

The lively needle

Painting your canvas

By MARY KAY DAVIS

Beautiful needlepoint can be worked on canvas that has never been touched by paint. But if painted canvases turn you on, here are a few how-to-do-it tips from an expert.

Elizabeth Meyer designs and paints magnificent canvases. She illustrated "Needlepoint from America's Great Quilt Designs" and is currently diagramming my new book with Helen Giannattelli.

A fully-colored canvas is a help when you don't enjoy following graphs. You know exactly where to change colors, and what colors to change to.

More importantly, a painted canvas is colored to match your wool. Even if the yarn doesn't completely cover the canvas, no white flecks can show through because they've all been painted.

FIRST TRACE your design on the canvas. Use either a fine tipped permanent marking pen or India ink and a quill pen. The latter gives much finer lines, but is somewhat more difficult to use.

Then fill in the areas with color. El-

ther use oil or acrylic paints, or waterproof marking pens. Each medium has its pros and its cons.

Waterproof pens are easy to work with and dry quickly. Their drawback is in their limited color range. Buy use only marking pens that are labeled "waterproof," and even then be careful.

Needlepoint canvas is heavily sized and some waterproof marking inks sit on top of that sizing. They never penetrate to the canvas fibers below and are freed when the canvas is dampened during blocking. The ink grabs for the nearest available fiber. And that means permanent ink stains on your newly finished needlepointing.

Test any pen you're not sure of on a scrap of canvas. Wait 15 minutes and then scrub the canvas with a wet, white cloth. If any ink stains the cloth, don't let the pen near your needlepoint canvas.

OILS. Unlike pens, have an infinite range of possible colors. Dilute them, not with turpentine but with a fabric medium such as textile by Grumbacher. Then wait for them to dry. Don't stack or stitch in less than 12 hours.



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Acrylic paints have the same wide color range as oils and are faster drying. Usually four hours will harden them completely. But acrylics are diluted with water, and water will soften the canvas sizing if too much is used. So paint with a "dry brush," using as little water as is necessary to spread the paint.

When using oils or acrylics, be careful not to clog the canvas holes. Test the consistency of the paint on a canvas scrap before you begin the main piece. Don't use your best brushes. Canvas is a rough surface and will ruin a fine paint brush.

Paint on a protected surface. Some of the paint will probably go through the canvas mesh. You don't want it as a permanent addition to your kitchen counter or dining room table.

And that's all there is to it. Stitch and enjoy!

Volunteers

WOMEN'S SURVIVAL CENTER is Pontiac is looking for 35 volunteer crisis counselors concerned about women trapped in dangerous and lonely situations. Counselors answer a hot-line phone for a four-to-six hour period once a week. If interested, they may also work in public speaking, publicity and research areas of the program. Training is provided.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSIONS Service in Pontiac is sponsoring an expanded nutrition education workshop at the Pontiac YMCA on April 27. Volunteers are needed for children while mothers learn how to improve their family's nutrition. Hours are 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

HERITAGE CONVALESCENT Center in Birmingham is seeking volunteers interested in working with elderly residents in the center's activities programs. Duties vary according to the interests of the volunteer but may include readings, writing, playing games, sewing, providing music. Teens over 14 are welcome as well as adults. Hours are flexible.

FAMILY AND CHILDREN Services of Oakland County in Berkley needs persons with public relations experiences as well as people for clerical and receptionist duty. Drivers are also needed to transport clients to appointments and return home. Volunteers are needed to assist elderly incoming with problems of daily living. Case aides are needed to help elderly or foster child of single parent families.

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Camp Fire Girls to hold annual Finger Fling event

Camp Fire Girls and their families from all parts of the tri-county area will gather April 16 at Southfield's Tel-Twelve Mall for the annual CFG Finger Fling display and awards ceremony.

Display hours are 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. with award ceremonies beginning at 12:30 p.m. in the fountain area of the mall.

Some 1,000 Camp Fire Girls between the ages of 7 and 17 have participated in this year's project, knitting, sewing, crocheting, embroidering and macramé items to develop personal abilities and to benefit those in the community who receive these gifts.

The Finger Fling program is a service project undertaken each year by the Detroit area council with the assistance of the Needlework Guild of America Birmingham chapter. Individuals, or girls in groups, perfect needlework skills by making quilts and af-

ghans, knitted, crocheted or sewn layettes and apparel; education and fun toys.

These items are then distributed to needy youngsters and adults in the Detroit metropolitan area. Recipients in former years have included Lulu Belle Stewart Center for infants, Children's Hospital, Wayne County General Hospital pediatrics, Martha T. Berry Memorial Hospital of Mt. Clemens, Wing Lake School for Retarded Children and the Rivergate Convalescent Center.

THE 1,000 entries, judged before the mall display, are graded on practicality and suitability in design and fabric for each category, plus workmanship and needlework skills.

Award ceremonies begin at 12:30 p.m. for Blue Birds (ages 7-8), followed by Camp Fire Adventurers (ages 9-11) at 2 p.m., and the Discovery and Horizon Club entries (junior-senior high school) at 3:30 p.m.

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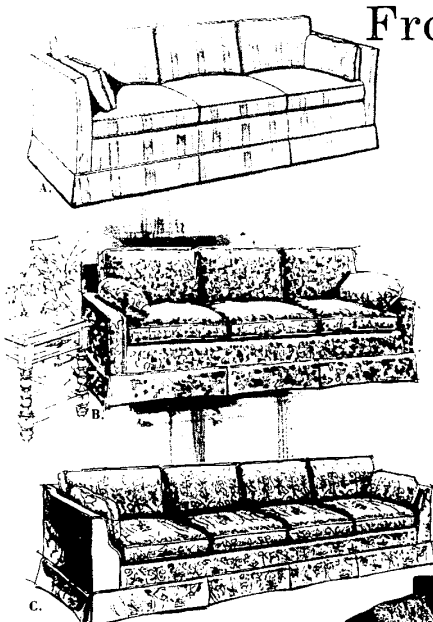
Left: Soft rounded semi-attached back cushions, gently sloped arms, matching bolsters and a frame graciously shaped at each end are focal points of this extremely comfortable Sofa-by-the-Inch 54" to 120" lengths available.

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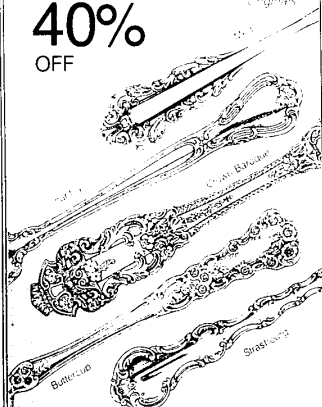


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