Meditation

General construction tips

•When cutting your fabric, add approximately 1″ to all perimeter edges of the circle and also to any appliqué piece edges that extend into that perimeter. This will ensure that you can adjust, trim, and sew the edge into a perfectly-sized circle, as some shrinkage and distortion may occur during the appliqué process.

•Working from the most distant point in the landscape, add objects in the order that they advance toward the viewer. Start with a full circle of the sky to create the base on which you will appliqué the remaining pieces. Carefully study the other objects in the scene, such as the pavilion, to determine which pieces should lie over or tuck under others. This will contribute to creating successful visual depth in the scene.

•When transferring your appliqué templates to the fabric, group (treat as one item) any objects that appear to be broken up by other overlapping objects. That way, if an overlying piece shifts during the appliqué process, you will not risk exposing the raw edges on the underneath piece. This will add some bulk but will also add a sculptural quality to the finished project. As an alternative, be generous with the seam allowance you add for pieces that will be tucked beneath others. To minimize bulk, the excess fabric under larger areas can be trimmed away as you complete the appliqué.

Getting started

Have a copy shop enlarge the circle pattern by 222%. AQS members can download a full-sized pattern from our Web site at www.AmericanQuilter.com.

Trace the perimeter of the circle onto freezer paper and cut out directly on that line. Iron the freezer paper circle to the fabric you have chosen

FABRIC & CUTTING REQUIREMENTS	Skill level: Intermediate
Quilt size: 21" x 32"	• Requirements are based on 40" fabric width. • Read all pattern instructions before cutting any patches for this project.
Print for sky – ⅝ yard	• 1A
Print for mountain – ⅓ yard	• 1B
Various prints – scraps	• Appliqué patches C–N Refer to the Key.
Background panel – ¼ yard*	• 1 panel 7½" x 32½"
Background panel – ½ yard*	• 1 panel 14½" x 32½"
Binding – ⅜ yard	• 4 strips 2¼" x 40" to make 118" of continuous binding
Backing – 1⅛ yards	• 1 panel 25" x 36" • sleeve, 1 strip 9" x 21"
Batting	• 25" x 36"

* Before purchasing this fabric, read the section PREPARING THE BACKGROUND PANELS.

