

Colorful Adventures at the SOMA Camp Fiber Arts Workshops

BY DUSTIN KAHN / originally published in SOMA News, VOL 27:4

A feeling of anticipation is in the air... Now that the rains have come (and will hopefully stick around), fiber arts enthusiasts are dreaming of *Dermocybe* (oops, make that red *Cortinarius*) mushrooms and *Ompahlotus olivascens*, among others. *Pisolithus tinctorius* has made its appearance already, as has *Phaeolus schweinitzii*.

Why do these and other pigment-containing fungi cause such a stir at the dye pots? The photos herein should give you some sense of their potentials as providers of color for the fiber artist.

This year we are pleased to offer 11 different fiber arts classes that you can register for in advance of Camp, on the website at <http://www.somamushrooms.org/camp/2015/schedule.php>.

Mushroom dye classes include:

- “The Art of Mushroom Dyes” (for beginners), taught by Dorothy and Myra Beebee
- “Mushroom Dyes for Experienced Dyers,” taught by Dorothy and Myra Beebee
- “Beginning Mushroom Dyes,” taught by Alissa Allen
- “Dye Your Own – Open Studio,” with Dorothy Beebee and Fiber Arts staff members.



A sampling of yarns dyed by Dorothy and Myra Beebee (photo by Myra Beebee). Mushrooms used to obtain these colors include:

- *Cortinarius* spp., most likely *smithii* and *cinnamomeus* for oranges/pinks
- *Gymnopilus spectabilis* for yellows and light greens
- *Phaeolus schweinitzii* for darker green (using iron mordant on yarns)



A few favorite dye mushrooms, clockwise from top left: *Cortinarius smithii* (photo by Dustin Kahn), *Gymnopilus spectabilis*, *Phaeolus schweinitzii* (photos by Myra Beebee), *Hydnellum aurantiacum* (illustration by Dorothy Beebee) and *Cortinarius cinnamomeus* (photo by Dustin Kahn)



A rainbow of mushroom- and lichen-dyed yarns from Alissa Allen's recent Humboldt Bay Mycological Society class. (Photo courtesy of Alissa Allen)

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Monique Risch returns with two wonderful classes on textile design:

- “Arashi Shibori,” uses a Japanese technique to create resist patterns on silk scarves (above), which are dipped in a dye vat of *Pisolithus tinctorius* (left). (Photos by Dustin Kahn)
- “Ecoprints,” where the colors and shapes of leaves and flowers are incorporated with mushroom dyes to create patterns and color on silk scarves. (Photo at left of an ecoprint bundle, ready to open, by Monique Risch)

DO YOU HAVE DYE MUSHROOMS TO DONATE TO FIBER ARTS?



Dye mushrooms are always appreciated by the students and staff of Fiber Arts at SOMA Camp. Email dustinkahn@gmail.com and we will make arrangements to receive your mushroom donations. (Photo of *Omphalotus olivascens* by Dustin Kahn)

A recent addition to the Fiber Arts menu of classes is “Lichen Dyes,” taught by Shelly Bensen and Sarah Minnick. An amazing array of colors can be coaxed out of our local lichens, as shown in the photos at right and below, courtesy of Sarah Minnick.



Flavopunctelia flaventior (above) makes purple dye that turns magenta when dipped in vinegar (left).

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Marilyn Hornor's class "Papermaking from Fungi" teaches the use of polypore mushrooms and materials such as lichens and flower petals to make paper. (Photo below of decorative paper making in progress courtesy of Marilyn Hornor)



Mushroom-dyed wool can be used for a myriad of felting projects, and this year we offer two classes on the subject:

- "Making a Felted Bowl," taught by Marilyn Buss (photo by Marika Banyacski, above)
- "Needle Felting a Mushroom Sculpture," taught by Sara Gibson (photo of instructor samples, below, courtesy of Sara Gibson)



Assorted polypore papers, photo at left by David Russell, from *Mushrooms for Dyes, Paper, Pigments & Myco-Stix* by Miriam C. Rice, courtesy of Dorothy Beebee.

In a class called "Mushroom-Dyed Kumihimo Keychain," taught by Gayle Still, students make a keychain from mushroom-dyed silk using a Japanese braiding technique, shown in Gayle's photo at right.



TO REGISTER FOR FIBER ARTS CLASSES:

SOMA campers who are interested in taking any of the Fiber Arts workshops are asked to register for those classes ahead of time, due to limited space. After completing the regular Camp registration process on the SOMA website, go to the "Schedule & Class Registration" page (found at <http://www.somamushrooms.org/camp/2015/schedule.php>) where you can read more details about the classes. Click on "Register" for your desired class, which will open a form that sends your request to the Fiber Arts registrar, who will then register you for the class on a "first come-first served" basis.