

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July, Victoria and Albert Museum

## **The literal (bodily) and figurative incorporation of flora and fauna into costume**

Breakout leaders: Marion Kite and Susan North

The session began with an exposition by Susan North of some examples of sixteenth-century embroidery featuring floral motifs. Such depictions are often similar in style to those found in contemporary herbals, and this was particularly evident in some 'blackwork' on display: these black and white square pieces looked very much like the illustrative engravings of such texts, down to the straight borders, graphic style and the curvilinear arrangement of the plants shown. While this probably originated in printed engravings as a means of showing leaves, stems and flowers within a small rectilinear box, these sinuous curves are characteristic of English floral embroidery. A good example of this style is seen in the repeating spirals of an embroidered early seventeenth-century linen jacket (919-1873, please see attached sheet). Here the miniature leaf, fruit and flower motifs are varied within a repetitive curvilinear framework. This beautiful and richly coloured garment would have belonged to a woman of some status. It features the use of silver-gilt thread and from the intricacy of the work and techniques used we can infer that it was created by a professional needlewoman, unlike the examples of blackwork, which were probably created by amateur embroiderers. Another fine example of floral motifs in embroidery can be seen in an early seventeenth-century purse (T.127-1992, please see attached sheet), in which a technique of detached embroidery has been used to create a textured as well as richly coloured finish. This example again shows the typical sinuous style. Both pieces display an interest in naturalistic detail which suggests observation from nature.

and Marion Kite then exhibited several items that incorporated animal products/animal motifs ~~and even entire animals~~. Two pairs of kid gloves, one with embroidered satin cuffs from the seventeenth century (711-1875; 711-1875A) and one from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century (T.607:1-1999; T.607:2-1999) helped illustrate the long duration of the use of animal products in costume. As well as leather, fur, feathers and other materials can also be found in garments through the centuries. Whalebone (T.38-2000), for example, was used to stiffen corsets from the sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. Its use illustrates an issue often highlighted today with using animal products in clothing: the wide use of baleen from certain species of whales in corsets meant that they were hunted almost to extinction by the nineteenth century. An eighteenth-century feather hat, featuring feathers dyed vivid pinks, greens and blues (T.90-2003), shows how materials from nature were

often altered by artificial means in order to be more fashionable or more striking. The feathers used in this hat, for example, were taken from commonly available birds and would have looked rather drab and uninteresting if colour had not been added through the use of dye. Other items on display brought home forcibly the different attitude to the use of animal products of people in the past. A pair of silver fox fur stoles, for example, showed use of the complete pelt of the animals, including head and legs. To most twenty-first century eyes, the idea of draping a fox head over one's shoulder is disturbing, if not repugnant. Similarly provocative to our contemporary sensibilities was a set of a woman's hat, stole and muff, each featuring the head and feathers of a peacock. While the iridescent blues and greens of the feathers are beautiful, the use of animal products for adornment has gone out of fashion in Western societies in, although only in recent decades. The long history of fur and feathers in costume in the West is testament to humankind's exploitation and admiration of nature.

Object Name Jacket  
919-1873 (Jacket)

Collection T&D



Created by SUP on 25/04/2003  
Amended by ToW on 23/02/2005

**Descriptive Line** Linen jacket embroidered with silk, silver and silver-gilt thread, Great Britain, early 17th century

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>
		Unknown	

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role made</b>	<b>Date</b>
		1600-1625 (01/01/1600 - 31/12/1625)

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role made</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>
		Great Britain	

**Physical Description**

Linen embroidered with silk, silver and silver-gilt thread. The ribbon fastenings are modern reproductions

