



Blackwork Journey Blog

August 2017



The Embroiderers' Guild of America
San Francisco Chapter



Sampler 8



LACIS MUSEUM OF LACE AND TEXTILES

Metallic threads

Light

'Sublime
Part 8 - E



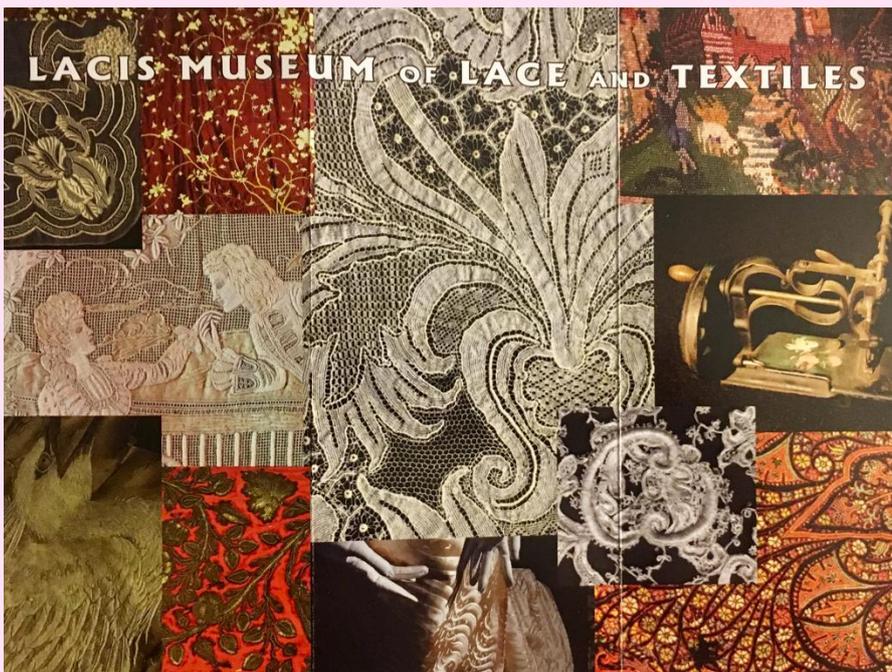
The month of July was really exciting as we spent two weeks in San Francisco with our son and his family who moved there from the UK last September.

Whilst we have visited San Francisco before, having an insider's view is very different.

However, some weeks before we left the UK Catherine, a member of the San Francisco Embroiders Guild bought one of my charts and I mentioned that I was coming out to San Francisco and she very kindly suggested that we meet up whilst there, so I packed a case full of embroideries and spent many happy hours, finding out about their Guild and meeting some of the members. Catherine and her friends very kindly took me to many of the embroidery shops which was wonderful, but more about that next month.

Thank you Catherine and all the ladies that I met during my visit for adding so many lovely memories.

Looking at needlework stores is a 'must' and so was visiting **The Lacis Museum of Lace and Textiles 2982 Adeline St. in Berkeley, California.**



I have heard about this unusual museum many times, but this is the first opportunity I have had to visit it.

The exhibition being featured in July was an intricate whitework embroidery technique worked on pina cloth from the Philippines.

Pina
The Philippine Cloth of Pride, Endurance & Passion
July 7, 2017 to May 4, 2018

The cloth is made from fibres taken from the leaves of pineapple plants. The embroidery worked on it was intricate and very delicate and the fabric transparent. Making the cloth from the thorny plant is very well explained in this YouTube video: <https://youtu.be/yRvWiiGoOzI>



Pineapple fibres are an ivory-white colour and naturally glossy. This delicate cloth is translucent, soft and fine with a high lustre.

Since piña fabric is hand loomed by only a few weavers, it is very precious and scarce, which also makes it expensive.

The major use of Pina fibre is the Barong Tagalong, wedding dresses and other traditional Philippine formal dress. It is also used for table linens, mats, bags and other clothing items. Because it is lightweight but stiff, this sheer fabric can be used in any creative design. Nothing prepares you for the sheer beauty and delicacy of the embroidery and I will be looking at this technique in greater detail later in the year.

