

Two Birds

Wall Quilt Pattern

By Betty Jo's Fabric Arts



Copyright © 2022 by Betty Jo Tatum, Ashburn, Virginia, USA
All Rights Reserved

Building the Bird Scene

Overview

This pattern lets you create a beautiful wall hanging or lap quilt. I am also posting a set of free companion videos for this project on YouTube that will help you work through the different steps in each phase (assembly, thread art, quilting, painting). Designed mainly for advanced beginners and intermediate quilters, this project uses a lot of the same techniques I have used in some of my show quilts that have won awards. However, the combination of project book and videos are designed to make it achievable for a wide range of quilters.

- I have also posted short videos on YouTube with alternative techniques you can use for various steps, depending on what equipment you have and how you like to work. For example, one of these shows how to [set up a domestic sewing machine for free motion quilting](#), and another shows an [alternate approach to marking your project for quilting](#).

The completed quilt is about 39½" x 49½". The central panel of the quilt has six solid color appliques applied that provide the structure for free motion stitching of the complete bird scene.

The birds in the flowery tree design are inspired by a coloring book line drawing in *Birds of Paradise* by Marica Zottino published by Dover Publications Inc. and used herein by permission.

The raw-edge applique pieces of the bird scene are first applied to the center block with fusible web and stitched on with matching 40 weight thread. The stitching guides for the bird scene are printed onto a sticky wash away stabilizer and applied to the top or marked onto the quilt by one of the suggested alternative methods. Borders pieced onto the sides and corners frame the picture and allow for some stitched designs with dramatic contrast on the borders as well.

The pattern calls for free motion feathers and swirls that surround the appliques. In the supply list there is a link for a stencil for you to order to assist with marking the feather work around the birds or you can mark or improvise your own. The remainder of the background quilting is free motion of your choice. Some of the background quilting I used is demonstrated in the videos.

In the videos I demonstrate not only the thread painting, quilting, and finishing of this quilt, but also the optional addition of painting using the artist crayons in the supply list in the some of the bird designs. The painting is not required to make this a beautiful piece, but I like the enhancement it provides and recommend it.

Please watch the free YouTube videos to learn more about how to complete this project and subscribe to my YouTube channel. Subscribing only requires that you click on "Subscribe" and is free.

Questions and comments can be made below the YouTube videos and I usually monitor those daily. Alternatively, they can be sent to me by email at BettyJo@bjfabricartist.com.

Supply List

Note: All of these recommendations are products I use myself. Some of the links I have included for certain supplies are affiliate links, which means that if you use those links to make your purchases, I will receive a small percentage at no additional cost to you. Other links aren't affiliates but are provided for your convenience.

Fabric:

Because of the thread art, quilting, and painting that are used with these, I recommend solid colors for this project.

- 1 ¼ yds of [deep red solid cotton](#) for central block.
- 1 ½ yds of [jet-black solid cotton](#) for borders and bindings.
- 1 ½ yds of backing fabric (you can use 42" wide quilting fabric for this with no piecing).
- Small pieces of fabric or [fat quarters in various colors](#) for the appliques: a blue for the male bird, a lighter blue for the female bird, two different flower colors (I used violet and purple), and a [medium green](#) for the leaves.

Batting, interfacing, stabilizer, fabric treatment:

- 1 crib size package of [Hobbs Heirloom Fusible batting](#) (80 percent cotton/20 percent poly).
- 1 package of Sulky printable [Sticky Fabri-Solvy](#) water soluble stabilizer. (If you prefer to trace your design rather than use this product, I recommend [Crayola Washable Gel Pens](#), because the markings wash away completely with a small amount of detergent even if you iron them.)
- 1 package of sheets of [Steam-a-Seam 2](#) fusible web.
- If you are not using the fusible batting, you will need temporary spray adhesive to baste the sandwich together. I prefer [Sulky](#)

[KK2000](#) because it washes out well and sticks well until you want to wash it out. Spray lightly and wear a face mask when spraying.

- Fusible interfacing, Pellon SF101 (only needed if your red cotton is very light weight). [By the bolt](#) or [by the yard](#).
- [Synthrapol](#) concentrated surfactant for washing your fabrics. Prewashing is necessary for this project. You will need to wash your project to remove both the stabilizer and the markings.

Thread and needles:

This project involves a lot of thread art and quilting, so you will need a selection of threads, both matching and decorative. I used a combination from Wonderfil Threads and Superior Threads of varying weights. Here is my suggested list of threads with links:

Wonderfil

- Accent 12 wt. Rayon, [AC137 True Blue](#)
- Accent 12 wt. Rayon, [AC50 Dark Blue](#)
- Accent 12 wt. Rayon, [ACM12 Green Foliage](#)
- Accent 12 wt. Rayon, [AC39 Fuchsia](#)
- GlaMore 12 wt. metallic Rayon, [GM2124 Amber](#)

Superior Threads

- [Bottom Line](#) (60 wt. poly) in the color of quilt back for bobbin thread.
- [Magnifico](#) (40 wt. poly) in colors to match quilt and applique fabrics.

Needles

- Schmetz super nonstick needles in [assorted sizes](#)
- Superior [80/12](#), [90/14](#), and [100/16](#) top stitch needles.

Marking:

- A light tablet is very helpful (I suggest [Cutterpillar with cutting mat](#) if you don't have one). Alternatively, watch my [short video](#) on how you can use a portable laptop projector instead.
- Quilting Creations International [Feathered Corners stencil](#) for use in the quilting, if desired.

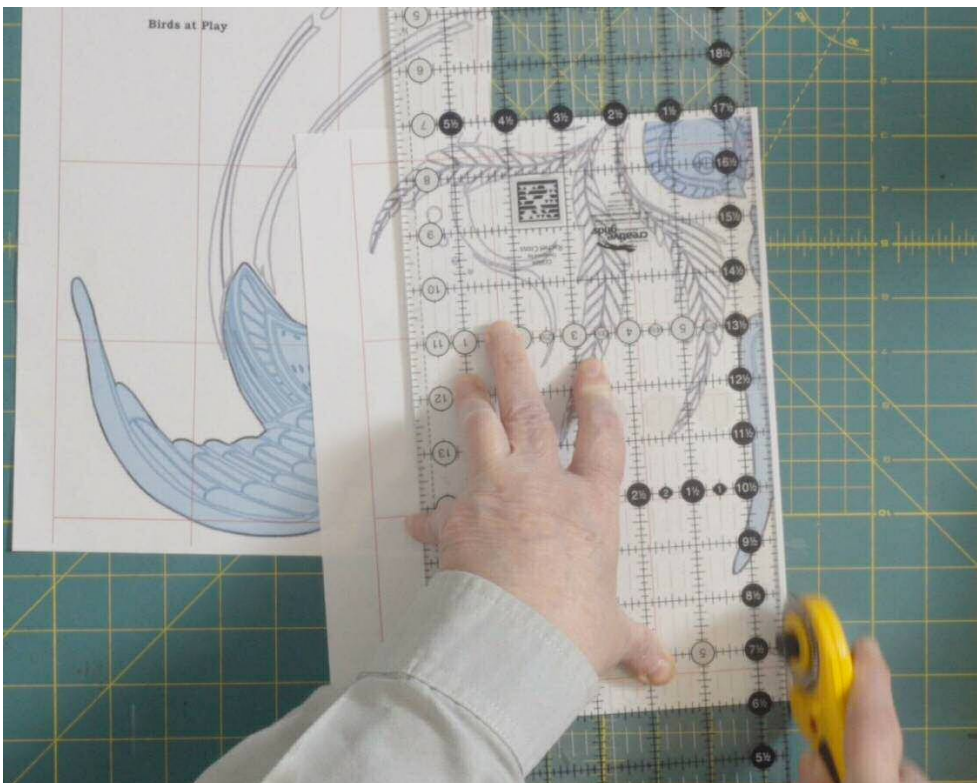
- [Pounce chalk marking pad](#) to use with the stencil.
- A marking tool such as [Bohin Chalk Cartridge pencil Set](#).

Embellishment:

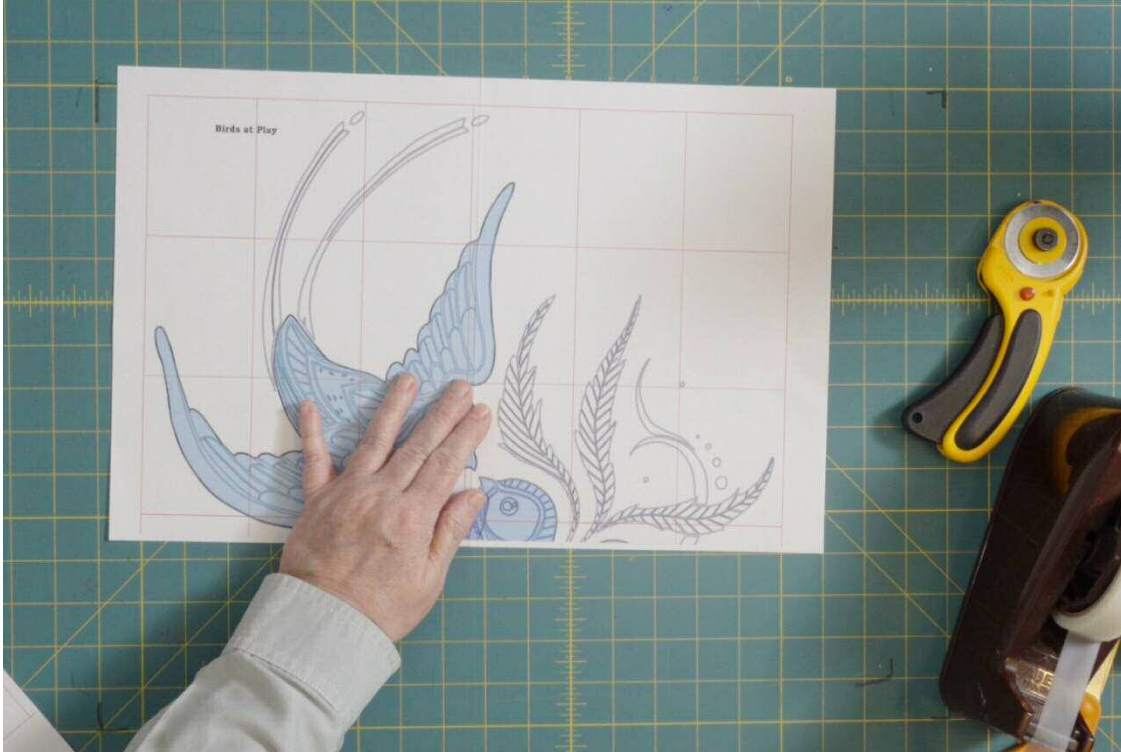
- Water soluble artists' crayons. I use Caran d'Ache Classic Neocolor II [Water Soluble Pastels](#).
- Two hot fix crystals or sew on beads for birds' eyes.
- Three or four hot fix pearls for the center of the big flower, if desired.

Assembling the Center Block Pattern

1. Print out the sheets of the full-sized Center Block Pattern at the end of this workbook.
2. Pick one sheet that you want to use as the base that the other sheets will attach to.
3. Find the sheet adjoining it, and look at where the design and grid lines stop on the edge next to your base sheet. Use those to align your ruler and cut off the white edge with a rotary cutter.



