

Start With a Photo

a workshop with Susan Brubaker Knapp



This workshop is designed to help you learn the skills you need to go home, take your favorite photo, and interpret it in fabric. In the workshop, we will all be working on the same photo, a close-up shot I took of a wonderful round barn at the Shelburne Museum in Vermont. You'll learn how to:

- make a positioning overlay from clear upholstery vinyl
- create patterns on fusible web
- cut out your fabric pieces and fuse them
- use thread to “paint” on top of your fabric to add detail, color and texture.

If you have photos you'd like to make as art quilts, please bring them with you. We will talk about which ones would work best, and why.

SUPPLIES to bring:

- Good quality quilting fabric – cotton solids or prints, or hand-dyeds, washed and pressed. (Do not use fabric softener, as fusible products may not stick.) Do not bring light-weight fabric. Avoid stone, grass or barn fabric; scale and perspective may be wrong.
 - any color, 15x20” (for background; will not show in finished piece)
 - black, 5x5” (for window)
 - red, 16x13” (for barn siding)
 - green, 16x8” (for grass)
 - light gray 16x9” (for mullions, wall shadow)
 - medium gray/brown, 16x8” (for stone wall)
 - white, 9x16” (for window, wall)
- 16x20" clear medium-weight upholstery vinyl – you can buy this at fabric stores; it is generally found near the vinyl picnic table coverings
- 18x22” very firm/non-stretchy interfacing, to be used as a stabilizer. Best choices are Pellon 910, heavy weight Shaping Aid, or Pellon 806 Stitch-N-Tear. If it stretches at all, it will not work.

- 1-1/2 yards of 12"-wide Lite Steam-a-Seam 2 or Pellon Wonder Under
- Embroidery thread (50 or 60 weight) in the colors you will use to thread-paint (I use Aurifil Cotton Mako 50 wt., or Mettler No. 60 fine embroidery cotton merc.) in white, yellow, brown, black, and several shades of gray and green. (If you are coming with a friend, you can buy a spool of each and share!) I recommend cotton thread, because it is usually much easier to adjust tension for thread sketching using it. If you only have synthetic thread, bring it, but make sure it is very light weight (50- or 60-weight).
- paper scissors and fabric scissors (sharp)
- seam ripper
- white fabric-marking pencil (Sewline and Bohin mechanical ones work best)
- pencil with soft lead
- Fine-tip Sharpie permanent pens, black and red
- masking tape and Scotch tape
- light box
- Sewing machine – must be in good working order, able to drop feed dogs, and have a free-motion or darning/embroidery foot.
- manual for your machine
- quilting straight pins
- Universal or Microtex needles, size 80/12 or 70/10
- extended surface for your sewing machine (if you have one)

Please e-mail me if you have any questions!



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Thread Sketching: Dragonfly

a workshop with Susan Brubaker Knapp

This is a good workshop for those who already have basic machine free-motion experience who want to expand their skills and do more with thread on the surface of a quilt. Using a simple drawing of a dragonfly, students learn how to:

- create line, color and texture with thread
- gain control and confidence when free-motion stitching
- make templates for the body
- stabilize the fabric surface
- choose the right threads and needles for thread sketching
- correct tension problems

SUPPLIES to bring:

- 18x18" cotton fabric for the background. I like to use batik because it is a bit heavier and it has a very tight weave, which provides more stability. Stay away from light-weight fabric.
- Scraps of fabric for dragonfly's head and body (several different shades of one color work best) that have a strong value contrast with your background fabric
- 5x18" Lite Steam-a-Seam 2 or your favorite fusible adhesive with at least one paper side
- 20x36" very firm/stiff interfacing, to be used as a stabilizer. Examples include Pellon 910 non-fusible "sew-in" interfacing, Pellon 806 (Stitch & Tear), or Heavy Weight Shaping Aid. It is better to choose an interfacing that is too heavy than one that is too light! If it stretches at all, it will not work.
- Cotton embroidery thread (50 or 60 weight) in the colors you will use to thread sketch. I use Aurifil Cotton Mako 50 wt., or Mettler No. 60 fine embroidery cotton merc. If you don't have cotton threads, bring what you have, but make sure it is a lightweight thread. Bring at least 3-4 small spools that contrast with your dragonfly fabrics. (See photos for an example.)
- paper scissors (sharp)
- fabric scissors and seam ripper



- masking tape and clear cellophane tape
- Mechanical chalk pencil (Sewline or Bohin) with lead that will show up on your background fabric. You will use this to trace the wings.
- light box/board (if you have one)
- Sewing machine – must be in good working order, and be able to drop feed dogs
- free-motion or darning/embroidery foot
- manual for your machine
- Universal or Microtex needles, size 80/12 or 70/10
- 10 straight quilting pins or safety pins
- extended surface for your sewing machine (if you have one)
- cotton batting, 18x18"
- backing fabric, 18x18"

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