

Christina Rinaldo

1944-2019

Christina Rinaldo died on 21 January 2019, aged 74 years. Christina studied Textile Design from 1969 to 1971 at Konstfack, Stockholm in Sweden, and from 1971 to 1972 at Konstindustriskolan in Göteborg. In 1976, she succeeded Ulla Cyrus-Zetterström as head of the handweaving school, Väfskolan, attached to Textilinstitutet in Borås, Sweden. Christina was a firebrand who saw possibilities and acted upon them. Thanks to Christina's hard work, handweaving was accepted as a school in the University College Borås, and it became possible to take a bachelor's degree in Textile Science and Handloom Weaving. Plans were also made to add a master degree to the school but, unfortunately, this did not succeed, and, after Christina's retirement in 2008, handweaving was abandoned as a separate programme and became part of Textile Design.

I first met Christina in 1993, shortly after I had achieved a postdoctoral position at Göteborg University. She was then working on a reconstruction of the Golden Gown of Margrethe I (1353-1412), Queen of Norway, Denmark and Sweden. The result was intended for an exhibition on the History of Sweden at the State Historical Museum in Stockholm. I saw an article in the local newspaper on the project and went to Borås to have a look. At that time, the main room at Väfskolan was filled with looms, including drawlooms and jacquard looms, but, as it was Sunday, all the looms but one were silent. Christina and a colleague were there weaving the golden cloth. As their deadline was short, they hardly had time for a break but still Christina took her time to tell me about the project, and how they had spent all the money on real gold thread from a specialist workshop in Lyon.

The following year, I arranged a seminar on archaeological textiles at Göteborg University, which Christina also attended. One of the speakers, Gillian

Vogelsang-Eastwood, gave a talk on Tutankhamun's wardrobe, and Christina was instantly fascinated. She invited Gillian to Borås and turned the recreation of Tutankhamun's garments into the next term's student project. This collaboration developed further, resulting in the exhibition *Tutankhamun's Wardrobe* which put University College Borås on the map nationally and internationally. It was mentioned in the *New York Times*, something that the vice-chancellor often cited as his institution's main claim to fame!

Christina co-organised NESAT VI with me in 1996, on her home ground at University College Borås, and made sure it became a memorable occasion for the participants as well as for her own students.



Christina Rinaldo (Image: Annie Andréasson)

Christina was first and foremost a hands-on person. She made the construction of exact replicas of archaeological or historical textiles an important part of Väfskolan's curriculum. Matching yarns and weaving techniques of the past was a challenge and taught her students to master their craft. She was also an excellent speaker, much sought after by craft associations all over Sweden. She was awarded a Gold Medal by the King of Sweden, and the Ulrika Eleonora Medal by the Swedish Craft Association. In

1997, she received an award from University College Borås for creativity in teaching. Perhaps Christina's most lasting legacy is her students. Several of them became seriously interested in archaeological textiles. Among them can be counted Martin Ciszuk, Sunniva Halvorsen, Viktoria Holmqvist, Lena Hammarlund, Amica Sundström and Kathrine Vestergaard, who each made important contributions to the field of textile research.

Lise Bender Jørgensen