

Spring
A.S. XXXV (2001)

Filum Aureum

Newsletter of the Needleworkers Guild

in the Kingdom of the West (SCA)

Sabrina de la Bere
P.O.Box 1809
El Granada, CA 94018

Guild calendar & projects

MARCH CROWN

Again we will have our Guild pavilion, courtesy of Iulitta Rowan, for our Mentor's Corner, class, and meeting. Look above the rooftops for our guild pennant, a gold needle on a green background! We have our eye on a space just off the list field on the way to Merchant's Row.

Our Mentor's Corner — a one-on-one chance to get help with needlework projects, or just to stitch — will be on Saturday after Invocation. More experienced members of the Guild will be available to answer questions about your latest project. Or if you just want to stop by to stitch and chat, we will look forward to seeing you! Copies of the Questionnaire will also be available if you haven't filled yours out yet.

At 2:30 pm in the pavilion we'll be holding a short meeting, followed by a class on German Whitework (*Opus Teutonicum*) with Christian de Holacombe. This is an easy and authentic counted-thread technique that is wonderfully decorative for linens and clothing! —🧵

JUNE CROWN

The Needleworkers Guild will again have the honor of hosting the A&S pavilion. Plan on bringing a project to display and on joining us for our usual meeting with "show and tell," class, and Mentor's Corner! —🧵

UPCOMING COMPETITIONS

A&S TOURNAMENT (July 27-29)
Open Knitting

MISTS CORONET (Sept 21-23)
Needlework with documentation

TWELFTH NIGHT 2002 (Jan 5)
Metal Thread

CYNAGUA INVESTITURE
Open Embroidery (Oct 26-28)

We are lucky this year; there are four competitions on the Arts and Sciences calendar that are right up our collective alley! They are all very open as to technique and subject, so you may already have a project started that will be eligible. If you are a beginner or intermediate level needleworker, do not be intimidated — it's a great way to get feedback and see how you are doing, and the others in the competition will probably be people just like you! Think about entering one or more of the contests being held this year! —🧵

GUILD KITS

Guild kits are a fun way to learn a new needlework technique while making an attractive little accessory, either for yourself or for the Queen's Gift Chest — it's guaranteed to be appreciated! Kits are designed to take only a day or two to embroider and finish. We try to include materials for finishing as well as embroidering. These kits are great "portable projects" for a weekend event, and there is room for lots of creativity in how you do them!

Kits are available from the Guild pavilion at all Crown events and Collegium. They are priced at \$5 or less (depending on the kit) to cover the cost of materials. Each kit includes full instructions and a choice of motifs. Find the Guild pavilion or one of the Guild officers any time!

1. BLACKWORK BOOKMARK

Try counted-thread blackwork with both silk and cotton floss and see how easy it is! The kit makes a finished bookmark lined with a wonderful patterned fabric. *Blackwork on linen. Includes cloth, floss, lining material and instructions.*

2. ELIZABETHAN SWEET BAG

Make a simple sachet with flower, fruit and insect motifs in outline stitch from *Scholehouse for the Needle*, a pattern book published in the early 1600s and containing many delightful "sprigs." Fill it with potpourri and decorate with ribbon and a simple one-stitch edging. *Surface embroidery on linen. Includes linen*

marked with design, batting, cotton floss and instructions.

3. FAN POUCH

A fan is a much appreciated accessory on a hot day. Make this special pouch in any one of several techniques, including pattern darning (counted running stitch), cross stitch, or counted satin stitch. Finish with a nice lining, button, and a cord to hang on someone's belt! These are popular Queen's Gift Chest items.

Counted thread techniques. Includes cloth, cotton floss, and instructions for motifs in several styles.

4. HARDANGER NEEDLE CASE

We have a limited supply of these little needlecases in white-on-white counted and drawn work. Each one resembles a little snowflake or flower and is a much appreciated and very decorative little gift!

Hardanger whitework. Includes hardanger cloth, floss, felt "leaves" and instructions. (P.S. Please note, this kit will only be available in 2001. We will be discontinuing Guild projects in Hardanger after this year since it is actually a post-1600 style.)

