

Susan Brubaker Knapp

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About me

I am a fiber artist, teacher, and host of “Quilting Arts TV.” Quilting started as my hobby, but has turned into a passion and a business. I teach classes at quilt guilds, at quilt festivals – and occasionally online — and have published patterns and books for my original quilt designs.



I love traditional hand quilting and needleturn appliqué, but have embraced innovative machine techniques. I started making “art quilts” — works of art executed in fabrics and fibers — in 2005. My quilts have won national as well as local awards, and have been exhibited at national and international venues. I have won seven Best of Show awards at three different quilting guilds, with six different quilts.

I am an experienced writer, and have worked in corporate communications and also as a page designer for The Charlotte Observer (Charlotte, N.C.) and The Herald-Leader (Lexington, Ky.). I grew up near Pittsburgh, Pa., and earned my B.A. in English at Allegheny College (Meadville, Pa.) and my M.A. in journalism at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I now live near Charlotte, N.C., with my husband, Rob, and two daughters.

Artist’s statement

Creating fiber art is my consuming passion. I am an artist who works in fabric and thread. I find great joy in creating works that draw people closer and invite them to savor color, texture and form. The art I create is my way of celebrating and documenting the deep mysteries of the world that are to be experienced only by close inspection of the miraculous details of nature.

While my core materials — cloth and thread — are those used in traditional quilting, I often employ substances such as fabric paints and dyes, Tyvek, Angelina

fibers, and water-soluble wax pastels, to transform the cloth. Nearly all of my work is realistic in style, and starts with original photographs of the subjects. I use two primary techniques – wholecloth painting, and fused applique – then heavily free-motion thread sketch the surface before quilting.

Highlights

Author of *Point, Click, Quilt: Turn Your Photos into Fabulous Fabric Art* (C&T, 2011), and *Appliqué Petal Party*, (C&T, 2009)

Featured on *The Quilt Show* with Alex Anderson and Ricky Tims, Episodes 901 and 1709; www.thequiltshow.com

Host of “Quilting Arts TV,” starting in 2014. Guest in Series 500 (2009-2010); Series 700 (2010-2011), Series 900 (2011-2012), and Series 1300 (2013-2014).

Frequent contributor to *Quilting Arts* magazine

Selected for the 2012, 2011, 2010 and 2009 *Quilting Arts Calendars*

Quilting Arts Workshop DVDs: *Master Machine Quilting: Free-motion Stitching and Thread Sketching* (2009), *Master Machine Stitching: Thread Sketching Beyond the Basics* (2010), *Dynamic Quilt Design: Paint Meets Stitch* (2011), *Fabulous Finishes* (2014), and *52 Free-Motion Quilting Motifs and Fillers* (2015).

Interviewed by Mark Lipinski for his *Creative Mojo* radio show, and by Pat Sloan for the *American Patchwork & Quilting Radio* show.

Featured in the following magazines and books: *Quilting Arts*, *Quilt*, *Machine Quilting Unlimited*, *American Quilter*, *Quilters Newsletter*, *QuiltArt Engagement Calendar 2012*, *Cloth Paper Scissors’ Studios*, *Modern Blocks: 101 Patchwork Projects + Quilts*, *SAQA’s Portfolios 16-20*, *Quilting Arts Gifts*, *Quilt Scene*, *Fons & Porter’s Easy Quilts*, *InStitches*, and *Patchwork Professional*.

Aurifil “Thread Expert”

International Quilt Association, VP for Public Service, 2011-2013

Susan Brubaker Knapp

PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS 2018-19



General information

I strive to provide professional instruction in a supportive, friendly atmosphere. I encourage students to push themselves beyond their comfort zones to learn new things and improve their skills, and to have fun doing it.

For engagements requiring more than four hours of travel, I require a minimum booking of one presentation and two six-hour workshops. For more information or to download my contract, go to www.blumoonriver.com.

Need to accommodate more than 20 students in a workshop? This is possible in some workshops for an additional fee. Please contact me to discuss it.

2018-19 prices:

Presentation: \$550

3-hour workshop: \$550

6-hour workshop: \$800

Note: Some classes have kit fees to cover some supplies that are not easy for students to gather on their own; fees vary depending on what organizers want included in the kit and how far the supplies need to be shipped.

