

Spring of Desire

In the June 2008 issue of QN, award-winning quilter Ted Storm-van Weelden shared her thoughts about her quilt, *Spring of Desire*. Here's more from Ted.

I had a ball making this quilt. It was a friend always waiting for me to work on it. It was the best time of my life. I felt so connected to my ancestors.

Spring of Desire is a family affair, and it's about life. I never knew photos as far back as my great-grandmother were in my parents' home. I tossed the pictures onto the quilt, which was still in the frame, and the old photographs blended right into the grays and greens of the quilt. Perhaps the most special event of all took place in Rotterdam, where my family is from. The quilt was shown in a guild exhibit that was hung in the church where my son was baptized. My desire is to keep the quilt in the family and pass it along just like the handkerchief.



Here is Ted's unique order of construction for *Spring of Desire*:

- Hand sew the four huge triangles together for the background.
- Hand baste a grid across the background.
- Construct and embellish all applique elements away from the background.
- Baste the applique elements onto the background using the grid for correct placement.
- Applique one quarter of the quilt at a time.
- Embroider outline stitches for the stems with DMC Pearl Cotton #3 and #5, using a large needle. After fusing the shisha mirrors, add a row of buttonhole stitches and tack stitches with DMC Cotton #16.
- Sandwich the three layers.
- Quilt in and around the applique.
- Take the quilt out of the frame, except for the top and bottom rod, and mark the grid.
- Quilt the grid in a subdividing sequence.
- Soak the quilt 24 hours in the bathtub, and then wash.
- Block the quilt on the floor.
- Sew on the binding.
- Trim off the excess fabric.
- Hand stitch the binding on the back.
- Apply sleeves to the top and bottom.
- Write name and address with a permanent-ink marker directly on the back of the quilt. Cover this information with the label.



The inspirational bridal handkerchief carried by Ted's great-great-great-grandmother on her wedding day.



Ted designed and patented this unique tool for "thumb quilting," which she prefers to classic hand quilting.



Ted basted a large reference grid on the quilt top for applique placement.



Detail of applique element construction and alignment. Notice the embroidered details, the extra padded areas, the basting in the gray fabric, and the partially visible orange basting thread that holds the white lining to the applique.



Detail of quilting in and around the applique elements. Ted used shisha mirrors to create the flower centers.



After all the applique elements were quilted, Ted removed the quilt from the frame and marked the grid.



To quilt perfectly straight long lines, Ted first quilted a four-block grid, and then she quilted in halves, and then in halves again.



Before binding her quilt, Ted soaked it for 24 hours in the bathtub, washed it, and then blocked it.