4. Tape the pieces together, using the grid lines to help you align the piece along the edges.



5. Repeat this for the remaining pages, adding one at a time to the main block. For the final page, you will need to cut off two edges before taping it down.

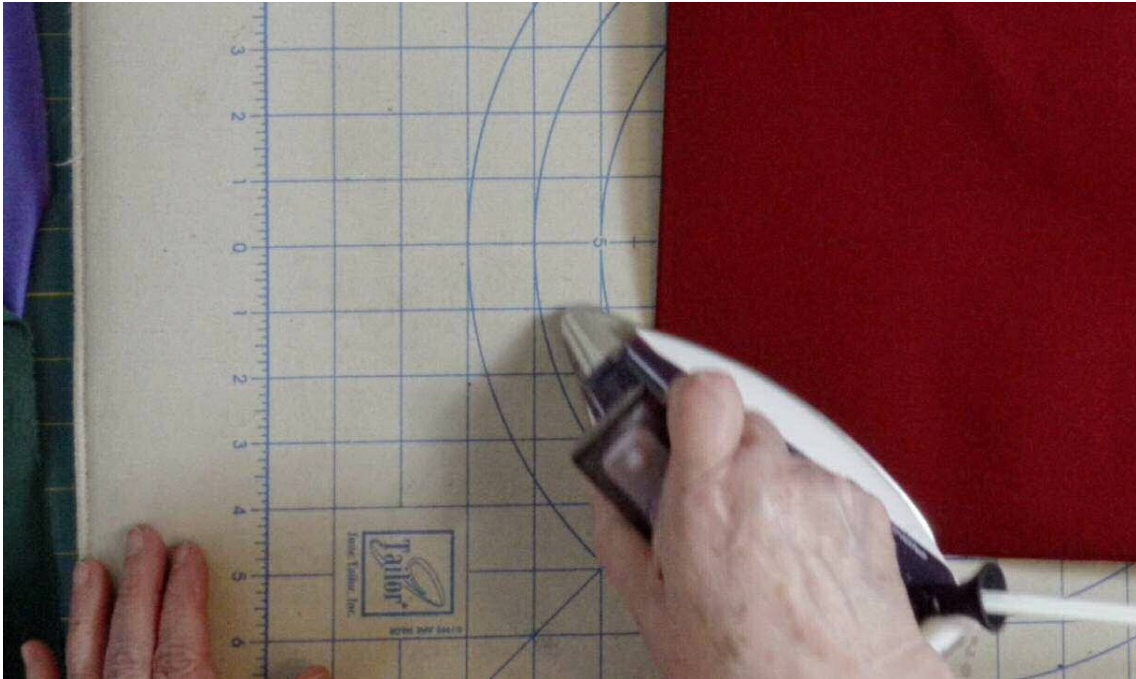
Piece Cutting Guide

Cut the following pieces for this 39½" x 49½" quilt:

1. Cut a piece of red fabric 25 ½" x 35 ½" for the central block.
(Optionally, add fusible interfacing before cutting this to size.)
2. Cut 4 pieces of red fabric 7 ½" x 7 ½" for the corners
3. Cut 2 pieces of black fabric 25 ½" x 7 ½" for the border
4. Cut 2 pieces of black fabric 35 ½" x 7 ½" for the border
5. Cut 2 ½" strips of black fabric for the binding
6. Cut backing fabric 42" x 52"
7. Cut a piece of backing fabric 10" x 40" for a rod pocket
8. Cut batting the same size as the backing fabric or a little larger

Preparing the Center Block for the Appliques

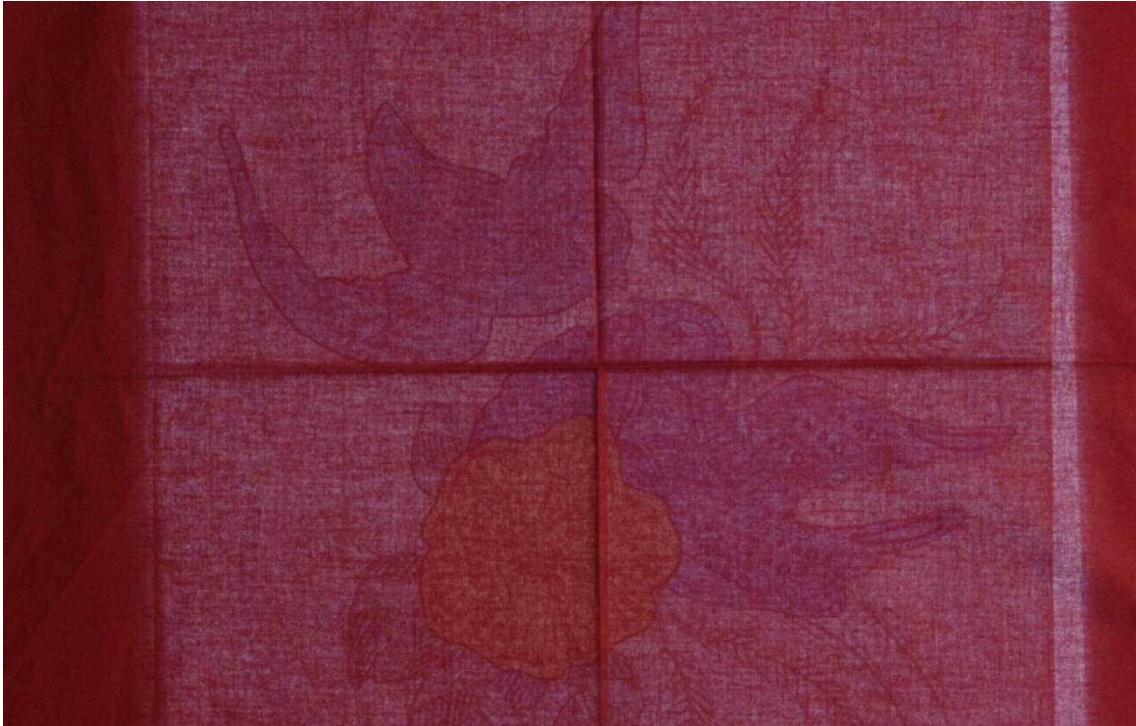
1. Fold the 25 1/2" x 35 1/2" piece of red fabric into fourths and lightly iron to help locate the center.



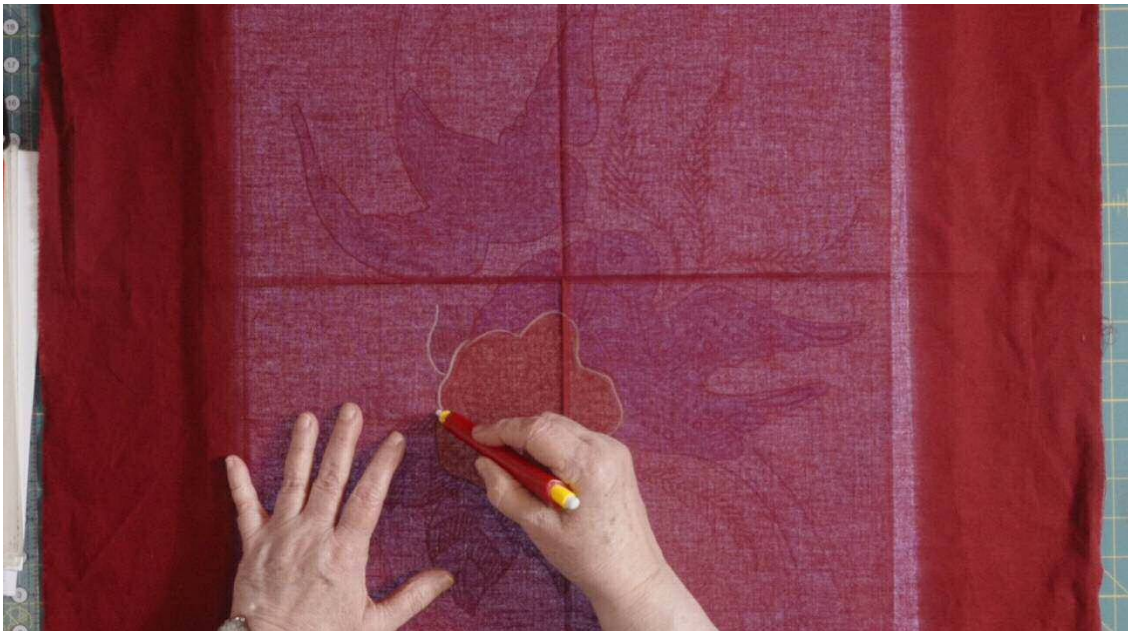
2. Tape the Pattern Assembly Guide to your light table.



3. Place the central block centered over the Pattern Assembly Guide on the light tablet and center it on the pattern using the folds you ironed earlier as a guide.



