



The Sun and the Moon

Japan is often called as “The Land of the Rising Sun”, but this island nation has a long association with the moon too, so it has a long association with their culture and beliefs.

Tsukuyomi is the Japanese god of the moon in Shinto, and the goddess of the sun is Amaterasu.

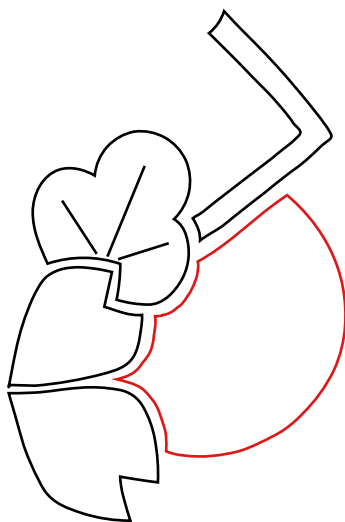
The sister of the moon takes the stage most of the time, but at night, Tsukuyomi embodies all the positives of the dark sky — spirituality, dreams and energy balance.

The Japanese have long admired the moon as a kind of sacred deity. The full moon is considered especially beautiful in mid-autumn, when the air is clean and transparent. Meanwhile, the sun is the most recognisable and an iconic Japanese symbol, represents the heart of the island Land and culture, the emperors (“the sons of the sun”) and the duality and harmonious interaction of many opposite sides in life: night and day, life and death.

Look at the embroidery design and you will catch both: the sun and the moon. The sun is larger, it nourishes the blooming flowers and shines with reddish silk.

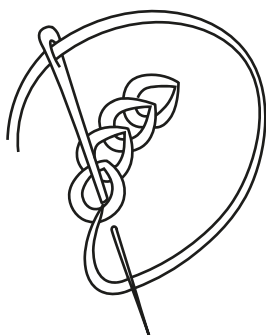
The moon is far away and stands high and aside, sleepy looking at the meditative floating of petals and their dance in the wind.

In the diagram below the element (indicated in red) is the Sun. It should be outlined with a Split stitch all along the edge and later covered with needle weaving embroidery stitch.



▲ The Sun element

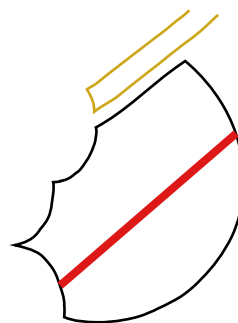
The Sun element is going to be more voluminous than previously embroidered flowers, so it is better to contour it with a Chain stitch, which will make the edge more rigid, and later, when making weaving, it will prevent distortion of the entire element.



▲ Chain stitch

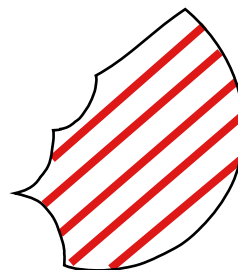
When the “frame” is ready, it is time to move on and cover the element with weaving. Do not worry, it is pretty simple, the main thing you need to take into account is to space the stitches in parallel with the same pitch, thus to ensure even filling.

Thread the needle with three strands of Madeira Silk Hand Embroidery Thread col. 0402. Secure the end of the thread and make one long stitch across the entire element from one side to the other. It should be parallel to the side of the fan (indicated in yellow).



▲The axis of the element

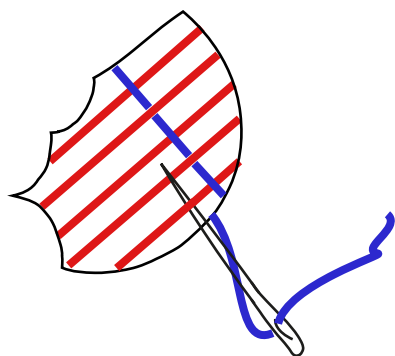
Fill in the entire space in one direction with a series of even parallel stitches, leaving a distance of one millimetre between each long stitch.



▲Weaving stitch base

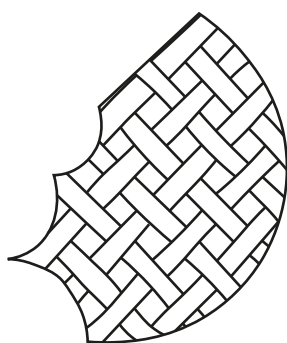
Then change direction and pull the thread through the odd stitches at a different angle (indicated in blue). It is better to start from the centre of the element, thus the weaving will turn out even and it will be easier to regulate the angle so that it is right.

