

2019 Fellowship Report: Gail Pietrzyk

Zanshi and Sakiori Weaving

I was excited to share the Zanshi and Sakiori techniques with weaving students and for the opportunity to invite beginners to explore the beautiful creative options I learned in Tom Knisely's workshop at MAFA.

The Art Studio <https://nccde.org/1784/Weaving-Studio> scheduled a Special Topic weaving class for Saturday, March 7, 2020. The class description included in the Spring catalog is shown below.

WEAVING SPECIAL TOPIC WORKSHOP

Instructor: Gail Pietrzyk

One 3-hour class, \$33R/\$38NR

Sat 10 a.m.-1 p.m. 3/7

Learn about Sakiori and Zanshi — Japanese weaving techniques following the principal of *mottainai* — to reuse and recycle fabric and yarn. These eco-friendly practices create beautiful new pieces with hints of nostalgia threaded in each unique pattern. Leave with a small sample. No previous experience needed. Snow date, 3/21. Teens/Adults

For this workshop, weavers worked on pre-warped table looms with many of the weft materials already prepared – silk strips for Sakiori and weft yarn of tied thrums, so that everyone had an opportunity to create a sample in a 3-hour timeframe.

My goal was to offer the opportunity to explore these techniques to weavers and to let non-weavers experience the delight of making something beautiful. One of the pre-warped looms was a rigid heddle loom, although none of the six students participating chose to weave their project on it. I believe that making entry into the weaving community as accessible as possible is crucial. Weaving can be an expensive craft to pursue and many younger weavers are excited to see that they can create beautiful and functional pieces with simple, less expensive tools and materials.

AUDIENCE AND OUTCOMES

The Art Studio Special Topics class was open weavers and those who had no prior experience to offer hands-on opportunities in a 3- hour class. Students were be able to experiment and create their own textiles using the Sakiori and Zanshi Weaving approach.

Students worked on pre-warped table looms in order for them to complete a project in the time available. Warps were 8/2 tencel or rayon. Weft materials, silk fabric for Sakiori was available and some pre-cut strips were available. Additional silk yardage was also available in more colors and designs. A selection of zanshi weft was also prepared in advance and available including tencel and bamboo yarns in a wide variety of colors.

Those who wished to complete a larger piece than the 3-hour class would allow were invited to return to the studio to continue weaving until their project is finished. Materials fees were calculated by weight so that the cost was proportional to the size of the sample woven in the workshop.

Six students attended the Art Studio Special Topics class on March 7, 2020. Three were absolute beginners and three had some weaving experience. The students ages ranged from 38 to 72.



Three of the students completed small pieces and the other three plan to continue their weaving projects during our Open Studio time.

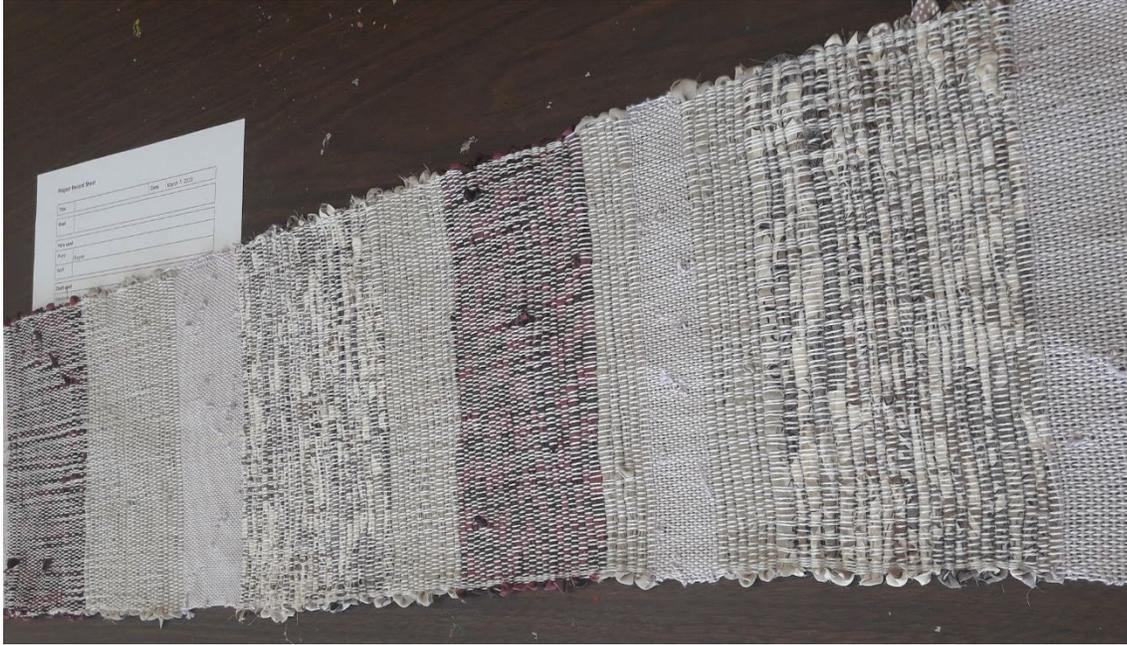
The students were enthusiastic and pleased to have the opportunity to experiment with these techniques. I was particularly pleased to see how successful the beginners projects were.



