

Creative and improv clamshells

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Carolina Oneto

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What is depth

- Depth refers to the distance between foreground and background in a composition.
- It involves the arrangement of distance around and between objects.
- Methods to create the illusion of depth making a flat surface appear three-dimensional.

Why depth is important

1. It helps differentiate between foreground, middle ground, and background, enhancing spatial awareness.
2. It adds complexity and dimension, making visuals more captivating and appealing.
3. It helps establish context and hierarchy, allowing for clearer communication of ideas.

2

Methods to create depth

- *Overlapping and layering*
- *Size and detail*
- *Linear perspective*
- *Saturation*
- *Temperature*
- *Value*

Lagoon, Acrylic on Canvas, 30" x 24", Andrea Cermanski

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Color gradients

- Color progressions
- Series of hues/values/saturations that gradually change in discrete and controlled steps.
- Any number of steps
- Progression in value, hue or saturation

Why gradients?

- To create a slow transition between opposites
- To smooth contrast
- To create movement- rhythm
- To create depth - value in a logical progression to create a curved space
- To create order
- Gradients tie things together

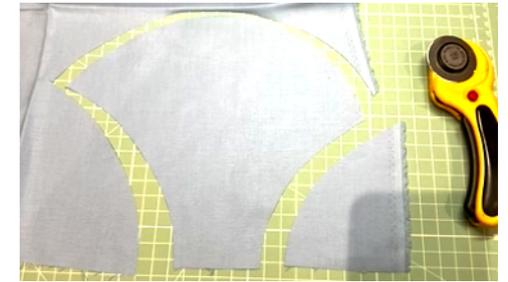
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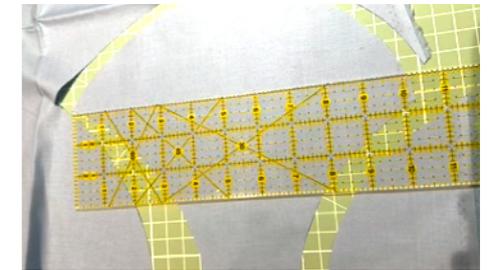
Create a color gradient using one hue and going from dark to light

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Cut free hand the first piece of your clamshell From your lightest fabric

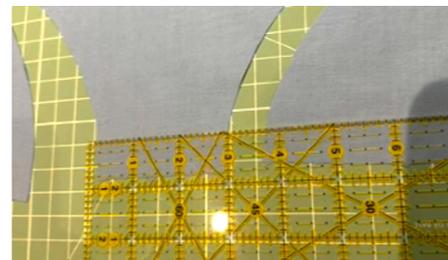


Widest place 10"



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Most narrow place 3"

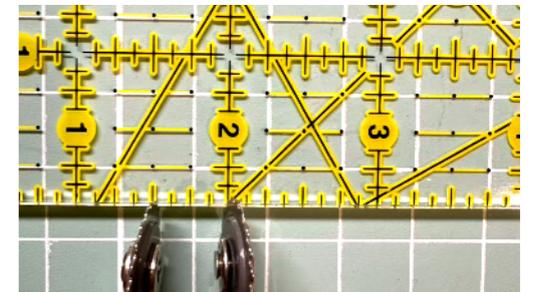


Maximum height 9"

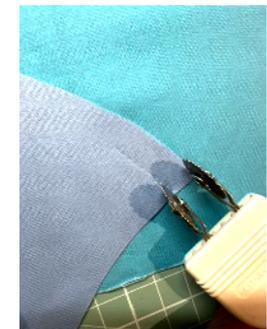


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In your double tracing wheel, locate each wheel with 1/2" distance between them



Put your first piece on top of the next gradient fabric Use your TW to mark a line on top of your first piece following the curve

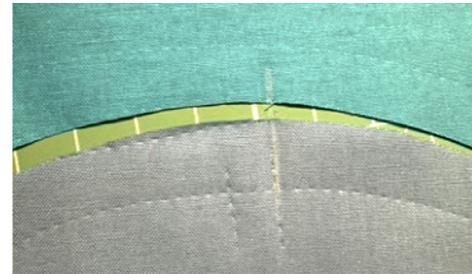


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In the center of the arc, mark a registration mark with your TW



On your second fabric, cut along the tracing mark that is closer to the edge of the first shape. Mark one of the RM with chalk on both pieces of fabric

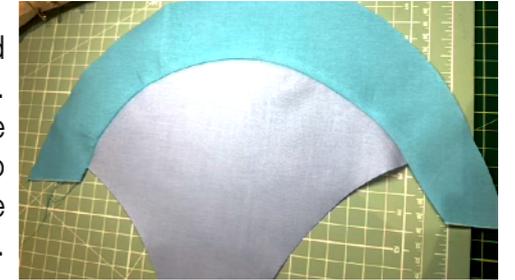


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Convex on bottom, concave on top. Match your registration marks and pin from the center toward one side and then the other side. Sew with your 1/4" foot, short stitch length (2.0).

