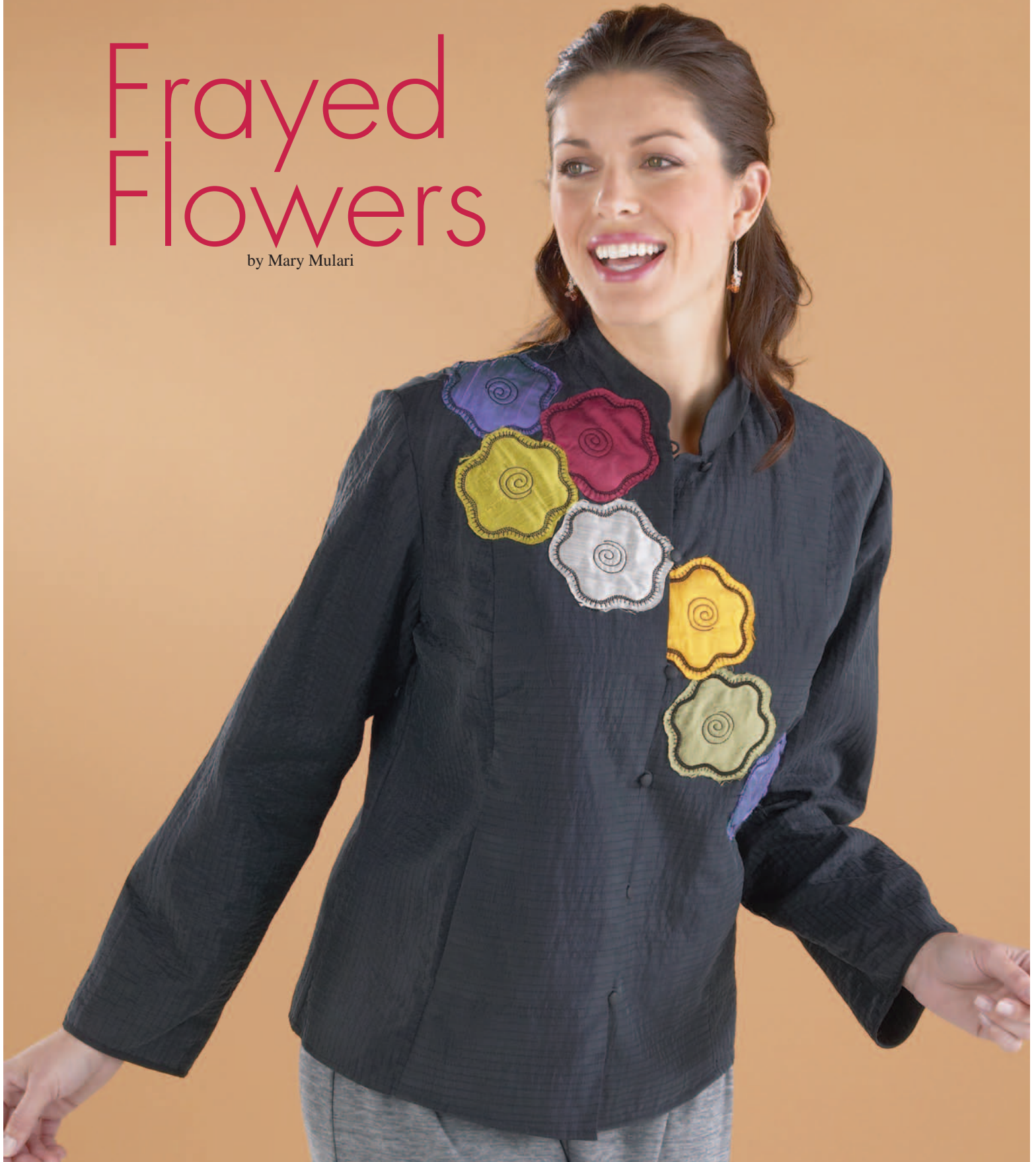


# Frayed Flowers

by Mary Mulari



*Trim a plain jacket with a scattering of applique flowers created on your embroidery machine. Instead of embroidering the flowers directly on the garment, stitch them individually, trim away excess fabric, and then sew the flowers to the jacket.*

*The flower applique design on the jacket is from my book Embroidery Machine Essentials: Machine Applique. I selected a simple flower shape, reduced the size 10%, and eliminated some of the stitching segments to create the flowers faster. Lightweight quilt batting beneath the applique fabric gives a slightly puffy look and adds dimension to the flowers.*

## Step 1. Preparation

To plan the floral arrangement on the jacket before you begin embroidering, sew out the flower shape on stabilizer. Cut out the shape and use it as a pattern to cut out additional flower shapes from paper or fabric. Arrange and pin them on the jacket. Consider adding a few to the back of the jacket too. Make sure that pocket areas are kept clear of stitching so the pockets are functional.

Try the jacket on to test the placement of the flowers. Viewing yourself in a mirror will help you determine the number of flowers to stitch and where they can be placed for the most flattering display. Leave the flower patterns pinned in place until you replace them with the stitched out designs.

## Step 2. Embroidery

Cut a 4" square of lightweight quilt batting for each flower, a 6" square of applique fabric and a piece of tear-away stabilizer for the hoop. Silk dupioni was chosen for the flowers on the featured


silk jacket. The raw edges fray as the jacket is worn and cleaned. If you prefer a non-fraying edge, consider Ultrasuede® or boiled wool for this project.

Hoop a piece of stabilizer, center the square of quilt batting on the stabilizer and the applique fabric over the batting. Spray the back of the fabric with temporary fusible spray, or pin the edges to the stabilizer at the sides of the hoop. Stitch the flower design without trimming away fabric from the edges, as you would normally do with machine embroidery applique designs.

Remove the stabilizer and fabric from the hoop and tear away the stabilizer. Trim away the excess quilt batting very close to the outer stitching lines of the flower shape. Trim the applique fabric, leaving 1/4" or less beyond the stitching line around the flower.

## Step 3. Attaching the Flowers

Pin the flowers to the jacket in place of the patterns you arranged earlier. Try it on again to test your design layout. (This is the machine embroidery adaptation of the carpenters' motto: Measure twice, cut once.) Sew the flowers to the jacket with a sewing machine stitch of your choice or use the buttonhole stitch as I did, reversing the stitch so the horizontal bars extend beyond the edges of the embroidered design. The stitch was set at a 4.5 width and 1.0 length. After sewing on the first flower, examine the edging and fraying potential. You may prefer to trim away more fabric around the flowers before you sew any more in place.

To avoid flattening the flowers, press the jacket and design areas from the wrong side of the garment. For another accent, sew beads to the flower centers. 

## Special Offer:

Mary's book Embroidery Machine Essentials: Machine Applique is available at a special price to **Designs** readers at \$20 postpaid with an autograph and a free tip sheet. Send a check to Mary's Productions, Box 87-DME8, Aurora, MN 55705.

