Crafting Together: A Live event with Sarah Bond, Twinkie Chan and e bond v

Chapter 1 - Crafting Together: A Live event with Sarah Bond, Twinkie Chan and e bond
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- But everyone, welcome. I'm Stephanie, AKA TWiNKiE Chan, and we are joined by the wonderful and talented Sarah Bond, who's one of our new instructors. Her class, the "Pickle Dish Quilt Block" just went live and will be one of many that we'll be rolling out in the future. Sarah is from Philadelphia, award-winning quilter, teacher. I know she just got back from QuiltCon and she was a judge. She's super talented and you'll get to know her really well and her family, but we're so happy to have you, Sarah, thank you for coming. - I'm so happy to be here. It's so nice to see you again. I kinda missed you. - Yes. I had the honor and pleasure of hanging out with Sarah during her week filming with Creativebug, so we are very familiar with each other. We have a lot of sort of like a multimedia experience queued up for you all, lots of stuff to look at, but what I'm looking at right now is Sarah's beautiful quilts. Do you wanna talk about sort of what we're looking at in the background right now? - So the class that has just come online is the Pickle Dish and so I brought two versions. I'm actually traveling for my day job today so I'm in a hotel room in Tampa, Florida. - We'd never know, looks great. - It's amazing what you can do with some ropes and the curtains. But anyway, so these are two versions and if anybody's looked at the class yet, the Pickle Dish, as with most of my classes, has a bunch of options. So, you know, the concept is here's this element and then here are these different ways that you can use this element to make whatever quilt it is that you want. So the two versions we have here, this is a Pickle Dish with just some plain wedges of fabric, and then this is a Pickle Dish using geese. And if we back up a little bit, you can see that there's this repetitive. The nice thing about geese is they're directional so you get this, you know, a lot of movement because everything is flowing in a direction and it really, it's really dynamic. - It is a feast for the eyes, so much to look at. Thank you for sharing. Ivy, now that we have like a couple of people in here, do you wanna go over our Zoom housekeeping? - [Ivy] Yes, hi everyone, welcome. Just wanting to let everybody know we will be muting everybody during the live, but if you want to raise your hand, if you have something to share, wanna ask a question, feel free to use the chat for any questions, or like I said, you could raise your hand. By just going down to the bottom, there's an option there for reactions, and if you click that, there's a raise hand option and you should be able to click that and we'll see that your hands raised and can unmute you so you could share or ask your questions and then just keep an eye on the chat. We'll be posting links to Sarah's class as well as a link to the giveaway. Later we've got a really cool giveaway, so yeah, keep your eyes out in the chat and enjoy. - Thank you, Ivy. Some of you may have seen this special feature that we filmed about Sarah and her amazing, oops, I'm sorry if you heard that. I have a new computer, so it's doing all these weird things, so I apologize in advance. The amazing legacy of quilt making in her family and in case you missed seeing that video, we're gonna play it for you now. It's about three minutes. It's really beautiful and we're just really proud to be able to share it with you so I'm gonna figure out my share screen. Here we go. - Love a lot, I love a lot of action. I like pattern and repetition and I like the way colors come together and I like to see a lot of it. My name is Sarah Bond and I've been making quilts for about 40 years and I love what I do. After I started quilting, I found out that I have a lot of quilters in my family. I came across this book called "Stitched from the Soul," which is a book about slave quilt makers. So I'm flipping through this book and I come across Jane Arthur Bond. Jane Arthur Bond, enslaved woman, was my great, great grandmother. It was wild. So I came across Jane

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in a book and I also came across Ruth. She was married to one of Jane's grandsons. Ruth was a social justice warrior back in the day. She was an artist, so she designed a few quilts and they're quite beautiful. They're very recognizable. I also found out that my father's maternal grandmother was a quilt maker. Her name was Louvinia and she was born an enslaved person. Many of the quilts that I saw growing up on the beds were made by Louvinia. And so there's a part of me that feels as though I was maybe channeling somebody or maybe being prompted to embrace this particular art form. I am very inspired by the work of my foremothers, particularly the work of Louvinia. We hear a story that American quilt making was driven a lot by a need for warmth and by using scraps, and that is definitely true, but she clearly made some of these quilts for her own pleasure and also to be things of beauty. That's something that we do now. We make quilts because they answer a need to create. Whenever I feel a little whiny about being tired or working so hard, all I have to do is think about these women, what they created, and the circumstances in which they created these amazing quilts and I'm inspired to persevere. I'm very lucky because I have a lot of information about my family and about what they did from the stories that people tell and from the memories that people have. And if you think of a quilt telling a story, I'm not done talking until I get a lot of quilt in there. - Yay, thank you so much for filming that with us. It was just very special. We loved it. - It was so much fun. - Oh, I'm so glad. - It's a great experience to have people make you look as good as the team made me look. You