



CAROLINE ZOOB | WORKSHOPS

Join Caroline Zoob & guest tutors Viv Sliwka (*Hens Teeth*) and Lynn Barron (*Sea Angels Vintage*) in France for a week of Creative Workshops from 11-18 July, 2018



St Victor la Grand' Maison is a small, turrets-and-fairytale-towers chateau about 50 miles north east of Poitiers in the French region of Berry

I spent a week here with my husband a couple of years ago, and was struck by the peaceful atmosphere and relaxed charm and comfort of the place. I thought how marvellous it would be to gather a group of creative people in such a beautiful and inspiring setting for a week of embroidery and mixed media workshops. Days of stitching, painting, more stitching, a bit of swimming, reading, eating delicious food...and more stitching. In 2017 we ran the inaugural week of workshops, and they went so well we have decided to return in 2018.

THE WORKSHOPS

Viv Sliwka (*Hen's Teeth*) and Lynn Barron (*Sea Angels Vintage*) have agreed to share the role of guest tutor for the week. All three of us use similar materials and love all things vintage, but work in different ways. Having two teachers working simultaneously not only offers participants greater variety, it also allows us to teach in small groups, and gives participants a chance to acquire a wider range of complementary skills and techniques.

The enormous studio enables each participant to have their own 6' work table for the week. Materials are placed on different tables in the centre of the room, with further tables for small breakout groups working on ad hoc projects.



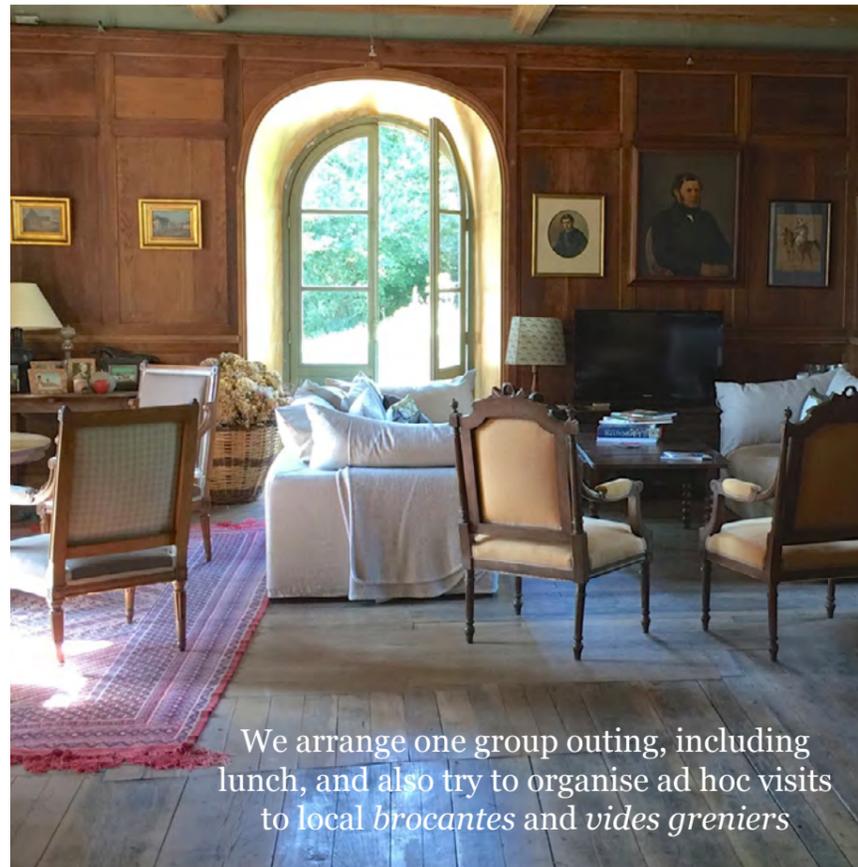
If the weather is fine, we can also sit at tables outside the work room. Access to the workroom is allowed at all times, with tea and coffee making facilities provided. Participants often like to work early in the morning or return to the work room after supper and have some free time to work on their pieces.

The studio will be generously

stocked with vintage fabrics, papers, haberdashery, paints and all materials and kit required for the planned projects.

RELAXATION

While the focus of the week is on the workshops, we are mindful that it is also a holiday, and want everyone to go home feeling not only inspired but that they have enjoyed a break.



