

Fields of the Future: Unraveling the Loom

A Podcast by Bard Graduate Center

S2E4: Lynda Teller Pete and Barbara Teller Ornelas - Weaving as a way of creating Kinship

Introduction: This is Fields of the Future, an interview series by Bard Graduate Center. This season highlights the work of scholars, artists, and educators working with Indigenous textiles and textile history of the Southwestern United States and Mexico. Jessie Mordine Young speaks with authors, educators, and fifth-generation Navajo weavers Lynda Teller Pete and Barbara Teller Ornelas about their ancestral knowledge of weaving, their process of making rugs, their recently published book on the topic, and their relationship with their tools.

Jessie Mordine Young: Hi, I'm Jessie Mordine Young, a recent graduate from the Bard Graduate Center. I'm a Brooklyn-based textile scholar, educator, and weaver. And I'm calling in today from the traditional homelands of the Lenape, Mericoke, Canarsie, Matinecoc and Rockaway nations. I'm proud to be speaking with Barbara Teller Ornelas and Lynda Teller Pete, who are award-winning fifth generation Navajo weavers, making work in the Two Grey Hills regional style. In their family, weaving is considered a legacy. For Barbara and Lynda, weaving is a living thing that they use as a form of storytelling. The sisters are also both educators who teach weaving workshops as a way of keeping the knowledge of the woven medium alive. In the past year, they have written a book, 'How to Weave a Navajo Rug and Other Lessons from Spider Woman', which is the only book of its kind. It is the first how-to book published by Navajo textile artists. Hi, Barbara and Lynda. Thank you for joining us today.

Lynda Teller Pete: Hello.

Barbara Teller Ornelas: Hello. [Foreign language].

LTP: I'm Lynda Teller Pete. I'm, uh... uh, coming to you from Denver, Colorado. Denver has been a hub for a lot of Indian nations, um, however it is the traditional homelands of the... several bands of Utes. Uh, Comanches, uh, Cheyennes and Kiowas. And then... yeah, of course, Navajos right now. So, Barbara and I are fifth generation Navajo weavers. We are from the Two Grey Hills, Newcomb, New Mexico, area of the Navajo nation. We are, born for Edgewater, which is our Mom's clan. We are born for our father's clan, To'aheedliinii, which means Two Rivers That Flow Together. And our maternal grandfathers' are Tl'aashai'i, which means Red Bottom, Clan. And then our paternal grandfathers' clan is One Who Walks Around. And that's how we introduce ourselves and the last phrase that you heard her say is, "This is how we- we are, uh, women from the Navajo nation." And that's traditionally how we introduce ourselves with any time that we talk about our weaving.

BTO: I live in Tucson, Arizona, and it's, uh, the ancestral homeland of the Tohono O'odham Nation.

JMY: Thank you so much. To start off I'd love to learn more about just your- your connection with weaving and your connection to making, both with your individual self and with your family.

LTP: Our weaving practice. And, uh, like everything else, it's- it's evolving. revolving and evolving, mainly because of technology, new modern stuff that we are using today. You know, when we first started weaving when we were probably about six years old, we were given our tools that our father made and, our weaving practice was whenever our mom could catch us to tell us to sit down and weave. Barbara and I used to have this one loom and we sat on- on either side of each other and, basically our mom would come and- and sort of teach us the- the basic stuff, and then our older sister, Roseanne, was a different story because she was the one that was in charge of discipline. She wanted to make sure that we were weaving straight, that we weren't drawing in our sides, you know, she walked around with a measuring stick, and really, you know, she was the disciplinarian.

