Textiles 1
A Textiles Vocabulary
# Contents

Before you start

Introduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment one Introductory assignment</th>
<th>18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Part one** Observing and capturing

| Project 1 Selecting and identifying | 25 |
| Project 2 Recording and capturing   | 31 |
| Project 3 Picking and portraying    | 45 |

**Part two** Surface and stitch

| Project 1 Creating surfaces       | 53 |
| Project 2 Drawing with stitch     | 59 |
| Assignment two Stitching: Placed and spaced | 66 |

**Part three** Colour studies

| Project 1 Colour palettes and proportion | 82 |
| Project 2 Materials and composition    | 92 |
| Assignment three Colour communication  | 99 |

**Part four** Yarn and linear exploration

| Project 1 Exploring lines            | 108 |
| Project 2 Creating linear forms      | 115 |
| Assignment four A yarn collection    | 125 |

**Part five** Building a collection

| Project 1 Developing visual research | 132 |
| Project 2 Building a response        | 135 |
| Project 3 Experimenting and taking risks | 137 |
| Assignment five Your capsule collection | 139 |

References

| References | 142 |

Further reading

| Further reading | 143 |

Links

| Links | 144 |
Before you start

*I’m motivated every second by my work; it doesn’t switch off. The pictures I make come from every blink of my lashes.*

(Sam Taylor-Wood) ¹

Welcome to *Textiles 1: A Textiles Vocabulary.* This course will equip you with different ways of approaching visual exploration and help you to develop an individual creative skills base for your textiles practice. Developing new ways of looking and working is an important aspect of textiles practice. *A Textiles Vocabulary* will give you core ways for generating and accumulating new ideas, techniques, material knowledge and visual awareness within the textiles subject.

If you’ve previously completed the OCA Foundation Textiles course, you should find that the skills you developed there will feed your exploration on this course.

Your tutor

Your tutor will be your main point of contact and support during this course. Before you start work make sure that you’re clear about your tuition arrangements. The OCA tuition system is explained in some detail in your Student Handbook.

If you haven’t already done so, please write a paragraph or two about your experience to date. Add background information about anything that you think may be relevant for your tutor to know about you (your profile) – for example, your own practice, your reasons for exploring this subject and what you expect to achieve from taking the course.

Email or post your profile to your tutor as soon as possible. This will help them understand how best to support you during the course. Your tutor’s reply will include a suggested deadline for completion of your first assignment. These course materials are intended to be used flexibly so this deadline isn’t set in stone – but please keep your tutor informed about your progress.

Your tutor will also make arrangements with you for dealing with queries and reviewing progress. This will usually be by email or phone. Please note that tutors can only deal with occasional emails between assignments.

When you’ve completed the first assignment, at the end of the course introduction, you’ll be asked to send your work to your tutor. (A blue postal bag is provided.) This first assignment is diagnostic and will not be assessed if you decide to go down that route. It’s an early opportunity for your tutor to take a look at your work, tell you what you’re doing well, give guidance on improving other areas, and provide pointers for the next assignment. Your tutor may also suggest sources of extra support and learning; these could include the OCA website, book titles, journals and exhibitions. In tutor reports 2 and 4, your tutor will also indicate how they think you might do at assessment.

Only work done during the course should be sent to your tutor for review or submitted for assessment.

Do note that you’re encouraged to reflect carefully on all tutor feedback and, if appropriate, to go back to the assignment you submitted and make adjustments to it based on your tutor’s comments. If you decide to submit your work for formal assessment, making such adjustments demonstrates responsiveness and learning and will help improve your mark. If you’re unclear about anything your tutor has written, contact them for clarification.

Tip

When submitting your work to your tutor it is very helpful if you try to organise and present it in a way that is easy, clear and logical for your tutor to look through. There are many ways to do this; choose a method that is unfussy and sympathetic to your work. When submitting physical work, consider using a very simple, clean presentation on white sheets with clear labelling on the back of each piece to indicate which project the work is part of. Try to order your work in a logical way too and make it easy and engaging to look through.
Course aims and learning outcomes
Take a moment to read the aims and learning outcomes for the course below.

The course aims to:
• allow you to explore archive textiles through observational drawing and develop textile
design ideas
• introduce you to ways of recording and using colour from different sources using a range of
media
• develop your awareness of traditional and non-traditional yarn types and simple textile
sampling
• develop your reflective skills and ability to evaluate the appropriateness of different
approaches.

On successful completion of the course you’ll be able to:
• develop visual ideas to show a personal interpretation for textile-based work
• demonstrate sensitivity in the translation and handling of colour
• use a range of textiles media and techniques to creatively develop design ideas
• reflect upon your own learning experience in the context of your studies.

Your tutor will be looking for evidence that you’re beginning to demonstrate these learning
outcomes in your work. It’s a good idea to apply these to your progress at the end of each part
of the course and reflect in your learning log on whether or not you feel you’re beginning to
develop these skills.

Formal assessment
Read the section on assessment in your Student Handbook at an early stage in the course.
See also the study guide on assessment and getting qualified for detailed information about
assessment and accreditation. You’ll find this on the OCA student website.

For assessment you’ll need to submit all of the work you have done on the course:
• Assignments One to Five
• your tutor feedback forms
• your sketchbooks
• your learning log or blog url.

As already noted, the introductory assignment (Assignment One) is diagnostic and won’t
be formally assessed, but the assessors will want to see it to help them gauge your progress
through the course.

There are some guidelines on how to package your work for assessment at the end of this
course guide.
Important note: To ensure that all your work is seen at assessment, record ALL your work, including the ‘failures’ and happy accidents, and place it in your learning log/blog. This is in case you’re unable to post all your work for assessment, either because you have too much work to post or because a piece of work is too fragile to post or hasn’t survived for some reason. Refer to the assessment guidelines at the end of this course guide for more information. Recording everything in this way will also ensure that all your work is available to your tutor for review. Developing the ability to self-select your best work is an important part of your learning and future textiles practice, but at this early stage it’s important to give your tutor the opportunity to guide and encourage your development – and they need to see all your work in order to do this.

Assessment criteria
The assessment criteria listed below are central to the assessment process for this course, so if you’re going to have your work assessed to gain formal credits, please make sure you take note of these criteria and consider how each of the assignments you complete demonstrates evidence of each criterion. On completion of each assignment, and before you send your assignment to your tutor, test yourself against the criteria; in other words, do a self-assessment and see how you think you would do. Note down your findings for each assignment you’ve completed in your learning log, noting all your perceived strengths and weaknesses, taking into account the criteria every step of the way. This will be helpful for your tutor to see, as well as helping you prepare for assessment.

- **Demonstration of technical and visual skills** – materials, techniques, observational skills, visual awareness, design and compositional skill (40%).
- **Quality of outcome** – content, application of knowledge, presentation of work in a coherent manner, discernment, conceptualisation of thoughts, communication of ideas (20%).
- **Demonstration of creativity** – imagination, experimentation, invention, development of a personal voice (20%).
- **Context** – reflection, research, critical thinking (20%).

Your attention will be drawn to the assessment criteria as you progress through the course and in the feedback from your tutor.

A full description of the assessment criteria and how this fits with the grading system is in the back of this course guide.
Course content and structure
This Level 1 course represents 400 hours of learning time. Allow around 20% of this time for reflection and keeping your learning log/blog (see below). The course should take about a year to complete if you spend around 8 hours each week on it.

If this is your first course with OCA, you can learn more about studying with OCA by reading your Student Handbook. As with all OCA courses, these course materials are intended to be used flexibly but keep your tutor fully informed about your progress. You’ll need to allow extra time if you decide to have your work formally assessed.

This course is formed of five parts, each with a different focus. Each part of the course requires around 80 hours of study and in each part you’ll tackle a particular assignment through a series of exercises and projects. It is important that you complete all of the tasks set out in each part of the course as they build to give you important skills, experience and a knowledge base that will inform the next part and also contribute to the growth of your practice and vocabulary of textiles.

The course comprises:

Introduction and introductory assignment
For your introductory assignment you’ll source examples of objects, materials and textiles centred on a theme. This will allow you to creatively explore and examine textile qualities, surfaces, forms and properties that interest you. You’ll capture these through drawing (predominantly) and photography to demonstrate skills in selection and observation and in response to imagery, motifs, surface, detail, pattern, texture, repeat and composition. Colour will not be a focus at this stage.

Part One
In Part One, you’ll be introduced to using archive references as a visual stimulus, building on your findings from the previous assignment. You’ll observe and capture the specific qualities of both archive textiles and primary sources such as flowers, leaves and plants through observational drawing and mark-making using graphite, ink and other simple media.

Part Two
In Part Two, you’ll build on the work you’ve generated in Part One by developing textile translations from your drawings and visual explorations. You’ll take an experimental approach to textile techniques and materials and build skills to investigate material manipulation and stitch approaches.

Part Three
From working with relatively neutral colour palettes in the previous two parts, you’ll now wholeheartedly explore colour within a textiles framework. You’ll explore the process of working with colour palettes and learn how to make decisions on forming palettes, dealing with proportions of colour, and ensuring the building and presentation of moods and qualities through colour. Your work on Part Three will culminate in a beautifully presented colour resource book.
Part Four
In Part Four, you’ll return to your drawings from the introductory assignment and Part One to inform the design and making of yarn, through the consideration of linear qualities. You’ll build on your exploration of material qualities through the creation of conventional and unconventional yarn qualities; you may also wish to refer back to your early material explorations in Part Two to feed this work. You’ll employ one of the colour palettes you developed in Part Three to inject colour and proportion of colour choices as well as other visual and tactile qualities.

Part Five
Part Five is the conclusion to your studies on this course and will allow you to showcase your new knowledge, skills and experience through creating a concise textile collection. Your aim will be to present a group of textiles that sits well together as a collection to generate a strong mood or story whilst also working individually as intriguing and carefully considered material solutions.

Throughout the course you’ll be directed to increase your understanding of textile contexts through further research into other artists’ and designers’ work. This supporting research will allow you the opportunity to reflect on aspects of traditional and contemporary textiles practice.

At the end of each part of the course you’ll collate your work from the projects, exercises and research points as directed in the assignment brief. Your tutor’s report on each assignment will serve as a tutorial point, allowing you room to further review your work, build a conversation about it with your tutor, and revisit and refine aspects that you feel would benefit from this.

As you explore the course, you’re encouraged to take a lively and experimental approach to the tasks. Think of this course guide as a framework within which you can develop your own exploration. Try to go above and beyond the course requirements and really push the possibilities of your own practice.

Learning logs, notebooks and sketchbooks
The learning log is an integral element of every OCA course. If this is your first course with OCA, you’ll find guidance on what to include in a learning log, and how to set up an online learning log/blog, on the OCA student website.

Record and reflect on the development of your visual work in your learning log as you progress through the course. Do this both visually and in written reflection. With creative work, it is important to evidence its development and the design process you’ve followed. This can include anything from rough sketches, colour trials and sampling through to more in-depth thinking and concentrated experimental sampling and technical notes. The learning log gives you a place to do all this.

Your learning log is also the place to collate your drawings, photos, material samples, postcards, cuttings, book and journal articles, visual research, written research and any notes. These may be from very varied sources including exhibitions, magazines, websites, books, galleries, commercial samples, etc. Some of these will link to or provide a context for the creative work
you’re currently doing, but you may also want to collect things and do work additional to your course work. Keep this work in your learning log too, if you wish, or in separate notebooks or sketchbooks.

Textiles has a particular focus on physical materials, experimentation and outcomes, so you may choose to have a physical learning log. However, most students opt to have an online log or blog instead of or in addition to a physical learning log. A blog can be a great way to consolidate and present your work, findings, observations and reflections for your tutor and peers to review. Many students find that this format allows them to stand back from their work and take stock; it can also provide an effective way to make connections between selected examples of your work through written reflection.

Setting up a blog is free and can be done through websites such as Blogger, Tumblr or Wordpress. Alternatively you can set up a blog within the OCA student website. If you do decide to have a learning blog, you’ll need to consider how best to photograph your work and how to organise your blog to show the development of your work and your reflections on it.

It’s up to you how you organise your work. If you decide to have a few different notebooks for different aspects of your work, that’s absolutely fine. You may benefit from having a pocket-sized notebook/sketchbook for drawing and recording on the move, for example.

Some of your work may be most effectively presented or contained in a simple card folio format, rather than hidden between the pages of your learning log or sketchbook. Often it can be beneficial to work on individual sheets outside the limiting scale of your sketchbooks, particularly when sampling. This is also a good way to highlight the pieces you feel are particularly successful and to provide visual evidence of your decision-making and selection process.

There are no rules on the scale of work you create or collect, so be open to this changing as different projects demand or as you see fit. If your work is A1 in size, for example, you probably won’t want to squash it into small book format, so photograph it for inclusion in your learning log and retain the original work in a simple protective card folio.

Tip
As a general rule, don’t fully stick samples down onto paper or card (although you may occasionally need to do so if a sample is particularly fragile or liable to fall apart easily). Attach samples onto lightweight card along the top of the sample, or by the top two corners; this allows samples to be touched and examined for drape, texture and movement qualities. Give each sample adequate space and consider the relationships between samples, should you choose to present more than one on each sheet.
Studying with OCA

If you haven’t already done so, now is a good time to work through the free introductory course ‘An Introduction to Studying in HE’. This is available on the OCA student website.

Don’t be tempted to skip this introductory course as it contains valuable advice on study skills (e.g. reading, note-taking), research methods and academic conventions which will stand you in good stead throughout your studies.

The OCA website will be a key resource for you during your studies with OCA, so take some time to familiarise yourself with it. Log onto the OCA student website and find the video guide to using the website. Watch the video and take some notes.

Remember too, that there are other students following this course, so you are not on your own. Use the online forums to reflect on your findings and discuss issues with other students.

Research, references and contexts

Building an understanding of how to create new work from a personal viewpoint and making use of a robust research, development and refinement process are both key to building your textiles practice – and begin with this course. You’ll examine how your work relates to the wider range of contemporary and historical practice as well as unearthing the variety of contexts in which textiles appear. You’ll be given guidance on how to make these links from the outset of this course, but you’re also encouraged to do your own research into aspects that you feel relate, link to and influence your ideas, thinking, techniques, approach and results. References outside the sphere of textiles (e.g. product design or photography) may also be relevant because textiles is a discipline that rarely sits in isolation.

As well as following up specific research tips, take an inquisitive approach towards learning more about the practitioner behind the quote, or the artist or designer behind the image, within this course guide. Note down all your sources, whether books, journals, blogs or websites, so that you can go back to them should you wish to later. Keeping a careful record of references will help you track your research and guard against plagiarism. Refer to the study guide on Harvard referencing on the OCA student portal for more help on how to do this.

Don’t rely too heavily on the internet or limit yourself only to images. Try to delve a little more deeply. You’ll find that textiles-focused books are much more informative, analytical and detailed than information you will find online. Invest in some key texts, or check for library access to textiles books you feel you can gain from as you progress through the course.
Viewing and experiencing textiles

This course requires you to source textiles and analyse, record, draw and photograph them. Wherever possible, try to experience textiles at first hand. Visit department stores that stock fabric collections; look at garments or upholstery in shops; view textiles within a gallery, exhibition or archive setting; or simply see what you have stashed away at home. The textiles discipline is now expanding beyond a traditional notion of textiles towards one which encompasses many forms of new materials and contexts and provokes us to look at all material possibilities, techniques of making and applications. Wherever colour, texture and surface are employed, textiles are present. Look out for materials and textile qualities and consider their application in more unexpected contexts – on public transport or in hospitals or other public buildings, for example.

At this early point in your studies it is important to keep an open mind towards the textile discipline and, where possible, to see and experience as much as you can. Record your experiences of materials (be they visual, tactile, digital, interactive or in any other form) in your learning log or perhaps in a separate research file or sketchbook. Keep both visual and written records. In this way you’ll begin to build a strong personal reference resource that will grow as you pursue your studies in textiles.

(wood (birch, mixed dyed wood) and textile (cotton)) www.elisastrozyk.de
Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer. Photography: Studio Been.
Planning your resources
From the start of this course, you’ll need to access resources that will allow you to successfully tackle the projects and assignments. The resources that you’re able to access or seek to access will be quite different from student to student; for this reason, each exercise or project gives some options to choose from.

Read through the whole course at the outset. Before starting each part of the course, you may be able to make a list of the materials and media you need to start you off. Once you’ve embarked on a project and started to develop your ideas, you’ll find that you need to source materials with specific qualities and properties. This is a natural part of any creative textiles course. Your material choices will be in constant flux as you move from project to project, from technique to technique, from approach to approach, and as you begin to master your materials and feel accomplished in their handling. Your choices of materials and media, the way you explore them, and the way in which you eventually grow to master and refine them, are what will make your work yours.

The course introduction that follows, and the first assignment, encourage you to view the materials, textiles, surfaces and objects that surround you in a new light. Be brave, be inquisitive and take advantage of the possibilities and avenues that textiles offer.
Textiles 1: A Textiles Vocabulary

Introduction

Marie O’Connor, Make Shape (mixed media) www.marieoconnor.co.uk
Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer.
The breadth of textiles

New materials have fresh associations, physical properties and qualities that have built into them the possibility of forcing you or helping you do something else.

(Robert Rauschenberg)²

Our understanding of what ‘textiles’ encompasses most often starts out from a personal focus, a specific viewpoint – and often a bit of an obsession. It can begin from a love of knitting or an affinity with drawing. It can come from the fascination of working with materials and an appreciation of craftsmanship. It can come from the experience of a connected discipline such as fashion, interiors, ceramics, jewellery, architecture or product design. Equally, it can simply emanate from the pleasure and enjoyment of colour and surface.

What is clear about the textiles discipline is its breadth. Textiles encompass a diverse and extreme array of materials, from the delicacy and fragility of lace to the engineered durability of geotextiles. Textiles can be highly practical and essential and/or beautifully decorative and superfluous – or anything in between.

Textiles also span an extensive range of techniques and can build from chemical and fibres, through to yarn, material, finishes, and finally to product. Traditional textile crafts such as weaving and embroidery sit comfortably with automated production developments and digital making methods. Economies of scale contrast with ‘slow design’ thinking.

The scope of textiles – like other art, design and craft disciplines – is undergoing huge shifts, with a blurring of the lines between different practices. Intriguing intersections between craft and technology are seeing textile practitioners fuse mastery of making and aesthetics with new ways of interacting with textiles, new material considerations and new industrial solutions.

It is a very exciting time to be engaged in textiles.

² Robert Rauschenberg: Works on Metal
www.rauschenbergpre-degree.org/newsfeed [accessed 22.01.2015]
Material handling
There is enormous potential and opportunity for you to develop a strong response towards materials within the textiles discipline. Build your knowledge through first-hand experience – the handling and observing of textiles, whether raw materials or materials you’re surrounded by – and through looking at other practitioners’ work.

Textile practitioners are continuously expanding their knowledge of textile properties and textile qualities as they seek to explore and re-explore new possibilities for textiles. Finding, collating, handling, observing, analysing and recording materials and surfaces is the focus of your introductory assignment. This assignment won’t be formally assessed, but it will serve as a good indicator of how you have progressed from the beginning to the end of the course so you will need to include it in your assessment submission. You may choose to use the work you create in this assignment to feed further development later in this course.

Remember to record ALL the work you do on this course – even the ‘failures’ – so that it’s available for your tutor to review, and for assessment, even if you’re unable to submit it all physically for some reason.

Jenny Ellery, Samples, 2014 (moulded latex/pigment printed onto cotton chad)
www.jennyellery.co.uk
Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer. Photography: Colleen Leitch.
**Assignment one Introductory assignment**

Observation is fundamental to art and design and is the essential starting point of the textile design and creation process. Gathering, observing and recording textiles, surfaces, materials and their unique qualities will form the basis for this project.

*Drawing makes you see things clearer, and clearer and clearer still, until your eyes ache.*

(David Hockney, interviewed by Martin Gayford 18.09.06)

**Brief**

In this project you're asked to collect, then visually observe, explore and record a group of textiles and materials. You'll create a folio of 10 to 15 drawings that visually capture the qualities and properties of the items you select.

Tackle this brief in two stages: first, gather and select materials; second, take time to arrange, rearrange and record them through drawing and mark-making.

