

ISSUE 22:

Fall

A.S. XXXVIII (2003)

Filum Aureum

Newsletter of the Needleworkers Guild

in the Kingdom of the West (SCA)

Appliqué

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

Guild calendar

Aelia has undertaken to do our class scheduling. Please let her know what classes you would like to see at Crown events, Collegium and the next A&S.

OCTOBER CROWN (Oct. 3-5)

• A&S PAVILION HOST: CHEESEMAKERS GUILD

Two classes will be taught — “Period World of Cheese” and “Beyond Simple Cheeses.”

• ARTISANS IN RESIDENCE

Held in another pavilion attached to A&S — Artisans will be in residence over the course of the event demonstrating a number of different crafts. Please drop by! Schedule to be posted.

• MENTORS CORNER

11:00 am-2:30 pm

All are welcome to come stitch, drop off Apprenticeship items for evaluation, and consult with our Mentors in residence about your projects.

• GUILD MEETING - 2:30 pm

Open to all! Business and show and tell. Key Topics: Structure of the Apprenticeship Program and 1995 Service Project.


• CLASS - 3:00 pm

This Saturday class is **Medieval Appliqué** with Christian de Holacombe. Applique is a quick and very medieval way to produce bold and bright colored decorations for tournaments, banners, clothing and accessories. Learn how to do medieval-style corded applique and explore some short-cuts that make smooth, crisp appliques easy. Bring scissors and frame — a large circle or 8x10 rectangle is good for this. Fee \$5 for a West Kingdom “demi-sun” pouch kit.

• ARACHNE'S WEB - 5:00 pm

Arachne's Web, the guild of lace makers, will have an open Guild Meeting in the Needleworkers Guild Pavilion. All who are interested in learning about Arachne's Web or learning about lace in any of its forms are welcome to attend.

• SUNDAY CLASS - 10:00 am

Middle Eastern Buttonhole Stitch Variations with Jaida al-Rakshanda. Come and learn just how versatile this ancient basic stitch really is! Bring thread and scissors, 6" hoop is optional. Class limit: 6, Fee: \$2 

FALL COLLEGIUM (Nov. 22)

Please bring a **frame or hoop & scissors** to any class where you'll be stitching!

SETTING FABRIC IN A WOODEN FRAME

Teacher: Duchess Letitia de Scotia

This class will show you how to lash and tighten your fabric down to all four sides of your frame so that the tension is even and tight AND stays that way. Students must bring **four 10-inch Uni-Stretch stretcher bars**, available at Michael's. If you have problems obtaining these, please contact the instructor. Fabric, string and needles will be provided.

LIMIT 8. NO FEE (FRAME REQUIRED)

NEEDLE-LACE EDGINGS

Teacher: Aldith Angharad St. George

Learn two forms of 16th century needle-lace edgings, using buttonhole stitch, picots, and needleweaving. These edgings were used for all kinds of linens, including shirts, chemises, handkerchiefs and veils. A kit will be provided including linen fabric, thread and needle.

LIMIT 6. FEE \$2 (AUDITORS WELCOME)

MEDIEVAL QUILTING

Teacher: Christian de Holacombe

Medieval quilting is a one-color art, created with fine stitches on solid colored fabric. The technique is simple and the materials inexpensive. Learn the stitches on a small piece of corded and stuffed quilting, and take home patterns from the 1300s Guicciardini quilts, made in Sicily. Bring a thimble — even if you don't use one otherwise, you'll need it for this!

NO LIMIT. FEE \$5 (KIT & HANDOUT)

TRIM DESIGN AND CHOICE: EASY EMBROIDERY FOR THE IMPATIENT ANACHRONIST

Teacher: Mistress Hilary of Serendip

Design concepts for fast neck and wrist trim, plus the three simple stitches needed to execute your own designs so they look like period work.

LIMIT: 15 FEE: \$1
(3-PAGE HANDOUT & KIT)

THREE BASIC STITCHES

Teacher: Caterina nic Sheamus

In this class, we will learn three basic stitches used in period (stem or outline, chain, satin), as well as how to thread a needle, strip thread and yarn for use, dress the ground cloth into a hoop for working, and start and end new threads. Kits will include fabric, thread, yarn, and needles to make a small sweet bag.

LIMIT 4. \$1 DONATION REQUESTED

TWELFTH NIGHT (Jan. 3, 2004)

• OPEN DISPLAY — Daytime


All work done during the past year is welcome — finished or not! The Guild will also have a table in the Guild area and we'll showcase the Travel Bags and Rose Pouches for our Queen. We'll need members to attend the table during the day.