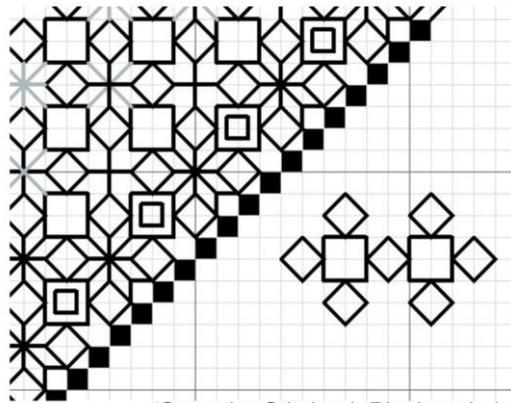
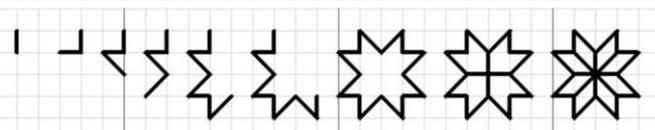


Pina embroidery



Attached to the museum is a large retail store filled with abundant supplies for lace making and embroidery and many other creative projects.

I went with a list of threads, fabrics and beads I wanted to purchase and came away very happy if slightly poorer!.



Building a star pattern. Look for the squares & diamonds - the pattern builds round them.

'Save the Stitches' Blackwork Journey

Back to basics!

If you are new to blackwork, half the secret is learning to 'read' the pattern sequence..

Look at all the different parts and see if you can see a sequence. Break it down into small parts and work from what you can see. I have taken a small piece from Block 1 of 'Save the Stitches' and if you look to see the squares and diamonds, the pattern is built up round those shapes. All patterns build up in the same way!



Blackwork Journey 'New Stitches' E-Book 8

Creating the perfect pattern - a practical example!

I spend a lot of time designing patterns for Blackwork Journey and over the years I have purchased many charts and books and am not always happy with what I find, as I have very clear ideas about what I want to include in a pattern. Given this, let's take a look at the new e-book EB0008 'New Stitches', the evenweave version and how I approach the design.

I may not get everything perfect, but I hope to produce a chart which fulfils the following criteria:

1. A chart should be easy to read and well presented with clear, simple instructions. If the chart is confusing the reader will be discouraged.
2. Fabric sizes should be clearly stated and alternative fabric included where appropriate. Most people have fabrics they are comfortable working with and appreciate the extra information.



Two new patterns:
Blackwork
Pulled thread work

Cross Stitch Calculator

Graphed Size: stitches wide by stitches high

Fabric Count: threads per inch

of threads each X covers? (Aida is 1, linen is usually 2)

Extra fabric on each side for border? inches

Extra fabric on each side for finishing? inches

Calculate Size

Clear Form

The stitched area will be inches wide by inches high

The fabric should be inches wide by inches high

I suggest using a size tapestry needle

I suggest using strands of floss for stitching

For backstitching, I suggest strands of floss

Use the Tab key to move between fields.

Extra fabric for border is the distance between the stitching and the edge of the frame.

Extra fabric for finishing is the amount of fabric allowed for mounting or sewing.

Suitable evenweave fabric for the sampler:

Zweigart 25 count Dublin

Zweigart 25 count Lugana

Zweigart 27 count Linda

Zweigart 28 count Brittany

Zweigart 28 count Jazlyn

28 Count Jobelan

Charles Craft:

Monaco Evenweave Cloth 28 Threads

Linen:

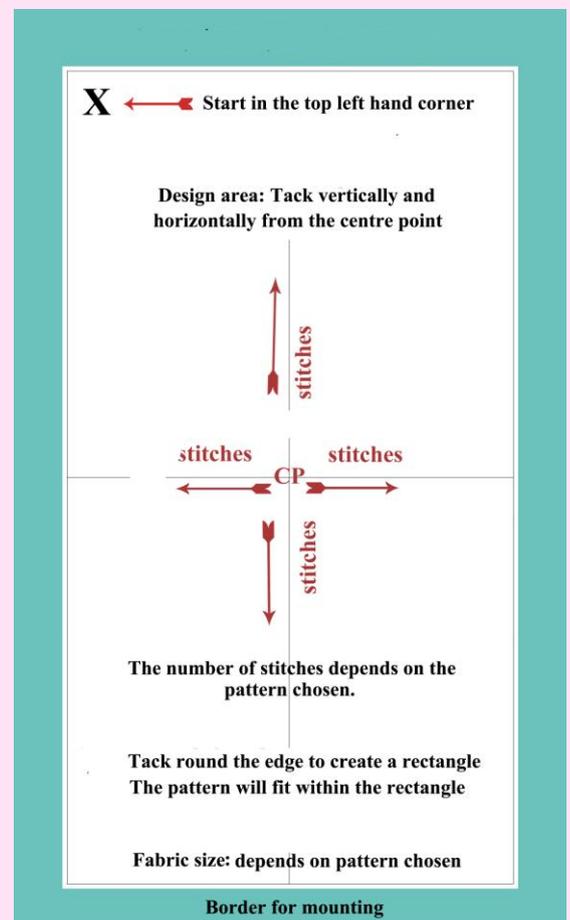
Zweigart 28 Count Cashel Linen

28 Count Quaker Cloth

DMC 28 Count Linen

'New Stitches' is more suited to an evenweave fabric because pulled thread work stitches and half stitches are included. Different tables have been included for the different stitch counts

3. Knowing how to place the design on the fabric needs to be clearly stated and a suitable diagram included if the pattern is complex.





4. Colour charts can be confusing, especially since different printers produce different effects. If necessary state that '**an alternative colour has been used to represent...**' This makes the chart easier to understand and view.

*'DMC Coloris 4507 Bougainvillaea is represented on the chart by DMC 602 cranberry
DMC Cotton P rle No.12, Ecr , one ball - represented on the chart by DMC 996 electric blue.'*

Choosing colour for a large project can be confusing so a colour photograph of the threads used can be helpful.

5. A clear list of threads and their alternatives, with symbols is helpful.

The **Key or Legend** provides very useful information:

- the floss number, colour and alternative brands
- the stitches used - the square blocks represent cross stitch
- back stitch lines
- the amount of floss used
- French knots
- beads

It does not indicate the number of strands of floss to be used, that should be stated in the instructions.

Legend:

		DMC-310
		DMC-815
		DMC-3808

Backstitches:

	DMC-310
	DMC-996
	DMC-815
	DMC-958
	DMC-3808
	DMC-602
	DMC-798
	DLE-E3852

French Knots:

	DMC-958
	DMC-602

Beads:

	MHG-557
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Legend:

	[2] DMC-310	ANC-403	DLE- black	(2105 stitches, 2.1 skeins)
	[2] DMC-815	ANC-44	DLE- garnet - md	(15 stitches, 0.1 skeins)
	[2] DMC-958	ANC-187	DLE- seagreen - dk	(15 stitches, 0.1 skeins)
	[2] DMC-3808	ANC-1068	DLE- turquoise - ul vy dk	(16 stitches, 0.2 skeins)
	[2] DMC-602	ANC-63	DLE- cranberry - md	(11 stitches, 0.1 skeins)

Backstitch Lines:

	DMC-310	black	(1896.02 inches, 2.1 skeins)
	DMC-996	electric blue - md	(365.33 inches, 0.2 skeins)
	DMC-815	garnet - md	(149.99 inches, 0.1 skeins)
	DMC-958	seagreen - dk	(32.73 inches, 0.1 skeins)
	DMC-3808	turquoise - ul vy dk	(283.49 inches, 0.2 skeins)
	DMC-602	cranberry - md	(110.02 inches, 0.1 skeins)
	DMC-798	delft blue - dk	(182.65 inches, 0.1 skeins)
	DLE-E3852	Dark Gold	(47.58 inches, 0.1 skeins)

