

spinning

felting

weaving

knitting

dyeing

aShford
WHEELS & LOOMS

the Wheel


ASHFORD'S FIBRECRAFT MAGAZINE – NEW ZEALAND

Seamless
Summer Statement

*Fractal
Spinning*

Designer
Denim

ISSUE 29
2017/2018 NZ \$10



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GREAT NEW PRODUCTS AND PATTERNS INSIDE

Editor's Letter

Welcome

Welcome to our colourful issue of The Wheel! Research shows that there are health benefits in using colour. So, stimulate the senses and brighten the mood by trying our features on ombré dyeing, fractal and combo spinning, freedom weaving and fluro felting!

Also in this issue, I am delighted to feature our lovely son and son-in-law, James and David, who just two years ago left their multinational employers in New York and returned to our small rural town, Ashburton, to join us in the business. They are now part-owners, and Richard and I couldn't be more pleased to have them with us. The men have embraced the wonderful world of textile arts and have really enjoyed meeting our customers, working with our team and learning the products.



With the men on board, Richard has been able to spend more time researching and developing new products with Kate Sherratt, our Sales and Marketing Manager. See page 50. Often the idea or inspiration comes from our customers so please keep sending your suggestions to us.

Earlier this year, Richard and I were invited to give an address to the National Creative Fibre Festival. In our speech, we observed how important spinning, weaving, dyeing, felting and knitting were to people all around the world, and we endeavoured to identify the reasons why.

In the Ashford Club newsletter, I printed my list and invited members to add more explanations. See page 29 for the list – do you agree? Or are there more reasons why the crafts give so much joy?



Richard and I feel very privileged to be part of this positive, joyful activity and are pleased to announce the establishment of an annual award to encourage and support textile artists and help them enjoy even more artistic freedom. We hope our award will contribute to the development of the fibre arts or the education of future spinners, weavers, felters, knitters and dyers. We are looking for creative projects that have vision and are viable. This could be a garment, process, or an educational or philanthropic project. For more details please see page 7.

So, wherever you are and for whatever reason, enjoy the crafts!

Kindest regards,

Elizabeth



Contents

Editor • Elizabeth Ashford

Design • Tina Gill

Printed • Spectrum



8

The Wheel is published annually by Ashford Handicrafts Ltd. The 52 page, premium version is available to members of the Ashford Club (see below). The 48 page, standard version is available from your Ashford dealer. Copies of back issues 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 are available. All material is copyright to Ashford Handicrafts Ltd and is subject to editing. Contributions welcome.

The Ashford Club

I welcome you to join the Ashford Club and be part of our world-wide community of textile artists. Based at the home of our company, in Ashburton, New Zealand, membership costs only NZ \$10.00. Receive a premium, members-only 52 page edition of *The Wheel* sent from New Zealand. Membership also allows you access to the Ashford Club pages on the Ashford website with special offers and competitions only available to Club members. You will also receive the Ashford newsletter emailed to you quarterly.

Pay by cheque or go to the website to pay:
www.ashford.co.nz/ashford-club

The Ashford Club, PO Box 474,
Ashburton, New Zealand
Email: elizabeth@ashford.co.nz

Cover: Maria in her seamless,
summer felted dress.
See page 4



46



48



34



18

- 4 A seamless, stylish summer felted dress
- 7 Ashford Award
- 8 Combo spins
- 10 Secret portraits in tapestry
- 11 Fibershed
- 12 I love denim
- 14 Fractal spinning
- 16 Awesome ombré
- 18 Public arts installation
- 19 Graduate's collection
- 20 Custom lacings the Inkle way
- 22 Family business
- 24 Boomerang shawl
- 25 Ombré blanket
- 26 Fluro felt
- 27 Linked warp weaving
- 28 Baby blanket
- 29 Why do we love our crafts?
- 30 Plying masterclass
- 32 Keepers of the cloth
- 34 Classic bomber in herringbone
- 35 Colour blending
- 36 Latvian fingerless mitts
- 38 Jack is back!
- 40 A change for the better
- 42 Weaving on the web
- 44 Peruvian diamonds
- 46 Snazzy singles
- 48 Cowl of the wild
- 50 What's new?



Maria wears her seamless felted dress

A Seamless Felted Summer Dress

BY MARIA SHTRIK, MOSCOW, RUSSIA

A stylish, seamless, two-sided dress for expert and beginner felters.

The key to the success of a summer felted dress is a minimum of wool and a maximum of silk fibres: the wool just acting as "glue", combining and holding the silk fibres.

Size: L (46 RUS, 12 UK, 8 USA, 44 IT, 11 JP)

Height: 165-175cm (65-70ins)

The length of the dress: 110cm (43ins)

You will need:

1. Wool and fibres:

Wool: Ashford Merino sliver, Indigo 130gms (4½ozs)

Mulberry silk fibres for the decorative batts: yellow 140gms (5ozs), turquoise 50gms (2ozs), dark turquoise 30gms (1oz), blue 50gms (2ozs)

Mulberry silk fibres for the inside layer of the dress: blue 130gms (4½ozs)

Tussah fibre silk: blue 30gms (1oz)

Tip 1

If you do not have silk fibres of the right colour at hand, you can dye the silk fibres any colour using Ashford dyes. See www.ashford.co.nz/tutorials/dyeing-tutorial

If you prefer, replace the silk fibre with viscose fibre or Tencel.

2. Soap or dishwashing liquid
3. Thin polythene sheeting or mosquito net
4. Paper for making the patterns and wide transparent polythene sheeting for the template
5. Orbital sander (optional)
6. Two or three terry towels
7. Foam roller
8. Mannequin (if possible)
9. Blending Board
10. Felting Board (optional)

Here's how:

Preparation

Cover the table with waterproof sheeting. The table needs to be big enough for the dress template.

Divide the wool and fibres into two equal parts: one half for the front and one half for the back.

Make forty-two decorative batts to decorate the front and back of the dress on the Blending Board. Each will weigh 6-7gms (1/4oz). Apply the silk in this sequence and direction:

Layer 1: yellow silk fibres from top to

bottom of the Blending Board.

Layer 2: turquoise silk fibres diagonally (from the right upper corner of the Blending Board to the left lower corner).

Layer 3: dark turquoise silk fibres from right to left.

Layer 4: blue silk fibres diagonally (from the left upper corner of the Blending Board to the right lower corner).

Remember to press each layer down with the Blending Board Brush.

Tip 2

To see a video how to make the batts on the Blending Board see www.ashford.co.nz/tutorials/carding-tutorials



Make silk batts on the Blending Board

Making the Dress Pattern

Making patterns for felting is easy and quick! Unlike sewing patterns, we need to take very few measurements. This pattern (Figure 1) only needs six dimensions. To see how to measure and make the pattern go to our website www.ashford.co.nz/wheel29

Tip 3

If you cannot take your own measurements and there is no friend around who could help you, take the measurements from a garment that fits you.

Creating a Template

From the created pattern, make a template. A template is the same as a pattern, just increased by the wool shrinkage ratio. As a rule, during felting, the wool shrinks by about 30%. But I prefer to felt the products a bit firmer so that the fabric is more durable. For this project, I set the ratio at 1.5. This means that the finished pattern should be increased by one and a half times. For instructions to make the template go to www.ashford.co.nz/wheel29

Tip 4

Use polythene to create a template, as the dress is wet-felted. If you do not have such a large piece of polythene, just stick with tape (or sew) a few pieces together.

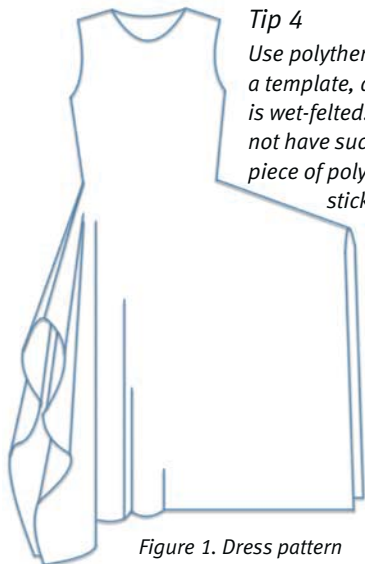


Figure 1. Dress pattern

Lay Out the Wool and Fibres

For a light summer dress, the wool has a single function - to "glue" the silk fibres among themselves. The wool will be inside - between the layers of silk fibres - like a filling in a pie!

The "pie" will have a total of four layers:

Layer 1: mulberry silk, blue

Layer 2: Ashford Merino sliver, Indigo (lay out diagonally from the left to the right)

Layer 3: Ashford Merino sliver, Indigo (lay out diagonally from the right to the left)

Layer 4: tussah silk of blue colour (for the top part of the dress) and decorative batts made of the silk fibres of different colours, which you have prepared in advance.

Back of the Dress

Put the dress template on the table and lay out the fibres as follows:

Layer 1: cover the template in the blue mulberry silk fibres placed vertically. Go beyond the template edge only at the shoulders and the sides by at least 3cm (1in) and no more than 5-6cm (2ins). For the neck, the armholes, as well as the bottom of the dress and the part of the sides, keep the fibre within the template. See Figure 2.

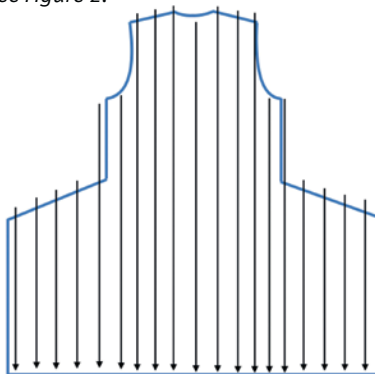


Figure 2. Vertical layout of the mulberry silk fibres.

Layers 2 and 3: lay out two diagonal layers of wool, going beyond the template limits only where it is indicated (on the shoulders

and the sides of the template) in Figure 3.

Note: Around the armholes and the neck, as well as along the bottom edge of the skirt, the wool is laid out **ONLY IN ONE DIRECTION:** see the red arrows.

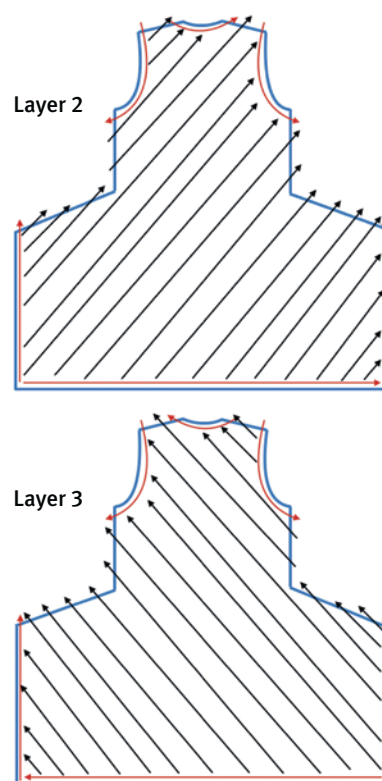


Figure 3. Diagonal layout of the wool.

Layer 4: this is the outer layer of the dress. On it, lay out the decorative batts made from the silk fibre. Lay the batts starting at the bottom part of the dress up to the waist. When laying the batts, rotate them so that their design changes. You can boldly cut the batts with scissors and lay them in a way to fit them all in. Please note Figure 4 where the batts should extend beyond the template (marked with a dashed line). In other places, lay the batts in such a way as to ensure that they do not go beyond the template.

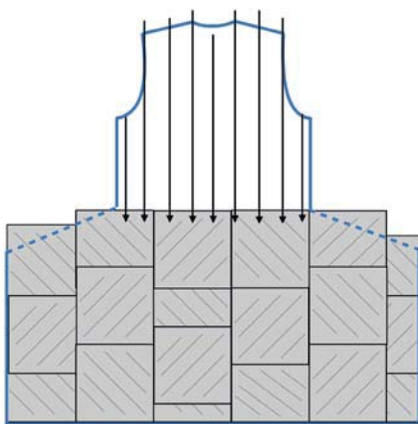


Figure 4. Lay out the decorative batts (Layer 4)

Only after all the batts are laid, place the tussah silk (blue) on the top of the dress. At the waist overlay the tussah on the batts to soften the skirt edge. To enhance the design lay strips of tussah silk on top of the batts.

Now all the layers of the "pie" are down it is time to start felting.

1. Wet the fibre with the soapy water.
2. Cover with thin polythene sheeting.
3. Turn on the orbital sander and place gently on the sheeting. Move to a new position after every few minutes of vibration. If you do not have an orbital sander cover with a mosquito net and proceed to felt the back of the dress manually.

Note: Do not felt those parts of the fibre that go beyond the template.

Front of the Dress

Turn the template and the dress back over (so that the back of the dress is on the table, and the template is on top).

Tip 5

To turn the template and the dress back, gently blot the dress with a terry towel to remove the excess water. When the dress is lighter it will be easier to turn over.

For the front of the dress, create the same layered "pie" as the back, but make the neck opening big enough for your head. This pattern does not use a zipper or fastener!

1. Lay out the layers from 1 to 3 just as you did on the back, with only one exception - neither the wool nor the silk should go beyond the template edge.
2. Gently fold the silk and the wool sticking out from under the template (those wool and fibres that went beyond the template edge when you were laying out the back), on the template.
3. Lay out layer 4, keeping the wool and fibres within the template edge.



The Ukrasa Studio feltmakers



An orbital sander felts the fibres quickly and easily

After all the layers are laid out, proceed to felt as you did to the back of the dress.

Felting the Dress

1. After the wool has caught on the silk fibres, proceed to felting "on roll". Cover the dress with thin polythene sheeting. Place your roller straight across the width of the dress and roll up very tightly – keeping it very straight. Pushing down firmly, roll back and forth. After a hundred rolls, rotate a quarter turn. Repeat for a total of four hundred rolls. As the batts have a lot of fibres and little wool, you will need to roll four times longer than if the dress was only made from wool. The dress should be felted now. To check, pinch a small amount of fibre and pull up a little. If the fibres and wool lift together the dress is sufficiently felted. Continue to felt until the template begins to bend and wrinkle - this means that the dress has become slightly smaller in size than the template.
2. Pull out the template gently and



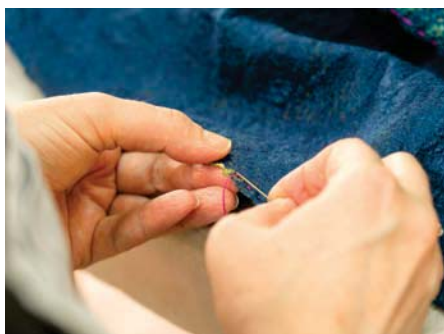
On-roll felting technique

continue to felt the dress on a roll until you make sure that the wool and silk are felted together and the fabric is strong and the dress is at least 10-15% smaller than the template.

3. The dress is designed to be two-sided. So, do not forget to pay attention to its underside. If the fourth layer has suddenly shifted and gone beyond the edge of the first layer, then just cut it off with scissors.



Cut off the excess from the hem of the dress



Stitch the armhole and pull the thread

4. Wring the dress to remove the soap foam then immerse it in a basin with warm water for 15-20 minutes. This little timeout will allow the wool to "rest" and speed the final felting process.

5. Remove the dress from the basin and carefully treat all the side "seams" - wipe them between the palms with soapy liquid to make sure that the fabric is flat and has no creases.

6. Continue to felt the dress on a roll until its size matches the size of your pattern.

Fitting

Try on the dress or try it on a mannequin. If you see that in general, the dress fits you, go to the next step. If the dress is still too

big for you, keep on felting it. Shrink the armholes if necessary. Sometimes the armholes do not fit well, and sometimes they even stretch. If this happens to you, then it is necessary to shrink them:

1. Stitch the armholes loosely at the very edge.
2. Pull the thread so that the armhole becomes the correct size.
3. Wet the armhole with a hot soapy liquid.
4. Felt the armhole area to the correct size. Rub gently against a Felting Board if necessary.
5. Remove the thread.

Shrink the neck: If the neck puckers, shrink it as you did for the armholes.

Finishing

1. Gently rinse the dress adding wool conditioner to the last rinse.
2. Lay the dress out on a grate for 10-15 minutes, to drain. Then remove excess water with a towel.
3. Iron the dress until it becomes almost or completely dry. Remember to align all the open edges of the dress: hem, neck and armholes.
4. Steam iron to make the dress soft and supple – it will drape beautifully.

Care Instructions

Gently hand wash. Dry and then press with a warm iron. Do not machine wash or tumble dry.



Funding available for textile artists!

Richard and I are pleased to establish an annual award to encourage and support textile artists and help them enjoy artistic freedom. We hope our award will contribute to the development of the fibre arts or the education of future spinners, weavers, felters, knitters and dyers. Valued at NZ\$5,000 the award can be used to purchase any Ashford equipment, fibre or yarns.

We are looking for creative projects that have vision and are viable. This could be a garment, process, or an educational or philanthropic project. The award is open to everyone: individuals, guilds/groups, aid agencies, non-government agencies... Your application must be received by March 1st each year. For details, criteria and application forms go to www.ashford.co.nz/Award



"We hope this annual award will encourage and support textile artists."

Spinning all the Colours

BY ROBIN WIEST, DOYLESTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA, USA



How many colours can one skein of hand spun yarn hold? Robin says, "as many as you want and then some". And the resulting yarn? A glorious vibration of colour.

Hello, I'm Robin Wiest. I'm from Doylestown, Pennsylvania, in the USA.

If someone had told me six years ago that I would be addicted to spinning my own yarn, I would have rolled my eyes and said, "Never!" I had been a hardcore knitter for fourteen years and spinning was not even on my radar. Well, you know all about the proverbial rabbit hole that we fibre enthusiasts can fall into. Most of the time it's just the natural progression of our fibre passion and along with this newly-found passion is what I call the "passion for stashin", where instead of yarn, it's fibre.

Have you heard of Combo Spins? It seems to be a helpful remedy for "stashin passion" and a fun way to cull that ever-growing fibre stash. Spinners usually pick eight 4oz (100gm) braids of fibre with colours that play well together, strip them up and randomly spin all those colours together, resulting in a sweater's worth of beautiful hand spun yarn.

However, some may not want to spin a sweater's worth of yarn to experience this mega blending of colours. Did you know you can do this with just 4ozs of fibre for a smaller project? I call it a Mini Combo Spin and I'm going to share how I go about it.

