

# NOTAN DESIGN

A workshop by Colleen Pelfrey

colleenpelfreyquilts.com

colleenpelfreyquilts@gmail.com



Notan is a Japanese term that means harmony or balance between light and dark. It is a design concept that looks at how light and dark elements of a composition interact. I was first introduced to it in an art class in a version involving paper cutting. Like many things in my life, I wondered if I could make a quilt using the concept. Turns out I could, and I would love to share with you some ways to use this concept in a quilt.

## Notan Workshop Supply List

### Fabric:

My favorite fabrics to use are batiks – they tend to fray less, and the cutting process is simplified because they basically look the same on the front and the back. That being said, you can use other fabrics that have a clear front and back ... you just end up with twice as much cutting, and two design blocks instead of one. The red, white and blue sample was made with non batik fabrics. For making the Notan blocks themselves, I start with a nine inch background square (which gets trimmed to an 8 ½ inch square at the end), and a 4 ½ inch design square (which I end up trimming to a 4 inch square). If you are using non batik fabric, you will need 2 of the same design square fabric. You'll notice in the sample, I have 2 light backgrounds with dark designs, and 2 dark backgrounds with light designs. You can come with precut squares, or bring fabric to cut in class. I encourage experimenting with design, and if you have a different idea you want to try after the basic instruction, go for it! ( Like a different size or a different shape.) So bring fabric to play with. For the pictured wall hanging (32" x 32"), to frame your Notan blocks, you will need two 8 ½ x 2 ½ inch strips and two 12 ½ by 2 ½ inch strips for each block. For the border, you would need two 4 ½ x 24 ½ inch strips and two 4 ½ x 32 ½ inch strips. Feel free, however, to use your blocks any way you wish. Sometimes the fun is in the process.

### **Other Supplies You should bring.**

\*Good scissors for cutting small details on paper.

\*Good scissors for cutting small details on fabric.

I actually use my “Karen K Buckley Perfect Scissors” for both – the paper hasn’t seemed to hurt them. I will have paper scissors to share, and a couple pair of the “perfect” scissors to share, but bring your best cutting, pointed, fabric scissors if you have a pair.

\*Light and dark marking pencils/pens I use a regular #2 pencil for light fabric, and a Bohin or Sewline white mechanical pencil for dark fabric.

\*Glue Elmer’s school glue works. I use either Roxanne Glue Baste It, or Acorn Seam Align Glue. I like these because of the skinny metal applicator tube that makes it easy to control.

\* Basic sewing supplies ... sewing machine, thread, pins, rotary cutter and mat, rulers

Things we’ll use, but you don’t need to bring unless you want to, because I will provide.

Construction paper, Freezer paper, Parchment paper, Spray fabric adhesive, Terial Magic (liquid fabric stabilizer), tweezers, light boxes, card stock.

Feel free to email me if you have additional questions.

Colleen