

HOW TO MAKE PHOTO QUILTS WITH QUILTING ARTS:

6 Image Transfer Techniques for Your Art Quilts



1 SCANNING THE HORIZON
MARIE ROPER

2 EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY
MARY ANN TIPPLE

3 SCAN, PRINT, STAMP, & STITCH
PAMELA PRICE KLEBAUM

4 TAPPING INTO IMAGE TRANSFERS
LESLEY RILEY

5 DIGITAL PLAYTIME
DIANE DORAN

6 OPTIONS FOR IMAGERY
GINNY ECKLEY

Go to any quilt show and you'll find that quilts incorporating photographs are very popular. Nowadays, it's a snap to



scan your favorite photos into your computer, then print them onto fabric that can easily be incorporated into a quilt. But how do you make your photo quilt stand out from the crowd?

In this free eBook, you'll discover a number of creative techniques and tips for artfully incorporating images into your quilts. Are you planning a memory quilt and want to give your photographs or images a vintage look? Try Lesley Riley's easy and fun technique for transferring images to fabric. Or maybe you'd like to design and create your very own colorful fabrics but don't want to invest in the cost of painting or dyeing supplies. Diane Doran shows that it's a cinch to digitally alter images to create colorful cloth by simply using your home computer and printer.

Or perhaps you'd like to make an abstract quilt depicting an urban or countryside scene, but don't know where to begin. Inspired by the grassy hillsides of her British homeland, Marie Roper shares her methods for creating unique, embellished landscape pieces. Pamela Price Klebaum illustrates a playful approach to enhancing your digital fabrics with stamps to create unique quilted imagery, while Mary Anne Tipple explores how to incorporate large-scale photographs into your quilts. Finally, Ginny Eckley gives tips on several surface design techniques, including inkjet printing on pretreated fabric to achieve sharp, crisp images.

So get out your box of favorite photographs and get ready to play!

Happy creating,

Pokey

POKEY BOLTON
Editorial Director

Quilting Arts

MAGAZINE®

HOW TO MAKE PHOTO
QUILTS WITH QUILTING ARTS:
6 IMAGE TRANSFER
TECHNIQUES FOR
YOUR ART QUILTS
from QUILTING ARTS

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QUILTING ARTS MAGAZINE® explores *ideas*, textiles, and techniques related to *embellished and contemporary art quilting*. Inside, you'll find design inspiration, *step-by-step* directions, gorgeous photography, and *motivation* for developing your personal style, at all skill levels.

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scanning the HORIZON

incorporating digital images
into landscape-
inspired design

Herefordshire, where I live, is a beautiful county on the border of Wales and England. The land that straddles the two countries—with distant hills, soft green valleys, and craggy outcrops of rock—enchants me, most of all when the gentle light of spring sunshine filters through the sparkling air. Gold, peach, and myriad soft greens set off by the greys and lilac of the far away hills; these colors lift the spirits after the winter.

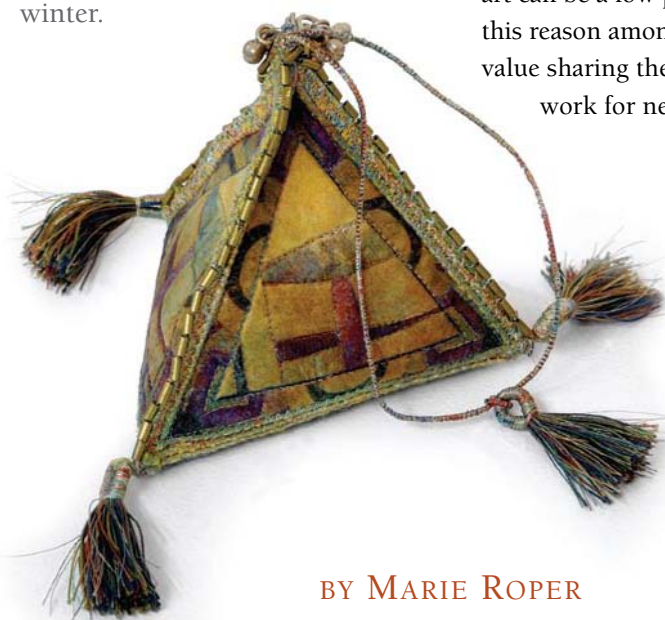


These delicate pyramid pieces were inspired by photographs Marie had taken of the Herefordshire landscape.

Teaching embroidery and patchwork, as well as creative computing at several levels up to Diploma level City & Guilds, is quite demanding, and I find that making time for my art can be a low priority at times. For this reason amongst many others, I value sharing the challenge of making work for new exhibitions

with my fellow members of the exhibiting group SiX. We usually work independently because we are all so busy but we love to get together occasionally to talk about what we are doing and eat cake.

My method of working has two strands: First I dye and collect many fabrics, inspired by the colors and textures of



BY MARIE ROPER



the countryside where I walk with my husband as often as possible. Then I start to cut and piece the fabrics together, making complex fabrics with which to work, a technique I learned in a two-week class with Nancy Crow. This process is the equivalent to sketching. After time spent walking and observing, I bring back mental and photographic images that I then play with in the studio, sometimes leading to a finished top but not always. Some are left at this stage as complex fabrics to be incorporated in later projects when they become treasures of unexpected color combinations and delightful shapes. I have huge stashes of complex fabrics that I treasure.

On finished tops, my quilting is done mainly by machine, inspired by the marks and tracks left by the use of the land by man; ploughing patterns, sheep walks, fencing, and forestry all leave signs on the landscape, which I collect as inspiration. Hand stitching is then added to increase texture and add subtle touches of color.

The second strand of my work is to use these fabrics and pieces to incorporate into my digital work. I photograph or scan them and in conjunction with landscape photos and my artwork inspired by the landscape, creating images on my computer to use with my fabrics in different ways.

I use Paint Shop Pro® 7, 8, and 9 software to produce complex images, layering scanned, pieced work, and artwork with photos to extend the range of images. Some of this work goes into my books, some becomes part of my stitched work, working alongside my dyed and collected fabrics or on its own in small items.



Marie found an old, dilapidated map among her late father's belongings and realized its potential for beauty. She first dyed cotton scrim and other fabrics, distorted them to give an aged effect, then applied them to the map with gesso. When dry, the first layer was painted with transparent acrylics, then the gesso was sanded away to reveal some of the town images beneath. Afterwards, digital images printed on fabric and scraps of artwork were added. Machine and hand stitched.

I have several favorite methods for adding digital images to fabric:

- Direct printing onto pre-prepared fabric sheets.
- T-shirt transfer prints (I have sourced some in England that are so soft and fine that the texture of silk can be detected through them).
- Printing onto Tissutex, tissue, or paper, which is then bonded onto fabric using fusible web.

Tissutex, also known as Abaca paper, is a tissue paper that has strength when wet, making coloring it with paint or dye much easier. You can also use the tissue from the inside of new shoes or that comes wrapped around garments. Both of them are easy to use, but you need to support the tissue by affixing it to ordinary paper to pass it through the printer.

DIRECTIONS

1. Using a glue stick, apply glue to the paper support, then smooth the tissue onto it.

2. Trim the tissue to size if it overhangs the support, then seal the leading edge with masking tape to insure it doesn't kick up under the printer head.
3. Make your print.
4. Generally I would crumple the tissue and perhaps rub it with a small amount of wax after printing and before bonding. This creates a much stronger and softer fabric that can withstand an amazing amount of manipulation (rubbing it with a perfumed candle is pleasing as the scent lasts quite a while).
5. When the tissue is dry, carefully remove it from the support and iron the fusible web onto the back of the image.
6. Apply your image to the supporting fabric and now treat the tissue as you would any fabric.

Note: I use an Epson printer with DURABrite Ultra® inks for longevity.

Note: It is good to experiment on many kinds of paper for printing from the computer. There are many prepared papers to use, but sometimes it is good to try out some that aren't meant for digital printing.

