

Instructions for The Swan

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THE SWAN

‘The Swan’ was designed and worked by Tamara P. Duvall, predominantly in Milanese Lace. It was originally for Jane Swanson, a lacemaking friend whom Tamara met through the internet mailing list Arachne, and originally appeared in International Old Lacers Bulletin (Spring 1999/2000 issue — Vol. 20, No. 5).

A pair of mirror-image swans, one white and one black — reminiscent of Swan Lake, would make a nice gift for your favourite ballerina. Although the instructions here are given for a white swan based on the letter S, there is also a mirror image pricking if you wish to make a black swan facing in the opposite direction. The Swan is copyright © Tamara P. Duvall, May 2000. You may use the design for commercial or non-commercial purposes provided that you do not republish it in your own name and that you credit the designer.

INSTRUCTIONS

Introduction

Thread

Mettler 60/2 cotton was used in the sample, but Madeira or DMC 50/2 should give a similar effect. Any reasonably fine and smooth metallic thread will work for the gold accents.

References to techniques

Except where otherwise specified, the techniques of Milanese Lace (number of twists at footsides, adding and removing pairs, gaining on the pin etc.) are those used in:


‘Milanese Lace, An Introduction’ by Patricia Read and Lucy Kincaid

‘New Braids and Designs in Milanese Lace’ by Patricia Read and Lucy Kincaid

Additionally, some techniques can be found in:

‘Practical Skills in Bobbin Lace’ by Bridget Cook.

Starting Points

The starting points of all braids are marked on the pricking with a ‘square one dot’: 

1: The ‘S’ — Head, Neck and Tail

17 pairs: 12 white, 5 gold

Head

Start at the tip of the beak with 3 white pairs (workers) and 2 gold pairs (passives). Add two more gold passives and the central white passive, and work in cloth stitch to the thick black line marking the beginning of the head. On that row, add 3 white and 1 gold pair on the left side of the central white passive, and 4 white pairs on the right side.

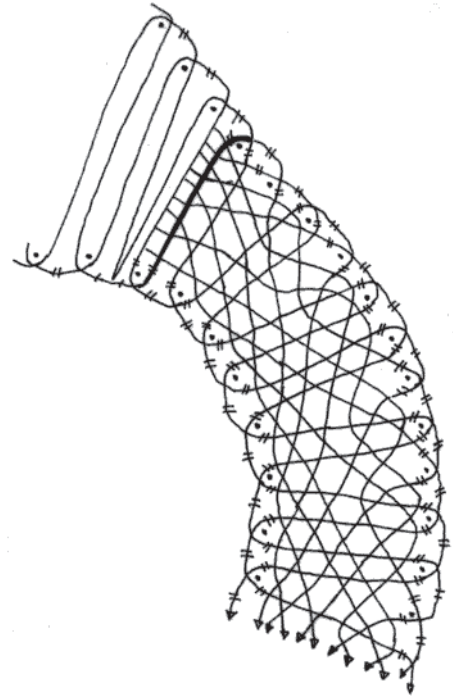
Work the head in half stitch. The original 4 gold pairs form interlocking gimps next to the footsides (‘Practical Skills in Bobbin Lace’, Section VIII.6a–d, p. 164); the added 5th gold pair moves towards the eye as a twisted cordonnet (*ibid*, Section VIII.5, p. 163).

Make a gold tally for the eye and continue the half stitch over it (as in *ibid*, Section V.12c–d, p. 107). Reintroduce the gold pair into the head for one row and, at the same time, add one white pair to replace it. Lay back the gold pair to be finished off later. Continue the head in half stitch to the next thick line.

Neck and tail

The sample uses the Basketweave braid ('Milanese Lace', p. 27). This is a very tightly woven braid and the usual method of gaining on the pin ('blind' pin as in *ibid*, p. 145) makes it look very 'congested' on the inner curve. The method used here is illustrated in the diagram. Note that for greater clarity the gold interlocking gimps have not been included in the diagram.

