

Order code	Manufacturer code	Description
06-1800	n/a	ANTEX CRAFT IRON & TIPS (RE)

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Mastering the Fabric-Master

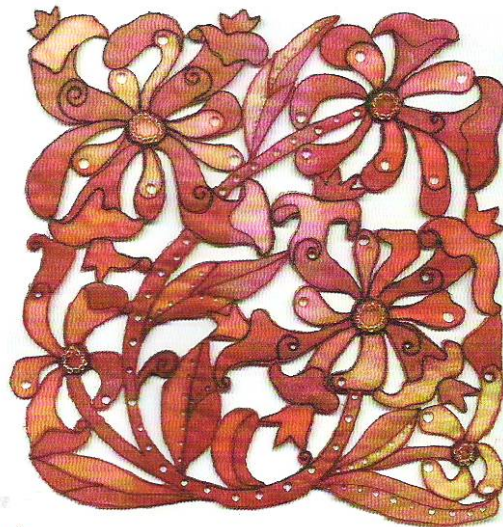


A soldering iron is my must-have textile tool, so I was keen to play around with the Fabric-Master, which comes with an assortment of different tips ...

by Kathleen Laurel Sage

My soldering iron takes the place of scissors whenever possible as it cuts, neatens and seals my fabric edges so that no extra finishing is required and my work never frays. It also gives me the freedom to produce unique, intricate patterns that I would find difficult to cut with scissors; I can add texture to otherwise flat surfaces, puncturing holes and making marks, and I have the control to solder straight lines and create geometric shapes.

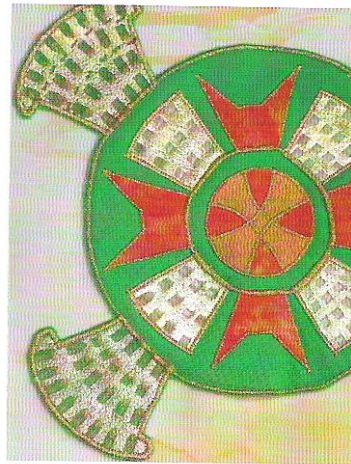
All in all, my soldering iron is a valuable part of my creative sewing equipment – a real must-have. Whether you're an absolute beginner or an experienced soldering iron devotee, there's no end to the creative innovation that this tool offers to the textile artist. Just make a collection of synthetic and meltable fabrics – and play.



Layers of organza held together with a machine embroidered design, the pencil-sharp tip (4) has been used to 'draw' around and remove all of the negative areas, throwing the design forward. The stitched design was placed on

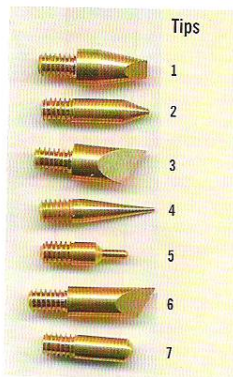
a piece of glass and the tip was pushed down through the fabrics and against the glass, melting and sealing all the edges and preventing any future fraying. The spiked tip (5) was used to make the lines of holes.

Layers of synthetic and organza materials machine embroidered onto dyed cotton fabric in a simple design. The pencil-sharp tip (4) was used to make the tiny holes in this piece while the stubby tip (2) was used to make the wavy markings through the organza, allowing the cotton underneath to show through. The larger holes with melted outer circles around them were achieved by pushing the spiked tip (5) down through the layers until the widened part of it touched the fabrics. It was then quickly pulled back, leaving stressed edges to the circular holes.



Gold lamé was used in this ecclesiastical sample. It was appliquéd onto the green cotton and the flat-edged tip (1) was used to add pattern to the design by drawing the flat edge across the lamé, melting and dragging it in short lines, adding texture and interest to what could have been a lot of bland gold.

EXPERIMENTAL



Tips

- 1
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Triangular markings made through synthetic fabric using the wedge-shaped tip (3). This could be placed over a contrasting fabric, which would show through and enhance the markings.

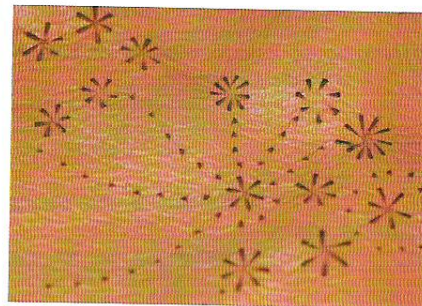
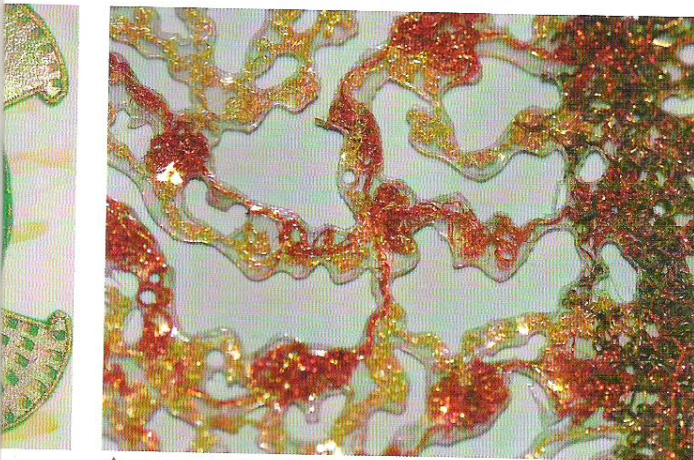


