

Shuttle SPINDLE & DYE POT



HGA

Handweavers Guild
of America, Inc.
VOLUME XXXVIII NO.2
ISSUE 150, Spring 2007
www.weavespindye.org



30

The Montreal Centre for Contemporary Textiles and Louise Lemieux-Bérubé

by Carol D. Westfall



56

Creative Grand Crossings—Multimedia Intercements Exhibit



38

Craft in America

Features

Right From the Start—Plan Your Warp Carefully 15
by Marcy Petrini

HGA Award Recipients for 2006 19

The Colors of Nature 26
by Michele Wipplinger

Sewing Handwoven Fabric with Confidence 43
by Stephanie Corina Goddard

Leki and Rinzin Wangmo: Weavers of Bhutan 49
by Gaye E. Elder

Insert HGA Update, HGA Board Nominations,
HGA Salutes Its Volunteers, HGA Membership Form,
Tropical Temptations—Convergence 2008 Tampa Bay, Fiber Trust

INSET PHOTOS, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:

Breanna Rockstad-Kincald, Silver Point, Tennessee. *Bobble Neckpiece*: #1 in the *Creative Grand Crossings* exhibit. Hand-felted; merino wool. Photograph by John Lucas. See feature on page 56.

Josee Hamelin. *Tap Dancing Rain*, 2006. 11.8 by 17.7 inches. Photograph by the artist. See feature on page 30.

Tim Harding. *Koi Kimono*, 1996. Handwoven; silk. Photograph by Petronella Ytsma, as featured in *Craft in America*. See feature on page 38.

Departments

65 Advertisers' Index

10 Books & Videos

64 Calendar

55 Classified

5 Letters

6 News & Information

4 President's Letter

61 SS&D Index

23 Travel & Workshop

COVER: Louise Lemieux-Bérubé. *Indian Summer*. Polyester, merino wool, metallic fibers; 85 by 118 inches. Photograph by the artist. See feature on page 30.



The Montreal Centre for Contemporary Textiles

ABOVE LEFT: Joanna Berzowska. *Krakow: A Woven Story of Memory and Erasure*, detail, 2005. Cotton with conductive yarns, thermochromic inks, custom control electronics; 76 by 38 inches. Photograph © XS Labs.

ABOVE RIGHT: Emiko Nakano. *Diary from Andes/Machupichu*, detail, 2004. Cotton; 69.6 by 40.9 inches. Photograph by Tadahiro Kumagai.

by Carol D. Westfall

The Montreal Centre for Contemporary Textiles

Contemporary jacquard weaving is truly a marriage of both art and the science of new technologies. If I were to list the contemporary colossal figures of highly specialized weaving, the work of Louise Lemieux-Bérubé would be at the forefront.

I had heard about this incredible work being done in Montreal, Canada, by Louise Bérubé. Once I learned about a symposium and exhibition being held at the Montreal Centre for Contemporary Textiles (MCCT), which is the school and gallery founded by Bérubé, I knew it was time to meet her.

About Jacquard was the title of both the seminar and the exhibition. The seminar began with an introduction by Bérubé, a reunion of sorts, for so many of the artists in the exhibition had either studied or worked independently in the studios of the MCCT with Bérubé. Two queries were posed to the panelists: "What is happening in fiber arts today?" and in particular, "What is happening in education in the fiber arts today?"

Art historian Denis Longchamps opened the presentations citing the work of several artists in the *About Jacquard* exhibition whose weavings deal with the evocation of memories: Bhakti Ziek, Frances Dorsey, Lisa Lee Peterson, Chia-Hui Lu, Barbara Layne, Emiko Nakano, and Julianna Joos.

Professor Lia Cook of the California College of Art gave the second presentation that chronicled this moment in fiber arts education which she described as an "interesting time" with growing departments. These departments address two trends: an interest in high tech coupled with a "back to the hand- and process-oriented art making." Neither of these is mutually exclusive, for today's students use multi-disciplinary approaches in their creative art work. Cook showed student slides which visually addressed these concerns and then cited the work of several of her colleagues

RIGHT: Cynthia Schira. *Hearsay*, 2003. Cotton; 57 by 52 inches. Photograph by Neal Keach.

FAR RIGHT: Ruth Scheuing. *SunFlower*, 2003. Cotton; 59 by 39.37 inches. Photograph by Christian Dahlberg.



