

“Zigzag”

By Tim Strzechowski

diagonal weave
strands of vivid warp and weft
trading post cotton

fabric color break
patterned with beaded border
broken scalloped edge

ribbed lines separate
Navajo from Shasta weaves'
long-held history

most honored in prayer
entire edges hemmed zigzag
connecting to fringe

sacred, fragmented
motifs to commemorate
structures long in place

gather, story tell
dances and prayers for the hunt
to blanket chilled limbs

from wind a motif
tribal-hued with porcupine
quill embellishment

spirit line defect
the restraint of pattern break
human hazard stitches

cloven prayer, cyclic
vital beliefs onto the
fractured who language

our history is
stitched into clothing worn, shorn
by woman and child

our history is
encircled at top fold to hold
worlds atop a shell

our history is
woven 'to webbed tapestry
long traded, replaced

----- a past cast in chants
memorialized within
feather, tooth, and shell