

## Animal Portraits: Pictorial Appliqué Workshop

### Thank you for enrolling in my workshop.

I'd like this letter to provide a preview of what we'll be doing during our time together. I do have fun teaching and hope I can share what I've learned playing in my studio and from fondling my fabric. The focus of this class is to rethink the traditional appliqué process. I create highly detailed images by using simple shapes and by letting the fabric create texture to give the image a 'painted' effect.

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My applique process is quite extensive, and I would suggest starting with a simple image for your first project. Remember, you will not finish the project in the time we have together, but you will be able to make quite a bit of progress and you'll have the information you need to continue on. Choose a subject matter that appeals to you, as you'll be working on the project for awhile. If you are not an accomplished photographer, no worries. In this handout, you'll find resources to help locate a suitable image for the workshop.

My art quilts are a direct adaptation of a photo. The more simple your subject matter, the easier it is to add texture. A simple photo is not boring, it just needs to have an emotional connection to the viewer or tell a story.

**Please note...** I do not have experience with human portraiture or landscapes. I do NOT recommend using my technique for those wishing to create such a quilt. Birds and other animals are more appropriate for my class.

### Here is an example to illustrate my photo-to-quilt process:



Photo by David M. Taylor



"Did You Wash Your Beak?"  
Pictorial Appliqué Quilt  
by David Taylor

**Here's a brief overview of my process. I also recommend you also review the workshop page on my website: [www.davidtaylorquilts.com/workshop.html](http://www.davidtaylorquilts.com/workshop.html).**

## Tracing and pattern making

First, find a suitable image. My process then requires a full-size pattern. We will create our patterns on the first day of the workshop from grayscale enlargements.

Visit your local copy center and have the image printed out on large format, plain copy paper (36-inch wide). This should cost no more than a few dollars. **A grayscale enlargement on paper is all you'll need,** along with a color photo or accurate color printout for color reference when choosing fabric.

I can provide the grayscale enlargement for you for

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\$20. Please do not alter or trace your image before having the enlargement made. I have a unique way of pattern making and tracing. We'll be drawing our patterns on Canson 25lb. exceptionally transparent tracing paper. I will be providing the tracing paper for the workshop, as it can be difficult to acquire in the large format rolls.

We will transfer our patterns to freezer paper and cut out the shapes to begin our fabric selection. You will want to bring a box of resealable plastic bags to keep all of your pieces in order.

## Fabric, fabric, fabric!

I do think it's best to use a lot of different fabrics to create texture. Bring a lot of DIFFERENT prints with multiple colors from your image, not a lot of each color in fat quarters and half-yard pieces. For example: If you have a spot of yellow in your quilt, there is no need to bring a dozen large cuts of yellow fabrics. Instead, choose some fat quarters and scraps that contain a spot of yellow and other colors in the image. Large-scale printed panels are also useful!

I use fabrics that show texture and movement, hand-dyed fabrics and prints that have no obvious repeat! Look for fabrics that have a lot of detail and color variety in them. Novelty prints work well, too. I do not use a lot of batiks as I find them a little tougher to get a needle through with hand appliqué, but that doesn't mean you can't use them. I urge you to avoid solids and single-color (tone-on-tone) prints.



## Putting it together

I use freezer paper and liquid starch to prepare my pieces for hand appliqué. This is the method I'll be teaching one afternoon when we're together. If you

really don't want to stitch by hand, you are allowed to use your preferred method. My focus is to teach you a new way to look at pattern making and fabric.

## IMAGE

### Choosing the proper image

Since we have only a limited time together, I'd like you to choose a very simple subject matter for the workshop. Birds and small animals work best. Avoid busy backgrounds. In my process, the fabric is the key. The image is a single subject matter, and I add all the details with the fabrics I choose.

**Please email a jpeg image prior to the workshop to: david@davidtaylorquilts.com for preapproval.**

If you are having difficulty in finding a suitable image, here are some resources:

**pixabay.com**

**istockphoto.com**

**gettyimages.com**

## SUPPLY LIST

- An original color photograph. The sooner you have approval, the sooner you'll be able to gather appropriate fabrics.
  - The same photograph enlarged in GRAYSCALE. Enlargement should be the actual finished quilt size you desire. This can be done at your local copy center, or, I can provide for \$20. Working larger is easier and has more visual impact. Roughly a 40" x 30" or 36" square size project is ideal for the workshop. (Every student will have their own work table.)
  - Pencil and eraser
  - Paper-cutting scissors and Fabric-cutting scissors
  - Freezer paper, enough to cover entire image
  - Finger stiletto (optional)
  - Yellow highlighter (optional)
  - Extra-fine point, black permanent marker (optional)
  - Plenty of appropriate fabric selections. Colorful textured prints, batiks, hand-dyes, marbled and non-repeating patterned fabrics work best. Solid-color fabrics are not suitable for the class. I will also have commercial fabrics in fat quarters available for purchase.
  - Inexpensive straight pins for pinning pieces to the design wall. (Don't ruin your good appliqué pins!)
  - Resealable plastic bags to organize pattern pieces, gallon-size or larger recommended.
  - Small iron and ironing pad (optional); irons and ironing boards are provided in the classroom.
  - Piece of home insulation board (Home Depot, Lowe's, etc.) the same size as your project (optional, but helpful) if you are driving to the workshop. Otherwise you will need to disassemble your project to take it home. There will be portable design boards available for use during the workshop.
  - Portable light(s) for your table top
  - Power strip/surge protector/extension cord
  - Sheet or fabric to cover your work table during non-class hours.
  - If you have difficulty tracing, you may find the need for a light box or light tablet. (optional)
- You may not be ready for these during the workshop, but you may need them to complete your project.***
- Straight pins for applique
  - Muslin, Kona cotton, or background fabric, as large as your quilt size, for a base in which to applique on (may be determined later).
  - Hand-sewing needle
  - Hand-sewing thread

## Choosing the proper image for my pictorial appliqué retreat workshop

Since we have only a limited time together, I'd like you to choose a very simple subject matter for the workshop. Birds, small animals and colorful flowers work the best. Avoid busy backgrounds. In my process, the fabric is the key. The image is a single subject matter, and I add all the details with the fabrics I choose.

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**pixabay.com**

All content on Pixabay can be used for free for commercial and noncommercial use across print and digital, except in the cases mentioned in "What is not allowed". Attribution is not required. Modifications to content is allowed.

**istockphoto.com**

Purchase credits and choose an image. These are not copyright free, but I have found if you are using the image for your own personal use, a license will not be required. You are strongly urged to contact the photographer through their profile for permission.

**gettyimages.com**

Choose "royalty free stock photos" from the main page. Getty Images are gorgeous, but more expensive than other sites. Please contact the photographer through for permission.

