



PLAYING WITH COLOR

An A' La Mary Resource

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AGENDA

- Introduction to the color wheel
- Basics of color theory
- Impact of color
- How color theory applies to quilting
- Achieving harmony in quilts—quilt examples
- Conclusion



THE BASICS OF COLOR THEORY

COLOR WHEEL CHART

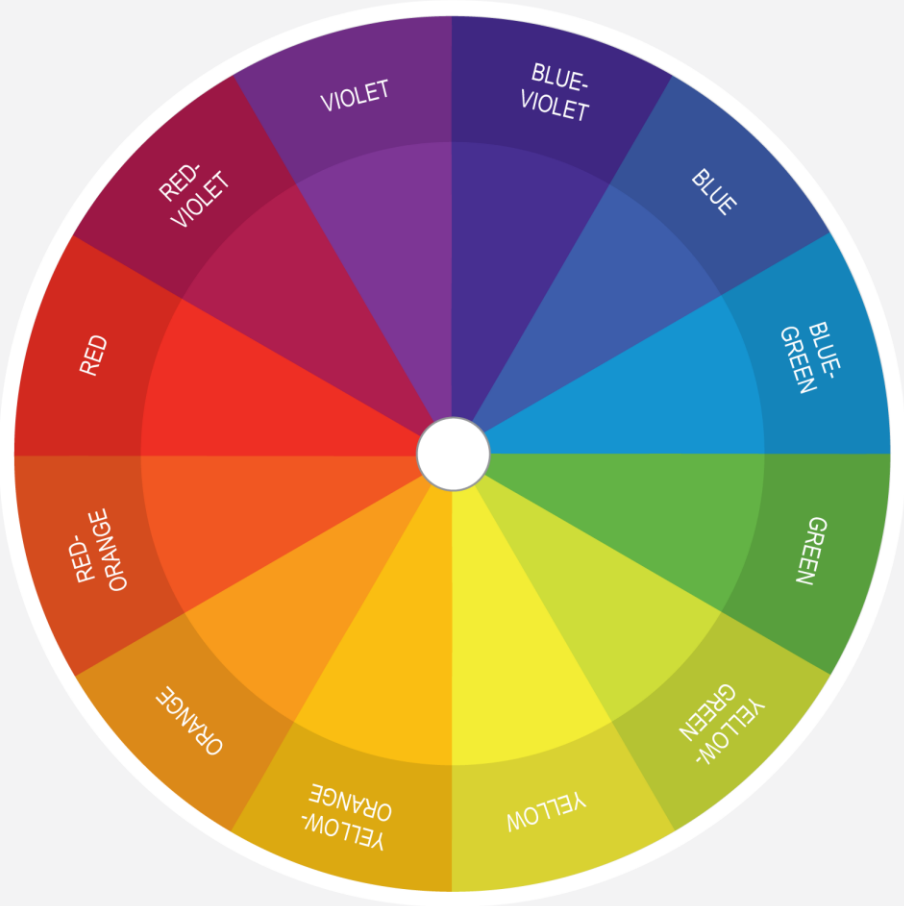
PRIMARY COLORS



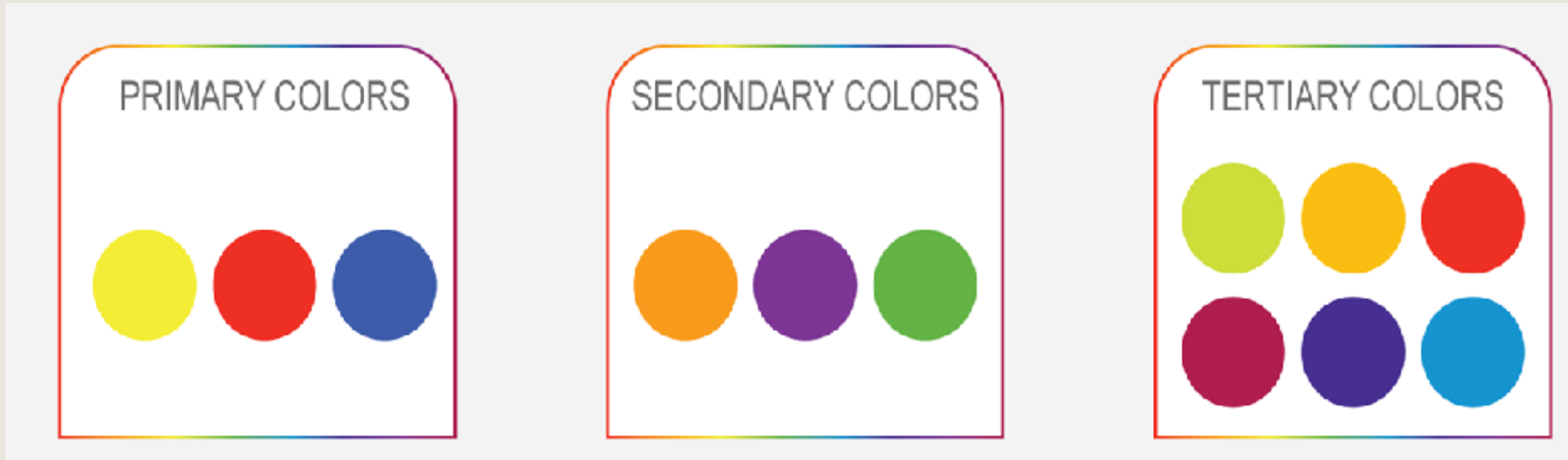
SECONDARY COLORS



TERTIARY COLORS

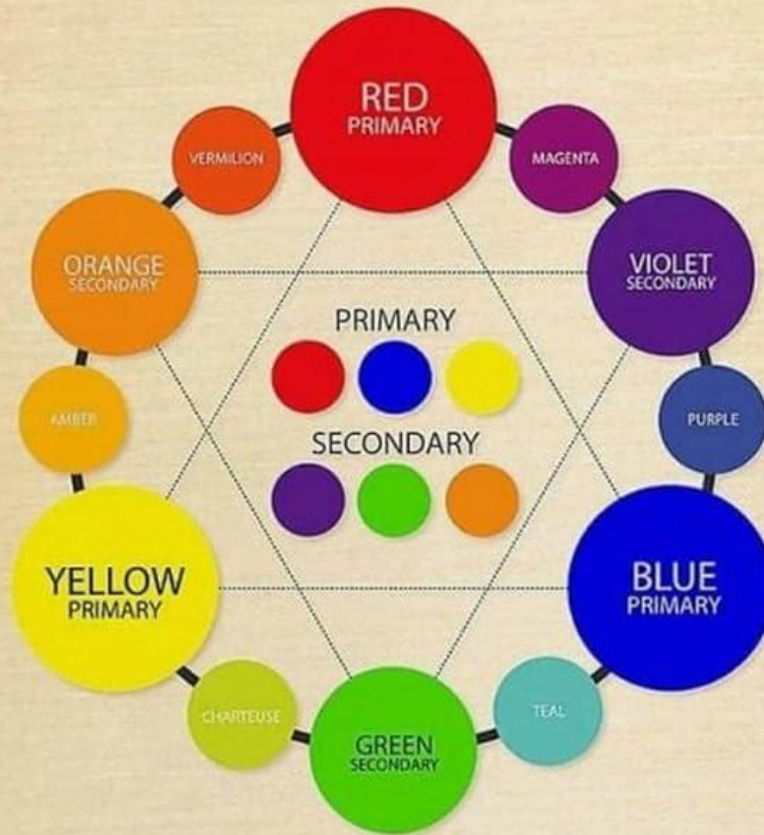


COLOR WHEEL CHART: DIVISION OF COLOR

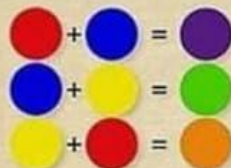


The color wheel is divided into three main categories: primary, secondary, and tertiary colors. All colors come from the three primary colors: yellow, red, and blue. Mixing these creates the secondary colors of orange, purple and green. Mixing even further creates the tertiary colors. A mnemonic for remembering how color works is to know that primary means one, only one color is mixed. Secondary colors combine two of the primary colors. And tertiary colors use a primary and secondary color.

