



# *Blackwork Journey Blog*

August 2025





### August - a time for stitching and reflection



#### The missing piece! The story behind 'Pandora's Box'

Throughout history there have been stories where curiosity has got people into trouble and taken no notice of a warning. Pandora was such a person.

In classical Greek mythology, Pandora was the first woman on Earth. Zeus, the most powerful of the gods ordered Hephaestus to create her using water and earth. The goddess Athene then breathed life into the clay and clothed her, Aphrodite made her beautiful, Apollo gave her musical ability and Hermes gave her speech and taught her how to be both charming and deceitful.

Zeus called her Pandora and sent her as a gift to Epimetheus, who with his brother Prometheus had annoyed Zeus by stealing fire from heaven. Despite the warnings from Prometheus, Epimetheus fell in love with Pandora and married her.

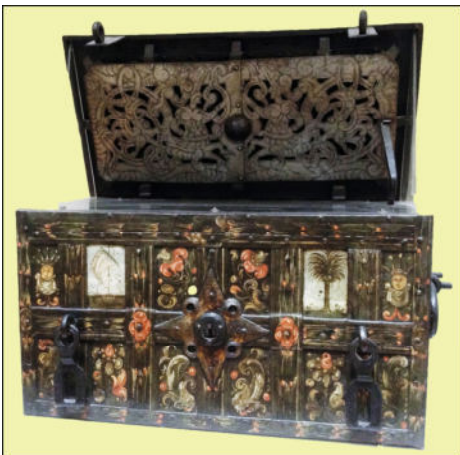
As a wedding gift Zeus, gave Pandora a wedding gift of a beautiful box with the condition that she never opened the box. Finally, Pandora could stand it no longer. She crept up to the box, took the huge key fitted it carefully into the lock and turned it.

She lifted the lid to find not treasure but disappointment! Out of the box poured disease and poverty. Out came misery, out came death, out came sadness, all shaped like tiny buzzing moths. The moths stung Pandora repeatedly and she slammed the lid shut but one voice still called from the box pleading to be released so she opened the box again.

All that remained in the box was Hope. It fluttered from the box like a beautiful dragonfly, touching the wounds created by the evil moths and healing them. So even though Pandora had released pain and suffering upon the world, she had also allowed Hope to follow them!

#### Where did I find my Pandora?

When I was researching the ideas for 'Pandora's Box' I wanted to find not just a suitable box but a statue or bust that I could use. I found the box and the key in a museum in London but where was my Pandora?



Tatton Hall, Knutsford, Cheshire, UK



It wasn't until I visited Tatton Hall an historical estate with a neo-classical mansion set in 50 acres of landscaped gardens and 1000 acres of deer park in Cheshire that I found a bronze head set in a marble fireplace.

She was perfect but at the time no-one could tell me where or when she was made or by whom and it was only when I revisited Tatton earlier in June that I was able to discover her history.

*Formal gardens, Tatton Park*

The fireplaces in the Library were designed by Lewis William Wyatt with bronze ornaments by Benjamin Lewis Vulliamy (1780- 1854) installed in June 1812.

The bronze mounts consist of caduceus and flame on each chimneypiece jamb above which is a mask representing one of the four muses – Thalis, Euterpe, Calliope and Erato.

The cost of supplying the bronze mounts in 1812 was £160 including packing and transportation and thirteen different craftsmen participated in their manufacture.



**E-Book 6 Pandora's Box** is an embroidery project designed to combine different embroidery techniques within one project thus encouraging the embroiderer to stretch her boundaries and explore new ideas. The project has been presented in two different versions: 'Pandora's Box' worked on Zweigart evenweave fabric, and 'Pandora's Box' worked on Zweigart 14 count Aida blockweave.

This was my Pandora and the rest of history!







### New design for August

#### CH0443 Twist of Kogin

‘Twist of Kogin’ combines a traditional Japanese technique with an embroidered border to create a unique wall hanging, picture or a table mat.

