

“Weave” at Nordiska museet

PHOTO BENGT ARNE IGNELL

The Main Hall of the Nordiska Museet will be bursting with weave, when the show, “Väv” opens in May 9. 150 pieces of weaving, in almost 500 square metres, all picked to inspire and awaken fresh creative talent, will be accompanied by ten looms for visitors to have a go at weaving. The workshop section will be stewarded throughout the show, alongside a programme including courses and demonstrations.

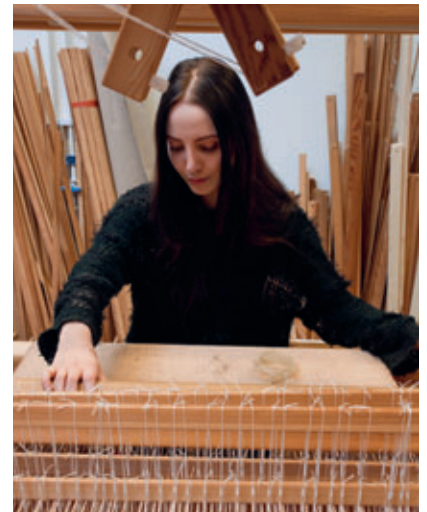
In addition to a selection of the magnificent works from the 18th and 19th centuries in the museum collection and around 100 pieces of new work from weavers all over Sweden, the show will include invited contributions from some thirty students at Konstfack, HV School and Sätergläntan College of Handicrafts. We met up with some of the students.



Viktoria Cleverby, Konstfack, braiding in birch-bark and leather, researching into the evolution of weave.



Anneli Tegelberg, Konstfack, enlarged a sketch from the Zickerman collection as the basis for her woollen rug weave.



Rebecka Vestergren Ahlin, Konstfack, at work on a weave with strips of leather, to be moulded into a body form.



Emilié Karlberg, HV School. Dense flossa pile with a contemporary expressive feel.



Emelie Ericsson, Sätergläntan, Indigo blue rag rug with white water-lilies.



Celeste Photini Johnson, Sätergläntan, started out from the Kurbits painting tradition for her woven rag rug.



"Rug IV"

Anneli Tegelberg

Konstfack

▼ Sometimes it feels like you spend so much time at the loom with very little in the way of results – with this project, I really wanted to up the size, said Tegelberg of her 150 x 250 cm colourful rölakan rug.

Inspiration for her rug design came straight from Lilli Zickerman, from an enlarged section of one of the sketches in the Zickerman collection at Konstfack.

– I made a sketch of it, so it is not quite accurate. The colours are not the same as in the original sketch, because I didn't think they were that great. I am really fascinated by colour and wanted to choose my own combinations. By taking a black/white copy of the sketch, the grey scale inspired me to create new values: the lighter areas in the sketch are also light in my rug.

The filling weft is from blanketing she ripped into approximately three centimetre wide strips and combined with strips of silk to create a shimmering effect. She also random dyed to avoid the colour fields looking overly uniform or graphic. The linen rug warp was painted with textile print dye as she went along to harmonize with the weft inserted at that point. As the weft is wide and pretty thick, it formed bulgy knops on the face at each colour change, producing its own special effect.

– I like the way the knops stand out, kind of making the technique more obvious, and creating a character of its own.

"Weaving"

Rebecka Vestergren Ahlin

Konstfack

▼ There are a lot of people who shy away from hair, skin and other things on our bodies – things that are very human. My project is about the fear of what is human.

Rebecka Vestergren Ahlin uses leather in the weave she is forming as a skin. It will be moulded into a three-dimensional body, and will be integral to an installation in the show, as a picture of a back seen in a mirror.

– The skin has hair, it contains cellulite and pimples. The back is the part being shown because that is often the keeper of what is hidden; we just look in front and don't take the back into account. I want to bring all that to the surface – it is not as dangerous as we think.

Both the warp and weft are handcut reindeer skin. Ahlin saved reindeer skin that had been attacked by parasites, and cut it into narrow strips. She had already done a two-year leather course at the now defunct School of Design and Leather Fashion in Malung, so it is not the first time she is working with leather, but the first time weaving it. And it is not that easy. Leather is not intended to be put under high tension. She had to keep the warp fairly slack while weaving and push the weft down with a comb.

– I was inspired by Lilli Zickerman, the way she preserved the heritage of her time. I am preserving something from my time, which is current today. I think the fear of what is human is important as an issue and this work has turned into a type of contribution to the discussion.