4. Trace just enough of the outlines of the colored shapes with your chalk pencil to show the applique placements.

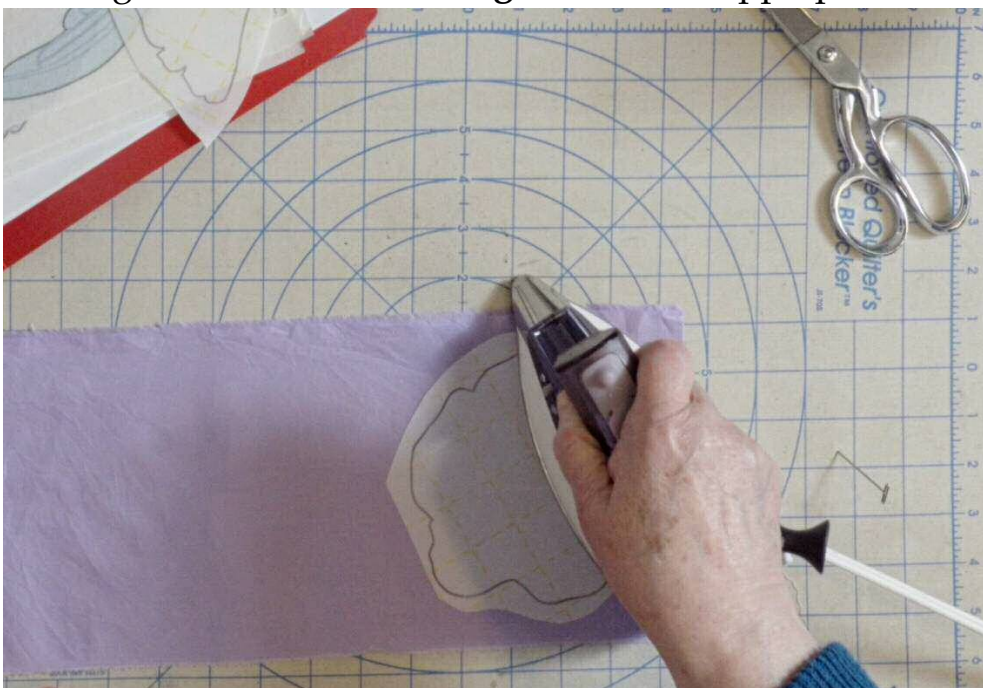


Cutting and Using the Appliques

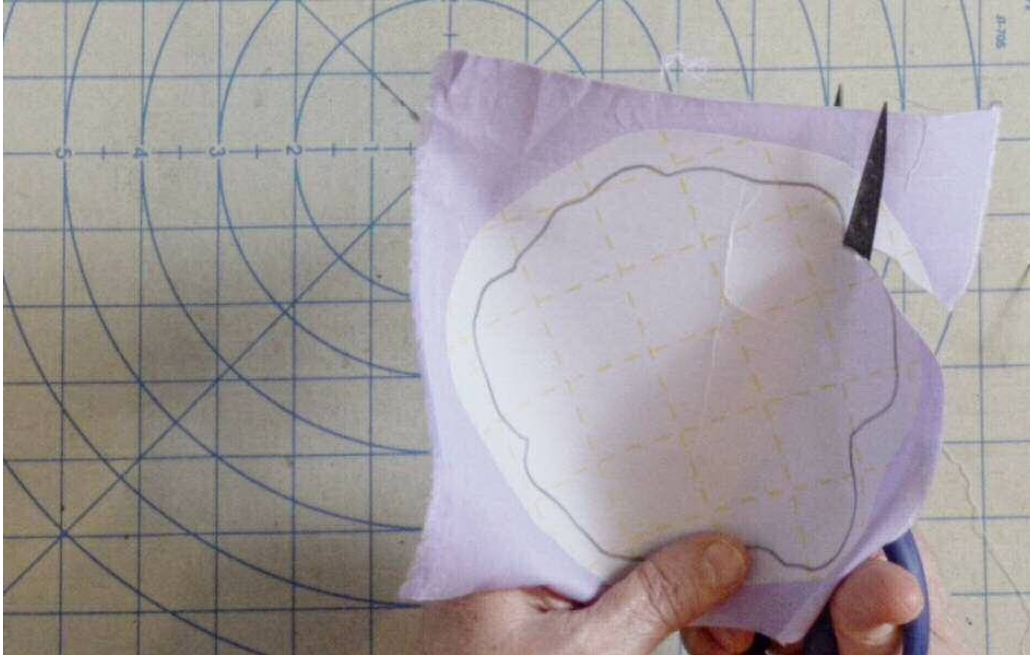
1. The fusible web is sandwiched between two silicone sheets. Print the full-sized applique patterns on the backing side that is harder to remove, which usually has a light-yellow grid. The designs are **already reversed** for printing.



2. Rough cut around the applique shapes, remove the non-printed backing, and iron to the **wrong** sides of the applique fabrics.



3. With small sharp scissors cut out each applique carefully along the marks.



Note: If you prefer to use a digital cutter, I have included svg files you can download for each applique. They have been lightly tested with a Brother digital cutter, but I still consider them experimental, so use at your own risk. When using these, back the applique fabrics with steam-a-seam before cutting.

4. Place the applique shapes onto the red block on the locations you marked with chalk earlier, and stick them down. Once you are certain they are properly placed, iron them down. **Don't iron over your light table, though!**



5. Stitch the appliques down using a narrow blanket stitch and 40 weight matching thread. Use an open-toed embroidery foot, and set the needle as far to the right as possible. Run the edge of the applique piece along the inside right toe of the foot, so the left stitches are inside the applique and the right stitches are just outside.



Settings and Equipment: I set my stitches at 1.7 width and 1.5 length. On my Bernina 880 Plus, I used my number 20D open toed embroidery foot with the dual feed engaged. I also used an 80/12 Schmetz Super Non-Stick needle.

Marking the Central Panel for Thread Painting

1. Print the five stitching guides (male bird, female bird, flowers, and additional stitching) onto the Sulky Sticky Fabri-Solvy washable stabilizer using an ink-jet printer. **Do not print this product with a laser printer or iron it!**
2. Rough cut out the pieces.

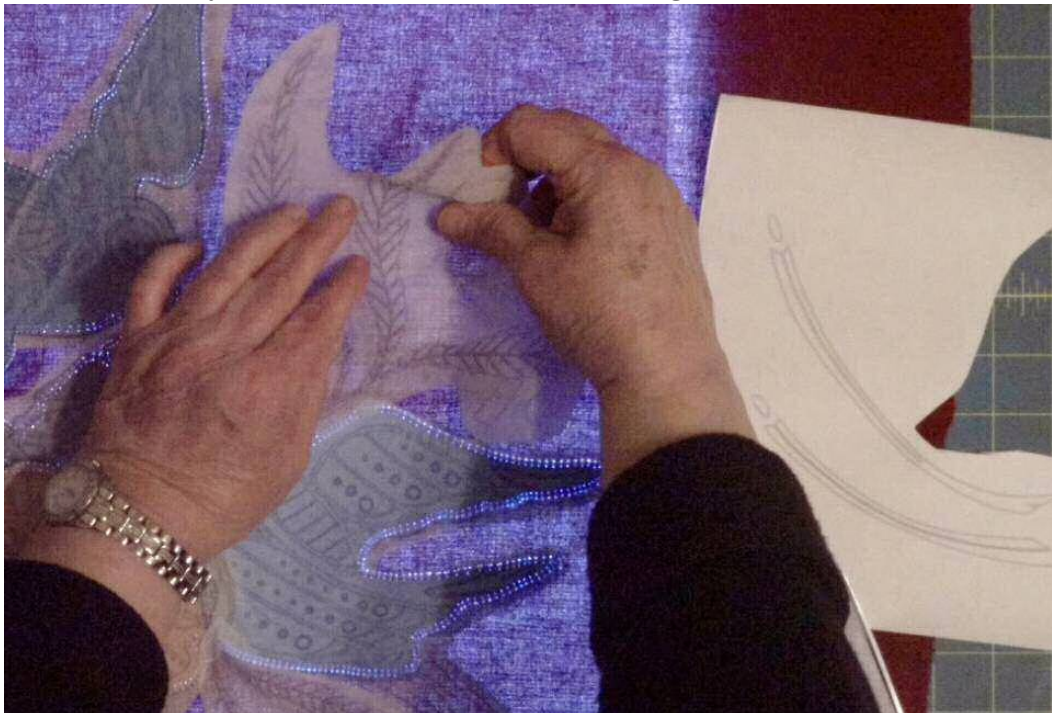


3. With your paper pattern still taped onto your light tablet, place the red center block with the appliques over the guide, lining up the appliques with the Assembly Guide design. You don't absolutely need the light tablet, but the light will help you place the printed stitching designs, by easily showing where the stitched edges are to match the edges of the design.

4. Cut around the stabilizer pieces. Remove the backing of the stabilizer and stick down matching the stitching guide over the appliques you have already stitched in place. Get them as closely placed as possible.



5. Stick down the additional stitching guides included for the main block directly on the red fabric, following the pattern for placement.



Alternate Method 1 (using the light tablet for tracing): With the Pattern Assembly Guide taped onto the light tablet, place the center red block with the appliques already attached carefully centered over the Guide and trace the stitching lines. These may be difficult to see, but if your light tablet is bright enough it is probably workable. I recommend Crayola washable Gel pens for this tracing.

Alternate Method 2 (using a portable laptop projector): Watch the video “A New Way to Mark Quilts for Stitching” <https://youtu.be/a-snHQLKjhA> on my channel.

Piecing the Borders and Corners to the Center Panel

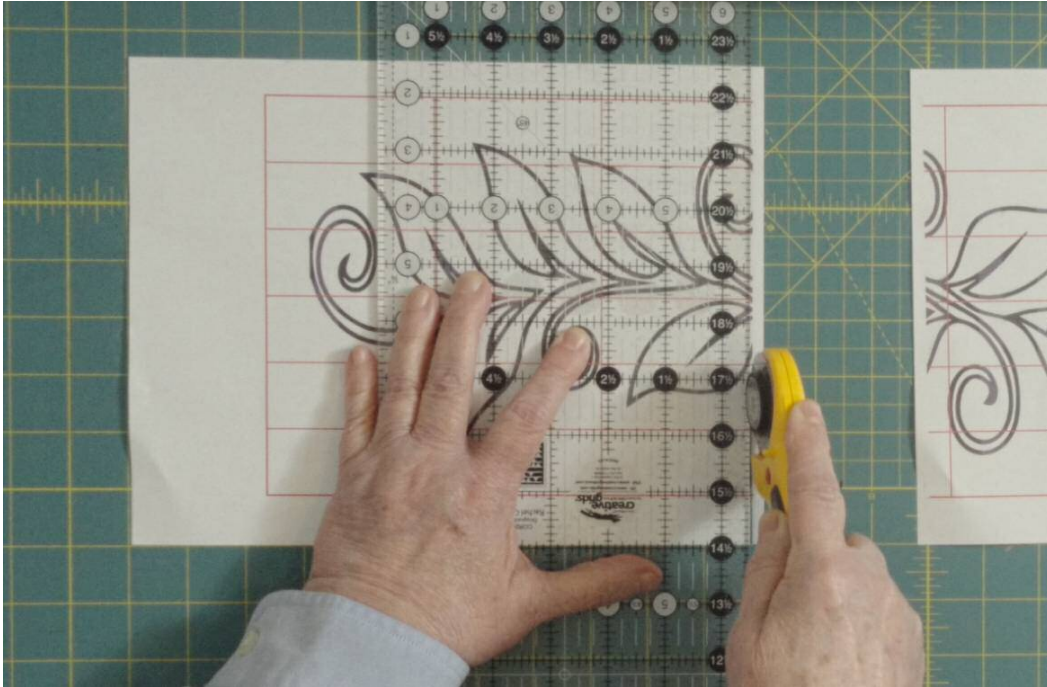
Piece the top with the red block in the center surrounded by black border blocks and red cornerstone blocks. The pieces you cut earlier are all sized to include quarter-inch seams. See the picture on the cover of this pattern for how the assembled top should look.

1. Pin and then sew the black 25 ½" x 7 ½" top and bottom pieces onto the central block.
2. Pin and then sew the red 7 ½" x 7 ½" corner blocks to the black 35 ½" x 7 ½" side pieces.
3. Press the assembled sections flat where you pieced them together using a roller or iron. If you use an iron, be careful not to iron any of the Super-Sticky Fabri-Solvy.
4. Pin and stitch the assembled side sections to the middle section, being careful to align the intersections where the central block, side, corner block, and top or bottom pieces meet.
5. Remeasure to verify that the quilt is square and that the top and bottom borders measure the same, as do the left and right borders.

Marking the Border Quilting Designs

Before sandwiching the quilt, you'll need to mark the quilting designs on the borders.

