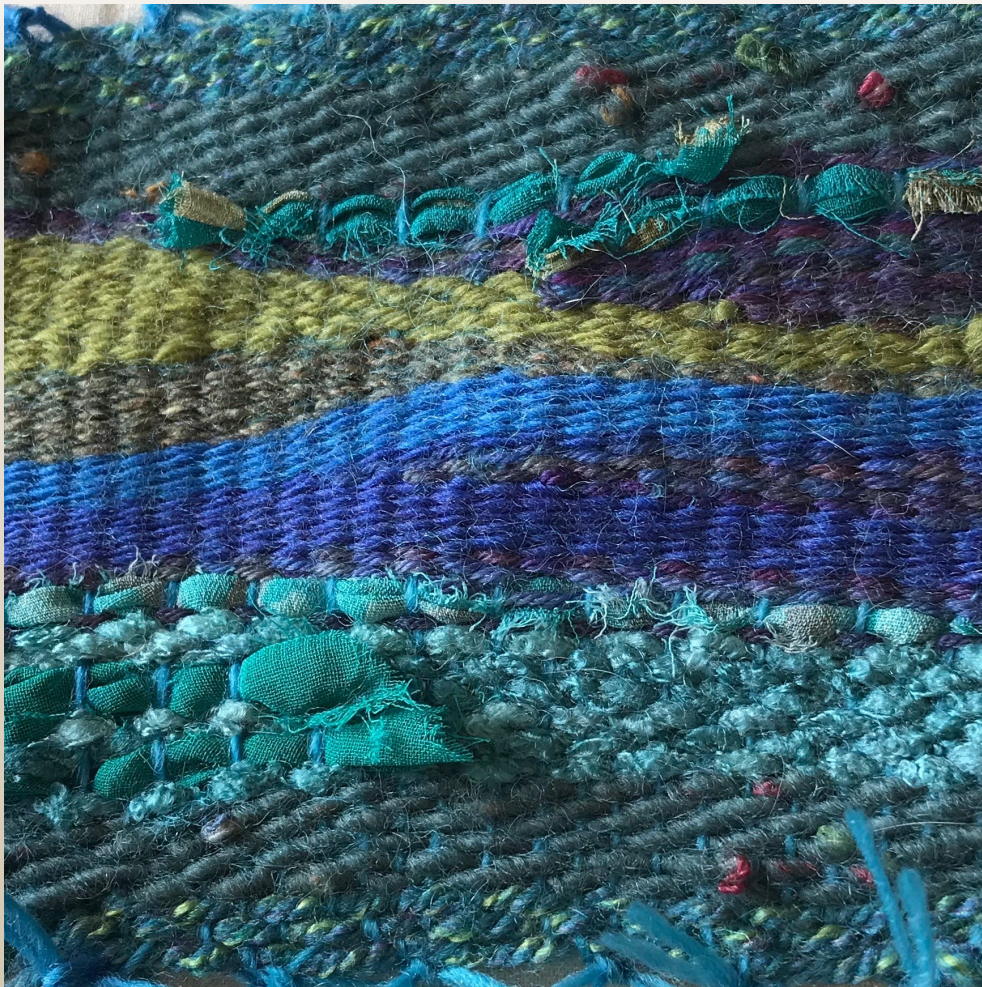


the
stitchbook
COLLECTIVE 2022

Workshop 7 of 12

Basic Weaving Techniques

These notes should be read in conjunction with the online video



www.untangledthreads.co.uk/MEMBERS

Video Password: WEAVE

Basic Weaving Techniques

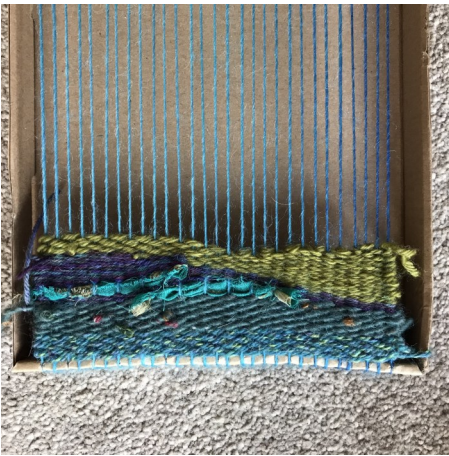
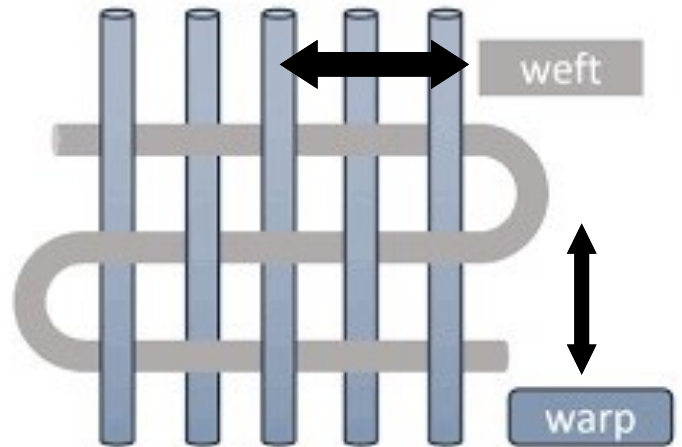
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BASIC WEAVING

Introduction

- **The basic principle of weaving** is forming fabric by interlacing 2 distinct sets of threads.
- **Warp** threads run lengthwise and are interlaced with **weft** threads.

I remember which is which by thinking of the speed of a rocket going UP in Star Trek 'WARP FACTOR 7 Captain!'



Loom weaving requires the warp thread to be held stationary, under tension, while the weft thread is drawn under and over. This method makes fabric of a uniform width.



Pin weaving (without a loom) allows you to make shaped pieces of woven fabric. The outcomes look far more organic than loom woven fabric.

Making Your Own Loom

There is obviously a huge variety of looms which you could invest in, and if you find that weaving is something you'd like to investigate and develop further, I would recommend looking at a weaving frame or a rigid heddle loom as a starting point, **BUT ..**

