

3 Free & Easy Quilt Projects

To Create This Year

By Jamie Fingal



- **Fun & Unique Quilt & Craft Projects**
- **Easy Step-by-Step Instructions**
- **Get Creative All Year Round**



Editor – Ashley Harris
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Fly Your Own Flag

Create 3 Fabulous Fabric Flags

Learn how to make three flags, using scrap fabrics, fusing, wool blended felt backing and free motion machine quilting.



Each flag measures 6" x 8" vertical format. I used wool blended felt for the foundation and backing. If you so desire, one layer of felt is okay. I prefer the firmness of 2 layers. I would not recommend polyester felt, because noxious fumes will release when ironed or fused to other materials. Choose three background colors that fit on a 6x8 foundation.

So let's get started...



FALL FLAG

Cut out the felt 6" x 8" using a [rotary cutter](#), ruler and [cutting mat](#).



A Fusing Lesson

Picture 1: I use Mistyfuse, a fusible web, that doesn't change the hand of the cloth. It is very easy to sew though on the machine, as well as, hand sewing. I buy it by the bolt. So, I have rolled it out onto the wrong side of the fabric.

Picture 2: Using a pressing sheet (Goddess Fat Sheet by Mistyfuse), I run my dry iron on the cotton setting over the entire area, making sure that the edges are all melted into the fabric. You can lift up an edge of the sheet to see how it is working.

Picture 3: On the left is the fabric without Mistyfuse, and on the right, is the fused fabric. You see it has a sheen to it, so you will know what side has the fusible on it. Trim off the edges that are not fused, and set aside. You will need 3 different pieces of fabric for the backgrounds. Fuse all of your fabrics for this project.



Here is a page from my journal/sketchbook on brainstorming ideas for this project.

These are fused fabrics that I am auditioning for this project. This is the way that I normally work when I am making an art quilt. I am looking for colors that compliment each other, good contrasts, texture, and to make sure they are the same value. I am seeing that the blue/black geometric is too strong for this group. The batik with the chevrons is also too strong, but could be used for an accent.



This is the background for the *FALL* flag, and I am fusing it into place on the wool blended felt. All of the flags will use the same method.



Turn it over and cut from the back, to trim the sides.

I am now auditioning fabrics that will work well with this background.





Making Interesting Leaves:

For this I am using 3 fabrics. 2 for the leaf sides and one for the center. I am fusing them together on a Goddess Sheet, but you can use Parchment Paper too. The fabric won't stick to either, and it is a great way to build objects before fusing them to your actual project.

Use 3 different fabrics for more interesting leaves.



Fussy cut your leaves out – one by one. You will need three of the same size, and one larger size. I would say that the smaller ones are 2" long and 1- 1-1/2" wide. I used 5 pieces of different fabric for the small leaves, and 3 pieces for the large leaf. The large leaf is about 4" long by 2" wide.

*Fuse them onto the background, leaving room in the middle for the word FALL. **Note:** the fabric that I used for the leaves, is echoed onto the next leaf, sort of like a natural progression into fall.*



Place the lower portion of your flag on the piece of fabric that you have selected for your text, to use as a guide when drawing the squares for the letters F-A-L-L. Use a Pentel Gel Roller for Fabric to draw your squares and letters. You can write each letter into the square, cut out with your scissors and fuse them on the flag, making sure there is some space between each letter. If you don't trust your own writing, you could print the text out on your computer, and copy it onto your fabric by using the light coming through a window as your light box.





The flag is backed with another piece of felt, or you can choose not to do this step. This is the way that I make all of my quilts. This piece is ready to be free motion machine quilted.

Now on to the next flag....

BEAUTY FLAG



I begin by auditioning the background fabrics for the 3 lanterns.

The royal blue makes a great background, and the colors that I chose for the lanterns are all complimentary colors, so they POP out.

Cut 2 round and 1 rectangle.

Add the lantern tops and rope, by using black fabric. You could use another color for these, but I think the black really sets it off.