I recommend picking a braid of fibre from your stash where the dyer has used at least five different colours. The more colours, the better. In this instance, I chose to hand dye 4ozs of Ashford's 100% Merino fibre with Ashford Dyes instead of pulling a pre-dyed fibre braid from my stash. I wanted to show how multiple random colours, even those that you think might not play well together, result in a yarn that is an explosion of barber-pole colours.

I start out by mixing up my dyes as per the directions and use plain old household white vinegar as the acid for heat setting the colours. I then break up the 4ozs of fibre into five different equal pieces so that I can dye each piece with many random colours. I placed the Merino in a warm water bath for about an hour to open up the fibres so it readily accepts the dye. After soaking, I gently wring out the fibre and place one piece on a length of cling wrap. Here is the fun part. Just start hand-painting on colours. Once you have one piece finished, wrap it up "burrito style" and place to the side. I do this with all the pieces and place them in old glass casserole dishes that will no longer be used except for dyeing purposes. Then I put each dish, one by one, into an old microwave for four to five minutes each or until I see that the dye runs clear. Set your dishes aside to cool down completely. Once cooled, unwrap the fibre, rinse thoroughly, squeeze excess water out, and hang up to dry.



Robin spins all the colours



Dye your own fibre



When the fibre is completely dry, how you choose to spin the colours is completely up to you. I find that tearing them up into lengthwise pencil-size strips, gives me the most amount of colour play because the thinner the strips, the shorter the bursts of colours, thus making the colour changes fairly quick.



Strip the fibre lengthwise into pencil-size pieces

The wheel I use to spin on is a double treadle Ashford Joy and I adore this wheel. Great for the beginner or expert spinner. A little confession: up until three years ago, I really didn't utilise the ratios on my wheel. I just adjusted my feet and hands. This was the most natural for me since I had

learned to spin on a drop spindle. There are no ratios on a spindle to think about, only weight. Since then, I have learned that changing the ratios for certain spinning projects makes a world of difference. Still, more often than not, I keep my wheel set on the lowest ratio, and my Scotch Tension set almost at no tension. I do a long slow backwards draw so I can see how much fibre and twist I'm allowing into the drafting triangle sweet spot, while smoothing out the twist with my forward hand. I prefer low-twist singles and then a slightly higher twist when plying. This tends to keep the yarn soft, bouncy and squish-a-licious.



Spin with little or no tension

And then it's on to the plying where the barber pole magic happens right before your eyes. Colours partnering up, jumping in and out as though they're performing a little square dance. Almost always, I like to do a 2-ply from a centre-pull ball. That way I use up all the singles and there are no leftovers to deal with on the bobbins.

Now hurry up, go grab something from your stash and try your hand at Mini Combo Spinning. Cheers!



Barber pole magic

What's Your Secret?

One question people tend to ask me all the time is, "What's your secret for spinning a consistent and even-balanced yarn?" Three simple things.

Firstly, the adjustments to my wheel. I keep the ratio on my wheel set on the lowest ratio.

Secondly, I almost always prep my fibre by stripping to pencil-roving size. This is the way I achieve the best control over my fibre supply hand and can maintain a steady consistency of drafting the exact amount of fibres for the grist I'm trying to achieve.

And thirdly... practice! Just plain old repetitive practice. My wheel is always set up at the same spot ready to go at any time and I'll hop into that spot even if it's just for a few minutes, almost every day.

Editor's **NOTE**

See more of Robin's delicious yarns on:
Ravelry: Sit-N-Spin
Instagram: sitsnspins
Etsy: Treadle Handspun Yarns

Secret Portraits

BY MICHELLE DRIVER, ADELAIDE, SA, AUSTRALIA

Traditional tapestry weaving creates non-conformist, thought-provoking pieces.

The last couple of years have seen me concentrating more on my artwork. This focus has led to entering art competitions and exhibitions with a view to having tapestry exhibited alongside more conventional art mediums.

My new series is called *Windows*, and has been inspired by x-rays that have been donated to me. These are rendered as 'secret portraits', as I never divulge my sources. With the *Windows* series, I have refined my distinctive and bold visual language. It is making use of strong black backgrounds, starkly displaying the images against it.

Windows No. 1 was the first tapestry in this series, taken from an x-ray of a foot injury. It was a finalist in the 2016 Emma Hack Art Prize, and then went on to win the 2016 Port Pirie Art Prize.

Windows No. 2 is a spinal x-ray, and was a finalist in the 2016 Gallery M Open Contemporary Art Prize, as well as the 2017 Contemporary Art Awards.

At the time of writing, *Windows No. 3 – Self Portrait* is in the UK as part of the *Heallreaf 2* International Exhibition of Woven Tapestry. It has already been exhibited at West Dean College in West Sussex and will shortly be exhibited in London's Brick Lane Gallery. This piece is a cheeky rendition of the traditional artist's self portrait, as well as a social comment on what constitutes 'beauty'. It is the only piece in this series where I have revealed the x-ray's owner. Maybe I'll attempt a more traditional self portrait in future, who knows?

The latest in the series, *Windows No. 5 – Portrait of Dementia* was taken from CT scans from a dementia patient and I have interpreted these by using the donor's favourite colours. This reflects the tendency for dementia sufferers to retain more permanent, long-term memories. I feel the work is a poetic way of educating audiences and raising awareness of dementia.

Most recently, I have started a yet-to-be-named series, which is being inspired by vintage illustrations of medical procedures ... stay tuned!

Starting a Tapestry

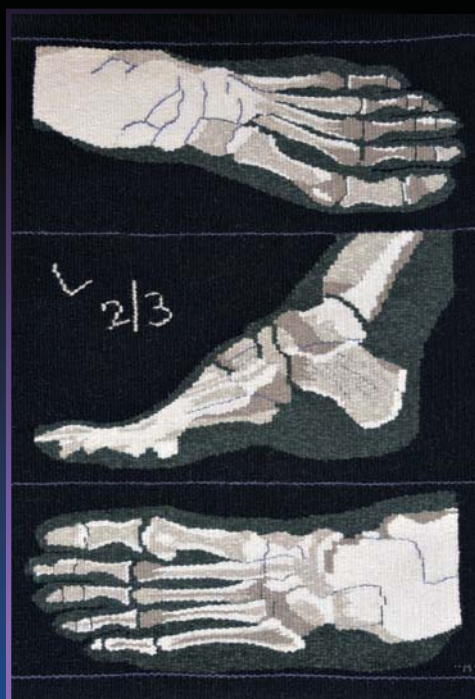
I own two Ashford Tapestry Looms, which are aesthetically pleasing, as they tend to act as pieces of furniture in the lounge room! And while whole books have been written on how to weave a tapestry, I will give a quick description of how I start as the Ashford looms make it so easy to create the warp.

I first draw the design, or cartoon, on a piece of paper that sits behind the warp. When creating my cartoons, I prefer to work in a collage style, using photocopies and sketching with coloured pencils. The completed cartoon will then be secured to the warp using rare-earth magnets. I have found this to be the most effective method of securing it.

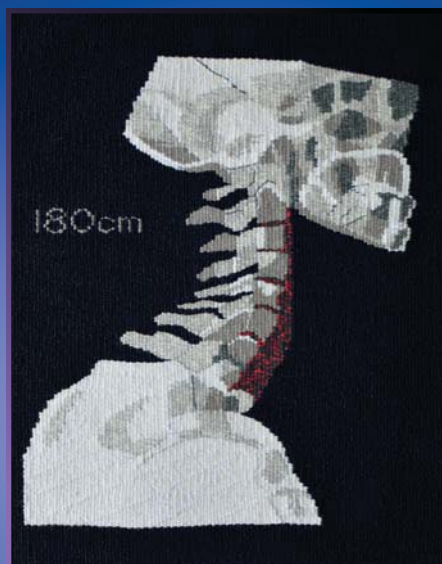
The Ashford upright tapestry loom has a revolving frame that makes warping up a quick and easy process, with effective tension adjustment. My usual warping sett is $9\frac{1}{2}$ epi (ends per inch), as it gives me the ability to include as much detail in my work as I need. A leash rod is included with the looms, but I choose not to use leashes, preferring instead to create the shed with my fingers.

After warping the loom and attaching the cartoon, I weave a hem, which will be folded over after the tapestry has been completed. I then weave a line of double half-hitches before starting the tapestry itself. The design is traced from the cartoon onto the warp with a permanent marker and these are the lines I follow while weaving ... However I do tend to 'make it up as I go along' for some parts of the tapestry.

Once the tapestry is completed, the back threads are cut to about 3cm ($1\frac{1}{4}$ ins) long and the ends along the edge are sewn into the back to prevent them being seen from the front. For larger tapestries, I sew Velcro to the back and attach the other side of the Velcro to a thin plank of wood with D-ring hangers. For smaller pieces, I tack the tapestries onto a fabric-stretched frame. This means that the tapestry is easy to hang both within the gallery, as well as in a domestic setting.



Windows No. 1



Windows No. 2

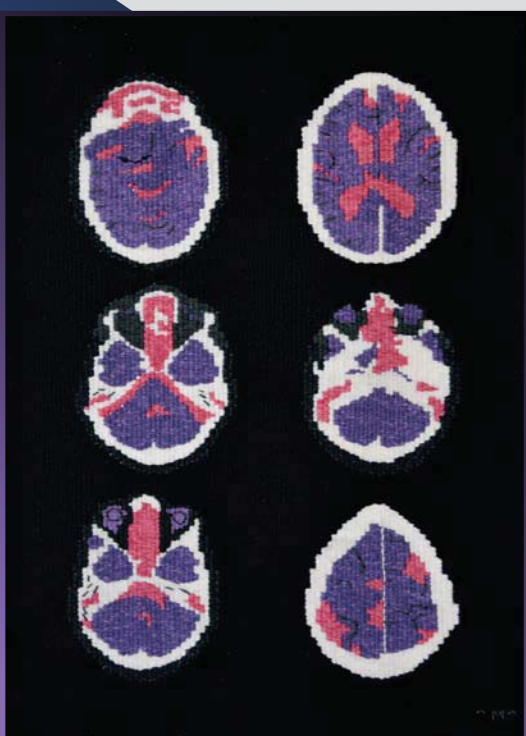


Windows No. 3 – Self Portrait

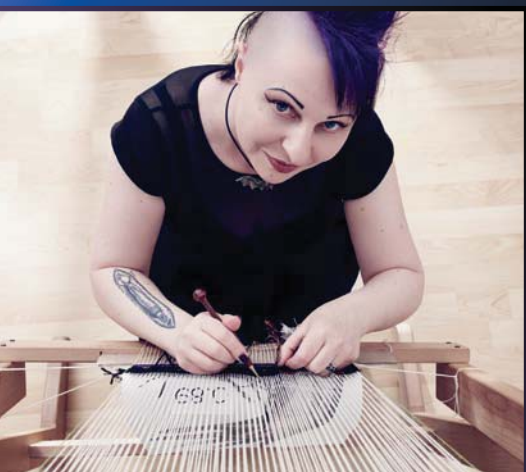
Editor's NOTE

Michelle featured in Issue 26 of The Wheel describing how her love of wool started and sharing a lovely art deco fan scarf. To see more of Michelle's fabulous work, go to: www.threefolddesigns.com.au

Michelle likes to push boundaries. Since featuring in The Wheel in 2014 she has chosen woven tapestry to express her ideas to the world. In her true, non-conventional style, she uses traditional tapestry weaving to create non-conformist, thought-provoking pieces.



Windows No. 5 – Portrait of Dementia



*Michelle still pushing boundaries
(photo Brent Leideritz)*



Pokeberry-dyed yarn

Fibershed

BY DALIA LEVY,
VANCOUVER, BC, CANADA

"This is all about dressing human beings at the end of the day, in the most ethical way that we can," says Rebecca Burgess.

When Rebecca Burgess was working in villages across Asia, she saw the impacts of the clothing industry firsthand: waste, pollution, widespread health problems. But in these same communities, from Indonesia to Thailand, Burgess also saw working models of local textile production systems that didn't harm anyone.

She was inspired to build a sustainable clothing system — complete with natural dye farms, renewable energy-powered mills, and compostable clothes — back home in the United States.

The project began in 2010 with a commitment by Rebecca to develop and wear a prototype wardrobe where the dyes, fibres and labour were sourced from a region no larger than 150 miles from the project's headquarters. She had no expected outcomes from the personal challenge other than to reduce her own ecological footprint and maybe inspire a few others.

Burgess teamed up with a talented group of farmers and artisans to build the wardrobe by hand, as manufacturing equipment had all been lost from the landscape more than twenty years ago. The goal was to illuminate that regionally-grown fibres, natural dyes, and local talent were still in great enough existence to provide this most basic human necessity—our clothes.

Within months, the project became a movement, and the word Fibershed and

the working concept behind it spread. There are now networks of farmers, ranchers, designers, ecologists, sewers, dyers, and spinners in fifty-four (and growing) communities around the world, mostly in North America.

Like Burgess, Fibershed artisans like myself are reclaiming clothing production and seeing the environmental, economic and social benefits of de-centralising the textile supply chain.

Everything is traceable to the farms from whence the plant and animal fibres come, to the small-scale mills that turn that fibre into fabric, to the artisans who spin, weave, felt, dye, knit and sew the fibre into complete garments.

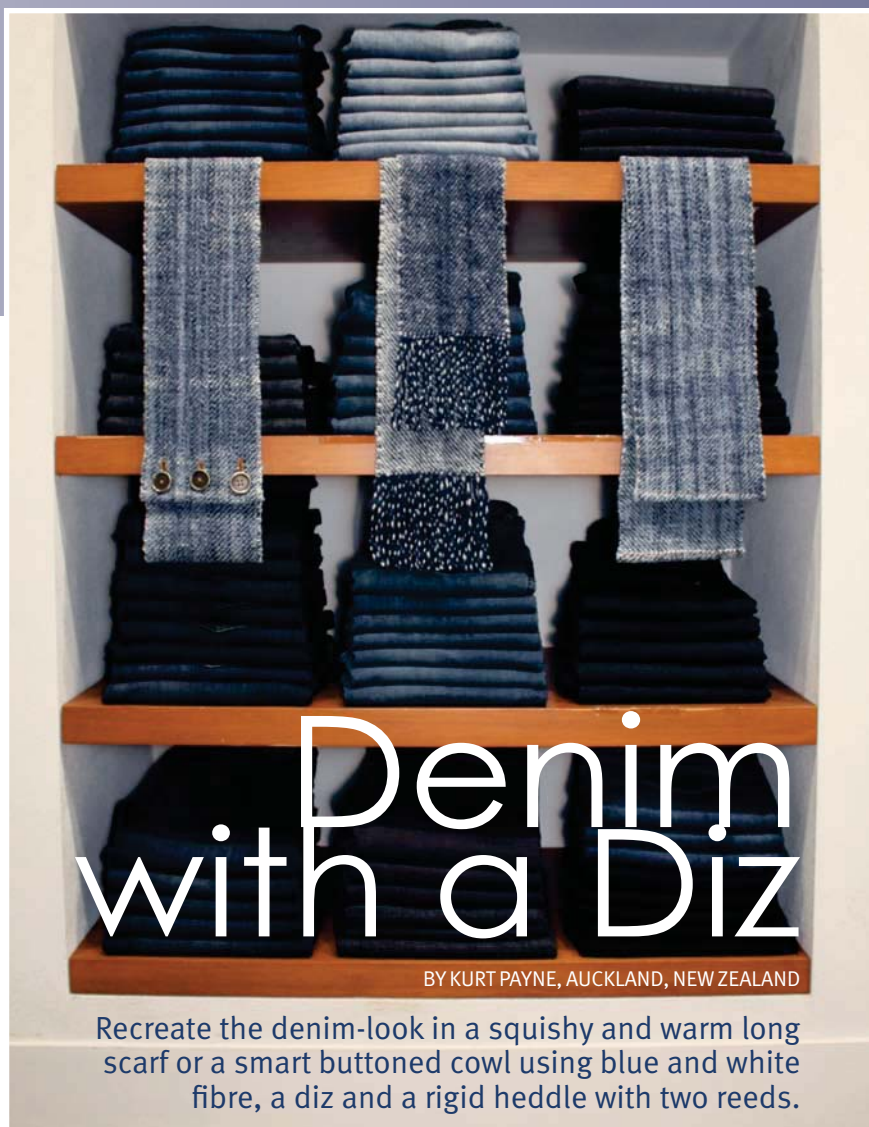
"Today I'm so fortunate to be a part of an entire movement of makers, farmers, mill-operators, artisans and change-makers that will hopefully be the future's dress code."

Editor's NOTE

Dalia, who featured in the Issue 28 of The Wheel, creates textiles using natural dyes and rare breed sheep's wool.

See www.wildcraftedwool.com

To find out more about the Fibershed movement go to www.fibershed.com



Kurt

Photos: Chetan Prajapati - Fifth Avenue Menswear

that is warm and soft without being heavy and comes in a great range of colours. To make further colours and a more distressed look for my denim yarns I diz-blended Indigo Merino and Frost Alpaca/Merino together to change the shades.

Anything with a hole in can be used for a diz. Paua shell and brass are popular. I like to use a light plastic diz for fine spinning, or a large button for blending or turning carded batts into roving. The bonus with blending using a diz is your fibre is already pre-drafted making spinning very fast and even.

To blend using a diz just pop your two or more colours of roving side by side and pull a small section though one of the holes in the diz. Gradually work along the roving, pulling a little then sliding the diz along, taking care not to break the roving apart, then once it is all drafted through, wind your fibre into birds' nests ready to spin.

Ensure your warp yarn is nice and smooth with enough twist to hold together while weaving. Your weft yarn can be spun a little loftier to create softness in your finished project. Either wash your plied yarns to set the twist or warp straight from the bobbin in which case you will need to allow for more shrinkage.

I was so pleased, while at the Handweavers and Spinners Guild sewing the last buttonhole on my cowl, when a member walked in and exclaimed, "That looks like denim!"

I love denim and wear it 365 days a year. I also enjoy making bags and accessories out of this versatile and hardwearing cloth. Traditional denim is woven using a 1 x 2 twill, a deep indigo cotton yarn is used for the warp and plain white yarn for the weft. This creates a two-faced cloth which also changes colour slowly over time with wash and wear, adding to its appeal.