before you go to any expense, why not try some different ways of making your own loom: see if weaving is something you become addicted to before you invest in expensive equipment. To be honest, the type of loom you will ultimately need will be dependent on what it is you want to weave:

- full lengths of fabric , or
- smaller sections to incorporate into other work
- irregular shaped pieces.

In this workshop we are going to look at making and using the following:

- 1) Cardboard Box Loom
- 2) Wooden Frame Loom
- 3) Photo Mount Loom (my own design)
- 4) Pin & cushion

Once your loom is ready (i.e. you've set the warp), the process of actually weaving is pretty similar whichever type of loom you choose. (I really think that weaving is something which you either can't resist, or something which, ultimately, you find takes too long to set up.)



With this in mind, you won't be surprised to hear that the style of weaving which I enjoy most is called:

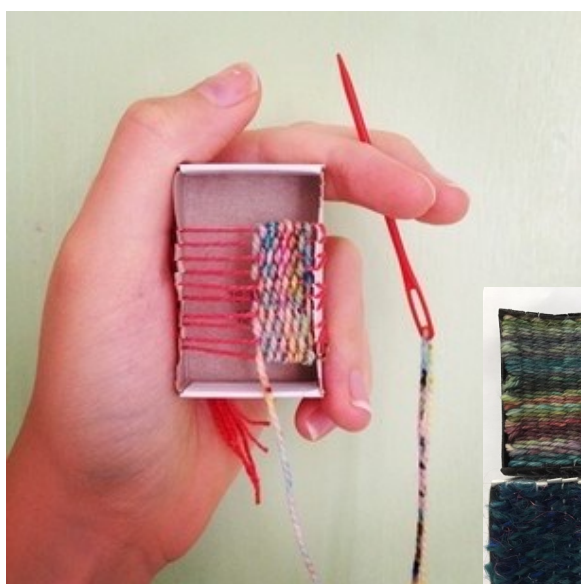
Saori Weaving

This is a Japanese free-style form of weaving with no rules or restrictions. It means there are no mistakes, no patterns to follow. You can just weave with creativity. When you get to the end of one colour simply start the next, leaving tails, or tying the yarns together. It is all about exhibiting one's true self through expressive no-rules weaving ... sound familiar?