**Materials & Techniques**

Linen, hand-sewn and embroidered with silk thread

**Materials**

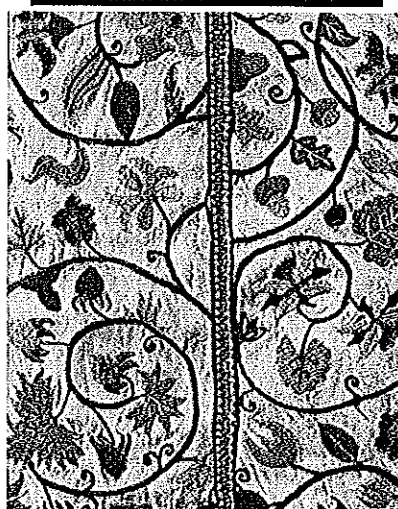
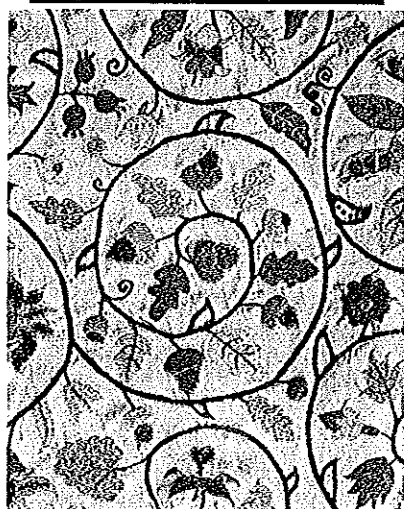
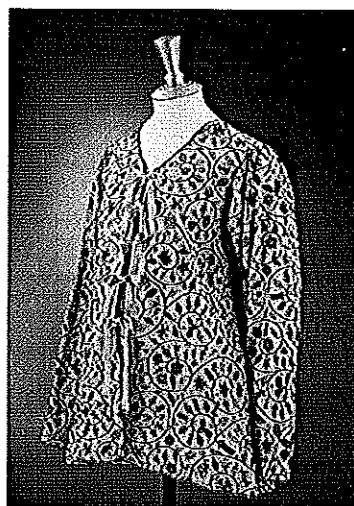
linen

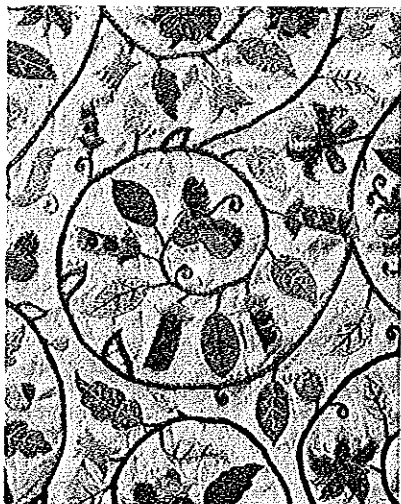
**Techniques**

hand sewing  
hand embroidery

**Category**

Textiles  
Embroidery  
Clothing





<b>Valuation</b>	<b>Amount (sterling)</b> £30000	<b>Date</b> 11/03/2002
<b>Exhibition History</b>	<b>Cat' No./Date</b> 35 01.12.2002 (01/01/2001 - 31/12/2012)	<b>Title/Venue</b> Marcus Gheeraerts Tate Gallery, London

#### Reproduction

Number	CT82581
Type	CT
Picture Date	12/09/2002
Dimensions	5x4 in
View	Front
Location	Costume - 17th Century
Number	CT82579
Type	CT
Picture Date	12/09/2002
Dimensions	5x4 in
View	Left 3/4
Location	Costume - 17th Century
Number	CT50140
Type	CT
Dimensions	5x4 in
View	Front
Location	Costume - 17th Century
Number	CT50139
Type	CT
Picture Date	01/10/1997
Dimensions	5x4 in
View	Front
Location	Costume - 17th Century
Number	CT50138
Type	CT
Picture Date	01/10/1997
Dimensions	5x4 in
View	Front
Location	Costume - 17th Century
Number	CT40140
Type	CT
Location	Costume - Late 20th Century

#### Condition

Code	2 (Fair)
Curator	Sue Prichard
Date	25/04/2003

#### Handling Restrictions

Needs two people to dress the mannequin. Very vulnerable to splitting if put under strain.

