

IRENE VAN VLIET 'Copper/Nylon Stripes' and 'Copper Sateen Weave', 1992

In 'Copper/Nylon Stripes' (below) the warp is Polyamide 6.6 and the weft is alternating copper and polyamide. A sateen weave gives the copper stripes a smooth look, contrasting with the plain dense weave of the polyamide. 'Copper Sateen Weave' (bottom) has a Polyamide 6.6 warp making it a strong textile lengthwise, and a copper weft providing surface interest.

REIKO SUDO FOR NUNO CORPORATION
'Brass Cloth', 1994

Designed by Reiko Sudo and manufactured by Nuno Corporation as part of the *Metal series* (opposite), this is a plain weave of forty per cent cotton and sixty per cent brass. The matt cotton warp gives a subtle effect. The metal weft (discarded brass wire) allows the cloth to be manipulated into exciting shapes and imparts a soft sheen.

and irritation to the skin. Lamé (the French word for thin plate or strip) is a fluid, sensuous and dramatic fabric made from a flat metallic thread, used primarily for evening and stage wear. Fabrics made from metallic threads used to be expensive and difficult to clean. New technology can provide sophisticated metal yarns to be woven into beautiful and malleable fabrics.

Jakob Schlaepfer Co. AG of St Gallen in Switzerland, who won the Swiss Textile Design Competition in 1995, have developed a wonderful collection of fabrics including many combinations of textile and metal. Silk combined with steel might seem an unlikely mixture, but the result is a fabric

which has a new appearance, handle and performance. Schlaepfer also won first prize for their metal fabrics in the competition, 'Textiles Between Practice and Vision' arranged by the Stuttgart Design Centre to promote textiles for fashion, interior and exterior applications. It includes practitioners from industry and individual designers, holding an exhibition of selected entries.

Reiko Sudo of Nuno Corporation also uses unusual materials in her textile designs, including various metals in combination with traditional yarns to create innovative fabrics. 'Copper Cloth' which was introduced in 1993 can be manipulated into many forms to create complex or subtle shapes. Her stainless-steel spattered fabric with different finishing effects, such as embossing and pleating, was based on the car industry process whereby a protective finish of stainless steel is very finely sprayed on to the trim or underneath the car. Reiko Sudo uses this technique to apply a fine spray of stainless steel to a woven polyester fabric to create a beautiful, shimmering and fluid surface.

Irene van Vliet, a Dutch designer fascinated with the possibilities for woven metals with textiles, produces richly beautiful fabrics using copper and steel in combination with both natural and synthetic yarns. The Japanese are particularly interested in her work and she has produced fabrics for fashion, interiors and architecture.

NON-WOVENS

Directly affected by advances in technology, this is a hugely growing area for textiles in all fields ranging from fashion to industry. Early examples of non-woven fabrics are felt and tapa cloth, but nowadays non-wovens can be made from all fibres from natural and regenerated to synthetics. The majority of non-wovens are thermoplastic, so they can be shaped to create many complex forms. With synthetic fibres, a successful way of achieving a permanent bond is by the application of heat and pressure either over the entire fabric or in specific places. Exploiting the thermoplastic qualities of synthetics in the development of non-wovens appears to be the way forward. The new non-wovens, Tyvek by DuPont, for example, are durable, washable and resistant to most chemicals. They do not fray, so they can be perforated or subjected to