For your text, use a color that goes with everything else that you have chosen.



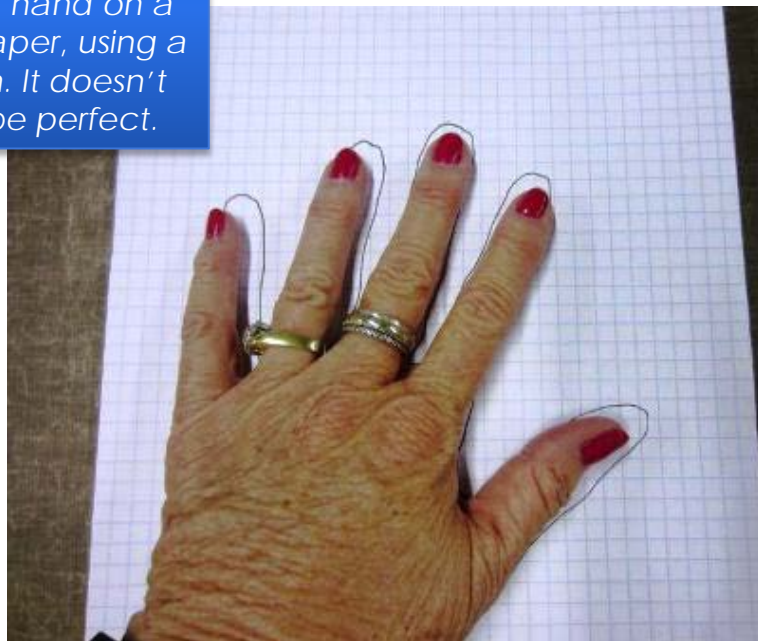
Create the text using the same method as the *FALL* flag. It doesn't have to be perfect. Use a color that goes with everything else that you have chosen, but is set off by the background. Back the flag with another piece of wool blended felt, or not, and set aside for the sewing machine.

The Third Flag - ARTIST



You only need 3 pieces of fabric. One for the background, the hand, and the text. I used the green for the background, the orange for the hand, and lavender for the text.

Trace your hand on a piece of paper, using a black pen. It doesn't have to be perfect.





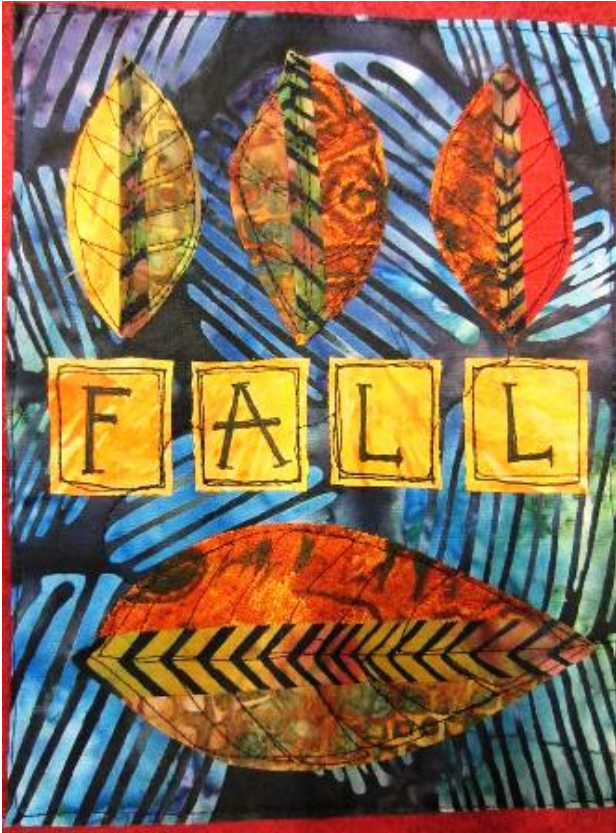
Lay your tracing on the piece of fabric that you have chosen for the hand, and pin into place. I find it easier to pin where the fingers are - then cut it out.