5. STRAWBERRY PINCUSHION

For this Elizabethan style pincushion in canvas work ("needlepoint"), you have a choice of not only a strawberry, but a pansy, a rose, a pomegranate, an acorn, a carnation or a bunch of grapes! Use one easy stitch to make a durable and useful accessory just like the ones in period portraits. *Tent stitch in wool on needlepoint canvas. Includes canvas, yarn, backing, finishing cord and instructions.*

6. DEMI-SUN POUCH

Big enough to hold a checkbook, wallet, and other essentials, this pouch has an appliqué stitched with an ornamental cord in a period style. The demi-sun is the official badge for the populace of the West Kingdom, so make this with pride! *Appliqué with cording. Kit includes pouch material, felted wool applique with design, cord for appliqué and drawstrings, and instructions.*

(More kits are in the works!) —🧵

The Needleworkers Guild of the Kingdom of the West

All are welcome to join us in making and enjoying historical needlework, furthering our knowledge, and developing our skills. We meet Saturday afternoon at every Crown Tourney and Coronation, and we look forward to seeing you and your needlework!

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All that glitters...

"Marvel not at the gold and the expense, but at the craftsmanship of the work. Bright is the noble work; but, being nobly bright, the work should brighten the minds so that they may travel, through the true lights, To the True Light.... The dull mind rises to truth, through that which is material And, in seeing this light, is resurrected from its former submersion."
 — Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis (Paris, 12th century)

I don't know about anyone else, but I'm always ready to "Ooh" and "Aah" over the glittery stuff. In this issue we'll take a quick look at some of the stitches and styles that produce these rich effects.



BAUBLES & BEADS

The small picture at right shows one of the simplest forms of metal ornamentation — though perhaps calling it "embroidery" is a bit of a stretch. Jewels, spangles, and bright bits of metal have been sewn onto clothing all over Europe from a very early period. The Museum of London excavations have medieval samples of "dress ornaments" very much like these, attached to belts or sewn to the fabric of gowns, capes, et cetera. This illustration is a close-up of a gown made for a doll representing the Christ Child; the ornaments date to the 14th and 15th centuries.

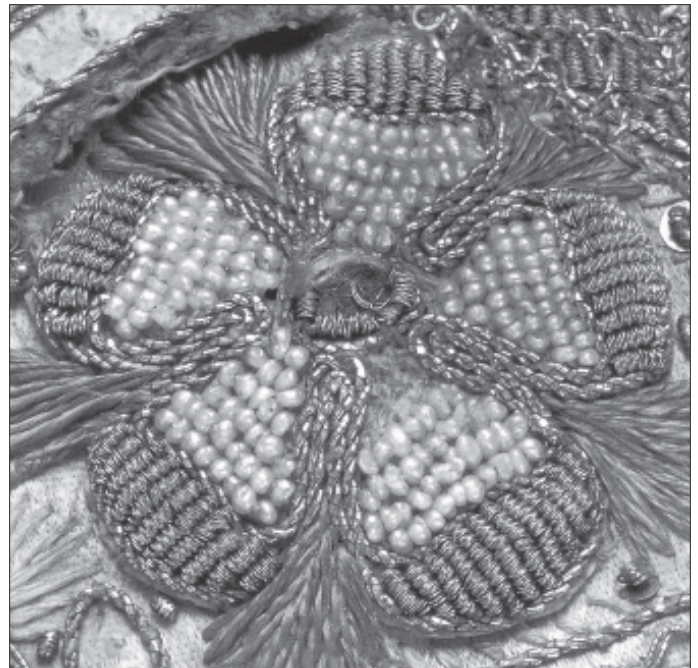
Spangles continue to be used right up through the end of our period. Period spangles are small flat disks with a central hole. The Elizabethans called them "spangs" or sometimes "oes" (O's). They are usually sewed down with two or three stitches radiating from the central hole to the rim.

COILED & BRAIDED WIRE

Gold is an easy metal to work, and it doesn't tarnish or discolor, so gold wire was made and used for ornamentation on cloth from an early date. In the Scandinavian finds at Birka, there are a variety of ornaments made of gold or silver wire on clothing, some with wire stitched directly through the cloth as if it were thread, others made separately of braided and twisted wire and sewed on. Another type of decoration uses long flexible coils of very fine wire around a fiber core. The coils are braided and sewed down to make borders that look like knotwork. You can just see a bit of such a border (very tarnished) under the feet of the gold wire "deer" from Birka shown here.

PURLS

Today as in the Middle Ages, gold "purls" of various kinds are still used for sumptuous embroidery. Purls range from fine gold tubes like bugle beads, to crimped, twisted, and coiled forms. Purl is cut into lengths and sewed down like beads, making a rich, solid surface that twinkles and catches the light. Often purls are padded or worked over cord, or they may be combined with spangles, seed pearls, and silk to make complex and wonderful embroideries. Unfortunately, many good examples have gone into the melting pot over the centuries for their gold content, but others survive for our admiration.