**Stage 1: Gathering materials**

Choose one of the four themes or starting points below and gather and select objects, items and surfaces that represent your chosen theme as interpreted by you.

Choose ONE of these four themes:

- Tropical Tourist
- Style Lounge
- Iced Landscape
- Nature’s Larder

Now think of the type of visual and tactile qualities, properties, materials and objects your chosen theme brings to mind. Start by doing some brainstorming. For example, for the theme Tropical Tourist you might come up with: bright, garish, sun-bleached, clashing patterns, orchids, Hawaiian shirts, pineapple, flip-flops, chinos, water, sand, blue sky, creased maps, feeling of wandering around in a beautiful place, dormant volcanoes, iridescent insects…

This list probably doesn’t describe your personal reaction: it would be surprising if it did. The idea is to generate your own interpretation. Everyone’s response will be different, so you can’t be right or wrong – just make sure you begin to build a clear vision in your mind. It might be useful to make a note of these early ideas in your learning log or sketchbook, so you can refer to them easily and use them to help your ideas grow. Try not to take the themes too literally: push your interpretation as far as it can go. Be humorous if your ideas go in that direction. Be as diverse as you can in your thinking and use the theme as a launch pad.

Next, gather materials and objects that visually and physically represent your response. Aim to collect five to eight items. Think carefully about the qualities of the materials you want to gather.

---

Do you want them to be light and airy? Or heavy and gritty? Do they need to be garish and patterned or delicate and serene? Start by looking around your home and near environment. Look at the variety of textures and the appearance of the things that surround you. Viewed with fresh eyes, can their surface qualities be adopted to reflect your theme? In isolation some items might not initially spring to mind or even relate to the theme, but as part of a collection – and with a focus on surface, texture, pattern, shape and form – they might add a much-needed quality. Again, push your interpretation as far as you can. You can’t build an entire ‘iced landscape’ in your room, or on your work surface, but what objects, textures or materials could represent your take on this theme? Be brave, have fun with your choice of objects, and try to inject as much visual variety as possible within the scope of your chosen theme.

Once you’ve gathered your items and feel like the group represents your theme well, take some photographs as a record of the collection. When you’re taking your photos, look at how the materials and surfaces sit next to each other.

- Does the way you order or arrange the items help to tell the story and your personal interpretation of your theme?
- Do some arrangements work better than others?
- Does your theme lend itself to a richly clustered layout or a sparser distribution?
- Can you experiment with the placement, positioning, spacing, background and framing of your collection to emphasise the theme? What background should you use – plain white to show off the surfaces or something different that adds another layer to your theme?

Print or select for your blog the photos you feel best capture the mood and interpretation of your theme and put them in your learning log. Reflect on their success or otherwise and consider how you can improve or adjust the collection for the next stage of the assignment.
Stage 2: Observing qualities
In this next part of the process you'll work to increase your sensitivity towards the qualities, properties, components and construction of the items, textiles, materials and surfaces you've gathered.

Draw, sketch and make marks on paper to record the qualities of the items you've gathered. You can group the collection or draw them separately, or vary this from drawing to drawing. Please don't worry if you aren't a particularly experienced or accomplished artist! You're trying to capture an impression of your display and of your objects and materials, not produce an immaculate drawing. Focus on translating the energy, contrasts and surfaces you see and don't be scared to get simple marks down on the page to represent what you see.

First, gather some simple media to work with such as pencils, pens and ink. You don't need to include colour at this stage; in fact, by ignoring colour you'll be more focused on recording the textures, surface and other material qualities. If you do use colour, you should record it as accurately as possible.

Next, select a few different sizes and qualities (thickness, weight, texture, flexibility and colour) of paper to work on. Base your choices on the mood you're trying to get across in your drawings. If you're seeking to convey lightness and delicacy, for example, you might choose a lightweight paper or even tracing paper. If you want to get a feeling of solidity, you might choose something more rigid like card or watercolour paper. Consider working on a variety of sizes of paper, from A5 all the way up to A0 and everything in between. Again, the size of paper might be dependent on what you're drawing, what media you're using and the size of the marks you want to make.

When recording the collection, try to look at the individual items in as many ways as you can. For example, you can analyse the fine detail in the structure of a fabric or material. Alternatively, you can try to create marks on the page that convey the overall feeling of weight or drape of a material or item.

As you begin to draw and make marks, make sure you are really observing your collection of items. Use the following ways to view your collection, to inspire and feed the variety of drawing and mark-making you do, as you move from sheet to sheet:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Close-up textures</th>
<th>Tiny detail</th>
<th>Pattern and repeat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distant textures</td>
<td>No detail</td>
<td>Capturing weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt and gloss</td>
<td>Silhouette</td>
<td>Bigger than life-size</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow drawing</td>
<td>Edges and seams</td>
<td>Barely there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast drawing</td>
<td>Highlighting contrasts</td>
<td>Small/large marks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Focus on capturing the qualities that most interest you. Be concerned with texture as much as form, particularly the way texture can be captured through two-dimensional representations. Be bold and experimental and aim for between 10 and 15 sheets/drawings. Do vary the time you spend on your drawings too. Quick drawings require and demand different marks and energy than drawings where you're aiming to invest more time, build focus and include more detail.
References
Listed below are some practitioners who use drawing and mark-making as an important component of their work. Some are engaged in creating textiles whilst others conclude with drawing as the intended outcome.

Take some time to look at their work. This will help you both to make links to your own drawing and to generate some ideas for your approach to this assignment. Document this research and your ideas in your learning log.

- Louise Bourgeois: Link 1
- Alison Carlier: Link 2
- Alex Chalmers: Link 3
- Hilary Ellis: Link 4
- Michael Griffiths: Link 5
- Debbie Smyth: Link 6
- Katie Sollohub: Link 7
- Roanna Wells: Link 8


Submitting your work
Send your work to your tutor using the blue postal bag provided, or if this is too small, in a simple cardboard folio. You may need to carefully fold larger pieces. Alternatively, you could photograph larger pieces; if you do this, make sure that these images do your work justice. There is no need to mount or crop your work.

On completion of the assignment, produce a written analysis of your work in no more than 500 words. Do this in your learning log or post it on your blog. You might want to reflect on the following points and questions:

- What were your first ideas in response to the brief?
- What was your first impression of the project?
- Which techniques did you explore through your selection, drawing and mark-making?
- What do you feel are the strong points of your work and what are its weaker aspects?
- What new skills have you gained?
- How would you like to develop your work in future, based on this first project?

Your tutor will review your assignment with a view to gaining a sense of your current level of creative, observational and analytical abilities and discuss with you how best to proceed with the rest of the course.
**Reflection**

Before you send this assignment to your tutor, take a look at the assessment criteria for this course, which will be used to mark your work at assessment. The assessment criteria are listed in the introduction to this course guide. Here's a reminder:

- **Demonstration of technical and visual skills** – materials, techniques, observational skills, visual awareness, design and compositional skill (40%).
- **Quality of outcome** – content, application of knowledge, presentation of work in a coherent manner, discernment, conceptualisation of thoughts, communication of ideas (20%).
- **Demonstration of creativity** – imagination, experimentation, invention, development of a personal voice (20%).
- **Context** – reflection, research, critical thinking (20%).

Review your work using the criteria and make notes in your learning log/blog. Send these reflections to your tutor, along with the rest of your assignment submission.

Your tutor may take a while to get back to you so carry on with the course while you’re waiting.

**Reworking your assignment**

Following feedback from your tutor, you may wish to rework some of your assignment, especially if you are ultimately submitting your work for formal assessment. If you do this, make sure you reflect on what you have done and why in your learning log.
Part one
Observing and capturing

Bokja, Migration (Love Boat), 2013 (sofa and various textiles) www.bokjadesign.com
Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer.
Use the grid below to keep track of your progress throughout Part One.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Selecting and identifying</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Recording and capturing</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Picking and portraying</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research point</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Project 1 Selecting and identifying**

Delving into the variety of textiles makes for quite a daunting task. As well as thinking about the creative possibilities of the textiles discipline, an important part of your study of textiles is to experience, analyse and reflect on physical textiles and materials. The more hands-on experience you have of textiles, the greater your awareness will become of the material possibilities and limitations, as well as the stories and messages you might create from them.

Handling different materials will increase your sensitivity to their qualities, properties and construction and to the creative possibilities of working with, manipulating or developing your own materials. During this course you should aim to build on your personal understanding and interaction with an extended range of textiles and materials. This will give you a strong foundation from which you can develop your own creative practice and further your own textiles vocabulary.

Analyses of both contemporary and historical textiles are equally valid and valued. You can get first-hand experience of textiles both through engagement with and research into the textiles created by other practitioners and from your personal handling, manipulation and transformation of textiles and their components.

As well as experiencing their physical attributes, it is also very important to consider the stories, memories and experiences we attach to textiles, particularly if they are worn or were once worn, or exist in close proximity to us.

*Clothing is … an exercise of memory… It makes me explore the past… how I feel when I wore that…*

(Louise Bourgeois) 4

In this project you’ll begin to record textiles through selecting, observing and drawing pieces from an archive source. As well as becoming more aware of the qualities of textiles, there might be the opportunity to investigate and express their story, history or background in the marks, lines and forms you make, as well as through the notes you take.

Before embarking on this project, now might be a good point for you to consider your perception of what textiles as a discipline might be. Write down your responses to the following questions:

- In your own words, write a definition of ‘textiles’ in its broadest sense. What materials do you consider to be ‘textile’ materials? When is a material not a textile? Can you identify any examples?
- In what ways could textiles have stories or narratives attached to them? There is a lot you could think about here, both in terms of the story of or behind the textile and the story potentially told by the textile. Try to give some examples.

---

Exercise 1.1 The archive

Each item in a collection has its own story, its own memory – the search, the day you bought it, who you were with, the vacation, etc.; a collection provides a special satisfaction and sense of achievement.

(Tricia Guild, in Murphy, 2009, p.44)

Textile archives are found worldwide; they vary greatly in their context and content but they all have the purpose of recording, categorising, retaining and preserving textiles. The collections contained in archives may focus on historical and/or contemporary collections of craft, textiles and design, records of commercial textile industry, design samples, personal collections – or any combination of these.

For this part of the course, you’ll work from an archive to generate a folio of visual work, at the same time gaining a deeper knowledge of the textile pieces you select. The archive you choose to work from may not purely house textiles, but you should source textile pieces for this project.

Aims

This exercise aims to help you:
• identify an archive and select three textile pieces to observe and work from
• expand your experience of textile handling and close analysis.

Brief

Locate an archive accessible to you that contains textiles. This could be a local or national art or design archive, a university archive, a gallery or museum archive or an archive belonging to a company or manufacturer (for example, if there’s an archive strongly connected with your local area). You’re likely to benefit from doing some initial online research to find out what is accessible to you. Bear in mind that galleries and museums have limited space and often hold additional stores of work and objects that you can access on request. (If you do this, be sure to ask in advance of your visit.)

Once you’ve found an archive that’s available to you, consider what type of textiles you’d like to look at within the collection. You won’t be able to tackle everything, so choose three
pieces that you’re particularly drawn to. Choose three textiles that are linked in some way or analyse three quite different pieces – it’s entirely up to you. You may be able to get an overview of a particular textile archive from their online catalogue before your visit. If your chosen archive isn’t recorded online, however, you may need to make your decision on the spot. What type of textiles would you like to learn more about? For example, would you like to look at textiles that have a particular origin, such as silk embroideries from China or tartans from Scotland? Alternatively, you may wish to look at textiles from a particular period, such as 1950s prints. Or you could focus on a particular material or technique like concrete or lace. Also consider objects and items made from textiles, or with a textile component. This is an observational drawing project so you should make your decision primarily on the basis of the appearance and construction of the pieces, but if you can learn more about their history and story then this will provide another rich layer of information for you to consider.

*Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful.*

(William Morris, 1882)

William Morris’s statement is arguable, but considering the objects in your own home could open your eyes to an alternative archive. If it’s difficult to find a formal archive to visit, it may be that the archive available to you is in your own home. Do you have clothes or textiles that have been passed on to you through your family or do you hoard fabrics, trims and yarns? Traditionally an archive is defined as a collection of historical documents or records, but could you view your wardrobe of clothes at home as a form of archive and select three items to draw from it? An archive needn’t be a formally documented collection; it could be something surrounding you that has grown over time – a personal archive – where you can identify the material qualities, decorative aspects or the details of making and stitching.

A word of warning, though: you may find it more difficult to identify inspiring and novel textiles in your own home. Remember too that textiles presented in a more formal setting will have a wealth of information associated with them – information that may be much harder to glean from domestic items.

Whether you choose to select from your own collection or archive of textile items at home, or seek to discover textiles through a more formal archive, work carefully to ensure that your chosen items give you some interesting visual information to record onto paper.
Exercise 1.2 Substance and story
Once you’ve identified your archive and selected the three pieces you wish to explore, do some further research.

Aim
This exercise aims to help you find out more about your chosen textile pieces through observation and further research.

Brief
Consider the following questions in relation to each of your three textile samples. Write down your responses, ideas, thinking, information – and any problems you encounter whilst responding to these questions – in your learning log.

The questions below are separated into two loose groupings to allow you to consider the substance and the story of the textiles you’ve chosen. If you’re new to studying textiles, don’t worry if you can’t answer all these questions – but do take note of them so that you can start to see what’s involved in practical research into textile properties.
Substance

1 What is the textile made from?
   • What fibres are employed in its making?
   • Is there a manufacturer’s label or an archival label to give you that information?
   • If there is no label, are you able to find out some other way?
   • How can the textile be cared for?

2 What methods have been used in its production?
   • Is it woven, knitted, another form of construction, or is it a non-woven material? (If you don’t know what these terms mean, do some research to find out.)
   • Is it hand-made or machine-made? Is it possible to know what type of machinery was involved? If it’s hand-made, is the maker identified?
   • What textile finishing methods have been employed?
   • Is there a print or any form of embellishment, or has a surface finish been added to the original textile? Do you know how this has been achieved?

3 Where is the textile from?
   • Can you find out this information from labels or from the archive information?
   • Is it the final product (perhaps a garment the fabric has been made into) that reflects the ‘Made in…’ label?
   • Is it possible to be sure where the fabric is from?
   • Is it possible to know where the original fibres came from? (If you are not sure, again try to do some further research into the fibre types or processes used in order to find out where this is usually done. It could be a country of origin, or even a city or factory.)

4 What problems have you encountered in trying to find out this information?
   • Why might traceability be important in textiles?
   • What information are you missing and how might you find out more?
Story

Nostalgia is unarguably seductive, and it is everywhere. (Saw, 2012, p.119)

1. What other visual indications can you glean from closely examining the textile samples? If the textile has been made into a product, what can you learn from further visual examination?
   - Is it well-worn and heavily used?
   - Is it fragile and delicate or durable and sturdy?
   - Can you tell the age of the textile or product?
   - Are there any indications of patina due to wear and age?
   - Is there evidence of repair or alterations?
   - Can you tell the story or guess the story behind the life of the textile?

2. Are there any elements of the design, detail, decoration or construction of the textile sample that indicate a story behind the textile or product? (This could be anything from the use of traditional motifs to t-shirt slogans!)
   - Can you learn more about these, where they originate from and any background meaning or message?
   - Are they made to last or are they supposed to be transient?
   - Are they personalised in any way or have they been customised or repaired?

3. Nostalgia is a recurring theme in textiles and within the broader spheres of design and art. Textiles have a special role to play, as we can attach memories, experiences and sensations, particularly to the wearing of textiles or their close proximity.
   - Can you build up a story of the users or wearers of the textiles?
   - Do you feel any sense of nostalgia in relation to any of the three examples you have chosen? If so, why? If not, why not?
   - Was this a conscious decision when choosing your samples? Or could it have perhaps been an unconscious decision in your selection?
   - Do you feel that any of your three examples reflect any sense of heritage, whether your own or someone else’s? If so, why and in what way? If not, why not?

Take your time to respond to these questions and any others you can think of. This will help you to build as full a picture as possible of each of your three chosen textile items. Your learning log will be a good place to do this, although you may wish also to make separate notes – and to add notes alongside and in response to the drawings you’ll be creating in Project 2.
Project 2 Recording and capturing

For me, it’s all about that close knowledge of the object, its materials and construction and how it’s changed over time. I see my work as getting people to stop and think about an object and how it has engaged with people’s lives.

(Dr Mary Brooks in Hill, 2014, p.50)

Dr Mary Brooks is a conservator, researcher, curator and academic. Her statement (above) provides an intriguing overview of her approach to the objects she encounters in the course of her work. In Project 2 you’ll take a similar approach to the three textile pieces you’ve decided to focus on. Gaining close visual knowledge of your selected items, their materials and construction, and perhaps some indication of their age or wear, is your next task.

A focus on different ways of looking and drawing will allow you to build a beautiful folio of work that will both capture your sources and feed much of the work you’ll develop throughout the rest of this course.

If you’re drawing in a museum or gallery archive, you may be limited by the amount of time you have available, so you’ll need to work out how to capture their qualities quickly and in an interesting way.
In each of the following exercises you should work to capture all three of your textile items. You may find that your textiles lend themselves to some of the exercises better than others; however you should persist in trying to capture each one in a range of ways as set out on the following pages. We’ve made suggestions as to the choice of media, scale and approach, but if you want to push a particular approach a little further, don’t hesitate – and have fun with it!

You might also find that you enjoy drawing one of your items more than the others. If this means you do more drawings of that particular item, that’s fine, as long as you feel you’ve thoroughly captured all three items in your mark-making and drawing.

Exercise 1.3 Making marks

*Drawing is a universal language. It crosses boundaries of nationality, age and culture. It concerns the making of surfaces, the laying down of marks that describe, explain or explore.*  

*(Cane, 2014, p.62)*

**Aims**

This exercise aims to help you:

- generate a folio of mark-making, drawing and visual work in response to the three archival textile items you selected in Project 1
- develop your observational skills through recording textile qualities of texture, tone, weight, drape, detail, pattern, surface and scale.
**Brief**

Once you’ve chosen the archive you’ll work from and selected three items of interest from it, begin to observe, closely analyse and record the textile items through drawing and mark-making onto paper.

Select simple media such as pencil and ink and work on white paper. At this stage, colour is not necessary as you’re aiming to record the textile qualities of texture, tone, weight, drape, detail, pattern, surface and scale. Your way of drawing can be quite different from page to page. You may choose just to record the fine detail in one drawing, whilst aiming to capture the overall texture in another.

Work on a variety of different thicknesses of paper, if possible, and on a range of sizes from A5 to A1. (Join smaller pages together if you wish to extend the size of your sheets.)

You may also wish to begin by taking photos of the items, where it’s possible to do so, so that you have a simple record of the items in your learning log.

It may be that you’ve selected the textile items because of their beautiful or intricate design, so aim to record these, but also try to look at each item in a number of different ways.

First, consider the types of marks you can put on the page to capture aspects of the textiles.

---

Kiley Mead, *Drawing – Wind Patterns*, 2014 (gouache on paper)

[www.kileymead.com](http://www.kileymead.com)

Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer.
Consider marks to represent or capture the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Texture</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rigidity</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sturdiness</td>
<td>Strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drape</td>
<td>Wear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damage</td>
<td>Decoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fragility</td>
<td>Fluidity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Smoothness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delicacy</td>
<td>Construction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add to or delete from this list of qualities, depending on the actual textile piece you're looking at, and then work to develop marks that will best capture the specific quality. The aim here is to build variety in your exploration, and in the range of marks you make, from page to page.

Consider the tools you can employ to create different marks. If you're working with paint or ink, collect or even make tools to allow you to apply different marks on the page – anything from an old bank card or business card to a toothbrush, sponge, ice scraper or even simply the edge of a piece of corrugated cardboard. Use anything that can drag the liquid media across the page in some way.

Think about the qualities of mark you need to make on the page to capture the qualities of the textile piece you're looking at. Can you make your own tools to form specific marks? Tying or wrapping materials around one end of a pencil or old paintbrush will allow you to design and build your own unique mark-making tools. Any material that will allow you to transfer the liquid media to paper will work. You could use feathers, scraps of fabric, yarn, rolled paper, scrunched paper, folded paper, sponge, bunches of fine twigs, etc.

Louise Mann, *Drawing Research Tools*, 2013 (ink on paper using found and made tools)
Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer.
Varying the qualities of your tools will in turn vary the qualities of the marks you produce. Also consider experimenting with the pressure you apply on the page and the type of movement you make across the page.

