



Autumn Birch  
by Deb Crine

Materials Needed:

This quilt can be any size you would like, but for the purposes of these instructions the piece will measure 30x30.

1 yard background fabric cut to 32" x32". Preferably hand dyed or hand painted.

½ yard silver Dupion silk

1/3 yard white Dupioni silk

Fabric paint (Lumiere) for trees – Black, Brown, White

Fabric paint (Lumiere) for leaves – Copper, Gold and Russet

Paint brushes

Silk thread for leaves

40 weight rayon or polyester threads in a variety of silver shades for trees and branches

Fusible web

Batting

Rotary cutter

Free-motion foot of your choice

## Trees:

1. Fuse one side of the silver Dupioni silk. The fusible will provide more stability to the Dupioni silk when cutting. Using a rotary cutter cut out tree trunks. Try to make the trunks have gentle curves and vary the sizes. I have seven trunks in this piece; you can have fewer or more. Arrange them on the background fabric so that some trees are crossing and some are in front of others.
2. Using the rotary cutter cut a few thin branches. Position the thin branches onto the trees on the background fabric. Very thin branches can be thread painted.
3. Once you are pleased with the layout, fuse the trunks to the background fabric.
4. Using the black, white and brown paints, add markings and highlights to the trees similar to those you would see on birch trees. Be careful with the black, it is very dark and will look too jarring if you use too much. Mix the black with the white to create nice shades of gray. Don't worry if you have an area with too much paint, the thread painting will help soften the look.
5. Once you've completed painting your highlights. Layer your batting and backing fabric and pin or spay baste in place. In this piece the thread painting acts as the quilting a well.
6. Your machine should be set up for free motion. Start with the lightest shade of silver (or gray) thread and begin making vertical hash-like lines on the trees varying the sizes. Do this for all trees and branches using a variety of shades.
7. Additional branches and small trees should be painted on with a variety of shades as well. Be sure to fill the background area at the bottom of the quilt with small trees and branches. Remember, you are doing your quilting and thread painting as one, so you don't want any big sections without thread work.

## Leaves:

1. Cut the white silk into four pieces. Dampen the fabric slightly and paint each silk piece one of the three Lumiere colors (Gold, Copper, Russet). The wetter the fabric the lighter the color will be when it dries. To add interest you can wet one side more than another.
2. On the fourth piece I used all four shades making sure to mix them into one another. To help add texture I balled each of the pieces and allowed them to dry in the sun.
3. Once the silk is dry, take a look at it and decide which side you want to use for the top of the leaves and fuse the other side.
4. Cut out leaves (either free-hand, or drawn on the fusible side). Vary the size of leaves; small, medium and large. How many you want will be entirely up to you. Start with about 10 from each color and place on your piece. Continue to add a variety of colors and sizes until you are pleased with the arrangement and then fuse in place.
5. Use silk thread to thread-paint veins on leaves. I used shades similar to the leaves but with a darker value.

## Finishing:

Once you are done you can trim the piece and finish it any way you like. I didn't want my piece to be square, so I cut some gentle curves and then added my binding using the same fabric as my background.

