

**North Shore Needle Arts Chapter  
The Embroiderers' Guild of America, Inc.  
PO Box 75542 3034 Edgemont Village  
North Vancouver, B.C. V7R 4X1 Canada**



# NEEDLE YARNS

**NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2004**



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Embroidery... what an expansive word. When I travel I am most often either stitching or reading about it. There is often a nice young gentleman sitting next to me who engages me in conversation telling me about his grandmother who embroidered pillowcases. This is not what I do, and I long to tell him about the wonderful world of contemporary and creative embroidery, but I let him ramble on about his memories because we all do have these memories. A large number of embroiderers today learned at the knee of their grandmother or great aunt and sleeping on a lovingly embroidered pillowcase brings back treasured memories. I was fortunate to grow up surrounded by a great-grandmother, two grandmothers, two great aunts and a mother who all either embroidered, tatted, quilted, knitted, smocked, crocheted or hooked. I could go on and on telling you wonderful stories about them and their creative endeavors; they were each so unique and special.

As I travel I am also in awe of the number of techniques the simple word embroidery covers... counted thread, canvas, surface stitchery, lace making, quilting and machine embroidery are some of the general categories that encompass a massive number of individual techniques. We are fortunate at North Shore Needle Arts to have so many talented members who explore and express themselves in a great variety of techniques. We are also fortunate to be members of EGA who through their magazine, correspondence courses and seminars constantly expose us to a world of embroidery beyond our immediate experience. Many of us who grew up with grandmothers and great aunts who embroidered learned techniques associated with different cultures and regions, our heritage. Our local and national organizations take us far beyond cultural and regional boundaries and unite us all with our passion for needle and thread. This is my last message as your President. As I reflect on the last two years I realize how having this experience has expanded my world. I am fortunate to have worked with an outstanding executive and I have felt and appreciated the strength and support of the membership. Together we have accomplished a great deal in these two years. We have laughed and celebrated, cried and mourned, tried and learned, shared knowledge and experience with each other and the rest of our community. Together we have demonstrated the strength and importance of being bound together by the joy embroidery brings into our lives. My ambition has been to encourage you each to grow by flexing your creative muscles and sharing your experience in thread and fabric. Continue to listen to your "what if" muscle, continue to risk and continue to trust that your embroidery journey will continue as it should. Thank you all for the opportunity, the joy and the friendship you have given me.

*Wendy*

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xxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

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## November meeting reminder



**Please note that the second Thursday of the month in November, our usual meeting day, falls on Remembrance Day this year. We will meet on November 4th. The time and location remain the same as usual.**

## Executive

### North Shore Needle Arts Executive 2003-2004

#### Elected Positions

|                       |            |
|-----------------------|------------|
| <b>President</b>      | xxxxxxxxxx |
| <b>Vice President</b> | xxxxxxxxxx |
| <b>Treasurer</b>      | xxxxxxxxxx |
| <b>Secretary</b>      | xxxxxxxxxx |
| <b>Workshops</b>      | xxxxxxxxxx |

#### Other Positions

|                                     |                                        |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>Past President/ GPR Rep</b>      | xxxxxxxxxx                             |
| <b>Newsletter Editor</b>            | Wendy Osenton 604-922-9159             |
| <b>Membership</b>                   | xxxxxxxxxx                             |
| <b>Programmes</b>                   | xxxxxxxxxx                             |
| <b>Librarians</b>                   | xxxxxxxxxx<br>xxxxxxxxxx               |
| <b>Education</b>                    | xxxxxxxxxx                             |
| <b>Stitch-Ins</b>                   | xxxxxxxxxx                             |
| <b>Outreach</b>                     | xxxxxxxxxx<br>xxxxxxxxxx               |
| <b>Show &amp; Tell</b>              | xxxxxxxxxx                             |
| <b>Evening Liaison</b> (until June) | xxxxxxxxxx                             |
| <b>Social</b>                       | xxxxxxxxxx<br>xxxxxxxxxx<br>xxxxxxxxxx |

*In an effort to streamline the Newsletter please note the new email address for all submissions:*

[NSNANewsletter@shaw.ca](mailto:NSNANewsletter@shaw.ca)

*Questions regarding your membership should be directed to :*

xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxx  
xxxxxxxxxx

*Mail your membership cheque directly to*  
xxxxxxxxxx at :

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

*If you have a question regarding your copy of Needle Yarns please contact:-  
for e-mail copies:*

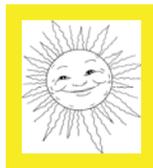
**Wendy Osenton (604-922-9159)**

[NSNANewsletter@shaw.ca](mailto:NSNANewsletter@shaw.ca) .