#### Environmental Requirements

Code	2 (sensitive)
Humidity	50 +/- 5%
Light	< or = 50 lux
Pollution	UV: <75 µw/lumen
Temperature	19° - 21° C

#### Display Requirements

Object requires specially adapted mannequin for display

#### Packing Note

Lie flat on board with tissue padding in sleeves and at shoulders.

Object Name	Jacket		
Museum Number	919-1873		
Attribution	Role	Name	Uncertainty
		Unknown	
Attribution	Role	Date	
	made	1600-1625	
		(01/01/1600 - 31/12/1625)	
Attribution	Role	Place	Uncertainty
	made	Great Britain	

#### Materials & Techniques

Linen, hand-sewn and embroidered with silk thread

#### Credit Line

Given by A Solomon

#### Category

Textiles  
Embroidery  
Clothing

#### Object Entry Approval

REC	Yes	User lynnp	Date 16/12/2004
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#### group fields (AccessToImages)

00.AccessToImages Yes

#### group fields (Every Object Tells a Story)

01.Every Object yes

03.Story Title Maternity clothes in the 1600s

04.Story Text It's 1610 and you're pregnant. What are you going to wear?

This is a difficult question for dress historians to answer. There is no evidence for special 'maternity dress' for women at this time. That didn't develop until the twentieth century. There are a number of portraits of very definitely pregnant women from the late 1600s and early 1700s. They are clearly wearing something and something quite luxurious. We know that dress was very expensive at this time. A formal gown, embroidered with gold and jewels, to be worn at court, could cost the equivalent of a luxury car today. So we think that women adapted their regular clothing to accommodate expanding girth. They laced their bodices loosely at the back, pulled their skirts over the bump and adjusted the tie fastenings at the back.

A style of very loosely cut linen jacket for women also survives from this period, like this beautifully embroidered example. It would have been a very comfortable garment to wear when pregnant or even when just having a 'fat' day.

07.Category Keywords 1600-1650, England, Fashion and Fabric, Family Life

08.Author Name Susan North

09.Author Display Name Textiles and Fashion

No. of Parts 1

919-1873 (Jacket)

Object Name Purse  
T.127-1992 (Purse)

Collection T&D



Created by SUP on 25/02/2003  
Amended by SFN on 24/03/2005

Attribution	Role	Name	Uncertainty
		Unknown	
Attribution	Role	Date	
	made	ca. 1600-1625 (01/01/1595 - 31/12/1625)	
Attribution	Role	Place	Uncertainty
	made	England	

#### Physical Description

Square flat purse of canvas with an embroidered ground of silver thread. A raised pattern of scrolling chains of silver-gilt purl surrounds honeysuckle, borage, rose, gilly flower, rosehips, grapes, peapods and a butterfly. These are embroidered with detached leaves and petals in coloured silks, silver thread, silver-gilt thread, purl and spangles. The purse is lined with salmon pink silk taffeta. Flat salmon pink silk braid forms the ties with two pear-shaped finials covered in silver thread and coloured silks.

#### Materials & Techniques

Canvas and silk, hand sewn and embroidered with silk and metal threads, with plaited silk strings

#### Materials

canvas  
silk thread  
metal thread  
silk taffeta  
silk thread  
silver thread  
silver-gilt thread  
spangles

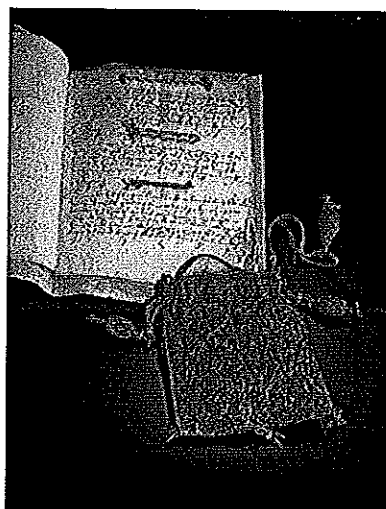
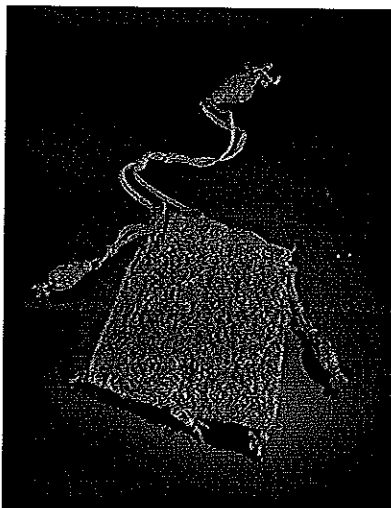
#### Techniques

