

MAFA Workshop Weekend 2009
3-End Block Weave
Jason Collingwood, Instructor

What an exciting weekend we all had in Gettysburg, PA! The line up of instructors was truly a weaver's Hall of Fame. After much deliberation (which included 'eeny, meeny, miny, moh!') I chose to spend my weekend as a student of Jason Collingwood.

In Jason's introductory remarks he told us that his workshop is usually scheduled for five full days, and since we only had 2 ½ days, he would be moving at a brisk pace...hopefully we could all keep up! He watched the clock carefully, set time limits for his lectures, and always allowed time for questions at the end of each segment. He was amazingly well organized! Each morning he arrived early to fill the blackboard with the day's technical information. He impressed us all by his ability to write drafts on the board while answering questions or talking about other things. He certainly worked hard to condense his 5-day class into our 2 ½ day time allotment!



What we learned was monumental!

- tips on making rug warps
- loom requirements for making a sturdy rug as well as ideas to modify some floor looms to make them more rug-worthy
- rug design
- thorough examples of 3-end block weave
- rug finishes that included both warp and weft protectors
- how much 'bubbling' to allow in the weft
- use of temples
- shaft switching and how to modify a loom to use this technique
- ergonomics of proper body positioning to minimize strain while rug weaving

All this in 2 ½ days!

The only significant drawback to our shortened schedule was the lack of time needed for practicing the ideas and techniques he was offering. Obviously there are no portable looms that are appropriate for weaving a rug, so we all faced challenges in actually weaving our samples. There was so much information given in such a brief time that we all had to choose which sample drafts we'd actually weave, and this made for very interesting differences on each loom. A walk through our classroom showed many different block weaves, shaft switching exercises, and of course myriad colorways. It was a delightful sight!



Jason supplied an excellent hand-out to supplement his careful teaching style, which ensured that everyone in the class understood each facet of the course. However, since I don't trust my own memory, or my note taking abilities, I also purchased his DVD from The Mannings. After participating in the class and watching the DVD at home, I feel quite confident in tackling the business of making my first rug!

I will christen my newly acquired 60" Toika with a rug of my own design!

Thank you, Jason!