

Hannah Waldron

graphic design and textile art

– I love the clean, graphic design and relationship to colour and contrast, the curiosity and experimentation, especially in the early years of the Bauhaus movement.

HANNAH WALDRON came to Stockholm's Konstfack to do the two year programme for a Masters. Born and raised in London, she took a three year degree in graphic design/illustration at the University of Brighton, graduating with a BA (Hons) in 2007. This was followed by a stint in Berlin, where she came in contact with the Bauhaus as an inspirational source.

Two of her favourites are Anni Albers and Gunta Stözl.

– They created wonderful work: being women, the textile world was their sphere since they were often excluded from other forms of artistic expression. In my eyes, some of those textile pieces were amongst the absolute best created in the Bauhaus period.

These models led Hannah towards a new form language and fed into her graphic design.

IT WAS A FRIEND, who seeing her pattern designs with their distinct verticals and horizontals, commented that they would be ideally suited to weave. That perception inspired her.

She bought the small rigid heddle loom, one she still uses, and got going.

A friend from Brighton University, who could do weaving, taught her the basics.

THREE YEARS LATER she was on the plane to pursue further studies here at Konstfack, with the focus on textiles. With form language already at her dis-

posal, she is hoping to learn new weave techniques on computer assisted looms. She would also like to learn textile print, shibori and study a range of dyeing techniques.

HER WORK AREA COMPRISES a table and two walls, filled now with her sketches, samples, woven and printed textiles. She talked us through the weave in progress on her loom, one section of a piece of work relating to a trip to Japan

The sketch for this work on the loom is for one of five intended weaves. Travel gives her source material for her narratives. Starting from photos, that provide images for her fine, detailed sketchwork, she turns the ideas into new imagery at the loom.

The narrative unfolds from the top down: arrival in Japan, the Japanese superexpress train Shinkansen, the ryokan (the inn where she stayed), mountains, tatami mats... the field at the bottom is meant to continue over to the next weave. A path wends its way over the surface, executed in soumak.

APART FROM THE BAUHAUS, Hannah finds inspiration in ancient woven textiles, such as those from Peru.

– The wonderful art of story telling in thread, understood by the initiates, is a kind of transmission of knowledge from person to person, she said and added:

– That is what I would like my woven work to do, of course for people to find their own associations, but to have a real story that I can tell.



HANNAH WALDRON

EDUCATION

2003-2007 University of Brighton, UK. Illustration, BA.
2012-2014 Konstfack, MFA.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2009 Home, Sweet Home, The V&A Museum, London.
2011 Living Things, Rare Device, San Francisco.
2012 Soiree Graphique, Kunsthalle Bern, Bern.
2012 Patterns of Behaviour, Brooklyn Art Gallery, Brooklyn.
2013 Map Tapestries, Observatoriemuseet, Stockholm.

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ALONGSIDE THE WEAVING are her materials. Colour dictates first and foremost; the yarn might be linen, cotton or silk. The dye tuition will allow her the freedom to produce the range she wants.

SAT WEAVING, Hannah pointed out the benefits of a portable loom. Easy to take around, both here in Stockholm and when she travels home to London. In the summer she can weave out in the open.

She has learnt how to use a backstrap loom. Another ingenious piece of weaving equipment.

THE WARP RIGHT then on the loom was red, bright red. The weft did not cover completely, so the red shimmered through. Intentionally of course.

Something that sets her weaves apart from others with more neutral warps.

The computer assisted doublecloths, that she is in the process of exploring, will allow her to try out an idea, making one layer white and the other striped in multifarious bright shades. The imagery will be similar, but the technique could mean something else happens.

GRAPHIC DESIGN, ON PAPER, continues alongside her weaving. This, she finds, complements woven imagery really well. Textiles are flexible and tactile, inviting touch and allowing touch.

A weave can easily be rolled up and moved, incorporated into interior design, while retaining functionality. A graphic product is usually framed and keeps some distance, she feels. Moreover, a weave is mostly a one-off, while a graphic design on paper or a graphic product can be produced in several editions. That alone is a significant distinction, giving textiles a different status and complementing her graphic profile, she said.

– And there is a difference technically too. Weaving is time-consuming and meditative, even if I do my graphic work very carefully and slowly, but there is a difference. Which can be fruitful.

UP ON THE WALL was a textile print, with more organic forms. Quite different from Hannah's other graphic design. The inspiration came from her first impressions of Sweden.

– Looking down at Sweden from the

plane, I saw a lot of water, nature and rounded forms.

PRINT PROVIDES the complete freedom to create patterns that suit these forms.

When it comes to print, she already has quite clear ideas. She would like to do a collection of weaves, based on the Japanese textile wraps known as *Furoshiki*, whereby a four-sided cloth can be folded in a variety of ways for many different purposes.

– It would be so much better if we could use textiles instead of paper and plastic, just think how lovely it would be to wrap up your lunchbox, a bottle of wine or bread in a beautiful cloth, she said.

This spring she will have completed her Masters. She thinks she will show weave at her final show, preferably on a larger scale. But what and how she would rather not say precisely. Δ

above / Hannah Waldron at Konstfack.

right / *To Houshi Onsen*, 2013, 30 x 180 cm.