hand sewing  
hand embroidery

Dimensions	Type	Value	Units	Qualification
	Length	14.5	cm	
		145.0	mm	
	Width	12.6	cm	
		126.0	mm	

#### Category

Accessories  
Embroidery



**Reproduction**

Number CT59165  
 Type CT  
 Picture Date 16/01/1999  
 Dimensions 5x4 in  
 View Front  
 Location Bags & Purses

Number CT59164  
 Type CT  
 Picture Date 16/01/1999  
 Dimensions 5x4 in  
 View Pair  
 Location Bags & Purses

**Condition**

Code 1 (Good)  
 Curator Susan North  
 Date 23/03/2005

**Environmental Requirements**

Code 2 (sensitive)  
 Humidity 50 +/- 5%  
 Light < or = 50 lux  
 Pollution UV: <75 µw/lumen  
 Temperature 19° - 21° C

**Object Name** Purse

**Museum Number** T.127-1992

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>
		Unknown	

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Date</b>
	made	ca. 1600-1625 (01/01/1595 - 31/12/1625)

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>
	made	England	

**Materials & Techniques**

Canvas and silk, hand sewn and embroidered with silk and metal threads, with plaited silk strings

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Qualification</b>
	Length	14.5	cm	
		145.0	mm	
	Width	12.6	cm	
		126.0	mm	

**Public Access Description**

Sue Prichard

In the seventeenth century, needle lace and embroidery patterns were disseminated through pattern books such as *The Needle's Excelency* published by James Boler (1631). Many seventeenth-century embroidered purses have been collected and prized for the liveliness of their embroidery and tiny scale. They were particularly valued by Edwardian collectors, such as Lord Lever, who formed large collections of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century embroidery.

**Credit Line**

Given by Margaret Simeon

**Category**

Accessories  
 Embroidery

**Object Entry Approval**

<b>Author</b>	Yes	<b>User</b>	<b>Date</b>
		clareb	25/02/2003
<b>Collection</b>	Yes	SHW	13/04/2004
<b>REC</b>	Yes	kcollins	26/03/2003
<b>Editor</b>	Yes	helena	31/03/2003

**group fields (AccessToImages)**

00.AccessToImages Yes

**No. of Parts** 1  
 T.127-1992 (Purse)

Object Name Pair of gloves

711-1875 (Glove)

711A-1875 (Glove)

Collection T&D

Created by BritGall\_load on 27/03/2003

Amended by KC on 03/06/2003



Attribution (WHOLE)	Role	Name	Uncertainty
		Unknown	
Attribution (WHOLE)	Role	Date	
	made	1600-1625 (01/01/1600 - 31/12/1625)	
Attribution (WHOLE)	Role	Place	Uncertainty
	made	England	

#### Materials & Techniques

(WHOLE)

Kid leather and satin, embroidered with silk, silver-gilt threads and seed pearls, with silver-gilt bobbin lace and spangles (sequins)

#### Dimensions

(WHOLE)

Type	Value	Units	Qualification
Length	32	cm	
	320.0	mm	
Width	20	cm	
	200.0	mm	
Depth	6	cm	
	60.0	mm	

#### Dimension Notes

(WHOLE)

