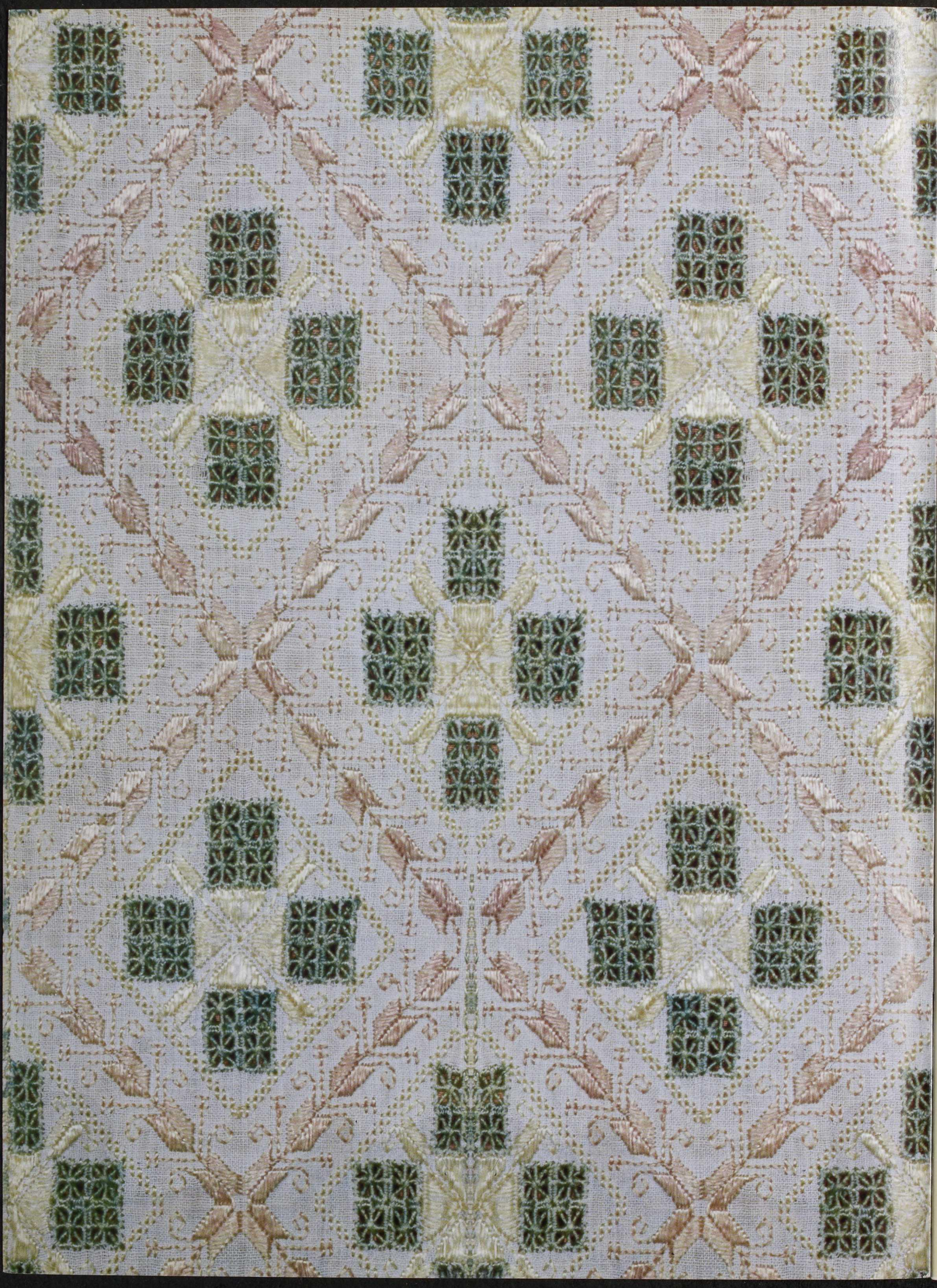




Cora Ginsburg



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TITI HALLE

Donna Ghelerter • Michele Majer



*A Catalogue
of exquisite & rare works
of art including 16th to 20th century
costume textiles & needlework
2000*