The 1 x 2 twill is easy to create on a rigid

heddle loom using a second heddle kit. No extra pickup sticks or leashes are required making the process a quick joy. You will soon get into the meditative rhythm while warping and weaving of front, then back, then both!

There are a few methods of warping two heddles for twill. I have outlined the simplest below but a quick search online will uncover other methods to try that suit finer yarns and mismatched heddles.

I chose Ashford's Alpaca/Merino blend to explore the possibilities of creating some 'woollen denim' accessories to keep warm this winter. This blend creates yarn



You will need:

Loom: 25cm (10ins) or wider rigid heddle with a second heddle kit
Reed: 40/10cm (10dpi) x2

For the scarf

Warp yarn: hand spun Ashford/Merino Indigo 2ply 260m/100gm, 18 wpi approx. 140m (153yds)

Weft yarn: hand spun Ashford Alpaca/Merino Frost 2ply 290m/100gm, 18 wpi approx. 140m (153yds)

For the cowl

Warp yarn: hand spun Ashford Alpaca/Merino Seamist diz-blended with Merino Indigo 2ply 280m/100gm, 18 wpi approx. 140m (153yds)

Weft yarn: hand spun Ashford Alpaca/Merino Seamist diz-blended with Alpaca/Merino Frost 2ply 280m/100gm, 18 wpi approx. 140m (153yds)

Buttons: 3 x 25mm (1in)

Other: DMC Embroidery Cotton #420, darning needle, Ashford Fringe Twister, Ashford Yarn Gauge, diz, small crochet hook

Here's how:

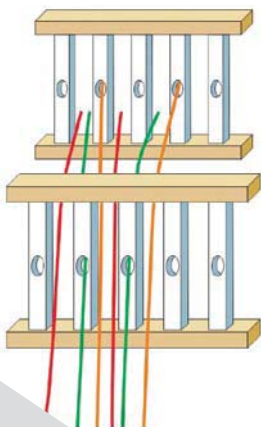
Total warp ends: 72

Total warp length: 2m (6½ft)

Finished width: 16cm (6¼ins)

Warping

With one reed in the back position on the second heddle kit and the darker handspun yarn, follow the direct warping instructions included with your loom up to step 19, unclamping the loom. Place the second reed into the front position on the loom and continue threading as shown in the threading diagram.



Threading Diagram

From left to right the first warp will be threaded through both slots, the second through the front hole and back slot, the third through the back hole and front slot. Keep the far left and far right warp threads though both slots to create a selvedge edge.



Hand spun warp and weft

Weaving

After weaving a small header in waste yarn weave complete warp length with the light coloured hand spun yarn using the weaving sequence as follows:

1st pick - Front heddle neutral, back heddle up

2nd pick - Front heddle up, back heddle neutral

3rd pick - Both heddles down

To make a nice selvedge edge, go over one edge and under the other for each pick.



Twill on the rigid heddle loom

If you would like your twill pattern to slope the other way, reverse the order

of lifting heddles. If you want to create a herringbone design, experiment with reversing the order part way through weaving, every few centimetres.

Hem stitch the beginning and end of your weaving to make later hemming or fringe twisting easier.

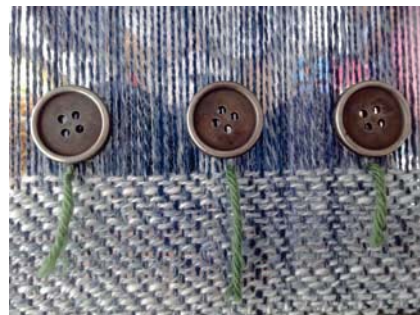
Buttonholes

To make woven buttonholes first mark the position on the warp using scraps of waste yarn.

Cut lengths of weft thread long enough to weave each section.

Weave each section remembering to go over one edge and under the other.

Make the slits slightly longer than the buttons to allow for shrinkage.



Include button holes as you weave

Editor's NOTE

Born into a family of sewers, knitters and other handy people, it is no surprise Kurt ended up joining in the fun, studying fashion design, pattern making and machine knitting before diving head first into a pile of raw fleece, wheels and looms.

An active member of Creative Fibre and The Handweavers and Spinners Guild, Kurt lives in Auckland enjoying fibre arts full time while completing the Master Hand Knitting Program and Certification for Technical Editors with The Knitters Guild Association. Find him on Ravelry: PinkyNZ

Denim with a Diz continues...

Finishing Scarf Fringe

To create a two-colour twisted fringe, first cut your weft yarn into lengths twice as long as your fringe. Thread a needle and sew the weft up into one hem stitch and down into the one next to it. Each group of warp threads will now have one lighter thread sewn into it.

Using the fringe twister, twist each group of four and knot the ends.



Create a two-colour fringe

Washing

Wash in warm soapy water. Gently move up and down in the water for 1-2 minutes. Rinse out the soap and dry flat on a towel. Press gently into shape while still damp with a warm iron.

The scarf can be fulled more in a washing machine. Give it a few minutes' agitation on a hot cycle. The fringe can then be trimmed to length with the knots cut off.

Cowl Hems

Trim the remaining warp close to the hemstitching. Fold the edge over double towards the lighter side and sew down with the embroidery thread split into two (3ply).

Cowl Buttonholes

Using the embroidery thread split into two (3ply), finish the buttonhole inside edges with buttonhole stitch. Using the same thread sew the buttons to the opposite ends of the cowl.



Finish the button hole with embroidery thread

Fractal *spinning,* an adventure

Dividing things in two is something that must have been fascinating to humans for a long time. To take something and split it down the middle and make two pieces, each one half the size of the original. This could apply to anything: a stick, food, a piece of leather – anything! No wonder that it eventually found its way into the textile world.

The term "fractal stripe" first turned up in an article by Janel Laidman in the 2007 summer edition of *Spin-Off* magazine and fractal spinning has since then been very popular amongst hand spinners all over the world. Fractal spun yarns create stripes in a way where the colours blend into each other instead of there being a sudden change from one colour to another.

Fractals, named by mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot in 1975, appear in nature, in everything from pineapples to trees, ice crystals and even broccoli! Basically, it's a pattern that looks the same no matter if it's in a large or small scale. Fractals are complex, yet stem from simple equations. I am by no means a mathematician and there are a lot of people out there who can explain this way better than I can, but let's imagine a fractal "tree": it starts out with one trunk, then splits into two smaller trunks (only we usually call them branches instead of trunks), which then splits into four smaller branches, which then splits into eight even smaller branches and so on. This is the general idea and as complex as we need to go in order to understand the principles of fractal spinning.

So how does one go about it? Well, let's start off with a piece of dyed roving. It needs to be dyed in relatively distinct parts, so that the colours aren't too blended to begin with. As an introduction to fractal spinning, I like to start my students out with a piece of roving dyed in three separate sections. Let's pick blue, brown and pink as an example:



Roving dyed in blue, brown and pink

We then split the roving down the middle, lengthwise, to get two pieces, each one 50% of the original piece:



After this step, you take one of your two pieces and spin it. It's important to spin worsted, since you don't want the colours to mix. I like to use a short forward draw, but any worsted technique that you're comfortable with will do. You then put on an empty bobbin on your spinning wheel and here's where the magic happens – you then split your second piece in two (or more, as we'll come to later) and spin them on the new bobbin, after each other, making sure you keep the colours in the same order as for the first single you spun (i.e. if you spun the first piece in the order blue/brown/pink you should spin the two smaller pieces in the same order, one after the other – blue/brown/pink/blue/brown/pink).



Spin a worsted yarn

This will give you one thread that has three long colour sections and one thread that

Editor's NOTE

BY STEFAN MOBERG,
STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

has six short (about half as short as the long one) colour sections:



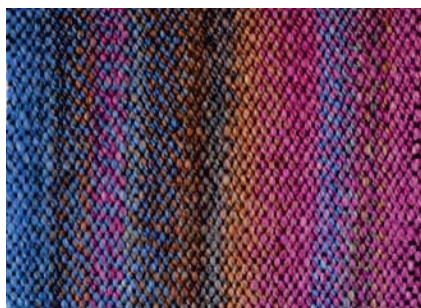
When plying them together you get a yarn where the colours blend except for at the beginning and at the end.

This is the standard fractal spinning I teach at workshops and the simplest way of working with the technique. However, let's take it further! What happens when you vary the amount of times you divide that second piece of roving?

For this article, I've dyed all the pieces of roving in the exact same way. Blue, brown and pink. I've then made different yarns with them:



Yarn No. 1 consists of one single spun from a 50% piece of the roving and one single spun from two 25% pieces. In mathematical terms one could say that this yarn is spun according to:
 $x/2 + (x/4 + x/4)$



Yarn No. 2 consists of one single spun from a 50% piece of the roving and one single spun from three 16.6% pieces. In mathematical terms: $x/2 + (x/6 + x/6 + x/6)$



Yarn No. 3 consists of one single spun from a 50% piece of the roving and one single spun from four 12.5% pieces. In mathematical terms: $x/2 + (x/8 + x/8 + x/8 + x/8)$

As you can see in the woven samples the colours blend more and more the more times you divide your second piece, and your stripes become shorter and shorter.

For a fractal spinning adventure in multiple ply yarns I've ventured into the 3-plies. This is a more complex system and gives you more ways of varying the yarn. I've chosen two true 3-ply yarns and one

Stefan Moberg featured in Issue 28 of The Wheel where he encouraged us to use our hand spun in our weaving to create a very personal cloth.

Stefan, as well as being an award-winning spinner and weaver, also teaches classes in spinning and weaving at Gudruns Ullbod, the Swedish Ashford distributor.

Navajo-plied yarn (which I wouldn't consider a true 3-ply yarn since it's all made from one single thread).

Yarn No. 1b consists of one single spun from a 33.33% piece of the roving, one thread spun from two 16.6% pieces and one thread spun from three 11.1% pieces. In mathematical terms: $x/3 + (x/6 + x/6) + (x/9 + x/9 + x/9)$



Yarn No. 2b consists of one single spun from a 33.33% piece of the roving, one thread from two 16.6% pieces and four 8.3% pieces. In mathematical terms: $x/3 + (x/6 + x/6) + (x/12 + x/12 + x/12 + x/12)$



Yarn No. 3b is a Navajo-plied yarn made from a single that was spun from a 50% piece of roving, then a 25% piece, a 12.5% piece, a 6.25% piece and a 3.125% piece, then plied back on itself. Not taking the plying into consideration, this could be expressed in mathematical terms as: $x/2 + x/4 + x/8 + x/16 + x/32$



This technique was inspired by an article written by Benjamin Krudwig in 2015.

I'd also like to encourage you to experiment with more factors than just colour and number of plies – try experimenting with volume! A 3-ply yarn using singles spun in three different diameters (100%, 50% and 25% for example) could be quite interesting!

Good luck and happy spinning!

NOTE: All the pieces described in percentage are approximate and not to be taken literally! Don't feel bad because you can't pick out exactly 16.6% of a piece of roving – nobody can! It's just a figure to guide you.



Stefan

Magical Ombré Dyeing

BY SHIREEN NADIR, BURLINGTON,
ONTARIO, CANADA

An easy dyeing technique creates a clever colour gradient fade that is soft and subtle – and beautiful, too!

Gradient, or ombré yarn refers to yarn that has been dyed in a long, slowly-changing colour stripe, so that the final project graduates slowly in colour from one end to the other. Sound like magic? Well it is, to knit with, but dyeing it doesn't have to be! All you need are a few household tools and some quality supplies and you're ready to start your own ombré adventure. Before we begin you'll note that in the supplies below I have listed two kitchen items, a measuring spoon and a microwave: once they have been used for acid dyeing do not use them for cooking. You can get used items from your local thrift shop, and it's a worthy investment if you end up enjoying dyeing, and who wouldn't?

You will need:

Dyes: Ashford Acid Dyes (Hot Pink, Purple and Blue)
Yarn: Ashford Mackenzie (4 Ply Super wash treated, 357m/390yds, 100gm net). I recommend using a superwash yarn if this is your first dyeing adventure
White Vinegar (Pro-tip: cleaning vinegar has the highest acid content)
Gloves
Mask
Disposable plastic cups
Plastic drop sheet to protect your working surface
Disposable wooden stir sticks
1/8 tsp measuring spoon
An old microwave
A plastic tub, that will fit in the microwave



Here's how:

Step 1

Separate your ball of yarn into mini skeins. I am using a niddy-noddy to do this, but you can also substitute the legs of a chair or the arms of a patient friend. I counted my wraps and ended up with nine, more-or-less even skeins. Don't cut the yarn between the skeins and don't tie your knots too tightly; you'll end up with areas where dye cannot reach that remain white (think tie-dye).



Step 2

Arrange your cups – one per mini-skein (nine, in my case) - inside the plastic bin.

Step 3

Using 3 parts hot water to one part vinegar, fill each cup about 1/3 of the way and add your mini skeins. Allow them to soak for at least 20 minutes.



Step 4

In this step, you will mix your dye. Ashford Dyes are very powerful and a little goes a long way, which is why we are using the smallest increment easily available in measuring spoons. If you have the ability to use even smaller increments (say, the tip of a toothpick) then I recommend using it. It's easy to add too much dye and the small amount of yarn going in each cup can only absorb so much.

Arrange a second set of cups, one per mini-skein, and fill each cup 1/3 of the way with the same mixture of vinegar and hot water. Using your measuring device, fill each cup as follows:

1. 3 spoons of Hot Pink
2. 3 spoons of Hot Pink, 1/2 a spoon of Purple
3. 2 spoons of Hot Pink, one spoon of Purple
4. 1 spoon of Hot Pink, two spoons of Purple
5. 3 spoons of Purple

6. 3 spoons of Purple, ½ a spoon of Blue
7. 2 spoons of Purple, one spoon of Blue
8. 1 spoon of Purple, two spoons of Blue
9. 3 spoons of Blue

If you have chosen different colours the pattern is the same:

1. 3 spoons of colour A
2. 3 spoons of colour A, ½ a spoon of colour B
3. 2 spoons of colour A, one spoon of colour B
4. 1 spoon of colour A, two spoons of colour B
5. 3 spoons of colour B
6. 3 spoons of colour B, ½ a spoon of colour C
7. 2 spoons of colour B, one spoon of colour C
8. 1 spoon of colour B, two spoons of colour C
9. 3 spoons of colour C



Step 5

Using the wooden stir stick, stir these cups gently until the dye is fully dissolved.

Pro-tip: before you proceed to the next step, dip a folded piece of paper towel into each cup to see if the progression looks smooth. Some dyes are much more powerful than others, and you may need to make tiny adjustments before you're happy.

Add them in sequence to the cups containing the yarn and use your gloved hand to "smoosh" the yarn gently to ensure that the yarn is completely covered in dye.

Make sure all the yarn, including the yarn connecting each mini skein, receives dye as well. Do not stir at this stage; you will regret it when the time comes to put the yarn back into one skein (unless you enjoy untangling yarn!). Carefully move the entire bin of cups to the microwave.



Step 6

Run your microwave in two minute intervals, checking on your yarn in between. When the water in the cups is clear, you have absorbed all the dye from the water into your yarn and are ready to rinse. This is called an "exhausted dye-bath". If the dye in the water persists, try adding more vinegar to help the dye bond to the yarn. Once the dye bath is exhausted, let your yarn cool completely before proceeding to the next step. (Seriously, it's hot. Be patient with those grabby hands!)

Step 7

Rinse out your mini skeins in warm water with a little mild soap. Carefully straighten your skeins out and hang them to dry. Once dry, you can untie the individual pieces and rewind it into one large skein. Take a moment to feel like the rockstar that you are.

Your skein is now ready to become a gorgeous project that will graduate in colour all on its own as you knit, weave, or crochet your way through. When your friends ask how you did it, it's totally cool to respond with, "A magician never tells!"



The perfect way to showcase gradient yarn.

Size: One size fits most

You will need:

Loom: 40cm (16ins) or wider rigid heddle

Reed: 40/10cm (10dpi)

Warp Yarn: Ashford Mackenzie 4 Ply Super wash treated (357m/390yds, 100gm net)
1 ball hand-dyed

Weft Yarn: fingering weight (4 ply) 100% Tencel (275m/300yds) 1 ball hand-dyed

Here's how:

Total warp ends: 128

Total warp length: 2.4m (8ft)

Finished width: 30cm (12ins)

Warping

Warp complete width of the reed (30cm/12ins) with Mackenzie yarn.

Weaving

Weave complete warp length with the Tencel yarn.

Finishing

Remove weaving from the loom. Finish ends with knots.

Hand wash in warm water and a little liquid soap, rinse and lay flat to dry.

When still a little damp cover with a soft cotton cloth and press with a warm iron.



Shireen and her ombre scarf

A Place to Belong

BY LAURA MORRIS, GERRINGONG, NSW, AUSTRALIA

Part café, part casual community space, Calderwood Valley's "Sprout Hub" hosted the creation of a public arts project: a community weaving facilitated by Laura Morris of NSW, Australia. Here, she tells us about the journey that led to this exciting project.

I live in Gerringong on the beautiful NSW

South Coast with two of the loves of my life – my wonderful husband and cheeky three-year-old son. Two years ago however, I fell in love again, when I started to create hand woven and hand spun fibre artwork.

Since I was a child I have sought out creative expression, starting with fine arts then moving to a more design-oriented space. After coming out of the fog of having a newborn and having moved to such a picturesque part of the world, I felt inspired to use my hands to create again in a more tactile and organic way. So, in 2015, I began to learn the art of weaving, spinning and botanical dyeing.

As I fell more and more in love with this wonderful world of fibre art, I realised it

was not just the process of making, but the connections I was feeling to makers of times past that I felt drawn to. Perhaps the art form is in my blood, because my ancestors were English cloth-dressers (croppers), many of whom became part of the Luddite Movement of the 19th Century. I find this fascinating, because I am now in my own way resisting many of the modern technologies of today's textile industries. Constantly inspired by my natural surroundings, I am so passionate about interpreting traditional methods of my craft, as an authentically-sustainable and environmentally-conscious practice.

Recently I was approached to facilitate a community weaving project where community members themselves would participate in its creation at the "Sprout Hub" in nearby Calderwood Valley. The development brief was to celebrate the natural beauty of the surrounding open space.