French Knots:

	DMC-958	seagreen - dk	(15 French knots)		DMC-602	cranberry - md	(11 French knots)
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Beads:

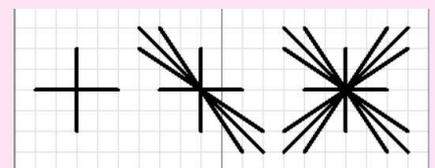
	MHG-557	Mill Hill Glass Beads-Gold	(78 beads)
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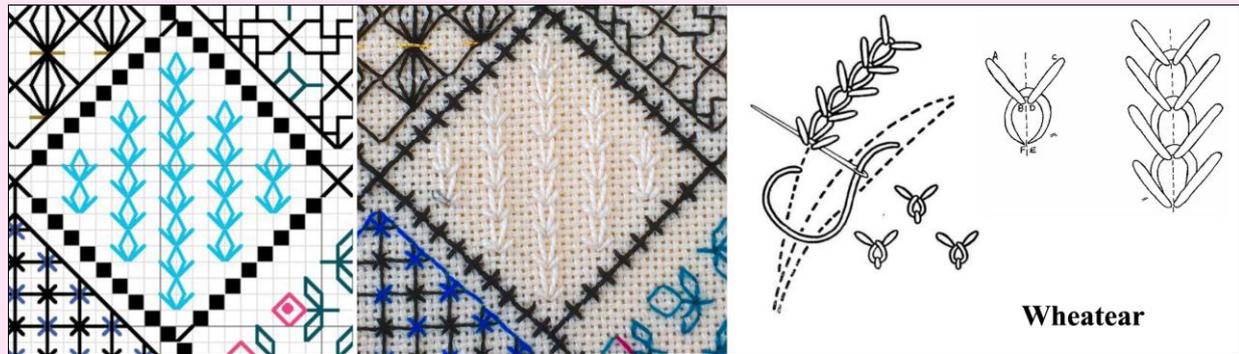
The legend appears in two places in a chart, on the actual chart itself and a more detailed breakdown in the instructions.

6. Good clear symbols are helpful especially when associated with a colour key.

7. Instructions should be clear. Specialist stitches should be accompanied by diagrams and if necessary a photograph.

Triple cross over





8. A colour picture of the finished embroidery should be included so that the reader can see what she is aspiring to and also sections of the design included for a more detailed look.

9. Needlework equipment, frames and needle sizes should be listed clearly

10. 'New Stitches' is a counted thread design, but if the design is to be drawn on fabric rather than 'counted', the design should be clear enough to trace through fabric. If the design can be enlarged to for different projects it is helpful to indicate the size of the fabric required. There are many examples of this throughout Blackwork Journey and especially in 'Projects'.

Using the right kind of designer software is important and whilst there are a number of different ones I tend to use PCStitch or PatternMaker for most of my designs.

Each chart is checked carefully for errors but there is a saying in the Islamic world 'Only Allah is perfect'.