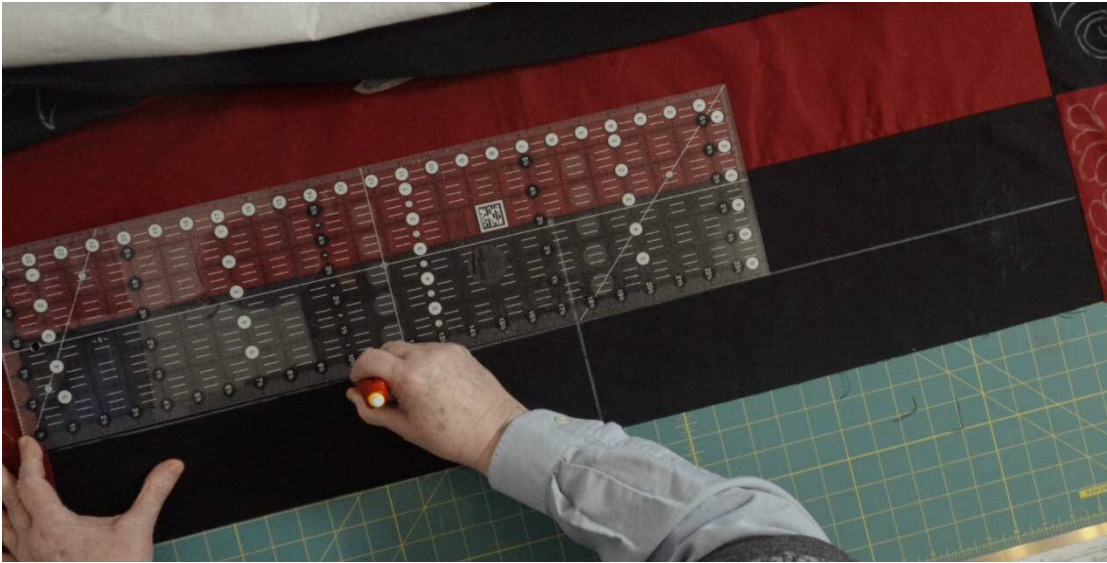
1. Print the border quilting designs for the border on printer paper.
2. Using a ruler and rotary cutter, slice the edge off of one page using the grid lines to help you align the cut.



3. Tape the pages together, still using the grid lines to help you align the pages.



4. Measure and chalk the border along its center lines.



5. Using a light tablet, trace the design twice on each side border, once on the upper half and once on the lower half. The picture below shows how the grid lines are designed to help fit the design to the border. When placing the designs, remember you will need to use a quarter inch on the outside edge all around the quilt for binding.



6. Repeat the process for the top and bottom borders, cutting and taping the pattern and then tracing it with the light tablet. Note that the top and bottom use a different-sized pattern.
7. The cornerstone pattern is a single page, so just trace it once on each of the corner blocks. The pictures below illustrate how the markings should look when complete.



Thread Painting:

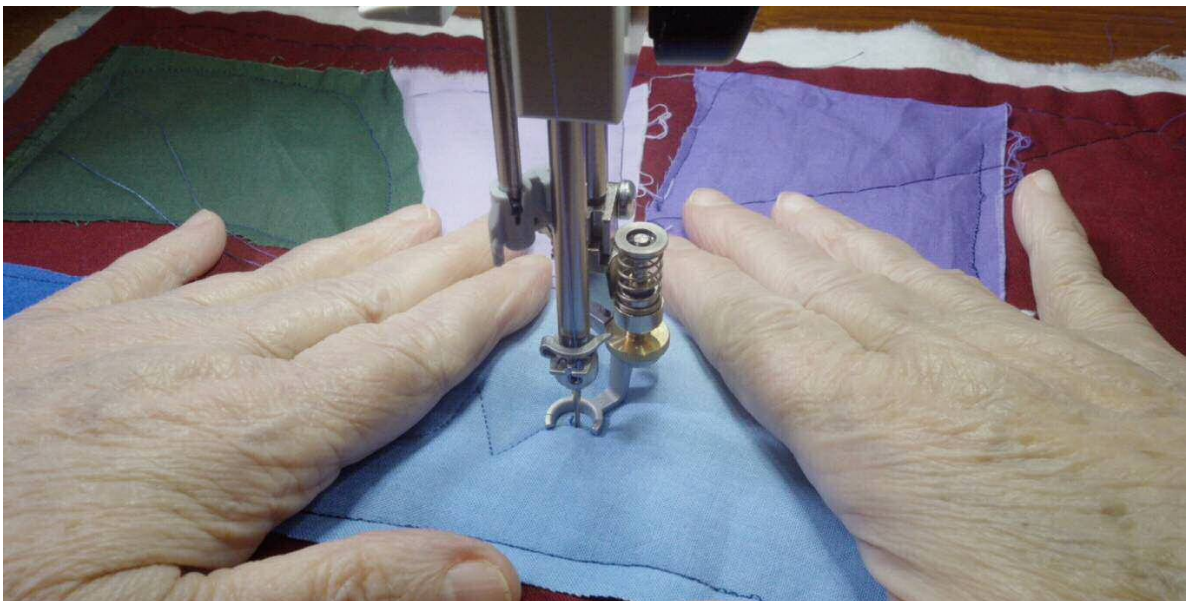
Before quilting, sandwich and baste the quilt using fusible batting, temporary spray adhesive, or your own favorite method to baste it. You can add some thread basting with your machine if desired. I used fusible batting and then machine-basted both the edges and roughly around the central design to stabilize the center panel of the quilt.

Settings and Equipment: For all of the thread painting, use a free-motion quilting foot. I used Bernina #73 on my Q20.

Over the appliques: Use 40 weight threads (I used Superior Magnifico), and an 80/12 or 90/14 needle.

Over the base fabric: Use the variegated 12 weight Accent rayon thread (see supply list) for the ferns and the 12 weight GlaMore rayon/metallic thread for the ribbons. Use a 100/16 topstitch needle.

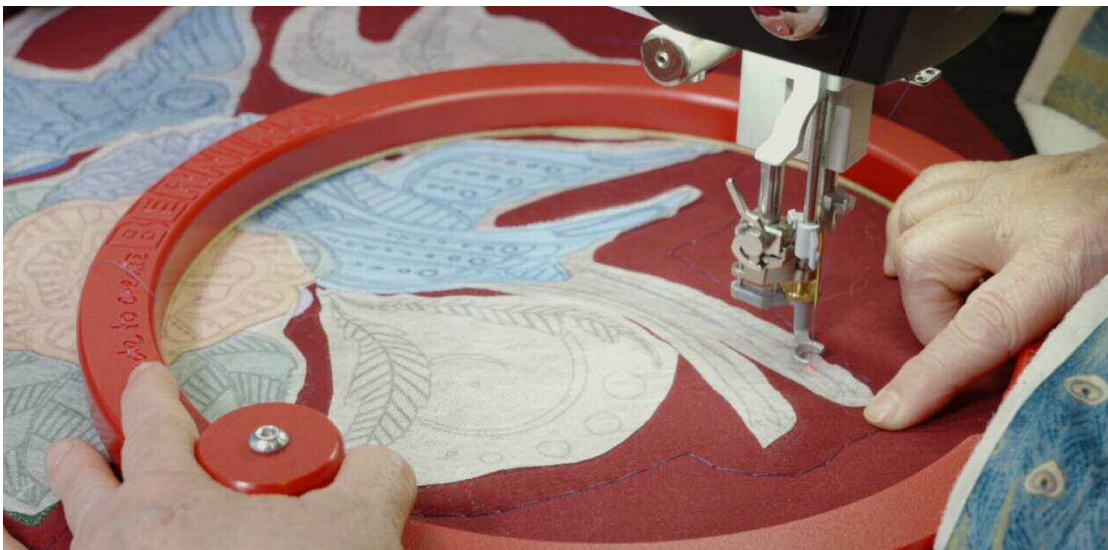
1. I recommend making a small test sandwich using fabric scraps to verify how your chosen threads will look with each piece of applique.



2. Using the thread colors you chose to work with each applique, start by free motion stitch around the lines marked with the stitching guides printed on the Super-Sticky Fabri-Solvy.



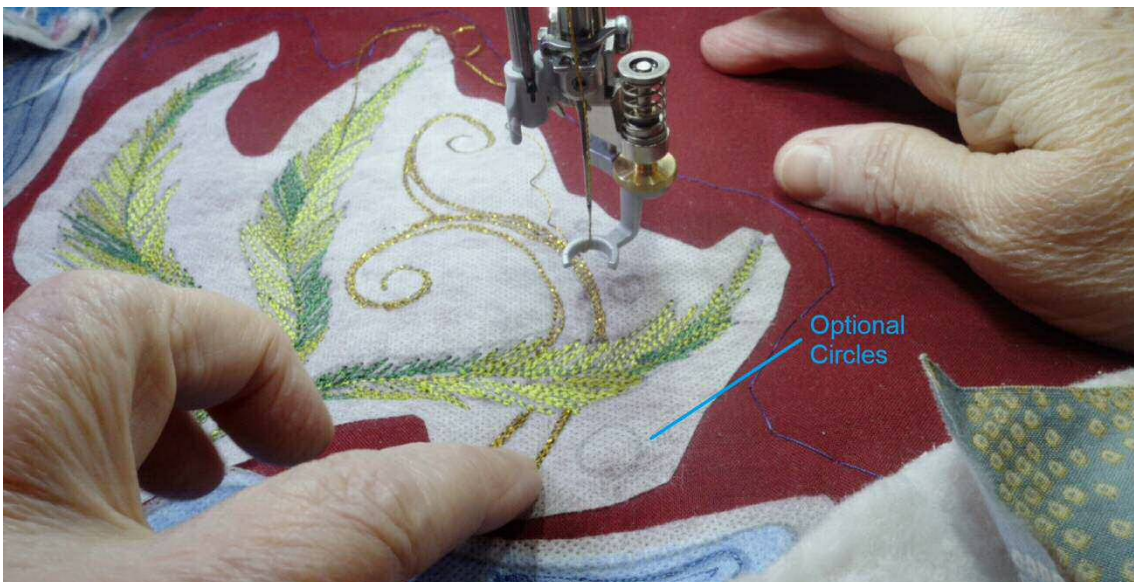
3. Also stitch along the printed lines for the birds' extended tails. They won't really show but you'll use them for guidelines later.



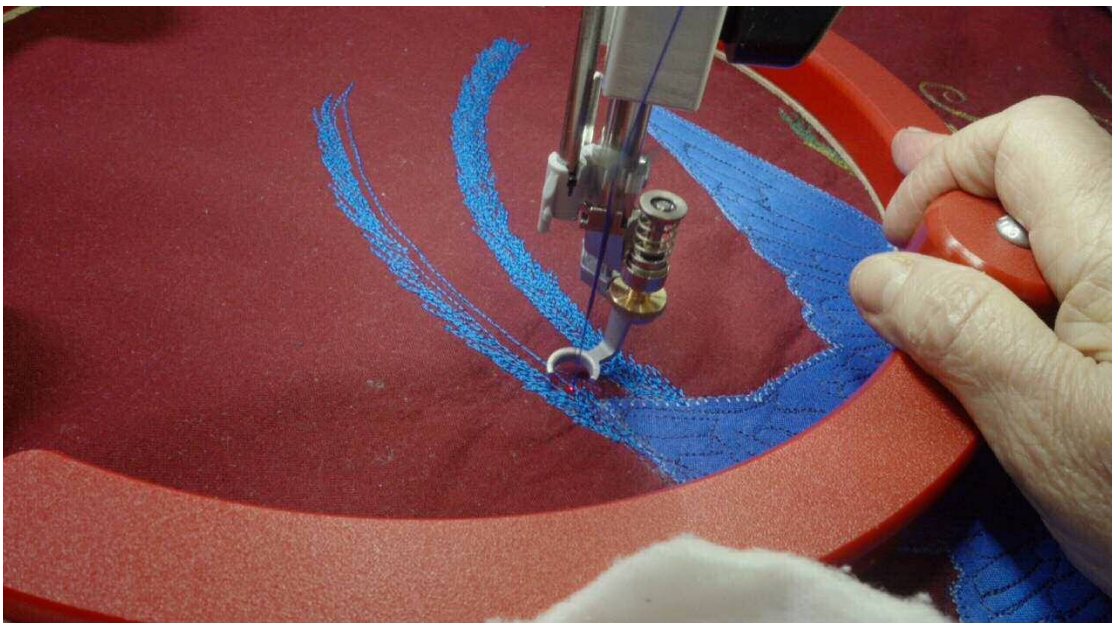
4. For the part of the design that has no applique behind it, which includes the ferns and the ribbons, switch to the 12 weight threads and stitch along these lines. **Note:** for the ferns, the printed design gives you a set of box guidelines that show where fern leaves should be placed, but I recommend stitching them by backtracking to and from the central stem of each fern, almost as if they were evergreen needles.



