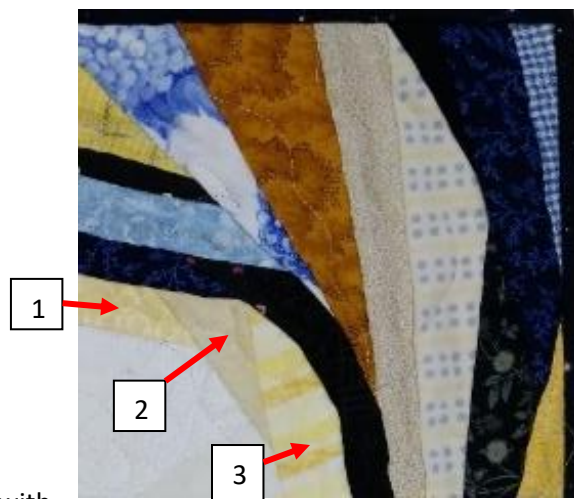
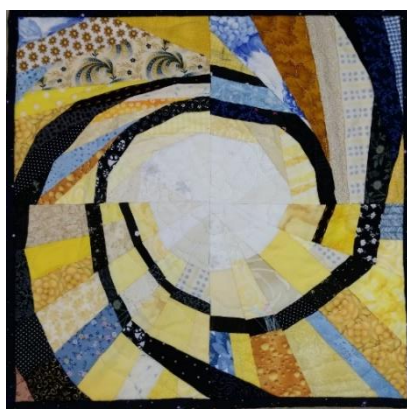


## Amazing Abstracts – Student Handout – Julia Graves, [www.soquilts.com](http://www.soquilts.com)

**Class Description:** Create an abstract quilt that has amazing movement and drama, using the techniques pioneered by Ursula Kern. Go from inspiration to a simple sketch, then have fun “coloring” your sketch with bits of fabric to create a mock-up of your design – see before you sew! The design is gridded and blocks are foundation pieced using an easy sew and flip method with room for creativity and improvisation. Lots of discussion of design principles and how to use color and value to create the drama and desired effects.

### Process:

1. **Sketch** design – see appendix for sample design layouts from sample designs
2. Select **color scheme** – keep it simple – 2-3 colors and lots of neutrals.
3. Make a **shopping list** – small pieces of fabrics in the colors you want to use in the quilt, arranged from light to dark by color family. Include “bridges” either through value or neutrals
4. Create a **Fabric mockup** – Sketch a simple design. Apply small fabric rectangles to stiff paper with glue or double stick tape. Completely color your sketch, following the flow lines. Include lots of neutrals. Create focus with contrast through color (warm vs cool), value (light vs dark) and/or intensity (bright vs toned/grayed).
5. Place a **grid** over your design using a Sharpie over clear plastic to identify block boundaries. Place the grid to avoid “S” curves or changes of direction. You cannot sew a “S” curve in the same block. Approximately 1” grid works well. 1 square = 1 block. Want it bigger? Make more grid lines. Label rows and columns.
6. **Foundation piece** blocks – cut out foundation blocks per desired size (add 1” seam allowance to desired finished size; finished size of 5”-8” works well). Label back (wrong side) with row and column and draw seam line  $\frac{1}{2}$ ” in from outer edge. Lightly pencil in guidelines on front (right side) of foundation if desired. Sew strips to the front (right side) of foundation, right sides together, following your mockup and guidelines. To create curves, use two or more strips at an angle; the last strip in a curve has the most showing. Start at the inside of a curve and grow out. Match the value, color and proportions of color from your mockup. Completely cover foundation. Vary width of strips for interest; add surprises. Use a design wall and check for flow from block to block. Use neutrals to lighten or darken a block. Remember – the mock-up is a *guideline*. This is not paper piecing - you do not need to be exact. Be creative!
7. **Finish** the quilt – Press, then trim blocks to consistent size. Sew into rows, then sew rows together, using  $\frac{1}{2}$ ” seam allowance; press seams open. Layer top with batting and backing. Quilt. Bind. Add a sleeve and a label.

