

## My Grandmother's Knitting: Family Stories and Inspired Knits from Top Designers

Larissa Brown

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**Larissa Brown : My Grandmother's Knitting: Family Stories and Inspired Knits from Top Designers** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised My Grandmother's Knitting: Family Stories and Inspired Knits from Top Designers:

19 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Collection of Designer Patterns and Stories About Designers' "Roots"By Lynne E.About half of this book is devoted to short, heart-warming stories about the family "roots" of popular knitting designers. The remainder is devoted to designer knitting patterns "inspired by" the designers' grandparents, parents, and their places of origin.Dedicated knitters will no doubt enjoy reading about the family backgrounds of Wendy Bernard, Pam Allen, Meg Swansen, Ysolda Teague, Jessica Marshall Forbes, Kay Gardiner, Joan McGowan-Michael, Kristin Spurkland, Teva Durham, Jared Flood, Norah Gaughan, Anne Hanson, Leigh Radford, Chrissy Gardiner, Adrian Bizilia, Kirsten Kapur, and Emily Johnson.Many (but not all) of these designers contributed patterns, and there are some patterns contributed by designers who did not contribute family stories. Most of the patterns are for small, portable projects (mittens, hats, socks, slippers, scarves, cowls, a dishcloth, a pillow), but there are some patterns for large, ambitious projects (a cardigan, a Fair Isle pullover, a cape, a lace-bordered shrug, an afghan, a lace baby blanket). My personal favorites are Kristin Spurkland's "Rose and Cross Pullover" with Fair Isle yoke, David Castillo's striped "Conover Mittens", Anne Hanson's "Crocus Patch Baby Blanket" with its complex allover lace pattern, and Cookie A.'s "Wan Jai Socks" that have gently undulating, street-like curves along the sock legs and feet.The book does not include any historical "grandmother knitting" patterns--which was a disappointment

for me. There are no handed-down family patterns, no patterns actually knitted by or invented by the older generations of the designers' families. Nevertheless, because of the entertaining, anecdotal stories and the variety of attractive patterns, I rate this book at 4 stars. It should make a welcome gift for any serious knitter. 10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. A Sweet and Charming Book By Fairbanks Reader - Bonnie Brody This delightful knitting book has family-inspired knitting stories by many of knitting's greats. Some of the contributors are Meg Swanson, Jared Flood, Pam Allen, Ysolda Teague, Leigh Radford and Ann Hanson. While the patterns in this book are not handed-down patterns from families, many are patterns that were inspired by the designer's family. Some of the ones that really spoke to me are the Family Tree Afghan designed by Larissa Brown, inspired by her grandmother's love of knitting afghans. Grandma's Fan Dishcloth by designer Judy Becker was inspired by antique lace medallions that she inherited from her family. Crayon Cows is designed by Kirsten Kapur who was inspired by the creativity of her great-aunts. Kristin Sparkland designed the Rose and Cross Pullover based on traditional Norwegian design. Minerva Bonnet by Teva Durham is inspired by one created and worn by her grandmother. The Crocus Patch Baby Blanket is just stunning, designed by Ann Hanson, and inspired by her grandmother who spent a lifetime knitting afghans. This one is in a beautiful lace motif. The Edna Slouch Hat is designed by Leigh Radford who got her inspiration from her grandmother. The Storm Cloud Shawlette by Hanna Breetz is inspired by Elizabeth Zimmerman. The stories are quaint and lovely reading and each knitter adds their own bit of wisdom, advice and learning. The patterns are clearly written, lovely to look at and there are several that I would like to knit. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Love it! By Anonymous I love this book. The stories are great and I've almost finished one of the patterns (there are many patterns worth knitting in this book). Some of the patterns weren't accompanied by stories and I wish they were. In a day and culture where aging is seen as an unfortunate and pitiful decline, it was refreshing to read of elders who are honored and respected for the lives they lived. Not all the stories are about grandmothers' knitting, but how people were inspired by their elders. I loved reading stories about how some prominent designers were nurtured in the craft. It inspires me to do the same for the little ones in my life.

When most people think of their grandmothers knitting, they might not immediately see the connection to a modern knitters life. But in *My Grandmothers Knitting*, Larissa Brown shows us that nothing could be further from the truth. Many of today's hippest and most popular knitters found their passion for knitting under the tutelage of their grandmother or another revered family member, and in this book, they share stories and patterns inspired by their memories and their gratitude. Among the 26 contributors to *My Grandmothers Knitting* are STC Craft authors Wendy Bernard (Custom Knits series), Teva Durham (Loop-d-Loop series), Norah Gaughan (Knitting Nature), Joan McGowan-Michael (Knitting Lingerie Style), and Leigh Radford (AlterKnits series and One More Skein) as well as many other popular designers such as Jared Flood, Cookie A., Ysolda Teague, Anne Hanson, Kay Gardiner, and Meg Swansen. Praise for *My Grandmother's Knitting*: This is a pattern book with a twist. . . . Full of useful information and easy-to-knit garments, *Custom Knits 2* is a good choice for knitters looking to adapt designs and venture into designing their own garments. *Creative Knitting Magazine* In [My Grandmothers Knitting], Brown weaves family stories and early knitting memories of her interview subjects into poignant evidence that today's knitters have a strong connection to the knitters who came before them. *CraftSanity* This is a thoroughly charming book . . . A heartfelt celebration of shared creativity. *Knitty.com* "Wonderful family stories are shared by those such as Meg Swansen, Norah Gaughan, Kirsten Kapur and Kay Gardiner. The projects in this book, as you can imagine, with the star-studded lineup of designers, are a beautiful assortment of accessories and women's garments. The look and feel of this book is so inviting and beautiful, with lovely photography by Michael Crouser. In all ways, this book is a true work of art and heart." *Petite Purls*

About the Author Larissa Brown is the co-author of *Knitalong: Celebrating the Tradition of Knitting Together* (STC Craft, 2008). Her hand-knit designs have appeared in *Knit.1* magazine, *Knitty*, and on her blog, *Stitch Marker*. She lives in Portland, Oregon.