

# Creating Fabric Paper

## Laughing Cat Designs

Fabric Paper sounds a bit like an oxymoron – but really it is a fusion of Fabric and Paper creating a very versatile material suitable for wall art, journal covers, purses, and the like. It stitches very well, requiring a bit less stabilization than regular fabric, can be quilted and constructed, thread painted, and it can be customized to any size, color, and style project desired.

Here are the basic steps and supplies used to create Fabric Paper:

### Work Area

Creating Fabric Paper can get a bit on the messy side. Protect the work surface with a plastic sheet or plastic drop cloth. The Fabric Paper can also be made on a separate piece of plastic and then moved to another area to dry, freeing up the work space again. This plastic sheet can be as simple as recycled large plastic bags (not grocery type bags), painter's plastic drop cloths like those found in home improvement stores, or even clear vinyl from a fabric store.

Other things to be considered are easy access to a sink/water, freedom of movement from the wet table to a 'dry' area where the papers will be laid out, and possible protection for flooring.

### Supplies

The supplies needed can vary depending on how elaborate the Fabric Paper being created. The basic supplies include: muslin base, Jacquard Textile Paint - #100 Colorless Extender, brushes, container for mixing, papers for layering. Optional but worth consideration: apron and gloves.

Additional supplies that can add excitement, depth, sparkle, and more to Fabric Paper are limited only by imagination and the ability to adhere to the fabric using the Colorless Extender but can include: Decorative Papers (hand-made, mulberry, printed tissues, art papers, etc), Silk fibers (hand dyed hankies, rods, threads, sari waste, fabric), organza and sheer fabrics, cheese cloth, fun fabrics, paints, glitters, foils, stamping and stenciling, Smooch Spritz.



Preparations - It is important to have all supplies ready and at hand before starting.

1. Tear tissue papers, art papers, etc. into strips or pieces and set aside
2. Cut all fabrics to desired shapes if possible – try free form cutting into wavy strips with a rotary cutter
3. Place muslin onto plastic surface and have brushes ready
4. In a plastic container, mix a 1:1 ratio of water and Colorless Extender (one part water, one part colorless extender) try to mix only as much as will be needed for the project. More can always be mixed as needed.

### Getting Started – first layers

1. Using the flat brush, brush the entire surface of the muslin with the water/extender solution.
2. Choose pieces of torn tissue and place them onto the wetted fabric, brushing over each with the solution as they are placed. It does not matter what tissue is used, printed, solid, bleeding, or plain.

\*Try to not get too detailed at this point unless only tissue is to be used.



### Adding Additional Layers – decorative and art papers, fabric, organza, cheese cloth

Begin adding the other papers, layering with any other material desired. Make sure edges stay flush with the surface as much as possible. Take advantage of the transparency of organza and cheese cloth, or even more tissue to add depth. Motifs from fabric or paper can be placed and worked into the piece at this point.

\*Remember to brush each piece with the solution as they are added to ensure it is bonded.



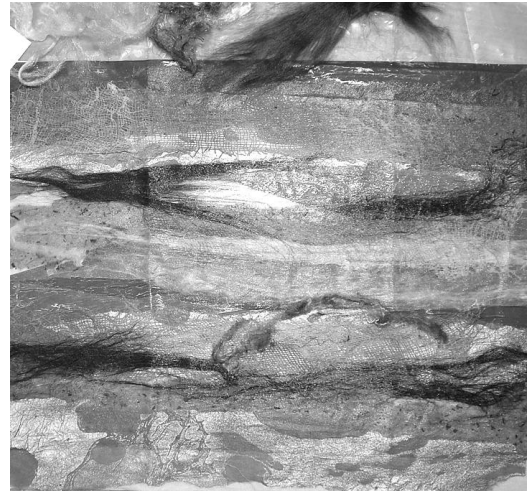
### Silk and Bamboo Fibers

Silk fibers mesh very well with the Fabric Paper technique, adding subtle texture and richness. Spread fibers apart before placing onto the wet Fabric paper, hold in the center with one hand while brushing on the solution from the center out. This process will help to keep the fibers in place.



Bamboo fibers will also work very well with this technique. They will fuse into the Fabric Paper just as well as silk, adding texture and color. They do not come in a wide range of colors and can be harder to find but are well worth the effort. The fibers length is shorter but very smooth and soft and can be spread out quite easily.

Silk threads, silk Sari waste, silk rods and hankies can all be used and all have a different look to them.



## Paints, Glitter, and Sparkle

If the Fabric Paper is very wet when adding paints such as Jacquard Textile or Lumiere, a more watercolor effect can be achieved. Washes of color can be added with Jacquard Dye-Na-Flow paints.

Try sprinkles of glitter, finely cut Angelina Fibers, and even Jacquard Pearl Ex pigment powders for different sparkly and shimmery effects.

To add more detailed painting, stenciled designs, stamping and such, allow the Fabric Paper to dry first and then add these design elements. When these additions are fully dry, heat set them so that the final coat of Colorless Extender does not cause them to re-wet and alter the shape and definition. (\*see Drying and Heat Setting below.)

## Drying

When all components have been added, it is important to let the Fabric Paper dry completely before removing it from the plastic and heat setting. Depending upon how wet the piece is, humidity, etc. this can take 24 hours or more. Let the piece sit over night in a dry area. For faster drying, move the piece outdoor on a dry warm day (out of the sun) or even place it in front of a fan.

## The Final Coat

Once dry, a final coat of undiluted Colorless Extender is brushed over the whole piece. Allow this to dry completely. If desired, the piece can be turned over and coated from the back as well.

## Heat Setting

When the Fabric Paper is totally and completely dry it can be removed from the plastic and taken to the ironing board. Cover the entire piece with a press cloth (an extra piece of muslin works very well) and press with a hot iron very thoroughly. It is important to really heat set the entire piece. There are several layers of fabric, paper, more paper, fabric, and of course the Colorless Extender between them all that needs to be heat set. Iron slowly, always moving the fabric at a snail pace, from one end to the other and back. When the front is done remove the muslin (it will stick just a bit, simply pull it off) turn the piece over and replace the muslin, and heat set again from the back.

Ready to Sew - The Fabric Paper is now ready to use!