Solo Flight

What a fabulous project to inspire the kids to take up sewing. Designed by Kate Hampson and Jo Hercus of Annabella Moonthreads, this fun messenger-style bag, featuring a handy pocket on the front, is a handy size for carrying notepads, books and much more to school, the library or even to a sleepover. Best of all, it's the ideal project to create during the school holidays – not only will it encourage your child to test out their skills on the sewing machine but you can also encourage them to create a second bag using one of their own drawings.

Materials

- 23 x 30cm (9 x 12in) cream homespun (appliqué background)
- 40cm (½yd) mauve prairie cloth (outer bag, strap and button loop)
- 30cm (⅜yd) multicoloured stripe print fabric (bag and pocket lining)
- Scraps of assorted print and tone-on-tone fabrics in blue, orange, pink and green (appliqué)
- Scrap of purple floral print fabric (self-covered button)
- 23 x 30cm (9 x 12in) fusible batting such as Pellon
- DMC Stranded Embroidery Cotton in Very Dark Antique Blue (3750), Ultra Very Dark Turquoise (3808) and to match appliqué fabrics
- Embroidery needle
- Two 19mm (¾in) blue buttons (strap)
- One 23mm (1in) self-covered shank button
- 1.1m (1¼yd) of 13mm (½in) wide purple ricrac
- Double-sided fusible web
- Sewing machine cottons to match appliqué fabrics
- 0.1 Pigma pen in Black
- Appliqué mat or baking paper (optional)
- Press bars (optional)
- Rotary cutter, ruler and cutting mat
- Sewing machine with ¼in foot
- General sewing supplies
- A copy of *Homespun* Vol 10 No 12

Finished size: 22.5 x 29.5cm (9 x 11⅝in), excluding handle

Stitches used: Back stitch, French knot, primitive straight stitch, straight stitch

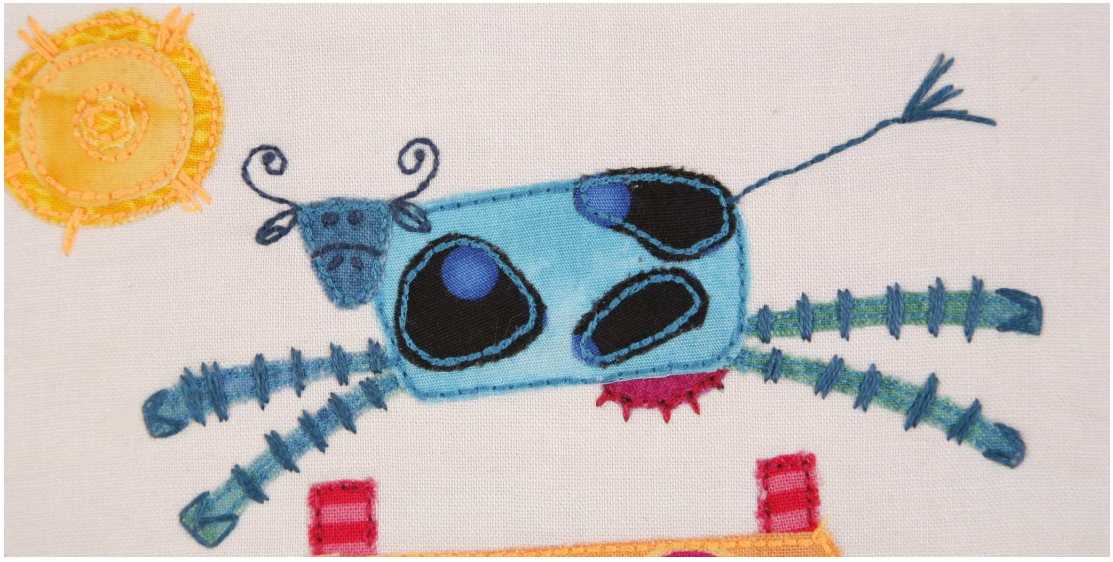
Note: Please read all instructions before commencing the project. Careful and accurate cutting and sewing are essential to ensure success with this project. A seam allowance of ¼in is included throughout for the patchwork. It is recommended that fabrics be 100% cotton, pre-washed and well ironed. All embroidery is worked with two strands of thread unless otherwise stated. Kate and Jo chose to sew the appliqué shapes by machine using a single straight stitch and a triple straight stitch.

Cutting

1. From the mauve prairie cloth, cut:
    - One strip, 9½ x 36in (outer bag)
    - One strip, 1¼ x 40in (strap)
    - One rectangle, 2 x 4½in (button loop).

Note: Kate and Jo recommend overlocking or zigzagging the edges of the prairie cloth after cutting and prior to handling, as it frays easily.

2. From the multicoloured stripe print fabric, cut:
    - One strip, 9½ x 36in (bag lining)
    - One rectangle, 7¼ x 10in (pocket lining).