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OCTAGONAL SEWING BASKET WITH ACCESSORIES
English, 1770-1790

For the eighteenth-century woman of leisure skilled in the arts of the needle, a well-stocked sewing basket was indispensable to her daily routine. With its contents of pins and needles, threads, thimbles, scissors and other articles, the basket was used at home and also taken along on social occasions. This fancy octagonal basket, which survives with its original sewing accessories intact, would certainly have been admired by the owner's female acquaintances.

Richly brocaded dress silks, dating from 1750 to 1765 and no longer in fashion for clothing, are reused here, wonderfully demonstrating the appreciation of expensive fabrics in the eighteenth century. Pieces of floral silk edged with metallic thread cover the sides of the basket's base and green silk taffeta is used for the drawstring pouch. The sewing basket's contents are both charming and useful. There is a beribboned pin cushion made from silk and metallic brocade; a heart-shaped needle case of silk satin with heart-shaped felt sheaves; a pink straw case filled with dried peas for making buttons; a thread case of brocaded silk containing silk thread-wrapped paper cards; and a "housewife," or folding wallet, for storing needles and thread, made from numerous pieces of brightly colored silks.

8" H x 6" Diameter



MEMORIAL PICTURE BY BETSEY ANN SLOCUM
American, ca. 1810

The maker of this picture was working within the tradition of embroidered memorial pictures but instead of using needle and thread, ink was the chosen medium. At the upper right corner is the inscription, "Painted by Betsey Ann Slocum." Betsey Slocum's picture includes the expected elements of an early nineteenth-century mourning picture: grieving figures, urns, and a weeping willow tree. Like printwork memorials which were embroidered in black silk to emulate engravings, here the fine black inked lines on a white linen ground also suggest the engraved sources from which the imagery for embroidered mourning pictures was originally appropriated.

The earliest known embroidered mourning piece was made in 1791. But it was George Washington's death in 1799 which is believed to have been the impetus for the countless memorial pictures made by American schoolgirls in the early nineteenth century when mourning became a commonplace theme in American decorative arts. As no names appear on the two urns drawn by Betsey Slocum, the picture withholds any sense of a specific loss yet captures with originality the fashionable appeal of its subject matter.

14.75" H x 17" W

PAIR OF EMBROIDERED CHINOISERIE PANELS
English, ca. 1700

Delicately rendered Chinoiserie figures, fantastic birds and fenced pagodas mingle on these panels along with the traditional elements of Queen Anne embroideries. Typical of early eighteenth-century English needlework, spot motifs are irregularly placed against a false quilted vermicelli ground. Although an Eastern aesthetic prevails, decidedly Western-looking squirrels sit perched on leaves and the result is a feeling of subtle exoticism. This sensibility illustrates the ongoing influence of English pattern books featuring Chinoiserie ornamentation such as the well-known *Treatise of Japanning and Varnishing* by John Stalker and George Parker (1688). These publications supplied imagery throughout the decorative arts; when used for needlework, designs were freely exchanged. A bird worked on an embroidered panel in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum (T.15-1961) is identical to one of the birds found here while the other motifs differ.

These embroideries reflect the English appropriation of Chinese design, retain the original rich colors of the silk threads and demonstrate the refinement for which Queen Anne needlework is renowned.