**Design Area:** 15.21 x 21.86  
**Stitches:** 213 x 306.

**Fabric used:** Zweigart 16 count Aida 18 x 24 inches.

**Threads:** Sashiko cotton, Cotton Perle No 8 or matt crochet cotton No. 10.

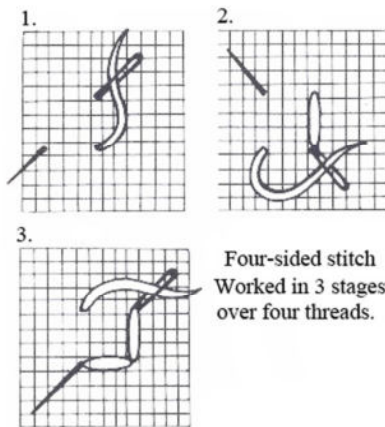
### What is Kogin Embroidery?

Kogin embroidery originated in the Aomori Prefecture of Northern Japan. This area is rural, with snow covered mountains, thick forests and rice paddies. Protective clothing for the farmers and fishermen was essential, so the fabrics were joined together by stitching and made into clothing for warmth and stability.

The patterns in Kogin embroidery are very intricate and many of the garments were very old and had been patched and re-stitched constantly with thick white cotton threads. Cotton fabric and threads were expensive, so local indigo dyed hemp cloth was often used for these garments. The designs were usually geometric, often diamond shaped and the running stitches which varied in length, were only worked in rows, along the weft of the fabric. It was worked in the hand without using a frame and with a number of stitches on the needle at any one time, making it faster to stitch.



### Four-sided stitch variation



I use four-sided stitch in a number of my designs but Maureen from Montreal came up with a variation which I really like so I thought I would share it with you.

Four-sided stitch can be used in many ways from pulled thread work or as an embroidery stitch on Aida fabric.

*Four-sided stitch worked on Zweigart 25 count Lugana.*

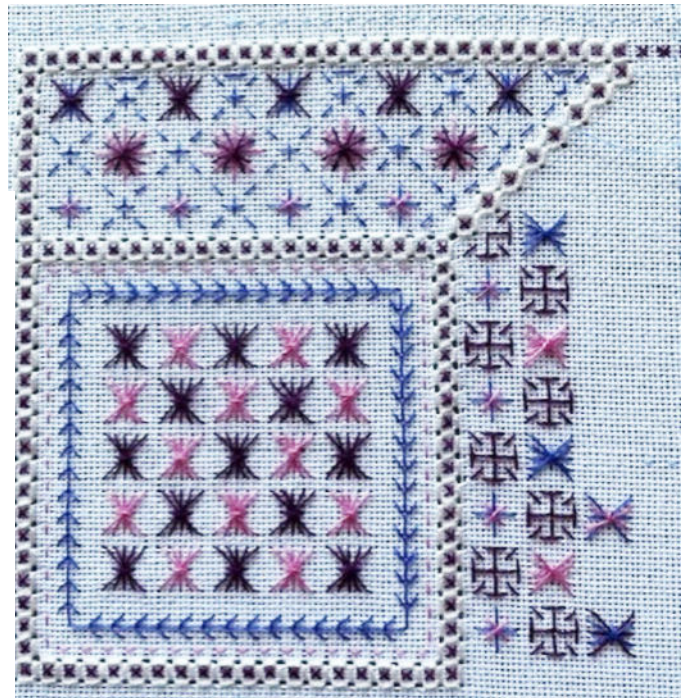
This consists of 3 straight stitches, to form the end, the middle and the top of the 'square'. Work from right to left over 4 threads or 2 x 2 blocks. Always put the needle in at one corner and come out at the opposite one. Follow diagrams 1-3. Pull tight on evenweave fabric to create the holes but pull gently on Aida fabric. On the back of the work will be a line of diagonal cross stitch.