Fuse into place and cut the excess from the back, just as we did in the first flag.



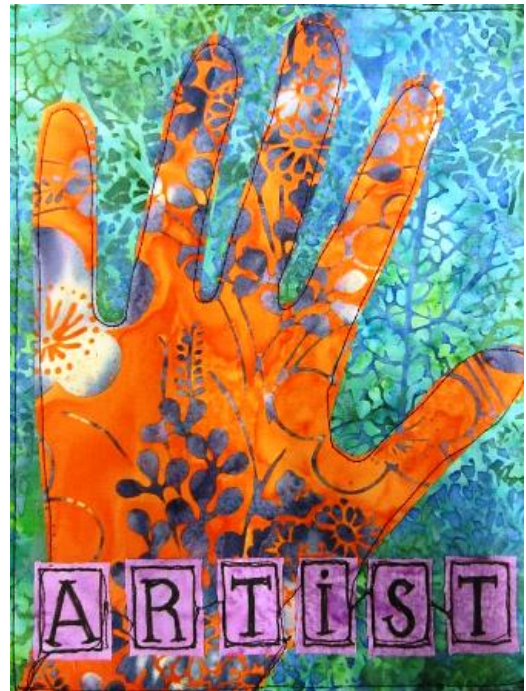


Place the lower portion of your flag on the piece of fabric that you have selected for your text, to use as a guide when drawing the squares for the letters A-R-T-I-S-T. Draw, cut, and fuse into place.



Free motion machine quilting.

Simply outline the leaves and do as little or as much as you want in the veins of the leaves. Follow the lines of the text boxes. I did not stop and start these separately, but chose a dark line to sew over to the next block. This is a great way to practice this skill. And I simply sewed the sides to the felt backing.



The Finished Flags: I have all of my flags hung using a laundry line and clothes pins. You can also sew pop tops on the back of the flags and hang on the wall with a small nail.

Use your imagination to create your own unique flags.

A Holiday House

An Easy Quilt Project to Celebrate Winter

This *Holiday House* is a fun and easy holiday quilt project that you can make for your own home or you can use it as a gift. It measures 8" high by 15" wide and can be made with fused scraps or the fabrics of your own choosing. The entire piece is fused to a foundation of black wool-blended felt and backed with red wool-blended felt. It is then free motion machine quilted. For this project there is no binding.



This is a holiday project that is fast, fun and not meant to be perfect!

Supply List:

- 2 pieces of wool blended felt – one in black and one in red
- Mistyfuse or other fusible web
- Goddess Sheet or Parchment paper for fusing
- 2 greens for the trees
- 1 green for the landscaping
- 1 blue for the sky
- 1 yellow for the windows, doors and stars
- 1 red for the house
- 1 brown for the roof
- 1 fabric pen for the windows, door and stars
- Sewing machine
- Thread
- [Pinking Shears](#)
- [Scissors for Fusing / Cutting](#)
- [Sewing Scissors](#)
- [Rotary Cutter, ruler and mat](#)
- Iron



My palette of Batik fabrics that I used, are all the same value. I use all kinds of fabrics in my work, but Batiks remain my most favorite to work with, because they have such saturated color, beautiful designs, and are easy to fuse and sew through, with less fraying.

For the greens, choose one for the landscape with an obvious print direction that can work, because it resembles grass. The greens for the trees should be somewhat contrasting, so that you can clearly see the difference, in lining them up in your landscape.

I think it's important to *really* look at the colors, and see if they work together. You can look for fabrics with certain designs that work for what you want to convey. For example, the roof fabric I chose resembles an actual thatched roof. This part of trying out fabric is an important part of quilt design.

Start off by cutting a piece of wool-blended felt in black (8" high by 15" wide) and set aside.