35.5" H x 52" W each







PAINTED AND DYED COTTON PALAMPORE
Indian Export, 1700-1750

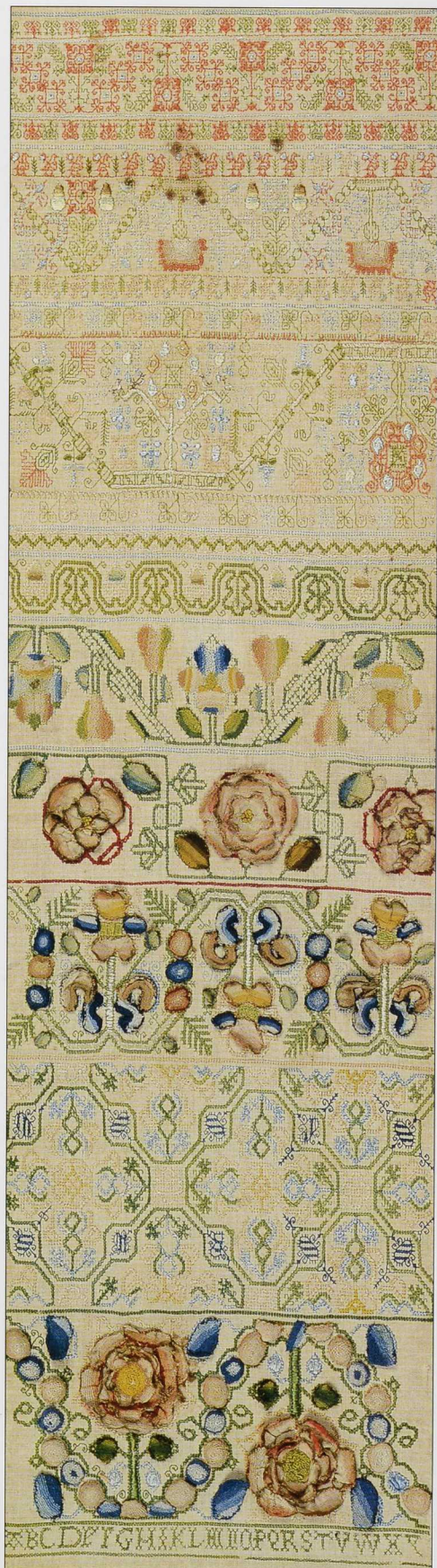
The renown of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Indian chintzes derives from their fine drawing, luxurious colors and sinuous forms. The combination of these qualities, as seen on the palampore above, results in textiles of exquisite beauty. The making of Indian painted chintzes was one of the most labor intensive of all eighteenth-century textile techniques. The mordants, to which the dye stuffs adhere, were painted on the fabric by hand for each successive dye bath. This method allowed for a delineation of design that was unachievable by other means of ornamentation on fabric practiced at the time, such as block printing or embroidery. Throughout this palampore, small geometric and floral filling patterns define the flower petals, the leaves, the vases, and even the hillocks of the mounds in glorious detail.

While palampores were produced for export to various trading cities of Europe, this piece features stylistic elements indicative of Dutch market tastes. The bold red palette, the central star motif, the mirror-imaged Trees of Life and the corner medallions all suggest Holland as a final destination for this masterly textile.

For a related palampore see *Sitsen uit India*, Ebeltje Hartkamp-Jonxis, 1994, p. 23.

