

# moda

## BAKESHOP

### Original Recipe



Redbird and Berries Mini Quilt  
By Karen Miller  
Karen's Quilts, Crows and Cardinals Blog

// Moderate

Greetings Moda Bake Shop readers and Happy New Year! It's Karen from [Karen's Quilts, Crows and Cardinals Blog](#) excited to share the "Redbird and Berries" mini-quilt with you!

Original Recipe can be found at [www.modabakeshop.com](http://www.modabakeshop.com)

## Ingredients:

### Quilt Border:

- 3 or 4 Mini Charm Packs of Little Black Dress 2 by BasicGrey (88 2.5" fabric pieces)

### Applique Background:

- 14.5" by 22.5" Grunge Basics Cream (30150-160) by BasicGrey

### Applique Pieces:

- 1 Fat Quarter Grunge Basics Grey Couture (30150-163) by BasicGrey for Stems
- Fat Eighth or Scraps of Grunge Basics Kissing Booth Cherry Cordial (30150-167) or Grunge Red (30150-151) by BasicGrey for Bird and/or Berries
- Scraps of Black and Reddish Orange Fabric for Bird Mask and Beak - I used Moda Black and Grunge Radish

### Batting/Backing/Binding

- 27" by 35" piece of fabric for backing
- 27" by 35" batting
- 1/4 yard of fabric for binding

### Garnishes (optional):

- Perfect Circles or heat resistant template plastic or thin cardboard for berries
- Freezer Paper or Template Plastic for making applique templates
- Clover Bias Tape Maker - Size 6 (1/4") for tree stems
- Spray Starch or Sizing for Berries
- Aurifil Mako 50 Wt - Color 2325 for Piecing and Border Quilting
- Aurifil Mako 50 Wt - Color 2000 Quilting Background
- Aurifil Mako 50 Wt - Color 2460 for Red Applique
- Aurifil Mako 50 Wt - Color 2605 for Gray Stem Applique

## Instructions:

### Pre-cut Basics:

Before working with Mini Charms it's helpful to run a lint brush over the edges. This will reduce the amount of "little fuzzies" adorning your workspace ;)

Also, when working with any of the Moda Pre-cut fabrics always treat the outer most tip of the pinking as the edge. This is especially important when piecing - the accuracy of your piecing depends on it.

For the piecing on this project you'll need to know exactly where your 1/4 seam mark is on your sewing foot. The walking foot below is clearly marked -- I LOVE using it for accurate piecing.

