MOVING THE NEEDLE

The Australian Embroidery Revolution

CONFERENCE
23 June 2024

Presented by:

embroiderers' guild nsw

gallery 76

Supported by:

City of Canada Bay

Pictured: Detail from Pebbles, circa 1969. (Guild Collection ref. SS 098)

MOVING THE NEEDLE

One-day Conference

Sunday, 23 June 2024

9.30am-4.00pm

The 1960s-80s was an exciting period for Australian embroidery as it came out of the home and into the public arena. Our expert speakers will examine why this change came about, who was involved and its enduring impact. You'll also meet like-minded makers and art lovers over morning tea and lunch.

VENUE

The Connection (pictured)
30 Shoreline Dr,
Rhodes, NSW, 2138

GETTING THERE

Public Transport:

Rhodes Train Station is a few minutes walk away on Walker Street (it is one stop along from Concord West Station).
Bus routes servicing Rhodes include the 410, 458, and 533 along Concord Road and Rider Boulevard (458 only), and the 526 across the Bennelong Bridge.

By car:

Rhodes Central Shopping Centre, on nearby Marquet Street, provides three hours' free parking, after which it is paid. There is two and four hour timed street parking available on Shoreline Drive.

BOOKINGS

www.trybooking.com/eventlist/gallery76
Ph. 02 9743 2501

Prices:

Standard $150
Members $120
Prices are plus booking fee. They include morning tea & lunch.

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June-July 2024

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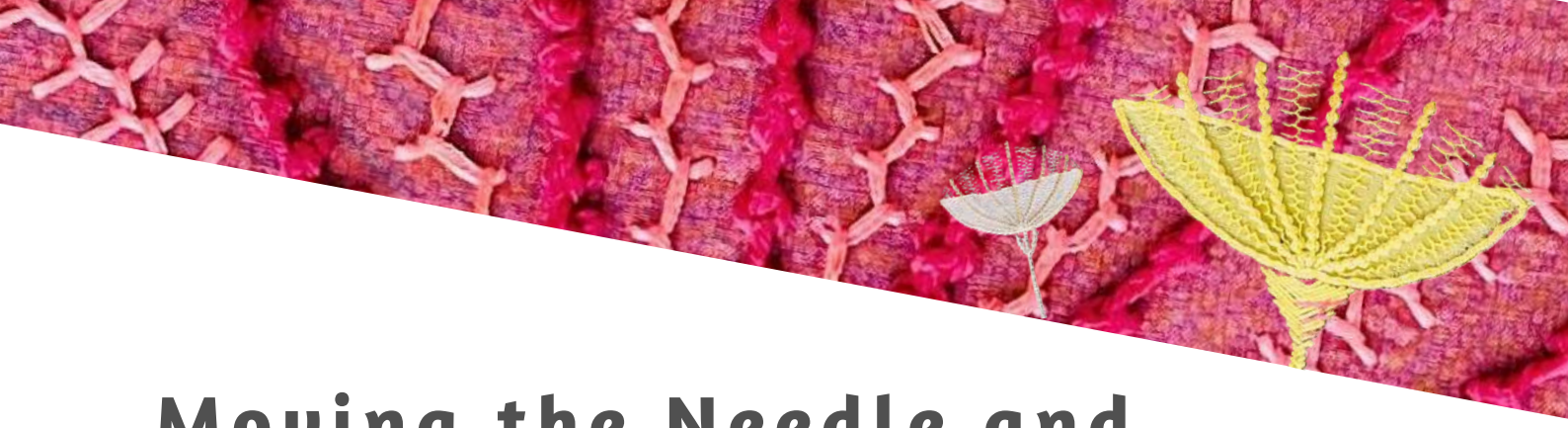