guys did a great job. - When we were in that sort of interview process, I remember we were just all kind of in awe. We're like, the stories, just the incredible, just the richness of just the fabric of your life and your foremothers' lives are just like mind blowing and like where did you find this book? Was it just like in a random bin somewhere or? - In a random bin. This was back when there were lots of quilt shops and you'd go to a quilt shop and you would look in the bargain bin and I found it and I was looking through it and I saw Jane and I, you know, I knew that she was mine and I was hers, but I didn't know that she was a quilter and it wasn't until somewhat later that I realized, that I found out who had the quilts and I did finally end up with one of the quilts, so I actually have a quilt from Jane. - That's so amazing, so historical. Since this was a surprise, who taught you to quilt? Like how did you, did you teach yourself, did you take a class? Was it someone else in the family or a friend? - So I, you know, it's a good question of why I decided to make a quilt. It was the summer I guess between my junior and senior year and I thought, hey, I think I'm gonna make a quilt and that was in 1979 so of course they were all, for some of us who can remember, all these sort of cotton frocks that we were making ourselves and I had, I had been a garment maker and I had made a number of these dresses and so I had some cottons and I started to put this together. I found this Dover book and got my little cardboard and my scissors, which is what we had to work with then, and I made this quilt. I made this quilt over the summer and took it back when I went back to school and so that's how I started and you know, I mean, my mother actually came in when I was making this quilt and she said, "What are you doing?" And I said, "I'm making a quilt." And she said, "Why?" And I said, "You know, I don't know, but I feel like I have to, I mean, I feel pushed to." And I do believe that there was some pushing going on on the other side. - Right. That's incredible. I know that you prepared a PowerPoint for us. It's gonna be a treat for me, a surprise for me. I have no idea what's in it. Do you wanna try to load that up and we can sort of get into what you'd like to share with us? - Let's just see how that works out. - You're doing it, perfect. - It's always exciting. Is the right thing up? Is it? - This looks good. I should have asked this while we were prepping, but is there a way where we, like to change the view so we don't see that like. - I think I got it the last time, so give me a second here. - Maybe it's in view, like maybe there's like a full screen or. If not, it's no big deal, we can still go over everything. - Yeah, I know what to click and I

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had it before, but. - [Ivy] You got the slideshow. - Oh, thanks, Ivy, yeah, slideshow. Oh, and Carrie also very helpful, thank you. - [Ivy] Does that work? - I can't tell what you're saying. Slideshow, hold on. Interview. - Play from from start? - [Ivy] Probably from the start. - On the far left with the green arrow. Okay, great. - All righty. So this is a picture of my very first quilt and so this is the pattern that I picked out of this book. It's called "Goose in the Pond," which actually sort of is a foreshadowing of an obsession with flying geese that I seem to still be having. I love geese, I love that directionality and the, just the vivaciousness of the movement that's created by it. But this is the first quilt that I made, and you know, I really didn't know what I was doing at all. I had never taken a class in terms of quilting, but I just kind of hacked through it and it came out great. So after I made this first quilt, you know, I made more, and as all of us do, you know, we try to find space for the thing that we like to do because life likes to get in the way. You have, you know, I had children, I had a spouse, I had, you know, a full-time job. I had all these obligations and so of course this always sort of falls to the wayside and so I started to teach because that was a way to prioritize, not only for myself, but also for my husband, who was a musician, and he was out all the time. The only time he wasn't out was Monday nights so I took Monday nights and I kept teaching, I kept teaching, you know, I picked a new class, a different class, just so I could keep that night so I could get the heck out of the house. But teaching also sort of elevated my work because it gives you focus and it gives you sort of repetition. So particularly when I was teaching the same class over and over, people would say, you know, "Aren't you tired of teaching that same class?" And I would say, "No, because it's not the same quilt every time." When you're sort of working in a series, which is what that is, it helps you find the new things when you're doing the same thing. It's kind of ironic that way. So as I was teaching, I first started out with samplers. I made lots of different samplers, a lot in these pictures, which were the ones that I had access to. You're gonna see a lot of African fabrics because those were some of the things that I really love. So these are some sampler quilts. Here's one that is a sampler, it's also a lone star, which you'll see is a recurring theme with Louvinia. But I took the spaces that were in between the component parts of the lone star and filled it up with different sampler blocks. These particular ones, I took a trip to India and I had a block swap with a bunch of my quilty friends and so everybody made one block and then we swap them around and I stuck them in between and among the lone star bits here. - That's so cool. - And then here's a couple of others. You can see the geese making another appearance there. And then on the other side you can see a public block made with a whole amalgam of a lot of different fabrics. There's mud