Secure the end of the thread and pull the thread through the odd stitches. Pierce the fabric and go to the wrong side, then in one millimetre step return to the right side and make a new stitch through even stitches.



▲Weaving stitch

Mind the tension. Make sure that it is even, otherwise the edges of the element will be slightly distorted, not round.



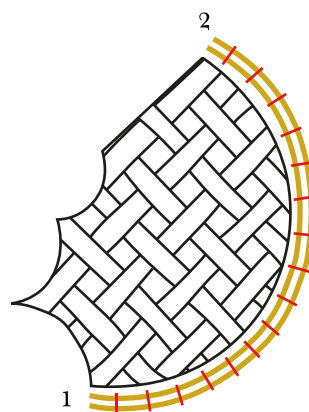
▲Space filled with weaving

When the Sun is fully weaved, a golden frame should be added around the edge. To make this process easier, you need to prepare two separate bobbins of Madeira Metallic 40 col. 422 Golden Dust. I wind them on wine corks, when you hold them in that way, the threads do not twist and become evenly tensed.

So, these golden threads need to be laid out and couched with another (working) thread Madeira FS Metallic 40 Embroidery Thread (gold 6).

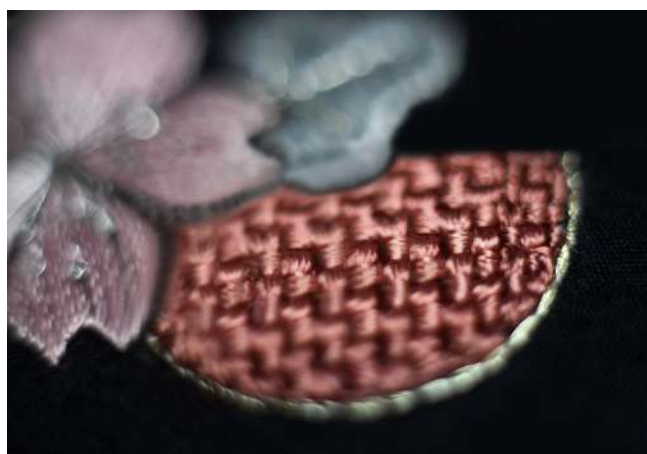
Secure two threads of Madeira Metallic 40 col. 422 Golden Dust (at the point 1). You may use the “lasso” method or an embroidery needle to pull the ends to the wrong side.

With Madeira FS Metallic 40 Embroidery Thread gold 6 (indicated in red), sew in the laid-in thread with a series of neat couching stitches made in 3 millimetres increments. On finishing the curve (at the point 2) secure the end with a tiny stitch, cut the threads and pull all the ends to the wrong side to fasten them there.



▲Couching the golden frame

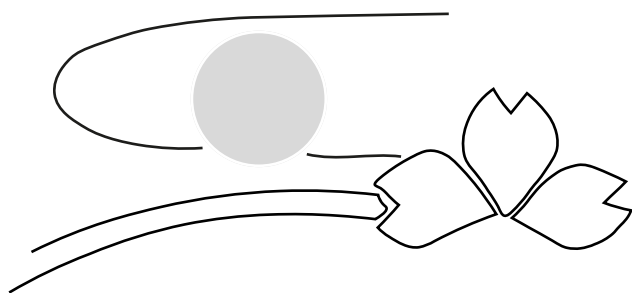
The Sun apparently seems to be done. In a while we will come back to it to set in some golden decorations, but no hurry, every stitch is in time, and do not forget to leave some space between each element.



Since the Sun is fully embroidered, switch to the Moon. In the diagram below, the grey circle indicates the location of the element in the design.

First, it needs to be outlined in the usual way, using a split stitch, using Madeira Rayon 40 col. 1087.

When the contour is ready, fill it in with a satin stitch. All satin stitches should be in one direction, straight and even.

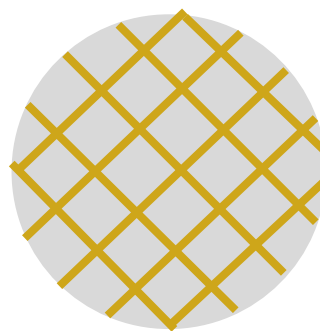


▲The Moon

It is time for shining decorations. Thread the needle with two strands of silver Madeira FS Metallic 40 Embroidery Thread and stitch a series of long stitches in the same direction in an equal space of three millimetres.