*if you receive it by regular mail:*

xxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxx

## Meetings



### Day Meetings

#### EXECUTIVE MEETING

1st Thursday  
Assembly 9:30am  
Meeting starts 9:45am

#### MONTHLY MEETING

2nd Thursday 9:30am - 2pm  
(Doors & Library open at 9am)  
St Martin's Church Hall,  
195 East Windsor,  
North Vancouver.

#### STITCH-IN

3rd Thursday  
(See below for more details).

#### STITCHING IN THE VILLAGE

4th Thursday, 10am-2pm  
Capilano Library



### Night Awls

#### MONTHLY MEETING

2nd Thursday, 7pm  
2189 West-42nd Avenue, Vancouver

## Stitch-Ins

*Please let the hostess know you are coming.*

**November 18, 2004**

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**December 16, 2004**

**No Stitch-in**

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## Night Awls

The Night Awls held elections at our last meeting and the following positions were filled:

**Chair:** xxxxxxxxxxxx

**Liaison:** xxxxxxxxxxxx

**Programmes:** xxxxxxxxxxxx

**Newsletter:** xxxxxxxxxxxx

Our thanks to xxxxxxxxxxxx (past chair) and xxxxxxxxxxxx for all their work.

The Nov. meeting is still scheduled for the **11th (Remembrance Day)**. Guest speaker TBA. We will be holding our Christmas social and re-gifting exchange at the Dec. meeting. Bring in anything from your stash (kit, instructions, book, etc. in good condition ) that you would like to pass on.

Our monthly Stitch-In is the last Sunday of the month, from 10am till noon at our regular venue. All are welcome.

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### Mission Statement

The purpose of the North Shore Needle Arts, EGA is 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. Membership dues are \$55 per year. Membership is open to anyone interested in embroidery and textile related arts. Members receive 'NEEDLE ARTS', a quarterly publication of the Embroiderers' Guild of America, our own newsletter **NEEDLE YARNS**, use of our extensive library and an opportunity to participate in the many guild workshops and courses. Guests are invited to attend one meeting. Further attendance requires membership in the guild.

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## Member News

### Nominating Committee Report

The new executive for 2005 – 2007 is almost complete. The nominating committee have met several times and made many phone calls. We have filled all positions with the exception of Workshop Chairperson and someone to manage the Show and Tell table. I would like to thank **Xxxxxxxxxxxx** for stepping in to the position of Treasurer a few months early after Jose Ingram moved away.

I would also like to thank the committee for all the work they did while I was away.

**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**  
**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**  
**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**  
**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**

**Nominations stand as follows:-**

- President:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Vice President:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Secretary:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Treasurer:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Workshops:** **???????????**
- Membership:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Newsletter:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Assistant:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Advertising:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Distribution:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Programmes:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Education:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Library:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx & Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Past President/GPR Rep:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Show & Tell:** **???????????**
- Social Committee:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- & committee**
- Stitch-ins:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Community Outreach:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx & Xxxxxxxxxxxx**
- Greeters:** **Xxxxxxxxxxxx & Xxxxxxxxxxxx**

**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**

*Nominating Chair*

Please consider volunteering for one of the vacant spots on the above list. Your new executive is energized for the two years ahead and will work hard on your behalf. Joining this team will be both fun and rewarding.

**Ed**

## Membership

Please welcome:

### New Members

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**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**

### Exhibit at the Silk Purse

We have been successful in being selected for an exhibit at the Silk Purse in 2005. The dates of the show are November 15<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>, 2005. We will be giving more details at the November meeting and the next newsletter but you can begin stitching now!