Cardboard Box Loom

(watch video for full instructions)

1. The joy of this type of loom is that you can make it any size you like, depending on the box you use. You need to cut off any extra pieces from the box, **leaving just the base and the 4 sides.** (You might need to strengthen the two ends.) Make small notches opposite each other at equal intervals along the top and bottom edges - approx. 5mm apart. (a paring knife or a junior hacksaw is great for this. A scalpel doesn't make the notch wide enough to hold the yarn).
2. Take a length of warp thread. This should be a strong thread, which will not snap easily. Tape one end of this to the back of the box. Wrap the thread around the box, making sure at each turn, that the thread sits into one of the notches and remains parallel to the side of the box. If you pull this too tightly at this stage you will deform the box. When complete, tape the other end of the warp to the back of the box.
3. Cut 2 pieces of cardboard slightly longer than the width of your warp threads and about 1cm wide. Weave them into the warp as shown. Push them down to the bottom of the loom, to give a firm edge to weave against. Also make one strip which will act as a beater.



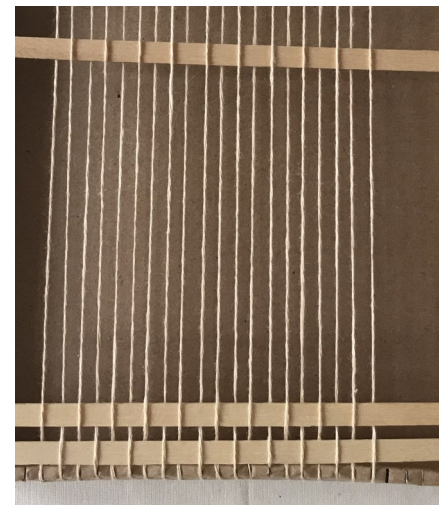
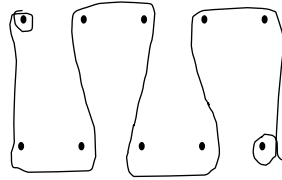
I love making looms from old matchboxes. It is a perfect size to occupy me for a few minutes of mindful meditative stitching, and they can easily be patchworked together to create larger pieces.

[Go to Page 9 for Weaving Suggestions](#)



Wooden Frame Loom

- A wooden frame loom is really just a slightly sturdier version of the box frame. The cardboard loom will begin to lose some of the integrity of its shape after a few uses. Here I have used an old picture frame.
- Measure and mark at about 5mm intervals along opposite ends of the frame. You can do this onto the front face, or the top and bottom face. Gently tap in a nail or panel pin at each mark.
- Take a length of warp thread. This should be a strong thread, which will not snap easily. Tie one end of the warp to the first nail. Leave a tail of about 15cm. Take the warp down to the opposite nail, across and around the next nail, the back up to the top. Make sure that the warp remains parallel with itself. When finished tie the warp to the last nail.
- Use 2 pieces of thin wood (or cardboard) slightly longer than the width of your warp and about 1cm wide. Weave them into the warp as shown. Push them down to the bottom of the loom, to give a firm edge to weave against. Also make one strip which will act as a beater.
- Once your warp is in place, and before you start weaving, I highly recommend stapling a piece of fabric over the nails to cover them, otherwise you will find that your weft will keep catching on them as you weave.



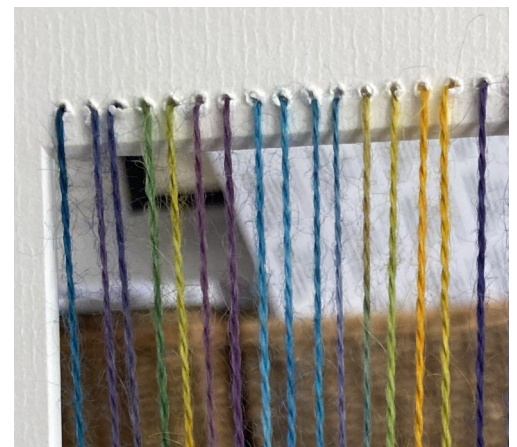
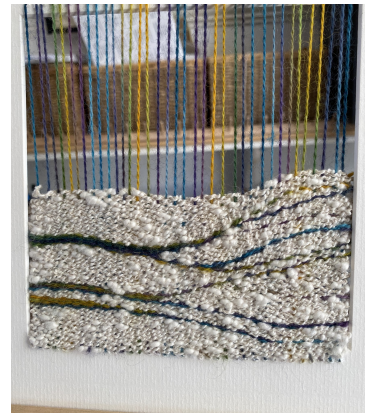
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You can see from these two photographs that I leave the nails as visible additions to my work. I like the industrial or honest look that they give to the piece

