TOWARDS IMPROVING THE FIBER ARTS CURRICULUM: CONTENT MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSING PROFESSIONAL WORKS OF FIBER ART

A Thesis

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts

by

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The Ohio State University
1979

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge and thank my advisor, Dr. Kenneth Marantz for his help and understanding during the writing of this thesis; Prof. Clara Creager and Mr. Jon Wahling for their assistance in compiling the information on the Fiber Arts; and Dr. Nancy MacGregor for her course "Talk About Art."

Above all, I would like to acknowledge the love and understanding of my husband, Larry, and children, Justin and Sky, whose support I could not have gone without.
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose for this research is to provide a curriculum tool for the fiber art studio teacher. With the information compiled in these pages the fiber arts teacher will have a resource for developing classroom discussions on the history of textiles, the development of weaving as a craft and the final emergence of a new art form, the fiber arts. Although this is not an extensive history or analysis of fiber art it does provide topics for more in-depth research by the teacher.

Included in this paper is a general curriculum model for studio education along with a discussion of some of the questions studio education has faced in years past to the present, as indicated by the literature. The more specific fiber art studio curriculum is made in light of its implications for a particular type of student, the future studio teachers. The knowledge these pre-service teachers gain in their art classes effects the quality of their teaching on the elementary or secondary level. As many art educators have indicated there is more to teaching art than the art-making process. (Feldman, 1972; Ackerman, 1970; Clark and Zimmerman, 1968; and Chapman, 1978) One aspect is the discourse that communicates our perception and understanding of art. This is the "talk about art" that aesthetician David Perkins describes:

But, in fact, all our intercourse with art occurs in an elaborate frame of discourse about art. Of course 'talk' here spans lecture, or dialogue, spoken or written. Critics talk, professors talk, artists talk, friends talk. They talk about meaning, value, motivation, technique, style, significance. (Perkins, 1977:88)

To encourage this "talk" in a fiber arts studio the teacher must have some knowledge of the past as well as the present in textiles. One
cannot talk of the significance of a work of art if the teacher and students do not have a basic frame of reference with which to analyze that work.

This study intends to develop a chronology which leads to contemporary fiber arts and to illustrate the effects that history has on modern works. It is hoped that fiber art teachers and students can use this material in their "talk" about the fiber arts.
CHAPTER I

CURRICULUM PLANNING FOR THE ART STUDIO IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Perhaps more than any other social force, the economic factor, has led universities to accept their present role as leaders in instruction in the arts. Bluntly stated, society has defined the American university as the place where post-secondary education ought to occur. Universities have not resisted the opportunity to fulfill such societal expectations. But when they undertake the mission, naturally they search for completeness in program offerings and strive to ensure continued favor and support for themselves. (Risenhoover and Blackburn, 1976:7)

Though post-secondary education may be found in a range of institutions from professional schools to colleges and universities, the focus of this study will be on the latter two institutions of higher education.

Curriculum Questions

Curriculum planning in the visual arts for higher education has been a relatively unstudied area. (Brokema, 1979) As a comparatively new component to college programs (Perkins, 1965:651) studio education has been in a state of conflict and indecisiveness for close to twenty years. (LaChapelle, 1977:1)

In 1967 the National Endowment for the Arts funded the American Association for Higher Education to conduct a study of the arts in colleges and universities. From this study four background papers were

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1 This refers to the popular support colleges and universities receive and as a result the university is a "large organization of professionals." (Risenhoover and Blackburn, 1976:7)
commissioned to deal with basic philosophical and educational problems relating to the arts. Edward Mattil, Head of the Department of Art Education at Pennsylvania State University, addressed his paper to "Teaching the Arts". (1968) He attributed the enormously expanding interest in the arts by the public, which he called the "cultural explosion", as being responsible for bringing about the inclusion of the arts as a legitimate concern for colleges and universities. Mattil felt some of the questions concerning studio education were: How should this art be taught effectively? For what goals? And for whom?

A major problem is the ability of those who determine curriculum and those who teach to distinguish among the numerous goals for the teaching of art. What shall be taught and how depends entirely upon the populations to be taught and the purposes for teaching them. (Mattil, 1968:73)

He suggested:

These experiences are not only educationally valuable to students, but also give them opportunities for self-renewal that modern life with its many barriers seems so determined to stamp out. No one believes the arts to be the only avenues to creative and aesthetic growth, but the fine arts are uniquely suited to evoke strong responses in both the naive and the sophisticated. (Mattil, 1968:62)

Albert Christ-Janer and Ralph L. Wickiser also wrote a paper for this study and suggested that the arts offered specific educational experiences not found in book learning. They felt the primary role of the arts in higher education "...must be predicated on the ulterior purpose of developing each person's creative imagination fully through the creation of art works or the enjoyment of art experiences. (1968:55)

James A. Perkins, President of Cornell University also wrote of the problems in the visual arts. In his paper "The University and the Arts" (1965) Perkins examined the practice of professional artists teaching university studio courses and felt, because the university recognized
a need for professional standards of artistic works on campus, they recruited the professional artists as teachers.

This development—the acceptance of the professional artist on campus—led logically to the next, the arrival of the student who wished to work with the professional artist as part of his regular course of studies, as full preparation for a professional career. Some were anticipating a career as professional-cum-teacher, and others planned an artistic side of their life to a level that required real professional standards. (Perkins, 1965:673-4)

Mattil, Christ-Janer and Wickiser stated what they believed to be curriculum goals for the studio—to provide an opportunity for the student's self-expression, to promote the student's aesthetic growth, and to develop the student's creative imagination. (Christ-Janer and Wickiser, 1968:55) Mattil felt the approaches studio teachers took to attain these goals depended upon what kind of students were in the class; and Perkins suggested a professional role model was needed for three types of students: the artist, the teacher, and "others" which I will term the general audience type student. Perkins warned the professional artist/teacher to remember he was teaching the amateur, "Let him bear in mind that general taste cannot improve unless the interested amateurs are shown a better world. (1965:675)

It appears that in the decade to follow the same questions are being asked about studio education by a variety of people. Art historians and critics, Amy Golden (1973) and Harold Rosenberg, (1973) sociologist Judith Adler, (1975) art professors Harold Altman, Kenneth Evett and Jason Seley, (Risenhoover and Blackburn, 1976) authors Robert Watts, (1970) Gerry Monroe, (1977) and Eric Larrobée, (1970) and College Dean Andrew Brokema, (1979) have all criticized studio education. Again they questioned curriculum: what was to be taught and to whom?
As Adler stated in her article "Innovative Art and Obsolescent Artists",

To be a teacher in a field in which the only reliable tradition appears to be the tradition of breaking with tradition is, in a sense to be a teacher without a field, without any unified body of theory, without any guiding standards of practice…. (1975:367)

Brokema, Monroe and Golden felt that studio courses were geared heavily toward professional artist training. Golden stated in "The University Art School: Limbo for Alienated Youth", "A college art education systematically treats every student like an art major and every art major like a professional artist." (1973:46) Brokema echoed Perkins by suggesting students be moved through art curricula on three equal levels—the professional artist track, the art teacher track, and the general audience track. (1979)

**STUDIO STUDENTS**

Do these three types of student make up the population in the art studio class? Harold Rosenberg (1973:92-3) once commented on the fact that in Jackson Pollock and Willem de Koonings's generation of professional artist, one in ten had a degree from a college or university, but of the thirty artist shown in the "Young America 1965" show at the Whitney Museum of Art in New York, the majority had B.A.'s or M.F.A.'s. And as Mattil found in a report to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare called "Artist's Ideas About Art and Their Use in Education", by John A. Michaels, "...96% of today's artists have had formal training in a college or an art school..." (Mattil, 1968:72) We can then agree that students pursuing a career as a professional artist make up a portion of the population in studio classes. Thus we have the artist track Brokema spoke of.
In the area of teacher education one need only look at art teacher preparation programs in university catalogues to find hours of studio training a prerequisite to obtaining a degree. Art educator Manuel Barkan, in a paper titled "The Education of an Art Teacher" (1969) recommended that along with professional studies, a teacher must have diverse studio training.

...life in the studio which invites attention to contemporary issues in art and in life is essential to the education of an art teacher. (Barkan, 1969:7)

There is reason to believe, therefore, the teacher track student is among those in studio courses.

Finally, in light of references to the general audience track student we must remember most of our colleges and universities have general education requirements appropriate to the philosophy of a liberal education. Christ-Janer quoted Alfred North Whitehead as describing a liberal education:

A liberal education is an education for thought and for aesthetic appreciated. It proceeds by imparting a knowledge of the masterpieces of thought, of imaginative literature, and of art. (Christ-Janer and Wickiser, 1968:54)

In this area of the general student we must consider the fact that although many studio courses limit the enrollment to art majors only, not all art majors are going to be professional artists or teachers. As a matter of fact, Golden found that according to the 1960 census, 52% of the graduates with art degrees or majors were working as teachers and less than 10% became professional artist. (Golden, 1973:43) Many schools

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2See University Bulletins for 1979 from University of Illinois, University of Kansas, Ohio State University, and Pennsylvania State University.
have courses for the non-major in art history, art appreciation, and studio which are geared to training a general art audience. But few professors teaching upper level studio courses at the undergraduate level take into consideration that there are all three types of students in their classes. Re-examining who is in the studio class will be necessary in order for the curriculum to meet the needs of the non-artist as well as the artist.

A Curriculum Model

I am not suggesting a lowering of standards. I agree with art educators Gilbert Clark and Enid Zimmerman that the art student needs the professional artist as model but "...a focus upon one role should not dominate instruction or learner experience nor should any one role be studied exclusively." (Clark and Zimmerman, 1978:37) They believe that to reach all students the roles and activities of four professional models were appropriate sources for the content and design of educational activities in the arts. These roles are the professional artist, art historian, art critic, and aesthetician. Students progress towards these exemplar models on varying levels from the naive to the sophisticated.³

These four models are ideals and are not the vocational goals of all the students.

Nearly all students though they may not practice professional roles in the visual arts, can attain the near-professional understandings and skills that are required for empathic appreciation of the work of those who do. (Clark and Zimmerman, 1978:37)

³Mattil used these same terms to describe studio students. See page 2 of this chapter.
Students pass from the naive to the near-sophisticated state, some even attain the ideal sophisticated state.

THE FOUR ROLE MODELS

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<th>Sophisticated State</th>
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<tr>
<td>unskilled maker of art</td>
<td>artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uninformed judgements about works of art</td>
<td>critic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uninformed preference statements about works of art</td>
<td>aesthetician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of awareness of works of art in a historical context</td>
<td>art historian 4</td>
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I believe these varying levels of the four models will meet the needs of the artist, teacher, and general audience type of students. With this plan the curriculum goals would be:

1. Develop the student's artistic ability. (artist model)
2. Develop the student's critical skills. (critic model)
3. Develop the student's perceptual skills and aesthetic awareness. (aesthetician model)
4. Develop the student's sense of artistic and cultural heritage. (art historian model)

One can see a similarity between some of these goals and those suggested by Mattil, Christ-Janer and Wickiser at the beginning of this chapter.\(^5\)

Now that we have determined who the students are in the studio, we can satisfy Mattil by designing approaches to fulfilling the above goals.

\(^4\) Adapted from a similar model by Clark and Zimmerman, 1978:38.

\(^5\) See page 3.
Approaches

1. artist------It is through the learning of techniques, the role experimentation with materials, and the discovery of formal and expressive qualities in works of art that a student learns to make art.

2. critic-------It is through critical discourse about his own role work, about other student work, and about the work of professional artists as well as examining the work of professional critics, that a student learns to make critical judgements about works of art.

3. aesthetician----It is by looking at, talking about, and making role works of art that a student develops perceptual skills and increases his aesthetic awareness. By reading works of professional aestheticians students learn about philosophies of art.

4. art historian----It is by looking at and talking about historic role as well as contemporary artist and works of art that a student gains historical perspective and a sense of artistic and cultural heritage.

It is out of the scope of this study to develop a list of possible activities for each one of the approaches suggested. It is also beyond this thesis to examine the implications these activities would have for each of the three types of students in the art studio class. However, as previously agreed, one activity that is important to all four of these approaches is the looking at and talking about professional works
of art. In the next chapter this aspect of looking at professional artists' work, which is so important to the generalized studio curriculum is applied to a specific studio discipline, fiber art, and then examined for its implications for one of the three types of students, the teacher track or pre-service art teacher.
CHAPTER II

EXAMINING CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN FIBER ART IN THE STUDIO SETTING

AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PRE-SERVICE ART TEACHER

Yet curriculum is brought to bear not on ideal or abstract representatives but on the real thing, on the concrete case in all its completeness and with all its differences from all other concrete cases on which the theoretical abstraction is silent. The materials of a concrete curriculum will not consist merely of portions of 'science', of 'literature', of 'process'. On the contrary, their constituents will be particular assertions about selected matter couched in a particular vocabulary, syntax, and rhetoric. (Schwab, 1969:9)

Before going from the general curriculum theory to the specific subject matter, there is some vocabulary consistently used throughout this study that needs clarifying.

**Fiber** Any substance that can be separated into threadlike parts and used for weaving, sewing, etc. These substances can be from animal or insect products, such as wool, hair, fur, or silk; from plant products, like cotton, hemp, flax, or paper; and from synthetic products such as rayon, nylon, cellophane, or plastic.

**Fiber work** These are the works of art made from fibers. This term will be used interchangeably with fiber art or art fabric.

A studio course designed to teach the fiber arts which follows the general curriculum plan outlined in the previous chapter, must contain several components. One part of the curriculum would involve the teaching of techniques peculiar to the fiber arts. This might include weaving, basketry, dyeing, knotting, or other skill-oriented activities. Along with these techniques the teacher would have students use a variety of materials, such as rope, yarn, plastic, cloth, etc.
Another component to the fiber studio instruction would be the activity mentioned in Chapter I, discussing the works of professional artists, in this case contemporary fiber artists. Looking at slides or photographs of artists' work and reading about the art and artists in books and periodicals can aid this discussion.¹ From these kinds of activities the students become aware of who some of the artists are that work in fiber, where they get ideas, how they make their art, what kind of success they have had in gallery or museum shows, and what kind of influence they have had on other fiber art. Perhaps students will become familiar with a style of a particular artist, or a traditional technique used differently by several artists. Students may get inspirations for their own works or may realize a particular culture's influence on a group of works.

For the student who is studying to become an art teacher it is an opportunity to learn about an art form in order that he might give this information to his own students someday.

In Ohio, the planning guide for art education in the middle and secondary schools, Planning Art Education, (Efland, 1977) recommends several approaches to teaching art. One approach suggests junior high and senior high students learn how artists discover ideas for their work, how they transform these ideas into art and how they manipulate media to make their art. (Efland, 1977:43) Efland proposes teachers try such activities as reading biographical accounts of artists, listening to taped or filmed interviews with artists, examining and comparing

¹A more detailed outline of this approach will be discussed in Chapter V.
a series of works developed by one artist over a period of time or comparing different interpretations of the same subject or theme in different artists' work. (Efland, 1977:79) These types of activities, designed to give children insight into professional art, also transmit a certain cultural awareness through studying the achievements of these artists.

The higher education student in fibers, preparing to be an art teacher, would certainly benefit from having had some experience with the work of fiber artists. As a teacher he can then develop curriculum content material following the guidelines suggested by the State.

Information about American fiber artists is apparently lacking in the schools of the central Ohio area. Of the 15 elementary art teachers and 15 secondary art teachers that I randomly selected to survey, 75% responded.² All but one said that they taught some form of fiber techniques in their classrooms but only ten out of twenty-five teachers used slides, photographs, or filmstrips of fiber art. Of those only a few knew any contemporary fiber artist by name.