5. Optionally, also stitch around the small circles next to the ferns. You will see that I did not include the small circles in mine.



6. Remove the water-soluble stabilizer, which will make it easier to add more stitching with the heavier threads on the appliques. Place the center of quilt sandwich where the stabilizer is in mildly warm water in your sink and let it soak for ten minutes or so. Rinse and squeeze out some of the water with a towel and then air dry. I hung mine over the shower rod.
7. Now that you have removed the stabilizer, you will be able to see your design stitches. You will need to press the quilt sandwich after it dries to smooth it out.
8. Fill in the stitching for the birds' extended tails using the 12 weight thread and 100/16 topstitch needle. Use a backtracking stitch to represent feathers, much like you did with the stitches for the ferns earlier.



9. Use the additional 12-weight threads to enhance the strength of the major lines of the stitched scene. These threads should be contrasting colors or shades rather than matching colors.



Applique	Recommended Contrast Thread
Light blue bird (including tail)	Accent AC137 True Blue
Dark blue bird (including tail)	Accent AC50 Dark Blue
Light flower	Accent AC39 Fuchsia
Dark flower	Accent ACM12 Green Foliage
Leaves	Accent ACM12 Green Foliage

Quilting:

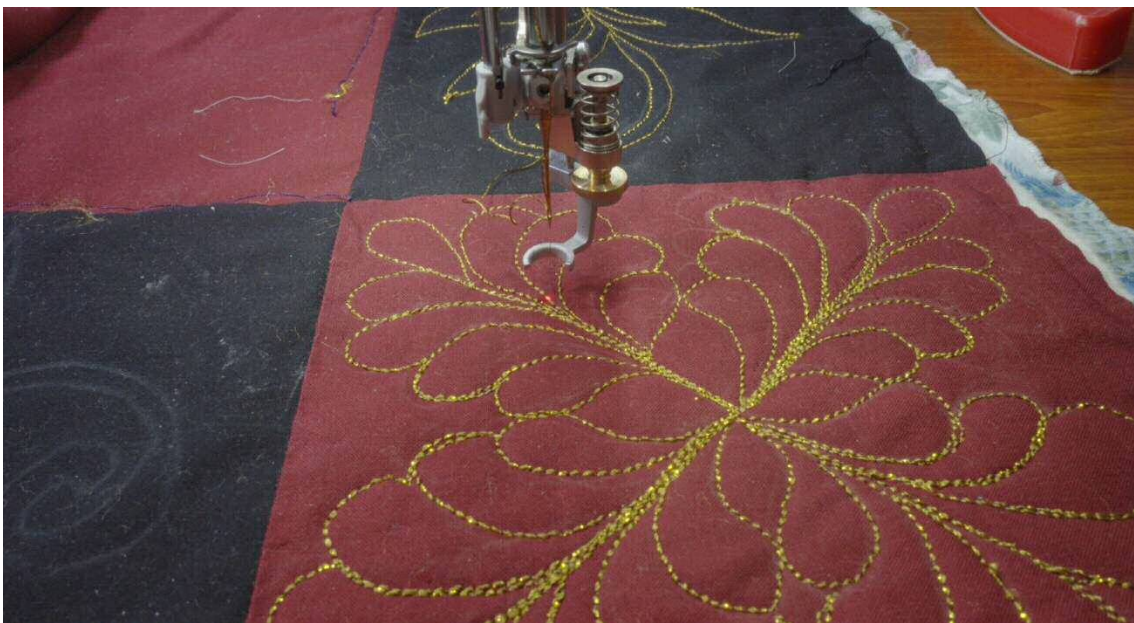
Before moving on to the quilting, stitch in the ditch of all the pieced seams with matching threads to re-stabilize the overall quilt. You can remove any thread basting at this point.

Settings and Equipment: For all of the quilting, use a free-motion quilting foot. I used the #73 foot on my Bernina Q20.

Borders and Cornerstones: Use the Glamore Rayon Amber thread, and a 100/16 top stitch needle.

Over the base fabric: Use a 40 weight polyester to match the red background fabric. I used a Superior 90/14 topstitch needle.

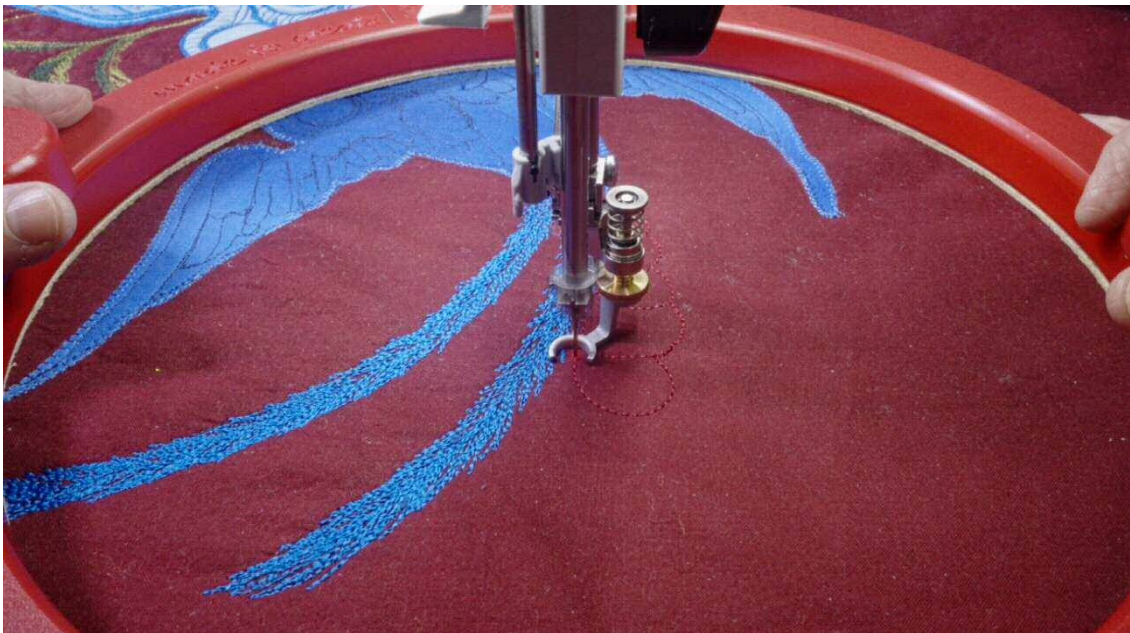
1. With the Glamore rayon thread, or alternative gold colored thread and a 100/16 top stitch needle, quilt the main quilting design on the borders and cornerstones that you marked. Using a thread with a metallic strand makes managing the thread a little harder, so I recommend slowing way down, loosening the top tension, and using a thread lubricant. If you prefer, just use a plain (non-metallic) gold-colored rayon thread. This also works better with a thread lubricant.



2. If you are using the stencil, mark the quilting feathers with the pounce chalk marker to compliment the birds tail feathers. Mark and then quilt the corner feather design on the stencil on all four corners of the red center block using the 40 weight matching color thread.



3. Quilt the feathers and swirls around the birds' tails, still using the 40 weight matching color thread.



4. Fill in the remaining swirls and background quilting on the remainder of the quilt. The accompanying videos provide additional suggestions.



Cleaning, Blocking and Binding:

Square and bind the quilt, or wash, block, and then bind using your favorite method, as you prefer. Wash in cold or lukewarm water using a handwash or gentle cycle with a little Synthrapol detergent. If the quilting marks don't disappear with the first wash, just wash again before you dry it.

Dry flat using rulers or laser squares from the hardware store to square it up and block it. I have used both T-pins on my carpeted floor and blue painter's tape in a grid formation across the entire quilt on a table top to block quilts square. For quilts as small as this it is also possible to block it square on the ironing board with steam (you have to do this in parts, but it works).

After drying, steam press the binding edge for a sharp edge finish. You can correct any blocking errors with the steam while holding the quilted area to your ironing board with pins if needed.

This would be a good point to attach a rod pocket as suggested in video.

Finishing Touches (optional):

1. With a black marker or with hot fix crystals or sew on beads, add the eyes to the birds. I also added hot fix pearls to the center of the big flower.



2. I used water-soluble artists pastels to highlight some details, especially shading a few areas on the birds.
3. For each area you want to paint, apply a bit of the color like a crayon, then dissolve and spread it as needed using water and a brush. For this process in particular it may be helpful to watch the accompanying video. Heat set the paint with your iron.

