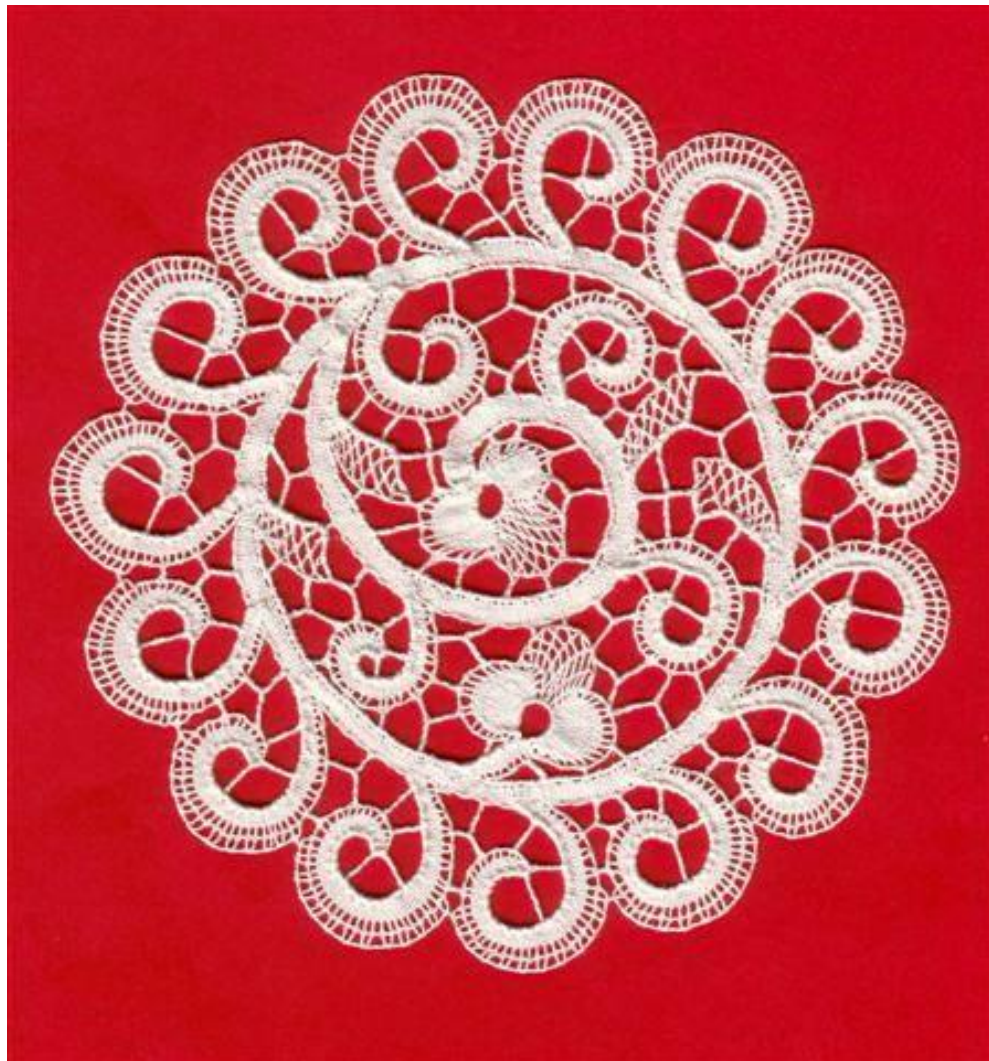


Classic Cantu' Lace

Betty Manfre's Guide to Lace Making



Technical Writing by Kathryn Jewell

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About the Author

Betty Manfre is an Italian American who has lived in Milan, Italy for 20 years. She is a registered nurse with a degree in Nursing Education. In 1989, she found herself living in Brussels, Belgium, with her husband and daughters. Unable to work as a registered nurse, she turned her interests to lace making, learned Torchon and Duchesse and began teaching Torchon at the American Women's Club. This quickly became a passion.

In 1997, on returning to Milan, near the Town of Cantu', she learned to make and design Cantu' lace. She continues to attend Il Giardino dei Punti, a lace school in Milan, where she has become proficient in Cantu' lace making. She has won awards at the Gorizia and Sansepolcro International Lace Exhibitions. Betty has also taught Cantu' lace at IOLI lace conventions as well as to local lace groups in the United States and Canada. She also has represented her Milan lace school as a Cantu' teacher in Naples, Italy. Her work has been published several times in the International magazines RAKAM and RICAMO ITALIANO.