I selected twelve artists' names to be checked on the survey. These names were chosen because of the artists' long careers in the fiber arts, and their national and international reputations among museums, galleries, and art journals and, collectively, they are a good sampling of the many fiber artists working in this country.

From this survey I learned many teachers are using fibers in their art lessons and are teaching several fiber art techniques, however very few are familiar with contemporary American fiber artists.

²See survey data in Appendix I.
Another fact that suggests the fiber arts are popular in the classroom is the number of fiber related project articles in *Arts and Activities*, a teacher activities magazine. In the last 48 issues at least twenty-two articles have been written about ideas for using fibers in the elementary and secondary art classes. These involved such subjects as basket making, batik, weaving, stitchery, etc. To supplement such project ideas the pre-service art teacher needs to know something of fiber art history and America's contemporary fiber artists. This knowledge can help to enrich the encounter the children have with fibers and raise the experience from a step-by-step craft project to art. The teacher avoids what one high school art teacher of 15 years calls "the Macrame Trap".

The 'macrame trap' is a hypothetical and negative example with which you should familiarize yourself so that you can recognize and avoid its pitfalls and problems.

The teacher thinks, "I ought to include fibers in this class ...better plan a project...I've done macrame, I know how to tie those knots...we'll do hanging planters...NO...shouldn't do planters. This is an ART class...we'll do wall hangings."

The teacher teaches, "This is how you tie a square knot. This is a double half-hitch." (Robards, 1977:20)

This is an example of a step by step craft project. The directions lead each student to the identical finished product.

To teach students about macrame the teacher, knowledgable in textile history, can talk about historic uses of the art form, show slides or pictures of contemporary art works using this technique and then demonstrate various knots. The teacher then encourages students to develop their own macrame pieces, be it a plant hanger, a wall hanging, a

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3 See Appendix II.
sculpture, or "whatever". Students experience the art making process, make aesthetic decisions, develop knot-tying skills and nurture an appreciation for the art of macrame.
CHAPTER III

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Introduction

The roots of contemporary fiber works are found in the history of textiles. This history begins in ancient times when man first worked with the fibrous materials obtained from vegetable and animal sources to fill his basic needs for clothing and shelter. Fibers were spun into threads, and methods were devised to intertwine them. As cultures evolved, many materials and innumerable techniques were developed to form and embellish clothing, shelters, and accessories, eventually resulting in distinctive styles and designs. (Svec Ward, 1977:1)

Professor Bernard Kester, head of the fiber arts department at UCLA, artist and critic wrote in Craft Horizons in 1966 that there were three major influences on contemporary American fiber art: 1) the "scope and scale of materials" natural and man-made now available to the artist; 2) influences of change in the other art forms, such as painting and sculpture, that have affected the rate and direction of change among textile artists; and 3) "a re-examination of traditional and historic processes" that have moved craftsmen towards interpretive experimentation. (Kester, 1966:32) It is this third influence, the strong tie textiles have with the past, that prompted this chapter on historic background. Before examining the fiber arts of today in this country, it is important to sift through the rich and abundant, worldwide textile tradition that has been with man since his beginnings. It is necessary to look to the past in order to approach the present in the textile arts with some perspective and appreciation.
Numerous writers on the fiber arts of today have found that much of the work recalls some aspect of a previous era, be it a traditional pattern, a conventional material, an age-old dye recipe, or an ancient technique. (Held, 1973; Albers, 1965; Emery, 1976; Constantine and Larsen, 1972; Hall, 1977; Blumenau, 1967) The more one looks at this modern art form the more one finds an affinity for the past. Such findings were noted by John and Susan Hamamura in their book *Woven Works*.

The concerns of contemporary fiber artists are so diverse they seem to defy definition. Some fiber artists work with metal, plastic, color Xerox, photo-screen emulsions, exploring how the newest technologies can alter the old forms and patterns. Other fiber artists delve backward in time, studying each intersection of warp and weft in some fragment of fabric unearthed in a Peruvian ruin, studying until they can translate that nameless weaver's message into contemporary terms. (Hamamura, 1978:8)

and by Candace Crockett and Marcia Chamberlain in their book *Beyond Weaving*.

We were impressed throughout our study with the parallels between the ancient craftsman and his modern followers. Both have been able to use fiber crafts in clearly functional and practical ways and both have used their crafts to make observations on life's mysteries, the human life that is worked into a hand-fashioned fiber form, whether an ancient fetish or a modern fiber sculpture, stays with the piece forever. (Crockett and Chamberlain, 1974:7)

The richest resources for today's artists are the museum collections of fabrics from diverse times and places. The lush patterns from the Middle East, the intricate pictorial tapestries of Renaissance Europe and the complex techniques of Peru are some of the many important alien practices and products that have influenced contemporary fiber artists. In this country the textile arts have evolved from their humble beginnings at log cabin looms, through a vigorous arts and crafts movement, to
the present and what has been termed "the art fabric movement" by Stewart Johnson, curator at the Museum of Modern Art. (Johnson, 1977)

It is impossible to trace the complete development of textiles from the beginning of weaving to today's work within the limits of this paper. The history of textiles is one that is as complex as the history of mankind himself. Instead, I would like to survey early weaving history and examine a few of the more important contributions that I find have had a significant influence on the evolution of textiles and on the work of contemporary American fiber artist.

Not only does a recapitulation of the genesis and progress of a technology like weaving help to clarify the logic of its functions, it also provides an opportunity to reproduce examples of the most ambitious and appealing works ever accomplished in the form, whose extraordinary beauty may well be the most effective teacher the student of weaving could have. (Held, 1973:v)
Ancient Times

Early man's survival needs inspired the weaving together of fibers to form a cloth which would become protection for his body and shelter for himself and his family. No one knows exactly when the first cloth was made, in fact:

By the time the first history was written the beginnings of clothmaking had been so long forgotten that the earliest historians of every race wrote that the Gods had taught men how to spin and weave. (Baity, 1942:15)

It is because of the impermanence of fabric that little is known of the very early textiles. Remnants were found in the tombs of Egypt and in the diggings from the Swiss Lake Dwellers. One of the earliest woven decorative pieces was found in 1949 by a Russian archaeological expedition headed by Professor S.I. Rudenko. (Harris, 1977:19) The group uncovered a burial mound in the Pazyryk valley near the border between Russia and Outer Mongolia. Water had leaked into the grave and had frozen the contents. Among the artifacts was a 6'7" by 6' hand knotted rug.

The Pazyryk carpet, as it is generally known, seems to date from the 5th century B.C., and is unquestionably a fine piece of work,...The carpet is impressive. There are 232 knots to the square inch--a higher number than is found in most hand-knotted carpets produced today. (Harris, 1977:19.)

The origins of this carpet remain in dispute, some believe it was Persian and had been a gift to the Scythian Chief in whose grave it was found, Others believe the Persian-like designs and hand-knotting process were used by the Scythians themselves, a nomadic tribe, who roamed the Middle East and were influenced by other cultures.

The hand-knotted pile techniques were used extensively in the Persian empires. Many of today's artists use this knotting process
to produce a pile or fringe effect on the surface of their weavings.¹ Two of the most widely used knots are the Ghiordes knot and the Persian or Sehna knot. (Birrell, 1959:175) Both involve the wrapping of weft yarns (horizontal threads) around warp threads (vertical threads), coming to the surface of the cloth, creating a loop. This loop is then cut to form the pile. (See figures 1 and 2)

![Diagram of Ghiordes knot]

Figure 1
Ghiordes knot

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¹ See Sheila Hicks Chapter IV
Persian or Sehna knot

Persia of the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries was at the crossroads of the civilized world. Several trade routes passed through her borders giving Persian weavers access to silk from China, cotton from India and linen from Egypt. Under the rule of the Sassanid kings great fortunes in textiles were luxuriously and masterfully crafted. One example, considered the model for all oriental carpets, (Leix, 1942:1516) was the palace hall carpet commissioned in the 6th century by Chosroes III. This work was 11,080 square yards of a garden pattern with realistic woven flowers, vines, paths, fish, fowl and canals. The whole surface was adorned with pearls and precious stones and woven with silk and gold threads. (Leix, 1942:1559-1565)

Traditional Sassanian imagery placed birds, hunters, animals, and mythological figures in woven roundels with flowing floral borders. (See Plate 1) Sassanian textile has become a collective term for all the fabrics containing this design motif. These Persian cloths had a far reading influence over the East, Near-East, the Byzantine and the Islamic empires, and finally into Europe where their impression was felt until far into the 13th century. (See Plates 2 and 4) Today that area
Plate 1

which is now Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq, still produces the world's finest flat-woven and pile carpets. (Harris, 1977)

Early Egyptian textiles were eclectic in style, borrowing from Persia, India, China, and Rome. In the 5th century a new, more local style was developed by a group of Christians, the Copts. These textiles were highly decorative with harsh colors and rounded stylized portraits of men or women, or of animals, framed by borders of flowers and colorful bands. Many times a loopy texture of yarn, hand-knotted in a pile technique, surrounded the woven image. (See Plate 3) These textile pictures have much in common with the paintings in the catacombs of Rome.

These colorful cloth paintings were done in a tapestry technique whereby the weft interrupts their path across the warp and either interlock with each other, with individual warp threads or turn back into the next weft row. (See figures, 3, 4 and 5) This change of weft back and forth fills in blocks of color creating the pictorial image. It has been speculated that these Coptic weavings were the first tapestries. (Volbach, 1969:38) This tapestry technique was then appropriated by invading Arabs during the Islamic era (642-1194) and then acquired by the Crusaders who transported it to Europe. Today intricately woven tapestries are made by modern artists using these same techniques.

Lili Blumenau urges modern artists to look at Coptic weaving.

2 Professor Giza de Francovich has made comparisons of the development of weaving with that of Coptic painting and sculpture. (as quoted by Volbach, 1969:38)

3 See Lenore Tawney, Chapter IV.

Plate 2
Figure 3
weft interlock

Figure 4
warp interlock

TAPESTRY TECHNIQUES
The individuality of the coptic weaving has a great deal to teach the contemporary weaver-craftsman. Not only do they furnish inspiration in hour time. Many of the innovations that the Egyptian tapestry makers introduced almost millenniums ago are thoroughly applicable to modern design. (Blumenau, 1967:6)
Coptic, 4th century
Peacock, wool and linen

Plate 3
European Tapestries

The first tapestry known to be woven in Europe was the "Cloth of St. Gereon", named for a church in Cologne, Germany. (Ferrero, 1969:9) (See Plate 4) It is believed to be from the 11th century and contains several Sassanian design motifs (a bull attacked by a gryphon, inside medallions). The borders and background designs are similar to those in the illuminated manuscripts of the same time. Fragments of this tapestry are scattered all around Europe in various museums.

Early medieval tapestries were done in convents and monasteries solely for the beautification of the church. By the 14th century what had originally been intended as religious decoration flourished into a secular industry backed by a powerful economic system. Large tapestry studios were active in France, Germany, Italy and Flanders. Guilds of textile workers, weavers and dyers, formed to organize the production of these large narrative wall hangings as well as the many other woven cloths.

The vast halls of castles were decorated with ever larger and more luxurious hangings; tapestries served as screens to keep out the cold and wind. Then they invaded the bedrooms as canopies, and were spread out on benches and draped over chairbacks, finally becoming themselves veritable 'rooms'. So indispensable were these hangings that they accompanied their owners on journeys, and even to war with them. (Ferrero, 1969:24)

The immense scale of these picture weavings has inspired many contemporary textile artists to do large wall size pieces. Some have created large environments or "veritable rooms."

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4 See Sheila Hicks in Chapter IV.
"Cloth of St. Gereon" (fragment) Cologne
11th century, Musée des Tissus, Lyon

Plate 4
Distinctive of late medieval Europe were large pictorial hangings of wool worked in tapestry technique for both religious and secular purposes. Both their large format and their use suggest that these large hangings may well be considered the precursors of today's fiber works. (Ward, 1977:2)

By the 15th and 16th centuries tapestry had reached its peak and Brussels had become the principle center. A close relationship between painting and the tapestry "cartoon" or design developed as similar imagery and style was used. Desire for these richly woven "paintings" was increased by Emperor Charles V. His wealthy court dominated European social canons placing the precious narratives in great demand.

In Italy, Renaissance tapestry was greatly influenced by the textile designs of Raphael. (Ferrero, 1969:65) He discouraged the 'woven wall' concept and felt tapestries had to fit within the room's architectural structure. (Ferrero, 1969:65) These pieces were still monumental in size, by our standards. One of Raphael's patrons, Cosimo de Medici, established tapestry workshops in Florence in 1546.

The contributions of the Florentine Mannerists to the art of tapestry was coherent and aesthetic, employing valuable cloth and beautiful weaving methods. This was no vulgar display of luxury but a serious attempt to interpret the subtleties and singularities of the designer and the meaning of the cartoons. They were linked closely to an aesthetic idea and were representative of a society whose interests were pre-eminently intellectual. (Ferrero, 1969:83)

The Baroque painting style was introduced to weaving by another famous painter, Peter Paul Rubens. His cartoons were done in oils instead of the usual tempera, presenting weavers the problem of how to translate into cloth the transparencies of the paintings.

In 1667 the Gobelins Tapestry works were founded. Here engravers, furniture makers, and goldsmiths as well as weavers worked until 1694.
Finally wars and revolutions got the best of this art form, so bound in tradition it could not cope with the changing times. During the French Revolution some of the most beautiful royal tapestries were burned to yield their gold thread content. This seemed to be a symbolic action as it meant the end of a certain way of life and an end to the art of tapestry for many years.

All of Europe soon became totally involved in another revolution, that of industry. Men discovered ways to produce goods more rapidly and with fewer workers. The majority of people lost touch with weaving as the power looms of the Industrial Revolution took over.
The Arts and Crafts Movement in England

The Industrial Revolution of the 1760's introduced mass production to the world. Technology in textiles brought about the use of power spinning, looming, and sewing devices, making the handcrafted fabric less economically practical. Cloth could be made in factories more rapidly, more uniformly and more affordable to all.

In England the factories had all but choked out the craftsmen. Industrialization brought about such an increase in production that little care was given to quality or design. By the 1880's a reaction to this decline was germinating among the few remaining craftsmen. In an attempt to revitalize design and to rekindle an interest in the art object, artists joined together to form the Art Workers Guild in 1884, the beginnings of a twenty-five year long revival—the Arts and Crafts Movement.

The story of the Arts and Crafts Movement is a mixture of personal and collective efforts. The participants did not all share the same objectives or tastes, but all were united in the desire to see the designer raised to a status equal with that of the 'fine' artist and the architect, and to see well-designed goods of every kind made available to all levels of society. (Watkinson, 1967:69)

One of these early crafts activist was William Morris (1834-1896). Morris studied architecture at Oxford University; however his interest in literature, painting, design, and various crafts, and his distain for the industrial aesthetic, prompted him to leave his architectural firm and form his own design and production company.
Without thinking of himself as other than an artist, he (Morris) had, by virtue of his own energy, his determination to control the product, and his adherence to the Pugin-Ruskin principle of truth to material, became not only accomplished and versatile but also an authority on half a dozen crafts. These he had restored, not merely in a technical sense but in the sense of bringing them back into reputable practice.⁵ (Watkinson, 1967:67)

Among the crafts Morris was instrumental in reviving, were the dyeing, weaving and printing of fabrics. In thirty years he designed some 70 patterns for wallpapers, chintzes, woven cloths, and rugs. Many of his lectures on design were published as pamphlets or books. In an 1881 lecture on "Some Hints on Pattern Designing" Morris said: "You may be sure that any decoration is futile, and has fallen into at least the first stage of degradation, when it does not remind you of something beyond itself." (Watkinson, 1967:48)

Morris's concern for the decorative arts and his production of textiles, stained glass, furniture, and ceramics was a major contribution to the future of crafts in general and textiles in particular. It was an early signal for new directions for the art object. (Ward, 1977:6)

The integration of utility and aesthetics that Morris tried to achieve in the 19th century, was also inspiration for yet another strong contribution to art and design in the 20th century--the Bauhaus School.