### Measuring Seam Allowance Accuracy:

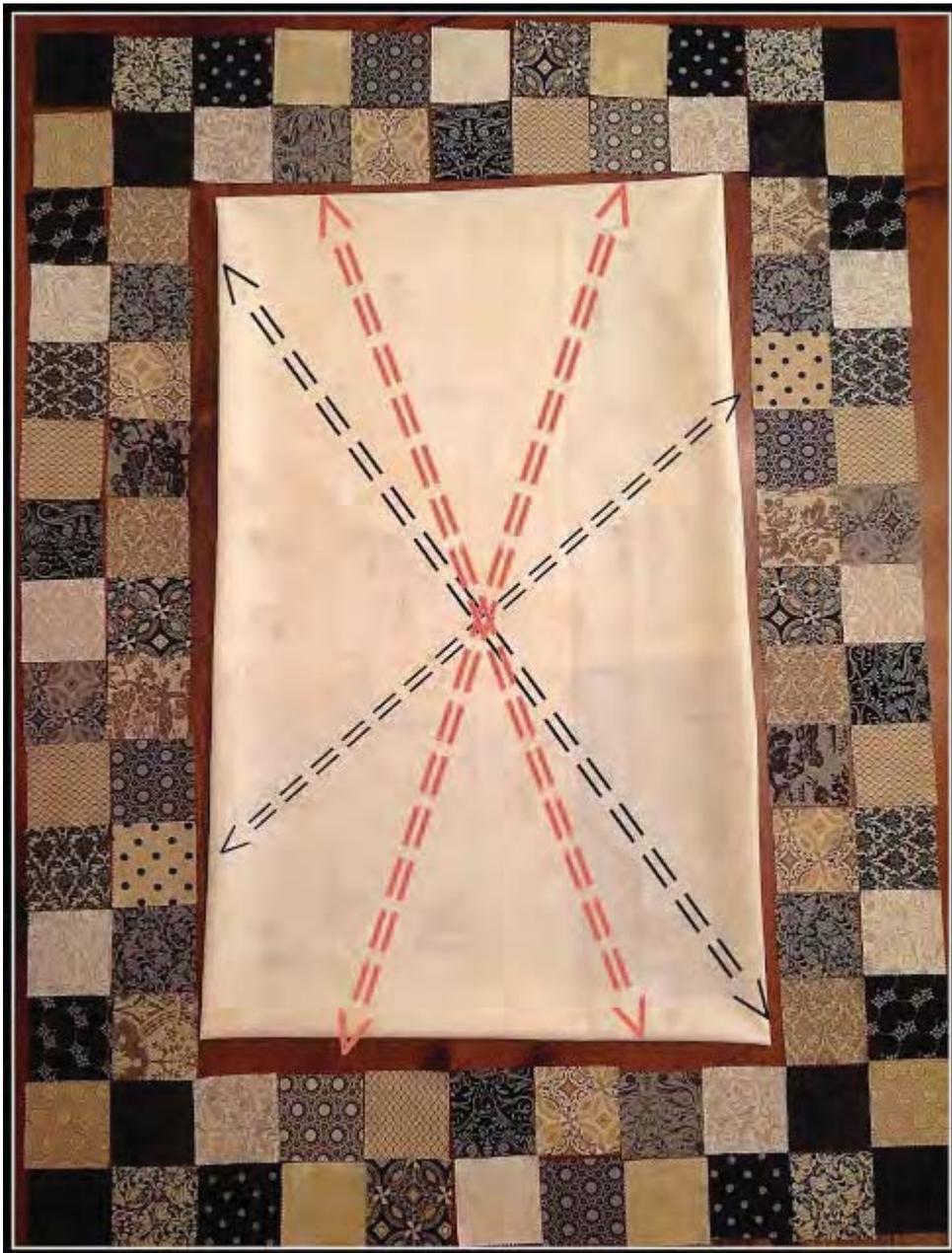
A great way to test the accuracy of a scant 1/4 inch seam allowance is by sewing three mini charms together. Press to set the seams, press the seams to one side, flip over and measure. The middle charm should measure exactly 2 inches wide. If not, adjust your seam allowance until it does.

Now lets get started with our recipe:

### Step 1: Layout/Design the border:

Layout your mini charms in a manner which is pleasing to YOUR eye. Each quadrant of the border will be 11 charms high by 2 charms wide for a total of 22 charms in each of the 4 quadrants. The complete border will use 88 charms.

I'm one of those CRAZY symmetrical types so a scrappy layout wasn't in the cards for me. Instead I designed one quadrant at a time, alternating light and dark pieces and making the opposite quadrant a diagonal mirror image. Checkout the picture below. I love the checkerboard effect!



To duplicate the layout above you will need 4 Mini Charms packs. If you would rather go scrappy or change the layout you can get away with using 2 Mini Charm packs and cutting 4 mini charm pieces from one of your grunge fabrics ;) Overall you'll need 88 2.5" square pieces of fabric for the border.

**Step 2: Sew a Border Quadrant (for each of the 4 quadrants):**

Once you've finalized your border layout/design, pick one quadrant and sew the pairs together - chain stitching all 11 pair of your light/dark fabric. Chain piecing allows you to quickly sew the 11 pair without cutting your thread. Once you've chain stitched the 11 pair are all attached in the correct order.

When finished chain piecing 11 pair of a quadrant, remove them from your machine and lay them (still connected to one another) on your ironing space with the darker fabrics facing up. This allows you to "set" your seam by pressing them flat, and then pressing again in the desired direction - in this case it's best to press toward the dark fabric.

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On a checkerboard layout, pressing toward the dark will enable you to nest your seams when you sew your pairs into 4 x 2 and then into 8 x 2's and so on. Nesting your seams allows for more accurate intersections.

Clip the threads attached to the first 2 pair and prepare to sew 2 - 2x2's into a 4 patch. Nest the seams for accurate alignment, pin and sew. Repeat this effort until you've created an 11 x 2 quadrant of your border.



If you are following a light/dark arrangement (checkerboard) with a pattern to your layout (like I did), I suggest stopping and spot checking your order as you sew ; ) I ALWAYS take a picture of the layout before beginning to sew. Use the picture to be sure you are sewing your pairs and your 11x2 sections together in the desired arrangement.