We learned how to... put in our best effort because weaving, you know, on a mediocre scale, you just can't sit down and weave and not do your best because this is our livelihood. It's been our livelihood. You know, it was our mother's livelihood, it was our grandmothers and our great-grandmothers, and, uh, you know, to this day we are fifth generation and we have six generation weavers. Barbara's children, Michael and Sierra, are six generation weavers. And, they have different weaving practices. So I think it's really connected to where your environment is and whether it's your livelihood or whether it's a familiar thing you do after work, after your main job is done. So for Navajo weavers, you know, your weaving practice is what you are into today, you know, whether you have a job or whether, uh, you... Uh, for us right now, we're doing marathon weaving which means we're getting ready for Santa Fe Indian Market, which will take place August 21st and 22nd, I think, in Santa Fe, New Mexico. That's where we take a lot of our finished pieces, and we meet our collectors, we pick up commissions and it's a huge weekend for us. It's like the super bowl of Navajo weaving.

BTO: (laughs).

JMY: It's an opportunity to really, most likely, just work through concepts or work through patterns or imagery that you- you've been wanting to make or... I mean it seems that this is something that you've been going to every year for quite some time, right?

BTO: Yes. I've been going for 37 years. And I won two best of shows there plus many other awards and... But, it's- it's something we look forward to every year. It's just not just the art show, it's more like our whole family get together and we rent a house and we, you know, we spend a lot of time together and We kind of are- are- are each other's critics.

You know, we look at each others' pieces and we say, "Okay, well..." especially me, you know, I look at their pieces and I'd say, you know, "Maybe it's best if you do it like this, or, you know, if you do it this way it might be even better." Or something like that, you know. And I think because we do that to each other, um, it... we hold ourselves, you know, on a higher level of weaving.

And like, my sister Lyn was talking about our older sister Roseanne, she was the disciplinary of our weaving, you know, and if we wove an inch she would measure it all the way across to make sure that there was an inch all the way across. If there wasn't, we had to fix it, If she didn't like the colors that we were putting together, she'd make us take it out and fix it and stuff. So we learn as children not to cut corners and to always do our best. And one of my favorite, sayings that she said before, to us was that, "You're only as good as your last weaving." You know, 'cause people are not gonna see your portfolio or anything. They're gonna see what's on a table. So you always have to put your best forward, you know, what you do, on the table, and never to cut corners, and I think because that's why. Lyn and I are and my son, Michael, are excellent weavers. So it's really a collaborative effort, it seems, in that you're all working together to make each your best work.

BTO: Yeah, yeah. And we help each other back and forth. Like sometimes I'll have problems with colors and I'll run it by Michael or I'll run it by Lyn, and then they'll tell me their, opinions and I always help out with their patterns, the three of us are always there for each other, helping each other that way.

JMY: That's wonderful. And then in terms of the style, the Two Grey Hills style, what distinguishes it from other designs and what makes it so unique because y- you're both working in that style, correct? Yes.

LTP: Yes, we are and, the Two Grey Hills has, um, the- the varied history of it goes back to the, late 1800s, that's when the Navajos came back from Bosque Redondo and resettled in their different homelands. As people resettle in their homelands, so did trading posts. They started popping up and one trading post was the Crystal Trading Post in Crystal, New Mexico, that was run by J. B. Moore and his wife. And, J. B. Moore did 29 drawings and the framework for the, Two Grey Hills style is... was one of the sketches that he did. You know, and he provided the framework but it was actually the weavers that really put life into it. They put their stories into it, they put their, you know, blood, sweat and tears into those weavings.

And what distinguishes it is, the people from the Two Grey Hills area, and I'm speaking for my mom, I'm speaking for my aunts, my grandmothers, everybody that has lived there, from our community, they've worked so much to make it a distinctive weaving. Meaning that, our family prided themselves on, taking raw fleece off the sheep and- and processing all the wool themselves. Carding, blending colors, spindling, and getting the warp as fine, as fine as possible. And in our area weavers are known for a high weft count and the high

weft count sets a bar for how much things are expensive. And, uh, you know, these days, and I'm not knocking this in any way I'm just making this statement because it's- it's true today, is that a lot of weavers have other jobs and, they don't have the time to process their own wool and so a lot of them use commercially bought wool, commercially dyed, where in our area we did... we only dyed the black. We didn't dye any other colors other than to, blend the natural colors together.