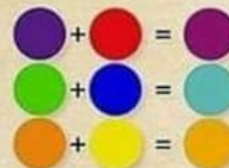
COLOR WHEEL



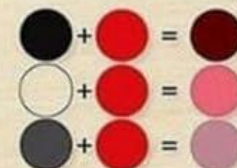
MIX PRIMARY WITH
PRIMARY TO GET
SECONDARY COLORS



MIX PRIMARY WITH
SECONDARY TO GET
TERTIARY COLORS



MIX BLACK, WHITE
WITH ANY COLOR TO GET
SHADES, TINTS AND TONES



IMPACT OF COLOR



Psychological Impact of Colors

Colors evoke specific emotions and can significantly influence perceptions. For instance: Red is often associated with passion and confidence, making it a popular choice for bold statements. Blue conveys calmness and professionalism, frequently used in corporate attire. Green symbolizes nature and tranquility, often seen in casual or resort wear.

Color Combinations and Harmony

Color harmony refers to aesthetically pleasing combinations of colors. There are several types of color harmonies:

Complementary Colors: Colors opposite each other on the color wheel (e.g., red and green or blue and orange) create vibrant contrasts.

Analogous Colors: Colors next to each other on the wheel (e.g., blue, blue-green, and green) provide a soothing effect.

Monochromatic Schemes: Variations of a single color can create a sophisticated and cohesive look.