Appliqué

3. Locate the appliqué shapes on the pattern sheet of *Homespun* Vol 10 No 12 and using the pencil, trace the shapes onto the paper side of the fusible web, leaving about ½in between them. You will need one sun, one cow body, one cow head, one cow udder, four legs, one of each cow spot, two chimneys, one roof, one wall, one door, 16 windows and two flowers.
4. Cut out all of the shapes roughly – do not cut on the pencil line yet. Select fabrics for each appliqué shape and fuse each one to the wrong side of the selected fabrics. Cut out each shape carefully on the pencil line.
5. Peel the backing paper off the fusible web and place the appliqué shapes on the cream homespun rectangle, overlapping the shapes where necessary and referring to the photograph and pattern sheet for guidance. You may wish to use an appliqué mat or baking paper for this step to make it easier to assemble the house and the cow before fusing them as whole motifs to the fabric. Once you are happy with the placement, fuse the shapes in place. Fuse the batting to the wrong side of the appliqué panel.
6. Using the sewing machine and threads a little brighter than the appliqué fabrics, work a triple straight stitch close to the edges of all the shapes, except for the flowers and the cow's legs. Sew the flowers and the cow's legs using a single straight stitch by machine. Work a triple straight stitch for the door panels and the leaf outlines and work a single straight stitch for the centre line of the leaves and the cross bars on a few of the windows.
7. Using threads to match the appliqué fabrics, work a form of primitive straight stitch by machine to embellish the sun and the door and add the five teats on the cow's udder.
8. Using Ultra Very Dark Turquoise (3808), work back stitch for the cow's tail, adding some long straight stitches for the end of the tail. Using the same thread, work primitive straight stitch on the legs to embellish them.
9. Using Very Dark Antique Blue (3750), work back stitch for the cow's muzzle, straight stitch for the cow's nostrils and a two-wrap French knot for the cow's eyes.

The ears and horns are worked in back stitch, with a French knot at the end of each horn. Using the same thread, work small straight stitches to outline each flower.
10. Cut a 7in length of purple ricrac and sew it to the bottom edge of the appliqué panel, covering the lower edge of the house.
11. Trim the appliqué panel to measure 7¼ x 10in, with the design centred.

Assembly

12. Sew the ricrac to the four edges of the appliqué panel, matching the "points" of the ricrac with the raw edges of the fabric. Begin and end the ricrac by folding it beyond the raw edge.
13. Match the appliqué panel and the matching multicoloured stripe print rectangle right sides together and sew around the four edges, leaving a 3in opening in the bottom edge. Trim the corners and turn the appliquéd pocket right side out. Press.
14. Position the pocket ¾in from one end of the 9½ x 36in strip of mauve prairie cloth, centring it between the side edges. Top stitch close to the edge of the pocket around three sides, closing the opening in the bottom edge with this stitching. Leave the top edge open. Top stitch again ¼in in from the outer edge, leaving the top edge open once again.
15. Fold the 2 x 4½in mauve prairie cloth rectangle in half right sides together and long edges matching. Sew the long edge. Turn the strip right side out and press. Slip stitch the opening closed.
16. Fold the 1¼ x 40in mauve prairie cloth strip in half right sides together and long edges matching. Sew the long edge, leaving a 3in opening in the middle of the strip. Roll the fabric so that the seam is in the centre back, open the seam and sew across each end.
17. Insert the press bars into the strap and press, with the seam open. Remove the press bars, turn the strip right side out and press again. Slip stitch the opening closed.
18. Fold the button loop in half and place it on the centre of the pocket end of the prairie cloth strip, raw edges matching. Baste to hold it in place.
19. Measuring from the end that has the pocket sewn to it – make a light mark on each long edge 11in from the end. Match the rectangle of lining with the prairie cloth, right sides together, and sew from one mark down to the pocket short end and up to the mark on the other edge. This will be the bag flap.
20. Sew across the other short end.
21. Fold the bag so that the edges of the seam you sewed in step 20 are on top of the marks you made in step 19. The prairie cloth will be right sides together and the lining will also be right sides together. The flap lining should be folded so that it is under the lining. Finger press the seam you sewed in step 20 open. Sew from the seam line to the fold on the prairie cloth end of the bag. Then fold the bag flap so that it is under the prairie cloth, and sew from the seam line to the fold on the lining end of the bag. Repeat this process on the other long edge, but this time leaving a 5in opening for turning.
22. Trim the points and turn the bag right side out. Slip stitch the opening in the lining closed and push the lining down into the bag.
21. To create the button, place the button on the wrong side of the purple floral print fabric and trace around the outer edge with the pencil. Cut the circle out, adding a ⅜in seam allowance.
23. Run a row of gathering stitches ⅛in around the edge of the circle and place the self-covered button on top. Pull up the gathers tightly and knot securely. Cut one end

of the thread and use the other end to sew the button to the front of the bag, aligning the loop on the flap and sewing through both layers.
24. Position the ends of the strap 1in below the top edge of the bag on each side and secure in place by stitching through a blue button.

For more information on other hip designs by Kate Hampson and Jo Hercus of Annabella Moonthreads, write to PO Box 392, Buderim Qld 4556, phone (07) 5476 8231, fax: (07) 5476 7751, email: hercsinbud@gmail.com.au, or visit their blog at www.annabellamoonthreads.typepad.com