



ISSUE 21

AUGUST 2019

# *the shuttle*

*devon weavers workshop*  
[www.devonweaversworkshop.org](http://www.devonweaversworkshop.org)

# DWW 2018 - 19

*A taste of what we got up to!*



*Setting up at Birdwood House 2018*



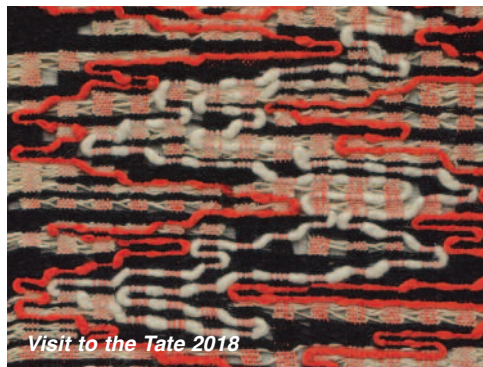
*Spring Clean at DWW 2019*



*Harbour House 2019*



*Laura Thomas Course 2019*



*Visit to the Tate 2018*



*Contemporary Craft Festival 2019*

# DIARY DATES

## 2019/20

### MEETINGS

#### BLACKJACK 31

Monday 23 September  
at 10.30am

#### COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 9 October  
at 10.30am

#### AGM 2019

Saturday 23 November  
at 12 noon

### EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

#### BIRDWOOD HOUSE 2019

Monday 2 to Saturday  
7 December

#### CONTEMPORARY CRAFT FESTIVAL 2020

Friday 5 - Sunday - 7 June

### BEGINNERS COURSES

*For further details or to book a place on a beginners courses contact Jenny Rolfe via the website. Offers of help with these courses are always much appreciated.*

#### AUTUMN 2019

Tutor - JENNY ROLFE  
28 September -  
3 October

*£195 (includes materials)*

#### SPRING 2020

Tutor - JENNY ROLFE  
15/16 Feb, 22/23 Feb &  
29 Feb/1 March

*£195 (includes materials)*

### COURSES 2020

*For further details or to book a place on a general weaving course please contact Jill Davies via the website*

#### RUG WEAVING

Tutor - JASON COLLINGWOOD  
1 - 4 November 2019  
*(Course full)*

#### SUMMER & WINTER

Tutor - MIRJA WOOLLARD  
18 & 19 January 2020

*For new weavers £60  
(members only)*

#### BROCADE

Tutor - LAURA THOMAS  
16 & 17 May 2020  
*non-members £185  
associate members £166  
full members/trustees £150*

#### WEAVING WITH MARGO

*(Course content to be confirmed)*

Tutor - MARGO SELBY  
11 - 13 July 2020  
15 - 17 July 2020  
*non-members £295  
associate members £265  
full members/trustees £240*

#### RUG WEAVING TECHNIQUES

Tutor - VEINIKA VÄSTRIK  
23 - 25 October 2020  
*non-members £245  
associate members £220  
full members/trustees £198*



# ANNI ALBERS Exhibition

November 2018



The exhibition about and including works by Anni Albers at the Tate Modern was much trailed in advance. I first noticed it over a year before. So, it was with a lot of emotional build up that I arrived at the gallery back in November to meet up with other members of the Workshop to view it.

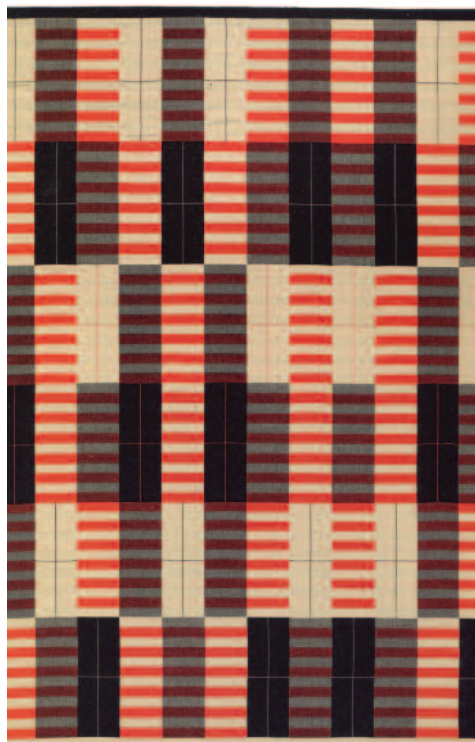
There was much talk about it being 'a first' for the Tate, mounting an exhibition about what is considered by some to be a 'craft' and treating the work as 'art'. This led to a rather grudging review in *Vav*, and prepared me to question my expectations when I came face to face with the work.