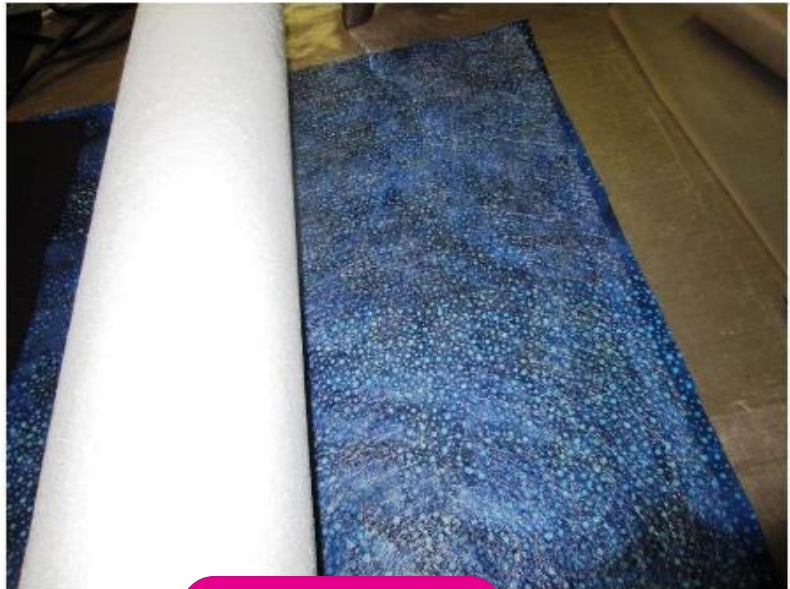
I used [Havel's Comfort Rotary Cutter](#).

Fusing fabric with Mistyfuse:

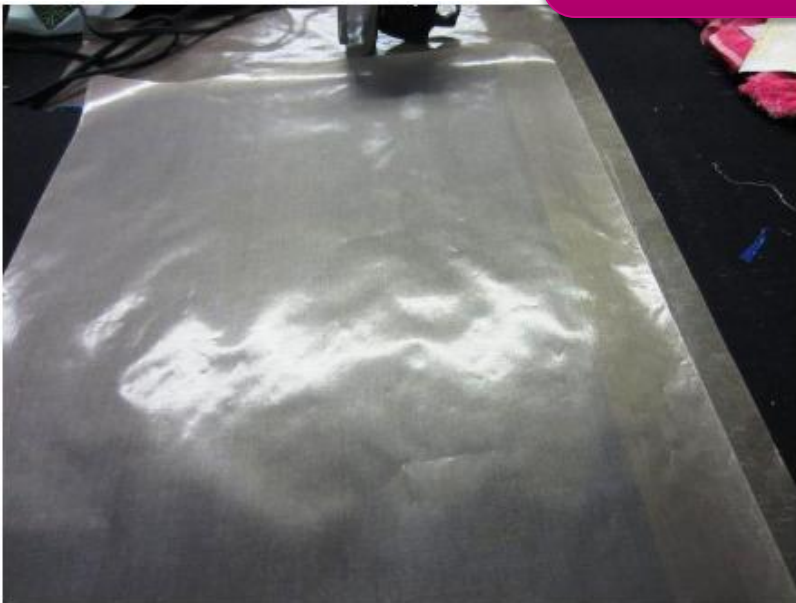
Lay out your blue sky fabric with the foundation felt to see how much you will need, allowing for more room than needed. Cut and trim.