Point, Click, Quilt!

A one-hour digital slide show and trunk show based on my book. This lecture focuses on tips for taking better photographs, and then turning them into art quilts. This is an inspirational and detailed look at my process: tracing the photo; enlarging the line drawing; using it to trace the fused applique pieces for the quilt; creating a positioning overlay; and then cutting, positioning and fusing the pieces before thread sketching and quilting.

The Artist in You

A one-hour digital slide show and trunk show. I describe my personal journey from that of a traditional quilter and pattern designer to an artist who makes both traditional quilts and art quilts. I start by discussing my work (both traditional and art quilts) and some of the techniques I use. The focus is on ways for traditional quilters to become more creative by embracing their own "inner artist."

Thread Sketch It!

A one-hour digital slide show and trunk show. I cover what thread sketching is (and isn't!), preparing your piece for thread sketching, stabilizers, types of threads and thread weights, sewing machine considerations, great tools, and how to add wonderful detail to your piece with thread, including color, line, pattern, texture, dimension and movement. I'll also address getting over your fear of trying free-motion stitching. This presentation covers much of what I wrote about in my series of six articles for *Quilting Arts* magazine in 2010, and in the two *Quilting Arts Workshop* DVDs on the subject I produced in 2009 and 2010.

Yes, You Can Do Needleturn Appliqué!

A one-hour digital slide show and trunk show. I walk you through my method of doing needleturn appliqué. I cover all the basics: fabric choice and preparation; several ways of making templates (or, better yet, working without templates at all!); creating positioning overlays; doing reverse appliqué; and stitching precise concave and convex points, curves, beautiful circles and bias vines. You'll learn about the little details and tools that make all the difference: knots (starting and stopping), threads, needles, pins, sand boards, and marking devices. My love and enthusiasm for needleturn appliqué is infectious... Those in your group who admire needleturn appliqué but are terrified to try may just decide to jump in!



Wholecloth Painting: Botanicals

Students will learn the basics of creating wholecloth painted quilts. Working with acrylic fabric paints, students create a small piece (choosing from several designs shown here). We will cover:

- * selecting the right photos for great results
- * which paints and fabrics to use and why
- * how to transfer your design to fabric
- * painting and blending techniques
- * quilting considerations

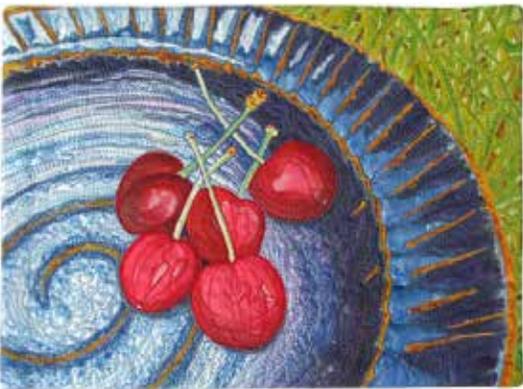
MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20

EXPERIENCE LEVEL: All

TIME: 6 hours

REQUIREMENTS: Access to water for paint cleanup. Table space for each student. Adequate lighting. Floors that can get messy, and can clean up with water. One iron and one ironing board.

KIT FEE: includes PDF fabric, set of three paintbrushes, paint, pattern and photograph.



MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20 **EXPERIENCE LEVEL:** All

TIME: 6 hours

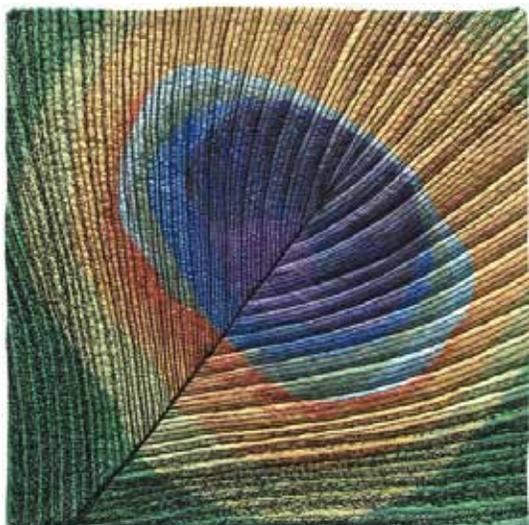
REQUIREMENTS: Access to water for paint cleanup. Table space for each student. Adequate lighting. Floors that can get messy, and can clean up with water.

