



Tent stitches in wool on canvas using a wide selection of colours to create natural shading and to give the design depth and movement. Traditionally used for chair covers and cushions, canvas shading can also be used to create effective conventional or abstract images for pictures or wall hangings.

AIM – To create canvaswork embroidery showing mastery of naturalistic shading to an advanced level, using multiple shades in the needle.

Please note: All preparatory work (e.g. outlines, drawings, stitch plans, original source material) MUST be handed in for assessment or the work will not be marked.

DESIGN

Finished size approximately A5 measurements, 21cm x 15cm (8in x 6in)

Try to think of some design ideas before you come; books, photos, magazines and postcards could be your source material.

The best subjects have large areas in which to depict subtle shading. “Still Life” scenes, flowers and fruit are popular choices giving you plenty of scope for three-dimensional shading. Landscapes can also be appropriate, but make sure that there is sufficient shading from light to dark within the design. Try not to choose designs with lots of small, intricate details.

Do be flexible in your approach, listen to your tutor’s experienced advice and be prepared to alter your initial ideas if necessary.

BACKGROUND – may be worked in stitches other than tent stitch – for example Cashmere stitch or Milanese stitch. If you choose to work a tent stitch background, work it in the basket weave style to produce a more even surface.

BORDER – this is optional.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Please see *Project Evaluation* sheet for details

TIPS

- Make sure you are using tent stitch and not half cross-stitch as this will aid even tension.
- Ensure you are stitching with even tension to produce a smooth surface. Canvas shading can appear very bumpy when not worked evenly.
- Threads should not be carried across the back of the work, as this would cause unnecessary bulk.
- Do not carry dark colours into light areas unless appropriate to the design.
- Blend different colours of similar tone where appropriate to create a realistic effect – eg mixing pink and orange together will give a peach colour. This is known as “blending in the needle”.
- Prior to starting your piece, create a palette of your chosen colours, using blending in the needle where appropriate. This will aid your decision-making later on in the project.



- Short lengths of thread should be used to keep stitching smooth, to stop the threads from wearing out and losing their shine.
- Overworking of stitches to correct mistakes is not acceptable.
- Use sufficient number of threads in the needle to adequately cover the canvas ground, as no canvas should show at the end.
- Check your work when finished, as it is easy to miss stitches!
- To enable easier mounting, the canvas can be stretched after completion if it is misshapen. However this is not usually necessary when the canvas is worked on a tight frame throughout.
- When mounting, cut away the excess canvas from the corners and there should be an even amount of canvas rebate around the edge when mounted.

MATERIALS

- 18 TPI antique single canvas mounted onto a slate frame.
- Appleton's crewel wool
- Needles – Tapestry Nos 20, 22, 24
- A waterproof pen only should be used to draw on your design, as pencil will rub off onto your threads. **Test** the pen to ensure it is waterproof.

The Royal School of Needlework stock a wide range of Appleton's crewel wool.

BOOKS

Most books written about canvaswork include stitches that will not be used in this project. However, they contain useful information about tension etc.

For a description about the difference between tent stitch and half cross-stitch see:

- Owen Davies & Gill Holdsworth - "Embroidered Knot Gardens" ISBN 978-0713489668
- Pages 43 & 44, Jan Beaney and Jean Littlejohn "A Tale of Two Stitches" ISBN 978-0954601409

General reference books:

- Rachel Doyle "The RSN "Essential Stitch Guide: Canvaswork" ISBN 978-1844485871
- Anchor "Canvaswork Embroidery Stitches" ISBN 978-0715306314
- Mary Rhodes - "Dictionary of Canvas Work Stitches" ISBN 978-0713433012
- Betty Barnden "The Embroidery Stitch Bible" ISBN 978-0785831068
- Jo Ippolito Christensen - "The Needlepoint Book" ISBN 978-147654086

STOCKISTS

- Royal School of Needlework (Wools; canvas; books) 020 3166 6935 www.royal-needlework.org.uk



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PROJECT EVALUATION

NAME.....

DATE.....

As you work your embroidery, please think about and record how you achieved the various assessment criteria listed below, and record why you made various decisions affecting your embroidery. These questions ask you to reflect on your embroidery work, which helps you gain a deeper understanding of what you have learned in class.

Please sign and date the form and hand it in with your work for assessment.

Assessment Criteria:

1. First Impressions

- The work is well presented and clean with no alien fibres /10
- No design lines or canvas are visible as a result of missed stitches and/or thread density /10
- The thread condition is good. The thread is not fluffy or thin and retains its sheen and twist /10
- No fibres are visible from the front caused by incorrect starting and finishing of threads /10

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2. Design

- The design is appropriate and has been adapted well to this technique /10
- The choice of colours enhances the design /10
- There is a 3 dimensional and realistic effect achieved through the shading /20

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3. Appropriate Use of Thread and Colours

- The colours used are sympathetic with one another and enhance the design /20
- The selection of colour replicates the design and is appropriate for each individual area /15
- No dark colours run behind light areas and vice versa /15

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4. Tension and Accuracy of Stitches

- The stitch tension is consistent, smooth and even and there are no loose threads or stitches /10
- The stitches are all at the correct angle and if using an alternative background or border stitch it has been worked correctly /5
- The correct number of threads has been used in the needle for the stitch to achieve even, smooth coverage /5
- No obvious lumps or bumps are visible from the front indicating tangled threads on the back.) /10
- There is no evidence of over-working of stitches /10

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5. Shading and Overall Effect

- Shading gives a realistic effect so that the embroidery has depth and movement and does not appear flat /30
- Where two sections meet the colour enhances the design and the meeting point is smooth /30

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6. Mounting

- The board has been cut with 90 degree corners and straight edges /5
- The design is placed straight on the board with an even rebate on the front; the fabric grain is straight to the edges of the board /5
- The canvas is pulled tautly across the board to remove creases, bubbles and puckering /5
- There are no pinpricks visible along the edges of the board /5
- The corners of the canvas have been folded neatly and are square and flat /5
- The sateen is on the grain, taut and clean with square corners and even rebate /5
- The slip stitches are consistently of even size with no slip stitches or pinpricks visible /5

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The following questions encourage you to reflect on your embroidery work and your experience at the RSN. They provide helpful feedback so that we may continuously improve what we do. In order to provide anonymity, the following page is separate. Please sign and date the bottom of this page and hand in with your work.

Embroidery

What did you enjoy most in stitching this piece? Why?

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Did your decisions work well and are you satisfied with the results?

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What did you find most challenging in working this piece? Why?

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What, if anything, would you do differently in the future?

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Did the design evolve over time and were you influenced by your tutor, fellow-students or other source to develop your original ideas?

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The next time you employ this technique, what aspects of the design and/or embroidery will do you differently?

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Signed..... Date.....

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Teaching & Environment

Which aspects of the teaching were particularly helpful to you in working this piece?

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Was any part of the teaching advice confusing or unhelpful in any way?

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Is there any advice or instruction that would have been helpful to you if it had been given during your classes?

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What is your opinion of the materials provided by the RSN for this project?

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Do you know of any additional resources (books, textiles collections, websites etc.) that will help future students in this technique?

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Did you enjoy the learning environment at the RSN? Is there anything we could improve?

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