cloth, there's some old vintage fabrics, there's some Civil War reproductions, lots of different funny fabrics. But these are all things that, you know, I was teaching these classes and people would take the same class over and over just because as quilters we know that the community that it makes when you are together in a room with people making is magical and so you wanna keep doing it and eventually people said, "Well, can you come up with another class?" So I came up with all of these different classes and then I would teach them again and again. And eventually, you know, I got quite a few classes under my belt. So I did wanna talk a little bit more about Louvinia just because she is, I guess the family quilter that I have the most intimate relationship with. She was my great grandmother, my father's maternal grandmother, and I have a lot of her quilts because my Grandmother Rosabelle was one of her daughters, the other daughter was Bertha and Rosabelle always felt that Louvinia preferred Bertha and she had some feelings about this and so when Louvinia died, Rosabelle went over and got all the quilts because before Bertha could get there so I ended up with most of the quilts and so I have been communing with them for a while and it makes me feel like I've been, you know, not just talking to the quilts, but talking to Louvinia. - That's

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magical. - I have a little bit of history on Louvinia here, which I'll run through. She was born in 1858 near Orangeburg, South Carolina, so she was born enslaved. She had two children. She was a prolific quilter. She died in 1943 and I didn't know about all these quilts until my father died. There were a few quilts that were on the beds when I was growing up, but when my father died and we cleaned out the basement, I found another dozen quilts down there and it was as though he was still hiding them from Bertha. Bertha was long gone by that time. So this is Louvina, and this is a picture of Esmond, her husband, and we're gonna talk about another family member in a little while. And so anyway, Esmond was the son of an Irish, Scotch Irish man and an African woman. And I remember when my grandmother Rosabelle was dying, my father had her writing some things down and one of the things that she wrote down in his journal was my father told me that they were never slaves. It was a love match. And then she wrote, "Rufuss Cleckley." And so that didn't mean that much to me at the time, but subsequently I went through the whole ancestry thing and looked people up and it's amazing what you can actually find. So when I was looking up Esmond and Rufuss Cleckley, so I looked up Rufuss and I found Rufuss Cleckley and he was listed as unmarried and a railroad agent. But then I looked at his property schedule, which included his slave schedule and you can see down here at the bottom, I don't know if you can see my cursor, there's Rufuss Kleckley, and then under here you can see that there is a mulatto female, eight years old, a mulatto male, two years old, and here is a 25-year-old female and it says that she is black. There's also a 59-year-old man, I don't know who that was. So that's in 1860, the census from 1860. When you get to the 1870 census here, you can find Rufuss again. I'm just gonna give you an easier to see version here. So here again, here's Rufuss Cleckley. He's 42 at this point. His wife Julia has died at this point. But if you remember the 17-year-old mulatto female, now she has a name, her name is Emma and she is Rufuss' daughter and when in the place where you're supposed to write what they're doing, it says she is keeping house. And if you remember the two-year-old male piece of property, now, 10 years later, he has a name, Esmond, and he is attending school, so now in 1870, the children of this white man, the mixed race children of this white man are listed as his children and they are recognized by the census as human beings with names, whereas 10 years ago, they were unnamed property. So here I was able to prove, to substantiate what my grandmother had written in that book so many years ago, which was, it was a love match because if it had not been a love match, these children would not still be living with him and they would not be listed as his children. So, you know, I'm getting goosebumps right now. So my message to everyone who is interested in this sort of thing is, you know, check it out. It's amazing what you can find out. It's amazing. And also ask the old people before they die, ask them about the things. If you have people, ask them, get them to tell you all of the stories. All right, so here's some quilts by Louvinia. She was very big on the stars. This is one of her lone stars. This is actually called a "Blazing Star," which means that there's a star in the center here, but then there are points, star points that go all the way around and come out, blaze out from the point of each of this in each point of this interior star and come out to join out on the outside. And here's another quilt of hers. This one is applique and some piecing. I'm not gonna linger too long here because I don't wanna keep you too long. And I'm just gonna talk a little bit about some of the people that you saw in the video. Jane was my great great grandmother. This is, I don't know, you can't see me there, but that's me underneath our pictures, and this is Emma. She was the one who was doing a lot of the genealogy for our family and she made contact with the woman in the picture that you saw in the video where Jane was fixing the hair of this young woman. She made contact with the granddaughter of that woman because they were both interested in genealogy and it turns out that it is her family, the white family for whom Jane worked after the Civil War was over