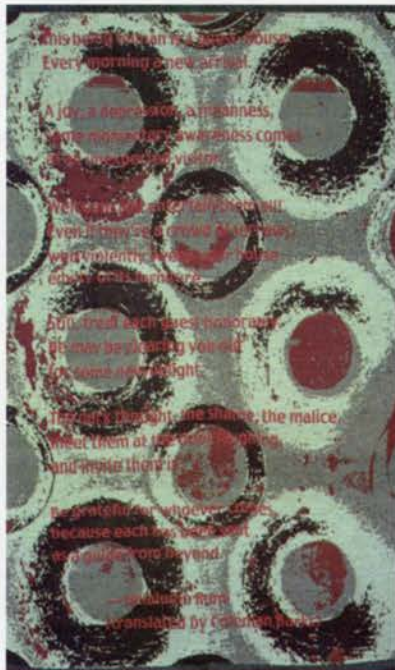
and Louise Lemieux-Bérubé

in various parts of the United States who are working in the same vein: Ann Wilson, Chicago Art Institute; Vita Plume, North Carolina State University; Janice Lessman-Moss, Ohio State University; and Pauline Verbeek-Cowart, Kansas City Art Institute.

Faculty member Barbara Layne at Montreal's Concordia University, another speaker, is a founding member of Hexagram, an organization of media arts and technologies formed through Concordia University and the University of Québec at

BELOW: Barbara Layne. *Lucere*, 2006. Cotton yarns, silver threads, electronic components (LEDs, microcontroller, ultrasonic sensor); 65 by 39 inches. Photograph by Diane Morin.



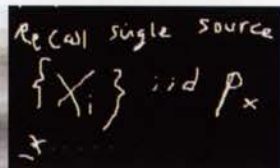


THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE:

Bhakti Ziek. *The Guest House-6*, 2001. Linen, cotton; 66 by 39 inches. Photograph by Luke Jordan.

Christine LoFaso. *Restless: Arnold, George W, Dr. Zagart, Babe, Shawn*, detail, 2005. Cotton; 27 by 115 inches. Photograph by George Tarbey.

Janis Jefferies. *Source the Code*, 2005. Cotton; 27.5 by 74.8 inches. Photograph by David Ramkawalon.



Montréal (UQAM). Layne is also director of Studio Sub Tela where she is working on the development of dynamic fabric surfaces. Think of an image of a fabric that moves, a fabric which “talks,” or a fabric that changes color and lights up. Earlier that day, some of us in the audience had joined Layne and her colleagues at the Hexagram site at Concordia University for a walk-through of the facility. There we watched a petal fold into itself and various fabric surfaces light up, as does Layne’s work in the *About Jacquard* exhibition.

According to Layne, her work in the exhibition, *Lucere*, is “...an original image of a tornado with two lightning bolts as photographed by storm chaser Mike Hollingshead. A microcontroller and sonic sensor have been woven into the fabric to create a cloth that is receptive and responsive to external stimuli. Light-emitting diodes are programmed in a continuous binary counting sequence. When the sensor is triggered by the viewer, the LED array is activated to recall the flashes of lighting that can accompany an extreme weather event.”

Another speaker at the symposium, Liz Williamson, is senior lecturer and coordinator of textiles in the School of Design Studies, College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia. Williamson spoke of the generalist programs being developed for the undergraduates, while postgraduate programs are becoming the place to specialize. Her work in *About Jacquard* was stunning. Entitled *Visible Darning*, the close values, hues, and tones of the warp and weft in this piece created a now-you-see-it, now-you-don’t effect. About this work, she says, “...it renders the invisibility of darning visible. In so doing, it [is] available to the gaze, exposing its connotative power: the cultural implications and narratives generated by the act of darning.” These images are then woven on a digital loom using the jacquard process.

Both Ruth Scheuing of Capilano College in Vancouver and Robin Muller of Nova Scotia College of Art and Design spoke about their respective programs which reflect not only the cultural concerns of the Eurocentric east coast of Canada, but the orientalist aspects of the fiber arts on the Canadian west coast.

The second portion of the program featured speakers who are following emerging paths in textile creation and began with Professor Joanna Berzowska, research director of XS Labs at Concordia University. She made her presentation with Marguerite Bromley, who is also a researcher in the XS Labs. Using thermochromic inks, the lab is currently working on a skirt that a young woman might wear that would change color dramatically should she receive unwanted attention via touch on a subway.