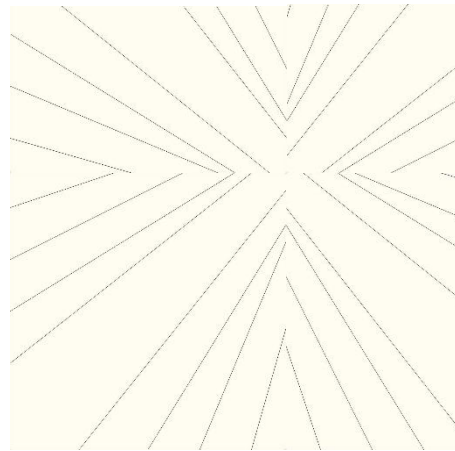
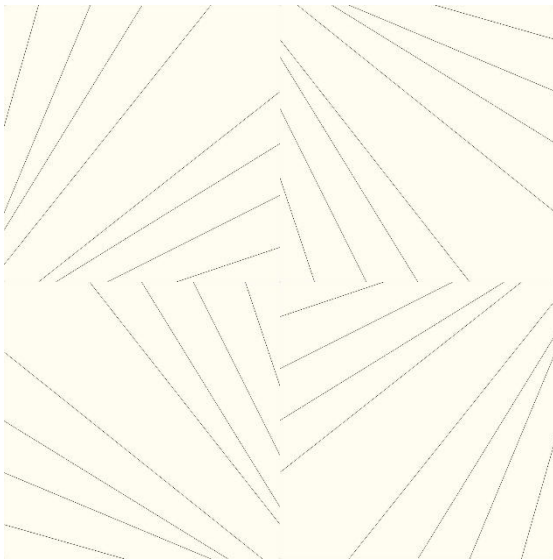
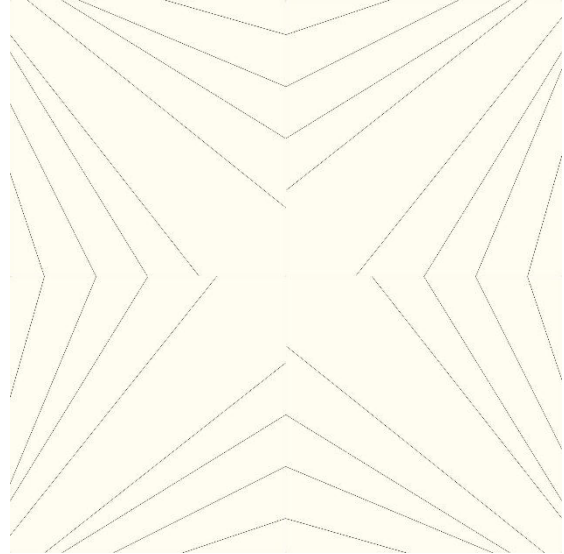
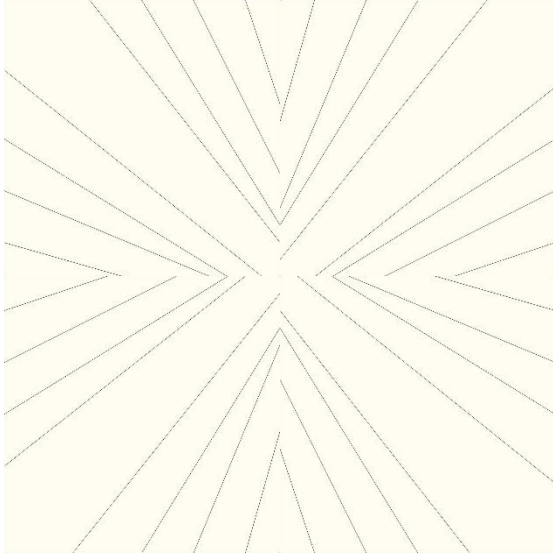


Left – all straight seams. Middle – bottom blocks are straight seams with strips of multiple pieced fabrics. Top blocks are curved piecing.

Right – shows piecing a curve. Lay two or more strips down at angles to approximate the curve. Start at the inside of a curve (this block is the bottom left corner) and grow out. Strips need to cover all raw edges.