**Xxxxxxxxxxxx & Xxxxxxxxxxxx**

Dear Friends,

Finally I can say that I'm really settled in my new home-I have started stitching, not doing so was driving me crazy. starting to stitch has its downsides too-it makes me miss all of you a lot!!! There's no one here (at least for now) to seek advice, discuss projects, critique color schemes and so on. That I am told is life-unfair-but to be met bravely.

I live in a fairly comfortable but modest sized apartment-not as spacious as my former house in the north shore but adequate for Raj and I. Our apartment has a sea view on one sideband on the other, our bedroom, overlooks a tropical rainforest patch-all green. Quite pretty especially in the early mornings, we even get to see nesting white headed eagles fairly regularly. The sea breeze we get is very pleasant but the high level of humidity simply means that air-conditioning becomes a way of life.

Returning back and resettling in Penang has not been as easy as I thought it would be. Former friends have moved on with their lives, local norms have changed, familiar shops are not there anymore, and traffic is a nightmare. I am learning and I am meeting new people and making new friends. I spend one afternoon a week in an orphanage for traumatized children. I work with a group of teenage girls to help them befriend needles and discover the wonderful world of stitchery. This distraction must help children somewhat, for instance, fourteen year old Mary who until now has difficulty communicating with anybody around her, seemed to have developed an immense liking to needlework. She is beginning to smile and express delight at her handwork. She is changing and showing potential. So if any of you have any ideas on how I can improve and interest my orphans, please do not hesitate to drop me a line. Also if you are planning a trip my way, bring along your discards (UFOs, needles, threads etc.).

I miss you all very much, I thank you all for your wonderful friendship and certainly look forward to being in touch and visits to Penang.

Keep smiling, enjoy beading and stitching and take care of each other, you all surely realize how lucky it is to have such a wonderful bunch of togetherness.

My e-mail is still the same and my address is:

**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**  
**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**  
**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**  
**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**  
**Xxxxxxxxxxxx**

## Caring for your Needlework

We have recently been receiving reports on the dire consequences of washing needlework in a solution of 'Woolite'. Loving Stitch in Surrey have called the guilds to tell us of the misfortunes of a customer whose beautiful work was ruined by using this product. Back in the late 1980's North Shore Needle Arts warned its members of this very same problem and advised us to use 'Orvus' paste. A reminder is long overdue. One recommendation is that you wash linens and aida with **Orvus**. Orvus is sold for washing livestock. It is extremely gentle, being pure lauryl sulfate; it is the detergent used by conservators. It contains no softeners, perfumes, bleaches or brighteners that might adversely affect fibres over time. It is available at some needlework stores or you can find it at livestock supplies, tack or feed stores such as Buckerfields in the valley. It comes in quite large containers and can be divided amongst a large number of stitchers. Another good suggestion is that if you have some threads left from your project, wash them in tepid water with a dab of dish liquid or shampoo, rinse well and let dry on a paper towel. If they don't stain the paper towel it should be OK to wash the finished project in the same way. If they bleed, wash some more samples and add white vinegar to set the colour. Your needlework is a future heirloom; to make it last, follow one of these treatments and help preserve a family treasure. Orvus is **NOT** recommended for silk. Always use caution when washing antiques or other aged materials as the dyes may be unstable. When wet these items will be very fragile. There are numerous articles out there on this subject. Such as [http://www.fibreartsonline.com/res/useful/ui\\_Care.htm](http://www.fibreartsonline.com/res/useful/ui_Care.htm). Do your research!

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The following is from the DMC website. See website for terms of use.

### Care and Washing Instructions for your Needlework Projects

#### Care Instructions:

- \* When handling any needlework, always take the special care that is necessary to keep your work clean. Wash hands frequently to prevent body oils from staining the fabric or embroidery.
- \* Be sure to remove your embroidery from the hoop each time you stop stitching to prevent hoop marks from soiling your fabric..
- \* It is recommended that you use approximately 18" lengths of thread when stitching your project. This will help to avoid knotting, twisting or fraying of the thread while you work.
- \* Your project should be stored in a bag or workbasket when not being stitched to protect it from dust, spills, etc.

