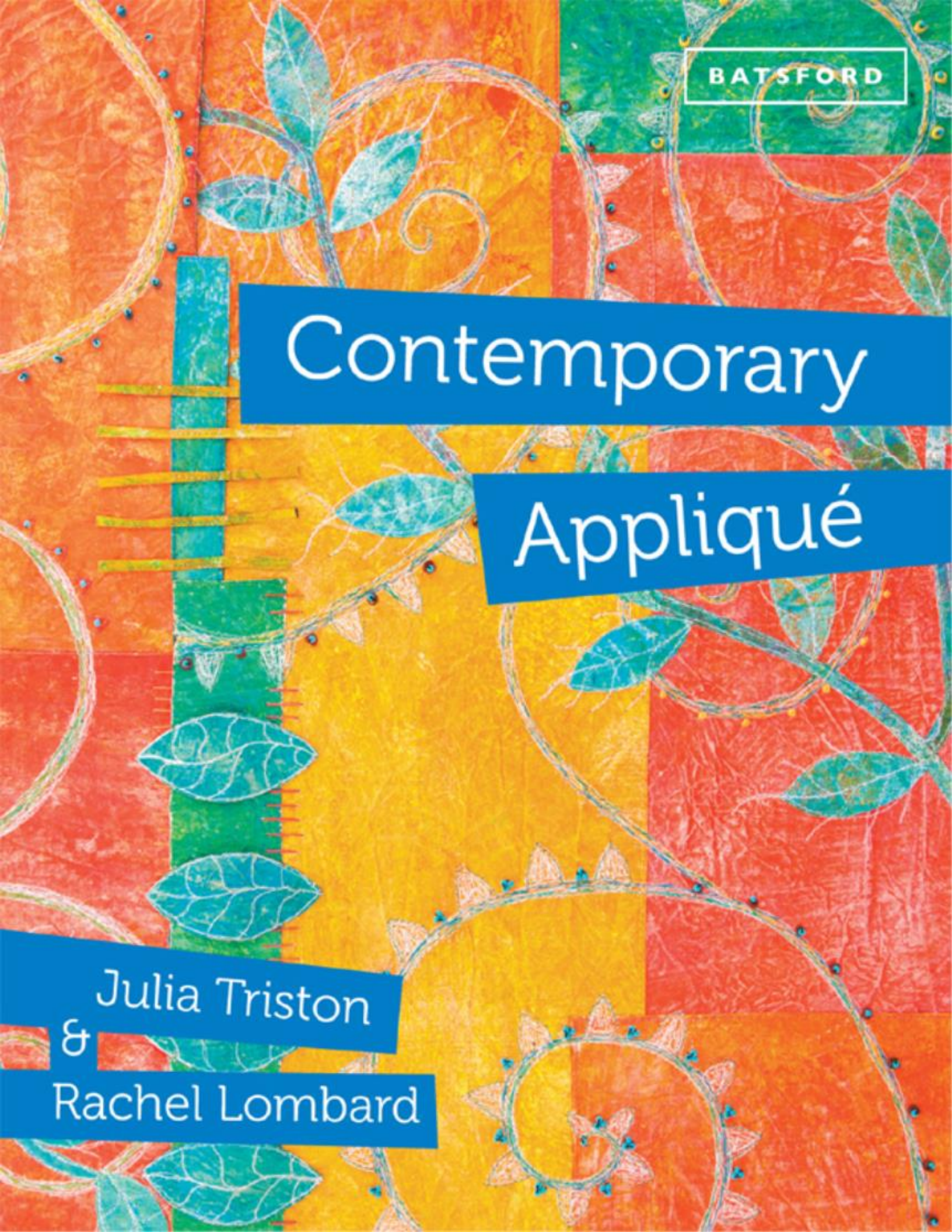