• ARTS COMPETITION

The Arts Competition at this event is a Decorated Chemise or Undergarment. This is also during the day and information will be on the West Kingdom A&S website.


• LAUREL PRIZE TOURNEY

Early Evening

This an opportunity for anyone who is NOT a Laurel to display their work and for Laurels and the populace to view it. You're encouraged to stay with your work so that people may ask questions. We did this 2 years ago and there were 55 enthusiastic participants, and some wonderful needlework, beads, calligraphy, costume et cetera. *(More info later on the Guild website.)* 

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 at 2:30 Saturday afternoon at every Crown Tourney, and we look forward to seeing you and your needlework!

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Appliqué: Lay on!

— by Christian de Holacombe, Guild Deputy

Never let it be said that *all* medieval needlework is painstakingly worked in thousands of tiny stitches. Appliqué, simply stitching pieces of colored cloth onto a background, provides a quick and easy way to make a big splash of color on banners, bunting, bardings and clothing — making encampments and tournaments truly spectacular.

This indeed seems to have been one of the main ways appliqué was used in the medieval centuries. By laying cloth on cloth, you avoid having to solidly cover large areas of your design with colored stitching. All that needs to be done is to secure the edges of the appliqué.

Historical overview

Surviving pieces decorated with appliqué include everything from elaborate Elizabethan pictorial hangings, meticulously stitched in silk, to banners, religious vestments, story cloths, and heraldic devices for horse trappings. Some of the surviving work done in wool or other humble materials is downright sloppy in its stitching, encouraging to the beginning stitcher who can probably do much better!

Appliqué is used in several rather different contexts in our historical examples. One of the earliest and simplest is a plain (or fancy!) band of cloth added to decorate a fabric edge (and perhaps hide the raw edges). While modern stitchers might cut such bands on the bias, most medieval decorative bands are cut on the straight grain and simply eased or mitered along corners and curves. Most often the edge of the strip is turned under and stitched down.



Another use equally ancient is the “recycling” of decorative bands or panels, which may be cut from an old or worn textile before it is discarded or turned into rags, and then applied onto a new garment. Surviving Coptic garments often show this, since the tapestry-woven or embroidered panels on the original garment are more durable than the thinner fabric around them.

Toward one end of the sewing spectrum, these applied panels and bands shade off into the plain and humble patch, applied to repair or strengthen a worn or vulnera-



ble fabric. At the other end of the spectrum we have the elaborate and glittering sixteenth-century embroideries composed of individual motifs or “slips” worked in fine stitching on canvas, cut out and applied onto a rich background fabric. One of the most famous examples is the Oxburgh hangings, which were worked by Mary Queen of Scots and Bess of Hardwick during Mary’s captivity in England.

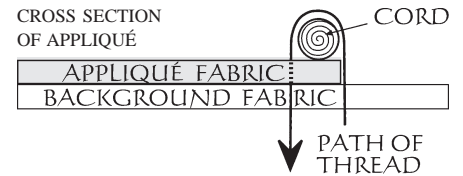
Corded appliqué

The most common appliqué method seen in period pieces has the appliqué piece being “laid on” and fastened down by a cord couched on top of the edges. One advantage of this technique is that the edges of the appliqué do not need to be turned under. Much of the historic appliqué that we have is worked in heavy silks or wools, and turning under the edges of these fabrics would be awkward and probably lumpy.

As you can see in the diagram, the cord is not mere decoration but has a real role to play. By laying the cord *on top of* the fabric edge rather than beside it, the edge of



the applied fabric is firmly “pinched” between the cord and the background fabric, holding it in place.



The cords used for appliqué can be anything from a simple bunch of loosely twisted threads to elaborately braided lengths of rich materials. They may be stitched with near-invisible stitches in matching thread, or with stitches that are quite visible and perhaps decorative. The stitching is most often a simple row of straight stitches across the cord.

One disadvantage of corded appliqué is that if the applied fabric is prone to raveling, the edge may slip out from under the cord and come loose. This is not usually a problem with wool, especially if it has been well fullered or felted. Corded appliqué is most often used on items that are not likely to be washed or rubbed, but even so, the lifespan of material applied in this way may not be very long. These disadvantages are balanced by the fact that this is a quick technique to work, well suited for running up dozens of banners in a few weeks for a special event.



Motifs

One major use of cloth-on-cloth appliqué is for the display of heraldry or heraldic motifs. At least, these are the pieces that have mostly survived, saved out of family or national pride. The banner displayed above and on our cover, for instance, is the 14th-century family banner of the Blonays, a prominent family in Vaud (eastern Swit-

(continued next page —>)

zerland). The roundel shown at the beginning of this section, in wools with cotton cording, is a piece of Islamic heraldry, the emblem of a royal cup-bearer.