#### Washing Instructions:

If you have followed our Care Instructions, you may not find it necessary to launder your piece before framing or finishing. If, however, your piece has become soiled, wash it following the instructions below:

- \* Always wash each embroidery piece separately -- DO NOT wash embroidered piece with any other embroidery projects or laundry items.
- \* Wash embroidery in lukewarm water with a mild detergent or dishwashing liquid. DO NOT use specially formulated wool wash, harsh detergents, or chlorine bleach.
- \* Rinse embroidery several times in clear water. Do not worry if water becomes colored when washing embroidery -- continue rinsing piece in clear water.
- \* Roll the embroidery between two clean towels squeezing gently without wringing -- DO NOT allow embroidery piece to touch upon itself. Unroll towels and spread out piece flat to dry on a towel. NEVER leave damp embroidery folded or in a heap.
- \* To iron your piece, place the dry embroidery face down between two clean towels and press with a warm, not hot, iron. To remove creases or fold lines from your piece, you may find it necessary to use the steam setting on your iron.
- \* It is NOT recommended that protective coating sprays or other products of this type be used on your embroidery projects as they may cause a chemical reaction with the thread dyes.
- \* It is generally NOT recommended that your embroidery be dry cleaned. However, certain fabrics (i.e., wools) may require dry cleaning. We suggest that you speak to your local dry cleaner advising him that there may be a reaction between the thread dyes and the dry cleaning chemicals (i.e., benzene, trichlorethylene, etc.).

### WHITENING LINEN.

According to a French writer, crystallized carbonate of soda, although so great a favorite with the washerwomen, is a declared foe to linen, since, notwithstanding its cleansing power, it attacks the fibre, and after a time makes it so rotten as to cause it to tear, almost at the touch. An improvement on this substance, it is said, consists in the employment of a solution in the proportion of two pounds of soap to twenty-five quarts of warm water, to which are to be added one table-spoonful of essence of turpentine and three spoonfuls of ammonia. The mixture is to be stirred by the help of a little broom, and the linen immersed in it for several hours, the tub being completely covered. The articles are then to be washed in the ordinary way, rinsed in tepid water, and then blued, if this is necessary. The same solution can be used twice over by heating again and adding half the amount given of essence of turpentine and ammonia.

It is claimed that this process is accompanied by great economy of time, labor, and fuel, and that the linen experiences little or no injury, appearing finally in a condition of irreproachable whiteness. The ammonia, it is said, does not exert any corrosive effect upon the fibre, since it evaporates immediately; and the odor of the turpentine entirely disappears in drying.

Freedom to reprint this article given by Ralph Griswold. This article from his web site is in the public domain; one of many dealing with textiles from old and out of print sources.

[http://www.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/articles/hnm\\_amm0.pdf](http://www.cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/articles/hnm_amm0.pdf)

Ralph Griswold [[ralph@cs.arizona.edu](mailto:ralph@cs.arizona.edu)]

**Wanted To Buy; smocking pleater, larger size, in good condition. xxxxxxxxxxxx**

# Workshops

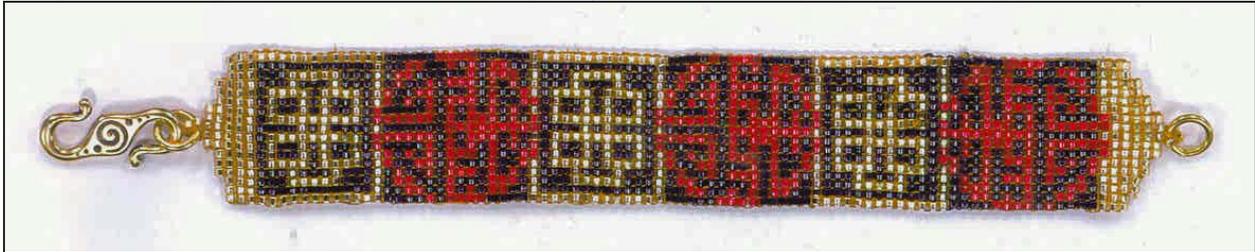
## NSNA WORKSHOPS - NOVEMBER 2004 TO MARCH 2005



1. **Xxxxxxxxxx's** Tie Bag class is on Wednesday November 10th at Edgemont Library. We will meet at 9:30 and create a lovely little bag out of a silk tie. Kit fee is \$12 and we will learn to stitch with an expert.