GOLD THREAD

Embroiderers in search of lighter, more flexible, and less staggeringly expensive gold materials developed gold threads in the early Middle Ages. The first threads from the 8th or 9th century are a thin strip of fragile gold metal wound around a silk thread. A less fragile thread has a fine layer of gold plated onto the surface of a strip of another metal, used in the same way. Even this is now expensive and hard to find; most modern thread that uses real gold has a microscopic film of gold on a strip of paper wound around the silk core. Imitation gold and plastic materials like Lurex may contain no metal at all.

(I couldn't resist this unicorn from the 15th-century bishop's miter in gold and pearls from Västerås Cathedral in Sweden, which shows several gold thread techniques. Another detail is on our cover.)



All that glitters, continued on p.4

One of the most frequently asked questions is, "What stitches are period?" This article, the fifth in a series of six, looks at another category of the Apprenticeship Program, **Metal Embroidery**.



SURFACE COUCHING

Especially with the stiffer or more fragile gold threads, surface couching is an easy and efficient way to produce a decorative gold surface. A gold thread is laid on the surface of the fabric and stitched or “couched” down with crosswise or slanted stitches in silk or another strong fiber. Solid areas can be filled with closely packed rows of gold thread, worked from the outline inward until the whole area is filled. (See p.6 for an example.)

OPUS ANGLICANUM

In the 12th and 13th century, some of the finest embroidery in the world was produced by English embroiderers. Church vestments in this *Opus Anglicanum* (“English work”) were so highly prized in Europe that they were given as gifts to popes and kings. Opus Anglicanum has figures of people, animals, leaves, and other objects in very fine split stitch in silk, worked so closely as to give a smooth, flowing surface almost like satin. Backgrounds and further ornaments are worked in gold. The flat gold backgrounds are worked in underside couching, a technique that was invented in this period and gradually died out in the 1400s. (Pictured above is the head of St. Katherine in Opus Anglicanum from an altarpiece belonging to the vestments of the Golden Fleece.)

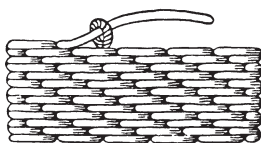
In underside couching, gold thread is laid on the surface of the fabric and couching stitches are taken over it. As each couching stitch is taken, the needle is carefully

UNDERSIDE COUCHING

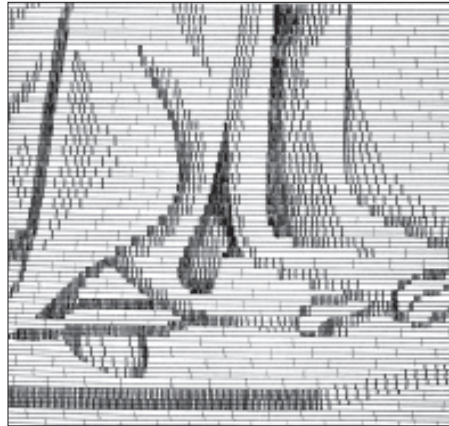
Side view of fabric



Top view, with a loop of couching thread, ready to pull gold thread under.



re-inserted into the same hole in the backing that it came out of. The couching thread is pulled tight, and a tiny loop of the gold thread from the surface “pops” through the hole in the backing fabric to the underside. This creates a “kink” or “hinge” in the gold thread, where it can easily bend. Fabric worked with gold thread in underside couching is much more flexible and “drapery” than fabric with surface couched gold. Underside couching is often done with stitches in a decorative pattern to create a textured gold background.



OR NUÉ

As the Opus Anglicanum style faded, a different, but equally stunning and subtle, style came into fashion, called Or Nué (French for “gold shaded;” for “nué” think “nuance”).



In this style, the fabric surface is first covered solidly with parallel lines of surface-couched gold thread. Crosswise threads of colored silk are then worked along each gold thread, with stitches placed closer together in areas to be shaded dark, and farther apart in light areas. The diagram from Pamela Warner’s *Embroidery: A History* makes this very clear.

In the detail of jugs from the Middleburg altar frontal in Brussels (dated about 1518), you can see that the right sides of the jugs show closely spaced colored stitches to create a “shadow” area, making the jugs look rounded.

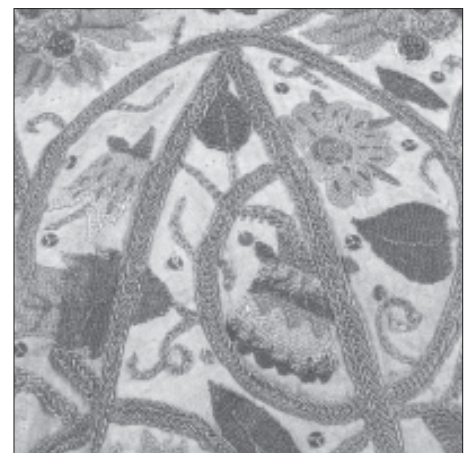
Or Nué, like a lot of other gold embroideries, isn’t nearly as difficult as it sounds. If you’d like to try a small exercise in Or Nué, take a look at the article “Very Simple Or Nué” at the Medieval Embroidery Home Page:

<http://node-02.advancenet.net/~jscole/ornue.html>.