N.B. To stress the 'S' aspect of the braid, make it in cloth stitch, with gold weavers. To stress the swan aspect, remove the gold gimps on the wing side as soon as the connection with the wing outline (see Section 2) is reached.

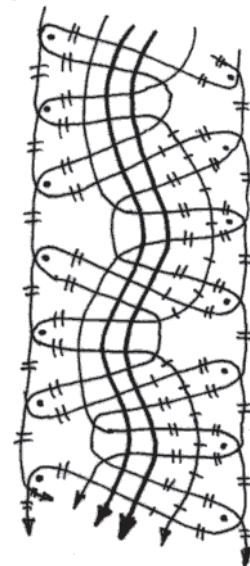


Neck
Basketweave — gaining on a pin

2: Wing Outline

7 pairs: 5 white, 2 gold

Meander in braid ('Milanese Lace', pp. 48–49); combination of both braids, with side passives removed. See the accompanying diagram for details. Where it joins the 'S', use *top sewings* ('Milanese Lace', p. 22; 'Practical Skills in Bobbin Lace', Section III.5, p. 55).



Wing Outline
Meander in Braid — variation

3: Body

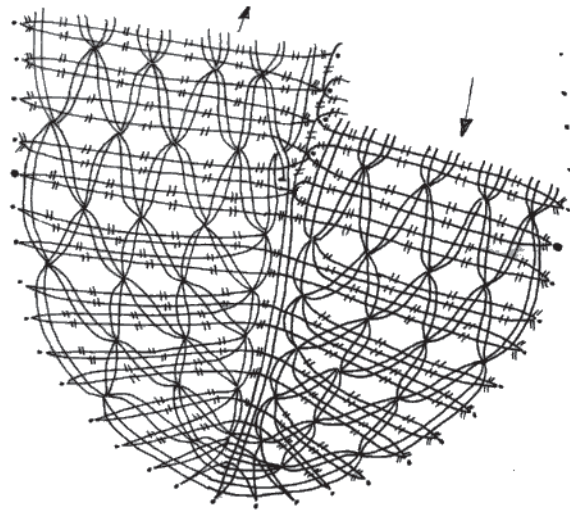
15 pairs at the widest point, all white

Worked in lattice 3, ('New Braids and Designs in Milanese Lace', p. 18). Use top sewings on both sides if the 'S' aspect is to be stressed. If the swan aspect is more important, use top sewings for joining to the wing outline, but side (edge) sewings to join to the 'S'.

4: Wing

23 pairs at the widest point, all white

Lattice 2 ('New Braids and Designs in Milanese Lace', p. 17, *shortened*). See the accompanying diagram for the turn. All side sewings both to the outline and to itself. Note that for greater clarity the diagram does not show the twists at the very crest of the turn. They should, however, be worked to maintain the pattern.

