

# Ars Poetica: Visual Stitching

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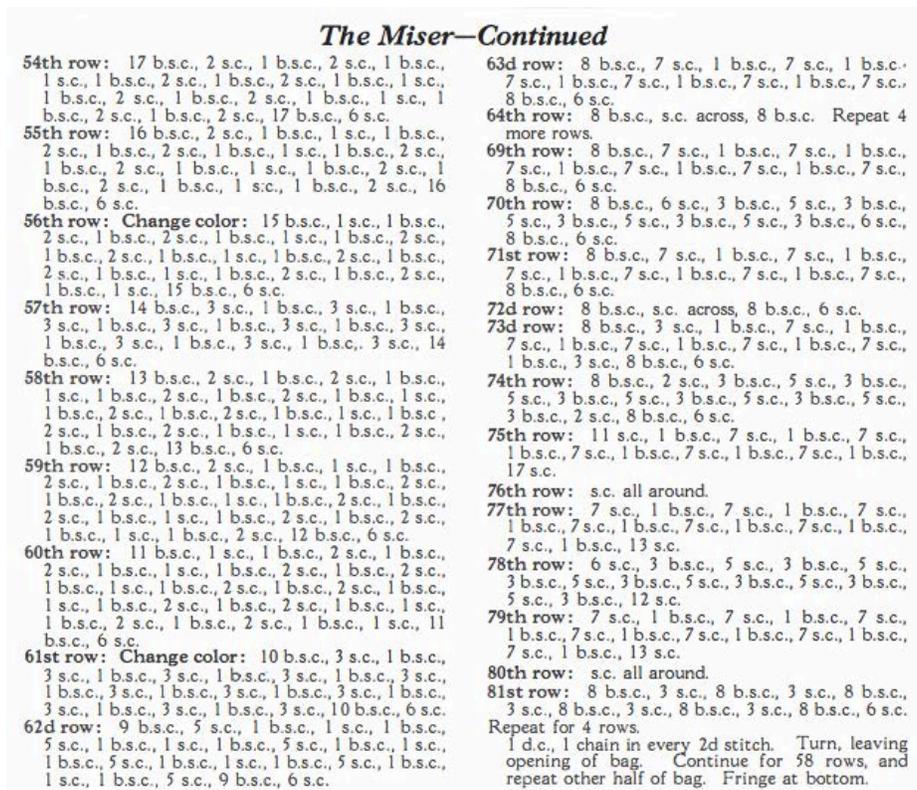


Figure 1

Reading a poem is not unlike reading a needlework pattern. The poet uses widely recognized symbols— letters, words, language— to create an image that exists within the mind as well as formally on a page.

A written pattern (Figure 1) is the most tedious type of pattern from which to work. The reader, should they desire to create a mental image of what will occur within the work, needs to have an intimate knowledge of every line. Moreover, the reader needs an understanding of how

those lines, visually strung together like beads down a single string, will wrap together upon themselves into a nebulous whole. This is no easy task, and is not strictly necessary to accurately complete a pattern physically. However, should the reader not undertake the time to visualize the finished work as a whole, it becomes vastly more difficult to improvise within the given pattern, and vastly more likely that error should occur as the reader cannot see how the stitch they complete connects to every stitch around it.





Notes

1. Mary Ellen Solt, *Concrete Poetry: A World View*, 1968 p. 67
2. David W. Seaman, *Concrete Poetry in France*, 1981, p. 12

Other Texts

1. Bridget M. Cook and Geraldine Stott, *The Book of Bobbin Lace Stitches*, 1980.
2. Philip C. Herwig, *Square-Knot Book No. 3*, 1926.
3. Emma Post Barbour, *The New Bead Book*, 1924.