- Try printing on old bits of paper that may have accidental brush marks on them.
- Try brown paper. It takes the print in a very unusual way, looking immediately old and interesting with the faded bits of old paint making shadowy marks. I have used brown parcel paper under my artwork to protect the work surface and the resulting accidental marks are fascinating.

It is sometimes the unintended bits that really excite me, not unlike my complex fabrics. That is serendipity, together with the importance of recognizing the potential of these happy accidents.

The pieces of work shown here are mainly hand-dyed, with some commercial and digitally printed fabrics. They are machine pieced and machine quilted with hand stitching added to further embellish or emphasize the lines. ♦

To see more of Marie's work, visit www.sixart.co.uk/Marie_Roper.htm.

RESOURCES

TISSUTEX/ABACA PAPER

- meinketoy.com
- store.quiltingdaily.com

HEAT-TRANSFERABLE PAPER

- craftycomputerpaper.co.uk
- artvango.co.uk



Above: "Offa's Landscape" 39" x 39" • A photograph of Offa's Dyke (an ancient Stone Age ruin that runs the length of the border between Wales and England) was scanned into the computer. The digital design was printed in different scales on Tissutex and then bonded to silk. Machine pieced and quilted.

Right: Detail from "Offa's Landscape"



EVERY PICTURE TELLS A story

large-scale photograph quilts

BY MARY ANN TIPPLE

ADAPTED FROM
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My mother and aunt sat down one day and went through a stack of old photos, sorting out who was who. Eventually they had a stack they threw away! But not for long; I retrieved them and added to them with finds from flea markets, garage sales, and antique malls. My ancestors, real and “adopted,” have populated my art ever since.

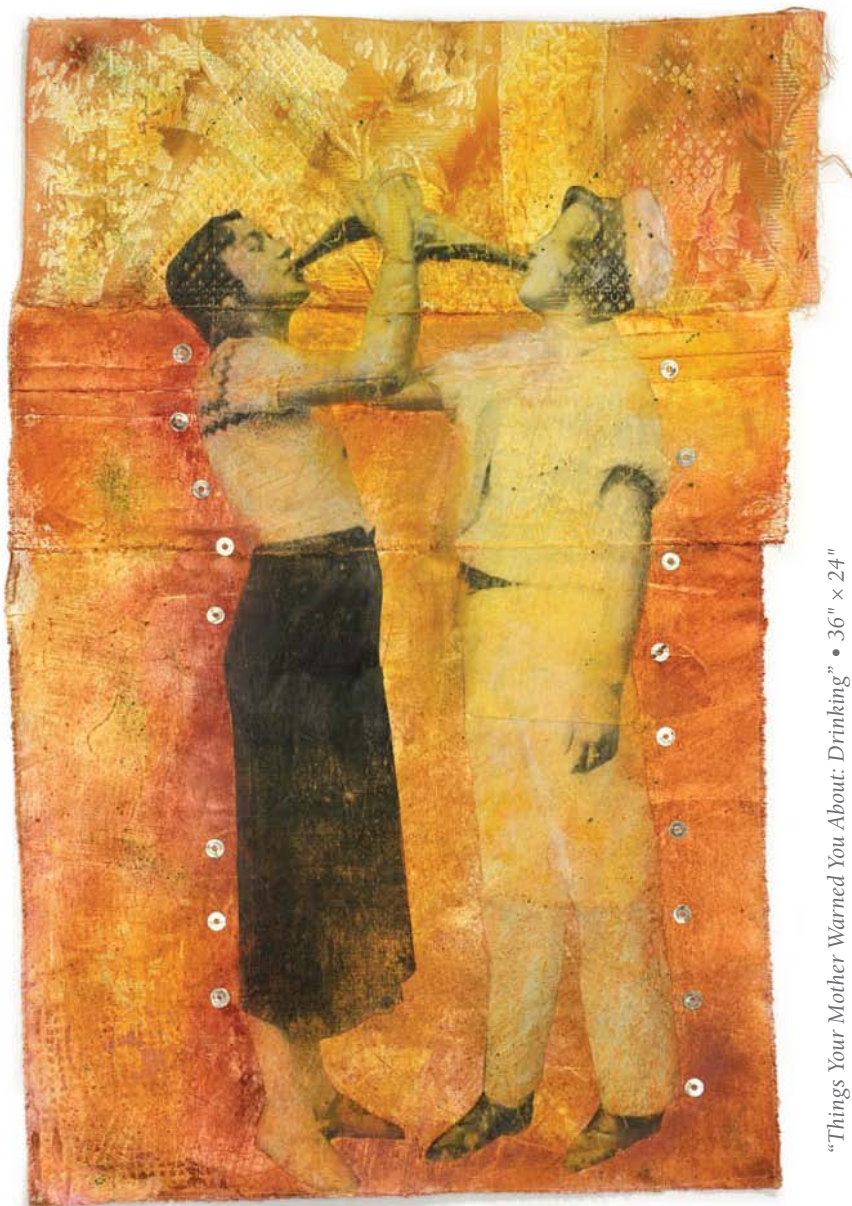
Recently I found an album of photos my mother took on a vacation with her friends in the late '30s. They had a good time documenting all their adventures. As I looked through the album, I realized these pictures revealed all the things my mother had warned me against: drinking, smoking, fast boys, and fast cars. From these photos, a series of art quilts was born.

First, I photocopied the photos and worked out a series in my sketchbook. I try to be creative in thinking about what I can add to the photo to tell a story about the subject. With an “adopted” relative, I make up a name and history for the person.

When seeking out photographs, I recommend looking for compelling faces or poses that suggest a story. Consider cropping in on a face, enlarging certain features and overlaying them, or contemplate

cropping off parts of the photo. Enlarging images can bring more meaning to the face. Play with composition by shifting the photo

around your picture plane, maybe reversing it or using it twice, large and small. Always be on the lookout for pictures from the same era; add a



“Things Your Mother Warned You About: Drinking” • 36" × 24"

boyfriend, child, pet, or house to the story. Sometimes researching a subject or time period on the Internet can add to the story or lead to an unexpected twist for the tale. I also come up with a color scheme for the work, though that sometimes changes as the work progresses.

I use cotton duck for the background. I am partial to the off-white, loden green, and pumpkin colors, but black or white can work just as well. I am always on the lookout for scraps of textured fabric, lace curtains, antique clothing, and quilt pieces at flea markets. The remnant bins at fabric stores are a good source for home decorator fabrics.

"Things Your Mother Warned You About: Fast Boys, Fast Cars" • 30½" × 28½"



DIRECTIONS

PREPARING THE PHOTOS

1. Scan the photos. Most of the photos I use are 2" × 3", so I scan them at 1,200 dpi and then drop them down to 300 dpi without re-sampling the size in Photoshop®. This leaves me enough pixels to enlarge the photo even more. Many office supply or quick print shops will scan and enlarge photos for you, or you can enlarge them on a copier.
2. Print the photos on an 11" × 17" black-and-white toner copier and

tile the copies so you can piece them back together. If they don't line up, it just adds to the funky, off-kilter look.

Note: *Your prints have to be toner copies; inkjet prints can't be worked into the surface with gel medium.*

PREPARING THE FABRIC

1. Rip the cotton duck fabric into pieces and sew it back together so you have funky edges and strings hanging off.

Next is my favorite part: painting. I'm open to any method.

2. Randomly throw some white paint onto the fabric. Scrape the paint on with a plastic putty knife or squirt it on with a syringe. Be patient and let it dry thoroughly.
3. Add a wash of white paint and gel medium to the whole surface and allow it to dry again.
4. Now add glazes of color; I use Golden® fluid colors and acrylic inks. I work the surface with paper towels and a water sprayer, letting the color dry a bit and then taking

MATERIALS

- Cotton duck fabric
- Toner copies of photograph
- Acrylic paints, inks, and glazes (white and various colors)
- Paintbrushes
- Gel medium
- Various embellishments
- Paper towels
- Spray bottle
- Sewing machine and thread

the color back to make the surface look antique. The spots where the white paint was applied will stand out and add to the texture—a little improvisational surprise.

