

Fabric Collage Wall Hanging

By Caponi Art Park

Introduction to project:

Recommended for ages 6+

Instead of throwing away those old t-shirts, upcycle them to create a unique fabric collage to display at home! Mr. Caponi often used old materials, and repurposed them to create amazing features around the park, such as fences, walls, and even sculptures. Be green, be artistic, and recycle!

Supply List:

- Variety of old fabric (This could come from old t-shirts, or old pillow cases/sheets, or other fabric you are willing to use for this project)
- Glue (We would recommend using fabric glue, but liquid Elmer's glue, hot glue (with help), a stapler, or, if the kids are old enough, they can sew the pieces of fabric to the base. You just need something to adhere the materials to the base-get creative!)
- Natural materials (Have the participants go outside to collect some durable natural materials, such as twigs and small pine cones or acorns.)
- One large stick, approximately 1.5 feet long, and no more than an inch thick.
- Yarn or string of any kind.
- Hole Punch
- Scissors

Instructions:

- Have a 1.5 foot by 1.5 foot square of fabric per participant. It is best if this base piece of fabric is a solid color, but it is ok if it isn't.
- Have participants spend a few minutes outside to gather some durable pieces of nature, such as twigs, acorns, and small pine cones. They also need to collect one larger stick, about 1.5-2 feet in length, and about 1 inch or less thick.
- Punch 3 holes equidistant across the top of the fabric. You can also use a sharp scissors to make holes.
- Next, take pieces of string and loop them through the holes. Line the large stick they collected along the holes, and tie the string (looped through the holes already) around the stick, and double knot to secure.
- Now you have the base for your fabric collage wall hanging!
- Using inspiration from their time outside, participants should create a scene from nature using different colored and patterned fabric. They should cut each piece of

fabric to the desired size and shape, and adhere it to the base piece of fabric. This can be done using any type of glue you have laying around, with a stapler, or can even be done by sewing each piece to the base layer. (We recommend glue, especially fabric glue if you have it, or sewing it for a the nicest finish)

- Last, attach the pieces of nature collected earlier, and integrate them into your collage.
- Let dry, and then display!

Example photo of complete project:



Discussion Questions:

- How did you utilize different patterns and shapes of fabric to create your image?
- How is your fabric collage representative of nature?
- What part of nature did you use as inspiration for your fabric collage? Why?
- How else can you recycle materials around your home to create art?

Short Lesson for workshop:

- Textile art is one of the oldest forms of art in human civilization. When it was created, it was not focused on looks, but for practical purposes—such as clothing or blankets to keep warm.
- We come into contact with textile art every day. From the clothes we wear to the objects that decorate our home, it's an art that can be simultaneously beautiful and useful.
- In this workshop, you made beautiful art out of things you used to wear!

- The first textile art dates all the way back to prehistoric times, and anthropologists estimate that this is between 100,000 to 500,000 years ago. These goods were made from animal skins, furs, leaves, and more.
- Unlike today's processes, creating clothing and other textiles was once a very long and difficult process—everything had to be done by hand.
- This included gathering fibers from plants or animals and then twisting them to make it into yarn.
- In addition, making an article of clothing was expensive; tailors and seamstresses altered garments to ensure that they lasted a very long time. Depending on how wealthy someone was, they could get imported fabrics and colorful dyes to make their clothing more beautiful and appealing.
- During the Industrial Revolution, we invented machines that made the process of producing fabric much faster and automatic, which made clothing easier-people were able to do it on a mass scale.
- In modern times, the terms fiber art or textile art generally describe textile-based objects that have no intended use.
- Textile work was predominantly considered “women’s work,” so during the feminist movement of the 1960’s and 70’s, female artists took textile and fabric art, and elevated it to the level of “high art.”