

CROP CIRCLES

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D E S I G N E R



The beauty of this silk shantung throw comes from circle appliques cut free-hand to create an organic look. Stitch the quilted furrows casually for a soft, undulating effect. A bit of hand embroidery adds texture, detail, and a shot of color.



Finished size: approximately 60 x 44 inches (152.4 x 111.8 cm)

MATERIALS

QUILT TOP AND BACKING:

3⁵/₈ yards (3.3 m) of orange silk shantung,
54 inches (137.2 cm) wide

APPLIQUÉS:

1 yard (0.9 m) each of pink velvet and pink
corduroy, 45 inches (114.3 cm) wide

½ yard (0.5 m) of white silk organza,
42 inches (106.7 cm) wide

BINDING:

½ yard (0.5 m) of red silk fabric,
45 inches (114.3 cm) wide

BATTING:

Low-loft cotton batting, 64 x 48 inches
(162.6 x 121.9 cm)

THREAD, ETC:

Red sewing thread

Neutral sewing thread to blend with the
orange shantung

Black heavy-duty
cotton/polyester thread

Clear monofilament nylon thread

Bulky red acrylic yarn

TOOLS

Embroidery needle with a large eye

Two rulers or other long
straight-edge tools

¼-inch (6 mm) seam allowance

INSTRUCTIONS

1 Trim the selvages off the orange silk shantung. Cut a quilt top 62 x 46 inches (157.5 x 116.8 cm) and a backing 65 x 49 inches (165.1 x 124.5 cm).

2 Cut the pink velvet and corduroy fabrics crosswise into 8-inch (20.3 cm) strips. With right sides together, sew the strips into a panel, alternating the velvet and corduroy strips. Press the seams open.

3 For the appliqués, cut 12 roughly circular rings 12 inches (30.5 cm) in diameter and 2 to 3 inches (5.1 to 7.6 cm) thick from the pieced velvet/corduroy panel. Stagger the cuts so the proportion of velvet to corduroy differs from one appliqué to another.

4 Arrange the appliqués on the right side of the quilt top in three rows of four appliqués each. Leave a border of about 6 inches (15.2 cm) all around the edge of the quilt top. Pin each appliqué in place.

5 Thread the sewing machine and fill the bobbin with red sewing thread. Zigzag stitch the raw-edge appliqués. Stitch the outer and inner edges of each appliqué.

6 Place a ruler or other straight edge diagonally through the center of each pair of appliqués to find the midpoint of the space in between (see figure 1). Mark each midpoint with a pin.

7 Thread the embroidery needle with red yarn. To embroider a cross at each midpoint, knot the end of the yarn and bring the needle through to the right side at the midpoint mark. Sew running stitches about ¼ inch (6 mm) long for 2½ to 3 inches (6.4 to 7.6 cm), then return to the midpoint by sewing running stitches in between the first set, filling in the arm of the cross. Sew the remaining three arms of each cross the same way (figure 2). Secure the yarn on the wrong side with a knot.

8 Trim the quilt top to 60 x 44 inches (152.4 x 111.8 cm). Stack and baste the quilt layers.

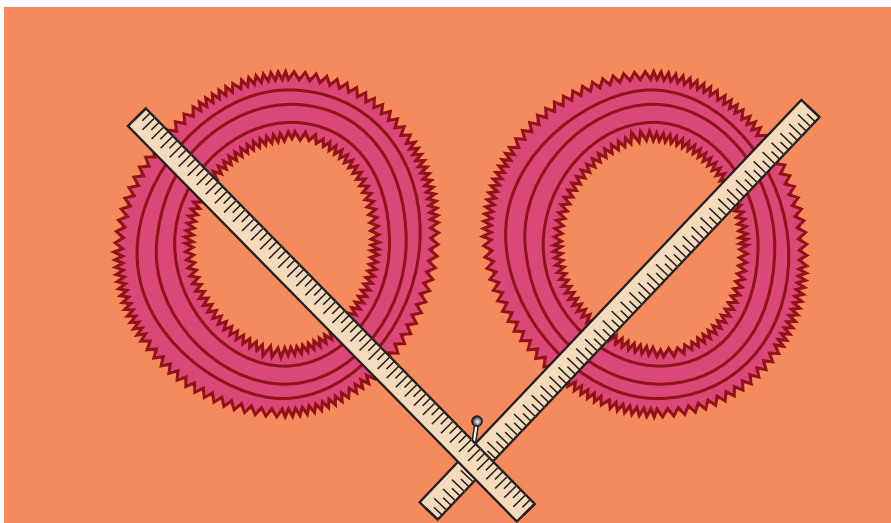


Figure 1

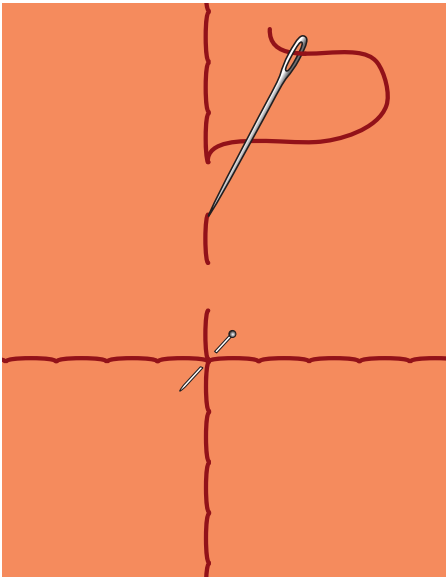


Figure 2

9 Thread the sewing machine needle with black heavy-duty thread and fill the bobbin with neutral thread. Adjust the machine for straight-stitch quilting. Stitch horizontally and vertically through the center of the appliqués to form a grid over the entire quilt. Stitch diagonally through the center of the appliqués and the crosses to form a second grid.

10 Repeat step 9, using the previously stitched grids as a guide but deviating slightly from them to make the lines of black stitches more visible.

11 Thread the sewing machine needle with red thread. Stitch horizontally and vertically through the arms of the embroidered crosses to form a grid over the entire quilt. As you reach each embroidered arm, adjust the machine for a short, narrow zigzag stitch to couch the yarn securely. Return to straight stitching in between the crosses.

12 Adjust the sewing machine for free-motion quilting. Stitch several concentric circles on each appliqué.

13 Cut one rough circle about 18 inches (45.7 cm) in diameter from the white organza fabric. Cut one rough circle about 14 inches (35.6 cm) in diameter from the center of the first circle; in the same way, cut one rough circle about 11 inches (27.9 cm) in diameter, then one 8 inches (20.3 cm) in diameter from the centers. Use the three larger circles for appliqués. (Recycle the 8-inch [20.3 cm] circle.)

14 Arrange the white organza appliqués on the quilt top, and pin them in place.

15 Adjust the sewing machine for zigzag stitching. Thread the needle with clear nylon thread. Zigzag the outer and inner edges of each white organza raw-edge appliqué.

16 Adjust the machine for free-motion quilting. Stitch a few concentric circles on each white organza appliqué.

17 Use a rotary cutter to cut 1½-inch (3.8 cm) strips crosswise from the red fabric. Bind the quilt using a ¼-inch seam allowance and making a double-layer binding with mitered corners.