Enough! First off, we heard a lecture on Anni, her time at the Bauhaus and then at Black Mountain College and New Haven in the US.

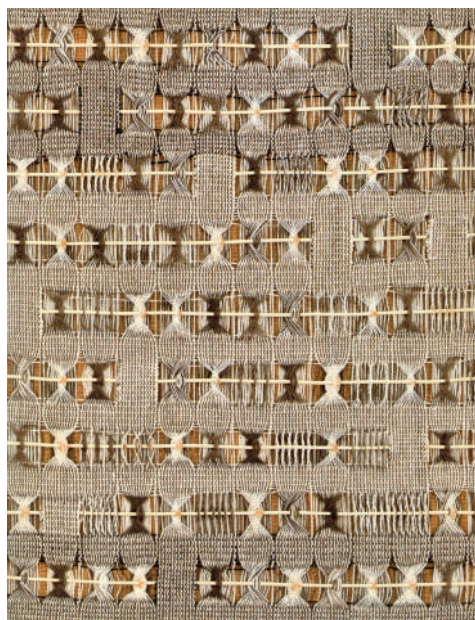
This very much set the context for what we were to see; and helped me understand how the exhibition had been curated and presented. We saw many of her original pieces, some of her designs woven by her friend and associate Gunta Stölzl and masses of paper designs and notes developing her ideas. Also her jewellery using everyday items and the printing that she did later in her life.

Stories of why Anni started to weave at the Bauhaus are well documented; that it was not her first choice but became a discipline that she explored and developed; indeed, bringing it from its older craft traditions to modern art. She also saw weaving as a process that was the basis for design.

Anni was very innovative in her use of materials.



Left: *Pasture* 1958. Above: *Orange, Black and White* 1926/7. Below: *Variations on a Theme* 1958



She incorporated materials such as rayon and cellophane alongside wool and linen. I admired her diploma piece, a soundproof, light reflective fabric for an auditorium in Bernau, Germany.

She ranged from pieces for manufacture to specific art works, her famous asymmetrical geometric pieces and later her 'pictorial weavings'. The most ambitious were *Six Prayers* woven in response to an invitation by the Jewish Museum, New York to create a tapestry in memory of the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust. Woven in cotton, linen and silver thread, include floats to symbolise writing. All six together at the Tate, stunning!

Her technical ability and the range of her experimentation was thrilling. I was fascinated to see in many pieces her limited use of colour and her reliance on texture, using knots, and structures such as leno within double cloth as a focal feature rather than an overall piece. *La Luz* was woven in a range of muted colour linens with a cross in the middle which only stood out in all its golden glory when you viewed it from the side. *South of the Border* contradicted this in its vibrant pinks, oranges, yellow and blues woven in a variety of techniques which gave it an added depth and interest.

I was surprised that despite her technical mastery and level of productivity, also the sheer volume of material on display; but this was not a daunting exhibition. I was very inspired and came away with lots of ideas. Not least her interest in using pile and plain weave. The *Vicuna Rugs I & II* were favourites of mine.

In my view Anni Albers deserves her treatment as a 'modernist artist'. Although hanging her work so that weavers set off the alarms every time they got too close to a piece as they examined how it is woven was an amusing downside, but maybe a headache for the Tate!

Thank you Jacqueline for making the arrangements so that we could visit this wonderful exhibition and listen to the lecture - all as a group from DWW.