Wholecloth Painting: Still Life

Students will learn the basics of creating wholecloth painted quilts based on photos. This project is featured in my 2011 Quilting Arts DVD "Dynamic Quilt Design: Paint Meets Stitch." Students will work from a line drawing and my photo to recreate the image using acrylic textile paints. We will cover:

- * selecting the right photos for great results
- * which paints and fabrics to use and why
- * how to transfer your design to fabric
- * painting and blending techniques
- * quilting considerations

KIT FEE: includes PDF fabric, set of paintbrushes, paint, pattern and photograph.



Paint and Stitch: Peacock Feather

Learn the basics of painting on fabric using my peacock feather design, then stitch the details with black thread. This design was featured on the cover of Quilting Arts magazine in 2010. We will cover:

- * transferring a design onto your background fabric
- * basic techniques of painting on fabric
- * thread sketching your piece with black thread
- * quilting considerations

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20

EXPERIENCE LEVEL: All

TIME: 6 hours or 3 hours

REQUIREMENTS: Access to outlets for sewing machines, table space for each student. Access to water for paint cleanup. Floors that can get messy (and clean up with water). Two ironing boards. Table space for each student.

KIT FEE: includes PDF fabric, paintbrushes, paint, and pattern.



Paint & Stitch (3 or more days)

Learn the basics of painting on fabric (two days) and threadsketching (one day) to make whole-cloth painted quilts. Working from original photographs, students use acrylic textile paints and threadsketching to bring them to life. Students begin two original projects, learning how to:

- * mix colors, shades and tints
- * transfer the design to fabric
- * paint and blend colors
- * create line, color and texture with thread
- * gain control and confidence when free-motion stitching
- * stabilize the fabric surface
- * choose the right threads and needles for thread sketching

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20 ■ **EXPERIENCE LEVEL: All** ■ **TIME: 3 or more days**

REQUIREMENTS: Access to outlets for sewing machines. Access to water for paint cleanup. Floors that can get messy (and clean up with water). Two ironing boards.

KIT FEE: includes PDF fabric, set of paintbrushes, paint, and pattern.



Wholecloth Painting from Original Photos (2 or more days)

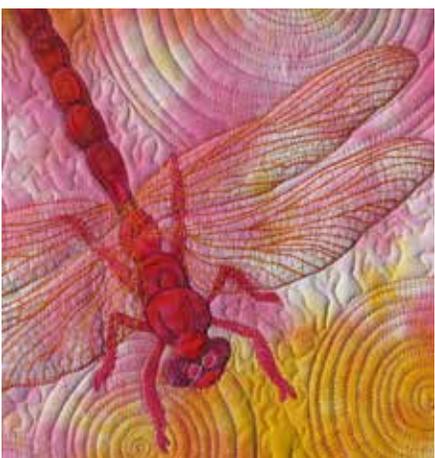
Learn the basics of painting on fabric to make wholecloth painted quilts. Working from original photographs, students use acrylic textile paints to recreate them on fabric. Students begin two original projects, learning how to:

- * select the right photos for great results
- * mix colors, shades and tints
- * choose paints and fabrics to use and why
- * transfer the design to fabric
- * paint and blend colors

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20 ■ **EXPERIENCE LEVEL: All** ■ **TIME: 2 or more days**

REQUIREMENTS: Table space for each student. Access to water for paint cleanup. Floors that can get messy (and clean up with water). Two ironing boards.

KIT FEE: includes PDF fabric, set of three paintbrushes, paint, and pattern.



Thread Sketching: Dragonfly

A workshop for those who already have basic free-motion machine quilting experience who want to expand their skills to create color and texture with thread. Using a line drawing of a dragonfly, students learn how to:

- * make templates for the body and create fusible pieces
- * stabilize the fabric surface
- * choose the right threads and needles for thread sketching
- * adjust tension for the correct stitch

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20

EXPERIENCE LEVEL: Intermediate

TIME: 6 hours

REQUIREMENTS: Table space for each student. Access to power outlets. Light boxes/light boards. Two ironing boards and irons.



