The Princess Pleater - User's Instructions

INTRODUCTION

Now you're the proud owner of a Princess all-British Pleater, you have the machine which will enable you to gather fabrics for smocking, elasticating, Shibori and many other applications. It will save you time and trouble with those tedious tasks, to let you get on with the enjoyable side of your chosen task.

The Princess is made in high quality materials throughout, with the base in varnished dense wooden fibre board, the side plates in laser cut and painted aluminium, solid brass is used for the rollers, steel for the needles.

No adjustment should be needed, it is important not to overtighten the screws holding the side plates to the baseboard.

CARE

Keep the machine away from dampness and water as they would damage it permanently. An occasional wipe of the rollers with a cloth dampened in methylated spirit will remove any accumulated dirt. Light machine oil could be applied to the roller axle pivots very sparingly after a great deal of use, but remember to run scrap cloth through repeatedly after oiling to avoid damaging valuable fabrics.

The machine is best kept in its original box when not in use to prevent dust and accidental damage. Dropping the machine is likely to cause permanent damage and misalignment. It will be best to keep the box and packing material including the polystyrene protection blocks, in case you ever need to return the machine to us.

GUARANTEE

The machine is guaranteed against faulty workmanship and materials. Needles are only guaranteed against manufacturing faults, misuse will break them prematurely and they are regarded as expendable spares.

SAFETY- ONLY FOR USE AS A PLEATER OR ELASTICATOR.

It is important not to use the machine in such a way that you could trap your fingers between the rollers, take care and never operate the machine fast, never allow children to touch it or its components.

GETTING ACQUAINTED

Take any supporting ties and packaging off the machine and it is ready for use, but do read these instructions first. The front of the machine is viewed from the direction where the fabric is fed in, the back is where the fabric emerges gathered (where the needle eyes and the Princess decal are). The right hand axle looked at from the front has left hand thread; the left axle has right hand thread. You can use the machine either way round with one or both handles, whichever suits you and the fabric.

OPERATION

Thread as many needles as you need with the lengths of thread or elastic you require (needle-threader included). You can remove any unwanted needles to save making needle holes in fabric where you want to avoid holes. See the section on changing or moving needles. Try a test piece first in case your first attempt would damage some valuable fabric. There might be some oil or transit grime left on the rollers – practice makes perfect.

Best way is to roll your fabric around the wooden dowel stick supplied. The stick we supply will do most jobs. It helps to attach the end of the fabric to the stick with adhesive tape for stability.

Then slide the rolled fabric (on the stick) through the side loops of the upright coloured plates through which the rollers run, with the fabric coming off the bottom of the roll.

(continued overleaf)

OPERATION (continued)

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Feed the leading straight edge of the fabric into the teeth of the top and bottom front rollers while turning the knobs gently, carefully ensuring that the fabric is taken up straight and evenly, as the start will determine the quality of the gathering across the whole piece.

Keeping the tension even all the way across the fabric is important, this can take a few attempts to get right. You can use either or both turning knobs plus an extra dowel stick (not supplied) laid over the fabric as it comes off the bottom of the first dowel stick. This second stick will need to be about 28cm. in length.

This second stick can be quite thick if you wish. What it does is to keep the tension even across the width of the fabric, while you have two hands free to turn the knobs. As you turn the knobs the fabric will pass through the rollers, emerging onto the needles and you will need to pull it onto the threads to keep the needles clear.

If you meet strong resistance as you turn the knobs it may mean the fabric is becoming folded. If this happens you can reverse up to a quarter turn of the knobs to release jammed fabric, but it is best avoided by making sure the fabric is taken up straight and not folded as it passes through.

FABRIC TENSION

Probably the most important detail which affects the quality of the gathering you will achieve is the fabric tension. If there is too much 'pull' against the direction of movement of the fabric you will put stress on the needles and possibly tear a fine fabric. Conversely if there is insufficient tension or different tensions across the fabric width, you are more likely to have 'off line' or unevenly gathered fabric, or missed gathers. Again practice makes perfect and lots of users use no dowel stick quite effectively; it all depends on your individual style.

By now you should have some gathered fabric - and that is all there is to it. Occasionally needles may break and these are easily changed.

CHANGING OR MOVING NEEDLES

Use the small screwdriver included, inserted in the slot in the black circular roller holders. These are recessed into the coloured side plates and they hold the removable roller in position. Push the slots to the vertical position and the roller can be lifted out or levered gently using your screwdriver.

Now the needles will lift out easily and go back positioned just between the top and bottom front rollers where the fabric feeds in. The shoulder of the needle rests on the bottom back roller, the top back roller keeps the needles in place while gathering.

SPARE NEEDLES

Spare needles are available in packs of 24. Prices include post and packing.

REPAIR AND TOOLS

We do not supply any other specific tools, because all you are likely to need is a small screwdriver spplied. To dismantle the machine (and it is very simple) for major cleaning or repairs you will need a cross-headed stubby screwdriver to loosen the screws under the bottom of the baseboard. Alignment is important, so is light lubrication.

PRINCESS PLEATERS is owned by Anya Morris and she will do all she can to ensure you have years of trouble-free use from your Princess. Please write, e-mail or telephone and we will do our best to help.

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DIAGRAM TO SHOW THE CORRECT POSITION OF NEEDLES AND DIRECTION OF FABRIC IN PLEATING

