

Ceremonial Cloak

Materials: Gilt passing thread, Tambour passing Thread, Silk taffeta(leaves), Silk satin (birds), Silk thread, commercial adhesive, wool, linen (lining)

Technique: appliqué done as laid couching, free embroidery – split stitch

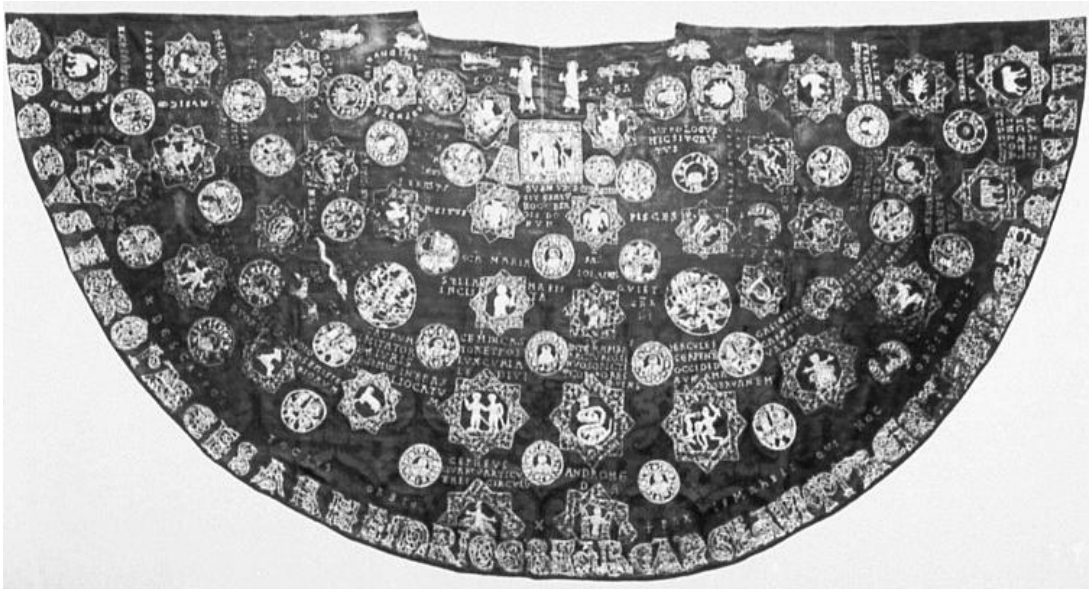


This cloak was created as a symbol of office. I had been asked to do the embroidery on the cloak; the balance of the sewing would be completed by other people crafting the cloak.

The cloak was already cut, and it was my challenge to design the embroidery which needed to fulfill a number of requirements:

- Incorporate designs which were important to the recipient
- Needed to represent the office they would be ascending
- The embroidery needed to be done in a short period of time
- Needed to be suitable for the style of cloak requested

The usage of a cloak for ceremonial purposes is well documented throughout the period of our study. They are usually represented in artwork on Saints and Royalty. The image of Ludwig Von Toulouse painted by Simone Martini in 1317 is a good example of a ceremonial robe of its kind. These styles of cloaks traditionally were embroidered all over the garment such as the mantel of Kaiser Heinrichs II in Bamberg, Germany.





While the majority of the cloaks were either directly embroidered using techniques such as Opus Anglicanum or other forms of gold work, there is evidence that appliqué was also used on the garments. An example of this is seen in the flowers and leaves from this appliquéd chasuble from the late 15th century.

Embroidery:

The silk for the leaves and pelicans were backed with commercial adhesive in lieu of the more accurate casein based glues. I was concerned about the glue coming through the silk as well as I did not want it drying up before I completed the embroidery. It would also give the appliqués more strength and less opportunity to fray.

Two strands of gold tambour passing thread was used for the leaves. Silk thread was used to couch down the gold overtop of the silk, right on the edge. In this method the edges would not need to be turned under. The pelicans were done using the same technique but using a gilt passing thread for the majority of the outline.

In a whimsical note, I had opted to replace one of the three baby pelican's traditionally in the artwork with a badger, the recipient's badge. The badgers were done using split stitch with 2 strands of silk thread.

Images:

Simone Martini: Altar des Ludwig von Toulouse, um 1317, National-Museum von Capodimonte in Neapel

http://www.heiligenlexikon.de/BiographienL/Ludwig_von_Toulouse.html

Sternenmantel Kaiser Heinrich, Bamberg, Domschatz, circa 1020 <http://www.bildindex.de/bilder/MI00092b02a.jpg>

Couched goldwork, appliqué embroidery. C1470-1500. Victoria and Albert Museum : Inventory number T 194-1911 . Image located at <http://images.vam.ac.uk/>. January 2004.

References:

Schuette, Marie, and Mu"ller-Christensen, Sigrid. *A Pictorial History of Embroidery*. Frederick A Praeger. New York.

Newton, Stella Mary. *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince, A Study of the Years 1340-1365*. The Boydell Press. Rochester NY.1980. ISBN 0-85115-767-X