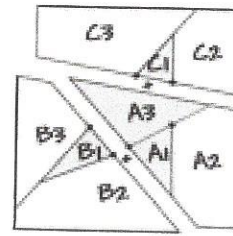


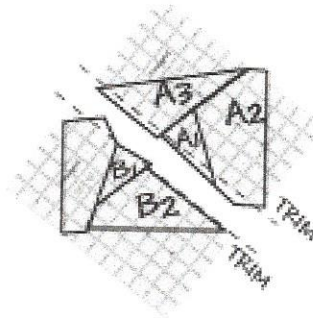
GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

General Craziness

1. You get one block for every piece of fabric, so these quilts are easy to make larger or smaller: just count the blocks, and that's the number of fabrics you will need!
2. Stack all fabrics right sides up.
3. I usually cut through 12 to 15 fabrics at a time with a 60 mm rotary cutter. I recommend a new blade, but I usually don't start with one myself. When cutting the pattern apart, the cutting order can be determined by saying the alphabet backwards, and counting backwards to determine which section or piece to cut next.
4. Stitch the pieces of each section together in numerical order, 1, to 2, then add 3 etc using quarter inch seams. Dots on the master indicate where you should try to have an accurate quarter inch seam. Just pick up the two pieces to be sewn and look at the seam line between the two pieces to see where the dot is, and that is the end at which you will try to maintain an accurate quarter inch seam. Don't worry if the other end isn't even after stitching! If there are no dots, just center one piece on the other and stitch. There will also be dots at one end of a seam line between sections. These dots show up only on the master and not on the piecing diagrams in the written instructions, but the written instructions will ALWAYS tell you. In the diagram below, the dots for sections B and C are both along the inside seam so you will try to keep that inside seam straight. For section A, when stitching piece 1 to piece 2, you would try to keep the seam straight along piece three so you could add piece 3 without having to do any trimming.



5. After each section is pieced, put the sections together in alphabetical order, section A to section B, then add C etc. Before stitching two sections together, you MUST straighten seam lines as necessary, trimming off the very least amount. Generally, the portion that you are trimming off will be parallel to your ruler. This is a very important step and ensures that your blocks will lay flat. For instance, in the diagram below, before stitching section A to section B, lay your ruler along the seam line and trim so that you have a nice straight seam to sew! Only straighten the seam you are sewing!



6. The specifics for each pattern, where to match, what to line up etc are found in each pattern. Please read the directions prior to starting. I encourage you to make practice blocks with some fabric out of your stash before you cut into your "good stuff" so that you can see how the pattern is going to go together. Simply count the elements in each block to arrive at the minimum number of fabrics needed: so for the star you need one for the star and a second for the background so the minimum number of star blocks you can make with this method is two!
7. Lastly, be sure to have fun!

About Stacking

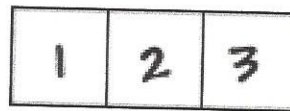
Right Sides Up! Right Sides Up! I can never say that enough when I'm teaching any crazy class.

Stacking is generally fairly easy when the quilt is to be totally scrappy, as is "Dash for the Stars", with different fabrics in each position in the block, and you are stacking in two (or more) color piles, i.e. lights and darks. When stacking for these types of quilt patterns, just make sure that ALL of the fabrics in each color pile contrast with ALL of the fabrics in each of the other color piles. If I just have two stacks, one light and one dark, I generally audition my darkest light against each of the darks and my lightest dark against each light. Then just be sure to have contrast by color, print, print size, and type of fabric as you stack.

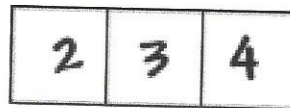
Stacking can be more difficult when the blocks aren't totally scrappy and have a set number of fabrics per block: 2, 3, 4, or more fabrics per block, generally the patterns that stack in only one pile which is what we will discuss from this point forward.

It makes it easier if you have a color scheme that you can follow it for stacking purposes: for example red, white, blue, red, white, blue, until all the fabrics are stacked. Stacking can get more difficult if you don't have a color scheme and want to use a wide variety of medium or dark fabrics.

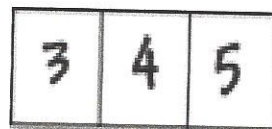
Begin by counting the number of elements in the block and that's how many fabrics you need to look at as you stack. The tall pumpkin block has #1 the pumpkin, #2 the star, and #3 the background so every three fabrics will be together in a block. If you have more elements per block, 4 or 5, you would look at every four or five fabrics as you stack. Many blocks have only two: the dog, the basket, and the flower so you look at every two-piece of cake! The following example is for blocks with three elements per block.



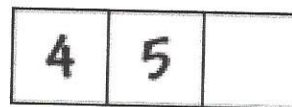
Select three fabrics you want together in a block that contrast and stack them 1, 2, 3. Each piece must contrast with both of the others.



Cover up fabric #1 (it stays beneath fabric #2) and add a 4th fabric that looks good with and contrasts with both fabrics #2 and #3.



Cover up fabrics #1 and #2 (again keeping them on the bottom of the stack beneath fabric #3!) and add a 5th fabric that looks good with and contrasts with both fabrics #3 and #4.



Keep going until all fabrics are stacked. If you are left with two reds or two golds that don't contrast, you still have time to fit them into your stack somewhere before you cut! Remember to check the fabrics on the top of the stack to be sure they contrast with the fabrics on the bottom of the stack! Because of shuffling, the top fabric will be paired with fabrics #1 and #2 from the bottom of the stack and the top two fabrics will be paired fabric #1.





