

Looming ITEMS

May 2024

Harmony Weavers Guild Newsletter

Vol. 49 Number 9



May Program — Zoom and in-person May 9 @ 10:00 a.m. Red Clay Presbyterian Church

The Corris Effect Part 1 presented by Margaret Coe

This month, Margaret Coe will be presenting her program - The Corris Effect Part 1 (4 and 8 shafts). Margaret's focus has been designing weaves with the computer as her main tool since the 1980's. She is the author of four books; and, a presenter of courses both in person, online, and virtually (Zoom); but always at heart a weaver and designer.

Her website has an online course by a similar name - The Corris Effect a.k.a. Parallel Paradox. My guess is that we will get an overview of her comprehensive online course (30 lessons in all) in her one hour presentation. But to whet your appetite - here are some nuggets she set us about her presentation ...

What is the Corris Effect? How did it evolve? Where did the name come from? All will be revealed ...

It takes a village, or at least two weavers brainstorming, to halt, take a right turn, and look at weave structures in a whole new light. In two separate, but related incidents, and over 5 years of exploring, we discovered that it isn't always the threading, tie up, and treadling (or liftplan) that determine structures.

From double weave to Jin to twills and basket weave; from Jin to summer & winter; add taqueté as well as rep to the mix. Come see what it is all about!

You can poke through her website as it has links to her courses, presentations and books; she also has a gallery of beautiful peeks at her work. Here is a link - <https://coeweaves.com/>

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87003062222?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87003062222?pwd=V2VLV2dubm1ObVpFM29JODJWcmwwZz09)

[pwd=V2VLV2dubm1ObVpFM29JODJWcmwwZz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87003062222?pwd=V2VLV2dubm1ObVpFM29JODJWcmwwZz09)

Meeting ID: 870 0306 2222

Passcode: 046143

From the President's Pen

May is here and our world is turning green! I know this past weekend was a great weekend to take in fiber art exhibits - so get out there if you can! If not - check out our Instagram account - as a few photos of the Washington DC Ikat exhibit are now there. Just click this link - <https://www.instagram.com/> and search for harmonyweaversguild (one word).

I want to thank you all for our recent honest and frank discussions about growing our guild and improvements we can make in our website. I have heard from a few of you - but all are welcome in these discussions. Both of these will be a fun way to show off your talents and get involved and grow with our guild. So, if you want a say in how our guild and website evolves - let me know as I am in the process of setting up an initial meeting of both the Website Committee and the Growing Diversity Committee. (We may not meet for at least a week or two as the transformation of my kitchen is taking precedence.)

Speaking of growing our guild, we still have a few volunteer opportunities available. We will be voting on a new Vice President and Secretary at our June meeting. But we are still looking for a new [groups.io](#) Administrator and someone to monitor the use of our Zoom account. All of these positions will come with a mentor for you - so you won't be going it alone. So, please think about how you can help.

Lastly, don't forget about the outreach opportunities that Carol presents each month to the guild. This is an excellent way to showcase what our guild is all about and to educate and garner interest in what we do. Contact Carol for more information.

Hope to see you all at our May meeting - either in person or via Zoom!

[Nancy Everham](#)

June

Newsletter

Articles are due Monday, May 27, 2024



Most Spring classes still have spaces

Find details and register for ALL MAFA Virtual classes and lectures on Lessonface at lessonface.com/mafa.

- **May 9-30: Cell Weaves** with Martha Town WAITLIST
- May 18: Let's Look at Long Draw Spinning Part 1 - Fiber Prep with Michelle Boyd
- May 19: Let's Look at Long Draw Spinning Part 2 - Drafting with Michelle Boyd
- May 20: Thinking With Their Hands – Changing The World Of Children With Yarn with Elizabeth Okeyele-Olatunji
- June 1: The Art of Plying: From Basic Foundations to Beautiful Yarns with Alanna Wilcox
- June 1: Here Comes the Sun - Cyanotype Printing with David Heustess
- June 9: Incredible Ice Dye with Jessica Kaufman

July 23: MAFA Book Group will meet on Zoom, 7:30 p.m. ET

There have been a number of excellent books published in the last several years that use textiles as a way to understand history—particularly women's history. The book that really started it all is **Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years** by Elizabeth Wayland Barber. It is the 30th anniversary of the publication of this scholarly, yet eminently readable history, and it is the choice for our July Book Group discussion.