98" H x 84" W





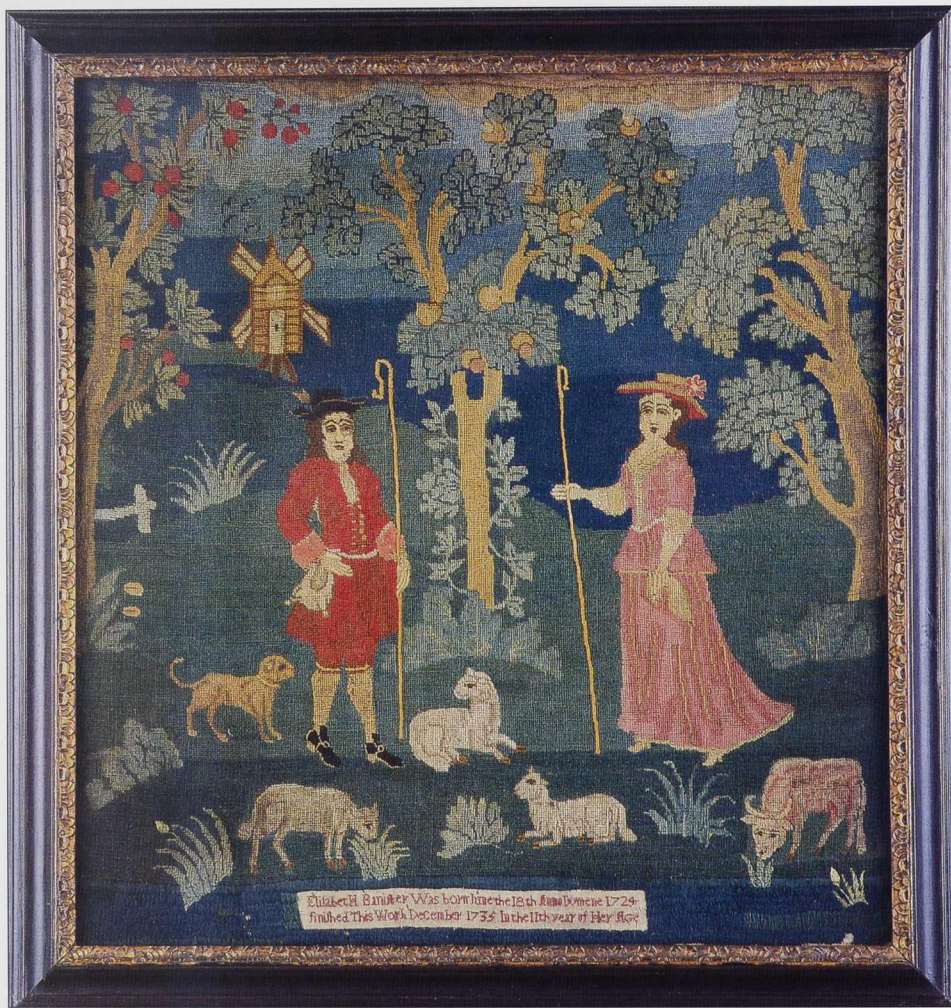
BAND SAMPLER WITH
RAISED WORK FLOWERS
English, ca. 1660

This beautifully executed band sampler is made even more exceptional by the inclusion of raised work motifs, a technique typically employed on pictures and boxes but rarely seen on samplers. The three-dimensional petals and leaves, worked in detached buttonhole stitch, accentuate the sampler's flat forms and surprise the eye. With several of the bands appearing in relief, the embroiderer surpasses what would already have been a high level of proficiency in seventeenth-century sampler making.

Bands of traditionally worked patterns also occur. At the top are finely embroidered leaves and scrolls styled in a geometric manner seen often in seventeenth-century decorative arts; close inspection reveals one of the narrowest sections to be of very small birds and trees; and as a final statement of simplicity, the requisite alphabet appears at the sampler's lower edge, demonstrating an elementary skill amidst evidence of the embroiderer's rich talents.

Illustrated in *Antique Needlework*, Lanto Synge, 1982, plate 16c and *Samplers*, Averil Colby, 1964, pl. 99.

26.5" H x 7.5" W



NEEDLEPOINT PICTURE BY ELIZABETH BANISTER
English or American, dated 1735

Young girls in the eighteenth century mastered the basic skills of needlework at an early age by producing samplers ornamented with alphabets and individual, unrelated motifs. Once assured of their competency, the more rewarding challenge of making needlepoint pictures was undertaken which gave the embroiderer the pleasure of seeing a complete pictorial image unfold as the work progressed. Here a gentleman and a lady pose as a shepherd and a shepherdess surrounded by grazing animals. Pastoral scenes of this kind, worked in wool and silk on canvas, were commonly depicted on both English and American needlework pictures of the eighteenth century.

While inscriptions rarely appear on pictorial embroideries, the lower edge of this piece identifies its maker: "Elizabeth Banister was born June the 18th Anno Domini 1724 – finished this work December 1735 in the 11th year of her age." In perpetuating her sense of accomplishment, Elizabeth Banister provides her name, age, the date of completion, and a fact more commonly omitted, the precise date of her birth.