We arrange one group outing, including lunch, and also try to organise ad hoc visits to local *brocantes* and *vides greniers*



ACCOMMODATION

The owner of *St Victor la Grand Maison* has renovated her family home with immense style, combining beautiful antiques with modern comforts. It has been awarded 5* by the *French Gites* association, and reviews on *Trip Advisor* are consistently glowing.

The beds are comfortable, with good bed linen, the bathrooms are a mix of roll top baths and modern walk-in showers. One or two have showers cleverly built into the turrets. One swimming pool is adjacent to the house, and surrounded by a stone terrace with roses and lavender. The other is smaller, and surrounded by a deck, but convenient for a quick plunge for those staying in the nearby outhouses. The views are gorgeous, the grounds extend down to the river Anglin. There are five rooms with en-suite facilities. The rest of the bedrooms are in the shared

houses, created from the outbuildings of the chateau, and so bathrooms are shared. Each house has comfortable, spacious living accommodation, perfect for a bit of morning stitching, or sharing a bottle of wine in the evening. While we will all eat together and socialize in the communal rooms it is nice to have space to spread out and enjoy a bit of privacy, and for this, *St Victor* is perfect.

FOOD AT ST VICTOR

Food at *St Victor la Grand'Maison* is French and absolutely delicious. Served at a beautifully decorated long table in a barn, a continental



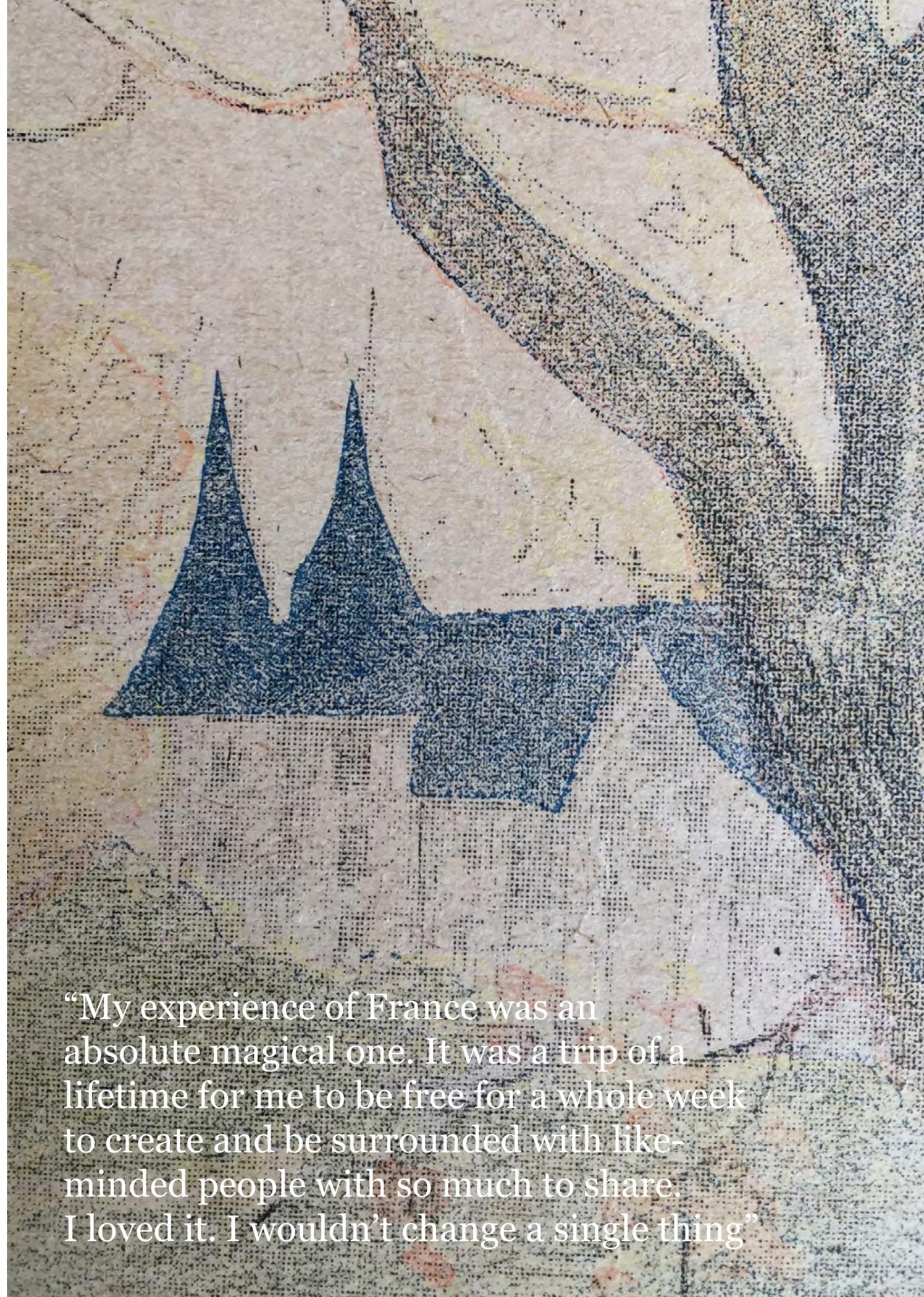
breakfast is followed by morning coffee with 'a little something for the left hand', and a light lunch by afternoon tea and cake. Supper is a three course affair, with wine. There is also an open kitchen where we can gather for cups of tea and a crumpet, or a G&T, if we are feeling the need for home comforts.

