

March Spinning Sample by Cozy Swickard

It's probably been around ten years since Heather Hubbard gave me two little innocent bags of something called 'dyed silk caps'. Heather - who has generously shared her love of fiber and pattern with all of us - had encouraged me to learn to spin, had helped me make friends with my wheel and had given me the courage to ply.

So that was ten years ago, give or take. When I signed up to do a spinning sample this year a little voice inside knew the day of reckoning was at hand; I would have to open those bags and treadle into the void. Recalling Heather's generosity and enthusiasm I oiled my wheel, opened the bags, politely greeted the caps, pinched out a little starting point and began treading. Slowly the long sticky fibers began to draw magically away from the cap-in-hand; I was spinning silk! The fibers were so long I could almost spin them from the next room.

I am an excellent spinner of art yarn, which is to say I can create lumps and bumps and skinny, over-spun filaments with such random skill, inattention and lack of concentration that I can almost



guarantee a really interesting, bumpy surprise yarn. Usually when my singles are plied, the result is two lumpy, bumpy, over-spun filaments nestling warily against each other. This sample – my first silk! – has been left as single-ply and wound on a small ball-winder, innocent no more. I cut off a few inches and plied them by hand but I think they look better and much more dignified, art-yarn-wise, un-plied.

The silk is so strong and spun tightly enough that I think I could use it in a scarf; perhaps even as warp. I'm sure Heather will encourage me actually to *use* the yarn, not just to *look* at it. (Thank you, Heather.)

Registration Opens for Rocky Mountain Weaving Guild's

Betsy Blumenthal Workshop

April 17-18, 2011

Two Sides Are Better Than One

Betsy is a Boulder fiber artist with a MFA from Indiana University, noted for her workshops in weaving and dyeing. She is a member of RMWG and has given several previous presentations to our guild.

This is a 2-day round-robin workshop of weave structures that can be used to create both warp and weft-faced fabrics in a single textile, including twill, double-weave and tied weave (lampas). It is aimed at beginner/intermediate weavers. Participants will prepare a warp and thread their loom beforehand, using warp instructions provided and locally available yarns. Each participant will have the chance to weave on all the structures during the workshop. 4 and/or 8-shaft looms are required (floor looms preferable to table looms, but not required). Looms up to 16 shafts can be used as well. Cost \$140. (\$5 material fee to be collected at the workshop.) Max: 14 participants.

Questions? Contact Peg MacMorris at peg.macmorris@gmail.com