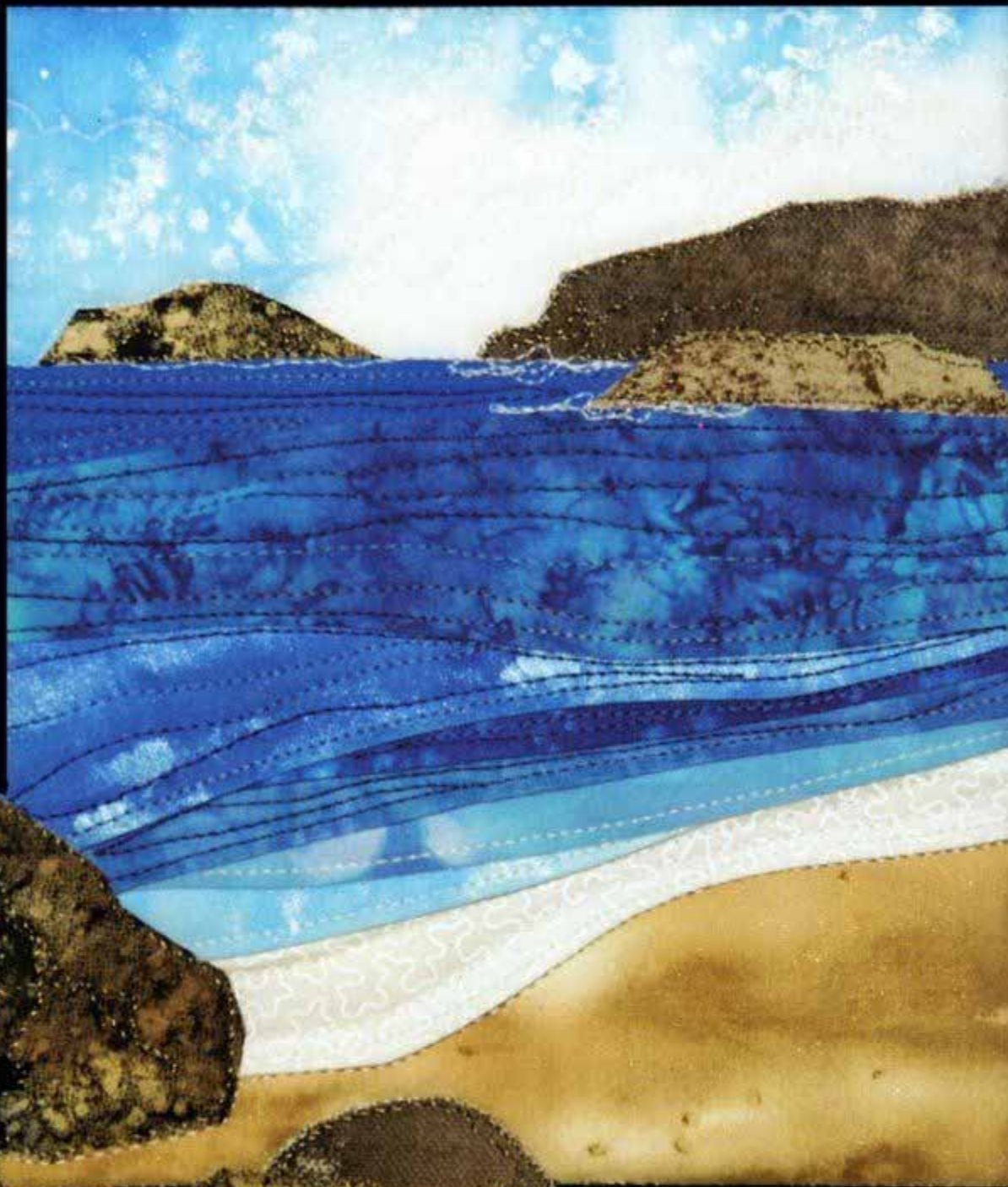


# Accidental Landscapes™

Surprisingly Simple Quilted Scenes



*Karen Eckmeier*

# Accidental Landscapes™

Surprisingly Simple Quilted Scenes

©2008 Karen Eckmeier

Published by



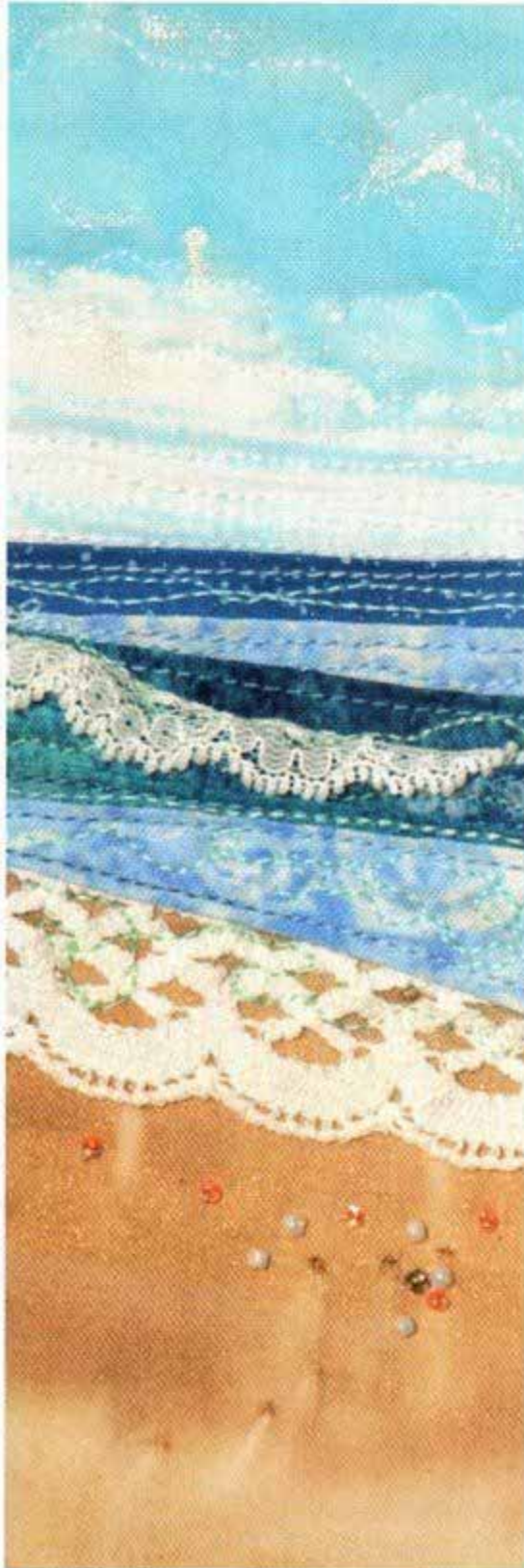
The Quilted Lizard

19 South Road

Kent, CT 06757 USA

+1 860-927-4201

[www.quilted-lizard.com](http://www.quilted-lizard.com)



**All rights reserved.** No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted or stored in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical without written permission from the author.

**Notice of Liability:** Every effort has been made to ensure that this book is complete and accurate. The information in this book is presented in good faith, but no warranty is given, nor results guaranteed. Since we have no control over the choice of materials or procedures used, neither the author nor The Quilted Lizard shall have any liability to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused directly or indirectly by the information contained in this book.

**Trademarked (™) and Registered Trademark (®) names** are used throughout this book. Rather than use the symbols with every occurrence of a trademark and registered name, we are using the name only in the editorial fashion and to the benefit of the owner, with no intention of infringement.

ISBN 13: 978-0-9792033-1-2

ISBN 10: 0-9792033-1-7

Printed in the United States of America

Editor: Eleanor Levie, Craft Services, LLC

Photography: Karen and Walter Eckmeier

Book Design: Walter Eckmeier

An EXTRA SPECIAL THANK YOU to:

Eleanor, my editor and friend, for keeping my compass set at true north throughout this adventure.

Walter, my best friend and partner, who is willing to travel anywhere with me!

Juli, my daughter, for your photographs on pages 30 and 61.

Glenn, my son, for your numerous consultations and critiques!

Holly Hassett, my friend, for your objective peer editing.

Carol Capozzoli for suggesting the bookmark idea.

Friends and students for your enthusiasm, encouragement, and support....you know who you are! THANK YOU!

# CONTENTS

**Introduction** 2

**Setting Out** 3

Planning vs. Serendipity  
Warm-Up Exercise

**Learning the Way** 8

Sample Project #1: Alpine Lake  
Sample Project #2: Waves Upon the Shore

**Pathways to Successful Designs** 18

Sample Project #3: The Four Seasons

- Local Color and Value
- A Perfect Focal Point
- Detail Oriented
- Headed for the Borders – Curvy and Straight
- Quilting Your Scene
- Bound for the Wall
- Framing the Vista

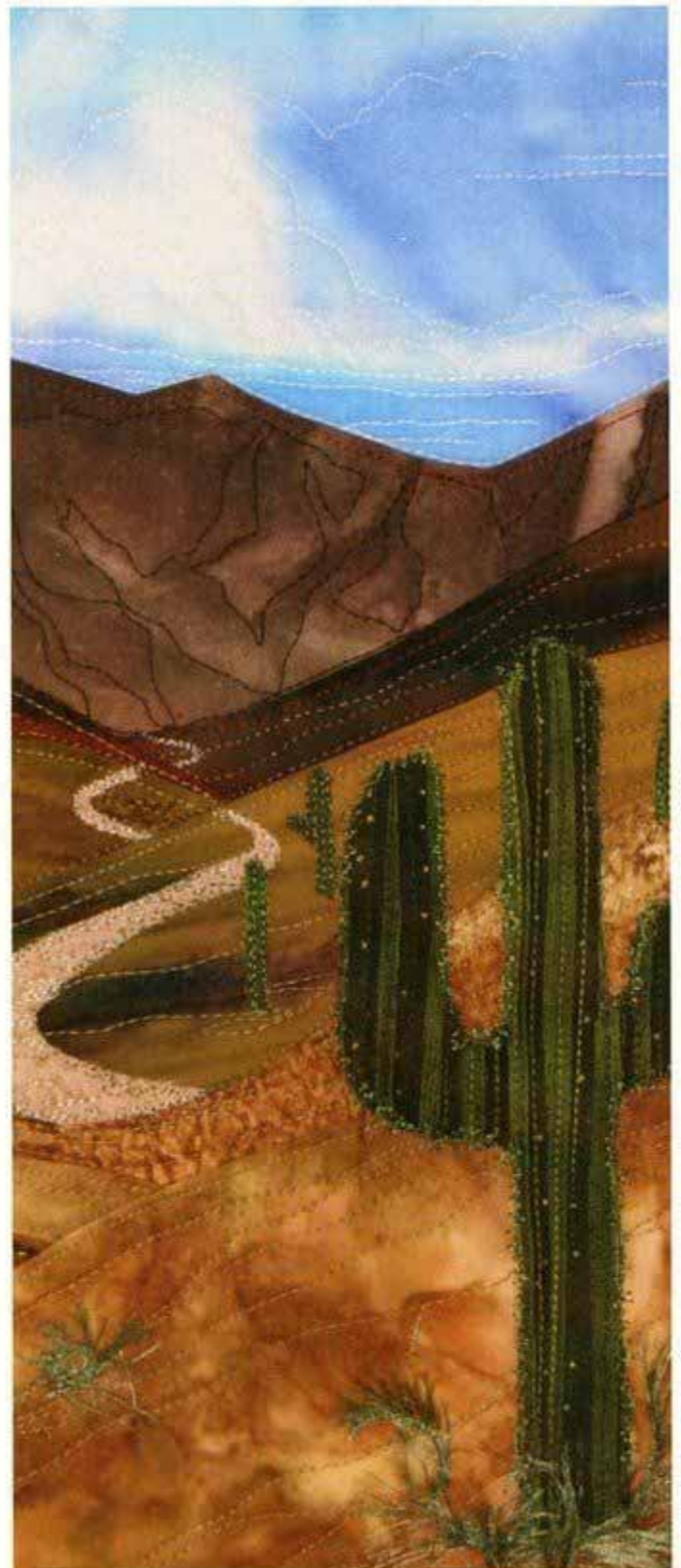
**Four Easy Approaches** 25

1. Photos
2. Favorite Colors and Fabrics
3. Wintry Effects
4. Black & White

**Scene Enhancers** 50

**Small Souvenirs** 58

**Patterns & Resources** 62



# INTRODUCTION

*"A discovery is said to be an accident meeting a prepared mind"*

*~Albert Szent-Gyorgyi / Biochemist*

Fabric landscapes landed in my life by accident. They were the surprise result of teaching my layered/topstitching technique "Layered Curves." At the end of a workshop, when my students and I stepped back to view their masterpieces, we were delighted and amazed to find that every horizontal design seemed to be a landscape.

In 1998, when I first discovered this phenomenon, I made a few little landscapes to bring along to my lectures to demonstrate another possibility for using my "Layered Curves" technique. The funny thing is that people wanted to know if they could buy the patterns to make the little landscapes. I had to answer them with a giggle, because I couldn't imagine writing a pattern for something that I had created accidentally! But my students were persistent and suggested that if I wrote the basic "guidelines," that would be enough to get them started. So, in 2002 I began writing patterns for specific landscapes.

Now, here is the guidebook full of ideas for additional landscapes and how to add your personal touch. Take the journey with me, and even though we don't know where you'll be going, I promise you'll have a lot of fun and create the most unique souvenirs!

**I suggest you begin your journey with:**

1. The short and simple warm-up exercise in **Setting Out**.
2. Once you have warmed up to the idea, begin with Sample Project #1 in **Learning the Way**, which will lead you through the technique. Sample Project #2 offers you an alternative route that you will also enjoy.
3. Now you are ready for Sample Project #3, which will guide you down the **Pathways to Successful Designs**. After making just one scene, you'll have the necessary skills to adopt the same easy technique to add curved borders to your landscape.
4. With confidence in your step, you'll be ready to move on to the next chapters with **Four Easy Approaches** that explore the possibilities of creating scenes inspired by favorite photos, fabric prints, and color combinations!
5. Take a little side excursion and learn how to add sparkle and dimension to your landscape in the **Scene Enhancers** section.
6. At the end of the trail is the **Small Souvenirs** chapter, which will guide you through the process of creating adorable little mementoes from your special trip.

After all of these years, I am still fascinated with Accidental Landscapes. They are always new and exciting. I hope this book shares that excitement and that you will be encouraged to venture off the beaten path and follow your own creative heart.

# SETTING OUT

## Planning vs. Serendipity

### What makes a landscape “accidental?”

While key elements of a design, such as the horizontal lines, colors, values, and proportions are planned, the cutting and layering of the horizontal layers are left to serendipity. Every scene you make will *evolve* into a unique creation. In my series of Accidental Landscape patterns (see page 62), I have done the planning for you. In this book, I share my secrets, so that you can do your own planning.

### What makes an Accidental Landscape different from other fabric landscapes?

- Spontaneous, quick and playful
- No need to search for the perfect landscape fabrics
- Free-form rotary cutting of strips
- No templates or exact measurements required
- Quilters and sewers of all skill levels can sew these curves and angles
- Small sew-in-a-day project
- Edges are pressed under and topstitched by machine
- Topstitching provides textural excitement
- Every landscape is different and unique – you will never make the same one twice

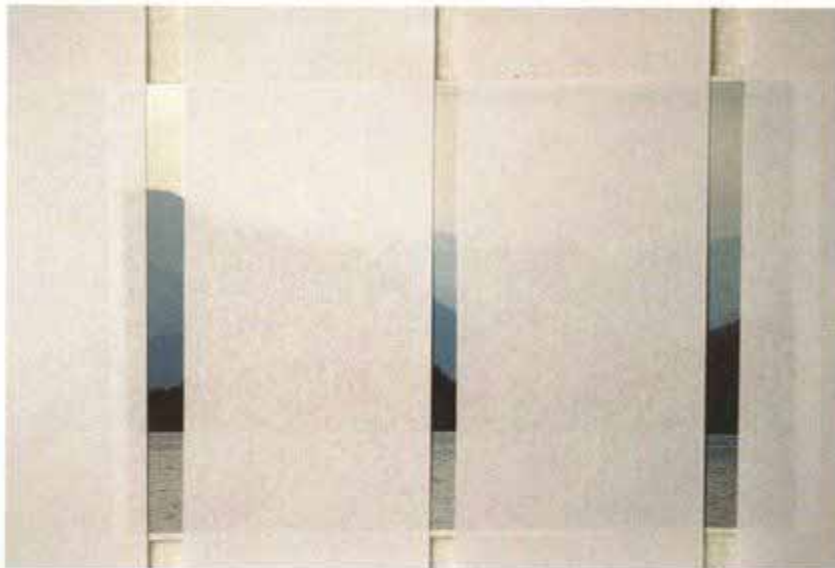


## Which scenes are good candidates for an Accidental Landscape?

Since Accidental Landscapes are based on horizontal lines, there are some scenes, which cannot be easily interpreted using this technique. When looking at a photo, the predominant lines of the scene should run horizontally across the photo.



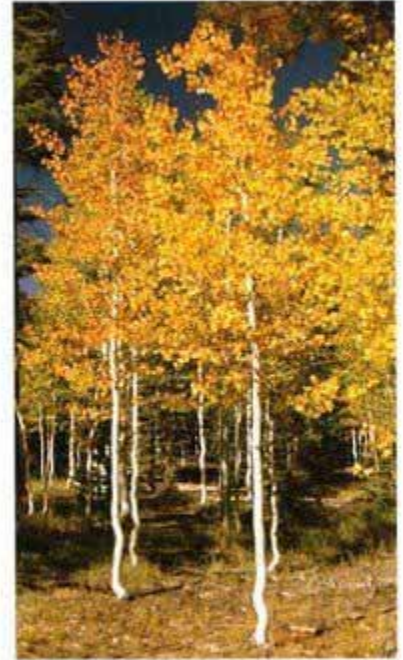
Want to start with a vacation photo or pretty postcard as inspiration for your quilt? Here's how to judge whether it will make a good Accidental Landscape:



The "Sliver Test"

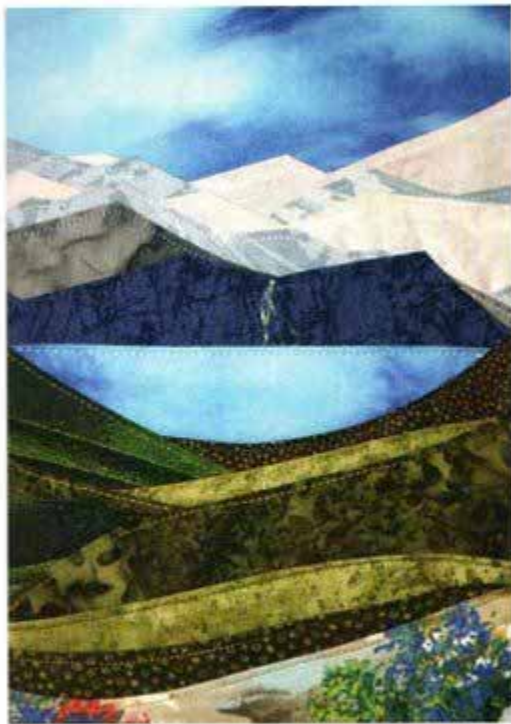
- Place sheets of white paper over the photo so that 1/2" (1.3 cm) wide vertical slivers of the photo are visible.
- The horizontal lines, or topographical layers, should be obvious, with a minimum of three layers ideal.
- In order for the scene to qualify to be an Accidental Landscape, the layers should be similar (but not exactly the same) on the left, in the middle and on the right, as shown in this example. All three vertical slivers show similar layers (sky, mountains, distant shore, and water), which will make this a good candidate for an Accidental Landscape.

Here are three examples of photos that will not pass the "sliver test."

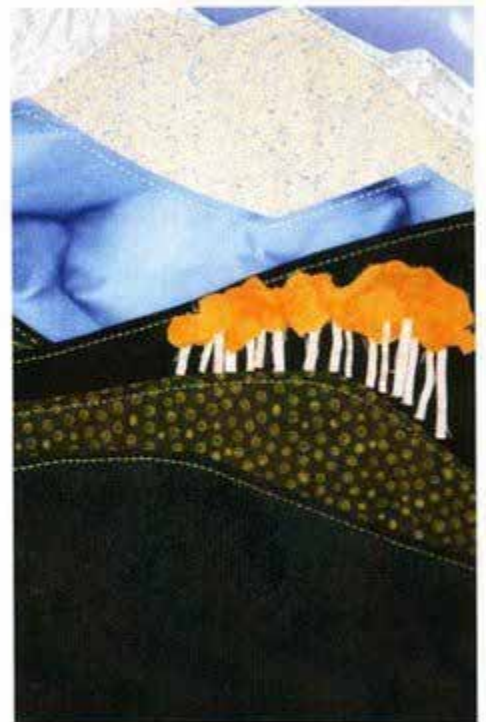


In each of these shots, the main subject has a vertical flow to it, which draws your eye up and down. The photos do not contain the necessary horizontal layers. They may be wonderful photographs, but are not the best ones to become Accidental Landscapes.

However, bear in mind that a vertical subject can be added to the scene *after* the layering process, using raw-edge fabric collage or couched ribbons and yarns.



Couched yarn for waterfall



Raw-edged fabric collage for trees

# Warm-Up Exercise

Accidental Landscapes are abstracted landscapes, which rely on a combination of 2" length (5 cm) and 4" length (10 cm) horizontal strips to tell their story. Our minds naturally interpret straight or curved, horizontal strips as land or water, whereas strips with angular edges will read as rocks or mountains.