2. On Sunday November 7th **Xxxxxxxxxx** will teach a beading class at 2189 West 42nd Avenue in Vancouver. This class is from 10 - 2:30 and we have a few spaces left. The Oriental Bracelet is a form of petit point with beads and it is a good beginners project. The fee is \$27 and a kit fee of \$20.



3. **Xxxxxxxxxx's** Florentine Sampler starts in the New Year. We will start on Wednesday January 26, Wednesday February 9, Thursday February 17, Wednesday February 23 and Wednesday March 2. We will meet at the Edgemont Library from 9:30 - 12:30. The fee is \$75 and a supply list is available. Join this friendly teacher and enjoy creating a project that you will complete quickly.



4. In the New Year we will also offer a sampler course by **Xxxxxxxxxx**. **Xxxxxxxxxx** comes to us from Victoria and is highly recommended. The Heritage Needle Roll is an original sampler that can be made into a roll or kept as a small sampler. The stitcher will also make a scissor fob to include in the needle roll. The fee is \$80 and a supply list is available. **Xxxxxxxxxx** also charges \$20 for the pattern and button forms. Classes will be held at Edgemont Library March 11 & 12, 2005 from 9:30 - 4.



5. Our Kris Kringle lady, **Xxxxxxxxxx**, has designed a lovely Christmas stocking. The pattern is available for \$20 and Kay has generously donated the proceeds to the Guild and its workshop programs. Many thanks **Xxxxxxxxxx** for your thoughtful contribution.

**Xxxxxxxxxx**



# What's On



**Crafthouse Gallery,**  
1386 Cartwright St.,  
Vancouver, BC, 604-  
687-6511.

**November 5 - 29, 2004.** Janet Collins, "New Every Morning." Featherlight needlefelted angels delight both spirit and eye as they challenge the conventional concepts of the heavenly host. Opening reception: November 5, 6-8 pm. For more information contact Calvin Taplay, Crafthouse Gallery 604-687-6511

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**Fall/Winter workshops at Foxglove Fibre Arts Studio/Gallery on Bowen Island:**  
589 Prometheus Place,  
Artisan Square, Bowen Island.  
604-947-0092

- Sat, Nov.20 Handpainted Paper for Collage, Gift-wrap and Ornaments with Jennifer Love
- Sun, Nov 21 Canvas Floor Cloths with Kathy Benjamin
- Sun, Nov 28 Aizome Furoshiki: Indigo dyed Japanese style wrapping cloths with Jean Kares
- Sat/Sun, Jan 8/9, 2005 Organic Handbag in Freeform Knitting & Crochet with Prudence Mapstone from Australia

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**CRACKERJACK 2004**

*An exhibition and sale of work from 29 local textile, ceramic, fashion and jewellery artists.*

**Hours: November 11 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM**  
**November 12 11:00 AM to 9:00 PM**  
**November 13 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM**

**Held at the home of Celia Pickles,**  
1911 28th St., West Vancouver

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The Youth Missions Team at Friendship Baptist Church (2950 Dewdney Trunk Road at Lougheed Hwy in Coquitlam -- 1 km south of Coquitlam Centre) is hosting a Craft Fair on November 26 (6 to 9 pm) and 27 (10 am to 4 pm) to raise money to build houses and do work in an orphanage in Tijuana, Mexico next summer. Tables available for arts and crafts sales (\$50/ table, if paid by October 31) and limited tables to reps of products such as Avon, Tupperware, etc. (\$55/ table, if paid by October 31). Sellers keep all profits from personal sales. Free admission to public. Info: Elaine (phone: 604.945.8500) or [elaine@fbcc.net](mailto:elaine@fbcc.net)

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## Langley Weavers & Spinners Guild

### One-of-a-kind Gift Ideas Available at Juried Sale

(Langley, BC) — Looking for that special holiday gift? On Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2004 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Langley Weavers & Spinners Guild are hosting their popular Juried Artisans' Sale at the Fort Langley Community Hall. Featuring more than **25 regional weavers and spinners from all over the Lower Mainland**, the Langley Guild has also invited guest artists who work in natural mediums such as wood, fibre, and sheepskin. Some of the items you can expect to see will include: garments, fashion accessories, jewellery, dolls, stained glass, and home decor accessories.