5. At this point, add lace and other antique pieces if they are going under the photo. Use gel medium to glue them down and let everything dry.

ADDING THE PHOTOS

1. Now it is time to prepare your copies. You can trim them with scissors or you can tear the paper around them for a rougher look.
2. Pour gel medium onto your duck fabric, brush it into the fabric, and then add the copies, adding more medium on top. Rub the copies into the fabric using your hands until the paper starts to meld into the fabric. Keep adding your copies until you have your photo reassembled. While the gel medium is still wet, add another glaze of color but keep it light so the photo shows through.

Note: If you choose to pull the color back by spritzing with water and lightly rubbing with paper towels, make sure your paper towel is sturdy enough that it doesn't rub off on the photo.

3. After everything is dry, I evaluate the layout. It is at this point that you might:
 - Add other papers, newspaper, sheet music, sewing patterns, pieces of antique fabric, or even old pieces of clothing.
 - Add more color or rub the piece with paint sticks, buffing them into the fabric for another layer of color.



Here, Mary Ann stands in front of her photograph quilt, which was juried into Quilt National 2007.

"My dad served in New Guinea during World War II. When asked what he did, he said he built hospitals in the jungle. After he died, we discovered that he had been awarded the Bronze Star. He never talked about the war. How many stories of bravery remain sealed away? How much was sacrificed so that we can live in freedom?"

- Sprinkle with ink or paint, adding drips and splotches.

When you are satisfied, it is time to add the backing.

ADDING THE BACKING

1. Cut another piece of cotton duck slightly smaller than the front piece so it doesn't show from the front. I add a rod pocket to the backing first, then sew the backing to the front. Sew with matching thread or invisible thread, stitching around the photo with contrasting thread if you want. Be sure to avoid the rod pocket. The fabric will be stiff

and tricky to maneuver through your machine, but it is possible; rolling the fabric helps.

2. Once the stitching is complete, add buttons, washers, and any other chunky surface decorations.
3. Insert a piece of lath in the rod pocket and add holes in the ends of the lath so you can hang the quilt. 🌟

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FEBRUARY/MARCH 2009

SCAN, print, STAMP, & stitch

BY PAMELA PRICE KLEBAUM

one person's debris is

another's art



"Magnolia
Leaves Redux"
12" x 12"

“DETRITUS” is a word that has always intrigued me. Technically, detritus is loose fragments that have been worn away from rock. Generally, it is leftovers, debris. But who decides that something is debris? It seems that one person's debris is another's...art.

It all started with a run in the park with my black Lab puppy. We came upon some young magnolia trees that had produced and dropped some stunning leaves, a subdued array of hues, shiny and leathery. I gathered them up, sad that I could only find four. As an art student, I have learned that one of art's mantras is the power of odd, not even, numbers.

I envisioned creating a small quilt that would incorporate printouts of my scanned leaves (manipulated in Photoshop), but I wasn't sure how it would come together. After a bit of experimentation, I created elements that evolved into a satisfying piece. In addition to incorporating various digital leaf images (printed on a variety of inkjet fabric sheets), the piece also includes fabric stamped with a similar motif, plus quilting and embroidery that highlight and enhance the leaf design.

DIRECTIONS

DIGITAL PLAY

1. Scan your treasures. I scanned the magnolia leaves leaving space for a fifth (phantom) leaf.
2. Play with your image in Photoshop. I was intrigued by the interplay of the curved shape of the leaves as they intersected with the linear veins. I cropped the image closely to highlight that interplay.
3. Play with color combinations. I chose a variation of my beloved complementary colors, copper and turquoise. I also used the layering and opacity tools in Photoshop and produced this result (see top left image on the next page), which struck me as playful and happy.

More digital play produced another color variation (see bottom left image on the next page), which might be good for printing on fabric, but it seemed too dark for what I had begun to envision. I tweaked the image more (see right image on the next page), and it looked like a family of leaves.

FROM COMPUTER TO FABRIC

1. Once you have created a few images that appeal to you, print them on fabric to see how they'll look. I printed my two favorite images, one on cotton and the other on silk. The printed fabric was less vibrant than the image on my computer screen, certainly not strong enough to impart the playful, colorful image I had imagined would be the focal point of my piece. I set aside my cotton and silk printouts and continued experimenting.
2. Print your design on some ExtravOrganza. I did this thinking that if I layered it over the silk piece, the effect would yield a more vibrant image. I was wrong—the result was rather ethereal, but it was a nice unexpected result.
3. Determine whether you wish to layer your printed ExtravOrganza design on one (or both) of your previously printed fabrics. Using Mistyfuse, fuse the layers together. I fused my ExtravOrganza piece on top of my silk piece and left the cotton piece as it was (it had slightly more saturated colors).
4. Select your favorite portions of each printed piece, cut them out,

and stitch them together to make the focal point of your piece. I cut a square from the silk/organza piece, and I cut two strips from the cotton piece. I stitched the cotton strips to opposite sides of the square piece.

STAMPING AND FINISHING

1. For added interest, carve a stamp with an interpretation of your image. I carved the magnolia leaves, using my Speedball linoleum cutters and the buttery Mastercarve Artist Carving Blocks.
2. Select a color for stamping the image and stamp it onto a clean piece of fabric. I chose a chocolate

MATERIALS

- Leaves
- Computer and scanner
- Photoshop®, or other photo-editing software
- Color Plus® inkjet fabric sheets, 8½" × 11" (1 sheet of cotton twill, 1 sheet of silk satin)
- 1 sheet of ExtravOrganza by Jacquard®
- Mistyfuse™ fusible webbing
- Staedtler® Mastercarve® artist carving blocks
- Speedball® linoleum cutters
- Textile paint (I used brown Jacquard paint.)
- Cotton fabric for border
- Skeleton leaves
- Acrylic paint, diluted with water
- Foam brush, small
- #5 perle cotton and embroidery needle