MAFA 2025 – June 26-29, 2025, at Millersville University!

Check out the Spring outreach opportunities for Guild members

Many thanks to those who have already signed up to participate in the events below. If you haven't signed up or let me know, there's still time! Check your calendars and email me (spinningbiker@comcast.net) if you can join us for one or more.

Sat., May 18 - Scottish Games Spinning & Weaving Demo

For many years, FiberGuild members have spun wool and woven a shawl (which is sold through a silent auction) at the Scottish Games in Fair Hill, MD. Harmony Weavers Guild members are invited to join the FiberGuild folks in carding or spinning. Dinah Kirby and Toni Ammons will be using wool spun at the event to weave the shawl to be auctioned. You'll go home with bagpipes echoing in your ears! Admission is free for demonstrators, and participants can also sell their handcrafted items at the Games.

Sat., May 25 - Winterthur "Merino Madness" Craft Instruction

Harmony Weavers Guild members will be instructing up to 30 participants (two groups of 15) on a felting project using Greenbank Mill merino wool during this morning program. The agenda includes a visit to the sheep housed at Winterthur and a discussion of the connection between merino sheep and the DuPont family. Winterthur will send a \$500 honorarium to Harmony Weavers Guild as a thank you!

Carol Ireland

For Sale:

40" 4 shaft 6 treadle ad-a-harness
Macomber loom. Beautiful
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\$600
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Harmony Weavers Guild Officers and Committee Chairs

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 Membership & Guild Looms..... Linda Shinn
 Programs & Workshops..... Dinah Kirby

Chairs

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 Kathleen Remsa
 Hagley Craft Fair..... Sonnie Sperati
 Gail Caron
 Hospitality..... Carol Ireland
 Karen Evans

Chairs continued

Internet Services..... Toni Ammons
 Carol Ireland
 MAFA Representative..... Nann Miller
 Newsletter..... Sonnie Sperati
 Outreach..... Carol Ireland
 Publicity/Communications..... Gynnie Moody

Donor's gratitude with Guild's decisions/actions

Two years ago Ellen Clore, the daughter of Jim Thomen, an acquaintance from my days at DuPont, donated a variety of textiles to the Guild, with the hopes that we could find good homes for them. Ellen's mom Lydia Thomen had been a weaver and a traveler, and some of the textiles were obviously from her travels.

I contacted Ellen to let her know where some of these textiles ended up, having gotten updates from Dinah Kirby and Ginny Moody:

- One of the “coverlets” (or maybe just a piece of fabric) was turned into beautiful midsize-large tote bags by Dinah Kirby. See the attached photo.
- Another of the coverlets was sold. The remaining coverlets were donated to the National Museum of the American Coverlet (<http://www.coverletmuseum.org>) in Bedford, PA, following a visit there by Linda Brasel and Dinah Kirby.
- The beautiful Central Asia wool blanket was donated to Wake Forest Museum of Anthropology. (I think this was the most unusual and stunningly beautiful textile of the whole collection.)

Ellen very promptly replied:

“I really appreciate you taking the time to track these down and let me know what became of them! What a clever idea to make tote bags - I love it!. And one of my daughters graduated from Wake Forest, so that's a nice connection. And the coverlets to another museum - perfect. My mom and dad would both be so pleased, just as I am. I wish I could tell them. I know it took some time and effort to accomplish this and I am so appreciative. It never would have happened without the Guild.”

Ellen went on to say that her 1st grade granddaughter decided after trying a potholder loom that she wanted her 7th birthday party to be a “weaving party” at a studio in Brooklyn (where her Wake Forest daughter lives). Her 5 year old grandson enjoyed the party too. Ellen herself is starting to weave on a belt loom her mom gave her years ago.