To get acquainted with the concept, try this quick warm-up exercise. Follow along, using 2" (5 cm) and 4" (10 cm) strips of either colored construction paper or fabric with straight edges and one angular edge. We'll roll into curved strips in the next chapter.

## Combine Two Strips

A simple landscape consists of two straight horizontal strips:

- 9"W x 4"L (23x10 cm) strip of sky (light blue)
- 9"W x 2"L (23x5 cm) strip of land or water (green, lavender, light blue or dark blue)

Place a 2" (5 cm) green land strip below the 4" (10 cm) light blue sky strip to create a calm pastoral scene with a low horizon.

For a high horizon, switch the proportions, so that the light blue sky strip is 2" (5 cm) and the green land strip is 4" (10 cm).



Change the 2" (5 cm) green land strip to a 2" (5 cm) darker blue strip, and now you have a seascape.



### Metric Conversions:

Measurements are provided in inches (") and in centimeters (cm).

The exact conversion is 1" = 2.54 cm. I have rounded the centimeter value up or down, since precise measurements are not critical in creating Accidental Landscapes.

1 yard is roughly 1 meter (0.9, to be exact)



### Add an Angular Strip

Cut a 9"W x 2"L (23x5 cm) strip of lavender, and cut random angles across one long edge. Now, substitute the blue water strip with this angular strip, and your seascape transforms into a mountain scene.



### Add a Third Strip

Combine the straight sky strip and green land strip with the angular lavender strip to create a meadow and mountain scene.

Now, gradually move the green land strip up, overlapping the angular lavender strip and exposing less and less of it. Notice how the mountains seem to recede into the distance.



### Add a Fourth Strip

Bring a straight light blue strip in, and you've got a lake or river in your scene.



Wasn't that easy?

All Accidental Landscapes are based on this simple concept!

# LEARNING THE WAY

Let's return to the simple landscape from the Warm-Up Exercise, which used a combination of four strips: sky, mountain, lake, and land. To create an Accidental Landscape, look at the types of layers in the scene: straight, angular, or curved. Estimate the number of layers in the scene. Then bump that number up - just for the fun of it. In this case, I've added another strip with an angular edge to the mountain section, and seven curved edge strips for a grassy section in the foreground.

In an Accidental Landscape we won't leave the fabric edges raw as in the Warm-Up Exercise. We will press one long edge, on each of the strips, approximately 1/4" (0.6 cm) to the wrong side of the fabric, layer it with the other strips, and pin them in place. Then we'll topstitch 1/8" (0.3 cm) from the pressed edge, creating a pleated edge that adds interest and surface texture.

## Choosing Fabrics

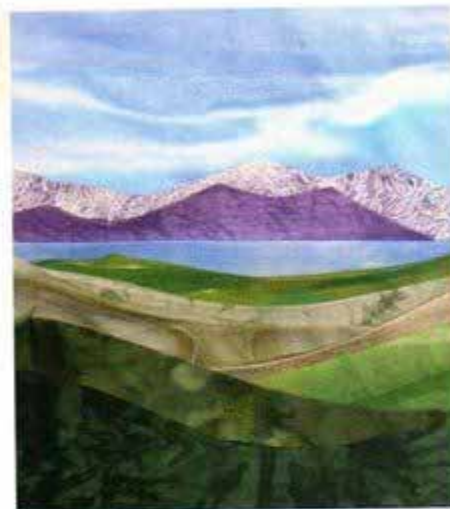
Accidental Landscapes do not require a long search for the perfect landscape fabric. In fact it's often best *not* to use landscape fabrics, because the scale is usually inaccurate for the size of these small quilted scenes. With that said, however, if you find a landscape fabric that will work for your scene, by all means, use it! But there's no need to agonize over trying to find the "perfect" fabric. This defeats the accidental nature of working with lots of textured fabric strips and letting them surprise you.

**Sky:** Start with a dynamic sky fabric. A great sky is one of the most important components of a successful landscape. It sets the mood for the entire scene. Look for commercially printed sky fabrics, hand-painted/dyed fabrics in your local quilt store, or paint/dye your own.

**Hills, Mountains, and Water:** Look for textures - dots, lines, mottled, and random uneven designs. Avoid busy prints and recognizable patterns, as they will distract from your scene.

## What You Need to Create An Accidental Landscape:

- Small amounts of fabrics (1/8 and 1/4 yard/meter cuts)
- Small and large fabric scissors
- Rotary cutting supplies
- Iron and pressing surface
- Long pins (I like flower head pins because they lay flat)
- Sewing machine
- Thread to match fabrics for topstitching and quilting
- Thread to match fabrics, or neutral color for bobbin
- 100% cotton batting



Size: 9"W x 12"L (23x30 cm)



Fabric for Sample Project #1

## Fabric Strips

**Sky:** One 9"W x 4"L rectangle (23x10 cm)

**Lake:** One 9"W x 2"L (23x5 cm) blue strip with straight edge (cut from sky fabric)

**Mountain:** Two purples 9"W x 2"L (23x5 cm) strips (light and dark), with irregular angles cut on one edge

**Hills:** Seven greens 9"W x 4"L (23x10 cm) strips with a gentle curve cut on one edge (different textures and values, graded from dark to light)

Don't worry about precision, all of the measurements and dimensions for the strips are suggested or approximate.

# Sample Project #1: Alpine Lake

## Layering from Top to Bottom



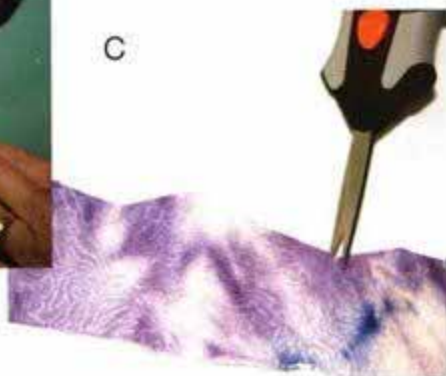
### A. Cutting Curves

Use a rotary cutter, working on a cutting mat. The goal is to cut a strip with a gentle curve. Curves can be cut on both edges, but only one side will be pressed under and exposed. Cut any curve that feels good to you, just try to avoid extreme wavy curves, which are hard to cut and even harder to press. Swooping curves work beautifully. Try to vary the types of curves you cut.



### B. Cutting Angles

Use scissors to cut random angles along one long edge of a strip. Keep the angles at 90° or greater. If the angles are too sharp, it will be hard to press the excess fabric under the points.



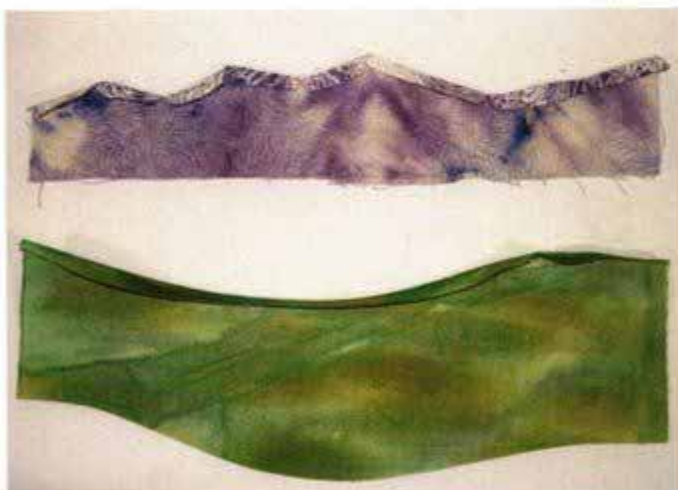
### C. Clipping

Clip ¼" (0.6 cm) into each inside angle. This little clip is helpful at the pressing stage. *Curved strips do not require any clipping.*



### D. Pressing

On one long edge of each of the strips except the sky, press ¼" (0.6 cm) to the wrong side.



### Cutting Tip:

Once you have cut one type of curve, your body remembers that curve and wants to keep re-creating it. That's OK; don't fight it. These are the curves that feel best to you and they will all fit nicely together in your scene.

## Layering Sequence for Alpine Lake

## Alpine Lake

There are many possible configurations for layering the straight, curved, and angular edge strips.

Here are a few variations. Scan them all, and create the look you like best, or try a new combination.

A. Place the sky down on a flat surface.

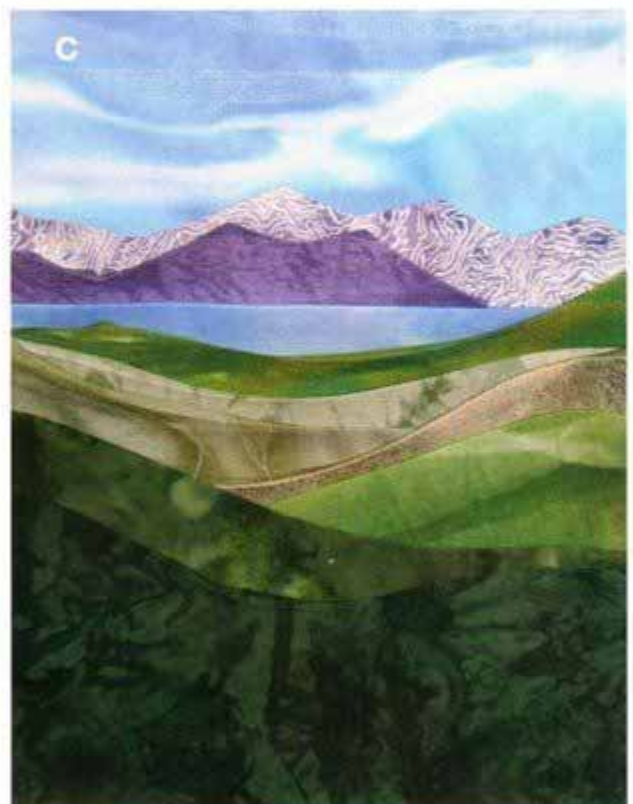
Next place the light mountain strip so that its top pressed edge covers the bottom  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6 cm) of the sky fabric.

Add the darker mountain strip so that it overlaps the first mountain strip. Shift it to the right or left, and up or down, until you like the look. The strips can hang off the edges, since they will be trimmed later.

B. Place the 2" (5 cm) straight strip of blue, so that its pressed-under edge overlaps the bottom edge of the darker mountain piece.

Layer the seven green strips, beginning with the lightest and ending with the darkest.

C. Crop the scene with strips of white paper to assess the composition.



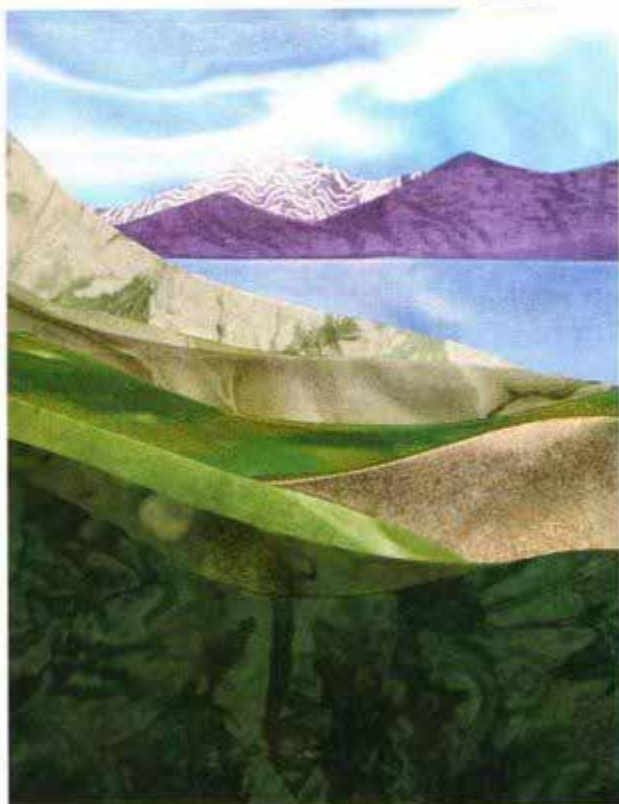
### Layering Tip:

When you are layering the strips and you are not quite sure how much distance to leave between them, show more of your favorite fabrics. It's easy and it will make you happy.

Besides the fun approach, consider a more scientific approach: layers in the distance should be very close together, and layers in the foreground should be further apart, to give the illusion of perspective.

## VARIATION #1: Lake to the Right

- A. Begin layering with a light green strip at an angle so that the upper left corner extends into the sky.
- B. Continue layering the green strips in gradated order, ending with the darkest.



## VARIATION #2: Lake in Foreground

Start layering with four of the green strips (lights and mediums) below the mountain strips, then add the strip of blue.

Continue layering with the remaining three green strips.





## Pinning

Once the scene of your choice has been layered, insert pins perpendicular to the pressed edges, piercing several layers with one pin. Take your time to ensure that all layers are smooth and held securely in place.

In this example, I decided to angle both green strips to create a centered lake.

Pinned layers ready to topstitch

## Topstitching

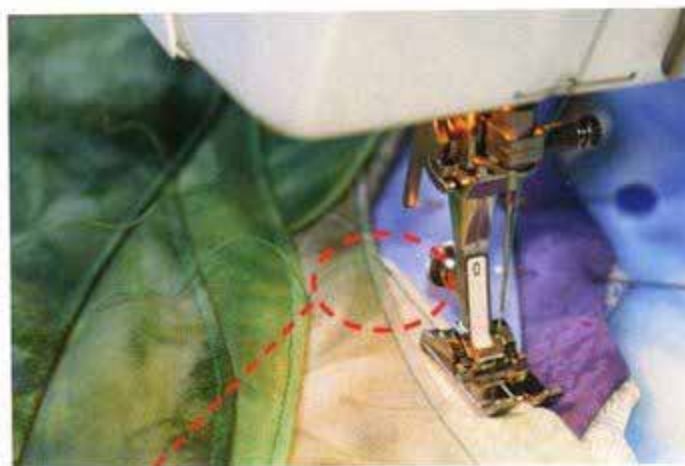
Begin with the last strip that was layered, the one at the bottom of the landscape. Use matching thread, or a variegated thread on the top of your machine, and a matching color or neutral thread in the bobbin. Set your machine for a straight stitch, approximately 11 stitches per inch (2.5cm), and stitch 1/8" (0.3 cm) from the pressed edge.

Remove the pins as you come to them. If a strip begins to pucker as you topstitch, smooth it out, easing the pucker toward the edge. Continue topstitching one strip at a time, always sewing in the same direction. Topstitch from the bottom of the landscape toward the sky section.

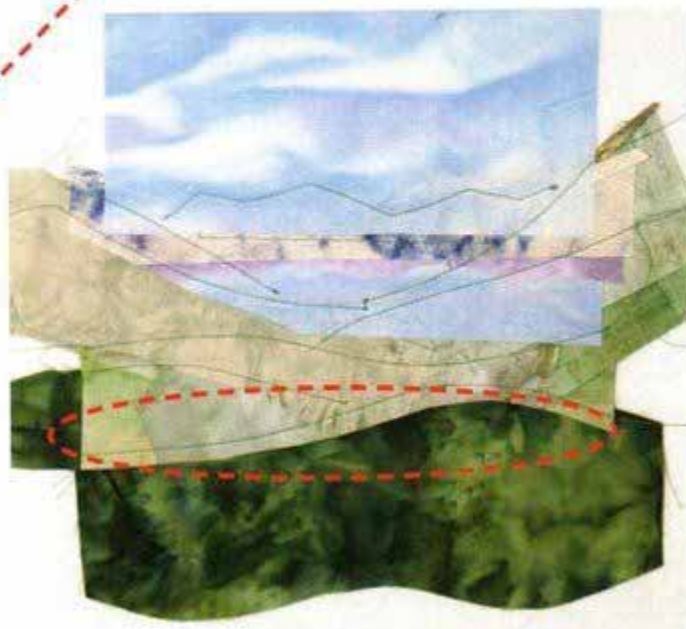
When a strip "disappears" behind another strip, begin topstitching at the point where the strips intersect, instead of topstitching in from the edge. Secure the beginning stitch with a single backstitch. Then continue sewing out towards the edge. This eases any excess fabric toward the edge, and prevents puckering.

Change the color of the thread to match the water and mountains. After the topstitching is complete, turn the piece over and trim away excess fabric, that is, any fabric so loose you can easily fit your fingers underneath. Press well with an iron from the back.

Excess fabric trimmed 1/4" (0.6 cm) from the topstitching



Topstitching when a strip "disappears"



## Balance and Composition

The width of the landscape will usually be determined by the shortest raw edges on the left and right sides. To determine the length, decide on whether a square format, horizontal, or vertical format is best for the scene.

As a helpful guide, consider the rule of thirds when deciding on a length for your landscape. If you want a low horizon, let the sky equal two thirds of the scene and the land mass occupy the remaining one third. If you want a high horizon, let the sky occupy the top one third, and allot the remaining bottom two thirds to the landmass. In determining the proportions you do not need to measure, just eyeball. An extra inch or two is often quite appealing. Let the elements of the composition determine the final size.

### The "Rule of Thirds"



Low Horizon: Sky = 2/3

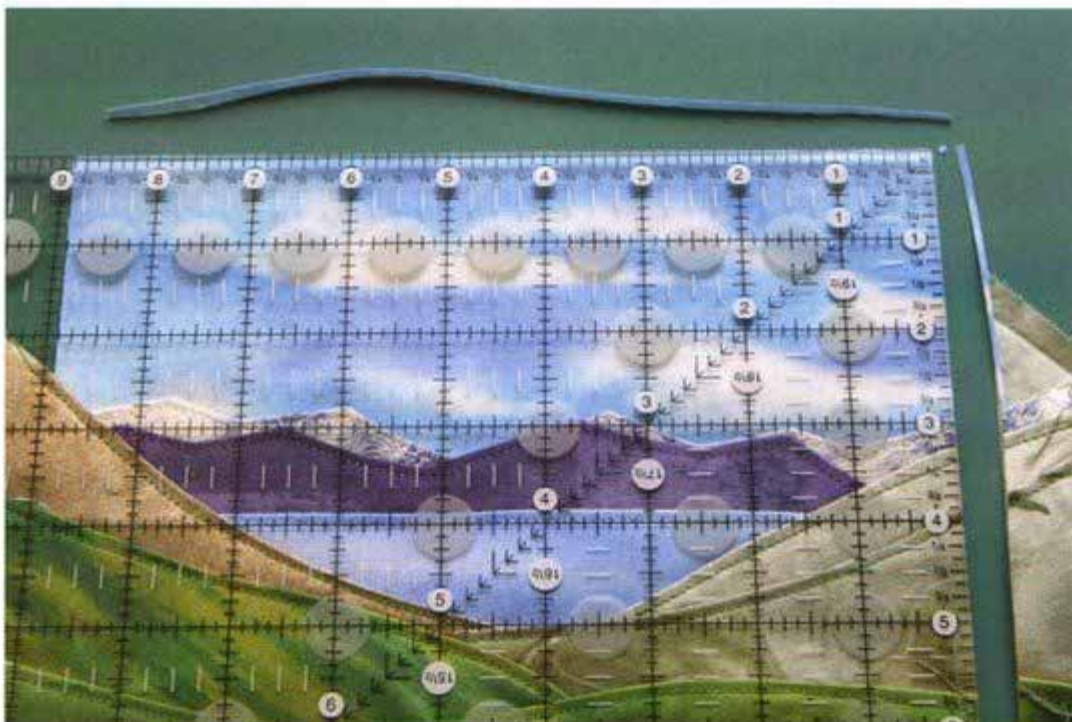


High Horizon: Sky = 1/3

#### Trimming and Squaring:

To provide the viewer of your quilt with a feeling of balance and surefootedness, **trim the top section of the sky so that it is exactly parallel to any straight lines in the landscape**, such as the surface of a lake. Use a quilter's square and line up a horizontal line on the grid with the horizontal line of the lake fabric (or a straight horizon line).

Always trim and square your landscape before adding borders.

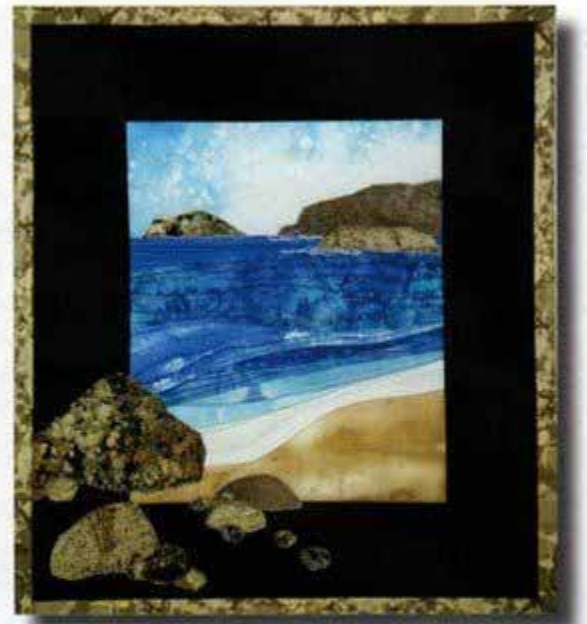


Trimming  
and  
Squaring

## Sample Project #2: Waves Upon the Shore

### Layering From Bottom to Top AND Top to Bottom!

Most Accidental Landscapes are layered from the top sky fabric to the bottom foreground strip. But there are exceptions and combinations. In this sample, we want to make the waves look as though they are rolling onto the shore. You can achieve that look by reversing the direction in which you layer and topstitch the strips.