Maureen worked a line of cross stitches first and then worked the four-sided stitch round the cross stitches.

This is much easier than trying to add the cross stitch inside the four-sided stitch and the result is an attractive textured stitch.

### PR0083 Exploring Stitches

This pattern can be found in 'Projects' on the Blackwork Journey website.



*Maureen's four-sided stitch variation*



### Chicago, a new adventure!

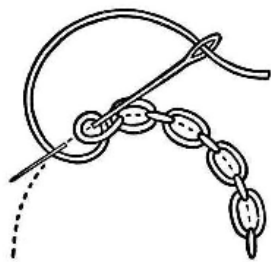
The quiet countryside of Lancashire and Cheshire is a complete contrast to the hustle and bustle of Chicago which we visited recently. Our son and family have moved from San Francisco, California to accept his post as Principal Horn of Chicago Symphony Orchestra. It is the first chance we have had to visit our family and explore this area.

Chicago, on Lake Michigan in Illinois, is among the largest cities in the U.S. Famed for its bold architecture, it has a skyline punctuated by skyscrapers such as the iconic John Hancock Centre. 1,451-ft. Willis Tower (formerly the Sears Tower) and the neo-Gothic Tribune Tower. The city is also renowned for its museums, including the Art Institute of Chicago with its noted Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works.

Not only did I want to explore the city, but I wanted to check out the craft stores, fabric outlets and patchwork shops as well as explore the music scene.

**What did I find? Check in next month and I will give you all the details!**

### ‘Stitch Along’ 2025 Block 7 and 7a.



Block 7 and 7a has been added at the end of this Blog and like all new stitches most need practice. **Row 55. Cable chain stitch.** A useful band stitch where the cable can be filled with straight stitches or beads. There is a small link between each chain which is made by wrapping the thread round the needle.

Mary Corbet has an excellent video on her website and YouTube: [www.needlenthread.com](http://www.needlenthread.com)

Working along with the video is a practical way of learning a new stitch!



**How To Videos**

<https://rsnstitchbank.org> › stitch › cable-chain-stitch

If you have any queries, please contact: [lizalmond@blackworkjourney.co.uk](mailto:lizalmond@blackworkjourney.co.uk)

