YOUR CREATIVE COMPANION

Through the NEEDLE

ONLINE

Sewing Adventures

Patchwork Floor Art

Beaded Cocoon Necklace

Cool Spice & Hot Chili Pepper

Table of Contents

Needle Notes

Welcome to the first edition of *Through the Needle Online*! The last few months have been extra busy — learning new software, creating an online format, coordinating with authors, taking pictures, making last minute changes, and adding links to all the articles — whew! After all that, you'd think we'd be ready for a little break, but we're already working on the next issue of *Through the Needle Online*, due October 1.

We hope you like our new electronic format. Since you're viewing *Through the Needle Online* on your computer screens we've made the text a little larger so articles are easier to read, pared back the color a bit to save ink when pages are printed, and added links to connect you directly to additional information on our featured topics, contributors, and sponsors. And we're still dedicated to providing a variety of articles in every issue, covering the full spectrum of sewing — basic stitching, embroidery, software, serging, fashion, quilting, crafts, and much more.

In this issue we explore basic sewing projects, an unusual software project (where else would you find a patchwork floor?), and an exotic necklace made from silk cocoons and serged cord. Plus, an essay on the sewing adventures of our youngest contributor yet, 7-year-old Sophie Rubin. A gorgeous set of embroidered bags by Sarah Vedeler covers some BERNINA CutWork Software and Embroidery Software basics, and we've also made Sarah's finished software files and bag instructions available for you to download.

In addition to projects from our staff and BERNINA National Artisans, we'd love to include articles from readers. If you have a project to share, send it to jo@berninausa.com for consideration. We haven't posted any submission guidelines yet — coming soon! — so for now just send us a photo and general description of your project, including sewing techniques and accessories used. We can't promise to use every idea, but we can guarantee that we'll look at each one.

Along with the new online version of *Through the Needle*, we're launching a new website — throughtheneedle.com! You may have noticed the address on the front cover of this issue. It will be up and running in the next few weeks with each issue of the magazine posted there for your viewing pleasure.

Thanks again for subscribing to *Through the Needle Online* — enjoy your first issue and share it with all your sewing friends!

Jo Leichte
Editor

Susan's Designer Handbag

by **SUSAN FEARS**

*This designer-inspired handbag is so easy to make,
one won't be enough! With a secret zipped pocket on the outside,
this handbag is adapted from the "Steel Ball Frame Purse Pattern."
Follow the instructions in this article to create the decorative panel, then construct
the bag following the general sewing instructions included with the pattern.*

Supplies

- "Silver Frame Purse Pattern" by Quilt Plus
- Purse handle style 1500 in dark silver from Quilt Plus
- 3 cotton fat quarters (sample is "Arianna" from Benartex)
- Main fabric (pink dot in sample)
- Accent fabric (brown in sample)
- Lining fabric (floral in sample)
- One 13½" x 17" rectangle of batting
- One 9" non-metal zipper to coordinate with fabric
- One ⅝" x 8" embroidered ribbon to coordinate with fabric
- One ⅝" x 8" grosgrain ribbon to coordinate with fabric
- One 5" x 12" strip of tulle to coordinate with fabric and ribbon
- Quarter-inch foot (BERNINA Patchwork Foot #37 or Patchwork Foot with Guide #57)
- Edgestitch foot (BERNINA Edgestitch Foot #10)
- Walking foot (BERNINA Walking Foot #50)
- Zipper foot (BERNINA Zipper #4)
- Buttonhole foot (BERNINA Automatic Buttonhole Foot #3A)
- OESD LightWeight Tear-Away stabilizer
- Point turner
- Buttonhole cutter and block
- Jeans needle, Size 80/12
- Wonder Tape (wash-away double-sided tape)
- Mettler Silk Finish Cotton 50 weight thread for assembly and decorative stitching
- Scissors that are NOT your fabric-cutting shears

*BERNINA 3 Series:
The Designer Handbag shown in the photo was sewn using the new BERNINA 380 sewing machine.*

Instructions

Cut the Fabric Pieces

Cut the fabric according to the pattern instructions EXCEPT for the center panel strips. Cut the purse sides, bottom, and ruffle from the main fabric. The leftover main fabric will be used for the front zipper pocket. Cut the accent fabric into two 5½″ x 8″ rectangles. These fabrics will replace those used for the pieced strips in the pattern instructions. Cut the lining pieces from the third fat quarter as directed in the pattern instructions.

Create the Pieced Pocket

Insert a Jeans needle and thread the sewing machine with Mettler Silk Finish Cotton thread in the needle and bobbin. Attach the zipper foot to the left side of the shank (or so the needle stitches to the right of the foot). With right sides together, use a straight stitch to sew the leftover piece of the main fabric to the right side of one half of the zipper, between the zipper tab and the stop. Use Wonder Tape to hold the embroidered ribbon in place on the other half of the zipper. Topstitch the ribbon to the zipper between the tab and the stop.

Lay the pieced zipper strip diagonally over the lower right corner of one of the 5½″ x 8″ accent fabric pieces. Pin in place, allowing for a generous corner pocket.

Select a single or double blanket stitch with the stitch width adjusted to 4mm. Attach the edgestitch foot to the machine. Position the zippered pocket piece on the accent fabric, and place the ribbon edge against the guide. Stitch the ribbon in place.

Move the zipper tab to the center of the pocket; this will make it easier to position the ends of the zipper under the presser foot. Attach the open embroidery foot to the machine, select the zigzag stitch and adjust the stitch width to the maximum setting. Drop the feed dog. Center the zipper coils inside the toes of the foot and stitch across the coils several times to make a thread bar tack. Repeat at the other end of the zipper to make a stop at each end. When finished, return the feed dog to the sewing ("up") position.

Pin the pocket flap to the accent fabric and use a pair of non-fabric scissors to cut away the excess zipper and fabric. The thread stops will prevent the zipper tab from zipping off the ends of the coils until the pieced seams are stitched.

Customize the Pocket with Text and Decorative Stitches

Using your sewing machine's memory functions — memory, preprogrammed alphabets, and decorative stitches — program a line of text (name, initials, slogan, etc.) and stitches as desired. Note: If your machine is not equipped with these features, add a line of decorative stitching in place of the lettering (or omit this step).

Place a piece of LightWeight Tear-Away stabilizer under the area to be stitched. Align the edge of the ribbon with the inside toe of the open embroidery foot. Stitch the line of text and stitches along the edge of the ribbon.

Add Ribbon Embellishment to the Bag Front

Pin the grosgrain ribbon diagonally across the opposite corner of the bag front, parallel with the zippered pocket.

Select a blanket stitch, adjust the stitch width and stitch length to 2mm, and set the needle position to the far right. Guide the ribbon edge along the toe of the open embroidery foot and stitch both edges of the ribbon in place.

Stitch Combinations in Memory

It's simple to program stitches into the memory of BERNINA's new B380 sewing machine.

Press the MEM button and clear any previous saved combinations. Stitches can be entered with their default settings, or they can also be programmed with adjusted settings. Insert the following stitches into Memory: #33, #34, and #33. Press the Mirror Image button and enter #34 again so the stitch flips over. Stitch the combination on the ribbon.

Easy, Effortless Buttonholes

The automatic buttonhole features of the B380 make sewing buttonholes effortless — and they're perfect every time!

Attach Automatic Buttonhole Foot #3A to the machine and press the 0 button to select standard buttonhole #10.
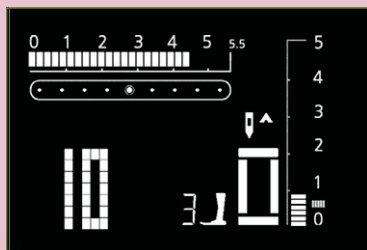
Adjust the red slide guide on the foot to 22mm. Start the first buttonhole at the first buttonhole mark, near the top of the ribbon, perpendicular to the edges. Stitch the first side of the buttonhole, stopping when the slide reaches the red guide. To set the buttonhole length, press the Quick Reverse button. Continue sewing; the automatic buttonhole will stitch until the buttonhole is complete, and then sew a tie-off stitch. Be sure to keep the foot control depressed until the machine comes to a complete stop to ensure that the stitching is complete.

To sew the second buttonhole, position the fabric under the foot at the second mark and begin sewing. There is no need to press the Quick Reverse button — the buttonhole length is in memory; it was stored when the previous buttonhole was stitched. Both buttonholes will be exactly the same.

Program another line of text and/or decorative stitches into your machine's memory. Stitch your combination down the center of the ribbon. *Note: If your machine is not equipped with these features, add a line of decorative stitching in place of the lettering (or omit this step).*

Add Buttonhole Embellishment to the Bag Front

Attach the buttonhole foot to the machine. Mark two buttonholes, ¾" apart, in the approximate center of the grosgrain ribbon. Stitch a 22mm (⅞") buttonhole at each mark. (See your sewing machine owner's manual for instructions on creating buttonholes with your machine.) Cut the buttonholes open using the buttonhole cutter and block. Cut the tulle into two 6" lengths. Thread it through the buttonholes and tie in a fluffy bow.

Cutting the buttonholes open.

Assemble the Purse Pieces

Using a quarter-inch foot and following the pattern instructions, sew the purse front pieces together with a ¼"-wide seam allowance.

Arranging the bag pieces

Layer the batting, lining, and pieced front with the ruffle strips as directed in the pattern instructions. Stitch them together using a walking foot and a ¼"-wide seam allowance. Leave an opening in one seam for turning the bag right side out. Clip the batting from the corners, then turn the bag right side out and sharpen the corner points using a point turner.

Attach the edgestitch foot to the machine and move the needle position to one side. Fold the seam allowances in at the opening, pinch them together with the folds aligned, and then straight stitch along the folded edges to close the opening.

