

Mary Walker Phillips: “Creative Knitting” and the Cranbrook Experience

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PREFACE

I came to the decision to write this thesis on Mary Walker Phillips in the most natural way possible: I am a lifelong knitter as well as a new scholar in the field of the decorative arts with an interest in the Arts and Crafts movement, Art Nouveau, Modernism and contemporary American studio art and craft. Writing about Mary Walker Phillips and her knitted wall hangings allowed me to marry these interests in a single scholarly research project. I first became acquainted with the work of Mary Walker Phillips when I found a copy of her book, *Creative Knitting: A New Art Form*, originally published in 1971, offered for sale at a used book fair I attended in the mid-1980s. The copy was in good condition, and was signed by the author in her characteristically bold and angular script. It was not the first time I had heard of Mary Walker Phillips, but it was the first time I had really looked at her work.

I admit that I was initially transported not so much by Phillips's own unusual lacy knitted constructions as I was by the historic examples of knitting from all over the world that she had thoughtfully included in the opening chapters of her book. Even in the 1980s, the history of knitting had not progressed very far and resources on the subject were still fairly scarce. Like most knitters, even today, I knitted garments and accessories to wear rather than the abstract, architectonic hangings for which Phillips gained such recognition in the 1960s and 1970s, but as I continued to peruse her book over the years, I became more interested in Phillips herself, and in her creative journey. Phillips made wall hangings using both lacy and opaque stitch constructions. Noted textile designer and entrepreneur Jack Lenor Larsen said in the Introduction to Phillips's 1967 bestseller *Step-By-Step Knitting* (published by Golden Press), that Phillips took "knitting out of the

socks and sweater doldrums to prove that a knit fabric can be . . . a piece of art.” Her works span the scale from monumental to miniature, and are quintessentially modern in their aesthetics. They are well designed, sophisticated, and were exquisitely executed by Phillips’s hands in novel combinations of durable and fine natural materials. Brought into being through the imagination, skill and creative vision of Mary Walker Phillips, her works are entirely personal statements in knitted form wherein the traditional craft of knitting was made fresh and relevant to contemporary viewers and collectors.

Phillips and her work are particularly well-suited to scholarly treatment here and now not only because so little has been written about them, but also because she and her contemporary knitting are grounded, through the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, in the development of mid-century industrial design, and in the ensuing emergence of the fiber genre within American studio craft and contemporary art. With the critical distance of a half-century from Phillips’s heyday as an artist, the interest of scholars and collectors has finally turned to re-thinking previously problematic interpretations of mid-century art, studio craft, and design, although, according to Virginia Gardner Troy, author of *The Modernist Textile: Europe and America 1890-1940* published in 2006, and other notable scholars in the field, scholarship in the fiber medium still lags behind other media. Phillips attended the Cranbrook Academy of Art in the 1940s and the 1960s, two formative eras in the history of the fiber medium in America. The thesis will focus primarily on the clear influence of Cranbrook on Phillips’s early experiments as an artist in knitting, and on her later work in knitting as an art form. However, I do want to pay homage here to Mary Walker Phillips’s tremendous influence

on knitting for those like me who owe our own interest in knitting to Phillips and pioneers like her in the medium, both past and present.

As a child of the 1970s, I recall the joy of spinning around on the sleek tulip-shaped chairs of the Eero Saarinen-designed dining set that my parents purchased from Knoll Furniture during our five-year stint living in Southern California. But when I started this research project, my interest in Cranbrook was purely that of the decorative arts scholar; I had no expectation that I would experience any similar rush of childlike emotion when I visited the Cranbrook campus for the first time in 2008. I have only been to Cranbrook three times for short visits, but it captivated me from the first, and the extraordinary beauty of it will be with me always. Brought into form by Eliel and Loja Saarinen, who were so integral to the birth of George G. Booth's vision for the Cranbrook community, Cranbrook stands today as one of the few places where art and life truly merge. I came to realize during my research on Mary Walker Phillips, and her instructors and peers at Cranbrook, that no artist passes through Cranbrook untouched by its sense of place or by the tremendous artistic freedom and responsibility engendered by a Cranbrook education.

During a recent docent-led visit to the Saarinen family home, one of the many treasures of the campus that was restored to its original glory in 1995, I paused at the top of the stairs where, in the family's private quarter, there is a small built-in breakfast or tearoom. At certain times of day, light reflected from a bay of leaded windows will cast shadow patterns through the curtains, across the table, and onto the wall opposite. I was fortunate to experience one of those times during my visit. Such visual transparency is a characteristic of many settings, both interior and exterior, throughout the Art Academy

and the adjacent Cranbrook and Kingswood Schools. Many of the faculty residences and schools were built with windows designed to emphasize, and even transform, the effects of natural light within the interior space. But in the breakfast room, at human scale, this interplay is so intensely experienced and so extraordinarily similar to the effects Phillips achieved in her knitted works, that one almost sees her knitting as an effort to recapture the essence of her visual experience of Cranbrook. I stood there transfixed and knew, whatever came afterward for her, that I had found Mary Walker Phillips's original source of inspiration. In considering the affinity of Phillips's works with the architectural ambiance of Cranbrook created by the Saarinens and the many artists who worked with them, Gerhardt Knodel, former Head of Fiber, and until recently Director of the Cranbrook Academy of Art, ventured to suggest, "If Phillips had been an architect, she would have been working in hard materials like iron, stone and glass, instead of linen and silk."

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Second, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the Cranbrook Educational Community and the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan for the access they granted me to the extraordinary collections they steward. At the Art Museum, I am particularly indebted to Gregory Wittkopp, Director, who kindly permitted me to visit the Cranbrook Art Museum and Archives several times for research, and to Roberta Frey Gilboe, Registrar, and Emily Zilber, former Assistant Curator, through whose assistance I was able to spend a substantial amount of time analyzing Mary Walker Phillips's hanging, *The Kings*, 1966, at close range, and reviewing related archival information. Although I have yet to unravel its many mysteries of knit construction, through my intensive study of *The Kings* I was able to find my way into the work of Mary Walker Phillips, and to appreciate with a dazzling clarity her awe-inspiring use of knitting, in her words, as “a legitimate medium for artistic

expression.” At the Cranbrook Art Library, Judy Dyki, Library Director, gave me access to Phillips’s two theses, which were critical in helping me to develop Phillips’s story.

At the Cranbrook Archives I am most indebted to Leslie Edwards, Acting Director, and Cathy Moras, Archivist. Through them, and their in-depth knowledge of the institution’s prodigious archival collections, I experienced the magic of meeting Mary Walker Phillips through her own correspondence. I also learned much that was helpful to me about her instructors and friends, and about the progressive environment in which they studied and worked at Cranbrook. I can honestly say that without these resources, I would not have had a thesis to write.

On my first visit to Cranbrook in 2008, Mark Coir, former Director of the Cranbrook Archives, gave me a tour of the campus, and of Christ Church Cranbrook that opened my eyes to the tremendous influence of the Arts and Crafts movement on Cranbrook through the patronage of its founders and benefactors, George Gough Booth and his wife, Ellen Warren Scripps Booth. Diane Schmale, also formerly of the Cranbrook Archives, showed me the Arts and Crafts treasures of the Booth family home. In the property surrounding the Booths’ home, Eliel Saarinen, the noted Finnish-American architect and first President of the Academy of Art, designed and built the Academy and many of the other schools and research institutions that formed the Cranbrook community. His and Booth’s shared aesthetic and philanthropic vision for the Cranbrook community can be felt today in the rhythm of Cranbrook’s architecture and interiors, the beauty of the setting, and in the people who are still drawn to teach and learn there. Even in my short time visiting Cranbrook to work with the collections I was aware of its transformative effect. Hence, I perceived firsthand how Cranbrook must

have soaked into Phillips during her four years of study there to emerge again in her creative process, her own pedagogy, and her knitted wall hangings. I am left with a lasting respect for the institution and for the remarkable individuals who were and are drawn to create and sustain it.

Family members, fellow artists, colleagues and friends of Mary Walker Phillips gave generously of their time, their remembrances, and their unique perspectives on her, on Cranbrook, and on the broader creative environment in which she lived and worked. Phillips's brother, W. David Phillips and her longtime friend and fellow lace knitter, Patricia Abrahamian, both of Fresno, California, treated me to lunch and shared their remembrances of Phillips. I am extremely grateful for their time and support.

Glen Kaufman, Director of the Department of Weaving and Textiles at Cranbrook from 1961-1967, welcomed me to Athens, Georgia shortly after his retirement as Chair of the Fabric Design Program at the University of Georgia, and we spent a delightful two days talking about Phillips, remembering Cranbrook, and discussing the evolution of contemporary fiber art. As a student, an instructor and a department head in the Weaving and Textiles Department at Cranbrook (which under his leadership became known as the Department of Weaving and Fabric Design), Professor Kaufman's recollections, which pepper the footnotes of the thesis, put flesh on my archival research and provided ballast for my interpretations. He brought the *zeitgeist* of mid-century art and craft to life for me and filled me with a sense of its ongoing vitality, especially in fiber. Professor Kaufman also shared with me a number of photos he had taken of Phillips's work during a visit he made to her apartment in New York sometime in the 1980s, some of which appear as

illustrations in the thesis. A lively correspondent and an active traveler, he kept up my spirits with news of his work and his activities.

Gerhardt Knodel, former Director of the Cranbrook Academy of Art from 1995-2007, and former Head of the Department of Fiber from 1970-1996, was Glen Kaufman's successor. He also knew Phillips, an active and loyal alumna throughout her life, and for many years he took his classes to visit her on their trips to New York. His candid and lively recollections of Phillips, and his reflections on trends in contemporary fiber art were especially insightful. Mark Newport, currently Artist-in-Residence and Head of the Fiber Department at Cranbrook Academy of Art is well known for his use of knitting as a primary medium. Although knitting, in some ways, has come full circle at Cranbrook, in the intervening years the fiber medium has changed so much. Mark Newport spoke with me about fiber at Cranbrook now in the looming presence of his supersized knitted superhero costume, "Batman 3," 2006, and in concert with Glen Kaufman and Gerhardt Knodel, helped me to understand the continuities and discontinuities at Cranbrook and beyond that shaped the world of fiber and contemporary art and craft in which Phillips lived and worked.

Former Cranbrook classmates and friends of Phillips also provided me with valuable personal recollections. Noted fiber artist Adela Akers and sculptor Eleen Auvil were both classmates of Phillips in the Department of Weaving and Textiles at Cranbrook during the 1960s. They spoke with me at length about their experiences, which helped me to more accurately characterize what Cranbrook was like for Phillips at that time. Fiber artist Barbara Factor, another longtime friend of Phillips, kindly drove four hours to meet with me in Chicago "for Mary." Her recollections of Phillips at Cranbrook and in

New York, coupled with those of Adela Akers, gave me the best sense for Phillips as an individual. Ted Hallman, another former student in Cranbrook's Weaving and Textiles Department under Marianne Strengell, volunteered his recollections of Strengell and her teaching style. Mr. Hallman attended Cranbrook during the late 1950s with Glen Kaufman. Like Phillips and Kaufman, he too later worked in single element techniques. Jack Lenor Larsen, the noted international textile entrepreneur and philanthropist to whom Phillips always gave accolades for his enduring support of her work, generously provided his recollections of Phillips in her first decade working as an artist in New York. Mr. Larsen, who studied in the Department of Weaving and Textiles at Cranbrook in the early 1950s, helped me to tell the story of Phillips's involvement in the 1964 Milan Triennale, an international venue for which he acted as the design director and organizer. Participation in this event garnered Phillips considerable recognition and launched her career as an artist. Edwina Bringle, weaver, spoke with me about her recollections of Phillips at Penland School of Craft, located in Penland, North Carolina where Phillips taught workshops starting in 1965 at the invitation of Penland's Director, Bill Brown, a personal friend of Phillips and also a Cranbrook graduate. Author, teacher and fellow knitter Susanna E. Lewis spoke with me of convivial lunches she shared with Phillips at the Brooklyn Museum in New York where Phillips spent many hours researching textiles in the 1970s and 1980s. Ms. Lewis also shared photos she had taken of Phillips's work when it was exhibited at Parson's New School of Social Research in the 1980s. All of these individuals not only generously gave me useful and personal perspectives on Phillips and on Cranbrook, but they were, to a one, stimulating, insightful, irreverent, charming, funny, candid, and unequivocally engaging to speak with. They have shown

me how much we still have to learn about this period in fiber history, and how important it is to understand the story of the work through the words of those who have made it, and are still making it, themselves. I truly wish that I had been able to speak directly with Mary Walker Phillips. To her, and to the generation of pioneers in fiber to which she belonged, thank you.

Christa C. Mayer Thurman, former Chair and Christa C. Mayer Thurman Curator of the Art Institute of Chicago's Department of Textiles in Chicago, Illinois, and a long-time friend of Phillips, granted me the opportunity to study in person "Shells," 1967, a monumental hanging by Phillips in the Art Institute's renowned textile collection and to review related archival information. I was most honored to have the opportunity to meet Mrs. Thurman during my visit to the Textile Department because I have relied significantly on the research she did for her chapter on Cranbrook's textiles in *Design in America: The Cranbrook Vision 1925-1950* published in conjunction with the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Metropolitan Museum of Art's retrospective exhibition on Eliel Saarinen and the Cranbrook legacy in 1983. At the Art Institute of Chicago's Department of Textiles, I was ably and courteously assisted in my research by Ryan P. Paveza, Collections Manager, and Chi Nguyen, Administrative Assistant.

David Shuford, former Librarian at the American Craft Council Library, New York, New York also provided gracious and timely assistance. The American Craft Council College of Fellows Artist File Collection was a rich resource for information about Phillips, and I was able to see many images of Phillips's work that were previously unknown to me. I thank Emily Zilber, former Assistant Curator, Cranbrook Art Museum,

for making me aware of the types of materials retained in the American Craft Council's Artist File Collection.

I have also benefited from the collections and resources available to me through the Smithsonian Institution as a student of the Smithsonian Associates and Corcoran College of Art + Design Masters Program in the History of Decorative Arts. At the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C., I am grateful to Doris M. Bowman, Associate Curator, Division of Home and Community Life, who graciously showed me Phillips's hanging, "Fans And Beads," 1974. At the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Renwick Gallery, where I had interned with former Curator Jane Milosch, I am grateful to Robyn L. Kennedy, Chief, and Marguerite R. Hergesheimer, Museum Specialist, who let me peruse the Gallery's extensive library of publications in American studio craft. I spent several weeks there reading through back issues of *Craft Horizons*, a critically important resource for developing my understanding of the evolution of fiber art in America.

The University of Maryland's library system was of tremendous importance; most of the secondary source material I used was from this collection. The University's holdings in art, architecture and contemporary culture never ceased to amaze me with their comprehensiveness, and the staff, including Evelyn Yocco, Coordinator, Access Services, were ever courteous and helpful. I will be forever grateful for the opportunity to use this resource as a result of the reciprocal borrowing privileges extended to me through my affiliation with the Smithsonian Institution.

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INTRODUCTION

[W]hen we are inspired by its beauty, do something of our own, maybe in the same spirit, then it is our work. It has passed through our individuality, our personality, and through a mental process it is part of our culture.

–Eliel Saarinen, American Institute of Architects Address,
San Antonio, Texas 1931

Everywhere we look we find inspiration: forged iron grillwork, lacelike in design; cross sections of stem structures; spider webs; elevated train trestles and their shadow patterns – we are surrounded by a fertile field of ideas.

–Mary Walker Phillips, *Creative Knitting: A New Art Form*, 1971

Major exhibitions like “Radical Lace and Subversive Knitting,” shown at New York’s Museum of Arts and Design in 2007, are bringing knitting back into the public consciousness as an art form for the first time since the 1960s and 1970s, when museums widely exhibited the abstract, architecturally-inspired, and technically innovative knitted compositions of Mary Walker Phillips, 1923-2007.¹ Phillips received the prestigious American Craft Council Fellows Award in 1978 for being “the first to introduce knitting as a form of artistic expression.”² The renewed interest in knitting as an art form, and in mid-century art and studio art and craft, make Phillips’s works ripe for revival and study.³ Extensive records at the Cranbrook Academy of Art (hereinafter “Cranbrook”) link Phillips and the entrance of knitting into the exclusive world of fine art and craft institutions with one of the most progressive, influential schools of art education in America; it was at Cranbrook that Phillips first experimented with what she later called “creative knitting.” Although each artist’s life and work blends many interests and

influences, Phillips's lifelong connection with Cranbrook, where she trained as a weaver and textile designer in the 1940s and 1960s, is one of the most fruitful and unifying contexts within which to situate the first scholarly treatment of her work. Phillips, whose career in fiber bridged both industrial design and studio art and craft, enhanced the aesthetic qualities and expressive potential of knitting through her mastery of materials and techniques, and in advancing the knitted textile as a form in sympathy with architecture in its concept and construction, Phillips showed her allegiance to the core values and interests of her training as an artist at Cranbrook, where, as at the Bauhaus School in Germany, architecture functioned as the primary organizing discipline. Through the legacy of Eliel Saarinen (1873-1950), the noted Finnish-American architect who oversaw the design and construction of the Cranbrook Academy of Art and the development of its curriculum, Cranbrook students learned to see the world and their chosen medium as a "search for form."⁴ Compare Figures 1 and 2.⁵

As a result of the progressive approach to art education at Cranbrook, Phillips was among many Cranbrook graduates who worked fluidly as industrial designers, teachers, and studio artists, and who remained professionally viable long after the burgeoning industrial design opportunities of the 1940s and 1950s gave way to the studio art and craft movement that blossomed in the 1960s and 1970s.⁶ At Cranbrook, craft training was enhanced by practical experience in marketing and product development for industry, but the school's firm foundation in the Arts and Crafts movement was one of its greatest strengths. Cranbrook graduates, like Phillips, possessed considerable knowledge, experience, independence and flexibility as a result of their command of traditional craft techniques. In the thesis, a close look at Phillips's gradual shift from

industrial design to studio art and craft during the years she studied at Cranbrook from 1946-1947 and from 1960-1963 reveals how Cranbrook's built environment, instructional style, elite faculty and students, and commitment to creative freedom of expression nurtured and supported her ground-breaking experiments in knitting. The nexus between Phillips, knitting, and Cranbrook offers a fresh opportunity to consider Phillips and her work as examples of Cranbrook's essential role in promoting cross-fertilization between twentieth century industrial design and studio art and craft (often treated critically as separate disciplines today).

As context for the in-depth look at Phillips and her development as an artist, Chapter 1 briefly situates Cranbrook within the larger movements of twentieth century art, craft and industrial design. This chapter presents an overview of how Cranbrook, as an artist's community and educational program, was well designed to support Phillips in her search for an original mode of expression in fiber. George Gough Booth (1864-1949), owner of the *Detroit News*, and his wife, Ellen Warren Scripps Booth (1863-1948) officially founded Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1932 after nearly a decade of development.⁷ Eliel Saarinen collaborated with the Booth family on the design and construction of the Cranbrook community, which included the Academy of Art as its crowning jewel.⁸ Saarinen served as the Academy of Art's first President from 1932-1946 and as the Director of the Department of Architecture from 1932-1950.⁹ Based on its successful synthesis of ideas from the Arts and Crafts movement and European Modernism, Cranbrook quickly evolved as one of the nation's most progressive programs in art education.¹⁰ In the 1930s, the Weaving and Textiles program established at Cranbrook by Loja Saarinen, Eliel Saarinen's talented wife, brought national recognition

to the school. Loja Saarinen is widely acclaimed for the decorative and utilitarian textiles that she and her weavers designed and executed for specific architectural environments, including those at Cranbrook. Under the supervision of Loja Saarinen's successor, the noted Finnish-American textile designer Marianne Strengell from 1942-1961, Weaving and Textiles at Cranbrook emerged as an entirely modern discipline that served a vital contemporary market in all sectors of industry including, but not limited to, corporate and residential interiors, fashion, and industrial and commercial applications.

Using archival records and personal interviews of peers, instructors and family members, as well as an in-depth analysis of her B.F.A. and M.F.A. theses, Chapter 2 documents how Mary Walker Phillips's personal experience of Cranbrook, and the connections she developed there during her two periods of study, initiated significant developments in her work as an artist that culminated in a shift from weaving to knitting and from industrial design to studio art and craft. Coming of age in the immediate post-War era at a time when women were experiencing increased professional flexibility, Phillips chose the Weaving and Textiles program at Cranbrook in order to learn a modern craft discipline from Marianne Strengell who, along with such luminaries as Dorothy Wright Liebes, Loja Saarinen and Anni Albers, was a noted expert in the relatively new field of American contemporary textile design.¹¹ After studying the design and production of contemporary textiles by hand and machine as a special non-degree student at Cranbrook from 1946-1947, Phillips joined the ranks of professional hand weavers and textile designers for more than a decade.

Phillips eventually developed her own successful custom hand weaving business, but by the late 1950s she saw a return to Cranbrook to complete her B.F.A. and M.F.A.

degrees as a necessary step toward realizing increased independence and professional viability. Phillips returned to Cranbrook in 1960 at a time when the field of modern hand weaving was undergoing tremendous change. Opportunities for professional hand weavers and textile designers in the industrial and commercial sectors were less plentiful, particularly for those who, like Phillips, preferred the creative independence of free-lancing. At the same time, Anni Albers was at the vanguard of a new generation of weavers that included Lenore Tawney, Claire Zeisler and others, who were rediscovering the aesthetic and expressive potential of the textile form using combinations of woven and non-woven techniques; shows like “Woven Forms,” held at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York in 1963, proved the emergence of this new group of fiber artists and a new way of thinking about and working in the textile medium that had been developing during the previous decade.¹² Under Marianne Strengell’s successor, Glen Kaufman, who led the department of Weaving and Textiles from 1961-1967, Cranbrook’s program opened to non-woven techniques and other hand-made methods of fiber and fabric production; this was a vitally important shift that freed Phillips to explore knitting as an alternative to weaving.

Phillips was one of Cranbrook’s first graduates to specialize in non-woven techniques, and her experiments at Cranbrook set her on a new path that ultimately reshaped her professional life. Although she started out knitting the same types of architectural and interior textiles she had learned to weave at Cranbrook – including draperies, casements, upholstery, and linens – with an eye toward marketing herself as a free-lance hand knitter and textile designer of knitted prototypes for industry, she soon found the soundest market for her work was in museum-sponsored art, craft and interior

design shows and in private galleries. Following her graduation from Cranbrook in 1963, Phillips moved to New York City, where she remained active for nearly thirty years working as a studio artist, teacher, and best-selling author of books on knitting and macramé. From designing woven and knitted textiles to enhance architectural spaces and interior furnishings, Phillips evolved into an artist and architect of the hand knitted textile as an end in and of itself. At a time when knitting was used almost exclusively for making garments from standardized weights of wools or synthetics, Phillips pushed accepted notions about the knitted form into the previously uncharted terrain of the purely aesthetic. Phillips became well known for her contemporary wall hangings, a popular textile genre of the 1960s and 1970s.¹³ Free of the confines of weft and warp, Phillips recast in knitting, and later macramé, the fibers she had used in weaving, making both the materials and the techniques appear fresh and unfamiliar.¹⁴

Other than Phillips's own writings, and catalogues from the exhibitions of her work, there are few reminders in the very limited, but now growing scholarship on knitting as an art form, of Phillips's pioneering role.¹⁵ To re-construct her history in the medium, Chapter 3 examines Phillips's work as a studio artist in the decade after Cranbrook. During the 1960s, Phillips participated in several exhibitions that initiated the development of the fiber art genre in the 1970s, including the Milan Triennale in Milan, Italy in 1964 and "Wall Hangings" at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1969. This chapter documents how the increased receptivity of the art world to experimentation in new media at that time made Phillips's new direction in knitting at Cranbrook and afterwards feasible and timely. Further, Chapter 3 describes how Phillips's entry into the world of knitting and macramé in the 1960s and 1970s coincided

with the revival among artists and the public of craft traditions that crossed all media. Her success as a studio artist in non-woven techniques made her extremely desirable as an author, teacher and spokesperson; accordingly, she was able to publish several instructional books that served diverse audiences from recreational crafters to fellow fiber artists. She also published *Creative Knitting: A New Art Form* in 1971, a book that came directly out of her M.F.A. thesis at Cranbrook and charted new territory in knitting. The ensuing perception of fluidity between craft as hobby and craft as art form became problematic for many artists in craft media in the 1970s and 1980s, but for much of her professional life, Phillips successfully straddled these two communities.¹⁶

Chapter 4 explicates several key examples of Phillips's work to show her evolution in the medium of knitting. From the playful and virtuoso abstraction of *The Kings*, 1966, to the contemplative and assured modernism of *Shells*, 1967, to the naturalistic beauty of a virtually unaltered historic stitch pattern in *Fans And Beads*, 1974, Phillips's works revealed their structural properties at the stitch level. Her hangings, whether in lace or in bold and three-dimensional surface textures have abstract and organic qualities. Figures 3 and 4. Many fiber artists of the period excavated, revitalized and contemporized forgotten techniques like knitting, netting, knotting, macramé and lace making, but Phillips was among a small group of artists that included Virginia Harvey, Luba Krejci and Else Regensteiner, among others, within whose works "techniques once considered 'techniques,' important only for their structural purposes, were isolated and featured full-scale—in fact, they became the pieces."¹⁷ These artists "dissected the vocabulary [of the techniques] and featured selected characteristics in personal and unique ways."¹⁸

In all her compositions, Phillips was concerned with the interplay of solids and voids, with manipulating the anatomies of scale, and with the relative reflectivity of unusual combinations of natural materials and stitch patterns. For example, by working with large needles and the fine linens typically used to warp a loom, and endlessly manipulating her selection and execution of the stitches that comprised each hanging, Phillips created dazzling, skeletal structures that focused the viewer's attention on each stitch or stitch pattern individually and as part of the whole. She was one of the first artists to knit with paper, metal thread and wire, all of which have been rediscovered by knitters and fiber artists during the past decade.¹⁹ Figures 5 and 6. She often added beads to accentuate the dimensionality and flow of the stitches, or suspended found objects, such as seedpods, bells or stones in framed openings or gossamer knitted pockets. Figure 7. She once commented, “[b]y changing the patterns to suit my needs and by my choice of materials . . . the finished pieces become part of the twentieth century.”²⁰ Her best works marry her technical virtuosity in knitting with an architectural sensibility and a contemporary design aesthetic that she retained from her years of study at Cranbrook to create a truly original modern art form.

Phillips was an artist who advanced knitting as “a legitimate medium for artistic expression,” that in its particular structural and aesthetic characteristics could underpin “an independent art style, newly emerged.”²¹ In her years at Cranbrook, with its synthesis of traditional craft methods and Modernist values, Phillips learned that any medium was acceptable for making a work of art if the artist could bring forth from it a true, original and contemporary form, whether by hand or machine, and she adhered to this view throughout her life.²² At a lecture presented by the well known knitter and scholar

Lizbeth Uptis as part of a retrospective exhibition of Phillips's work at the Goldstein Gallery, Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel, University of Minnesota in 1987, it was clear from the comments of many fiber artists, designers and hobbyists that Phillips had been influential, but not by encouraging others to develop a body of work that resembled her own.²³ In contrast, Phillips expected those who would follow her to use her book *Creative Knitting* as a starting point in a medium she believed was open to unlimited development; she hoped others would progress to new terrain in knitting as an art form, a design medium and a subject of scholarship.²⁴ In these aspirations she embodied the Cranbrook way of working as an artist in an ever-changing world.

In the Conclusion, Mary Walker Phillips's works, which are part of a number of notable museum collections, are considered as a reflection of her Cranbrook experience, and for their resonance with trends in contemporary fiber art, design, and recreational knitting. Phillips's primary contribution to knitting as an art form in the 1960s was to free it from its traditional associations with utility, domesticity, femininity and clothing. Many knitters found Phillips's lead hard to follow. A brief look at a few artists and designers whose work resonates with Phillips will include Piper Shepard (cut fabric), Debbie New (knitting) Niels van Eijk (bobbin lace lighting fixtures), Marcel Wanders (macramé and crochet chairs) and Veronik Avery and Kristi Schueler, who recently produced knitting patterns for lampshades and chair covers that recall Phillips's early work in knitting as a medium for interior design. These artists and designers openly convey in their work a sense of the fiber medium extending beyond clothing into fine art, architecture and other even more experimental realms, and they perpetuate Phillips's

interest in using novel and experimental materials as a basis for design in knitting and related single element techniques.

CHAPTER 1. CRANBROOK: “[A] RESEARCH INSTITUTION OF CREATIVE ART”²⁵

[I]f the teacher is a living artist, and if the student has natural gifts to become a living artist . . . [y]ou hardly need to teach him. He will find his path himself.

– Eliel Saarinen, American Institute of Architects Address,
San Antonio, Texas 1931

In order to establish how Phillips’s experience of studying at Cranbrook supported and influenced her growth as an artist, this chapter outlines the relevant events and ideas that shaped Cranbrook Academy of Art’s development as a leading school for art education, starting with an overview of Cranbrook’s origins, curriculum, and physical environment. The chapter then sets forth how the program in Weaving and Textiles evolved within the institution prior to Phillips’s arrival in 1946. With the institutional background as a backdrop, the thesis proceeds to an in-depth review of Phillips’s two periods of study at Cranbrook in the mid-1940s and the early 1960s.

Part 1. Founding the Cranbrook Academy of Art

Section 1. Origins of the Academy

According to Robert Judson Clark, writing on “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth Century Form,” in *Design in America: The Cranbrook Vision, 1925-1950*, the Cranbrook Academy of Art educational model came originally from the American Academy in Rome, which Cranbrook founder George Booth and his wife, Ellen Warren Scripps Booth (1863-1948), visited in 1922.²⁶ Eliel Saarinen confirmed this precedent in his “retrospective analysis” of the school in 1942.²⁷ As Clark described, Booth returned from his European travels inspired to construct an artist’s educational community in

Bloomfield Hills, Michigan along the lines of the program developed in Rome.²⁸ A brochure produced by the American Academy in 1915 that Clark referenced emphasized the program as one where “persons of advanced training” were “given every freedom for individual development” in conjunction with the opportunity to learn from their peers and from “members of the Faculty” through “informal contact” and “fellowship” rather than “a very rigid, prescribed course.”²⁹ Coupled with the desire to create an advanced school for the arts in Michigan was Booth’s own sense that young persons needed to be prepared at an early age to attend such a school, hence the Cranbrook complex of schools was designed to allow the lower schools to feed, ultimately, into the Academy of Art, which would include studios for fine and applied art, residences for artists and students, a library and a museum.³⁰ This was the concept that Booth outlined to Saarinen in 1924; the Cranbrook campus and the educational program they developed together over the next two decades initially blended Booth’s Arts and Crafts ideals, and his desire to elevate American education and culture through exposure to the arts, with those of the American Academy, and ultimately with Saarinen’s own more European and modern focus.³¹

In the late 1920s, the Cranbrook Academy of Art operated informally and more in the manner of a guild with “Master Artists” and their apprentices and students, if they had them, dedicating most of their time and effort to the construction of the facilities, or to their own private work if it was deemed “consistent with the general welfare of the Academy.”³² But where the founders of Rome’s American Academy chose the Janus as their symbol – a classical figurehead with two faces, one looking left and one right, that signaled a willingness to value the past in equal weight with the future – Cranbrook was soon oriented through Saarinen’s influence in a decidedly forward-looking posture.³³

Citing an unpublished manuscript by Eliel Saarinen, Davira S. Taragin, author of “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” Chapter 3 in *Design in America: The Cranbrook Vision, 1925-1950*, a scholarly publication that accompanied the landmark exhibition in 1983 of Cranbrook’s defining role in American modern art, architecture and design, Eliel Saarinen “never fully agreed with Booth’s concept of a master-apprentice situation at Cranbrook, and as early as 1925 . . . conceived of Cranbrook as a place where students would learn the fundamental principles of art so that they could develop a mode of artistic expression that would reflect modern existence.”³⁴ In an address he gave to the American Institute of Architects in 1931, the year before Cranbrook Academy of Art officially opened, Saarinen stated that a school should not teach theories of art, theories of proportion, theories of color, Greek form language, or style.³⁵ Rather he outlined the program for the school as follows:

The function of the school is to develop, besides technical and historical instruction, in the students:

1. Their artistic intuition.
2. Their sense for the spirit of the time.
3. Their instinct to translate the spirit of the time in an expressive architectural form.
4. Their sense for truth, ethics, and logic in architecture; and finally – their creative imagination. Creative because art is always creative in every moment and at every point. And the devil of copying has to be kept far from the schools.³⁶

In keeping with Booth’s and Saarinen’s broad social, spiritual, practical and aesthetic goals, Cranbrook’s program, from the first, envisioned all of the arts as unified in their importance and purpose with each other; architecture, which Saarinen characterized broadly as “the search for form,” was the organizing discipline because it “did not mean

the building only: it meant the whole world of forms for man's protection and accommodation," an organizing concept that for Saarinen, an urban planner, could apply to every room and its individual appointments and expand to include the "complex organism of the city."³⁷ The emphasis at Cranbrook on architecture as an organizing discipline simply stood for the premise that every artist was responsible for the development of original forms in his or her medium that were appropriate to modern life, rather than that perpetuated stale copies of what other artists had done in the past.

Saarinen's own preoccupation with the concept of form development echoed that of many of his proto-Modernist and Modernist contemporaries.³⁸ The similarity of his ideas to those of Walter Gropius, who founded the Bauhaus School, established in Germany in 1919, has been noted by other scholars.³⁹ Saarinen's fluency with the progressive intellectual currents of the day, as well as his personal connections with high profile European and American architects, artists and designers contributed significantly to the "pace-setting" character and the ensuing recognition of Cranbrook as a leading program in the arts.⁴⁰ A broad spectrum of ideas from the Arts and Crafts movement of William Morris and John Ruskin, to Art Nouveau, Finnish Jugendstil, German Expressionism, and most notably "the Deutsche Werkbund, the Wiener and Deutsche Werkstätten, and the Bauhaus," were clear in Saarinen's own writings of the period and were mirrored in the earliest course catalogues for the Academy, as well as in correspondence and reports Saarinen generated about and for the school.⁴¹ Both *The Search for Form: A Fundamental Approach to Art*, published in 1948, and *The City: Its Growth, Its Decay, Its Future*, published in 1943, were already in a manuscript form of some 568 pages by at least as early as 1934, and likely underpinned or paralleled the

development of the pedagogy, informal as it was, at the Academy; these writings by Saarinen do not belabor specific influences.⁴² It is possible that the time period in which Cranbrook came into being, and the patriotic nature and philanthropic interests of the patron who supported it, worked against placing too much emphasis on the European origins of the ideas that were put into play in the development of the school.

Eliel Saarinen, an established architect of considerable reputation in Finland, and his wife Loja Saarinen, a sculptor and designer, rose to prominence in Finland in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, initiating a style that became known in Finland as National Romanticism, and which developed a Finnish interpretation of the Arts and Crafts movement in both England and America; by the time they came to Cranbrook in the early 1920s they brought in their outlook and aesthetic something that was neither Arts and Crafts nor Modernism, but a synthesis of both from ideas that were in broad circulation at the time.⁴³ Most of Cranbrook's faculty in the early decades were Finnish or from other Scandinavian and Eastern European countries. These countries had been influenced heavily starting in the 1920s by the economy, simplicity, social responsibility and functionalism of International Modernism, including but not limited to Bauhaus design, which provided a new way to express cultural values that were already well-entrenched, but of these, Sweden, from where Cranbrook drew many of its weavers, was the most heavily influenced.⁴⁴ All the Scandinavian countries, who were somewhat nationalistic at this time, filtered the influence of International Modernism through regional interests and aesthetics; by the 1940s the style that developed from this assimilation was gaining recognition more broadly as "Scandinavian," wherein functionalism was married with a more regionally sensitive and organic character, as

expressed in the work of the noted Finnish designer and architect Alvar Aalto, for example.⁴⁵ Such an international cross-fertilization of ideas was an essential characteristic of Modernism in Europe and America in the early twentieth century and elsewhere, but it was focused and tempered at Cranbrook by Booth's and Saarinen's shared commitment to foster a quintessentially American contribution to art in an atmosphere where artists-in-residence and students "would carry on with their work, consistent with the greatest possible freedom to each."⁴⁶

Section 2. A Curriculum for Modern Artists in Modern Times

In 1932, the Academy of Art officially opened to students. As President of the Academy, Saarinen "assumed responsibility for the entire art program, including the crafts, the art library and the art museum, and he served in this post until 1946."⁴⁷

Saarinen also served as the Director of the Department of Architecture until his death in 1950. The first course catalogue listed an illustrious staff of resident artists and craftsmen: Eliel Saarinen, Architecture; Carl Milles, Sculpture; Loja Saarinen and Maja Wirde, Textiles; Waylande de Santis Gregory, Ceramic Sculpture; Pipsan Saarinen Swanson, Costume Design; Arthur Neville Kirk, Silver and Jewelry; Jean Eschmann, Bookbinding; Edward Alonzo Miller, Printing; and Zoltan Sepeshy and John Cunningham, Painting.⁴⁸ Herein, Saarinen set out objectives for the community of working artists at Cranbrook that bridged Arts and Crafts and Modernist ways of thinking about art, education, production and society. An explicit purpose of the school, as stated in the course catalogue, was its social and cultural mandate not only to be a "community of artists and craftsmen engaged in the execution of beautiful objects . . . [which was] regarded by some as the final goal of the Academy," because beautiful objects were not to be "an end in themselves;" but to produce, through its artists and craftsmen, "an

influence . . . upon the general art development and art understanding . . . to build up an art form expressing our time and culture.”⁴⁹ Further, Saarinen stated that although one-of-a-kind handmade objects were an integral part of the activity of Cranbrook artists-in-residence, “an important part of the Academy program [is] to produce a design that can be multiplied by machine.”⁵⁰ To that end, Cranbrook was committed to forging relationships with industry as a means of “develop[ing] good taste around the country.”⁵¹ As at the Bauhaus, the products of the “craft studios” were to be the focus of Cranbrook’s program for partnership with industry.⁵² And through Cranbrook’s program, designers, architects, artists and their students actually brought Bauhaus-like ideals of good design to a mass audience to fruition in America, albeit without any of the same adherence to developing a recognizable Cranbrook style in either form or ideology.⁵³

In keeping with the American Academy model so favored by Booth, a loose structure evolved that allowed Cranbrook students to watch and learn from working professionals, but with a sense of responsibility about engaging in their own research: “[T]he Academy is not constituted to become a school in the ordinary way. It is merely intended to become a community of working artists. . . . [A]rtistically talented young men and women may be brought to the institution, where in an atmosphere of creative thinking they may be inspired by following the work in the various studios and in being corrected and advised while executing their own problems.”⁵⁴ In articulating the institution’s commitment to research, experimentation and industrial production, Saarinen expressed the hope that the Academy would “grow into a research institution of creative Art.”⁵⁵ However, as some have noted, the concept of the student’s complete freedom to work in a discipline as he or she saw fit, and to bear the total responsibility for the

outcome of those efforts was “alien to American ideas of education,” and required an especially adventurous and independent type of student to take full advantage of the school’s program of study, even after certain basic requirements and methods of assessment were reluctantly imposed in the 1940s.⁵⁶

The robustness of this model in practice, however, was due in no small part to its essential compatibility with Saarinen’s own preferred method of working, developed during his years of architectural partnership in Finland with Armas Lindgren and Hermann Gesellius in their eponymous firm, “Gesellius, Lindgren and Saarinen,” which was active, roughly, from 1896-1910.⁵⁷ “Hvitträsk,” constructed by the partnership between about 1902 and 1904 outside of Helsinki on Lake Viitrask, was an artist’s community they built for their own use.⁵⁸ As Marika Hausen described it in *Eliel Saarinen: Projects 1896-1923*, it was an idyllic setting in which work and play were seamlessly blended:

Hvitträsk was closer to the concept of a “complete work of art” in that it was directly associated with the creative work going on in it . . . Unusual and systematic care was given to the detail. At Hvitträsk, work, social life and family life were inseparably one; the demands of privacy and intimacy were fitted in with open and semi-open conviviality. Many people have described the atmosphere at Hvitträsk, and they have all shown how easily the most impossible amounts of work done there merged into a relaxed social life.⁵⁹

Hvitträsk continued to be an important annual destination for the Saarinens after they moved to Cranbrook, and Cranbrook, for the Saarinens, was an extension of Hvitträsk, and their collegial life there, to a larger and more diverse community of artists, a more expansive landscape, and another generation.⁶⁰ Therefore, in balance with the scientific language so prevalent in the day, Cranbrook, through the Saarinens, also stood for a

creative life in balance with the community and with nature that validated and perpetuated Booth's own Arts and Crafts ideals.⁶¹

As he articulated in *The Search for Form*, and in his other writings, Saarinen's worldview reflected an intense spirituality; his pedagogy was detached yet humane, and he valued the child-like joy and spontaneity of learning to build and to create from "intuition," "instinct," and "imagination."⁶² Saarinen repeatedly abjured what he considered "the devil of copying and imitation" of past forms, and stated his belief that it was an essential aspect of discovering "the form of our time" to "be in touch with as much as possible the creative spirit of our youth."⁶³ Finally, Saarinen believed deeply in the value of work, and the link between work and creativity.⁶⁴ He believed hands-on experience in solving problems was the best teacher.⁶⁵ One of Saarinen's most important contributions to the success of the Academy was that he brought all of his beliefs and ideas, whatever their origins in his own education and experience, to bear upon the design, construction, and educational mission of the Academy in a deeply personal and emphatic way.⁶⁶ "Architecture" was the organizing discipline, but it was the practice of it by Saarinen's example that really set the curriculum of the school; his approach was grounded in "a consistent attitude toward place and materials," and "a pragmatic rather than an intellectual approach" that "safeguarded both values of personal expression and the public good."⁶⁷ As Clark related, Carl Feiss, one former student of Saarinen's in the Architecture department in 1932-33 recalled:

'Eliel was constantly wandering in and out. He never gave what . . . would be called a 'crit.' Our relationships were different. His genius as a teacher was to make it appear that he believed that we knew as much about architecture as he did. The only differences were in kinds of experiences and points of view. Since we knew that was nonsense, we

did everything we could to prove that it wasn't nonsense. The result was that we all worked harder and learned more in our few years at Cranbrook than ever before (or probably after)⁶⁸

Feiss's recollections are important to note here, because his description of the artist-in-residence as disengaged and respectful of another's creative process echoed through the recollections of so many individuals associated with Cranbrook over the years that it seems one of the truest hallmarks of a Cranbrook education. Further, Saarinen's approach was implemented, either intentionally or by a self-selecting process of recruiting others with a similar worldview, by the instructors in the school, and thereby imparted, also by example, to the students. In fact, Saarinen viewed Cranbrook as an organic system that would evolve physically and creatively with each succeeding generation.⁶⁹

Section 3. Cranbrook's Landscape and Architecture: "A Total Work of Art"

The Art Academy, with its Library and Museum (1926-1942) was constructed as part of a larger complex of schools that included the Brookside School (elementary, 1923-1930s), Cranbrook School for Boys and Kingswood School for Girls (two preparatory schools, 1926-28 and 1930-31, respectively), an Institute of Science (1930-38), and Christ Church Cranbrook (a Protestant Episcopal church, 1925-28).⁷⁰ In the design and construction of the campus, with its several schools and institutions, Eliel Saarinen had attempted to represent the concept of a *gesamtkunstwerk* or "a total work of art" where all aspects of the architectural environment, from its geographical setting to its design, construction, and interior appointments reflected an organic whole that related directly to its ultimate purpose.⁷¹ This concept, derived from Richard Wagner (1813-1883), and defined by scholar Virginia Gardner Troy as "the synthesis of art and life as a condition of modernity," was popular first during the Arts and Crafts movement, and it

continued to influence expressions of Modernism in Europe and America at least up to the 1960s.⁷²

The design and construction of the Academy of Art buildings, including the faculty studios and residences followed that of the adjacent Cranbrook School for Boys, and was an homage to the medieval style, built of brick, with mullioned windows, and organized around intimate courts, archways and quadrangles.⁷³ At the Cranbrook School, Saarinen created a playful mix of architectural styles in the ornaments and appointments. Irreverent gargoyles coexist merrily with the elegant geometry of a Vienna Secession-inspired cupola and a monumental and arresting pergola that blended the vocabulary of the Vienna Secession and Expressionism in an original design lexicon that would later characterize the architecture of the Kingswood School for Girls. Figures 8-11.

Archways, engraved with mottoes embrace and instruct. Figure 12. The Cranbrook School dining hall is one of the most notable structures, deftly harmonizing medieval structure with an interior that recalls the Vienna Secession for an effect that is at once grand and understated. Figure 13. The Art Academy buildings retain many features of the lower school's eclectic decorative scheme. Throughout both the adjoining schools, which are separated by Academy Way, Saarinen worked a variety of rhythmic patterns into the brickwork of the walls and walkways and into the dark wood of the doors. Gates feature decorative ironwork, the patterns in the mullioned windows change for every structure, and columns and archways, both freestanding and structural, reflect an international language of styles and periods, from Gothic to Byzantine to Romanesque to Vienna Secession, to name just a few. Throughout this part of the campus, the sense of intimacy was enhanced by beautifully appointed pedestrian walkways, with gardens,

fountains, arches and colonnades all carefully constructed to surprise and engage the pedestrian. Figures 14-17. The imaginative sculptures of Carl Milles are highlighted throughout the Cranbrook School, the Art Academy, and the Museum and Library complex. Figure 18. Beyond the softened brick of the Cranbrook school, the Saarinen and Milles residences, and the studios, the Art Academy campus gave way to more utilitarian-looking brick structures, including garages and dormitories. Figures 19-24.

The attention devoted to the architecture and appointments of the Art Library and Art Museum indicated their importance within the Art Academy's educational scheme. The circular Orpheus Fountain and the cascading rectangular reflecting pools of the Library and Museum complex clearly suggest Versailles in their form and arrangement, but are vastly simplified, scaled down and modernized, and ornamented, again, with the distinctively contemporary sculptures of Carl Milles. Figures 25-26. Completed in 1942, the structures are in a modernized classical style reminiscent of the Vienna Secession and are constructed in a warm yellow colored Mankato limestone, with magnificent doors of bronze that bear a unique design from Saarinen's imaginative lexicon.⁷⁴ Figure 27. The Booth family had generously donated a substantial collection of books and objects to endow the Library and Museum. Although Cranbrook advocated a hands-on approach to work, the Library housed "more than 7,000 volumes," which were regularly augmented with current publications.⁷⁵ The interior of the Library shows the functionalist influence of International Modernism. Figure 28. The Museum housed, in addition to the many items donated by the Booth family (including a collection of historic textiles), notable student and faculty work, as well as continued acquisitions of works by other contemporary artists, and a progressive and busy exhibition schedule.⁷⁶

The Kingswood School stood apart from the Cranbrook School and Art Academy on a different area of the campus. Figures 29-30. Considered the finest achievement of the Saarinen family since all the family members collaborated on the project, it synthesized the sophisticated decorative vocabulary of the Vienna Secession, the vibrant heritage of contemporized Scandinavian folk culture in many of the textiles and interior appointments, the fanciful Art Nouveau delicacy of filigreed metal work, the clean lines and stepped skyscraper motifs of Art Deco, the industrial overtones of Expressionism, and the landscape-hugging horizontal sprawl of the vernacular Prairie style so suitable to the expansive terrain of the Midwest into an integrated whole. Its tremendous scale and the seamless elegance and appropriateness of every detail of its design and construction made the Kingswood School a totally distinctive architectural entity.⁷⁷ As testimony to the importance of the textile tradition at Cranbrook, the Kingswood School maintained a number of looms, upon which the noted Swedish weaver, Lillian Holm, instructed several generations of young girls.⁷⁸

Part 2. History of Weaving and Textiles at Cranbrook

The weaving program, and its evolution at Cranbrook, is most closely associated with two influential individuals: Loja Saarinen and Marianne Strengell. Phillips's own innovative approach to knitting as a form of architectural expression shows she was deeply familiar with and sympathetic to the Cranbrook legacy of textiles as fundamentally related to architecture through the work of Loja Saarinen and Eliel Saarinen, whom she certainly knew, and Marianne Strengell, with whom she had studied directly, although it was not until Glen Kaufman took over the department that Phillips began to explore knitting as an alternative medium to weaving. Kaufman succeeded Strengell in 1961 and continued to head the program until 1967, but within a few years he

transformed the program in accordance with his own interests and those reflected in the broader cultural environment of the 1950s and 1960s into one where fabric design in all its diversity of techniques, including off-loom or non-woven techniques, was featured, although weaving was still available as a course of study.⁷⁹

Section 1. Studio Loja Saarinen: The Genesis of Weaving at Cranbrook

Loja Saarinen, Eliel Saarinen's talented wife, had learned to weave in Finland, where she was also formally trained as a sculptor and a designer; it was primarily as a textile designer rather than as a teacher that she undertook the role of managing the Weaving Department as an adjunct to the production activities of Studio Loja Saarinen, established in 1928.⁸⁰ Figures 31. At the Studio, Loja Saarinen oversaw tremendous production in weaving, and with a team of professional weavers, her Studio produced most of the extraordinary textiles for which Cranbrook interiors are justly famed. Figure 32. Loja and Eliel Saarinen designed many of these textiles jointly; professional Swedish weavers Loja Saarinen hired to work for her designed others.⁸¹ Loja Saarinen's work throughout her life was associated with the finest in materials, design and workmanship, a distinction that Phillips's works would also exhibit.⁸² From the first these textiles, both utilitarian and decorative, were part of the "*gesamtkunstwerk*" of the school, original to the architectural settings there, and were benchmarks of the various roles that textiles could play in interior settings.⁸³ Figures 33-34. Cranbrook students understood that these textiles were deservedly famous, even if their work under Strengell represented different ideas about the function and aesthetics of contemporary textiles.⁸⁴

Regarding the Weaving Department, it is clear from a contract between Loja Saarinen, "a resident craftsman," and the Cranbrook Academy of Art dated December 30, 1932 that commission work, whether for Cranbrook or for other paying clients, would be

more of a focus of Loja Saarinen's professional efforts than teaching.⁸⁵ In fact, as she was empowered to hire whatever staff she felt was necessary, and as the Cranbrook course catalogues for other years the 1930s show, Loja Saarinen hired instructors for the Weaving Department to do the teaching for her – first Maja Wirde, then Lillian Holm.⁸⁶ She was to receive ninety percent of the fees paid by students who wished to study with her in the Weaving Department, whether or not she taught them herself.⁸⁷ Wirde was an accomplished designer from Sweden whose salary was paid in equal portions by Loja Saarinen and the Cranbrook Academy of Art.⁸⁸ When she was hired in 1929, it is probable that in addition to her duties as a designer and a production weaver, that she augmented Loja Saarinen's own training in the art of weaving as well as instructed any other students in the newly created Weaving Department, an adjunct to the Studio.⁸⁹ Hence Loja Saarinen and Maja Andersson Wirde received equal billing in the first course catalogue, their names appearing side by side and followed by the department identifier, "Textiles."⁹⁰

According to Christa C. Mayer Thurman, who authored the chapter on textiles in *Design in America: The Cranbrook Vision 1925-1950*, Maja Wirde was expert in a weaving technique perfected by the Swedish association, "Foereningen Handarbetets Vänner" or "The Friends of Handicrafts," where it was in use as early as 1905.⁹¹ In this technique, known as "H.V. technique," which was used widely at Cranbrook, "a pattern was introduced by discontinuous wefts; [and] colored threads . . . through inlay."⁹² This technique "was quicker and cheaper than tapestry weaving and also produced materials that could withstand heavy use."⁹³ Further, it also produced a relatively sheer and reversible fabric that worked well for curtains.⁹⁴ Curtains made from such sheer fabrics

hung in front of the many decorative windows in Cranbrook's buildings to create an almost symphonic interplay of architectural effects – that of the window itself, that of the weaving with its structures and patterns revealed, that of the reflected light through glass and fabric on the surfaces of the room, and finally, the way in which the window and fabric formalized the view of the landscape beyond. Figure 35. The Saarinens, who from their early years in Finland assiduously promoted the “habitat as a total work of art” worked to achieve these interdependencies of textiles, architecture and landscape throughout the campus.⁹⁵ Phillips's later work in knitting reflected similar interests, as the comparison of woven curtains from Saarinen House and knitted curtains from Phillips's apartment in New York show. Figure 36.

Owing to the financial difficulties of the Great Depression, after 1932 the teaching staff at Cranbrook was reduced.⁹⁶ From 1934-1936, only Saarinen, President and Director of the Department of Architecture; Milles, Resident Sculptor; Sepeshy, Resident Painter; Loja Saarinen, In Charge of the Department of Weaving; and Pipsan Swanson (Eliel and Loja Saarinen's talented daughter), Costume and Interior Design, remained.⁹⁷ At that time, the Weaving Department was still heavily engaged in producing the textiles commissioned for the Cranbrook complex of buildings and schools and by outside clients.⁹⁸ Swanson had a busy career with her husband in their architectural and interiors business and taught only briefly at Cranbrook.⁹⁹ According to the catalogue, the educational function of the Academy became even more loosely construed at that time: “There is no regular scholastic year at the Academy. The selected students may enter at any time and stay until they have completed their work. There are no scheduled vacations, the students being free to devote as much of their time to their work as they

desire. The courses in painting drawing and modeling are in session only from September to June.”¹⁰⁰ Further, because the curriculum was one of self-directed study, there was no formal prospectus of what students would learn if they came to study with the artists-in-residence. The “craft shops” for those who wished to come to Cranbrook from 1934-1936 featured “ceramics, silver, metal, wood, and other materials.”¹⁰¹ For these years, although Loja Saarinen was still listed as “In Charge of the Department of Weaving,” without instructors to teach weaving students, the study of textiles was apparently lumped into “other materials.”

In 1936-1937, the course catalogue announced the founding of an “Intermediate School,” which would be “completely separate” from the “advanced departments,” and which would serve to educate students who were insufficiently qualified to enter those departments, as well as increase revenue to the school.¹⁰² The advanced departments were identified as Architecture, Sculpture and Painting. In the Intermediate School, Weaving was offered, with Loja Saarinen identified as “In Charge of the Department,” and Lillian Holm as “Instructor.”¹⁰³ Other offerings included Design (William W. Comstock), Drawing and Painting (Wallace Mitchell), Silver and Metal Work (Charles D. Price), Modeling and Ceramics (Marshall Fredericks).¹⁰⁴ A brief description accompanying each of these areas of study indicated the students would receive input from instructors in the form of “criticisms.” For example, the weaving curriculum was described as follows: “[i]nstruction to a limited number of students in the principles of the design and weaving of contemporary rugs and textiles. Three afternoon criticisms per week.” “Design,” which was offered for the first time in the Intermediate School, was described as the precursor to advanced study in architecture, and so it was linked at Cranbrook from the

beginning with the school's governing discipline. With the publication of the curriculum for the Intermediate School in 1937, the Cranbrook Academy of Art course offerings began to look much more like the program that Phillips would attend in 1946, however, Cranbrook could not be said to have a "curriculum" in the usual meaning of that word until the 1940s, when state accreditation forced some compromises in the overall approach to education and required the school to develop policies and procedures for instructors to verify attendance and measure the competency of the students in their subject areas commensurate with other competitive, accredited, degree-granting institutions.¹⁰⁵

Section 2. Marianne Strengell: Weaving and Textiles for a New Generation

A. Developing a Modern Curriculum in Weaving and Textiles

In 1937, Marianne Strengell, an accomplished professional weaver and designer from Finland, and the daughter of Gustaf Strengell, a long-standing friend, professional colleague, and sometime competitor of Eliel Saarinen, arrived at Cranbrook at Saarinen's invitation.¹⁰⁶ Strengell had a degree from the "Central School of Industrial Art 'Athenaeum' in Helsinki, Finland," where she had studied with Elsa Gullberg, a noted Swedish textile artist; further she had expertise in designing for the power loom and an impressive resume of participation in numerous international exhibitions.¹⁰⁷ Strengell brought a more contemporary, utilitarian, and functional interpretation of the textile to Cranbrook than that espoused by Loja Saarinen and the earlier generation of Swedish weavers.¹⁰⁸ Through Strengell, Scandinavian modern design – with its particular sensibilities about clear, soft colors; organic forms using subtle, natural materials; and its debts to Functionalism and Constructivism – came to the Weaving and Textiles program at Cranbrook.¹⁰⁹ When Strengell arrived, there were about six students whom she

characterized as “hobby girls/ladies.”¹¹⁰ At that time, the weaving students were mixed in with the professional weavers that Loja Saarinen directed.¹¹¹ Strengell came at the express request of Eliel Saarinen – “that was Eliel’s golden opportunity to get me in” – to replace the Swedish weaver Lillian Holm who had been teaching the student weavers at both the Academy of Art and the Kingswood School from 1934 until her departure.¹¹² Strengell’s recollections demonstrate how carefully Saarinen cultivated relationships with Cranbrook’s early generation of instructors, many of whom, at first, came from Finland and other Scandinavian countries. In an interview conducted by Mark Coir, former Director of the Cranbrook Archives, Strengell stated that she was of “about the same age” as Eero Saarinen, Eliel and Loja Saarinen’s son, and that her family was always very close to the Saarinen family. Eliel Saarinen had first personally expressed his hope that Strengell would someday teach at Cranbrook when she was only thirteen years old, and had followed this up, as she recalled, by “writing me from Cranbrook and telling me in beautiful letters what he was doing and what he was thinking. . . . And our friendship just grew. We were very, very good friends. And that continued until the day he died.”¹¹³

In 1937-1938, Strengell began to teach in the Intermediate School as the “Instructor of Weaving and Costume Design.” After Strengell’s arrival, the weaving program became more clearly defined in its focus of study, as the course catalogue for 1937 indicates: “[T]he student is given instruction in the design and execution of contemporary textiles including rugs, drapery fabrics, dress materials, etc. Emphasis is placed upon the design, although its successful execution on hand looms is a necessary part of the instruction. The course is excellent for those who wish to become instructors of weaving or to pursue the craft as a hobby.”¹¹⁴ By 1940, Strengell had phased out the

costume design and dressmaking aspects of the textile program and had focused the curriculum entirely upon weaving.¹¹⁵ That year, she amended the earlier course description in a small but important way: she promised the course would be excellent not only for hobby weavers, but for aspiring professionals as well.¹¹⁶ She had at her disposal sixteen looms from 28” to 40” in width.¹¹⁷ During the time she was an Instructor in the Weaving Department, Strengell worked without direct supervision from Loja Saarinen, even though the course catalogues continued to observe the formality of Loja Saarinen’s title as “In Charge of the Department of Weaving”: “I never worked for Loja, no. . . . She was very great about it. She was very nice. She accepted me as if she liked what I did. And she never mixed in – she never said a word about my work. Good or bad.”¹¹⁸

In 1942, Cranbrook Academy of Art received “from the State of Michigan a charter of incorporation as an institution of higher learning [with] the privilege of granting academic degrees.”¹¹⁹ Cranbrook officially launched a graduate studies program that included the Weaving Department along with the other disciplines. This change came only after considerable soul-searching at all levels of the institution, and was taken up with a sense of making a necessary compromise.¹²⁰ Cranbrook adopted new measures of accountability with extreme reluctance, as the course catalogues throughout the 1940s clearly convey: “Whatever subsequent changes may have occurred in the educational progress of the Academy since its foundation, the . . . spirit of its educational philosophy remains unchanged.”¹²¹

In envisioning a new direction for the school, Saarinen reiterated his earlier aspiration that Cranbrook “be made as little as possible of a regular school character, and – besides the academic studies – as much as possible of research and work character.”¹²²

Further, the CAA Course Announcement for 1942 reaffirmed Cranbrook's institutional commitment to the unity of all the arts: "[A]rt is all-inclusive, and embraces architecture, sculpture, painting, the crafts, design, and all things which develop taste and reach toward achievement."¹²³ As part of this change, or in concert with it, Loja Saarinen was asked to retire as head of the Department of Weaving effective in January of 1943, and Strengell took her place.¹²⁴

Given that Saarinen had been grooming Strengell to teach at Cranbrook since she was thirteen, and that after five years, she had successfully transformed the program from one for hobby weavers to one for aspiring professionals, it is possible to consider that the transfer of power from Loja Saarinen to Marianne Strengell was anticipated, at some point, by all parties, as Strengell's recollections seem to indicate:

M. Coir: When you arrived and you were given this opportunity, did Eliel tell you what he was aiming at for the Academy? What he was trying to do?

M. Strengell: He had told me that over all the years he wrote me.

M. Coir: And what were the things he was trying to do at Cranbrook?

M. Strengell: Well, he was trying to pass his wisdom to other people, and he encouraged them to do good work, you know.¹²⁵

Clearly this change in circumstances was painful for Loja Saarinen, who wrote several letters to George Booth asking for clarification regarding her responsibilities.¹²⁶ In one such letter she stated unequivocally that while the students were learning useful skills under Strengell's instruction, they were not capable of creating the caliber of textiles that Cranbrook had become famous for through her work: "[t]he good reputation and influence our Weaving Department has had throughout the country is, to the greatest part

due to the large and durable things from my studio.”¹²⁷ Another real difficulty for her at this time was the lack of commissions for the Studio, with which she had always been primarily occupied.¹²⁸ In any case, when the educational mission of the school also succeeded as its primary source of revenue, it was perhaps not possible for Loja Saarinen to preserve her role in the Weaving Department when teaching the weaving students had always been secondary to her work in the Studio.¹²⁹ And in the new era of wool shortages, synthetics, and machine-made fabrics for every use, Strengell, with her background in power loom weaving, was the clear choice for the future.¹³⁰ It would be at least a decade before an interest in pictorial weaving would re-emerge to influence Phillips’s work in knitting.¹³¹ In the interim, Strengell’s plan for textile education at Cranbrook was directed toward developing broad commercial and industrial applications for the artist’s handmade prototypes, but it is important to note that Strengell also perpetuated in her own commission work for clients outside Cranbrook Loja Saarinen’s focus on creating original and beautiful custom hand made textiles for specific architectural environments.¹³² In so doing, Strengell oversaw an era in which the broader goals of Cranbrook’s mission were realized in the marketplace – the achievements of the founders and the first generation of Cranbrook graduates were in demand as designers and makers of the new domestic and corporate identities.¹³³

B. The Department of Weaving and Textiles at Cranbrook, 1944-1961

Art teaching which is based on examples of historical forms or on theories derived from them encourages imitation, whereas dwelling in an atmosphere of creation inspires the mind to creation and to a creative understanding of Art.

In other words: Art cannot be taught, it must be learned.

-- Eliel Saarinen, CAA Announcement, 1933

The home or hobby weaver . . . makes a big mistake [in using] weaving books, old patterns, haphazard advice . . . [T]he net result is . . . a piece of weaving that had utterly nothing to do with themselves. . . My suggestions are just the opposite. I like the home or hobby weaver to rely entirely on her own taste, strength and personality.

