

Art Quilts – Tortoise Shell Dimensional Applique

Supply list (1 page)

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This is an exercise in creating raised texture for a bas relief effect. A tortoise shell is formed by layers of keratin (the same material that makes our fingernails). A new layer of keratin forms at the base of the old 'plate' increasing in size each year resulting in a steppe texture over time (see photo at right). In this class we will explore recreating these layered tiles or plates in leather or felt. The shell plates can be any shape you wish as long as they can be laid out in a mosaic tile style.



Please be courteous to others by arriving for class with the correct supplies. Contact me at 503-888-9784 or helene.m.knott@gmail.com if you have any questions.

A Note to Students: Many students do not realize that once the teacher is paid, the shop offering a class makes little if any income on the class itself. The shop is relying on product sales to continue offering quality classes to you. Therefore, I urge you to patronize this shop when buying your supplies for this class as much as possible and remind you that big chain stores do not offer the variety of classes that the smaller shops do. Keep quilt classes alive by supporting this shop.
Thank you, Helene

TOOLS/MATERIALS:

- **A 10" x 12" or larger 'background' panel:** This should be fairly heavy like upholstery weight fabric, denim, heavy felt or regular fabric adhered to a medium weight embroidery stabilizer to give it body. The exact color/print is not important as only small portions will be visible between the plates like grout between tiles; the color should contrast at least some from your plate material.
- **Pieces or scraps of leather (see note below), faux leather, heavy felt or felted wool:** in sizes ranging from about 1" to about 3" or larger: You will need a range of colors and/or values for the best effect. Whatever material you choose should be fairly thick and not fray easily.
- **Sewing Machine:** this project can be carried out with a regular presser foot but a zipper foot makes it much easier to stitch the layers.
- **Leather or Jeans needles:** size 14 or 16. Use a leather needle only if sewing leather as it will damage woven fabric.
- **Thread:** this can be cotton or polyester in a standard 50 wt. but heavier thread like hand quilting or topstitching thread can be used for artistic effect, The thread color can match the 'plate' materials or contrast as desired.
- **Scissors:** A pair of sharp craft scissors.
- **Graph Paper (optional):** to draft your tortoise shell plates on; if you want to make hexagons, isometric triangle paper can be very helpful. It's not easy to find but I have some. Let me know if you would like a sheet of isometric graph paper for your project.
- **Pencil and good eraser**



NOTE: if you do not object to working with leather, I have some leather car upholstery sample scraps I like to up-cycle; you are welcome to use my leather for your project.