Hand Sewing

Soft Fabrication Skills
• low tech
• fast prototyping
  ○ connecting pieces various materials
• fastening different materials
  ○ soft to hard
  ○ weird shapes
• details and embellishments
  ○ final touches
  ○ fragile delicate materials
• repair work
A Brief History

- evidence from Paleolithic Age (~40,000 years ago):
  sewn hide, skin, fur, bark
- sewing needles: bone, wood → metal
- thread: catgut, sinew, veins, animal fiber/plant fiber →
  chemical fibers (polyester, synthetic silk, viscose)
Kayak, Nunivak, Alaska, 1930

Oglala Lakota tipi, 1891
Embroidery

- decorating fabric/material with needle and thread or yarn
- originally used for reinforcing cloth

Horse cover with metal silver thread, Morocco
18th - 19th century

Sashiko stitched fireman’s coat, Japan
19th century
Bayeux Tapestry, ~1077

- 230 feet by 20 inches
- first British comic strip?
Samplers: demonstration of skill or technique
LeAaCc

Edith-Anne did this in 1848 and hated every stitch
Appliqué

- applying one material to another surface
- surface patterning technique

heraldic flags, Knights of Thistle

Asafo flag, 20th c., Ghana
Reverse Appliqué

sewn layers that are cut away and then stitched down

Mola, Kuna people, Panama/Colombia
150 - 170 years old
Examples of Hmong applique and reverse applique in the mountainous regions of Vietnam, Laos, Thailand and Southern China.
Beading

Attaching beads to a surface by stringing them together using thread.

12th c., Egyptian

Ethiopian beaded basket
Styles change among tribes on East Coast, Great Lakes, Plateau and Southwest.

Teri Greeves
Bookbinding

in process

variation on Japanese stab binding
Sewing with Conductive Materials
Overview of Tools + Materials

- sewing needles
- thread
- whatever material you are going to sew!
Other Tools

- embroidery hoop
- thimble
- needle threader
- fancy little scissors
DEMO:
hand sewing sampler
DEMO + Lab: Hand Sewing Sampler

- Running stitch (basting)
- Running stitch (tiny)
- Back stitch
- Whip stitch
- Applique
Stitches for Sampler:

**Running Stitch:**
The thread runs through the fabric without doubling on itself.

Basting: stitches are about \( \frac{1}{4} \)" apart
Tiny: stitches are about \( \frac{1}{8} \)" apart

**Back Stitch:**
The stitch is formed by doubling back on itself. The needle emerges ahead of the stitch just made, and goes back to where the previous stitch ended.

**Whip Stitch:**
This stitch goes “over and over” the edge of the fabric. It is used to sew two pieces of fabric together.