



Blackwork Journey Blog

April 2019



Blackwork Journey Koginesque

E - Book 11



Japanese Kogin

'TINY TREASURES' Square - Part 8



Colour, Black & Gold
12 monthly parts!



Take one!

Spring has finally arrived and the months of March and April are very busy this year with talks and day schools and a long awaited visit to Barcelona in Spain.

Spring in Barcelona – what to see and where to go for an embroidery enthusiast.

Top of list is the **Textile and Costume Museum** -
Plaça de les Glòries Catalanes, 37-38, 08018 Barcelona.

It occupies two adjacent buildings, the Palau Nadal and Palau dels Marquesos de Llió, with the latter retaining some of its original 13th-century wooden ceilings. Amongst the items on display are medieval Hispano-Arab textiles, some liturgical vestments and the city's embroidery and lace collection. This is my idea of heaven, especially since the blackwork embroidery, I so enjoy, has its roots in Spain.

The real highlight though is the fashion's history – from the baroque to the 20th century – that collector Manuel Rocamora donated in the 1960's and which is one of the finest collections of its type anywhere.



The body dressed Silhouettes and fashion, 1550-2015

Since ancient times humans have altered the shape and appearance of their body with hairstyles, jewels, tattoos and above all, through the dress.

The different ways of dressing are related to the moral, social and aesthetic codes of each age. Fashion imposes beauty canons and silhouettes and volumes are modified. Nature gives way to artifice. The dress changes the proportions and modifies the relation of the person with respect to the space and of the other individuals.

The dressed body explains how the dress modifies the appearance of the body through actions that tend to compress it and release it alternately, from the sixteenth century to the present day.

Blackwork Journey Blog, April 2019

The link to the video about Silhouettes and Fashion is:

<https://vimeo.com/129598667>

The list of things to do and see is endless, but I will be looking for inspiration for Blackwork Journey and the *Basílica i Temple Expiatori de la Sagrada Família* is a 'must see'. It is a large unfinished Roman Catholic church in Barcelona, designed by Catalan architect Antoni Gaudí.



Basílica i Temple Expiatori de la Sagrada Família

Casa Batlló

I love the quirky and unusual and Barcelona has many such buildings. Casa Batlló, a building in the centre of Barcelona designed by Gaudí, is considered to be one of his masterpieces and along with Park Güell, the waterfront and the galleries there is a lot to explore!

When I travel, I tend to look at things from a different perspective. I love looking at doors and windows and life in the city behind the usual tourist areas. It is the little things that I remember when I look back and at the photographs. Of course, I also look for the needlework shops and any embroidery that I can find. I do my research well in advance and present my long suffering husband with a list of places I would like to see.



Embroidery in Spain was influenced by two major sources, the Christian lands to the North and the Muslim lands to the South. During the Gothic period, embroidery in Spain, as in many other places, was influenced by painting.

During the 13th Century, Church embroideries started to incorporate narrative into the designs. In the early part of the 14th Century, the use of the quatrefoil motif, used to contain figures becomes more widespread.

Blackwork Journey Blog, April 2019

The 15th Century saw the foundation of great workshops through Spain. Each workshop and town had its own characteristic style. These workshops imported artists from Italy and the relationship between painting and embroidery continued to grow. All the workshops used gold thread as the base for their embroidery, but each worked it in different techniques.

I have visited Spain in the past and have seen the influences of Moorish architecture in Granada, Cordoba and Seville and have incorporated some of the Islamic designs into my needlework. I am hoping to extend this aspect of embroidery further over the coming months, an Islamic chessboard for example?

