Crow-Stitch or Transmontane beading style – not just Crow tribe, but wide spread, including Nez Perce. Examples of Crow Sundance belt, Lucy Real Bird (1977) and Crow pipe bag after ca. 1850, Kay Miller (1998)

Work on brain-tanned deer hide, or trade cloth and canvas.

A. Typically, any given piece of work would employ three primary beading techniques. It was a rare piece that used only one technique.

1. Crow-stitch for the designs and background.
2. Overlay-stitch for the white outlines
3. Lane-stitch (“lazy-stitch”) for border and central lanes.
4. Zipper-edging stitch, most common found on old beadwork along edges and sides of pieces.

Unlike the “lane-stitch” (“spot stitch” or “Sioux-style”), which allows only a limited number of diagonals, the Crow-stitch allows diagonal at any angle and size desired. This allowed beadwork designs to more closely reflect prescribed traditional patterns, as for example in rawhide parfleche paintings and the “hour-glass design.”

Crow-stitch also characterized by use of outlines, the single row of beads that typically outlines the primary design. Typically white outlines.

In addition, the Crow-stitch allowed a much more even “smooth” texture, rather than the rowed effect of the lane-stitch.

B. Seven colors primarily used by the Crow: light blue, lavender, white (emblematic of purity and hail or fag), dark blue, red (represents property, blood or desire for revenge), yellow and green (represents earth). Black (symbolized revenge accomplished or clouds) and orange seldom used. The meaning of the colors, however, is in most cases quite subjective and varied.

1. Preferred light blue and sometimes lavender backgrounds. But white backgrounds so common among Sioux, not present.
2. In fact, white beads used sparingly, primarily for outlining major design motifs.
3. Red flannel trade cloth also employed.

C. Although women rarely produced two pieces that were identical, was is a marked tendency in Crow designs and patterns. Most geometric

1. Long band that runs diagonally of a single color, width and length varying depending on the design of the piece.
2. Small isosceles triangle, either of solid or subdivided horizontal stripes of different color. The apex of the triangle touches a band of beadwork or an angle of a much larger triangle. Seemed to have a particular fondness for this design.
3. Large diamond outlined with beads of contrasting color. Very typical of pipe bags, cradle boards and blanket strips.
4. An hourglass shape formed by two isosceles triangles joined at their apex.
5. Floral designs of leaves and stems as well as flowers on dresses and other articles of clothing, as well as moccasins, leggings and belts and belt pouches.