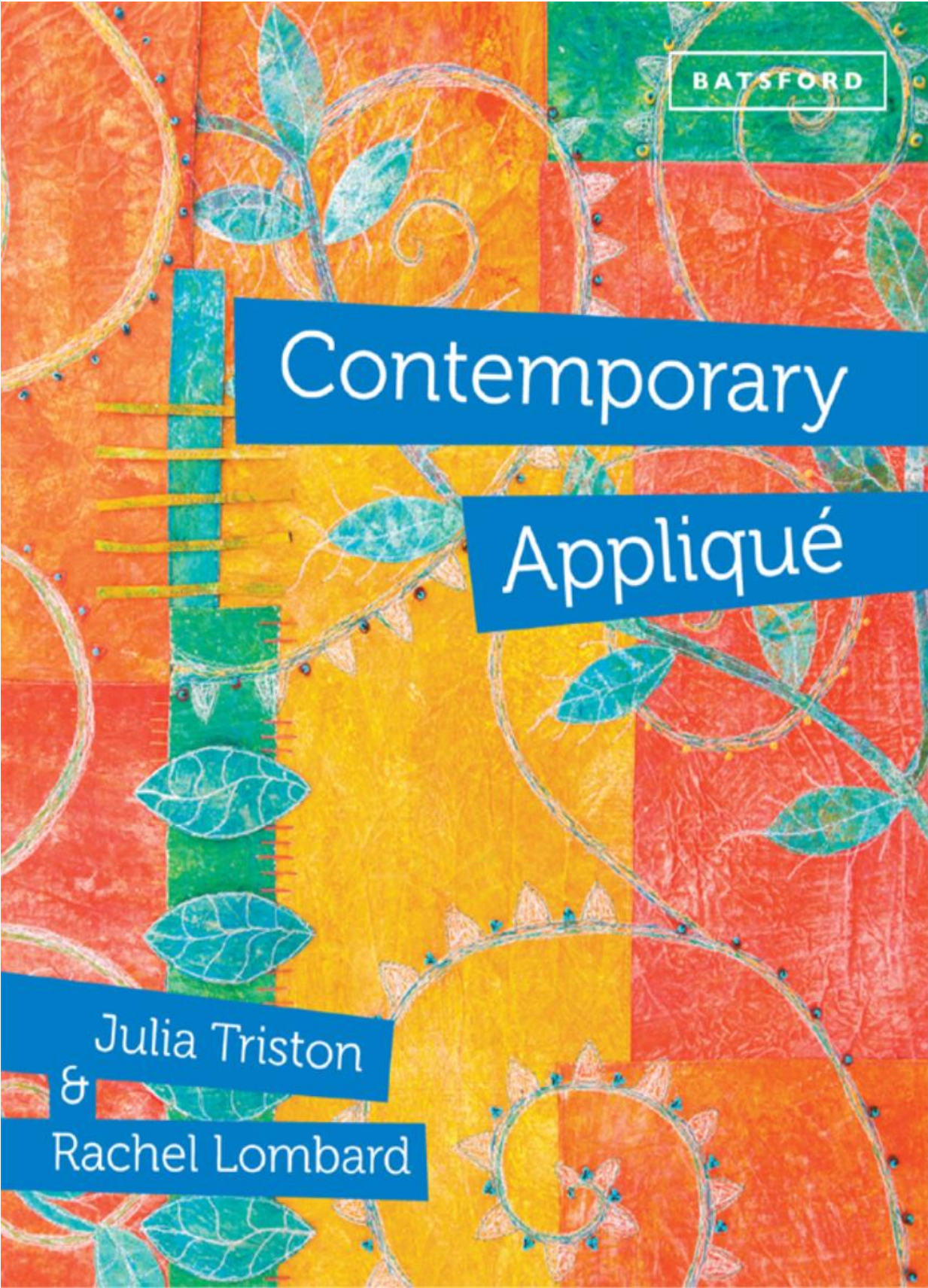