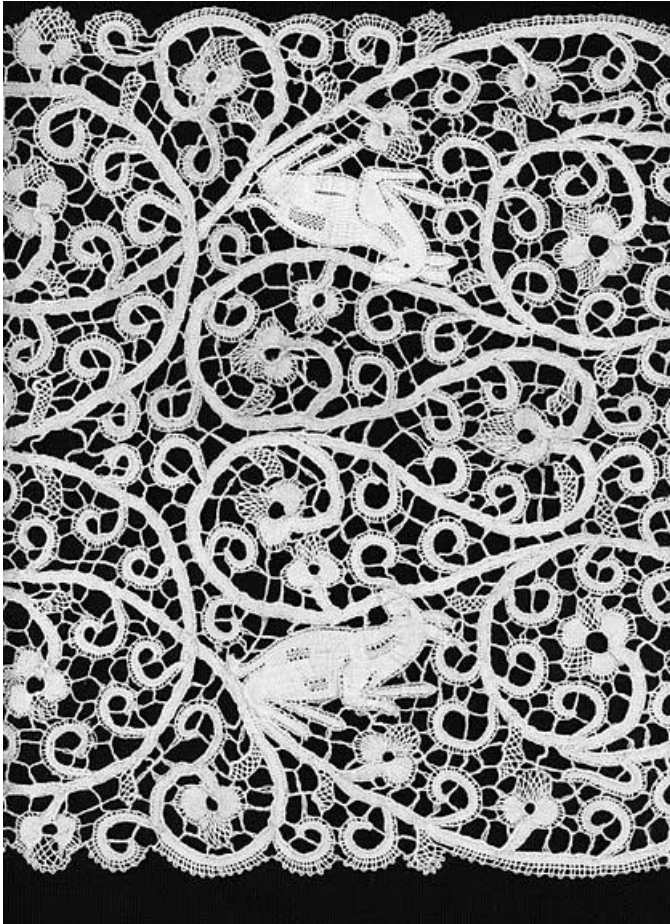
Betty has also been a quilter for over 30 years and has taught quilting courses in Mexico and Italy.

Kathryn Jewell, a technical writer and Cantu' lace student in the Los Angeles area, collaborated with Bette Manfre to produce this help guide.

Classic Cantu' or Venetian Point

Cantu' lace is also known as Venetian Point. It is worked on a tombolo (bolster) with palms-up technique. This means there are several differences between Cantu' and other types of lace making:

- The work is done in an open method. Threads are never left crossed.
- Half stitch is TC.
- Whole or Cloth stitch is CTC.
- Pins are straight up and down, not slanted to the work.
- Pins are pushed all the way down into the pillow.



A Brief History

Cantu' lace originated in the small town of Cantu' which is about 25 miles north of Milan. In the 16th century, Benedictine nuns founded what would become one of the greatest lace production centers of Italy. But by the late 18th century Cantu' lace became a domestic activity as the production of lace waned throughout Europe.

A fundamental shift in Cantu' lace making occurred during the 19th century lace revival when wealthy and noble women promoted workshops. As a result, lace makers developed techniques for Venetian Point or Classic Cantu'. Demand increased for lace in tablecloths, bedspreads, curtains, and clothing. Lace makers created time-saving techniques to increase the speed of lace production. They also duplicated and adapted the designs of Venetian needle lace makers for bobbin lace making.

Currently Cantu' lace is made in many of the surrounding towns as well as in the town of Cantu' itself. Every other year on odd years there is an international lace exhibition and contest held in the town of Cantu'. There are several lace schools in Cantu' as well as some of the surrounding towns.

For a more detailed history, go to <http://Cantulace.wordpress.com/about-Cantu/>.

The School

The school that I work with is IL GIARDINO DEI PUNTI, located in Milan. It began in 1993 at its present location in via Cappuccio.

Currently the school offers about 4 classes a week in Cantu' bobbin lace as well as classes in embroidery and Buano needle lace.

IL GIARDINO DEI PUNTI
Via Cappuccio 18
MILAN 20123
Italy
ilgiardinodeipunti@tin.it

Equipment and Supplies

For class projects, the following are useful to maintain the high tension used in Cantu' lace:

Bobbins: 8 to 11 pairs of Cantu' bobbins are traditional for Venetian Point designs

Thread: Number 40 Cantu' cotton (also 30 or 50 depending on the design)

Pillow: A Cantu' tombolo bolster and stand are traditional, but other bolsters or cookie pillows can work. Bolsters in baskets are not stable enough for tensioning.

A Tombolo with a folding stand and Cantu' bobbins:



Equipment and supplies are available from the school at www.ilgiardinodeipunti.it

