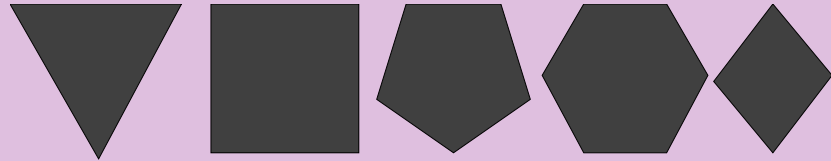


UK/US Bead Pals

2012-2013 Project

Embellished Shapes



Booklet Editor: Diane Fitzgerald

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Notes from the Editor:

This bead pals exchange seems to have been the most fun and most challenging when it came time to assemble the shapes. With 23 shapes in front of one, how do you decide what to do with them? On the following pages, you'll see how the UK and US Bead Pals solved this question.

Thank you to everyone who is part of this project. It is an opportunity to get new ideas, to learn from others, and to stretch our brains to put together a puzzle with many "right" answers.

As we begin our next and fifth project, "Embellished Found Objects," try to let yourself go in new directions.

I'm sure it will be just as much fun as the first four.

Happy Beading,
Diane Fitzgerald, US

UK-US Bead Pals 4th Challenge:

Embellished Geometrics

The Challenge: This challenge was inspired by the idea of quilts, especially crazy quilts and puzzles, and the opportunity to make them into a two or three dimensional final piece or use them as embellishment on another surface.

1. Make one flat, straight-sided embellished geometric shape for each participant (expected number is 24 participants). Embellished shapes with open centers are o.k.

2. Any regular shape may be made including triangle, square, pentagon, hexagon, octagon, decagon, diamond or isosceles triangle.

3. Colors: In order to unify the assembled pieces colors are limited to Jewel Tones which are similar to the rich colors of a stained glass window or gemstones such as ruby, sapphire, emerald, topaz, amethyst and garnet- these are the colors we refer to as jewel tones. Jewel tones are generally medium to deep, clear or pure colors rather than diluted with gray or brown or their opposite on the color wheel.

In Swarovski crystals, these colors could also be included: Hyacinth, Red Topaz, Light Siam, Burgundy, Lilac, Green Tourmaline, Smoked Topaz, Red Magma, Cobalt, Capri Blue, Fern Green, Dark Sapphire, Siam, Blue Zircon, Olivine, Purple Velvet, Ruby, Garnet, Smoked Topaz, Sapphire, Indian Red, Dark Indigo and Fuchsia. Colors with Satin, AB or AB-2X coatings are not included because these colors are not pure jewel tone hues.

In Miyuki Delicas, these colors would be considered jewel tones: 43, 46, 47, 73, 74, 105, 116, 183, 422, 427, 430, 431, 463, 602, 603, 605, 607, 608, 610, 611, 612, 682, 683, 688, 693, 696, 1340, 1345, 148, 149 and so on. This list may not be comprehensive.

Gold may also be used but not black, silver or pastel colors.

4. Stitches: Any of the following stitches may be used to make your embellished shapes: peyote, brick, square or herringbone.

5. Size: The shapes must be a minimum of 1 inch (2.5 cm) and a maximum of 2 inches (5 cm) in any direction. There are approximately 400

cylinder beads per square inch and 200 cylinder beads per gram.

6. Deadlines: To encourage participants to work on these throughout the year rather than leaving them to the last minute, we are asking each of you to submit one quarter of the final number (6 pieces) to either Steph or Diane on the following dates: Dec. 1, 2012, March 1, 2013, June 1, 2013 and Sept. 1, 2013. If it appears that a beader is unable to meet the deadlines, giving early notice of this would be appreciated so someone else can be recruited to take your place or the number of pieces needed can be reduced. We hope that everyone will be able to complete this challenge. Please submit each of your shapes in a 2" x 2" plastic bag with your name inside.