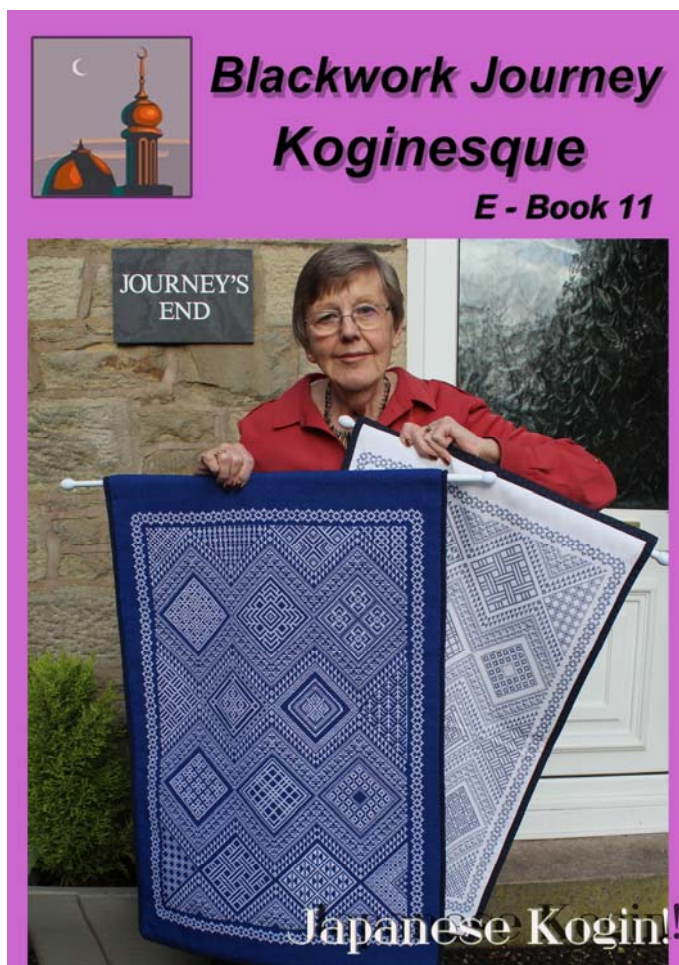
Co-ordinating the website and the Blog needs to be done well in advance and this is fine when there is the Internet and Wi-Fi available. I take it for granted that I will be able to log on anywhere in the world during my travels, but this is not always the case, so please bear with me if I am not able to answer all the e-mails and Facebook comments as quickly as I usually do.

So what is special this month?

EB0011 'Koginesque'

I am very excited that my new e-book on Kogin is published this month. It is called 'Koginesque' and consists of 22 pages of information and patterns.

It is a large piece of Japanese style pattern darning that incorporates all the different Kogin patterns that I really enjoy working. It was designed as a table runner and wall hanging. There are 21 major pattern areas and borders all linking together to form the whole design.



'Koginesque'

Design Area: 23.36 x 33.57 inches, 327 x 470 stitches including border.

Fabric: Zweigart 28 or 32 count evenweave or, 16 count Aida blockweave, 30 x 40 inches minimum.

If the embroidery is to be worked as a hanging, please allow at least 2 extra inches per side ie. 34 x 44 inches for making up.





