



Hands On

# The Art of Making Fiber Art Exhibit

**June 22–25, 2023 • Millersville, PA**

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## **Message From the MAFA Fiber Art Exhibit Coordinator**

Coordinating the MAFA Fiber Art Exhibition was a very exciting process for me. Seeing the work and hanging the work was especially rewarding. The quality of the work and the content of varied pieces was so impressive. I also cannot express a thank you enough for the two volunteers who helped with the hanging and re-hanging of the artwork. We discussed and moved the pieces several times so that each work could be seen on its own as well as from a distance with the work of others. My sincere gratitude to Katy Clements and Vicki Aspenberg for their tireless help and support.

*Fannie Lee*

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## Award Judges and Award Recipients

Anne Choi, Handweavers Guild of America (HGA), was the judge for the MAFA 2023 Hands On: The Art of Making Fiber Exhibition. Her choice for the SDA (Surface Design Association) Award of Excellence was "Modulation" by Kathleen B. Remsa. Quote from Anne: "I was moved by the visual urgency of the pieces and I was inspired by the novel use of materials and techniques. But as I said it was a super difficult decision to make because so many of the pieces were so meaningful in their intention."

Anne's choice for the HGA Award was "We Interrupt This Program" by Katy Clements. Quote from Anne: "I thought it was incredibly clever and inventive, the use of a vintage icon and the antenna to convey the immediacy of current events."

The Viewer's Choice Award from the 2023 MAFA attendees was for "She Watched and Waited" by Nancy Everham.



# 1. Vicki Aspenberg

New York, NY

New York Guild of Handweavers

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## Ode to the Female Cardinal

16" x 10"

Wool, Cotton  
Weaving

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I spend a lot of time bird watching and have always been moved by the colors of the female cardinal, which was the inspiration for this piece. To arrive at the color palette, I pixelated a photo of the female cardinal which revealed many shades and tones of various colors. For the design, I wanted to use these colors in an abstract way that would capture a sense of movement and flight. I used painting as a way to experiment with different design possibilities, and I wove several samples to work out technical challenges in the weaving before arriving at the final design. Also, I studied the work of Silvia Heyden, which influenced my choice to use triangles as the central element to express flight.

The process of weaving this tapestry was challenging because of the many decisions that needed to be made about the values of the colors used. But once I found the right color blend, it was an enormously satisfying "hands on" experience.

*Vicki Aspenberg*



## 2. Susan Balascio

New Castle, DE  
Harmony Weavers Guild

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### **Vibrations 13**

13.5" x 13.5"

Cotton, Rayon, Tencel™, Wire  
Weaving

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I am drawn to the art of geometry that is intrinsic to weaving. In this piece, I am exploring squares within squares using wire to delineate the smaller squares. The wire is woven into the fabric using the Theo Moorman technique. Virtually invisible monofilament is used as the tie-down threads for the wire enabling the wire to appear as if it is floating on the surface of the cloth. The background cloth is composed of a hand-painted warp and gradient weft threads.

*Susan Balascio*



### 3. Katy Clements - **HGA Award**

Brooklyn, NY

New York Guild of Handweavers

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**We Interrupt This Program**

11" x 16"

Cotton, Recycled/Repurposed Materials

Weaving, Other - Embroidery

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Inspired by the theme of 'Interruption' suggested by a weaving challenge group, this rep weave piece recalls the screen that would appear on TV when there was an interruption in signal or programming. A television antenna is used to hang the piece. Remembering the recommendation to 'please stand by,' it seemed more appropriate not to be passive, to use the Art of Making to do and say something.

*Katy Clements*



## 4. Laurie Duxbury

Charlottesville, VA

Central Virginia Fiberarts Guild

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### **Out Of Bounds**

11" X 14" canvas

Wool, Cotton, Linen, Wood

Weaving

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So much of my weaving has focused on color that I wanted to challenge myself by incorporating mostly texture as a design element. At the same time I was exploring double weave and the possibilities of weaving multiple layers of differing widths. "Out Of Bounds" is one of the pieces from those explorations. There are three layers of cloth. The layer of black warp and weft forms the background. A second, narrower layer of tan warp and weft acts as a second field above the black. The third, even narrower layer of natural colored warp rises above both other layers as times to catch the wood pieces and unseen roving. It was a lot of fun to weave this piece.