Dimensions checked: Measured; 28/03/2001 by NH

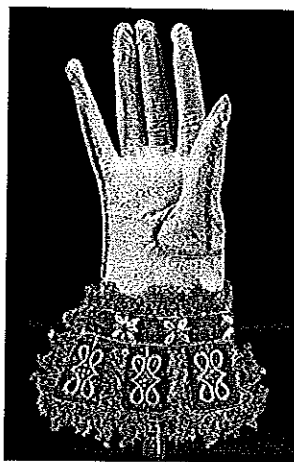
#### Category

(WHOLE)

Clothing

(WHOLE)

Accessories



Label Text  
(WHOLE)

Date  
27/03/2003

Text  
British Galleries:

Gloves played an essential part in 17th-century etiquette. Both men and women aspired to a narrow hand with long fingers and gloves were cut to exaggerate these features. Similar decoration appears on gloves for both sexes, so it is difficult to distinguish women's gloves from men's.

(27/03/2003 - 27/03/2003)

#### Reproduction

711A-1875

Number CT73711

Type CT

Picture Date 17/07/2001

Dimensions 5x4 in

View Front

Location British Galleries Project



711A-1875  
 Number CT73710  
 Type CT  
 Picture Date 17/07/2001  
 Dimensions 5x4 in  
 View Top  
 Location British Galleries Project

#### Environmental Requirements

(WHOLE)

Code (none)  
 Light 50 lux

#### Display Requirements

(WHOLE)

British Galleries rotation period: the  
 show thumb side out

**Object Name** Pair of gloves

**Museum Number** 711&A-1875

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>
(WHOLE)		Unknown	

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Date</b>
(WHOLE)	made	1600-1625 (01/01/1600 - 31/12/1625)

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>
(WHOLE)	made	England	

#### Materials & Techniques

(WHOLE)

Kid leather and satin, embroidered with silk, silver-gilt threads and seed pearls, with silver-gilt bobbin lace and spangles (sequins)

<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Qualification</b>
(WHOLE)	Length	32	cm	
		320.0	mm	
(WHOLE)	Width	20	cm	
		200.0	mm	
(WHOLE)	Depth	6	cm	
		60.0	mm	

#### Public Access Description

Susan North

#### Object Type

Gloves served several purposes in early 17th century Britain, apart from the obvious ones of protection and warmth. Many were solely decorative, to display the wealth and status of their owner. They were worn in the hat or belt, as well as carried in the hand. Gloves were popular as gifts and were often given by a young gallant to his favourite mistress. In combat, a glove was thrown down as a gage, or challenge.

#### Materials & Making

The gauntlet of the glove is covered and lined with maroon satin. The seams on the back of the hand are embroidered with silver-gilt thread in plaited braid stitch to emphasise the length of the fingers. The spangles worked into the lace would have trembled with movement and glistened in the light.

#### Designs & Designing

The shapes outlined in pearl reflect the taste for strapwork, a style of decoration deriving from France and Italy in the 16th century. Popular in England in the early 17th century, strapwork appears on furniture and metalwork, as well as in textile designs.

#### Category

(WHOLE)

(WHOLE)

Clothing  
 Accessories

#### Object Entry Approval

<b>Author</b>	Yes	<b>User</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Collection</b>	Yes	BritGall_load	27/03/2003
<b>REC</b>	Yes	BritGall_load	27/03/2003
<b>Editor</b>	Yes	kcollins	03/06/2003
		BritGall_load	27/03/2003

group fields (AccessToImages)

00.AccessToImages yes

No. of Parts 2

711-1875 (Glove)

711A-1875 (Glove)

**Object Name** Pair of woman's gloves

**Collection** T&D

T.607:1-1999 (Glove)

T.607:2-1999 (Glove)

Created by FIC

on 20/11/2000

Amended by LNN

on 19/08/2002

**Descriptive Line**

White kid leather gloves decorated with black embroidery and fastened with four small white buttons, Britain, 1890-1910.

