

JANE SASSAMAN

Abstracting from Nature

This class is especially beneficial for the drawing impaired and the tragically literal.

Nature is an endless source of inspiration. In this class we will examine a wide variety of artists interpretations of nature before beginning to manipulate natural forms ourselves.

On the first day of class you will choose a plant subject to work through a set of design exercises. This subject needs to have a variety of elements to work with... like a blossom, stem, leaves, buds, etc. to make the exercises successful. You don't have to be in love with the subject, because at the end of the day you can jump ships and work on any subject you'd like, but many folks keep working on their original plant.

So if you have a couple plants in mind, bring as many views and detailed (leaves, blossoms, overall, etc) pictures as you can for each one. Our goal is to discover as much about the plant as we can before simplifying and exaggerating it for our own interpretation. Many folks bring their inspiration on a computer or iPad, which also allows us to look up images on the internet. Others bring 8.5" X 11" prints, or snap shots.

Personally, I prefer prints because you can spread them out and look at them easily and you don't have to keep scrolling back and forth. Books, of course, are another way

to go. For example, if you wanted to work on Orchids, a picture book of Orchids would do the trick. Seed or bulb catalogs can be helpful, too.

If you were doing an Orchid, again, the fabrics you bring should correspond to your subject. If your orchid was yellow and pink (it can be any color, not necessarily the real one) I would bring a stack of yellows, a stack of pinks, plus greens, and probably some purples for contrast, and perhaps some light or dark for possible background fabric. Fat quarters are OK, but we work with big shapes, so 1/2 yard cuts are even better. But as quilters we make do and the fabric gets shared and traded all the time. Luckily there is a store that can fill any gaps.

We will just be making one quilt top during the week. They range from about 24" to 36". We let them grow and shrink, as needed.

Through a series of exercises we will experiment with abstraction and exaggeration to capture the essence and energy of your favorite flora and achieve dramatic visual effects. We will then translate these ideas into fabric.

Drawing skills are not needed but participants should have a strong interest in developing their own design language and unique visual symbols.

SUPPLY LIST

- Close-up photos of flora, (as many views as possible, including leaves, blossoms, buds, etc.) or better still an actual plant or bouquet of flowers. Check *Visual Bibliography Resource* listing for some nice flower and plant photo books.
- Drawing materials: Paper, pencils, tracing paper, etc.
- Clear tape, craft knife with #11 blade (optional)
- Fabrics: a good range of fabrics - solids, prints from light to dark
- Fusible interfacing: white, non woven, at least 4-6 yds. (ShirTailor® by Pellon is best)
- Wonder Under* or some kind of iron-on adhesive
- Aileen's Tacky Glue*: 2-4 oz. bottle
- Stick glue: archival, washable UHU is fine
- Scissors, rotary cutter, mat and ruler, masking tape
- Sewing basics: machine, scissors, iron, threads, etc.
- Open-toed embroidery foot (optional)
- Threads: basic and fancy (optional) to match fabrics
- Table top light and, if driving, a multi-plug extension cord with surge protection.
- Digital camera (optional, but very useful)
- Flannel or some other method for pinning work to the wall (optional)
- Something to cover your work at night.



SESSION 4

Friday to Wednesday, April 21 – 26, 2023

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