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## Block of the Month Tips from Joan

This quilt can be done using any method of applique that you choose. Pearl, the quilt designer, hand appliquéd the quilt using a method of preparing the appliqué with freezer paper templates and starch. Her DVD, which QBTB carries, is very informative. My favorite method is preparing the appliqué using either templates and starch, or freezer paper and glue stick. It depends solely on the shape of the pieces. A few hints if you decide that these are the methods you are going to use.

1. Preshrink the freezer paper by pressing with a dry iron. I did a test and found that the length of the freezer paper sheets shrunk by 1/8". Always use a dry iron to keep from crinkling the paper.

2. You can print the appliqué design on freezer paper sheets (at QBTB) with your ink jet printer, just remember that you need to mirror image the designs as you scan and print.

3. Pearl has a couple of tools that make turning the seam allowance back with starch much easier. Both the bamboo handled stiletto and appliqué pressing tool are easy to use. I bought both and like the way they fit in my hand.

4. Match the thread to your appliqué pieces. QBTB has put together a set of appliqué threads to best match the fabrics in the quilt (Spooky spools on the website).

5. Pearl puts all her pieces together with Roxanne's Glue Baste-it (at QBTB) before she places them on the block. By doing this you can overlay the pieces on the original without looking through the background fabric. You can put groups of pieces together. The great feature of this is that you don't have to use pins so you don't catch your thread as you sew. Glue- Baste-it has a very fine point and will actually put down drops of glue.

6. Her method works well with machine appliqué because everything is on the block and stabilized with glue. You may want to use a light weight stabilizer under the block before stitching with the machine (sometimes I just use a piece of tissue paper). If you are new to machine appliqué, Harriet Hargrave's book *Mastering Machine Quilting* is a standard.

7. If you choose to use fusible appliqué as your method of choice, QBTB carries Light Steam a Seam which is a wonderful non-stiff fusible product. Just remember when tracing your pieces that you need to use a mirror image of the block.

Joan

(I'm working on my blocks, slightly different than yours because I have a huge stash. Sandy and Sue have worked really hard to find fabrics that work well with this quilt. I am sure you will be very pleased with the results. Though my blocks are different, I will try to post as we are working. Have fun with the process.)

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