

**Printing on Fabric: Short presentation by Caryl Bryer Fallert-Gentry
for Peninsula Fiber Artists meeting, February 8, 2023**

There are two ways to do digital printing on fabric. One is using your home computer and printer, which is what I did until 2018. The second is uploading images to Spoonflower or other similar printing service. Regardless of which method you choose, remember that you are not printing on coated photo paper, which has color enhancing chemicals in it. It will be more like printing on plain copier paper, so you will probably need to increase the color saturation and contrast of your image. Test a full-size section of your image on plain paper and see if you like the results.

To run through your printer, the fabric needs to be attached to paper, usually freezer paper, and cut to the size of the printer paper your printer will accept. If you are using an ink-jet printer, your fabric will need to be pre-soaked in Bubble Jet Set or some other chemical that will bond the dye molecules to the fabric and make it washable. You can buy pre-soaked fabric sheets online for anywhere from \$1.50 to \$3.50 per sheet.

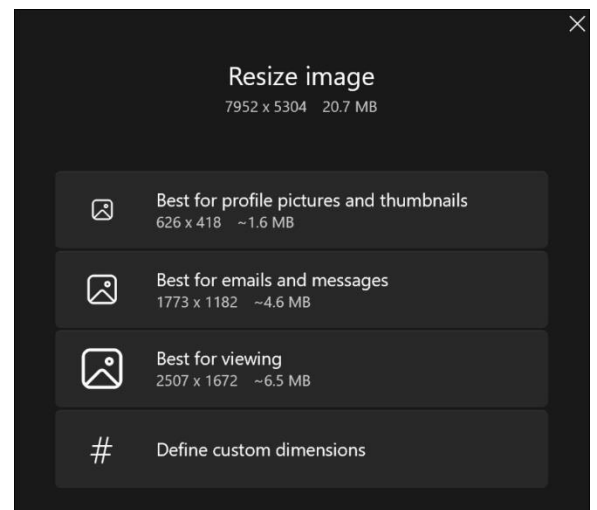
Reflections of Eldean was printed on a standard inkjet printer on Printed Treasures fabric sheets.

If you are using a pigment printer you don't need to pre-soak the fabric, but the ink is very expensive.

If you use a laser printer, you need to heat-set the toner. I make all my quilt labels with my laser printer. It's a good way to get instant results if you have an image that is smaller than a piece of copier paper and you need it right away. To heat-set the toner, I put the print face-down on plain copier paper and iron it with the highest heat setting on my iron, until no more ink is coming off on the paper. Then I'm careful not to iron directly over that part of my quilt, so toner doesn't get smeared onto the iron and transferred to other parts of my quilt.

