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**Quilt as You Go and Finish in Half the Time!**

**Marguerita McManus & Sarah Raffuse**

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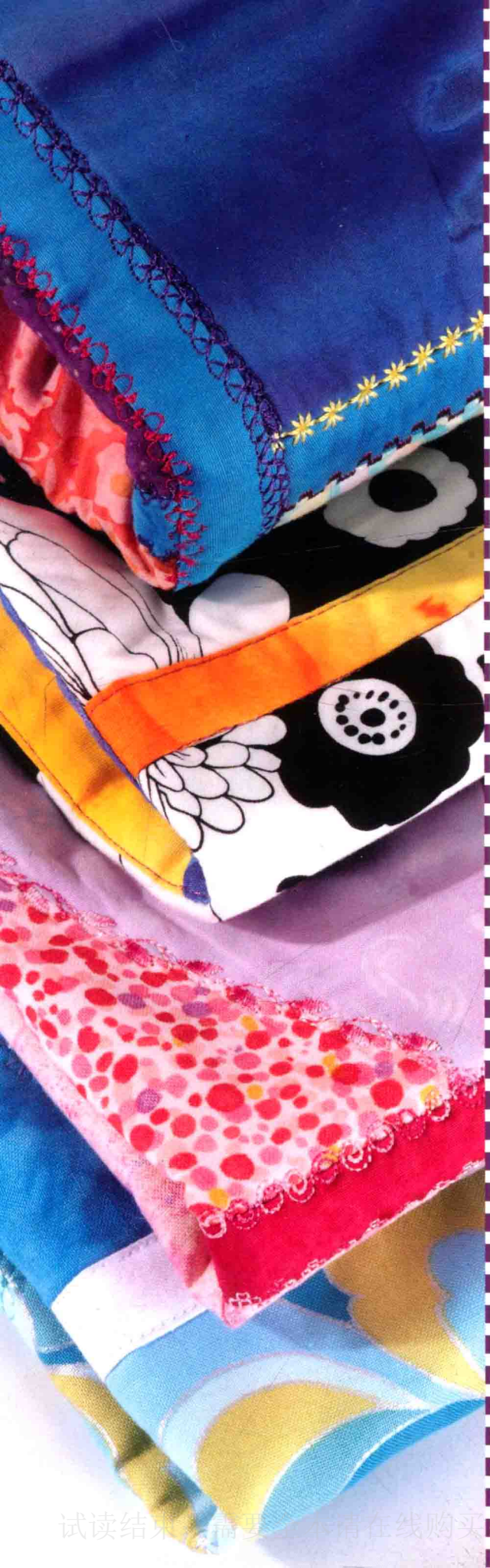
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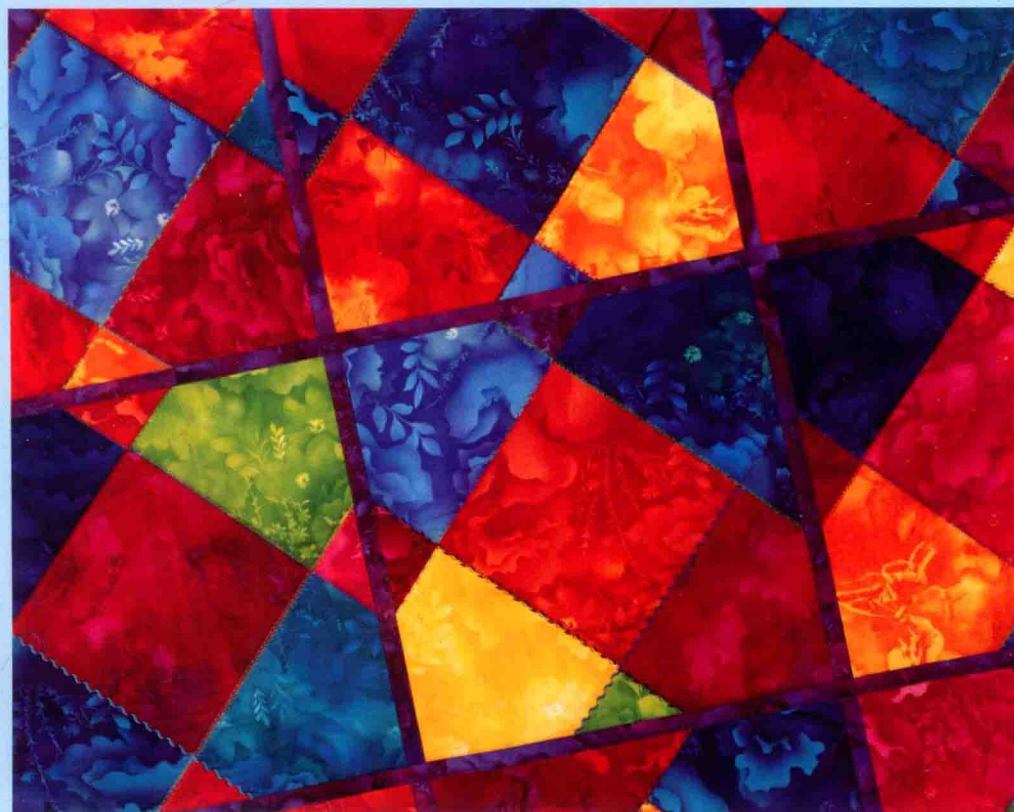
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# Dedication