Quilt the Layers

Attach a walking foot to the machine. Move the needle back to the center position and quilt the layers together by stitching-in-the-ditch of the seams.

Prepare the ruffle strips as directed in the pattern instructions.

With the walking foot still attached to the machine, stitch the ½" rod pocket needed for the handles.

Complete the Purse Construction

Rather than stitching the sides of the bag by hand as directed in the pattern, use the following method to sew them by machine. Attach the edgestitch foot to the machine, select a zigzag stitch, set the stitch length = 3.1mm and stitch length = 1.1mm, and move

the needle to the far left position. Begin at the top of the bag and stitch to the fold, back-tacking to secure the seams at the beginning and end of the stitching.

B380 Note: If the stitch is too loose to whip the folds together, tighten it by moving the tension dial to 7 and threading the stitch finger of the bobbin case.

Box the bottom of the bag following the pattern instructions.

Insert the handle rods through one rod pocket and into the handle frame and tighten the ball. Repeat for the other side of the bag. The hinge of the handle frame sits on the outside of the bag, giving the handbag its pretty shape by controlling the sides.

"Doodle-quilt" the plain panel on the B380 using straight stitch #1 and oval stitch #42: Sew about 1" of straight stitch; select stitch #42 and engage Pattern End and sew; the B380 will automatically stitch just one oval, and then stop. Continue alternating between the straight stitch and the oval stitch until the entire panel is quilted.
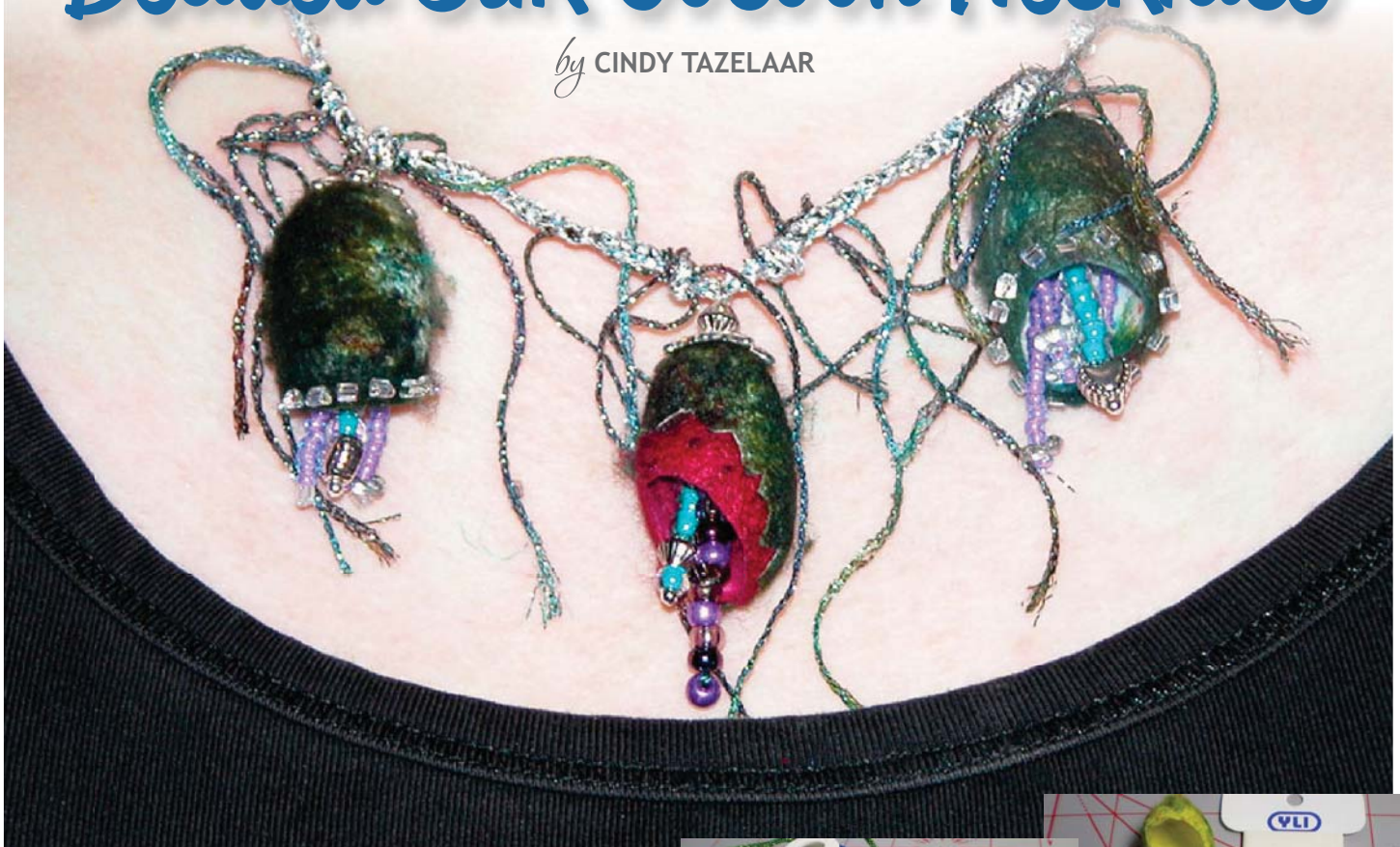
Beaded Silk Cocoon Necklace

by **CINDY TAZELAAR**

Finished length = approximately 21"

Materials

Serger

Serger Cording Foot

3 yards of YLI Designer 7 for base of serger cord

2 cones of YLI decorative serger thread for loopers, such as:
- Candlelight
- Designer 7
- Pearl Crown Rayon
- Shimmer

1 cone of YLI Elite Premium Serger Thread

1 pack of YLI Painter's Threads Potpourri (includes silk cocoons)

1 card Silamide beading thread (40 yards)

Hand-beading needle (recommended: Milliner needle, size 10)

Jewelry findings (available at your local craft store):
- 1 crab clasp
- color-coated jewelry wire
- beads
- head pins
- 3 decorative caps

Awl or large-diameter hand-sewing needle

Jewelry pliers

Instructions

Create the Knotted Cord

Cut three 1-yard lengths of Designer 7 and tie all three pieces together at one end.

Set the serger for a 3-thread rolled hem, with decorative serger thread in the upper and lower loopers and polyester serger thread in the needle. Remember to engage the rolled hem lever to disengage the stitch finger.

Install the Cording Foot on the serger. Insert the bundled Designer 7 cords into the guide in the foot.
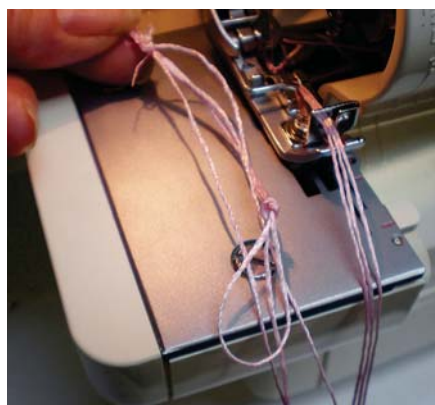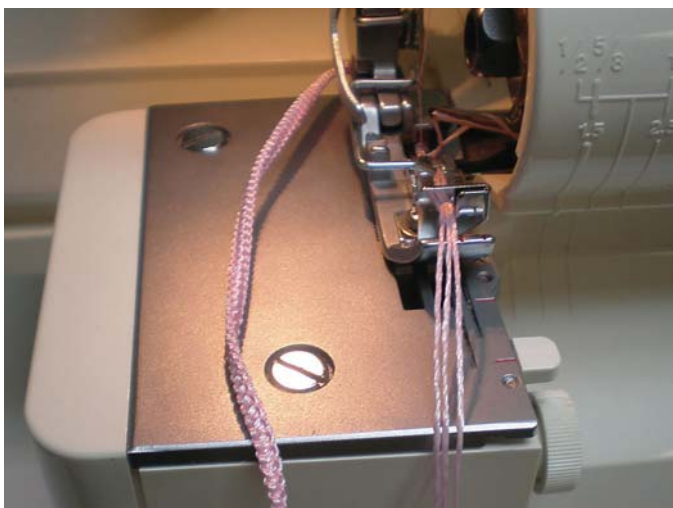
Serge over the entire bundled length of Designer 7, creating a 1-yard long cord. Set aside.

Embellish the Silk Cocoons
Remove the three silk cocoons from the Potpourri pack.

Thread the beading needle with a 1-yard (or slightly longer) length of Silamide beading thread.

String beads onto the needle, covering a little less than half of the thread length.

Place a seed bead at the end of the bead string (this will be the anchor bead). Thread the needle back through all the beads, skipping the anchor bead. There will be two strands of Silamide at the beginning of the bead string.

Working through the opening in the cocoon, push the threaded needle through the top of the cocoon, from the inside to the outside.

Unthread the needle and re-thread with the other end of the Silamide thread.

Repeat the stitch through the top of the cocoon, taking care to put the needle through the cocoon a short distance from the first stitch.

Tie the two ends of the Silamide beading thread together in at least two square knots.

Return the threaded needle to the inside of the cocoon and carefully trim away the excess Silamide thread.

Repeat for the other end.

Repeat this process if more than one strand of beads is desired.

With a large diameter needle (or an awl), create a hole in the top of the cocoon.

Push an eye-pin through the hole, and then top it with a purchased decorative cap. Create an eye with jewelry pliers to hold the cap in place.

Repeat these steps for all three silk cocoons.

Assemble the Necklace
Create three pairs of overhand knots in the serged cord – one pair in the center (spaced ½" apart), the other pairs approximately 1½" to the right and left of center (also spaced ½" apart).

Use an eye-pin and pliers to attach one cocoon inside each pair of knots.