--Marianne Strengell

The Cranbrook course catalogues show Strengell was first listed as the Director of the Weaving Department in 1944.¹³⁴ Figure 37. Strengell chose to define the program under her leadership differently from Loja Saarinen. Strengell's view of the textile as "another building material" rather than as a decorative tour de force showed that attitudes about the role of textile in architecture had changed from that which the Saarinens' work at Kingswood School had represented, but that "[a]ttitudes regarding the collaborative relationship between weavers and architects were [still] well established at Cranbrook."¹³⁵ Strengell's style of teaching, however, closely followed Eliel Saarinen in spirit and purpose; there are many similarities in their approach. First, like Saarinen, Strengell's tone was compassionate and direct.¹³⁶ In her writing about the weaving curriculum at Cranbrook, she demonstrated enthusiasm for her field and empathy for the students and their difficulties in learning something new: "The students should get the feeling right away that they can master the loom, by learning the fundamentals the first day and should never feel victimized by the equipment."¹³⁷ She had an efficient and well-thought-out process for getting students to move ahead with their own program of design as quickly as possible: "In six weeks, during our summer school, we teach the students to a degree where they can start earning their living AND contributing to good taste, craftsmanship, etc."¹³⁸ She articulated a clear preference for doing rather than for study: "I do not care a bit about academic education, nor former crafts study, as this only

means some confusion. They are better off with absolutely no previous experience, which means they have nothing to undo and can launch right into the very simplified teaching I advocate. The same goes for art study, I do not like the students to look up things in the library etc. I want them, most emphatically to do their own thinking and creating, without outside sources.”¹³⁹ Experimentation, problem-solving, research and analysis were matters of daily engagement for Strengell in her own work, and the Weaving curriculum was designed to encourage students to do the same: “To me, in all textiles, the constant and endless experimentation in dyes, weaves, yarns, fibers, in spinning, twisting, printing, tie dyeing and batik, the challenges and the endless possible solutions, are what makes textile design an exciting and all inspiring work, with each day fresh and deeply satisfying.”¹⁴⁰

Strengell’s students learned to weave many different types of fabrics, starting in each case with small 6 x 6” samples to test various materials and ideas, and then moving to larger finished pieces of approximately three yards, considered the standard exhibition length, and “where the finishing touches are important, the evenness of the weaving, the excellence of the edges, etc.”¹⁴¹ Strengell expected students to keep notebooks and to systematically record the results of their experiments for future reference.¹⁴² In learning to make rugs, for example, students mastered several techniques: all pile, pile executed from a design drawing, part flossa which featured a raised design on a flat ground, sculptured pile with high and low variations from cut and uncut flossa, and finally “a free personal sample choosing various aspects of the above techniques and utilizing them in a personal manner.”¹⁴³ Students progressed from rugs to upholstery, drapery, suiting and linens, and they learned to employ the different conventions of construction (weaves) for

each type of fabric, to assess and select the best materials, and to demonstrate the appropriate methods for finishing each fabric for optimal aesthetic effect and performance.¹⁴⁴ Strengell taught color, a key aspect of fabric design, also through individual experimentation: “[t]he colors are studied in a practical manner, by starting right away dyeing their own yarns and getting individuality into their work that way. We almost always use white or natural yarns, and either piece- or yarn- dye them. This sharpens the students’ perception of color tremendously.”¹⁴⁵ In addition to dyeing their fibers for use in weaving, students also learned spinning, tie-dyeing and batik.¹⁴⁶ Finally, students learned merchandising, and how to present their samples and finished pieces for review and exhibition at the student shows.¹⁴⁷ Figure 38. After “a short general course,” which covered about two years, students were free to follow their interests in the field with further specialized study.¹⁴⁸

In 1942, Strengell first organized the program, as articulated above, into three increments (generally the first year covered making rugs and a variety of fabrics by hand; the second year focused on a range of skills associated with designing for the power loom (with actual practice on this equipment starting in 1945) and merchandising, and the third year emphasized independent research.¹⁴⁹ Over the succeeding years of her tenure at Cranbrook, the essence of the program appears not to have changed significantly.¹⁵⁰ Strengell insured that Cranbrook students had an opportunity to experience every aspect of the discipline from design to construction to marketing, and to make a variety of original fabrics suitable for different specified uses on looms ranging in size, function, and complexity from small hand looms to the power loom.¹⁵¹ As part of the graduation requirements, starting in 1942, M.F.A. students in Weaving prepared a thesis; B.F.A.

students were also required to submit a “short thesis” as early as 1944.¹⁵² As in the Architecture Department, advanced students in Weaving, as in virtually every other discipline, were expected to conduct independent research on a subject or subjects of their choice as a basis for their thesis.¹⁵³ By 1945, with the advent of the student shows each year, students were also required to formally exhibit their work in their major and minor subjects; this included constructing any necessary frames, armatures and mountings.¹⁵⁴

Also in 1942, the number of hand looms available to the students of the Academy increased from sixteen to thirty.¹⁵⁵ According to Christa C. Mayer Thurman, “[t]he type of loom [typically] used at Cranbrook was designed in 1936 by John P. Bexell, a talented cabinetmaker and the husband of one of Loja Saarinen’s weavers. It was lightweight and could be operated easily. In 1945 at Loja’s suggestion this loom was named the Cranbrook loom. It was patented and is still being manufactured today.”¹⁵⁶ Jane Patrick, in an on-line article for *Handwoven Magazine* echoed the utility of the Cranbrook loom: “The sturdy counter-march . . . is ideal for any weaving requiring high warp tension (such as rugs), fabrics with dense warps (such as warp rep) or fabrics with sticky, fine, or mixed warp fibers.”¹⁵⁷ Of interest, Jack Lenor Larsen and Azalea Stewart Thorpe, both former students at Cranbrook under Strengell, pronounced the “contremarche loom” as “a poor choice for teaching purposes” because it was difficult to set up, although “[s]ome skilled weavers prefer [it] to any other.”¹⁵⁸ However, Ed Rossbach, who attended Cranbrook in the 1940s with Phillips, stated that the loom was the ideal piece of equipment for the Scandinavian style of weaving that Cranbrook became noted for under Strengell.¹⁵⁹

Strengell had a professional career quite independent of her teaching duties at Cranbrook, in keeping with Saarinen's and Booth's desire that resident artists work in the discipline in which they were teaching. Strengell worked for numerous notable clients, including industrial designers like Raymond Loewy and Russel Wright; manufacturers like Knoll Associates, Cabin Crafts, Chatham Manufacturing Company, Owens Corning Fiberglas Co.; and architects like Eero Saarinen (for whom she developed custom fabrics for the General Motors Technical Center complex), her husband, Olaf Hammerstrom, and many others.¹⁶⁰ In addition to the fabrics she developed for industrial manufacture, Strengell designed many fabrics to be custom-woven by hand, for the production of which, like Loja Saarinen, she employed local weavers.¹⁶¹ According to Ed Rossbach, "[h]andweaving was considered stylish and prestigious not only in private interiors but also in corporate structures."¹⁶² After she left Cranbrook, her successor Glen Kaufman also employed some of these same local weavers to produce his work.¹⁶³

Students responded differently to Strengell's absorption in her work as an independent professional textile designer, which at times must have been pressing. Despite the clearly defined curriculum she had implemented, the Weaving program at Cranbrook was relatively unstructured and was better suited to advanced and mature students who, like Phillips, were disciplined and could pace themselves.¹⁶⁴ As her writings about the Weaving program confirm, Strengell believed, like Saarinen, that Cranbrook students should learn to develop independently; she did not actively encourage the students to imitate her style.¹⁶⁵ Ed Rossbach, M.F.A 1947, recalled Strengell as somewhat secretive, claiming "[s]he did not allow students to visit her studio or see her weavings or to know her as an artist."¹⁶⁶ Strengell did not typically involve the

students in working with her on outside commissions.¹⁶⁷ She may also have been cautious about competition from students because she was reported to have been reluctant to share the sources for her materials.¹⁶⁸ Strengell maintained a separate studio space located at the back of the weaving studio used by the students, but every day, several times during the day, she passed through the main studio where the students worked, and it was at that time that students were encouraged to approach her with questions and to discuss their work informally.¹⁶⁹ Strengell also arranged regular meetings with the students as individuals and in groups, and her support and approval was important for any independent project, such as a thesis.¹⁷⁰ Where Ed Rossbach found Strengell virtually inaccessible in the late 1940s, others found her interested and supportive. Ted Hallman graduated from Cranbrook in the late 1950s; Glen Kaufman, a classmate of Hallman's recalls his work, in which plexiglass forms were suspended in a woven structure, as very unconventional for the Weaving Department at that time.¹⁷¹ Hallman recalled that Strengell was available to him whenever he expressed a need for her opinion, and he had only to arrange to be at the loom when she passed through the studio, which happened several times each day at predictable intervals, to solicit her undivided attention. He also warmly recalled her as "[t]he great support person for all of us" who "kept morale at a peak."¹⁷² His work, which was so different from many of his contemporaries in the Weaving Department, also testified to the fact that Strengell, true to her word, maintained a fair degree of openness to diverse interpretations of the weaving curriculum. Adela Akers, who graduated in the 1960s, recalled that Strengell was particularly welcoming to foreign students, for whom she hosted dinners in her home.¹⁷³ Strengell and her husband

Olaf Hammerstrom also spoke of her efforts to foster collegiality among the students in the various departments at the Academy.¹⁷⁴

As a textile designer, Strengell was known for a recognizably Scandinavian modern aesthetic that favored simplicity enlivened by the judicious use of “clean pure colors as accents in a mass of quiet, soothing shades.”¹⁷⁵ Strengell incorporated metallic fibers, bright colors and textures in her work, but she “favored textures and colors that complimented wooden surfaces,” and the controlled, restrained and uncluttered look of her fabrics differed markedly other noted designers of the period who often combined a cacophony of colors, textures and fibers into the same showy fabric.¹⁷⁶ Like Loja Saarinen, whose fabrics and decorative textiles were designed and constructed for a particular architectural space, Strengell, while eschewing the art weaving that Loja Saarinen so excelled at, and which to a certain extent had become passé, still looked to architecture to guide her in the design and construction of textiles woven for interior use.¹⁷⁷ Rather than subscribing to the theory of the textile as a dominant aesthetic element in a room, Strengell developed structural textiles that could function most practically, aesthetically, and even unassumingly as the “building materials” for the contemporary interior space, just as the glass, steel, brick and reinforced concrete constituted the building materials for the structure that contained them.¹⁷⁸ She saw herself, in effect, as the architect, engineer, contractor and even the psychologist of the textile.¹⁷⁹ Strengell articulated her role as one of working within “a framework of limitations” that was determined by all the relevant factors for each project, both practical and emotional, which included “price range, raw material, available labor, dyes, personalities involved and many other basic problems.”¹⁸⁰ Within these limitations,

Strengell was inspired to create original and beautiful fabrics that satisfied the requirements of function and taste for each particular application. The work provided her, as the designer, a satisfying role: “The joy of creating is there every minute.”¹⁸¹

Although Strengell herself designed primarily for industry and for architectural uses, and had focused the weaving curriculum at Cranbrook to impart the necessary skills to those who would follow her, she was open to all possibilities for her students and did not expect them to pursue the path she had chosen, stating that a career choice in the field “was a very personal thing.”¹⁸² For those who chose custom hand weaving, she advocated specializing, as Phillips eventually did, in certain discrete types of fabrics to maximize efficiencies.¹⁸³ Hence, Strengell’s curriculum prepared the Cranbrook weaver to exercise individual interests and abilities from a basis of competency in designing and producing all types of fabrics that maximized his or her future career choices and opportunities, and Phillips was an excellent example of someone who put Strengell’s instruction to good use, especially in knitting, in a very personal and original manner. Further, because Phillips was also familiar with the work of Loja Saarinen, as were all of the students who studied at Cranbrook, the decorative and formal possibilities for weaving and other fiber techniques were all around her, even if they were not directly covered in Strengell’s curriculum.¹⁸⁴

CHAPTER 2. MARY WALKER PHILLIPS AND THE CRANBROOK EXPERIENCE

Part 1. The Early Years

Section 1. Traditional Tastes and Contemporary Influences

Mary Walker Phillips was born in Fresno, California on November 23, 1923 into a prominent family whose roots can be traced to pioneer days, an appropriate beginning for a woman who became well recognized as “pioneer” herself in using knitting as an artistic medium.¹⁸⁵ Both the maternal and paternal branches of Phillips’s family had prospered in the Fresno area over several generations through hard work, advanced education, circumspect living, and generosity to neighbors and the community.¹⁸⁶

Phillips was the third of four children.¹⁸⁷ Phillips’s father, John Pressley Phillips, was a dairy farmer and later a minority partner in Federal Fruit Distributors of Fresno.¹⁸⁸

Phillips’s mother, Ruth Anderson Phillips, a social force in Fresno, appreciated the arts and was sensitive to the beneficial influences of culture. Ruth Phillips was renowned for her exquisite, conservative taste, which Mary Walker Phillips shared, for her gracious manner, for her talents as a classical pianist and hostess, and as a generous and lifelong benefactor of the arts in Fresno, a small, cultured city south of San Francisco, where visiting artists like Beverly Sills often found themselves at post-performance receptions in the Phillips family home.¹⁸⁹

Ruth Phillips’s example of refinement, and the many opportunities she had as a child to explore her interests in music and art were critical for Phillips in developing her artistic sensibilities, and were considered important indicators of success for Cranbrook students.¹⁹⁰ Like her mother, Phillips enjoyed playing piano; she was also an accomplished violinist, and was a member of the City School and State College

Symphonies in Fresno.¹⁹¹ Before she attended Cranbrook, Phillips indulged her love of music on the weekends and during school vacations by selling records at Sherman Clay in Fresno.¹⁹² Sherman Clay, established in 1870, was a dealer of fine musical instruments and related paraphernalia; originally located at Kearny and Sutter Streets in San Francisco, it expanded to Fresno in 1902, and later to other locations throughout the west.¹⁹³

Phillips learned to knit from her mother but it was the dream of becoming a professional weaver like her mother's childhood friend, Dorothy Wright Liebes, one of the foremost textile designers in America, that initially inspired Phillips to aspire to a career in fiber. In an interview in 1985, Phillips stated: "I was always going to be and *was* a weaver. . . . My mother's closest friend . . . was Dorothy Wright Liebes . . . and she was a very strong influence in my life."¹⁹⁴ Liebes, who was well educated, articulate, immensely creative, glamorous, entrepreneurial, and a fearless self-promoter, provided a ready example of how this goal could be accomplished.¹⁹⁵ In 1930, Liebes, who had learned to weave at Chicago's Hull House, opened her own studio in San Francisco on Powell Street where she produced custom fabrics and art textiles for an exclusive local clientele.¹⁹⁶ Figure 39. In 1939-40, Liebes established her reputation as a tastemaker and style innovator as the Director of the Decorative Arts Exhibition for the Golden Gate Exposition.¹⁹⁷ Figure 40. Among the many contemporary artists whose work figured prominently in her exhibition were Loja Saarinen and Marianne Strengell (Textiles), and Maija Grotell (Ceramics) of Cranbrook Academy of Art.¹⁹⁸ As a result of the exhibition's success, Liebes's career took off on a national scale through the 1940s and

1950s when the world of industry seemed to be opening the door to women professionals, especially in the field of textiles.¹⁹⁹

Liebes became one of the first American textile designers to successfully integrate custom design for hand woven fabrics with industrial production.²⁰⁰ In developing a contemporary approach to textile design and use, Liebes, Strengell, Albers, and their cohort established an entirely different and vastly expanded market for hand woven textiles than was served by the production of traditional American textiles.²⁰¹ In the 1960s, Marianne Strengell acknowledged the influence of Liebes when she wrote that she considered Liebes a “brilliant exception” to the history of textile designers in the United States, who for the most part “faithfully reproduced a colonial pattern, void of texture and color,” because Liebes, “by introducing vivid colors, textures and new materials as well as by tirelessly educating the public did a great deal to promote textile design in the USA.”²⁰² And when Phillips identified Liebes as a primary role model, she demonstrated her understanding that contemporary weaving in the 1940s offered solid, and even glamorous career opportunities for women with the right skill set and training.²⁰³

Although traditional academics were never Phillips’s forte, prior to attending Cranbrook for the first time in the summer of 1946, Phillips attended several schools without obtaining a degree in an effort to get the training and education in weaving and the applied arts that she desired.²⁰⁴ These included a summer program in art at San Francisco State College in San Francisco, CA in 1942, a two-year stint at Fresno State University, where she took art, music and traditional academic courses from 1942-44, and summer programs in weaving and pottery at Mills College in Oakland, CA in 1943 and 1944.²⁰⁵ In keeping with Liebes’s example, perhaps, Phillips also studied “[d]esign

and color with Rudolph Schaeffer” at the Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design in San Francisco, CA in 1944.²⁰⁶

At the time of her application to Cranbrook in the spring of 1946, Phillips resided at 940 Powell Street in San Francisco.²⁰⁷ Before applying to Cranbrook, and in addition to her more formalized training in the arts, Phillips gained some pertinent work experience that showed a strong drive toward establishing a professional identity and a considerable fluency with the language of modernism and contemporary craft that was permeating life and the arts in San Francisco the mid-1940s. In 1945, Phillips worked in sales and administration at V.C. Morris, a retailer of luxury goods and gifts, including china, crystal, linens and house wares, located since 1911 at 140 Maiden Lane.²⁰⁸ Phillips also worked at Gump’s, established in 1861 and still located today at 135 Post Street, where her mother, who had a passion for Asian decorative art, had relished shopping for gifts, home décor, and the annual additions to the family’s collection of Christmas ornaments.²⁰⁹ Gump’s was an early and exclusive retailer of remarkably similar character to London’s famed Liberty & Co., est. 1875, specializing in Chinese, European and Japanese luxury goods that sold briskly to well-heeled San Franciscans.²¹⁰ In the 1940s, both Gump’s and the V.C. Morris gift shop also sold fine contemporary crafts, including ceramics and textiles.²¹¹ At Gump’s, Phillips worked in the hand weaving studio under the supervision of Henning Watterston, a distinguished contemporary American hand weaver.²¹² Watterston and his partner, Carolyn Rees Watterston were Fellows at Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin West in 1941.²¹³ Before Taliesin, as the design team “Rees-Henning” they entered a group of woven fabrics in the Museum of Modern Art’s Organic Design in Home Furnishings Competition of 1940, in

which Eero Saarinen and Charles Eames had also distinguished themselves with the experimental furniture they had designed and built at Cranbrook.²¹⁴

Phillips's cultured upbringing, the individuals and ideas she came into contact with through her family, her schooling in the arts, and her work experiences in San Francisco give some insight into how she came to learn of and focus her sights on attending Cranbrook. But Cranbrook had, at that time, also gained a national reputation as a progressive, even avant-garde, art academy producing leaders in all the creative disciplines. Eero Saarinen, Eliel Saarinen's son, had by the mid-1940s become a noted architect and designer in his own right. As the principal of Eero Saarinen and Associates, he employed a number of Cranbrook faculty members in the design and construction of the General Motors Technical Center; this included Marianne Strengell, who designed and oversaw the production of the carpets and interior textiles for installation in all the public lobbies, and several of the major buildings and office suites.²¹⁵ Cutting-edge modular housing units designed by Charles and Ray Eames, two Cranbrook graduates, in conjunction with Eero Saarinen, were under construction in Santa Monica in 1946-1948, and likely received significant publicity.²¹⁶ The Museum of Modern Art in New York exhibited furniture designed by Charles Eames in 1946.²¹⁷

Although Lee Nordness, writing on the history of studio craft in America for the catalogue that accompanied the "Objects USA" Exhibition in 1969, in which Phillips participated, noted the deplorable state of craft education in America at mid-century, he confirmed that Cranbrook was among a handful of elite schools, including the Rhode Island School of Design and Black Mountain College, where students like Phillips could obtain advanced education in the fine and applied arts that included contemporary

weaving.²¹⁸ The Rhode Island School of Design (hereinafter “RISD”), established in 1877, offered instruction in textiles as early as 1882, and in costume as early as 1933, but the program at RISD was best known at mid-century for its courses in textile chemistry and technology, so it would not have served Phillips’s interests to go there.²¹⁹ Black Mountain College, established in 1933 and located in the remoter precinct of Asheville, North Carolina, was where Anni Albers had been recruited to teach contemporary weaving in the Bauhaus tradition. In 1945-46, after the loss of their previous premises, the school and the students were often living on a shoestring, as well as spending a great deal of time building their own buildings and growing their own food.²²⁰ In marked contrast, and as a result of the generous patronage of the Booth family, Cranbrook in the mid-1940s was an elegant, modern, established academy “located in the pleasant suburban district of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, twenty miles north of Detroit.”²²¹ A co-educational program, Cranbrook had a dedicated dormitory for women, and the school’s many other amenities and conveniences likely appealed to Phillips, who was “from one of Fresno’s leading families,” and “had a background of taste and culture.”²²²

Fully accredited by the State of Michigan in 1942, by 1946, the year Phillips applied to Cranbrook, the Art Academy advertised the following amenities:

The Academy group of exceptionally well-equipped modern buildings was designed by Eliel Saarinen. The buildings house offices, studios, drafting rooms, work shops, library, museum, exhibition rooms, residences of staff members, and living and recreation rooms for students.

Three dormitories, one for women and two for men, under the supervision of the Residence Supervisor, provide sleeping accommodations for resident students and four pleasant living rooms for their use. All rooms are for single occupancy and are equipped with wardrobes and lavatories.

No rooms have private baths. Linens for dormitory use are provided by the Academy.

The Academy has its own dining room.

Recreational facilities for both summer and winter sports are ample.²²³

Students also had access to an infirmary with a resident physician, two nurses and a laboratory technician.²²⁴ Private automobiles were permitted.²²⁵ Students could purchase artist supplies at an on-campus shop.²²⁶ Cranbrook advertised easy access from trains arriving in Detroit or nearby Birmingham by car, bus, or taxi.²²⁷ Phillips and other “[t]rain travelers from the West may come via the Grand Trunk to Birmingham, and taxi directly to the Academy.”²²⁸ Booth’s generous patronage and Saarinen’s ability to realize his and Booth’s vision for the campus in tangible form meant students of the Academy were treated to the very best and most modern facilities, set in a supremely attractive environment that was sheltered, yet easily accessible.

Section 2. “Cranbrook is the Place for Me”

Letters written by friends and former teachers who offered recommendations for her application to Cranbrook’s Weaving and Textiles program in 1946 reveal Phillips as a lively young woman who had not yet tapped her full potential, but who had “found her forte” and “wish[ed] professional training for definite use.”²²⁹ Her references stressed her cultural refinement, her wealth of creativity, her good social background, her “buoyant” and “sparkling” personality, and her “generous” nature, despite a lackluster academic record.²³⁰ They also, like Phillips herself, saw and wrote about Cranbrook as place where she could develop her considerable natural abilities in art into a career through increased focus, discipline and direction.²³¹ A friend of the family stated that Phillips had “persisted in her effort to get training in her field of interest, through

disappointments,” and “will make good use of her opportunities.”²³² A charming photo of Phillips that accompanies the application captures her at the loom in a dreamy posture.

Although Phillips indicated in her first communication with Cranbrook to request a course catalogue and application form that she was “mainly interested in weaving and ceramics,” Phillips’s focus in the letter that accompanied her completed application form was clearly on weaving:

From the information set forth in your catalog and from the enthusiastic reports of former students that I have met, I feel that Cranbrook is the place for me to further my education. I have studied weaving and design but there is so much for me to learn.

Some day I hope to open a studio and do my own designing on the power and hand loom. At present I feel my education is not adequate for such a project.²³³

Phillips’s career aspirations, as articulated above, ring of admiration for Liebes, who in 1946 had been featured in a very modern compendium on the textile industry, entitled *America’s Fabrics: Origin and History, Manufacture, Characteristics and Uses*, as a leading example of what was then recognized as an emerging relationship between talented designers, who worked up prototypes on the hand loom for eventual mass production, and the textile industry, the complex technology of which authors Zelma Bendure and Gladys Pfeiffer exhaustively document.²³⁴ The “former students” Phillips referred to, and how she came into contact with them are, as yet, unknown (although at least one recent graduate of Cranbrook was working for Liebes in 1944), however, as documented above, Phillips could have learned about Cranbrook from any of a number of sources familiar to her from her social set, work experiences, and the national press.²³⁵ As Phillips’s letter indicates, a crucial factor in her interest in attending Cranbrook was the opportunity to learn to weave on the power loom, which Cranbrook had purchased in

1945 at the request of Marianne Strengell, then Director of the Department of Weaving, and which placed the Academy's weaving program "in a very advanced position" relative to other similar programs.²³⁶ The loom was a former silk loom that was "converted to a more varied use."²³⁷ Figure 41. Strengell's purchase of a power loom for Cranbrook showed her intent to fulfill the objectives Eliel Saarinen had outlined in establishing Cranbrook's educational program: that all disciplines stay in step with and derive ideas from developments in contemporary life – and this included market trends and technological innovations.²³⁸

Section 3. Cranbrook in the Forties

According to the 1946-1947 CAA Announcement, the course catalogue for the Cranbrook Academy of Art, Founder George G. Booth, then in his early eighties, still sat on the Board of Trustees, although his son, Henry S. Booth, had just that year assumed his father's role as Chairman of the Board.²³⁹ Eliel Saarinen, then in his seventies, was still listed as President of the School and Director of the Department of Architecture, although he had resigned as President of the Academy of Art that year.²⁴⁰ Phillips arrived at Cranbrook, therefore, in the twilight of these two hugely visionary men, when the institution they had created had already begun to move forward under the next generation of leadership, but while its ties to the founders and their ideals remained strong.

The Saarinens were still active in the social and academic life of the community, as can be seen in the photograph of Eliel Saarinen speaking with a group of students, including Phillips, at a dinner. Figure 42. Marianne Strengell and her husband Olaf Hammerstrom recalled the Saarinens as somewhat formal by American standards, but that of the two, Loja Saarinen could be very cold and formal, while Eliel Saarinen was of a merry disposition, and enjoyed a good joke.²⁴¹ Olaf Hammerstrom also recalled Eliel

Saarinen as very dapper and as a careful dresser who changed his clothing several times a day.²⁴² At the time Phillips attended Cranbrook, Loja Saarinen was no longer directly involved with the Weaving Department, but according to noted fiber artist Ed Rossbach, she visited the studio occasionally, stopping to speak with the students and to view their work: “By the time I was a weaving student at Cranbrook, in 1946, Loja Saarinen still walked through the studio now and then, escorting guests.”²⁴³ Figure 43.

During the 1940s, the Saarinens regularly hosted teas for the students in their sophisticated, Art Deco-inspired home, which gave students like Phillips the opportunity to experience the full impact of the Saarinen family’s approach to designing the total environment on an intimate and personal scale.²⁴⁴ Everything in the home was exquisitely integrated, and most of the textiles were not only designed by the Saarinens, but were also made by Loja Saarinen personally or under her direct supervision. Photographs from the period show well-groomed students on their best behavior waiting to receive cups of tea served from Eliel Saarinen’s iconic silver tea set.²⁴⁵ As Phillips recalled in an interview, “[w]hen you were asked to tea at the Saarinen’s it was understood you dressed up.”²⁴⁶ Within the home, in the spirit of the Saarinens’ home in Hvitträsk, Finland, spaces for casual and formal entertaining flowed seamlessly into those for work and study, Finnish traditional design blended with modern furnishings and appointments, and every detail contributed to an overall sense of graciousness and understated elegance.²⁴⁷ It would be impossible for a weaver to ignore the evidence of the elevated role of the textile in the Saarinens’ worldview. Figure 33. In her work in knitting, Phillips clearly shared Loja Saarinen’s love of fine materials, and she later

specialized in one of the textile forms for which Mrs. Saarinen had received so much recognition at Cranbrook and beyond: the wall hanging.

Section 4. Cranbrook 1946-1947: Weaving and Textiles

There were six degree-granting departments within the Academy of Art in 1946: Architecture (Eliel Saarinen), Sculpture (Carl Milles), Painting (Zoltan Sepeshy), Ceramics (Maija Grotell), Weaving (Marianne Strengell) and Design (Howard Dearstyne). Of the six departments, all had directors except Design, where Howard Dearstyne, an American, and the first of the Bauhaus-trained students employed by Cranbrook, was listed as an “instructor” starting in the 1945-46 academic year.²⁴⁸ The other departments also had instructors in addition to directors. The Architecture program was considered “post-graduate;” the other departments offered a two-year Bachelor of Fine Arts degree followed by a Master of Fine Arts or advanced credit for continuing students for a period of time to be negotiated on an individual basis.²⁴⁹ Candidates for the B.A. degree had to apply with sixty undergraduate credits, or approximately two years of study, in general subjects. In the distribution, a maximum of twenty of these credits could be in art.²⁵⁰ All applicants, whether for a degree program or not, were required to submit examples of their work as well as a “plan for work which they intend to pursue at the Academy” for consideration prior to admission.²⁵¹ Candidates were admitted if their “submitted work and work-plan [gave] promise of successful participation in the Academy’s program and . . . the serious professional pursuit of their work upon leaving the Academy.”²⁵² It is not known at this time what examples of her work Phillips submitted for consideration, what her work plan entailed or what comments on her submissions she received, but because Phillips had only amassed a small number

of credits toward her B.A. degree at the time of her application, she was eligible to attend the school only as a non-degree student.²⁵³

Phillips was admitted to the Cranbrook Academy of Art for the Summer Session in 1946 and she remained through the end of the Summer Session in 1947.²⁵⁴ Figures 44-45.²⁵⁵ She was among a select class, however, because non-degree students were accepted into individual departments only if they demonstrated “unusual ability in the field of art in which they intend[ed] to specialize.”²⁵⁶ The non-degree students were characterized in Cranbrook’s promotional materials as “teachers and artists who seek to enlarge their art knowledge and improve their skills through practical studio experience.”²⁵⁷ Students who were not eligible to participate in the degree programs “[were] not limited by fixed requirements, but [were permitted to] select, with the aid of the instructors, courses which they consider best suited to their individual needs.”²⁵⁸ Strengell clearly favored students who had little or no prior experience in weaving, yet Phillips came to Cranbrook after previous study and considerable work experience in the discipline under the supervision of those, like Henning Watterston at Gump’s, who made contemporary textiles.

In the summer session, which ran from June 24 – August 3, 1946, Phillips studied weaving with Robert D. Sailors (M.A., Cranbrook, 1943) who was then Assistant Director and Instructor in the Department of Weaving under the supervision of Marianne Strengell, Director.²⁵⁹ Figure 46. Strengell described Sailors as one of her best students; he left Cranbrook in the fall of 1947 to start his own weaving operation in Bittely, Michigan, and was a lifelong innovator in textiles.²⁶⁰ Strengell typically spent summer months away from Cranbrook vacationing with her family and working on outside

commissions; since Sailors was retained in part to set up, teach and operate the power loom, Phillips's first experience in learning to weave at Cranbrook would likely have involved learning to design for and use this machinery.²⁶¹ According to the attendance sheets, the week's schedule ran from Monday through Saturday, with each day divided into three time slots: 9-12 AM, 1:30-4:30 PM, and 7-10 PM.²⁶² Over the summer session Phillips worked an average of 7 to 8 hours per day in the Weaving studio. Long hours were typical for students and faculty at Cranbrook throughout its history, in keeping with the habits of the Saarinens, who were reputed to be "workaholics."²⁶³ Phillips fit in well with this ideal; all her instructors commented on her hard work. Phillips performed well in the class, but Sailors reflected, "[s]urer of herself than she should be – a case of 'a little knowledge.'"²⁶⁴ Nevertheless, Phillips recalled Sailors as someone "who taught a lot of people a lot about weaving."²⁶⁵

Despite the expertise that Sailors developed in designing for and weaving on the power loom, he was also a bit of a maverick at Cranbrook and afterwards in his use of unusual materials for hand weaving.²⁶⁶ Sailors enjoyed blending traditional weaving fibers such as silk, cotton, wool, and linen, with rigid elements, such as bamboo rods, natural fibers like cornhusks, and items scavenged from hardware or discount stores, such as the copper metallic fibers he obtained from unraveling "Chore Boy" scouring pads.²⁶⁷ The 1950s and 1960s were a time when many weavers utilized non-traditional materials, but Robert Sailors and Dorothy Liebes were early proponents of this trend in American contemporary weaving, which may have originated at the Bauhaus.²⁶⁸

During the fall of 1946 and spring of 1947, Phillips studied weaving with Marianne Strengell, who at that time went by her married name of Marianne S.

Dusenbury. Strengell's comments on Phillips's work were highly complimentary. In the fall of 1946, Strengell recorded that Phillips was "fast and hardworking, a good designer and very prolific. [G]ood craftsman."²⁶⁹ In the spring of 1947, she pronounced Phillips an "[e]xcellent designer and craftsman."²⁷⁰ Phillips also impressed Antoinette Prestini, one of Strengell's star students, who filled the position of an Instructor in the Weaving Department after the departure of Robert Sailors: "Excellent creative ability and color sense – Technique very good – works industriously and fast."²⁷¹

As a non-degree student, Phillips was not required to take a distribution of courses. However, during the summer of 1946, Phillips audited a Survey of Modern Art with Harriet Dyer Adams, the Curator of the Art Museum. According to the course catalogue, the survey was designed to present "the arts of the past and present . . . in relation to the social and cultural milieus out of which they grew. The intent is to aid the student to gain a fuller understanding of changing attitudes toward art and life."²⁷² Of the fourteen sessions she had with Abrams, Phillips missed five; but her schedule shows she was at work in the weaving studio rather than attending class.²⁷³ It appears from her weaving schedule in the fall of 1946 that Phillips studied "Design" on Wednesdays.²⁷⁴ It is probable that Phillips studied design for weaving with Strengell, however, since there are no comments on Phillips's work from Howard Dearstyne, who was the instructor in the Design Department. As early as 1942-43, Design was a required subject for all B.F.A. students, but the Weaving program specified throughout this time only that "[a]s in all other departments, drawing is required as an aid to observation, design, and presentation."²⁷⁵ If Phillips took drawing in the 1940s as part of the "design" component in the Weaving program it would have been with Wallace Mitchell, who was then an

instructor in Drawing and Painting, although, again, there are no comments on her work from him. Phillips's later correspondence to Cranbrook, however, indicates she had made and maintained a personal connection with Wallace Mitchell during her time at Cranbrook.

In addition to the social and educational life in which Phillips participated as a student in the Weaving department, Phillips would have had access to the resources of the Library and Museum. During the time Phillips attended Cranbrook, the Museum offered a staggering array exhibitions mounted for the enjoyment of the students, faculty and general public: eighteen exhibitions were mounted from June to December of 1946 and sixteen exhibitions were mounted from January to June of 1947, and these reflected all media, and all periods of art history from Pre-Columbian art to contemporary craft.²⁷⁶ A number of these shows were assembled for circulation by the American Federation of Arts, the Museum of Modern Art, and other similar institutions, and contained easy-to-read panel descriptions of the works, many of which were shown only as photographs.²⁷⁷ In 1946, there were several exhibitions of primitive and ethnic art, primarily from the Americas, including Mexico, Peru, Guatemala and the American Southwest, as well as several shows from Latin America, generally. These Pan-American cultures with their strong artistic traditions in textiles, architecture and other media, were of tremendous interest to modernists in America and Europe at this time.²⁷⁸ An exhibit in Ancient Peruvian Textiles from the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C. was too early in the year for Phillips to have seen it, although she might have been able to look at a left over brochure.²⁷⁹ Likewise she missed the initiation of the Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary Textiles and Ceramics, which would become a Cranbrook tradition

through 1953, and for which Marianne Strengell and Maija Grotell had solicited works from Anni Albers, Dorothy Liebes, Angelo Testa, Gertrud and Otto Natzler, Marguerite Wildenhain, Victor Schrekengost, and many other notable contemporary artists of the period.²⁸⁰ Christa C. Mayer Thurman, who authored the chapter on Textiles in *Design in America* considered these exhibitions, which were invitational, and in which Phillips exhibited her work in 1949 and 1951, “of prime importance for they exposed faculty and students alike to the very latest accomplishments in the two disciplines.”²⁸¹ The prints of Josef Albers and of Paul Klee also preceded Phillips’s arrival by only a few weeks, but testify to the early availability of artworks and ideas from Bauhaus artists to Cranbrook students.²⁸² During the fall of 1946, Phillips would have seen an exhibition entitled “The New Spirit: Work by Le Corbusier,” as well as an exhibition on “Modern Chair Design” that included the works of Mies van der Rohe, Alvar Aalto, Marcel Breuer, and Cranbrook’s own Eero Saarinen and Charles Eames.²⁸³ There were exhibitions of student work mounted after each semester, as well as exhibitions of the work of faculty members. Maija Grotell (Ceramics), Wallace Mitchell (Abstract Painting), Lillian Saarinen (Sculpture), and Harvey Croze (Photography) were among the faculty members, present and former, whose work was exhibited at the Cranbrook Art Museum during Phillips’s term of study there in the 1940s.²⁸⁴ The work of students from Mills College in Oakland, California where Phillips had studied weaving before attending Cranbrook was shown in August of 1946.²⁸⁵ The Museum, therefore, gave the students tremendous exposure to the history of art and to its contemporary developments. It also provided a venue for them to exhibit their own work before their peers, instructors and potential employers.

Saarinen valued and encouraged the participation of students and faculty in competitions, both at the school and in outside venues, where they could compete with their peers from other schools and with professionals in their field.²⁸⁶ All the working artists who were instructors at Cranbrook regularly exhibited their work in national and regional art, craft and design exhibitions, and it was expected that the students would also enter their work in these venues. Further, students were required starting in 1945 to exhibit their work at Cranbrook as part of the process of qualifying for a degree.²⁸⁷ In addition to the flattering reviews Phillips received for her work from Strengell and Prestini, Phillips garnered numerous awards for weaving starting while she was still at Cranbrook. Phillips would not have participated in any degree shows in the 1940s, but on May 21, 1947, she received, by letter of Zoltan Sepeshy, the President of the Academy of Art, a first prize for her work in weaving during the past year.²⁸⁸ As the school policy made clear: “[t]he Academy has the right to hold for exhibition purposes any work done in its studios and to retain for its permanent collection . . . such examples as may be selected. Students will be reimbursed for the value of the materials used.”²⁸⁹ As a result, Cranbrook purchased and still retains in its collection one of the few known examples of Phillips’s weaving from the 1940s, a three-yard sample of a yellow curtain fabric.²⁹⁰

Figure 47. According to Leslie Edwards, Archivist, Cranbrook Archives, and Roberta Frey Gilboe, Registrar, Cranbrook Art Museum, this example of Phillips’s weaving strongly reflects the influence of Marianne Strengell, in a manner that is perhaps best articulated by a fellow Cranbrook weaving student, Ed Rossbach:

By the late 40s, all representational patterning had disappeared from student work . . . in favor of precise lines, some thick, some thin, moving horizontally and vertically to create a multitude of rectangles. I vividly recall the day

when Strengell walked through the weaving studio and suddenly observed that all her students were weaving with a subdued chartreuse – pure Scandinavian. . . . She was not pleased. She was emphatic that we get some other colors on the looms.²⁹¹

Phillips also won a Third Prize at the La France Industries design competition in 1947 where “awards were given for modern upholstery and drapery fabric designs adaptable to power loom weaving.”²⁹² Edward J. Wormley, a noted designer, acted as one of the judges for the competition.²⁹³ At the 1947 International Textile Exhibition at the Women’s College in Greensboro, NC, a prestigious venue that attracted many notable artists, including many of Phillips’s peers and instructors from Cranbrook, Phillips won a Second and a Third Prize, and an Honorable Mention for her entries in Drapery and Upholstery.²⁹⁴ Phillips also exhibited in the Woven Synthetics and Napery categories. After her success at Cranbrook she regularly exhibited her work, winning prizes throughout her life for weaving, and later knitting and macramé. The year at Cranbrook in 1946-47 did not furnish Phillips with a degree, but it helped her accumulate some of the credits she would use to obtain both her B.F.A. and M.F.A. when she returned to Cranbrook in the early 1960s, and it set her on a career path as a professional weaver for the next twelve years.

Section 5. Designer of Hand Woven Textiles, 1947-1959

From 1947-1959, Phillips gained experience as a designer for industry and then opened her own custom-weaving studio in Fresno. A brief look at these years shows the considerable professional credentials that Phillips possessed at the time she returned to Cranbrook in 1960, and also that despite her natural abilities and achievements, she perceived the lack of a degree as a serious impediment to further progress. After leaving Cranbrook at the end of the Summer term in 1947, Phillips first secured a coveted

position in Dorothy Liebes's studio in San Francisco "not as a designer, though, but doing apprentice work, the nitty gritty of weaving – bobbin winding, threading looms, mending, and so on."²⁹⁵ In a typewritten letter dated February 2, 1948 addressed simply to "Virginia" at Cranbrook Phillips writes with enthusiasm, stating:

I am now living in San Francisco at 940 Powell Street. For the monthly paycheck I am working for Dorothy Liebes. It is fascinating. The materials that we have to work with are so great in variety that it is overwhelming. We use colors that most people are not used to seeing and I will have to admit that the first day I walked into the studio I was a little overwhelmed with the great quantity of color and its intensity. The things that *LIFE* told about the studio are true. We have the phonograph going most of the time, lots of interesting visitors and tea every afternoon at four. When the weather is good we have tea in the garden.²⁹⁶

As Phillips's letter referenced, *Life* Magazine did a feature article on Liebes in 1947; exotic-looking photos from that article illustrated Ed Rossbach's later assertions that a visit to Liebes's studio was sure to be a memorable event. Figures 48-49. Liebes's approach to designing textiles and interiors, as well as to promoting herself and her expertise, was theatrical, colorful, calculated, and mesmerizing to clients and followers.²⁹⁷ She loved bold and glitzy textiles and she was known for working with new materials, like Lurex, and with unconventional color combinations that she claimed to have invented.²⁹⁸ Rossbach noted that Liebes's weavers had a jingle they recited that encapsulated her approach to color: "[s]omething dark, something light, something neutral, something bright."²⁹⁹ He also inaccurately credited her with initiating the use of colored warps in weaving to add depth and interest to the fabrics from her studio.³⁰⁰ Much of what Liebes later marketed as her own innovations in color may have come from her studies with Rudolph Schaeffer, who taught color theory first at the California School of Fine Art, and later at the Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design in San

Francisco, established in 1926, but she had the drive and the talent to develop his theories from woven color studies into a lucrative empire of widely disseminated textile products.³⁰¹ The bright and glitzy palette and heavily textured surfaces that became the hallmark of “Liebes Look,” or perhaps the “Schaeffer look,” found their way into Phillips’s weaving, and to a lesser extent, her knitting.³⁰²

At this time, Liebes’s clients ranged from architects like Frank Lloyd Wright, Edward Durell Stone and Philip Johnson, to filmmaker Samuel Marx, to industrial, interior and fashion designers like Edward Wormley, Henry Dreyfuss, and Fresno native, Bonnie Cashin.³⁰³ After Liebes moved her base of operations from San Francisco to New York in 1948, she worked to disseminate “the Liebes look” through relationships with some of the largest textile manufacturers and department stores in the United States, as well as in the national press.³⁰⁴ Phillips was involved for several weeks in the spring of 1948 or 1949, as part of her work for Liebes, in weaving draperies and table linens for the Wrights on site at Taliesin West. A swatch pictured in the exhibition catalogue for “Fine Art in Stitches,” which the curator’s notes identify as “cotton, metallic, synthetic straw,” shows Phillips’s handwritten notations in blue ink: “[t]able cloth woven for Frank Lloyd Wright’s Taliesin West, Scottsdale Arizona 1949,” amended in pencil, also in her hand, to read “- Spring.”³⁰⁵ Wright was a long-time client of Liebes, who wove a theater curtain, among other textiles, for his residence at Taliesin West.³⁰⁶ Phillips listed her time working at “Dorothy Liebes Textiles and Yarn Depot” as running intermittently from the Fall of 1947 through the Fall of 1950, including the Spring of 1948, but excluding 1949.³⁰⁷ In 1948, Liebes relocated her studio to New York City, but the location she occupied in San Francisco continued on as “Dorothy Liebes Yarn Depot,” supplying

artisans and designers with fine fibers and doing custom production work, at least until Liebes consolidated her operations in New York in about 1952.³⁰⁸ Since Phillips lists both Dorothy Liebes Textiles and Yarn Depot on her resume, it is likely she remained working there for a time after Liebes had moved her base of operations East.³⁰⁹

Although Phillips's resume indicates she continued on with Liebes through the Fall of 1950, she also worked from 1948-1950 at the Amberg/Hirth Gallery, an independent gallery owned by Ernest Amberg and Hugh Hirth.³¹⁰ Phillips described the gallery in a letter to Marianne Strengell as "a very beautiful shop":

It is owned by Mr. Amberg and Mr. Hirth. Mr. Amberg is Swiss so the shop is stocked by mostly Swiss products. They are very creative ceramic pieces by four of Switzerland's leading artists. They also carry a line of Swiss textiles. It is very interesting working with all these beautiful things but there is no chance to get anywhere. I have very little time for weaving³¹¹

Despite her rueful comment about the limited time to weave, Phillips related that she had won a First Prize for suiting fabric and a Second Prize for upholstery fabric at the California State Fair in 1949, a venue that was later described as "a showcase for the younger craft artists" and "one of the most important state fair craft exhibitions in the country."³¹²

In the letter to Strengell, Phillips poignantly requested the opportunity to spend another year at Cranbrook as a scholarship student in the Weaving department starting in the spring of 1950. Phillips stated that her family was experiencing difficulties, was not currently in a position to provide any assistance to her, and was unaware of her request for aid. If the school could help her with a scholarship for tuition and a work/study arrangement in the Weaving department to cover expenses, Phillips thought she would have enough money for her materials, and that additional financial help might be

forthcoming from her family in the future.³¹³ Strengell, who did have some ability to recommend students to the Trustees for such scholarships, referred Phillips's request to Wallace Mitchell, then Registrar, stating, "it certainly is within your province."³¹⁴ Mitchell's Assistant Registrar, Jesse Hadden wrote to Phillips on September 29, 1949 and promised that a loom and a room would be available for Phillips, but she cautioned that on-campus jobs were scarce.³¹⁵ She referenced enclosed forms for Phillips to complete to apply to the Trustees for an award.³¹⁶ It is not clear whether Phillips ever applied for the award, but starting as early as 1952 she became a lifelong donor to the scholarship fund and to other Cranbrook fundraising efforts, contributing money and sometimes stock annually, as later correspondence in her Cranbrook file reveals.³¹⁷ She also sought potential students for the school, organized activities for the alumni, and even served as National President of the Cranbrook Alumni Association starting in 1976.³¹⁸ And although Phillips did not return to Cranbrook in 1950, as she had hoped, she continued to build her professional reputation over the next decade.

From 1950-1952, Phillips's resume indicates she took a hiatus from working for others.³¹⁹ It is possible that her father became ill at this time; he retired from Federal Fruit Distributors as a result of poor health in 1952, and Phillips may have been involved in helping her mother to care for him at times during this period.³²⁰ However, noted international textile designer and entrepreneur Jack Lenor Larsen, who graduated from Cranbrook with his M.F.A. in Weaving in the spring of 1951, recalled meeting Phillips during a visit to San Francisco after his graduation.³²¹ After declining several choice job offers, Larsen, who was originally from Seattle, Washington, decided he wanted to open his own venture in New York City; before settling in New York, he was asked to exhibit

fabrics in the “Pacifica” exhibition and to weave an upholstery for a new sofa design that would be featured on the cover of *House Beautiful*’s “Pacifica” issue.³²² After a mutual friend introduced them, Larsen did the weaving in Phillips’s studio in San Francisco. He recalled that she was living alone in one half of “a strange old house in Pacific Heights.”³²³ Over the week or more that Larsen labored over his upholstery fabric, he and Phillips became friends, often sharing meals together. Phillips, who so admired Liebes’s charisma, must have been very impressed; her correspondence to Cranbrook indicates she kept up with his activities.³²⁴ Larsen went on to be phenomenally successful in his New York venture, and his friendship and support was vital to Phillips when she embarked on her career in knitting.

Phillips’s next communication to Wallace Mitchell is dated February 7, 1952, wherein she discussed her recent travel to Guatemala and Mexico, destinations that had become important ones for fiber artists like Anni Albers and Sheila Hicks, who were at this time delving into pan-American pre-history for new sources of inspiration in weaving.³²⁵ Phillips’s comments on what she saw there, however, are frustratingly devoid of her reflections on local textiles: “I have just come back from a month trip to Guatemala and Mexico. What a wonderful country that is. When I go again I am going to stay longer in Guatemala. It is a wonderful country. Very colorful.”³²⁶ She also announced her recent engagement, accompanied by a newspaper clipping dated January 17, 1952, to a Reverend John G. Harrell of Los Angeles.³²⁷ In the letter, Phillips asserted she had much in common with Harrell, an artistic and musical man. Phillips reported that Harrell had done drawings for a number of the stained glass windows proposed for St. James Episcopal Church, est. 1911, in Los Angeles and that he had

written and produced original scores and scripts for the parish's annual youth theater productions. According to Phillips, she had known Mr. Harrell before she attended Cranbrook.³²⁸ Although she anticipated, after her marriage, moving to live and to weave in Balboa, just south of Los Angeles, while Mr. Harrell taught religious education in a new post at the St. James Church of Newport, est. 1946, her next communication to Mitchell, dated November 20, 1952 reads:

Just a line to bring you up to date. As you can see my state is still single.

I have been in Zurich since the end of July. All I can say about what I am doing is that it is a designer's delight. I have the perfect set up. In time I will be able to tell you more, but not now.

Zurich I find very dull mainly because I cannot be with the designers and architects etc that I am used to being around.³²⁹

Phillips, according to her resume, had secured a job in Zurich, Switzerland as a textile designer for the Swiss firm, A.F. Haas & Company.³³⁰ She never married. In November of 1953, she returned, via Cranbrook, to Fresno where she moved in with her parents.³³¹ Her father, who had been unwell, died in 1954.³³²

For the next several years, Phillips worked from a studio she set up in her parents' home, located at 410 North Van Ness Street in Fresno, where she taught weaving students and developed her own business custom-designing wool suiting fabrics, table linens, and upholstery.³³³ A photo of Phillips in her Fresno studio dated 1955 shows a trim, graceful woman seated at the loom in a posture strikingly reminiscent of the 1947 *Life* Magazine photo of Dorothy Liebes. Figure 50. From 1947 through 1959, when she returned to Cranbrook, Phillips exhibited in at least forty-two venues, winning twenty-

nine awards for her woven fabrics.³³⁴ She showed her work most often on the West Coast, including the California State Fair in San Francisco and in the Los Angeles County Fair, where “craft arts are international in scope.”³³⁵ She exhibited at the M.H. de Young Museum in 1949 in “Design in ’49,” and in 1957 in “Designer Craftsmen of the West,” as well as in two of the museum’s annual “Contemporary Handweavers” exhibitions in 1950 and 1955.³³⁶ At the de Young Museum, Dr. Elizabeth Moses, the Curator of Decorative Arts, was a powerhouse in promoting fine crafts in California throughout the decade.³³⁷ Phillips also showed her work in other noted national venues for textile artists, including the Wichita Decorative Arts and Ceramics Exhibitions and the International Textile Exhibitions in North Carolina.³³⁸ In 1949, 1951 and 1954, she participated in exhibitions at Cranbrook.³³⁹

In 1955 Phillips won several awards for her woven fabrics at the California State Fair and the M.H. de Young Museum of San Francisco, and had a One-Woman Show at The Yarn Depot, also in San Francisco. She also received a commission from St. John’s Episcopal Church in Stockton, CA to weave a “[d]ossal curtain,” which is a curtain usually mounted on the wall behind the altar.³⁴⁰ At the time, churches and other public buildings in California (and elsewhere) were incorporating handmade craft objects into their interiors, but Phillips was likely also aware of the market for textiles and other craft media in churches and synagogues through her association with Cranbrook, where many of the artists and students accepted commissions from religious organizations, including the Saarinens (whose most notable collaboration was on the Tabernacle Church of Christ, Columbus, Indiana), Marianne Strengell (who made numerous liturgical textiles both

before and after she left Cranbrook), and Richard Thomas, Director of Metalsmithing (who made liturgical objects a specialty in the course of his career).³⁴¹

In the spring of 2009, the current Church Administrator at St. John's Episcopal Church, Ms. Kim Coombs, confirmed that a gold-colored curtain had hung in the church until it was removed and replaced sometime in the 1990s because it was deteriorating.³⁴² Ms. Coombs undertook an effort to locate whether documents, photos or portions of the dossal curtain remained, and she located the curtain itself, now nearly sixty years old, as well as confirmation that Fr. Paul Langpaap had commissioned the curtain from Mary Walker Phillips.³⁴³ Details of the commission, the materials used for the curtain, and its dimensions are still under review, but Ms. Coombs provided photographs of the curtain that reveal the influence of Dorothy Liebes in Phillips's heavy use of metallic and textured yarns. The color balance in Phillips's dossal curtain also conforms to Liebes's "jingle" in its use of "[s]omething dark, something light, something neutral, something bright."³⁴⁴ Figures 51-52.

The dossal curtain was the first of at least three works Phillips created for use in religious settings that also includes a woven banner with an image of a cross inserted into the weft, date unknown, figure 53, and *The Cross*, 1967, figure 54, where Phillips appears to have re-worked the concept of the earlier woven banner in knitting.³⁴⁵ The comparison of these two works shows that by 1967 Phillips had substantially developed as an artist. *The Cross* represents a feat of engineering in knitting and demonstrates tremendous restraint and sophistication in its design and execution. Phillips created the image of the cross in an unusual double-knit construction of silk and metal thread that shines within a matte linen openwork ground of lace faggot stitch. The quiet elegance of the silk and

metal thread juxtaposed with the rough simplicity of linen in this work enhances its contemplative impact with an effectiveness and grace that clearly distinguishes Phillips's work in the knitted medium; the hanging would be a perfect complement to the contemporary architecture and interiors the Saarinen designed for the Tabernacle Church of Christ, for example.³⁴⁶ Of interest, Cranbrook held an exhibition of religious art entitled "Sacred Subjects by Twelve Contemporaries," from September 9-October 8, 1961 in conjunction with the 60th General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America; although no weaving was included. Another major exhibition that included liturgical objects (e.g., the *Ark Panels*, 1962, woven by Anni Albers for the Temple B'Nai Israel in Woonsocket, RI), was "Collaboration: Artist and Architect," developed by the Museum of Contemporary Craft in New York, which was shown in the Cranbrook Art Museum in November of 1962. Phillips would likely have seen both of these exhibitions while she was a student at Cranbrook, and would have been aware from these and many other exhibitions regularly reviewed in *Craft Horizons*, of the vast market for hand-crafted art objects in liturgical settings.³⁴⁷

Despite her considerable successes in weaving at this time, however, Phillips's letters to Cranbrook in the 1950s and her resume confirm that although she had made many efforts to remain professionally viable during the years between her two periods of study at Cranbrook, her opportunities remained limited. As Phillips candidly told a reporter for *Knitters* in 1985, "I'd discovered you don't make much of a living by handweaving."³⁴⁸ Greater success in her field would require the ability to do a variety of jobs successfully, like teaching, writing or working with a textile designer or manufacturer to develop a larger market for her work. Phillips was likely hampered by

several factors including lack of a degree, competition in her field, and family obligations.

Phillips noted as early as 1949 that the Bay Area was becoming a destination point for Cranbrook graduates, and a *Craft Horizons* article published in 1956 by Richard Petterson confirmed that fewer than half of the top 150 craft artists in California were native Californians, indicating Phillips was likely encountering brisk competition from her peers with degrees for the available jobs in the industry.³⁴⁹ Petterson's article gives a good synopsis of the other burdens Phillips faced as she tried to establish herself professionally. The good news was that California in the 1950s was a receptive market for independent artists, like Phillips, with consumers of all income levels eager to see exhibitions and to purchase handmade objects for their modern homes: "Californians go out of their way to use such crafts as the handwoven sheer casement draperies that many California weavers are making for softening large window areas."³⁵⁰ As a result of this public interest in textiles for the home, Phillips had many opportunities to exhibit her work, as her resume confirms, and perhaps even to sell it to a small, developing clientele. However, unlike other sectors of California design in consumer products, California handcrafts had failed to distinguish themselves as a brand with national appeal. Where Petterson found a definite "California style" that was "fresh, informal, and colorful" in the fashion industry, e.g., he considered California handcrafts eclectic and lacking a recognizable identity because "influences in U.S. crafts are today so quickly disseminated and assimilated, whether they originate in Los Angeles, Chicago or New York."³⁵¹ Petterson did broadly distinguish the work northern California artists from southern California artists, stating that artists from the northern region were more "willing[] to

sacrifice function for effect,” while those from the southern region, who were more dependant upon craft sales, tended to be “less likely to be involved in experimentation for its own sake.”³⁵² However, this distinction did not apply to Phillips who, as a northern California weaver, was primarily engaged in making custom fabrics for use as suiting, upholstery or draperies for a limited local market where radical experimentation would likely have been an infrequent indulgence. Her success at creating fabrics with style and durability was confirmed when a woman wore a coat made of fabric Phillips had woven in 1957 to the opening of Phillips’s 1984 retrospective exhibition in Fresno.³⁵³ Finally, having touted the fine, well-funded and abundant public educational programs in ceramics at the university level as an outgrowth of the general interest in hand craft in California at the time, Petterson acknowledged that weaving, although it was the second most popular craft discipline in the state, lagged well behind ceramics in terms of the educational opportunities available to interested students.³⁵⁴ With a lack of funding for advanced weaving programs curtailing the available educational options near home, and no degree, it is likely Phillips could neither complete her course work easily nor secure a permanent teaching position that would allow her greater professional range or economic independence.

In 1957 Phillips wrote to Wallace Mitchell looking for programs that would permit her to study abroad, and at that time she noted:

My weaving business is increasing. I am doing mostly woolen fabrics and find them very well received in Fresno much to my surprise. I have had my work room done over and it is a big improvement. Still not large enough (14’ x 172) with three looms and everything else but if I had a barn it wouldn’t be big enough with my ability to collect.”³⁵⁵

However, other than a note on her resume about “three months of European travel,” it appears Phillips did not study abroad. A news item published in the “Briefs” section of the CA Newsletter for 1959 states: “Mary Walker Phillips took a trip last spring [1958] to see the mosaics of Southern Europe in Portugal, Spain, Southern France, Italy, Sicily, the Dalmatian Coast, Istanbul, Zurich and Ireland”³⁵⁶ During this trip, Phillips likely saw the mosaics of Antonio Gaudi, whose architecture she would later describe as so conducive to interpretation in knitting.³⁵⁷

Phillips did find work teaching in the Department of Art and Music at Fresno State College, as she related in a letter she wrote on the college’s departmental stationery to Wallace Mitchell, Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1959, however, she was still seeking a return to Cranbrook as a means of professionalizing herself.³⁵⁸ Cranbrook had just been featured in a flattering article in the May/June 1959 issue of *Craft Horizons* magazine, where it was called “a wellspring for the crafts,” and where “[e]xchange of ideas and free experimentation with materials have produced major American talents.”³⁵⁹ Phillips related to Mitchell that she had been teaching “two units of basic design and did the reading and part of the teaching for a course called Art for Enjoyment. One main thing I found out, that I need more school. I am attending Fresno State full time this semester. What a struggle after no school for so long.”³⁶⁰ After discussing her current academic schedule and her willingness to do whatever she needed to do to get back to Cranbrook, she also confided: “For the first time since I saw you in the fall of 1953 I am not needed to help take care of the sick or aged or be involved in family affairs.”³⁶¹ Phillips inquired about the requirements for completing her bachelor’s degree at Cranbrook, and stated: “I realize my grades are not the best and may be low this semester.”³⁶² At this point in time,

the distribution requirements for obtaining a degree at Cranbrook had become more complex, and Phillips, after a difficult semester in academic subjects at Fresno State, almost despaired of getting the degree at all in her letter to Mitchell on July 1, 1960, saying:

I may have to forget about the degree but I do want to return to Cranbrook and do all of the work for a degree if I may. . . .

Maybe a good job that doesn't require a degree but does want a trained person is the answer to my problem.

I am looking forward to returning to Cranbrook and hope that you will let me even if you can't give me the ok on the degree. I feel that Cranbrook is the place for me.³⁶³

Phillips's echo of the language she used in her first letter to Cranbrook in 1946, when she stated "I feel that Cranbrook is the place for me to further my education," shows she was still convinced that she would gain substantially by completing further study at Cranbrook, even if it took a bit longer than it might elsewhere: "The time element is all right since wherever I go it will take 1 ½ years at least and if everything works out, I would rather take two years at Cranbrook."³⁶⁴

Phillips did return to Cranbrook in the fall of 1960 at the age of thirty-seven. It would take her not two, but three years to complete her B.F.A. and M.F.A. degrees. In 1987, during an interview with Kim Ode, a reporter for the Minneapolis Star Tribune, Phillips recalled Cranbrook in the 1960s as a different environment from Cranbrook in the 1940s: "[I]t was decidedly casual, everyone wearing jeans."³⁶⁵ Ode suggested in her article that this "era of questioning accepted norms" contributed to the freedom Phillips felt to shift from weaving to knitting.³⁶⁶ But a look at the changes in the textile field as well as in Cranbrook's weaving program at this time provides additional insight.

Part 2. From Weaving into Knitting: Return to Cranbrook, 1960-1963

Section 1. Beyond Weaving: Cranbrook's Shift from Industry into Art Fabric

Textiles are achieving an increasing importance in today's living. Their traditional uses in personal adornment and home furnishings are expanding, and they have become essential units in contemporary architecture and industrial designs. New commercial products constantly suggest new areas of interest for the weaver and fabric designer. The student is encouraged to meet this challenge through particular stress on function, texture, color, pattern and experimentation with fibers.³⁶⁷

-- CAA Announcements, "Weaving," 1960-1963

[M]achine enthusiasm seems to still be on the rise. This enthusiasm may, and probably will, last for some time to come. But the higher the altitude it reaches, the deeper the change will be. It is psychologically conceivable – and so testifies the history of man – that after the human mind has been saturated with overdoings in one direction it is likely to swing the other way.

-- Eliel Saarinen, *The Search for Form: A Fundamental Approach to Art*, 1948

The articulation of the weaving curriculum above, which appeared in the Cranbrook course catalogues for the Weaving Department throughout Phillips second period of study at Cranbrook from 1960-1963, testified to the staying power of Marianne Strengell's commitment to train Cranbrook students for employment in the design and production of commercial, architectural and industrial textiles. When Phillips returned to Cranbrook in 1960, the basic outline of the weaving program had changed little since the mid-1940s. Over the four-year program (B.F.A. of two years; M.F.A. of two years) first-year students in weaving still undertook "setting up warps, warp winding, working drawings and drafts" and made a "study . . . of yarns, fibers, and actual weaving techniques."³⁶⁸ Second-year students still learned "complex weaving, both hand and

power loom” and undertook “research in merchandising, design for specific price brackets, and fabric and yarn dyeing.”³⁶⁹ Finally, third- and fourth-year students were to “select an area of specific research and experimentation, and, with the instructor’s guidance, [were] expected to achieve a thorough understanding of the creative aspects of weaving and the potentials of industrial production.”³⁷⁰ Students still worked from samples that conveyed the basic structures of weaving for each type of project (rugs, drapery, upholstery, suiting fabrics and linens) to larger projects that expressed individual tastes and interests. As further testament to Cranbrook’s institutional continuity, of the directors employed by Saarinen in the 1940s, three were still directors of their departments in 1960 when Phillips returned to Cranbrook: Marianne Strengell (Weaving and Textiles), Maija Grotell (Ceramics) and Zoltan Sepeshy (Painting). Richard Thomas, a student of Sepeshy’s in the Painting Department in 1946 stayed on to become the Director of Metalsmithing, a position he held until 1984.

However, Marianne Strengell, with whom Phillips had studied in the 1940s, and who had been teaching at Cranbrook for twenty-four years, left Cranbrook in 1961 to move to Connecticut with her husband, architect Olaf Hammarstrom, just after Phillips had completed her first year of study.³⁷¹ Strengell recruited her former student Glen Kaufman, M.F.A. 1959, who was then barely thirty years old, to replace her as the Head of the Weaving Department. Kaufman, whose career had been nurtured by Strengell, had himself recently completed a Fulbright Scholarship at the State School of Arts and Crafts in Denmark, and was spending a year working with Dorothy Liebes in her New York Studio.³⁷² He was initially uncertain that a teaching position at Cranbrook was what he wanted; he and his wife were enjoying themselves in New York, “living like tourists.”³⁷³

But, in the end, and at Strengell's urging, he applied for the position and was hired by Zoltan Sepeshy, who had succeeded Saarinen in 1946 as President of the Academy.

Kaufman was more structured in his approach to teaching than Strengell, and as noted before, he gradually expanded the Cranbrook program to incorporate the study of historic textiles, including tapestries, off-loom techniques, and alternative methods for fabric design, construction and ornamentation, all of which he had become fascinated with during his time in Europe.³⁷⁴ Kaufman's interests in such a broad range of textile techniques beyond weaving, and in textile history, and the ways he incorporated these interests into the Cranbrook curriculum reflected the changes that had occurred in the textile field over the previous ten years; in keeping with Eliel Saarinen's mandate that Cranbrook stay in step with contemporary life, Kaufman and his students responded to these changes in exceptionally creative ways. Although the general description of the weaving program at Cranbrook stayed the same under Kaufman as it had under Strengell for the duration of Phillips's study there, in 1962-1963, Kaufman amended the articulation of the course requirements for the Weaving Department to include "techniques suitable for home furnishing, apparel and *art weaving*."³⁷⁵ With Kaufman's departure from Cranbrook to start a program in fabric design at the University of Georgia in 1967, the weaving program as it existed under Strengell had been effectively transformed.³⁷⁶ Under Robert Kidd from 1967-1970, Cranbrook dropped all reference to the term "weaving" in the program's title for the first time; it was then called "Fabric Design;" with the arrival of Gerhardt Knodel in 1970, and despite the purchase of new looms, the program became known simply as "Fiber."³⁷⁷

When he arrived in 1961, Kaufman recalled some initial resistance on the part of the students at Cranbrook to his leadership; they had all been handpicked by Strengell and were expecting to work with her. Kaufman, like many of Phillips's friends and family members, acknowledged that Phillips was opinionated and strong-willed, but he also found her to be determined and hardworking, very professionally experienced, and refreshingly self-directed in her work: "She knew what she wanted."³⁷⁸ Over the remaining two years of her degree program Phillips completed the work for her undergraduate and graduate degrees under Kaufman. In addition to her work in weaving, Phillips laboriously fulfilled the numerous academic distribution requirements for her degrees at other schools in both California and Michigan, and took required courses in other departments at Cranbrook, including two minor subjects, Ceramics and Metalsmithing, and an introductory course in the Design Department, which was then required for all students regardless of their specialized interests. Phillips took the hard work in stride, and at the end of three years of study she was a weaver transformed: ". . . I forsook the loom for the soft clicking of the needles." Phillips also recalled: "My timing was impeccable . . . The art world was ready to look at things in a different way."³⁷⁹

In May of 1962, and May of 1963 respectively, Phillips submitted two theses that, with her course work and the degree shows in which she participated, fulfilled her requirements for the Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees.³⁸⁰ The two theses bookend Phillips's shift from weaving to knitting, and from working on-loom to working off-loom, and richly illustrate the sea change that occurred for Phillips during this period of study. Although the B.F.A. thesis and M.F.A. thesis were designed to meet different standards of competency and originality, such is the difference in voice,

methodology, sense of authorship and presentation between the two theses that they could have been written by two entirely different people. Further, Phillips's re-invigorated approach to her work in fiber as expressed in the M.F.A. thesis brought her in harmony with Saarinen's vision of the artist making a new form language from within that would be modified and perfected through an ongoing process of research and experimentation. This transformation would resonate throughout Phillips's life and work after Cranbrook.

In both theses Phillips combined relatively extensive written sections with substantial portfolios of her work. For the B.F.A. degree, Cranbrook required students to "prepare a thesis which will include a photographic record of the work accomplished in major subject and electives, and arrange for approval by the faculty."³⁸¹ For the B.F.A. degree, in "Weaving," Phillips's thesis, entitled "Wool," explored the many uses of wool and wool blends as a hallmark of quality in "wearing apparel, industrial fabrics or home furnishings," supported by actual samples and photographs of her work.³⁸² She also provided a photographic overview of her accomplishments in her three minor subjects: Ceramics, Matrix Study (required for all B.F.A. candidates), and Metalsmithing. For the M.F.A. degree, students were required to meet the same burdens as the B.F.A. thesis, but with the additional expectation that the research, writing, and work displayed in the portfolio and student show be "based upon . . . [her] field of specialization," and "reveal a high degree of individuality."³⁸³ For the M.F.A. degree, in "Weaving and Textile Design," Phillips's thesis, entitled "Experimental Fabrics," explored weaving and knitting with both conventional and industrial materials, and demonstrated a fairly radical departure from her earlier thesis. The M.F.A. thesis also incorporated the results of her

second year of work in Ceramics. It is possible that Phillips began the work for the B.F.A. thesis under Strengell's supervision and completed it under Kaufman's supervision, but there is currently no way to determine this. Phillips did all the work for her M.F.A. thesis under Kaufman's supervision. All faculty members for the major and minor subjects, and a number of other individuals within the hierarchy of the Academy, including the President of the Academy, had to sign off on every thesis. The signatures appear on a form without comments of any kind, although Kaufman noted next to his signature that Phillips could not receive her M.F.A. degree until she appended photographs of her work to the thesis. Phillips received her Degree Show Approval for the Bachelor of Arts degree on May 11, 1962, and her Bachelor of Arts degree on February 1, 1963. Phillips received her Degree Show Approval for the Master of Arts degree on May 10, 1963, and her Master of Arts degree on May 31, 1963.³⁸⁴ For the purposes of this discussion, Phillips's work in each thesis will be treated separately, followed by a summary of Phillips's work in her minor subjects, which reinforced some of her newly experimental methods.

Section 2. New Techniques in the Weaving Program: Spinning and Dyeing

Hand spun and hand dyed yarns and fabrics figured prominently in Phillips's work for both her degree portfolios and raised questions about whether she made them herself or obtained them elsewhere. Fellow classmate and noted fiber artist Adela Akers confirmed that not only the dyed fabrics, but the vegetable-dyed and handspun yarns shown in Phillips's thesis were likely done by Phillips, not something she was purchasing ready-made from a vendor or a local artist or supplier. Strengell's curriculum specified instruction in and facilities for spinning and dyeing yarns and fabrics. The first mention of these activities occurred in the 1942-43 overview of the weaving program, but they

drop out of the catalogue for the next year.³⁸⁵ They reappear in 1944-45 and are set into the curriculum for second year B.F.A. students in Weaving for that year and the following year, which would have been Phillips's first year as a non-degree student. In 1946-47, dyeing of fabrics and yarns was part of the second year curriculum, as was learning to weave on the power loom.³⁸⁶ In 1960 and 1961, spinning and dyeing were still clearly stated as part of the curriculum for second year B.F.A. students.³⁸⁷ In 1962, the Weaving curriculum stated specifically "the techniques of spinning and *vegetable* dyeing are thoroughly covered."³⁸⁸ This change in the course description to specifically feature vegetable dyes occurred when Glen Kaufman hired Eleen Auvil to teach at Cranbrook for one year.³⁸⁹

Adela Akers recalled that in 1960, while Strengell was still at Cranbrook, a fellow student by the name of Eleen Auvil was responsible for sparking a renewed interest among the students in hand spinning and in using vegetable dyes, a trend that was becoming popular among many weavers of the time, including some Cranbrook graduates.³⁹⁰ As context for the interest that Cranbrook students like Akers, Auvil and Phillips had at this time for handspun yarns and for exaggerated texture in woven goods, Hans Namuth, in a short spread for *Craft Horizons* in 1961 on Jack Lenor Larsen's fashion emporium, called "J.L. Arbiter," showed the entrée of heavily textured hand woven fabrics and ethnic fabrics onto the fashion scene, asserting that "Fabric is the Fashion."³⁹¹ Namuth touted the sophistication of such items as "the textural drama of an ungraded natural camel's hair fabric from Morocco," "the soft luxury of a Berber blanket . . . transformed into a sumptuous coat loomed with wool roving as large as a thumb," and "the reversible, shaggy wool coat . . . made of a felted, knotted Greek astrakhan rug

woven by Greek shepherds [and] rainproofed by natural oils of the sheep.”³⁹² In the catalogue published by *Craft Horizons* for “Fabrics International” in 1961, the Berber coating fabric elicited the following comment: “[n]atural modulation of hand-spun ungraded fiber gives this plain-woven [fabric] an authentic character which suggests hand-spinning – not hand-weaving – was the sacrifice of the industrial revolution.”³⁹³ The trend at Cranbrook and in the commercial world of fiber and fabric was moving toward a handmade aesthetic, and the use of more natural and naturally processed fibers.

Although there was a spirit of collaboration at Cranbrook, Adela Akers recalled that there was also considerable competition because each artist was looking for something new that would distinguish his or her work from classmates and others in the field.³⁹⁴ Akers recalled that Eleen Auvil’s work featured lumpy handspun yarns and was absolutely innovative and new at that time; the handspun wools Auvil produced fascinated Strengell and all of the students.³⁹⁵ Auvil recalled that even though she was worried that Strengell would disapprove she began to work some of her handspun yarns into her pieces rather surreptitiously.³⁹⁶ Auvil confirmed she had become interested in hand spinning and vegetable dyeing before attending Cranbrook, but that she willingly shared her interest and experience in preparing and spinning fibers by hand, using a drop spindle and a wheel, and also taught her classmates the art of vegetable dyeing.³⁹⁷ Adela Akers recalled Eleen Auvil bringing her own wheel for the other students to use.³⁹⁸ Auvil collected plants for dyestuffs around her property in Rochester, but Akers also recalled the gardeners at Cranbrook saved plants for the students, like the dried marigolds after deadheading, and the students used them to make dyestuffs as well as collected plants on their own.³⁹⁹ Phillips used “hand-spun dahlia-dyed wool” for two samples that she

included in her B.F.A. and M.F.A. portfolios; Auvil confirmed that dahlias make a good dye.⁴⁰⁰

To spin fiber by hand is tremendously time-consuming; each type of fiber can require different handling and equipment. Vegetable dyeing is less predictable and more labor intensive than using chemical dyes, however, engaging in fiber production at this basic level is deeply satisfying and teaches the student more about fiber than simply using commercially prepared materials. In addition to her demonstration of weaving skills, exhibiting her proficiency at these techniques was likely an expected part of her portfolios for both the B.F.A. and M.F.A. degrees, but the extent of Phillips's use of these hand prepared materials shows a change away from weaving using so many manufactured metallic fibers and toward a more experimental way of working.

Section 3. B.F.A. Thesis, "Wool"

Although he was the head of the Weaving Department at the time Phillips submitted both theses for the consideration of the faculty, Glen Kaufman does not now recall reviewing either of Phillips's theses.⁴⁰¹ Kaufman kept up a blistering pace in his first few years at Cranbrook, maintaining his own outside commissions, exhibiting his work, and developing two substantial exhibitions that blended historic and contemporary textiles at Cranbrook, including "Tapestry: 1500 Years of Fabric Art," November 1963-January 1964, and "Ornamentation: The Art of Fabric Decoration," February-March, 1965. Joy Hakanson, of the *Detroit News* Art In Michigan column, reviewed both exhibitions extremely favorably.⁴⁰² For these exhibitions, Kaufman recruited the students to assist him and built study groups around each exhibition.⁴⁰³ He unearthed Cranbrook Founder George G. Booth's textile collection from storage at the Cranbrook Art Museum, and using it as the basis for the exhibitions, he borrowed numerous objects from major

museum collections, private collectors and even students, creating exhibits that married historic textiles with contemporary examples.⁴⁰⁴ As a source of inspiration for student work at Cranbrook, Kaufman's predecessor, Marianne Strengell, had never encouraged reference to historic textiles; she wanted students to "design from 'within.'"⁴⁰⁵ But Phillips's return to Cranbrook in the 1960s coincided with a new era of textile development and a popular return to historic textiles as a source of inspiration for design and construction of new products.

Looking at Phillips's theses in early 2009, Glen Kaufman considered them more comprehensive in the length of the written sections and in the body of original work included than would typically have been expected of B.F.A. and M.F.A. students at the time.⁴⁰⁶ Phillips, who had studied for a year with Strengell in 1946-1947 and again in 1960-61, and who had been a professional weaver for twelve years, used the time available to her in the Cranbrook weaving studio to weave a substantial portfolio of fabrics (seven suiting fabrics totaling 30.5 yards; 3 blankets; 2 complete rugs with five additional samples; 5 upholstery fabrics totaling 15 yards; four casement and drapery fabrics totaling 12 yards; six examples of tie & dye, only one of which was hand woven in a 3 yard length (the rest were likely cut of commercially woven natural silk yardage); five woven pillows, and one double weave panel.⁴⁰⁷ A photo from the period shows Phillips, hard at work at the loom. Figure 55. Although this was a prodigious quantity of weaving, Phillips, even in 1946-47, was considered by her instructors to be highly competent, hardworking and speedy.⁴⁰⁸

Phillips B.F.A. thesis illustrates an important stage in her development as an artist.⁴⁰⁹ From 1960-1962, Phillips continued to win awards for her weaving, and

received highly complimentary and supportive comments on her work from both Marianne Strengell and Glen Kaufman.⁴¹⁰ In the fall of 1960, Strengell commented: “Mary has a great technical knowledge and good sense of color and design.”⁴¹¹ In the spring of 1961, Strengell commented: “Very good – magnif. craftsmanship good design authoritative, good leader and boss.”⁴¹² Kaufman also found Phillips to be talented and capable, stating in the fall of 1961 that Mary had a “[g]ood understanding of weaving processes; excellent craftsmanship evident in her work – thoroughly explores each problem she selects.”⁴¹³ Later, in the spring of 1962, Kaufman stated, “Mary demonstrates a good comprehension of weaving techniques and has thoroughly explored possibilities on 4 and 8 harness looms. She has shown an increased awareness to widen her experiences and successfully completed several projects that were new ventures for her.”⁴¹⁴ Again in the fall of 1962, Kaufman stated: “Background in weaving technique excellent.”⁴¹⁵ However, Phillips later poignantly wrote in her M.F.A. thesis that “[b]eing commonplace and satisfied with one’s work and self will stifle creative activity.”⁴¹⁶ Phillips’s weaving, given the number of awards she had won over her career, and the unstinting praise of her instructors at Cranbrook, was anything but “commonplace,” but that statement, which followed a year after submission of the B.F.A. thesis, revealed that Phillips was ready for something new and that she had perhaps felt a sense of stagnation in doing the same sort of work she had always done, even though it was of very high quality.

In weaving for the B.F.A. thesis, Phillips prepared a substantial portfolio of fabrics that would be useful for a person in search of employment as a designer of fashion and interiors rather than as an artist creating one-of-a-kind works of art.⁴¹⁷ As such,

Phillips's B.F.A. thesis reflected the vitality of Strengell's influence, and the established Cranbrook model for success in which weaving by hand and machine were given equal weight and in which marketing prototypes for industry was a major focus of developing competency in the field and meeting expectations.⁴¹⁸ The weaving portion of the thesis, which included the written section, was entitled *Wool*; hence Phillips used wool in nearly all of the woven samples she included in the portfolio of fabrics, often in combination with other natural fibers and some synthetics. Only three of the woven samples did not have any wool in them, and all of these featured other combinations of natural fibers, including silk, linen, rayon, mohair, and cotton. Phillips's interest in working with wool at this time was cutting edge, was supported in the marketplace, and was not simply an extension of her personal preference for working with fine, natural fibers. According to an article in *American Fabrics* published in 1958, "[t]he wool picture [wa]s bright," because price reductions in recent years made wool more affordable for consumers, and "experimental work" in the wool industry had led to advancements in technology that made wool more appealing in comparison to synthetics, which were previously outstripping its market share.⁴¹⁹ These advancements included "permanent creasing," "shrink-proofing, mildew proofing, and moth-resistance," considered "advertising assets which only the manmade fiber companies could promote up until recently, but now they can be used just as effectively by the woolen people."⁴²⁰ Further, in the portfolio, Phillips showed considerable innovation by extending the use of wool fabrics, which were gaining ground against synthetics in fashion, into fabrics designed for interior use as upholstery fabrics, rugs and draperies.

