The Medieval Screen: A Work in Progress
http://newmedievalart.org
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The Question:
Will people be inspired to study history and fiber arts when presented with colorful and era accurate embroidered patches displayed on a screen?

Materials & Methods

A medieval screen built to display embroidered patches depicting musicians from Las Cantigas de Santa Maria. This screen is made from recycled wooden shutter doors, with trigger material stretched between the slats. Inkle weave is sewn on every side of the patches to further frame the medieval laid stitchery.

On the reverse side of the screen are sewn upholstery fabric of tapestry design to counter-weight the heavy patches. The material is further lined with felt and reflects images from the Middle Ages such as partridges, stages, floral and religious symbols. Acrylic paint was used to add ivy and grape vines along the wooden edges. Many medieval screens were often wooden and painted.

The two images above show the patch created from the image downloaded and printed from a web site onto transfer paper, ironed onto fabric, and embroidered over. The stitch used is the Laid stitch, the medieval stitch used in the Bayeux Tapestry, of the 11th century.

Results

Using metal hinges to link all 10 panels together has produced a functional and large room divider or screen. Screens were used in castles and churches to display art work and create warmer spaces within a room.

Conclusions

Creating a display of images from manuscripts from a period in history requires an understanding of the music, symbols, the techniques used in embroidery and weaving, geography, and the politics of these codices is necessary. The texture and vibrant colors of fiber bring another aspect of connection to the people and their music from the 13th Century. The background color is light blue and light pink and alternated on the panels. The pale background allow for image colors to stand out.

Inkle weave is used to frame the patches in pink. The images used are from the “Cantigas” or songs within the four codices which hold various songs and/or lyrics with different illuminations and number of songs per text. The first four panels have space for only 4 patches as the remainder of the panels are solid wood.

Four more panels have space for 7 to 8 patches with the last 2 panels being wider to allow for larger images. The finished screen will allow for an estimated 54 patches in total.

Resources Cited