

Top left / *The Princess and the Pea* – the width of the stripes in the stripe sequence has been worked out precisely. With another colour scheme, the rug would have a completely different expression. Centre left / A pair of checked bedside rugs. Below left / The occasional imaginative figure might appear at the end of a fringe. Below centre / *The Pippi rug*, based on Pippi Longstocking's sweater. Top right / Tommy Jonestrand in front of his *Yves Saint Laurent rug*. Below right / Wall textile woven at the end of a warp. *Somewhere over the Rainbow rug*.



Rags Rippling with Colour

Tommy Jonestrand's stripe design ideas can be sparked off by the colours of weft wound on his ski-shuttles. Other sources of inspiration might be a piece of music or Pippi Longstocking's sweater.

TOMMY JONESTRAND'S rugs are given names such as *the Pippi Rug*, *the Princess and the Pea* and *Yves Saint Laurent*. Judy Garland singing *Over the Rainbow*, heard on the radio, gave him the idea for *the Rainbow Rug*. The Princess and the Pea rug was woven with a pink/red rag stripe sequence in an intricate repeat. It was supposed to have a random look, but each stripe is meticulously measured. There is now just a little green pea to be embroidered in. The Pippi rug was woven in taqueté, based on Pippi Longstocking's knitted white sweater with blue and red stripes, while the YSL rug is checked with cool and warm shades, a juxtaposition significant for the French fashion designer. Tommy recognizes himself too in this somewhat unexpected colour scheme, which in the 1980s went completely against the rules. Mixing red and purple or blue and green was not considered tasteful. At that time Tommy was into making his own clothes and printing them with textile dye. On one occasion he got featured in the evening papers because of the garb he had on. He was also a model wearing Jean Paul Gaultier's clothes in a Swedish tabloid. Textiles and colour, in other words, have been with him for some time. These days his work is in hairdressing. Weaving found its way into his life without him quite knowing how. He saw an ad on *Blocket* that stirred his curiosity. Fetched the loom, which still had some warp on – a sun-bleached black rug warp – tied on and got going. Further investigation revealed several family connections further back in time, where textiles played a part. His maternal grandmother did weaving

and her mother had a mangling business on Rörstrandsgatan in Stockholm. On his father's side, his grandmother wove and her father made looms. He can remember having a go at weaving on a little child's loom, aged five. All this, however, is not the reason for his weaving now. His comment is that he took a fancy to it and simply wanted to learn to weave.

OVER THE SEVEN YEARS that he has been weaving, his work has developed: he now weaves one rug after another with a highly personal touch. What he first learnt came from Solveig Magnusson and Laila Eriksson, who are now good friends of his. Laila has for many years woven major commissioned pieces and dyes her rags herself. Tommy can buy what he needs from her and has access to masses of different colours. His warps are of unbleached linen, which he feels works well with numerous shades, such as white in the weft, “that comes out gorgeous.”

TOMMY IS ACTIVE on *Vävspolen*, a closed group on Facebook. It is there he can bounce ideas, see what others are weaving, get different viewpoints and plenty of feedback. As a meeting place, it plays a significant role since weaving itself is often pretty solitary.

AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER each year he takes part in the art trail, for which he makes sure his stock is up. Some 150 visitors come by, ten or so rugs sell. For Tommy, weaving is no means of making a living, yet it is an important part of his life. He does his weaving in the morning, a few centimetres

daily, before going off to work at the salon. By and by a rug gets finished. Beaming a warp, as and when, is something he can manage without extra assistance. The sectional warp beam, purchased earlier on, makes it possible to warp and beam in one operation.

HAIRDRESSING AND WEAVING do have things in common when it comes to all the finishing, such as plying fringes or making a flat woven edge. His hands are naturally dexterous and precision is a hallmark of both his practices. On some of his rugs, little imaginary figures get knotted in to the warp ends at the end of a fringe. One way of putting a personal stamp on the rug and a chance to play a little.

When cutting down a rug, he rolls it up without looking at it in its entirety. Only when all the finishing is done will he roll it out to inspect the whole piece.

– It's become a bit of a thing. I now do it every time.

HIS LATEST WEAVES are a couple of checked bedside rugs, long enough to run from the bedside table to the end of the bed, ca 150 cm in all. There are plenty of yet-to-be-woven rugs in his head, waiting for their turn to be realized. Rugs, as he says, are “his speciality”.

– I really like the functionality of a rug, how it provides a base. And it really can change a whole room. It is a simple and relatively cheap way of creating a whole new interior.

Weave Tommy's rag rug with all the turquoise shades, page 60–61.