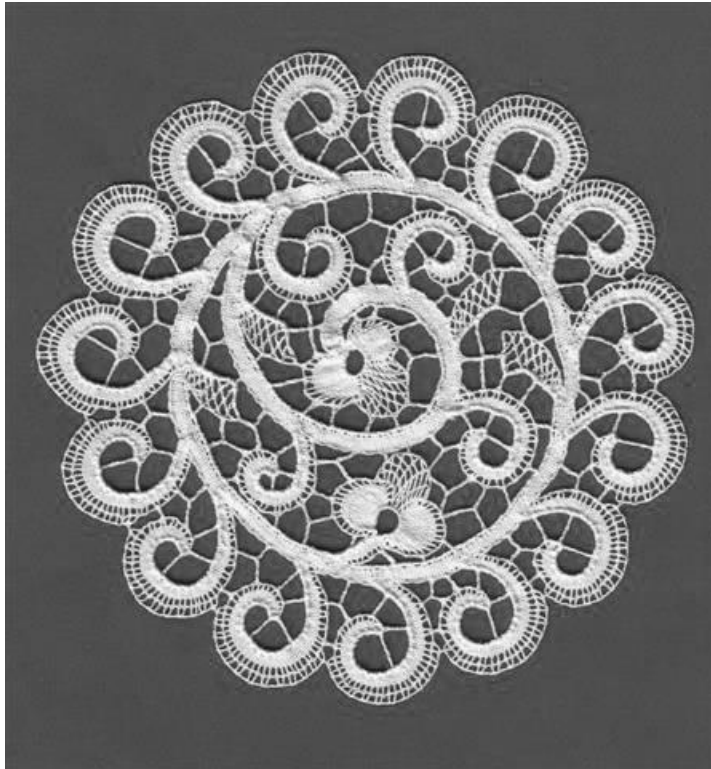
Identifying the Parts

Ramo (Curved branch)

Ricciolo (Curl)

Fiore (Three-petaled flower)

Bandierina ("Little flag" or leaf)



Stitches

The following stitches appear in these lace elements:

Ramo (Branch)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cordetta (Cord) on inside of curve • Doppio Punto e Mezzo (double cloth and half stitch: CT with extra T on outside pair, repeat, C)
Ricciolo (Curl)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cordetta (Cord) on inside of curve • Piede (TT both pairs, cloth stitch, pin after four, TT the worker pair) on outside of curve
Fiore (Three-Petaled Flower)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) • Piede (TT both pairs, cloth stitch, pin after four, TT the worker pair) • Punto Tela Diagonale a Torciglio (diagonally twisted cloth stitch)
Bandierina (Flag)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punto Tela Diagonale a Torciglio (diagonally twisted cloth stitch) • Cordetta (Cord)

Branches

Note that the main branch is different than a stem in Cantu' lace.

Main Branch

- has stems, curls, flags and flowers attached
- made with 8 bobbins

Stem

- ends in a flower and may have flags attached
- made with 5 bobbins

Starting a Branch

To begin a main branch:

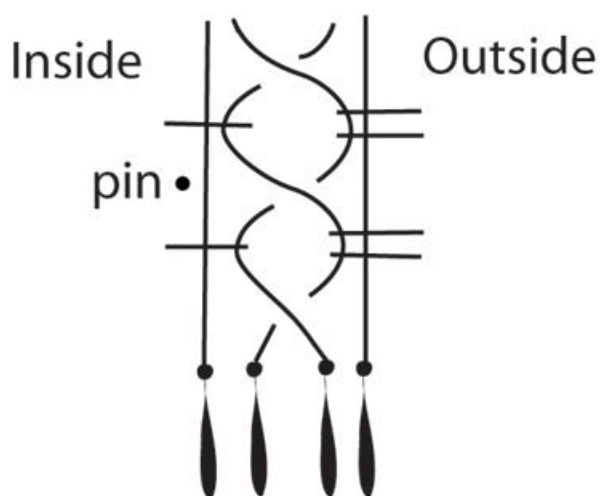
1. Place four pins across.
2. Hang two pairs Cavallo (rainbow style) on each pin.
3. Starting from the inside curve, cloth stitch across all but the last pair.
4. With the worker pair and the last pair work a Doppio Punto e Mezzo, as described below.

Doppio Punto e Mezzo

The Doppio Punto e Mezzo creates a tight edge on the outside curve of a branch.

To work the outside edge of a branch in Doppio Punto e Mezzo:

1. Using the worker and the first pair on the outside of the curve, cross the center bobbins, twist the inside pair once and the outside pair twice.
2. Repeat once more.
3. Finish the stitch by crossing the center pair.
4. Pin inside the two pairs and continue working across the row.



Starting the Cord

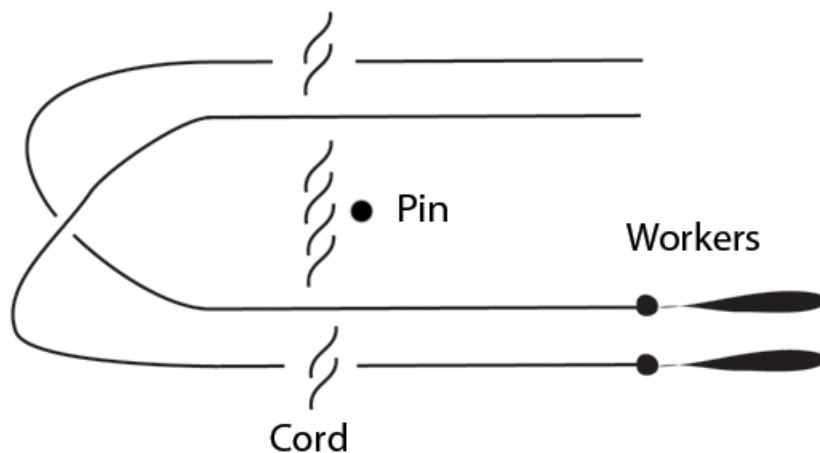
The Cordetta (Cord) runs along the inside edge of a branch, stem, curl, or flag. You can make a cord by twisting a bundle of threads, as directed.