Decorate the remaining cord with additional fibers from the Potpourri package, plus other beads and findings as desired.

Attach the clasp to one end of the cord by threading the cord through the opening, doubling the cord, and wrapping the doubled end tightly with jewelry wire. Finish the other end by doubling the cord back on itself to create a loop, then wrapping both ends tightly with jewelry wire.

Finish the other end by doubling the cord to create a loop, then wrapping the end and cord tightly together with jewelry wire.
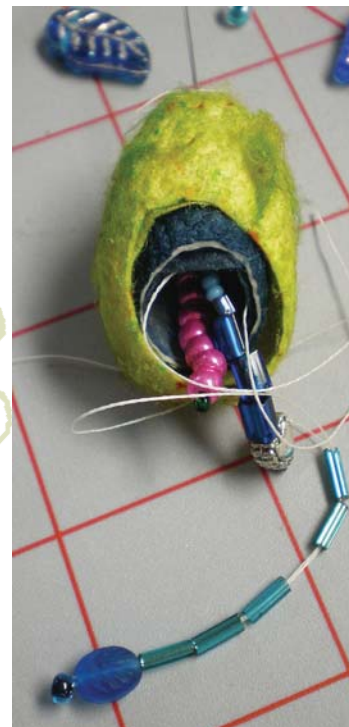
Cindy Tazelaar lives in the Chicagoland area with her husband. She started sewing when she was ten years old and has been stitching ever since. "Sewing and creating is a passion of mine. I think it very relaxing and I am constantly getting ideas throughout the day!" Cindy recently started her own company, acatdesign, where she sells and designs her own bag and purse patterns.

Adventures with
My bernette 46

by SOPHIE RUBIN

Hi, my name is Sophie Rubin. I am a quilter! My mom taught me to hand sew with a needle and thread when I was three years old. I started to sew on a little machine when I was 5. Now I am 8, and I sew on a beautiful BERNINA bernette 46 that is just my size! You can watch a film of me and my mom with my new machine on YouTube.

Sophie with a few of the quilts she made for orphans in Haiti.

I love to make quilts for orphans. My mom brings home packages of 2½" strips, and I sew them together on my bernette. I have a special ¼" quilting foot with a blade that helps me sew the strips together straight. I like to sew fast so I can make more quilts for the orphanages. I really like the quilting foot because it helps me to sew faster with almost no mistakes.

When I first started sewing on a machine, I was a little afraid of the needle. My mom had me start out by just sewing parallel straight lines on a fat quarter. That way I could get used to the needle going up and down. After a while my mom showed me how to thread the machine. Then she showed me how to fill the bobbin. I like to fill two bobbins at a time so I won't have to stop while I'm making a quilt!

My mom is a quilter too. I asked her to save all her scraps for my quilts. I like to sew with cute bright prints. I mix them with batiks and hand-dyes. When I sew for orphans in Haiti, I try to pick out colors and fabrics that those kids would like. I use fabrics with pictures of palm trees, fish, turtles, and dolphins. When I make a fun quilt with lots of pretty colors, it makes me happy, and I hope it will make another kid happy, too.

This Fall I will be on PBS TV on an episode of *Quilting Arts TV*. I'll be on TV for eight whole minutes! I showed Pokey Bolton how I used scrapbooking stickers to decorate my machine. I made words like "Fun" and "Sewing with Sophie" with sparkling letters. Now I have a very special machine, decorated just for me. I also put some swirly rhinestones on the machine. They look really cool on my black machine.

Sophie in the Green Room at Quilting Arts TV, with her "blinged out" bernette 46.

Sophie with her mom Luana Rubin and Quilting Arts TV host Pokey Bolton in the Green Room with Sophie's BERNINA bernette 46.

Sophie finally gets her hands on the 830, under the guidance of Jeanne Delpit, Director of National Events for Bernina of America.

My favorite part of being on *Quilting Arts TV* was being able to sew on-camera. I want kids to know that it is easy and fun to sew on a machine. I got my bernette just before we went to Ohio to film the show. I was very excited! My mom has a BERNINA, but she says I have to be a little older before I can use her machine. I'm not big enough to use the knee-lift lever yet, but maybe when I am ten years old?

My favorite part about my bernette is the special scallop stitch. I like to sew the fancy stitches on the edges of my quilts before I send them to the orphanages. When I was learning to sew on my mom's machine, I practiced stitching lines on a fat quarter. I sewed straight stitches and zigzags, and fancy stitches that look like embroidery. If I had to do those fancy stitches by hand it would take forever! With my bernette I can sew around the edges of my quilts with the scallop stitch and it looks really pretty.

Next, I want to learn to sew clothes. When I was six, my babysitter made me an apron out of my favorite fabrics. She made it on her BERNINA! That made me want to learn how to sew aprons and other clothes. I'm going to make a jacket to wear to the Quilt Festival in Houston. First I am going to make a quilt top. My mom will help me cut the jacket pattern pieces out of it, and then I'll sew them together. When I'm done I'll have a pretty quilt jacket, just like the grown-up ladies!

Last year at Houston I took a fabric collage class at Make It University. I want to take more classes this year. I'm lucky because my mom can teach me to sew. I hope more grown-ups will teach classes for kids like me who want to learn how to sew on a machine.

My favorite way to spend time with my mom is to go down to her sewing studio and sit together while we sew on our machines. She is teaching me how to use an iron to press the seams on the quilt strips and blocks that I sew. There is a lot to learn, but sewing on my bernette next to my mom is my favorite way to have fun at home!

Sophie's Mom and Dad, Luana and Paul Rubin, are the owners of eQuilter.com in Boulder, Colorado. Luana has been a Bernina Fashion Designer and attended Bernina National Teacher retreats in Chicago and Switzerland. After working as an import fashion designer in Hong Kong and New York, Luana adopted Sophie from China in 2003. Sophie and Luana have been sending quilts and aid to orphanages around the world ever since. Sophie is in episode #613 of Quilting Arts TV, and also narrates "A Kid's Eye View of Quilt Festival" on eQuilter's video page. She plans to run eQuilter when she grows up.

Sophie and Luana Rubin deliver quilts to Mission of Love in Youngstown Ohio — with quilts made by Sophie and eQuilter customers to send to the orphans in Haiti after the earthquake.

If you would like to help us make quilts for orphans in Haiti or Pine Ridge, SD, you can drop them off in person at eQuilter in Boulder, Colorado, or you can ship them directly to Mission of Love and they will make sure the quilts are hand-delivered personally to an orphan in Haiti or on the reservation in Pine Ridge.

Mission of Love Foundation
Hemlock Court
Youngstown, Ohio 44515
http://www.missionoflove.org

Japanese Garden Shirt

by AMANDA WHITLATCH

I love to "shop" with my camera (aren't cellphones wonderful?) and collect embellishing ideas from garments that I see when I am out window-shopping. The idea for this project came from a sweater by "Salvage" that I saw and purchased in an expensive boutique in Laguna Beach. What I loved about it was the fact that the cotton sweater had been bleached and then embroidered. This "mixed media" style of embellishment is very popular on current high-end garments. It was also embroidered with heavyweight cotton thread, another unusual detail.

Do you have a boring cotton pullover in the back of your closet that you never wear? It's easy to turn it into your own designer original. A little bit of bleach, some embroidery, and it's done!

Supply List

- Cotton or other natural fiber shirt
- OESD Zenscapes embroidery collection #12185 (design #FB282 – Koi Swimming)
- OESD Stabil-Stick Tear-Away stabilizer
- BERNINA Embroidery Software
- Isacord embroidery thread in colors to coordinate with shirt.
- Embroidery hoop
- Household bleach
- Sponge
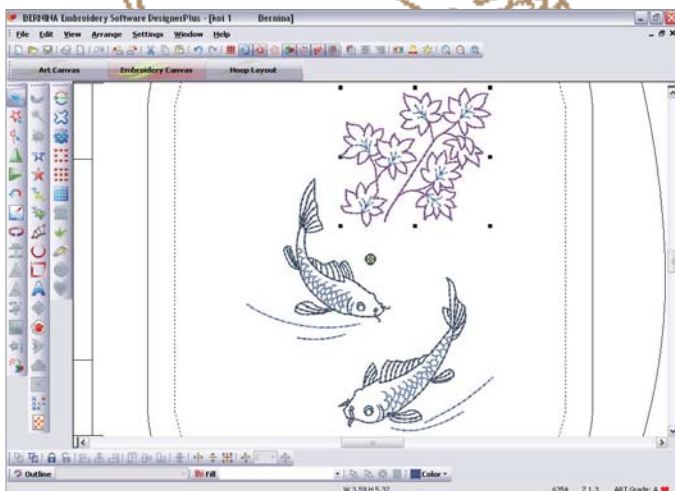- Spray bottle
- Rubber gloves
- Plastic tub
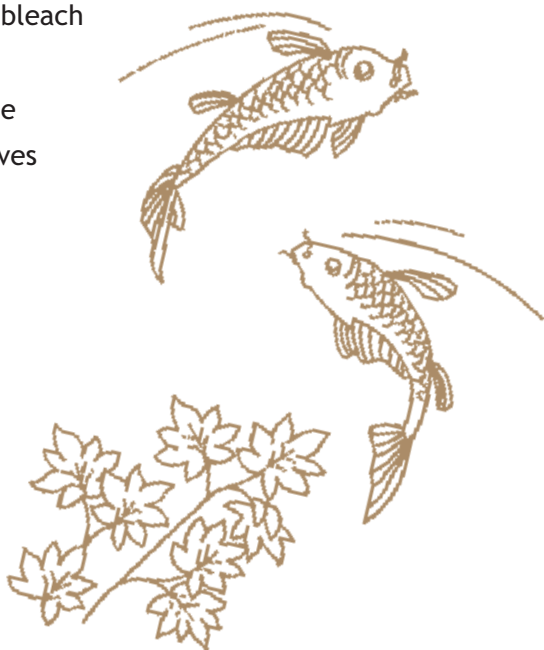
Bleach the Shirt

- Place the shirt in the tub, then use a sponge dipped in bleach to remove the color from random areas of the garment. You could also use a spray bottle filled with bleach for a different effect.