EB0011 'Koginesque' table runner



PR0052 Take One

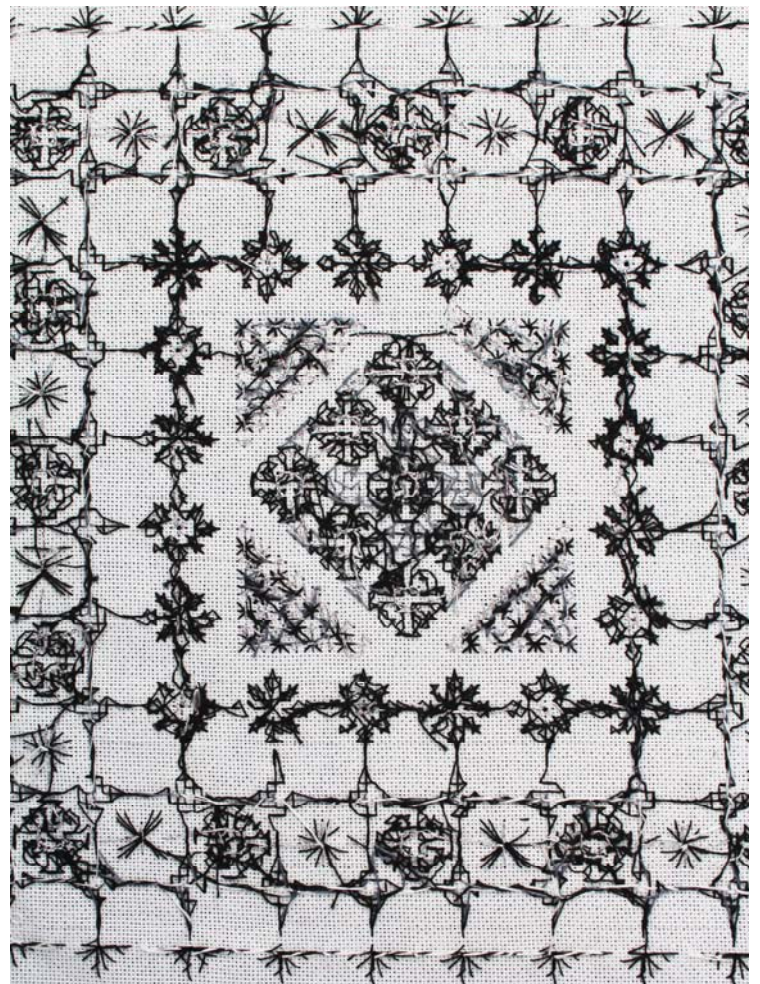
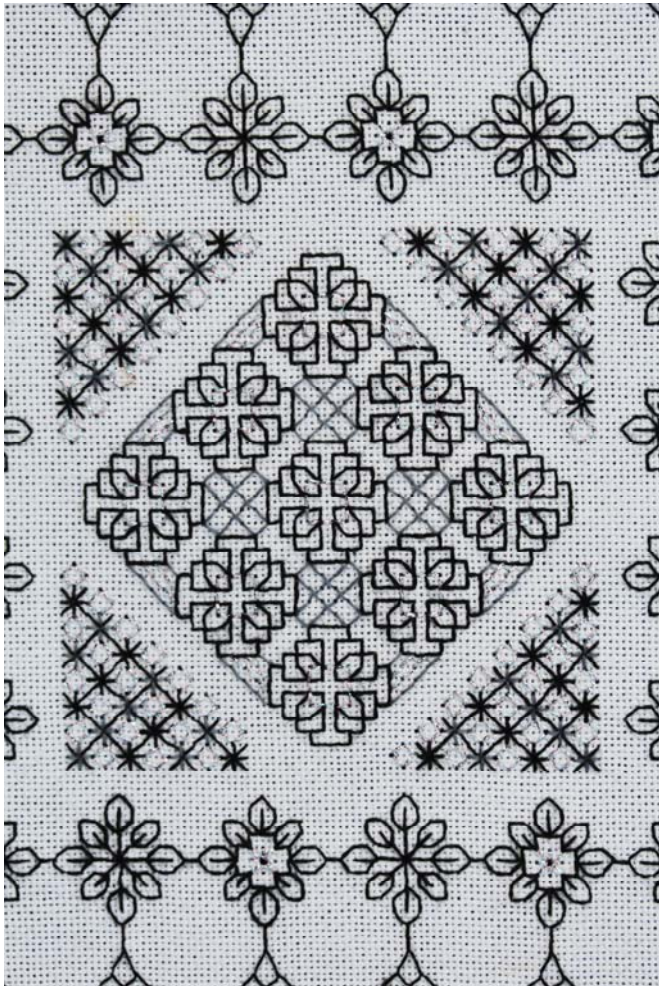
For those of you who like Kogin but want to work a smaller piece I have designed a bag and accessories based on one I produced for the Embroiderers' Guild of Bolton. The design shows how one small motif can be combined to create a whole series of different projects. The band pattern would look very attractive on placemats and table linen. This type of project is ideal to take on holiday and great fun to stitch. Make it for yourself or as a gift for a loved one. The design can be found in 'Projects'.

Kogin embroidery can even be used for jewellery if the fabric is fine enough!



Showing front and back?

The question has arisen once again about the backs of work and is it important that it is neat? My reaction is that when you are spending many hours on a piece of work it makes sense to keep it as neat as possible, especially when working a technique such as blackwork where any untrimmed threads will show through on the front of the work when it is framed. I was then asked if I would show the back and front of a piece of my work.



This is the front and back of a piece of blackwork currently being worked. Take care when moving from motif to motif not to cross large open spaces with the threads, but weave them in and move from one to another.

Part 2 Transferring designs onto fabric.

Following on from last month, this is the second part in the series. There are many tools available to help, but a knowledge of their advantages and disadvantages can help you make an informed decision as to the best course of action.

Part 3 will deal with:

Tacking stitches and tissue paper

Prick and pounce

Tacking from the back of the work

Using a computer – ink jet printing

Semi-permanent markers:

Dressmaker's carbon usually comes in packets of five sheets, 28 x 23 cm in size in white, blue, red and yellow. Start by taping the fabric face down on a piece of board, then tape the carbon face down on the fabric followed by the design on the carbon - a layer of three.