To begin the cord:

1. Start with the first two pairs on the inside of the curve.
2. Make a Punto e Mezzo (cloth stitch and half stitch: CTC, TC)
3. Twist both pairs together very tightly.

To work the cord into the inside edge of the branch:

4. Pass the cord through the worker pair, twist the workers once.
5. Pass the cord back through the worker pair again.
6. Pin inside the cord and workers to hold in place.
7. Continue to work across the branch with the Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC).
The pin will be removed and moved down with each row.

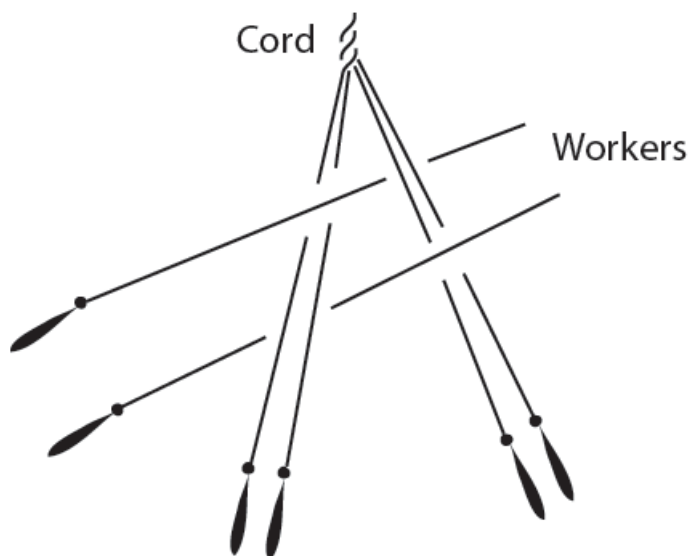


Exiting a Branch

In classic Cantu', five bobbins are used to make the curl, the flag, or the small branch (stem) leading to the flower. There are two ways to take these five pairs out of the main branch, using steps 1 through 8:

To exit from the cord side:

1. Do not work the cord. Untwist it and arrange the pairs.
2. Using each cord pair as an individual bobbin make a Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) with the workers, and abandon the worker pair.



3. Set aside three pairs from the outside of the curve; they will not be used.
4. Continue to step 5, **To prepare the Cord.**

OR

To exit from the outside of the curve:

1. With the worker and the last pair of bobbins make a Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) instead of the usual Doppio Punto e Mezzo.
2. Abandon the worker pair.
3. Set aside three pairs from the inside of the curve; they will not be used.
4. Continue to step 5, **To prepare the Cord.**

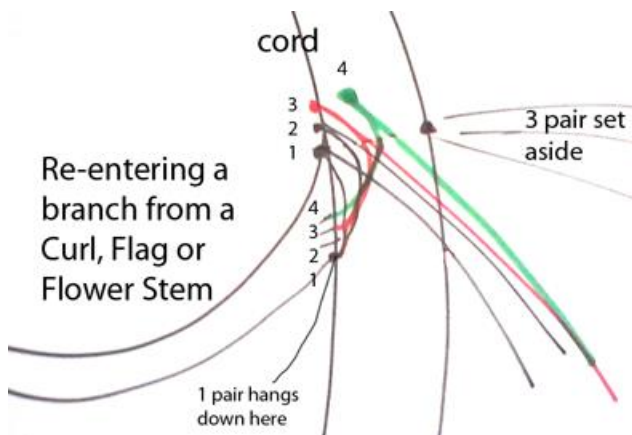
To prepare the Cord:

5. Starting from the side you are exiting, count five pairs across, including the worker pair.
6. Taking the fourth and fifth pairs of bobbins, make a Doppio Punto (double cloth stitch: CTCCTC).
7. With the new worker pair, Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) the other two pairs.
8. Abandon the worker pair next to the previously abandoned worker pair.

Re-entering a Branch

To work back into the branch after a curl, flag or flower stem:

8. At the end of the curl make a Piede (TT both pairs, cloth stitch, pin after four, TT the worker pair) as usual.
9. Twist the new workers (1) once and Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) to the cord, sew around the cord, and abandon.
10. Take the next pair (2), Punto Tela across to the cord, sew around the cord, and abandon.
11. Repeat step 10 with the third pair (3).
12. Repeat step 10 with the fourth pair (4), instead of sewing into the cord, sew into the Doppio Punto (double cloth stitch: CTCCTC) made when exiting the branch.