Creating Alphabets for Embroidery Projects

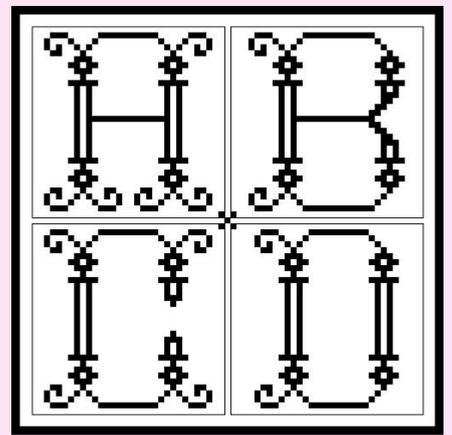
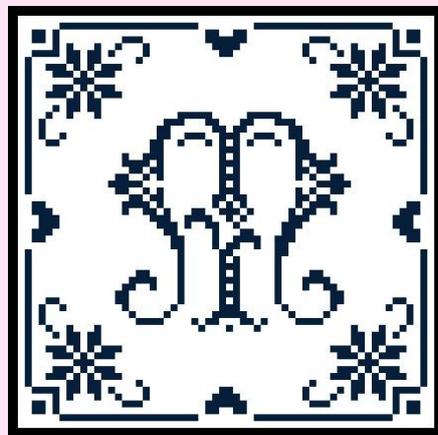
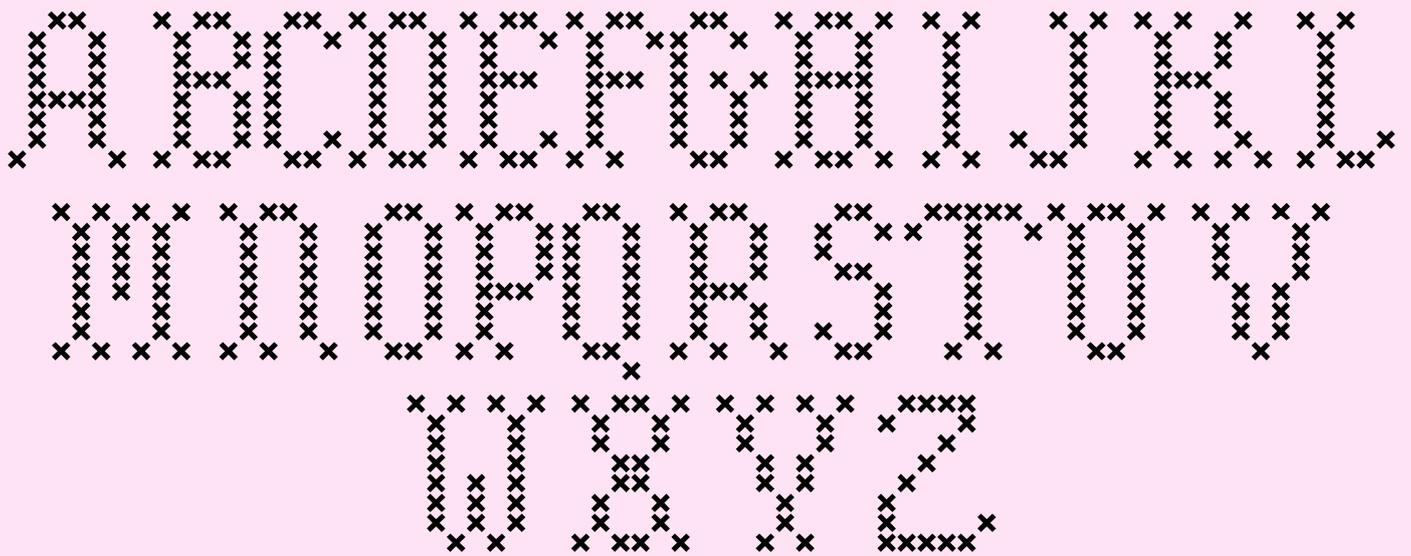
Alphabets are an integral part of many old samplers and I enjoyed exploring and adding in different examples which can be used for other projects. Part 8 'New Stitches' includes a number of different alphabets and there are number of free letters in 'Freebies' in Blackwork Journey which can be used individually or grouped together.

However, different cross stitch fonts are also available for downloading from the Internet and adding into the fonts in Word.

<http://www.1001fonts.com/stitched-fonts.html>

Type your message and then stitch the words into your embroidery, for example:





FR0053 M is for...
E is for Elizabeth - work in progress!

