1 Project output formats

1.1 Sample braids

Recently I realized that I need several sets of samples: one that's fit to be shown off at demos at medieval fairs in this country, one that can be used at generic craft fairs and classes and one that can be shared online. Furthermore, I wanted to have a 17th century style recipe book for my own reference, one that I can fill up in whatever order I learn new braiding techniques and just need to jot down a few notes on those braids. As I don't know where my teaching will take me and in what format, I decided to make some posters that can be hung on a wall or pinned to a screen either independently or in connection with a class or demo I'm doing myself.

The samples for a 15th century style book of braids are mostly done in silk, although there'll be a few linen ones based on existing finds. The set also includes a few finished products using the technique: bookmarks and Renaissance gown fastenings (ties and button-and-loop frogs) in a simple purse with silk purse strings.

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Figure 1 "Hearts", my two-colour variation of Grene Dorge. Pearl cotton nr 8.

1.2 Printed material

1.2.1 Helsinge book of strings, a 15th century sample book

The area I live in is known in the medieval documents as the parish of Helsinge and as many of the manuscripts of the era are known by either owner or collector or the place they are stored in, I thought this would be an appropriate name for my book of strings. The layout follows loosely that of the Harley manuscript 2320, with an upright blackletter font (Lucida Blackletter) and well-filled pages. The space next to each section and subsection title will accomodate a silk sample braid sewn on.

One day I may calligraph a book for my own use, but for medieval fairs I want to have something that I can easily recreate (i.e. reprint) if the old one gets wet or just to dirty to be handled. Cloth paper is too expensive for this purpose, but at least some versions of the book will be printed on off-white paper. I once learned a very simple medieval bookbinding stitch that I'm going to use to bind these books.
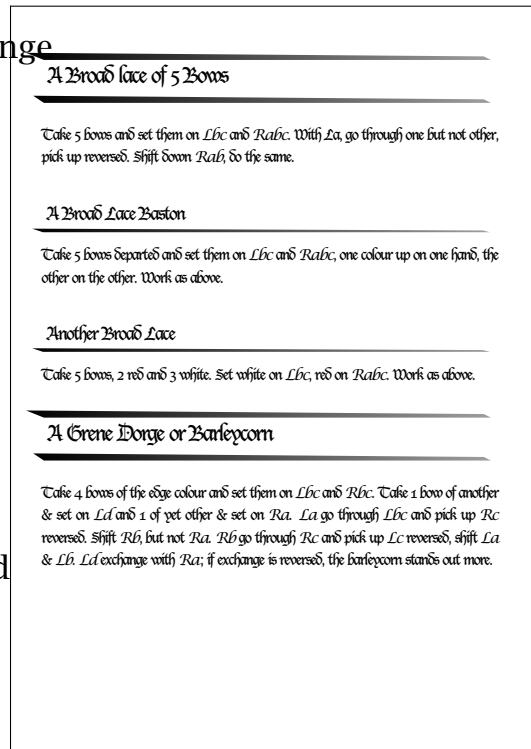
Figure 2 A page of Helsinge book (scaled down, without braid samples)

1.2.2 A 17th century braiding recipe book

This is the book I'm compiling for myself, to use as reference when working at medieval fairs and other places where one might frown at using a modern book. The texts are the same as for *Helsinge book*, but it is typeset with Lucida Calligraphy, a slightly later handwriting font; not quite like the cursive the enigmatic Lady Bindloss used, but in the same vein. No samples, no figures, just notes on how to set up a certain braid.
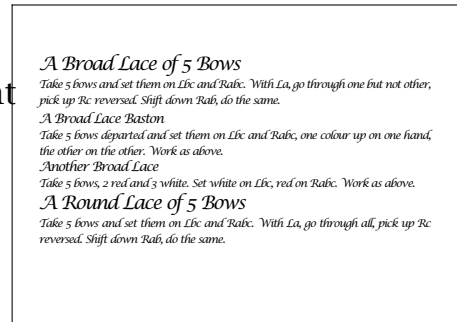

A Broad Lace of 5 Bows
Take 5 bows and set them on Lbc and Rabc. With La, go through one but not other, pick up Rc reversed. Shift down Rab, do the same.
A Broad Lace Baston
Take 5 bows departed and set them on Lbc and Rabc, one colour up on one hand, the other on the other. Work as above.
Another Broad Lace
Take 5 bows, 2 red and 3 white. Set white on Lbc, red on Rabc. Work as above.
A Round Lace of 5 Bows
Take 5 bows and set them on Lbc and Rabc. With La, go through all, pick up Rc reversed. Shift down Rab, do the same.

Figure 3 A draft page of my period notebook

1.2.3 Scrapbook and posters

I've decided to make my modern sample book and most of the posters in the standard scrapbook size, 12 x 12 inches. They'll be partly interchangeable as most scrapbook albums have clear plastic pockets into which the page is inserted. As the pockets are also designed to accommodate several layers of paper or cardboard, a single-sided poster with samples will fit nicely into an album.


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Figure 4 One of my sprang posters (in Finnish)

The texts are printed into frames, but after that I put everything together by hand, so they have a slightly old-fashioned feel, but are still legible. If I want to change the texts, I only need to replace the damaged texts, samples and backgrounds, but do not have to start over from beginning.

1.2.4 Instruction sheets

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Figure 5 A first attempt to describe the 5-loop unorthodox braid

The instruction sheets will contain full - both written and graphic - "modern" instructions on how to make a certain braid as well as a colour photo of the finished braid. All the graphics are generated by MetaPost, following a style that Elizabeth Benns and Gina Barrett used in "Tak V Bowes", as that is the way I personally find clearest. In text I'm sticking to the 15th century style that Noémi Speiser also uses; it is not the way I originally thought of fingerloop braiding, but I have grown to understand and like it and there's no reason to deviate from what is more or less the standard in the field.

In my other material English comes first, but the instruction sheets will be done in Finnish first as there's a demand for such a material among others at schools. This is where I'll be deciding on what kind of terminology to follow in Finnish, so it is important for me to start with the most extensive instructions and then do the shorter versions later, based on my English sample books.

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Figure 6 "Hearts", my two-colour variation of Grene Dorge. Pearl cotton nr 8.

1.3 Electronic material

I have not yet decided whether I will publish all of my material online or just the basics and my own patterns. In any case my typesetting system makes it very easy to create pdf's with clickable document internal links, e.g. table of contents and a pictorial index of patterns. These e-versions will also be optimized for on-screen reading at least for a laptop screen and possibly even for a smartphone, as it is a very handy way of keeping how-to instructions in one's pocket for quick reference. All the information that I decide to share will also be downloadable in ready-to-print size on my website. As printable pdf is the native format of my teaching suite files, the only extra work involved is to upload and link. As to the Braids 2012 Exhibition, if the MoSI has a computer used in or near the exhibition, I'll be happy to provide an interactive version of all of my materials for public browsing, so e.g. books displayed in a case can be browsed online with a mouse.

I also have a YouTube channel with a few instruction videos on luceting and tabletweaving, and the next additions to that channel will be on fingerloop braiding. These videos I make in iMovie on my Mac, but I'll have to look into creating the inserts out of the existing material for the sake of consistency and ease of switching between languages. Once I've uploaded the videos, they'll be linked (but not embedded) to the fingerloop braiding suite as "additional material" as my video recording and editing skills aren't quite up to par yet; but even a slightly grubby video is better than nothing, sometimes it is just the little something that static graphics are missing.