Size: 10"W x 12"L (25x30 cm)

#### Fabric Strips

**Sky:** One 7"W x 3"L (18x8 cm)  
blue/white rectangle

**Sand:** One 7"W x 3"L (18x8 cm) tan rectangle

**Waves:** Seven blues (gradated from dark to light) and one white. Cut 7"W x 2"L (18x5 cm) strips with a gentle curve on one edge from each of the wave fabrics (a total of eight strips)

**Rocks/Islands:** Scraps of textural prints (not shown)

#### Transition Strip:

Choose one of the dark blue strips on which to cut a gentle curve along both long edges. Press both of the curved edges under  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6 cm). This strip is called the **transition strip**. Its purpose is to connect the two sections of layered strips. You'll see how this works soon.

#### Pressing

Press  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6 cm) toward the wrong side on one edge of all the wave strips.

The sky and sand rectangles do not need to have the edges pressed under.





## Section 1

- A. Place the sand rectangle down on a flat surface.



Next place the white strip above the sand rectangle, with the pressed edge facing bottom and overlapping the sand fabric. The white strip can be placed either at an angle or horizontally, as long as it covers the top raw edge of the sand.

- B. Next place a light blue strip so that it overlaps the white strip and the pressed edge faces the bottom.



- C. Continue to layer the remaining five wave strips in this direction.

Pin the layers with the heads of the pins facing bottom toward the sand fabric, as shown in Photo F below.



## Section 2

- D. Place the sky rectangle down on a flat surface. Add two raw-edge rock/island shapes by aligning the bottom raw edges of the rocks with the bottom raw edge of the sky fabric. Glue-baste the shapes with fabric glue.



Layer a blue strip with the pressed edge facing up toward the sky so that it covers the bottom edge of the rock/islands by  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6 cm).

- E. Next place a rock shape on the blue strip, so that it sits in front of the distant rock/island shape without blocking it. Glue-baste.



Add the transition strip, which has both long edges pressed under. Layer this strip to cover the bottom raw edge of the last rock shape.

- F. Pin the layers with the heads of the pins facing upward toward the sky fabric.



## Adding Lace: Lapping Waves

### Topstitching

1. Topstitch each section separately. Begin sewing with the last strip that was layered.
2. Combine sections so that the bottom of the transition strip overlaps the top strip from Section 1. Trim the strips, if necessary, to make the two sections fit together naturally. Pin in place. Topstitch with matching thread.

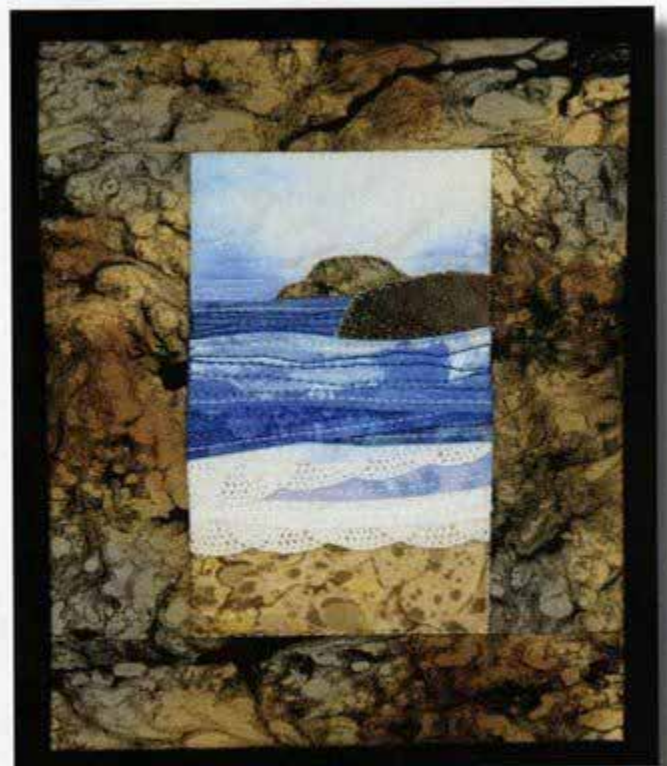
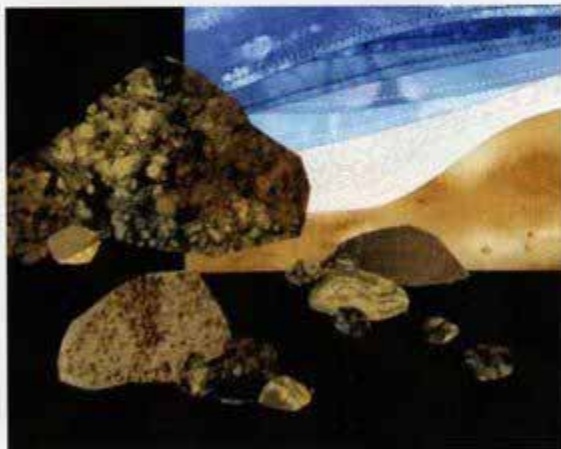


Strips of 1" (2.5 cm) wide flat, unruffled white lace can be layered among the strips to create three-dimensional effects. A simple change in the direction of the layered strips will affect the types of waves created, either gentle lapping waves or crashing waves.

- Layer in two sections
- Transition strip is close to horizon



3. Turn over and trim excess fabric.
4. After adding borders, extend elements of the scene into the border. Use raw-edge collage, hand appliqué, topstitched or fused shapes.



## VARIATION #1: Crashing Waves

- Layer in one section
- Transition strip is the last strip layered next to the sand

Add strips of lace at the layering stage. After topstitching, tack down sections of the lace to look like crashing waves. Machine or hand-stitch with white thread.

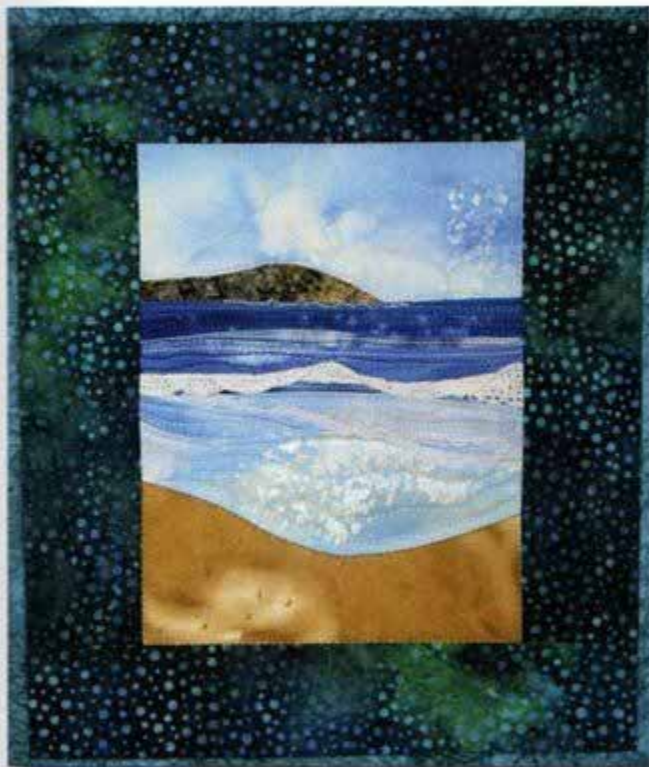


## VARIATION #2: Lapping and Crashing Waves

- Layer in two sections
- Transition strip is the second to last strip layered next to the sand.

### Tip:

The transition strip in all of these examples may need to be custom trimmed and adjusted to fit the section.



Crashing Waves  
6"W x 9"L (15x23 cm)



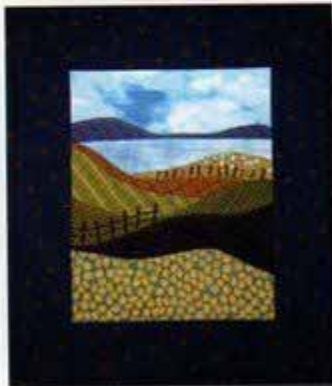
Lapping and Crashing Waves  
6"W x 9"L (15x23 cm)

# PATHWAYS TO SUCCESSFUL DESIGNS

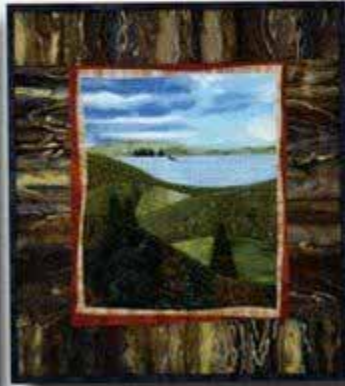
## Sample Project #3: The Four Seasons

### Local Color and Value

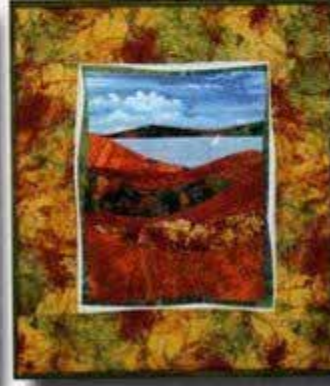
With a little care in selecting colors and values, you can create the illusion of distance or set a mood. Here are four Accidental Landscapes, which all contain the same sections: sky (rectangle), distant hill (curved strip), lake (straight strip), and six layers of foreground (curved strips). Notice how a simple change in the color palette dramatically affects the time of day and time of year.



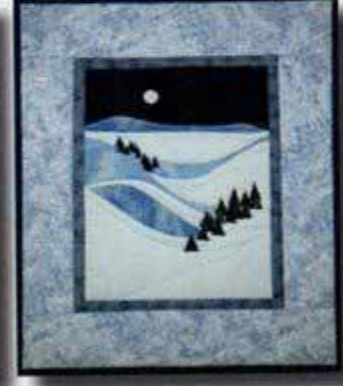
**Spring:** Floral prints, plaids, and stripes to look like plowed fields



**Summer:** Warm greens



**Fall:** Foliage colors



**Winter:** Cool blues, white flannel, and dark nighttime sky

### General Rules for use of Value, Color, and Scale in Landscapes:

- Hills/Mountains: Dark values in the foreground, with light values in the distance
- Water: Light values in the foreground, with dark values in the distance
- Bright colors in the foreground, with grayed or muted colors in the distance
- Large shapes in the foreground, with smaller shapes in the distance
- Layers spaced farther apart in the foreground, with layers close together in the distance
- Sunrise/Sunset: The sky is the brightest section with the foreground in silhouette, either black or very muted shades

Use these general rules as guidelines. There are many occasions where these rules will not apply. For example, the summer scene is the only one of the four seasons that follows the rule of of gradating the values from dark in the foreground to light in the distance. This illustrates the point that although the other three seasons do not follow the rules rigidly, they still look like landscapes.

In reality, when looking at hills or mountains the values do indeed gradate from dark to light, however, the immediate foreground, where the viewer is standing, will very often be light in value and color (as seen in the Spring scene). Here are a few more exceptions to the rule:

- When standing on a sand dune looking toward the water. The sand is actually darker at the water's edge, so the layers will gradate from light in the foreground to slightly darker near the water.
- When clouds interact with the sun, they cast random shadows on the landscape, often creating layers that look "striped"... dark, light, dark, light. This creates the illusion that there are more hills in the scene.

## A Perfect Focal Point

Horizontal lines make a beautiful landscape; however, in order to invite the viewers into the picture and tempt them to linger a while, you may want to add a focal point. Two or three subjects such as trees, fences, sailboats or tall grass work well as focal points to break up the rhythm of the horizontal lines.

### Where to place the focal point?

Imagine a tic-tac-toe grid over the entire landscape. The points where the lines intersect are good spots to place a focal point. See photo at right.

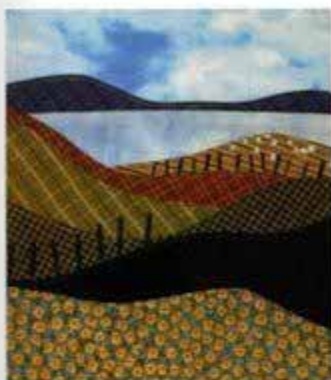


## Detail Oriented

There isn't any reason why a focal point needs to be realistic or time-consuming and tedious to create. It can simply suggest the subject. Squares (houses), circle (moon), triangles (fir trees and sailboats), and strips (fences) are the basic shapes I use for the collage details in my Accidental Landscapes.

You can also go prospecting through your fabric stash and your local quilt shop or fabric store for conversation prints and small-scale pictorials. The trick is finding the scale that is right for your Accidental Landscape.

To attach your focal points, adhere them with a dot of fabric glue. This will hold them in place until it is time to machine-stitch them at the quilting stage. The quilting will give them extra textural dimension.



### Spring:

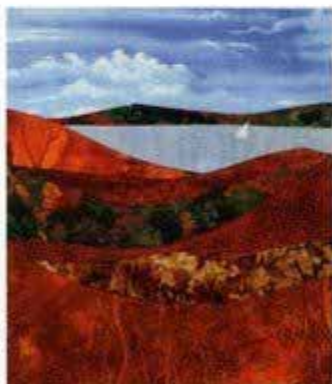
Strips of brown fabric suggest a fence. Longer strips are placed in the foreground, and shorter strips give the feeling of distance. Tiny balls of batting suggest sheep. Use a dot of black marker for their faces.



### Summer:

Green fabric triangles suggest fir trees. To create dimension, place large trees in the foreground, medium size trees in the middle, and small trees in the distance. A small strip of red fabric suggests a canoe.

**Fall:**  
A small white triangle suggests a sailboat.



**Winter:**  
A small circle of white cotton batting suggests a full moon. Green triangles suggest fir trees.

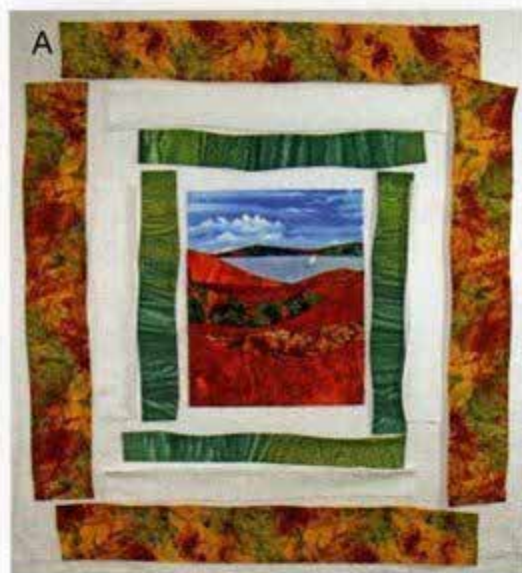


## Headed for the Borders – Curvy and Straight

Add a touch of the accidental to the borders as well, by topstitching curved border strips around your landscape. These whimsical borders are a quick and easy way to enhance the colors of the scene without concern for precise measurements and accuracy.

### Hints for Choosing Border Fabrics

- Choose an inner border color that contrasts in value to the landscape.
- Look for one of the least used colors in the scene, and use that for an inner border to create a sense of color balance.
- Try to find an outer border fabric that reflects the mood of the scene. Perhaps it includes all of the colors or adds an obvious motif that helps tell the story of the landscape. Audition several possibilities before making a decision.
- Some landscapes will only need one border, where others may require three borders. Refer back to page 18 for different border treatments and color choices used in the Four Seasons.



### Curvy Borders

- A. Cut four gently curved 2" (5 cm) strips for the first inner border. The length and width of each 2" (5 cm) strip should be slightly longer than the length and width of the trimmed/squared landscape.

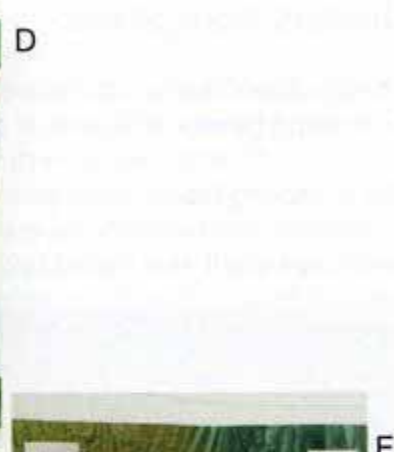
Cut four gently curved 2" (5cm) strips for the second inner border (white strips - difficult to see in photo). The length and width of each 2" (5 cm) strip should be slightly longer than the length and width of the landscape plus the first inner border.

Cut four gently curved 3" (8 cm) strips for the outer border. The length and width of each 3" (8 cm) strip should be longer than the length and width of the landscape combined with the two inner borders.

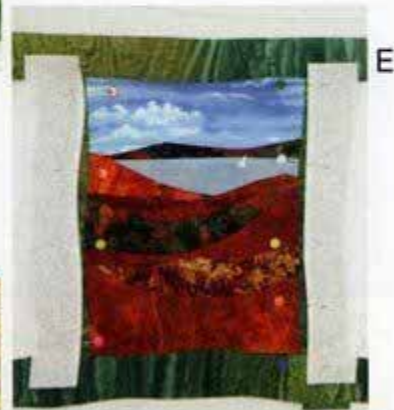
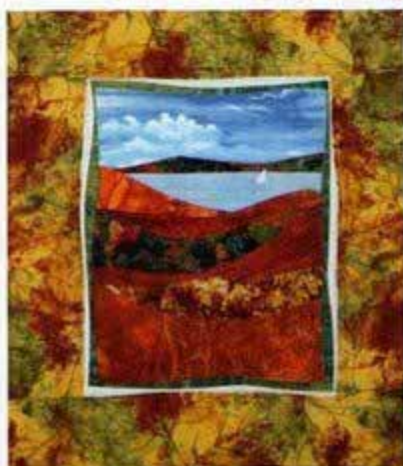
Press  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6 cm) to the wrong side on one long edge only of all of the curved strips.

- B. Pin two of the first inner borders, with the right side of the border fabric facing up, on the left and right sides of the landscape. Overlap the pressed edge of the strips on top of the landscape by a minimum of  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6 cm).





- C. Topstitch with matching thread, 1/8" (0.3 cm) from the pressed edge.
- D. Repeat the pinning and topstitching with the top and bottom first inner borders.
- E. Add the second inner border to the sides by overlapping it on top of the first inner border. Move it up, down, and shift it sideways until you like the look. Then pin the strip in place and topstitch.
- F. Repeat layering process with the top and bottom second inner borders and the four outer borders.



Turn the piece over and trim away excess fabric.

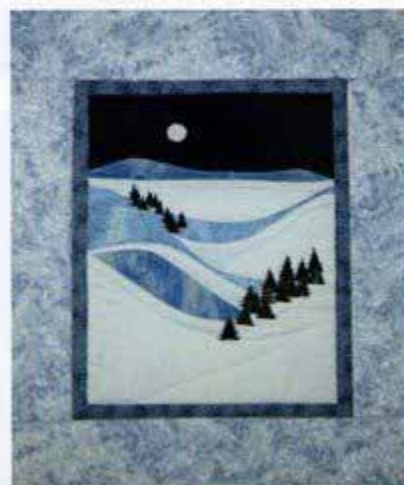
## Straight Borders

Cut four 1" (2.5 cm) strips for the inner borders  
(finished size 1/2"=1.2cm)

Cut four 3" (7.5 cm) strips for the outer borders  
(finished size 2 1/2"=6.3 cm)

Place the border strips right sides together with the landscape and sew a 1/4" (0.6 cm) seam allowance.

Sew the two side borders on first. Press seams toward the border fabric. Then sew the two top borders and press. Continue adding the remaining borders in this manner.



## Quilting Your Scene

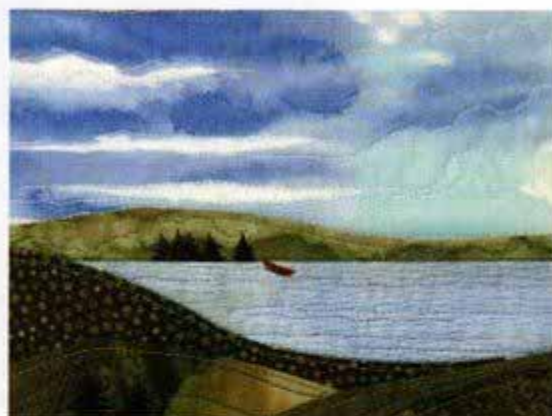
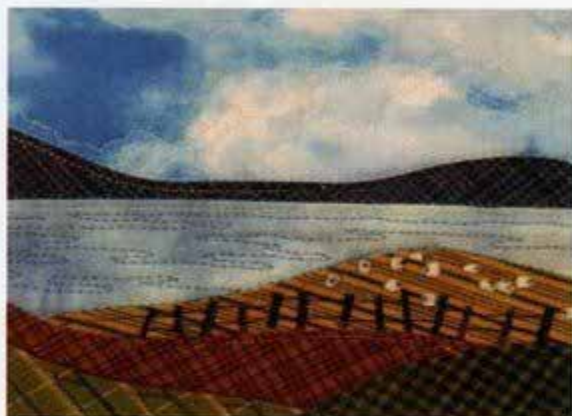
The quintessential touch for any quilt is the quilting. These lines of dimension add extra topography to your Accidental Landscape.

Cut a backing fabric and a piece of 100% cotton batting approximately 1" (2.5 cm) larger than the landscape. Pin-baste the layers together in this order: backing fabric (right side facing down), batting, and landscape (right side facing up).

Make sure you use 100% cotton batting. Your landscape will thank you by hanging perfectly flat when displayed in a place of honor.