*Laurie Duxbury*



## 5. **Nancy Everham - Viewer's Choice Award**

Tabernacle, NJ

Harmony Weavers Guild, New York Guild of Handweavers, Philadelphia Guild of Handweavers

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**She Watched and Waited**

15" X 19"

Wool, Silk, Cotton  
Weaving

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A friend and I went to visit a gallery in Philadelphia in August of 2021. We both saw the docent standing by the wall. Her red sneakers and the way she was standing caught my eye; so I took her picture. Afterwards, after looking at it, realized that she was a quintessential Covid survivor. Her red shoes saying that she would not be broken and would not go away; and, as she was standing, was either taking notes or drawing her own pictures of us - recording us as we watched her. Totally a statement.

Inspired, I did a colored pencil sketch from the photo; even though I hadn't drawn anything in years. Loved it and knew I had to create my next tapestry from it. But could I accomplish it? Was I good enough? Would my eye be able to do her justice? Did I even have the skills to take this on - as this was and is far and above what I have done so far tapestry-wise - it's only my fourth tapestry - good grief!

The answer to all these questions is - we'll see!

*Nancy Everham*

## 6. Rachel S. Fesperman

High Point, NC  
Triangle Weavers, Inc.

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### **Noli me tangere: Cairn**

5" x 5" x 5"

Cotton, Recycled/Repurposed Materials - Velvet, recycled fiber filling, wood plaque  
Weaving, Sewing, Recycling/Repurposing

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Noli me tangere is a Latin phrase meaning “touch me not” that many artists, particularly renaissance painters, have visualized through biblical imagery.

Vertical piles of stones, cairns, have been used for millennia across human cultures to mark pathways through treacherous land or left as gifts to the earth.

As a child, I used to build them with my mother and my grandfather on the banks of the Dan river outside of Arat, Virginia.

Noli me tangere: cairn reckons with the duality of hard and soft, masculine and feminine, and loneliness and camaraderie, all by denying the audience the ability to touch an otherwise tactile work.

*Leslie Fesperman*



## 7. Neal Howard

Waynesville, NC

Not a MAFA Member

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### **Aspen**

13.5" x 8.5"

Wool, Silk, Cotton

Felting, Dyeing, Embellishment (beads etc.)

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Many years ago Liz Spear made felted pieces, machine embroidered them and incorporated them into one of her Celebration Coats. When I began to use embroidery in my work, she gave me one of the felt samples from that project saying it would be interesting to see what I did with it.

I did not like the composition and it was lost to the Studio Void. After two years and a move, it resurfaced. I bravely scissored two inches out of the middle. (I challenge observers to locate the join.) The stitching came readily.

