

# Sheer Paper Cloth

by Margarita Koriath

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Host Susan Brubaker Knapp with Margarita Koriath

## Materials

- Cheese cloth, 12" x 12"
- A variety of delicate papers (I used napkins, tissue paper, and sewing pattern tissue.)
- Freezer paper
- Plastic sheeting
- Fluid polymer medium (I used Liquitex® Matte Medium.)
- Plastic container
- Foam brushes

## Optional

- Acrylic paints
- Stamps
- Stencils

I'm a mixed-media artist and I love to combine all types of artist materials in my quilts. Lately, I've been working with cheesecloth as a base for paper collage, creating what I call paper-cloth. This technique combines all of the things I love about mixed-media projects—the glue, the paint, the papers—with a woven base that can be sewn into my quilts.

For this project, I've reached into my collection of found and saved papers and chosen delicate papers like sewing pattern tissue, printed or single-color tissue paper, napkins, and even newsprint. If you don't have a collection, there are many resources online or visit a craft store's scrapbooking and paper department.

## DIRECTIONS

1. Cut or tear pieces of the delicate papers and set them aside.

**Tip:** Torn edges are easier to hide, if you want a smooth transition between the papers. Cut edges will be more prominent.

2. Cut a piece of freezer paper about twice the size of the cheesecloth.
3. Cover a work surface with the plastic sheeting and place the freezer paper on it, shiny side up.
4. Assemble your supplies: a plastic container with fluid polymer medium, a couple of foam brushes, and the cut/torn papers.

**Tip:** It is helpful to have everything ready before you begin. This process is messy and it's inevitable you will end up with sticky fingers, making it difficult to cut or tear the papers or open containers.

5. Pour several tablespoons of fluid polymer medium in the center of the freezer paper. With the foam brush, cover the surface in an even layer. Add more medium, if needed.

6. Place the cheesecloth on the medium, centered on the freezer paper. (figure 1) With your fingers or a foam brush, smooth it as much as possible.
7. Pour more medium on top and spread it in an even layer. The cheesecloth should be very wet.
8. Immediately start positioning the papers over the cheesecloth until it is covered. Apply more medium over the papers. (figure 2) With a gentle touch, smooth the papers with your fingers as much as possible. It's OK if some tear.
9. Allow the paper-cloth to dry completely, at least 6–24 hours.
10. If desired, add marks using paint, stamps, or stencils. Let it dry completely.
11. Peel the paper-cloth from the freezer paper and use it in your next quilt project. (figure 3)

Play with this technique to make several pieces of paper-cloth in different sizes, values, and colorways. I cut several shapes and appliquéd them by machine onto larger pieces of paper-cloth to create the work you see here. Experiment and have fun! 🍯

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## TIPS FOR SEWING ON PAPER

- When choosing a needle for your sewing machine, start with the smallest number the thread can take. For example, start with a size 75/11 needle. If the thread cannot get through the eye, go to a bigger number.
- Needles used to sew on paper become dull fast. Save needles that are too dull for quilting and use them for sewing on paper. Mark and use a separate pincushion to keep them from your regular needles.
- When designing your work, paste—don't pin—cut pieces with a drop of white glue or glue stick.
- Plan carefully where you want to stitch. Paper is not as forgiving as fabric; once you pierce the paper with a needle, that mark is permanent.
- When sewing by machine, use a slow speed. If your sewing machine has the option, go at half speed.
- Store the paper-cloth in a cool, dry place.
- Save leftover scraps for future projects. It is very easy to cut small pieces.