

Appliqué Angels and Hearts

with Christmas Projects

Madeleine Millington



A RAINBOW DISKS BOOK

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Madeleine Millington is well known throughout the UK for her work with recycled, dyed blankets. She has been featured in books and magazines and is the designer behind the successful kit range 'Blankits'. Madeleine teaches and lectures regularly for the Embroiderers' and Quilters Guilds and is a member of The Devon Guild of Craftsmen.

USING THIS BOOK

- Browse through this book using the pdf bookmarks and page tabs on the left-hand side - they will take you quickly to the chapter, project or page you need.
- Use the pdf zoom tool to zoom in on close-up details in photographs, and see the details greatly enlarged.
TIP: Click on the zoom tool and drag a box around the area you want to enlarge.
- When you have chosen your first project, print out its pages for easy and portable reference.
- Use links to suppliers to go directly to their web pages.

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Introduction

Layers and shapes of colourful blanket, hand stitched on top of one another gives an almost quilted look as the stitches sink into the surface. This is the starting point for all the fun I have had with appliqué using dyed woollen blanket fabric. Keeping the colours strong and the stitching bold but simple creates a contemporary folk-art feel – and scope for plenty of amusement.

So, I've written this book to show you how much fun you can have with the natural fabric of wool blanket ([see page 6](#)), whilst also developing your knowledge of appliqué. There are clear instructions for making templates and simple hand stitching, so you can create any of the projects, from a small hanging bird through to the more adventurous Glitzy Angel.

The projects in this book are intended to inspire you to make your own heirlooms whether they be simple or more elaborate, for Christmas or for all-year-round (my angels are always on display to cheer us up throughout the seasons). Once you have mastered some of the ideas, what about developing your own colour schemes and embellishments? There are plenty of opportunities to be inventive and create your own personal well-loved things.



- ▲ *Simple hanging bird ([page 13](#))*
- ◀ *This Hearts Sampler is a perfect demonstration of the techniques we will be using. The simple heart shapes in bold coloured blanket fabric are handstitched onto contrasting backgrounds, which are themselves handstitched onto the main background. The stitches are simple, sometimes in contrasting thread and sometimes in matching thread.*

Materials



FABRIC

The particular characteristics of natural wool blanket, dyed in bold modern colours, are ideal for recreating the projects as shown in this book. If you want to get a look as near as possible to the one shown here, you can buy ready prepared packs of dyed wool fabric for all the projects ([see Hotlinks](#)). If you are feeling adventurous you could dye your own fabric, using recycled blanket. Use Dylon Dye for wool, or Acid Dye (for Suppliers see [Hotlinks](#)) and follow the instructions on the packet.

If you would prefer to use a different fabric, you could try wool coating fabric, fleece or man-made felt. The effect will of course vary from the projects shown here, depending on the qualities of your chosen fabric.

THREAD

For the stitching, I have used mostly double knitting (sportsweight/worsted) yarn. Use whatever brand that you can find in the colours nearest to your requirements. Where thinner thread is needed, I have used Cotton Perle no. 8 (occasionally no. 5), or you could substitute Coats Floretta crochet cotton or stranded cotton (floss). ([See page 7](#)) In addition, the Christmas Pudding Bag uses stranded cotton (floss) for the hand stitching, and the Glitzy Angel uses a gold metallic machine thread.

As for needles, use darning, crewel or chenille needles, to suit the thickness of the thread or yarn. The thread should pass easily through the eye without snagging, so you will need a large-eyed needle for the yarn.

Appliqué Techniques

Appliqué means, quite simply, sewing one piece of fabric on top of another. In this book, fabric shapes such as hearts and stars are stitched on top of other coloured pieces to produce an exciting design and texture.

For all the projects in this book it is important to use a press cloth and warm iron on your fabric before you cut out, as ironing after you have stitched flattens the thread/yarn and spoils the look.

To start stitching, thread your needle with the appropriate thread/yarn, then tie a knot at the bottom of the length and start sewing with this knot at the back.

MAKING AN APPLIQUÉ MOTIF

The following method can be used for all template cutting and stitching for the projects in this book. The photos show a simple heart shape as an example.

1. Print out the template shape.
2. Using a sharp pair of scissors, carefully cut round the outline of the template.
3. Place the template onto the fabric. Pin down firmly. Cut out the appliqué shape carefully, following the template edge.
4. Place the cut-out appliqué shape onto a background piece of fabric and pin into place. This is now ready to sew into place using overstitching (see below). The overstitching secures one fabric to another and serves as a decorative stitch in its own right.

