



above
Paying homage to William Morris, this detail of a silk appliqué wall panel is entitled "Morris Remembered," from the workshop of Wende Cragg.

Royal Impressions

London's Royal School of Art Needlework played a central role in influencing the spread of the art form throughout Europe. In Scotland, the MacDonald Sisters (Margaret was married to the notable Scottish Arts and Crafts master designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh) and the Glasgow Girls were noted for their familiar long rectilinear, sinewy designs, which often incorporated elements from nature like roses and rose stems. Calico and linen were favored backgrounds for their appliqué work. In particular, Jessie Newbery was instrumental in bringing about a revolution in textiles and embroidery. As head of the embroidery department of the Glasgow School, she achieved international recognition for her designs, patterns and motifs, particularly in Germany and Austria. In Austria, the Wiener Workshop's needlework designs were particularly unique as they took nature and expressed it in a new modernistic bold, abstract way, with heavily stylized foliage. These decorated patterns were applied to silk, cotton, linen and wools that lent themselves to soft furnishings. In Scandinavia, Fanny Churberg's Friends of Finnish Handicrafts was dedicated to the notion that interiors should have uncomplicated, clean lines and exalt the simplicity of nature. This notion was reflected charmingly in their needlework.



top
Reminiscent of the strong geometric patterns from the master Roycroft craftsman, Dard Hunter, this silk appliqué pillow by Cragg measures 22" x 18".

middle
A silk Ophira pillow shows appliqué artist Wende Cragg's interpretation of a highly stylized geometric floral design with a hint of Oriental exoticism.

above
A typical American Craftsman style design from Cragg's workshop is graphically bold with alternating patterns.