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Teaching tradition:

Investigating potential teaching tools for the
preservation of Kyrgyz textiles traditions

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Design in Textiles at Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand.

Jennifer Rosenthal 2010

NOTE TO READERS:

When contemplating this Masters research project, I was unsure whether it fit best within the field of international development or design. It is a research project about design set in the context of international development.

Sir Christopher John Frayling identified three types of design research one of which I think best describes this research. "Research for design" according to Frayling, is "research where the end product is an artifact - where the thinking, is so to speak embodied in the artifact"¹. In this case, the artifact/s I have designed reflect the thinking I have arrived at while seeking a way to preserve and revive Central Asian wool felt textile traditions in order to support the development of crafts-based economic development initiatives in Kyrgyzstan.

As an instructional designer, my goal was not to create an aesthetically pleasing or cleverly designed artifact but the design of an effective and appropriate instructional resource that could help preserve traditional designs while inspiring and informing new designs among a particular group of people - in this case, a women's handicraft cooperative in Kyrgyzstan.

The traditional textile designs that I aim to help preserve through this project are those that the Kyrgyz have developed or adapted from other cultures over time which have come to reflect the Kyrgyz cultural traditions and identity. According to Gale and Kaur, "Textiles (...) mirror periods of national history, reflecting the way in which people see themselves, their culture and their lifestyles at a particular time."² Many of these traditional designs originate from a time when the Kyrgyz were free to express their cultural identity through their arts. Years of Soviet oppression and forced assimilation made it difficult - even illegal - to practice these arts. Today, as the Kyrgyz struggle to adapt to independence they are looking to the past to help restore their national and cultural identity.

Because instructional design is an emerging discipline that many people are unfamiliar with, I thought it would be helpful to provide the reader with a definition: Instructional design is the practice of maximizing the effectiveness, efficiency and appeal of instruction and other learning experiences.³ A great deal of instructional design involves understanding what the learning need is, and designing the most appropriate resource or "intervention" to meet that need.

¹ Sir Christopher Frayling, *Research in art and design, Research Papers Vol.1, No1*, Royal College of Art, London, 1993, pp. 1 -5.

² Colin Gale and Jasbir Kaur, *The Textiles Book*, Berg Publishers, Oxford, 2002, p.91.

³ *Instructional Design*, Wikipedia, retrieved 23 February 2010, < http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Instructional_design>

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Background

“The Silk Road stretched from China in the east to Iran in the west, across high mountain passes and through desert oases, traversing all the Central Asian nations. Branching, rejoining, and extending toward Russia and India, the Silk Road formed the basic pattern of interchange of luxury goods, art, food, music, ideas, and religious practices between the nomadic and settled peoples of Central Asia. People along the Silk Road developed an intricate material culture that responded to the practical and the aesthetic, to internal migrations and to invasions.”¹

¹ H. Feltham, A Brief Overview of Central Asian history in *Beyond the Silk Road Arts of Central Asia*, Powerhouse Publishing, Sydney, 1999, pp.9-21, cited in Beth Gottschling, Mary Littrell and Mary Cockram *An Artisan Association is Born: A Case Study of Aid To Artisans in Central Asia, 1994 – 1999*, Hartford, Aid to Artisans, 2005, p.13.

The Silk Road is actually a network of interconnected trading routes linking Asia to the Mediterranean and northern Africa. These routes were important paths for cultural, commercial and technological exchange for almost 3,000 years. Because of its location along the Silk Road, Kyrgyzstan has developed a rich culture and history.

Historically, the Kyrgyz people led the life of nomadic herdsmen. Kyrgyz nomads who travelled the Silk Road were exposed to designs and ideas from as far as China and Eastern Europe and created their own distinctive crafts that assimilated these designs and ideas. "Like actors on a historic stage performing their entrances and exits, the Kyrgyz people recorded in their national memory and preserved in their folkloric art the cultural influences of their past."²

Many of the ancient cultures who travelled along the Silk Road have influenced the motifs, patterns and designs found in Kyrgyz textiles.

Textile traditions are never static nor geographically fixed, and they have constantly changed in response to interactions between different cultures. This is one of the great strengths of textiles and a major part of the way it has contributed to the world's cultural heritage.³

Kyrgyz textiles incorporate the designs and symbols of many ancient cultures including the Karluks, and Uyghur tribes (nomadic Turkic tribes), the Achaemenids, Sarmatians, Scythians and Sakas (nomadic Iranian tribes), and Ususns (ancient Chinese Hun tribe), the Mongols and the Timurids (a Mongol-Turkic tribe). Many of these cultures no longer exist but their beliefs and symbols live on in the textiles and craft traditions of the Kyrgyz people. It is for this reason, that it is so important that the Kyrgyz craft traditions are preserved.

Other Kyrgyz textile motifs, designs and patterns were derived from the world of spirits and the surrounding environment.⁴ For example, a bird symbolised the sky, and was believed to be the intermediary between the gods above and the earthly world. Various decorative elements related to birds can be seen in Kyrgyz felt mats including *Karga tyrmak* (crow's claws) and *Kaz ayak* (bird's foot).⁵ Hunting with eagles is a well-respected skill and eagles feature in many Kyrgyz motifs.

² Akul Nakov., *Kyrgyz Culture Overview*, Bukhara Carpets, 2003 - 2010, retrieved 23 October 2010 < <http://www.bukhara-carpets.com/making/kyrgyz.html> >

³ Gale and Kaur, op.cit., p.91

⁴ Amantur Japarov, E. Sulaimanov, K. Tashbaeva and L. Vedutova. *Atlas of Central Asian Artistic Crafts and Trades Volume III* translated by Olga Titova, International Institute for Central Asian Studies, Bishkek, 2002, p.90.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.91.



Hunting with golden eagles is an ancient tradition that dates back to the 12th and 13th centuries that is still practiced in some parts of Kyrgyzstan. A skilled pair, berkutchi (hunter) and bird can catch fawns, foxes, badgers and even wolves.

Motifs depicting this highly-prized bird can be seen in Kyrgyz textiles. The sketch below is my impression of how this particular motif may have come about.



Numerous representations of sheep and their horns can also be seen in many Kyrgyz woven and felted carpets. Different types of curls were main ornamentation motifs. Two-sided or one-sided curls disposed on various parts of a felt mat surface were given different names such as *kochkor muyuz* (sheep's horn) *kosh muyuz* (double horn), and *synar muyuz* (single horn).⁶

At one time, these motifs, designs, patterns and symbols were known and understood by many Kyrgyz and each tribe would have their own distinctive style which could be identified and recognised by other tribes. Today many of these traditional designs have been lost or their meanings forgotten. The loss of craft traditions can have serious implications for a people's cultural identity and their future.

Loss of Craft Traditions

Traditional crafts provide insight into our lifestyles, our social structures and our beliefs. They can teach us about the past, and the values and customs of our ancestors but they are just as important to our future. They can teach us creative and sustainable ways to use natural materials and can inspire innovation.

Unfortunately, craft traditions are disappearing as pressure from the forces of modernization and globalization impact communities around the globe. A community's culture and traditions are strongly linked to its identity and when this is lost, it has damaging effects on society.

"Like other forms of intangible cultural heritage, globalization poses significant challenges to the survival of traditional forms of craftsmanship."⁷ Crafts which were once highly valued among traditional communities are now seen as old-fashioned as the luxury and prestige of owning modern, manufactured or imported goods is highly sought after.

For many indigenous communities around the world, craft traditions were lost as a result of colonizing nations intentionally suppressing these traditions in order to assimilate them into the dominant culture. This was the situation in Kyrgyzstan when the Soviets

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.78.

⁷ UNESCO *Traditional Craftsmanship* Intangible Cultural Heritage UNESCO, 1995-2010, retrieved 13 September 2010 < <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?pg=57> >

took over in the early 20th century. The Soviet leadership attempted to end the nomadic lifestyle of the Kyrgyz.

During the Soviet era, traditional craft production was banned by the Soviets in their push for modernization and pressures of conformity. People were discouraged or prevented from operating private businesses or using their hands for craft production.⁸

Fortunately, during this period, some underground craft production continued but many important craft traditions were lost.

In 1991 the USSR dissolved the Kyrgyz Republic and Kyrgyzstan (as it was more commonly known) became an independent state. Unlike other new nations, Kyrgyzstan had not agitated for independence – independence happened to them. They were completely unprepared for this new situation.

Kyrgyzstan had no industry of its own; its role had always been to supply power to support the manufacturing and industry of its neighbouring countries. When the Soviet system collapsed, the interdependent economic relationships between the former Soviet states also collapsed destroying the Kyrgyz economy.

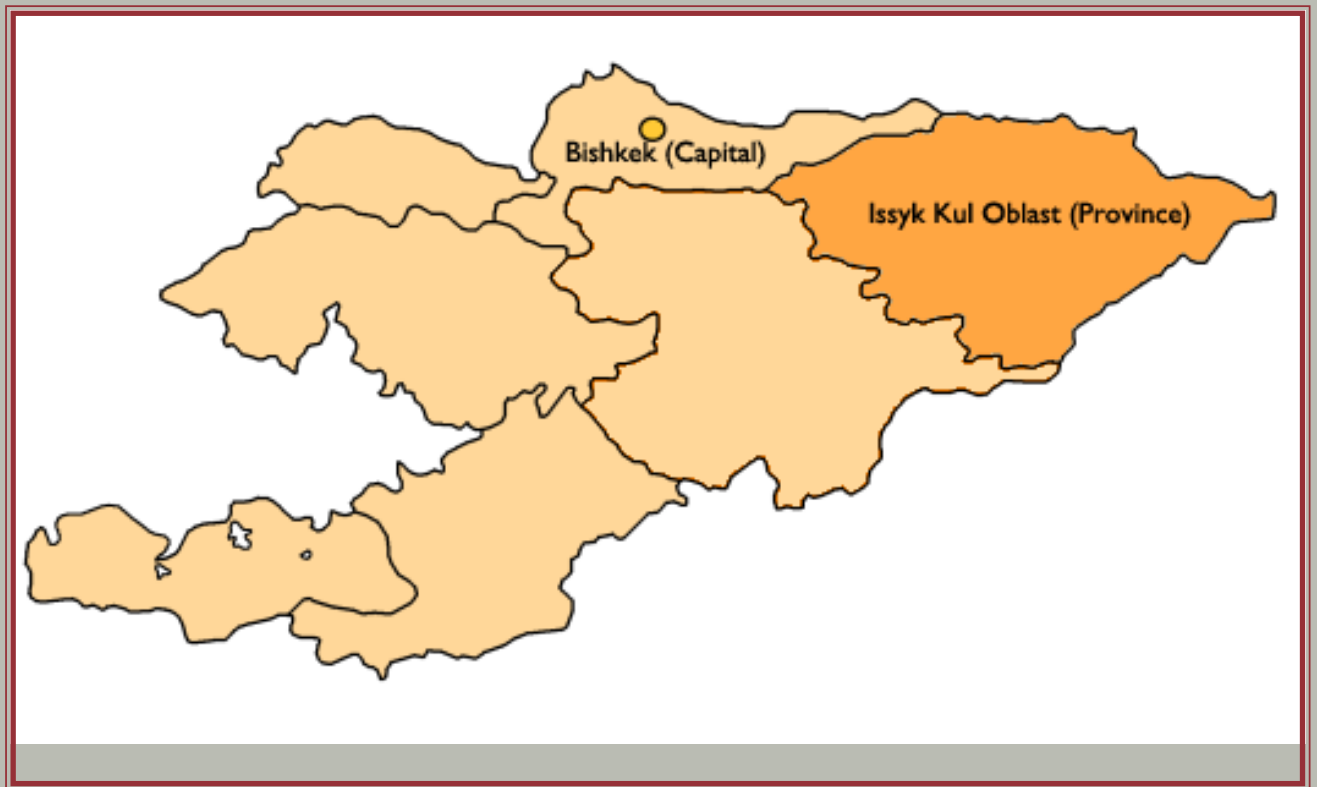
Today the Kyrgyz are looking to revive these traditional crafts in order to meet a need for sustainable economic development.

The main aim of this Masters research project was to design an educational resource to help preserve these Kyrgyz textiles traditions, in particular the felt-making traditions of the Issyk-Kul region.

I chose to focus on the preservation of felt traditions because of felt's historic and cultural importance in Kyrgyzstan and more recently because of its potential as a sustainable income generator for rural Kyrgyz women who are seeking to support themselves and their families through home-based craft enterprises.

⁸ Gottschling, Littrell and Cockram op.cit., p.2.





Introduction

“There are two kinds of poverty, economic poverty and spiritual poverty. Economic poverty is not so bad. It can be overcome by hard work and changing circumstances. Spiritual poverty is another thing. It occurs when people have lost their culture and traditions. This is the worst kind of poverty because when you lose your traditions and culture you are truly lost – you have nothing.”

*– Mr. Junushbai Tokmorbaev,
Kyrgyz Traditional Craftsman*





This traditional bazaar in the southern Kyrgyz city of Osh has operated for nearly 2000 years. Its location along the Silk Road made it an ideal place for trade and commerce and attracted merchants and craftsmen from as far away as the Mediterranean.





Violent conflict in July 2010 ravaged the once-vibrant traditional bazaar. Since the destruction of the bazaar there has been increased ghettoization and a dramatic change in the atmosphere and composition of the city.



Many traditional crafts are being lost as elderly artisans pass away without having passed on their knowledge and traditions to subsequent generations. The context in which these traditions thrived has changed with many young people leaving their communities to seek opportunities in larger urban centres.



Most traditional crafts were originally essential items that families needed for their day-to-day living. Now traditional artisans sell these items in craft markets and bazaars. Unfortunately, many of these items are now mass-produced and available commercially at a lower cost so traditional artisans struggle to compete with these products have abandoned their crafts in search of more lucrative livelihoods.

Traditional crafts represent an important source of income for women and youth in some of the world's poorest countries.

With the collapse of the economy after the Kyrgyz gained independence from the Soviet Union, many Kyrgyz men found themselves unemployed and unable to support their families. This presented challenges for Kyrgyz women "so many of their men – husbands, sons, and brothers - have succumbed to the depression of chronic irremediable unemployment, many drowning their sorrows in vodka."⁹ The women suddenly found themselves in the position of having to support their families.

In an attempt to revive the economy, Kyrgyzstan began promoting itself as a tourist destination. Its beautiful scenery and low-cost of food and accommodation made it attractive to many Russian and European travellers. The arrival of the tourists created a market for traditional crafts - especially crafts made of wool felt. Many women saw this as an opportunity to earn an income.

Unfortunately, the years of suppression of this traditional craft has left a younger generation of women with significant gaps in their knowledge of felt production and traditional design elements. This knowledge would normally have been passed down from their mothers, mother-in-laws and/or their grandmothers. Recent changes in Kyrgyz society and economy have meant that younger generations of women have been geographically separated from their mothers and grandmothers as they have left their villages due to marriage or seeking education or employment in larger urban centres. In some cases, the older generation of artisans who had the knowledge of traditional crafts, passed away before they could pass it on to their daughters or grand-daughters.

For women without access to this traditional knowledge, the design and development of marketable products has proven a real challenge.

Many Kyrgyz believe that "a strong market for traditional crafts can help revive these generational links and help preserve that sacred knowledge."¹⁰ Organizations such as the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative are working to establish a market for their traditional crafts in the remote province of Issyk Kul located in the foothills of the Tian Shan mountain system.

This organization was established as part of a Kyrgyz/Canadian development initiative

⁹ Anne-Laure Py, *Crafts in Kyrgyzstan: A Look at Creative Small Entrepreneurs*, 2007, retrieved 12 September 2010, < <http://www.neweurasia.net/culture-and-history/crafts-in-kyrgyzstan-a-look-at-creative-small-entrepreneurs/> >.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

called The Issyk Kul Biosphere Reserve Ecological and Economic Development project (I-K BREED) that aimed to encourage ecologically and culturally sustainable economic development. The herdsmen of the region were encouraged to maintain a biologically diverse stock that included indigenous breeds of sheep and yaks and the women's artisan cooperative was established to create felt handicrafts from their fleece and fibres.

The project partners, felt that if the women's artisan cooperative was going to be successful, some outside expertise was needed to help them develop their design skills and learn how to market their crafts. I came to know some of the project partners as a result of a previous research project on wool felt that I was involved with. Because of my background as a textiles lecturer and instructional designer, the project partners believed I could find a way to strengthen the women artisans' design skills through some kind of



educational initiative. Because many of the women in the cooperative lacked access to printed resources about their local felt traditions, it was felt that documentation of existing felt designs could serve as both a reference tool for the young designers as well as a way of asserting their communities' intellectual property rights (protecting their local designs from being stolen by others).

I was invited to visit the region in July 2009 to deliver a marketing workshop for the cooperative and carry out some research into what could be done to preserve the felt-making traditions of the region and make it more accessible to the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative.



Textile Traditions

Within any culture, textiles traditions play an important role. We interact with textiles everyday - through our clothing and in our homes (carpets, furnishings and bedding). These textiles express a great deal about who we are and how we live our lives.

With textiles, people around the world express their diverse traditions, lifestyles, fashions and technologies, all while addressing fundamental physical, aesthetic and spiritual needs. Through material, colour, pattern, design and other facets, textiles reveal an individual's wealth, social status, occupation, and religious and ethnic associations, as well as a culture's values, codes and social order.¹¹

In Kyrgyzstan, wool felt is an important textile that has been used by the nomadic peoples to make clothing, furnishings and even their portable homes. Wool felt dates back thousands of years and has been credited as the world's first textile.

In the fifth century BC, the ancient nomadic tribes of the Central-Asian steppe, known to the Greek historian Herodotus as the Scythians, had a complex and artistic culture. They have left us the earliest known examples of felted textiles (2,500 years old), which were found in the Pazyryk tombs in Southern Siberia.¹²

The production of felt was and still is a communal activity which brought together many generations of a family or community and felt carpets were created to mark important milestones in a family member's life such as a marriage. For this reason, felt plays an important role in the culture of the Kyrgyz and many other Central Asian nations. Today there are nomadic cultures within Central Asia who continue to make wool felt in much the same way as their ancestors had done for centuries.

Whereas silver work has disappeared, leather work is practiced by only a minority, and traditional Kyrgyz embroidery designs have been pushed aside by Uzbek, Ukrainian and Russian motifs, [felt] *shyrdaks* and *ala kiyiz* [types of carpets] are still found in every home, just as they were 2,000 years ago.¹³

¹¹ Cyndi Bohlin., *Upcoming Exhibition Provides a Lens into Cultures Around the World Through Textiles* (press release) The Textiles Museum, Washington, 2008 retrieved 28 September 2010, <http://www.textilemuseum.org/pdfs/timbuktu_to_tibet_pr.pdf>

¹² Gale and Kaur, op.cit., p.98

¹³ Rowan Stewart, *Kyrgyz Republic*, Odyssey Publications, Hong Kong, 2004. p. 23.