FR0073 Alphabet Soup

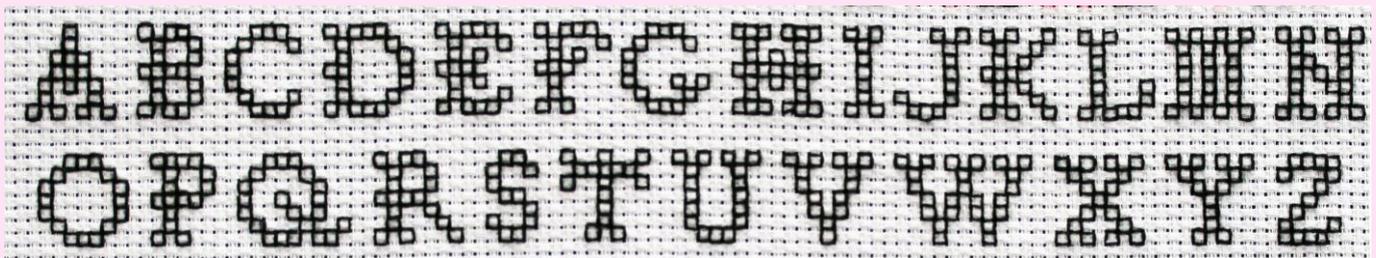
'Sublime Stitches' Part 8 Evenweave and Aida



The next section goes online this month along with CH0361 Sampler 8 which is based on Part 8 of 'Sublime Stitches'.

Creating a sampler out of one section is proving interesting and quite a challenge. The problem is getting the balance right between all the different sections and adding in some new elements.

Within the different types of software I use for designing the charts there are a number of different fonts available which I can adapt for the different designs. I also look at old samplers and adapt some of their alphabets. In Sampler 8 I used an alphabet from the 1700's from my collection to recreate a little slice of history.



The original alphabet was worked in four-sided stitch on a very fine linen. This one has been worked on 14 count Aida using one strand of floss.

CH0361 Sampler 8 based on Part 8 from 'Sublime Stitches'

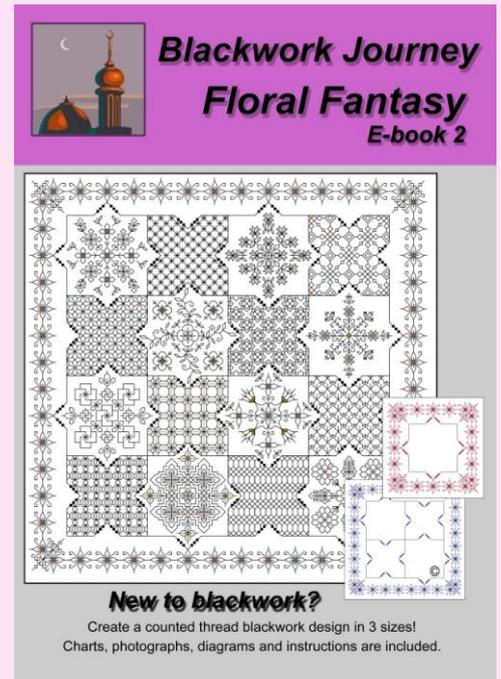


CH0361 Sampler 8 from 'Charts' in Blackwork Journey

A selection of pulled thread work, blackwork, cross stitch and embroidery stitches have been used to create this sampler. All the samplers in the series use a variety of stitches and techniques. If you encounter a stitch that is new to you, try it out on your doodle cloth before working on the main design.

Practice makes perfect. (J. Adams, -Diary-, 1761)

Wonderful readers!



EB0003 Floral Fantasy

Looking at photographs of work completed is great fun. Liz K sent in 'Floral Fantasy' and Solange R completed and framed 'Pandora's Box'.



