

Cecilia Maciá

A Renaissance Woman

Why am I a Renaissance woman? Because variety is the spice of life!

I started embroidering as a child in my native Cuba; stitching with all those colorful threads instilled a love for using various colors in my work. Crewell and Bargello have become my favorite forms of embroidery. As a young woman, I sewed clothing and household items for my family.

One day, more than 40 years ago, I took all my fabric and yarn scraps and made a *Family Tree* quilt. I was hooked! Quilting has been a lifesaver and a happy companion. Some of my quilts have a story built into them, while others have inspired me to write poems. My main concern is the design. It wasn't until the 90s that I found out that quilters looked at the back of quilts! My quilting stitch progressed with practice. There is hope for all - just keep doing it.

I do have some quilting preferences: I let the theme of the quilt guide the choice of the quilting pattern. I quilt the design of prints to emphasize their motif. For strength, I piece with backstitches, and quilt the edges of appliqués. Embracing many styles is very stimulating. My quilts don't have the same look because I try to do something new and different with new projects. All my work is done by hand.

Because I stab quilt, going over many layers of fabric is very easy. I use very thin, lightweight batting and cut out the backs of the appliqué pieces to give a smooth effect. I've used variegated quilting thread, but find that Gutterman cotton quilting thread allows me to produce a very small stitch.

When quilters ask me what is the hardest part of quilting, I emphasize the choice of colors. Scraps and different fabrics produce many shades and variety for the eye.