

A Clever Red Ruana for Linda

DOROTHY TUTHILL

ONE OF MY FAVORITE TREATS, especially on a long winter's evening, is to browse through old—let's call them classic—*Handwoven* magazines. I'm fortunate to have many. In one of those issues (not so old, 2009), Linda Ligon offered a red and purple ruana as a blank canvas for embellishment. Well, I love red and purple, and Linda's touches of gold and turquoise were wonderful—so inspiring! Nine years after her offering, I took up Linda's challenge.

For me, this was the perfect opportunity to empty a drawer or two of yarns to use as warp. I chose pretty much any reddish yarn that could be sett at 12 ends per inch, meaning pinks, reds (including brick reds), and purples. Following Linda's lead, I made the selvages gold. I wound as many warp lengths as each skein would give until I had 300 total. I laid them all out on the front beam of the loom and sleyed them through the reed so that the colors flowed, pinkest at one side, purplest at the other.

I threaded the warp in extended twill, but as soon as I started weaving, it was obvious that this was a poor choice—the floats were much too long and the fabric was flimsy. I alternated twill sheds with plain-weave sheds to get a fabric with sufficient hand and drape for my purpose. My weft was a fuzzy yarn that I'd had for who-knows-how-long, but any yarn that would weave at 12 picks per inch would do.

Linda's ruana had a nice knitted binding on the neck, but I'd rather weave than knit, so I wove a narrow band on my rigid-heddle loom (though any loom would do) using turquoise and green. I seamed the back of the ruana with gold, attached the turquoise band, and added an assortment of twisted and wrapped cords and Bolivian pom-poms (see Resources) until my need for color was met. I especially liked the way Linda trimmed the knotted fringe of her ruana to make little balls, and I did the same, except at the corners where I added pom-poms and left the fringe as tassels.

Winters can be long here in Wyoming, but my (and Linda's) bright red ruana makes me smile on even the coldest day.

RESOURCES

- ♦ Baizerman, Suzanne, and Karen Searle. *Finishes in the Ethnic Tradition*. St. Paul, Minnesota: Dos Tejedoras Fiber Arts Publications, 1987.
- ♦ Ligon, Linda. "Log-Cabin Ruana." *Handwoven*, January/February 2009, 48–50.
- ♦ McEneely, Naomi. *Interweave's Compendium of Finishing Techniques*. Loveland, Colorado: Interweave, 2003. eBook.

STRUCTURE

Twill.

EQUIPMENT

4-shaft loom, 25" weaving width; 12-dent reed; 1 shuttle.

YARNS

Warp: Sportweight wool yarns, including but not restricted to Rauma Finullgarn (1,724 yd/lb), Brown Sheep Nature Spun Sport (1,660 yd/lb), and Brooklyn Tweed Loft (2,470 yd/lb), totaling 1,950 yd.

Weft: Sportweight fuzzy yarn, red, 1,686 yd. **Note:** Yarns with texture such as blends of wool and mohair or acrylic are recommended.

Narrow band: Rauma Finullgarn, #4605 Medium Marine Blue, 50 yd; #493 Pale Apple Green, 7 yd.

Pom-poms: Rauma Finullgarn in several colors.

WARP LENGTH

300 ends 6½ yd long (allows 10" for take-up, 40" for loom waste; loom waste includes fringe between pieces and fringe on ends).

SETTS

Warp: 12 epi (1/dent in a 12-dent reed).

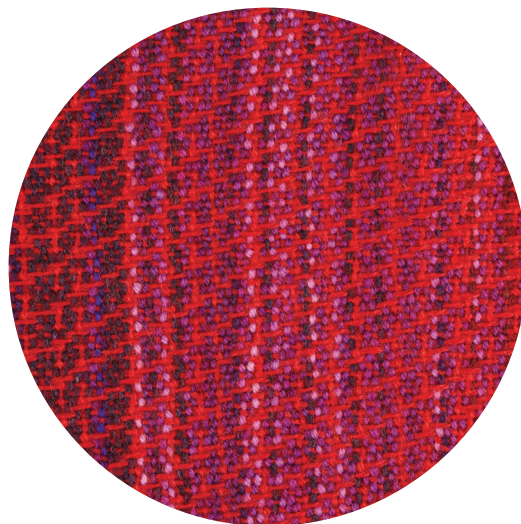
Weft: 12 ppi.