Needle Turn Appliqué

None of my designs are drawn reversed. I use freezer paper only as a means to get the design onto the fabric. I don't baste: I just glue the design down and get to stitching!

SUPPLIES:

1. Use freezer paper with plastic coating for tracing. Reynolds brand freezer paper can usually be found in the canning section of your grocery store, or you can buy it in bulk in a large roll in either 18" or 24" widths from U-Line.
2. Always use a fine needle. I use a #10 straw needle but sharps or milliner needles also work well. Straw needles are a little longer. Tulip needles have also become very popular.
3. I recommend only 100% cotton thread that matches the color of the motif you are stitching down. Polyester and silk fibers are stronger than cotton fiber and can cut through your motif.
4. Pin with 3/4" sequin pins or glue down with Glue Baste-It. I prefer Glue Baste-It because I can glue my entire design in place so I can be sure of the placement of each piece prior to starting to stitch. And there's no risk of loved ones stepping on those pesky pins. My husband and mother also both highly recommend the glue!
5. I generally use just a #2 lead pencil for tracing around the freezer paper template. I do like white or silver pencils for dark fabrics. The chalk pencils are nice because you can see them easily. I also use a permanent fine point sharpie for marking on medium valued fabrics. A sharpie should never be used on light fabrics because the drawn line will be visible in the seam after it's turned under.
6. Scissors need to be sharp or you will fray your fabric when you clip!

7. Bias tape makers come in a variety of widths and are a favorite for vines. If the curve is too sharp to be made smoothly with bias, or if it's just a small vine, simply trace the entire shape of the vine which helps with placement.

PREPARING THE MOTIF:

1. Trace all of the appliqué motifs onto the unwaxed side of the freezer paper and cut out each motif.
2. Iron the freezer paper template onto the right side of the appliqué fabric. The freezer paper template can be ironed down repeatedly if making more than one of the same motif, or you can iron the freezer paper template onto card stock and cut it out to make a template that you can trace around.
3. Trace around the freezer paper template, marking the sewing line; this line will be turned under and sewn down.
4. Cut out the motif leaving a scant $\frac{1}{8}$ " seam allowance all the way around the motif.
5. Remove the freezer paper; it is not left on for this method of appliqué.
6. Where possible, always cut your background block 1" larger all the way around. Trim the block to the required size after all of the appliqué is done.

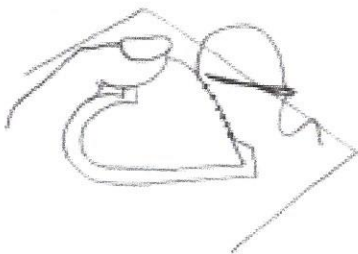
PREPARING THE BLOCK:

1. If your background fabric is light enough to see through, place it on top of the full sized pattern provided in this book. Using the pattern beneath as a guide, lay the first piece to be appliquéd into place on the background and glue into place. Always start in the background of the design and layer out. Continue placing and gluing each motif in place until the entire design is in place. Hint: It is also helpful to first glue one entire motif together, for instance a bird or flower, then to place and glue the entire bird or flower in place.

2. If your background fabric is too dark to see through, place just the motifs onto the full sized pattern, and glue the motifs together only where they overlap. Be careful not to glue them to the pattern page! Once the glue is dry, move the entire design to your background fabric and glue into place.

APPLIQUE STITCHES:

"If you can bind, you can appliqué!"



1. To begin, knot the thread and come up just inside the pencil line on the motif (Do not go through the background fabric). Don't begin too close to a point, cleavage, or corner as it makes it more difficult to turn under the seam allowance as you finish.
2. Fold the seam allowance under with your needle, rolling the pencil line underneath, and finger press. Anchor the fold with your thumb as you stitch.
3. Insert the needle into the background directly beside and slightly under where the thread came out of the fold of the motif. Don't get in front of where the thread comes out of the fold.
4. When bringing the needle out of the background, catch only a thread or two of the fold. You want to average 10-12 stitches per inch using more stitches at curves and points.
5. Place your thumb over the appliqué stitches and gently tug after every 3 to 5 stitches (a thumb's width!) to hide your stitches as necessary.
6. Right-handed people stitch counter clockwise around the motif while left-handed people stitch clockwise.

7. Be gentle: excessive working of the fabric can cause fraying. To protect the edge of the block, roll the edges to the area you are working on.
8. Motif edges that will be overlapped by another appliqué piece should be left un-sewn to avoid excess thickness.

CURVES:

1. For inside curves, clip only as much needed to release the tension.
2. Clip just barely through the pencil line. Remember it takes two clips (pizza shaped!) to get a rounded edge. One clip will be pointed.
3. I do not clip outside curves but a smaller seam allowance, about 1/8", will help them to lay flat. If you feel "pleats" under the motif, then your seam allowance is too large.

CLEAVAGES:

1. Clip just barely through the pencil line.
2. Take a second stitch to secure the clipped point:
 - A. As you stitch up to the cleavage, at the point your needle will come up a few threads beyond the fold instead of just catching the fold.
 - B. The second stitch DOES NOT go through the background but goes under the motif and comes up just behind your first stitch.
 - C. Give a little tug toward the center of the motif to ensure that the fabric rolled under.

POINTS:

1. When you're within a half inch from a point, start taking smaller stitches (smaller by about half).
2. Grade the seam allowance, clipping excess fabric away from underneath and at the point.

PRESSING:

1. Press the block from the back (wrong) side after completing the appliqué. Try not to over press or the seams will show beneath the motifs!