To help you find appropriate marks to capture aspects of your items, it may be helpful to write a more extensive list of words for the qualities you see in each piece. Try using words and language to help you consolidate and build a story of what you see. The words could be almost anything, but keep the qualities and properties that you can actually see to the forefront. Then, develop marks to reflect these words, which will in turn emphasise these qualities in your drawing and mark-making.

As an example, the words that came to mind when looking at a heavy knitted sweater were: structured, rigid, heavy, rounded, bubbly, joyous, complex, weighty, confident, bold, restrictive, full, scratchy, wavy. These terms could all be converted into a form of mark, capturing both the visual appearance of the sweater and its energy.

Josh Blackwell uses repeating marks to clever effect to capture the qualities of materials and weight of garments, as in the drawing above. A relatively simple gesture like blurring the marks also helps to emphasise its depth, weight and texture.

Aim to do at least three drawings of EACH of your archival pieces, keeping a focus on the qualities of the textiles explored through creative and engaging mark-making.

Josh Blackwell, SW15, www.joshblackwell.com
Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist and Kate MacGarry.
Exercise 1.4 Lines and edges

The essence of drawing is the line exploring space.

(Andy Goldsworthy, in Fichner-Rathus, 2014, p.44)

Aims
This exercise aims to help you:

• further develop your observation and recording skills, with a focus on using different qualities of line to depict your three archive textiles
• begin to build an experimental approach to your drawing.

Brief
As Goldsworthy’s quote above suggests, there is lots of scope for taking an exploratory but simple approach to drawing. Approach this exercise as a way of taking a line on a journey across the space of the paper. You may find it beneficial to work on larger pieces of paper for this exercise, so that you can truly push how a drawn line can move and explore the initially blank expanse of a page.

Look again at your three archive items and consider what aspects would be best represented through linear marks. For example, line could be an appropriate way to capture the silhouette of an item, the seams and hem, or even features like zips, trims, stitching, embroidery or edges.

Sometimes the structure of a textile can suggest clear linear qualities, perhaps in the continuous yarn that forms a knit or through embellishment created by embroidery and stitch.

Can you record the drape, volume and folds of your textile items effectively using linear marks?

For this exercise, create a series of drawings with a focus on using line. You should aim for between 8 and 12 drawings, but if you feel compelled to do more, do keep exploring.

Use simple media again, such as:

• different weights and thicknesses of pencil/graphite
• different thickness of pen (from ultra-fine to a chunky marker)
• different thicknesses of brushes/tools (used with paint, ink, etc.).

You may wish to use your own drawing tools again. You could use a different tool/media in each drawing, or combine tools and weights of line in your drawings. You'll need to combine different linear qualities if you’re trying to capture different characteristics of an item in one drawing. For example, you could contrast the bold silhouette of an item with the lines of its finely detailed knitted or constructed structure. Equally, you could show the difference in qualities between a smoothly draping soft material and its frayed edges. Don’t use colour in this exercise.
Explore some different ways of working with line.

**Continuous line**
Draw your archive textiles using a continuous line, without lifting your hand from the page. Experiment with the possibilities through the use of different media, tools and weights of line. Pencil and pen will lend themselves most effectively to this method due to the continuous flow of line. Observe how the way you draw changes when you aren’t allowed to lift your hand from the page or break the line. For example, it might mean you have to double back over your lines a lot to capture different parts of the textile.

**Different modes of line**
Consider using different modes of line from drawing to drawing, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dotted</th>
<th>fluid</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dashed</td>
<td>fluffy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broken</td>
<td>fuzzy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scratched</td>
<td>lazy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Try to come up with your own types or qualities of line. Look at your textile items to inspire and inform the type of line you draw and select the best media and tools to create that line.

**Right hand/left hand**

Draw with both your right hand and your left hand. Experiment with how the lines differ and how much control you have depending on which hand you favour. Take note of how the marks you make differ depending on which hand you use.

**Drawing with eyes closed**

*To draw, you must close your eyes and sing.*

(Pablo Picasso)

Finally, tackle observation as Picasso suggests, with your eyes closed.

Look at your items and try to memorise some key elements of their shape, silhouette, details, pattern, etc., then close your eyes and draw from memory. Imagine the forms, shapes and curves of the items and try to capture both what you remember (don't peek!) and the energy of the item. If you want to be even more adventurous, you could combine this approach with a continuous line. Once you open your eyes, take note of how the positioning of the elements you've drawn has shifted to create intriguing and perhaps unexpected outcomes.

Above all, treat this exercise as a process of experimentation with line. Certainly you won't be 100% pleased with all of the outcomes, but what you create will be an interesting, lively and varied folio of drawing. It will reflect the qualities of your items in new ways and begin to show your exploration and ability to build new ways of looking, understanding, recording and responding to your textile items.

If you've previously followed OCA's Foundation Textiles course, you'll recognise some of the approaches suggested above. Use this exercise to build your confidence in your observation and recording skills. Be experimental and challenge yourself.
Exercise 1.5 Collage and creases

Drawing is not the same as form; it is a way of seeing form.

(Edgar Degas, quoted in McClatchy, 1999, p.173)

As Degas’ quote suggests, you can use drawing to capture form. In this exercise, you’ll explore collage as a drawing technique. Collaging allows you to work with papers and other carefully selected materials to compose your drawing.

Aims
This exercise aims to help you:
• expand your means of drawing by using paper media and materials to capture further aspects of your archive textile pieces through collage
• explore placement, composition and contrasting surfaces in the depiction of form through collage.

Brief
Demonstrate your exploration of the form, shape, drape, volume and three-dimensional qualities of your three archive textile items through two-dimensional collage.

First, you'll need to gather a selection of papers that you can cut up, reformat and reassemble as collage. Look at each of your archive pieces to direct what you need to collect. At this point you may wish to introduce some colour. You may find that you can’t exactly match your papers and materials to the colours of your archive textiles so, rather than attempting to reproduce them exactly, use your archive textiles to inform an overall palette and colour mood.

Consider using old magazines and newspapers, unwanted wallpaper, discarded wrapping paper, old tickets and receipts, insides and outsides of envelopes, pages of unwanted books and any other paper resources.

You may wish to create your own papers to work with, which you can do by painting colour or pattern onto them. You can then cut shapes from these pre-painted papers to use in your collage. If you decide to use colour in this exercise, pre-painting your chosen colours onto paper will give you control of the colour palette you’ll use to depict your archive textiles. If you’re combining found papers with your pre-painted ones, try to select colours that fit in with your colour palette.
You’ll apply your papers flat onto a base paper to compose your drawings. Choose a base paper that will support the weight of your collage. Think about the colour of your base paper too. Do you want to start with a white page, or pre-paint a background colour to begin? You should approach this in a way that will allow you to interpret the three-dimensional qualities and form of your archive textiles into two-dimensional results.

Look again at your archive textiles and decide the way you wish to position, hang, drape, fold or compose your textiles to work from. If you hang a garment on a hanger it will have quite a different suggestion of form than if it is dropped in a pile, folded neatly or worn. Think about exploring this and try a number of ways to compose or arrange your textiles, in order to vary your drawings.

If any of your textile items are quite small or can’t be manipulated in this way, then you may have to look closely at the finer detail of their form. Look at the structure and form of stitches, loops, seams, frayed edges or surface pattern and translate these into collage. You may need to increase the scale of these small elements quite considerably in order to translate them into collaged paper shapes. Be bold and be open to interesting results when you do this.

- Begin by looking at one of your archive textiles and considering how you can break its form into large blocks, chunks or sections. You might initially just look at the silhouette it creates and cut quite large blocks from your papers to represent the textile. Arrange the cut shapes on the page and try to compose a representation or interpretation of the textile you’re looking at.
• Next, you might look at the tones and shadows of the textile and how they help to indicate the form, weight and drape of the textile. You might find that creases, folds and seams help to indicate these qualities. Break the overall silhouette of the textile into smaller sections and cut (or tear) your papers to represent and build your interpretation of the textile in slightly more detail. Aim to bring a sense of the three-dimensional qualities of the textile into your two-dimensional rendering, but don’t worry if at first the overall feeling is quite flat.

• Be brave and explore interesting combinations of papers. If it seems appropriate, push your materials beyond the paper but do bear in mind that the result should be predominantly two-dimensional.

• Explore both the representation of your archive textiles and the composition on the page that you’re creating. You should be beginning to realise that every time you draw your textiles, you capture a different essence of them and a different set of qualities. Collage forces you to consider placement of shapes, pattern, colour and tone to build your drawing. Take time also to consider how the resulting composition works and balances with the background page. How does the overall depiction of elements of your archive textiles fit on the page? Does it spill off the edge of the page, or is it contained within its boundaries?

Aim to produce two or three collages, but if you’re working quite quickly or on a smaller scale you might produce more than this. You can choose whether to depict all three of your archive samples, or whether to focus on just one or two.
Research point 1

Pare down to the essence, but don’t remove the poetry.

(Koren, 2008, p.72)

As you begin to look more and more closely at the archive textiles you’ve chosen, and as you move onto the final exercise of this project, it could be interesting to consider the Japanese concept of ‘wabi-sabi.’ This is a notoriously difficult concept to explain, but part of its description involves notions of beauty in imperfection, patina and authenticity. The quote above hints at another aspect of wabi-sabi, a sense of harmony and simplicity. Carry out your own research to learn more about wabi-sabi. Leonard Koren’s book could be a good start, but you should also be able to find many other resources and interpretations of it. Consider your relationship with this idea or aesthetic and why it might be a relevant concept to try to get to grips with in relation to your archive. Make some notes in your learning log on what you have discovered and your own thinking.

Rebecca Lucraft, Birds in Flight, 2009 (paper and mixed media)
www.rebeccalucraft.com
Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer.
**Exercise 1.6 Detail and definition**

*I have learned that what I have not drawn, I have never really seen.*

(Frederick Franck, in Edwards, 1999, p.4)

**Aims**
This exercise aims to help you:
- look closely and with attention to the fine detail of your archive textiles
- represent this detail through a self-directed approach to your drawing.

**Brief**
Now is the time to look even closer and capture some of the finest qualities of the textile items you have chosen. There are many tiny details you can capture, from minute stitches to the weave of the fabric or the loops of knitting, to folds, creases and imperfections.

Prepare to look very closely and focus in on small areas of your textiles to pick out and represent some tiny qualities, by scaling them up.

At this stage it can be a good idea to also look at the reverse of each of your archive textiles. Is it markedly different from the face of the fabric? Look for prints being fainter, embroidery, surfaces or edges being rougher but more intriguing, knots showing, holes and other imperfections being present. Can you see mended areas or even worn linings and labels inside?

Labels, buttons and other fasteners can be intriguing to focus on. Details that would usually be ignored, in favour of stunning decoration, can give an interesting contrast to the folio of drawing you are building.

Consider your drawing and think about how best you can capture the fine details and qualities you've identified. What types of marks do you want to make on the page? Can you show the contrast between the front and back of the item in your drawing?

Consider also how you might impart more of the story of the textile in the new drawing you do.
- How is the age (whether historical or contemporary) apparent in the fine qualities of the textile item?
- What kind of small marks on the page can you use to record these details?
- Can you see signs of the wearer or user of the textile item? Perhaps there are tears, worn or faded colour, frayed edges, or even signs of moth. Are there folds, creases and crumples that you can record in detail too?
Choose the media, marks, papers and scale you want to work with for this exercise. Again, there is no requirement to use colour, but you can do so if you wish.

Take control of the drawing outcomes you produce for this exercise. Becoming self-directed in your decision-making is something that will be demanded of you as you progress through your textile work, so it’s good to start making some decisions for yourself now. You might choose to work in extremes of scale, from postage stamp size through to A0, or you might decide that you’d like to draw a series that will work as a small, focused collection, using the same media, papers and scale. This is left up to you.

Make between three and six drawings, focused on capturing detail through interesting marks and techniques.

In Project 3 you’ll choose a new source to work from. You should find that you can transfer the techniques you’ve used to uncover and learn about your archive textiles to this new source. These techniques of looking and capturing are tools that you’ll return to again and again throughout your textiles experience.
Project 3 Picking and portraying

Certain people use pencil and paper, others scraps and collage. Some use computers and iPads or cameras, others sketchbooks and paint or large sheets of cartridge paper and sticks of charcoal.

(Cane, 2014, p.63)

In this final project of Part One we ask you to open up your whole approach to drawing and media as far as possible. Your choice of media, tools and methods is left entirely to you. You may draw with any media onto any base, background or foundation.

Begin by asking yourself what you believe ‘drawing’ to be. Think about this and write your thoughts in your learning log. Can you draw with a camera or with a bundle of sticks? Where does drawing end and making begin, or do they cross over? Are there different types of drawing for different end uses?

Next, make some notes in your learning log about what media you would like to work with, how you’ll explore it and why. It may be something you began to tackle in Project 2, which you wish to push further, or there may be media that you haven’t yet tried in your drawings. Before you make a final decision, read the project brief.

Jane Askey, Scribbled Jug and Flowers www.janeaskey.com
Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.
Life is the leaves which shape and nourish a plant, but art is the flower which embodies its meaning.

(Charles Rennie Mackintosh)

Aims
This project (two exercises) aims to help you:
• explore through drawing a new primary visual source
• self-direct your choice of media and tools for these drawings.

Brief
In this project you’ll move on to a new visual source, drawing flowers, leaves and/or plants from life.

Florals and leaves have been employed in textiles in every possible way and in every possible context, from the evergreen Liberty prints to the bold and imposing motifs of Marimekko. They are employed in embroidered digital textiles, with the help of the LilyPad Arduino combined with conductive yarns, and are used to flowing effect in Zoffany wallpapers.

Flowers and leaves are a staple motif for textiles within both fashion and interior contexts. They provide a huge range of forms and colour which are easily built into fluid repeating patterns. You may even have selected archive textiles that contain floral or leaf motifs.
Research point 2
To give your work for this project a frame of reference, choose at least three examples from the list below of artists, designers and companies that employ floral and leaf motifs in their work and do some research into their practice. Find examples of their floral or leaf-based work and try to determine why these motifs are so important, dominant or recurring in their work.

Elizabeth Blackadder  William Morris  Marni
Zoffany  Takashi Murakami  Jane Askey
Erdem  Timorous Beasties  Tord Boontje

Elizabeth Blackadder, *Cat and Flowers*, 1981 (watercolour on paper)
Exercise 1.7 Sources and media
Collect the flowers, leaves or plants you’d like to draw. These can be anything that inspires you, from a tropical stem to simple daisies or dandelions, autumn leaves or an evergreen houseplant. The choice is endless, and may be season-dependent, but you should aim to choose a source or small group of sources that you’ll enjoy drawing. You must work from life and not from photographs; only from first-hand observation can you capture the true wealth of visual information from its many angles and perspectives.

Decide on the media you’ll use to create your drawings. Again, the choice is yours and may be led or informed by the flowers, plants or leaves you want to capture. You may wish to work on a particular paper or on a particular scale. You may wish to draw using an iPad or push your use of paper collage.

Be bold and experimental in your choice, but also reflect back on what you’ve gained from drawing your archive textiles. Is there a technique or approach you’d like to build upon, or a success you want to push in a new way with this new visual source?

Research point 3
Have a look at the flowers, tree, plants and still-life drawings of David Hockney. You’ll find his work at Link 9 and other gallery websites too. Hockney constantly looks to update the tools and approaches he uses in his drawings, including his recent use of an iPhone and an iPad to draw flowers.
**Exercise 1.8 Portraying by drawing**

Once you’ve chosen the plants, flowers or leaves you’ll draw and the media you’ll concentrate on, think about how you’re going to portray your visual source through your own self-directed drawing approach.

Make some notes in your learning log, setting out all the choices you’ve made in tackling this project.

Aim to do at least 10 drawings; feel free to vary the scale and also the amount of time you spend on them.

As you’ll now be drawing a visual source where colour is likely to be important, or even dominant, you may find that the simple inclusion of colour means you immediately have a more demanding task. If you decide not to include colour, then have a plan for what the focus of your drawing will be. This could be to do with pattern or silhouette or tone. Again, when making these decisions, make some notes in your learning log or sketchbook. In doing this, you’re steadily building your own framework and setting your own direction for this drawing project.

As well as colour possibly being a new consideration, you should try to push the composition of your drawings a little further too. It might be possible to address some of the factors that form part of textile design thinking and composition within your drawings.

Although your drawings will be based upon observing from life, you may wish to experiment with the placement, construction and layout of the drawings and the elements or motifs (flowers, leaves, stems, details, etc.) within them, with a nod to some of the textile design considerations listed below.

You could explore some of the following in your drawings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repetition</th>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>Motifs</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Movement</td>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Flow</td>
<td>Pattern</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, be experimental and explore your visual source so as to capture as much of it as you can. This part of the course has been very much focused on generating a body or folio of visual research to inform and lead the work you do in the next part of the course. You will also return to this folio of drawing in Parts Four and Five, so ensure that you build as broad and varied a folio of drawing and visual exploration as you can.
Feedback at the end of Part One

Consolidating your folio of drawing

This is not an assignment, but your tutor will want to see evidence of your progress in Part One.

Collate your work from Part One into a drawing folio. There is no need to mount or crop any pieces; simply place them in a simple lightweight card folio for protection.

Don’t send your drawing folio to your tutor at this point as you’ll need it to inform the textile and material developments you’ll work on in Part Two. However, you may wish to email up to 10 of your drawings (send scans or clear photos) to your tutor for some brief comments. Alternatively, if you have your learning log online as a blog, you may wish to place your 10 drawings there for your tutor to view. Email a link to your blog to allow your tutor to give you some brief comments on your progress.

Written reflection

During your work on Part One, you should have made some notes that form a written record of your decision-making and reflections as you progressed from project to project. Draw your thoughts together by further reflecting on what you’ve learned over the course of the projects. Write about 250–300 words. Think about what new knowledge you’ve gained and consider what you’ve learned from observing and drawing textiles and other visual sources in this way. Include this written reflection, clearly labelled, in your learning log or blog.

This folio of work will serve as a point of departure for your future textile development.

*There must be some point of departure; a beginning is to develop an awareness of the visual background, so that looking with purpose and intent becomes second nature. This kind of observation takes some time to perfect and entails concentrated and conscious effort but with this increased awareness, familiar surroundings take on a new meaning and interest.*

(Howard, 1996, p.14)
Textiles 1: A Textiles Vocabulary

Part two
Surface and stitch

Marie O’Connor, *And what will all of this become if not you?* 2011
(fabric, thread) www.marieoconnor.co.uk
Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer.
Use the grid below to keep track of your progress throughout Part Two.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Creating surfaces</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Drawing with stitch</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exercise</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research point</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project 1 Creating surfaces

In this part of the course you’ll build from the folio of work you created in Part One. With a thorough body of drawing in your possession, tackled and explored through a range of marks, media and qualities, you now have the visual ingredients you need to develop your work towards new and personal textile outcomes. Your initial research into artists, designers and practitioners in Part One should also have increased your awareness of some of the possible contexts for textile work.

In Projects 1 and 2, you’ll carry out some exploratory work that will give you a sense of the skills, methods and scope of sampling that you need to move towards textile creation. These exploratory samples will in turn direct the creation of textile samples in Assignment Two. All of the work you generate will be based on responses to your folio of drawing through a hands-on exploration of a combination of surface and stitch.

The overall aim is to give you the means and methods to progress naturally and logically towards textile outcomes through a process of translation. The focus is on tackling the making and exploration processes as an extension of your drawing, only this time using different media and tools and applying different processes.

From the outset of this project, you should begin to feel a clear move away from your original source material. There’s no need to have the original archive textile items to hand; you’ll now rely purely on your drawings for information. You should begin to be more aware that each stage in the development of your textiles is a move away from the preceding one. Each stage should work as a level of translation and interpretation of information, whether visual, tactile, analogue, digital, physical or imagined, of the preceding stage.

Start by reviewing your folio of drawings. Review and evaluation are key processes that should form a regular element of your practice. Your learning log and sketchbooks are usually the best places to record these thoughts and considerations.
Exercise 2.1 Selecting

Aim
The aim of this exercise is to help you develop the ability to evaluate and review your work and to make effective selections that will inform the next stage of development.

