

CAROLINA
ONETO



Carolina Oneto
Modern Quilter

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IMPROVISATIONAL GARDEN: EXPLORING COLOR TRANSITIONS AND ORGANIC COMPOSITION TO CREATE EXPRESSIVE QUILTS

5 DAYS WORKSHOP

In this 5-day retreat, we will explore color in motion — creating our own fabrics that transition through hue, value, and saturation across the full chromatic sphere. These color transitions will form the foundation for expressive, abstract flowers. Once our blooms are complete, we'll design and piece improvisational backgrounds that bring rhythm, depth, and harmony to each composition. Carolina will guide you through color exploration, fabric creation, and composition development, helping you craft a vibrant, personal quilt where color and form flow together naturally.

SUPPLY LIST FOR STUDENTS

GENERAL TOOLS

- Sewing machine in good working condition
- Regular sewing foot, ¼" piecing foot, zipper foot
- Rotary cutter (new blade), mat, and ruler
- Fabric scissors and thread snips
- Pins
- Fabric scissor with a fine point for cutting snips
- Notebook, color pencils, and pencil for sketches and notes
- Basic sewing kit (needles, seam ripper, etc.)
- Travel iron with automatic shut-off function (optional but recommended)
- Design boards will be provided
- No lab fee.



FABRICS FOR THE FLOWERS

- Bring a variety of fabrics in different hues, values, and saturations, with each piece measuring at least 12" long and 2.5" wide
- You may include scraps, fat eighths, or jelly rolls
- Carolina will bring additional scraps to share, and students are encouraged to exchange pieces to create beautiful, collaborative color transitions for their flowers .

FABRICS FOR THE BACKGROUND

- Choose one color family in a dark value (Carolina recommends blue, green, or blue-green) but feel free to choose the color that you want.
- Bring at least 10 fat quarters of that color family in similar dark values to add depth and variety (Two FQs can be replaced with ½-yard cuts in the same dark value.)

ADHESIVE AND MARKING SUPPLIES

- Washable glue with a fine-point applicator (Helmer's Glue or Roxanne Glue-Baste-It)
⚠ Do not bring glue sticks — they don't work for inset shapes.
- Fabric marker (erasable chalk or water erasable type)
- Double tracer wheel – e.g., [Prym Double Tracing Wheel](#)
- ¼" masking tape

Note: If you have an Ipad and you have the possibility to download the app PROCREATE, bring it to the seminar, it is a fantastical tool to draw and design your quilts.

IF you have any question don't hesitate to send me a email, I would be happy to help you

AGENDA

Day 1 – The Language of Color

Focus: Understanding hue, value, and saturation transitions.

We begin by exploring the chromatic circle and discovering how gradual shifts in hue, value, and saturation can bring color to life. Through guided exercises, you'll create fabric transitions that will later form the foundation of your flowers.

Demonstrations:

- Planning and building smooth color transitions
- Piecing and blending colors through value and saturation

Day 2 – Growing the Flowers

Focus: Creating organic floral forms.

Using the fabrics created on Day 1, you'll design and piece your own abstract flowers. Carolina will demonstrate curved piecing and improvisational shaping techniques that allow each piece to bloom naturally, reflecting movement and rhythm.

Demonstrations:

- Piecing curves and inseting shapes
- Exploring scale, proportion, and dynamic movement.

Day 3 – Composing the Garden

Focus: Design and spatial relationships.

With your flowers complete, you'll begin designing your overall composition. Together we'll discuss focal points, balance, and harmony — and how to use contrast and repetition to guide the viewer's eye. By the end of the day, your design wall will bloom with possibilities.

Demonstrations:

- Arranging shapes to create unity and balance
- Balancing color, form, and negative space

Day 4 – Building the Background

Focus: Improvisational background construction.

Now it's time to bring your flowers to life within their environment. Using fabrics in one dark color family (blue, green, or blue-green recommended), you'll create an improvisational background that adds depth and contrast to your composition.

Demonstrations:

- Constructing backgrounds with variety and flow
- Integrating foreground and background organically
- Planificación of the construction

Day 5 – Harmony and Refinement

Focus: Integration and completion.

You'll finalize your quilt top, refining the relationships between color and form. Carolina will guide you through options for quilting and texture, offering ways to enhance your finished piece. The retreat closes with a joyful group sharing of each participant's unique Improvisational Garden.

Demonstrations:

- Discussion: Quilting design and finishing ideas