Please let us know by Oct. 1, 2012 if you plan to take part in this challenge: Stephany Hornblow at hornblow@btopenworld.com or Diane Fitzgerald at dmbfbeads@bitstream.net.



Carla Abler-Erickson, US

After the flower challenge where I made every flower differently I decided to make all of my shapes the same. However, I decided to keep with one of my favorite “bee themes” so I decided to do a honey comb shape with a bee holding a drop of honey. This turned out to be not be quite as easy as I thought as I had to come up with a way to make the honey comb shape look symmetrical and within the size parameters. Once solved they become fun to make.

I had a hard time deciding what to do with the shapes when they arrived since they were so diverse in color and shape. However, when cleaning the upstairs I came across the two display boxes and the light bulb went on. I stained the boxes, filled the cavities with Styrofoam, and then covered the foam with adhesive backed felt. I do admit to cheating since I took all of the shapes over to my sister’s (who is an artist) and between the two of us and my two nieces we came up with what went where. Then all it took were some sequin pins and I was done.

Doing these exchanges keeps me thinking and challenges me to do something other than working on Nefferbarbie.





Rachel Bertenshaw, UK

This is Hat 2, following on from last year's hat pins. The jewel tones and different geometric shapes needed no further embellishment and glitter out against the black of the hat. Years ago as a girl I had international pen friends and have helped countless children do letters and exchanges through my job: such a wonderful way to develop this!

I had been doing the hexagon shape for another project and it just appealed to me. All my shapes are the same pattern, but lots of different colour combinations. I got a palette of jewel colours and then just went with whatever combination appealed to me as I picked them up.

When I got the shapes I already knew that I was going to put them on a hat as I had done last year, so it simply became the second in the series. Friends who have seen it just love it, the idea of having a pen pals exchange and particularly the jewel colours.

I loved this challenge and I love the whole pen pals idea.





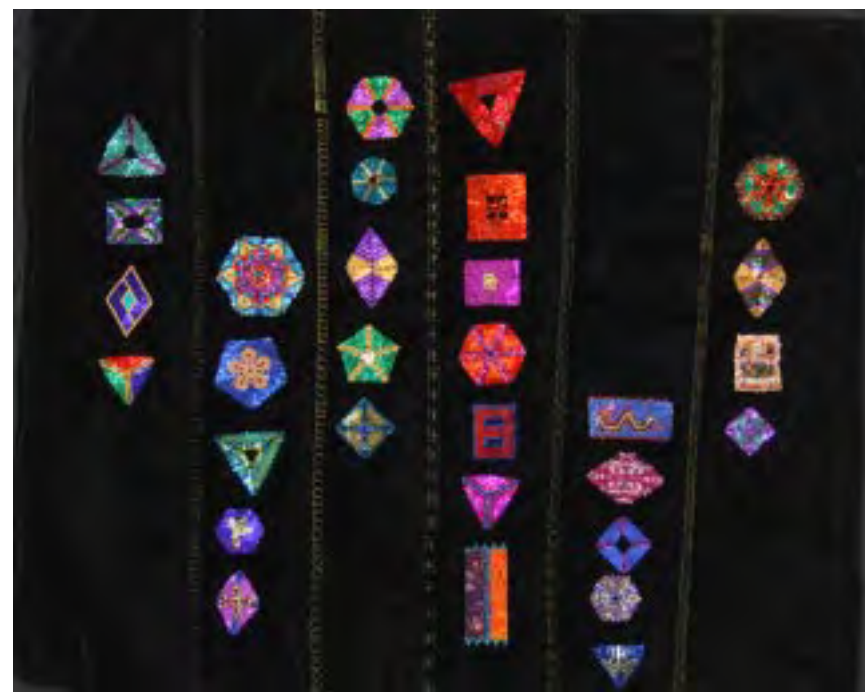
Francie Broadie, US

This was an interesting and surprisingly difficult challenge for me. I loved making all of the pieces to swap. I ended up making an assortment of shapes. After several solid shapes, I discovered that the open

shapes worked up a little more quickly. The “embellished” part of this challenge also added a bit of difficulty. I tried to play with color in my shapes, and some lent themselves to having a bit of embellishment, and some did not. As I was making the pieces I was envisioning a fabulous necklace made with all of the pieces. But when the pieces came, it was clear fairly early on, that that idea was not going to work the way I had imagined it.

