

2015-2016 GLHQ Block of the Month Challenge

February 2016 Block of the Month Challenge Shadow Applique



Shadow applique is a technique that uses wonderful transparent fabrics, like netting, tulle, organza, silk gauze, chiffon, georgette to create a delicate effect. In this technique the applique motifs are cut to the finished size, without seam allowances, arranged on the background fabric. Then an overlay of a sheer fabric is placed over the motif. This results in the applique sandwiched between the background and a top, transparent fabric layer. Stitches are then worked around the applique outline, though all the layers. The sheer top layer can be left in place or trimmed away from the edges of the applique motif. Embroidered details by hand or by machine can be added – another chance to use those decorative stitches!

Please read through all of the instructions first. If you don't have a copy of the General Instructions, please download from the www.GLHQ.org website under ACTIVITIES, Block of the Month 2015-2016, BOM General Directions Link. All seam allowances are ¼" unless noted otherwise.

Materials:

- 6" x 8" fabric for front of flag (the background for the applique motif)
- Scraps of bright fabric for the applique motif – needs to be high contrast to the front fabric
- 6" x 8" sheer fabric – this could be netting, tulle, voile, organza, chiffon, silk gauze or georgette
- 6" x 8" thin batting
- 6" x 8" backing fabric
- Fusible web
- Tear Away stabilizer
- Thread-- solid, variegated or metallic
- Needle – fine, sharp
- Other embellishments, like sequins or small buttons, can be sandwiched between the layers to add sparkle and interest.

Sewing Instructions:

1. Mark the flag outline on the front fabric with your favorite erasable marker. This will help you in position the applique shapes.
2. Trace a heart applique shape(s) on fusible webbing and prepare per manufacturer's instructions. You can make one big heart or few varying sized hearts from different material. Perhaps you have some precut hearts or you want to use up your scraps. Cut out shapes along the traced line, do not add seam allowances.
3. Position the heart shapes on the front fabric in a pleasing place within the flag outline. Fuse in place.
4. Add other embellishments you want trapped under the sheer layer. Remember, you'll be sewing around the applique after you've placed the sheer fabric over the applique block (see step 5), so be sure to plan how you will maneuver around and over any "hard" embellishments.



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5. Audition sheer fabrics to see what looks pleasing, you'll be amazed that an unlikely piece (or color) may look very good. Interestingly, black fine tulle makes colors look more intense.
6. Lay the sheer fabric over the applique block and smooth it flat. Baste around the outside edges to secure the top fabric and prevent fraying.
7. Stitch around the applique shapes, through all layers, just inside the shape. Use a matching thread to the applique or invisible thread. I add a tear away stabilizer underneath to give the work some stiffness.



8. You may want to leave the sheer just over your applique motif, so trim the outside sheer away but leave about 1/8" to 1/4" in case the sheer fabric frays. Maybe the fraying will look great, so you may want to intentionally leave extra.



Other alternatives are:

- Leave the sheer fabric on the background fabric and exposing just the motif.
- Trim away half or portions of the sheer fabric covering the motif.
- Trim away portions of the sheer fabric exposing spots on the background fabric.



Be creative. Maybe even try a combination of different sheer fabrics.

9. Add decorative stitches around the applique motif and other stitched embellishments on the flag front. In the photo on the right, I stay stitched the tulle about a 1/2" around the outside of the motif, then trimmed the tulle away from the entire background. I worked a decorative stitch around the edge of the trimmed tulle. Note: I intentionally used a contrasting thread to hold the outside edge of the tulle so it showed in the picture, but normally I would use an invisible thread and leave it in. I recommend you use a piece of tear away stabilizer on the back of your work to stabilize the decorative stitches.
10. Remove the stabilizer (if you used any) before you make your quilt sandwich. Make a quilt sandwich with front fabric right side up, backing fabric wrong side down and batting. On the backside of the quilt sandwich mark the Center Top and Center Bottom.



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11. Turn the entire sandwich/backing over, so you can see the backside of the quilt sandwich. Again make sure you have marked what is the top and the bottom, because you are going to create the point at the bottom. You do not want to cut off the wrong end!
12. From the bottom, measure up 2" on each side. Draw a line from each side down to the point at the bottom. Cut from the 2" side marks to the bottom of the center bottom point to make the flag point.
13. Sew around the outside (1/4" seam allowance), leaving a 2" long opening (on the top or side) for turning inside out.
14. Trim points, trim the batting close to the seam being careful not to cut the seam allowances from the front or back fabric.
15. Turn right side out. Close opening, add other decorative stitches and/or top stitch around outside of flag with a decorative stitch, if desired.

Tip: Be care if you press/iron – these sheer fabrics melt at a very low temperature!

16. At the top, stitch 3/4" long buttonholes 3/8" in from top and sides of flag at the top.

