century Androniki's sisters, Eleni and Anasta, had a loom in the house where they wove fine silk bed-covers, seersucker bed sheets, twill napkins and striped table covers. Androniki inherited the house from her other sister Chrystalleni who was a talented embroiderer and dressmaker with apprentices learning dressmaking techniques and helping her to create the latest trends in fashion.

Julia's deep knowledge and appreciation of Cypriot textiles has played an important role in the establishment of the workshop. She has participated in scientific seminars and has given lectures on Cypriot embroidery and woven fabrics. She has also written a number of small publications on these subjects.

Her love for the old and traditional together with her talent for art and design enabled her to establish her workshop/showroom/gallery. Here the visitor can find hand-woven contemporary articles, woven, to Julia's designs, on Cypriot traditional looms which can be seen working in the "dihoro" (big room with a central arch). Her exclusive designs are inspired by traditional motifs and are made by traditional techniques. She has two or three weavers making special orders and a small stock of coded items, and she is always looking for more weavers. The articles on display include cushion



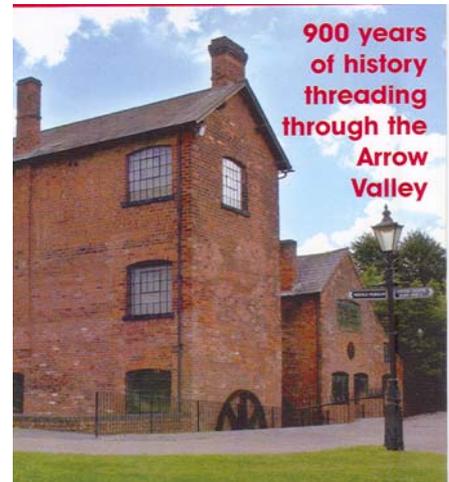
covers, table linen, lampshades, window blinds, and woven wall hangings. In some the natural colour of the materials such as string, plastic, glass and copper has been used whilst in others the choice of colours and quality of threads is based on the landscape. The shining blue sea and the wet pebbles in the sun become alive with the use of metallic threads.

She has also produced a small collection of bracelets and necklaces made with shiny copper and black thread. Julia made a series of fine transparent shawls inspired by Queen Arete's costume which she made for the production of "the Odyssey" in 1997. They are based on drawings depicting the characters of "the Odyssey" from the ceramics of the 5th century BC. There are also paintings by Julia with themes such as nudes, landscapes and beach scenes made using acrylic paints, charcoal and crayons worked on wet paper, which makes the result look fluid and alive. She also uses weaving as a form of expression for making wall hangings which have represented Cyprus in International Tapestry Contests.

At the moment Julia is not doing any workshops or teaching but occasionally has students from secondary schools up to University level visiting the workshop. They are interested in the historical building as well as the work done on the traditional looms etc. and she gives them a talk whilst they are being shown around. She also cooperates with Museums, the University of Cyprus and the Cyprus Tourism Organisation etc. and gives lectures in conferences and seminars. This year she will be giving a talk at the Cyprological Conference, organised by the Society of Cyprus Studies, founder of the Cyprus Folk Art Museum, about a valuable collection of Cypriot textiles. She is also the central contact person for the Cyprus Textiles Route.

Forge Mill Needle Museum Redditch
Patricia Christy
England

The Forge Needle Museum is situated on the outskirts of Redditch adjacent to a country park, where we had a very pleasant walk whilst waiting for the museum to open at 11.00 a.m. During the walk we also discovered the remains of Bordesley Abbey, a medieval Cistercian Abbey, which was destroyed by Henry VIII. During excavations they discovered the earliest metal working mill to be found in this country. You can explore the remains of the Abbey accompanied by Brother Nicholas in the audio tour of the site. So there is plenty to do and see if you arrive at the Museum early, if the weather is fine.



The Museum, which was opened by the Queen in 1983, tells the fascinating and sometimes gruesome story of needle making since the early 19th century until the 1950's. Redditch was the main manufacturing centre of needles for the whole world and if you have an old packet of needles in your sewing box it is possible that they were made there. There were several needle making factories in the area such as Milwards, John James and Octopus, each one making different types of needles or doing a particular process. The Forge Mill, which is a listed building, houses the original water powered machinery and specialised in needle polishing. The scouring mill there is the only one of its kind remaining in the world. This tedious process of polishing needles created an atmosphere of metal dust resulting in the early deaths of most of the workers. Few lived beyond the age of 40 years. The working area has been re-created with a lot of the original machinery and photographs of the people at work. There are also posters showing the rules and regulations which the workers had to abide by, which are interesting social documents.

