

HIGH FLYING BIRDS

I am a great fan of textile artist, Kathy Loomis, who must be the Queen of the Skinny Line. Her tutorial on the blog, "and then we set it on fire", is the definitive go-to for anyone wanting to learn how to add really narrow lines to a quilt. I have no intention of rewriting it here and would recommend that you see for yourself (the blog is no longer active, but the information is all still available). Click on the link below: <http://andthenwesetitonfire.blogspot.com/2012/06/piecing-very-fine-lines.html>



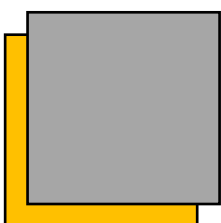
finished size approx. 16 x 16 in.

I would suggest that you practise your skinny lines before launching into any project – why not see just how narrow you can make them. The block patterns I have shared with you here are all based on triangles and I am sure you can come up with a few more variations of your own.

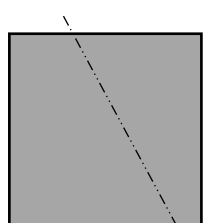
Each of these blocks started with squares of fabric 7 x 7 inches (I cut four yellow and five grey for this layout) and most blocks include two strips of contrasting fabric approximately 1 x 8 inches each.

NOTE: RST =
Right Sides Together

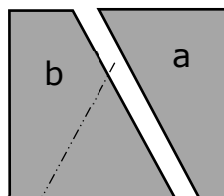
BLOCK 1 *OK, not skinny lines, but a useful block and it makes two! -----*



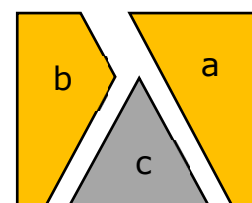
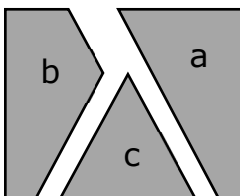
1. Place two contrasting squares of fabrics, both face up, directly on top of each other on a cutting mat



2. Make an angled cut across the square through both layers, not too close to the corners

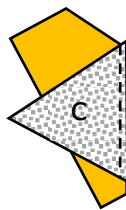
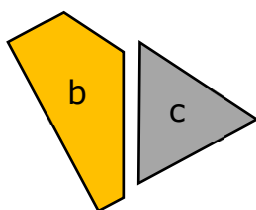


3. Separate the two pieces and make a second cut across the larger piece, again avoiding the bottom corner. Your triangles will not be the same every time you cut them – that's improv!



4. Separate the pieces to form two blocks as shown

5. Work on one block at a time and sew the three pieces back together, starting with **b** and **c**. Place them RST with a small overlap at the apex of the triangle

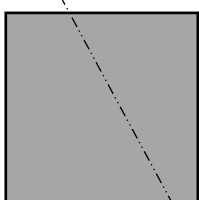


6. Stitch in place and press seam towards triangle. Trim joined edge straight if needed so you can add piece **a** the same way.

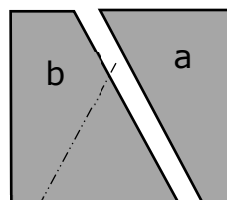


7. Repeat with the second block. Do not trim until you have made all the blocks

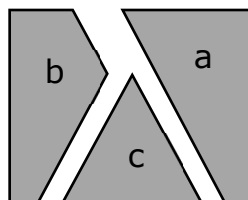
BLOCK 2 -----



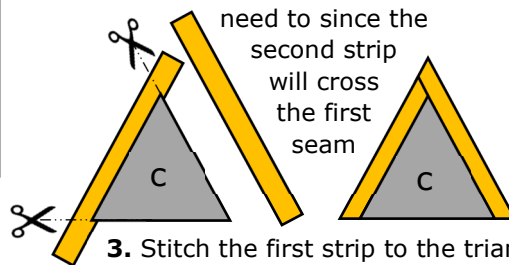
1. Make a diagonal cut across the square – not too close to the corners