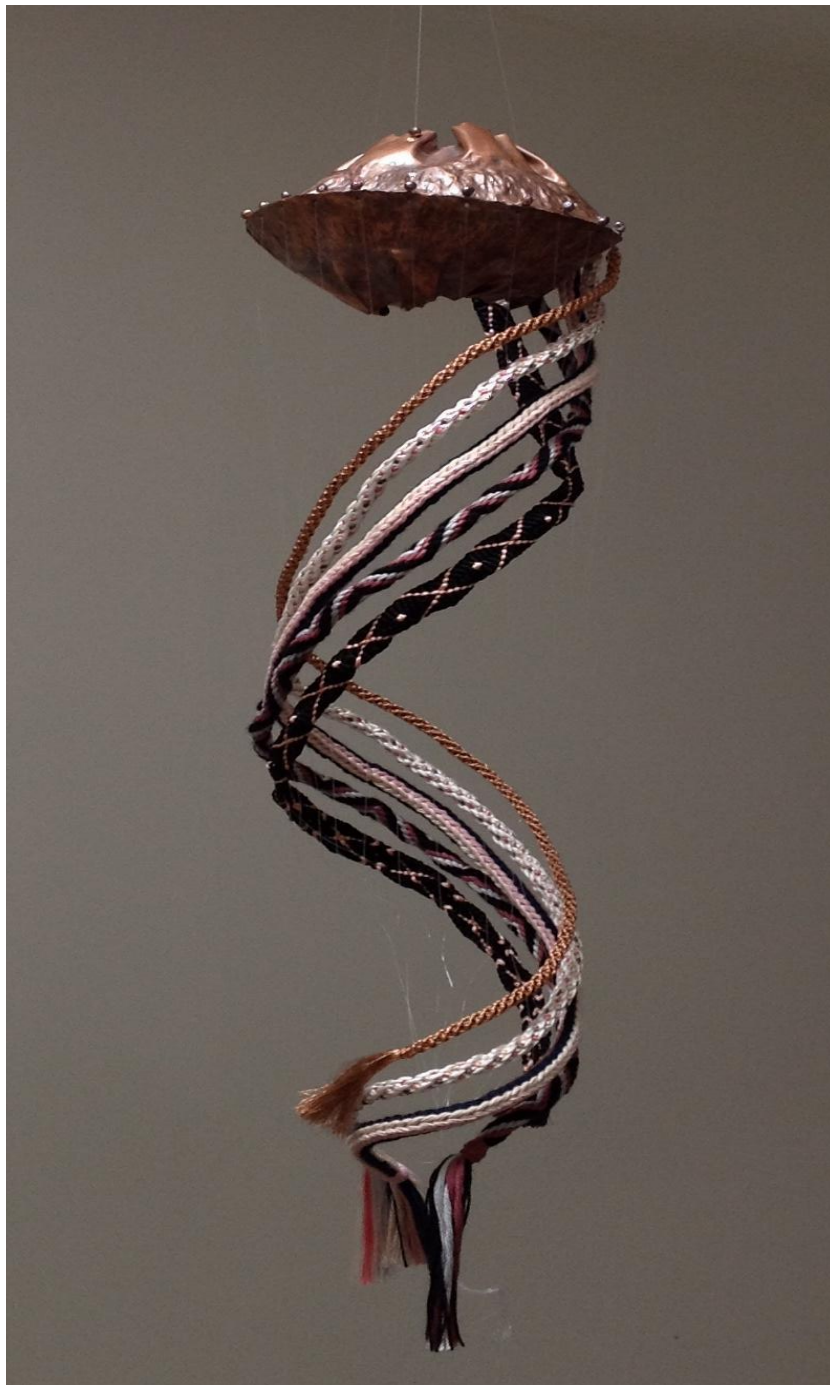
*Neal Howard*

## 8. Tina Kelsey

Findlay, OH

Woodstock Weavers

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### **Follow Me Down**

28" X 9" x 9"

Cotton, Rayon, Metallic fiber

Other - Kumihimo (Japanese Braiding)

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Beside kumihimo, metal fabrication is one of my primary hobbies. I was determined to create a display for several braids using a Rueger fold-form copper as a support. That form would give me a base to support a 3-dimensional project from which to hang the braids. Braids were selected to blend with the copper color, as well as for their variety and shape. All Braids were done on the Marudai.

Stretch over time is the biggest problem when hanging braids for display. Instead of just hanging them vertically, it occurred to me to use multiple fishing lines and loop them through each braid at 1 inch intervals, so that they could spiral around and be supported for their entire lengths. The fishing lines were then secured by looping glass copper-colored beads. The spiral gives a more dynamic visual, as well as eliminating the stretching problem. It also gives me a way to adjust the braids at every point, and a way to view braids from both sides.

Braids from the top inside:

Braid 1 Pattern: Kara-Kumi Flat braid 24 tama, 36 ends/tama

Braid 2 Pattern: Kongoh-Gaeshi (Zigzag) Round braid 12 tama, 8 ends/tama

Braid 3 Pattern: Maru-Sugi Round braid 16 tama, 8 ends/tama

Braid 4 Pattern: Kagome-Gumi Round lattice braid 20 tama, 30 & 45 ends/tama

Braid 5 Pattern: Oimatsu (2X Variation) Round braid 16 tama, 20 ends/tama

*Tina Kelsey*



## 9. Fannie Lee

Brooklyn, NY

New York Guild of Handweavers

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### **Penguins**

32" x 28"

Wool, Linen, Acrylic paint, glass studs, polyester mesh  
Weaving, Embellishment (beads etc.), Paints/Stamps/Silk Screens

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This is my small statement about how the idyllic world of penguins is changing ever so quickly.