And so when we have our Two Greys, the distinctive things are, there are four corner pieces, two, double diamond... they're geometrics but they're double diamond and then if you have room you have two center pieces and then you have inset borders after inset borders after inset borders, and so it's framed. So those are the distinguished design elements of a true Two Grey Hills. And so when Barbara and I look at other weavers that make Two Grey Hills that are not from the Two Grey Hill area, we can pick them out. We know it because a lot of them will put in one diamond, And the double diamond thing, I think, really evolved in the late '60s. And, we have pictures of our mom, her Two Grey, that have the one diamond. But as the... as the designs evolve, and what collectors wanted, and what was really, considered, you know, fantastic weavings, a lot of them are the double diamond design outlays. So those are the distinguished marks that we have as for our Two Grey Hill weavings.

JMY: Wow. And so as you're preparing for Indian Market, how many months have you been preparing and within that time frame, how many textiles are you trying to make for the event?

LTP: Well, this is a really interesting year because last year because of the COVID shutdown we didn't have the Indian Market. We had a virtual market which we didn't do 'cause we had a lot of other things, family things, that we were into. and this year, you know, Santa Fe Indian Market did not make the announcement until way after February, I believe, that they were gonna have a in-person, uh, market. And then they were trying to decide on what kind of in-person gathering they were gonna do and then they told us that they were going to do only 500 artists as opposed to the 1000 that are usually at the market. Basically, I think Santa Fe Indian Market set their own, criteria on who they were gonna choose and so we just kind of sat around and waited for that information. And it didn't come 'til really late. I believe it came, uh, what, April?

BTO: In May.

LTP: Yeah. So we didn't have enough, uh, notice to really settle down and start, you know, weaving, and so now we're scrambling. We're scrambling to try to get... you know, I'll be a lucky if I take two pieces and my normal is usually around five. And, uh. Two Greys take the most time. We also are doing period pieces and then we're kind of doing our own styles, so a lot of times those take less time than the Two Grey weaving. So this year I'm not taking any Two Greys at all and I think Barbara started one and she sold it right away, and that was just last month. (laughs).

JMY: Wow.

BTO: (laughs). I'm- I'm just doing small pieces, like old-timey 8x10s,... uh, because, again, we didn't have enough time to... to come up with some really nice big pieces like we normally do. Normally what we do is right after the Heard's Fair, which is in March, the first weekend in March, we start working for Indian Market, and then we have six months to create, you know, pieces for- for Indian Market. And then right after Indian Market's over, we have six months to create things for the Heard's Fair. So you only do two shows a year, and this year because the Heard didn't happen and then... Indian Market, you know, given us the later date, I just ended up making some small pieces and I had like maybe three pieces I'm gonna take, but they're all small, and I'm probably not gonna take any Two Greys either because they take... again like Lyn says, they take the longest. You know, and I don't have the time to spin the- the wool to create a piece.

JMY: Weaving has such a rhythm too it and the way that you're talking about there's a rhythm to how you make the work and make finished pieces to be able to show twice a year in these two different events or be able to sell in these two different events, there's like a rupture that occurred because of COVID and so that changes the rhythm.

BTO: Right.

JMY: So do you both spin the wool? Or, Barbara, do you mainly spin the wool?

BTO: Okay, so I kind of took it on as my job, you know, to just spin 'cause, when we were kids, my mom and my aunts and my grandmothers, they used to put us in circles. Like some of them would work with raw wool, some of them would work with... is all my cousins, you know, everybody... and some would spin, some would card, you know. Lyn was always put in the- ... the group with the carding and I was always put in with the group with the spinning.