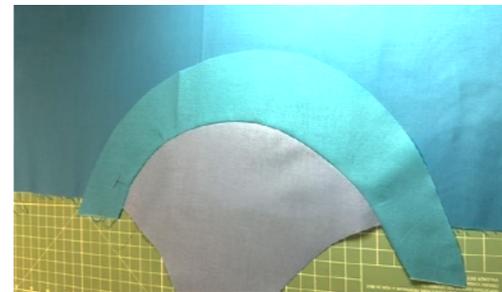


Press with seams toward the second piece. With your iron, start pressing in the center of the clamshell from bottom to top. Then press the sides from the center out.



10

Repeat all the steps with the next fabric in your progression to create the next arc of your clamshell



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You can try different layouts



More traditional

First layout all your clamshells



Or more improv

Once you are ready, start planning the piecing order

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Sewing your clamshells

- Always keep your top flat
- Any distortion needs to be fixed once you see it
- Slow process: design wall-table-sewing machine-pressing board
- Take pictures in each stage; this helps you remember the position of your clamshells
- Always label the order in which you will sew your clamshells
- Use painters tape to mark the location of your sewn-together pieces of your top on your design wall

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Before you sew two clamshells together, **DESIGN WALL** you need to make 3 marks: one horizontal, one vertical and a registration mark.

Registration mark with the double wheel on the center of the top clamshell



Vertical mark where the two clamshells intersect

Mark on the top clamshell



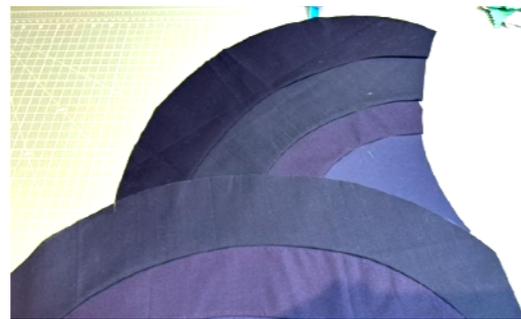
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Horizontal mark on the bottom clamshell along the edge of the top clamshell

On the opposite side of the vertical mark



When you move your clamshells to your mat, make the 3 marks match.

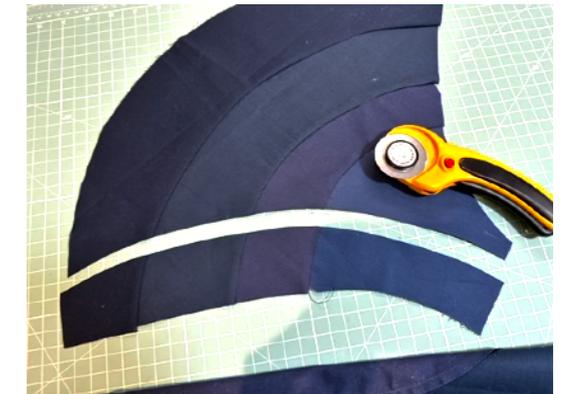


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Use your TW to mark the cutting line of the bottom clamshell



Cut the bottom clamshell following the bottom marked line



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Mark the registration marks with chalk, closer to the borders

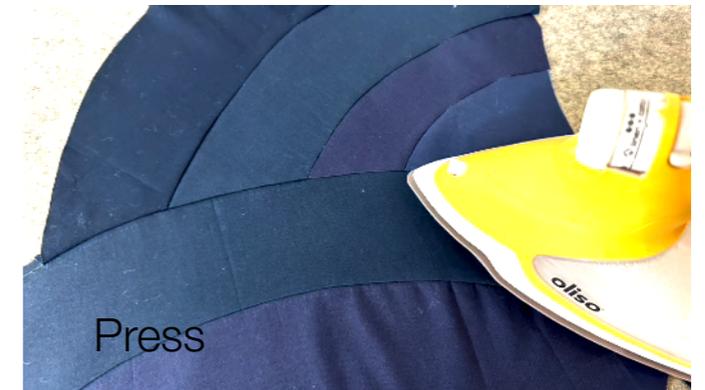


Match the registration marks before pinning; always start pinning in the center.



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Pin and sew with 1/4" foot and a short stitch length (1.8-2.0)



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Return to your design wall. Then, using any marking method, register the location of your first two sewn clamshells



Here I'm using a 1/4" masking tape.



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Start preparing your next clamshell to be sewn

3 marks, horizontal, vertical and registration mark



When you overlap the new clamshell, it may be on top of more than one clamshell



20

Move everything to your mat. Match all your 3 marks, using TW mark the cutting line for your bottom layer



21

Cut along the marking line that is closer to the edge



Mark the registration marks with chalk



22

Match the registration mark in the center and pin



Sew and press



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Return to the wall matching the location marks

Continue with the next clamshell and repeat until you finish!



Final thoughts

- Embrace Depth: Use the methods that we talked about to create visual interest and dimension in your quilts.
- Sewing Improv Clamshells: Enjoy the playful process of mixing shapes and colors for unique designs.
- Play with Color: Experiment with different color combinations to achieve a dynamic effect in your work, specially depth.
- Stay Organized: It is key, label your fabrics, organize the sewing order, take pictures
- Monitor your quilt top often: Ensure your quilt lies flat to avoid puckering.
- Enjoy the Journey!

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