If there is a large space between leaving the main branch and returning back into it:

- a. On step 12 above, sew into the cord.
- b. Start with the next to the last pair on the outside of the curl.
- c. Work a Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) across the three passive pairs from the curl, sew around the cord and drop it in place.
- d. Repeat this step two more times.
- e. On the fourth repeat sew the pair into the Doppio Punto of the main branch.

Turning the pillow so that the passives hang in the direction of the main branch:

13. Return the three pairs that were set aside when beginning the curl.
14. To determine the worker pair, choose one of the curl's passive pairs which is not too high or too low in respect to the other side of the main branch. Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) across the main branch. Work a Piede as usual.
15. On the return to the curl side, this worker may need to be exchanged for one of the other passives which is worked across and back if more area needs to be filled in.
16. When the worker returns all the way to the inside of the main branch curve, begin a new cord with the last pair.

Connecting and Finishing in the Middle of a Branch

You may need to finish and connect the end of a branch to the beginning of another that has already been worked.

To sew the vertical pairs:

1. At the last row on the outside of the branch work a regular Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) with the worker and the last pair (instead of the Doppio Punto e Mezzo).
2. Sew that vertical pair into the first pin hole of the beginning of the branch.
3. Work a Punto Tela across the row to the inside and work a regular Punto Tela with the cord pair. This means undoing the cord and working the two pairs as though they are one pair.
4. Sew the outside vertical pair into its corresponding pin hole, dropping its partner and the other pair from the cord into the loop.
5. Then make a sewing with the other two remaining pin holes in the same manner, pulling one loop through, dropping its partner and another pair through the same loop.

Result: All the vertical pairs should be sewn in.

To finish off:

6. Starting at the inside of the branch with the worker make a Punto Tela and Mezzopunto (half stitch: TC) across all pairs, tensioning tightly.
7. On the outside of the branch make the first thread (this will be one of the worker threads) longer than the rest and work across all threads tying the long thread over the short one and the short thread over the long one, dropping the short thread.

Branches

8. Work completely across all threads in this manner. End with a Cappio.
9. To work a Cappio, taking all the threads in one hand, make one of the threads longer the rest and tie it around all threads including itself.
10. Tighten the knot securely against the work.

Curl

The Ricciolo (curl) uses 5 pairs of bobbins.

To begin the Curl:

1. From the outside edge of the main branch, Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) across to the beginning of the curl.
2. Using the correct method for [Exiting a Branch](#), make a cord out to the point of the curl, stabilizing the curve of the cord with pins.
3. At the point of the curl, undo any excess twists.
4. Starting from the inside, next to the cord, work a Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) to the outside pair.
5. Work a Piede (TT both pairs, cloth stitch, pin after four, TT the worker pair).
6. Return to the inside and sew around the cord.
7. Continue working in this manner until the end of the curl.
8. Follow the directions for [Re-entering a Branch](#).

Three-Petaled Flower

The Fiore (flower) uses 5 pairs from the branch and 3 added pairs for a total of 8 pairs of bobbins.

To begin the Stem and Flower:

1. Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) across the main branch to the beginning of the small branch leading to the flower.
2. Use the correct method for **Exiting a Branch**.
3. Make a cord to the center ring of the flower.

To make the Braid Ring:

1. Working COUNTERCLOCKWISE, Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) to the right across all five pairs of bobbins tightly.
2. Using the first two pairs of bobbins on the left, make a braid ring continuing in a counterclockwise direction.
3. The ring should take the shape of a square that fits inside and smaller than the circular design.
4. Sew into the beginning of the ring.

First Petal

The first petal is made in cloth stitch with the inside edge sewn into the ring and the Piede on outside edge. After starting, three pairs will be gradually added and will remain until they are eliminated near the end of the third petal.

To begin the first petal, work CLOCKWISE:

1. First Row: start from the center ring and work the Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) across, bringing in the pairs of bobbins which were abandoned at the end of the cord.
2. Add 1 pair of bobbins before the next to the last pair of bobbins on the outside.
3. Work a Piede (TT both pairs, cloth stitch, pin after four, TT the worker pair) with the last pair.
4. Turn and continue Punto Tela back to the center.
5. Sew around the ring.
6. Second row: add a second pair of bobbins towards inside the Piede of the petal.