Upstairs there is an exhibition of the many types of needles which were manufactured in the area, not only sewing needles of all sizes, but also knitting needles, a wide variety of surgical needles, some of which were extremely fine, fishing hooks and gramophone needles. There are beautiful display cases with attractively arranged needles which were sent to major industrial exhibitions. The displays of Victorian needle cases and sewing equipment cases were very beautiful, some of them of them were embroidered or beaded, others made from precious metals and stones.



An extra bonus is the exhibition area on the top floor where a range of textile exhibitions are held throughout the year. It is home to the Charles Henry Foyle Trust which organises a programme of textile competitions each year for both adults and local schools. This year's exhibitions have included an exhibition of animated sculpture, Vintage Quilts from Britain and America in the 19th century, textile art from the Forge Mill Embroidery Group, and two exhibitions of 'Out of the Blue'. These last two exhibitions are of creative textiles entered for the Charles Henry Foyle Awards, which you may have read about in your embroidery magazines. The first exhibition was for the entries from local schools, some of which were still displayed when we visited. The second exhibition, held from August to October is the Stitched Textile Award for new and promising textile artists. The aim of the award is to fund either educational travel or

further advanced study. The winner of the £2000 award had made an intriguing multilayered screen using red and blue yarns and bubble wrap. Each entrant also submitted their sketchbooks and that of the winner was a most interesting research about how bubble wrap could be used as a textile, from using the punched out bubbles as sequins to making various sized beads with it.

The Visitor Centre is a converted barn which houses an interesting exhibition about the abbey with some of the items excavated from it, including a skeleton. Of course there is a shop selling needles and other sewing goods and equipment, as well as other souvenirs, though sadly no interesting needle cases. In another section there is a studio for textile and art workshops and the Forge Mill Embroidery Group were busily sewing whilst we were there. Unfortunately there is no café and we were gasping for a cup of tea after our long tour. We were told that the nearest café is at the supermarket 5 minutes away! So I suggest that you take your own refreshments if you go there, as there is a picnic area in the gardens. My husband was rather dubious about visiting the museum as he didn't think a needle museum sounded very interesting, however he thoroughly enjoyed the visit. For opening times of the museum see the website www.redditch.whub.org.uk/forge-mill

The Work of a Textile/Mixed Media Artist

**Mary Kroetsch
Toronto Canada**

I have experimented with a lot of different mediums, and with each experiment I learn new ways of merging all types of fibre together.

I have a very strong passion for beads and, as such, each piece of art I work on incorporates their sparkle. I get a lot of pleasure out of using needle and thread to embellish items containing a variety of fibre elements.



I have a fascination with history and in particular, historical recordings that tell stories. In 2004 I participated in an exhibit in the UK where artists depicted their versions of Pre-historic Rock Carvings; ancient writings that record the events of past life times. I often use samples of ancient graffiti in my work. It's not just the graphic simplicity that inspires me, but the story being told, or rather the story we think is being told by a people no longer able to voice their own words.

I enjoy the building process of my work best of all. Constantly challenging myself, I endeavor to enlighten people with unique, two and three dimensional art forms created with textiles, found objects, and all types of organic and man-made fibres.

But my work also includes current events of the present and the need to quietly voice my belief in practicing global tolerance. For me the past and the present are close cousins. Many of the events today can be found mirroring events of the past and the stories this merging can create are shown in my art.

In my work I strive for 3 things:

1. **A Story is Being Told** • often the words accompany the art.
2. **A Point of Reference** • something the viewer easily recognizes.
3. **Conceptual Representation** • to make the viewer think, discuss and draw their own conclusions.

Peace Cloth to Silence Contemporary War

Mary Kroetsch

This is the title given to my latest work in progress which is the signature piece for an exhibition entitled Bend, Fold, Manipulate.

As a Maker I am faced as other Artist's who incorporate fibre and textile techniques in their work with a limited number of commercial venues where our works can be properly introduced to Collectors and the Public at Large as an Art Investment Option. I think the difficulty stems from the age old question is our work fine art, or fine craft. I really don't worry too much about how the question is answered by viewers and critics, I only care that people get a chance to see the work in a setting that at least allows them to pose the question.

