

Intuitive Embroidery

WORKSHOP



Concept

Textiles have the power to remind us of home — the cherished memories of the family we've left behind and the soothing stories of our mothers and foremothers. Textile practices embody acts of care: mending, joining and creating represent tangible forms of nurturing, supporting, and healing. Textiles are pervading our lives: clothing, blankets, carpets, and countless others. Take a moment to look around you to find textiles in innumerable shapes, patterns and uses. They suggest a sense of protection, warmth and safety.

It was just natural for this practice to weave into our artistic research, becoming integral to our creative expression. We embrace the intuitive process and mistakes. With the *Intuitive Embroidery Workshop*, we wish to share the spontaneity that guided us since our first venture into embroidery. We invite participants to create in a communal setting, helping us create a safe space where stories can be shared and words can be playfully woven to create collective narratives.



Second session of our *Intuitive Embroidery Workshop* at SIGN, Groningen (2024)

Historically, embroidering has been considered a feminine practice, where its inherent silence was stereotypically addressed as passivity or mere concentration. In this workshop, we aim to give voice to the **subversive** quality of this silence. Through embroidery, participants can experience self-awareness and collective contemplation, reflecting on the importance of textiles in their lives.

"[...] stitches convey meaning, they create and they repair the damage"

(R. Parker, *The Subversive Stitch*)

We encourage reconsidering mistakes as intuitive gestures of our hands, to follow the natural movements of our body. Elements such as tangled threads, knots, or unconventional stitching techniques add layers of curiosity and fascination, especially when viewed from unconventional perspectives:

upside down, folded, or from the back-side.



The mothers recalled that god used to be three women — that time is made of threads. And they knew now, in the extreme perishability of the things they had made, that thread could be unwoven, snipped, dyed, repurposed — altered in innumerable ways.

(A. S. Karlsen, *Entangled - Texts on Textiles*)

First session of our *Intuitive Embroidery Workshop* at the MIVC Graduation Show, Den Bosch (2024)



Outcome

Each participant will be given a piece of textile to work on, and we aim to gather all these pieces to form a collective quilt, a material representation of the shared effort and creativity of the group. The outcomes of the workshop will be joined together as a symbolic act of connection and collaboration.

Additionally, we are collecting stories and memories about textiles that participants wish to share. These narratives will contribute to a future publication that explores collective embroidery practices and personal stories about textiles.

Practical Information

#Materials: We'll provide all the necessary materials, including needles, scissors, scrap textiles, etc. We collected second-hand materials like threads, needles, yarns, and fabrics to share and incentivise the participants to be creative - sometimes when things are new, there's the fear of ruining them and we aim to overcome this barrier.

#Duration: 3 hour session

#Participants: 6-8 participants would be a good group size, though this is flexible depending on interest. Last time we organised an open workshop where people could join at any moment.

#Workshop Concept: The workshop will focus on engaging with memories and storytelling, using intuition to guide the movements of our hands and bodies. We'd also like to record the conversations during the session, as they may be part of our future publications.

We hope to share this experience with your community. Please don't hesitate to ask if you need any additional information or support.

Best wishes,

Alessia and Yara