

Stitched Pigma Pen Leaves

By Natalya Aikens

Autumn is upon us; the colors of the leaves here in the Northeast always inspire me. With Thanksgiving right around the corner, I thought it was a good time to turn that inspiration into making fabric leaves that can be used as a decoration or place cards on the festive table.



These doodled, quilted leaves by Natalya Aikens are simple to make. She uses a technique from her Cloth Paper Scissors Workshop DVD, "[Texture Transformation](#)," to add visual textures with Pigma pens and water.

Materials

- Leaves for inspiration
- Muslin (large scraps are fine)
- Decorative fabric (for backing)
- Batting
- Pigma® pens or other permanent markers
- Pins
- Sewing machine and decorative thread
- Good-quality flat paintbrush and water
- Iron
- Scissors
- Acrylic paint or gel medium
- Optional: Hand-stitching needle and threads

Directions

1. Gather autumn leaves from nature's bounty to use as stencils and for color inspiration. Choose any shape or size you like.
2. Place the muslin down and lay your leaves over the fabric. Trace the outlines with a pencil or Pigma pen. You can trace several leaves on one piece, but be sure to leave enough space around each one for stitching.



3. Make a quilt sandwich with the muslin on top and the decorative fabric for the back. I used a gold colored silk for extra sheen.

4. Free-motion stitch the outline of your leaf in a thread your heart desires. If you wish, stitch inside the leaf to emphasize the veins. Then use a tight zigzag or buttonhole stitch to outline the outside of your leaf again. (You could also hand stitch the leaves, backstitching the veins and using a blanket or whip stitch for the edges.)



5. Now, add visual texture by doodling with the Pigma pens! Use the colors and patterns in the real leaves as inspiration or just doodle fanciful shapes or patterns. Press gently with your pens, sometimes going over a line twice, and fill in the entire leaf in one or more colors.



6. Dip your paintbrush in clean water and gently brush over your doodles. Your pen marks will become vibrant with color and bleed slightly to cover the blank areas around your doodles. Some colors will bleed more than others, so experiment first on a scrap if you wish.



7. Let your fabric leaves dry and then heat set them with an iron.

8. Write names or wishes on your leaves, if you like. Heat set again.

9. Cut the leaves out with sharp scissors, being careful not to cut into your stitching.



10. Gently brush the edges of the leaves with acrylic paint or gel medium to prevent fraying and also to secure any thread you might have clipped. I used a bronze acrylic paint for added glitz.

Scatter on the table to enhance your festive occasion, or put one on each place setting.