



# The Woven Coverlets of Norway

*Katherine Larson*

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## **The Woven Coverlets of Norway** Katherine Larson

The Woven Coverlets of Norway showcases one of Norway's most beautiful and enduring folk arts. A warm, thick cover has always been important during Norway's long winter nights, but coverlets also decorated the family bedsteads in one-room farmhouses, affording housewives an opportunity to display their talents. Coverlets were a central feature in the important ceremonies of a person's life as well, wrapping an infant at christening, providing a cover for the marriage bed, and draping the coffin as a last offering of comfort to a loved one. To explain the coverlet's importance as the pinnacle of the Norwegian weaver's art, Katherine Larson looks at the role textiles played in the lives of women prior to the twentieth century. She takes readers through the yearly cycle in rural Norway and relates it to the many steps of cloth production in a pre-industrial era. Larson describes traditional methods of preparing, spinning, dyeing, and weaving wool and flax, and the tools with which these tasks were performed. She devotes chapters to the different types of coverlets and their origins: tapestry, square weave, krokbragd, double weave, rya, and overshot. Numerous illustrations show patterns from ages past faithfully preserved in the coverlets of Norway. In addition, the book includes a wealth of bibliographic sources and a complete glossary of weaving terminology. Katherine Larson is a weaver and researcher whose Norwegian-American background has inspired her study of Norwegian coverlets. Her book will appeal to anyone who owns or has ever admired an antique coverlet, and especially to Scandinavians who are interested in their cultural heritage. The historical aspects of her work will be important to textile studies, women's studies, and art history. She lives in Seattle.

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