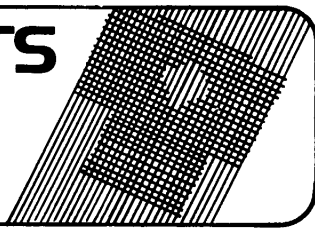


GARMENTS



by Gloria Rither

SEAMS, SURFACES, AND CLOSINGS FOR GARMENTS

Though economy is not among the reasons for weaving one's own clothing, shaping garment pieces offers advantages that cannot be had any other way. Most exciting is being able to weave a one-of-a-kind garment whose design elements and fitting requirements are incorporated into each shape. The commercial patterns from which we sew garments often offer little variation from the 5/8" seam allowance used to assemble the pieces; the fabrics are whatever someone else designed for the season; and closings are often constructed last or concealed.

By shaping garments we give ourselves many more possibilities. Selvedge and semi-selvedge edges allow us to treat seams in other ways than pressing them open on the wrong side. There is an unlimited number of surfaces we can create. And in making each piece we can incorporate parts of a closing in the web. Whatever the seaming, the surface, or the closing, all must be decided in the design stage so they can be figured into the warp.

Seaming Design Notes

1. Plan a simple, classic style. Try to keep the pieces fairly uncomplicated in shape.
2. For structural interest, consider weaving several smaller shapes and piece together. Plan seams in unconventional places.
3. Darts can be seamed in or they can be shaped and their edges woven together.
4. Consider weaving parts of the garment sideways to get fringe and selvedge edges where you want them.

Seam Ideas

1. Knot fringed edges together; leave fringe.
2. Knot fringed edges together; darn fringe from one side into fabric of the opposite side.
3. Weave selvedge edges together with separate thread as in assembling knitted pieces.
4. Lap one selvedge over the other and stitch with running or blind stitch.
5. Lace pieces together with cord or leather strips.
6. Sew fringed edges with seam allowance on right side of garment for a mane of fringe.

Surface Design Notes

1. Decide on a surface which will enhance, not cover, the structure of the garment.
2. Plan shapes of surface embellishment which move with the garment shape.
3. Texture only certain areas of the surface, such as yokes, or borders.
4. Develop a color and texture sense by conscious observation and constant exposure; use thoughtful selection.
5. Surface ideas might come from fabrics, yarns, grasses, bark, fur, junkyards, landscapes, anything that grows.

Surface Ideas

1. Plan borders of texture or pickup designs.
2. Alternate heavy and light weft.

3. Use an uneven beat.
4. Skip dent.
5. Add warp on already woven areas and needleweave into a layered design.
6. Double weave pockets, or stuff doublewoven areas.
7. Arrange warp and weft in planned stripe or plaid.
8. Use loops or shag; vary pile height, yarns, colors.
9. Use tapestry and discontinuous wefts in select areas.
10. Use soumak or any of the texture weaves.
11. Use lace weaves in areas.
12. Use space dyed yarns or ikat planned with the shapes.
13. Incorporate leather, fur strips, rags, textured yarns.

Closing Design Notes

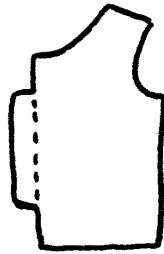
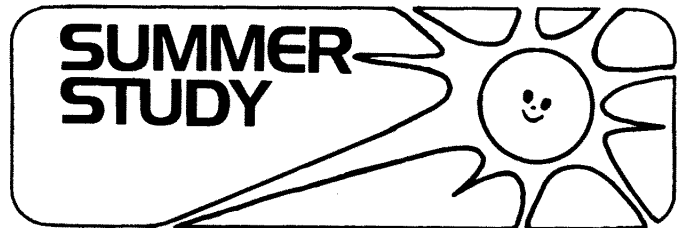
1. Closings should not detract from the garment. They may offer contrast, but should remain compatible in scale, material, color, and spirit.
2. Each garment requires rethinking the closings. Each may require a different solution.
3. Notice closings on buildings, door latches, on trucks and industrial equipment, on primitive garments and dwellings, on seed pods and natural structures, on theater costumes and designer fashions.
4. Solve a problem you set up for yourself: How can I get into this garment? How can I close it without adding anything after it is cut from the loom?

Closing Ideas

1. Front lap (a)
2. Band tabs with buttons (b)
3. Tabs and slits (c)
4. Weft ties (d)
5. Wrapped warp or weft into loops and buttons
6. Gathers with drawstring
7. Gathers with inkle belt to tie
8. Needlewoven forms that interlock
9. Wire pins and bars; forged metal pieces
10. Slots and latches (e)
11. Belts in slit carriers (d) (e)
12. Lacing in eyelets or slits
13. Button forms of clay, weathered wood, antler, horn, shell

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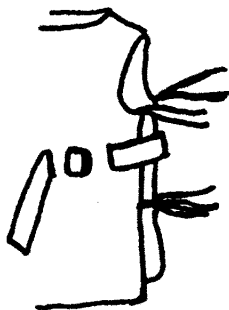
a.



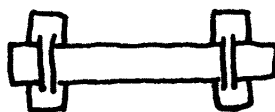
b.



c.



d.



e.

The Ixchel School of Guatemalan Weaving offers two sessions of classes to experienced weavers during summer '78. Located in the tranquil setting of Antigua, Guatemala, the school offers a curriculum of backstrap weaving, natural dyeing, ikat and weaving theory. In addition, various stimulating topics will spur discussion groups in the evenings.

The faculty is a combination of native backstrap weavers and dyers, and professional artist-weavers (including our own Sue Baizerman). Accommodations are provided. Optional excursions to weaving centers are also offered. The sessions will be held July 2-23 and July 30-August 20.

For more information, write Ixchel School of Guatemalan Weaving, Apartado Postal 45-C, Guatemala City, Guatemala, Central America.

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