

April Program by Helen Summers

The Creative Process: Turning Inspiration into Garments

Helen will be presenting a talk about the creative process. She will discuss where ideas come from, how to implement them, and her general decision-making process (which she does not advocate as *the* process). Helen will describe the process, from inspiration to finished product, of the creation of two garments, with accompanying slides. Then she will finish up with some thoughts about the creative process in general, including ways to jump-start the creative juices.

Helen Summers began to weave in 1977 while working as a research lab technician at the Yale School of Medicine. She treated weaving as a hobby until 1985, when, after marriage, a move to Philadelphia, and a job that just wasn't a good fit, she began to weave as a profession. She first concentrated on weaving accessory items (scarves and shawls) and items for the home (place mats, lap rugs and so forth), then became enamored of weaving in silk and using shadow weave as her weave of choice. She dropped the household good line, but didn't move into the realm of clothing until 1991, when she got her first AVL loom and began making Japanese-style jackets.

Her evolution as a clothing designer has led to a continuing exploration of oriental inspired clothing, focusing on comfortable, stylish and unique wearables. She still prefers to weave using silk and shadow weave, but also weaves with blends and a technique called network twill.

In the past ten years or so, she's added surface design to weaving, mostly to create beautiful linings — a little secret only the wearer knows — but also combined with handwoven fabric in the body of the piece. Recently, she's also become interested in quilting, and is having fun adding a little bit of that to the garments she make. After living in New Mexico for more than 20 years, she's still inspired daily by the colors of the landscape and the cultures.

Please take this opportunity to wear something you have made yourself and show off your talents. Let's make this our own mini fashion show. Also Helen asks if you have a problem or some material you have woven you want to ask her about to please bring it. Remember that we must be out of the church by 12:30 this month, due to an event they are having, so the program will start early.