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⁵ Pugin and Ruskin were anti-industrial designers and writers. Gothic Revivalists, in the 1840's and 50's they supported the concept of using the true nature of one's materials and avoiding the imitations.
Further impetus to the European crafts movement occurred in Germany. In 1919, architect Walter Gropius merged the Academy of Fine Arts and the School of Applied Arts in Weimer, to become the Bauhaus School. The school's aim was to train artists to make good designs that could be mass produced; to bridge the gap between art and industry; and "...to create a new guild of craftsmen, without the class distinctions which raise an arrogant barrier between craftsmen and artist." (Held, 1978:68)

Every student at the Bauhaus was trained by two teachers, by an artist and a master craftsman. (Herschfeld, 1963:7) By uniting the arts and crafts, Gropius developed a new creative situation. Students were allowed to freely experiment with materials. Gropius said:

Economy of form depends on function and material. The study of materials must precede the investigation of the function. Therefore the studies of form begin with learning through experimenting with materials. (Herschfeld, 1963:14)

The style that developed from this synthesis of art and craft drew heavily on the lessons of modern abstract art. Such well known painters as Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, and Josef Albers were members of the faculty. Designers and architects such as Mies Van der Rohe, Moholy-Nagy and Marcel Breuer encouraged simplicity, functional design, and a oneness with the "machine-age".

The Bauhaus was an idea and I believe that the reason for the tremendous influence which the Bauhaus had on every progressive school in the world lies in the fact that it was an idea. One cannot achieve such resonance with organization nor with propaganda. Only an idea has the power to spread as far as that. --Mies Van der Rohe (as quoted by Herschfeld 1963:14)
In 1933 the Bauhaus was forced to close its doors as its ideals did not coincide with Hitler's new regime. However, out of this school emerged architects, painters, industrial designers, and craftsmen who were to dominate their fields for decades. Fortunately for the United States, a great many of these artists emigrated to this country. Two fiber artists were among those who left Germany, Anni Albers, wife of Josef Albers, and Trude Guermonprez. Albers role in contemporary American fiber art will be discussed later in this paper.

Several contributions to textile history that were made by previous cultures on the American continents must first be examined before a study of modern fiber art can be made.
Ancient Peruvian Textiles

Of all the products of textile history, ancient Peruvian textiles have had one of the greatest impacts on American fiber art. Many of today's artists have researched Peruvian fiber techniques. Some have gone to South America to study weaving or to work with archeologists; many have collections of Peruvian artifacts which provide endless sources of inspiration for their work. Anni Albers spoke of these textiles.

It was the loom of ancient Peru, for instance, on which the great masterworks of the textile art were woven... the fabrics made on this loom stand as a testimonial to heights on inventiveness in weaving never reached again anywhere at any time. (Albers, 1965:29-30)

The term Peruvian is apt to be misleading, for what is now known as Peru was part of a much larger area in pre-Columbian times. During the Inca empire, Peru covered some 350,000 square miles and stretched from the mountain and coastal area of the southern border of Columbia to central Chile. (Poullada, 1959:80)

Because the early Peruvians had no form of writing, much of their history was recorded by memory and retained as folklore. Dates for this era are approximate and based on archeological investigations of agriculture, ceramics, weaving and architecture. The Peruvian era began about 1200 B.C. and ended with the onset of the Spanish Conquest in 1532 A.D.

It has long been debated by textile experts whether the textile arts developed spontaneously in the eastern and western hemispheres or whether there might have been some contact between the ancient peoples.

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See Anni Albers, Jack Lenor Larsen, Lenore Tawney, Sheila Hicks and Claire Zeisler, Chapter IV.
of the Middle East and the cultures of Central and South America. There is a striking similarity between the textiles of ancient Peru and the fabrics of ancient Egypt. (Held, 1978:51) It is possible that in the long chain of cross cultural influences in weaving, the tapestries of the Copts, mentioned earlier, may have had a strong influence on the tapestries of Peruvian weavers.

The earliest specimens of Peruvian textiles were found at Paracas, where the remains of two cultures, Paracas Cavernas and Paracas Necropolis, have been distinguished. (Poullada, 1959:80) Ponchos, shirts, shawls, turbans and mummy wraps were not only beautifully woven but decorated with rich embroidery.

From the period 400-1000 A.D. have come cloth fragments of the Nazca culture found in the valley of Nazca and Ica. They too emphasized fine weaving and the over-all embroidery; but brocades, warp and weft stripes, gauze and painted cloth are also quite prominent among the textiles. They were quite familiar with the processes of printing, tie-and-dye and batik as well; both blocks and small terra-cotta rollers for printing have been found in their tombs. (Lewis, 1937:101-102)

The Tiahuanaco culture, aptly termed the "Age of the Mastercraftsmen" (Held, 1978:54) was the most elaborate and masterful of the Andean cultures. Dating approximately 600-1300 A.D., they were located on the Bolivian side of the Titicaca basin. Of this period, Mummy bundles contain fine wrappings of brocade, double-cloth, painted fabrics, tie-and-dye and pile knot or velvet techniques. But the polychrome tapestries are the most characteristic... Hats showing a skillful use of feathers in mosaic designs are found, as are some very freely and vigorously executed examples of painted cloth. (Poullada, 1959:82)
The contents of many such archeological finds are displayed in museums across the American continent today providing a wealth of information and inspiration to the contemporary weaver.

In the period between 1300-1438 A.D. regional styles developed--Chancay, Chimú and Ica. The complex feather textiles, where feathers were sewn into a mesh of netting, were perfected during this era.

The final period, between 1438-1532 A.D. was that of the mighty Inca Empire. "Inca weaving was, in a sense, a refinement of all that had gone on before--a purification of form combined with a mastery of technique." (Held, 1978:54)

Some of the techniques employed by the Peruvians that have influenced contemporary artists are the braiding, painting, printing, tapestry, double-cloth and netting. The Peruvians were masters of meshes and fringes, and many of their finishing techniques (how warp ends are tied) are used in contemporary works. One example of a Peruvian braiding style popular today is the finger twining of vertical warp threads which alternately become the horizontal weft. (Turner, 1973:4) (See Figure 6)

Andean weavers used predominantly cotton and wool. The alpaca, llama and vicuna, which grazed the highlands, supplied the brown, black, tan and white wool. The cotton, grown in the lowlands, has as many as six natural colors. These fibers were spun on slender spindle shafts or on drop spindles and were of uncommon fineness. (Poullada, 1959:84)

The loom most commonly used was the back-strap loom. The web to be woven was stretched between two bars. One bar attached to a tree or

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7 See Tawney, Chapter IV.
Figure 6

Peruvian braiding

a post the other to the weaver by means of a belt, thus enabling the tension of the warp to be controlled.

Peruvian designs and colors are many times echoed in modern American work. Stylized animals, such as cats, birds, fish or serpents crowd around ancient textile borders and are sometimes painted in

8 Directions for the making and use of such a loom for the modern weaver can be found in the back of Else Reginsteiner's book, The Art of Weaving. New York (Van Nostrand Reinhold Co.) 1970.
an allover pattern. Vivid reds, browns, greens, blues, yellows, and ochers, all made from vegetable dyes, characterize the Peruvian fabric. (See Plate 5) Many of the symbols were ritualistic and portrayed various aspects of deities. (Poullada, 1959:84) The colorful stripes and patches are echoed later in North American Navajo rugs and blankets and much later in contemporary works.

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9 See Anni Albers, Chapter IV.
Funerary Mantle Paracas Necropolis, Peru, 1st century B.C. wool plain weave and embroidery, 9'x3'9"
Brooklyn Museum, New York

Plate 5
North American Indian Textiles

The early native American textiles that have been found were made from the fibers of their environment. Hemp, bark, fur, cotton, and grasses were twined together to make such useful items as mats, rope, baskets, masks and other ritual objects. Leather garments as well as woven articles were ornamented with needlework of beads, shells, bone, and feathers, and in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys with mica. (Baity, 1942:200) This embellishment has inspired many contemporary artists to adorn their works of art with similar materials making their own spiritual fetishes.

Indian fabrics developed to a high level of achievement in two separate regions—-one in the Southwest, the other on the Northwest coast.

But the best known and most advanced textile to be found in the Alaska-British Columbia region in the more recent past is without doubt the famous 'chilkat blanket'. (Dickstader, 1978:108)

These chilkat blankets were actually ceremonial robes made by the Tlingit Indians in the 1700 and 1800's and typically combined stylized animal forms flanked by symmetrical abstract shapes or human heads. (Dockstader, 1978:108) (See Plate 6) These formed the family crest of a particular clan in the tribe. In these blankets warp threads were completely covered by three-strand twining and consisted of mountain goat hair spun around strands of cedar bark. Three-strand twining is still used by some weavers and employs the finger twisting of three threads over and under the vertical warp threads. (See Figure 6) The warp traditionally hung from a bar and was held taut with weights.

See Tawney and Zeisler, Chapter IV.
Chilkat blanket, Tlingit, Southeastern Alaska. 64" high, 54" wide. Collection the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago. (19571)

Plate 6
Three-strand twining

Figure 7
The colors of traditional chilkat blankets were basically:

...black, yellow and blue-green on a natural white base. Black or black-brown, was obtained from hemlock bark; yellow cam from lichen or moss, while blue-green was derived from copper oxide. These were set with urine as a mordant. (Dockstader, 1978:112)

Because many of these blankets were used as a shroud or funeral gift and buried with the body, few of these textiles have survived. With the passage of time and with the advances of the "white man" the weavers themselves have all but disappeared.

The Indians of the Southwest who wove were from predominantly two cultures: the Pueblos and the Navajo. It is believed the Pueblos, including the Hopi and Zuni tribes, developed around 600 A.D. (Herr, 1979:8) The Navajo called "Apaches de Navajo" (American Fabrics, 1976:iv) by the Spanish, migrated from the north at some date before the historic period. When these Indians first produced woven articles is under debate by scholars. The fragile nature of baskets and textiles have made evidence finding difficult. The present collection of information suggests that twining and basketry were done as early as 7500 B.C. (Dockstader, 1978:19) The more noted textiles of this region developed after the Spaniards, under the leadership of Coronado, invaded the Southwest in 1540. Spanish settlers and missionaries introduced sheep, European looms, new dyestuffs and new design motifs.

Earlier, cotton had been the weaver's basic material, a probable Peruvian influence. But with greater yield of raw material from sheep, the Indians transferred their attention from cotton to wool. This was spun by drop spindle and dyed with vegetable and animal dyes.
The first woven wool articles were for personal use: dresses, shawls, blankets, etc., and were designed with simple stripes, diamonds, zig-zags and diagonal. (See Plate 7) (Herr, 1979:9) These were woven on vertical looms stretched between two horizontal bars. This "Navajo loom" is still used by the Navajo weavers today. (Pendleton, 1974:15)

As contact with the "white man" grew, designs and materials of Navajo weaving changed. Trade increased between the settlers and Indians in the 1800's. Private trading companies emerged in the Southwest following the completion of the Santa Fe Railroad and tourists began arriving in Arizona and New Mexico. (American Fabrics, 1976:iv) To accommodate the traders, the Indians took bayeta, a red cloth from England traded to them by the whites, unraveled it and wove it into bright "white man" pleasing designs. It was with the Germantown wool from Pennsylvania, that the Indians wove tight, sturdy rugs instead of their traditional soft colored blankets. (American Fabrics, 1976:iv) With the introduction of aniline dyes, (coal tar dyes made after 1856) came the "Eye-Dazzler" designs which exploded with bright color. (See Plate 8) The trading companies prescribed what they felt were saleable "Indian designs" which the Indians wove and sold by the pound. The quality of Navajo weaving had declined and as the United States entered the 20th century and became involved in World War I, interest in Southwestern textiles waned.

Then in the 1930's federal money, including W.P.A. projects, flowed into the reservations to revive the old traditions and crafts, among them weaving and basket making.
This, combined with a newly awakened realization that here was an important indigenous art form in which there remained a vitality, esthetic brilliance, and a cultural integrity, inspired a recognition and ever-widening enthusiasm. (Dockstader, 1978:66)

The enthusiasm for genuine Indian art increased in machine-made environments at the very same time the Arts and Crafts movement began in this country. Non-indian craftsmen looked to native American art as hallmarks of a disappearing way of life.

They evoked the American past as surely as did the Colonial coverlets, for always on the edge of the American consciousness was another way of life which the very same land had fostered. The Indian work was clearly handmade, uncontaminated by the machine. The new craftworkers began to copy motives from baskets, pottery, and blankets. (Rossbach, 1976:26)

This copying persisted until the 1950's when craftsmen began to take these old forms and push them beyond tradition, interpreting, changing, embellishing to make their own statements.
"Chief's Blanket", Navajo ca. 1880-1900
62"x48", Museum of the American Indian

Plate 7
"Eye-Dazzler", Navajo rug, ca. 1890-1900, 56"x76"
Museum of the American Indian

Plate 8
Early American Textiles

Colonial

The settlers who traveled to the American colonies from Europe brought with them the old traditions of hand-made textiles. In the early years each family was responsible for its own textiles needs but later, itinerant weavers traveled from homestead to homestead weaving the homemaker's hand-spun yarn into coverlets and table cloths of complex patterns. Slowly, weaving centers began to develop, some the result of efforts made by historic American heroes. It was due to Benjamin Franklin's influence that a calico print-works was established near Philadelphia in 1772. (Lewis, 1937:310) George Washington started a weaving house on his estate at Mount Vernon which serviced some twenty-five families. (Lewis, 1937:311) This history of cloth-making in America tells much of the history of this country, the struggle for self-sufficiency, the development of raw materials, and finally the growth of the factory system after the Revolution that declared our independence. (Lewis, 1937; Little, 1931; Baity, 1947; Atwater, 1951) Out of this period in our history emerged a legacy in craftsmanship and design for all handweavers to come—the American coverlet.

to many people American Colonial textiles mean but one thing—Hand-woven bedspreads. These coverlets that were made in all sections of the country are justly famous, for they not only show the skill of the weavers, but they show a charming appreciation for well conceived design. They had to be so designed and woven that when the narrow strips were put together a harmonious ensemble resulted.11 (Lewis, 1937:311)

11 More will be discussed about the coverlets later in this section.
By the 1800's the need for a craftsman's skill diminished. The Industrial Revolution had reached American shores and as factories grew textile workers in the large production mills became less attached to what they made because they no longer followed the process of weaving from start to finish. Quantity became more important than quality and speed in production was paramount to meet the burgeoning needs of a consuming society. What few craftsmen remained existed in the hills and plains of rural America.

**Southern Highlands**

One such stronghold for handcrafted goods was in the hills of the Southern Highlands, an isolated region of the Appalachian Mountains which began with the Virginias and extended into Northern George and Alabama. Here weavers of Scotch, British, and Irish ancestry continued to stitch, braid, dye and weave native fibers into useful yet aesthetically pleasing objects.

*It's the use of color which expresses the mountain woman's yearning for beauty. She created beauty with color in the quilts she designed, the rugs she braided, and the yarns she dyed for her weavings. (Ramsay, 1975:96-7)*

Among the weavings done by these Highland women were the traditional coverlets mentioned earlier, and "counterpanes", a cotton, single colored bedspread. This lightweight cover was traditionally woven in the honey-comb, huckabuck, or basket weave. The mountain coverlets or "kivers" (Hall, 1921:44) were of three varieties, the simple overshot weave, the

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12 These quanit mountain names are still used to describe the structural textures of cloth similar to the way the more familiar houndstooth and herringbone describe a particular type of weave.
summer and winter weave, and the double weave.  

