

The Braid Society
Online Workshop May 2020
Week Three booklet 2
Designing your personal band pattern
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This workshop was prepared for the Braid Society. <https://thebraidsociety.wildapricot.org/>

The booklets are available for any interested weaver to enjoy.

Braids Iga, Japan October 2019

Last October the Fourth International Conference on Braiding was held in Iga, Japan. As a keynote speaker, I was asked to set up a table with my work in the exhibition space. The exhibition was held in a *sukodu*, an old school building originally for the children of Samurai. It is a very elegant space. I decided to make a book of band samples as well as two sets of shoe laces inspired by a haiku by a local poet, Bashō who was born in 1644. The sample book contained actual woven examples of bands from Scandinavia, Russia, Ireland and the Baltic States, as well as drawdowns and photographs. The cover is handwoven cotton with the title in a supplementary warp.



For my talk I brought lots of samples and spread them out so that everyone could handle them and take photographs. (My suitcase was very full!) Each of the woven bands and belts were tied with the narrow band that I had designed.



My Design Inspiration

Bashō was born in 1644 in the city of Ueno in the province of Iga. Many years ago I read his book *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*, which is an account of his travels.

Bashō was given two pairs of straw sandals with laces dyed in the deep blue of the iris. Here is the haiku he composed.

*It looks as if
Iris flowers had bloomed
On my feet -
Sandals laced in blue.*

Bashō

The iris is of particular significance in Japan. The Kakitsubata (カキツバタ, 杜若, *Iris laevigata*) It is the flower of Aichi Prefecture. The kakitsubata at the Ōta Shrine, Kyoto, are a *National Natural Treasure*. The flowers are a bluish purple colour.

I looked at many pictures of irises. I looked carefully at close up pictures of the petals. The colour is not uniform, so in the design I wanted to show the shading of the blues and purples. If you want colours to melt together in a striped band, I have found that warping in groups of three adds to the shading effect. I wove many metres of it so that I could use it as a tie for all the samples I took with me.

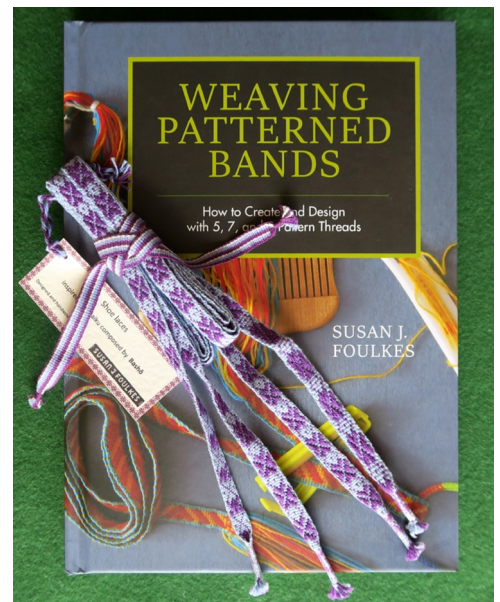
I made a pair of shoe laces which you can see on my blog.

<https://durhamweaver64.blogspot.com/2019/10/shoe-laces-and-decoration.html>

For the second pair of shoe laces, I used a flower pattern from my book., *Weaving Patterned Bands*. They are tied together with the plain striped band.



