

Conservation Netting



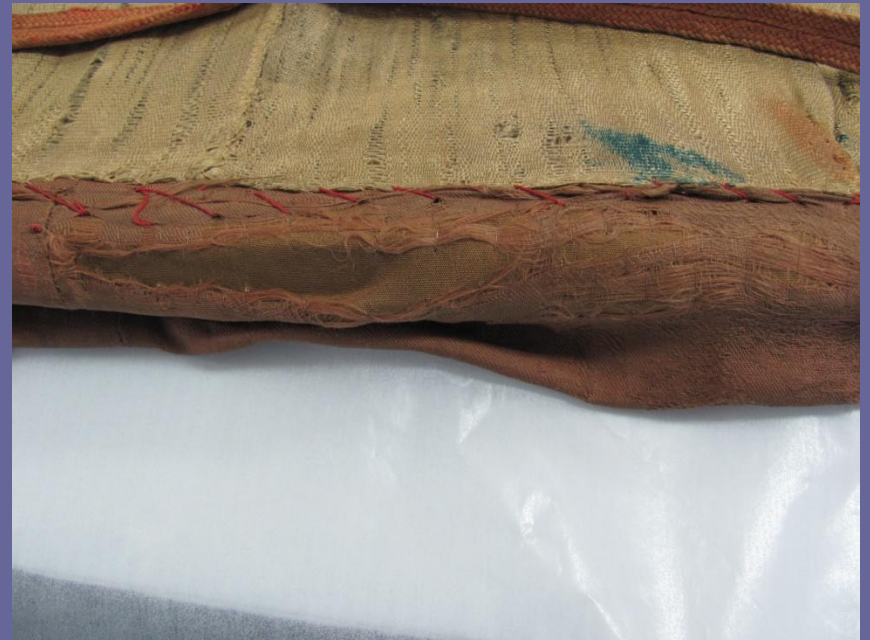
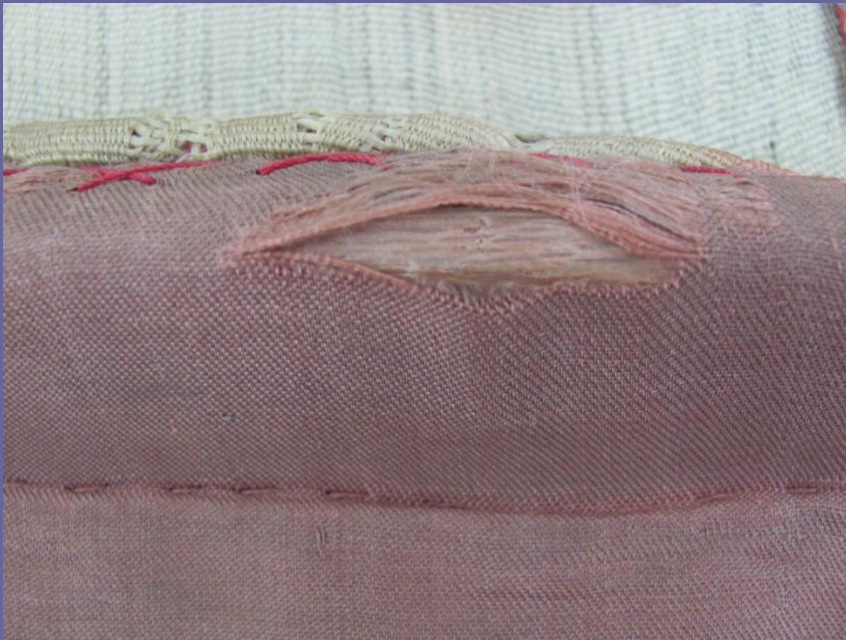
Very large expanses of 19th-century Chinese silk brocades and silk sheers, many in poor condition.



Nylon net provided an excellent color pallet and affordability. Wide widths were a plus..