DIMENSIONS

Width in reed: 25".

Woven length: (measured under tension on the loom) 184".

Finished size: (after washing and assembly) 1 ruana, about 76½" x 48".

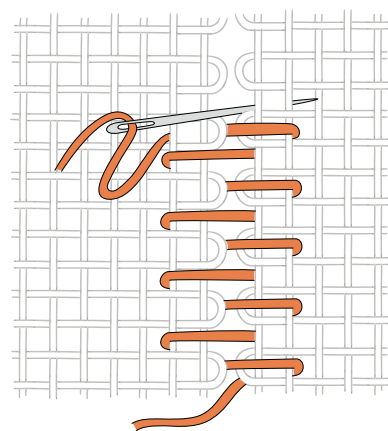




1. Draft

25x						1	2	3	4	5	6
4	4	4				4			4	4	
	3	3	3			3		3	3		
2			2	2			2	2			2
1	1				1	1	1	1			
						plain weave					
Heddle count											
Shaft 4						/					
Shaft 3						/					
Shaft 2						/					
Shaft 1						/					
Total						92"					

2. Figure-eight stitch



3. Band drafts

Inkle loom

heddled	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
open	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Rigid-heddle or multishaft loom

■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	2
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	1
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	/

■ Medium Marine Blue
■ Pale Apple Green

1 Wind 300 ends 6½ yd long, using yarns that can be sett at 12 epi. Sampling is recommended. If you are using multiple yarn types, make a separate warp chain for each yarn. For this project, Dorothy recommends warping front to back, so that you can arrange your many colors as you sley the reed. Use light tension on the yarns as you wind them as knitting yarns can stretch.

2 Centering for a width of 25", sley the ends 1 per dent in a 12-dent reed in the color order of your choice. Dorothy arranged her colors from pink through red to purple, with borders of yellow (as per Linda's ruana). Avoid distinct wide stripes; blending the warp bundles not only makes the color flow, but reduces the "seersucker" effect of varying shrinkage rates among different yarns.



3 Thread according to the draft in Figure 1 and tie onto the warp beam. Wind the warp gently, especially if you are using softly spun knitting yarns.

4 Spread the warp using scrap yarn and plain-weave sheds (treadles 1 and 6), allowing at least 6" of unwoven warp for fringe. Using a fuzzy weft similar in grist to the warp, weave 92" following the draft in Figure 1. Weave 12" using scrap yarn or cardboard spacers for fringe, then weave another 92" piece.

5 Weave several picks of scrap yarn to protect the weft. Remove fabric from loom, allowing at least 6" of warp for fringe at both ends. Cut the pieces apart, leaving 6" on each piece for fringe. Tie bundles of 10 ends with overhand knots at both ends of each piece.

6 Place the two pieces side by side, lining up the bottoms. Use the figure-eight stitch (see Figure 2) and matching yarn to stitch the pieces together at the center back for about 46".


7 Handwash or machine wash on gentle cycle with cool water and mild detergent. Rinse in cool water and line-dry.

DECORATIVE BAND AND EMBELLISHMENT

1 Wind 9 ends 3½ yd long for a plain-weave band following the draft in Figure 3. With blue, weave a warp-faced band ¼" wide and about 100" long. This band can be woven on an inkle loom, rigid-heddle loom, or multishaft loom.

2 Fold the narrow band in half lengthwise. Place the mid-point about 10" from the bottom of the back seam. Pin the two halves of the band on either side of the back seam, leaving a loop of 2" at the bottom and about 1" between them. Handsew along both edges of the bands.

3 At the neck opening, cross the bands and continue to sew them along the front opening for about 12". Leave 6" of unsewn band on each side to finish as you desire. Dorothy wrapped the bands with yarn and left fringe.

4 Trim and embellish the fringe and back loop of the decorative band as desired. Dorothy added Bolivian pom-poms and tassels to the fringe and pom-poms and twisted cords to the back loop. 

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