*Fannie Lee*

## 10. Paige Miller

Neptune, NJ

Shore Fiber Arts Guild

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### Harvest Etude

14" x 20"

Wool, Cotton, Iris Leaves

Weaving

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I've purposefully expanded my art and creative process as I've incorporated a more hands-on and traditional approach to food and home-life. I am delighted to discover materials in my garden that motivate me in my studio. The iris leaves in this woven piece are from a plant that originated in my great grandmother's garden and that tie to family and traditional hand skills is very inspiring to me.

*Paige Miller*



## 11. Bambi Moise

San Jose, CA

Not a MAFA Member

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### **Meanderings**

33" x 18"

Cotton, Bamboo, Unknown fibers in trim

Weaving, Sewing

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I have been working with textiles (sewing, knitting, crocheting) since I was a child. It was not until my 70's that I discovered weaving. Before weaving, most of my artistic expression was in ceramics and dance. My clay work was with coils and slabs which I pinched into undulating forms inspired by dancing and my love for nature.

I loved the process of weaving from the very start, but felt restrained by the perpendicular warp and weft structure. I loved curves and free movement. I didn't want to be constrained by a rectilinear system. So I learned Fiberworks and how to make curves in my threading and treadling. I loved this freedom so much that I then bought a 24 shaft loom to increase my curving capabilities. "Meanderings" is my first free form design with 24 shafts. In Fiberworks I used a lot of mirroring, but then altered the mirrored images so that despite the feeling of symmetry, there is no true symmetry in the design. This design was inspired by the meandering streams in the Colorado Rockies that wander all around the alpine meadows. I lived in Crested Butte, Colorado in the 1970's and fell in love with those streams.

*Bambi Moise*



## 12. Patricia Mueller

Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey  
North Country Spinners

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### **Cosmic Ferns**

14' x 20'

Wool, Alpaca, Cotton, Rayon, Paper Recycled/Repurposed Materials - burlap  
Weaving, Crochet, Spinning, Dyeing, Embellishment (beads etc.), Recycling/Repurposing



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Cosmic Ferns was created as a tribute to one of our North Country Spinners guild members. She was taken too soon in the prime of her life from cancer but loved the craft of spinning and art of painting. She enjoyed experimenting with different kinds of fiber both natural and man made. She was just as skilled with spinning art yarn as creating traditional plied yarns. Her paintings were spiritual in their theme and use of color. She said they were dream visions and an expression of her inner self. She sometimes said that she used the meditation qualities of spinning when she would hit her pace with the wheel and wool. She was very friendly with one of our long time members and that member brought some of her finished yarns and unfinished fibers for the membership to take. I was drawn to the thick green art yarn, some purple man made fiber, and a few other items. It wasn't until much later that the fiber piece concept for 'Cosmic Ferns' was created. My fiber art techniques in executing this piece hopefully pays homage to her abilities as a meditative spinner and vision painter.

*Patricia Mueller*

### 13. Evelyn Ray

Bronx, New York

New York Guild of Handweavers

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#### **Song Bird**

8" x 10"

Wool, Recycled/Repurposed Materials

Weaving, Paints/Stamps/Silk Screens, Recycling/Repurposing, Other - leftover variety of yarn from weaving projects, paint brushes, and mod podge

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I am a member of the New York Handweavers Guild. During our meetings in 2022, we were introduced to the "Sustainability Challenge" to create a piece during the summer break from materials that we had on hand. We would present what we made at the first meeting when we returned back in the Fall. I created my first piece during that summer. The "Sustainability Challenge" continues to inspire me to think outside the box on how to use my collection of yarn scraps, fabric, a variety of fibers, and other materials. I decided to create an art piece on canvas of the American Goldfinch Song Bird. I sketched the bird, painted the background in acrylic paint, worked yarn pieces into the design using my hands, an old paintbrush and palette knife. Each strand and areas were developed by cutting pieces, laying the design with the fibers with my hands, using mod podge to glue all the fibers onto the canvas, and developing different textures with the fibers. The 2-dimensional piece became a painting. Incorporating the fibers and art materials was a very therapeutic and invigorating experience. I truly enjoyed the process and have since developed more pieces using this method. I even sold the first art piece I created! It has truly given me a unique method to create art with a "Hands On" approach. I loved every moment.

