

Book Review

Weaving with Wire: creating woven metal fabric

Author: Christine K. Miller

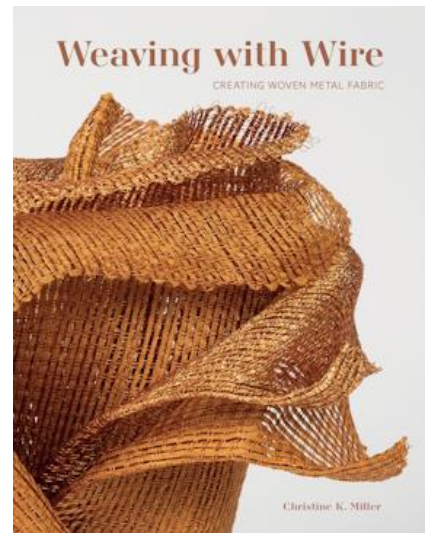
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Full colour illustrations and sketch diagrams

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Review by: Sally Reckert, September 2023



Weaving with Wire (book cover)

Christine K. Miller is a weaver, exhibitor and teacher with many years of experience. Her understanding of her subject - metal wire in textiles - comes across on every page. Although this book is primarily aimed at shaft-loom weavers there is a great deal of useful information for artists of all fibre techniques.

In the contents section Miller writes an overview for each part of the book from Looms, Wire, Yarns and Tools, through instructions for weaving and sculpting metal wire and fabric, and the applications to which the material can be put, to guiding the reader through the artistic thought processes required to create fibre art. For artists with a knowledge of metal-working, Miller describes ways for pairing sheet with woven metal and fabric.

Weaving with Wire is not a how-to-make book. At the beginning of each part of the book Miller poses three questions pertinent to all artists and craft makers; for instance: How could records of your projects reflect your growth as a weaver? Where do the rules of design originate?

Although Miller understands that students learn in different ways, her instructions to shaft-loom weavers for making the foundation project insist that they are followed to the letter: "I am asking you not to deviate from these instructions until you get one or two warps under your belt before you begin experimenting." Wise words, as metal wire has its own characteristics, and once crimped or bent it cannot be reversed. Miller's tips and traps for this "lively material which can quickly and easily get out of control" are also applicable to other woven fibre arts.



The photographs clearly support Miller's concise instructions for beaming the warp, winding the bobbins and dressing the loom. Drafts are given for four-, six- and eight-harness looms. Where photography might not be as clear, for instance jewellery instructions, Miller uses sketched instruction on squared paper. Throughout the book she shares her processes and techniques for working with metal yarn but she doesn't tell the reader how and what to make. Instead, she poses questions which readers can only answer for themselves; for instance, in Part 4, Woven-

Metal Applications, she poses the question: "What does a form have to have to be considered a basket?"

Miller shares her knowledge for working with metal yarn and woven cloth clearly. She backs up her words with images of her own art and that of her students and other artists. This makes *Weaving with Wire* very informative, not just for shaft-loom weavers but all fibre artists interested in combining metal with fabric yarns.