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who had all of the quilts and so she sent this quilt to us to sort of commune with at one of our family reunions. We had to send it back afterwards, but this was the first time that I ever touched a quilt that Jane had made. And then I'm gonna run through a section of quilts that I have made that are inspired or reminiscent of some of the quilts. So if you look at this quilt, you can see that it is made simply from squares. So I took that concept of the squares and you can see that there are these, you know, little checkerboard things in here, but I make big quilts so they require a lot of blocks and by the time I've made it through a bunch of them, I'd get a little bored and I wanna do something else so once I got through a bunch of these square ones, I thought, well, let's make some round ones. And so then I made the round ones and I ran a few of them down through the center of these. And here's some more block-based quilts. So here we have basically a nine-patch where you have nine different blocks or squares, each one made up of different things. This one has some stripes, this one has some piecing, so all of these have these square elements as building blocks. Here's another version with some of those individual ones and you can see when you look at some of these very sort of traditional classic elements, there are a lot of ways to, where those can move and morph into something that's more contemporary, more modern. And it's really proof for me that, you know, there's really nothing new in quilting. I mean, whatever it is, whatever it is we think of and we think we think them up, if you look back, you'll find that some woman has done that with a dull pair of scissors, and you know, a couple of needles 100 years ago. Another of my relatives, which actually I haven't talked about is Anna. And Anna was the wife of one of Jane's sons. Jane had two sons and Henry, her second son, is my great-grandfather. So in my family, you're a Henry or you're a James and I'm a Henry, so anyway, Anna was Henry's wife and she made a number of quilts including this one which is sort of built on a column structure and then I have some pictures of quilts that I've made that are built on that same structure. And these are, I'll go back to this one, this one I made in a class with Nancy Crow and we were focusing on color and composition and light and dark and this was my first foray into just using solids, which I now adore, although I obviously also adore patterns. And so these quilts here are sort of built on these sort of squares and columns. This quilt was actually built on squares that are made from triangles and this is all solid colors, so all piecing. And then here, this little quilt was made from the leftover pieces from this quilt because they were so pretty, these little pieces, that couldn't throw them away so I had to build a whole nother quilt around that. - Also, can we talk about how gigantic that other one is? Courtney made a comment a little while ago, like, "You've always been a big quilt girl." And then, I mean, this just looks like enormous. - Yeah, this quilt is like 108 inches square. It's quite big. I couldn't stop. I couldn't stop. I had these colors and they just, I mean, I don't know if this happens to other people, but sometimes I drive the quilt and sometimes the quilt drives me and this was definitely a situation where that quilt was driving me. I pieced this entire quilt over the course of about six weeks. It was just fugue state all the way. It was crazy. So it was definitely driving me and it, you know, it was still driving me. I made this probably two or three years later out of those bits that were left over because they, I just couldn't throw them away and each of these pieces was maybe nine inches by maybe two inches wide, so, you know, I just had them in a little Ziploc bag, you know, those Ziploc bags that we have. And I finally had to do something with them 'cause they were calling to me also. And then let's talk about Louvinia and her quilts. And my major thing with her has been these lone stars and the diamonds that make up these quilts. And this one was made probably in 1920, 1930, and you know, there are a number of quilts that I have from Louvinia that were simpler quilts and much more utilitarian and show a lot of wear. This one definitely is, was made for good, was made special, was something where she wanted to express her artistic skill and her, I'm gonna say ability with color. I

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mean, it's amazing what she did. And it's amazing how, how vivid these colors still are 100 years later. And so I did a year or two where I was riffing on Louvinia and her stars so here I took the stars and instead of the points pointing outwards, I pointed them inwards towards the center of the quilt. And I will never make this quilt again because the black and white points are 45 degrees and the red and white ones are 30 degrees and that was a lot harder than I had anticipated in terms of getting those to cut in a cohesive manner. - Starting a bit of math now. A lot of like mathematics and geometry. - Yeah, it is, I'll tell you, if you had asked me in high school if I was ever gonna use math again, I would've said "no," and you know, in my day job I do numbers and in my side hustle, it's all about geometry, so never say never. Anyway, so then I said, okay, well what if I take those diamond blades and instead of centering them in a circle around a star, what if I take them and I put them across the quilt? So here I ran them across the quilt in sort of a lateral pattern instead. I love this one. - Someone is asking, "Is there a name for that quilt?" Like Liz is wondering. - So this one, I mean, I'm very bad at naming and labeling, very, very bad, but I do call this one Louvinia's Lateral Lone Star. And then, so I took it one further from this and I said, well, what if I took those diamond strips, those strips of these colorful diamonds and what if I separated them with the background