

Ohiyo gozaimas, tomodachi

Welcome to the quarterly newsletter for Japanese embroidery students. I am very excited about this first issue. I hope you find it as stimulating, interesting and informative as I envision. There are links to additional information at the Needle Artworks web site that you can peruse and download for future reference. There will be several continuing features and others that will be added as space and information is available. Robin Wilks offered to provide glossary terms each newsletter. I am confident you will want to print and keep the information in her *Seeds of Japanese Embroidery* column.

Rena, Sylvia and I are thrilled with the excellent suggestions we received at the box lunch gatherings the third day of each session and during the classes. You will find several of the suggestions incorporated in this newsletter and more will be implemented during the year.

Information Updates

During class I gave a breakdown of what needle to use for twists, couching, transferring the design with a running stitch, etc. This information is now incorporated in the General Information pages you received when you started Phase I. Pages 3 and 4 are in a PDF file at the web site via this link: <http://www.needleartworks.com/edu/je/updates/list.htm> for you to peruse and download.

Based on another suggestion, I have prepared a sticker to place on your felt pad with the numbers of the needles M2 (machine 2) through #10 to help you keep your needles in the proper order. They will be available at the retreats and at the Callaway class next January.

Also, two of the template pages are revised and available as PDF files. Here is the link to the E-Z Angle and the E-Z Divider updates: <http://www.needleartworks.com/edu/je/updates/list.htm>

Stitching Retreats

We have two scheduled retreats in Naples this year...in June and October. The first is June 2, 3, 4, and 5 so the travel dates are Wednesday, June 1 and June 6. There are several links and PDF files that will give you additional information including the airport, hotels within a few miles, glorious shopping, Japanese restaurants, etc. There's also pictures of the stitching room, the main dining room salad bar (for lunches), a reserved, private dining room for our lunches, a few pictures of the 83 acre campus (yep that's what they call the Moorings Park grounds) and the class cost. I've even included a link to the Moorings Park web site as you may find it interesting and want to move here one of these days! The lovely thing about retreats is that it is laid back so you can take an afternoon off to go shopping or have a massage or pedicure, take a leisurely stroll on one of the picturesque walking paths, etc. The reservation sheet is updated with the workshop cost and all pertinent information. It's up at the web site as a PDF file to print as well. http://needleartworks.com/edu/je/retreat/retreat_info.htm

Cyberspace Gallery

During the next three months, I'll be working diligently to refine and expand the picture gallery at the web site. There is a link on the right side of the home page so you can check out additions at your convenience. Here is the direct link: <http://needleartworks.com/edu/je/gallery/05frame/> to the breathtaking 2005 Exhibit and Classroom pieces.

Congratulations!!!!

It's a very exciting time in class when a student completes stitching a design. We all stop what we are doing so we can admire the piece and congratulate the student. This year we had two pieces completed (well almost). Margot Anderson completed *Cascading Chrysanthemums* and Jane Farber is one hour away from finishing *Spring Blossoms*. Hopefully we have images of the pieces in our Cyber Gallery one of these days soon.

And, several stitchers had their designs in the Exhibit or the classroom. Althea DeBrule had her adaptation of a holiday card; Angela Dorrell had 3 pieces, *Cascading Chrysanthemums, Kimono Ribbons & Petite Pansies*; Rena Gordan had 3 designs, *Gold 'n Robes, Noshi, & Flutterbys*; Bettye Hill had 2 pieces, *Hiogi Fan & Kimono Ribbons*; & Robin Wilks shared her *Sake Box and Pansies*.

Japanese Embroidery Tips or *Why didn't I think of that?*

Does your needle squeak and make other annoying noises each time you take a stitch? You may have a great deal of acid in your skin. Another good way to tell is if your needles and laying tool aren't shiny any more. Get out your [four-sided wand](#) and go to work polishing them. Then, before you begin stitching each time, check the needle(s) and the laying tool to see if you need to give them a quick fix.

When is the last time you sharpened your needles? It just takes a few minutes with your four-sided wand and makes a world of difference. Your needles will slide through your fabric like butter and will make each stitch more pleasurable. I'm not saying it will make your stitches more accurate or that you'll stitch faster, but you never know!

Swap Shop or *Tweaking the Stash*

Sometimes we have projects or fabric or equipment that we don't or can't use. Occasionally we are looking for a special book or design and haven't located it. For instance, I've been looking for Emi Wada's book, *My Costumes*, for several years.