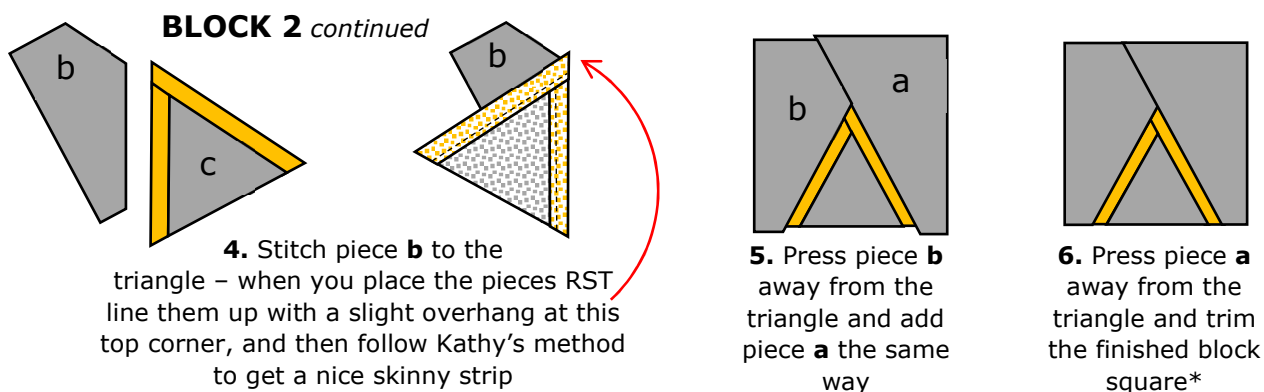
2. Separate the two pieces and make a second cut across the larger piece, again avoiding the bottom corner. Your triangles will not be the same every time you cut them – that's improv!



NOTE: Although Kathy says not to press at this stage, you will need to since the second strip will cross the first seam

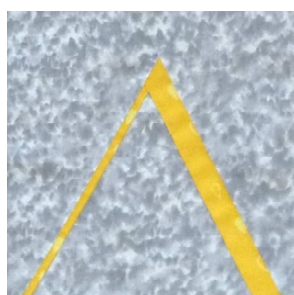


3. Stitch the first strip to the triangle (RST) as per Kathy's instructions. Press the seam towards the triangle, trim the ends in line with the other two sides. Stitch, press and trim the second strip the same way



* Wait until you have made all your blocks so you can square them each up to the same size

VARIATIONS: The possibilities are huge, have a play! These are some of the ones I did -



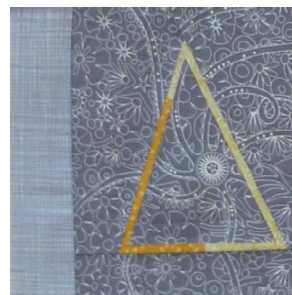
Here I used different width strips on each side of the triangle. You could also use different fabrics or join strips before stitching them in place



Here outer piece **b** has been stitched to the triangle section before the second strip has been added. Done in error, but, as we say: a variation not a mistake



I cut the bottom inch off the triangle & added a third strip. The piece of triangle left was too narrow to re-attach so I used a different fabric before adding pieces **b** and **a** in the usual way



This started the same as the one left, but instead of using a different fabric to finish the third edge of the triangle, I cut a strip from the side of piece **a** and stitched it along the bottom after adding pieces **b** and **a**

TRIMMING: Once you have made all the blocks for your chosen layout, trim them square, all the same size. I find I occasionally have one block that is considerably smaller than all the rest, so rather than cut all the blocks down to match that one and waste fabric (horror!) I will add fabric to one or two sides of the small block to bring it back up to size before trimming. In order to make a virtue of a necessity, I usually add a fabric not already in the block; make it look like you meant it to be part of the design. Alternatively, just add more of the same fabric – this is patchwork after all!

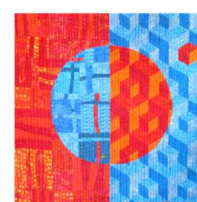


PUTTING IT TOGETHER:

It may not be obvious at first glance, but in this layout, my birds are all flying in a circle around the central block, but arrange them however you please. Sew the blocks into three rows of three, pressing the seams in each row in opposite directions, then sew the rows together matching up the corners of each blocks and pin before stitching.



Starting each block with squares of the same fabric makes the birds float in the background



MODERN ART QUILTERS

Layer, quilt, trim and bind to make a small wall hanging, or use it as the front panel for a cushion or tote bag.