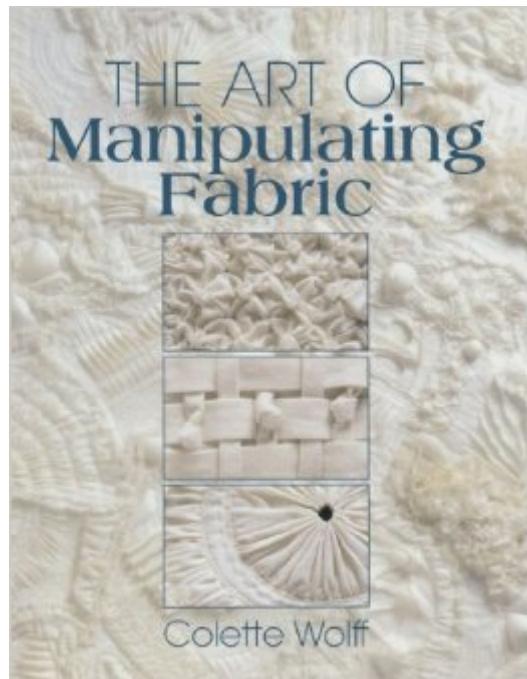


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The Art Of Manipulating Fabric



Synopsis

The possibilities for three-dimensional manipulation of fabric - gathering, pleating, tucking, Shirring, and quilting woven materials - are seemingly endless. To describe them all would be to describe the entire history of sewing. In "The Art of Manipulating Fabric," Colette Wolff has set herself just this task, and she succeeds brilliantly. Working from the simplest possible form - a flat piece of cloth and a threaded needle - she categorizes all major dimensional techniques, shows how they are related, and give examples of variations both traditional and modern. The result is an encyclopedia of techniques that resurface, reshape, restructure and reconstruct fabric. More than 350 diagrams support the extensive how-tos, organized into broad general categories, then specific sub-techniques. Handsome photos galleries showcase the breathtaking possibilities in each technique and aid visual understanding by emphasizing the sculptured fabric surface with light and shadow. Textile artists and quilters, as well as garment and home decor sewers, will expand their design horizons with the almost limitless effects that can be achieved.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In the author's words, "this is a book of ideas about sewing cloth" but what it really is, is an awesome collection of information from a thousand different sources on the techniques sewers have used since fabric was invented, to change the surface of an initially flat textile. Wolff brings little techniques of fabric manipulation from the background to the spotlight by isolating each technique, cataloging its unique features, separating the technique from end product associations,

and exploring the sculptural possibilities without regard to where application will be. For any home or professional sewers who currently (or hypothetically) maintain folders of "pleating ideas," "interesting darts," or "photos of ruffles" get this book, and fast. Save yourself the chore of assimilating all the diagrams and photos and captions because Wolff has done it so thoroughly you will find yourself engrossed just reading about the humble little fabric tuck. Granted, no technique by itself makes wearable art or couture clothing, but these are the manipulations that make up the experimental stuff on the runways and in the exclusive boutiques. Learn what they do to a plain textile and you're primed to exploit fabric, for whatever purposes your little heart desires. Wolff's chapters cover: controlled crushing (gathering, shirring), supplementary fullness (making ruffles, making flounces, making godets), systematic folding (pleating, smocking, tucking), filled reliefs (cording, quilting, stuffing), structured surfaces (darts), and mixed manipulations (combinations). If you're a collector of books on dyeing or embroidery or exquisite cut, you really owe it to yourself to add this viewpoint to your library.

I'm really not exaggerating. Nor do I often (ever) write book reviews. I knew I wanted to do something "creative," I had tried classes in various things that were fun but not quite "there." Interior design, color theory, drawing, drafting, art history, and even two in MS Access database design! And then I saw this book in the flesh at a store and bought it on the spot (sorry !) I read it straight through, unable to put it down. Afterward, I wanted to see and own all the muslins. I wanted to put them together into sculptural objects. I wanted to know all the things that Ms. Wolff knows about fabric and sewing. I wanted more books, some fabric, and my ancient Singer. I wanted to do it having no idea where I'd end up! So beyond all the lessons in how to do particular things that the book contains, it inspired a passion in me to work with cloth. It built a fire inside me about possibilities, and I began to see the book as beckoning me to try, with cloth as the medium. I grew up as a child threading my Grandmother's needle but hadn't sewn myself since high school. All this was two years ago, and in the interim I have been working hard on my new passion and have created (and modified many times over!) a design all of my own. I'm entering juried fiber arts shows, and selling pieces. I work on this every day. And in addition to the motivation to start, this book's details are a central reason why I could realize my design. I would not have been able to do it without one of the very last things in the book--how to create a round spherical form to an exact size by darting a flat circular piece of fabric. When I bought the book, I never knew that this part of it would make all the difference.

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