Fused Patchwork And Thread Bridges Instruction Sheet

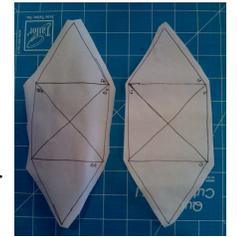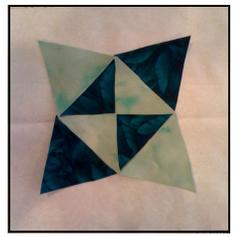*Remember: Fusible reverses the motif*

This is a new technique for Fused Patchwork that will simplify the laying out and fusing of patchwork-like pieces. Tracing same fabric units that touch as a single piece, connected with bridges of the fabrics thread, eliminates tedious placement problems. In other words, your points will always be sharp!

When laying out and cutting the appliqué fusible, allow for and leave "bridges" of thread… The design pieces of the same fabric are connected by only a few threads where they touch in a point. For this "Bridges Quilt," a dark and a light are layered but the two fabrics barely touch, mostly abut.
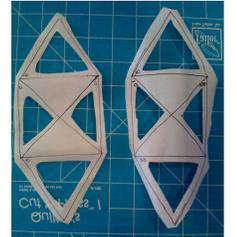

Trace Shapes to Fusey

The "Thread Bridges" are covered by the appliqué stitch, so they can be as wide as that stitch. I like a zigzag stitch that is short and narrow, about a 1 length and a 2 width. That is where I start, then adjust from there for you own liking. The shorter length stitch is easier to control and the width is narrow enough to be unobtrusive yet wide enough to tame that fused edge. In many instances, you will layer the light and the dark appliqué pieces upon the background fabric. Seldom, if ever, will there be actual layers of fabric overlapping, mostly just a few points. More often, the fabric will actually abut. Any tiny gaps visible after fusing will be filled with the thread of the appliqué stitch.

Trim Interior Fusey

About the thread, I am going to make my actual blocks in light and dark green, and stitch down all edges with a medium green thread. If I were doing a yellow and blue like in the blog pics, I would use a blue a few shades lighter. Where fabrics abut, the needle should swing from light to dark to fasten both colors. The thread will be an additional design element.
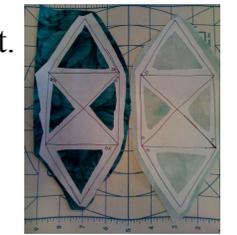

Fuse to WS of Fabrics

1. **Trace Shapes to Paper Backed Fusible Web (Fusey):** Decide on fabric placement. Wherever the "pieces" touch can be cut with Thread Bridges as one piece. Trace the whole shape that will be of one fabric as it appears on the pattern.

2. **Trim away interior fusey:** Mark which sections are fabric and which will be cut away in the design. The sections that are fabric need to have the excess (interior) fusible cut away. Trimming away excess fusible from the inside of shapes (larger than about 1") will lighten the whole project and give it a softer "hand", more like that of hand appliqué.

Cut Outer Edge

3. Fuse to wrong side of applique fabric following manufacturers instructions. Most manufacturers recommend your fabric be free of starch and fabric softener. Carefully read the info about iron temperature. Heat N Bond Lite suggests a "Silk" setting. Too hot an iron will cause the glue to burn away, too Cool and the glue will not melt. Irons vary so find the temperature that works for your iron starting out at a lower temp and working toward a higher temp til the glue melts.

Close Up Of Thread Bridge

4. Cut along outer edge of piece. Fold fabric to make a snip in the non-fabric sections. Cut away excess fabric and fusey, being sure to leave bridges of thread between the sections.

5. Fuse completed shapes to oversized background square, overlapping and abutting as necessary.

Cut Away Interiors Leave Thread Bridges

6. Choose a rayon thread color that complements both fabrics… usually lighter that the darker fabric and darker than the light fabric. Stitch down using the rayon thread atop your sewing machine and a neutral color cotton in the bottom. Reduce your top tension one number.

7. Start with a 1 length and 2 width zigzag stitch and adjust to your own liking. Along the outer edge, the needle should swing from the background fabric right along the edge of the applique up on to the applique. On the interiors, where one fabric abuts the other, the needle should swing from one fabric to the other, fastening both down. Stitch down all fabric edges. Trim background to unfinished block size.
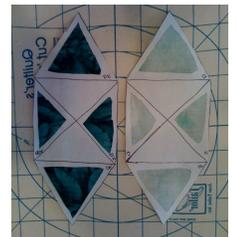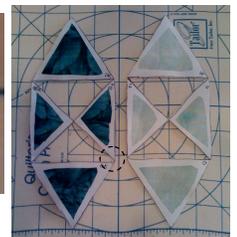
Completed Shapes