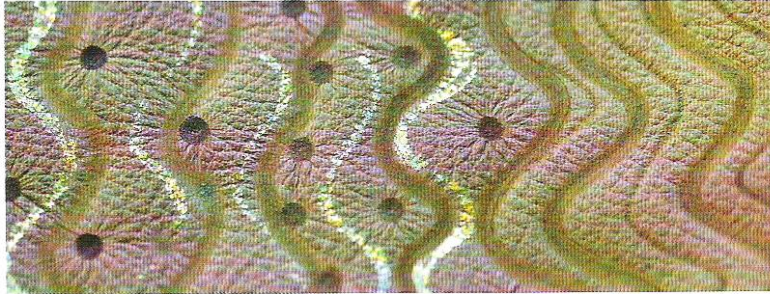
This gold fabric, which comes already bonded onto a white backing film, is great for making marks onto it with a soldering iron. With the gold side of the fabric uppermost, the thick round-ended tip (7) was used to draw a quick spiral design across it; this removed the gold surface while leaving the white backing which made the finished design jump forward.



Layers of red organza layered together, hand stitched and beaded. The spiked tip (5) has been used to make the lines of holes and the pencil-sharp tip (4) has been used to cut out the

small flowers that embellish the piece. Two pieces of red organza were fused together with Bondaweb and the sharp tip used freehand to cut out the flowers, sealing their edges as they were cut to make freeform 'sequins'. For individual and innovative projects, small squares, diamonds and many other shaped 'sequins' could be custom-made in the same manner.



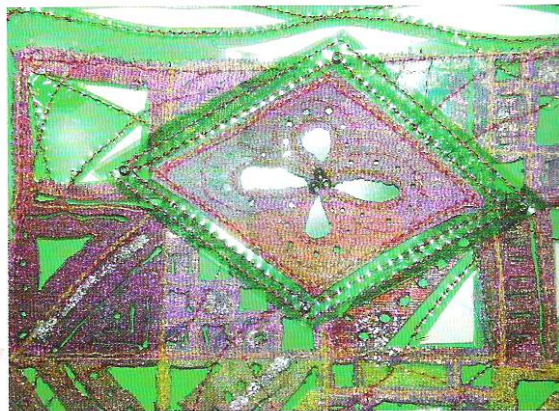


Simple wavy lines have been marked onto this leather using the spiked tip (5) and rounded tip alternately. The round-ended tip (7) was used to add the foiling by placing the foil down onto the leather with the foil uppermost. A piece of baking parchment was laid over the foil and the round-ended tip (7) was drawn over the leather in wavy movements. When the parchment and foil were carefully pulled away, the foil remained on the leather.



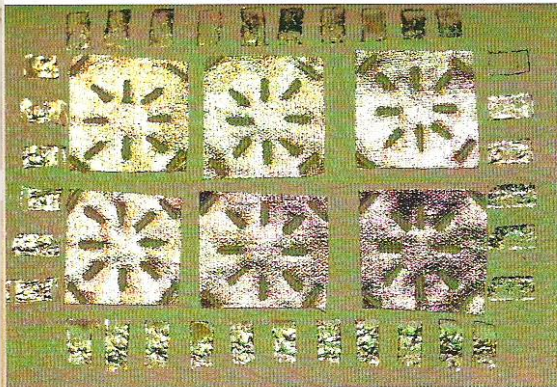
Layers of Angelina with shavings of paper trapped between it. To fuse the red acetate flowers onto it, the

round-ended tip (7) was pushed into the flower centres, melting the acetate and Angelina simultaneously and bonding them together.



Metallics and polyester organza machined together in a geometric design. The pencil-sharp tip (4) was used to cut out areas within the flower and the spiked tip (5) was used to make small holes and lined markings in the larger underlying design. Both pieces were

then sewn onto the green acetate and mounted one on top of the other. The pencil-sharp tip was used to remove areas of the acetate, which was much easier and less dangerous than using a craft knife or trying to manipulate scissors through the stiffness of the acetate.



Using the chisel-end tip (1), gold lamé squares were adhered to the leather. I made small straight lines forming a circular design in the centre of each square, melting the fabric onto the leather. The same marks were made across each corner, firmly securing the squares and adding pattern. Around the perimeter, the flat edge of the tip was used

to drag small short lines over the foil, leaving the gilt on the leather when the foil was removed.

Conclusion

I'm used to working with the pencil-sharp tip, which I use for everything from cutting out areas not required to cutting shapes that could be applied back onto works in progress. Using all the extra tips was a little time-consuming as I had to keep turning the iron off to cool it down so that I could change the tips. However, the extra tips were very good when foiling onto fabrics as they produce stronger, more definite lines of coloured foil. The extra tips were also excellent for marking leather, and many patterns can be achieved with a little patience and practice.

Special Offer

The list price for the Fabric-Master is £24.99, but it's on offer to *STITCH* readers at the very special price of £14.99, with free postage and packing to the UK and Europe. You must quote reference **FAB 1** to get the discount. Order by phone with a credit or debit card, tel: 01822 613565. Or send a cheque to: Antex (Electronics) Limited, 2 Westbridge Industrial Estate, Tavistock, Devon PL19 8DE. Offer ends 31 May 2007.

You'll find more information about the Fabric-Master and other products at www.antexcraft.com. Because of the different plugs on the UK and Europe models, quote Fabric-Master BP part number RFK823106 for the UK, Fabric-Master EP part number RFK833106 for Europe.