- To remove the excess bleach, put the shirt into a washer filled with warm water. Run it through the complete rinse cycle, and then dry it following the laundry instructions on the garment tag.
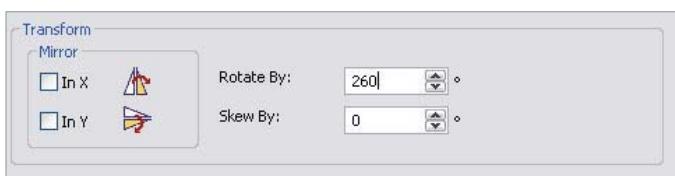
Modify the Embroidery Design (optional)

- Open design #FB282 in the embroidery software.
- Ungroup the design.
- Use the Polygon Select tool to select the tree branch. Group just the tree branch.
- Rotate the branch 180°.
- Select All; Group the entire design.
- Save as Koi 1.ART.
- Rotate the entire design 180°.

Embroider the Shirt

- Stabilize the inside front of the shirt with Stabil-Stick Tear-Away stabilizer.
- Hoop the upper right side of the shirt.
- Embroider Koi 2.ART.
- Remove the hoop from the machine and the shirt from the hoop.
- Hoop the lower left side of the shirt.
- Embroidery Koi 1.ART.
- Remove the hoop from the machine and the shirt from the hoop.
- Trim the stabilizer about ⅛" from the stitching.

Wasn't it easy to transform your plain into a beautiful Japanese Garden Shirt? You can try the same technique and other embroidery motifs on garments made of natural-fiber fabrics (cotton, linen, or rayon). What a great way to turn great buys or thrift-store finds into one-of-a-kind artful designs!

If you don't have embroidery software, simply stitch the designs as they are, rotating the second motif 180° for an effect similar to that shown on the sample.
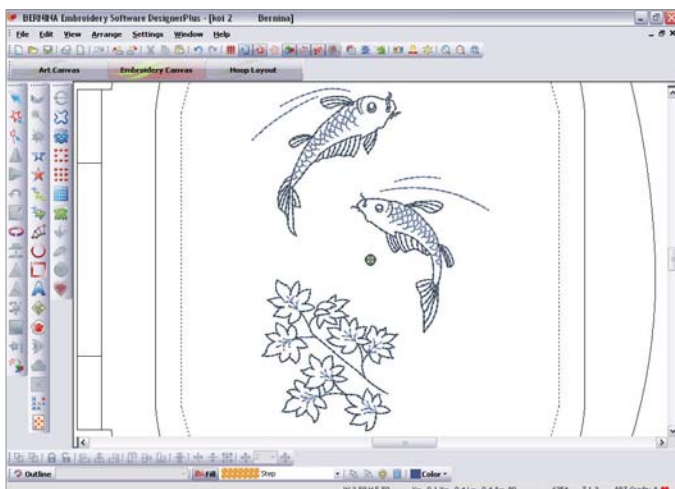
- Ungroup the design.
- Select and Group the tree branch
- Open Object Properties > General and Rotate the branch 260°.

- Select All; Group the entire design.
- Save as Koi 2.ART.

Thinking Outside the Box:
Patchwork Floor Art

by PAULA SCAFFIDI

Hiding under a rug in the foyer of my home was a patch of sadly damaged wood flooring. Replacing the boards would surely look like an obvious "patch," but what other options did I have? Eventually a happy idea emerged — why not add a different material? I've always wanted to design something in stone — the colors and visual textures are so beautiful — and I was also eager to play with my new BERNINA Embroidery Software 6. To meet this creative challenge, I "married" the two desires and soon discovered that I could use the software as my design assistant in creating the design and layout for a stonework medallion to replace the damaged section of wood. My great-grandfather was a stone mason, so the urge to work with natural stone might be in my genes.

First I collected 12" natural stone tiles. Then I photographed each one and entered them as "fabrics" into the Quilter library, creating my own "fabric" library for the project. I also photographed each tile using the black-and-white setting on my camera so I could verify that I had a smooth range of values with which to play as I arranged the "fabric" tiles to create the design for my medallion.

I did get carried away collecting the stone tiles — just like collecting fabric! Luckily, I also decided that the medallion needed to be larger than I originally thought, so more turned out to be better. The ideal size turned out to be just slightly larger than one-third the width of the room and centered under the light fixture. My final collection of stone tiles included a few dark accents and very light highlights, plus a nice range of colors in the middle values.


Piles of tiles, arranged by value.

In the Quilter program of the software, I chose a Drunkard's Path variation for my blocks (as a tribute to the original builder of my home). As I explored layout ideas in the embroidery software, I learned something very valuable. The software helped me "see" that my dark-valued stones needed to be connected for visual flow to make a less choppy design. I played with several layouts, using "save as" multiple times to make sure I didn't delete any combinations that I might want to retrieve later.


Playing with color values.
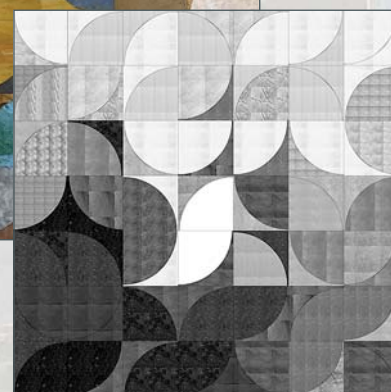
Substituting my black-and-white "fabrics" for the stone-colored ones made it easy to see the distribution of lights, mediums, and darks in the tile arrangement.

After constructing ten or so virtual stone medallions in the software, I was ready to "improvise" with the actual cut stone. I hired a stonecutter with the high-tech equipment needed to cut the tiles following my finished design. Thanks to a local tile installer (I'm better at stitching than at grouting!), a colorful medallion is now the focal point of my foyer.

My tiles are cut and ready to assemble into blocks.

13
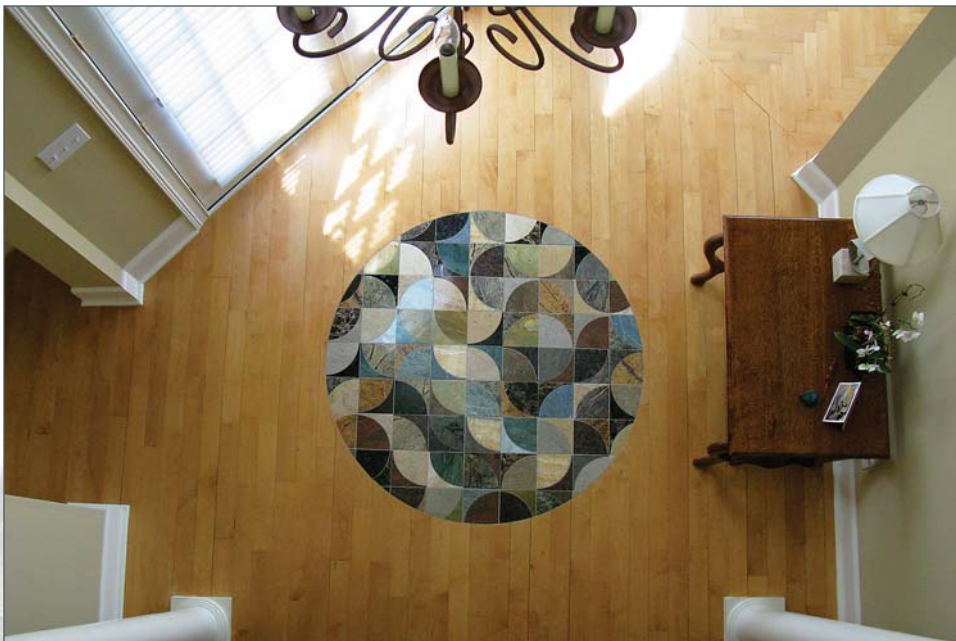
I honestly didn't know that three "birds" were going to appear in the final medallion. They must have flown in while I was improvising. I'm glad they did. Now my "nest" is complete! The completed stone medallion was our final step, the punctuation point at the end of a very long home renovation project.

Where will the leftover pieces end up? I'm still mulling that one over...

Working in BERNINA Embroidery Software 6 helped me to recognize my preference for concentrating lighter values within a region, and visually connecting dark values. All of my "play" in the software readied me for a spontaneous design session when I finally laid out the cut tiles.

The best thing about was how it enabled me to tackle a new project with confidence. Experience — even the virtual kind — is always the best teacher.

Can you see his beak and his outstretched wings? All birds fly away and return home.

Turn this image upside-down and you'll see that the beginning of the young bird's wing is the mama bird's beak.

PAULA SCAFFIDI

Artist... Internationally recognized as an innovative textile artist. Visit Paula's gallery at www.fiberella.com.

Teacher... When noted creativity coach Paula Scaffidi teaches, one thing is consistent: Art becomes "do-able" for all of her students. Design basics are interwoven with steps offering creative options. Paula says, "Teaching is a finely tuned rhythm, alternating between developing students' foundation skills and encouraging creative flight. All students can create unique and personally expressive textile art." Her diverse textile interests and provide a foundation for a wide variety of workshops.

Adventurer... Paula loves exploring new sewing technologies in her studio work, and freely shares expertise with enthusiasm. "I'm not a member of the secret sauce society," she says with a grin. A pioneer in machine needle-felting, Paula also enjoys embroidery and digitizing, as well as using her serger and new CutWork tool. Paula's 3-D vessel making retreats bring several technologies together for beginning students as well as more experienced ones.