Instead of just working with commercial materials, there is a history and journey to this artwork. I dyed locally-sourced fleece in its raw state with foraged plant dyestuffs, then scoured and carded it on my Ashford Wide Drum Carder. I then took the prepared batt and spun it with my most adored Ashford Kiwi 2 Spinning Wheel. I worked with the fibre in this way, to show

just how lucky we are to be surrounded by an abundance of natural materials and how, with the right tools, a special yarn (and ultimately art piece) could be produced. With many intense hours of preparation, I believe I too became a part of the essence of each community piece, as I am woven into its journey from conception to completion.

On the day, many hands were involved; wrapping the yarn spun from local Alpacas and Merino along with recycled yarns. While we wrapped the sticks, we discussed what it meant to be part of a community. The hopes of the new residents of Calderwood Valley were all very similar, in that they wanted to belong: to have a home and a community where children could thrive in a natural environment. So many of them were amazed at the process and were so excited to be part of the artwork, knowing that it would then be on display in their "Sprout Hub" space.

The general community rarely gets to see such things as fibre arts in practice. Creating a talking point through public arts projects can have the potential to inspire many people to rethink the source of their textiles. Sharing my passion like this was wonderful and the equivalent of standing on a rooftop to declare my love!



Laura, making connections through fibre artworks



Members of the community excited to take part

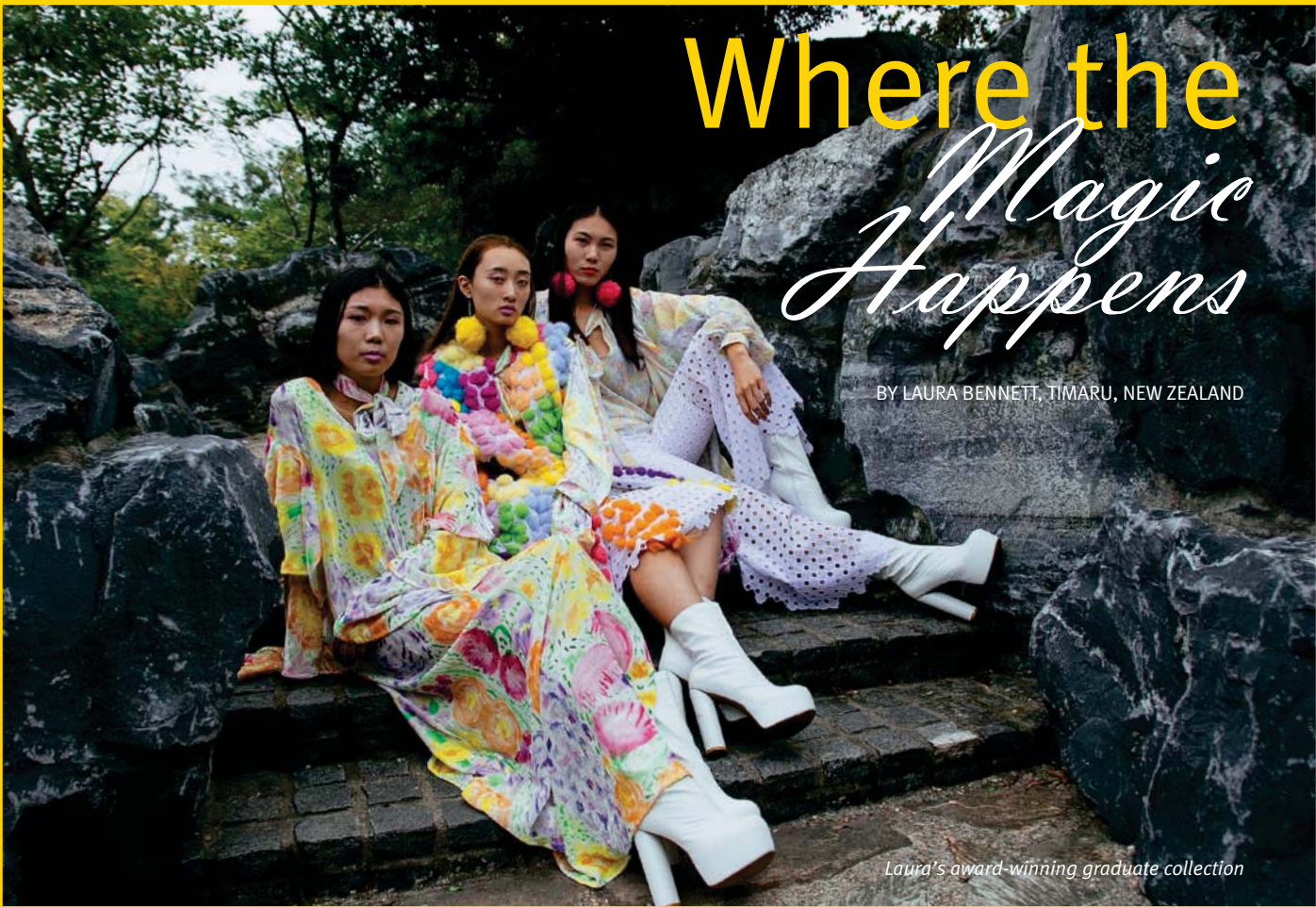
Editor's NOTE

Laura has been involved in several community arts projects and also runs workshops for small groups on spinning. See more of her work on her Instagram: [instagram.com/loomdreaming](https://www.instagram.com/loomdreaming)

Where the Magic Happens

BY LAURA BENNETT, TIMARU, NEW ZEALAND

Laura's award-winning graduate collection



A recently-graduated design student invites us to escape into the solace and wonder of nature.

As a recent fashion design graduate from Otago Polytechnic, New Zealand, my designer ethos is to create a simple design but with a rich decoration.

I believe clothing acts as our chosen skin and personal tool for communication so I enhance ready-to-wear classics through a play of colour and print.

The individual, hand element of textile exploration excites me. I focus on only using natural fibres and as a young New Zealander it is hard not to appreciate the wool that our country produces and the amazing qualities it holds for fashion garments. My graduate collection, "A Lucid Distraction", was based on how I find solace in nature. I painted a spring garden watercolour that was then digitally printed on linen and different silks.

I also wanted to create a tactile impression that contrasted with the flat digital printing. I fell in love with Ashford's Merino wool roving, drawn to its natural volume and to the wide range of dyed colours readily available. I instantly knew I somehow wanted to include it in

my collection. I wove strips of the roving in a random pattern through the eyelets of my cotton broderie anglaise base fabric, and then fluffed it with a flick carder. The results gave a great sense of playfulness and interest to my collection and were eye-catching down the runway. My pom pom earrings made from left-over Merino wool have proven to be a popular accessory.

As an emerging designer, I believe it is important to source materials locally, and to experiment and play with textiles. That's where the magic happens.

Editor's NOTE

Laura's stunning garments won the People's Choice Award at iD Dunedin International Emerging Designer Awards in 2017 and she has been invited to exhibit in this year's New Zealand Fashion Week.

Custom Lacings

the Inkle way

BY NICOLE KRAUTHÖFER, BERLIN, GERMANY



Shoelace style!

Frustrated with shoe and boot laces where the colour or material doesn't match, Nicole began weaving her own.

Editor's **NOTE**

I love Nicole's woven shoelaces, and her finishing techniques give a very smart and professional look. See more of Nicole's work on her blog <http://krautiline.blogspot.de/>

I wear my handwoven laces with almost every shoe that needs them - from gumboots to my red winter shoes. It is nice to be able to determine the colour and the pattern itself, and adapt to the shoe or the season.

You will need:

Loom: Inkle Loom
Warp: Ashford Cotton 10/2 (100% Mercerised Cotton 200gm, Ne 10/2; 1696m/1854yds) Cedar Green and Celosia Orange
Weft: Ashford Cotton 10/2 (100% Mercerised Cotton 200gm, Ne 10/2; 1696m/1854yds) Celosia Orange

Here's how:

Total warp ends: 7 orange and 6 green, a total of 13

Total warp length: 2.8m (3yds)

Finished width: 5mm (1/4in)

Finished length: 2 x 1.2m (4ft)

Warping

Using the instructions in the *Learn to Weave on the Inkle Loom* booklet or the tutorial www.ashford.co.nz/inkle-tutorial, warp the loom following the draft.

Shoelace draft

2 orange, 2 green, 1 orange, 1 green, 1 orange (centre), 1 green, 1 orange, 2 green, 2 orange

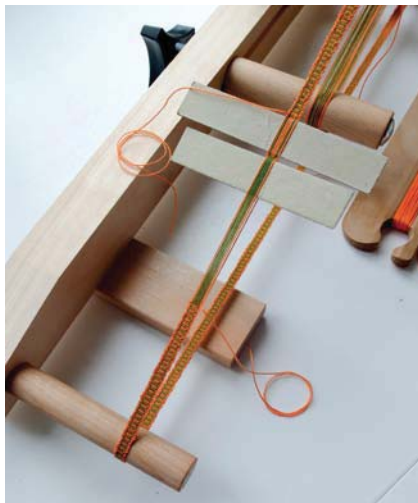


Nicole is colour-coordinated

Weaving

Leave a 20-30cm (8-12ins) tail of weft thread and beating firmly, weave 1.2m (4ft) using the orange cotton. Leave 30cm (12ins) of weft thread and cut.

Leave 20cm (8ins) of warp and weave the second shoelace like the first. Cut and remove from the loom.



Leave a 20-30cm (8-12ins) tail of the weft thread at the beginning and end of each shoelace.

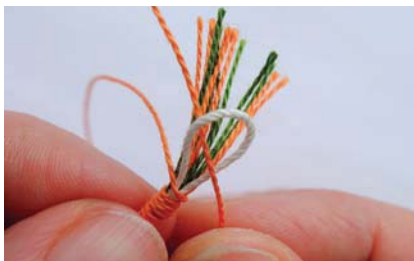
Finishing



Put a loop of a contrasting thread in the centre on the end of the shoelace.



With the long, cut weft tail, wrap the last row of the woven shoelace and fringes tightly.



When you have wrapped approx. 1cm (1/2in), put the end of the weft thread through the loop of the contrast thread.



Pull the weft tail through the wrapped threads by pulling the contrast thread.



Pull tight.



Cut and repeat process for all ends.



Now dip the ends in textile glue. Do not remove any surplus.



Allow the tips to dry thoroughly and cut off the fringes to create a nice end to feed through the shoe eyelet.



James and David

In Safe Hands

BY ANNIE STUDHOLME,
COLDSTREAM, NEW ZEALAND

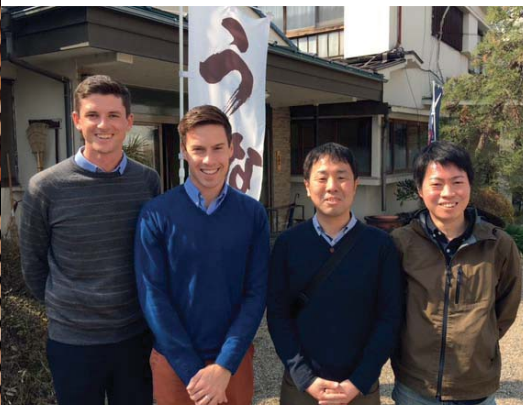
After more than eighty years dedicated to delivering the world's best spinning wheels, weaving looms and textile equipment to textile artists worldwide, people can rest in the knowledge that Ashford's future is not only secure, but in capable hands with the next generation taking on the challenge.

While Richard and Elizabeth are showing no signs of slowing down, both are delighted to have their son James Ashford and his husband David Lester, working alongside them in the company. With the

support of the staff, James and David are helping to drive the family business forth in this ever-changing world, ensuring it remains at the forefront of design, quality and manufacturing, while also leading the way in health and safety and continuous improvement.

Like his father, as a young boy growing up in Ashburton, James was surrounded by spinning wheels and weaving looms. He often spent time with his grandparents, Joy and Walter Ashford, soaking up their passion for the products they first started

With Tomio and Masayuki, Sanyo Trading, Japan



At Wonderwool, Wales, with UK distributor David Herring, Cathy and Steve



Opening Wolboerderij's new craft facility with Janny, Holland



creating back in 1934, while in his holidays he earned pocket money working in the packing room.

After finishing school, he attended Canterbury University graduating with an Honours degree in science, majoring in computer science. It was there that he met his future husband David Lester, also from Ashburton, who is a chartered accountant.

Following a stint working in Christchurch, together they moved to the United States and living in a studio apartment in Brooklyn, New York, they worked for big multinational companies. While there they also had an opportunity to visit and stay with Ashford's distributors in the US and Europe, which speaks volumes of the relationships formed over the past two generations.

Two years ago, Richard and Elizabeth presented James and David with the opportunity to return home and join the family business with a long-term view of their acquiring the company. Although they loved New York, with family in Ashburton it seemed like a logical step, but James and David were under no illusion. It was a massive shift from the high life of corporate New York to rural Mid Canterbury.

"I had been around the family business for my entire life so I knew what to expect, but for David it was a huge change. We wanted to give it a try and wanted to see if it could work for all of us. We came into the process with our eyes wide open, but without any sense of obligation or pressure from my parents," says James.

Since returning in November 2015, James and David have immersed themselves in the business, getting familiar with the manufacturing process. They also underwent extensive training in textile fibre arts, health and safety, human resources and continuous improvement. Both have also travelled

extensively meeting distributors, dealers and customers in Australia, United States, United Kingdom, Japan, Italy and the Netherlands, attending some of the world's largest textile and fibre shows.

"It has been a huge learning curve for both of us and quite challenging. We have more than 900 products; there is a lot to learn and that's not going to happen overnight, but we have had wonderful support from our staff and members of the spinning and weaving community. It's very rewarding working with the fantastic products we make and the wonderful customers we have," says James.

With his computer science expertise James has developed new programs to help speed ordering, production and dispatch. "It's about trying to improve and streamline the processes to make the lives of our staff easier." He has also helped improve work-flow to enable the company to respond more quickly to customer needs. His skills are also invaluable as more and more of the manufacturing process is replaced by state-of-the-art computer-automated equipment, which not only reduces wastage, but greatly improves operator-safety.

David meanwhile oversees the financials and has taken over the human resources and health and safety roles in the business. He is currently completing a National Certificate in Occupational Health and Safety. He is also a dab hand at weaving; Elizabeth describing him as "the best student I have ever taught".

They are not only enjoying their new roles, but relishing the time spent together and have inherited Richard and Elizabeth's passion for the business. "It's the greatest decision we have made coming to work at Ashford's. I can't imagine going back to working in separate locations. We are enjoying the work and can share the

challenges. In a big company, you are just a cog in a wheel, but in a small business you can really make a difference. Changes can happen faster and we can respond more quickly to customer needs," says David.

With James and David taking over some of the more critical operational tasks, Richard and Elizabeth are enjoying sharing their knowledge with their sons, spending more time researching new products and meeting Ashford's wonderful customers.

"We couldn't be happier that our sons have accepted this opportunity. And we know Walter and Joy would be thrilled that the future of our family business is secure in such capable hands," say Elizabeth and Richard.



The next generation

Boomerang Shawl

BY NATASHA SILLS, HOUSTON, TEXAS, USA

A versatile, easy-knit shawl that will wrap several times around the neck - perfect for displaying those variegated hand dyed, hand spun skeins.

I was travelling from the USA to New Zealand for a dealer retreat at Ashford headquarters when I came up with this cute but mindless plane project. It was easy to knit on the long flight even with frequent distractions. I've since made several Boomerangs of varying size and gauge; my favourite one is hand spun from a blend of fibre I obtained at the retreat. I always think of these as my Ashford Shawls. This pattern is quite versatile and works with any yarn. It is especially well suited to those odd skeins of hand spun that we all seem to make as beginners but don't quite know what to do with.

Knit with fine or bulky yarns

Editor's NOTE

Natasha Sills is a fibre artist who loves to knit, crochet, spin, dye, weave and design. She is an Ashford dealer and sells her hand dyed yarn and spinning fibre online at www.GrittyKnits.com. Her pattern design library is available on Ravelry.

You will need:

Yarn: 100gms (3½ozs)
Needles: for a loose gauge use larger size needles than recommended for the yarn. I used about 330m (360yds) of worsted weight hand spun yarn and a size US 10 (6mm, UK 4) needle.

Note: This pattern can be made with any yarn, any gauge. Knit until you run out of yarn or until the shawl reaches the size you want.

Here's how:

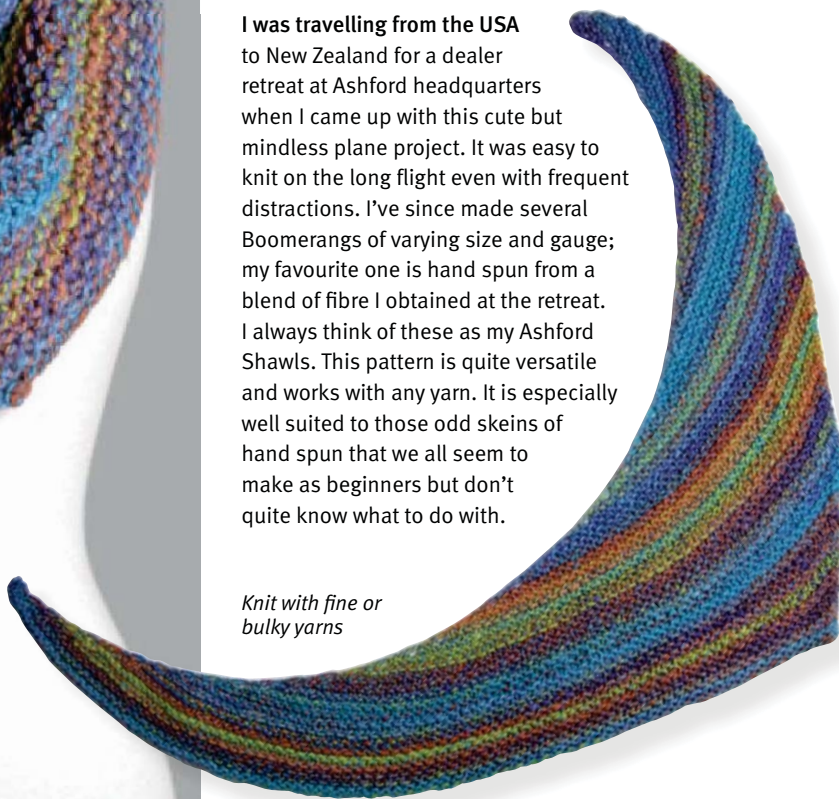
Cast on 4 sts

Row 1: Knit to last stitch, yarn over, knit into the front and back of the last stitch

Row 2: Yarn over, knit to last 2 sts, knit 2 together

Repeat these two rows until shawl reaches your desired size or you finish the ball of yarn.