Optional

- Plexiglas®

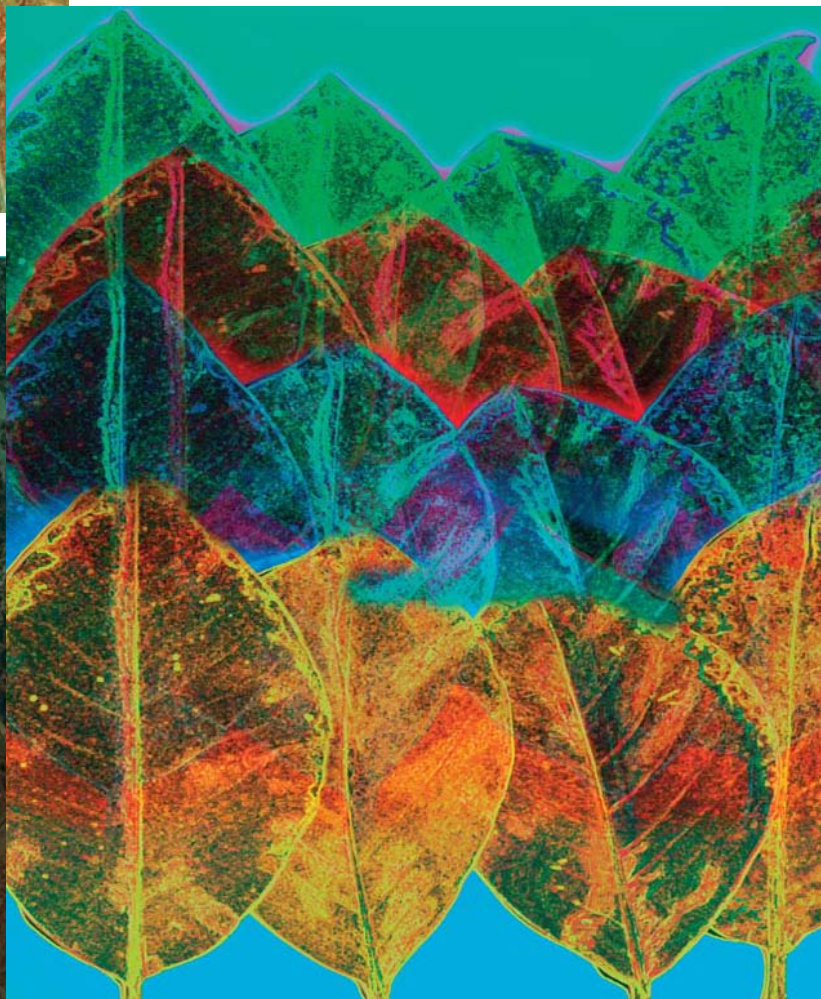
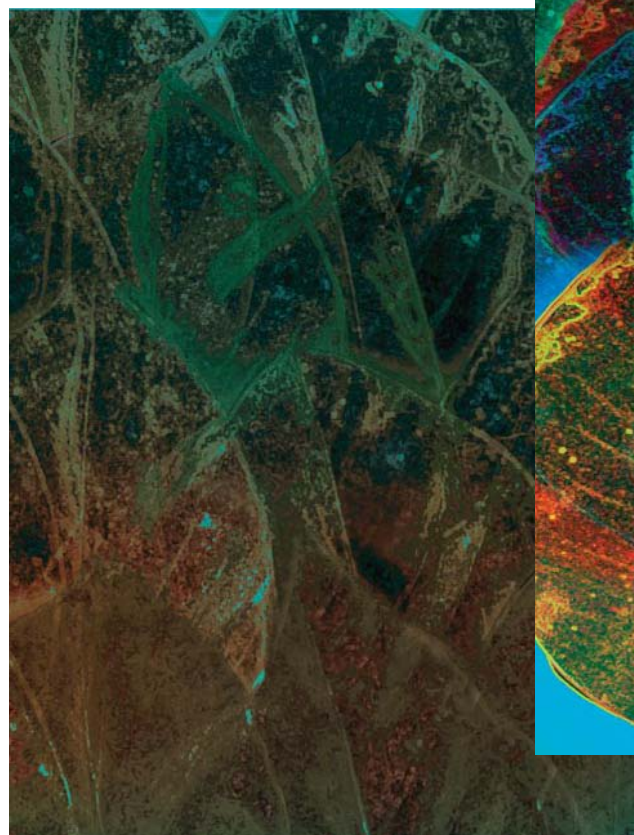


brown textile paint and stamped onto a pale azure blue solid, leaving room between the stamped pattern for quilting some magnolia leaf shapes and to provide a place for the eye to rest.

3. Cut strips from your stamped fabric and sew them to the top and bottom of your piece to create a nice border.
4. Add some quilting, highlighting the lines of

your image. I quilted the magnolia leaves, real and imagined.

5. Dig through your stash if you feel you need to add depth. My piece seemed to lack a focal point. I stared at my stash closet and remembered some skeleton leaves I had purchased months ago. I painted three leaves with diluted acrylics, two in my favorite blue, one in pale green.
6. Attach your additional fabrics or fibers as desired. I used Mistyfuse to affix the leaves to the piece, using the silk setting on my iron.



7. Use hand stitching to highlight your focal point. To bring the leaves forward, I outlined them with a running stitch using #5 perle cotton.
8. Finish your piece as you desire. I added a backing and binding. Then I mounted my 12" × 12" quilt on Plexiglas®.

Now I have a sweet homage to my runs in the park with my puppy and a testament to my new adage that one person's detritus is another person's art! ♦

To see more of Pamela's work, visit pamprice.blogspot.com.



TAPPING INTO image TRANSFERS

ADAPTED FROM
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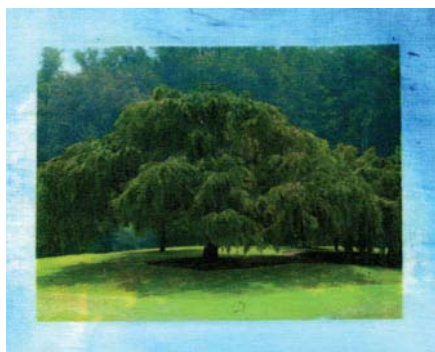
BY LESLEY RILEY

I began transferring images to fabric before the days of color printers and home computers. I marvel at the technology we now have at our fingertips—and the many choices we have to get a photo onto fabric. A transfer occurs when you take a photo printed on one surface and move it to another. In the Summer 2005 issue of CLOTH PAPER SCISSORS, I shared my favorite transfer methods for images printed on inkjet printers. Since then I have discovered a new way to transfer images that is not only easy, but also permanent and washable.

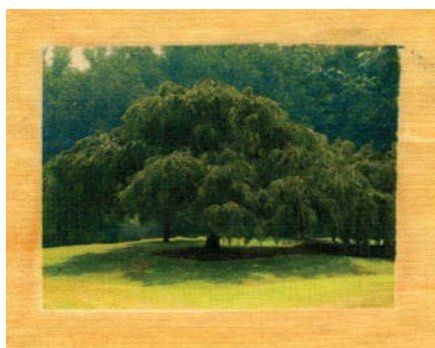
Transfer Artist Paper™ or TAP™ is the latest technology in iron-on transfer paper. What makes this transfer paper different and better than others? The inks combine with the polymer coating on the paper and, when heated, they fuse into the fabric and become a part of it. Other transfers sit on the surface and will peel, fade, and wear away over time or with repeated washing. TAP works on cotton and blends, silk, polyester, paper, leather, and more.

“Art School” • 24" × 16"

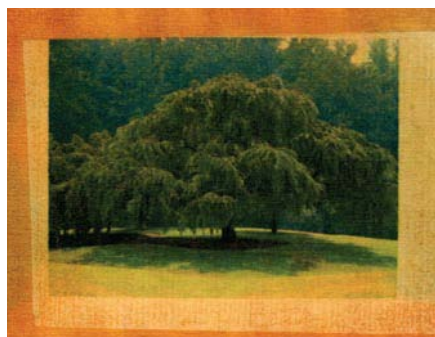




Trimmed TAP transfer on painted fabric.



Trimmed TAP transfer painted after transferring.



Untrimmed TAP transfer. Paint is absorbed differently in areas where the clear polymer has been transferred.



As with any transfer, you must print or write in reverse in order for it to read correctly after transferring.

BEYOND BASIC IRON-ON TRANSFER

DRAW & PAINT

TAP has been formulated to accept drawings or designs made with any soft drawing material. I'm sure you have a stash of markers and crayons or even some oil pastels. You can do your own drawings right on TAP and transfer them to fabric. Imagine a charcoal drawing that is permanent on fabric. You can also draw directly onto a printed image before transferring it.

Fluid acrylic paints and inks will transfer as well. I have used Tsukineko® and Ranger pigment inks, watercolor and fluid acrylic paints, and even thicker paints like Claudine Hellmuth Studio Paint from Ranger. Thicker applications of acrylic paint react to the heat of the iron and interfere with the bonding of the polymer coating on the paper, producing inconsistent results. Acrylic paint transfers sit on the surface and do not fuse into the fabric. If the paint application is too thick, it will peel right off. I'm still experimenting and trying to push the limits as far as thicker application goes.

PAINT OVER TAP TRANSFERS

Because a TAP transfer encases inkjet inks in polymer and fuses them into the fabric, your transfers are impervious to water. Images printed onto TAP with both dye-based and pigment inks can be painted over either before or after transfer. The printer inks will not bleed or run.