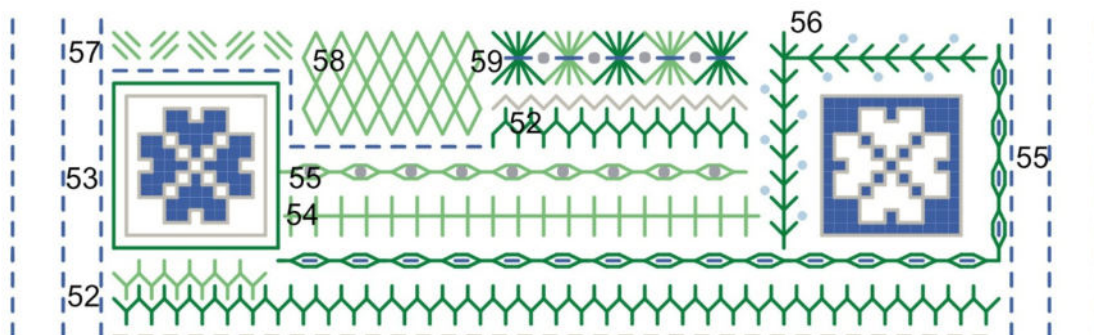
Happy stitching,

*Liz*

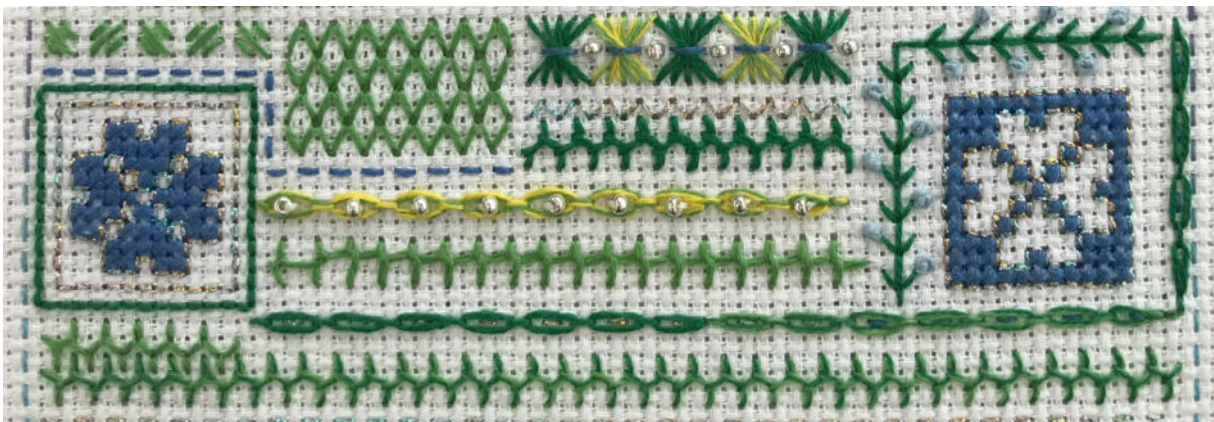


## Block 7.

Block 7. is worked in greens, blues, or colours of choice. **Threads:** Two shades of green, blue, metallic thread and beads. Two strands for cross stitch, decorative bands 2-3 strands.



Block 7 Numbered



Block 7 Embroidery

### Instructions:

Start one row above Block 6 with Row 52.

**Row 52.** Cretan stitch over 4 blocks.

*Cretan stitch*

**Row 53.** Cross stitch motif outlined in metallic thread in backstitch frame.

**Row 54.** Loop stitch over 4 blocks. Use 3 strands for a heavier band.

*Loop stitch*

**Row 55.** Cable chain stitch. A useful band stitch where the cable can be filled with straight stitches or beads. Use 2 or 3 strands of floss. Worked over 3 blocks with the link between each block.

*Cable chain stitch*

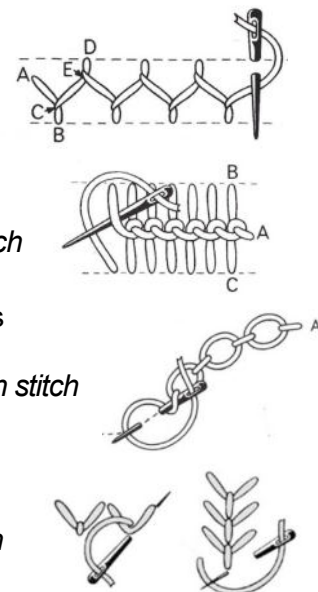
**Row 56.** Assisi cross stitch motif in Fly stitch frame with colonial knots at the point of alternative fly stitches. Outline Assisi motif in metallic thread.