 Generally they were made from linen or cotton warp and handspun wool weft. They were often designed to be the only decorative textile in the room they occupied. (Eaton, 1937:114) The overshot coverlet was done in many different designs and bore such charming names as "St. Anne's Robe", "Beauty of Kaintuck", (Ramsay, 1955, 96) "Charriot Wheels" or "Cat Tracks". (Lewis, 1937:312) Plate 9 is an example of one of these spreads done in a design called "Lee's Surrender".

 The summer and winter coverlets (See Plate 10) were woven in blocks and usually contained light and dark wool making them reversible from a light side to a dark side. The double cloth "kivers" were actually two thicknesses of cloth woven simultaneously and joined at the pattern. They too were reversible and Plate 11 shows both sides of a double cloth coverlet done in a "Lover's chain" with "Pine tree" borders.

 The directions for weaving these various coverlets and spreads were drawn out on paper (drafts) and handed down from mother to daughter or traded among weavers like recipes. Very few were collected and recorded until a decade later when an interest in this craft was revived. Weavers of today revere the hand-woven coverlets as masterpieces of their craft and as true representatives of Americana, much the same way painters look to canvases of Whistler, Furness, Sargent, and Abbey as examples of American art history. (Hall, 1931:11)

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13 Drafts for these weaves can be found in Regensteiner, 1970; Held, 1978, 1973; Davidson, 1973 and Birrell, 1959.
"Lee's surrender"
overshot coverlet

Plate 9
Summer and Winter coverlet

Plate 10
"Lover's Chain" double weave snowballs with pine tree borders

Plate 11
Many coverlets...have been preserved in museums, private collections, and homes, some in as good condition as on the day they were taken from the loom. These remarkable examples of skill, ingenuity, and technique are a valuable part of our handicraft heritage...(Eaton, 1937:114)

Craft Guilds

With the arrival of the 20th century the American counterpart of the English Arts and Crafts Movement began to stir. Louis Comfort Tiffany, an artist with both stained and blown glass, encouraged craftsmen across the country to work hand-in-hand with the machine. (Nordness, 1970:9) And although he had no immediate effect, he certainly did focus attention back to the handmade object. Americans began to take an interest in their craftsmen, and artisans began to join together in mutual support. As a result the craft guilds were formed. In the Southern Highlands the Southern Mountain Handicraft Guild, later changed to the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, was formed in 1928 in Penland, North Carolina. (Eaton, 1937:237) Largely brought about by the cooperation of outsiders--teachers and social workers--and the native craftsmen, the guild was meant to re-establish the slowly disappearing mountain crafts and to develop a source for the family income.

The founding of the Guild marks one of the most important developments in the handicrafts of the Highlands and of the entire country. Through it the standard of design and workmanship has been improved, variety of products enlarged, individuality of expression encouraged, use of native materials increased, better exhibitions held, markets expanded, and co-operation both within and outside the mountains greatly augmented. (Eaton, 1937:237)

Handicraft centers and cottage industries such as, Brea College Fireside and Student Industries, Brea, Kentucky; Allenstand Cottage Industries, Asheville, North Carolina; Penland Weavers and Potters, Penland, North Carolina; and the Pi Beta Phi Settlement School (now called Arrowmount)
at Gatlinburg, Tennessee were some of the early members of the guild and are still producing mountain crafts items today.

The example of the Southern Highlands is symptomatic of a trend in all the crafts. Folk handcrafts from all parts of the world are being explored by contemporary artists who seek a fresh outlook in their own work. This fact explains the current interest in macrame, sprang, twining, patchwork...and many other techniques. To a very real extent, the future of the handcrafts lies in the past. (Held, 1978:76)

In another part of the country, Mary Meigs Atwater, a young weaver in Montana, saw an heirloom coverlet which inspired her to try her own designs. (Held, 1978:72) She soon was teaching others to weave and during World War I wrote a book on the possibilities of weaving in the rehabilitation of the handicapped. It was the results of her efforts that the first weaver's guild was organized in the United States and the Shuttlecraft Bulletin, the first magazine expressly for hand-weavers, was developed. (Held, 1978:72) Atwater was very interested in fabric patterns. As the result of several trips to Central and South America she examined and recorded many pre-Columbian patterns and weaves. Her research in early American textiles and the recording of those drafts made it possible for modern weavers to understand and copy those traditional American designs. In her book The Shuttle Craft Book of American Hand-weaving she stated:

The traditional weaves and designs that have come down to us through the ages are apt to have a fundamental rightness that is unlikely to appear in something you or I dream up overnight. It is not servile copying to reproduce an old coverlet pattern in all its traditional charm, any more than it is for a musician to play a classic composition instead of some improvisation of his own. The craftsman who follows the precepts of William Morris, producing only 'what he knows to be useful or believes to be beautiful,' will not go far wrong. (Atwater, 1951:29-30)
Through the efforts of Atwater, the craft guilds, and a general revival in appreciation for the handmade object, there was rekindled an interest in the fiber arts. By the 1930's pattern weaving, based on coverlets and other colonial designs, became the prevalent style for the growing numbers of handweavers across the country. (Held, 1978:73)

But, as America entered the Second World War years more "modern" textiles, with emphasis on texture and simple weaves, became the fashion. This shift in interest was stimulated to some extent by the influx of the Bauhaus artists such as Anni Albers. (Held, 1978:73)

Colonial or overshot weaving gave way to what came to be known in the nineteen-forties and fifties as Contemporary handweaving to distinguish it from the traditional work and to indicate its relevance to the times. Handweaving was to look forward not backward; it was to be based on experimentation...(Rossbach, 1976:28)

The Contemporary handweaving Rossbach spoke of was the early investigation of fibers by such artists as Albers, Larsen, and Liebes, that eventually lead to contemporary fiber art.

**Summary**

This chapter has provided an overview of a textile history that has a particular influence on contemporary fiber artists. These artists, intrigued with the past, are certainly not limited to the few textile influences that I have mentioned; many are inspired by the techniques and imagery from other cultures. Our fiber traditions come basically from two distinct branches, the native indians of the Americas and the

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14 For information on textiles from Scandanavia, the Orient, Africa, or other cultures see issues of Ciba Review (1931-1950) and American Fabrics (1950-1979), as well as Glazier, 1925; Baity, 1942; and Lewis, 1937.
European colonists. Although these stands remained quite independent of each other textile historians find them equally significant to American textile heritage. (Glazier, 1923; Baity, 1942; Lewis, 1937) During the crafts revival both influences enjoyed a renewed interest.

At the same time that amateur basketmakers were copying Indian baskets, other people were learning to weave by hand, copying the Colonial coverlets which were preserved from America's past, and copying also the overshot patterns still being woven in the Southern Highlands as part of an unbroken tradition...The "Indian" baskets and the "Colonial" weaving were not considered to be related textile expressions...Even so the pattern weavings and the "Indian" baskets were one in that they found their inspiration in something of recognized value and distinction from the past. Both were attempts to renew a dying tradition. (Rossbach, 1976:28)

Thus, having noted particular design motifs and textile techniques that are "cornerstones" to contemporary fiber art heritage, a student in the textile arts can try to recognize these influences in modern works. In a fibers studio course that encourages discourse about works of art, the class should develop sufficient background in history to permit interpretive statements about a particular artist's intent, subject matter, or process. This information on textile heritage also gives the student a starting point from which to research a particular aspect of fiber history more intensely. These activities will deepen the understanding and appreciation of contemporary fiber art.

As the fiber artists are discussed in the next chapter an effort will be made to emphasize each particular artist's historic influences along with aspects of his work and career. It is not the focus of this study to compare or contrast the old art with the new, but to show specific examples where the old has influenced the new.
It is evident indeed that fiber works today represent an established art form of international scope. And, it is interesting to observe that they serve as their medieval counterparts, adding warmth and enhancement to the architecture of their time. The impetus and inspiration provided by works of the past cannot be denied. (Ward, 1977:10)
CHAPTER IV
CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN FIBER ART

Introduction

The metamorphosis of the Art Fabric in recent years is parallel with that of other visual arts. They share the same artistic currents and cross-currents, employ technological ingenuity and enjoy experimentation and manipulation of materials that have stimulated new concepts in all arts of the twentieth century. (Constantine and Larsen, 1973)

This chapter examines the contemporary handweaving Rossbach spoke of and investigates the contemporary crafts movement and the rise of what some writers have called "a renaissance in textiles", (Kaufman, 1968:7) "the revolution in hand textiles, (Rossbach, 1976:9) or the "growing art fabric movement" (Johnson, 1977). What exactly was this metamorphosis? And what led to the growth of fiber as an artistic medium?

After answering these general questions, specific attention is given to several modern fiber artists and their work to provide the studio teacher a base for discussing contemporary fiber arts. It is not an effort to make critical judgements but an attempt to describe certain works of art as well as to trace particular artists' development. I have selected six fiber artists: Anni Albers, Dorothy Liebes, Jack Lenor Larsen, Lenore Tawney, Sheila Hicks and Claire Zeisler to represent this contemporary art form. I chose these artists on the basis of their national and international reputations and the literature which lauds

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See page 59.
their contributions. All six of these artists were involved in either "Woven Works" 1963, Museum of Contemporary Crafts, or "Wall Hangings" 1969, The Museum of Modern Art: the first two major fiber art exhibitions. (Ward, 1977:6) Their names appear regularly in reference to the fiber art movement. For example, in Objects USA, Lee Nordness included all but Claire Zeisler in his account of the development of the art object. (1970) Dona Z. Meilach in her chapter "The Development of Soft Sculpture" said:

Regardless of its nomenclature at the time, the decade of the 1960's marked the emergence of soft sculpture...Among the early happenings were the weavings of Lenore Tawney, Sheila Hicks and Claire Zeisler. (Meilach, 1974:3)

Shirley Held in Weaving, A Handbook for Fiber Craftsmen cites the accomplishments of all six of these fabric artists. (1978: 72-75, 173, 331-352)

The art fabric movement has taken many forms and it is not within the scope of this paper to discuss all of the various ways artists have chosen to use fibers in art. I have concentrated on two areas fiber artists have explored, contemporary handweaving and three dimensional fiber forms. These were the first of many trends in the fiber arts. (Rossbach, 1976, 29-32) The six artists in this chapter were instrumental in gaining recognition for the art fabric.
Contemporary Handweaving

In the last chapter the historic overview ended with the development of Contemporary handweaving, contemporary in the sense that weavers were breaking with the coverlet tradition and exploring new dimensions in textiles. They regarded the handmade cloth as superior to the machine-made product and were zealous in their efforts to improve the quality of textiles. They made a lasting impression on the textile industries as many manufacturers hired weavers to develop cloth structures and fabric designs. (Held, 1978:74)

Handweaving was to find its appropriate role in the machine age through an imaginative rediscovery of fundamentals of processes and materials. And it was to exert an influence—a control—on the machine and its output. Weavings were to be models for industry. (Rosswbach, 1976:28)

Pioneering this close tie to machine-made goods were weavers and designers such as Anni Albers, Dorothy Liebes and Jack Lenor Larsen. They are largely responsible for improving the structure as well as the color, texture, and design of power-loomed fabric. Employed by such companies as DuPont, Bigelow, Jantzen, Goodall, Spring Mills, and Sears and Roebuck, handweavers explored new materials and new patterns, developing sample cloths that the industry could mass produce.

The fabrics that offered the most opportunity for experimentation were draperies and rugs. The sheer casement drapes and the rya or flossa rugs were structural and surface textile techniques that were to spur further investigation by the fiber artists. (Rossbach, 1978:28)
In retrospect it seems that many of the new experimental wall hangings and tapestries which were to appear in post-Contemporary weaving evolved from casement cloths with their open structures, their individual yarns as recognizable and distinct structural elements, and their preoccupation with spatial considerations beyond the edges of the cloth. (Rossbach, 1976:28)

The small area rugs that were designed by weavers in the 50's were described as "Sculptural". (Rossbach, 1976:29) Being small they could be dramatic, and impractical and were sometimes hung on the wall.

Rugs became sculptural splotches of color and texture; they seemed splashy, painterly, expressionistic...such departures required inventive solutions to technical problems which were quite foreign to Contemporary weaving. (Rossbach, 1976:30)

These casements and rugs required the artists to no longer make anonymous weavings. The product seemed more tangible, more personal than a length of upholstery of suiting fabric.

Handweavers were gradually discovering the sculptural potential of fibers. Using some of the materials and techniques initiated by the textile designers, weavers began using their looms to produce personal aesthetic statements that had little to do with function. Some artists abandoned the loom altogether and explored other fiber processes such as knotting, knitting, crocheting coiling, etc., (Held, 1978:75) Involved with fibers yet no longer only weaving, the new art form was to become known as the fiber arts. (Hamamura, 1978:3) As one fiber artist of that time stated:

Certain handweavers stopped thinking of themselves as craftsmen or designers and began to regard themselves as artists using fiber for individual expression. They were unwilling to be limited by a single method such as weaving, or by a piece of equipment such as a loom, or by a kind of product such as a furnishing fabric. They insisted upon using fiber in any traditional or untraditional way for their own expressive purposes. Their textiles were to be self-sufficient, not conforming to utilitarian needs, color schemes, architectural spaces or any other extrinsic conditions. (Rossbach, 1976:9)
Contemporary Crafts Movement

...as soon as the craftsman was removed by the machine from the primary obligation of satisfying the functional needs of his market, his choice to be an object-maker became a conscious gratuitous act. It changed the face of handcraft and signaled the beginning of a whole new creative life. (Silvka, 1977A:12)

By looking at the contemporary crafts movement in general one can understand how a new art form such as fiber art could come about. The climate was right—there was mutual support among the crafts artists and support was generating from museums, galleries and private patrons. Several events led up to what Rose Silvka, past editor of Craft Horizons called "The New Craft Era". (1977B:9) In 1941 Mrs. Vanderbilt Webb, a patron of the crafts opened America House, a showroom for a select group of craftsmen to sell their work and to own stock in the operation. From this early craft co-operative came the first issues of Craft Horizons, the official journal of the modern craft movement. (Nordness, 1970:15-18) This magazine started as a mimeographed sheet which circulated among the craftsmen of America House, became a full fledged magazine in 1947, and then became the official publication of the newly formed American Crafts Council. It is now called American Crafts. The ACC was organized by Mrs. Webb to establish a contact between the isolated craftsmen across the country. In 1957 they held their first Craftsmen's Conference in Asilomar, California where hundreds of "object-makers" gathered to share their enthusiasm for the growing crafts movement.

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2 Lee Nordness, organizer of the Crafts exhibition, "Objects USA" used the term "art object" in lieu of "work of art" or "handicraft". He defined art objects as art which required the skilled use of ones hands. He called the craft artists, "object-makers". (1970:7)
In 1956 Mrs. Webb opened the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York as a showcase for craft objects on a national level. This museum governed by a group of artists, was among the first to show the new fiber arts and has continued to give craft artists support through exhibitions.

**Fiber Art**

For the fiber artist the 1950's, 60's and 70's were a time of growth and recognition. Museum fiber shows educated the public to the new art form. In this country one of the first fiber art shows was the "Woven Forms" exhibition organized by Paul Smith at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts. Artists such as Lenore Tawney, Shelia Hicks, and Claire Zeisler represented some of the innovative forms the new fiber art was taking. (Meilach, 1974:3) As each year passed more and more fiber exhibitions were held--inspirations for the next generation of artists. What follows is only a partial list of museum fiber or fiber and craft exhibitions in this country.