color? So that's what I did here and these colors are running all the way across the quilt and I did a little bit of playing around with the background color to get this sort of 3D effect and again, this is just, you know, so this one is, I guess, let me go back now. Oh that's, okay. Oops, there we go, okay. So this one is one step away from your lone star. This one is two steps away. You might not be able to see that lone star in there, but it's in there. And then here I took those same diamonds, but I shortened them and I put them around sort of a square in the center instead of strips and so this is the diamond chain link and it's funny, so this quilt, this was sort of during covid during quarantine and so one had to work with what one had. So I tell people that this is, you know, an homage because I'm a city dweller. It's an homage to the chain link fence and you know how there's always these garbage trees that are growing around the chain link fence in the city and how, you know, the sunlight comes through and dapples through those leaves and you get this sort of. The truth is that I actually ran out of the one color of the background and so I had to use another color so that's really why we have this dappled effect, not actually that I was gunning for to begin with. Why are we having a problem here? Let me do this, okay. And this is just a quote from Bell Hooks. She was writing about her grandmother and the things, the quilting society that she had developed with the women that she worked with and she said about quilting, "It was that aspect of a country woman's work which enabled her to cease attending to the needs of others and come back to herself." And this is something we do still today. We are, you know, attending to various needs, whether it's family or work or whatever it is and it's that aspect of making that we use to make ourselves whole. And you know, Louvinia was doing it 100 years ago and Bell Hooks talked about it and we're still doing it now. And so now I make, I get to collaborate with my cousin. So this is me a few years ago, and my cousin E Bond, who is also a teacher for Creativebug, and she is now designing fabric and she and I get to collaborate now. And we recently collaborated at QuiltCon and I taught a couple of classes with, I did two quilts and one of the quilts that I did with her very first line of fabric I taught at QuiltCon and she and I gave a lecture about design and she spoke about her design process to design the fabric and I spoke about the process to design the quilt, which best showcased her fabric and so now I get to work with, after a decade of collaborating with dead women from my family, I get now to collaborate with a real live person. - Amazing. - That's all I've got, so shall I unshare? - Sure. I wanted to make sure that we were not forgetting about the comments. You're just getting a lot of like, "wow" and "amazing." All the quilt work, the video of quilts, all the quilts are just stunning.

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I remember seeing a comment I think from Debbie saying, "I see a book in the making." Do you ever think that you might explore that? - I do and so as I've lamented a couple of times, I do still have a day job so it is hard to get that plus the kind of therapeutic making that we need to do to feed ourselves, plus the obligatory making that I need to do for other reasons, so it's just a little hard to get everything in so I'm hoping one day to do that. - I've always been curious about how you cram it all in, you know what I mean? Like, after you work your full day job, it's like, how am I gonna spend these few precious hours and how do you produce these gigantic pieces of art? It's just incredible. - You know, for me it, I think it all has to do with how your brain works and my brain is very much about breaking it down into elements and then combining those elements in different ways to get different results. And so for me, it took me a while to figure all these truths that you find out about yourself are hard won, but very useful. And I found that the physical activity of making, of sewing these things together, is a dopamine producer for me. Not only in terms of the physical activity, but also in terms of, you know, the unveiling of the final product. I don't really, I know there are some people who have that vision when they think about what they wanna make and they look at, you know, the components that they're going to use to make that thing, some people can see that finished product and occasionally I will see that finished quilt, but mostly for me it's a surprise to some extent, right? Like I sort of have a picture of what's gonna happen, but I don't actually know what that finished picture is going to look like. I don't sketch generally so it's really, it's a surprise, and so that is part of the dopamine rush for me and that is part of the making that feeds me and keeps me going. - I don't know if you're comfortable sharing, but Aruna is wondering what your day job is. - Oh, so I have worked actually at the same day job, or for the same, it changed over the years, but I do some accounting, some financial analysis, some management of human beings for an entrepreneurial company that, you know, sometimes it's five people, sometimes it's 50 people, depending on what we're working on. So that's what I'm down here. We have a company down here in Tampa that I've been working with. So it's numbers, a lot of it is numbers and a lot of it is, my undergraduate degree is in anthropology, which in my personal opinion is one of the most useful viewpoints in terms of trying to figure out corporate American culture. - Huh. I would love to hear more about that sometime. That's a book too. Leona is wondering if you have tips for cramming in all the day-to-day duties with being able to quilt. Talk about sort of breaking it down into bite-sized pieces, but, I mean... - I'm gonna