All of the pieces I received were beautiful, but they did not all go together. I think there was some wide interpretation of jewel tones, and it was a bit of a challenge having different sizes and shapes of beads to work with. I spent 3 or 4 days just laying out the pieces in different configurations and snapping pictures, hoping something would click. Finally with the deadline looming, I decided to take the theme literally. I found a piece of black velvet in my stash, found a layout that I liked, then started sewing pieces on to the velvet. About half way through this process it became clear to me that it wasn't working. I ended up picking out all of the work I had done, and starting over. I made several extra shapes to tie the pieces together a bit better, decided on a second arrangement, and began sewing the pieces to the velvet again. It's still not perfect, but it's not bad. I added a bit of batting, and pieced together a backing and quilted the two pieces together with some decorative stitching on the sewing machine. I wish the gold stitching showed up a bit more.

This was definitely a challenge, more so than any of the other challenges. I think having a more limited color palate or at least some defined color numbers would have made this a bit easier. Also, I received several



pieces that were made with galvanized beads, which are beautiful, but the finish was already coming off, which made me less inclined to create something wearable. I look forward to seeing what everyone else has made with their pieces. Now I need to find a place to hang my new quilt.



Denise Campion, UK

This is my Bead Pal contribution for this year - a bead embellished cushion.

The variation of the received items was fascinating – such inventive ideas and intricate work.

I decided to cover a plain cushion with them in order to properly display the skill and imagination of our fellow beaders.





Dana Cleak, UK

I suppose my comments about the project should start with the making of the shapes for everyone in the group. This was kind of tailor-made for me, as I had been beading little vessels made from embellished pentagons for some time and it was nice to have a reason to move on to other shapes too. I made the bulk of

them very early on and tried to make each one unique. The end result was a mixture of shapes, colours and sizes. I don't have a preference for a particular shape, although the pentagon and hexagon are both interesting, whilst offering plenty of surface area for embellishment. My approach was to combine both a geometric design and surface embellishment. Wherever possible, the embellishments were beadwoven into the work as it progressed, rather than being applied to the top after completion of the shape. Often, there was a central motif or some pre-prepared pieces around which the shape would evolve. I really enjoyed all of the endless possibilities this offered – each idea gave rise to several more and I ended up with more shapes than were needed. These were not wasted, as I used up all of the spares in my own project.

The arrival of the shapes the rest of the Bead Pals had made was eagerly anticipated and finally they came. I had several ideas of what I might do, but I was most drawn to Diane's original inspiration of crazy quilts and the look of stained glass in jewel tones. I had been working a lot in 3D, so decided to make a flat piece with raised elements, which could be used as a panel for a cushion (pillow).

The first challenge was how to combine a wide variety of shapes of different sizes, made in a range of techniques using several types and sizes of bead. My response was to unify all of the pieces, mounting them where necessary, so that they all had shaped edges with a clear peyote



and got a bit carried away with some additional embellishments for a rich, crazy-quilt look. At this stage, I had a freeform piece of work requiring a boundary. I made a border out of small squares of beadwork and attached the central portion to this, filled in the edges with black beadwork, which was then embellished with a trail of flowers and leaves in subtle colours, to add an embroidered feel to the work.

I have tried to arrange the shapes without any one standing out as the focal point – the idea is for the eye to travel around the work and enjoy what each person has made.

The panel is currently just over 14" square and weighs 429 grams – just over 15 ounces. My intention is to finish it off with an additional border of plain beadwork, simulating the stone found in ancient churches. It may still become a cushion front or, as has been suggested by my sister, could be set into the top of a small table, under glass.