IMPACT OF COLOR

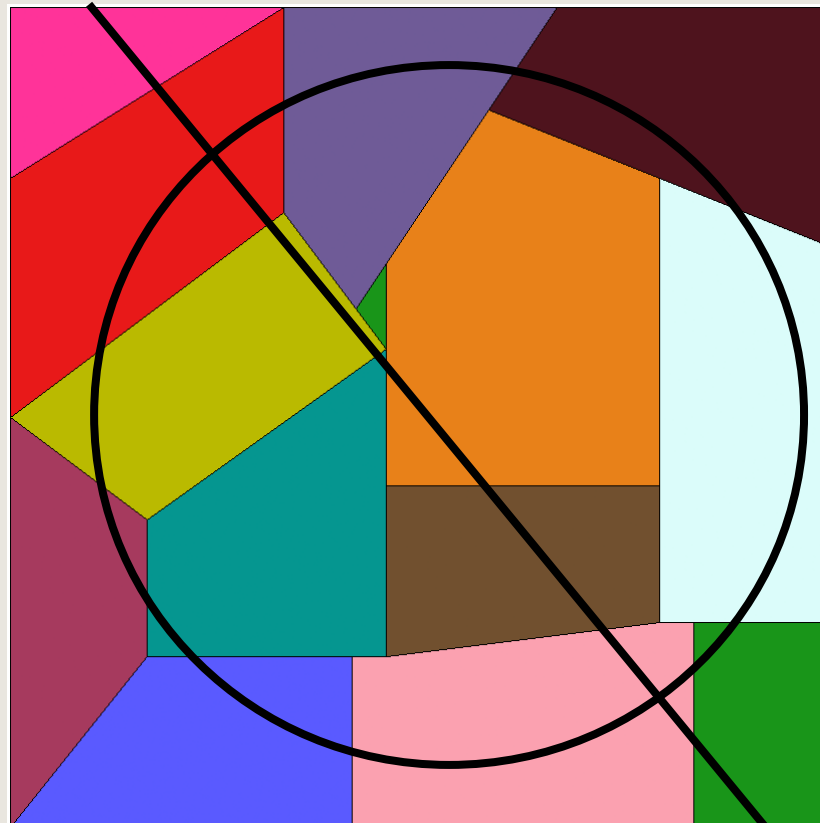
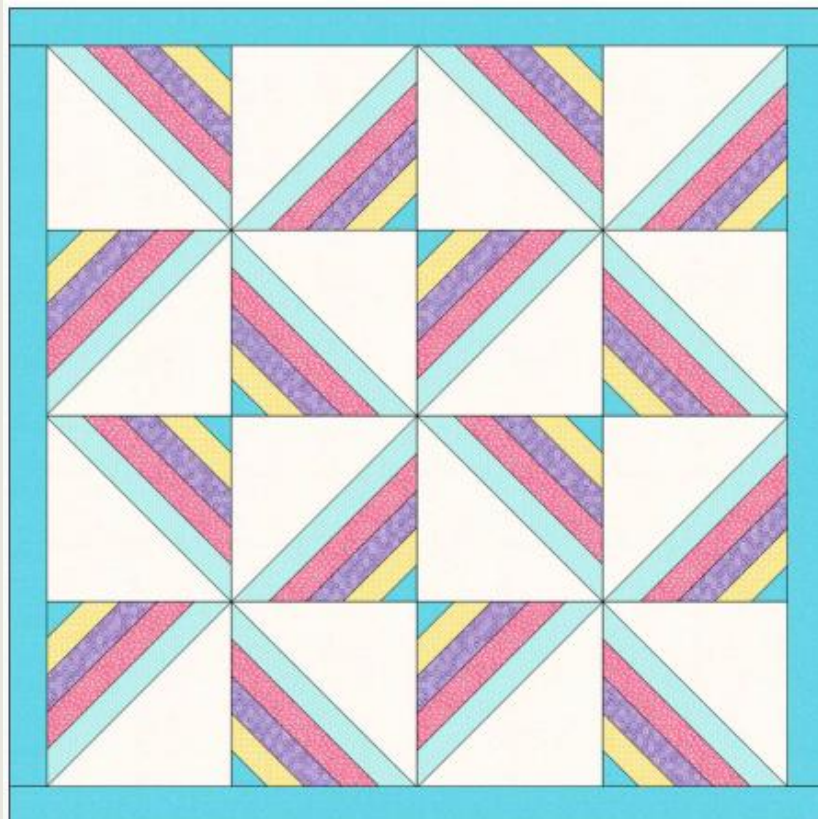
Color theory in fashion is the study of how colors interact, influence emotions, and create visual harmony, guiding designers and individuals in making impactful style choices.

Key Concepts of Color Theory

1. Understand the color wheel developed by Sir Isaac Newton
2. Use the wheel to create harmonious palettes
3. Appreciate emotional significance of colors

HOW COLOR THEORY APPLIES TO QUILTING

Harmonious vs Discordant Quilts



HOW COLOR THEORY APPLIES TO QUILTING

Understanding color theory is essential for quilters to create visually appealing, harmonious quilts that convey emotion and narrative.



HUE, TINT, SHADE, TONE

- Hue: the pure color without white or black. Primary colors
- Tint: a color mixed with white to increase its lightness
- Shade: a color mixed with black to make it darker
- Tone: a color mixed with gray to change its intensity



ACHIEVING HARMONY IN QUILTS



Five ways to use color in quilts:

1. Use a palette already created by your favorite designer and add one or two colors from your stash that coordinate with the palette
2. Choose a fabric design with several colors (such as a floral) and pull coordinating stash fabrics. Add additional fabrics halfway through the quilt
3. Use complementary colors (across from each other on the color wheel)
4. Use colors with an analogous relationship (reside next to each other)
5. Choose one color and use stash fabrics and scraps in that color



USE A PALETTE CREATED BY YOUR FAVORITE DESIGNER AND ADD ONE OR TWO COLORS FROM YOUR STASH THAT COORDINATE WITH THE PALETTE

For this anniversary quilt for my parents, I added solids to make the flowers along the borders

**CHOOSE A FABRIC DESIGN
WITH SEVERAL COLORS
(SUCH AS A FLORAL) AND
PULL COORDINATING STASH
FABRICS. ADD ADDITIONAL
FABRICS HALFWAY
THROUGH THE QUILT**

For *Autumn Splendor*, I began with the leaf fabric in the center of every other block. The rest of the fabrics all came from my stash. Some do not match perfectly, but all colors represent fall.



