



David Taylor: Turn Photos into Quilts with Hand Appliqué

Thank you for enrolling in my workshop.

I'd like this letter to provide a preview of what we'll be doing during our week together. I do have fun teaching this subject and hope I can share a little (or a lot!) of what I've learned on this quilting journey.

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 a good start on it and you'll have the information you need to continue on. I generally stress choosing a subject matter that you really like, as you'll be working on the project for awhile.

My art quilts are pictorial, they depict a singular subject matter in great detail: a goat, a rooster, a flower, a dog, etc. They are a direct adaptation of a photo turned into a quilt. The more simple your subject matter, the easier it is to add texture. A simple

photo is not boring, it needs to have an emotional connection to the viewer.

Please email your image to david@davidtaylorquilts.com for approval before the workshop! This will help to make sure your picture is suitable for my method.

PLEASE NOTE! I do not have experience with human portraiture. I do not recommend using my technique for those wishing to create such a quilt. Likewise, landscape images are also best suited for other methods. Birds, animals, are flowers are more appropriate for my class.

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



Actual photo of Maynard
by Hilary Spillane



Pictorial quilt of Maynard
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.

Tracing and pattern making

First, find a suitable image. My process then requires a full-size pattern to work from. I enlarge my digital image by printing it out on my home printer in "tiles" and then I tape the pages together.

You can also visit your local copy center and have the image printed out on large format paper. This can cost a few dollars per foot. **A grayscale enlargement is fine**, as long as you have a clear color photo or letter-size color printout for color reference when choosing fabric. Please do not have your image "Posterized" for this class. Please do not trace your image before having your enlargement made. I have a different way of tracing and pattern making than other methods.

After the enlargement is complete, I cover the entire image with Canson tracing paper. Canson is the best tracing paper available. You can find it in large and small pads at most craft stores like Hobby Lobby or Michael's. It is also available online in large and small rolls from www.DanielSmith.com. I will be bringing a few rolls with me, so please don't panic if you can't find it. Do not buy a substitute, you'll just be disappointed with it.

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

Fabric, fabric, fabric!

I know, I know, we are traveling to the workshop, and we can't all bring our entire stash.

I do think it's best to use a lot of different fabrics to create texture. **Take note:** I would advise you to bring a lot of DIFFERENT fabrics, NOT a lot of EACH fabric. I mostly buy fat quarters and half-yard pieces. For example: If you have a spot of yellow in your quilt, do not bring thirty-seven 2-yard cuts of yellow fabrics! How about several yellow toned fat quarters

and some other fabrics that contain a little yellow and a little bit of some adjacent colors in your image.

I love fabrics that show texture and movement, and hand-dyed fabrics (from other fabric artists, as I do not dye my own!) and prints that have no obvious repeat! Look for "crusty" fabrics (as I like to call them) - ones that have a lot of detail and color variety in them. I do not use a lot of batiks as I find them a little tougher to get a needle through with hand appliqué.

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. What I mostly want to teach you is a new way to look at simple pattern making and getting your fabrics to work out the details.

David Taylor

Pictorial Appliqué Workshop Supply List

- An original color photograph.
- The same photograph enlarged to the actual finished quilt size you desire. This can be done at your local copy center - **a grayscale enlargement is fine**. OR, the image may be pieced together (tiled) in sections from your home computer and printer, and taped together (this is how I work). Helpful tip: Working larger is easier and has more visual impact. Don't be afraid to go big! Everyone will have their own table at the workshop. There is a PostNet copy center in Steamboat Springs if you wish to wait until after you arrive.
Here are some web pages that offer help in 'tiling' your project!
Basic tiling from your home pc and printer: http://www.ehow.com/how_2007398_print-poster-inkjet.html
For using Microsoft Excel: http://www.educationworld.com/a_tech/techtorial/techtorial058.pdf
- Pencil and eraser
- Paper scissor
- Fabric scissor
- Canson tracing paper, enough to cover entire image.*
- Freezer paper, enough to cover entire image
- Scotch Magic Tape, (non-shiny finish)
- Hand-sewing needle: I use John James Gold'n Glide #11.*
- Hand-sewing thread: I use Masterpiece by Superior Threads.*
- Straight pins for applique.*
- Plenty of appropriate fabric selections. Colorful textured prints, batiks, hand-dyes, marbled and non-repeating patterned fabrics work best. I will also have a table of commercial fabrics in fat quarters available for purchase.
- Muslin or background fabric, as large as your quilt size, for a base in which to applique on (may be determined later)
- Reducing glass (optional)*
- Resealable plastic bags to organize pattern pieces, gallon size or larger recommended.
- Small iron and ironing pad to use at your own table; irons and ironing boards are provided in the classroom.
- Piece of foam core or insulation board the same size as your project (optional, but helpful).
- Portable light(s) for your table (optional)

** I will have some available for purchase at the workshop, or may be available on my website.*