Once you have a quadrant that is 11 long by 2 wide, press to set the seams, and then press all the seams of a quadrant in the same direction. For ease of attaching to the background fabric you can press this way:

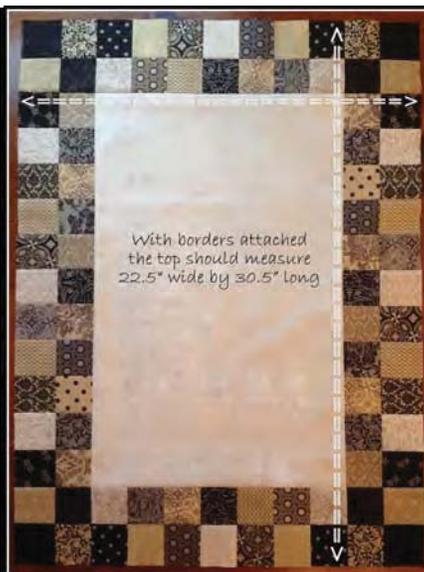
- right side border should be pressed downward
- left side border pressed upward
- bottom border pressed to the left
- top border pressed to the right.

Each of the 4 quadrants should measure 22.5 inches long and 4.5 inches wide. once all 4 quadrants are prepared, it's time to put it all together!

Step 3: Cut background fabric and attach borders:

Using Grunge Cream cut a piece of background fabric 14.5" by 22.5".

Attach the side borders to the background fabric first, press to set the seams, then press the seams toward the border.



Next attach the top and bottom borders, setting the seams and pressing them toward the border. You only have two seams to match on this border -- so simple ;)

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Woohoo! Now your top is ready for the applique. The top should measure 22.5 inches wide by 30.5 inches long.

### Applique:

The applique on the sample was completed by hand, but you can use your favorite applique method to complete yours. The stems, berries and bird can be done with two sided fusible, raw edge machine applique, or any other applique method. The sample was completed with bias stems, perfect circle berries, and a needle turn applique Redbird. You can learn more about Needle Turn applique by visiting the "[Teardrops of Love](#)" tutorial on my blog.

### Applique Prep 1 - Prepare Strips for Bias Stems:

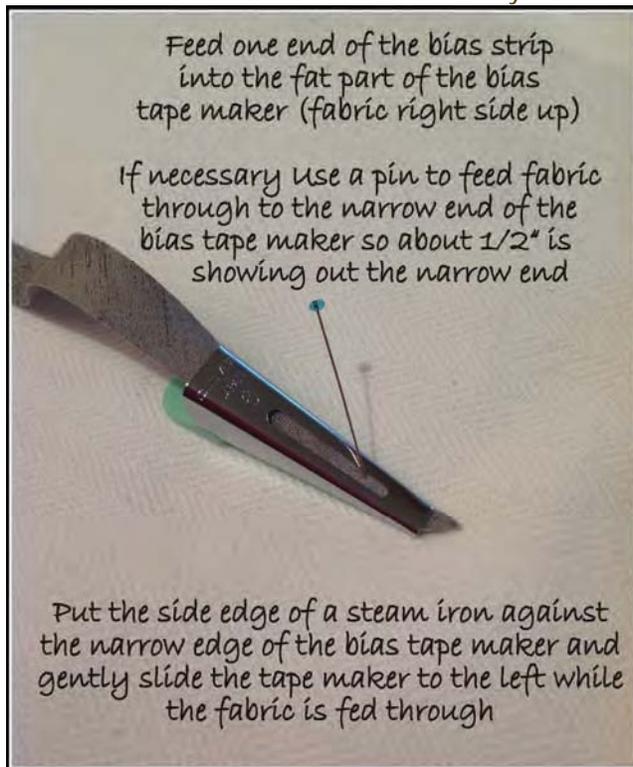
You will need 10 or so 1/2 inch bias strips of Grunge Gray Couture. If you've never made a bias strip before, don't worry -- just follow these simple steps:

- Start with a fat quarter of Grunge Grey Couture
- Iron your fabric - cut a straight edge if there isn't one already.
- Most rotary rulers include a 45 degree angle mark on them - find it on your ruler.
- Lay the 45 degree angle mark on the selvage edge of your fabric. This will align the cut edge of your ruler on a 45 degree angle.
- Use a rotary cutter and cut a straight edge on the bias (the diagonal above).
- Gently slide your ruler over to the 1/2" mark (with the 45 degree line still on the selvage) and cut a 1/2 inch strip.
- Repeat this process until you have 10 or more 1/2" strips cut on the bias.

