Weaving Kiosk
by Rosa Tolnov Clausen

Across cultures and languages, the word kiosk connotes convenience and availability. By providing goods for daily life, kiosks become meeting points that commonly mark cornerstones for local communities.

The Weaving Kiosk is a public space where weaving tools and materials are made available for anyone to use. Together with the tools and materials, collections of weaving samples and readily designed product proposals are presented that have their base in traditional Nordic weaving techniques. Using these for inspiration or as production guidelines, participants in the Weaving Kiosk can choose to remake an example from among them, or explore by their own choice of yarns and techniques their adaptation into products of their liking. This way, products that relate to individual purposes and needs can be freely created.

The Weaving Kiosk project has taken place as a series of a total of nine spatial installations in Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland between 2017-2018. The Weaving Kiosk is a concept created by me and conducted together with fashion designer Merja Hannele Ulvinen and has received funding/support in kind from The Nordic Culture Fund, The Danish Arts Foundation, Grosserer L.F. Foghts Fond, Museum of Impossible Forms, Hantarbetets Vänner, A:Space, The Nordic Culture Point in Finland and The Nordic House in Iceland.

The aim of the Weaving Kiosk project has been to explore Nordic hand-weaving traditions and their place in, and value, for contemporary contexts of social, design and production culture. Through its nine editions, the purpose has been to investigate how hand-weaving can take place in urban settings in the Nordic countries. Despite the time and effort that needs to be invested in the process, the Weaving Kiosk series have shown that there is an interest in hand-weaving by a younger audience today. Beside the achieved product, hand-weaving can be a catalyst for physical, social and creative interaction between people and material. A term I have been using in this exploration, “a pause in contemporary urban everyday life” to mark more than a mere temporal intermission, but instead a break from current paradigmatic ideologies relating e.g. to questions of productivity, competence/skill, the new vs. tradition, social hierarchy, and others. Unintentionally the Kiosks have also shed light on the different historical development within the craft of hand-weaving in respectively Denmark, Sweden and Finland respectively, and the existing presence of practical knowledge and its application in terms of how and where hand-weaving takes place varies in the three countries.

My PhD project seeks to understand why we should continue the practice of (leisure time) hand-weaving in Northern Europe today, in an age when production of textiles as use objects is achieved both faster and more economically by industry. The Weaving Kiosks have provided a varied and deep knowledge fundament to continue and refine this exploration.

* Frontpage: Weaving Kiosk in Kalleria, Helsinki Design Week 2018, Photo: Johannes Romppanen
Bag woven in the Weaving Kiosk in Collaboratorio, Helsinki Design Week 2017, Photo: Jukka Kivistä