

Irene Newman

I work in two very different techniques. As a retired-CPA, off-loom bead weaving appeals to my inclination to be precise and mathematical, since patterns require careful planning, counting and construction in order to be successful. I use ten different stitches, sometimes in combination, and the fun comes in seeing how different the same stitch can look in different color ways and using different types and sizes of beads. Bead weaving usually starts with seed beads and nylon fishing line on a very thin needle, and is sometimes embellished with Swarovski crystals, pearls, natural stones or glass beads in a variety of shapes and sizes.

With bead embroidery, the approach is totally different. I assemble a group of compatible components, and the materials dictate the design.

This is especially true of the pieces which incorporate Shibori silk ribbon. The shapes and contours created by first tacking down the silk become the foundation of the design in a very organic process. Glass beads in many shapes and sizes, natural stones, pearls and crystals are sewn onto a stiff backing which is then affixed to a leather backing. The layers are then bound together and further embellished with beads stitched around the entire edge.

