

Mia and The Bayeux Tapestry Replica

I'm Mia, born and raised in Skanör, the most south-western point of Sweden. I was 5 years old when my nan taught me how to cross stitch. I have long since grown up and I'm now 51, but my love for embroidery and my nan has never worn off. Nan's words ring in my ears every time I neatly fasten a thread, because the back of a piece of embroidery is as important as the front.

At the end of 2015, after years of hand stitching Viking re-enactment clothing, I was bored with small handicraft projects and I fancied something that I couldn't finish in a hurry... the Bayeux Tapestry.

By then, I had left my teaching job in Sweden, moved to England, finished a career in specialist dementia care in London, England, and moved to north Cambridgeshire with my partner and his young adult disabled son, Tom. For the sake of Tom's wellbeing, I made the decision to become his fulltime carer, which meant spending a lot of time at home. With his condition, he requires plenty of sleep and I have to be quiet. Embroidery is quiet work.

On the 13th July 2016, I made the very first stitch on my Bayeux Tapestry replica, with the aim of making an embroidery that hopefully resembled the original when it was brand new, before any damage or repair work was done. 9 years down the line, I now have over 53 metres of embroidery to show and I'm still enjoying every stitch.

From originally being something that I could do in a quiet corner of my sofa, while watching TV, my tapestry project has grown enormously. I give talks about my work, write about it in a series of Musings and create illustrations for Bayeux-inspired colouring books. I live and breathe the Bayeux Tapestry.

During the presentation, you can expect close-up photos of my embroidery, various stages of it. I will show how I transfer the images from my reference book and the process of creating a full-scale embroidery that resembles the original masterpiece. You will see that several people were involved in the 11th century project, while I work alone. Throughout the presentation, you will have a chance to ask questions. I welcome interaction from the group.

My project is documented on a Facebook group page, Mia's Bayeux Tapestry Story, and I have a website, www.miasbayeuxstyleart.uk, as well as an online store, mia-s-sewing-and-embroidery.sumupstore.com.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all on zoom.

Mia Hansson