Unfortunately, felt is slowly losing its role within Central Asian cultures as they experience rapid changes in their social and economic lives brought about by modernization and increased access to industrially produced products from the developed world. However, among the Kyrgyz, felt is beginning to find renewed importance as a means of economic development.

The Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative was among many organizations looking to revive traditional crafts in order to help its' members support their families through the production and sale of traditional felt crafts. Unfortunately, some of the women lacked knowledge of the traditional designs and motifs of their region.

Most often, artisans cannot afford to maintain references close at hand, and hence they have never seen what their forefathers used to make. Their databanks are in their minds and at their fingertips. There is thus the very and real danger of motifs, designs and traditions dying out due to change, under use, or even the death of a specialized artisan or craft family/group.¹⁴

These women did not have access to reference materials from which they could learn about their local designs, patterns and motifs. As a result, a lot of the crafts they were creating were copies of other artisans' designs.

Some regions such as the Naryn region of Kyrgyzstan (who have a national reputation for producing the best felt) had retained a local style within their felt carpets for example the predominant use of red and green and certain motifs and patterns, that made them easily identifiable as being from Naryn. This made their carpets highly sought-after by tourists. The felt carpets being produced in other regions of Kyrgyzstan reflected a sort of "generic" Kyrgyz style that was saturating the market.

An approach adopted by some organisations was to hire designers to create designs for small carpets and cushions and assembling "craft kits" to send to home-based workers throughout the country to assemble for a small fee. "The full-time salaried staff prepare the felt, choose the colors, and cut out the pieces according to pre-determined standard sizes and designs."¹⁵ While this model assured that the products conformed to certain standards, it tended to contribute to the market saturation of a generic Kyrgyz style of

14 Ritu Sethi, Celia Duque Duque and Indrasen Vencatachellum. eds. *Designers Meet Artisans: A Practical Guide*, UNESCO, Craft Revival Trust and Artesanias de Colombia S.A. New Delhi, 2005.

15 Anne-Laure Py, op.cit., p.3.

Kyrgyz have been making wool felt the same way for centuries. It is a labour-intensive communal activity which involves many members of a family or community at different stages of production. The Kyrgyz have used felt to make many things including their portable homes (called yurts or in Kyrgyz 'bozui').





Yurts have been a consistent part of Kyrgyz life for over two thousand years. It is not known which of the nomadic tribes originally conceived of this unique residential design but it has become a national symbol for the Kyrgyz and an important part of the Kyrgyz cultural heritage.



There are two main types of felt carpets created in Kyrgyzstan, the 'shyrdak' and the 'ala kiyiz'. A detail of a shyrdak is depicted above. These are pieced together, embellished and quilted to create a strong surface design



Surface design is created in the ala kiyiz style of carpet before it is felted. Coloured wool is carefully placed on to the surface of the loose wool fleece before it is felted resulting in a looser, more “painterly” effect as can be seen in the image above.

felt product and reduced the artisans to “skilled labourers” rather than designers in their own right.

In the last decade, a number of similar “design interventions” have taken place in developing countries in an effort to support handicraft production and economic development. While these types of “interventions” provide a source of income, they do very little to support the locals to design and develop their own products. “The purpose [...] should be to inspire artisans to undertake their own innovations further, not stunt them into passive replication.”¹⁶

Other initiatives, saw designers putting their skills to use to preserve craft traditions. This second type of intervention describes the nature of my project among the Kyrgyz and is what I had hoped to achieve through my research.

In the following chapters I will describe how the project evolved and changed over the last two years. As you will discover, the aim of my project, changed somewhat from initially being about documenting traditional felt-making and developing this documentation into a resource that can be used as a reference, to a teaching tool that can support craft teachers to impart their knowledge onto younger generations while supporting younger generations to develop their own skills. The changes in direction came about as a result of learning more about the subject, my experiences, my design efforts and subsequent reflection.

In Chapter 1: Documentation, I discuss the original aim of my project, which was the documentation of various aspects of designing and producing traditional felt carpets. I include a brief discussion of the ethical considerations I had to work through before my trip to Kyrgyzstan and the problems and issues that came about while I was carrying out my documentation efforts. Finally, I discuss what I learned to be the limitations of documentation as a tool for learning and preserving traditional crafts.

Chapter 2: Initial Experiments looks at some of the alternative learning media I investigated through design to try and address some of the aspects of felt making that I felt I had not been able to capture through documentation alone. I tried a number of different approaches to the problem with limited success.

¹⁶ Sethi, Duque Duque and Vencatachellum. eds. op.cit., p. 8.

In Chapter 3: Learning Traditional Crafts I looked at how crafts are traditionally learned both in general and in Kyrgyz culture and examine this style of learning from different instructional and educational theory. This leads me to the idea that learning must involve social interaction and hands-on experience and gave me some new criteria for my design. At this point in the project my aim changed from developing a reference tool for learners to a tool that can be used to support teachers to effectively share their knowledge with younger learners.

Chapter 4: Samplers is the chapter which describes the design experiment I felt was most appropriate and effective for teaching and learning traditional felt techniques and design elements. I looked at examples of how samplers have been used historically for the purposes of teaching and learning as well as how they have been used for the production of carpets. I go on to discuss the process of making my own sampler and evaluating its effectiveness as a potential teaching and learning tool.

Finally, in my conclusion I sum up what I have learned and share some of the conclusions I came to as a result of this project. I also discuss briefly possible future directions for this project and make some recommendations for others considering a design-based intervention involving artisans from developing communities.

CHAPTER I

Documentation

“There is an imperative need to research, analyse, categorize and document craft traditions so that this knowledge can be accessible to a wider audience.” - UNESCO

Preservation Through Documentation

As a designer I felt it was important that the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative had access to documentation of the techniques, patterns, designs and motifs that were unique to the Issyk Kul region to help them develop their own designs that reflected the unique culture and history of their region.

I read many documents prior to my visit to Kyrgyzstan which indicated that documentation was very important to the preservation and revitalisation of traditional crafts. For example, a joint publication between UNESCO, Craft Revival Trust and Artesanias de Colombia explained why documentation was important for craft-based economic development initiatives in developing countries:

Several among those involved with revitalizing crafts, especially languishing ones, insist, and rightly so, that documents and monographs on crafts are an invaluable reference source-necessary for the development of crafts, for preserving memories, and for protecting copyright. They see as critical the need for motifs, designs and techniques to be documented and made accessible to more users.¹⁷

In another document UNESCO stated that "there is an imperative need to research, analyse, categorize and document craft traditions so that this knowledge can be accessible to a wider audience."¹⁸ and recommended that:

Design consultants or designers should be hired to collect the designs and patterns from around the country or region that depict the art, culture and styles of the location. A national bibliography recording the arts and crafts of the country should be formed to preserve the designs, which are part of the cultural heritage of the nation. This would serve as a development tool for the handicrafts sector and protect the cultural heritage for future generations.¹⁹

Having worked in indigenous art and craft galleries and social history museums for many years, I understood the importance of preserving these forms of cultural expression. I

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6..

¹⁹ Noëlla Richard, *Handicrafts and Employment Generation for the Poorest youth and Women*, Policy Paper, UNESCO Inter-sectoral Programme on the Cross-Cutting Theme "Poverty Eradication, Especially Extreme Poverty", UNESCO, Paris, 2007. p. 37.



Initially, I planned to document every aspect of the design and production of traditional felt carpets to use as a basis for the development of an educational resource that the Kyrgyz artisans could use as a reference tool.

had some experience documenting museum artifacts but I had never documented the process of making a traditional craft. Fortunately, the process of preparing my Massey University Human Ethics Application led me to some helpful publications which will be discussed later in this chapter.

Ethical considerations

In order to get permission to carry out my research in Kyrgyzstan, I had to complete a Massey University Human Ethic Application. The application had to provide detailed information about what I planned to do and how I planned to do it. (This application is included in the Appendix.)

The ethics process required that I clearly define my research methods and define exactly what I intended to document, and explain how this would be recorded, stored and subsequently disposed of. The application procedure also required that I demonstrate a level of cultural awareness about the cultures I was seeking to involve in my research.

In order to learn more about Kyrgyz culture I read several publications about Kyrgyzstan's history and culture. I also spoke with Canadian researchers who had lived in the Issyk Kul region of Kyrgyzstan for several months while developing and implementing the IK-BREED project. Because their project was connected with a university, they had to complete an ethic application (which they shared with me) and they highlighted issues that I might encounter as part of my research project. The Canadian researchers also briefed me on Kyrgyz customs and what they consider to be good manners so that I could be sure not to offend my Kyrgyz hosts.

I also corresponded regularly via email with one of the Kyrgyz partners in the IK-BREED project Mr. Talasbek Mukach Uulu (hereby referred to as Talas) president of the Issyk Kul Artists' Union who also supplied me with a report he and Mrs. Gulnara Kydyrmysheva (hereby referred to as Gulnara) head of the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative, wrote after their trip to Canada in 2006 which contained explanations of their objectives in

establishing the cooperative and what they hoped to achieve in the future. He also provided me with a formal letter of invitation which I needed in order to obtain a visa to enter Kyrgyzstan.

It was important to ensure that the research was understood and welcomed and produce evidence of consultation with the community in which I would be conducting my research. I had to and explain how the subjects would be informed about the project and given the option to refuse or place limits on their participation. My discussions with the Canadian researchers made me aware of how culturally inappropriate some of the Massey University ethics processes were (at least for research involving Kyrgyz participants). For example, they told me about the Kyrgyz's reluctance to sign papers (such as participant consent forms) as they tend to associate such documents with government for whom they have a deep mistrust. They also made me aware of the low literacy among some of the villagers and the inability of some Kyrgyz to read and understand Russian (the language I had my project information sheets translated into).

I realised that in order to comply with the ethics requirements of my university, and reassure the Kyrgyz participants, I would have to come up with a compromise. Fortunately, the marketing workshop I planned to conduct for the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative would provide me with an opportunity to explain my research (via Talas who translated) and answer any questions they might have as well as gaining their verbal consent (also translated and witnessed by Talas). This arrangement was acceptable to the ethics committee.

Preparing this information made me think critically about the time frames I had to work in, the limitations I would encounter due to language and cultural differences and how I would have to adapt my project to manage these issues.

Documenting Disappearing Cultures

As mentioned earlier, all the publications I had looked at regarding the preservation of craft traditions highlighted the need for these craft traditions to be documented but few had provided any clear guidelines about how this should be done. In an attempt to find some helpful information about this process, I looked at some early examples of the use of photography and film to document traditional cultures. This eventually led me to discover some helpful resources from the field of visual anthropology.

The disappearance of cultures has been a concern since the early 20th century when many anthropologists shared a belief that “primitive” cultures would disappear as an inevitable result of cultural assimilation and progress. “Salvage Anthropology” came about as a method of capturing a civilization or people’s former way of living before it disappeared. Anthropologists, amateur researchers and other scholars traded, purchased and even stole cultural artifacts from indigenous societies around the world in order to ensure their preservation and safekeeping.²⁰

A somewhat less destructive approach to this concern for cultural loss was the use of photography and film to record for posterity the ways of life of societies assumed to be doomed to extinction. Two notable figures in these early documentation efforts include Edward Sherriff Curtis (1868 – 1952), an American photographer and Robert Flaherty (1884 – 1951) an American ethnographic filmmaker. Both men worked at a time when the romantic notion of the “noble savage” was popular and of great interest among academics and general society alike.

Edward Curtis took over 40,000 images during his career as well as recording the stories and history of the tribes, creating biographical sketches of some of their tribal leaders and describing various aspects of their daily lives from food to funeral customs. However he was criticised for “staging” many of his photographs.

In the early 1920s Robert Flaherty filmed *Nanook of the North* which was an attempt to portray the life of the Inuit people of the far north. His film showed the world a way of life, very little of them would have ever had the opportunity to see. Flaherty’s intentions

²⁰ Douglas Cole, *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts*, University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 1995.

Edward Curtis photographed over 80 Native American tribes during the first part of the 20th century. Though his intent was to capture the way of life of these peoples, Curtis has been criticised for “staging” many of his photographs - removing all evidence of western culture such as wristwatches or spectacles.



Early filmmakers like Robert Flaherty attempted to present other cultures in a narrative format more for the benefit of an audience than accurate portrayal but were just as guilty of taking “artistic liberties” in their portrayal. Flaherty used actors and staged some scenes of the “documentary” Nanook of the North.





"Navajo girls learn first to weave by observation"
Photo by John Collier Jr. 1948

were to entertain rather than inform. His work “combined documentary subjects with fiction-like narrative and poetic treatment.” But was not always historically or culturally accurate.

The work of these two men influenced academics and led to the development of an entirely new field of anthropology. By the 1940s academics became interested in photography and film as a research methods. Margaret Mead suggested that note-taking was an inadequate way of recording behaviour and ritual activity and that recording these would allow for greater analysis and reanalysis of data. In the 1950s this type of research became known as visual anthropology.

Visual anthropology is a sub-field of cultural anthropology that involves the study and production of ethnographic photography, film and new media. Visual Anthropology is also concerned with the anthropological study of visual representation including, among other things, the production of arts and crafts by specific cultures.

John A. Collier, Jr. was an American anthropologist who wrote the first textbook in the field of Visual Anthropology in 1967. A subsequent revised edition *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method* was produced with his son Malcolm who was also an anthropologist. Collier documented Native American cultures for many years and tried to take a holistic view of a particular culture, using their environment, customs and traditions as subject matter. He believed that a lot could be learned about a culture through their visual representation. This challenged the predominant anthropological beliefs of the time, which were that theory and conceptualization were the only legitimate ways to analyse a culture.

When preparing for my research trip to Kyrgyzstan I consulted the Colliers’ book in order to better understand what aspects of the craft traditions I should be documenting. John A. Collier, Jr. and Malcolm Colliers’ “Scheme of Observation” listed the following elements as being essential:

- Environmental location of the [craft] technology
- Raw materials in the shop
- Tools of the trade: An inventory of technology
- How the tools are used

- How a craft proceeds
- Conclusion of the process
- The Function of the [craft] technology
- Social Structure in Technology ²¹

While the Collier's "Scheme of Observation" was helpful in identifying what to document, it was written from an anthropological perspective. The purpose of documentation from their perspective was to analyse and understand a particular culture through their crafts and the processes and interactions that took place during the production of these crafts.

I was still somewhat unclear as to how this documentation should be carried out. Fortunately there were guidelines available such as UNESCO's *Working Draft Guidelines to Document the Process of Producing Traditional Crafts* which claimed that if these guidelines were followed, "the reader should be able to document a craft in such a way that it provides clear insight into the processes involved in their production, so that, if required, it can be revived in the same social and cultural context in which it has thrived and is now dying out"²². This was an exciting breakthrough in my research as these were the only guidelines I could find that were for the specific purpose of reviving a craft.

The UNESCO document *Working Draft: Guidelines to Document the Process of Producing Traditional Crafts* was created to guide development workers and those involved in cultural conservation in how to document traditional crafts. The authors proposed that documentation be compiled into what was essentially two documents that could be used in conjunction with one another. The documents are described below:

1. **Technical Manual:** The first document UNESCO recommended was a technical manual (referred to as a "cook book") which included information about sourcing and preparing the raw material, and the techniques and rituals of making the craft.
2. **Style book:** The second document was a visual reference tool they referred to as an artistic stylebook containing images of motifs, patterns, colours, and information about their symbolic meanings.

These guidelines proposed that photographic or video documentation be obtained about

²¹ John A. Collier Jr. & Malcolm Collier *Visual Anthropology: Photography as Research Method*, Revised and Expanded Edition, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, 1986.

²² Anupam Sah, *Guidelines to Document the Process of Producing Traditional Crafts: Cultural Survival and Revival in the Buddhist Sanga: Documentation, Education and Training to Revitalize Traditional decorative Arts and Building Crafts in the Buddhist Temples of Asia*. UNESCO Bangkok, 2007, p.6.

the following aspects of the craft:

- Preparation of the products
- Process/Technique
- Materials
- Tools
- Actors
- Rituals/practices associated with the craft
- Calendar of craft production
- Problems about the craft production

This list of aspects of craft production bore striking similarities to those recommended by the Colliers.

I read these documents carefully and considered the contents in relation to my planned documentation project in Kyrgyzstan. It was clear that the UNESCO guidelines were written for projects with a much larger scope, time line and budget than my project. However, I was able to adapt these guidelines to my intended purpose and took from them only what was most relevant to the aims of my project.

When I travelled to Kyrgyzstan my aim was to record all the relevant documentation so that I would be able to create my own “technical manual” and “style book” according to the UNESCO Guidelines. However, when I arrived in the country, it did not take long to realise that this process was not going to be as straightforward as I initially anticipated. Despite all my prior research and careful preparation, there were a number of issues and obstacles that I had to overcome in order to successfully carry out my documentation project. These made me consider whether it was really appropriate for an outsider to be carrying out the task of documenting these traditional crafts.

"I come from a long line of crafts people who have all become masters of their trade. Traditional skills and knowledge have been passed through my family for many generations. My family has worked hard to ensure the preservation of proper ways and techniques. I never went to school - not one class - but I am fortunate to know what I know. Because I am the oldest, it is my job to keep the traditions. My husband is already dead. I don't know what will happen after I die. I don't want this knowledge to die with me. I want to spread the knowledge and pass it on to many people."

- Onol Matanova
Nationally acclaimed
Master yurt maker



Documenting Kyrgyz Crafts

When I arrived in Kyrgyzstan, my guide had already prepared an itinerary of artisan visits for me. Each day we travelled to the studios or work spaces of different artisans to conduct interviews and carry out photo and video documentation of their work and processes. I visited carvers, embroiderers, makers of Chiy screens (decorative screens made from wool-covered reeds), hat makers, saddle makers, makers of musical instruments and many different types of felt-makers. Many of them echoed the UNESCO claim that there is an imperative need to preserve these traditions and share them with others. I chose to focus my documentation efforts on the process of making wool felt and the various designs patterns and motifs used in felt carpets. I believed this was one of the most important skills to try to preserve as it was the basis for the construction of yurts, and both *ala kiyiz* and *shyrdak* style of carpets as well as numerous felt handicrafts.

I followed the UNESCO guidelines as closely as possible when I was documenting the felt-making process believing that the resulting documentation would provide the insight and technical knowledge as UNESCO claimed in the *Working Draft: Guidelines to Document the Process of Producing Traditional Crafts*. I paid careful attention to the most important aspects of the craft production, resisting the urge to take “beautiful pictures.” Unlike Curtis and his filmmaking counterpart Flaherty, I tried to see my camera and video recorder purely as research tools. With the exception of a few posed “group photos” for posterity, I tried to focus exclusively on the processes and design elements of the traditional crafts hoping that I would be able to put these together later into resources similar to the “technical manual” and “style guide” described in the UNESCO guidelines.

Initially, I remained uninvolved, an observer there only to record the processes and crafts in front of me. I tried not to interfere with the process and kept my questions for after the craft was completed. This approach seemed to reflect some early anthropological methods of research but it was not proving to be the most appropriate way to go about it in this particular situation.

