



# The Fabric of Protest

**September 2022**

Create a patchwork letter  
using reverse appliqué



A monthly textile workshop by People's History Museum (PHM) and artist Helen Mather. Learn new techniques and discuss the issues that matter to you.

This resource introduces some of the ideas and techniques that will be explored during the online workshop on Saturday 24 September 2022. Use it to prepare for the workshop or as inspiration for your own textile projects.

Recommended for 11+ (under 18s must have an accompanying adult present during the session).



#FabricOfProtest

[phm.org.uk](http://phm.org.uk)

# Inspiration

In this month's workshop we will be taking inspiration from the Nothing About Us Without Us banner in the museum's 2022 Banner Exhibition.

The banner was made by six learning disabled textile artists for an exhibition at People's History Museum in 2015.

The artists sent red patches out to other disabled artists across the UK who drew and stitched on their names. They were then sent to arts group Venture Arts, where they were brought together to form this banner.

The red and gold colours represent ambition and courage.

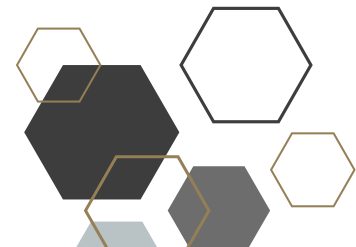


Nothing About Us Without Us banner, 2015.  
Image courtesy of People's History Museum

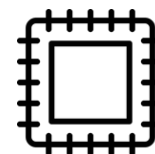
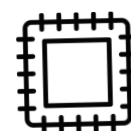
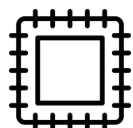
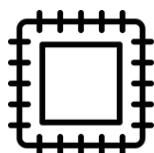
## Banner description:

The banner is made of small hexagons of varying shades of red in different fabrics, stitched together in a patchwork. The words 'Nothing About Us Without Us' in gold lame fabric are across the top half of the banner. Below these words two lines of gold hexagons are sewn on alternate patches. Sewn onto the first line of gold hexagons are the words '20th anniversary' and then 'Disability Discrimination Act' is sewn onto the second line of gold hexagons. The banner is 1,190mm wide and 1,880mm high.

# What will we be making?



Following on from our previous in-person workshop held in July 2022, we will continue to create patchwork pieces that bring together the migration themed work we have created over the past few years.

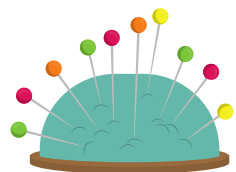
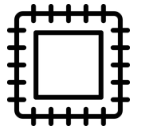
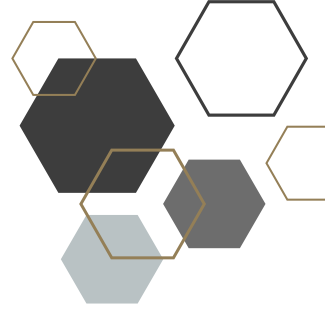


In this workshop we will be stitching letters that will then be patched onto larger banners to make a slogan about fast fashion and its impact on migrant workers. The technique we will be using is called reverse appliqué in which the top fabric is cut away to reveal the bottom layer of fabric.





# Materials



## Materials will you need

- Two square pieces of fabric (for example 20cm x 20cm)
- Embroidery threads / needles / pins
- Fabric pen or regular marking pen
- Scissors – ideally small nail/embroidery scissors
- Pen, paper, scissors





# Pin your fabrics together

1

Pin the two squares of fabric together.