### Quilting Tips:

- With a walking foot or darning foot (for free-motion quilting) on your sewing machine add a few quilting lines to each topstitched section that echo the curves of the topstitched seams. Stitching in the ditch, next to the topstitched seams will add more texture to the surface. Avoid stitching across any of the topstitched seams, since this will flatten the sections and reduce the amount of texture in the scene.
- When possible, quilt lines that follow the pattern or design in the fabric. This is especially effective when quilting the sky.
- To suggest snow, add only one quilting line per section, so the surface retains a puffy, smooth appearance in order to look like snow.
- For most focal points, which are raw-edge shapes, you can simply outline-quilt with a matching thread.
- For fir trees, stitch randomly back and forth over the green fabric triangles, extending the quilting lines slightly beyond the edges of the green fabric triangles. This will suggest tiers of feathery boughs.





## Bound for the Wall

Now that you have created your fabric landscape, you'll want to display it for everyone to see. That's where a binding and hanging sleeve enter the picture. Insert a wooden dowel, which is exactly the width of the quilt into the hanging sleeve. Use two screw eyes with holes large enough for the wooden dowel to fit through.



### Hanging Sleeve

1. Cut a  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " (16.5 cm) length of fabric. The width will be determined by the width of the Accidental Landscape. Width minus 2 inches (5 cm), is the correct size for the hanging sleeve. For example: For a 9" (23 cm) wide landscape, cut a 7"W x  $6\frac{1}{2}$ "L (18x16.5 cm) strip.
2. Press  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6 cm) under on the  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " (16.5 cm) side, (toward the wrong side) then press that over  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6 cm) once again. Repeat on the other  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " (16.5 cm) side.
3. Machine-stitch down the pressed edges to hold them in place.
4. Fold in half and press with wrong sides together to create a  $3\frac{1}{4}$ " (8.3 cm) hanging sleeve.
5. Pin the hanging sleeve to the back of the Accidental Landscape by aligning the raw edges of the sleeve with the top raw edges of the Accidental Landscape. Center the hanging sleeve so that there is approximately a 1" (2.5 cm) space on either side. These are the spaces on either side that hide the hardware when displaying your quilt.



### Fabric Binding

1. Cut  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " x 44"/45" (6.3x115 cm) (selvage to selvage) strips that will extend around the perimeter of the quilt.
2. Join the two strips together with a straight or 45° angled seam.
3. At one end, this will be your starting point, press a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6 cm) under toward the wrong side. Then press the strips in half lengthwise, with wrong sides together.
4. Pin to the top right side of the quilt, aligning the raw edges.
5. As you come to a corner, flip the fabric strip up at a 45° angle, then fold it down again and continue pinning.
6. To finish pinning the binding, insert the tail end into the starting point, as shown above.
7. Machine-stitch a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6 cm) seam allowance.
8. Fold binding around to the back and hand-stitch to the back, so that the line of machine stitching is covered. Miter the corners as you come to them.

Hand-stitch the bottom edge of the hanging sleeve.

## Framing the Vista

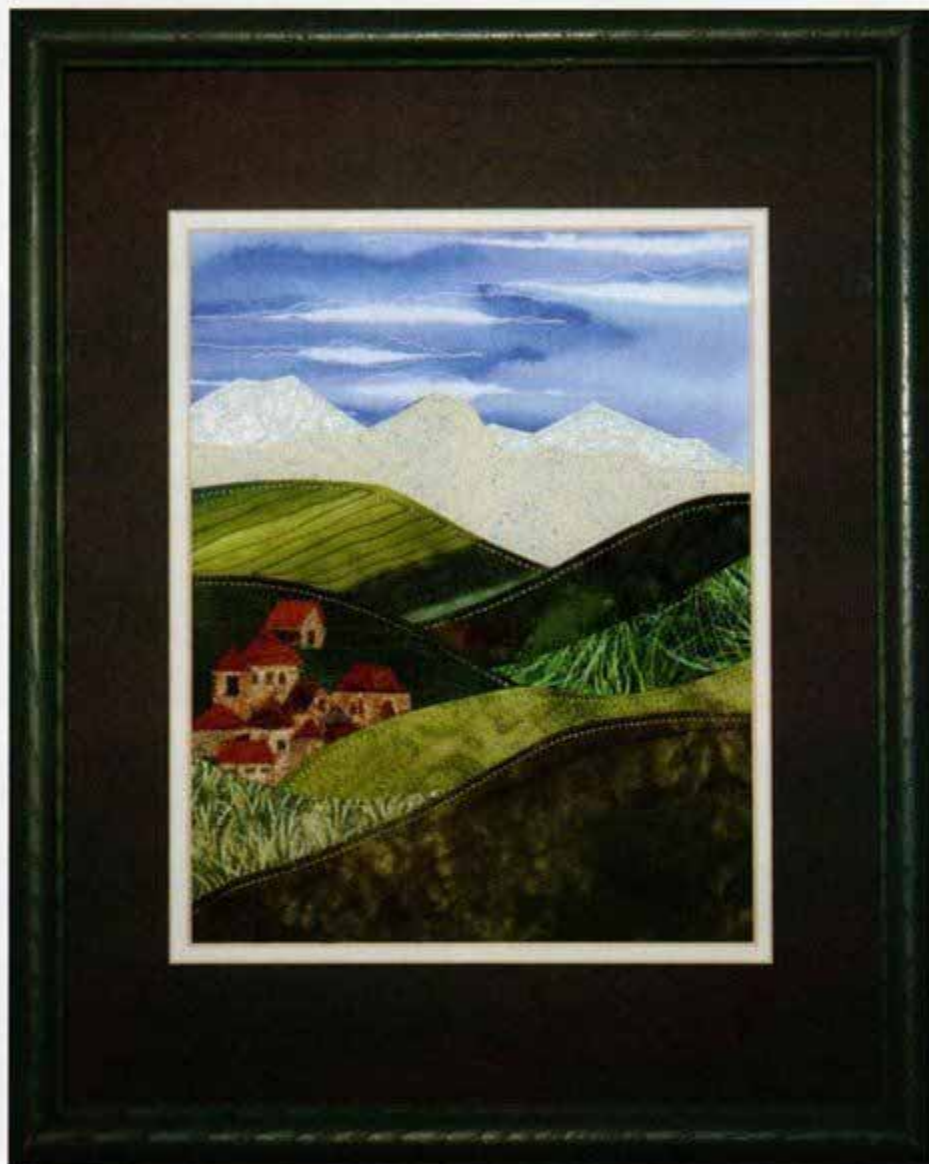
Instead of using a fabric binding, borders and a hanging sleeve, you may wish to consider a quick and dramatic finish that treats your piece like a landscape painting.

Select a standard 11"W x 14"L (28x35 cm) mat, acid-free if possible, with an 8"W x 10"L (20x25 cm) opening. The exact measurement for the opening commonly equals 7½"W x 9½"L (19x24 cm). Trim your quilts a bit larger than the opening size.

For extra dimension, add a piece of 100% cotton batting behind the landscape and do a little hand or machine quilting. No need to waste time picking out the perfect backing fabric since it will be covered by the mat board. Secure your landscape with archival linen hanging tape on an 11"W x 14"L (28x35 cm) acid-free mat board.

Use a standard 11"W x 14"L (28x35 cm) wooden or metal frame. Remove the glass to allow the fabric to breathe and to leave room for three-dimensional embellishments, such as beads and yarn.

Of course, there are many different size mats and frames available at craft stores. Check out the wide selection of colors and double mat combinations to see what's right for your new landscape. You may even want to splurge and have your masterpiece custom framed.



# FOUR EASY APPROACHES

Here are four trails to explore. Along these trails I will:

1. Introduce you to the idea of creating scenes **inspired by photos** and how to **incorporate photo transfers** into your scene. Different examples will warm you up to the possibilities.
2. Show you how inspiration for a landscape can begin with a **favorite color palette or focus fabric**. Now that's an adventure you won't want to miss!
3. Lead you through the process of choosing just the right colors to create **wintery effects**.
4. Tempt you with the drama of a black and white palette. See what happens when you experiment with your collection of **black and white fabrics** to create a landscape!

## Approach #1: Inspired by Photos

Accidental Landscapes inspired by photographs, post cards, calendars, or magazines capture the essence of the images in colors and lines. Aim for a general impression of the scene. Leave the idea of duplicating the image in intricate detail at home. On this trip we want to enjoy ourselves as we revisit a favorite vacation spot, remember special occasions with family and friends, or search for Shangri-La. Relax and let go of your expectations. You won't know where you are going until you reach your destination.

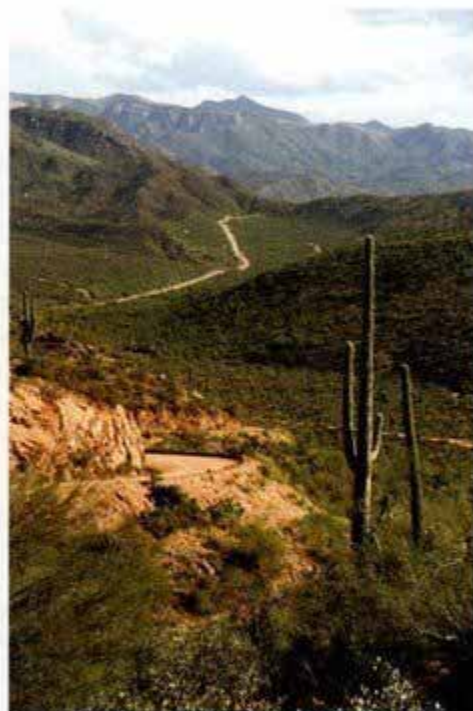
### Photograph Check-List

- Be passionate about your scene:** Look for a photograph or image that excites you and draws you in. If you absolutely love an image, those warm feelings will come out in the final product.
- Look for layers:** Are there horizontal lines that run across the photo? Use the paper "sliver test" (see page 4).
- Categorize the lines:** Curves, angles, or straight lines?
- Simplify and exaggerate:** Count the layers in your scene. Then exaggerate the number of layers. For example: in a typical beach scene there are three simple layers: sky, water and sand. To exaggerate the number of layers, use 4-6 different fabric strips for the water and as many as 11 different fabric strips for the sand. The more the merrier!
- Eliminate details:** Add them later, sparingly.
- Add a focal point:** Use the tic-tac-toe rule for placement (see page 19).
- Combine elements from different photos** to make your own interpretation.
- Choose a dynamic sky:** A great sky fabric is critical to the entire mood of the scene. It also determines the size of your piece. Cut all layers to match, approximately, the width of the sky fabric.
- Variety of values:** Include a minimum of three values: dark, medium, and light.
- Decide on an overall format:** Horizontal/calm, vertical/energetic, or square/stable.
- Set your photos/images aside:** Look at them to select colors, values, and to categorize the lines, then tuck them away out of view. Think about the scene when you are cutting the strips. Remember how the photo makes you feel and your strips will reflect your emotions.
- Keep it small!** This technique works best in a miniature scale, both technically and visually. As beginners on this path, aim for Accidental Landscapes with a width in the 6"-12" (15-30 cm) range. With a little practice and experience you can expand your horizons and test the limits by making the maximum 22" (55 cm) width. Beyond that limit, your landscape takes on a new dimension that requires different details and perspective.

## Inspired by a Single Photo

My husband Walter and I love to hike and travel. Any dirt road or path is an open invitation to explore the unknown. I was inspired by this particular photograph in the desert, which captures the spirit of many of our trips. See that winding dirt road? Isn't it just beckoning us to find out where it leads? What's around the next bend? I wonder what we'll see there? Come on, let's find out.

- **Choosing Fabrics:** I let the colors in the photograph be my guide, but ultimately let my preference for warm tans, rust, and brown win out. Once I selected the fabrics and categorized the layers, I made sure that the photograph was put out of sight. That way it couldn't influence how I layered the strips, and I would truly be creating an Accidental Landscape.
- **Looking for Layers:** The majority of the layers in the photograph appear to be curves, with one angular strip for the distant mountain. To keep it simple, I cut all of the strips 10"W x 4"L (25x10 cm).
- **Scouting for a Focal Point:** The foreground cactus captures your attention as the main focal point. The winding dirt road is a secondary focal point, which leads you into the scene.
- **Detail Oriented/Embellishments:** I enjoy using green eyelash yarn to suggest sagebrush. I glue-basted the yarn in place, then quilted through it with a matching thread. I'll show you how to add a textured prickly cactus to your landscape in the Scene Enhancer chapter.
- **Headed for the Borders:** I chose an inner border that would emphasize the color of the dirt road. I got lucky in finding fabrics for the outer border and binding which continued my desert theme. I was very pleased that it successfully brought all of the colors in the scene together.

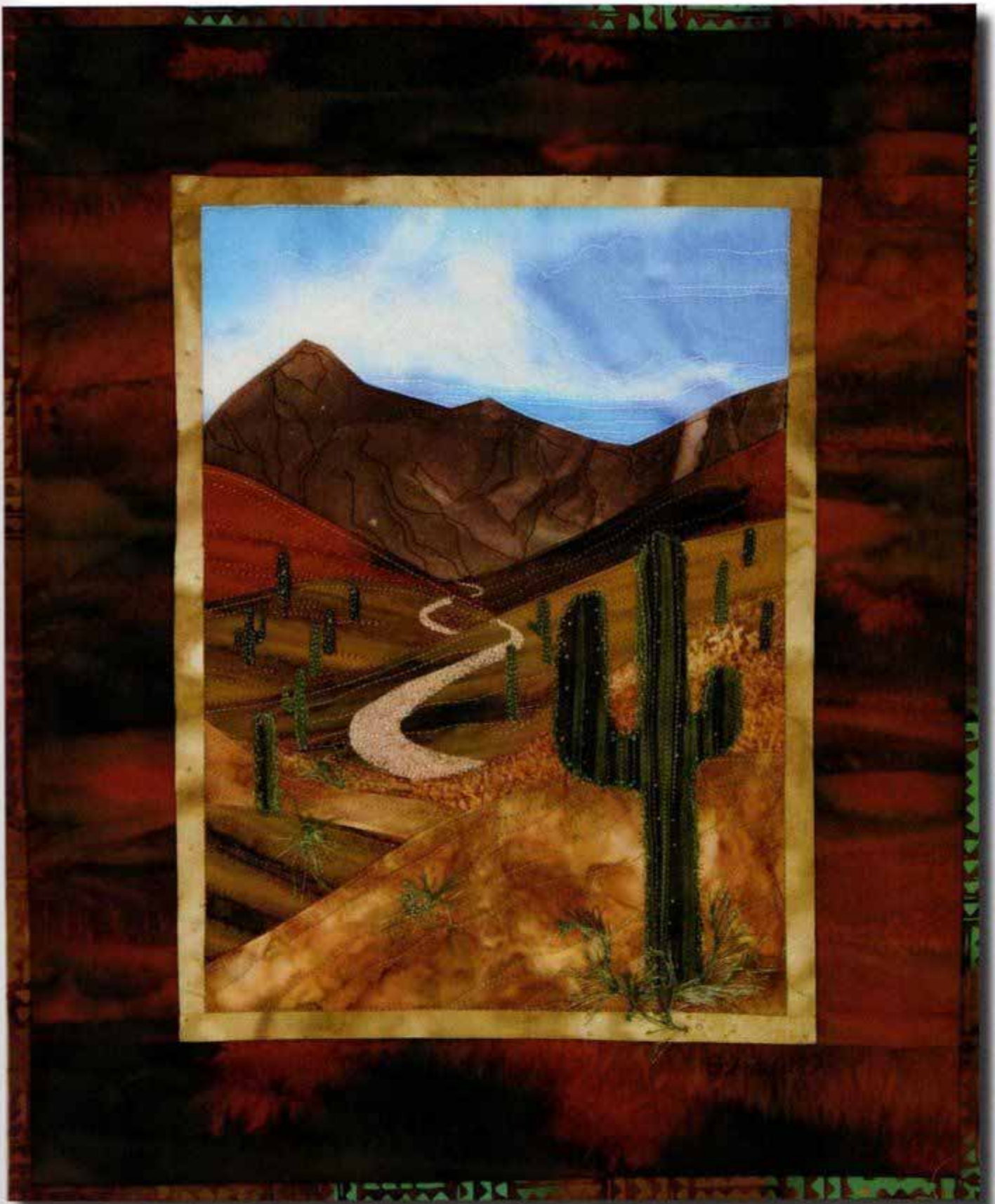


### Tip:

When you aren't sure what size strips to cut, cut 4" (10 cm) strips, because you can always expose most of the full length, or conceal all but a sliver with overlapping strips.

### Drawing a Road:

For the road, I placed a piece of tracing paper over the topstitched scene so that I could see the different sections underneath. I drew an "S" shape and crescent shapes that gradually got narrower in the distance. I cut the road shapes out of fabric and adhered them with fabric glue, so they would stay in place until I quilted them. Notice how the road appears to wind up and down through the hills. This illusion is created by shifting the road sections slightly up or down, so that they do not align. Narrowing the width of the road makes it look as though it disappears into the distance.



Desert Road (2007)  
16"W x 19"L (41x48 cm)

## Inspired by More Than One Photo

Combining elements from different photographs gives you the freedom to decide which elements you like best from each photo. That's what I did with these sunrise beach photos. Here's what I mean:

**Photo #1:** I love the silhouette of the sea oats, but not the gray color of the ocean.

**Photo #2:** Great colors in the water and the sky, but there isn't a focal point to hold my attention.

**Photo #3:** The seagull flying toward the rising sun is perfect, but the color of the ocean is too drab. And trust me, it's really hard to find those colors in your fabric stash!

- **Choosing Fabrics:** In my version of this sunrise, I took the liberty of choosing rosy fabric colors for the ocean, just before the sun rises (photo #2). It's tempting to add a yellow circle for the sun, but I like how my hand-painted sky suggests the glow of the sun.
- **Looking for Layers:** It's easy to see the straight lines in all three photos.
- **Scouting for a Focal Point:** My choice is the sea oats for the foreground, plus the seagull flying in the distance.
- **Detail Oriented:** I traced the silhouette of the sea oats and the seagull directly from the photograph and used the tracings as my guides. I cut strips of black fabric to suggest the sea oats, and adhered them with fabric glue. Then I used free-motion quilting to add the details. You can also add these types of details with a fine fabric marker or with hand embroidery. I used a very fine fabric marker to trace the tiny seagull outline. Templates for these details are included in the "Beaches" pattern (see page 62).
- **Headed for the Borders:** I found a blue/pink fabric with a subtle wave design to continue my water theme into the border. I carried the glow of the sunrise right out into the binding.



Photo #1



Photo #2



Photo #3

### Tip:

For a successful sunset or sunrise scene, select a fantastic sky fabric. A light area in the fabric will suggest the glow of the sun. Also use a low horizon format, which emphasizes the sky.

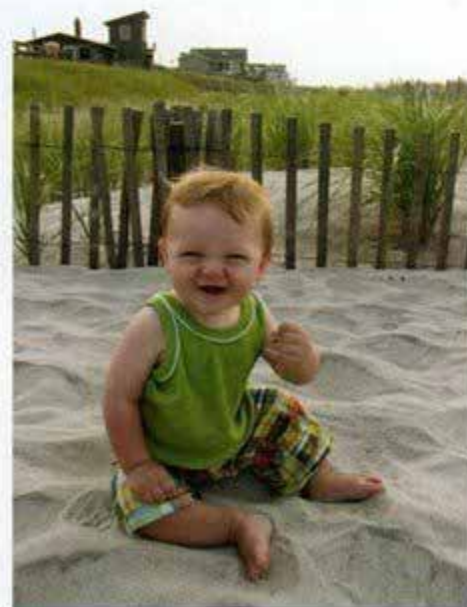


Sunrise Beach (2002)  
11"W x 10"L (28x25 cm)

## Adding a Photo Transfer

Photographs can both inspire and play an integral part of the scene. For this Accidental Landscape, I combined elements of two photographs to capture my grandson Trevor's first day at the beach. Look at the joy in his face as his hand holds that first fistful of sand. Let me show you how I got started and the experiences I had along the way.

- **Choosing Fabrics:** I selected fabrics based very loosely on the colors in the photographs. The actual sky and water colors seemed too washed out for this special occasion, so I took the liberty of selecting brighter sky and water fabrics. Once the fabrics were chosen, I set the photographs aside, so they wouldn't influence the layering process.
- **Looking for Layers:** The layers in the scene fell into the gentle curves and straight-line categories. I cut all of the strips with gentle curves except for the horizon, which I cut straight. I cut seven 8"W x 2"L (20x5 cm) water strips gradated from white to dark teal and four 8"W x 4"L (20x10 cm) gray strips. Remember to keep the water horizon line straight.
- **Scouting for a Focal Point:** I eliminated the house in the background, but chose to keep the dune fence. I now had a scene for my focal point, Trevor.
- **Adding a Photo Image:** Before I transferred the image of Trevor onto a fabric sheet, I printed several different sizes of the photo on regular paper, to see which size would work best with the size of my landscape. Then I transferred that image on to a paper backed fabric sheet using my printer.
- **Detail Oriented:** I added 1/8" (0.3 cm) wide slivers of a dark gray/brown to suggest the dune fence. The vertical lines of the fence break up the horizontal lines of the scene and bring attention to Trevor. Pre-printed fabric sailboats were added in the distance. Although they weren't in the original photos, they add interest and perspective to this little scene.
- **Headed for the Borders:** I chose the happy plaid border fabric to accentuate Trevor's colorful madras shorts.



### Cutting Tip:

When cutting out the image of Trevor from the photo transfer, I left approximately 1/4" (0.6 cm) space around his body, where I could simultaneously appliqué and quilt, leaving the photo unblemished and uninterrupted by stitches.