I quickly learned that the artisans were not interested in sharing their crafts in this way. I was frequently invited to put down the camera and participate in the making. In order to



Altubek Madambekov, the matriarch and manager of the family felt-making business (not pictured here), works with her son, daughter, daughter-in-law, and several other local ladies. These ladies have specialist skills, for example, some are better at 'ornament' (laying out and planning the design). Each family member knows each others' job and can fill in if someone gets busy. "Men is important, but only as helpers," she told me, "the women do most of the work".

achieve the documentation goals at the same time, I made arrangements for my guide to take some photographs while I experienced hands-on learning from the masters.

This approach seemed to please the artisans much more as they seemed to appreciate the inter-personal contact and welcomed my assistance with the various tasks. The more senior artisans seemed to be very pleased when I learned the particular skill they had shown me. I was always encouraged to go on to do more and everyone came to look at my work and expressed their approval.

I spent a day with the Madambekov family who allowed me to document their felt-making process from start to finish. The family were making a large *ala kiyiz* carpet for the upcoming marriage of one of their young daughters. I was invited to get involved and was even asked to write my name in wool as part of the carpet design. At first I was reluctant to ruin their design by writing my name but my translator explained to me that the matriarch of the family was very religious and believed I was sent there by God to bring good luck to the bride to be.

I noticed that throughout the process the family would laugh and tease one another. It was explained to me that because this particular carpet was for the daughter she was being especially picky about the quality of the workmanship and the older women joked that it would be great if she could be so careful about the quality of all their carpets. I asked the family whether they enjoyed working together. They explained that they currently make 7 -8 carpets each day and sometimes they get angry with one another but the outcome of the carpet depends on how the people making it feel, if they are in a good mood, or if they are tired or not in the right state of mind the carpet will reflect this.

Limitations of Documentation

When I returned home I had an opportunity to reflect on my experience and analyse the documentation I had recorded.

Trying to document a traditional craft in three weeks as an outsider was a challenge. I had to rely on Talas, my guide and interpreter from the Issyk Kul Artists Union to arrange





visits and prepare an itinerary before I arrived in the country. Talas had contacts within the arts community, but did not personally know many master felt-makers in the region. He had to rely heavily on friends and acquaintances to make the initial contacts and introductions. Because some of the felt-makers were still living in yurts in remote locations, they could not be contacted by phone to set up visits. Travel to and from these locations could take several hours, which meant that in some cases, we had to cut our visits short and were unable to document the process from start to finish.

Kyrgyz custom requires that a host provide refreshments (most often this consisted of bread, cream, fruit jam, lollies, vegetables and tea). It would be considered extremely rude not to accept these refreshments (even though we may have already visited two or three other artisans that day). The exchange of hospitality and goodwill could take hours which always cut our actual documentation time short. It was always a very difficult task to leave politely after the documentation and interviews had concluded as many of the families wanted show us hospitality by offering to slaughter a sheep and prepare a feast



reserving the most prized parts (often this would be the brains and eyeballs) for the honoured guest.

Something that I had neglected to consider when preparing for my documentation trip was the fact that the artisans might be interested in learning more about me and the place where I live. It never occurred to me that a visitor from far away would be so interesting to them. The artisans wanted a personal connection with the person they were sharing their knowledge with most likely because they had a personal connection with those who had originally taught them. I regretted not having photographs of my home and samples of my own felt artwork to share with my hosts as I believe these would have strengthened our connection with one another and perhaps stimulated more in-depth discussions. I had become so focussed on my project and trying to stick to the plan that I forgot it was ok to ask questions other than what was on my ethics application and talk about myself instead of just my project. I suspect this was partly due to the very short time frame I had to do for my documentation and my fear of not accomplishing what I needed to before I had to return to New Zealand.

While Talas was an excellent translator, certain textile-specific terms (such as “fulling” which is the process of hardening the felt) were not part of his vocabulary in any of the languages he spoke so there were occasions where the artisan had to describe the process so that he would understand the meaning of the word and then he would have to repeat the description back to me. Neither the artisans or myself had prior experience communicating via a translator and in our enthusiasm we sometimes spoke too long and in too much detail for Talas to accurately translate. He sometimes had to summarize what was said and I suspected some important information might have been left out. The interviews and interaction would have been much easier if we had been able to speak a common language. Fortunately, I had significant prior knowledge and experience of the felt-making process to be able to understand what the artisans were trying to demonstrate or communicate and knew what aspects of the craft were important to photograph.

Reflecting on my experiences carry out the documentation made me suspect that any documentation project that is reliant on outsiders would have similar issues. UNESCO in the *Working Draft: Guidelines to Document the Process of Producing Traditional Crafts* recommended that there should be a member of the “documentation team” who could communicate in the local language, and advised that the team should familiarize them-

selves with the craft. But my experience made me realize that it might be more effective to train the artisans to carry out their own documentation efforts.

The documentation I took was extremely thorough (over 1000 photographs and 8 hours of video), yet when I managed to get the images down to a reasonable number and arranged them sequentially as suggested in the UNESCO guidelines, they still did not reflect the aspects of the craft that I had come to realise were most important.

In particular, the following important aspects of craft production seemed to be more difficult to capture and convey through documentation alone:

- touching and experiencing the materials
- learning the exact movements and motions
- the length of time a step in the process should take or how often it should be repeated
- the stories about the meanings and the origins of motifs and the lessons to be learned from them
- how the overall design was developed and how elements were chosen and incorporated
- the social contexts such as who did certain tasks and the social interactions that took place throughout the process.

I realized that these important aspects of craft production could not be transmitted through a visual and/or written document and wondered whether other forms of instructional materials could be more effective.

Many of the key aspects of the craft process that I had identified as being important seemed to be aspects that could be experienced but not necessarily represented visually. "Learning is not simply something that a person does. It is a process that occurs in a specific context with physical, social and cultural parameters that affect the learning process."²³

23 C.Jill Minar and Patricia L. Crown, 'Learning and Craft Production', the *Journal of Anthropological Research*, Vol. 57, No.4, The University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, 2001. pp. 369-380



Touch & Materials



Motif & Meaning



Movement & Motion



Design Elements



Time & Repetition



Social Context & Interaction





MAKING FELT IN KYRGYZSTAN

BEGIN WITH SHEEP'S WOOL-



SHE USES THE
STICK TO FLUFF
UP THE WOOL

TOGETHER THEY SPREAD THE WOOL OVER THE CHI MAT



WOOL MUST BE SPREAD
EVENLY WITH NO HOLES

USE HANDS
TO SPIN
WOOL FOR
THE
DESIGN--



CAREFULLY LAY OUT THE PATTERN



FLATTEN THE
WOOL BY
STEPPING
LIGHTLY OVER
THE SURFACE



THEN
SPRINKLE
THE SURFACE
WITH VERY
HOT WATER

CHAPTER II

Initial Experiments

“A process is most easily taught when it is wrapped in an interesting package.”²⁴

– Will Eisner

²⁴ Will Eisner, *Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative: Principles and Practices from the Legendary Cartoonist*, W.W. Norton & Company Inc., New York, 2008, p.18.

Engaging with Instructional Media

If the goal of documentation is, as UNESCO stated, “to provide clear insight into the processes involved in a craft’s development”²⁵ so it can be revived if (or when) it dies out, this suggests there is an instructional objective to the documentation. How else could a group of people expect to revive a craft tradition that has died out?

At this point the aim of my project changed as I was not convinced that the “technical manual” and “stylebook” recommended by UNESCO would be sufficient for communicating the key aspects I had identified in the previous chapter (see page 52 - 53). I realised that I needed to spend some time investigating possible forms of instructional media that might be appropriate for transmitting and preserving the information I had gathered in my documentation efforts.

Because my career in instructional design was primarily in public galleries and museums, industry, I was mainly responsible for creating learning experiences that helped visitors engage more fully with the exhibits and gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for the artifacts that were on display. Unlike most traditional (passive) instruction, my mandate was to actively engage visitors through the instructional process.

Fortunately there was research within the field that I was able to draw on. Dr. Deborah Perry of the American Museums Association created a model for museums to help institutions make learning fun, satisfying and successful for visitors. Her model was based on research conducted by Stanford University researchers into fun and motivating instruction. Dr. Perry’s model identifies the following components as being essential for satisfying and successful learning in an institution setting:

- **Curiosity:** Surprise and intrigue the visitor.
- **Confidence:** Help visitors feel safe and smart.
- **Challenge:** Encourage visitors to do or learn something new.
- **Control:** Help visitors feel “in charge”.
- **Play:** Encourage playfulness and sensory exploration.
- **Communication:** Stimulate meaningful conversations ²⁶

²⁵ Anupam Sah, op.cit., p.6.

²⁶ Selinda Research Associates, *What Makes Learning Fun?* 2007 Selinda Research Associates Inc., retrieved 28 July 2010, <<http://www.selindaresearch.com/learning.htm>>.

This model supported a more experiential way of learning that I believed would be more appropriate for learning about craft traditions. When considering potential design possibilities, I made sure to keep these components in mind.

I also established other criteria to help me assess potential learning media. For example, it would have to employ appropriate technology that could be easily accessed by Kyrgyz locals living in remote rural areas. This immediately eliminated any digital or video media as some of the target audience would not have had access to power. The media would have to be able to be produced using locally available materials and inexpensively.

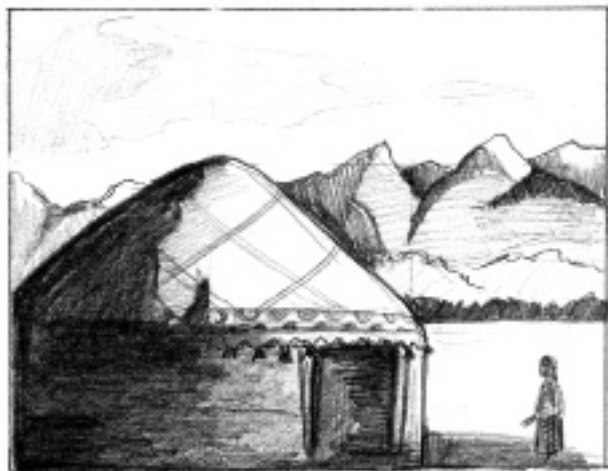
Most importantly the learning media would have to be something that the locals could produce themselves. Previous participation in design-based international development projects had taught me the importance of building the capacity within developing communities to create their own solutions – not to provide one for them. I did not believe that I could provide the Kyrgyz with a “ready-made solution” to prevent the loss of their traditions. But I did feel I could offer some creative approaches to the issue and provide them with some design prototypes that they could adapt to suit their purposes.

In order for any development initiative to be sustainable, it cannot rely completely on outside “experts”. Locals need to have input into the design and development of their own solutions. This is not only empowering but means that they can repeat the process when faced with other similar problems.

I initially explored a number of different media and considered their potential as instructional resources. Several were dismissed because they did not meet the above criteria or because they required specialist skills to produce. When testing out the different media, I focused on different stages of the felt-making process. For example, the process of rolling the carpet once it had been felted.

In the following pages I describe some of these experiments and some background about the different media I experimented with and how they have been used in the past for instructional purposes. I have also provided some images of both existing examples of these media and my own experiments and designs.

Early in the project, I began organising my video recordings of the felt making process into a short instructional video. I created a storyboard to help me clarify which shots I wanted to include. I eventually dismissed the idea of a video because I suspected the technology would not be accessible for many of the target audience (the rural Kyrgyz women artisans) but the sequential images led me to contemplate the possibility of an instructional comic.



TESTIMONY CONTEXT: THIS MIGHT BE A DESCRIPTION OF THE LOCATION WHERE THE CRAFT ORIGINATES AND/OR SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS CRAFT IN A PARTICULAR COMMUNITY.



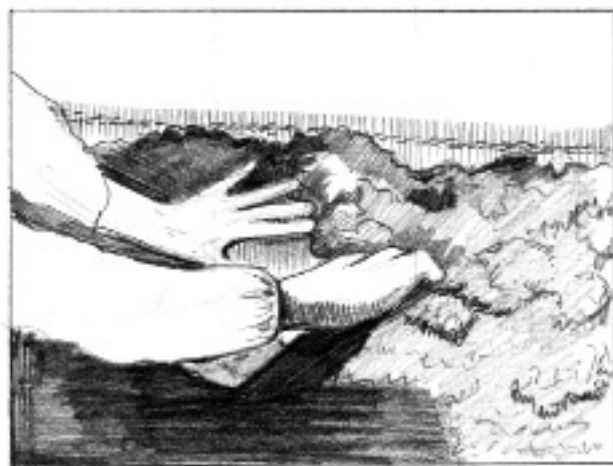
PREPARATION OF TOOLS AND/OR WORKSPACE: MAY INCLUDE TIME OF DAY, WORK ENVIRONMENT, ANY TOOLS OR EQUIPMENT



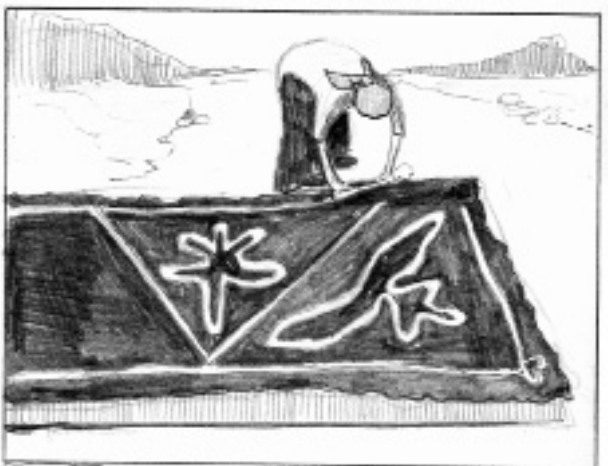
RAW MATERIALS: WHERE THE RAW MATERIALS ARE SOURCED, ANY ASSOCIATED TOOLS, AND MAY ALSO REQUIRE EXPLANATION ABOUT WHAT TIME OF THE YEAR IT IS COLLECTED.



PREPARATION OF RAW MATERIALS: HOW THE RAW MATERIALS ARE PROCESSED OR MANIPULATED IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO USE TO CREATE THE CRAFT, TOOLS USED TO PREPARE RAW MATERIALS INTRODUCED



STEP 1 THE FIRST STEP IN THE PRODUCTION PROCESS



STEP 2 THE NEXT STEP IN THE PROCESS

Instructional Comics

While I was reviewing the video recordings I had made of the felt-making process, I felt the need to edit the footage down to a manageable amount. This required that I create a storyboard of the shots I wanted to keep in the order I wanted them. The sequential images I produced as part of my storyboard were similar to the images I had initially arranged of the photographs to make up my “technical manual” as per the UNESCO guidelines (see pages 42 - 43). When looking at these sets of sequential images I was immediately reminded of comic books.

Will Eisner (1917 – 2005), a man who has been credited as one of the most important contributors to the development of the medium of comics assisted the American military to make their publications more appealing to young soldiers by adding a comic-style component to their Preventative Maintenance Monthly magazine which was dedicated to technical and safety policy information. In each issue, Eisner created a comic-style continuity story based upon the technical manuscripts provided to him by the army staff. The stories always featured a soldier character that ignored preventative maintenance of his vehicles or equipment and learned his lesson in the end.²⁷

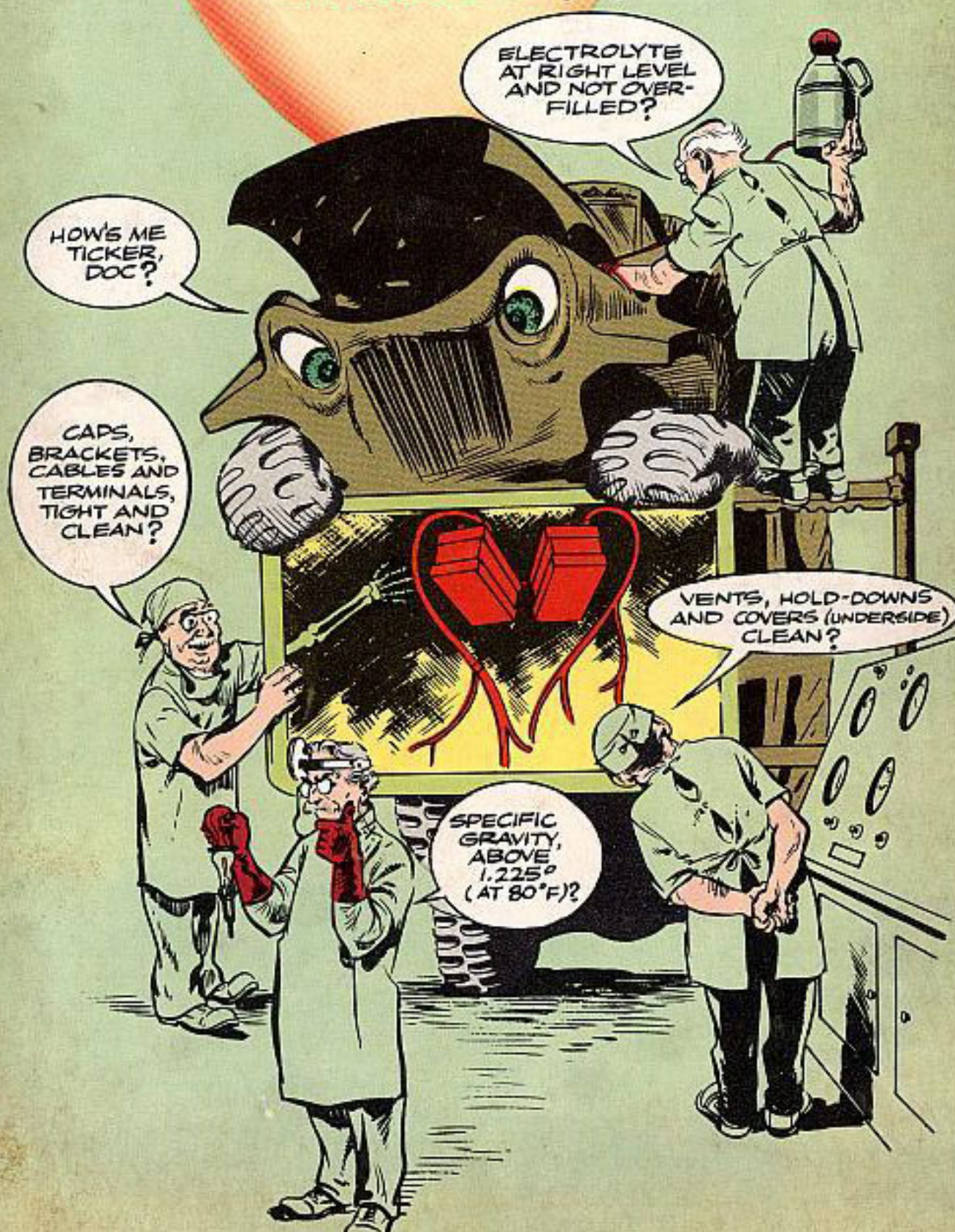
Today the medium of comics is being used to further international development efforts by organisations such as World Comics-Finland, founded by comics artists and aid activists in 1997. World Comics-Finland helps NGOs and developing communities to create comics “as a mirror of culture, as an information tool in development and human rights work and to help small and alternative groups to use comics as a tool for self expression.”²⁸ A large part of their work involved delivering workshops in developing communities teaching locals how to write, illustrate and produce comics themselves. I felt this medium could be a good possibility for communicating both the important information about the processes and techniques of felt-making, while adding some interest through the introduction of characters and dialogue.