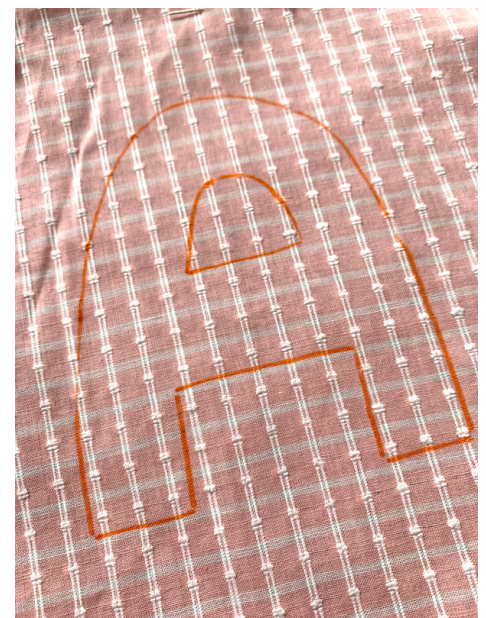
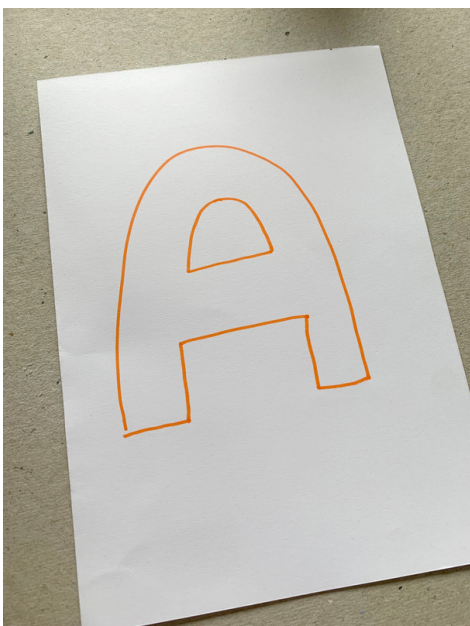
The top fabric will be cut away in the shape of the letter to reveal the bottom fabric, so decide which way around you want your fabric.



# Draw out your letter

2

Draw the letter on paper. Your letter should be thick enough to cut out when we come to that stage, be careful not to draw it too thin. Cut out the letter and trace around it onto your top fabric. You can either use an erasable fabric marking pen or just a regular marking pen.





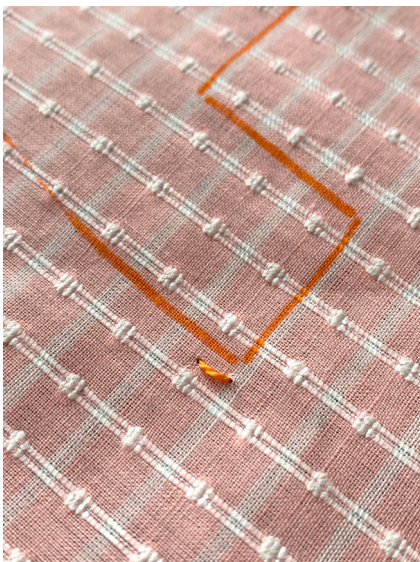
# Stitch around your letter

**3**

Stitch slightly outside the line you have drawn. You will use your drawn line as the cutting line, so your stitches should be distanced enough away so that you don't cut through them. You can stitch using a running stitch, a backstitch, or a chain stitch if you prefer.

In this example we are using a back stitch: bring the needle up from the back and down to make a stitch. Then bring the needle back up a stitch length away and put the needle back into the last hole, closing the gap to make a continuous line.

