



From the Editor

MADELYN VAN DER HOOGT

There are quite a few projects that were planned for this issue that you will not see in it. In fact, thinking about the lost projects made me picture a national event called Weaving with the Stars . . . or The Weaving Apprentice . . . or The Weaving Survivor. I'd assign a project to a group of weavers (much as an editor actually does) and bring them together each week to see whose project gets eliminated.

The factor that caused the eliminations in this issue of *Handwoven* is this: you can't always predict what will happen with fibers during wet finishing. I should have known this before I predicted that everyone's proposal for the issue would succeed. A few Convergences ago, I taught a workshop in creating Fabrics That Go Bump. We workshop teachers sometimes use workshop sample assignments as experiments, thinking these dangerous words as we get a great idea: "There's no reason why this shouldn't work." So, operating under the I've-always-known-it misapprehension that silk doesn't shrink, I planned a workshop sample in silk and merino wool. The idea was that the wool would shrink and the silk would not, creating a puffed fabric with silk's glow, sheen, and hand.

It was a round-robin workshop, so everyone wove on all the looms with high anticipation. (You had to promote anticipation, because fabrics that are supposed to do something fabulous during wet finishing don't look that great while you're weaving them.) With our anticipation at its apex, we all traipsed to the university-dorm laundry room to do our magic. The sampler of silk and wool went in one machine, hot water, lots of agitation. We checked often: nothing. Then we noticed that something actually was happening. The whole sampler was getting smaller and smaller. Well. Maybe silk shrinks.

Disappointed, we carried that sample along with the more successful ones back to the workshop room to do our post mortems. We passed the failed sample around the room, each of us verifying that, indeed, this one hadn't worked. As the still-wet sample went from hand to hand, someone said suddenly: It's getting puffy! The merino wool was shrinking further from handling ("agitation"), but not the silk. Next time? Wash in cold water (there's no reason why *that* shouldn't work).

As I think about it, I'm not sure a reality show would work very well for weavers. Weavers would never be able to eliminate one of their own. They would all be saying: "Yours is much better than mine; just look at my terrible selvedges, uneven beat, and that treading error. . . ."

Madelyn

A CALL TO GUILDS AND STUDY GROUPS!

The May/June 2010 issue will share fabrics resulting from sample exchange and study groups and give great ideas for forming new groups. Send photos of projects or samples from your group to madelynv@interweave.com.

FUTURE THEMES

March/April 2010 Doubleweave A handbook of doubleweave techniques: doublewidth fabrics, stuffed and stitched fabrics, and *lots* of pattern.

May/June 2010 Sample Mania. A collection of projects inspired by sample exchanges and study groups.

September/October 2010 Weaving and Folk Art. Projects and design inspiration from weaving in indigenous and other cultures.

November/December 2010 Not Just for Rugs. Rugs, too, but this issue includes a wide range of thick, color-intense fabrics that are weft dominant.

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