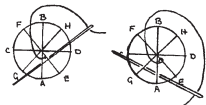


Application Methods, Continued

Ribbed Spiderweb Stitch

Attach with spoke frame, up at A, down at B etc., then start in centre by taking thread from side of Shisha, take thread around central threads and bring needle out between A and E. Work from right to left, go back over one spoke E, forward under two spokes E and A, backwards over A and forward under A and G, continue going around in this manner until required space is filled.



Lazy Daisy worked on Shisha

Work the basic frame foundation to hold Shisha in place. Bring the needle up at A, take needle up and under foundation thread, bring needle down over this thread, take needle down at B and bring it up at C, keeping thread under needle, pull thread through and take needle down at D and bring up at E and keep repeating this method until circle is completed.



Sadi Threads: May be threaded onto art silk (use a straw needle number 7) and laid across Shisha to form a decorative feature on the front of the Shisha. Do not attempt to pull Sadi through the fabric. Only the working thread should pierce the ground fabric. The Sadi can be laid across on some or all top stitches for a wonderful effect. See "The Luxury of Sadi" brochure by Rajmahal for details on using Sadi.

Crochet or cover a rubber, metal or wooden ring of appropriate size with art silk. This ring may then be placed over a circular mirror and slip stitched from the wrong side to hold the mirror in place.



Using Fabric: Shisha may also be attached by applying a "looking-glass" frame of sheer fabric, e.g. tulle, muslin, chiffon etc. Cut fabric slightly larger than the Shisha Glass to be applied, then, holding Shisha in place, embroider edge of covering fabric to your ground fabric, using stitches and threads as desired. Mirrors can also be decorated with surrounding concentric patterns of stitching, making the mirror a central feature from which to expand your design.

Application Methods, Continued

Machine Application: It is also possible, with practice, to attach Shisha Glass using a free machine feather stitch. Make sure that the needle pierces the fabric very close to the edge of the Shisha. Have the spool tension much looser than the needle thread tension so that long loops form over the Shisha.

The Luxury of Shisha Glass

Embroidery with Shisha, metal and Sadi threads is rightly considered one of the most fascinating, beautiful and versatile forms of embroidery. This brochure is meant as an introductory guide only and we hope that you will enjoy your Shisha work enough to venture further with techniques and applications.

If you are interested in further researching this wonderful form of needlecraft, we suggest that you begin in libraries under headings such as: abhla bhara, sisadar, mica, stump work, raised work, Sindi embroidery, Folk Embroidery of the Kutch, Saurashtra, Rajasthan, Iran, Central Asia, Russia, Banjara, metal thread embroidery, mirror embroidery . . .

Books, kits and patterns for Shisha Embroidery are available from Rajmahal. "Sadi Thread and Shisha Glass Embroidery" by Betty Luke is a useful publication.

The popular craft magazines have begun to publish projects which incorporate Shisha embroidery. Please feel free to contact Rajmahal for information about projects.

Rajmahal Agents and teachers run classes in special techniques in conjunction with our retailers. If you would like details of classes, your nearest stockists, or further information on Rajmahal products and their applications, please send a SAE to us at the address below or contact us through our website. For information on becoming a designer or teacher with Rajmahal, please contact us.

If you would like further information on Rajmahal products, a free colour brochure and a stockist's list, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

Rajmahal Art Silks

182 High Street, Kangaroo Flat 3555 Victoria Australia

International Telephone: 61 3 5447 7699

International Fax: 61 3 5447 7899

www.rajmahal.com.au

Aust. Telephone: (03) 5447 7699

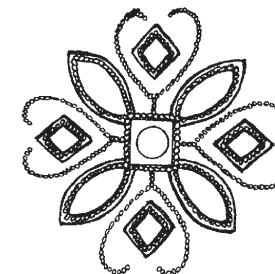
Aust. Fax: (03) 5447 7899

The Luxury of Shisha Glass Embroidery



An Introduction to Applying Shisha (Mirror) Glass

Add excitement, interest and extra beauty to your
needlework through applying these simple techniques.

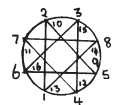
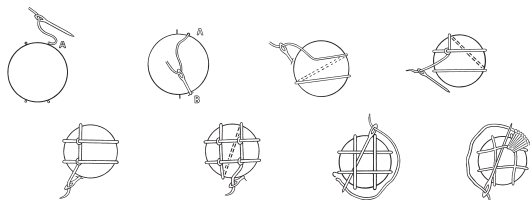


~ Rajmahal Art Silks, Sadi, Shisha Glass, Metals,
Lurex, Kits and Tambour Hooks ~ Fine Needlecraft Products ~

Application Methods

In the space of a brochure, only the basic application outlines can be described. Do research and experiment with other methods of application. The basic applications given here can be enhanced by altering surrounding embroidery in terms of stitches and threads used.