Photo Mount Loom

- I designed this myself, and it has advantages and disadvantages over the more traditional box or frame loom. I wanted to find a neat and simple way of finishing the weaving (i.e. not having to remove it from the loom, and not having to deal with loose ends.) If you can cope with the front looking great and the back being an absolute mess, this might be one for you!
- Measure and mark at about 5mm intervals along opposite edges of the aperture. Using a thin bradawl, make holes at all the marks.
- Take a length of warp thread. In this example I have used variegated sock wool. Stick the thread to the card with tape (on the back of the mount), and then using a tapestry needle, thread the warp up and down, across the aperture. If you run out of thread, stick the end down, and start a new piece. Make sure that the warp remains parallel with itself. When finished stick the warp to the back of the mount.

Go to Page 9 for
Weaving Suggestions



This piece has had some of the weft stuck to the back of the mount, and some left at the front. I have added a second mount before framing

Pin & Cushion (full instructions on video)

Pin weaving (without a loom)

This is a cross between a fixed pin loom and a lace making cushion. You can use this technique to make shaped pieces of woven fabric. It is quick and easy, and doesn't involve all the lengthy preparation to set the warp threads. What's not to like really?

You will need glass headed pins, a piece of cardboard, strong thread for the warp, a variety of different wools, and a tapestry needle. You will also need a CUSHION so that you don't stick the pins into your knees!

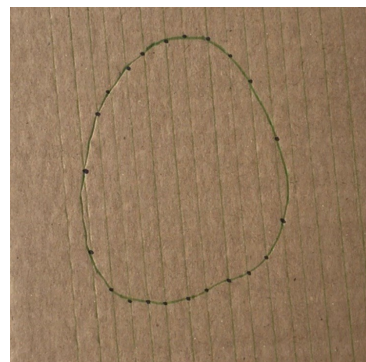
Follow instructions A -F. When the shape is filled with weft threads, you can unpin the shape from the board. The warp thread will have looped itself around the weft and the shape will remain intact.



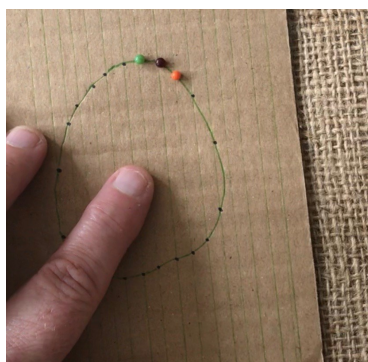
A) Draw lines on the card 5mm apart.



B) Draw the shape you want to weave.



C) Mark each point at which the shape and the lines cross.



D) Pin the card, through the marks, into the cushion.



E) Wind the warp around each pin, securing at either end.



F) Starting at the lowest point, weave the warp threads.

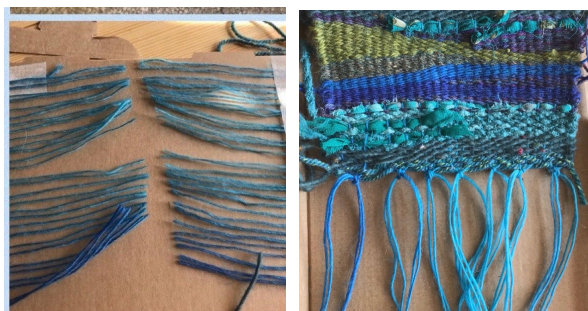
Weaving Suggestions

Once you have your loom with your warp set, you are ready to weave. You will find full instructions on the video.