Brief
If possible find a space where you can lay out or pin up all of your drawings. Take some time to look at them carefully and consider which ones you find the most inspiring and which possess the most exciting qualities in terms of line, marks, texture, scale, pattern and surface. Which pieces do you feel are the strongest and why? Write some notes in your learning log and consider which pieces you would now like to use to inform your material and textile developments.

You’ll quickly become aware that the process of idea and design development involves a broad and all-encompassing exploration, that then becomes focused (as you begin to select pieces to develop further, and decide what to leave behind for the time being), and will then become very broad again, as you push your material exploration and textile development more widely. This broadening and narrowing approach to the development of your project work is something that you should pay attention to and learn to appreciate and embed in your creative process.

Select around six drawings that you feel have the most interesting visual qualities. You’ll be using these drawings to feed the developments you create in this part of the course, so make sure there is variety across the group and that you’re going to enjoy working with them to inform new work.

Once you’ve begun to engage in surface and materials exploration, you can return to your folio to select further drawings if you feel you need more, but limiting yourself to around six at the moment will give you a clear focus at this early stage. You’ll return to this folio of work in later parts of this course, so there will be other opportunities to use drawings that you haven’t selected yet.
Exercise 2.2 Paper manipulation library

All art is but dirtying the paper delicately.

(John Ruskin)

Aims
This exercise aims to help you:
• develop your skills in the translation of surfaces and textures, building on the key abilities of observation and analysis
• develop your awareness of the stages of creative design development.

Brief
Before you begin to think about translating your drawn marks through the use of stitch, you’ll need to make some decisions about the qualities of the substrates, base materials or surfaces you’ll use. These form an important component of what you’re creating; you can also consider them as the background or foundation layer that will begin to help you effectively translate some of the qualities and elements of your drawings.

If you’ve done the OCA Foundation Textiles course you’ll have touched on the manipulation of simple textile materials previously.

By working to select, manipulate and transform paper first, you can carry out an initial translation of your drawings’ qualities into something more malleable and tactile. This will allow you to move gently from drawings on paper to working with paper as a substrate.

www.allisonwatkins.com
Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.
Begin by choosing a small range of papers to work with. The list below gives you some ideas to consider. The idea is that you will be physically manipulating these papers to create a range of textures and surfaces; their initial appearance should be dramatically transformed from their original state by the time you’re finished.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tracing paper</th>
<th>Lined paper</th>
<th>Glossy paper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graph paper</td>
<td>Hand-made paper</td>
<td>Rice paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cartridge paper</td>
<td>Acetate</td>
<td>Writing paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Envelopes</td>
<td>Watercolour paper</td>
<td>Manila paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copy paper</td>
<td>Sugar paper</td>
<td>Recycled paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cards and boards</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Allow the six drawings you’ve selected to inform your choice of paper. Look at the qualities in the drawings and the marks you’ve made rather than the actual paper you’ve drawn on to help you make some initial paper choices. For example, are the marks soft and cloudy, or sharp and pristine? If they are soft marks, perhaps you need to use a soft paper, or one that looks soft, or one that you could soften by manipulating it. If the marks are sharp and pristine, perhaps you need to find a crisp, clean paper or one that could be made crisper or cleaner or more refined through some kind of treatment or manipulation.

Now build your own library of paper manipulation samples that thoroughly explores a range of techniques to allow you to translate aspects of your selected drawings into textural results.

We’ve provided a list of possible treatments or ways to manipulate your papers. This list will be something that you can come back to for many of your textiles projects. You may feel excited by the possibilities of these various techniques but explore just two or three to begin with. Again, choose the manipulation techniques around the qualities in your drawings. Try to forget the original textiles or flowers that you drew and now just analyse the marks on the page and even the mood of the drawing. Which manipulation techniques will give you the most scope for translating the qualities of the line, mark, surface or mood of your drawing?

Read through the list, and with your six drawings beside you, start to circle the ones that you think could link. If you haven’t heard of any of the techniques, do some research to find out more. You may be able to come up with some techniques of your own too. Then, begin to manipulate your papers. At this point, you’re dealing with three-dimensional surface and textures so you don’t need to apply any colour or graphic marks at this stage. Work with and against the paper as a material to be manipulated and pushed. Use techniques on top of or alongside other techniques too, and keep looking at your drawings to give you ideas for the textures.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slashing</th>
<th>Twisting</th>
<th>Scratching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Melting</td>
<td>Unfolding</td>
<td>Creasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tearing</td>
<td>Curling</td>
<td>Rolling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laminating</td>
<td>Drilling</td>
<td>Crackling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tearing</td>
<td>Twirling</td>
<td>Scuffing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleating</td>
<td>Scoring</td>
<td>Crumpling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bending</td>
<td>Tessellating</td>
<td>Knotting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lining</td>
<td>Punching</td>
<td>Tufting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shredding</td>
<td>Grazing</td>
<td>Burning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folding</td>
<td>Pricking</td>
<td>Sanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cutting</td>
<td>Crushing</td>
<td>Dipping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coating</td>
<td>Wrapping</td>
<td>Sandwiching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raising</th>
<th>Layering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twisting</td>
<td>Tying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfolding</td>
<td>Stabbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curling</td>
<td>Wetting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drilling</td>
<td>Growing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twirling</td>
<td>Breaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scoring</td>
<td>Covering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tessellating</td>
<td>Moulding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punching</td>
<td>Puncturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grazing</td>
<td>Bashing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pricking</td>
<td>Weaving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paper manipulations (author's image)
Think about the range of tools you’ll need to manipulate the papers, from water to sandpaper, from your own hands to a pair of scissors.

Work on approximately A4 size for each paper manipulation sample you make and push the textures off the edge of the paper. This will allow you to feel the texture you make, and if the sample is soft enough, the drape and handle of the resulting paper too. You should aim to create 15 to 20 samples for your small library.

In the next exercise, you’ll use your paper manipulations as a base on which to stitch, but don’t think too far ahead at the moment. Concentrate on creating some inspiring papers to work on. If you have new ideas for surfaces when you begin to stitch, you can always come back to this exercise to build your library of foundation papers.

Place your 15 to 20 samples in a simple A4 box. Put a small label on the back of each paper sample recording the processes you applied and the original paper type you transformed. There is no need to mount the samples. Don’t place them in plastic sleeves as this obscures their texture and appearance – and you’ll need relatively easy access to them for the next project.

Sandra Dufour, *Fumée 40* (screen printing and embroidery on paper) [www.sandradufour.com](http://www.sandradufour.com)
Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.
**Project 2 Drawing with stitch**

*Drawing is a fantastic way of investigating possibilities.*

(Cane, 2014, p.63)

You now have a folio or library of foundation papers giving you a range of texture, softness, surface pattern, flexibility and rigidity. Your papers may have a regular or repeating surface or the surface might be rough and uneven. Now you need to find ways to apply marks onto this surface, as you begin to use your selected drawings from Part One to further feed the visual appearance of the pieces you’re making. Try to see the progression into stitch as an extension of your earlier drawing and therefore as a means of investigating possibilities too.

---

Sandra Dufour, *Fumée 28* (screen printing and embroidery on paper)

www.sandradufour.com

Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.
Exercise 2.3 Drawing with stitch onto paper

Aim
This exercise aims to help you build your exploratory approach to design development by using stitch as a means of ‘drawing’ onto prepared paper surfaces.

Brief
*Embroidery is such a gift. You’re painting with a million textures. Looking is the absolute key, otherwise you’ve just got repetition of process.*

(Karen Nicol, in Hall, 2014, p.20)

To begin this exercise, take a close look at the six drawings you’ve chosen. Your focus will be on translating and interpreting your drawn marks into stitched marks on your prepared papers.

You’re very much encouraged to stitch by hand, as this will give you a similar level of control as you had when drawing, although achieving fluidity and energy will be a challenge. You may also choose to explore machine stitch as well, if you have a sewing machine or embroidery machine available to you.

Gather together some different sizes of needles and different thicknesses and qualities of thread and yarn before you start. You may also employ some unconventional yarns or other materials to stitch with. Don’t necessarily use embroidery threads, as their qualities are quite limiting; if you do, try splitting them into finer plies and applying them in different thicknesses for interesting results.
Start by cutting some small squares from your prepared paper samples, a minimum of 10cm x 10cm in size, to give you a range of surface qualities on which to sample various stitches and approaches. Identify small sections of your drawings where you find the marks very exciting and aim to redraw and translate these into stitched marks. It might help to use a paper viewfinder to allow you to isolate or frame areas of interest in your drawings.

**Linking drawn qualities with stitch**
As you begin to examine the marks and lines in your drawings, consider their qualities. A line may be straight, curvy, wavy, thick, thin, broken, continuous, or all or any combination of these. When we break down the language of lines, we can easily link these terms with the language of stitch and embroidery. Drawing with thread is not far removed from drawing with conventional media on paper and many artists and designers who work in stitch don’t differentiate.

Delve in and experiment. How can you build up qualities of line, mark and surface through repetition, layering, different thicknesses of yarn, lengths of stitch and directions of stitch? Which of your prepared paper surfaces lend themselves best to applying certain types of marks/stitch?

Viewing your stitch-work as a continuation of your drawing will free you from any constraints or pre-conceived ‘rules’ of stitch (if you have any!). You’re not learning or required to use traditional embroidery stitches here. Treat this as a fluid process and be open to happy accidents and unexpected discoveries.

Aim to sample at least 10 small squares of stitch translations on your prepared papers. This will give you a bank of stitch qualities to refer to when you move on to developing some larger pieces. When choosing what to draw in stitch, look for achieving variety across your samples: sample thick and thin, heavy and light, textured and sleek, grainy and smooth, flowing and stilted, dense and delicate. Keep the translation process simple; treat this as a drawing exercise that grows from the marks you’ve made with pencil, charcoal, ink and paint and be sensitive to the qualities in your drawings as you translate them.
Other possibilities and translations

Working on paper has some limitations, which are different from working with conventional textile substrates. Tearing and piercing the paper represents both a creative possibility and a technical concern. The holes you make when you stitch become part of the result. How can you control and include these qualities as part of your stitch translation?

- Do you want the pierced holes to be ragged and soft, or sharp and clean?
- Is it helpful to pre-punch the holes into the paper and then stitch into the holes you’ve created with your chosen yarns?
- Could you use a sewing machine (without thread) to punch holes and then work back into them by hand?

Be bold and questioning in your approach, and keep notes on what you’re trying out in your learning log.

Think about how stitches integrate, fuse and embed in your papers, or how they sit proud and project from the surface. And think about how the stitching affects the qualities of the papers you’re working with. You need to work both against the foundation papers’ qualities and with them. How can you push the stitch marks to have an effect on and further manipulate the papers? How can you work with the textural or relief qualities you’ve given the papers and emphasise these qualities with stitch? As you work, keep looking at and analysing your drawings to inform and direct the qualities you produce.
What might seem like insignificant decisions, such as how to finish off a line of stitch, can prompt you to leave threads hanging or to decide on ways of knotting, cutting or finishing the ends to fit in with the aesthetic you’re interpreting.

Looking at your collage work at the drawing stage might prompt you to work with your foundation papers in a different way to combine, cut and attach pieces with stitch.

Look at the back of your stitched samples as you make them; sometimes the backs can become even more interesting than the fronts.

Don’t be afraid to combine techniques and varieties of stitch on top of one another to give new qualities. You might do this to link qualities or to show contrast. Your translations of your drawings will force you to find new and interesting ways to render the qualities in the visual work that you’ve created. Be as creative and playful as you can. Again, colour is not an important aspect at this point, and you may be working in quite a monochromatic way. When selecting your yarn colours and tones, do use the drawings to inform this.

The time you take on each small sample may vary greatly. Hand stitch can give you a lot of freedom, but it can also be very time-consuming. Sandra Dufour (2014, p.20) has her own perspective on the difference between hand and machine stitch, but you might have a different opinion:

*A sewing machine is faster and results in a more graphic style – with happy accidents – whereas hand stitches take time and are more delicate providing poetry and sensibility.*
Challenges
The fluidity and speed with which you can work with paint, ink, pencil and charcoal far outstrips any speed or freedom of hand you have with stitch. The biggest challenge you can tackle in this exercise is to bring the same sense or essence of touch (lightness, heaviness, fluidity and movement) seen in your drawings, into your stitch. You need to strive to replicate these qualities but in a more sustained and planned way.

The work you do in these projects will inform Assignment Two, so be thorough, take risks and experiment. Although this exploration is designed to give you a relatively smooth and logical transition from drawing with more conventional media on paper to drawing with stitch on prepared papers, there will be challenges in the process of translation. Be open to this, but also be aware that a further set of challenges awaits you when you move on to developing your stitch on textile substrates in Assignment Two.

Alice Kettle, *Place settings, collaboration with Helen Felcey*, 2008 (stitch work on textile)  
www.alicekettle.com  
Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.
Exercise 2.4 Developed and composed samples

Aim
The aim of this exercise is to help you begin to explore the role of evaluation, selection, development and refinement in your design and making process.

Brief
Once you've translated a range of marks and qualities into stitch across your small samples, develop two more considered and larger stitched paper pieces that take on board what you've learned in this sampling stage. These larger pieces should be approximately A4 to A3 in size. Use two different drawings from the six that you began with to inform these two samples. Evaluate the successes of your small samples and the paper surfaces in your paper manipulation library to inform these two samples.

As you move to a bigger sample, you need to consider the scale of the elements you want to place on it, the composition and the layout of the sample. Use your sketchbook to plan out some ideas; use your drawings to feed this. You also need to make decisions on the materials and processes you'll use to create each sample.

It can be helpful to lay out the two drawings you've chosen to develop, your paper manipulation library and your stitched samples. This will help you decide how to begin, what materials and components you want to use, and the composition of the piece. Feel free to push the design off the edge of the paper. When you're working with materials, it is always good to imagine it as a three-dimensional outcome and not as a two-dimensional picture. This helps you to be aware of the tactile, drape and surface qualities too.

Once you've developed these two larger samples, you'll move on to work on textiles substrates in the assignment that follows next.
Assignment two

Stitching: Placed and spaced

To conclude Part Two of the course, in this assignment you’ll develop new stitched textiles work building on the stitched paper explorations you’ve just made. This assignment should feel like a relatively smooth transition from paper into textiles.

Aims
Your aims in this assignment should be to:
• consolidate your exploration so far by creating a series of stitched textiles
• employ observational and compositional skills, as well as material and technique handling, in the creation of stitched textiles.

Brief
This assignment asks you to explore the creation of a series or small collection of stitched textiles inspired and informed by your drawings and your stitched paper explorations.

Develop a series of three stitched pieces showing:
• a sense of repetition
• variety of scale
• a placement design.

You should aim to produce stitched textile samples larger than A4 size where possible so that you can understand the drape, handle and movement of the fabric. You can go much bigger if you wish, especially if your ideas demand it. Your samples need not all be the same size. Consider how much time you’ll devote to each piece; don’t make them all highly labour-intensive.

You now have a strong folio of work from earlier tasks, including your drawing folio from Part One and your paper manipulation library and paper stitched pieces from Part Two. These are all the ingredients you need to move forward, so start by reviewing this work and making some selections to choose what will inform your three stitched textile pieces.
Choosing imagery and qualities to stitch
Start by making some choices for the first of your three textile pieces.

• **Imagery and marks**: Begin by narrowing down the visual imagery that you want to bring into your first stitched textile piece. Is there a particular drawing you want to work from – or even a section of a drawing? Or would you prefer to work from some of your stitched paper pieces and develop these further visually, rather than going back to the drawings?

• **Surface qualities**: Look at the surface qualities and textures of your drawings and paper manipulation samples. Are there textures that you want to translate into textiles? Are there paper samples that you’d like to develop or exaggerate further? Are there textures or surface qualities that you’d like to try to achieve with textile materials?

(hand stitch on wool) [www.roannawells.co.uk](http://www.roannawells.co.uk)
Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.
• **Stitch qualities**: Have you made some exciting discoveries in your stitched paper samples that you’d like to develop further into textiles? Are there stitch textures or linear qualities that you’d like to explore further?

• **Colour and yarn**: Although colour exploration hasn’t been a focus of the course so far, even neutral or monochromatic colours require selection. If you’ve been observing and recording colour from your original archive textiles, these will contain some colour to lead your textiles. It can be very helpful at this stage to decide on a narrow or focused palette of colour to inform your materials choices for the three textiles pieces. Don’t introduce any new colour at this stage; simply pick out the key colours from your drawings and paper samples. Your colour choices will inform the textiles you’ll stitch into and also the colours of the yarns and materials you stitch with.

Use your sketchbook or learning log/blog to help you plan out all of these initial choices.

First consider how you’ll tackle the first sample. You should aim to build a strong design and development process by which the results of the first sample give you ideas for the second sample, and these two samples give you ideas for the third. Aim to bring in new ideas as well as building on your successes as you move from sample to sample. Your development process won’t necessarily be a linear one; you may find yourself looking back at other sampling or drawings, or other parts of your folio work, even as you’re developing your samples. Try not to see these three stitched textiles as ‘final’ in any sense; they should be exploratory and allow you to experiment and explore possibilities of translating and interpreting some pieces from your growing folio of work.
Working with textile materials

_These drawings, of a twig or a budding stem in a glass jar, are stitched on layered organza. They appear delicate and refined in their beautiful simplicity, but with a sense of the everyday represented by a variety of glass jars and bottles. Water lines and light hitting glass are perfectly delineated with minimal stitches._

(on Emily Jo-Gibb’s stitched work, Gordon, 2014, p.18)

As you launch into the textile-making, allow yourself to become a bit obsessed with textile materials. As you’ve discovered, textiles is an extremely diverse discipline. Early on in this course you were asked to consider what you believe ‘textiles’ to be. Your response may have encompassed everything from very traditional embroideries to contemporary stitched concrete and digitally-printed wallpapers. For this assignment, however, you should start with textile materials that possess relatively traditional qualities.

Explore materials that possess three-dimensional qualities of drape. Don’t use paper. Drape is the quality of a textile that allows it to fall into folds under its own weight. Drape gives textiles particular aesthetic qualities but it also affects the potential movement of a textile, which is most clearly viewed when a textile is made into a garment. Drape also impacts on and is impacted by the texture of a textile.

Sourcing and manipulating the materials that you’ll then stitch into is important at this point. This process should feel very similar to the paper manipulation you carried out earlier, but you’ll be working with textiles instead of papers.

You’re encouraged to develop your own base textiles or textile substrates into which you’ll stitch, informed by the visual work you’ve chosen to observe and translate. You may decide to find different weights of white fabric that you can manipulate to give new and inspiring surfaces and textures into which you can stitch. Look back at the list of words in Exercise 2.2. You can apply some of these treatments to your chosen textile materials, just as you did with your papers.

---

**Review point Demonstration of creativity**

_Demonstration of creativity—Imagination, experimentation, invention, development of a personal voice (20%)._

One of the assessment criteria for the course is ‘Demonstration of Creativity’. The way you can show this in your work is through using your imagination, taking an experimental approach and being inventive and inquisitive. This assignment is structured to allow you to do this, with the support of all the visual work you’ve already created to lead the way.
Manipulate the textiles to reflect the qualities of your drawings and/or paper manipulations, before moving on to the stitch process. Try to be sensitive to the original properties of the textiles you’re intending to manipulate as well as pushing them to become something new. There are extremes of weight in textiles from the finest organza to the heaviest wool felt. Be sensitive to the drawing or paper samples you’re observing to inspire your choices.

**Choosing base textiles**

Allow your selection of drawing or sampling from your work so far to guide your choice of base fabrics to manipulate and stitch into. The textiles you choose could be brand new, recycled or re-used. There is no limitation on the textile source, but you need to work hard to find the right qualities. As your original source back in Part One was focused on the examination, recording and translation of the qualities of archive textiles or textile products, it may actually be quite exciting to consider working on base textiles that are not new to begin with. By contrast, you may wish to work on very fresh, new textiles that reflect some clean qualities of the papers you worked with. Be considerate of your choice and make links.

**Preparing base textiles**

As has been suggested, you’re very much encouraged to manipulate, develop or transform the surfaces of the textiles you’re planning to stitch into. Look at the surfaces you developed in Part Two Project 1. Which did you enjoy working with and which do you feel are the most successful? Think now about how you can translate these textures, patterns or qualities into textile possibilities. Just consider the base fabric for now, rather than what you’re going to ‘draw’ on it with your stitching. Are very minimal, flat surfaces important to translating your pieces, or do you need to build many layers of fine fabric to create the desired strength and opacity of your base material?