Another famous heraldic appliqué from about this same era is a set of three large semi-circular copes of black velvet, now in Switzerland, which were captured from the Burgundian forces at the battle of Murten in 1476. These bear appliquéd shields with the arms of Burgundy and Artois, and the rest of the surface is lavishly appliquéd with gold-embroidered “flames” and a large “fire-steel” motif, representing the badge of Duke Charles the Bold.

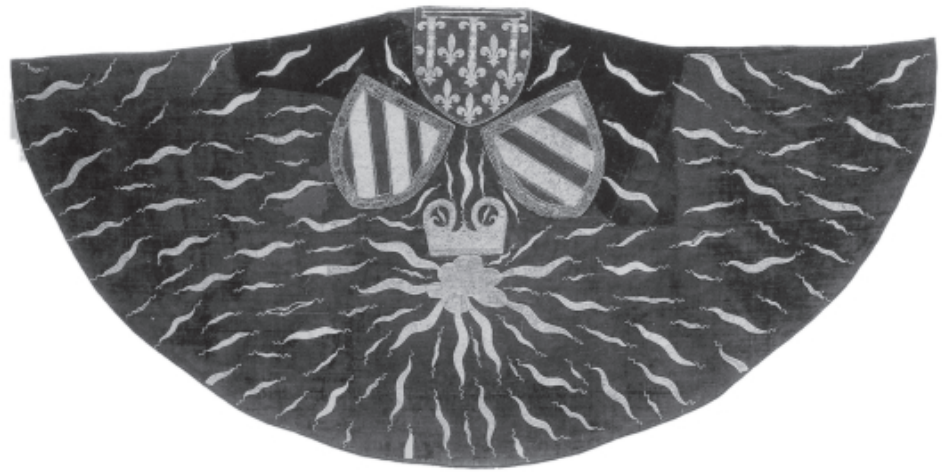
The way the “flames” were worked demonstrates also that it’s quite common to embroider motifs on a base fabric such as linen, and when finished, to cut them out and apply them to a richer or heavier background. Many of the rich works in *Opus Anglicanum* have parts of the embroidered figures worked in this way.



Another major type of appliquéd piece is what we would now call a “story cloth,” figures illustrating a familiar story or legend, made of shaped cloth appliqués with a few touches of embroidery. The well-known North German example above shows an episode from the story of Tristan and Isolde, probably the single best-known and most-depicted secular story of the 13th and 14th centuries. There are 22 surviving episodes from what was probably a wall hanging; the cords at the appliqué edges are narrow strips of (originally) gilded leather.

In later-period pieces we see even more examples of embroidered motifs laid onto a ground fabric. We have quite a few 16th-century pillows and hangings, like (both on p.3) the black velvet pillow with flower sprays and the delightful embroidered puppy from a bed hanging at Scone Palace, possibly worked by Mary Queen of Scots.

These later motifs include just about anything that could be found in engraved illustrations of the time: mythical figures, fruits, insects, exotic trees, animals, figures at work or pursuing sports, such as the hawking man on horseback shown at right on another late 16th-century pillow. Most of these were worked in fine tent stitch in wool and silk on linen. A decorative effect seems to have been more important than any kind of strict realism, so a thistle may



easily appear bigger than a hawk!

Technique tips

There are some helpful techniques for appliqué, used by many modern needleworkers, that would be quite plausible for medieval needleworkers to have used in some form, but so far there is not a lot of surviving evidence for them.

One is the use of a stabilizing backing on the appliquéd piece, such as paper or parchment. We do know that cloth backed or covered with parchment was used for some bead embroideries (including parts of a 14th-century Madonna from Halberstadt) to help support the weight of the beads without distorting the fabric. Parts of the Oxburgh (16th c.) embroideries also had



paper glued to the back before the embroidery was laid on the background fabric.

Something similar could certainly be done with paper or parchment lightly glued onto a cloth piece before it’s appliquéd onto a background. Stabilizing like this helps keep any long thin strips or points, or any edges cut on the bias, from distorting before they are sewn down. The paper can be removed after sewing is complete through a slit in the background under the appliqué.