Mark fabric to show where shisha will be placed. (A tiny piece of double-sided tape or silicone helps hold mirror in place). Secure working thread, then, holding the Shisha Glass between your thumb and index finger, bring the needle through from the back of fabric. Stitch two parallel long stitches across the glass. Take a small back stitch to secure thread, then stitch the next set of parallel lines at right angles to the first. Rather than taking two straight stitches, this time hook under and over each of the first stitches and take a back stitch to secure on the wrong side. (If desired, a further set of frame stitches may be laid diagonally over the first square to form an octagon in the centre). The tension of the base stitches is important as they will be pulled out towards the edges of the mirror by the decorative stitches. Too loose and the mirror may fall out; too tight and the stitching may be difficult to pull out from the centre to create the circle of decorative stitches. Tight tension allows more mirror to be shown; looser tension makes more of the surround. To decorate, bring thread to the right side to form decorative, e.g. buttonhole, stitches, incorporating the "holding" threads. Make a small stitch at the edge of the mirror (i.e. the circumference of the shape) with the thread looped behind the needle. Continue alternating the loop and the buttonhole all around the edge of the Shisha Glass to build up the ridge of supporting stitches. Buttonhole, twisted chain and cretan stitch are commonly used stitches to be worked from the base thread frame.



Attachment using Star Foundation

Bring needle up at 1, down at 2, up at 3 etc. to 16. A very firm foundation.

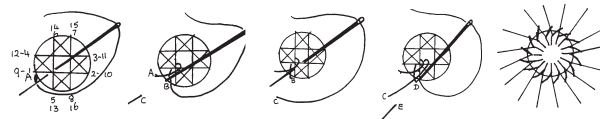
Cretan Stitch Attachment

Bring needle up at A. Take over then under foundation threads at the junction, pointing needle towards you. Pull working thread

firmly. Take needle down to the right of A, then up at C. Keeping thread to right of needle, take needle over and then under the foundation threads. Bring needle out on left side of long leg stitch, close to Shisha edge, then down on the right side of leg close to Shisha edge. Bring up at E. Continue, keeping stitches close.

Variation of Cretan

The angle and length of the stitch worked into the fabric may be changed to create different effects.



Materials Required

Shisha Glass: In shapes and sizes as desired.

Threads: Rajmahal Art Silks and/or Rajmahal metal threads are ideal for attaching Shisha. Use threads that will be wonderfully reflected in your Shisha. Gold, silver and beautiful coloured threads are ideal.

Needles: Chenille No. 7 or Crewel Needle.

Scissors: If using metal threads, have a separate pair of scissors exclusively for this purpose. Use a **honing stone** to smooth Sadi edges prior to use to prevent the threads catching.

Fabric: A firm, strong fabric is best. However, light fabrics can be easily and effectively used provided that they are backed with e.g. a medium weight linen or pre-shrunk calico. Remember, rich backgrounds suit rich embroideries.

Frame: Essential for Shisha work to prevent puckering.

If using Shisha Glass for the first time, we highly recommend practising the techniques of application on a sampler before working a major piece. Use a honing stone to smooth edges prior to commencing work.

Care: The care of your finished embroidery will, in part, depend on the ground fabric you have chosen. Mirrors may be cleaned, preferably prior to commencing embroidery, as one cleans a household mirror. Occasional washing will not hurt Shisha. However, if you are using metal threads to attach Shisha, then metal thread care applies. Metal threads should of course never be immersed in water. Rather, clean the article by applying a thin sprinkling of Magnesium Carbonate to the fabric, leaving for a few moments, then removing with a soft brush. Alternatively, set the vacuum on low suction, place fine nylon net over nozzle and use in circular movements over the fabric. Shisha attached with silks may be carefully dry cleaned providing the fabric is dry cleanable.

Removing Shisha: To remove Shisha from tube, unscrew cap and turn tube upside down, close to a soft cloth. Gently tap the end of the tube. *Please take care when handling Shisha. It is hand cut and edges may be sharp!*

Introduction to Shisha Glass

The history of Shisha Glass is fascinating. An integral part of the folk embroidery of Russia and Central Asia for centuries, Shisha is believed to originate from the jats of Banni and Lohnas of Khavada. The wealthy classes of Central Asia, Russia and the Indian subcontinent wore clothing embroidered with precious metal threads and jewels. Camel girths and animal decoration were and are embroidered using coloured silks, metal threads and much Shisha. Less prosperous people used cheaper decorations, e.g. chips of mica and beetles' wings embroidered onto cloth to give a rich, luxurious look. During the 1500's, mica and wings were largely replaced by pieces of mirror. Shisha also replaced mica in the beautiful stumpwork of Tudor and Stuart times. To this day, Shisha work is part of the great embroidery tradition of many Eastern countries and is now reaching into Western embroidery in exciting designs and applications, both traditional and innovative.

Embroiderers began attaching mirrors to all sorts of garments and cloth. Suited to many motifs and designs, the most prevalent have been stylized plants and animals and geometric designs. Shisha may be applied in numerous and varied designs on e.g. sleeves, bags, cushion covers, cradle quilts, purses, jackets, placemats, napkins, tablecloths, wall hangings, caps, waistcoats, yokes, pods ... a charming and inexpensive way to add interest and beauty to many embroideries.

Rajmahal will be designing projects along classic lines as well as experimenting with new ideas. We encourage you to try incorporating Shisha into your designs and look forward to seeing what you, the talented and creative embroiderers, choose to do with Shisha Glass.

Shisha is available in various shapes and sizes. There are no holes drilled in Shisha, i.e. Shisha cannot be pierced. To attach, the glass must be sewn onto fabric with the threads lain upon, that is, held in place by a framework of embroidery. A piece of double-sided tape on the back of the Shisha will help keep the glass in place on the fabric, allowing both hands to be free for stitching.

Designs courtesy of Rhonda Inwood,
South Australian Embroider,
Teacher and Designer.