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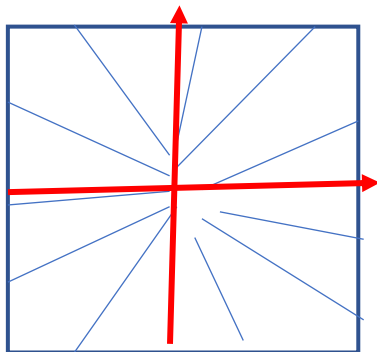
Sample design layouts



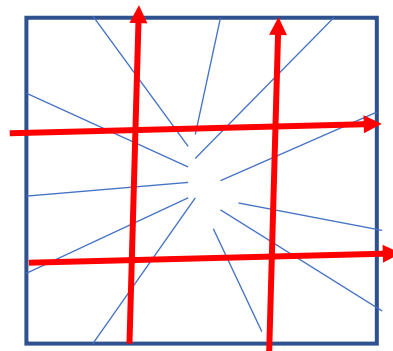
What if this image was colored to form a spiral?

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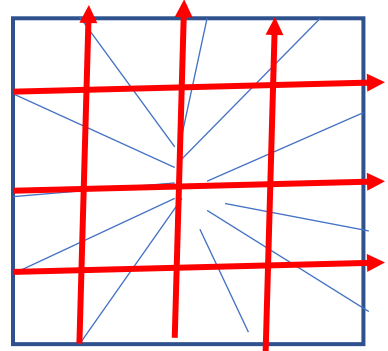
Note: grid lines need to be at changes in direction (no “S” curves in a block). Make bigger with more gridlines.



