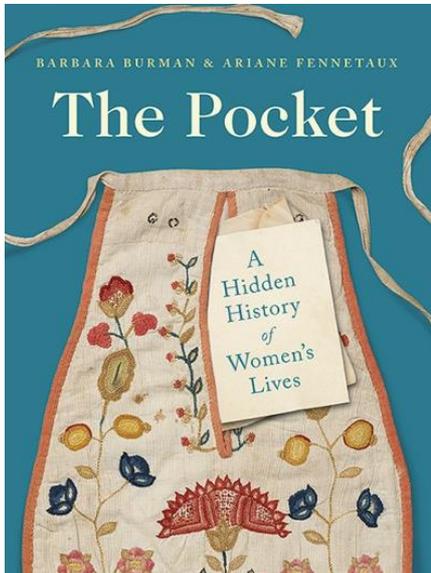


# The Pocket Winter Design Competition

## THE WINNERS



In the later months of 2020, the art team at Yale University Press ran a very special **winter version** of the popular Pocket Design Competition for members of The Embroiderers' Guild and The Quilters' Guild.

Inspired by [The Pocket: A Hidden History of Women's Lives, 1660-1900](#) by Barbara Burman and Ariane Fennetaux, we asked participants to submit an original, winter-inspired design for an [18<sup>th</sup> century pocket](#) in order to be in with the chance of winning £100 worth of fashion and textile history books from Yale University Press.

The standard of entries was incredibly high, and judges Barbara and Ariane were truly impressed with the creativity and dedication shown by everyone who participated. In the end, however, they settled on their winners, and we're delighted to share them with you all here!

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## THE OVERALL WINNER

*Carole Fletcher*



**The judges say:**

We admire the ingenious design and standard of the work. What marks it out in particular is the clever recycling and references to historic materials and processes. It balances the fact that it is wholly within the spirit of the older traditions yet also adapted for use in modern life. Our congratulations to Carole!

We were impressed by the care and thought behind all the pockets submitted, and humour, it was a great turn-out. We also highly commend the pockets by our runner-up winners: Liz Smith and Yvette Phillips.

**Carole says:**

During my research I was intrigued by broderie de Marseille work, but for a modern interpretation I experimented with upcycled denim, an old ball of wool, and woollen blanket which I had previously dyed with rhubarb. I had recently bought an old mill bobbin with the remains of heavy ochre thread on it and this seemed perfect to echo the ingrained association we have of gold topstitching on denim. The abstract 'Marseille' work was sketched over and over until I got a balanced pattern and then drew that onto the reverse fabric. Using heavy thread in the under bobbin, finer thread on the inside, I machine stitched the pattern. Using a bodkin needle I inserted 4 strands of wool into all the channels. The reverse side was first lined with woollen blanket for warmth and heavily seed stitched to create texture and to bond the lining to the outer. A jeans-type antique metal zip seemed an appropriate and safe opening. I made two belt loops and inserted on the top edge and finally stitched front and back together. In the spirit of the original pockets, the piece could be worn with a leather belt slotted through. During the making of this project I had in mind that pockets were precursors to our modern handbags, hence the body and weight I have created. The leather belt could therefore be used as a bag strap and I've also made a topstitched denim strap as well.



## **RUNNER-UP WINNER**

*Yvette Phillips*

### **Yvette says:**

The piece is titled "Winter Pocket for an 18<sup>th</sup> century Huntress". I was inspired by 18<sup>th</sup> century riding habits, as well as the album "Hunter Huntress Hawker" by Laura Cannell. I envisage that this pocket would be worn by an imaginary huntress! The melanistic barn owl symbolises hunting. In keeping with my own artistic style its head is hand embroidered, and its wings feathers are collaged vintage fabrics. The pocket itself is made from vintage midnight blue viscose, with a flurry of hand embroidered French knot snowflakes.



## **RUNNER-UP WINNER**

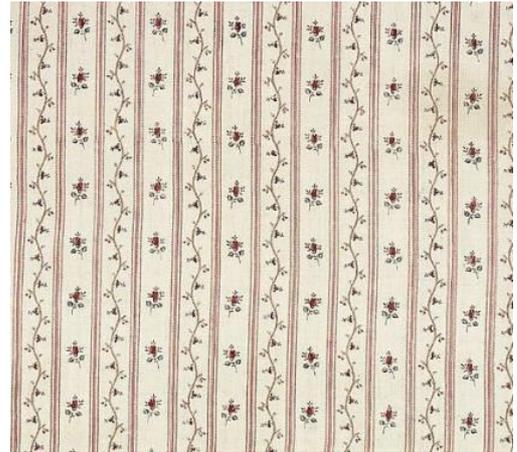
*Liz Smith*

### **Liz says:**

The idea for this winter pocket came from an 18th century weather report ("[Severe cold spell set in from roughly mid-December 1767 and lasted until beginning of the second week of January, 1768...](#)"). Tie-on pockets traditionally act as a repository for personal effects but it occurred to me that in the light of the weather forecast, they might also be a warm and snug retreat for a frozen hand!

During initial research into fabrics of the period I came across a French fabric design of a similar period to the weather report.

**Metropolitan Museum of Art. Date: ca. 1788-90**  
**Culture: French Medium: Cotton Dimensions: L. 20 x**  
**W. 19 1/2 inches 50.8 x 49.5 cm Classification:**  
**Textiles-Printed Credit Line: Gift of William Sloane**  
**Coffin, 1926 Accession Number: 26.265.93**



I liked the restrained colour and formal elements of the design. I wanted to explore the idea of using a traditional stripe to give structure to my design whilst providing the opportunity to replace the floral motif with a direct reference to contemporary patch pockets: a marriage of past and present, but both with a similar function. I took the most basic shape of a patch pocket and then played around with variations of shape and detail. I worked with twelve shapes in total, rotating these vertically through the columns.

My choice of fabric was influenced by the V&A's description of pockets in their textile Collection. I used an interlining of cotton wadding for warmth, recycled linen and DMC single stranded cotton embroidery thread. The textile is handstitched, using basic running stitch and backstitch.