USE COMPLEMENTARY COLORS

Wooden Bowl with Citrus works because blue and orange are complementary colors. Notice that the oranges are larger than the lemons or limes.



CHOOSE ONE COLOR AND USE STASH FABRICS AND SCRAPS IN ONLY THAT COLOR

Technically, *River* has two colors, blue and white. However, the blues in the river are the focal point. The white background is used only to create another quilt in my poster series.





USE COLORS WITH AN ANALOGOUS RELATIONSHIP (RESIDE NEXT TO EACH OTHER)

This log cabin class sample uses blues and purples which are beside each other on the color wheel, since purple lies between red and blue.

ACHIEVING HARMONY IN QUILTS



Five more ideas to use color in quilts:

1. Pull two of your favorite solids and add scraps or stash fabric that play well together
2. Use one designer's fabrics and a few fabrics from other lines
3. Find a common thread or theme
4. "Steal" ideas from friends
5. Just have fun!



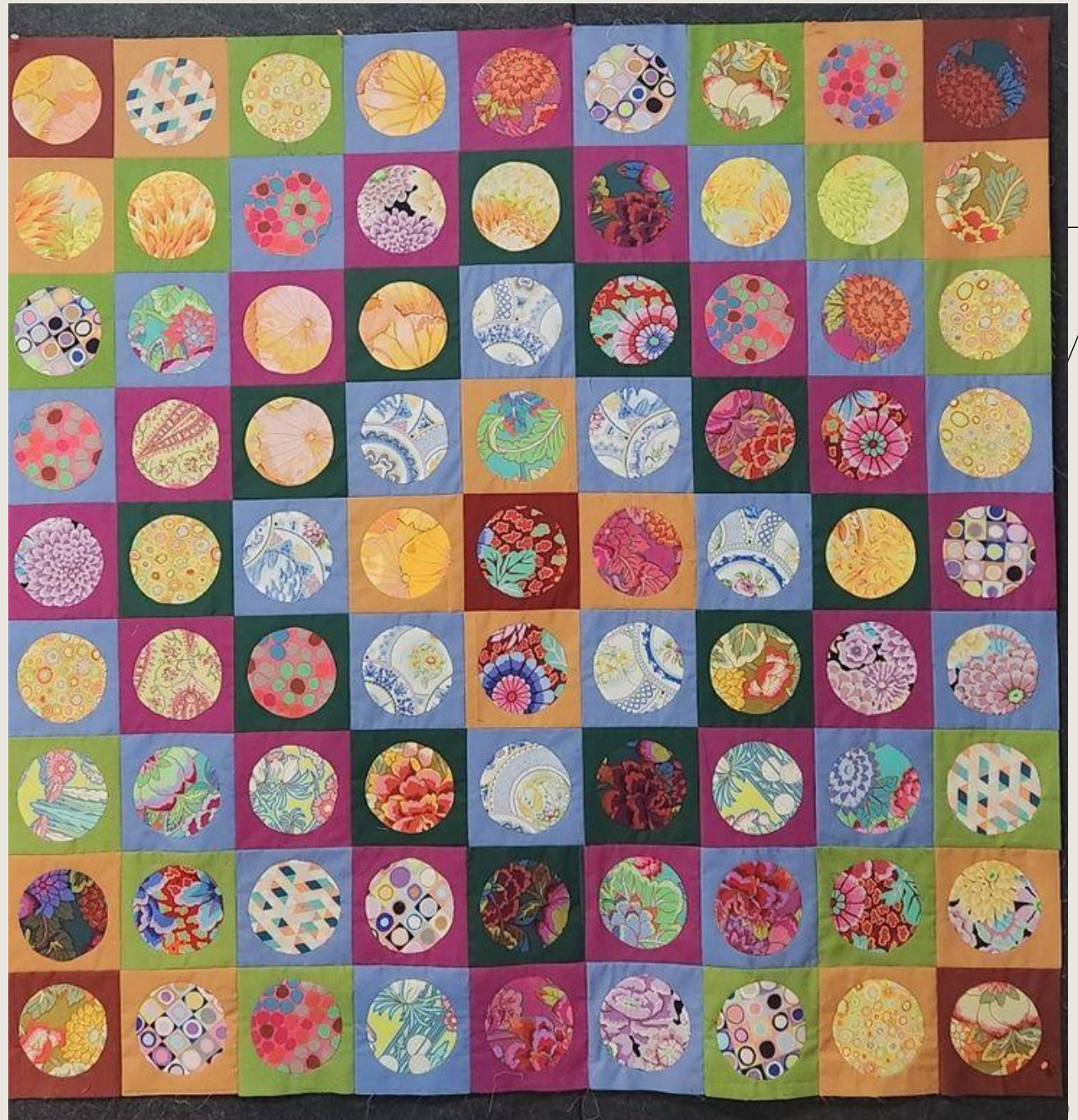
PULL TWO OF YOUR FAVORITE SOLIDS AND ADD SCRAPS OR STASH FABRIC THAT PLAY WELL TOGETHER