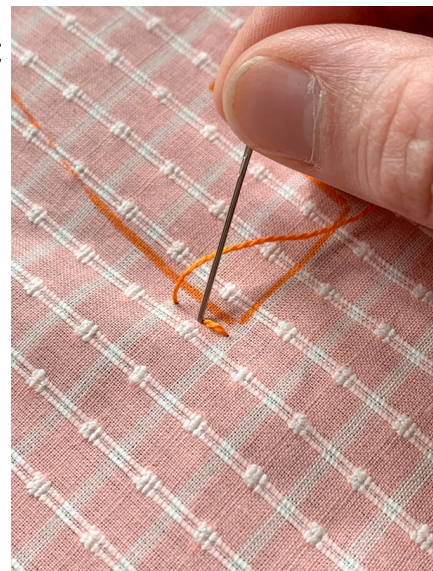
**a**



**b**



**c**



**d**



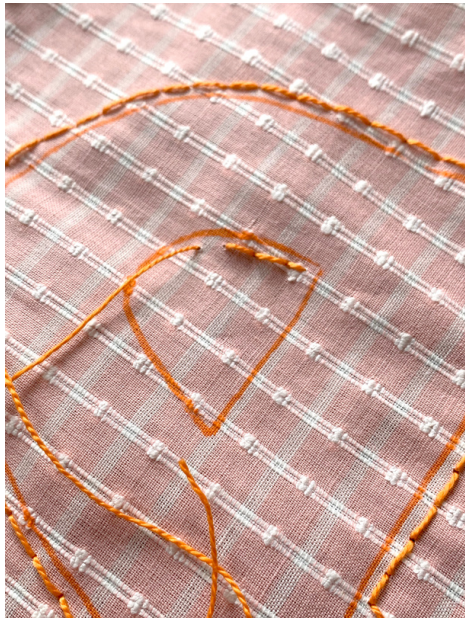
**e**



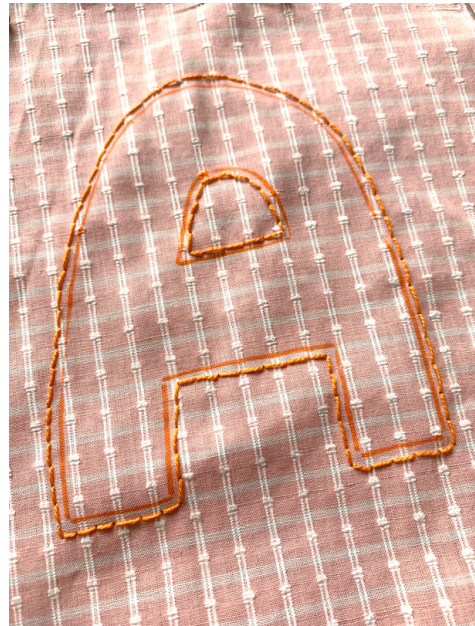


- \* Remember which side of the line to stitch when the letter has a centre to cut out.

**f**



**g**



## Cut out your letter

**4**

When you have stitched around the shape of the letter, you can then cut out the letter from the top layer of fabric. It is important not to cut through to the back! Pinch the top layer away from the back and make a small cut with scissors, then you can go in and start to cut away using the drawn lines as your guides.

**a**



**b**





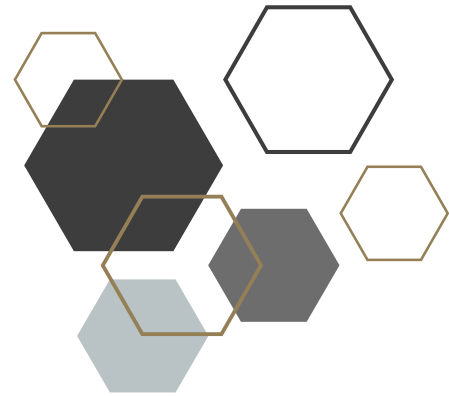
c



d



Finished piece



# Find out more

In previous online sessions we created textile pieces to highlight the impact of poor working conditions on garment workers and show support for the campaigns to improve their working rights and conditions. You can find the supporting resources for those sessions on [The Fabric of Protest online resources webpage](#).

These include:

- [Transparency in the fashion and garment industry](#)
- [Migration and textiles: garment workers campaigns](#)
- [Stitch a message about garment workers' health & safety](#)
- [Visible mending: valuing the skills of garment workers](#)
- [Create a campaign slogan for garment workers' rights](#)
- [Patchwork: highlight hidden labour in the garment industry](#)

You can learn about the campaigns to support garment workers through the links below:

- [Fashion Revolution](#)
- [Clean clothes](#)
- [Pay your workers](#)
- [Labour behind the label](#)
- [Home workers worldwide](#)



# Join us on Zoom to get creative

If you would like to join artist Helen Mather and others to stitch, chat and share ideas inspired by this resource, [book onto the online Zoom workshop](#).

Don't forget to bring a cuppa!

This month we'll be online on  
Saturday 24 September 2022  
2.00pm - 3.30pm



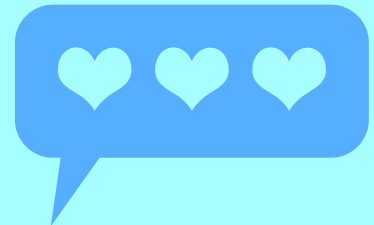
## Share what you have created

We would love to see what you have created!

If you use social media, please share photos of your creations using #FabricOfProtest



Or if you prefer you can email a photo of your creation to [learning@phm.org.uk](mailto:learning@phm.org.uk)



@PHMMcr



@phmmcr



@PHMMcr