There are few existing examples of Phillips's weaving from the 1940s and 1950s, so it is not possible at this time to provide much of a comparison of her weaving before 1960 to that shown in the thesis.⁴²¹ However, in looking at the fabrics she included in her portfolio, it is possible to discern several themes. These include 1) her preference for using natural fibers; 2) her experience in designing fabrics for fashion; 3) her exploration of several more traditional woven patterns; 4) her introduction of surface texture into woven goods, including by the use of handspun yarns; and 5) her continued reliance on a color palette that followed either the "Liebes look" of metallic fibers and intense, bright colors with high contrast, or the more traditional Scandinavian naturals typically associated with the work of Marianne Strengell.⁴²²

In the first section of the B.F.A. portfolio, Phillips focused on suiting fabrics, showing seven examples, all but two of which were woven by hand.⁴²³ Although Glen Kaufman does not recall many Cranbrook students who were designing fabrics for clothing, Dorothy Liebes, whom Phillips admired, certainly did work for fashion designers like Fresno native Bonnie Cashin, a noted creator of American sportswear.⁴²⁴ Strengell, in her lesson plan, also listed suiting fabrics as a part of the curriculum, and identified fashion fabrics generally as a possible growth area for designers, although her own focus throughout most of her career was clearly on fabrics for interiors and other industrial commissions.⁴²⁵ Jack Lenor Larsen, who was by this time well-established professionally and a real powerhouse in the field of textiles, noted in an article for *Craft Horizons* in 1952 that the use of hand woven fabrics had not yet found much of a market in fashion although they had become "a vital and permanent element of interior architecture."⁴²⁶ As Phillips had been operating her own successful business in Fresno

from about 1955-1959 weaving suiting fabrics, among other types of fabrics, before returning to Cranbrook, it was natural that she would feature such fabrics prominently in her thesis.⁴²⁷ Further, it shows she had already been working to create what was a relatively new luxury market for her work.

According to Jack Lenor Larsen, suiting fabrics represented a particularly “stringent” set of challenges to the successful designer. His explanation of these strictures in the article for *Craft Horizons* is instructive because it gives non-weavers a better understanding of Phillips’s command of both the discipline and the art of weaving, as well as of the scope of Cranbrook’s curriculum and its expectations for its graduates.⁴²⁸ According to Larsen, for the weaver of fashion fabrics:

Every technical requirement of cloth must be most meticulously adhered to. The fabric must be well meshed in order not to fray in cutting or slip at the seams. It is even more essential that the material withstand the stresses and strains of the body movement than in the case of upholstery which is to be molded over a static chair form. The extent of its resilience must be fully controlled. . . .⁴²⁹

Larsen further asserted that fashion fabrics had to withstand abrasion and that their construction should resist shrinkage and be easy to maintain despite the necessity for frequent cleaning, a standard not applicable to most fabrics designed for interior decoration.⁴³⁰ Further, Larsen averred: “Even more in fashion than in decorative fabrics, scale seems to be the arbiter of successful designing. Scale may be very bold, but it is vital always that a fashion fabric be appealing in close-up. A drapery is usually not seen closer than two yards off, but a glove, a hat, a suit must stand the scrutiny of close inspection throughout a tête-à-tête such as luncheon.”⁴³¹ Larsen discussed the necessity of staying in step with trends in colors and fabrics, which changed more quickly in fashion than in interiors, and that only “dramatic simplification” allowed fashion fabrics

to be effective compliments to a wardrobe.⁴³² Finally, Larsen addressed the need for hand woven fashion fabrics to meet exceptional requirements for performance and beauty; only if these standards of quality and aesthetic appeal were met would consumers be willing to pay the additional costs associated with the production of hand woven fashion fabrics.⁴³³ Other noted designers of hand-loomed and power-loomed fashion fabrics expressed similar concerns.⁴³⁴

The fashion fabrics Phillips created for her portfolio were primarily sophisticated tabby (a balanced plain weave) and twill weaves, which were good choices for suiting fabrics.⁴³⁵ Phillips specified that two of the suiting fabrics (Suiting Fabrics 5 and 6, both twill weaves) were woven on the power loom, and these are the only fabrics so identified in the entire B.F.A. portfolio, although for some of the fabrics Phillips did not specify the type or complexity of the loom used at all. The standard exhibition length was three yards, but Phillips's more substantial examples ranged from three to seven yards in length.⁴³⁶ In five of the fabrics (Suiting Fabrics 1, 3-5, and 7), Phillips showed wool woven in combination with other luxury natural fibers like silk or linen.⁴³⁷ Each of the seven clothing fabrics appeared as an actual swatch in the thesis, and six of these were paired with illustrations of chic women's suiting ensembles deftly executed by "Frank Akers" in white on black paper on a model reminiscent of Jacqueline Kennedy.⁴³⁸ The seventh fabric was a check identified as a "[s]port coat fabric" in a masculine-looking tabby weave. No fashion drawing was provided for this fabric. Fabrics 3-4 appear to be variations on a color theme using a palette of olive, natural, black and gold paired with drawings that show the smaller tabby weave as the suit fabric and the larger tabby weave as the cape fabric. Figures 56-57.

In two of the fabrics, (Suiting Fabrics 1 and 2) Phillips used handspun fibers, one in wool, and one in silk and mohair.⁴³⁹ Suiting Fabrics 1 and 2 show that Phillips achieved substantial surface texture and interest, even in her clothing fabrics, by using highly textured or handspun yarns. Although Marianne Strengell deplored what she considered “colonial patterns, void of texture and color,” Phillips used one traditional M and O pattern for a bright, coarsely textured coat fabric (Suiting Fabric 2) of handspun Mexican wool and Scotch wool.⁴⁴⁰ This fabric, with its intense gold and hot pink palette may have reflected Dorothy Liebes’s influence.⁴⁴¹ However, other designers were taking up the bright palette traditionally associated with Liebes, as in “the high-pitched colors of weaver Alice Parrot’s hand-loomed wool and silk – tangerine, scarlet and cerise,” made for J.L. Arbiter ca. 1961.⁴⁴² Certainly in “Fabrics International” and other fiber shows of the period, handmade fibers were becoming more prevalent.⁴⁴³ According to Phillips’s classmate Adela Akers, they contributed to woven goods the increasingly desirable quality and appearance of something that could not be duplicated by machine.⁴⁴⁴

For the B.F.A. thesis, Phillips also wove three substantial blankets. Blanket 1 was a luxurious confection of white curly mohair and wool and provided another study in bold surface texture. Blanket 2 used deep yellow wool and silk with white handspun wool that looks so soft as to resemble roving. Along with handspun yarn, contemporary hand weavers were also using roving in their fabric compositions at this time. Roving is the drawn out “web” of fiber prepared for spinning by hand or machine; soft and fluffy, like cotton candy, it can be given a slight twist, but to spin roving into commercial yarns may require up to three additional processes.⁴⁴⁵ Roving is light and warm, and can be easily felted. One concern of using such soft fibers for fabrics is that they might felt from

wear or washing, which could produce a pleasing halo effect on the surface of the fabric, or cause it to shrink and toughen. Blanket 3 is a twill weave in bold stripes of blue, white, black and red. It appears densely woven and is ornamented with fringe at either end, and with unusual corded tassels along the sides.⁴⁴⁶ The blankets could easily coordinate with many of the fabrics presented in other categories.

Phillips wove two complete rugs and five rug samples, all in natural fibers. Phillips noted for Rug 1, of “[y]ellow, mustard, chartreuse and white: wool and linen: flossa and flat area” that it won the “[n]on purchase prize in the California State Fair, 1961.”⁴⁴⁷ “Flossa” is a traditional Scandinavian technique for creating a short, knotted pile with which Phillips would have been familiar from Strengell’s focus on learning to make rugs in the weaving curriculum.⁴⁴⁸ Of Phillips’s rugs and rug samples, some exploited high contrasts in color and texture for a lively, playful, syncopated effect reminiscent of Dorothy Liebes; others were accomplished compositions in flat or flossa weaves that emphasized the more subtle qualities of pattern, texture and materials in the design, and reflected a more Scandinavian aesthetic in keeping with Marianne Strengell’s preferences.⁴⁴⁹ Glen Kaufman recalled that the students held “rug parties” whenever a rug was completed because it was a substantial investment of time and materials to complete a rug, and therefore a cause for celebration and congratulations.⁴⁵⁰ Kaufman noted that Phillips showed two complete rugs in the portfolio, which represented a significant accomplishment given the number and quantity of other fabrics she presented.

Phillips also offered five upholstery fabrics ranging from two to four yards in length. In several of these she used rayon with natural fibers, and in one she used “synthetic straw.” Upholstery 1 showed a soft, heavily textured surface created by use of

thick, handspun wool to form the weft. Glen Kaufman considered that an upholstery fabric with so much surface texture might be prone to wear, however hand weavers at the time were experimenting with weaves that would add durability to the soft fibers and irregular surface textures typical of handspun wools, although it is not clear how effective these experiments were or whether Phillips was specifically aware of them.⁴⁵¹ Three of Phillips's upholstery fabrics (Upholstery 2-4) featured small, visually busy patterns in traditional-looking weaves using high contrast colors in conventional color combinations such as blue and white, or black, brown, white and natural. For Upholstery 2, Phillips used a traditional "M and O" pattern. These fabrics would make a statement in a room and would likely compliment the simple lines of modern furnishings popular at the time. Upholstery 5, a "turquoise and poison green check," succeeded with its dramatic use of color, and its large-scale pattern adds to the fresh, contemporary look of the fabric.⁴⁵² Although Phillips does not state this in the written portion of the thesis, the upholstery samples all coordinate with one or more of the rugs or rug samples.

In the "Casement and Drapery" section, Phillips showed four examples, each three yards in length. Two of these blended natural fibers with rayon, and one blended natural fibers with metallic thread and synthetic straw. Only one is shown in its full length, but because the photo was taken at a distance of several feet, the subtleties of the design and how the materials, listed as "[s]ilk, linen, synthetic straw, wool loop and metallic," were used are difficult to discern. The overall off-white palette was accented with a regular textured grid pattern in relief, likely formed in part by the use of the wool loop. Glen Kaufman thought this example looked like a Liebes-inspired fabric.⁴⁵³ It is the simplest and most transparent-looking of the group, which included several striking

combinations of color and texture presented in intricately constructed patterns of honeycomb, twill and stripes. Casement 4 compliments Upholstery 5 and Rugs 1-3.

The portion of the thesis portfolio entitled “Tie and Dye” testifies to the space and freedom to dye fabrics at Cranbrook. Of the six examples Phillips included in her B.F.A. portfolio, five are experiments in the tie-and-dye technique using various color combinations and patterns on three-yard lengths of silk. Kaufman considered these examples fairly basic in their techniques, however, he also thought Phillips’s use of tie-and-dye was somewhat unusual for that period.⁴⁵⁴ The palette Phillips chose for her dyes ranged from deep and cool (blues, blacks and whites) to warm and subtle (bronze white and brown) to bold and bright (red, maroon and orange). Again, these tie-dyed panels coordinate with other fabrics in the collection. The sixth example was a three-yard sample of a woven fabric comprised of silk, linen, wool and synthetic straw that was then tie-died in muted coppery shades. Because all the tie-dyed fabrics were shown in details that stressed a small area of pattern to exhibit a specific dyed effect, it is difficult to get a sense of the overall appeal of the fabrics that Phillips created using this technique. However, in 1963, Phillips exhibited these fabrics in her one-woman show at the Fresno Art Museum and their strikingly diaphanous qualities, if not their bold colors, were captured in the black and white photos of the exhibit. Figures 75-79.

A section of “Pillows” featured five examples woven in various dimensions suitable for covering the front of a pillow. All were shown as detail photographs except Pillow 1, which showed a finished pillow woven in what Phillips noted was a combination of flossa and soumak weaves, in “[h]ot pink, poison green, orange and yellow,” bright colors reminiscent of Liebes.⁴⁵⁵ Pillow 2 in the electrifying combination

of orange, yellow, black and white used the “honeycomb pattern,” another traditional weave. Each of the examples, except Pillow 3, combined natural and synthetic fibers. Several used metallic fibers. Pillow 3, in a pattern of irregularly spaced orange and white stripes, used “handspun silk, wool and mohair” with “hand spun Dahlia dyed wool.” The last item in the “Weaving” section was one spectacular example of “double weave,” a traditional Finnish weaving technique; Phillips later used double knit frequently, both for transparent pockets in which she inserted objects and for more complex color patterns. Double knit is conceptually similar to, but easier to produce, than double weave, and must have fascinated Phillips.⁴⁵⁶ Phillips’s woven example, made of linen and rayon, featured a very sophisticated and pleasing abstract pattern in a muted palette of pink and oranges, accented with metallic fibers.

The written section of the B.F.A. thesis comprises about twenty pages of text enumerating the chemical, physical, technical and aesthetic characteristics, uses, and preparation of wool and wool blends, as well as a historical overview of wool.⁴⁵⁷ Phillips also included an advocacy piece in a section entitled “Why Use Wool,” to explain the desirable and competitive qualities of wool and wool blend fibers and fabrics in fashion and home furnishings, as well as in more general industrial uses, in comparison to the many exclusively man-made fibers on the market at that time, e.g., “[a]cids of the air, soil and perspiration all have difficulty in fading or changing the color of wool;” and “[h]igh fashion . . . is loyal to the use of wool because they have found none of the synthetics that will compare to it;” and “[w]ool [carpets] tend[] to shed dirt, will respond to cleaning and will look better after long use than any other natural or man made fiber,” and finally, “[t]here is nothing hotter or colder than the upholstery of a car that is made of man made

fibers.”⁴⁵⁸ In as late as 1960, in “A Personal Approach to Textile Design,” at 3, Marianne Strengell wrote about the making of a synthetic automobile upholstery for the Chrysler Imperial, 1959 as one of her most successful design projects: “The fabric is 100% synthetic, utilizing nylon, viscose, Metlon, etc. It is piece dyed, collandered and rubberized for production.” Phillips’s overt rejection of synthetic materials for use in this context is interesting.

Phillips identified several supporting trade and governmental organizations as resources, including the American Sheep Producer’s Council, Denver, CO; The International Wool Secretariat, London, England; and The Wool Bureau, Inc., New York.⁴⁵⁹ There are numerous comments of the following type, e.g., “[t]he Wool Bureau, Inc., has launched a promotion to dramatize and encourage the sale of sheer woollens. Leno weaves in wools is one of the newest designs on the market today;” and “[t]he finest couturiers use it for their most important designs.” However, despite the quality and up-to-the-minute style of her fabric portfolio, and the assertive tone of her writing, Phillips derived some of her material from considerably outdated sources, thereby undercutting her efforts to appear *au courant* and familiar with market developments and trends to potential industrial clients or employers, which was an explicit goal of the Weaving curriculum.⁴⁶⁰ For example, Phillips recommended “Vicara,” synthesized from corn protein, as one of the better synthetics to blend with wool for its pleasing tactile qualities.⁴⁶¹ In 1962, Vicara had been out of production for five years.⁴⁶² However, it was featured in an older issue of *American Fabrics* that Phillips substantially relied upon.⁴⁶³

In support of her thesis, Phillips cited two comprehensive reference texts:

American Fabrics Magazine Encyclopedia of Textiles, published in 1960 by Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ, which was current, and *America's Fabrics: Origin and History, Manufacture, Characteristics, and Use* by Zelma Bendure and Gladys Pfeiffer, which was a classic guide to the modern production of textiles published in 1946 by The Macmillan Company, New York. Both the *Encyclopedia* and *America's Fabrics* are fascinating for their contemporary views of textiles and the textile industry. The 1960 version of the *American Fabrics Magazine Encyclopedia of Textiles* was a less comprehensive version of the Bendure and Pfeiffer opus.⁴⁶⁴ Bendure and Pfeiffer's *America's Fabrics* is nearly 700 pages in length and would have been an invaluable resource on industrial textiles during Phillips's first term of study at Cranbrook in the 1940s. Touting the importance of textiles in modern life, much like the Cranbrook course catalogues for the same period, it covers the properties of many natural and synthetic materials. Authors Bendure and Pfeiffer outlined the current practices and state-of-the-art machinery for weaving, knitting, twisting (lace-making), and felting, which they termed the four basic processes of textile manufacture. They also discussed printing, dyeing and finishing techniques, fabric chemistry, and implementation of industry standards. Phillips also cited Numbers 15, 22 and 43 of *American Fabrics*, a fine quality trade publication for fashion designers and retailers of the post-war years, for the technical properties of wool.⁴⁶⁵

The Textile Arts: A Handbook of Fabric Structure and Design Processes: Ancient and Modern Weaving, Braiding, Printing, and Other Textile Techniques by Verla Birrell, M.F.A., and published in 1959 by Harper & Bros., New York, was also cited by Phillips.

Birrell produced a comprehensive book focused on the history of the textile arts, including knitting, spinning and macramé and, unlike Bendure and Pfeiffer, gave equal space to the use of the hand and the machine, offered more coverage for ethnic textiles generally, and gave more attention to the aesthetic considerations of design and hand made textiles. Birrell's book was published the same year as Anni Albers's *On Designing*, which featured essays dating from as early as 1944 that questioned the primacy of the machine and the artist's role in modern life, advocated for weaving as an art form, and juxtaposed the essays with dramatic photos of Albers's weaving, including several from her latest series of "pictorial weavings." Birrell spoke to the "current renaissance in hand weaving," as one driven in part by the desire of creative artists, professional and recreational, to produce something of which machines were not capable.⁴⁶⁶ Birrell also noted the resurgence in the 1950s of interest in tapestry weaving.⁴⁶⁷ This represented a shift in focus in the community of weavers like Phillips and her contemporaries.⁴⁶⁸ The great weavers and textile designers of the 1940s, like Marianne Strengell, Dorothy Liebes, and Anni Albers, were successful in creating an appetite for the hand made product that spread to other areas of fiber work; the 1960s were a time of tremendous change for artists in the medium away from industrial production and toward the hand made textile as an art form.

There are several weaknesses in Phillips's presentation of weaving in the B.F.A. thesis overall that become more apparent when compared to the M.F.A. thesis. The first and most notable weakness is the total absence of any rationale in the written section of approximately twenty pages for the fabrics that Phillips wove and presented in the accompanying portfolio. If the reader looks for a connection, he or she will discover by a

review of the fiber content of each fabric that nearly all of the fabrics in the portfolio have some wool in them, but the correspondence between the text and the portfolio is not something Phillips addresses directly. The second difficulty is in the format used to present the portfolio of fabrics, which could tell their story more clearly if arranged in coordinated groupings, rather than within the categories that corresponded to the dictates of the curriculum, e.g. “Casements,” “Upholstery,” etc. Perhaps Phillips was adhering to a convention of presentation followed at Cranbrook, or was anxious that no one overlook her demonstration of competency in all the required areas, but she missed the opportunity to emphasize either in writing or presentation one of the great strengths of her portfolio. The fabrics would furnish a series of rooms, each with a different luxurious and stylish character, if presented in the portfolio as Phillips might have envisioned them working together in an interior space. For example, there is a red, black and white suite of fabrics and rugs for a modern living room that would look well with leather, chrome and glass furniture, as well as a blue and citrus suite of fabrics and rugs that would complement the light woods of Scandinavian furniture, and a vibrant pink, red and orange suite of fabrics and rugs that would complement a modern ski chalet with white walls and a large hearth. In concert with other fabrics in the group, many of Phillips’s tighter, stuffier and more traditional-looking weaves provide a punchy counterpoint to the bold, highly textured luxury of her rugs, blankets and pillows. From the suiting fabrics, Phillips would have been able to design coordinated clothing ensembles for the inhabitants of these interior spaces. Although Phillips could have engaged the reader directly with her talent, her aesthetic sensibility, her depth of knowledge and experience in working with fiber, and her sense of timing about the desirability of wool fabrics if she revealed more about her

own process of developing the portfolio, the reader is left to discover the interrelationship of these fabrics and textiles, if at all, only after a lengthy consideration of the samples shown. Finally, even though she had very likely done considerable experimentation in making the handspun fibers featured in many of the samples, and although it reflected one of the more interesting developments in her work as well as a new trend in the textile industry, Phillips does not reflect at all on this process, or offer her assessment of the results she achieved, in her writing. Nor does she discuss her use of dyeing techniques, or the effects she hoped to produce. The lack of cohesiveness that so hampers the presentation of the B.F.A. thesis, however, is righted in the M.F.A. thesis.

Yet the overall impression created by Phillips's woven and tie-dyed fabrics is one of competence and control in all the required areas of mastery. As noted, Phillips devoted the first section of her portfolio to fashion fabrics, which were part of the Cranbrook curriculum, but which Strengell seldom emphasized in her own work after about 1940.⁴⁶⁹ Second, Phillips abjured synthetics in favor of wool, which flew in the face of Strengell's lifelong efforts to create beautiful and durable fabrics with synthetics. However, this showed not only Phillips's own preference for natural fibers but also a recent change in the market that favored a return to wool.⁴⁷⁰ Third, she included several examples of traditional woven patterns, which Strengell generally frowned upon as "colonial weaving," a polite term for copying patterns out of books rather than making one's own original designs, but in which Phillips may have been interested, although she does not elaborate. Fourth, Phillips used a great deal of surface texture in all of her fabrics, which was another emerging trend. Finally, in her own palette, she did not diverge much from the "Liebes look" in her continued use of metallic fibers, bright colors

with high contrast, and mixed warps, or from Strengell's Scandinavian aesthetic, which generally adhered to a more subdued palette of neutrals on their own, or mixed with deep, saturated colors that exuded calm, sophistication and control. Phillips's use of so many handspun fibers and of natural as well as chemical dyes shows she readily adopted an emerging trend toward the hand-processed as well as the hand made in fiber work. Knowledge of hand-spinning and vegetable dyeing would have augmented Phillips's already substantial knowledge about process and material, and likely became an essential component of the more original and experimental work she subsequently did in the M.F.A. thesis. The utility of the work she was doing overall -- its sophistication and beauty -- shows to best advantage not in the detailed shots from her portfolios, but in the comprehensive arrangements of textiles in her one-woman show at the Fresno Art Museum in 1963. However, the stilted written portions of the B.F.A. thesis also speak poignantly of Phillips's struggle to find her voice and to move beyond what was a safe, comfortable and potentially stagnating way of working in her medium. After two years of study at Cranbrook, the B.F.A. thesis showed that Phillips was beginning to stretch a little beyond her comfort zone, but that she had not yet found her way forward; that was soon to change.

Section 4. M.F.A. Thesis: "Experimental Fabrics"

Art is an expression of life, and therefore the art form has to have deep roots in life itself. . . [I]ts germ has to be found where it comes closest to man in his daily existence. It is not in the monumental buildings, but in the home, in the living and working place, and in man's contact with even the smallest objects he uses and with which he lives, that a valid art form is created.

-- Eliel Saarinen, Cranbrook Academy of Art
Announcement, October 1932

It has been a very exciting time for me and I feel that my results have been successful even though in many cases they have only been the beginning and not the end. I do not feel this thesis is a conclusion but only the beginning of things to come.

-- Mary Walker Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, "Experimental Fabrics"

In the fall of 1962, Phillips saw an exhibition at Cranbrook entitled "Fabrics International" that inspired her to investigate new concepts, processes, and materials for fabric construction within the scope of her M.F.A. thesis, and transformed her work in ways that would resonate for a lifetime. One of her most important discoveries was that a favorite hobby, knitting, could also be a valid medium for research and innovation in fabric design. In the course of preparing a portfolio of woven and knitted fabrics using such radical materials as asbestos, glass-insulating roving, synthetic straw and leather, in addition to more conventional materials, Phillips connected with the true spirit of experimentation and original form development that Eliel Saarinen aspired to for all Cranbrook students, as expressed in the quotations above. In the unconventional and adventurous vision for knitted fabrics that she advanced in her thesis, Phillips likely benefitted from her exposure to Marianne Strengell's history of working within emerging sectors of the textile industry. But Phillips was also on the cusp of a new trend in fiber that embraced the handmade craft object, and, along with her instructors and peers, she looked to older techniques and natural fibers as a source of inspiration.⁴⁷¹ Even Marianne Strengell expressed such interests at about this time, although she did not alter the curriculum she had established to include them while she remained at Cranbrook.⁴⁷²

In contrast, Glen Kaufman was primed by his own fascination with the extraordinary richness in the collections of historic textiles he had seen during his

Fulbright studies in Europe to support Phillips's experimentation in knitting and to encourage other students to expand their repertoire beyond weaving into new and old non-woven techniques.⁴⁷³ Kaufman's enthusiasm for Phillips's new direction was critical to Phillips; his energy and openness created an environment at Cranbrook that allowed a serious body of work in non-woven techniques to develop among the students. As he said of Phillips: "I supported her, I encouraged her, I *permitted* her to do this work." Hence, it was in a climate of interest and acceptance that Phillips's wrote her M.F.A. thesis with a focus on knitting. Her language conveyed a new sense of assurance and enthusiasm that shone from the page and testified to her excitement for the initiative she had taken: "We as students should be concerned with experimentation and be way out in our thinking, forget what is safe and sure."⁴⁷⁴ At a time when Phillips may have feared that the textile industry was becoming glutted with talent in hand weaving, she likely saw mastering design for commercial knitting as an opening horizon of opportunity. By 1965, the "knit revolution" was an established fact in the American textile industry; it remained vital for more than a decade, expanding into the home craft market as well as into every facet of textile production.⁴⁷⁵

Phillips's work in the M.F.A thesis was also directly inspired by the "Fabrics International" exhibition she saw at Cranbrook in the fall of 1962. In 1961, the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York (established by the American Craft Council) and the Philadelphia College Museum of Art, where Jack Lenor Larsen was Co-Director of the Department of Fabric Design from 1960-62, co-sponsored "Fabrics International," which was largely the brainchild of Larsen. When it opened in Philadelphia in September of 1961 with more than 150 examples of textiles from around the world "in

current production,” *Craft Horizons* magazine reviewed the show, published images of the works, a catalogue of entries, and several articles about it by Larsen and others in the September - October 1961 issue of *Craft Horizons Magazine* (the publication of the American Craft Council).⁴⁷⁶ “Fabrics International,” which traveled to numerous venues, was designed to showcase “fabric poetry” from three sources: notable international designers (e.g., Anni Albers, Dorothy Liebes, Marianne Strengell, Ed Rossbach, Trude Guermonprez, Sheila Hicks, Larsen himself, and many others); “indigenous fabrics of older cultures” that would show “unexploited techniques” (including fabrics from the Near and Far East, Africa and Peru); and “industrial or experimental fabrics.”⁴⁷⁷ “Experimental Fabrics,” the title of Phillips’s thesis, likely came from Alice Adams’s characterization of this last category in her essay for the magazine entitled, “The Fabric as Culture.”⁴⁷⁸ In the textiles that comprised “Fabrics International” there was a range of fabrics produced by both hand and machine; Larsen’s embrace of both types of manufacture in such a significant exhibition was another indicator of the growing interest in the 1950s and 1960s in techniques that machines could not reproduce, a trend that Glen Kaufman and Adela Akers also recalled as important to the period in their interviews.⁴⁷⁹ The message of “Fabrics International” was as inspiring as the dazzling variety of fabrics and techniques exhibited: it was to bring about a renaissance in the creative collaboration of artists and designers with the manufacturers of goods for use and decoration; and for Larsen and others associated with the exhibition, the hand-made fabrics and experiments in non-woven techniques were beautiful and innovative benchmarks for designers and manufacturers of contemporary fabrics, as well as stand-alone achievements in fabric construction.⁴⁸⁰

In the introduction to the M.F.A. thesis, Phillips specifically described her new experiments in knitting as the outgrowth of “accepting a challenge that Jack Lenor Larsen gave to every one of us in a talk he gave at the FABRICS INTERNATIONAL SHOW.”⁴⁸¹ She then cited the *Craft Horizons* article wherein Larsen stated that the show represented “not so much a survey about what is . . . but what can be done,” that “technology can supply whatever man is moved to invent,” and that “[p]roduction can be accomplished and the market found” as compelling her to try something new.⁴⁸² First, Phillips noted that Larsen, a prolific writer and designer, who was at that time acting as a spokesperson regarding future trends in the fiber industry, “stressed the importance of knitted fabrics.”⁴⁸³ She cited the knitted items exhibited by Anni Albers, Lilly E. Hoffman, Ellen Siegel, the Joynel Corporation of Belgium, and Larsen himself in “Fabrics International” as catalysts for her own ideas about how to respond to current demands in the textile industry receiving attention at the time. In fact, Larsen and Albers were among many weavers who publicly anticipated a shift in textile manufacturing from weaving, which produced significant amounts of waste, to knitting, which was seen as more economical and efficient.⁴⁸⁴ Second, “since fire laws and insurance companies require fire resistant fabrics in all public buildings,” the construction and interior design industries were in need of fabrics that were either fire resistant or fireproof.⁴⁸⁵ Phillips, who was optimistic about the versatility of the knitted medium to respond to these imperatives, stated, “[m]achine knitting is faster than weaving and has the advantage of being able to produce a finished article, be it clothing, lampshades, blankets, decorative fabrics or industrial materials.”⁴⁸⁶ Phillips’s M.F.A. thesis makes clear she saw knitting, initially, not as a medium for making a one-of-a-kind art object, but for making

aesthetically pleasing and functional industrially reproducible prototypes for a variety of end uses: “There are a sufficient number of technologies in the field that, should there be sufficient interest in my knit fabrics, they will be able to figure out a way to manufacture them or will invent a machine that will do the job.”⁴⁸⁷ However, Phillips also gave due attention to hand knitting, which she perceived as an area of growing interest, and as a source of pleasure and personal expression, especially in fashion: “The desire for beautiful knit clothing can be realized by everyone who will take the time to knit.”⁴⁸⁸ Although later in life Phillips would eschew knitting garments, knitting as a method for developing fashion fabrics, a new trend, was given equal weight in the thesis with knitting for other types of end uses.⁴⁸⁹

Phillips had learned to knit from her mother as a way of keeping herself occupied during numerous childhood illnesses, and it was a hobby she had continued to enjoy into adulthood.⁴⁹⁰ Adela Akers, who roomed next door to Phillips in the fall of 1960, confirmed that Phillips’s switch to knitting from weaving was not the reawakening of an old interest but rather the conversion of a current one to a new purpose -- Phillips was an active recreational knitter at Cranbrook, always knitting something, like socks or mittens, in her spare time.⁴⁹¹ Phillips herself stated that she was experienced in knitting socks and sweaters before she started knitting with weaving yarns, but Akers’s recollections help clarify that the timing of her recreational knitting and her experimental knitting coincided at Cranbrook.⁴⁹² When Phillips, inspired by the examples she had seen in “Fabrics International,” realized that her dorm room pastime, her educational objectives, and her future professional opportunities could coincide, she began knitting samples with the materials she normally used for weaving.⁴⁹³ By using primarily weaving yarns, like those

used by several artists in the examples shown in “Fabrics International,” and industrial fibers rather than traditional knitting yarns, Phillips said she saw new possibilities more quickly.⁴⁹⁴ In the thesis, Phillips extolled the amazing variety of fibers available for knitters to work with as inspiring for all knitters, including those who wanted to knit garments: “This is a great age for knitting.”

Glen Kaufman also recalled that seeing “Fabrics International” was an important turning point for Phillips and that she had pursued her new direction in knitting with enthusiasm and determination.⁴⁹⁵ Kaufman’s comments on Phillips’s work in the fall of 1962 confirm his genuine support for her: “Greatest creative efforts have been directed toward non-woven techniques with very exciting results. New approaches and open mindedness not seen before. New ideas for fabric design have been a welcomed result. She has found an area of investigation that is stimulating and rewarding . . . Diligent worker – creative results.”⁴⁹⁶ Friends and colleagues, including Adela Akers, Glen Kaufman, Barbara Factor, Gerhardt Knodel and Patricia Abrahamian all remember Phillips as very experienced, willing to share her views, and even somewhat opinionated, both personally and professionally.⁴⁹⁷ From her years at Cranbrook, she understood how to construct textiles based upon evaluating the functional and aesthetic characteristics of natural and synthetic fibers individually and blended with one another.⁴⁹⁸ She had learned to spin silk, mohair and wool yarns from raw fiber for the B.F.A. thesis, and had then worked those yarns into fabrics, which brought her to a depth of understanding about materials that no one using only commercially produced yarns can attain.⁴⁹⁹ But through knitting, which Glen Kaufman, Barbara Factor, Adela Akers and Jack Lenor Larsen all characterized as freeing for Phillips, she re-discovered her creative potential

and found fresh possibilities for the fiber medium.⁵⁰⁰ In her M.F.A. thesis, Phillips expressed a sense of authorship that is wholly absent from the B.F.A. thesis; here she outlined her intentions for the fabrics she had developed and analyzed results she had obtained: “My thesis is a record of my own creative research and searching for new expressions of techniques and materials. There are pertinent facts for background. In every case I am making statements about the research I have been doing and what conclusions I have made concerning their validity.”⁵⁰¹ Many of her experimental fabrics in the M.F.A. thesis were woven, but although she professed she had not given up weaving, she wrote, “I have spent the greater part of my energy knitting.”⁵⁰² Phillips clearly found her renewed sense of creative vitality incredibly exciting: “The last two semesters have opened up a whole new way of working for me and in this respect I feel that I have grown and progressed as a creative person. . . . [O]nly by constantly striving for the unknown will I expand and develop new ideas.”⁵⁰³ It was this rejuvenation that she had returned to Cranbrook to experience.

The fabrics exhibited in “Fabrics International” likely provided Phillips with a feast of inspiration for her own experiments in knitting.⁵⁰⁴ Notably, there were no historic or ethnic examples of knitting included in “Fabrics International,” but a reviewer commented that “[k]nitting is used to produce some unusual designs, several from well-known handweavers.”⁵⁰⁵ Although not pictured in *Craft Horizons*, Anni Albers submitted an “experimental” knitted casement in linen that, (if it was the same as that exhibited in the Guggenheim Retrospective in 1999-2000), was likely knit by hand, given its small dimensions.⁵⁰⁶ Figure 58. A “casement” was an architectural textile designed to filter the excess light that permeated the large expanses of glass typically used in the

modern interior.⁵⁰⁷ The many textile exhibition catalogues and articles on weaving in *Craft Horizons* from the 1940s through the 1960s show that casements, in addition to being useful and practical, were used to showcase the weaver's skill at using novel materials, techniques and color combinations, and were a staple item in the contemporary weaver's repertoire. The process Albers used was ingeniously simple, and can be duplicated as follows: the knitter casts on a given number of stitches, and on the first row adds stitches across the row at regular intervals, e.g., every two stitches, as Albers did.⁵⁰⁸ After knitting a sample of reasonably generous proportions (the Albers sample measure 20 7/8" x 15 3/8"), on the last row, the knitter binds off all the original stitches while allowing the stitches that were added to run down the length of the sample like a ladder in a pair of stockings. Because stitches were added after the cast on edge, the fabric will remain stable at the baseline and at the bound off edge.⁵⁰⁹ Albers's sample produced a clean, linear, openwork effect from strong vertical columns of stitches separated by horizontal floats for transparency. Albers created a second version of this casement sample in cotton and metallic thread; both samples were made in about 1960.⁵¹⁰ Albers exhibited a similar "knitted casement cloth" with wider bands of horizontal floats than in either of the Guggenheim examples in the "Designer-Craftsmen USA 1960" exhibition.⁵¹¹ It is possible she experimented with adding more stitches between the cast-on stitches at each interval to get the appearance of wider floats. Also not pictured in *Craft Horizons* were two knitted casements by Lilly E. Hoffmann, one made from acetate and the other made from linen.⁵¹²

In contrast, Ellen Seigel's fabric was a study in technology: a Raschel-knitted "Saran Net" casement, heat-set at high heat to fix its open weave. Figure 59.⁵¹³ The look

of this fabric cannot really be reproduced by hand knitting. The Joynel Corporation of Belgium's machine-knit natural linen casement was not pictured, but several of Larsen's fabrics were, including a Raschel-knit "Rovana" (a flat Saran monofilament) casement with elongated stitches that look like the "fancy crossed throws" Phillips would use so frequently and to such great effect in her own hand-knitted work.⁵¹⁴ Figures 60-61.

According to Phillips and to sources she cited, a Raschel or warp knitting machine could produce an extraordinary variety of fabrics, with or without elastic qualities, from lingerie and lace to carpeting or industrial fabrics, depending upon the attachments used.⁵¹⁵

Unlike hand knitting, which is a weft knitting process where the fabric is constructed in horizontal courses, warp knitting is constructed on a bed of needles with the yarns running in vertical courses like the warp on a loom.⁵¹⁶ Each course requires a separate yarn source and needle, but by shifting the bed to the right or left, the vertical chain of stitches formed moves back and forth between several courses.⁵¹⁷ Because the chain of stitches made from each yarn source moves across the fabric, Raschel knits rarely run.⁵¹⁸

Several other examples shown in "Fabrics International" likely provided inspiration for Phillips, who later duplicated the appearance of these fabrics in knitting, although they were made using a variety of other construction techniques. These included a decorative casement in linen made in Germany on a Nottingham loom (stitches that look like clusters or shells that Phillips replicated in knitting in "The Shells"); a spectacular gauze weave by Kay Sekimachi, a California weaver who studied at the California School of Arts & Crafts under Trude Guermonprez (undulating lines suggest the lacy cables Phillips later used to great effect in several works); a woven casement by Sue Goldberg emphasizing the natural crimp in mohair (open and solid areas

look like Phillips's use of double knit in "The Kings" and many other works); a Zapotec Indian technique worked by Sheila Hicks and Rufino Reyes in handspun natural beige wool that produced an embossed texture comparable in appearance and surface interest to some of the cabled and textured stitches Phillips later used to great effect in knitting and macramé.⁵¹⁹ Figures 62-69. Finally, a "sumptuous experimental coating or upholstery fabric plain-woven by Hella Skowronski . . . employ[ed] linen warp with filling of white calfskin strips, silk and metallic threads," that may have inspired Phillips's use of leather in her white leather rug.⁵²⁰ These examples, rather than detracting from Phillips's innovations in knitting, should reveal how her eye worked to adapt knitting to contemporary aesthetics in fabric design for architecture and interiors, and how her vision for knitting remained connected in later years, even in her practice of knitting as an art form, to an architectural sensibility.

In the M.F.A. thesis, in a section entitled "Introduction and Purpose," Phillips described how she used *Mary Thomas's Book of Knitting Patterns*, which she found in a used bookstore for \$1.50, as her starting point.⁵²¹ Phillips wrote, "I have developed and expanded the patterns to suit my needs."⁵²² Thomas's language and method of working likely resonated with Phillips – Thomas defined knitting using weaving terminology like "warp fabric" (ribbing) or "weft fabric" (garter stitch).⁵²³ Patterns in knitting could be charted out like weaving drafts.⁵²⁴ Thomas also urged the student of knitting to make "samples" using "scientific methods."⁵²⁵ She equated knitting with combining the tasks of dressmaker and weaver and, in a manner that must have sounded logical and familiar to Phillips, she discussed the aesthetic qualities and functional characteristics of the "fabrics" that could be made by knitting.⁵²⁶ Further, Thomas's books, like Strengell's

notes, are filled with enthusiasm for knitting and its creative and liberating potential: “Soon the knitter herself will visualize a thousand other ways in which a motif can be used, and so have at her disposal an inexhaustible variety of fabrics.”⁵²⁷ For Thomas, decorative arts and interior design were ready sources of inspiration for knitting.⁵²⁸ In another of Mary Thomas’s books, which Phillips later acquired, Thomas’s description of the virtues of knitting echoed Larsen’s own interests in promoting knitting as he expressed them in his writings for “Fabrics International,” and later, the Milan Triennale:

If all the looms in the world ceased to produce cloth, and the art of spinning and knitting alone remained, we could still be clothed, both warmly and fashionably. Such is knitting, which without a doubt is the most resourceful and inventive method of fabric construction in the world, being made without a loom or machine, without warp or weft, shaped as it is constructed, patterned as whim requires, and divided without being cut.⁵²⁹

Phillips’s thesis opens with a brief “History of Knitting” wherein she focused primarily on the history of knitting by machine, covering each of the types that are available, and describing her efforts to determine that the Cidega knitting machine would be the best choice for producing her casement fabrics.⁵³⁰ In this section Phillips relied primarily on the *American Fabrics Encyclopedia of Textiles*, although some of the information also comes from *Mary Thomas’s Book of Knitting Patterns*.⁵³¹ This section of the thesis also featured a description, with samples, of the basic stitches comprising knit fabrics, which Phillips termed as knit, purl and ribbing (a combination of the two).

Phillips demonstrated initiative by developing her own contacts with industry to solicit materials for her experiments, and to explore potential markets for her work, another departure from the B.F.A. thesis.⁵³² From Miss Lynn Given, Stylist, of The Dow Chemical Company, Dobeckmun Division, a long-standing client of Dorothy Liebes and

Marianne Strengell, Phillips obtained a supply of Rovana and Lurex, a metallic yarn.⁵³³ From Mr. W.S. Hough, Products Manager of Asbestos Textiles at Johns-Manville she obtained “different weights and plies of asbestos yarn” and accompanying technical information.⁵³⁴ From the Sawyer Tanning Company of Napa, California, she obtained the leather. Phillips also expressed her gratitude to Mr. Raymond C. Lofthouse, Plant Manager of the The Boye Needle Company of Chicago, Illinois, who made a custom circular knitting needle for her with a size 7 tip on one end and a size 13 tip on the other. Phillips requested the custom-made circular needle for a pattern that required two sizes of needles to make, and because the extra large size of her stitches fell off the ends of conventional straight needles. She used the needle to make a three-yard sample of a casement fabric.⁵³⁵ She does not disclose where she obtained the glass insulating roving (which she later called “Fiberglas” in *Creative Knitting*), and although she wrote summaries of the properties and uses of Rovana and asbestos, she did not include similar summaries for the Lurex or for the glass insulating roving.⁵³⁶ In *Creative Knitting*, in the reprise of her experimental knitting at Cranbrook, she stated, “I do not recommend knitting with glass yarn, however, since the rub-off can cause skin problems.”⁵³⁷

In a section of the M.F.A. Thesis called “Knit Casements,” Phillips showed five samples, only one of which was a substantial three-yard length. For Casement Samples 1, 2, 4 and 5, Phillips used linen. For Casement Sample 3, she used glass fiber. Casement Sample 1, made from yellow linen, featured “Indian Pillar Stitch,” which appeared crisply articulated, showing the stitch structure to optimum advantage, and producing an attractive fabric.⁵³⁸ The only stitch that Phillips used in her portfolio that specified the use of two different needle sizes is the “Grecian Plait Stitch,” which

required “two needles, one small and one large, the large needle to be twice the size of the smaller,” and Phillips used this stitch in only two small samples shown in the portfolio: Casement Sample 2 and Asbestos Knit Sample 1.⁵³⁹ In Casement Sample 2, Phillips used white slub linen in combination with the Grecian Plait Stitch, which she modified from Thomas’s original version by placing a plain knit stitch between repeats of the crossed stitches that form the “plaits” of the pattern.⁵⁴⁰ This modification, in combination with the slubbed and irregular appearance of the fiber, marred the original crispness and appeal of the pattern’s structure. In the asbestos sample, Phillips knitted the stitch the way Thomas wrote it, and the effect is more appealing.

Casement Samples 3-5 featured Phillips’s own experimental modifications of Thomas’s “Double-crested Garter Insertion Stitch.”⁵⁴¹ Phillips must have used the Boye Company’s custom needle to make the three-yard sample of Casement #4 in Double-Crested Garter Insertion Stitch, since that is the only three-yard knitted casement sample shown in the M.F.A. thesis.⁵⁴² This stitch pattern created visual effects similar to Larsen’s Raschel-knitted casement from “Fabrics International.” The pattern seems inaptly named because it is not the garter stitch that forms the insertion, but two rows of “fancy crossed throws,” which create a horizontal band of openwork within a background of a more solid fabric, such as garter or stockinette stitch.⁵⁴³ Phillips really pushed this stitch to its limits in her samples for the M.F.A. thesis, and brought its execution more in line with its name: the stitch meant to create the insertion in an otherwise solid fabric became the fabric itself, supported at random intervals by narrow horizontal insertions of the garter stitch for stability. Figure 61. Thomas alternated the garter stitch and openwork at regular intervals, and in her examples she showed the stitch with only one

twist, however, Phillips's smaller samples (including one in glass fiber) show she was adding numerous twists to the stitch with additional throws.⁵⁴⁴ Because the "fancy crossed throw" is elongated and twisted around itself by adding wraps around the needle before the stitch is made, it stands to reason that Phillips's ability to alter the length of these stitches from shorter to extremely long in the same work would be enhanced by using different needle sizes. Further, the stitch can be awkward to complete with more than three wraps around the needle, so by using a larger needle tip, which would require more yarn for each wrap, the longest of these stitches could have been done as efficiently as the shortest version.

The image of the three-yard casement sample that Phillips showed in the thesis was widely publicized, and Phillips's variation of the stitch became something of a trademark in her later works. It appeared in *Craft Horizons* and *American Fabrics* as well as in the Cranbrook Academy of Art course catalogues in the 1960s. Glen Kaufman commented that the irregular quality and lack of uniformity in the stitches was what made the fabric so attractive and so unable to be reproduced by machine.⁵⁴⁵ Phillips later included the stitch, along with many of the stitches she obtained from Thomas's books, in *Creative Knitting*, citing Thomas and her books as the basis for her work.⁵⁴⁶ Further, the three-yard casement sample spawned at least one larger casement that Phillips may have exhibited in her degree show in 1963. According to Phillips, "several people said [the linen casement] looked like a Paul Klee drawing;" she later titled this work, as shown in several in exhibitions, "For Paul Klee."⁵⁴⁷ As Weissman notes in her article, "[t]hough she didn't say as much it may have been that remark about her first wall hanging that

made Mary firmly believe, if she hadn't before, that knitting could be as much a medium for art as for garments."⁵⁴⁸

In a section called "Multipurpose Knits," Phillips experimented with several more traditional knitting patterns and fibers, which she offered as possibilities for clothing, drapery or upholstery. All the fibers Phillips used in this section are typical choices for clothing fabrics, including silk, linen and wool. Phillips made several samples using the "Hexagon Stitch or Honeycomb Stitch," a slipped stitch, or "close" pattern, to test various fibers and colors; later she would use this stitch in a number of her knitted works and would include it in *Creative Knitting*.⁵⁴⁹ The embossed effect produced by this stitch is similar in appearance to the work of Sheila Hicks and Rufino Reyes for "Fabrics International." Figure 68-69. The Hexagon Stitch, which can be made in one color, but is usually made with two or more colors, produces a dense fabric with a cellular structure comprised of raised edges outlining hexagonal wells. If using multiple colors, the knitter works each color alone across alternate rows, while slipping the stitches of the other color, without working them, from the right to the left hand needle according to the desired pattern. Phillips tested the pattern in wool and linen, and in several two- and four-color combinations. In the brightest combination of the group, she shaded the hexagons from dark red, to bright red, to hot pink to orange in succeeding repeats, all outlined with a raised black edge for maximum vibrancy. The linen and light-colored wool versions have a summery look. In the final example, Phillips used hot pink and orange wool yarns that were very close in value. The pattern has a much more subtle effect in these closely related colors despite the bright palette, and the sheen of the wool yarns in this sample lends an elegant appearance to the fabric. Phillips finished one or

two of these samples into pillows that are pictured in *Step by Step Knitting*, a knitting book with instructional information and basic projects for the beginning knitter that Phillips published in 1967.⁵⁵⁰

In other samples in this section, Phillips tested the Popcorn Stitch in one and two colors, and several patterns for knitting with multiple colors, including a Bohus-style pattern made in pink and orange, and a handsome diamond pattern in black, brown and white intarsia.⁵⁵¹ She also worked an unusual notched stripe in two neutral shades of linen that she adapted from a pattern in *Mary Thomas's Knitting Book* that was originally designed to be worked in knit and purl stitches for an embossed effect, rather than in contrasting colors. Thomas's book typically provided all the instructions for each stitch pattern in both charted and written form, so the graphic representation of this pattern, which Thomas called "Rib 3 and 3. Welt 3 and 3," showed the purl stitches as black boxes and the knit stitches as white boxes.⁵⁵² Even though Phillips purported to dislike working from charts, it is easy to see from Thomas's chart how the pattern would look if knitted in two colors instead of two textures.⁵⁵³ According to the Weaving curriculum as articulated in the course catalogues over the years, Strengell taught her students the skill of charting weaving drafts, but Kaufman recalled that she did not encourage their use, preferring her students to work in a more spontaneous way.⁵⁵⁴ Phillips also preferred to work more spontaneously, especially in knitting.⁵⁵⁵ The other patterns Phillips tested in this section were very basic combinations of knit and purl stitches, including a broken rib pattern, and a stockinette stitch fabric interrupted with garter stitch ridges.

In the two sections following the section on "Multipurpose Knits," Phillips showed her work in two different fibers that had heat and fire resistant properties:

“Asbestos,” and “Rovana.” Today one is alarmed to think of Phillips knitting and weaving with asbestos yarns, but at the time little was known about the potential hazards of working with asbestos, and it was considered a natural material of tremendous value for creating fireproof fabrics and construction materials.⁵⁵⁶ For the M.F.A. thesis, Phillips knitted two samples of asbestos, one in Grecian Plait Stitch and one in plain stockinette stitch. She was inspired to try this by Jack Lenor Larsen’s reference to the waste involved in cutting and piecing woven fabrics and hoped to discover whether protective gear, like gloves and helmets, could be knitted by machines in tubular or fully-fashioned constructions. In *Creative Knitting*, Phillips disclosed that she had been dissatisfied with her experiments in knitting with asbestos because the yarn lacked character; despite this unsatisfactory experience with asbestos, she continued to recommend that her readers experiment with new, untried fibers.⁵⁵⁷ Phillips also wove a number of fabrics, including two drapery samples, three casement samples, and three upholstery samples from combinations of asbestos yarn and Rovana, “to show that asbestos textiles can be produced for decorative purposes as well as satisfying insurance and fire regulations.”⁵⁵⁸ As a way to increase the aesthetic appeal of the stark white, highly reflective asbestos yarn, Phillips tried dyeing it black with Cushing dyes, but she was concerned that the dyed asbestos might not prove to be colorfast.⁵⁵⁹ Phillips wove the dyed asbestos yarn in combination with a dark teal blue Rovana and natural white asbestos into some smart-looking fabrics that she considered a “finished product with more depth and interest” than un-dyed asbestos alone could produce, and one that would be suitable for theater curtains, an idea that was perhaps inspired by Dorothy Liebes, who wove theater curtains for Frank Lloyd Wright’s theater at Taliesin West and the

Paramount Theater in Oakland, California.⁵⁶⁰ It is not clear whether Phillips also dyed the Rovana used in these samples, or whether it came in colors, because in other experimental samples shown in the M.F.A. Thesis, Phillips used Rovana fiber that was straw-colored.

Like asbestos, “Rovana,” a Saran monofilament, also had the properties of fire-resistance and imperviousness to the elements and to microorganisms.⁵⁶¹ Phillips tested Rovana alone, and in combinations with asbestos, Lurex, and glass insulating roving. She discovered weaving Rovana required extra care to avoid stretching the fiber too tightly because it became stringy and inelastic.⁵⁶² Although easy to knit, Rovana had to be “stretched and heat set to 300 degrees.”⁵⁶³ Phillips prepared samples of a stylish, densely woven black and white shoe and bag fabric or wall covering, and two knitted casements.⁵⁶⁴ One of the casements, knitted in a lace faggot stitch that Phillips would later add to her regular stitch repertoire in *Creative Knitting*, had a crisp cellular structure that resembled caning.⁵⁶⁵ Phillips also wove five samples of “insulating fabrics” using combinations of silver- and copper-colored Lurex, with Rovana, and glass insulating roving. Phillips did not mention what she had in mind as uses for these fabrics, but they would certainly glitz up the inside of a toaster! In the open style of the weave that allows the roving to show through, these insulating fabrics resemble Blanket 2 from the B.F.A. Thesis.

Phillips also experimented with weaving and knitting leather “because it is the big news in the high fashion field.”⁵⁶⁶ Several entries in “Fabrics International” may have inspired this assertion, including a woven shoe and bag fabric by Azalea Thorpe and a woven coating or upholstery fabric by Hella Skowronski that featured white calfskin in

the weft.⁵⁶⁷ Like Thorpe, Phillips appreciated the visual interest created in both her woven and knitted leather items from seeing both sides of the leather, one rough and one smooth.⁵⁶⁸ Phillips inventively used leather as the flossa knots in a white rug made from hand-cut leather strips that she combined with white silk, wool, chenille, and linen.⁵⁶⁹ Phillips acknowledged that she had invested considerable effort and time into cutting, knotting and trimming the leather strips herself and that pre-cut leather would be an essential component of manufacture.⁵⁷⁰ This luxurious-looking rug received high praise when it was later exhibited at the Fresno Arts Center.⁵⁷¹ She also acknowledged that the luxurious and hand crafted effect she had created might not be easily reproduced because, “I did not always use the leather the same number of times in a row of knots.”⁵⁷² Phillips was even more positive about her knitted leather samples – one she made with natural leather strips and dahlia dyed handspun yarn, and one she made with white leather strips and handspun mohair. Phillips stated, “I know that leather has been woven by machine, but to date have never seen a machine knit leather.”⁵⁷³ Phillips considered the mohair sample much heavier than the wool sample. In both knitted samples Phillips allowed the leather to twist as it willed, showing both sides.⁵⁷⁴ She acknowledged that such a luxury fabric would be only be “a limited edition article,” but she also stated that “[t]he hand of the finished sample is very good and if I had had enough leather and handspun I would have knit a coat or a jacket.”⁵⁷⁵

Finally, one of Phillips’s most unusual knitted experiments in the M.F.A. thesis was her lampshade, shown alone in a section of the M.F.A. thesis entitled “The Lamp.”⁵⁷⁶ Phillips constructed the lampshade “to show that an inexpensive lamp of good design can be done with a knitted shade that would take little finishing after the knitting had been

done.”⁵⁷⁷ Phillips knitted her sample shade out of white “slub linen” in a seamless tubular construction which “at completion need only be slipped on the form wet and allowed to dry.”⁵⁷⁸ A photo of the finished lamp, which Glen Kaufman thought was likely taken from the window of his studio at Cranbrook, shows a modern-looking white cylinder suspended from a cord, with a textured surface pattern that waves in serpentine lines.⁵⁷⁹ The stitch pattern Phillips used for this shade is not easy to determine from the photo. Without a light source behind the shade, the fabric looks almost solid, but at the top margin of the shade a small area of the fabric is visible that shows a pattern of holes. If Phillips pulled all of her pattern stitches for the M.F.A. thesis from Mary Thomas, the stitch she used for the lampshade most closely resembles “Scale Pattern,” or a personal variation of it.⁵⁸⁰ If it is “Scale Pattern,” Phillips likely worked the pattern as written for one repeat, and then reversed the direction of the diagonal bias for the second repeat, and for each successive repeat, to achieve the organic, flowing appearance of the fabric. This effect would not be possible without modifying Thomas’s original stitch, which produced a bias fabric that moved diagonally only in one direction.

Phillips’s interest in filling what she considered to be the “need for a well-designed lamp and shade at a moderate price,” reflected Modernist ideals.⁵⁸¹ She liked the result of her experiment: “The effect is pleasing, the diffusion of light eliminates glare.” Phillips did not reveal the details of the materials or methods she used to construct the lampshade in her thesis. For example, she did not disclose whether she used starch to stiffen the shade, nor did she reveal whether the fabric was used to cover an existing glass or metal shade, or was used alone after it had dried into shape. The starkly cylindrical shape of the lamp, suspended from a single cord, recalled the clean

lines of Bauhaus or Scandinavian Modern designs, however, the naturally textured surface created by the knitted fabric gave the lamp a warm, organic look. Phillips did make several other versions of the lamp. Phillips exhibited two such lamps in the “The American Craftsman,” an exhibition held in 1964 at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts.⁵⁸² In the exhibition catalogue they are identified as a “[p]air of shades / hand knit of linen and silk surface enrichment by variation of stitches and yarn, for Lumacryl lamp fixtures.”⁵⁸³ Figure 70. In “The American Craftsman” show, Phillips also exhibited two linen casements, the white leather flossa rug she completed for her M.F.A. thesis, and a mohair blanket donated to the Museum by *Woman’s Day Magazine*⁵⁸⁴ In an article entitled “Take the Dull Edge off Winter: Knitting in No Time!” Phillips showed two variations of her knitted lampshades set in two different rooms that were arranged using several examples of her knitted home furnishings.⁵⁸⁵ In the article, Phillips urged her readers to “[s]lip-cover a pendant lighting fixture with linen yarn to hang singly or in varying sizes.”⁵⁸⁶ She showed one lamp made in the cylinder style in a casual dining scenario. The other items in dining ensemble included hand knit placemats and a pair of chair cushions Phillips knitted using the multicolored hexagon pattern she showed earlier in the “Multipurpose Knits” section of the M.F.A. thesis. For the magazine, Phillips re-knitted the patterns for which she had selected warm colors in the thesis in “turquoise, amethyst, blue, and black,” but she assured readers that the cushions “can be knitted in any size, any combination of colors.”⁵⁸⁷ Phillips constructed the other lamp, which dropped from an arm attached to a wall-mounted fixture, with a long rectangular shade. Phillips described this lamp as follows: “The exquisite wall light has a cover knitted from linen yarn.”⁵⁸⁸ In the photo, the rectangular lamp graced a contemporary reading nook,

replete with hanging basket chair, a knitted wall hanging, potted grasses, and a “[c]loud-soft afghan . . . of fluffy coral mohair and rust wool that knits up rapidly.”⁵⁸⁹ The article advertised the availability of the instructions for all of the projects shown in the article to readers who submitted a coupon from the publication by mail.⁵⁹⁰ Phillips would have greater success for her knitted concepts and designs in the do-it-yourself craft market almost immediately after graduation than she would have as an industrial designer.⁵⁹¹

Also in the M.F.A. thesis portfolio, Phillips showed an “Experimental Panel for Interior Use,” the construction of which she did not describe, although she did state that the wood molding used at the top and bottom of the panel “was designed by David Kann,” who may have been a fellow student. Phillips billed the work rather unintelligibly as a “[r]oom [d]ivider, backing for room divider bookcase, background material for display work.” It is likely the fabric was knitted, however, because an image of it appeared in one of the photos shown in “Take the Dull Edge off Winter: Knitting in No Time!” There, Phillips described the room divider and its architectural purpose more clearly than she did in the thesis: “The handsome wall hanging, knitted from synthetic straw, hangs over a piece of plain-colored fabric. Without the fabric, it could hang freely as a room divider in one panel or a group of panels to break the openness of a large room.”⁵⁹²

The remaining fabrics Phillips included in her portfolio were either woven or tie-dyed. In “Woven Fabrics,” Phillips showed three yards of a beautiful striped silk upholstery fabric that reflected Marianne Strengell’s influence, and two power-loomed fabrics prepared in the three-yard lengths.⁵⁹³ Both power-loomed fabrics have substantial surface texture, like many of her fabrics in the B.F.A. thesis. In Woven Fabric 2, which

she designed for use as drapery material, Phillips combined synthetics, linen and wool yarns in a palette of black, tan and cream in a bold zigzag weave that featured two crimped or boucle yarns in the warp. The use of the bold pattern balances the pronounced and irregular surface texture, resulting in a dramatic composition with a soft, tweedy appearance. Woven Fabric 3 is a casement fabric that appears to use the same mix of warp threads as Woven Fabric 2, but Phillips altered the weft threads, choosing a mix of naturals already used in the warp to make an open weave which she accented at regular intervals by inserting a bold horizontal stripe of a fuzzy textured chenille that gave a highly defined and tailored look to an otherwise loosely woven, gauze-like fabric. Glen Kaufman considered the mix of warp yarns in this piece reminiscent of Dorothy Liebes; Phillips may have been influenced, as noted previously, by both Dorothy Liebes and Rudolph Schaeffer in her use of mixed warps.⁵⁹⁴ When he reviewed the fabrics in the theses recently, Glen Kaufman expressed surprise that this fabric was woven on the power loom; he thought that the different warp threads Phillips selected for such a small piece of fabric would have taxed the patience of Charles Merrigan, who was hired to set up a communal warp on the power loom for the students “that went for miles.”⁵⁹⁵ Between the two samples, Phillips wove at least six yards of fabric on the same mixed warp set up for the power loom, which is still a fairly small sample of fabric, unless other students also used this warp for their work. Phillips also showed three additional examples of “Tie and Dye,” including a silk organdy casement of three yards in the same sheer style as the pieces she showed in her B.F.A. thesis, as well as two Pellon drapery samples, one of two yards and one of three yards in length. Phillips ornamented the two Pellon samples with dramatic, horizontal bands of patterning in bold colors that

demonstrated considerable sophistication, precision, and mastery of the dyeing technique. Pellon was a relatively new and important synthetic interfacing fabric that Phillips may have been testing as a stand-alone fabric by dyeing it with attractive surface designs.⁵⁹⁶ Phillips included a couple of photos of her fabrics and samples displayed at her M.F.A. Degree Show that testify to their appeal. In one of these photos she also shows her lampshade, attached to or balanced on a supporting cylinder.

In the M.F.A. thesis, which departs so radically from her B.F.A thesis in all but the exquisite craftsmanship for which she was duly recognized, Phillips expressed her eagerness to explore knitting by hand and machine and to work with materials that challenged her skills and imagination in the textile medium. The most remarkable aspect of Phillips's M.F.A. thesis is her work in industrial materials, and in a wonderful capsizing of Strengell's "framework of limitations," Phillips claimed that "[b]y not knowing the limitations of the knitting machine, I am sure that I have tried ideas that I might have hesitated to do Now I feel the need to know what the machine can do so I can expand my ideas."⁵⁹⁷ Although she did return to using primarily natural materials, she would never lose her newly open-ended and experimental approach to creativity and design in the textile medium; further, she had validated her preference for natural materials as objectively as possible through extensive experimentation. Nevertheless, in *Creative Knitting*, she maintained an open mind, saying that she would try these materials again to see if her thinking about them had changed. Conscious of the aesthetic benefits and tactile pleasure of knitting by hand, Phillips nevertheless directed her work and writing in the M.F.A. thesis toward designing for industry – whether for an architect, a manufacturer of asbestos safety gloves, or the designer of couturier fashion – rather than

on creating individual works of art. As Kaufman remarked, “Mary has an excellent background in weaving already and concentrated this year on other fabric constructions, primarily knitting. Her work in this field was outstanding. She showed great imagination and sense of design in her experimental work. She was thorough in her approach – open to new ideas. She developed many ideas to logical conclusion. She has shown potential for development as a craftsman not evident before.”⁵⁹⁸ On the cusp of entering her creative life after Cranbrook with an open sense of the possibilities before her, Phillips wrote: “It has been a very exciting time for me and I feel that my results have been successful even though in many cases they have only been the beginning and not the end. I do not feel this thesis is a conclusion but only the beginning of things to come.”⁵⁹⁹

Section 5. Other Subjects

In addition to her training in weaving and textiles, Phillips studied ceramics, metalsmithing and design (Matrix Study) when she returned to Cranbrook in the 1960s. Her academic record at Cranbrook describes these as her minor subjects.⁶⁰⁰ Phillips included examples of work from all three of these disciplines in her B.F.A. portfolio, and in her M.F.A. portfolio, she included additional work in ceramics, which was her minor subject at the Masters level. As previously mentioned, there was considerable continuity in the instructional styles used by Cranbrook’s faculty, and even in the faculty members themselves, from the 1940s to the 1960s. Maija Grotell, Director of the Ceramics Department from 1938-1966, and Richard Thomas, M.F.A. Cranbrook, 1948, and Director of the Metalsmithing Department from 1948-1984, had both known Eliel Saarinen personally; both perpetuated Saarinen’s belief in the independence of the students and their need to find their own way into working in every medium. Although Howard Brown’s career is less well documented, he received his M.F.A. from Cranbrook

sometime in the 1950s, and specialized in making jewelry; therefore, he would have studied with Thomas. However, the student body in the 1960s had become more professional; most students had considerable experience in their fields of specialization.⁶⁰¹ The demanding nature of the program at Cranbrook in the 1960s can be better appreciated by a brief look at Phillips's work in these other disciplines, which likely forced Phillips outside her comfort zone. In concert with her work in weaving and knitting, the challenge of learning new media also stimulated Phillips toward authentic form development in the manner that Eliel Saarinen had envisioned for all Cranbrook students.

A. Ceramics

Creative expression in ceramics, as in other fields, is the satisfactory completion of an original idea. Design must be combined with technical mastery and understanding of the material.

It is important for the ceramist of our time to be well equipped so [s]he can participate creatively as a studio potter, instructor, or as a designer in industry.

--CAA Announcement, "Ceramics," 1960

Phillips studied ceramics at Cranbrook for four semesters starting in the spring of 1962 under Maija Grotell, an award-winning Finnish ceramist who came to the United States in 1927.⁶⁰² Eliel Saarinen recruited Grotell in 1938; she had spent some years teaching in New York, first at the Henry Street Settlements and then at Rutgers University, and had just won a Silver Medal at the 1937 Paris Exposition.⁶⁰³ In 1961, while Phillips was her student, Grotell won the illustrious Charles Fergus Binns Award for her achievements and contributions "to the advancement of ceramic art and [for reflecting the] character, ability, initiative, humility, and originality so admired by Dr.

Binns.”⁶⁰⁴ Like Marianne Strengell, who was also recruited by Saarinen, Grotell fostered creative independence in her students by helping them to develop from a foundation of technical proficiency in the medium. First-year B.F.A. students in Ceramics were expected to demonstrate “facility on the wheel, in slab and coil building, and tile making,” as well as “kiln stacking and firing.”⁶⁰⁵ Second-year students studied “glaze and clay composition, decorative techniques, mold making, jiggering, slip-casting, and mass production techniques.”⁶⁰⁶ Grotell firmly believed, in keeping with Saarinen’s own views and those of her ceramics instructor from the Central School of Industrial Art in Helsingfors, Finland that “pottery at its finest is an art comparable to painting and sculpture.”⁶⁰⁷ She dedicated herself to producing individual works of art in the ceramic medium and trained others to do the same.

When she first applied to Cranbrook in 1946, Phillips wrote, “I am mainly interested in weaving and ceramics.”⁶⁰⁸ Although Phillips had taken classes in ceramics in California in the 1940s, she did not study ceramics with Grotell until she returned to Cranbrook in 1960. Phillips worked hard at everything she undertook, and learning to form and glaze in ceramics was no exception, as Grotell’s comments on Phillips’s efforts show; she considered Phillips to be “industrious,” “conscientious,” “systematic,” and “reliable.”⁶⁰⁹ Although Grotell sometimes bonded closely with students, it is not possible to know without further information the nature of Grotell’s relationship with Phillips. Phillips could be talkative and opinionated; she was also an experienced professional in her own field with the ability to work independently.⁶¹⁰ Grotell, according to Martin Eidelberg in his chapter on “Ceramics” in *Design in America*, was reserved and increasingly withdrawn into her own work in the 1950s and 1960s; therefore it would be

possible for a student, especially one with some basic competence in the medium, to pass through her department without much interaction, although it was just as easy to involve her by seeking her out.⁶¹¹

Phillips included a portfolio of thirty-one examples of her work in ceramics in her B.F.A. thesis and twenty-one examples in her M.F.A. thesis. If Grotell commented specifically on Phillips's portfolio of work in ceramics for either the B.F.A. or M.F.A. degree, it is not recorded in Phillips's academic file. While studying with Grotell, Phillips experimented with throwing and glazing small to medium-sized cylinder and bowl forms, sometimes modified by the use of different necks or feet. A number of these vessels were shaped with the addition of faceted cuts that showed either an effort to create a minimalist decorative effect or to remove excess weight from a finished pot. Phillips did not exhibit a wide variety of forms, such as lidded jars, vessels with handles or spouts for drinking or pouring, or platters, and the small range of sizes she produced rarely exceeded seven inches in width or height, in contrast to Grotell's own preference for working everything from the daintiest bowl to the 100 pound planter.⁶¹² Even after two years of study at Cranbrook, Phillips considered her own experience in the ceramics medium to be "very limited."⁶¹³ Phillips wrote: "My efforts have resulted in a collection of bowls and vases; in all cases they are to be used for every day use . . . for flowers, food, or just to look at and enjoy."⁶¹⁴

Although in her own view her skill at throwing and finishing her pots was not sophisticated, Phillips showed in the range of glazes she used that she worked hard to achieve a variety of shaded, blended and matte effects. Phillips wrote in her M.F.A. thesis, "[m]ost of my glazes are a result of using a slip glaze either alone or with a glaze

on top. The break up of the slip and glaze together create a great deal of variation and interest.”⁶¹⁵ At an exhibition of Phillips’s weaving and ceramics in 1963, a reviewer commented that “[t]he sampling of pots included simple and direct statements of form combined with subdued glazes.”⁶¹⁶ Figure 77. Phillips’s work in ceramics does not resonate of Grotell; the Ceramics Department, like other departments at Cranbrook, was not known for developing a consistent style among students in the medium.⁶¹⁷ Grotell once commented, “I cannot tell you how I teach, except to say I try very hard not to squash a student with my thinking. . . . Good potters must develop their own approach. I am against influence.”⁶¹⁸ Grotell had developed a wide range of forms and glazes from the simplest to the virtuoso, but she is best known for her dramatic palette and for her use of sophisticated decorative techniques, like *pâte-sur-pâte* and *sgraffito*. An image of Grotell’s work in the 1950s and 1960s shows her use of brightly colored glazes with decorative details. In her own portfolio of work, Phillips experimented with incising a decoration around the rim of only one vase.⁶¹⁹ Phillips’s freedom to explore ceramics in a manner and aesthetic of her own choosing testified to Grotell’s commitment that each artist should learn the medium in her own way. Further, Grotell explicitly encouraged students to study the work of other ceramists, and Phillips would have been familiar with the work of many notable contemporary European and American ceramists of the period from her experience at Gump’s, V.C. Morris and the Amberg-Hirth Gallery in San Francisco, as well as from her participation in numerous exhibitions over the years that included both textiles and ceramics at Cranbrook, the California State Fairs, and elsewhere. And perhaps because she lacked the same sense of mastery in the ceramics medium that she possessed in textiles, Phillips had the opportunity to approach questions

of materials and methods afresh in ceramics in a way she could never do as easily in weaving. Rather than imitating the control for which Grotell was noted, Phillips may have enjoyed the appearance of more spontaneity in her ceramics as a contrast in both process and product to her work in weaving.⁶²⁰ Her ceramics, if compared to Grotell's, look more like Grotell's work from the 1940s, but without the same precision of form.⁶²¹

It is in working as a studio artist rather than as a designer for industry, however, that Grotell may have most deeply influenced Phillips; Grotell offered a different model for success within the Cranbrook community from Strengell – one that Phillips, as a knitter, would soon adopt for herself.⁶²² During her career at Cranbrook, Grotell trained many noted ceramists, produced and exhibited her artwork in prestigious venues, won numerous awards, was active in the major organizations promoting ceramics as an art form as both an artist and juror, and placed her work within the collections of many major museums.⁶²³ Phillips's work in knitting, her books and workshops, and her activity in and support of studio craft organizations in the next decades could be said to have followed Grotell's example more closely than Strengell's. Grotell's approach to the art and practice of ceramics reinforced Cranbrook's and Strengell's emphasis on constant research and experimentation; Grotell was an avid developer of glazes, many of which took her years of trial and error to develop.⁶²⁴ But being driven in this exploration purely by the joy of learning, teaching and expressing herself in the medium of ceramics, rather than by Strengell's more client-driven and situational "framework of limitations," Grotell showed Phillips firsthand how such intensive investigation could be done for art alone rather than for industry. She also showed Phillips that one's expertise develops over a lifetime of patient engagement.

