

Rollins  
Museum  
of Art

# Studio Saturdays: Paper Weaving



The Alford Collection of Contemporary Art at Rollins College, Gift of Barbara '68 and Theodore '68 Alford, 2014.1.33. Image courtesy of LMAK projects and the artist. Photo: Tom Powell Imaging.

*Quilts, Dresses, Arts  
and Crafts (for Rollins)*  
Sabrina Gschwandtner  
(American, b. 1977)

2014

16mm film (polyester), polyester  
thread, lithography ink

53 x 77 3/16 x 6 1/8 in.

## MATERIALS

**4 Strips of Paper**  
**Glue Stick**  
**Scissors**

Sabrina Gschwandtner is an American artist born in Washington, D.C. in 1977. She creates art using photography, film, and textiles. For her works like this one, titled “Quilts, Dresses, Arts and Crafts”, Gschwandtner weaves and sews together film strips to make a quilt-like effect. A **film strip** is a series of transparent images printed in a strip for projection. That’s how they used to make movies before digital cameras; the images would be recorded on film strips, then the strips would be copied and sent to different theaters along with separately recorded sound so they could show the movie.

Gschwandtner’s work is a form of **textile art**. This is art that is created using or based on fabric, yarn, and thread, as materials, and using techniques like knitting, quilting, felting, and sewing. For much of history, textile art was not seen as “real” art because it was mainly made by women; the men who controlled the galleries and museums dismissed the highly complicated and beautiful textile artworks as “crafts” and “women’s work” and therefore not “true” art. In the 1960s and 70s, as the civil rights movement was at its peak in the United States, women artists began to reclaim textile art in their artistic practice, and they protested the idea that it didn’t qualify as fine art. Artists Miriam Schapiro and Melissa Meyer coined the term “**Femmage**”, meaning feminist collage, to describe the textile art they were creating. They called it this because they said that **collage**, a form of art where you assemble different images or pieces to create one artwork, was directly inspired by quilting, sewing, embroidery, and other textile techniques. So, to Schapiro and Meyer, the idea that when men created collages with paper or paint it was fine art, but when women created collages with fabric and thread it wasn’t, was a silly and biased against thought women. Sabrina Gschwandtner is inspired by the ideas of the women artists of this time, and continues their tradition of bringing textile techniques into fine art.

**For today’s activity, we’ll be trying our hands at weaving using paper, inspired by Sabrina Gschwandtner. We will create one weaving together, then you can be inspired by the tradition of textile art to create your own collage.**

## THINK LIKE AN ARTIST

1. What other forms of art do you think are underappreciated, or dismissed as not being “real” art? Why do you think that is?
2. Sabrina Gschwandtner uses film strips for her weavings. What material other than paper or fabric do you think would make a cool woven artwork?

# INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) If you don't have an art kit for this season on hand, cut a half-inch wide strip from the long side of four different colored pieces of paper. Take 2 of your strips and glue them together at a right angle.
- 2) Now, add a third strip going in the same direction as your left strip, but below it, and on top of your right strip.
- 3) Glue your fourth strip in the same direction as the strip on the right, but under it, to your left strip, and weave it under your third strip. Take the left strip and flip it to the right, going alongside your third strip. Form a smooth fold on the left that will create a straight line up and down.
- 4) Fold your right strip over to the left in the same way, then bring your third strip over on top of it. Now take your third strip and fold it to the right, in the same way as you did for your left strip, creating a smooth straight fold on the side again.
- 5) Take your fourth strip and fold it backwards, putting it to the left behind everything. Now take your fourth strip and weave it between the left and third strips. Fold your right strip back over to the right, creating the same smooth fold on the side.
- 6) Continue weaving until you've reached the end of your paper strips. When the ends of the strips remain short, glue it in place. Cut the remaining paper off of the bottom at an angle, leaving a clean edge.
- 7) You can use your weaving as a bookmark or a bracelet! You can even make more weavings and assemble them to create a collage inspired by Gschwandtner's textile art.