My first experiment involved the use of the photographs I had taken while in Kyrgyzstan. Using free software I downloaded from the internet, I was able to alter the images to make them look more like illustrations (like the effect you get with “posterize” feature

27 Virginia Commonwealth University Library Digital Collections, *Welcome to PS Magazine, the Preventative Maintenance Monthly Collection* Virginia Commonwealth University, Retrieved 14 August 2010 <http://dig.library.vcu.edu/cdm4/index_psm.php?CISOROOT+%2Fpsm>

28 Leif Packalén, *Wallposter Comics – A Great Campaign Tool for NGOs*, World Comics –Finland , Helsinki, 2004. p.2.

your **BATTERY...**
the **heart** of your vehicle



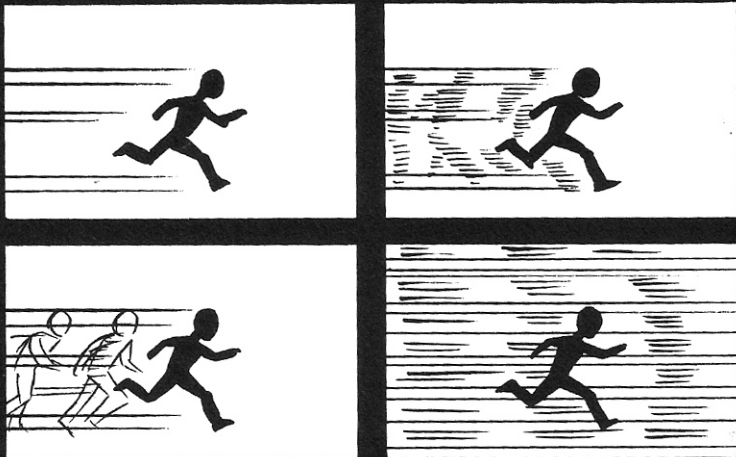
According to World Comics Finland, comics that tell stories from local cultures in local languages give insights into how these communities look at their issues and the world. World Comics Finland arranges exhibitions of such comics - mainly for distribution in Europe - hoping that, by showing comics and cartoons from different parts of the world, new insights into other cultures will be discovered. Often these comics show how people, with humour, can cope - even in difficult circumstances.



PREVENÇÃO DA MALÁRIA



Júlia Vivaldo
BPF-Maquina



Comics have a visual language that most people can understand. While the text of the comics provide some information, the images are just as informative. Comics' visual language can communicate movement, the passage of time, and sound. I believed that some of the key elements of the felt-making process could be depicted more effectively if I could use these visual elements to communicate them.



in Photoshop). The software had a range of layout templates that you could insert your images into. There was also a range of comic fonts and different styles of word balloons to choose from. You could also choose from a range of title fonts and special effects like star bursts. When I tried to create a test page, I found that the images became very dark and the composition of the photographs did not allow much space for word balloons or captions. (see page 50). I decided I would get better results drawing the comic myself and as the Kyrgyz would be unlikely to have access to the software to create their own comics, a hand-drawn example would be more appropriate.

I looked at the images I took of Kyrgyzstan for inspiration and looked at some Tin Tin comics to try and imitate Hergé's popular style. Tin Tin has been translated into 50 languages and is sold in countries around the world so I thought this would be a look that would both appeal to the Kyrgyz and also be understood by them.

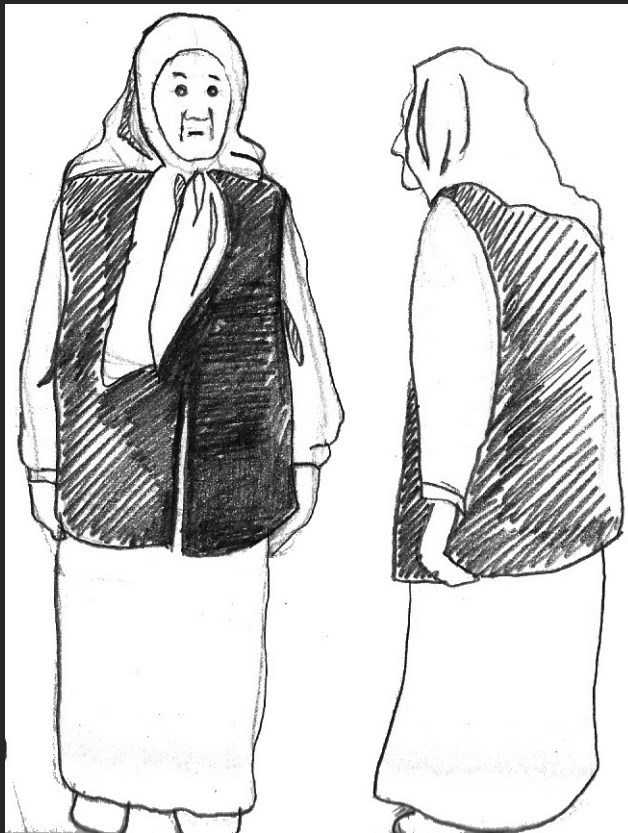
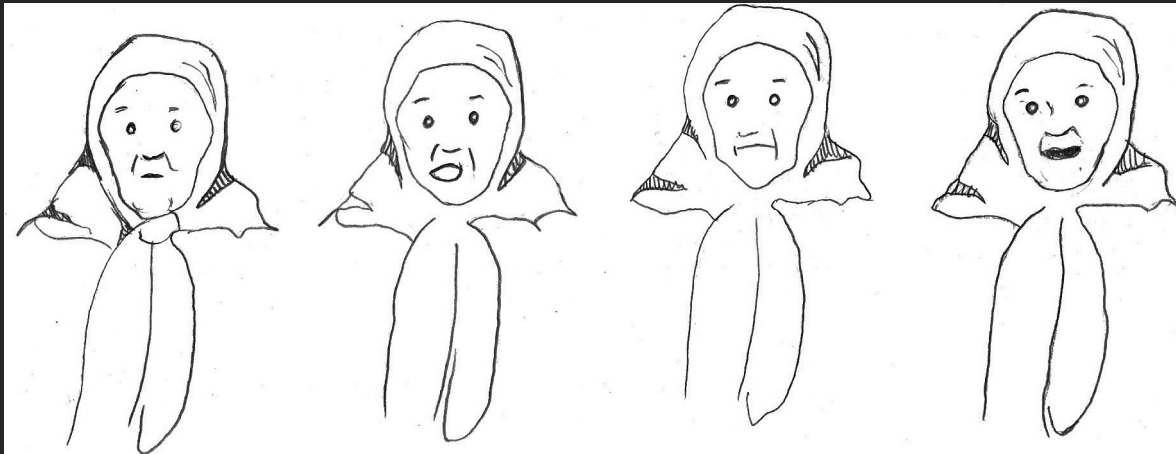
I created a character based on the elderly Kyrgyz women I had met on my visit. I did some practice sketches to be able to confidently draw her in many different poses and facial expressions. What I liked about the idea of a narrator character is that she could explain the steps in the processes that were illustrated, providing her own tips and insights along the way. She could be the storyteller providing the background information about the origins of particular motifs or designs.

Comics are cheap to produce and easy to distribute, however a certain amount of skill is still required to create effective comics and I was unsure that the Kyrgyz artisans would have the drawing skills to create their own instructional comics. The examples of instructional comics created by community groups that I had seen (such as the one on page 59) seemed to rely heavily on text and were difficult to understand as the drawings difficult to interpret. I wasn't even sure that all of the target learners could read. I soon dismissed instructional comics as an option.



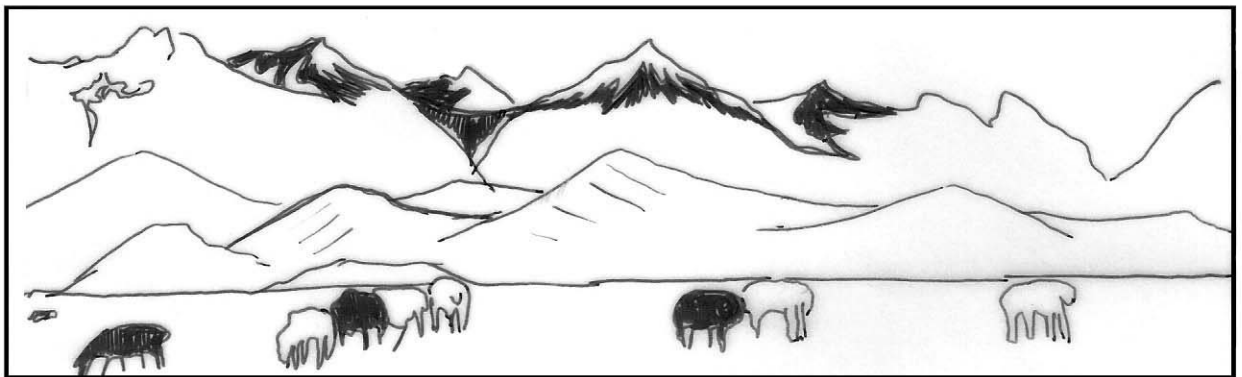
The Kyrgyz scenes I had photographed (see opposite page) had a quality that reminded me of the beautiful illustrations in Tin Tin comics.





I decided to try and create a character based on the Kyrgyz master artisans I had met on my research trip to Kyrgyzstan. In addition to being the narrator of the story (and explaining each stage of the process) the character of the master felt-maker could also convey important tips about the process, convey stories of the origins and meanings of motifs within her speech bubbles and interact with the other characters (her felt-making assistants) in an authentic way.

If a character doesn't look the same in every frame of the comic, it can confuse the reader so it is important to practice drawing the character in different poses and with different facial expressions.



THE BEST QUALITY
WOOL COMES FROM
SHEEP LIVING HIGH
IN THE MOUNTAINS.



SOMETIMES THE WOOL IS CUT FROM
THE SHEEP TWICE A YEAR. THE FIRST
CUT WHICH IS DONE IN THE SPRING
IS THE BEST WOOL TO USE. THIS WILL
MAKE THE BEST QUALITY FELT.

Representing Movement

When I was drawing during the instructional comic book experiment I found myself frequently returning to my videos and watching a particular movement frame by frame to better understand what I was seeing slowing the movement down and by breaking it down into steps.

I became very interested in ways that the complex movements of the Kyrgyz felt-making process could be represented. Body motion is an important aspect of learning a traditional craft. Many researchers have identified the process of becoming familiar with a particular movement or motion as being essential to learning the process of producing a craft.

To better understand actions of the process of rolling the carpet on the chiy grass matt which is how the Kyrgyz harden their carpets as part of a process known as “fulling”, I designed an articulated paper model so I could analyse the movement more carefully. Having previously analysed the video, I saw that this process was less of a rolling action than it initially appeared. In actual fact the felt makers dropped their outstretched arms heavily onto the rolled up carpet and pulled it towards them repeating this motion several times. I experimented with this articulated paper model trying to get the movement just right and did a number of sketches to see how this movement might be represented.

I also sketched some of the other important movements that are part of the felt-making process, such as the beating of the wool (see the image to the right) which is done to loosen any dirt from the wool fibres and fluff up the wool so it is easier to work with.

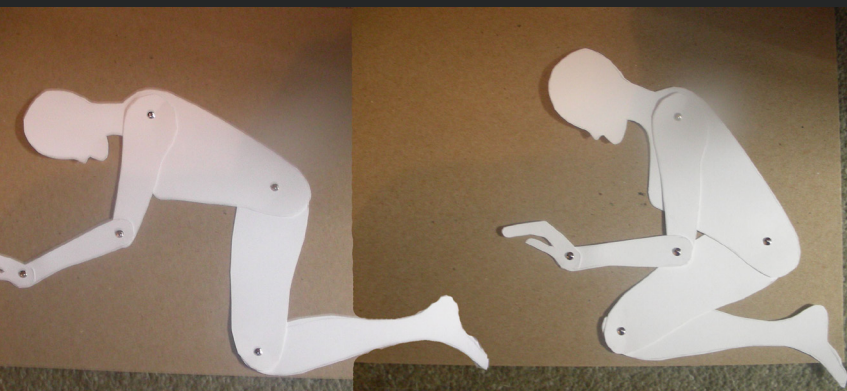
The articulated paper model made me think of the moving books I had enjoyed as a child which had various pull tabs and other mechanisms to create movement within the images on the pages. I thought this might be an effective way to represent these movements in an instructional resource. This led me to carry out further investigation into paper engineering.



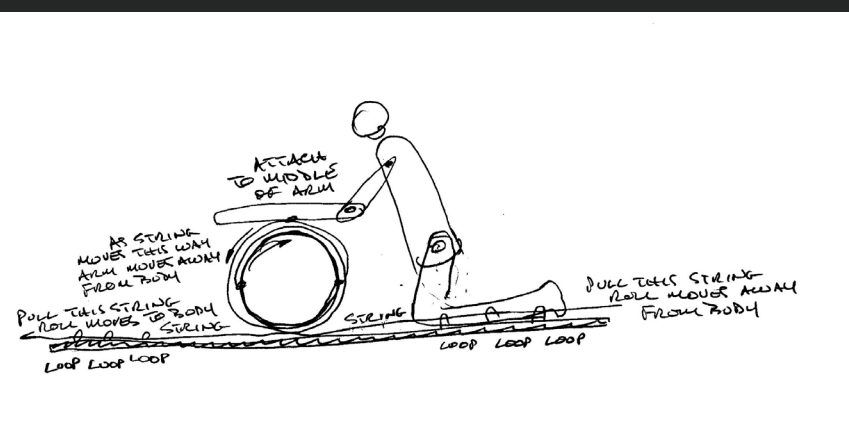
Books with movable parts have existed since as early as the 14th century. Though many (like the one depicted here) are designed for children, some have been created for the purposes of instruction and for an adult audience.







My first experiments were with an articulated paper model held together at the joints by small metal brads (split pins used for securing multiple sheets of paper together). These allowed the parts of the figure to move freely and I could move the figure into different positions.



Once I got a feel for the actual motion that was involved, I tried to figure out how this could be activated. For example, many wheels, or tabs that the reader can roll, push or pull causing the figure on the page to move. Unfortunately, my designs became increasingly complex.



Further experiments led me to conclude that the wheel was the most promising mechanism for recreating the movement I was trying to represent however it could only partially complete the motion and I struggled to find a way to combine it with a pull tab to create a smooth motion.

Paper Engineering

“Pop-up” books or books with movable parts have existed since as early as the 14th century. The books have parts such as flaps, wheels and pull tabs that have been engineered to make the images on the page move or even become three-dimensional.

Combining illustration with movement and three-dimensions has advantages for teaching traditional crafts as it can depict various stages of the process and its’ associated movement simultaneously. The reader can study the movement repeatedly and at various speeds according to how slowly or quickly she works the parts.

When researching this particular media, I started with some basic instructional books about paper engineering and making pop-up books. This provided some important basic concepts on which mechanisms can be used to create particular movements. I also sourced a number of second-hand pop-up and moving books which I took apart to get a better understanding of the construction of the mechanisms.

I found that the best way to illustrate this particular movement required a combination of the wheel and a pull tab however it was very difficult to combine these two mechanisms in a smooth motion. The experimentation that I did with paper engineering also made me realise that this is a very technical process that requires some specialist knowledge. I did not believe that this would be something the Kyrgyz artisans would have been able to produce on their own – especially without access to the resource materials that I was fortunate to have been able to find here.

Examination of the second-hand movable books (many of which were damaged) also made me realise that this is a very fragile media and repetitive use would eventually destroy the resource. Many of the moving parts were also created by die-cutting and this is normally an expensive production option as special dies would have had to be created. Depending on how many movements one wished to illustrate, this could become a very complicated and expensive process to produce, and there was also the book binding that would have to be included in this process which is another specialised skill.

I made the decision not to continue with this design.

Automata

Because the design challenge of representing movement had me intrigued, I looked to other media for ideas. I saw an image of an Egyptian funerary model on the internet that appeared to have had at least one or two moving parts. (see image on previous page). A number of carved wooden models had been found in a tomb in central Egypt including this model depicting a group of weavers. I had read about how similar funerary models had informed our current knowledge of Egyptian weaving traditions. I wondered whether a similar model might be able to communicate some aspects of the Kyrgyz felt-making process. Whether or not the parts on this particular model were movable, I had seen at least one example of an Egyptian model that did have moving parts. (see below)

This led me to investigate the unusual medium of automata - sometimes referred to as mechanical toys or kinetic art, that employ mechanical processes to simulate animal or



This Egyptian carving of a baker needing dough was found in a tomb from the time of the XII Dynasty or later. This was one of the earliest examples of what became known as Automata.



Automata was normally created for the purposes of entertainment. Numerous examples of automata were developed in Europe (and later in America) in the 1700s and throughout the 1800s.

human movement.

Jaques Vaucanson was a French engineer who sought to use this technology as an educational aid.

He like other post-renaissance engineers, was obsessed with manufacturing simulations of life that included clockwork counterparts for every biological function. In addition to correctly proportioned moving limbs, the devices would often include circulation systems constructed from rubber, and organs fashioned from leather, cork, and papier-mache.²⁹

I decided to try to design an automata to represent the Kyrgyz traditional felt-making process of kicking the rolled up wool that is wrapped in the chiy grass mat. This is the process that causes the wool fibres to felt together.

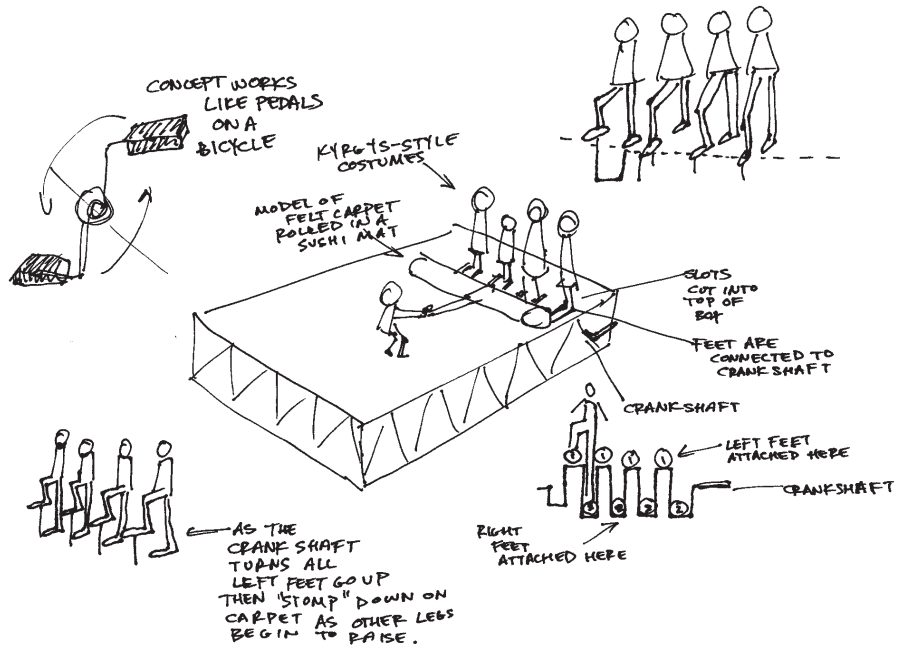
Unlike the complicated automata created by Vaucanson, this was a fairly straightforward motion. The video recordings of the Kyrgyz family kicking the rolled up carpet looked a bit like they like they were marching. Instead of a kick, the motion was more like a “stomp”. The design of bicycle pedals helped me devise s strategy for simulating this movement. I saw the way my legs and feet moved up and down as the pedals turned and

²⁹ Kyle Sherer, *The Checkered History of Automata*, Gizmag, 2008, retrieved 10 October 2010 from < <http://www.gizmag.com/history-of-automation-the-turk/10331/>> p.3.





