

# Book Review

## Tapestry Weaving for beginners and beyond

Kristin Carter

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Review by Jane Kirby, May 2022



*Tapestry Weaving for beginners and beyond (book cover)*

I love reading books on tapestry and have always been disappointed that our county has very few in the library collection, so when I saw this in the local branch's 'New Titles' section I was surprised and pleased that they had bought something about tapestry, borrowing it immediately.

It is a very basic introduction to tapestry weaving, written by a self-taught weaver. It guides you through making a simple frame from a picture frame, retaining the backboard of the picture frame to support your cartoon (referred to as a template). Retaining the backboard means that there is no access to the warp from behind, and necessitates needle weaving, rather than using bobbins or butterflies.

The author urges you to be free in your choice of weft yarns, and those described are essentially knitting yarns. This approach could be reassuring for complete beginners, who perhaps have a stash of knitting yarns to use up, but will probably not give good results for people who want to progress.

I found the ordering of the different sections a little off-putting – once you have made your loom and warped it, the instructions dive straight into weaving an image, though you have to look at a later section to learn how to start your weaving with some rows of tabby and a rya-knotted fringe. As all the projects start in the same way, I would have preferred to have these instructions before those for weaving an image.

Texture is important to the author, and there are instructions for rya knots, soumak, twill patterns, pile, and embellishing with beads or embroidery. The photos are mostly very clear, often with black warp to ensure that the intersections of warp and weft stand out in the images. On the other hand, there is very little discussion of the challenges of weaving shapes – no mention of 'meet-and-separate' - and although there is advice on sewing slits, this is very much relegated to the end of the book.

There is absolutely no information on the history of tapestry, or any examination of 21<sup>st</sup> century tapestry weavers. At the most basic level, yes, this book covers weft-faced weaving with discontinuous weft, so it is about tapestry, but it is not one I would recommend for anyone who wishes to really educate themselves about tapestry weaving.