*Without the loving fan club that we had in "the boys" we wouldn't even have tried half of the things we've done. Nothing could motivate us like the desire to hear their reactions to our endless new projects, and their unwavering support and enjoyment of life, which they are and were so much a part of.*

*Our dedication is to all people who have loved and lost a child to an untimely death. The loss we suffer, no one knows. The memories we cherish, worth more than anything. In loving memory of Mickey, Joey and Christopher Woods, our nephews and cousins - the lights of our lives.*



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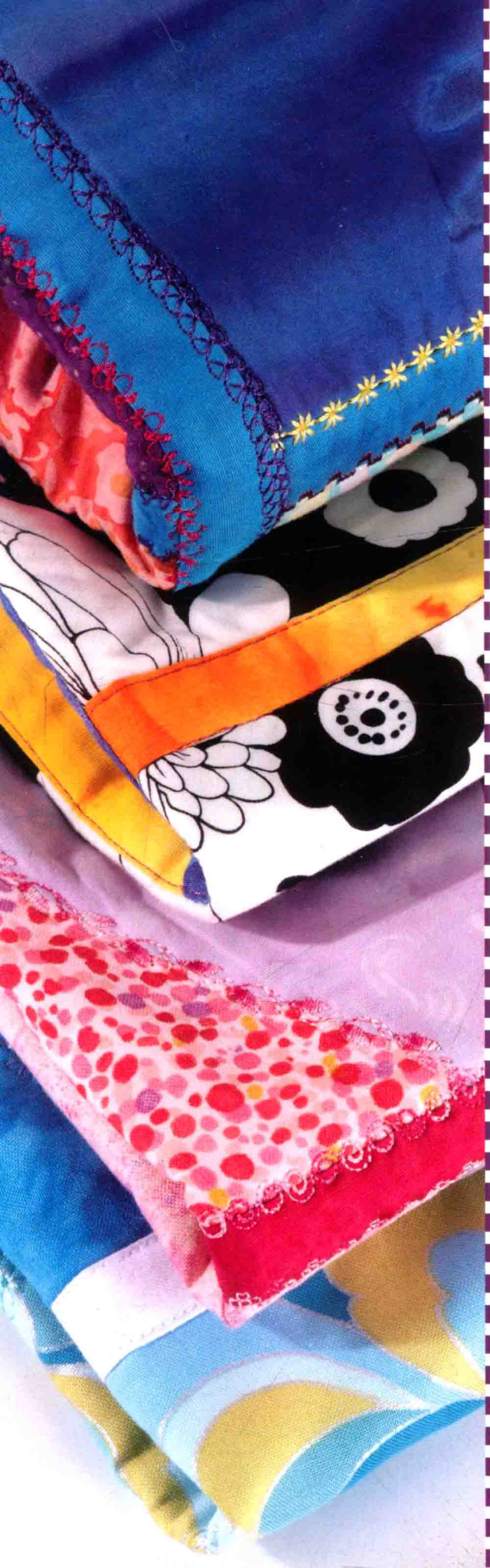
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# Special Thanks

Some people are such an inspiration that their faces and voices are a part of our lives and memories forever. Their laughs, their smiles, their encouraging words, the warmth of presence of their hands on our shoulders keep us moving forward.

The encouragement of Karen Tomzcak, whose incredible drive and savvy has motivated many Alaskan quilters, and the example and inspiration of Dina Pappas and Trish Stuart have kept us trying new things and loving every minute of it. We are grateful to you all. Marguerita especially thanks Tom Buchanan for his help creating the quilts and aunts Doris, Carol and Marie, who “showed me the world and I am grateful every day. It’s funny how people who expect the most of me, inspire me to search out and give the best that I have to offer.”

