

You should know

The Story of ARTSgarage

by Cameron Taylor-Brown

ARTSgarage is a textile resource center in Los Angeles, California. Founded in 2010, it has an extensive reference library, hosts seminars for educators, and shares donated yarn with teachers. It also is home to *Art of the Loom*, a workshop series that explores woven design.

The seed for **ARTSgarage** was my interest in working with educators. After developing an arts integration model called **accessARTS** in partnership with a team of Los Angeles educators, I deeply missed interacting with teachers. So I cleared out our cluttered garage, covered the ping pong table with craft paper, bought some folding chairs – and **createIt@ARTSgarage** was born. Other programs developed over time as ideas presented themselves.

createIt@ARTSgarage offers “educators of all stripes” the opportunity to nurture creativity through collaborative work using simple textile processes and donated supplies. After completing a hand-on project, we discuss how our discoveries can influence our teaching practices. Topics range far and wide, and have included museum visits and guest artists. *Poetic Fiber*, using hanks of yarn as a writing prompt for Haiku poems, was our last seminar before shutting down due to Coronavirus. *Pattern and Code*, with artist Ahree Lee, was on the calendar for several months until we decided to reconfigure it as a Zoom seminar. Ahree demonstrated some of the interactions between weaving and computing, and included a hands-on project that everyone created as part of the seminar.

The reference library began as an accidental archive of more than twenty-five years of periodicals and books on textiles, art, design, creativity, innovation, education, and more. I am a lover of books and don't need much of an excuse to buy them, so the library just keeps growing. Among my favorite books is the rather obscure *Textile Calculations* by E.A. Posselt, published over a century ago. **ARTSgarage** also has just about every catalogue and book ever published about or by Anni Albers, happily compiled while I was researching her life and artistry. A recent addition to the library is *The Fabric of Civilization* by Virginia Postrel, a wonderful writer and member of my local weaving guild.



Art of the Loom is a weaving curriculum that introduces students to floor loom weaving and explores facets of woven design – color, texture, fiber, and pattern – in a series of weekend workshops. The classes are small – a maximum of six students - and are a fun mix of people. Some have never woven before and are simply curious to try it, some are weavers seeking additional knowledge, others are artists wanting to expand their practice, while several have been costumers from the entertainment industry. I've even had a couple of anthropology professors and some museum professionals join in. It makes for great discussions around the lunch table! Sadly, these workshops are currently on hold but I will get them going again once the virus is under control.

conversations about once a month, and the talks are so enjoyable that we are likely to continue them in some form when **ARTSgarage** re-opens. Topics are a mix of inspiration and helpful bits of technical knowledge that move our practices forward. It is also an opportunity to share what everyone has been working on and simply to visit with one another.



One of the lessons I've learned from this global pandemic is how important it is to come together as a community and to support one another's creative endeavors. Weavers are a generous and resourceful bunch, and I'm so fortunate to host **ARTSgarage** and be a member of the weaving tribe – virtually and in-person.

To learn more about **ARTSgarage**, please visit www.artsgaragela.com

You can also find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ARTSgarageLA

Talking Textiles: Conversations About Cloth is most recent addition to **ARTSgarage**. This series of virtual conversations was developed for the **ARTSgarage** community in response to the need to be "apart together," *Talking Textiles* is a Zoom-based discussion about some aspect of weaving, and a way to stay in touch with one another during our time apart. We've been having these

For more information . . .

Ahree Lee - <https://www.ahreelee.com>

Read more about Virginia Postrel's book, *The Fabric of Civilization* - <https://vpostrel.com/the-fabric-of-civilization>

Textile Calculations by E.A. Posselt is available as a PDF download - https://www2.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/books/pea_calc.pdf

Cameron Taylor-Brown has immersed herself in the worlds of fiber, education, and commerce since the 1970s. She founded ARTSgarage, a textile resource center in Los Angeles.



To learn more about Cameron, including her work as a fiber artist, textile designer, teacher, and exhibition curator, go to the following:

<http://camerontaylor-brown.com>

<https://www.instagram.com/camerontaylorbrown/?hl=en>