I have had many favourable comments from my family – as yet, I have not shown it to anyone else. It was an exciting project, although I feel I may have made it a bit more challenging than necessary!



Doris Coghill, US

Did you choose a shape to make because you prefer that shape? I tried several shapes, just to test out how the shapes were made, but decided I liked the Triangles best and most of them ended up as triangles.

When you received your shapes, did you have several ideas for how to use them or just one? I knew from the beginning of the project that I did not want to do jewelry and would do something that would hang on a wall, but waited until I actually had the shapes to let them speak to me and tell me what they wanted to become.

If you had several, what were some of the other ideas and why did you decide on the one you used? I had originally thought that I would put them in a shadow box, but once I got them I changed my mind and went with the mobile.

Do you think this was a good challenge? Yes, because you did not have to do just one thing (like Jewelry) with the finished squares - there were many possibilities.





Diane Fitzgerald, US

I love my little doggie! He has large ear bobs on each ear and notice that he grabbed one shape in his mouth. The little dickens! He has been aptly named "Patch" by Jean Hall.

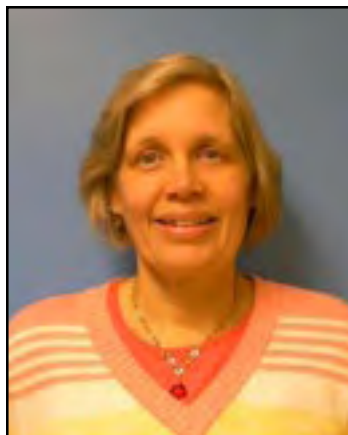
He is a simple little stuffed muslin weiner dog which is about 10 inches from nose to tail and just 4 inches tall. With a coat of black acrylic paint, the shapes stood out on his body. His ears are edged with beads.

As we started this challenge, I didn't envision using them on a stuffed dog. I had thought I would distort the shapes to make them more 3D for a bracelet, but when they arrived, like most everyone else, my mind went blank. Walking through a hobby store, I spotted this little muslin dog and knew he was it. Since he is part Brit, he wears a crown to suggest his royalty.

He is so lovable...A bit of whimsy in this serious world!

P.S. I am so enamored with the shapes that have been added to fabric that I have made two "ribbons" of shapes. It is a challenge to come up with new ways to embellish them and to create new patterns within them.





Kathy Franke, US

I found this challenge to be really fun and absolutely loved the colors we had to use because these are the colors I am naturally drawn to. For me, it was especially nice to take a break from black and silver and work with gold and bright colors.

I chose to make all different shapes in different sizes with different patterns, colors and embellishments. No two were alike. When working on a project, I get too bored doing the same thing over and over. I need variety.

It was so fun getting all my shapes in the mail. I had to clear a spot on the table to have enough room to lay them all out and I was totally blown away by how wonderful they all were. It took a bit of pondering on what to do with them. I had thought about somehow sewing them all together to fit over a tall bottle, but because of the variety of stitches used in the shapes as well as some having outside embellishments and mostly because I'm not real good at freehand random stitching, I discarded this one —although it looked really good in my head!

I tried fitting them all together with the idea of attaching them to a wood plaque, but it looked too muddled and the shapes lost their individuality.

My next idea was to cross stitch a grid and sew the shapes in their respective squares in effort to have a “quiltish” look, but it was so uniform and boring, I tossed that idea, too.

I finally settled on stitching the shapes in a pattern on cross stitch fabric and attaching that to a canvas. The fabric worked well because it helped me keep everything straight and was easy to align the outside beads to the holes for stitching. I had originally wanted to do some beaded cross stitching to add more visual interest, but I had so many delays from where I ordered my fabric including getting the wrong color, that I finally had to



just condense the pattern to fit onto an 8x8 canvas. I purchased ribbon that I hoped could replace the cross stitching and I think it would have looked great if I had been able to use a larger canvas. I did put ribbon around the outside when it was finished and, despite the setbacks, I'm really happy with the finished creation. The shapes are beautiful and they all stand out. It's perfect! It was a great challenge.