Anne Bulleid

# WORKING FOR THE WORKSHOP

When I run the Beginners courses or take part in one of the courses run by outside tutors I'm regularly told that we are a pretty unique organisation. When I ask what is meant, the thing that everyone picks up on is the sense that we run as a co-operative group that works by everyone pitching in where they can. One point in particular, which really surprises some visitors, is that everyone is working for free.

We sometimes forget to pat ourselves on the back for this, probably because it just seems the right way to go about things, but I certainly appreciate what everyone does to help me with the Beginners Courses. I truly believe that the course would not be as successful as it is without the input of lots of different members of the workshop. It is the same with the exhibitions that we put on - Committee members willingly do a lot of the organisation, but wider input from the membership helps a lot - and keeps us all motivated.

Everyone has very busy lives and sometimes it's not easy to match up the work and the people available to do it. I thought I'd remind everyone of the busy times, how people can help and, not least, the fun we can have doing it.

The amount you do doesn't matter, sometimes just a few hours make a big difference.

## *What could you do?*

- Keep space in your diary to help at one of the exhibition stands. If enough of us sign up it makes a huge difference. Talking to people about our work is fun! You meet all kinds of people and get told all kinds of stories. Sometimes there are lots of sales, sometime very few, but it is one of the best ways to get our name out in the local community and tell people about our craft. There's always at least two of us there, so if you are unfamiliar with being on the other side of the sales counter your partner will help. It doesn't take long to learn. This year we had exhibition space at Kingsbridge, Bovey Tracey and Totnes, so pick one that is near you.
- Help in the children's tent at Bovey Craft Fair. It's not for the faint hearted, you don't get much time to stop, but the kids are so enthusiastic it's great to see. And who knows what interest you may spark and where it might take them?
- Come in for half a day or a day to help on a Beginners Course. All levels of ability needed; I won't ask you to mend a broken thread if you've

*Below: Helping in the Children's Tent at the Contemporary Craft Festival*



only just started, but often the most important person there is the one who keeps us all supplied with tea! The moment you get a few weavers together you are bound to learn something new or find some inspiration, so it's not just the beginners who are learning.

- If you are coming in to another course, maybe you can give an extra hour or so in the Workshop to help get everything ready or to help inexperienced weavers setting up their looms?
- If meeting the public is not your thing, remember that all exhibitions and courses need time to set up and take down. The Committee often organises this between themselves, but if it's something you would be interested in just let one of us know. We also need people to help publicise the exhibitions locally, which might just be putting a few leaflets in your local Library, but is really helpful.

- We are always looking out for new ideas. If you have a project that you'd like to do that you think might benefit us, or something that you think we could do better, let us know. You may be asked to run it, though!

- We often have stand alone events, like the recent visit to the Annie Albers exhibition or the Christmas lunch. Again, they have usually been organised by a committee member, but if you would enjoy helping on something like this, let us know.

- Maybe you have a particular expertise you would like to share with everyone at a Members Day. It might be an hour's talk about something you have done or a small demonstration of a technique.

Thank you to everyone who makes this place work. We really are part of something to be proud of!

Jenny Rolfe



*Above: The Big DWW Spring Clean. This was a joint effort in January to get the shelves of yarn, and all nooks and crannies, cleaned and sorted. Thanks go to Anne B, Kay, Jill D, Jacqueline J, Janet, Gail & Chris for their hard work (and Sareela, who intended to come but was off sick!).*

# WHITE ON WHITE

26 - 29 April 2019

Thirteen weavers attended this Workshop course of three days with Laura at Devon Weavers Workshop and everyone agreed how enjoyable the whole experience was. Laura is an experienced, award-winning woven textile artist and designer specialising in producing striking textiles for contemporary spaces. She has a first class degree from Birmingham City University, an MA from the Royal College of Art and two research fellowships.

The objective on this course was to use only white shades of colour so we could concentrate purely on texture, yarn and structure during weaving and not be distracted by any colour combinations, which can sometimes become overwhelming.

We experimented with cottons, silks, lambs-wool, linens, paper, metal and nylon yarns. Some yarns were thick and some were elastic and some were 25% steel. A couple of favourites were a yarn that looked as if it had been painted with silver leaf and a beautifully soft mohair and silk yarn.