Carol Ireland



Tote bag by Dinah Kirby



Weaving party

Working With Your Hands Is Good for Your Brain

Activities like writing, gardening and knitting can improve your cognition and mood. Tapping, typing and scrolling? Less so.

■ by Markham Heid
NYT March 28, 2024

The human hand is a marvel of nature. No other creature on Earth, not even our closest primate relatives, has hands structured quite like ours, capable of such precise grasping and manipulation.

But we're doing less intricate hands-on work than we used to. A lot of modern life involves simple movements, such as tapping screens and pushing buttons, and some experts believe our shift away from more complex hand activities could have consequences for how we think and feel.

“When you look at the brain's real estate — how it's divided up, and where its resources are invested — a huge portion of it is devoted to movement, and especially to voluntary movement of the hands,” said Kelly Lambert, a professor of behavioral neuroscience at the University of Richmond in Virginia.

Dr. Lambert, who studies effort-based rewards, said that she is interested in “the connection between the effort we put into something and the reward we get from it” and that she believes working with our hands might be uniquely gratifying.

In some of her research on animals, Dr. Lambert and her colleagues found that rats that used their paws to dig up food had healthier stress hormone profiles and were better at problem solving compared with rats that were given food without having to dig.

She sees some similarities in studies on people, which have found that a whole range of hands-on activities — such as knitting, gardening and coloring — are associated with cognitive and emotional benefits, including improvements in memory and attention, as well as reductions in anxiety and depression symptoms.

These studies haven't determined that hand involvement, specifically, deserves the credit. The researchers who looked at coloring, for example, speculated that it might promote mindfulness, which could be beneficial for mental health. Those who have studied knitting said something similar. “The rhythm and repetition of knitting a familiar or established pattern was calming, like meditation,” said Catherine Backman, a professor emeritus of occupational therapy at the University of British Columbia in Canada who has examined the link between knitting and well-being.

However, Dr. Backman said the idea that working with one's hands could benefit a person's mind and wellness seems plausible. Hands-on tasks that fully engage our attention — and even mildly challenge us — can support learning, she added.

Dr. Lambert has another hypothesis. “With depression, people experience something called learned helplessness, where they feel like it doesn't matter what they do, nothing ever works,” she said. She believes that working with one's hands is stimulating to the brain, and that it could even help counteract this learned helplessness. “When you put in effort and can see the product of that, like a scarf you knitted, I think that builds up a sense of accomplishment and control over your world,” she said.

Some researchers have zeroed in on the possible repercussions of replacing relatively complicated hand tasks with more basic ones.

In a small study of university students published in January, Norwegian researchers compared the neurological effects of writing by hand with typing on a keyboard. Handwriting was associated with “far more elaborate” brain activity than keyboard writing, the researchers found.

“With handwriting, you have to form these intricate letters by making finely controlled hand and finger movements,” said Audrey van der Meer, one of the authors of that study and a professor of psychology at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. Each letter is different, she explained, and requires a different hand action.

Dr. Van der Meer said that the act of forming a letter activates distinctive memories and brain pathways tied to what that letter represents (such as the sound it makes and the words that include it). “But when you type, every letter is produced by the same very simple finger movement, and as a result you use your whole brain much less than when writing by hand,” she added.

[Continued on next page](#)

Dr. Van der Meer’s study is the latest in a series of research efforts in which she and her colleagues have found that writing and drawing seem to engage and exercise the brain more than typing on a keyboard. “Skills involving fine motor control of the hands are excellent training and superstimulation for the brain,” she said. “The brain is like a muscle, and if we continue to take away these complex movements from our daily lives — especially fine motor movements — I think that muscle will weaken.” While more research is needed, Dr. Van der Meer posits that understimulation of the brain could ultimately lead to deficits in attention, memory formation and problem solving.

But as with knitting and coloring, some experts question the underlying mechanisms at play.