How can you now manipulate the base textiles to further develop your paper outcomes? Do you need to destroy and rebuild surfaces? Do you need to do some textile trials to determine the best surfaces you can create?

*The spider is a repairer. If you bash into the web of a spider, she doesn’t get mad. She weaves and repairs it.*

(Louise Bourgeois)

Be bold, experimental and exploratory in your approach.

---

5 Adrian Searle, *Louise Bourgeois: A Web of Emotions*, 1st June 2010
www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2010/jun/01/louise-bourgeois [accessed 06.01.15]
Research point 1

Stitching to mend or darning could be another consideration in your translation from paper to textile. You may find that your drawings and stitched paper pieces suggest a feeling of mending or repairing and refining. Is this something you can introduce into your textile preparation and stitch work? As already suggested, you may decide to use imperfect textiles or found/recycled materials as your base textiles rather than employing brand new unused or virgin materials. Consider how you can work with the characteristics, imperfections or patinas of the textiles you’re using as base materials. An element of repair may give another layer to your work.

Many textile designers and artists choose to work with found, recycled, worn or even discarded textiles and materials. Try to find an example of one such designer or artist and analyse how they select, apply and alter their chosen materials. Make some notes on this research in your learning log.

Celia Pym, *Hope’s Sweater, 1951*, 2011
(moth-eaten sweater and darning)
www.celiapym.com
Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.
Stitching into your base textiles

The embroidery of simple but original designs should give more satisfaction than the working of commercial transfers, however elaborate.  

(Howard, 1996, p.9)

Once you have inspiring base textiles that you’re excited to stitch into, decide how you’ll tackle the stitching process itself. This should be an extremely exciting stage of the project as you seek to represent aspects of your drawings and/or paper samples in textiles by drawing with stitch. It should also be a point at which you feel you have complete ownership and control over the results.

This course has encouraged you to concentrate on the development of a process that allows you to create self-generated and original work that will now lead to original stitched textile samples. As the quote above suggests, you should take great satisfaction in generating your own work and your visual and tactile interpretation into textiles.

View the development of your stitching as a continuation of your drawing, mark-making and stitched paper samples. Of course, stitching into textiles is different from stitching into paper, but the aim is still the same: to create beautiful, exciting, lively and inspiring textile translations.

There are further decisions to make as you begin to stitch into your base textiles. Your choice of yarn qualities will be very much guided by the marks and qualities you wish to translate into your textiles, as will the size of the needle and the size of the stitch you use. You may choose to use an embroidery hoop to give some stability and control over the textiles you’re stitching into, but this isn’t always necessary.

Some of the things you’ll need to take into account in your stitching are detailed below. Make some notes in your learning log about how you plan to address these different areas.

1. **Directions of stitch and creating lines.** You can achieve stunning results by applying some simple limitations in the way you stitch. Consider the orientation of your stitched lines and thread or yarn. For example, keeping all your stitches parallel will create a quite different result from stitching in every direction. As always, observe the qualities and marks in the work you’re translating and use this to inform your stitched textiles.

Draw and make notes in your sketchbook in relation to the drawings you’ve created and how you plan to translate them through stitch and line qualities. Will you work from one drawing but with different intentions – for example, one having a sense of ‘uniformity and control’ and another having a sense of being more ‘out of control’? You could create some small exploratory samples and consider which you enjoy most, in terms of both the making and the resulting work.

The thickness and quality of yarn you employ, the size, length and placement of stitch, and the energy with which you employ them, will all be important decisions. Allow these to develop as you stitch. Be flexible; your ideas won’t necessarily work straight away so be prepared to change direction if needed.
Using stitch to create texture. Depending on the focus of the drawing or paper sample you’re referring to for your stitched textile, you may want to use stitch to create texture in addition to or instead of more linear qualities. You could even choose to make a stitched textile wholly focused on texture rather than on drawn marks. How can you build up stitched marks to create texture? Is it relevant for you to explore this in small samples first?

Texture describes the nature of the surface quality of a material or object. We may initially consider it to be related to our sense of touch, but what we view with our eyes also indicates tactile qualities to us. The variety of surface characteristics is potentially huge. Consider the textural contrast between the smooth, cold steel surface of a kitchen worktop and the rugged, pitted and irregular surface of tree bark, for example. But how can you translate two-dimensional drawn texture back into textiles and stitch?

By building drawn marks on top of marks on the page you can begin visually to suggest the nature of a texture. Often smoother surfaces are more difficult to render as they direct the work towards a distinct lack of marks, while rougher, more uneven surfaces will force you to explore which marks or stitches you can use to suggest a distinct surface quality.

Use stitch to create texture in a very similar way to drawn marks on a page. The additional excitement with indicating texture through stitch, though, is that stitch usually gives a relief texture by its very nature, so a 2D line or mark can be brought back to a more 3D result almost instantly. You can use stitch to create anything from a very gentle surface texture through to a highly pronounced surface texture.
The yarn, thread, ribbon or other material you use to stitch with will give you an instant starting point. If the yarn already has a pronounced textural quality, such as a hairy mohair or shiny viscose, then this already begins to suggest a textural quality of stitch or line.

A simple decision about the length of stitch can determine how far the yarn sits off the surface of the ground fabric. Creating loops or strands of yarn, or layering or patching fabrics, can build up areas of texture and help you translate the more heavily textured aspects of your drawings or paper samples.

You may wish to research techniques of couching, quilting and patchwork and investigate how they can bring more pronounced 3D results to stitch work.

3. **Deconstructing and recessing.** Working into layers of fabric can help bring depth to a piece of work. Look at how your drawings are formed. Is there a sense of depth in the way you’ve applied your marks? How do the marks appear? You may wish to approach your stitch exploration by deconstructing the base materials you’re working with. Could you stitch layers of fine, transparent or semi-transparent materials together and then carefully use scissors to remove some layers from some segments? Can you plan your work so that the lighter marks of your drawing are recorded on one layer and the heavier marks are recorded on another layer, with the final result finding you cutting into one layer to reveal the other? Be inquisitive and experimental in finding ways to translate the qualities.
4. **Building relief.** Building up layers of relief in your textile samples might be of interest too. Stitch itself can sit above the surface you’re stitching into, and you could work to emphasise this. Patching fabric onto the surface of the textile can also help you build up more raised layers and may help to translate areas of collage from your drawings or paper work. The difference between paper and textiles in this case is that you need to consider the edges of the textile when you cut it, as it’s likely to fray. You then need to decide if you should stitch the edges carefully, leave it raw, make it intentionally fluffy, etc. To translate extra-thick or heavy lines, you could cut strips of fabric and stitch and hold them onto the surface of the textile.

Try stitching on top of stitches to build height or make the height more prominent and more exaggerated in some areas of your samples. Again, be experimental!

5. **Looking at the reverse.** As you begin to stitch, look at the reverse of the stitched textile you’re making. Sometimes the back can be as interesting – or more interesting – than the front.
6. Repetition/scale/placement

Materiality in all its many forms, and an intense devotion to the making of things, has renovated and reenergized the world of handcraft, replacing the world of conceptual art with the new materiality of our time.

(McFadden, 2007, p.8)

When you begin to develop your work from paper to textile, there are many factors to consider in terms of translating qualities, characteristics and properties through material and making choices.

There is also much to consider in terms of the design, placement and arrangement of these qualities in relation to each other. As you begin to develop your collection of stitched textiles, think about the variety of compositions you could explore and try to find the right ones that reflect your development work in the form of your drawings, marks and paper manipulations.

As indicated at the beginning of this assignment, you’re asked to consider ideas of repetition, scale and placement in your three samples.

Repetition. You may decide to plan one of your stitched textile pieces with an eye on repeating elements, motifs, marks or objects and giving your sample a sense of pattern or repeat. It doesn’t need to be a real repeat, but as well as repeating some elements of your design, a good way to suggest the energy of repeat is to make sure your marks or stitches spill off the edge of the sample, almost as if you’ve cut the sample from a roll of fabric. Bear in mind that you’re not creating a picture in your textile piece; you’re creating a 3D piece that can be extended in all directions.
**Scale.** You can approach this in a few different ways. You could dramatically enlarge and exaggerate the motifs you draw through your stitch. This would force you to think about the size of your yarn and the size of the stitches you employ. It is also likely to lead you to make a sample much bigger than A4. Or you could go in the opposite direction and take some element of your drawing and scale it down to tiny stitches and small delicate marks. You might decide to use the same imagery in more than one of your samples, but tackle it on two different scales. You might even decide to have a mix of scale of a particular motif in one sample.

Scale can draw the viewer into your work; it can also make the viewer stand back from it. You might find it helpful to sketch out a plan for the design and scale of motifs in your stitched sample. This can help you decide whether you're happy with the composition and if the scale is interesting to you.

**Placement.** Aim to create a placement design in one of your samples. Focus on carefully composing the design to place different elements, textures and focuses against each other. Experiment on paper first, roughly sketching out ideas before embarking on the stitched piece. Focusing on a placement allows you to consider areas of space against areas of motifs or marks. Look at the source you're translating; you might make adjustments to the scale or placement of motifs or marks, different from the original.

As you reach the conclusion of this assignment and the end of Part Two of the course, you should feel that you've worked hard to build a sense of process and exploration from new marks and drawing, through to paper and textile manipulation and into stitch. Stitch is a relatively simple process, but it's one that you should have found opens up possibilities and prompts you to make a lot of choices and decisions. It is as open as taking a pencil to paper.

*A simple stitch is the backbone of so many processes – practical and/or decadent. It can be used to render repairs, to embellish garments, to mend skin.*

(Karen Nicol, in Hall, 2014, p.20)
**Submitting your work at the end of Part Two**
You should now prepare your work to submit to your tutor for feedback.

In addition to your work for Assignment Two, you’ll need to submit:
- your work from Projects 1 and 2
- your learning log or blog url
- some examples of relevant sketchbook work.

Make sure you show your tutor the key drawings from Part One that have fed into your work in Part Two.

**Written reflection**
During your work on Parts One and Two, you should have made notes and sketches that form a written and visual record of the decision-making and reflections you’ve made as you’ve progressed from project to project and even from sample to sample. Conclude your work on Part Two by further reflecting on what you’ve learned over the duration of the projects. Write about what you’ve gained from observing and developing materials and textiles. Write about what you feel the strengths of your work are and what you’d like to spend more time addressing. Write around 250–300 words and include this reflection, clearly labelled, in your learning log or blog.

**Reflection**
Before you send this assignment to your tutor, take a look at the assessment criteria for this course, which will be used to mark your work at assessment. The assessment criteria are listed in the introduction to this course guide.

Review your work using the criteria and make notes in your learning log/blog. Send these reflections to your tutor, along with the rest of your assignment submission.

Your tutor may take a while to get back to you so carry on with the course while you’re waiting.

**Reworking your assignment**
Following feedback from your tutor, you may wish to rework some of your assignment, especially if you are ultimately submitting your work for formal assessment. If you do this, make sure you reflect on what you have done and why in your learning log.
Part three
Colour studies

Marie O’Connor, Study 02, 2011 (paper collage)
www.marieoconnor.co.uk
Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer.
Use the grid below to keep track of your progress throughout Part Three.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Colour palettes and proportion</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Materials and composition</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exercise</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research point</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From a survival point of view, it is the primary sense in distinguishing ripe from unripe fruit and safe from unsafe meat; it informs us of the quality of beer or honey and tells us how strong a cup of coffee is or the quality of tomato puree. It adds richness and immediacy to complex visual information, for example in maps and warning signals. It identifies football teams, snooker balls and political parties. It affects mood and performance, dominates fashion aesthetics, while its symbolism permeates fine art, national flags and corporate branding. For human beings as sensory, intellectual animals with a high proportion of information about the world surrounding us channelled through vision, colour is a highly significant component of our everyday life.

(Hanson, A. in Best, 2012, pp.3–23)

In Part Three, you’ll turn your attention to colour. So far, colour hasn’t been a strong focus in your work; rather, you’ve focused on some other important components necessary to create new visual and tactile work as well as new textile outcomes. In this part of the course, you’ll practically explore colour as it relates to textile design and start to explore how you can select, control and apply colour in the textile development process.

There are a myriad books, writing and analyses on colour theory, but your main focus is the practical exploration of colour through observation, analysis and an examination of physical media. You’ll carry out supporting research into key areas of colour analysis and theory as well as touching on digital resources.

In your project work you’ll begin by analysing colour from different sources. You’ll move on to translating your colour using paint, collage and yarn and, finally, produce a colour sample book which you’ll use to inspire your application of colour in Part Five of this course.

It’s particularly important to record thoroughly your work for this part of the course because you’ll be returning to your colour studies in Part Four when you come to explore the possibilities of yarn design.
Project 1 Colour palettes and proportion

Every textile that you come across where aesthetic considerations have played a role, will have had a great deal of attention paid to the choice of colours within it. The range of colours used in an individual textile or across a textile collection is often called the colour palette. It can be particularly helpful to analyse the colour palettes present in textiles to gain a feel for the:

- range of colours employed
- number of colours employed
- proportion of each colour employed.

Different types of textiles rely on colour being applied in different ways and colour can be applied at different times in the making or manufacturing process. Some synthetic fibres have colour added when they are manufactured at the fibre stage. Colour may be decided at the point of selecting yarns for constructing knitted and woven textiles and the colour may be visually mixed through the textile construction. In fast fashion, single colour garments may be made in white and then dyed at the very last moment to ensure that the colours fit with ever-changing trends and customer demands. But no matter when the colour palette is applied in the making process, decisions have to be made.

Printed textiles, whether for fashion, interiors or as artwork, traditionally use a process of colour separation, so the number of colours in a design is easy to count. If you’ve ever tried to screen print onto textiles, then you’ll have printed with one colour at a time.
By contrast, contemporary digitally printed textiles can contain millions of colours. Digital printing onto textiles works very similarly to the way you might print out pages from your computer onto paper, but in this case special dyes or pigments are used that adhere to textiles rather than paper. The colour application can result in photorealistic imagery or highly coloured drawings or paintings, or may combine the two. Even though the colour might not be narrowed down to a minimum selection in this process, the colour palette and the resulting mood imparted by the colour will have been considered.

---

**Research point 1**

Research the colour work of some textile artists and designers, starting with the names listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voyage Decoration</th>
<th>Wallace Sewell</th>
<th>Paul Smith</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marimekko</td>
<td>Cole &amp; Sons</td>
<td>Vlisco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Katrantzou</td>
<td>Norma StarzaKowna</td>
<td>Ptolemy Mann</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- How do the designers you’ve researched control the colour in their designs?
- What (if any) is their signature way of using colour?

Choose some key pieces to analyse.

- Do they demonstrate interesting proportions of colour?
- Does the colour use work well with the actual design?
- Which is more important, the colour or the design? Or are they interdependent?

Store your research and written reflection on it in your learning log or blog.
Exercise 3.1 Gouache studies

Aim
This exercise aims to help you collate, thoroughly observe and record colour palettes from a series of textiles.

Brief
In this first colour exercise you’ll explore how colour is used in textiles. First you should source a series of textile samples that you find interesting. They don’t need to be large samples, but they should show enough of the design that you can gain a good understanding of the palette of colours used within each of them. You may be able to get small samples from department stores or fabric shops. It may also be possible to order samples online from different companies.

Part 1
Source the following:
- one to three printed samples where the design contains between four and six colours
- one to three samples of neutral (beige/cream/grey/white) textiles that have an interesting construction or surface.
Using the samples you’ve collected, work with gouache paint to produce some colour matching tests using white paper as a surface to paint onto. Look very closely at your samples. Taking one colour at a time, mix your gouache paints and try to replicate each of the separate colours evident in the design as a separate colour chip (3cm x 3cm will be a good size).

A colour chip is usually a small square or rectangle of flat, opaque colour. In this case, yours will be painted. You may find that you need to experiment with your colour mixing to match the colours you’re trying to replicate. Gouache, mixed with a little water to give a consistency somewhere between a paste and a liquid, can be very effective in achieving a flat, even colour. However, you’ll find that the colour often changes and becomes paler or chalkier when the paint dries. You’ll have to experiment with your mixing to achieve the correct colour when dry.

With the coloured samples, you should aim to create chips of all four to six colours in the design. With the neutral textiles, you’ll need to find a way to select and represent the colours you see. The texture might give you a challenge. You may see two colours or you may see 10! Try to present the minimum number of colour chips that you feel represents the sample.

When creating your chips, it can be useful to start by drawing (with pencil) a series of 3cm x 3cm squares on your page to paint into. It doesn’t matter if you overlap the edges when you paint, as you can later cut the correctly matched chip out and present it next to the sample you’re working from. You might want to save the incorrect chips in your sketchbook.
Present your samples simply on white paper, with the corresponding colour chips carefully attached alongside.

**Part 2**
Next, you should select one of your printed samples, or source a new one if you wish. Cut a sample of the textile, approximately 10cm x 10cm.

On a piece of white paper, use a pencil to draw a square outline approximately 20cm x 20cm. Place your printed textile square in the centre of the drawn square and attach it cleanly and flatly to the surface of the paper.

Mix your gouache colours again. This time you’re required to match the colours in the sample but also to extend the design out to the size of the 20cm square. Be imaginative and playful with how the elements in the design move and repeat as you extend the design. You might find it helpful to draw in the different elements of the design very lightly in pencil, so you have a design to paint into.

When mixing your colours to match those in your sample, make sure you mix enough of each colour to complete that colour in the design. (If you run out of a colour, you’ll find it extremely difficult to match it exactly once more.) You might have to do a few tests on a separate sheet of paper first, to make sure you’ve mixed the correct colour, before starting to paint into your design.
Part 3
This time, colour match and extend a 10cm x 10cm square of one of your neutral samples to a painted 20cm x 20cm square. Again, this will be a challenge as it’s likely that the texture will have a lot of impact on the rendering of the fabric. Try to focus on the different tones created from the same colour.

Make thorough notes in your learning log/blog reflecting on your experience and discoveries from these exercises.

This detailed exercise should have given you a sense of how a colour palette is employed within individual textiles, and also how precise the colours are. This will be most evident in your analysis of your printed textiles; however, the tonal values of a single-colour textile also form a colour palette too.

Another aspect of the printed textiles that you can look out for is the proportion of each colour used in the print. You might find there’s a dominant background colour with a few others used in much smaller quantities. Have a look at the printed samples you’ve collected and take note of the differing proportions of each colour. You’ll look at this more closely in the next two exercises.

Keep your original source materials and the colour explorations you’ve developed from them in a safe place; you’ll be using them again in Exercise 4.2.
Research point 2

The textiles discipline generally demands that you work with physical materials and colour. However, it is also very relevant for you to explore some digital resources that allow you to experiment with colour, as the employment of digital resources in the development and creation of textiles is becoming increasingly important. Listed below are a few relatively simple resources that will allow you to explore colour on screen. You may be able to find some other tools or apps in addition to these. Make some notes on your experience of these tools, and any others that you find, in your learning log/blog. How does working with colour online compare to physically mixing paint colours?

Adobe Color CC (previously known as Adobe Kuler) is an online platform from Adobe which allows you to build colour palettes digitally, either by selecting from a colour wheel or using imagery to pick from. It will also allow you to save these palettes.

Mudcube Colour Sphere is similar to Adobe Color in that it allows you to explore palettes and also colour combinations, such as complementary colours, triads and analogous colours.

Color Halipixel is a simple tool with an interesting interactive gesture you can use to select colours on-screen and to build and save small colour palettes.

Color Hunter is a simple tool that allows you to select colour palettes from digital images. This can be a helpful way to narrow down the number of specific colours you want to use to a manageable palette size.

ColRD offers a more social way of sharing imagery and colour palettes. The majority of colour palettes on here have an even balance of each colour, although it can be useful to look out for some which show different proportions of each colour. This is sometimes known as a ‘weighted’ palette.

These tools can seem very exciting and instinctive. The difficulty with then moving from on-screen to off-screen comes when you want to print colour palettes or imagery. The chances are that with a simple digital printer, the colours you see on the screen will not print the same on paper. Indeed, a colour viewed on your screen may even look entirely different on another screen, as monitor settings are likely to be different. However, working online can be a fast and intuitive way to explore colour possibilities. As you begin to work with materials, if you find it useful, you can use the digital palettes as a guide to assist you in developing palettes leading to the sourcing of material examples.