Enjoy Paula's free tutorial Pintuck Landscapes, also featured on the BERNINA of America Sew-lebrity page.

www.fiberella.com

Cool Spice & Hot Chili Pepper

Small and Large Totes featuring CutWork and Embroidery

by SARAH VEDELER

Maximizing the stitching area of the BERNINA 830's Jumbo Hoop was the inspiration behind this easy tote bag. Its smaller twin was stitched in the Large Oval Hoop.

The addition of CorelDRAW Essentials 4 to BERNINA Embroidery Software 6 makes overall design, embroidery, and cutwork a breeze. Follow along to see how my design process worked, then create your own version of these stunning totes using the free embroidery and CutWork designs available at www.berninausa.com.

Creating the Overall Design

After opening my BERNINA Embroidery Software I selected the Art Canvas tab; this took me to CorelDRAW Essentials 4, where I created a "page" exactly the size of the bag I wanted to create (in this case, 12" x 15". I used CorelDRAW to provide the basic shapes: A square for the body of the bag (shown in light gray), with circle and square outlines indicating the embroidery placement; plus a "9-patch" CutWork overlay (shown in dark gray). I also created a woven-ribbon border at the top of the tote, which I knew would be easy to digitize using the Add Buttonholes feature in BERNINA Embroidery Software 6.
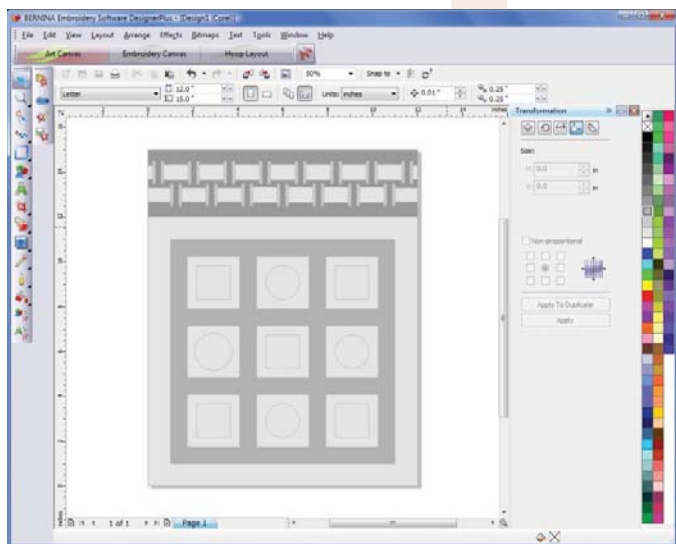
Note: Thinking ahead, I selected all the objects as a JPG bitmap, knowing I'd need this later during the CutWork design stage.

Moving On to Embroidery

The Convert to Embroidery button is a great new tool introduced in version 6 that allows you to convert CorelDRAW shapes into embroidery objects. I removed the fills from my artwork to ensure that it would be converted as objects with single-stitch outlines rather than fills, then I clicked on the Convert to Embroidery button.

After converting my drawing to embroidery, my design appeared in the Embroidery Canvas part of the embroidery software, with the vector drawing from CorelDRAW visible in the background. The Color Film Bar on the right side of the screen shows all of the digitized objects in my design.

The vector drawing from the Art Canvas shows through onto the Embroidery Canvas. I could have switched from the Art Canvas directly to the Embroidery Canvas without using Convert to Embroidery, and then created the embroidery squares and circles using the Rectangle and Circle/
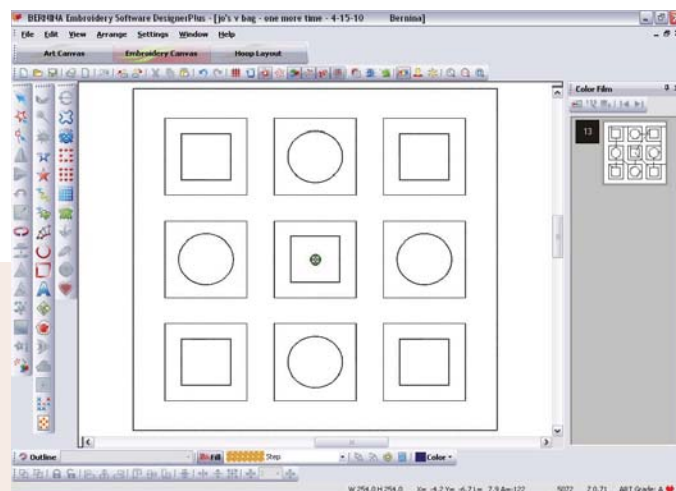

Oval tools, tracing over the vector graphics — but I like to make life as easy as possible using all the tools at my disposal!

Before embarking on the embroidery design using basic shapes that have been created as a foundation, put some thought into the actual construction of the project. In order to make the best use of my resources, I cut the fabric that will be embroidered to size, and use a placement line on my stabilizer to ensure perfect placement.

For this design I used a simple cross to mark the center of the design. Then I digitized tack-down lines at the upper and lower edges of the design to ensure that my fabric would stay in place while the embroidery was being stitched.

At this point I could finish my design without benefit of the CorelDRAW artwork, so I clicked on the Show Vectors button to hide the vector artwork.

Then came the fun part — assigning colors and stitches to the embroidery objects!
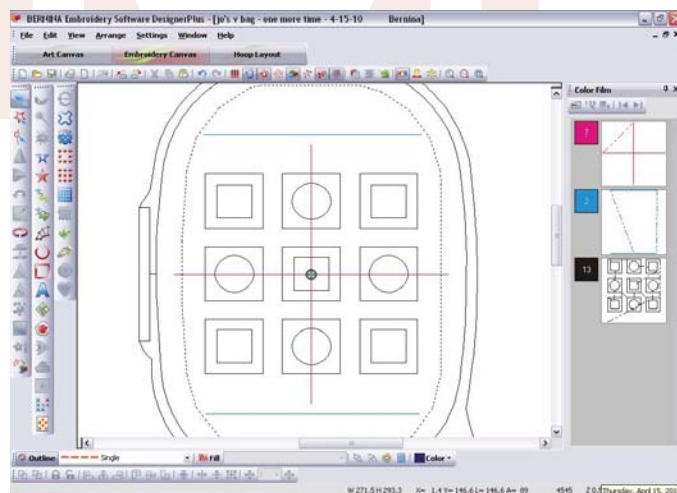
For the outer squares, I simply assigned a pattern outline stitch to each one. For the inner squares and circles I first duplicated the shapes, then assigned

fills to one set and pattern outline stitches to the other. With all the pattern outline and fill stitches in BERNINA Embroidery Software 6, it's easy to lose track of time while playing with all the possible stitch combinations!
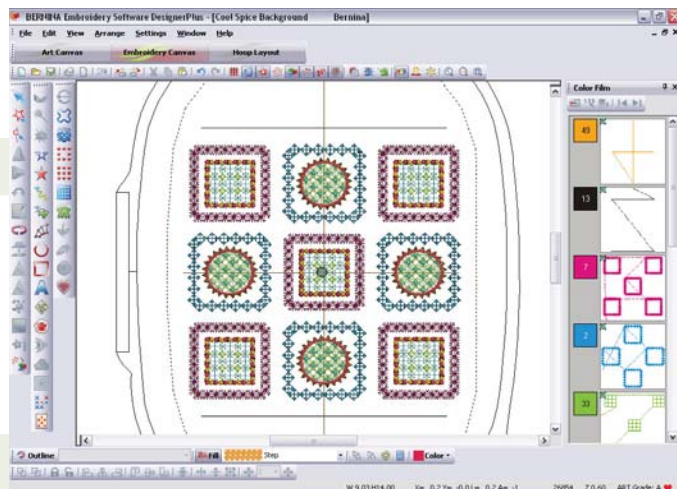

Moving On to CutWork

There are three toolbars in the CutWork software that I like to have visible. They can all be found under View > Toolbars.

- Thread Palette is the line of colors at the bottom of the screen. This allows me to easily change the color of the thread being used for a specific part of the design.
- Tool Options appears toward the top of the screen, underneath the main horizontal button bar. When an object has been selected, all sorts of good information will appear, all of which can be modified to make changes to the object.
- Object Properties shows up on the right-hand side of the screen. This is where you define the kind of stitches that will appear on an object — and if any cutwork is to be done.

