

Embroidery on Seventeenth-century Costume

Carnation Motif



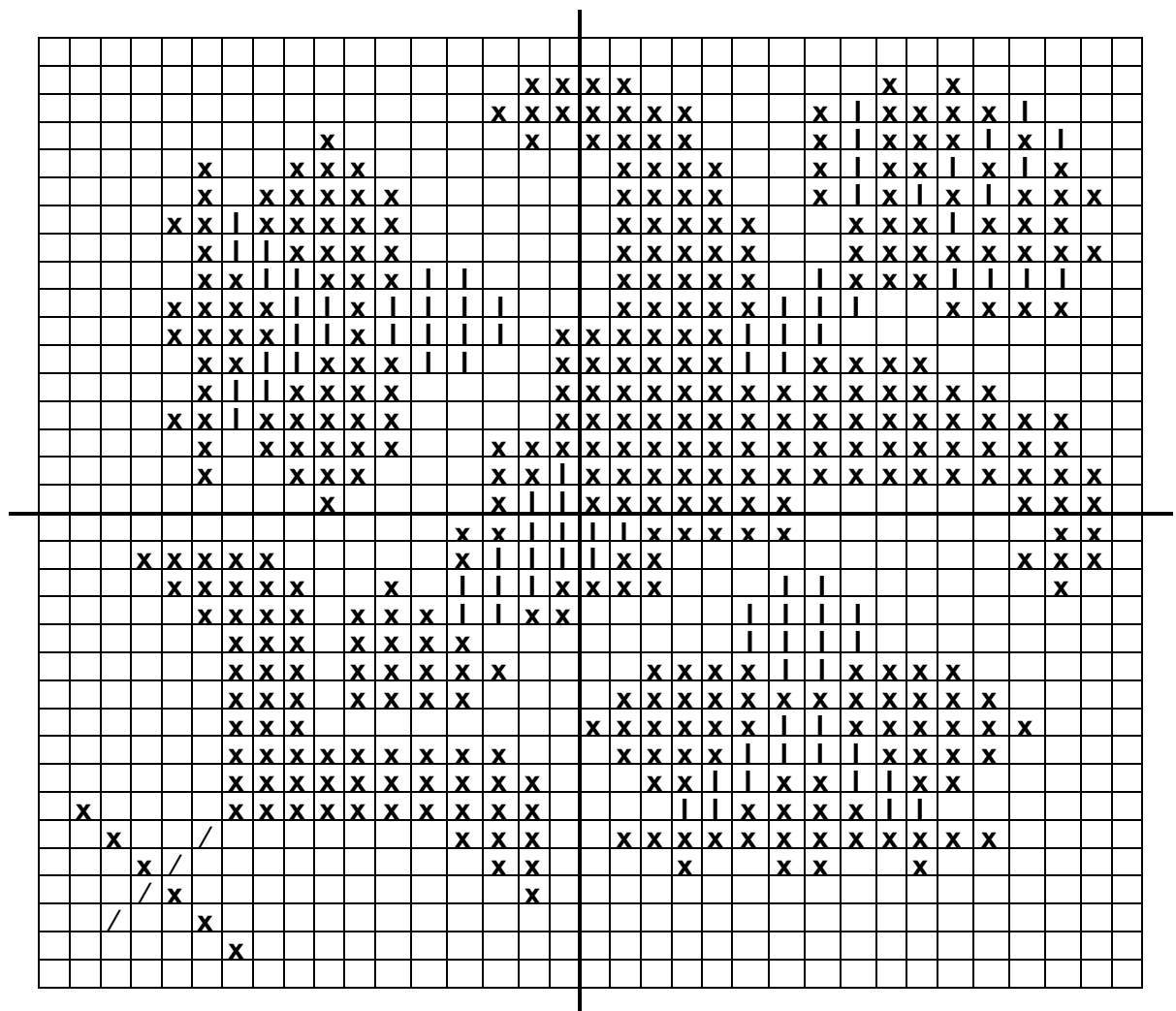
This carnation motif is based on a pattern on an early seventeenth century handkerchief (29.148) in the Burrell Collection. The handkerchief is made from a square of linen and is embroidered around the edge with a repeated floral motif. The majority is worked in cross-stitch using black silk thread with the details done in chain, plaited braid, satin and woven wheel stitch in silver-gilt thread.

Carnations are thought to have originated from around the Mediterranean. Their scientific name *Dianthus* originates from the Ancient Greek for heavenly flower. They were a popular embroidery motif in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, when the flowers were also known as gilliflowers. The early seventeenth century gardener William Lawson recorded that they 'of all the flowers (save the damask rose) the most pleasant in sight and smell'.

Materials required

- 6 strand cotton thread in two colours
- Square of Aida fabric approximately 12 cm x 12 cm
- Needle
- Scissors

Chart



- x cross-stitch in main colour
- I cross-stitch in contrasting colour
- / tent stitch in main colour

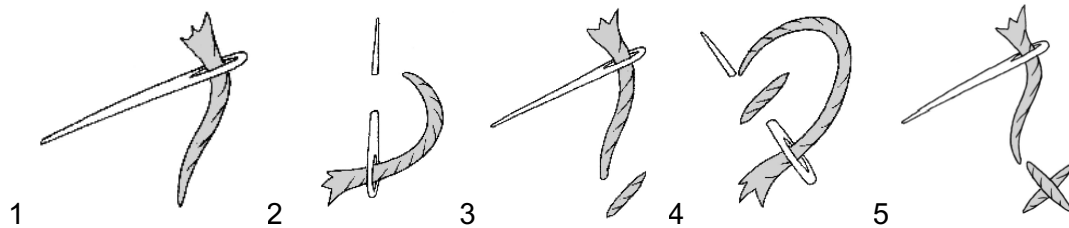
Instructions

Separate two strands of cotton in your main colour, cut the length to approximately 50 cm and thread your needle.

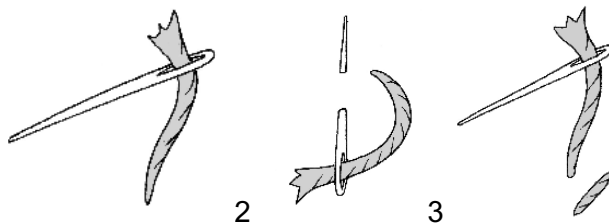
Find the centre of your fabric by folding it in half both ways.

Start stitching the design in cross and tent stitch working from the centre out.

Cross stitch is a double stitch in the shape of a diagonal cross.



Tent stitch is a single stitch on the diagonal (steps 1-3 above).



Try to avoid knotting your thread to start. Instead hold 1cm length on the back of the fabric and work your first few stitches over it. At the end of each thread run it behind several stitches on the back of the fabric and trim. This should give you a smoother finished piece.

Work dark colours first and lighter colours after.

When embroidering a large area work across in rows with the cross stitched in the same direction.

Try not to carry a thread on the back too far between one part of the design and another as these can sometimes be seen from the front.