BATSFORD

Contemporary Appliqué

Julia Triston
&
Rachel Lombard



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Appliqué



Sprig (Mandy Pattullo). Hand stitched appliqué on vintage quilt fragment.



Bright Spot (detail) (Julia Triston). Constructed textured appliquéd surface; cotton patches applied to cotton foundation with whip stitch in free machine embroidery.

Dedication

To Zoë Triston and Tim Triston. Thanks for being such brilliant, inspiring and loving human beings; you are the best. And thanks to my mum, Joan Baker, for being there and for believing in me. To the memory of Natalie Jane Davies and 'Daisy' Jane Few Dodds: two wonderfully creative women who knew how to lead their lives to the full.

Julia Triston

Dedicated to David, with love, 'we've been a long long time together, through the hard times and the good'. To James, Christopher and Siân you are each unique and wonderful. Also to Elsie, the dog, our favourite furry friend.

Rachel Lombard

Contents

Foreword

Introduction

Part 1 Appliqué in context

Historical perspectives

Ancient appliqué

Medieval appliqué

Sixteenth to eighteenth centuries

Nineteenth and twentieth century to the present day

Cultural contexts

Dress

Banners

Narrative hangings

Interiors

Symbolism – shape and colour

Appliqué now

Planning and forming ideas

What shall I make?

Keeping records

Conclusion to Part 1

Part 2 Design skills

Design for appliqué

Why design?

Formal elements

Formal principles

Conclusion to Part 2

Part 3 Appliqué: the basics

Materials and equipment

Fabrics

Threads

Tools and equipment

Transferring designs

Transfer methods

Appliqué by hand and machine

Preparing fabrics

Stabilizing fabrics

Hand-stitched appliqué

Machine-stitched appliqué

Conclusion to Part 3

Part 4 From tradition to innovation

Appliqué techniques

Mola work

Indian-style appliqué

Inlaid appliqué

Bonded appliqué

Broderie Perse

Cutaway appliqué

Shadow appliqué

Collage

Three-dimensional appliqué

Sculptural forms

Pushing the boundaries

Specialist fabrics

Unusual materials

Breaking the rules

Non-stitch

Appliqué or embellishment?

Conclusion to Part 4

Glossary

Suppliers

Bibliography and further reading

Acknowledgements and picture credits

Index

Foreword

This book is about appliqué – the art of decorating one fabric with another. 'Appliqué' is an umbrella term that encompasses a collection of techniques, such as layering, patching, applying and overlaying, which can be interpreted in myriad ways.

Each technical variation of appliqué has its own structure and formal method of working within set boundaries as well as the expectations of function and appearance. But these boundaries can be broken, developed and reinterpreted so that appliqué becomes contemporary and relevant for your own work and practice.

As well as setting appliqué within its historical and traditional contexts, we will take you on a journey of new ideas and imaginative ways to develop distinctive and individual designs; create exciting compositions; use unusual combinations of materials; and explore innovative and creative approaches for each method.

Enjoy discovering the exciting possibilities of appliqué!



Tea Time Treats (Donna Cheshire). From left to right: 'Rosie Lea', 'Garden Party', 'It's Always Sunny in the Tea Tent'; collaged appliquéd surfaces with free machine embroidery on recycled tins.



Flourish (detail) (Emily Notman). Bonded, stitched and burned appliquéd surface with natural and handmade embellishments.

Introduction

The possibilities for the exploration of appliqué are endless. It can be explored two- and three-dimensionally; it can be delicate and transparent or thick and chunky; it can be on a large or more intimate scale; it can be created in fabrics, plastics, papers or metals; it can be used in layers and multiples to repeat patterns; it can play with shape and form; and it can be the main feature or a smaller component or highlight of a piece of work.

In its simplest form, appliqué is the technique of stitching a small patch of cloth on to the surface of a larger foundation cloth, and was traditionally used to repair small holes and tears in clothing and furnishings.

