



## An Artist Newsletter

by Becca Rahn



I love Spoonflower's design challenges because often they make me think about my design process a little differently. I have a personal rule which is whenever I see the theme, the very first thing that comes to my mind is automatically off the table, because usually that is the same thing everyone else thinks of. This week's theme was "Treat Yourself" and the idea was to pick your favorite treat. [I just voted on the submissions this week](#) and there are a lot of donuts and cupcakes with cherries on top. (When was the last time you saw a real cupcake with a cherry on top?) My mind immediately went to sweet pastries first, but then I followed my rule and went a completely different direction and designed a "[Kitchen Lobster Dance Party](#)".

When I was a little kid, we went to visit my grandparents who live in far upstate NY and my grandma got lobsters for us to try. My sister and I had never seen them before and my mom says we were pretty skeptical that these were actually a treat. I remember vividly my grandma taking them out of the bucket they were in and putting them on the kitchen floor. My sister and I were equal parts fascinated and terrified of them. I can still hear my grandma laughing when she told the story years later. The memory is as much a treat as the lobsters ever were.

-- Becca

## what's new?

I was totally delighted to discover that someone nominated me for the Star Tribune's Readers Choice Minnesota Best 2024. Thank you to my anonymous nominator. What a lovely thing to do!

[Want to cast a vote?](#)

You can find me under Shopping -> Minnesota Made Artwork & Craftwork.



I'll be at the 2nd Annual Makers Market at [Darn Knit Anyway](#) on Sunday April 21, 11-4 with these two new project bag prints and many other new goodies! Stop by and say hi!

Also Art A Whirl is coming up May 17-19.

## classes





## Strawberry Needlebooks Class - Two Online Versions

This class is going to be SO MUCH FUN! These are felt needlebooks that you can use to store pins and needles but they are also a great beginner embroidery class! Not only do you get to make yourself a handy tool but you can learn blanket stitch, figure eight knots, fly stitch, pistil stitch, whip stitch, cross stitch and back stitch. Class comes with a kit of everything you'll need and you choose your animal: dog, cat or rabbit. All the details at the links below.

- [LIVE ZOOM - Thursdays at noon starting April 11](#)
- [ON DEMAND - At your own pace, opens April 2](#)

**REGISTER NOW to make sure you get your materials kit in time for class.**

There are also TONS of online [classes available at Dakota County Libraries](#) throughout the spring and summer. We've added a second session to the handcraft classes so hopefully some of you that have had trouble getting in will have more opportunity!

April - Modern Blackwork Embroidery

May - Folk Art Felt Blackbird

June - Corded Silk Jewelry

July - Embroidered Ledger Books

August - Origami Dresses

I'm also finishing out an art business series with a Photography class on April 4 (in person) and Etsy Shop on April 11 (online).

on the studio table







#### What's on the studio table this morning?

**Notions:** I realized mid-project last week that a gremlin had stolen every seam ripper out of my studio. So I got [these \(set of 3\)](#) with nice rubberized handles. They are much nicer than the 99 cent ones I had.

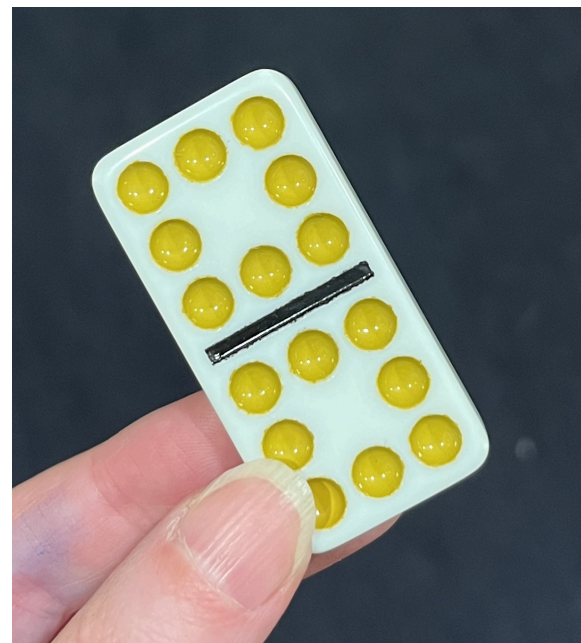
**Stickers:** I ordered a [sample pack of glitter stickers](#) from Sticker Mule just to check them out. How fun are these?

**Notions:** I'm participating in a swap and one member asked us to sign our pieces. She did some research and these [Fabric Gel Roller pens](#) came highly recommended. I'll try them out this week.

## get in the game

I'm going for an old school game for this newsletter: dominoes

One of the games we play nearly every time my parents come to visit is dominoes. They aren't "euro" game players like my husband and I are, but we all love dominoes. There are dozens of games you can play, but usually we play one called [Mexican Train](#), which is best with a [set of double-12s in colors](#). I also found a [set of domino playing cards on Etsy](#) which will be great for tucking in my bag when we travel because our box of double 12s is heavy!



## links you'll love

[Some lovely cut paper artwork printed on fabric](#) (you know I love this!) from artist Pippa Dyrllanga and the scarves support a good cause.

A thoughtful [interview with embroidery and clothing designer Natalie Chanin](#) about sustainability and community.

James Hance is one of my personal favorite artists. [His most recent series of black and white animals](#) are just charming and incredibly detailed.

This is gorgeous: [A Massive Catalogue of Stitched CMYK Studies by Evelin Kasikov Merges Printing and Embroidery](#)

The Feb 25 episode of the [On the Couch](#) podcast about all things Prince, features my friend costumer Sonja Berlovitz talking about working on Purple Rain.

This is just full of fun and joy: [Trash bags, CDs and condoms: How one Minneapolis upcycler is changing sustainable fashion](#)

I wish this video showed more of the [gorgeous quillwork](#), but Oscar nominee Lily Gladstone's dress was a collaboration from Gucci and Indigenous designer Joe Big Mountain.

I am not usually drawn in by quilts but this one is a wow: [Vesta by Julia Wachs](#). [Watch the video of her putting it up on her design wall](#).

A quickie tutorial [about how to store embroidery threads by braiding them](#).

This is interesting and super adorable: [A Shepherd's Year: What to Expect When You're Expecting \(Lambs\)](#)

I made this for dinner last night and it's absolutely a new favorite: [Wheat Berry Waldorf Salad](#). I get my [wheatberries from Sunrise Flour Mill](#). (Their pancake mix is also amazing.)

I ordered some digitally printed [fabric from Bags of Love](#) recently. It is fairly pricey, but wow do they have a **lot** of different fabric options. I printed enough to make a scarf from the "fine wove linen cotton", but it didn't wash up quite as soft and drapey as I had hoped.

Becka Rahn

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