Thread Sketching: Snowflakes

Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow! Whip up your very own flurry in this class, using thread, fabric and a tiny bit of paint. Kit fee includes interfacing, pattern and paint. You'll learn the basics of how to thread sketch, using my patterns for gorgeous, realistic looking snowflakes. We will cover:

- * tracing your design onto your background fabric
- * how to stabilize your piece to avoid draw-up
- * regulating your stitch for perfect tension
- * how to improve your control while stitching
- * quilting considerations

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20 ■ EXPERIENCE LEVEL: All ■ TIME: 3 or 6 hours
REQUIREMENTS: Several ironing boards, light boxes/light boards.
access to outlets for sewing machines, table space for each student.



Thread Sketching: Cripps Pink Apple

Learn how to add highlights and shadows, and blend colors using thread sketching to create a realistic apple. This is the most basic of my thread sketching classes. Using a simple apple pattern, students learn how to:

- * cut pieces from fusible adhesive and fuse them to the background
- * stabilize the fabric surface
- * choose the right threads and needles for thread sketching
- * adjust tension for the correct stitch
- * add color, highlights and shadows using thread

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20
EXPERIENCE LEVEL: Beginner to Intermediate
TIME: 3 hours
REQUIREMENTS: Table space for each student. Access to power outlets for sewing machines. Two ironing boards and irons.



Thread Sketching: Still Life with Three Fruits

Students learn the same skills as in the Cripps Pink Apple class (above), but the longer time (6-hours) permits students to get more practice. Students learn how to:

- * cut pieces from fusible adhesive and fuse them to the background
- * stabilize the fabric surface
- * choose the right threads and needles for thread sketching
- * adjust tension for the correct stitch
- * add color, highlights and shadows using thread

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20
EXPERIENCE LEVEL: Beginner to intermediate
TIME: 6 hours
REQUIREMENTS: Table space for each student. Access to power outlets for sewing machines. Two ironing boards and irons.



Thread Sketching: Crayons

In this class, students will create thread-sketched crayons on white fabric. This is a good class for those seeking greater control in their free-motion stitching. Students learn how to:

- * stabilize the fabric surface
- * choose the right threads and needles for threadsketching
- * adjust tension for the correct stitch
- * add color using thread
- * quilting considerations

MAX CLASS SIZE: 20 **EXPERIENCE LEVEL:** Intermediate

TIME: 3 hours or 6 hours

REQUIREMENTS: Table space for each student. Access to power outlets for sewing machines. Two irons and boards.



Start With a Photo: Round Red Barn

This workshop is designed to help you learn the skills you need to go home, take your favorite photo, and interpret it in fabric. 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 will 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 “sketch” on top of your fabric to add detail, color and texture.

MAX CLASS SIZE: 20

EXPERIENCE LEVEL: Intermediate

TIME: 6 hours

NOTE: This class is about 4-5 hours fusing, and 1-2 hours threadsketching.

REQUIREMENTS: Ironing boards, irons, and light boards. Access to outlets for sewing machines. Table space for each student. Each student must bring a machine able to drop feed dogs, with a free-motion foot.



Surface Design Madness

Come and experiment with some of the exciting new materials you can use in your quilts to create texture and color. I provide all the materials for a fee payable at the start of class. This is a fun, low stress way to try some new things. Students will learn techniques using the following materials:

- * fabric paint
- * Shiva paintstiks and rubbing plates
- * Caran d’Ache water-soluble crayons
- * rubber stamps
- * Angelina fibers
- * Textiva
- * Tyvek
- * Wonder Under (used as a paint transfer material)

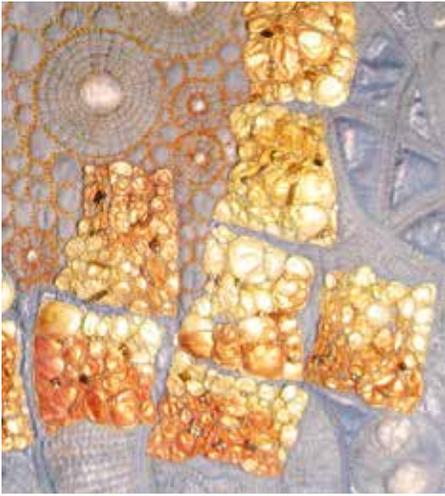
MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20

EXPERIENCE LEVEL: All

TIME: 3 hours or 6 hours (3-hour workshops may cover fewer materials than are listed, due to time constraints)

REQUIREMENTS: Access to outside space and power outlets when heating and burning materials. Access to water for paint cleanup. Two ironing boards. Table space for each student. Floors that can get messy, and can clean up with water.

