Dyeing Techniques

As colour is such an important dimension in the design of a woven cloth, it is necessary to be prepared to dye yarn to the appropriate colour. This dyeing stage, like all aspects of designing and weaving woven fabrics, cannot be hurried. It takes time to dye hanks of yarn to the exact tone that is required.

RANDOM DYEING

The majority of fabric illustrated in this book uses yarns that have been dyed in the hank to a particular colour. When these coloured yarns are placed in a warp or weft, they will produce vertical or horizontal striped patterns.

If small sections of a hank of yarn are dipped into differently coloured dye pots, or dabbed with differently coloured dyes, it produces a multi-coloured yarn. When this yarn is woven it creates streaks or dashes of colour along a warp or weft stripe. I call this dyeing technique Random Dyeing.

Random Dyeing

Random Dyeing was the first colouring design technique I tried for the design of the first few scarves I wove. The different coloured areas along the length of a Random Dyed warp of yarn rarely lay adjacent to the same colour again. What I really want to achieve with Random Dyeing is to have little patches of solid colour along the warp’s length.

When I look at coloured pictures that inspire me, such as sunsets or autumn leaves, I think of the different colour patches that make up the whole. I am trying to accentuate, and is therefore less satisfactory in my opinion (Plate 95).

I use Procion MX Cold Water Fibre Reactive Dyes for Random Dyeing yarn. I make a type of mix that I like. How do I get a similar ambience in my warps? The answer is clearly to Random Dye an actual warp before it goes onto the loom.

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This concept is the first colouring design technique I tried for the design of the first few scarves I wove.

Designs 23 Picosc de Europa Meadow and 28 Candy Floss use a yarn that has been Random Dyed in the hank, before being warped in the normal way. These Random Dyed yarns show as little dashes of colour along the length of the warp.

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