



Embroiderers' Guild of America Master Craftsman Programs

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egausa.org/mastercraftsman

EGA's Master Craftsman Programs are designed to promote excellence in embroidery by providing the accomplished needleworker the opportunity to demonstrate mastery in specific needlework techniques.

Each program consists of a series of six projects or steps with very specific requirements designed to test technical ability in a particular technique. Completion of all six steps leads to a certificate designating the successful participant a Master Craftsman. A high level of expertise in the technique of choice is required BEFORE entering one of the programs. Each program provides a challenging series of exercises designed to encourage application and expansion of the embroiderer's knowledge, skill, and creativity.

All directions and instructions must be followed carefully and specifically to master each step and progress in the program. The Master Craftsman Program may be considered a competition, **not** against other stitchers, but against one's **own** earlier efforts. All submissions are confidential.

The Programs

BEADING: The first five steps of this program require a mastery of the knowledge of five different techniques and the completion of a piece in that technique: bead embroidery, Peyote Stitch, Square Stitch and/or loom beading, Herringbone Stitch, and Right Angle Weave. Step 6 combines three of those techniques in an original piece. All Steps are judged on following directions closely, good documentation, material choices for the design, good design and color choices for the technique, and a well executed piece. **Link:** egausa.org/mcbeading

CANVAS: The first 2 steps of this program enable the stitcher to execute a specified list of stitches and show general expertise in compensation and following directions. The later steps allow for exhibiting expertise in the use of color and to design pieces and apply various canvas techniques. After each judging, participants are sent an update to evaluate how they are progressing along with hints and suggestions on improving their performance. **Link:** egausa.org/mccanvas

COLOR: This program tests your ability to use key components of color effectively in embroidered designs. Each step focuses on one aspect of color. Stitched work done in this program should be of exhibit quality, but any embroidery technique may be used. For each step, you will create one or two stitched pieces sized from 6" x 6" to 24" x 24", a 4-page essay with bibliography to show your understanding of the topic, short artist's statement(s), a line drawing of the design(s), and stitch and thread list(s). No kits are allowed. For Step 6, an original design

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is required. The Color program has a newsletter published bi-annually after each judging. **Link:** egausa.org/mccolor

COUNTED THREAD: This program challenges participants to be the best in a variety of counted techniques. Each step provides criteria for the creation of an original design or provided design in a specific technique: Cross-stitch, Assisi, black work, pulled thread and finishing, and Hardanger. Submissions are judged on following the directions, source research and expertise in the technique. **Link:** egausa.org/mccountedthread

CREWEL: This program tests basic crewel embroidery techniques, stitch execution, color usage, historical knowledge and research skills, and original design skills. Three designs are provided including an example based on 18th century New England crewel embroidery requiring research into stitches and history and an adaptation of a Jacobean or Elizabethan crewel design. Two original designs are required including Step 6 which must demonstrate a mastery of stitching, color, and design. **Link:** egausa.org/mccrewel

DESIGN: This program differs from other Master Craftsman categories by its very nature. Rather than demonstrating knowledge of a particular technique, candidates use their chosen needlework medium to demonstrate knowledge of specific design principles and elements. All submissions must be original, but wide latitude is allowed in format and interpretation. There is no one right answer. Technical expertise is expected, but is not the only criterion on which submissions are based. Completion of the program demonstrates mastery of the principles and elements of design and their use in creating original work. **Link:** egausa.org/mcdesign

QUILTING: A program whereby one will show their expertise in various techniques of handwork in piecing and quilting. Piecing includes appliqué, straight and curved stitching, points, cording and/or stuffing in the progressive six steps. There are two steps with specific projects and the other steps are of the participant's choice. All steps must be of exhibit quality and Step 6, an original design, must be of masterpiece quality. **Link:** egausa.org/mcquilting

SILK AND METAL THREAD: This program tests your embroidery skills and tests your knowledge in the use of metals and silks. Each step builds on the previous step. In several steps the designs are provided while others require original designs. The final step must demonstrate your mastery of the various silk and metal techniques. All aspects of the final step will be judged for perfection. All steps must be of exhibit quality. **Link:** egausa.org/mcsilkmetal

SMOCKING: Candidates are challenged to produce four smocked garments and two other smocked items. No set designs are provided but commercial designs may be adapted for some of the steps. Step Four requires the creation of a traditional English smock accompanied by a research paper. Smocking differs from some of the other Master Craftsman programs as candidates are judged on clothing construction as well as smocking skills. The candidate's ability to follow directions and successfully incorporate all of the step's requirements into their submission is also evaluated. **Link:** egausa.org/mcsmocking

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SURFACE EMBROIDERY: This program evaluates a stitcher's skill in five surface (non-counted) embroidery techniques: silk ribbon, stumpwork and needlelace, silk shading, Brazilian embroidery, an ethnic or regional embroidery technique of the candidate's choice, and an original final master step that incorporates at least three of the previous five techniques. Designs are provided for two of the first five steps, but original designs or designs based on published motifs can also be used for any of the first five submissions. Submissions are evaluated on stitching excellence, but also ability to follow directions, and color and design choice, where appropriate. **Link:** egausa.org/mcsurface

Highlights of the Programs

Execution: Excellence in stitch execution is expected and it is a requirement for all programs.

Knowledge: Participants are expected to demonstrate basic knowledge of the program area and of the basic principles of color and design.

Time Period: The initial step must be submitted within 2 years of enrollment. After the initial submission of Step 1, each subsequent step must be submitted with the next 5 year period. Participants who fail to meet any deadline will be considered to have withdrawn from the program; however, extensions may be requested from the Chairman.

Withdrawal and Reinstatement: For those who find it necessary to withdraw from a program, later reinstatement is done by re-registering and paying the registration fee. Upon verification of completed steps, the participant will continue in the program where he/she left off and receive any revised materials for that step.

Judging: Judging is held twice a year and each step must be passed in order. A **provisional pass** allows work to begin on the next step, although it will not be judged until the previous step has been resubmitted for judging and passed. A *provisional pass* will be re-judged only on those sections marked as needing corrections. A **not pass** requires the step to be completely re-done.

Fees: Initial enrollment or re-enrollment into a program is \$50.00. With each step submitted, a fee of \$20 is sent along with the piece to cover administrative and shipping costs. If a piece receives a *provisional pass* or *not pass*, the resubmission fee is \$15.00. International applicant's fees are based on increased costs of shipping