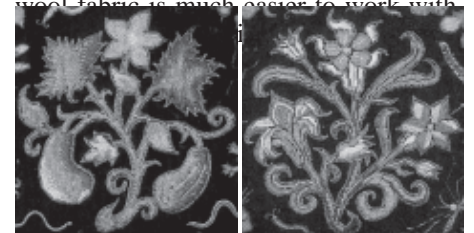
If you don’t mind wasting a little fabric, you can also stabilize your appliqué by sewing it first and cutting it out afterward! To do this, draw your design on the appliqué fabric, and lay the whole piece of cloth

onto the background fabric, without cutting anything out. Position the design where you want it (peeking underneath and moving it around as needed), pin securely all over, and sew a close running or back stitch around the edges of the design, through both fabrics. Then trim the appliqué fabric just outside the stitching, add the cord on top, and appliqué as usual. We have no evidence that this was done in period, but it’s hard to be sure from the finished product.

Another helpful technique is to use some sort of glue to stick the appliqué to the background fabric, rather than pinning, basting, or simply laying it on the background. There is indirect evidence that some sort of paste was used in appliquéd pieces in period, but it’s not clear exactly what for. The 15th-century Italian “*Libro dell’Arte*” says: “Also, for painting hangings, you may cut white cloth, and put it on top of the blue cloth, fastening it on with pastes, like glue; and lay it on according to the figures which you wish to distribute over the ground; and you may paint with washes of colors, without varnishing afterward.” This clearly shows cloth being glued, but it seems not to have been sewn at all!

I admit I’m particularly fond of “glue basting” because in my hands, pins and basting stitches distort the appliqué, and the end result is uneven. A water-soluble glue like Elmer’s (as a casein-based glue it’s related to period “milk glue”) or the common gluestick (also casein glue, but solid) enables it to stay smooth as it’s stitched.

The ease of appliqué is greatly affected by the materials you use. Many of the difficulties of appliqué seem to be related to the use of lightweight or slippery materials, like thin cottons or satin. If you’re new to appliqué, wool flannel or similar washed wool fabric is much easier to work with.



Demi-Sun Appliqué

This project — also available from the Guild as a kit — makes a drawstring pouch big enough to conceal a wallet and other modern accessories. It features a green demi-sun on a gold background, the heraldic badge that all people of the Kingdom of the West have a right to bear.

Materials

- Gold velveteen or other sturdy gold background fabric, cut 11 x 22 inches, or two 11-inch squares.
- Green felt or well-washed wool for the appliqué.
- About 2 yards of cord.
- Sewing thread to match the cord.
- Fabric for lining, the same size as background fabric.
- Two drawstrings, each about 20" long.
- Embroidery needle, scissors, embroidery frame or hoop, and (optional) gluestick.

