

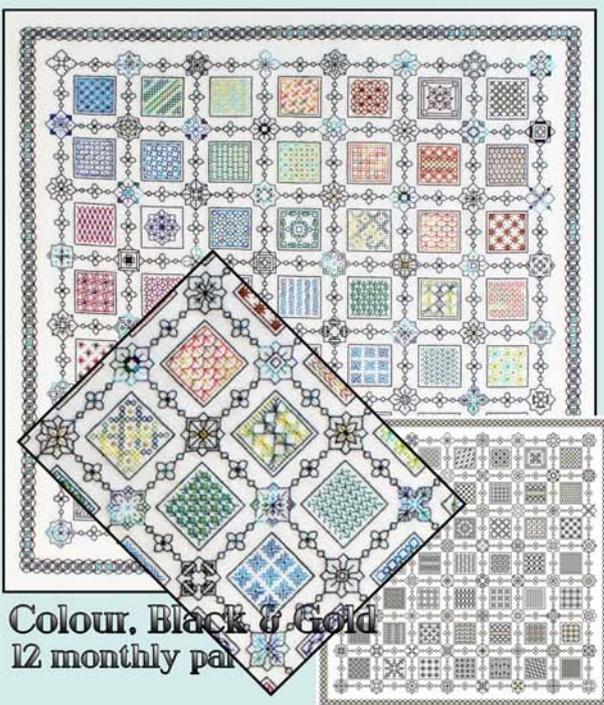


# *Blackwork Journey Blog*

March 2019



**TINY TREASURES**  
Square - Part 7



Colour, Black & Gold  
12 monthly part

## Blackwork Journey Blog, March 2019

The Winter months are slipping away and Spring is just round the corner. Unlike Canada, we have had a mild winter with very little snow. The snowdrops and daffodils are starting to bloom and the tawny owls are once again investigating the nest box in our garden.

We have a lot to look forward to in the coming months with trips to Barcelona, Vietnam and Cambodia and a welcome visit from our son and his family from San Francisco.

I have many talks and day schools planned for the coming months and am currently preparing the kits and charts for an Islamic embroidery weekend in May and for other events across the United Kingdom. I always enjoy these events as they give me a chance to meet groups across the country and make new friends who share the same interests.



*'For Sale or To Let'  
The owl box has been refurbished and  
filled with straw.*



*New resident required!*

### Hot off the Press!

Following on from the blackwork and pulled thread work snowdrops from last month, I decided to design a whitework snowdrop featuring Mountmellick stitches and using heavy cotton threads.



*PR0049 Snowdrops,*

***NEW!*** *PR0051 Mountmellick Snowdrop*



It is a joy to return to embroidery stitches and texture as a contrast to counted thread embroidery. The snowdrops are both free style embroidery charts where the designs are drawn onto the fabric with a water-soluble pen or an HB pencil. I have had several e-mails from readers who have queried how to work free style designs and so I offer the following advice on how to draw a design onto fabric.

### Transferring a design to fabric

Transferring a design to fabric can often cause difficulties for an inexperienced needlewoman and so in this article I will be examining a number of different methods that can be used to help anyone wishing to undertake this task.



*Fig.1 Tacked lines on fabric and similar lines on the paper design*

### How to draw:

Having lined up your design with the fabric, draw continuous lines, rather than short strokes to create an unbroken line (See Fig. 2). You will find that your confidence grows with practice.