Further, in her rich use of decorative motifs, Grotell directly expressed in ceramic form an awareness of both the architecturally constructed and natural environment of Cranbrook and the work of Cranbrook artists in other media.⁶²⁵ Because her work was well known and was on display for students to see in the studio, the Art Museum and in numerous exhibitions, Phillips would have had ample opportunity to observe these qualities in person, although she did not imitate them in her ceramics.⁶²⁶ For example, Martin Eidelberg in his chapter on “Ceramics” in *Design in America*, noted the geometric designs on some of Grotell’s ceramics echoed Saarinen’s own relief work in the decoration of the entrances to the Library and Museum.⁶²⁷ One can also compare the similarity of the V-shaped motifs on *Vase*, 1943 or earlier, to a bird in flight, a motif Saarinen used in the design of the Cranbrook School Cupola, as documented by J. David Farmer in his chapter on “Metalwork and Bookbinding,” *Design in America*, and in the Nichols Gate along Lone Pine Road.⁶²⁸ Rhythmic patterns, such as those in “Vase,” 1939, suggest design elements fundamental to Saarinen’s architecture.⁶²⁹ Other works of Grotell’s resonate of Cranbrook’s younger generation of artists, including *Vase*, c. 1952-53 and *Bowl*, 1951, both of which show decorative motifs Martin Eidelberg suggested were reinterpreted or inspired by the organic designs of Harry Bertoia and Charles Eames, friends of Grotell.⁶³⁰ A possible source for the arched droplet motif Grotell used in a number of works, including *Vase*, c. 1952-53, referenced above, would be the many fountains at Cranbrook where arcs of water splash over the softened bronze forms of Carl Milles’s sculptures. Strengell, too, was inspired by nature and her environment, but she preferred more abstract, color-driven compositions to the fine, decorative surface details at which Grotell excelled and which remain hallmarks of her work.⁶³¹

Ceramics remained a minor field of study for Phillips, but her disciplined approach to knitting conformed not only to Strengell's approach to weaving, but also to Grotell's approach to ceramics. Like Grotell, Phillips took an interest in researching everything about her medium and she was inspired through her research and experimentation to continue to extend the boundaries of knitting beyond traditionally accepted materials and methods and to patiently perfect her ideas and techniques through the construction of one sample, and later, one work of art, at a time.⁶³² Although Phillips never acknowledged anyone publicly other than Jack Lenor Larsen for her inspiration to knit, Grotell's example of pushing one's medium and materials into new terrain through continual experimentation was certainly a part of Phillips's approach to her work in knitting.⁶³³ Grotell once said:

I always have something I am aiming at, and I keep on. I do not sketch on paper; I sketch in clay. So if it is not what I want, I make another one and keep on. In that way, I have many similar pieces. My reason is not for repeating, but for improving. Because if I have one that I like - I mean one that has come to what I was aiming at, then it has no interest any more and I would not try to make another one. And also I like to learn from each piece I make in some way.⁶³⁴

Like Grotell, Phillips generally did not draw, sketch or chart her work on paper – she knitted it.⁶³⁵ Also like Grotell, she made numerous similar pieces until she was satisfied with the result, using a relatively small number of different pattern stitches out of the many hundreds of possibilities available to knitters, but finding a myriad of different ways for these same stitches to express themselves, with slight variations, even within the same piece. Finally, Phillips's use of architecture and nature as a sources of inspiration for her knitting, as well as her preference for working as a studio artist, could as easily have been awakened or validated by Grotell's work in ceramics as by Strengell's work in

textiles, and at a time when Phillips's exposure to new approaches and interpretations obviously stimulated new ways of thinking about her own work.

B. Matrix Study

The matrix study is an exploration into the nature of the environment providing opportunity to structuralize previous experiences into meaningful patterns.

Creative ideas are the result of individual responses to environmental conditions. Some of these conditions are external – others internal. Without a working knowledge of this total matrix there is little basis for creative responses. To be exposed to the intricacies of this totality is important.

-- CAA Announcement, "Matrix Study," 1960

Phillips included several examples in her B.F.A. portfolio of works she did from a class entitled "Matrix Study," which she took during the fall semester of 1960, although she did not provide any comments in the B.F.A. thesis about her work in this course. According to Cranbrook's course catalogues for the year 1960, one semester of Matrix Study, an introductory course in the Design Department, was a required subject for all B.F.A. students.⁶³⁶ As such, it likely functioned as the closest thing to a Bauhaus-styled preliminary course that Cranbrook ever offered in its famously loosely structured program; although required for all students, the course was not used, as at the Bauhaus, to weed out candidates who had been admitted to the Academy.⁶³⁷

According to Victor Margolin in *The Politics of the Artificial: Essays on Design and Design Studies*, in his chapter entitled "Ken Isaacs: Matrix Designer," Isaacs developed the ideas that would underpin the Matrix Study course while he was a student of Roy Gussow at Bradley University in Peoria, IL in the early 1940s.⁶³⁸ Gussow, himself a graduate of the Chicago Institute of Design, would have been familiar with the avant-garde ideas favored by the school's founder, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, a former

Bauhaus instructor with whom he probably studied.⁶³⁹ Isaacs came to Cranbrook to get an M.A. in architecture from 1952-1954.⁶⁴⁰ There he built a “Living Structure” that was featured in *Life* magazine.⁶⁴¹ Isaacs’s very “antibourgeois goal” was “to aggregate all living requirements into a single structure” that was small, efficiently designed, economical to build and largely self-contained.⁶⁴² Isaacs left Cranbrook after graduation, but was asked to return in 1956 to direct the Design Department.⁶⁴³ There he implemented a course called “Matrix Study” which Margolin described as an opportunity for students to:

[C]reate . . . a ‘processing environment’ that would prepare [them] to translate information about the world around them into new objects to enhance creative living . . . based on a series of problems that began with a statement about the self and moved on to an engagement with issues related to information processing.

To break down conventional habits of thought, [Isaacs] devised the Matrix Drum, an 18’ circular space in which students sat [and] were bombarded by three slide projectors that cast images around the 360° wall [to] reinforce the idea that ‘product solutions be made in terms of the total environment.’⁶⁴⁴

According to Margolin, following their experience of the matrix drum, students would be asked to make “material representations, first of themselves, then of a friend, and finally of a social situation.”⁶⁴⁵ Isaacs hoped through this experience to present “the matrix [as] a metaphor for the world,” presumably by fostering the conscious integration of both subjective and objective content into the design process.⁶⁴⁶ Margolin noted that Isaacs also based his teachings on the work in cybernetics, or systems theory, as elucidated by MIT scholar Norbert Wiener’s work, *The Use of Human Beings*.⁶⁴⁷ Isaacs left Cranbrook in 1957.⁶⁴⁸

In 1960, Howard Brown, who had his B.F.A. from the University of Illinois, his M.A. from Michigan State University, and his M.F.A. from Cranbrook Academy of Art, taught the class with “workshops, field trips and seminars,” and purportedly with the assistance of guest lecturers.⁶⁴⁹ There is no indication of how closely Brown followed the program devised by Isaacs, e.g., whether the matrix drum was still used, but according to fellow student and noted fiber artist Adela Akers, the course was “a preliminary design I type of class” that served as an introduction to Cranbrook; it was unique in her experience because it combined the use of two and three dimensional media, typically taught separately in art schools.⁶⁵⁰ In the Supplement to the CAA Announcement for 1960-61, a major in Design, of which Matrix Study was a part, states that in the first year students would engage in “[a] general examination of two and three dimensional design through a controlled group of problems.”⁶⁵¹ Adela Akers recalled that Matrix Study was the only class that created a sense of community between students from all of the various departments, encouraging them to mix and get to know one another.⁶⁵²

Phillips submitted photos of all her works for the Matrix Study section of the B.F.A. thesis rather than including them as actual samples, as she did for the Weaving section. Further, there was no list of works for Matrix Study like those Phillips included for other sections of the thesis, so it is difficult to guess the particulars of the works she submitted as part of her portfolio or to be certain of the materials or methods they explored.⁶⁵³ One of the works, a sizeable tie-dyed fabric mounted in a frame, appeared in a photomontage used in the Academy’s course catalogue from 1961-62 to illustrate Matrix Study, where it hung on the wall behind three free-standing abstract sculptures. If

Phillips made this work for the class in the fall of 1960, the photo in the course catalogue likely came from the Student Exhibition mounted in the Cranbrook Art Museum in the summer of 1961, which Phillips identifies on her resume.⁶⁵⁴ Former Director of the Department of Weaving, Glen Kaufman, thought that Phillips's experiments in tie-and-dye, which appeared in both the Weaving and Textiles and the Matrix Study portions of her portfolio, although fairly simple in their technique, were not commonly done at this time.⁶⁵⁵ In addition to the tie-and-dye, the other works featured in Phillips's portfolio for Matrix Study included a detail of an abstract motif painted on coarse brown paper, four examples of abstract embroidered compositions using elementary embroidery stitches on burlap and linen fabrics, and two very tiny photos of mounted collages in mixed media.

Brown's comments on Phillips's work indicate she struggled somewhat in this course: "Works hard. Results tight and unimaginative."⁶⁵⁶ However, one or two of Phillips's experiments in abstract embroidery and those in collage, had "fresh," "contemporary," and graphic qualities.⁶⁵⁷ In Jack Lenor Larsen's article, "The weaver as artist," *Craft Horizons*, November-December 1955, there are two photos of free-form embroidery projects that students of Mariska Karasz, the noted contemporary embroiderer, completed during the summer session at the Haystack Mountain School in the summer of 1955.⁶⁵⁸ It is not clear whether Phillips saw this article or saw actual embroideries by Karasz in another context and then intentionally emulated them, or whether she came up with these designs on her own, but her embroidery samples for Matrix Study bear a striking resemblance to those made by Karasz's students and pictured in the article. Further, Karasz's approach to her medium, which Larsen articulated at some length in the article, fit squarely within the goals and objectives of

Matrix Study.⁶⁵⁹ In any case, Phillips attempted to connect through this type of contemporary embroidery with the spontaneity encouraged by Matrix Study. Figure 71.⁶⁶⁰

Phillips's efforts to understand and explore the subjective and environmental aspects of design in her work for Matrix Study through embroidery and other textile techniques may have been undervalued by Howard Brown, her instructor, either because she stayed within the textile medium rather than stretching herself into uncharted terrain, or because he did not relate well to textiles as a form of expression. In contrast to Phillips, fellow student Adela Akers used Matrix Study to experiment with materials and ideas that were unrelated to textiles.⁶⁶¹ Akers received high marks in Matrix Study from Brown, who she recalled as a wonderful teacher, for a three dimensional sculpture she made from plastic drinking straws mounted with glue onto cardboard.⁶⁶² She said an awareness of the climate of abstract expressionism that permeated the Art Institute of Chicago, where she had been studying before she came to Cranbrook in 1960 to focus on weaving, may have opened her mind more readily to these different possibilities.⁶⁶³

But Brown's negative comments on Phillips work are useful in that they contrast so nicely with her friend Barbara Factor's recollections as she expressed them to Glen Kaufman – paraphrasing here – “the knitting freed Mary up.”⁶⁶⁴ Adela Akers stated that “Mary did not have a very abstract mind,” and that the precision and planning necessary to do weaving often discouraged abstract thinking, but she wholeheartedly confirmed Factor's view of the importance of knitting in moving Phillips into a more experimental and spontaneously creative state: “Mary discovered knitting for a lot of us; she found her way through it to a more abstract language.”⁶⁶⁵ Akers recalled that as Phillips immersed

herself fully in “testing her medium and through having something to call her own” that “she found herself and her way.”⁶⁶⁶ It is possible that Matrix Study had a role in liberating Phillips’s thinking to include a wider range of experimental activity in textiles.

C. Metalsmithing

Ethical as well as mechanical principles, selected by earlier artisans, still govern hand fashioned metal work.

The problem of the metal worker in contemporary society is, therefore, one of constructing objects consistent with the best dictates of that society, yet conforming with the traditional in method.

-- CAA Announcement, “Metalsmithing,” 1962

Phillips included four examples of her work in the Metalsmithing course with Richard Thomas in the B.F.A. portfolio. Thomas and Phillips were both students at Cranbrook in 1946-1947. Thomas started teaching Metalsmithing at Cranbrook in 1946 while he was studying for his M.F.A. in painting with Zoltan Sepeshy, Head of the Department of Drawing and Painting, who had then just replaced Saarinen as the Director of the Academy.⁶⁶⁷ In 1948, Sepeshy offered Thomas a full-time position teaching Metalsmithing at Cranbrook, where he remained until he retired in 1984.⁶⁶⁸

The course catalogue for 1962 described Metalsmithing as entirely “dependen[t] upon traditional techniques.”⁶⁶⁹ The curriculum for first year B.F.A. students in Metalsmithing included “forming, joining and surface embellishment” and the specific processes within those general categories of “raising (symmetrical and asymmetrical), soldering and jigging devices, riveting, coloring, finishing, chasing, embossing, repousse, enameling, casting (sand and centrifugal), stone setting and the use of hand tools and hand operated machines.”⁶⁷⁰ Phillips took Metalsmithing in the spring semester of 1962, and made three small bowls in sterling silver, bronze and copper, respectively, and a

wide, footed “container,” also in copper, that she photographed for the “Metalsmithing” section of the B.F.A. thesis. In the thesis, the photograph of the silver bowl is missing. The photos of the other three vessels, however, give credence to Thomas’s encouraging comments: “Worked – surprisingly well. Demonstrated an unusual regard for metal as a material – and, by persistence, learned to handle it well.”⁶⁷¹ Either Phillips had a clear affinity for the medium or she was relaxing into the learning process; her bowls and container were simply, elegantly, and gracefully formed, and burnished to a high sheen.⁶⁷² In the photos, the wide, footed copper container, as if in some Eastern temple, appeared to await an offering of oranges, while the bronze bowl showed to great effect on the double weave linen panel. Figure 72. These metal vessels made by Phillips’s hands resonate with refinement and a sense of their place and purpose that remains a hallmark of her works in the fiber medium. Further, as a result of her affinity with both metalwork and knitting, Phillips apparently accepted a dare from Jack Lenor Larsen, who queried in his “Forward” to *Step-By-Step Knitting*, published in 1967, “[c]an rope be knit? Can wire? Can a piece of sculpture? Of course! Read on!”⁶⁷³ She later knitted with extra fine copper wire in a series of wall hangings she made, including “Many Bells Without Sound,” 1974, “Bells for Dunedin,” 1981 and at least one other, when no one else had thought to try it.⁶⁷⁴ Figure 73. A reviewer in 1975 noted that one of these wire hangings with bells “chimes when shaken gently,” and was “[p]robably the most arresting piece in the [one-man] show [at The American Craftsman gallery].⁶⁷⁵

Richard Thomas, an American, knew the Saarinens personally, and like so many members of the faculty, he followed Eliel Saarinen’s example, developing a teaching style that allowed students complete freedom to experiment. As Julie Hall, one of

Thomas's former students, recalled in 1982 this was not an easy way to teach or to learn, but it could be vastly rewarding for both teacher and student:

During the two years I attended Cranbrook, I do not remember Thomas ever making a positive or negative comment regarding my work – we had no individual or group critiques. While this was occasionally frustrating . . . I can now appreciate its value. Where else can you be left alone to develop yourself in the stimulating presence of other highly motivated and talented students and still have access to anything you need? Perhaps one could say we were carefully nurtured with benign neglect. Now as a teacher I find . . . it is harder *not* to comment . . . It takes a very wise, mature and intelligent person to provide just the right amount of technical background and instruction to shape creative, independent individuals.⁶⁷⁶

Although this was written many years after Phillips's own experience of Cranbrook, it is no coincidence that Julie Hall's recollections resonate so clearly with the remembrances of Eliel Saarinen's architecture student, Carl Feiss, and with Ted Hallman's, Glen Kaufman's and Ed Rossbach's recollections of Marianne Strengell, and even with Strengell's own recollections of Loja Saarinen, "[S]he never said a word about my work, good or bad." Such correspondence among the recollections of so many different individuals at different times emphasizes the consistency, longevity and vitality of the Cranbrook approach, and gives readers today a sense of the intense demands that Phillips faced in every medium. If Ceramics, Matrix Study and Metalsmithing succeeded where Weaving could not to push Phillips outside her comfort zone in the 1960s, then they also gave her fresh confidence to try new modes of working with and thinking about techniques, methods, and materials in her own preferred medium. Certainly this was the point of returning to school at a mature age; it fed her sense of adventure, and ultimately led her to knitting, in which everything she had learned at Cranbrook finally found its right form.

CHAPTER 3. MARY WALKER PHILLIPS: “A KNITTER OF ART”⁶⁷⁷

Within the first few years after her graduation from Cranbrook, Phillips’s work shifted from an industrial design to a studio craft model. This very personal shift in direction in Phillips’s work mirrored broader patterns in consumer interest in knitting; where Jack Lenor Larsen anticipated a flood of competition in the interior design market for knit fabrics, this did not materialize; however, “the knit revolution,” as it came to be called, hit the fashion market and made recreational knitting very popular. As a result of her Cranbrook training and experience, and the financial support of her family, Phillips was well positioned to work in whatever way she chose. She ultimately discovered the most pleasure, the greatest artistic flexibility, and the warmest public reception for her wall hangings, the evolution of which will be discussed in Chapter 4, using three works, *The Kings*, 1966, *Shells*, 1967, and *Fans And Beads*, 1974.

Phillips’s art works retained their affinity with architecture and with interior design, becoming, essentially, a visible expression of the architecture of stitches. Further, in keeping with the open attitude about the role of the textile in the architectural setting that her Cranbrook training encouraged, she continued to publicly promote knitting as a flexible medium for interior design and home furnishings, as well as for one-of-a-kind works of art, throughout her career.⁶⁷⁸ The following sections of this chapter will illustrate, through several important exhibitions in which Phillips participated, the events and contexts that influenced Phillips’s decision to pursue knitting primarily as a studio craft rather than as an industrial design medium.

Part 1. Knitting as an Industrial Designer

After Phillips graduated from Cranbrook in the spring of 1963, she claimed to have experienced the truth of the old saw “[l]ife begins at 40.”⁶⁷⁹ She moved to New York City, following in the footsteps of Jack Lenor Larsen and Dorothy Liebes, whom she so admired, where she settled in the Greenwich Village neighborhood. Phillips first lived at 560 Hudson Street, No. 8, and later moved to a larger apartment at 2 Horatio Street, No. 9A.⁶⁸⁰ It was in this larger, loft-style apartment that Gerhardt Knodel, Head of the Fiber Department at Cranbrook from 1970-1996, recalled that he used visit Phillips with his students on their class trips to New York.⁶⁸¹ There, Phillips’s independence, both professionally and personally, was as fiercely protected by the 3000 miles of geography between New York City and Fresno as it was tinged with ambivalence and longing. Each year, during the summers and on holidays, Phillips went west for long visits with her family.⁶⁸² Friends of Phillips, including Barbara Factor and Adela Akers, recalled Phillips’s dedication to her family, and especially to her mother. As Jack Larsen irreverently recalled, “Mary lived for the time that she and her mother could unite their china collections.”⁶⁸³

Friends and journalists recalled Phillips as essentially conservative, and a little old-fashioned. In dress, manner and décor, Phillips emulated the genteel formality of her childhood in Fresno where her mother was reputed to have worn white gloves for a walk around the block.⁶⁸⁴ Barbara Factor, who met Phillips at Cranbrook, recalled that over their many ensuing years of friendship, “I never saw her in anything other than a dress or a suit.”⁶⁸⁵ Jack Lenor Larsen recalled Phillips’s preferred style of entertaining as the antithesis of California living: “Guests were expected to dress for a dinner that involved getting out all the china and silver.”⁶⁸⁶ In the decoration of her New York apartments

Phillips demonstrated her love of Asian decorative art and antiques, with which she was familiar from her family home and from her early exposure to Gump's in San Francisco.⁶⁸⁷ Figure 74. Friend and classmate Adela Akers also recalled Phillips's exquisite taste when she mentioned eating cereal out of Chinese porcelain bowls on a visit to Mary's apartment.⁶⁸⁸ A reporter who interviewed Phillips at home in 1975 wrote: "A tiny Imari bowl adds a note of sharp color. The tray is carefully but not obviously arranged. Selection. Placement. Spontaneity. Those elements seem implicit in everything Phillips does."⁶⁸⁹ Phillips also collected books on all subjects, including antique knitting books, which fellow knitter and textile artist Susanna Lewis recalled savoring on her visits to Phillips's apartment.⁶⁹⁰ Despite a more traditional decorative aesthetic in her personal sanctuary, Phillips's work in the 1960s and 1970s was considered cutting edge, modern, and in step with the contemporary spirit of mid-century architecture, interior design and studio art and craft.

Shortly after arriving in New York in 1963, Phillips acknowledged she felt some pressure about how best to launch herself professionally, and she sought career advice from Jack Lenor Larsen, who was living and very successfully running his studio nearby.⁶⁹¹ At Cranbrook Phillips had tried knitting, and been excited by its possibilities, but she "ha[d] not given up weaving."⁶⁹² Larsen said he thought at the time that Phillips's weaving, which was always constructed from the most expensive and luxurious fibers, was all looking about the same; he recalled telling her "Mary, you can knit – no one is knitting, and it's much more flexible."⁶⁹³ Phillips later recalled that Larsen had suggested knitting as an alternative to weaving because of her affinity for handwork, but at the time, Phillips was clearly positioning herself to work in industry where knit fabrics,

much like woven fabrics “may be used for blankets and afghans, casements and draperies, lampshades, pillows, place mats, wall hangings, room dividers, and screens” as well as “industrial applications.”⁶⁹⁴ In fulfillment of her promise in the M.F.A. thesis, Phillips even studied machine knitting at New York’s Fashion Institute of Technology.⁶⁹⁵

Although Larsen was not the first to encourage Phillips’s knitting, his encouragement came at a crucial time when Phillips was looking for direction in a post-Cranbrook world, and most important, he backed it up over the next several years by helping her to get significant exposure for her work. At this time, Larsen shared Phillips’s enthusiasm for knitting as a quintessentially modern medium. In fact, as a designer and manufacturer of woven fabrics, Larsen had an unusual passion for the future of knitting as a democratic, cost-effective, industrially viable way to get well-designed products to a large market, starting as early as “Fabrics International” in 1961, and continuing well into the next decade. In the 1970s he would rather grandly write, “[W]e must invent those techniques that will produce design in bulk. Then we will have . . . a Utopia-within-reach.” Larsen further described his vision, which he hoped would finally be realized in the 1970s, as follows:

The prototype for a really democratic fabric is the nylon stocking. Both maid and mistress afford them, both the same. There are no “nylon stocking districts.” This one democratic fabric exists because it fully utilizes current technology. Yarn preparation is minimal; sewing is non-existent. . . . The key lies in monolithic or one-piece products, such as felt hats, knit sweaters and rubber gloves, which are fully fashioned and so ready for consumer use. Most items of apparel and upholstery could be produced by similar means⁶⁹⁶

It was this vision for knitting that initially captivated Phillips in “Fabrics International,” and which she tested out in the marketplace during her first two years after Cranbrook.

In the summer of 1963, *American Fabrics* published a review of “Woven Forms,” an exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York that featured new works by Lenore Tawney, Dorian Zachai, Sheila Hicks, Alice Adams and Claire Zeisler, and showed weaving squarely occupying the terrain of fine art.⁶⁹⁷ The works exhibited were sculptural and lively, and the titles the artists used evoked narrative, feminist, and emotional content, like Dorian Zachai’s *Woman Emancipated*, and Lenore Tawney’s *Dark River*, 1962. These artists described their efforts to use older, freer techniques for woven fabric construction developed by ancient cultures that had advanced textile traditions, most notably the Andeans, to create contemporary textiles with a new sense of structural and expressive freedom that manipulating the relationships between warp and weft could produce.⁶⁹⁸ Of interest, Larsen, who reviewed the show for the magazine, while acknowledging the “strong personal advance toward art” that the works represented, also suggested their functional possibilities: “One day all this personal ‘nonsense’ may be regarded as a durable art form and the prototype of shape-woven garments and upholsteries, or even houses.”⁶⁹⁹ In an interesting counterpoint to this show of artwork in fiber, Phillips also received a review for her design prototypes in knitting in this issue, entitled “Knit Casements Designed by a Cranbrook Weaver.” Seven examples of her knitted fabrics from her M.F.A. thesis were photographed for the article, including five casements, one blanket and one knit sample; half of these featured natural fibers and the other half experimental fibers like Rovana, Lurex and glass. The text of the short review reads as follows: “The market interest in knitted fabrics has been strong enough to penetrate even into the textile design schools, which have traditionally been concerned chiefly with handweaving. . . . While they were all made by hand, the constructions are

considered adaptable to machine knitting, and as such they suggest a fruitful area for further investigation in the field of knitted casement and drapery fabrics.”⁷⁰⁰

That both these articles appeared at the same time in *American Fabrics* shows the fluidity of the hand made contemporary textile to fill the desire for both artistic expression and commodity.⁷⁰¹ But as interest in non-woven techniques grew among artists and the venues that showed their work, Phillips would have increased opportunity to showcase knitting as an art form and not simply as an alternative method for mass production of textiles.

The review in *American Fabrics* in 1963 immediately followed Phillips’s graduation from Cranbrook and was the beginning of a period of significant publicity for Phillips’s work. Phillips was among a fairly small group of artists working in off-loom techniques in the 1960s that included Anni Albers, whose knitting experiments were limited to only a few examples of casements, fellow Cranbrook graduate Ted Hallman, who worked in knitting and crochet to develop 3-D structures, West Coast knitter Dorothy Reade, who specialized in dyeing and hand-spinning fiber for shawls and other garments as well as in the ethnic knitting traditions of the Pacific Northwest, Ruth Asawa, who was using crocheted wire to make sculptural forms as early as the mid-1950s, and macramé artist Virginia Harvey, who started the craze for macramé in which Phillips would also become influential.⁷⁰² Another artist working in single element techniques at this time was the Czechoslovakian lace-maker, Luba Krejci, 1925-1974, who worked in her own combination of bobbin lace, knotting and needle weaving. Krejci made starched lace pictures of human figures and animals, which range from hauntingly primitive and modern in composition to sweet and folk-art inspired.⁷⁰³ However, Glen

Kaufman recalled that in 1963, Phillips was Cranbrook's "prime example of an artist working off-loom."⁷⁰⁴

In the fall of 1963, shortly after her graduation, Phillips had a one-man show at the Fresno Art Center in Fresno, California from November 6 – December 1, entitled "Architectural Knitting, Hand Woven Fabrics, Ceramics," which was reviewed favorably in *Craft Horizons* by Frank Laury. Laury noted that the show, which encompassed fifteen years of Phillips's work and one hundred pieces, was in essence a retrospective. Woven fabrics, including many clothing fabrics, comprised the largest showing. But Laury praised the "natural and synthetic fibers knitted at architectural scale," and Phillips's "inventive and exploratory approach [to] knitting, which included casements, wall hangings, screens, and illuminated cylinders. Her insight and control over the subtly irregular and decorative links of the stitches suggest great potential for this usually uninspired craft."⁷⁰⁵ Among the woven pieces, Laury was particularly impressed with Phillips's 5 x 9' white wool, linen, silk, and leather flat and flossa weave rug, which he called a "tour de force." The magazine also printed a photo of a sample of Phillips's experimental knitting in Rovana. Phillips was described as "a Cranbrook-trained weaver now free-lancing in New York."

Photos from the show emphasize the refined and almost meditative quality of Phillips's very contemporary textiles, and the title of the show characterizing her work as "architectural knitting" shows her concept at this time for how she saw these textiles performing in an interior space – they were beautiful, simple, atmospheric, and functional. Figures 75-79. Phillips would soon exploit this architectural scale in many of her more decorative knitted hangings over the next decades, using monumentality as a

way to engage the viewer in the intricate variations of knitted stitches. Further, she would increasingly move away from producing functional textiles herself, except as beginner patterns in her instructional knitting books, although she emphatically touted knitting throughout her life as an appropriate and flexible medium for making functional items of all kinds for the interior.

Part 2. Knitting as a Studio Artist

In 1964, Jack Lenor Larsen persuaded a group of individuals to form “CAPT,” The Committee for American Participation in the 13th Milan Triennale. Larsen, as the design director and organizer of the U.S. section, invited Phillips to enter several examples of her knitting in the 1964 Triennale; this was an important break for her that publicly established her in an international venue as an artist in the medium of knitting. It also pushed her soundly in the direction of producing one-of-a-kind works of art. Before 1964, Americans had never fully participated in the Triennale di Milano, “an international design and architecture show” that started in 1933.⁷⁰⁶ Sergio Dello Strologo, summarizing the events of the 12th Triennale in 1960, noted that the Triennale had recently altered its focus away from “pure design,” to incorporate a “social concept,” making the show receptive to the exhibition of textiles for the first time.⁷⁰⁷ Individual American artists and industries had exhibited previously at the Triennale, but Dello Strologo considered the persistent lack of a broadly representative American showing of craft and design at this prestigious venue “deplorable.”⁷⁰⁸

In 1960, Luba Krejci of Czechoslovakia dazzled the Triennale’s awards committee with a monumental hanging in bobbin lace depicting multiple human figures in an abstract composition for which she won a Gold Medal. Dello Strologo commented, “a large lace panel by Lubea Krejci is one of the most original and handsome craft

objects in the whole *Triennale*.”⁷⁰⁹ That a textile had won such a stunning victory in a contemporary design show that had previously excluded textiles would not have escaped Larsen, a textile entrepreneur. In a statement that could have been about Phillips, Larsen later summarized the fascination that Krejci’s work engendered in the viewer, saying she “freed lace from its tradition of miniscule size and subservience to ornament and fashion. With rough-spun linen she expressed in a readable scale the excitement of its engineering aesthetic.”⁷¹⁰ At the time, such scientific language was considered entirely appropriate to the discussion of textiles and art; today the vocabulary would be entirely different, emphasizing subjectivity and personal experience, perhaps even when discussing the same work.

In 1964, Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., an illustrious scholar of design and architecture at Columbia University, acted as President of the Committee, Charles Forberg was the architect of the American section, and Jack Lenor Larsen acted as design director and organizer.⁷¹¹ The Committee raised the money from private donors to fund the American section, and from five thousand entries, a selection committee headed by Mildred Constantine, who was then an Associate Curator at the Museum of Modern Art, selected seventy-five objects for inclusion in the exhibit.⁷¹² The committee selected three works made by Mary Walker Phillips, including a linen casement, a mohair blanket, and a fully-fashioned upholstery fabric made to fit a prototype tubular metal chair designed by the noted modern designer, Eva Zeisel.⁷¹³ Figures 80-81.

The theme of the 13th Triennale was “Leisure – the responses of designers and craftsmen to its growing needs and its effect on product development.”⁷¹⁴ According to Larsen’s summary report, where other countries took an “ironical” view of this topic, the

American section was “clean, bright, spacious, and serene, projecting hope and confidence.”⁷¹⁵ The objects selected combined highly individual handmade art and craft objects and objects designed for mass production. All were displayed against the slick, luminous, white backdrop of Charles Forberg’s sensuously arched, almost Surreal, highly sculptural and futuristic suspended tent of white double knit stretch nylon fabric that was further shaped where it came into contact with the flooring by the use of an ingenious system of delicately pointed feet.⁷¹⁶ It is notable that the original source for this concept was likely a model exhibited in “Fabrics International” in 1961 that featured a white fabric tent woven from “two-ply cellophane and cotton warp with Banlon roving for the fill,” by textile designer Miriam Leefe.⁷¹⁷ It is easy to imagine, given this connection with “Fabrics International,” that Forberg’s concept for the American section at the Triennale may have originated with Larsen. At the Triennale, Larsen extolled the “fantastic freedom” of Forberg’s fabric environment, against which the craft and machine-made objects were shown.⁷¹⁸ The tent was structured with openings that allowed individuals to move through the space, and to see objects framed and defined by the fabric.⁷¹⁹ The design of the exhibition represented a recent trend in modern architecture that favored the juxtaposition of dissimilar objects within the same environment, e.g. the hand made object and the machine-made. As Alda Louise Huxtable explained in *Craft Horizons* in 1959:

The arts today – independent, autonomous, *un-integrated* – are prepared to serve and complement each other in a very special way.

The basis of this relationship is apposition, not integration. Architecturally, this means enrichment by juxtaposition, completion by contrast. It is the skillful, perceptive use of the right kind of painting, the suitable piece of sculpture, the correct craft, to enhance and enlarge the sensuous

appeal of a competent work of architecture in such a way that the building is greater than it would have been without it. . . . [A]lthough [the art object] serves no structural or narrowly functional purpose, its use goes beyond mere elaboration or decoration to provide sharp, judicious and extremely meaningful accent to the strict simplicity of contemporary architectural forms.⁷²⁰

Therefore, the juxtaposition of Phillips's dark and somewhat rusticated linen casement against Forberg's high-tech and sculptured fabric scrims made their individual and disparate qualities more dramatically apparent, and the thinking was, easier to appreciate. Larsen's orchestrated display at the Triennale in 1964 reinforced the perceived unity, at that time, between craft and modernism, a unity that Larsen took pains to reinforce at every possible opportunity.

Two of the three works Phillips exhibited at the Triennale merit some brief individual consideration. The hanging, entitled *Near East*, 1964 was a quiet and serene composition rendered in linen, the color of which Larsen recalled as a "dark natural," that mixed a strong decorative "Tree of Life" motif, pared down to its essence, with the monumental casement form that Phillips had developed at Cranbrook.⁷²¹ The work is part of the Design collection at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and is the only work by Phillips in that collection. The hanging, which measures 4' by 9', appeared suspended in the entrance to the American section, and was photographed and reviewed in numerous publications, including the Italian architectural digest, *Domus*.⁷²² Phillips used graduated repeats of the "Bell Pattern," a pattern that produces a large hole surmounted by a loose frill or pleat of fabric when extra stitches are added into the fabric on a single row and then are removed over a series of rows, eventually restoring the original number. The bell motif in *Near East* was set at precise intervals in a ribbed ground fabric to create what fellow weaver Alice Adams, writing for *Craft Horizons* in

1965, called “a large central arch form [that] gives the impression of a relief because it is covered with these flowing shapes – catching the light and allowing it to pass through the apertures they form – transparent, but at the same time, rich in surface.”⁷²³ In this piece, billed as a casement, but with an evocative title and a decorative motif that connected it to a rich history of architecture and the decorative arts, Phillips set a new trend for her knitting that she would expand upon rapidly, moving quickly into wall hangings, both large and small, that were designed to show the beauty and complexity of knitting distilled and guided into contemporary expressions by the exacting refinement of Phillips’s aesthetic sensibility and technical mastery. It is instructive to compare *Near East*, Figure 80, with a similar “Tree of Life” or bell motif in the windows of the Studio Alcove at Saarinen House, Figure 82. Figure 83 shows Phillips’s bell motif in detail. The angular geometry of the motif in the window is softened in the textile, but the appearance of transparency and the essential shape is retained.

The chair cover was Phillips’s response to Larsen’s own obsession with knits and the key to his pet concept of modern, fully-fashioned fabrics, made in one piece, without waste or labor from the need for cutting and seaming, and that could be easily removed and cleaned or simply changed for seasonal effect. According to Larsen’s recollections, he presented this concept to Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. as something Americans could put forward in the Triennale, where unsurprisingly, fabrics dominated the American entries.⁷²⁴ Kaufmann liked the idea and wanted a chair – a modern icon – as the prototype. Larsen recalled that Kaufmann asked Eva Zeisel to make the frame, which was constructed of tubular metal in a small size that would not have been usable except, perhaps, as a child’s chair. In keeping with the notion of leisure, the chair was billed as a

“prototype of a folding, portable chair.”⁷²⁵ Larsen arranged to have Phillips design the upholstery to fit the frame. He does not recall if Zeisel and Phillips ever met during the project, since Kaufmann invited Zeisel’s involvement, while Phillips was involved on behalf of Larsen. Larsen described Phillips’s contribution as “a sweater-like-knit chair covering, . . . in the vanguard of that design exploration which is growing out of new technology,” which was a very optimistic characterization of this hand-knitting experiment, as the idea never really caught on in the marketplace.⁷²⁶ Phillips noted in *Creative Knitting* that the upholstery was constructed rather ingeniously in “[b]lue and turquoise nub wool.” Knit in a tubular shape on a circular needle, Phillips used a durable seed stitch pattern on the facing side of the tube, which created an effect similar to tweed fabric for the seating surface of the chair, while using a “spiral rib technique” from Mary Thomas on the reverse side of the fabric, starting at the point where the fabric encircles the chair’s frame. The spiral rib pattern made a bias fabric that would shape itself snugly to the chair’s butterfly frame. It would be helpful to examine the chair in person to learn more about the construction techniques; Phillips did not reveal them in specific terms in *Creative Knitting*. The location of the chair today is unknown.⁷²⁷

Phillips was not the only artist who exhibited work at the 13th Triennale made using non-woven techniques. Cranbrook graduate Ted Hallman also exhibited several large sculptural forms in both wool and wire that he made using knitting and interlacing. Further, another artist submitted a hand knitted baby blanket. Although Phillips followed Larsen’s lead with her design for a fully-fashioned upholstery fabric, it was the casement she created that provided the future direction for her work. This was considered by Larsen to be one example of a “crafted, organic non-production piece expressing the free

imagination of [the] individual[] working independently;” handmade craft objects were advanced in the American section of the Triennale as an alternative vision of democracy to the machine-made product.⁷²⁸ Larsen’s identification of handmade, unique craft objects as artistic expressions of the individual that integrated fine art and design and ultimately celebrated democratic values was an important theoretical underpinning of the studio craft movement that Phillips was entering in the 1960s.⁷²⁹ Of course the tremendous national and international coverage that Phillips received after the Triennale showed it had been influential in launching her career.⁷³⁰

In 1964, Glen Kaufman invited Phillips to Cranbrook to exhibit her knitted work in his sumptuous textile retrospective, “Ornamentation: The Art of Fabric Decoration” where she gave her first workshop in knitting to students in what was then called the Department of Weaving and Fabric Design at Cranbrook, and it appears from a local newspaper article that at least one student was knitting in Phillips’s style.⁷³¹ From 1964-1967, Cranbrook’s course catalogues included an image of one of Phillips’s hand knitted casements in the section devoted to advertising the program in Weaving and Fabric Design.⁷³² Figure 61. After teaching a workshop in knitting at Cranbrook, Phillips subsequently taught workshops in both knitting and macramé at numerous other colleges and universities over the years, as well as at noted craft schools, such as the Haystack Mountain School of Craft in Maine (1965, 1972), in which Jack Lenor Larsen was heavily involved, and at the Penland School of Craft (1965-1971, 1975 and 1979), where Cranbrook graduate Bill Brown had taken over as director in 1962.⁷³³ Phillips was also involved in teaching workshops in 1971-1975, 1977, 1980-1982 at New York’s New School of Social Research, a continuing education program of New York’s Parson’s

School of Design, which offered classes to the public during the spring, summer and fall that were regularly advertised in the *New York Times*.⁷³⁴

Further, Larsen continued to champion Phillips's works over the next decade, including her in several books that he collaborated on with Mildred Constantine, including *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric*, and *The Dyer's Art: Ikat, Batik and Plangi*, as well as in "Wall Hangings," a show he and Mildred Constantine mounted at the Museum of Modern Art in 1969. The genre of the wall hanging, defined by Larsen in *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric*, was as follows: "Art Fabrics can be most readily divided into several categories. The most obvious one is that which completely dominated the scene during the 1960s – wall hangings, a category that has considerable range. These are objects with presence both in size – often they are monumental – and character. A wall-hanging is meant to be hung in front of a supporting wall; a work conceived for non-utilitarian purposes, it extends the formal possibilities of fabric."

In 1967, Phillips exhibited two works in "Made With Paper" at the Museum of Contemporary Craft, an exhibit based on experiments with paper at the Bauhaus. For a novel hat constructed on the bias fabric principles Phillips likely mastered in her chair upholstery, completed with an irreverent "Hershey Kiss" style peak, and accompanied by matching wristlets, Phillips used yellow paper yarn from Japan.⁷³⁵ Figure 84. For a prototype wall covering that is inaccurately billed in some sources as a wall hanging, Phillips used paper twine from Enterprise, Inc., of Dallas, Texas. Figure 5. Phillips's willingness to work in these novel and unusual fibers shows she maintained the experimental approach to her work developed at Cranbrook in the M.F.A. thesis. In "Objects: USA" and "Wall Hangings," both in 1969, Phillips achieved recognition as a

fiber artist making one-of-a-kind works of art. In “Wall Hangings,” Phillips’s *Near East* was displayed in the entrance to the exhibition. Fellow knitter Susanna E. Lewis recalled how important it was for her at the time, as an artist in machine knitting, to see Phillips’s hanging – a work of art in knitting – displayed so prominently in a major museum exhibition.⁷³⁶

By 1970, Phillips was established in her field as an artist, teacher, and as an author of “how-to” knitting and macramé books. By this time, despite the prior enthusiasm for the possibility of knitting everything, including cars and boats, knitting had already developed its primary market, and it would not be in upholstery or drapery fabrics, but in fashion, both industrially produced and handmade.⁷³⁷ Shortly following the proliferation of knits in fashion, the public became increasingly interested in knitting as a hobby. It was in capitalizing on this latter category that Phillips excelled. By 1970, the hand knitting hobby craze had “taken on industrial dimensions,” as yarn manufacturers struggled to feed the recreational crafter’s voracious demand for fibers for knitting, crochet and macramé:

Are they all squares? Banish the thought! We are talking about young swingers. Of course, old ladies in blue sneakers do knit. They always did. But O-L-I-B-S don’t generally make for themselves openwork crochet vests or six-foot scarves. These youngsters have fashion on their minds. The latest thing. The newest riff. Knitting is very much “in.”⁷³⁸

These knitters, unlike Phillips, used synthetic yarns, but they were eager for the up-to-date patterns and the basic information she could impart in her workshops and how-to books. However, in Phillips’s view, no one took knitting to the next level, experimenting with materials and stitch structure in the way that Phillips had envisioned. Within the next year, Phillips published *Creative Knitting: A New Art Form*.

Part 3. “*Creative Knitting: A New Art Form*”

“In his decorative work the artist must have creative freedom in using his material without any restrictions from esthetic stipulation. But whatever the artist does in ornamental terms, and how he uses his freedom in this respect, his ornament must have the quality of expressive language. As such, the ornament must be understood. As such, it has a reason for existence. And only as such is it “art.”

-- Eliel Saarinen, *The Search for Form*

Nine years ago when I started experimenting with knitting as a creative craft, I had only a few indications of its possibilities, but, through experimentation, a whole new world opened up to me. Knitting became an art worthy of study. I was a weaver at the time and already had a love for yarn and for the designs created by the stitches, and I forsook the loom for the soft clicking of the needles.⁷³⁹

-- Mary Walker Phillips, *Creative Knitting*

In the front of her M.F.A. thesis, Phillips put the following quotation, which she attributed to Appolonius of Tyana: “Imitation will fashion what it has seen, but imagination goes on to what it has not seen.”⁷⁴⁰ This quotation expressed in a way that was meaningful to Phillips an echo of Eliel Saarinen’s views that the artist/architect must find the link between the individual creative imagination and the demands and opportunities presented in modern living for the inspiration to develop new and original forms.⁷⁴¹ Nine years later, Phillips prominently printed this same quotation on the dedication page of *Creative Knitting: A New Art Form*, the book that grew from her M.F.A. thesis at Cranbrook in “Experimental Fabrics.” All of Phillips’s books, and especially *Creative Knitting* blend the interest in revitalizing the old crafts that was so

prevalent in the 1960s with a pedagogical style that encouraged free experimentation and independent thinking, in keeping with Cranbrook's preference that students learn from hands-on experience rather than copying out of books.

Before publishing *Creative Knitting: A New Art Form* in 1971, which Phillips considered her best work and her most original contribution to the art and craft of knitting, she had already made a name for herself with two well-received and best-selling instructional books, including *Step-by-Step Knitting*, 1967 and *Step-by-Step Macramé*, 1970, both published by Golden Press. Phillips had become interested in working in macramé in the late 1960s and early 1970s as an extension of her off-loom repertoire. *Knitting*, published by Franklin Watts in 1977, was aimed at a juvenile audience.

Creative Knitting: A New Art Form was a revolutionary book for knitters because by it and through it Phillips launched herself as an artist, and knitting as an art form, into the mass market.⁷⁴² Phillips had followed a tried and true model for a successful career – she studied at a prestigious art school, she exhibited widely, and she gave lectures and taught workshops and seminars as early as 1965 at well-known craft schools and summer programs like Penland School of Crafts in Penland, North Carolina and Haystack Mountain School of Craft in Deer Isle, Maine, along with other well-known artists, many of whom were peers of hers from Cranbrook. She also as taught at local craft guilds and notable craft shops that sold materials to artists and recreational crafters. From the recognition she gained in these venues, like so many other artists of the period (including Anni Albers, Ed Rosssbach, Jack Lenor Larsen and Glen Kaufman, to name only a few), she secured book contracts that allowed her to bring her knowledge of specific craft techniques to an international audience that was much more extensive than that typically

reached by museums, private galleries and workshops. In turn, Phillips's books brought her even greater access to the public, because through them, she was asked to give interviews on radio and television. Her resume lists a number of such interviews in the United States, including *The Today Show* in 1970.⁷⁴³ That Phillips was in the mainstream of a much broader trend in such books does not diminish her contribution to the small number of such publications on knitting. Her Cranbrook training, and the exposure she gained during her career after Cranbrook, made the publication of *Creative Knitting* possible.

In *Creative Knitting*, Phillips offered the reader a retrospective of her achievements to date in knitting as an art form, and brought into focus for others the full scope of the experimental work in knitting she started in her M.F.A. thesis, now interpreted through the lens of its limitless potential as “a creative medium for self-expression,” (a description she actually borrowed from Jack Larsen's “Forward” to *Step-By-Step Knitting*, a basic instructional manual for beginners that Phillips had published by Golden Press in 1967), rather than as a means to create an industrial prototype or as a utilitarian craft for use in making functional objects for the home or wardrobe. Certainly this was new terrain for knitting to occupy in the public consciousness. Phillips saw herself as the embodiment of the Cranbrook ideal of doing original and creative work and being able to teach others to do the same: “Personal expression in knitting, as in any other medium that is creative, is not achieved by copying exactly what someone else has done. Rather, the aim is to translate with yarn the atmosphere of the inspiration.”⁷⁴⁴ *Creative Knitting* is a generous book in which Phillips passed on her Cranbrook methods of working in the medium to others, and extolled research and experimentation to gain

familiarity with the properties of various materials and the effects of different techniques. Phillips believed that only through knowledge of the medium could it be effectively used for something new and innovative.⁷⁴⁵

Like Strengell, Phillips recommended that a student of knitting start with one fiber and try working it with many different needle sizes and in many different patterns to determine “the properties of the yarn, its effect on the stitches, and the relationship of one pattern to another pattern.”⁷⁴⁶ She encouraged the student to attach notes to each swatch to preserve pertinent information about stitches and needle size and any subjective reactions to its tactile and aesthetic qualities. She offered, in her chapter on Experiments, a number of examples she had made at Cranbrook, and her candid reflections on what she had learned from them. She also alluded to the patience required to achieve just the right effect; if a work was not to Phillips’s liking, she ripped it out and started again.⁷⁴⁷

However, also like Strengell, Phillips did not share everything she used or did in the text of *Creative Knitting*: “I think [knitters] should have to do their own homework.”⁷⁴⁸ For example, Phillips took great pains, as can be see in a direct study of her works, to stabilize hems and borders, and even central areas of each wall hanging, the methods for which she never addressed specifically in the text of the book. In the 1960s, Phillips made numerous hangings from ikat-dyed linen (including *The Kings*, 1966, and *Fans And Beads*, 1974) and she described briefly how to do the dyeing process in her book. Her book documented the fact that she continued to dye fiber and even piece-dye finished hangings long after she left Cranbrook.⁷⁴⁹

The material in the book comes from several sources – historical research, primarily from Mary Thomas and from Phillips’s visits to the Brooklyn Museum; stitches

and information borrowed from Mary Thomas with notes from Phillips as to “variations” although these are by no means exhaustive, and a section or two lifted from her thesis.⁷⁵⁰

There are six chapters in the book: Introduction, History, Equipment, Blocking and Finishing, Stitches and Patterns, and Experiments. The chapters on Equipment and Blocking and Finishing provide insights into Phillips’s own methods of knitting and finishing her work. In Equipment, Phillips discussed not only what types of needles she prefers but also how to use materials economically and to collect them from one’s travels. In contrast to Jack Lenor Larsen’s recollections of Phillips as someone who used only the most expensive materials, Phillips here expressed her delight in the ability of some handspun silk yardage she had acquired on her travels to make many pieces.⁷⁵¹ Blocking and Finishing was a completely original section describing Phillips’s methods of handling of fibers, fiber blending, and the best methods for blocking pieces using a blocking board, starch and T-pins.

In discussing her view that wall hangings must be placed carefully in order to show to advantage in a room, Phillips expressed a belief about the relationship between the textile and its environment that links back to the use of textiles by Eliel and Loja Saarinen at Cranbrook as focal points in an integrated interior scheme. Phillips wrote: “The actual hanging of the knitted work can be something of an event, so consider carefully where to hang it, keeping in mind that the beauty of the piece can be enhanced or detracted from by its surroundings Try hanging [it] against a wall that will compliment it by lending some contrast in color. In some cases hanging . . . slightly away from the wall creates shadow patterns [that change with the light] adding to the design details of the piece”⁷⁵²

In Chapter 5, “Stitches and Patterns,” Phillips introduced “those that relate to my own work,” although these are just a starting point since Phillips used other stitches as well. However, from studying the stitches included here in concert with Phillips’s works, one can learn a great deal about how Phillips approached her own process of “creative knitting.” Although the title of the chapter implies a difference, there does not seem to be a clear distinction in how Phillips defines “Stitches” versus “Patterns,” however, the information she relates in Chapter 5 clearly revealed her development of two separate but related areas of interest in knitting techniques. First, Phillips was interested in and experimenting with “stitch movement.” This term connoted a methodical approach to deconstructing the process of knitting and its variables at the stitch level – a level that most knitters take for granted once they have learned a reliable method to knit and purl – but which, if understood, gives the knitter greater control over the basic building blocks of the knitted stitches and ultimately over the knitted fabrics they can be used to construct. Second, Phillips was interested in the structural and aesthetic effects of certain stitches that were more or less commonly in use, and in the seemingly endless variations she could make with them in her wall hangings.

The methods encompass the following: Uncrossed and Crossed Eastern Western and Combined Stitches (pp. 40-43); Increasing, Decreasing and their Variations (pp. 60-66), all from Mary Thomas.⁷⁵³ The “Stitches” include the following, some with one or more variations: Fancy Crossed Throw (pp. 45-46), Double Knit (pp. 47-49); Double Throw (p. 51); Knit into Stitch Below (p. 52); Embossed Motifs, including Clustering, Popcorn, and Bobble (pp. 55-59), Lace Faggot Stitch (p. 68), Ladder Stitch (p. 70), Spiral Rib Stitch (p. 70), One Over One Stitch (p. 72), Plaited Basket Stitch (p. 73), Horizontal

Stitch (pp. 74-75), Bell Pattern (p. 76), Bell Frilling Pattern (p. 76), Lace Diadem Eyelet Pattern (p. 78), Shell Pattern (p. 80), Bowknot or Butterfly Pattern (p. 82), and Honeycomb Pattern (pp. 85-86). Nearly all of these stitches can be found in one or the other of Mary Thomas's manuals, as Phillips indicates in both her M.F.A. thesis and in *Creative Knitting*.⁷⁵⁴ Some stitches Phillips modified by changing the number of stitches in the repeat, by substituting different decreases that produced a similar effect but were more compatible with her somewhat idiosyncratic style of knitting, or by setting motif on a different ground fabric (compare, e.g. Phillips's "Bell Pattern" as modified for use in the work *Near East*, 1964, to Thomas's "Bell Motif in Repeat"), but many appear exactly as recorded in Thomas's books, (e.g. "Plaited Basket Stitch").⁷⁵⁵ Others are original to the publication of *Creative Knitting*, e.g., "Horizontal Stitch" which is a "variation on the One Over One principle" devised by the well-known weaver Trude Guermonprez, who attended one of Phillips's classes in the mid 1960s, and about which Phillips wrote: "This is the only truly horizontal stitch that I know of, and it gives great stability to what otherwise might be a droopy piece."⁷⁵⁶

The most interesting aspects of *Creative Knitting* are 1) that Phillips provided in it an unselfconscious retrospective of her first decade of work in knitting, including both art textiles and functional pieces; 2) that she generously offered her experimental method, learned at Cranbrook, to a wide audience of readers; 3) that she re-emphasized the functional possibilities of knitting for home décor and architectural use; and 4) that she simultaneously sought to establish her knitted work as fine art, and knitting as a fine art medium by relating her own creative process back to the founding ideas and inspirational sources most appropriated by modern artists in all disciplines – an authentic connection

to primitivism, a sense of connection to important fine artists in well-known modern movements and the intellectual history this represented, and a resonance with architecture.

For example, Phillips cited the influence of ancient Peruvian weaving on her work, the dazzling technical proficiency and variety of which had been unearthed in archeological excavations in the early twentieth century (along with other Pan-American weaving traditions in Mexico and Guatemala, and the Pacific Northwest). For modern weavers like Anni Albers, Sheila Hicks, Marianne Strengell and others, Peruvian weaving had a robust connection to an “American” primitivism, and it represented an authentic history for weaving in the New World that appealed to the international and ethnic interests of Modernists and Surrealists. But in erroneously classifying one of a group of three textiles that she offered to readers as sources of inspiration for her work as a “Peruvian gauze weave,” instead of an “embroidered, notted net,” and in blurring the distinctions between “interlooping,” (knitting) and “crossed-looping” (a technique used in ancient Peruvian textiles from Paracas and Nazca), Phillips showed her lack of scholarship and precision, a fault which Milton Sunday, Curator of Textiles at the Smithsonian’s Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum who reviewed Phillips’s book in *Craft Horizons* in 1971, was quick to point out.⁷⁵⁷ However, in looking at these examples recently, figures 85 (A and B) and 86, Glen Kaufman concurred that the visual effects of the gauze weaves and net sample, which are pictured in *Creative Knitting*, would have been much easier for Phillips to replicate in knitting than in weaving, and would clearly have been inspiring to Phillips. Sunday also took issue with Phillips’s section on textile history, which he claimed “restat[ed] shaky deductions of historical development as

absolute fact.” Yet Sunday generally praised Phillips for her original and inventive use of the medium of knitting, and *Creative Knitting* as “the integration of her personal integrity, her sense of design, and her knowledge of and joy in using yarn.”⁷⁵⁸

In addition, in *Creative Knitting*, Phillips also claimed Klee and Kandinsky as sources of inspiration for her work, and by extension, the Bauhaus legacy they represented.⁷⁵⁹ Phillips specifically stated “[t]he works of Paul Klee never fail to give me new ideas.”⁷⁶⁰ By the 1960s, the works of Paul Klee had become synonymous through Anni Albers’s work and writing with modern textiles and art weaving. As the Bauhaus master most engaged with the activities and instruction of the weaving studio, Klee had a talismanic presence for many fiber artists of the 1960s; it was common for weavers interviewed over the years in *Craft Horizons* to identify him as an influence. In claiming a connection to Klee and to Peruvian weaving for knitting, however succinctly, Phillips appropriated the concept so popular in the 1960s and 1970s of the textile as a form of language, and by extension, placed knitting in the same intellectual and avant-garde terrain as weaving and other modern art forms.⁷⁶¹ Further, Albers and Klee shared with scholars of Peruvian weaving an interest in the idea of the textile as a “text” that could be relayed to the viewer through the textile’s form, structure and decoration.⁷⁶² Phillips, whose work in knitting was, in essence, a language of stitches, was likely associating Klee’s work and Peruvian weaving (which had a language of imagery) with her own creative process, wherein the structural quality and function of the stitches as exposed in her work created the form and the “form language” for others to see and interpret. In Phillips’s work, the stitches do almost seem to speak, drawing the viewer’s attention to

the conversation expressed by the variations and relationships of stitch patterns within the composition and structure of each hanging.

Phillips even rewrote her own history with respect to Klee's influence on her work – where in one article she noted that others had told her that one of her earliest knitted casements “looked like Paul Klee drawing,” in *Creative Knitting* she claimed this insight for herself, after having renamed the casement in question “For Paul Klee” at some point in the 1960s. In *Creative Knitting*, Phillips wrote: “The first reaction *I* had to [*For Paul Klee*] was that it resembled a Klee drawing.”⁷⁶³ She then compared her casement directly with Klee's *Pastorale*, 1927, a tempera painting in soft pastels on canvas and mounted on board. In the book, the black and white photographs of the painting and the hanging enhance the visual affinity between the two works by emphasizing their “beautiful, linear qualit[ies].”⁷⁶⁴ Figures 87 A and B. She also cited the works of Wassily Kandinsky as inspiring, perhaps for her most abstract and unplanned compositions, and that of Piet Mondrian, perhaps for her most geometric and formal compositions. However, Phillips did not enlarge upon any of these associations, whether because they seemed so obvious to her that she thought the comparisons not worth explaining, or because she understood them visually and in a way she could not or did not articulate, except in knitted form.

Finally, in *Creative Knitting*, Phillips stayed true to acknowledging architectural sources of inspiration, both from Cranbrook and beyond, citing such modern icons as bridges and decorative ironwork as touchstones in her very personal search for form.⁷⁶⁵ Beyond citing painters she admired, she never wrote about her work in the language of painting, but rather in the language of architecture, for which Antonio Gaudí's work

“alone [could] inspire a lifetime of ideas.”⁷⁶⁶ For Phillips, wall hangings were described as “structures,” and “constructions,” not color studies.⁷⁶⁷ Although she alluded to the influence of painting on her work, especially the works of Paul Klee, it was for his “harmonious lattices of verticals and horizontals, linear qualities that are so inherent to knitting.”⁷⁶⁸ What she did not do in *Creative Knitting* that sets it apart from other knitting books, even knitting books that today profess to be about knitting as an art form, is that she did not provide instructions for knitters to duplicate her work.

CHAPTER 4. THREE WORKS BY MARY WALKER PHILLIPS

It is fundamental that whatever forms a man brings forth through honest work, those forms will not be altogether convincing unless they are a true expression of his life – his emotions, his thoughts and his aspirations. His art, at best, is a significant testimony to his integrity of mind and spirit, the product of his real personality. No work of art in any field can be considered a work of art unless it reveals the basic nature of the artist himself.

--Eliel Saarinen

Knitting is an effective medium through which you can express your individuality You can work with graphs, plotting your designs beforehand and allowing the yarn to give form to your preconceived ideas, or you can draw your inspiration mostly from the yarn itself so that the ideas grow out of the material. If the knitter is in sympathy with the material, there will be a special awareness of the way the materials give birth to form.

-- Mary Walker Phillips

The similarity between knitting and building makes practical sense, but would not have emerged without Phillips's lead in the medium, since she gave an architectonic form to what was already an architectural process. Susanna E. Lewis, who knew Mary Walker Phillips and admired her work, was one of the first to write so explicitly about what Phillips already knew – that knitting is inherently architectural and that lace is one of the most architectural forms of knitting:

The desire to learn about lace knitting goes beyond fashion and into the realm of art and architecture, for designing or building a knitted lace pattern requires an understanding of the system of factors that develop and balance the pattern. You have to know the possibilities as well as the limitations inherent in this system, how to work with them and around them . . . It's a wonderful challenge to fit together the elements of a design – to decide which stitches should bias and which should be straight, where the lines of eyelets and

decreases will be, how prominent or how hidden they should be, and so on. How wonderful to be able to take charge of the building of this interlocking looped structure so that it becomes a new whole of grace and beauty.⁷⁶⁹

Of all the types of knitting, lace knitting requires the most careful attention. In traditional lace knitting, where each row becomes the visual and structural foundation for the next, the symmetry of the design is noticeably interrupted by mistakes. The goal of any lace knitter is a perfect execution of the pattern, which requires much attention to counting the stitches as they are worked and making all the increases, decreases and openings in the proper sequence. In contrast to this ideal, Phillips often used asymmetry intentionally and to great advantage. Asymmetry was one of the key elements in the work of Eliel Saarinen and of Antonio Gaudi, another architect whose work Phillips admired.

Some of Phillips's earliest lace pieces exhibit tremendous freedom and exuberance, and as such they overthrow the governing principle of perfection in lace. *The Kings*, 1966, is a good example of Phillips's early work, a period of virtuoso abstraction. In her book *Creative Knitting: A New Art Form*, published in 1971, Phillips admitted that some of her works had suffered from poor planning, but she did not suggest which of her works she considered examples of this flaw. *The Kings*, and other works like it, are appealing in part because of their extreme asymmetry, which contributes to a sense of freshness and lively activity. A reporter once commented, "Miss Phillips knit jazz," which is a great way to express the appearance of unpredictable rhythms in this group of works.⁷⁷⁰ Although knitting is a method of construction that proceeds in regular horizontal courses, because these works appear to defy any visible reference to that

structural convention, it is difficult for knitters and non-knitters alike to follow the progress of her work. As a group, these works tend to be smaller in size.

Shells, 1967, is an example of Phillips's more mature work in its contemplative modernism. Works in this group tend to be abstract or highly stylized, and monumental in size, measuring up to nine feet in height and four to five feet in width. Phillips again used asymmetry to maintain interest and movement, but the rhythm in these larger, more iconic and modern pieces, is highly organized, repetitive and restrained. In many of her similarly monumental and architectonic pieces in both lace and textured stitches, Phillips explored the interrelationship of stitches and fibers organized in horizontal courses that emphasized the actual structural progress of the knitting. *Shells* is a particularly successful work in this group.

Finally, later pieces like *Fans And Beads*, 1974, are more formal and predictable compositions of historical stitch patterns. Many of these hangings feature stitch patterns that mimic leaves and vines and other shapes clearly representational of nature. In *Fans And Beads*, Phillips knitted a historic stitch pattern entirely unaltered from the original instructions, which can be found in numerous pattern books; in other similar hangings, she tweaked the stitches in various original ways to accentuate certain aspects of their structure to optimum effect. These works, like the first group, tend to be smaller in size and date generally from the mid-1970s to the 1980s. Most share a natural visual affinity with decorative arts of the Arts and Crafts period. Phillips often repeated these pieces serially; unlike the more complex and spontaneous works of the 1960s, these works would be quite simple to duplicate, varying small aspects to maintain one's interest and

to make refinements in the details. They have a quiet grace to them, and show Phillips's interest in allowing the beauty of the stitches to speak for themselves.

Part 1. *The Kings*, 1966, Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum, CAM #1992.19⁷⁷¹

Phillips exhibited *The Kings*, 1966, a small wall hanging made from hand-dyed linen, in "Craftsmen USA '66," a national exhibition sponsored by the American Craftsman's Council. "Craftsmen USA '66," drew 268 winning works from competitions held in six regional divisions. Phillips first entered *The Kings* in the Northeast Region, which included New York. Judges for the Northeast Region reviewed 1,376 entries exhibited at the Delaware Art Center, Wilmington, Delaware, March 11-April 3, 1966, and they selected *The Kings*, figure 88, as one of 142 winning works to advance to the national exhibition, where it received an Award of Merit.⁷⁷² According to reviewer Michael Boylan, woodworking and ceramics dominated the entries from the Northeast Region, while Textiles "seemed sparse."⁷⁷³ In 1967, *Craft Horizons* published a full-page photograph of *The Kings* in an article it ran about the noted French photographer Pierre Berdoy and his wife Dorinne Berdoy, who had been invited to tour the studios of several New York artists, including Mary Walker Phillips, and to photograph works that interested them; Phillips's work was described in the article as "purist."⁷⁷⁴ By the time Phillips published *Creative Knitting* in 1971, she noted that *The Kings* was in the private collection of Roger Dunham, a Cranbrook classmate of Phillips with whom she kept in contact.⁷⁷⁵ In 1992, Dunham donated *The Kings* to the Cranbrook Art Museum, where it currently resides in the collection as CAM #1992.19. The hanging measures approximately 19.25 x 29 inches.

There is no other work quite like *The Kings* in Phillips's oeuvre. First, among Phillips's works, *The Kings* is a rarity in that the title Phillips chose for the work implied representational and symbolic content. Phillips generally chose titles for her pieces that were refreshingly straightforward and unpretentious, and that she derived from observable characteristics, like the materials she used (e.g., *Peruvian Seeds*, 1968), the stitch patterns she featured (e.g., *Oakleaf and Acorn #3*, 1983), or the function of the piece (as in the many works she simply dubbed, *Wall Hanging*). This lack of pretention may be a result of her Cranbrook training; even Phillips's ceramics instructor, the renowned Miaja Grotell, named her pots very circumspectly as *Vase*, 1939, e.g. The few other works with similarly evocative sounding titles to *The Kings*, – e.g., *Near East*, 1963, *From the Persian*, 1974, and *Bells for Dunedin*, 1981 – when considered with the hangings themselves, do not evoke the same impression of mystery and of narrative content. *Near East*, 1963, is an elegantly simplified reinterpretation of a “Tree of Life” design comprised of a knitted leaf motif that recalls the traditional “boteh” or paisley; both the Tree of Life and the paisley motif are common design elements in textiles from Near Eastern cultures. *From the Persian*, 1974, exhibits interlocking geometric motifs in double knit in a graphic two-color palette that references Persian tiles and carpets. In *Bells for Dunedin*, 1981, a hanging knitted from wire, Phillips suspended a number of small bronze Indian temple bells within the openings formed by a variation of the lace diadem stitch.⁷⁷⁶ In *The Kings*, Phillips experimented with knitting to obtain a pictorial effect similar to a tapestry, but executed in knitted lace. *Yellow Variations*, 1967, figure 90, and other similar works, share the abstract complexity of *The Kings*, but in its focal

register of abstract figures, *The Kings* stands alone in the body of work that Phillips produced.

Whether Phillips had a specific source in mind when she created *The Kings* may not be discovered until her papers are available for scholars to review, but the central figures in the work bear an uncanny resemblance to the statues of the kings of ancient Egypt that stand guard at such well-known archeological sites as the Temple at Karnak, Luxor, in the Valley of the Kings.⁷⁷⁷ The hanging has the appearance of symmetry, but on close examination, one sees many variations in the arrangement and execution of the patterns in the composition. As in certain architectural structures, including those designed by Eiel Saarinen and Antonio Gaudi, the lack of symmetry contributes to the sense of flow and vitality in the work. The central figures in the hanging also evoke the ornamental structures and decorative details of Antonio Gaudi's renowned architecture (e.g., the Casa Milà, Casa Battló, Parc Guëll and Guëll Pavilion, and the El Templo Expiatorio de la Sagrada Familia, to name a few), which Phillips stated specifically as a source of inspiration for her knitting: "The undulating lines of Gaudi's creations can be incorporated so naturally into a knitted structure."⁷⁷⁸ Phillips also claimed inspiration from the Bauhaus painter Wassily Kandinsky, and perhaps an analogy to his freeform, abstract compositions is not unfounded. Finally, the appearance of a checkered ground below the figures formed of double knit panels could indicate Phillips was alluding to chess pieces on a board in the composition of the hanging.

An important context to consider in examining *The Kings* was the revival of interest during the 1950s and 1960s in tapestry weaving, which artists began to explore for the first time since Loja Saarinen's era.⁷⁷⁹ The relatively small size of *The Kings*

confirms that its purpose was primarily decorative, in the manner of a painting or tapestry. In *The Kings*, Phillips would retain and enhance the transparency of the hangings that Loja Saarinen wove in her signature brocade weave, but instead of using colors, Phillips used the vocabulary of knitted lace stitches, which are so architectural in their construction and visual effect, to tell her “story” to the imaginative viewer. In its suggestion of figures or architectural structures in lace, and in its expression of technical proficiency taken to the extreme of the knitted medium, Phillips work parallels that of the Czechoslovakian artist Luba Krejci’s bobbin lace constructions, which were widely exhibited at this time. One of Krejci’s works won a Gold Medal at the Milan Triennale in 1960, and to some degree this event paved the way for Phillip’s participation in the next Triennale, held in 1964. Krejci’s work veered between hauntingly primitive looking and folk art sweet. Krejci’s *Black Comet Dream*, 1965, The Art Institute of Chicago, is an example of the former, while *Peasant Girl*, no date, Museum of Arts and Design, New York, is an example of the latter. But while both Loja Saarinen’s and Luba Krejci’s work was clearly figural, in *The Kings*, Phillips adhered to what was a more architectural and abstract expression of knitted figures or structures.

It is possible that Phillips may have considered experimenting in the tapestry form as a result of Glen Kaufman’s 1964 exhibition at the Cranbrook Art Musuem, entitled “Tapestry” 1,500 Years of Fabric Art,” November 22, 1963 – Mid-January 1964. He and some of his students may have begun working on this exhibit while Phillips was still a student at Cranbrook in 1963. The exhibition included the following types of tapestries or fragments: Hellenistic, Coptic, Gothic, and Contemporary.⁷⁸⁰ In the printed materials for the exhibit, Kaufman offered viewers definitions of both traditional and contemporary

tapestries. He defined the traditional tapestry as “[a]n ornamental woven fabric in which the design is usually a picture which illustrates a story. The design is an integral part of the weaving and is not embroidered.” In contrast, he defined the contemporary tapestry as “[a] creative expression resulting in a fabric in which the design, motif or form is an integral part of the construction of the finished product. Excluded from this definition are such surface treatments as embroidery or printing.”⁷⁸¹ Using Kaufman’s contemporary definition of tapestry provides an appropriate framework for describing the effect Phillips sought to produce in *The Kings*, and it makes a close comparison of *The Kings* with a more traditional form of tapestry with which Phillips would have been familiar – Loja Saarinen’s transparent brocade weave hanging entitled *The Festival of the May Queen*, ca. 1932 – both useful and instructive. Compare figures 88-89.