Laura is enthusiastic about trying things out, encouraging you to be courageous, not afraid to make mistakes, which can lead to new learning and approaches to your weaving. The course was challenging, innovative, encouraging, exciting and motivational.

The photographs show some of the interesting results and the levels of concentration involved; by the end of the third day we were all shattered but happy with a good sense of achievement and inspiration.

To find out more about Laura and her work have a look at her website [www.laurathomas.co.uk](http://www.laurathomas.co.uk) or follow her updates on her facebook page 'Laura Thomas'.



*Lisa Hocking*

*Photos: Mary Hildyard*

# BEGINNINGS OF MY HANDWEAVING STORY

I have always had a love of textiles which began in the 1970s when my first son was six months old. My darling Gran lent me £100 to buy a knitting machine. Within a year I was selling to clients around the UK, America and Germany and teaching too. This chapter of my life came to an abrupt end when my Dad asked me to work for him. Something had to give!

When I retired in 2014, I researched the crafts of spinning and weaving and discovered the Devon Guild of Weavers, Spinners & Dyers which I decided to visit that September and there I saw advertised the Devon Weavers Workshop Exhibition at Birdwood House in Totnes. It was there that I met Kay and Sareela and they sat me down at a Louët Kombo 8 Shaft table loom. I looked at it longingly and thought we had room for that size loom! Immediately I signed up for the DWW Beginners Course in February 2015 with Jenny Rolfe. Loved it. Steve took me all over England visiting different wool and craft fairs and by November 2015 Steve had purchased a Louët David 8 shaft Floor Loom for me. In 2016 I lost the love of my life suddenly. Weaving was difficult due to complete loss of concentration, but I had wonderful support not only from my family but my spinning and weaving friends I had made in the past year.

I've had wonderful opportunities of attending the Devon Weavers Workshop with amazing world class master Weavers, Lotte Dalgaard, Nancy Arthur Hoskins, Marian Stubenitsky and Margo Selby. At Summer School 2017 I took Weaving Textiles that Shape themselves by Ann Richards. Weaving and Spinning has opened up a whole new world for me.

2018 ended with my son announcing to me in November that he had set a date. I asked what for - my wedding December 22nd! So I put my mind to designing a silk wrap to be my wedding wrap.

The pattern draft was 8 Shaft No. 70110 from Handweaving.net and the yarn 100% Silk Splendour from my friend Jean Field of [www.fleecewitch.co.uk](http://www.fleecewitch.co.uk). Woven at 24 epi/24 ppi. 26" wide x 120" long. I wanted it to come to the length of my dress when draped around my shoulders. The dress is deep purple satin with black patent shoes and bag and a friend lent me a black feathered fascinator.

*Jacqueline Hitchen*



# CONTEMPORARY CRAFT FESTIVAL 2019



The Workshop once again had the privilege of taking part in this wonderful event. Our spot in the Children's Tent was its usual success, with six Workshop looms in almost constant use. Our thanks go to those of you who were so generous with their time in helping to steward for us. A special thanks is also due to Sareela who, single-handedly this year, sorted and posted over 200 children's woven samples to them. We receive a great deal of heart-warming feedback about this every year - it is certainly worth the effort, the children really value receiving them.

The DWW stand achieved sales of over £1650 (our best ever at CCF), despite some very difficult weather conditions, especially on the final day. We have agreed to take part again next year - 5 to 8 June 2020, please make a note in your diaries!



# HARBOUR HOUSE Exhibition

## 23 - 29 May 2019



Devon Weavers Workshop held an exhibition of members' work in Harbour House, Kingsbridge from 23 to 29 May. This is a fabulous large, light and airy space and is ideal for displaying larger pieces of work such as rugs as it offers plenty of height.

The work of almost thirty members contributed to this exhibition and the space was soon filled

with a magnificent display of colourful weavings of all kinds; from earrings containing the smallest piece of delicately woven fabric, scarves, runners, blankets and cushions to large rugs, some laid on the floor. During each day there were wonderful demonstrations of spinning and a 'Mighty Wolf' loom enabled the visitors to see weaving in action. This was our second visit to Harbour House and although

footfall and sales were lower than we hoped for, we were pleased with the positive comments we received from the many visitors we had.

