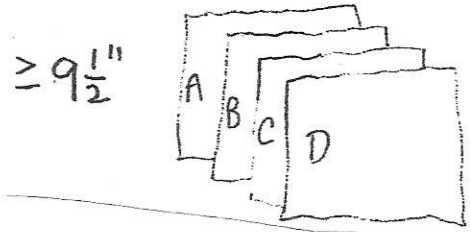


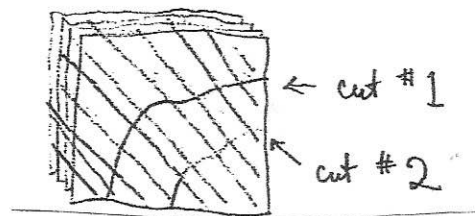
## Improvisational Circles

These directions will allow you to assemble 4 quarter circles into a single irregular circle. The circles are set in a square shape. The size of the final circle (square) can be of your own choosing. (ie- a raw 7 1/2" square will be a 7" square when finished).

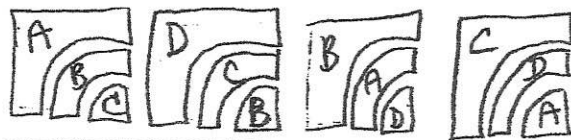
1. Begin by cutting 4 squares at least 9 1/2".



2. Layer the 4 squares together, **right sides up**, on top of each other. Free-cut two slightly curvy arcs through all 4 squares, as illustrated (shaded lines = right side of fabric). The cuts should be roughly parallel. You will now have 12 pieces of fabric.



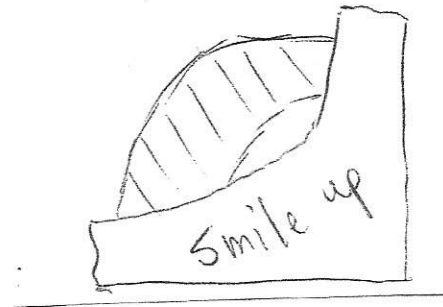
3. Shuffle the pieces to create 4 new squares, each one with a different arrangement of fabrics in the inner, middle and outer pieces.



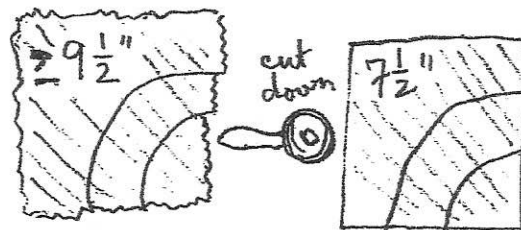
4. Sew the 3 parts of each square together, always putting right sides together and using a scant quarter inch seam. Always start with the inner circle first. Sew the larger piece to the smaller one. Flip the larger piece over (the wrong side of the larger piece of fabric should be facing you as you sew) and put the **smile side up**. **Lengthen the stitches on your sewing machine**. Sew slowly so you can keep the raw edges together. You will not come out even at both sides-the larger piece will stick out a bit further at each end. **Do**

**not pin your pieces!** This can lead to more puckering and an uneven appearance. You will be trimming up later.

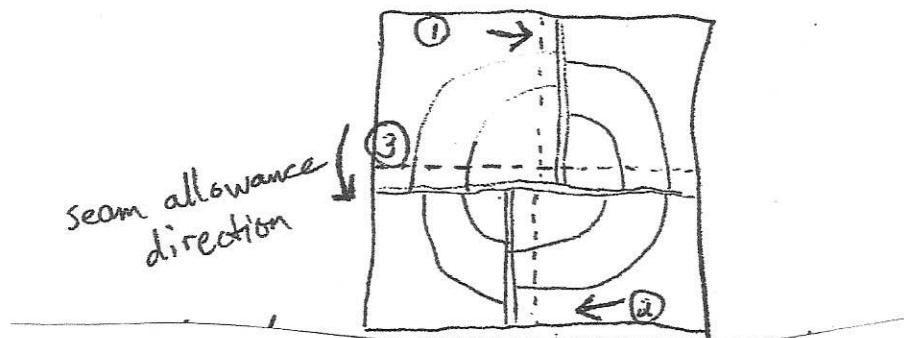
Shaded pieces  
right side



5. You now have 4 roughly equal quarter circles. Carefully iron each one, pressing the seam allowances closed and letting them turn towards whichever direction they "want to go".
6. Arrange them on your table or design wall in an appealing manner. Lay your square ruler on each one and decide which fabrics you want to take center stage on each square to enhance the design. Then cut each square down to  $7\frac{1}{2}$ ".



7. Sew the 4 quarter inch circles together to form one big circle. Press the closed seam allowances so that they'll fit together as illustrated. This will make it easier to keep the circle's final seam nice and flat and will help you match the inner corners of all 4 circles.



### Additional Techniques

- Make many piles containing different fabrics in each pile. After cutting into arcs, combine pieces from different piles. After shuffling, you can reform their edges as necessary by overlapping them slightly and re-cutting them. This way they can match perfectly, even though they weren't originally paired together when they were first cut.

- Take one of your circles (or circle pieces) and randomly cut it in half. Find a chunk of contrasting fabric and sew it in between the two random pieces, re-joining them back into an arc shape.
- Re-cut open one of the seams you've already sewn together on one of your quarter circles (can be either one of the two seams, or both). Spread the two pieces slightly apart onto a piece of contrasting fabric. Re-cut the raw edges of the quarter circle pieces so that you'll have an "extra" arc of fabric to sew between the inner/middle pieces of the arc. (Remember to cut larger because of seam allowance).. Sew as usual and rectify the square to the pre-determined size.
- Don't group all your quarter circles into full circles. Let some be  $\frac{1}{2}$  circles or  $\frac{3}{4}$  circles. You can even have a few random quarter circles facing in different directions.

Technique taught by Barbara Ramsey