

Londa Rohlfing - Memory T-Shirt

Londa digs in, filters, and combines men's collared polo knit shirts and seven dress shirts into strikingly artistic tops so the men in your life better lock their closets!



Mannequin 1: The Khaki/Black Shirt

Interesting collar edge - how it flows over the shoulder to the back

1. Asymmetrical/Informal Balance - accented with woven striped shirt set in from behind to fill in low neckline.
2. Combination of textures - couched edges for 'finish' - more on how to couch later. Yarn 'connects' everything, finishes edges.
3. Light hand stitching as center of interest - also on back, and sleeves
4. Bound neckline using knit fabric
5. Even Daddy's 'spot' is OK!
6. Original uneven hemline - bound slits at side seams



Mannequin 2: The Periwinkle Shirt

1. Symmetrical/Formal balance
2. Curved line of inset check knit shirt flows over the shoulder/sleeve seam - had to stitch shoulder seams, insert sleeves before working the check shirt 'fill-in' at the chest.
3. Reason for lower yoke, to cover up the logo embroidery at left chest.
4. Wider at shoulders always makes hips look slimmer
5. Use of polo collar - wrong side as 'outside' to not show 'worn' folded edge of collar.
6. Bias is ALWAYS better/more flattering - check shirt inset.
7. ALWAYS stay-stitch neckline edges.
8. Bound neckline finished with bias tie fabric.
9. Bias cut 2 layer 'Fabric Fur' + yarn = the trim.
10. Somewhat wild eye-attracting 'hairy' Couched yarn connects everything and adds some 'pizazz'.
11. Sleeves - tie label covers insignia at sleeve, bias Fabric Fur + yarn trim connects with rest of the shirt.
12. Curved hemline echoes curved yoke area.



Mannequin 3: Raspberry Shirt

1. Use of Mom's shirt on an inexpensive T-Shirt
2. Use of neck ribbing of an old sweater-type T shirt
3. Use of BIAS strips of Mom's woven shirt as bindings for sleeve and lower hem edges. Decorative stitches with heavy thread in the bobbin: Bobbinwork.



Purple Shirt

1. Asymmetrical/ Informal balance once again -
2. Original parts of starting shirts used in unexpected places
3. Monochromatic color scheme - easiest.
4. 2 shirts used, solid pique and ombre-stripped polyester - point out lighter color at neckline (button tab), darker at hemline to 'anchor' and sleeves.
5. Wider at shoulders again.....
6. center of interest - the THREE buttons
7. Couching to finish edges and rolled knit hem trim.

8. Under portion of knit collar includes collar stand - ALWAYS cut things bigger than think might want...



Filtering Fabrics and Ideas



Let's look at what I started with...everything I had collected that might work in this garment...

- Original T-shirt: Always use one MUCH larger than your body - as gives you the most 'fabric' with which to work.
- Note how the lighter plaid shirt collar and bias strips really 'jump out'
- IF I use the light shirt, then the striped tie and light buttons 'work'.
- Note how the tie rushed when I started to pull it apart - I liked that and thought it was an idea I might utilize...ultimately discarded both the lighter shirt AND the tie idea, but kept for a 'next' project!

I TRIED VERY HARD to go with my original idea of the lighter plaid shirt, plaid chenille strips, light buttons...

I let the idea 'REST'. I slept on it. I took pictures with and without the light color.



Construction Tips & Couching How-To's

The Royal Blue T has been cut apart, and my pattern laid on top for re-cutting to fit.

Sleeve and Back are pinned on... but I work on the Front.

1. Show how I've located bust points using darted pattern front to mark for reference points in further designing
2. Remove pattern Front piece, open up and show designing front bodice/yoke line to cut...and fill in with another fabric.
3. Quickly review some ideas for this shirt showing the things I have gathered, including filling in the front, godets of the sleeves of the knit check shirt for side lower hem interest



At the machine - Couch yarn

Types of yarn that are good - light blue one, nubby
'Tacking down' has been done with narrow, long ZZ stitch
Embroidery Foot with 'groove' underneath is the one to use...
Both Clear and Smoke Monofilament thread
3 sw, stitch width adjusted to just wide enough...
Reduce thread tension so as to not see any hint of the bobbin thread at each side of the zigzag stitch.

Conclusion: You are making a 1-of-a-kind garment - to celebrate the life of someone precious to you. Take the time....it will be a joyous creative experience, and you'll feel like your loved one is hugging you as you wear it!