The Sequence Manager is also vital to success! If it is not visible, it can be made visible by checking View > Sequence Manager.
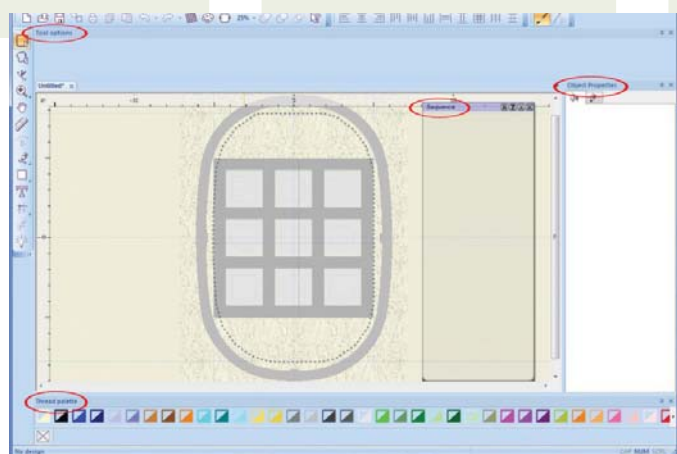

Remember the CorelDRAW graphic I saved as a JPG? I used it as a backdrop in the CutWork software. First I created a new file, with From File set to the JPG I just created. I selected the Bernina 256 x 400 Jumbo Hoop #26, and specified Open as Backdrop.
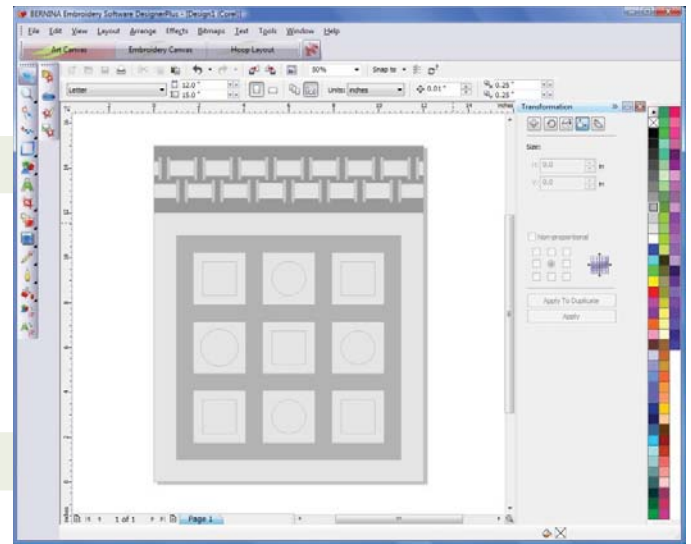

The first thing I created for the cutwork design was a placement line. I marked the center of the design with a vertical stitching line, and then the top and bottom of the cutwork overlay.

Next I used the Create Rectangle tool to create nine squares to define the cutwork. Initially, these appeared as nine separate objects on the Sequence Manager. To make the design easier to manage (and also to improve the way that it stitches out), I combined the nine squares by selecting all of them, right clicking on the group, and then selecting Combine.
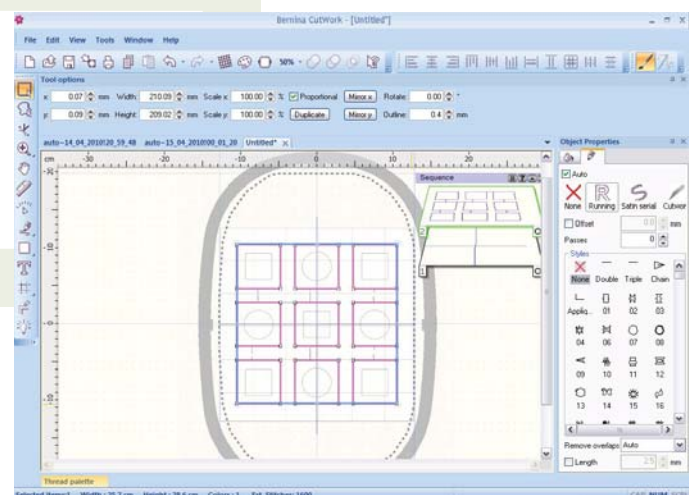
I created a duplicate of the cutwork squares to form the foundation for the decorative stitches. I selected thread colors and outline widths, and chose stitches for the outlines. There over 350 stitch Styles from which to choose!
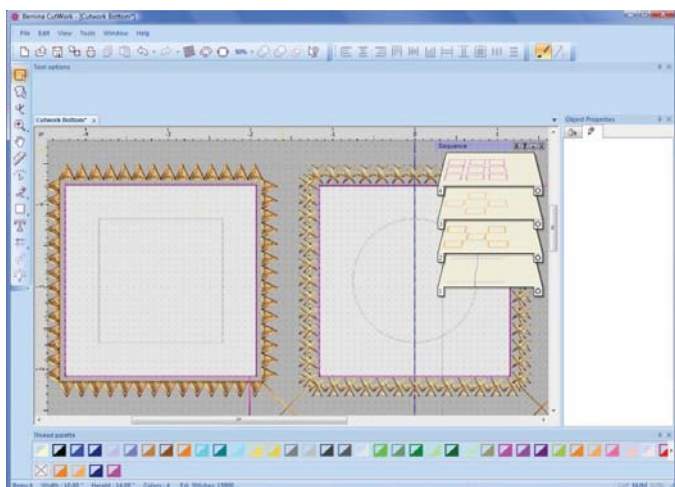
Having finished digitizing the decorative stitches, it was time to create the cutwork part of the design.

Note: To achieve the best stitching results, I did all of the decorative stitching before cutting any holes. This gave me the most solid background to stitch onto. Any time the fabric and stabilizer have holes in them, the more opportunity there is for disaster to occur!

Working with the group of Combined squares, I used the Object Properties box to convert them into CutWork objects.

The settings that I have found to work best for cutwork are as follows:

• In Tool Options, set Outline = 0.1". This is equivalent to 2.54mm. This setting determines the width of the satin stitch used to finish the cutwork. Large values work, but 0.08" or 2mm is the smallest value that I have found to generate good results on the embroidery machine.

• Check Running Before, and set Offset = 0.8mm, Length = 2.0mm, Passes = 2.

• Set Cutting Offset = -0.8mm. The shape is defined by the original line drawn. A positive offset, as used in the Running Before stitches, will place those stitches on the outside of the object. A negative offset, as used in the Cutting Offset, will place the cuts on the inside of the object. There will be 1.6mm between the Running Before stitches and the cutting line. (In my first attempt at creating a cutwork design, I managed to cut off the Running Before stitches by not having a big enough offset!)

• Check Satin Serial, and set Offset = 0.2mm, and Density = 0.4mm.

• Discard Part can be left at the default setting, which is Internal.

I used a similar process was used to create the cutwork for the top of the bag.
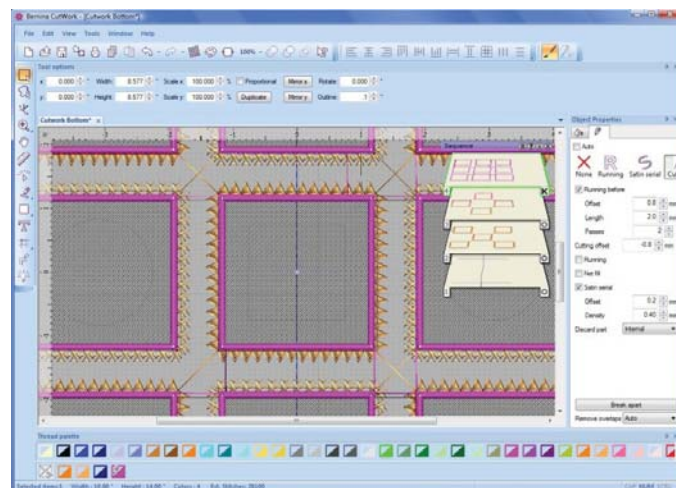
Download the following files at www.berninausa.com to make creating these tote bags easy:

Embroidery Files:
   CoolSpiceBackground.ART60
   HotChiliPepperBackground.ART60

CutWork Files for Body of Bag:
   CoolSpiceOverlay.DRAW
   HotChiliPepperOverlay.DRAW

CutWork Files for Upper Border:
   CoolSpiceTop.DRAW
   HotChiliPepperTop.DRAW

Sarah Vedeler, quilt artist and teacher, combines her love of quilting and embroidery to create stunning embroidered appliqué quilts featuring her own intricate digitized designs. Sarah loves to combine silk fabric and AURIfil's Cotton Mako thread in colors that are guaranteed to make your heart sing! As a new artisan on the scene, Sarah brings a refreshing perspective to quilting with her unique style. Her beautiful designs reflect her stated purpose in life of creating beauty, inspiration, and infinite creative joy.

Simple Summer Shirt

Materials

1¾ yards floral-print fabric
Bias binding for the neckline

Instructions

Cut a 37½" x 62" rectangle from the fabric.

Fold the fabric in half crosswise and mark a 10½" neckline in the center of the folded edge as shown in illustration #1.

TIP: Fold the fabric in half again (into quarters) and finger press a crease to mark the center of the fold. Open the fold out, then mark 5¼" from each side of the crease mark for a total of 10½".

Completely unfold the fabric, then fold it in half lengthwise. Measure approximately 2¾" (7cm) from the fold toward the front, and approximately 1¼" (3cm) from the fold toward the back. Draw a rounded neckline as shown in illustration #2 and cut along the drawn line.

Try on the top to make sure that the neck opening is large enough to go over your head. If it is not, scoop out another ⅛" at the center back and/or center front (do not enlarge at the sides).

Illustration #1

37½
10½
12½
20½-23½*
31
6
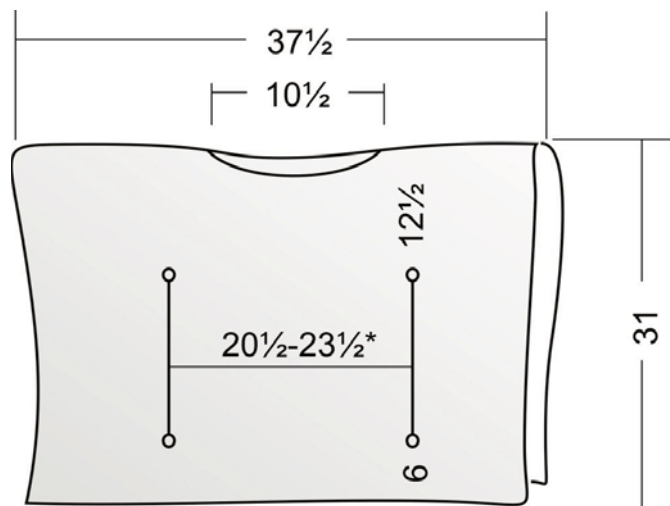
* Waist Measurement: Small = 20½"
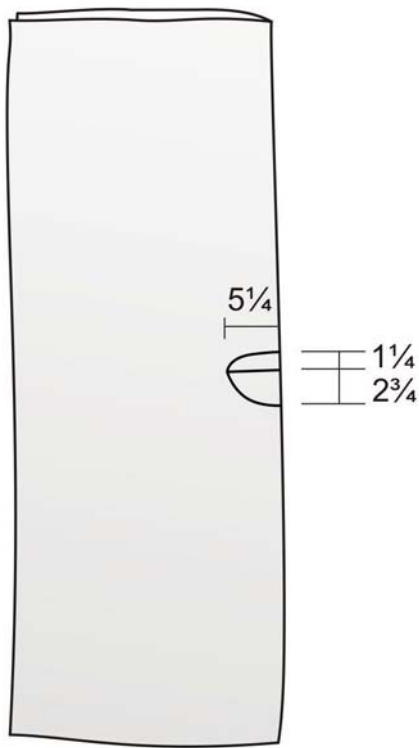Medium = 22"
Large = 23½"

This top is unbeatably quick and easy to sew. Look for interesting fabrics like the bold print shown here; the more interesting the fabric, the better! To wear with a belt, simply work long buttonholes and thread the belt through them.

