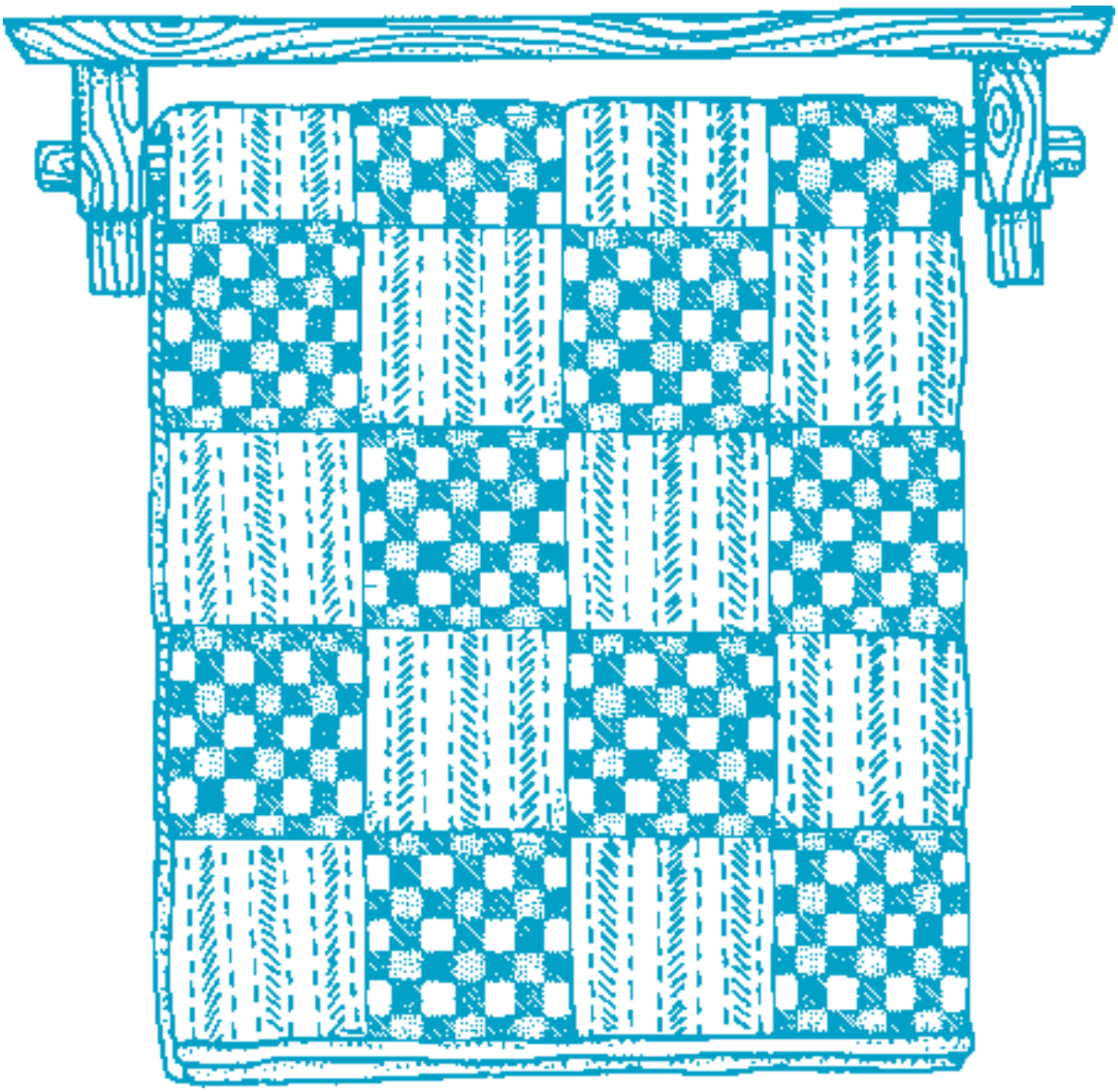
4-H MEMBER MANUAL

STANDARDS OF QUALITY IN CRAFTS



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

EM4720

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The Language of Design

A Background for Standards of Quality in Craft Design

The person who has crafted an object and the person who is judging that object may feel inadequate in expressing their knowledge of what constitutes a well-designed piece of work. The artisan may unconsciously have done the right thing in the right way, and the judge may have developed an unerring ability to recognize that quality, but neither one may be able to say why the object in question is well-designed or why some other object is not.

Standards or levels of excellence are usually explained in words. Ratings on that basis are set up in words, and possibly numerical points or percentages, on scorecards. Words often mean one thing to one person and something else to someone else. To be able to judge creatively, a person must have an awareness of design quality gained through experience which makes the words have a definite meaning for him or her, hopefully, the same meaning they have for other people connected with the creating and judging process.

This use of meaningful words is particularly important to the judge who tries to base his or her decision on merit. Merit can be defined logically while personal preference cannot. The judge is usually expected to state the reasons for his or her choices in words to be given to a supervisor after the judging is complete. A few simple words, tactfully chosen by the judge and written as comment to be read by the entrant, provide a means of encouragement (playing up a good point) and a valuable tool for education (honestly assessing what needs to be improved).

Knowing the language of design is not a substitute for an awareness of design which comes from experience, or for an intimate knowledge of the skills required for a particular craft. It can help the artisan and the judge of craft work communicate. It may also provide a framework for gaining a greater awareness in design through diligent study, attendance at art shows, exhibitions, and museums—all enriching experiences which help a person be a better judge, and grow in stature or reputation. Such a person, by promoting creative expression and originality, will raise the standards of judging, strengthen the educational purpose of the fair, and increase public support for it.

One artisan works with yarns and fabric and produces an object which is judged best in show, while another uses the same materials and receives a lower award. What is the difference? If they are both equally skilled in the technique and developed their own designs, the difference is clearly in design.

The total design procedure involves deciding on aims, developing an approach, and selecting and organizing the forms and materials best suited to the purpose. If we think about this as a process, we can see that an object's use and whether or not it is worth the time and money to make and maintain it, are important goals in its design. Only some aspects of an object's use and economy can be fairly assessed by a judge, unless the evaluation involves a total project explaining these factors, or an interview with the entrant.

In evaluating a rug's use without such information, a judgment as to whether it lies flat on the floor can be made, but a judgment as to whether it is acceptable in size cannot be made. In evaluating an infant's quilt in terms of use, attached pompons might be judged to be dangerous, but color should not be considered unsuitable because it is not a light value.

If one of the purposes, or perhaps the only purpose, of an object is to give pleasure, two other important goals of design emerge: beauty and creative individuality or character. In creating and judging the design of handcrafted objects, we are often mainly concerned with the selection and organization of line, form, texture, color, and space to achieve beauty and that special quality which differentiates one person's work from another's.

ELEMENTS OF DESIGN

Lines, shapes or forms, textures, colors, and space are the basic components or **elements** of design.

Line

The mark of a pencil, the stroke of a brush, a series of stitches which starts someplace and ends someplace else, become visual lines. Theoretically, at least, line has only one dimension—length.

- A line may be imagined, as well as real. Just as you imagine the line a ball has traveled as it is thrown and caught, your eye can follow an imaginary line as it is led from one part to another part of a design.
- Lines may be straight or curved, or a combination of these two, such as scalloped or zigzag. Lines may move in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal direction, and may be described as short or long, thin or thick, smooth or fuzzy, etc.
- The direction and quality of lines affect our feelings. They may make us feel secure, or happy, or excited if they are well-planned.
- Lines may make us feel uneasy if they are not well-planned (i.e., our reaction to an uneven line of stitching in a quilt).
- Lines may be considered structural (i.e., when used to define a shape or form) or decorative (i.e. when used to create an all over pattern).

There are boundaries, but no actual lines in nature, even though we may interpret a stem or a branch or the outline of a boulder as a line in art and craft work.

