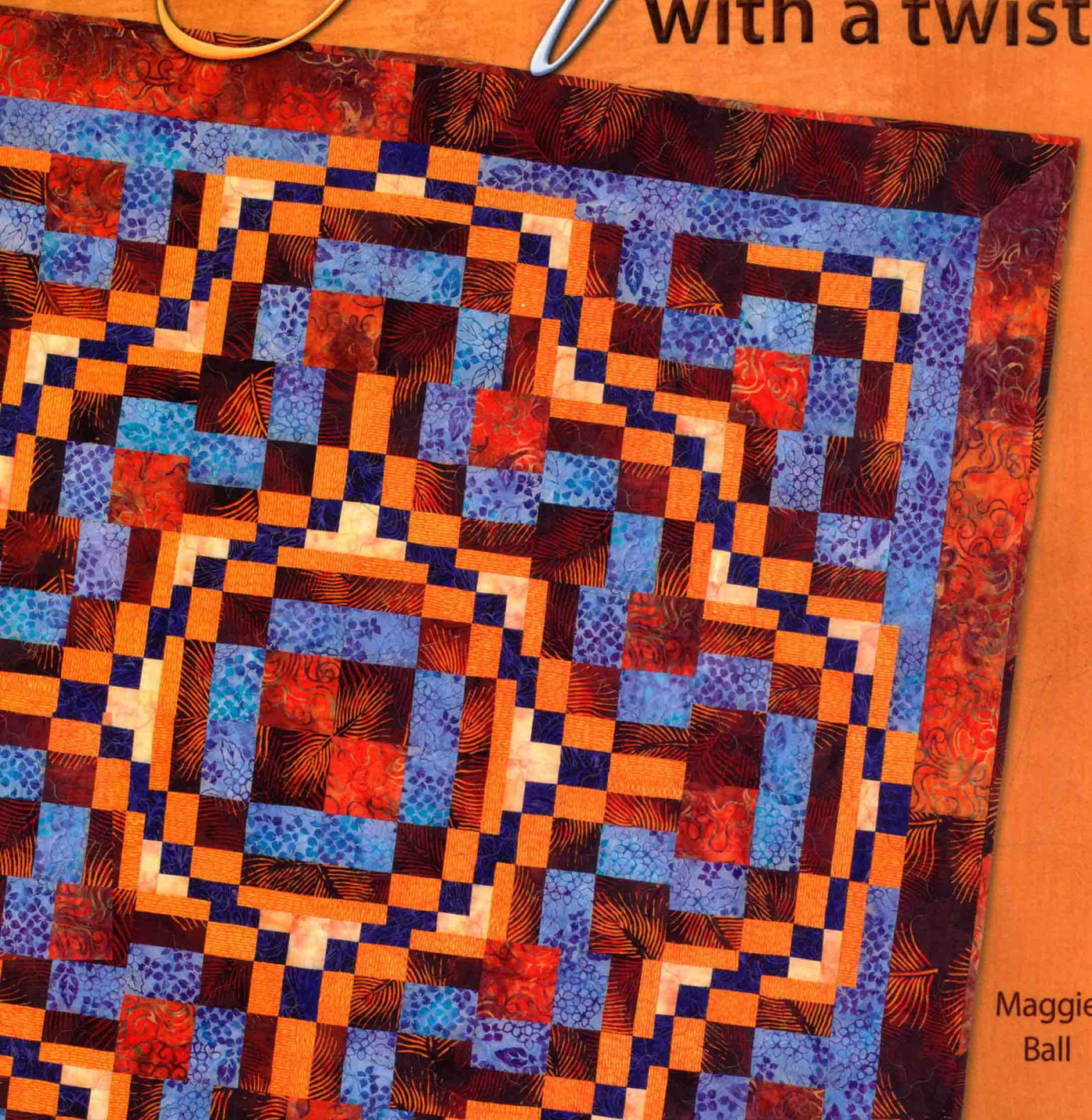


Bargello *quilts* with a twist



Maggie
Ball



BARGELLO QUILTS

with a twist



Maggie Ball



CINCINNATI, OHIO

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To Convert	To	Multiply By
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Feet	Centimeters	30.5
Centimeters	Feet	0.03
Yards	Meters	0.9
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Fishgello Pieced by Carol Wood.

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Pieced by Maggie Mogee.