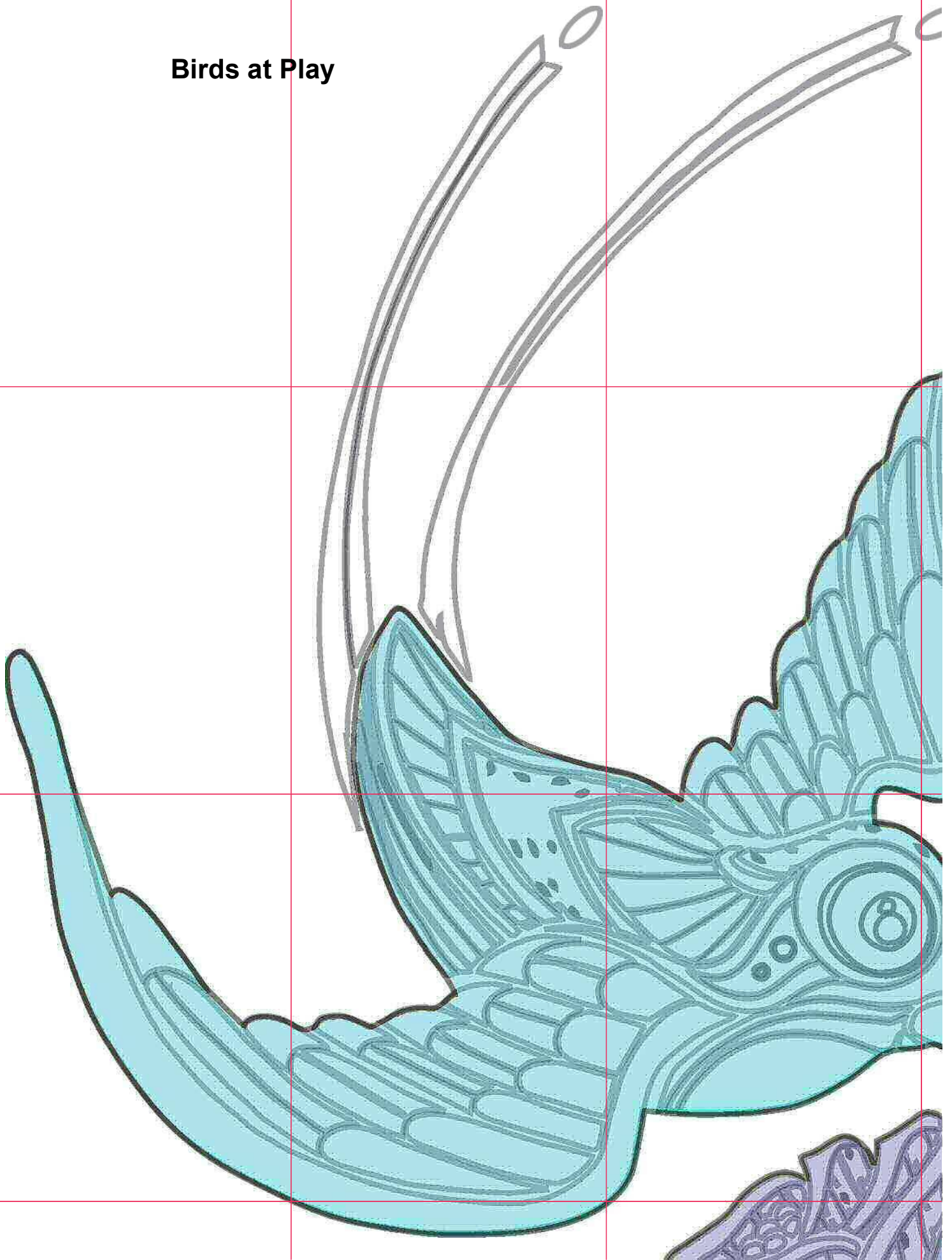


At this point, you're done! Hang up your quilt using a curtain rod attached to the wall or use as a lap quilt and enjoy it.

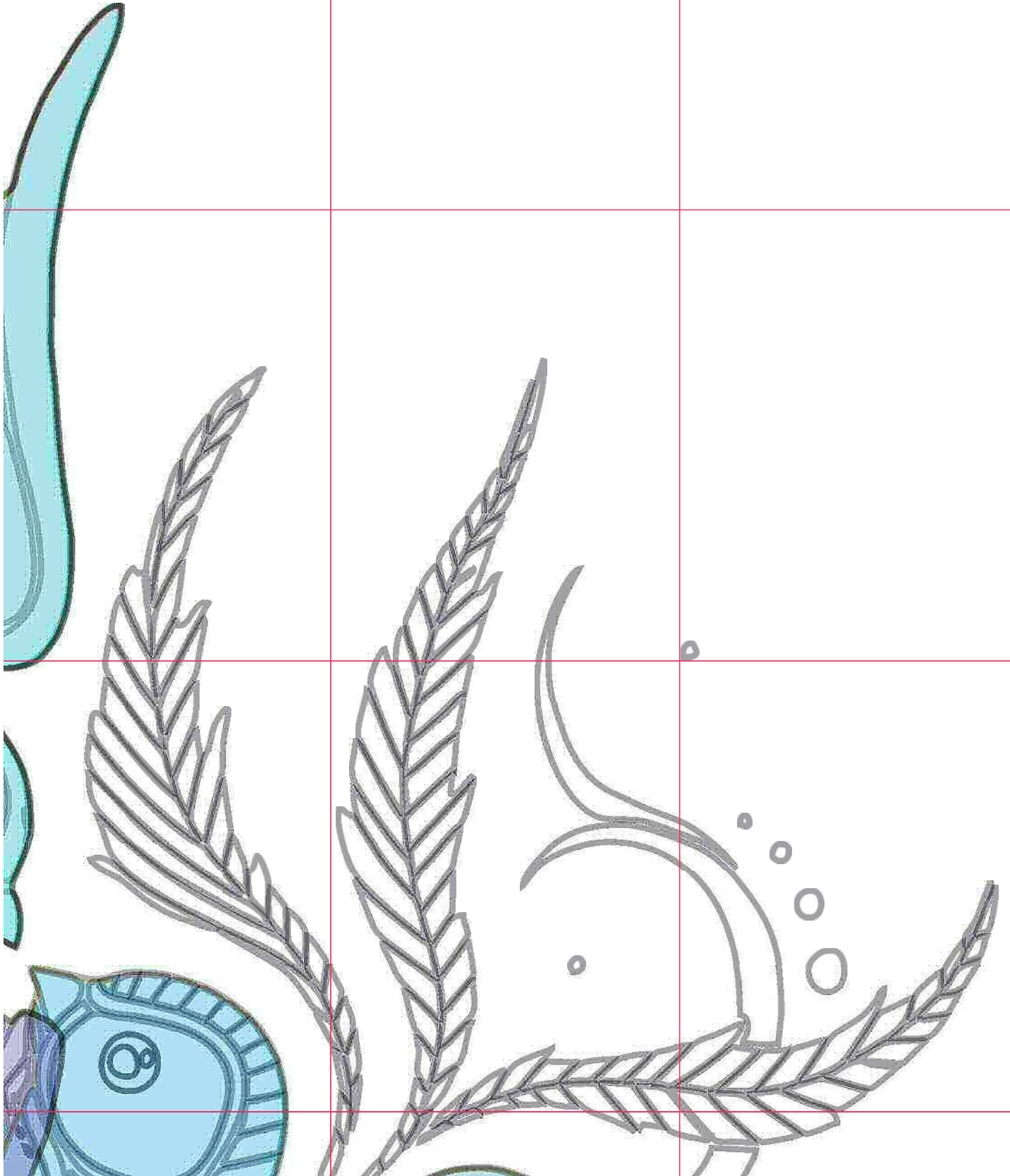
Center Block Pattern

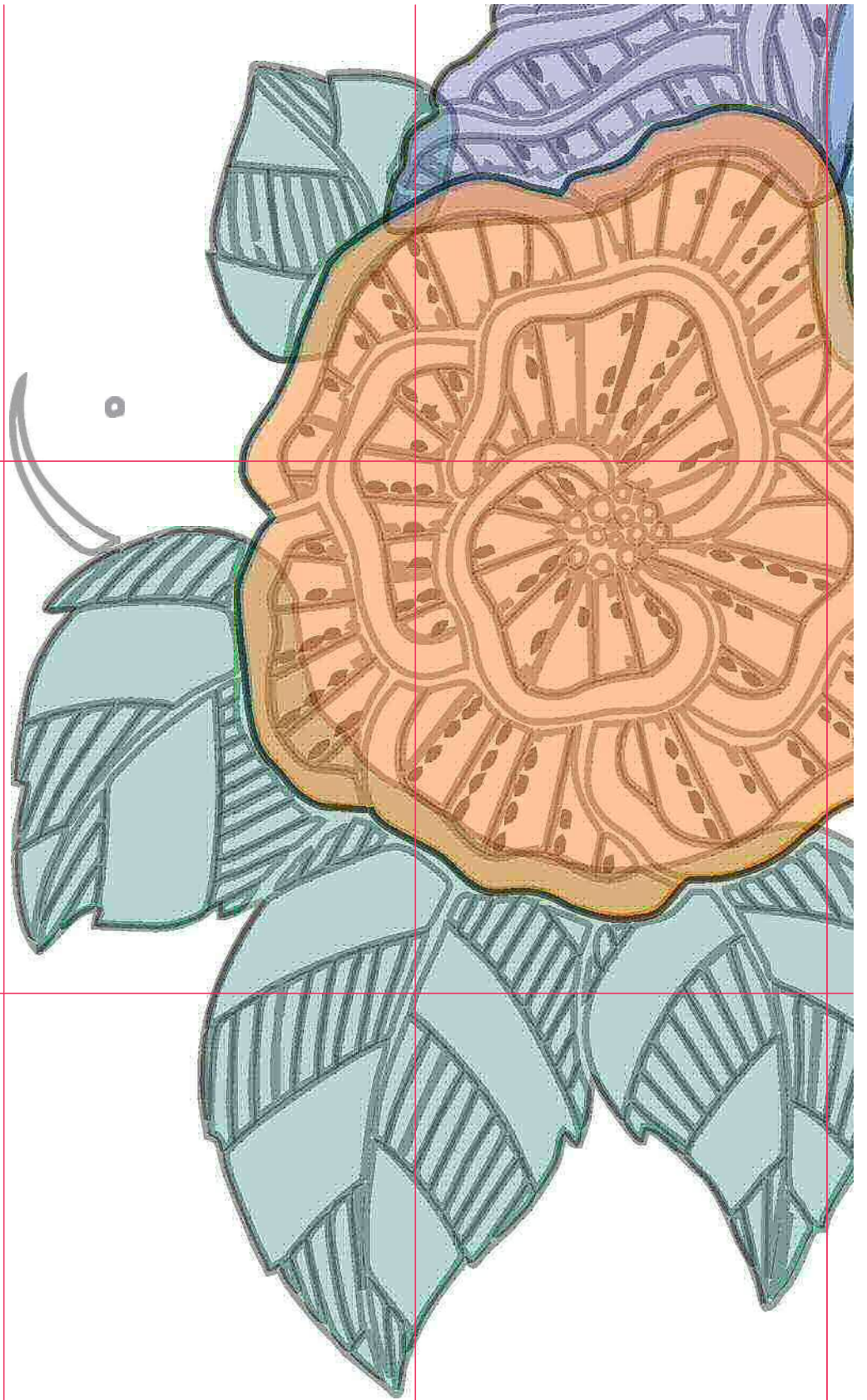
Print on regular paper and tape together.