Shape and Form

A shape may be defined as a flat enclosure of space having two dimensions—length and width. A shape may be defined by the artisan by extending a line around an area, so that the line ends, or seems to end, at the same place it started (i.e., a line of stitching can create a shape). A cut-out piece of fabric used in appliqué or patchwork will seem to have only two dimensions. We often view a door, a window, a picture, or a hanging on a wall as a flat plane having two dimensions. There are many shapes: squares, rectangles, triangles, circles, and a variety of other geometrical shapes.

A form may be thought of as a three-dimensional structure (mass or volume) revealed or surrounded by space. A form has length, width, and depth. In art or craft work we may deal with forms which tend to be viewed as two-dimensional shapes (i.e., a picture or a rug), those which make us more conscious of depth (i.e., a vase or a plant hanger), or designs made on a flat surface, but given the illusion of depth by perspective or shading. The basic forms are projections of the basic shapes: cubes and other rectangular forms, pyramids or cones, spheres or cylinders, and a variety of other geometric and free forms.

Texture

Texture refers to the surface qualities of materials. It may define actual or tactile texture, in which three-dimensional surface qualities can be felt as well as seen (bricks, fabrics), and visual texture, in which a material has a textural pattern under a smooth surface (wood grain, some printed fabrics). Texture affects us physically when we see and touch an object. It may look and feel soft, harsh, slippery, etc. Texture affects light

reflection and the appearance of any form. Smooth materials reflect light, attract attention, have a clear color quality. Rough materials absorb light unevenly, making colors look darker and less bright.

It is difficult to distinguish where texture ends and pattern begins. For example, yarn has a soft, springy texture. Working it into a plain background area, using the same stitch and color, creates a quiet pattern which is textural in effect. Changing the yarn size or type of stitch varies the texture and creates pattern, but may not be viewed as pattern when compared with the colorful design shapes worked into the background.

Color

In using or judging color we are concerned mainly with three fields of color; color in light, color in sight, and color in pigment. It is exciting to study the seeing of color as an indication of our eyes' response to wavelengths and intensities of light being absorbed and/or reflected by the pigments of a colored surface. It is important to know colors can make us feel cheerful or depressed, quiet or excited. They can change our perception of how near or how far away an object is. Because of the way our eyes and brain receive color impressions, the visual effect of one color upon another color placed near it is very definite.

In general, however, the principles which guide us to use color beautifully are the same in the three fields of color within the limits outlined above. Complementary colors in the field of vision and of pigment are similar, and the effect upon the eye of two colors which are nearly complementary is much the same as that of true complements. The color theory of pigments should serve satisfactorily enough for our purpose of creating or judging craft work.

Because the effect of one color on another is so important in judging art and craft work, some additional explanation of how we see color may be useful. About half a minute after we look fixedly at a color, another color which isn't actually there to look at appears in our eyes. This nonexistent color is called an *after-image*; it is the complement of the color we are staring at; and it changes the appearance of that original color to us even while we look at it. If we shift our eyes to a white surface, we can see this after-image. Since each color has its after-image, any color we have just been looking at will affect the appearance of every color seen near it. This explains why certain pairs of complementary colors (i.e., red and green, yellow and blue) can neutralize each other in the eye and form gray when they are used next to each other in relatively small areas and seen at some little distance. On the other hand, certain pairs of colors (i.e., very strong red and green) may affect the eyes' color receptors in alternation, causing a sensation of vibration.

Each hue, value and intensity seems different to our eyes when set in a different background. The eye tends to retain a background color, causing its hue, value, and intensity to be subtracted from the color of a shape seen against it. For example, the same medium blue shape will appear lighter when seen against a deeper blue background, and darker when placed on a lighter blue background. Two shapes which differ in some color quality can be made to look alike in color when used on backgrounds chosen to cause this effect. It becomes clear why it may be necessary to separate colors which affect each other unpleasantly by using black or other neutrals between them, or harmonizing colors for backgrounds. Colors which seem to clash may be keyed by giving them all something in common, such as an addition of white to make them all pastels.

A basic knowledge of pigment color theory is helpful when using paints or dyes, or materials which gain their colors from these media. We are concerned with three characteristics of colors: hue, value, and intensity (or chroma).

Hue refers to the name of a color, so named because of the wavelengths of white light not absorbed by (or, conversely, reflected by) its pigments. In the most familiar pigment color theory, we call three basic hues (red, yellow and blue) the *primary* hues, which cannot be obtained by mixing other hues. Between primaries, a hue can be changed by mixing it with another hue. Mixing two primary hues in equal amounts gives a *binary*, or secondary, hue. The binary hues are orange, green, and purple. Mixing a primary and a neighboring binary hue results in an *intermediate* hue. The intermediate hues halfway between the primaries and neighboring binaries are yellow-green, blue-green, blue-purple, red-purple, red-orange, and yellow-orange. However, an indefinite number of gradations between intermediates may be mixed. The hues near red and orange are warm, advancing, stimulating hues; those near blue and blue-purple are cool, receding, restful hues.

Used together, colors may be related and harmonious, such as monochromatic (one-hue) combinations or analogous (adjacent on the color wheel) combinations. Used together, colors may be contrasting, such as complementary (directly or nearly opposite on the color wheel) combinations.

Value is the name given to the range of lightness or darkness which may describe the infinite gradations from white, through grays, to black, or the range from lightness to darkness of a hue. The value of a hue can be changed by adding white (or diluting) to lighten it, or by adding black (or more pigment) to darken it. Tints are values lighter than the normal color; shades are values darker than the normal color. Colors look darker and brighter against white, paler and less bright against black, inconspicuous against gray of their same value. Light values seem to increase the size of an object and create an impression of distance. Dark values seem to decrease the size of an object and suggest nearness. Values which are much alike can be subtle if handled well, monotonous if not. Close values help unify a combination which has so many hues that adding value contrast would give it too much variety. Backgrounds which are much lighter or darker than the shapes placed on them call attention to the silhouettes of the shapes. If such shapes are clumsy, or if many contrasting shapes are used together (i.e., flowers, leaves, stems), placing or working them on a background close to their own value may be desirable.

Intensity, or chroma, describes the brightness or dullness of a hue, its saturation with the pigment characteristic of its hue (high intensity), or its dilution toward neutral gray (low intensity). The intensity of a hue may be changed by adding its complement or gray. Adding gray is, in effect, adding its complement along with more of its own hue and some white, which makes it possible to lower the intensity of the hue without changing its value.

The complement of a color is found directly across from it on a color chart. If a chart is not available, a hue's complement can be determined by remembering that equal parts of pigment primary hues mix to form neutral gray. The complement of a color is a hue which, when mixed with the color, would complete the components of neutral gray. For example, the complement of red is green (green being composed of the other two primaries yellow and blue). The amount of complement added to a hue determines the extent to which the hue is made less intense (neutralized or grayed).

Complementary hues placed next to each other intensify or emphasize each other, more so when they are both bright, unless the color areas are so small that at a distance they neutralize each other in the eye. A small amount of a bright hue can be emphasized by using a large amount of the same hue in a lower intensity near it or surrounding it. A hue can be emphasized by a small note of the same hue in a brighter intensity in some other part of a composition. A large

area of a bright color next to a dull color of the same or similar hue will make the latter seem even less intense. A bright color will seem less intense if it is combined with a very dull color of about the same value but slightly different in hue.

A useful guide (not a rule) to color areas, particularly backgrounds, is that the larger the area to be covered, the less intense the color may be; the smaller the area, the brighter the color may be. However, dramatic effects may be obtained by reversing this suggestion. Two classes of color which might be mentioned here are: *tertiary* colors (red, yellow, and blue much neutralized), and *quaternary* colors (orange, green, and purple much neutralized).

Space

Space may be defined as the distance or interval between things. For space to have meaning, a point of reference and a limitation of the space surrounding it must be established. In making or judging craft designs we are often concerned with two-dimensional space. The enclosure of space may be marked by the edge of a wall hanging or quilt. As the artisan designs a shape or shapes within the limits of the edges, he or she may emphasize those shapes or the space. He or she may create a feeling of movement with shapes which lead the eye from one to another. He or she may create an optical illusion of depth by the size and placement of shapes in the enclosure. Placing shapes in a space involves all the principles of design. The space between and around the shapes of the design should be as pleasing as the design shapes.