17" H x 16" W





EMBROIDERED TREE OF LIFE BED CURTAIN
English, 1705-25

In 1700, when Indian cottons were in great demand, the English government, spurred by domestic woolen and silk manufacturers, prohibited the importation of Indian chintz for home consumption. This prohibition lasted for several decades. Viewed in the context of the period, it is interesting to imagine the commissioning of embroidered bed hangings, such as the curtain seen here, designed to emulate Indian chintzes yet far surpass them in extravagance.

In this embroidery the linking of Indian aesthetics and English needlework techniques is boldly evident. The Tree of Life has been appropriated from Indian palampores and brought to England with its exoticism intact, but the workmanship and the materials are purely English. On a luxurious silk satin background, the pattern was first drawn and then embroidered with the richest of materials. Professional needleworkers, skilled in the difficult task of working with metallic threads, satisfied their patrons' taste for conspicuous opulence.

To create the stunning design, silver-gilt-wrapped threads are combined with brightly colored silks. Patterned couching defines the tree's sinuous branches, while long and short, satin and stem stitches are used to create the stylized plant forms. The resulting embroidery, with its vivid beauty, illustrates the dynamic exchange which occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when trade with India extended beyond material goods to include aesthetic ideals as well.

A matching curtain is in the collection of the Dallas Museum of Art; two larger curtains from the set are in a private collection.

105" H x 42.5" W



KNITTING SAMPLERS

Polychrome sampler, initialed T. H.
English, ca. 1790-1800

Whitework sampler, initialed A. O.
and dated 1863

Knitting, one of the most domestic of the needle arts, was used primarily for the making of stockings and undergarments until the twentieth century. While knitting is well suited for such utilitarian purposes, it is at the same time a technique which lends itself to decorative treatments in a variety of ways — two of which are seen here. In the narrow sampler, multicolored silks are knitted in stockinette stitch to produce small-scale flowers, geometric patterns and beribboned garlands which follow late eighteenth-century taste in design. The patterns on this finely worked sampler relate to a group of knitted purses and wallets made by Mary Wright Alsop between 1774 and 1817 (in the collection of The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum). Mary Alsop's pieces demonstrate how the motifs seen on this sampler would have subsequently been used in the making of finished objects.

In the nineteenth century, knitting was often done in a single color with great effect. In the whitework sampler, cotton yarn has been manipulated to form thirty-two lace designs bordered with a sawtooth edging. Made in 1863 by a knitter known only today by the initials embroidered at the top, "A. O.," the delicacy and fineness of the sampler reveal a strong sense of pride in workmanship. While making the sampler gave the knitter a repertoire of openwork patterns which could later be applied to bedcovers, tablecloths and underclothes, it was also a chance for its maker to exhibit her virtuosity, skill and, not least of all, patience.

Whitework sampler: 73.5" H x 5" W
Polychrome sampler: 38.5" x 2.25" W





SET OF NEEDLEWORK BED VALANCES WITH THE STORY OF
QUEEN ESTHER AND KING AHASUERUS
French or English, late 16th c.

Extraordinary for their complexity of design and superb workmanship, these needlepoint valances reflect the height of luxury textiles made in sixteenth-century Europe. Commissioned from a professional workshop, the embroideries with their original vibrant colors depict the biblical story of Queen Esther and King Ahasuerus. In pristine condition, this complete set of three narrative hangings offers a rare view of late Renaissance splendor.