OVERSTITCHING

1. Bring the needle up through the motif and then back down through the background fabric, just beyond the edge of the fabric shape, forming a straight stitch.
2. Continue to sew straight, even stitches all round the edge of the motif to secure it to the background fabric.



The template pinned to the fabric, ready to cut out the fabric shape

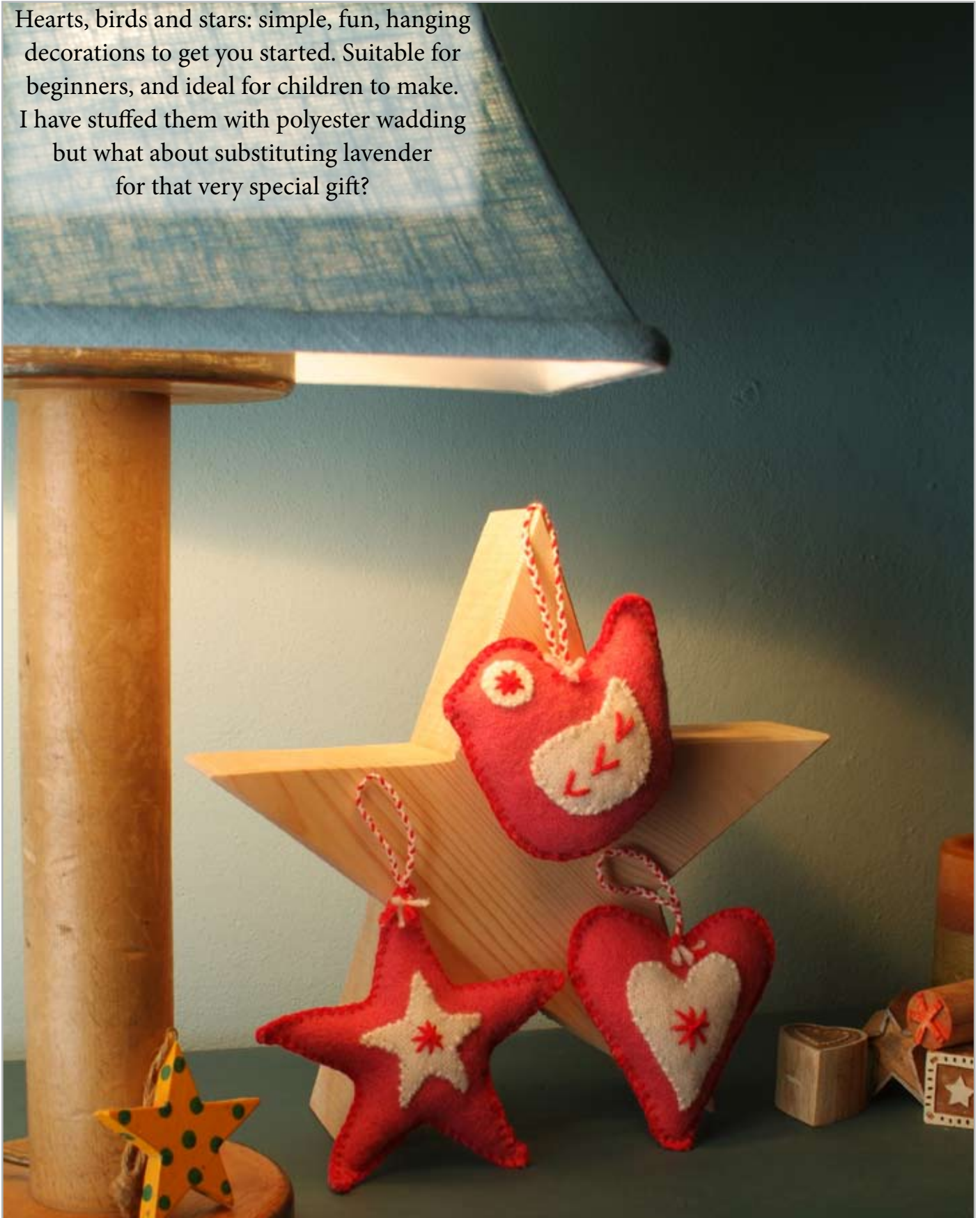


Overstitching round the edge of the fabric in thick knitting yarn (above) and perle embroidery thread (below)



Dizzy Danglers

Hearts, birds and stars: simple, fun, hanging decorations to get you started. Suitable for beginners, and ideal for children to make. I have stuffed them with polyester wadding but what about substituting lavender for that very special gift?



DIZZY DANGLERS: HEART MULTI DANGLER



Heart Multi Dangler

This Heart Multi Dangler hangs perfectly down the side of a kitchen dresser or from the end of a curtain pole. To ring the changes, how about exchanging the hearts for stars?