

Fairbanks Weavers & Spinners Guild

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**GUILD MEETING: Thursday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm**

**TOPIC: Sheep Breed Studies and Shave 'Em to Save 'Em**

**Presented by MK Romberg**

MK Romberg, currently completing Level 3 of the Master Spinner's Certificate through Olds College, will share her passion for learning about the rich diversity and heritage of sheep breeds through spinning. MK will share a bit about her studies in the Master Spinner's program, talk about breed studies for spinning and chat about her discoveries exploring what different breeds have to offer. She'll also give us an overview of the Shave 'Em to Save 'Em program through the Livestock Conservancy.

This is a fun, hands-on session via Zoom. Kits containing mystery fiber to practice our identification skills and fiber to spin with from one of the endangered breeds on the SE2SE list are available for pickup at Sophie Station Suites the week prior to the meeting. We have enough kits for 8 to 10 spinners, so please RSVP to [bonontherun@gmail.com](mailto:bonontherun@gmail.com) to reserve your kit! Kits are free to guild members and can be obtained for your non-member guests at a cost of \$10 each. Or just get your friends to join the guild!

This promises to be a fun, interactive and memorable meeting. Save the date now so you don't miss out on the fun! Spread the word - all are welcome!

To get excited about sheep and shepherds, check out this great article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/08/travel/lens-sheep-island-maine.html>

See you on Zoom on the 28th! The link to this meeting will be sent closer to the meeting date.

### Officers & Board Slate for 2020 – 2021

President: Buffy York Dewitt 347-5370  
Vice President: Maureen English 388-4465  
Secretary: Pat Costello 457-7033  
Treasurer: Terry Roberts 455-8450  
Historian: Bonni Brooks 980-3126

#### Board of Directors:

Barbara Ebbesson 479-0440  
Kate Hedstrom 590-1420  
Sherrill Peterson 218-626-5435  
Chris Waigl 699-9943

Librarian: Barbara Ebbesson 479-0440  
Hospitality: OPEN  
Newsletter: OPEN  
Fair Supervisor: Moxie Pender 479-8443  
Workshops: OPEN  
Dye Garden: Gail Mayo 479-2954  
Spinning Group: Alice Stickney 479-3425  
Busy Bees: Jodi Gouwens 474-9144

### President's Letter

Greetings All!

With the return of the light and the rollout of the vaccines beginning, I feel there is Hope in the air.

The issue of a physical space for the Guild has been on our minds a lot recently. We really have Penny to thank for the space we have occupied in the Lathrop Building. The Guild does not have a source of income at this time, other than membership dues and donations, so paying \$878 a month is not possible after our lease runs out. We're not sure if the University has any space at this time, so if any of you have ideas about economical space in town, please send them to us.

The Guild's holiday Zoom party was a lot of fun! Great to see everyone's face and see what lovely show and tell people we're working on. I'm looking forward to MK Romberg's presentation on Jan.28. The spinning class with Patsy Zawitoski was a lot of fun and gave us lots to work on.

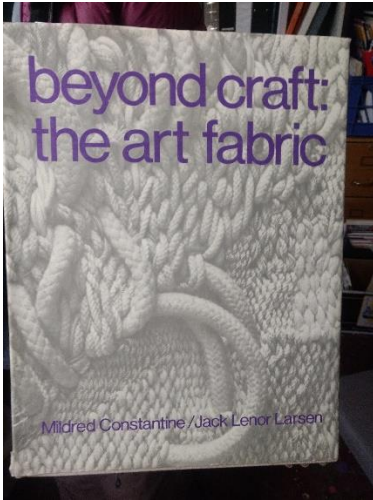
That's all for now. Stay safe and we hope to see you soon!

Cheers,

Buffy

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## The Guild Bookshelf by Bonni Brooks



### Beyond Craft – the Art Fabric

Mildred Constantine and Jack Lenor Larsen

Picking just one book to recommend this month was a nearly impossible choice! Faced with Peter Collingwood's rug books, a treasure trove of tapestry books and exhibition catalogs, an entire section on Navajo weaving, all of Johannes Itten's books on color and more, selecting just one seemed an impossibility. Then I looked on the top shelf and spotted a book that I would gladly put on the "desert island" list – if you could take only one book to a desert island for a year, what would it be?