Since the lines will be on the **BACK** of the work, check that it will face in the correct direction before drawing on the design with an embossing tool or a blunt crochet hook.



Fig.10 Dressmaker's carbon paper comes in a variety of colours

When using the carbon paper, iron a test drawing onto a scrap of the fabric first to see whether the lines 'set' and that they will wash out. Always test any 'removable' marking tool on a spare piece of fabric before use. Whilst these methods should be easily removed from most fabrics, always follow the manufacturer's instructions as occasionally the fabric will have been treated and will not react well with a particular marker.

Permanent markers:

These include hot-iron transfer pencils, making your own iron-on transfers and purchased iron on transfers.

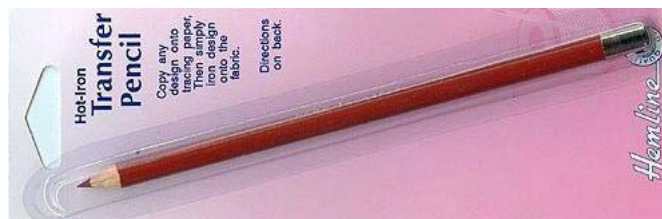
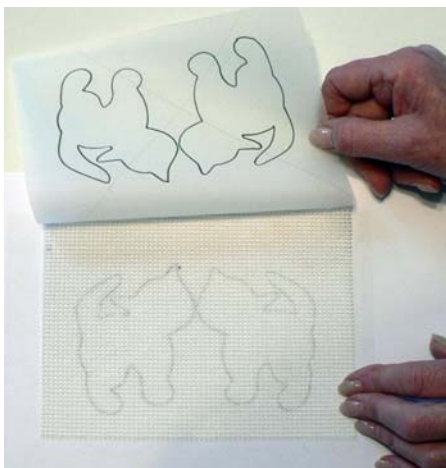


Fig.11 Hot-Iron transfer pencil leaves a permanent impression.



Hot iron transfer pencils are usually red. Start by tracing the design onto paper using the finely sharpened transfer pencil, then turn it over and iron the design onto the fabric, taking care not to allow it to move. The marks are permanent, so the design must be completely covered by the stitches.

Fig.12 Hot iron transfer on canvas creates a pale, but effective outline

Making your own iron-on transfers:

First select the subject you wish to trace and then draw it onto tracing paper. Press firmly so that the transfer marks are clear and bold. Then turn the traced design side down on the fabric and press it on using a warm iron without steam. The traced design will then transfer to the fabric.



Fig.13 Reverse transfer method – design, reverse and trace with transfer pencil, iron the design onto fabric.

Remember the transfer will be a mirror image of the original, but if this is not the case, as you may find for example with a monogram, a slightly different procedure needs to be adopted. In these circumstances, once you have traced the design, turn it over and trace the design on the reverse side with a transfer pencil so that the finished tracing will be facing the right way round ready for ironing.

Iron-on transfers:

Purchased iron-on transfers are one of the earliest methods of transferring a design onto fabric. I have a wonderful collection of embroideries made by this method ranging from Crinoline ladies to Celtic crosses and whilst they are simple to transfer, they are permanent and will not wash out or fade, so if the embroidery does not cover the lines adequately, the blue or silver outline will be visible for all to see. It is therefore important to take care when positioning the transfer before transferring the design to the fabric.



Fig.14 Blue and silver iron on transfers cover a wide range of subjects

To use a permanent silver transfer, iron the fabric and place the transfer printed side down, in the correct position. Use a hot iron and press firmly over the fabric lifting part of the transfer carefully as you iron to check that it has transferred the pattern to the fabric.

An alternative way of using permanent transfers if you do not want a permanent pattern on your fabric, is to photocopy the original, then trace the design onto the fabric using a light box or similar. This works if the fabric is thin enough to see through. If the material is thick or dark, a stitched method may be preferable. When ironing the transfer onto the fabric, press rather using the usual backward and forward movements, otherwise the transfer may move and the image blur.

Next month in Part 3 we will look at the other methods of transferring designs onto fabric.

Making up embroideries



Stitching the designs is easy, making the designs up is a different matter! However, the end result does make the effort worthwhile. The charts are PR0048 Extravaganza and PR0050 Textured Treasure



Maureen from Montreal is a very talented needlewoman. She has taken an extract from PR0048 Extravaganza to create this delightful picture.