If you do paint over your image after transfer, there will be a difference in the paint absorption in the areas where the unprinted polymer transferred to the fabric, so be sure to trim away any excess white areas when possible. (See the examples at left.) I prefer to paint my fabric first and then do the transfer, but there is an occasional need to paint after the transfer has been done, so I always trim it before transferring.

scrap & scratch FABRIC

TAP SCRAPS Save all the colored scraps you get when you cut out your TAP images. Always store all printed TAP in a resealable plastic bag. Layer and overlap the scraps to create a random collage of TAP scraps that can then be ironed onto fabric to create fun and interesting "new" fabric. You can do it blindly, layering them face-down onto the fabric you will be ironing onto. If you want a more controlled randomness, layer the scraps face-up on a sheet of copy paper, and then place your fabric on top of the scraps and iron.

TAP SCRATCH Every time you scratch a printed image, you create colored bits of inked polymer I call TAP scratch. I save these in a little leftover shaker-top glitter jar for sprinkling and ironing onto fabric for decorative effects.

Note: Use parchment paper between the iron and the TAP scratch.

LAYER & OVERLAP

After transferring, you can iron directly onto the image without an overlay sheet, so you can add additional images to your quilt or project without worrying about damaging images you have already transferred. This opens up design possibilities.

“Art School” (shown on page 13) is a wholecloth quilt with 11 TAP transfers. Each image was transferred individually, but the central chair image was ironed right on top of the other photos.

In “Grace,” the cemetery angel sample, the angel and scroll images were transferred at the same time. When you arrange the printed images to overlap one another, whatever image is on “top” or closest to the

fabric will block out whatever is underneath it. I trimmed off all of the excess white areas of the scroll before layering it on top of the angel. The black scroll blocks a portion of the angel’s wing.

Because I could not cut all the white areas from around the letters in the word “Grace,” I transferred it after the other two images were transferred. Because any white (unprinted) areas on the TAP will transfer as transparent, you don’t have to worry about trimming them away if the transfer is done on top of an already transferred image.

In the “Easter Bonnet” sample on the next page, all of the images were transferred at the same time. I painted a sheet of TAP with Golden® fluid acrylic and used Portfolio Series® oil pastels to create the lawn area. On a separate sheet of TAP, I printed a photo and some bird ephemera. The girl and birds were trimmed of excess white areas. I used a glue stick to tack those images in place on the painted background, flipped it over, and ironed the composition onto fabric.

Keep in mind TAP transfers are transparent to some extent. The color or design of the base fabric or image you are transferring onto will affect the color of the transfer. The brightest, clearest transfers are the result of transferring onto a white surface.

DISTRESS & SCRATCH

If you’re a fan of lost and imperfect edges, you can just scratch away



the edges of the TAP images before transferring. I use my fingernail and, for finer detail lines, I use any pointed or sharp tool. Dried out ballpoint pens are great for this.

WRITE RIGHT

By now you are probably thinking, “Hey, I can write on this stuff.” Well, yes and no. If you can mirror-write like Leonardo da Vinci did, you will have no problem. But as with any transfer, you have to print or write in reverse in order for it to read correctly after transferring. So, the easiest way to transfer text is to print it in reverse and then transfer it. But with a little patience and ingenuity, and maybe a light box, you can write over or scratch out a few words in a printed image. (See the word “tree” in the example on the previous page.) Here are three ways to do it:

- Write the text on some scrap paper and then slowly write or scratch in reverse, referring to the original.
- Print text on regular copy paper, flip it over, and place the printed TAP over it. Use a light box (or

RESOURCE

TRANSFER ARTIST PAPER (TAP)
transferartist.com

tips

- When ironing to a fabric that cannot withstand high heat, choose a setting appropriate to the fabric and iron for a longer period of time. Peel back a corner every so often to see when the transfer is complete.
- Use a pressing cloth, paper towel, or parchment paper between the transfer and the iron.
- Trim any extraneous white areas around the image before you transfer it to avoid unnecessary transfer of the polymer coating to your fabric.

window) to trace the words directly onto the printed TAP image.

- Using your photo-editing software, add the reverse or mirror-image

text directly onto the image before printing. After printing and before transferring, scratch away the

printed word. The result will be white text on the colored image. ♦

To see more of Lesley's work, visit lesleyriley.com.

"Easter Bonnet"



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JUNE/JULY 2009

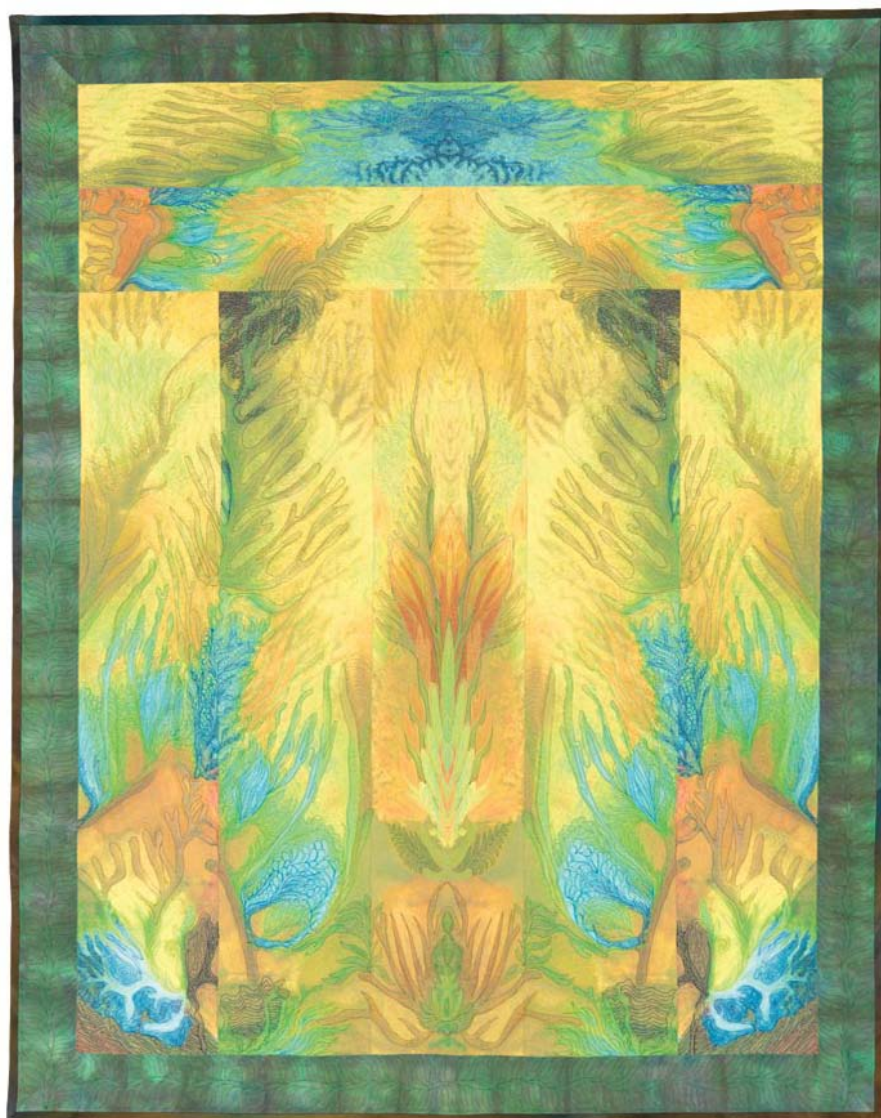
DIGITAL playtime

Create colorful fabrics with your computer

BY DIANE DORAN

As a longtime crafter and sewer with no formal art training, it didn't occur to me that different paints applied to different types of papers would provide a variety of interesting effects. When my children were in preschool, they'd come home every day with fabulous new creations, joyously and freely coated with tempera paint. When I looked at these works of art very closely, I was fascinated by the separation of color that often occurred. This led me to experiment with an assortment of paints and papers and a mix of techniques used by stampers and other paper crafters. Inspired by the results, I challenged myself to get the same results on fabric.

