

One Heart, One World

I designed this simple heart project to express healing and unity in this time of unrest, and hope you will “feel the love” as you create your own personal version of it! This could even be used as a teaching tool for your children, they can just color in the page you print. I used Woolfelt in various skin tone shades for my heart and hands with orange and yellow for the flames, which calls to mind a phoenix rising from the ashes. (You could also use cotton or batik fabric, but you would need to add fusible web to the back.) I used Valdani mulberry silk floss for the orange radiating warmth around the heart in long, straight stitches. I love the warm luster the silk floss adds, and the way it catches the light, adding a degree of variation to the finished look. I used a size 12 perle cotton in black for the decorative stitches in the heart, hands and flames. I used a variety of stitches such as cross-stitch, herringbone, blanket-stitch, whip-stitch, and primitive-stitch. Really, any stitch will work, whatever you like to do and comes easily for you!

Here are the basic supplies you'll need:

- * Black Woolfelt for the background, 9" x 12" square
- * Small pieces of Woolfelt for the heart, hands and flames; I used skin-tone shades, orange, & yellow
- * Perle cotton/silk floss, or embroidery floss (see my note above)
- * Scissors, pins, embroidery needle
- * Optional: freezer paper, iron, light box (or sunny window), rotary cutter with ruler and mat.
- * Sewing machine if you prefer doing the decorative stitches by machine
- * The paper pattern

The first thing you'll do after printing out the pattern is to trace the hands and flames onto the paper side of freezer paper or another piece of paper, or you can cut them from the one you printed. (If using cotton fabric, trace them onto the paper side of fusible web.) I like to use freezer paper to cut out my Woolfelt for a crisp, clean cut: just trace the design components to the paper side, cut around the traced designs leaving a narrow margin around the outside line, use a low-temp iron to iron to your Woolfelt, and cut out designs on the traced lines. Be sure to remove the paper backing before pinning these to your background. Cut out 2 hands using paper, freezer paper, or fusible web. Also, cut out the flames, cutting the full size for the orange flame, and just the smaller one for the yellow flame. For the heart, cut the heart out from your printed pattern, keeping both the heart and background intact. Then you can lay small pieces of your Woolfelt colors in your cutout to audition color placement. Or if you like the colors shown, I used the following shades for my heart (starting at upper left and going counter-clockwise): Beach Sand, Light Brown, Camel, Suntan, Hay Bale, and Cinnamon (Peat Moss would also look good here.) I left it open in the center to show the black background. Or you can use more colorful pieces if you prefer - how about rainbow colored? It's your art piece, feel free to use whatever hues you like!

Once you've chosen your colors, trace the heart sections onto the freezer paper and cut them out as described above. Then pin them to the background, making sure to leave room for the hands and flames at the bottom; you can use your printed pattern as a placement guide. Then stitch your heart sections together using your preferred decorative stitches. Once you have your inner heart stitched, primitive-stitch or whip-stitch it to the background around the outer edge. A primitive stitch is just a random whip-stitch with a wonky quirky uneven look! Then whip-stitch around the hands. Next use a tiny cross-stitch to attach the yellow flame just to the orange flame, then pin these below the hands and use a whip-stitch to sew to the background. once you have all your components attached to the background, you're almost done! The last step is to sew the orange radiating warmth of love around the heart with long straight stitches. My rows are about 1/4" - 3/8" apart and the stitches are about 1/2" long. You can make yours smaller if you prefer, I lean towards larger stitches - fast 'n easy!

And you're done! I hope you enjoyed making your new loving heart and that it will bring joy and warmth to your heart each time you look at it. Let's fill the world with love not hate - everyone can make a positive difference! For more ideas and color photos, see my Blog.

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