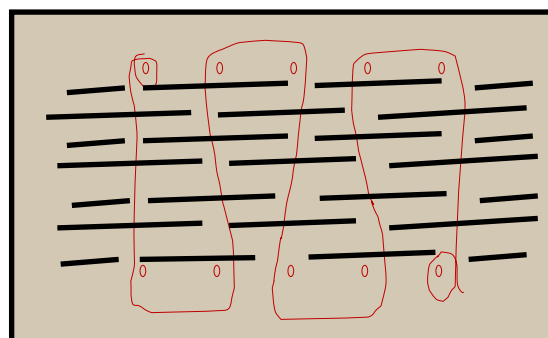
- Work with about 1m of weft at a time.
- Pass the weft 'under and over' the warp threads from left to right.
- I find that a plastic needle is brilliant, and I generally tie the weft to the needle loosely for ease of working.
- Pull the weft through leaving about a 2" tail.
- Use the beater to push the weft into place along the bottom of the loom.
- Repeat from right to left, making sure that you alternate 'over and under'. If you do get it wrong, you will simply unthread the previous row!
- Keeping the weft at the correct tension is VERY important. See VIDEO.
- It is easy to unintentionally narrow your weaving. Each time you work a weft row, imagine that you are drawing a hillock from edge to edge, before using the beater.
- You are now weaving!
- You can add anything you like into your weaving, twigs, paper, wool rovings, ribbons, beads .
- **Removing weaving from the loom**

When you have finished, removing the weaving from the loom will depend on how you set the warp.

BOX LOOM: Turn the loom over to the back, and cut across the warp threads. Carefully remove any tape. Tie the ends of the cut warp together in 2's. If you have an odd number, one set should be tied as a 3.

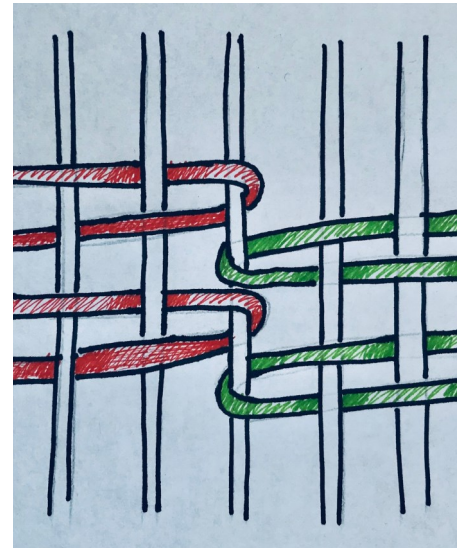


WOODEN FRAME LOOM: If you have passed your warp around each nail (and not around the back of the loom), the weft will automatically have looped itself over the warp and as long as your weft is packed tightly enough to reach the nails, top and bottom, the shape will remain intact when you lift the weaving from the nails. You will have to make sure that the ends of the warp are tied in though!



Change Colour Midway Across a Row

If you want to change colour in blocks: bring one colour from the left and one from the right, and make sure, if you don't want a hole, that colours are 'woven together' in a dove tail joint... (*below*). P.s. *This is easier to show on the video than in an illustration.*



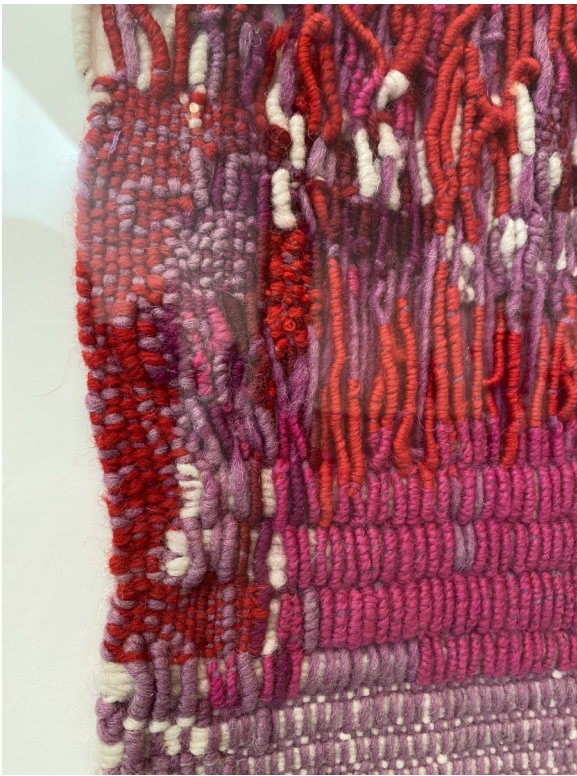
Different Yarns and Fabrics



You can weave with just about anything! Yarn, ribbon, torn strips of fabric, grasses, sticks, feathers, etc, etc etc. The only limit is your imagination. I quite like the effect of using one colour palette and lots of different textures.