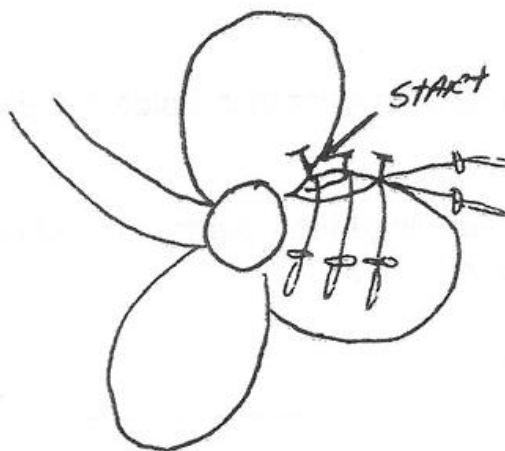
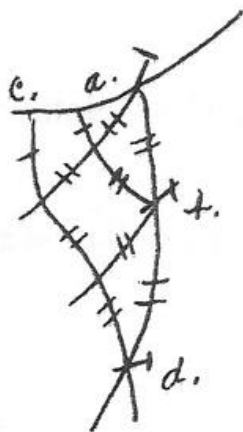
7. Third row: add a third pair of bobbins inside the Piede for a total of eight pairs of bobbins.
8. Continue working in the Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) to the end of the petal.
9. Finish on the outside of the petal.

Second Petal

The second petal uses the Punto Tela Diagonale a Torciglio (diagonally twisted cloth stitch):

To start the second Petal:

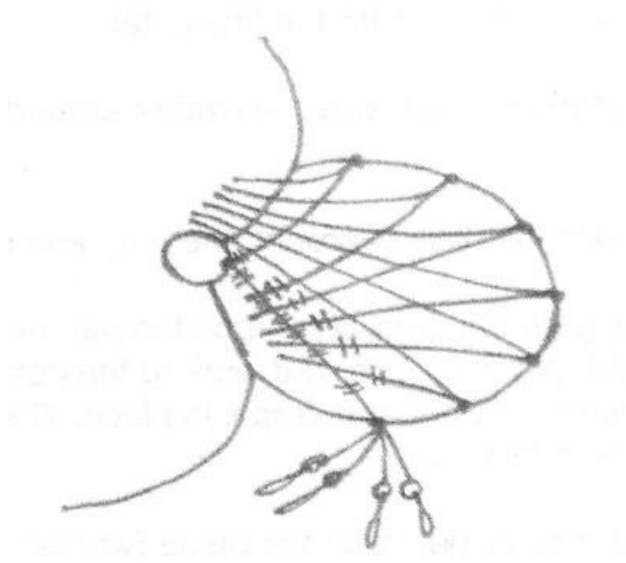
1. At (A) start with the first passive pair on the outside of the petal (third pair in from the outside) and the next pair on the outside.
2. Twist the passive pair once and the other pair twice.
3. Make a Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC).
4. Working toward the outside of the petal, make two twists on both pairs, Punto Tela with the end pair, pin after four at (B), and abandon.
5. Working always from the inside to the outside of the petal, pick up the next passive pair at (C) and make one twist.
6. Put two twists on the next pair toward the outside and work a Punto Tela.
7. Continue to work toward the outside by putting two twists in each pair and making a cloth stitch to the end at (D) and Piede (TT both pairs, cloth stitch, pin after four, TT the worker pair).
8. Work in this manner until all passive pairs from the previous petal have been used.
9. Adjust bobbins well.



Three-Petaled Flower

To complete the second Petal:

10. Take the first pair in the center near the ring, twist twice, and sew around the ring.
11. Work this pair like the previous pairs to the outside.
12. Continue working this way until the petal is finished ending on the outside of the petal.
13. Adjust bobbins well.
14. Take the first pair in the center near the ring, twist twice, and sew around the ring.
15. Work this pair like the previous pairs to the outside.
16. Continue working this way until the petal is finished ending on the outside of the petal.
17. Adjust bobbins well.



Do not overwork this petal. The pins should be spaced apart to give an open and delicate appearance to the petal.

Third Petal

The third petal is like the first, worked in cloth stitch. The three pairs that were added in the first petal will be gradually eliminated towards the end of this petal.

To start the third petal:

1. The worker pair is the inside pair of the two pairs hanging from the pin after four.

2. Put one twist in all passive pairs and two twists in the workers.
3. Pin, Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) towards the center.
4. Sew around the ring.
5. Continue working as for the first petal.

Toward the end of the petal, abandon three pairs as follows:

6. Abandon one pair.
7. Sew the worker around the ring and work back to the outside.
8. In the next row, abandon a second pair.
9. Sew the worker around the ring, and drop it in place.
10. Pick up the pair of bobbins hanging off the outside pin and the pair next to it, twist each pair twice.
11. Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC), pin after four.
12. Work to the center abandoning a third pair of bobbins.
13. Sew around the ring, and drop it in place.

To return the 5 pairs of bobbins to the main branch:

14. Return to the outside. Use the other pair from the Piede (TT both pairs, cloth stitch, pin after four, TT the worker pair) to work the Punto Tela to the center.
15. Sew around the ring to close the circle, and leave this worker in place.
16. Go back to the outside. Use the first pair as a new worker to Punto Tela all the pairs across the top of the flower stem.
17. The flower is now complete. Work the stem sewing around the cord and making the Piede on the opposite side.