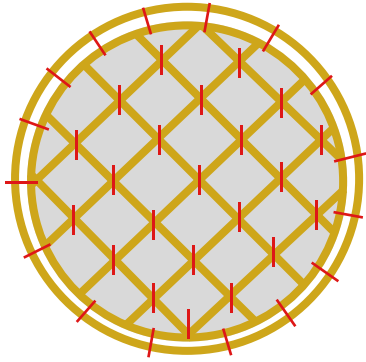
Then change direction and spread a series of new stitches at a right angle. There is no need to weave silver stitches.

The diagram below (indicated in yellow) shows the basic stitches that will soon turn into the silver mesh.



▲Silver mesh on the Moon

At the intersection the stitches set a very small couching stitch, using one silver strand (indicated in red). Then contour the Moon the same way you did on contouring the Sun, but do it with a silver thread. Secure the ends of two silver threads and lay them out in a circle, securing it with another silver strand. Approaching the point where you started, pull the ends to the wrong side and make the joint invisible.



▲Couching stitches on the Moon

When the sunlight and the moonlight
merge together in one story, the
flowers are in bloom, it is time to
admire the falling petals.



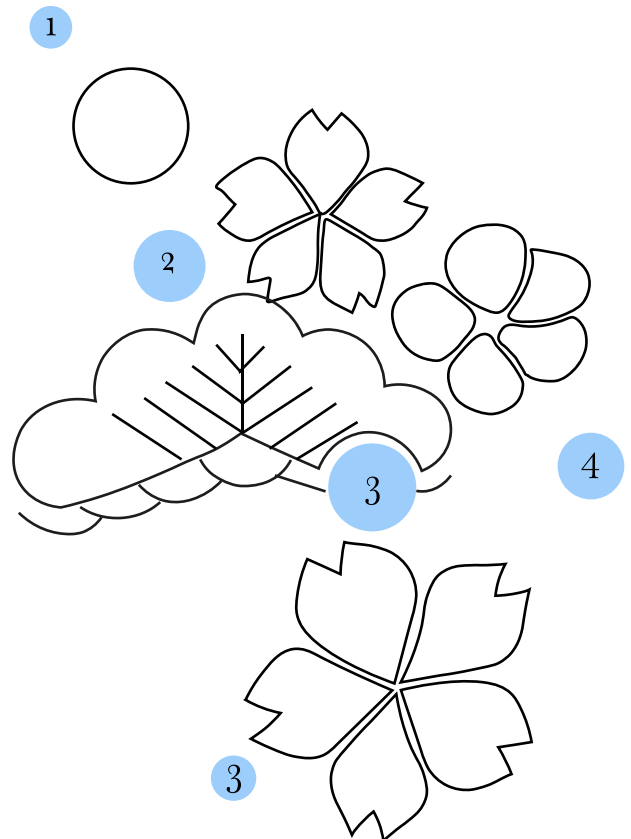
*Under the white moon
of December
Shiro wakes up*

Matsuo Basho

Falling Petals

Tossed by the wind, the tiny circles
filled with satin stitch, sprinkle all
round. All the petals are different sizes,
dressed in satin stitching, that done at
various angles, so that their “satin
dresses” change their colour.

The diagram below shows the
location of the petals (indicated in
blue) and the shaded of threads to use
for filling.



▲ Satin petals in the design

Each petal embroidered with
different shades of thread, here is a list
of the colours used:

1) Madeira FS Metallic 40 Embroidery Thread gold 6

2) Madeira Rayon 40 col. 1338 (used for a Satin stitch) / Madeira FS Metallic 40 Embroidery Thread gold 6 (used for making a “golden frame” with a Couching stitch)

3) Madeira Rayon 40 col. 1186

4) Madeira Rayon 40 col. 1136

As usual, circle each petal with a Split stitch and lay out a Satin stitch on top. Pay attention to a single petal which is circled and couched with metallized thread.

See the diagram below to find it.



After you have filled the petal with satin stitching, contour the petal with a Couching stitch done with Madeira FS Metallic 40 Embroidery Thread gold 6.

The same way you did while making the “golden frame” in the Moon and the Sun.

Secure the ends of the laid out golden threads with another gold (working) thread and stitch them along the edge of the petal, contouring it.

Coming to where you started, pull the ends of the threads you have laid to the wrong side (use a sewing needle or “lasso” technique).

Secure the ends and set the last couching stitch very close to where the ends meet.

So the “golden frame” is up and it is high time to process a new series of element where you will polish your skills of a couching stitch.

So, turn over the page and make ready all your metallized threads.

