

## **READY, SET, KNIT**

Air Date: June 14, 2008

Color Work Series: Workshop II

### **The Dreaded Intarsia, part 3**

#### How to Prepare Your Intarsia Chart, continued

Remember, you will be working the first row of the chart from right to left, the next from left to right and so on.

Examine the chart carefully. Are there any stitches that would be better done in duplicate stitch than knitted in? If so, make note of these and lightly circle them on the chart. Using duplicate stitch is not cheating!

The chart will be up on the website so you can begin preparing it. Also, you can begin gathering your materials: yarn, different types of tapestry needles (blunt tipped and sharp tipped), tape measure, sharp scissors, a container for your yarn (a box, not a bag), a smaller container for your yarn butterflies, crochet hook, magnetic board, sticky notes or highlighter tape, and stitch markers.

#### How to Choose Your Needles and Yarn

Intarsia is not limited to any specific type or weight of yarn, but you should choose the yarn that will create the effect you desire. Cotton yarn produces sharp definition between areas of color; wool yarn creates a more blended look. The fuzzier the yarn, the hazier the design will be. In some cases, a textured yarn will produce a dramatic effect if combined with a smooth yarn. You can also create texture by doing some color sections in garter stitch or seed stitch.

After you choose your yarn, make a swatch in stockinette stitch. Intarsia should be knit at a tighter gauge than regular stockinette stitch to produce a firm (not stiff) fabric...otherwise your design will look sloppy and you will have unsightly gaps. Be sure to use straight needles with a nice tapered end and good points, as you will want to knit the first 2 stitches of each new color with the needle tips only to avoid stretching these stitches out of shape.

I am using the Valley Yarns Northampton left over from my Babette Blanket, but on a size 6 needle instead of an 8.

#### How to Prepare Your Yarn

Wind your yarn into small center-pull balls and place them in a box of appropriate size or a square/rectangular plastic container. Do not keep them in a knitting bag or

they will keep getting tangled and make more work for you. Never knit Intarsia right from a ball of yarn, use butterflies or single strands of yarn.

## **READY, SET, KNIT**

Air Date: June 21, 2008

Color Work Series: Workshop II

**The Dreaded Intarsia**, part 4

### How to Prepare Your Yarn, continued.

Study your chart to see how many butterflies or single strands of each color you will need for the first few rows. Don't bother with bobbins! They take more time to wind than they're worth, tangle with each other constantly, and then take more time to untangle. Now, how much yarn should you wind into butterflies or cut into strands? If you have large blocks of color that are repeated, you can count the number of stitches in each block and then proceed as follows: cast on and knit 10 stitches in one color of your yarn, then knit one row in another color. Cut the second color fairly close on each end and pull out the row. Measure this length of yarn. You can conclude that each 10 stitches will use this much yarn, but be sure to add 12 inches extra for tails and good measure. So, if your block has 80 stitches, multiply the sample yarn length by 8 and add 12 inches. Cut this amount for each of the repeating color blocks and wind into butterflies. If the strand is not too long, just leave it as a strand; it is easier to pull one strand of yarn out of a tangle than a strand with a butterfly at the end of it. If the color blocks vary, just cut workable lengths of yarn and replace them when you run out. This is the method that Kaffe Fassett uses.

### How to Wind a Butterfly

Pinch the yarn between your thumb and middle finger about 6 inches up from the end of the yarn. Straighten out your index finger and wind the yarn around your middle finger and your index finger, being careful to keep the tail hanging loose. When you have wound enough yarn around your fingers (don't make the butterfly too fat), cut the yarn, leaving about a 12 inch tail. Wrap this tail snugly around the center of your butterfly several times, and then tuck it under the wrapped strands. Lucy Neatby has an even better way to anchor the butterfly...check out her DVD. The original tail should still be hanging loosely; this is what you pull from as you need yarn from your butterfly. Pull out very short lengths of yarn as you knit to keep the butterfly close to the piece of knitting...they will tangle less this way.

**Next Week:** Knitting the Palm Tree

## **READY, SET, KNIT**

Air Date: June 28, 2008

Color Work Series: Workshop II

### **The Dreaded Intarsia, part 5**

#### Knitting the Palm Tree

To start, make 3 butterflies, 2 in your water color (color A) and one in your island color (color B).

For the Palm Tree chart, cast on 55 stitches. Purl one row, and then begin following the chart.

**Row 1**, RS of your piece, read the chart from right to left.

With the first butterfly, knit 27 stitches in color A. Now you will add your second color, B. Place the new strand of yarn under the old strand, and hold a 6" tail to the left along the left needle. Keep the tail on the left at all times. Knit the next stitch with the working end of the yarn as close to the ends of the needle tips as you can manage. Do not let go of the tail. This will interlock your old yarn with the new yarn. Before knitting the next stitch, put the tail of the new yarn up over the left needle and then knit the stitch with the working yarn, but don't pull the tail through with the new stitch. Knit the next stitch. If you look at the back of your work, you will see that the old yarn has been interlocked with the new yarn by the first stitch. This will prevent a gap in the knitting. The new yarn has been anchored in the work by knitting the next stitch with the tail up and the following one with the tail down. You have now completed the 4 stitches you need in color B. Cut what remains of the tail, but not too short as you don't want it to come through to the right side of the piece.

Next, add a new butterfly of color A using the same technique. Since you will be knitting 24 stitches, repeat the tail up/tail down procedure for about an inch and a half to firmly anchor the yarn in the knitting and cut the tail, again, not too short.

**Row 2**, WS, read the chart from left to right.

Using the color A butterfly that you just ended with, purl 23 stitches. Drop color A and bring color B up under color A to interlock the old yarn and the new yarn. Purl 6 stitches with color B. Drop color B over color A, and purl the remaining 26 stitches in color A.

**Row 3**, RS, repeat row 1, but knit 25 stitches in color A, 8 in color B, and 22 in color A.

**Next Week:** We continue knitting the Palm Tree and get some more Tips and Tricks for successful Intarsia knitting.