for your sky and cut the fabric into a circle approximately 1″ larger than the paper circle (fig. 1). Do not mark the edges of the fabric circle. Remove the freezer paper and reserve the template to use later in the construction process. This circle of sky becomes the foundation to which you will appliqué all the remaining parts of the design.
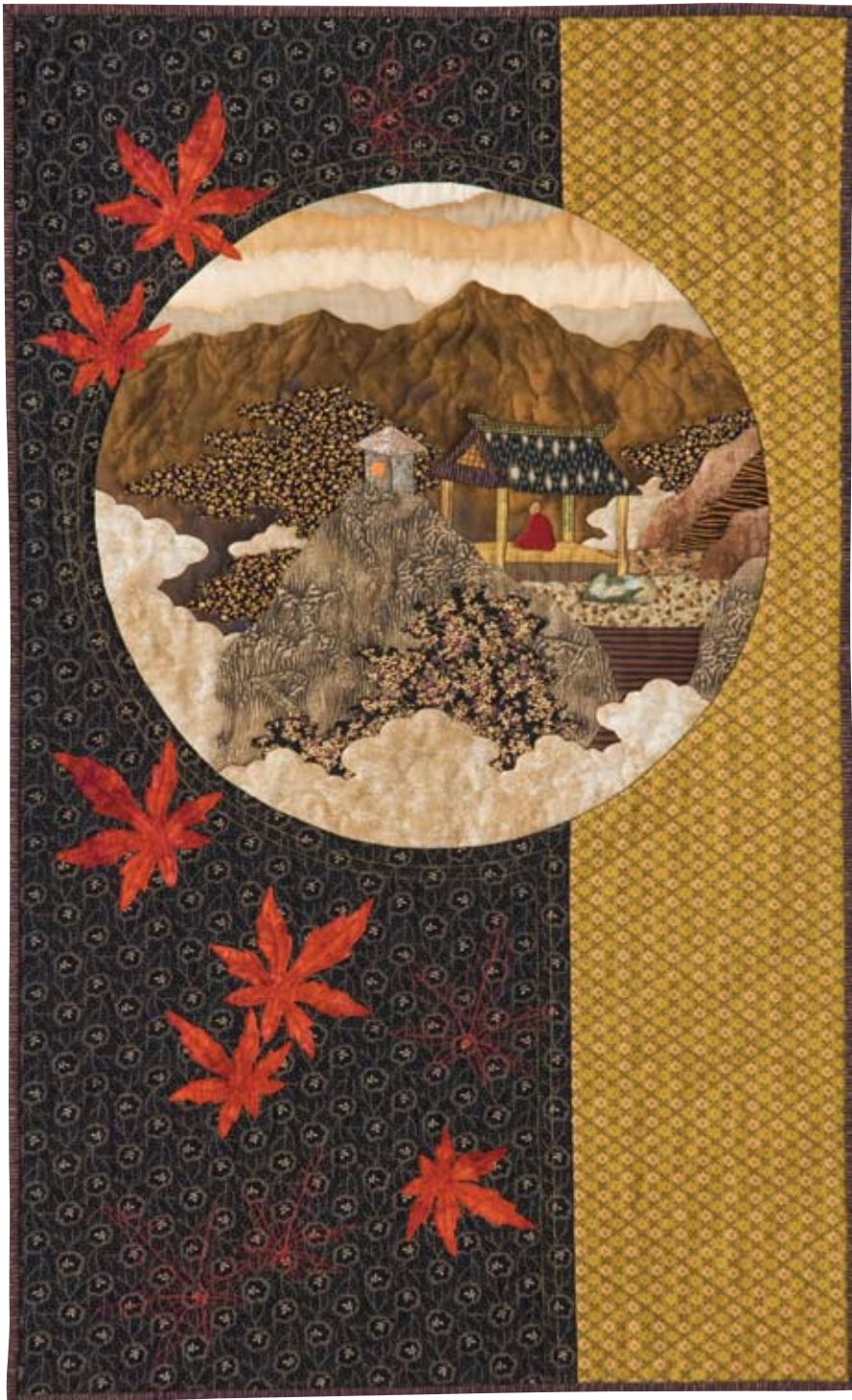
Adding the appliqué

Prepare appliqué patches according to your favorite method. Pattern pieces have been coded with letters to identify the shapes and numbers to indicate the sequence in which they are applied. Some pieces have the same numbers,

Fig. 1

because they can be positioned and appliquéd concurrently with each other.

For the lantern and pavilion, I recommend reverse appliquéing the "windows" into their surrounding fabrics then appliquéing these units into place. Use a

MEDITATION II, 21" x 32"

Fig. 2

Preparing the circle for appliqué

Retrieve the freezer-paper circle template you used for the sky, and iron it to a piece of muslin. Cut the muslin into a circle as you did with the sky fabric, adding an extra inch of fabric beyond the template edge. Position this circle, paper side up, onto the right side of the appliquéd circle. Pull back the edges of the muslin that extend beyond the paper to verify that all the appliqué pieces at the perimeter extend beyond as well (fig. 3). If they do not, or if they extend less than ¼", redo this step with a slightly smaller paper circle.

Fig. 3

Once all edges are verified, pin the muslin to the appliqué and stitch the two together along the edge of the paper circle (fig. 4). Complete the stitched circle, overlapping the end a bit and backstitching to secure. Do not leave an opening for turning.

Fig. 4

light box or a clear plastic registration sheet onto which you have traced the pattern to help position the appliqué pieces in the appropriate places.

If desired, the trees can be appliquéd with a raw-edge machine technique that adds extra texture. You'll find directions for this technique on page 30 of the January 2008 *American Quilter* issue.

Extend by an additional inch any pieces that touch the perimeter of the circle, as you did with the sky (note the mountains in figure 2). When the appliqué has been completed, press the circle to flatten the appliqué as much as possible. The edges of your circle may be somewhat ruffled, but any fullness should "quilt out" in the quilting process.