As in Loja Saarinen’s *May Queen*, there is a strong compositional arrangement of lace motifs in *The Kings*, as well as an interplay of solids and voids that forces the eye to focus on the central horizontal arrangement of abstract figures. Figures 88-89. Both works share a repetitive, densely patterned lower border of serrated shapes that have strong, vertical impact. Surmounting this border, both works feature a frieze of figures massed in a horizontal arrangement with one figure clearly designated as the dominant figure. In Saarinen’s hanging it is the figure of the “May Queen,” and in Phillips’s knitted hanging it is the “jeweled king” among “kings” – a central figure whose “head” Phillips formed from a giant eyelet opening surmounted by a bell frill that looks like a conical bishop’s hat and that is further ornamented with a large raised “jewel” or knot formed by a bobble stitch.⁷⁸² In both works, two minor figures flank the main figure, and two larger figures, in turn, frame them, without challenging the primacy of the

central figure. In Loja Saarinen's hanging, these are the young girls in attendance at either side of the May Queen, followed by two pairs of older attendants. In Phillips's hanging, this arrangement is less symmetrical, but is similarly defined. On either side of the jeweled king are two smaller figures, or perhaps columns with capitals, that recede in prominence because their "heads" are formed by lace cables that close off tightly at the top, instead of opening, and then diffuse into headdresses constructed of eyelets. Beside them are the flanking "kings," whose conical hats exceed the central king's in height and density, but because of their axial position and the lack of a raised three-dimensional ornament, they remain visually subordinate. Where Loja Saarinen's hanging has a parity of figures on either side of the May Queen, excepting the dog, Phillips's knitted hanging has one extra receding figure on the left margin. This figure throws the composition off-center in reality, but not in effect.

In both works, the horizontal frieze falls below the centerline of the piece, and is surmounted by a more open pattern or motif that draws the eye of the viewer upward. In the tapestry, Loja Saarinen used the figure of the tree placed directly over the May Queen to accentuate her power and extend her influence into the top half of the tapestry where it diffused into a flutter of birds and leaves. In Phillips's hanging, this transition was achieved less gracefully and with less visual impact. To increase the transparency of the hanging dramatically just above the frieze of figures, Phillips constructed a horizontal border over the figures that featured two variations of fancy crossed throws. A long section of faggot stitches that surmounted this transitional area appears less transparent to viewers, but because of a strong horizontal line of stitches that interrupted its flow, at least a quarter of its height is incorporated into the more transparent section below. This

break in the flow divided the area above the frieze of figures into quarters of the whole, and weighted the bottom half of the hanging with more visual significance; hence Phillips achieved a similar visual emphasis for the figures that ensured their central importance in her composition. More information about the structural details of this piece can be found in Appendix 1.

Although the colors and patterns formed by the dyeing process Phillips used to produce the ikat-dyed linen fiber she used to knit *The Kings* do not directly influence the viewer's reading of the figures, they enhance the qualities of abstraction and fluidity in the overall composition. In *Creative Knitting*, Phillips described her process for dyeing the yarn for pieces like *The Kings*, for which she used "5/1 natural linen and ikat-dyed red and black linen."⁷⁸³ To create a two-color blend with black, Phillips likely would have tied off areas of the yarn and dyed the black portions first, then re-tied and over-dyed the black and some additional natural areas with the red on the second pass. Finally, some areas would have remained bound through both dye baths and would not take on color. In Japan, India, and other international textile traditions, ikat-dyeing is synonymous with a mind-bending effort to mark and pre-dye fibers before weaving so that they form pre-determined patterns in the fabrics during the weaving process. One of the most beautiful aspects of these fabrics is that the lines defining the motifs from each other and from the background are never precise, but are slightly blurred at the edges. Examples of Phillips's "Tie and Dye" from her portfolio in her M.F. A. thesis show she had perfected her dyeing techniques so as to achieve complex and repetitive patterns, but with only a few exceptions, she dyed commercially woven fabrics. Today it is possible through a computerized process to pre-dye knitting yarns to make specific patterns when

knitted. But despite the way her work is sometimes described, Phillips did not dye her knitting yarns with the idea that they would form pre-determined patterns when knitted; rather, she liked to see “the undyed areas form their own pattern and create fascinating designs in the fabric.”⁷⁸⁴ This was more freeing than dyeing to create specific patterns in either woven or knitted fabrics. In her use of the ikat dyeing technique in *The Kings* and several other pieces, Phillips enjoyed the freedom of expression and serendipity she gained by not pre-determining or trying to control the relationships that would occur between color and the placement of stitch patterns in the finished works.

Part 2. *Shells*, 1967, The Art Institute of Chicago, #1984.87

A monumental hanging measuring more than seven feet high and nearly three and a half feet wide made in linen and silk, *Shells*, 1967, provides a dramatic counterpoint to *The Kings*. Figure 91. While we can consider *The Kings* a pictorial work in knitting, *Shells*, because of its colossal scale, could function as an architectural structure. The Art Institute of Chicago purchased the hanging from Phillips in 1984 in honor of its illustrious Curator of Textiles, Christa C. Mayer Thurman’s, 20th year, using funds donated for the purpose by Mrs. Edward K. (Grace Vogel) Aldworth, a descendant of George G. Booth, Founder of the Cranbrook educational community.

Phillips made wall hangings for most of her career. She understood that if hung away from a wall or in front of a window or other light source where light could pass through them, her works created a shifting kaleidoscope of shadow patterns on the room’s surfaces in concert with the motion of the textile itself.⁷⁸⁵ Such passively generated but mobile patterns of light and shadow transformed an interior space in response to both artificial and natural sources of light and added yet another dimension to the interplay of structure and materials in the pieces themselves. Many of the

photographs in *Creative Knitting* reveal Phillips's interest in and exploration of the effects of transparency and dimensionality that she could achieve with knitting.⁷⁸⁶

Shells is firmly tied within the mid-century tradition of architectural textiles called "casements," and "dividers," both popular forms designed to filter the light radiating from the enormous expanses of glass in modern interiors and to divide and enclose spaces to create intimacy. If suspended from the ceiling in the middle of a room, a large hanging like *Shells* could also have functioned as a room divider to interrupt or modify the viewer's visual interpretation of the space, and to create a sense of privacy, contemplation, or transformation.

But if *Shells* derives its monumentality from architecture, its ornamental scheme is pure art. Handmade textiles of the caliber of construction and design that characterize work by mid-century textile artists like Phillips, Anni Albers, and others have a compelling presence to them that seems to murmur of the fibers of which they are made and of the maker's hands at work. Phillips's textiles, in their sheer exquisiteness of composition and construction, seem to evoke a secret life contained within. To make *Shells*, Phillips used natural linen and silk, alternating them at random intervals to accentuate the myriad variations in the horizontal bands of knitted patterns. The pale, undyed, natural palette of *Shells* clearly reflects Marianne Strengell's Scandinavian modern aesthetic, but in designing the hanging Phillips made the most of the interplay between shiny and matte surfaces, rough and smooth textures, open and solid areas, and the subtle gradations of light and dark that her choice and use of materials allowed. The visual effect of the materials – the pale, creamily elegant silk's uniform twist, and the slightly darker, coarser, and more fibrous rusticity of the linen, coupled with the complex,

syncopated rhythm achieved in the fifteen different horizontal registers of stitch patterns – draws the viewer in and recalls the dizzying opulence of the art, architecture and interiors of the Vienna Secession, a style that resonated with much of Eliel Saarinen's own work.⁷⁸⁷ One recalls the artful variations in the brickwork at the Cranbrook School for Boys, just across Art Academy Way from the Art Academy itself, and other areas of the campus where Saarinen's fascination with the more ornamental phase of the Vienna Secession is most in evidence. Small decorative patterns, each one different from the last, can be picked out at regular, and often irregular, intervals in the walls and walkways as the eye leaps from one to the next across a run of cloistered academic buildings. Saarinen thoughtfully incorporated such decorative details throughout the Cranbrook School and, to a lesser degree the Art Academy campus; such patterns emphasize the organic rhythm of the architectural complex, e.g., heavy doors in dark wood, each with a different surface pattern; rows of similar columns and pilasters where no two are exactly the same, and countless other examples that the keen eye picks up on even a casual perusal of the campus, because so many of them are situated at eye level, or seem to be visible from many vantage points.

In the repeating shell stitch motifs and other stitch variations that Phillips used throughout the hanging, there is a clear echo of Eliel Saarinen's own refusal of symmetry and his desire to play up subtle differences by tweaking a motif slightly each time it is used. Phillips's intricate bands of pattern and subtle color shifts in *Shells* pull the eye across the work horizontally, but her use of fancy crossed throws and other strong, vertical motifs to counterbalance this horizontality and keep the eye moving upward, emphasizes the panoramic flow and monumentality of the hanging. The mass of the

hanging also affects the viewer this way, simultaneously drawing one in close and then offering an opening vista in the interplay of related patterns and textures. Although Phillips cited the works of Bauhaus painters Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky as sources of inspiration in her work, she also cited De Stijl's Piet Mondrian. But Mark Rothko's monumental works, where the viewer's increased proximity brings on a sense of kaleidoscopic detail, and even vertigo, seem a more apt comparison. Phillips made numerous pieces with these strong horizontal bands of pattern, sometimes with highly contrasting colors, and in both lacy and textured fabrics, see Figure 92, but *Shells* succeeds over these in its appearance of almost indiscernible variations in tone. Another hanging with mica disks is simpler and even more architectonic in its monumentality and modern simplicity. Figure 93. However, in a letter to Curator of Textiles at the Chicago Art Institute, Christa C. Mayer Thurman, about *Shells*, Phillips wrote: "After seeing so many pieces hung together [at the Fresno Art Museum retrospective in 1984], I still consider this piece as one of my best."⁷⁸⁸ Brief notes about the structural details of this piece can be found in Appendix 2.

Part 3. *Fans And Beads*, 1974, #T.17765, Smithsonian National Museum of American History

Associate Curator Doris M. Bowman, in the Division of Home and Community Life at the Smithsonian National Museum of American History, purchased *Fans And Beads*, 1974, by Mary Walker Phillips from the Hadler-Rodriguez Gallery in New York City where Phillips had a showing of her work March 7-22, 1975, "Mary Walker Phillips: Recent Fiber Works."⁷⁸⁹ Figures 2 and 94. This gallery, jointly owned by Warren Hadler and Nicholas Rodriguez, was known as "The American Craftsman," and was one of the first galleries in New York to specialize in textiles; Phillips reportedly had a long

professional relationship with the gallery.⁷⁹⁰ Miss Bowman recalled that at the time she had been asked to acquire an example of contemporary knitting. The piece is relatively small; according to the information available from the museum's object file, it measures 26 inches x 31 inches. To make the work, Phillips used ikat-dyed linen ornamented with mahogany beads. Phillips's use of the ikat-dyed linen in a palette of browns, oranges and creams, which look contemporary again today, complemented the dark wooden beads and added an organic quality to the piece.

Phillips was an avid collector of knitting books, especially antique knitting books, so although the stitch pattern she used for *Fans And Beads* is not from Mary Thomas, there were likely a number of contemporary and antique sources from which she could have obtained the pattern.⁷⁹¹ In a popular stitch compendium published in 1970, one of a set of several volumes compiled by Barbara Walker, the stitch that Phillips used is identified as "Grand Shell or Hoopskirt Pattern."⁷⁹² Most knitters today recognize Barbara Walker and Mary Walker Phillips, along with Elizabeth Zimmerman, as the three great figures in contemporary hand knitting. Figure 95. Walker is famous for her technical knowledge and for the stitch patterns she collected from knitters all over the United States and published a multi-volume set. These stitch compendia are comprehensive and highly valued resources for knitters today and contain hundreds of different knitting stitches, some of which are original to Walker. Elizabeth Zimmerman was also a technical virtuoso, but of garments knitted in the traditional way, and of novel methods for simplifying the process of knitting and designing garments and accessories. She designed many original patterns, and starting in 1958, published an irreverent and personable newsletter for knitters, entitled "The Opinionated Knitter," that provided

intelligent and easily modifiable basic patterns with commonsense advice. Along with a knit shop to supply materials to customers, Zimmerman started the Schoolhouse Press, which still publishes high quality knitting books today.⁷⁹³

Phillips constructed *Fans And Beads* with five horizontal and nine vertical repeats of the pattern stitch, separated by interstices of garter stitch that span five stitches. The pattern requires twelve rows of knitting to complete, and it appears that Phillips did not modify the pattern significantly from the way it was expressed in Walker's book, except that there are five stitches between each repeat of the fan motif in Phillips's hanging, and three stitches between each repeat of the fan motif in Walker's pattern. In other words, where Walker's pattern is a multiple of 19 stitches plus 2, in Phillips's slight alteration, the repeat is a multiple 19 stitches plus 4. These kinds of small variations occur in different printed versions of the same pattern and are often made by the knitter according to need or preference. Like the shell stitch, which formed the basis of Phillips's improvisations in *Shells*, 1967, the fan pattern also increased the number of stitches in each repeat over several rows, and then removed the extra stitches in one cluster on the last row. In the first repeat of the fan pattern in the hanging, Phillips added a bead only to the clustering stitch in Row 11. In succeeding repeats, in addition to the bead added on Row 11, Phillips also added beads on Rows 7 and 10 as follows: in Row 7, she set one bead on the decrease stitch inside the double yarn over framing either side of the fan motif, and in Row 10, where there are two double yarn over stitches framing either side of the fan motif, she set one bead on the decrease stitch inside each of the double yarn over stitches.

From examining the piece, it is possible to determine that Phillips added the beads during the knitting process. If the beads were pre-strung and moved into place as needed, only one strand of yarn would pass through the center of each bead; the bead would sit only on one leg of the anchoring stitch. The possibility that the bead would shift out of place over time increased with this method, because knitting is done with a continuous thread. In *Fans And Beads*, however, each bead sits securely on the surface of the fabric because both legs of the anchoring stitch pass through the center of the bead. Phillips described her process of setting the beads as follows: she removed the stitch from the knitting needle, either before or after knitting it, but consistently within the piece, and passed a length of thread through the center of the stitch. After doubling the thread, she passed the two ends of the thread through the bead to pull the stitch through the center of bead. Once the bead was securely positioned on the stitch, she replaced the stitch on the knitting needle and removed the thread.⁷⁹⁴ The process is somewhat laborious, but can be done more quickly with practice.

Phillips worked in all of her pieces to keep the eye moving using a variety of methods, including composition, color, pattern, graded transparencies, surface texture and dimensionality, and special effects, which could include beads or other embedded objects. As in many of her later pieces, Phillips pared down what she used in *Fans And Beads* to the bare minimum. Here, it is the random dyed effects of the linen that keep the eye moving. Although the beads appear to dance lightly on the surface of the work, this is an optical illusion enhanced by the shifting colors in the yarn; the placement of beads is secure and varies only on the first repeat while the antique stitch pattern never varies at all. Phillips made several versions of this hanging.

The most important aspect of *Fans And Beads* is that Phillips had, by the 1970s, turned to the stitch itself as sufficiently expressive in its own right; she no longer mixed a large numbers of different stitches, or made unending variations of the same stitch, in her works. In *Fans And Beads*, Phillips emphasized simplicity over the technical virtuosity of *The Kings* and *Shells*. Still later, Phillips continued to make more repeatable patterns, as the titles of the next two works indicate: Figure 96, *Oakleaves and Acorns #3*, 1983, and Figure 97, *Clematis #2*, 1986. Many of these works featured motifs from nature, and recall the flat, stylized patterns in the textiles and wallpapers of William Morris. Pared down, elegant, even occasionally a bit quaint, they recall in their reliance upon precise and repeatable articulations of solids and voids, the architectural ornaments at Cranbrook, including the Cranbrook Cupola, the entrance gates, and the many beautifully constructed windows of the Cranbrook campus buildings. In arriving at this point in her work, Phillips was still emphasizing the beauty and serenity of the architecture of each stitch, and the way that craftsmanship and materials could bring them to light for modern viewers, but she was also developing a more deliberate history of the art and craft of knitting in her works. In an interview in 1987 she stated that although friends had urged her to “break out into more daring designs or invent new stitches . . . she found her challenge in transforming the traditional.”⁷⁹⁵

CONCLUSION

From the 1940s through the 1980s, Phillips let her own personal search for form guide her from industrial design into studio art and craft, from weaving into knitting and macramé, and finally into research, scholarship, and teaching, in which she took great pleasure. In her own work and workshops, she was dedicated to the advancement of knitting not only for its technical beauty and intricacy but also for its possibilities as an artistic medium that even today has barely been explored. In her creative process and in her workshops and writing, she remained true to the formative influences of her Cranbrook experience, which emphasized in-depth knowledge of one's craft coupled with innovation, experimentation and a commitment to develop art forms that reflected contemporary life rather than those which copied historic predecessors. Phillips and her extraordinary knitted wall hangings are part of the complex fabric we have come to call "fiber art," and they are especially integral to the history of non-woven, single element techniques, which are again so popular among fiber artists today. In the Conclusion, we will look at ways in which Phillips and her work can be considered as part of the continuum of fiber art and craft that extends from mid-century and into the twenty-first century.

Phillips worked primarily as an artist making one of kind works of art for nearly three decades, but she never lost her respect for or interest in knitting's potential for use in interior design or in other creative ways as yet untried -- she was clear and free in her belief that anything could be done in knitting. Like many creative people, Phillips took her work fearlessly into uncharted territory. Her primary innovation in knitting was to remove it from the associations of the body, which was a radical concept for knitting in

her day and even today. In the 1970s, as fiber artist and textile entrepreneur Jack Lenor Larsen and New York's Museum of Modern Art's Assistant Curator of Design Mildred Constantine showed in *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric*, fiber art was already moving beyond the wall hanging and into new terrain. Phillips did experiment with a few free-form pieces by allowing the structure of the stitches to dictate the form, as in Figures 98-99. She inverted these more free-form pieces and other works without regard to the direction in which they were constructed if they looked better that way, but she never moved from wall hangings into the free-standing sculptural, figural or environmental forms that became popular in the 1970s and 1980s. And as garments continued to dominate the scene in hand knitting, Phillips expressed some concern about her legacy to Melanie Falick, author of *Knitting in America*, a sumptuous coffee-table book published in 1996 that showcased the work of a number of artists, including Phillips. She stated then: "They don't know what to do with me because I don't do anything that fits."⁷⁹⁶ Yet, in freeing knitting from the strictures of utility to make contemporary art forms, and in using materials that had never before been used for knitting, Phillips opened new possibilities for the medium and for artists today, whether they express themselves through making garments or making something else.

Phillips also grew to appreciate knitting as "an art worthy of study," and she shared her enthusiasm for its extensive history in diverse world cultures in her books and workshops.⁷⁹⁷ In the field of recreational knitting, there have been literally thousands of publications since Phillips wrote *Creative Knitting*, but relatively few of these advocate Phillips's wholly experimental approach; after so many years, it is still a book that speaks to the adventurers and innovators in the medium for it offers only a starting point for

independent work, not a compendium of instructions to follow to obtain a predetermined result. Despite that fact that most knitting books do offer patterns today, a few authors shine in their contributions to a small but growing body of knitting books that, like *Creative Knitting*, expand the horizons for knitting into the unexpected and non-traditional. These include recent books by Debbie New and Cat Bordhi, who have actively overturned many of the conventions of knit fabric construction. As a result of their publications and workshops, which echo Phillips's work in their pioneering spirit, recreational knitters are better informed about the potential for innovation in their craft and are increasingly sophisticated creators and consumers of knitting. Phillips also contributed to an appreciation for the history of knitting, which in her time was only marginally recorded. Thanks to Phillips and other pioneers like her, knitters now have an astounding library of books about the history of knitting available to them.

Today the public is also looking at mid-century art and craft with renewed interest. Although they may be unaware of these similarities, there are echoes of Phillips's oeuvre in the works of many current artists and designers; they provide a framework for reassessing and exhibiting Phillips's works. For example, Piper Shepard, M.F.A. Cranbrook, 1988 has widely exhibited a series of elaborately and precisely hand-cut panels of lace fabric that provide a most striking comparison to Phillips's knitted wall hangings. Figure 100. Comparing the works of these two artists, it becomes clear that the connection between fiber and architecture at Cranbrook remains strong.

Shepard, who is currently on the faculty of the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, Maryland, exhibited a work entitled "Lace Meander," 2006, in "Radical Lace and Subversive Knitting" at New York's Museum of Art and Design in 2007. In

the catalogue for that exhibition, Shepard described her work for Jennifer Scanlan as having been influenced by Anni Albers's essay "The Pliable Plane: Textiles in Architecture" originally published in 1957, and expressing views about fiber and architecture that were in general circulation during the years Phillips was first working in knitting.⁷⁹⁸ Echoing Albers, Scanlan wrote: "Although the two seem inherently different – architecture as solid, rigid, fixed; fiber as pliable, transportable – they often serve the same function of protecting, sheltering, serving as a point of separation between the outside world and the body. [Piper Shepard's] work explores this dichotomy by using fabric to create architectural installations that question our notions of strength, solidity and integrity."⁷⁹⁹ Scanlan further described Shepard's "Lace Meander," 2006, in its marriage of diaphanous hand-cut lace panels suspended from industrially scaled metal spools, as simultaneously referencing both the labor and intricacy of hand-made textiles and the history of textiles as products of an industrial process.⁸⁰⁰ In cutting her large panels of lace by hand, Shepard acknowledges both the intricacy of hand-made lace as well as the time and labor involved in making it.⁸⁰¹ However, true to Cranbrook's own legacy of valuing the artistic process, whether achieved by hand or machine, Shepard joins hand labor and machine production in every work by hand-cutting lengths of commercially produced fabric.

Through different materials and processes, both Phillips and Shepard explore the relationships between fabric and structure, lace and architecture, transparency and monumentality, albeit for different reasons and using different materials and methods. But both Phillips and Shepard expressed their desire to push their media to its extremes and to make historic lace patterns relevant to contemporary viewers.⁸⁰² Shepard cites her

interest in Jali screens, made from intricately pierced sandstone or wood, as a source of inspiration for her work; like the elaborately mullioned windows at Cranbrook, Jali screens filter light from outdoors and refract it into dazzling shadow patterns that transform interior space. Shepard's openwork panels, which show to best advantage when light passes through them, like Phillips's knitted casements and wall hangings, also recall the many ornamental windows at Cranbrook.

Debbie New is an artist, teacher and author in the medium of knitting. Her many experiments in knitting show the more radical possibilities of the medium when processed through a mind that works to integrate mathematics, science, knitting and the human experience. Debbie New's most interesting work in relation to Phillips's oeuvre is her *Lace Coracle*, 1999. Debbie New adopts the general form and method of construction used to make traditional Shetland shawls, but like Phillips, she alters the expected symmetry of the lace pattern into an original composition of tremendous invention, movement and originality. In its swirling composition, the structure and pattern of the lace foreshadows New's ultimate repurposing of the shawl. After immersing it in fiberglass resin, New shaped it into a small sea-going craft, whose action on the water will be as unpredictable as its lace meander. New shows knitting, too, can be a "transportation cloth," a specialty of Phillips's esteemed weaving instructor at Cranbrook, Marianne Strengell. Figure 101.

In the contemporary design arena, Phillips would have delighted in the experimental and novel use of materials and techniques conveyed in the playful brilliance of contemporary designer Niels van Eijk's bobbin lace lamps and chandeliers made of fiber optic cable. His *Bobbin Lace Lamp*, 2002, was exhibited in "Radical Lace and

Subversive Knitting,” at New York’s Museum of Art and Design in 2007. Figure 102.

Van Eijk, who is part of the well-known contemporary Dutch design collaborative

“Droog Design” studied mechanical engineering (Polytechnic School, Helmond, the

Netherlands) and handicrafts (TeHaTex, Nijmegen, the Netherlands) before he enrolled

in an industrial design program at Design Academy, Eindhoven, the Netherlands where

he apprenticed with Gijs Bakker, one of the founders of Droog Design.⁸⁰³ Paul

Greenhalgh, a noted curator and decorative arts scholar, writes that “[c]entral to the

Droog philosophy is a reductive design process, celebrating the ordinariness of materials and functions, and the decorative possibilities of the simplest shapes and materials.”⁸⁰⁴

Here van Eijk has taken a thoroughly modern material, fiber optic cable, and repurposed

it, not in its light-giving function, but in its form, using a traditional lace-making

technique that is almost extinct. The result celebrates the new material’s innate qualities

yet humanizes and humor-izes their expression in the form of a Victorian-era fringed

lampshade. Van Eijk’s use of bobbin lace, like Phillips’s use of knitting, revitalizes an

old art form by giving it a new and contemporary use. Phillips’s nubby, sweater-like

upholstery slipped over Eve Zeisel’s thoroughly modern tubular metal chair frame, or her

re-conceptualization of the iconic, modern, white cylindrical lampshade as a hand-knit

form in natural linen, Figures 70 and 81, are similar in spirit to van Eijk’s work. The

Knotted Chair, 1996, for Capellini, Italy, and *Crochet Chair*, 2006 for Droog Design,

both by Marcel Wanders using macramé and crochet, are current design offerings that

further explore the connections between old techniques and new forms and materials.⁸⁰⁵

And over the past decade, recreational knitting interest has spilled from garments into

home décor and other items; publishers for the recreational knitting market like

Interweave Press have begun to respond to this demand. Phillips's ideas of a contemporary lighting fixtures structured from fiber and a modern knitted slip-on upholstery are back in style along with their mid-century modern aesthetic; lacy lamps of linen by Kristi Schueler and slip-on chair cover by Veronik Avery were recently published as Do-It-Yourself projects in *Interweave Knits*, a well-known magazine for knitters. Figures 103-104.

Finally, the use of unconventional materials in knitting and needlework today is not directly inspired by Phillips because we have largely forgotten her early efforts to break with traditional fibers, but Phillips's work can be newly appreciated by an ever-growing audience of adventurous knitters, both artists and hobbyists alike, now hungry for a myriad of "new" yarns and materials for knitting and spinning. Spearheading the recent era of exploration into new fibers for knitting is Takako Ueki, a talented weaver and fiber artist who began to import unusual fibers produced in Japan in about 1999 to sell at her weaving studio, Habu Textiles, in New York City.⁸⁰⁶ Realizing that hand knitters provided another potential market for these materials, Ueki carefully selected highly unusual plant, animal and synthetic fibers, both newly manufactured and recycled, and made by both hand and machine. Her offerings, which include all the usual fine natural fibers like mohair, silk and wool, also feature stainless steel, silk-wrapped paper, kenaf, copper wire, recycled fish nets and bamboo, to name just a few of her more than 450 varieties.⁸⁰⁷ Ueki began to exhibit her fibers at the many conventions nationwide that now cater to recreational knitters and professional designers.⁸⁰⁸ In the early years of the twenty-first century, knitters, who were likely unaware that such materials had ever been previously used in knitting, were enchanted with the possibilities presented by these

fibers, which radically altered the textures and behaviors of conventional knitted fabrics and allowed knitters to experience a new sense surprise and delight at the unexpectedly crisp, crunchy, and shape-retaining properties they were able to produce, and at the varied special and subtle effects of blending materials with vastly different properties, as Phillips so frequently did. These fibers, now returned to the province of knitting by a weaver, offer today's knitters the same sense of discovery and excitement that Phillips must have felt when she first converted her weaving yarns to knitting in the 1960s. Further, Ueki's website touts the tactile and aesthetic pleasures of producing beautiful fabrics by hand in a post-industrial society, and her belief, so like Mary Walker Phillips's, that fabrics created by hand of durable and interesting materials will have a long life: "[W]e . . . stubbornly believe all the care our actual hands give to each and every process creates something more than just a good look. It may be so subtle but you know when you wear and touch. You know when the fabric ages with you and you look at it twenty years from now."⁸⁰⁹ Further, in step with Cranbrook's philosophy, and that of Phillips, Habu Textiles encourages complete artistic freedom for its customers in the use of their fibers: "[W]hat you will do with them? Up to you . . ."⁸¹⁰

Today Phillips's legacy of imagination and experimentation resonates in the works of these artists and designers and in a vital community of hobbyists around the globe. In her M.F.A. Thesis, "Experimental Fabrics," in 1963, Phillips wrote: "This is a great age for knitting." As the passion for this traditional craft continues to reach new audiences through art exhibitions, books, magazines, small and innovative on-line publications and robust social networking sites like "Ravelry.com," which links the communal creativity of more than 700,000 knitters and crocheters worldwide, Phillips's

optimistic pronouncement of nearly half a century ago still rings true today. It is a “brave new world,” but Mary Walker Phillips would doubtless be gratified to know that “creative knitting” is everywhere.

NOTES

¹ See, e.g., “Radical Lace and Subversive Knitting,” January 25 – June 17, 2007, Museum of Arts & Design, New York, NY; “Unknitting: Challenging Textile Traditions,” July 17 – September 13, 2009, The Stanlee and Gerald Rubin Center for the Visual Arts, El Paso, TX; and “Renwick Craft Invitational 2009,” July 7, 2009 – January 3, 2010, Smithsonian American Art Museum Renwick Gallery, Washington, D.C. The latter two shows will include knitted superhero costumes by Cranbrook Academy of Art’s current Artist-in-Residence and Head of Fiber, Mark Newport.

² Press Release: American Craft Council Public Information, “10 Cited in 1978 for Nation’s Highest Award in Craft,” undated. Mary Walker Phillips Excerpts & Miscellanea File (hereinafter “Phillips E&M File”), Cranbrook Archives. Phillips exhibited her knitting extensively from the 1960s through the 1980s. Her works are in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Museum of Arts & Design (formerly the Museum of Contemporary Crafts) in New York, the Smithsonian Institution’s Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum and National Museum of American History, and many other museums. Phillips’s book *Creative Knitting: A New Art Form* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1971) may soon be revised and updated. A retrospective of her work, “Fine Art in Stitches: Creative Knitting, Macramé, Weaving,” for which Phillips’s personal friend Patricia Abrahamian, a fellow lace knitter, acted as curator, was exhibited at the Fresno Art Museum, Fresno, CA, from November 15, 2005 – January 8, 2006. See Patricia Abrahamian, Guest Curator, *Fine Art in Stitches: Creative Knitting, Macramé, Weaving*, (Fresno, CA: Fresno Art Museum, 2005), the catalogue published in conjunction with the exhibition. Although other artists of the period also experimented with knitting, Phillips, because she worked almost exclusively in knitting and macramé, and because she exhibited widely and wrote several best-selling books, achieved the widest recognition in and for the medium. As appropriate within the thesis, the works of these other artists will be considered in relationship to Phillips’s work.

³ Although various sources debate the construction of the possessive form of proper names ending in “s,” the possessive form of Phillips, “Phillips’s,” is used throughout the thesis in accordance with Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*, 7th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), Rule 20.2, Possessives, 286-87. This resource is recommended by the Smithsonian Associates and Corcoran College of Art + Design Masters Program in the History of the Decorative Arts for use in formatting the Masters thesis.

⁴ See generally, Eliel Saarinen, *Search for Form: A Fundamental Approach to Art* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp., 1948), reprinted under new title, *The Search for Form in Art and Architecture* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1985). All citations herein are to the Dover edition.

⁵ Figure 1: Eliel Saarinen, Cranbrook School Cupola, ca. 1929-30, detail of dome. Photograph by Jennifer Lindsay, 2008. The design of the cupola has obvious precedents in the architecture of the Vienna Secession. However, according to J. David Farmer in “Metalwork and Bookbinding,” Chapter 6, in Robert Judson Clark, David G. De Long, Martin Eidelberg, J. David Farmer, John Gerard, Neil Harris, Joan Marter, R. Craig Miller, Mary Riordan, Roy Slade, Davira S. Taragin, and Christa C. Mayer Thurman, *Design In America: The Cranbrook Vision 1925-1950* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. in association with The Detroit Institute of Arts and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), 156-57, the dome’s motif in iron “recall[ing] an abstracted bird in flight” was entirely original to Saarinen and appeared frequently in his drawings.

Figure 2: Mary Walker Phillips, *Fans And Beads*, 1974. Wall hanging. Tie-dyed (ikat dyed) linen with mahogany beads, 26” length x 31” width. Object #T-17765, Smithsonian National Museum of American History, Washington, D.C. Photograph by Jennifer Lindsay, 2008.

Phillips’s work clearly shows its affinity with architecture, and her writing, as expressed in the quotation from the Introduction to her book, *Creative Knitting*, at 12, directly acknowledged architecture as a source of inspiration. Patricia Abrahamian stated in *Fine Art in Stitches: Creative Knitting, Macramé, Weaving*, the brochure she authored to accompany the Fresno Art Museum’s retrospective of Phillips’s work in 2005-2006, that Phillips was interested in and inspired by architecture: “She had a passion for many subjects, especially architecture, which is reflected in the structure and composition of many of her works.” *Ibid.*, 2.

⁶ See generally, Conrad Brown, et al., eds., “Craftsman’s Conference at Asilomar,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XVII, No. 4 (July-August 1957): 17-32; Rose Slivka, ed., “U.S. Crafts in this Industrial Society,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 2 (March-April 1959): 8-21; Lee Nordness, *Objects: USA* (New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1970), 4-22; Gregory Voltolato, *American Design in the Twentieth Century* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1998), 169-72.

⁷ Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” Chapter 2, 24-27, and Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” 35-42, *Design in America*.

⁸ Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” 21-24, 26-27, and Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” Chapter 3, 41-42, *Design in America*.

⁹ Preface, 9; Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” 24-27, and Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” 42, 45, *Design in America*.

¹⁰ Several authors who contributed to *Design in America* have carefully documented the confluence of ideas from Arts and Crafts to Modernism that informed the development of the Cranbrook Academy of Art through its founder, George G. Booth and

principal architect, Eliel Saarinen. Both men had a history of involvement in the Arts and Crafts movement. Booth was the former owner of a firm that manufactured decorative ironwork before he married into the Scripps newspaper business. He was a staunch supporter of several Arts and Crafts societies and the Detroit Institute of Arts, as well as an avid collector, commissioner and connoisseur of Arts and Crafts objects from notable artists, with which he furnished his home, Cranbrook House, and Christ Church Cranbrook. Booth was among many Americans who looked to William Morris's model of improving society and ensuring the future through education in the arts.

Saarinen was also familiar with the work of William Morris, and as an architect in Finland during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, he had been instrumental in developing "Finnish Romanticism," a style based upon a regional interpretation of the Arts and Crafts movement and the related movements of Art Nouveau and Jugendstil that were sweeping Europe at that time. But Saarinen was also well acquainted with the emergence of the Modern movement in art and architecture, and it was his synthesis of Arts and Crafts and Modernism that formed the basis of the Cranbrook curriculum. See generally, Harris, "North by Midwest," 15-19; Clark, "Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form," 21-26, and Taragin, "The History of the Cranbrook Community," Chapter 3, 35-42; *Design in America*.

¹¹ Virginia Gardner Troy, *The Modernist Textile: Europe and America 1890-1914* (United Kingdom and Burlington, VT: Lund Humphries, 2006), 81, 132-139.

¹² Jack Lenor Larsen, "Woven Forms," *American Fabrics*, No. 61 (Summer 1963): 93-95. Rose Slivka, "The New Tapestry," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIII, No. 2 (March – April 1963): 10-19, 48. See generally, Elissa Auther, "Fiber Art and the Hierarchy of Art and Craft, 1960-1980," *The Journal of Modern Craft*, Vol. 1, Issue 1 (March 2008): 13-34.

¹³ Mildred Constantine and Jack Lenor Larsen, *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric*, (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1972), 9.

¹⁴ Jack Lenor Larsen, telephone interview by Jennifer Lindsay, June 23, 2009; Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009. See also, Alice Adams, "Mary Walker Phillips," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXV, No. 1 (January-February 1965): 24-27.

¹⁵ Some recent examples of writing about Phillips can be found in publications primarily aimed at recreational knitters, including Melanie D. Falick, *Knitting in America: Patterns, Profiles, & Stories of America's Leading Artisans* (New York: Artisan, 1996) which contains Falick's interview of Phillips at her home in Fresno, California, 126-127. More recently, acknowledgments of Phillips and her leading role as a fine artist in the knitted medium appear in Susan M. Strawn, *Knitting America: A Glorious Heritage from Warm Socks to High Art* (St. Paul, MN: Voyageur Press, 2007),

180, 187, 189 and 189, and in Karen Searle, *Knitting Art: 150 Innovative Works from 18 Contemporary Artists* (St. Paul, MN: Voyageur Press, 2007), 10, 81, 151.

¹⁶ See generally, Elissa Auther, “Fiber Art and the Hierarchy of Art and Craft, 1960-1980,” *The Journal of Modern Craft*, Vol. 1, Issue 1 (March 2008): 13-34.

¹⁷ Quoting from a brochure entitled “Focus on Fiber Art: Selections from the Growing 20th-Century Collection,” author unknown, published by the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL on the occasion of the exhibition of the same name, held in the Elizabeth F. Cheney and Agnes Allerton Textile Galleries, October 6, 1993-February 27, 1994.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Jocelyn Y. Stewart, “Mary Walker Phillips, 83; artistic knitter,” *Los Angeles Times*, November 25, 2007, B11, quoting Patricia Abrahamian: “She was the first to incorporate unconventional and ordinary items – bells, rocks, seeds, mica – into knitted works of art. . . .” Melanie D. Falick, “The Experimental Spirit of Mary Walker Phillips,” *Knitting in America: Patterns, Profiles, & Stories of America’s Leading Artisans* (New York: Artisan, 1996), 126-27.

Habu Textiles, a shop in New York City founded in 1999 by weaver Takako Ueki, rediscovered for knitters materials that Phillips and her contemporaries used, like stainless steel, silk-wrapped paper, abaca fiber and other unusual fibers. Her efforts to bring these unusual fibers to knitters spurred a lot of innovation in knitting through stimulating a new awareness of materials. See e.g., Laura Spence Ash, “Knitting out of the Pantry,” *Interweave Knits*, Summer 2004, 34-36. See generally, David Revere McFadden et al., *Radical Lace and Subversive Knitting* (New York: Museum of Arts & Design, 2007), published in conjunction with the exhibition, January 25 – June 17, 2007. A look at a range of knitting magazines and books today, as well as the work of artists in knitting, including Katherine Cobey and Debbie New, who were not featured in the “Radical Lace” show identified above, will show a variety of projects using all types of materials, from beads to wire to paper to industrial materials and recyclables.

²⁰ Catherine M. Daly, Guest Curator, “The Magic Knitting Needles of Mary Walker Phillips,” (St. Paul, MN: University of Minnesota Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel, 1987). Published in conjunction with the exhibition “The Magic Knitting Needles of Mary Walker Phillips,” held at the University of Minnesota’s Goldstein Gallery, St. Paul, MN, March 15 – May 10, 1987.

²¹ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

²² Joy Hakanson, “Cranbrook,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 3 (May-June 1959): 18-19, 18. While noting that Eliel Saarinen’s designs for the ornamental ironwork were hand forged by blacksmith John C. Burnett, Hakanson was quick to balance this with Saarinen’s equilibrium regarding the machine-made object: “Eliel Saarinen really

had no handcraft fixation. He often said, ‘If the form is there, it makes no difference whether we use the hand of man or the machine.’”

²³ Lizbeth Upitis, “Mary Walker Phillips: A Creative Knitter’s Influence,” April 21, 1987 (a lecture presented by the Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel in conjunction with the exhibition “The Magic Knitting Needles of Mary Walker Phillips,” Goldstein Gallery, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN, March 15 – May 10, 1987). Guest curator, Catherine M. Daly. I am grateful to Patricia Abrahamian for providing me with a copy of this lecture.

²⁴ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 9, 12, 96-97.

²⁵ CAA Announcement, 1933, 5. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. The course catalogues for the Academy of Art were called the “CAA Announcement.”

²⁶ Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” 24-25 and Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” 36-37, *Design in America*. The American Academy was formed in 1913 when the American School of Architecture, established in 1894 by notable architects and artists Charles Follen McKim, Daniel Burnham, John La Farge, Francis Millet, Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Chester French, merged with the American School of Classical Studies, founded in 1895 by the Archeological Institute of America. See American Academy in Rome website, “Overview of the Academy,” <http://www.aarome.org/overview.htm> (accessed March 30, 2009). The architectural firm of McKim, Mead and White designed the new Academy building, which opened in 1914. American Academy in Rome website, “Buildings,” <http://www.aarome.org/overview.htm> (accessed March 30, 2009).

²⁷ Eliel Saarinen, “Analysis of Past and Future Educational Policies of the Cranbrook Academy of Art,” January 12, 1942. George G. Booth Papers (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁸ Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” 24-25, Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” 37-38, *Design in America*.

²⁹ American Academy in Rome 1915 brochure, quoted in Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” *Design in America*, 25.

³⁰ The lower schools included Brookside Elementary School, and the preparatory schools, which were Cranbrook School for Boys and Kingswood School for Girls. Clark, “Cranbrook and the History of Twentieth-Century Form,” 26; Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” 37-39, 41-42, *Design in America*. See also Kathryn Bishop Eckert, *The Campus Guide: Cranbrook* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001), 96-99.

³¹ See generally, Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth Century Form,” 26, 29; Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” 38; and Harris, “North By Midwest,” 15-19, *Design in America*. See also *Craft in America*, Chapter 7, “The Cranbrook Vision,” 163-182, and Eckert, *The Campus Guide: Cranbrook*, 97-103.

³² George G. Booth to Eliel Saarinen, August 12, 1930. George G. Booth Papers (1981-01). Cranbrook Archives. The term “Master Artist” here is Booth’s. See also Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” *Design in America*, 40-41.

³³ American Academy in Rome website, “Overview of the Academy,” <http://www.aarome.org/overview.htm> (accessed March 30, 2009). In “The Cranbrook Vision,” a chapter in *Craft in America*, presumably written at least in part by former Director of the Cranbrook Archives, Mark Coir, the writer notes, at 175 (but without citations to archival sources), that it was Booth who initially pushed the curriculum of the school in an industrial design direction in about 1930. It appears equally clear that Saarinen, with his knowledge of contemporary movements in modern art and craft, developed and promoted the educational program for the Academy, articulated its focus, and recruited its noted faculty. Ibid. See also, Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth Century Form,” 28-33, and Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” 41-45, *Design in America*.

³⁴ Taragin references an unpublished manuscript dated 1925 in the collection of the Suomen Rakennustaiteen Museo, The Museum of Finnish Architecture, in Helsinki, Finland in support of her assertion. See Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” *Design in America*, 42 and n. 32.

³⁵ Eliel Saarinen, “My Point of View of Our Contemporary Architecture,” American Institute of Architects Conference, April 1931, San Antonio, Texas, (hereinafter “AIA Address, April 1931”), printed in H. Booth, *The Saarinen Door*, 59. It is important to note that by Saarinen’s own admission, his interest in pedagogy evolved after his involvement in teaching, first at the University of Michigan in the Department of Architecture, where he taught George Booth’s son Henry Booth, and later at Cranbrook. See also, Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” *Design in America*, 41-42.

³⁶ Eliel Saarinen, Address, “My Point of View of Our Contemporary Architecture,” American Institute of Architects’ Convention, San Antonio, TX, April 1931, in Henry S. Booth, *The Saarinen Door: Eliel Saarinen Architect and Designer at Cranbrook* (Bloomfield Hills, MI: Cranbrook Press, 1963), 59.

³⁷ See generally, Harris, “North By Midwest,” 15-19, and Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” 41-42, 47, *Design in America*. See also Eliel Saarinen, *Search for Form: A Fundamental Approach to Art* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp., 1948), reprinted under new title, *The Search for Form in Art and Architecture*

(New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1985), 45-48. All page citations are to the Dover edition.

³⁸ Albert Christ-Janer's authorized biography of Saarinen mentions H.P. Berlage, Louis Sullivan, Henri van de Velde, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Otto Wagner. Albert Christ-Janer, *Eliel Saarinen: Finnish-American Architect and Educator* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948, rev. ed. 1979), 7. According to Christ-Janer, Saarinen acknowledged his interest in Josef Olbrich and Peter Behrens, but demurred on direct influences. *Ibid.*, at 9, 18-19. However, R. Craig Miller, "Interior Design and Furniture," Chapter 5, *Design in America*, at 112-13, noted that Saarinen also acknowledged the direct influence of Frank Lloyd Wright.

³⁹ Even a cursory comparison of Saarinen's writings in *The Search for Form* and in the Cranbrook course catalogues generally with those of Walter Gropius in "The Theory and Organization of the Bauhaus," or "Idee und Aufbau des Staatlichen Bauhauses Weimar," published in 1923, reveals many striking similarities. See Herbert Bayer, Walter Gropius, Ise Gropius, *Bauhaus 1919-1928* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1938), 22-31. More recently, in the scholarly catalogue that accompanied the traveling exhibition *Craft in America: Celebrating Two Centuries of Artists and Objects*, edited by Jo Lauria and Steve Fenton, and published in 2007, the author or authors of the chapter on Cranbrook do acknowledge that Cranbrook had "much in common with the Staatliche Bauhaus," but insisted as did many of the authors of *Design in America* that the adoption and implementation of these ideas at Cranbrook was done differently. Lauria and Fenton, *Craft in America: Celebrating Two Centuries of Artists and Objects*, Chapter 7, "The Cranbrook Vision" at 176. It would be interesting to closely compare Saarinen's writings to those of John Ruskin or William Morris, as precedents to both Cranbrook and the Bauhaus, as well as to those of another contemporary of Saarinen and Gropius, Le Corbusier, in, e.g., *Vers une Architecture*, published in 1923.

⁴⁰ Joy Hakanson, "Cranbrook," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 3 (May-June 1959): 18-19. Hakanson, a Michigan-based newspaper reporter, discussed the Arts and Crafts heritage of Cranbrook as an extension of both Booth's and Saarinen's interests in fine craftsmanship, and in the community of artists who, with William Morris and Philip Webb, established Red House. Despite Hakanson's recognition of Cranbrook as "pace-setting" and influential, it is interesting that she made no comparison between Cranbrook or Saarinen and more contemporary movements in art and architecture that also extolled machine production, such as the Bauhaus School, which by 1959 would have been reasonably well-known in America. For a thoughtful discussion of these influences, see Clark, "Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form," *Design in America*, 29-29.

⁴¹ Neil Harris in Chapter 1, "North by Midwest," 15-19, *Design in America*, notes the influence of all of these movements on Saarinen. Christa C. Mayer Thurman, formerly Curator of Textiles at the The Art Institute of Chicago and a noted scholar also states the importance of the Saarinen's connections to modern European movements in

“Textiles,” *Design in America* at 176 and n. 31, citing as her source Saarinen’s “Biographical Data,” 61-63, in the little gem of a book, *The Saarinen Door: Eliel Saarinen Architect and Designer at Cranbrook* by Henry S. Booth, published in 1963 in Bloomfield Hills, MI by Cranbrook Academy of Art and printed by the Cranbrook Press. This summary of Saarinen’s life events shows he met Josef Olbrich and Peter Behrens in 1907, that he was invited to attend international exhibitions in Vienna and Berlin in 1907-1908, that he met Josef Hoffman in Vienna in 1911, that he was made a “corresponding member” of the Deutsche Werkbund in 1913, and exhibited at the Werkbund’s Cologne exhibition in 1914. Ibid. He continued to cultivate personal and professional relationships with prominent European architects, artists, composers and other notables and to win awards and honorary degrees from international exhibitions and European universities and associations throughout his life. Ibid.

In 1983, the Detroit Institute of Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art collaborated on a twenty-five year retrospective of Cranbrook, “Design in America: The Cranbrook Vision: 1925-1950.” The scholarly publication that accompanied the exhibition, edited by the curator of the exhibition, Robert Judson Clark, is the most in-depth analysis of the Cranbrook legacy that has yet been done, but it does not belabor the relationship between Cranbrook and the Bauhaus, either actual or ideological. R. Craig Miller, curator of the exhibition, stated quite clearly in an interview: “Cranbrook came before Bauhaus . . . It’s a myth that there was no modern design in America until the Bauhaus designers immigrated to the United States about the time of World War II. Cranbrook in the arts and crafts tradition, stands for the unity of design from object to architecture.” Sarah Booth Conroy, “Pioneering Visions,” *The Washington Post*, April 19, 1984. Bauhaus artists actually began to come to the United States in the 1930s, including Josef and Anni Albers, but like the Saarinens, they were part of a larger movement that could be described as International Modernism – a confluence of similar ideas that were widely dispersed in Europe in the early decades of the twentieth century.

⁴² Regarding the publication of Saarinen’s writings, see H.S. Latham of The MacMillan Company to Dr. Frederick Keppel, The Carnegie Institute, April 6, 1934, with attached undated “reader’s report” by Charles S. White, Architect. Saarinen Family Papers (1990-08), Cranbrook Archives. Saarinen, who was teaching architecture as early as 1923 at the University of Michigan, later characterized the manuscript as the outgrowth of an ongoing dialogue with his students. Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” *Design in America*, 38.

⁴³ See De Long, “Eliel Saarinen and the Cranbrook Tradition in Architecture and Urban Design,” 47-52.

⁴⁴ See Helena Dählbeck Lutteman, “Nordic Design: A Multitude of Voices, 39-41; Ulf Hård Af Segerstad, “Unity and Diversity in Scandinavian Design,” 34; and Erik Lassen, “The Early 20th Century: Design in Transition,” 88, 101-02. McFadden, ed., *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880-1980* (New York: Cooper Hewitt Museum, The Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of Design, in association with Harry N.

Abrams, Inc., 1982). See also, Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 176, 180-81, 193.

According to Thurman, "Textiles," at 193, while a student in Helsinki, Strengell studied with Elsa Gullberg, a Swedish textile artist noted for developing contemporary printed textiles that reflected Swedish sensibilities. Antiques and the Arts Online, "Modernity in Sweden 1900-1960," <http://antiquesandthearts.com/CS0-05-07-2002-10-48-53> (accessed January 31, 2010).

⁴⁵ The textiles of Loja Saarinen and later Marianne Strengell were publicly associated with Finnish and Scandinavian textile traditions. Loja Saarinen's textiles were designed to reflect and preserve Finnish and Scandinavian traditional textiles, and to adapt them to modern environments. Her textiles speak with an international vocabulary of structure and motif derived from Finland and other Scandinavian folk sources and tempered with the clean geometry of Art Deco, the Vienna Workshops, and the Prairie Style popularized by Frank Lloyd Wright, for whom Studio Loja Saarinen did commission work. Loja Saarinen's distinctive marriage of traditional techniques and motifs with a simplified design aesthetic from these early modern movements can be seen in the textiles she produced for the Cranbrook community's schools and residences. In contrast, Strengell's textiles were associated with a more international "Scandinavian," tradition that eschewed decoration and blended functional properties with subtle or deep colors, traditional weaving techniques, like "ryijy," and a luxurious, natural look. (See Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 182, Colorplate 35, *Carpet for Headmistress's Office, Kingswood School, Cranbrook*, 1931, designed by Loja Saarinen and produced by Studio Loja Saarinen, and Figure 149, *Sample for Festival of the May Queen Hanging*, 1932, designed by Eliel and Loja Saarinen, and produced by Studio Loja Saarinen. Compare to Marianne Strengell's *Rug #10* of chartreuse fiber and cotton, CAM 1955.414, and *Rug, mid-Twentieth Century*, linen, wool and synthetic fibers, 11'1" long with fringe, Gift of Peggy de Salle, CAM -184.83, both in the collection of the Cranbrook Art Museum). See also, Sigrid Wortmann Weltge, *Bauhaus Textiles: Woman Artists and the Weaving Workshop* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 190; and Jarno Peltonen, "The 1930s: A New Function for Design," *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880-1980*, 107-19, 127-28. Ed Rossbach and Glen Kaufman, both students of Strengell, described her aesthetic as "Scandinavian." Ed Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April - May 1984): 8-11, at 8-9. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁴⁶ George G. Booth to Eliel Saarinen, August 12, 1930. George G. Booth Papers (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives. See also, Eliel Saarinen, "Analysis of Past and Future Educational Policies of the Cranbrook Academy of Art," January 12, 1942, 1. George G. Booth Papers (1980-01), Cranbrook Archives. Neil Harris in Chapter 1, "North by Midwest," *Design in America*, 15-19, discusses the compatibility of Booth's and Saarinen's worldviews as based upon many factors, including the cultural, religious and environmental similarities between the Middle West and Northern Europe. A shared ideology rooted in the Arts and Crafts movement made both Saarinen and Booth

sympathetic to the power of the “applied arts” to “protect an authentic cultural inheritance.” Ibid., 15, and Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 173, 176.

Another factor contributing to Cranbrook’s support for the development of an American voice in the arts was the time period in which Cranbrook came of age. As many Europeans fled Europe to restart life in America, the issues of immigration and assimilation were more politicized. When America entered World War II and then the Cold War, the appearance of unqualified commitment to the American cause was essential to the school’s success. The school’s printed materials reflect an awareness of this necessity. See, e.g., CAA Announcement, 1943-44: “[W]e are in a position to enrich living by developing this handicraft [weaving] in a way natural to Americans.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁴⁷ Eckert, *The Campus Guide: Cranbrook*, 101.

⁴⁸ CAA Announcement, 1932. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁴⁹ CAA Announcement, 1932, 5. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁵⁰ CAA Announcement, 1932, 8. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁵¹ CAA Announcement, 1932, 8. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁵² CAA Announcement, 1932, 8. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. According to Taragin in “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” *Design in America*, at 41-42, marketing the products and services of the craft shops would enable them to earn their keep and not to be forever dependent upon the founder as a source of revenue, although Cranbrook never realized this goal in the original manner conceived which was “as a free-scholarship school based on master-apprentice relationships” that developed products for direct sale to the public. However, it did come to fruition in concert with developing the school starting in 1932 as a tuition-based enterprise in which working artists taught students and had the freedom to pursue outside commissions as an adjunct to teaching. Ibid. See also Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA at 19: “Most of my work at teaching was maybe a third of it. I did a tremendous amount of work professionally outside. And he [Eliel Saarinen] liked that because that way my students would learn something about what goes on in the world.” Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives.

⁵³ De Long, “Eliel Saarinen and the Cranbrook Tradition in Architecture and Urban Design,” Chapter 4, *Design in America*, 47. According to an article entitled

“Cranbrook,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 3, (May-June 1959): 18-19, by Joy Hakanson, a Michigan-based newspaper reporter, “[a]vailable records . . . reveal that during 1956 and 1957 former students had more than 60 one-man exhibits, participated in almost 200 group shows, won 180 awards and scholarships.” Further they became the teachers for the next generation of artists.

⁵⁴ CAA Announcement, 1933, 5. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁵⁵ Second CAA Announcement, November 1933, 5. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. See also the numerous catalogue descriptions over the years, e.g. CAA Announcement, 1946-47, of the advanced architecture student’s responsibility to “select his own problem” and construct solutions to it “by employing and coordinating all the facts and circumstances.”

⁵⁶ Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” *Design in America*, 43

⁵⁷ Armas Lindgren left the partnership in about 1905, and Saarinen and Gesellius, after 1910, worked increasingly on their own projects although they still shared Hvitträsk. See generally, Christ-Janer, *Eliel Saarinen: Finnish-American Architect and Educator*, 12-18; Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” *Design in America*, 21-23.

⁵⁸ See generally, Christ-Janer, *Eliel Saarinen: Finnish-American Architect and Educator*, 12-20; Marika Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen Projects, 1896-1923* (MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1990), 41, 48-54.

⁵⁹ Marika Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen Projects, 1896-1923* (MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1990), 41.

⁶⁰ See generally, Christ-Janer, *Eliel Saarinen: Finnish-American Architect and Educator*, 12-20; Marika Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen Projects, 1896-1923* (MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1990), 41, 48-54.

⁶¹ Again, for a discussion of George G. Booth’s Arts and Crafts ideals, in comparison with Saarinen’s, please see the following sources: Harris, “North by Midwest,” 15-19; Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” 21-26, and Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” Chapter 3, 35-42; *Design in America*.

⁶² Saarinen, *Search for Form*, Forward, at v, vii and Introductory Analysis, 25. See also Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” *Design in America*, 42.

⁶³ CAA Announcement, 1932, 8-9. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Saarinen, *Search for Form*, 351. Thurman noted that this was also a governing principle of the Weaving department in

“Textiles,” *Design in America*, 176-177. Saarinen’s view of art education as a means of tapping the creativity inherent in childhood reflected his familiarity with the history of progressive educational reform in Europe that also underlay the pedagogy of the Bauhaus school. See, e.g., Troy, *Anni Albers and Ancient American Textiles From Bauhaus to Back Mountain*, “Art Educational Reform,” (England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2002), 12-15.

⁶⁴ Saarinen, *Search for Form*, 325.

⁶⁵ Saarinen, *Search for Form*, xiv.

⁶⁶ Saarinen, *Search for Form*, Forward, xiv; Preamble, 2-3, 5; Introductory Analysis, 11-48, 126-133. Christ-Janer, *Eliel Saarinen: Finnish-American Architect and Educator*, 1-19, discussed the defining Finnish and international influences that shaped Eliel Saarinen, which included the values of his native Finland, and his middle-class upbringing as the son of a Lutheran minister. His mother spoke Swedish and his father Finnish, as well as Russian and German. He spent his childhood in Russia, and was educated in Finland. He and his wife Loja Saarinen traveled annually and widely throughout Europe, starting in the early 1900s, and entertained an international coterie of leading artists and architects at Hvitträsk and later at Cranbrook.

⁶⁷ De Long, “Eliel Saarinen and the Cranbrook Tradition in Architecture and Urban Design,” *Design in America*, 47.

⁶⁸ Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” quoting Feiss, *Design in America*, 30.

⁶⁹ Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” quoting an unpublished manuscript by Eliel Saarinen, ca. 1925, at 227-228. *Design in America*, 27 and n. 17,

⁷⁰ CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, “Cranbrook,” and “Location.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Construction dates for these buildings provided herein, which may be inclusive of several individual entries, are from Eckert, *The Campus Guide: Cranbrook*.

⁷¹ Miller, “Interior Design and Furniture,” *Design in America*, 107-08.

⁷² Virginia Gardner Troy, *The Modernist Textile: Europe and America 1890-1940*, 19-20. According to R. Craig Miller, Eero Saarinen was a strong proponent of the International style executed so that all aspects of a project, from its setting to its structure and materials, to its interior appointments were unified in the manner of his father and other influential architects and designers of his father’s generation, like Frank Lloyd Wright. Miller, “Interior Design and Furniture,” Chapter 5, *Design in America*, 112-13.

⁷³ Eckert, *The Campus Guide: Cranbrook*, 103.

⁷⁴ Eckert, *The Campus Guide: Cranbrook*, 114-117. Martin Eidelberg, “Ceramics,” Chapter 8, *Design in America*, 222 fig. 175, 223.

⁷⁵ CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, “Library.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Much of the Library’s collection of historic materials was donated by Cranbrook’s founder, George G. Booth.

⁷⁶ CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, “Museum.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Again, the art collection that comprised the Museum was started by Cranbrook’s founder, George G. Booth.

⁷⁷ Eckert, *The Campus Guide: Cranbrook*, 128-29. Miller, “Interior Design and Furniture,” *Design in America*, 95-99; 113 (noting influence of Wright).

⁷⁸ Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 187.

⁷⁹ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009. The course catalogues for the academic years from 1960-1963 show that even after Kaufman’s arrival, the department continued to be known as “Weaving and Textiles.” In the 1963-1964 academic year, Kaufman changed the name to “Weaving and Fabric Design,” and it was identified as such until Kaufman’s departure in 1967.

⁸⁰ Harris, “North By Midwest, 31 and Thurman, “Textiles,” 175-176, *Design in America*.

⁸¹ Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 176-77, 183-87.

⁸² Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 176-77.

⁸³ Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 176-77.

⁸⁴ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009; Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 176-77; Ed Rossbach, “Marianne Strengell,” *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11 at 8-9.

⁸⁵ Agreement Between Loja Saarinen and Cranbrook Academy of Art, December 30, 1932, 1-3, 5. “Mrs. Saarinen will purchase all materials required and keep her own accounts and will undertake such work as she may wish, and at such prices as she finds fair and suitable, and will collect her own bills.” Ibid. at 3. Cranbrook Foundation RGI: Office Records (1981-05), Cranbrook Archives. See also Thurman, who in “Textiles” wrote, “Studio Loja Saarinen concerned itself with outside commissions and orders for which Loja was paid as long as she was on the Academy’s faculty.” *Design in America*, 176.

⁸⁶ Agreement Between Loja Saarinen and Cranbrook Academy of Art, December 30, 1932, 1-3, 5. Cranbrook Foundation RGI: Office Records (1981-05), Cranbrook

Archives. See also CAA Announcements for 1932, 1936-37. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Lillian Holm taught weaving at the Kingswood School as well as at the Academy. After a brief absence, in which Strengell took her place at the Academy, Holm taught weaving at the Kingswood School until 1966. Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 187-88.

⁸⁷ "Mrs. Saarinen will engage such help as she may require, and will accept pupils of good character and ability who will pay tuition to her in the courses for service rendered." Agreement Between Loja Saarinen and Cranbrook Academy of Art, December 30, 1932, 3. Cranbrook Foundation RGI: Office Records (1981-05), Cranbrook Archives.

⁸⁸ Agreement Between Loja Saarinen and Cranbrook Academy of Art, December 30, 1932, 4. Cranbrook Foundation RGI: Office Records (1981-05), Cranbrook Archives.

⁸⁹ A typewritten list entitled "Cranbrook Academy of Art staff members in the early years," dated September 1, 1932 by Richard P. Rasemen, with handwritten edits in another hand, shows Wirde was hired as an instructor in weaving on October 1, 1929. (Note: *This document may be part of the Rasemen Report*). Cranbrook Archives. In Loja Saarinen's Agreement with the Cranbrook Academy of Art, dated December 30, 1932, she is identified as a designer. Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 175-176. Thurman's research turned up a primary source that stated: "'Under her [Wirde's] tutelage Mrs. Saarinen had perfected her skill in weaving so that she would be able to take her place.'" *Ibid.*, 187, n. 62.

⁹⁰ CAA Announcement, 1932. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁹¹ Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 177. The weaving techniques taught by Maja Wirde to Loja Saarinen, and widely used at Cranbrook for both the decorative and utilitarian textiles made at Studio Loja Saarinen had their origins in Finnish and Swedish traditional weaving. Erik Lassen, "The Early 20th Century: Design in Transition," *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880-1980*, 88, 101-02, in David Revere McFadden, ed., *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880-1980*. See also, Ed Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, at 8-10.

In Sweden, the Friends of Handicrafts was established in 1873, closely followed by the Friends of Finnish Handicraft, established in 1879, and both were active in reviving the indigenous textile traditions of their native countries throughout the Art Nouveau and Modern periods. Elisabet Stavenow-Hidemark, "Viking Revival and Art Nouveau: Traditions of Excellence," *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880-1980*, McFadden, ed., *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880-1980*, 52-58. A noted Norwegian weaver, Frida Hansen (1855-1931) developed and frequently used a transparent weaving technique wherein "[s]he left areas of warp exposed to create a transparent structure, and

these were often contrasted with broad expanses of rich color;” this technique appeared in “Portieres,” a pair of hangings she completed in 1900. Erik Lassen, “The Early 20th Century: Design in Transition,” McFadden, ed., *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880-1980*, 81. Compare to Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 190-192, and 194, Colorplate 41, describing *The Sermon on the Mount*, a tapestry designed by Eliel and Loja Saarinen for the Tabernacle Church of Christ in Columbus, IN and completed at Cranbrook in 1941.

⁹² Thurman, *Design in America*, 177; see also Jack Lenor Larsen and Azalea Stuart Thorpe, *Elements of Weaving: A Complete Introduction to the Art and Techniques* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1967), 126-135.

⁹³ Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 173, n. 7 and 177.

⁹⁴ Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 177.

⁹⁵ Elisabet Stavenow-Hidemark, “Viking Revival and Art Nouveau: Traditions of Excellence,” *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880-1980*, 58. Virginia Gardner Troy, *The Modernist Textile: Europe and America 1890-1940* (Hampshire, UK and Vermont: Lund Humphries, 2006), 19-20. Loja Saarinen to George Booth, July 29, 1942, indicated she also took a personal interest in the landscaping of the campus. George G. Booth Papers (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives. See generally, Diana Balmori, “The Invisible Landscape,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (March 1994): 30-60.

⁹⁶ Thurman, “Textiles,” 187 and Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” 42-43, *Design in America*, 187.

⁹⁷ Clark notes that Loja Saarinen had “a special title, because she was not officially a teacher.” Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” *Design in America*, 31.

⁹⁸ Christa C. Mayer Thurman describes a number of commissions during the 1930s that Studio Loja Saarinen fulfilled, including some work for Frank Lloyd Wright, among other projects, and an exhibition of textiles for the Cranbrook Pavilion of 1935. See Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 189-192.

⁹⁹ For a discussion of Pipsan Saarinen Swanson’s career in textiles and interior design, see Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 188.

¹⁰⁰ CAA Announcement, 1934-35. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁰¹ CAA Announcements, 1934-35 and 1935-36. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁰² Announcement of the Intermediate School, 1936-1937. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Eliel Saarinen, "Analysis of Past and Future Educational Policies of the Cranbrook Academy of Art," January 12, 1942, 2. George G. Booth Papers (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives. Taragin, "The History of the Cranbrook Community," *Design in America*, 43.

¹⁰³ CAA Announcement, Intermediate School, 1936-1937. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Lillian Holm, according to Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 187-88 was also a Swedish weaver who later taught weaving at the Kingswood School from 1933-1966.

¹⁰⁴ CAA Announcement, Intermediate School, 1936-1937. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Wallace Mitchell was active at Cranbrook in a number of different capacities. He was a student of Zoltan Sepeshy from 1934-1935. From 1936-1954, he was an Instructor in Drawing and Painting at Cranbrook. From 1944-1963, he was Secretary and Registrar; from 1955-1970 he was Director of the Museum, and from 1970-1977, he was President of the Cranbrook Academy of Art. "Biographies of the Artists," *Design in America*, 272.

¹⁰⁵ See generally CAA Announcement, 1942-43, "Charter," and "Educational Philosophy." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Eckert, *The Campus Guide: Cranbrook* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2001), 102.

¹⁰⁶ Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 16. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives. According to Marika Hausen's thoughtful and detailed analysis of Saarinen's architectural career in Finland up through 1923, it was Gustaf Strengell who, in 1904, was at the vanguard of the public criticism that led Saarinen to redesign the Helsinki Railway Station project in a modern style, rather than in the Finnish National Romantic style that the firm of Gesellius, Lindgren & Saarinen had so successfully popularized in the Finnish pavilion at the 1900 Paris Exposition, the Pohjola Fire Insurance Company, and the National Museum, e.g. See Marika Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen Projects, 1896-1923*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1990, 18, 32, 34-37, 59-60; see also Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 11-12. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives. Strengell, a fellow architect, "as a writer and critic" wrote "forceful polemics in favor of a functional, more rational approach . . . influential . . . in the development of a Modernist architecture in Finland." He had been the "Secretary of the Finnish Applied Arts Association (1901-18) and its museum's Director (1911-18)." See Answers.com web entry, "Art Encyclopedia -- Gustaf Strengell," at <http://www.answers.com/topic/gustaf-strengell-2>, accessed May 25, 2009. It was also Strengell who accompanied Saarinen to the United States and acted as his interpreter when Saarinen won second prize in the Chicago Tribune competition in 1922. Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 193; Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17,

1990, Wellfleet, MA, 11. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives. According to Thurman, Anna Strengell, Marianne's mother, like Loja Saarinen, was a notable interior designer. See Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 193.

Hausen saw contemporary precedents for Saarinen's revised design for the Helsinki Railway Station in the work of Herman Billing, Josef Maria Olbrich and Louis Sullivan. Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen Projects*, 59-60. Although in *The Search for Form*, Saarinen discusses his schooling in the 1890s as a process of rejecting the endless recycling classical forms in favor of developing new forms that spoke of their time, see, e.g. Forward, ix, the Helsinki Railway Station likely represented such a watershed within his own body of work. Saarinen's oft-iterated desire that Cranbrook stay connected with youth and with fresh ideas, flexible and moving forward with the times, likely reflected not only the formative ideals of Finnish Jugendstil, but also his own very practical recognition of the importance of staying in step with current trends and designing for modern life.

¹⁰⁷ Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 10. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives. See also Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 193.

¹⁰⁸ Ulf Hård Af Segerstad, "Unity and Diversity in Scandinavian Design," 33-34; Erik Lassen, "The Early 20th Century: Design in Transition," 88, 101-02, and Jarno Peltonen, "The 1930s: A New Function for Design," *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880-1980*, 107-127 in McFadden, ed., *Scandinavian Modern Design 1880-1980*. See also, Ed Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April - May 1984): 8-11, at 8-9.

¹⁰⁹ Ed Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April - May 1984): 8-11.

¹¹⁰ Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 16. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives.

¹¹¹ Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 16. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives.

¹¹² According to textile scholar Christa C. Mayer Thurman, Lillian Holm likely arrived in 1929-30 to join a group of highly skilled professional weavers and designers from Sweden, including Maja Andersson Wirde and Ruth Ingvarsson, among others, hired by Loja Saarinen to execute the tapestries, rugs and textiles that were to furnish the interiors of the many schools and residences under construction at Cranbrook. Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 180. Loja Saarinen's contract of December 30, 1932 shows she was hired to supervise the design and construction of these textiles at her

eponymous workshop, Studio Loja Saarinen, “as a resident craftsman.” Agreement Between Loja Saarinen and Cranbrook Academy of Art, December 30, 1932, 1. Cranbrook Foundation RGI: Office Records (1981-05). Loja Saarinen, her husband Eliel Saarinen, and her daughter, Pipsan Saarinen-Swanson, designed many of the textiles, but the hired professionals also designed several major pieces. Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 179-190. Tuition students from the community would have been a source of income, but were not a major focus of the Studio’s work. Ibid. See also, Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 16. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives.

¹¹³ Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 11. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives. It would be wonderful to compare these letters to Saarinen’s manuscripts and other writings for the institution.

¹¹⁴ CAA Announcement, 1937-38. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America* at 196, also discusses the ways in which Strengell professionalized the Weaving program over time.

¹¹⁵ For a few years, it appears that Strengell offered costume and fashion design as well as weaving in an effort to attract a larger group of students to the program. Fashion fabrics, however, in the form of wool suitings, remained a part of the weaving curriculum, and Strengell always considered fashion as a possible industry for Cranbrook graduates despite her own preference for work with architects and interior designers. Marianne Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 1. Marianne Strengell Excerpts & Miscellanea File (hereinafter “Strengell E&M File”), Cranbrook Archives.

¹¹⁶ CAA Announcement, 1940-41, “Weaving and Textiles.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹¹⁷ CAA Announcement, 1940-41, “Weaving and Textiles.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹¹⁸ Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 19. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives. Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 196. See also Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” *Design in America*, 31, stating that Loja Saarinen’s title was a special title created for her as Saarinen’s wife; she did not teach.

¹¹⁹ CAA Announcement, 1942-1943. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹²⁰ “[I]t is most essential that there, besides this regulated art education, always will prevail about Cranbrook an atmosphere of free art creation To maintain such a

creative atmosphere . . . is in full accord with the wishes of the Founders of the Academy and, therefore, it must be our endeavor to strengthen this atmosphere rather than let it dwindle. How this creative atmosphere can be kept vital parallel with that part of art education as is based on efficient functional order . . . is a problem for us jointly to solve.” Eliel Saarinen, “Analysis of Past and Future Educational Policies of the Cranbrook Academy of Art,” January 12, 1942, 10. George Booth Papers (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives.

¹²¹ CAA Announcement, 1946-1947, “Educational Philosophy.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹²² Eliel Saarinen, “Analysis of Past and Future Educational Policies of the Cranbrook Academy of Art,” January 12, 1942, 6. George Booth Papers (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives.

¹²³ CAA Announcement, 1942-1943, “Educational Philosophy.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹²⁴ Loja Saarinen to George G. Booth, July 29, 1942. George G. Booth Papers (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives. However, Loja Saarinen is still listed as “[i]n charge of the Department of Weaving” in the CAA Announcement for 1943-1943 academic year, the first year of the graduate program. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Diana Balmori, in her article “The Invisible Landscape,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (March 1994): 30-60 at 54-57, called Loja Saarinen’s forced retirement a result of a disagreement between Booth and Saarinen, that once resolved between the two men, left her outside the school she had helped to build. Certainly a wider investigation of Loja Saarinen’s life and work at Cranbrook would be helpful to scholarship about the weaving program at Cranbrook.