As a fixed component of the bed's decoration, valances provided a perfect vehicle for storytelling and sumptuous display. Often represented in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century needlework was the tale of Queen Esther and King Ahasuerus. An admired female figure from the Old Testament, Esther's loyalty and bravery made her a choice subject for embroideries. The heroic deeds which Esther undertook to save the Jews from Haman's murderous intentions are prominently portrayed on this bed set. Each valance depicts two scenes whereby the major dramatic incidents of the story unfold. In the first, Esther is crowned queen and Mordecai is seen sitting at the town gate; in the second, Ahasuerus offers Esther the golden sceptre and Mordecai is led through the city streets dressed in the king's finest; and in the third, Esther reclines before Haman and the king, and holds a banquet at which she informs the king of Haman's plan to kill the Jews.

The valances, worked with polychrome wool and silk in tent stitch on a linen canvas, exhibit a high degree of attention devoted to the design as well as its execution. The tale is revealed within a setting of interior spaces. In the backgrounds, architectural elements and formal gardens create a densely layered world. Bracketed borders of fruits and flowers outline the valances and form quatrefoils with fruit trees and flowering bushes. Throughout the embroideries, domestic and wild animals inhabit the landscapes. The sensuous textures of silk brocades and figured velvets, seen as draperies and clothing, are richly conveyed, while lace ruffs are embroidered over the tent stitch imparting a sense of delicacy. Padded jewel shapes, representing pearls, rubies and emeralds, appear in necklaces, hair ornaments and crowns, and decorate the hems of women's gowns and the borders of the king's robes.

As was customary in sixteenth-century needlework, the biblical figures are depicted in contemporary clothing. With the exception of Mordecai as he sits outside the gate, all of the characters are arrayed in lavish French and English court fashions. Men's and women's silhouettes alike are exaggerated in their shape and ostentatious in their use of slashed silks, patterned velvets, embroidery, lace, and jewels. Wide heavily starched ruffs are worn by both sexes. According to an amused observer, the protruding and overhanging "peascod belly" of the men's doublets made it difficult for the wearers to "eyther stoupe downe, or decline them selves to the grounde." (Quoted in *Patterns of Fashion*, Janet Arnold, 1985, p. 74.) Women's gowns were equally rigid with their boned bodices, full stiffened sleeves, and copious trained skirts worn over a farthingale, or hooped petticoat. The magnificent *tout ensemble* signaled wealth and the highest social rank.

The richness of the hangings carries over to their reverse sides which would have been seen from the interior of a bed. The valances are opulently lined with embroidered linen bands of the late sixteenth-century. The bands of the two larger pieces are worked with gold and polychrome scrolling florals, while the bands of the smaller valance present drawnwork motifs with peach and green silk embroidery (see frontispiece).

The valances are linked to England and France by aesthetic trends that were current in both countries. While stylistic developments beginning in the seventeenth century serve to distinguish embroidery done in England from that produced on the Continent, at this early date it is the similarities between them that are notable. From the limited number of engraved pattern books existing at the time, images were disseminated throughout Europe and designs taken from one source were combined with those from another. Related late sixteenth-century embroideries include a table carpet depicting Lucretia's Banquet in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; a panel in the collection of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (T21e3), Boston, illustrated in *Textiles*, Adolph S. Cavallo, 1986, fig. 99; and numerous other sets in European and American collections.

Provenance: Château de Bailleul, France

Side valances: 22.5" H x 82.5" W each; center valance: 22.5" H x 70.5" W





CHASUBLE WITH SILK AND METALLIC EMBROIDERY
French, mid-18th c.

Luxury textiles were an important component of the church ritual, both as liturgical vestments and as symbolic accessories on the altar. Although Medieval and Renaissance vestments were generally decorated with Christian imagery, by the eighteenth century figured or embroidered silks were more commonly used. Conservative overall by nature, the church nonetheless specially commissioned and acquired textiles that reflected the prevailing aesthetic. The lush naturalism of the floral motifs and the lace-like bow knots are characteristic of the rococo taste that was dominant in the mid-century.