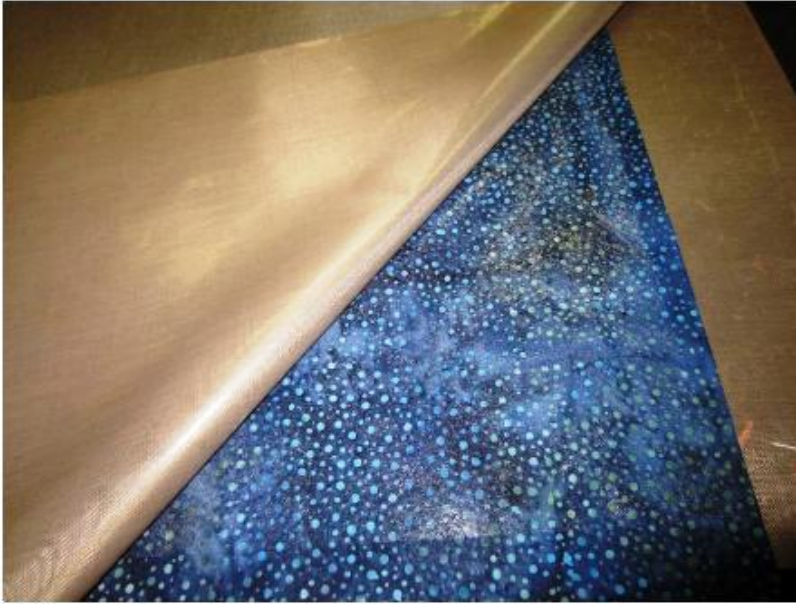
Lay the Mistyfuse on the back side of your fabric (this is a bolt, but you can use a package of Mistyfuse for this project). Cut it and make sure to lay it out flat, and that there are no strings under the web.



I use an extra Goddess Sheet to better protect my iron.



I have a Goddess Sheet under my fabric. I also like to use an extra Goddess Sheet whenever I work with fusible in order to better protect my iron. Another option would be using Parchment Paper.



With a dry iron glide over the protective sheet, in a circular motion, making sure the heat of the iron covers every part of the fabric, *especially the edges.*

You will be able to clearly see the Mistyfuse on the fabric, because it will be shiny, so there will be no mistaking it for the front of the fabric.



Follow the same method for the green landscape which will be used in the lower portion of the wall hanging. Be sure to cut more than you need.



Continue with the coordinating fabrics. Line them up and cover them with one sheet of Mistyfuse, cover with parchment or a Goddess Sheet and iron into place. Using a pair of [Havel's fabric scissors](#), simply cut in between each different piece of fabric.

After fusing it is important to trim the edges that are not fused, and any residual Mistyfuse that is over the edges, so it doesn't get on your iron.



Lay the fabric you chose to resemble the winter sky on top of the black felt foundation - it should cover 2/3 of the upper portion of the quilt. Iron into place.



My favorite scissors for cutting fabric are [Havel's 8" Sewing/Quilting Scissors](#).

Now flip this over and trim any excess fabric from the back, so that it is flush with the felt.

Now we will start work on the landscape. I chose a fabric with an obvious design, so I needed to be sure it was laying in the right direction for this piece.



Next, using [Havel's Pinking Shears](#), cut the edges of the horizontal side of the fabric, which will meet up with the sky.

Line up the landscape fabric so that it overlaps the sky - the [pinking cut](#) should be on the top of the green fabric - iron into place.



Sometimes the imperfections are what add the most charisma to a piece.



Now we are ready for the elements that are going to bring the quilt to life! Remember - this does *not* have to be perfect.



For the house, there is a main section with the triangle roof and a side portion. The side portion is about 2" tall by 3" wide, and that will help in creating the main section, as far as scale goes.

You can build your house on top of a Goddess Sheet or on parchment paper.

I used yellow fabric to make the windows and door, and then a brown fabric for the roof. I also added a small stick of the brown between the two houses to create a better sense of separation.



Now draw the window frames, window panes, and the front door window and knob. I drew my designs directly onto the fabric.



Using your iron, press the entire house, sealing in the hand drawn portions.

We can now start creating the landscaping!

Take the brown fabric which was used on the roof of the house and start cutting out small sticks. These are going to create the trunks of the trees we will use to construct the scenery.



Cut the trees using a pair of Havel's [Pinking Shears](#) to produce a zigzag appearance on the sides of the trees. Our trees are basically just going to be long-ish (new word!) triangles.

Place the house (but DO NOT fuse it yet!) onto the background and start arranging the trees as you like. For mine I chose to alternate between the two different fabric colors.

Make sure that you have one on each side that goes off the edge - this will create more depth in your scene. You can now start to move these around until you find the design, you feel looks best.