Early automata may have been influenced by Egyptian funerary models such as this carved wooden model found in a tomb in central Egypt that belonged to the local governor and his wife who would have lived sometime around 2000 BC.



realised I needed design a similar mechanism to create the illusion of kicking/stomping the rolled up felt carpet.

Because I planned to have at least four “people” simulating this motion, I realised I needed to create the effect of numerous bicycle pedals in a row. After consulting with my father (who is an engineer) I understood that what I was describing was called a crankshaft. I created my basic crankshaft using a sturdy metal coat hanger. This was placed in a box below the “people” (which for the purposes of my first experiment were a set of miniature wooden life-drawing dummies). I lined the dummies up in a row on top of the box with slits cut into the top. The dummies feet were attached to the crank shaft which was bent in such a way that each foot would raise and lower as the crank was turned. This was a prototype created initially to get a feel for the movement and how to shape the crank shaft to get the most similar movement to what I had analysed in the videos.

I liked the natural look of the wooden box and the wooden dummies the dummies looked like a bit like robots or soldiers.

I realised that the Kyrgyz might also associate these dummies with soldiers and the message could become confused. I replaced these with a set of marionettes that I had played with as a child.

Their articulated parts easily lent themselves to the movement I was trying to create. I freed these marionettes from their strings and proceeded to re-costume them into





I knew that this would be more suitable for the Kyrgyz audience who are already familiar with toys or models being created to mimic real life. One of the felt artisans I had interviewed made small felt toys representing Kyrgyz people and their way of life. This assured me that the Kyrgyz artisans would be able to create their own figures in order to create automata of their own.



As for the mechanisms, I had seen many home-made machines that the Kyrgyz had created to mechanise some of the more labour-intensive steps in the felt-making process so I was confident they would understand the basic mechanics required to create simple automata.



more recognisably Kyrgyz clothing. After numerous adjustments to the crankshaft I was finally able to get the motion to closely resemble the kicking/stomping motion and was pleased with the aesthetics of my finished model.

Unfortunately, the automata models could only depict one process at a time so new models would have to have been built for each step in the process. While the automata gave an indication of the social context of the felt-making craft, replicated the necessary tools and the motion involved, it provided minimal insight into the felt-making process as a whole. I realised that this type of instructional resource was better suited to public institutions like museums where they could be incorporated into exhibitions and add an interactive dimension to the experience.

Though my early experiments were challenging and fun, they were limited in the scope of what information could be conveyed about traditional Kyrgyz felt-making. The more I thought about the problem, the more I felt it was impossible to create instructional resources that could replace the experience of actually learning from an experienced master and working with the materials one's self.

CHAPTER IV

Learning Traditional Crafts

“The most traditional way of learning a craft is through apprenticeship, watching a master crafts person and receiving feedback as the skills are practiced over and over”³⁰

³⁰ Cristen Torrey, Elizabeth Churchill and Davic McDonald, *Learning How: The Search for Craft Knowledge on the Internet*, p.1.



I decided it was important to look at how felt-making and other traditional crafts were normally learned to see if I could find some clues to help me create a more effective instructional resource for the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative.

Most traditional crafts are learned directly from an experienced crafts person. In most traditional communities, these experienced crafts persons would be more senior family members who would work closely with a young apprentice (usually a child or grandchild). In Kyrgyzstan, this was very much the way it worked.

"There was no special training in any craft. Good hands-to-be acquired necessary knowledge since young age as they watched their relatives - grandmothers, mothers, and mothers-in-law – at work and helped them."³¹

Kyrgyzstan it not yet at the point where there is nobody left who knows the processes and traditional knowledge associated with felt-making. Though many of these experienced crafts persons are elderly, many have expressed a desire to pass their knowledge and skills on to others. One village I visited, invited experienced artisans to come live in their community promising that their needs would be met as long as they taught their skills to others in the village. This particular village had a very high level of unemployment but as a result of this initiative, 80% of them were able to earn a living through the production of felt and other traditional crafts.

My original aim was to design an instructional resource to support learners who wanted to increase their knowledge of traditional felt-making but I eventually came to the realisation that while there are still artisans who have this knowledge, it would be better to design a resource to support them to pass their knowledge on to others. Instead of a learning tool, I needed to be designing a teaching tool.

From what I learned about learning felt-making or any traditional craft, it seemed it has always involved observing and participating in the making of the craft until the learner has developed the skills to be able to work on their own.

Interestingly, instructional theory supports the notion that learning follows a particular process.

³¹ Japarov, Sulaimanov, Kadicha Tashbaeva and Lubov Vedutov, op.cit., p.57

In 1956 Benjamin Bloom and a committee of his colleagues published their influential taxonomy which identified six categories or levels of learning claiming that the first must be mastered before the next one can take place:

1. Knowledge (finding out)
2. Comprehension (understanding)
3. Application (making use of the knowledge)
4. Analysis Questions (taking apart the known)
5. Synthesis (putting things together in a different way)
6. Evaluation (judging outcomes).

In the 1990's, a former student of Bloom, Lorin Anderson, revised Bloom's Taxonomy and published *Bloom's Revised Taxonomy* in 2001. Where Bloom had used nouns to represent each category, Anderson chose to use verbs (action words):

1. Remembering – (recognising, identifying, naming, locating, finding)
2. Understanding– (interpreting, classifying, comparing, explaining)
3. Applying – (implementing, carrying out, using, executing)
4. Analysing – (comparing, finding, structuring, integrating)
5. Evaluating – (checking, critiquing, experimenting, judging, testing, detecting)
6. Creating – (designing, constructing, planning, producing, inventing, devising, making)

I decided that the tool that was needed was one that would allow the instructor (in this case an experienced artisan) to support the learner through these various steps. I looked at the verbs that Anderson used and applied these to aspects of traditional felt-making. For example:

1. Recognising, identifying and naming various motifs and patterns, locating sources of raw materials and identifying important plants
2. Interpreting these motifs and patterns and understanding their meanings, comparing and classifying different types of wool.

3. Putting this knowledge to use by following the instructions for making felt and applying the knowledge learned in the earlier steps.
4. Comparing techniques with that of a more experienced master, gaining feedback and integrating learning into your own work.
5. Evaluating the felt product, critiquing or judging its qualities and weaknesses, detecting faults and testing different ways of working to avoid the same mistakes,.
6. Planning, devising and designing and making your own felt.

This really helped me to see the importance of working directly with an experienced artisan (to support the learner through the steps). Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist believed that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of learning.

“Vygotskian view sees learning as based on working alongside an adept: observing, assisting with very simple task elements, gradually taking over responsibility for these elements while continuing to observe, and then assisting with more complex tasks.”³²

This reinforced my suspicions that learning a traditional craft required that social context and interaction that I wasn’t able to capture through documentation or substitute through experiential learning materials.

Another important thing I discovered was the importance of hands-on experience with the materials. Researchers have acknowledged the importance of becoming familiar with the properties of the raw materials from which a craft is made. “Physical materials have particular boundaries and characteristics [and that] with continued experience, people can acquire a sense for how a particular material, under specialized conditions will behave.”³³ Wool is an especially versatile material that has a number of remarkable properties. Different wools will perform differently in the felting process and it is important to be able to identify which wools are best suited for a particular purpose. For example, coarser wool is often used as the base of a felt carpet while softer, finer wool is reserved for the top.

³² *Anthropology of Craft Production*, 2010, retrieved 17 October 2010 <<http://pagerankstudio.com/Blog/2010/10/anthropology-of-craft-production/>>.

³³ Torrey, Churchill & McDonald, *op.cit.*, p.1.

Finally, I discovered that when it comes to the decisions about design, Kyrgyz artisans begin by imitating the designs of more experienced felt-makers. “Mothers and mothers in-law pass down designs unique to different tribes and clans. Mothers and daughter in laws influence one another’s designs after women move to their new husband’s family home.”³⁴

Choices about colour, pattern, motif and layout are all carefully considered when making a felt carpet but I could find no evidence of this being explicitly taught. There would have been some characteristics that were common to a particular region (a regional style of decorating the carpet) but within these, there was always the individual’s own creative expression and design choices. Apparently, “each woman draws on meanings held in traditional motifs and adds her own ideas that express her attitude toward life and the future”³⁵.

Having developed a better understanding of the learning and development process that takes place when learning traditional felt-making, I realised that what was needed was a teaching tool that could be used to facilitate discussions about diverse aspects of felt-making, something that provided an opportunity to gain hands-on experience with wool and something that incorporated a number of local designs and motifs that the learners could study and interpret and eventually adapt to create new designs.

When added to the other criteria I had previously established (see pages 52-53), it began to sound like I had set myself an impossible task. I asked myself what kind of teaching resource could encompass so many different things while still being low-tech and accessible. Then as if by chance, while browsing various textiles sites on the internet I came across some information about samplers. When I read about the origins of samplers and the different ways they had been used over the last few centuries, I was surprised at how appropriate they were for teaching, learning and preserving Kyrgyz textiles traditions.

34 Stephanie Bunn, *Kirghiz felt carpets*, Hali, 1997, pp. 84-89. in Gottschling, Littrell and Cockram, *op.cit.*, p.16.

35 Gottschling, Littrell and Cockram, *op.cit.*, p 16.

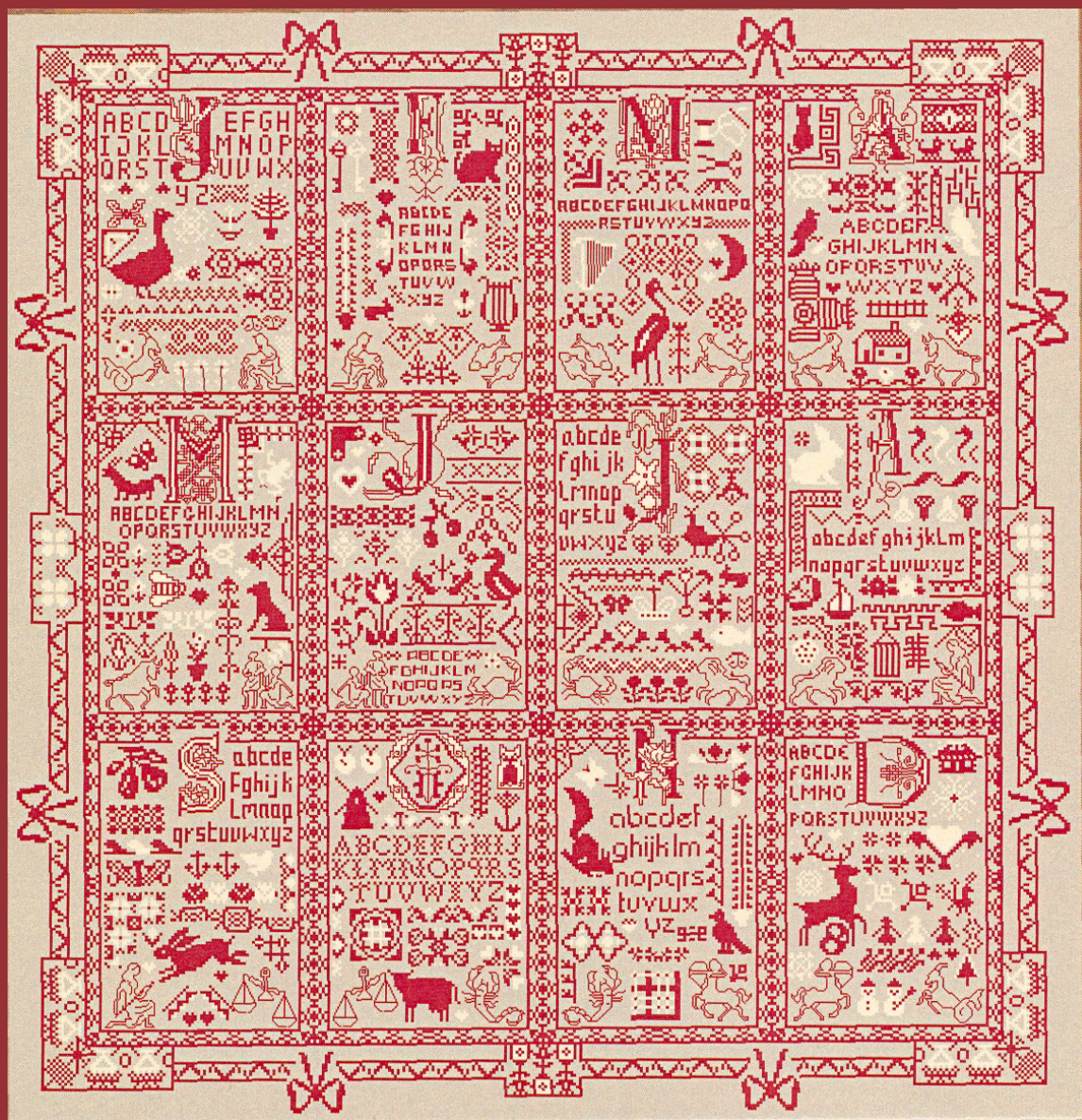


This embroidered linen sampler by Jane Bostocke in 1598 was made to commemorate the birth of a child, Alice Lee, two years earlier. Samplers were being used at this time as a reference piece for a more or less experienced embroiderer. A century later, samplers would also serve as a method for measuring and recording the maker's skill. The motifs at the top of the sampler relate family crests from Jane's side of the family. It is believed Jane and Alice were first cousins.

CHAPTER V

Samplers

Since the 16th century, women have been stitching samplers as a record of their needle working skills. They have also served as an effective method of learning, teaching and documenting stitches, motifs, patterns and important events.



Embroidered samplers like this one were stitched by women for many reasons, to practice and perfect a particular stitch or pattern, to document different styles of stitching, motifs and designs, to commemorate an important event or simply to pass the time.

The origin of samplers

The term sampler is derived from Latin exemplum which means “an example to be followed, a pattern, a model or example.” Dictionaries define samplers as “a piece of embroidery executed as an example of the embroiders skill in using a variety of stitches” and “a decorative piece of cloth embroidered with various designs or mottoes in a variety of stitches serving as an example of skill in needlework”³⁶

Early beginnings

Nobody is quite sure how long women have been stitching samplers but examples exist from as early as the 16th century (though it is believed that they have existed well before this time). The Bostocke sampler (see page 86) is one of the earliest dated samplers and is held at the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Early samplers were stitched by women as examples of both designs and various embroidery stitches. These early samplers were in the form of long narrow bands containing a selection of embroidery stitches such as cross-stitch, eyelet, Algerian eye, long armed cross and others. The samplers also included stitched alphabets elaborate scrolled designs and sometimes cut and pulled thread work.

In the 17th century the style of samplers changed to “spot samplers” in which random motifs were worked in silk. These motifs were often cut out from the sampler and appliquéd onto bed hangings or other furnishings. “During this period, printed pattern books became available, so samplers lost some of their use as works of reference. Many of the designs from these books can be seen repeated in English samplers from this time onwards.”³⁷

Samplers were a way to share and display different types of stitches, motifs and patterns. Before patterns were printed in books, “embroidery designs were passed from hand to

³⁶ www.thefreedictionary.com

³⁷ “A Brief History of Samplers”, Simply Samplers History Page, September 12th 1998, <http://www.needleworksamplers.com/Simply_Samplers/sampler_history.shtml>

hand, many of them travelled great distances.

“The recording of patterns and motifs on fabric for future use was an essential method of storing information. This stitched reference resulted in the creation of a sampler. New patterns and stitches were avidly collected and exchanged.”³⁸

Sampler Quilts

Around the turn of the 19th century American women began developing a new and uniquely American approach to quilt design. The sampler quilt - a block style quilt made up of non-repeating pieced and/or appliqué patterns became a popular. Earlier quilts followed a European style, which were built around a central medallion providing a strong focus to the quilt's design.

In the years before the American Civil War, block-sampler quilt format became extremely popular throughout the country. “Sampler quilts may well have served as textbooks of block-style design, a way of passing patterns from friend to friend, both nearby and far away.”³⁹ The sampler format allowed a quilt-maker to experiment with different block patterns on a single quilt and offered the challenge of finding ways to integrate a variety of designs into a pleasing overall composition.

Each block in a sampler quilt is different. The individual blocks each contain a different motif or pattern. Sometimes the blocks all had a related theme but often they were a mixture of designs that had no relation to one another.

Some samplers were clearly intended to serve as learning or teaching compendiums. This type of sampler could be used as a study document a sort of textiles source book where the quilter recorded patterns for future reference by herself, her friends, her children, or her students.⁴⁰

Similar to the embroidery samplers where girls would experiment with various basic

38 Sharon Boggan, *A Brief History of Samplers*, 2009, retrieved 23 September 2010, < <http://inaminuteago.com/articles/samplerhist.html> >

39 Robert Shaw. “Sampler Quilts” Robert Shaw 2005. <http://www.robertshaw.com/samplerq.html>.

40 *Ibid.*



sewing and embroidery stitches they needed to learn, quilt samplers were often the first quilts made by young girls as they started to learn the craft of quilt making. “Using the sampler as a touchstone, a quilt-maker could choose a pattern or patterns to work up into another quilt.”⁴¹

The block-style quilt allowed women to work on smaller pieces at a time which was more convenient than working the entire top of the quilt at once which is how it had previously been done following the medallion format. “Because it broke the quilt top into

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

small manageable units, block-style also lent itself to communal quilt-making, allowing several women to contribute blocks to a single quilt. Block quilting also encouraged the sharing (or copying) of patterns, and quilters were quick to pick up on each others' design solutions."⁴²

Sampler carpets/*Wagireh*

Samplers are not restricted to needlework and quilting. I was excited to discover *wagireh*, sampler rugs with segments of weaving patterns that can be referred to when preparing to weave a whole rug. Most *wagireh* come from Persia but examples have been found from India, Anatolia, Caucasus, and Turkmen.

