

TEXTILE EMBROIDERY PAPER

# An English Garden

25 MAR 15 / TEXT: CORINNE YOUNG



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## Corinne Young's nature inspired needlepoint

**I** am a textile artist from the United Kingdom, and have been fascinated by needlework since I was a child. I was born in Lancashire, and grew up in Yorkshire. Both areas have a strong textile tradition. My father was a sales manager at a cotton mill and taught me a lot about the history of textiles. My mother taught me how to make clothes for my dolls and to knit, and my aunt was a seamstress. I used to watch her creating fabulous garments from flat pieces of fabric – which to me was like alchemy! After marrying and having my children young, and a career that involved fashion, interior design and decorating, I was 40 before I undertook my degree in Textile Design at Bradford College.

After experimenting with print and embroidery, I decided that I wanted to focus on bespoke pieces for interiors. These would be strongly connected to organic inspiration, as I have a love plants inherited from my mother. My research for my final degree show work involved a trip to London to look at antique botanical books and drawings at the Royal Horticultural Society library and the Garden Museum, and plant specimens at Kew Gardens. I decided to focus on two plants with very structured seedheads - Scabious 'Paper Moon' and Moluccella Laevis 'Bells of Ireland'. I grew the plants from seed to study, and wanted an organic feel for the background of the pieces I created. I found some handmade silk paper at a textile show, and after experimenting with various different fibres, I found some flax and viscose 'tops' in a local textile supplies store. I bought a large sack full, as it was only in stock temporarily. Fortunately I only use a small amount at a time, and so am still using that sackful today! The six final degree pieces were machine embroidered 'wallpaper', and were 8ft x 2ft in size. They featured my interpretation of the two plants studied, and were heavily embellished in a matching coloured thread to reflect the natural colour of the seedheads.



GALLERY

After graduating in 2003, I was lucky enough to secure a wonderful commission to make 16 large publicity panels for the Lord of the Rings show in Toronto and London. Following on from this I started to create framed pictures, embellished fabrics and one-off clothing pieces to commission for private clients and galleries.

About five years ago, I began to make three dimensional pieces using stumpwork methods, inspired by historic artifacts such as 17<sup>th</sup> Century caskets. To construct these, I use my linen paper, other papers and fabrics. I have a large collection of vintage linens, victorian scraps and postcards which I sometimes like to use in my work. My main inspiration still comes from the garden, and I grow plants for their aesthetic and architectural qualities, as well as their ability to attract insects, which I also depict in my pieces.

I love to collaborate with other artists and designers and had an exhibition in 2011 at Burton Contable Hall, an Elizabethan house near my home in East Yorkshire. I worked with a young installation artist – Gideon Johnson, and together we made several upcycled pieces inspired by the collections in the Hall. The resulting works were placed alongside antique pieces in a room, and many visitors could not tell which were ours, and which were antique. We were delighted by this outcome. Many of the pieces I made for that show were sold, but I decided to keep a clock decorated by me with stitched and painted lace, the form of which Gideon fashioned from a broken violin.

I have recently combined my love of gardens with my interior design and curator experience (until recently I ran an art gallery alongside my practice) and begun to design floral themed interiors. Features of these rooms include soft furnishings, printed and embroidered textiles, fabric taxidermy and stitched pot plants made by me, with artworks, antiques and upcycled furniture. I am just about to launch a blog called The Garden Room, which will feature all things floral, and I am also planning a new range of floral giclee prints and a collaborative exhibition with a Chelsea Flower Show Gold medal winning garden designer. All in all, I am keeping very busy!

More details can be found on my website at [www.corinneyoungtextiles.co.uk](http://www.corinneyoungtextiles.co.uk)



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