"Self-portrait set against soft rocks"
Emilié Karlberg, HV Skola



PHOTO: MONICA HALLÉN

Kurbits inspired rag rug
Celeste Photini Johnson,
Sätergläntan College of Handicrafts

Something that stuck with me when we did our design classes was a quote from Lilli Zickerman's book, "Lilli Zickerman - the best of Hemslojd thinking from the source". In the book, she describes the importance of modernizing handwork, for it to live on. Those ideas helped build up my vision, partly by using traditional fossa pile technique and then allowing a more modern form of expression in. I wanted, via the fossa rug, to make a narrative about the sense of time existing earlier when everything did not move so fast.

When I started on the sketchwork, I immediately began reflecting on what time meant to me. Time was given a value through deadlines, money, planning and effectivity. When designing, though, I wanted to stop time by putting the focus on me in a self-portrait, a portrait carved out of a rock, a figure standing still while letting the world move freely around, with the opportunity to stop and observe it.

The sketch developed from a photograph of me and a photograph of a rock-

face, superimposed in photoshop, which produces the cliff shaped feel of the portrait.

The colour scale was chosen carefully after methodical testing in different colours with screenprint. The image in question would be interpreted as being an old and aged photograph in shades of brown and black-grey. This image, printed on cotton cloth, was the basis for how the colours were transferred, knot by knot, to my rug. Its finished dimensions were 1m wide and 1.5m long. There were 28,000 knots in it, made from linen thread, Åsborya, Brage yarn and Åkle yarn. The ground weft consisted of rug wool yarn and Brage yarn.

After five long weeks of work, I can only say that I have just fallen in love with this technique, since it not only stirred the spirit of adventure in me to carry on developing even further in the textile sphere, but also gave the answer to the question about what time signified for me and what I need to do with the time allotted to me. The answer then came: Live in the now and enjoy the creative energy when it comes.

When we were given the task of weaving something based on a rag rug technique, with a colour scheme of blue and white, I felt very challenged, mostly because one of the other main keys to the assignment was to create a piece that was modern and would draw interest from people not normally interested in textile art. I looked for inspiration throughout many forms of Scandinavian folk art, as I am ever intrigued with the idea of taking something that is not a textile and using it as a starting point for a woven design. I ended up choosing Dalmålning for several reasons. It is unlike anything we have in the United States, and although it is often taken for granted in Dalarna, I always find myself in awe of the incredible art that was created by untrained traveling painters.



PHOTO: MONICA HALLÉN

Water-lilies rag rug
Emelie Ericsson,
Sätergläntan College of Handicrafts

Also, Kurbits are something I have been inspired by since my first introduction to Swedish folk culture and I think they lend themselves especially well to modernization. I like them so much I even have one tattooed on my back. But I have never seen a kurbit depicted in a woven textile. Because of the technical aspects of what is possible in a weave, my kurbit is somewhat stylized, but I hope it captures the essence of the original. In my design, I had a lot of fun using mixed media. Integrated with the weaving are techniques such as wool embroidered vines, metal worked petals, and fabric paint printed leaves. The result is what I feel to be a textile firmly rooted in the folk culture it springs from, with a strong element of modern aesthetic to bring this ancient art into the new age.

When I found out we were going to be exhibiting at Nordiska Museet, it was quite something – big and exciting. Those of us who had decided to study weaving at Sätergläntan College of Handicrafts this year were extremely fortunate. But I had hardly done any weaving before, so first of all I had to learn it

At Sätergläntan we were set the task of weaving indigo blue rag rugs, with recycling as the theme. I had quite a clear picture of how I wanted to design my rug. I was thinking of a blue sea with white water-lilies and rosepath borders in between. We had already had to do rag sample-weaving in various techniques, which meant trying out rosepath and rag inlay with “slarvor”, amongst other things.

Anna Sjons, who teaches us colour and

design, told us to aim for a living quality in our work. Each of us had a pile of white sheeting and tablecloth. I cut my lot into pieces and gave them different amounts of dips in the indigo dye bath to get several shades of blue.

For my inlay, I hunted about for small remnants of cotton, linen, lace and tulle in white, beige and pale pink. Those were cut into small pieces and I also cut my blue fabrics up into finer strips.

When I was ready to get going with the weaving, my confidence faltered. But after an inspiring lecture from Maria Westerberg, who makes poetry in wood, it did not feel so bad. I even found myself weaving with a feeling quality, and it was a pleasure to vary different blue rags and inlay small bits of fabric, shaping them into beautiful roses, like my tutor Monica Hallén had shown me.

EACH PIECE of weaving turns into something unique, which is what used to happen domestically, using old worn cloth. This rag rug was woven just by me for the Nordiska Museet!

The “Weave” show runs from
May 9th to September 30th
at Nordiska Museet, Stockholm.