



A resource for teachers and group leaders to learn with the exhibition *ALL IN THE SAME STORM: PANDEMIC PATCHWORK STORIES*

First floor gallery Spring/Summer 2021

The De La Warr Pavilion Learning & Participation programme seeks to support people of all ages and abilities to engage with culture and creativity through a range of opportunities.

This resource aims to help visitors explore the exhibition and related ideas and processes. It can be used before, during and after a visit to the gallery. The resource suggests ways of looking, inquiring, connecting ideas, communicating and making. Activities are open-ended and adaptable for diverse educational settings or community groups.

Groups can visit the exhibition for free on booking a self-led visit. We are happy to provide a short welcome to the exhibition for pre-booked groups. In addition, we can support your visit with a brief exhibition introduction and facilitate a selection of the enquiries and activities outlined in this resource at £3 per participant (min. 12, max. 30 participants per group).

Schools can use this resource to develop cross-curricular learning, life skills, emotional learning and engaged citizenship. As a registered Artsmark Partner we can support Artsmark settings at any point on their journey, as well as children and young people undertaking Arts Awards, from Discover to Gold levels.

To find out more or book a group visit email ashley.mccormick@dlwp.com

ALL IN THE SAME STORM: PANDEMIC PATCHWORK STORIES

Set against the traumatic backdrop of COVID-19 and the resulting need for individuals and communities to support one another through it, the [Refugee Buddy Project, Hastings, Rother & Wealden](#) initiated an online version of *Stitch for Change*, a project that began in late 2019 to bring people together through storytelling and making. Through spring and summer 2020 more than 70 people met regularly online to share their experiences and find a collective voice. Facilitated by community artists Jimena Pardo and Janey Moffat, project participants told their stories of life under the shadow of COVID-19 through hand-stitched patchwork squares that reveal tales of resistance, loss, rage, joy, togetherness, isolation and home.

95 patchwork squares from people across the community, including those seeking refuge, volunteers, and students from East Sussex College have been sewn together to form four large quilts: a people's history of a pandemic that sits within the long tradition of hand-stitching as a method of narrating individual and collective life under oppressive, unsettling circumstances.

This exhibition presents the four quilts alongside their makers' stories, giving visitors a glimpse of each participant's very different experiences. You can listen to project participant Helen Dodaki speaking about *Stitch for Change* [here](#)

Musician Simon James has composed an accompanying sound piece entitled *Patchwork* which invites visitors to slow down and reflect on the stories held in the quilts, and offers up "some calm in the storm". You can listen to it [here](#)

This project is organised by The Refugee Buddy Project, Hastings, Rother & Wealden working with community artists Jimena Pardo and Janey Moffatt as *Stitch for Change*. The sound piece was produced by Lo Recordings.

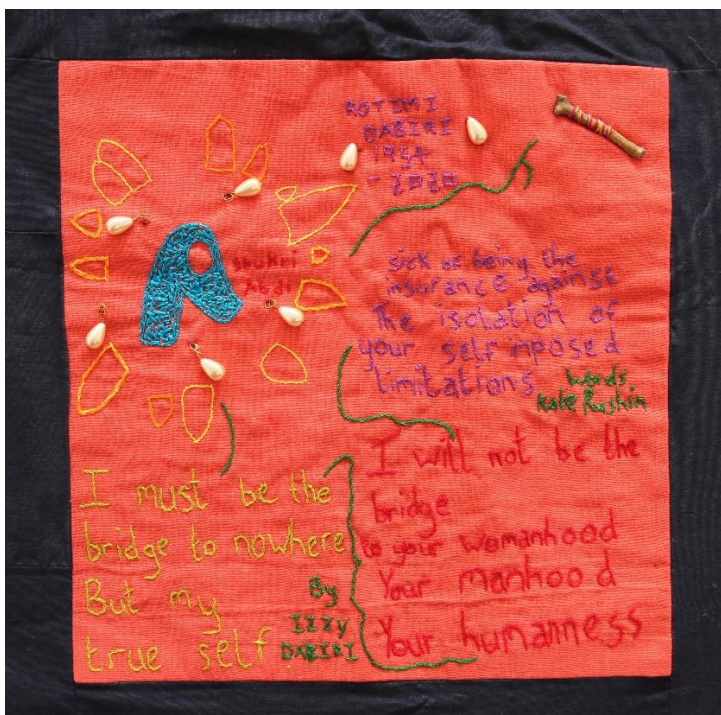
Selection of patches from the exhibition