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

Certain qualities serve as guidelines to explain why some combinations of lines, shapes or forms, textures, colors and spaces seem to work better or look better than others. Applying these guidelines in selecting and arranging the elements of design does not guarantee that the resulting design will be beautiful or creative, and some of the most striking designs seem to ignore these guidelines altogether. However, they can be very helpful in creating effective design. Harmony, proportion, balance, rhythm and emphasis are these guidelines or **principles** of design.

Harmony

Harmony may be defined as the quality of relatedness or agreement achieved in the selection and arrangement of consistent lines, shapes or forms, textures, colors, sizes and ideas. Harmony may be said to exist when unity and variety exist in a pleasing relationship. Uniformity, if carried to extremes can be monotonous. Similarity, rather than sameness, suggests a degree of variety. Extreme variety destroys unity. Lines and shapes that repeat each other are harmonious; those which are in opposition to each other are contrasting or contradictory; those which bring together contrasting lines and shapes are transitional and establish harmony. Textures which have something in common with each other are harmonious. Colors which have a hue common to both, such as red and orange (red plus yellow), are harmonious together, those which do not share a common hue show some contrast (red and yellow) or the greatest contrast possible (red and green). When one or more of the design elements are held constant and one or more are changed, unity and variety are pleasingly related.

Proportion and Scale

Proportion refers to the relation (satisfactory or unsatisfactory) of one part of a design to another part or to the whole. For example, the relation between the vertical and horizontal measurements of a wall hanging may be pleasingly proportioned because the unequal lengths produce enough contrast to be interesting. Lines of stitchery used to divide a space into several parts (some alike and some different) may produce shapes and

sizes which are especially satisfying in relation to each other, i.e., in their proportions.

Scale refers to the relative size of a thing in relation to other things. For example, to say that a rod used to hang a decorative fabric is in scale means that the size of the rod is neither too thin nor too heavy for the visual weight of the fabric.

Balance

Balance is defined as equilibrium. This may range from static permanence to rest or repose or from suspended animation to actual motion.

Identical weights or equal attractions balance each other at the same distance from the center of a design or an arrangement. This kind of balance is called symmetrical, formal, or passive balance. If the attraction (object or design) on one side is exactly like that on the other, or its reversed replica, the balance is often called bisymmetrical. If the two weights are not alike but equally forceful in appearance, the balance may be called obvious formal balance. This kind of balance tends to stress the center creating a logical focal point for something one wishes to emphasize, providing that shapes or colors that lead the eye away from the middle do not weaken this position. Symmetrical balance can be imaginative, but it often tends to be rather dull and ordinary.

Unequal weights or attractions balance each other at different distances from the center of a design or an arrangement. This kind of balance is called asymmetrical, informal, active, or occult balance. The greater attraction must be placed closer to the center, and the lesser one farther away. This does not imply that these attractions, which may be the lines, shapes or colors of a design, must be separated units. Continuous, flowing lines, worked mainly on one side of center but extending into the space on the other side, can cause eye movement which contributes to an impression of visual balance. The above description assumes the objects or design motifs are on the same horizontal line. A method of balancing used frequently in pictorial composition gives the effect of perspective by using a larger figure in the foreground balanced by a smaller one in the background. Asymmetric balance suggests movement and spontaneity, and holds the interest longer than symmetrical balance does.

Radial balance is achieved when all parts of a composition are balanced and repeated around the center of a design or arrangement. Its circular movement out from, toward, or around a focal point is often used in handcrafted objects.

Rhythm

Rhythm may be defined as continuity, recurrence, or organized movement which may be achieved in the arrangement of the elements of design. Rhythm may be gained through repetition of lines, shapes, forms or colors; through progression by increasing or decreasing one or more qualities, i.e., size; and through the use of easily connected (by the eye) or continuous line movement. In each case the eye is carried along an easy path. In trying to gain rhythm through repetition, one must not allow the intervals to be so far apart that eye movement will be in jerks or leaps; one should avoid the monotony of too much repetition; and one should avoid repeating a shape or form which is commonplace. A common misuse of progression is a series of steps which lead the eye to the wrong place. A continuous line thoughtlessly placed can lead the eye right out of the picture, and since such lines are apt to be made up largely of curves, overuse can result in violent rhythms which allow little or no rest or repose.

Radiation is a type of movement which grows out of a central point. Lines and shapes may be arranged to lead the eye toward and away from the center by means of straight, radiating lines, concentric

circles, spirals, or combinations of these. Repetition, progression or continuous line movement are also the means of obtaining rhythm in radiating designs.

Emphasis

Emphasis may be defined as a quality which causes the eye to be carried first to the most important thing in a design or an arrangement, and from there to other parts in the order of their importance. These degrees of visual importance are considered in terms of dominance and subordination.

- In one wall hanging, i.e., an all-over repeat pattern in batik on fabric, all parts or units may have the same level of importance, but the finished product will provide a point of emphasis in some room.
- In another batik wall hanging, a large, central unit may be emphatic, a relatively strong border may be dominant, little wiggly lines filling in the background may be subdominant, and the crackle may be subordinate.

The whole piece may also provide a point of emphasis in some room. Since the judge may know nothing about the room in question, or the likes and dislikes of the entrant, beware of such admonitions as "look for the focal point" and "backgrounds should be less conspicuous than the objects or shapes seen against them" and use these concepts only where it makes sense to do so. A case in point might be a pictorial scene in which a weak attempt was made to establish a center of interest, but too many equally assertive elements were allowed to compete with it for attention.

There are several ways by which one may create emphasis, or attract attention, among them:

- grouping objects or shapes in a design
- using contrasts of color
- using decoration
- using contrasting or unusual lines, shapes, or sizes
- using plain background space around objects or shapes in a design

The principles of design are guidelines. Their names are part of the language of design, and understanding them may help the entrant and judge. Don't hesitate to use them as crutches. But, watch your language! Say "should be" and "must" as little as possible. They imply rules. They are made for creative artisans to break—with stunning success. It is up to the creative judge to know which entry is a success and which is a mess and why, and to break the news in a way that will do the most good.

ADDITIONAL DESIGN CONCEPTS

There are a few more words in the language of design which may be helpful to know and understand.

Structural and Decorative Design

In creating or judging an object we are concerned with its *structural design* —size, form, color, and texture—whether it is a shape, like a piece of fabric or paper, or a form, like a figurine, or a drawing of a shape or form.

An object may or may not have *structural ornament* as a part of its structural design. This quality comes from the intrinsic character of materials, i.e., grain of wood; the way in which an object is made, i.e., textures resulting from the weaving process; or the deliberate shaping of an object to provide visual and tactile pleasure.

We are also concerned with an object's *decorative design*—any lines, shapes, colors, textures, or materials which have been applied to its structural design to enrich it. This is sometimes called *applied ornament*, i.e., pattern printed on cloth after the cloth is structurally complete.

In judging structural design we might ask:

- Is it well proportioned?
- Is it suited to its purpose?
- Is it suited to the materials and processes used in making it?
- Does it show individuality and creative expression?

In judging decorative design we might ask:

- Is it suited to the object's use, basic form, and materials, or is it inappropriate to them?
- Is it placed at structural points so as to strengthen the shape of the object, or otherwise accentuate the form of which it is a part?
- Are background shapes as carefully studied and as beautiful as the patterns placed against the background?
- Is it pleasant to feel, or physically uncomfortable?
- Is it related to the size or scale of the form? Is it vital and creative in itself?

Note: These are valid questions, but some of them may be impossible to use in fair judging because of limited information about the entries.

Sources and Interpretation of Shapes and Forms

In creating or judging an object we may also be concerned with the manner in which the design is interpreted—whether it is realistic, stylized, abstract, or nonobjective. This applies to both structural and decorative design.