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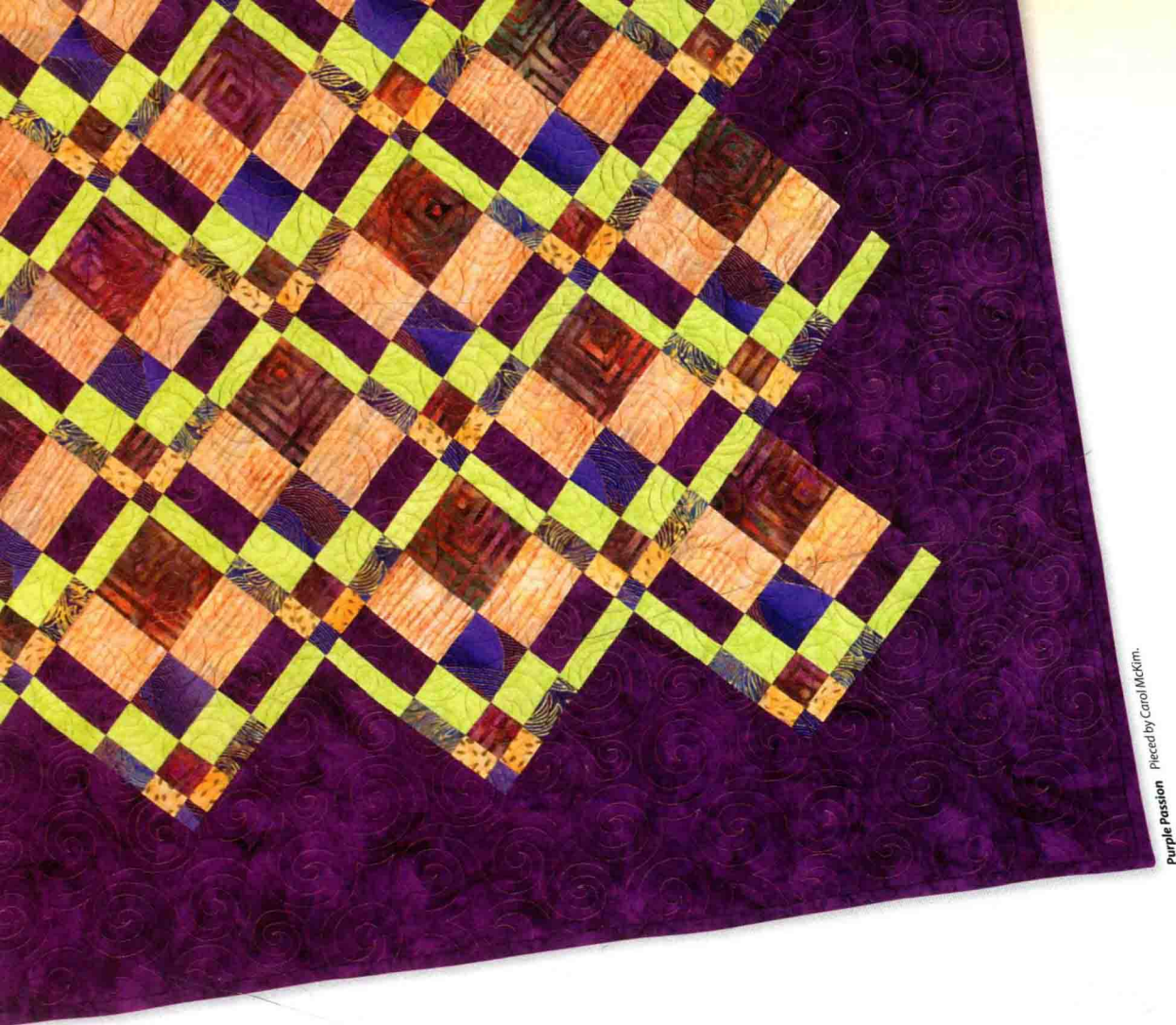
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Purple Passion
Pieced by Carol McKim.

DEDICATED TO NIGEL, HAZEL & THOMAS

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Introduction

I learned the technique of making bargello quilts in 1991, when I took a class from quilter and fiber artist Alison Goss. I loved Alison's work and felt very inspired by the workshop. My first bargello quilt was symmetrical, but I gradually became more adventurous and enjoyed a freer approach, experimenting with increasing the complexity of the design and adding strip sets.

In the traditional bargello quilting method, named after a needlepoint technique, multiple strips of the same width (usually eight to ten strips, or sometimes as many as 20) are sewn together, then counter-cut in a variety of widths. The width size increases in specific increments; the strips are set adjacent and offset by one fabric. This creates the illusion of flowing curved lines, even though there is no curved piecing involved.

Many quilters find the large numbers of strips difficult to handle and are deterred from attempting these types of quilts. I have created a block in which only four strips are joined at a time so that the construction is much simpler. In addition, it is easy to generate a great variety of patterns by manipulating the block orientation. This technique draws on the principles of bargello quilting, using strip piecing and the same specific width increases in the strips and counter-cuts to create the flowing lines. Therefore, I've named it the Bargello block.