From these utilitarian beginnings, appliqué has evolved to become an expressive and creative art form in its own right. In contemporary appliqué, the emphasis is now on surface embellishment and decoration. Wide ranges of colours, textures and materials can be innovatively combined to create individual and personal textile artwork, from quilts and soft furnishings to clothing, jewellery and wall art.

In this book we will build on a foundation of traditional knowledge and skills, and show you that appliqué is very much alive. It is relevant to, and at

***the cutting edge of, contemporary surface decoration
and textile design.***

Part 1

Appliqué in context



Antique Hmong Tribe traditional costume fragment (detail), (collection of Julia Triston). Hand-appliquéd cottons onto fabric strips with embroidered surface decoration.

Historical perspectives

Ancient appliqué

Medieval appliqué

Sixteenth to eighteenth centuries

Nineteenth and twentieth century to the present day

Cultural contexts

Dress

Banners

Narrative hangings

Interiors

Symbolism – shape and colour

Appliqué now

Planning and forming ideas

What shall I make?

Keeping records

Conclusion to Part 1

Historical perspectives

Historically, textiles were highly prized and valued for their beauty as well as their function, as they were time-consuming and labour-intensive to produce. Because there were few alternative materials suitable for wrapping, carrying, sheltering, shrouding and clothing, textiles held a status and importance in everybody's lives; we have lost this respect for textiles today. In our modern throwaway world we take for granted the availability, variety and cost of textiles.

Appliqué has existed for thousands of years. Although textiles by their nature deteriorate and disintegrate over time and colours fade, beautiful examples of exquisitely designed and intricately worked appliqué have survived from all over the world. These give us a tantalizing insight into the historic use and importance of appliqué, and an appreciation of the technical skill and creativity of the people who used this method of decorating one cloth with another.

Ancient appliqué

Archaeological excavations reveal that richly decorated appliquéd and embroidered textiles were closely associated with, and reflected the elite status of, the deceased. They were entombed with the revered dead to accompany them to the afterlife, giving us a fascinating insight into the everyday lives and lost worlds of ancient civilizations.

Some of the earliest surviving appliqués have been discovered in Ancient Egyptian tombs. Mummified animals have been found wrapped in appliquéd cloths, and a linen collar with appliquéd petals dating back 3,000 years was discovered in Tutankhamen's tomb.

In southern Siberian tombs, examples of felt and leather appliqué, dating back to the fifth century BC, were discovered in the 1920s. These highly decorative and incredibly well-preserved appliquéd carpets and wall hangings, saddle blankets and coverings were made by the early nomadic tribes of the Pazyryk region of the Altai Mountains. It is astonishing that these beautiful textiles really are 5,000 years old – the colours, textures, designs and workmanship are so intact that they could have been made yesterday. It is only because of exceptional

climatic conditions that these precious ancient textiles have survived.

Although much of the physical evidence of appliqué has been lost with the passage of time through deterioration, wear and tear, and recycling, there is such a consistency in the use of materials, designs and technique, it is obvious that the traditions of appliqué have been passed from generation to generation through the ages.

For centuries, textiles were a valuable trading commodity and, as they were traded between cultures, ideas about appliqué were exchanged, designs were reinterpreted and techniques were adapted to make them more suitable for use with locally available materials and cultural tastes.



Saddlecloth, 218 × 68cm (86 × 27in), 5th–4th century BC (Pazyryk culture, Siberia, collection of The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg). The whole surface of this white felt saddlecloth, except for a narrow band beneath the saddle, is covered with

***ornamental inlay felt appliqué, with horseshoe shapes
in the border.***

Medieval appliqué

Disease also played its part in the development of appliqué. In England, the Black Death of 1348 contributed to the destruction of the system of medieval guilds and workshops where skilled textile workers and embroiderers produced vestments and hangings for the Church and the wealthy elite. The style of embroidery at this time, known as Opus Anglicanum (English work), predominantly involved exquisite metal thread and silk stitching, and was intricate, expensive and time-consuming to produce. These pieces were highly valued and exported throughout Europe.