NON PARTICIPATING PARTNERS

Please do consider bringing partners. Most of the rooms are doubles, and the charge for non-participating partners has been set to reflect this. Anyone with a partner whose idea of a holiday is to relax somewhere beautiful, from where they can take lovely walks, enjoy nature, swim, read, take photographs, paint or sketch, will find that this is the perfect place to enjoy a week together. There will be free time after lunch each day as I plan to organize the timetable taking into account the climate, and the need for a bit of a break during the day. My husband will be with us to help with hosting, so he will be up for trips or walks, and if partners come along they may want to hire a car and explore. The region is full of interesting small chateaux, towns such as Argenton and Chauvigny, the house where George Sand lived at Nohant, and the picturesque hilltop town of Gargillesse. A living room with doors opening to the swimming pool will be for our use, and there are comfortable living quarters in each of the shared houses. The studio is tucked away from the rest of the property, so partners can rest assure that they can get away from stitching women and enjoy a drink and a book in a quiet place!



“It was a magical week, in beautiful, story-like surroundings, full of inspiring people, ideas, projects and materials. Where else would we have the opportunity to spend as long as we wanted in the workroom experimenting with new techniques and sharing the experience and lots of fun with like-minded women?”



“My experience of France was an absolute magical one. It was a trip of a lifetime for me to be free for a whole week to create and be surrounded with like-minded people with so much to share. I loved it. I wouldn't change a single thing”



A WHOLE WEEK TO EXPLORE YOUR CREATIVITY
The ethos of this week is to encourage and allow people to try new things, to explore the different techniques we can offer.

Lynn Barron is a mixed media artist who uses paint, antique papers, papier mache, stitch and found items to create exquisite and sought after treasures. A large project, such as the sculptural wreath above, will be accompanied by several smaller projects. Lynn will also encourage people to try some watercolour painting on paper, which I will then help you to translate onto linen. I will bring some thermofax



screens for us to try some easy screen printing. Lynn will also show you how she makes her faux flowers and more intricate work with beads and the sparkle for which she is known.

Viv Sliwka is renowned for her tiny, collectable creations, fashioned from intricately pieced vintage patchworks featuring her signature embroidery and found objects, such as her flattened thimbles. Viv also works with antique papers and produces beautiful pieces of mail art. Each person will have an opportunity to create a fabric journal with decorated pages, as well as a mail art collage

Painted buzzing bees, embroidered flowers, hand drawn animals and characters make up the world of Viv Sliwka's art. Telling tiny tales in textiles



We try to encourage and allow people to try new things, to explore the different techniques we can offer



and other small projects during the week.

We hope to show you how our different approaches can be combined, to give you, in a short space of time, a range of new skills.

Working with me, you will have the opportunity to start on a large scale embroidered piece, using different stitching techniques. In addition, we will do some painting into stitch, and collage work with antique papers. Each person will receive a printed stitch sampler at the beginning of the week, and we will spend a little time each day practising new stitches - a form of mindfulness for stitchers.



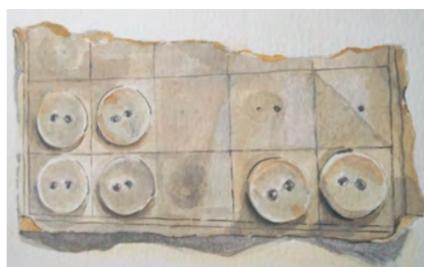
Paint into stitch...