All the quilts in this book are made from the new Bargello block. I stumbled upon the idea quite by chance when I was looking through unusual settings for quilts on my computer in an The Electric Quilt Company® program. What I found was actually the mega-block used in *Rebel* (below and on page 118).

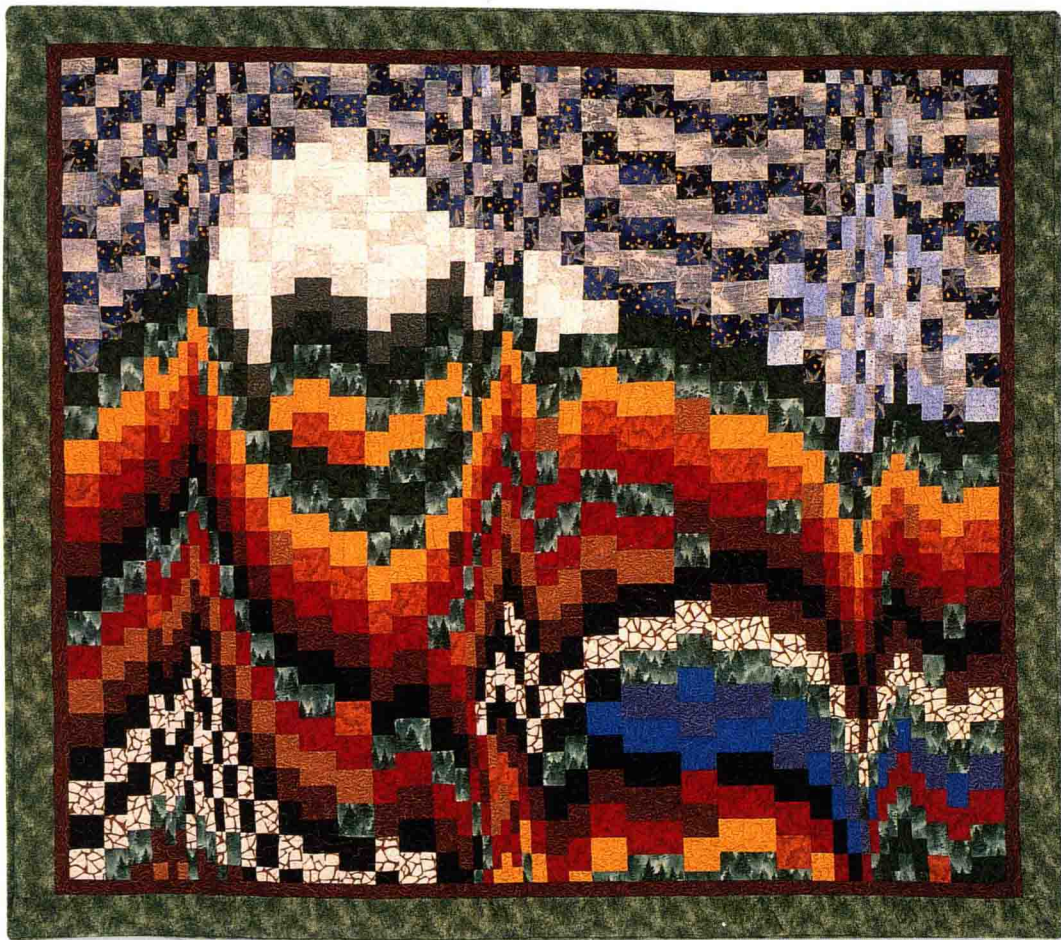
Rather than using it for a quilt setting, I drew it out as a 64-piece block and began to play with different arrangements. I then realized that if I divided it into four, I had a much more manageable 16-piece block that was easy to construct and remarkably versatile as well.

I was amazed by the number of attractive quilt patterns I could create from this one Bargello block. So began the series of quilts featured here. I taught the technique and was delighted by the excitement of my students.