1963  "Woven Forms" Museum of Contemporary Crafts, New York
1969  "Objects USA" National traveling exhibition (contained a fiber section)
1969  "Wall Hangings" Museum of Modern Art, New York
1972  "Deliberate Entanglements" Art galleries of UCLA, Los Angeles
1972  "Fabric Vibrations" Museum of Contemporary Crafts, New York
1972  "Sculpture in Fiber" Museum of Contemporary Crafts, New York
1972  "Fabrication" Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
1972  "Fiber Structures" Denver Art Museum
1974  "Seven Weavers" University of Texas, Austin
1976 "Fiber Sturcture" Museum of Art Carnegie Institute, Pittsburg

1977 "Fiberworks" Cleveland Museum of Art


1978 "Fiber Forms '78" Cincinnati Art Museum

1978 "Diverse Directions" Washington State University Museum of Art

The following statement was written for the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition, "Wall Hangings: The New Classicism" by Stewart Johnson, Curator, Department of Architecture and Design.

When in 1969 the Museum of Modern Art presented its large exhibition "Wall Hangings", the art fabric movement was already in full force. Although employing widely diverse techniques, many of the artists used coarse fibers, irregular or three-dimensional forms, and loose weaves. Their 'subject' tended to be nature in its organic state, and their work reflected the vigorous experimentation that typified the artistic ferment of the '60's.

Since then, the growing art fabric movement has attained such wide acceptance that today patrons include architects, corporations and-abroad-governments. There is still much freedom in individual choices of size, materials, and techniques, but the intervening years have seen the emergence of an impressive new classicism. An strong sense of architecture underlies the surfact elegance of these new works...But although these artists may employ widely dissimilar means, they have created hangings that have in common a serenity resulting from a precise, disciplined feeling for the logic of structure. (Johnson, 1977)

To more fully appreciate the fiber art movement is as important to look more closely at the artists involved in this art form.
Anni Albers

birthplace  Berlin, Germany, 1899
education  Bauhaus (Weimer and Dessau) 1922-1930

Teaching  Black Mountain College, 1932-1949
Collections  Museum of Modern Art (New York), Bauhaus Archive (Germany), Museum die Neue Sammlung (Munich), Kunstgewerbe (Zurich), Victoria and Albert Museum (London).


Anni Albers has long been considered by many the conscience of contemporary textile design. Her unconventional approach to her craft, re-emphasizing the thread as the beginning and end of all textile-making, has inspired and influenced a generation of young American weavers. She has provided standards with which to measure the creative work of the individual craftsman as well as the enormous production of the American textile industry.

--Arthur Drexler, Director, Department of Architecture and Design, Museum of Modern Art. (Albers, 1965; jacket)

Albers has made a large contribution to handweaving and to the development of fiber art. She is not only celebrated as an artist, but also an industrial designer, lecturer, teacher, and author. (Nordness, 1967:276) Albers entered the Bauhaus School in 1922 to study painting with Paul Klee. But because craft workshops were required along with the studio classes she began studying weaving. This involvement in textiles eventually lead her to laboratory work for industrial production. (Welliver, 1965:42) and to a life long career in weaving as an art form. Albers spoke of her choice of weaving over painting in an interview in Craft Horizons. When asked "Did you consider weaving then, a step down from art?" She answered:
'Not at all. The freedom of painting which I had done before was bewildering to me. There was such temendous freedom that you could do anything...This weaving was a kind of railing to me--the limitations that come with a craft. That was a tremendous help to me, as I think it probably can be to anybody as long as you, at the same time are concerned with breaking through it...' (Welliver, 1965:21)

Albers work at this time showed the structural side of weaving as the loom and thread dictated certain limits. With emphasis on linear qualities her aesthetics developed from a reduction of elements to their basic form, (Nordness, 1967:276) in true Bauhaus fashion. The silk weaving in Plate 12 is an example of the complex overlap of line and shape as lights and darks play across the composition. It is a very formal study which, if it were a painting or drawing appears very simple, but as a loom woven textile, it is technically quite complex.

One of the outstanding characteristics of the Bauhaus has been, to my mind, an unprejudiced attitude toward materials and their inherent capacities. The early improvised weavings of that time provided a fund of means from which later clearly ordered compositions were developed, textiles of a quite unusual kind. A new style started on its way. (Albers, 1959:38)

From her Bauhaus experiences Albers became interested in the physical characteristics of materials, their light-reflecting and sound-absorbing qualities. Utility was emphasized by Bauhaus teachers as well as a goal to improve the environmental aesthetics of contemporary life. (Albers, 1959:39) In 1928, Albers' diploma piece, the culmination of all this experimentation and training, was created at the request of Hannis Meyer, architect and director of the Bauhaus at that time. He asked Anni to design and weave drapes for an auditorium he had designed that had an acoustical problem. Anni wove fabric in chenille and an Italian synthetic that not only solved the sound problem but also had light-reflecting properties. (Welliver, 1965:43) In her essay "The
Anni Albers Bauhaus Weaving, 1926, 6'x4'
Busch-Reisinger Museum Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

Plate 12
Pliable Plane: Textiles in Architecture" Albers suggested textiles were an integral architectural element, "a counterpart to solid walls." (Albers, 1959:23) She compares this principle to the large tapestries of Europe and the veil-like fabric panels of ancient Japanese houses.

In 1933, Anni Albers and her husband, painter Josef Albers came to the United States with the closing of the Bauhaus. They were offered teaching positions at Black Mountain College, an experimental school near Asheville, North Carolina. Black Mountain was a wholistic community experience which attracted artists and educators who believed the arts were a part of everyone's life. (Richards, 1977:21) Among its students and faculty were the Albers, Robert Rauschenburg, Kenneth Noland, Trude Guermonprez, Bed Shahn, Peter Volkos, John Cage, Merce Cunningham and Buckminster Fuller. (Richards, 1977:21)

Anni was to set up a weaving workshop. However, having no looms at the school, she was forced to invent other approaches to teaching. Taking her cue from primitive weavings, many times, she would ask students to make texture studies using grass, twigs, moss, etc. and develop primitive looms on which to weave these found fibers. (Welliver, 1965:40) Albers once said:

Beginnings are usually more interesting than elaborations and endings. Beginning means exploration, selection, development, a potent vitality not yet limited, not circumscribed by the tried and traditional. For those of us concerned win our work with the adventure of search, going back to beginnings is seeing ourselves mirrored in other's work, not in the result but in the process.

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3 For more information on Black Mountain College see Duberman, 1972.
Therefore, I find it intriguing to look at early attempts in history, not for the sake of historical interest, that is, of looking back, but for the sake of looking forward from a point way in time in order to experience vicariously the exhilaration of accomplishment reached step by step. (Albers, 1965:52)

Through these years of teaching at Black Mountain, Albers was a champion for experimentation with materials and with weaving techniques. She believed the students should be taught "...the development of structures, from the elementary weaves to more complicated derivations, rather than the passing on of patterns for weaving." (Albers, 1941:4) During the 40's and 50's Albers continued to advocate the use of materials in their original state. She felt that by experiencing the stages of change from raw fiber to finished weaving, handweavers would recover a sense of directness. (Rossbach, 1976:38) Weavers of that time were usually using commercially spun and dyed yarn and weaving predetermined patterns from the old drafts. She felt these weavings lacked the act of discovery, the personal statement. (Albers, 1941:3)

The Albers remained at Black Mountain for 15 years and left in 1949, Josef to take a position at Yale University, Anni to continue weaving and to write several books. On Designing, published in 1959 is a collection of essays; On Weaving written in 1965 was awarded the Decorative Arts Book Citation. In 1949 a one-man show of her work was held at the Museum of Modern Art and continued on tour for three and a half years. Her weavings from this time were very personal and were still investigations of the vertical and the horizontal, and the fragmentation of linear elements. (See Plate 13) She was intrigued by the weavings of ancient Peru, particularly the interlocking warp and
weft pieces. Plate 14 is an example of this type of Peruvian textile. One can notice the relationship in composition between this and Albers' piece on Plate 13.

Anni Alber's personal philosophy of art permeates her writings. She encouraged weavers to think of their work as art, that the medium did not determine what was to be considered art.

For we certainly realize that there are no exclusive materials reserved for art, though we are often told otherwise. Neither preciousness nor durability of material are prerequisites. A work of art, we know, can be made of sand or sound, of feathers or flowers, as much as of marble or gold. Any material, any working procedure, any method of production, manual or industrial, can serve an end that may be art. (Albers, 1965:72)

It was this philosophy as well as her own work that encouraged early fiber artists to use the loom in unorthodox ways, to turn to primitive looms or to reject looms entirely. Anni Albers encouraged weavers to try new materials or to return to primitive fiber-making. She was an inspiration for the new fiber art. (Rossbach, 1976:50)

The weavings of Anni Albers have bridged the gap between craft and art. They stand on their own as complete and thoughtful statements of her approach to life and to design.  
--Cecil Lubell, Executive Editor, American Fabrics Magazine (Albers, 1965: jacket)

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Anni Albers fabric 1946

Plate 13

Checkerboard shirt, Peru, 1438-1532

Plate 14
Dorothy Liebes

birthplace  Santa Rosa, California, 1899

education  1919, San Jose State Teachers College, B.S. in Art Education
1920, Hull House, Chicago
1923, University of California, Berkeley, B.A. in applied
design (Phi Beta Kappa)
1926, California School of Fine Arts, 1 year painting and
color
1928, Columbia University, M.A. in Art Education
1929, One year study of textile design and techniques with
Rodier in Paris

teaching  1918-29 Public and private schools in California and New
York
1930-61 Weaving and design workshops around the country

exhibitions  over 100 national and international museum and gallery shows
(one-man and group) and 8 trade and World's fairs,
including: Art Institute of Chicago, '48, '57; Baltimore
Museum of Art, '48, '51; Brooklyn Museum '42, (retrospec-
tive), '50, '53, '56, '61; Brussels World's Fair, '58;
Detroit Institute of Arts, '49; DeYoung Memorial Museum,
San Francisco, '49, '55; Museum of Contemporary Crafts,
New York, '56, '61, '64; Museum of Modern Art, New York,
'45, '56; Philadelphia Museum of Art, '60; Victoria and
Albert Museum, London, '64.

commissions  St. Francis Hotel, San Francisco; Mark Hopkins Hotel,
San Francisco: SS America; SS United States; SS Santa
Paula; SS Santa Rosa. Marco Polo Room, Waldorf-Astoria
Hotel, New York; Chateau Champlain, Montreal; DuPont
theatre curtains, New York World's Fair; 8 Hilton Hotels
around the world.

died  September 20, 1972; age 72.

Dorothy Wright Liebes had a vision of what textiles should be
and a desire to bring this vision not only to those who could
afford 'fine art' textiles but to the consumers of mass produc-
tion. With talent, persistence, and vitality she pioneered in
bringing her beliefs to reality. Today we know her as 'America's
first lady of the loom' and as a color and textile expert and
prophet. (Znamierowski, 1970:3)

It is fitting that Dorothy Liebes be included among the fiber
artists in this chapter. Although not an "object-maker" of the craft
tradition, as a designer Liebes exhibited the ultimate in craftsmanship
and artistry in her work. (Nordness, 1970:12) When color and texture played no apparent role in the textiles of the Depression, Liebes was the first to introduce bright daring color combinations and unusual materials to the fabric world. Because of this pioneering work "Her success stimulated the market for special hand weaves, and more importantly, on an expanded scale, the serious pursuit of weaving as a profession" (Larsen, 1972:11)

Liebes was an art education major in college, specializing in painting and color theory. At one point in her schooling one of her teachers made a chance remark that Dorothy's painting had a fabric-like quality. This inspired her to take her first hand-weaving course at Hull House in Chicago in 1920. (Weltge, 1979:25) She immediately set up a weaving studio in her parents attic and began learning everything she could about the craft. She once said: "Weaving is music and painting and more to me". (Znamierowski, 1970:41) Dorothy remembers this period as one of experimentation. While other weavers were using cotton and wool, Liebes was weaving with ribbon, strips of bamboo, strings of beads--anything for a better, more beautiful fabric." (Znamierowski, 1970B:3) (See Plate 15)

Dorothy Liebes opened her first official studio in 1930, on Powell Street in San Francisco. She specialized in custom hand woven fabrics for designers, architects, and decorators. She soon established herself as a weaver of unorthodox fabrics by using brilliant colors, in strange combinations, and by using a wide variety of materials and textures. (Weltage, 1979:25) Dorothy intuitively seemed to know what
Dorothy Liebes fabric, rods, metallic yarns, wool and cotton, 1952

Plate 15
colors were "right" together and often went to San Francisco's Chinatown for inspiration.

From childhood her 'color soul' had responded to the brilliant clashing displays of silks and artifacts from the Orient. Lacquer red became a permanent part of her life. The silk yarns, beading and Chinese reeds she picked upon these frequent trips soon found their way into panels, blinds and pillows. Years later when she journeyed to Japan she felt a reaffirmation of this inspiration and found that this freedom and frenzy of marvelous colors still excited her. (Znamierowski, 1970:3)

In 1935 Liebes met Frank Lloyd Wright who became her friend and strongly influenced her design philosophy. (Weltge, 1979:25) He supposedly commissioned a fabric in "earth tones" suggesting Dorothy take her color scheme from the environment. From this philosophy came the combination of blue and green, a meeting of sky and land: "it was a combination for a time associated only with her, for in the textile world she was the only one who dared to put these two unrelated colors together..." (Znamierowski, 1970:3) Liebes once remarked, "There is no such thing as bad color--only bad color combinations..." (Weltge, 1979:25)

For the 1939 Golden Gate Exposition in San Francisco Dorothy was asked to head the decorative arts section. It took her two years to select craft objects from eleven nations. This exhibition was the first major exposure of crafts in the United States. (Znamierowski, 1970:4) Dorothy Liebes became nationally recognized as a spokesman for the crafts artist. It was her wish to upgrade popular tastes by displaying better designed items.

This philosophy was instrumental in her going beyond the custom weaving she was doing for the wealthy. Dorothy wanted good design
to be available to the average consumer, much as the Bauhaus advocated
good design for mass production. Liebes joined industry for the first
time in 1940 with Goodall Mills. There she designed fabrics for home
furnishings. Her success with this company opened the doors to a life
long association with many of the major textile manufacturing companies.

...through the years she has made her influence felt in every-
thing from car upholstery to bathroom tiles. Many years ago
a magazine gave her the title of the American home's 'most all-
pervasive influence'--a completely apt title, for even if we
don't have a Dorothy Liebes designed product in our home. Her
presence has been so strong that other designers have picked up
and interpreted her ideas...(Znamierowski, 1970:4)

In 1948 Liebes moved her studio to New York City but her involve-
ment with mass production became so intense that by 1958 it was necessary
for her to forego the custom weaving. DuPont came to her with the
opportunity for unlimited experimentation with synthetic fibers. This
offer was a designers dream as the field was wide open for new innovations
in fabric. Because of her work with synthetic carpet and rug yarns
Bigelow-Sanford hired her as a color consultant. She then became inter-
ested in designing area rugs which she felt were "a marvelous link with
history and with all cultures--primitive and sophisticated."
(Znamierowski, 1970:4) Her Sears and Roebuck contract was a chance for
every home in the United States to become aware of her color philosophy
and the hand woven look in fabrics.