Note: Use Caution when handling the strips -- when fabric is cut on the bias it will easily stretch.

### Applique Prep 2 - Make Bias Stems:

- Using the Clover #6 - 1/4" Bias Tape Maker (BTM) feed one end of your 1/2" bias strip through the wide end of the BTM with fabric right side up. Use a pin to advance the fabric through the BTM to the narrow end if necessary. Leave about 1/2" of the strip showing on the narrow end.

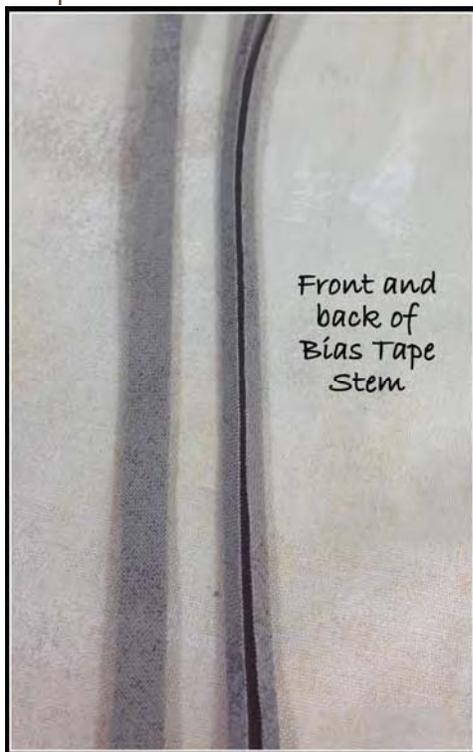


- Position your iron so the side of the iron is against the narrow end of the BTM.
- Note: The BTM instructions say to move the tool with the hand that is not ironing -- but I prefer to use the iron to move the tool.

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- The iron should be set on a "Cotton" heat with steam and a fair amount of pressure should be applied as you glide the iron over the fabric to make the bias stem. Once you start pressing to the left - keep going - don't stop mid strip.
- Some would suggest you use a light starch on the fabric before beginning to make the tape -- feel free to do so - it makes the bias tape hold its shape.

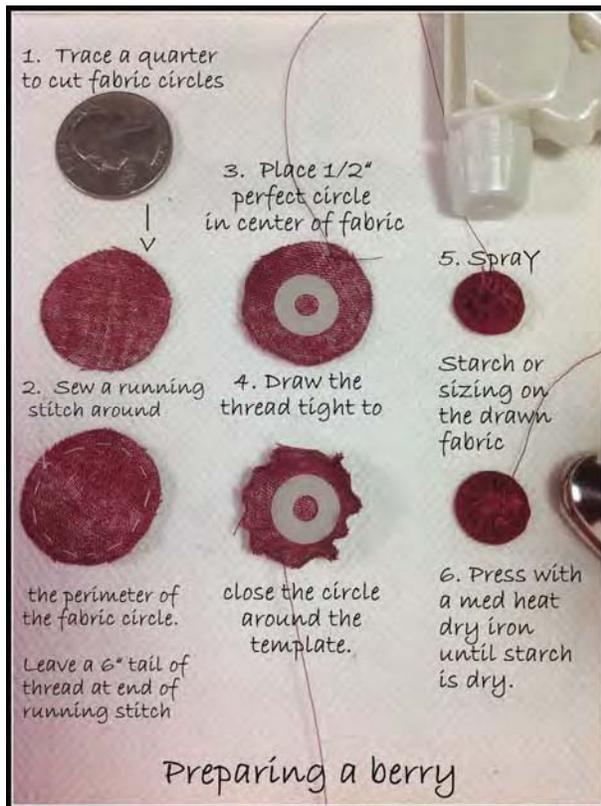
Completed bias stems:



#### Applique Prep 3 - Make Berries:

Using Karen Kay Buckley's Perfect Circles templates choose the 1/2 inch diameter template. If you don't own Perfect Circles, use the heavy piece of cardboard that backed your Mini Charm pack to cut a template.

