

## Cloth and the Picture Book: Storytelling with Textile Techniques

A lecture for the Western North Carolina Textile Study Group & the Public Presentation by Author and Illustrator Debra Frasier (debrafrasier.com)

Bibliography: Selections by Debra Frasier and Vicki Palmquist (Books listed in order of appearance in the presentation):

### INTRODUCTION TO THE PICTURE BOOK FORM

*Spike, Ugliest Dog in the Universe*, written and illustrated by Debra Frasier, Beach Lane Books, Simon & Schuster, 2014. (Collaged worn blue jeans with other textiles and papers.)

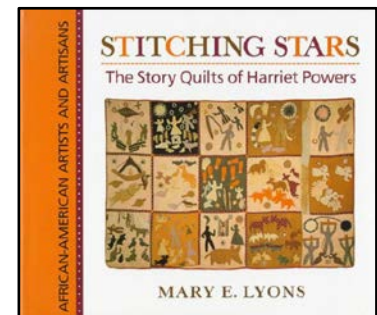


### THREE HISTORICAL INSPIRATIONS

*The Lady and the Unicorn*, as seen in the Musée de Cluny, Paris, France.

*The Bayeux Tapestry*, written by David M. Wilson, "The Complete Tapestry in Colour with Introductions, Description and commentary by David M. Wilson," Thames & Hudson, 2004.

*Stitching Stars, The Story Quilts of Harriet Powers*, Lyons, Mary E, African-American Artists and Artisans series, 1993, Charles Scribner's & Sons, historical overview of late 1860's, slave life, and Ms. Powers' works and history.



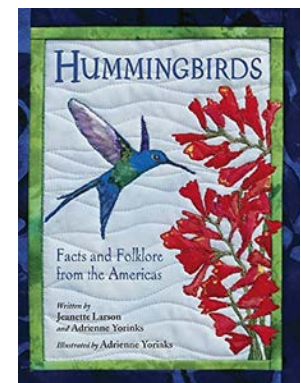
### A Quirky Survey of Textile Techniques Used in Illustrations for Children's Picture Books

#### QUILTED INSPIRATION

*The Alphabet Atlas*, Written by Arthur Yorinks, illustrated by Adrienne Yorinks, Winslow Press, 1999 (Machine quilted, collaged continents)

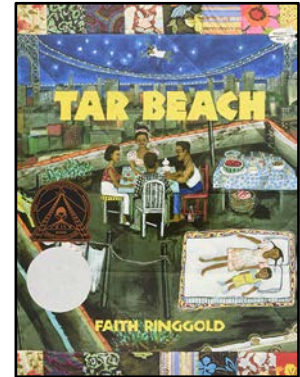
*Hummingbirds*, written by Adrienne Yorinks and Jeannette Larson, illustrated by Adrienne Yorinks, Charlesbridge Publishing, 2011 (Nonfiction combined with mythic, all quilted)

*Patchwork Folk Art, Using Applique & Quilting Techniques*, written and illustrated by Janet Bolton, Sterling/Museum Quilts Book, Sterling Publishing Co, 1995 (Not a children's picture book but an excellent introduction to narrative in patchwork collage.)



*Mrs. Noah's Patchwork Quilt, A Journal of the Voyage with a Pocketful of Patchwork Pieces*, written by Sheri Safran and illustrated by Janet Bolton, Tango Books (England), 1995. (Presents a how-to along with the story of Mrs. Noah's quilt, and a back pocket includes patterns of quilt pieces appearing in the illustrations.)

*Tar Beach*, written and illustrated by Faith Ringgold, Crown Publisher, 1991. (Based on one of Ringgold's quilts held by the Guggenheim Museum. The story arc and quilt borders all carried over to the picture book so, in this case, the book is inspired by the quilt.)



*Quiltmaker's Gift*, written by Jeff Brumbeau, illustrated by Gail de Marcken, Scholastic Press, 2001. (In which the creation of a quilt changes the heart of a greedy king. Each page features a different quilt block that fits into the context of the story.)

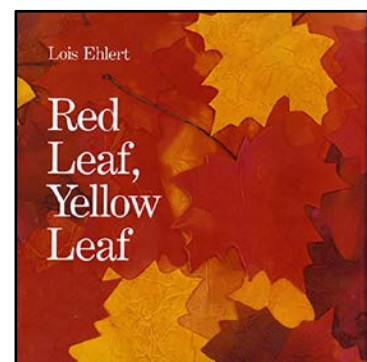
*Keeping Quilt*, written and illustrated by Patricia Polacco, Simon & Schuster, 1988. (A quilt made from a family's clothing is passed down in various guises for more than a century, a symbol of their enduring love and faith.)

## CLOTH AND THINGS IN THE SEWING BASKET

*Pat the Bunny*, written and illustrated by Dorothy Kunhardt, Golden Book, 1940. (Spiral bound with a small trim-size, this classic book uses actual bits of fabric to "feel" and "lift.")

*Wag A Tail*, written and illustrated by Lois Ehlert, Harcourt, Inc, 2007 (Collaged papers and cloth, with buttons and "pinking shear" edging throughout.)

*Red Leaf, Yellow Leaf*, written and illustrated by Lois Ehlert, Harcourt Brace & Company, 1991. (Burlap, kite tails, string and bits of cloth are used in the collages.)



*Joseph Had a Little Overcoat*, written and illustrated by Simms Taback, Viking/Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers, 1999. (The main character – a diminishing coat – is actual cloth and is collaged with other bits of cloth curtains, rugs and clothing, and then all adhered to a painted surface.)

*Mama Miti*, written by Donna Jo Napoli, illustrated by Kadir Nelson, Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2010. (Nelson has combined cloth with painting for both landscapes and clothing.)