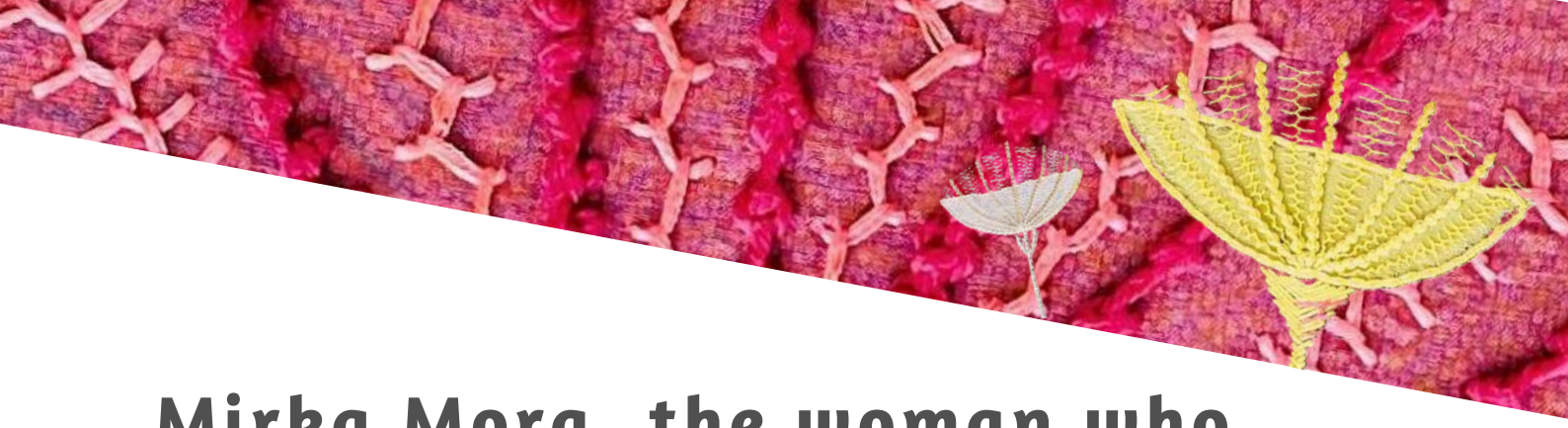
Moving the Needle and making embroidery as art

Presenter: Sue Wood

Modern approaches to embroidery were introduced to Australia in the mid-twentieth century through the efforts of a group of energetic and enthusiastic women with an interest in the arts and crafts. Working together, they promoted embroidery through workshops and exhibitions and forged connections with other arts and crafts practitioners in Australia and overseas. The embroideries they produced were lively, inventive and intended to demonstrate that embroidery should be recognised as an art form in its own right. This richly illustrated talk will discuss their achievements and evaluate the extent to which this aspiration has been achieved.

About the presenter

Sue Wood works in stitched textiles, artist books and mixed media, with a focus on landscape and place. She also works in response to objects and documents held in museums and archives. Sue's textile work has been exhibited in Australia and overseas, including solo exhibitions at the Wagga Wagga Art Gallery and the ANCA Gallery in Canberra. Sue has a Masters degree in visual art and a PhD in embroidery history awarded for her thesis titled Creative Embroidery in New South Wales, 1960 – 1975.



Mirka Mora, the woman who stitched her way into art history

Presenter: Sabine Cotte

Mirka Mora was one of the most beloved artists in Melbourne, as much for her bohemian personality as for her art. Rarely has an artist travelled so seamlessly from one medium to another; drawing, painting, mosaic, and extraordinary textile work including embroideries and soft sculptures that mixed several of her techniques in very idiosyncratic works. This talk will examine these textile works more closely, showing how Mirka's married her knowledge of old masters' techniques with an unbridled creativity, bringing textile onto art galleries' walls and along the way forging her own original style as well as creating a feminist legacy through her media, her imagery and her attitude to art.

About the presenter

Sabine Cotte is a French-Australian private conservator, based in Melbourne since 2001. She holds conservation degrees from Institut National du Patrimoine (Paris), ICCROM (Rome) and a PhD from University of Melbourne, Australia, on the materials and techniques of contemporary artist Mirka Mora. Her book Mirka Mora, a life making art was published in 2019. She is an Honorary Fellow of the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation, and a lecturer and tutor at the University of Melbourne.

Skipping Stitches

Presenter: Belinda von Mengersen

Stitch offers an expressive vocabulary that can be used in conventional or exploratory ways. In contemporary art practice, many artists are using stitch. Some iterate with a vocabulary of simple stitches, some treat it as a form of drawing, some stitch words, some stitch surfaces, some only use one stitch, some skip stitches, some stitch to subvert, and others seek formal technical training post art-school to redress their lack of skill. Some were taught to stitch; others describe finding or discovering it. No matter how they arrived at stitch, they agree it has a dexterity and a unique capacity for improvisation and nuance that can be personalised. They visualise embroidery as a language, one which they can constantly reinterpret and re-envision. Artists use stitch for creative expression, for its capacity to translate the irregularities of their handwriting and approach. This presentation will observe how artists amplify their stitch vocabularies in a myriad of ways.

About the presenter

Associate Professor Belinda von Mengersen cannot remember a time when she was not stitching and working with textiles. Art making is an indelible part of her life. Belinda is a visual artist and academic who completed a PhD in contemporary stitch and was fortunate to spend time studying at Goldsmiths College, London. She curated an Australian touring exhibition called ‘Slipstitch’, and regularly writes about stitch in contemporary art practice. Despite currently holding the dual roles of Discipline Lead in Design Innovation and Technologies and Campus Dean for Strathfield at ACU, she makes time to stitch.