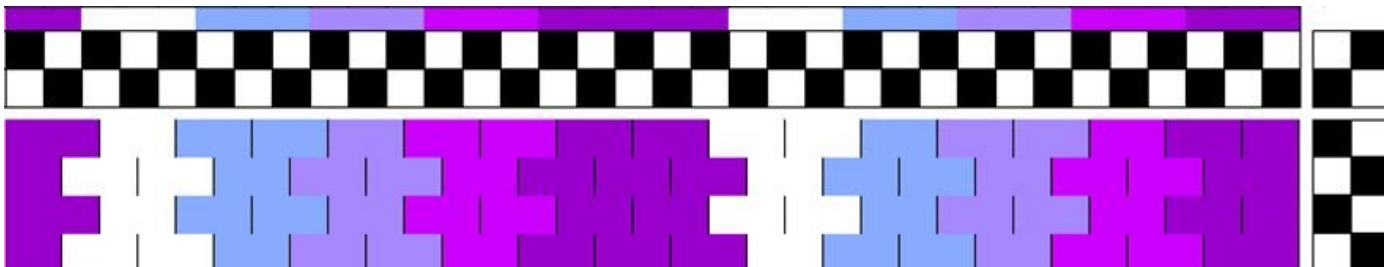
**Two pairs of shoe laces
with ties.**



Here is the pattern for the striped bands. There are 34 warp ends in 6 colours using 16/2 cotton. The colours are in groups of three. If you look at the close up of the woven band, you can see that on each pick the colour alternates between two and three warp ends on the surface. This helps the colours to shade into each other.

Warp Chart

Purple	2	5	3
White	3	3	
Pale blue	3	3	
Lilac	3	3	
Pale purple	3	3	



Sanada-Himo Bands

Sanada Himo bands are also described as '*promise bands*' when they uniquely represent a clan or person. The band I designed for the exhibition could be described as a *promise band*.

For Japanese tea ceremony ceramics, they may convey information about who made or who owned the vessel inside the Pawlonia box.

With the rising fortunes of the Japanese tea ceremony culture from the 17th century, Sanada-Himo became increasingly important. Tea school, tea masters, temples shirnes and art collectors all have their own unique design. I was fortunate to see a pattern book which had some ancient promise bands from a famous Chado school. Most sanada-himo are 'public patterns' that anyone can buy.

So **my challenge** is for you to design a personal promise band. You might start with your favourite colours or use some other inspiration to form the basis of your own design.



This tea bowl and its pawlonia box tied with a sanada-himo band is my prized possession.

During the workshop, De-De from Ohio, USA, posted a picture of a band she had designed for a friend. I asked her permission to use her description here as it encapsulates the idea of making a personal design.

The Story of the Band

‘I decided today to make a bookmark for my best friend’s birthday with part of my workshop warp. I wanted to use purple and green, which are her and my favorite colors respectively, and I wanted them to mesh together to symbolize our friendship. I wasn’t finding anything that felt just right in our first booklet, but then I looked at Susan’s May 1 blog post. When I saw the red and white belt, I knew precisely what I wanted to do. I decided to color in the design on the Raktres program to make sure I had it right. I’m going to get a lot of use out of that!

Anyway, here’s my band, woven in 10/2 cotton.’



Thank you De-De for sharing this with us. I love the way that both colour and pattern are interlinked in the design.

Now do try designing your personal promise band.

Nordic Braids and Bands 2022

Demark

The Fifth International Conference on Braiding will be held in Denmark in 2022.

I have attended three out of the four international conferences and they are amazing. Open to Braid Society members, they are an added reason to join the Braid Society. Further details will be available in the Autumn.

***Strands*, the Journal of the Braid Society is published once a year and is a treasure-trove of fascinating articles, as well as examples of different techniques.**

The Braid Society

Do join the Braid Society. Joining is easy on the web site:

<https://thebraidsociety.wildapricot.org/>

Members receive a quarterly newsletter and the annual journal *Strands* and have access to resources in the members' area of the website.

Membership is renewable annually on 1st November. New members receive a welcome pack, which includes the latest issue of *Strands*. They will **also** receive the issue of *Strands* published at the end of the membership year.

Individual full membership..... £21.00

Individual full membership after 1st July..... £27.50

Family/group full membership.....£27.50

Long haul membership.....£12.50

Long-Haul membership is available to residents of Asia, the Americas, Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Long-Haul members are mailed a hard copy of *Strands*; all other communication is by e-mail. An upgrade to Full membership can be made at any time.

***Strands* is a very informative and practical journal full of articles about different types of braiding and narrow bands. There are practical examples as well as plenty of background information about different techniques. Do join the Braid Society.**