ELIZABETHAN EXTRAVAGANZA

A love of gold and its glitter certainly has continued through all centuries including our own. Many magnificent embroideries survive from the 16th and early 17th centuries that use gold in abundance in all its forms, including spangles, purls of all kinds, and gold plate, a narrow flat strip of gold metal that is folded back and forth and sewed down. Gold cord and thread is couched, looped, and worked in chain, outline, buttonhole and braid stitches, and even worked into bobbin lace as a finish.

In the Current Middle Ages, we all claim for ourselves the privilege and respect once reserved for royalty. And with such magnificent examples to learn from, surely we can all create at least a little bit of the Middle Ages’ golden splendor!



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Golden opportunities

AUGUST II, SAN MATEO

Goldwork with Linn Skinner

— by Sabrina de la Bere

Here is your "golden" opportunity to learn the techniques for working with gold and metal fibers used in classic European metal embroidery!

We have arranged a special class for Guild members on Saturday, August 11th, from 9:30 to 4:30 with Linn Skinner, an embroidery historian who teaches and exhibits in England and the US. Linn has studied Blackwork, Goldwork, Jacobean embroidery and Silk Shading at the Royal School of Needlework, Hampton Court, and is a founding member of The New Elizabethans, an international group of embroiderers formed in 1998 to further the development of classic hand embroidery. For more information on Linn, and to see her web-magazine, visit her website:

<http://www.skinnersisters.com/>


The limit for this class is 12 students and the cost is \$100 per person — she is giving us a *big* discount from her usual rate. Our tentative site is JoAnn's Fabrics in San Mateo.

We are excited to be able to provide this class for intermediate and advanced stitchers. You will need a working understanding of basic embroidery techniques. If you have questions, please talk with me!

Although no specific "project" is taught in class, several motifs are provided for planning future projects, and you will create a notebook of stitches including surface Couching, underside Couching, St Cuthbert's Couching, Chipwork, Laying of Purls, 2 plaited stitches and Padding Up. Transfer of designs by pricking and pouncing will be demonstrated and you will experiment with transferring a design to satin. The kit included in the price of the class contains muslin, satin, assorted silk fibers, assorted English metal fibers, felt, string, and a notebook with printed materials on the history of Goldwork, silk and gold fibers, heraldry and symbolism.

I know this price seems a bit steep, but I can tell you that I have learned more in a few hours just stitching with Linn Skinner than in months or years from anyone else. She is truly a wonderful person and a great teacher.

Your check must accompany your reservation for class space. Reservations will be on a first come, first served basis, and we must have the full 12 attendees to have the class. Checks will not be refundable

after July 1, 2001 unless the class is totally cancelled, and if the class is cancelled, a materials cost may still be assessed, because Linn special-orders materials for each class directly from suppliers in England. Make checks payable to Linn Skinner and send them to me, Sabrina de la Bere (my address, as always, is on p.2). —

AUGUST 16-18, RIVERSIDE

Historic needlework with CATS (!)

— by Isela di Bari

No, not *that* kind of cats! One of this year's six Cross Stitch Festivals, presented by Creative Arts & Textiles Shows (CATS), will be August 16-18 in Riverside, California. (This is the same show that has been held in Sacramento the last several years.)

Don't let the name of the Festival fool you — besides cross stitch, there are classes on a variety of other needlework techniques including blackwork, beadwork, reticella, goldwork, assisi, hardanger, etc. Besides classes, there's also a "Shopper's Mart", dangerous to the pocketbook!

There will be a class called "Blackwork for the Bewildered" for beginning needleworkers wanting to learn the reversible technique. Taking a page from Peter Quentel's 16th c. book of designs, Linn Skinner (can you tell Sabrina and I are fans of hers?) will show you how to turn his designs into a blackwork band sampler.


"Don't Say Assisi" for intermediate level stitchers will provide historic background and show students how to use cross-stitch, backstitch, long-arm cross and double running stitches on linen to create their own voided ground project.

For the advanced students, Linn Skinner will be teaching her "All That Glitters" goldwork class at this conference as well, similar to the one she's offering just for us the previous weekend.