The *wagireh*, that is the knotted pattern, has probably been used for centuries. Skilled weavers produce a small carpet from a design on graph paper, and this serves for years as a durable pattern whereas the paper patterns soon disintegrate. The weaver counts the knots on the back of the *wagireh* and uses the same number in his carpet. It is possible that the origin of the *wagirehs* lies in the distant past and that the designer who created the pattern and knotted the *wagireh* in this way perpetuated his ideas among weavers for a long period. Nomads still use *wagirehs* and so do villagers in Central Asia.⁴³

Wagireh served as reference tools or catalogues of patterns and motifs. Small weaving workshops began to produce *wagirehs* as samplers for promotion which were more complex presenting a wider variety of designs that would be suitable for several different rugs.

Some *wagireh* may also have been studies by master weavers while experimenting with new designs. This type was generally very small with only one motif repeated in a range of sizes and colours.

Zeigler and Co. of Manchester established an oriental carpet manufacturing operation in

⁴² Robert Shaw Quilts: A Living Tradition as quoted in *Sampler Quilts*, op.cit.,

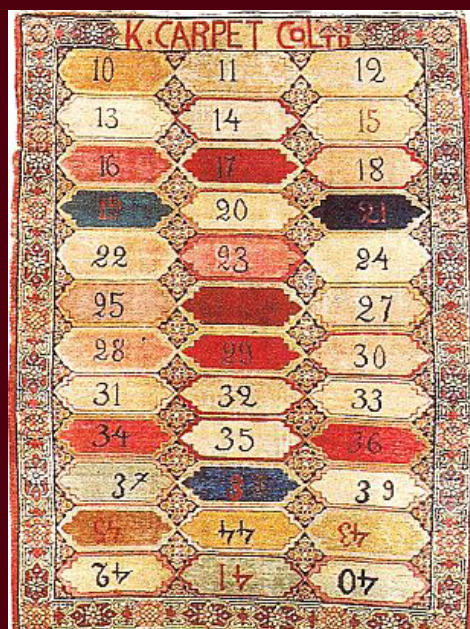
⁴³ John Howe and Filiberto Boncompagni, *The Wagireh*, Salon du Tapis d'Orient, 2010, retrieved 24 November 2010, <http://www.turkotek.com/salon_00115/salon-2.html>.



The first type of wagireh contains all the design elements for at least one complete rug. This might include border designs, central patterns, and motifs.



The second type demonstrates the colour and texture of a rug to facilitate the ordering of a rug and may also contain all the elements required to weave a complete rug.



The third type is made up of colour blocks that the producer can use in rugs to be ordered offering a buyer the opportunity to select the colours that appeal to them the most.

Iran in 1883. They used wagireh to disseminate new designs to their village manufacturers.

I felt that the concept of a sampler carpet could meet many of the Kyrgyz artisan's needs.

- Initially it would facilitate the teaching of felt-making by a more experienced artisan.
- The women could then create a sampler of her own (practicing her skills at the same time).
- It would then serve as a reference to inform new designs.
- Then she could use it to teach others.
- Finally she could use it as a marketing tool to promote her work and provide clients with a visual “portfolio” that they can choose designs from when commissioning a carpet.

I never suspected I would be able to find a resource format that would be able to address so many needs at once.

Designing a Felt Sampler

Having found what I believed to be a possible solution, I decided to try to make a sampler carpet of my own.

Initially, I saw the sampler as being comprised mainly of motifs from the various carpets I had seen when documenting felt carpets in the Issyk Kul region. When I was conducting my research I often asked about the motifs in an artisans' carpets. Some could tell me where they had originally seen this motif used but only the very experienced and elderly artisans could tell me the meanings of the motifs and what they symbolized. I came to learn that very few books or visual references existed that contained this sort of information. One woman kindly shared with me her “sketchbook” in which she had collected images of motifs and patterns from postcards, magazines and even candy wrappers.

After learning more about samplers I saw an opportunity to incorporate other important design aspects into the piece.

Gulnara head of the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative had expressed that the young women she was teaching had no understanding of colour theory or how colours should be used. This gave me the idea to incorporate a colour wheel and different colour combinations into the design in order to serve as a reference.

Many of the artisans spoke to me about the importance of understanding the differences between types of wool. I decided to include different wool types in my sampler to allow a learner to touch and feel the different surface textures produced by different types of wool.

The aspects I decided to try to incorporate into the sampler include:

- Traditional motifs
- Traditional and contemporary colour combinations
- A colour wheel
- "Touch squares" of different types of wool
- Value scale of different shades of wool
- Traditional border designs
- Typical ala kiyiz carpet layout
- Measurement tool

I decided to try to create the sampler carpet using the same method as the traditional *ala kiyiz* are made in Kyrgyzstan.

Making the sampler

Because of the numerous aspects I hoped to include in the sampler it would have to be fairly large. I was also limited by the size of the bamboo blinds I was using to lay out the wool (the way the Kyrgyz lay out the wool on the chiy grass mat). Fortunately I had one that was just small enough to be easily portable when rolled up. I wanted a sampler that would be small enough to lay out onto a table or the floor where people can gather around it. When evaluating the size I had to take into consideration that when felted the



Because I was working alone, the process of laying out the design took much longer than it would have taken the Kyrgys felt-makers. I also had to continually refer to the photographs I had taken to ensure that I was copying the motif correctly.



I had to enlist some volunteers when it came to felting the carpet as it was too large to be able to do myself. This was labour intensive but I enjoyed the social interaction. We wondered how the Kyrgyz could make up to 8 carpets a day using these methods.

carpet would shrink - I made sure to make the carpet slightly larger than the size I wanted.

The first attempt at designing the layout of the sampler, I tried to follow a traditional Kyrgyz layout. The pattern consisted of a series of diamond shapes bordered by triangular shapes with a solid outline and motifs contained within these shapes. However, when I attempted to create a sampler using this underlying structure, I found that I wasn't able to incorporate all the elements and motifs that I wanted. It seemed that this layout worked best for repeated patterns but did not lend itself to a variety of patterns.



I then came across a style of *ala kiyiz* carpet that I had never seen before. This one was made up of square patters that called to mind the sampler quilts I had researched earlier. The only limitation to this design is that it appeared that only motifs of a similar level of detail could be put together well.



I decided that I would have to come up with a design that was more versatile and that would allow me to include a variety of different patterns and motifs.

The next step was to determine a colour palette. I initially planned on sticking with a traditional colour scheme and limiting the palette for the sake of aesthetics but the Kyrgyz artisans love the bright colours achievable through the use of chemical dyes. One artisan (who was an expert in the making of natural dyes) told me she just couldn't get the bright "happy" colours using natural materials and that the bright ones (carpets) were easier to sell. I compromised and went for a mix of traditional and popular contemporary colour combinations seeing this as another possible teaching aspect of the carpet (the differ-



1. Bird's Tracks refers to the effect a person has on their family and their community. What a person does leaves a lasting imprint.
2. Hunting eagle. Any representation of a bird in flight symbolizes the wish that your dreams come true.
3. Synar muyuz (single ram's horn) it resembles a long-horned sheep in profile and refers to great wealth and fortune.
4. This design is a mirror image of "Tree of Generations" The tree is growing, children are spreading and making more generations.
5. Examples of different colour schemes or combinations on a motif of "ram's horns" and "bird tracks"
6. This motif represents the Chiy plant from which the reed mats are made which is the most important felt making tool.
7. Traditional mountain border pattern.
8. Double or mirror image of mountain border pattern. Both patterns represent a barrier for protection.
9. The wave border pattern represents "the road of our generation". Life is up and down and passes on from one to another.
10. Symbol of soldiers standing in attention and vigilance, providing protection to the homeland. Naryn traditional colours.
11. "Touch squares" made from different grades of wool from very coarse to very fine. Allows us to see the felting properties of the different wools.
12. Colour wheel to teach colour theory
13. Square that shows a possible layout for a shyrdak carpet (many carpets designs are repetitions of this layout).
14. Blanket stitched every centimeter allows the bottom of the carpet to be used as a measuring tool.

This is just some of the information that is contained within my sampler carpet. I used motifs that I had seen while I was in Kyrgyzstan and was fortunate to be told the names and meanings of some of them.

Certain squares on the sampler can spark discussion about the materials used to create a felt carpet (such as the touch squares and the chiy motif)

Other squares are there to help illustrate the elements of design, line, shape, colour, texture etc. As well as layout and composition.

The sampler can also be used as a marketing tool allowing the artisan to show a range of possible designs and colour schemes from which the client can make a selection for a commissioned carpet.

The measuring edge is helpful when discussing size of works with potential customers.

The combination of contemporary "bright" colours and traditional colours can also facilitate a discussion about whether to use chemical or natural dyes.

ence between the colours achieved by both natural and chemical dye processes).

Using the carpet sampler as a teaching tool

A felt sampler such as the one I created could easily be created by experienced felt-makers using the of colours, motifs, designs and patterns of her choice. This could be taken to workshops where an experienced master could share information about the various elements within the sampler with her students. Its' portability is an advantage as some teachers travel a long way to share their skills with women from other villages. The size allows for it to be spread out over a table or even hung up on a wall.

The cost of materials to create a sampler carpet is relatively inexpensive and because it is much smaller than most carpets that are made, it would be a justifiable expense and its multiple uses would also make it a worthwhile investment.

Because the women in the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative have different levels of skills and experience with felt-making I would recommend that the more experienced ones be responsible for creating the first sampler. To involve the whole group, I would recommend that they collectively seek the designs, patterns and motifs of their region and use this as a basis for the design of the sampler. Once the first few samplers are made, they can be used to teach others and eventually this traditional knowledge will spread across the region, strengthening their local culture and preserving some very ancient knowledge.

Conclusion

Apprenticeship, learning by first watching a master crafts person and then receiving feedback while practicing the skill is the most traditional way of learning a craft. This model of craft instruction is common throughout many traditional cultures and appears to have been the way for thousands of years. A symposium entitled *Learning and Craft Production in Pre-history* was held at the 65th Annual meeting of the Society for American Archaeology in 1998 in Seattle. In the transcripts of this symposium, I read papers on various aspects of craft production from researchers in different fields. Research about diverse crafts and cultures from hammock makers of Central Brazil to potters from Cameroon, revealed that traditional craft skills are almost always passed from one generation to another.

While it is possible to develop a basic understanding of the process of producing a craft via printed materials like “how-to. . .” books, or by instructional videos showing the process step by step with supporting written or verbal instructions, this type of learning resource can be very limited. Most examples I have seen of this type of craft instruction has the reader follow steps to replicate the particular craft depicted – in other words, learners are not supported to explore other possible design options. Most importantly, these types of resources do not provide feedback to the learner, or explain what to do if something goes wrong. I have never come across any examples that strengthen the learner’s connection to their culture.

Having learned felt-making from experienced masters through hands-on learning, I can honestly say that no learning resource I could create could ever replicate or provide as much insight as this experience has given me. I was surprised that UNESCO, an organization dedicated to supporting craft preservation and cultural traditions, could claim that documentation in the form of a “technical manual” and “style guide” (whether in the form of a printed document or video) could be sufficient to “provide clear insight into the processes involved in [traditional craft] production, so that, if required, it can be revived in the same social and cultural context ” and that this documentation “would

allow future artisans to produce the craft in an authentic artistic and social manner.”⁴⁴

Documenting the felt-making was a challenge due to the various time and language barriers and the long distances that needed to be travelled. Perhaps if I had been working with a larger team over a longer period, the resulting documentation would have been better and perhaps might have been good enough to provide some insight into the process though unlikely to be enough to revive a craft on its own. Being an outsider made this project that much more difficult because I lacked local knowledge and ability to communicate directly with the artisans whose work I was documenting. Even with a local guide and translator this was a difficult process.

I suspect that if this documentation was carried out by sufficiently-trained local artisans the documentation would be more effective. Developing the capacity among local artisans in developing communities to document their own crafts would be a very beneficial exercise which I have been thinking about as a future project. I believe that providing artisans with the training and technology to document their own processes and crafts would be very beneficial to them, not just to help them to preserve their traditional knowledge but to help them to keep records of their work, and to be able to promote themselves and share their work with wider audiences (and potential buyers).

I still do not believe that documentation alone - even if it is of a very high quality - is enough to teach a traditional craft process to someone who is unfamiliar with the craft so that they can “produce the craft in an authentic artistic and social manner” as UNESCO claims. Without hands-on experience with the tools and materials and some guidance from an experienced craft person, I suspect the novice would have limited success.

It would appear that the author of the UNESCO document did not consider the importance of the interaction between the master and the learner or apprentice when learning the process of producing a traditional craft. Images, video, and words can certainly provide some insight into a traditional craft process but they are no substitute for face-to-face instruction and hands-on experience. Torrey, Churchill and McDonald explain in their article *Learning How: The Search for Craft Knowledge on the Internet* that:

There is [...] a large gap between watching and doing. It is not hard to imagine how

44 Sah, op.cit.,p.6.

challenging it is to knit a row having only observed a skilled knitter for a short period of time. However, with the attention of a practiced teacher, tailored feedback can be offered, and objects can be mutually referenced. When being introduced to a craft, there is often new vocabulary that is easier to learn when both the teacher and student can point to features of an artifact or pick up the right tool. ⁴⁵

Experienced artisans are not teachers and unfortunately, the context in which they learned their skills will not necessarily be the same as the contexts in which they may now find themselves passing on their skills. These masters are now finding themselves in workshop situations teaching their skills to larger groups of people over a short period of time. This means they will not be able to successfully employ the teaching methods they experienced when they were learners. This is why I felt it was important that these master/teachers have some kind of teaching resource that would support them to transmit their knowledge to others in an engaging way that actively involves the learner. I believe that the sampler has the ability to achieve this.

Because of their long history of incorporating ideas from other cultures, I feel it is appropriate to share the sampler concept with the Kyrgyz artisans. No doubt the Kyrgyz artisans would put their own unique spin on the design and make it even better than mine. I would really enjoy seeing how the Kyrgyz artisans would adapt the sampler design to meet their own needs and reflect their particular local and personal style.

I would have liked to be able to work more closely with the Kyrgyz artisans to test and develop some of the educational resources I examined, I suspect that some of the ideas I came up with would have been dismissed by the artisans because they know their “audience” better than I do and would have known instinctively what would work and what would not.

I think that if the Kyrgyz artisans are not already familiar with samplers they would have found this concept quite interesting as many artisans were struggling to find images of motifs and designs to work from when creating new work. One woman showed me her inspiration source-book which was a scrapbook with images of Kyrgyz designs she had found on packaging, postcards, magazines and other printed materials. She had been collecting these images for many years and yet her scrapbook only had a few pages filled.

⁴⁵ Torrey, Churchill and McDonald, *op.cit.*, p.1.

Access to images of designs, patterns and motifs is a very significant problem for Kyrgyz artisans. If we could have worked together to source these images and create sampler carpets from these images, I believe the artisans would have found the experience valuable and would have been able to incorporate some of the motifs, designs and patterns into their future projects.

I currently have no plans to return to Kyrgyzstan as the current civil unrest makes it unsafe to visit. However, I will be sharing my ideas with the Kyrgyz Women's Handicraft Cooperative and the many talented artisans that I met on my research trip via a letter (with photos) which my former guide and translator has promised to translate for me. Should the situation in Kyrgyzstan become stabilised in the near future, I would consider implementing a "design intervention" of my own, helping the Kyrgyz artisans set up a pilot project to trial the sampler concept and evaluate its effectiveness. I would certainly include the artisans in the design and development of the project and I would support them to develop samplers of their own to use to teach others in the cooperative.

For other designers considering a project or "design intervention" among traditional artisans, I would recommend including these artisans in the process of determining just what time of intervention they require. I originally thought I was going to be creating a reference resource for artisans to refer to when developing their own designs, so that they could create unique and more marketable products. However, when I spoke with the artisans, they were passionate about wanting to share their knowledge and skills with others in order to keep the traditions alive. This made me realise that my skills might be better used researching and developing a sample resource that they can adapt to suit their own purposes. Most importantly, designers must be flexible enough to change a project when it becomes clear that the project is going in the wrong direction.

Another thing that I learned that might be beneficial to designers working with artisans in developing communities, is to try and see the big picture and not just focus on the immediate problem. Most of the design interventions I saw focussed on income generation for artisans. Many NGOs develop partnerships with designers to help improve the quality and marketability of the artisans' products and this sometimes ends with the designer coming up with the ideas for the product and the artisans working as skilled labourers to produce the designs. While this may help the artisans earn an income, this does not seem to help develop their design skills and does not allow them to express

themselves artistically. I suspect many artisans would feel unfulfilled producing someone else's designs and quite possibly some traditional designs might be lost in the process. A better way to go about something like this would be to involve the artisans in the design process, and support them in developing their own design skills, and help them to access reference materials such as images of traditional and contemporary crafts.

Finally, I would encourage anyone considering a design-intervention to take the time to develop relationships with the artisans they want to work with. Find out what really matters to them and ask them how you can be of assistance. This was by far the most rewarding part of this project for me and the interaction with the artisans and local people taught me far more than any of the journal articles and research I did before I went to Kyrgyzstan. Far too often, I have seen design-based development projects where the designer enters the community as some sort of authority to be obeyed and acting as though there is nothing they can learn from the artisans themselves. I do not think these projects are ever really succeed. Certainly, designers come with some knowledge and experience that the artisans may not have had but the artisans also have generations worth of knowledge and skills that should not be ignored.

Personally, I hope to be able to do more work in this design/international development field and I would very much like the opportunity to contribute to UNESCO craft revival initiatives. I was fortunate to be able to contribute some of my experience and learning into an updated version of *Designers Meet Artisans* (to be published later this year) which provided me with so much helpful and practical information when I was working on my project. I feel fortunate to be able to give back some of what I have learned so that other designers and more importantly artisan communities can benefit from it. I may choose to explore some of the ideas and concepts from this project as a future research project - if I have the opportunity I will certainly return to Kyrgyzstan and work more closely with the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative to help them achieve their goals.

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Appendix



Massey University
Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa

Application No: _____ / _____

This number is assigned when your application is accepted.

Quote on all documentation to participants and the Committee.

Human Ethics Application

FOR APPROVAL OF PROPOSED RESEARCH/TEACHING/EVALUATION INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

(All applications are to be typed and presented using language that is free from jargon and comprehensible to lay people)

SECTION A

1. **Project Title** Deeply Felt: Supporting crafts development initiatives in Kyrgyzstan through documentation of traditional felt-making processes.
- Projected start date for data collection** 2 July 2009 **Projected end date** 18 July 2009
- (In no case will approval be given if recruitment and/or data collection has already begun)*

2. **Applicant Details** *(Select the appropriate box and complete details)*

ACADEMIC STAFF APPLICATION (excluding staff who are also students)

Full Name of Staff Applicant/s

School/Department/Institute

Campus (mark one only)

Albany ☐

Palmerston North ☐

Wellington ☐

Telephone

Email Address

STUDENT APPLICATION

Full Name of Student Applicant Jennifer Lori Rosenthal

Employer (if applicable) N/A

Telephone 021 246 2332

Email Address jeni@dunn-wright.ca

Postal Address 2 Karaka Street, Castlecliff, Wanganui 4501

Full Name of Supervisor(s) Dr. Jessica Payne

School/Department/Institute College of Creative Arts/ COCA/IDIE/Textiles

Campus (mark one only)

Albany ☐

Palmerston North ☐

Wellington ☒

Telephone 04 801 2794
ext.6996

Email Address J.Payne@massey.ac.nz

GENERAL STAFF APPLICATION

Full Name of Applicant

Section

Campus (mark one only)

Albany ☐

Palmerston North ☐

Wellington ☐

Telephone

Email Address

Full Name of Line Manager

Section

Telephone

Email Address

3. Type of Project (mark one only)

Staff Research/Evaluation:

Academic Staff

General Staff

Evaluation

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Student Research:

Qualification

Credits Value of Research

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

If other, please specify:

4. Summary of Project

Please outline in no more than 200 words in lay language why you have chosen this project, what you intend to do and the methods you will use.

