

QUILTS 1700–2010

Hidden Histories, Untold Stories



edited by Sue Prichard

V&A

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Quilts 1700–2010 celebrates more than 500 years of British quilt and patchwork production – from the spectacular eighteenth-century chintz bed hangings found in some of the most affluent homes in the country, to complete and sometimes controversial examples of contemporary art practice. Drawing on some of the finest collections and archives in the country, this groundbreaking book documents the fascinating history of British quilt-making.

For the first time contributors reveal the hidden histories and personal narratives of some of the most evocative objects in the V&A's collection. From the origins of the 'love poem' on the Chapman marriage coverlet to the sources of inspiration for the intricately pieced pictorial 'George III coverlet', this publication repositions quilts as complex, multi-layered windows into their makers' worlds.

Published to accompany a major exhibition, *Quilts 1700–2010: Hidden Histories, Untold Stories* includes a lavishly illustrated, comprehensive catalogue, four contextual essays, and individual feature spreads that challenge the assumption that stitching is simply 'women's work'.

31 Quilting Point

Clio Padovani
Winchester
2010
DVD – six-minute loop
Collection of the artist

'Quilting Point' takes as its inspiration the techniques of appliqué and patchwork, digitally layering fragment over fragment. Describing her inspiration, Clio Padovani reflects on the ability of digital technology to replicate the processes of patchwork:

I was drawn to explore how to reference quilting techniques with fragments of moving images, how to structure and organize a textile media narrative. Just like the scraps of fabric traditionally used to make a quilt possess an intimacy born of everyday personal and family use, I wanted the video clips to have the feel of public and private – to reflect images we might see everyday, with our eyes, or in our mind.

The work is also a commentary on a shared, collective past, with particular reference to the quilting bee. She describes how

the shaped movie clips pulse and breathe on the screen, enlarging, contracting, constructing a collective dialogue: the blocks of images change and transform into patterns organized by the framework of personal experience. The story of the fabrics becomes individualized, structured by the pattern. The voice is the thread: it connects and constructs, it pieces together this sequence or story, this kind of cloth.

The subtle voices and whispers are designed to stimulate thoughts which, like thread, bind together the pictures on the screen.

Trained as a weaver and captivated by the mark of the hand, Padovani speaks of both a metaphorical and material 'point' at which cloth, text and dialogue connect.

