

I'd never heard of shrinking thread either until I saw a quilt at "Road to California" where it had been used. I then tracked it down and found it at artisticartifacts.com. It is formally known as Chizimi and costs \$19.99 for a very large spool.

This is how I use it – I decided on a cactus motif and drew and traced cactus designs with a Frixon pen onto some silk I had. Then I did just a bit of painting with Metallic and Pearlized Jacquard Textile paint from Kharma Trading Company. I then backed the silk with wool batting and put shrinking thread into my bobbin and color-matching thread in the needle and stitched around the shape.

Note - the shrinking thread looks just like regular white thread so keep it in a separate labeled bag or box so you don't sew it on the wrong thing.

Trim just the batting close to the stitch line.

Next, I made the piece ready to appliqué onto the base by putting "Aqua Magic" water-soluble stabilizer (this is a Viking product available at JoAnne's) on the face of the silk with Chizimi still in my bobbin I sewed over the first line of stitching.

Trim Aqua Magic and fabrics about ¼" and clip curves and notches.

Set the steam iron for the most steam possible and hold it about 2 or 3 inches above the wrong side of the motif and give it a good steaming. **DO NOT TOUCH THE IRON TO THE FABRIC AS THE AQUA MAGIC WILL MELT IF IT GETS TOO WET!**

It will shrink up and give you lots of texture. The Aqua Magic will also pull toward the back. Cut a small slit in the Aqua Magic and turn the motif to the right side. You have an applique with a ¼" seam all tuned and ready to hand stitch or machine stitch to your background. If you wish to can rinse your **stitched and appliqued** piece and the Aqua Magic will dissolve away leaving a perfect applique.

The Frixon pen you traced the design with will have disappeared with the heat of the steam.