If you would like to send this information to me, I'll publish it in the next newsletter. Be sure to include pertinent information so interested stitchers know how to contact you. The newsletters will be broadcast about the 15th of May, August, November, and February.

24 Keys to Successful Stitching

Each morning during the first Callaway session, I talked about ways to make sure you found time to stitch every day. Each issue, I'll give you ideas that will guarantee success! Here's a few to get started:

- Be open to new ideas, stitching methods and techniques.
- Keep your frame set up all the time.
- Find a half hour program you enjoy and listen to it while stitching each day (TV/radio/CD/tapes) as it establishes a consistent daily time/pattern. If you have a television program on, you will probably look up from time-to-time and will automatically rest your eyes. Otherwise be sure to set a timer if you stitch more than 15 minutes. Then look as far in the distance as you can for a minute. Then resume stitching.
- Practice 15 minutes/day rather than 2 hours once a week (It's easier to find 15 minutes in a day to stitch rather than an hour or so.) To quote Arthur Rubinstein, "If I omit practice one day, I notice it. If two days, the critics notice it. If three days, the public notices it." Rubinstein practiced every day for 70+ years.
- Find a friend(s) to stitch with regularly, i.e. once a week or twice a month or even once a month

Seeds of Japanese Embroidery – Robin Wilks

Ohiyo gozaimas, tomodachi! Or, Hello, friends! This is pronounced: ohio (as the state) goh – zah – ee – mahs, toe – moe – dah – chee. Blessings on you and on your stitching.

This column of our newsletter will present Japanese/stitching terms and symbolism, hopefully, making your stitching time more meaningful and fulfilling. Please, let me know if there is something you would like to know more about and I will do my best to find out for you and all of us.

When I began Japanese Embroidery in 1991, I did so not only because the technique was so beautiful, but I was very attracted by the concept that everything in Japanese artistic endeavors had meaning and symbolism. This is indicated by the syllable “do”, or “way”. For example, there is Judo, Aikido, Sumo (all ways of martial arts); Kado (way of flower arranging; Chado (way of Japanese Tea). We share in the way of embroidery, Nuido, which means a development of skills, knowledge and awareness. There is also a spiritual side of Japanese embroidery, called Shishu. In Japanese culture, the heart or spirit is expressed through ones’ hands; that, when we stitch toward ourselves, a peaceful calm rests upon us. This is why we don’t just sit, open up our piece and get to it. We sit, take a few deep breaths, clear our minds, and then begin – well – that’s what’s supposed to occur (sigh).

For this month, I’ll say sayonara with this (from the Forward to Traditional Japanese Embroidery by Master Iwao Saito: “Hopefully, this tradition will spread like the proverbial dandelion, the seeds of which bid farewell to the parent stem and, carried far on the wings of the wind, embed themselves among rooftop shingles, wayside bushes, or freshly plowed furrows. There they lie hidden until the following spring, when they sprout and bloom. May the instructions contained in this manual be like dandelion seed embedding themselves and sprouting fresh and beautiful wherever they are carried around the world.”

Quiz: What is the Japanese term for our laying tool, or BLT? (Answer at end of newsletter) Next time: Why So Many Chrysanthemums? Or, Didn’t Orange Go Out With the Seventies?

Buddy Network

There was an excellent suggestion that we team up advanced students with the Phase I students. If you would like to help mentor a new student, please drop me an e-mail. If you are a new student and would like to have the help and support of a stitcher who has been taking classes for a few years, please let me know.

Jean Cavanaugh

I spoke with a life long friend of Jean’s a couple of days ago. Many of you know that Jean has been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s and has had to move. Bob said Jean loves to get mail and checks the mailbox 2 or 3 times a day. I know she would love to get a card or letter from you. Her address is: c/o Harbor Chase, 100 John Knox Road, Tallahassee, FL 32303

That’s about all I can squeeze into this first issue. Here is the link to download this newsletter as a PDF file: http://needleartworks.com/edu/je/nwsltrs/nws_list.htm

I’d really appreciate your feedback about the newsletter content and any suggestions you have for improvements, additions or changes. Please be sure to add my name to your address book so your ISP doesn’t think the newsletter is SPAM. ☺

Best wishes for three months of memorable Japanese embroidery stitching. Remember, I am as close as the telephone or e-mail if you have questions.

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