How is your landscaping shaping up? Do you like the way the trees are displayed? If so, start to iron it into place, making sure that the iron presses all of the pieces to the foundation.



Trim the excess green from the back.

Now we're starting to make some serious progress, but it still needs a little something to bring it all together. What would a holiday quilt be without stars? They will make a beautiful addition to the night sky by topping some of our trees!



I recommend the [Havel's 7" Serrated Scissors](#), because they are excellent for any fussy cutting. The serrated blade will hug the fabric, and this is especially useful when cutting small objects.

Begin drawing the stars, using the Pentel pen. Now separate all of the stars, and carefully cut them out. Don't cut right on the black lines of the fabric pen, but instead cut just beyond it, to create a border for your stars.



Place the stars on the darker green trees to help create more of a color contrast. Iron into place.



It's looking great!



Now we will work on the backing, which is going to help set off the entire holiday scene!

Use the same type of felt for the backing that was used on the foundation, but in red.



Cut your red felt larger than the quilt and pin into place using one pin at each end. (You will remove these pins later when you need to sew those sections.)

Free motion machine quilting:

For this you will need a free motion foot on your machine and the thread color of your choice. (I prefer to use black thread because it reminds me of a line drawing.)

Begin in the middle outlining just the house.

Note: This is very simple, not dense quilting, but this will give you a feel for free motion quilting. You may later decide to do more to your project, and perhaps even some thread painting – they sky's the limit!



With the needle, start to travel onto the trees. I alternated between the straight stitch and the zigzag stitch. Zigzag was used for the sides of the trees in order to follow the design from the pinking shears. If you want to keep one continuous line of free motion machine quilting, instead of switching back and forth, then you can also do the tree trunks along the way.

Before you begin stitching the edges, press the entire piece flat with your iron.



Using the zigzag stitch, go along the horizontal line of the bottom of the house, from side to side. Continue through the middle of the landscape and between the lower portion of the house and the edge.

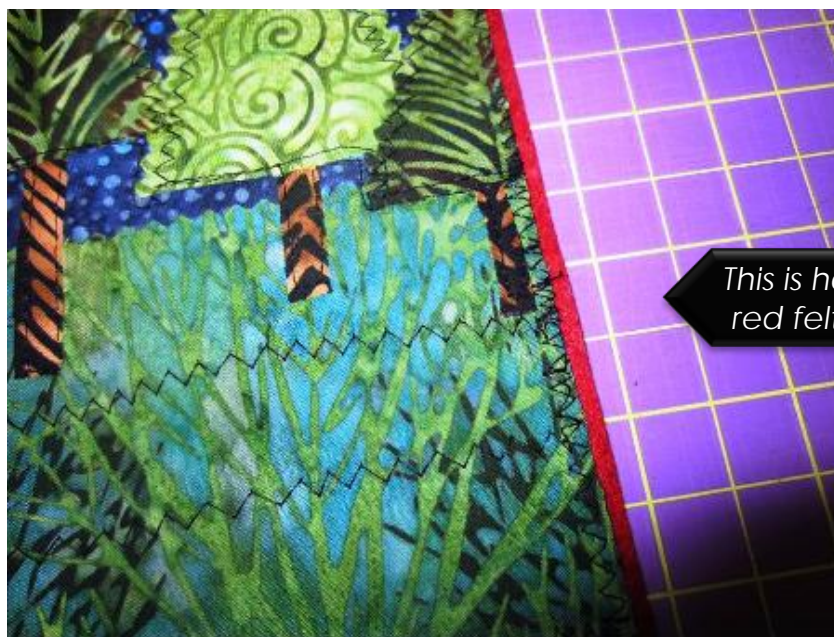
Then, still using the zigzag stitch, sew all the way around the edges.



Now start trimming the background.

We are going to want the edge of the red felt to show from the front. On my ruler, I used the longest yellow line on the sides, probably about 1/8" of an inch, this creates a nice subtle border.

Finally, trim the piece on all sides.



