

Virtual Weaving - Pat Williams

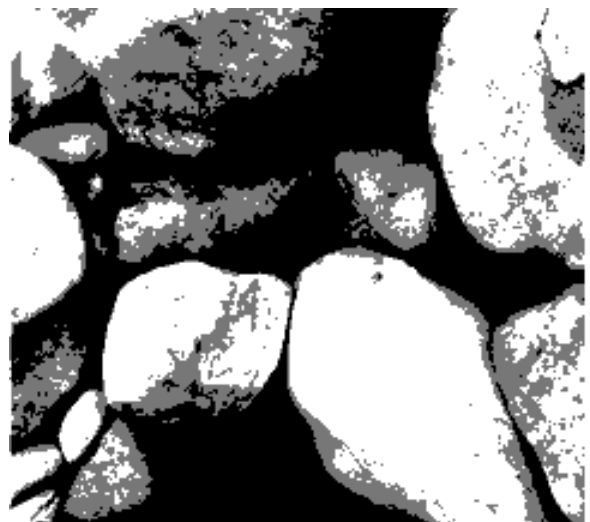
This article traces my continuing investigation of ways of using graphics software to assist me both in pre-visualizing with some degree of accuracy and, to some extent, in producing my weaving work with pickup 1:1 lampas. The approach described below makes it possible for me to experiment on the computer with the effects of using different weave structures in different compositional areas. Although the color and texture results are not identical to those achieved by actually weaving the composition, they are nevertheless helpful. Since I do not own jacquard weaving software, this is the method I've found thus far which is workable for my purposes.

Working with Photoshop

1. Scan in grey scale a photograph I've previously taken, in this case of some rocks on the shore of Lake Huron in northern Michigan.
2. Open the resulting image file in Photoshop, and crop to the area in which I'm interested.
3. Adjust the brightness and contrast of the image until I'm comfortable with the results.
4. Posterize the image in 4-, 3- and 2-color versions, saving each version separately for later use. Posterizing simplifies the image and makes it considerably more weavable using pickup techniques.
5. Clean up the 3-color version by eliminating stray pixels and any small shapes which are not necessary to the image, and by slightly enlarging any tiny areas which are necessary to the image. This process makes it much easier to fill the different areas of the image with appropriate weave structures in Painter in order to end up with a relatively clear image of the potential weaving.
6. Resize the 2-color version as needed to produce a high-contrast image of an appropriate size for the warp width. From this image, make a transparency to use in exposing a photo silkscreen. Printing the silkscreen image onto one of the two warps to be used in the piece enables me to pick up portions of the image with some visual guidance for at least the larger areas.



rocks in 2 colors



rocks in 3 colors

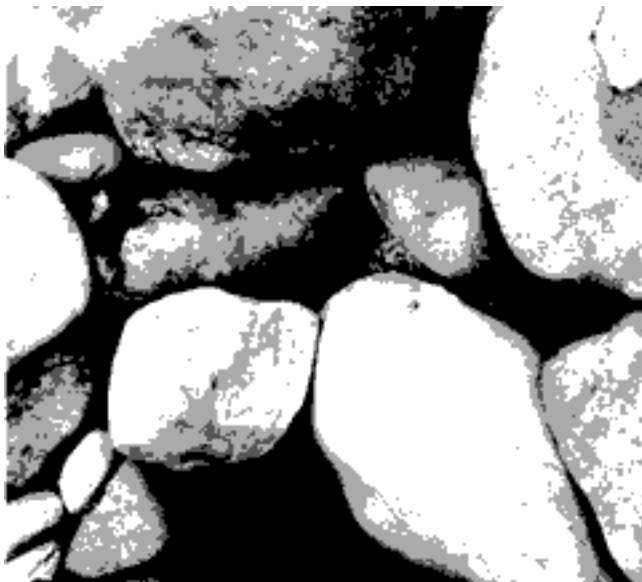
Working with Painter

1. Choose (or set up and store in the weave library) the weave structures I want to consider for use in different areas of the 3-color version of the composition.
2. Color the warps and wefts of the structures chosen for each of the two warps which are on the loom and for the wefts I'm considering using in the woven piece.
3. Fill all of the appropriate areas of the composition with the colored weaves, keeping in mind which warp will be used for each area when actually weaving.
4. Experiment with other weave structures and color choices as needed until I'm satisfied I've learned all I can from this virtual weaving process. The final image I arrived at for this example is shown on the following page.

Getting Ready to Weave

With this preparation complete, I am ready to begin working on the loom. I set up Swiftweave with the interleaved weave structures needed to actually weave the composition as planned. While weaving, I will use the 4-color version of the image, below, as a guide for adding more detail during the pickup process.

Incidentally, the best reference I have found for working with the weaves portion of Painter is Chapter 13 of *Fractal Design Painter 3.1 Unleashed* by Denise Tylor, Sams Publishing, 1995, ISBN 0-672-30707-3.



rocks in 4 colors

