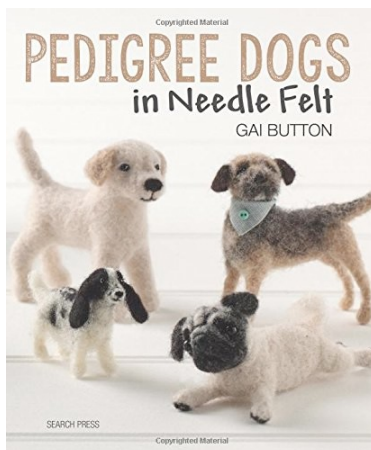




October 2015 Newsletter

Dear All,

First of all a big thank you to everyone who came and said hello at the Exeter Stitching and Hobbycrafts show. It was lovely to see so many friendly faces and catch up. Am so sorry there wasn't more time to chat. Also to everyone from Blackmore Vale Embroiderers Guild who made me so welcome at their AGM the week before, and fed me such wonderful cake!



There were some really interesting new stands at the show and a couple I just had to pick out to share. Firstly I met the lovely Gai Button who was there launching her new book "Dogs in Needlefelt". Even if you aren't a fan of dogs, it is worth buying just to learn Gai's process for making these amazingly lifelike little creatures. The way she measures the tops and makes each individual piece is described and photographed in great detail, I have the book, tops, and now all I have to do is remember where I put those felting needles and you may see my own little animal appear in a future newsletter.

I am sure most of you know that I am often inspired by Japan, not only the craftspeople that are treated with such high respect, but the poetry, gardens and textiles that bestow such a feeling of calm and serenity. I had my Japanese sketchbook and miniature kimonos with me at the show as ideas for the residential "[Gardens](#)" course in Cornwall and so of course when I saw there was a talk on "Ceremonial Kimono Dressing" I couldn't resist. Jill Clay fascinated us with stories of her tours to Japan, time spent with the Geisha's and the woven fabrics she handed round were exquisite. The cost of her trips are not prohibitively expensive so if you

have ever considered going, I would certainly recommend a look at the [website](#) and a conversation with her, she is one very knowledgeable lady!

Another idea that came about from the show was that I was asked to supply printed copies of the Distance Learning as a complete course to work through at home without the written feedback. I have had some printed and am happy to sell them for £50 which includes postage to the UK. What you will receive is a ring bound book containing the Introduction and all six units which were originally marketed as the level 2 City & Guilds Machine Embroidery course. If you are interested or want further information do have a look at the [Distance Learning page](#) and either give me a call or email, my details are at the bottom of my [home page](#).

As well as Blackmore Vale and Exeter, I have had a couple of days in Cambridge visiting the Fitzwilliam Museum where I saw the latest photographic work by Maisie Broadhead, her sister fashion designer Bella Newell and academic Professor Ulinka Rublack. They have taken as inspiration, over 100 drawings made from 1520-1560 of Matthäus Schwarz, an early fashionista, and recreated them



as photographs of a 21st century Londoner, a sword is transformed to an umbrella and a horse to a moped. There is a [short documentary](#) of the project, and although I am not sure how accurately this depicts what young men are wearing today - there are references to the athleisure trend but it would have been nice to see a few hipster beards and some floral prints.

I also paid a short visit to Madrid, three days spent in three wonderful art galleries, The Prado of course where round every corner there was another painting by one of the great masters. I particularly wanted to see, Las Meninas by Velazquez which is my number one painting ever and The Garden of Earthly Delights by Hieronymus Bosch, also pretty near the top of my list. The surreal imagination of a painter who lived in the early 16th century and could create a triptych of this scale and detail it is a painting which needs to be seen in real life, images in books, on postcards or the internet cannot show the minutiae of detail within each tableau, one could stand in front of it for days and still see something new at the next encounter.



Next was [Museo Thyssen](#) for "[Vogue: Like a Painting](#)" an exhibition of photographs from the Vogue archive which were inspired by or reappropriated from paintings. I loved this image by Grant Cornett 2014, such a simple but exquisite still life. There is also the allusion to the fact that in the contemporary photographs at least, Photoshop is now used

so extensively for retouching that it is almost as if a painter's hand had intervened. On the final day it was the Reine Sofia and of course Picasso's [Guernica](#). I have to admit that this was more a painting I felt I ought to see while I was in Madrid, but I was so glad I did – it is amazing and very emotional.

For fear of turning this newsletter into a list of galleries and exhibitions I have visited, I did just want to mention one more in Bristol that may be of particular interest as international artist Do Ho Suh works in textiles, and furthermore in organza. The piece which was on show was “New York City Apartment” As a South Korean who has spent most of his adult life abroad, Suh explores his personal sense of physical and cultural displacement and is known for creating works that explore the issues of separation, migration, sense of loss and longing.



He does this through representing real objects, such as furniture, rooms and buildings, that serve as mementos of real spaces but are constructed from organza, often on a scale that will allow the pieces to be transported in the artist's suitcase.

Next month, I am particularly interested in seeing [Periodic Tales: The Art of the Elements](#) at Compton Verney in Warwickshire. Having worked at [Diamond Light Source](#) for several years, science and art collaborations are something that particularly appeals to me and the gallery is set in beautiful grounds and is a venue I haven't visited for far too long.

There are two new Distance Learning Units to show, Unit Two from [Vivienne Shanahan](#) and Unit Four from [Beth Irvine](#) sorry to Susan and Anne, I will put yours up this week and there will be a link in the next newsletter. To keep track of these and all the units, visit the [distance learning](#) page and scroll down to the table of images at the bottom.

Hope you have an enjoyable, Halloween Bonfire night, the next newsletter I guess will be just before Christmas, where has this year gone?

Best wishes,