(Note: All the information provided in the application is potentially available if a request is made under the Official Information Act. In the event that a request is made, the University, in the first instance, would endeavour to satisfy that request by providing this summary. Please ensure that the language used is comprehensible to all.)

This project is about documenting traditional felt making processes and profiling felt artisans of the Issyk-Kul region of Kyrgyzstan. The project was designed to support development initiatives in this region, in particular the development of the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative (working under the umbrella of the Issyk Kul Artist Union). Photographic and video recording of artisans and their work will be used for the development of marketing and promotion material for the group as well as the preservation of their felt-making traditions for future generations.

I have been interested in the potential of wool felt as a sustainable design material for many years. In 2006, I developed a project promoting wool felt which was awarded the World Wool Award by the International Wool Textile Organization. Wool felt originated in Central Asia over 2000 years ago. The nomadic shepherds of this area, having limited access to materials, managed to push the boundaries of what could be done with wool, using it to make a range of household items, clothing and even their homes. These cultures can teach us a lot about innovation – especially at a time when our own wool industry is struggling to find new uses and markets for wool.

When some Canadian colleagues asked me to become involved with a development initiative in Kyrgyzstan, I saw an opportunity to learn more about felt making while helping a developing community.

5. List the Attachments to your Application, e.g. Completed "Screening Questionnaire to Determine the Approval Procedure" (compulsory), Information Sheet/s (indicate how many), Translated copies of Information Sheet/s, Consent Form/s (indicate of how many), Translated copies of Consent Form/s, Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement, Confidentiality Agreement (for persons other than the researcher / participants who have access to project data), Authority for Release of Tape Transcripts, Advertisement, Health Checklist, Questionnaire, Interview Schedule, Evidence of Consultation, Letter requesting access to an institution, Letter requesting approval for use of database, Other (please specify).

This application is supported by the following attachments:

- Screening Questionnaire to Determine the Approval Procedure ☒
- 1 Information Sheet ☒
- 1 (Draft) Consent Form ☒
- Proposed interview questions/data collection sheet ☒
- Scheme of Observation/Photographic Documentation ☒
- Evidence of Consultation 1, 2, & 3 ☒

Applications that are incomplete or lacking the appropriate signatures will not be processed. This will mean delays for the project.

Please refer to the Human Ethics website (<http://humanethics.massey.ac.nz>) for details of where to submit your application and the number of copies required.

SECTION B: PROJECT INFORMATION

General

6 I/we wish the protocol to be heard in a closed meeting (Part II). Yes ☐ No ☒
(If yes, state the reason in a covering letter)

7 Does this project have any links to other MUHEC or HDEC application/s? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, list the MUHEC or HDEC application number/s (if assigned) and relationship/s.

8 Is approval from other Ethics Committees being sought for the project? Yes ☐ No ☒
If yes, list the other Ethics Committees.

9 For staff research, is the applicant the only researcher? Yes ☐ No ☐
If no, list the names and addresses of all members of the research team.
N/A

Project Details

10 State concisely the aims of the project.

The aim of this project is to document felt crafts and related processes and techniques for the purpose of supporting the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative in Issyk Kul Oblast in Kyrgyzstan in two ways:

- 1) To preserve the traditions of Kyrgyz felt making for future generations by producing an accurate record of the processes, materials, tools and techniques.
- 2) To provide high quality photographic and video documentation of felt making, felt crafts and members of the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative for the purposes of marketing and promoting themselves to tourists and overseas markets and establishing a record of their work for the purposes of asserting their intellectual property rights.

11 Give a brief background to the project to place it in perspective and to allow the project's significance to be assessed. (No more than 200 words in lay language)

The Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative Development project evolved as part of the larger Issyk-Kul Biosphere Reserve Ecological and Economic Development project (I-K BREED), to encourage ecologically and culturally sustainable economic development in mountain pasture areas. A follow-up project was funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Partnerships for Tomorrow Programme (PTP). A Can-Kyrg Partnership for Sustainable Development was initiated to assist Kyrgyzstan's transition to a market economy, encourage gender equity, and foster environmental sustainability. Its main objective was to establish a rural women's handicraft cooperative in Kyrgyzstan that uses fibre from indigenous breeds of livestock to produce high quality handicrafts for the Kyrgyz tourist market and export to Canada. This project builds on these development initiatives by supporting the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative to put their marketing plan into action.

Felt crafts have become an important part of the economic development efforts in Kyrgyzstan. When the Soviet Union collapsed, many Kyrgyz men found themselves unemployed and unable to provide for their families. Fortunately, Kyrgyz women found a way to help support their families through the production and sale of traditional felt crafts.

By supporting traditional felt craft production, a market for the fleece and fibres from indigenous herds of sheep and yaks is maintained which in turn helps to preserve the traditional lifestyle of the nomadic shepherds in the region.

12 Outline the research procedures to be used, including approach/procedures for collecting data. Use a flow chart if necessary.

Research methods will include:

INTERVIEWS :

Because this project is about documenting a traditional craft, it is essential to obtain information first hand from the artisans' who are involved in making the craft. For this reason, I have chosen to conduct short interviews with 15 – 20 felt artisans. Mr. Uulu will act as interpreter during the interviews. A list of interview questions is included in the attachments. These questions are based on sample questions for the craftsperson in the *UNESCO Working Draft on Guidelines to Document the Process of Producing Traditional Crafts*.

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION – The purpose of the photographic documentation is to record the processes, materials, tools and techniques of felt making in the Kyrgyzstan. These will be used to create a visual record of the way felt is produced in this region. In brief, the photographs taken for documentation will include:

- Environment or location of the felt making (studio, outdoors, in a home)
- Raw materials used (wool or hair from livestock, plants used for natural dyes)
- Tools of the trade (an inventory of tools used)
- How the tools are used
- Process of producing the felt
- Traditional motifs and embellishment techniques

Two documents have provided guidelines on what should be documented and how: *The UNESCO Working Draft on Guidelines to Document the Process of Producing Traditional Crafts* and *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method*. (see **Scheme of Observation/Photographic Documentation** attached)

It is important that the felt artisans are the ones who direct the documentation process. Being practitioners of the craft themselves, they are familiar with which aspects of the process are to be photographed and from what angle. The artisans know what details to highlight and what is unique about a particular artists' work and methods. They will also be the ones to select which examples of crafts should be photographed as they would know best which are the most representative of their best work.

Additional photographs will be taken of the participating felt artisans in their working environment as well as examples of their crafts. The Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative requires high quality images of their work to be used for promotional purposes and to create artisan profiles of their members. In this case, photographic methods will include:

- Plain cloth backgrounds (grey, cream or black)
- Close up and detail shots
- Use of a scale to indicate size of object
- Images of the artisan at work

VIDEO DOCUMENTATION – In instances where a process is being recorded, video will be used to be able to capture any important movements (like the rolling of the wool in a *chee* grass matt for the purposes of fulling the felt). Still images will be extracted from the video to show the felt making process in sequential order. This may be played back to the artisan in order to allow them to provide additional information and/or comment on the process that was recorded.

13 **Where will the project be conducted? Include information about the physical location/setting.**



The Kyrgyz Republic, is located in Central Asia, bordered to the northwest and north by Kazakhstan, to the east and southeast by China, to the southwest by Tajikistan and to the west by Uzbekistan. Kyrgyzstan is a mountainous country with a population of five million people. This country is undergoing a great deal of political and economic change since it's independence in 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Tourist facilities are not highly developed, and many of the goods and services taken for granted in other countries are not yet widely available. Rural and urban areas have been subject to rolling power and water outages, leaving many homes without running water or electricity.

The research for this project will be conducted primarily in the Issyk Kul Oblast (province) at Karakol (see map above) and in Bishkek the capital which is close to the Kazakhstan border. There will be short day trips to some rural villages with the possibility of travel into the more remote mountainous Naryn region. While **there is no current travel warning in place for the Kyrgyz Republic**, no research will be undertaken in areas south and west of Osh, the Fergana Valley region, and rural areas along the borders of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan as there is the possibility of the presenence of anti-personnel mines.

-
- 14 **If the study is based overseas:**
- i) Specify which countries are involved;
 - ii) Outline how overseas country requirements (if any) have been complied with;
 - iii) **Have the University's Policy & Procedures for Course Related Student Travel Overseas been met?**
- (Note: Overseas travel undertaken by students – refer to item 5.10 in the document "Additional Information" on the MUHEC website.)*
-

i) The research will be conducted only in Kyrgyzstan. While in Kyrgyzstan, I will be restricting my travels to stay north and east of Osh and avoid the border areas of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan for reasons of personal safety.

ii) In general, an invitation letter from a registered tour operator is required to obtain the tourist entry Kyrgyzstan visa. Nationals holding Canadian passports may obtain Kyrgyz Visas on arrival at Bishkek's Manas international airport.

I have inquired with the Canadian Consulate in Bishkek (as I am a Canadian Citizen) to find out if a tourist visa is sufficient or whether I will require some special permission as the purpose of my visit is for research.

I have an official letter of invitation from the Manager of the Issyk Kul Artists Union who is also a licensed tourism operator.

iii) Once all travel arrangements are made and I have a confirmed itinerary for my trip, I will obtain written permission from my supervisor and the appropriate Pro Vice-Chancellor and I will ask my supervisor to advise the University's Insurance Officer.

15 Describe the experience of the researcher and/or supervisor to undertake this type of project?

Jennifer Rosenthal is the researcher for this project.

DOCUMENTATION

- Recently documented a bicycle-ambulance design project for a Canadian organization called Design for Development in Kenya.
- Responsible for research and documentation of the Pacific textiles collection at the Whanganui Regional Museum (six month internship).

DEVELOPMENT

- Presented a research paper on The Use of Natural Fibres in International Development Projects at the Design Education Forum of South Africa Conference in Cape Town, South Africa in 2007.
- I have also been an advisor for Fair Fibres, a Canadian fair trade organization assisting fibre (textiles) artisans in developing countries (currently Kyrgyzstan and Ecuador).
- Worked with the Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre, The Saskatchewan Cultural Exchange Society and the Regina Street Culture Project on community development projects involving First Nations (indigenous peoples) in Canada. One of which was awarded the **Canada Council of the Arts Award for Indigenous Literature Development** and another received the **Heritage and Multiculturalism Award for Best Practice**.

MARKETING

- Recipient of the 2006 **World Wool Award for a Marketing and Promotion** for a resource I created about wool felt as a sustainable design material.
- Marketing instructor for a New Zealand Trade and Enterprise-sponsored business development initiative in Wanganui.
- 8 years experience working as a Marketing consultant for creative industries in both Canada and New Zealand.

DESIGN

- Over 4 years experience working as a full time lecturer in the Whanganui UCOL School of Fashion for Design, Design History, Textiles, Concept Development and Research Methods.
- Completed a Post-Graduate Diploma in Art and Design at Auckland University of Technology. Research topic was Factors that Affect Sustainability in Design-Related Development Projects.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- Currently employed as Project Manager for Ag Challenge Ltd (Private Training Establishment) responsible for the development of educational resources and the integration of literacy and numeracy curriculum.
- Completed a Certificate in Cultural Management through the University of Waterloo, Canada.
- Responsible for the development of Educational Resources for the Inuit Art Department of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection (a Canadian public gallery/museum).
- Contracted as Project Coordinator for a number of highly successful community arts projects in Canada.

16 Describe the process that has been used to discuss and analyse the ethical issues present in this project.

I initially discussed the ethical implications of my project with my supervisor Dr. Jessica Payne.

When planning the project I considered the principles of participation, partnership, and protection in relation to the community in which I intend to conduct my research.

PARTICIPATION –

At this stage my connection to the community is through Mr. Talasbek Mukach Uulu (hereby referred to as Mr. Uulu) is the Manager of the **Issyk Kul Oblast Artist Union** which supports the development of the **Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative** and acts as their umbrella organization. He has extended an invitation to me to document the felt making of his region and profile local felt artisans as part of the marketing and promotion plans for the cooperative. (**see CV and Letter of Invitation attached**)

It seemed that the best way to involve the community in the development of the project would be to address the stakeholders as a group. The marketing workshop was the best way to get a group of artisans together to discuss the project and invite them to participate and share any ideas they may have. Even if they choose not to participate, they would get the benefit of the workshop and have an opportunity to express any thoughts or concerns they may have.

So I could learn more about the objectives of the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative Development project, Mr. Uulu sent me a report he wrote with Mrs. Kydyrmysheva Gulnara (head of the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative) which they wrote after the conclusion of their trip to Canada. (**full report is attached**) *this report clarifies the wishes of the group and this research project was based on some of these goals.*

PARTNERSHIP

The Issyk Kul Artists Union and the Kyrgyz Artisan Cooperative are the main partners in this research project and will be credited accordingly for their contribution to the completed research product. I plan to work collaboratively with the artisans to refine the research topic, and project design as well as clarify any issues. I am relying on the artisans to let me know what form the intended resource should take in order to meet their needs.

The artisans will guide the process of documentation, ensuring that the aspects of felt making they feel are most significant are the ones being recorded. Being practitioners of the craft, they are best suited to determine the angles from which the photographs are taken, what details to focus on etc. By being actively involved in the research project I hope they will feel a sense of ownership of the project.

PROTECTION

This project aims to protect or preserve the traditions of Kyrgyz felt making. It is also to assert the intellectual property rights of these artisans over their own creations and traditions. Being without the means to register patents and copyrights, it is essential that the artisans are able to link themselves with their designs and traditions to ensure that they are not appropriated. The intended documentation – especially the artisan profiles provide tangible photographic evidence of the artisans' "authorship" of their crafts and can be helpful should the artisans ever need to assert their IP rights. In the proposed marketing workshop I will be discussing issues of intellectual property with the artisans and suggesting that they collectively register what is known as a Collective Mark (like a trademark but for products made by members of a group).

Women in Kyrgyzstan enjoy a great deal of autonomy in Kyrgyzstan, despite being a Muslim country and are able to consent to participate in the research project without consulting their husbands or tribal elders.

Participants

17 Describe the intended participants.

The participants for this project are Kyrgyz felt artisans from the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes living in rural villages in the Issyk Kul Oblast (province) and surrounding areas.

18 How many participants will be involved?

15 – 20 felt artisans living in Issyk Kul Oblast and surrounding areas.

What is the reason for selecting this number?

(Where relevant, attach a copy of the Statistical Justification to the application form)

15 – 20 is an achievable number of people to be able to research in the time period that I will be spending in the country (2 – 3 weeks maximum).

19 Describe how potential participants will be identified and recruited?

Mr. Talasbek Mukach Uulu is the Manager of the Issyk Kul Oblast Artists Union and works closely with the Kyrgyz Women Artisans Collective. He has asked me to teach a marketing and design workshop for the artisans in his community many of whom will be potential participants. He has organized for a group to attend the workshop at which time they will be invited to participate in the research project.

20 Does the project involve recruitment through advertising?

Yes ☐ No ☒

(If yes, attach a copy of the advertisement to the application form)

21 Does the project require permission of an organisation (e.g. an educational institution, an academic unit of Massey University or a business) to access participants or information?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, list the organisation(s).

(Attach a copy of the draft request letter(s), e.g. letter to Board of Trustees, PVC, HoD/I/S, CEO etc to the application form. Include this in your list of attachments (Q5). Note that some educational institutions may require the researcher to submit a Police Security Clearance.)

22 Who will make the initial approach to potential participants?

At the design and marketing workshop I will have the opportunity to explain the research aims to the potential participants and invite any interested artisans to participate in the research.

23 Describe criteria (if used) to select participants from the pool of potential participants.

The participants will be artisans living in the Issyk Kul and surrounding areas who specialize in making felt crafts. Participants will be chosen based on their availability, location (at least 3 from each village), and obviously their willingness to participate in the research project.

24 How much time will participants have to give to the project?

Under 30 minutes in order to not take up too much of the artisans' time.

Data Collection

25 Does the project include the use of participant questionnaire/s?

Yes ☐ No ☒

(If yes, attach a copy of the Questionnaire/s to the application form and include this in your list of attachments (Q5))

If yes: i) indicate whether the participants will be anonymous, (i.e. their identity unknown to the researcher).

Yes ☐ No ☐

ii) describe how the questionnaire will be distributed and collected.

(If distributing electronically through Massey IT, attach a copy of the draft request letter to the Director, Information Technology Services to the application form. Include this in your list of attachments (Q5) – refer to the policy on “Research Use of IT Infrastructure”.)

26 Does the project involve observation of participants? If yes, please describe. Yes ☒ No ☐

I will be observing the participants making felt crafts in their studio or home environment.

27 Does the project include the use of focus group/s? Yes ☐ No ☒

(If yes, attach a copy of the Confidentiality Agreement for the focus group to the application form)

If yes, describe the location of the focus group and time length, including whether it will be in work time. (If the latter, ensure the researcher asks permission for this from the employer).

28 Does the project include the use of participant interview/s? Yes ☒ No ☐

(If yes attach a copy of the Interview Questions/Schedule to the application form)

If yes, describe the location of the interview and time length, including whether it will be in work time. (If the latter, ensure the researcher asks permission for this from the employer)

29 Does the project involve sound recording? Yes ☐ No ☒

30 Does the project involve image recording, e.g. photo or video? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, please describe.

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION – The purpose of the photographic documentation is to record the processes, materials, tools and techniques of felt making in the Kyrgyzstan. These will be used to create a visual record of the way felt is produced in this region.

In brief, the photographs taken for documentation will include:

- Environment or location of the felt making (studio, outdoors, in a home)
- Raw materials used (wool or hair from livestock, plants used for natural dyes)
- Tools of the trade (an inventory of tools used)
- How the tools are used
- Process of producing the felt
- Traditional motifs and embellishment techniques

Two documents have provided guidelines on what should be documented and how: *The UNESCO Working Draft on Guidelines to Document the Process of Producing Traditional Crafts* and *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method*. (see **Scheme of Observation/Photographic Documentation** attached)

I am aware that some artisans may have “trade secrets” that they do not want shared and that is why I will ensure that they know they have the right to refuse that photos or video to be recorded. I will make the playback feature on the cameras available to participants if they want to be assured that what was recorded was only that for which I was given permission. The participant consent form allows the participant to indicate whether or not they wish to allow photography or video recording.