These students had never woven before. On the left, she experimented with clasped weft technique, in addition to incorporating Zanshi and Sakiori in her piece. The weaver on the right brought some yarn from home to experiment with and added silk sari scraps to her sample.



The student on the left had some weaving experience. She returned to the Weaving Studio for an open studio session in order to complete her project. She hopes to make a tote bag from the fabric.



One beginner wove a 30" piece which she plans to make into a cowl. At least one of the weavers from the workshop plans to attend a meeting of Harmony Weavers Guild.

Success for the Art Studio Special Topics class was evaluated by the participants. Below are comments from the students.

Your class was excellent and inspiring.

I really enjoyed the special topic class related to the concept of Mottainai due to my interests in Japanese aesthetics. I'm glad it was still offered, as so many courses are being cancelled these days. My Longwood Gardens course on Bonsai, previously scheduled for tomorrow, was just cancelled.

Background: My only weaving experience was 4-5 years ago. It was an intro to Saori weaving workshop, along with a few additional days to finish my piece. Although I enjoyed the experience, I did not pursue weaving after that due to the driving distance & parking expense.

The class was just what I needed as I search for ways to connect my background in apparel design with various fiber and textile arts. You created a warm and open atmosphere for all of us. Your introduction to the topic and instructions were both concise and clear.

I would have liked to bring materials from my own stash to test out. The one small wool selvedge piece I did bring suggests a way to incorporate these in future weavings.

Thanks so much!

I really enjoyed the class. It was rewarding to weave a lovely piece in a short time and with no previous experience in weaving.

With such a short class time, I think it would've been helpful to have a quicker intro period with more direct explanation of the loom and its parts.

Also to save time, I would've liked to have all the materials ready, perhaps even directed to cut the fabric strips at home or prep the tied yarn pieces.

You could share links and provide reading materials via email a week or few days prior to the class. Anything to get folks weaving on the loom as quickly as possible.

I hope the Art Studio offers the class again.

Thank you for teaching us these two fun and beautiful techniques.

Each of the students received a handout sheet of information. A copy is attached.

I am fortunate to have a number of opportunities to share the knowledge gained from the MAFA workshop.

I will have the opportunity to share an 45-50 minute program to the members of Harmony Weavers Guild in 2020. The guild generally schedules a program by a local member for one of the winter guild meetings.

The program for Harmony Weavers Guild is scheduled for May 14, 2020. The April program for the guild has been cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. No decision has been made yet about the May program.

Gail Pietrzyk

Weaving Special Topics: Sakiori and Zanshi

Sakiori and Zanshi fabrics are the ultimate in recycling. Sakiori is a fabric woven with very narrow strips of fabric, much like a rag rug but with a subtle hand that makes it possible to wear as clothing. Zanshi cloth is woven with leftover threads of previously woven fabrics. The broken warp threads, leftover bobbin threads and thrums would be tied together to make a continuous length that could then be woven to make a new fabric. These ingenious textiles were woven by people who had very little to call their own.

Suggested Resources:

Weaving Western Sakiori: A Modern Guide for Rag Weaving, Amada Robinette, (Guilford, CT: Stackpole Books), 2018.

Weaving equipment, yarns, books, and classes are available at these shops.

VULCAN'S REST FIBERS

2728 Augustine Herman Hwy
Chesapeake City, Maryland 21915
(410) 885-2890

<https://vulcansrest.com>

Rigid Heddle Weaving Class , March 27th, 2020

RED STONE GLEN FIBER ARTS CENTER

435 Popp's Ford Road
York Haven, PA 17370
(717) 212-9022

<https://redstoneglen.com/>

Tom Knisely will be teaching a class in Sakiori and Zanshi on Aug 24th, 2020 - Aug 25th, 2020

LABADIE LOOMS

2572 Old Philadelphia Pike
Bird in Hand, PA 17505
(717) 291-8911

Many weavers purchase yarns online at these suppliers:

Webs <https://www.yarn.com>

Halcyon Yarn <https://halcyonyarn.com>

Gist <https://www.gistyarn.com>

Today's workshop is made possible, in part by the MidAtlantic Fiber Association (MAFA) Conference Fellowships, established to help promote, expand and preserve fiber arts and to encourage the sharing of valuable information within the MAFA community and with the general public.