Cast off very loosely.





Ombre Blanket

BY TRACY TAIT, WINSLOW, NEW ZEALAND

The gentle progression of colour in ombre has been likened to the transition from wakefulness to slumber. What better way to enjoy this beautiful effect of one colour gradually blending into another colour hue, than in a soft, snuggly and squishy blanket.

Knitted with four strands of Ashford Tekapo 12ply as one, this queen size blanket is warm, durable – and beautiful! This pattern in bulky 12ply using Ashford big needles is quick and easy to knit.

Finished size
210 x 210cm (7 x 7ft)

You will need:

Yarn: Tekapo 12ply (134m/146yds, 100gm net) #709 Natural Dark x 6 balls, #708 Natural Medium x 11 balls, #707 Natural Light x 11 balls, #706 Natural White x 8 balls

Knitting needles 18mm (US 35), 45cm (18ins) long
Darning needle

Here's how:

Using 4 strands as one, cast on (loosely) 100 stitches.

The first 7 rows are moss stitch.

Row 1 – Knit1, Purl1 to end

Row 2 – Purl1, Knit1 to end

Repeat

Row 8 – Begin row with 8 moss stitches then 84 stocking stitches finishing with 8 moss stitches. Keeping moss stitch borders, work as per colour sequence.

Last 7 rows are moss stitch.

Total number of rows knitted 152.

Cast off loosely.

Colour pattern sequence

Row 1 – 7: 4 strands white

Row 8 – 13: 3 strands white, 1 strand light

Row 14 – 19: 2 strands white, 2 strands light

Row 20 – 25: 1 strand white, 3 strands light

Row 26 – 31: 4 strands light

Row 32 – 37: 3 strands light, 1 strand medium

Row 38 – 43: 2 strands light, 2 strands medium

Row 44 – 49: 1 strand light, 3 strands medium

Row 50 – 55: 4 strands medium

Row 56 – 61: 3 strands medium, 1 strand dark

Row 62 – 67: 2 strands medium, 2 strands dark

Row 68 – 73: 1 strand medium, 3 strands dark

Row 74 – 80: 4 strands dark

Now reverse colour sequence by working row 73 to row 1.

Concept to Creation

BY KATE WILLIAMS, CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND

Hello my name is Kate and this is my first Wheel magazine project. I am a textile design graduate and have just started working at Ashfords. For my project, I was given the new Ashford Merino sliver colours in Fog, Fluro Pink and Yellow to create into a felted article. Stationery, bags and cushions were all considered as options. In the end, I decided that a collection of bags would be created, with the bags aiming to be fun, modern and tasteful.

It was a good challenge for me using a fluorescent colour scheme as I am quite fond of soft and natural colours. For this project, I created a visual diary to record, test and plan my ideas: a process that was firmly ingrained while studying.



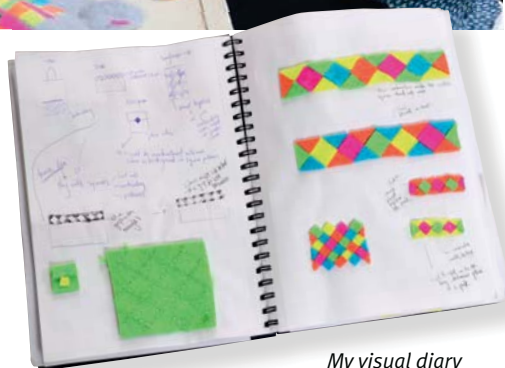
I find working in a visual diary important when creating a large project. It may seem time consuming but it will save you wasting time and effort making something and finding the result isn't what you had in mind!

To start with I needed an inspiration source. I went looking to nature and found brightly-coloured marine life. Inspiration is all around us. I like to take photographs of scenes and images that inspire me. The internet is a good source too, and Pinterest is a website I often use, particularly to find craft inspiration.

I did sketches and experiments in my diary testing out patterns, colours and experimenting with different techniques to create variety in the collection. I made felt and glued the pieces together to try the different styles. In the beginning, I started creating layers inspired by coral and cut out felt in the shape of fish scales. From the scale shape, I progressed to squares as they gave me more options - the squares could be rotated to make diamonds and cut in half to make triangles.

When working with the fluro colours I found that the proportion of colours used was going to be important to make the collection more refined and sophisticated. Little bags were mocked up to test colour combinations and proportion.

I started experimenting with embroidery using hand spun fluro yarn to keep the colours matching. The square shapes pieced together reminded me of a quilting pattern, which lead me to try stitching squares out of straight lines like you would do when quilting. I used yarn the same colour as the felt as it would be



My visual diary

subtle and I believe would make the piece more sophisticated. Hand stitching ended up being a technique used throughout the collection and it gave the pieces more texture and added interest.

Briefly, I tried mixing the different coloured fibres together into felt. I decided to stick with felt all one colour as it looked cleaner and more modern.

One challenge was figuring out how to piece the square shapes together. This was solved by weaving strips of felt together and then felting again onto a thin wool batt. This was an efficient way to bind small shapes of felt together.

The felt shrinkage was another aspect that needed to be tested. Three 10cm (4ins) batts were created with two, three and four layers of wool. Once dried the squares were re-measured and the shrinkage value was calculated.

Working in a visual diary is important when creating a large project. Usually my first idea is never the best and it takes development and planning to achieve a more refined result. Often the hardest part is starting but once you do your idea will evolve and may be quite different from where you began!



Kate's fabulous bags

Alps to Ocean

BY TINA GILL,
METHVEN, NEW ZEALAND

My linked warp scarf is inspired by our beautiful local scenery – from the snowy peaks of Mt Hutt to the Pacific Ocean. A linked warp gives you a little extra interest and will draw attention when you wear it.

You will need:

Loom: 40cm (16ins) or wider rigid heddle
Reed: 40/10cm (10dpi)

Warp yarn: Ashford Mercerised Cotton 5/2 (100% cotton; 848m/927yds; 200gm net) 1 cone each Bleached White #101, Scuba Blue #144, Green Glow #152 and Dazzling Blue #146

Weft yarn: Ashford Mercerised Cotton 10/2 (100% cotton; 1696m/1854yds; 200gm net) 1 cone Bleached White #801

Other: Ashford Fringe Twister

Here's how:

Number of ends: 160 doubled ends – total 320

Warp length: 230cm (90ins)

Width in loom: 40cm (16ins)

Finished size: 180cm x 36cm (70 x 14¼ins) plus fringes

Weave structure: Tabby (plain weave)

Warping

Begin as you would normally set up for warping a rigid heddle loom (refer to our tutorials on rigid heddle warping www.ashford.co.nz/tutorials/weaving-tutorials). You will take a loop (two ends) through each slot **and** each eye as you warp. Start with your white 5/2 cotton tied to the back-warp stick. Tie the blue 5/2 cotton to the warp peg at the other end of the table.

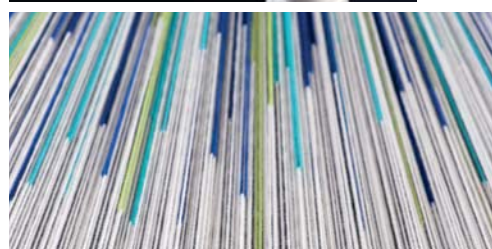


Take a loop of white through the first slot in the reed, bring the cone of blue towards the loom and take it through the white loop and back to the warp peg. Adjust tension by pulling either colour.



Take the second loop of white through the next eye in the reed and bring the blue down from the warping peg and through the loop again. Each time you will take the blue back around the warping peg. Continue across the full width of the reed. To change colours, tie the end of the first colour to the warp peg then tie the new colour to the warp peg and continue. You can adjust the lengths of each link to your preferred design.

Once the reed is threaded, wind on to the back roller. As all the eyes and the slots are already threaded, tie the warp in 2.5cm (1in) groups and leash on to the front warp stick (for simple leashing on instructions watch our Youtube video *Tying on a warp* <https://youtu.be/bnrCoijfZVY>).



Weaving

Leave a 5cm (2ins) header (for fringe), spread the warp and weave the length of the warp with the 10/2 cotton. Beat very gently for your finished scarf to be soft and drapey.

Finishing

Cut the warp from the loom, untie knots at the beginning and make fringes at both ends using an Ashford Fringe Twister. Wash the scarf on a regular wash in the machine. Lay flat to dry. Press with a hot iron. Enjoy!

Oooh Baby!

BY LIBBY KEOGHAN, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND



Create a soft, squishy and delicious baby blanket.

You will need:

Loom: 120cm (48ins) Rigid Heddle
Reed: Ashford Vari Dent Reed 120cm (48ins) I used 2.5, 5 and 7.5dpi (10, 20 and 30/10cm) reed sections in this order: Short 5dpi / 7.5 / 5 / Short 2.5 / 5 / 2.5 / 2 x 7.5 / 2.5 / 5 / Short 2.5 / 5 / 7.5 / Short 5

Warp and weft yarn: Ashford Tekapo 8ply Double Knit (100% wool; 200m/218yds; 100gm net) 9 balls Natural White #206

Other: Ashford Fringe Twister

A Vari Dent Reed is great if you want to create a project using a variety of yarns from your stash: art yarn, thick or thin, chunky or funky. You can think outside the box and include a variety of colours and textures. For this project I stayed neutral for a sophisticated look using the same yarn for the warp and the weft in a variety of single, double, triple and quadruple threads. This created a lovely texture and a basket-weave effect in places. Not only does this blanket look and feel delicious but it is quick to weave.

Here's how:

Number of ends: 464

Warp length: 2m (79ins)

Finished size: 148 x 109cm (59 x 44ins)

plus fringes

Weave structure: Tabby (plain weave)

Warping

Warp the loom as follows:

For the 7.5dpi reed sections use 1 thread in each slot and eye

For the 5dpi reed sections use either 2 or 3 threads in each slot and eye

For the 2.5dpi reed sections use 4 threads in each slot and eye

Weaving

Weave a header with a thicker yarn for a few rows to spread the warp.

Start and finish with three rows of single yarn beaten very firmly. Weave rows using double, triple and quadruple threads in any order you choose, just be creative!!

Weavers tip: When weaving more than one weft thread. With one weft thread on the shuttle weave one row and beat, then with the same shed open catch the outside thread/s and go back through the same shed. This will ensure your thread doesn't pull in at the selvedge.

Your outside thread/s may be an up or down thread so be sure to catch the outside one. Repeat if you want three or four weft threads in the shed.

Finishing

Cut the finished blanket from the loom, make fringes using an Ashford Fringe Twister. Wash the blanket on a short wool wash to full the blanket and felt it a little. Trim fringes to desired length. Add a beautiful baby and enjoy!



The Vari Dent Reed Kit includes a selection of 5 and 10cm (2 and 4ins) of 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60/10cm (2.5, 5, 7.5, 10, 12.5 and 15 dpi) reed sections. All interchangeable. All you have to do is remove the top rail to insert the sections, and the fun begins!

Reasons

BY ELIZABETH ASHFORD,
ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

Richard and I were honoured to speak in April at the New Zealand National Creative Fibre Festival, held this year in Christchurch. In our speech, we followed our products around the world and in observing how important spinning, weaving, felting, dyeing and knitting are to many people, we concluded our speech by endeavouring to identify the reasons why.

I then invited Ashford Club members to comment on the list of reasons and add any explanations we had missed.

Our conclusions are printed below. Are they complete? I would love to know if you agree or if you can add other reasons why we enjoy this common passion for the crafts so much.

Our Conclusions: why the crafts are so important.

- *Making textiles to wear, sell or give away.*
- *Crafts can allow us to feel part of a community and engender a sense of belonging as part of a group.*
- *As part of a group you gain friendship, companionship and support – as well as sharing knowledge and experience.*
- *There is always some new knowledge to gain. Learning new skills is satisfying and keeps our minds active.*
- *The thrill of making something unique yourself is very satisfying and gives a sense of self-fulfilment and a way of reaching your personal potential.*
- *The joy of helping others to experience the wonder of the textile arts and to reach their potential.*



Crafts are also important to these Ashford Club members because:

"What I have really enjoyed in the textile world is *the possibility to communicate with people* even if you don't speak their language. I visited an old woman in a Greek village to see her loom and her weaving, and was treated with fantastic warmth and hospitality." Elsa Krogh, Denmark

"They are *an interest for me aside from work and family* and provide a *challenge and excitement through working with different fibres.*" Betty Booth, New Zealand

"I have spent my career in a highly stressful field working long hours for the past 35 years. *Coming home to relax* is very important to my mental well-being. Half an hour of spinning, weaving, braiding, embroidering or crocheting allows me to step away from the issues of the day. Rather than relaxing, I find it absorbing. My mind becomes focused on the rhythm of my hands and the concentration required reduces the space for other thoughts in my brain. I "zone out" and become refocused on the thing that I am making. I am not even driven by the process of creating something. Just the rhythm. I am in the moment. Nothing else exists for that space of time. This is me. This is who I am. A maker." Sarah A. Pape, UK

"For me, it is *a source of pure joy and happiness.* I am free to let my imagination flow, be creative, see and feel and smell lovely wool and wood. And as an avid armchair traveller, I can travel around the whole world with wool. I can wonder how people in other countries and at other times wove and spun their textiles. And yes, I can learn. They all teach me so much! *It never gets boring.* It's the never-ending question - how did they do this, how does this work, what happens if.... As I always tell my friends - I don't need to climb Mount Everest. I have my daily adventures and challenges at home!" Carmen Budan, Germany

Plying

BY JO REEVE, WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND

Ply – it's such a little word but one with a big meaning.



A **plied yarn** is one in which multiple strands of spun singles are twisted together, usually in the opposite direction to that in which they were spun. There are many ways we can ply – two or more strands, novelty yarns, art yarns, cable yarns, and yarns with amazing colour effects, to name but a few. Plying is exciting – no matter which colours or textures are in the singles, or how they are plied, a beautiful new yarn is being created.

Why do we ply?

Balance – plying removes twist from each of the singles for a balanced yarn – one that does not twist upon itself. **Uniformity** – plying evens out singles for a more uniform yarn. **Strength and durability** – plied yarns are stronger and more durable than singles – two, three, four or more singles can be plied. More strength is added to the yarn with the addition of each strand. **Loft** – plied yarns are lighter than a single of the same thickness. **Texture** – create textured yarns from a subtle spiral to an art yarn, and

everything in between. **Lustre** – plying emphasises the sheen in fibres such as silk, suri alpaca, and Blue Faced Leicester.

How much twist?

There is no single answer to this as it depends on two important points – how much twist is in the singles, and the intended use of the plied yarn. The amount of twist in the singles is usually determined by the crimp in the raw fibre. Generally, the more crimps per centimetre the finer the fibre which means more twist is needed to hold them together. If you're not sure, make a short plying sample before you finish spinning your singles. Pull a 20cm (8ins) length of freshly-spun yarn off the bobbin and, keeping it under tension, fold it in half and let it ply back on itself. Is it suitable for your intended project? If the yarn looks under-plied with gaps between the two singles, you will need one or two more treadles in the plying. If the yarn feels hard and plies back on itself, fewer plying twists are needed. Once you are happy with the sample, snip it off and use it to refer to while you are plying.

PLAIN COLOUR YARNS

Singles

Stocking stitch: An unbalanced yarn with strong vertical lines and bias in the knitting.

Cables: Limp fabric and the cables do not 'stand up'.

Lace: There is some bias in the stocking stitch areas of the knitting, but not in the lace. The sample is soft and drapery, and the lace is open and well defined.

Two-ply

Stocking stitch: A balanced yarn with no bias in the knitting. The fabric is soft with good stitch definition.

Cables: Better stitch definition in the cables than the single yarn.

Lace: The lace holes are open but not as good as the single yarn.

Three-ply

Stocking stitch: A beautiful smooth, rounded yarn with stitches that sit snugly together and line up well. A very firm fabric.

Cables: The cables 'stand up'. Much better stitch definition than the two-ply yarn.

Lace: The fabric is firm with no drape and the lace area is not as open as the single yarn.

Singles

Two-ply

Three-ply



How to ply

Plying removes twist from the singles by spinning in the opposite direction to that of the singles. Assuming you have spun them Z twist (clockwise), you will be plying S twist, or anticlockwise. Working with a good rhythm is the key to evenly-plied yarn. Many spinners like to count the number of treadles before feeding the yarn onto the bobbin. Try this for your first efforts – as you become comfortable with the plying process you will find a natural rhythm and won't need to count.

Freshly spun singles are lively and full of energy. To prevent them twisting back on themselves while plying, place your lazy kate about 1m (3ft) behind your spinning chair. Attach the two singles to the leader and pinch lightly with your front hand. Holding your back hand close to your body and in line with the orifice, use one finger to separate the threads. For even plying, keep the singles taut. Treadle anticlockwise, letting the twist run down the length of the two singles, sliding your front hand lightly along the plied yarn until your two hands meet, then pinch and feed the yarn into the orifice. Depending on your treadling speed, it will take 4-6 treadles

for the twist to accumulate along the length of the singles. Adjust the tension if you need to so that the yarn is pulling on at a steady rate. The bobbin will fill up quickly so be sure to move your yarn to the next hook at regular intervals.

All hand spun yarns, single or plied, benefit from resting to set the twist. I like to let my plied yarn rest on the bobbin for about 24 hours before washing.

The way we ply can be the difference between a good yarn and a fantastic yarn. This applies not only to the aesthetics of the yarn, but whether it is fit for purpose. Some yarns are simply better suited to a particular knitting stitch. I made samples of single, two-ply and three-ply yarns to compare stocking stitch, cables and a simple lace pattern using plain and variegated yarns. They are a wonderful resource for planning future projects. For a fair comparison, my singles were spun worsted style with the same amount of twist and the same thickness from Ashford Corriedale sliver. I would love for you to be able to touch the samples but as that's not possible, I'll do my best to describe them. The results certainly are interesting.