VIDEO DOCUMENTATION – Video will be used to capture sequential images of the felt making process from which still images will be extracted. This may be played back to the artisan in order to allow them to provide additional information and/or comment on the process that was recorded.

31 If recording is used, will the record be transcribed? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, state who will do the transcribing.

(If not the researcher, a Transcriber's Confidentiality Agreement is required – attach a copy to the application form. Normally, transcripts of interviews should be provided to participants for editing, therefore an Authority For the Release of Tape Transcripts is required – attach a copy to the application form. However, if the researcher considers that the right of the participant to edit is inappropriate, a justification should be provided below.)

- 32 Does the project involve any other method of data collection not covered in Qs 25-31? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, describe the method used.

- 33 Does the project require permission to access databases? Yes ☐ No ☒

(If yes, attach a copy of the draft request letter/s to the application form. Include this in your list of attachments (Q5). Note: If you wish to access the Massey University student database, written permission from Director, National Student Relations should be attached.)

- 34 Who will carry out the data collection?

Only the researcher Jennifer Rosenthal will be carrying out the data collection with the assistance of Mr. Uulu as interpreter.

SECTION C: BENEFITS / RISK OF HARM (Refer Code Section 3, Para 10)

- 35 What are the possible benefits (if any) of the project to individual participants, groups, communities and institutions?

"Whereas silverwork has disappeared, leatherwork is practised by only a minority, and traditional Kyrgyz embroidery designs have been pushed aside by Uzbek, Ukranian and Russian motifs, [felt] shyrdaks and ala-kiyiz (types of rugs) are still found in every home, just as they were 2,000 years ago." (Stewart 2004)

The motivation for this project was to ensure that the felt making traditions of the Issyk Kul region of Kyrgyzstan did not meet the same fate as other traditional handicrafts. Photographic documentation of traditional felt making processes will serve to preserve the craft for future generations. The Culture Department of UNESCO encourages the documentation of traditional crafts to "allow future artisans to produce the craft in an authentic artistic and social manner." (UNESCO 2007)

Being able to document traditional felt making processes has a number of uses for the artisans and tourism operators of the Issyk Kul region:

- Images of felt crafts and traditional felt making processes can be used to promote tourism in the region via internet and print media.
- The development of a visual resource/book about traditional felt making is another potential product to come out of this project. I hope to be able to collaborate with Ms. Gulnara on this and explore the possibilities of joint-publishing the finished product to be sold by the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative (all profits to go to working to sustain the Cooperative).
- Providing an accurate record of traditional felt making processes to be held by the Issyk Kul Artist Union (and copies to be provided to any other interested organizations) will help to ensure that the felt making traditions of this region are preserved.

Further benefits include the development of markets for the wool and fur of indigenous breeds of livestock (supporting the larger **Issyk-Kul Biosphere Reserve Ecological and Economic Development project (I-K BREED)**, out of which the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative Developed). This project was developed to fulfill a goal to encourage ecologically and culturally sustainable economic development in mountain pasture areas to enable the families who depend on pastoral areas of Issyk-Kul Biosphere Reserve to fulfill their basic needs.

This project also seeks to aid the artisans in protecting and asserting their intellectual property rights by furnishing them with comprehensive documentation of their crafts, methods and processes. This documentation can be used to register copyrights and trade marks if needed and can also be held by the artisan as evidence of their "authorship" of the work should they ever need to assert their intellectual property rights.

36 **What discomfort (physical, psychological, social), incapacity or other risk of harm are individual participants likely to experience as a result of participation?**

There is no risk of harm to the participants as a result of participation.

The only reasonable concern is that their work is copied

37 **Describe the strategies you will use to deal with any of the situations identified in Q36.**

The artisan will always be given the option to say what may and may not be visually recorded.

When a work is photographed, the name of the maker and the date will be included in order to support the artisans' claims to their intellectual property rights (unless the artisan chooses to remain anonymous).

In the unlikely case that the artisan wishes to remain anonymous, the date and place of creation of the object will be included.

38 What is the risk of harm (if any) of the project to the researcher?

There are some areas of Kyrgyzstan that are best not travelled alone for reasons of personal security. Travel advisory sites warn that travellers should avoid certain border areas and not to take part in any political demonstrations but otherwise there is no major risks. I do not anticipate any risk beyond that which any single woman undertakes when visiting any foreign country.

39 Describe the strategies you will use to deal with any of the situations identified in Q38.

I will be accompanied by Mr. Uulu who is an experienced guide interpreter wherever I need to go.

I will register with the local Canadian Consulate upon arriving in Kyrgyzstan.

My travels will be restricted to the areas north and east of Osh and avoid the borders of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan where it is suspected there are land mines.

40 What discomfort (physical, psychological, social) incapacity or other risk of harm are groups/communities and institutions likely to experience as a result of this research?

None

41 Describe the strategies you will use to deal with any of the situations identified in Q40.

N/A

42 Is ethnicity data being collected as part of the project?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, will the data be used as a basis for analysis? If so, justify this use in terms of the number of participants.

If no, justify this approach, given that in some research an analysis based on ethnicity may yield results of value to Maori and to other groups.

(Note that harm can be done through an analysis based on insufficient numbers)

Ethnicity is only recorded for the purpose of obtaining demographic information about the artisans. (To be able to differentiate regional styles from one another). All the artisans participating in the project will be Kyrgyz citizens but some may have bi-cultural origins. If this is seen as having an influence on the design features of their felt crafts, it may be used as a basis for analysis.

43 If participants are children/students in a pre-school/school/tertiary setting, describe the arrangements you will make for children/students who are present but not taking part in the research.

(Note that no child/student should be disadvantaged through the research)

N/A

SECTION D: INFORMED & VOLUNTARY CONSENT (Refer Code Section 3, Para 11)

44 By whom and how, will information about the research be given to potential participants?

A draft information sheet has been prepared to give to potential participants an idea of what the research is about and what their rights are if they chose to participate. This has been sent to Mr. Uulu with a clear explanation that the research has not yet been approved and this is a draft only.

Information about the project will be given verbally by the researcher (via Mr. Uulu who will be acting as interpreter) at a workshop where potential participants will be in attendance. The participants will have the opportunity to ask questions, discuss any issues that they feel are relevant and provide feedback on the proposed research aims. At this time the participants will be invited to participate.

45 Will consent to participate be given in writing?

Yes ☒ No ☐

A participant consent form has been drafted that employs simple language and has been translated into Russian. However with some participants (Kyrgyz speakers) it will be more practical to get oral consent via the interpreter (this consent could be captured on video if the participant is willing).

If no, justify the use of oral consent.

It is very important to realize that paper-based processes of information and consent may be viewed as a bureaucratic by some participants which they tend to associate with government. Kyrgyz people are very mistrustful of government and anything that seems to reflect governmental (bureaucratic) processes. Many Kyrgyz are still dealing with the economic and social aftermath of the overnight collapse of the Soviet Union and have come to believe that bad things come from such processes. This is especially true of rural villagers who have suffered a devastating loss of their livelihoods as a result of the collapse of the Soviet government.

As a researcher I want to minimise any fears the participants may have and so if paper-based information and consent forms are likely to cause mistrust, I will opt for a verbal consent witnessed by the interpreter.

46 Will participants include persons under the age of 16?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes: i) indicate the age group and competency for giving consent.

ii) indicate if the researcher will be obtaining the consent of parent(s)/caregiver(s). Yes ☐ No ☐

(Note that parental/caregiver consent for school-based research may be required by the school even when children are competent. Ensure Information Sheets and Consent Forms are in a style and language appropriate for the age group.)

47 Will participants include persons whose capacity to give informed consent may be compromised?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, describe the consent process you will use.

48 Will the participants be proficient in English?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If no, all documentation for participants (Information Sheets/Consent Forms/Questionnaire etc) must be translated into the participants' first-language.

While some participants may have a basic working knowledge of English, many will not. The two main languages in Kyrgyzstan are Russian and Kyrgyz. I have been able to get a Russian translation of the Consent Form, and can get the same for the Information Sheet once it has been approved. Unfortunately, these will be of limited value as many of the research participants will be primarily Kyrgyz speakers that speak in a variety of dialects depending on their geographical location. There is the distinct possibility that many participants will also have literacy issues that prevent them from fully understanding the written forms so I will be relying on Mr. Uulu to interpret for me when I explain the project to the participants and make them aware of their rights should they choose to participate.

As stated above, due to the mistrust many Kyrgyz have with paper-based forms due to their associating these with governmental practices, I prefer to keep interactions informal, giving information about the project and gaining consent verbally instead.

SECTION E: PRIVACY/CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES (Refer Code Section 3, Para 12)

- 49 Will any information be obtained from any source other than the participant? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, describe how and from whom.

Secondary sources of information such as books, museum/gallery interpretive labels, brochures, and promotional information from local crafts organizations. No information about the individual participants will be obtained from other sources.

- 50 Will any information that identifies participants be given to any person outside the research team? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, indicate why and how.

As I will be photographing original crafts, it is likely that the participants will want to be acknowledged as the makers of these crafts.

- 51 Will the participants be anonymous (i.e. their identity unknown to the researcher?) Yes ☐ No ☒

If no, explain how confidentiality of the participants' identities will be maintained in the treatment and use of the data.

This research project is about documenting traditional skills and profiling traditional artisans. Many of the artisans that participate in this research project are likely to want to be credited for their work and be acknowledged as the providers of the data I collect. There is nothing in the data I am collecting that is likely to embarrass or harm the participants.

If, for some reason, the artisan prefers to remain anonymous, they will be advised that every precaution will be taken to keep their identity confidential.

- 52 Will an institution (e.g. school) to which participants belong be named or be able to be identified? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, explain how you have made the institution aware of this?

Participants will be members of the Issyk Kul Artists Union and/or the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative. I have been invited by this organization to carry out this research and provide workshops in design and marketing to the group.

- 53 Outline how and where:
i) the data will be stored, and

All photographic and video data will be stored at Massey University/Wellington campus in the secure facilities provided for the MDes students until the project is concluded. Once the research is completed, this information will be given to the supervisor to store for up to a year after the completion of the project after which time it will be destroyed.

ii) Consent Forms will be stored.

Consent forms will be kept in a filing cabinet in the locked office of the supervisor at the Wellington Campus of Massey University. It will be held for up to a year after the completion of the project after which time it will be destroyed.

54 i) Who will have access to the data/Consent Forms?

Only the researcher, the supervisor and the Head of the Department will have access to the data and consent forms.

ii) How will the data/Consent Forms be protected from unauthorised access?

They will be locked in the supervisors' secure office on campus.

55 How long will the data from the study be kept, who will be responsible for its safe keeping and eventual disposal? (Note that health information relating to an identifiable individual must be retained for at least 10 years, or in the case of a child, 10 years from the age of 16).

(For student research the Massey University HOD Institute/School/Section / Supervisor / or nominee should be responsible for the eventual disposal of data. Note that although destruction is the most common form of disposal, at times, transfer of data to an official archive may be appropriate. Refer to the Code, Section 4, Para 24.)

The data will be kept for up to one year after the completion of the research after which it will be disposed of (shredded) by the supervisor or Head of Department.

SECTION F: DECEPTION (Refer Code Section 3, Para 13)

56 Is deception involved at any stage of the project?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, justify its use and describe the debriefing procedures.

SECTION G: CONFLICT OF ROLE/INTEREST (Refer Code Section 3, Para 14)

57 Is the project to be funded in any way from sources external to Massey University?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes: i) state the source.

ii) does the source of the funding present any conflict of interest with regard to the research topic?

58 Does the researcher/s have a financial interest in the outcome of the project?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, explain how the conflict of interest situation will be dealt with.

59 Describe any professional or other relationship between the researcher and the participants? (e.g. employer/employee, lecturer/student, practitioner/patient, researcher/family member). Indicate how any resulting conflict of role will be dealt with.

The researcher has no pre-existing relationships with any of the potential participants. However, there is a pre-existing relationship with Mr. Uulu and Mrs Gulnara through their involvement with the Canadian fair trade organization Fair Fibres (for which I am an advisor). There is no reason to believe that this represents any conflict.

SECTION H: COMPENSATION TO PARTICIPANTS (Refer Code Section 4, Para 23)

60 Will any payments or other compensation be given to participants? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, describe what, how and why.

(Note that compensation (if provided) should be given to all participants and not constitute an inducement. Details of any compensation provided must be included in the Information Sheet.)

SECTION I: TREATY OF WAITANGI (Refer Code Section 2)

61 Are Maori the primary focus of the project? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes: Answer Q62 – 65

If no, outline:i) what Maori involvement there may be, and

There will be no Maori involvement in this project.

ii) how this will be managed.

62 Is the researcher competent in te reo Maori and tikanga Maori? Yes ☐ No ☒

If no, outline the processes in place for the provision of cultural advice.

There is no need for the researcher to be competent in te reo Maori and tikanga Maori as this research project does not involve Maori.

63 Identify the group/s with whom consultation has taken place or is planned and describe the consultation process.

(Where consultation has already taken place, attach a copy of the supporting documentation to the application form, e.g. a letter from an iwi authority)

ISSYK KUL ARTISTS UNION

Mr. Mukash Uulu runs an eco-tourism business in Karakol and is the current manager of the Issyk Kul Artists Union. He also has extensive experience coordinating logistics and communications for rural development initiatives in Kyrgyzstan. Mr. Uulu is the primary contact person with which I have consulted about this project. This has mostly taken the form of email correspondence.

KYRGYZ WOMENS' ARTISAN COOPERATIVE

Mrs. Gulnara is an artisan who runs a small handicraft business in Karakol and is the director of the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative. She also teaches workshops on handicraft production to women from rural communities. Because of the distance and language issues (Mrs. Gulnara is not a fluent speaker of English) the majority of consultation has taken place via email correspondence with Mr. Uulu. However, Mr. Uulu provided me with a report that he and Mrs. Gulnara prepared about the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative which outlines their goals for the development of the cooperative. This has been helpful to provide a background and thorough understanding of what the group hopes to achieve.

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY DEPT. OF GEOGRAPHY

The Canadian partners in the IK- BREED project out of which the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative was established are Dr. and Mrs William Wilson both professors at Lakehead University in Canada. Dr. Wilson was one of the first Canadians to conduct research in Mongolia, where, for his PhD thesis, he studied the connections between grassland ecology and conservation, and the nomads in Mongolia. He was the team leader in the IK-BREED Sustainable Development project and project partner with the Issyk Kul Artists Union who jointly applied for the Partnership for Tomorrow PTPII funding from the Canadian International Development Agency CIDA. He has discussed the project with me at great length when we last saw one another in Canada (last Christmas). The Wilsons approached me to become involved in the second phase of the project for which it was hoped they could get another Partnership for Tomorrow Project PTPII grant (unfortunately CIDA is no longer providing this funding). It was them that suggested I work with the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative for my Masters of Design.

64 Describe any ongoing involvement of the group/s consulted in the project.

Mr. Uulu will be paid to act as a guide and interpreter for the duration of my project as I do not speak Russian or any of the Kyrgyz dialects. I will be relying on him to advise me of any cultural issues that may arise and inform me on how best to deal with them.

65 Describe how information resulting from the project will be shared with the group/s consulted?

- Photographs and video will be shared with the Issyk Kul Artisan Union to be used for promotional purposes
- Participating members of the Kyrgyz Womens Artisan Cooperative will be provided with copies of the photographs that were taken of them and their crafts. These will be developed into individual artist profiles which they can use to promote themselves and their work. These photographs will also help the artisans to assert their intellectual property rights as it provides them with evidence that they are the creators of the work depicted.
- Documentation of traditional felt making will be developed into a visual resource (technical manual and style guide following UNESCO guidelines) copies of which will be provided to the Issyk Kul Artisan Union/ Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative to share with as they see fit.

SECTION J: CULTURAL ISSUES (Refer Code Section 3, Para 15)

66 Other than those issues covered in Section I, are there any aspects of the project that might raise specific cultural issues? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, explain. Otherwise, proceed to Section K.

67 What ethnic or social group/s (other than Maori) does the project involve?

68 Does the researcher speak the language of the target population? Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, specify how communication with participants will be managed.

69 Describe the cultural competence of the researcher for carrying out the project.

(Note that where the researcher is not a member of the cultural group being researched, a cultural advisor may be necessary)

70 Identify the group/s with whom consultation has taken place or is planned.

(Where consultation has already taken place, attach a copy of the supporting documentation to the application form)

71 Describe any ongoing involvement of the group/s consulted in the project.

72 Describe how information resulting from the project will be shared with the group/s consulted.

73 If the research is to be conducted overseas, describe the arrangements you will make for local participants to express concerns regarding the research.

SECTION K: SHARING RESEARCH FINDINGS (Refer Code Section 4, Para 26)

74 Describe how information resulting from the project will be shared with participants and disseminated in other forums, e.g. peer review, publications, conferences.

The finished resource will be shared in the following ways:

- One copy will be used as the final product of my Masters project which I will be sharing with the academic community (via my final exhibition and any subsequent academic presentations of this research).
- One copy will be placed with the Issyk Kul Artists Union for the use by any interested member of the Kyrgyz Women's Artisan Cooperative or anyone they decide they want to share it with.

The artisan profiles will be shared in the following ways:

- Every participating artisan will receive a copy of their own profile to use for self promotion or whatever way they see fit to use it.
- These profiles may also be printed and distributed with the felt crafts the artisans sell (so in that way they are shared with the consumer).

There is a possibility that the research will be presented at a conference or parts of it will be published in a relevant publication but currently no such opportunities have been identified to date.

SECTION L: INVASIVE PROCEDURES/PHYSIOLOGICAL TESTS (Refer Code Section 4, Para 21)

75 Does the project involve the collection of tissues, blood, other body fluids or physiological tests? Yes ☐ No ☒

(If yes, complete Section L, otherwise proceed to Section M)

76 Describe the material to be taken and the method used to obtain it. Include information about the training of those taking the samples and the safety of all persons involved. If blood is taken, specify the volume and number of collections.

77 Will the material be stored? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, describe how, where and for how long.

78 Describe how the material will be disposed of (either after the research is completed or at the end of the storage period).

(Note that the wishes of relevant cultural groups must be taken into account)

79 Will material collected for another purpose (e.g. diagnostic use) be used? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, did the donors give permission for use of their samples in this project? (Attach evidence of this to the application form)

Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, describe how consent will be obtained. Where the samples have been anonymised and consent cannot be obtained, provide justification for the use of these samples.

80 Will any samples be imported into New Zealand?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, provide evidence of permission of the donors for their material to be used in this research.

81 Will any samples go out of New Zealand?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, state where.

(Note this information must be included in the Information Sheet)

82 Describe any physiological tests/procedures that will be used.

83 Will participants be given a health-screening test prior to participation?

Yes ☐ No ☐

(If yes, attach a copy of the health checklist)

Reminder: Attach the completed Screening Questionnaire and other attachments listed in Q5

Bibliography

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