I had dabbled with paints on fabric on many occasions, but found fabric paints changed the hand of the fabric and did not work well with the heavy quilting that I so love to do. The solution I came up with was to paint on paper and then scan the results into the computer at a very high resolution. By manipulating the scanned image and then printing it on fabric, I can have the best of both worlds.



"Grotto" • 52½" × 41½"

You can yield fascinating results ripe with possibility for transfer to fabric using inexpensive art supplies you probably already have on hand.

Unlike monotyping, where what you see is what you get, my

prints/"paintings" are just a jumping-off point. The pattern is my primary focus, and I can change the scale and color endlessly on the computer. Many of the patterns that fascinate me are on a very tiny scale—

perhaps all contained within an area measuring 2" × 2", or less. By scanning these designs at a high resolution—as much as 1,200 dpi—I can produce a result that's more accessible to the viewer. If the design is still not large enough, I can continue to enlarge it, using my photo-manipulation software. Since the designs themselves are abstract, losing some of the detail is not a big concern.

TEMPERA AND ACRYLIC PAINTS

Tempera and acrylic paints have a thicker texture that is well-suited to creating distinct patterning. Both types of paint can be used on freezer paper, inexpensive drawing paper, overhead transparencies, and sandwich wrap. Keep in mind that the thicker texture may mean that some of your pieces will take longer to dry before they can be scanned into the computer. This is especially true for paints applied to smooth surfaces such as transparencies. When scanned at a high resolution, the texture of the

paper will also be apparent, adding another layer of interest.

Note: When using acrylic or tempera paints, I make an effort not to over-mix the paint on the paper in order to achieve more separation between the colors and thus more distinct patterning.

I dabbed tempera paint onto the shiny side of freezer paper, folded it in half, pressed it together, and then pulled it apart. This resulted in beautiful organic shapes. (Photo 1)

When the same technique is used on cotton fabric with thick textile paint, the result is very different. The paint wicks through the fabric and, though still interesting, the design loses its crisp patterning. (Photo 2)

For my purposes, using the freezer-paper method (and then scanning and printing the design onto fabric) works far better than using the direct-to-fabric technique of the second example.

WATER-BASED MARKERS

Try using water-based washable markers on watercolor paper. Scribble, spritz with water, and watch the magic happen. If the paper curls up, once it's dry it can be pressed in a heavy book overnight to flatten. Not pleased with the results? Repeat the process, or use your art as a layer within the photo-manipulation software of your choice. Different brands of markers, and sometimes even different colors of markers, react differently when spritzed with water, so try experimenting to see what different effects can be produced. (Photo 3)

You can use the same technique on inexpensive cardstock (rather than



Photo 1

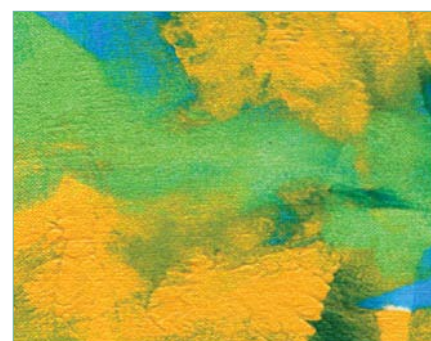


Photo 2



Photo 3

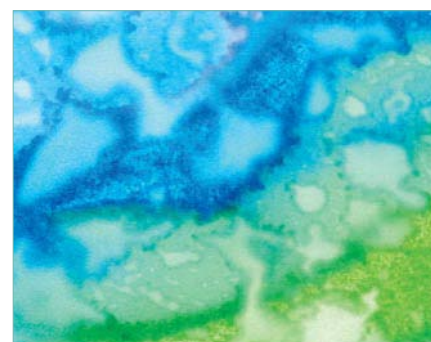


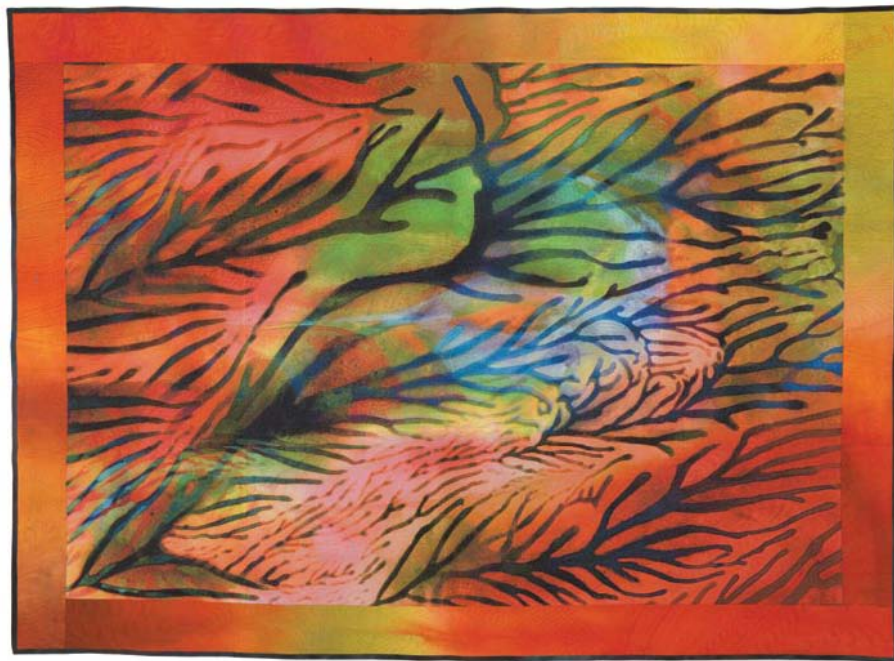
Photo 4

paper). Notice how the ink creates interesting pools of color. (Photo 4)

OPTIONS

- Duplicating the image repeatedly could result in a border print or a kaleidoscopic effect. (Right)
- Scanning paintings is a terrific way to achieve a more painterly look when creating digital collages using a variety of image types.
- Paintings that have less patterning can be used to create wonderful backgrounds.





"Under the Rainbow" • 41¾" × 56½"

WATERCOLOR PAINTS

How about children's watercolor paints on the same types of paper? I love the textured look created with watercolor paints on watercolor paper. (Photo 5)

INK PADS

Borrowing from my stash of rubber-stamping supplies, I swiped pads of pigment inks randomly onto cardstock. Though perhaps not a composition in and of itself, it could certainly make an interesting background. (Photo 6)

ALTERING SCANS

Have you ever taken a photograph and been disappointed with how the colors turned out? The same thing has often happened to me when I've scanned my art. The simplest thing you can do is experiment with your image using your software's auto-correction settings. Increasing the saturation,

as shown in Photos 7 and 8, can also make a big difference.

The image I used in "Grotto" was originally ½" × 2½" (Photo 7); I upped the saturation and enlarged the scan to approximately 8" × 28". (Photo 8) You can see it in the finished quilt as the two vertical panels, mirror images of each other, on either side of the central panel.

Modifying the colors in your art can become addictive. Try changing all the colors at once, and then try modifying them separately. I often save many intermediate steps when manipulating images, as all I'm using up in the way of supplies is computer memory. "Grotto" and "Aqua Leaves" both had minimal manipulation of the original scanned images. (Primarily the saturation was upped and the scale was dramatically enlarged.) Other times, I've extensively modified and layered images to reach the final design, as for "Under the Rainbow."

