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
evidence from Paleolithic Age (up to 60,000 years ago):
sewn hide, skin, fur, bark
sewing needles: bone, wood → metal
thread: catgut (animal intestines), sinew (tendon that connects muscle to bone), veins, animal fiber/plant fiber → chemical fibers (polyester, synthetic silk, viscose)

bone needles, Cave of Courbet in France, ~13,000 years old

50,000 years old, Denisova Cave, Russia
Agave thread and needle
Parka coat of seal intestine
North America, USA, Alaska, Yup'ik or Inupiat, 1820s

Kayak, Nunivak, Alaska, 1930
made from driftwood, seal skin and seal sinew
Oglala Lakota tipi, 1891

Sami lavvu, around 1900
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 stitches for reinforcement or repair
Sashiko stitched fireman’s coat, Japan
19th century
Bayeux Tapestry/Bayeux Embroidery, ~1077

- 230 feet by 20 inches
- embroidered rather than woven with woolen yarns on linen
- depicts events leading to Norman conquest of England
- first British comic strip?
Samplers: demonstration of skill or technique
Nasca Samplers, Peru, 2nd century BC.
Appliqué

- applying one material to another surface
- surface patterning technique

heraldic flags,
Knights of Thistle

Asafo flag, 20th c., Ghana
Thongdrel (giant applique scroll) of the Zhabdrung in Punakha Dzong, Bhutan
Reverse Appliqué

sewn layers that are cut away and then stitched down
Mola Applique, Kuna people, Panama/Colombia
150 - 170 years old
Examples of Hmong applique and reverse applique 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.
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
- Overcast stitch
- Blanket stitch
- Applique (overcast and blanket stitch)
- Hem whip stitch
- Slip stitch
Stitches for Sampler:

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

Basting: stitches are about ¼" apart
Tiny: stitches are about ⅛" 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.

**Overcast Stitch:**
This stitch goes “over and over” the edge of the fabric. It is used to sew two pieces of fabric together.
Blanket stitch
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9zegUYdPmg

Hem whip stitch
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INcjixkx66o&t=17s

and

Slip stitch
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWlE_-mS1-M