No one other than my husband has seen it, but he loves it. I actually think he likes these challenges as much as I do! He always offers opinions and recommendations and loves to check out each item as I make it and is as excited as I am to open the boxes when they arrive.



Ann Gilbert, US

I loved doing the shapes. It represents freedom within structure. There is a base shape but the colors and enhancements take it to a new level. When I got everyone else's shapes, I didn't have a clue what to do with them. I separated them by basic shape and found to my surprise I had a good 1 to 1 match-up. Then I rearranged them on a black background and the shapes just kind of came into focus. I wanted to put it all together into a large wearable necklace, but found that finishing a piece like this, fixed on a background was daunting. But I liked the arrangement so much I decided to leave them this way. My brother made me the lovely triangular frame and it will hang on the wall in my studio!





Jean Hall, UK

Of all the Bead Pal challenges to date, this is the one I enjoyed the most – the combination of jewel colours and geometric shapes is right up my street! It was the embellishment that I had trouble with, until travelling along the motorway to visit a friend with Steph and Carol Stevenson, I had the light bulb moment. Steph had already done a number of her shapes and was regretting not having chosen letters and that was when inspiration finally dawned on me! I chose the open triangle shape because I had two words and a number to “write” on each side of the triangle and luckily they just fitted on the size of triangle that I had. I used Braille characters as my embellishment. So far only one person has worked that out, but she is still having trouble working out what is written! Each of my triangles is a different colour and each character is worked in a different colour of Delica.

When I received my shapes I had two ideas, but rejected one as being too impractical. I took inspiration from the idea of jewels and stained glass windows and I stitched my shapes onto black silk which I then used to cover a box. I had no idea how to go about this and spent far more time trying to work out how to do it, rather than actually doing it. I now have a Jewelled Box in which to store previous Bead Pal Challenge treasures!





Lynda Hitchings, UK

Until receiving the beaded shapes you have ideas etc, once they've arrived colours and layout can be thought about.

Firstly I laid them out in various configurations, then tried them on different background fabrics. Once the fabric was picked, loosely pinned around them, then laid three simple running stitches to give a little more definition, then stitched each piece of beadwork onto the fabric with a layer of wadding behind. The hanging was completed with a plain backing and a simple hidden support and a cord as the hanger.





Stephney Hornblow, UK

When I was given my bag of shapes I really was at a bit of a loss what to do. I laid them out on a table and waited for the 'inspiration fairy' to pass by and give me an idea! Sure enough she did, in the shape of a good beading friend who had made a wonderful tassel which I had always admired. So the seed was set but where to get the tassel, step in another beading fairy who so kindly gave me a hank of beautiful silk threads to make the tassel. My job was to mould the shapes into a form to decorate the tassel head. It was a very satisfying experience and the wonderful shapes all went together like old friends, it was really great fun. So to all those beading fairies out there, you know who you are, thanks for inspiration, fun, laughter, support, ideas and a whole lot more. Here's to the next Bead Pals.





Sandra Houk, US

Here is the start for now. When I don't shake so much I will finish it. I will join all the shapes using gold beads.

I made triangles that I varied when I made them. This was hard for me to figure out what to do with the shapes. I have a hard time doing anything that is freeform. So far no one has seen the started project.

This was a good challenge for me.





Carol Hutchings, UK

Hello again! . . . A belated “thank you” Bead Pals for my beaded shapes for the 2012/13 challenge.

It seems an age since I opened the pretty, colourful little packages and pondered on what could be done with them, but time has flown by and I hope you like the realization of my plans!!

I am taking a breather from the current challenge (too many pies to dip into and not enough fingers!) but to those of you who have picked up the gauntlet: “Happy Beading!”
Carol Hutchings





Jane Langenback, US

I decided to make a banner-like piece by using the shapes as a kind of crazy quilt look. I really enjoy bead embroidery and I am a member of the Minnesota State Button Society so I added a few buttons here and there on the piece.