“With some of this research, I think it’s hard to dissociate whether it’s the physical movement of the hands that’s producing a benefit, or whether it’s the

concentration or novelty or cognitive challenge involved,” said Rusty Gage, a professor at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in San Diego.

Dr. Gage studies how certain activities can stimulate the growth of new cells in the brain. “I think if you’re doing complex work that involves making decisions and planning, that may matter more than whether you’re using your hands,” he said.

That said, the benefits of many hands-on activities aren’t in doubt. Along with gardening and handicrafts, research has found that pursuits like making art and playing a musical instrument also seem to do us some good.

“You know, we evolved in a three-dimensional world, and we evolved to interact with that world through our hands,” Dr. Lambert said. “I think there are a lot of reasons why working with our hands may be prosperous for our brains.”



Haverford Guild of Craftsmen **2024 Spring Art & Fine Craft Show**

Celebrate this Spring with Unique Art & Fine Crafts

10AM to 5PM
Saturday, May 4 & Sunday, May 5

Haverford Community Recreation and Environment Center (CREC)
9000 Parkview Drive, Haverford, PA 19041

\$5 admission
(\$3 admission with this postcard)

Visit our website for more information! www.haverfordguild.org/Spring2024

Scott Foster

Swedish Folk Weavings for Marriage, Carriage, and Home
1750 to 1840

March 15, 2024 - September 22, 2024

Explore rare and artful cushions and covers woven and stitched by women for their households. The intricate and whimsical designs on these textiles were created using a variety of methods and feature geometric patterns, exotic birds, real and mythical creatures, religious depictions, and floral themes.

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April's Excursion to Winterthur's library and Textile Conservation Department



The TEXTILE CONSERVATORS at Winterthur are responsible for about 20,000 objects such as window treatments, bed curtains, rugs, costumes, quilts and

coverlets, needlework, and upholstery. Damage to textiles comes from many sources. Unstable environmental conditions that cause mold and exposure to excessive light weaken and discolor textile fibers and fade dyes and colorants. Abrasive, acidic soil from the environment that becomes embedded in the fibers also weakens and disfigures the textile. Stains and wear from past usage contribute to deterioration. Some dyes and finishes used in the production of textiles are inherently unstable and may cause serious damage. Textile conservators support and stabilize the structure of textiles while reducing stains and degradation wherever possible.

The LIBRARY includes rare books, manuscripts, original works of art on paper, ephemera, photographs, the archives of the Winterthur estate and its history as a museum, and more. Collections encompass everything from 20th-century etiquette books by Black leaders, to 17th-century atlases and style guides by European publishers, 18th-century account books of immigrant craftspeople, to extraordinary 19th-century chromolithographed ephemera by leading printers from around the world. **AND FABRIC SAMPLES!**

The library is open for drop-in visits and general browsing Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.. The use of special collections (rare books, manuscripts, and archives) is by appointment only, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.. Please email reference@winterthur.org or call 302-888-4631 to make an appointment at least 24 hours in advance of your visit.

The [online catalog](#) contains more than 110,000 entries. They include bibliographic records for imprints, periodicals, manuscript and ephemera holdings, photographs, and archival resources.

MEMBERSHIP

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE GUILD? Please contact Linda Shinn at 302-655-9434 or e-mail info@harmonyweaversguild.org. Membership renewal for each year begins in June and ends by the September meeting in order to be included in the Membership List.. Membership includes a monthly Newsletter available through the web site: https://groups.io/g/harmonyweaversguild or by e-mail attachment.

All monthly meetings are in person at Brandywine Town Community Center and by Zoom.



Membership Form for 2024-2025

Categories for Membership: Active \$35 Full-Time student \$15

👉 NEW MEMBERS ONLY: Joining between January 1 and March 31 - \$20 🗨️ Joining between April 1 through June - \$40 (Includes next season's dues)

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS AS YOU WISH THEM TO APPEAR IN THE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: (_____) _____ E-MAIL: _____

Checks payable to Harmony Weavers Guild.
Mail form & check to Linda Shinn PO Box 4458 Wilmington DE 19807