

Quilting the Garden :: From Photo to Flower

Two-Day Supply List

Learn to translate Sarah's photo of a flower (pink water lily or orange day lily) into a pattern and construct an enticing fused, collaged quilt top. Along the way you'll learn about design, value, shading, shape, different ways to approach your fused collage, and how to apply Sarah's process to your own photos. Before going home on day one, we'll look at your photos so that you can, if you choose, work on the patterning in the evening or stop at a photocopy shop. You'll begin your flower quilt top in class and, time permitting, discuss thread-coloring and quilting.

Day One:

Fabric: tone-on-tone prints with low contrast designs, particularly batiks, work best for me, but bring the fabric you love. On the first day, you'll create a top about 8x11 or (if you feel confident about scaling up in size) up to about 12x15. That means you don't need a vast quantity of any given fabric. Opt for smaller pieces of a wide range of fabrics rather than a lot of a few fabrics. On the second day, the choice of subject and size is yours, but keep in mind that substantially larger takes longer and can be more challenging when you are new to the process.

For the flower on day one, look closely at the image provided and bring a range of value (light to dark) in your fabric. You will want light lights and deep darks. You'll also need three to five greens for the background. Err on the side of bringing more than you might need! Look at the proportion of background to the size of flower to figure out how much to bring.

For the **pink water lily**, note that the reflection of the lily in the pond is quite greyed, so try to find a more muted, shaded fabric for the reflection. You'll also need a deep dark for the pond; I had a hand-dyed fabric that was somewhat solid with some light areas, which was perfect. If you don't have one perfect fabric, you can use several fabrics together. In the photo, you can see that my cloth is not only green but also brown and burgundy and blue-green! For the lily pads and pond, you'll want a range of medium to dark greens, a bit of yellow and ochre (a yellow-y tan), and possibly a bit of medium-light green for the lighter bits of the water if your pond fabric.

For the **orange day lily**, you don't have to make it orange! Just bring a range of values from light to dark in your favorite color; this image uses light, medium and dark orange (nearly rust/burgundy!), yellow, and a yellow-green. If you want to create a stargazer lily, one that is

white and hot pink with freckles, bring whites (white on whites work well here), light-medium and dark pink. Since this is a close-up, you'll use more of the flower colors and less of the background / foliage colors than in the water lily photo.

You may pre-fuse fabric at home so you have more working time in class or do the fusing in class. I prefer Mistyfuse, which can be hard to find so I will have some for sale in class.

Modest kit fee of \$4 covers: 8x10 color photographs printed on heavy paper, half-sheet of transfer paper, clear page protector.

Day Two:

Selecting your own photograph, copyright: For day two, please bring your own photograph. It is illegal to use another's photo or artwork without permission, so please do not bring a photo from a magazine, book, internet or other source unless you have received written permission to use the image. Photographers (or the photo companies who sell their images) own the copyright to the image; please respect their artistry and work. For example, You wouldn't want to make the best brownies on the planet from your own, original recipe, then have a local bakery steal your recipe, claim it as their own, make the brownies, become an overnight sensation and make a fortune, and leave you frustrated and unrecognized. Same thing with photos. Except we probably won't become overnight sensations or make a fortune! There are online sources for copyright free photos (see below), so don't panic if you don't have a photo of your own.

What to look for in an image: We will discuss your photos at the end of day one, but before then, for your first foray into creating an artwork from a photo, I recommend choosing a photo with *strong light and shadow*. Misty, foggy photos can be beautiful, but are harder to render in cloth, so a picture with strong *contrast* will make your life easier for this first piece.

The elements of design are Line, Shape, Value, Color, Movement, Size/Scale, and Pattern/Texture. Think about these elements as you select a photo. Look at the angle: normal viewing, from above (bird's eye view), down low to the ground. Remember the rule of thirds: think of your picture as a tic-tac-toe grid: are main elements grouped into thirds? Generally, a composition along these lines is more pleasing than a totally symmetrical image (four-square). An odd number of the focal item is usually more pleasing than an even number. If your photo has four roses, consider adding or eliminating one: you don't have to make your quilt exactly like the photo!

Choose an image with a strong focal point. You do not have to have a photo of a flower—you can choose a pet, a street scene, the choice is yours. And your photo doesn't have to be perfect. You can crop it to strengthen the composition; you can eliminate superfluous stuff. For example, in my collage of the water lily, I eliminated a pod in the water above the lily; I didn't need it to tell the story of the pond. Finally, the collage process is the same no matter what your image. People and beloved pets are more challenging than nature or many landscapes, so just decide how much you want to tackle! Dream big!

Further reading: Susan Brubaker Knapp's *Point, Click, Quilt! Turn Your Photos into Fabulous Fabric Art* has a fantastic section on refining your photography. You can find it at www.blumoonriver.com/Shop.html.

But what if you don't have a photo that you want to turn into a quilt? There are **Internet resources for copyright free images**; just google "copyright free images" to see what you find. Make sure to read the fine print on usage! And you may, of course, use the other flower photo I will provide on Day One.

I usually work from a photo printed anywhere from 5 x 7 to 8 1/2 x 11 inches. Look for a crisp, sharp image. On my home printer, I can print onto photo paper and get a good image, but when I print onto plain paper, the quality of the photo isn't as good. At Staples, if I send them a PDF of my jpeg image, they can print an excellent 8 1/2 x 11 photo on very heavy paper (almost card stock) on the big color printer behind the counter for less than the cost of photo paper and printer ink at home.

You'll need these supplies:

Learning to see/pattern:

- 1. Vis a vis wet-erase or other washable black marker (do NOT use *dry-erase*), available at Staples/office supply stores
- 2. 5-10 sheets white paper—copy paper works, tracing paper also fine
- 3. Pencil, eraser and pencil sharpener
- 4. Digital camera (optional) if you have one—camera on phone is fine
- 5. A couple paper towels and a small container for water

The Quilt Top:

- 6. Fabrics (see discussion on page 1); bring a wide variety rather than a few large pieces of a few fabrics (unless they are awesome and varied hand-dyes)
- 7. Appliqué non-stick press sheet *or* 24-30 inches baking parchment (Reynolds brand works best, in the plastic wrap aisle at the grocery store)
- 8. 15-18 inches baking parchment for patterning (in addition to the above)
- 9. Marking tools such as Chalk pencil/blue pen
- 10. Paper scissors and freezer paper (only if you plan to make pattern pieces)
- 11. Fabric scissors, large and small
- 12. Small cutting mat (optional but encouraged)
- 13. 18 mm cutter (optional but encouraged) or other small rotary cutter
- 14. Transfer Paper if you have any –I will bring some for day 1 as part of your kit fee
- 15. Iron—small craft irons are perfect
- 16. Ironing surface
- 17. Fusible web: Mistyfuse is my favorite brand; WonderUnder also works (I'll have Mistyfuse for sale)
- 18. If the workshop venue does not permit fusing at your own work station, a piece of cardboard (a flattened cereal box works) or cookie sheet to transport collage to ironing station