This is how you want your red felt 'border' to look.



You've now completed your Holiday House quilt project!

Please remember to make a label with all of your info (name, city, state, blog address, the title, when you made it, etc) so that your story will be recorded.

I always add "Do Not Wash" on all of my quilts since they are made for the wall.

For finishing, you could sew pop tops on the back to make it easy to hang on the wall. Or you could sew loops on the top to hang it from a rod or tree branch.

I hope you enjoyed making this quilted piece of art. It is sure to be beautiful this holiday, whether it is hanging on your own wall or thoughtfully given as a gift to a loved one.

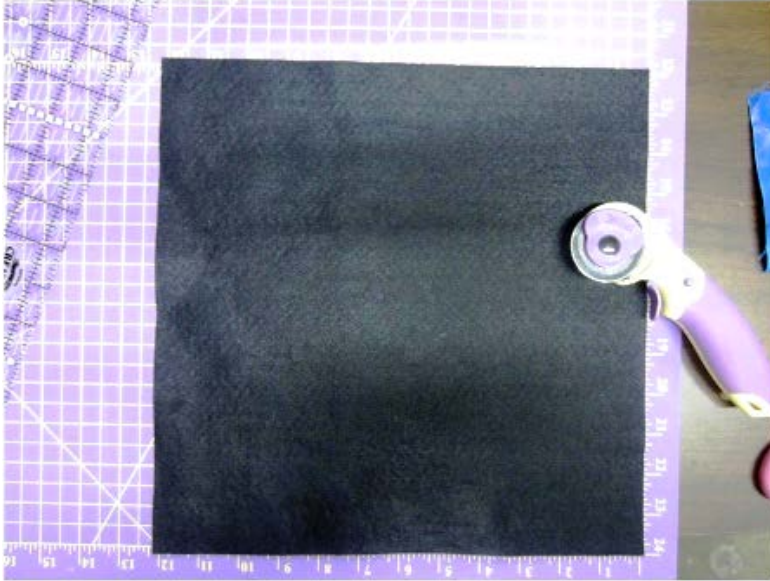
Spring Bloomin' House

Bring on the spring with this fun project!



What you will need:

- 2 pieces of wool blended felt in black and a coordinating color
- [Cutting mat](#), ruler and [rotary cutter](#)
- Pre-fused scrap fabrics, and fabrics from your stash
- [Mistifuse](#)
- Parchment paper or Goddess sheets
- Bamboo felt – in a few bright colors
- [Pinking Shears](#)
- Iron
- Sewing machine



Start by cutting a 12x12 piece of wool blended felt (black) for your foundation.

Select fabrics for the background – blue for the sky and green for the landscaping. The sky fabric should cover about 2/3rds from the top. Iron into place.



Auditioning fabrics: This is the main part of my stash of fabrics, and Batiks are center stage, because that is what I use the most in my work. The majority of my fabrics all go together, because 'brights' are my color palette. There is not one pastel in the bunch.



Select fabrics that are the same value.



I kept thinking of my theme for this house quilt, so it was easy to select the fabric for the house, something bright and cheerful.



Fusing with Mistyfuse.
This is a 12" roll, that is oh so easy to use. Roll it out onto your fabric, and cut.

Place parchment paper or a Goddess Sheet over the top, press using an iron on the *cotton* setting, no steam. Pressing in a circular motion, make sure that all the edges are secure. As you pull back the sheet, you can clearly see what side is fused because of the shiny appearance that is visible. Cut the around the entire piece, trimming off the parts that are not fused.



Decide on the placement of your house.



After looking at black and white fabrics, which I would usually use for the roof, I decided on a yellow roof because it was more Spring-like. I cut the fabric edges with [pinking shears](#), and ironed into place on the house.

The Bamboo felt flower is about 3" in diameter. Then I cut three other colors for the center. I would recommend 2 for the center, because when you sew them onto the quilt, your needle will be going through 6 layers of felt, and this is where I broke a needle. *So please be careful!*



I keep telling myself... Keep it simple.