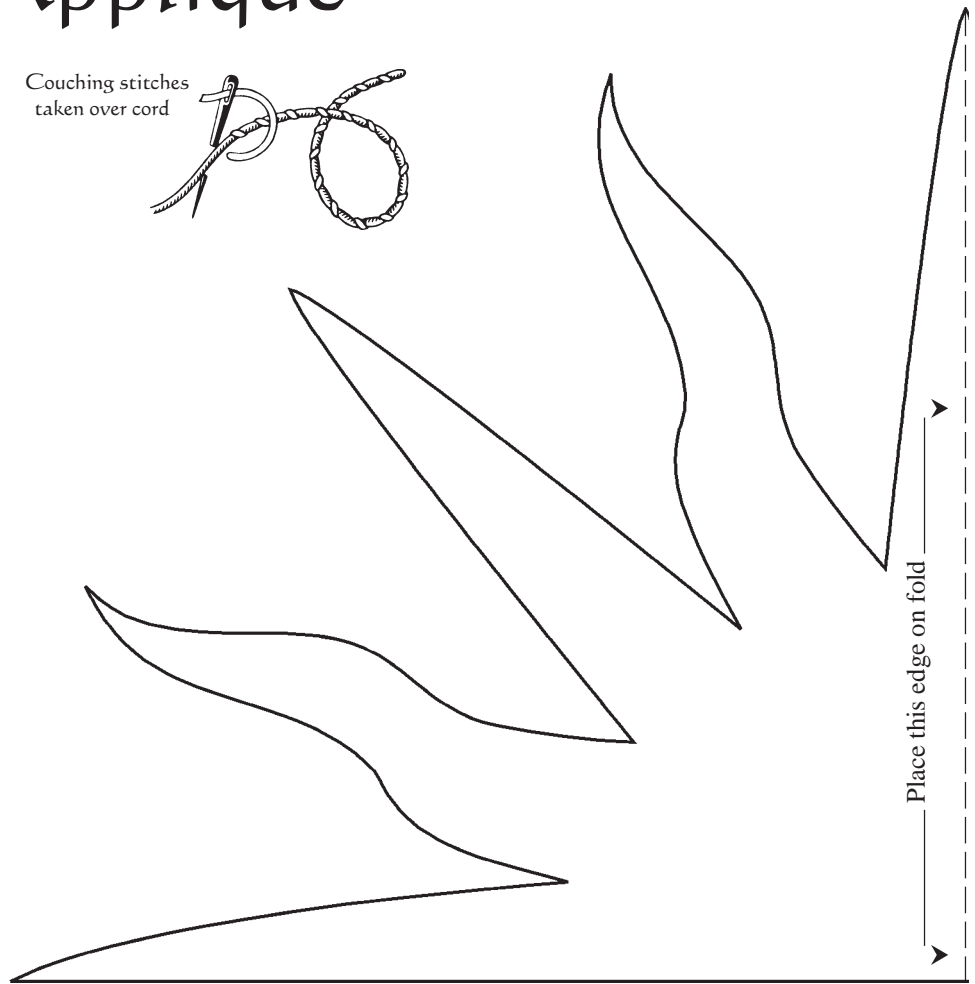
Instructions

Make a pattern for the appliqué by tracing the half-pattern on this page onto folded paper, placing the fold along the dotted line.

Tracing patterns onto felt is difficult because it's soft and fuzzy. This pattern also has long skinny bits, sharp points, and wavy edges, which may be distorted either as you trace or before you get them stitched down. So try this:

1. Don't cut out your paper pattern yet. Lay it over the felt, and either glue it down lightly with a gluestick, or baste it a little inside the pattern lines. Then cut out both paper and felt **together** on the lines.
2. Fold the background fabric crosswise, making two squarish shapes, with the fold at the bottom. Measure up about 1 inch from the fold and lightly mark a crosswise line. (Or use one of your two squares and measure up about one and a half inches from the bottom edge.)
3. Baste, pin, or glue the **felt side** (not the paper side!) of the appliqué to the background, with the long straight side along the line you measured. For "glue basting," use gluestick, a thin coat of white glue, or "light tack" spray adhesive (spray the appliqué, not the background).
4. Be sure the appliqué is straight and centered. Carefully peel off the paper. (Save it as a pattern if you'd like to re-use it.)

Couching stitches taken over cord




5. Starting at one of the "valleys" between the sun points, couch the cord with small, evenly spaced stitches **on top of** the edge of the appliqué, using 1 strand of matching sewing thread. Leave a "tail" of a couple of inches of loose cord before your starting point. (Later, thread this through a large-eyed needle and carefully "plunge" it through to the back of the fabric.) Using a couched cord on the edge of your appliqué "squeezes" the edge of the appliqué piece between the cord and the background fabric, holding it more securely, as well as being decorative.
6. After you have couched the cord all the way around, you can add another decorative cord outside the edge next to the first, or additional embroidery, as you like. Plunge all cord ends when you're done.

Finishing the pouch

1. Fold the lining fabric in half as you did the velveteen and sew up the sides, mak-

ing a pouch. Fold the velveteen in half, right sides together, and sew up the sides.

2. Turn the lining pouch **right** side out and slip it over the **inside-out** velveteen pouch (like a pillowcase over a pillow) so the seams match and the loose seam allowances are hidden between the two layers. Turn under the top edges of both the velveteen and the lining and sew them together with overcast or machine stitching.
3. Turn the pouch right side out. Draw a line with a wash-out marker $\frac{1}{2}$ inch below the top edge, and backstitch or machine stitch along this line all the way around the pouch. This forms the casing for your drawstrings.

4. Carefully pull out a few stitches from each side seam just below the top edge to make an opening for the cord. Thread one drawstring through the opening and around the top, then knot the ends together. Repeat from the other side seam with the other drawstring. You're done! 

A Timeline for Silk Embroidery

— by Sabrina de la Bere, Guild Minister

In Issue #21 we saw a brief history of silk in general, together with a bibliography. Part II of this article, a timeline of silk embroidery, is still a work in progress, and there are tantalizing hints (marked *) of embroideries and pictures I have not yet seen. Here are a few dates and notes on some particularly outstanding historical examples of embroidery in silk.

Embroideries in Time

6th c. BC: HALSTATT BARROWS

In these barrows on the Danube, Chinese silk is used for embroidery of Celtic patterns on woollen garments — the silk probably courtesy of Greek traders.*

2nd–1st c. BC: CHINA

Chinese embroidery in silk — chain stitch, satin and plain line stitch.

1st c. AD: CHINA

Chinese embroidery including stem, satin, chain, and long & short stitches. Also “jap” gold (thin metal strips around a silk core) is traded from China to Rome, primarily for weaving

4th c. CHINA

Chinese silk embroidery used for trade — chain stitch in blue, crimson, sand and brown primarily.