Exercise 3.2 Translation through yarn

Aims
This exercise aims to help you:
• work on ways of interpreting colour and colour proportions from a 2D image, through yarn and material selection and placement
• extract, explore and present a palette of colours.

Brief
First, you should choose a good quality image or postcard of an Old Master’s painting. ‘Old Master’ is a broad term and includes artists like Goya, Dürer, da Vinci, Tintoretto, Raphael, Vermeer, Titian and many, many others. Look for a painting that has very rich colour use, but where you can clearly see the distinctions between different colours. Some Old Master paintings use the rendering of textiles as a focal point, so this might add to the richness of the colours present too.

Now work to find appropriate yarns, threads, ribbons, trims and any other materials in a linear form, to represent the colours and the qualities of the colours in your chosen image. When you’re collecting materials, have the printed image with you so that you can match the colours as closely as possible.
For the Titian image on the previous page, the materials sourced included velvet ribbons, lace, gold thread, and emerald, dove grey and sky blue yarns.

Once you feel you have a good range of materials reflecting the colours present in the painting, arrange your yarns and materials in a stripe format, in the form of a yarn wrap, to reflect the colours, colour relationships and the proportions of colour across the painting. Vary the width of your blocks of colour to demonstrate the proportions of colour you can see in the painting. You might repeat colours if they’re present across the painting.

The best way to create this ‘yarn wrap’ is to take a piece of heavy white card (something around the weight of mount board can be good) and wrap the yarns around the board, side by side, to build up sections of colour, sitting them against one another to show some of the colour relationships in your chosen image. It’s best to make the card you’re wrapping around a slim rectangular shape or strip. You could start by making the card the same length as your image, and around 5cm wide.
There is no single correct solution to this exploration. Work to create a series of between three and five yarn wraps; these should reflect different ways of looking at the image, different sections of the image and different mixes of colour.

If you can’t find the exact colours of yarn you’re looking for to match with the image, take the colour of yarn that’s closest and mix it with another colour of yarn, side by side, to see if you can achieve a closer translation, as shown below.

Although the mixing might seem stripy when observed close-up, if you hold the yarn wrap at arm’s length you’ll start to get an optical mixing of colour. Take some time to explore the mixing of colours to achieve closer representations of the colours in your chosen painting and carefully document these colour tests.

Make sure you retain a good quality print of the painting to present alongside your yarn wraps and colour mixing tests, to show how you’ve matched and explored the colours present.

In your learning log/blog, reflect on how you’ve tackled this task and what you’ve gained from it. How have you found the challenge of translating printed colour into physical colour?

Keep a record of each of the materials you’ve sourced for future reference. You could use your sketchbook to hold a small sample of each of the yarns and materials you’ve used, along with details like fibre type, brand, cost, yarn thickness, where you sourced/bought it from, etc. This is important because you’ll be returning to the work you’ve done during this exercise in Exercise 4.3.
Project 2 Materials and composition

Colour is a dramatic communicator and colour proportions are important relationships. Small amounts of accent colours can activate a palette, or harmonious groups express calm, contrasts adding vibrancy, setting the mood to a collection. A successful palette is relative to the design, with consideration for season, product, process of application and fabric type.

(Dickinson, K. in Briggs-Goode and Townsend, 2011, p.175)

Scholten & Baijings for HAY, Colour Carpet, 2011 (100% New Zealand wool pile on 100% cotton backing) www.hay.dk
www.scholtenbaijings.com
Image reproduced by kind permission.

Building your sensitivity towards colour and colour palettes is something that will come with practice. You can develop your skills with colour by experimenting with painted colour and working with physical colours and materials. You can also add to your vocabulary of colour through observing and analysing colour, both within other people’s work and through experience with drawing, painting, collaging and photographing first-hand sources that you might use as inspiration to lead colour.

In this project you’ll work through two further exercises to allow you to view and record different modes of colour in relation to different types of compositions.
Exercise 3.3 Watercolour studies

Aims
This exercise aims to help you:

- explore and gain an understanding of opacities of colour through the observation and recording of transparent and semi-transparent objects
- extract colour palettes and proportions of colour from a self-selected first-hand visual source.

Brief
Start by gathering a range of transparent and semi-transparent vessels – glasses, empty jars, bottles, bowls or any type of container that you can see through. It’s fine if the glass or plastic is slightly tinted, but it shouldn’t be completely opaque or solid in colour. If any of your transparent objects have any kind of texture or pattern, this could be interesting too. If possible, collect between four and six objects of different shapes and sizes.

Use these objects to set up a small still-life display on a white paper background. Experiment with the arrangement of the objects and how you can see from one through to another sitting behind it. Decide whether you want to have the white paper just sitting under the objects, or whether it’s preferable to have a white wall or paper background behind the objects too.

Once you’ve prepared your first arrangement, look for colour! Look for subtleties of colour, perhaps reflections of colour bouncing onto the transparent objects from the surrounding environment. Your lighting source will also have a big impact on the tones of colour you might be able to see. Look too at how subtly colours change where objects overlap. Can you see any unexpected colours?

Next, paint out a series of stripe designs, based on the colours and proportions of colour you can see in your still-life arrangement. It’s best to use watercolour paints; you should find
that this medium lends itself to the lightness and translucency of the colours in your still life. You may also find that it’s better to use a watercolour paper or a heavier cartridge paper to apply your watercolour paint to, as it will be heavy enough to withstand the watery qualities of the paint.

By painting out stripe designs, you’ll get a sense of how you can observe and then hugely abstract what you’re observing into simple colour representation. Be experimental in your approach to this. You might find that you can approach your still life in different ways, from trying to capture the whole arrangement across one stripe design, to focusing in on one section of it. You can also change the arrangement of the still life as you progress from one design to the next.

Be sure to pay close attention to the accuracy of the colours you’re mixing and applying. Look for highlights and accents of colour that contrast with the overall colour palette. If they only appear in small amounts, represent these as much narrower stripes. Represent larger expanses of colour as broader stripes and think about how an individual stripe colour might appear more than once in your stripe design. Consider how your colours work when they sit next to each other. When you paint the stripes, each stripe should touch the next, with no gap left between. This will allow you to analyse the relationships between the colours, and allow the mood of the colour palette to become evident.

As a guide, you might begin by fitting your stripe design into a rectangle 20cm wide and 5cm tall. However, you can vary the size and orientation of your full stripe designs as you see fit. If your objects and their arrangement are tall and thin, it might make more sense for your stripe design to be taller than it is wide. If your arrangement is long and thin, then it might also make more sense for your stripe design to be long and thin.

Aim to capture the colours and proportions of colour in your still-life arrangements in at least five different stripe designs.
Exercise 3.4 Collage studies

Aim
This exercise aims to help you extend your skills at working with collage, with a focus on colour and composition.

Brief
In this exercise, you'll further develop your collage skills, which you've already touched on in Part One. This time, however, the focus will be on the exploration and presentation of colour and composition through collage techniques.

Begin by taking a photograph of a ‘messy’ corner of a room or cupboard. Don’t set up a still life this time; just find some normal, everyday clutter and take a photograph. The more chaotic and random, the better!

Keep a record in your sketchbook. You may wish to photograph the different arrangements you’ve worked from and show a photo of each still-life arrangement alongside your stripe designs, although it's unlikely that the colours in the photo will be the same as those you view with your own eyes. You’ll be returning to these stripe designs in Exercise 4.4 so keep them safe.

Write a reflective commentary on this task in your learning log/ blog.
Carefully observing the photograph (you may wish to print it for ease of reference), gather a variety of interesting papers that suggest the colour complexities and colour story of the photograph.

You can also prepare some coloured papers yourself, to help you achieve more accuracy in your colour story. To do this, mix key colours in gouache and paint an expanse of flat colour onto a white paper. You can then use this painted coloured paper to cut or tear pieces from, for inclusion in your collages.

**Part 1**
Using your photograph as reference, create a series of three collage studies, around A4 in size, that capture the colour and composition of the photo.

One of these three collages should have a ‘simple’ colour combination. It’s up to you how you define ‘simple’. You could:
- use as few colours or papers as possible to represent the photograph
- simplify the elements in the image to as few as possible
- translate the messiness of the photograph into a simple coloured stripe design.

Or you may have an idea of your own on how to create a simple collage inspired by the photograph.
The second of the three collages should have an ‘unusual’ colour combination. Again it’s up to you to decide what an ‘unusual’ colour combination might be. You may wish to make some notes and record your thoughts on how you’ll interpret this definition. Could unusual mean that you choose what you feel are the least harmonious colours from your photograph to represent? What do you think a more ‘usual’ or normal colour palette might be? Are there colours in your photograph that you wouldn’t usually choose to put together, which could form part of your unusual colour palette? There is no right or wrong way to do this. Be experimental and brave in your approach and remember to record your thinking in your learning log/blog.

The third of your three collages should have a ‘complex’ colour combination. Again, what does a complex colour palette suggest to you? Does it mean there will be a broad range of colours in the collage? Does it mean it will be sophisticated or garish? How can you select colours from your image to create a collage that gets across a feeling of complexity?

When composing your three collages, be open to how you’ll translate the forms and shapes in your photograph. You might choose to translate and abstract one into a stripe design, whereas another might remain quite pictorial, so that the individual objects are easy to understand and recognise. Another version may be very blocky and sit somewhere between a stripe and a recognisable representation. Try to build variety into this small collection of collages, but do remember the focus is on colour and composition.

Part 2
Now select one of your collages to develop further. There is no need to refer to the original photograph now; instead use just one of your collages to inform three new developments.

Based on the collage you’ve selected, produce another three versions of it, using the same shapes and composition but varying the colour content.

1. **Monochromatic study – black and white**
   This may seem limiting at first, but how do you choose which elements of the design become black and which become white? Can you cheat a little and use patterned papers, like newsprint or magazine print, which only contain black and white? Can you find any packaging or other patterned papers that have interesting designs printed on them in black and white? Be imaginative and playful! There should be some clear visual links, perhaps in terms of shapes, pattern and composition, between this new collage and the collage you’re referring to, but clearly this new collage will be somewhat different because of the change in colour palette.

2. **Single colour study**
   Work to create a second version of your chosen collage using different tones of one colour from the original collage – you decide which. In this case it is probably most effective to paint out different tones of the same colour on paper, so that you then have a bank of paper to choose from when building your collage. When creating your collage, try to retain the same tonal values as the original collage.
A useful trick to gauge the tonal values of a coloured artwork is to photocopy it in a black-and-white photocopier; this will show you the darker and lighter areas, and all the values in between, more obviously.

3. Multi-coloured study
In this third version of your selected collage, you can go a bit wild! Be bold and adventurous in re-creating your collage using a large number of different colours and papers. Even though the number of colours is essentially unlimited, work to achieve a combination of colours that you enjoy and are happy with. You can mix painted coloured papers with found and patterned papers in whatever combination you wish. Be sure to maintain a visual relationship between this new collage and the collage you’re referencing.

You’ll return to your collage designs in Exercise 4.5, as part of your series of yarn explorations.

On completion of all six of your collages from Parts 1 and 2 of this exercise, you may wish to place some colour chips alongside each of your collages to isolate and present the palette of colours and papers you’ve employed in each. If you choose to mount your collage work and colour chips, a white background will show the colours off best.

The presentation of your work is the focus of Assignment Three.

Review point Quality of outcome
Quality of outcome – content, application of knowledge, presentation of work in a coherent manner, discernment, conceptualisation of thoughts, communication of ideas (20%).

It may be useful to look again at the assessment criteria for the course and pinpoint the criterion concerned with the content and presentation of your work. Although the quality of your outcomes will be reviewed in relation to many aspects of your work, it is particularly relevant to the next assignment.
Assignment three

Colour communication

Aims
Your aims in this assignment should be to:
• employ a process of evaluation and selection of your own work
• demonstrate effective design, layout and presentation skills in the visual communication and presentation of your work.

Brief
This assignment asks you to use the work from Projects 1 and 2 to develop and create a beautifully presented colour resource book.

As you progress in your textiles practice, you should discover that a significant part of building your design and creative process involves regular review and reflection on your work. In order to develop a strong and beautiful way of presenting your work that is personal to you, you should now reflect back on the work you’ve produced in Part Three and read the reflective notes you’ve written in response to it.

If you can, find some space to lay out as much of your colour work as possible, so that you can get a good overview of your progress, ideas and what you feel are your stronger pieces and weaker pieces. Next, select some of the most interesting colour work from each of the four exercises.

Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer.
Your task now is to present this work in a beautiful book format that you build and make yourself.

**Content**
The content of the book is very important; your aim is to get across the learning you’ve gained during the exercises. So, for example, if you’ve worked from a photograph to extract colour, it would make sense to show the photo in relation to the colour you’ve taken. Similarly, if you feel that colour chips or samples of coloured materials, yarns, etc. help to communicate a colour palette, then please make them and include them.

Put yourself in the position of someone who has never seen your work before and think whether it’s possible for them to get a good sense of your colour ideas and the processes and translations you’ve undertaken. Think about whether you need to include some small pieces of text or titles to explain particular pieces of work or exercises.

If you feel it would benefit your book to go back and do some extra work or revisit any of the exercises at this point, you’re encouraged to do so. Also, consider whether you can do any additional work that helps with the presentation. This could include taking photographs of the work to use for the front cover or the introduction.

Marie Paysant-Le Roux, *Senegal Diapositive* (slide film on mirror)
http://marieplrdesign.com
Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.

**Design/Construction**
It’s up to you to decide on the design, construction, size and layout of your book, but do ensure that it is carefully and precisely made. The design doesn’t need to be overly complex; the book should serve as a simple vehicle to allow your colour work to look its best.
Use a white or a very pale background to present your colour work as this gives a fresh, clean base and allows colour to stand out in a contemporary way. Avoid black and dark backgrounds where possible, unless you feel they really are the best bases on which to present particular colour palettes, or to emphasise a particular mood.

Think about choosing a good quality paper or card from which to make your book. Make sure the paper is heavy enough to support your work effectively.

How you connect the pages is up to you. You can glue, staple, sew, tie or use a binder of some sort to hold the pages together. You might decide to make the book more like a file, in which case you could use a ring-binder type device to hold the pages together. If you have longer pieces, or want to see your work in a landscape view, could you have pages that fold out? Be imaginative, but don’t over-complicate things. The design of the book should be sympathetic to your work and not distract from it.

You could choose to build a file or create a book format that you can add to in the future, as these projects are really only the beginning of your exploration into colour. You may want to leave space or create some kind of mechanism that allows you to add to your colour resource book at a later point.

**Layout/space**

Aim to give your colour work plenty of space on each page. Contemporary design books, and colour and trend information, tend to use a lot of white or pale space to allow your eye to clearly focus on the colour and design. Plan where you’ll position the different pieces, and how you’ll order them, by laying your work out on the blank pages. Don’t squash too much onto one page and make sure that you order the pieces in a way that makes sense to the reader.

Label the projects/exercises clearly but simply. Include extra text where you feel it is useful to supplement the colour work. This writing could be anything from the summing up of an exercise to the naming of colours! (Would naming some of your colour chips help to build an even stronger mood in the book?) Type and print out any written information to keep the overall presentation professional and clear.

Think about the front and back covers and what might be appropriate to have on these.

Scholten & Baijings for HAY, *Paper Carpet Collection* (paper) [www.hay.dk](http://www.hay.dk)  
[www.scholtenbaijings.com](http://www.scholtenbaijings.com)  
Image reproduced by kind permission.
Submitting your work at the end of Part Three
Send your colour resource book to your tutor. This book should contain a good range of the work you’ve created across both projects in Part Three.

You should also provide evidence of any colour work that hasn’t made it into your colour resource book; this could be a combination of samples and photographic evidence. This will allow your tutor to evaluate your self-selection process.

Also submit your learning log or blog url and examples of any additional sketchbook work you’ve undertaken.

Written reflection
Conclude your work on Part Three by further reflecting on what you’ve learned over the duration of the projects. Write about what you’ve gained from observing and developing materials and textiles. Write about what you feel the strengths of your work are and what you’d like to spend more time addressing. Write around 250–300 words and include this reflection, clearly labelled, in your learning log or blog.

Reflection
Before you send this assignment to your tutor, take a look at the assessment criteria for this course, which will be used to mark your work at assessment. Review your work using the criteria and make notes in your learning log/blog. Send these reflections to your tutor, along with the rest of your assignment submission.

Your tutor may take a while to get back to you so carry on with the course while you’re waiting.

Reworking your assignment
Following feedback from your tutor, you may wish to rework some of your assignment, especially if you are ultimately submitting your work for formal assessment. If you do this, make sure you reflect on what you have done and why in your learning log.
Part four
Yarn and linear exploration

Ella Robinson, *Death by Jumbrella*, 2011 (plastic lacing, plastic tubing, steel pins, varnish and sustainable timber)
www.ellarobinson.co.uk
Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.
Use the grid below to keep track of your progress throughout Part Four.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Exploring lines</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Creating linear forms</td>
<td>117</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>110</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>114</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>119</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>121</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>124</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research point</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Linear quality plays a very important role within textiles in many different contexts and formats. As you've already explored, linear qualities can simply begin as marks on a page and can have a relatively simple translation into stitch. Lines can be fine, smooth, hairy, rough, jagged; they can be simple and fluid, or multi-faceted and broken.

Linear qualities take on new forms when they are translated and delineated onto the surface of textiles, as they may be through print or stitch. Linear qualities can also be employed to form the actual structure of textiles, as in the case of knitted textiles (perhaps formed from a single line or continuous strand of yarn) and woven textiles (formed from many lines or lengths of yarn that interlace together). And, of course, other ways of forming textiles – lace, crochet, knotting and braiding, to name just a few – involve the building of a structure that begins simply with a line of yarn.

Yarn is an extremely important and versatile component in the formation and decoration of textiles; its properties directly inform the properties and appearance of the resulting textile. In this part of the course you'll explore and develop a range of linear qualities in the form of yarns. You'll be encouraged to explore a broad range of materials in your design of these 'lines', taking on board your recent learning about the handling of colour.

Exploring the creation and development of ideas for yarn will allow you to concentrate on the development, refinement and expression of visual and tactile qualities in a very focused way. This exploration will also encourage you to deal with detailed creative decisions, as you seek to simply design 'lines'.

**Research point 1**

Before you begin to explore yarn qualities and their possibilities, carry out some research into yarn’s role within the textiles discipline.

Yarn is a huge industrial and creative field in its own right. Just as textiles are designed and created, so too are yarns, and they are employed in products as diverse as car tyres, industrial hoses, fine hand-made bobbin lace and embroidered couture garments.

Yarn design offers a number of development opportunities.

**Properties**

The properties of a yarn include whether it is conductive or insulating, waterproof or water-repellent, coloured or even possessing colour-changing abilities. The fibres or materials the yarn is made from will determine both its properties and its capabilities in textile design.
Aesthetics
How a textile looks is affected immeasurably by the appearance of the yarn. It can be down to the colour of the yarn, for example whether it’s made of a single colour or two or more colours twisted together, or perhaps whether it has some extra flecks or additions of colour or texture. Fancy yarns are designed to have variety in texture, colour and repetition of pattern. Fancy yarns can be used sparingly to add interest to a relatively simple textile or abundantly to create more exaggerated texture or colour mixing. The composition and design of a yarn usually depends on whether it will be used as surface decoration, or to create knitted, woven or some other form of constructed textile.

Handle and performance
The handle of a yarn is concerned with its softness and fullness, as well as its ability to drape and move. Some yarns are more rigid than others due to their construction, and in some cases, how their components are twisted together. The resilience of a yarn – how well it springs back into shape after being stretched – can also be an important consideration of yarn design, especially if its intended use is to be made into knitted textiles or textiles that will be worn. Yarn performance may be particularly important for more extreme end uses – for example, the use of elastic yarns in sportswear, the use of tightly twisted wool in flame-retardant furnishings, nylon safety cords and Kevlar bullet-proof vests. But even for textiles employed in everyday use, the strength and durability of the yarn must allow for normal wear and tear.