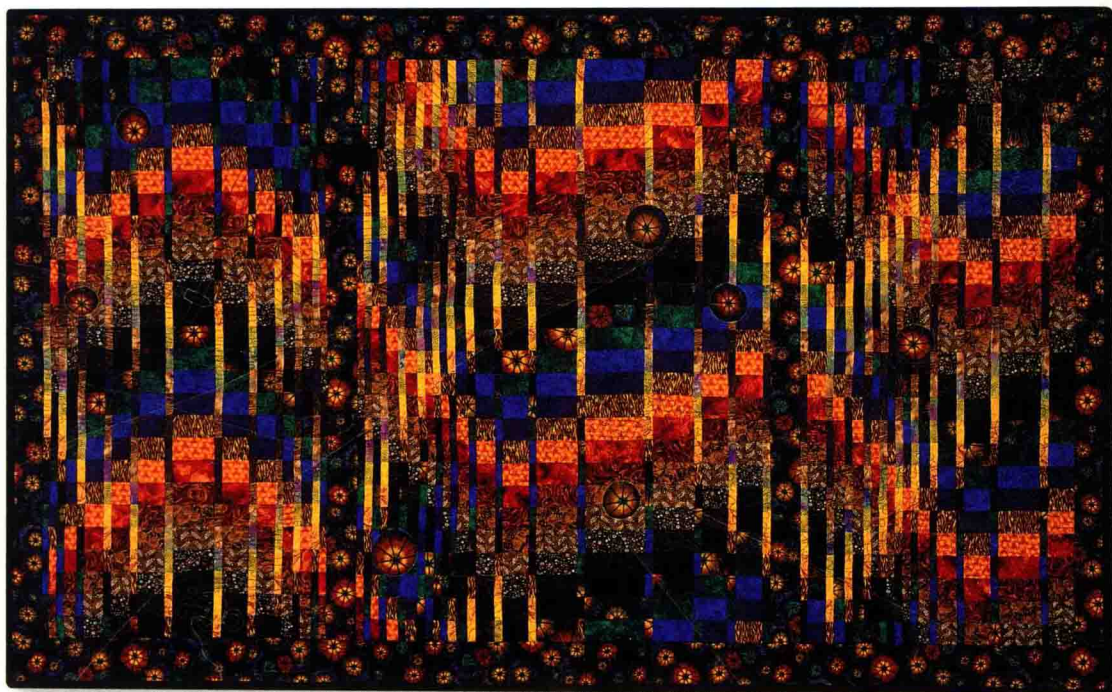
My hope is that you, too, will enjoy exploring the many possibilities of this new Bargello block—and be inspired as well.



Rebel Pieced by the author, machine quilted by Wanda Rains.



The North Cascades Are Burning Designed and made by the author in the traditional bargello method in 1994, a bad year for forest fires in the North Cascades around Mount Baker and Lake Chelan, Washington (43" x 48½"). Photo by Mark Frey.



Galactic Autumn Designed and made by the author in the traditional bargello method, 2001 (45" x 73"). Photo by Mark Frey.



A Good Starter Project Bainbridge Delft (project quilt, page 92) is made from only one block type in a simple on-point setting.



Options for Fabric Placement There are a multitude of options for fabric placement in the Bargello block; for example, the blue florals and white in this block from Bainbridge Delft.



Options for Creative Quilting Bargello block quilts provide an opportunity for interesting quilting designs, as seen in this detail from Mississippi Sunflowers (project quilt, page 136). Photo by Mark Frey.



Options for Increased Complexity Detail from Rebel, the author's first Bargello block quilt (project quilt, page 118) showing the original 64-piece mega-block, made from a cluster of four 16-piece blocks. Photo by Mark Frey.



How to Use This Book

The Bargello block concept is new and unique. Here are some points to keep in mind:

- **Chapter One** contains useful basic guidelines for making your quilt, from fabric selection to attaching the binding.
- Study **Chapter Two** carefully before attempting the projects. Make sure that you fully understand how to plan the fabric placement and construct the block.
- Always read through all the directions for a project before you begin.
- The directions assume that you use a consistent $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance.
- A "full-width" strip is cut across the entire width of the fabric, selvage to selvage (40-42" depending on the fabric).
- A metric cutting table for 7" and $9\frac{1}{2}$ " blocks is provided in Appendix 4, page 147.

The projects are grouped in chapters by size and format:

Chapter Three – Small Quilts and Projects

Chapter Four – 36-Block Quilts (blocks set squarely; medium size, in the 50-55" range)

Chapter Five – Bargello Blocks on Point (medium size, in the 50-55" range)

Chapter Six – More and More Blocks (larger quilts, over 65")

Chapter Seven – Enlarge the Block ($9\frac{1}{2}$ " blocks to make bed quilts)

The projects show you some of the many options for arranging the blocks. You may modify them in any way, using them as a starting point to make your creative juices flow. Each chapter includes a Gallery of unique Bargello block quilts made by my students.

The given fabric requirements for project quilts are generous to allow for errors. Adjust the fabric quantities if you decide to make additional blocks or change the number of fabrics.

"Block type" refers to particular fabric combinations in a block, so a

quilt made from two block types has two sets of blocks, each with differing fabrics. The block pattern remains the same throughout; only the fabrics change.

In general, the quilts are easy to piece as long as you stay well organized when cutting all the strips. The most challenging aspects are determining which fabric goes where in the block and itemizing them in your cutting plan. I've done that part for you if you choose to use fabrics similar to those shown in the project quilts.

I encourage you to substitute your own fabric choices. Photocopy and use the block diagrams and cutting plan in the Appendices. You will also find two line drawings of project quilts to copy and color for planning your projects.

Have fun and enjoy your projects!