In the exhibition, Berzowska's *Krakow: A Woven Story of Memory and Erasure* "...is an electronic, color-changing Jacquard weaving," says Berzowska, "that integrates conductive yarns, thermochromic inks, and custom control electronics. It illustrates a scene from my childhood in Poland. Over time, the ink over-printed on the figures in the weaving changes color from pink to transparent. Like our (candy colored) memories of them, the people in the textile disappear over time. As populations are displaced, the traces of their presence in place and time are similarly erased."

After Marielle Chouinard, teacher and director of studies at MCCT, and Stephanie L'Heureux, director of galerie Diagonale, spoke of their vision of new trends in the fiber arts and their respective roles with regard to work in the fiber arts in Montreal and Quebec, Julianna Joos, professor of printmaking at Dawson College



ABOVE: Chia-Hui Lu. *Journey of the Notebook*, detail, 2006. Rayon; 26.7 by 17.3 inches. Photograph by Ming-Yi Tsai.

LEFT: Robin E. Muller. *Shibori Story*, 2005. Silk, cotton; 92 by 21.25 inches. Photograph by the artist.

BOTTOM LEFT: Rudy Kovacs. *Budapest #2*, 2005. Cotton, linen; 68.9 by 44.8 inches. Photograph by Paul Winder.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Wen-Ying Huang. *Memory Clothes*, 2005. Cotton and yarns covered by metal; 16.5 by 7.8 by 12.9 inches. Photograph by Kun-Lung Tsai.

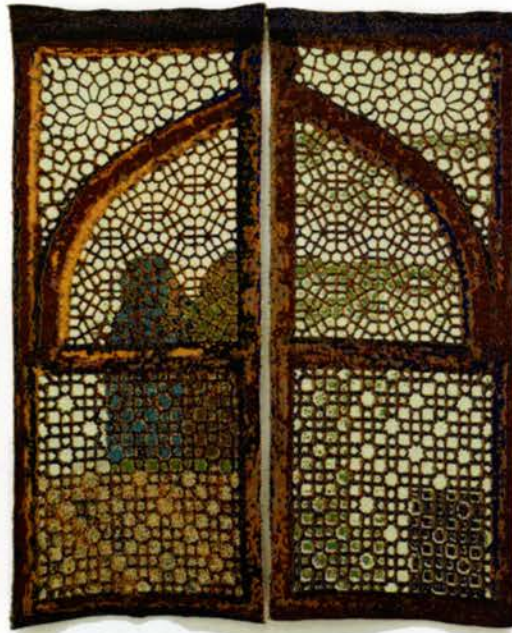


in Montreal, spoke. She began jacquard weaving studies in 2004 after twenty-eight years in printmaking. "...I try to represent scenes or objects and tell stories," Joos explains. "From these narrative images, I abstract shapes that capture the essence of reality....the digital camera and Photoshop® and Pointcarré software...enable me to easily manipulate my images. However, the traditional techniques of printmaking and weaving give qualities to artworks the digital prints do not have yet: sensuality, rich values, relief and texture....I want to preserve a direct physical contact with my art."

In the exhibition, Joos' work *Who Am I?* features Alice in *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. "...As poor Alice changes sizes numerous times," says Joos, "she questions her true identity. The viewer has to find in the tapestry how many times the character of Alice changes size."

RIGHT: Kelly Thompson. *Double Screen*, 2005. Cotton, linen, rayon; 43 by 35 inches. Photograph by David Ramkawalon.

BELOW: Julianna Joos. *Who Am I?*, 2005. Cotton; 74.8 by 41.7 inches. Photograph by Flip Image.



ABOVE: Vita Plume. *Yardage VKP#2*, detail, 2004. Shibori; cotton, polyester; 27.5 by 39.3 inches. Photograph by Chris Giles.

The last speaker, Professor Vita Plume of the College of Design at North Carolina State University, spoke of the many obligations of a researcher outside of standard artistic practice. Melding art and design with graphic design and developing products like carpets is essential in order to sustain a program. Plume's new work involves the use of woven shibori which, coupled with the realistic imagery of the jacquard loom, provides the artist with the capacity to integrate image and pattern.

After the seminar, we left for the opening reception of the exhibition *About Jacquard*. The show features the work of twenty-four artists from Canada, England, Japan, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, and most (if not all) have studied at the MCCT.