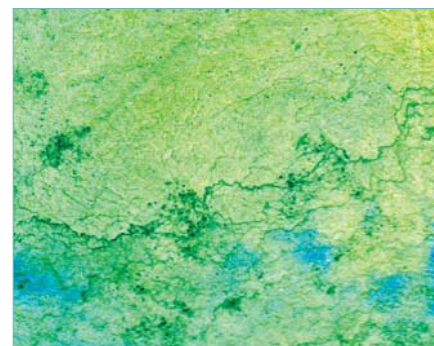


Photo 5



Photo 6

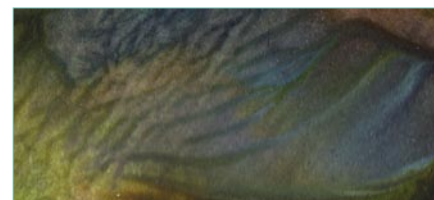


Photo 7

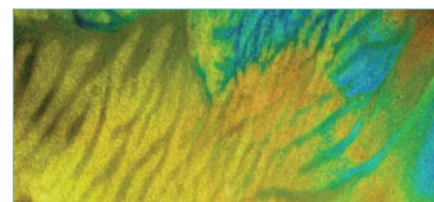


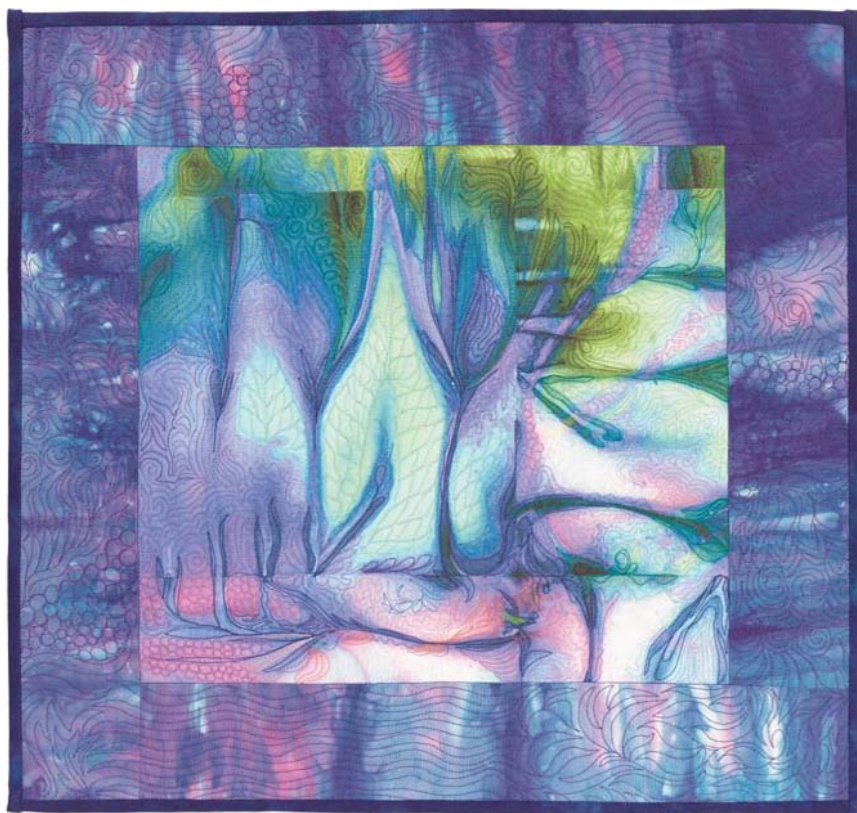
Photo 8

HOW DO I USE THESE DIGITAL DESIGNS?

My quilts are compositions in and of themselves that result from a print/painting. I like to create the central image, then border it with fabrics

I've hand dyed, either those I have on hand or those I've dyed to match. The smaller quilts are a single piece of fabric with borders added on, while the larger quilts are several printed fabrics seamed together to create the whole and then bordered. Someone else might use fabric created this way in appliqué or piecing.

"Aqua Leaves" • 17¾" × 16½"



PRINTING

My favorite fabrics for running through the printer are silks and EQ Printables. If a print needs a little extra oomph, I sometimes pump up the colors with a little colored-pencil work.

I find it enjoyable to use more than my hands in painting. Manipulating

images digitally is a lot of fun, too. It can be relaxing, and you never know what you'll come up with. Allow yourself a little digital playtime and see where it takes you. ♦

To see more of Diane's work, visit dianedoran.com.

MATERIALS

- Silk fabric and/or EQ Printables inkjet fabric sheets
- Tempera or acrylic paints
- Water-based markers
- Watercolor paints
- Freezer paper
- Watercolor paper
- Inexpensive cardstock
- Water for spritzing
- Pigment ink pads
- Photos
- Computer with photo-editing software
- Scanner
- Printer (I use Epson® printers with pigment-based inks.)
- Optional**
- Colored pencils

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OPTIONS for imagery

BY GINNY ECKLEY

ADAPTED FROM
QUILTING ARTS MAGAZINE
SUMMER 2003

"Endangered Warblers" • 84" x 71" • Hand painted on silk, quilted, and embroidered.

There's a myriad of choices for today's quilter who wants to include images in their work—three that I am continually drawn to are painting, printing, and silk screening. With the variety of products available in the market today, all of these are viable options, but which to choose?

My work is nature-based, and for the most part the designs are realistic. After designing a new piece, I think through various paint, embroidery, and printing processes to determine what will most effectively portray my ideas. I used to do quite a bit of piecing and layering, but as my painting skills have improved, I now paint larger areas and enhance them with machine embroidery. Silk is my favorite canvas—it takes the paints beautifully and has a luminescent quality.

PAINTING ON SILK

Much of my work involves hand painting. Paint tends to run on silk (unlike cotton), and precautions must be taken. First, I recommend stretching the fabric in a frame. For small pieces, a plastic embroidery hoop will do. For larger pieces, I use an Arty frame. Made of plastic parts, it is durable and easy to clean. Both the width and length can be adjusted, and each side of the frame has rows of holes that make it easy to re-stretch your fabric. If an area has a lot of paint, it may sag, but by simply moving a peg back a hole, the fabric can be kept taut. Best of all, it all comes apart for easy storage. The



Using Photoshop®. I added a yellow border and text to a digital image I had taken. After printing it out using my inkjet printer and allowing it to dry, I touched it up with a fine point black marker and sponged the ground area with brown Setacolor transparent paint.

frame comes in two sizes, 24" or 35", and has an extender kit for larger work.

Another way to keep paint colors from running into each other is by precoating the fabric with Jacquard® No Flow. If I am doing a lot of detail work, I let the first coat dry and brush on a second coat. No Flow is applied after you stretch the fabric and before

you trace your design. It must be dry before you start painting.

Resist can also be used to separate colors. My favorite brand is SilkPaint!® Resist. It is a water-soluble product, which works best on silk. You pour it into a plastic ½-ounce bottle, add a fine metal tip, and draw with it. With your fabric stretched and the design traced onto the fabric, the resist is applied over the design

lines. You do not have to wait for the resist to dry before painting. The resist lines act like a dam, allowing the paint to flow up to the resist and stop, confining the paint. Wherever the resist is applied, the fabric will be white, similar to batik. The width of the line is determined by the size of the tip, how quickly you draw, and how hard you squeeze the bottle. The tips come in three sizes: 5mm, 7mm,

and 9mm, with 5mm producing the finest lines.

My favorite paints are Pebeo Setacolor Transparent. The colors mix beautifully, and can be layered on top of one another without a heavy build-up. Many people describe them as watercolor paints for fabric. The fabric remains soft, but the colors are vibrant. If you love pastel colors, mixing the Setacolor Transparent Medium with the paint will give you

light colors, but the consistency of the paint will remain the same. Most of the time you can use water to lighten a color, but if too much water is added, the paint will run.

Once you've finished painting, let the paints set or air cure for 24 hours. Then remove the fabric from the frame, place a press cloth over the fabric, and heat set with an iron. Your paints are now permanently set and you can rinse in cool water to remove the resist or No Flow. It is important to remember to heat set the paints before you rinse, or you can lose some of your color.

Detail from "Endangered Warblers"



INK-JET PRINTING

When it comes to organic shapes, I can draw. However, for machines or buildings, I prefer to take a digital picture, transfer it to the computer, and print the image on fabric. There are a number of transfer products on the market that involve printing the image onto transfer paper and pressing the transfer onto fabric. This tends to stiffen the fabric, however, and if the transfer is later touched with an iron, the design can smudge, distorting the image. Instead, I prefer to transfer the image directly using my inkjet printer, eliminating the adhesive layer used in transfer printing.