*Fig. 2 The flower design is traced directly onto the fabric. The finished embroidery is worked on 18 count Aida covering all the pencil lines with two strands of DMC cotton.*

### Setting up the design:

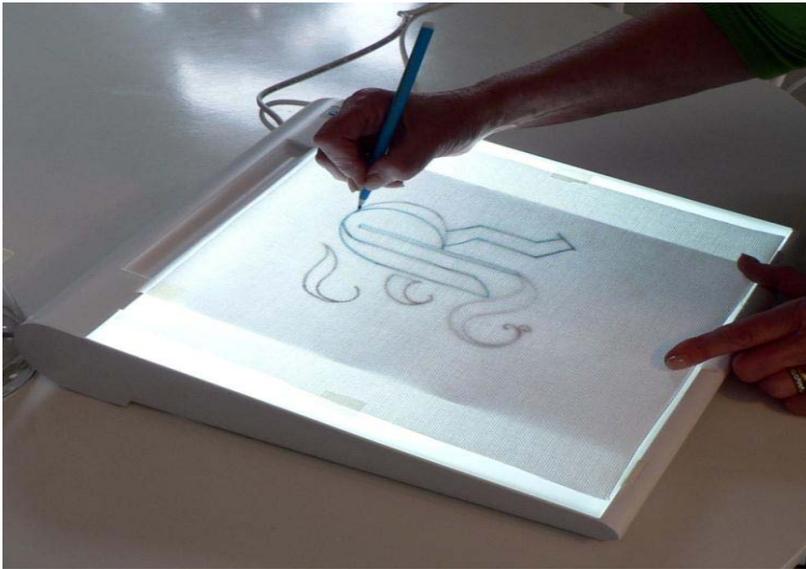
Preparation is the key to success, whatever method you choose.

Start by identifying and marking the centre point of the fabric you intend to use and then tack lines in a pale thread from this point at right angles to the edge of the fabric. (See Fig. 1)

Then locate and mark the centre point of the paper design so that it can be positioned for tracing exactly over the corresponding centre point of the fabric.

Masking tape or tacking the layers together can then be used to hold the design and fabric in place and stop any movement.





If you trace designs on a regular basis, it may be worth investing in a light box containing a fluorescent light under a transparent working surface. These boxes can vary in size, but the A4 size is one of the more popular.

With the fabric placed over the design they are fixed to the transparent working surface of the box with masking or a similar tape.

If you don't have a light box you could fix the design and fabric to a window, or possibly to a sheet of perspex balanced between two chairs with a light placed beneath.

*Fig.3 Light box with the design and fabric taped together*

### **Tracing markers:**

The medium you should use to trace the design will depend on the type of fabric being used, as textures can react differently with different types of markers. However, whichever medium you use, **ALWAYS** test it out first on a piece of spare material to see how it will react, as not every medium will wash out and can leave traces behind.

Tracing or transfer markers come in several types eg. erasable, semi-permanent, permanent, stitched transfer and ink-jet printer methods.

**Erasable markers** including water soluble pens, air soluble markers, fabric pencils, chalk pencils, quilting and HB pencils.

**Semi-permanent markers** including transfer pencils and dressmaker's carbon.

**Permanent markers** including hot iron transfer pencils and iron-on commercial transfers.

These methods will be considered next month:

Tacking stitches and tissue paper

Prick and pounce

Tacking from the back of the work

Ink-jet printing

### **Erasable markers**

Water soluble markers for both light and dark fabrics with different sized tips are readily available. They often come with a blue ink that disappears when the fabric is wetted.

However, whilst I use water-soluble pens and pencils, I always test them first to see whether the colour does disappear completely, as a slight watermark may remain on certain silks and fabrics.



*Fig.4 A combination of marker and eraser in one unit can be very useful*

Once it has been established that the ink from the marker can be removed satisfactorily and the finished embroidery has been completed, spray or dip it in cold water to remove the tracing before ironing, otherwise the marks could be 'set' and be very difficult to remove without damaging the fabric.



A white marking pen is available for use on dark fabrics where the ink becomes visible as the ink dries. Again, the lines are easy to remove by spraying them with water.

*Fig. 5 White marking pen*



*Fig. 6 Water soluble pens provide a clear outline*

Personally, I prefer to use good quality water soluble pens with ultra-fine 0.3mm points as they are easy to use, water based and quick drying. However, a word of caution! If a water soluble pen is to be used, iron the fabric before applying the design, or it could disappear in a puff of steam.