*Fly stitch*

**Row 57.** Cushion stitch (to be continued in Block 8).

**Row 58.** Wave stitch used to create diamonds.

**Row 59.** Wheat stitch over 4 blocks.

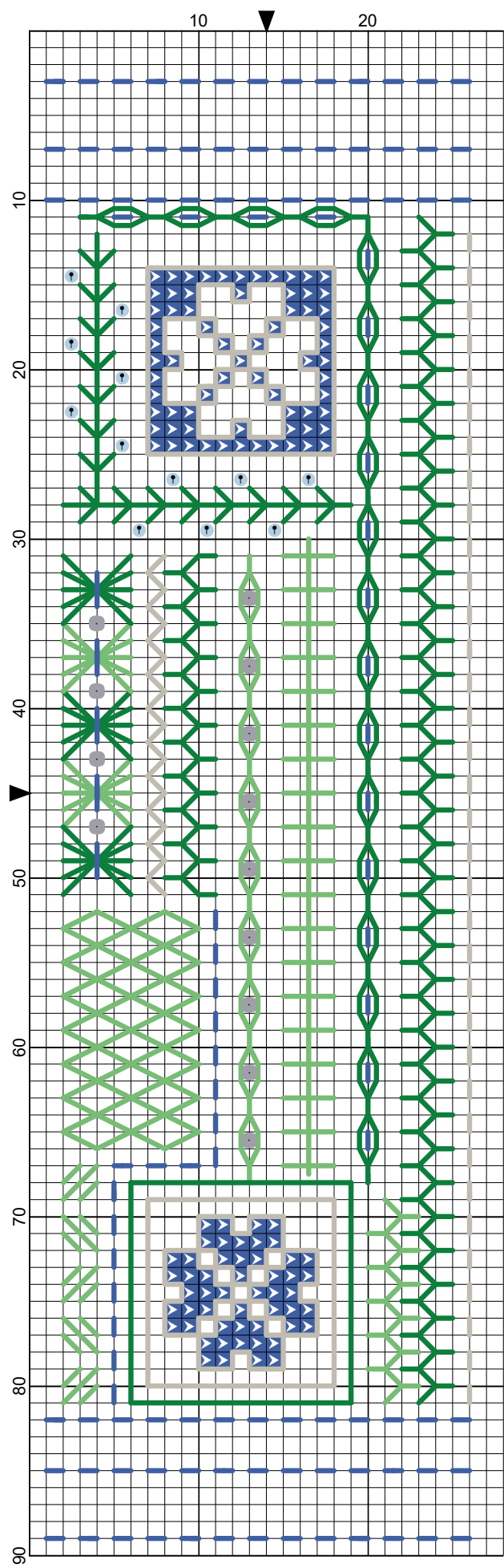


[rsnitchbank.org/stitch/cretan-stitch](https://rsnitchbank.org/stitch/cretan-stitch)

<https://www.needlenthread.com> › embroidery-video-tutorial-cable...

This completes Block 7.