To finish off a terminal flower, where the stem has previously been worked:

1. After completing the third petal, (all pairs of bobbins have been sewn) turn the pillow upside down so that the threads are hanging in the direction of the last worked petal.
2. Starting from one side work a Punto Tela and Mezzo Punto across each of the 5 pairs tensioning tightly.
3. Then take the last bobbin worked and make it longer than the rest.
4. Work back across all pairs tying the long bobbin over the short one, then the short bobbin over the long one.
5. Drop the short bobbin and continue across all bobbins.
6. You will be going in the opposite direction from the previous step. When finished make a Cappio.
7. To make a Cappio, taking all pairs in one hand, extend one thread and wrap it around all threads including itself. Tie a half hitch knot tightly down

Three-Petaled Flower

to the bottom of the threads. This can be done a second time. Make sure to get the knot close to the work before tightening.

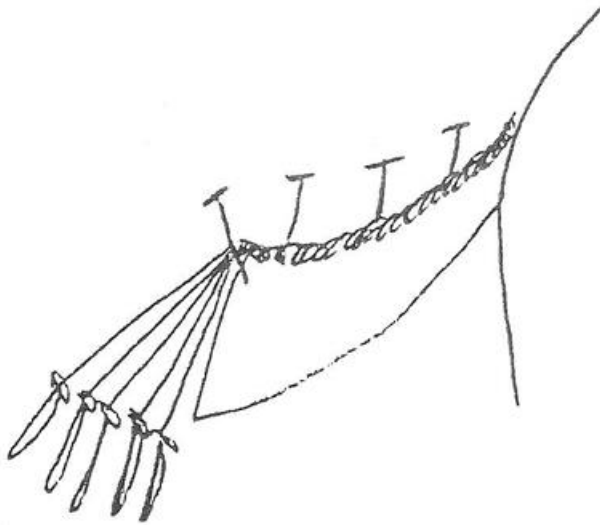
The three pairs which were previously left out in the third petal are finished in the same manner but are tied and knotted in the same direction they are heading.

Flag

The Bandierina (little flag) uses 5 pairs.

To start the flag cord:

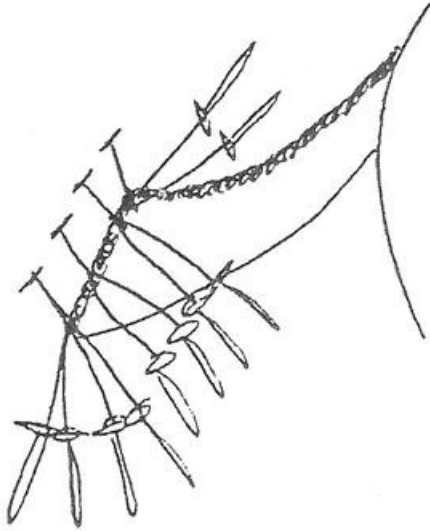
1. Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC) across the main branch to the beginning of the flag.
2. Using the correct method for exiting the main branch.
3. Make a cord to the first corner at the end of the flag using pins to hold it in place.



To eliminate pairs from the cord:

4. At the first corner, separate one pair of bobbins on the inside of the cord.
5. Twist one of these bobbins around the cord.
6. Bring it together with the other bobbin and hang them off the corner pin.
7. Twist the cord again to the second pin position.
8. Separate another pair of bobbins on the inside of the cord.
9. Twist one of these bobbins around the cord, bring it together with the other bobbin and hang this pair off a second pin.
10. Do the same with the next pin.
11. Two pairs of bobbins are left. Twist these pairs to the corner at the end of the flag and hold in place with a pin on the inside of both pairs. Adjust bobbins well.

Flag



Result: Three pins with one pair of bobbins off each pin and one pin at the end of the flag with two pairs of bobbins.

NOTE. Every flag will be stabilized by one or two brides or bars on each corner. Use the pair that you have separated from the cord to make the brides.

To work the Punto Tela Diagonale a Torciglio (diagonally twisted cloth stitch):

12. Start on the outer corner of the flag at the pin with 2 pairs of bobbins.
13. Make two twists in the second and third pairs from the outside and cloth stitch together.
14. Pick up the first pair on the outside and the pair next to it, make a Piede (TT both pairs, cloth stitch, pin after four, TT the worker pair).



15. Work the next two rows with the fourth and fifth pairs of bobbins in a similar manner, always working from the inside of the flag to the outside.

16. Take the pair of bobbins next to the cord, twist twice and sew around the cord.
17. Continue working this pair toward the outside of the flag as done with the previous row.
18. Work in this manner, sewing around the cord and working to the outside of the flag.

