

Marvelous Hand Stitched Molitas

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Molas are a form of reverse applique practiced by the natives of the San Blas Islands off of Panama. In this technique, several brightly colored fabrics are layered, then cut away by layers and hand-stitched to create colorful Folk Art designs usually depicting animals, flowers, or people. The word Mola means shirt or blouse in the native language, and indeed, traditional Molas were made as the bodice of clothing worn by the women of the Cuna tribe in the San Blas Islands. In this class, you will learn the traditional hand-stitched Mola technique while making a small Mola, or Molita, as the smaller ones made for the tourist trade are called. There will be a variety of folk art motif patterns to choose from. The beauty of this traditional fiber art technique is that everything you need to carry out the project fits neatly in a small quart-sized Zip-loc bag, making it one of the more portable projects you can do. Take it to the park, work on it at your lunch break or while at a board meeting, or on your road or camping trip...



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:

- **Fabric:** Solids work best although light textures that read as a solid will also be suitable. Avoid busy prints or fabrics with lots of color transitions, as they will interfere with the finished design. Bring at least four to five 11" squares (preferably more) in variety of colors from light to dark. Vibrant folk art colors will give the most authentic results.
- **Thread:** 100% cotton or silk in a variety of colors to match your fabrics, plus basting thread.
- **Hand appliqué needles:** I recommend Milliner's or straw needles in size 10-11 but appliqué 'sharps' in one of those sizes will work as well.
- **Small appliqué pins**
- **Pencils and/or Pigma pens:** Bring a variety from light colored quilters marking pencils (for dark fabrics) and mechanical pencils and/or Pigma pens (for light fabrics) to transfer marks to the wide range of colors of your fabrics.
- **Rotary cutter, mat and ruler OR fabric shears:** to cut large pieces of fabric to more manageable sizes.
- **Embroidery scissors:** To cut your reverse appliqué. **These are absolutely necessary!** I prefer the small-jawed stork embroidery scissors for better precision. Don't even try this with regular sewing shears or appliqué scissors.
- **Seam ripper:** This tool is also **absolutely necessary** for this technique.
- **Tweezers:** Optional. To be used if you wish to try the technique utilizing inserts. Choose a pair that comes to a fine point not the standard blunt nosed medical type.
- **Saral Paper:** This artist's transfer paper is used to transfer the design onto fabric and comes in several colors, I find white the most useful but you can find packages with assorted colors
- **One clear plastic sheet protector**
- **'Sharpie' brand black marker (fine point not the ultra-fine)**
- **Embroidery floss and embroidery needles:** To embellish your finished mola as is traditionally done in San Blas.

NOTE: for some of the harder to find supplies like Saral Paper and sheet protectors (easy to find but only available in multi-packs and you only need one), I will have extra supplies to share.