Avoid Frixion pens as the lines may reappear at a later stage on the fabric.



**Air soluble fabric markers** produce a bright, thin purple mark which disappears within 24 to 48 hours, although I can seldom complete a piece of embroidery within that time frame!(See Fig.7)

*Fig. 7 Air soluble pen with eraser*

**Fabric pencils** are amongst my favourites, especially quilting pencils. I generally use light grey, but also have red, yellow, green and blue pencils. (See Fig.8)

Most quilting pencils claim they can be erased with a fabric eraser, although I am wary of rubbing a fabric with any eraser, however good and prefer to embroider over the line.



*Fig. 8 Iron on transfer pencil and erasable quilting pencils*



Dressmakers chalk pencils in white and pink are good on dark fabrics, but do tend to smudge and rub off.

**Ordinary pencils** also make very good markers and I have very seldom experienced a problem removing the lines they make or smudging them. I suggest an HB with a 0.7mm lead for a fine line, although yellow and red pencils can be used to mark darker fabrics. Remember to always try your pencil out on a piece of the intended fabric before working the main design.



*Fabric eraser – use with care*

*Fig. 9 Chalk pencil, pencil crayons, HB pencil, water soluble pen and a quilting pencil, all of which can be used to mark fabrics without leaving a permanent outline.*

Tracing the design directly onto the fabric using a pencil, or one of the markers designed for the purpose is the simplest method, but is not always suitable for some fabrics. I find velvet, corduroy and heavily texture fabrics respond better to a stitched technique which will be discussed fully next month along with the four other methods of:

- Tacking stitches and tissue paper
- Prick and pounce
- Tacking from the back of the work
- Ink-jet printing



*Free style designs*

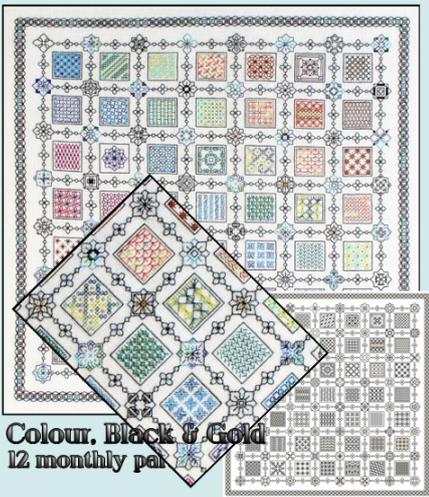
*Two examples of hand drawn designs: CH0183 Sonata and CH0301 Trust.*

*The designs were drawn onto the fabric and then stitched, unlike counted thread charts where there is no drawing but all patterns are counted.*

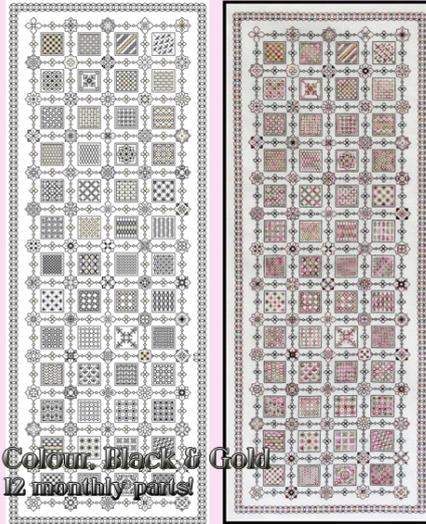
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**‘Tiny Treasures’ the next parts for March**

**'TINY TREASURES'**  
Square - Part 7



**'TINY TREASURES'**  
Rectangle - Part 6



There have been some wonderful photographs posted on the Facebook group showing 'work in progress'.