VARIEGATED YARNS

These days there are many beautiful colourways available for spinners. I wanted to see what would happen when I knitted the same samples using variegated yarns. They were spun from drum carded batts.

Singles

Stocking stitch: Clear, bright blocks of colour.

Cables: Limp fabric. The cables are flat and lost amongst the colour variation.

Lace: The lace holes are open and clear. The pattern is still obvious amongst the colour variation.

Two-ply

Stocking stitch: Bright, clear colours.

Cables: Good stitch definition in the cables but some depth lost in the colour variations.

Lace: The lace holes are open and the patterning is still clear but not as good as the single yarn.

Three-ply

Stocking stitch: The colours are soft and subtle – not as bright as in the single and two-ply yarns.

Cables: Great stitch definition even with the variation in colours.

Lace: The rounded yarns 'fills' the lace holes which are less open than the single and two-ply yarns.

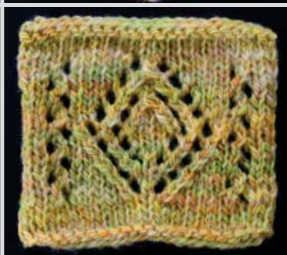
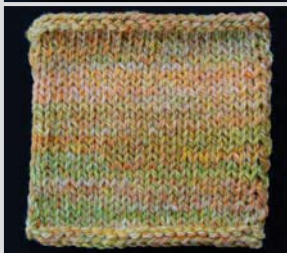
Singles



Two-ply



Three-ply



In conclusion:

Single yarns: Great for showing off colour in stocking stitch. I would not use a single yarn for cables. The fabrics are limp and the cables do not 'stand up'. This would be a beautiful yarn to use in an all-over lace pattern. It is lightweight, drapery, the lace holes are open and there is no problem with splitting plies during knitting.

Two-ply: Also great for showing off colour variations in stocking stitch. An all-round yarn with good stitch definition for most knitting projects.

Three-ply: The ideal yarn for creating subtle colour variations. The perfect yarn for the best stitch definition in cables. A firm, hard-wearing fabric for outerwear that would have very little pilling.

Editor's NOTE

Jo is the author of the very popular *The Ashford Book of Carding and The Ashford Book of Hand Spinning*. She is also a member of the Professional Weavers Network of New Zealand and Creative Fibre New Zealand.

Keepers of the Cloth

BY KAREN SELK, SALT SPRING ISLAND, BC, CANADA



Using a porcupine quill for pick-up



Passing down history through woven patterns

Determined to uphold the culture and endangered language of her tribe in Myanmar (Burma), Mai Ni Ni Aung has proved that one person is all it takes to make a huge difference in the well-being of the world.

Over the past fifteen years Mai Ni Ni has devoted her life to setting up a weaving training centre that not only provides economic opportunities and encourages self-employment, but benefits the quality of life of Sumtu individuals as well as the entire Chin community.

Mai Ni Ni is of the Sumtu (people living at the mouth of the river) Chin tribe, which is one of the major ethnic groups living in the northwest of Myanmar. The Sumtu, like many of the fifty-three sub-groups within the Chin, only have oral language so storytelling and performances by village shamans, as well as patterns in cloth, have been their method of passing down the history, traditions and culture within each clan for generations.

Her background is as a teacher and tour guide. She has an MSc in International Development Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London and an MA in conflict resolution from the University of Notre Dame in the US. Her grandfather was a shaman, who was called upon to perform for special occasions and wore unique clothes woven with significant patterns to assist in telling stories of their history and daily life.

Mai Ni Ni's on-going amazing journey of preservation first started back in 2000 with seven shamans and the recording of the oral history of her Sumtu tribe with a grant from the Brighton Museum, UK.



"Fruit cut in half" pattern



Backstrap weaving



Grain seeds woven into the cloth



"Flower from the forest" pattern

The results were so fascinating that she received grants funded by the National Geographic Society to train new weavers and document the weaving techniques, while the Endangered Language Program at SOAS also provided a grant to collect audio and video recordings of traditional performances telling the stories and history using archaic language.

Sadly though, Mai Ni Ni could not find any of the original garments worn at ceremonies in the Sumtu villages that weren't in tatters. Although the garments were an important component of storytelling, they were sold for money to survive. This prompted Mai Ni Ni to go in search of the older ladies in the villages who still remembered how to weave and make the patterns and costumes before they were lost forever.

In a bid to return the traditional textiles to the lives of the Sumtu, in 2002 Mai Ni Ni recruited young women in the villages with a passion and feeling of pride in being the keepers of the culture through weaving. They took part in a training programme with the older master weavers who knew the weaving patterns using the traditional method of supplementary weft pick-up on a back-strap loom.

When interviewing the thirty or so older weavers she realised the women, many of whom had not woven for more than twenty years, were reviving the skill through muscle memory as much as mental memory. She gave the elder women rice beer to help with the flow of memory for the meaning of the patterns, as well as how to weave them. The younger women would listen and watch, carrying on at the loom while the mentors rested. When they woke up, the younger weavers would be told if they could continue or must take it out and start again, Mai Ni Ni explained.

Just as Mai Ni Ni was getting the training centre underway she returned to Notre Dame University where she was awarded a social entrepreneur award of US\$15,000 which enabled her to fulfil her dreams. As well as training, it allowed her to build bamboo lodgings for the weavers on an acre of land in Minbya.

Since starting the training centre, Sone Tu Weavers, Mai Ni Ni has revived fifty-two traditional pick-up patterns, each telling a story like bees fetching water, fruit cut in half, female spider and so on. She has trained more than three hundred people and provided them with a good income to sustain their dedication to weaving.

Back-strap weaving, which uses stunning supplementary weft pick-up

designs, is time consuming, but uses minimal materials and suits a village lifestyle. It takes approximately two-three weeks of six hour days to complete an 80 x 20ins shawl, she says.

Currently there are three hundred weavers spread across three townships, and long-term she would like to see that increase to seven hundred. There are one hundred and fifty working full-time, while others work part-time split between other family responsibilities of children, planting and harvesting.

The weaving centre appoints one person to be responsible for thirty weavers in a village to maintain strict quality control and distribution of yarns, so all weaving is returned to the centre ready for sale. This frees up time for the people in the centre to concentrate on training, learning new techniques, and receiving and distribution of orders.

When the centre receives an order a sample is woven for approval. The team decides which group of weavers is best suited for the job, provides them with the necessary materials and an advance payment so they have enough money to concentrate on producing beautiful, quality weaving. The weavers get paid a fair wage and an additional ten per cent when their piece is sold.



Mai Ni Ni Aung with her textiles

Mai Ni Ni hasn't stopped there. Full of energy, great ideas and immense dedication to the Sumtu people, she has almost finished building an even larger training centre on the property. In addition to continuing training the traditional back-strap weaving techniques, she is also reviving the Sazigyo card weaving technique. This was traditionally used for weaving a complex Burmese script into ribbons used to bind the sacred Buddhist prayer plates.

She has also introduced fourteen ancient floor looms from Amarpura, once the industrial weaving centre of Myanmar. Once refurbished, the floor looms will be used to complete larger commissions such as bed covers and curtains in hotels.

In addition, Mai Ni Ni has also built a dormitory and school for 9th and 10th standard (Grades 10 and 11) as in Rakhine state, where many Chin live, there are no high schools in the small villages. She provides free room and board for thirty-five students and their parents provide the money for the teachers' salaries. This education provides the necessary step to university and all the Sone Tu staff are graduates of the education project. In time Mai Ni Ni hopes that by preserving Chin cultural heritage and incorporating Chin people's identity in a modern world it will help break down the discrimination and these beautiful weavings will inspire others to understand and respect Chin history, culture and traditions.

Editor's **NOTE**

It was a special moment when Karen met Mai Ni Ni – someone who is making a huge difference to the well-being of the Sumtu people – at the Sone Tu Weavers' compound last year. See more of this wonderful initiative at:
Website: www.sonetu.com
Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/SonetuChinWeavings/
Film: sonetu.smugmug.com/Films/Sumtu-memories/

Bomber Jacket in Herringbone

BY DAVID LESTER, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

Hand woven woollen classic bomber jacket with knitted cuffs, collar and hem.

For my first hand woven garment I wanted to make a classic herringbone bomber jacket suitable for everyday wear.

You will need:

Loom: Eight shaft loom 80cm (32ins)

Reed: 40/10cm (10dpi) sleyed 2 threads per slot

Sett: 20 ends per inch

Warp yarn: Ashford Tekapo 3ply (100% wool 454m/496yds, 100gm net) 7 balls Black #911

Weft yarn: Ashford Tekapo 3ply (100% wool 454m/496yds, 100gm net) 7 balls Natural Medium #908

Banding: Hand or machine knitted for cuffs, collar and hem in Ashford Tekapo 8ply (Double knit, 200m/218yds, 100gm net) 1m x 90cm (1yd x 35½ins) 4 balls Black #211

Other: Interfacing, lining and zip



Here's how:

Number of ends: 640 threads, plus floating selvages

Width in reed: 80cm (32ins)

Warp length: 4.5m (5yds)

Finished size: 78cm x 3.9m (30¾ins x 4yds) after washing

Weave structure: Herringbone (broken twill)

Warping

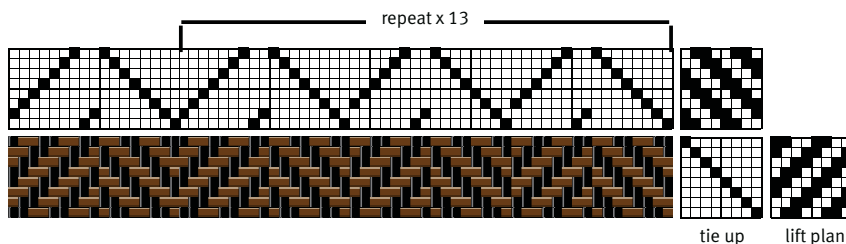
Wind warp and thread as per draft.

Weaving

Weave a few picks of tabby and then follow the draft. I wanted a firm fabric so I beat the weft firmly (approximately 20 ends per inch)

Finishing

1. Remove from the loom and secure the ends with a zig zag stitch.
2. Machine wash using the wool cycle. Remove, lay flat to dry and steam press.
3. Use a commercial jacket pattern or make a calico toile.
4. Place the pattern on the fabric and mark.
5. Remove the pattern, cut and zig zag around the edges of the pattern pieces to secure the weaving.
6. Iron on interfacing to the wrong side of the pattern pieces.
7. Sew as per pattern instructions.
8. Use the knitted rib band for the collar, cuffs and hem.
9. Attach a lining and zip.





Shifting Shades of Grey

BY KATE SHERRATT,
ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

Create beautiful shifting shades from white to bright using subtle hues of grey to transition almost seamlessly.

Batts made using this method are perfect to spin and then Navajo ply or fractal spin.

You will need:

Ashford Drum Carder 20cms (8ins) wide 72ppsi

Ashford Corriedale wool sliver: 15gms White, 20gms Fog, 20gms Grey, 15gms Turquoise

Here's how:

- | | |
|----------|---|
| Colour 1 | 10gms White |
| Combo 1 | 2nd shade is a blend of 5gms White and 5gms Fog |
| Colour 2 | 3rd shade is 10gms Fog |
| Combo 2 | 4th shade is a blend of 5gms Fog and 5gms Grey |
| Colour 3 | 5th shade is 10gms Grey |
| Combo 3 | 6th shade is a blend of 5gms Grey and 5gms Turquoise (or your favourite bright colour). |
| Colour 4 | 7th shade is 10gms of Turquoise (or your favourite bright colour). |



Use your fingers to guide fibre onto drum

Prepare combo colours first

Blend each combination colour by feeding small amounts, alternating the two colours, onto the drum carder in a narrow strip. To ensure the combination colour is well blended you may want to remove the batt and put through the carder again. The more contrasting the two colours are the more blended you will want it to be. It is this blending that will give you your subtle shifts in colour. Repeat for each colour combination.

Creating the finished batt

Using the side by side method load narrow strips of each colour and combination in approximately 2.5cm (1in) sections in the sequence listed above. Use your fingers to guide each colour onto the drum carder.

Remove the batt from the drum carder, rolling into a large tight rolag and spin a woollen yarn from the end of the batt and Navajo ply or fractal spin.



Navajo plied and knitted

Latvian Fingerless Mitts

BY BETH BROWN-REINSEL,
BRATTLEBORO, VERMONT, USA

Being a knitter of historic techniques has enriched my skills and understanding of how knitting works for all garments, old and modern.



I love to add motifs, a shoulder join, or a cast-on from long ago into the modern patterns I write, giving the resulting project a unique look. I hope you'll enjoy my version of Latvian mittens in this pattern.

You will need:

Yarn: Ashford Tekapo 8-ply Double Knit (100% wool, 200m/218yds/100gm)
1 ball each of Mahogany #217 (MC), Mustard #220 (CC1), Chartreuse #221 (CC2), Azure #226 (CC3), Ochre #219 (CC4)

Needles: One set of four 3.5mm (4 US) double-pointed needles

Other: Stitch marker, scissors, smooth contrasting waste yarn, tapestry needle

Finished Sizes

Women's Medium to Large: 19cm (7½ins) hand circumference, 22.5cm (8¾ins) long

Gauge

25 sts and 24 rounds = 10cm (4ins) in two-colour stockinette stitch

Here's how:

Cast-On Method: Slingshot/ Longtail-Method-With-Short-Tails.

Note: You can view two videos of this cast-on on my website at www.knittingtraditions.com/knitting-resources/tutorials/#LongEng for Continental knitters and for English knitters.

Using the Slingshot/Longtail Method with MC and CC2, cast on 54 sts. Drop off and pull out the slip knot. Place a marker to indicate the beginning of the round. Arrange the sts evenly over three needles (18 sts on each) and knit with the fourth.

Two-Colour Half-Braid

This creates a two-colour half-braid which has a row of purl bumps in MC above the braid. Your yarns will get very twisted around each other.

Rnd 1: Bring both yarns to the front of the work. Purl, alternating the yarns with every st by bringing the new yarn **UNDER** the yarn just used.

Take the yarns to the back of the work. Cut off MC and pull through the other yarn, causing it to untwist. **Note:** CC2 will be used in Rnd 4, so just let it hang for now, making

sure it strands up the inside of the work. Mark the RS of the fabric because it's easy to get confused in the next few rounds.

Rnd 2: Join CC1 and knit. Cut off CC1. This round will not be noticeable in the final product except as a row of contrasting purl bumps which will show above Rnd 3.

Solid Colour Half-Braid

For Rnd 3, you will need to break off a piece of CC3, 2m/2yds long, to use with the end from the ball; alternatively, work with both ends of CC3 ball. Again, your yarns will get very twisted.

Rnd 3: Bring both strands of CC3 to the front of the work. Purl, alternating yarns with every st and bringing the new yarn **UNDER** the yarn just used. Cut off both strands of CC3.

Scalloped Lace Pattern

Here the stitch count remains the same for all three rounds but because of the decreases and yarn overs, a scallop will develop. The 9-stitch pattern for Rnds 4-7 will repeat twice across each needle.

Rnds 4-6: With CC2, *ssk, k2, yo, k1, yo, k2, k2tog; rep from *.

Editor's NOTE

Beth teaches workshops on traditional knitting internationally and recently taught throughout New Zealand. We were delighted when she visited us in Ashburton and agreed to share one of her patterns in The Wheel. Beth is the author of *Knitting Ganseys* and has produced three DVDs. Beth loves living in Vermont in the United States and invites you to join her monthly email newsletter list at www.knittingtraditions.com/news/newsletter/

Cut off CC2. Join MC.

Note: In Rnd 7, decreases are made without the accompanying yarn overs which will reduce the total number of sts; the slipped stitch brings the colour from Rnd 6 up into Rnd 7.

Rnd 7: *Ssk, k2, sl 1 purl-wise, k2, k2tog; rep from *.

Total: 42 sts.

Cuff

Note: Avoid twisting the yarns by being consistent with one yarn stranding above, the other stranding below.

Rnds 8-23: Work the Flower Chart.

Herringbone Braid

Three rounds are worked for the Herringbone Braid. Rnd 24 sets up the colours so that the braid will have a two-colour centre. This accentuates the herringbone aspect of this braid, as opposed to the centre being all of one colour. This Braid points to the right.

Rnd 24: Join CC2; *k1 MC, k1 CC2; rep from *.

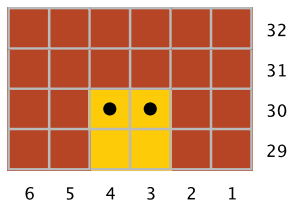
Rnd 25: Bring both yarns to the front of the work. *P1 with MC, p1 with CC2; rep from *, bringing the new yarn **OVER** the one just used. (Work MC sts of previous round with MC yarn, CC2 sts with CC2 yarn. Do not untwist the yarns at the end of the round - the next round will untwist them.)

Rnd 26: *P1 with MC, p1 with CC2; rep from *, bringing the new yarn **UNDER** the one just used: (Work MC sts of previous round with MC yarn, CC2 sts with CC2 yarn.) Cut off CC2 yarn.

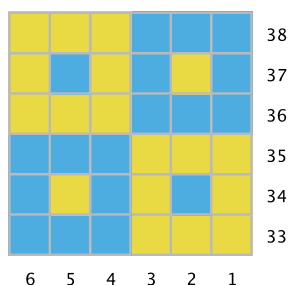
Rnd 27: Knit with MC.

Rnd 28: Knit with MC and increase 6 sts evenly around. Total: 48 sts.

