Preparing "UN-Square" Wall Hangings

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Many rooms have "odd-shaped" spaces in which in which you could showcase your beautiful wall quilts or embellished projects. Some of these spaces are neither square nor rectangular, thus posing potential design problems. The explanation below provides details for how to design a project for ONE such space, and the concepts discussed could apply to other unusual or "UN-Square" shapes. Below are some suggested procedures:

MAKE A PAPER PATTERN: Examine the actual space you would like to FILL with your project. Make a paper pattern of the exact (outer) size you would like for a wall hanging to be for that space.

BORDER DECISIONS: Decide the width of any borders/edging, and trace that onto your paper pattern.

DESIGN SIZE: Your internal design SIZE will be the INSIDE shape of the above (the entire space minus the border). Choose your background fabric that is AT LEAST the size of this inner space (but don't cut it yet).

ACTUAL DESIGN: Decide WHAT will FILL your chosen design area. Will it be sample quilt blocks you have stashed away, samples of your stitched embroidery designs, etc. An original design?? What about a person's (last) NAME to fill that space? THIS explanation will involve the latter (and will relate to the "Dunkelberg" sample).

SPACING FOR THE NAME'S LETTERS: You have marked off the AREA you want to fill, but the letters in the chosen name will not go edge to edge. Now cut your paper to JUST the space that you want your letters to fill.

CHOOSING FONTS AND LETTER SHAPES: This is PLAY TIME!! There are so many clever fonts from which to choose—so have FUN! For the sample design, I chose the font named "Curlz." (MANY different fonts would have worked nicely!!) To get these letters in the correct SHAPE, you may do **one** of the following:

- Make a line art drawing of your wall quilt "inner space" in any of your computer programs (such as Corel or Photoshop). Double check to see that any non-90° angles are accurate. Now type in the letters (one at a time—not as a word) and pull EACH separate letter into the actual shape you have chosen. Print this file (with a GRID showing, if you have that option). This will take several pages. The grid can help you tape the pages together for each entire letter. Don't trim the letters yet.
- Do the same as the above step, but do so "freehand." (I don't have this kind of talent, so I use my computer.)

PREPARING FABRIC LETTERS FOR THE WALL QUILT:
- Choose a fabric for the letters that will be in CONTRAST to your chosen background fabric.
- Iron a fusible web (such as Lite Steam-A-Seam 2) onto the **back** of enough **fabric** for all of the letters.
- Use a glue stick on the **backs** of the printed **paper** letters—just enough for them to temporarily cling to the fabric.
- Position one "glue-sticked" paper letter at a time to the RIGHT SIDE of the "fusible-web-backed" fabric. CAREFULLY CUT OUT EACH LETTER. Immediately remove the "glue-sticked" paper letter as soon as you have cut it out. Continue until each letter has been cut out. *Note: SOME FOLKS prefer to print the letters in REVERSE (horizontal mirror) and to glue them to the WRONG SIDE of the fabric. You might want to try a sample to see if your chosen fabric retains any of the glue stick residue. I have never had a problem with it—but, then, there is always a first time.*
- After ALL letters have been cut out, do a mock-up of your design atop your BACKGROUND FABRIC. You may find that you need to slightly readjust your pre-determined spacing (which is why you didn't CUT it earlier).
- Decide at this point if you will have any photos (or other embellishment) inside the enclosed shapes in some of the letters (such as inside the "D" of the sample). If so, prepare those items.
- When you are happy with the spacing of your cut letters, gently peel the paper backing from your cut letters, and iron them on one at a time (according to the manufacturer's instructions). Be sure to include any optional photos (etc.) by trimming and placing them BENEATH the letter openings.

FINISHING: After ironing on each letter, cut the fabric to the chosen shape, sew on any borders/edging/trim, and complete the project with your desired batting, backing, and quilting techniques.