The MidAtlantic Fiber Association (MAFA) represents and supports a community of fiber arts guilds in the greater Mid-Atlantic region with the goal of promoting fiber arts education.

LOCAL GUILDS

FIBERGUILD

Website <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fiberguild/>
Meeting Date 1st Thursday of each month September - June
Meeting Time 7pm
Location Greenbank Mill, 500 Greenbank Road, Wilmington, DE

HARMONY WEAVER'S GUILD

Website <http://harmonyweaversguild.org/>
Meeting Date 2nd Thursday of the month September-June
Meeting Time 9:30am Meet and Greet, 10am Program
Location St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, 345 Bear Christiana Rd, Bear, DE 19701
Occasionally meetings are held elsewhere. Contact the guild to confirm location.

THIRD STAR FIBRE ARTISTS GUILD

Website
Guild Email Third Star Rep
Meeting Date 2nd Monday of the month
Meeting Time 7 pm
Location Ware Agricultural Building, 51 Cheney Road, Woodstown, NJ 08098

PHILADELPHIA GUILD OF HANDWEAVERS

Website <http://www.pghw.org/>
Meeting Date 1st Thursday of the month, September - June
Meeting Time 7 - 9 pm
Location Guild House, 3705 Main St., Philadelphia, PA 19127
Phone 215-487-9690
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/PGHWs/>

GLOSSARY

A **loom** is the frame that holds the warp threads aligned and under tension so that weaving can take place.

The **warp** is all of the threads that are aligned vertically on a loom before weaving begins. A warp end is a single warp thread.

The **weft** is all of the horizontal threads that interlace with the vertically aligned warp. A pick is a single pass of the weft through a shed; a pick is also called a **shot**.

The **heddles** are wires, nylon braid, string, or flat steel rods attached to the shafts. Each heddle has an eye in the center through which a warp end is threaded. (Because of this eye, heddles have sometimes been called needles.)

The **shafts** are the frames that hold the heddles. When a shaft is raised or lowered, all of the warp ends threaded through the heddles on that shaft are raised or lowered. (**Harness** is sometimes used as a synonym for shaft, although originally it was the name for the mounting that holds all of the shafts.)

Each weft pick passes through a **shed**. The shed is the opening made by raised and lowered warp threads.

The **breast beam** is the horizontal crosspiece on the loom directly in front of the weaver. The woven cloth passes over the breast beam on its way to the cloth beam.

The **cloth beam** is the (usually) cylindrical rotating crosspiece of wood (sometimes of metal) at the front of the loom on which the woven cloth is wound.

The **back beam** is the horizontal crosspiece on the back of the loom around which the warp passes on its way to the warp beam.

The **warp beam** is the (usually) cylindrical rotating crosspiece of wood (sometimes of metal) at the back of the loom on which the warp is wound.

The **beater** is a frame that holds the reed. It is attached to the loom by an upright on each side that pivots to pull the reed through the warp and “beat” the weft in place at the fell of the cloth. The **fell** is the woven edge of the cloth on the loom where the most recent pick has been inserted.

The warp **sett** is the number of warp ends per inch—usually abbreviated as **epi**. The weft sett is the number of weft picks per inch—usually abbreviated as **ppi**.

The **weave structure** is the order in which warp and weft threads go over and under each other, i.e., the **interlacement**. If they interlace alternately, the weave structure is plain weave.

Boat shuttles (which look a bit like boats) are equipped with a central hinged rod on which a **bobbin** (a slender spool) wound with the weft thread is placed. The bobbin rotates as the shuttle is thrown, and the weft is pulled snug at the selvedge by the drag of the unwinding thread against the rotating bobbin.

Stick shuttles are flat pieces of wood that are usually notched at each end so that the weft can be wrapped from end to end around the shuttle. The shuttle must be turned over a time or two as it is brought out of the shed to free weft yarn for the next pick. The turn of the thread at the selvedge must be adjusted manually.

Tabby is used to name a weft that weaves plain weave when there is also another weft, usually heavier, that weaves pattern (as in overshot or summer and winter). Tabby is sometimes used as a synonym for plain weave.