Remove the paper circle and trim the seam allowance down to ¼". Clip the seam allowances to help circle lie flat when turned right side out. (Don't worry about cutting through hand appliquéd stitches; the machine stitching will prevent them from unraveling beyond the stitched edge.) Grasp the muslin fabric in one hand and the appliquéd circle in the other and pull them apart (fig. 5). (This is very important so you don't accidentally cut the appliquéd panel while slashing an opening in the muslin.) Cut a slash in the middle of the muslin circle, approximately 4" long or large enough for your hand, and turn the circle right side out (fig. 6). Reach in through the opening and push the edges out with your fingers. The faced circle can now be prepared to appliqué onto the background. On the right side, roll the seamed edge between your fingers to push the muslin slightly under the lip of the appliquéd circle. (This will insure that the muslin does not form a "halo"

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

around the circle when it's appliquéd to the background.) Pin or baste this edge to keep it in place while you press the edge of the circle with an iron. The circle is now ready to be appliquéd onto the background panels.

Preparing the background panels

The background is divided into two panels, one twice as wide as the other. You will need ½ yard of one fabric for the wider portion and ¼ yard for the narrower one. I recommend you get ½ yard of both so you can determine which ones will be used for the wide and narrow panels after you've had a chance to audition them both ways. Please note that the yardage requirement will also depend upon how you choose to orient the print of the fabric. Some directional fabrics may need to be positioned vertically for the print to run correctly. If this is the case with a fabric you have chosen, you will need 1 yard of that fabric.

The background panel measures approximately 21" wide by 32" tall and is composed of two bands of contrasting fabric, one measuring about 7" in finished width and the other about 14" in finished width. These measurements may be changed to accommodate a particular fabric if needed to avoid cropping a print inappropriately. To determine whether to have the narrow strip on the right or left side of your quilt, audition the fabrics you are considering by placing pieces folded to the approximate size on your design wall and pinning your completed circle on top of them. Play with the arrangement, repositioning the fabrics and reversing darks and lights until you get a composition that feels well balanced. It may be helpful to take a picture of each arrangement with a digital camera so you can put them up side by side on your computer for comparison (fig. 7). You are looking for an arrangement that feels balanced, where the color, texture, and individual widths of these panels harmonize with the circle. This will vary based on the particular fabrics you choose.

Completing the quilt

When you are satisfied with your selection, cut the pieces as described in the yardage box and sew them together along the long edges. Appliqué your circle approximately 4" down from the top edge and centered from the sides. If you are appliquéing by hand, catch just the top (appliquéd) edge of the circle with your needle and pull it down over the muslin facing so the muslin is completely hidden.

This pattern includes an embellishment of two sizes of maple leaves that may be used as appliqués and/or quilting designs for the background panels. You may add the maple leaf embellishments at this point, appliquéing them by hand or machine and placing them wherever you wish, or add them during the quilting process using the raw-edge appliqué technique.

Quilting Suggestions: First, stitch in the ditch around the circle. Echo that stitching around the entire circle or just part of it, including echoing the vertical seam between the two background panels. Quilt around the appliqué in the ditch. If desired, add quilting for visual texture in some of the larger areas, such as the mountains, clouds, rock, and sky.