Realistic (also called representational and naturalistic) structures or decorations are those which represent the subject (flowers, fish, birds, people, landscapes, etc.) as easily recognizable forms. The ability to draw or shape a form that is an exact likeness of a real form is basic to designing art and craft work at a higher level of creativity, but by itself often produces designs that have little merit for decorative purposes. A work of art or craft needs more than an exact likeness of a subject to give it lasting appeal. An artisan who uses realistic forms to create a picture or design may give his or her work character by eliminating nonessential detail in order to emphasize some more important quality; by using an interesting rendering technique (fine pen lines or bold brush strokes, etc.); or by using an unusual color combination. The same criteria distinguish between photography as a record and as an art form.

The artisan who makes a *stylized* (or conventionalized) design is not as concerned with making his or her subject recognizable as he or she is with using it as the theme of his or her decoration. The subject is simplified, exaggerated, or rearranged to suit the shape and purpose of the object being designed and the materials, tools, and methods to be used. The artisan who just tries to reproduce with wool yarns the same portrait or scene which an artist achieved with brush and oils, without adapting the subject to the wools, needle, and stitchery technique used, may find he or she has lost some essential quality in so doing. While most beautiful designs are more or less stylized, as described, all stylized designs are not beautiful. Without imagination and inventiveness, commonplace curves and angles may be substituted for the beauty of a natural form.

An *abstract* design may draw inspiration from nature, but does not remind one strongly of a specific natural form. Sometimes classified as abstract, geometric and biomorphic or irregular shapes are also called *nonobjective*. These shapes are not associated with any nature forms. Again, their use does not automatically guarantee designs which have suitable, appropriate, or decorative quality. The artisan must have imagination and the ability to translate what he or she visualizes into a vital design.

Standards for Creative Arts Handcrafts

STANDARDS FOR BATIK

Batik is a method of decorating fabric, paper, etc. by covering parts of it with wax (or a paste resist) so those parts do not take the dye which is applied after waxing. The word batik means "wax writing." Hot wax (usually beeswax and paraffin) is applied to fabric with a tool, such as a brush or tjanting, and the cloth is dyed using cold-water dyes so the wax will not melt. The waxed areas keep the color they had before waxing, so when the wax is removed, undyed and successively dyed areas make a pattern. The wax cracks to some extent in handling the fabric, letting dye through in a hairline effect. This "crackling" is characteristic of most batik work. Some artisans feel that only the crackling which occurs unavoidably is acceptable. Others crumple the waxed cloth before dyeing to encourage veining and cracking.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design, and craftsmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design):

The fabric, paper, etc., should have a pattern or surface design made by the contrast between dyed and undyed, or variously dyed, lines and/or shapes, which is characteristic of the process. Dye may seep into pattern areas meant to be undyed, or of an already dyed color, if the wax is not hot enough to penetrate the material, or if the wax is brittle and flakes or peels off in the dye bath. In such cases parts of the pattern may not be clear or may be lost.

Lines and shapes created by applying wax to the material should be clear, fluid, quickly and confidently drawn. Lines may be clumsy, showing starts and stops where wax overlapped, or edges of shapes may be uneven, for several reasons: the artisan may lack the ability to draw freely and quickly with brush or tjanting and wax; the wax may not be hot enough to flow freely; the tools may be inadequate or not functioning properly. It is easier to repeat small shapes in a relatively uniform size if an evenly hot wax temperature is maintained.

The size and intricacy of the design will be influenced by the thickness of fabric used. Wax applied in delicate designs and fine, sweeping lines penetrates thin and medium weight fabrics readily, but such lines are hard to produce on coarser fabrics. Large, clear shapes are more suitable for heavier fabrics.

Dyed areas of the material should be attractive and even. White and off-white fabrics take dye colors more clearly and accurately than colored fabrics do. Overdyeing should be planned in a workable and attractive sequence of values of one color or different hues. Natural fibers in fabrics without special finishes dye well with cold-water dyes, but synthetic fibers (except viscose rayon) do not. Uneven dyeing may result from failure to wet the cloth before immersing it in the dye bath, letting the cloth hang in folds as it dries, or starting with fabric which is not clean and free of sizing.

Crackling should be subordinate to planned areas of design. Small, weak, or intricate lines and shapes can be overpowered by excessive crackling, especially in large, light background areas with dark crackling.

The amount of wax residue remaining in cloth after wax removal by ironing, boiling, or scraping should not detract from the design or be unsuitable for the intended use of the fabric. A "ghost" outline of wax around shapes which are surrounded by unbroken background space may be much more distracting than residue between small, close

shapes. Residue can be removed from fabric to be used for clothing or soft furnishings by a dry-cleaning solvent in order to eliminate stiffness.

The object made from the batik should be well-constructed and presented.

Examples:
- A rolled hem with neat, even stitches would be one appropriate finish for a scarf
- A wall hanging, if lined, should not show the lining unintentionally at the front edges; its hanger, rod, etc., should be harmonious with the hanging
- A pillow cover may be backed with a fabric harmonious in color, texture, and weight.
- A piece of batik may be matted and framed harmoniously and used as a picture

Scope for creativity in the completed object is necessary, as it is in the creation of the batik design itself.

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of batik contribute to the decorative quality of the finished product.

Examples are:
- an unusual color combination created by carefully planned overdyeing, or by painting dyes on the fabric within waxed design lines in order to use a range of colors which cannot be achieved by overdyeing
- a very decorative effect produced by over-batik, which can be used also to cleverly mask mistakes and rework unsatisfactory designs
- unusual effects produced by tjaps (wax stamping tools) improvised from familiar items

STANDARDS FOR TIE AND DYE

The words tie and dye describe the two operations of a resist-dye method of decorating fabric. First, the fabric or parts of the fabric are tied tightly so that dye cannot reach, or can only partially reach, the bound areas. Then the fabric is dyed. There are many variations of tying, knotting, folding, bagging, stitching, gathering, etc., which will resist or block out dye penetration. Special names are given to some of the methods, and the effects are different, but the standards for success are essentially the same.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design and craftsmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design):

The fabric should have a pattern of dyed and undyed, or lightly dyed, lines and/or shapes, which is characteristic of the process. Dye may seep into the areas which are meant to remain undyed if the cloth is tied too loosely, if the dye penetrates the fabric or tie cords too readily, or if the ties have been removed before rinsing, etc. In these cases the pattern may be lost entirely, or be too faint to be effective.

Each color used should show up clearly in its own hue and/or produce an attractive overdye color from successive dye baths. Failure to rinse the tied-up bundle well in clean water after each dyeing may result in "muddy" colors. The initial color of the fabric used will influence the colors which are dyed over it. White or off-white fabrics take dye colors more clearly and accurately than colored fabrics. While some pastels may overdye well, brighter and darker colors offer limited scope for overdyeing.

The fabric should accept the dye evenly. Dirt, grease, or sizing which has not been washed out of the fabric before it is dyed may make the cloth less absorbent in places, resulting in a splotchy background color.

The fabric should accept the dye attractively. Synthetic fibers (except viscose rayon) and fabrics with special finishes may not accept the dye as well as natural fibers without special finishes. While unusual effects are sometimes obtained with the former, they may be more accidental than controlled.

The design should be free from streaks and drips of dye which do not occur as part of the tie-dye process. When dipping only part of the cloth into the dye, failure to protect the part which is not being dipped or holding it carelessly may allow dye to run down or spatter onto it.

The fabric should be free of accidental cuts made by scissors when ties are removed.

A tied and bleached fabric should be free from fabric damage from the bleach. Cloth left in a bleach solution too long in order to discharge color from untied areas, and bleached fabric which has not been rinsed thoroughly, usually develop splits or holes.

The object made from the fabric should be well constructed and presented. Examples: A rolled hem with neat, even stitches would be one appropriate finish for a scarf. A wall hanging, if lined, should not show the lining unintentionally at the front edges; its hanger, rod, etc., should be harmonious with the hanging. A pillow cover may be backed with a fabric harmonious in color, texture, and weight. A piece of tie-dye may be matted and framed harmoniously and used as a picture. Scope for creativity in the completed object is necessary, as it is in the creation of the tie-dye design itself.