**Attribution**  
(WHOLE)

**Role**  
made

**Date**  
ca. 1890-1910  
(01/01/1885 - 31/12/1910)

**Attribution**  
(WHOLE)  
(WHOLE)

**Role**  
made  
made

**Place**  
United Kingdom  
France

**Uncertainty**  
probably  
possibly

**Physical Description**  
(WHOLE)

Pair of white kid leather gloves, with separate thumb piece, decorated with three bands of black embroidery running from the top of the wrist to the base of the fingers. Fastened with four small white iridescent (mother of pearl) buttons. The glove would have reached below the wearers wrist.

**Materials & Techniques**  
(WHOLE)

White kid leather, machine-sewn, decorated with embroidery in black cotton, machine-embroidered, mother of pearl buttons.

**Materials**  
(WHOLE)  
(WHOLE)

leather  
cotton fibre [cotton]

**Techniques**  
(WHOLE)

hand sewing [hand sewn]

**Dimensions**  
(WHOLE)

Type	Value	Units	Qualification
Length	29.5	cm	longest
	295.0	mm	
Width	6.8	cm	widest
	68.0	mm	

**Production Type**  
(WHOLE)

Mass produced

**Reason For Production**  
(WHOLE)

Retail

**Marks and Inscriptions**

T.607:1-1999

**Content**

**Note**

'26' stamped in blue dye; '28', 'D', and '61/2' stamped in black dye inside centre and centre right of glove; stamped; dye

**Condition**  
(WHOLE)

**Code**

1 (Good)

**Curator**

Suzanne Lussier

**Date**

20/11/1999

**Object Name**

Pair of woman's gloves

**Attribution**  
(WHOLE)

**Role**  
made

**Date**  
ca. 1890-1910  
(01/01/1885 - 31/12/1910)

**Attribution**  
(WHOLE)  
(WHOLE)

**Role**  
made  
made

**Place**  
United Kingdom  
France

**Uncertainty**  
probably  
possibly

**Materials & Techniques**  
(WHOLE)

White kid leather, machine-sewn, decorated with embroidery in black cotton, machine-embroidered, mother of pearl buttons.

**Dimensions**  
(WHOLE)

Type	Value	Units	Qualification
Length	29.5	cm	longest

(WHOLE)	Width	295.0	mm	
		6.8	cm	widest
		68.0	mm	

No. of Parts 2

T.607:1-1999 (Glove)

T.607:2-1999 (Glove)

**Object Name** Strip

Collection T&amp;D

T.38-2000 (Whalebone strip)

Created by SFN on 22/02/2000  
Amended by on

Attribution	Role	Date	Uncertainty
	formed	01/01/1800-31/12/1899 (01/01/1800 - 31/12/1899)	
Attribution	Role	Place	Uncertainty
	formed	Britain	

**Physical Description**

A strip of whalebone, greenish black, with one side smooth, the other striated

**Materials & Techniques**

Cut from baleen

**Materials**

baleen

**Techniques**

cutting (dividing) [cut]

Dimensions	Type	Value	Units	Qualification
	Width	6	mm	
	Length	53.4	cm	
		534.0	mm	

**Historical Context Note**

From the 16th to the mid-19th century, whalebone was the primary stiffening material in the stays/corsets worn by women in Europe. Over all other materials, whalebone was preferred for its malleability, flexibility and comfort during wear. A strip such as this would be inserted into a channel stitched between two layers of linen. The number of whalebone strips used and their proximity to each other would depend upon the style and date of the stays/corset.