Along with this design work came numerous commissions: ship in-
teriors, hotels, even World's Fair pavillions. She exhibited her work
in many museums and galleries and gave lectures at colleges and craft
workshops. Many young weavers came to the Liebes studio to work and
went on to win fame
for themselves. (Znamierowski, 1970:5) Her contributions to modern fiber art are well noted, as indicated by an article in Interiors magazine,

The current development of a whole new art form of sculptural weaving and tying and of free-wheeling tapestry weaving could not have appeared without her. ("Dorothy Liebes", 1972:143)

In modern handweaving, she was the first to create loosely woven textured casements, first to use nubby and puffy yarns, metal thread, ribbons, straw, mica, beads, leather, etc. She was the first to weave in fringes and build sculptural masses and ridges on rugs. To her we credit the woven blinds of reed, bamboo, rods and clats. (Znamerowski, 1972A:143)

In 1970 The Museum of Contemporary Crafts organized a retrospective of Dorothy Liebes' work. In the catalogue Paul J. Smith, director stated:

This exhibition is the second time in the twelve year history of the museum where a single artist has been featured in the main gallery, an honor only given to those who have made a major contribution to the design world. Viewing the exhibition makes it obvious that Dorothy Liebes has indeed made an outstanding contribution throughout her distinguished years of professional activity. (Smith, 1970:2)
Jack Lenor Larsen

**birthplace** Seattle, Washington, 1929.

**education** University of Washington, B.F.A.; Cranbrook Academy of Art, M.F.A.

**teaching** Haystack Mountain School (Chairman, 1975-present)


Jack Lenor Larsen is respected unanimously as designer, fabricator, producer of limited edition fabrics for interiors, master weaver. An unequalled leader and spokesman for contemporary fabrics, Larsen is a scholar, educator and author. He is uniquely equipped to pause and reflect on a past, present and future for American fabric producers. (Goldin, 1979:18)

While a student of architecture at the University of Washington, Jack Lenor Larsen had his first experience with weaving. After taking private lessons in Los Angeles with weaver Dorothea Hulse, Larsen
returned to Seattle to spend two years studying ancient Peruvian fabrics. He collaborated with Grace Denny on the translation of D'Harcourt's *Textiles of Ancient Peru and Their Techniques*, a monumental piece of research. During that time he worked with a large collection of Peruvian textiles, Larsen called them his "teachers". (as quoted by Goldin, 1979:18) Larsen continued his education by getting a masters in textiles at the Cranbrook Academy of Art. Displaying compelling drive and energy, Larsen tried learning all he could about weaving. It was said he set himself the task of weaving off a new warp every day. (Rossbach, 1971:13) When asked what influenced his early work Larsen cited his training in architecture and his teacher, Ed Rossbach, for whom he worked as a graduate assistant, and who shared his interest in Peruvian fabrics. (Goldin, 1979:19)

In 1952 Larsen moved to New York to set up a small production studio and was joined later on by Cranbrook classmate, Win Anderson. Larsen, like Dorothy Liebes, found that architects and decorators wanted handmade fabrics. He had hoped to be a consultant designer but found most New York fabric houses wanting the fabric—not just the designs. Larsen spoke of this first business:

> Aside from $6,000, some looms and yarns, all I started with was confidence and a small knowledge of contract bridge. I tried to discern what aces I held and what would have to be finessed. (as quoted by McDevitt, 1964:49)

By the end of that year Larsen had over a dozen weavers and power looms making upholstery material, draperies, and window blinds. One of his first commissions was the lobby draperies for the Lever House, the first large post-war office building. (Salmon, 1971:15)
Larsen found it difficult to compete with the large textile companies that employed well-known designers.

When I was a handweaver coming in to design something for someone's living room, I ran into this—that a Dorothy Liebes designed Goodall fabric was cheaper and some people thought it was better than what I was specially doing by hand. (as quoted by McDevitt, 1964:50)

For this reason and because it was not as creative as Larsen would have liked, he cut back on his handweaving operations and added a general design studio. Larsen, Inc. soon became consultants for a number of industrial accounts. (McDevitt, 1964:50)

Larsen once said "The secret is in doing what has not been done—to envision what has not been tried." (as quoted by Salmon, 1971:15) To accomplish this, Larsen traveled the world acquiring fibers and designs, and starting new companies. He set up hand-spinning operations in Mexico, Columbia, Haiti and Swaziland; weaving in Italy, Scotland, Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, France and Germany. (Handweaver & Craftsman, 1963:7) Jack Lenor Larsen International was opened in Zurich, Switzerland in 1963. From Columbia Larsen got alpaca and wool; from Haiti, cotton; and mohair from Swaziland. His "African Collection" designed and produced in 1962 included mohair casements, drapery and bedspread fabrics. African strip weaving (narrow strips of cloth woven on primitive looms and then stitched together in patterns) was inspiration for "Swazistripe" a luxurious fabric of handspun mohair in ochre and indigo. (Handweaver & Craftsman, 1963:7) "Cochabamba" was an elaborate wool and cotton weave from his "Andean Collection" of 1966.
An ardent admirer of pre-Columbian fabrics from his student days, Larsen in this collection says he neither has attempted to document nor reproduce but has worked within the tradition of the world's most impressive textile culture. (Handweaver & Craftsman, 1966:42)

This collection included examples of gauzy wool casements and drapery fabric of silk and metallic yarns. Many are hand-printed designs of intricate archaic motifs, inspired by the Tiahuanaco culture. (Handweaver & Craftsman, 1966:42) A traveling exhibition of these fabrics began in July 1966 in the Seattle Art Museum and closed in December at the Pan Am, Union in Washington, D.C.

In 1967 Larsen was honored with a retrospective exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. He talked about some of these pieces and their designs in Craft Horizons.

In the next gallery texture is demonstrated with a low-key palette and straightforward approach. Expressing the texture of fibers and yarns is most often my beginning and my desired end. I search all over the world for handspun yarns, as these are the most sensitive, the most in contrast to the industrial materials and finishes necessary to contemporary interiors. My basic premise is that a naturalistic, random texture soothes the jangled nerves of hard-edged urbanites." (Larsen, 1967:24)

Another Retrospective was held in 1971 in Boston. "Irish Awakening", "Reflection Forms and Nature", and "Kublai Khan" were among the collections of fabrics represented. Batik, ikat, screen printed and woven, the Larsen textiles "stand as works of art, a fact attested to by the large number of awards given his designs." (Salmon, 1971:17)

Larsen's contribution to fiber art have not only been his designs and handspun fabrics. He has worked closely with the crafts movement, writing for Craft Horizons, authoring several fiber art books and judging and assembling fiber art exhibitions. He co-directed the first
major fiber art show at The Museum of Modern Art, "Wall Hangings", and had total responsibility for assembling the 1977 exhibition "Wall Hangings: A New Classicism" at that museum. He is currently on the Museum of Modern Art's advisory board. A participant in the first ACC crafts conference in 1957, Larsen has continually played a leadership role in the American Crafts Council. He is presently vice-president of that organization and was recently elected to the ACC Academy of Fellows. Larsen co-authored two major written works on the art fabric: Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric (with Mildred Contantine, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1972) and The Dyer's Art--Ikat, Batik, Plyagi (with Alfred Buhler, Bronwyn and Garrett Solyom, 1977). (Goldin, 1979:57) His new book yet to be printed, The Art Fabric: Mainstream will focus on fiber work from the '70's. (Goldin, 1979:57) As Ms. Goldin said at the beginning of her interview with Larsen, "Jack Lenor Larsen is THE WORD." (Goldin, 1979:18) Larsen ended this interview with advice to the next generation of fiber artists.

I am amazed how many younger people I'm seeing now who don't know historic fabrics or ethnic fabrics or have never looked at Peruvian weaving or didn't know that ikat was an old technique. I wish they would look at good old things, not necessarily even in fiber. The inspiration in great fabrics is so extraordinary. It's a challenge to realize how many of the techniques we've lost could be done by handweavers. (as quoted by Goldin, 1979:57)
Lenore Tawney

birthplace  Lorain, Ohio, 1925.

One of the pioneers of this movement is Lenore Tawney. She is one of the people who raised weaving in the USA to the level of an art form—giving it a presence like a painting or sculpture. In addition to her tapestry, woven on the loom and her sculpture, some of her work seems to have definitely broken the gap between tapestry and sculpture. Out of a variety of materials like linen, horsehair, gold beads, bones, shells, feathers and apparently whatever she can lay her hands on, she weaves her tapestries and sculptural forms. (Kgositile, 1968:34)

Tawney was a sculpture student at the Institute of Design in Chicago. As was the case with Anni Albers, Tawney first experienced weaving in a required course in crafts. She graduated in sculpture in 1948 and so impressed her teacher, Archeenko, that she was asked to work a summer in his New York studio. Tawney did not take her weaving seriously until two years later. After buying a used loom, her first pieces were functional items, placemats, which were accepted for the Good Design Exhibition in Chicago. For several years she did design work and custom yardage. In 1951 her work was exhibited in the Chicago Public Library.
Between 1951 and 1956 Tawney grew restless with the handweaving of custom pieces. In a recent interview, Jack Larsen talked about Tawney.

I think the first Art Fabric, other than Anni Albers, might have been those of Lenore Tawney. When I met Tawney about '53 or '54, she was distressed to be designing and possibly offering for sale hand woven yard goods when others needed the income; she did not. What could she weave that wouldn't sell? I suggested she work with Finnish tapestry designer, Marta Taipale, who was that year in America. (as quoted by Goldin, 1979:20)

She did search out Taipale, who was teaching tapestry at Penland Craft School, and developed her skills in that technique. From then on, Tawney's work would be non-functional-fiber hangings, collages and assemblages.

In 1956 Tawney left Chicago to set up a studio in a waterfront loft on New York's South Street. (Constantine and Larsen, 1973:270) She lived among other artists and enjoyed the exchange of ideas and the support from their associations. Jack Youngerman, Robert Indiana and Agnes Martin were her neighbors, advisors and friends. (Constantine and Larsen, 1973:271) Her weaveings from this period were explorations in the contrast of solid weave against open spaces and the use of a variety of materials: unspun fibers, feathers, beads, what ever would give her the effect she needed. (Handweaver & Craftsman, 1962:6) Many were about birds. "Blue Crane", (20"x96") was of soft greys and blues with a silvery white. "Shore Bird" was, as described by Rossbach:

In a widely spaced delicate warp, the weft moves as in eccentric tapestry but is beaten so loosely that both warp and weft assert their linear nature while the feathers are left to lie on the surface as feathers. (Rossbach, 1976:37)
"The Song" is a long (12'x16'') narrow panel with the delicate form of a crane stretched the length of the hanging. Occasionally Tawney would use owl figures. Humorous, somewhat three-dimensional, these curious creatures were feathered by cuts in the warp, giving them a soft textured surface. These hangings were loosely woven in a gauze-like mesh with thick and thin yarn.

Tawney's early works also had a philosophical note, a characteristic that appears in much of her later pieces. For example,

"The Field of the Square Inch" symbolic of the Chinese philosopher's idea that the field of thought was located between the brows. Handspun black wool is used for the face, imposed on a screen-like web of linen, with heavier wool for the borders. The transparent web which Mrs. Tawney employs in many design can be seen clearly here. Contrasting weights and spins of yarn create interest. (Handweaver & Craftsman, 1962:8)

One of her more ambitious works "Triune" (1961, 9'x9') is a rich glowing tapestry of inlaid wool. Reds, blues, and purples are hatched across the surface as different color strands are laid in each weft path. Symbolic in design, it has a circle within a larger circle upon which floats a white cross. Somewhat a mixture of Christian and Oriental influence, the circle motif reoccurs in many of Tawney's weavings. (e.g., "Jupiter", 1959; "Morning Redness", 1974; "Waters Above the Firmament", 1974; and "Red Sea", 1975)

In a sharp turn-about "Triune" was to be Tawney's last large color piece for a long time. Developing a new series of works in the early 1960's, Tawney put away her colored wool yarns and ordered huge amounts of natural and black fine strand linen, specially cable plied and polished. (Constantine and Larsen, 1973:271) She used the forms she
every day on the docks as inspiration—wenches, spikes, masts, ropes, etc. Pieces like "King", "Queen", "Pharoah", "Bride" all woven in the mid-60's, took on human-like, larger than life stature. (See Plate 16) Tall and thin, dark and light and usually symmetrical, these pieces were a sharp contrast to her soft delicate bird series. (Howard, 1975:71) Called "hanging sculpture" by some (Schuyler, 1967:21) these weavings were some of the first off-wall textiles to be shown.

Tawney is credited with being one of the first weavers—if not the first—to create three-dimensional hangings, thereby freeing the medium forever from functional uses or wall placement. One of her sculptured forms shown at the Seattle World's Fair in 1962 was twenty-seven feet high. (Nordness, 1970)

To produce the tightly woven slit tapestries, Tawney invented a method where she could re-arrange her warp threads without redressing the loom. By removing the top from the reed (the loom part that separates the warp evenly), Tawney could vary the width of web between the slits. As a result, the weaving moves from wide panels to narrow strips in a non-interrupted flow. Many were variations on Peruvian techniques, (Constantine and Larsen, 1973:271) with narrow rods woven into the web reminiscent of primitive looms. "The arrangement also expressed the beauty of warps stretched on a primitive loom—the shifting of yarns forward and back as they cross through the lease sticks. The woven product seems to be at the same time the loom." (Rossbach, 1976:50)

Another series of works, much smaller in scale, were her shields. Plate 17, "Shield IV" (9" x 12") woven in 1967, is an example of one of these tightly woven forms. Like some sort of ceremonial magic cloth, (Ward, 1977:6) this tribal looking piece is woven from mustard colored
Photo by Ferdinand Boesch.

Plate 16
Lenore Tawney "Shield IV' 1967 9"x12"
linen, shells and beads

Plate 17
linen over natural linen warp. Pre-Columbian beads and tiny shells
dangle from the center. Other weavings of this type had long grass-
like tails with feathers attached. (e.g., "Shield II")

In a 1967 show at the Williard Gallery Tawney showed her new work.

A Craft Horizon article about the show said:

The weavings for which, in the past, she has been best known
have been rightly called "hanging sculptures" and all her
recent work tends toward the condition of sculpture: con-
structions, (many in boxes) collages of slivered paper like
bas-relief, confrontations of found objects and of the natural
and the man-made, mathematical drawings on graph paper that
are an abstraction of a step in an architectural or technical
process. (Schuyler, 1967:21, 23)

Feathers lined up in boxes; antique sheet music, manuscripts, newspapers
against raw wood, porcelain and egg shell made ambiguous, metaphorical
images. (Schuyler, 1967:23) "The Smallest Rose" is 10" square with
a circle of slashed paper holding an egg as it peeps through the
surface. "Seed Circle" (7"x8") is a solid circle of mustard seeds on
cork and old manuscript paper. These mysterious works seem to be a
form of visual poetry, objects and fragments of printed words, webs
of thread and torn paper make this group of works "abstract, impure,
moral, not to be categorized--" (Schuyler, 1967:23)

The mysterious circle motif appears again and again in Tawney's
work. (See Plate 18) A symbol of the world, her inner self, perhaps?

Craft Horizon critic Richard Howard talked of works from 1974.

...these hangings have in their centers the same circle
of vertical cords, the lower half of the circle covered, thread
by thread, with strips of writing--sacred texts, illegible of
course, and transformed into secular textures. "Morning
Redness" and "The Waters Above the Firmament" both are con-
cerned, as their titles remind us, with the notification of a
change, a division from night into day, from liquid into solid,
which Tawney reinforces...by all the devices in her elaborate
panoply: the woven cloth the slashed fabric, the colored design, the cutup text, the poem pulverized into its parts, the parts reformed (in both senses) into their integrity. (Howard, 1975:71)

Tawney's work continues this kind of meditation, its true meaning always beyond reach. She has been a great influence on the direction contemporary fiber art has taken.
Lenore Tawney "Waters Above the Firmament" 1974
153"x154", linen

Plate 18
Sheila Hicks

birthplace Hasting, Nebraska, 1934.


teaching Universidad Catholica, Santiago, Chile, 1958; Universidad de Mexico, Mexico City, 1962.