Amy Bradford



Anonymous



Izzy Dabiri



Khadija Khan



[Momoe Tasker](#)



Khadija Kagaz Kafi Otiei



Daniela De Oshun



Fara Yasamee

Exploring in the First floor gallery

Throughout the *Stitch for Change* project, participants were inspired by the Chilean practice of arpillera-making: protest textiles made from scraps of fabric and burlap, hand embroidered to create flat images and some 3D elements that tell a visual story of what was happening under the dictatorship in Chile (1973-1990). Many were made by groups of women, some who were families of the disappeared, and others from **poblaciones** (shanty towns) who were impacted economically during the coup.

The arpilleras of Chile were a voice for many of the families affected by loss, disappearances and trauma, and they became poignant testimonies of what had occurred during the dictatorship. The arpilleras were labelled as subversive and banned, so they would be smuggled out of the country in order to tell the world what was happening under Pinochet.

The four quilts in this exhibition pay homage to the collaborative nature of arpilleras. The Refugee Buddy Project sought to overcome the challenges of social distancing and the related risks of isolation for those seeking refuge and their buddies, by working with *Stitch for Change* to provide an online support network for the users of the project and the wider community.

At the outset of the *Stitch for Change* project lead artists Jimena Pardo and Janey Moffatt sent small packages of recycled fabric and threads to participants. Each week they shared stitching and quilting techniques via zoom meetings. During the meetings they showed examples of arpilleras and quilts from around the world. Jimena and Janey were joined by guest facilitators including costume and quilt maker Jane Grimshaw and Roberta Bacic, curator of [Conflict Textiles](#) - a large collection of international textiles, exhibitions and events.

AT FIRST GLANCE IN THE GALLERY

> Invite everyone to spend 15 minutes looking around the exhibition. After this, ask people to write 3 single words on a post-it note to express what the exhibition has made them think and feel. Share the words to see if any appear more than once. What are the 3 most common words that appear? Discuss why this is.

> The exhibition title references the poem *We are not in the same boat*, written by Damien Barr reflecting on COVID-19 in spring 2020, which begins:

I heard that we are in the same boat.

But it's not that.

We are in the same storm, but not in the same boat.

and ends:

Let everyone navigate their route with respect, empathy and responsibility.

See page 13 for the full poem.

Everyone has been affected by COVID-19 in different ways. Discuss the relationship between the poem and the ethos of the *Stitch for Change* project.

> The patches/stories each reflect different experiences: the makers are not in the same boat. Invite everyone to choose one of the patches/stories that resonates with them or closely mirrors their own feelings about lockdown, and explain their choices. How have they navigated through the storm?

> Invite everyone to share an aspect of their own experience of lockdown by sketching a design for a patch for approx. 10 minutes. Invite the group to discuss their sketches, and the differences and similarities within the group.

FURTHER TALKING POINTS

- > Discuss the idea that craft and art forms might be gendered i.e. why is a craft like stitching mostly associated with women? Which artists and craft practitioners subvert this assertion?
- > Discuss a range of examples of creative forms of protest and resistance including music, graphic art, graffiti and more.
- > Discuss ways that creative activities such as stitching, journaling, singing, and more can enhance emotional wellbeing and personal growth. What other ways do people live life imaginatively and what additional benefits can this everyday creativity bring about?

ENGAGED CITIZENSHIP

The exhibition can open dialogues on a range of topics from the refugee experience and racism to how different communities have been impacted by COVID-19 and more.

