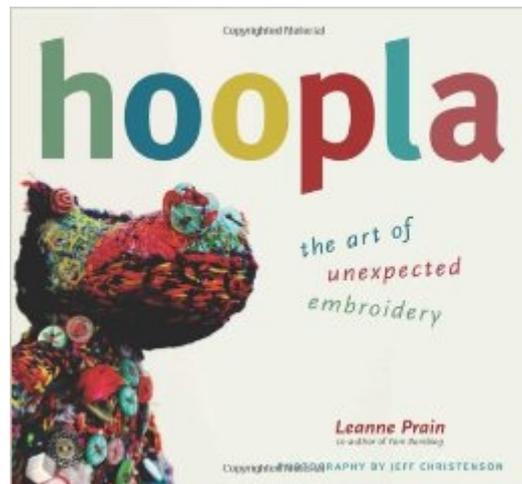


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# Hoopla: The Art Of Unexpected Embroidery



## Synopsis

A Library Journal Best Book of the Year *Hoopla*, by the co-author of 2009's bestselling *Yarn Bombing: The Art of Crochet and Knit Graffiti*, showcases those who take the craft of embroidery where it's never gone before, in an astonishing, full-color display of embroidered art. *Hoopla* rebels against the quaint and familiar embroidery motifs of flowers and swashes, and focuses instead on innovative stitch artists who specialize in unusual, guerrilla-style patterns such as a mythical jackalope and needlepoint nipple doilies; it demonstrates that modern embroidery artists are as sharp as the needles with which they work. *Hoopla* includes twenty-eight innovative embroidery patterns and profiles of contemporary embroidery artists, including Jenny Hart, author of *Sublime Stitching*; Rosa Martyn of the UK-based Craftivism Collective; Ray Materson, an ex-con who learned to stitch in prison; Sherry Lynn Wood of the Tattooed Baby Doll Project, which collaborated with female tattoo artists across the United States; Penny Nickels and Johnny Murder, the self-proclaimed Bonnie and Clyde of embroidery; and Alexandra Walters, a military wife who replicates military portraits and weapons in her stitching. Full-color throughout and bursting with history, technique, and sass, *Hoopla* will teach readers how to stitch a ransom note pillow, mean and dainty knuckle-tattoo church gloves; and create their own innovative embroidery projects. If you like anarchistic DIY craft and the idea of deviating from the rules, *Hoopla* will inspire you to wield a needle with flair! With a foreword by Betsy Greer.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I found *Hoopla* via a website, and ordered it just going by the cover. I was not disappointed. It's a delight of a book. I'm a little worried that hand stitching, which has been devalued for centuries as

"women's work" will gain credence only because a number of men have taken it up - but I can't change society. I suspect it's the inclusion of men embroidering (manbroidery is the term) that makes it all of a sudden acceptable as art to the art world at large. However, despite my annoyance at this, I am glad that the joy of stitching unique and uncommon art has become worthy of a good book. I hate books and reviews that claim: Not your mother's stitchery (or knitting or crochet, etc) because usually that is exactly what that is. There is a crochet book of that name that features patterns straight out of McCall's Needlework and Crafts from the 60s and 70s - and it IS her mother's crochet - and pretty dull crochet at that! Worse, crochet that predates the innovations and exciting work done during the the 1970s and early 1980s, which brought a revolution in all sorts of textile work. These were the first innovations in needlework of all sorts in centuries. I still have many of the textile and stitchery books I got during that period, and find them useful and inspiring to this day. How nice to finally find some new books that bring a fresh look at this ancient craft. Hoopla definitely can hold its own with "Native Funk and Flash" which is still a book that makes you get out some sort of textile device and do something. But, Hoopla can - and does - inspire in the same way those books do. If you have been thinking of experimenting with stitchery, buy Hoopla and Push Stitchery and you won't come up for air for weeks.

I am a lifelong embroiderer and I looked forward to this book to see what artists were doing with the form that was described in such glowing terms. Even after adjusting my expectations, I can only say...what a disappointment and a bitter one at that. First, I expect that people who are described and describe themselves as leaders in the field to be not only masters of technique, but pushing the boundaries of technique. With the exception of one of the artists doing needlepainted portraits, all of the techniques surveyed were beyond basic. There are dozens of different embroidery styles and literally hundreds of stitches - and that is just the techniques and stitches in their traditional forms - before any "cutting edge" innovation and not one of the artists in this book pushed the boundaries of technique - or even demonstrated the huge range of techniques available, with some very minor exceptions. Wait a minute, you say.....wonderful things can be done with simple materials and simple techniques presented in a new way with an artist's eye - and that is true. It just wasn't done here. Were all of the artist's uniformly terrible? Of course not, but in no case was I wowed. At no time did I ask myself "How did they do that?" And I never wanted to try my hand at any of the things presented - an important point as this book presents instructions and "projects". I didn't want to do one of them, even if I did my own take on it. What most of these people seem to be good at, is not embroidery but self promotion and pretension. Not only did I have to wade through examples of

work that rose to the at best level of good, but I had to read the descriptions and artists statements.

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