KIT FEE: includes most materials



Tyvek: Paint, Melt, Stitch

Learn how to create fascinating texture and pattern while you create a small art quilt with pieces of melted Tyvek and stitched designs. Kit fee includes paint, Tyvek and foam brush. We will cover:

- * painting and melting Tyvek
- * creating an abstract design with Tyvek pieces
- * stitching on melted Tyvek
- * creating doodled, stitched designs for an interesting background
- * quilting considerations

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20
EXPERIENCE LEVEL: All
TIME: 6 hours
REQUIREMENTS: Access to outside space and power outlets when heating Tyvek. Extension cord for outside access. Access to water for paint cleanup. Floors that can get messy (and clean up with water). Two ironing boards. Table space for each student.



November Leaves

This class teaches the technique of stitching through Tyvek pieces, then heating the Tyvek so that it disintegrates in places to show the background fabric. Kit fee includes paint, Tyvek, and foam brush.

Topics covered include:

- * painting and stitching through Tyvek
- * creating a design using maple leaf shapes
- * heating stitched Tyvek
- * creating doodled, stitched designs for an interesting background
- * quilting considerations

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20
EXPERIENCE LEVEL: All
TIME: 6 hours or 3 hours
REQUIREMENTS: Access to outside space and power outlets when heating Tyvek. Extension cord for outside access. Access to water for paint cleanup. Floors that can get messy (and clean up with water). Two ironing boards. Two or more light boxes. Table space for each student.



Freestyle Embroidery

Turn a small piece of spectacular fabric – a special hand-dye, a batik, or a shibori piece from your stash – into an intricate freestyle embroidered masterpiece. You'll learn how to transform the surface of the fabric with simple embroidery stitches, while letting the beauty of the fabric shine. We will cover:

- * basic, simple embroidery stitches
- * analyzing your fabric to decide how to approach the embroidery
- * using different kinds of threads and flosses
- * quilting considerations

MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20
EXPERIENCE LEVEL: All
TIME: 6 hours or 3 hours
REQUIREMENTS: Good lighting (or individual table lights). Table space for each student. Two irons and ironing boards.



MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20

EXPERIENCE LEVEL: Beginner to intermediate

TIME: 3 hours or 6 hours

REQUIREMENTS: Access to power outlets. Each student must bring a machine able to drop feed dogs, and with a free-motion foot. Two irons and ironing boards.

Machine Quilting 101

Many beginner quilters have a bunch of quilt tops sitting in their sewing room that they are afraid to quilt. In this class, students learn the basics and gain confidence to go home, practice, and take on those quilt tops. In this class, students learn about:

- * pinning and basting
- * lighting, ergonomics and posture
- * exercises to reduce strain
- * the sewing surface
- * settings for your machine
- * the essential feet (free-motion/darning foot, and walking foot)
- * how to work with a big quilt
- * starting and stopping neatly
- * what to do if thread breaks or you run out of thread
- * thread, needle and batting basics
- * preparing a quilt for quilting (how to make the “quilt sandwich”)



MAXIMUM CLASS SIZE: 20

EXPERIENCE LEVEL: Beginner to intermediate

TIME: 6 hours

REQUIREMENTS: Two irons and ironing boards. Good lighting or individual lights brought by students. Table space for each student.

Needleturn Appliqué

Learn the fine art of needleturn applique step by step. If you've never done needleturn applique and are intimidated and afraid to try, this workshop is for you. Using my “Spring Valentine” pattern, which has all the shapes and techniques beginner appliquers need to learn, we will cover:

- * marking and pinning
- * concave curves and points
- * convex curves and points
- * reverse applique
- * bias stems
- * small and medium circles
- * straight lines
- * making a positioning overlay
- * making pattern templates