

**2024-2025**  
ACADEMIC YEAR

**ROYAL SCHOOL OF NEEDLEWORK**

**DIPLoma**

**STUMPWORK**



Patron: HRH The Duchess of Cornwall  
President: HRH The Duchess of Gloucester



**Raised embroidery originated in the 17<sup>th</sup> century combining different embroidery and needlelace techniques. Traditionally showing historical or biblical subjects often on wooden caskets or mirror frames. Stumpwork today can be used to illustrate a contemporary narrative.**

**AIM** – To work a Stumpwork embroidery figure demonstrating an understanding of design and technical skill in the choice, application and use of fabrics, threads and technique. Designs should not be directly copied from other sources; referencing, interpreting or stylising shapes or designs is acceptable however designs should be original you, which your tutor will encourage you to do.

## **DESIGN**

Try to come with some ideas for your design. Your design source(s) should be clear and crisp. The tutors will be able to make suggestions and help you bring your ideas together to create your own original design.

When creating a design for stumpwork, proportion is key. This should generally be realistic, but if not then it should be deliberately out of proportion (e.g. large figure next to a tiny castle, which is quite traditional).

**Do be flexible in your approach, listen to your tutors' experienced advice and be prepared to alter your initial ideas if necessary.**

- The finished size should sit comfortably within A4 measurements, 21cm x 30cm (approximately 8in x 12in)
- The stumpwork figure should measure 10cm – 12cm.
- It is best to avoid bare shoulders and wrists on figures because of joins.
- Props should be carefully considered and usually should be made rather than bought.
- Try to choose a design where the techniques will fit naturally (needlelace in particular) and not look out of place.
- Try not to depend on “found” or bought accessories and embellishments – if needed, generally they should be made.
- The figure must have:
  - A stitched face
  - A padded body
  - Worked hand or hands
  - At least 4 ‘slips’ as part of the figure’s clothing or background; at least two of which should be needlelace stitches (to be worked separately and applied)
- The piece should also use a variety of the following techniques:
  - Embroidered slips
  - Detached embroidered shapes
  - Wired organza shapes
  - Wrapped beads
  - Wrapped wire
  - Buttonhole and needle-woven picots
  - Appliqué
  - Surface stitching

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## **MOUNTING**

The final piece should be mounted onto mount board, with wadding between the embroidery and the board. This will cushion any plunged ends and prevent lumps on the front.

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

## **TIPS**

- Keep needlelace slips neat and keep tension even. Make sure that needlelace is consistent at the edges of shapes with no gaps.
- Make sure wire covered hand(s) are worked smoothly and that no wire shows through the wrapped thread. Hands should be of an appropriate size – discuss with your tutor.
- Make sure your embroidered or canvas slips, if used, are turned back accurately with no raw or frayed edges showing.
- All your raised embroidery techniques, such as covered beads, or picots, need to be neatly worked, with good tension.

## **MATERIALS**

Background fabric: calico, cotton, linen or silk, with the option to paint.

Figure: felt, wadding, paper covered or florist wire.

Stranded cottons, perlé, Appleton's wool, coton a broder, and other threads.

Please discuss materials specific to your design with your tutor.

Needles: A good selection of all types.

## **BOOKS**

- Barbara and Roy Hirst "Raised Embroidery" ISBN 978-1853915789
- Kate Sinton 'RSN Essential Stitch Guide: Stumpwork' ISBN 9782756521992
- Barbara Hirst "Raised Embroidery: A practical guide to decorative Stumpwork" ISBN 978-1853912030
- Ros Hills & Pat Gibson "Needlelace Stitches" ISBN: 0-85219-758-6
- Xanthe Brooke "The Lady Lever Art Gallery – Catalogue of Embroideries" ISBN: 0-7509-0149-7
- Jane Nicholas "Complete Book of Stumpwork Embroidery" ISBN: 978-1863513418

## **STOCKISTS**

- Royal School of Needlework (wires) [www.royal-needlework.org.uk/retail](http://www.royal-needlework.org.uk/retail)
- Blue Ribbon cake shop, East Molesey (paper covered wire)
- John Lewis (ribbons, fabrics) [www.johnlewis.com](http://www.johnlewis.com)
- VV Rouleaux (ribbons and trimmings) [www.vvrouleaux.com](http://www.vvrouleaux.com)
- The Silk Route (Silk dupion) 01252 835781 [www.thesilkroute.co.uk](http://www.thesilkroute.co.uk)
- MacCulloch & Wallis (Silks, fabrics, threads) Dering St, (Nr Oxford St) London 020 7629 0311 [www.macculloch-wallis.co.uk](http://www.macculloch-wallis.co.uk)
- Oliver Twists Tel. 0191 416 6016 (space-dyed threads and fabrics)

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- Stef Francis (space-dyed threads/fabrics) Tel. 01803 323004  
[www.stef-francis.co.uk](http://www.stef-francis.co.uk)
- JG Threads (space-dyed cotton, rayon & fabrics) Tel. 01202 73525  
[www.jgthreads.com](http://www.jgthreads.com)



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