say, yes, so, and I don't, I'm in this motel room instead of in my studio, but I think I can express this in words. So a lot of times when I have a little bit of time, I will set myself up to work on something, right? So if I'm gonna work on this, I will precut my segments that I'm going to use in my arcs, and I will, sometimes I'll lay them out on trays, you know, like plastic trays. I get some from Ikea, but you could use cookie sheets, you could use anything, box tops, you know, I've used the tops to copy paper boxes and I lay things out in them so I cut and I have my patterns ready and then I stack them up, particularly the Ikea trays are very useful this way, so I'll just stack them up and then I can put them over here in the corner and then when I have an hour I can take that, I can unstack them and I can sew, I can actually sit there and make something because I've set myself up for that. And what that does for me, which is really helpful, is, you know, it's so easy to say, "Oh, I really would like to sew, but I've only got this much time and what could I really do in that much time?" But if I set myself up for success, essentially, I can get something done so that's how I get, you know, 36 blocks or 72 arcs done on a big old quilt because I've set it up so that I can run them through, I can do a couple of them or three of them in an hour, or not so much now because my studio's not in my home, but if I couldn't sleep, I could get up and run a few things, you know, through and then go back to bed. Finding a way to take advantage of those little

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opportunities that your schedule will give you will keep you moving and it also keeps, you know, sometimes you'll get like a block. I don't mean a quilt block, but like a block where, you know, you can't think of what to do or your creativity is running dry, your mojo is drying up, whatever, but for me, simply the activity of running fabric through my hands helps to keep that from jamming up and it keeps me moving. - I love that idea that things that maybe we don't give ourselves enough credit, right? Like, oh, I didn't sew something today, but that's okay. Like part of it is the prep and the cutting, even just the thinking about it. So even if you're having a really busy day, even just like five minutes of cutting is still part of that whole creative process and I think that's really- - And whatever you're making thing is, you know, whether it's fabric or yarn or whatever it is, sometimes if you just sort of fondle it a little bit, you know. - Let it speak to you. (Stephanie laughing) - You know, you keep that, you know, you keep your connection to that creativity and it sustains you. - I love that. I'm gonna circle back to the end of your presentation where you talked about working with your cousin E, who again is another Creativebug instructor. I wanna remind people that we are running a giveaway of a fat quarter bundle of E's first fabric collection, "Glyphs," which I believe is sold out or close to selling out so this is like your last opportunity to grab some of this very special fabric. She also wrote a really beautiful blog post on the Creativebug blog about the naming of the fabric, which was very meaningful to her and the legacy people that influenced her. And she's our very special guest. So we're going to find E in this Zoom spider web and you guys can talk about fabric and collaborating and I've never seen you two interact before, so this is a treat for me too. - Oh, that's right, yeah. - Ivy's gonna figure out- - [E] Can you see me? - Oh, we can hear you, there you are, yay. Welcome. - Hi. - How are you doing today? I know we sort of like flung you right in here. - I know, that's great. No, I've been listening the whole time. I'm good today, it's good, it's sunny here. We got a little reprieve from the rain in the wind. - We did, it is a beautiful day. So tell us about working together and QuiltCon and have you guys talked about fabric since even before you've been designing fabric? Like just tell us all the things. - All the things, well, where do you wanna start, Sarah? - Well, you start and then I'll, I've been talking for a while. They're tired of me now. - Okay, well we, yeah, I think Sarah alluded to the fact that we just got back from QuiltCon and it was my first QuiltCon because I'm not a quilter or a sewist. I'm mostly a binder, a book binder and an artist so this was so fun to get to see all of these beautiful, beautiful quilts. I was just taken out like the entire time. I was so excited. I just kept revisiting the gallery space, like the exhibition space where all of the quilts were located, but we also did a really fun lecture. This was the first time we did a co-lecture together and it was about kind of from designing fabric to designing quilts, so, you know, like I started it and then Sarah took it on and it was like this long kind of really cool thread that you could draw from like the beginnings of the ideas of the fabric I was making, which was "Glyphs" and "Root," and then what Sarah has done with it, you know, which is phenomenal. - I have to say, I just, we have been talking for many years about collaborating and I'm just so excited and you know, we let things get in the way, right? Just like things get in the way of all of that stuff. And the fact that now we have this opportunity and this reason to collaborate has just been so exciting for me. It's really been a jazz. I'm so excited. - It's been so fun because Sarah has all of this historical knowledge and like a lot of the quilts that you all just saw in this presentation, what we've been doing is whenever I come out with a new line of fabric, we've been reimagining one of the quilts of Jane or Louvinia as part of the line so it's just so fun because we see it one way and then now we're seeing it like 100 years later in this new fabric and we're, well, I'm always trying to like name them after them too so that the, you know, the names keep going. So the one for "Root" is called "Louvinia Unrooted" and it is one of the quilts I think that was in your presentation. It might have been one of