To complete the flag:

19. Towards the end of the flag, begin to eliminate pairs of bobbins on the outside by not working the last pair until the whole flag is filled.
20. Taking the first two pairs on the inside of the flag, work a Punto Tela (cloth stitch: CTC).
21. Sew the inside pair of bobbins into the Doppio Punto (double cloth stitch: CTCCTC) that were worked at the very beginning of the cord. This pair is now a passive pair.

If the flag is on the cord side:

22. Take the first pair of bobbins on the inside of the flag, work a Punto Tela across the main branch.
23. Make a Doppio Punto e Mezzo (double cloth and half stitch: CT with extra T on outside pair, repeat, C).
24. Return to the flag side. Sew into the stitch of the previous row and abandon. This worker now becomes a passive.
25. Take the next pair on the inside of the flag, work across the main branch as usual.
26. On the return, sew into the last stitch of the outside of the flag. This pair is not the worker.
27. There are two remaining pairs of bobbins. With these pairs make the cord.
28. Using the worker pair Punto Tela across the main branch again and return.
29. Pass the worker through the cord and continue to make the main branch as before.

If the flag is on the outside of the curve:

22. Take the first pair of bobbins on the inside of the flag, work a Punto Tela across the main branch as usual.
23. Return picking up one pair from the flag. Exchange the worker with this pair from the flag. If this creates a hole in the main branch then sew the old worker into the base of the flag before exchanging it for the new worker.
24. Make 2 more rows in the same manner, picking up another pair of bobbins each row.
25. In the next row, sew the worker into the bottom pin hole of the flag.

Flag

26. In the last row, pick up and work the Doppio Punto e Mezzo (double cloth and half stitch: CT with extra T on outside pair, repeat, C) with the last pair.

Borders

These are borders found in Cantu' lace.

Finizione Mochetta

Cloth stitch, pin, cloth stitch. You may also add a picot if desired.



Finizione Piede

Footside border.



Punto St. Anna

Use cloth stitch with TT on worker and TT on passives.



Other Elements

You may see unfamiliar symbols in Cantu' lace diagrams. The following topics identify them for you.

Mezzo Punto

Half Stitch: TC.



Mimosa

With 4 pairs, pin only on the outside of the curve. Use Piede on outside of curve, and Punto e mezzo or Doppio Punto on inside of curve:

- On the outside of the curve, TT, cloth stitch, pin inside four, TT on workers.
- On the inside curve, for sharp curve use CTCTC, while for a moderate curve use CTCCTC.



Pallino (Ball)

Pallino or "little ball". Work in cloth stitch.



Piopiolino (Picot)

Single picot.



Ragnette or Raghette (Spider)

To make a spider:

1. Work all the spallengetta (false plaits) to the last line of entry.
2. Twist the worker once and sew around the cord to the right.
3. Twist once and sew around the cord to the right.
4. Continue around to the beginning.
5. On the second row make 2 twists between each sewing.
6. Continue adding another twist in each row until desired size.
7. Last sewing is made into the previous row of spider before finishing the last cord.



Rete (Ground)

Ground or netting



Spranghetti (False Plaits)

Twist one pair of bobbins across to the point of attachment to make a small cord and sew. On the way back make one twist and sew around the previously made cord. Continue repeating this process until the whole cord has been covered. Then work the pair back into the main body of the work. The symbol is a straight line between elements.

Glossary: –

Glossary

Italian Cantu' Lace Terms

B

Bandierina

Little flag

Biscetta

Tape or strip of stitches

Buco

Hole

C

Cappio

Finishing knot

Cavallo

Rainbow style

Coppia

Pair

Cordetta

Cord

D

Di Sbalzo

Sewing in side bars of Piede (TT, whole stitch, pin after four)

Doppio Punto

Double cloth stitch (CTCCTC)

Doppio Punto e Mezzo

Double cloth and half stitch (CT with an extra T on outside pair, repeat, C)

F

Finiture

Finished edge or border

Finizione Mochetta

A border of cloth stitch, pin, cloth stitch; may add a picot if desired

Finizione Peide

Footside Border

Fiore

Flower

Foglia

Leaf

Fuselli

Bobbins

M

Mezzopunto

Half stitch (TC)

Mimosa

4 pairs cloth stitched, with Piede on outside of curve, Punto e mezzo or Doppio Punto on inside of curve

Mochetta

Twist twice around a pin

P

Pallino

Little ball

Piede

TT both pairs, cloth stitch, pin after four, TT the worker pair

Piopolino

Picot

Portante

Worker pair

Punti

Stitches

Punto e Mezzo

Cloth stitch and half stitch (CTCTC)

Punto Tela

Cloth Stitch (CTC)

Punto Tela Diagonale a Torciglio

Diagonally twisted cloth stitch

Punto Venezia

Punto Tela Diagonale

R

Ragnette or Raghette

Spider

Ramo

Branch

Rete

Ground or netting

Ricciolo

Curl

S

Spranghette or Spalinghette

Bars, brides or false plaits

V

Verticali

Passives

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