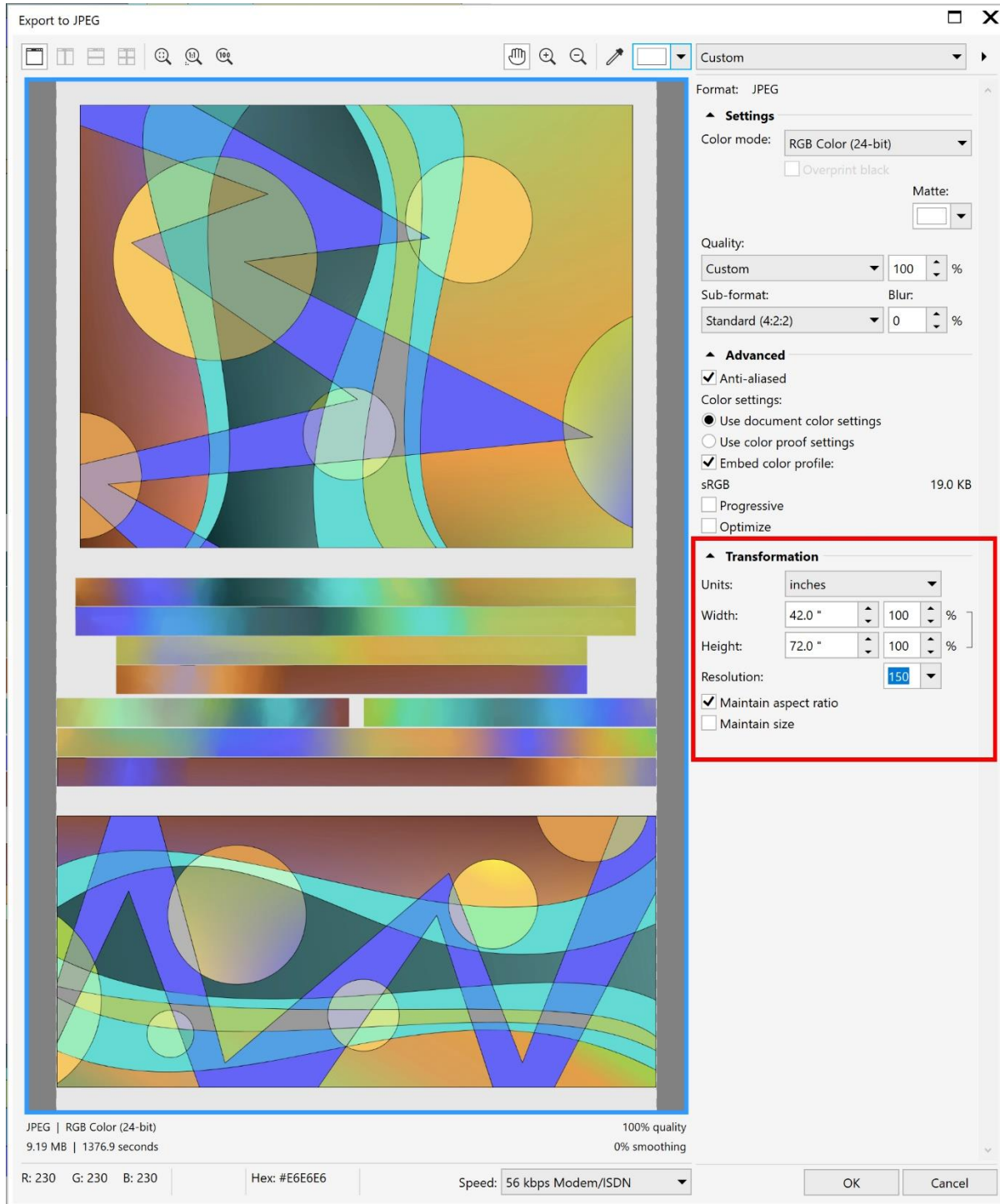
The photograph of the Bertram Levy in Bandonion was printed on a laser printer in three sections that would fit on a letter size fabric sheet and applied onto the pieced background.

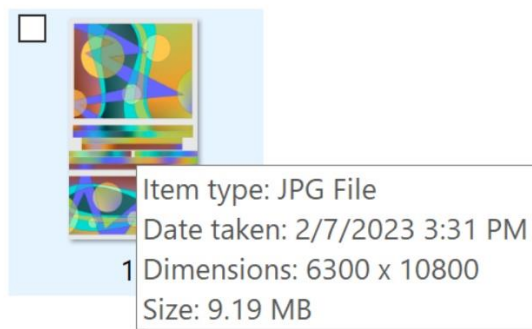
Since 2018, I have had most of my printing done by Spoonflower. I use their default cotton fabric called petal signature cotton. You can print up to 42" wide and the fabric is about 45" wide, so you always have a white border along the edge. The most frequent question I get about uploading to spoonflower is how I size my prints. I use Corel Draw (a vector drawing program) for all my designs. I make a 42" wide box that is 1-4 yards long, depending on what I'm printing. Then I put all my drawings or my bitmap images inside the box. You have to pay for full yard increments, so if my first set of images is slightly longer than a yard I try to fill the rest of the second yard with a smaller quilt or a graduated fabric I might want to add to my stash. I like to have a couple extra inches around the outside of my quilt to hang onto when I'm quilting, so I leave extra space around my images. Once I get everything arranged, I export the whole box as a jpeg bitmap at 150 dpi, which is what Spoonflower recommends. So, if I'm printing a one yard piece, the Pixel size of the bitmap I upload to Spoonflower is going to be 42 x 150 by 36 x 150. Which is 6300 by 5400 pixels. Two yards would be 6300 by 10800. If you hover over the saved image, it will show the size in pixels. If you don't have a vector drawing program, you can resize your image in almost any photo-editing program. The default, Windows Photo Viewer, for instance, has a resize image function and one of your choices is "define custom dimensions". Choose that option and you can type in the exact number of pixels you want.