Liana Magee,
US

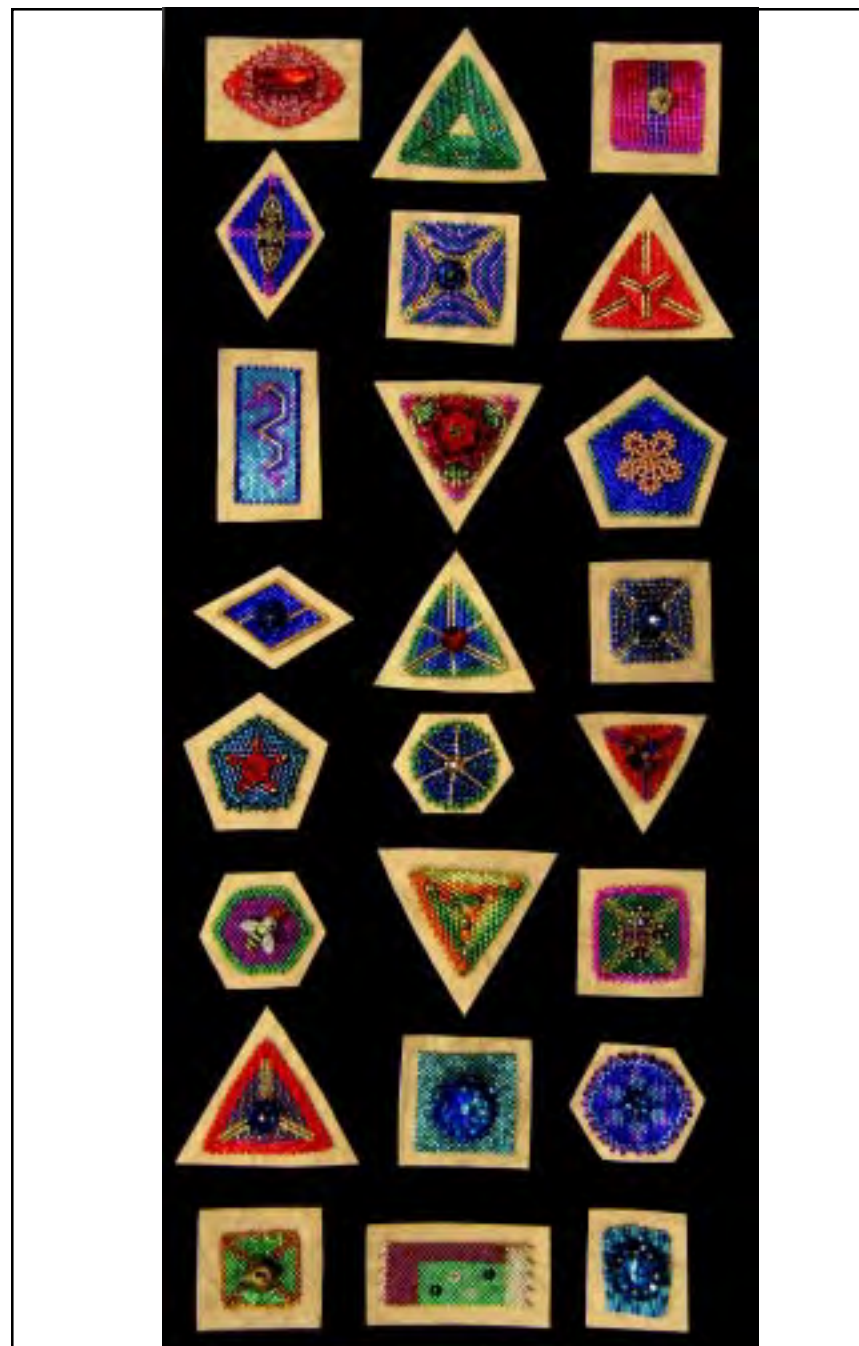
I like making shapes, so this was a fun project to work on. I started out making several different kinds of shapes, and having fun incorporating patterns into the shapes, thinking that was an adequate embellishment. I gradually started working mostly with triangles, which are the shapes I prefer to make and started to add bead embellishments on the shapes, which was more interesting when finished. In September, when I received my package of shapes from all of the other beaders, it was a bit overwhelming..so many colors and shapes, some matching, some complementing and many that didn't. I was in a bit of a time crunch because I was leaving town in early November, which meant I had only 5 or 6 weeks to make something with the shapes. I considered various design options, like making a fabric box and covering it with shapes, making a necklace, a mobile, and more, but I just couldn't get excited about any of it. Time was passing and I was starting to panic about lack of time. (This is normal for me..) Then one day Diane said, "Why don't you get a piece of black grosgrain ribbon and attach them to the ribbon?" It sounded too simple...almost like cheating. But I thought about it and thought some more..and finally decided to try it. I like the end result. I have hung it on a narrow wall in my bead room and can enjoy it every day. I had to make my own metal pieces for the ends of the ribbon, so it is a little crude, but I really do like it. It makes me happy!