Reserved for priests and bishops, the chasuble is the outer vestment worn during the celebration of the Eucharist and, according to the church's specifications, should be of silk. The panels of this ivory faille example were embroidered to shape. The brightly-colored silk floral sprays on both front and back, including stylized pansies, irises and tulips, are executed in long-and-short and stem stitches, while couching and laid work are used for the gold trailing bow knots. The brilliance of the metallic embroidery is achieved with a combination of wrapped metallic thread, metallic strip and sequins, and crimped wire, all of which simulate the intricacy of contemporary lace.

The chasuble's resplendence underscores the dignity of the sacred occasion for which it was worn, and attests to the consumption of high quality textiles by the church in the eighteenth century.

41" H x 27" W







FLORAL PANEL WITH TAMBOUR EMBROIDERY
Indian Export, ca. 1750

The thoroughly European aesthetic of the textile's scrolling branches belies its origin as an embroidery worked in India for export to the West. Roses, carnations, and fantastic tendrils bloom from arching floral vines worked with a tambour hook using silk threads on a cotton ground. Indian tambour embroidery of this period is unsurpassed for fineness and delicacy; the panel requires close examination to see the method by which it was made. With surviving examples of such beauty, the desirability and continual appeal of Indian textiles throughout the eighteenth century is visibly evident.

70" H x 35" W





PAIR OF CREWELWORK POCKETS
English, ca. 1740

Before the widespread adoption of purses in the early nineteenth century, pockets served as repositories for all manner of small personal belongings that an eighteenth-century woman needed to carry with her. Tied around the waist, pockets were well concealed yet easily accessible under the fashionably wide skirts. This spacious pair might have held keys and money, a handkerchief, a fan, spectacles and a watch, and other assorted objects.

Although primarily functional, pockets were usually embellished by the wearer for her own delight. The delicately colored floral and acorn sprigs, floral urns and vermicelli pattern are worked in a variety of stitches with crewel yarns on a fustian ground, a sturdy fabric of linen and cotton mix. Presented in mirror image, the motifs are typical of English embroidery at this date both in their evident naturalism and in their isolated placement.

Provenance: Having belonged to Mary Measures of Lincolnshire, England.

16.5" H x 9" W



WOOL APPLIQUÉD TABLE CARPET
American, ca. 1840-45

In the tradition of quilting, black woolen squares have been appliquéd and joined together to complete a table carpet with classic American style. Floral motifs, some with perched red birds, fill the center with an orderly repetition; flowers and grapes scroll along the carpet's edge; and black wool fringe provides a handsome finish. Quilts stitched by nineteenth-century American homemakers were confined to the bedrooms for which they were made. But in homes where needlework of this kind was practiced and appreciated, embroidered and appliquéd table carpets extended women's talents to rooms often unadorned by the products of their imaginative labors.

49" H x 79" W

SISTER EVENING DRESSES ORNAMENTED WITH BEETLE WINGS
Indian Export Fabric, English, 1845-1850

In mid-nineteenth-century Europe, women's fashionable dress displayed a vogue for natural exotica of distant lands such as the beetle wings seen on this pair of dresses. The striking effect of their changeable coloration and jewel-like radiance made them ideal decorative elements for nineteenth-century evening wear. One can readily imagine the vivid impression that these lustrous gowns would have made at an elegant *soirée* as their wearers moved through a gas-lit interior.

Prized for their iridescent brilliance, beetle wings have been used for centuries to embellish textiles, clothing and accessories by widely differing cultures. The hard, convex outer wings required for embroidery are harvested from Buprestids, a family of beetles especially desirable for their high metallic sheen. The fashionable appeal derives from a phenomenon known as interference in which light waves, manipulated by the wings' structure, produce a tantalizing fluctuation of colors.

In the nineteenth century, Indian artisans created many opulent fabrics sought after by stylish European women. These sister dresses, and the accompanying shawl, are constructed from ivory muslin fabric embroidered in India. With a bold pattern of stylized florals, scrolls and even insect motifs (seen on the dress with the shawl), the beetle wings stand out against the delicacy of the cloth. The intensity of the emerald green-to-violet hues is complemented by the glistening gold metallic sequins and twisted gold metallic threads which complete the embroidery.