- Cut 65-75 1" circles for berries -- I used a variety of fabrics, including Red Grunge, Moda Marbles and some of the extra Little Black Dress mini charms. Use a US Quarter coin to cut 1" circles if necessary.
- Once the 1 inch circles are cut , hand sew a running stitch around the perimeter of the fabric circles - leaving approximately a 6" tail of thread attached to the fabric circle. Do not knot the thread after you've finished the running stitch.
- Place a Perfect Circle template in the center of the fabric.
- Pull the thread taut around the Perfect Circle, drawing the fabric tight around the template.
- Place the unit right side down on the ironing surface, spray a bit of starch or sizing on the back side of the drawn fabric and place a medium heat, dry iron on the piece(s) until the berry is completely dry (a minute or two depending on how much spray starch you use).
- Remove the iron, allow the berry and template to cool, then peel the edge of the fabric back to remove the template.
- Reshape the circle by pulling the thread taut again and press once more to set the circle.



A collection of berries: The sample contained about 75 berries and included some berries made from the leftover Little Black Dress 2 mini-charms (not shown).

#### Applique Step 4 - Layout and Attach Stems to Background:

Layout stems in a manner which is pleasing to your eye. If you would like your completed work to look like the sample, use the "Final Applique Layout" picture (below) to arrange the stems and berries.

I use pins to secure the applique stems to the background prior to stitching. This method allows the stem to float for re-arranging. You can also baste or glue baste the stems in place for stitching.



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Once arranged, use an invisible stitch (similar to the stitch used for needle turn applique) to attach the stems to the background. You can see more about applique stitch [here](#).



A couple of tips when working with stems:

- When stems are made on the bias they are very flexible - so they curve easily. Just pin or glue or baste in the position you like.
- To hide a raw edge tip of a stem fold the end under once and secure when you sew the stem.
- Create a fork in your stems by tucking the end of a stem under another section of stem or by folding a long piece of stem in two.
- You don't need stems that are so long they are unmanageable. Just put one stem end against the other and sew -- place a berry on it to cover the intersection if you like.

Attach your stems to the background fabric by hand or machine. Again, you can learn more about needle turn applique on the ["Teardrops of Love" tutorial](#) on my blog.

#### **Applique Step 5 - Layout and Attach Berries and Bird:**

Berries or Redbird first? The choice is yours. I did a few berries and then the Redbird and finished up with Berries.

Arrange and pin some berries in place. I limited the number pinned at one time so my threads were not getting caught on the applique pins.

Stitch the berries by hand or machine. If stitching by hand use the same "invisible" stitch used on the stems and used for most [needle turn applique](#).



**Applique - Prepare and Applique the Redbird:**

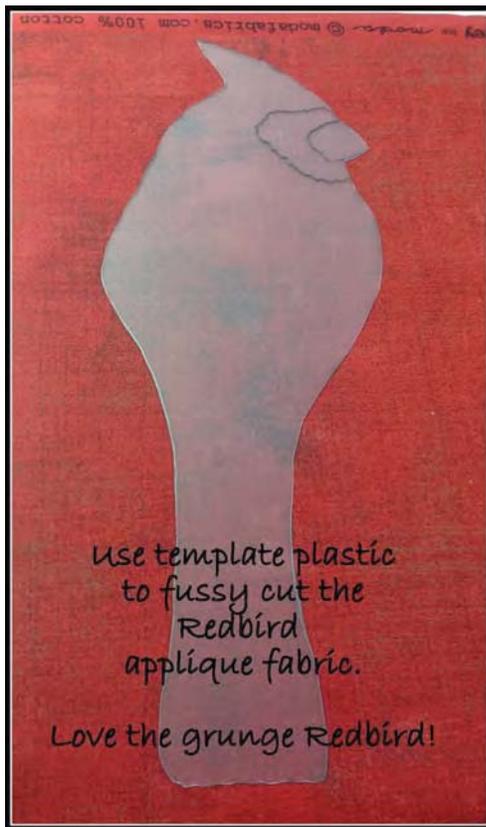
Note: The Redbird applique template can be found in the "Printer Friendly" version of this recipe.

In the sample, Needle Turn applique was used for the Redbird, his mask, and beak - but any method can be used to complete this step. I won't go into Needle Turn Applique techniques here but please [visit my blog](#) and/or leave me questions below if you run into trouble completing the bird. I do have pictures of each applique step and would be happy to share them on my blog if it would be helpful. Please let me know.