Yarn design on an industrial scale is primarily the concern of spinners who provide yarn to the textile industry. Large international fairs are held annually to present new yarn ideas and designs, including Pitti Immagine Filati in Florence, and the Yarn and Fabrics Sourcing Fair in Dhaka. Some other fairs, such as the Heimtextil International Trade Fair for Home and Contract Textiles in Frankfurt, focus on textiles but also include spinning companies that present yarn design too.
Do some research of your own into the design and sourcing of yarns. Try to find information about the yarn trade shows and the types of companies that present at them. Look at how trends and themes in colour and yarns are presented. Can you find any new issues or innovations that are being promoted in relation to yarn design or manufacture?

Start with the following websites, which will introduce you to fibres, yarns and trade shows. You should be able to find additional links to spinners from exploring these websites too:

Link 15  Link 19
Link 16  Link 20
Link 17  Link 21
Link 18

Record your findings in a separate yarn research file within your learning log or as a separate technical file/page in your blog. If any aspect of this research has particularly interested you, you may wish to add to your research file as you continue with the course. Comment on what you’ve learned in your learning log/blog.
Project 1 Exploring lines

In this project, you’ll look more closely at the idea of yarn as a linear quality that you can design, manipulate and build. Your focus will be on translating line from two-dimensional marks into the three-dimensional form of yarn.

Exercise 4.1 Yarns inspired by stitch and marks

Aims
This exercise aims to help you:

• expand your knowledge and application of materials into yarn concepts
• interpret and experiment with different ideas to translate linear qualities into yarn outcomes.

Brief
Exploring lines is the first stage of yarn development. Just as you worked to translate drawn line and mark qualities from marks on a page to stitched textiles, you’ll now work to translate drawn and stitched lines into three-dimensional lines in the form of yarns.
First, look back at the stitch work you produced in Part Two – both your stitched paper samples and your stitched textile pieces. Look also at the drawings and mark-making (Part One) that inspired these.

Select one or two pieces of work where you feel the qualities of the lines and marks are exciting and potentially inspirational. Take time to review and select your chosen pieces carefully; there needn’t be any colour in these pieces, but they must have marks or lines that you feel you can work from.

Take photos or scan the pieces of work you’ll be referring to so you have a good, clear version to present alongside your yarn explorations later. However, you should work from the original piece to enable you to closely observe and translate its qualities.

First, create a variety of 30cm lengths of yarn with a range of different thicknesses and textures. You should create simple repeats within your yarn designs, based on the following sizes:
- 1cm repeat
- 5cm repeat
- random patterning/design.

To hold your yarn designs in place and stop them unravelling, you may have to knot either end or secure the ends neatly with a little piece of tape.

Next, develop three further designs, based on the 30cm explorations, but now in a length of 100cm. Think about how you can improve and build on the 30cm designs to create interesting line and yarn qualities.
You’ll first need to collect some materials to work with, and these will be informed by the stitched or drawn pieces you’ve chosen from Part Two. Look at the colours, texture and pattern present and match simple threads, materials, paper, beads or any other small elements that could combine to make a very interesting yarn.

The possibilities are limitless, but consider the following options to get you started with making your yarns:

- Twisting two or many more threads together, either to mix colours or build up areas of texture or thickness. This is known as plying yarns. You could also try trapping small pieces of yarn, fibres or other materials in the twisted plies.

- Wrapping and knotting threads around each other to build up small dots of texture. Yarns wrapped around another yarn in small concentrated dots are known as knops, especially if they’re built into small solid areas on a finer yarn. These can give little dots of colour that contrast with the finer yarn and provide points of texture and surface contrast in a textile.

- Cutting larger yarns, ribbons and even fabrics into smaller pieces or finer strips to tie and attach onto another yarn. Or consider making loops, bows and attaching many longer strands onto a strong yarn base to build texture, hairiness and tactile variety into a single yarn design.

- Cutting up materials, papers or plastics to create small pieces that can be threaded and held, using a needle, onto your length of yarn. You could use knots to hold elements in place too.

Above all, be experimental and true to the qualities of the visual source you’re using. This is not such a different task from translating drawings into stitched textiles, but it perhaps involves even more focus as you’re dealing with the translation of quite small detail and qualities.
Present your first experiments by wrapping them simply around a white piece of card. Your three 100cm long designs can either be wrapped around a slightly bigger piece of card or you may be able to present them on a simple bobbin, cone or reel. Make sure that you clearly present an image of the piece/s of work you used to inspire the yarn experiments alongside your yarns.
Exercise 4.2 Experimental yarns and concepts

Aims
This exercise aims to help you:
• explore colour translation and development in yarn design and making
• explore textures and unexpected materials in the creation of yarn concepts and designs.

Brief
In this exercise you’ll be using some of the colour work you produced in Part Three. By this point, you should have received your project work from Part Three back from your tutor, so you can refer directly to it.

Look at the work you developed in Exercise 3.1. You should have a range of colour-matching work in the form of palettes of colour chips, as well as the original textile samples you sourced. You should also have some gouache studies of your printed and neutral textile samples.

Referring directly to this work, you’ll now focus on colour experimentation through the making of a series of yarn designs.

Begin by selecting one of your full-colour palettes inspired by the print designs and gather a range of materials that you can use to create linear concepts that reflect these colours. You may need to gather yarns and
threads, as well as papers, plastics, wire, feathers, etc. You could even consider materials that you might be able to take apart, cut up and re-use in your yarn design explorations. Use the colour and the print design as a source of inspiration for the linear designs and explore the following:

1. **Colour placement and composition**
   Develop a series of yarn designs that really push the colours in your chosen colour palette: how they appear and sit next to each other and how they can combine together in your yarn developments. Can you translate the colour proportions from the printed textile into a yarn design? Can you show ideas of different proportions of colours from your selected palette across different yarn designs? Can you use shapes or pattern elements in the original printed textile in some of the elements or shapes you introduce to your yarn?

   Aim to create a minimum of three yarn designs based on this kind of exploration, where the focus is on the colour and composition of the yarn developments.

2. **Materials exploration**
   Develop a series of yarn designs that push the material and physical qualities of the yarns you design. Look again at your work from Exercise 3.1. Do any of the textiles or colour explorations make you think of unusual materials or surfaces that you might not usually associate with yarns? For example, your neutral sample from Exercise 3.1 might make you think of cement, concrete or stone. Could you find a way to employ these materials in a yarn ‘concept’ or proposed linear form, perhaps dipping materials in plaster or coating surfaces with sand or roughening with sandpaper? Perhaps the printed textiles you looked at have some very bright, garish colours. Could you make links with materials used in children’s toys or plastics? Be imaginative and adventurous! The resulting linear explorations may not be truly useable yarns, but they should serve as ‘yarn concepts’ providing further inspiration for yarns. Make sure to show an image of the reference source you’re using from Exercise 3.1 alongside your yarn concepts, to show the translation you’re making. Continue to record and reflect on the results and your thinking during these explorations in your learning log/blog.

   Aim to create three to five yarn concepts based on this approach. You may have to be inventive in how you present these more experimental yarns.

3. **Texture and tonal qualities**
   Finally, look at your neutral colour explorations from Exercise 3.1 and collect a range of materials to help you explore and translate their tonal and textural qualities into yarns. Be sensitive to the tones present in the original textile and your painted work, but try to explore colour combinations as far as possible. You may decide to use conventional yarn and thread-like materials or combine these with more unconventional materials. Create two or three tonal yarn explorations based on the tonal colour palette you’ve chosen. Present these alongside a copy or image of the original source to demonstrate your consideration of colour, proportion of colour and a sense of its translation from the original source.
Next, create two or three textured yarn explorations. In these explorations you should aim for the developments to become much more pronounced and exaggerated. Look at the marks and surface qualities captured in your painted sample and the original textile sample and see if it’s possible to create more extreme textures that exaggerate, elongate or emphasise some of the qualities present. Could they become more jagged and prickly, fuzzy and hairy, slimy and smooth, freckled and pitted? Consider the language you’d use to describe the original textile or the marks in your painting and think further about how you might describe an exaggerated version of it. Use this to guide your choice of colours, choice of materials, ways of making and the formation of your yarn designs.
Project 2 Creating linear forms

In Project 1, you started to explore what it means to design a yarn and the many options available to take inspiration from, and be led by, your own visual work.

The exercises in Project 2 will present you with further possibilities for creating linear forms and also prompt you to look at ways of both building and deconstructing materials to create new linear solutions. You’ll continue to use your work from Part Three to inform these new explorations and experiments, so keep it to hand.

As you become more confident in your design of yarns and creation of yarn concepts, you should also start to become more sensitive to the translation and development of their qualities, their appearance and their tactile nature; this is the focus of Project 2. This is a good point to review your yarn samples so far to see if you can pinpoint a theme or approach you’ve taken and to work out if you can take a slightly different approach towards this new project. For example, if you’ve put many components into each piece in Project 1, could you explore simpler, more refined options in Project 2? If your work to date has seen you develop relatively simple and graphic yarn solutions, can you push your explorations towards more complicated or intricate results? If you’ve discovered some interesting means of making that you’d like to explore further, look for an opportunity to really push its possibilities in Project 2. Essentially, look at what you’ve created so far and see if you can find a way to take a different approach.

Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.
Review point Demonstration of creativity

Demonstration of creativity—Imagination, experimentation, invention, development of a personal voice (20%).

At this point, it may be useful for you to look again at the assessment criteria for the course. It is particularly relevant at this point to look at the criterion associated with the demonstration of your creativity.

Of course, we expect you to have taken a creative approach to your work throughout this course. You’ll have employed and demonstrated your creativity in many forms. This may have been through your thinking processes, as evidenced in the execution and development of your work or through your reflection in your learning log or blog. And you’ll have demonstrated your creativity through the variety, depth and engagement you’ve shown whilst experimenting with materials, exploring different media and trying out a range of mark-making methods.

You also show your creativity when you go above and beyond a project brief. Try to become more inventive and imaginative in the way you tackle or question a project or exercise brief. By reflecting on and questioning your work and the outcomes you produce, you’ll begin to edge towards developing your own personal voice within (or even against) the textiles discipline. You’re at quite an early stage in your learning, so don’t expect this to happen quite yet. But try to be open to how you approach even the smallest exercise, so you can begin to put your own stamp on it.

Make some notes in your learning log or blog about how well you feel you’ve demonstrated your creativity and creative thinking to date. Think also about aspects of your learning experience that perhaps require a more imaginative or creative approach. This needn’t just apply to the project work itself, but could also refer to your approach towards surrounding tasks or supporting concerns in your working practice. For example, could you be more creative with your presentation methods or in your sourcing of materials? Could you photograph your work in a more inventive or sensitive way for your blog? Could you be more creative or imaginative in the way you carry out your research?
Exercise 4.3 Re-interpret, re-invent

Aims
This exercise aims to help you:

• employ colour and mood translation in materials and yarn sourcing and yarn development
• explore, re-invent and re-interpret an approach to building structures as small- and large-scale design concepts
• research and keep technical notes on your making processes.

Brief
In this exercise you’ll develop a series of yarn designs and simple textile constructions in response to the colour work you carried out in Exercise 3.2.

You’ll also carry out some research into simple textile-making technique(s) and find appropriate ways of recording and retaining your research and references.

You’ll recall that Exercise 3.2 asked you to select a good image of an Old Master painting and translate it into a series of yarn wraps, by capturing and translating the colour, textures and mood of the image.

You should refer directly to the work you created in Exercise 3.2 to guide the new work you’ll do now. We recommended that you record the sources and details of the materials you used in your yarn wraps so that you’d be able to go back and find more. This might be
very helpful information now, but equally, you may seek to develop and add to the range of materials you originally used in response to your chosen image. First, review the materials you gathered in Exercise 3.2. Now that you’ve had some experience of developing yarn qualities through various simple means of experimentation, you might now have some ideas of what you can do with these materials to develop more interesting yarn possibilities.

Your task is to create a small range of newly developed yarn designs and concepts in response to your chosen image and the yarn wraps you developed from it.

You should also carry out your own research into one or more means of working with the yarns to create some simple textile or constructed forms. You’ll be able to find books, magazine articles and online videos and tutorials on the techniques we’ve listed below relatively easily. If you come across any other interesting simple construction techniques in addition to these examples, do go ahead and explore them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knotting</th>
<th>Macramé</th>
<th>Crochet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plaiting</td>
<td>Braiding</td>
<td>French knitting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rope-making</td>
<td>Finger knitting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We don’t expect you to become an expert in any of these overnight! Rather, it’s an opportunity to become engaged in some simple hands-on making that will allow you to use your yarns. You may wish to try two or three of the techniques using simple yarns and then settle on one you’d like to pursue further using your yarn designs. The technique you choose should allow you to show off your yarn designs even more dynamically.
Keep a research file of all the discoveries you make about your chosen technique(s) as well as your notes on any technical guidance or videos you’ve located, so that you can return to them in future. Keeping good, informative technical notes is a skill in its own right and one that you can build on as you work to master your textile focus in the future.

You’ll need to do some simple hands-on exploration of your chosen technique(s) before you start applying them to your yarn designs. Don’t worry about getting perfect results. The aim is to re-interpret and re-invent both your ways of making and your original Old Master image. Find new ways to push the making, as well as imaginative ways to employ your yarn samples and your own designs in the making. Try to capture the richness of surface and colour in your explorations.

As a guide, you might have to do three to five initial explorations of your technique, using simple yarns. You might then have to do some material testing to determine how to combine your found yarns and materials with your own yarn designs in the simple structure. Again, you might create three to five constructed samples to explore this fully. Try to take your learning from one sample into the next, so that each one gets more and more exciting.

Conclude this exercise by writing a reflective commentary on the processes you adopted as well as the discoveries, successes and failures you encountered along the way.

- How did you build from your successes?
- What did you learn from any failures?
- The aim was to push the techniques towards your own interpretation and re-invention of them. How did you tackle this?
- How did you re-invent and re-interpret the imagery, colour and yarns from Exercise 3.2?

Write 250–300 words.
Exercise 4.4 Deconstructing colour as yarn

Aim
This exercise aims to help you select and explore new and appropriate making and deconstructing techniques to translate lighter and more transparent qualities into your yarns.

Brief
In Exercise 3.3, you recorded a transparent and semi-transparent still life by translating it into a series of colour-focused stripe designs using watercolour paint. The qualities that resulted in your colour palette and in your handling of the watercolour media should be much lighter and sit in contrast to those you explored in Exercise 3.2 with your Old Master’s inspiration.

In this exercise, you’ll develop ideas from your stripe designs towards material selection and then apply methods of deconstruction and reduction to capture the lightness, colour, energy and particular qualities of your watercolour-painted stripes in a small series of yarn designs and yarn concepts.

First, with your stripe designs from Exercise 3.3 for reference, collect some materials that reflect both the colour palette and the qualities present in your designs. You should aim to collect materials that can be manipulated and taken apart in some way to further reflect these qualities and form yarn concepts.
Consider some of the techniques you employed when you were working on paper, surface and textile manipulation in Part Two. Look back at the list of words we gave you to provoke your approach to materials manipulations. Can you begin to employ some of these processes to deconstruct slightly heavier materials into much lighter versions? You’ll probably need to deconstruct materials into smaller pieces and elements, so that you can then re-construct them back into yarn formations. Remember, you’re deconstructing to make yarns and to create a sense of lightness in your yarns, extracting colour and qualities from your watercolour stripes.

Think also about developing other ways of removing qualities from your sourced materials. Consider approaches such as

- removing or fading colour
- fraying and meticulously removing material
- perforating substrates.

Keep a record of your deconstruction techniques, tests and experiments and any technical notes too. Present your materials both before and after you’ve explored them, taken them apart in some way (deconstructed) and used them to create new yarn designs or concepts (re-construction). Demonstrating the process of transition from a solid material to something that’s delicate and very fragile can be as exciting as the final result itself.

Aim to present around five fully-developed yarn designs or concepts that capture the qualities of your watercolour-painted stripes using deconstruction and re-construction methods.
Exercise 4.5 Collage-inspired yarn

Aims
This exercise aims to help you:
• further explore and refine colour, composition and making techniques in yarn design
• find ways to translate making techniques and approaches used in collage work into yarn concepts, with a focus on flat yarns
• master and refine strong development and making techniques and approaches that you’ve already tackled.

Brief
In this, the final exercise of your yarn and linear exploration, you’ll work in ways that echo the collage techniques you employed in Part Three, but now with a focus on yarn design.

Begin by looking back at the work you produced in Exercise 3.4. You should have at least six collage studies that you can select from to allow you to develop some refined yarn designs. It’s up to you to decide whether to work from just one collage or more than one.

You can also draw on all the yarn exploration and making you've done up to this point. Is there a making process you want to explore further? Is there a particular approach that would work best to translate aspects of your collage work?

Look at the range of paper surfaces and qualities, as well as colour, present in your collage work. Start by focusing on the following forms of yarn construction:

- flat yarns
- flat braids
- ribbons
- slit or slit-film yarns
- rag yarns
- tape yarns.

These types of yarn construction are generally quite flat in profile and have qualities that echo the flatness of the paper in collage. Do some research into these types of yarns to learn more about their construction and forms and consider how they might inform your yarn development for this exercise.

You should also try to translate some of the surface qualities apparent in your collage. Are the papers shiny, matt, sparkly, grainy or some other quality? Be sure to be sensitive in your selection of materials and their qualities.

As your focus is on a ‘flat’ construction in the yarn design, you may also wish to employ ways of joining and connecting pieces together to make length. Could you stitch, glue, clip, fasten, hook, slot, tie, loop or wrap pieces to connect them?
Think about the nature of collage and how it can combine and contrast many different qualities. The mixing, blending and combining of materials is inherent in yarn creation, so how can you emphasise this? The quote below sums up the whole range of yarn possibilities very simply. Can you attempt to deal with both the handle and the appearance of the yarn, hand in hand?

_Yarns can be made from one fibre or from blends of fibres depending on what is required from the ultimate fabric in terms of performance, handle and appearance. They can comprise one single yarn for a single ply yarn or be made from a number of single yarns twisted or folded (plied) together for a multi-ply yarn. There are a variety of different systems to make yarns with regular and irregular profiles. Yarns with regular profiles are termed regular yarns while those with irregular profiles are termed fancy yarns._

(Wilson, J. in Briggs-Goode and Townsend, 2011, p.4)

Create a series of at least five yarn designs with some type of flat construction, as in the examples just given, and inspired by your collage work. Make close reference to the visual inspiration of your collage work and demonstrate the links and translations you’ve explored. Bear in mind that you may need to produce and present many samples and tests before finalising your five yarn designs.

As always, continue to reflect on your ideas and development in your learning log or blog.
Assignment four

A yarn collection

Aims
Your aims in this assignment should be to:
• demonstrate your ability to value all stages of the design development process
• build on your ability to be selective and analytical of your design and presentation decisions

Brief
This assignment requires you to address the presentation of your work from Projects 1 and 2 as a collection. Yarns can be difficult to display clearly and effectively and usually the best method is the simplest one.

How you present your work is very much up to you. You received some initial guidance in the first exercise of Part Four (Exercise 4.1); you could choose to build from this, or develop your own method. This is an opportunity to be creative and imaginative, but also to make sure that...
you don’t over-complicate things! Presentation methods should enhance and support the work, not detract or distract from it. Boards, books, boxes and sheets are all equally possible, but you need to decide the format and the detail of this.

There is a major focus on colour and texture exploration in the yarn work you’ve produced. White or very pale coloured backgrounds are the most effective and contemporary way to present colour. Using good quality papers or lightweight card can also make a huge difference so think carefully and be selective with the papers you use to present your work on.

Be generous with the space you give to your work. Try not to cram work into small pages or put too much on one page. Give each piece room to breathe and allow the viewer to view each piece clearly. This will help to elevate your work and give it more importance.

Elevating chosen pieces of work will help demonstrate your evaluation of what you think are the strongest pieces against those you consider less successful. Testing and trials can perhaps be given less space, or be shown as a series, as they are likely to show more of the process rather than necessarily drawing any conclusions. Consider the ordering of exploratory samples and show your evaluation of them through your method of presenting. Indicate any unexpected results and mistakes that have given you inspiration.

Also be sure to show representations – colour copies, scans or prints – of the imagery or paper work or any other reference source you used to develop your yarns. This is a key component of showing your ability to translate colour, composition, proportion and qualities, which has been a major focus of Part Four.
Try to keep some consistency in the overall presentation, as you’ll be presenting all the projects together as a large collection. You can achieve consistency through the size of sheets, pages or boards or through the materials, format and techniques used to present the designs and processes.

