

JENNY BOWKER

Portraits in Appliqué

This workshop will teach you to turn one of your own photographs into a fabric portrait. While the result looks complex, the process is step-by step and you will be amazed at your results. We use only tools which are easily available, and no drawing skills are necessary. All drawing is simple tracing.

This image will be appliquéd using Vliesofix and soft edge appliqué because it is faster, but we will discuss different ways to appliqué during the workshop.

REQUIREMENTS LIST

A selection of photographs or images of faces. Images must be printed to A4 or close as you can get without distorting the photograph. Please be sure that most of your image is the head. A photo of a whole body on a beach will not give you enough definition – we want close-ups. For USA, the size is about the size of a piece of computer paper. Approximate is fine!

Please do not bring copyrighted images to class. Copyrighted images include anyone else's image - including paintings, postcards, photographs and prints and images in books or magazines.

This link will help you to select photographs that might work:

<http://static1.1.sqspcdn.com/static/f/1022867/14092320/1315726711180/Portraits+-+Photo+Criteria.pdf?token=htDj85XqVDJvC17A2E8uskLf6Nc%3D>

You can see more about the workshop here – but use these requirements rather than those listed in the website as they were written for countries where the requirements are different.

<http://www.jennybowker.com/portraits/>

I would be happy to look at photographs that you are considering before you enlarge and print them. Please send them to me at **jenny.bowker@gmail.com** with a subject line of Empty Spools Portraits – but do not wait for the last few weeks as I will be travelling.



SESSION II

Friday to Wednesday, February 26 – March 3, 2021

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Please check that you have each item on this list. Some items might take a bit more time to find. I have been careful to list everything that you absolutely need and I do not carry spare equipment when I teach away from home.

- Fine Overhead Projector pen**, permanent and black, as it must be able to write on plastic and not wipe off (not water soluble). Bring a spare too as they dry out easily. Sharpies are good but with a Sharpie you need the ultra fine.
- 3 sheet protectors (A4)** - in newsagents (The closest equivalent to A4 is US Letter).
- One piece of tracing paper (A2)** This large size sheet should also be at your newsagents or art supply shop. It should be firm and strong and slightly milky. It is sometimes called calque and might be available in large sheets in art supply places. A2 is the same size as four sheets of computer paper put together. Do not use grease-proof or thin opaque paper as it is not strong enough. NOTE – we might not need this as the photocopier we use for the enlarging of our images might be able to make a mirror image copy as well as the copy that is the right way around. However – if you do not have it and we do need it there really is not an alternative. At the moment we do not know.
- Scissors** for cutting fabric AND scissors for cutting paper. Small sharp scissors are also very useful.
- HB pencil**
- A good sized sheet of Glad Bake or non-stick paper** to protect your iron from the Vliesofix or Wonder Under
- Ruler – this is just for occasional squaring up of our images and not critical.**
- Masking tape**
- A good, broad selection of fabrics** in the colour and value ranges you are likely to want. You will be very surprised how dark the darks are. Look hard at the colour in your photograph and try to find the exact shades.

If in doubt find a range for skin that moves from almost black to light in at least eight steps. They might be warm orange-based colours, or even yellows – it does not matter as long as they look like a progression from dark to light. You will need quite big pieces of some, smaller of others but without seeing your photos it is hard for me to give estimates. Fat quarters would be plenty but for some fabrics you will use only tiny pieces so if you have good scraps – bring them.

More textured fabrics work well for hair but you will still need a range of at least three values.

Tone on tone fabrics like those in Jinny Beyer's palette or fossil ferns will be more useful than strong or big prints but small prints can be interesting too. Even small pieces of fabric can be useful. Hand dyes can be wonderful if you have any. If you have sky in your image you will need a piece of fabric as wide as your sheet of tracing paper.

- 60 cm or about 22 inches Width of fabric of good quality calico, quilter's muslin or homespun**, pre-washed – be sure it is lightweight as we need to be able to see a black line on a photocopy below it. This will be your foundation.
- A second piece of the same foundation fabric** about the size of half a sheet of computer paper, and a small extra piece of wonder Under or Vliesofix to match.
- A small portable ironing board** or firm padded board is useful so you can carry your work to the iron without disturbing it.
- 70cm of wide Vliesofix or Wonder Under**, full width and largest size - do not fold it but keep it flat or rolled.
- Table top lamp** and a **multi-plug extension cord** with surge protection
- Something to cover your design board and something to cover your work at night.**

NOT NEEDED ON DAY 1 or 2

- Sewing machine** in good working order. Please be sure that you are familiar with your machine.
- Free motion darning or quilting foot.** Useful if you have it but you can cope without.
- Smoke and clear monofilament or invisible thread – buy a good quality one please as some are like fishing line. I like Superior or YLI.
- A Microtex 60 needle for your machine for working with the monofilament or invisible thread.
- Threads for your bobbins in the colours of the fabrics you will use. Bring a selection.
- MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL - a sense of fun and adventure and a willingness to stretch your skills.

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This is my cell phone so I can also receive international texts or messages on Viber or Whatsapp.

PORTRAITS - How to Take Your Photographs

I usually try to have a meeting before the class to brief people on photographs that really work easily for this class. Because I have many people coming from a long distance I thought it might be easier to write it instead.

There is almost no portrait photograph that cannot be made if it is big enough to trace around, and if you have the right fabrics.

You can make it much easier for yourself to achieve a great result by taking a photograph that gives you a full range of values - from black or almost black to parts that are almost white even though they go through flesh colours in between.

Photographs of babies facing the camera and taken with flash are really difficult. You get a very subtle range of colour that will almost never match the fabrics we can buy. Sharp lines where colours change look really bad on a baby face unless it is taken in strong sidelight where you have strong shadowing.

To take the best photographs put your subject near a window, turn off the flash on the camera, and pose them so they are not looking full face towards you - though their eyes can look at you. Take several images and choose a few to blow up to A4 size for class.

Otherwise - take the image outside with low sun - morning or latish in the afternoon. Try for strong shadows to model the features so the nose is clear against the face.

Easy images to turn into fabric



Lots of tonal variation, and even the child's face is well defined by the light

©Jenny Bowker, Portraits, 2011

Difficult images to turn into fabric



Very little colour value change on the faces - they are hard to work with, especially the young girl in the head scarf

Email me with images if you want me to check them before the class:

Jenny.bowker@gmail.com