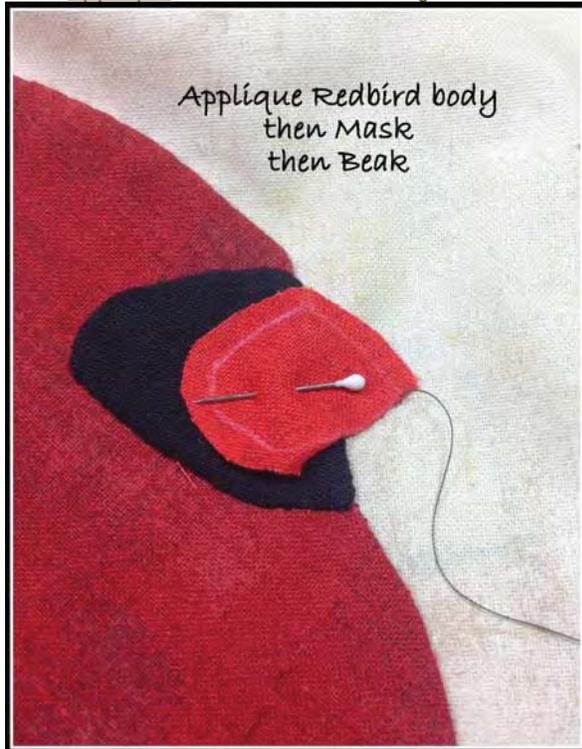
Normally, to [prepare applique shapes](#), I would print the applique templates directly onto the dull side of a piece of freezer paper; however, for this recipe I decided to use template plastic so I could fussily cut the Redbird from the beautiful Grunge fabric. If you're using turned applique, trace the bird onto the fabric with any of the [marking tools identified here](#) and cut out with an 1/8" plus seam allowance.

Did I mention how much I LOVE Grunge? - OR - how well it goes with the Little Black Dress 2 fabric line? It really is a beautiful line of fabric. No kidding!!

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Next applique the bird to the background. Stitch the body first, then the mask, and lastly the beak.



If you haven't done so already, finish attaching all of your beautiful berries to the background. Each berry adds dimension to the overall design. I didn't fret much about making my berries perfect - because in real life they are not. The sample berries were stitched by hand.

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Final Applique Layout:



Note: Often when you applique a quilt top, the overall dimension gets smaller. The applique stitching tends to pull in the sides of a quilt top. No need for concern -- the quilting will probably shrink it more!

#### Prepare for Quilting:

If you are unfamiliar with the steps necessary to prepare a top for quilting, there are detailed instructions specified in the Family Tree Pillow Recipe [here](#).

For the sample I used two layers of batting to provide both loft and stability. One layer of 100% Wool Batting and one Layer of Warm and Natural Cotton batting.

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I also pieced the back for this particular quilt. The backing measured 27" x 35".



I started quilting by straight line stitching around the perimeter of the background fabric and again around the perimeter of the first rows of charms. I almost always "stitch in the ditch" to stabilize the quilt before starting to Free Motion Quilt.

For the background quilting I used Aurifil Mako 50 Wt Cotton in Color #2000. This thread glides through my Janome and I never get thread breaks. The color matches the Grunge Creme perfectly!

Always be sure to match your top and bobbin threads when Free Motion Quilting. So we are now echo quilting around each applique piece (removing pins as necessary). Once done repeat the echo quilting around all applique and stems. In hindsight I wish I had echo quilted one more time before starting my background quilting. As you can see below, I quilted in some mock berries to add interest.

To complete the background quilting I used a "[McTavishing](#)" like design - a variety described as "[Nifty Little S's](#)" shared by Wendy Sheppard of [Ivory Spring Blog](#). This design is so forgiving and allows you to move around the applique pieces with ease.