¹²⁵ Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 19. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives.

¹²⁶ Loja Saarinen to George Booth, July 29, 1942. George G. Booth Papers (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives. Balmori, “The Invisible Landscape,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (March 1994): 30-60 at 54-57.

¹²⁷ Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 192, quoting Loja Saarinen to George Booth, August 28, 1942. See also, Loja Saarinen to George Booth, July 29, 1942. George G. Booth Papers (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives.

¹²⁸ Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 192, quoting Loja Saarinen to George Booth, August 28, 1942. Clark, “Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth-Century Form,” *Design in America*, 31. Ed Rossbach, “Marianne Strengell,” *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April - May 1984): 8-11 at 8-9.

¹²⁹ Balmori, "The Invisible Landscape," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (March 1994): 30-60 at 54-57.

¹³⁰ Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America, 196-97*, discusses the Academy's virtual prohibition of pictorial weaving as a part of the graduate textile curriculum after Loja Saarinen's retirement. Thurman stated that shortages during the war years restricted pictorial weaving as "an unnecessary luxury." Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid. and Verla Birell, M.F.A. *The Textile Arts: A Handbook of Fabric Structure and Design Processes*, 157. See also the many articles on the revival of tapestry weaving in *Craft Horizons* starting in the mid- to late 1950s, e.g., Mildred Fischer, "The Weaver as Artist," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 5 (September-October 1959): 14-15.

¹³² Ed Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, 8.

¹³³ Ed Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April - May 1984): 8-11.

¹³⁴ In the CAA Announcement for 1943-1944, she was listed as "Weaving Instructor," without Loja Saarinen's name appearing in the catalogue. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives.

¹³⁵ Marianne Strengell, "A Personal Approach to Textile Design," January 1, 1960, 2. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. See also, Ed Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, at 8 and 10

¹³⁶ Chicago architect Charles E. White, former associate of Frank Lloyd Wright and a contributor of articles on architecture to several well-known shelter magazines, wrote a "reader's report" of Eliel Saarinen's work that he titled "THE SEARCH FOR FORM by Eliel Saarinen, Architect (an architectural work in four parts)." White made the following comments: "His prose is modest and direct, the most free from unpleasant egotistical didactics, I think, that I have ever read in a work of Architecture or the Fine Arts. The author who is very much in earnest has a refreshing sense of humor. He does not take himself too seriously." See remarks of Charles E. White, undated, attached to letter of H.S. Latham, The Macmillan Company, Publishers, to Dr. Frederick Keppel, The Carnegie Foundation, April 6, 1934. Saarinen Family Papers (1990-08), Cranbrook Archives.

¹³⁷ Marianne Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹³⁸ Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 2, emphasis in original. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook

Archives. See also, CAA Announcement, 1932, 8. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives.

¹³⁹ Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. Compare to Saarinen, “Education must not mean the amassing of stereotyped book-knowledge, but rather the guiding of the mind toward living wisdom, so that the pupil will not only imbibe knowledge with eagerness but also digest this knowledge and make it fertile. As regards this the reciprocal training of both hand and mind – concept and creation, thought and action – is not only the best method but even the only one.” Saarinen, *Search for Form*, “Art Education,” 328.

¹⁴⁰ Strengell, “A Personal Approach to Textile Design,” January 1, 1960, 2. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁴¹ Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 1. Glen Kaufman recalled the “rug parties” which students held on the completion of any major rug, because making a rug was a substantial undertaking. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009. According to the website for Vävstuga Swedish Weaving and Folk Arts in Shelburne Falls, MA, “Flossa has a denser shorter pile and rya has a long pile.” See “Rya and Flossa Rug Techniques (new for 2009!)” at <http://www.vavstuga.com/classes/desc-ryaflossa.shtml>, (accessed August 11, 2009).

¹⁴⁴ Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁴⁵ Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁴⁶ Strengell, “A Personal Approach to Textile Design,” January 1, 1960, 2. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. See also examples of dyed fabrics in Mary Walker Phillips, B.F.A Thesis, “Wool,” May 1962, under “Tie and Dye,” Cranbrook Art Library, and images of her work from the Fresno Art Museum exhibit in 1963, Figures 75-79.

¹⁴⁷ Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁴⁸ Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 2. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁴⁹ 1942-1943 CAA Announcement, “Weaving,” under Department of the Crafts and Undergraduate School. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁵⁰ A comparison of the course description for Weaving in 1942-1943 to that for Weaving in 1960-1961, shows essentially the same educational objectives, although more tersely and less specifically articulated in the later catalogue. Compare 1942-1943 CAA Announcement, “Weaving,” under Department of the Crafts and Undergraduate School, to the “Supplement No. 1 to the Cranbrook Academy of Art Announcement 1960-61 Course Outlines” at 11. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁵¹ Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 1: “The students work on handlooms, with a contramarch system, also on big rug looms, . . . on fly-shuttle looms a preparation to the power loom. They finally work on the power loom itself” Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁵² 1942-1943 CAA Announcement, The Graduate School, “Master’s Degree” and “Entrance Requirements.” See also Department of the Crafts, “Weaving,” and School of Undergraduate Studies, “Weaving (1)” and “Weaving (2).” Compare 1944-45 CAA Announcement, “Requirements for Graduation.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁵³ 1942-1943 CAA Announcement, “Weaving,” under both the Department of the Crafts and Undergraduate School. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁵⁴ 1946-47 CAA Announcement, “Requirements for Graduation.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. See also, Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 201. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

¹⁵⁵ The 1940-1941 CAA Announcement mentions sixteen looms from 28 to 40” in width; the 1942-1943 CAA Announcement mentions thirty looms from 28 to 40” in width. The CAA Announcement for 1941-1942 does not seem to specify the number of looms available to the Weaving Department, or if it does, I do not have those pages from the catalogue. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. It is possible that the Academy purchased additional looms for the Weaving Department between 1940 and 1942; more research is needed to confirm this. However, according to the 1932 contract between Loja Saarinen and the Cranbrook Academy of Art Foundation, the equipment used at Studio Loja Saarinen belonged to the Academy, and would revert to it upon termination of the contractual relationship: “When and if this agreement shall be terminated, Mrs. Saarinen shall furnish an inventory and turn over to the Academy all tools and equipment which have been purchased by the

Academy or by the Cranbrook Foundation, its predecessor.” Agreement Between Loja Saarinen and Cranbrook Academy of Art, December 30, 1932, 5-6. Cranbrook Foundation RGI: Office Records (1981-05), Cranbrook Archives. This Agreement was in force for only one year, but it is possible that ensuing Agreements contained similar language, and that Loja Saarinen’s retirement would have benefited the Weaving Department under Strengell by the addition of up to fourteen looms. Using different archival source material from the CAA Announcements, Thurman credited the Weaving Department in 1941 with “twenty-two looms . . . with two looms belonging to Loja Saarinen. They varied in size from twenty-eight inches to twelve feet.” See Thurman “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 187 and n. 56. This could indicate that the Studio furnished only an additional four looms to the sixteen Strengell’s students were using, with the balance of the thirty purchased for the school between 1940 and 1942.

¹⁵⁶ Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 187. Bexell was Swedish, and had relocated to the United States with his wife, Marie Bexell, in 1923. Jane Patrick, “The Legacy of the Cranbrook Loom,” in *Handwoven*, http://www.interweave.com/weave/projects_articles/legacyofcranbrooklow.pdf, at 1, accessed August 13, 2009. The on-line version of this article, according to the Interweave Press website, was expanded from the original print version published in the September - October 2002 issue at 67.

¹⁵⁷ Jane Patrick, “The Legacy of the Cranbrook Loom,” in *Handwoven*, http://www.interweave.com/weave/projects_articles/legacyofcranbrooklow.pdf, at 3, accessed August 13, 2009. The on-line version of this article, according to the Interweave Press website, was expanded from the original print version published in the September - October 2002 issues at 67.

¹⁵⁸ Larsen and Thorpe, *Elements of Weaving*, 219-220. By 1967, when their book was published, there were other simpler looms for weavers to choose from. It would be interesting to know what types of looms Phillips worked with when she had her own weaving business in Fresno, CA from 1954 to 1959.

¹⁵⁹ Rossbach, “Marianne Strengell,” *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, 9.

¹⁶⁰ Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 198-200, provides a substantial listing of Strengell’s career in textile design for all types of commercial applications.

¹⁶¹ Rossbach, “Marianne Strengell,” *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, 8.

¹⁶² Rossbach, “Marianne Strengell,” *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, 8.

¹⁶³ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

- ¹⁶⁴ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, by Jennifer Lindsay, May 21, 2009.
- ¹⁶⁵ Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11 at 9-10.
- ¹⁶⁶ Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, 8.
- ¹⁶⁷ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.
- ¹⁶⁸ Telephone interview of Eleen Auvil, by Jennifer Lindsay, June 15, 2009.
- ¹⁶⁹ Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, 8. Telephone interview of Ted Hallman, by Jennifer Lindsay, June 30, 2009; telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 21, 2009; Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.
- ¹⁷⁰ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 21, 2009; Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.
- ¹⁷¹ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.
- ¹⁷² Telephone interview of Ted Hallman, June 30, 2009.
- ¹⁷³ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 21, 2009.
- ¹⁷⁴ Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 19. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives.
- ¹⁷⁵ Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April - May 1984): 8-11, 10; Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.
- ¹⁷⁶ Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, 9.
- ¹⁷⁷ Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, 9.
- ¹⁷⁸ Strengell, "A Personal Approach to Textile Design," January 25, 1960, 2. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁷⁹ Strengell, “A Personal Approach to Textile Design,” January 25, 1960, 2. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁸⁰ Strengell, “A Personal Approach to Textile Design,” January 25, 1960, 2. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁸¹ Strengell, “general approach to the story,” undated. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁸² Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, at 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁸³ Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, at 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁸⁴ Rossbach, “Marianne Strengell,” *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-11, 10, recalling the Loja Saarinen’s cartoons that hung in the studio of the Weaving Department.

¹⁸⁵ Press Release; American Craft Council Public Information: “10 Cited in 1978 for Nation’s Highest Award in Craft,” no date, quoting Aileen O. Webb comments. Mary Walker Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. Margalit Fox, “Mary Walker Phillips, 83, Knitter of Art,” *The New York Times*, Obituaries, Tuesday, November 20, 2007.

¹⁸⁶ See generally, John Renning Phillips, *The Good Intent: The Story and Heritage of a Fresno Family* (New York: Magnolia Group Press, 2007).

¹⁸⁷ J.R. Phillips, *The Good Intent*, 15-16. Phillips had two older siblings, John Pressley Phillips, Jr., Martha Elizabeth Phillips, and a younger brother, William David Phillips. Phillips’s older brother died tragically, and her sister and younger brother both married and had children. Phillips remained single, and likely took on a certain level of responsibility for her parents during her early adulthood.

¹⁸⁸ J.R. Phillips, *The Good Intent*, 40, 44-47.

¹⁸⁹ J.R. Phillips, *The Good Intent*, 15-19. Telephone interview of Gerhardt Knodel by Jennifer Lindsay, April 8, 2009; telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009; Barbara Factor, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Chicago, IL, April 26, 2009; telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009. See also Melanie D. Falick, “The Experimental Spirit of Mary Walker Phillips,” *Knitting in America: Patterns, Profiles, & Stories of America’s Leading Artisans* (New York: Artisan, 1996), 126-27; Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18, 17.

¹⁹⁰ Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18. Eliel Saarinen to The Cranbrook Foundation, September 25, 1935, 3-4. George G. Booth Papers (1981-01), Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁹¹ Mary Walker Phillips, Application for Admission to Cranbrook Academy of Art, April 7, 1946 (hereinafter “Phillips CAA Application”), Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ Sherman Clay & Co. Houston, TX, “About Us,” <http://www.shermanclaypiano-houston.com/about-us-keyboard-instruments/> (accessed March 20, 2009).

¹⁹⁴ Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18, 17. Liebes and Ruth Phillips were both born and raised in Santa Rosa, California. Ed Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 9-12, 9 and J.R. Phillips, *The Good Intent*, 15.

¹⁹⁵ Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 - January 1983): 9-12, 12. Rossbach’s series covered the four women he believed shaped the 1940s in weaving: Dorothy Liebes, Marianne Strengell, Anni Albers, and Mary Atwater. For Rossbach, of the four, Liebes represented “the decorator.” In my interviews of Glen Kaufman, his recollections of Dorothy Liebes conform closely to Ed Rossbach’s. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

¹⁹⁶ Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 - January 1983): 9-10, 12.

¹⁹⁷ Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 - January 1983): 9.

¹⁹⁸ Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 - January 1983): 9.

¹⁹⁹ Ed Rossbach, “Fiber in the Forties,” *American Craft*, Vol. 42, No. 5 (October – November 1982): 15-19, at 15 and 17. See also, Dorothy Liebes, “Designing Textiles for Industry,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XII, No. 3 (May-June 1952): 20. WorldCat lists an exhibition catalogue entitled, “Twenty-five Years of Dorothy Wright Liebes,” published in conjunction with an exhibition held at the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY, in 1942. See WorldCat at http://www.worldcat.org/oclc/79292189&referer=brief_results (accessed August 2, 2009).

²⁰⁰ Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 - January 1983): 9. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

²⁰¹ Liebes and her contemporaries revolutionized the handmade textile by integrating it with modern life and creating a demand that ultimately only industrial production could satisfy. At the same time, such institutions as Berea College in Kentucky and Penland School of Crafts in North Carolina, and individuals like Mary Meigs Atwater were active in preserving colonial and regional weaving traditions for their historical and cultural value as well as for the economic sustenance they could provide to isolated populations. These individuals and their programs initially produced hand woven goods and products for tourists, collectors, and hobby weavers, but in the 1960s, the community of hobbyists and professional became more integrated. See generally, Lucy Morgan with Legette Blythe, *Gift From the Hills: Miss Lucy Morgan's Story of Her Unique Penland School* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1958) and Ed Rossbach, “Mary Atwater and the Revival of American Traditional Weaving,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (April – May 1983): 22-26.

²⁰² Strengell, “A Personal Approach to Textile Design,” January 15, 1960, 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. See also, Sigrid Wortmann Weltge, *Bauhaus Textiles: Woman Artists and the Weaving Workshop* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1993), 188-89.

²⁰³ Rossbach, “Fiber in the Forties,” *American Craft*, Vol. 42, No. 5 (October – November 1982): 15. Rossbach stated that Liebes provided a compelling example of success as “a woman [doing appropriately feminine work], yet living a glamorous life in a world of architects, designers, industrialists and wealthy clients,” and that was certainly part of the image she maintained; but Liebes was also a writer, teacher, critic, exhibitor, judge, spokesperson and board member for many museums, arts organizations, professional associations and publications.

²⁰⁴ Phillips CAA Application, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. See also, Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18.

²⁰⁵ Phillips CAA Application, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. Liebes also had studied at Mills College, according to Ed Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 9.

²⁰⁶ Phillips CAA Application, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. See also Resume of Mary Walker Phillips, hand-dated “Jan. ‘68,” hereinafter “Phillips 1968 Resume,” American Craft Council College of Fellows Artist File Collection (hereinafter “ACC Library Fellows Collection”), American Craft Council Library, New York, NY.

Rudolph Schaeffer also trained Dorothy Liebes and her staff; Phillips may have learned of Schaeffer through Liebes. See Rudolph Schaeffer, "The Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design: Art in San Francisco Since 1915," an oral history conducted 1981 by Margaretta K. Mitchell, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, CA, 1982 (hereinafter "Schaeffer Oral History"), 80-81, 83, 171. I reviewed the text of Schaeffer's oral history on-line courtesy of The Open Library, <http://openlibrary.org/details/rudolphdesign00scharich> (accessed May 20, 2009).

²⁰⁷ CAA Application, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁰⁸ CAA Application, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives; Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection. See also, John Snyder, *San Francisco Secrets: Fascinating Facts About the City by the Bay* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1999), "Maiden Lane." In 1948, Frank Lloyd Wright updated the premises of V.C. Morris and Co., originally a warehouse, for the owners, and this remains the only Wright-designed building in San Francisco. Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Phillips, J.R., *The Good Intent*, 17, 22-23.

²¹⁰ See generally, Janet Lynn Roseman, Nan Birmingham and Diane Dorrans Saeks, *Gump's Since 1861: A San Francisco Legend* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1991). See also, Snyder, *San Francisco Secrets: Fascinating Facts About the City by the Bay* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1999), "Maiden Lane."

²¹¹ Mildred Constantine and Jack Lenor Larsen, *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric*, (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1972), 29. Roseman, et al., *Gump's Since 1861: A San Francisco Legend* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1991), 41, 71-76.

²¹² According to the recollections of Kay Sekimachi, a noted contemporary of Phillips who was interviewed in 1993, Gump's employed local weavers at the Jim Ahrens Weaving Studio to make custom goods for the store. Kay Sekimachi, "The Weaver's Weaver: Explorations in Multiple Layers and Three-Dimensional Fiber Art," an oral history conducted in 1993 by Harriet Nathan, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1996, http://www.archive.org/stream/weaverswaver00stocrich/weaverswaver00stocrich_djvu.txt, page 11 (accessed March 19, 2009). However, Phillips stated in her application to Cranbrook, in her resumes, and in her recollections about the period that Gump's also employed weavers in-house. See, e.g., Phillips CAA Application, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives; Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection; and Weissman, "Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting," *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18. Although Gump's still exists today, it was not possible to learn much about the activities of the Handweaving Department where Phillips stated she had worked in the 1940s. Mr. John Brantley, currently Store Manager of Gump's, San Francisco, CA, contacted several of the older former employees, but found no one with any

recollection of Mary Walker Phillips, Henning Watterston, or the activities or existence of the Handweaving Department at Gump's. "Ken," a telephone representative of Gump's Customer Service Department, stated that many of the company's archival records were destroyed by fire. Telephone Interviews of Gump's Employees by Jennifer Lindsay, February 11-12, 2009.

²¹³ There is some confusion about the spelling of the name "Henning Watterston," which is also spelled in some references as "Henning Watterson." See a photo of "Henning Watterson, Weaver, 1946" by photographer Imogen Cunningham at PhotoLiason, "The Published Work of Imogen Cunningham," http://www.photoliason.com/Imogen_Cunningham_Published/index.htm (accessed August 14, 2009). It appears Watterston married Rees, and that they were both Fellows at Taliesin West in 1941, according to a "Taliesin Timeline" by Susan Jacobs Lockhart, Gerald Lee Morosco and Val M. Cox listing "Henning Watterson and Carolyn Watterson" among the Fellows for 1941 at VALMCOX.com, http://www.valmcox.com/vmc/pages/taliesin_timeline_pdfs.html (accessed January 17, 2010) and the "Fellows Roster" of the Taliesin Fellows Newsletter, Vol. 5, October 2001, <http://www.midglen.com/newsletter/volume5.pdf> (accessed August 14, 2009). See also National Society of Magna Charta Dames and Barons, "Lost Members Listing 12/31/97," citing "Rees, Carolyn (Mrs. Henning Watterston)" among its missing members, <http://www.magnacharta.org/maidenlr.htm> (accessed January 17, 2010). Watterston and his wife exhibited their textiles at the Rudolph Schaeffer Design School in the 1940s according to an invitation to an exhibition of "Weaving by Henning-Rees" offered for sale by Wittenborn Art Books on AntiQbooks, an antiquarian book dealers' website, <http://www.antiqbook.com/boox/witt/54-1996.shtml> (accessed January 17, 2010).

It appears that a Henning Watterston, 1916-2009, died July 7, 2009 in Cloverdale, CA. See Tributes.com, "Henning Watterston, 1916-2009," <http://www.tributes.com/show/Henning-Watterston-86381899> (accessed August 14, 2009).

²¹⁴ Noyes, Eliot, *Organic Design In Home Furnishings* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1940). See also Miller, "Interior Design and Furniture," *Design in America*, 109-112.

²¹⁵ Miller, "Interior Design and Furniture," *Design in America*, 109-112, and Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 200.

²¹⁶ Miller, "Interior Design and Furniture," *Design in America*, 109-12, 115-16, 121-22 and n. 167-68, and Plates 116-17 at 138-39.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Lee Nordness, *Objects: USA* (New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1970), 9-11.

²¹⁹ Jo Lauria and Steve Fenton, *Craft in America: Celebrating Two Centuries of Artists and Objects* (New York: Clarkson Potter/Publishers, 2007), Chapter 5, “Rhode Island School of Design (RISD),” 145-46.

²²⁰ Lauria and Fenton, *Craft in America*, Chapter 9, “Black Mountain College,” 189-99. See also the rather crudely hand-illustrated two-page leaflet entitled “Black Mountain College Bulletin/Bulletin Newsletter, Vol. III, No. 8, August 1945” at the North Carolina State Archives, <http://digitalstatelibrarync.contentdm.oclc.org/ncstatearchives/document.php?CISOROOT=/p249901coll44&CISOPTR=573&REC=2> (accessed September 30, 2009) which shows ongoing construction at the campus performed by the students and faculty.

²²¹ The CAA Announcement for 1946-1947 was a substantial publication with numerous photographs and thoughtful descriptions of the programs and modern facilities offered to art students; it was likely professionally typeset and printed each year by the Cranbrook Press. Its format with logo had been consistent since 1932, but the text was continually expanded to reflect developments in the program’s offerings. The quotation is from CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, “Cranbrook.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²²² Taragin, “The History of the Cranbrook Community,” *Design in America*, 43. References prepared in support of Phillips by James G. Gala and Alexandra Bradshaw (Head, Department of Art) of Fresno State College, Fresno, CA. Phillips CAA Application, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²²³ CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, “Buildings and Other Facilities.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²²⁴ CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, “Miscellaneous Information.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²²⁵ CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, “Miscellaneous Information.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²²⁶ CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, “Miscellaneous Information.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²²⁷ CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, “Buildings and Other Facilities.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. Compare to the remoteness of Black Mountain in Lauria and Fenton, *Craft in America*, Chapter 9, “Black Mountain College,” 189-99.

²²⁸ CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, “Location.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²²⁹ References submitted on behalf of Mary Walker Phillips by Dr. Mitchell Briggs and Alexandra Bradshaw (Head, Department of Art) of Fresno State College, Fresno, CA. Phillips CAA Application, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²³⁰ Quoting from references submitted on behalf of Mary Walker Phillips by Dr. Mitchell Briggs, Alexandra Bradshaw and James S. Sala of Fresno State College, Fresno, CA, and Phebe McClatchey, a family friend. Phillips CAA Application, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Reference submitted on behalf of Mary Walker Phillips by Phebe McClatchey, a family friend. Phillips CAA Application, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. Curator Lee Nordness, in his introduction to the catalogue for the “Objects USA” exhibition in 1969, discussed the difficulty many artists of the period experienced in obtaining specialized instruction in the crafts. Lee Nordness, *Objects: USA* (New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1970), 4-22.

²³³ Mary Walker Phillips to Cranbrook, April 8, 1946. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²³⁴ In 1946, a photo of Liebes in her studio with the caption “[d]istinctive original fabrics are still being hand loomed,” appeared along with numerous examples of her fabrics (combining synthetics and natural fibers in creative and experimental combinations), in this encyclopedic reference work of nearly 700 pages. Bendure shows Liebes in her studio on 312, and images of Liebes’s hand woven fabrics on 99, 102, 135, 158, 230, 240, 572, e.g., “[s]oft casein yarns combined with yarns spun of other fibers and with brilliants are hand-woven into a colorful and unusual drapery fabric,” 240. Zelma Bendure and Gladys Pfeiffer, *America’s Fabrics: Origin and History, Manufacture, Characteristics and Uses* (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1946). Phillips later used this book, which was nationally advertized in trade publications, in her thesis. See generally, Ed Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 9-12.

²³⁵ One former student that Phillips may have met in San Francisco was Geraldine Funk Alvarez, who graduated from Cranbrook in 1944, and worked in the Liebes Studio. Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 203.

²³⁶ Textile curator Christa C. Mayer Thurman confirmed that Cranbrook’s purchase of the power loom occurred in 1945, and that it was a bold move that was observed with interest by such competitors as the Art Institute of Chicago and Black Mountain College. Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 196, 203, and n. 118. According to Ed Rossbach, Dorothy Liebes was also investigating the purchase of a power loom at this time. Rossbach recalled that both Liebes and Strengell sent representatives to the Rhode Island School of Design to learn how to operate the power

loom, and in Strengell's case, this was Robert Sailors. See Rossbach, "Fiber in the Forties," *American Craft*, Vol. 42, No. 5 (October – November 1982): 16 and Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 203.

²³⁷ Strengell, typewritten document, two pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction at 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²³⁸ Ed Rossbach in an article he wrote for *American Craft* and Jack Lenor Larsen both recalled the power loom at Cranbrook as something of an anomaly; although weaving on the power loom was part of the curriculum, the bulk of weaving done by the students was on hand looms. Ed Rossbach commented that he did not appreciate any correspondence between what he was doing at Cranbrook in weaving and how it could be applicable industrially. Ed Rossbach, "Fiber in the Forties," *American Craft*, Vol. 42, No. 5 (October – November 1982): 18. Jack Lenor Larsen recalled that although he thought Cranbrook would train him to design for the power loom, the reality of the translation from hand-loomed samples to industrial production was quite different from what he expected, although he mastered it. Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009. Glen Kaufman recalled that Cranbrook hired a local operator to fit the loom with a "communal warp" that "went for miles" and that everyone used the same warp as the basis to make power loom samples. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

²³⁹ CAA Announcement, 1946-47. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. See also, Clark, Chapter 2, "Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth Century Form," 32, *Design in America*.

²⁴⁰ Clark, Chapter 2, "Cranbrook and the Search for Twentieth Century Form," 32, *Design in America*.

²⁴¹ Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 13-14. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁴² Marianne Strengell and Olaf Hammerstrom, interview by Mark Coir, December 17, 1990, Wellfleet, MA, 13-14. Oral History Transcript (Tape #78), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁴³ Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8.

²⁴⁴ Wittkopp, Gregory, ed., *Saarinens House and Garden: A Total Work of Art* (New York: Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum in association with Harry N. Abrams, Publishers, Inc., 1995), 37, fig. 19 and 41, fig. 30.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ Kim Ode, “Wall hangings give knitting a new image,” *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, April 4, 1987.

²⁴⁷ See images of the studio at Hvitträsk in Marika Hausen, et al., *Eliel Saarinen Projects, 1896-1923* (MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1990), at 82, fig. 362, and 123, fig. 23, showing, in the first, Eliel Saarinen and Frans Nyberg seated at the work table with Pipsan, Eliel’s young daughter, all engrossed in their work, and in the second, a comfortable space for entertaining guests, just to the left of the worktable. Compare to images of the Studio and Studio Office, similarly arranged, at Saarinen House, Cranbrook Academy of Art in Gregory Wittkopp, ed., *Saarinen House and Garden: A Total Work of Art* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., in Association with Cranbrook Academy of Art Museum, 1995), 112-13, Plate 98.

²⁴⁸ CAA Announcements, 1945-46 and 1946-47, “Educational Staff.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. The CAA Announcements conflict with the biography of Dearstyne developed by researchers at Black Mountain College Project, where he was identified as the Director of the Design Department at Cranbrook from 1944-1946. Black Mountain College Project, “Howard Dearstyne/Biography/Black Mountain College Project,” <http://www.bmcproject.org/Biographies/DEARSTYNEhoward/DEARSTYNEhoward.htm> (accessed January 18, 2010).

²⁴⁹ CAA Announcement, 1946-47, “Courses.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. A review of this Announcement under each department indicates some variation in the time anticipated for completion of the Master of Fine Arts degree from one year (e.g., Ceramics, Drawing and Painting), to a more open-ended timeframe (e.g., Sculpture, Weaving, Design).

²⁵⁰ Supplement 1 to the CAA Announcement, 1946-47, “Requirements for Admission.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁵¹ Supplement 1 to the CAA Announcement, 1946-47, “Application for Admission.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁵² Supplement 1 to the CAA Announcement, 1946-47, “Application for Admission.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁵³ See generally, academic information supporting her CAA Application. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁵⁴ Phillips’s resume lists her time at Cranbrook as extending from the start of the Summer term of 1946 through the end of the Summer term in 1947. Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection. An acceptance letter in her file at the

Cranbrook Archives from Wallace Mitchell permits her to attend the fall session of '46, but it is obvious from Phillips's academic record, and from a class photo, that she did attend the summer session in 1946. See generally admissions related correspondence in Phillips, E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁵⁵ Photos of Summer Student Groups, 1946 (#AA-1061) and 1947 (#AA-2229), courtesy of Cranbrook Archives. According to Archivist Leslie S. Edwards, Cranbrook took group photos of students only during the summer sessions. Jennifer L. Lindsay Notes from Archives Visit, June 9, 2008, 2. In the 1946 photo, Phillips, wearing a short-sleeved blouse, is seated on the far left side of the photo at the very edge of the group, positioned between the second and third rows. In the 1947 photo, Phillips, in a prim-looking suit with a white bow, stands at the far right side of the group, in the third row.

²⁵⁶ Supplement 1 to the CAA Announcement, 1946-47, "Requirements for Admission." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁵⁷ Supplement 1 to the CAA Announcement, 1946-47, "Admission." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁵⁸ Supplement 1 to the CAA Announcement, 1946-47, "Non-Degree Students." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁵⁹ CAA Announcement, 1946-1947. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. CAA Announcement, 1945-46 shows Robert Sailors as the Weaving instructor under "1946 Summer Staff." Dates for the program appear under "Summer Session." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁶⁰ Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 202-03. See also, Gregory M. Wittkopp, *Robert Sailors Textiles*, (Bloomfield Hills, MI: Cranbrook Art Museum, 1989), published in conjunction with the exhibition "Robert Sailors Textiles, held at the Cranbrook Art Museum, June 4 - October 29, 1989. Robert D. Sailors Excerpts & Miscellanea File (hereinafter "Sailors E&M File"), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁶¹ Per Archivist Leslie S. Edwards. Jennifer L. Lindsay Notes from Archives Visit, June 9, 2008, 5.

²⁶² Course schedules and attendance records for Mary Walker Phillips, 1946-47. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁶³ See, e.g., Miller, "Interior Design and Furniture," *Design in America*, at 107. Many fellow students also testified to spending long hours in the studio, which was the norm at Cranbrook. Artist Ted Hallman, Cranbrook M.F.A. 1958, recalled that the studio was open every day from 7:30 AM until 11:00 PM; if you wanted to work all night, you

had only to ask for a passkey from the guard. Telephone interview of Ted Hallman, June 30, 2009.

²⁶⁴ Attendance record for Mary Walker Phillips, Weaving, Summer 1946, Robert D. Sailors, Instructor. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁶⁵ Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 320 n.124, referencing Ms. Thurman's Interview of Mary Walker Phillips, December 14, 1981.

²⁶⁶ Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 203. See also, Gregory M. Wittkopp, *Robert Sailors Textiles*, (Bloomfield Hills, MI: Cranbrook Art Museum, 1989), published in conjunction with the exhibition "Robert Sailors Textiles," held at the Cranbrook Art Museum, June 4 - October 29, 1989. Sailors E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁶⁷ Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 203. See also, Gregory M. Wittkopp, *Robert Sailors Textiles*, (Bloomfield Hills, MI: Cranbrook Art Museum, 1989), published in conjunction with the exhibition "Robert Sailors Textiles," held at the Cranbrook Art Museum, June 4 - October 29, 1989. Sailors E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁶⁸ See, e.g., Yoshiko Uchida, "Trude Guermonprez," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 2 (March-April 1959): 31 (wall hanging "enclosing flat shapes of copper sheeting"); Lois O'Connor, "Luella Williams: Weaver of Reed and Seed," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 6 (November-December, 1959): 10-13; Rose Slivka, ed., "Mary Buskirk: . . . a sense of freedom . . ." *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XX, No. 2 (March-April 1960): 10 (wall hanging using red osier branches).

²⁶⁹ Attendance record for Mary Walker Phillips, Weaving, Fall 1946, Marianne S. Dusenbury, Instructor. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁷⁰ Attendance record for Mary Walker Phillips, Weaving, Spring 1947, Marianne S. Dusenbury, Instructor. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁷¹ Attendance record for Mary Walker Phillips, Weaving, Summer 1947, Antoinette Prestini, Instructor. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁷² CAA Announcement, 1945-46, "Survey of the Arts." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁷³ Attendance record for Mary Walker Phillips, Weaving, Summer 1946, Harriet D. Adams, Instructor. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives

²⁷⁴ Course schedule for Mary Walker Phillips, Weaving, Fall 1946, Marianne S. Dusenbury, Instructor. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁷⁵ CAA Announcement, 1946-47, "Weaving." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁷⁶ See generally, entries for 1946-47 in notebook containing roster of “Exhibitions” held in the Cranbrook Art Museum, 1946-47. Cranbrook Archives.

²⁷⁷ See generally, e.g., exhibition files maintained by the Cranbrook Art Museum. “Prints by Paul Klee,” May 3-24, 1946, and “The New Spirit: Work by Le Corbusier,” October 6-27, 1946, are two examples of such shows for this period. The Paul Klee exhibit included numerous original works, whereas the Le Corbusier exhibit had only a few, but made use of panels and photographs to illustrate many of Le Corbusier’s ideas, works and design innovations. Exhibition Files, Cranbrook Art Museum.

²⁷⁸ Virginia Gardner Troy, *Anni Albers and Ancient American Textiles: From Bauhaus to Black Mountain* (Hants, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2002), 98-02.

²⁷⁹ The roster of “Exhibitions” held at the Cranbrook Art Museum in 1946-47 shows a collection of “Ancient Peruvian Textiles” was exhibited in February 7-26, 1946. Cranbrook Archives. See also the related exhibition brochure, “Ancient Peruvian Textiles,” The Textile Museum of the District of Columbia, 1945, billed as “an exhibition of 30 pre-Spanish textiles organized by the Division of Intellectual Cooperation, Pan-American Union, with the cooperation of the Office of Inter-American Affairs.” Cranbrook Art Library.

²⁸⁰ See generally, correspondence related to the “First Biennial Exhibition of Contemporary American Fabrics and Ceramics, February 1-28, 1946” Exhibition Files, Cranbrook Art Museum.

²⁸¹ Thurman, “Textiles,” *Design in America*, 201.

²⁸² See entries for April and May 3 – May 24, 1946, respectively, in notebook containing roster of “Exhibitions” held in the Cranbrook Art Museum, 1946-47. Cranbrook Archives.

²⁸³ See entries for October 6-27 and November 11-25, 1946, respectively, in notebook containing roster of “Exhibitions” held in the Cranbrook Art Museum, 1946-47. Cranbrook Archives. See also the related files for these exhibitions maintained at the Cranbrook Art Museum, which contain press releases and object lists that identify the objects included in the exhibitions.

²⁸⁴ See generally, roster of “Exhibitions,” Cranbrook Art Museum, 1946-47, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁸⁵ See entry for August 1946, in roster of “Exhibitions” held in the Cranbrook Art Museum. Cranbrook Archives.

²⁸⁶ Lauria and Fenton, eds., “The Cranbrook Vision,” Chapter 7, *Craft in America*, 175.

²⁸⁷ Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 201.

²⁸⁸ Zoltan Sepeshy to Mary Walker Phillips, May 21, 1947. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

²⁸⁹ CAA Announcement for 1946-1947, "Miscellaneous Information." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

²⁹⁰ Mary Walker Phillips, *Yellow Curtain Fabric*, 113 x 34 7/16 in. (287 x 87.5 cm), CAM #1964.17 (General Collection), moved from #S1947.38 (Study Collection). Received "Acquisition Honors, May 1947." Cranbrook Art Museum.

²⁹¹ Rossbach, "Marianne Strengell, *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-12, 9-10.

²⁹² "\$650 in Prizes Won by Fabric Designers," *New York Times*, June 12, 1947. Other Cranbrook graduates who won prizes in this competition were Antoinette Prestini and Winifred Schilling.

²⁹³ "\$650 in Prizes Won by Fabric Designers," *New York Times*, June 12, 1947.

²⁹⁴ *International Textile Exhibition 1947* (Greensboro, NC: Women's College of North Carolina Department of Art, 1947). Published in conjunction with the "International Textile Exhibition" held at the Women's College of North Carolina Department of Art, Greensboro, NC, November 4-30, 1947. Mary Walker Phillips File, Cranbrook Art Library. Other prize winning Cranbrook graduates and instructors included Ed Rossbach, Antoinette Prestini, Joy Lind, Robert Sailors and Floyd Le Vigne.

²⁹⁵ Julia Weissman, "Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting," *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 17.

²⁹⁶ Phillips likely resided at the Clay Street Center of the YWCA located at 940 Powell Street and 965 Clay Street in San Francisco in a neighborhood adjacent to Chinatown. The center was designed by Julia Morgan for the YWCA and built in 1932 according to a local history website "NoeHill in San Francisco," at "San Francisco Landmarks: Landmark 122 Clay Street Center," <http://www.noehill.com/sf/landmarks/sf122.asp>, accessed August 29, 2009. Phillips's older sister, Martha (Mrs. Glen A. Stackhouse), also lived in San Francisco at this time, and her younger brother, W. David Phillips, lived nearby in Oakland. See Phillips, J.R., *The Good Intent*, at 46, and Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, "Dedication." It is not clear who "Virginia," the addressee of the letter, was. She may have been part of the administrative staff at Cranbrook Academy of Art in 1948, but she is not identified in the CAA Announcement 1947-1948. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. After this letter, Phillips wrote primarily to Wallace Mitchell, who served in various capacities at Cranbrook as both an instructor and an administrator.

Phillips's letter of 1948 closely approximates Glen Kaufman's more contemporary recollections of his experiences with Liebes ten years later: "I mean she had this arrangement with the Dobeckmun Company that made Lurex. And she had this section of the studio, which was called "Fort Knox" where all the metallics were in every color, size and dimension available. And it was walking into this blast of color that was unbelievable -- the yarns, and the fabrics, and the metallics." Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

²⁹⁷ Rossbach, "The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes," *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 10, describing the blue Chinese silk robes that all of Liebes's employees wore because it was a color in which Liebes herself looked particularly stunning. Kaufman also recalled that Liebes had a routine for entertaining clients that included dressing in a Chinese robe. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

²⁹⁸ Rossbach, "The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes," *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 12. Glen Kaufman also recalled Liebes staking her claim to fame on color: "She was in all the shelter magazines. She would take these trunk shows to department stores and ladies with hats and gloves would come and listen to her expound on the revolutionary idea of putting blue and green together in one combination, or red and orange. She invented these combinations of colors, or so she would lead you to believe so, I'm not sure but in many ways it was true. And she had contacts in the fashion world – Bonnie Cashin, and she had contacts in the design world and these people would float in and out. It was a heady atmosphere to be in. 767 Lexington Avenue – right near Bloomie's." Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

²⁹⁹ Rossbach, "The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes," *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 12. This is a modification of the color relationship described by San Francisco color theorist and design instructor Rudolph Schaeffer in his Oral History Transcript ("middle – dark – middle – light") and which he derived from color values in Japanese painting. See note Rudolph Schaeffer, "The Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design: Art in San Francisco Since 1915," an oral history conducted 1981 by Margaretta K. Mitchell, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1982 (hereinafter "Schaeffer Oral History"), at 79-80.

I reviewed the text of the oral history on-line courtesy of The Open Library, <http://openlibrary.org/details/rudolphdesign00scharich>, accessed May 20, 2009.

Of interest, Schaeffer was born in Clare, Michigan in 1886. *Ibid.*, at 1. He studied art in Munich, Germany from 1914-1917, and was conversant in the European movements of the period including the Arts & Crafts movement, the Vienna Workshops (which he admired and emulated in his use of strong, saturated colors that came from the

strident chemical dyes of that period), and the Bauhaus. See generally, Schaeffer Oral History at 26-55, 81.

³⁰⁰ Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 10-12. As previously noted, Liebes and some of her staff had studied with Rudolph Schaeffer. Schaeffer does not specify a precise date for when he trained Liebes and her staff, except that it would have been around 1930. Schaeffer Oral History, 80-81, 83, 171. Schaeffer maintained that Liebes used his theories of color and adopted his own use of colored warps in her work. *Ibid.*, 79-81, 83, 171. Further, her “Chinatown” aesthetic -- as recalled so vividly by Rossbach, and by Jack Lenor Larsen in *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric*, (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1972), 29, was also likely influenced by Schaeffer, whose first studio was located in Chinatown, and who drew heavily upon Asian art and locally available Asian fabrics and decorative art, as well as on his personal knowledge of avant-garde European movements, to develop his theory of prismatic color and rhythm and demonstrate its principles to students. *Ibid.*, citing Rudolph Schaeffer’s Obituary, *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 10, 1988, which precedes the Table of Contents, and 73. See also, Ed Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 10.

³⁰¹ See notes 24-25, *supra*. Of interest, Jack Lenor Larsen stated that he learned of Schaeffer’s color theories “by proxy” from a friend and fellow designer who had studied with Schaeffer. Later, Larsen was instrumental in getting Schaeffer admitted to the American Craft Council as a Fellow. Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009.

³⁰² Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 9.

³⁰³ Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 10, 12.

³⁰⁴ Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 9.

³⁰⁵ According to the obituary printed in the *New York Times*, Phillips was invited in the spring of 1948 via a telegram signed by “Mrs. Frank Lloyd Wright,” to Taliesin West in Scottsdale, Arizona to weave draperies and table linens. The instructions in the telegram read: “KINDLY BRING COTTON MATERIAL FOR WEAVING THIRTY FIVE YARDS DRAPES NATURAL DEEP ROSE LAVENDER AND DARK BROWN ALSO GOLD METALLICS.” Margalit Fox, “Mary Walker Phillips, 83, Knitter of Art,” *The New York Times*, Obituaries, Tuesday, November 20, 2007; see also, Patricia Abrahamian, Guest Curator, *Fine Art in Stitches: Creative Knitting, Macramé, Weaving*, (Fresno, CA: Fresno Art Museum, 2005), at 3. Patricia Abrahamian stated during an interview by the author on July 9, 2008 in Fresno, CA that the telegram had gone to the

Liebes Studio in San Francisco in 1948. Yet, according to the sample of the tablecloth pictured in *Fine Art in Stitches*, Phillips noted that she wove the tablecloth in 1949, although it is possible that she had later incorrectly dated the sample by one year. Ms. Abrahamian also stated in the interview that she contacted Taliesin West while she was preparing the brochure for the retrospective exhibit of Phillips's work she curated in 2005 to ask whether they could contribute any additional information about the textiles Phillips wove for the Wrights, but she was unable to learn more about the commission.

³⁰⁶ Christa C. Mayer Thurman, "'Make Designs to Your Heart's Content': The Frank Lloyd Wright/Schumacher Venture." *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* Vol. 21, No. 2, *The Prairie School: Design Vision for the Midwest* (1995): 152-163 and 189-191 at 190, n.17.

³⁰⁷ Phillips worked for Liebes in "Fall 1947, spring 1948, fall 1950." Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection.

³⁰⁸ Rossbach, "The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes," *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 9. By 1954, Liebes's former studio was advertising itself as "The Yarn Depot, Inc.– formerly Dorothy Liebes Yarn Depot." Advertisement for The Yarn Depot, *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIV, No. 5 (September/October 1954): 6. The Yarn Depot continued on under new ownership as a vendor of fine fibers for weavers and of finished goods for many years. The shop also became a venue for fiber artists to exhibit their work and conduct workshops. According to her resume, Phillips exhibited her weaving there in a One-Woman show in 1955 and again in 1957. In 1966, she taught a one-week workshop there in knitting. Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection.

³⁰⁹ Glen Kaufman recalled that Liebes may have continued to produce a certain style of rigid blinds in the San Francisco location: "I'm not sure when she moved her studio from San Francisco to New York -- but anyway she went to town on these rigid screens, window screens, and they were woven, I think, in the Sutter Street studio in San Francisco." Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

³¹⁰ See Couturier Gallery, "Otto and Gertrud Natzler," a chronology, at <http://www.couturiergallery.com/images/OtherArtists/Natzler/xbio.asp>, Accessed August 28, 2009. Amberg/Hirth represented the Natzlers in San Francisco from about 1940-1950. Phillips would have known of the Natzlers from other exhibition venues as well, including many in which she also exhibited. These include the annual California State Fair and Exhibition held in Sacramento, various Cranbrook Academy of Art exhibitions, the St. Paul Gallery's biennial "Fiber, Clay, Metal" exhibitions, and regular exhibitions at the Detroit Institute of Arts, to name a few. See biography of Otto Natzler at Art Scene: A Guide to Galleries and Museums in Southern California, <http://artscenecal.com/ArtistsFiles/NatzlerO/NatzlerOFile/ONatzlerBio.html>, accessed May 20, 2009.

³¹¹ Mary Walker Phillips to Marianne Strengell, August 23, 1949. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. It is curious that Phillips did not mention her work for Liebes or for the Wrights to Strengell in this letter.

³¹² Mary Walker Phillips to Marianne Strengell, August 23, 1949. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. See also, Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection, and Richard Petterson, "A Climate for Craft Art," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (September-October 1956): 11.

³¹³ Phillips's grandparents, whether maternal or paternal is not clear, provided Phillips with the funds necessary for her to attend Cranbrook in the 1940s; she also cited her inheritance from them as the source of the regular contributions she made to Cranbrook's scholarship funds and to other alumni funding requests over the years. See Phillips to Glen Paulsen, President, Cranbrook Academy of Art, October 23, 1968. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³¹⁴ Strengell's comments to Wallace Mitchell were typed at the top of the first page of Phillips's handwritten letter. Mitchell, from 1944-1963 was Secretary and Registrar at Cranbrook. See n. 104, *infra*. Regarding Strengell's involvement in scholarships for students, see Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 203 and n. 117. Notable scholarship students among Phillips's contemporaries were Jack Lenor Larsen and Ted Hallman.

³¹⁵ Jesse Hadden, Assistant Registrar, Cranbrook Academy of Art, to Mary Walker Phillips, September 29, 1949. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³¹⁶ Jesse Hadden, Assistant Registrar, Cranbrook Academy of Art, to Mary Walker Phillips, September 29, 1949. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³¹⁷ See, e.g. Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, November 20, 1952: "Enclosed is a check to be used as you see fit. Either for equipment for the weaving department or for the scholarship fund (weaving dpt) or for books or textiles." Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³¹⁸ "The Cranbrook Quarterly," Autumn 1976. Many letters in Phillips's file reference her contributions to the school, as well as her efforts to locate promising students and her activities on behalf of the Alumni Association. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³¹⁹ Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection, shows she participated in several exhibitions in 1950-51, and that she was involved in "work and travel in Europe" from 1952-53.

³²⁰ Phillips, J.R., in *The Good Intent*, 46, states that Mary Walker Phillips resided in Fresno with her parents during her father's illness from 1952-1954, however, it is clear from her resume and correspondence that she was living in Switzerland from July of

1952 until at least November of 1953, when she was arranging to return home via Cranbrook. See, e.g., Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, November 20, 1952 and November 12, 1953. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. See also, Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection.

³²¹ See Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 208. Larsen's resume states that he was working in his own studio in Seattle, WA in 1949 and attended Cranbrook from 1950-51. See LongHouse Reserve Website, "Jack Larsen: Personal Biography" at <http://www.longhouse.org/larsen.ihtml>, (accessed August 29, 2009).

³²² Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, July 23, 2009; Jack Lenor Larsen, *Jack Lenor Larsen: A Weaver's Memoir* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1998), 26-27; Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 208.

³²³ Ibid.

³²⁴ Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, Cranbrook Academy of Art, November 20, 1952. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³²⁵ Troy, *Anni Albers and Ancient American Textiles*, 102-115; Kathryn Shattuck, "In the Woof and the Warp of Miniatures Interlocking Metaphors and Journeys," September 4, 2006, Art and Design, <http://www.sheilahicks.com/new-york-times.html> (accessed January 27, 2010); Cora Carlyle, ed., "The Weavings of Sheila Hicks," *American Fabrics*, No. 53 (Summer 1961): 52.

³²⁶ Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, February 7, 1952, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³²⁷ Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, February 7, 1952, and Announcement, "Mary Phillips is Engaged To the Rev. John G. Harrell," *Fresno Bee*, January 17, 1952 (per handwritten notations), Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³²⁸ Ibid. Harrell was descended from J.B. Grinnell, a founder of Grinnell College in Grinnell, IA. A spring wedding was planned. See "Rev. John G. Harrell to Wed Mary W. Phillips of Fresno," *Los Angeles Times*, Jan. 17, 1952.

³²⁹ Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, November 20, 1952, Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³³⁰ See Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection, e.g., among other sources, including correspondence in her E&M File, Cranbrook Archives, and several interviews she gave to journalists over the years. I have been unable to discover anything about this textile company, how Phillips came to be employed by them, or anything specific about her work there. She may have learned of the company, or have been recommended to them, through Ernest Amberg and Hugh Hirth of the Amberg/Hirth Gallery, which Phillips described in a letter to Marianne Strengell, dated August 23,

1949, as a dealer of contemporary Swiss linens and ceramics, or from her prior employment with Gump's, V.C. Morris, or Dorothy Liebes. When her personal papers become available to the public, they may shed more light on this aspect of her professional history.

³³¹ Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, November 12, 1953. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³³² Phillips, J.R., *The Good Intent*, 47.

³³³ Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection; Julia Weissman, "Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting," *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 17. See also CAA News Letter for 1955, "Other Jobs:" "Mary Walker Phillips – Conducts her own hand-weaving business in Fresno, CA." Cranbrook Archives. Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, February 12, 1957, shows her business stationary with her name and address printed at the top of the page and the phrase "Handwoven Textiles" printed at the bottom. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³³⁴ Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection.

³³⁵ Richard Petterson, "A Climate for Craft Art," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (September-October 1956): 11.

³³⁶ Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection.

³³⁷ Richard Petterson, "A Climate for Craft Art," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (September-October 1956): 11.

³³⁸ Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection. Phillips entered the Wichita Decorative Arts and Ceramics Exhibitions I 1948, 1949, 1950, and 1956. She also entered the International Textile Exhibitions held at the Women's College of North Carolina Department of Art, Greensboro, NC, in 1947, 1948, and 1949.

³³⁹ Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection. In 1949, Phillips entered Cranbrook's Second Biennial Exhibition of Textiles and Ceramics, in 1951 Phillips entered Cranbrook's Third Biennial Exhibition of Textiles and Ceramics, and in 1954 she participated in the Cranbrook Academy of Art Alumni Exhibition.

³⁴⁰ Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection.

³⁴¹ Richard Petterson, "A Climate for Craft Art," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (September-October 1956): 11. See also, Joy Hakanson, "Cranbrook," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 3 (May-June 1959): 18-20, 20; Thurman, "Textiles," *Design in America*, 190-92 and fig. 155; Alice Adams, "Exhibitions," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXII, No. 2 (March-April 1962): 43, reviewing an exhibition of Marianne Strengell's work at the National Design Center in New York, February 1 – April 15, 1963, that included

“ecclesiastical panels,” and Alice Adams, “Marianne Strengell: ‘...good design is a way of life . . .’” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIII, No. 1 (January-February 1963): 34-36 and 51 at 51.

³⁴² Telephone Conversation with Kim Coombs, Church Administrator, St. John’s Episcopal Church, Stockton, CA, May 12, 2009.

³⁴³ Phillips lists “1955” as the date on her resume. Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection. It is not known how Phillips was selected for this commission, but friend Barbara Factor recalled that Phillips was a dedicated member of the Episcopalian faith. Barbara Factor, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Chicago, IL, April 26, 2009.

³⁴⁴ Rossbach, “The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes,” *American Craft*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 12.

³⁴⁵ An image of the woven banner, fig. 53, was among the slides in Phillips’s files at the American Craft Council. Mary Walker Phillips, Slides, ACC Artist Files. Phillips provided no information about the work; neither a date nor a description of materials and techniques is currently available, but the banner does appear to be woven with the image of the cross inserted in the weft. Perhaps when Phillips’s papers are made available to scholars, more information about this piece will be discovered. *The Cross*, 1967, is in the collection of W. David Phillips of Fresno, California.

³⁴⁶ Miller, “Interior Design and Furniture,” 105-107 and fig. 92 and Thurman, “Textiles,” 190-192 and fig. 155, *Design in America*.

³⁴⁷ “Sacred Subjects by Twelve Contemporaries,” September 9-October 8, 1961 and “Collaboration: Artist and Architect,” November 1962. Exhibition Files, Cranbrook Art Museum.

³⁴⁸ Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of Art Knitting,” *Knitters* (Spring – Summer 1985): 16-18, 17.

³⁴⁹ Mary Walker Phillips to Marianne Strengell, August 23, 1949 notes an influx of Cranbrook graduates to the Bay Area. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. See also, Richard Petterson, “A Climate for Craft Art,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (September - October 1956): 11.

³⁵⁰ Richard Petterson, “A Climate for Craft Art,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (September - October 1956): 11.

³⁵¹ Richard Petterson, “A Climate for Craft Art,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (September - October 1956): 11.

³⁵² Richard Petterson, "A Climate for Craft Art," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (September - October 1956): 11.

³⁵³ Julia Weissman, "Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of Art Knitting," *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18, 17.

³⁵⁴ Richard Petterson, "A Climate for Craft Art," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XVI, No. 5 (September - October 1956): 11.

³⁵⁵ Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, February 12, 1957. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. The measurements Phillips provides for her workroom do not seem to be accurate.

³⁵⁶ CA News Letter 1959, "Briefs." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

³⁵⁷ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

³⁵⁸ Mary Walker Phillips letter to Wallace Mitchell, undated, ca. 1959. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³⁵⁹ Joy Hakanson, "Cranbrook," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 3 (May-June 1959): 18-21, at 18-19. Hakanson, a Michigan-based newspaper reporter, also noted that "[a]vailable records . . . reveal that during 1956 and 1957 former students had more than 60 one-man exhibits, participated in almost 200 group shows, won 180 awards and scholarships."

³⁶⁰ Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, undated, ca. 1959. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³⁶¹ Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, undated, ca. 1959. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³⁶² Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, undated, ca. 1959. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³⁶³ Wallace Mitchell to Mary Walker Phillips, May 20, 1960, stating changes in academic requirements, and Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, July 1, 1960, emphasis in the original. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³⁶⁴ Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, undated but ca. Spring or Summer, 1960. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³⁶⁵ Kim Ode, "Wall hangings give knitting a new image," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, April 4, 1987, page 01.C

³⁶⁶ Kim Ode, "Wall hangings give knitting a new image," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, April 4, 1987, page 01.C

³⁶⁷ CAA Announcement, "Weaving," 1960-63. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09). Note that the description of the program did not change for two years after Kaufman succeeded Strengell, but in the fall of 1963, Cranbrook changed the department from "Weaving" to "Weaving and Fabric Design."

³⁶⁸ Supplement to the CAA Announcements, "Weaving," 1960-62. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09).

³⁶⁹ Supplement to the CAA Announcements, "Weaving," 1960-62. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09).

³⁷⁰ Supplement to the CAA Announcements, "Weaving," 1960-62. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09). The articulation changed in the CAA Announcement, 1962-63, "Weaving," under Glen Kaufman, but the requirements did not change substantially: "Graduate students must demonstrate a thorough mastery of a wide variety of weaving techniques along with a comprehensive understanding of textile design, as described in the Bachelor's Degree program. The student, with the instructor's guidance, selects specific areas for research and experimentation. These projects should culminate in work suitable for the student degree show and thesis material." CAA Announcement, 1962-62, at 40. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09). The expectations of for the M.F.A. thesis in 1962-63 was that it be "based upon research in his field of specialization and including a photographic record of his work," and that: "[t]he nature and scope of the thesis is determined by consultations between the student and the department head, and must reveal a high degree of individuality. At the conclusion of his graduate studies the student is required to prepare an exhibition of the work he has done for inspection and approval of the faculty." *Ibid.*, at 8.

³⁷¹ CA News Letter, 1962. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09).

³⁷² Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009; CA News Letter, 1961, "New Jobs and Other News." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09).

³⁷³ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁴ Barbara Factor, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Chicago, IL, April 26, 2009; Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

³⁷⁵ CAA Announcement, "Weaving," 1962-63, 40. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), emphasis added.

³⁷⁶ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

³⁷⁷ Gregory Wittkopp, ed., et al. *Hot House: Expanding the Field of Fiber at Cranbrook 1970-2007* (Bloomfield Hills, MI: Cranbrook Art Museum, 2007), 9. This catalogue was published in conjunction with the retrospective exhibition “Hot House: Expanding the Field of Fiber at Cranbrook 1970-2007,” held at the Cranbrook Art Museum, June 17 – October 14, 2007.

³⁷⁸ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

³⁷⁹ Kim Ode, “Wall hangings give knitting a new image,” *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, April 4, 1987.

³⁸⁰ Phillips, who was a reluctant scholar in subjects outside of art, struggled to collect the 60 credits in distribution requirements that were a necessary part of the Cranbrook degree in the 1960s: 6 credits each in English, Social Studies, Natural Science or Mathematics, English Literature, History of Art, and 30 credits in Liberal Arts and Art (with Art not to exceed 20 credits). She cobbled these credits together by taking classes in the summer and through extension programs, as well as submitting transcripts for prior study at other institutions. See generally correspondence between Mary Walker Phillips and Wallace Mitchell regarding fulfilling distribution requirements. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³⁸¹ Supplement No. 1 to the Cranbrook Academy of Art Announcement 1960-61 Course Outlines, “Requirements for Graduation: Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree,” 2. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

³⁸² Mary Walker Phillips, B.F.A. Thesis, *Wool*, May 1962 (hereinafter, “B.F.A. Thesis”), 18. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

³⁸³ *Ibid.* The notion of research and experimentation goes back to Saarinen’s original characterization of the Academy as “a research institution for creative art” and is consistent with the objectives articulated when the school first opened – that it stay in step with the needs of society through the production and marketing of objects of good design. CAA Announcements, 1932 and 1933. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

³⁸⁴ Forms conferring the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees to Mary Walker Phillips signed by Cranbrook faculty members. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

³⁸⁵ CAA Announcement, 1943-44. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

³⁸⁶ CAA Announcement, 1946-47 “Weaving.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

³⁸⁷ CAA Announcements, 1960-61. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

³⁸⁸ CAA Announcement, 1962-63, “Weaving,” 40. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

³⁸⁹ Telephone interview of Eleen Auvil, June 15, 2009.

³⁹⁰ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 21, 2009. Telephone interview of Eleen Auvil, June 15, 2009. Auvil completed her B.F.A. at Cranbrook in Sculpture in 1960 and her M.F.A. in Weaving in 1961. Alice Parrott, in “. . . the right, unhurried pace . . .” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XX, No. 1 (January-February 1960): 20, wrote that “my weaving had remained . . . very much in the Cranbrook style, with a kind of place mat neatness. Finally the discontent broke out, and I knew I wanted to make beautiful rugs and blankets which would compare . . . to the Indian weaving. Their handspun yarns were superior to mine, their vegetable-dyed colors were richer and more interesting in their variety.” Mary Buskirk, another Cranbrook graduate was also experimenting with natural dyes at this time, but in combination with commercially dyed fibers; she liked the way “the combination of the softer vegetable dyes with the sharper commercial ones can result in color relationships that are quite beautiful.” Rose Slivka, ed., “Mary Buskirk: a sense of freedom,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XX, No. 2 (March-April 1960): 8-10.

³⁹¹ Hans Namuth, “Fabric is the Fashion,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 3 (May-June 1961): 18-23.

³⁹² Hans Namuth, “Fabric is the Fashion,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 3 (May-June 1961): 18.

³⁹³ “Fabrics International,” 1961, an exhibition co-sponsored by the Museum of Contemporary Crafts and the Philadelphia Museum College of Art and circulated by the American Federation of Arts. Rose Slivka, ed., “Fabrics International: Catalogue of the Exhibition,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 21.

³⁹⁴ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 21, 2009.

³⁹⁵ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 21, 2009. One of Auvil’s pillows was featured in an exhibition “Designed for Production: The Craftsman’s Approach,” at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, March 6- May 3, 1964. See Rose Slivka, ed., “The Craftsman Produces/1,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 2 (March-April 1964): 30.

³⁹⁶ Telephone interview of Eleen Auvil, June 15, 2009.

³⁹⁷ Telephone interview of Eleen Auvil, June 15, 2009. Fellow student Adela Akers was so inspired by her experience spinning on Auvil's equipment that she purchased a large "walking wheel" to spin her own woolen yarns for use in weaving rugs and blankets. Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 21, 2009. A "woolen spun" yarn is a loose, single-ply yarn that can have a lot of hand-produced character, including a thick-thin interest; fibers are not always aligned in a uniform direction before they are spun. A worsted spun yarn is more tightly twisted when spun, uses longer fibers that are aligned in the same direction, and is often plied. Working to spin a yarn, and then using the yarn teaches one a tremendous amount about fiber that can never be learned from using commercially produced yarns.

³⁹⁸ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 21, 2009.

³⁹⁹ Telephone interviews of Eleen Auvil, June 15, 2009 and Adela Akers, May 21, 2009.

⁴⁰⁰ Phillips, B.F.A. Thesis, "Pillows," and Mary Walker Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, "Experimental Fabrics," May 1963, (hereinafter "M.F.A. Thesis"), "Leather." Telephone interview of Eleen Auvil, June 15, 2009.

⁴⁰¹ Supplements to CAA Announcements, 1960-63, "Requirements for Graduation." Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. As Phillips's thesis approval forms show, multiple signatures were required from the Cranbrook academic community, including that of Zoltan Sepeshy, Director, in addition to all the faculty members who worked with directly with her. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴⁰² Joy Hakanson, "1500 Years of Tapestry at Cranbrook," [date unavailable], and "Cranbrook Serves Textiles with a Flair," *The Detroit News*, February 21, 1965. Cranbrook Archives.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ See generally, Exhibition Files, Cranbrook Art Museum.

⁴⁰⁵ Strengell, "A Personal Approach to Textile Design," January 1, 1960, Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴⁰⁶ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁴⁰⁷ Kaufman commented on the substantial amount of weaving represented in Phillips's B.F.A. thesis, stating that he thought the work as comprehensive as was generally required for an M.F.A. thesis. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁴⁰⁸ See earlier reviews of Phillips's work in the 1940s by Antionette Prestini and Marianne Strengell, both of whom referenced Phillips's speed, competence and prolific production of woven work. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴⁰⁹ Notes in Phillips's academic file indicate the B.F.A. degree was officially granted on February 1, 1963, and the M.F.A. degree on May 31, 1963.

⁴¹⁰ A rug Phillips showed in her B.F.A. portfolio won a non-purchase prize in the California State Fair in 1961.

⁴¹¹ Course Evaluation, "Weaving, Fall Term, 1960," Instructor: Marianne Strengell. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴¹² Course Evaluation, "Weaving, Spring Term, 1961," Instructor: Marianne Strengell. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴¹³ Course Evaluation, "Weaving, Fall Term, 1961," Instructor: Glen Kaufman. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴¹⁴ Course Evaluation, "Weaving, Spring Term, 1962," Instructor: Glen Kaufman. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴¹⁵ Course Evaluation, "Weaving, Fall Term, 1962, Instructor: Glen Kaufman. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴¹⁶ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, ii. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴¹⁷ Phillips, B.F.A. Thesis, 18. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴¹⁸ Compare the articulation of the weaving curriculum in the CAA Announcement for 1946-47 to that in the CAA Announcement for 1961-62. Even after Glen Kaufman had been at Cranbrook for one year, the basic program and the competencies students were expected to develop, including merchandising and designing for the power loom, had not changed significantly. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁴¹⁹ William C. Segal, "An Analysis of the Textile Industry for Executives," *American Fabrics*, No. 42 (Spring 1958): 42.

⁴²⁰ William C. Segal, "An Analysis of the Textile Industry for Executives," *American Fabrics*, No. 42, (Spring 1958): 42.

⁴²¹ Phillips herself discussed the lack of many ready examples of her weaving from the 1940s in a letter to Roy Slade, President, Cranbrook Academy of Art, ca. 1979-80. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. The Cranbrook Art Museum has only the one example from that era, entitled *Yellow Curtain Fabric*, 1947, CAM 1964.17. The Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum has several samples, and there is

the recently re-discovered dossal curtain in Stockton, CA from the 1950s. Phillips's family may have additional samples or fabrics from this period.

⁴²² Compare Rossbach's discussion of the color palette of Dorothy Liebes in "The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes," *American Craft*, Vol. 42, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 10, 12 to his discussion of the color palette of Marianne Strengell in "Marianne Strengell," *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 9-10. Although the two artists certainly made fabrics with similar colors, the visual qualities of these fabrics are quite different.

⁴²³ Phillips, B.F.A. Thesis, "Clothing Fabrics."

⁴²⁴ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁴²⁵ See generally, Strengell, "A Personal Approach to Textile Design," January 15, 1960, as well as a typewritten document, two pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, and a one-page typewritten document, undated, entitled "general approach to the story." Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. See also, Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁴²⁶ Jack Lenor Larsen, "[W]eaving for Name Designers," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XII, No. 4 (July-August 1952): 1-15, 13.

⁴²⁷ Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, February, 12, 1957. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴²⁸ Jack Lenor Larsen, "[W]eaving for Name Designers," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XII, No. 4 (July-August 1952): 1-15, 14.

⁴²⁹ Jack Lenor Larsen, "[W]eaving for Name Designers," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XII, No. 4 (July-August 1952): 1-15, 14.

⁴³⁰ Jack Lenor Larsen, "[W]eaving for Name Designers," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XII, No. 4 (July-August 1952): 1-15, 14.

⁴³¹ Jack Lenor Larsen, "[W]eaving for Name Designers," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XII, No. 4 (July-August 1952): 1-15, 14.

⁴³² Jack Lenor Larsen, "[W]eaving for Name Designers," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XII, No. 4 (July-August 1952): 1-15, 14-15.

⁴³³ Jack Lenor Larsen, "[W]eaving for Name Designers," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XII, No. 4 (July-August 1952): 1-15, 13.

⁴³⁴ See, e.g. Lore Kadden, "Designing for the Fashion Market," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIII, No. 2 (March-April 1953): 38-39. Kadden was a student of Anni Albers at Black Mountain College. Ibid. See also, Peggy Ives, "Handweaver prospers with haute couture," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIII, No. 4 (July-August 1953): 39-41. Ives wove fabrics for such noted designers as Mainbocher, Charles James and Valentino. Ibid.

⁴³⁵ Larsen and Thorpe, in *Elements of Weaving* at 110-111 describe these weaves as having characteristics that make them good for clothing. See also Verla Birrell, *The Textile Arts: A Handbook of Fabric Structure and Design Processes: Ancient and Modern Weaving, Braiding, Printing and Other Textile Techniques* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 228-232, for a good description of how these weaves are made.

⁴³⁶ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁴³⁷ Fabrics 3 and 4 are a coordinated pair with both fabrics appearing to use the same materials but in differently patterned weaves. Although Phillips identifies Fabric 3 as "[w]ool" and Fabric 4 as "[w]ool, silk and linen" it is likely that both fabrics had the same composition of materials.

⁴³⁸ Frank Akers was married to Adela Akers, a weaver and fiber artist ten years Phillips's junior, who attended Cranbrook with Phillips from 1960-63. Barbara Factor, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Chicago, IL, April 26, 2009; Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁴³⁹ "Fabrics International," an exhibit that would not visit Cranbrook until October 1962, featured a number of contemporary fabrics woven with handspun yarns. One of Strengell's former students, Ted Hallman, a classmate of Glen Kaufman's in the late 1950s, wove a jacket that featured handspun yarns for the show. Mary Alice Smith, ed., "Fabrics International: A Presentation of New Developments and Adaptions of Ancient Techniques," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 6-8, 46-7 at 8 and 46.

⁴⁴⁰ Strengell, "A Personal Approach to Textile Design," January 15, 1960, at 1. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴⁴¹ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009. See also, Rossbach, "The Glitter and Glamour of Dorothy Liebes," *American Craft*, Vol. 42, No. 6 (December, 1982 – January 1983): 10, 12.

⁴⁴² Hans Namuth, "Fabric is the Fashion," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 3 (May-June 1961): 18.

⁴⁴³ See also, Mary Alice Smith, ed., "Fabrics International: A Presentation of New Developments and Adaptions of Ancient Techniques," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 6-8, 46-7.

⁴⁴⁴ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁴⁴⁵ These include “gilling,” “combing,” and [d]rawing out and doubling.” Bendure and Pfeiffer, *America’s Fabrics*, at 41 and 270.

⁴⁴⁶ A rug pictured in the CAA Announcement for “Weaving” in 1943-44 shows a similar form of ornament. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. More research is needed to determine the origin of this design feature.

⁴⁴⁷ Phillips, B.F.A Thesis, “Rugs.” Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁴⁸ Strengell, typewritten document of two pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009. Rugs were one of the larger and more complex projects undertaken by students at Cranbrook. The completion of such a large piece was usually celebrated by the students within the department at a “rug party.”

⁴⁴⁹ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009; Strengell, typewritten document of two pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴⁵⁰ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁴⁵¹ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009. See also the “[u]pholstery fabric designed by Paul Maute, Germany, for Knoll Associates, [of] hand-spun natural wool filling on a cotton warp in a mock plain weave with binder picks for solidity,” exhibited in “Fabrics International,” 1961, an exhibition co-sponsored by the Museum of Contemporary Crafts and the Philadelphia Museum College of Art and circulated by the American Federation of Arts. Rose Slivka, ed., “Fabrics International: Catalogue of the Exhibition,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 11.

⁴⁵² Phillips, B.F.A. Thesis, “Upholstery.” Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁵³ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009. In accordance with Kaufman’s recollections, this fabric compares favorably with images of Liebes’s fabrics recorded by photographer Charles E. Steinheimer for *Life* Magazine at the Liebes Studio in San Francisco in 1947. See this image, entitled “Weaver Dorothy Liebes posing in front of woven panels made on the loom in her studio,” which is hosted by Google Images on behalf of *Life* Magazine at <http://images.google.com/hosted/life/?q=dorothy+liebes&prev=/images%3Fq%3Ddorothy%2Bliebes%26gbv%3D2%26hl%3Den%26sa%3DG&imgurl=fabeba0afb409384> (accessed August 29, 2010).

⁴⁵⁴ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁴⁵⁵ According to information available via a virtual museum called Weaving Art Museum and Research Institute:

Soumak technique, like that used to make a kelim, produces a patterned weaving with a flat surface of discontinuous horizontal threads known as weft. The variously colored weft threads are wrapped around the warp threads, the primary structural component. In kelims, they are passed over and under adjacent warps. But unlike kelim weaving there are no slits at each color join and there is a supplementary weft thread which, along with the pattern weft, provides the second component necessary to create a structurally sound woven object. These structural wefts are invisible from both the front and back of a soumak weaving and can only be seen by bending the weaving in the horizontal direction. There are, however, some later groups of soumaks, which lack structural wefts and the added strength they provide.

Because of the necessity for a structural weft after each row of weft wrappings, soumak weaving, like that of pile-carpet, proceeds a row at a time, again differing from kelim where color areas can be 'built-up' independently from each other. There are also several different soumak techniques - plain and countered as well reverse. These styles can also differ somewhat depending on the many possible combinations of warp threads are used for each individual wrapping.

Jack Cassin, "Soumak and Kelim Weaving of the Caucasus, Part 3," Weaving Art Museum and Research Institute, http://www.weavingartmuseum.org/ex2_main.htm, (accessed March 27, 2009).

⁴⁵⁶ According to an on-line explanation of "double weave" provided by The Handweaver's Guild of America, double weave is a technique for doubling the production capacity of any loom by weaving a double width of fabric simultaneously. To do this a weaver threads the loom with double the "sett" or warp threads, half of which are worked first and when the shed is raised, the other half are worked. By using a continuous "weft" or horizontal thread the weaver joins the two halves along one side of the loom. When complete and released from the loom, the fabric opens out to its full width. Precision is required to manage the dense work areas; mistakes in the weaving will join the two halves of the fabric irrevocably at those points and will ruin the piece. Mary Petrini, "Right From the Start" by Mary Petrini, The Handweaver's Guild of America, Inc., <http://weavespindye.org/html/rfts-dbl.html>, (accessed March 27, 2009).

