

# Course of Nature- Caminho da Natureza

inspired by CONTEMPORÂNEO - CONTEMPORARY  
at the National Quilt Museum



# Inspiration

Ergos by Claudia Dias



*CONTEMPORÂNEO – CONTEMPORARY is a joint exhibit of art quilts from Brazil and the Contemporary QuiltArt Association. There was not an assigned theme so that each artist could work in his or her chosen style. However, commonalities appeared as artists from both countries explored life, the home, abstract art, and social commentary in their pieces. The exhibition runs October 18, 2019– January 28, 2020.*

She Wondered if She Would  
Make the Mark  
by Marie Murphy Wolfe



*“Improvisational piecing is a great way to make a quilt without a lot of planning and restrictions. Use what you have, break some rules, make it wonky, have fun! The inspiration for this block was a collection of elements I saw in the CONTEMPORÂNEO-CONTEMPORARY exhibit quilts: the narrow, delicate lines and shapes, the defined areas, the floating squares, and also the organic movement of the pieces. There is not a specific pattern for this block because each one ends up being unique, like its maker. Let’s explore some Improv!”*



## Quilter: Silvia Sutters

Silvia Sutters



Silvia Sutters is Brazilian-American with a background in fashion design and pattern-making who has designed and published her quilts widely.

She is a member of the Bee Sewcial group that works with monthly improv prompts, many of which have recently won awards including the QuiltCon 2019 Best in Show.

When not sewing, she loves to spend time with her husband and two daughters. Visiting art museums is one of her favorite activities and it often inspires her work. Silvia is also influenced by the colors, patterns, and culture of her native country of Brazil.

### Find Silvia Online:

Website: [astrangerview.com](http://astrangerview.com)

Facebook: [astrangerviewquilts](https://www.facebook.com/astrangerviewquilts)

Instagram: [@astrangerview](https://www.instagram.com/astrangerview)

Ello: [astrangerview](https://ello.com/astrangerview)



## Sample Block: Course of Nature – Caminho da Natureza



- Size 10.5" x 10.5" (finishes 10" x 10")
- Supplies: scissors, rotary cutter and mat, ruler, pins, water soluble pen, chalk, or preferred marking tool

#### Required fabric:

- You can use scraps or pieces no larger than Fat Quarters



# Preparation

Photo 1



1. Choose your fabrics. I decided to use lots of warm and cold neutrals with the addition of the contrasting reds (photo 1).
2. If the idea of improv quilting makes you a little tense, feel free to sketch or plan ahead. Take a picture and keep it as inspiration, but avoid overcommitting. Don't be afraid to change things as you work (photo 2).

**TIP:** Sometimes your scraps are not the size you want so you might need to piece several scraps together, or you might need to trim areas a little more than expected. Keep the sketch with an open mind for change.

Photo 2



I decided to follow a column pattern and then join the three columns to form the final block.

Working in sections is a great way to compose your block or quilt. I try to make smaller units that will fit together or have the same general size. This makes it easier when joining everything at the end.



# Assembly: First Column

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



1. Start by cutting your pieces roughly larger than desired. Join the first pieces together (photo 1). If the pieces are different widths, you can center or align it with one of the sides. Don't worry! You can trim these edges later.
2. Next, overlap your pieces to cut the next joining area. Remember to include the 1/4" seam allowance (photo 2). You can keep the same distance throughout or go from thinner to wider like in this example.

*For very narrow strips, overlap fabrics in a way that you are able to see about 3/8" of the fabric, which will be the narrow strip. After joining, you should only see 1/8" of that strip.*

3. Sew with a 1/4" seam allowance (photo 3).  
*You can be very free about the 1/4" seam allowance. If you want to make the narrow strip even narrower, feel free to take in more from your seam allowance.*
4. Press open to avoid bulk build up (photo 4).  
*At times, this might not be possible due to stitching overlap. In those cases, press to the side or whichever way works best for you.*
5. Set column aside.