These classes aren't cheap — they range from \$50 to \$150, depending on time & materials involved, and the class time ranges from 2 to 8 hours. However the teachers are excellent, and I can promise you it will be time and money well spent.

For more information, contact CATS at (336) 778-1157. You can also e-mail them at <creativeartsshow@gateway.net>, or go to their Website:

<<http://www.creativeartsshow.com>>.

If you're looking for a summer vacation treat for yourself, this Festival is definitely worth considering! —

Filum Aureum goes Web!

At the Guild officers meeting in February, we decided that we needed to make some changes in the format of *Filum Aureum*. We have received many wonderful compliments on the current format since we began it a year ago, but it is also expensive to produce copies like the one you are currently holding in your hands.


Unfortunately we have outgrown the privilege of free paper and free copying on someone's office copier. But fortunately, we have been more and more impressed with the possibilities the World Wide Web offers us for providing this wonderful material to a wider audience!

We plan to produce our summer (June) issue — the first issue of A.S. XXXVI — in the current format, giving us ample time to make the switch. (Conveniently, this will also be the last in our current six-part series on the major types of needlework in our Guild programs — we look forward to hearing about quilting and other types of stitched-fabric techniques from Elspeth Semstress of Dunkeld in that issue!)

Beginning with the fall (October) issue, we will e-mail an announcement to everyone when a new issue is posted on our Guild web site, and anyone is welcome to download the pages. As an added attraction, we will now be able to offer illustrations in color!

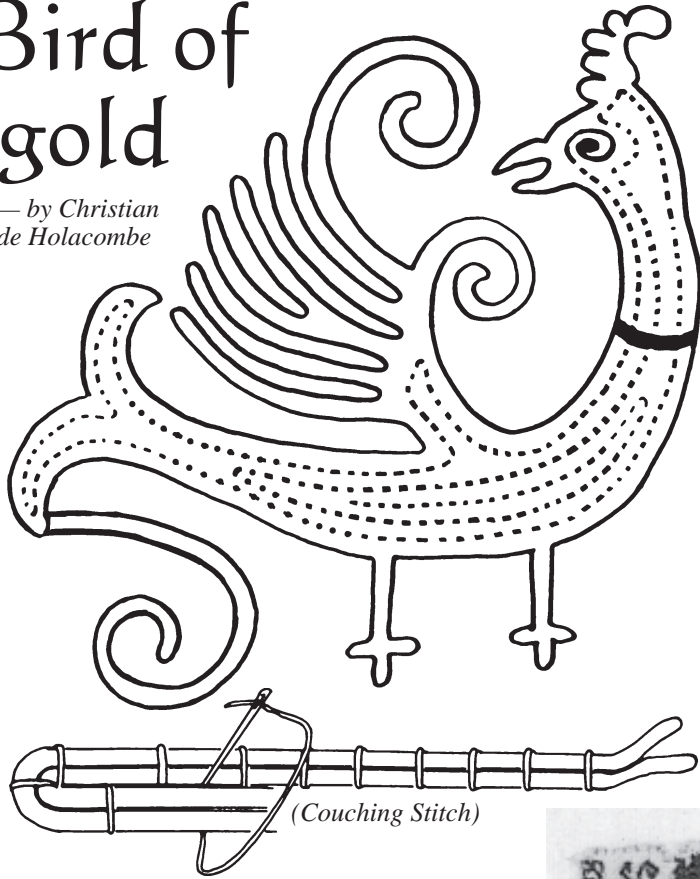
If you would like paper copies mailed to you, we will ask for a \$10 per year donation to cover the costs of printing and mailing. (If you've made a donation above this amount to the Guild this year, please talk to Sabrina to make sure she knows to include you in this.)

Guild funds collected at the Silent Auction and from donations will continue to cover our other Guild expenses, the materials we print for outreach and periodic mailings of general Guild information. We also do NOT want anyone who is interested to miss out on *Filum Aureum* for financial reasons, so if you know someone for whom \$10 is a difficulty or who does not have e-mail or Web access, please encourage them to contact us.