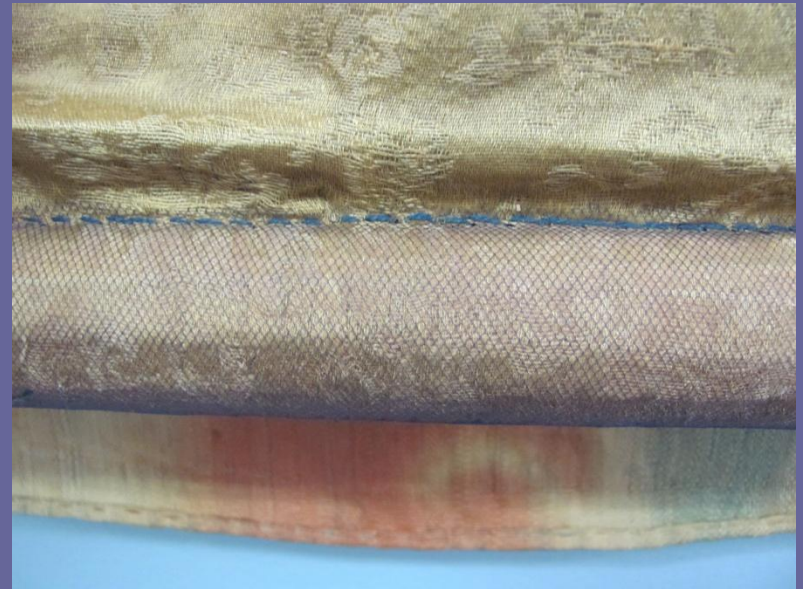
Cotton underlays protected the original fabric from the wood and provided color compensation.



Nylon net overlays consolidated the repairs and was easily trimmed to irregular shapes.



Hand-painted silk pongee was used to repair veils.
Nylon net was used to line the entire veil from
behind and weak areas above.



Silk brocade was weak from carrying the weight of the wood pole under tension. Underlays of blue cotton and overlays of nylon net provided a sandwich of needed strength.



Overlaying Net after extensive repairs was a method of protecting the textile during handling, and in the event of further deterioration.



Overall net covering is something the only thing that can be done to consolidate textiles that are damaged from handling and stitching.



Historic costume collection



The silk was splitting and the ribbons were weak.



The ribbons were tacked to ivory nylon net treated with 1 mil BEVA. Lavender net was hand-stitched over the entire brim of the bonnet.



The sleeve hems were fraying and the silk lining was extremely fragile.



Nylon net was wrapped around each cuff to cover the entire silk lining on the inside.



Netting Supplies

- Selection of net colors, washed and ironed
- Neutral thread, preferably cotton
- Straight or curved needle, sharp or dull
- Pins, good scissors
- Clean work space with ample light



Preparation

- Wash your hands before starting or returning
- To avoid unnecessary handling of your textile, leave it flat on the table and stitch from the top. This takes practice.
- Protect the textile by having a piece of fabric or tissue between you and your project.
- Decide whether you are going to stitch through to the back. This may affect your choice of thread color. Only thick quilts or strong lined textiles may allow you to stitch your net overlay no farther than the padding.

Step 1

Cut a piece of net larger than your area. If you cut your net to shape before sewing, it may turn out to be too small by the time you finish.



Step 2

Pin your net so that it lies flat and is not too tight. Thread your needle and knot your thread leaving a 2-inch tail. You will later tie off to this tail.



Step 3

Take your first stitch, preferably in a corner. Pull the thread gently to avoid pulling your knot through. Stitch in the “ditch” placing your stitches $\frac{1}{4}$ inch apart. Back stitch is better than running stitch. Take small stitches—they only need to travel from one cell of the net to the next.





Simple running stitch
in cross section



back stitch in cross section

Step 4

Sew around the block you are netting until you arrive at your starting place. Finish by knotting to your tail, placing the knot flush to the fabric. Trim your tails to 1.5 inches, thread them to your needle and bury them between the quilt layers.



Step 5

Trim your net leaving 1/8 inch. You only need to leave one row of net cells beyond where you sewed. Check your stitches to see if you missed the net or cut too close.



Step 6

Decide whether you need interior rows of stitching. If the net can shift or bag or pull away from the textile, you need additional stitching. Follow the same guidelines.



Trouble-Shooting

- If your net is not lying flat, it may have shifted while you were stitching. Back your stitches out and re-pin.
- If your net is not sewn down everywhere, you either cut your net too close or you took a stitch without traveling to the next cell of the net. Go over the areas that you missed.
- If your stitches are very visible, try making them smaller or choose another thread color.

Overlay Wraps



Step 1

To net hems, cuffs, and edges, wrap your net around your area and pin it so the net is tight. If you are using more than one piece of net, overlap them by $\frac{1}{4}$ inch



Step 2

Look for a seam or a design line to follow that is straight and stable. Pass the needle from back to front carefully and work your way around.



Step 3

Make sure the longer floats are on the back or the inside of the textile. Overlap pieces of net by $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. When you finish, tie off and bury both tails. Trim the net if necessary.



Trouble-Shooting

- If your net is torqued or not lying flat, it may have shifted while you were stitching. Back your stitches out, re-pin, and re-do.
- If your net was not wrapped tightly and is visible beyond the textile edge, remove your stitches, re-pin, and re-do.
- If your net is not sewn down everywhere, go over the areas that you missed.
- If your stitches are very visible, try making them smaller or choose another thread color.