Visitors to the sale will be entered in hourly prize draws for treasures donated by Guild members and participating artisans. The silent auction is sure to entice bids for gifts to treat yourself or others, while in the *Wool Room* an extensive selection of fibres and yarns will be on sale. Admission to the event is \$2 at the door.

Funds raised assist the Langley Weavers & Spinners Guild to carry out its mission "to promote, encourage and improve the art and craft of weaving, spinning and dyeing in the community."

Dawn M. Russell,  
Guild Volunteer, T 604.576.8101E [drussell@direct.ca](mailto:drussell@direct.ca)

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## 31st Annual Circle Craft CHRISTMAS CRAFT MARKET

Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre: 999 Canada Place Way, Vancouver, BC, Canada  
**Wednesday, November 10 to Sunday, November 14**

Hours: Wed, Thur & Fri: 10am to 9pm / Sat: 10am to 7pm / Sun: 10am to 5pm

Daily Admission: \$10 Adults / \$8 Students & Seniors / Show Pass \$12 / **Kids under 12 FREE**

**Tickets:** In advance at The Net Loft on Granville Island, over the telephone at 604.801.5220 until October 31, 2004 or at the door. Info: 604.801.5220. Full details at [www.circlecraft.net](http://www.circlecraft.net).

## east side culture crawl

|                                 |                                 |                                 |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>November 19<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>November 20<sup>th</sup></b> | <b>November 21<sup>st</sup></b> |
| <b>Friday</b>                   | <b>Saturday</b>                 | <b>Sunday</b>                   |
| <b>5pm - 10pm</b>               | <b>11am - 6pm</b>               | <b>11am - 6pm</b>               |

The *Eastside Culture Crawl* officially began in 1997 with 45 artists in 3 Strathcona area studio buildings and was attended by a few hundred people. This year the event has grown to over 200 artists and is expected to be attended by thousands.

The *Eastside Culture Crawl* is an annual 3-day November/December event that involves artists who live in Vancouver's Eastside in an area bounded by Main St., 1st Ave., Commercial Drive, and the Waterfront. [Painters](#), [jewellers](#), [sculptors](#), [furniture makers](#), [musicians](#), [weavers](#), [potters](#), [writers](#), [printmakers](#), [photographers](#), glassblowers; from emerging artists to those of international fame... these are just a sampling of the exciting talents featured during this unique chance to meet local artists in their studios.

## Oasis women fashion their own freedom

By Sylvia Smith, BBC in the Siwa oasis

### **Embroidery lies behind a peaceful revolution in the very traditional Egyptian oasis of Siwa.**

The small patch of green near the Libyan border currently holds dates as the mainstay of its economy.

But the income of the palm tree is slowly being eclipsed by the efforts of the women of the oasis.

Women - married and unmarried - are able to earn more than twice the average Siwan agricultural wage earned by men by skillfully wielding a needle.

Outside the home they are totally covered, from head to toe, and have no contact with the outside world. But their symbolic stitches are on show on the catwalk in Milan.

### **Painstaking work**

When on holiday in Siwa three years ago Tony Scervino, an Italian fashion designer and one half of the Ermanno Scervino couture house, spotted the Berber patterns stitched on clothes sold in the local market.

**The women are thrilled to be working in new colours –  
it's put them in direct contact with the fashion industry  
Egyptian intermediary, Laila Neamatalla**

Struck by the originality of the work, he decided to incorporate the embroidery in their next collection.

Through an Egyptian intermediary, Laila Neamatalla, he discovered that the embroidery was only done by elderly women.

So he arranged for younger women to be trained in the painstaking work.

He has swatches of exclusive fabric sent to the Egyptian capital, Cairo, from where it is taken more than 700 km (435 miles) to Siwa to be embroidered.

Then the fabric begins its long journey back to Italy.

Laila has witnessed the impact of the introduction of new colours into the women's repertoire.

"Before, the women only ever worked in the four colours known within the oasis - olive, brown, sand and green," she explains.