Susan Manchester, US

I liked making geometric shapes and love jewel tones so I was very pleased that I could keep the project interesting by making several different shapes in my favorite colors. I was pretty sure from the start that I wanted to frame the shapes since I knew I would enjoy the color palette and wanted more beadwork on my walls. I did end up doing a little more embellishing of the final pieces I received to integrate the colors and I love the final result.





Vicky Pritchard, UK



I made my shapes pentagons because I knew I wanted to make a five petalled flower to sit on the top and decided that a pentagon shape would balance nicely.

All of my shapes were the same size, but to stop me going completely loopy I varied the colours I used. The embellishments are two different flowers- the US ones have one from The Beaders Floral book by Jill Devon and Liz Thornton, the UK flower is from Embellished Beadweaving by Laura McCabe.

I was actually quite stumped by how to use my shapes. I always find this the most difficult part of the bead pals projects- how best to show off each item individually while still making a coherent overall display. I'm really pleased with the way it turned out. I think the dark purple background works much better than the black that I tried originally. I'll be the first to admit that the stitching isn't the greatest, but it is my handwriting underneath. I wanted to use the bright jewel toned threads to catch the eye and compliment the shapes I received.

People have admired the shapes I received, and I also had some nice comments about the shapes I made. Not many

people have seen the finished article yet, but I love the way it has turned out!

I found this year quite challenging- I'm not very good at making lots of identical components, but managed to get there in the end! I'm looking forward to seeing what everyone else has done with their shapes- bring on the found objects!



Adele Recklies, US

Having made a few patchwork quilts in the past, I was immediately drawn to the idea of a patchwork diamond. I decided to make the diamond more interesting by dividing it up into two “L” shapes with the result of a smaller diamond in the middle. As for color, I was just in the mood for a rich purple.

It was very exciting to see all of the other shapes, but I had no ideas on what to do with the collection. I left the shapes out on my work table and just moved them around periodically to see if inspiration struck. Nothing I did really thrilled me. Then I remembered a game that some of us on Facebook had played where we posted photos of what project we had on our bead boards. I made a face of my partially-completed bead crochet project for that game and challenged myself to do the same with the beaded shapes. Somehow that morphed into story about a lonely, robotics nerd in the future who builds himself a girlfriend out of spare parts and makes her sparkle with beadwork samples scrounged from his grandmother. From there, everything fell into place for a bead embroidery project.