Sarah would like to give special thanks to her husband Ryan, and to Beth Gold, Laura McDonell and Jeanne South – you guys are my quilting inspiration.

We both thank RJR Fabrics and Robert Kaufman Fabrics for their gorgeous contributions of fabrics for the quilts; Sulky of America for their threads and Maret Anderson and her staff at Seams Like Home Quilt Shoppe in Anchorage. We are grateful to Katie Newby for her wonderful design work; Kris Kandler for her patience and outstanding photography and especially to Candy Wiza and our editor, Tracy Conradt, at Krause Publications who have given us this wonderful opportunity to write this book.

# Introduction

We love a great shortcut when traveling, cooking and quilting, since it usually takes us on a path less traveled and often saves us time. Crazy Shortcut Quilts has an amazing combination of short steps and has eliminated tasks in quilt making, allowing you to finish your quilt in record time, even if you've never quilted before!

Old fashioned quilters used small scraps of leftover or recycled fabrics, then hand or machine sewed the pieces together, using old blankets as filling, hand quilting needlework or yarn ties to secure the layers. Today's quilters have available fabrics of the finest quality, specialized battings and computerized sewing machines to make their quilts. Still it's a struggle to complete a quilt because of the traditional process of piecing the whole top and layering it with bed-sized batting and an oversized backing before beginning the quilting – the process of joining the three layers.

Traditional crazy quilts involve an additional step because once the pieces of fabrics are joined, decorative stitching is added. It makes an elegant and always unique quilt, but often takes months if not years to make.



We have a new way of making these lovely, unique and sophisticated quilts, in much less time than the traditional method! Making a Crazy Shortcut Quilt is exciting for experienced quilters, non-quilters and new quilters because there is virtually no precise measuring or cutting!

Your sewing machine and its decorative stitches do all of the quilting in small, manageable sections – no quilting skills needed, no struggling to quilt a huge quilt in a sewing machine, no need to hire a professional quilter!

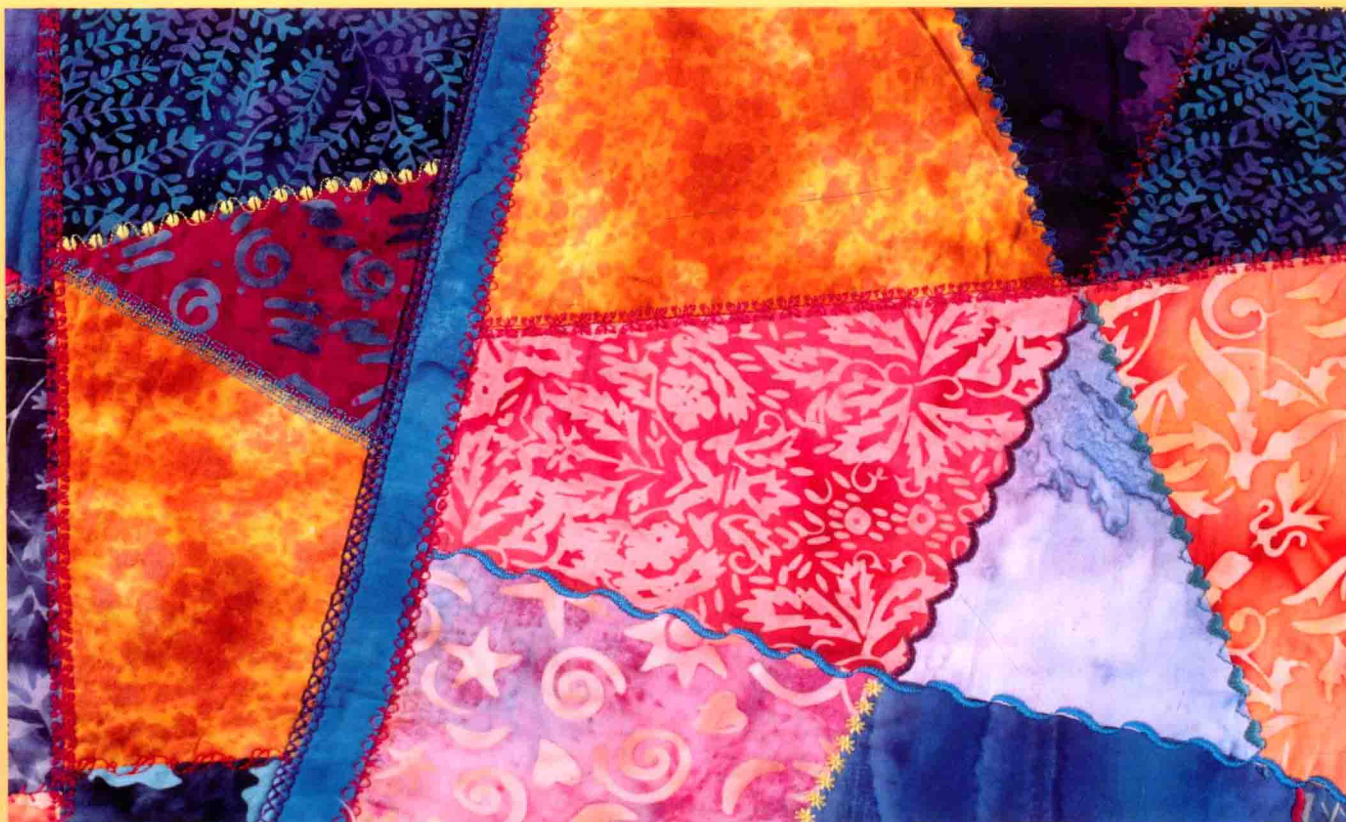
We help you choose fabrics that coordinate with your home décor or add a decorative spice to existing room décor, making every project truly a designer crazy quilt.