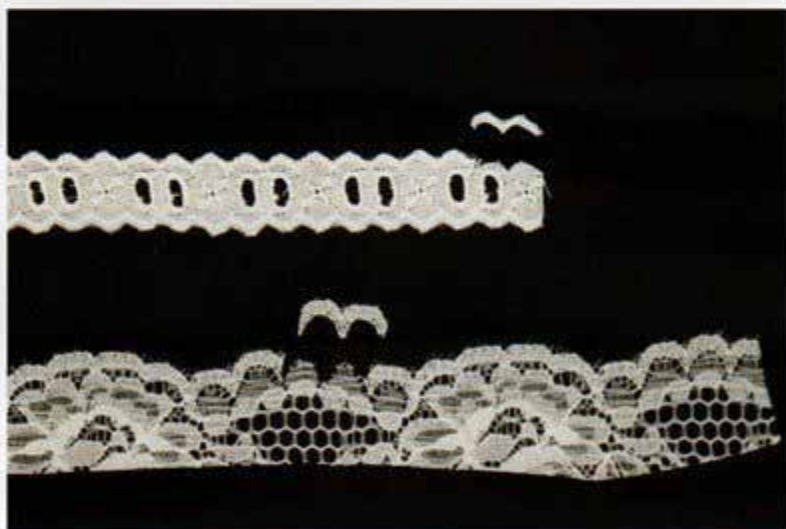


First Day at the Beach (2007)  
13W x 17L (33x43 cm)

## Combining Elements

When I look at these photos I still remember the windblown feeling I had standing on those rocky ledges. I can feel the mist from the crashing waves and hear the chatter of the seagulls. I just snapped these shots to remember the day. Perhaps you have a few snap shots from special moments? If that's so, let a group of your photos inspire you to visit a similar memory, one that only you can commemorate with strips of fabric.

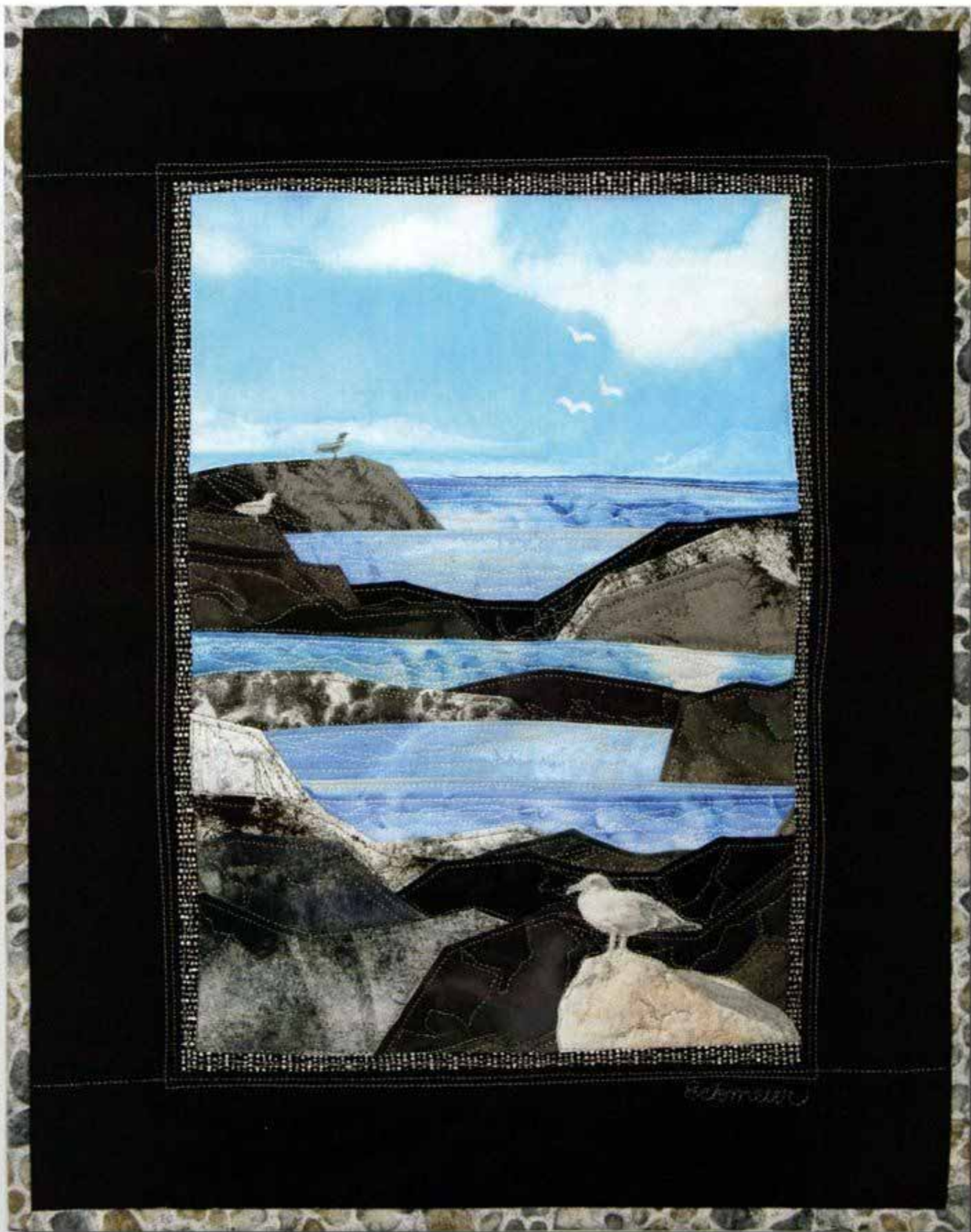
- **Choosing Fabrics:** The high contrast in the rock layers make me think of a black and white photograph. So I selected a gradation of fabrics from light gray to deep black for the rocks. For the water, I selected a couple of my hand-painted fabrics that had both white and light blue.
- **Looking for Layers:** I categorized the lines into straight strips for the water and irregular angular shapes for the rocks.
- **Scouting for a Focal Point/Photo Transfer:** The seagulls came to the rescue in the form of photo transfers. I placed a large seagull in the foreground, and tiny seagulls in the distance to give the scene the perspective it needed.
- **Detail Oriented:** I had fun adding very small three-dimensional seagulls in the sky by cutting sections of lace (see below).
- **Headed for the Borders:** I selected a solid black fabric for the border to bring out the deepest value in the rocks. I got a kick out of continuing the black and white combination in the inner border and the rock theme into the binding. There's even a feather motif on the backing fabric, in honor of the seagulls.



### Lace Seagulls:

I cut "v" shapes from two different laces. Can you see where the seagull shapes come from in the strips of lace?

Attach the seagulls with fabric glue and tack with white thread.



Seagull Rockscape (2007)  
15"W x 19"L (38x48 cm)

## Inspired by Photos / Adding Photo Transfers

On a trip to Italy we stayed in a villa nestled among the vineyards with distance views of a hilltop village. My husband took a photo of the beautiful gardens with the warm glow of the afternoon sun. Due to the angle of this shot, you don't see much of the surrounding hills, so I took the liberty of adding my own hills and distant village, in an Accidental Landscape way.



- **Choosing Fabrics:** I let the landscape inspire me. Striped fabrics in shades of olive tree and vineyard greens mimic the pattern of endless rows I had seen in the hills.
- **Looking for Layers:** Gentle curves dominate the Tuscan landscape, so I cut two 4" (10cm) strips from each of my five fabrics.
- **Scouting for a Focal Point/Photo Transfer:** The photo transfer of the villa and gardens, taken from the shot shown on right, is my foreground focal point. An additional distant focal point is a photo transfer of the hilltop village, taken from the shot shown below. The photo transfers are integrated into the landscape using raw-edge collage.
- **Detail Oriented:** When I cut the sky section away from the villa and gardens, a cypress tree was eliminated, so I added a green flannel cypress tree in its place and a few distant cypress trees. I also extended the garden to the right with a floral print fabric.
- **Headed for the Borders:** Framing the view with this wood-print fabric was an easy choice. A few collaged flowers escape into the border.

### Trimming Tip:

Trim away topstitched layers that are under a photo transfer. In this landscape the topstitched green hills were trimmed away from underneath the villa and gardens photo transfer. This keeps the surface of the photo transfer smooth.

### Photo Transfer Tip:

When using a photo transfer that includes a section of sky, carefully cut the sky section away from the photo, so that you can insert your own sky fabric underneath. This makes it easier to transition the photo into your scene without trying to match the sky color exactly.





Memories of Tuscany (2007)  
17W x 14L (43x35 cm)

## Approach #2: Favorite Colors and Fabrics

Now let me share my favorite approach to making an Accidental Landscape with you. It allows me to venture off the beaten path to a place I've never actually been. I choose a multi-color print fabric as my inspiration or focus, and let that be my starting point for choosing the fabrics for my landscape. The focus fabric may have distinct images that I love, or it could be a soft watercolor wash in a palette that makes my heart sing. Here are a few examples of Accidental Landscapes that have been inspired by a specific fabric.

### Asian Print Fabric

- **Focus Fabric – Asian Print:** I love the herons and the colors in this fabric. I envisioned a lone heron flying over an imaginary landscape.
- **Choosing Fabrics:** I selected ten different texture print fabrics to match the colors in the heron fabric. Aiming for a night scene helped me select the dark blue fabric for the sky.
- **Layers:** Since I am creating a landscape that I have never seen, I cut one 4" (10 cm) strip with a gentle curve from each of my fabrics.
- **Setting the Boundaries:** I wanted a horizontal format to show off the flying heron in a wide sky. Originally I was aiming for a low horizon with lots of sky, but it turned out to be a high horizon with very little sky!
- **Detail Oriented:** In addition to the graceful heron, other motifs from this focus fabric enliven the scene. The vertical stems of the flowers break up the rhythm of the horizontal lines.
- **Headed for the Borders:** I chose a solid black border, instead of using the heron fabric. The focus fabric had many herons flying in different directions, which would have been very distracting. Using it in the binding, however, frames and unifies the scene beautifully.
- **Embellishments:** Couched gold/white yarn adds sparkle and definition as an inner border.



#### Tell a Story:

Save one of your favorite fabrics for a foreground strip, especially if it helps tell the story of the scene. In the Accidental Landscape shown here, the bottom foreground strip features a bamboo motif that I really like. It suggests a lush area of reeds where my heron can hide.

#### Tip:

When layering strips, lean toward showing more of your favorite fabrics and less of those that are not as exciting to you.



Heron River (2007)  
19"W x 14"L (48x35 cm)

## Barnyard Animal Print Fabric

Landscapes can be whimsical too. Fabrics with barnyard animals and a red barn are my inspiration here.

- **Focus Fabric - Barnyard Animals:** What fun to create an imaginary barnyard for these cute animals!
- **Choosing Fabrics:** The colors in the focus fabric were my guide. I looked for dot, star, and swirl fabrics to keep the spirit of the piece child-like. Instead of using a realistic looking sky fabric, I chose one with cute puffy clouds to match the mood of the scene.
- **Layers:** I cut two 2" (5 cm) gently curved strips from each of the fabrics.
- **Setting the Boundaries:** I like the idea of a square format, with a high horizon, to provide lots of space for my animals to graze.
- **Detail Oriented:** As I cut around the animal shapes, their final destinations in the scene changed from my original plan. Even the site of the barn moved from the right hill to the left hill. I added a little fence, made up of vertical slivers of brown fabric, to break up the rhythm of the horizontal lines.
- **Headed for the Borders:** A thin black and white striped fabric in the inner border emphasizes the black and white cow. The outer red border and black binding echo the red barn and the barnyard theme.



### Across the Border:

When details of your scene are going to extend into the border, it's best to add the borders *before* adding the details. That way you can see the whole picture and make a better decision as to where to place your details.





Barnyard Animals (2007)  
15"W x 15"L (38x38 cm)

## Seashell Print Fabric

- **Focus Fabric - Seahorses and seashells:** This fabric makes me think of the ocean. I think that's a great reason to make a beach scene, don't you?
- **Choosing Fabrics:** Warm purples, oranges and yellows, to match the focus fabric, give this scene the soft glow of the late afternoon sun.
- **Layers:** For the sea, I cut four straight 2" (5 cm) strips from different purple fabrics and nine 4" (10 cm) strips with gentle curves from fabrics that coordinate with the focus fabric.
- **Setting the Boundaries:** When in doubt I usually choose a vertical format with a high horizon for my Accidental Landscape. A combination that works very nicely for this scene.
- **Detail Oriented:** A dark purple beach fence (1/8" = 0.3 cm strips of fabric) and a dark purple sailboat (very small triangle), are the finishing touches.
- **Headed for the Borders:** Let's show off the focus fabric, by using it in the border. A dark purple inner border echoes the color of the dune fence and sailboat.



Purple Beach (2007)  
13"W x 17"L (33x43 cm)

## Hand-Painted Fabric

### Tip:

How many layers should I cut, when I don't know what kind of landscape I am creating? Let the number of fabrics you choose to match your focus fabric be your guide. In this example I selected five fabrics, so I cut five strips. Nice and easy!

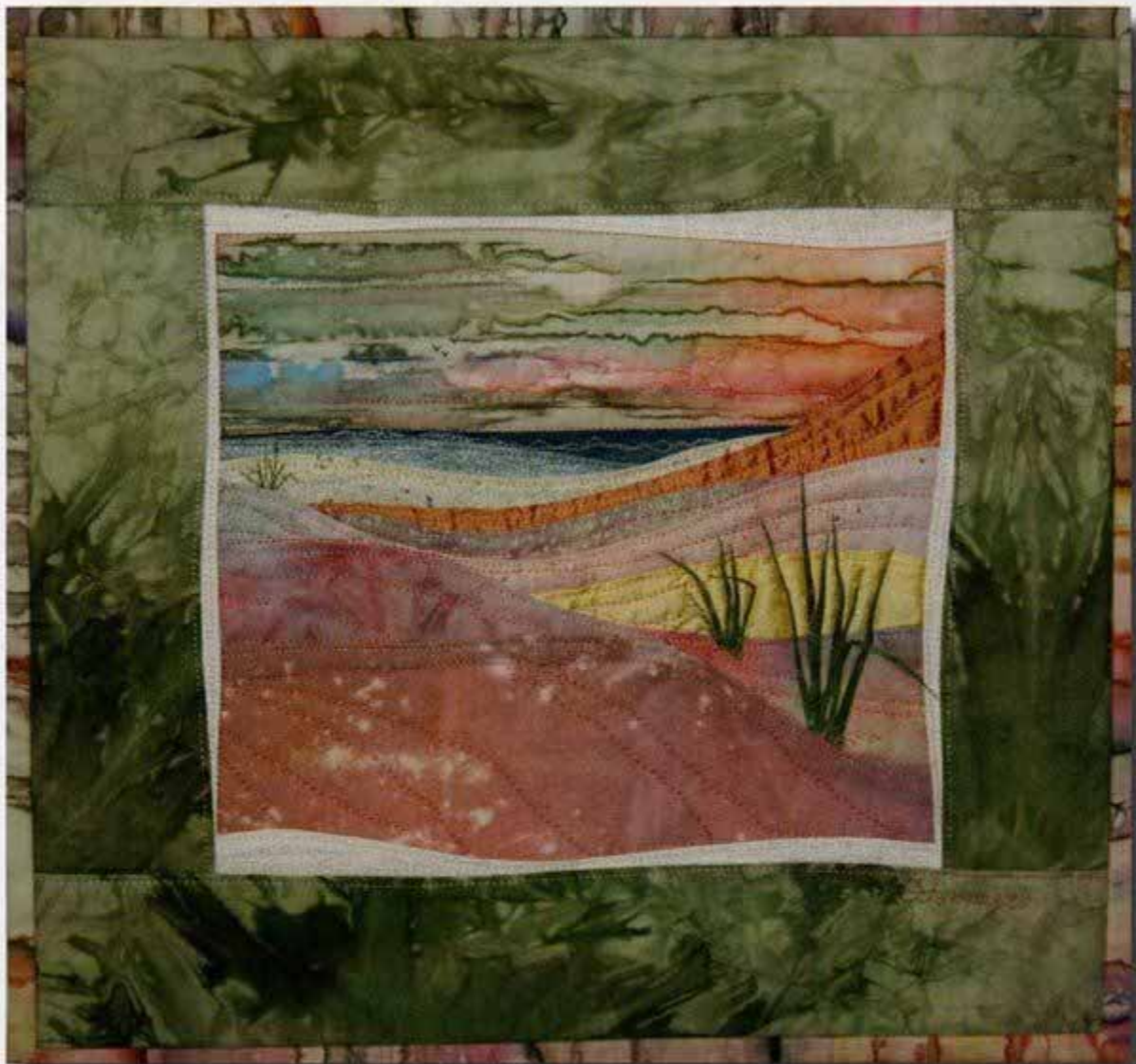
- **Focus Fabric - Hand-Painted:** A part of a hand-painted fabric had two dramatic light sections. I liked how they seemed to glow. What a perfect sky and starting point for an Accidental Landscape!
- **Choosing Fabrics:** I found a range of purples and purple/gold fabrics to match the focus fabric.
- **Layers:** I liked the idea of majestic mountains to go with my mysterious sky, so I cut a 4" (10 cm) angular strip from each of the five selected fabrics.
- **Setting the Boundaries:** The sky section that I cut from my hand-painted fabric was very wide, which determined the width of my scene. This made it easy to decide on a horizontal format with a high horizon.
- **Detail Oriented:** The scene was very calm and beautiful, but the addition of the full moon gives me the focal point that I need.
- **Headed for the Borders:** Soft yellow yarn is couched as an inner border, and echoes the glow of the sky. The outer border fabric has mysterious little symbols that seem to match the mood of this scene. The multi-color striped binding works beautifully to pull all of the colors of the scene together.

Moon Glow (2007)  
21"W x 13"L (53x33 cm)



## Watercolor-like Fabric

- **Focus Fabric - Watercolor-like:** Along with hand-painted fabrics, there are many commercially printed fabrics that give the effect of a watercolor painting. The colors in this particular fabric suggested a dramatic sky.
- **Choosing Fabrics:** I selected soft pastel colored fabrics to match the focus fabric. I never get tired of making beach scenes in different color ways. Here was a good excuse to make another one.
- **Layers:** I cut 4" (10 cm) strips with gentle curves for the sand and 2" (5 cm) strips for the water.
- **Setting the Boundaries:** Instead of deciding on a format ahead of time, I allowed the layering of the landscape to tell me its final format.
- **Detail Oriented:** A few strips of green fabric suggest dune grass waving in the ocean breeze. Distant sea gulls drawn (small "V" shapes) with a very fine fabric pen lead your eye further into the distance.
- **Headed for the Borders:** I like the fresh white-on-white fabric with swirls for the inner border, which echoes the white sand and waves. I am very fond of green, so that was a good reason to use green in the border, besides the fact that it emphasizes the dune grass. I used the focus watercolor-like fabric again in the binding to show off those beautiful colors one more time.



Pink Sand  
Dunes  
(2007)

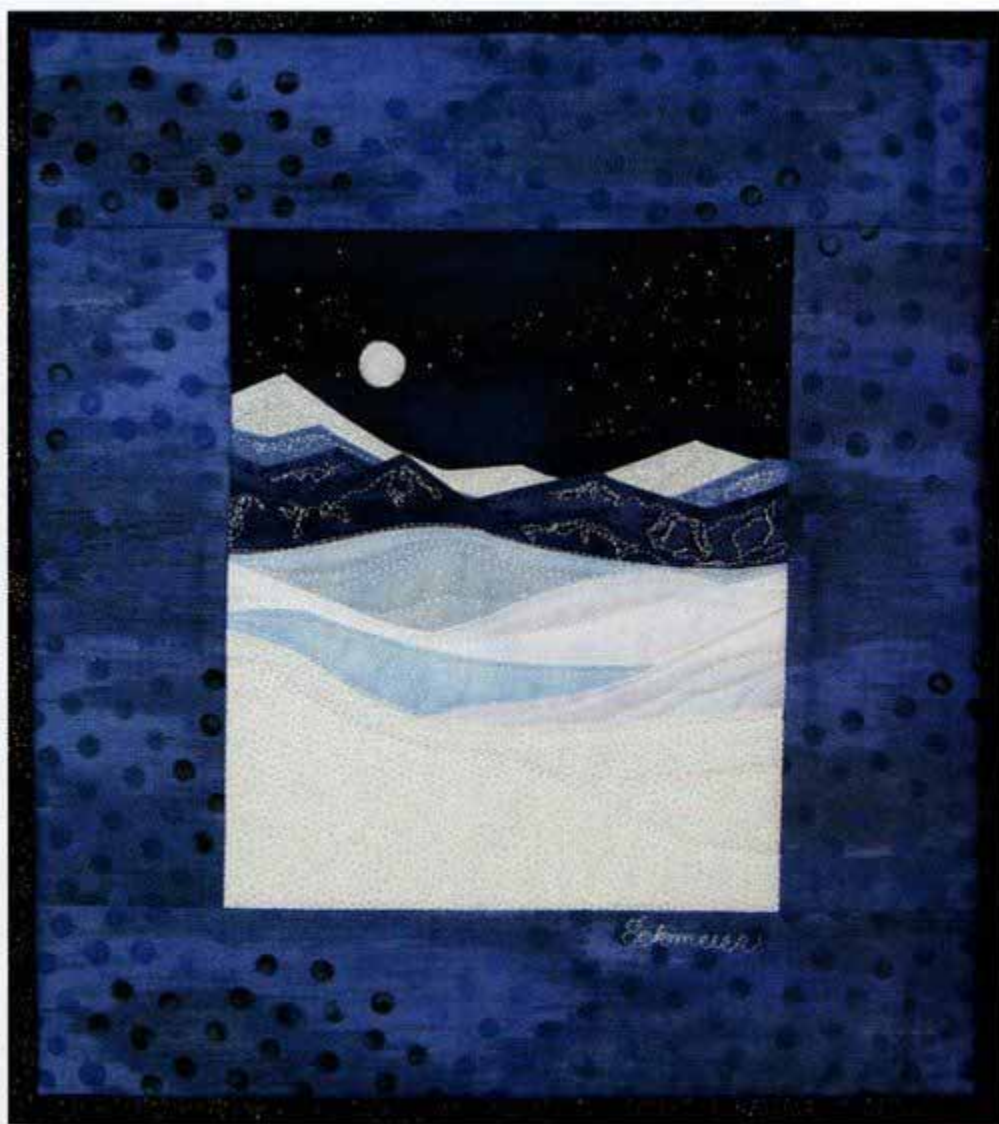
15"W x 14"L  
(38x35 cm)

## Approach #3: Wintry Effects

In the classic image of winter, the landscape is often covered with snow, yet the layers are still visible. The beautiful blankets of snow can be captured in cool blues, whites, and or grays. Bringing in an assortment of fuzzy white flannels, luxurious silks, shimmery organza, transparent tulle, and sparkly fabrics will be just the finishing touches you need to enjoy a winter snow scene all year round.

