

Intro to Portrait Quilts

by Laurie Ceesay

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I call this girl Angelina—and I call my pattern that, too—but she is your girl to make and name whatever you wish! I have made these quilts as self-portraits and as portraits of friends and family as gifts. Be inspired by a photo, draw your own pattern, or trace the pattern provided here. I have created several different hairstyles for Angelina so you can choose your favorite.

Materials

Finished size: 18" x 18"

- Portrait quilt pattern (provided)
- Background fabric, fat quarter or large scrap
- Inner border fabric, $\frac{1}{8}$ yd.
- Outer border fabric, $\frac{1}{4}$ yd.
- Batik scraps for raw-edge fused appliqué:

Hair: Natural colors (yellow, gold, copper, red, brown, grey, black, or white) or fun/fantasy colors (hot pink, purple, or lime green)

Skin tones: 1 light and 1 medium that are close in value

Eyes: White plus an iris color (blue, brown, green, hazel, or lavender)

Lips: Any skin color such as red, pink, or peach

Brows: Medium to dark brown

Shoulder strap: Coordinating commercial cotton or batik

- Lightweight, paper-backed fusible web, $\frac{1}{2}$ yd. (I used Pellon® Wonder-Under®.)
- Backing fabric, $\frac{5}{8}$ yd.
- Binding fabric, $\frac{1}{4}$ yd.
- Low-loft batting, $\frac{5}{8}$ yd.
- Sewing machine with walking foot
- Fine-tip, permanent markers (I use Pigma® Micron® size 08 or Sharpie® fine and extra fine.)

Optional

- Free-motion presser foot
- Tweezers
- Jacquard® fabric paint, white matte
- Small brush or dotting tool
- Embellishments: rhinestones, glitter glue or nail polish, beads, sequins, felt flowers, felt buttons, silk flowers

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Cut the background fabric 11" x 11".
2. Trace the appliqué pieces on the paper side of the fusible web.

NOTE: I have provided 3 different hairstyles to choose from to personalize your portrait.

3. Following the manufacturer's directions, fuse the pattern pieces to the wrong side of the fabrics you have chosen for the specific pieces. Let the fabric cool. Cut on the drawn lines with fabric shears. DO NOT cut apart the lips, eyes, and brows at this time. Set them aside.
4. Measure 1½" in from the bottom left corner of the background fabric. This is the placement for appliqué piece 1.
5. Fuse piece 1, aligning the bottom edge with the edge of the background fabric. This will catch the appliqué in the seam allowance when the bottom inner border is sewn on.
6. Fuse piece 2 over piece 1, aligning the bottom edges.
7. Fuse piece 3 over piece 2, aligning the top edges to create the jaw line.

8. Fuse the hair appliqué over the face, using the pattern guide for placement.

TIP: After the hair is fused in place, use leftover fused scraps to add highlight pieces to the hair.

9. Fuse on the shoulder straps.

NOTE: I do not use shoulder straps for portraits with long hairstyles.

10. Cut the small facial feature appliqué pieces just before you fuse them to

the face. (By cutting and fusing each feature at a time, these small pieces will not get misplaced!) Fuse in the following order: brows, lips, the whites of eyes, and finally the irises.

TIP: Use tweezers if the small pieces are difficult to pick up or place on the design.

11. Using the fine markers, draw in the jaw line and nostrils. Using a color coordinated pen, outline the iris, and create the eyelid. With a black pen, define the eyes with “eyeliner” and a center of the eye. Draw around the mouth with a color-coordinated pen.

12. Cut the inner borders 1¼" wide and sew to all 4 sides of the background.

13. The outer border is asymmetrical by design. Cut and sew the outer border strips in the following order:

Left side: 3" x 12½"

Right side: 3½" x 12½"

Top: 3" x 18"

Bottom: 3½" x 18"

14. Prepare a quilt sandwich with the backing wrong side up, followed by the batting, and the top right side up. Baste using your preferred method.
15. As you machine quilt, you will also be attaching the appliqué pieces. Stitch close to the raw edges of fused pieces using a walking foot or free-motion foot. Select coordinating thread to match the skin, hair, lips, eyeliner, iris, brows, and shoulder straps. Variegate thread adds a nice effect. Thread paint cheekbones, shadows, and any additional hair and facial details as in photo.

TIP: Stitch the small pieces first, working up to the larger pieces, until all of the appliqué is stitched down.

16. Quilt the background and borders as desired. ■■

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Dress me up!

Embellishments are similar to adding jewelry or accessories to one's wardrobe—they are not necessary but they're fun!

