



Domestic Dusters Women & Domesticity - What's your Perspective?

You are invited to embroider a duster for the UK-based Domestic Dusters Project. Your contribution will join the exhibition *Passing the Brush: Feminist Art NOW* at Floyd Memorial Library, Greenport.

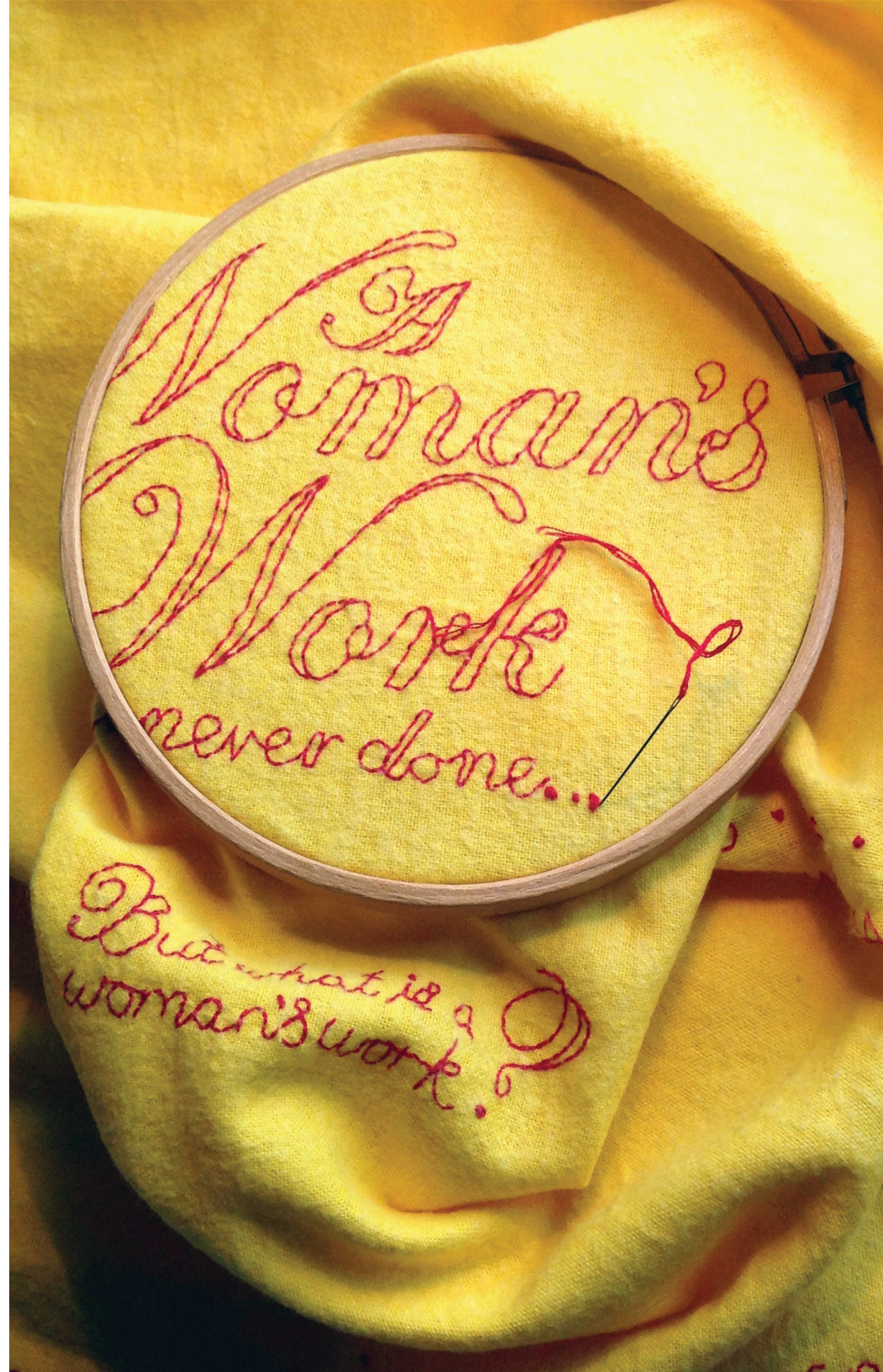
No experience needed. All levels of sewing ability welcome.