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of tie-dyeing contribute to the decorative quality of the finished product.

Examples are:

- the effect produced by varying resist objects (paper clips, clothespins, wood blocks, wire, pipe cleaners, etc.)
- results indicating a suitable choice of ties for the type and weight of the fabric special effects achieved by tying the cloth around objects (pebbles, rice, etc.), by stitching and gathering with thread (tritik), by tip-dyeing puckers
- unusual color combinations produced by using more than one dye bath, or by dipping only part of the fabric into the dye at a time

STANDARDS FOR KNITTING

Knitting is a method of producing a fabric, garment or other article or structure by interlocking loops of yarn or thread by means of needles. It is an ancient craft which was probably done at one time by shepherds as they cared for their sheep. Arab traders were known to knit while riding their camels. Knitting reached Europe in the 15th century. It was refined as a craft by the Spaniards and the Scots, and became an important craft in the Middle Ages. A knitting master was a respected member of the Guild system, and it took an apprentice six years to learn all the knitting skills necessary to become a Master Knitter.

Knitting was considered men's work until the development of the knitting machine in England in 1589, after which it became impractical for men to earn a living doing hand knitting. Women began to learn the craft to provide inexpensive garments for their families. Since then knitting has been regarded as women's work. However, today many men are becoming interested in the craft they developed. Many people find that it is a relaxing and satisfying pursuit. Some very unusual work in knitting is being produced as a major art-craft form by contemporary artisans.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design and craftsmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design).

The knitted article or structure should reflect the stretch and recovery characteristics of the materials and methods used in this craft. A lot depends on the quality of the yarn used. Poor quality yarn may not be worth the time spent on the project.

The yarn, needle, techniques used, and

design should be suitable to each other and to the obvious end use of the article. It is important to buy all the yarn or thread needed at one time, and by the same dye lot number, because different dye lots may have a slightly different tone of the named hue.

Evidence of knitting skills which may be observed in the finished product:

Cast-on stitches—even, suitable tension for the article.
Bound-off stitches—suitable tension.
Decrease and increase stitches—neat and smooth, no holes, method used appropriate for yarn and pattern.
Picked up stitches—smooth, no holes.
Gauge—correct number of stitches per inch.
Tension—uniform (improper tension may give the article a ridged appearance).
Stitches—not twisted, not dropped, not split.
Yarn ends—joined inconspicuously, woven in inconspicuously.
Ribbing—even.
Buttonholes or eyelets—evenly spaced, properly finished, right size for button and garment, or other article.
Buttons—suitable style for design of garment or other article, securely, yarn buttons well-made.
Seam finishes—smooth and neat, flexible.
Crocheted edges—smooth and neat, flat.
Hand stitching—even.
Machine stitching—even.
Neck finishing or collar—neat.
Sleeves and armholes—neat, not bunched.
Pockets—neat.
Carried yarns—neat, not too tight.
Blocking—proper shaping, smooth.

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of knitting contribute to the quality of the finished product. Examples are: a departure from prepared patterns in order to create a unique and personal item, such as a garment, an environment, or a humorous soft sculpture; use of knitted shapes in appliqué.

STANDARDS FOR CROCHET

Crochet is a method of ornamenting or producing a fabric, garment, or other article or structure by forming interlocking looped stitches of yarn or thread with a hook or hooked needle. The name is derived from the French word "croche," meaning a hook. Although no one really knows where crochet began, we do know that nuns in Europe during the 16th century worked a very fine type of crochet. In the 1800's, Irish women developed a particular type of crochet that is still known as Irish crochet. Then it spread to England as a fad, and was popular for a number of years. Now it is again gaining popularity among women of all ages, and men are also showing an interest in the craft. Some very unusual work in crochet is being produced as a major art-craft form by contemporary artisans.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design and craftsmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design).

The crocheted trim, article, or structure should reflect the qualities which are desirable or intended for its end use. These qualities may range from laciness and flexibility to stiffness and rigidity and are achieved by the materials chosen and adaptations of the technique. Using high quality yarn or thread helps to achieve the characteristics desired in crochet and makes the time spent worthwhile.

The yarn, hook, techniques used, and design should be suitable to each other and to the obvious end use of the article. For example, a "hard crochet" wastebasket would require different materials and techniques than a shawl. It is important to buy all the yarn or thread needed at one time, and buy the same dye lot number, because different dye lots may have a slightly different tone of the named hue.

Evidence of crochet skills which may be observed in the finished product:

Chain or ring—even, suitable tension for the article.
Ending stitch—neat slip stitching.
Decrease and increase stitches—neat and smooth, no holes, method used appropriate for yarn or thread and pattern.
Gauge—correct number stitches per inch.
Tension—uniform (improper tension may give the article a ridged appearance).
Stitches—not twisted, not dropped, not split.
Yarn ends—joined inconspicuously, woven in inconspicuously.
Thread ends—neat knots and ends worked in.
Buttonholes or eyelets—evenly spaced, properly placed, properly finished, proper size for button and garment, or other article.
Buttons—good style for design of garment or other article, attached securely, yarn buttons well made.
Seam finishes—smooth and neat, flexible but firm slip stitch.
Crocheted edges—smooth and neat, flat.
Hand stitching—even.
Machine stitching—even.
Neck finishing or collar—neat.
Sleeves and armholes—neat, not bunched.
Pockets—neat.
Carried yarns—neat, not too tight.
Blocking—proper shaping, smooth.

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of crochet contribute to the quality of the finished product. Examples are: handling a potential flaw or error in planning in a creative manner, such as separating two tones of a color from different dye lots with a fancy stitch at the line of color change; branching out, away from prepared patterns, in order to make some new and different form, such as a wall hanging with some three-dimensional surface treatment, or a soft environment of filmy strips to hang from the ceiling.

STANDARDS FOR QUILTING

Quilting is a method of stitching together two pieces of material with an interlining or batting between them. In the past, quilts for beds were layered for warmth, pieced out of scraps for economy, and designed to add beauty to everyday articles in the home. A quilt is usually thought of as a bed covering, but other quilted articles may correctly be called quilts. Quilted fabrics are used for upholstery, clothing, wall hangings, table coverings, banners and many other purposes. Bed quilts seem to represent most of the quilting entries at fairs.

There are three basic approaches to creating design on quilts. One approach is to make a quilt top by starting with a large, quilt-size piece of fabric, then applying decorative design to it. The design may be done with embroidery; one of the paint, print, or dye-design processes; appliqué; prefinished blocks, or a combination. Another approach is to make a quilt top by joining a collection of blocks or small pieces of fabric. In this case, each block or piece may be made of fabric in solid color and/or print combined in a regular pattern or a "crazy" pattern; or, the various methods of producing design outlined above can be used on the separate blocks. Unusual padding or stuffing ideas apply to either approach to making a quilt top. A third approach is to produce a design with the quilting thread when the top, filling, and backing are joined together. Done on a solid color, single piece top, the quilting forms the only embellishment. Quilting, of course, is used to complement and extend the other designs mentioned.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design, and craftmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design).

The quilt should reflect the combination of art and sewing which is characteristic of this handcraft. The general use of the term

"quilt" often extends to include unquilted covers, such as tied comforters and pre-finished pillow-form comforters which should be considered in a separate category.

The pattern of quilting stitches, if used with no other design, should result in a creative embellishment of the surface. If the quilt top has another design, the pattern of the quilting stitches should complement and extend that design and remain subordinate to it. The type of filling chosen should allow the most desirable relationship of the quilting to the design of the quilt top.

It is important to buy enough fabric for the quilt at the outset. If more is needed than was purchased initially, there is a risk of getting a different dye lot. A signature on a quilt should not compete with the quilt design. A signature should be small, and preferably on the back, unless it is integrated with the design in some manner. In combining patterns, such as various floral prints, or plaids, polka dots and stripes, make sure they have something in common, such as scale, color, spirit. The same criteria should be used in choosing a print to use for the backing of a quilt top which has a pattern. Scale is especially important in making a child's quilt; consider weight of fabric and filling. Some decorations, such as pompons, might not be safe to use on an infant's quilt. A child might pull one off and choke on it.