On the next page is the drawing I made for two of my Zigzag and Circles quilts. The fabric will be two yards long. The strips in the center will become bindings to match the quilts.

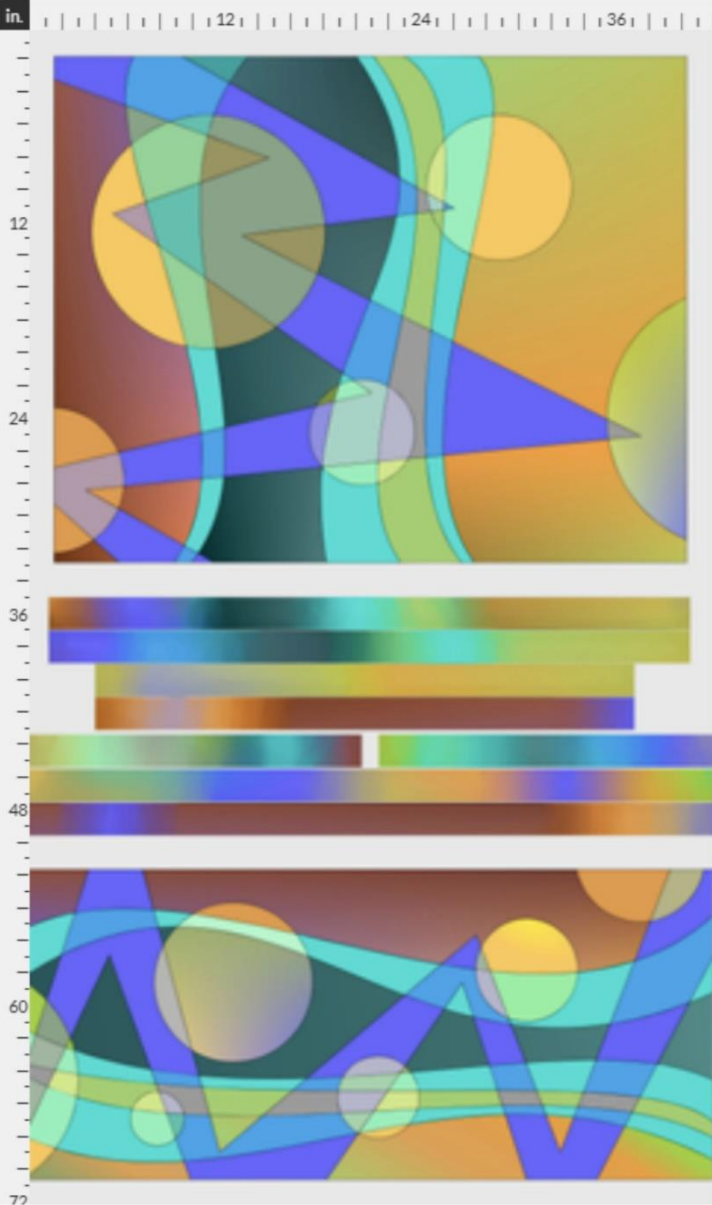
In this image I am exporting my Corel drawing as a jpg bitmap that is 42" wide by two yards long (72").



 <p>Item type: JPG File Date taken: 2/7/2023 3:31 PM Dimensions: 6300 x 10800 Size: 9.19 MB</p>	<p>Notice that I have chosen 150 dpi as my resolution.</p> <p>When I hover over the thumbnail of the new JPG in a file folder, it shows the dimensions in pixels.</p>
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Here is the dialogue box you will get after you upload this image to Spoonflower. From the top row, I have chosen to center the image. I have chosen two yards in the size and amount box, and my fabric choice in Petal Signature Cotton. The preview on the left shows how your image will fit the printable area.

1b



in. 12 24 36

12

24

36

48

60

72

Fabric Wallpaper

Repeat

BASIC HALF-DROP HALF-BRICK CENTER MIRROR

Design Size (150dpi minimum)

Smaller Bigger

42.00in x 72.00in, 150 pixels/inch, Basic [Change DPI](#)

1. Choose a Fabric

Petal Signature Cotton

2. Choose a Size & Amount

2 Yards (42" width)

QUANTITY

Add to Cart