

SUE BENNER

textile artist

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WORKSHOP TITLE: **DRIVEN TO ABSTRACTION: developing abstract imagery**

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LENGTH: 5 days

LEVEL: all levels

SEWING MACHINE USED? optional

DESCRIPTION:

The exploration of abstraction in the art quilt medium is the theme of this workshop, both objective (abstracted from an actual subject) and non-objective. Through exercises, slide shows, individual discussions and a review of the history of abstraction, Sue will lead you through methods for developing abstract imagery. Each student will create a series of works based on source materials brought to class for inspiration. Instruction on using fusible collage as the construction technique will be presented, but these concepts can later be applied to other techniques as well. This is a great class for pushing your personal work.

(Workshop includes PowerPoint presentations, demonstrations, and handout.)

SUPPLIES PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BRING:

- source materials for your quilts, i.e., inspirational images of any kind, photographs, sketches, sketchbook, magazine pages, etc. Two or three good ideas are plenty!

- a reproduction of at least one abstract image (or book) of an artist's work to contribute to a class discussion. I suggest to look outside the quilt medium for this;

- 20-30 yards (this is not a typo!) of 17" wide Pellon Wonder-Under 805 --the faster and larger you want to work, the more you bring. (*HINT: Watch for half-price coupons/discounts at JoAnn Fabric and craft stores. Ordering online is usually the easiest*). If you are more comfortable working with Soft Fuse, Misty Fuse or Spun Fab, you may bring these products.

- one twin-size cotton batting or roughly equivalent in pieces (e.g., 4 pieces each about a yard square). To ensure consistent results only bring 100% cotton batting such as Quilter's Dream Cotton or Fairfield Soft Touch. Some batting contain polyester or a synthetic scrim that can cause problems, like dimpling or warping (Warm 'N Natural has such a scrim; if it is all you can get, we can deal with it.);

- **FABRIC!** Choose an assortment of fabrics with your inspirational images in mind. Bring the fabrics you want to work with, that are your signature, and then..., keep these suggestions in mind:

- Remember, you can fuse fabrics that you can't piece, so be creative with your choices.
- Bring a range of values from light to dark, not just mediums. Stretch yourself into tints, tones and shades.
- Mind-bending color, be bold and don't forget the neutrals!!!!
- Large prints, small prints, hand-dyed and painted.
- Cotton, silk, linen, rayon, and polyester will all work—and are strongly recommended for adding interest.
- Recycled thrift store clothing, fun, fun, fun!
- Sheers like chiffon and organza.
- Anything of interest that you want to put into your work.
- Total fabric amount—about 30-50 different fabrics, with the equivalent of a fat quarter each. This is just to give you an idea of the amount, the size and shape of each fabric can differ.
- Don't sweat the fabric choice too much. We can work with almost anything! Really!

Pre-washing is not required but strongly recommended for a better fuse. I almost always prewash, including the recycled clothing. Before you come to class, I also strongly recommend fusing Wonder-Under to a grouping (10-20?) of fabrics, about 12" x 17" (30x40cm) of each would suffice. Do not pull paper off, transport flat or rolled.

- 2-4 yards or more cotton fabric for the backs of your quilts;
- Teflon press sheet and/or a roll of parchment paper. These are especially necessary for Misty Fuse and Spun Fab that don't come with release paper;
- extension cord and outlet strip, design wall (unless the workshop furnishes these);
- straight pins, pencil and paper (about 20 sheets office paper or spiral of drawing paper, a few sheets of tracing paper, letter size is fine, black fine point Sharpie, masking tape, glue stick, one colorful magazine to cut up);
- steam iron;
- 1 yard (1m) of 100% cotton solid fabric, preferably white (this is a "junker" fabric). Part of the cotton batting and this cotton sheet or fabric will be used to create an ironing/design surface on your work table;
- sharp scissors, cutting mat, rotary cutter (a large and very small, 18-mm, would be ideal), and gridded ruler (24" x 6" is good or metric equivalent), gridded square (6 1/2" or larger or metric equivalent);
- digital images of your work, actual quilts, or portfolio.

OPTIONAL, but HELPFUL SUPPLIES:

- reducing glass or other type of reducing viewer (your digital camera works for this, too).
- digital camera (your phone is usually fine for this);
- press cloth of 100% cotton long staple cotton (like pima), pre-washed, approximately 18" x 18" (45x45cm), white color best.
- about 5 office file folders or gallon plastic bags for storing fused scraps;
- old blouses or other clothing to add to class stash, silks best, but other interesting fabrics welcome;
- tacking or sealing iron (brand name, Hobbico or Hanger 9); iron cleaning sheets (for a fusing slip-up);
- portable sewing light;
- X-acto knife (helpful to cut intricate designs);
- tweezers
- **a sewing machine is not required or needed**, but you may bring it if you want to sew or quilt. If you do bring your machine, the following supplies are suggested:
 - basic sewing machine and hand sewing supplies, darning or free-motion quilting foot, even-feed (walking) foot, couching foot if you have one, machine needles for quilting (e.g., Schmetz Stepp-Nadel Quilting Needles, Microtex or Jeans needles, Organ titanium coated needles are good, too);
 - 10-20 colors of cotton, rayon, polyester, and metallic threads (do not buy new thread for this class, just bring what you can and appropriate needles, topstitch or metallic);

SUPPLIES I WILL HAVE ON HAND: digital camera and interesting fabric scraps.

Please email or call if you have any questions about the supply list!

CLASS FEE: none