And my mom loved my spinning. She always said, "You're a good spinner." So I always spun since I was a kid, you know. So now I spin for my sister and my son, Michael, my daughter, Sierra, and my granddaughters, Roxanne, and plus me. So I spin for five people. (laughs). but I make enough to where I separate everything five ways and by the amount of wool that I spin, they figure out, what size they're gonna make and we go from there Or, if they decide that they're gonna make a bigger piece, then I'll spend more time spinning wool for them to... so that they can work on their pieces.

JMY: Lynda, you don't spin, though, correct?

LTP: Uh, well, you know, in the time of COVID I actually had to break out my spindle. I was weaving this one piece, I can't remember what it was, and I took a photo of it, and I text it to my sister and she goes, "What is that grey?" I was like, "Mm, that was a leftover ball from some other weaving that I did." But I think that Grey was for a pictorial that I did it wasn't supposed to be mixed with my other stuff and she picked it out right away and said, "That's a weird grey." And so I thought, "Crap, I'm gonna have to take that out."

And I didn't have any spun grey which meant I had to do it, right? So I broke out my spindle and I started. It was kind of rough and, uh, then I had to redo it again. I kept spinning and spinning, stretching it. And thank god the- the wool that I chose, the roving which is that come off like cotton batting, which we now purchase, because our aunt, Margaret Yazzi, no longer has her sheep. So we do not have direct access to, uh, sheep that we can get the fleece and process. So we've taken to just buying roving which means it's already been carded, and then you just start splitting it and then, they're spun. They're really soft and depending on how fresh it is, it's really easy to spin.

BTO: Lynda Teller Pete: It helped because it was really fresh and in my weaving, uh, it was in an area where, uh, they're just little- little, uh, striping areas and so I replaced it and it looked great. So, again, when, my back is up against the wall I'll do it. Otherwise, I leave it to my professional sister who has spun most of (laughs) my wefts. (laughs).

JMY: (laughs) It's so interesting how weaving is such an organized form of making. You know, that it's like organized chaos that requires so much planning. And then there are moments where you can't plan for it. Even though you think you have it all planned out it just it's not the case, such as needing to spin some yarn.

LTP: Yeah. There are certain color blends that you can't recreate. Our sister, Roseanne, passed away in 1996 and, right before her journey to the stars, she was really weighing out the different colors of fleece and weighing them to try to get the exact match, and, we haven't taken it to that level because it was just something that she did that worked really well for her. And now we don't work with raw fleece anymore, we're just using roving. But as time goes on, you know, all these things we remember, we honor the way that she did it and we come to a place where we need to do that, we know how to do it because she's done it.

BTO: And it's much easier, to blend colors with roving, you know, 'cause it's already cleaned, and it's already brushed, and you just kind of put it together and- and then brush it together to come up with really cool colors. Whereas before it was a lot more... a lot more work, a lot more, uh, process that you had to go through.

JMY: No step is a step where time isn't spent. It's- it's so much time and attention placed in each- each part of it. So to- to make the thread itself, it's this extra kind of layer that makes the weaving all more special and precious, it seems, you know?

BTO: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

JMY: In terms of passing down this knowledge, you had mentioned that your- your grandchildren are learning, or are making, and then your children are also making in, textiles, and so I'm just wondering why you think it's so important to pass down, the processes, the knowledge, 'cause I know you teach both within your family, and then also with workshops and now with a book. And so what's that interest or desire to share your skills and knowledge?

LTP: Wow. Well, very distinct levels. There's so many different levels to your question. Barbara and I grew up, with I'm gonna say it was a divided household. It was a divided household because of the Christianity that came into our house and the traditional knowledge that our father had. And so there was kind of a little struggle there for awhile. As our dad aged more and more he thought it was really important that we keep a hold of our, traditional stories, and the traditional prays and the songs that are associated his father came from Canyon de Chelly, and then our grandfather there, his father was born at Bosque Redondo - in the prison camps. And so we have all this history that we have to honor and so it was through him that we maintain our hold on what we'd learned as kids.