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the ones we actually saw, so that's really fun too. - And that's been really, you know, I mean there are so many things in all of this that are such a gift. We are so fortunate as a family to have all of this information, to know about our past and the people that came before us because a lot of people don't know. And the wealth, you know, the wealth of quilts that I have, thanks to sibling rivalry has been wonderful in that I've been able to come up with, you know, a quilt for each time. I guess we didn't have one for "Glyphs," but there was one. And if you go to FreeSpirit Fabrics and you hunt around a little bit, "Louvinia Unbound" is in there and there's another one that's gonna come up for the next line, which is coming out soon. - Very soon, yeah. I just got the samples from the distributor yesterday. - So excited, I can't wait to get home and see if mine is on the doorstep. - Yeah. - Looking for the sneak peeks on Instagram, E. - I know, right. (E laughing) - I'm curious about sort of the rest of your sort of living present family, are there other creatives? Is it just you two in like the secret club? Like who else is out there? - No, our cousin, Constance, who lives like maybe 15 minutes away from me is a children's book illustrator and an elementary school teacher, but she's been doing these cool children's book illustrations along with a poet and each one is based on a color. It's been so cool. So the first one was brown and the second one was black, and now I think Blue comes out in April. - That's exciting, that's super cool. - Yeah, she's amazing. - Leona's wondering, I guess this is for E, "What's your inspiration for all the lovely fabric you make?" Like when you sit down and you're designing it, what's running through your mind? - Well a lot of the ideas, Leona, have existed, you know, and fabric is really just the next place or the outlet that the ideas come out through. So for "Glyphs," I'd been working on projects around language and shapes for some years and then when I got this opportunity to make fabric, it was just like this great way to think about it in a different format. And I really love changing formats. I love thinking about things in different forms so I kind of welcome when these challenges come along. I'm like, yeah, I wanna, let's try it in fabric. Let's see what that looks like. And "Root" was almost like a continuation of some of those ideas about language and about the shapes that our language looks like, like visually, and sometimes in sound. - Michelle's wondering how long you have been designing fabric. Not that long. - Oh, not long. I mean, I've been an artist forever, but the fabric came, I say around like 2019, 2018, like right around when the pandemic started to happen and we started to shelter in place here a little early so maybe it was like end of like the beginning of 2020 or something is when the drawings that I'd been making then started to become fabric, at least in our heads. - I'm curious about if fabric design is in Sarah's future. Are you leaving that to E or do you think you might work on something together? - Who knows? I would never say never. I do keep nagging E about stripes. - I know. I was gonna say you need to make a stripe collection 'cause I keep like somehow trying to and then getting sidetracked in my feeble brain. - Yeah, I mean, who knows? You know, I don't have the same kind of drawing skills that E has, so it doesn't come as naturally for me, but who knows? You never know. - Yeah, I mean you could totally do it, you can do it. But Sarah's been so helpful for me because again, because I feel like a newbie in this world of fabric, it's just been so nice to have someone who loves it so much be able to just share even just the things that she loves, you know, because I'm looking at it as artwork, you know, still in my head. These are drawings to me that have become something else so when Sarah sees them and starts to use them, I feel like I then get more acquainted with them after seeing what she does with them. - Well, and one of the things that's so exciting about this particular collaboration is that E is not a quilt maker so she is making designs for the, you know, the inherent beauty and value of the particular design itself, whereas I think there's definitely a pull for a lot of quilt fabric designers to be designing for use. And so, you know, sometimes I think they feel bound to constrict themselves to a certain size so that you get repeat this that can happen in

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smaller spaces or other considerations like that. So for me to be able to work with this fabric that is speaking a little bit differently than most of the quilt fabric that you come across, it gives me the opportunity to design a space on a quilt to fit the fabric, to showcase the fabric, to amplify the fabric rather than the other way around. - Yeah. - I feel like that's such an interesting perspective. I never would've thought of that. I'm not a quilter or a garment maker, so that's really interesting to hear. Sandy is asking where we can find E's fabric. I mean it's in stores everywhere. Like if you kind of Google E Bond "Root" fabric, maybe you can- - Right, yeah. If you do follow me on Instagram, I always keep the first two spaces on my feed with running lists of small quilt shops that have tagged me and whenever they tag me, I just added to that list, you know, so there's one for "Glyphs" and one for "Root," but honestly the "Glyphs" ones are pretty much sold out, but "Root" is still around. - "Root" is beautiful. I love how you can tell like the same person designed them, but the color palette is quite different. I'm