Block 7



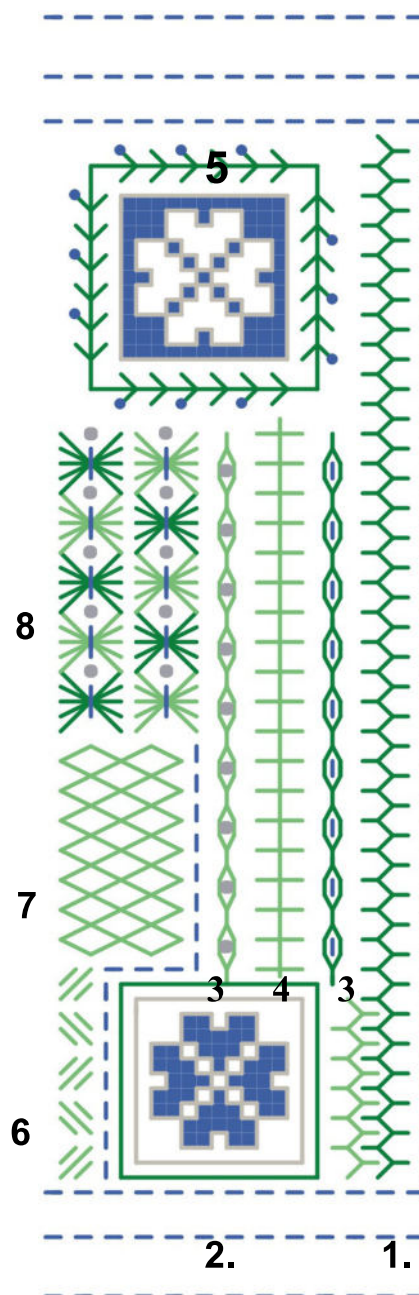
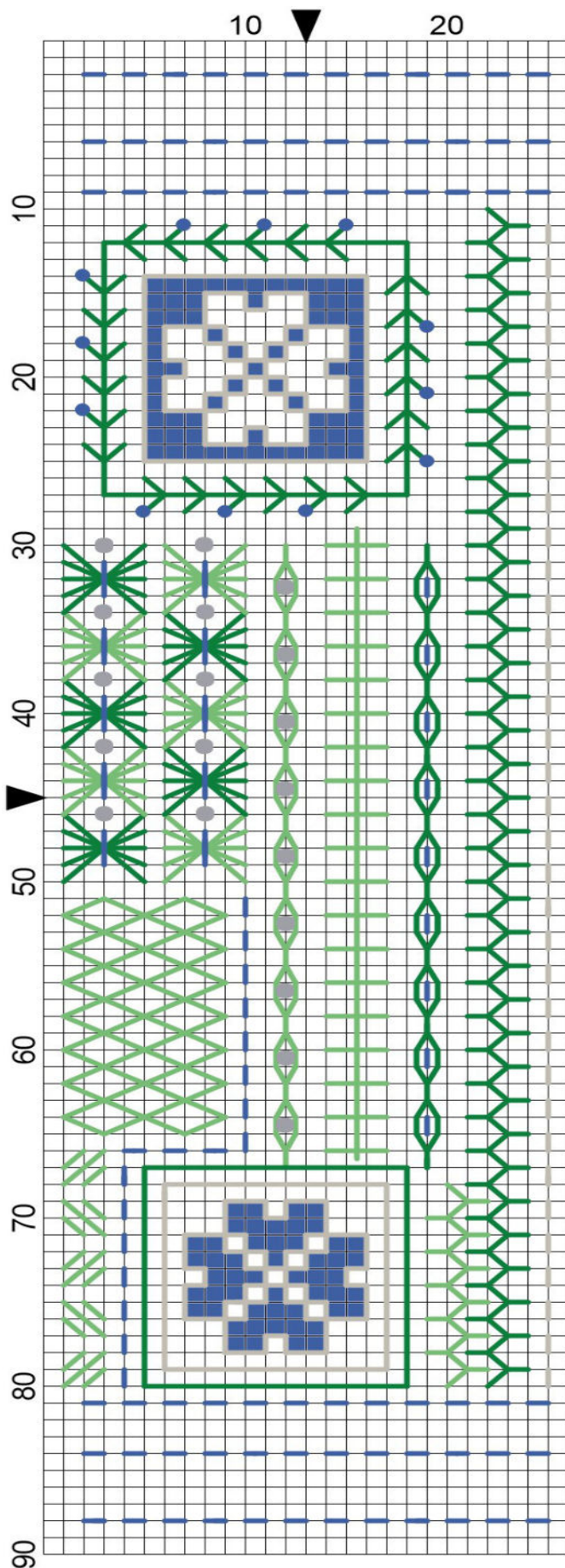
- Legend:
- DMC-798
  - Backstitches:
    - DMC-798
    - DLE-E168
    - DMC-909
    - DMC-320
  - French Knots:
    - DMC - 8 0 0
  - Beads:
    - MHG-2022



Block 7a Embroidery contains a number of stitch variations.



## Block 7a Simple Stitches



**Row 1.** Cretan stitch.

**Row 2.** Cross stitch motif outlined in metallic thread.

**Row 3.** Cable chain stitch.

**Row 4.** Loop stitch.

**Row 5.** Assisi cross stitch motif in Fly stitch frame. with colonial knots.

**Row 6.** Cushion stitch.

**Row 7.** Wave stitch.

**Row 8.** Wheat stitch.

Assisi embroidery is a form of counted-thread embroidery based on an ancient Italian needlework tradition in which the background is filled with embroidery stitches and the main motifs are outlined but not stitched