**Condition**

Code 1 (Good)  
Curator Susan North  
Date 22/02/2000

**Environmental Requirements**

Code 2 (sensitive)  
Humidity 50 +/- 5%  
Light < or = 50 lux  
Pollution UV: <75 µw/lumen  
Temperature 19° - 21° C

**Object Name** Strip

**Attribution** Role Date  
formed 01/01/1800-31/12/1899  
(01/01/1800 - 31/12/1899)

**Attribution** Role Place Uncertainty  
formed Britain

**Materials & Techniques**

Cut from baleen

Dimensions	Type	Value	Units	Qualification
	Width	6	mm	
	Length	53.4	cm	
		534.0	mm	

No. of Parts 1

T.38-2000 (Whalebone strip)

**Object Name** Hat  
T.90-2003 (Hat)

**Collection** T&D

**Created by** SFN **on** 18/11/2003  
**Amended by** SFN **on** 07/12/2004

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>
		Unknown	
<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Date</b>	
	made	1750-1770 (01/01/1750 - 31/12/1770)	
<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>
	made	Great Britain	

**Physical Description**

A round hat with a shallow crown and wide brim decorated with cock and guinea feathers in natural colours and dyed blue, yellow, red and green. The feathers are stitched to a linen ground which is lined with blue taffeta.

**Materials & Techniques**

Feathers, linen and silk, hand-stitched with silk and linen thread

**Materials**

feathers  
Silk taffeta [silk]  
linen (material) [linen]

**Techniques**

hand sewing

**Dimensions**

Type	Value	Units	Qualification
Diameter	38.0	cm	overall
	380.0	mm	
Diameter	13.2	cm	crown
	132.0	mm	

**Category**

Access\_to\_Images 2003

**Object History Note**

Formerly part of the Castle Howard Costume collection, the private collection of George Howard. Purchased on 7 October 2003 from the Sotheby's.

**Historical Significance**

In the 18th century, wide-brimmed, shallow crowned hats were popular for women in a range of materials such as straw, openwork, paper, ribbons. This example demonstrates the use of feathers, of common origin, but dyed in a variety of colours.

**Purchase Price**

<b>Amount (sterling)</b>	<b>Order Number</b>
£1200	

**Reproduction**

<b>Number</b>	CT126983
<b>Type</b>	CT
<b>Picture Date</b>	27/02/2004
<b>Dimensions</b>	5x4 in
<b>View</b>	Top
<b>Location</b>	Costume - 18th Century

<b>Number</b>	BW126983
<b>Type</b>	BW
<b>Picture Date</b>	27/02/2004
<b>Dimensions</b>	5x4 in
<b>View</b>	Top

**Condition**

<b>Code</b>	1 (Good)
<b>Curator</b>	Susan North
<b>Date</b>	18/11/2003

**Environmental Requirements**

Code	2 (sensitive)
Humidity	50 +/- 5%
Light	< or = 50 lux
Pollution	UV: <75 µw/lumen
Temperature	19° - 21° C

**Object Name** Hat**Museum Number** T.90-2003

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>
		Unknown	

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Date</b>
	made	1750-1770 (01/01/1750 - 31/12/1770)

<b>Attribution</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Uncertainty</b>
	made	Great Britain	

**Materials & Techniques**

Feathers, linen and silk, hand-stitched with silk and linen thread

Dimensions	Type	Value	Units	Qualification
	Diameter	38.0	cm	overall
		380.0	mm	
	Diameter	13.2	cm	crown
		132.0	mm	

**Public Access Description**

Susan North

Wide-brimmed hats with shallow crowns were popular for women in the mid 18th century. They were often made in a range of materials such as straw, openwork, paper and ribbon. This example shows the use of feathers of common origin, such as those from cocks or guinea fowl, dyed in a variety of colours for a vivid effect. Such hats were worn as fashionable daywear with short jackets and petticoats. They demonstrate the 18th-century trend for taking items traditionally associated with working-class dress and transforming them into fashionable styles.

**Credit Line**

Purchased with the assistance of the National Art Collections Fund, the Friends of the V&A, and a number of private donors

**Category**

Access\_to\_Images 2003

**Object Entry Approval**

		User	Date
Author	Yes	susann	12/03/2004
Collection	Yes	clareb	11/03/2004
REC	Yes	kecollins	19/03/2004
Editor	Yes	pbaker	22/03/2004

**group fields (AccessToImages)**

00.AccessToImages yes

**No. of Parts** 1

T.90-2003 (Hat)