Amy Crum has turned her 'Box of Delights' into a very attractive cushion!

If you are new to blackwork embroidery, check out the 'Freebies' section and try a few small designs first to get the feel of the technique before moving on to a larger design. It will give you an opportunity to try out different threads and fabrics until you find ones that you are comfortable using.

Maureen tried out FR0020 Cranes from the 'Freebies' section and has created a small, but attractive design which could be used for a card, picture or box top.

Thanks Maureen you always come up with something special!



FR0020 Cranes

Sheila Major is working on CH0317 Coffee and Cream

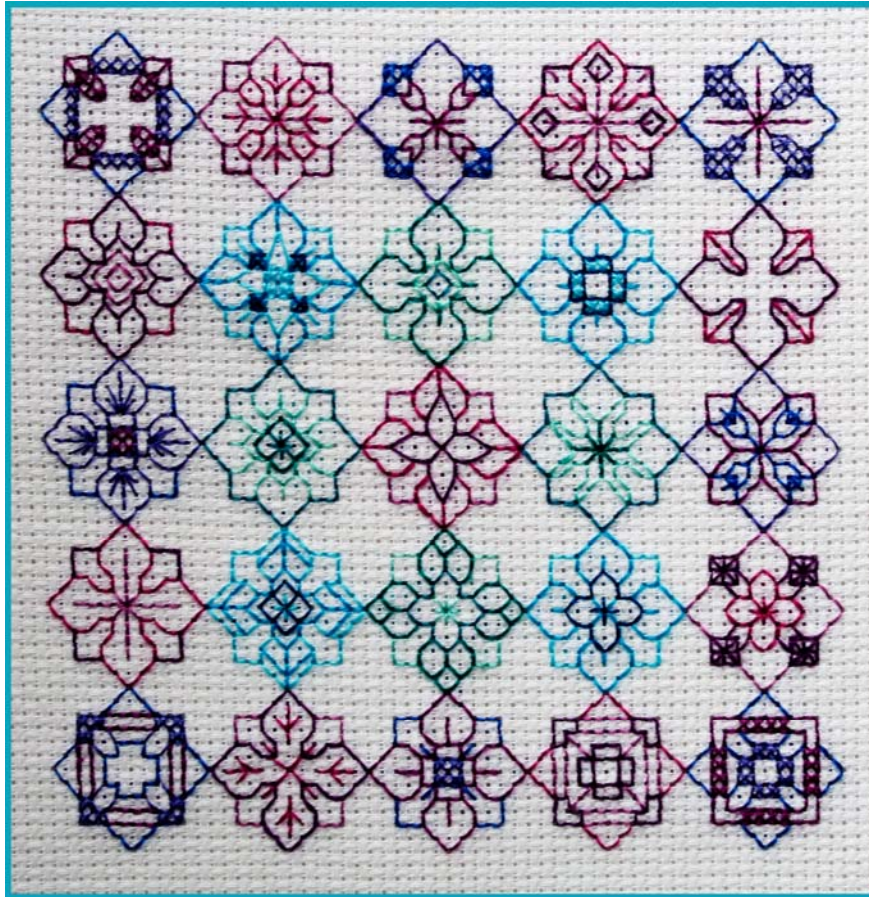
If you want to check out 'work in progress' head to the Facebook groups on the Blackwork Journey website.

[Blackwork Journey - Elizabeth Almond Designs](https://www.facebook.com/groups/blackworkjourneydesigns/)

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'Tiny Treasures' – the next instalment

The 'Tiny Treasures' project is coming along well and many photographs are being posted in the Facebook groups. This month there is an addition, courtesy of Margaret who attended one of my workshops last year when the idea of 'Tiny Treasures' was born. Margaret took the ideas presented at the workshop and produced a very small, but colourful sampler just using the flower motifs. I love the way she uses colour and I thought it deserved a wider audience! The instructions are attached to Square Part 8 and Rectangle Part 7 for you to enjoy



Margaret's Mini Sampler

'TINY TREASURES'
Square - Part 8



Colour: Black & Gold
12 monthly parts!

'TINY TREASURES'
Rectangle - Part 7



Colour: Black & Gold
12 monthly parts!

Happy stitching! *Liz*