*Hands*, written and illustrated by Lois Ehlert, Harcourt Brace & Co, 1997. (Ehlert has used actual objects: work gloves, apron swatch, sewing tools, scissors, pattern tissue – in this ode to making things as a child.)

## PAPER TREATED AS CLOTH

*Paper Illusions, The Art of Isabelle de Borchgrave*, by Barbara and Rene Stoeltie, Abrams, 2008 (English edition) (Lavish photographs of life-sized paper costumes made to match Renaissance period cloth using painting, folding, gluing, stitching to create the illusion of cloth.)

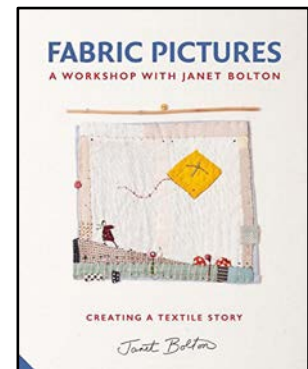


*Mole's Hill*, written and illustrated by Lois Ehlert, Harcourt, 1994 (Inspired by Woodland Indians ribbon applique and sewn beadwork, the paper is often dotted and pieced as if stitched and beaded. An author note describes this handwork and how it inspired her approach.)

*Seeds of Change*, written by Jen Cullerton Johnson, illustrated by Sonia Lynn Sadler, Lee & Low Books, 2010. (Distinctive Kenyan-styled flower print dress patterns are used as the inspiration for paintings of dresses and mirrored in landscapes.)

## STITCHING

*Fabric Pictures, A Workshop with Janet Bolton, Creating a Textile Story*, written and illustrated by Janet Bolton, Jacqui Small LLP, Aurum Press, (London), 2015. (Not a children's picture book but an excellent workshop-in-a-book on creating narratives with applique.)

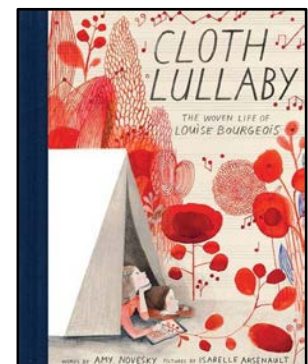


*Baby's First Book*, written and illustrated by Clare Beaton, Barefoot Books, 2008 (Hand sewn felt, vintage fabrics, buttons, and stitched lettering collaged for a baby's compendium of subjects. ALL items and backgrounds made of cloth.)

*Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*, adapted by Joan Aiken, illustrated by Belinda Downes, A Dorling Kindersley Book, Penguin Company, 2002. (Downes uses fine fabrics appliquéd with rich embroidery, incorporating a consistent running stitch to outline and embellish.)

## CLOTH AS SUBJECT

*Cloth Lullaby, The Woven Life of Louise Bourgeois*, written by Amy Novesky and illustrated by Isabelle Arsenault, Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2016. (The illustrator uses woven lines, [similar to some of Bourgeois' later drawings] to create a textile sensibility in the illustrations amid the early years, and then the same vocabulary is used to visually describe the sculpture of her adult artist years.)



*A Pattern for Pepper*, written and illustrated by Julie Kraulis, Tundra Books, Random House/Canada, 2017. (From Herringbone to Dotted Swiss, from Argyle to Toile—a visit to a tailor’s shop becomes a compendium of fabric patterns with each fabric sampled in the hunt for the perfect pattern for Pepper. Oil paint and graphite on board.)

### THREE-D CLOTH AND FELT

*Pocketful of Posies, A Treasury of Nursery Rhymes*, collected and illustrated by Salley Mavor, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010. (64 traditional nursery rhymes are illustrated with hand-sewn fabric relief collages, including dozens of figures.)



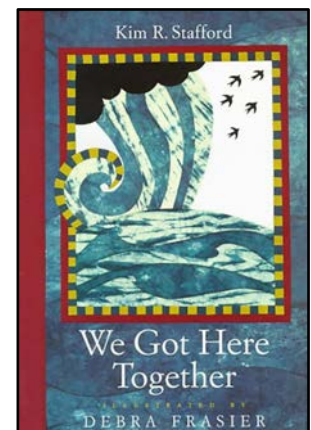
*Felt-Wee-Folk, 120 Enchanting Dolls, “New Adventures,”* by Salley Mavor. This is a how-to book for creating characters and scenes as pictured in *Pocketful of Posies*.

*Cozy Classics, Jane Austen’s Pride & Prejudice*, by Jack and Holman Wang, Chronicle Books, 2016. (Entirely illustrated by felted 3-D characters that are set in an environment, superbly lit, and photographed to tell classic tales in one word page turns.) (Several classic titles are included in this series.)

*Roarr, Calder’s Circus, a Story* by Maira Kalman, Photos by Donatella Brun, designed by M&Co for the Whitney Museum of American Art, 1991. (Using bits of Calder’s spoken text from the film of his hand manipulated circus, Kalman expands the language and characterizations. Calder’s circus characters of wire and cloth are photographed and then collaged across the double page spread.)

### THE DYED BOOK

*We Got Here Together*, written by Kim Stafford, illustrated by Debra Frasier, Harcourt Brace, 1994. (Shibori, a resist dyeing method, is used to pattern Japanese gampi tissue paper (long fibered tissue) as ocean and rain, in both pipe resist and braided resist techniques, respectively. Shibori tissue paper is combined with Japanese dyed sheets in collages on illustration board.)



### SPECIAL GUEST

Catharine Ellis, self published, three titles:

*Cape Cod: The Present, Blue, and Mapping Color* (written by Nancy Penrose, illustrated by Catharine Ellis). Find Catharine’s [resources and publications](#) here.

(Each of these chapbooks is illustrated using photographs of natural dyed fabrics, sometimes additionally stitched on the surfaces, while abstractly defining the text.)