It can be said that she is limited only by thread--but what she is able to do seems limitless. Her work is deeply rooted in searching for a sound and rational structure which will enable poetic liberties. Many of her inspirations can be traced to ancient Andean sources--twining, looping, wrapping, knotting, braiding (all nonloom techniques). When she does employ the loom the structural methods used are straightforward and self-evident. (Nordness, 1970)

As a student of Josef Albers at Yale University Sheila Hicks gained a healthy foundation in color theory and use of materials in a Bauhaus tradition. Albers told his students to "examine carefully the material they were using, to analyze its properties and to avoid waste."

(Levi-Strauss, 1973:13) This valuable experience would prove to be useful to her career as a fiber artist in later years.
Hicks, like Jack Larsen and Anni Albers, became interested in the textiles of ancient Peru. While doing research for a paper on pre-Inca fabrics she had the opportunity to seek advice from the renowned archeologist Junius Bird, who later became her M.F.A. thesis advisor. (Constantine and Larsen, 1973:173) After her B.F.A. Hicks earned a one-year Fulbright scholarship to study in South America. Thus began what would be a lifetime of world-wide travels. In Chile, Venezuela, Peru, and Bolivia Sheila visited many small weaving villages and archeological digs. She recorded her impressions in the form of drawings, paintings, a diary, and small weavings. This would be continuous inspiration for future works. (Ward, 1977:11)

...the finished weaving had a four sided salvage, showing no visible difference between warp and weft...She wove each row of weft developing the work on the basis of visual accumulation of texture, composing a system of signs that can be compared to handwriting. (Levi-Strauss, 1973:22)

After returning to Yale to complete her M.F.A., Hicks was awarded another scholarship to study in France. It was at this time Sheila fell in love with Paris and decided to make it home. (Levi-Strauss, 1973:20)

In a trip back to South America in 1961 Hicks presented her first weaving exhibition at the Galeria Antonio Souza in Mexico City. This show was a collection of her small weavings, which she called "Miniatures", that had been done in the past five years. (Levi-Strauss, 1973:22) The success of this show encouraged her to continue weaving small scale works. Her series "Hieroglyphs" were small, monochrome, double-sided texture studies in wool. The Museum of Modern Art in New York bought a blue "Hieroglyph" and ordered a larger one in white wool. The difficulty in duplicating the effect of the miniature into
a large scale piece was a lesson well learned—size and relationship to materials are important. (Levi-Strauss, 1973:22) Continuing to weave miniatures throughout her career Hicks became more involved and eventually better known for her larger pieces.

While doing some research in West Germany for a rug manufacturer, Hicks did a series of works using a combination of braided and wrapped pile with tufting shot through the back of the weaving with a mechanical device. (Held, 1978:208) "For the first time Sheila was able to plan and realize very large wall hangings that were as thick as fleece or giant headresses." (Levi-Strauss, 1973:26) "Barber's Pole" (Plate 19) is a hanging from that series. Thick tufts of wool in a "voluptuous cascade of yarns" (Held, 1978:208) hang in shaggy orderliness of red, white and blue. Hanks of yarn are bound tightly in sections by fine blue silk. This wrapping of strands is a characteristic that marks many of Hicks' pieces. "Red Prayer rug" (1964), "Quipu" (1964), "Saddle Prayer Rug" (1965), "Grand Prayer Rug" (1965) and "Principle Wife" (1969) are all hangings that use this particular technique. (See Figure 7)

This wrapped effect came from experiences in South America, having seen yards and yards of partially wrapped warp threads lying ready for dyeing in the ikat technique (a resist method where the warp threads are wrapped in patterns to resist dye). "Her experience of these, and of the Peruvian quipus in llama wool, led her later to wrap long cords of natural linen with brightly colored thread." (Levi-Strauss, 1973:22)

One of the pieces Levi-Strauss was speaking about was "Principle Wife" (1969) which hung from a bar 11 feet above the ground and spread out on to the floor below. This piece was in the international fibers show
Sheila Hicks. Barber's Pole. 1964-65. Wool and silk pile shot through backing with a mechanical pistol; 11'3"x5'8". Private Collection. Germany.

Plate 19
called "Perspectief in Textiels" in the Stedelijk Museum of Amsterdam, and is owned by that museum. Constantine and Larsen describe this work.

...like stones rippling in a stream of fast water bulbous hunks on linen ooze out from the tight twists, smooth verticals isolated from ceiling and floor by a section of unwrapped linen. (Constantine and Larsen, 1973:178)

One of the largest of Sheila Hicks' works was a commission for the New York Ford Foundation Building in the years 1966-1968. It was made with 8" diameter circles, uniformly embroidered in a honey colored silk over a natural linen base cloth. The threads were stitched over metal discs to maintain their shape. The finished wall piece measured 32'x13'.

The walls by Sheila Hicks are, in a sense a complete contrast to her individual works, yet there are solid likes between these expressions and her single hangings. Her walls are made to cover existing walls or are walls in themselves. They are composed of single elements multiplied, components that are repeated and assembled. They are commissioned for specific places and are essential to the architectural spaces they occupy. (Constantine and Larsen, 1972:178)

From the years 1966-1970 Hicks traveled the globe at the request of many foreign governments. Her main task was to develop designs and techniques that would boost the textile industries of those countries. Each culture she visited was source material for her works. From India came her "Palghat" tapestries; from Chile, where she set up the Huaquen weaving workshop, came ideas for more miniatures; and from Morocco came her Morroccan prayer rugs.

In each of the places in which she has worked she has absorbed the tone, respected its tradition and responded to its potentials. The canvas of tent, the canopies of mats and vines, the structures of screens etc... (Constantine and Larsen, 1973:178)

The prayer rug series was inspired by the architecture and the middle Eastern carpets. ("Sheila Hicks at Robat", 1971:31) The arch shaped
form that occupies the rectangle in these works has strong architectural references to the doorways and tunnels of Tangiers. Their thick sculptured pile looks like "successive layers of plaster." (Constantine and Larsen, 1973:179) Done in the knotting technique of Persian rugs (see Figure 1) their loops are sissor-cut to form the dense carved surface.

In a recent fiber symposium Sheila Hicks talked of her career in an address called "Holey Socks, Darned Sheets, and Phase IV" (1978).

The period that consisted of research, studying pre-Inca textiles, photography, and painting with a Bauhaus group, I would call my Phase I. It was then that I began trying out Josef Alber's color theory with Anni Alber's structural vocabulary. Phase II--getting my work recognized and participating in exhibitions, museums, galleries. I think I have shown in thirty to forty countries now. Phase III--architecture. Trying to put this art form into context, attempting to make my living from it. Creating textiles, bas-reliefs, fiber forms in airplanes, public buildings and homes. Now I am in Phase IV. (Hicks, 1978:8-9)

Phase IV deals with Hicks' social and political values, statements she wishes to make through her art. (Marston, 1977:95) These works are conceptual in nature and are not the sensuous, colorful yarn fabrications of the past but large whole gallery, on-site structures. One of the earliest indications of this direction was the piece "Reprisage Repertoire" which hung in the "Fiberworks" show (1977) at the Cleveland Museum of Art. The 29 1/2'x14 1/2' walls of natural linen fabric hangs in three panels. It it hatched with a subtle pattern of darning stitches in silk, cotton and wool thread.

Another example of this series was the five tons of hospital laundry, "Without Good Fences--Seeking Good Neighbors", that was arranged by Hicks for the 1977 Lausanne Biennale. Ena Marston in
Shuttle, Spindle, Dyepot, called this "a visible protest to the conditions of entering the Biennale, including the size requirement and all the problems of crating, shipping, insuring and possible repairing."

(Marston, 1977:95) A similar work was done in Lund, Sweden that same year. The following quote is taken from the catalogue description.

The resulting masses may be viewed as sculpture, and perhaps more. They are almost architecture. Soft villages. Sheet walls. Bandage huts. Newspaper pyramids. Girdle towers. Boulevards of blouses. Hundreds of nuances of washed white linen...All of the textile masses observe the natural laws of gravity. They fall and lean tenously in space. No glue holds these packages together. They are bound by their own laws. Some are tied, knotted, woven. Others are stitched, darned, sewn. Wrinkles and creases catch the light across the vast surfaces of the large hanging sheets she uses to define her personal and invented environment. (as quoted by Hicks 1978:9)

Sheila Hicks has certainly been an innovator in the fiber arts.
Claire Zeisler

birthplace Ohio, 1903.

education Columbia University, Institute of Design, Chicago.


collections Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Museum Bellerive, Zurich; The Art Institute of Chicago; First National Bank of Chicago; Northern Illinois University, DeKalb; DreyfusCorporation, New York; Wisconsin Art Center, Milwaukee; Objects USA, Johnson collection, Racine, Wisconsin.

One senses that most things she makes will enter into the stream of history; they will re-emerge at unexpected moments, juxtaposed with some of the most enduring, beautiful artifacts produced by man. Claire Zeisler has enriched our living culture; she has already left traces which will inspire future form makers. (Hicks, 1979:12)

Claire Zeisler's career as an artist began in 1960. Like Tawney, she was a student in sculpture with Archepenko at the Institute of Design in Chicago, and had her first exhibition in Chicago's Public Library. (Uhlmann, 1962:35) She was also shown in "Woven Works" in 1965 at the Museum of Contemporary crafts, and along with Hicks and Tawney was a pioneer as "America emerged in the quest for the non-utilitarian fiber object." (Thurman, 1979:15)
Zeisler's early works were both loom-controlled and in off-loom techniques. On the loom these first pieces were double and triple cloths in a layering effect which permitted her to manipulate the warp into fringes, loops, tassels, etc. Designs were created in some with the pick-up technique. A process perfected by ancient Peruvians where the underlying cloth warp is brought to the surface and woven in a design and returned to the back side.

Her off-loom processes included wrapping, knotting, netting stitching and crocheting. Many times little pouches or pockets were created in a weaving to hold natural objects like stones or shells. These hangings had a certain spirituality, a personal magic or amulet-quality. (Halstead, 1968:12). A longtime collector of artifacts from Africa, Peru and the American Indians, Zeisler found inspiration in these ancient works of art.

Claire Zeisler's new concept of creating textiles had been inspired by the study of ancient weaving techniques. Her mentors were the woven artifacts of Pre-Columbian origin, none of which are preserved more beautifully than those excavated in Peru's ancient burial sites...Artifacts for religious ceremonies and sacred symbols to protect from evil spirits provided the background for Claire Zeisler's early works. (Billeter, 1979:9)

In these first pieces Zeisler had a preference for silk and wool but gradually her work got larger and more three-dimensional and she turned to jute, sisal and raffia. In the last few years she has worked with hemp and leather. (Thurman, 1979:17)

Zeisler quit making the small intimate works to simplify and reduce her imagery to uncomplicated forms. In 1968 Zeisler's work was described as "architectonic" (Halstead, 1968:12). Works that
were six to eight feet high or more in simple uncluttered designs projected a strong presence that showed greater detachment. This reductivist attitude paralleled that of sculpture in the '60's. (Halstead, 1968:12) In basic colors with a pronounced preference for red, these works contained a pure structural order that was monumental and sometimes environmental. (Kester, 1979:12) "Red Forest" (1968) is an example of one of these large scale works. (See Plate 20) It consists of three panels, square-knotted in red jute, with long flowing cords that gather in a tangle at the bottom. A woven wall the scale of medieval tapestries, this piece hangs in the First National Bank of Chicago.

"Red Madagascar" (Plate 21) from 1971 is 7'8" tall made from raffia and jute that is knotted and wrapped. Long shaggy strands of straw-like fibers hang from this piece giving it a thatched appearance. Kester described the work of this period in a Craft Horizons article.

Knotted construction became important in her work of the early 60's as her forms acknowledged the natural fall of the fiber ends. Tight square knotted images appeared atop multistrand vertical columns of buoyant, free-flowing thread. Over the years, in an extensive series of forms in the round, she had modified and refined this characteristic resiliency into an individual style. (Kester, 1979:56,58)

Vertical, circular and spiral movement characterized a series begun in 1971. Groups of wire slinkies (a spiral wire child's toy) were thickly wrapped creating rhythmical spatial patterns that float yet accept the natural pull of gravity. (Kester, 1969:58) "Floor Slinky" from 1971, and "Coil series I and II" from 1977 change the entire environment they occupy and "function not as objects surrounded by space, but rather as independent walls and planes." (Kester,1979:58)
Zeisler's newest works involve a new medium--leather. True to her fascination with materials she has been experimenting with all the possibilities of the medium. She folds, cuts, stitches, strings and stacks the leather into three-dimensional forms. ("The New Leather Forms of Claire Zeisler", 1976:30) "Continuum" (1976) is made from discs cut from a natural-colored chamois with pinking shears (leaves a saw-toothed edge) and strung on a single thread. The snake-like form is then strewn, coiled and piled at random on the floor. "Public Affair" (1976) is the largest of these works at 120 inches high. ("The New Leather", 1976:32) Sissor-cut strips of soft leather are suspended from the ceiling and hang to the floor in thick layers.

In a series of "texts" ("Page I", "Chapter I" and "Chapter II") Zeisler creates little volumes of folded leather stacked on edge. (see Plate 22) The top corners of these "books" are stitched in red as the initial letters in old manuscripts. ("The New Leather", 1976:31)

In February, 1979, the Art Institute of Chicago staged a retrospective showing more than 45 of Zeisler's major works from 1961 to the present. In the catalogue the curator who organized the Zeisler exhibition in Museum Bellerive, Zurich, said of this artist:

The name of Claire Zeisler will always be related to the avant-garde in my mind--avant garde in the true sense of the word, the innovation of a visual concept which is accepted with enthusiasm by the art lover who is sensitive to artists' expression but which is received with skepticism by a shocked general public. (Billeter, 1979:9)

Claire Zeisler is 76 years old and is still avant garde.

Plate 20

Plate 21
Having the information that is gathered together in this chapter, the fiber arts teacher can talk about the development of the art fabric in the recent years and has some knowledge of six important artists that have made a contribution to this art area. The art teacher can then encourage his students to talk about professional works of art in the studio in order to enrich the student's fiber arts experience. A process for such critical discourse is outlined in the following pages.
CHAPTER V

APPROACHES TO TALKING ABOUT THE FIBER ARTS

The study of the techniques and grammar of art combined with practice and experiment can lead to an understanding of the art of the past and of the present which extends into new dimensions the experience gained in historical and critical discourse. The attempt to solve personally and in a contemporary idiom problems that have challenged artists in the past can give a vivid grasp of their nature. (Ackerman, 1970:71-72)

As discussed in Chapter II, a fiber art studio teacher can enrich studio instruction by including readings and dialogue about the works of professional artists.¹ These works of art can be seen in a variety of ways, "in person" as they hang in museums or galleries, or by reproduction in slides, books and periodicals or in photographs. It is assumed that at some point in a student's fiber arts education he will see some "real" fiber art by visiting a museum, however it is understood that the majority of textile art a student sees will be by way of reproductions.

One might ask why talk about something that is a non-verbal experience. David Perkins in his article "Talk About Art" (1977) referred to Howard Gardner's theory of untranslatability, that there are certain aspects of art that cannot be communicated in words or any other symbols. Perkins did not intend words to be full substitutes for the art experience but explained that talk

¹See page 13.
about art, though only describing a small part of the intricate reality, assists in our perception of the art.² "...language adopts a sort of pointing function which guides our senses to recognize things not apprehended before." (Perkins, 1977: 90) And when this exchange of perceptions takes place in a studio classroom, it becomes a teaching device. Students develop greater perceptual skills as well as skills in art criticism and making aesthetic judgements. The curriculum model of Chapter I suggests these activities be part of the studio experience.³ It also suggests that the student would progress from the naive to the sophisticated state in the development of these skills. The teacher should expect the talk about art that is generated in the studio to also be naive at first. Perkins cited a study by Wilson⁴ (1974), which examined talk about art in high schools.