We're also looking at adding a new publication, a *Guild Annual* for sale at Twelfth Night each year. This would contain some of the excellent articles we publish in *Filum Aureum*, along with others contributed by Guild members. Tentative plans are for the first Annual, for Twelfth Night 2002, to collect all six articles and accompanying patterns on the Guild's six areas of needlework, which we've published over the past two years. —

Bird of gold

— by Christian de Holacombe

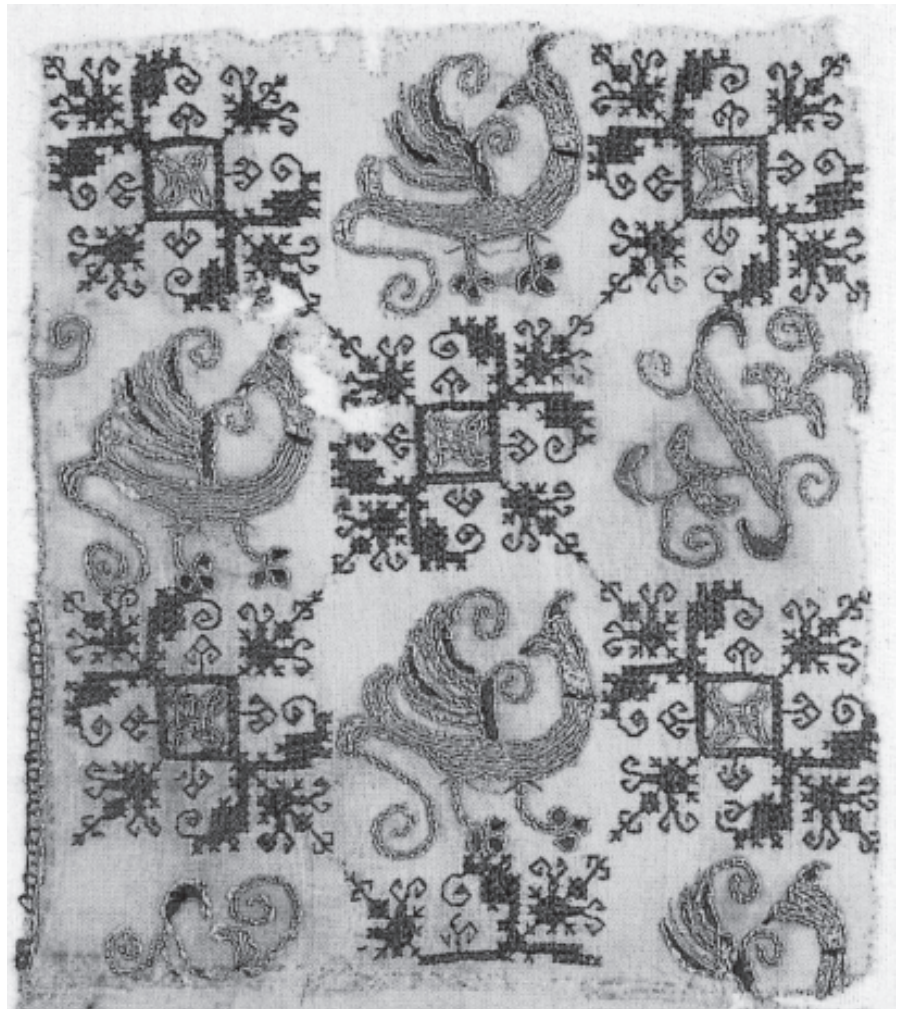


An embroidered fragment from 16th-century Italy is the source for this cheerful fantasy-bird motif in couched gold. The ground is very fine tabby-woven linen, and the gold thread is the familiar thin strip of gold twisted around a gold-colored silk core. The gold is couched down with fine strands of silk the same color.

Between the gold threads, some areas of the bird wings (and the S-shaped scroll motif at the right) are filled in with split stitch in red or blue silk, accenting the gold.

Alternating with the bird motifs are squares worked in cross and Holbein stitches in deep purple silk. In the center of each square is a loose knot woven of loops of gold thread (see diagram). In the chart, the solid squares are cross stitches and the lines are Holbein stitch. These motifs are intriguing when you look at them closely because they are not quite symmetrical, and they alternate directions along each diagonal.

The line drawing above is of a simplified bird with the outline solid, and some possible lines of filling indicated by dots. Work the outline first, then fill the space from the outside working inward, packing the gold threads fairly closely. —



2001: A needle odyssey

Greetings from Sabrina —

It is hard to believe that we have begun the New Millennium. The Guild has done so much last year, and it looks like this year will also bring a full slate of “golden” opportunities.

We had a very impressive display and Silent Auction in the A&S room at Twelfth Night. Our display included the Queen’s Gift Chest, the 5 Rose Pouches that have been completed so far, and numerous items showing all six categories of needlework that the Guild encourages.

The Silent Auction, in addition to outright donations, donations for kits, and donations for newsletter support, brought in a grand total of \$272. Thank you, all who participated! The funds will go to supporting the Guild’s programs and mailings throughout the coming year.