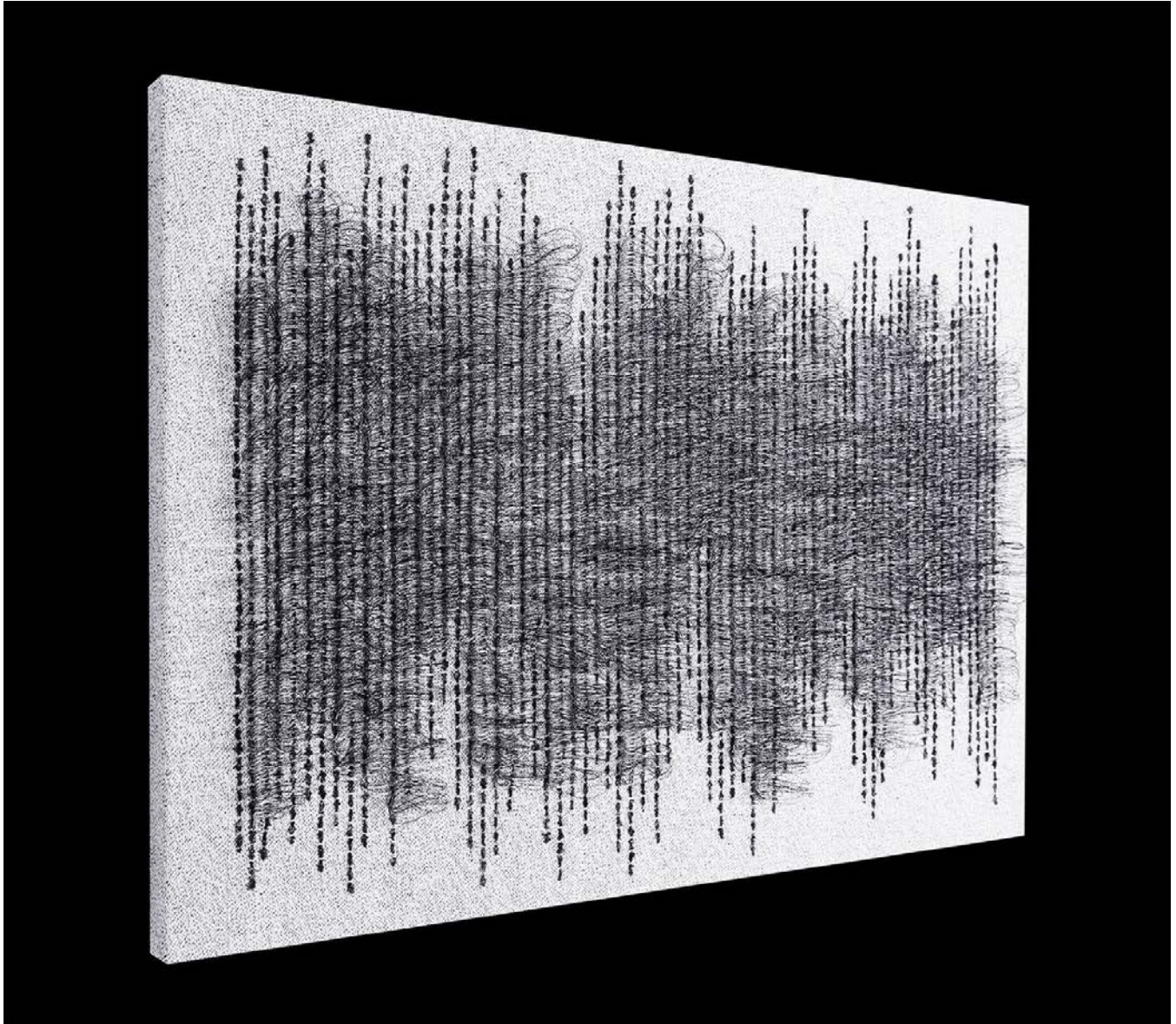
*Evelyn Ray*



## 14. Kathleen B. Remsa - **SDA Award**

Mount Laurel, NJ  
Harmony Weavers Guild

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### **Modulation**

24" x 18"