See Such Fun has only two colors, but the yellows read as solids and the pinks are, well, all in the same color family. This quilt was made from scraps only.

USE ONE DESIGNER'S FABRICS THEN ADD SOLIDS FROM DIFFERENT LINES

Kaffe Around the World used all the Kaffe Fassett fabrics that I could get my hands on. (And I added some other brands.)

To give it some cohesion, I used solids in the background and tried to match the prints to the background.





FIND A COMMON THREAD OR THEME

For *Give Me Words* I used part of my collection of fabrics with words. One of the fabrics has an aqua background with torn newsprint. I pulled other fabrics in the green color family to accentuate it and provide a surprise.

“STEAL” FROM YOUR FRIENDS

At a class I taught pre2023, a student had two fat quarters, royal purple and deep green, and when she put them together, I fell in love with the combination. When I needed colors for the stars in *Daystar*, I had to use them. The stars pop against the neutral background colors.





JUST HAVE FUN!

I used no rhyme or reason to make *Citrus Sherbert*. I am not completely sure how it came about. I wanted to play. To see how many ways I could create blocks. I do know I began with yellow and orange, but they were too bland. I have tons of navy, so why not? And here we are. It was one of the most fun quilts I've made.

FINAL TIPS & TAKEAWAYS

Seek feedback from friends whose color choices you admire

Reflect on why you like or dislike a particular color

Explore new colors—challenge yourself to use the color you like the least. Start small.

Set personal goals

Iterate and adapt

Challenges are healthy ways to include color in your quilting and life

Pay special attention to color when you look at other quilts, especially at quilt shows where you may not know the maker



CREDITS AND QUILTS

- [Colour Theory in Fashion Design: Color Wheel and its Application - Disha Foundation](#)
- *EQ8 designs – Mary Marcotte*

50th Anniversary Quilt; 80" X 90"; 2008 (made for Ellen and Riley Bourque)

Autumn Splendor; 80" X 110"; 2010

Wooden Bowl with Citrus; 25" X 30"; 2018

River; 28" X 24"; 2022

Log Cabin Class Sample; 50" X 50"; 2025

To See Such Fun; 62" X 62"; 2019

Kaffe Around the World; 54" X 54"; 2017

Give Me Words; 54" X 58"; 2020

Daystar; 85" X 90"; 2023

Citrus Sherbert, 50" X 50"; 2023

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PURCHASE

To see more of my quilts, go to marymarcotte.com/quilt-portfolio
Additional classes available at marymarcotte.com/workshops-and-lectures

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