This year my aim is to have us present a completely integrated program to help all

our members progress in their skills and interest. At Collegium, we will continue to present classes that teach different needlework styles and the techniques associated with each. At Crown events we will focus on how you can use each of these needlework techniques in a period manner. We will continue to try to supply breadth to the program by having opportunities for all levels of needleworkers to learn.

At Crown events we also plan to continue Mentor’s Corner, an open-house time in our Guild pavilion. If you have a project you want advice on, or just want to come show off your work, stitch, and chat, we hope you will join us anytime from Invocation up through our meeting and class at the Guild pavilion.

On my trip to Oertha this past January, the Ivory Thimble Guild gave me a very warm welcome and enthusiastically asked to join in all the historical needlework activities of our Guild. So welcome all! Lady

Augustias is our new Oerthan Liason. I know they would be happy to have any of our teachers come visit and teach at Oerthan events such as the Oerthan spring and fall Collegium. And don’t forget that the Known World Arts and Sciences Symposium is in that direction too, up north in Seattle, October 26-28. (More information at <http://www.vertetsable.com/kwas/>)

Questionnaires — if you haven’t returned yours, please do so — we REALLY want your input. Additional copies will be available at March Crown.

As we move into the New Year and the “real” New Millennium, we wish you well and hope you will share with us your Needlework wishes so we can fulfill them in the year ahead.

I remain yours in service,

Sabrina de la Bere

IN STITCHES . . . NEWS AND NOTES OF GUILD MEMBERS

HUZZAH to our former Guild Minister, now Guild Patron, Isela di Bari, who was elevated to the Order of the Laurel, and to Jania of Call Duck Manor, who was elevated to the Order of the Pelican, both at Twelfth Night.

In addition, our accomplished Guild Member Brid Hecgwilt won the Arts Competiton in Costume, Pre-1100 A.D., and she ALSO won the Sciences Competition in Bookbinding.

Congratulations to our latest “Needlemaster” – Rosalie Ashleigh, who completed the final level of our Guild Apprenticeship Program with Whitework. Congrats also to our newest Guild Apprentice, Eva Volin, who began her program with Counted Thread.

Thanks are due to the wonderful Guild members and other participants who have given generously throughout the year in time, energy, and money. (Also we apologize in advance if we leave someone out – it is not intentional, just a case of filing!)

Aldith Angharad St. George • Anahita alshazhiyya • Anne of Bradford • the Barony of Vinhold • Catherine Lorraine of Stonegate Manor • Christall Madelaine Moore • Christian de Holacombe • Doreen Dragonet of Darkstone Castle • Eliska z Jihlava • Elspeth the Semstress of Dunkeld • Francesca von Hesse • Isela di Bari • Iulitta Rowan • Judith of Stormholde • Kareina Talvi Tytär • Kiriana Michaelson • Letitia de Scotia • Mairghread nighean Eanruig • Octavia Jenon de Treues •

Rosalie Ashleigh • Sara of Foxhaven • Sorcha o’Ciardhubhain • Tangwystyl verch Morgant Glasvryn • Theiadora Groves • Trinite Ducalon • Willow MacKay

There are many to be especially thanked for their help in making the Twelfth Night display and auction happen.

For donating items to the Silent Auction — Isela di Bari, Catherine Lorraine, Jania of Call Duck Manor, Sabrina de la Bere, Catharina Saluatare Rocca, Garick and Talitha von Kopke, Judith of Stormholde, and Eliana Fraser – Thank you!

For bringing items for display — Isela di Bari, Catherine Lorraine, Jania of Call Duck Manor, Sabrina de la Bere, Rosalie Ashleigh, Christian de Holacombe, Gwenyth of Mousehold Heath, and Ellen of the Western Winds – Thank you!

For assisting with setup, cleanup, and staffing of the tables — Theiadora Groves, Sveinn Ulfsson, Isela di Bari, Christian de Holacombe, and William – Thank you from a very tired, but well satisfied Sabrina!

ADDRESS CHANGES

Please keep us updated on your address changes, phone numbers and e-mail. A sign-up sheet is available at every Guild Meeting to help with this. [WKnoodle], our e-mail list, is up and running; feel free to subscribe yourself or update your address (it’s quite easy to do it yourself) at <http://www.yahoo.com/group/WKnoodle>. ☞

ROYAL ROSE PROJECT

We still have kingdoms available for those who want to work on the Royal Rose Pouch Project. The first set of 16 pouches are to be presented at June Crown to Their Majesties to take to the Pennsic War in August. You can see the first few completed pouches on the Guild website for all to enjoy. Thanks to Mistress Isela for making this project possible! If you’re interested in signing up, call her at (831) 385-3040. ☞

TREASURE WANTED

Calls have gone out from Her Majesty, and also from the Princess of Cynagua’s Treasure Chest, for “the donation of wondrous items of work by the Guilds to show the skills and largesse of our Kingdom.” Items need not be large or difficult! Small projects are most welcome. Come drop them off at Crown or send them to Sabrina or Jania for the Queen’s Chest, Judith of Stormholde for the Princess of Cynagua’s Chest.

