
Gee's Bend Inspired Collage with Sarah Matthews

Chapter 1 - Gee's Bend Inspired Collage

Overview

- Hey art friends. This is Sarah Matthews. The Gee's Bend quilts inspire me, even though I'm a printmaker and book artist. There is something about them that draws me in. The women of Gee's Bend created community where they could be themselves and they can make beautiful art. They took scraps of fabric from bedsheets and tablecloths and created intricate patterned quilts. Although I'm not a quilter, I find inspiration in their work and experiences. In this class, I'm gonna show you how to take paper scraps and turn it into a work of art.

Materials

- When I teach printmaking classes, a lot of times my students ask me, what do you do with the prints? And one of the projects that I'm always drawn to is making paper quilts inspired by at the Gee's Bend quilts. To make one with me, bring out all your paper scraps, misprints, whatever you have that's paper. For this project, I have some of my prints, scrapbook paper, cutting tools, pencil, glue stick, ruler, and a cutting mat. We're gonna cut down paper into the quilt squares, mimicking the Gee's Bend quilt.

Make a quilt-inspired collage

- The first step is to cut out nine four inch by four inch squares. I'm gonna grab my ruler. I'm using the cutting mat, so 1, 2, 3, 4, that's four inches. I'm just gonna line it on the cutting mat, got the cutting tool, and then set that aside. Of course, this will be used for other things. And then 1, 2, 3, 4, - And then cut. - That only yielded four. So I'm going to use some of my other scrapbooking paper to cut down to four by four. I'm gonna stack two together and go ahead and cut them together...8 and 9. The next step is to cut the L shape out. So I have this as an example. So you're gonna cut an L shape out of the squares. It doesn't have to be perfect, so I'm just gonna use my scissors and go straight across and cut the L shapes. And as a result, you have a square shape left over. So I should have nine L shapes. The next step is to grab the paper that you're going to collage on. I'm using a 12 by 12 sheet of paper. Make a mark at every four inches. Okay. And then take the ruler and connect those marks with a line. Next, we're gonna take the L shapes and place them roughly onto the page before we glue them. So we just kind of wanna see what it's gonna look like before we make our decision. Like I wanna alternate the colors. Some of my scrapbook paper is double-sided, so I might wanna change that depending. I think this is where I wanna be. And now I'm going to take the scraps that I have and cut down smaller squares to go opposite of the L shape. So I'm gonna cut them roughly. I'm not gonna worry about it being perfect. In my studies of the Gee's Bend quilts, what I learned is that the women utilize scraps of fabric from their bedsheets quilts that they already had to make new quilts. So doing something like this, taking what I have, what is existing and making something new, it's like being in the same tradition as making fabric quilts. Okay, I'm happy with how this looks. So now I'm gonna glue everything into place. And the final piece. The inspiration of my collage is actually from Lucy Pettway's Gee's Bend Quilt. I'm very happy with what I accomplished today, and I also have more scraps to make more quilts. Let me show you some others that I made. This one is mostly scrapbook paper, and this one includes my block printed patterns. The Gee's Bend quilts are very inspiring. I know you'll find them inspiring too.