Students with three years of art training made significantly more frequent use of 'organistic' and 'contextualistic' reasons in support of judgements than did students with no such training...To my mind, Wilson's own data table (1972) suggest more a continuously developing sophistication.

By examining the different ways one can approach talk about art, a teacher can develop teaching strategies for encouraging sophistication in the critical discourse that takes place in the studio.


³See pages 8-9 of this paper.

⁴This study can be found in Wilson's "The Relationship Between Years of Art Training and the Use of Aesthetic Judgement Criteria among High School Students," Studies in Art Education, 8, 3, (1974), pp. 34-43.
In his book *Varieties of Visual Experiences* (1972) Edmund Feldman wrote that any statement about art is likely to contain examples of "critical performance" because it is difficult to talk about art without carrying on some aspect of criticism (1972:466). He believed that the value of the critical process was that it enables us to carry on a search for understanding and appreciation in art systematically. To do this Feldman stated: "We must become conscious of the form, process, or system we use in making critical statements." (1972:466) What follows in this chapter is the process I propose studio teachers use to talk about art in their classes.

**Objective and Subjective Statements**

Statements about works of art can come from two different points of view. The statements can be objective or they can be subjective. Objective statements have different functions. They can describe the work of art or they can analyze that work. In either case these observations contain no value judgements or debatable facts. There would be little disagreement among the students about the information gained from the objective statements.

On the other hand subjective statements are open to disagreement and are based on personal factors which effect each individual's response to a work of art. From the subjective perspective one can interpret and evaluate a work of art. These functions of description, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation make up the talk about art and will be discussed in more detail.
Objective Statements

Description. We can divide description into three categories:

1) identifying facts, 2) subject matter, and 3) formal elements.

1) The identifying facts of a work of art are: its title, the artist, the date it was made, the art form it has taken (e.g. a weaving) the medium (wool, cotton, etc.) the technique, (tapestry, knotting) and its function (rug, wallhanging, etc.). All of these facts can be supplied to the students through readings or with the reproductions, and are facts which identify the work.

2) Subject matter can be discussed if there are recognizable images in the work of art. In his article "The Work of Art and the Object of Appreciation" Kenneth Marantz devised categories of appreciation and called this aspect of appreciation the "literary description." (1966:6) He gave as an example of a literary description: "A very simple literary description of the Mona Lisa might see it as a picture of a woman, seen from the waist up and dressed in dark clothes, with a curious smile on her lips. Behind her is a landscape scene with mountains and a cloudy sky." Marantz, (1966:6) Understandably one cannot use this particular descriptive process with non-objective art. One must then rely on the work's formal elements.

3) Formal elements can be described in both objective and non-objective works. They are sometimes called the elements of design, (Lanier, 1968:57) and include such factors as line, shape, color, texture, space, etc. Feldman explains this process of description as taking inventory of what is immediately visible. (1972:467)
Analysis. The other objective process one can perform in talking about art is analysis. This can be a 1) formal analysis where relationships are made between formal elements (e.g. how one color is brighter than another, where the objects are placed in the picture plane, how shapes effect the three-dimensional space, etc.) We can also make a 2) contextual analysis. By discussing the context which surrounds the work of art we can increase our understanding of it. For example, it would be helpful to know for what situation a work was designed, or how it had been received by the public (One could get this information from art history books or from reading art journals, etc). One could also talk about what influences, cultural or historic, affected this work. For example, in Picasso's "Guernica" it would help to understand the work if the students discussed the influence war and violence had on this painting. Finally, 3) we can analyze a work of art by examining the technical aspects of the work: How the paint was applied to achieve a certain effect, or how the handspun wool was twisted to achieve a certain texture, etc. This form of analysis may be difficult when only a slide or photograph of the work is available, but many times readings in books or periodicals use technical analysis to better explain a particular work.

Subjective Statements

Interpretations. As Feldman explains, interpretation is the process of expressing the meanings of a work of art (1972:741). He makes the assumption that a work of art cannot avoid being a vehicle
of ideas. To interpret these ideas in a work one must form a hypothesis or "guess" of what the work is about. Because we are human coming from different experiences and social and cultural conditions "we are justified in finding more than one satisfactory hypothesis to serve as the interpretation of a work." (Feldman, 1972:472) The exchange of different explanations of a particular work of art among students opens new possibilities for further interpretations and perhaps a greater understanding of that work.

To form a hypothesis about a work of art one takes into account the information gathered in the description and analysis and well as the influence of two other factors: 1) associations and 2) the viewer's cultural and social backgrounds.

1) Associations are the "looks-like," "reminds-me-of" reactions. As these personal observations are many times superficial, an effort should be made to ask questions that might explain these reactions. For example, Why does it remind me of a dark, scary night? or why does this particular work look like a bird in flight? Is it the shape, the color, the imagery? These questions make the simile and metaphor responses more informative.

2) The viewer's cultural and social background is also a consideration when interpreting works of art. There are times when symbols are used by artists to convey certain meanings in their work; if the viewer is from a different background this symbolism would be lost. For example, if one was not familiar with the bull as a symbol for Spain one would miss that particular reference in "Guernica." Ones particular age group, social class, ethnic background or level of education effects how an interpretation can be made. Efland considers
this one of the contemporary issues affecting the ways society
responds to the visual arts.

Today, on the other hand, many beliefs, ideologies, life
styles and moralities vie for adherents. Each of these
tends to have its own symbols, and the symbols of one
group or cause do not speak to all persons (Efland,
1977:113)

Evaluation. Another subjective observation in talking about art
is evaluation. For students this aspect of criticism usually
takes the form of 1) a personal preference or 2) discrimination.

1) Personal preference statements, such as "I like it," "I don't
like it," generally enter the talk about art as value statements.
For example, "I like it, therefore I think it is good." Students
should become aware that preference statements are neutral with
respect to the value of a work of art, but these statements when
supported by information gathered in the description, analysis and
interpretation, aid in the understanding of the work. Students
should examine why they like or dislike a particular work of art
to help broaden their perceptions.

2) Discrimination is the judgement students make about what is
good art or bad art. These terms "good" and "bad" are relative
to the knowledge the students has of the art to be judged. (Marantz,
19:8) This "connoisseurship" (Feldman, 1972:479) is acquired on
varying levels of sophistication, the professional critic or his-
torian being the ideal. Students are usually shown art works that
have already been judged worthy of study by connoisseurs (art
historians, critics or the studio teacher). What the student learns
from these exemplar models are the criteria for judgement. As
Efland states:
Students should be encouraged to evaluate works of art. Evaluation extends beyond the effort to find meaning. In evaluation students attempt to determine whether the artist succeeded in achieving his aim and to understand why a particular work is successful or unsuccessful. They should be encouraged to examine the criteria used in arriving at their judgement...

Deciding which standard to apply is in some ways more important than knowing how to apply the standard. (Efland, 1977: 56)

The student examines the criteria used by his teacher and professional critics, artists, and historians to develop his own standards which he can then apply to his own work and in the talk about art that occurs in the studio critique.

Using preference and discrimination in the talk about art it is possible for a student to judge a work of art as good but still not like it. By reading what professional critics say about particular works and discussing their criteria for judgement, students learn how to be discriminating art viewers.

The fiber art teacher can use both the objective and the subjective components of talk about art: description, analysis, interpretation and evaluation in the studio. As an additional help to understanding a student's response to a work of art one should look at Vincent Lanier's curriculum model for a course on "Talk About Art." (Lanier, 1968) Although it is a different approach to examining how students see art it does cover similar ground to the proposal of talk about art outlined above.

Lanier suggests students see works of art through a series of "screens" which influence their responses to art. He makes no attempt to rank these factors but draws a simple flow chart which I have adapted below.
A. Social attitude towards a specific work
B. Cultural view of art form
C. Perceptual skills
D. Recognition of formal qualities
E. Knowledge of specific symbols
F. Associations
G. Historical identification
H. Judgements
I. Relationship of the art work to life

What follows are brief explanations of these nine screens.

A. Social attitudes toward a specific work of art comes from reading the comments of professional art critics about that work or talking about it with others.

B. Cultural view of an art form is made up of the attitudes an individual absorbs from his surroundings, his parents, friends, ethnic background.

C. Perceptual skills deals with the way one sees, the way in which one selects, organizes, and interprets sensations. Lanier says there is evidence to support the contention that selection is based on, several factors--the nature of the stimulus, its differential intensity, one's expectations, and one's motivation. (Lanier, 1968:56) Student's perceptual skills will vary.
D. **Recognition of formal qualities** is the ability a student has to search out the elements that make up the work of art. Line, color, shape, etc., are conventional rules of composition arrived at through practice, but can sometimes be the "Mysterious facet of art to the untrained person" (Lanier, 1968:57)

E. **Knowledge of specific symbols** refers to symbols that have either private or public meaning. For example the eagle as a symbol of America, might not be understood by all students and would therefore change the interpretation of a particular work of art.

F. **Associations** are the similes and metaphors common to talk about art. These are the "reminds me of" and "it looks like" phrases used to interpret art. Since these associations concern experiences from one’s life they would not be universal to all the students.

G. **Historical judgement** is the location of a specific work in time, place, and technique. Obviously some knowledge of art history is needed to place a Jackson Pollock in Abstract Expressionism. There are varying degrees of sophistication in this area.

H. Judgements may be considered the product of the totality of one’s responses. After one has gone through all of the above factors then the "I like" or "I don't like" statements are attached to the work, this opinion effects the talk about art.

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7 Feldman also uses these associations for interpretation. See page 115.
1. Relationship or art work to life is the factor that might affect judgements of value. "How much does it cost?" or "Is it useful" or "Does my friend like it?" are all statements that determine a student's talk because the work is of some status consideration.

Although all of these "screens" influence how students respond to the fiber arts, several are more effective than others, for example, (C) perceptual skills and (D) recognition of formal qualities. Because much of fiber art is non-objective the way in which a student perceives and interprets the work and recognizes its formal elements, determines a large part of the student's response to that work. He will respond to and talk about the formal qualities more often than the symbols (E) and subject matter in the fiber arts. And, because of the generally non-objective nature of the textile arts, associations (F) will play a role in the student's response. He will most likely think of something that the fiber piece "reminds-him-of" in order to interpret the work.

Social and cultural attitudes (A & B) will sometimes affect the student's response to the fiber arts because of the strong cultural traditions in textiles. For example, a student with African or Indian heritage might look at a particular piece of fiber art much differently than other students because of his environment or cultural background in textiles. Many times an anthropological approach to discussing textiles will enhance the understanding a student has of a particular artist's use of material, technique or pattern.
Understanding media and techniques is one aspect affecting a student's response to art which Lanier failed to include in his screens. A student's knowledge of how a work is made and what materials are used definitely affects how he responds to the fiber arts. For example, a student familiar with tapestry techniques will certainly look at a complex tapestry with a different "eye" than a student who is not aware of that particular textile process. Discussion of techniques and materials used by professional artists aids the students' perceptions of the fiber arts.

Lanier's screens can be useful to the art teacher when using the process I proposed to talk about the fiber arts. He can evaluate the students' discourse and adapt activities that would strengthen their perceptual skills. For example, students might rely too heavily on interpretation and avoid any analysis of the work's formal qualities. An effort could then be made to increase the use of vocabulary particular to the fiber arts pertaining to materials, technique, patterns, design principles, etc. By talking about these aspects of a specific work of art the principles which the students use to organize their own work could be clarified as well. Another activity would be for the studio teacher to spend some time discussing the use of traditional techniques in contemporary fiber art, for example, how Lenore Tawney used ancient Peruvian tapestry techniques to create her modern woven forms. The teacher might also suggest readings in books or periodicals
that talk about a particular artist's work and invite discussion on the criteria used to evaluate that artist's work.

This is only a sampling of the possible activities that might nurture discussion on the fiber arts. The talk that is then generated by these approaches could take place in a variety of ways. It could be in a formal discussion after viewing a particular work or group of works of art. It would occur in the studio critique as the teacher might refer to a particular artist's work as an example of a point he wishes to make. The student could also talk about a work of art in discussing the sources of inspiration for his own work. What is important is that the fiber art studio curriculum provides for the talk.
Conclusion

It is hoped that the curriculum model, the historic overview, the information on contemporary artists and the process proposed for talking about art contained within these pages will be of use to the fiber art teacher. Fiber art is a fairly new art form yet it has a long tradition. Students can benefit from knowing about its past and its present and the possible future directions the fiber arts might take.

This thesis has developed content material to be used to improve the fiber art curriculum through the discussion of works of professional artists. It does not contain all the information the teacher will need to design effective discussion activities but offers a core around which to develop such discussion.

The content of art is not a rigid body of facts and skill; it is a fluid body of options through which one can begin to experience and comprehend the significance of art. Content possibilities are more or less timely and well-substantiated particulars for study that give specificity to the approaches and suggest the kinds of teaching resources you will need. (Chapman, 1978:367)
Appendix I
SURVEY DATA

Selection Process

25 elementary and 25 secondary art teachers' names were arbitrarily selected from a list of Franklin County, Ohio art teachers. These were placed in a "hat" and 15 elementary and 15 secondary teachers' names were drawn out. This was to insure a random selection yet an even distribution of teachers. These 30 teachers were then sent the survey; 24 responded, an 80 percent return.

Survey

Question

1. Do you use fibers (string, rope, yarn, cloth, reed, etc.) as an art medium?

Response

Yes 24 (100%)     No 0 (0%)

Question

2. Do you teach any fiber techniques (eg. batik, weaving, basketry, macrame, braiding, quilting)

Response

Yes 23 (95%)     No 1 (4%)

3. Check the Artist's name who's work you show your students in slide or picture form.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anni Albers</th>
<th>Lenore Tawney</th>
<th>Walter Nottingham</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adele Ackers</td>
<td>Jack Lenor Larsen</td>
<td>Ferne Jacobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trude Guermonprez</td>
<td>Shelia Hicks</td>
<td>Gerhardt Knodel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed Rossback</td>
<td>Francois Grossen</td>
<td>Claire Zeisler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Response

21 or 87.5% of those who responded did not check an artist's name.
2 checked 1 of the names.
1 checked 2 of the names.
Survey cont.'t.

Question
4. Do you show the work of any other Contemporary American Fiber artist?

Response
Yes 10 (41%) No ___ (58%)

Question
5. Who?

Response
Clara Creager, John Wahling 1
"Assorted film strips" 2
"Neighborhood artists" 1
Joy Wulke, Janis Provisor, Kay Aronson 1
Dorian Zachai 1
"Artists in general" 1
"Don't know the names" 1
Books: Designing With String, Mary Seyd, The Macrame Book, Bress. 1
Nick Krevitsky 1
ARTICLES ON THE FIBER ARTS 1975-1978

ARTS AND ACTIVITIES

1975
Jan. "Circle Weaving"
April "Fingers are Wonderful Things"
May "Knots Aren't Everything"
Nov. "Threads of History"

1976
Jan. "Historical Stitchery"
April "Wild and Wooly Weaving"
May "Weaving Widgets"
Sept. "Card Weaving"

1977
Feb. "Weaving Concepts"
March "Needle Weaving"
May "Sprang Fever"
June "Loom With a View"
June "Webs of Yarn"
Sept. "Winning Weaving"
Nov. "Small Weaving"
ARTS AND ACTIVITIES con't.

1978

Jan.    "Warp Tie Stitch and Dye"
Jan.    "Weaving on a Three-dimensional Cardboard Loom"
Feb.    "Paint With Wax and Dyes"
Dec.    "Gullah Baskets"
Dec.    "Modifying the Hand Lift Sling Loom"
Dec.    "Reeds, Grasses, Vines and Bark"
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