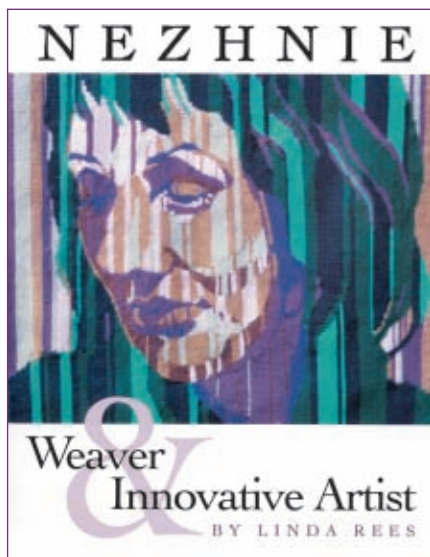


**NEZHNIIE: WEAVER & INNOVATIVE ARTIST****Linda Rees**

*Image Line Publications, 2375 Monroe, Eugene, OR 97405, 2004. Paperbound, 166 pages. \$29.95 plus \$3 shipping and handling. ISBN 0-9755775-0-6.*



Like many others, I stumbled across the work of Muriel Nezhnie almost by accident in a brief article in a fiber publication in the 1970s. I met Nezhnie in 1990 when she came to Portland, Oregon, to give a workshop at the Oregon College of Art and Craft and present the keynote address for Tapestry Forum 1990. She was an impressive woman, full of humor and determination, and she was an excellent instructor. It has always seemed lamentable to me that her work was not better known in the fiber world, and I was therefore delighted to discover that Linda Rees has written a book about her.

Through her obviously extensive research, Rees has painted the portrait of a complex personality who, despite a difficult childhood, maintained a strong sense of self and artistic direction. Nezhnie followed her muse throughout her creative life, maintaining a delicate balance between family and studio. Though the book would have benefited from more rigorous editing, it is a good biography of a highly creative and ambitious artist.

Nezhnie's work in weaving began in the early 1960s and continued until the end of the 1980s, at which time bad health required her to discontinue weaving. Working chronologically through Nezhnie's life, Rees discusses her corporate and ecclesiastical commission work, as well as the portraits and Holocaust tapestries for which she is perhaps Best known. The many color and black-and-white images allow readers to trace the stylistic and technical evolution of her work. Nezhnie's training in graphic arts is revealed as a strong influence on her designs. Furthermore, many of the technical innovations that contemporary artists are interested in today were utilized abundantly by Nezhnie, in particular shaped weaving and contrast of texture and weave structure.

There are far too few biographies written about historically significant artists working in the textile field, and this book contributes to that genre. It is recommended as a useful and rewarding addition to the handweaver's personal library.

—Sharon Marcus