If you wish to see the latest entries go to:

**Blackwork Journey - Elizabeth Almond Designs**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/blackworkjourneydesigns/>

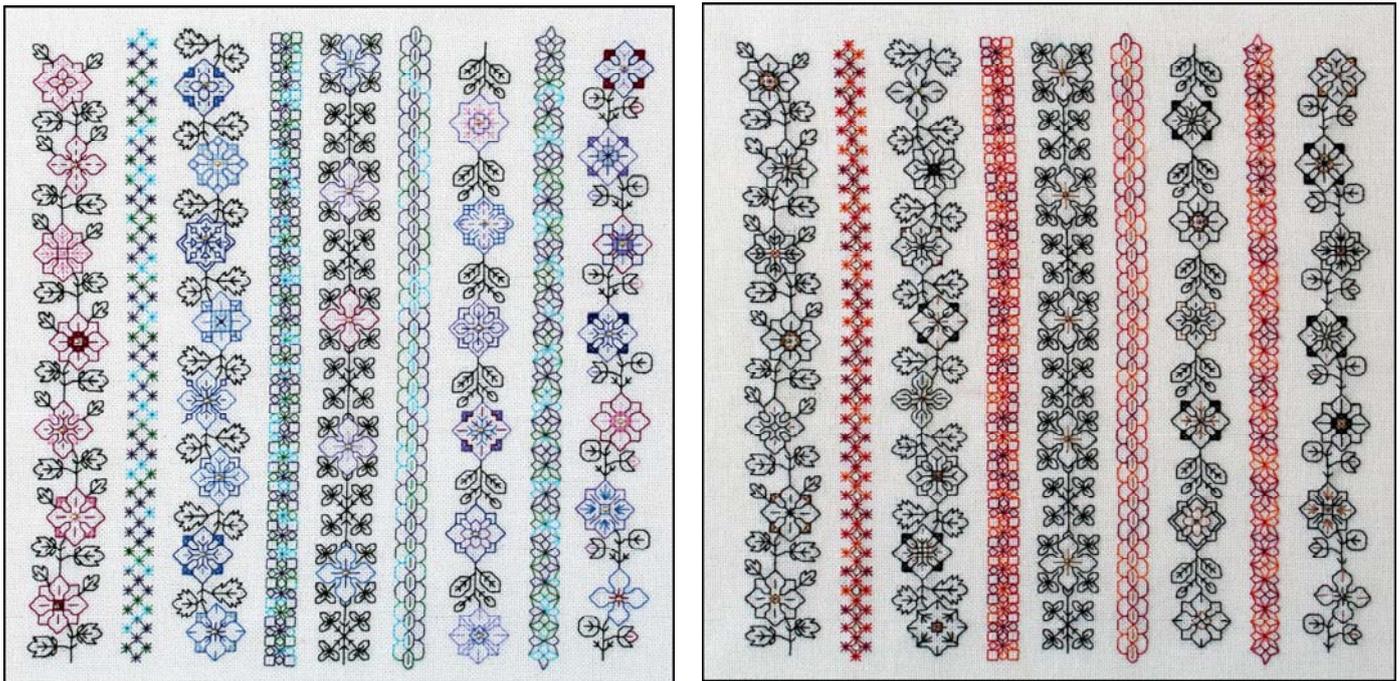
*Just two examples of the work in progress on 'Tiny Treasures'.*

*Adapt, alter and resize the design to suit your own requirements.*

### CH0385 Colour Clematis and CH0386 Copper Clematis – two new charts for March!

Two more new charts have been added this month that have been developed from the ‘Tiny Treasures’ project where motifs have been combined to create floral samplers. The colours can be altered to suit different colour schemes, but it demonstrates how flexible working with motifs can be.

Like most projects ‘Tiny Treasures’ started as a simple idea developed for a workshop on pattern construction. The motif reminded me of a clematis flower and I wanted to see how many variations I could create from the one design. I was also fascinated by the different varieties and the wide range of shapes and colours, so I went on to design the two new samplers. Each column of flowers is separated by a decorative band which was stitched in Threadworx variegated threads.