## Assembly: Second Column

Photo 5



Photo 6

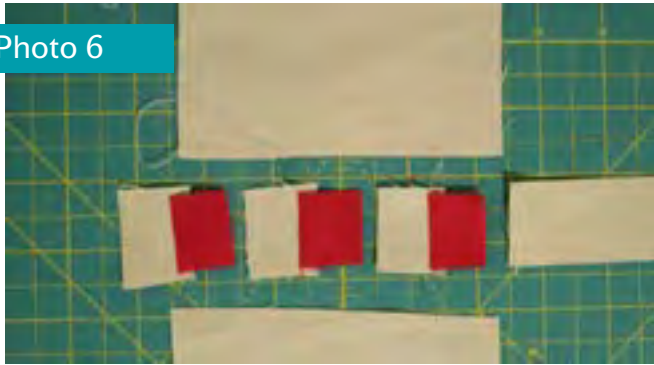


Photo 7

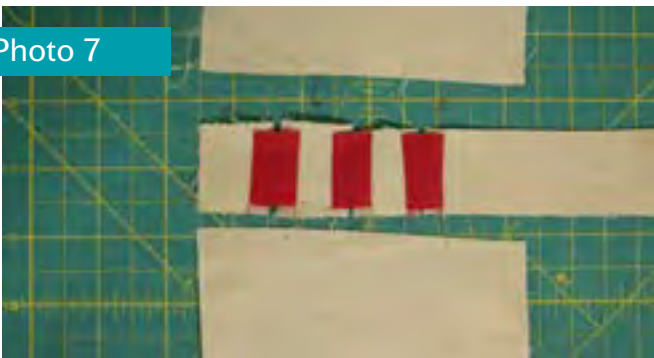


Photo 8



6. Lay out pieces in desired order for second column (photo 5). When joining small squares, make use of chain-piecing, then press (photo 6).
7. Continue joining the squares to form a pieced strip (photo 7).
8. Place the pieced square strip right sides together with the top piece of the column and trim. If you miss your ruler, this is a good time to use it since the square strip might have a lot of uneven edges (photo 8).
9. Stitch together and press.



## Assembly: Second Column

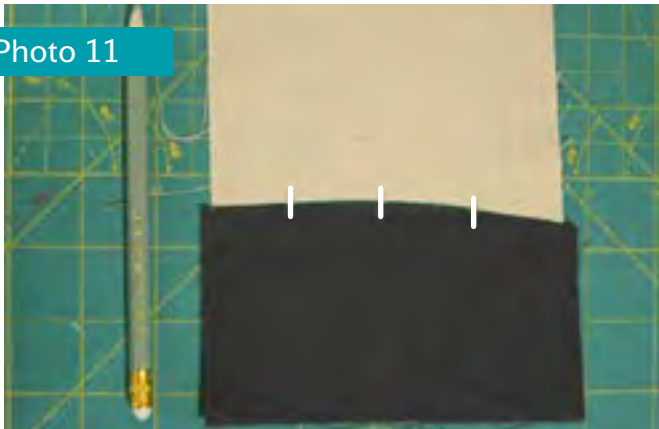
Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11



10. Repeat Step 8 with the bottom piece of the column. Stitch and press (photo 9).
11. Let's add some subtle curves to the bottom of this column. Overlap your fabrics by 1/2" to 3/4" and cut it with a slight curvy shape (photo 10). *Make sure you are cutting only within the area where both fabrics are overlapped.*
12. Remove the excess. Lay the two pieces side by side matching the curve you just cut.
13. With chalk or water soluble marker, mark lines on both fabrics (starting on the deepest part of the curve then out, every 1" to 1 1/4 ") so that you have matching lines (photo 11).
14. Pin fabric right sides together on these matching lines. Stitch and press.
15. Set column aside.





## Assembly: Third Column

Photo 12

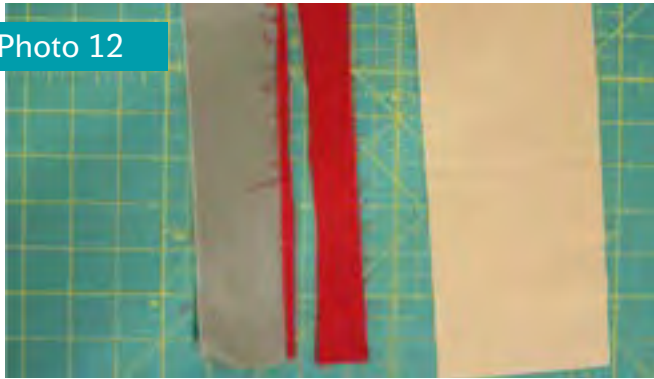


Photo 13



Photo 14

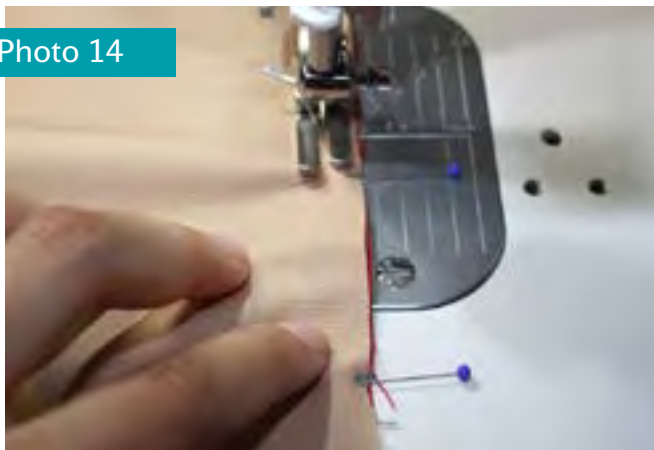


Photo 15



*For the third and last column, we will try a longer and curvier narrow strip.*

16. Start by overlapping your pieces by 1/2" to 3/4". Cut with a wavy line - you might need to hold the pieces and move slowly to avoid shifting (photo 12).
17. Discard the excess. Lay the two pieces side by side matching the curve you just cut and mark lines (photo 13).
18. Pin fabric right sides together on these matching lines. Stitch and press.