PS .. *Wool roving is wool which has been carded ready for spinning, so that all the fibres are laying in the same direction. It is really wonderful when it is woven using a loom.*

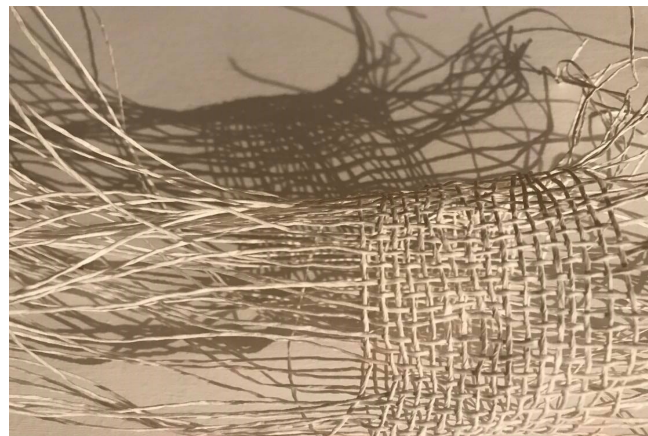
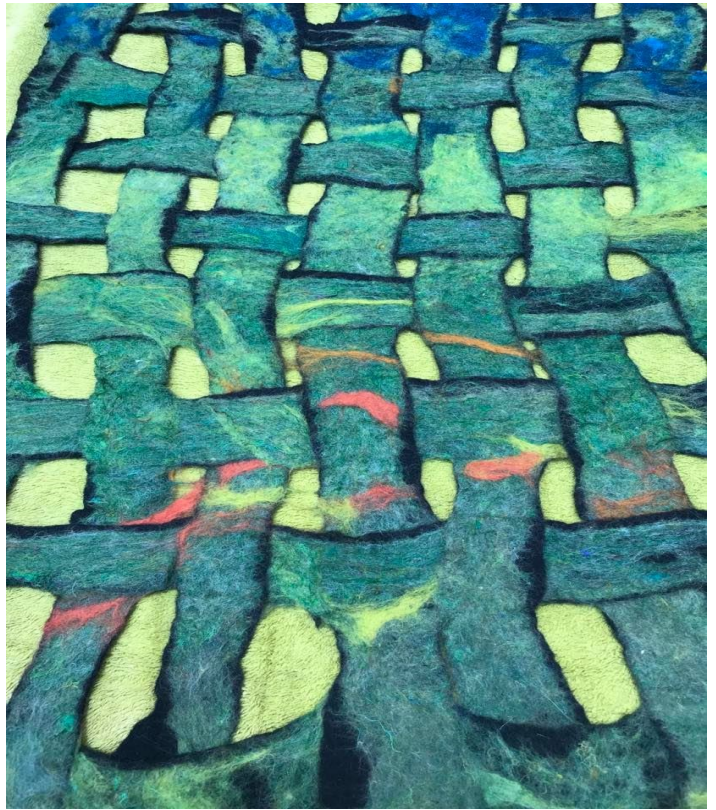
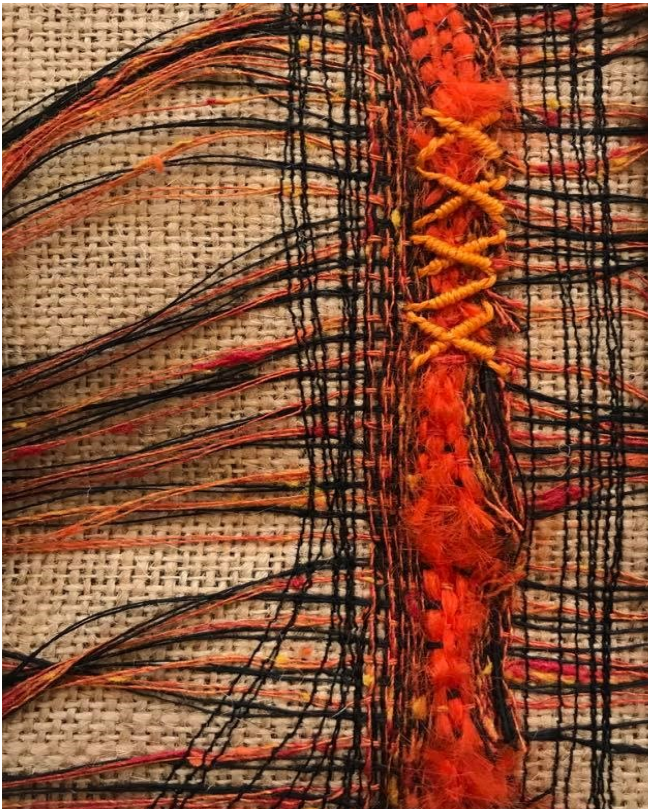
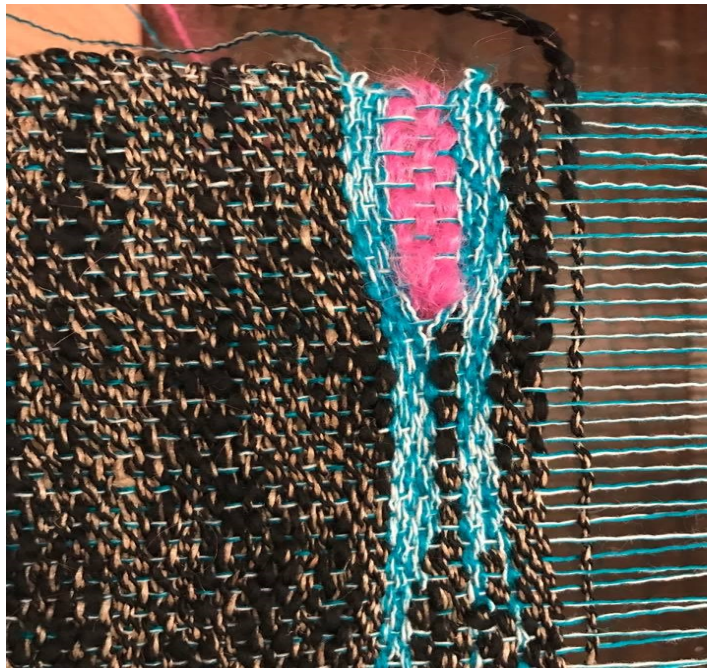
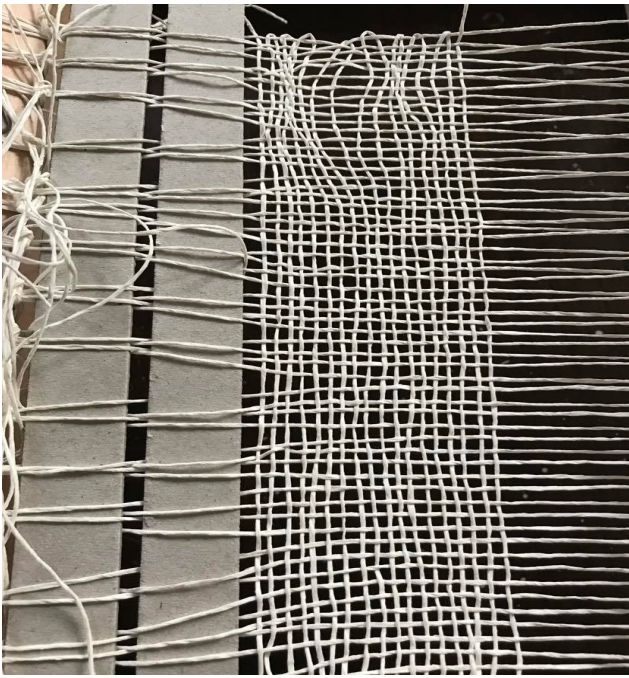




Weaving by the amazing Sheila Hicks (on show at Hepworth Gallery in Wakefield) until 25th September
(www.sheilahicks.com)

Weaving by Cameron Taylor-Brown (www.camerontaylor-brown.com)





Weaving by Helen Birmingham (www.untangledthreads.co.uk)

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Next Workshop



September:

Free-motion Machine Embroidery

8th September 2022

Workshop 8 of 12

Free-motion Machine Embroidery

A list of supplies needed for this workshop will be announced in the next Newsletter (August 18th 2022) and online

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