The gallery space is perfect for viewing these works of extraordinary variety and complexity. Bhakti Ziek's work of poetry is superimposed on a richly wrought surface of radiating roundels. The text was thought provoking. Cynthia Schira also works with text on an exceedingly rich surface in a manner the artist refers to as "...meaningless chatter endemic in our world today." Near this work hangs a magnificent study by Rudy Kovacs of a doorway in Hungary, seemingly evoking feelings of trepidation and concern in viewers. Kelly Thompson's *Double Screen* bears homage to the marble mughal screens of India, although here the artist has layered the image with color. Emiko Nakano's image of the Andes is overlaid with text from her notebooks that is not always legible and therefore adds a note of mystery to this photo of an ancient site in Peru. Mitsuko Akutsu's *Time J-02* also shares inspiration from the Andean civilizations with those who chronicled the passing of time. Christine Keller's work explores the architecture and industrial structures of Montreal. This artist's work is in a separate darkened space, as it is transitory in nature—another now-you-see-it, now-you-don't piece.

Lia Cook's magnificent *Wove Girl* is a true marriage of photography and weaving. Her structure seamlessly replicates the pixels of a print. Other artists also explored portraits—Christine Lo Faso in her *Restless* series, Lisa Lee Peterson in her *Pop Art* portrait, and Vita Plume, whose *Yardage VKP#2* integrates image and pattern. Ruth Scheuing's nudes and sunflowers bring to mind Edward Muybridge's human in movement series in terms of multiple images of the same objects in different poses.



ABOVE: Louise Lemieux-Bérubé. *Spring at Sunset*, 2006. Metallics, wool, cotton, polyester; 84.6 by 118 inches. Photograph by the artist.

Josee Hamelin's small graphic work extols the virtues of "singing in the rain" with a couple and small dog happily frolicking through such a landscape of slanting raindrops. Another very graphic but somber and abstract image by Janis Jefferies, *Source the Code*, was quite striking in terms of stark forms and strong, bold color.

Three works in three-dimensional form were grouped together in the middle of the gallery. A colorful scroll with Robin Muller's photos of shibori practitioners and various images of the shibori itself is shown on a pedestal with the box made to hold the scroll. Next to this work are two garments by Wen-Ying Huang that refer to patterns from the artist's childhood shirt and a portrait work bearing the image of a child.

Kathy Schicker uses christening dresses as motifs in her work *X-Ray Dress I*, evoking in the viewer all the memories that article of clothing can provoke. Both Frances Dorsey's and Chia-Hui Lu's works bear homage to the memories of their respective fathers. Lu works with her father's actual notebooks and the images found therein, while Dorsey explores the traumatic memories of war.

Lastly we saw an extraordinary work by Louise Bérubé, *Spring at Sunset*, a five-paneled length of banners depicting those soft yet vibrant colors which herald the rebirth of Mother Nature in all her springtime glory. Here the artist presents a true medley of color celebrating all the possibilities of a most munificent spring mélange of many variations of plant life.

Louise Lemieux-Bérubé

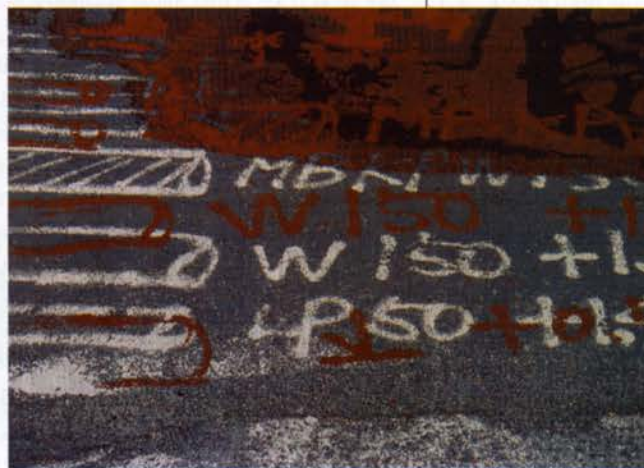
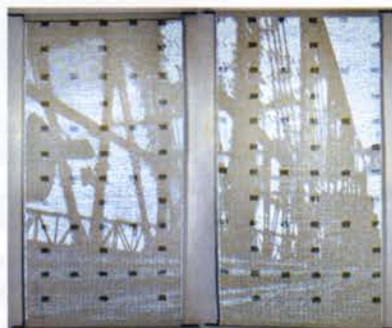
Louise Lemieux-Bérubé was born and raised in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Her family was not able to afford to send her to college, but once married, she followed her mother's interest in sewing by setting up her own business and making clothes for

BELOW: Kathy Schicker. *X-Ray Dress I*, 2004. Cotton; 27.5 by 39.3 inches. Photograph by Tim Fox-Evans.