so excited to see the third one. What could it possibly be? - I know, it's another continuation of this crazy obsession I have with thinking about language and thinking about the origins of language, you know, so like "Glyphs" were about the actual shapes that make up language and then the third one is about almost taking those shapes back apart, so it's gonna be fun. I think we'll be able to see it in April, so it's close. - Yeah, really close. - Hopefully I'll get mine and I can start making with it. I already kind of know what I wanna do with it. - Oh, wow, okay. I'm excited. - Talking about Instagram handles and so maybe we put in the notes. - Yeah, we'll put it in there. - How to so that people can follow. - Oh, Ivy's on it. We have E is Rough Draft. - Oh, thank you. - And you're SLB Philly. Padma has a question for Sarah. "You said 'what if' a lot of times when you talked about experimenting with your quilt layouts. Are there any tips to get out of your comfort zones?" Because that can be scary. As you said, most people plan, you don't sketch, you kind of just throw caution to the wind. Do you have tips for that? You just kinda like, "I'm just doing it." - You know, I'm gonna say that, so I always bitch to E that, you know, she got to go to art school and I didn't. But it turns out, well, that's what they say, but some of the things that I've been doing over the course of my career are exactly the kind of things that one does in art school so one of those things is working in a series and you know, when I'm teaching a class, I'm almost, I'm working in a series 'cause they teach the same class over and over again, but I never make the same quilt and so each time the fact that you're focusing in, you know, on one thing that sort of frees you up because you don't have as many possibilities to consider, so if you bring it down, then you can really concentrate on the creative process rather than which of the 147 different options that you have in terms of a quilt. So, you know, I would say focusing small really helps in terms of thinking big. That sounds like a contradiction in terms, but I think it really does work. And you know, the other thing I would say is just work a little every day. I mean, it doesn't matter, you don't have to come up with a masterpiece every day. It all accrues to, you know, the final product which is this quilt or the next quilt or the one after that or, you know, it's all an avalanche. It's all the same avalanche, right? It's all rolling and contributing to the next thing. - And it's all a long game anyway, you know, so you're just kind of like on this journey and you make things along the way, but especially for me because I love process so much, I'm just really interested in that anyway, so I just think of it as just this really long game and all the fun parts are just the questions, like the what ifs. Like I thought what Padma said was so cool 'cause you did say what if a lot and I was like that's why we get along so well because we're always just like, "Well, what if we tried this? Well, what if we made the quilt a book? Well, what if we did this or what if we did that?" That's to me is the most fun part of all of it. Some of it might never become like a finished thing, but it's the ideas that fuel like a bigger idea or a deeper idea. - Yeah, it is about process. It's a lot about process and you know, this is not the last whatever for me it's quilt.

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This is not the last quilt, this is just this quilt. - Right. - No pressure. - I like that idea of fearlessness. I think that we also try to encouraging people like with the daily practices E has the daily practice just also, yeah, what if, so what if it's a mistake or the mistake could turn into something you never would've thought of before and I think it's just breaking it down that barrier of like, it's okay, the mystery is okay. Sometimes we're scared that like we're wasting our time and not making something perfect, but you could be discovering something even more exciting. - Yeah. - One of my favorite little parables is, you know, I make a lot of things and I cram colors together and shapes together and sometimes it's great. A lot of times it's really great. Sometimes it's not so great and you know, if it's not that great or if I don't love it that much, I put it in the drawer over here and I leave it there for a while and then I come back to it and I take a look at it and sometimes when I come back- - It's great. - It has more meaning for me or it has, you know, I like it more or whatever. Sometimes yeah, not so much so I put it back in the drawer. And then when somebody has a birthday and they're not quite quilt worthy, you know, but you can just take that, you can go in there and pick something out and you say, "Okay, well let me make a potholder, mug rug," whatever it is out of this thing and give it to this person and this person says, "Did you make that for me?" And I say, "Yes." - Just for you. - And so what have I learned from making that about color or shape or texture or whatever it is, or pattern, and somebody is happy and you know, it's all good and there's still some stuff in the drawer and then sometimes I send it to E. - Yeah, and I make books out of it. - I like that, it's all just part of the learning. It's all important, even if you don't use it. I think that's wonderful. Well, we've come up at our time. Thank you so much E for being our special guest. - Yay. - Sarah for being our guest of honor, I guess. I learned a lot. I always learn a lot when I hang out with y'all, so thank you, thank you so much. I think our next live is also quilt-related. Justin of Keaton Quilts will be doing his live next in a couple weeks. So yeah, take care. Safe travels to Sarah and I guess we'll see everyone in a few. - All right. - Thank you. - Bye. - Thank you. - Bye.

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