⁴⁵⁷ It has not been possible to exhaustively review within the compass of this thesis all of the secondary source materials Phillips cited as support for her B.F.A. Thesis, however, a close review of some sources showed that Phillips used her secondary source

materials quite liberally, both with and without proper citation. For example, Phillips copied the text on pages 2-5 of her B.F.A. Thesis almost verbatim from *America's Fabrics* by Zelma Bendure and Gladys Pfeiffer, at 30-34, with only portions of the text set within quotation marks. Further, Phillips often made errors of attribution in the citations themselves, which may have contributed to these irregularities. Where she did provide footnotes to her text in pages 2-5, she attributed them erroneously to *American Fabrics*, No. 15 (Fall 1950): 100, which was the cover page to a substantial section published in that issue of the magazine entitled "Wool—Nature's Unique Fiber."

⁴⁵⁸ B.F.A. Thesis, 18-20. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. Phillips derived most of the information in this section, without providing specific citation, from paraphrasing and directly copying text from Cora Carlyle, ed., "Wonder Fiber W," *American Fabrics*, No. 22 (Summer 1952): 73-74 and 79-84, and from Cora Carlyle, ed., "Wool's Multitudinous Facets Appeal to People," and "Stages in the Processing of Wool" both from *American Fabrics*, No. 15 (Fall 1950): 112, 114-115.

⁴⁵⁹ B.F.A. Thesis, 19 and Bibliography. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁶⁰ For example, Phillips liberally used Bendure and Pfeiffer's *America's Fabrics*, published in 1946, which, although it was a thorough reference text about industrial production of textiles, may have been somewhat out of date by the 1960s. Further, much of the information on wool Phillips used came from issues of *American Fabrics* that were eight to ten years old. See *American Fabrics*, No. 15 (Fall 1950), and No. 22 (Summer 1952). Phillips also cited to *American Fabrics*, No. 43 (Spring 1958), where the qualities of wool were extolled in comparison to synthetics. This was a more current viewpoint.

⁴⁶¹ B.F.A. Thesis, 17. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁶² B.F.A. Thesis, 16-17. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. See Advertisement, "C.M. Deland blends Vicara with wool to create VICALAND a new flannel suiting," *American Fabrics*, No. 15 (Fall 1950): 22. A sample of Vicara appears in the on-line Collections Database of the Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris Street Ultimo, Haymarket, Sydney, NSW 1238 Australia as an example of a "Synthetic Fibre Sample," <http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/collection/database/?irn=241765>, (accessed March 26, 2009). According to the related descriptive text and the additional context provided in the "Production Notes," by Erika Dicker, the Assistant Curator of Materials Technology at the Powerhouse Museum, "Vicara" was manufactured by the Virginia Carolina Chemical Corporation from 1947-1957. It was derived from a corn protein called "Zein," and "[d]uring their development in 1930s, 40s, and 50s, synthetic fibres offered a cost effective solution to using natural materials, which were becoming increasingly expensive. Wool became scarce during World War II, owing to the vast amounts that were required to make military uniforms. . . . Raw materials, such as casein from skim milk or protein from peanuts, could be dispersed in a solution of caustic soda and then have carbon disulphide added. The solution was then aged, and forced through a sieve like apparatus called a 'spinneret'. The resulting filaments could then be spun on a

spinning machine. The synthetic fibres were then mixed with wool, rayon, or cotton to produce textiles that were used in numerous applications.” Ibid.

⁴⁶³ *American Fabrics*, No. 15 (Fall 1950): 22. See also, Cora Carlyle, ed., “Progress Report on New Fibers,” *American Fabrics*, No. 24 (Winter 1952): 63-67.

⁴⁶⁴ Lubell, et al., eds., *American Fabrics Magazine Encyclopedia of Textiles*, 2nd Ed. (Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1960). It was not possible to locate a copy of the 1960 edition to review. The text was subsequently revised and updated in 1972. The 1972 edition is used for reference herein, and is cited as follows: Lubell, et al., eds., *American Fabrics Magazine Encyclopedia of Textiles* Rev. ed. (Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1972). In comparing this later edition to Bendure and Pfeiffer’s earlier work, it seems less comprehensive, despite the following assertions made by the editors in the Introduction to the Second Edition: “In the decade since 1960, when the first edition was published, technological advances have been more far-reaching than at any other time in history . . . These advances are now covered in the present volume.” Further, the 1972 edition of 636 pages professed to have deleted “obsolete processes” and added “over 150 pages of new material covering more than thirty major new developments.” An *American Fabrics* editor, Cecil Lubell, was a close friend of Mary Walker Phillips.

⁴⁶⁵ *American Fabrics* was a luxurious and informative trade publication that introduced the newest lines of fabrics, complete with actual fabric swatches, to the designer and merchandiser of fashion and interiors. It provided market analysis and delivered authoritative and interesting articles about trends and taste-makers in the textile industry. It would be nice to know for certain if Phillips subscribed to this publication; as a solo designer of woolen suiting fabrics, she likely did, to stay current with fashion trends. *American Fabrics*, No. 15 (Fall 1950) (already more than ten years old in 1962), which Phillips cited on page 2 of her B.F.A. thesis, is now a highly collectible issue of this bygone periodical; it had a cover designed by Salvador Dali and a substantial article devoted to wool fabrics. See, e.g., listing by Paper Pursuits, an on-line dealer in vintage publications, http://www.paperpursuits.com/magazine_detail.cfm?catid=31&subcatid=105&pid=2293, (accessed May 29, 2009), where it is priced at \$225.00.

⁴⁶⁶ Birrell, *The Textile Arts*, 25.

⁴⁶⁷ Birrell, *The Textile Arts*, 7.

⁴⁶⁸ Adela Akers confirmed the interest in the 1960s in producing fabrics and textile works that could not be duplicated by machine in her interview. Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁴⁶⁹ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009, where he did not recall many Cranbrook students pursuing a career in fashion

fabrics; most Cranbrook students followed Strengell's model of designing for industry. See also, Strengell, typewritten document of two pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction (but where suiting fabrics are clearly indentified herein as part of the curriculum); and Strengell, "A Personal Approach to Textile Design," January 1960, where she so beautifully articulates her own preference for working with architects and designers but still states that "[i]n apparel, the hand, the weight and the consistency of the material become imperative." Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴⁷⁰ Cora Carlyle, ed., "New Fashion Excitement for Wool," *American Fabrics*, No. 58 (Fall, 1962): 59-78.

⁴⁷¹ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009; Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009; Telephone interview of Eleen Auvil, June 15, 2009.

⁴⁷² Marianne Strengell, undated document entitled "Creative Weaving," Smithsonian Archives of American Art. States she was tired of doing commissions for industry "for the past 20 years" and wanted to get back to traditional forms of fiber work. The timeframe given for her industrial commissions could place the letter anywhere from 1957 (she came in to Cranbrook in 1937) to about 1965 (1943-45 was when her industry career actually took off).

http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/searchimages/images/image_1103_1130.htm

⁴⁷³ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009, wherein we discussed two substantial textile exhibitions he mounted at Cranbrook, using students to help with the research on the objects as part of the curriculum. These included "Tapestry: 1500 Years of Fabric Art," Cranbrook Art Museum, November 23, 1963 – mid-January 1964, and Ornamentation: The Art of Fabric Decoration, January 18 – March 31, 1965. Exhibition Files, Cranbrook Art Museum.

⁴⁷⁴ M.F.A. Thesis: Experimental Fabrics, "Introduction and Purpose," i. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁷⁵ "Almost without our realizing it, we have come off the "woven" standard. A weaver like Anni Albers begins to wonder aloud whether knitting will not overtake weaving." Cora Carlyle and Cecil Lubell, eds., "Knit Directions: A Report on the Knit Fabric – Fashion Directions which are Headed for Popular Success in the Coming Seasons," *American Fabrics*, No. 70 (Winter 1965): 3. This same issue, which was a special issue focused on knits, cited a 26% increase in consumption of knitted fabrics from 1961-1964, verses a 15% increase in woven fabrics for the same period. Ibid., 50. It also showed examples of Phillips's work following her success at the Milan Triennale in 1964. Ibid., at "Design for Knitting," 87-90.

⁴⁷⁶ Jack Lenor Larsen, "The Future of the Textile" *Craft Horizons*, Vol. 21, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 7.

⁴⁷⁷ See E.M. Benson introductory comments on the "Fabrics International," and Alice Adams, "The Fabric as Culture," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. 21, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 5, 6. See also, Mary Alice Smith, ed., "Fabrics International: A Presentation of New Developments and Adaptions of Ancient Techniques," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 6-8, 46-7. Smith's review noted the show included 159 fabrics from 23 countries, with hand-woven fabrics comprising the majority of the entries, and that "[w]all hangings and rugs, as such, were not accepted." *Ibid.*, 6.

⁴⁷⁸ Alice Adams, "The Fabric as Culture," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. 21, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 6.

⁴⁷⁹ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009; Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009. See also "Mary Walker Phillips: Her New Approach To Knitting," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Spring 1965): 17-18, 31, at 17.

⁴⁸⁰ Jack Lenor Larsen, "The Future of the Textile," 7, and Robert Riley, "The Myraid Worlds of Fabric," 8 and 45, both in *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961). See also, Smith, ed., "Fabrics International," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962) at 8: "It is interesting to note contemporary producers picking up old design techniques."

⁴⁸¹ M.F.A. Thesis, i. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁸² M.F.A. Thesis at i, citing Jack Lenor Larsen, "The Future of the Textile," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 7. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁸³ M.F.A. Thesis, i. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. Mary Alice Smith, ed., "Fabrics International: A Presentation of New Developments and Adaptions of Ancient Techniques," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962) at 46-7 described Larsen as "designer and weaver, . . . head of his own textile firm in New York, director of the fabric design department of the Philadelphia Museum College of Art and a trustee of the American Craftsman's Council." Larsen wrote regularly for a number of publications at this time including *Craft Horizons* and *American Fabrics*.

⁴⁸⁴ Jack Lenor Larsen, "The Future of the Textile," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 7. See also Mary Alice Smith, ed., "Fabrics International: A Presentation of New Developments and Adaptions of Ancient Techniques," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962) at 6, who was perhaps alluding to comments by Larsen and Albers: "It has been noted that these non-woven fabrics pose the possibility of making obsolete many current production methods, including weaving and fiber sources." Albers was exhibiting her own hand knit prototypes

for casement fabrics as early as 1960 in “Designer Craftsman USA,” and again in “Fabrics International” in 1961. See Rose Slivka, ed., “Designer-Craftsmen U.S.A. 1960,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XX, No. 4 (July-August 1960): 27 and “Fabrics International: Catalogue of the Exhibition, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 48. Albers would later write in “Early Techniques of Thread Interlacing,” published in *On Weaving* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1965), 47-58, that knitting, because it resolved problems of shaping, was more efficient and economical to produce and better suited to modern life, and would therefore “move[] more and more to the foreground” while weaving would “diminish[] in its dominance.” *Ibid.*, 57-58. See also, Anni Albers, “On the Beginnings of Weaving,” *American Fabrics*, No. 69 (Fall 1965): 89-92.

⁴⁸⁵ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 9. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁸⁶ M.F.A. Thesis, ii. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁸⁷ M.F.A. Thesis, 4. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁸⁸ M.F.A. Thesis, 4. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁴⁸⁹ At this time, *American Fabrics* magazine was already beginning to show knitted fabrics for fashion. See e.g, William Winkler, “A Special Market Report: ‘Knitted Fabrics, An American Way of Life,’” *American Fabrics*, No. 48 (Winter 1960).

⁴⁹⁰ Patricia Abrahamian, Guest Curator, *Fine Art in Stitches: Creative Knitting, Macramé, Weaving*, (Fresno, CA: Fresno Art Museum, 2005), 2; Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18.

⁴⁹¹ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 97; Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁴⁹² Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 97; Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009. Phillips even taught Akers to knit socks; Akers recalled that she found doubling the yarn for the heels and toes, which Phillips had insisted upon, very difficult and tedious to do.

⁴⁹³ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009; Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 32; Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters*, (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18.

⁴⁹⁴ Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters*, (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18, 17. Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 32.

⁴⁹⁵ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁴⁹⁶ Course Evaluation, “Weaving,” Fall 1962, Instructor: Glen Kaufman, emphasis in original. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁴⁹⁷ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009; Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009; Barbara Factor, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Chicago, IL, April 26, 2009; Patricia Abrahamian, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Fresno, CA, July 9, 2008; Telephone interview of Gerhardt Knodel, April 8, 2009.

⁴⁹⁸ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 96-97.

⁴⁹⁹ B.F.A. Thesis, “Clothing Fabrics,” “Blankets,” “Pillows;” and M.F.A. Thesis, “Leather.” Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. See also, Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 107-108.

⁵⁰⁰ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009; Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009; Barbara Factor, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Chicago, IL, April 26, 2009; Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, July 23, 2009.

⁵⁰¹ M.F.A. Thesis, iii. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁰² M.F.A. Thesis, ii. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁰³ M.F.A. Thesis, ii. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁰⁴ See generally, Rose Slivka, ed., “Fabrics International: Catalogue of the Exhibition,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 10-50.

⁵⁰⁵ Smith, ed., “Fabrics International,” *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 6.

⁵⁰⁶ Nicolas Fox Weber and Pandora Tabatabai Asbaghi, *Anni Albers* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999), published in conjunction with the Guggenheim Museum on the occasion of the exhibition, “Anni Albers,” at 91, No. 127, showing a knitted casement material, linen, 53 x 39 cm (20 7/8 x 15 3/8 inches), ca. 1960, Metropolitan Museum of Art 1970.75.22. See also Smith, ed., “Fabrics International,” *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 8.

⁵⁰⁷ Rossbach, “Marianne Strengell,” *American Craft*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (April – May 1984): 8-12, 10. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁵⁰⁸ To try this yourself, cast on 20 stitches; on Row 1, * knit 2 stitches, make a new stitch (raise the running thread between the stitch just worked and the next one and knit into it); knit 2 * and repeat the sequence, as expressed between the two asterisks,

across the row ending with knit 2 stitches. The stitch count has increased 9 stitches from the initial number of stitches cast on. Turn the work and on the reverse side, Row 2, * purl 2, knit 1 (the new stitch) * and repeat this sequence across the row, ending with purl 2. On Row 3, * knit 2; purl 1 * across row ending with knit 2. Continue to repeat Rows 2 and 3 to make a decent sized sample, then bind off all the stitches, dropping every third stitch (the newly made stitches) so that they run down the length of the fabric leaving a ladder insert.

⁵⁰⁹ See, e.g., Mary Thomas, *Mary Thomas's Book of Knitting Patterns*, "Long-ladder Pattern," 100.

⁵¹⁰ Nicolas Fox Weber and Pandora Tabatabai Asbaghi, *Anni Albers* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1999), published in conjunction with the Guggenheim Museum on the occasion of the exhibition, "Anni Albers," at 91, No. 127, showing a knitted casement material, linen, 53 x 39 cm (20 7/8 x 15 3/8 inches), ca. 1960, Metropolitan Museum of Art 1970.75.22.

⁵¹¹ *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XX, No. 4 (July August 1960): 27.

⁵¹² Smith, ed., "Fabrics International," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 8. The reviewer described Hoffman's entry as a "knitted acetate casement in natural [that] aroused much interest," and cited an article in *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Fall 1961 that likely provides more information on this artist's work.

⁵¹³ Siegel was a graduate of Cranbrook. Marianne Strengell, typewritten document, 2 pages, undated, that outlines her approach to weaving instruction, at 2. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives; Rose Slivka, ed., "Fabrics International: Catalogue of the Exhibition," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 23, No. 1. See also, Smith, ed., "Fabrics International," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 7.

⁵¹⁴ Rose Slivka, ed., "Fabrics International: Catalogue of the Exhibition," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961), Jack Lenor Larsen sample, No. 142, 24. Compare to Phillips, M.F.A. sample of Fancy Crossed Throw and *For Paul Klee*, 1963. According to Phillips, "ROVANA is the Dow Chemical Company's trade mark for products including flat Saran monofilament." M.F.A. Thesis at 9 and n.7.

⁵¹⁵ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 3-4; Lubell, et al., eds., *American Fabrics Encyclopedia of Textiles*, 1970 ed., 350-353. Note: Phillips cites to pages 419-420 in the 1960 edition.

⁵¹⁶ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis 3-4; Lubell, et al., eds., *American Fabrics Encyclopedia of Textiles*, 2nd Ed., 351-52; Bendure and Pfeiffer, *America's Fabrics*, 369-70.

⁵¹⁷ Lubell, et al., eds., *American Fabrics Encyclopedia of Textiles*, 2nd Ed., 351-52; Bendure and Pfeiffer, *America's Fabrics*, 369-70.

⁵¹⁸ Lubell, et al., eds., *American Fabrics Encyclopedia of Textiles*, 2nd Ed., 351-52; Bendure and Pfeiffer, *America's Fabrics*, 369-70.

⁵¹⁹ Referencing the images and descriptions associated with the following entries presented in "Fabrics International" as published in Rose Slivka, ed., "Fabrics International: Catalogue of the Exhibition," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 10-50 at 23 (No. 129); 17 (No. 44); 10 (No. 4); and 41 (No. 31). See also, Smith, ed., "Fabrics International," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 8 and 46, where the review commented specifically on many of the fabrics Phillips emulated in her later designs in knitting.

⁵²⁰ Rose Slivka, ed., "Fabrics International: Catalogue of the Exhibition," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September-October 1961): 10-50 at 12. See also, Smith, ed., "Fabrics International," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 46.

⁵²¹ Mary Thomas, *Mary Thomas's Book of Knitting Patterns* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, Ltd., 1938), reprinted by Dover Publications, Inc., New York, 1972. All page references herein are to the Dover edition, and are abbreviated henceforth as "Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*."

⁵²² Julia Weissman, "Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting," *Knitters*, (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18, 17; Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, ii. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵²³ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 1-4.

⁵²⁴ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, Preface, vii.

⁵²⁵ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, Preface viii-ix.

⁵²⁶ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, Preface ix.

⁵²⁷ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, Preface, x.

⁵²⁸ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, Preface, vii.

⁵²⁹ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, preface, ix.

⁵³⁰ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 3-4. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵³¹ A statement in Phillips's "History of Knitting" section which reads, "[t]he best periods of hand knitting have always been when yarns are scarce or expensive. The desire to use the yarn to its greatest advantage stimulates the knitter to give a great deal of

thought to the design, color and end product,” comes in part from Thomas without citation: “[t]he best periods of Knitting have always occurred when yarns have been scarce or expensive as the desire for better knowledge of the work is stimulated in order that yarn need not be duly wasted.” A portion of the following paragraph in Phillips’s thesis on the history of silk knitting also comes from Thomas. Compare M.F.A. Thesis at 2 to Thomas at “Preface” and pages 50-51. Thomas, for her part, provides no bibliography at all, noting only in her “Acknowledgements,” “[m]y thanks are also due to the many kind people who so willingly forwarded me valuable information and help, and especially to Mrs. Edith M. Walker, for the loan of her many books”

⁵³² Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, Acknowledgements, 15-16. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵³³ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, “Acknowledgments,” 15-16. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵³⁴ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, “Acknowledgments,” 16. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵³⁵ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 15. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵³⁶ It was not possible to review the text of these promotional materials. It is possible that copies of them may still be in Phillips’s personal papers.

⁵³⁷ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 99.

⁵³⁸ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, “Knit Casements.” Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 201.

⁵³⁹ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 83-84; Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, “Knit Casements,” and “Asbestos and Rovana.” Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. Phillips gives the dimensions for Casement Sample 2 as 12” x 12” but she does not provide dimensions for the Asbestos Knit Sample 1.

⁵⁴⁰ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 83.

⁵⁴¹ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, “Knit Casements,” list. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 111-112.

⁵⁴² This sample was the precursor to *For Paul Klee*, 1963.

⁵⁴³ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 108-109, 111-112.

⁵⁴⁴ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, “Knit Casements.” Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 108-111.

⁵⁴⁵ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁵⁴⁶ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 45-46, and such works as *More Variations*, 1967 at 34 and 73; *Shells*, 1967, 80-81; and *The Kings*, 1965, at 48, 86-87, e.g.

⁵⁴⁷ Notably Phillips does not call this work *For Paul Klee* in *Creative Knitting*, published in 1971. There it is called *Casement*. However, in the Fresno Arts Center show “Creative Knitting,” 1984, it does appear with the dedication as its title. The sample Phillips made for her thesis portfolio measured 3’ x 45,” whereas the full casement measured approximately 9’ x 42.” Compare M.F.A. Thesis under “Knit Casements” to Phillips, *Creative Knitting* at 13, and the brochure for the The Fresno Arts Center exhibition of “Creative Knitting,” January 8 – February 12, 1984, at 3. See also, Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18, 17.

⁵⁴⁸ Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters*, (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18.

⁵⁴⁹ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 90.

⁵⁵⁰ Mary Walker Phillips, *Step-by-Step Knitting: A Complete Introduction to the Craft of Knitting* (New York: Golden Press, 1967), 52, 54.

⁵⁵¹ What Phillips calls “Popcorn Stitch” is likely “Bramble Stitch,” from Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 200. The photo of the Bohus-style pattern called “Stocking Stitch” in Phillips’s list of patterns (but which would be more correctly termed “Two-Color Stocking Stitch”) was mounted upside down in the thesis, perhaps when it was returned to position at some later point by someone less familiar with knitting. Once oriented correctly, the pattern can be duplicated as follows: knit 2 rows of orange; knit four rows alternating colors (knit 1 orange, knit 1 pink); knit two rows pink; knit four rows alternating colors (knit one pink, knit one orange); repeat. The pattern makes a narrow notched stripe that looks like Bohus-style, or Swedish knitting, a very popular style of knitting in the 1950s and 1960s.

“Intarsia” is a useful technique for knitting color patterns, like argyle patterns, where two or more colors of yarn are to be worked in fairly sizeable and discrete areas of the fabric. Intarsia is comprised of a “patchwork” or “tapestry” where each color is worked singly and is dropped to work each successive color after the knitter twists the yarns carefully at the point where the colors intersect to close any gaps or holes in the fabric. This technique is more efficient and less wasteful than stranded knitting, another common color technique, for many types of multi-colored knitted fabrics, including argyle socks. Phillips’s brother recalled she had once knitted him a pair of argyle socks in the 1950s. Margalit Fox, “Mary Walker Phillips, 83, Knitter of Art,” *The New York Times*, Obituaries, Tuesday, November 20, 2007.

⁵⁵² Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, “Rib 3 and 3. Welt 3 and 3,” at 29. Thomas noted this pattern was also known as “Harris Tweed Pattern.” Phillips used 4 stitches rather than 3 stitches as the multiple in her version.

⁵⁵³ Phillips stated this in *Creative Knitting*, 36. Patricia Abrahamian confirmed that Phillips had few charts among her papers. Patricia Abrahamian, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Fresno, CA, July 9, 2008. Susanna Lewis related that she herself may have made some of the charts that appear in Phillips’s papers as a basis for writing out the directions for certain stitches in a form Phillips could use; she then would have given Phillips both the charts and the long-hand directions. Lewis preferred to chart; her lace book has, like Mary Thomas’s books, both charts and written directions. Telephone Interview of Susanna E. Lewis by Jennifer Lindsay, May 17, 2009. Phillips claimed she needed to chart her double-knit patterns, however. Phillips used only written directions without charts for both *Creative Knitting* and for *Knitting Counterpanes*. In Phillips’s last book, *Knitting Counterpanes: Traditional Coverlet Patterns for Contemporary Knitters* (Newtown, CT: Taunton Press, 1989) many fancy patterns are delineated in long form without charts; the extensive row-by-row written directions, which can extend to 40 or more rows, are somewhat irritating to follow.

⁵⁵⁴ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁵⁵⁵ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

⁵⁵⁶ The *American Fabrics Encyclopedia of Textiles*, 2nd Ed., 1970, at 56-57 and 518 lists a multitude of uses for asbestos cloth, which was available in numerous weights and grades, and in several weaves with different surfaces. It was frequently used in theatre curtains. A statement in the *Encyclopedia* calling asbestos “[t]he most important fiber, without which it would hardly be possible to have the conveniences enjoyed today” gives the flavor of the times about this naturally occurring mineral product.

⁵⁵⁷ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 112.

⁵⁵⁸ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 7. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁵⁹ These acid dyes made for protein fibers are still available today. More research is needed to confirm whether these were the dyes Phillips used at Cranbrook for her tie-dyed fabrics. Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 8. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁶⁰ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 9. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. See also Christa C. Mayer Thurman, “‘Make Designs to Your Heart’s Content’: The Frank Lloyd Wright/Schumacher Venture.” *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* Vol. 21, No. 2, The Prairie School: Design Vision for the Midwest (1995): 152-163 and 189-191 at 190, n.17, and “Detailed History of the Paramount Theater: Artists and Designers,” 3, Paramount Theater of the Arts, <http://www.paramounttheatre.com/history3.html>, (accessed October 24, 2009). The content provided on site was excerpted from Susannah

Harris Stone, *The Oakland Paramount*, (Berkeley: Lancaster-Miller Publishers, 1992); the Library of Congress Historic American Buildings Survey; a 1991 Update to Library of Congress Historic American Buildings Survey by Steven Levin (originally published in *Theater Historical Society of America Annual* #18), and Peter E. Hanff, "Paramount Theater Archives at the Bancroft Library," *BANCROFTIANA: Newsletter of the Friends of the Bancroft Library*, Vol. 116 (Spring 2000), at <http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/events/bancroftiana/116/paramount.html> (accessed October 24, 2009).

⁵⁶¹ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 9. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁶² Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 9-10. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁶³ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 9-10. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁶⁴ Phillips's concept of a shoe and bag fabric may have been inspired by Azalea Thorpe's "pilot" entry in "Fabrics International." Smith, ed., "Fabrics International," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 46.

⁵⁶⁵ This stitch appears to be "one over one" from Thomas, *Mary Thomas's Book of Knitting Patterns*, 64, but used for every stitch. Although Thomas advises the use of this stitch on a ground fabric, it is possible that the tension produced by the crossed stitches combined with the crisp quality of the Rovana obviated the need for the ground stitch by producing an openwork effect instead, against which the crossed stitches appear in linear relief.

⁵⁶⁶ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 11. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁶⁷ Smith, ed., "Fabrics International," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 46.

⁵⁶⁸ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 11. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. A shoe and bag fabric by Azalea Thorpe in "Fabrics International" was touted for "[c]olor and texture [that] result from the natural twisting of the leather in production." Smith, ed., "Fabrics International," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter 1962): 46.

⁵⁶⁹ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 11. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁷⁰ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 11. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁷¹ Frank Laury, "Exhibitions: Mary Walker Phillips, Fresno Art Center, Fresno, California, November 6 – December 1," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1 (January-February 1964): 46.

⁵⁷² Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 11. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁷³ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 12. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁷⁴ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 12. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁷⁵ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 12. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁷⁶ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 13. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁷⁷ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 13. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁷⁸ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 13. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁷⁹ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁵⁸⁰ Thomas, *Mary Thomas's Book of Knitting Patterns*, 176.

⁵⁸¹ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 13. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁸² "The American Craftsman" (New York: The Museum of Contemporary Crafts, 1964), Objects 138-142. This exhibition catalogue was published in conjunction with the exhibition "The American Craftsman," held at the Museum of Contemporary Crafts, New York, NY, May 22 – September 13, 1964. The catalogue and the image of the lampshades are courtesy of the American Crafts Council Fellows Collection Artist Files.

⁵⁸³ "The American Craftsman" (New York: The Museum of Contemporary Crafts, 1964), Objects 138-142. "Lumacryl" was a popular form of translucent white plastic frequently used in the manufacture of mid-century modern lampshades. See, e.g, Design Addict Forum, "Paul Mayan," posted by Pegboard Modern, November 25, 2007, at http://www.designaddict.com/design_addict/forums/index.cfm/fuseaction/thread_show_one/thread_id/5281/ (accessed October 8, 2009). Limited research indicates the company and brand are no longer made. See Uchisearch LLC, "Find Owner Search: Brand Lumacryl" at <http://www.findownersearch.com/lumacryl-5265415.html> (accessed October 8, 2009).

⁵⁸⁴ Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection, indicates her work appeared in an article entitled "Mohair Blankets," published in *Women's Day Magazine*, March 1964, pp. 56-59.

⁵⁸⁵ There is no mention of an article entitled "Take the Dull Edge off Winter: Knitting in No Time!" on any of the several versions of Phillips's resume collected during the research for this thesis. However, a copy of the article was in an artist file entitled "Mary Walker Phillips," at the Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. Unfortunately, the excerpted pages do not disclose the name or date of the original publication. One page of the article shows the page number "47" in the bottom right-hand corner. Phillips did identify on her resumes an article entitled "Creative Knitting,"

that she wrote for *Better Homes and Gardens* in January of 1965, which was printed on pp. 46-47. The first line of the article in the Art Library's file reads, "[i]n the past creative knitting was limited by scarcity of yarn." If Phillips recorded the title of the article incorrectly, this could be the article referenced on her resume. If not, this is an article she did not record. See, e.g., Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection.

⁵⁸⁶ "Take the Dull Edge off Winter: Knitting in No Time!" at 47. Mary Walker Phillips File, Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁸⁷ "Take the Dull Edge off Winter: Knitting in No Time!" at 47. Mary Walker Phillips File, Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁸⁸ "Take the Dull Edge off Winter: Knitting in No Time!" at 47. Mary Walker Phillips File, Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁸⁹ "Take the Dull Edge off Winter: Knitting in No Time!" at 47. Mary Walker Phillips File, Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. The afghan pictured here measures 48" x 65", the same dimensions as the afghan Phillips exhibited in "The American Craftsman," 1964.

⁵⁹⁰ "Take the Dull Edge off Winter: Knitting in No Time!" at 47. Mary Walker Phillips File, Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁹¹ Julia Weissman, "Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting," *Knitters*, (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18, 17.

⁵⁹² "Take the Dull Edge off Winter: Knitting in No Time!" at 47. Mary Walker Phillips File, Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁹³ Compare Phillips's striped upholstery fabric, M.F.A. Thesis, with Marianne Strengell, *Draperies Fabric*, 1945 or earlier, Warp – cotton and rayon; weft – rayon and silver thread, 126 x 41", Gift of the Artist, CAM 1945.30. Cranbrook Art Museum.

⁵⁹⁴ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁵⁹⁵ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, "Woven Fabrics." Cranbrook Academy of Art Library. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁵⁹⁶ According to the website for Pellon Consumer Products, LLC, "About Pellon Consumer Products: History," <http://www.pellonideas.com/content/view/12/26/>, (accessed October 10, 2009), Pellon was a synthetic, nylon-based, "non-woven," "all-bias" fabric that was "resilient, light-weight and lint-free." Developed in the 1930s in Germany by Dr. Carl Nottebohm, and perfected in the 1950s, it "forever changed the textile and apparel industry." Ibid.

⁵⁹⁷ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, ii. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁵⁹⁸ Course Evaluation, "Weaving," Spring, 1963; Instructor: Glen Kaufman. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁵⁹⁹ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, iii. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁶⁰⁰ Degree forms signed by faculty upon completion of the B.F.A. and M.F.A. degrees. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁰¹ Martin Eidelberg, "Ceramics," Chapter 8, *Design in America*, 231.

⁶⁰² Draft of an article ca. 1957 later published in "Ceramics Monthly," entitled "Maija Grotell Decorates a Pot," at 4. Maija Grotell Excerpts and Miscellanea File (hereinafter "Grotell E&M File"), Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁰³ Draft of an article ca. 1957 later published in "Ceramics Monthly," entitled "Maija Grotell Decorates a Pot," at 4-5. Grotell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁰⁴ News Bulletin (Press Release), officially undated but dated 1961 by an unknown hand, prepared by the Public Relations Office, Cranbrook Institutions, announcing Grotell's award. Grotell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁰⁵ Supplement No. 1 to CAA Announcements, 1960-61, 5; 1961-62, 5. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁷ Joy Hakanson, "A Visit With Maija Grotell," Art In Michigan Section, *The Detroit News*, August 28, 1960, Sunday edition. Grotell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁰⁸ Mary Walker Phillips to Cranbrook Academy of Art, handwritten, March 24, 1946. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁰⁹ Course Evaluations, "Ceramics," Spring-Fall 1961, Fall 1962, Spring 1963, Instructor: Maija Grotell. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶¹⁰ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009; Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009; Barbara Factor, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Chicago, IL, April 26, 2009.

⁶¹¹ Eidelberg, "Ceramics," *Design in America*, 230-31.

⁶¹² Grotell threw a number of pots that weighed over 100 pounds, but valued anything well made, regardless of size. Joy Hakanson, "A Visit With Maija Grotell," Art

In Michigan Section, *The Detroit News*, August 28, 1960, Sunday edition. Grotell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶¹³ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 14. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁶¹⁴ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 14. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁶¹⁵ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, 14. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁶¹⁶ Frank Laury, "Exhibitions: Mary Walker Phillips, Fresno Art Center, Fresno, California, November 6 – December 1," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1 (January-February 1964): 46.

⁶¹⁷ Eidelberg, "Ceramics," *Design in America*, 232.

⁶¹⁸ Joy Hakanson, "A Visit With Maija Grotell," Art In Michigan Section, *The Detroit News*, August 28, 1960, Sunday edition. Grotell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶¹⁹ B.F.A. Thesis, number unknown. [Note: I did not copy all of the photos of the ceramics in Phillips's B.F.A. portfolio. Although each piece is numbered and indexed in the thesis, Phillips's list provides only the dimensions without any details about color, function, or shape. Handwritten notes I made at the time of review indicate this example was glazed "brown with a blue haze over it." It is the only vessel in the group with any decoration other than cut facets or glaze effects.]

⁶²⁰ Eidelberg, "Ceramics," *Design in America*, 229.

⁶²¹ An array of simple vessel forms by Maija Grotell from the 1940s – 1950s look more like the aesthetic Phillips developed at Cranbrook in the 1960s, although Grotell's shapes are significantly more refined. See, e.g., A: *Vase*, ca. 1945, Cranbrook Art Museum, CAM 1981.57. Glazed ceramic. Height: 8 1/2 in. (21.6 cm); diameter: 7 1/8 in. (18.1 cm). Source: Courtesy of Cranbrook Art Museum; B: *Bulbous Bowl*, 1949, Cranbrook Art Museum, CAM 1970.13. Ceramic. Height: 12 in. (30.5 cm); diameter: 11 3/4 in. (29.8 cm). Source: Courtesy of Cranbrook Art Museum; C: *Bowl*, ca. 1951-1953, Cranbrook Art Museum, CAM 1991.23. Stoneware. Height: 4 in. (10.2 cm); diameter: 8 1/4 in. (21 cm). Gift of Dorothy O. Gaymer. Source: Courtesy of Cranbrook Art Museum.

⁶²² Eidelberg, "Ceramics," *Design in America*, 226, 230-31.

⁶²³ See generally, draft of an article ca. 1957 later published in "Ceramics Monthly," entitled "Maija Grotell Decorates a Pot." Grotell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶²⁴ Eidelberg, "Ceramics," *Design in America*, 225, 227-30.

⁶²⁵ Eidelberg, "Ceramics," *Design in America*, 220-21, 223, 229-230, 232.

⁶²⁶ Eidelberg, "Ceramics," *Design in America*, 231.

⁶²⁷ Eidelberg, "Ceramics," *Design in America*, 222-223.

⁶²⁸ J. David Farmer, "Metalwork and Bookbinding," Chapter 6, *Design in America*, 156; 158, Colorplate 30; and 159, fig. 127. Two vessels by Maija Grotell echo the distinctive architectural motifs and decorative details Eliel Saarinen developed for use throughout Cranbrook's campuses, e.g., Library and Museum doors and Cranbrook School Cupola, respectively. A: *Vase*, ca. 1942, Cranbrook Art Museum, CAM 1978.16. Stoneware. Height: 20 in. (50.8 cm); diameter: 11 1/8 in. (28.3 cm). Gift of Mrs. Benjamin Micou in memory of Maija Grotell. *Source*: Courtesy of Cranbrook Art Museum; B: *Vase*, 1943, or earlier, Cranbrook Art Museum, CAM 1943.16. Platinum design on unglazed blue stoneware. Height: 13 1/2 in. (34.3 cm); diameter: 14 in. (35.6 cm). Gift of George Gough Booth and Ellen Scripps Booth through The Cranbrook Foundation. *Source*: Courtesy of Cranbrook Art Museum.

⁶²⁹ Eidelberg, "Ceramics," *Design in America*, 224-225, Colorplate 54.

⁶³⁰ Eidelberg, "Ceramics," *Design in America*, 230, fig. 180 and 231, fig. 181.

⁶³¹ See for example, Marianne Strengell, *Rug Sample Entitled "Fall Meadow,"* 1950s, woven by Jôtô, Japan. Cotton, plain weave with wool yarns forming "hooked" pile 42.5 x 41.5 cm (16 3/4 x 16 3/8 in.) Gift of Marianne Strengell Hammarström, Art Institute of Chicago, 1983.755c. See also, Marianne Strengell, "A Personal Approach to Textile Design," 2. Strengell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶³² Draft of "Maija Grotell Decorates a Pot" later published in *Ceramics Monthly*, 1957, 1-4, Grotell discusses her continual experimentation in ceramics. See also "A Visit with Maija Grotell, *The Detroit News*, 20-E, where she told her interviewer, "[d]iscovering new ways of doing things interests me most. . . . Once I have mastered a glaze, a form, an idea, I lose interest and move on to something else. This helps me as a teacher, but not as an exhibitor." Grotell E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶³³ Julia Weissman, "Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting," *Knitters* (Spring-Summer 1985): 16-18. Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, "Acknowledgements." Kaufman also felt that he had contributed substantially to supporting Phillips's efforts, and this is clearly reflected in his comments about her work, and in the way he incorporated her into exhibitions and teaching opportunities at Cranbrook after her graduation. Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁶³⁴ Jeff Schlanger and Toshiko Takaezu, *Maija Grotell: Works Which Grow From Belief*, excerpt of the Introduction available on line from *The Studio Potter*, at <http://www.studiopotter.org/articles/art0006.htm>, (accessed May 31, 2009).

⁶³⁵ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 96, 109.

⁶³⁶ See “Supplement No. 1 to Cranbrook Academy of Art Announcement” for 1960-61 and 1961-62, under “Requirements for Graduation, Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree” at 2, listing “Matrix study: 12 hours per week for one semester” under “Minimum attendance requirements per subject.” Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁶³⁷ For a discussion of the preliminary course at the Bauhaus see Gillian Naylor, “Johannes Itten and the Basic Course,” Chapter 4, *The Bauhaus Reassessed: Sources and Design Theory* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1985), 75-82.

⁶³⁸ Victor Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial: Essays on Design and Design Studies*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2002, pp. 61-67, at 62. I am grateful to Leslie Edwards, Cranbrook Archives, for directing me to this resource on the Matrix Study course.

⁶³⁹ Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, 62.

⁶⁴⁰ Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, 63.

⁶⁴¹ Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, 63.

⁶⁴² Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, 62-63.

⁶⁴³ Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, 65.

⁶⁴⁴ Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, 65. Although Margolin does not make this connection, in its concept of enhancing transformation and spontaneous creativity, Isaac’s matrix drum clearly recalls concepts explored in the construction and operation of the *Light Prop for an Electric Stage*, 1930, by Lászlò Moholy-Nagy, a reconstructed replica (2006) of which is part of the collection of Harvard University’s Busch-Reisinger Museum, #2007.105. Moholy-Nagy’s *Light Prop* was a device for altering the environment, and human perception of it, through a mechanical play of light on the walls of a room, which could be experienced directly, or as Moholy-Nagy preferred, in a filmed version that allowed the viewer to watch the operation of the machine almost as if from inside it. Margolin does, however, reference Isaac’s fascination with Russian Constructivist Vladimir Tatlin’s *Monument to the Third International*, 1917, which was a similar idea, and a predecessor of Moholy-Nagy’s work. The *Monument* was never built, except as a model.

⁶⁴⁵ Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, 65.

⁶⁴⁶ Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, 65. Compare Naylor, “Johannes Itten and the Basic Course,” *The Bauhaus Reassessed*, 76-78.

⁶⁴⁷ Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, 65-66.

⁶⁴⁸ Margolin, *The Politics of the Artificial*, 66.

⁶⁴⁹ CAA Announcement, 1960-61, "Educational Staff," 2. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives. According to an article published by Marbeth Schon, 2002, entitled "The Wearable Art Movement Part II," courtesy of Modern Silver Magazine, <http://www.modernsilver.com/Walkerarticle2.htm>, (accessed August 30, 2010), Brown's full name was Howard O. Brown. A short biography of Brown offered by Schon appears beside an image of a skeletal silver leaf pendant that Brown exhibited in the 3rd Annual Exhibition of Contemporary Jewelry at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, MN, in 1955. Brown's biography, which Schon's article claims is unaltered from the original published in the *Everyday Art Quarterly*, #33, of 1955, stated that Brown "was an instructor of 3-dimensional design at the Department of Art and Design, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester New York . . . He worked primarily in silver jewelry, but also did raised silver work, silver screen fabrics, enameling on copper, and metal sculpture." If Brown was in Rochester in 1955, he would have obtained his Cranbrook degree before 1955.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, and Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁶⁵¹ Supplement No. 1 to the CAA Announcement for 1960-61, 6. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁵² Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁶⁵³ This list may have been overlooked during duplication.

⁶⁵⁴ Comprehensive resume of Mary Walker Phillips, with hand and typewritten additions through 1986, generously provided by her brother, W. David Phillips of Fresno, CA, July 9, 2008. Another copy of this resume was part of Artist's File for Mary Walker Phillips maintained at the Art Institute of Chicago's Textile Department. It differs slightly in the hand written amendments and is less comprehensive because it is missing two pages of typewritten additions.

According to Phillips's Comprehensive 1986 Resume, in 1962, Phillips exhibited in "Fiber, Clay, Metal" at the St. Paul Gallery in St. Paul, MN where she won "[h]onorable mention for tie-dye fabric, purchased by the gallery." It is not possible to know at this time whether the work pictured in Phillips's thesis and in the course catalogue photo of the Student Exhibition in 1961 was the one later exhibited at the St. Paul Gallery.

⁶⁵⁵ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁶⁵⁶ Course Evaluation, “Matrix Study,” Fall 1960, Instructor: Howard Brown. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁵⁷ Jack Lenor Larsen, “The weaver as artist,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XV, No. 6 (November-December 1955): 30-34 at 33, describing the work of Mariska Karasz.

⁶⁵⁸ Jack Lenor Larsen, “The weaver as artist,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XV, No. 6 (November-December 1955): 30-34 at 31 and 34. Larsen had become very involved the Haystack Mountain School in the 1950s, and which he characterized as modeled after Cranbrook. Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009.

⁶⁵⁹ Jack Lenor Larsen, “The weaver as artist,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XV, No. 6 (November-December 1955): 30-34 at 33: “[Karasz] thinks and works directly and spontaneously. Techniques are discovered, memorized, personalized to become automatic in the work that grows out of them. Forms, color balance and composition develop as she works. This is how she taught and students emulated her dynamic manner of working. She related embroidery to weaving. In drawing inspiration from nature, she urged expression of its life force and personal interpretation of its spatial and linear forms. She stressed the need and desirability of being receptive to nature – in the landscape of fibers and fabrics as well as outdoors. What was important to the weavers and to the stitchers as a group was learning the interrelationship—where weaving ends and where decoration or embroidery begins.”

Whether Phillips read this issue of *Craft Horizons* is not known. She did not join the American Craft Council, whereby she would have regularly received the magazine as part of her membership, until 1956. See, e.g., Phillips Comprehensive 1986 Resume. However, she did keep tabs on Larsen’s activities, as her correspondence to Cranbrook indicates. Mary Walker Phillips to Wallace Mitchell, Zurich, Switzerland, November 20, 1952: “Tried to see Jack Larsen when I was in New York but he was in Maine. His new set up sounds very swell and elegant.” Phillips E&M File. Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁶⁰ Compare to Mariska Karasz, *Hanging Entitled "Secret,"* 1952. Linen, plain weave; embroidered with linen, waxed cotton, cotton, jute, nylon, rayon, cellulose film and synthetic-covered cotton in open Cretan and simple looping stitches; couching 90.5 x 58.8 cm (34 5/8 x 23 1/8 in.) Gift of Mrs. Solveig Cox, Art Institute of Chicago, 1992.448

⁶⁶¹ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁶⁶² Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁶⁶³ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁶⁶⁴ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁶⁶⁵ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁶⁶⁶ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁶⁶⁷ Sepeshy permitted Thomas, who had an interest in metalsmithing, and who was also teaching Design at Cranbrook at the time, to re-open the metal studio on a part time basis; it had been closed in 1943 (resulting in the departure of Harry Bertoia, the noted designer of modern furniture for Knoll Associates, who taught Metalsmithing at Cranbrook from 1937-1943). See “Biographies of the Artists,” for Harry Bertoia, Zoltan Sepeshy, and Richard Thomas, *Design in America*, 268, 275-277. See also excerpt from the exhibition catalogue for a 1980 competition sponsored by the University of Arizona entitled “A Decade of Metalsmithing in the United States: 1970-1980,” in “Part 1: Richard Thomas,” at 8. Richard Thomas Excerpts & Miscellanea File (hereinafter “Thomas E&M File), Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁶⁸ Jim Finkelstein, Staff Writer, “Teacher’s silver creations widely revered,” Obituaries, *Detroit Free Press*, November 24, 1988.

⁶⁶⁹ CAA Announcements, Metalsmithing, 1960-1963. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁷⁰ Supplement No. 1 to the CAA Announcement, 1961-62, 8. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁷¹ Course Evaluation, “Metalsmithing,” Spring, 1962, Instructor: Richard Thomas. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁷² According to her application to Cranbrook, Phillips had some prior experience working with metals; she had taken “[d]esign and Metal work at Fresno High.” See Phillips’s Application to Cranbrook under “Previous Training in Art,” Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives. Phillips graduated from Fresno High School in 1942. See Phillips 1968 Resume, ACC Library Fellows Collection, under “Education.”

⁶⁷³ Mary Walker Phillips, *Step-By-Step Knitting* (New York: Golden Press, 1967), with a “Forward” by Jack Lenor Larsen.

⁶⁷⁴ Phillips made several knitted hangings using fine copper wire, with and without bells. In a very poor quality photo (too poor to reproduce) among the images of Phillips’s work at the American Craft Council Library is a hanging entitled “Many Bells Without Sound,” 1974. This piece is in the collection of the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh, Scotland according to notes made by the artist. There are no dimensions given. Phillips used the bell-frilling pattern from Mary Thomas, which she used in so many of her hangings. The hanging is square in shape and shows four registers with six bell frilling repeats in each register – a total of twenty-four “bells.” Later, Phillips thought to experiment with adding real bells, and made at least two hangings in this style in which the real bells were suspended in lace openings made in the hanging using

various stitches. One was photographed by Glen Kaufman; it differs in appearance from the piece entitled “Bells for Dunedin, 1981, and may have been made as early as 1974-75, based on Lisa Hammel’s review, “Wall Hangings: Not Your Usual Knitting,” *Shop Talk*, March 15, 1975, page 12.

⁶⁷⁵ Lisa Hammel, “Wall Hangings: Not Your Usual Knitting,” *Shop Talk*, March 15, 1975, page 12. The title of the hanging is not specified in the article.

⁶⁷⁶ Julie Hall, “A Conversation with Richard Thomas, master metalsmith,” adapted and reprinted in *The Cranbrook Quarterly*, August 198_ (2 or 3, *date illegible*) with permission, from an original article published in “Metalsmith” magazine, 1982 Spring and Summer Issues. Thomas E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁷⁷ Quoting from title of Phillips’s obituary by Margalit Fox, “Mary Walker Phillips, 83, Knitter of Art,” *The New York Times*, Obituaries, Tuesday, November 20, 2007.

⁶⁷⁸ Unknown author, “Click go the needles . . . as Mary makes knitting an art” October 13, 1978, *Melbourne Sun*, Melbourne, Australia. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁷⁹ Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18.

⁶⁸⁰ The earlier address can be confirmed by reference to a letter from Alan Wentz, Comptroller, Cranbrook Academy of Art, to Mary Walker Phillips, arranging for her “to conduct a workshop in knit fabric construction . . . during the 1964-65 academic year.” August 18, 1964. The later address appears on several of Phillips’s resumes.

⁶⁸¹ Telephone interview of Gerhardt Knodel, April 8, 2009.

⁶⁸² J.R. Phillips, *The Good Intent*, 21. See generally, Phillips’s later correspondence, which references her frequent trips to visit family in Fresno, CA. Phillips E&M File, Cranbrook Archives.

⁶⁸³ Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009.

⁶⁸⁴ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009; interview of Barbara Factor, April 26, 2009; telephone interview of Susanna E. Lewis, May 17, 2009; and telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009. See also Melanie D. Falick, “The Experimental Spirit of Mary Walker Phillips,” *Knitting in America: Patterns, Profiles, & Stories of America’s Leading Artisans* (New York: Artisan, 1996), 126-27, and Julia Weissman, “Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting,” *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18.

⁶⁸⁵ Barbara Factor, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Chicago, IL, April 26, 2009.

⁶⁸⁶ Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009.

⁶⁸⁷ J.R. Phillips, *The Good Intent*, 19, 22-23.

⁶⁸⁸ Telephone interview of Adela Akers, May 20, 2009.

⁶⁸⁹ Annalee Gold, "Village Textile Designer Mary Phillips Knits By The Mile," Village Arts Section, *The Villager*, Greenwich Village, NY, May 1, 1975. Mary Walker Phillips, American Craft Council Library Fellows Collection, Artist Files.

⁶⁹⁰ Telephone interview of Susanna E. Lewis, May 17, 2009.

⁶⁹¹ Julia Weissman, "Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting," *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18, 17.

⁶⁹² Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis, ii. Cranbrook Academy of Art Library.

⁶⁹³ Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009.

⁶⁹⁴ Julia Weissman, "Mary Walker Phillips: Doyenne of art knitting," *Knitters* (Spring - Summer 1985): 16-18, 17; see also Mary Alice Smith, ed., "Mary Walker Phillips: Her New Approach to Knitting," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Spring 1965): 17-18, 31.

⁶⁹⁵ Mary Alice Smith, ed., "Mary Walker Phillips: Her New Approach to Knitting," *Handweaver and Craftsman*, Vol. 16, No. 2 (Spring 1965): 17-18, 31, at 31.

⁶⁹⁶ Jack Lenor Larsen, "Democratic Fabrics for a New Decade," *American Fabrics*, No. 86 (Spring 1970): 62.

⁶⁹⁷ Jack Lenor Larsen, "Woven Forms," *American Fabrics*, No. 61 (Summer 1963): 93-95.

⁶⁹⁸ Jack Lenor Larsen, "Woven Forms," *American Fabrics*, No. 61 (Summer 1963): 93-95 (see comments of the artists on their work). See also Pat Hill, "Peruvian Tapestry Warp," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIII, No. 4 (July-August 1963): 22-26, 45.

⁶⁹⁹ Jack Lenor Larsen, "Woven Forms," *American Fabrics*, No. 61 (Summer 1963): 93-95.

⁷⁰⁰ Cora Carlyle, ed., "The World of Textiles," *American Fabrics*, No. 61 (Summer 1963): 103 (reporting on current developments).

⁷⁰¹ Troy, *The Modernist Textile*, 14-15.

⁷⁰² Virginia Harvey, who had studied at Mills College in California and the University of Washington, published a book in 1967 entitled, *Macramé: The Art of*

Creative Knotting (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold), according to her biography in Lee Nordness, *Objects: USA* (New York: The Viking Press, Inc., 1970), 301. See generally the following resources: Marjorie Cordley Rouillion, "Macrame in Mitlà," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIII, No. 6 (November-December 1953): 28-29 (showing the magazine's early perception of interest in this art form), and Lamar Harrington, "First Annual Western Craft Competition," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 4 (July – August 1964): 12-13 (showing cover image of a handspun, hand knitted lace weight alpaca shawl, "Troje," by Dorothy Reade, which later featured in the *Objects: USA* exhibit in 1969). See also, Nordness, *Objects: USA*, 300. Ruth Asawa Lanier is an interesting artist, whose inventive and arresting crocheted wire sculptures from the 1950s can be seen on her website, Ruth Asawa, LLC, at <http://www.ruthasawa.com/art/cro8.html> (accessed August 30, 2010). Her work was featured in Mildred Constantine and Jack Lenor Larsen, *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1972), 30. Described in *Beyond Craft* as "tubular knit," Asawa, who studied with Josef Albers at Black Mountain College, used crochet rather than knitting in her work.

⁷⁰³ For information on the modern tradition in lace that Krejci was a part of, consult "BLEN," the Bobbin Lace European Network, "Designers and the Lace: A Right Time in the History of the Czech Republic," at http://www.blen.net/blen_11/blen_11.htm, (accessed October 14, 2009). To compare some images of her work, see "Luba Krejci Objects," at <http://www.taylor-film.com/lke2.htm>, (accessed October 14, 2009), showing modern figures and The Museum of Art and Design, "Peasant Girl," n.d., 1991.9, Linen, bobbin lace 55 x 20 ½ " (19.7 x 52.1 cm) Gift of Florence Duhl, http://collections.madmuseum.org/code/emuseum.asp?style=browse¤trecord=1&page=search_advanced_static, (accessed October 14, 2009).

⁷⁰⁴ Glen Kaufman, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Athens, GA, February 23-24, 2009.

⁷⁰⁵ Frank Laury, "Exhibitions: Mary Walker Phillips, Fresno Art Center, Fresno, California, November 6 – December 1," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1 (January - February 1964): 46.

⁷⁰⁶ Sergio Dello Strologo, "The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XX, No. 5 (September – October 1960): 10-14.

⁷⁰⁷ Sergio Dello Strologo, "The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XX, No. 5 (September – October 1960): 12.

⁷⁰⁸ Sergio Dello Strologo, "The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XX, No. 5 (September – October 1960): 14.

⁷⁰⁹ Sergio Dello Strologo, "The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XX, No. 5 (September – October 1960): 13.

⁷¹⁰ Mildred Constantine and Jack Lenor Larsen, *Beyond Craft: The Art Fabric*, (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1972), 37.

⁷¹¹ Rose Slivka, ed., "Milan: The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 5 (September - October 1964): 24-30, 40-41, at 28.

⁷¹² Rose Slivka, ed., "Milan: The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 5 (September - October 1964): 24-30, 40-41, at 30. See also, Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 66-67, 115.

⁷¹³ Rose Slivka, ed., "Milan: The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 5 (September - October 1964): 24-30, 40-41.

⁷¹⁴ Rose Slivka, ed., "Milan: The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 5 (September - October 1964): 24-30, 40-41, 28.

⁷¹⁵ Rose Slivka, ed., "Milan: The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 5 (September - October 1964): 24-30, 40-41, 28. See also Jack Lenor Larsen, "The 13th Triennale: A Report by Jack Lenor Larsen," *Interiors* (September 1964): 92-107, at 92.

⁷¹⁶ Jack Lenor Larsen, "The 13th Triennale: A Report by Jack Lenor Larsen," *Interiors* (September 1964): 92-107, at 106-07.

⁷¹⁷ See Rose Slivka, ed., "Fabrics International: Catalogue of the Exhibition," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXI, No. 5 (September - October 1961): 40, Catalogue # 61 (prototype model tent by textile designer Miriam Leefe and Morrison, an architect).

⁷¹⁸ Jack Lenor Larsen, "The 13th Triennale: A Report by Jack Lenor Larsen," *Interiors* (September 1964): 92-107, at 106-07.

⁷¹⁹ Jack Lenor Larsen, "The 13th Triennale: A Report by Jack Lenor Larsen," *Interiors* (September 1964): 92-107, at 106-07.

⁷²⁰ Alda Louise Huxtable, "Art in Architecture 1959," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 1 (January - February 1959): 10-15, 11, emphasis in original.

⁷²¹ Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009.

⁷²² Author unknown, "Alla XIII Triennale: Finlandia, Austria, USA; i premi," *Domus*, #420 (November 11, 1964): 39-46.

⁷²³ Alice Adams, "Mary Walker Phillips," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXV, No. 1 (January - February 1965): 24-27.

⁷²⁴ Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009. See also, Jack Lenor Larsen, "The 13th Triennale: A Report by Jack Lenor Larsen," *Interiors* (September 1964): 92-107, at 105.

⁷²⁵ Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009. Rose Slivka, ed., "Milan: The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 5 (September - October 1964): 24-30, 40-41, 39.

⁷²⁶ Rose Slivka, ed., "Milan: The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 5 (September/October 1964): 24-30, 40-41, 28.

⁷²⁷ Larsen believes it may still be in the possession of Eva Zeisel and her family. Telephone interview of Jack Lenor Larsen, June 23, 2009.

⁷²⁸ Rose Slivka, ed., "Milan: The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 5 (September - October 1964): 24-30, 40-41, 28.

⁷²⁹ Rose Slivka, ed., "Milan: The Triennale," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXIV, No. 5 (September - October 1964): 24-30, 40-41, 28.

⁷³⁰ This was also noted by Gerhardt Knodel during a telephone interview, April 8, 2009.

⁷³¹ Alan W. Wentz, Comptroller, Cranbrook Academy of Art to Mary Walker Phillips, August 18, 1964, confirming her agreement to teach a workshop at Cranbrook "during the 1964-65 academic year." See also a copy of a review of "Ornamentation: The Art of Fabric Decoration," published in Royal Oak, Michigan's *Daily Tribune*, entitled "Texture and Design Form New Exhibition," author unknown, which shows a current student at Cranbrook holding up a knit construction mounted on dark fabric that looks as if it was decidedly influenced by Phillips, and perhaps was a project done in the workshop she gave at Cranbrook. The caption reads: "Striking green and black knit construction is the work of Linda Larsen, a student at the Cranbrook Academy of Art." Another photo of a student and her work included in the article shows her contemporary brocades, likely inspired by some of the historic examples in the exhibition. Cranbrook Foundation Public Relations Scrapbook, Cranbrook Archives.

⁷³² CAA Course Announcements, 1963-1964, 1964-1965, and 1965-1966 at 29. Cranbrook Academy of Art: Records of the Administration (1981-09), Cranbrook Archives.

⁷³³ Phillips Comprehensive 1986 Resume.

⁷³⁴ Phillips Comprehensive 1986 Resume; Display Ad 122, *New York Times*, August 17, 1976, 41: "Only at The New School 31 Crafts Workshops," listing Mary Walker Phillips, "Creative Knitting: An Advanced Course I," #8620.

⁷³⁵ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 112-113.

⁷³⁶ Telephone interview of Susanna E. Lewis, May 17, 2009.

⁷³⁷ Cora Carlyle, ed., “The Computerized Knitting Machine,” *American Fabrics*, No. 70 (Winter 1965): 71 (cars and boats might be knit of Fiberglas).

⁷³⁸ Cora Carlyle, ed., “Hand Knitting is Big Business: Make it Yourself Fashion and Needlework, An American Fabrics Magazine Marketing Report,” *American Fabrics*, No. 87 (Summer 1970), describing “The Revival of Handcrafts in America: A Syndrome of the Seventies,” in Marketing Presentations (a separate un-paginated tear-out section included within the magazine).

⁷³⁹ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 9.

⁷⁴⁰ It is not known at this time from what source Phillips obtained this quotation, or why it was so significant to her. According to Jona Lendering’s article on “Appolonius of Tyana” published on “LIVIOUS: Articles on Ancient History,” an on-line database, Appolonius of Tyana, was born in the 1st Century A.D. and was considered a “charismatic teacher and miracle worker” sometimes compared to Jesus of Nazareth. He may have adhered to neo-Pythagoreanism. Stories recorded about him in various sources relate that he traveled the world and educated himself about many different faith traditions. See <http://www.livius.org/ap-ark/apollonius/apollonius02.html>, (accessed August 29, 2010).

⁷⁴¹ Saarinen, AIA lecture, in Booth, *The Saarinen Door*, 57.

⁷⁴² Patricia Abrahamian, Guest Curator, *Fine Art in Stitches: Creative Knitting, Macramé, Weaving*, (Fresno, CA: Fresno Art Museum, 2005), 5. More research is needed to determine how the title of the book evolved. Workshops and books by various artists were termed “creative” during this period. See, e.g., n. 472 and n. 702 herein.

⁷⁴³ Phillips Comprehensive 1986 Resume.

⁷⁴⁴ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

⁷⁴⁵ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 97.

⁷⁴⁶ Phillips, “Experiments,” *Creative Knitting*, 97.

⁷⁴⁷ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 110.

⁷⁴⁸ Melanie Falick, “The Experimental Spirit of Mary Walker Phillips,” *Knitting in America: Patterns, Profiles, & Stories of America’s Leading Artisans* (New York, Artisan, 1996), 127.

⁷⁴⁹ See, e.g., Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 110-111.

⁷⁵⁰ Telephone interview of Susanna E. Lewis, May 17, 2009.

⁷⁵¹ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 34.

⁷⁵² Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 36.

⁷⁵³ Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, showing Uncrossed and Crossed Eastern Western and Combined Stitches (40-43); Double Throw (51); Increasing, Decreasing and their Variations (60-66).

⁷⁵⁴ Phillips, M.F.A. Thesis and *Creative Knitting*, 9. The corresponding stitches from Thomas's *Book of Knitting Patterns* are as follows: Fancy Crossed Throw (108-09), Double Knit (8-9); Double Throw (107); Embossed Motifs, including Clustering (228-32), Popcorn (a variation of "Bramble," 200) and Bobble (see "Picot Knot," e.g., 211-212); Lace Faggot Stitch (see "Purse Stitch," 155-56); Spiral Rib Stitch (see "Sugar Stick Ribbing," 162); One Over One Stitch (64); Plaited Basket Stitch (68); Bell Pattern (see "Bell Motif" and "Bell Motif in Repeat," 215-16); Bell Frilling Pattern (220-21); Lace Diadem Eyelet Pattern (130-31), Shell Pattern (see Rows 5-6 of "Bluebell Stitch," 202), Bowknot or Butterfly Pattern (see "Butterfly Slip Stitch," 97-98), and Honeycomb Pattern (see "Hexagon Pattern," 90-91).

⁷⁵⁵ "Bell Pattern" in Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 76, 62, 66, when compared to "Bell Motif in Repeat" in Thomas's *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 216, shows that Phillips used a different number of stitches in her bell motif (9 stitches versus 8), that she set it on a ribbed ground made of "purl 4, knit 2 ribbing" instead of reverse stockinette stitch, and that she anchored, stabilized and accentuated the protruding edge of the fabric that formed the bell motif by several means. First, she turned the work to cast on the extra stitches on the reverse side of the fabric using a "knit on cast on," which has a firmer and more defined edge than the "backward loop cast on" that would have been used if casting on from the right side of the work as in Thomas's version. Further, she more tightly anchored the bell shape to the ground fabric by working the first return row of the bell motif with crossed stitches.

⁷⁵⁶ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, at 75. See also, Yoshiko Uchida, "Trude Guermonprez," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XIX, No. 2 (March - April 1959): 27-31. A noted weaver in the Bauhaus tradition, Guermonprez taught with Anni Albers at Black Mountain College and later moved to the West Coast where she taught first at the Pond Farm Community and later at the California College of Fine Arts and the California College of Arts and Crafts.

⁷⁵⁷ Milton Sunday, Review of Mary Walker Phillips, *Creative Knitting: A New Art Form* in "Books," *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXXI, No. 6 (December, 1971): 12.

⁷⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵⁹ See generally, Jenny Anger, *Paul Klee and the Decorative in Modern Art* (Cambridge: University Press, 2004), Chapter 3, “Carpets of Memory,” 164-190.

⁷⁶⁰ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

⁷⁶¹ See generally, Jenny Anger, *Paul Klee and the Decorative in Modern Art* (Cambridge: University Press, 2004), Chapter 3, “Carpets of Memory,” 164-190; K. Porter Aichele, *Paul Klee’s Pictorial Writing* (Cambridge: University Press, 2002); Virginia Gardner Troy, *Anni Albers and Ancient American Textiles* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2002). See also, Sheila Poullada, “Some Aspects of Peruvian Textiles,” *American Fabrics*, No. 47 (Fall 1959): 80-84; Edith Jablonski, “Peru: A Panorama of Ancient Textiles,” *American Fabrics*, No. 108 (Fall 1976): 70-73.

⁷⁶² See generally, K. Porter Aichele, *Paul Klee’s Pictorial Writing* (Cambridge: University Press, 2002); Virginia Gardner Troy, *Anni Albers and Ancient American Textiles* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Co., 2002). See also, Sheila Poullada, “Some Aspects of Peruvian Textiles,” *American Fabrics*, No. 47 (Fall 1959): 80-84; Edith Jablonski, “Peru: A Panorama of Ancient Textiles,” *American Fabrics*, No. 108 (Fall 1976): 70-73.

⁷⁶³ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

⁷⁶⁴ In fact, shortly before her first term of study at Cranbrook in 1946, which started on June 24, an exhibition of Paul Klee’s prints was shown in the Cranbrook Art Museum, from May 3 – May 24, but it is not possible now to know whether Phillips ever saw the exhibit or any materials related to it. A look at the prints exhibited at that time does not show Klee’s *Pastorale*, 1927, or any other works that look likely to have inspired Phillips’s work in either weaving or knitting.⁷⁶⁴ “Prints by Paul Klee,” Exhibition Files, Cranbrook Art Museum.

⁷⁶⁵ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

⁷⁶⁶ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

⁷⁶⁷ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 9, 12.

⁷⁶⁸ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

⁷⁶⁹ Susanna E. Lewis, *Knitting Lace: A Workshop with Patterns and Projects*, Newtown, CT: Taunton Press, 1992.

⁷⁷⁰ Margalit Fox, “Mary Walker Phillips, 83, Knitter of Art,” *New York Times*, Obituaries, November 20, 2007.

⁷⁷¹ Sources differ regarding the date of this work. In the object record from the Cranbrook Art Museum, the date was identified as “ca. 1968,” which was likely based

upon information provided by the donor. Phillips herself, in *Creative Knitting*, dated it 1966. In the exhibition catalogue for “The Magic Knitting Needles of Mary Walker Phillips,” an exhibition mounted by the Department of Design, Housing and Apparel at the Goldstein Gallery, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN, March 15-May 10, 1987, (see n. 20), the work was dated 1965. It would have to have been made before March 11, 1966 to have been included in the American Craftsmen’s Council “Craftsmen U.S.A 1966” exhibition where it received an Award of Merit. Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 48; and notes on the regional competitions appearing in the margins of Paul Soldner’s review, “Craftsmen USA ’66 / Part Two, Northwest Region,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXVI, No. 3 (June 1966): 72.

⁷⁷² Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 48. See also, notes on the regional competitions appearing in the margins of Paul Soldner’s review, “Craftsmen USA ’66 / Part Two, Northwest Region,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXVI, No. 3 (June 1966): 72.

⁷⁷³ Michael Boylen, “Craftsmen USA ’66 / Part Two, Northeast Region,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXVI, No. 3 (June 1966): 76-77 and 108.

⁷⁷⁴ Rose Slivka, ed., “The Berdoy Portfolio,” *Craft Horizons*, Vol. XXVII, No. 1 (January – February 1967): 17-23 at 18.

⁷⁷⁵ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 48.

⁷⁷⁶ Phillips likely made this hanging just before a trip to exhibit her work and conduct workshops in New Zealand at the invitation of the New Zealand Spinning, Weaving, and Woolcrafts Society. Air New Zealand and the Queen Elizabeth II Arts Council of New Zealand also sponsored this trip. Exhibition brochure, “Fifteen Knitted Works,” 1981. ACC Library Artist Fellows Collection.

⁷⁷⁷ Compare *The Kings* with “Two Colossi Statues at 8th Pylon at Karnak Temple in Ancient Thebes, Luxor Egypt,” a recent photograph by Anders Blomquist, n.d., published on-line at AllPosters.com: “The World’s Largest Poster and Print Store,” <http://www.allposters.com/gallery.asp?startat=/getposter.asp&APNum=3657014&CID=AA2F29BBA1F9414483F1836F473633AC&PPID=1&Search=karnak%20blom&f=t&FindID=0&P=2&PP=6&sortby=PD&c=c&page=2>, (accessed October 20, 2009).

⁷⁷⁸ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

⁷⁷⁹ Birell, *The Textile Arts*, 157. See generally, “Tapestry: 1,500 Years of Fabric Art,” Museum Exhibition Files, Cranbrook Art Museum.

⁷⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁷⁸¹ Glen Kaufman, “The Tapestry Technique,” an undated document that describes the major historical periods in which tapestry is generally recognized.

“Tapestry: 1,500 Years of Fabric Art,” Museum Exhibition Files, Cranbrook Art Museum.

⁷⁸² Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 68, reviewing the “picot knot,” which is also included in Thomas, *Book of Knitting Patterns*, 211.

⁷⁸³ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 48.

⁷⁸⁴ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 110, and Jack Lenor Larsen, Alfred Buhler Bronwen and Garret Solyom, *The Dyer’s Art: Ikat Batik, Plangi* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1976), 19.

⁷⁸⁵ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 36.

⁷⁸⁶ Barbara Factor recalled that Phillips thought Ferdinand Boesch, photographer, had a particular gift for photographing her work to enhance this quality. Barbara Factor, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Chicago, IL, April 26, 2009.

⁷⁸⁷ Compare Gustav Klimt’s “Portrait of Adele Bloch-Bauer,” 1907, now in the possession of Ronald Lauder’s Neue Galerie, New York, NY http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gustav_Klimt_046.jpg to a detail of *Shells*, showing an offset pairing of cluster and bobble stitch variations.

⁷⁸⁸ Mary Walker Phillips Letter to Christa C. Mayer Thurman, Curator of Textiles, undated (ca. March 1984), on stationery from The Basil Street Hotel, Knightsbridge, London. Object File for Hanging Entitled *Shells*, 1967, #1984.87, Department of Textiles, The Art Institute of Chicago.

⁷⁸⁹ See invitation to the Preview addressed in Phillips’s hand to “Rita Adrosko, The Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.,” postmarked February 26, 1975; see also, Milton Sunday to Doris M. Bowman, May 12, 1975 confirming shipment of hanging. Mr. Sunday was, for many years, the Curator of Textiles at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York, a Smithsonian museum, and was a close friend of Phillips. Barbara Factor, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Chicago, IL, April 26, 2009.

⁷⁹⁰ Telephone interview of Gerhardt Knodel, April 8, 2009.

⁷⁹¹ Patricia Abrahamian, interview by Jennifer Lindsay, Fresno, CA, July 9, 2008; Telephone interview of Susanna E. Lewis, May 17, 2009.

⁷⁹² Barbara G. Walker, *A Second Treasury of Knitting Patterns* (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1970; Pittsville, WI: Schoolhouse Press, 1998), 242. Citations are to the 1998 Schoolhouse Press edition.

⁷⁹³ It is noteworthy that Zimmerman had obtained copies of *Mary Thomas's Knitting Book*, the companion to *Mary Thomas's Book of Knitting Patterns*, from England, which she offered for sale to her readers in 1962.

⁷⁹⁴ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 112.

⁷⁹⁵ Kim Ode, "Wall hangings give knitting a new image," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, April 4, 1987.

⁷⁹⁶ Melanie D. Falick, "The Experimental Spirit of Mary Walker Phillips," *Knitting in America: Patterns, Profiles, & Stories of America's Leading Artisans* (New York: Artisan, 1996), 126.

⁷⁹⁷ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 12.

⁷⁹⁸ Jennifer Scanlon, "Piper Shepard," in David Revere McFadden et al., *Radical Lace and Subversive Knitting* (New York: Museum of Arts & Design, 2007), 102.

