

# fashion forward

Part 2 of 6

By Stephanie Corina Goddard

## Petite Plus Patterns All Season Dress

A diverse collection of embroidery motifs takes on new dimension when stitched in a single color.

### Supplies

- ◆ Pattern for sleeveless sheath dress
- ◆ Fashion fabric and notions according to pattern envelope.  
*Note:* Our sample is constructed of silk noil, with silk matka and dupioni accents.
- ◆ Scraps of accent fabrics to match fashion fabric
- ◆ Mesh water-soluble and tear-away stabilizer
- ◆ Size 75/11 embroidery needle
- ◆ Embroidery thread to match fashion fabric
- ◆ Pattern tracing supplies including dressmaker tracing carbon
- ◆ Cotton swab
- ◆ Freestanding lace, cutwork, appliqué and other embroidery designs of your choice
- ◆ Optional: customizing software

### Getting started

- ◆ Using the pattern tracing supplies, trace a full (left and right sides) copy of the upper front pattern piece. Draw in the seamlines and the center front.
- ◆ When choosing embroidery motifs, strive for as much textural diversity as possible. Consider embroidering lace (freestanding or not), cutwork, appliqué, fringe, heirloom, chainstitch, satin stitch and patterned fills. To add yet another dimension, plan to attach a patch of accent fabric beneath a cutwork motif.
- ◆ Print or stitch a template of each embroidery motif and then trace one or more copies onto semi-sheer tracing paper. Be sure to include the cross marks for each motif.
- ◆ Play with the motifs over the pattern to arrive at a pleasing arrangement, avoiding the bust points. Allow at least 1/4" breathing space above the neckline. Tape the motifs in place on the pattern.
- ◆ Cut out the garment according to the pattern guidesheet except for the front neckline. For hooping ease, leave the neckline area between the shoulders intact.

### Embroidery

- ◆ Stitch the freestanding lace motifs first. Hoop a layer of mesh water-soluble stabilizer and thread both the needle and bobbin with embroidery thread.

Ken Clubb illustration



◆ Embroider as many lace motifs as needed; following the manufacturer's directions, soak away the stabilizer. Dry the lace pieces flat on a towel; set aside.

◆ Prepare to embroider any cutwork next. Place the front garment section right side up and lightly pin the upper front tracing in place. Slip dressmaker tracing carbon

between the layers and mark the cross marks for the cutwork motif(s).

◆ Hoop the fabric with a layer of mesh water-soluble stabilizer. Embroider, following the digitizer's directions for cutting away portions of the fabric without cutting through the stabilizer.

◆ Un-hoop and trim the stabilizer close to the stitching, taking care not to clip through the embroidered details in the open areas.

**If your layout requires multiple lace motifs, combine as many as will fit comfortably in one hooping.**

## Appliqué Fussy Fabrics

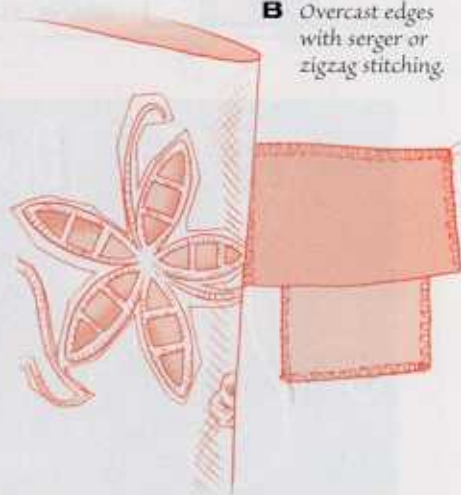
The cut edges of fussy fabrics such as silk doupioni or raw silk are very fragile. As appliqués, their edges are prone to pulling out of position. To tame them for

machine appliqué, simply pin or baste a topper of clear water-soluble stabilizer after trimming the appliqué fabrics (A). After embroidery is complete, pull off as much of the film as possible and then dab the rest away with a wet cotton swab.

◆ Place the work right side up over a plush towel. Dip a cotton swab in water and dab away any remaining stabilizer in the open areas. Allow the fabric to dry.



**B** Overcast edges with serger or zigzag stitching.



## Design Tips

Pin the pattern to the clothing you're wearing and work in front of a mirror.

- ◆ Place the largest motifs at the center neckline, tapering to smaller elements below and toward each side.
- ◆ Group smaller motifs together for more impact.
- ◆ The freestanding lace and accent fabrics will be the most eye-catching. Spread them around rather than concentrating them all in one place.

◆ Embroider the appliqué(s). Re-pin the layout tracing on the fabric and mark the cross marks for each appliqué motif. Switch to bobbin thread in the bobbin. Hoop the fabric with tear-away stabilizer and begin the embroidery sequence, following the digitizer's directions for the appliqué process.

*Note:* For more information on getting started with cutwork and appliqué, see the "Totally Techniques" column on page 40 of this issue and also in the March/April '07 issue of *CME*.

◆ Remove as much stabilizer as possible and press from the wrong side.

◆ Embroider any remaining motif(s). Re-pin the layout to the fabric and mark the cross marks for each motif. Hoop the fabric with tear-away stabilizer, aligning the guidemarks. Embroider, then remove as much stabilizer as possible and press from the wrong side.

## Construction

◆ Re-pin the original front pattern to the embroidered fabric and cut out the neckline.

◆ Prepare an underlay patch of one or more fabrics for the cutwork motif(s) by overcasting the edges with serger or zigzag stitching (**B** on page 75). Pin the underlay in place beneath the embroidery. Convert to standard sewing. Thread the needle with matching embroidery thread and straight stitch around each open shape in the cutwork.

◆ Construct the garment following the pattern guidesheet.

◆ Referring to the pattern piece with templates arranged, hand-tack the freestanding lace motifs in place as desired. ☞

*Stephanie Corina Goddard writes and sews in Easton, Md. to the sounds of classical music and dog moans.*

*Designs: Sadia Sews, Kanta Lace, design11 (freestanding lace); Izmir, design 15 (fill); Farsi, design1s (appliqué); Arabi II, design 4 (cutwork)*