



"I've had some strangely spiritual moments out here in the desert where I started to really connect to color at a level that I'd never

experienced before," says Biette, who left Maine for the West three years ago. "For me, it's less about: How can I make this pretty? Now, it's more about: How can I make this authentic to what's inspired me?"

Scroll through her shop, and you can see the stories of first kisses and long drives. Each collection of 15 to 20 pillow covers takes about one to two months to make. Her approach has evolved since her mother first taught her to sew a baby shower blanket at the age of 10. Now, she uses fewer designer fabrics and instead opts for a mix of recycled linens and fabrics that she hand-dyes with ice herself.

The quilter, who also works full-time at a surgery center, sells the hand-dyed fabrics individually, to have an offering for the quilting community she interacts with on social media. In addition to "crazy computer software" that designs new patterns, the platform has created a network of evolving perspectives on the tradition that Biette describes as "a cool mix of old and new."

Quilting isn't just for your grandma anymore, and Biette – who will release a holiday collection this fall – is part of the generation leading the charge. "It's a very old-school craft but there is a lot of really great tradition and skill that's been passed down," she says. "There are all these different quilting patterns that have come through hundreds of years that are now being made into these new, fresh projects. Projects from a new perspective." 🌱

—Kristin Scharkey

# Not your grandma's quilt

**Brooke Biette**, the creative force behind **April Two Eighty Quilts**, modernizes an age-old tradition with desert-inspired designs and hand-dyed fabrics.

"Inspiration is always trying to work with me," writes best-selling author Elizabeth Gilbert in her book, "Big Magic." For Tucson-based quilter Brooke Biette, this couldn't be closer to the truth.

"The first time I ever read that, I was like, 'That's exactly what I'm doing!'" says the founder of apriltwoeighty quilts. When it comes to creativity, Biette says she is simply a vehicle of communication for inspiration looking to get out into the world.

The 37-year-old's pieces range from vibrant pillow covers to intricate quilts, often inspired by the Arizona and California deserts, and each representative of a moment in time.