If you know nothing at all about quilt making – relax! Sarah's been teaching the technique for years to absolute beginners, who often finish their projects in a single weekend! Now that's really taking a shortcut to a crazy quilt!




Our book assumes that you have never made a quilt before, and therefore we begin with basic how-to chapters that fully explain each part of the process. While we encourage everyone to read through all of the chapters, an experienced quilt maker who already has a color scheme in mind for her fabrics may choose to skip the beginning chapters and go right to The Shortcuts.

With each design we have given detailed information for fabric requirements and cutting, however, the designs are interchangeable! If you see a design you like but want to make a different size quilt than the size offered for that design, review all the chapters for the size quilt you want and purchase the fabrics as stated for that size quilt – but make the cuts according to the plan we give you for your chosen design.

We've divided the projects into sections based on some of our favorite cuts, and added a little lagniappe with accessorizing home décor projects that coordinate with your quilts.



**We believe in the “keep it sweet and simple” philosophy so we’ll give you the short version here:**

-  Starting with squares (sometimes rectangles) of fabrics, make straight cuts, re-sew the pieces without matching fabrics and repeat as necessary for your project
-  Layer each square (or rectangle) for quilting and decoratively stitch along the seam lines, changing threads and/or stitching designs as desired
-  Trim, sash together and bind your crazy quilted squares

The projects are so easy and quick that we describe them like this:

**Crazy** quilts that you can make in a very  
**Short** time using a few straight  
**Cuts** and decoratively stitched into gorgeous décor  
**Quilts!** Let's get started!



# CHAPTER Getting Started

## [ 1 ]

---

There are just a few things that you'll need to make your quilt, and a few things you won't need! You don't need any quilt-making experience at all. In fact, we don't follow some of the rules of traditional quilt making and that's one of our first shortcuts!

You'll need a sewing machine with at least one decorative stitch, even if it is just a simple zigzag zag stitch. Don't worry if you don't have a machine with 1,000 stitches. We can show you how to get about 30 different looks from 13 simple decorative stitches. We also show you a quilt that uses lots of threads and only one decorative stitch – and it is quite elegant!

You'll need fabric, batting and threads. We're going to give you every tip we know of to help you select materials you will be happy with and that have worked well for us for years. We've had a lot of experience here and we've got some really unique methods. Trust us, they will work for you.

Other necessities are straight pins, safety pins, iron and pad or ironing board, rotary cutter and mat, and acrylic ruler – either two rulers which combined can measure 18" or the large 20½" square acrylic ruler. If you want to make the window valances you'll need a sew-through fabric stiffener, and a fusible web. If you choose to make the décor accent pillows, you'll need pillow forms for those projects.

The techniques we are going to teach you are ones that we've used for years. We'll tell you how to budget your time for your project and complete it in quick, easy sections.





## CHAPTER Crazy Ideas for Selecting [ 2 ] Fabrics, Threads & More

### Fabrics

Fabric selection can be very overwhelming, and like paint chips in a hardware store, hundreds of bolts of fabric can leave you frozen, staring and afraid to make the wrong choice. It can be difficult to get started with a single fabric selection and intimidating to add complementary fabrics to an initial fabric selection.

Some sewers find the fabric selection process so difficult, in fact, that they never get started with the project that they want to do! We have a few steps for you to take if you face any of these issues, and even if you select fabrics with ease, you might find an idea or two here that may inspire you to tweak your style just a little!