This has become my quest. Not to just create the work I enjoy giving birth to, but to scout out and find other Artists whose work compliments mine and are willing to step through some interesting venue doorways.

This current project of mine came when a gallery representing my work offered me a chance to produce an exhibition in partnership with them. ACA Gallery (<http://www.acagallery.com>) was founded in June 2004 by Carol Mark to create an incubator for art and social change. She is involved in humanitarian grassroots projects locally and globally and has seen at first hand how “love in action” can change lives for the better. From establishing a medical clinic in Afghanistan, to performing medical aid in the Yucatan, and helping build communities on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation; she recognizes that everyone has the power to effectively create change.

So taking her lead I wrote the following Curatorial Statement and it is this statement that is currently challenging Artists to join their voices and their art with mine for two weeks this coming May.

Bend - Turn in a New Direction

Fold - Lay Together and Interlace

Manipulate – Handle and Manage

The world as it is and what it might become considers the problems of our planet and forecasts a cataclysmic conclusion.

Nations invading Nations; Battles amongst Spiritual Beliefs vie for position of who is right and who is wrong; Industry preying upon Nature and weakening her beyond repair; leaving in the wake of tomorrow a ravaged landscape.

In this end however, we all imagine a new and hopeful beginning. A future built on possibilities where all life coexists on a non-hierarchical plane.

In this exhibition, artists using textile techniques in their work will suggest the possible steps in a plan for how we, today, can be coaxed into turning in a new direction so that tomorrow we learn to lay together and interlace our freedoms to handle and manage and live in global peace.



As the signature piece for the exhibition, **Peace Cloth to Silence Contemporary War** correlates to the White Flag of Truce which is an internationally recognized protective sign of truce or ceasefire, and request for negotiation. It is also used to symbolize surrender, since it is often the weaker military party which requests negotiation. A white flag signifies to all that an approaching negotiator is unarmed, with an intention to surrender or a desire to communicate. Persons carrying or waving a white flag are not to be fired upon, nor are they allowed to open fire. The use of the flag to surrender is included in the Geneva Conventions.

The improper use of a white flag is forbidden by the rules of war and constitutes a war crime of perfidy. There have been numerous reported cases of such behavior in conflicts, such as fighters using white flags as a ruse to approach and attack enemies, or killings of fighters attempting to surrender by carrying white flags.

Many times since the weaker party is in a decrepit state, a white flag would be fashioned out of anything readily available, like a t-shirt or handkerchief. The most common way of making a white flag is to obtain a pole and tie two corners of a sheet of cloth to the top of the pole and somewhere in the middle.

The first mention of the usage of white flags to surrender is made during the Eastern Han dynasty (A.D 25–220). In the Roman Empire, the historian Cornelius Tacitus mentions a white flag of surrender in A.D. 109.

Before that time, Roman armies would surrender by holding their shields above their heads. The usage of the white flag has since spread worldwide.

I see global peace as a truce. A cease fire. Stop the madness and lay down your weapons. And when this finally happens, and it will, all nations will be able to unite under one flag of pride without losing site of individual cultures, religious beliefs, personal philosophies, or their individual uniqueness. But we will share a mutual respect for all of humanity to exist and thrive in peace.

I present **Peace Cloth to Silence Contemporary War** not as a Flag of Truce for one nation giving up their freedoms to another, a symbolic sign of defeat and despair, but a symbolic sign of a world truly united in sharing and caring for all Earth has to offer.

The flag is comprised of 98 10” X 8” panels with the words May Peace Prevail on Earth in 98 languages representing 170 nations.

**Craftopolis –
The Creative Learning Environment
Barbro Sjöberg
Vasa, Finland**

Last spring Mia Porko-Hudd and I, Barbro Sjöberg, were asked to evaluate and give feedback on a e-learning environment called e-Craft Idea Tutor (e-CIT). E-CIT is a Leonardo da Vinci (EU) pilot project and it aims to develop and test the content of a creative e-learning environment. The target groups of the project are students and teachers in vocational institutes of the handicraft sector in the EU area. e-CIT concentrates on such handicraft and design areas which are based on manual skills and aim to produce goods for customer markets, e.g. textile and wood. Western Finland Design Centre MUOVA is a coordinator of the e-CIT project and the whole project group consists of nine partners from different parts of Europe, (Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Portugal and Slovenia), representing different levels of education.

