



Today's post is by Andrea Rangel, designer of the squishtastic pullover [Joist](#) from our newest issue, which includes variations for different genders! Andrea is also the designer of the gorgeous [Scribe](#) mittens that we showed last winter. You can keep up with her and her knitting on [her blog!](#)

The latest issue of [Twist Collective](#) is live and in it you can find more evidence of my obsession with surface design on knitted fabrics: [Joist](#) - pullovers designed for men and women.



I spend a lot of time swatching different textures and color patterns, and I get pretty excited working on fabric that's particularly sculptural. My first swatches for Joist were classic twisted-stitch lattice patterns straight out of Barbara Walker. They weren't substantial enough for my liking, though, so I tried out a few beefier cable patterns, but I still wasn't satisfied. I liked how the twisted-stitch lattice patterns were worked without purling - they relied on the twisting and direction of the stitches rather than on negative space created by purling. So I decided to give cabling a try with more stitches and without any purling. It took me quite a few tries to get the cables to be just the right volume, with deep enough valleys in between the cables, but once I had that swatch, I was in love. Not only do the cables have a strong, geometric directionality, but the stockinette stitch that forms the background also points one way, then the other, which is one of those lovely little things you have to get close up to notice.



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My original plan for [Joist](#) was to make a men's pullover. I always want to add to the current library of men's patterns that men hopefully want to knit for themselves. The fabric I ended up with is quite thick due to the heavy cabling, and worked up in a woolen spun yarn like [Brooklyn Tweed Shelter](#), it's especially insulating. Not only do the cables create lots of places for warm air to get trapped next to the body, but the yarn itself also has lots of little air pockets. The woolen spun nature of the yarn is also helpful for keeping the sweater to a manageable weight. All that thick fabric can make a pretty heavy sweater and I like the relative lightness of the Shelter. It makes for a great outdoorsy sweater that looks classic, but is extra cozy and warm.

What usually happens as I work on men's sweaters, though, is that I end up wanting one for myself. I love to wear my sample of Traverse and it has a fantastic slouchy boyfriend sweater fit that goes really well with my usual leggings, short skirt, and clompy boots look. But with Joist, I wanted a version designed to be specifically flattering to women too.





Both versions include waist shaping, but the men's is simple reverse A-line shaping, while the women's has hourglass-style shaping. Since the fabric is fairly thick, it's helpful to have this shaping for a well-fitting sweater.

Aside from the fantastic cabled lattice stitch pattern, the sweaters have lots of other special design features. The ribbing at the cuffs and hem looks like regular two-by-two rib, but it includes slipped stitches that help the ribs to stand out, making them conform more closely to the look of the cables. The yoke is worked in an Elizabeth Zimmermann-inspired seamless construction. The armholes and sleeve caps have the shape of set-in sleeves, but end in saddle shoulders that continue the established cable pattern and create a comfortable shoulder and sleeve cap section. Shaping details prevent the sharp corner look that saddle shoulder construction can sometimes have.



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The collar is worked in a pretty unique way as well. The construction was inspired by the classic Cowichan-style collars that are usually done at a huge gauge in garter stitch. I adapted that style to work with ribbing to mirror the cuffs and hem. It's quite magical and I hope you'll enjoy it as much as I did.

Thanks to the Twist Collective team for their beautiful styling and photography!