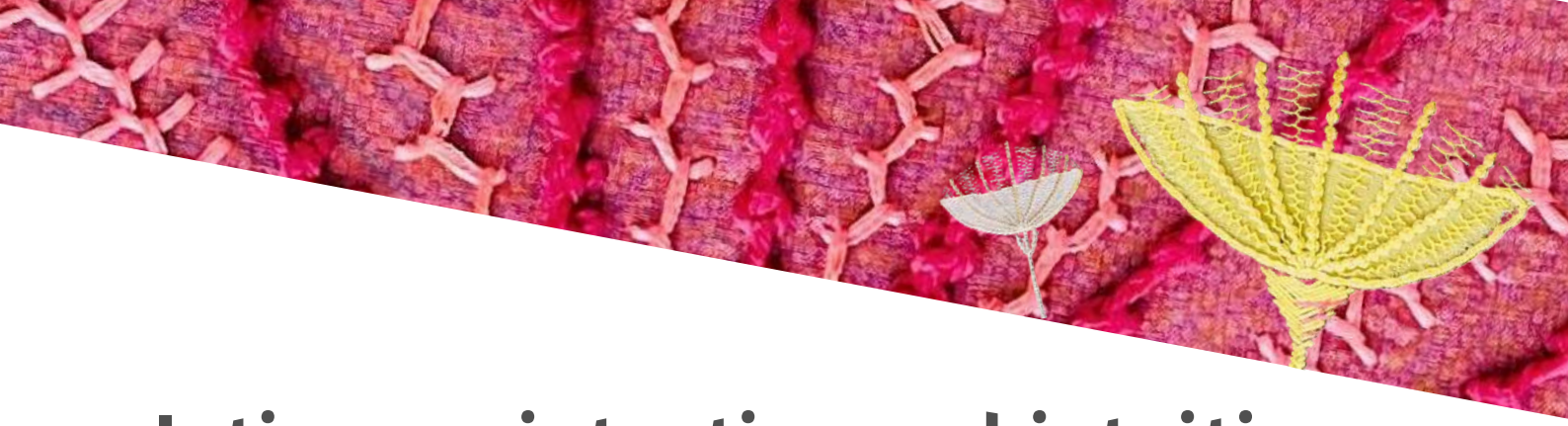
Know My Name: Women, Textiles and the Institution

Presenter: Simeran Maxwell

In 2020 the National Gallery of Australia announced a major exhibition (in two parts): *Know My Name*. It has become part of a larger initiative at the National Gallery that celebrates the work of women artists and enhances understanding of their contribution to Australia's cultural and artistic life. Textile art seems particularly significant, because of the strong association between women and textiles. Textiles—including quilting, embroidery and needlework, knitting and crochet—have historically been relegated to craft and folk art rather than high art. Simeran Maxwell will discuss how institutions, like the National Gallery, have historically played and continue to play a role in recategorising this medium.

About the presenter

Simeran Maxwell is Curator, Australian Art at the National Gallery of Australia where she has worked in various curatorial roles since 2007. She has a particular interest in international and Australian fashion, textiles, theatre arts and design. She is the curator of *A Century of Quilts* (2024) and *Australian Fashion Innovators: Recent acquisitions* (2024), as well as *1960s: International fashion from the collection* (2023) and *Good taste: French evening wear, 1910s–1930s* (2018) amongst others. Her current curatorial projects include Australian and First Nations contemporary fashion, historical quilts, and queer artist, designer and jeweller Peter Tully.



Intimacy, intention and intuition: textiles and contemporary art practice

Presenter: Nicole Barakat

Artist Nicole Barakat's first radical act of stitching happened on the banks of the Murrumbidgee River in 1999. Stitching thread into mud flakes opened up her practice to the possibilities that brought together unexpected materials and processes. A temporary moment became a vital turning point that has driven her practice for the last 25 years.

About the presenter

Nicole centres her practice on drawing with thread and cloth, the act of stitching as meditation and deep listening to self, materials, ancestors and place. The slowness of stitching and the heaviness of cloth hold the weight of labour and time, becoming an embodied measure of patience and love.

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CONFERENCE
23 June 2024

- Enjoy fascinating presentations
- Meet like-minded makers and art lovers
- Morning tea & lunch included

Organised by:
Embroiderers' Guild NSW and Gallery76
76 Queen St,
Concord West, NSW, 2138
Ph. 02 9743 2501 / 02 9743 2293
Email: info@embroiderersguildnsw.org.au
Web: www.embroiderersguildnsw.org.au

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