The windows and door are made with solid robin egg blue fabric (leftover from another project). I don't use solids in my work, so this is a stretch, even for me. You could add more windows, but I decided I wanted to add shutters to the windows, so there wouldn't be room for more windows. I keep telling myself... *Keep it simple.*

How to cut the windows: Cut small strips and squares for each of the windows. This is when [Havel's 8" Serrated Scissors](#), really come into play.



After you have placed all of the window panes where you want them, iron them carefully into place. They *do not* have to be perfect.



The Bamboo felt can be fused with Mistyfuse, and it adheres pretty well to the art quilt. When it gets heavy, like the flower, it won't stick. Just know that going in. Cut the stem and leaves, and the extra curvy pieces in the landscaping. These add depth, color and texture to your piece. Add a tiny circle to the front door.

It's looking good!

Now you can add the walkway. An inviting part to the landscape!





Now we are ready for the backing. I am using a piece of wool blended felt from National Nonwovens TOY002, sage green. Cut it a bit larger than your top piece. You can pin it if you feel more comfortable in securing the top to the backing.



Using black thread (I use Isacord 40 weight poly thread), start with the landscaping on the right side and then move onto the house.



When sewing the landscaping into place with free motion quilting, make sure the felt does not flip up. You can secure it with one hand when you put the needle down, and then proceed to sew it in place.

I am not about perfection, but more about having fun with what you are doing.



The house is loosely free motion machine quilted. However, I seemed to have a little mishap on one of the windows and I am going to have to fix that window, because it doesn't look good.



The window fix:

I cut out another window piece, that has Mistyfuse on the back, and I am going to iron it into place over that messed up window, and press it into place.



The window has been repaired and sewn into place, so now no one would ever even know. Whoohoo!



Sewing down the stems, leaves and flower onto the background:

For added interest I fused fabric inside the two leaves. I anchored the leaf using one pin just to keep it in the right position, before free motion machine quilting it on the inside.





The Flower

The center of the flower:

This is where you want to use less Bamboo felt for the center. I was sewing through 6 layers of felt and broke my needle, because it was simply too thick. You could have 1-2 contrasting colors and call it a day.



I just echoed the flower motifs when free motion machine quilting the blue background - easy peasy.

In and around the flower, and leaves:

An alternate method would be to free motion machine quilt the background, before you added the flower, stem and leaves.



Finish the edges by sewing a zigzag around the entire art quilt, making sure to anchor your stitches in the beginning and at the end.

When you get to the flower, anchor your stitches before you skip over a petal, then anchor again, when you start stitching. Repeat, when you go over the next one. Cut the threads on the front and back that cross the petals.





Cutting the edges:
Using a rotary cutter and ruler, trim the green felt, just so you can see it from the front.



Here's what the back of the quilt looks like. I think it looks so cool to see the stitching lines!



The finished Spring House!

I invite you to email me at Jamie.Fingal@gmail.com to share your own creations of each of these projects!



About the Author



Jamie Fingal is an award winning artist who lives in Orange, California and the author of "Embellished Mini Quilts". Her whimsical and abstract work has been juried into International quilt exhibitions and featured in many books. She has written articles for Quilting Arts, Cloth Paper Scissors, Gifts, and Studios magazines, and she has two instructional DVD's. She's been a guest on Quilting Arts TV in Series 200, 400, 700, 900, and is most known for her playful approach to quilt making with zippers, houses, abstract and faces.

Her work is in private, public and corporate collections. She is also a grown up Girl Scout and her artwork is featured on an Ecco-Bag for ABC Bakers for the 2010 Cookie Sales. Her piece "Soul Sisters" won the grand prize in the contest for the Alliance for American Quilts in 2011. Jamie says, "I believe in giving back, and coordinate the "Welcome Home" house quilt project with Furnishing Hope. I also co-curate art quilt exhibits and teach at the National level with Leslie Tucker Jenison for Dinner at Eight Artists."

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