Rnds 29-32: Work Purlled Boxes Chart:

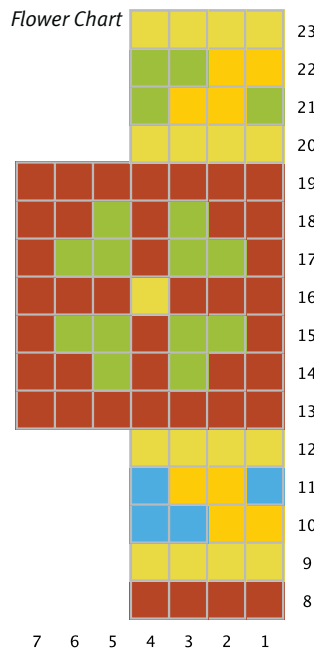


Rnds 33-42: Work Rnds 33-38, then 33-36 of Dotted Boxes Chart:



KEY:

- CC4-Ochre-purl
- CC4-Ochre-knit
- CC1-Mustard-knit
- CC3-Azure-knit
- CC2-Chartreuse-knit
- MC-Mahogany-knit



Thumbhole

The beginning of round "jog" of Latvian mittens is traditionally positioned on the outer edge, opposite of the thumb placement. Therefore, the thumb-hole position determines whether a mitt is worn on the left or right hand.

Rnd 43 (for Left Fingerless Mitt):

(Rnd 37 of the chart.) Work 14 sts in pattern. With waste yarn, knit the next 7 sts. Slip these 7 sts back to the left needle and knit them again in pattern with the established yarns. Finish the round.

Rnd 43 (for Right Fingerless Mitt):

(Rnd 37 of the chart.) Work 27 sts in pattern. With waste yarn, knit the next 7 sts. Slip these 7 sts back to the left needle and knit them again in pattern. Finish the round.

Rnds 44-53: Work Row 38, then 33-38, then 33-35 of the Dotted Boxes Chart. (*The chart is worked for a total of 21 rnds.*) Break off all yarns.

Picot Edge and Hem

Rnd 54: Join CC2 and knit.

Rnd 55: Purl and decrease 12 sts evenly around. Total: 36 sts.

Rnds 56 and 57: Knit.

Rnd 58: *K2tog, yo; rep from*.

Rnds 59 and 60: Knit.

Finishing the Hem

To finish, choose one of the following methods:

1. Bind off loosely and sew down bound-off edge to inside of mitt.
2. Turn mitt inside out, with all stitches still

on needles. Break yarn, leaving 1m/ 1yd of yarn still attached. Thread yarn onto tapestry needle and sew live stitches down to WS of mitt.

The Thumb



The waste yarn for the thumbhole.



Slip a dpn under the right-hand leg of each of the 7 sts above the waste yarn, and another needle below the 7 sts of the waste yarn.



Remove the thumbhole waste yarn.

Join CC3 (or any colour you prefer) at one edge (in the gap) leaving a long tail to tidy up the gap later, and pick up 2 sts. Knit across 7 sts to the other gap, pick up 2 sts, and knit across the other 7 sts. Total: 18 sts. Join circularly and place a marker for the beg of rnd. Knit 6 rnds or to desired length. Bind off. Remove any temporary knots. Sew ends in. To close the gap at the beginning-of-round colour changes, sew in ends across the gap, pulling the fabric together. Block by handwashing; lay flat to dry.

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My Journey with Jack

BY KATE SHERRATT, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

My journey with Jack started almost two years ago, assisting Richard in redesigning the old Jack loom for its comeback in 2017.

First manufactured thirty years ago and last made over ten years ago, there was a need for some design changes. I did a lot of testing and re-testing until we arrived at the finished design.

I am a huge fan of our rigid heddle and table looms and did not think it was possible for me to become hooked on a new loom – boy, was I wrong! As soon as I started working with Jack I was hooked – hook, line and sinker! Yes, it was a learning curve, but a very satisfying and rewarding learning curve. With each new project, I discovered more to love about the loom and every new project I began I found myself planning the next dozen projects before I was even finished.



I love to wear my hand wovens!



comfy to sleigh the reed



fine cotton warp and weft

Working on Jack has taken my weaving to a whole new level. I have woven floor rugs, blankets, throws, scarves, towels and metres and metres of fabric. The ability to weave unique fabrics for my own sewing projects quickly and effortlessly is probably the most gratifying aspect of weaving on Jack. I love the large rising shed and effortless treadling. Also the fact I can remain seated while advancing and tensioning the warp is great. The removeable harnesses, warp and back beams make dressing the loom a breeze. I find Jack to be the perfect loom for me. The size, the functionality and versatility are perfect – I could not ask for more in a loom! I plan on having a very long and productive relationship with Jack for years to come.



hearts on white

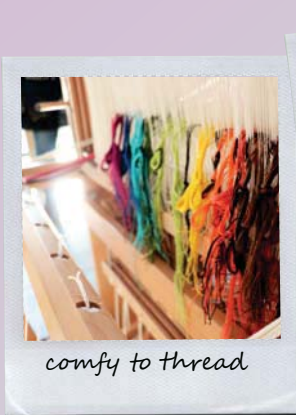
Hearts
For the threading pattern visit our website



Roving Rug



smooth winding on



comfy to thread



awesome shed!



such a breeze to weave!



NEW Warp weights

An absolute must have for your floating selvages, broken or supplementary warp threads.



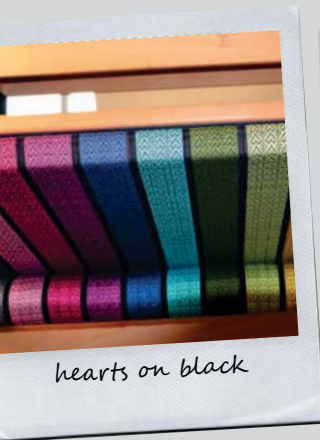
Jack loom tutorial

Check out our YouTube tutorial to see how easy it is to warp your Jack loom https://youtu.be/VbNL_nYI5qc

Beautiful Mohair Blankets



the raddle tames all



hearts on black



cotton warp with wool weft



treadling is so light - weave so quickly



Cotton plain weave

McLeod wearing her hand woven plain weave with "added extras" cotton skirt.



A Change for *the Better*

BY TRACY HENWOOD, CLARE VALLEY, SA, AUSTRALIA

Tracy Henwood has always been a passionate fibre artist, skilled in knitting, spinning and weaving.

She dreamed of establishing a yarn and craft supply store, one that would become a community hub for like-minded individuals to come and meet, share ideas and learn from each other in a friendly, fun environment.

It all began with a series of unfortunate events for Tracy. Dealing with a mental health crisis, two serious illnesses in the family and a devastating fire was the catalyst for change.

"It was one of those times in your life when you just have to change. There is no choice. I just could not have survived without changing. Without putting something into my life that would make me get excited about getting out of bed in the morning."

Once the insurance settlement came in, Tracy made her decision and after that things just seemed to fall into place. She was accepted into the New Enterprise Initiative Scheme and wrote her business plan while completing a certificate in small business. Then the perfect retail space became available and Knit Spin Weave was born.

"You don't know what you don't know. Ignorance can be bliss! If I had known how hard some things would be I may not have started!" Learning how to run a business and manage cashflow has been challenging and sometimes stressful. Luckily, Tracy's husband Peter has been able to become the primary parent for their seven children, and has faced something of a learning curve as well!

There have been some unusual rewards as well. For Tracy, the daily 72km (45mile) drive to her shop has been an unexpected joy. "The countryside is continually changing. I get to see the lambs appear, the crops grow and the harvesting." Tracy's third daughter Lilly is also very interested in fibre crafts and has become her "Saturday girl", spending special time with her mum every Saturday in the shop.

"I like to design knit patterns that are very flexible with yardage allowing me to use every centimetre of my precious hand spun yarn. I hope you enjoy making this crescent shawl."

Editor's NOTE

Since writing this article Tracy has moved into a better, more centrally-located store in Clare. Congratulations Tracy! Visit Tracy's website and Facebook page on www.knitspinweave.com.au www.facebook.com/knitspinweaveshop



Tracy's Seafoam Crescent Shawl

You will need:

Yarn: 100gms of hand spun yarn approx. 14 wraps per inch or 4ply commercial spun. I spun and plied Ashford Silk/Merino in Salvia. The pattern is designed to be very flexible with yardage.
Needle: 4mm (US6, UK8) circular needle at least 80cm (32ins) long
Other: darning needle, blocking mats and pins, markers

Abbreviations

k – knit
p – purl
kfb – knit into the front and back of stitch (increase)
yo – yarn over
sts – sts
ssk – slip slip knit 2 together
PM – place marker

Here's how:

Cast on 6 sts.
Rows 1- 60: K2, yo, kfb, knit to last 2 sts, yo, k2 (3 sts increased each row).
Garter stitch body worked until there are 186sts (60 rows).

Lace border

Row 1: K2, yo, kfb, PM [(k2tog) 3 times (yo k1) 6 times, (ssk) 3 times] repeat [] until last 3sts PM k1 yo k2.
Row 2: K2, yo, kfb, purl to last 2 sts, yo k2.
Row 3 & 4: K2, yo, kfb, knit to last 2 sts, yo, k2.
Row 5: K2, yo, kfb, k6, [(k2tog) 3 times (yo k1) 6 times, (ssk) 3 times] repeat [] until last 9 st, k7, yo, k2.
Rows 6, 7 & 8: As rows 2,3 and 4.
Row 9: K2, yo, kfb, k12, [(k2tog) 3 times (yo k1) 6 times, (ssk) 3 times] repeat [] until last 15 st, k13, yo, k2.
Rows 10, 11 & 12 as rows 2,3 and 4.
Above 12 rows repeated until desired length reached.
Cast off **loosely** on wrong side after row 3, 7 or 11.

Notes and Hints

I love to knit with every metre of my hand spun yarn and I designed this pattern to make this possible. The lace rows can be knitted until there is only enough yarn left to cast off.

A simple pattern with an easy one row body, makes for great binge watching of your favourite shows. The lace row is easy to remember; it is a good pattern for learning to read your knitting. Lace can be started at any row with a multiple of 18 sts plus 6. If you want more lace start with fewer stitches, less lace start later.

On Row 1 use place markers to mark the beginning and end of the lace row, just before and after the lace repeats are worked. This helps you keep track of the increases, as I find it can be easy to miss or add increase stitches. When you are ready to start the lace again from row 1, the stitch markers make it easier to check you have 18st plus the 3 sts for the edge. After working row 12, remove the markers and replace them at the start and finish of the lace repeats once more.

Blocking and Finishing

Blocking is necessary to open out the lace and even out the stitches. I sew my ends in after I have blocked. This stops the sewn-in ends preventing the shawl from evenly stretching.

Soak shawl in warm water, squeezing water through. Roll in towel to remove excess water.

Pin out top edge of shawl. I like to use blocking wires as they give a firm edge to pull against.

Starting at the middle of the bottom edge pin out the lace. I work from the centre out ensuring that the lace repeats are pinned out evenly to the corners. I go back after the first pin out and adjust the pins to ensure the curve and lace points are even.

Leave to dry.

Unpin and sew in ends. When sewing in the ends follow the lines of stitches. This ensures the ends don't stop the fabric from stretching. Carefully snip ends, close to fabric.



A shawl for all occasions

CHART KEY

	knit two together
	yarn over
	slip, slip, knit two together
	knit



Lace chart

Weaving on the Web

BY KELLY CASANOVA, MELBOURNE, VIC, AUSTRALIA

I have always been a creative person and have indulged in many arts and crafts over the years. As a stay-at-home mum who home-schools her children, I have found it important to have creative outlets. Over the years, I have been involved in embroidery, sewing, dyeing, painting, spinning, knitting and photography just to name a few. Then I became interested in weaving.

Before I even picked up a shuttle, I was fascinated with the weaving process: the idea of having a hand in every process of a finished piece has always appealed to me, along with the ability to create something that is both functional and beautiful. I didn't know any weavers, so I searched YouTube so that I could just watch someone weaving. My husband - my biggest support and Number One Fan - bought me a rigid heddle loom as a birthday present. Since then, I think it's fair to say that my weaving journey has expanded in a way I never would have imagined.

I started out weaving on a 60cm Ashford Rigid Heddle Loom, progressing to an Ashford Eight Shaft Table Loom. My "collection" now also includes an eight shaft floor loom and an Ashford Inkle Loom. A tapestry loom is on my wish list but that will have to wait!

I am a "self-taught" (if there is such a thing!) weaver but have used many resources online and in books for learning

and inspiration. I had been weaving and selling pieces in my Etsy shop for quite some time when I thought it might be nice to give back to the YouTube community in a creative way, as it had given to me. I uploaded a couple of video tutorials for the rigid heddle loom, using my son's camera. Being quite camera-shy and never having filmed a tutorial before, I didn't really expect that anyone would watch or be interested. The response was overwhelming!

The positive comments and messages I received, as well as the incredible enthusiasm of weavers from all different walks of life and of all different skill levels encouraged me to continue making teaching videos. I now have two YouTube channels and a happy, thriving community of weavers in my Facebook group. I have also begun writing patterns available for digital download in my Etsy shop to share my designs with other weavers. Having felt isolated as a weaver in the past, I am now in contact with thousands of weavers from all over the world. It is just amazing!

I have found weaving to be a serendipitous marriage of all the other skills I've built, and feel that all the years I've spent researching, learning and experimenting have lead me to where I am now. Last year I was astounded when my bamboo scarf took out the "best woven scarf" and "best woven exhibit" categories in the Melbourne Show Craft competition.

That was a huge boost to my confidence and quite a thrill!

My biggest current challenge is to find enough time to be a wife, mum, educator, designer and weaver. Like all creative people, I have so many ideas and so little time. I try to find time to weave every day and I'm a firm believer in nurturing yourself in order to be more effective in the nurturing of others. I am truly blessed to have the full support of my family in all things creative! Thanks to all of the wonderfully supportive weavers who follow my work, I am now on the path to achieving my dream - to make my living doing something I truly love. And while we're speaking of dreams, here is my ultimate dream - to escape the city and return to the countryside, to have my own weaving studio and to continue to share my passion for weaving. Oh, and considering my son is pursuing a career in filmmaking, I will probably need to purchase my own camera at some point!

Editor's NOTE

See more of Kelly's lovely work on her website
www.kellycasanovaweavinglessons.com

Fascinated by the weaving process



Kelly's Moroccan Dream Scarf

A beautiful double-sided scarf which is deceptively simple and woven on a rigid heddle loom.

Here's how:

Total warp ends: 124 doubled warp ends
(two threads in each slot and two in each hole)

Total warp length: 2.4m (2¾yds)

Finished width: 23cm (9ins)

Finished length: 190cm (75ins) with fringes

Warping

Using double ends warp 124 ends with your first colour.

Weaving

Begin with a header and then weave 2 picks of plain weave with your second colour.

Pick Up

Place the reed in the down position.

1. Using the pickup stick behind the reed pick up the threads as follows: 1 down, 1 up. Slide the pickup stick to the back roller.
2. Pick up the threads for the heddle rod as follows: 1 up, 1 down.

For a detailed instruction on installing a heddle rod, please view this video:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=nyNaq_Vx4eE
Now commence the weaving sequence:



Leashes and the pickup stick

1. Reed up, weave one pick.
 2. Reed in neutral, bring pickup stick forward and turn on edge, weave one pick. Slide the pickup stick to the back.
 3. Reed up, weave one pick.
 4. Reed neutral, lift heddle rod, weave one pick.
 5. Reed up, weave one pick.
 6. Reed neutral, bring pickup stick forward and turn on edge, weave one pick. Slide the pickup stick to the back.
 7. Reed up, weave one pick.
 8. Reed down, weave one pick.
- Repeat the 8-step sequence until your weaving measures 165cm (65ins).

Tip

When weaving with pickup sticks you may need to "catch" some selvages to keep your edges neat.



Catch the selvages

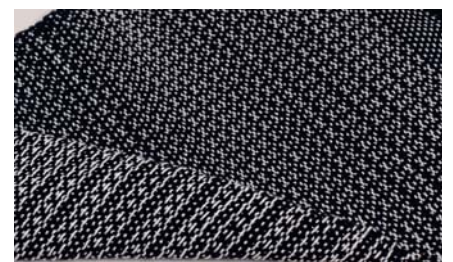
***Note** - after weaving a few centimetres, hemstitch your ends, 4 warp threads across and 1 weft thread deep. When finished weaving your scarf, hemstitch the second

hem in the same way. An instructional video for hemstitching can be viewed here - www.youtube.com/watch?v=goglgvjweqQ

Finishing

Remove the scarf from the loom and trim the fringes to the same length. If you are making a twisted fringe, now is the time.

Wet finish your scarf in warm water with a mild detergent. Press the scarf into the water until fully immersed, then allow to rest for at least an hour. Gently rinse. Lay the scarf flat in the shade to dry. When still damp, press the scarf on a delicate wool or silk setting.



Moroccan Scarf in the Ashford black and white mercerised cotton

You will need:

Loom: 40cm (16ins) or wider rigid heddle
Reed: 50/10cm (12.5dpi)

Warp yarn: Bambu 7 (100% bamboo)
589m/644yds, Green
Suitable alternatives would be
Tekapo 3ply (2 x 100g balls) or
Ashford 5/2 mercerised cotton (a
200g cone)

Weft yarn: Bambu 7 (100% bamboo)
295m/322yds, Burgundy
Suitable alternatives would be
Tekapo 3ply (1 x 100g balls) or
Ashford 5/2 mercerised cotton (a
200g cone)

Other: A pickup stick at least 5cm
(2ins) longer than the width of the
project

Piece of dowel (or similar) at least
5cm (2ins) longer than the width
of your project for a heddle rod
Strong cotton for making heddles

Peruvian Diamonds

BY ELIZABETH ASHFORD,
ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

For rigid heddle weavers who like a challenge, create this striking surface design using a diverted or deflected supplementary warp.

You will need:

Loom: 25cm (10ins) or wider rigid heddle

Reed: 60/10cm (15dpi)

Background warp and weft yarn: Ashford weaving cotton yarn 5/2 (100% mercerised cotton, Ne 5/2, 848m/927yds, 200gms) 1 cone #30 True Blue

Supplementary warp yarn: hand-dyed silk boucle 28gms (1oz)

Other: three pickup sticks, warp weights

Here's how:

Total background warp ends: 120

Total supplementary warp ends: 14 (two in 7 slots)

Total background warp length: 2.1m/7ft

Total supplementary warp length: 3m/10ft
(longer length required to weigh warp at back)

Finished width: 17½cm (7ins)

Finished length: 136cm (53½ins)

Warping

1. Warp 120 ends in the 5/2 cotton, wind and tie on.
2. Place the first pair of supplementary warp threads through the centre slot. Repeat either side in every 5th slot for a total of seven pairs.