Birds at Play



2





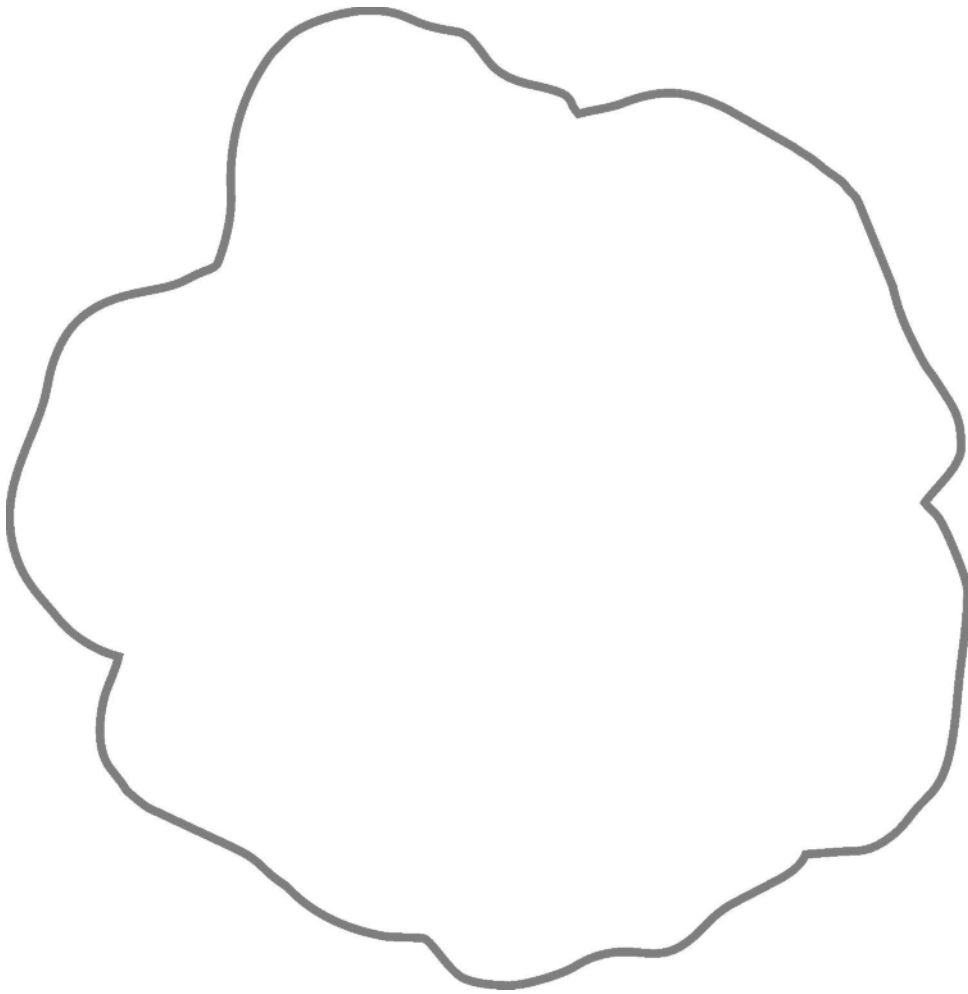
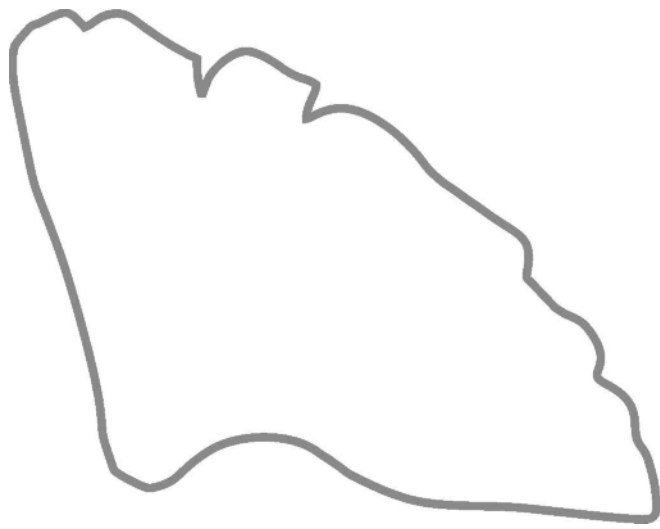