About the tutors



CAROLINE ZOOB is a self-taught embroiderer with no formal art training. After school she trained as an opera singer, and then qualified as a solicitor. She discovered antique textiles and took up stitching in her late 30s, when her work was spotted by *Country Living* magazine. Her first show in 2000 sold out and now her delicate, painterly embroideries and collages made from antique papers are much sought after. Her first book, *Childhood Treasures*, was published in 2004. She has designed children's bed linen for a leading UK brand, as well as ranges of ceramics, wrapping paper and cards. Caroline and her husband were tenants of Monk's House, the former home of Virginia Woolf, for ten years, and her books *The Hand Stitched Home* and *Virginia Woolf's Garden* contain embroidered work inspired by the garden they restored and maintained on behalf of the *National Trust*. Caroline is hugely inspired by the countryside, and gardens. An experienced teacher, she enjoys devising workshops and regards teaching as a process of sharing observations and skills generously and, in doing so, helping people to find and follow their own creative instincts.

VIV SLIWKA (*Hens Teeth*) works from her garden studio in Staffordshire, where she makes all of the tiny creations for which she is well known. Deceptively simple, in fact each piece is intricately layered, incorporating painting, stitching, found objects and fragments of antique textile, pieced together with an unerring eye. Her delight in nature and humour is evident in all of her work. Skilled at drawing, she is inspired by American folk art, old soft toys, flora and fauna. When teaching, Viv's main aim is to help students develop an understanding of the endless possibilities provided by a simple little scrap of time worn fabric, or how to see a tiny vintage thimble as a vase for a bunch of flowers made from frayed scraps. She encourages students to sketch their ideas, even if they have never done any drawing, and then discusses how they might be translated into a tiny needle case, or a piece of mail art, or a journal of fabric pages stitched together. "Nothing is perfect, the nature of the natural weaves produce flaws on this vintage fabric, any darns or patches are treasured"



LYNN BARRON (*Sea Angels Vintage*) is known for her exquisite creations, whimsical pieces of fragile beauty which are seized upon the moment they appear for sale. With a background in fine art, she is able to draw on a wide range of techniques. As a teacher, she likes to empower students by helping them to develop their individual skills. Using a hands on approach, she uses demonstration and group exercises to teach the techniques, and then helps students to develop their own projects as the course progresses. Her watercolour painting, stitching, collage and papier mache work are all inspired by her varied interests and a love of vintage textiles, found objects and embroidery. As she puts it "My work is a mix of social history, vintage textiles, and magical narratives, benign neglect, lost places, old ballrooms, black and white movies, tinsel, gilt, shadows and dust. My media are paints, printing, textiles, paper"



PRICE LIST

Please note that with the exception of one room in The Honey House, all rooms have double beds and the prices below are for single occupancy. We welcome non-participating partners (see below) for £750 per week, which includes accommodation, group outings and all meals.

Numbers in brackets indicate the number of available rooms.

	£
Private rooms with en suite facilities (5)	2150
Private room in shared house with own bathroom (3)	2000
Private room in shared house with shared bathroom (2)	1900
Twin room in shared house with shared bathroom (1)	1700 per person
Non participating partner sharing s double room	750

Rooms will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Please note there are only two rooms which do not involve stairs, *l'Ecurie* and *l'Atelier*. Both have walk-in, open plan showers rather than baths.

Please note that the three rooms in the Manor House are the private B&B rooms. There is a comfortable sitting room with French doors to the poolside, in which you will share tea and coffee making facilities. All other rooms are either loft style studio rooms with simple kitchen facilities, or they are rooms in shared houses with sitting rooms and fully equipped kitchens.

It is not expected that you will self cater, but you can make tea/coffee. The kitchen and sitting room of *the Orangerie* will also be available to all.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Most of the costs are in Euros. To avoid the effects of significant exchange rate fluctuation, I would like to settle as many of the costs in advance at the time of booking, and so would ask that people pay a deposit of £500 on booking, and the balance before the end of April 2018.

To book a place and discuss your accommodation requirements, please email Caroline Zoob at sales@carolinezoob.co.uk in the first instance.

THE LIST PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 nights accommodation at St Victor la Grand'Maison
- Five days of tuition with two teachers working simultaneously
- All materials
- All meals, with wine at supper, and one lunch out
- One full days outing, and a couple of shorter excursions, to be decided

Travel to and from St Victor la Grand'Maison is not included.

Ryan Air operates a flight on Wednesday 11 July departing London Stansted at 12.30, arriving Poitiers 15.00, with a return flight on the 18th departing Poitiers at 15.00. Transfers from Poitiers will cost in the region of Eu 20 per person each way.