

EG  
Embroiderers' Guild

# embroidery

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£4.90



*Rachel Sumner's embroidery*  
**NAUTICAL BUT NICE**

# Beside the seaside

Inspired by the untamed, rugged beauty of Devon, textile artist Rachel Sumner enshrines a fascination with nature, landscape and the sea in her vibrant embroidery



Detail from an experimental embroidery, *Lighthouse*, 2007

**THE BRIGHT COLOURS IN RACHEL SUMNER'S often nautically themed embroidered images are what first draw you in: subtle, complementary shades of blue, turquoise and sea-green, with a judicious use of reddish-brown highlights.**

Then it's the detail in the montage that keeps you looking. Is that a wavy length of fishing line that she has incorporated? How did she stitch all that ship's rigging without getting in a tangle? You imagine hours of advance planning.

But the Devon based textile artist says she can't sit down to a blank canvas and labour over a design. It is only when she surrounds herself with a pile of fabric remnants from her substantial stash that Sumner can start a new embroidery. With a concept in mind, she picks out relevant colours and builds up a picture layer by layer, stitching as she goes.

**'I keep putting things together and a story evolves, usually something that is a surprise to me. What I like is that people look at the pictures and create their own stories as well'**

'I have a making process that I'm happy with, which frees me to be creative,' Sumner says. 'I use a lot of found materials and vintage fabrics as well as things I've dyed myself – fairly plain, not too patterned. I keep putting things together and a story evolves, usually something that is a