First published in 1972 during a creative explosion in the fiber arts, Beyond Craft – the Art Fabric takes a deep dive into the work and biographies of 28 fiber artists, defining along the way what elevates fiber art from its more practical craft and home textile roots. Several of my favorite artists are featured in the pages of this book – Lenore Tawney, Barbara Falkowska and Claire Zeisler to name a few. The photographs alone are astounding with black and white illustrations showing the depth and texture of the work followed by full page color photographs taken with a such a sympathetic eye that you find yourself feeling it might just be possible to touch the page and feel wool or silk under your fingertips.

While it would be a real treat to just flip through the hundreds of pictures – each and every one another "wow!" – it's well worth pausing to read about each artist. Each profile is presented with depth and sensitivity, talking about the artist and the work with real effort given to honor the materials and process as well as the composition.

When I started weaving, an artist friend of mine said of this book, "If you own just one weaving book, make it this one." While I do also find it helpful to have a couple of "how to"

books on the shelf, there's no question that this is the book that keeps inspiring me to explore.

We have two copies of Beyond Craft – the Art Fabric in the library. One is available for loan by contacting me at [bonontherun@gmail.com](mailto:bonontherun@gmail.com) and the other is being offered to guild members for a donation of \$45.

And, as always, if you need inspiration or information from our library, just drop me a line!

Happy reading and happy weaving!

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## WORKSHOP ACTIVITY

### **Intro to Tapestry Weaving at the Folk School**

<https://folk.school/events/event/intro-to-tapestry-weaving/>

Have you ever wanted to give tapestry a try? In this month-long class, guild members Mina Doerner and Bonni Brooks will cover all of the fundamentals for success. The design options are up to you! We'll be working on small looms with a mechanism for holding good tension - no more loose or wandering warps! All of the equipment and supplies are provided, though you're always welcome to raid your own stash as well. The class will be a blended approach using video, Zoom and small group direct feedback with instructors. Warping instructions will be offered in person at kit pickup, appropriately masked and distanced. Tell your friends - this workshop is appropriate for fiber lovers with no previous weaving experience and will also cover techniques helpful to those with a bit of tapestry experience under their belts.

Also, keep an eye out for more workshops in the future at Calypso Farm, <https://calypsofarm.org/> and A Weaver's Yarn, <http://www.aweaversyarn.com/> and, of course, the guild!

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### **Dues Increasing in 2021 – Feedback Requested**

The board members have been considering options for raising money to pay bills and rent on whatever space becomes available. We'd love to hear your input.

One option is to increase dues. We want to start offering members monthly meetings with more value. For example, the session MK is doing for us would cost \$12.50 per person, plus materials, if offered through The Folk School.

We're also hoping to get out more newsletters where we'll offer free listings of items for sale and free advertising for your fiber related business.

## Fairbanks Fiber Festival Recap by Terry Roberts

Normally, the Fairbanks Fiber Festival is in early October, but this year everything changed. Since things had to change, the FFF Board decided to expand opportunities for vendors, demonstrations, and classes by turning the weekend event into a month-long on-line event. It was challenging and the Fiber Festival Board had a steep learning curve to tackle, but we are pleased with the result.

There were 2 weekends of live sales with our local Alaska vendors - 64NorthFibersAK, Calypso Wool, Eager Spinners Farm, GotchaGah, Hayseed Hopes, K3tog Hand-Dyed Yarns, Rock Pile Designs, The Net Loft, UAF LARS, wee ewe knits, White Fireweed Farm. Many of them had discounts during the month of November, and while those are not available, you can watch the vendor videos and see what they have available.

There was also a wonderful variety of demonstrations: Rabbit Basics, Musk Ox handling, Weaving, Spinning, Dying, and an incredible video about The Gansey Project that The Net Loft has been doing. Follow the link below to watch the demos.

Here are links to various ways to see what went on at The Fairbanks Fiber Festival this year.

Facebook Pages:

<https://www.facebook.com/FairbanksFiberFest>, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Fairbanksfiberfestival>

Demo videos:

[https://www.facebook.com/FairbanksFiberFest/videos/?view\\_public\\_for=217945522001023](https://www.facebook.com/FairbanksFiberFest/videos/?view_public_for=217945522001023)

Web Page: <https://www.fairbanksfiberfestival.com/>

YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxvIssY3twUX05HwWsMyt-g>

## Swatch of the month: January Mystery Swatch



Here is this month's Mystery Swatch. What is the structure? Did we do this in our sampler in Penny's first class? I will give you a hint: the fabric is thinner than a very fine tea towel—the warp threads are so fine.

Send your comments to [slpeterson2@alaska.edu](mailto:slpeterson2@alaska.edu) and we'll print them in the next newsletter.

## Answer to the November Mystery Swatch:



The answer for the previous mystery swatch: Yes!!