Fits sizes:

Small (bust = 35")
Medium (bust = 38")
Large (bust = 41")

Illustration #2

5¼

1¼
2¾

Finish the Top

Fold the top in half crosswise. Mark the armholes and shirt width as shown in illustration #1. Pin the layers together along the marked vertical lines.

To help prevent the stitching from pulling or tearing the fabric when the top is worn, sew an eyelet (or large zigzagged "square") at each end of the seamline. This distributes the stress over the area of the eyelet rather than concentrating it at the last straight stitch.

If your sewing machine has an eyelet program, select it and stitch an eyelet at one end of the vertical line (marked by a small circle in the illustration). Switch to a straight stitch and continue sewing to the other end of the line. At the end of the line of stitching, reselect the eyelet and sew one at the end of the line. The round eyelets will help prevent the stitching from pulling out at the end of the lines of stitching. Caution, do not cut the eyelet. Repeat for the second side of the top.

If your sewing machine does not have an eyelet program, select a zigzag stitch and set the stitch width = 5mm and stitch length = 1mm. Stitch several stitches at the beginning of one vertical line, forming a "square" of stitching. Switch to a straight stitch and continue sewing to the other end of the line. At the end of the line of stitching, reselect the zigzag stitch and sew a second "square." Repeat for the second side of the top.

Finish the Edges

Unfold the bias binding and note that one side is narrower than the other. Beginning at one side of the opening (not center back or center front), pin the narrow side to the right side of the neckline edge, right sides together, overlapping the ends 1″. Turn under one end ½″. Repin the ends with the folded end against the right side of the top; this will create a finished edge on the outside of the binding. Stitch the binding to the neckline, stitching in the crease of the binding.

Refold the bias binding along the creased lines. Fold the bias over the neckline edge and pin in place. Note that the wider part of the bias binding is on the inside of the top, and extends over the stitching line. From the outside of the top, stitch-in-the-ditch of the seam between the binding and the top; this stitching will catch the binding on the inside of the top and hold it in place.

Turn under ½″ along the short ends of the top rectangle; press. Turn under an additional ½″; press. Align the inside folded edge with the guide in the center of an edgestitch foot. Move the needle two positions to the left or right, as needed, to stitch the edge of the hem in place. Hem both short ends.

Hem the two long edges of the top in the same manner.

Belt Option

If desired, work two large buttonholes on each side of the top, 1″ from the side seam, slightly below the waistline. (Try on the top to determine where your waistline is.) Be sure to stitch the buttonhole on the inside of the body of the top, not on the "sleeves."

by **ALICE D. VOSS**

Square Deal Dress by Nicole Smith

Have you heard of the Sewing Republic?

The Sewing Republic (www.sewingrepublic.com) was launched in March 2008 and is for crafters with beginning-to-intermediate sewing skills. These seamsters might have just discovered their passion for sewing, or rediscovered crafting hip and fun sewing projects.

The Sewing Republic offers neat projects for everyone, including fashionable garments, home dec items, accessories, and even some neat ideas for toddlers. They are easy to sew, don't take much time, and make great gifts.

What does the Sewing Republic have to Offer?

Browsing through this inviting site with its crafty and rugged look, you will find lots of information about the tools you need for the sewing adventures ahead of you.

The "Machine Menu" gives you a great overview of the BERNINA sewing machines, from entry-level to more advanced models.

Burnished Denim Pouch by Melanie Testa

- Not sure what you are looking for? We know that when you are first getting into sewing it seems like there are millions of things you need to know. Sewing Republic's "What to Look For" section tells you which machine characteristics are important to consider when making a purchase.

- The "Machine Matchmaker" is a short quiz that makes recommendations for which machine would suit you best, plus two alternative models that you might also like. Simply answer five questions and your best fit pops up on the screen.

Juice Pouch by Stacy Schlyer

Cosmetic Brush Case by Juliette Lanvers

- The "Sewing Help" section offers video tutorials — great little online sewing classes. Learn how to sew buttonholes, insert a zipper, and apply bias binding. Don't know which stitch to use for a sewing task? Simply click on "Seams and Stitches." Can't figure out the perfect thread tension? We have some hints for you.

- Are you armed and ready, with your sewing machine and supplies at hand? Then it's time to dive into our great "Project Ideas" section. Here you will find great new projects every other week, with thorough step-by-step instructions to make it easy to get started and finish your favorite project. Some of the projects even include video sewing instructions.

Who are the artists behind the projects?

We work with popular bloggers who sew on BERNINA machines and provide hip and easy projects. Each one includes a short bio of the blogger who created it, plus a link so you can connect directly to their blogs. Current bloggers include:

- Nikki Smith (applianceclothing.com/blog/)
- Juliette Lanvers (angrychicken.com)
- Melanie Testa (melanietesta.com/)
- Kate Goodman (handmadekate.typepad.com/ handmade_kate/)
- Stacy Schlyer (stacysews.com)

Check out the Sewing Republic! It's a great place to get inspired for your next sewing project and get your creative juices flowing. Sign up for the RSS feed or newsletter and we'll keep you posted on what's new. We have many more great sewing ideas in the pipeline!

www.sewingrepublic.com

The 90/10 Stitch Solution

by SUSAN BECK

Trouble-free stitching is a joy, but it's really frustrating when your machine doesn't deliver a beautiful, consistent stitch. When this happens (and it happens to all machines at one time or another), there are some simple solutions that will usually take care of the problem and restore your machine to a quietly-humming workhorse. If you have a "bad stitch" situation, there are four areas to check that will often solve 90% of sewing problems.

1: Needle

Use needles made to fit your brand and model of machine and replace after 6-8 hours of sewing or sooner if the needle is blunt, burred, or broken. Make sure your needle is appropriate for your fabric (fine point for lightweight fabric, larger point for heavier fabric, stronger shaft for multiple layers of heavy fabric, etc.). Also make sure that the thread weight is compatible with the needles and the fabric. If you hear a "popping" sound as the needle enters the fabric, it means the point is dull and the needle should be replaced. Always insert a new needle when you clean your machine.

Hint: The needle is the #1 problem with stitch formation. When a problem arises, change the needle first and you will often save yourself some troubleshooting time, resolving the stitch crisis within a few short minutes. Even though a needle is one of the most inexpensive parts of the machine, it is one of the most important.

2: Thread

Always use high-quality, long staple thread to minimize the amount of fuzz and lint deposited in the machine. Inexpensive "bargain" thread can deposit large amounts of lint that build up in the feed dog and tension areas and can cause tension inconsistencies over time. Thread should also be matched in size with the needle selected so that it fits in the groove down the front of the needle. Dyes can also affect the characteristics of thread, making it stiffer, coarser, etc., so don't be surprised if different colors perform in different ways.
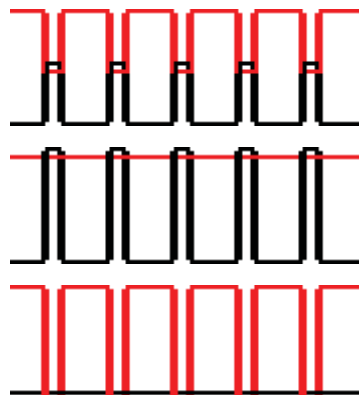
3: Tension

Generally, the needle and bobbin thread tensions should be balanced so they lock between the fabric layers, making their joining invisible. Balanced tensions are simplest if you have the same thread in both places. However, there are times you will want to use different threads such as when satin stitching or decorative stitching. You may use a lightweight bobbin thread and a decorative needle thread and you'll want the needle thread to pull slightly to the back so the bobbin thread doesn't show on the top of the fabric. It's best to accomplish this by adjusting your needle tension. The bobbin tension is

calibrated at the factory and rarely needs adjusting. If you think the bobbin tension needs modifying, take it to your sewing technician as he or she will have the gauges and weights to fine-tune the setting. To check the tension of your stitching, thread the bobbin and needle with the same type and weight of thread in two different colors. Sew a line of stitching on a contrasting solid color of fabric and inspect the stitch. You should *not* see the threads lying in small beads between the stitches on either side of the test fabric. If you do, or if you continually have to adjust your tension, clean the tension area.

Balanced tension.

Tight needle tension.

Loose needle tension.

4: Basic Maintenance

One of the best things you can do for your machine is to take good care of it with routine maintenance and yearly check-ups. You'll have years of high performance if you keep it clean, lint-free, and well-oiled. As each model is slightly different, check your owner's manual for specific information for oiling and cleaning. Make a habit to regularly maintain the following areas:

Bobbin Area

- Remove the stitch plate and bobbin case and hook, if applicable.
- With a lint brush, clean around the feed dog, the hook and the surrounding area.
- Clean the bobbin case.

