



Anne Kuo Lukito's strikes a balance of practical and flattering in her warm jacket, [Issara](#), her first design for Twist Collective. This post can also be found at her own blog, [Crafty Diversions](#).



After a few failed submissions, I finally made it into Twist Collective, and I couldn't be happier! Yes folks, I had tried to submit to Twist 2-3 times prior, but unfortunately, it wasn't in the cards for me at the time.

I finally achieved my goal with *Issara*, which was published recently in the Fall 2010 issue. What made this even more exciting for me is the fact that *Issara* is the cover for my particular storyline, Roxham Farm. I was already a fan of *Twist Collective* and of the artistry and designs in each issue. Now that I've experienced a small taste of what it's like to be a designer in Twist, especially with the multiple layers of review that goes into each pattern, I am even more impressed.

Named after a good friend's daughter (a Laotian name), *Issara* is a snuggly coat worked in bulky yarn with simple lines. The WOW factor lies within the back pleat and the oversized reversible cable collar that can be worn up, down, or somewhere in between.

The Idea & Design Process

Usually, when I design, I like to incorporate a feature element and/or versatility. And since I've been on a reversible cables kick lately, I really wanted a garment with a dramatic reversible collar. Thus, *Issara* was conceived. While I had a clear idea of what I wanted, some of the key elements in the concept required some tweaking and experimentation during the actual pattern-writing and design process.

Collar

In order for the collar to lay nicely on the shoulders when worn down, it needed to flare a little – I really didn't want a straight funnel collar. To make a nice flare, I knew that I would have to work increases into the actual cable pattern instead of bunching it all into the beginning or set up section of the collar. I experimented with a few types of increases into the cable pattern. Lifted increases won over other types of increases because it met 3 main criteria: (1) increases had to be as invisible as possible, (2) they had to compliment and work with the stitch pattern, and (3) they had to look good on both sides.

Waistline

Initially, I had intended the waistline to be a true empire waist. However, as I was working with it, I

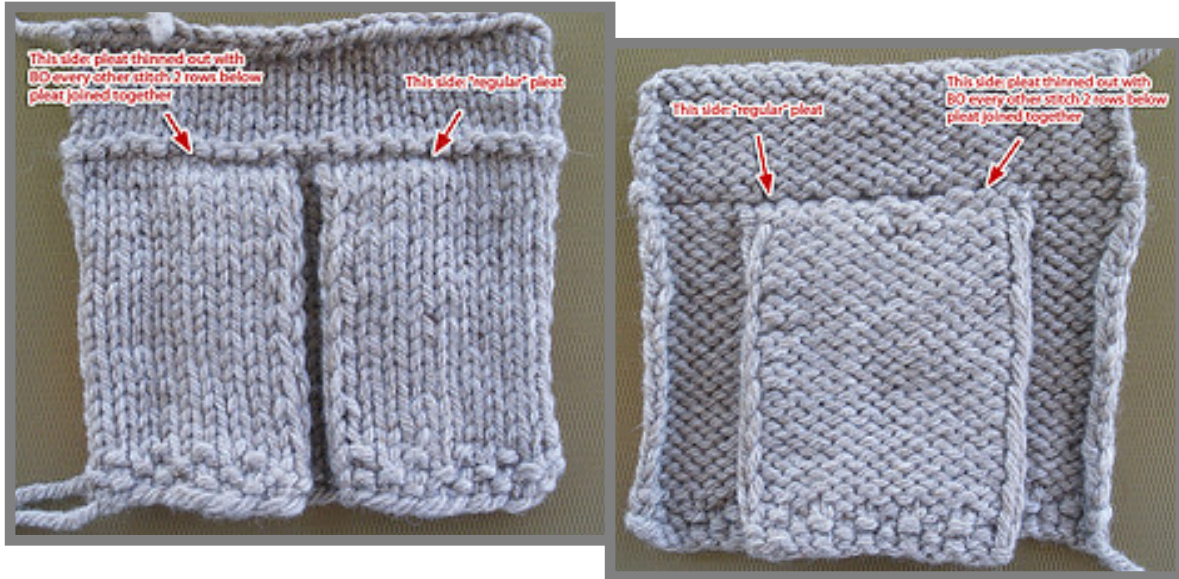
realized that the weight of the yarn in the skirt of the coat (especially with the pleat) may pull the waistline in a less than desirable way if I raised it to a true empire. So, I change the plan a little and worked the waistline roughly about 1.5" above a natural waistline so that there is still an elongated silhouette, but without having to carry the extra weight if it was set much higher.



Pleat

Because the coat is worked in a bulky yarn, Twist editor Kate Gilbert and I had some concerns that the pleat might be a little too thick and cumbersome in the back with all the layers. I really wanted

to keep the pleat because I think it gives a nice balance to the dramatic and slightly flared collar; thus, I was determined to make it work. I experimented a little and I figured out a way to thin out some of the bulk in the pleat folding process: I bound off every other stitch in the center panel of each side of the pleat 2 rows prior the pleat fold. The photos below show the differences (click to enlarge) between a regular pleat fold and my thinned out version.



Close-Ups





Photos above, clockwise from top left (click photos to enlarge): (1) work-in-progress shot of the skirt shaping; (2) the finished pleat from the private side (WS); (3) collar detail from the public side (RS); (4) collar detail from the private side (WS); (5) waist line and back pleat; (6) back view of coat with collar worn down

Overall, I found the sample a relatively fast knit. Seriously. I'm not just saying that because I'm the designer or as a fast knitter. It goes much faster than one anticipates because it's worked in a bulky yarn. The slowest part of it, IMO, was the blocking, which took forever and a day to dry. Next post: Tips/notes on modifications, blocking, etc.