Wool, Cotton, Wire, Acrylic, Polyester, Viscose  
Weaving



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As a fiber artist I continually strive to record and communicate my interaction with nature and my environment through traditional and non-traditional textile techniques. My latest work involves the visualization of sound. A search for a 'white noise' to block out the incessant bombardment of negative news during the pandemic made me wonder what 'white noise' might actually look like. My initial study of 'white noise' has grown to include many types of noise, sound, spectrograms, and oscillographs. Weaving on a floor loom, I manipulate various fibers, paper and wire to create abstract layered tactile representations of what I visualize sound and noise to be.

*Kathleen B. Remsa*

## 15. Helena Valentine

Sicklerville, NJ

Harmony Weavers Guild, Philadelphia Guild of Handweavers

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**Bo-kaap, Cape Town**

10" x 12"

Wool, Cotton

Weaving, Other Embroidery

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This piece was inspired by the beautiful pastel colors of the houses in the Bo-Kaap neighborhood in Cape Town, South Africa. I was caught up in the charm of the city and neighborhood and took several photos. This tapestry is based on one of them.

*Helena Valentine*



## 16. Jen Weber

Abingdon, MD

Instructor, Central PA Guild of Handweavers, Weavers Guild of Greater Baltimore

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### **Resilience**

6" diameter

Cotton

Other - Japanese Temari (embroidery on a hand-made thread base)



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When the war in Ukraine broke out, I was deeply saddened. I felt helpless as I was transfixed by the terrible news and happenings of the war. I kept thinking of how my Ukrainian grandmother would have been heartbroken to hear of what was happening to her homeland.

I needed a way to express the grief I was feeling, but also my hope that the Ukrainian people would endure. I decided to make the base of my Temari pink, to represent the blood that was being spilled. I wanted to have flowers blooming over that tragedy of pink, in the bright colors of the Ukrainian flag. I wanted to make the flowers deep and complex, to represent the strength of the people. To fill in the rest, I used bright rainbow colors, which felt like my hope that the world would come to their aid.

My Temari is named Resilience, in honor of the Ukrainian people, their struggle, and their perseverance through this terrible tragic time.

*Jen Weber*

## 17. Marina Welch

Tampa, FL  
Associate Member

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### **Autumn Love**

9" x 11"

Wool, Cotton  
Weaving, Sewing Felting

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As the granddaughter of a needle artist and daughter of a painter creating visual arts is my heritage. My grandmother taught me embroidery and my mother gave me the opportunity to try every type of creative pursuit I could think of. As children we had a cupboard filled with paints, enameling, fabric, paper, beads. We were given the chance to try our hand at creating anything we could think of. I love the fall, seeing the color change on the trees. Many years ago my mother gave me a painting she had done to celebrate my October birthday; it was a fall scene on the mountain lake where my parents lived. My mother is gone now but this painting forever holds her in my heart. I'm a new weaver and I wanted to create something that honors both my mother and grandmother.