Cleaning Tips: Use a lint brush, soft toothbrush, paintbrush, or a make-up brush to clear lint from the hook and stitch plate areas; brush the lint out of the machine, not into it.

Cleaning the Tension Area

- Lift the presser foot bar and using a lint brush, clean each side of the top tension discs. Lower the presser foot bar and use a length of buttonhole twist or Cordonnet to floss each side of the top tension discs. (See photo on page 26.)
- Check the take-up lever for jammed thread ends; if found, gently remove or take to a trained technician.
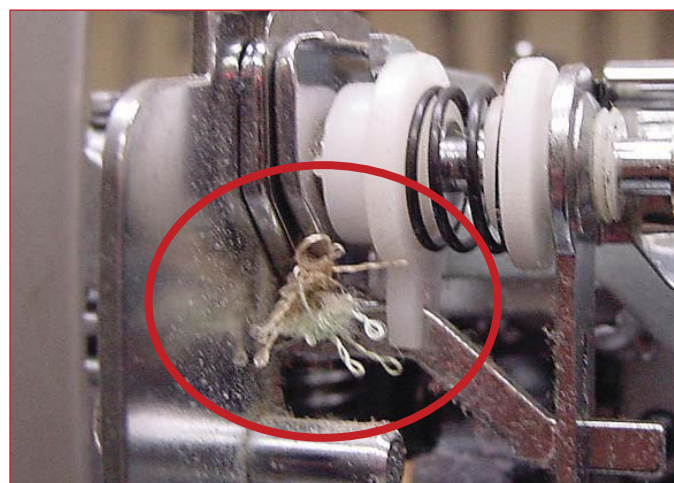

*Remove stitch plate, bobbin case, and hook.*
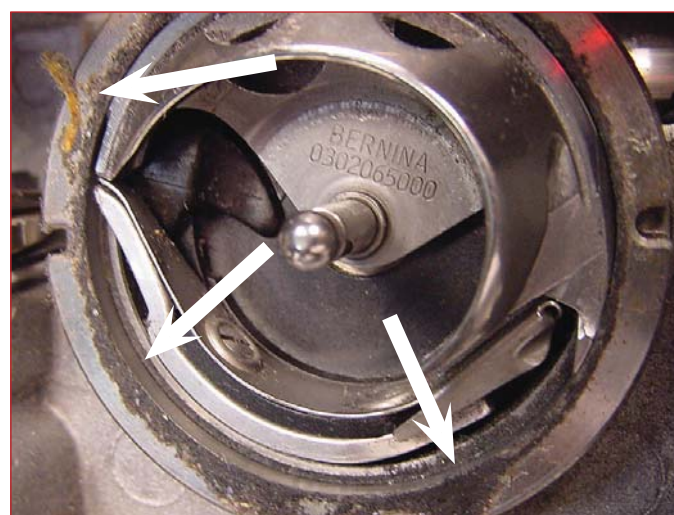
Brush to remove thread and lint build-up.

Tension Tips: If your machine develops tension problems that it did not have before, it can very well be the result of using faulty thread; don't use cheap, short staple thread that is "fuzzy" and deposits lint into the tension area as this can cause inconsistent tension settings.

*What your machine technician sees when thread is caught in the tension discs.*
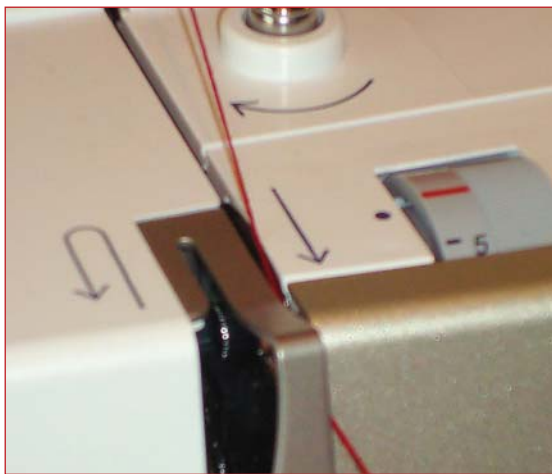
Floss to clean between tension discs.

Oiling the Hook Area

- Reinstall the hook if it was removed when clearing the lint.
- Place one drop or two drops of oil in the areas shown, or as indicated in your instruction manual.
- Insert the bobbin case as instructed in the manual. Note: If machine is accidentally over-oiled, sew several lines of stitching on a scrap of fabric to remove the excess.

Oiling Tips: If your machine is running noisier than usual, it's time to oil it. Use only the type of oil recommended for your machine; do not over oil.
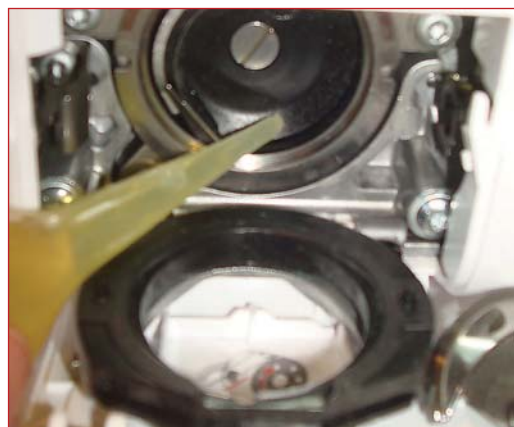
Oil hook area as directed by machine manual.

Ten Percent of the Time

If your stitching problem is not resolved after checking the four areas discussed above, it's time to take the machine in for a professional diagnosis. Do this at least once a year even if you are not experiencing problems of any sort. Your machine will reward you with years of trouble-free stitching!

Many thanks to John Gass, Sandi's Sewing Connection (West Burlington, Iowa) for providing the "machines in need of TLC" photos.

spotlight on ...

Fly Away Butterflies

Folk Art Patterns

Irish-born Parisian artist Marianne Byrne-Goarin is the creator of Cinnamon Patch, a collection of patchwork, folk art, and penny rug designs mixing wool felt, patchwork fabrics, and traditional embroidery stitches. Inspired by American folk art and her love of handwork, these simple patterns reflect the simple pleasures of everyday life... a garden in bloom, hearts of long ago, seasons that change...

Wool Felt

Spring Heart Collection

Combine your Cinnamon Patch pattern with this high-quality wool felt. It's thick, soft, and pleasant to touch and use. You'll love the color palette – heathered and marbled felts in shades from the softest pastels to the most vivid hues. This superior quality wool/rayon blend felt can be embroidered or appliquéd, and works perfectly with Cinnamon Patch patterns. Each sheet is 12" x 18". Dry clean only.

Alphabet Patchwork

Wool/rayon blend felt squares

Charming Felt Projects

As a garden unveils its charm in every new season, The Cinnamon Patch brings you "patches" of flowers and hearts to cultivate with felt, needle, and thread. The effortless whimsy of Cinnamon Patch patterns makes them accessible for stitchers of all skill levels. The only thing left is the question: What are you waiting for? Stop by your local quilt or sewing shop and ask for Cinnamon Patch today.

Spring Welcome

www.thecinnamonpatch.com

The Last Word

Coming Attractions

Here's a small slice of what you'll see in our next issue:

Flower Power Pillow

You'll love the explosion of texture and color on this decorator pillow by Artgirl Allison Stilwell. Layered petals, raw edge appliqué and free-motion stitching are just three of the fun techniques you'll use to create a signature look for your home.

Perfect Collar Points

Whether you are a beginning sewer or a more experienced one, this method of pressing and preparing a corner for turning will definitely surprise and delight you. Good for shirts, jackets, bags, and any project that has a faced and turned corner, this technique is easy and the results are truly professional.
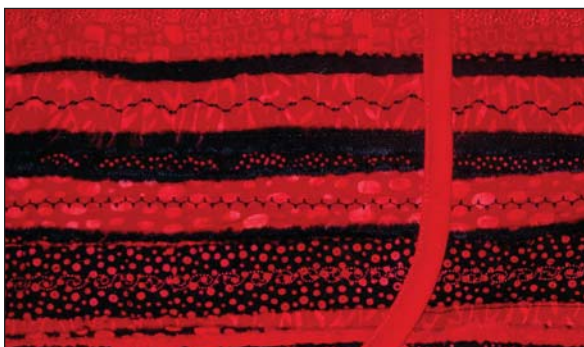
Threads and Edges Jacket

Fabric strips, embroidery thread, and lots of decorative stitches are what you need to create this simple textured jacket. This Kwik Sew pattern features long sleeves, a collarless neckline, and bound edges. Making this jacket is a great to bond with your sewing machine and really get to know what it can do!

The Foot Book

Create this fun mixed-media fabric book to showcase stitched techniques using various presser feet and accessories. Each issue of TTNO will feature one page, discussing and detailing the presser foot and the techniques used to create it. Start your own Foot Book with the next issue and follow along, learning as you go!

Stitching Inspiration

We hope you've enjoyed the first issue of *Through the Needle Online* and found it to be informative and inspirational. We'd love to see your take on any of our featured projects so please email photos of your projects to jo@berninausa.com so we can share in your creativity!

Quick Links

These are the main links featured in each article of this issue; see the articles for more links to specific products, projects, and technique information. Please visit our sponsors and contributors for more inspiration, more information, and more stitching fun!

www.ThroughTheNeedle.com (coming soon)
www.berninausa.com
www.berninausablog.com
www.bernina.com
www.embroideryonline.com
www.benartex.com
www.ylicorp.com
www.eQuilter.com.com
www.missionoflove.org
www.quiltingartstv.com
www.fiberella.com
www.sarahvedelerdesigns.com
www.sewingrepublic.com