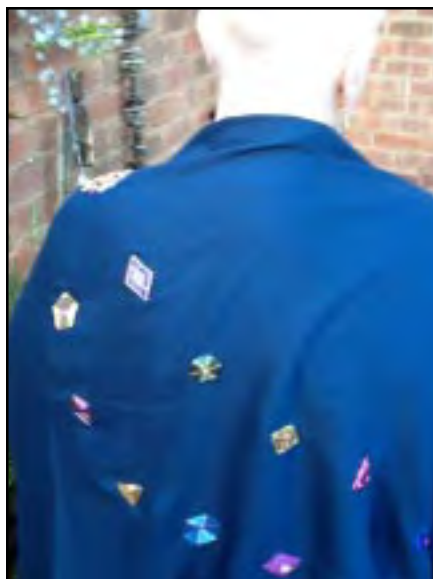


This was a fun challenge and I am looking forward seeing what everyone else did with their shapes.



Carol Stevenson, UK

This is my offering!
I did think that I would use the shapes to embellish my pashmina and call it "A night at the Opera" but, we don't get many Operas in Birmingham UK! So, I shall be wearing it to the Matthew Bourne ballet Swan Lake next month. Can I thank all participants in both the US and UK the range of shapes and jewel colours were super. I love them. Looking forward to 2014 Bead Pals.





Catharine White, UK

When faced with the shapes challenge I tried two or three shapes - in the end the majority of the shapes I created were triangles. I don't know why, but I found them most satisfying. I really enjoyed

playing with colours in different combinations and patterns. I was very sad to parcel up the shapes to be sent to the group - I wanted to play with them myself, when I have time I will have to create some more. Like everyone else, didn't know what I was going to get back.

The shapes I did receive were all different, and I didn't know how to combine them. I tried lots of combinations and photographed them all, seeking for inspiration. But even with a nicely balanced pattern, where or on what should I put it? I did think of a collage/piece of artwork for the wall - but I didn't know where I would put it and I really wanted everyone's efforts to be used rather than put away in a box.

I came to beading many years ago, mainly as a method to embellish the hats and clothing that I design and make. For our flower project I embellished a hat which I have worn several times - the last to my mother-in-law's funeral just before Christmas. I didn't feel I could do that again but it was still to that "embellishment" that I turned when trying to decide what to do with the lovely shapes the group has created. I have a scarf/stole which I made some years ago, it is creamy white cashmere on one side and silk dupion on



the other. I wear it a lot, and I thought I could give it a new life by using the shapes as a trim along the two short edges. This has converted an already luxurious winter scarf into a more dressy stole.

Thank you everyone for your hard work. Now I have to go and find some objects to bead!



Elizabeth Wilson, UK

Design Awards for the Fellowship of Beadpals

Our beading collaboration was formed by a prophetic dream to unite us across the pond.

It has steered us across the misty mountains where the jewels were

mined and through past challenges which have become legendary.

We have shown endurance and ingenuity by following our design

brief to fulfil the quest.

No dwarfs were harmed in the making of these medals, and no dragons slain.

The only battles were with colour and shape and juxtaposition!



After spending months making my jewel shapes; crystals suspended in a void.

It was exciting to receive all the shapes and begin to use them. I decided to try and build a landscape with them. After weeks of toil and many designs later I was sharing my ideas with Ian and Clare (my design consultants). We became intrigued by the idea of making medals. This seems a great way to award our dedication and perseverance.

So with thanks to my design team- here they are!



Peggy Wright, US

Did you choose a shape to make because you prefer that shape?
No, I don't have a preference.

Did you make your shapes all the same or vary them?
I made all kinds of shapes. I find it boring to make everything the same.

When you received your shapes, did you have several ideas for how to use them or just one?
I had one idea, to make them dimensional, but I used many different ways to do so. For quite a while, I have been very interested in making my beadwork and my quilts dimensional.

With respect to how I finished the piece, I had been thinking about ways that people have used vintage jewelry in wall art and sculpture, putting a lot of bling together to create a shape or image. I have had birds on the brain for some time with respect to my quilting, and so a bird was just a natural for this piece.

Have you had comments from others who have seen your shapes—finished or unfinished?



Only that they are interesting.

Do you think this was a good challenge?
I like challenges that allow lots of leeway in the interpretation, more open-ended than constrained by a particular goal.

Because I could embellish the shapes in many different ways, I thought it was a good challenge.