The quilt which is a utilitarian piece should be durable. Fabrics used in top, back, and binding should be good quality. Applied decorations should be firmly attached to the background. Seams should be firm and even. Quilting thread should be strong.

The workmanship of the quilt top should be neat and precise. Pieced blocks or shapes should be cut accurately and stitched so joinings are accurate. Fabrics should be cut on grain (unless they have to be cut otherwise for some reason). Fabric should not be stretched in piecing, which may cause puckered patterns or ruffled edges. In pressing seams, press dark seams back against dark colors so they don't show through light ones. Appliquéd pieces should have evenly turned edges and quality work in stitching to the background (either by hand or machine). The color of the stitching thread either should match the color of the fabric pieces or, if not, enhance the design rather than detract from it. Grain of appliquéd pieces should be the same as in the background to minimize puckering when the quilt is washed. Quality yarns should be used for embroidery. Stitches should not be so tight that they cause the background material to pucker. Embroidery stitches should not show on the back of the quilt.

The filling should be smooth and evenly distributed throughout the quilt, to the edges, and into the corners.

The quilting stitches, in addition to being integrated with any other surface design, should be even in length. Uniformity and neatness are more important than the number of stitches per inch. Quilting should not cause unintended puckering or ruffling of fabric. The stitches should look as good on the back as they do on the front. They should make an attractive pattern on the back as well as the front, so the quilt could be reversed. Thread should be carried from one area of stitching to another through the filling, not across the backing, and no knots should show. Quilting lines which are too far apart may permit movement of the filling that results in lumpiness. The distance between quilting lines depends in part on the type of filling used, and in part on the design plan for the quilting lines. Quilting pattern markings should not show on the finished quilt.

The binding should be done with neat, even, inconspicuous stitches in matching thread. The edges should be straight. Square corners should be mitered or at least square. Rounded corners should not have tucks stitched into the bias binding. The binding should be hand-sewn if the quilt is hand-quilted.

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of quilt making contribute to the design quality of the finished product.

Examples are:
- original fabric designs, such as batik, tie-dye, etc. made for the quilt top
- spontaneous embroidered motifs on patchwork designs
- embroidery stitches joining or outlining the joining of patchwork
- deliberate and controlled puckering and pulling of fabric during machine quilting
- on solid color fabric, "drawn" outlines of design figures in thick and thin lines of thread done while machine quilting
- down or feathers for filler; plush, soft corduroy, velour, velvet to emphasize tactile quality
- parts of the design stuffed and padded in varying heights
- prestuffed or sculptured surface
- a collage of fabric, ribbons, crocheted pieces, lace, etc.
- overlapping, padded and quilted flaps attached at one end only

STANDARDS FOR STITCHERY

Stitchery, for this purpose, may be defined as a method of ornamenting a fabric or an article made from fabric with stitches made by yarn or thread and a needle. Traditionally called embroidery, today we are apt to feel that stitchery, as a term, includes the freer and more experimental types of needlework art, while embroidery involves working with specific types of known stitches. This is not necessarily true, and whatever we choose to call it, either type can be creative and inventive.

Ancient tomb paintings show embroidered works and embroidery is referred to in our earliest literature, but we do not know the origin of the art/craft. In more recent times, needlework was taught by one generation to the next. Now we go to classes or books and magazines to learn what was once taught in the family. Some people start with an interest in embroidery as a technique, and then learn to create their own work in this medium. Some people begin with an interest in art, and then recognize stitchery as a new means of expression. Others will never aspire beyond stamped designs and kits.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design, and craftsmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design).

A fabric or an article made from fabric which has been decorated with stitchery speaks of embellishment or enrichment in widely varying degrees. At its best it explores the unique qualities of thread and cloth worked together as a means of individual expression. The result might be heavy, rich encrustation; sheer, floating transparency; or wild, funky humor. In any case, it is designing with thread.

Quality of design, interesting materials, and quality of craftsmanship are all important in stitchery. A craftsperson can do very fine work on poor materials, or very sloppy work within the outlines of a good design. Sloppy work should not be confused with free, spontaneous work, and the latter deserves every consideration in comparison with work showing much precise detail. Quickly done pieces meant to last only a short time have their place, but if much time and effort is spent on a stitchery, fabric and yarn of good quality are warranted. However, a piece of work showing the result of time, effort and quality materials must also have design quality to be rated highly. Fair entries may tend to reflect traditional skills more than experiments with materials and ways to use them. Work done by either approach can have merit, and should be appreciated with no prejudice. Kits, copies of kits, or custom designs are available. However, many craftspersons prefer to do original work, or make creative adaptations of existing designs.

If specific stitches are used, they should be even and regular, if meant to be so. A design limited to only one stitch, and possibly variations of it, can be quite as successful as a design utilizing many kinds of stitches. The selection of thread should be keyed to the type and weight of fabric, and be appropriate (i.e., in scale) for the design. Stitches should not cause the fabric to pucker, unless puckering is clearly a part of the design plan. Tracings of design outlines should not be noticeable.

Knots should not appear on the wrong side of the work; thread ends should be clipped close to the work on the wrong side, and thread should not be carried from one design to another on the back. Embroidery should be pressed on the back side with the thread design face down on a thickly padded surface to avoid flattening it.

An object made from a fabric on which a stitchery design has been worked, or an already constructed article which has been decorated with stitchery, should be well-constructed and suitably presented (i.e., clean, framed, etc.).

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of stitchery contribute to the quality of the finished product.

Examples are:
- three-dimensional stitchery
- padded forms
- relief designs
- inventive use of sewing machine stitchery
- use of thread as a medium (i.e., "painting with thread" as opposed to copying a painting)
- combination of fur, shells, feathers, found objects, etc., with stitchery

STANDARDS FOR NEEDLEPOINT

Needlepoint is a method of embroidering with yarn or thread and needle on an open-weave material called canvas. In the 16th century when this type of embroidery began to emerge, it was used for wall hangings, bed hangings and coverlets, and cushions for chair and bench seats (called cushion work). The development of the steel needle, which made stitching easier and produced satisfactory results, contributed to the growth of interest in this craft.

Needlepoint flourished in the late 17th and early 18th centuries in England, where it was known as canvas work. It began to be used to make fitted covers for upholstered furniture. American colonial women called it tent stitch. The stitch now called bargello was popular because it needed less yarn than other types of stiches. Colonists had to import yarn, needles, scissors, and thimbles from Europe. In the l9th century it was called Berlin work because the patterns and wool came from Germany. As the craft became more popular, new types of canvas were developed. This allowed more variety in the patterns which could be worked. Today, both men and women are needlepoint enthusiasts.

Some canvas comes with a pre-worked design, leaving only the background to be filled in. Kits are available, including canvas, yarn to complete the design and background, tapestry needle, and instructions. Interfacing, lining, or backing material, frames, handles, and the like, may or may not be included in the kit. Some people use the full color transfers published, along with instructions on how to complete the project, in magazines. Others have their ideas and color schemes worked out for them at needlepoint shops.

However, some craftspersons have a feel for the medium and are willing to experiment, rather than to go on following the colors and designs that are sold to them by others. They learn from the process, make something new out of it, and gain as well as give the satisfaction that comes from being creative.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design, and craftsmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design).

Typically, a fabric worked in needlepoint will have a surface composed entirely of yarn stitches, in the same size or in clusters of varying sizes, of the same type or in areas of varying types, and repeated with mathematical precision. The process produces a relatively firm, level texture which may range from delicate petit point and fine gros point through sturdy, oversized quick point and bold, geometric bargello.