### Blue and White

- **Choosing Fabrics:** I combined layers of white and light blue fabrics with a gradation of dark blue to light blue fabrics for the distant mountains.
- **Layers:** I was aiming for snow covered foreground hills with distant mountains. Gently curved white and light blue 4" (10 cm) strips combine with three angular 2" (5 cm) strips to create my imaginary scene.
- **Setting the Boundaries:** I cut a section of starry sky fabric that I liked, which then determined the width of my landscape. A vertical format was ideal to show off the layers of snow that I imagined.
- **Detail Oriented:** Rayon and/or metallic threads can add extra sparkle.
- **Focal Point:** A full moon is always a great focal point.
- **Headed for the Borders:** A dotted dark blue border sets off the light snow, and a sparkle in the binding fabric echoes the stars in the sky fabric.



Winter Moon  
(2004)

12"W x 14"L  
(30x35 cm)

## Blues with Organza and Tulle

- **Choosing Fabrics:** A gradation of eight blues go from dark to light. To add extra sparkle to the snow, thin strips of white organza nestle among the blue strips. In the distance, a layer of blue tulle (very fine netting) softens the gradation of dark blue in the foreground to the pale light blue in the distance.
- **Layers:** For this small scene I cut one 2" (5 cm) strip with a gentle curve from each of my eight blue fabrics.
- **Setting the Boundaries:** I cut a section of blue fabric, which determined the width of my landscape. A vertical format was ideal to show off the layers of hills.
- **Detail Oriented:** Green fir trees (triangles) and a distant moon (circle).
- **Focal Point:** The vertical lines of the green fir trees break the rhythm of the horizontal lines and draw your eye into the landscape.
- **Headed for the Borders:** Fabric I painted and stamped matches the mood perfectly.



Frosty Night  
(2004)

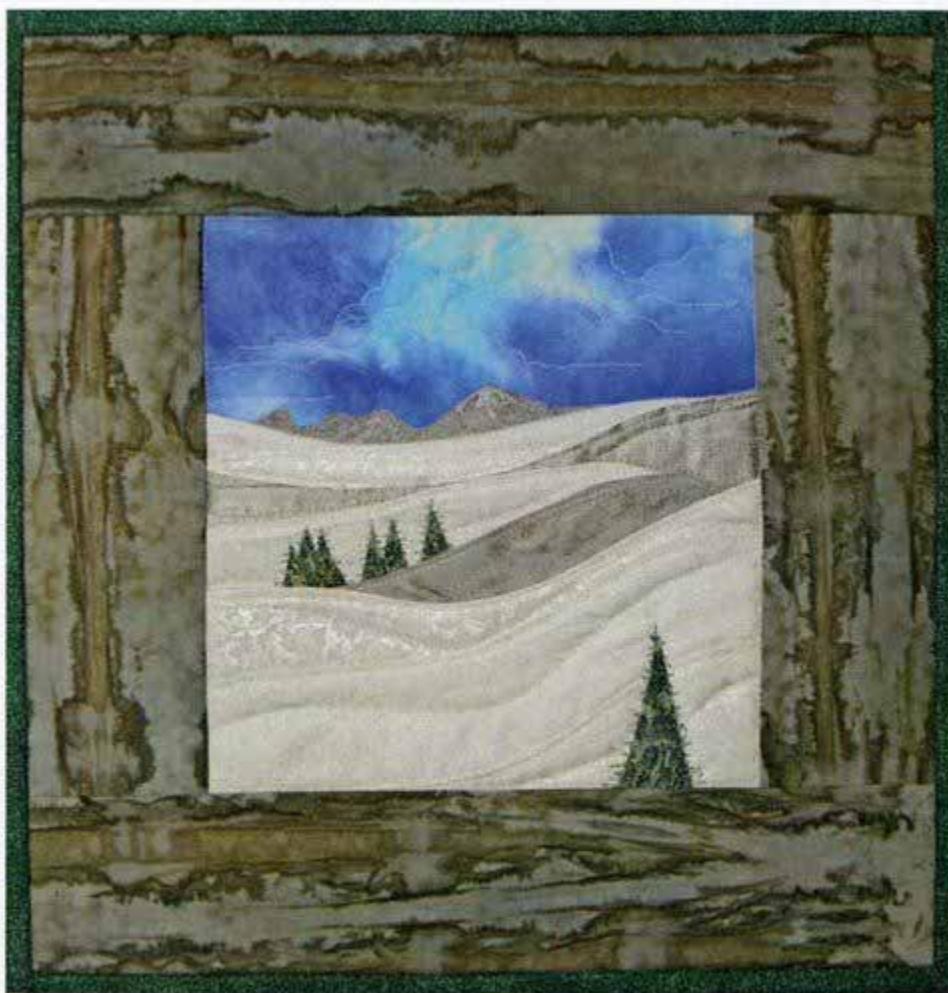
11"W x 13"L  
(28x33 cm)

## White and Gray

This photograph from my studio window inspired the colors for this winter scene.



- **Choosing Fabrics:** I prefer the rich blue sky of winter to the grey tones in the photo, so I found a brighter fabric for my sky.
- **Layers:** I cut six 2" (5 cm) strips with gentle curves from white fabrics, and two 2" (5 cm) strips with gentle curves from gray fabrics. An extra angled strip of gray was cut for the distant mountain range that is not visible in the photograph.
- **Setting the Boundaries:** I aimed for a square format, just to try it for a change. The sky fabric was helpful in determining the width.
- **Detail Oriented:** To keep it simple I eliminated all of the deciduous trees in the photo, and decided to add a few more fir trees for color and perspective.
- **Focal Point:** On a clear day I can see the Catskill Mountains, 50 miles away. Although they are not visible in the photograph I took creative license by adding them in the distance.
- **Headed for the Borders:** The evergreens provide strong color, which is echoed in the green binding. The deciduous trees I had eliminated from the photo, make their presence felt through the bark-like fabric of the border.



Kent Hills  
(2007)

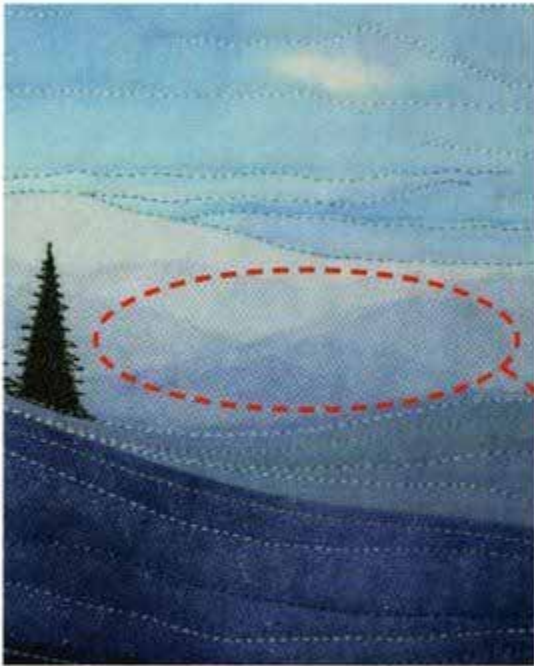
14"W x 14"L  
(35x35 cm)

## Blue Tulle (a very fine netting)

- **Choosing Fabrics:** My intention was to capture the soft rolling hills of the Smoky Mountains, but I accidentally wound up with this winter effect due to the cool blues.
- **Layers:** I combined dark, medium, and light blue gently curved strips with layers of blue tulle.
- **Setting the Boundaries:** I cut a section of my hand-painted fabric for the sky, which determined the width of my landscape. Instead of deciding on a format ahead of time, I allowed the layering of the landscape to tell me its final format.
- **Detail Oriented:** Tall skinny triangles of green fabric suggest fir trees. They add nice rich color to the scene. Smaller trees provide a sense of distance.
- **Focal Point:** The distant white hill is actually part of the sky fabric, but I quilted it to make it appear as though it was part of the distant hills.
- **Headed for the Borders:** The squares in this fabric suggest ice cubes, which make it an ideal border for my cool Accidental Landscape.







**Quilting Tip:**

To adhere soft hills of tulle to your scene, place an additional layer of blue tulle over the entire landscape and baste in place.

To keep the appearance of the distant hills soft, do not topstitch or quilt in this section.



Blue Hills  
(2004)

14"W x 14"L  
(35x35 cm)

## Approach #4: Black & White

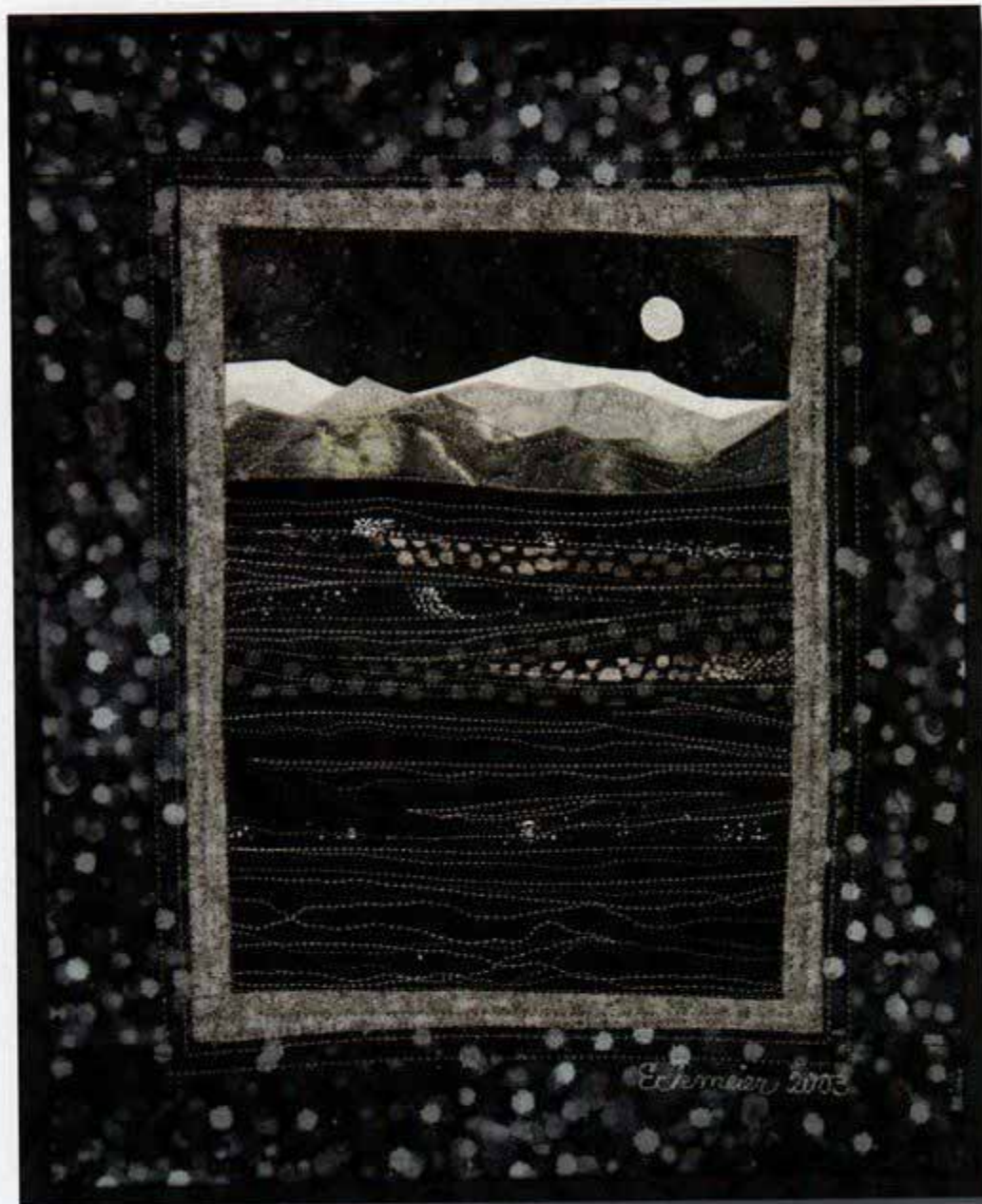
Landscapes can be made in just about any color palette, so why not in black and white? To my way of thinking, there's nothing so dramatic, nostalgic, or classy! In these three examples I'll show you how to soften a scene with a transition of gray shades, achieve pure impact with high contrast, or add a splash of color for zing.

### Shades of Gray

A careful selection of black-on-black prints, one black and white print, and three grays (dark, medium and light) creates this calm scene.

I cut several 2" (5 cm) strips from the fabrics and just let the landscape evolve.

The appearance of the moonlit layers in the center of the scene was a typical happy accident that happens when you let yourself go and let the fabric take over!



Moonlight (2003)  
12"W x 15"L (30x38 cm)

## Black & White

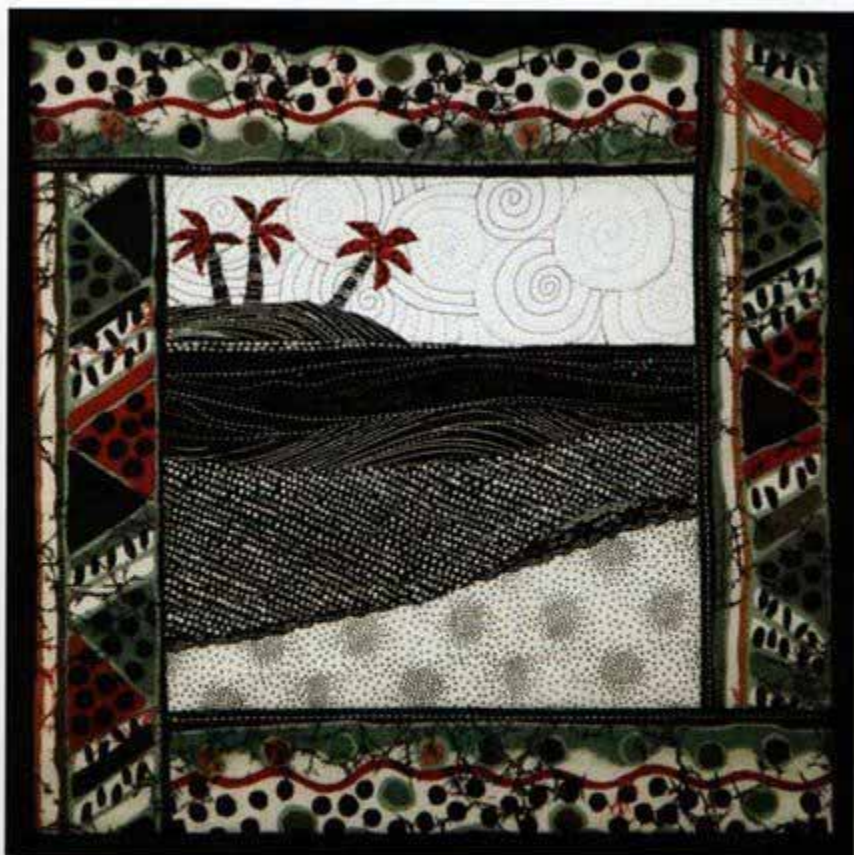
The high contrast of black and white fabrics can appear very harsh, but when carefully selected and combined, they can make an outrageous landscape. Lean toward fabrics with dots, lines, spirals, leaves, etc...

To create a strong focal point, I used a white background print for a winding road, which continues right out of the scene toward the viewer.

I couldn't help myself when it came time to quilt the scene...the stars just had to escape into the border with quilting lines and dabs of white iridescent paint.



Starry Night (2007)  
17"W x 15"L (43x38 cm)



Tropical Island (2007)  
11"W x 11"L (28x28 cm)

## Splash of Red

It's fun to choose fabrics by patterns, not colors, in order to suggest sand and sea. I often use lace for the froth of lapping waves, but here it's black lace, not the usual white. A splash of red in the palm trees and the border provides the tropical punch to finish the scene.

White-on-white spirals in the sky fabric inspired me to quilt giant spirals with a variegated black and white thread. I find it amazing that even without the traditional cool blues and greens, I still want to linger awhile in this accidental paradise.

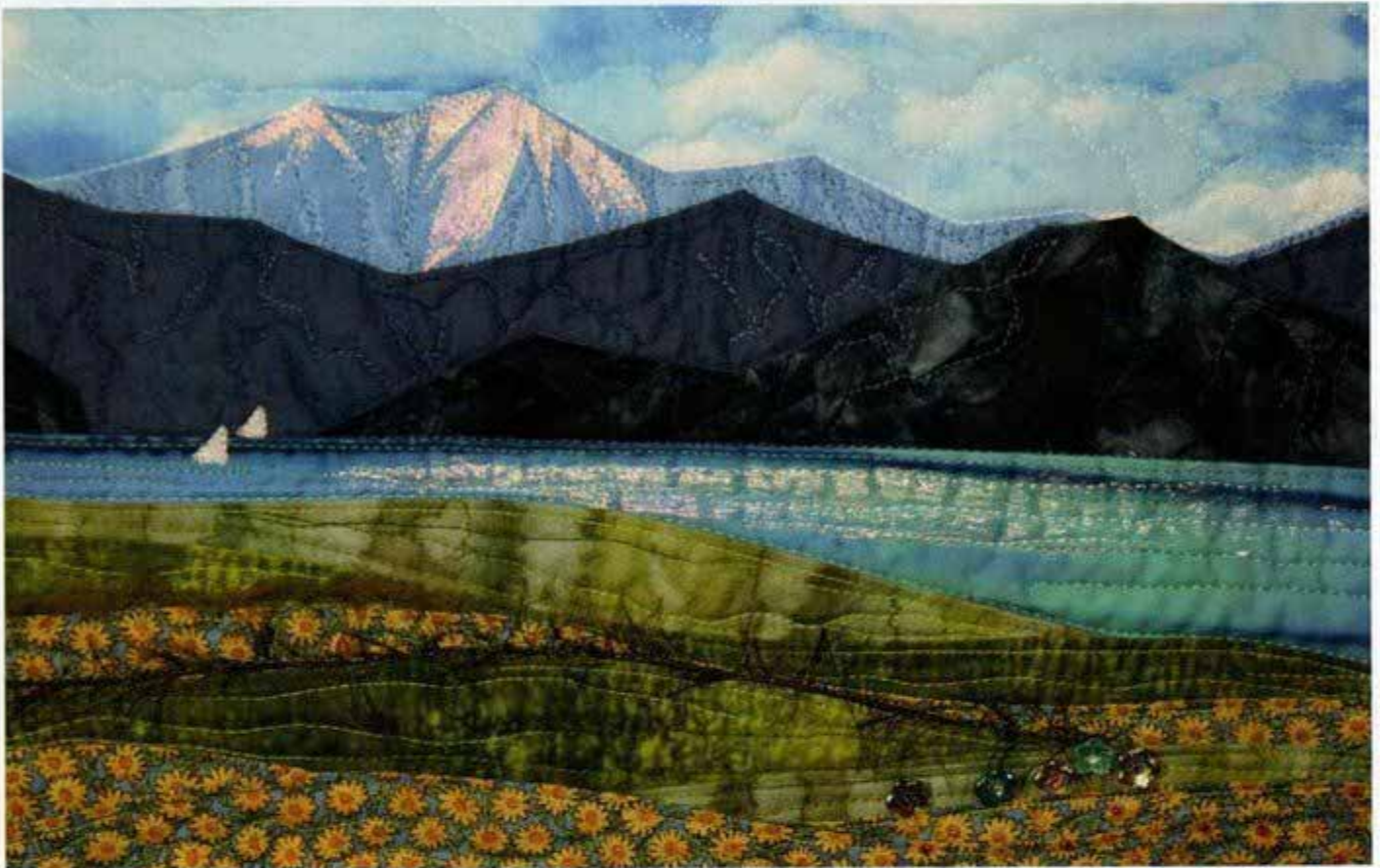
# SCENE ENHANCERS

## Embellishments

Along the way, I've shown you some new ideas for embellishing your Accidental Landscapes: white lace for ocean waves and seagulls, eyelash yarn for sagebrush, and yarns for inner border accents. In this chapter I will tempt you with a few more ideas.

Your new topstitch/layering skills are your passport to creating a textured cactus and palm tree. You'll want to reach out and touch them! I'll guide you step by step through this easy process. Let's head in that general direction now.

