

Philis Alvic

“Weavers are problem solvers. We like to figure out things and work things out. . . . you look at other people’s patterns for ideas but we like to figure out things and put things together in our own way.”

Philis Alvic has been putting things together in her own way all her life. She grew up in Chicago and has lived in Alaska, Florida, and South Carolina, but she has been an active member of the Kentucky artist community since 1976. A graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Philis has both an artistic and an academic interest in weaving. She has done extensive research into the Appalachian Crafts Revival of the early 1900s. In her book *Weavers of the Southern Highlands* (University Press of Kentucky, 2003), she explains how weaving centers empowered countless women to become successful entrepreneurs, weaving in their own homes while the centers marketed their work. Understanding the process of economic development for women through weaving has given her the insight to serve as a craft development consultant in Peru, Morocco, India, Nepal, Armenia, Sri Lanka, and seven countries in Southern and Eastern Africa. Her work as a scholar and consultant has inspired her creativity as a weaver. She creates loom-controlled patterns to convey visual ideas, usually in a series. Some of her series have been inspired by her travels, by works of art, or by literature. Her latest series is called *Portals*, and it explores the ideas of transition by suggesting windows and doors.