- > All refugees experience displacement, meaning that circumstances out of their control have forced them to leave their country. Discuss some of the reasons people need to seek refuge in other countries e.g. environmental catastrophe, war, political repression. Invite the group to imagine they were forced to leave their homeland. What things would they want to bring with them? What would they most miss? What challenges might they face in a new country?
- > Invite the group to consider the following statement from *Stitch For Change* project participant Momoe Tasker (you can see a patch she made on page 4):

"Every national and global emergency highlights structural inequalities. Since the first reports of COVID-19, there has been a resurgence of overt racism. From East Asian people being verbally and physically attacked on the streets, to the disproportionate number of people of colour contracting and dying from the virus. Whispers of "them" and "us" slithered snake-like through insinuations, echoing hissss-toric imperial discourse.

I am a member of In*ter*is*land Collective. A group of creatives with cultural heritage and connections to the Pacific. In our work we recognise and value the differences between our islands, yet also cherish the similarities between them because, ultimately, we are one people. It is our duty not only to our communities, but to all communities to stand in solidarity against racism and speak out."

Invite the group to discuss ways they can challenge and disrupt racism.

LITERACY

- > Invite the group to write a concise review of the exhibition for a local or national newspaper.

- > One of the main drivers of the *Stitch for Change* project was to reduce the risk of isolation and build connections across communities. Invite the group to find a patch/story that they feel a connection with and write a thank you letter to the maker/author, introducing themselves and explaining why they feel a connection.

- > Several patches use some sort of symbolism, where an idea, emotion or concept is represented by something else e.g. picture, icon or colour. *Stitch for Change* project participants learnt about the symbolism used in the arpilleras from Chile e.g. the sun is political symbol and suggests that we are all equal. Invite the group to identify symbols in the patches (on pages 3 and 4), use their imagination to interpret the symbols' meanings and write an acrostic poem, where the first letter of each line spells out the symbol.

Creative activities in the classroom or studio

Expanding on AT FIRST GLANCE activities in the gallery and inspired by the *Stitch for Change* project make an arpillera. This should be done over several sessions/weeks. [The Stitching Together Good Practice Guidelines](#) provides expert advice for facilitators of participatory textile making workshops and projects. Watch this [demonstration film](#) to learn different stitching techniques before you begin your arpillera.

Step one: collect materials including a square piece of cotton, polycotton or burlap approx. 25 x 25 cm, a square of paper approx. 22 x 22 cm, recycled fabric scraps, buttons, beads, ribbons (repurpose bits from preloved clothes or join a local recycling project e.g. [Forest Recycling Project](#)), wool, threads, needle, pins, scissors, pen or chalk.

Step two: develop design ideas by discussing themes around current social justice issues e.g. COVID-19 effects on society; Racism; Inequality; Education policies; Climate change. Think about what message you want to share using text and/or symbols and images.

Step three: sketch out your design on a square of paper (it should be smaller than the square piece of fabric to allow for approx. 3 cm margin). Use the drawing as a template to cut out shapes from fabric scraps. Place or pin the fabric shapes in position on cotton, polycotton or burlap square.

Step four: start stitching shapes together using different techniques demonstrated in the video.



Jimena Pardo

For younger people or those unable to sew, make paper and fabric collage patches without stitching and combine together in a pandemic story quilt. This can be done in one session with limited resources. A group can combine individual patches or quilts in a larger collaborative quilt.

Step one: collect materials including A4 sheets and smaller pieces of coloured paper or thin card, recycled fabric scraps, scissors, glue stick and drawing tools e.g. crayons, chalk or pens.

Step two: develop design ideas by discussing the changes the pandemic has brought about, activities and people that have been supportive, or things they have missed e.g. hugs with older relatives. Think about what messages you want to share using word, drawings and collage.

Step three: cut out different sizes and shapes of paper or fabric patches and take time to arrange them on an A4 background before you stick them down.

Step four: add writing, drawings and collage to your patches to create your pandemic story quilt. It may be a mix of good times and sad occurrences – it's all part of your story.

Step five: draw finishing stitches around the patches and edges of paper. Use a felt-tip pen, oil pastel or crayon to draw a variety of stitches including cross stitch, blanket stitch and running stitch.