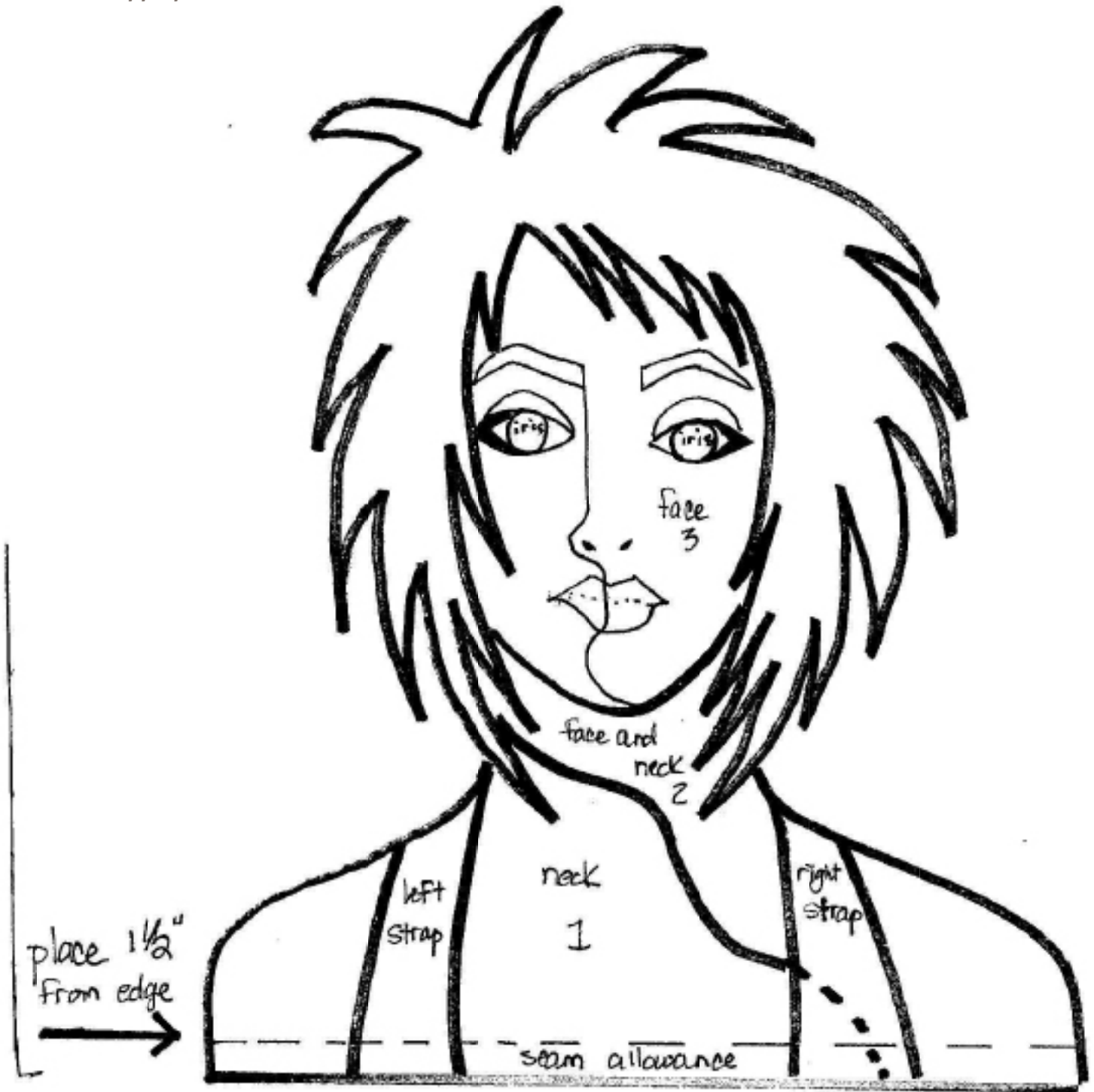
Here are some ways to use different embellishments and techniques:

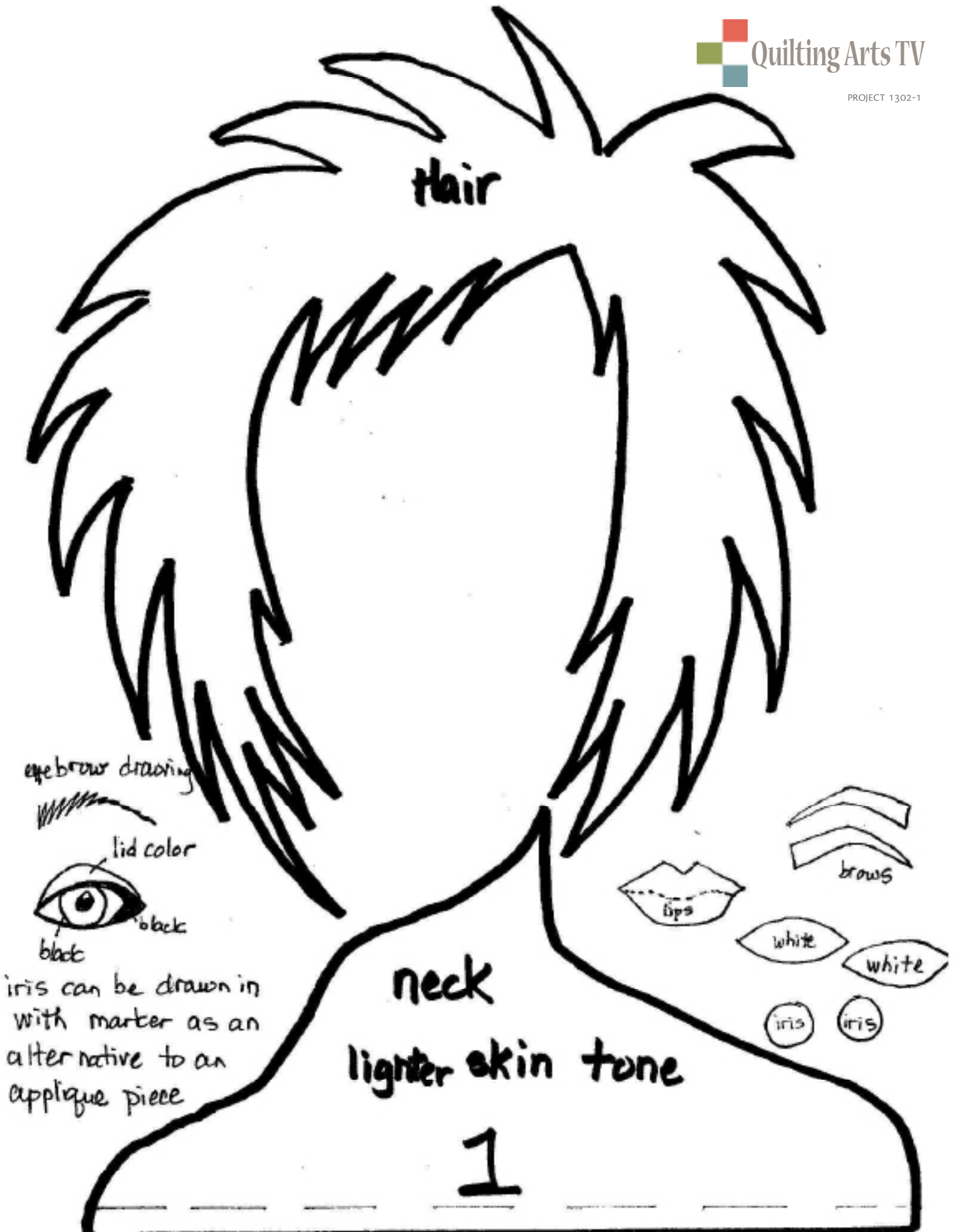
- Use glitter nail polish for highlights in the hair and on the lips.
- Use glitter glue as eyeliner.
- Place a dot of white matte fabric paint with a small brush or dotting tool as a catchlight in the eyes.
- Add small coordinating rhinestones to the background.
- Place a small silk or felt flower or flower button to the hair with a rhinestone or bead in the center.

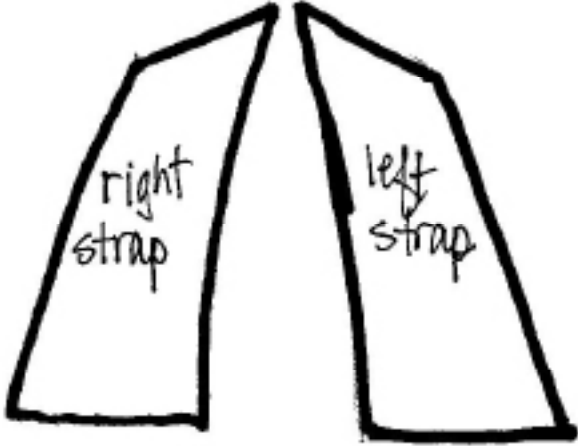
TIP: Use a mix of shiny and fuzzy embellishments and keep the colors similar to the other colors in the quilt so the overall effect of the embellishments is subtle and does not take away from the woman in the portrait.



Appliqué Placement Guide









Match short lines at part