⁷⁹⁹ Jennifer Scanlon, "Piper Shepard," in David Revere McFadden et al., *Radical Lace and Subversive Knitting* (New York: Museum of Arts & Design, 2007), 102. See also "The Pliable Plane: Textiles in Architecture," by Anni Albers, originally published in *Perspecta: The Yale Architectural Journal* 4 (1957): 36-41, but reprinted in Brenda Danilowitz, ed., *Anni Albers: Selected Writings on Design* (Hanover, NH and London: Wesleyan University Press, University Press of New England, 2000), 44-51.

⁸⁰⁰ Jennifer Scanlon, "Piper Shepard," in David Revere McFadden et al., *Radical Lace and Subversive Knitting* (New York: Museum of Arts & Design, 2007), 102.

⁸⁰¹ Jennifer Scanlon, "Piper Shepard," in David Revere McFadden et al., *Radical Lace and Subversive Knitting* (New York: Museum of Arts & Design, 2007), 102.

⁸⁰² Jennifer Scanlon, "Piper Shepard," in David Revere McFadden et al., *Radical Lace and Subversive Knitting* (New York: Museum of Arts & Design, 2007), 102.

⁸⁰³ Jennifer Stiefler Edwards, "Niels Van Eijk," in David Revere McFadden et al., *Radical Lace and Subversive Knitting* (New York: Museum of Arts & Design, 2007), 70.

⁸⁰⁴ Paul Greenhalgh, ed., *The Persistence of Craft: The Applied Arts Today* (London: A&C Black and New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 65-66.

⁸⁰⁵ See the chairs at "Marcel Wanders: Products and Personal Editions, http://www.marcelwanders.nl/wanders/pages/seaters-knotchair_1_8_grouppage.shtml and <http://www.marcelwanders.nl/new-pages/droog-crochet-chair.html>, (accessed September 1, 2010).

⁸⁰⁶ See generally “Habu Textiles” at <http://www.habutextiles.com/webfile/yarnstorefront.html>, accessed April 6, 2010.

⁸⁰⁷ Habu Textiles Yarn Storefront, <http://www.habutextiles.com/webfile/yarnstorefront.html>, accessed April 6, 2010. To see some of Setsuko Torii’s now nearly iconic garments and accessories, visit Habu Textiles, under “Kits,” at <http://www.habutextiles.com/webfile/garment1.html>, accessed April 6, 2010.

⁸⁰⁸ The National NeedleArts Association (“TNNA”) is an internationally recognized professional trade association for designers, manufacturers, retailers and instructors who serve the recreational knitting market. It hosts at least three major regional trade shows per year in the United States alone, where knitters gather to preview new products, place orders, and take classes from noted designers. XRX, Inc, publishers of *Knitters*, a magazine, and a large roster of knitting books, also hosts four regional conventions/expos per year called “Stitches,” which feature a multi-vendor yarn market, a fashion show, and a bustling schedule of classes by current designers.

⁸⁰⁹ “Habu Textiles” at <http://www.habutextiles.com/webfile/yarnstorefront.html>, accessed April 6, 2010.

⁸¹⁰ Habu Textiles, “Profile,” <http://www.habutextiles.com/webfile/profile.html>, accessed April 6, 2010.

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APPENDICES

**INTRODUCTION TO APPENDICES I-III:
Visual Analyses of Two Works by Mary Walker Phillips and List of Works**

As a result of the generosity of the Cranbrook Art Museum in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, The Art Institute of Chicago's Department of Textiles in Chicago, Illinois, the Smithsonian National Museum of American History's Department of Textiles in Washington, D.C., and the Center for Craft, Creativity and Design at the University of North Carolina, which provided a 2008 Craft Research Grant that enabled me to travel to see these collections, I had the opportunity to visit and study the three works featured in Chapter 4, Parts 1-3 of my thesis in person. These included *The Kings*, 1966, *Shells*, 1967 and *Fans And Beads*, 1974. I had several days to study *The Kings*, 1966 over two separate visits to Cranbrook Art Museum, so my notes on the construction of that piece in Appendix I are the most comprehensive of the three works I viewed. It was extremely gracious of then Curator Christa C. Mayer Thurman to grant permission for me to view *Shells*, 1967 at the Art Institute of Chicago given the pressure of an imminent and substantial renovation to the Department of Textiles' premises. My visit took place over two days, but there were also pertinent artist files to review so I was not able to dedicate the entire time to a study of the wall hanging; hence Appendix II includes only informal notes about what I observed. Finally, although it was the simplest of the three, I spent only one afternoon studying *Fans And Beads*, 1974 at the Smithsonian, and I included all the relevant details about the construction of this piece in the discussion previously

presented in Chapter 4, Part 3, 178-182. Appendix III is a List of Works by Mary Walker Phillips comprised from my research. This list is not complete.¹

I prepared for my visits to the museums by first knitting a sampler of the stitches Phillips advocated “as many of the ones that I use in my own work” in *Creative Knitting*.² Then, using my own sampler, and what I had learned while knitting it, as a guide and a reference, I carefully examined the three works during the time that was available to me. By comparing the works to my own sampler and to the text of *Creative Knitting*, wherein Phillips offered a wealth of technical advice and information, I was able to learn a great deal about the basic library of stitches that Phillips’s thought “creative knitters” should know, and how often she used them and varied them in her own work. As a result of the opportunity to study several works from different periods of her career as an artist, I can honestly say that *Creative Knitting* was only a starting point for Phillips’s work in knitting, and not a complete catalogue of all the stitches and techniques she used, although she included many of her favorites. Phillips developed considerable technical knowledge about knitting by working the same or similar stitches in many different ways. The study of these three pieces emphasized for me that the appearance of spontaneity in Phillips’s work came from a foundation of technical mastery. Later, I compared the stitches and techniques I learned from *Creative Knitting* to Mary Thomas’s two publications, *Mary Thomas’s Book of Knitting Patterns*, and *Mary Thomas’s Knitting Book*, which Phillips credited as her sources. Most of the stitches Phillips included in *Creative Knitting* are identical to the stitches Thomas had previously

¹ The family of Mary Walker Phillips may have access to a more comprehensive list of works as part of her papers, or comprised from information available therein.

² Mary Walker Phillips, *Creative Knitting: A New Art Form*, 12.

published, but, of course, Phillips used them in a completely original context: the wall hanging.

To re-engineer a piece of knitting requires a close observation of the piece in person, and should include access to both the back and front of the work.³ Often, such access is not possible in the museum setting, a fact that is dependent upon many understandable variables, including the limited time and space to work, the staff needed to turn pieces over, the size, complexity, condition, and safety of the pieces, the research time involved or allotted, and many other factors. An analysis can also be done from good quality photographs, but again, both the back and front of each area of the work must be carefully photographed, which was not done here.⁴ I make no attempt, therefore, to tell the reader in detail how each of these pieces was made or to offer instructions so that they may be duplicated, for Phillips's works are original art forms from her mind and hand that will not be enhanced by duplication, even if it could be done. Further, because of Phillips's skill and spontaneity in constructing her works, it is possible that certain aspects of their construction may never be entirely known. Phillips generally worked without rendering charts or graphs in advance, except in her double-knit pieces, so there are likely to be few records of what she intended for each piece other than the piece itself, however, if her papers and swatches ever become available to the public, it will be interesting to see what they reveal.⁵ Phillips certainly made swatches before starting a larger piece, and it is possible that she preserved these along with some notes about her design process, which may have included the occasional graph or chart,

³ Interview of Patricia Abrahamian, July 9, 2008.

⁴ Telephone Interview of Susanna E. Lewis, May 17, 2009.

⁵ Phillips discussed her limited use of graphs in *Creative Knitting* at 12, 31, 36.

whether prepared by herself or someone else.⁶ She also made many similar pieces, as her titles often indicate, e.g. *More Variations*, 1967, *Near East #2*, 1964, *Spanish Lace #2*, 1983, *Oakleaves and Acorns #3*, 1983, just to name a few, which if looked at as discrete groups and in chronological order, may reveal something of interest.

Phillips's professed that her preferred method of knitting, called "Uncrossed Stitch (Combined Method)" in *Creative Knitting*, made stitches that were of a more uniform size.⁷ This method was somewhat idiosyncratic, and it required Phillips to adapt how she constructed the stitch patterns presented in her book in ways she did not always document. I endeavored to learn her preferred method for knitting, and used this method in the sampler I knitted as well as while I tested out possibilities for how certain stitches in her hangings were constructed. In the stockinette samples I knitted from her book, I could clearly see that Phillips's assertions about the uniform size of the stitches she was able to produce using this method were correct; it was also possible to adapt her method of knitting to most of the stitch patterns she presented in the book with only minor alterations to my own practice of knitting, which she characterized as "Uncrossed Western Stitch."⁸ However, I sometimes had trouble figuring out how she might have made certain stitches, or how she had transitioned from making one stitch pattern to

⁶ Susanna Lewis and Patricia Abrahamian confirmed that Phillips worked without elaborate preparation on paper, however Lewis recalled making charts for Phillips for use in preparing her counterpane book. Telephone Interview of Susanna E. Lewis, May 17, 2009 and Interview of Patricia Abrahamian, July 9, 2008.

⁷ See Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 42-43, describing the characteristics of "Uncrossed Stitch (Combined Method)," and Thomas, *Mary Thomas's Knitting Book*, describing the characteristics of "Knit Stitch – Uncrossed (Combined Method), 55-56.

⁸ See Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 41, and Thomas, *Mary Thomas's Knitting Book*, describing the characteristics of "Knit Stitch – Uncrossed and Purl Stitch (Uncrossed), 50-52.

making another. For example, there were occasions where I assumed the position of the yarn based upon her preferred method, and could not actually make the stitch without altering either the position of the working yarn or of the stitch on the needle, indicating that my assumptions about where and how she had positioned her yarn for working the stitches were incorrect or that she did not always use her preferred method if another method was more suitable or efficient for the effect she wanted to produce.⁹ Hence, I offer my notes and observations on these three works, which are often rudimentary and incomplete, as a basis for further research rather than as the final word on how these works and their component stitch patterns were constructed. It is my hope that over time, and as interest in Mary Walker Phillips grows, a more insightful and discriminating approach to her work, and perhaps to knitted work in general, may be developed from these beginnings.

Phillips spent nearly twenty years in the latter part of her life working on her last book, *Knitting Counterpanes: Traditional Coverlet Patterns for Contemporary Knitters*, 1989.¹⁰ The process she used in her research to deconstruct, reconstruct, document and preserve these all but forgotten stitch patterns from antique counterpanes is virtually identical to the process I have used here, and has a long history. For, much like embroidered samplers, knitters made records of the stitches they learned to use as a reference for their future work long before printed knitting instructions were commonly circulated, and examples of these knitted samplers can be found today in many museum

⁹ Phillips described some of the necessary alterations she made to the set of the stitches in order to continue using the “Uncrossed Stitch (Combined Method)” in her section on “Decreasing,” in *Creative Knitting*, 62.

¹⁰ Mary Walker Phillips. *Knitting Counterpanes: Traditional Coverlet Patterns for Contemporary Knitters* (Newtown, CT: The Taunton Press, 1989), 16-19.

collections.¹¹ By looking at such samplers, one can, without benefit of written instructions, often figure out how the patterns were constructed and be able to repeat them. Further, once learned, the stitch patterns could be easily modified into many variations, as required. Phillips's books and the many excellent books on knitting that followed hers are extremely important to preserve the history of and to perpetuate the craft of knitting. To these, I humbly add my own observations on *The Kings*, 1966, and *Shells*, 1967.

¹¹ One of the most valuable knitting books in any knitter's library is Susanna E. Lewis's *Knitting Lace: A Workshop with Patterns and Projects* (Newtown, CT: Taunton Press, 1992). This work deconstructed such a sampler in the collection of Brooklyn Museum. Ms. Lewis knew Mary Walker Phillips, who often visited the Brooklyn Museum to study the collection there. *Mary Thomas's Book of Knitting Patterns*, 151, shows another knitted lace sampler from the Stadt Kunstgewerke Museum, Leipzig, Germany.

APPENDIX I: Visual Analysis of *The Kings*, 1966

Artist: Mary Walker Phillips
 Location: Cranbrook Art Museum
 Object: CAM #1992.19
 Materials and Methods: Ikat-dyed linen, knitting
 Dimensions: 29 x 19.25" (73.7 x 48.9 cm)
 Gift of Roger Dunham, 1992

Of the three works by Mary Walker Phillips that I studied in person, *The Kings*, 1966, is the most complex of the group. I was able to spend substantial time studying this piece, for which I am most grateful to the Cranbrook Art Museum, but it was not nearly enough time to be certain, because of its complexity, of all the aspects of its construction. *The Kings* is a small wall hanging Phillips made in or before 1966 that won an Award of Merit in the Northeast division of a competition sponsored by the American Craftsman's Council.¹² This led to its inclusion in "Craftsmen USA '66," the culminating national exhibition of 268 winning works that had been selected from six participating regional divisions. It was knitted of linen that Phillips herself had hand-dyed using a process known as to her as "ikat dyeing" where portions of the fiber are bound before dyeing to resist color, and then after dyeing, the fiber is re-bound and re-dyed to allow as many additional colors as the artist desires to penetrate designated areas. The result of such a process is a fiber with an abstract flow of colors, which in the case of *The Kings* includes black, red, and natural or un-dyed portions that may always have appeared as they do now -- dark chocolate brown in color with bright rust complimented

¹² There are varying dates attributed to *The Kings*. In the University of Michigan's catalogue for the 1987 exhibition of Phillips's work at the Goldstein Gallery entitled "The Magic Knitting Needles of Mary Walker Phillips," it is dated 1965, while in *Creative Knitting*, it is dated 1966. The Cranbrook Art Museum's records date it "ca. 1968," but since it was certainly exhibited in 1966, it has to have been made by Phillips by or before 1966.

by a few highlights of a pearly natural color – or they may have faded somewhat over time. The design of the hanging is accentuated by the random effect of the colors in the yarn, in relationship to the patterns Phillips knitted.

The gross characteristics of the hanging are as follows: the width of the hanging comprises 80 stitches, which are adjusted slightly in number over succeeding rows to accommodate the requirements of the different stitch patterns Phillips incorporated in her composition. Using the left side edge as the guide, and starting on the first row after the row of reverse stockinette stitch after the hem or casing, I counted 119 rows of pattern stitches before a reverse stockinette stitch row defined the start of casing at top of the work. The gauge, or number of stitches to the inch can be calculated as follows: $80 \text{ sts}/18.5'' \text{ in width} = 4.32 \text{ stitches to the inch}$, and $136 \text{ rows (119 pattern rows, plus 9 rows at the bottom hem and 8 rows at the top hem on the facing side of the two casings)}/28'' = \text{approximately } 4.85 \text{ rows to the inch}$.

Working the Hem:

Although Phillips typically starched lace hangings like *The Kings* before blocking them, and worked with a relatively small library of stitches that had appropriate qualities for such use, she also incorporated a number of structural characteristics into the construction of her pieces to counteract the tendencies of knitted hangings to droop and fall out of shape that are not directly covered in her book, but can be observed in the works themselves.¹³ The following paragraphs will describe some of these structural characteristics in detail. After Phillips cast on 80 stitches, she prepared a stockinette

¹³ In Chapter 4, “Blocking and Finishing,” *Creative Knitting*, 35-36, Phillips discusses some of these considerations, including the admonition that linen pieces not be stretched “too wide” when blocking because linen “is very sensitive to changes in humidity” and will droop if over-stretched. *Ibid.*, 36.

stitch casing for the bottom hem.¹⁴ A casing finished both ends of the piece and could be left as is, or could be used to provide a housing for a dowel or rod.¹⁵ Because the cast on edge is enclosed in the seam that forms the casing, it is not possible to determine conclusively how Phillips started the piece. Looking into the opening created by the casing on the right side of the piece, one can just discern the end of a linen thread, but whether this is the end of the cast on yarn or the end of the yarn used for sewing the hem, or both, is impossible to determine for certain. Therefore, the following is only a working hypothesis for how Phillips made the piece, since, without removing the hem, there is no way to be sure.

For example, it appears that after the cast on row, Phillips knit one row of ribbing, because on the first row, which is partially obscured by the overcast seam that closes the casing, both purl and knit stitches can be discerned, but it is not possible to conclude whether the ribbing pattern is “knit 2 purl 2 ribbing” or “knit 1 purl 1 ribbing.” Using ribbing here would give the edge of the piece more elasticity and more stability than a plain stockinette stitch edge.¹⁶ Ribbing contracts and expands as needed, and would be less likely to pull out of shape, even when stretched for blocking purposes.

After the row of ribbing there are six rows of plain stockinette stitch, followed by two rows of crossed stockinette stitch, one with the right leg of the stitch in front and the

¹⁴ Phillips appears to have adjusted the number of stitches in the piece by a few stitches as needed to accommodate the changing stitch requirements of the patterns she used throughout the composition.

¹⁵ Phillips typically put a “bar or rod” through the top casing, but also suggested “[a] small, lightweight rod may be inserted into the hem to stabilize the fabric and to keep the piece hanging straight.” Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 36.

¹⁶ To make “stockinette stitch” or “stocking stitch,” one knits on the right side, or facing side, of the fabric and purls on the reverse. It is the most common and generally recognizable stitch construction for a knitted fabric.

other with the left leg of the stitch in front, indicating Phillips may have been using her preferred “Crossed Stitch (Combined Method)” which created a plaited effect, with stitches crossing in different directions on successive rows.¹⁷ Instead of using a purled turning row, which is a more typical stitch to choose for a folded hem, Phillips used the two rows of crossed stitches at the fold line. Extra stability was achieved because crossed stitches tend to pull in more densely than regular stitches, and any bias tendencies would be canceled out because the two rows of crossed stitches slant in opposite directions. Further, when crossed stitches are put under the stress of stretching them laterally, as would occur in blocking the piece, the tension exerted on each stitch torques into the center of the stitch. Each stitch along the fold line, therefore, presented a strong vertical element with long floats between it and the adjoining stitches. The floats are not visible when the fabric is not under stress, but at the fold line for the hem, the extra lateral stretch created by the floats allowed the fabric to fold and stretch more easily to the desired measurements without compromising the integrity and stability of the hem. **Reference: Author Photo 1298.** This was a more flexible solution than a purled turning row at the hem edge would have been, and it is also less likely to collapse and to become wavy or fluted under stress or after hanging because of the internal tension of the crossed stitches.

After the two rows of crossed stitches that comprise the fold line, there appear to be five rows of plain stockinette stitch followed by two more rows of crossed stitches.

¹⁷ Phillips cited “Uncrossed Stitch – Combined Method” and “Crossed Stitch -- Combined Method” as her preferred methods of knitting in 1971 when *Creative Knitting* was published. It is not known at this time when she began to use these methods, which are somewhat idiosyncratic. However, Mary Thomas reported that it produced the most even and uniform knitted stitches. See *Mary Thomas’s Knitting Book*, 56. See *ibid.*, 50-57, generally for the information on knit fabric construction that Phillips used in Chapter 5, “Stitches and Patterns,” of *Creative Knitting*, 39-43.

Again, the first row of these crossed stitches has the right leg of the stitch in front, and the second has the left leg in front. Reinforcing the stability and elasticity of the piece here with crossed stitches was advisable since this area joins two sections of the work that have very different characteristics. The lace patterns that begin immediately above the hemline and form the body of the piece, would likely have considerable lateral and horizontal stretch. Lace also has its own internal architecture because it is based on creating structures from the bias tendencies of increases and decreases and their relationship to the open areas. In contrast, the weight and stability of the folded hem and its seam could cause the lace to sag or buckle at this point if inadequately supported.

First Lace Pattern: “Miniature-Leaf Pattern”¹⁸

After one row of reverse stockinette stitch and one plain row of stockinette stitch, Phillips began the first lace pattern. It is a simple lace pattern repeated over 4 stitches across the row, and it is worked as follows: “yarn over, knit 3 stitches together, yarn over, knit 1.” It creates a baseline of openwork with 19 tiny 3-stitch clusters that echo in miniature the larger leaf motif that appears above, flanked by 38 eyelets and separated by 18 knit stitches that form the vertical interstices of the pattern. After this lace pattern there are two rows of plain stockinette stitch. **Reference: Author Photos 1279, Right Side, and 1298, Left Side.** The numbers of stitches along the left and right edges of the work are not symmetrical – there is 1 stitch, perhaps made from a “knit 2 stitches

¹⁸ It is not clear that Phillips found this lace pattern in Mary Thomas, for it is a very common and simple lace form that could even be “invented” by someone familiar with knitting lace. Nor is it the exact stitch that Thomas offers as “Miniature-Leaf Pattern,” but it is the central component of that pattern, and Thomas refers to it as follows: “[t]his is the smallest repeating Lace Unit or Motif, as the pattern consists of 1 Double Decrease and 2 Single Overs with an interval of 3 stitches.” *Mary Thomas’s Book of Knitting Patterns*, 180.

together” on the right edge, but it is difficult to tell, and there are 3 stitches on the left edge. There are 80 stitches in the two stockinette stitch rows that follow this lace pattern.

Second Lace Pattern: “Ladder Stitch”¹⁹

After two plain rows that follow the first lace motif, Phillips offsets columns of the Ladder Stitch that feed into a larger leaf motif. Like the lace below, the Ladder Stitch repeats 19 times across the piece. The slightly offset appearance comes from positioning the paired decreases that separate each ladder hole so that the first “knit 2 together” uses the “knit 1” interstice from the lace pattern below as its second stitch, and so on across the row. The offset appearance of both the ladder holes and leaf motif from the lace pattern below is slight, but it serves to establish an organic sense of movement in the piece. In the Ladder Stitch section, there are 3 stitches at right edge and 4 stitches at the left edge of the work.

The size of the ladder holes in *The Kings* are so large that although the pattern in *Creative Knitting* only indicates one yarn over is used, to get the effect of the larger hole it was necessary to wrap the yarn over the needle twice in the sampler, following instructions for the “visible yarn over increase.”²⁰ The best approximation for how Phillips did the Ladder Stitch in “the Kings” is as follows:

Row 1 (Right Side [hereinafter “RS”]): Knit 3 edge stitches; yarn over twice; *(knit 2 stitches together; yarn over twice; knit 2 stitches together); repeat from *, ending row yarn over twice; knit 4.

¹⁹ *Creative Knitting*, 70; *Mary Thomas’s Book of Knitting Patterns*, 117-119.

²⁰ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 60.

Row 2 (Wrong Side [hereinafter “WS”]): Knit 3 edge stitches; *(knit 1; purl 1 and knit 1 into the yarn over; knit 1); repeat from * ending row purl 1 and knit 1 into the yarn over; knit 3.²¹

Row 3 (RS): Knit 2 edge stitches, knit 2 together; yarn over twice; *(knit 2 stitches together; yarn over twice; knit 2 stitches together); repeat from *, ending row yarn over twice; knit 2 together, knit 3.

Row 4 (WS): Knit 3 edge stitches; *(knit 1; purl 1 and knit 1 into the yarn over; knit 1); repeat from * ending row purl 1 and knit 1 into the yarn over; knit 3.

Repeat Rows 3-4.

Of interest, when using the Ladder Stitch, Phillips cautions knitters to “[b]e sure to watch the slant of the decreases so those on either side of the hole do not slant in the same direction;” however, the framing decreases on either side of the ladder holes in *The Kings* are definitely side-by-side “knit 2 together” decreases that all slant to the left, with the right stitch laying over the top.²² Often, when making decreases on either side of a yarn over, the decreases are set to slant in complementary directions – either toward or away from the yarn over, but that is not the case here. It is not clear, therefore, what Phillips’s cautionary note signifies. The doubled decreases that form the verticals between the ladder holes have a slightly enlarged space between them that almost appears to be a yarn over; it is not. Instead, the strong pull of the paired decreases actually creates

²¹ To use Phillips’s preferred “Uncrossed Combined” method to knit and purl successively into the same yarn over stitch on the return row, it works more smoothly to wrap the yarn over stitches in the opposite direction from normal, i.e. over the top of the needle from behind.

²² Compare instructions for Ladder Stitch, *Creative Knitting*, 70, with **Author Photo 1298**, e.g. Bear in mind that the left slant of these “knit 2 together” decreases is due to the way Phillips knits; for many knitters this same decrease would slant to the right.

the appearance of an opening there that is likely enhanced by the inelastic characteristics of the linen fiber Phillips used for the piece.

Third Lace Pattern: A Leaf Variation on Ladder Stitch

Phillips “corrected” any bias that might have resulted from the ladder holes where the framing decreases all slant to the left on the first vertical repeat by framing the second vertical repeat of ladder holes with decreases that all slant to the right, and where the left stitch laid over the top of the right stitch. The following sequence shows the modification of the Ladder Stitch to make it slant to the right on Row 1, prior to setting up for the base of the leaf motif on Row 2:

“Ladder Stitch” Variation Row 1(RS): Knit 4 edge stitches; *knit 2 stitches together by entering the two stitches at the same time from the left on the front side of the work, as if doing an “Uncrossed Western knit two together;” wrap the yarn over the top of the needle twice from back to front; knit 2 stitches together again as modified above; ending row with yarn over the needle twice, knit 4.²³

On Row 2 (reverse) of the second vertical ladder repeat, Phillips modified the Ladder Stitch into a leaf motif. To accomplish this, she used a variation of a standard technique for increasing stitches to make 5 stitches into the double yarn over of the ladder hole from the row below. This produced a much smoother, more fluid and more organic looking base for the leaf motif than would typically be produced by the lumpy-looking and more conventional “knit 1, purl 1, knit 1, purl 1, knit 1 into the yarn over to make 5 stitches” style of increase. Phillips uses this mode of increasing fairly frequently in her

²³ See “Uncrossed Western Stitch,” *Creative Knitting*, 41.

work. Further, and on the same row that the extra stitches were added into the ladder hole to form the base of the leaf motif, Phillips decreased the interstices separating the ladder holes from two stitches to one stitch. Although after the decrease, the left stitch rides over the right stitch when viewing the work from the front, by elongating the decreased stitch with a double wrap, the single separating stitch created by the decrease pulls both the left and right side stitches that formed it into a strong vertical line that frames the leaf pattern. There are 19 horizontal repeats of the leaf pattern, which emerges clearly in the next RS row, and they echo the structure and appearance of the simpler lace repeat below. Here is the best interpretation for how Phillips did the increase row to form the base of the leaf motif and its frame:

“Ladder Stitch” Variation Row 2 (WS): Purl 4, * (drop the extra yarn over to make one large open loop that is positioned correctly on the left hand needle as if to knit in the Uncrossed Combined method; increase into the loop as follows: knit 1, wrap yarn over needle from back to front, knit 1, wrap yarn over needle from back to front, knit 1, to make a total of 5 stitches into the loop; knit the next 2 stitches together, wrapping the yarn twice around the needle to get the single elongated stitch that separates the leaf motif on succeeding rows *; repeat from * to * to end of row, increasing five stitches in the yarn over; purl 3 edge stitches, but at the same time increase 1 stitch inside the last of these three stitches to establish a border of 4 stockinette stitches at either side of the work.²⁴

²⁴ Phillips described this maneuver poorly in her book. See *Creative Knitting*, 66, for a variation on increasing that Phillips described as follows: “* K1, YO * into the Over. Repeat * to * for desired number of stitches, ending K1. This treatment gives a looped edge to Hole area.”

On the side borders, Phillips omitted the stretched vertical framing stitch, so the leaves at either edge seem to merge into the borders. Phillips could have worked the stitch next to the leaf motif at either edge of the piece as a stretched vertical stitch but perhaps in order to increase the stability of the side edges and prevent them from stretching she chose not to do this. At the 2nd and 4th of the five increases that form the leaf motif from the ladder hole, the left legs of the stitches clearly come forward from behind the work to the front, “wrapping” the strand forming the ladder hole from the row below, and crossing over the right legs of the stitches. In contrast, the 1st, 3rd and 5th increases into the ladder hole recede back and appear to float behind the strand forming the ladder hole from the row below. This effect is reversed on the back of the work, with the 1st, 3rd and 5th increases coming forward with the “wrapped” appearance, while the 2nd and 4th increases recede. When blocked, however, the strand forming the ladder hole from the row below is pulled tight, and the 5 increased stitches, which are all knitted on the following RS row, rise over the ladder hole in a smooth, uniform profile of knit stitches that appear to unfold from a wrapped base. **Reference Author Photos 1265 and 1298.** This “wrapped” effect augments the organic quality of the leaf motif.

The leaf motif, after the increase row, is formed over 5 rows. Phillips likely wrapped the yarn twice around the needle on alternate rows because the stitches in these rows are very elongated and differ noticeably from the more compacted rows that form the base of the leaf, e.g. By alternating short and long stitches, Phillips enhanced the organic quality of the composition, and suggested the leaf was stretching upward. For example, over the last three rows of the leaf repeat, the stitches that formed the leaf were small, as if narrowing into the tip of the leaf, then elongated again to suggest the pointed

tip of the leaf, and then gathered all at once into the tip using a dramatic shell-like decrease. The gathering stitch was a simple “knit 5 stitches together” using the “Uncrossed Combined” method. At the same time, Phillips used “knit into the stitch below” to stretch the interstices between the leaves vertically to contribute to the sense of upward movement. Phillips increased the transparency of the composition at the leaf tips here by framing the final decreases that formed them with large holes that emphasize their pointed shapes against the open spaces and vertical interstices that separate them.

Reference Author Photo 1291. Below is a suggestion for how the leaf shaping may have been accomplished:

Leaf Motif, Row 1: Knit 4 edge stitches; * knit 5 leaf stitches; knit 1, dropping the extra loop *, and repeat from * to * ending row with knit 5; knit 4.²⁵

Leaf Motif, Row 2: Purl 4 edges stitches; *purl 5, wrapping twice around the needle; purl 1 into the stitch below wrapping twice around the needle; * ending row with purl 5, wrapping twice around the needle; purl 4

Leaf Motif, Row 3: Knit 4; * knit 5, dropping the extra loops; knit 1 dropping extra loop * ending row with knit 5 dropping extra loops; knit 4

Leaf Motif, Row 4: Purl 4; * purl 5 wrapping twice; purl 1 into the stitch below wrapping twice; * end purl 5 wrapping twice; purl 4

Leaf motif Row 5: Knit 4; * yarn over; knit 5 stitches together dropping the extra loops; yarn over; knit 1 * ending row yarn over; knit 4.

Note: There are at least two to three rows here that are particularly hard to decipher as this pattern transitions into the next small leaf pattern.

²⁵ Phillips used the technique of “Knit into Stitch Below” from *Creative Knitting*, 52 to elongate the single stitches between the leaf motifs in ensuing rows.

Fourth Lace Pattern: Another Small Leaf Pattern

This section appears to have been constructed over 7 rows. The effect is of a lacy geometric leaf-like pattern made from barely discernible triangular forms that are separated by vertical lines that rise from the pattern below. Here the leaf shapes and the vertical interstices are blending visually, and the leaf motif now comprises only three stitches rather than five stitches, and is much more open and diffuse. Phillips decreased the three stitches that form the leaf shape on the 7th row in a shell cluster -- the same method she used to decrease five stitches in the pattern repeat below. This visual link between the patterns adds movement and continuity to the composition. Phillips integrated the final decrease for the shell cluster into a simple eyelet row that formed the last row of lace and separated the lacy, leafy section at the bottom of the wall hanging from the area of Double Knit to come. Between the eyelet row and the Double Knit section there are two rows of a modified ribbing in knit 3, purl 1.

In order to shift the fabric from lacy openwork to the more solid lower register of Double Knit, Phillips inserted two rows of “purl 1, knit 3 ribbing” after the last lace motif and before the Double Knit section began. The knit stitches in the ribbing sit over the leaf shapes and the purl stitches sit over the vertical interstices. With its considerable capacity to stretch laterally without losing its shape, even under stress, the ribbing pattern here stabilizes the fabric.²⁶ It is also opaque. Following the ribbing, which is barely discernible as separate from the next section except by close observation, are two

²⁶ This is why ribbing is the best choice for the cuffs, neck and waist of sweaters. However, ribbing in an inelastic fiber like linen would have much less flexibility overall. For a discussion of the structural properties of ribbing, see *Mary Thomas's Book of Knitting Patterns*, 3 where she describes it as a “narrow” fabric.

registers of Double Knit paired in alternating panels, first with garter stitch and then with Lace Faggot Stitch.

Fifth and Sixth Lace Patterns: Double Knit Panels Paired with Garter Stitch and Lace Faggot Stitch

Phillips considered Double Knit to be a very versatile stitch. The Double Knit technique forms two layers of fabric that can “create[] areas of tension next to areas that have a lot of stretch.”²⁷ Further, the layers of Double Knit can be separated from each other so that objects can be inserted into “pockets,” and then sealed inside by knitting the openings closed on the following row, although that was not done here.²⁸ Phillips used Double Knit in *The Kings*, for its visual effect and for its stabilizing tendencies, to transition from the more crisply articulated openwork of the lace below it into the more figuratively suggestive cabled area above it.²⁹ The Double Knit area, while acting as a transition from one type of ornate openwork to another, also provides its own interest – in the appearance of a softly undulating fabric of light and dark tones created entirely by varying the stitch density of the panels. The effect of this sequence is a “checkerboard,” of graded transparencies, which provides a suggestion of a landscape for the abstract figures of *The Kings*, above, especially if the viewer imagines them as chess pieces.

²⁷ See “Double Knit,” *Creative Knitting*, 47-48.

²⁸ Phillips made many pieces with found objects, such as seeds and disks of mica using Double Knit. See, e.g. *Peruvian Seeds*, 1969, and *Rocks and Rills*, no date given, *Creative Knitting*, 49-50 and 65.

²⁹ Other examples of works where Phillips used Double Knit in a similar way as it is used in *The Kings*, include *Circles*, 1964, and *Cross*, 1967, in *Creative Knitting*, 47, 68-69.

In the first register there are four panels of “Double Knit” alternating with four panels of garter stitch (a single knit, which is made by knitting every row on both sides of the work, and that creates a ridged fabric with a great deal of lateral stretch, but also one that “takes up” or condenses vertically).³⁰ The Double Knit panels appear more transparent than the garter stitch panels, but overall, this first register of Double Knit is more opaque than the second one. According to the best possible attempt to count the stitches, there are 14 stitches in first panel of Double Knit, 10 stitches in the second panel of garter stitch, followed by 10 Double Knit stitches, 10 garter stitches, 10 Double Knit stitches, 10 garter stitches, 10 Double Knit stitches, and ending with 8 garter stitches (82 stitches). The pattern as set was worked over 8 rows. Because of the even number of panels, their placement is not symmetrical relative to the edges of the piece. In fact, Phillips emphasized the lack of symmetry by incorporating the edge stitches of the piece into the Double Knit panel on the right side of the work, and also extending the garter stitch panel on the left into the edge stitches there. This lack of symmetry becomes even more evident in the second register where the Lace Faggot Stitch makes the right edge of the work very open and transparent, and the Double Knit makes the left edge appear dense and opaque.

To make Double Knit, one works every other stitch on the facing row, and slips the alternate stitches un-worked. The working yarn must float in front of the un-worked stitches. On the reverse, the stitches that were slipped on the previous row are worked,

³⁰ Phillips does not include garter stitch in *Creative Knitting* stating: “The elementary stitches of knitting, such as casting on to begin a piece and binding off, and such simple stitches as Garter, Stockinette and Cable are not described in this book. The experienced knitter will know them, and the beginner can refer to the books listed in the Bibliography for this information.” *Creative Knitting*, 12. For a discussion of these basic stitches and their structural qualities, see *Mary Thomas’s Book of Knitting Patterns*, 1-4, e.g.

while those that were worked are slipped with the yarn in front of them. In effect, only half of the stitches are worked on each row, and the resulting fabric is a double layer with each layer comprising only half of the full number of stitches, and also only half of its width. Phillips likely balanced the narrowing tendency of the Double Knit fabric by wrapping the yarn twice around the needle for each stitch.³¹ The double wrap variation is indicated by the extra openness of Double Knit panels in the work. When paired with the garter stitch knit and its inherently flexible lateral and vertical stretch, the resulting fabric would be easier to block to the width of the lace patterns below, despite its relative appearance of solidity.

In the second register, where the Double Knit is paired with Lace Faggot Stitch, the Lace Faggot Stitch is significantly more transparent. This section maintains the panel width set in the section below, but the visual impact is much more dramatically open. The fabric here actually seems to grow in size. The Lace Faggot Stitch panels open up the knitting to allow a lot of light to pass through the grid pattern formed by the stitches, and they appear wider, while the Double Knit areas seem to pull in and darken.³² The Double Knit sections are placed over the garter stitch panels below and the Faggot Stitch panels are placed over the Double Knit so, in reality, the more transparent panels sit over each other, but the eye links the Double Knit panels for their visual similarities in density and size, and reads the composition more readily as a checkerboard than as columns of light and dark. It was difficult to determine exactly, but I counted at least eight (but probably nine) rows of pattern in this section (the Double Knit portions have four rows –

³¹ See the “variation” Phillips suggest for Double Knit, *Creative Knitting* at 49. See also “Making a Double Throw,” *Creative Knitting*, 51.

³² See “Lace Faggot Stitch,” *Creative Knitting*, 68.

half the total number of rows on the facing side, while the Faggot Stitch Sections appear to have nine rows on the facing side.

The Register Containing *The Kings*

The next section is of a cable and lace pattern that is centrally located to be the focus of interest in the piece. Starting at the base of the first cable twist, and counting from the left side up to the last row of holes, this section appears to be done over about 29 rows. Following the Double Knit section below it, there are five rows that set the placement of the cable and lace motifs for this section as follows (the reverse side rows simply maintain this pattern): knit 5, * purl 2 (these 2 purl stitches are used on either side of each of the six cables to set them off), knit 6 (the cable stitches), purl 2, knit 2 * and repeat from * to * six times, ending row purl 2, knit 6, purl 2, knit 6. In this section there are three double twist cables, and three single twist cables, but there is no effort at symmetry in their placement relative to the opaque and sheer areas of the Double Knit section below. This lack of symmetry adds to the suggestive quality of the figures, some of which appear, because they are positioned over the more solid areas of the pattern below, to extend bodily into the Double Knit section, while others that are placed over the sheer areas appear less distinct. A large hole surmounted by a tall conical hat-shaped Bell Pattern crowns the single twist cables. At the side margins, long columns of Ladder Stitch eyelets visually frame these cables, and Phillips also used shorter columns of Ladder Stitch eyelets to separate the cables from one another within the frame. These shorter columns of eyelets rise out of five smaller 2-stitch cables that separate the larger double twist cables. **Reference Author Photo 1269.**

After the five foundation rows, on both the right and left margins, Phillips set columns of irregularly spaced eyelets made using Ladder Stitch (a two-row pattern where the holes are formed on the first row and stabilized on the return row). On the right margin, there are seven holes and on the left margin, there are nine holes. **Reference Author Photos 1282, right margin, and 1302, left margin.** On the right margin, the first four repeats of the Ladder Stitch conform to the pattern as printed in *Creative Knitting* so that large holes are formed every other row, but in the last three repeats of the Ladder Stitch the holes appear to be separated by more than one intervening row of stockinette stitch as follows: between holes 4-5 and 5-6 there appears to be at least one additional separating row, and between holes 6-7, at least two additional separating rows. On the far left margin Phillips also used the Ladder Stitch, but there the first 6 holes appear to have been made on every other row, while between holes 6-7 and 7-8, there are at least two separating rows. Between holes 8-9, there is only one separating row.

Within the frame created by the Ladder Stitch at either side of the work, there are six large cable motifs spaced evenly across the work, divided by five tiny 2-stitch cables that later open into more Ladder Stitch eyelets. **Reference Author Photo 1268.** The cable patterns, and the Ladder Stitch holes at the right and left margins, appear to start at the same time on the 6th right side row, as follows: knit 1 edge stitch; knit 2 stitches together; yarn over twice [to make ladder hole]; knit 2 stitches together; * purl 2; cable twist over 6 stitches crossing the first 3 stitches in front of work; purl 2; and then over the knit 2 [the 2-stitch cable], knit the second stitch from behind and then knit the first stitch so that the first stitch crosses to left on the front of the fabric and over the second stitch; purl 2 * and repeat from * to * six times ending row with knit 2 together; yarn over twice

[ladder hole]; knit 2 together, knit 2.³³ Phillips and Thomas call this two-stitch cable “One Over One.”³⁴ On the next right side row, the larger 6-stitch cables open into a lacy cable made on right side rows as follows: yarn over; knit 2 stitches together, yarn over, knit 2 stitches together, yarn over, knit 2 stitches together. A similar lacy cable can be found in *Mary Thomas’s Book of Knitting Patterns* at 79-81, entitled “Old Scottish Stitch.” The return rows simply maintain the pattern as established. After three repeats of the lacy cable stitch, all six cables have a grid formed by three horizontal and three vertical holes. The holes are separated by strong vertical interstices formed by the “knit 2 stitches together” decreases. **Reference Author Photo 1275, e.g.**

The pattern formed by this stitch is the same in all six cables, but the surmounting patterns change the appearance of it, so that three of the lacy cables are closed off tightly while the other three -- the first, third and fifth cables counting from the right -- seem to open up into crowned “faces.” Phillips used the “Bell Pattern,” just like she used in *Near East*, 1964, to form the “crowns.”³⁵ In her book, Phillips says the nine stitches she increased to form the bases of the bells were “cast on;” however, the “wrapped” appearance of these stitches in **Author Photo 1292** shows she again used the method for increasing described herein at page 306, and n. 24. For the two flanking “kings,” Philips decreased the nine stitches in pairs on every fourth row – the crowns are reduced to a single remaining stitch on the twelfth row. The decreases lean toward the center of the

³³ The tiny two-stitch cable crosses to the left on the front of the fabric on every alternate right side row four times. After the fourth twist, on the next right side row, the Ladder Stitch pattern replaces it with a large hole, lending a sense of lightness and openness. The number of holes in these Ladder Stitch sections changes from 4 to 5 to 6 holes, and the number of rows between the holes also varies.

³⁴ *Creative Knitting*, 72; *Mary Thomas’s Book of Knitting Patterns*, 64.

³⁵ *Creative Knitting*, 76.

bell to create a tall conical shape like a leaf or a cardinal's hat. However, Phillips gave the center "king" a shorter crown, by decreasing the stitches more rapidly on every other row for eight rows. On the next right side row, Phillips added a 5-stitch "Bobble" to this crown to suggest a large jewel and to emphasize this figure's central importance in the composition.³⁶ Phillips preferred to use a Bobble rather than a Popcorn Stitch with linen fiber, because it held its shape better.³⁷

It is interesting to note that all three kings' crowns sit asymmetrically over only the left and center columns of the three columns of eyelets that form the eyelet cable below. **Reference Author Photo 1269.** Under the distinctive shape of their tall headdresses, the strong vertical lines of decreases that divide the eyelet columns appear to form the outlines of their faces – and a center line suggests noses framed by eyelet eyes. The eye of the viewer almost disregards the far right column of eyelets, but they can also be read as a source of light that illuminates the right side of the faces of the kings, and they stand in contrast to the defining lines and dense fabric to the left of the faces that seems to cast that side of the figures in shadow. Whether intentionally or by accident, the eyelets to the right side of the figures suggest remarkable depth and perspective. Each crown is also defined by a "frame" of smaller eyelets, which seem not only to draw attention to the crowns, but to create, through the openness there, a halo of light around the heads of the kings.

Looking next at the double twist cables, which are cables 2, 4 and 6 counting from the right, they can suggest royal figures of ancillary importance to or greater

³⁶ Phillips described her method for making bobbles in *Creative Knitting* at 58. The number of stitches used in a bobble can always be varied as needed.

³⁷ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 58.

distance away from those represented by the tall hats or crowns, or they could represent trees with a crown of openwork leaves, columns with flaring capital, or in concert with the Ladder Stitch holes on either side of them, some other imaginative architectural feature. **Reference Author Photo 1269.** After three repeats of the lace cable pattern, these cables are twisted a second time, right over left -- in the same direction as before -- and after closing off tightly into ovoid shapes that appear tighter and denser than “the kings,” they open out into a network of diagonally placed yarn over holes in arrangements that vary slightly from figure to figure. There are five repeats of openwork surmounting each closed cable, which shift to the right and to the left of center on succeeding rows. Phillips’s treatment of them makes them appear diffused, and lacking in precision. From the last row of yarn over holes, however, we can determine that all six cabled figures finish at the same point. The row that finishes *The Kings’* central register mixes regular and twisted stitches, although this may be distortion from blocking and from the torque of the Fancy Crossed Throws that follow. Or, Phillips could have used twisted stitches here to better stabilize and anchor the Fancy Crossed Throws. More research is needed here on this transitional area.

Top Register: Grading into Transparencies

Surmounting the cables is a section of short Fancy Crossed Throws made with two wraps around the needle that resulted in two twists. There are sixty-nine repeats of this pattern.³⁸ The first section of Fancy Crossed Throws ends with two rows of knit – the first of these with twisted stitches left leg over top. The second row is plain. A short interval with 3 repeats of Lace Faggot Stitch follows. On top of this is one row of reverse

³⁸ Phillips, *Creative Knitting*, 46-47; Thomas, *Mary Thomas’s Book of Knitting Patterns*, 108-112.

stockinette stitch that twists the stitches below and then a pattern of Lace Faggot Stitch resumes, k2 tog, yo – the next row appears to be “knit over the yarn over” from the previous row followed by a row of “knit into the stitch below over the k2togs” – this sequence creates the effect of a slashing motion across the fabric, interrupting its regularity. Next there is a plain stockinette stitch row followed by a twisted stockinette stitch row, twisted left leg over right – these rows formed the baseline rows for the Fancy Crossed Throws to come. It looks like Phillips started half the Fancy Crossed Throws on one row and half on the next – the first row has Fancy Crossed Throws about every second or third stitch – the intervals do not appear to be precise – while on the second row she slipped all the Fancy Crossed Throws already begun and completed them on the remaining stitches. The 70 very elongated Fancy Crossed Throws have 3 twists each. On the row following, Phillips joined each pair of Fancy Crossed Throws with knit 2 together, and followed the joined stitches with yarn overs to resume the regularity of the Lace Faggot pattern. This pattern continued for 8 repeats, was interrupted by a row of plain knitting that created a strong horizontal line across the piece (possibly as a stabilizing section). Afterwards, the Lace Faggot pattern was resumed for 22 repeats. There are 32 vertical repeats of Lace Faggot columns across the horizontal width of the fabric. Phillips finished the piece with 5 rows of stockinette stitch and only one row of twisted stitches at the turning row on the facing side. I counted 14 rows total in the top casing before the bind off row.

APPENDIX II

Visual Analysis of *Shells*, 1967

Art Institute of Chicago Credit: Designed and executed by Mary Walker Phillips, American, 1923-2007, United States, New York, New York City, *Hanging Entitled "Shells"*, 1967, Linen and silk, knit in shell knitting, ladder, fancy crossed throw, and knit into stitch below stitches, 218.3 x 106.1 cm (86 x 41 3/4 in.), Restricted gift of Mrs. Edward K. Aldworth in honor of Christa C. Mayer Thurman, 1984.87, The Art Institute of Chicago.

Notes:

This is a monumental knitted work measuring just over 7' in height. Phillips used two fibers in the hanging, linen and silk, alternating them in horizontal bands of random widths, with each band featuring its own vocabulary of stitch patterns. The silk fiber is a light off-white color, with a slight surface sheen. It is a smoothly plied yarn of two or more plies that has the appearance in the neatness, tightness, uniformity and fineness of the plies, of a commercially spun yarn. This is a substantial fiber in a weight and surface texture that would work well for knitting a conventional garment at a gauge of about 7-8 stitches to the inch, considered "fingering weight" on a standard knitting needle of approximately 3.0 – 3.5 millimeters in diameter (commonly referred to as a US "United States" size 3 or 4 needle). It is not coarse, or threadlike, or cobwebby.

The linen fiber is of a darker natural color, almost taupe, and it is used doubled throughout. The linen has a waxy texture and appearance that may be due to the quality of the fiber, or to the way it has reacted to the starch Phillips typically used to block the piece after it was knitted. Its visual appearance is rougher, somewhat friable, with a visible coarseness that contrasts with the silk's sheen and ability to reflect light. Unlike the silk, this yarn would be less suitable for use in a garment because of its coarse and irregular surface.

Up close the differences between the two fibers are more noticeable than when the hanging is viewed from a distance of several feet, as would be customary in a gallery. The overall appearance of the piece is very natural, but of refined, restrained richness. The subtle interplay of texture, surface reflectivity and color from Phillips's use of two different yarns in the piece gives the piece visual depth, lively surface interest, and a rhythmic quality, but the overall appearance of uniformity contributes to the impression of monumentality.

Hem and Border Treatment:

Phillips began knitting the piece with the coarser linen yarn. As covered in the Appendix I, *The Kings*, Phillips made a folded hem of about 1.25 inches. There is no way to determine, without turning the piece over, which was not feasible, how many rows are

behind the hem, but on the facing side, there is a turning row preceded by a twisted stockinette stitch, left leg over right leg, and then a purl row, and then three rows of twisted stitches that alternate left over right, right over left, left over right. This observation would be consistent with Phillips's stated preference for using the Crossed Stitch Combined Method. (Phillips, *Creative Knitting*).

To complete the border and the foundation rows for the first pattern, Phillips changed to garter stitch for 4 rows, and twisted each row of knit stitches that form the garter rows so that the left leg of the stitch crossed over the right leg. After the border and foundation rows, Phillips defined each ensuing horizontal register by the use of either silk or linen fiber and a different arrangement or composition of stitch patterns. These are described in further detail, below:

SUMMARY OF THE PATTERN REGISTERS

Register 1, Linen (5 Inches)

Phillips used the "Shell" pattern in linen – 2 repeats of it offset at the bottom. The shell motif transitions to 2 complimentary patterns in silk in Register 2, continuing the interplay of offset motifs from Register 1.

Register 2, Silk (4.25 Inches)

This register uses 2 variations of rounded motifs – all on same multiples of 5 stitches as the shell pattern in the register below. One is a small, flattened "bobble" or disk surmounting a cluster of 5 loops. The next is a larger and more teardrop-shaped motif that is closed off by the cluster stitch.

In Register 2, the cluster with flattened bobble is done with a triple yarn over on one row and on the return row a cluster of five stitches with increases, as follows: * Knit into back of stitch using Phillips's preferred method – pull stitch through, wrap yarn around needle, knit into back of the stitch, wrap yarn around needle – 5 stitches increased into decorative loop – knit 1 *. Repeat.

Next row: * P1; {purl 5, turn, knit 5, turn, purl 5} *

Next row: Into the P1, increase 5 stitches - * [Knit 1, yarn, knit 1, yarn, knit 1] – then decrease bobble as knit 5 together *

Next row (setting up next increase motif): Into the decreased bobbles * Knit into the stitch below, knit 5 *

Next row: * Slip 1, purl 5 *

Next row: * Knit into stitch below, knit 5 *

Next row: * The purl row is purled by wrapping yarn 3 times around the needle across the row *

Next row: * Drop all wraps – then * Slip 1; increase 5 wraps as before while knitting 5 together *

Next row: * Purl 1 into stitch below, purl 5 *

Register 3 Linen (4.5 Inches)

This register adds interest and even more movement (and softness) to what is becoming a series of shifting patterns placed in a symmetrical but offset arrangement. It has a natural, swaying, foamy rhythm which is achieved by using a classic faggoted stitch pattern and a different number of wraps around the needle on either side of it, separated by strong verticals created by knit into the stitch below. The strong verticals using knit into the stitch below actually continue into Register 3 linking the 2 sections in a subtle visual way.

This is still a 5-stitch pattern which may have been done as slip 1, knit 1, yarn over, knit 1, slip 1 – or it may be a variation of this. On the next row you would purl back across, perhaps purling into the stitch below. There are two repeats of the ladder pattern and then two rows of plain knit, then 3 repeats of the ladder pattern and two rows of plain knit, then one row of the ladder pattern and one row of plain knit. It is not clear if more wraps are used for some of the larger holes – but there seems to be an irregularity of sizes in the holes, which adds to the flowing look of the pattern. After the last knit row, the fiber changes to silk.

Register 4, Silk (8 Inches)

Return to the shell pattern – still on a multiple of 15 stitches, and still offset from Register 2. There are 3 horizontal bands of the shell pattern. In the first, the stockinette stitches show on right side of the clusters, in the second and third, the purl stitches show on the right side of the clusters. Each horizontal band of shell pattern is followed by two rows of garter stitch.

Register 5, Linen (4.25 Inches)

This register starts after the two rows of garter stitch in Register 4. There is one row of stockinette stitch as a base followed by a heavy, doubled stitch, but I don't think it's made with a yarn over. The next row is * yarn over, knit 2 together * with bigger holes, then a stockinette stitch row, then the cluster stitch followed by the heavy doubled stitch. Then a knit row, with a shorter wrap that branches again into 5 stitches – but only over one row – a wheat sheaves look. The register finishes with the heavy doubled stitch as the last row.

Register 6, Silk (2.25 Inches)

Starts with plain knit row, followed by the heavy doubled stitch as seen in Register 5, then a knit row, then the lace faggot pattern, but offset from shells below.

Register 7, Linen (9.5 Inches)

Four repeats of the shell pattern, each repeat separated by two rows of garter stitch. The first repeat of the shell pattern sits directly over the “wheat sheaves” pattern in Register 5, but the succeeding repeats of the shell pattern in this register are offset from one another. All show the purl side of the stitch in the cluster.

Register 8, Silk (2.25 Inches)

Offset from shells below – the cluster as used below, but with a purl row at the base. It is set on another row of those heavy doubled stitches. After the cluster, it branches into 5 knit stitches, followed by a purl row.

Register 9, Linen (2.25 Inches)

Two repeats of the Ladder Stitch. The holes sit on top of the heads of the cluster below, followed by two rows garter stitch.

(Registers 8 and 9 share the same strong vertical elements.)

Register 10, Silk (8.25 Inches)

Two rows of garter stitch – this is depicted in the detail photo of *Shells* shown in *Creative Knitting*. (Vertical elements shift here and again in Register 11.)

Register 11, Linen (4.5 Inches)

Starts with that heavy doubled stitch – could Phillips have used doubled yarn for this? Then there are two bands of Fancy Crossed Throws, each separated by a motif of 3 knit stitches in the center.

Register 12, Silk (4 Inches)

Ladder Stitch creates another new vertical element. It’s a single ladder pattern bordered by garter stitch.

Register 13, Linen (7.25 Inches)

Three repeats of shells separated by 2 rows of garter stitch. Last row of this pattern is the heavy doubled stitch.

Register 14, Silk (5.5 Inches)

Returns to cluster with ball motif used in Register 2 – but it’s a 3-stitch ball motif – not a 5-stitch ball motif.

Register 15, Linen (3.25 Inches)

Similar to, but not same as Register 11.

APPENDIX III

MARY WALKER PHILLIPS, 1923-2007: LIST OF WORKS

Name of Work	Number (Order of Works)	Collection/Location	Donor	Date	Medium	Dimensions	Materials	Stitches Used	Source	Exhibitions
Mohair Throw					Knitting		Mohair, wool		Handweaver & Craftsman, Spring 1965, Vol. 16, Number 2, pp. 17-18, 31-32.	Milan 13 th Triennale, 1964; Indiana University, 1965
Pillow					Knitting		Mohair, walnut dyed, and handspun white wool	Stockinette st., simple intarsia with color change worked along a central diagonal	Handweaver & Craftsman, Spring 1965, Vol. 16, Number 2, pp. 17-18, 31-32.	
Glove		Penland School of Crafts, Penland, NC			Knitting				Penland Archives e-mail, 03/0_/09	
Wall Hanging					Knitting	19" x 40"	Red Scandinavian Linen		CK: 8, 84-85	
Fans and Beads		Smithsonian National Museum of American History			Knitting					
Near East #2		Objects USA Collection at Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum		1964	Knitting	108" x 46"	Natural linen		Objects USA Catalogue, 299	Objects USA
Chair				1964	Knitting		Blue and turquoise nub wool; Tubular metal frame by Eva Zeisel	Seed stitch	CK: 67; Handweaver & Craftsman, Spring 1965, Vol. 16, Number 2, pp. 17-18, 31-32.	Milan 13 th Triennale 1964
The Kings	K22	Cranbrook Academy of Art	Roger Dunham	1966	Knitting	19.25" x 29"	5/1 natural linen and ikat-dyed red and black linen	Grand eyelet; double knit; purse stitch	CK: 48, 86; FAC 1984 #3, p. 3 GG #4; 8-9	Merit Award, Craftsman USA 1966; Fresno Arts Center, 1984; Goldstein Gallery 1987

Name of Work	Number (Order of Works)	Collection/Location	Donor	Date	Medium	Dimensions	Materials	Stitches Used	Source	Exhibitions
Casement: For Paul Klee	K1			1963	Knitting	4' x 9'	5/1 Natural Linen	Fancy crossed throws; garter stitch	CK: 13, 44-45; Fifteen Knitted Works; FAC 1984 #1, p. 3; GG #1; 8-9, 13	New Zealand, 1981; Fresno Arts Center, 1984; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Circles				1964	Knitting	NG	5/1 natural linen and single-ply handspun silk		CK: 47	
Wall Hanging				1964	Knitting	20" x 30"	5/1 natural and ikat-dyed dark green, natural and bronze linen		CK: 63	
Near East		Museum of Modern Art, New York		1964	Knitting	4' x 9"	5/1 natural linen		CK: 67	Milan 13 th Triennale 1964; Museum of Modern Art 1969 Wall Hangings Exhibition
Lace Diadem	[K14] In NZ cat. has this #			1964	Knitting	53" x 43"	Linen	Lace diadem pattern	Fifteen Knitted Works	New Zealand, 1981
The Creature	K14	Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum		1964	Knitting	14" x 21"	5/1 natural linen		CK: 60-61; GG #2; 8-9; SBS-K 7	Goldstein Gallery 1987
Wall Hanging	K16	Jack Lenor Larsen		1964	Knitting	20" x 30"	5/1 Natural Linen, ikat dyed green, bronze, natural	Grand eyelet; stocking stitch	CK: Overleaf; FAC 1984 #2, p. 3; GG #3; 8-9	Fresno Arts Center, 1984; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Wall Hanging		Harriet Clark Rouse		1965	Knitting	8" x 15.5"	Black 5/1 linen		CK: 80	
Wall Hanging				1965	Knitting	10" x 29"	5/1 natural linen, white silk		CK: 88	
Wall Hanging		Marianne Harvey, Hants, England		1965	Knitting	14" x 43"	Moss green and black slub linen with black glass beads		CK: 88	
Wall Hanging				1965	Knitting	14" x 36"	White and yellow linen, white and yellow silk		CK: 89	
Wall Hanging		Museum of Contemporary Crafts (MAD Museum) – JL confirm	Mary Walker Phillips	1966	Knitting	21" x 52"	Natural linen and silk		CK: 89-90	
Middle Ages				1966	Knitting	11" x 16"	Gold 10/22 linen, gold silk, gold metallic yarn		CK: 91	

Name of Work	Number (Order of Works)	Collection/Location	Donor	Date	Medium	Dimensions	Materials	Stitches Used	Source	Exhibitions
	K39	Museum of Arts & Design	Mary Walker Phillips, 1967	1966	Knitting	52.25 x 24"	Linen, silk			
Shells	K39	Art Institute of Chicago, No. 1984.87	Mrs. Edward K. Aldworth	1967	Knitting	218.3 x 106.1 cm 86" x 41.75"	Linen, silk	Bluebell (shell) knitting; ladder; fancy crossed throw; knit into the stitch below	CK: 80; Fifteen Knitted Works; FAC 1984 #7, p. 3	New Zealand, 1981; Fresno Arts Center, 1984
Peacocks	K33	Frank B. Laury		1967	Knitting	19" x 26" [19" x 28"]	Dark green linen used double and blue glass beads	Grand eyelet; ladder stitch; knit into the stitch below	CK: 70; FAC 1984 #4, p. 3	Fresno Arts Center, 1984
Many Openings				1967	Knitting	28" x 40"	Brown 5/1 linen and brown mohair		CK: 78	
Wall Hanging		Mrs. Bobby Copeland		1967	Knitting	13" x 34"	5/1 natural linen, white silk, pearl rings		CK: 85-86	
Yellow Variations		W. David Phillips		1967	Knitting	29" x 41"	Yellow slub linen, yellow silk		CK: 92-93	
Wall Hanging		Mr. and Mrs. Lance Factor		1967	Knitting	12" x 29"	5/1 natural linen		CK: 94	
More Variations	K34			1967	Knitting	20" x 50"	Greek handspun natural silk and 5/1 natural linen		CK: 34, 73; GG # 5; 8-9, 13	Goldstein Gallery 1987
Popcorn	K35	Mrs. John P. Phillips		1967 [per GG]	Knitting	28" x 36"	Natural slub linen, white silk, natural handspun wool	Popcorn; bobbles; plaited basket; horizontal stitch	CK: 33, 58, 65; FAC 1984 #5, p. 3; GG # 6; 4, 8-9	Wall Hangings Traveling Exhibit, 1968 [date in CK – check]; Fresno Arts Center, 1984; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Cross	K36	W. David Phillips		1967	Knitting	[34" x 70"] [20 x 70]	5/1 natural linen doubled, white silk, gold metallic yarn	Double knit; purse stitch; stocking stitch	CK: 68-69; Fifteen Knitted Works FAC 1984 #6, p. 3; GG # 7; 4, 8-9	New Zealand, 1981; Fresno Arts Center, 1984; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Wall Hanging				1968	Knitting	29" x 32"	Black 1.5 lea linen		CK: 56-57	

Name of Work	Number (Order of Works)	Collection/Location	Donor	Date	Medium	Dimensions	Materials	Stitches Used	Source	Exhibitions
Vertical Trails				1968	Knitting	53" x 69"	Natural 1.5 lea linen	Cable variations, bell pattern, ladder stitch, clustering, bobbles	CK: 59, 94-95; Fifteen Knitted Works	New Zealand, 1981
Wall Hanging				1968	Knitting	29" x 15"	Black 5/1 lea linen used double		CK: 74-75	
Wall Hanging: "Mica"	K45	Mr. and Mrs. Pete (Gladys) Peters		1968	Knitting	24" x 48" 45" x 24"	5/1 natural linen used double, natural silk, mica from North Carolina	Double knit; horizontal stitch; eyelet; bobbles; bell frilling; bell motif	CK: 77, 84-85; FAC 1984 #8, p. 3	Fresno Arts Center, 1984
Onward and Upward				1968	Knitting	36" x 34"	5/1 natural and ikat-dyed green linen; natural wooden beads		CK: 82-83	
Peruvian Seeds	K54			1969 [1968]	Knitting	18" x 22"	Black linen used double, seed pods from Peru, brown wooden beads		CK: 49-50; Fifteen Knitted Works; GG # 8; 8-9	New Zealand, 1981; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Pumpkin Leaves	K59			1970	Knitting	99" x 43" 96" x 52"	Linen	Bell cluster pattern	Fifteen Knitted Works; GG # 9; 8-9; Fine Art in Sts., 4	New Zealand, 1981; Goldstein Gallery 1987; Fine Art in Sts., 2005-06
Wall Hanging	K61			1971	Knitting	39" x 28"	Linen and mahogany beads		GG # 10; 8-9; Fine Art in Sts., 4	Goldstein Gallery 1987; Fine Art in Sts., 2005-06
From the Persian	K72			1974	Knitting	47" x 28"	Linen and Irish wool	Double knit	Fifteen Knitted Works; GG # 11; 8-9	New Zealand, 1981; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Wall Hanging: Bell Frilling and Mica	K85			1975	Knitting	70" x 45"	Linen, mica	Double knit, horizontal stitch, knit into the stitch below, bell frilling patterns	Fifteen Knitted Works; GG # 12; 8-9	New Zealand, 1981; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Parquet with Bobbles	K100			1975	Knitting	178 cm x 114 cm		Rug wool, heavy linen	Fifteen Knitted Works	New Zealand, 1981

Name of Work	Number (Order of Works)	Collection/Location	Donor	Date	Medium	Dimensions	Materials	Stitches Used	Source	Exhibitions
Royal Interlace	K101			1978	Knitting	42" x 23.5" 44 x 24"	Wool, silk, gold and silver threads	Interlace pattern	Fifteen Knitted Works GG # 13; 8-9; Fine Art in Sts., 4	New Zealand, 1981; Goldstein Gallery 1987; Fine Art in Sts. 2005-06
Fans #2	K103			1978	Knitting	112 cm x 76 cm	Linen, beads	Fan (shell) pattern	Fifteen Knitted Works	New Zealand, 1981
Oakleaves and Acorns	K107			1981	Knitting	81 x 61	Natural Linen		Fifteen Knitted Works	New Zealand, 1981
Homage to Raised Cables	K108			1981	Knitting	21" x 14.5"	Wool, silk	Raised cable pattern	Fifteen Knitted Works; FAC 1984 #17, p. 7; GG # 14; 8-9	New Zealand, 1981; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Bells for Dunedin	K109			1981	Knitting	31" x 22"	Wire, Indian bells	Butterfly stitch variations	Fifteen Knitted Works; FAC 1984 #18, p. 7; GG # 15; 8-9	New Zealand, 1981; Fresno Arts Center 1984; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Alsace	K111			1983	Knitting	60" x 42"	Linen (heavy)	Alsatian pattern; horizontal stitch, gathering stitch	FAC 1984 #19, pp. 4, 7	Fresno Arts Center 1984
Embossed Leaves and Bobbles	K112			1983	Knitting	108" x 42"	Linen, triple strand	Embossed leaf pattern; bobbles	FAC 1984 #20, p. 7; GG # 16; 8-9	Goldstein Gallery 1987
Spanish Lace #2	K113			1983	Knitting	60" x 37"	Linen, 1344 wooden beads	Spanish lace pattern with variations	FAC 1984 #21, pp. 6-7	Fresno Arts Center 1984
Oakleaves and Acorns #3	K114			1983	Knitting	53" x 43"	Linen, silk	Oakleaf and acorn pattern	FAC 1984 #22, p. 7 and cover; GG # 17; 8-9	Fresno Arts Center 1984; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Victoriana	K115			1983	Knitting	13" x 13"	Linen	Scalloped shell pattern with variations	FAC 1984 #23, p. 7; GG # 18; 8-9	Fresno Arts Center 1984; Goldstein Gallery 1987
Yellow Scotch Lace	K116			1984	Knitting	54" x 40"	Linen, silk		GG # 19; 7-9	Goldstein Gallery 1987
Blanket	K117			1984	Knitting	64" x 30"	Mohair, silk		GG # 20; 8-9	Goldstein Gallery 1987
Leaves with Beads	K118	Bobby Crocket		1984	Knitting	24" x 42.5"	Linen, beads		New York Times, 4-21-85; GG # 21; 8-9, 11	New York Textile Study Group Exhibition, 1985; Goldstein Gallery 1987

Name of Work	Number (Order of Works)	Collection/Location	Donor	Date	Medium	Dimensions	Materials	Stitches Used	Source	Exhibitions
Blue Half Knots	K120			1985	Knitting	31" x 13"	Linen		GG # 22; 8-9	Goldstein Gallery 1987
Colored Flaps	K121			1985	Knitting	32" x 13.5"	Linen [and metallic thread?]		GG # 23; 8-9	Goldstein Gallery 1987 Note: Is this the piece that David Phillips owns?
Red Butterflies with Beads	K124			1986	Knitting	36" x 21.5"	Linen, silk, beads		GG # 24; 5, 8-9	Goldstein Gallery 1987
Button-hole #2	K127			1986	Knitting	28" x 32.5"	Linen		GG # 25; overleaf, 8-9	Goldstein Gallery 1987
Clematis #2	K128			1986	Knitting	60" x 44"	Linen		GG # 26; 3, 8-9	Goldstein Gallery 1987
Wall Hanging		Mrs. Ann Stackhouse		NG	Knitting	14" x 36"	Yellow slub linen and yellow wooden beads		CK: 53-54, 84-85	
Rocks and Rills		Mrs. John P. Phillips		1966	Knitting	14" x 20"	Linen, beach pebbles		Fine Art in Sts., 5	Fine Art in Sts., 2005-06
Pillow		W. David Phillips		NG	Knitting	NG	Yellow Silk	Garter and Stockinette st.	CK: 64-65	
Pillow		W. David Phillips		NG	Knitting	NG	Yellow and orange silk	Plaited basket st.	CK: 64-65	
Pillow		Mrs. Ann Stackhouse		NG	Knitting	NG	Yellow silk	Popcorn st.	CK: 64-65	
Wall Hanging		Harold D. Crosby		NG	Knitting	20" x 35"	5/1 natural and ikat-dyed red linen, red wooden beads		CK: 84-85	
Sample 1				NG	Knitting		5/1 natural linen		CK: 98 Thesis?	
Sample 2				NG	Knitting		Fiberglass		CK: 99 Thesis?	
Sample 3				NG	Knitting		5/1 natural linen and single-ply mohair		CK: 100 Thesis?	
Sample 4				NG	Knitting		5/1 natural linen		CK: 101 Thesis?	
Sample 5				NG	Knitting		Rovana and Lurex		CK: 102 Thesis?	
Sample 6				NG	Knitting		Synthetic straw		CK: 103 Thesis?	
Sample 7 (reverse of Sample 6)				NG	Knitting		Synthetic straw		CK: 104 Thesis?	
Sample 8				NG	Knitting		Synthetic straw and gold metallic yarn		CK: 105 Thesis?	

Name of Work	Number (Order of Works)	Collection/Location	Donor	Date	Medium	Dimensions	Materials	Stitches Used	Source	Exhibitions
Sample 9				NG	Knitting		5/1 natural linen and natural mohair		CK: 106	Craft Horizons Magazine
Sample 10				NG	Knitting		Natural handspun wool and walnut-dyed handspun mohair		CK: 107 Thesis?	
Sample 11				NG	Knitting		Dahlia-dyed handspun wool, handcut leather		CK: 108 Thesis?	
Sample 12				NG	Knitting		Natural handspun mohair and white handcut leather		CK: 108 Thesis?	
Sample 13				NG	Knitting		5/1 natural linen		CK: 109	
Sample 14				NG	Knitting		5/1 natural linen		CK: 110	
Sample 15				NG	Knitting		5/1 natural linen		CK: 110	
Sample 16				NG	Knitting		5/1 natural and ikat-dyed blue linen		CK: 111	
Hat		Museum of Contemporary Crafts (MAD Museum) – JL confirm		NG	Knitting	NG	Yellow Japanese paper ribbon		CK: 112-113	Made with Paper Exhibit, Museum of Contemporary Crafts [date]
Wall Covering Prototype		Museum of Contemporary Crafts (MAD Museum) – JL confirm		NG	Knitting	NG	Paper twine		CK: 114-115	Made with Paper Exhibit, Museum of Contemporary Crafts [date]
Dossal Curtain		St. John's Episcopal Church, Stockton, CA		1955	Weaving				Resume	
Peking				1967	Macrame	58" x 8"	Linen, Peking glass beads, bracelet, ring		Fine Art in Sts., 7-8	Fine Art in Sts, 2005-06
Wall Hanging				1968	Macrame	59" x 11"	Linen, white and natural		Fine Art in Sts., 7-8	Fine Art in Sts, 2005-06
California's Sun				1974	Macrame	8" x 8"	Linen, silk, wool		Fine Art in Sts., 7-8	Fine Art in Sts, 2005-06
Wall Hanging (Work in Progress)				1975	Macrame	42" x 14"	Linen, silk		Fine Art in Sts., 7-8	Fine Art in Sts, 2005-06
Wall Hanging				1975	Macrame	31" x 21"	Linen, wool, metal rods		Fine Art in Sts., 8	Fine Art in Sts, 2005-06