Stylized motifs, symmetrical designs of repeated geometric forms, and asymmetrical free-form lines and shapes, as well as clearly defined areas of color are basically consistent with this type of needlework. Realistic renditions of nature forms (i.e., flowers) with intricate shading of colors, and copies of well-known paintings are traditional favorites. In choosing such pictorial designs, it is well to consider whether or not the motif or scene will be as effective worked in yarn, with the inherent limitations of stitching, as it was in the more flexible medium of paint. The discerning craftsperson will adapt, simplify, omit, or rearrange elements which may be too detailed when interpreted in wool, or will choose to follow a painting or design which has a suitable simplicity and detail which will adapt to the needlepoint process. The most satisfaction will be realized as the craftsperson transcends needle-poking and produces his or her own designs.

Design, canvas, yarn, stitch, and size of needle should all be carefully chosen for their suitability in relation to each other. Good quality in canvas and yarn assures that time spent on a project will not be wasted. Yarn which is too big or heavy for the size of the canvas will push the mesh out of line. Yarn which is too fine will let the canvas show through. Yarn should be durable enough to hold up through the repeated stitching and through the wear expected in the finished article. Yarn should be chosen for consistent color in dye lots, or an adequate supply of one dye lot should be secured for a project.

Precision in execution of the technique and control of materials indicate quality. Stitches should be neat, uniform, and done in the correct direction. The stitches making the edge of curved forms should be carefully planned as to use of background color vs. color of the form. A thicker and thinner appearance of wool in stitches may be the result of using too long a piece of yarn. Some stitches which show more tightly twisted yarn than others may be the result of not twirling the needle and yarn every so often. If stitches aren't firmly in place, the yarn may have been too elastic or the stitch a poor choice for the canvas.

Finishing the work and fashioning it for its end use should be done carefully and attractively. Starting and ending yarns should be covered with stitches or run through the backs of nearby stitches of the same color and tails should be trimmed on the back. The project should be pressed or blocked as needed. An off-grain effect along a straight edge (i.e., a picture frame) indicates inadequate blocking. Care should be taken not to overpress and flatten the surface of the yarn. If the edges of the canvas are to be turned to the back (i.e., for a wall hanging) the corners should be mitered and basted. Folding one edge over another results in bulkiness. Bare canvas should not show on the front edge, or between the front and a lining or backing (i.e., for a pillow).

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of needlepoint contribute to the quality of the finished product.

Examples are:

- designs which are a personal creative experience rather than an exercise in following directions
- designs which are made up as the craftsman "goes along"
- wool colors mixed as an artist would mix paint in a pointillist technique so the colors blend in the eye
- combinations of yarn (i.e., silk and wool) to gain highlights

- colors of the yarns repeated in colors of frame and/or mat

STANDARDS FOR APPLIQUÉ

Appliqué is a method of decorating one fabric or material with pieces cut from other fabrics or materials and fastened to its surface, usually by sewing or other needlework. Appliqué has been known as Applied Work. This type of needlework was probably invented by the Persians or the Indians as an inexpensive imitation of richer embroideries. Appliqué has a history of recurring waves of popularity. The Egyptians and Greeks used it lavishly. It appeared as a decoration on knights' surcoats, horse trappings, and tents during the Crusades. Botticelli revived its use for church banners, after which it was widely used for ecclesiastical and heraldic embroideries, showing delicate designs similar to fretwork on rich fabrics. This art/craft has been popular during the 20th century also, with designs often moulded and executed on a grand scale. Appliqué gives maximum effect with minimum work with the needle.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design, and craftsmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design).

More than any other form of needlecraft, appliqué affords the greatest scope for individual expression, having almost no limit to subject or material. A type of appliqué which has been called "onlay" involves shapes cut out of fabrics. These shapes typically have their edges turned under and are hand stitched to a background fabric with a blind stitch (which gives a somewhat full or puffy look to the appliqué), a simple running stitch (which gives a flat look to the appliqué), or one or more of a variety of stitches used to attach and/or embellish the cutout shapes. Such versions of appliquéd fabric show varying degrees of pliability and manipulatability ranging from light and dainty appliqué on net to heavy textiles which, with double or morn thicknesses, almost stand alone.

In addition to the above, some fabrics and other materials (i.e., felt, leather) are appliquéd without turning edges under; some are attached by machine rather than hand stitching; some are used in a form of "inlay" (reverse appliqué) in which the background material is cut and stitched back to reveal various pieces or patches underneath; some, indeed, involve no needlework at all in attachment. All have a common characteristic that might be described as applied decoration which, while it can readily draw on all the elements of design, is inherently involved with shape and texture, and usually with color.

The quality of the materials used and the security of the attachment should be related to the end use of the article which is decorated by appliqué. Some qualities (i.e., colorfastness) can't be discerned in judging; others can. If the end use of the object decorated suggests that it should be launderable or will receive hard wear, durable fabrics and construction are especially important. If the object is made to be used and washed or dry-cleaned, the grain (warp and weft direction) of the background material and the applied pieces should correspond, or the patch may wrinkle. This may not be necessary in making a picture or a hanging.

Pieces should be accurately cut with an adequate seam allowance which can be clipped to avoid bulk if the edges are to be turned under. If edges are turned, they should be turned evenly and stitched to the background. If the stitch used is not meant to be seen, it should be inconspicuous and in matching thread. If the stitch is meant to be decorative as well as an attachment, the thread or yarn should be handled toward that end, and its color can match, harmonize or contrast as long as it is planned as a part of the total design. The thread or yarn should be suitable for the type and weight of the fabric, and other standards for stitchery

should be followed. Neither the background material nor the applied pieces should be puckered or stretched. Knots, thread ends, and carried thread or yarn should not appear on the wrong side of the work.

The object which is enriched with appliqué should be well constructed, and any fasteners, findings, hardware, etc., should be considered part of the total design.

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of appliqué contribute to the quality of the finished product.

Examples are:
- use of an interesting variety of materials (from scrap bag, swatch books, warp ends, unexpected and unusual sources)
- padded or stuffed forms giving a three-dimensional quality
- combinations of "onlay" and "inlay"; inventive addition of stitchery to appliqued shapes
- figures cut from an interesting printed fabric

STANDARDS FOR HOOKING

Hooking is a method of decorating a fabric or making a textile structure by pulling loops of yarn or strips of cloth through a backing of canvas, burlap, etc. with a hooked or yarn carrying tool. One type of hooking requires more or less continuous yarns or relatively long cloth strips, and may be done with a traditional hand hook or a speed hook, such as a shuttle hook, punch needle, etc. Another type involves the use of a Hatchet hook with a tiny finger which closes over a cut yarn piece and loops it into a type of knot on the backing. Both produce a pile fabric. Most fair entries seem to be Hatchet hooked, probably because there are so many kits of this type available.

The hooking of rag rugs is an indigenous American craft with its source in the family rag bag. Designs were often wool pictures reflecting surroundings or activities of the rug maker. By the mid-1800's stamped patterns, the forerunner of today's kit, started the decline of the art/craft.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design, and craftmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design).

The hooked fabric has a textural quality (low, level loops; sheared loops; dense cut pile; etc.) which is characteristic of the process. In addition it usually has a pattern, often colorful, aptly described by the term "wool mosaics."

High even loops, low even loops, and combinations of high and low loops give different effects. Yarn loops of the same height wear better. If fabric strips are used, the strips can be cut into different widths, but they will wear better if the loops are the same height. The backing should be well-covered, but not overpacked, for a rug. Any height loop, material, or combination with other crafts is suitable for a wall hanging since the degree of wearability expected in a rug is not necessary.

Neatness of technique and careful finishing indicate quality. A poorly finished rug binding will cause wear. Lumps and large crossovers put extra thickness to the backing and can cause a hole to develop in a rug. All loose ends should be pulled through the backing to the top surface before being trimmed. This prevents the yarn from working out.

Three-dimensional, sculptured hooking will not wear well on the floor, but makes an attractive wall hanging. It isn't necessary to fill in all the backing space in a wall hanging, but the effect should be by design rather than default. One should not be able to see the backing just showing through from under the loops, however.

If sections of a piece are hooked and joined later, the joinings should have

smooth, flat seams. Backing can be turned at the edge of a hooked area, the corners can be mitered, and binding can be used to cover the edges of the backing. Some craftspersons prefer to turn the backing before hooking to the outer dimension of the design, and to hook through both layers of the last one and one-half to two inches of backing, providing a neat edge finish.