Thread seven pairs of supplementary warp threads

3. Tie the supplementary warp threads to the front beam. Hang the supplementary warp thread over the back beam and tie to a weight.

My table runner with deflected supplementary warp diamonds



Tie a weight to the supplementary warp threads and hang over the back beam

Preparing the Loom for This Project

Plain Weave Areas

Take pickup stick A behind the heddle and insert it to lower the supplementary threads below the background warp threads. Slide to the back when weaving the diamond pattern areas.

To weave plain areas at the beginning, the end, and in between the pattern areas, use only pickup stick A. Slide it forward and push down to lower the supplementary threads. With the reed in the down position and the shuttle on the right, weave the required amount.

Pattern Area

Push pickup stick A to the back. With the reed in neutral pick up the supplementary threads behind the reed and put on pickup stick B.



Pickup stick A lowers the supplementary warp threads



Pickup stick B raises the supplementary warp threads

Pattern Sequence (Beat with the shuttle edge)

Row	Shuttle Direction	Heddle Position
1	→	Up to start. Up to close* diamond
2	←	Down
3	→	Up pickup stick B on edge
4	←	Down
5	→	Up pickup stick B on edge
6	←	Down. Deflect** open diamond
7	→	Up pickup stick B on edge
8	←	Down
9	→	Up pickup stick B on edge
10	←	Down

Repeat from the beginning.

*Close the Diamond

To close the diamond, remove pickup stick B and with pickup stick A lower the supplementary threads below the background warp threads. Weave one row. Then, if you are weaving the pattern section, slide pickup stick A to the back and reinstate pickup stick B.

If you are weaving the border, keep the supplementary threads below the background threads with pickup stick A.

****Deflect** one thread of the first supplementary warp pair, two slot threads to the right and the other thread of the pair, two slot threads to the left.

Insert pickup stick C in to the plain weave shed in front of the reed and bring it up two slot threads to the right of the supplementary warp. Place one supplementary thread under the pickup stick, [re-enter the stick and bring it up two slot threads to the left. Deflect one supplementary warp from the right-hand pair and one from the left-hand pair and place under the stick.] Repeat [].

The diamonds can be made larger or smaller by changing the spacing of the supplementary warp threads.



Bring pickup stick C to the surface two slot threads of the background warp before the supplementary warp threads and deflect one of the supplementary warp threads under the pickup stick C



Deflect one supplementary warp from the right-hand pair and one from the left-hand pair and place under the stick

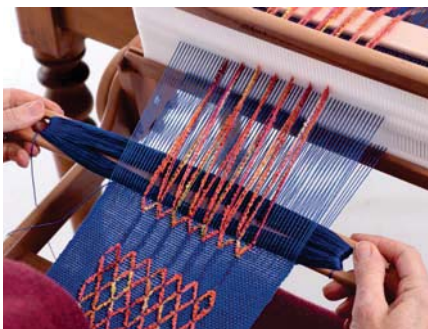


Continue across the warp

To Begin This Project

Weaving

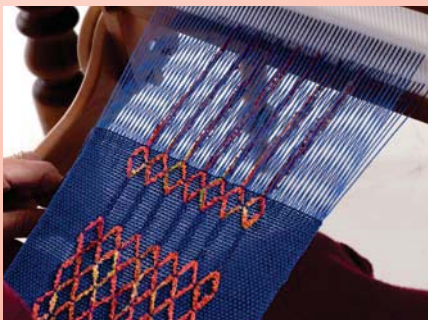
1. Weave a plain weave heading.
2. Weave two rows of a contrasting cotton (to be pulled out later and used as the cutting line).
3. Weave 5cm (2ins) plain weave in the 5/2 cotton (for the hem).
4. Weave one row of 1/1 Leno.
5. Weave 3cm (1¼ins) plain weave.
6. Commence pattern sequence and repeat opening and closing the diamonds for four rows.
7. Repeat instruction 5 and 6 for required length.
8. Weave 3cm (1¼ins) plain weave.
9. Weave one row of 1/1 Leno.
10. Weave 5cm (2ins) plain weave in the 5/2 cotton (for the hem).
11. Weave in 2 rows in a contrasting cotton (to be pulled out later and used as the cutting line).
12. Weave 5cm (2ins) plain weave in the 5/2 cotton (for the end heading).
13. Cut and tie off.



Opening the diamond



Closing the diamond



Create a pattern with four rows of diamonds

Finishing

1. Remove weaving from the loom.
2. Remove the two rows of contrasting cotton threads and cut.
3. Secure ends.
4. Make hem to the Leno row – this becomes a decorative edge.
5. Sew in the supplementary warp ends on the reverse side.
6. Press with a damp cloth and lie flat to dry.



I enjoyed the challenge of creating Peruvian Diamonds

Betty's Tips and Tricks

1. When weaving a heading use the same grist of yarn as your weft. This will help ensure you have straight edges.
2. The two rows of contrasting cotton after the heading can be easily removed and the space becomes the cutting line.
3. A row of 1/1 Leno makes a very attractive deckle edge to your weaving.

Editor's NOTE

Weaver and author Harriet Tidball in her book *Peru: Textiles Unlimited* documents this ancient Peruvian technique. I enjoyed incorporating it in this runner with master weaver Betty Booth who kindly shared some of her "tips and tricks". I made a short video showing how to create the diamonds.
www.ashford.co.nz/tutorials/weaving-tutorials/PeruvianDiamonds

You will need:

Fibre: Ashford Silk/Alpaca/Merino blend, 300gm (10½ozs)
Dyes: Ashford CMYK Dye Kit
Other: Spinning wheel, Niddy Noddy, knitting needles - one 15mm and two 7.5mm, darning needle

Here's how:

Dyeing

Divide the fibre into 3 equal lengths, one for the front, one for the back and one for the sleeves. Then take one of the lengths and divide into two pieces for the sleeves. Make up dyes as per instructions in the kit. Dye each length the same colourway. Starting with solid black gradually changing to mottled black, followed by other colours. Have a small



Snazzy

BY McLEOD SHERRATT, ASHBURTON, NEW ZEALAND

McLeod hand dyed fibre and spun into thick singles and with a bit of help knitted this super cute fun sweater.

Singles

KNITTING PATTERN

Back

Cast 40 sts onto 15mm needle, using one 15mm and 7.5mm garter st 5 rows.

Hole Row: (Rt side facing.) Knit first st, *yfd, k2tog*, cont. from * to * until last st, knit. Purl following row.

Garter stitch 4 rows, ending right side**.

Continue in stst – knit using 15mm needle, purl using 7.5mm needle until work measures 38cm (15ins).

Cast off stitches.

Front

Same as back to **.

Continue in stst – knit using 15mm needle, purl using 7.5mm needle until work measures 36.5cm (14 3/4ins), ending with right side facing, knit 9 sts, cast off following 22 sts and knit 9 to end.

Purl these 9 sts then cast off.

Attach yarn to inside edge of remaining 9 sts, purl row then cast off.

Sleeves (2 same)

Using 7.5mm needles cast on 20 sts.

Work 2 x 2 rib for 15.25cm (6ins).

Begin with right side facing and using 15mm needle for knit rows and 7.5mm needle for purl rows, stst 4 rows.

Cast on 1 st each end of this and every following knit row till 32 sts.

Continue in stst until work measures 49cm (19 1/4ins) or desired length, cast off.

Finishing

Sew shoulder seams. Set in sleeves and sew. Sew side seams.

Finishing

To give the yarn some stability, strength and balance without plying, it was given the “shock treatment”. Soak the yarn in hot water then plunge into very cold water. The difference in water temperature “shocks” the yarn causing the outer fibres to start felting slightly. Repeat the hot/cold process twice, squeeze out excess water. Take the skein, swing around and “whack” it against a table or smooth surface. Rotate skein a few times to ensure it is beaten evenly. This will even out the twist and puff the yarn out, making it soft and squishy. Hang skeins to dry. Once dry your yarn is ready to knit.

amount of crossover between each colour. To finish the dyeing process, follow the instructions in the kit. Rinse and dry.

used the new e-Spinner 3 as she could have it on a very slow speed and did not need to worry about treadling while she was spinning. Spin each of the five lengths of fibre from the end. This will keep the colours in order. Use a Niddy Noddy to skein each length once spun. Secure each skein with four ties.

Spinning

When spinning thick singles you only need a small amount of twist. McLeod



Cowl of the Wild

BY JANIS THOMPSON, EUGENE, OREGON, USA

An eye-catching cowl inspired by nature and created by a free spirit.

At this year's Yarn Fest in Loveland, Colorado with the team from Eugene Textile Center, I was inspired by the view from my seventh-floor hotel room. I didn't know it at the time, but this would become my colour palette for *Cowl of the Wild*.

I teach hand spinning so naturally my fibre stash consists of many colourful and textural goodies just waiting to be rediscovered and mined into a project. Don't we all forget exactly what we have hiding in all those fibre nooks and crannies? My collection consists of nine to twelve big colour bags that contain every "version" of a colour. If it looks blueish, it goes in the blue bag with the other roving, ribbon, small bits of silk fabric, yarns, threads, beads, carded batts, sparkly bits and anything else I deem worthy of keeping, which is usually everything! (Don't pretend you don't know what I talking about.)

This becomes my "artist's palette" from which to choose materials for any project or class I may teach. The contents are always being added to or taken from, so the bags evolve and change with the rhythm of my colour appetite.

I dived into these bags to find "materials" for the cowl. Colour and texture are the stars of this project! Structure is important but not tantamount, since this is a plain weave (tabby) with items tucked in here and there for visual interest. This is a great project to do with a beginning weaver, kids, or the structure weaver who just needs to have a mind-freeing project between Undulating Twill and Double Weave.

Start out with an inch or so of plain weave, wind two yarns onto the shuttle, one that is fuzzy and one that sparkles, so that they pop out at different intervals, and then just go for it!

I borrow techniques from tapestry

weaving like twining and soumak, with plain weave as my base to allow me to staple down:

- squares of silk fabric tucked in as butterflies that stand up softly and flutter a bit
- parts and pieces of jewellery that I love, but never seem to wear, like a bracelet
- a small piece of handwoven trim (a weaving within a weaving, so to speak)
- lengths of roving pulled up into irregular loops
- clasp-woven different yarns, from either side of the edges, to make hills and valleys as you go

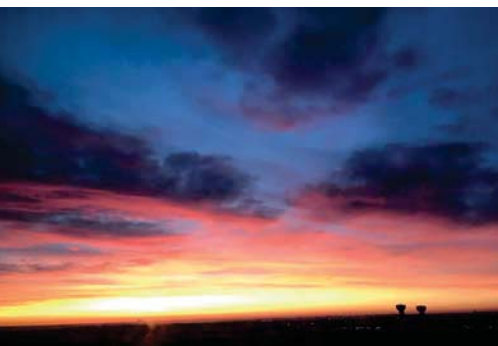
Referring to my inspiration source – in this case the photo I took of the beautiful sunrise - I am inspired to choose different things from my materials' pile to incorporate as I weave. This kind of weaving is a "stream of consciousness". Let

your creativity soar as you make choices... get lost in the **no rules** feeling you get when you do this kind of project. It really is okay to **not** plan so strictly and to "improvise" at times. It can be as complicated or as simple as your heart desires. I will sometimes go searching for things to use as metaphors in my weaving, like feathers, rubber bands, candy wrappers... the sky is the limit!

When you have completed your length of cowl fabric, leave a long fringe to use creatively at the end. After I knotted my silk warp ends and made one twist to establish an infinity loop, how to finish the ends? I could tie one end to the other end and let the fringe dangle, or French braid and embellish with beads, or use creative knotting and cut the fringe short, or weave one end into the other for an invisible seam. I often find that when I try to make something invisible I just draw more attention to it, so why not exploit the seam and decorate it? I chose this option.

My cowl is outrageous, completely over the top with fluffy and fluttery bits sticking out all over it on both sides. I love it!

Wear your cowl proudly and expect to get lots of attention when wearing it out in public. It has a personality and a fan club, you'll see. I look forward to weaving my next cowl in a different set of colours that I may find on my next walk on the beach or up on the mountain. *Enjoy!*





You will need:

Loom: 30cm (12ins) or wider rigid heddle
 Reed: 30/10cm (7.5dpi)
 Warp yarn: Silk 2ply 1600ypp, approx.125m (135yds)
 Weft: Anything from your stash!

Here's how:

Total warp ends: 75
 Total warp length: 160cm (62ins)
 Ends per inch: 7.5
 Finished width: 25cm (10ins)
 Finished length: 100cm (40ins)

Weaving

1. Plain weave a 2.5cm (1in) heading.
2. Plain weave the length of the warp incorporating items from your stash.
3. Beat gently to give the cowl drape.

Finishing

1. Remove from the loom and knot the ends.
2. Twist to create an infinity loop and decorate the fringe.



Editor's NOTE

Janis teaches in the Pacific Northwest at fibre festivals and at guilds. You can also find her in the Dye Kitchen at Eugene Textile Center making rainbows.



What's new from Richard and Kate!

Richard and Kate have been busy designing and testing new products and accessories to make spinning and weaving even easier and more portable than ever. All are made from beautiful Silver Beech, a sustainably-managed native hardwood of New Zealand.

e-SPINNER 3 *The Spinner for the Professional!*



This is a serious production machine for serious spinners. Our new e-Spinner 3 is the smallest, lightest and most versatile electronic spinner ever from Ashford! Take it with you, wherever you go!

Spin large amounts of yarn quickly and effortlessly. The e-Spinner 3 is quiet, convenient, portable and simple to use.

The e-Spinner 3 has a very quiet but powerful 12-volt DC 2.0 amp 70w motor. The quiet direct-drive motor with a soft start has an infinitely-variable speed from 0-1800 rpm so it is suitable for all skill levels. It comes with interchangeable wall plugs for Australia/New Zealand, Canada/Japan/USA, Europe/Scandinavia and the UK. CE approved. It includes a carry bag and on/off foot switch.

The jumbo sliding hook flyer with frictionless yarn guides, a 15mm (5/8in) orifice and large yarn exit hole on one side

ensures convenient spinning and plying of super fine to decorative art yarns. The e-Spinner 3 includes three jumbo bobbins, each with 225gm (8ozs) capacity, a 10mm (3/8in) reducer bush for spinning finer yarns and a tensioned lazy kate with yarn guide. The flyer simply snaps into place, resulting in a quick and easy bobbin change. The scotch tension system allows all types of yarn to be spun.

Hand controls allow you to easily turn the motor on and off, change speed and direction. The handy on/off foot switch is included for more control while spinning. It is so easy to learn hand spinning on the

e-Spinner 3 as you only need to draft the fibres - no treadling required.

The e-Spinner 3 comes assembled and lacquered and has rubber feet for stability. The padded carry bag ensures your e-Spinner 3, lazy kate, power pack and foot switch are protected and kept safe and tidy ready for you to take when travelling, attending workshops, guild meetings or on holiday.

The optional 12volt car cord enables you to use it in your car, caravan, RV or boat with a battery pack.



SAMPLEIT LOOM NOW 40cm (16ins) WIDE

Now this popular loom is available in two sizes. Choose either a 25cm (10ins) or the NEW 40cm (16ins) weaving width.

Weave scarves and fabric lengths for garments or sample all your favourite rigid heddle patterns, textures and colours.

These wonderful little looms are inexpensive, compact and cute without sacrificing function.

These looms are for new and experienced weavers and are the perfect classroom loom.

Whether you are learning to weave for the first time, want to learn new techniques or sample your wonderful yarns, this loom is fun and easy to use. Just add yarn!

Compact and lightweight, the looms only weigh 1.4 kg (3lbs) for the 25cm(10ins) size and 1.7kg (4lbs) for the 40cm (16ins).

The Sampleit has strong handles, ratchets and clicker pawls so your warp never unwinds unintentionally. The loom includes a built-in second heddle option.

Kit includes step-by-step colour instruction booklet, 30/10cm (7.5dpi) reed, two shuttles, warping peg and clamps. Assemble in minutes.



Leave the beautiful Silver Beech hardwood natural or finish with our soft and smooth wax finish.

Additional rigid heddle reeds in strong nylon are also available, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60/10cm (2.5, 5, 7.5, 10, 12.5 and 15 dpi), and the Vari Dent Reed, so you can weave fine to bulky or textured yarns.

SAMPLEIT LOOM STAND

This strong and sturdy loom stand is the perfect partner for the Sampleit Loom 25cm (10ins) and 40cm (16ins).

Easy to assemble and attach, you can weave anytime, anywhere without a table. Adjustable loom angle and foot rest for comfortable weaving.



WARP YARN STAND

Wind your warps without fuss on this handy six-cone stand. Smooth yarn guides ensure tangle and snag-free warping. Rubber feet for stability. Lacquered.



WOODEN STICK SHUTTLES

To complete our range, we are now offering 46cm (18ins) and 120cm (48ins) shuttles.

We will be including 2 x 46cm (18ins) in the Sampleit Loom 40cm (16ins) and 2 x 120cm (48ins) shuttles in the Rigid Heddle Loom 120cm (48ins) wide.

Our range is now 15, 26, 36, 46, 56, 76 and 120cm (6, 10, 14, 18, 22, 30 and 48ins).



WARP THREAD WEIGHTS

Use these handy warp thread weights to weigh floating selvages, supplementary or broken warp threads. Designed to hold long lengths of warp thread around the central spool.

Includes hooks on both ends and multiple steel weights to vary the tension on your yarn.

Lacquered. Sold in pairs.





Ashford Wool Sliver

New Zealand wool, hand-selected for quality, bulk and brightness, and processed by our skilled and experienced technicians at the Ashford Woollen Mill, is the best for your textile art project. Buy Ashford wool sliver – *you deserve it!*

Choose from Corriedale or Merino.

Corriedale – 30 micron. Soft wool for fine-medium spinning, ideal for baby wear, woven, knitted, crocheted, felted garments and homeware.

Merino – 22 micron. Very fine wool for fine spinning, knitting, felting, crochet and lace work.

All Ashford colours are now available in both Corriedale and Merino. To see the full range of fibres including luxury blends and to order your fibre sample packs go to www.ashford.co.nz/products/fibres

