

“BARN-QUILT” FRAME CONSTRUCTION AIDS

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Old Mission Peninsula Quilt Barn Trail Project

There are as many ways to construct the 8ft. X 8ft. Frame to carry and display the Barn-Quilt, as there are barn owners that are willing to display the art item. However, the following is a example of the “tried-and-true” frame construction that has proved successful to display the Quilt design properly, and to survive, and hold up in the high, exposed, environment that the art work will be exposed too, (40 mph winds, etc.)

An example of this type of construction has can be examined at the completed Quilt Frames at the Choun barn, the Miller barn, and the two Johnson barns.

MATERIALS

2 pcs. 4x8x½ BC exterior grade plywood.
(exterior glue, minimum number of “wood plugs,” and finished on one side.)

7 pcs. 2x4x8 framing material.

6 pcs. 1x2x8 trimming material. (the low-cost strips, aprox. \$1,60 ea..)

1 5/8” #7 Phillips outdoor, coated, screws.

3” Drywall (coarse,) drywall screws.

NOTE: A single 4x8 panel at this stage, weights aprox. 83 lbs., or 163lbs for the 8x8 completed Quilt Frame, (prior to painting.)

•CONSTRUCTION

The basic idea is to build a “box-frame” under a 4X8 ft. sheet of plywood, with a single 2X4 spacer, mid point across the 4 ft. center span.

Then, lay the plywood sheet on the “box-frame” and screw the sheet to the frame every 12 inches (or so.)

The 4X8 plywood sheet will be your guide for accuracy in mating the box to the sheet.

MAKE SURE THAT THE BOX IS PERFECTLY SQUARE WITHIN THE BOUNDRIES OF THE PLYWOOD SHEET.

There is one very important consideration in this construction, and that is, that after you have determined WHICH 8 FT. SIDES ARE GOING TO BE MATED TO EACH OTHER in the completion of this Quilt Painting----
“make sure that the 2X4 frame under that edge DOES NOT STICK OUT BEYOND THE EDGE OF THE PLYWOOD!”

As you can readily imagine, you want the plywood to mate PERFECTLY with each other, without GAPS, for the integrity of the painting.

After the construction is completed to this point, paint the entire product, ON BOTH SIDES, with a liberal coat of “Kilz 2” primer. Then, apply at least one coat, (preferably two) of good quality exterior latex paint. (white.)

When the paint has dried adequately, trim the edges of each 4X8 panel, (on three sides, inner edge not trimmed,) with the 1X2 trim pieces. I suggest laying a liberal bead of caulking compound ON THE EXPOSED EDGES of the plywood before nailing the trim in place. Use enough of the caulk so that when the trim is nailed in place, the caulk “oozes” out, for a good seal.

At this point, it is time to stand the two panes up together, on a very level surface, MAKING SURE THAT THE TOP AND BOTTOM EDGES OF THE PANELS ARE PERFECTLY IN ALIGNMENT. Clamp the mating edges in place temporarily, and make sure that the two pieces of plywood are mated together along the center without gaps or visual distortion.

At this point, drill four 3/8 inch holes, evenly spaced, through BOTH 2X4’s on the underside of the frame for the joining of the two panels. You will be using 5 inch machine head bolts and flat washers to join these two panels together.

Bolt the panels together firmly, double checking for panel alignment, and MARK EACH DRILLED POINT WITH A SPECIFIC IDENTIFICATION. SUCH AS “AA” “BB” “CC” so that after the quilt design has been completed, and the frames have been disassembled, that the frames can be bolted back together, and NOT MAKE THE MISTAKE OF HAVING THE FRAMES UP-SIDE-DOWN, and the paint lines on the portrait not match!

When it comes to the hanging of the panels on your barn, the basic attachment was a 8 inch lag-bolt, to attach through the 2X4 frame edge to the barn main beams. Each situation is different, and will call for ingenuity. We used Brothers Tree Trimming service to lift the high ones. Others used Hi-Lo tractors.

Paint your quilt design using at least two coats of color, being sure all coats are

dry before the next is applied.

We found a quilt pattern copied on a transparency and then placed on an overhead projector and traced to the two boards worked best. We used 'throw away' sponge paint 'brushes', and blocked off the different designs with blue painters tape.

In or near the Old Mission Peninsula (Traverse City, MI) area here are local resources that may be available to assist you:

The Youth Corp headed by Bill Watson (409-0868) are willing workers to make the quilt frames.

There may be paint remaining that you can have access to.

For further information please contact Carl or Evelyn Johnson

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