The decimation of a highly skilled professional workforce had a dramatic impact on the way that textiles were decorated: appliqué increasingly began to be used as a less costly substitute for solid embroidery on military regalia and ecclesiastical vestments, and European embroidery became more of a domestic art form. Appliqué was widely used to suit the needs and resources of the household and continued to be popular as it could involve the endless recycling and reworking of older textiles. It was used on covers, household linen, curtains, clothing and furnishings as a decorative feature and for small-scale mending.

Sixteenth to eighteenth centuries

In large, grand households, where a greater wealth of resources was available, appliqué featured on a more significant scale. The important allegorical Hardwick Hall panels, stitched by Bess of Hardwick, Countess of Shrewsbury, are a fine example of sixteenth-century appliqué. They show the use of recycled vestments, which would have found their way into private hands at the time of the Reformation.



Embroidery for a casket c.1650 depicting King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (collection of The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle). Raised embroidery in coloured silks and metal threads with needle lace and seed pearls, applied as wired, padded slips to a silk foundation later (probably in the 1960s) mounted over a wooden carcass.

In the late seventeenth century there was a fashion for a three-dimensional style of appliqué known as raised work or stumpwork. This lively, secular form of English embroidery adorned caskets, mirrors and

narrative pictures, often of a biblical theme. Individual motifs were stitched and then padded and applied as a 'slip' to a background of silk, satin or velvet.

An important step in the history of appliqué was the development of a patched and pieced style of quilt-making by settlers in North America throughout the seventeenth century. Trade restrictions put in place by the British severely limited the import of cloth into North America, which forced the settlers to find ever more inventive and creative ways to use and reuse available fabrics. By the time the British lifted the trading restrictions in 1826, the integration of appliqué into quilt-making was firmly established and continues to develop to this day. Fine examples are the album quilts of the mid-nineteenth century and the distinctive Baltimore quilts, many of which were stitched by groups of women working together.

Hardwick Hall 12
Health and safety 117
Howard, Constance 16
Hungary 20
India 23, 86–89
Indigenous peoples
 Fon people, Benin 23
 Hmong people, Thailand 20
 Kuba people, Congo 21
 Kuna Indians 20, 84
Interiors 24
Khayamiya 24
Lawrence, Sandra 17
Macbeth, Ann 14
Machine stitch 74–79, 112
 Free machine embroidery 78–79
 Hard edges 74
 Preparing motifs for 74
 Soft edges 76
Making holes 113
Mixed media 28
Morris, William 14
Motifs 27, 67
 Bars 88
 Constructed 101
 Flower 86, 87
 Preparation for hand appliqué 69
 Preparation for machine appliqué 74
 Raised/padded 101
 Stencil cut-outs 88
 Stuffed forms 101
 Triangles 89
Narrative Hangings 23

Needles

'Alternative' 111

Hand stitch 73

Machine stitch 74, 112

Newbury, Jessie 14

Op Art 17

Opus Anglicanum 12

Overlord Embroidery 17

Pazyryk textiles 10

Pin-stitch 96

Planning 28, 30–31

Raised work 13, 101

Recording 32

Recycling 12, 13, 18, 94

Royal School of Needlework 17

Schiaparelli, Elsa 17

Slips 13

Stumpwork 13

Surrealists 17

Symbolism 23, 27,

Sketchbooks 32

Threads 54

'Alternative' 111

Hand stitch 54

Machine stitch 54, 112

Tools 56–57

Transferring designs 58–65

Carbon paper 62

Freehand drawing 60

Prick and pounce 63

Removing transferred marks 65

Soap and net 64

Taking (basting) 62

***Templates and stencils* 60**

***Tracing* 60**

***Unusual materials* 107–108**

***Working design* 58–59**

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