



One Day in Summer

inspired by "Stone Portraits and Sacred Stonescapes" by Denise Labadie

Quilt by: Ann Brauer



Featured Artist: Ann Brauer

Ann Brauer



For almost 40 years I have been making my original quilts that use color, fabric, and tradition to create abstract landscapes of the imagination.

Since I can remember, I have always loved working with color and fabric. I am a self-taught quilt maker who creates abstract landscapes by piecing and sewing thin strips of cotton fabric through the cotton batting onto the back. My work is in numerous museums, institutions and private collections including the American Museum of Art + Design, the Lodge at Turning Stone in Verona, NY, the Federal District Courthouse in Springfield, MA and Pat Metheny's personal collection.

Each work is a unique expression of a time and place. I do all the work myself in my studio in Shelburne Falls, MA. This studio is open to the public unless I am doing a fine craft show.

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Inspiration

Denise makes contemporary art quilt portraits of very non-contemporary structures: megalithic Celtic stones and monoliths (think Stonehenge), and more recent (but still centuries old) monastic ruins. These relics – stone circles, standing stones, dolmens, burial tombs, abandoned churches, and lost-in-history portals and passageways – embody both immense timelessness and physical presence while evoking soulful and emotional remembrances of human pasts largely forgotten.

Denise's art quilts are known for their moody realism, and her unique and deeply personal style: assertive quilt top (and stone) textures, color, lighting, shadowing and perspective, and craftsmanship and technique precision.

Bonamargy Friary by Denise Labadie



Kilclooney Dolmen by Denise Labadie



Kilclooney Dolmen quilt detail





Sample Block



Sample by: Ann Brauer

Supplies:

- 15" x 15" square of Backing fabric
- 15" x 15" square of Batting
- Assorted fabrics in a mix of colors/gradations

The quilt will use between 25 and 30 strips of fabric depending on how the colors flow together.

- This is a good time to use those scraps that need a good home or maybe you want to coordinate with fabrics used in the other blocks.



Instructions

Photo 1



1. Start with the 15" x 15" square of backing fabric. I fold it in half from bottom to top, and then bottom to top again into quarters and press. This will mark how I attach the batting to the block and give me a guide as I sew.
2. Baste the backing and the batting together by stitching the two together along the guides just created. **For the batting, I love the Hobbs Classic Cotton which is soft and flexible. This allows me to get fine points on the curves.**
3. To begin, make a loose arrangement of some of the fabrics that may be used in the block. In the bottom middle I have added a strip of yellow to focus the piece. Then the top of the quilt will be darker blues progressing to a lighter color. For my quilts, I like the look and feel of commercially available cotton fabrics (Photo 1).



Instructions

Photo 2



4. Cut fabric strips 1½" - 2" x WOF (width of fabric). I do not stabilize the fabric as I want flexibility and frequently find that batiks add a different sheen. And of course you can add fabrics as you start to sew. Usually I cut fabric that I think I may use so I have a pile by my sewing machine. For me, this is a lot faster than cutting each fabric individually though of course I still hunt for that particular color that I just know I have "somewhere."

5. Cut the strips into random wedges that angle about 1 ½" to 1/2" (Photo 2). This gives the wedge just a bit of bias which lets the piece move as you piece it. There is no right way to make these cuts—indeed a bit of variation is good so have fun. Again this is the time when little snippets of fabric can add just the right spark.

Photo 3



6. To start, place the first strip right side up, halfway across the batting, somewhere in the bottom quarter.

7. Place the second strip Right Sides Together with the first, allowing a small amount of overlap along the long side (Photo 3).



Instructions

Photo 4



8. Stitch these strips together with a $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam, only stitching where they overlap (Photo 4). After sewing the strips together, pull up the threads and tie them off. When I am sewing these first seams I only stitch where I am joining two or more pieces of fabric so that I can manipulate the rest of the strip later. Press seam open (Photo 5).

Photo 5





Instructions

Photo 6



9. Add the next strip so that it covers the raw end of the previous piece. Manipulate the strip as needed. Stitch where the strips overlap, and tie off threads (Photo 6). Trim away excess fabric in the seam allowance to reduce bulk and then press (Photo 7 & 8).

Photo 7



Photo 8





Instructions

Photo 9



Tip: One of the tricks is to manipulate the fabric when adding a new strip to get a rather sharp point. To keep it more interesting, occasionally I would run the fabric the entire width of the quilt.

10. Continue to add strips (Photo 9).

11. Continue adding strips until all the batting is covered (Photo 10).

Photo 10





Quilting

Photo 11



1. I like very simple machine quilting in a single color that follows the organic nature of the quilt. In this case I chose a golden yellow thread and spaced the lines of stitching about $\frac{1}{4}$ " apart (photo 11).
2. Once the quilting is complete, press the block with a bit of steam to make sure it is flat.
3. Trim the block to $12 \frac{1}{2}$ " x $12 \frac{1}{2}$ " square! (Photo 12).

Photo 12



Now for the really fun part. I pin the quilt up on my design board and see what I can learn from it. What would happen if I changed out this color way? Was this fabric really the right choice here? What happens if I try it in a totally different color combination? Yes, it is addictive. So many possibilities. What will I make next?

Finished?
Fantastic!