9th c. MAASEIK PANEL

Anglo Saxon panel, now in Maseik Belgium. Worked in silk thread, couched gold and seed pearls. Design of arches, birds, animals, and monograms, believed to be

Below: legend recounts that the first silkworm eggs came to Europe as a gift to the Emperor Justinian from two monks who concealed them in a cane walking staff. Top right: sorting of silkworm eggs before incubating.



church furnishings. Said to be one of the first silk embroidered pieces in Europe.

10th–11th c. EGYPTIAN EMBROIDERY

Peacock stitched in silver, gold and silks on linen (Abegg collection).

LATE 11th c. CHINA:

Chinese embroidery in silk — needle loop stitching.

1133 ITALY: MANTLE OF ROGER II

Red and gold silk embroidered and appliquéd, and sewn with pearls and set gems. This embroidery from Palermo is in an Islamic style and bears an Arabic inscription blessing the owner and identifying the city and year when it was produced.

1166 SPAIN: SHROUD OF LAZARUS & CHASUBLE OF ST. THOMAS BECKET

Colored silks and gold thread on a sky-blue silk; kufic inscriptions and roundels of animal and human figures. Example from Almeria of workshop pieces from Spain with Central Asian influences.

12th c. PERSIAN TIRAZ

Embroidered bands, silk embroidery on cotton-silk fabric — worked in “crewel” and split stitch, with couched gold thread (gold wrapped silk thread). Some bands have kufic letters, animals and trees. Silk colors include blues, green and red.

13th c. OPUS ANGLICANUM

English embroidery primarily done for the Church and nobility in embroidery workshops — primarily silk split stitch and couched (underside) gold thread. Examples: the Grandson Antepedium, the Tree of Jesse Cope, etc.

13th c. GERMANY: WEIBERLISTEN EMBROIDERIES

Another type of German embroidery. Meaning “wiles of women”, these embroideries draw from stories of classical antiquity and the Bible, and focus on “resourceful women thwarting powerful men.” These embroideries are not from workshops, but from the hands of patrician and burgher class women, and are based on woodcuts, with the characters in contemporary dress. The embroidery is worked in silk, wool, and metal threads on linen and the stitches are primarily satin and split stitch.

13th c. ITALY

Silks completely covered with gold and silk embroidery are produced in Sicily and Southern Italy, such as the 5-meter-long drape for the funeral of St. Francis of Assisi.



1303: PARIS

The Provost of Paris, Guillaume de Hangest, implements regulations requiring that anyone doing gold thread work must sew with silk. Similar quality control regulations called “verleger” are implemented throughout Europe.

LATE 14th c.

Rows of running stitches in silk thread on fine wool[?] twill — decoration on everyday garments of other than noble classes. Also examples of silk used on buttonholes.

1600: INDIA

Under the Moguls, cut and voided silk velvets with silver and gold embroideries are made as floor spreads and canopies. Quilted silks and cottons are embroidered in silk chain stitch for summer carpets, hangings, and screens.

S, Z, & Flat Silk:

TYPES OF THREAD & HISTORICAL EXAMPLES

Silk that is able to be “reeled off” from the cocoons is most often made into a “flat” or untwisted silk thread. This is the most expensive type of silk thread but also the strongest and most luxurious looking. Other silk threads may be spun from shorter silk fibers, and may be S- or Z- spun depending on which way they are twisted. Single threads may also be plied, and again this may be in the S or Z direction. Historical silk embroideries may use one or a variety of thread types.

One early example of flat silk is the Maaseik embroidery already mentioned, also known as the Chasuble of Saints Harlindis and Relindis, from 850 AD. Flat silk is used to couch gold and to work satin stitch in red, blue, yellow and green.

WORDS FROM SABRINA:

Learning opportunities

In the Langors panel (800's) from Wales, the silk embroidery is very fine, in the same size thread as the ground linen, 25 threads/cm. The silk thread is reeled silk. Some of the silk has a slight S twist and is not plied, and some has a slight Z twist and is S-plied to form a 2-ply thread. The stitch is a counted-thread stem stitch, worked 3 threads over and 1 back.

In a 12th c. liturgical sandal in Lyon, the gold embroidery thread is made of gold strips twisted in an "S" formation around a silk core. The gold is couched down and outlined with stem or split stitch in red silk.

There are a number of examples of 14th c. buttonholes, done with a buttonhole stitch in the London archeological finds. The silk is 2-ply: Z-twisted, S-plied. This is the type of thread primarily used for stitching in these finds.