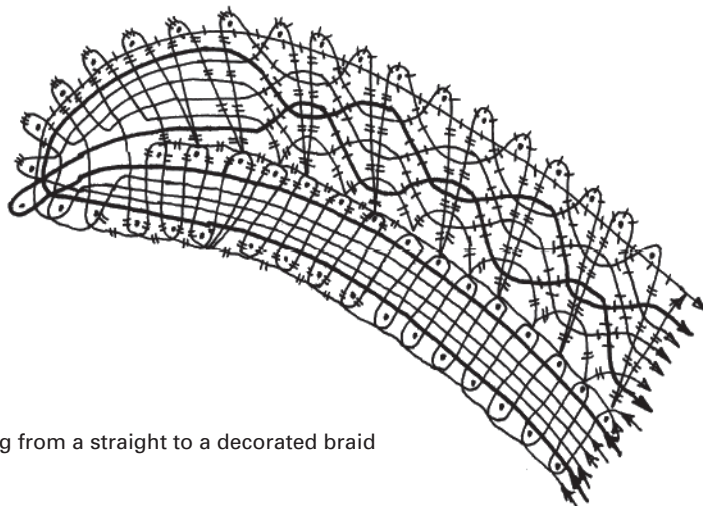


Wing: turn

5: Frame

8 pairs: 6 white, 2 gold

Start with the cloth stitch part of the braid. Work around the swan, joining (top sewings) where indicated. See the accompanying diagram for the turn and the decorated part of the braid (darker lines are the gold pairs). The decorated part of the braid is joined to the cloth stitch part with side sewings. Finish at the starting point.



Frame
Turning from a straight to a decorated braid

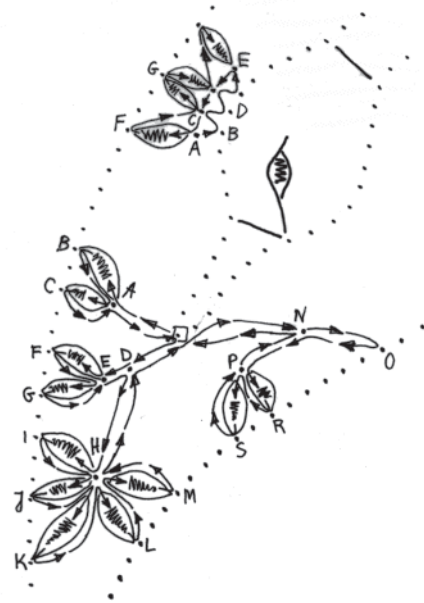
6. Crown and Flower

Crown

The crown is made with two gold pairs — plaits and tallies. Start at A and follow the direction of arrows to work. Side sewings into the head and into the frame.

Flower

1. You will need 1 pair gold, 1 white for the flower.
2. Hang the pairs at the tip of the beak, plait to A. Leave a good-sized pinhole (twist each pair three times) at the beginning of the tally, make a white tally to B, double (side) sewing into the frame. Double sewing: made the same way as a regular sewing, but each pair is used as if it were a single thread.
3. Plait back to A, making the plait slightly too long, so that it outlines the tally.
4. Double sewing into A. Repeat for the second white tally (A-C)
5. Double false plait from A to \square , double sewing into \square . Double false plait: *TCTC, make a single sewing over the existing plait*; repeat from * to * as many times as necessary.
6. Plait to D, leave a good-sized pinhole, plait to E. Make tallies and plaits as from A.
7. Double false plait from E to D, plait to H. Make the flower petals like the leaves, but using gold thread for tally weaver.
8. Double false plait back to the beak, plait to N and O, double false plait from O to N, plait to P, make another leaf twig (white tallies), double false plait from P to N and then back to where you started at the tip of the beak.



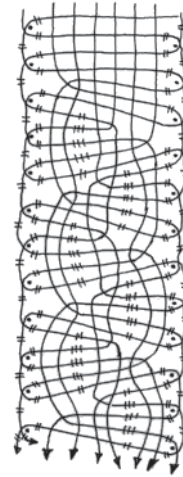
Crown & Flower

7: Water

9 pairs, all white

This is worked as shown in the diagram, opposite. Top sewings to the swan and to the frame


N.B. As far as she knows, this braid is Tamara's own invention, which she named 'Flames'. The diagram shows it starting from the cloth stitch. That is simply to conform to the standard established in the Read & Kincaid books. The 'water' in the swan picture starts with the decorated part, not with cloth, as shown below.



Water
Flames — straight braid

8: Frame Hanger

6 pairs: 5 white, 1 gold

Made separately and attached to the frame later on, with a needle. The hanger is worked as a tenstick' or 'rib' — there are no pins on the inside of the loops ('Practical Skills in Bobbin Lace', Section VI.24b, p. 131), with the gold pair as a twisted passive next to the footside. Start and finish at . Top sewings of the hanging loop to the bow loops.