

Threads that Weave through Time and Space

AN INSTAGRAM ENCOUNTER

It was in summer 2017 we began our collaboration on Instagram, that is between myself, Sofia Hagström Møller, and Marianne Fairbanks. I had contacted Marianne through her enterprise Weaving Lab about buying two small “Hello!Loom” weaving frames. After this transaction, Marianne Fairbanks and I began following each other’s projects and each other on social media. Then in summer 2018 Marianne visited Copenhagen and I showed her round the city’s places of interest connected to weaving and Danish design, as well of course to my own weaving studio in Copenhagen. She had come over wanting to see more of Scandinavia and Scandinavian weaving traditions and to do some workshops with her own Weaving Lab project. I in turn was keen to travel over to Weaving Lab’s artist residency in Madison University, Wisconsin, in USA.

WEAVING LAB

Through the summer and autumn of 2019, Weaving Lab ran workshops in Oslo at the RAM gallery, in Copenhagen at Copenhagen Contemporary and at the Röhsska in Gothenburg.

Weaving Lab’s fundamental approach is based on the combining of two ways of looking at weave: where on the one hand the emphasis is on access to weaving, creating dialogue that opens up new perspectives on textiles, society and production; on the other to a more conceptual side. With the latter, called speculative weaving, participants are invited to treat handweaving as an aim in itself, paying attention to time, rhythm, meditation and materiality.

HELLO!LOOMS

I was invited to be part of the Weaving Lab research team. In Copenhagen I was responsible for inviting professional weavers to an exhibition held in the workshop. The idea was to make as much as possible of Marianne Fairbanks’ huge network available to professional weavers in Denmark. Using the Hello!Looms designed by Marianne Fairbanks as the start-point for unique handwoven works of art: all together these formed a stunning show at Copenhagen Contemporary in Copenhagen.

THREADS THAT WEAVE THROUGH TIME AND SPACE

In January 2020 I made a trip over to Weaving Lab’s artist residency in Madison University, Wisconsin. Planning for my trip to Chicago and Madison included spending a bit of time exploring the area, which awoke an interest in me about the immigrants who travelled over the Atlantic from Sweden to America more than 100 years ago. For me, textiles and weaving as a craft were always part of my childhood, all the women around me could weave and were craftspeople. My maternal grandmother was born in 1898 in Flisby, Småland, at a time when people were leaving for a better life in America. Some of them took textiles with them, and most of these women knew how to weave. I inherited a big bundle of handmade textiles from that grandmother and use them still. I love them! I took one of my grandmother’s handwoven tablecloths with me to USA, as inspiration and as a physical link to the past. To a time when handwork skills and crafts were essential for the family to have textiles for everyday usage.

FROM THE PAST TO THE FUTURE

The production method itself is modern, the woven sections were produced on the TC2 loom, which offers a lot of technical possibilities. I would like to remind the beholder of the past and our history, but also find inspiration in the future. Maybe even broaden the public’s understanding of the power in craft and art combined with innovative technique.

I did my sketches and watercolours with reference to my grandmother’s handwoven tablecloth. She had used the very typical Daldräll as her weaving pattern. The potential with the TC2 loom means that you do not need to make a strict pattern with shafts that follow on from each other, each thread being raised individually. Taking advantage of this was important for me in creating the images for my weaves. Benefiting fully from the fact that the TC2 loom can in fact weave nuances and even the nuances in a watercolour medium. The finished work will be shown in an exhibition in Madison, Wisconsin, USA in summer 2020. Marianne Fairbanks and I will continue to collaborate, exploring what we have in common, the wealth of knowledge and interest in textile art and weaving.

My collaboration with Marianne Fairbanks has been financially supported by the Danish Arts Foundation as well as Danmark National Bank’s jubilee fund.

Links:

*sofiamoller.com
weavinglab.com
mariannefairbanks.com
hellloom.com
instagram.com/fiahagstrom
instagram.com/weavinglab*

Katrine Rolskov, Weaving Lab participant in Copenhagen
 Sofia's project on the TC2 in Madison. Photo: Sofia Hagström Møller
 Sofia Hagström Møller working at the loom. Photo: Marianne Fairbanks

From the top:
 1. HelloLoom weaving by Sofia Hagström Møller
 2. HelloLoom weaving by Sofia Hagström Møller
 3. HelloLoom weaving by Ida Kornerup
 4. HelloLoom weaving by Grethe Wittrock
 Photo: Martin Yam Møller