In Schuette's book there is mention of a Westphalian cushion of the 14th-15th c. embroidered with untwisted silk floss. The stitching is brick stitch. The colors of silk used are green, yellow, red and white.

In the Altar Frontal from Middelburg, circa 1518, the gold threads are laid two by two and couched in silk. In both the Or Nué technique and the laid-and-couched silk sections, the silk used has no twist. The metal threads have an S-twisted silk core.

In Bursa and other Turkish silk centers, the most highly prized silk was the tightly spun. This was earmarked for the weavers, and the unspun or less twisted was set aside for the embroiderers. Most of the Ottoman (14th-17th c.) embroidered textiles were done with a 2-ply silk thread. Both Z- and S-plied threads were sometimes used on the same textile, as were loosely plied and tightly plied threads, to give dimension to the embroidery. The metal wrapped threads are predominately Z-twisted, although there are some examples of S-twisted metal threads. The color of the silk core was chosen to enhance the intended effect of the metal.

In the mid-1500's there are regulations in Italy regarding the importation of thin and thick silks. "Thin silk," which was very fine, was costlier, and preferred for making fine garments. The different sized threads also meant different workmanship, different fabric types, and greater differentiation between the silk producers and producing areas. In addition, sometimes the threads imported from different areas were combined in the production of both cloth and threads to achieve various effects. —

Parts I and II of this article, and a list of modern silk embroidery threads and sources, are also available together in booklet form from the author.

It is hard to believe that we are mostly through 2003. I hope your personal projects and needlework studies have been wonderful experiences.

BLACKWORK CLASS REPORT

Just a quick note on the wonderful blackwork coif class we had with Linn Skinner. 10 of us attended, including 3 from the Caidan Broders Guild. While we were working on 45-count linen, the original was done on even finer linen, so some of the patterns needed modifications. It was also evident that the coif we were studying was not professionally made, nor one that was commercially available. Much of the day was spent studying the various parts of the coif and its layout. After doing some work on the fine detail and mastering a basic but beautiful braid stitch, we called it a day. As usual, having Linn Skinner to teach is much more than just learning technique. We hope to have her back in the Spring for a class on Or Nué, so begin saving your pennies now!

OTHER GUILD CLASSES

There is currently a waiting list for the November 9th **Smocking** class, which most of you heard of through the [WKneedle] mailing list where it was announced. A **Basic Reticella** class will also be offered soon; stay tuned.

Stitching Festivals (CATS)

I took the opportunity to attend both the Santa Clara and the Riverside Stitching

Festivals, formerly known as CATS. Santa Clara had wonderful shopping opportunities including "Needle In a Haystack" and a couple of other local shops. I took classes on pulled work, three different ways to do Laxis, drawn work, hollie point, tating, turkey work, and smocking. It was wonderful to learn from a number of different high-quality teachers.

Next year's dates are May 21-23 at the Santa Clara Marriott. For hotel reservations call 800-228-9290, and ask for the CATS Stitching Festival group rate.

The Riverside Stitching Festival next year will be August 12-14 at the Riverside Convention Center. See the Stitching Festival website for motel suggestions, and check at the beginning of the year for a listing of upcoming classes for 2004:

<http://www.stitchingfestival.com>

Sampler Gathering

Another outside learning opportunity is the Historic Needlework Guild's Sampler Gathering in Plymouth, Massachusetts, March 28-April 4. While their focus is samplers, they do classes on all types of needlework including some on whitework and blackwork. Check their website in December for details.

<http://www.historicneedlework.com>

Happy Stitching,

Sabrina de la Bere

GUILD KITS

Guild Kits are designed to help you learn & practice new techniques, and the finished products are welcome gifts to the Royal Treasure Chests. Kits are available for a \$5 donation at all Crown events and A&S.

Currently available are the Blackwork Needlecase (filling stitches), Whitework bookmark (counted satin stitch), Zigzag pincushion (long-armed cross stitch), Scholehouse Sweet Bag (outline stitch, buttonhole stitch), Fan Pouch (different counted thread techniques), Strawberry pincushion (tent stitch), and Demi-Sun Pouch (applique). There are also a few discontinued kits available. —

THE ROYAL GIFT CHESTS

The Queen's and Princesses' Gift Chests are desperate for your handiwork! Please be generous and donate your completed kits and other small needleworked items to your Kingdom or Principality chests. It greatly pleases the Royals to be able to show largess to special people by giving a hand made item. Good examples include: napkins, pincushions, sachets, book covers, bookmarks, kitchen-size towels or napkins.

