

The Art of Japanese Boro Stitching

with

April Sproule

SPROULE STUDIOS



paint and stitch
WORKSHOPS

April Sproule, aprilsp@sproulestudios.com

Add to your Email Contacts to receive all workshop info

Student's Supply List, Pre-Workshop Prep

Studio: (707) 725-9124

I. Supplies:

A. Fabrics:

1. Fabric for Stabilizer or Base:

- 11" wide x 20", cut 1, white silk organza, **unwashed**, or 1" extra all the way around your background fabric if working larger.

- 42" wide available at (live link): [Dharma Trading Company](#)

- Or you can use a thin white piece of cotton as a base to work on.

2. Fabric for Background and Focal Points:

- Your finished piece will be 9" x 18", so collect about double what you'll actually need so you have plenty to choose from.

- Cottons, silks, linens, or woolens are suitable for this project. Prewash fabrics whenever possible.
- Hand dyes, painted scraps, stenciled, rusted, or sun printed fabrics are great choices.
- Vintage fabrics are also great: old linen napkins, kimono scraps, bits of lace, embroidery
- Muslin or linen pieces to practice stitches on, (2) 8" squares

When choosing fabrics, you want your stitching to show up in at least some areas.

Solid fabrics work great, but so do some stripes or feature fabrics with motifs.

B. Papers for Stitching:

When selecting papers to use, you want to find a mid-weight paper that will hold up to stitching. I use lots of gelli plate papers using regular printer paper and acrylic paints. Things like tissue paper would not hold up and would probably tear when you hand stitch it.

- Hand made papers with assorted patterns or textures can work really well.
- Old book pages or text from other sources
- Little bits of ink work or drawings, tickets, letters, or other ephemera

C. Paper for Stitching Designs: same size as your actual piece

- tracing paper, parchment, tissue paper, or some sort of paper you can see through
(you'll put this on top of your piece to audition stitching lines)
- Press n' Seal, see through plastic slightly sticky on one side, found in the grocery store

Note on Color: *It can be hard pulling together your class supplies when you aren't sure what you are going to end up doing. Start with one base, or main color, to work around. It could be the thing you choose as your focal point, or the color of your background. You can always change that color once you get started.*

3. Embroidery Floss and Threads

A. DMC cotton embroidery floss is my favorite, but you can use whatever you have on hand or prefer.

- Have an assortment of colors to go with your color scheme

B. Regular sewing thread, assorted colors for sewing down your shapes

II. Tools:

A. Hand embroidery needles: I use assorted packs that are sizes 5-10

B. Fabric marking tools: this is what I use, but you are welcome to use what you prefer.

- Stabilo white pencil #8052, water erasable marker (from me or art supply stores)

- Frixion Pens # 31557, set of 3 colors (from me, Amazon, or office supply stores), heat-erasable ink

- Fine-grit sandpaper, 1 sheet

C. Basic Sewing Kit, including:

Sharp small scissors for embroidery, and regular scissors for cutting through paper, straight pins, regular hand sewing needles, and regular sewing thread for basting.

- Beeswax for your threads
- Ruler, rotary cutter, and cutting mat
- Color Wheel, available at any art supply store or online

III. Pre-Workshop Prep: *Basically, all you need to do is:*

A. Background Prep

- Cut your silk organza stabilizer, or your cotton backing, 11" x 20"

- Mark a rectangle 9" x 18" in the center (1" in from the raw edge of your backing)

- This will be the finished size of your piece, or you can work larger if you like, just follow the steps above.

B. Gather

- Create a little collection of stuff like scraps of fabric or paper you think might work, but you don't need to cut anything to size yet.

- Think about a theme, subject matter, or motifs you might want to use as a focal point.

- You could scan old photos and print them on paper or fabric, block print on paper, or include text.....

- Collect any ephemera you like, as it's better to have lots to choose from than not enough.

- If you roughly figure you have enough stuff to cover two areas, 9" x 18", you'll have plenty of choices.

- Think of one main color, and one main theme to get started.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions, and check out my website for more examples. Contact info is on the first page.

April Sproule