Christian de Holacombe challenged all comers in December to make *TEN* small items to give to the Queen’s Chest by Twelfth Night. Thanks to Masrauna, Gwenyth of Mousehold Heath, Iuleana ingen Cormac, Ivan Ivanovich Streltsov and all others who participated, along with all those who “really mean to get to it” but haven’t yet. It’s not too late!! ☞

Guild Mentors

These people are here to help you with your needlework questions!

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THIS ISSUE'S COVER: *detail of a bishop's miter in gold and pearl embroidery from Västerås Cathedral in Sweden, dating to the mid 15th century. Birgittinska Textilier, by Inger Estham, Statens Historiska Museum, Stocholm, 1991. P.6 is from Stickerieien von der Vorzeit bis zur Gegenwart by Ruth Grönwoldt, Hirmer Verlag Munchen, 1993. Other photos from Fashion in Detail by Avril Hart and Susan North, and Medieval and European Jewellery by Ronald Lightbown (both V&A).*

Webs to watch

—by Sabrina de la Bere

The World Wide Web is a wonderful universe, in which we can find a lot to admire and to help us in developing our needlework skills! Here is a guide to some of the wonderful places I've found to explore.

(A note of caution, though: remember that a lot of the information on the Web is from secondary and tertiary sources. Thus, what you find must be considered with care.)

Most of the information I'm listing here can be categorized into 4 areas — stitches, patterns, background information, or portraits and actual examples. In this column, I will try to find useful examples in each category and do a quick comment on content.

STITCHES

I'd nominate Kathy Dyer's page as probably the best overall site for "how-to" stitches and other general needlework in-

formation.

<http://www.dnai.com/%7Ekdyer/>

One of my favorite online stitch diagram places, which has nearly all the stitches we use in one place including drawn thread, is

http://www.designwest.com/Johanna/webstitch/needle_stitch.html

Here's a fun site, which has animated gifs of some stitches!

<http://homepage.mac.com/cfitzger-ald/Needle/>

Bayeaux Stitch on line:

<http://www.regia.org/embroid.htm>

Stitches for Viking clothing:

http://www.42nd-dimension.com/NFPS/nfps_stitches.html

PATTERNS

A superb site, now in a new home, is Stitch Out of Time – the home page for Master Richard Wymarc OL. This site has wonderful information on actual needlework items, pictures and some patterns.

<http://home.flash.net/~wymarc/>

Joyce Miller has pictures and charts of actual medieval pieces.

<http://www.doctorbeer.com/joyce/emb/embroid.htm>

Paula Katherine Marmor's Blackwork Archive provides a number of her originally designed blackwork patterns. While historic in style, these are not the originals but are useful for general embellishment and practice.

<http://www.pacificnet.net/~pmarmor/bwarch.html>

Patterns for some SCA Peerage Badges and some historic designs have been charted.

<http://www.dragonbear.com/index.html#articles>

Moonshadow Stitchery provides some historically styled blackwork patterns and SCA related cross stitch patterns.

<http://www.crosswinds.net/~msstitchery/charts/bwsampler.html>

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Cameo Roze has a series of articles which provide some useful insight to stitch techniques. I found her Waste Canvas article quite informative.

<http://www.cameoroze.com>

The Elizabethan Practical Companion Blackwork Gallery contains lots of paintings with the Blackwork shown in detail.

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Crete/1581/bwgallery/>

16th and 17th Century Coifs – a page of background information and pictures. Part of a website devoted to Elizabethan Costuming.

<http://www.dnaco.net/~aleed/corsets/headwear/coifpics.html>

Slips – a page of background information and pictures.

<http://www.victoriana.com/shops/andrews/slips.htm>

A collection of information and sites on Medieval/Renaissance Embroidery

<http://www.advancenet.net/~jscole/medembro.html>

Background information on Assisi Embroidery and few pictures – originally a hand-out for an SCA class

<http://www.planetc.com/users/derwyddon/assisi3.html>

The Bayeaux Tapestry online

<http://www.sjolander.com/viking/museum/bt/bt.htm>

Pictures with more information at:

<http://www.ealdormere.sca.org/university/btapestry/bt01.html>

HAPPY STITCHING!!!!!!!!!!!!