This pack contains everything you need to embroider your duster. Suggested themes include your lived experience of so-called "women's work", invisible labor, migration, home, family life and lineage, motherhood, sexism and/or women's rights.

You are welcome to complain or to celebrate, to remember the past, or express hope for the future. Whatever you choose to stitch on this theme, your voice matters!

Please return your completed duster by Saturday, March 22 to:
Floyd Memorial Library
539 First Street
Greenport, NY 11944
Tel: 631-477-0660

You are also welcome to share it with @domesticdusters and @floydmemoriallibrary on Instagram. And please join us for the opening reception of *Passing the Brush: Feminist Art NOW* on Friday, March 28, 6-8 pm, at Floyd Memorial Library, Greenport, NY.



Welcome!

Hello and thank you for choosing to embroider a duster in collaboration with Vanessa Marr, who is an academic, artist, and founder of the UK-based Domestic Dusters Project. Your contribution will join the exhibition *Passing the Brush: Feminist Art NOW* at Floyd Memorial Library, Greenport. It will be on display from the exhibition's opening reception on Friday, March 28 (6-8 pm) until the end of day on Sunday, May 11. Your embroidered duster would also be a welcome addition to the main Domestic Dusters touring collection, if you so choose.

Domestic Dusters is a community-facing research project that aims to give women a voice where they are otherwise silenced, ignored, or simply unheard in a domestic context, addressing everyday discrimination and the often-unacknowledged demands for invisible labour faced by many women. Vanessa selected dusters, a soft yellow cleaning cloth popular in the UK, as a metaphor for domesticity because they are mundane and invisible (like most domestic tasks), yet visually appealing in their brilliant bright yellow. Each duster created for the project is unique and hand-stitched, transforming it from a cleaning cloth into a voice among many; proclaiming a multitude of opinions as a craftivist act that invites conversations and entices change.

Suggested outcomes

You are invited to use the duster as a canvas to express your personal views and experiences, whilst being mindful and respectful of other differences and opinions. There is a preference for red thread, chosen because it represents femininity and adds to the unity of the duster collection when they are on display. Please feel free to add other colors to complement your design.

There is no 'right' way to do this, as it will be personal to you.

Most participants choose words or pictures. Here are a few ideas:

- Short statements and/or pictures on the theme of so-called "women's work", on invisible labor, migration, home, family life and lineage, motherhood, sexism and/or women's rights
- Images – collaged, appliquéd, or illustrated in stitch
- Words that describe your lived experiences – good, bad, funny, happy, or sad
- Demands for things that need to change for women
- Songs, poems, quotes, popular sayings
- Collaborations with a friend
- Anything else that inspires you on this theme!

How to stitch

Please stitch your duster by hand. This is important because something special happens when you spend time holding and stitching into this object. It becomes a catalyst for your thoughts, memories, and experiences. When stitching by hand you also reference the legacy of women historically working with stitch and cloth, which as Rozsika Parker tells us in her book *The Subversive Stitch* (1984), has been linked to women's powerlessness (when we were expected to sew quietly in the corner) and our power through contemporary and activist movements such as craftivism (a way of using craft to protest quietly).

You are welcome to use whichever stitch you prefer, and it can be as complex or as simple as you like. A simple running or back stitch is very effective.

Whether you are an experienced embroiderer or a complete beginner, all contributions are equally valued. The point is what you choose to include on your duster, how you feel about the experience, and the fact that by taking part you are collaborating with other women to share your story.

Top tips:

- Keep it simple.
- Plan your design out on paper before you start.
- Use an erasable fabric pen or soft pencil to sketch your design onto your duster before you stitch.
- If you are including text, select a few key words to make your statement in large letters. That way it will be clearly legible when displayed and can be completed more quickly.
- Use a window or other light source to trace images onto your duster.
- Consider stitching other fabric onto your duster to compliment your embroidery.
- You'll need to split the embroidery thread supplied into two or three strands, so that you can thread your needle.

What do I do with my finished duster?

Please return your completed duster by Saturday, March 22 to:

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Tel: 631-477-0660

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