Be sure to label your work and order it clearly for you to refer to later and for your tutor to view. If you decide to type or write any annotations or notes on this presentation, do so in a sympathetic manner and don’t allow this to overpower or distract from the designs themselves.

**Submitting your work at the end of Part Four**

You should now prepare your work to submit to your tutor for feedback.

You should submit your finished yarn collection as outlined above. This presentation should contain all your yarn exploration and developments as outlined in each project.

Also submit your learning log or blog url and examples of any additional sketchbook work you’ve undertaken.

**Written reflection**

During your work on Part Four, you should have made notes and sketches that form a written and visual record of the decision-making and reflections you’ve made as you’ve progressed from project to project and even from sample to sample. Conclude your work on Part Four by further reflecting on what you’ve learned over the duration of the projects. Write about what you’ve gained from observing and developing materials and textiles. Write about what you feel the strengths of your work are and what you’d like to spend more time addressing. Write 250–300 words and include this reflection, clearly labelled, in your learning log or blog.

**Reflection**

Before you send this assignment to your tutor, take a look at the assessment criteria for this course, which will be used to mark your work at assessment. The assessment criteria are listed in the introduction to this course guide.

Review your work using the criteria and make notes in your learning log/blog. Send these reflections to your tutor, along with the rest of your assignment submission.

Your tutor may take a while to get back to you so carry on with the course while you’re waiting.

**Reworking your assignment**

Following feedback from your tutor, you may wish to rework some of your assignment, especially if you are ultimately submitting your work for formal assessment. If you do this, make sure you reflect on what you have done and why in your learning log.
Part five
Building a collection

Jenny Ellery, *Work in Progress*, 2014 (mixed media including yarn, plaster, latex and sponge)
www.jennyellery.co.uk
Image reproduced by kind permission of the designer. Photography: John McNair.
Use the grid below to keep track of your progress throughout Part Five.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Developing visual research</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Building a response</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Experimenting and taking risks</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The studio is a laboratory, not a factory. An exhibition is the result of your experiments, but the process is never-ending. So an exhibition is not a conclusion.

(Chris Ofili)  

As you progress towards the completion of this course, you’ll consolidate your learning by tackling a series of connected projects that allow you to develop new translations, experiments and explorations. Although this is the concluding part of the course, it’s important not to see it as an ending; rather, it’s a chance to take stock of what you’ve tackled so far and apply your new knowledge, thinking and ways of working into further experimentation.

Consider Ofili’s statement above. As you develop your ideas and making, do you think of your working process as a factory or a laboratory? Where do the ideas, the reflection and the thinking go in this factory or laboratory? Is everything you do an experiment? Take some time to reflect on these issues in your learning log. How does your own thinking and approach relate to or contrast with Ofili’s?

Ofili also makes the point that an exhibition shows the results of experimentation: it is not a conclusion. How do you feel about this? Is an exhibition just a point in time that captures your experiments to date? Or does work in an exhibition need to form some kind of conclusion? Or can it do both? Continue to reflect on this and write down how you feel you would like to conclude or stop at the end of this course. Although you won’t be required to exhibit your work, you will be presenting it to be easily understood and examined, especially if you’re planning to submit for assessment. Do you feel that the work you have so far is a work-in-progress, or can you easily see how you might develop it a little further to present solid conclusions? How much do you value your experimental work, and is this more important than any final conclusions?

Part Five is made up of three projects which link from one to the next. Assignment Five will then prompt you to pull together all of the work from these three projects to present a coherent and exciting folio of observation, investigation, experimentation and refinement.

**Project 1** will take you through generating new and improved visual work by observing and working with sources you’ve already used. Now that you have a stronger understanding of some components and ways of translating and making links to generate new textile work, you should be able to apply your skills in an informed way.

**Project 2** will guide you to consider and develop the other ingredients you need to include if you’re to work towards a capsule collection of textiles.

**Project 3** will direct you to experiment and take risks in your materials making, materials manipulation and stitch translations and investigations.

**Assignment Five** will prompt you to evaluate the work from these three projects and develop and refine your experiments towards a capsule textile collection.

---

Project 1 Developing visual research

Begin by reviewing your visual research, in other words all the drawing, mark-making and recording you’ve carried out during this course, particularly back in the Introduction and in Parts One and Two.

Look back at the extensive folio of work you’ve created and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of your drawing and observational work. You can do this in your learning log or blog. You now have the chance to build on the strengths and try to tackle any perceived weaknesses.

You should now choose a project, exercise or aspects of some work you enjoyed or feel you would like to revisit or use as a starting point for new visual work.

Choose ONE of the options below. Send your tutor a brief email informing them of your choice and how you plan on tackling it. If you wish to formulate your own brief for the creation of new visual work, you can do this too, but your plan must be as challenging and detailed as those set out below. If you choose to go down this route, tell your tutor what you plan to do so that they can check that you’re thinking along the right lines. Make an entry in your learning log or blog outlining your thinking on how you’ll tackle your chosen option.
**Option 1 Strengthening a theme**
For this option, you should refer to work you created for Assignment One: Introductory Assignment.

In this early project you explored one of four themes, choosing from Tropical Tourist, Style Lounge, Iced Landscape and Nature's Larder, by putting together a still-life set-up and observing and recording aspects of it through drawing and mark-making.

For this option, you could go back and do more drawing to build on the theme you initially investigated. Consider how you could rebuild your still-life composition and strengthen its story, mood and atmosphere, to give you more ingredients for your drawings and mark-making. Colour wasn't a priority first time round so you could now give some thought to creating a colour palette for your still life and consider how you could carefully select colour and proportions of colour for inclusion.

If you wish, you could choose a different theme from the one you worked with originally, and so start the gathering of objects and materials afresh.

Create eight to ten new drawings using any media and in any size you wish.

**Option 2 Back to the archive**
Refer to work you created for Part One, Project 2: Recording and capturing.

In this project you selected archive textiles and recorded them through various means of drawing, mark-making and collage.

Consider how you can return to the archive as a source of visual, tactile and colour information. Reflect on the drawings you already have of your previous archive choices and make informed decisions on what you would now like to draw. You can still choose whether to work from a more formal archive or your own personal archive, but this time, decide on a focus for your observation. Will you concentrate mainly on texture and surface, for example, or detail and line? You now know that these drawings, marks and/or collages will inform linear qualities in the form of yarns as well as inspiring stitched textiles. As a result, you should be more aware of the abundance of visual inspiration you need to inform the development of your ideas.

Create eight to ten new drawings using any media and in any size you wish.
Option 3 Floral compositions
Refer to work you created for Part 1, Project 3: Picking and portraying.

In this project you sought to capture flowers, leaves and/or plants through your observation, drawing and mark-making.

After reviewing your drawing for this project, plan a new still life to work from, with flowers and/or foliage as its focus. Consider the composition carefully as well as how you can work to capture the colour palette effectively. Can you build upon and refine any particularly successful techniques or media from last time? Are there techniques you’d like to experiment with that would suit this subject matter? Colour could be a strong focus for your new visual work with this subject matter too.

Create eight to ten new drawings using any media and in any size you wish.

It is important that you develop fresh visual research at this stage to give you some new information, new marks and new colour to feed your new work. Your recent experience of developing and translating primary visual information into your own paper/material developments, yarns and stitched textiles should place you in a knowledgeable position as you begin to create new visual work. You need an abundance and variety of fresh and lively work to inform your experimentation and – later – your refinement of fresh and lively textiles. However, try not to think too far ahead when you’re engaged in the drawing stages, as it can hinder and restrict you if you’re already planning what the textiles will be. Allow each project to inform the next and make experimentation your key focus. You should be experimenting from the drawing stages right to the end, to allow unexpected, surprising and perhaps innovative outcomes to happen.

Alicia Galer, Botanical Drawing (acrylic, pastel, pencil and watercolour)
www.aliciagaler.com
Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist.
Project 2 Building a response

Now that you’ve developed a fresh collection of drawing, mark-making, textures, and perhaps pattern and colour, from your observational work in Project 1, think about all the other ingredients and tools you’ll need to help you build towards textile experimentation. In this project, you may not yet be creating textiles, but you will be making selections, observations and setting out the different choices that will directly inform your textile exploration in Project 3.

You’ll need to do the following:

Identify and present your colour palette
Working from your new drawings, you can choose to paint out colour chips or paint out simple stripe designs to extract colour from one or more of your drawings, just as you did in Part Three. Consider possible proportions of colour as well as the individual colours themselves. If you feel the drawings don’t have sufficient colour within them to give you a full palette of colours, you could choose to take colour from a different source entirely. You could use a colour palette that you developed in Part Three, for example. Be very clear about where your colour is taken from. If you decide to use a palette that you’ve already created, you must present it again in relation to this project. You can do this by scanning or photographing the palette and reprinting it or re-painting out colour chips and exploring new colour proportions.

Be inspired by an artist or designer
Throughout this course you’ve researched relevant artists and designers and carried out your own investigations into their work. You may also have used the images and quotes in this course guide to prompt further investigation into the artist or designer concerned. And hopefully you’ve also taken the opportunity to visit galleries, museums and exhibitions to build your first-hand experience of textiles.

The contemporary context for your work is something that we’ve touched on at a few points in this course. This is something you’ll increasingly need to consider as you develop your textiles practice. For this project you should seek to find at least one artist or designer/design company whose work, way of working, application of techniques, handling of materials or use of colour you find particularly inspiring. Carry out some research to learn more about the aspects of their work that you find interesting and use this to build a small research file, to include visual and written information and reflection. In your learning log, reflect on what you can learn from this designer to influence your approach to your own work or way of working. Can you use this research to inform an aspect of your project now?

Develop textile concepts
Using your new drawings from Project 1 as a source of inspiration, develop a series of textile concepts, using papers and other surfaces to develop material ideas, textures and structures. Also begin to explore ideas of material manipulation in conjunction with the possibilities of stitch.

Look back at your work from Part Two: Surface and stitch, and refer back to the relevant section in this course guide to remind yourself of the scope of the treatments and stitch possibilities.
you could adopt. Use your colour palette to guide the colour use in your exploration, and
explore translation of the range of qualities in your drawings in tandem with these colours.

As you’ve created new drawings with new qualities, you’ll probably need to source new
materials to work with.

Consider developing between 10 and 15 textile concepts, depending on their nature and how
time-consuming they are to make.

**Develop yarn and linear concepts**

You explored many options for yarn development and design in Part Four of the course. Employ
these approaches to develop yarns and linear concepts whilst also working on your textile
concepts. The translation process is similar, but the outcomes can take on quite different forms
and employ different materials and treatments.

You can then work to integrate and apply your yarn designs to your textile concepts, as
you consider the translation of linear qualities from your drawings to your initial material
explorations.

Consider developing at least six to eight yarn concepts. If you want line quality to be a very
strong focus of the resulting textiles, and you wish to work with your own yarn ideas in your
later stitched textiles, you may wish to develop many more yarn designs.

**Produce a workbook/working sketchbook**

As you work through your ideas and begin to develop work for all of the above, evidence the
development of your work and ideas in a sketchbook or workbook dedicated to this project.
You probably won’t want to put all of your work in here though, as some work may be better
presented on boards. You may also want to place more emphasis on key pieces, discoveries or
experiments by presenting these separately from your workbook. And some samples may be
more appropriately presented elsewhere simply due to their larger size.
Project 3 Experimenting and taking risks

In this project you’ll translate the qualities in your drawings into material and stitch explorations and further develop your textile and yarn concepts into textile results.

Be sure to employ all of your visual, surface, texture and material research and developments from Projects 1 and 2, to achieve a smooth and well-supported transition to textile exploration and experimentation. Although this process is presented here in a more or less step-by-step or linear sequence, you may find that you wish to go back to do more drawing or more colour work or more yarn development, if you feel at any time that you’re struggling for inspiration or there’s a gap in your research. This is a natural part of the design and creative process. The process of revisiting, redeveloping and reverting to earlier processes to push your later development is absolutely normal!

Your focus in this project is on experimentation, and particularly on taking risks with your methods and materials. You may wish to identify a particular focus for this experimentation, based on what you’ve achieved in Project 2 already:

- Is there a material or technique that you can really take to extremes?
- Would a bold exploration on a really large scale of stitch give you a new angle on translating your drawings and marks?
- If colour is an area that you really want to push, can you tackle extremes of use and application, whether through pushing proportions and colour placement or in your choices of material qualities and how they relate to their colour?

Josh Blackwell, *Pink Worms* (yarn and plastic bag)

www.joshblackwell.com

Image reproduced by kind permission of the artist and Kate MacGarry.
Be bold, but also be sure that as you work from sample to sample, you build sensitivity towards the materials you're using and look at them closely to move them onwards in the next experiment. Try to make links between samples and experiments and use what you learn from one to inform the next.

One must be entirely sensitive to the structure of the material that one is handling. One must yield to it in tiny details of execution, perhaps the handling of the surface or grain, and one must master it as a whole.

(Barbara Hepworth)

This quote from the sculptor, Barbara Hepworth, indicates the level to which you can become knowledgeable and respectful of the materials you work with. In order to attain a very good level of understanding, you may eventually need to direct your focus to just a few or even one main material. Mastering your materials and your processes should be your aim as you progress through your textile experience. At the moment, though, it's important that you get a balance between being adventurous with your textile ideas and acquiring detailed knowledge of some aspects, materials, processes or techniques – even developing your own techniques or combinations of these.

Work to develop at least 10 experimental textile samples. You may achieve less, if your processes are particularly time-consuming, or achieve many more than ten if you have some quicker responses. Decide on the sample sizes that are appropriate for each technique and exploration but try also to explore a variety of scale in your work.

---

Assignment five

Your capsule collection

In the three projects you’ve just completed, you worked to make decisions and find design directions inspired by your visual work, your research and some contextual research relating to your selected designer or artist.

In this, your final assignment, you should strongly consider the presentation of your work to reflect your engagement with all aspects of the projects, as well as aiming to communicate the particular discoveries and results that you find to be the most exciting, the most unexpected and the most beautiful.

Try to find some space to lay out your work so far. Reflect on which pieces you’d like to develop further towards the creation of your textiles capsule collection. This stage of development should prompt you to evaluate your experimental samples plus all of your supporting work from the first two projects to decide how you can refine and enhance your discoveries in the collection samples.

Now work to create a capsule collection of at least six samples. Try not to treat these as ‘final’ in any way; rather, think of them as an opportunity to improve upon your experimental samples, perhaps refining and working towards perfecting techniques and finishes, and extending them into a bigger sample size. All your capsule collection samples should be a minimum of 30cm x 30cm in size, but can be much bigger if you wish.
Any textile collection, even one of just six samples, should demonstrate unity and a sense that they belong together as a group. Each sample will have its own characteristics, qualities and appearance, but they should also sit well together and complement each other when displayed next to one another.

It can be difficult to define what connects a collection. Colour is often used, albeit in different proportions in different samples, and this might perhaps be the case with your samples as you’ve worked with one colour palette. Different uses of the same technique across samples can also make visual connections. Similarities in texture or surface can also help to make links. However, don’t be afraid to build differences into your collection; you can work at connecting the samples in quite subtle ways, perhaps with a shot of extra colour taken from another sample, or the use of a small stitch or mark in one area of a sample that is taken from another design. Sometimes the order in which you place samples can tell a gradually changing story from one sample to the next, but if you placed the first and last samples next to each other the connection wouldn’t be so clear. So, perhaps the ordering of your samples will be key to emphasising how they work as a collection.

Present your capsule collection in a clear and simple manner that is sympathetic to your work. Don’t over-complicate the presentation. It’s best to use a white or very pale card or heavy paper to attach the samples. Don’t completely paste down samples unless the sample is particularly fragile – they only need to be attached by the top edge or the top two corners. Consider how many samples to place on each sheet; be sure to give them sufficient space. Also consider the ordering and how you’ll communicate that the samples form a collection.

Finally, you may find it useful to take a look at the assessment criteria again.

**Review point Context**

**Context** – Reflection, research, critical thinking (20%).

The majority of your evidence that links with this assessment criterion is related to your learning log or blog so it’s important that you’ve reflected in a strong and committed way throughout the course. The course guide has prompted you to reflect on different points and to record your thinking about the tasks you’ve tackled and some issues that surround them. You’ll also evidence critical thinking in your decision-making during the development both of your ideas and of the work itself.
Submitting your work at the end of Part Five
You should now prepare your work to submit to your tutor for feedback.

Submit your completed folio of work as outlined in Projects 1, 2, 3 and in Assignment Five. This presentation should contain all stages of exploration and development as outlined in each project.

Organise your work in an easily accessible way and send it to your tutor.

You should also show your tutor your learning log/blog and examples of additional sketchbook work and other research you’ve undertaken.

Written reflection
Conclude your work on Part Five by further reflecting on what you’ve learned as you’ve developed your capsule textile collection from your work on the projects in this part of the course. What went well and what went less well? Now that you’ve come to the end of the course, what do you feel the strengths of your work are? What would you like to spend more time addressing? Where are you going to go from here in your textiles practice? Write around 500 words and include this reflection, clearly labelled, in your learning log or blog. Illustrate your written reflection with some images of your work.

Reflection
Before you send this assignment to your tutor, take a look at the assessment criteria for this course, which will be used to mark your work at assessment. The assessment criteria are listed in the introduction to this course guide.

Review your work using the criteria and make notes in your learning log/blog. Send these reflections to your tutor, along with the rest of your assignment submission.

This will be your final tutor report for the course. It forms part of a conversation on the development and review of your progress and your tutor will be pleased to help you with recommendations for preparing your work for assessment, if this is your intention.

Reworking your assignment
Following feedback from your tutor, you may wish to rework some of your assignment, especially if you are ultimately submitting your work for formal assessment. If you do this, make sure you reflect on what you have done and why in your learning log.
References

Murphy, D. (2009) Designing for the King: From Chaos to Order by Designing Within. Mustang, Oklahoma: Tate Publishing
Textiles 1: A Textiles Vocabulary

Further reading


Journals and websites

Crafts www.craftscouncil.org.uk/magazine
Embroidery magazine https://subscribeme.to/embroidery
Institute of Making www.instituteofmaking.org.uk/
Material Lab www.material-lab.co.uk/blog/
Patternity http://patternity.org/
Selvedge www.selvedge.org
Textile Forum magazine www.textileforum.com
VADS online resource for the visual arts www.vads.ac.uk
V&A collections www.vandaimages.com
# Textiles 1: A Textiles Vocabulary

## Links

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Link</th>
<th>Weblink</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Link 1</td>
<td><a href="http://www.moma.org/explore/collection/lb/index">www.moma.org/explore/collection/lb/index</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 2</td>
<td><a href="http://www.alisoncarlier.com">www.alisoncarlier.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 3</td>
<td><a href="http://www.alexjameschalmers.com">www.alexjameschalmers.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 4</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hilaryellis.co.uk">www.hilaryellis.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 5</td>
<td><a href="http://www.michaelgriffithsfineart.com">www.michaelgriffithsfineart.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 6</td>
<td><a href="http://www.debbie-smyth.com">www.debbie-smyth.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 7</td>
<td><a href="http://www.katiesollohub.co.uk">www.katiesollohub.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 8</td>
<td><a href="http://www.roannawells.co.uk">www.roannawells.co.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 9</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hockneypictures.com">www.hockneypictures.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 10</td>
<td><a href="http://color.adobe.com/create/color-wheel">http://color.adobe.com/create/color-wheel</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 11</td>
<td><a href="http://mudcu.be/sphere">http://mudcu.be/sphere</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 12</td>
<td><a href="http://color.hailpixel.com">http://color.hailpixel.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 13</td>
<td><a href="http://colorhunter.com">http://colorhunter.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 14</td>
<td><a href="http://colrd.com">http://colrd.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 15</td>
<td><a href="http://www.woolmark.com/trends">www.woolmark.com/trends</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 16</td>
<td><a href="http://www.campaignforwool.org/">www.campaignforwool.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 17</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cottoninc.com">www.cottoninc.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 19</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lurex.com/Inspiration">www.lurex.com/Inspiration</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link 21</td>
<td>heimtextil.messefrankfurt.com/frankfurt/en/besucher/willkommen.html</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>