To print using your inkjet, you can buy sheets of fabric that have been pretreated, or use Bubble Jet Set® to pretreat your own fabric. Fabrics with a high thread count and smooth texture, such as Pima cotton, will result in an image with greater definition. The process is easy, and the results are amazing.

tips FOR USING BUBBLE JET SET & RINSE

This is a process that involves coating sheets of fabric in a solution, drying them, pressing them onto freezer paper, and trimming them with a rotary cutter to fit into your printer tray. After printing, the freezer paper is removed, and the fabric is placed in a rinse solution. Complete directions are on the bottle, but here are a few tips.

FABRIC PREPARATION:

- I recommend using PFD (prepared for dyeing) fabric or prewashing your cotton or silk.
- The size of your fabric is determined by what your printer will take, the standard being $8\frac{1}{2}" \times 11"$. Cut your fabric a little larger, roughly a $\frac{1}{2}"$ both in width and length.
- Following the directions on the bottle, pretreat the fabric for five minutes. Each 32-ounce bottle can print between fifty and sixty $8\frac{1}{2}" \times 11"$ fabric sheets.
- Besides printing individual images equal to the size of your paper, you can print a continuous strip by setting your printer to a banner setting, the standard being 8.5" wide and 40" long. This is perfect for printing scarves or quilt borders. In this case you would cut nine-inch long strips, and set your printer to a banner setting.
- Once the fabric is dry, press the shiny side of the freezer paper to the wrong side of the fabric, using a dry iron. If you iron from the wrong side of the paper, it keeps your iron from sticking to the freezer paper. Be sure and check for air bubbles or creases in the fabric. If there are any, lift up the fabric, and press again. Also check for loose threads or lint, as they will leave a white spot and can clog the ink heads.
- Use a rotary cutter to trim the fabric-backed paper to fit your printer tray. Make sure the corners have a strong bond and don't curl. You can lay books on top to flatten your paper; some recommend trimming just $\frac{1}{8}"$ off the corners for easier feeding into the printer.
- The freezer paper can be used again, as long as the fabric is still bonding with it.
- I have found that letting the inks set for three days and then heat-setting before rinsing with Bubble Jet Rinse produces the most colorfast prints.



"Hungry Warblers"
16" x 17"
Hand painted on silk,
embroidered, and quilted.

If you love taking digital photos, this is an easy way to transfer your images onto fabric.

The obvious advantage of the pretreated fabric is time. Not only is the fabric treated, but it comes backed with freezer paper and cut to fit your printer. While it is less expensive to treat the fabric yourself, all the manufacturers, including the makers of Bubble Jet Set, believe the pretreated sheets provide a sharper image. The main reason is that they have more control over the treatment process, resulting in a more consistent coverage. Pretreated sheets cost anywhere from \$1 to \$9 per sheet, depending on the fabric and the manufacturer.

If you are concerned about the longevity of your images, invest in an inkjet printer that uses pigment inks. Both the Epson C80 and C82 use pigment inks, which are more stable and therefore more lightfast. Epson ink heads can clog, however, so using a lint roller on the fabric before feeding through the printer helps keep them clean. Archival inks (the highest quality) are available, but mostly for the large format printers.

The sharper your image and the higher the resolution, the clearer the image will be on your fabric. Scanning at 360 dpi will produce great images, but often I enlarge images, reducing the resolution to half that, and I still get good quality images. As with most processes, you'll need to do tests to determine what works best for your equipment. I had no trouble putting the fabric, backed with freezer paper, through my HP printer. However, when I put it through my Epson, I had to adjust for the added thickness



by changing the print lever to an envelope setting.

While it may seem logical that in order to get the best image you want to set your print quality to the highest setting, you will end up with more ink than the fabric can absorb, causing the image to appear fuzzy and out of focus. At first I couldn't figure out what I was doing wrong, but then I tried using the plain paper setting rather than the photo or inkjet paper settings. I could not believe the difference.

Always print your design on paper first to check your margins and image. Then place the prepared fabric into the printer one sheet at a time to prevent any jamming. Note whether your printer takes the paper face up or face down, and load the fabric sheet accordingly. Once you have printed your image, I recommend allowing it to air dry for 24 hours. Another artist, Pat Mink, recommends air drying for three days, and heat setting before rinsing. This lets the inks adhere to the fibers, and reduces the risk of colors running.

Rinsing, the final step, bonds the dye molecules to the fabric and removes excess inks. Each manufacturer has slightly different directions; some require simply rinsing in cool water, while others have to be steam set. Bubble Jet Set should be rinsed in a separate solution, Bubble Jet Rinse®.

Above: "Warblers in the Woodlands"
45" × 43" • Hand painted on silk.

Left: "Warblers Feeding a Cowbird"
18" × 16" • Hand painted on silk,
embroidered, and quilted.

SILK SCREENING

While silk screening can be quite time-consuming as well as costly, another way to transfer detailed images onto fabric is with thermofax printing. This is a fantastic process that makes silk screening easy.

It is perfect for producing an image multiple times, and is fine enough for printing text. The thermofax machine is an infrared transparency maker. Developed in the 1950s, it was designed to copy, make stencils, and laminate. A special polyester screen and a photocopy of your image are placed together into the machine. The photocopy must be made from toner inks using a laser printer or commercial copier; inkjet inks will not work. The light inside the thermofax heats the toner and burns the image onto the screen. The screen is then taped onto a plastic frame. The frame is placed on top of the fabric, and paint is squeezed



through the screen, creating your image on fabric.

The machine itself is rather expensive, approximately \$800 new. However, there are a number of people who will print the screens for you. Welsh Products offers all the screen printing supplies, and sells both new and reconditioned machines.

SILK SCREEN TIPS:

- The paints used should be thick. I use Setacolor paints, and add Setacolor thickener. If the paint is thin, it tends to bleed.
- Your printing surface needs to be padded—a layer of batting, such as Pellon® Thermolam®, works well.
- Smooth fabrics print most clearly, so fabrics should be pressed to remove any wrinkles.
- The best way to apply the paint is with a squeegee, held at a right angle to the screen.
- It is wise to check the side of the screen facing the fabric after a few prints to make sure the frame is completely clean.
- This is a messy process, so make sure to have lots of paper towels on hand.

Both silk screening and inkjet printing have given me new ways to express my ideas on fabric. Each allows me to produce multiple images faster and more accurately than if I had painted the same images with a brush. I encourage you to explore these

Sample of a silk-screened bird. The screen was created using a Thermofax machine. Branch was added using black paint and fine brush.

RESOURCES

PEBEO SETACOLOR PAINTS, PRETREATED SHEETS, BUBBLE JET SET, ARTY STRETCHER FRAMES, SILKPAINT!® RESIST:

dharmaarttrading.com

THERMOFAX PRINTING SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT:

welshproducts.com

C. JENKINS OFFERS TIPS ON THEIR WEBSITE FOR BUBBLE JET SET AND INK-JET PRINTERS. THEY DO NOT SELL THE PRODUCT, BUT PROVIDE A LIST OF DISTRIBUTORS:

cjenkinscompany.com

FOR FABRIC AND ALL SUPPLIES FOR WIDE FORMAT INKJET PRINTING, A DIVISION OF JACQUARD PRODUCTS:

www.inkjetfabrics.com

1-800-442-0455

For more information on fabric painting, see Ginny Eckley's book *FABRIC PAINTING: A SIMPLE APPROACH* (Fiber Studio Press).

Special thanks to Susan Brandeis and Patricia Mink, who generously shared their inkjet knowledge and expertise with me.

techniques, and you will discover new ways to express your artistic visions. ♦

To see more of Ginny's work, visit fabricpainting.com.