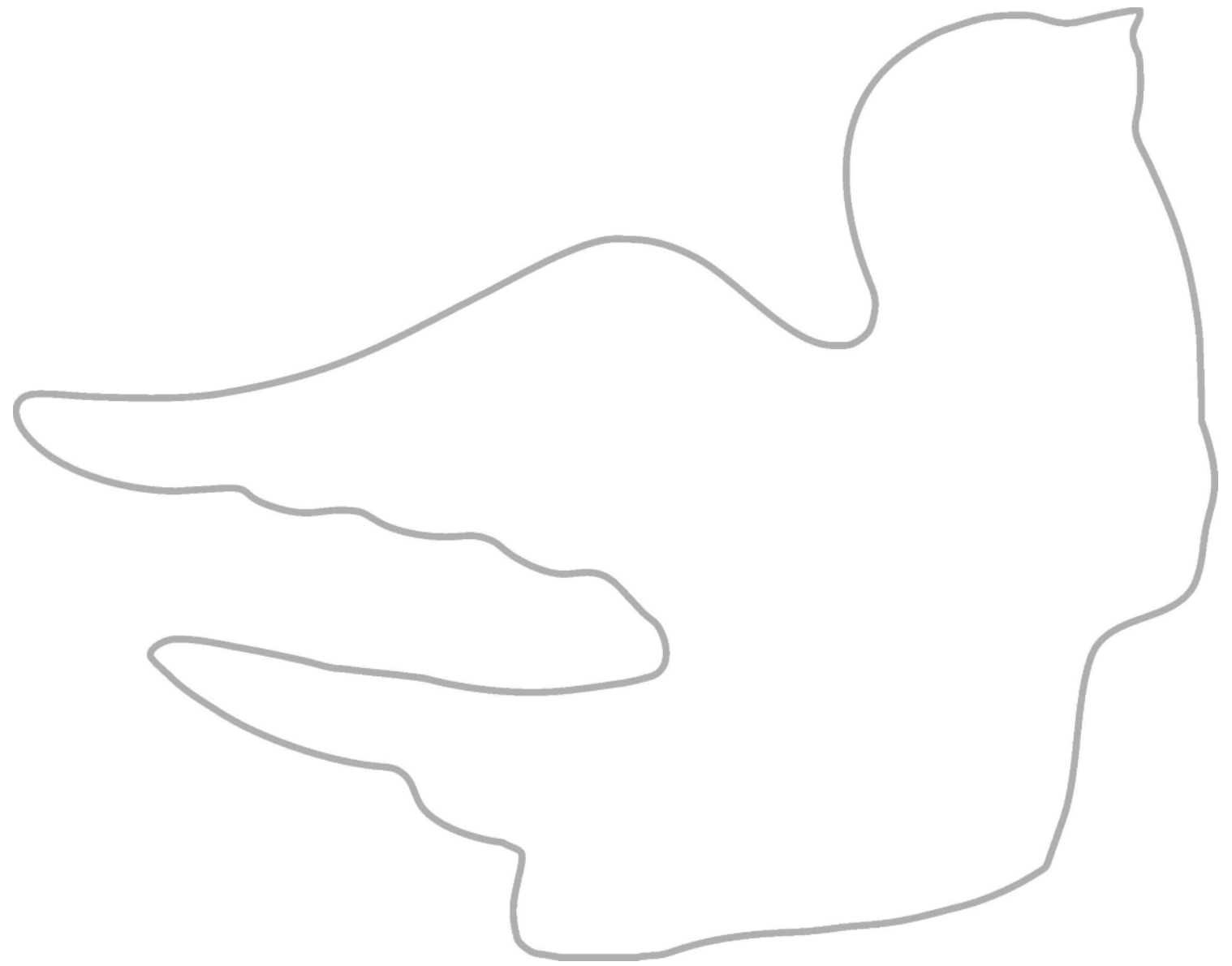
Applique Patterns

Print on Steam a Seam 2





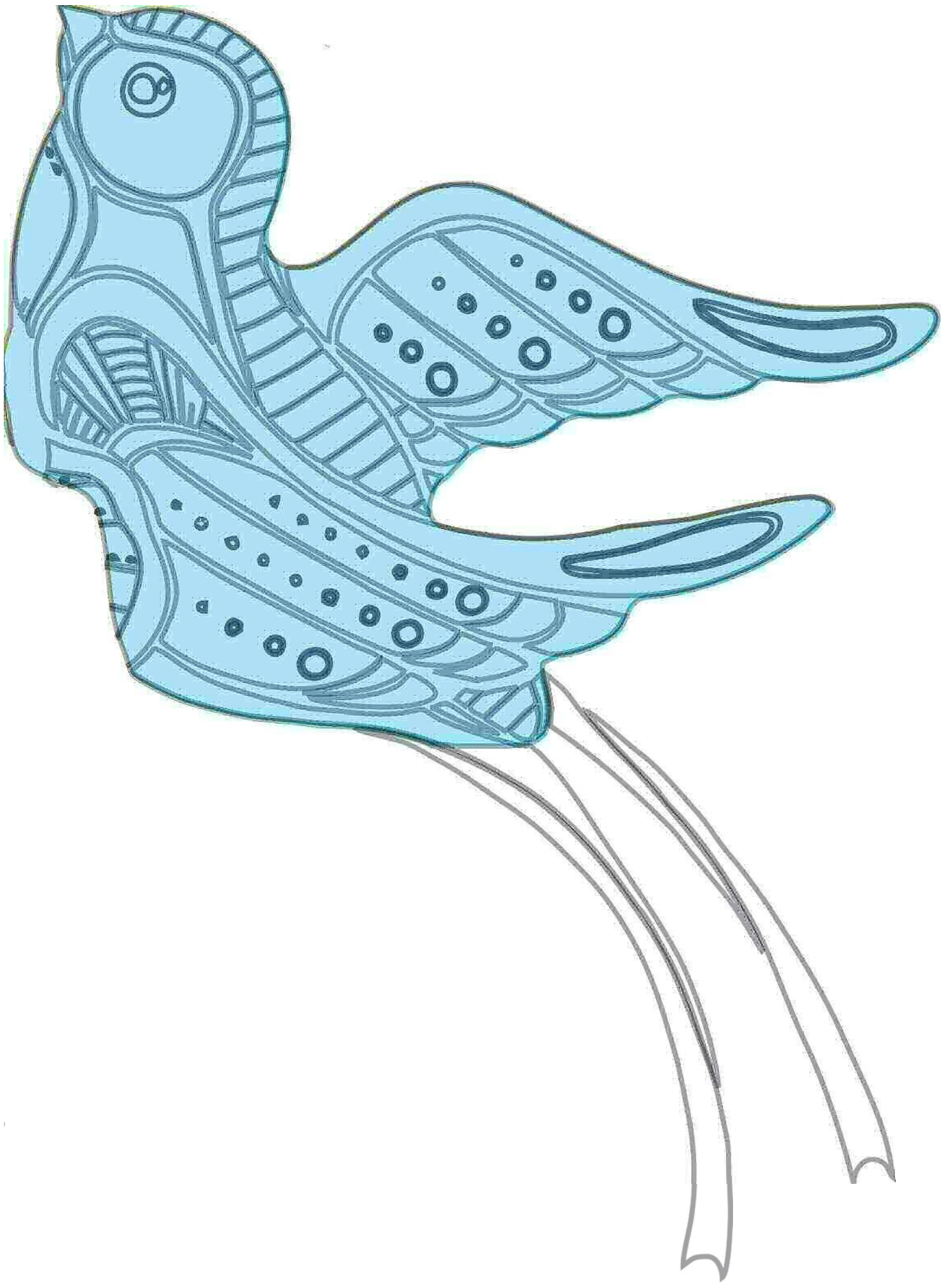




Stitching Guides

Print on Sulky Fabri-Solvy







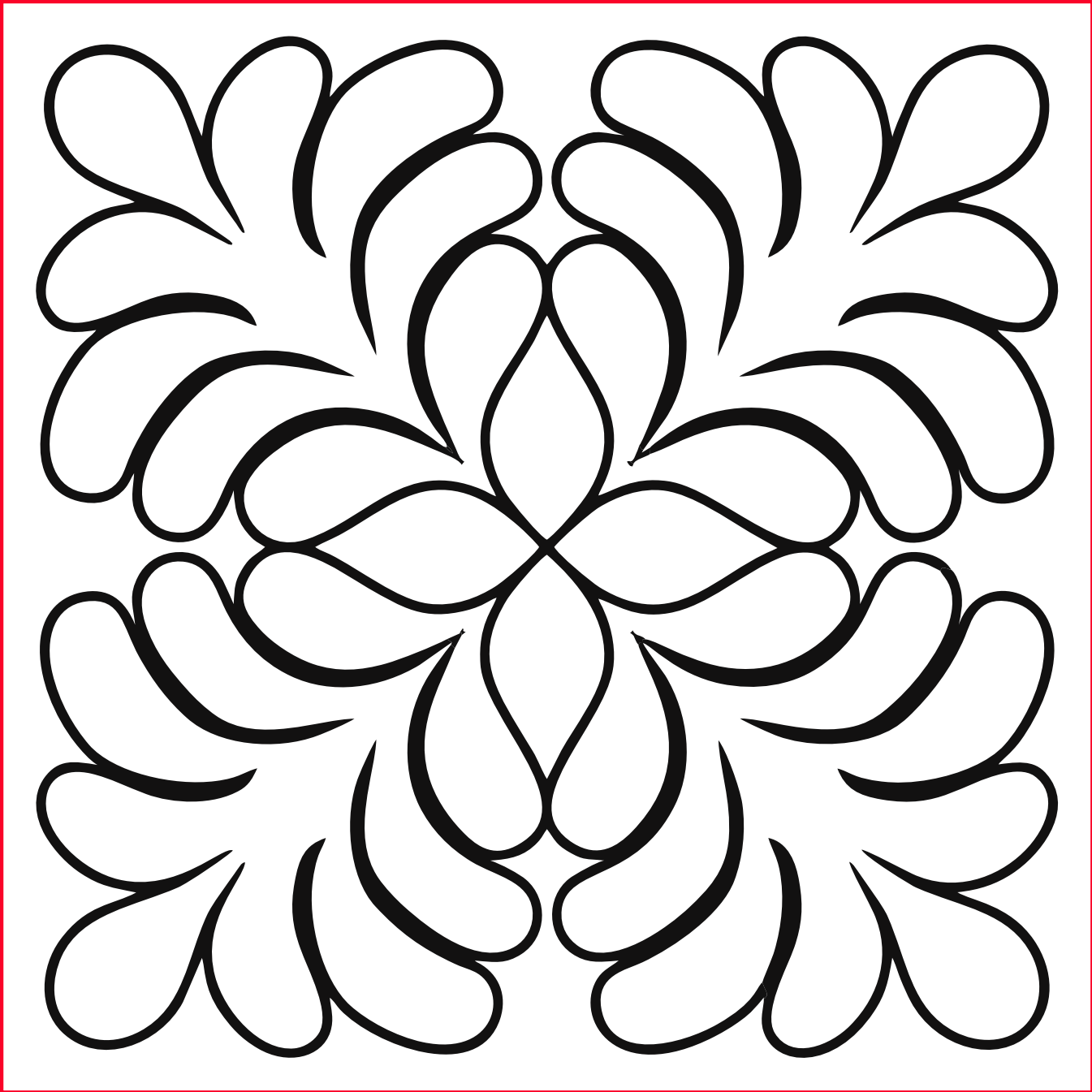




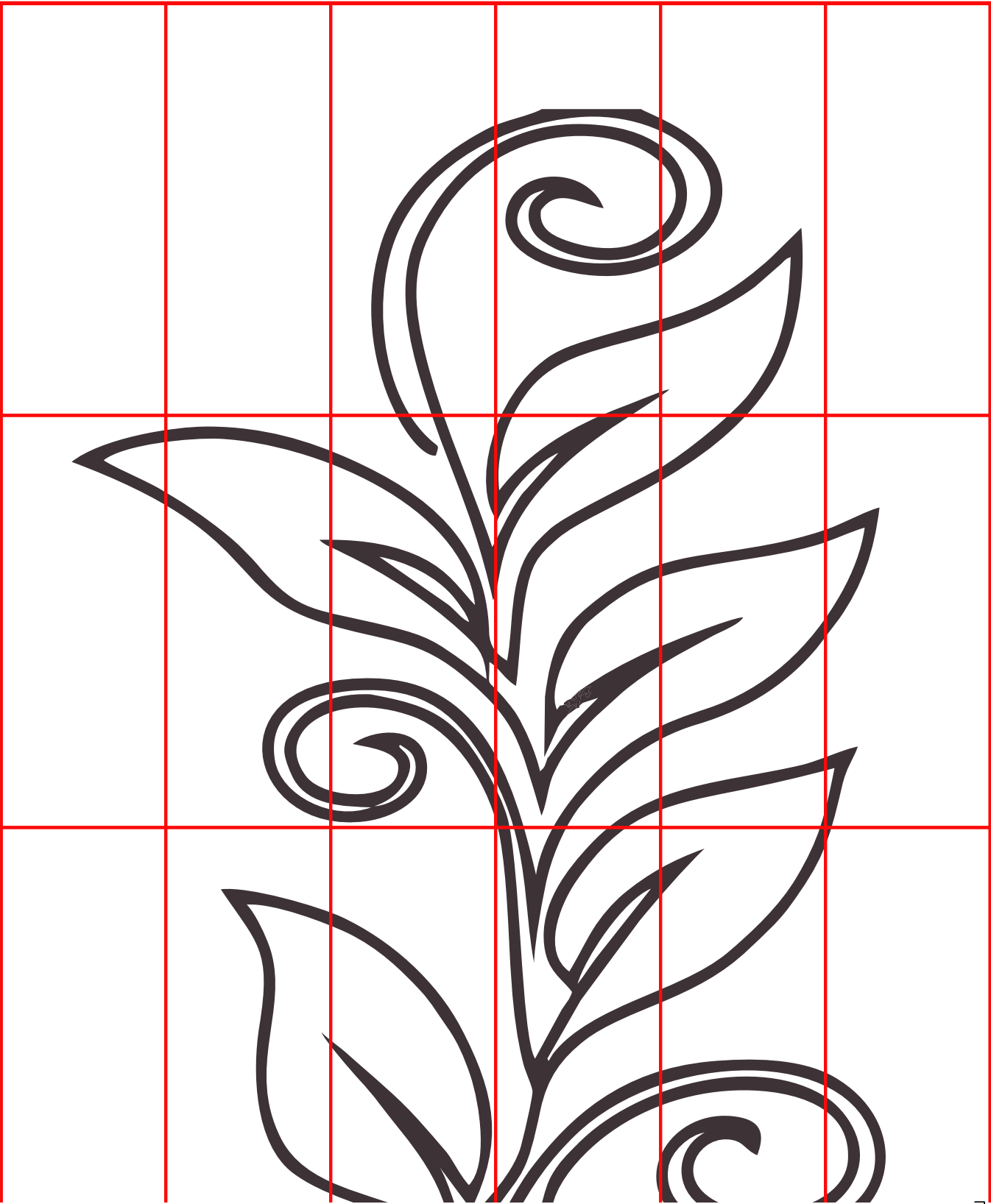
Border Quilting Patterns

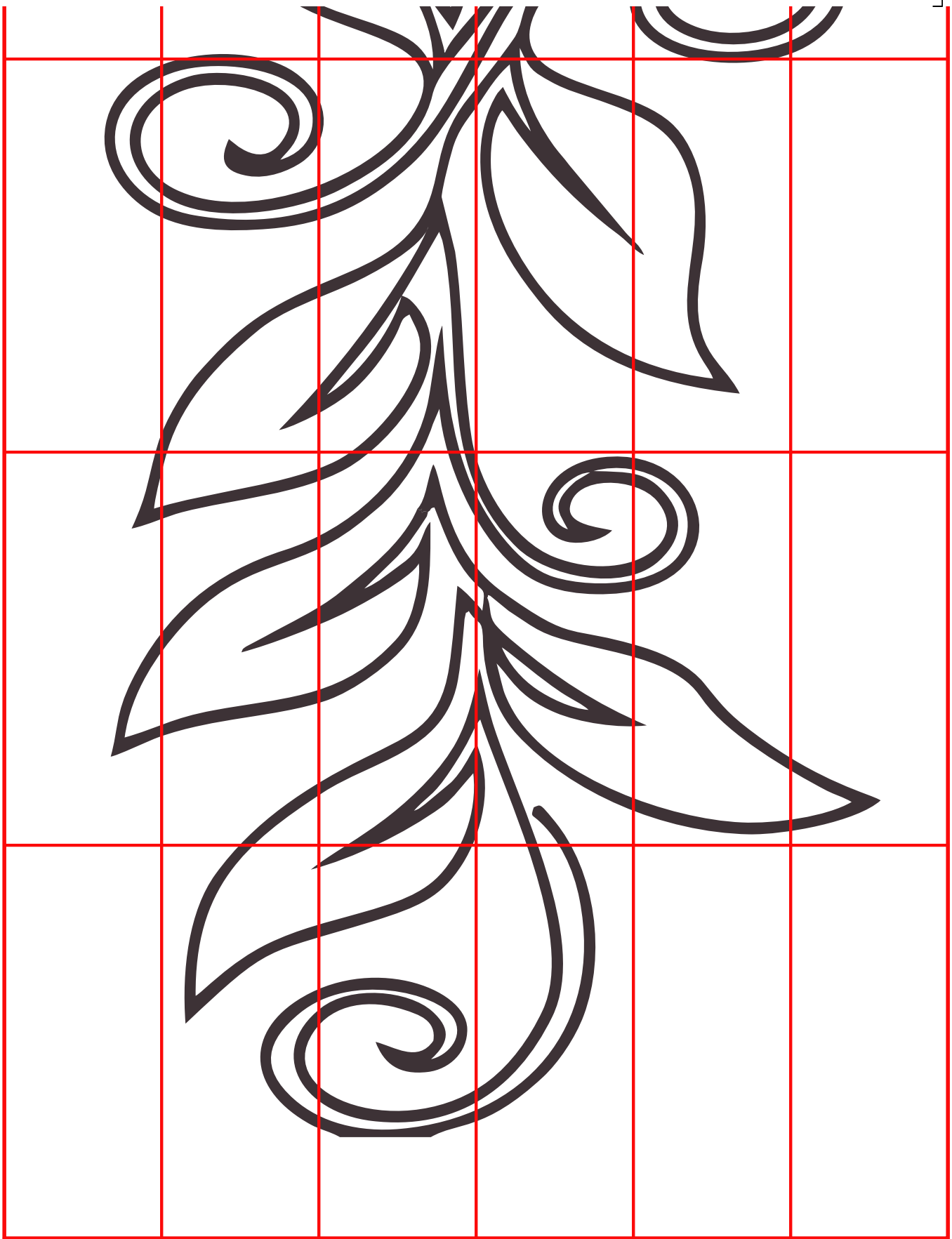
Print on regular paper and tape together.

Corner Quilting Design



(1, 1)





Side borders



(1, 1)

Top and Bottom Border Quilting Design