We took the challenge and got to know the e-learning environment. The learning environment contains of 53 tasks, divided into three levels of difficulty, which we were supposed to evaluate. From these levels the teacher is able to select the levels and tasks most suitable for the class. The first level relates to practicing basic skills (entrepreneurship, product development, etc.), while at the second level, students start to combine the bits of information they have acquired. The third level is the most demanding, including holistic problem detecting and –solving. The third level requires the application of skills obtained on both of the preceding levels.

The creative learning environment guides students to creativity and to the use of new problem-oriented views to find, develop and design more consumer-oriented products. The learning environment is presented in the form of a story: the learning takes place in a city called **Craftopolis**, and each task itself is a story taking place in the city. In the future it will also be easy to add elements and new stories to the city-metaphor, the city lives all the time, it can grow and become bigger. This is how the learning environment answers to the rising challenges of the modern story-telling society. All the tasks take place in visual scenes in Craftopolis. The visual element decreases the formal element of learning for the students, helping memory retention and opening minds to creativity.

The structure of the environment is flexible and versatile. The use of the environment is not limited to a certain didactic model, but can be tailored to the didactic system of the country or of a specific class. Because it is virtual, the learning environment opens new doors to how and where learning can take place.

After having evaluated the e-CIT learning environment we got an invitation to take part in the Final Conference in Paris in September 2007 where the Project Leonardo da Vinci e-Craft Idea Tutor was published. Today there are two versions of the learning environment available. A free-to-use version containing all the material necessary for teaching. There are a number of tasks, plus a gallery and other areas of the learning environment to use. The free version does not provide any services and does therefore not store any of the students work. The service-providing version stores all the phases of the tasks. The service-providing version is usable against a small licensing fee each year. Those who would like more information or who wish to use the Craftopolis learning environment , please contact tanja.oraviita@taik.fi. More information can also be found at <http://www.muova.fi/e-cit>

Crocheting, is it a Forgotten Art?

Margret Biermann

Germany

If you ask people if they are able to do crochet work, the most usual answer is: “I have learned it in Primary school, but I have forgotten how to do it.” Crochet seems to be old fashioned, the items which are done in this technique, are often useless e.g. ovengloves, which you can buy more cheaply and in more suitable materials, small tablecloths and so on. Formerly string bags were crocheted but today we use bags and baskets made of other materials and made by other techniques.

On the other hand crochet is a traditional textile technique which is disappearing if nobody is able to do it. Is it worth while teaching this textile technique these days? Do our children want to learn it?

I asked my student teachers (not all of them were able to crochet) and we decided to do it. They wanted to try it first themselves and perhaps later with pupils.

By chance one of the students in the past had lessons with a female textile artist, who worked at the University of Cologne, and the main subjects of this artist’s work are crocheted. The name of the artist is **Patricia Waller**. We started an Internet research and found many pages with crocheting and the website of Patricia Waller. She is making crocheted art objects with subjects such as “Crossing Wonderland, Twins, Rabbits, Accidents, Handy cap, How to Kill your First Love, Food Art” and others. All the things are made of coloured wool, wonderful, funny, astonishing, making people smile – even with serious subjects.

(Please contact *Google* or another search engine and you will find many pictures of Patricia Waller`s works)

The end of the story: In our lesson we crocheted cups and plates, a sugar pot and jug, sauce-pan and candles for a laid table –and we had much fun while working. Anyway: until now the students have not tried crocheting with the pupils, they think it is too complicated.....!!

Editors note.

Have you taught crochet to your pupils? If so let us hear about it. I used to teach knitting and crochet in school and many children enjoyed it though not all.

In England there is a Knitting and Crochet Guild who publish educational material, videos and leaflets, on knitting and crochet for schools. They produce patterns which are fun for children. Recently there has been a revival of teaching knitting in English schools but maybe not crochet. There is also a Knitting Guild in America. Details of these can be found on the internet.

Breaking the Mode

Renata Pompas

Milan, Italy

Breaking the Mode is the title of a travelling exhibition from the LACMA, which has arrived in Italy at Palazzo Strozzi (Florence), with curation (in Italy) by Maria Luisa Frisa, and is preparing to be transferred to the IMoA.