*Marina Welch*

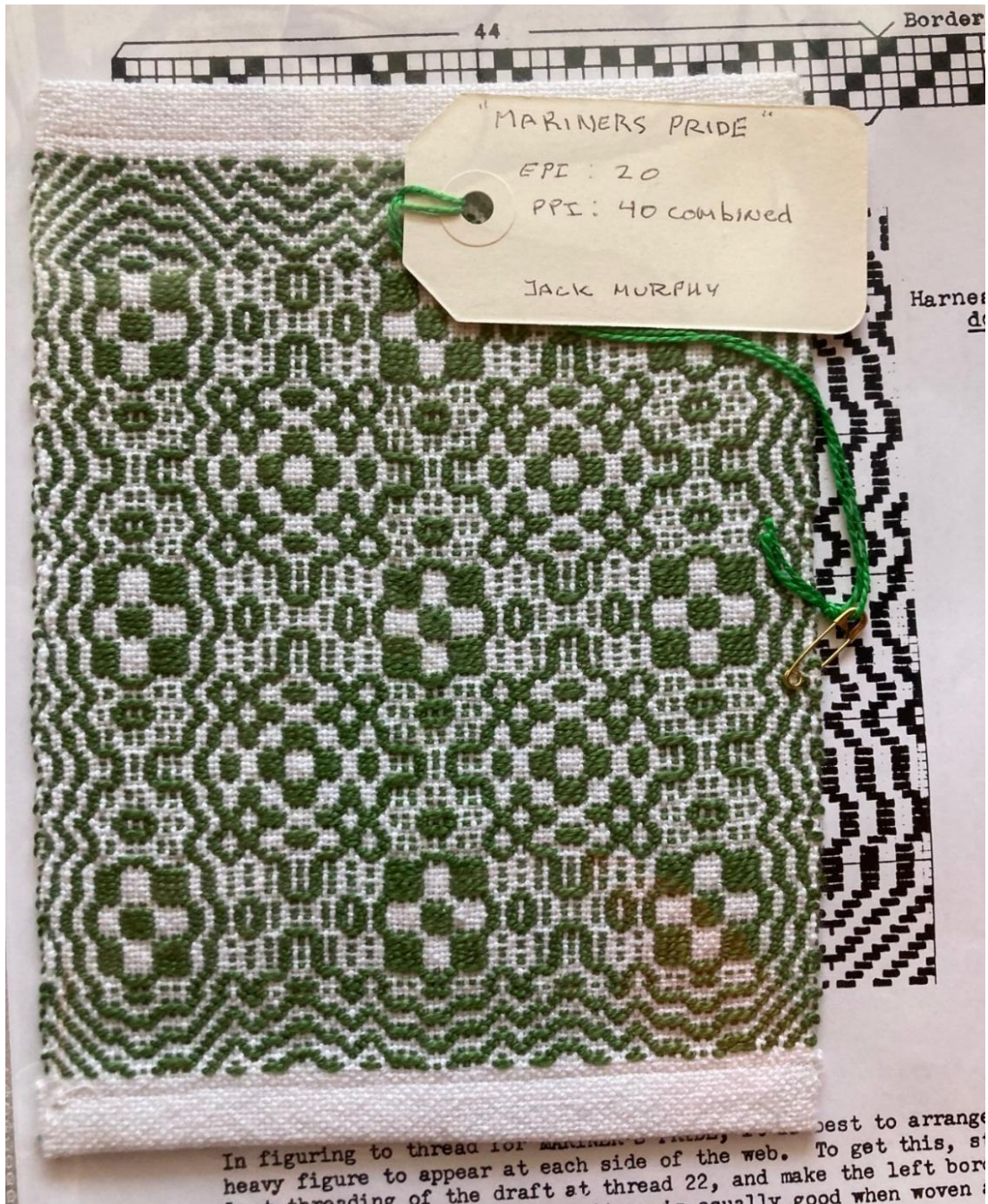


## 18. Williamsburg Spinners & Weavers/Tavern Spinners & Weavers Guilds

Montross, VA

Tavern Spinners & Weavers Guild

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### Josephine Estes Miniature Overshot (JEMO) Complete Samples

Two 3" Binders

Wool, Cotton

Weaving



Sometime in 2021, in the depth of the pandemic, a weaver from the Williamsburg VA Spinners & Weavers Guild discovered an old copy of Josephine Estes' Miniature Overshot book, with a few woven samples attached. Cindy French, the guild's program director, was intrigued and suggested the guild try weaving a few of the patterns as a study group. Her idea soon expanded to the idea of weaving all 48 patterns, but not just one sample -- oh no, the group would weave enough copies for everyone participating in the group! They invited their sister guild, the Tavern Spinners and Weavers Guild from Heathsville VA to join them, and soon there were about 22 participants. That meant that each weaver had to produce 22 copies of their chosen patterns. This project was accomplished over two years in two iterations, with the group gathering at the end of each year to exchange the samples and ooh and ahh at the creativity. In the process, everyone learned so much about the weaving art form of overshot, and every participant is now the proud owner of a complete set of Josephine's miniature overshot patterns.