A two-dimensional piece should hang or lie flat against wall or floor. Hardware or frames should complement the hooked work. A rod pocket in the back of a wall hanging provides an inconspicuous solution. Large, heavy iron rods, or curtain rods complete with finials may easily overpower a hanging. An isolated pattern or shape with no design to tie it into an unbroken area of background, and an unsuitable hanger are the most frequent reasons for low scores on hooked pieces. Some people feel uneasy about walking on flowers, butterflies, etc., but the reaction may involve design development more than subject matter. A rug design is often more satisfactory if it looks well from any direction rather than just one.

If a craftsperson spends many hours on a project, the design and the materials used should be of high quality or the person will have wasted time.

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of hooking contribute to the quality of the finished product.

Examples are:

- designs hooked with strips of old clothing or scrap material which result in an interesting textural quality sometimes hard to obtain with all new yarn
- designs hooked with yarns unraveled from fabric, which have an interesting crimp
- straight and random hooking combined
- one project made by several people
- children's art translated into hooked designs

STANDARDS FOR MACRAMÈ

Macramé refers to a knotting method used to finish or fashion a fabric or structure from cord, yarn, thread, etc., and to the resulting product. Macramé is a term probably derived from an Arabic word referring to a fabric with elaborate knotted fringes and used as a veil or shawl to protect the head. In macramé work knots combine to form characteristic surface textures and a variety of patterns. Most designs use only two knots, the square and the double half hitch.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design, and craftmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design).

The fabric or structure should have a surface texture or pattern of knotted and/or unknotted cords or yarns characteristic of the process. Knotted in certain densities or patterns, cords or yarns which have many loose fibers on their surface, or which are large and soft, or which are variegated in color, may so disguise the textural or patterned effect which should be obtained by knotting that the essential characteristic of macramé is lost. (This may happen with some jute cords and cotton or acrylic rug yarns.) A structure, such as a plant hanger, may have so little knotting that it may appear "all cord and no macramé," not to mention more hanger than plant.

The type of cords or yarns and the method of knotting used should be suitable to the form and end use of the object (i.e., linen cord may lend a crispness to the lines of a lampshade which is not obtainable with jute). Firm, dense knotting of sturdy cords is important in articles which will receive hard wear or which might stretch in use (bags, belts, chair seats). Open pattern, or lengths of floating yarn controlled by areas of knotting may be appropriate in a wall hanging. Soft yarns and patterns with spaced yarns will make a fabric suitable for wearing. Size of cords and pattern created by knotting should be in scale with the size of the object (i.e., a thin cord,

rather than a thick cord, may be needed for an eyeglass case, but the thin cord, appropriately knotted, may be as suitable for a large wall hanging as a heavier cord). A macramé piece made of soft yarns, particularly cotton, may soil easily and be difficult to wash without losing its original character.

The workmanship should be neat, accurate, and well controlled, and the finish appropriate and attractive. The knots should be even and regular; tension uniform; and width of a rectangular piece the same on top and bottom. No knots should be missing in a pattern. All ends where work is started or stopped, or yarns added, should be worked into or hidden in the knotting. An attractive ending or termination of the cords used in knotting the fabric should be planned, such as a fringe or a neatly turned, taped and hand-stitched edge. A two-dimensional shape may need blocking. If macramé is joined to a fabric, the attachment should be neat and smooth. If macramé is made to cover a shape, such as a bottle, it should fit the shape (actually, as well as in harmony of design lines) and not interfere with function (i.e., standing upright).

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of macramé contribute to the design quality of the finished product.

Examples are:

- addition of materials, such as beads, bits of metal, bits of wood, to give a third dimension to essentially two-dimensional pieces
- creation of three-dimensional hanging forms in which the unique characteristic of knotted cords or strings is not diminished by a function, such as supporting a plant
- combination of colored cords which are controlled to appear and disappear in the design
- use of materials which are not limited to those available in hobby shops or hobby corners, such as cords from upholstery, marine and weaver supply houses, as well as hardware stores

STANDARDS FOR DECOUPAGE

Decoupage is a method of creating a decorative design on a solid surface by attaching cut-out paper designs and adding successive coats of finish in order to make the cutouts appear to be an integral part of the surface. It is an art craft which originated in 17th century Italy and was popularized in 18th century France. The name comes from a French verb meaning to cut up or cut out. The craft has been called "painting with scissors," and much of the early work shows a fascination with handpainted Chinese lacquerware. Everything from boxes to furniture and rooms were decorated with cutouts from prints made from engravings and hand colored. Reproductions of these antique prints are used for decoupage by craftspersons today, who may prefer precolored prints or choose to hand color them. Cutouts from magazines, greeting cards, wrapping paper, and almost any other source are used.

Consider the following standards as they relate to appearance, design and craftmanship (in addition to standards which apply to any design).

The object should have a decorative design which is characteristic of the process, that is, one achieved by cutting out portions of a picture or design previously printed on paper, positioning, and pasting the cutouts in a composition planned to enhance the shape of the surface being decorated, and finishing so that no hint of contour from the cutouts can be detected in a rich depth of finish which is comparable to a fine porcelain glaze. Mounting an entire picture on a solid surface and producing a successful finish is usually accepted as an example of the craft in young people's or beginners' work. Some, if minimal, cutting or tearing is involved, even if only to remove a border. No redesigning or composing is done. In this case, a good part of the potential of the craft is not exploited, and judgment of comparative worth can be

made accordingly. Simply pasting a picture on a board and giving it a coat of varnish or some quickie commercial finish, or embedding it in plastic, is not practicing this craft. Attractive it may be, but decoupage it is not. The public acceptance of this hobby corner approach has so lowered the reputation of this craft, and others, that the serious craftsperson may not have bothered to investigate its possibilities.

The object itself should be a suitable choice for decoupage and evidence proper preparation for the process. Some raw wood objects on hobby shelves in stores are very rough, or are inept imitations of hand-hewn or edge-burned wood. Lumps under the print or the cutouts, and a rough or ripply finish may indicate that the base object was not made of a solid smooth material; that a raw wood base was not properly or sufficiently sanded and wiped clean; that excess paint buildups or drips occurred in preparing the background; or similar problems. Blunting of sharp edges and corners shows careless sanding. Stain, paint, or finish collected around or on hardware shows hardware wasn't removed before the work was begun.

The print or cutouts should show careful cutting, pleasing composition, smooth pasting without overlapping, and no discoloration or damage from sanding. Rounded inside corners, long unfeathered cuts, and white edges result from careless or inexperienced cutting. Raised spots in the print or cutouts show uneven spreading of paste or failure to remove air bubbles. Noticeable contours of cutouts and sanding damage to cutouts may be caused by overlapping one cutout on top of another. Discoloration of print colors and shredding of the paper pieces is apt to result from failure to seal the paper before cutting.

The finish should be even, clear, and deep enough to make the print or cutouts look as if they were painted on the surface of the object. Ridges, sags, or runs in the finish may be the result of improper brush work or sanding. Small, rough specks may result from inadequate sanding and wiping between coats of finish. A milky looking finish may be due to the type of finish chosen, heat drying, or cold temperatures during application or drying. A shiny but slightly etched finish may be due to failure to wax and polish to achieve a satiny surface. Other finishing touches to certain objects should be considered, such as linings for boxes, hangers for pictures, etc.

Imagination and ingenuity in the use of materials and methods of decoupage contribute to the decorative quality of the finished product.

Examples are:

- a very elegant effect done on the classic artistic level
- an amusing or witty effect interpreted on a relaxed level without resorting to the typically trite and garish
- interesting materials, such as gold leaf, braid, satin or velvet lining, used to embellish rich designs
- well-designed or unusual hardware used for pieces needing it
- interesting or unusual base objects (i.e., something other than the usual plaque), such as furniture, cupboard doors, picture frames, lamp bases, and switchplates
- hand coloring of prints

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EM4720

More boys and girls belong to 4-H than any other youth group.