As the title states, the exhibition takes a fresh look at the most important and spectacular examples of the contemporary fashion trend that broke with tradition from the 80's onwards, subverting the canons of form, proportion and style. Like the other languages of post-modernity, fashion has reinvented its canons: it has looked at the forms of the past, taken them to pieces and then put them back together again at random, with new aesthetic results and meanings, producing oxymorons (expressing two concepts with opposing meanings at the same time) and addressing the aesthetics of that which is conventionally considered ugly. As Umberto Eco writes "ugliness is the absence of form, asymmetry, disharmony, disfigurement or deformation".



The 200 pieces selected from the Museum's collection present the most innovative experiments in this direction by avant-garde designers, dividing them into 4 thematic areas: construction, form, concept and materials. In the section on *construction* are the garments based on asymmetry and clashes with traditional rules of balance and taste. In the section dedicated to *form*, a new relationship between clothing and the body is highlighted, at times denying the body, at times hiding it or transforming it. The section focusing on *concept* calls our attention to the relationship between the history of fashion, its reassessment and reinterpretation. Lastly, in the section set aside for *materials*, we see the outer shell at its most experimental in terms of material and decoration.

Vivienne Westwood's deliberately unbalanced constructions, Martin Margiela's "anti-fashion" (see left), which mixes different techniques presenting unfinished garments and Dolce & Gabbana's audacious lingerie to be worn outside clothes, made up an explosive avant-garde and have now become part of the common vocabulary of fashion.

In the 80's, when Japanese designers turned the very criteria that defined fashion garments on their heads, with their interpretation of western fashion through oriental tradition, they threw the austere Parisian catwalks into turmoil. Since then, fashion and art have found more than one point of contact: Rei Kawakubo's garments, with their protuberances and bulges scattered around to create an abstract sculpture with no reference to the shape of the body, express similar research to the work carried out on her own body by French artist Orlan. This artist has undergone a series of surgical operations to insert bumps into her forehead and create other physical alterations that have led her performances to be defined as "post-human art".

Expressing a similar concept to that of the artistic performance are garments presented in fashion shows transformed into flamboyant conceptual performances by Jean Paul Gaultier, John Galliano and Alexander McQueen, who have invented a new kind of opulence.



Junja Watanabe



Franco Moschino

Lastly, one interesting aspect is the research into materials: from the tight-fitting silk jersey material printed with bold colours, which makes up a kind of second skin, by Emilio Pucci, and the fabrics that designers have studied with Japan's Nuno Corporation – like the mulberry paper made by hand for Issey Miyake and the frayed denim for Junya Watanabe – to Antonio Marras' fabric mosaics punctuated with stitching and beads and Krizia's heat-set pleats in silver cellulose acetate.



Krizia

With so much serious and conceptual experimentation, Franco Moschino's ironic smile brings some light relief with his "Dinner jacket", as he pokes fun at Chanel's jewelled-clasps, substituting them, as the name of the suit suggests, with a set of golden cutlery.

TEXERE

*Textiles Education and Research in Europe
A Textiles Education Working Group within ETN*

Information Survey Form relating to Members of TEXERE

1. Personal Information of Member of TEXERE

PHOTO 4 x 4

Name:

Surname:

2. CONTACT INFORMATION

Country:

Address:

Telephone no.:

Fax:

E-mail:

3. Areas of interest, details where appropriate

- Textile and fashion design education and training.

- Textiles, fashion and costume history.

- Cultural exchanges with other countries.

- Other interests

4. Educational institution to which you belong

Institution name:

Type of institution:

Address:

Country:

Duration of current teaching post :

Name of subject taught:

Position:

Number of hours per week, for number of months and total course length:

Purpose and objectives of course relating to textiles-fashion: *Please tick:-*

- To teach an understanding of historical and modern textile manufacture.
- To provide fundamental skills for undertaking a career in textile design.
- To develop creative qualities and planning ability.
- Other purposes and objectives

Qualification awarded by the school:

Budget:

Who does the course target?

What is the course philosophy and in what area of education does the course fall?

Attachment: Curriculum Vitae

In a second phase, once we have the forms, we will send out a newsletter, with a description of interesting initiatives or projects that members are undertaking and respective photographs.