Janey Moffatt

[Make an arpillera doll](#)

This step by step guide was produced by Mexican textile artist Rosa Borrás, to support the online exhibition [Embracing Human Rights at Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre](#). Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre. For further inspiration see the associated [Arpillera Doll Exhibition](#)

Share photographs of your work with *Stitch For Change* and the De La Warr on Instagram. Please add any of these handles or hashtags:

@buddyproject_refugeeswelcome

@DeLaWarr

stitchesthatspeak

stitch_for_change

allinthesamequilt

Stitch for Change lead facilitators

[Janey Moffatt](#) @janeymoffatt is a community artist who fuses fine art and craft techniques for her work with [The Craftimation Factory](#), an arts charity that she established with her mother in 2013. This award winning organisation brings art activities to everyone, especially those who might face barriers.

Jimena Pardo is a Chilean community artist. She currently works as an Art Teacher in a school in East London and since February 2018 has been facilitating workshops for the project [Bordando por la Memoria – Embroidering Memory](#), a collaborative textile art project with the Chilean exiled community.

Stitch for Change contributing guests:

Roberta Bacic is curator of [Conflict Textiles](#) - a large collection of international textiles, exhibitions and events.

Jane Grimshaw @the_virtual_thread is a costume maker and teaches at Greater Brighton Metropolitan College. She runs online craft sessions for wellbeing at www.virtualthread.uk

This resource was co-produced with Jimena Pardo and Janey Moffatt.

LINKS TO RELEVANT RESOURCES

[Protesting Pinochet With Craft: Arpilleras at the Museum of Tolerance](#)

Video clip of Artist Francisco Letelier making an arpillera using fabric and glue.

[Sewing to protest in a Chilean prison camp](#)

Podcast on political stitching from the BBC World Service Outlook series

[Stitched Voices](#)

Blog about political textiles written in both Spanish and English, featuring insightful conversations about political textiles from around the world.

[Sew What?](#)

Podcast about historic needlework and the gals who stitched it, hosted by historic needlework expert, Isabella Rosner. In [this episode](#) Isabella interviews Rose Sinclair, lecturer in Textiles in the Design Department at Goldsmiths, University of London. They discuss Dorcas Clubs - specifically those attended by Caribbean women arriving in the UK in the 1950s and 60s, the intersection of textiles and race, and the storytelling power of cloth.

Tapestries of Hope, Threads of Love: The Arpillera Movement in Chile, author Marjorie Agosin, ISBN 0-8263-1692-1

The Subversive Stitch, Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine, author Rozsika Parker, ISBN 978-1-350-13229-0

Threads of life - A History of the World Through the Eye of a Needle, author Clare Hunter, ISBN 978-1-473-68791-2

We are not in the same boat by Damien Barr

I heard that we are in the same boat.

But it's not that.

We are in the same storm, but not in the same boat.

Your ship can be shipwrecked and mine might not be.

Or vice versa.

For some, quarantine is optimal: a moment of reflection, or reconnection.

Easy, in flip flops, with a whiskey or tea.

For others, this is a desperate crisis.

For others, it is facing loneliness.

For some, peace, rest time, vacation.

Yet for others, Torture: How am I going to pay my bills?

Some were concerned about a brand of chocolate for Easter (this year there were no rich chocolates).

Others were concerned about the bread for the weekend, or if the noodles would last for a few more days.

Some were in their "home office".

Others are looking through trash to survive.

Some want to go back to work because they are running out of money.

Others want to kill those who break the quarantine.

Some need to break the quarantine to stand in line at the banks..

Others criticize the government for the lines.

Some have experienced the near-death of the virus, some have already lost someone from it, and some believe they are infallible and will be blown away if or when this hits someone they know.

Some have faith in God and expect miracles during 2020. Others say the worse is yet to come. So, friends, we are not in the same boat.

We are going through a time when our perceptions and needs are completely different.

And each one will emerge, in his own way, from that storm.

It is very important to see beyond what is seen at first glance. Not just looking, more than looking, seeing.

See beyond the political party, beyond biases, beyond the nose on your face. Do not judge the good life of the other, do not condemn the bad life of the other.

Don't be a judge.

Let us not judge the one who lacks, as well as the one who exceeds him. We are on different ships looking to survive.

Let everyone navigate their route with respect, empathy and responsibility.