

## LET'S TALK DESIGN

This handout is to help you prepare and decide what fabric you want to use for your BOM quilt. Fabric choice is the most important key. Many mystery quilts do not work because the quilter didn't like the choice of fabric in the setting when it was assembled together. Let me help you select the fabric needed for this project.

**SETTINGS:** What setting are you going to choose? The wave setting is the only one you really should decide before you select fabric. You will want this in blues, greens, purples. I think solids, batiks and scraps would work great for this setting. A background fabric is NOT recommended, you should change up the light-colored fabric for each block. For this design you will need to add the yardage of the background into your light fabric yardage.

If choosing the traditional or gypsy wife setting, we will use borders and filler blocks to tie the whole quilt together. The key for these two settings is the background and sashing fabric.

**BACKGROUND FABRIC:** If you want a more modern quilt a gray fabric would be a good background choice. The traditional is white or a neutral. Black adds a high contrast. Scrappy works well with neutrals. Tans or browns work with civil war or batik. Usually solids are recommended because a print in the background can get too busy but small print blender fabrics can work. If you want to be really bold and use black and white prints or pastels, you might find a large print or busy print works for the background. **EXPERIMENT:** Make a four patch with your fabric selection, add a border with a potential background fabric and see if you like it.

**SASHING FABRIC:** This will be used in the traditional setting and may or may not be used in the gypsy setting. If you choose the sashing fabric prior to assembling the top you can add small pieces in the blocks. When choosing your sashing fabric, you want to make sure it doesn't blend with any of the other fabrics. You want a slight contrast. Some blocks may have background on the edge, others may have another fabric on the edge so the sashing should not blend with any of the fabrics.

**PRE-CUTS** – This is a package of fabrics cut in the same size and all the colors are coordinate. There are several different types of precut bundles to consider and look at when you are choosing them. Make sure you read and look at what you are getting some different ways to bundle are: two pieces of twenty different fabrics; four pieces of ten different fabrics; a pack of blender fabrics of one color, tonal pack that is one or two colors going light to dark within the same color. If you choose the first two you get more of a scrappy coordinate look.

**SCRAPS** – Scraps work great with these blocks and will work well in the settings if you do a little planning. Start by separating your scraps so that you have three groups, lights, mediums and darks. Then within those piles pull out the fabrics that stand out and don't blend. There may be a fabric that is too bright or the print is too large. You don't have to think too hard you will see what doesn't work with the other fabrics in the group. This will help your quilt coordinate when it is all assembled.

## GROUPS OR THEMES YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER

Black and white prints

Civil War – recommend you stick to small prints, not with pictures.

Patriotic – Red, white (neutral), blue

Batiks – when choosing batik fabric by the yard, you want to consider the pattern. Are they one color, do they have a picture print, is the print a contrasting color or is it watercolor changing color so when you cut it one piece is yellow and another piece orange?

Bright's or Pastels – solid or print

Tonal - One color (from light to dark)

Color Wheel – using the color wheel you can select color groups:

Analog are colors next to each other on the color wheel like yellow and orange.

Complementary colors are across from each other on the color wheel like yellow and purple.

Split complement is using three colors like orange, green and blue.

The color is only the first step you need to consider the other three things that effect fabric and prevent them from coordinating is hue, tint or shade. This is why some scrap quilts look better than others.

Color – This is a general term. Hue – Is a specific color originating from yellow, orange, red, violet, blue or green. Tint – is when a color is mixed with white making it light. Tone – is a color mixed with gray (this is why many colors don't match, they have different intensities of gray. Shade – this is when color is mixed with only black, no white or gray.

Lastly, when you shop for your own fabrics. The first step is **FIND ONE YOU LOVE** to be used in every block; this should be a medium fabric. Then use the dots on the selvage edge for or just match the colors on the fabric if the dots are too small. This is a controlled color palette. Another method is to choose 2-4 colors from the same design group, because the fabrics are from the same designer they will coordinate. When choosing fabrics, don't forget to consider similar print designs, use small prints, and a variety of shades so you have light, medium and dark. A **medium color should be the dominate** fabric and then use small dark or bright pieces for contrast and a light background.

I hope this information is helpful. Please ask questions from your quilting friends I know it can sound confusing when I described the settings or use terms you may be unfamiliar with when referencing different fabrics. I look forward to working on this project with everyone. The more input you provide about sharing your fabric choice and making the block the more fun and engaging this club will be.

Barb

rubio09@me.com