### Beads, Yarn, & Angelina Fibers



Beads and couched yarns add extra flowers and grasses to this blooming meadow. A thin layer of bonded white Angelina fibers gives sparkle to the water, and a thicker bonding of white Angelina, cut to the shape of the mountains, creates convincing snowcaps.

To adhere the bonded Angelina fibers to the scene, pin baste to the desired area and secure it to the landscape with matching thread at the quilting stage.



A thin layer of bonded yellow Angelina fibers makes the water sparkle and suggests the glow of the setting sun. The moose is cut from black fabric, glue-basted on to the scene and outline-stitched with black thread. The template for the moose can be found in the "Lakes" pattern (see page 63).

Long black bugle beads make great cattails and couched black fringe yarn is ideal for the high grass along the foreground of the lake. I couldn't resist couching the beautiful yarn as a highlight in the inner border for this dramatic sunset scene.

#### **What are Angelina Fibers?**

Angelina is an iridescent polyester and/or aluminum fiber, which is available in a variety of colors. It can be bonded, woven, layered, spun, etc ...the list goes on and on. For more information on this versatile fiber, see the Resources guide on page 64.

#### **How to Couch Yarn:**

1. Apply a thin line of fabric glue along the surface where you want to couch the yarn.
2. Place the yarn on top of that line of glue. Allow the glue to dry thoroughly.
3. Stitch (by hand or machine) with a matching thread, meandering along the yarn. I do this stitching at the quilting stage to add extra texture.

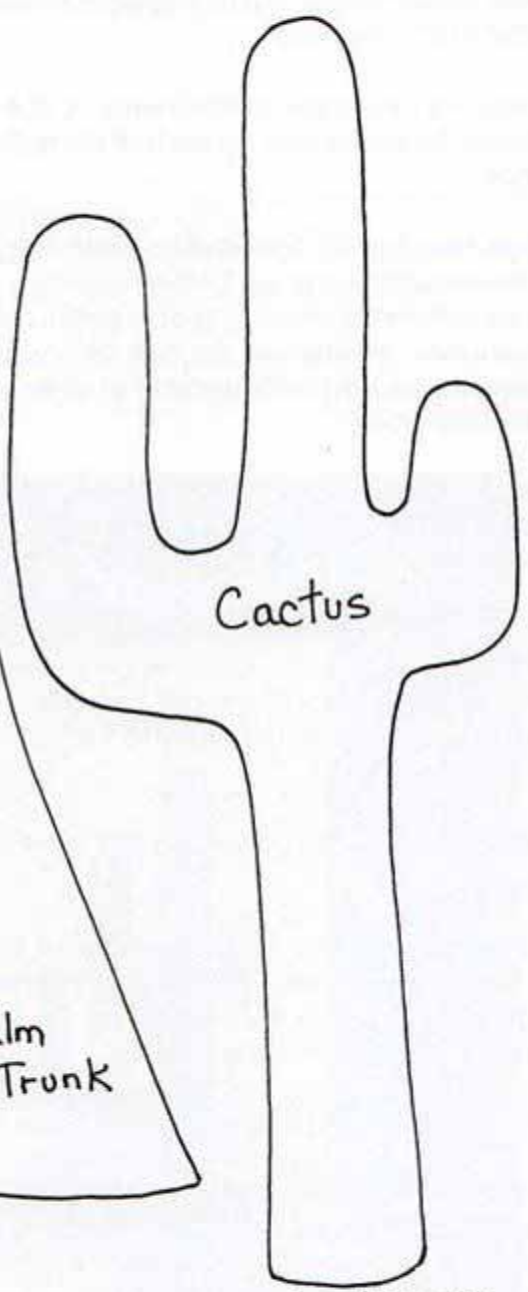
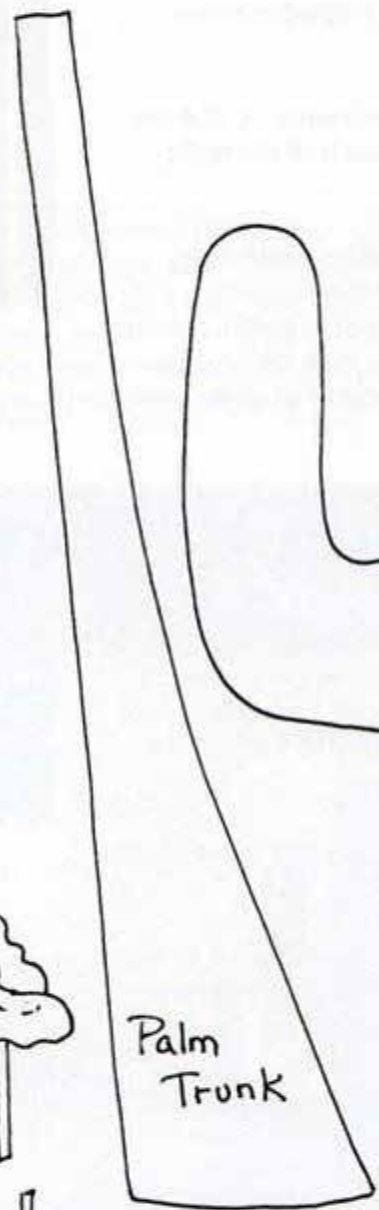
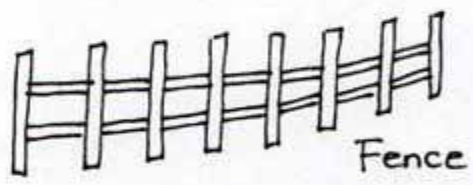
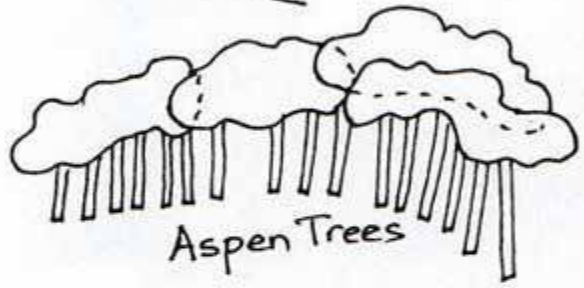
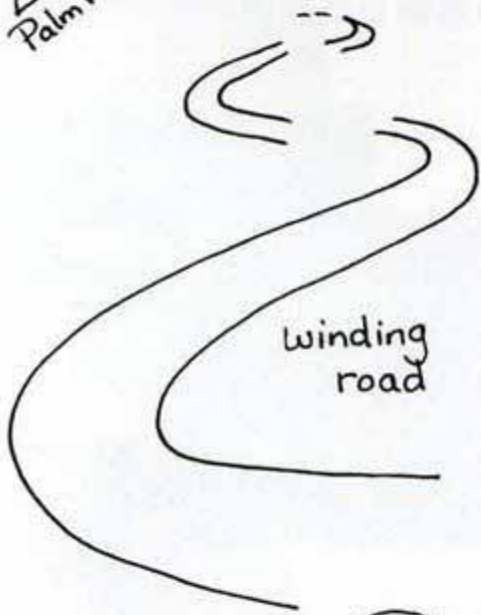
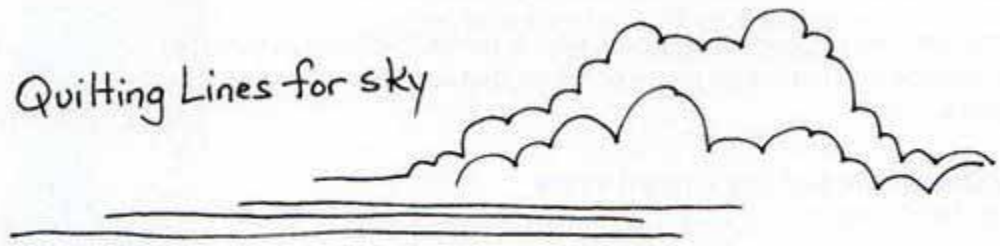


**Tip:**

Look around and be creative when choosing embellishments. If you can sew it or glue it, it's fair game!

Couched fuzzy white yarn looks like crashing waves and blue yarn adds texture to the distant water. Green eyelash yarn couched among the sand dunes looks like dune grass. A scattering of small beads suggests shells on the beach and larger beads in the foreground add sparkle. I made my own starfish by joining five bugle beads around a center bead. Hand-sew beads after machine quilting. That way they don't get in the way of the presser foot.

Quilting Lines for sky



©2007 Accidental Landscapes

## A Prickly Cactus

Add even more texture to your landscapes, with a tactile cactus that you can touch without getting hurt. This method creates a topstitched piece of fabric that will yield several textured cacti to enhance your scenes. Check it out!

- A. **Medium Green Dot:** Cut four straight strips  
18"W x 2L" (46x5 cm)

**Dark Green Stripe:** Cut four straight strips  
18"W x 2L" (46x5 cm)

Press one long edge approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$ " (0.6cm) toward the wrong side, on each of the eight strips.

- B. Begin layering with the medium green strip, pressed edge facing up. Continue layering the strips downward alternating dark green, medium green, etc... ending with the dark green strip. Space strips  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (0.3 cm) apart - in other words, very, very close!

Pin all of the layers together by inserting pins perpendicular to the pressed edges. One pin will hold several layers in a section.

Topstitch  $\frac{1}{8}$ " (0.3 cm) from the pressed edge with either a green or variegated green thread. Begin topstitching with the last dark green strip that was layered. Do not topstitch the last medium green strip.

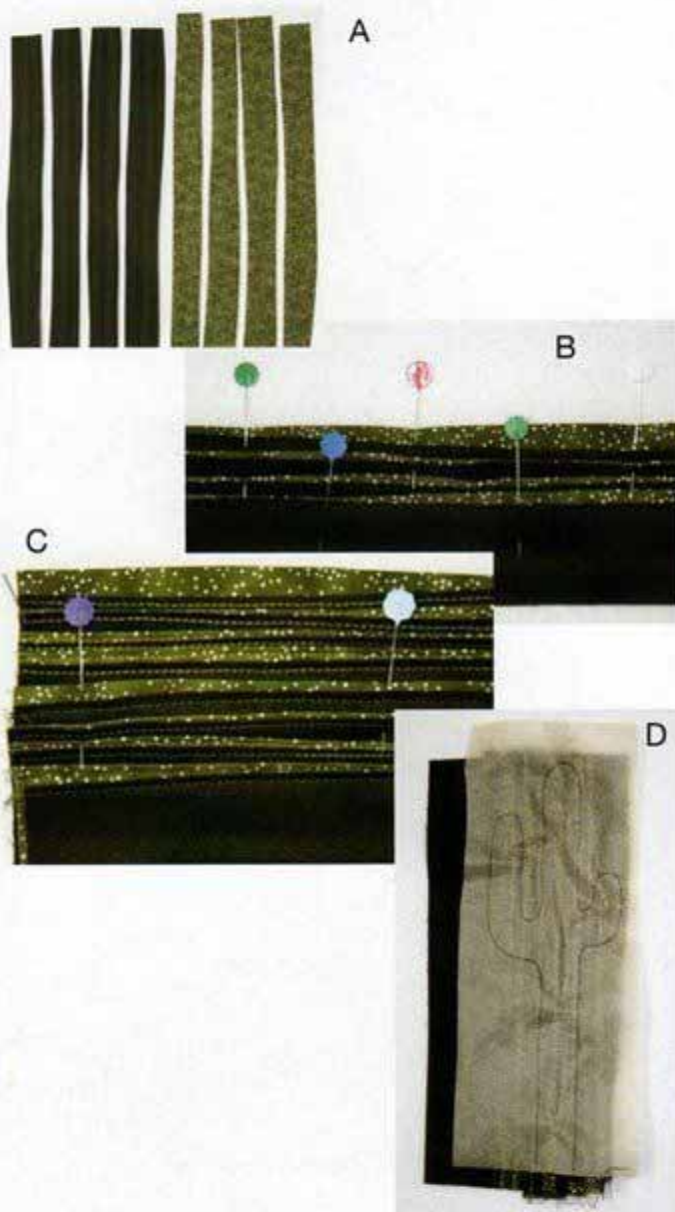
Turn the topstitched piece over and trim excess fabric.

- C. Cut the 18"W (46 cm) topstitched section in half, so that you now have two strips. Each strip is approximately 9"W x 3"L (23x7.5 cm). Pin and topstitch the two sections together.

Turn the piece over and trim excess fabric again.

- D. Trace the cactus template on page 53 (or draw your own) on tracing paper. Pin the tracing to the right side of the topstitched fabric. Be sure the topstitched lines run vertically.

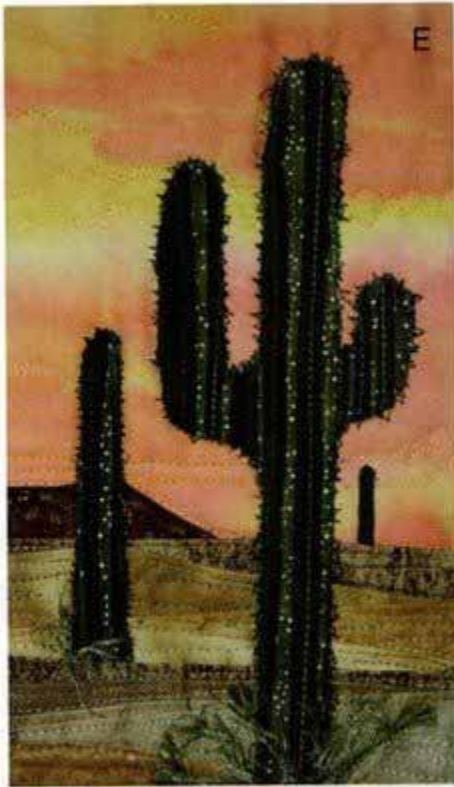
Cut along the traced lines with scissors. Cut smaller cacti from the rest of the topstitched fabric.



### Caution:

Due to the thickness of the layers (this applies to the Palm Trunk also, on page 56) the first strip will begin to pleat as you sew. This will happen no matter how carefully you have pinned. Gently ease the fabric strip flat as you topstitch, removing pins as you come to them to keep the fabric smooth. The remaining layers will have been secured by this first seam and will be easier to sew.





- E. Lightly glue the cactus to the topstitched landscape. Use a free-motion zig-zag stitch to quilt the cactus. The random zig-zag stitch gives the look of sharp spines.

**Morning & Evening Cactus:**

For an evening scene, the foreground cactus is almost in silhouette, just catching the last rays of sun, and therefore very dark greens are used.

In "Desert Road," on page 27, the cacti are created with lighter and more vibrant green fabrics to suggest the bright light of day.



Sunset Cactus)  
(2007)

17" W x 17" L  
(43x43 cm)

## Palm Tree with Fuzzy Fronds

Have you ever noticed the wonderful texture of the palm tree trunk? It looks like layers of tan fabric to me! Here is a fun way to add some lovely swaying palm trees to your tropical beach. They will attract even more attention when you add three-dimensional fuzzy fronds. We'll begin with the trunk and work our way up.

- A. **Light Tan Stripe:** Cut four straight strips  
21" W x 2" L (53x5 cm)

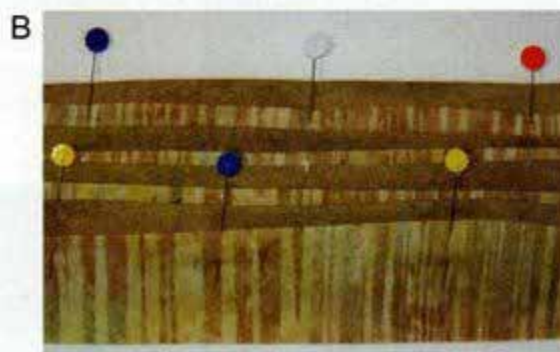
**Medium Tan:** Cut four straight strips  
21" W x 2" L (53x5 cm)

Press one long edge approximately 1/4" (0.6 cm) toward the wrong side, on each of the eight strips.



- B. Begin layering with the medium tan strip, pressed edge facing up. Continue layering the strips downward alternating light tan, medium tan, etc... ending with the light tan. Space strips 1/8" (0.3 cm) apart - in other words, very, very close.

Pin all of the layers together by inserting pins perpendicular to the pressed edges. One pin will hold several layers in a section.



- C. Topstitch 1/8" (0.3 cm) from the pressed edge with either a tan or variegated tan thread. Begin topstitching with the last tan stripe strip that was layered. Do not topstitch the last medium tan strip.

Turn the topstitched piece over and trim excess fabric.

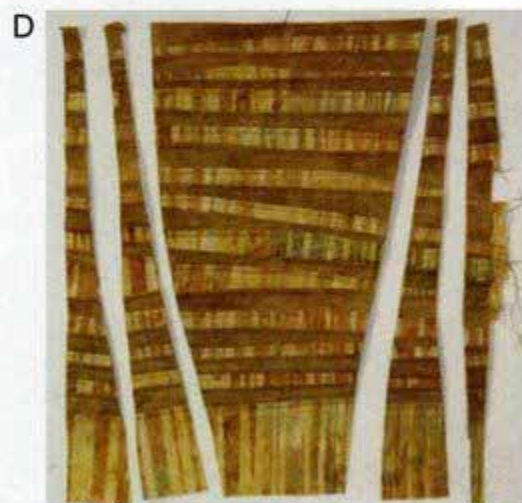
Divide the topstitched section into three 7" W (18 cm) sections.

Pin the three sections together and topstitch. Turn the piece over and trim excess fabric again.



- D. It's easy to cut your palm tree trunks freehand. Start by cutting the strips wide at the base and tapering to a narrow top.

If you prefer to use a template, trace the palm trunk template on page 53 on tracing paper. Pin the tracing to the right side of the topstitched fabric. Cut along the traced lines with scissors.

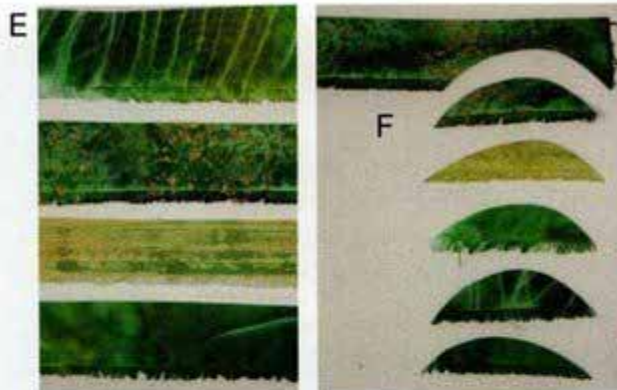


## Fuzzy Fronds

- E. Select fabrics that have a fuzzy selvage or cut the fabric with a wavy rotary blade. Cut 1" (2.5 cm) strips from at least five different green fabrics.
- F. Cut half circles – or elongated domes, approximately 3"W (7.5 cm). Cut an odd number of fronds, either five or seven.
- G. Place the palm trunk(s) on the topstitched landscape and arrange the fronds in a radiating pattern from the top of the trunk.

Attach the palm trunk and fronds with fabric glue.

Quilt the fronds with a simple half dome shape or copy my quilting design found on page 53. To quilt the trunk, quilt back and forth in the ditch, following the topstitched lines.



Tropical Beach  
(2007)

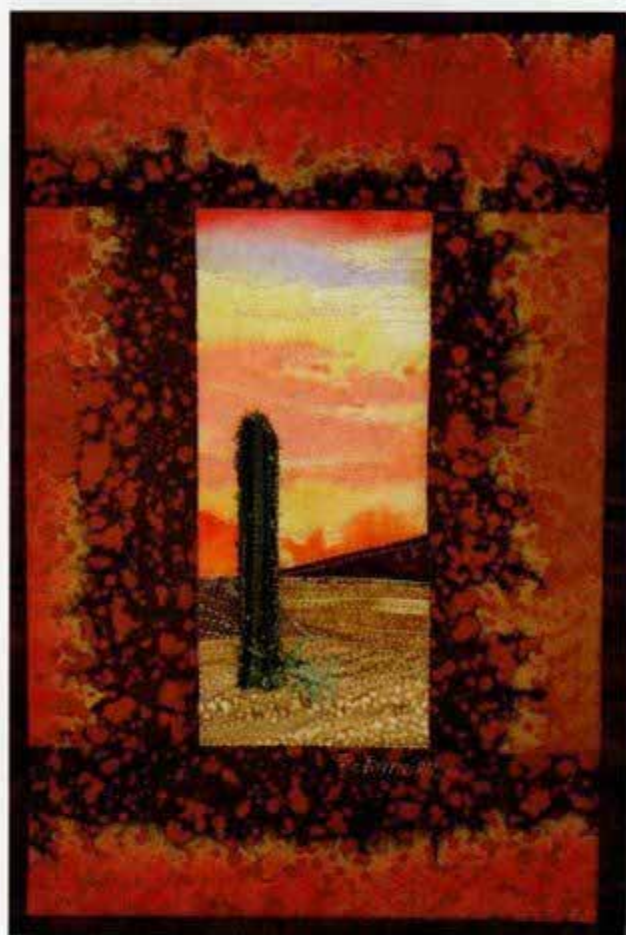
20" W x 17" L  
(50x43 cm)

# SMALL SOUVENIRS

More surprises await you on this little side trip! Here are some very special keepsakes that can be made from your leftover fabric strips. Do you remember the pieces you cut away from the back and perhaps the sides of your scene? With very little effort these strips will reward you by evolving into little treasures. A miniature landscape, a bookmark or a postcard.

## Miniature Landscapes

In my workshops I refer to these quilts as my "Accidental – Accidental Landscapes." It's difficult to discard those cute little fabric strips, so I keep layering them together to see what happens. Here are four examples of landscapes made with leftover fabric strips.