TAPESTRY SIGNED MARC DU PLANTIER, PF/AUBUSSON
French, 1950s

Born in Madagascar in 1901, Marc du Plantier received his artistic training in Paris at the École des Beaux-Arts and the Académie Jullian. At the start of his career, he worked as a fashion illustrator for Jacques Doucet and as a theatrical designer for the Comédie Française.

It was his interest in the theatre that led him to concentrate on interior decoration from about 1930. The interiors that he created for himself and for his wealthy discriminating clientele display an elegant and refined modern classicism. One of du Plantier's patrons in the mid-1930s was Jacques Heim for whose *salon de couture* on the Champs-Élysées he designed furniture and other objects. Du Plantier's furnishings, paintings and murals reveal his sophisticated handling of the interplay between volume, color and material.

In the 1950s, du Plantier executed tapestry and carpet designs for Pinton Frères, a manufactory established in the mid-nineteenth century with workshops at Aubusson. Pinton Frères commissioned leading artists to create cartoons in the contemporary taste. The large irregularly shaped areas of juxtaposed colors in this slit-woven wool tapestry illustrate the change in du Plantier's painting style from figurative to abstract, which occurred in the years following World War II. Between 1960 and 1962, du Plantier exhibited his tapestries in Paris, New York, Los Angeles, and Mexico.

Du Plantier's evolving modernist sensibility, characterized by a mark of luxury, continued to bring him noteworthy commissions until his retirement in the mid-1960s.

9'11" H x 4'10" W





WHITEWORK MARSEILLES QUILT INITIALLED R. C.
French, 1825-1850

There is a sense of freshness that characterizes the finest examples of whitework embroidery. The French quilt seen here, an illustration of stuffed *broderie de Marseille* quilting, presents an abundance of fruits and plants suitable to its role as a nuptial bedcovering. Adorned with a heart, the central basket overflows with grapes, pomegranates and various flowers. Within the lavishly quilted sides, artichokes, daisies and butterflies appear among the flowering vines.

The quilt's dazzling display of motifs is matched by the industriousness of its technique. With two pieces of cotton placed atop one another on a frame, the design is drawn and the pattern is quilted. Once the sewing has been completed, threads of the cotton cloth on the quilt's back are pushed aside forming small holes into which cotton batting is inserted. The resulting dimensional quality, in combination with the density of the design, gives stuffed Marseilles quilts their richness. While whitework embroidery carries an illusion of simplicity, there is a calculated measure of virtuosity which goes into making a quilt of this caliber from two pieces of white cloth.

86" H x 81" W





UPHOLSTERY FABRIC BY SIGMUND VON WEECH
German, 1929

Early twentieth-century innovations in weaving are seen in this sophisticated fabric by Sigmund von Weech. Working contemporaneously with Bauhaus weavers, the designs of von Weech reflect the scope of textiles, inspired by current trends, which were produced throughout Germany in the 1920s. The fabric's modern sensibility derives from the abstract interplay of a vibrant palette, texture achieved with chenille threads and the layering of colors. In 1921, Von Weech and his wife founded the handweaving firm of Handweberei Sigmund von Weech in Schaftlach where this piece and others of similar patterning were made. These striking upholstery fabrics of rectilinear configurations were probably made in conjunction with tubular steel furniture that von Weech designed in the late 1920s.

Examples of this textile are in the collection of the Textil- und Kunstgewerbesammlung Chemnitz (XII/8687), illustrated in *European Textile Design of the 1920s*, Metz, Mössinger and Poser, 1999, pl. 19; and also illustrated in *Bauhaus 1919-1933*, Benteli Verlag, 1988, fig. 297. Other von Weech designs for textiles and furniture are in the collection of the Neue Sammlung, Munich and illustrated in *Von Morris bis Memphis*, Hans Wichmann, 1990.

24" H x 15" W

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Cover & Frontispiece: Details from a set of late 16th-century needlepoint bed valances, page 14.

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