BOTTOM, RIGHT: Mitsuko Akutsu. *Time J-02*, 2004. Cotton; 41 by 58 inches. Photograph by Shinich Sato.

BELOW: Frances Dorsey. *Black Gun*, 2002. Cotton, linen, reactive dyes, pigments; 39 by 39 inches. Photograph by Steve Farmer.

RIGHT: Christine Keller. *Crossing Victoria Bridge*, 2004. Cotton, polyester, retro-reflective yarns and black metal yarns; 70.9 by 15.9 inches. Photograph by the artist.



RIGHT: Liz Williamson. *Square*, 2006. Cotton, silk, polyester; 39.3 by 40.5 inches. Photograph by Ian Hobbs.

FAR RIGHT: Lisa Lee Peterson. *Pop Art*, 2006. Cotton, linen; 35.8 by 41.7 inches. Photographer Clifford Peterson

BELOW: Lia Cook. *Wove Girl*, 2006. Cotton; 57 by 51 inches. Photograph by the artist.



Carol D. Westfall is an artist and writer who lives in Jersey City, New Jersey. She is a Contributing Special Features Writer for SS&D.

Contact MCCT, 5800 St. Denis Street, Room 501, Montréal, Québec H2S 3L5, Canada; telephone: (514) 933-3728; <www.textiles-mtl.com>; email <info@textiles-mtl.com>. A DVD of the catalog for the exhibition *About Jacquard* is available from MCCT.

Bibliography

- Bérubé, Louise Lemieux. *Creative Weaving*. Montreal: Editions Saint-Martin, 1998.
- Dizikes, Peter. "Twilight of the Idols." *New York Times*, November 5, 2006.
- Falcot, P. *Falcot's Weave Compendium: A Source Book for Textile Designers and Weavers*. London: Bellew, 1990.
- Harrison, Sophie. "Empress of Romance." *New York Times*, November 12, 2006.
- Roussel, Francois and Oliver Masson. *Network Drafting and Shaft Weaving*. Montreal: Editions En bref, 1987.
- Schlein, Alice, and Bhakti Ziek. *The Woven Pixel: Designing for Jacquard and Dobby Looms Using Photoshop*. Greenville, South Carolina: Bridgewater, 2006.

clients. During the evening hours, she took classes at a local fashion school. As she became less and less happy with the fabrics her clients were bringing her, she decided to study weaving. Once launched on this road, she has never looked back. As soon as her children became older, Bérubé returned to school and obtained a degree in art history after researching art schools and realizing that those courses would not allow her to retain her on-going interest in what was perceived as "craft media."

Recognizing that the arts in Québec were in desperate need of not only financing, but public understanding and support, Bérubé entered politics and served as a City Counselor from 1983–1995. She became known for her passionate advocacy of the arts in Québec—all the arts—but this tremendous workload would lead her to ask herself frequently, "What have I done?"

From 1990 until 2000, Bérubé also served as President of the Québec Crafts Council, and it was in 1990 that she and Regine Mainberger created the MCCT. This school enables Bérubé to share her knowledge and passion for the fiber arts with students and professionals who come to study. The school's mission is three-fold: education, research, and promotion of the textile arts.

"Research in different aspects of knitting, weaving, feltmaking and embroidery are initiated by inviting established artists to the Centre," she continues. "Through the acquisition of the best equipment and by supporting researchers in their endeavors, the Centre offers services and facilities to other artists and researchers worldwide."

About Jacquard is actually the second large group exhibition that Bérubé has curated. The first exhibit *e Textiles* toured throughout Canada and Australia. Now, the great hope is that *About Jacquard* will also tour but with the addition of Europe and America venues as well.

Bérubé maintains a dual role as artist and teacher, and in her words, "...these two functions are closely linked." She has a passion for textiles and takes great pleasure in passing on her textile knowledge and sharing equipment and facilities, thereby making them as accessible as possible.

"Creativity emerges from the little things you do every day," Bérubé says. "I would like people to remember my lifelong respect and admiration for the work that artists do...the actual work process, not the works of art they produce. The art is the end product of the work, but the day-to-day work (sometimes thankless work) that takes place during the course of one's life is what I find most important."

Louise Lemieux-Bérubé is living proof that sharing her knowledge and promoting the fiber arts can produce an extraordinarily successful and fulfilling life. Author, producing artist, mentor, master teacher, administrator, and politician are roles this most successful woman has assumed with quiet competence and fortitude.