Extract from Lucia's CH0351 Colour Aomori



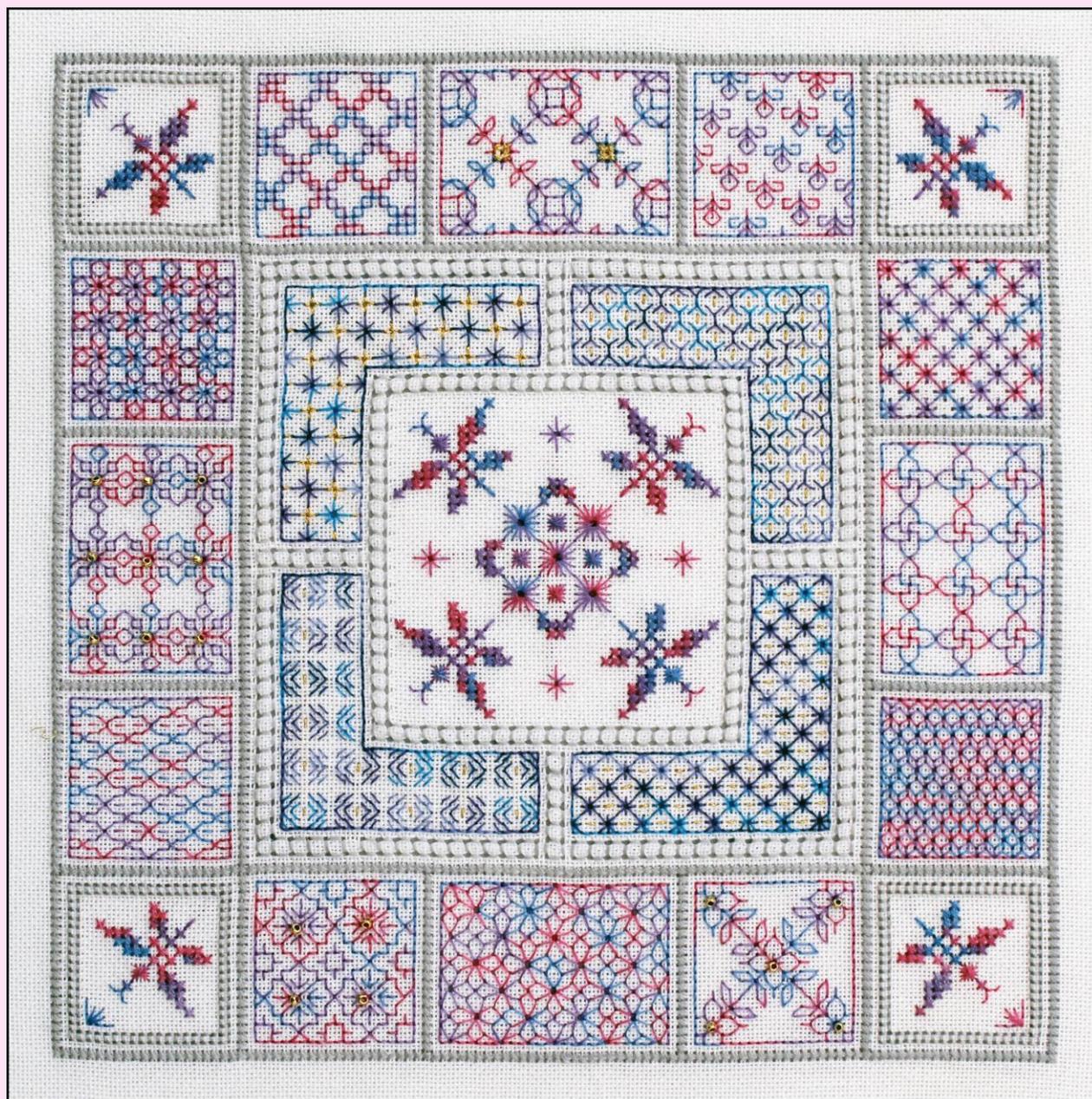
Ernene's Piano key cover - one of the most ingenious ways of using blackwork!





New Chart - Hot off the Press CH0360 Threads of Delight

Dedicated to the members of The Embroiderers' Guild of America San Francisco Chapter with many thanks for making my visit to San Francisco so memorable. My special thanks go to Catherine for her organisation and her time. Thank you ladies.



"The San Francisco Chapter of the Embroiderer's Guild of America exists to foster the highest standards of excellence in the practice of the art of embroidery through an active program of education and study, and to preserve the heritage of the art of embroidery."

Happy stitching, *Liz*

