

Darlene's Thread

Hi Sewing Friends,

I always find myself in a race against time when August comes screeching in. There are all the last minute summer alterations and remakes along with fall's set of projects filling up my 'wanna-do' list.

Don't let unfinished business from your past dreams keep you from conjouring up another challenge. Simply pack away any unfinished business in pastels for the following spring. By then you will have new inspiration to infuse into it!

Last week I was browsing through a women's fashion store and stumbled on an interesting fringed scarf. In addition to the eye-catching color combination (Caribbean greens and blues) the weave had layered cut out and frayed areas adding textural interest. It was too bulky for a belt and too heavy (in Florida) for a head wrap but too unusual to leave behind so I purchased the scarf priced at \$16.00. In my sewing studio I realized that there were several remnants of fabric that coordinated nicely with the gypsy pashmina. A deep blue piece of Dupioni Silk and a chartreuse scrap of chiffon along with my newfound neck wrap was all the inspiration I needed to get started on the gypsy-hobo-pirate blouse. I'll admit that I put this together and let it be for a few days while I chewed on the obstacles.



Problem: The body was too boxy and darts would interrupt the surface design in the fabric.

Solution: Add an inside casing and elastic to cinch the waist and preserve the surface design

Problem: The sleeves were too long, predictable and boring.

Solution : Gather the sleeve on the crease and add a placket to secure in place.

Problem: Shirt not large enough for Front bands to overlap all the way down.

Solution: Fold back the neck opening corners and omit overlap. Add buttons for interest.

Problem: Executing front bands closure. Zipper? String? Frogs?

Solution: TABS to match the sleeve plackets !!!

Some designer can conceptualize a complete ensemble in their minds and sketch it out flawlessly. For others, it's a process. Either way, it's a satisfying journey that will stretch your thinking and surprise you. Take it one step at a time and let the fabrics, colors and textures speak to you (along with logic) while you work. Try to imagine a balance that represents your point of view and is pleasing to you. It's impossible to make a mistake. Any goof up is a new design opportunity and solutions can be worked into your unique piece. Don't be afraid to mix and match pattern pieces when you're starting out. Measure twice, cut once! It will also help to have a dress form and a full length mirror. Savor the time it takes to make your masterpiece. It will be unlike any other and well worth the effort.

EMBROIDERY

Some of today's most popular embroidery machines are also advanced sewing machines. This dual functionality gives the sewer an advantage. You can construct as well as embellish practically any project imaginable. Many of you have been asking about heirloom fabric baby books. My guess is that if you ask ten different sewers, you'll get ten different answers. Following are three books from three of SINGER's consultants. They are all made differently so I wanted to feature them all to give you plenty of ideas before you decide how you would like your heirloom book to look.

As you can see, the books use the embroidery and decorative sewing features of the FUTURA. The counting book has ribbon stitched to the cover while the teddy bear's ribbon is decoratively stitched and free flowing and tacked onto the cover in a few places. The rainbow grid book's ribbon actually is holding the pages together as it is functionally going through all the layers. Each book has 5-10 pages. Whether you're counting, learning colors or telling a personal family story, your book will be treasured for generations.



The finished size of the larger book is 13" x 10 1/2" and is made from a heavily reinforced home décor dobby weave with a colorful quilting cotton binding. The teddy bear book made from pre-quilted cotton with satin ribbon binding is 9" x 9". The rainbow grid book is 8"x 8" and although the outer cover is a thin wheeled corduroy, the internal pages are felt with pinked edges. The larger counting book is made by constructing three large placemats on both sides and then stitching all together straight down the middle through all layers.



The outside placemat is larger than the inside mats measurement. Plan ahead. If you utilize BOTH sides of every page and the inside of the front and back cover, you'll have 10 pages! In the example on the right, numbers, lettering and repeat design were used all in one hooping! This is a great way to get to know your software as you will be able to exercise multiple functions including color choices, Fonts, sizing, repeat design, rotations, stitch choices, density, etc..... The outside placemat (remember to make two-one for the cover and one for pages 1 and 10) measurement is 21 1/4" x 13 1/4". The middle placemats (there are four to embroider but when backed and bound together, make two. 2 & 9----3 & 8 ----4&7----5&6) measurements are 12 1/4" x 20 1/4". That way the inside pages are tucked neatly inside the outer cover and lay just inside the binding.



The teddy bear book has five pages executed in a potholder style. Each one was made separately, only stitched on one side of the page and then backed with another piece of pre-quilted cotton and basted around the edge. Then the edge was finished by folding ribbon lengthwise and sandwiching it over the raw edges. The pages were then tacked together using a heavy home dec thread and finished off with a decoratively stitched ribbon bow tacked in place.



The rainbow grid book has three inside pages made from fusible felt. The felt piece started as 8 ½" x 16 ½" to embroider. After the embroidery, the page is folded with adhesive sides together and pressed. A border of decorative stitching was made around three sides and then ½ " pinked off to even and finish. The three pages were stacked on top of each other and sandwiched inside the outer cover. Two holes 4" apart were punched through all the layers and a 1/8" ribbon strung through and tied on the cover in a bow securing all the layers.



WHAT'S NEW?

SINGER's new Professional Computerized machine has the most functionality that SINGER has ever offered in their HSN lineup. With four sets of permanent memory modules, Programmable needle up/down, Mirror imaging and elongation, Large, easy to read back lit LCD screen, 392 built in patterns including two alphabets in upper and lower case with numbers and twenty bonus feet, you'll be glad you tuned in on August 17th to see this "Professional Masterpiece" in action. One Day ONLY with FREE Shipping and Handling 😊

WHEN TO WATCH

August 17th ---- 12am , 1am , 7am, 8am, 11am, 3pm, 4pm, 7pm & 10pm.

September---- 1 (11pm), 2 (10am), 6 (5pm), 8 (7am, 6pm), 13 (7am), 15 (6am, 5pm), 20 (7am), 22 (6am, 6pm), 27 (5am), 29 (5am, 4pm).

Watch in September for National Month of Sewing shows. We'll have our new Melrose Value packs available on quarterly auto-ship so you can collect all the brilliant colors over the course of a year. The fun never stops on HSN!!!

Sew Your Dreams,

Darlene