*Note: When joining the curvy areas, don't worry about having everything laying flat. As long as the needle area is laying flat and matching on the edges, everything will work out. You can push those wavy bumps to the side and back behind the needle while keeping the front of the needle flat.*

19. Repeat Steps 16 and 17 for the other side.
20. Pin fabric right sides together on these matching lines. Stitch and press (photos 14-15).

*TIP: When pressing, use steam, and iron heavily to distort the block and accentuate the curves, if desired. Break the rules and make it wonky. You can always trim off wavy areas later.*



## Assembly: Third Column

Photo 16



Photo 17



Photo 18



Photo 19



*If you have an area that does not lay flat, press that area allowing it to lay how it wants. This will create a crease that shows you where it needs to be sewn. From the wrong side of the fabric, stitch on the creased line until the stitches meet with the previously joined stitches. Backstitch (you don't have to sew the whole seam, just the creased area). Press again. Now, your block should lay flat.*

21. Let's add another narrow strip in the same manner as the first column. Overlap your pieces to cut the next joining area. Remember to include the 1/4" seam allowance (photo 16).
22. With chalk or water soluble marker, mark lines on both fabrics (starting on the deepest part of the curve then out, every 1" to 1 1/4") so that you have matching lines (photo 17).
23. Pin fabric right sides together on these matching lines. Stitch and press (photos 18 and 19).



# Joining

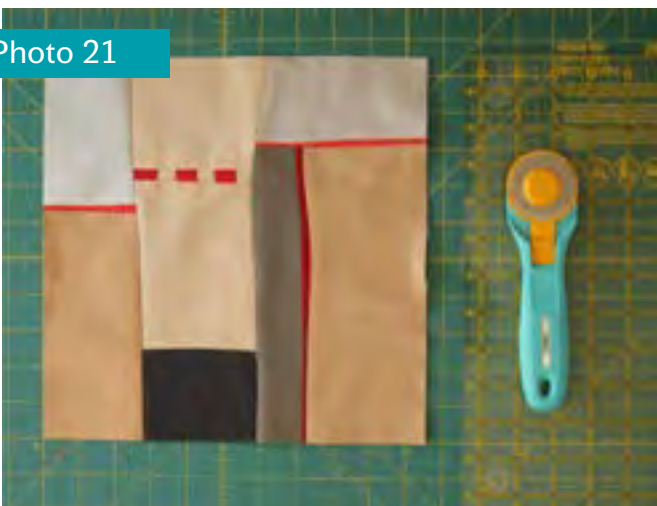
Photo 20



*It is time to join your columns into a block.*

24. Use the overlapping and wavy cutting technique for an organic look to join your first and second columns together. Mark matching lines, pin, and stitch as previously shown. Press seams.
25. Repeat Step 24 to join the third column to the block (photo 20).
26. Trim block to 10 ½" square, centering to make sure that all areas are within the size. (photo 21).

Photo 21



Finished?  
Fabuloso!



# National Quilt Museum Updates

## Exhibit



From October 18, 2019 – January 28, 2020 visitors can experience *CONTEMPORÂNEO-CONTEMPORARY*, an exhibit with quilts by Brazilian artists and members of the Contemporary QuiltArt Association (CQA). See the unique styles represented by the artists in these two diverse cultures displayed side-by-side.

- **Explore further** [quiltmuseum.org/visit/current-exhibits/](http://quiltmuseum.org/visit/current-exhibits/)

## Acquisitions



In the last two months, artists from around the globe donated twelve new quilts to our collection. Each year over one million people both in person and online view our collection through the gallery and traveling exhibitions; print and digital promotions and publications; and educational tours and programs. Find out how your quilt can become part of the museum collection.

- **Learn more** [quiltmuseum.org/acquisitions/](http://quiltmuseum.org/acquisitions/)

## Exhibit



A new Corner Gallery exhibit is here: *Not Just Fabric and Thread* by contemporary fiber artist Pat Kroth! Pat collects and incorporates fabric and found objects with interesting texture, color, or personal significance into her artwork. She enjoys the playful ambiguity and richness of detail which invites viewers to come closer, explore and look further than just the riotous surface of things. The exhibition runs through November 5, 2019.

- **See details** [quiltmuseum.org/visit/current-exhibits/](http://quiltmuseum.org/visit/current-exhibits/)

## Friends



Did you know that we now offer a Young Adult membership? For \$15 a year, people ages 25 and younger can support the museum. Membership benefits include: free admission, 20% discount in the museum shop, and an invitation to our annual reception in April. You can even gift this membership to your young art enthusiast and help us bring quilting to new audiences worldwide!

- **Gift a membership** [quiltmuseum.org/donate/become-a-member/](http://quiltmuseum.org/donate/become-a-member/)