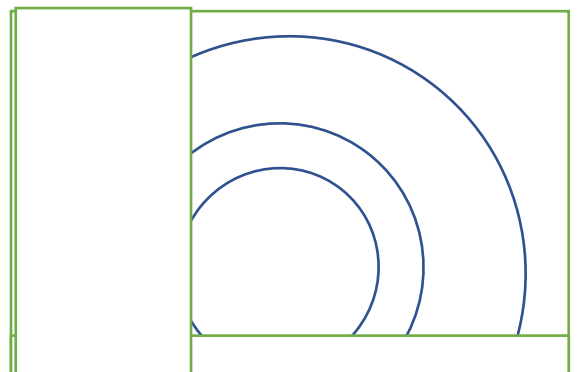
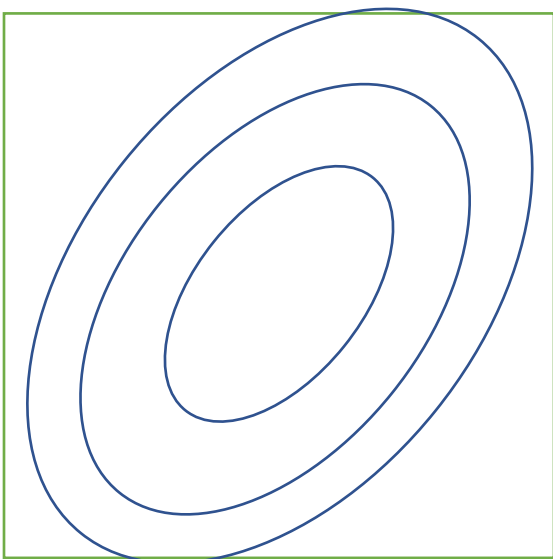
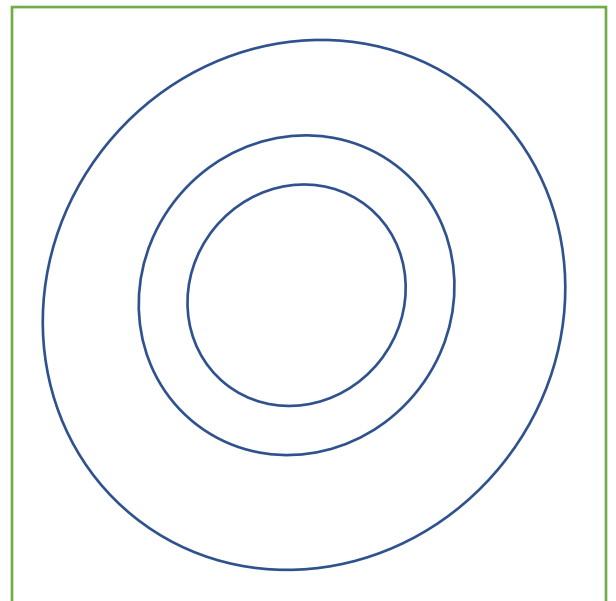
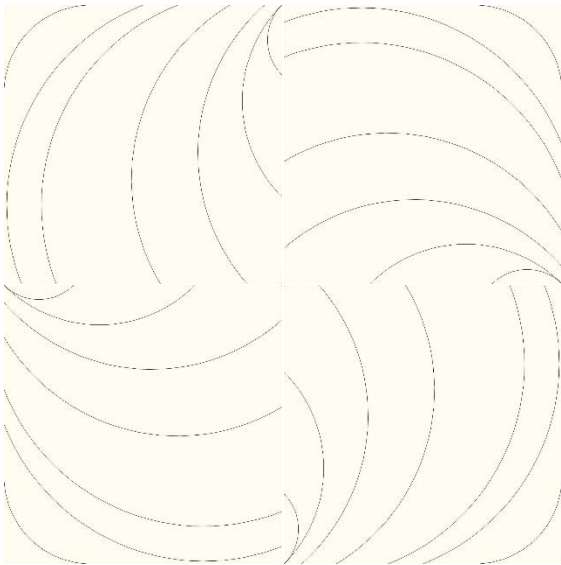
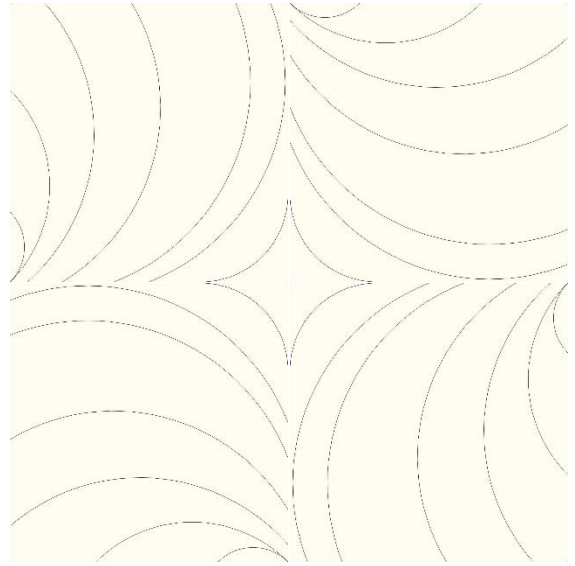
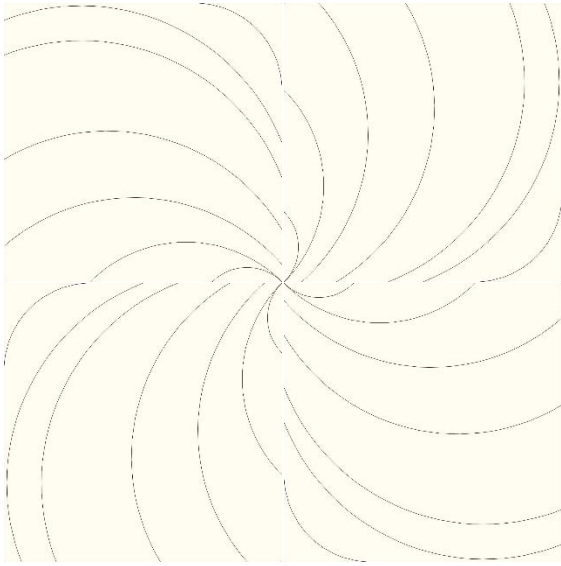
Yes



No



Yes



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Elongate shapes, change their angle, make spirals instead of circles – get creative!