Lone Cactus Sunset 2 (2007)  
8½"W x 13"L (22x33 cm)

The few leftover fabric strips from "Desert Road," were just enough to create this cute little scene. The border fabric plays an important role by reinforcing the colors and textures of the dry desert.



Sea Breeze (2007)  
10"W x 10"L (25x25 cm)

This small scene made with leftover fabric strips from "Pink Sand Dune" is appealing because of its tiny scale. Adding the little sailboat gives a focal point. The border enhances the feeling of a breezy day at a tropical beach.



Cheshire Cat Moon (2007)  
10"W x 10"L (25x25 cm)

I only had three leftover fabric strips to play with from "Moon Glow," which was just enough to suggest a mini mountain scene. The white inner border echoes the white crescent moon.

Tuscan Hills (2006)  
9"W x 14"L (23x35 cm)

The warm colors of Tuscany have inspired many Accidental Landscapes. In this little piece, I used several leftover strips from different projects. It captures the essence of our trips to Italy and it fits perfectly in a little corner of our kitchen where we can enjoy it everyday.

**Easy Binding:**

For a quick and sassy finish to your mini, just couch yarn to the outer edge of the border.



## Bookmarks & Postcards

The easiest way to create bookmarks is to use the leftover strips that have been cut away from the sides and/or the back of the landscapes.

Depending on the amount of strips leftover you may get only one bookmark like the barnyard bookmark on the right, or you may get a matching set of heron bookmarks from one landscape, as pictured below.



This set of beach bookmarks below was made by topstitching a beach scene, then cutting it up into strips.

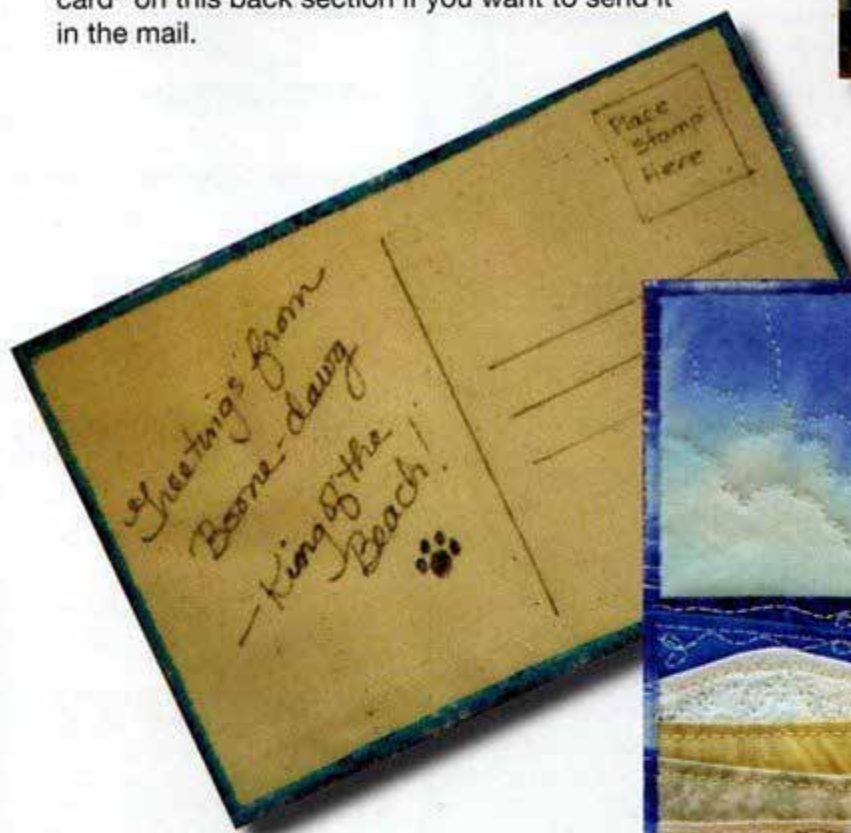


## How to Make a Bookmark

1. Topstitch a new scene or use leftover strips.
2. Cut topstitched fabric into  $1\frac{3}{4}''\text{W} \times 6''\text{L}$  (4.5 x 15 cm) vertical strips.
3. Use a fusible web to fuse the topstitched scene to a backing fabric. Satin stitch around the edges.
4. Add a loop of yarn and tie on a charm that coordinates with the scene.

## How to Make a Postcard

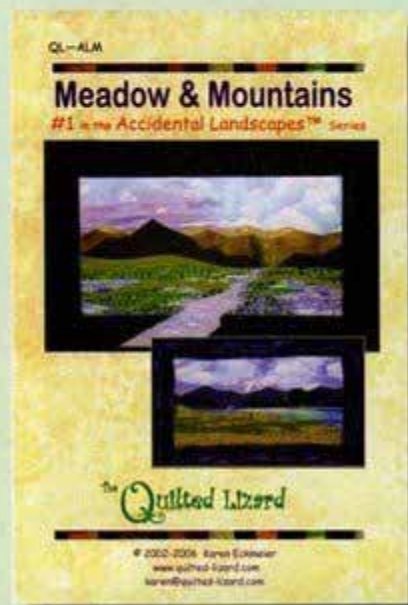
1. Follow the same basic instructions for the bookmark, but use a thicker fusible web to create a  $4'' \times 6'' \times \frac{1}{8}''$  (10 x 15 x 0.3cm) rectangle.
2. The backing for the postcard should be plain so that it can be written on. Be sure to mark "postcard" on this back section if you want to send it in the mail.



# PATTERNS & RESOURCES

## Accidental Landscape Patterns

Here are ten pre-packaged adventures, which use Karen's layering and topstitching to achieve surprising results. Colors, values, measurements, and proportions are already planned out for you. Several choices of focal points and simple collage details are also included in each pattern.

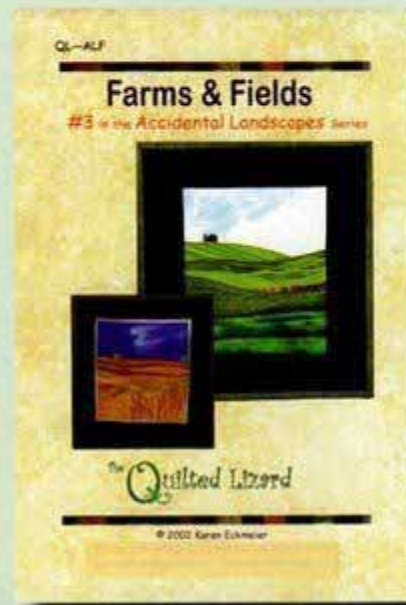
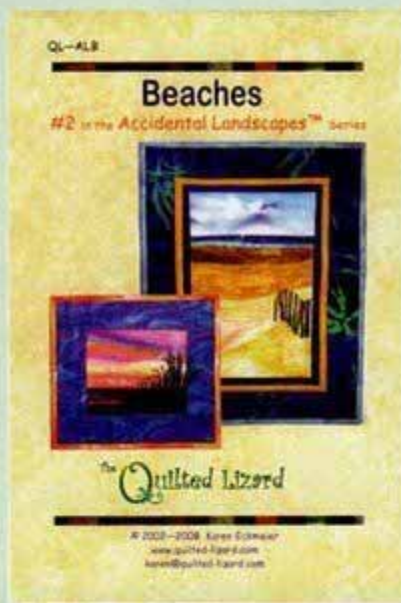


### Meadow & Mountains

Combine gently curved and angled strips to create a dynamic scene. Customize your scene with a meandering river, dirt path or lake.

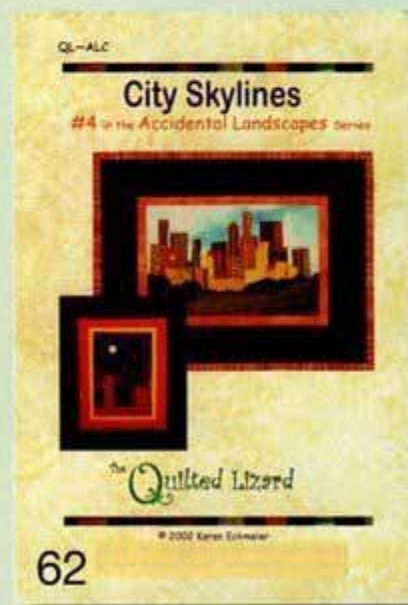
### Beaches

This is everyone's favorite landscape, because it is so easy to personalize. Some of the many details included are: a dune fence, sailboat, sea oats, dune grass, seagull, beach umbrellas and chairs, lighthouse, the list goes on...



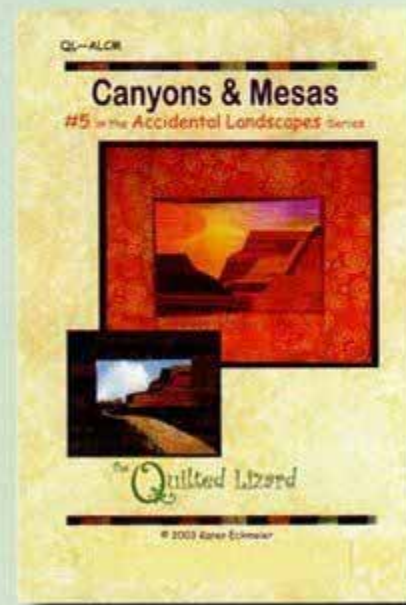
### Farms & Fields

One of the easiest scenes in the series, these peaceful rolling hills could be anywhere in the world. You have a choice of two different fabric collage barns, to add the finishing touch.



### City Skylines

Try layering and topstitching with rectangles and squares, same technique with the same amazing results.

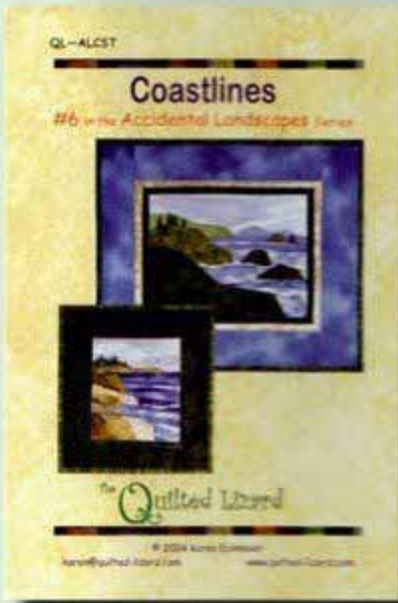


### Canyons & Mesas

Layers of angular shapes combine to create a canyon scene or a meandering dirt road along the mesas.



US \$7 each  
To order call +1 860-927-4201

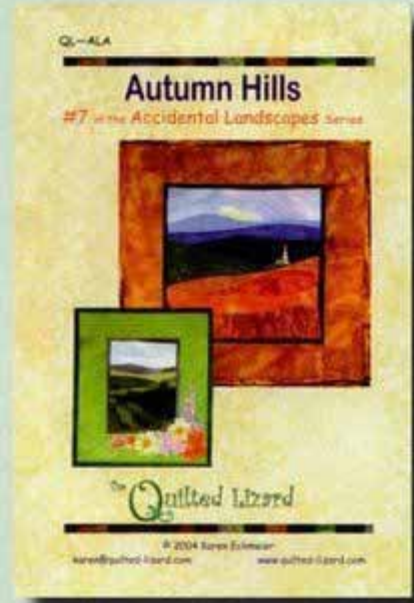
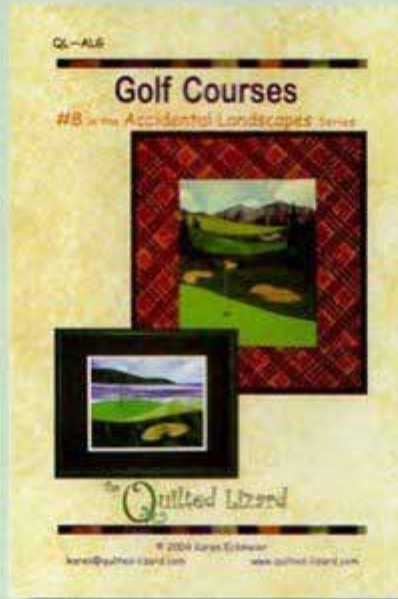


### Coastlines

Strips of blue fabric combine with rock shapes to form this rocky coastline. White lace is added for dimensional crashing waves. A distant light-house and/or pine trees add a nice touch to this seascape.

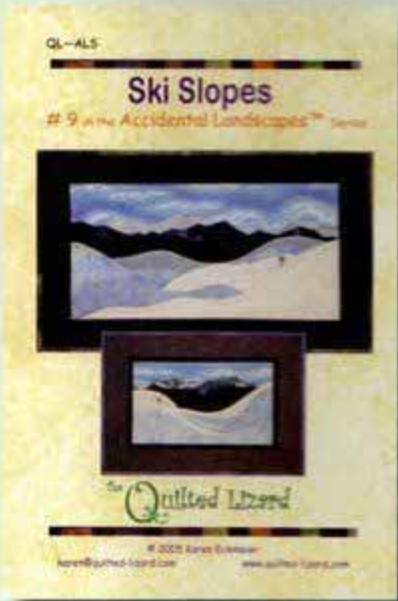
### Golf Courses

The focal points and details transform this beautiful landscape into a golfer's dream. Change the distant mountains to water for a golf course by the sea. Substitute willow trees, palm trees, or cacti to customize your course. How about adding a photo transfer of your favorite golfer?



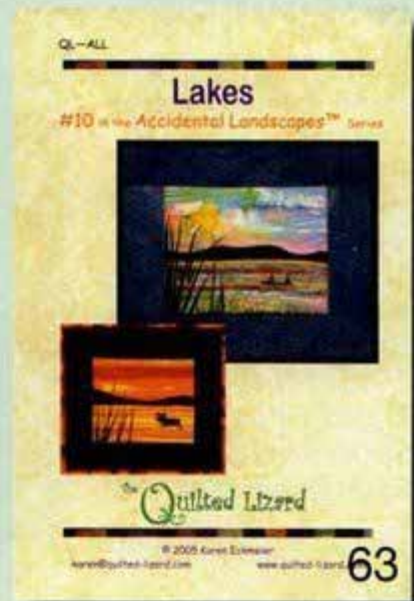
### Autumn Hills

The colors say Autumn, but this landscape can be made for any season, simply by changing the colors. This is a very easy scene made with gently curved strips.



### Ski Slopes

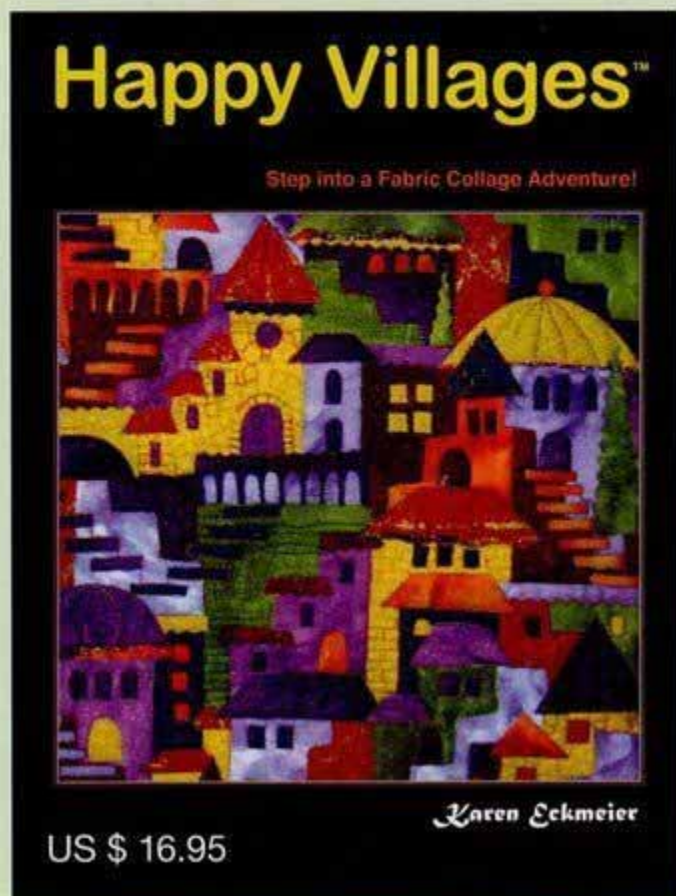
Winter enthusiasts like this scene with or without the skier (or snowboarder). Gently curved and angled strips in just the right colors create a dream vacation high in the mountains.



### Lakes

It doesn't get any easier than this. A dramatic sky combined with straight strips will have you relaxing on a cabin porch in the woods. Customize your lake with a choice of a canoe, kayak, sailboat, rowboat, heron, ducks, flying geese, moose, bear, or a fisherman.

If you like this approach to playing with fabric, you'll also enjoy Karen's book, *Happy Villages*.



Explore the freedom of raw-edge fabric collage! No seams to sew, no points to match, no fusing to gum up your iron.

Fabrics are lightly glue-basted then machine-stitched with a layer of tulle. Step by step, your village magically comes to life.

- A 16" x 16" (40x40 cm) project you can create in a day
- 12 variations offered – seasonal, international, whimsical, and more
- Steps + Rooftops + Windows = Village!
- Each village you make is a one-of-a-kind reflection of where you've been, if only in a dream.

To order call +1 860-927-4201

## Resources

### Hand Painted Fabrics

Skydyes  
PO Box 370116  
West Hartford, CT 06137-0116  
[www.skydyes.com](http://www.skydyes.com)

### Beads, Yarns, Angelina Fibers

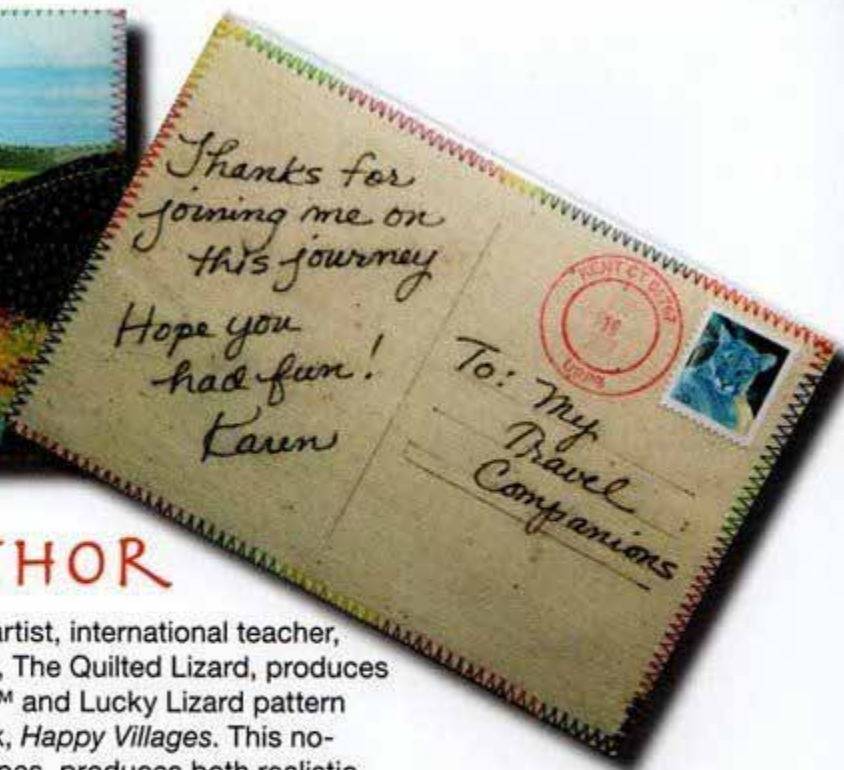
Embellishment Village  
15165 SW 100th Ave.  
Tigard, OR 97224  
[www.embellishmentvillage.com](http://www.embellishmentvillage.com)  
+1 877-639-9820

### 100% Cotton Batting

Fairfield Processing Corporation  
[www.poly-fil.com](http://www.poly-fil.com)  
New Organic Product: Bamboo/cotton batting  
(ideal for Accidental Landscapes)

### Brass Charms

Cat Allard [www.magicalcat.com](http://www.magicalcat.com)  
StarCatAuctions on eBay



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Karen Eckmeier is an award-winning fiber artist, international teacher, author, and pattern designer. Her company, The Quilted Lizard, produces the popular line of Accidental Landscapes™ and Lucky Lizard pattern series. In 2007, she published her first book, *Happy Villages*. This no-stress approach to collaging raw-edge shapes, produces both realistic and whimsical villages that are sure to make you smile. She confesses that most of her work comes about by accident. "Lots of intense playing tends to yield wonderful results," Karen believes, and she shares this philosophy in her workshops, books, and patterns.

Karen was introduced to fabric through the quilting world in 1987. With absolutely no sewing background but a desire to create, she taught herself how to quilt. Quilting remained a hobby until 2002, when it became a full-time business. Now every day is filled with fabric collage, painting fabric, designing, and teaching.

She lives in the peaceful Litchfield Hills of Connecticut with her husband and hiking buddy, Walter.



Karen's website:  
[www.quilted-lizard.com](http://www.quilted-lizard.com)



## Landscapes in Luscious Layers

Discover the secrets of creating a fabric landscape “accidentally,” using Karen’s layering and topstitching technique. As a complement to her popular Accidental Landscapes™ pattern series, this guidebook takes you, beginners and seasoned quilters alike, on an inspiring journey to the beloved places in your memories and dreams. You’ll find out how to...

- capture the feeling of a scene in simple layers
- create a landscape based on a favorite photo, postcard, color palette, memory, or vacation
- surprise yourself with lively, exciting compositions
- adopt the same easy techniques for gorgeous, curved borders



For ease and fun, Karen’s topstitched layers beat out machine appliqué and curved piecing by a mile.

US \$ 21.95