*CH0385 Colour Clematis and CH0386 Copper Clematis*



*Clematis flowers such as these could inspire any needlewoman!*



## Blackwork Journey Koginesque

E - Book 11



### New E-Book for April - EB0011 'Koginesque'

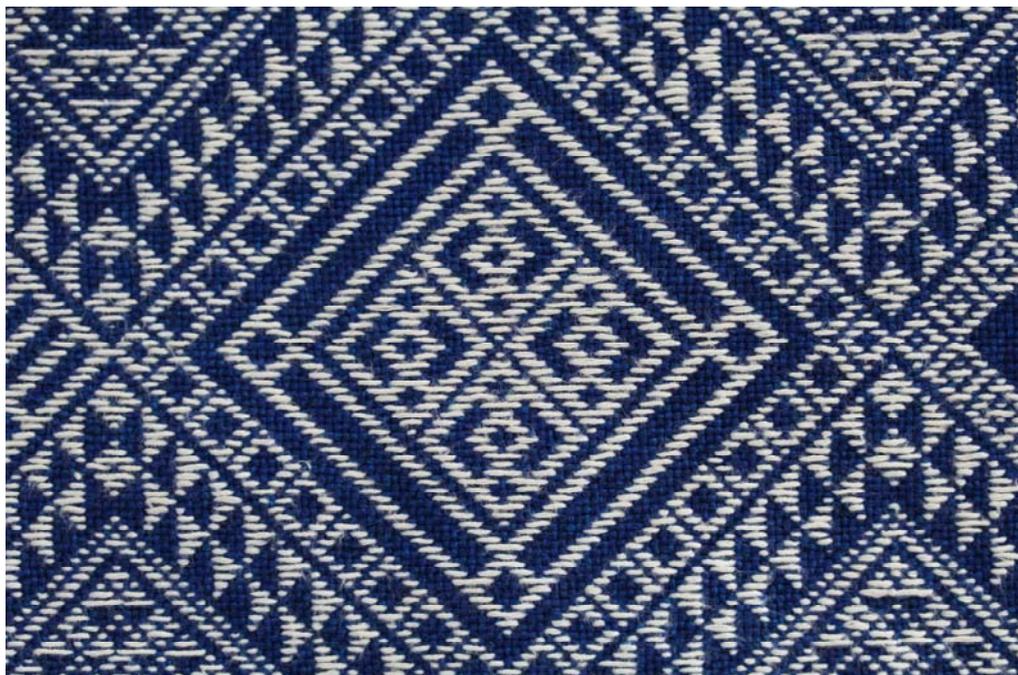
There will be a new e-book on Kogin next month called 'Koginesque' which features a large Japanese style Kogin panel designed as a wall hanging and a table runner. There are 21 major pattern areas and borders all linking together to form the whole design.

**'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.

Suitable fabrics for pattern darning designs should be easy to count with a smooth texture. Whilst Zweigart 25 count Lugana or 28 count Zweigart evenweave is my preferred choice. Aida 14, 16 or 18 count may also be used. Adjust the thickness of the thread to suit the fabric chosen. Furnishing fabrics may be suitable if the warp and weft are even.



*Extract from 'Koginesque'*

### News from the Needlecraft Guild of Zimbabwe

*“On behalf of the Needlecraft Guild of Zimbabwe we would like to say a huge thank you to Elizabeth Almond for allowing us to use her blackwork design for our monthly project last year and we are very proud to show you some examples of our work below”.*



*Work from the Needlecraft Guild of Zimbabwe*

It gives me great pleasure to work with different groups around the world and to see the end results of their work and I know you will enjoy seeing their efforts. I am always prepared to work with and support groups wherever they are and in whatever circumstances. If you are interested in working a group project, please contact me and we can discuss it.

I hope you have enjoyed this month's Blog.

*Happy stitching! Liz*