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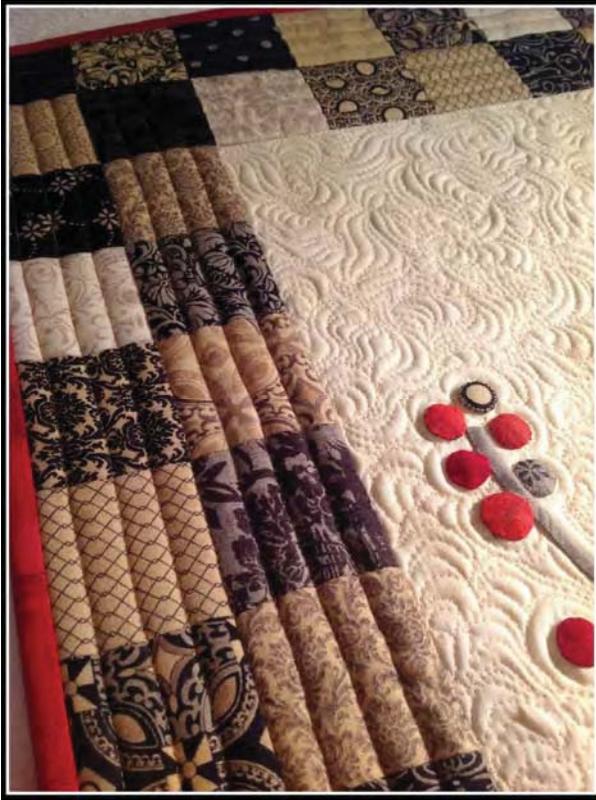


Once the background quilting was completed I added some straight line quilting (with a walking foot) on the mini-charms. I used a walking foot as a width guide and quilted every 1/2 inch around the perimeter of the background. The straight line stitching shows up best on the back of the quilt. For this quilting I used Aurifil Mako 50Wt Cotton in Color #2325. Again, I just love the way the Aurifil quilts - I couldn't be happier with this thread!

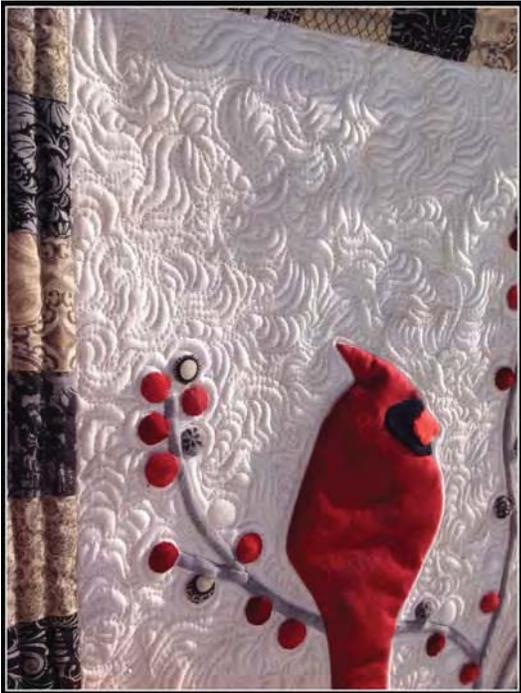


Below is another picture that shows the pretty straight line quilting on the charms.

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When finished quilting, the sample "squared" to 21.5" wide by 29.5" long. The applique and dense quilting ate up 1 inch each of the width and length.



The next step is to prepare hanging sleeves and binding as desired. There is a great [Moda Basics Tutorial for Binding](#) here.

The sample binding was completed using a 2.25" wide binding (folded) and a 3/8" seam allowance to sew it on the front and hand stitch it to the back. I also added two hanging sleeves (either side of the middle) using two 5.5" by 8.5 inch pieces of fabric.

If you've made it to this point of the tutorial congratulations! I hope you've enjoyed learning about bias stems, Perfect Circles, applique and some free motion quilting.

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Working with these methods opens a new door to the world of quilting doesn't it ? It's sew much fun!

## Yield:

One 21.5" x 29.5" Wall Hanging or Table Topper or Mini Quilt.



If you have questions, leave them in the comments below -- I'll be happy to answer them.

Please be sure to swing by [my blog](#) and check out my tutorials, lessons learned and completed projects. I would love to have you join the fun and give me feedback on this recipe.

I look forward to seeing you there!

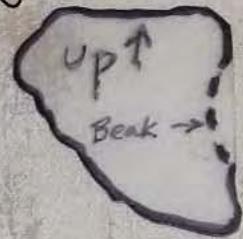
Karen Miller  
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Redbird  
Mask



Redbird  
Beak

Redbird  
Body

Redbird  
Mini Quilt  
Template

print  
full scale  
on 8.5 x 11  
paper