- West Kingdom Gift Chest: *Mistress Jania of Call Duck Manor*
- Mists Royal Gift Chest: *Sabrina de la Bere*
- Cynagua Royal Gift Chest: *Judith of Stormholde* —

Notes on the illustrations: the two "slips" on p.4 are enlarged from the black cushion on p.3. Engravings on p.6 are from "Strandanous Vermis Sericus," engravings of the manufacture of silk in 16th c. Italy, found at: <http://inky.library.yale.edu/medwomen/silk.html>

The Golden Needle

As mentioned at March Crown, the goal of the Apprenticeship Program is to encourage people to try new techniques and reach a higher level of understanding. But this only touches the surface of what we'd like to see the Guild encourage. To this end, we are now awarding a new token, the Golden Needle. This is for a major piece that is excellent and skilled in needlework technique, and is completely done in a historic style. Any member of the Guild who wishes to try this kind of project is eligible. Pieces may be submitted for evaluation under this program at any Crown event.

TO QUALIFY AS A GOLDEN NEEDLE PROJECT:

(1) The finished piece must be at least 10 square inches if solidly covered in embroidery, or at least 36 square inches if only partially covered. Ten square inches is the size of many historic sweet bags; 36 square inches (a 6x6 square) is the size of the embroidery on many of our service projects.

(2) The entire piece — the type of item, the materials, the design, the embroidery, and the finishing of the item — must be done in the manner of the same period. For instance, a 16th-century linen shirt with appropriate 16th-c. blackwork; *not* a brocade T-tunic with 16th-c. blackwork. A service-project pouch could qualify if it's in a correct style, appropriate materials, etc. for a given century's heraldic embroidery.

(3) The materials used should be appropriate for the project, though depending on how the finished object will be used, some substitutions are acceptable. Cotton floss, for instance, is acceptable instead of silk for something to be washed frequently. But cotton needlepoint canvas is questionable if the historical item was worked on plain linen (just as durable and available).


(4) The piece need not be absolutely perfect, but should be done very well, and certainly well enough that any mistake is not apparent upon casual observation. Many

historical pieces have errors, and we are human after all!

(5) Documentation is not required, but the evaluators might find it helpful.

(6) Evaluation is done by two Laurels and one Guild Needlemaster. Evaluations are coordinated by the Guild Minister to ensure that the evaluators are not overburdened and that perspective is maintained.


(7) To qualify for a Golden Needle, the piece must receive $\frac{2}{3}$ of the available points *and* be approved by all three evaluators. Five points each are awarded for design, period form, appearance, and complexity, and 10 for execution and workmanship.


The token of acknowledgement for a successful project is a golden needle. You can receive this token only once. This token is not related to the Guild's Apprenticeship Program or to any other SCA award or honor. The Golden Needle does not convey any special rank. 


IN STITCHES:

NEWS AND NOTES


CONGRATULATIONS



 to Sara of Foxhaven, new Guild Minister of Arachne's Web and recent recipient of the Queen's Cypher.

 to Elspeth the Semstress, who won the Beadwork competition at June Crown. Best wishes in your new home and Kingdom!

 to Anne of Bradford and Eliska z Jihlavy, recipients of the Silver Nib; Jaida al Rakhshanda, recipient of a Melan Pteron Cynaguae; Ella Gajewi, admitted to the Order of the Friendly Castle; Katherine ni Chaellaigh, who received a Princess's Favor; and Sorcha Fhionn inghean ui Ruairc, awarded a Corolla Aulica.

 to Sabrina de la Bere, admitted to the Order of the Western Lily [*about time!* - Ed.].

 to Giuliana di Benedetto Falconieri, who has completed the 1st and 2nd levels of the Apprenticeship Program.

 to those admitted to the **Order of the Queen's Treasure**, primarily for their wonderful Kingdom Pouches and other items: Aldith St. George, Brid Hecgwihht, Caterina nic Sheamus, Catherine Lorraine, Euriol of Lothian, Evaine MacGregor, Francesca von Hesse, Isela di Bari, Iulitta Rowan, Jenna Whitehart, Judith of Stormholde, Katherine de Langelei, Kellyn Firesinger, Kira Leonovna Zemhadushina, Letitia de Scotia, Liesel Helmschmied, Sabrina de la Bere, Sabrina Goldbender, Sorcha Fhionn, and Thryi de Peel. 

C R E D I T S & C O N T A C T S

Guild Mentors

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

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GUILD PATRON

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WEB PAGES

WK Needleworkers Guild Website	http://www.bayrose.org/wkneedle/
WKneedle Mailing List	http://groups.yahoo.com/group/WKneedle/
Fall 2003 Collegium:	http://www.angelfire.com/ca5/tbaldacci/collegium/collegium.html