

Course Description - Empty Spools Seminars - Asilomar

Quilt Like an Artist - Faces & Figures

I want you to fall in love with the work you create! This workshop is a deep dive into the experimental “*Quilt Like an Artist*” method, where you’ll design and stitch a figurative-portrait art quilt using a series of approachable, “easier-than-they-look” techniques. Together, we’ll explore the art of creating faces and figures while uncovering your unique artistic voice. The process is playful, liberating, and full of delightful surprises!

Student Supply List

- Sewing machine in good working order
- Basic knowledge of your machine (threading, tension, bobbin winding, etc.)
- Sewing basics: scissors, pins, seam ripper, etc.
- Rotary cutter with a new blade
- 18” (or larger) cutting mat
- 24” ruler
- Glue stick for fabric
- Design boards (provided by ESS)
- Travel irons are acceptable as long as they have an automatic shut-off function.

Fabric Selection

- Choose ½ yard each of 5–7 different colors in solids, hand-dyed fabrics, and/or prints that inspire you. Build a well-rounded palette by including a range of tonal values (light, medium, and dark) within each color family. Faces will need three values as well. Cherrywood fabrics has a lovely 8 fat-quarter hand-dyed bundle of skin tones that work well.
- **Color Variety:** If you choose a main color (e.g., red), incorporate related hues such as pink, peach, coral, orange, rust, and maroon. Add a bold contrast—like hot pink, lime green, or bright turquoise—to create visual energy.
- **Prints & Textures:** Bring small- to medium-scale prints, subtle textures, batiks, and tone-on-tone fabrics to add depth and interest. Avoid large-scale prints that may overpower smaller piecing, unless you plan to use them as a background.
- **Neutrals & Backgrounds:** Include several neutrals such as white(s), cream(s), gray(s), and black(s), or low-volume prints, to provide contrast and balance. These are especially useful for faces and will help your colors stand out while adding structure to your composition.

If you have a scrap bag, bring it—**more is better!** Bring as many fabric options as you’d like. Orphan quilt blocks or quilt tops you’re willing to cut up are also welcome.