Here is what is on the label for the draft: "Interlacement. Stars and Squares. August 1996. Ends 1-63. Picks 1-86. 12 Shafts. File: SPECIAL.DES" Vicki's File system???

Here is a short summary of the letter accompanying the swatch:

Written by Vicki (from California) to Penny.

Vicki wove and sent the sample after speaking to Penny about it at Convergence.

Prior to the conversation, Penny wove this structure for felting. My question: They were speaking about deflected double weave, right?

Vicki is interested in additional drafts using this structure and the origin of the draft Penny used.

If you would like a copy of the letter, and a (woot woot) color copy of the draft, email me your snail-mailing address. As many of us know deflected double weave was one of Penny's explorations and she used it for the woven fabric in her mittens. Oh, I miss her.

Thanks so much for your responses!!!!

-Sherrill

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## In Memory of Penny

I almost shared birthdays with Penny. Hers was a few days before mine and a year apart. We'd often celebrate. Penny was a wonderful person and so genuinely willing to teach and share her skills and even her financial support for the Guild and anyone who was interested in learning to weave. I think she was with me in the University's weaving class taught by Fran Reed in a large room on the 3rd Floor, Eielson Building on campus in the 1980's, or perhaps she came to Fairbanks a little later. But anyway, she had the bright idea of keeping the Weaving curriculum going when that room became needed for the Accounting department.

The Weaving classes were briefly in Fairbanks on the 2nd floor of a shop on Cushman Street, then the looms were moved out to Moose Creek. In wintertime the drive to Moose Creek was too much to ask of the students so the looms belonging to the University were stored until Penny had the idea of renting space in the Lathrop Building, probably mostly at her own expense and with Ken's help and support. She also persuaded the University to include Weaving in their curriculum on an optional credit basis.

When the Guild needed more space, Penny rented more and more of the 2nd Floor ostensibly for herself, but always shared with weavers. She eventually had the whole floor, though I rented one studio room from her for a short while. Penny encouraged all weavers to attend the triennial weaving Convergences. I shared a room with her at one in Vancouver, but she went to almost every Convergence and always came back with volunteers. Penny was always involved with setting up workshops in spinning and weaving and bringing in experts from Outside.

I copy here my personal list of workshops almost all of which Penny organized or had something to do with. [Editor's note: List not included in newsletter. Please email the guild if you would like a copy of the list of Helen's workshops.]

To say she is missed is an understatement.

-Helen

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## For Sale – Studio Update

“You're gonna need a bigger boat.” - Roy Scheider as Martin Brody in the 1975 movie Jaws

Well, maybe we don't need a bigger boat, but we certainly need some more space to put all of the items we're gathering together! Here's a list of items we are certain need a new home. If you're interested in any of these, please email the guild at [fairbanksweavers@gmail.com](mailto:fairbanksweavers@gmail.com) and we'll get back to you!

### Items Available for Free

- Loopers! We have boxes and boxes of loopers for weaving!
- Paper for your warp...maybe some cardboard tubes, too.
- Wooden frames for painting on canvas. Various sizes.
- Strips of fabric for rag rugs. We have bags and bags of these for free.



- There is also a futon and possibly a sofa that we'd love to get rid of.

### Items Available for a Donation

- Strips of fabric for rag rugs. There are about 10 spools of fabric, various widths and colors.



- Balls of Pendleton selvages for weaving rugs. Various colors/prints available.



-Magazines – please email Bonni at [bonontherun@gmail.com](mailto:bonontherun@gmail.com) with the name of the magazine you want, the decade you're most interested in and whether you want strictly sequential or a nice assortment over a broader time period.

Spinoff 1977 onward

Shuttle, Spindle and Dyepot 1974 onward

Complex Weaver's Journal 2000 onward

Handwoven starting in 1979

Fiberarts starting 1978

Threads 1987 to 2003

Weaver's Journal assorted 80's and 90's

### **Items Available for Sale**

-Magazines – please email Bonni at [bonontherun@gmail.com](mailto:bonontherun@gmail.com) for more information about these magazines.

Handweaver and Craftsman assorted 1950's

Prairie Wool Companion 1980's

-All of the knitting books are for sale.

-Other books of which we have multiple copies, some of which are out of print and/or rare editions. One example is Helene Bress' The Weaving Book. This is a wonderful book, somewhat rare in the earlier editions and well worth a donation to the guild. We have three or four copies.

Is there anything you remember seeing at the studio that you feel you just can't live without? It may be available. Email the guild with any questions and we'll get back to you as soon as possible!