"Now the women are thrilled to be working in new colours. It's put them in direct contact with the fashion industry."

### **Taste of freedom**

The married women still do not leave their homes, but recently the unmarried girls are beginning to work in a special house, or factory.

They enjoy getting together under the watchful eye of Laila.

She is in charge and has the power to employ new women as demand increases.

"It's a dream come true having out own business," she says.

"My father sometimes sits at the door to make sure no one comes in, but really it is our first taste of freedom and independence."

About 30 women sit on the floor and quietly sew; they are paid by the number of garments they complete.

Although they are still using the traditional stitches and patterns, their lives have changed.

The money allows them to buy what they want without having to ask any man.

### **Mysterious symbols**

At the other end of this business connection, their handwork is integrated into the exclusive, expensive garments that the cutting-edge Italian fashion house sends down the catwalk.

Sudanese model Alek Wek said she has a special feeling about wearing clothes that are decorated with Siwan embroidery.

Pockets, collars, cuffs and even whole garments are brought into Egypt under special "draw back" regulations that allow the delicately and patiently hand-stitched items to be re-exported without tax.

On their return to Italy, Ermanno Scervino's highly developed fashion know-how takes over and the glamorous end products are even more painstakingly assembled.

The bi-cultural, bi-continental co-operation is also a good illustration of how the Middle Eastern aesthetic is being integrated into Western products.

Perhaps surprisingly, not all the symbols are Islamic.

Leila Neamatalla, a Coptic Christian, remarks on the presence of fish and crosses, which she takes it as a sign that Christianity may have been present in the oasis before the Siwans converted to Islam in the 12th Century.

"But I haven't been able to find any other sign of a Christian presence in the oasis," she admits.

### **Exclusivity**

As the designs that the women work on change from season to season, so their skill and enthusiasm grows.

This relationship works well for everyone. The original, unique designs which only exist in Siwa give an exclusivity to the twice-yearly Italian collections.

In return, the 500-strong Siwan female workforce can now afford their own home comforts and some luxury goods.

## Oasis women fashion their own freedom (cont.)

Having their own money also allows the young girls to be selective when it comes to choosing a husband. Very occasionally they decide not to marry at all.

In Italy wealthy women sport the clothes because they are chic and hip.

They are only just beginning to learn the origins of what they have on their backs.

Story from BBC NEWS:

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/3758950.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/world/middle_east/3758950.stm)

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## GPR-EGA News

### Seminar 2006 - Logo Contest

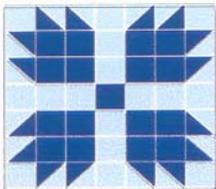
It is hard to believe that Seminar 2004 has come and gone. What is even harder to believe is there are only 23 months left until Seminar 2006 - right here in Portland. And that brings us to the latest news from your hard-working Seminar Committee -- the Stitched Logo Contest. Beginning NOW!

Using the provided line drawing and any technique or materials you choose, stitch the Seminar 2006 logo. The finished piece should measure no more than 9x9 and no less than 4x4. Send the unframed piece to Seminar 2006 Logo Contest, 3619 SE Caruthers St, Portland, OR 97214 before Dec 31, 2004. On a piece of paper attached to the back of the piece with a safety pin, write your name, address, how much you insured the piece for, permission to photograph the piece should you win, and any information you want us to know about your stitching choices. Judging will take place in January 2005 and all but the winning piece will be returned by February 1, 2005. The winning piece will be displayed at the February GPR Board meeting and returned to the winner by mid-February. It will be used as the basis for the seminar pins and bags, letterheads and other official documents, the fronts of the Seminar brochure and handbook, and other promotional opportunities as they present themselves. We would also like the framed piece to display at the Seminar 2006 Exhibit. The winner will be announced in the spring newsletter.

This is your opportunity to contribute to Seminar 2006 while doing what you love best - stitching.  
Ladies (and gentlemen) - start your needles!



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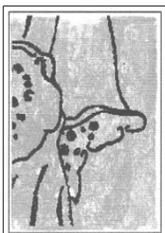
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2005 workshops include:

Sept. 10/11, Sandra Meech from England,

author of *Contemporary Quilts: Design, Surface and Stitch*.**JOE  
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