



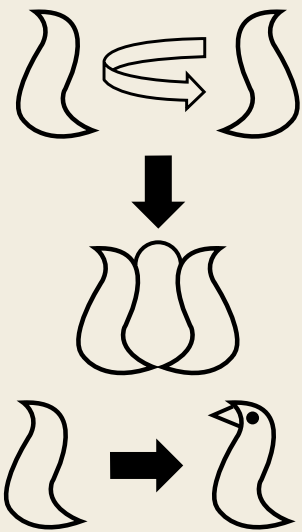
Handstitched Worlds

The Cartography of Quilts

Pattern Play

Each square, or “block,” in the *Cross River Album Quilt* contains a design that meant something special to its maker. Each of the blocks is a work of art; joined together, they create a quilt.

Making an original block often begins with a simple shape, which can be transformed into a pattern or picture, as in the sample below.

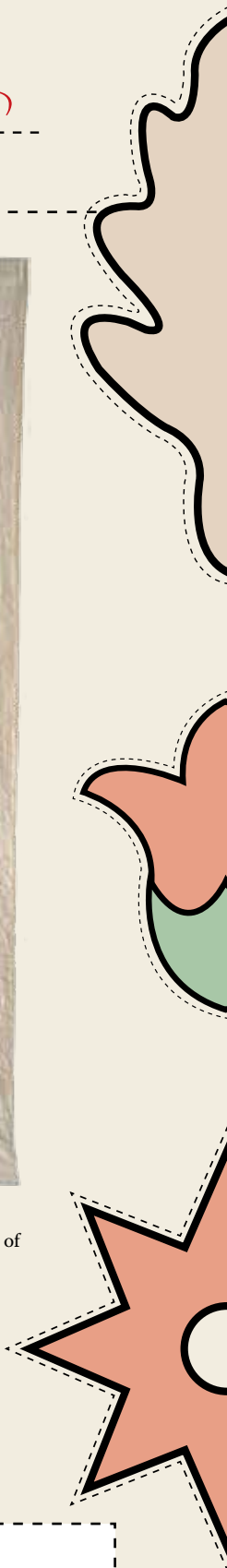


Mrs. Eldad Miller and others, Cross River, New York, *Cross River Album Quilt*, 1861, cotton and silk with wool embroidery; courtesy of the American Folk Art Museum; gift of Dr. Stanley and Jacqueline Schneider; photo by Gavin Ashworth

Building Blocks

Draw a shape you like and experiment with ways you can use it to make a quilt block. You can cut out and trace the border designs on this page to build your pattern.

Four large dashed rectangular boxes for drawing quilt blocks.



Coded Meaning

Fans or sunshine? What do you see in this quilt?

Everyone can see something different in a picture. This quilter used shapes and symbols to represent an idea or message.

If you look closely, you can see numbers and unusual designs in the stitchwork. What do you think the numbers represent?

Numbers that Count

What numbers have meaning for you? How can you incorporate special numbers in your quilt design?

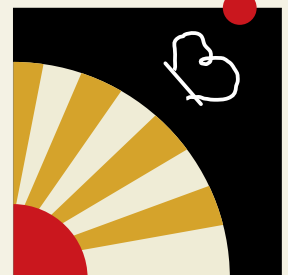
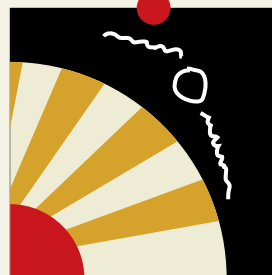
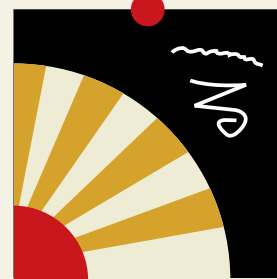
- ▲ Birthday or birth year?
- ▲ Anniversaries of important events?
- ▲ The number of people in your family?
- ▲ Addresses?

Lines as Signs

The maker of this quilt used embroidery to add mysterious lines in the block designs. Embroidery is a decorative technique using a needle and thread, or other materials, to embellish the surface of fabric.

Lightning, a landscape, or bird in flight – what do these lines remind you of?

What secret symbols can you create with lines in a quilt?



Above: Artist Unknown, Minnesota, *Fans Quilt*, 1922-23, rayon, wool, and army uniform wool with embroidery; courtesy of the American Folk Art Museum; gift of Margaret Cavigga

Right bottom: Jerry Gretzinger, Michigan and New York, *Jerry's Map (E1/N1, Generation 11)* detail, 2009-12, felt-tip pen, colored pencil, acrylic, tape, and plastic clippings on cardboard; courtesy of the American Folk Art Museum; gift of the artist; photo by Adam Reich

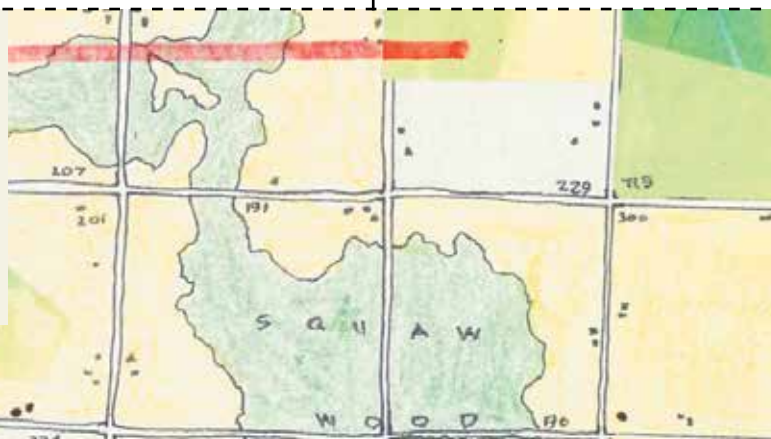


You Are Here

Quilts can be snapshots of a time and place, the life stories of the makers, or illustrate important events. *Handstitched Worlds* includes several quilts that look like maps or document an experience. Use the spaces below to compose a quilt – made up of twelve block designs – that depicts your life. Check out the fabric pattern on the back of this page for design and collage inspiration.

Mix, Match & Make

Cut out or cut up your quilt creations and combine them with those made by someone else – remember, quilts are constructed with many pieces and often by many hands.





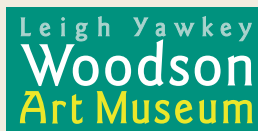
Pick up a free Art Kit inside the Woodson Art Museum or outside at our Stop-by Studio for more quilt-inspired art projects.

Unknown artist, Sample book (England), ca. 1834, cotton, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum

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This Activity Guide complements the Summer 2021 exhibition, *Handstitched Worlds: The Cartography of Quilts*, organized by the American Folk Art Museum, New York and toured by International Arts & Artists, Washington, D.C.



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