

SASKATCHEWAN CRAFT COUNCIL

SEED BEADING

CRITERIA

This category includes any articles using traditional techniques in the categories of Victorian wire sculpture, aboriginal weaving and embroidery, etc. with seed beads.

A number of techniques are employed in the creation of the object which may or may not end in a functional item.

It is understood that the various types of seed beads (listed below) used in the construction of seed beaded work are “ready-made” items, as the handmade construction of such small beads is unfeasible. Therefore, a considerable amount of manipulation of these readymade objects is expected when putting forth seed beaded work for the SCC jury.

MATERIALS

All beads and wires should be made of durable materials and finishes.

Seed Beads (size 4 - 22)¹ made of glass

Czech beads are donut shaped and irregular

Japanese beads are regular and cylinder or cube shaped – best for weaving and applications requiring tight finishing

India seed beads are relatively new on the market and of a lower quality, but acceptable

True-cuts: Have a single facet cut into them for a little extra sparkle; there are 2-cuts and 3-cuts as well.

Bugles: long, thin glass tubes with typically sharp edges, almost always strung with a rounded bead next to them.

Pony Beads made of acrylic or glass: used as spacers or accents

Wire: Should be resistant to wear/flaking/tarnishing and gauge and colour appropriate for the beads/object. Wire used in the construction of wearable items such as jewellery should be hypoallergenic. Use of lead is prohibited.

Thread: Waxed cotton, silk thread, nylon, leather/sinew, rayon. Thread should be of appropriate colour, thickness and durability for the object/beads.

Findings: Chains, clasps, hooks etc. Findings used in the construction of wearable items such as jewellery should be hypoallergenic. Use of lead is prohibited. Copper or Nickel cored findings should be plated or bonded with silver, gold etc.

¹ Size 4 and larger seed beads typically used as spacers

SCULPTURE BEADING TECHNIQUES

Victorian (European/Russian)

Horizontal/double pass

French

Loops, single pass

Continental

A combination of Victorian and French techniques

Finishing/Edge Lacing

Employed especially in sculptural seed beading to strengthen the edges and provide a clean finish.

Encasement

Beading around a solid object

Standards-Sculptural Beading

1. Objects should be soundly constructed (i.e. to prevent unraveling, warping, etc.).
2. Hardware (pins, rods, findings etc.) should be durable, compatible and securely attached to the object.
3. Use of beads that are dyed or galvanized should be appropriate for the item constructed: the finish on some beads can wear off if used for jewellery, for example.
4. Care should be taken when selecting finishes (when applicable to protect the finish on the beads/wire from wear or fading) and finishes should be applied with consistency.
5. Ends of wires should be filed neatly; all tool marks removed. Wire should be adhered properly; no gaps.
6. Embellishments must be used with discretion (i.e. they must be appropriate and compatible to the piece) and they must be subordinate to the overall design.

LOOMING & EMBROIDERY TECHNIQUES

<i>Peyote (aka Cheyenne)</i>	A horizontal stitch or weave, used to make a fabric of beads in an offset row method. When completed, no thread shows between the beads or rows Thread is visible along the edge of the work. The bead holes are lined up end-to-end in this stitch.
<i>Brick</i>	A vertical stitch or weave similar to peyote though more stable, with beads lined up side to side (end up), thread is visible only at top and bottom.
<i>Right Angle Weave</i>	Typically created using two needles allowing for fewer passes through beads creating a neater finish where the beads are at right angles to each other.
<i>Herring Bone (Ndebele)</i>	A flexible flat or tubular stitch: two or three ladder
<i>Loom weave</i>	Basic technique for beading on a loom
<i>Square</i>	Creates a surface that looks like loom work, very durable
<i>Netting</i>	A lace stitch worked on or off a loom, flat or vertical
<i>Spiral Weave</i>	Single or double: creates a flexible chain
<i>Bead Point</i>	Needle point with beads

Standards-Woven and Embroidered Beading

(Relevant SCC Fibre Criteria Also Apply)

1. Objects should be soundly constructed (i.e. to prevent unraveling, warping, etc.).
2. Hardware (pins, rods, findings etc.) should be durable, compatible and securely attached to the object.
3. Use of beads that are dyed or galvanized should be appropriate for the item constructed: the finish on some beads can wear off if used for jewellery, for example.
4. Care should be taken when selecting finishes (when applicable to protect the finish on the beads/wire from wear or fading) and finishes should be applied with consistency.
5. Threaded ends should be neat and carefully finished to avoid unraveling.

Whatever techniques used, all materials have their inherent demands. Primary considerations are structural in nature. The materials and techniques used should be suitable for the intended purpose of the object. Seed beaded work also tends to have a texture or “surface quality” that should be considered in the design. This is dependent on the actual type of material used and on the technique with which they are worked.

The use of colour should also enhance the design of the object. All the basic concepts of design should be considered. The use of colour, the proportions used, the use of texture, the interplay of figure and ground should all mesh into a pleasing balance.

CROCHET & KNITTING TECHNIQUES
(Relevant SCC Fibre Criteria Also Apply)

Unlike sculptural, loom and embroidery techniques, the thread used for crochet and knit techniques is often meant to show as part of the overall design. When this is not the intention, thread should be hidden or neatly finished where visible.

Crochet and knitting generally uses only a single thread, creating the interlooping of thread by using either a hook or two (or more) needles. All thread, especially textured and novelty ones, should be suited to the stitch, pattern, and the bead and needle size used, and should be appropriate for that particular article.

Attention should be given to: regularity of stitches and tension, elasticity of seams and the working-in of ends, as well as finishing, both inside and out, and casting on and off tensions.

Standards – Crochet and Knit Beading

1. When using more than one colour yarn, the yarn not in use should be neatly secured on the wrong side.
2. When using more than one colour the piece should show no puckering where threads have been pulled too tight when changing colours, or should not show holes if thread was not pulled tight enough.
3. Seams should be finished in a neat, smooth fashion. The seam should appear like part of the knitting.
4. There should be an even tension throughout.
5. There should be no dropped stitches or twisted stitches.
6. Beads should be secure in their location and not loose where they might slip to the wrong side of the piece.

Standards – Seed Beaded Jewellery
(Relevant SCC Jewellery Criteria Also Apply)

In cases where the seed beaded object is wearable jewellery, Jewellery criteria also apply. The artist will be required to be juried under the jewellery category as well. The exception is the “ready-made” aspect of the seed beads. Beads that do not qualify as seed beads (larger than 4) or beads other than seed beads used in the design that are the main focus of the piece, do not qualify under either category. Some beads, such as the Japanese Taho beads, are not recommended for jewellery because the finish will wear off.

1. The piece should be strong enough so that it does not bend or break easily, but not so heavy that it is clumsy or uncomfortable to wear. Should be designed in relation to the human body and should move with it.
2. There should be no sharp edges or protrusions that would catch clothing or the skin of the wearer.
3. Functional parts (findings, clasps etc.) must be durable and operate smoothly.
4. All sides of the piece (front/back/sides) and its detailing should be finished with the same attention to detail.

Ready made “findings” is the name given to the functional parts used in jewellery and metalwork (i.e. cuff link connections, safety chains and their pins, hinges for boxes or bracelets, patterned wires, etc.). The use of ready-made findings is acceptable only if the findings do not conflict with the design as a whole. There should be no “compromise” If the finding is purchased it must be of a very high quality.