And we recognize that that's really important to pass on to my nieces and nephews and then our granddaughter, Roxanne. And, when we started writing the book, we had big discussions on how much to write and how much not to put in and we have two audiences. We have the non-native audience and then we have the Navajo audience and- we discussed how much we were going to put in, for the Navajo audience and then how much, for the non-Native audience. And it was hard to figure that out. And in the end we said that it's better if we teach a lot of what we know about preserving tradition and sharing sensitive cultural knowledge to our Navajo students, we decided we would do that in class, because Barbara and I are now doing a lot of classes just for Navajo students and we can kind of control that information that way.

Because we are encountering a lot of Navajo students that have lost their linkages, uh, to weaving and other traditional things and the first thing we do is we try to encourage them to get in contact with their families, extended family members, even neighbors, and try to find out what their linkages were. And a lot of them have been successful. You know, they come to the next class armed with tools that were, you know, given to them by relatives that say it belonged to their grandmothers or some- something like that, and we have really good stories to share about that. And so, in the book we just tread very lightly on the sensitive stuff and, uh... and some of the things that we wanted to make clear was, you know, what is appropriations, what should not be woven?, you know, and those are

more on the spirituality stuff. So we kind of caution people that, you know, - you do need blessings before you attempt those kind of weavings. we just gave basic information. We really didn't dive into, the heart of each (laughs), uh, sensitive, tradition because it's- it's something that we can't put on paper. We kind of have to speak about it, to an individual that is wanting that knowledge and, orally that has been done that way, uh, for as long as we can remember.

BTO: And then we also got a lot of help from other people who are very knowledgeable with Navajo tradition and things that Lyn and I didn't know that we were able to learn from them. You know, so it was kind of like a learning process for all of us, uh, while we were doing this book.

JMY: We live in the "Age of Information," where there's so much information out there and so I think people expect that they are allowed to have information. But it's actually important, to keep information that you think is for your own family, for your own community, that's okay to stay within that group of individuals and it doesn't need to be shared with everyone. So even though your generosity in- in presenting a book of techniques is something that can be used by others, the more sacred or more intimate knowledge needs to be kept within your own community, within your family. and that's really respectable.

LTP: Thank you. We felt that way. I mean, it- it was a tough decision for us to try to figure out what we were gonna include in the book. and one thing that I think other books have done a disservice, uh, the other books that are written by non-Navajos is that they try to write, about Navajo weaving as if it's a universal thing. And when people do that it becomes a story that gets repeated and repeated and then it really doesn't have...soul. (laughs). It's linear information where, with our weaving, everything's fluid. The stories are fluid, the- the prayers are fluid. and it's very family-based. So when the Navajos came back from Bosque Redondo and they resettled in their homelands, each family, have their own stories that are passed down by their ancestors and, when I meet up with someone that is, you know, from a different, weaving family, and they're not a Two Grey weaving family, they're going to have their own set of protocols, they're going to have their own set of rules that they follow. And when I hear it, my reaction is, "Oh, you know, I didn't know that." That's really good information that was shared with me. And if- the speaker says, "Please don't share it with anyone," I won't.

And that's one of the ethic things that we learned when we were writing our first book- The Spider Woman's children book - when we were talking to elders. When we talked to them about their weaving, they asked us not to share certain things and we honored that. And so I think with other writers, they don't honor things like that, and they write it as if that particular tradition or that particular style is universal and that's not true. And that's the first thing that we wanted to address with our book, is that there are so many different ways for people to learn how to weave the Navajo way and our way's not just the only way. We're giving them the basics and a lot of them will come back with their own

stories and It's great. I think that there should be a lot more Navajo weavers that write books because we're gonna learn from their viewpoints- Our way is not the only way.

JMY: That's really, really important and I think beyond... the book, I think there needs to be more,... pro-activeness in textile scholarship overall in sharing the voices of- of Navajo makers, Navajo scholars, because they're the ones who should be able to share the story the way they want to, and not have it something that's coming from white-centered institutions. even with exhibitions and sharing textiles in an exhibition space, your textiles tell a story it's a personal story and should be shared by the one who- who makes the textile.