The background panels must also be quilted. If you waited to add the maple leaves, you can do so now with the raw-edge technique, which will appliqué and quilt them in one step. Scatter them over the background as desired. If you added them to the top before layering, quilt around them now, adding stitching to represent leaf veins.
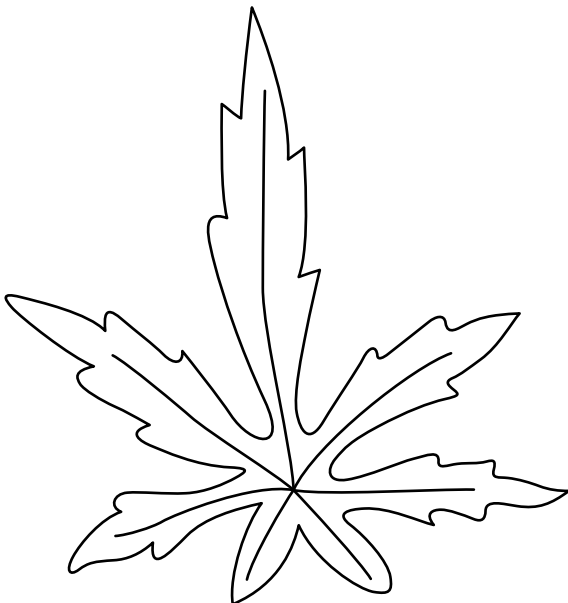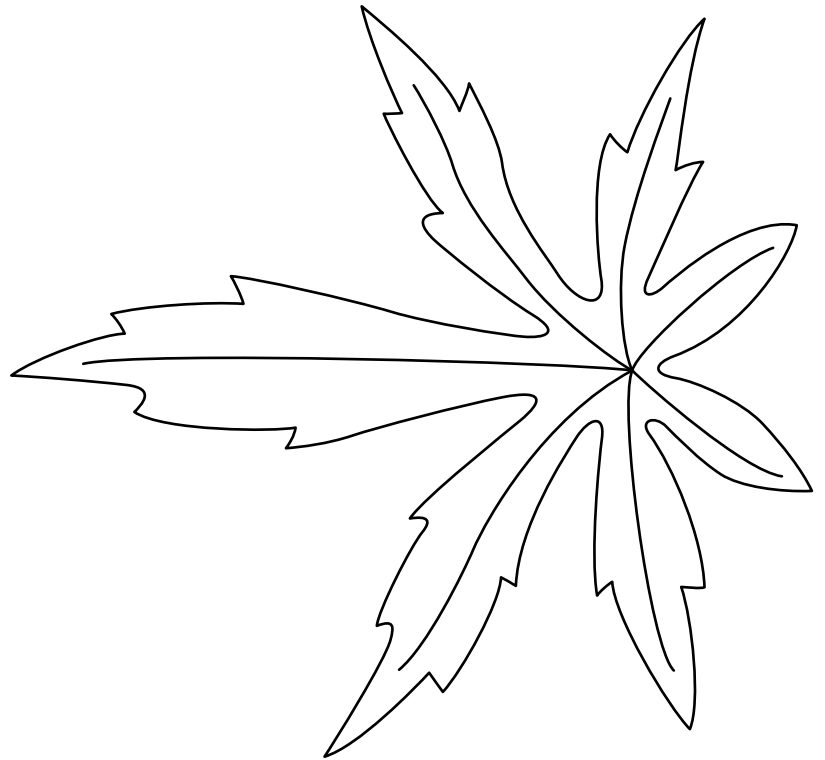
For the remainder of the background panels, I use a variety of quilting strategies tailored to each quilt. First I look at the fabric print or texture to see if it offers any possibilities for a related quilting pattern. If not, I might repeat a form from the scene itself, stitching in more clouds or maple leaves, for example. Or, the background can be stippled or echoed around the maple leaves. Be thoughtful and creative in whatever quilting design you choose.
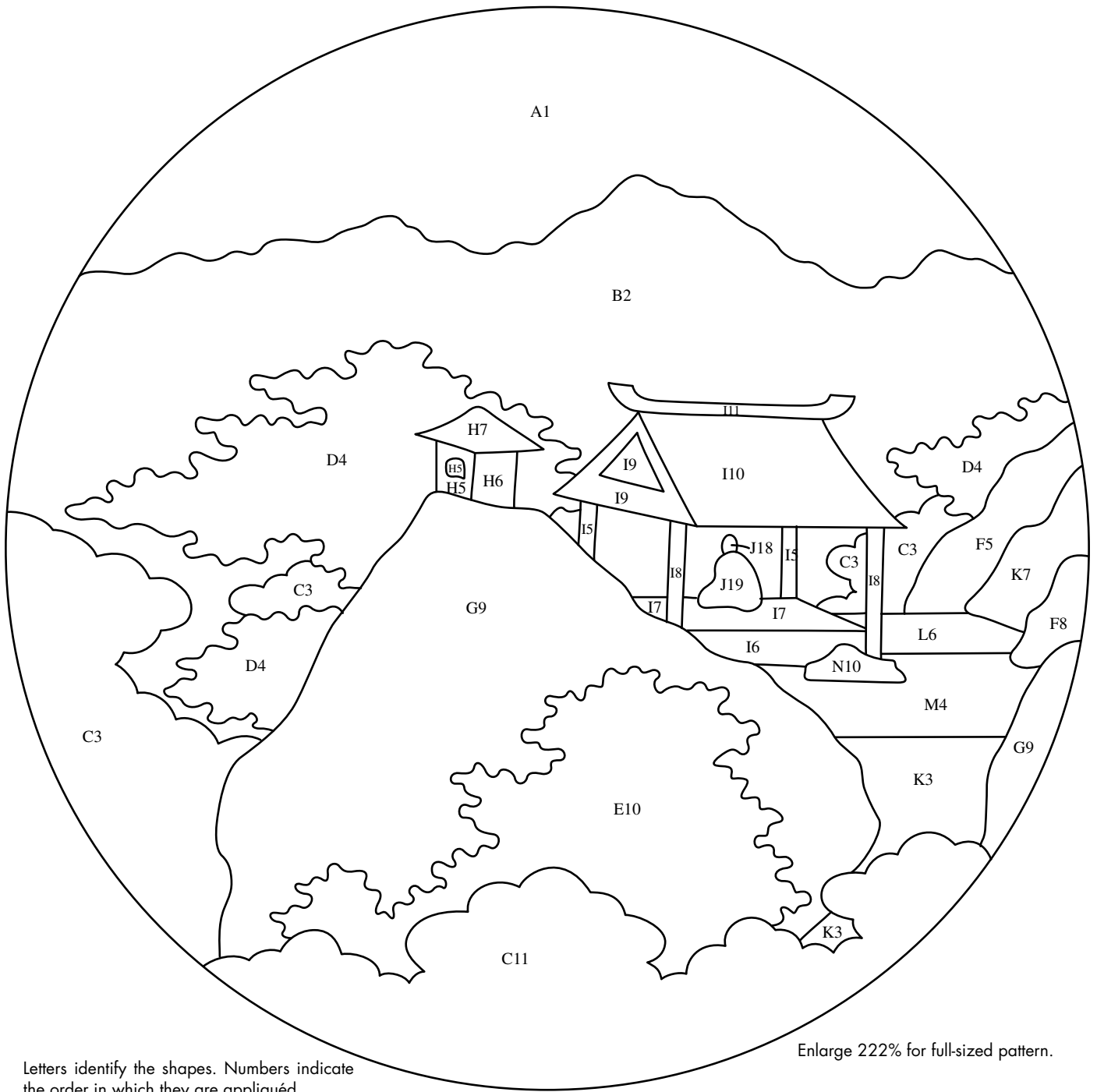
Fig. 7

Too many quilters agonize over fabric selections and meticulous appliqué or piecing only to shrug off the quilting in a hurried attempt to just complete the project. A lovely quilt deserves lovely quilting.

Trim and square the edges of the quilt. Join the binding strips and finish the quilt edges with double-fold binding. Add a hanging sleeve to the back to display your quilt.

A1

B2

H7

D4

H5
H5 H6

I9
I9

I10

I11

D4

I5

J18
I5

C3

D4

C3

G9

J19

I7

C3

I8

F5

K7

C3

I8

F8

I6

L6

N10

C3

M4

G9

D4

E10

K3

C11

K3

Letters identify the shapes. Numbers indicate
the order in which they are appliquéd.

Enlarge 222% for full-sized pattern.

KEY

A – Sky
B – Mountain
C – Clouds
D – Trees (farther)
E – Tree (nearer)
F – Rock embankments (farther)
G – Rock embankments (nearer)
H – Stone lantern (4 fabrics)

I – Pavilion (6–7 fabrics)
J – Seated Monk
       (2 fabrics for head and robe)
K – Stone stairways
L – Pathway
M – Ground
N – Solitary stone