

TUTOR Spotlight



Paula

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Hi Paula, what's in your schedule this week?

My schedule for this week is mostly about continuing with the preparation for teaching at my annual justhands-on.tv retreat. This year the theme for the retreat at Hayling Island is 'stash-busting'. The participants in my class will be making quilts from one of six quilt patterns that concentrate on using accumulated stash fabric, from full width fabrics to fat quarters, jelly rolls, charm packs, layer cakes, and even too-good-to-throw-away scraps. Besides working on the instructions for the new quilt patterns, I will be finishing off a couple of the sample quilts I've made for the retreat. It's going to be a weekend of sewing, sharing, and fun. I'm looking forward to meeting up with all the students in my class, as well as those in the class run by the amazing Jenny Rayment next door.

I will be visiting an exhibition of my Easy Stack quilts at Lady Sew and Sew in Henley.

Get to know

PAULA DOYLE

Paula is an award-winning quilter with over 25 years' experience and a published author with a flair for making complex techniques simple. We find out more about her designs and exciting career as a tutor for justhands-on.tv



I also have some forward planning for next year on the agenda for this week.

Can you tell us how you got involved with justhands-on.tv?

I met Valerie Nesbitt several years ago through my local quilt shop, Creative Quilting in East Moseley. In 2012 C&T Publishing published my first book *Mini Mosaics*, so Valerie and her team came to my studio to film a segment about the technique detailed in the book. Valerie also asked me if I had any other ideas I could share in short video segments, and since then I have had the privilege of sharing some of my knowledge on a wide range of quilting subjects, such as how to do hand piecing and hand quilting, or how to make machine thread-painted portraits. Valerie also arranged to film a segment about the Magna Carta Quilts when we met at Guildford Cathedral in 2015. I worked on the Magna Carta Quilts for over two years with my friend and co-artist Alison

Garner and 23 other talented quilters, working together to make eight quilts celebrating the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta. The quilts were part of the official 800th anniversary celebrations at Runnymede before going to the Cathedral for National Armed Forces Day, and then to subsequent exhibitions in Houston and Chicago. The quilts now reside in the permanent collection of the Quilters Guild of the British Isles.

You've been quilting for over 25 years, what has kept you inspired?

There are various things that have kept me inspired by quilting:

Fabric: When I see a fabric that I like I think of creating a quilt pattern that I could work the fabric into. Sometimes I have trouble getting to sleep for all the ideas for new quilts going around in my head, and I often dream about quilt patterns.

Master the 'charming circles' technique with Paula's friendly online tutorial



Fun fact!
Paula's signature technique is sewing small-scale quilts and blocks



INTERVIEW



Painting with pens



Free-motion quilting

Other quilters' quilts: Sometimes I see quilts hanging in quilt shows that inspire me, or pictures of quilts in books or magazines. Antique or vintage quilts are also a great source for helping think up new quilt patterns. It's a bit like the impressionist painters who saw each other's work, and drew inspiration from them for their own art. Or like the Beatles who wrote many of their best songs when they were together and inspired by each other's songs.

Making the quilt: First I design the quilt pattern. Next, I think about how I'm going to make the quilt. I especially like patterns where I can figure out a way to make the quilt or quilt blocks easy to make, and thus easy to teach other people how to make for themselves, either in a class or through a pattern. After that I do the number crunching, figuring out how many of which fabric to cut out, and so on. And finally, I get to stitch the quilt, I love the whole process! All of the steps of making a quilt inspire me to make another quilt, and then

another. I currently have about six quilt patterns on my must-do list, and I'm always doodling with ideas for quilts that stay on the back burner until their time has come to be made into an actual quilt.

Looking forward to future quilts: In 2014 my health took a sudden turn when I was diagnosed and treated for breast cancer. Since then I have had two bouts of pneumonia and a stroke, so I have had to limit my teaching and

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speaking engagements, allowing me more time to concentrate on my studio work. I now plan my quilting life around designing and making quilts for patterns and books, and doing more videos about quilting. I also take on privately commissioned pieces from time to time. The studio work inspires me to learn new techniques and try new products. And of course, the justhands-on.tv retreats keep me motivated to produce new and exciting offerings to my students. Just a sneak preview – next year's retreat is going to be called RE-USE, RECYCLE, AND UPCYCLE quilts. It's going to be amazing!

You're regularly seen in front of the camera, how do you prepare for videos?

First, I think about what I want to say during the filming session, then prepare the step-outs needed to illustrate what I'm going to say. I don't prepare an actual script for each session, but I do have a bullet-point outline written on an index card. The index card and the step-outs help keep me on track about what I need to tell the camera. Clean hands and nails are important too, as many of the close-ups focus on items I am holding up or pointing to for the camera. I don't really feel nervous in front of the camera as I'm more concerned about trying to remember everything I want to say and not miss out any vital facts. Videos done on camera are like telling another person how to do something one-on-one rather than speaking to a large audience. It also helps knowing that the camera crew are experts in editing the final video, and will ask for a retake on any points I need to make clearer.