LTP: Yeah. For a lot of people that don't know anything about Navajo weaving, two questions always pop up. First one is, "Hey, how long does this take to weave?" And, you know what? That makes my head blow up because there's so many variables-the second question is, "What is this design mean?" a lot of people are comfortable in seeing a Navajo rug and saying, "Oh, okay, well from this book that I read, this is what this means." You know, this means mountains, this means rain, You know, a lot of that stuff is made up. It's been made up for marketing purposes- And you really have to talk to the weaver, you really have to talk to, you know, members of the weaver's family because a lot of stuff of what we weave are messages, actually, for our family. You know, when Barbara weaves something she'll always weave in colors that she, reserves for her children. , you know, a certain different color that she'll put in, she'll say, "This is for Michael." Or, "This is for Sierra." And I know that by looking at it but, for, 1000 people that are gonna see it at market on Saturday, they're not gonna know unless they ask. they'll come up to the booth and they'll look at our weaving, and they'll say, "Oh, that's a Two Grey Hills." Yes, it is a Two Grey Hills, and then we'll kind of discuss what the elements are in a true Two Grey for us that we desire the red-brown color for our inside full color, that's what makes it very valuable for us. And then when we discuss the designs, you know, we can say, "Yeah, I wove this because it's my grandmother's design." One of the current, uh, weavings that Barbara is working on is a really tiny little Two Grey and on the side, when she started weaving it, I came back after lunch, I looked at it and I said, "Ah, Grandma's design." You know, because I recognize that and, uh... and there- there she has it. Right there, the- the little weaving.

JMY: Wow.

LTP: And I don't know if you can see a close- up on the border but there's like a really small little, stripe that's kind of back and forth? That was a design that was carried on by our great-grandmother, and then it transferred to our grandmother, and then our mom used it and now we use it. And, uh, so it's a design that's been in our family for generations. But, you know,we don't really take ownership because other people do use it but for them it may mean something different that's the big thing with people that write books about Navajo weaving, is if I told that story, they're gonna say, "Oh, yeah, it's been in their family and it belongs to them." And that's not what we're saying at all.

It's just a design that's been passed down for generations that we still use and for us it's to honor our grandmothers. It's to honor our ancestors. That's all it is. whoever buys that piece, they're taking that piece of our history with them. when we talk about the piece to them, we've had the same collectors for multiple years and a lot of them will come to our booth, look at it and they go, "Oh, I recognize that." You know, so you cultivate people and the story does get honored that way 'cause some collectors will remember it. And some won't but they'll say, "Oh, yeah, that's one of my favorite designs." (laughs).

BTO: (laughs).

LTP: You know, that's okay, too.

JMY: What a beautiful weaving, Barbara

BTP: Thank you.

JMY: I hope I can see a photo of it when it's done.

BTP: I was weaving that for Indian Market but then I sold it, so I just put it on the side and wait 'til after Indian Market, then I'll work on it.

JMY: You had mentioned that when you're teaching your classes, to Navajo students, they bring tools with them, you said that they inherited the tools from family members. So I was wondering if you could tell me a little bit about - the importance of tools and how they're, either kept within the family or exchanged. And if there are specific tools that you are particularly fond of using within your practice?

LTP: Well, one thing that we, say all the time is that, uh... and I think you brought it up in one of your questions was that, toolmakers are the unsung heroes of Navajo weaving because, you know, once a weaving is done, nobody stands around and says, "Wow, I wonder what kind of tools you use." Or, "Who- who made your tools?" I remember the young gentleman that won, uh, best of show or he won a huge ribbon for his weaving, I can't say his first name but his last name is Aragon and his brother, Artie Aragon - Is a really good toolmaker and he makes a lot of, our tools for our students because he- he, we require a real heavy- heavy comb to begin with and he knows how we like it. And so he makes those combs for us and, uh, I met with him to get more combs and I said, "Oh, I loved your brother's weaving. You know, he won... Best of classification, maybe."

