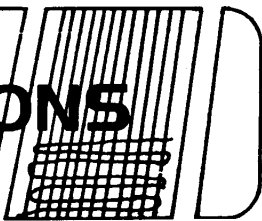


# FRAME LOOMINATIONS



by Mary Temple

It is hardly a secret that I am a dyed-in-the-wool enthusiast about the rigid heddle frame loom as an excellent teaching tool, affordable, portable, storable, and especially suitable for teaching the basic weaver-controlled weaves and hand techniques. This versatile loom gives the person interested in weaving an easy way to learn some of the fulfillment and creativity of weaving without making the major commitment to a floor loom. For many weavers it may be the only loom they will ever care to own. Within the limits naturally imposed by the rigid heddle these weavers will find limitless possibility for their creativity. While the Weavers' Guild of Minnesota does not endorse or recommend any specific products, the frame loom teachers have suggested that our students use either a Beka, Kircher, or Kay-an-Ee loom. Some of the reasons are the integrity of the people who manufacture them, the fine craftsmanship, and most of all the fact that these looms really work, stand up to a lot of hard usage, can be repaired, and any broken part can be replaced. Kay-an-Ee is no longer widely distributed in this area; I have both Beka and Kircher looms in my own studio and use them equally—they have both proved to be excellent tools.

Many other companies have sprung up locally with a rigid heddle frame loom and quickly disappeared. There are probably several reasons for the quick disappearance, but the one reason the frame loom teachers at the Guild have seen most often is that most of these looms simply cannot be woven on, no matter how fancy the box. I remember one unbelievable company executive eager for the recommendation we did not give, who told us his marketing researchers were sure eighty percent of the looms sold would never even be taken out of the boxes. He excused his poor product by saying it was not really intended for weavers, but it made an excellent gift for grown-ups to give to children. Was this to teach a child the meaning of frustration? I feel very bitter about the number of young people who must simply despise weaving because their first attempts were, in the name of sweet budding creativity, frustrated by a shoddy loom.

For the past month I have been trying out a pair of newly developed rigid heddle frame looms, and I've really enjoyed the experience. This is the Erica Loom, manufactured by the Northfield Loom Company. I have the standard twenty-inch loom, and also a very satisfying twenty-five inch loom. For many of you who have been frustrated with only twenty inches of weaving width, the twenty-five inch model fills a real need. The Erica Loom is intended for a mass market, and the lower price is reflected in a little lower quality material and workmanship, perhaps less attention to quality control. I am a little concerned over the durability of the loom, and tend to wonder how it will hold up when it has as much mileage as my first Kircher. Perhaps these small doubts are a little like comparing a VW and a Volvo, because the loom is plain, not fancy, but well-engineered and very easy to weave with. The loom has small beams that raise the weaving bed to a very comfortable height for working. Because of those raised beams it is very possible to warp the loom by oneself. The warp is tied onto apron sticks and beamed very much like a floor loom; I wonder if the transition from this loom to a floor loom might not be rather natural. Easy-to-tighten

wood blocks fitted with tee-nuts hold the warp securely in tension on the beams. The side frames are particularly sturdy with very large end notches so this loom fits almost all tables and counters. The heddle blocks on the side frames are grooved to hold the rigid heddle in a neutral shed; this is a great idea which eliminates the need for separate heddle blocks when the loom is being warped. I am sure we will be seeing this loom in our weaving classes. Please remember that this does not constitute a recommendation by the Guild, but is only my personal opinion, based on one month's experience.

# SHOWS & EXHIBITS



by Suzy Sewell

## TO SEE

*Knoll Retrospective Opens at College of Art and Design.* Some 29 signature pieces produced by Knoll International Organization, a world renowned design firm, will be shown in February at the Minneapolis Art Institute College of Art and Design. Today, Knoll commands some of the most exciting design talents in the world. Included in the upcoming exhibition of furniture and textiles are works by such noted architects/designers as Eero Saarinen, Mies van der Rohe, Florence Knoll, Harry Bertola and many others. All of the furniture pieces in the show were shown in the 1972 "Knoll en Louvre" exhibition in Paris. The pieces will be on view from February 3-27 in the Main College Gallery at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. The hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; 8:30 to noon Saturdays.

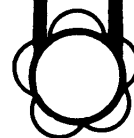
*Color Fields — Fiber:* Guild member Lynn Klein will have an exhibit of weavings Jan. 23-Feb. 6 at Gallery 305, on the 3rd floor of Northrup Auditorium, entitled Color Fields — Fiber. The opening will be Jan. 23 from 7-9 p.m.

## TO SHOW

### *Bicentennial Banner Exhibition*

Individuals and groups are invited to create banners reflecting their feelings about religious freedom as an important part of the American way of life. Banners will be hung in Hennepin County Government Building from April 4-25. Entries will be juried and cash prizes will be awarded. March 25 deadline. More information is available at the Guild office, or call Betty Hemstad, 922-2690.

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