DWW thanks everyone involved with the exhibition – from all those who produced work to sell; who gave up their time to steward; to spin; to 'set up and take down' and the many who worked 'behind the scenes' ensuring it all came together!



*Colleen Pope*

# NEWS from LIZ WILLIAMS.....

I am still weaving - a very small amount!

I used the gamp (below) to demonstrate weaving at our monthly village coffee morning. Some people had a go, but mostly they were daunted by the complexity of it! I'm going to make it into a couple of bags for two of Owen's granddaughters.

The scarf is merino and possum that we bought in New Zealand this time last year. Very soft. Owen thought he'd use it as clerical stole but I told him that people would always be teasing him about the chilliness of the church. He wouldn't let me wash it so it's ended up a bit weft faced. It's an extended twill and I think it needed a slightly looser sett. Anyway Owen likes it and it's great on chilly days!

As far as being a member of a group, to my great regret I haven't joined one yet. There's a Guild at Crickhowell, about 20 miles away, that I want to get to but somehow life seems to take over.

Life is full of aspirations!

Love to you all, Liz



# BUCKFASTLEIGH WOOL GATHERING

Buckfastleigh is an old wool town and the Wool Gathering was started in 2016 to celebrate that history and the workers associated with it. This twice-yearly event celebrates and promotes British wool and the sheep breeders, artisans, makers and those wanting to preserve traditional skills, who work with it.

On 31 March, as part of the Wool Gathering, Anne Bulleid and I set up two looms to demonstrate weaving and promote the workshop. The hall was buzzing with activity – fleece and yarn sales, spinners, felters, dyers, knitters, designer makers; buying and selling, sharing ideas, demonstrating skills; and downstairs a pop-up café serving delicious food.

We were kept busy with a constant flow of people eager to 'have a go' as well as talking about the workshop and our courses for beginners. It was an enjoyable day meeting others with similar interests.

The next Wool Gathering will be on Sunday 13 October 2019 at Buckfastleigh Town Hall. It promises to be a bigger event promoting British fibres, primarily wool, but also hemp, ethical silk, nettle, etc. As well as stalls selling fleeces,

tops, yarns and woollen goods there will be demonstrations, walk-in workshops, talks, a knit-athon, and pop-up café. Opening times are 10 till 4 and entry is by donation.

More details for those of you on Facebook can be found at <https://en-gb.facebook.com/events/buckfastleigh-town-hall-and-institute/buckfastleigh-wool-gathering/> 269355253735149/

Jill Davies



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## Chris's Waistcoat - The recipe

### WARP

Denim cotton on cones, 6 assorted colours for stripes.

18 epi / 324 ends

Length required for size of waistcoat

### WEFT

Use one colour of the denim

*The Weavers Book of 8 shaft Patterns*, page 90 329-1

Paper pattern required to shape the fabric i.e. shoulder, neckband down to front as required. Join shoulders, not sides! An overlocker was used to cut and shape around finishing-off using cut up denim jeans. Cut pockets from jeans and sew to sides. The front tie was made from the turn-up hem of jeans.

Chris Morey



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*www.devonweaversworkshop.org*

## **TRUSTEES & COMMITTEE 2019**

*(Trustees marked with an asterisk)*

Chairman	<i>Margaret Cushen*</i>
Intermediate & Advanced Courses	<i>Jill Davies*</i>
Secretary	<i>Anne Bulleid*</i>
Treasurer	<i>Colleen Pope*</i>
Beginners Courses	<i>Jenny Rolfe*</i>
Newsletters & Website	<i>Kay Balmforth*</i>
Equipment	<i>Janet Thomas*</i>
Library	<i>Sareela Salter*</i>
SW Area Coordinator	
& Health & Safety Officer	<i>Gail Bryant</i>
	<i>Ann Holl*</i>

*(Jacqueline Jones is our Membership Secretary)*

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