BTO: Yeah.

LTP: But we were so happy that he won 'cause he's such a nice, nice young man. And so I was telling-

BTO: And a beautiful weaver.

LTP: And I was telling Artie, I said, "His- his weaving is just fantastic." And he looked at me and he goes, "Weavers get all the glory." (laughs).

JMY: (laughs).

LTP: He goes, "I made the loom, I made the tools, I made this and where's my, you know, where's my publicity," kind of thing.

BTO: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah. (laughs).

LTP: And so I walked away and I thought, "He's right." Nobody ever talks about the toolmakers and we have tools that have been passed down from our dad and our brothers, our nephew, Terry...we lost him in April of last year.

JMY: Oh, no.

LTP: But he had taken over a lot of the toolmaking and so the things that he came up with. He was a left-handed toolmaker and so he really developed some tools that left-handed weavers could- could use. And then when you flip them they could be for right-handed weavers.

JMY: Wow.

LTP: His daughter, Roxanne, is our granddaughter, when she was having trouble she would just tell her dad and say, you know, "My batten keeps flipping." And so he developed a style that doesn't flip as much. And any little thing that she found annoying he fixed it in the tool area and I think that's what makes a great toolmaker, is one that is able to, create a tool for- for places that you're being challenged and, there are some tools that we outgrow but we won't ever get rid of it- Because they were made by a special person in our family. and our relationship to tools is much more intimate than our relationship, I think, the wefts. Because the wefts, you know, we prepare it, we use it but the tools are things that make things straight, they're used in a lot of different, troubleshooting. they're tools that really help with what we need to achieve in making a good weaving.

BTP: Speaking of tools, I wanted to show you one of my mom's battens. This is my mom's batten and I don't know if you can see it but there's grooves along here- where all the wefts, created these grooves and, her father-in-law, our grandfather, he cut it off a tree and then he made a batten for her when she had first got married to my dad and so she had this batten forever. This is her favorite batten. She's always used it and so right before she passed she gave it to me and told me take care of it, so I did that. And then she also had another batten that was thicker, and Lyn has the other one, but it was like this thick.

And my dad cut this in half when our older sister Roseanne and I were working on a large piece and he made sure that we had a batten... each of us had a same, width of a batten, and also- also has these grooves in it, I don't know if you can see it, but it's really cool.

And... this is probably the two most cherished battens I have, And then this one was made by Lyn's husband and it's just my favorite tool. I use it. It's a redwood. Rosewood. And I just love it. I take this everywhere on all my travels. I make sure this is always in my... box and you know, Lyn was talking about how Terry created a- a new batten so that it won't flip and this is what she's talking about. See it's square? You know, it- it's squared and it's not rounded like this one. See this how this was round? And this one will keep flipping, you know, after a while.

JMY: Yeah.

BTO: But then this one doesn't. It just stays in place and- and it's really a great, great tool and I just love it.

JMY: They're so beautiful.

BTO: Yeah, and then you get attach to your combs. .. one of my favorite combs and it's missing a bunch of teeth but I still, you know... I still use it. And every- every chance I get to see Lyn's husband I keep wanting him to cut this part but I, we always run out of time. So there's a few combs that I have that I really love but this is probably one of my favorites. I have combs that I probably used as a child that I still have.

JMY: Wow. You had mentioned in a previous conversation that with your combs, often, if a tooth breaks off you can have someone sand down the side to make it even.

BTO: Every time Belvin comes we don't have time for him to fix my tools but, you know, whenever he does he'll probably just cut this part off and then... and then sand it down.

JMY: Thank you both so much for taking the time and just joining us today on the second season of the Fields of the Future podcast. It's been such a privilege to speak with you about your work, about your family, about your knowledge. And so I really just appreciate it so much.

BTO: Thank you.

LTP: Thank you.