

Creating a face mask with dissolvable fabric

Learn to create sculptured faces and masks with a sewing machine.

By Karen Elzinga

Are you looking for a way of creating your own unique mask for a fancy dress party, looking to be the next Spiderman or just wanting to create a face for a sculpture, a doll, an animal well that's exactly what this lesson blog post is all about, and the beauty is it is much more simple than you think.

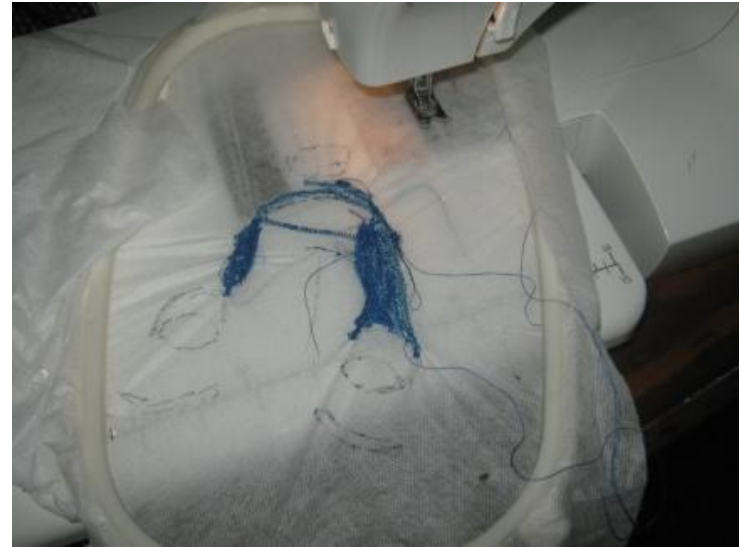
Okay ready, set, go- First thing is you'll need to visit your local fabric shop and ask for dissolvable fabric, it feels kind of like interfacing material only slightly transparent. Most larger chain stores should carry some because art students are required to use it sometimes for schooling.

The second item that will inevitably make your life a whole lot easier is an embroidery frame, it's not essential but you will see what I mean if you try doing this without one. It's very hard and your fabric will not stay straight.

LET'S GET INTO IT

Draw onto your fabric what your mask will look like

1. So firstly you'll need to draw an outline of your face onto the dissolvable cloth, once that's done add your fabric to the embroidery frame so it's nice and tight.
2. Work out your cotton colours
3. Get sewing, you'll want to work from the inside out, so start with your features, so at least if the fabric moves and tightens your features will be in the right spot.



Make sure your sewing overlaps – very important



Make sure your sewing overlaps, if it doesn't there will be nothing to hold it together once the fabric has dissolved

Don't forget to leave eye holes and mouth holes if your planning to wear this as a mask, not being able to see might impair you a little.

Remember that your sewing a flat face, and your face is not flat, so add some more sewing to the outside just so that when it wraps around your face it will cover all of your face.



Visit the tip shops or opp shops for a foam head

Although not expensive from craft shops the foam head can often be picked up for a few dollars at tip shops or opp shops so unless your wanting to go into production of masks try there first, you could even try a cheap plastic mask but you will need something rounded to lay your fabric over to dry.

This is important because what ever you place your mask over, it will conform to that shape when it dries out.

So once you have your head, it's time to rinse your fabric under running water, now you want to dissolve the fabric without completely washing away the adhesive quality of it so don't wash it under Niagara Falls. Just a quick wash, it should feel slimy and the fabric gone, that's what your looking for a slimy water feel. That means the glue is still present and active.... hooray!

Use some pins to fasten it onto your head and give it a good shaping with your hands, remember how it sits is how it will look finished when dry.

Now leave it for a few days to dry to the touch.

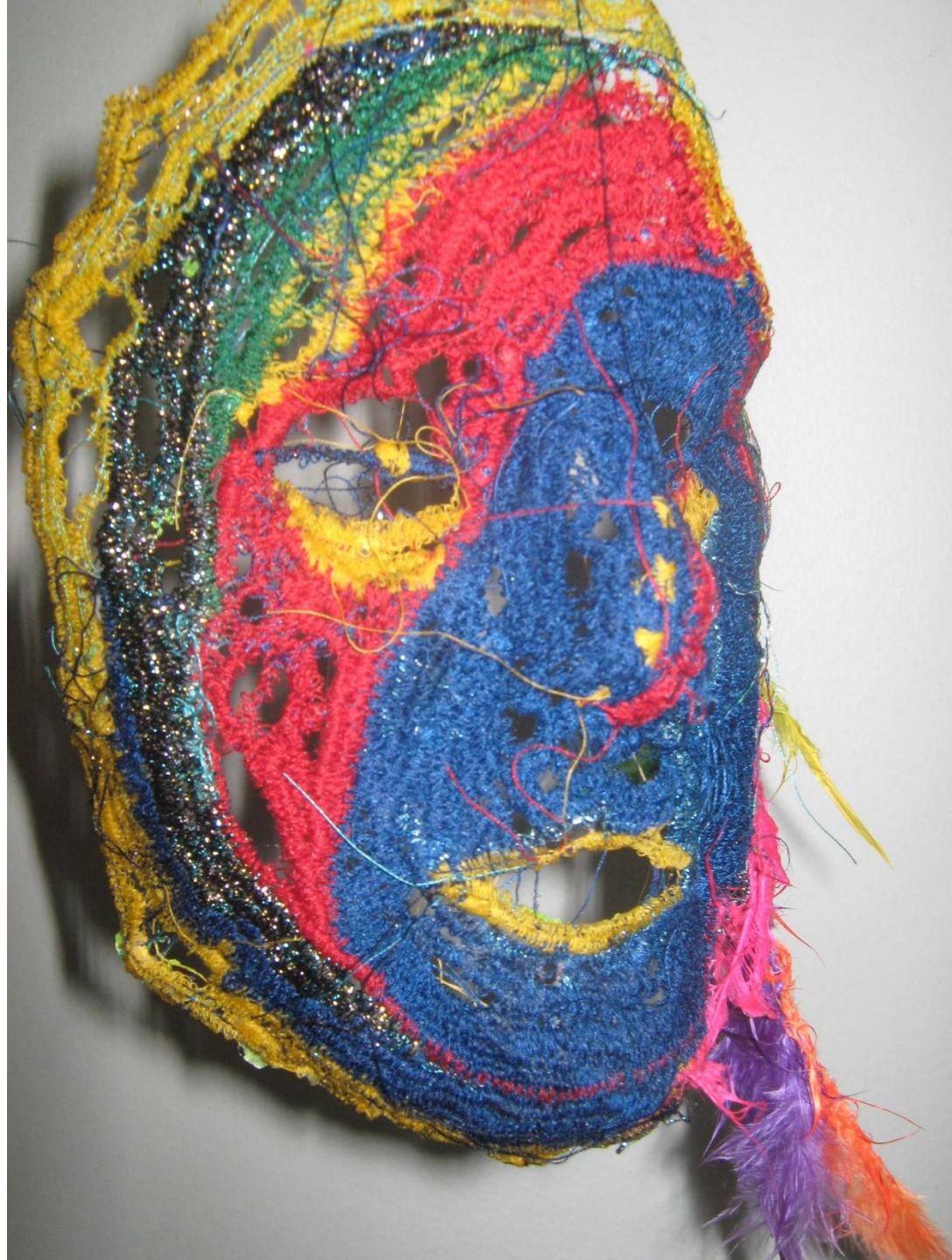


The finished work should hold it's shape really well

Once totally dried you can remove it from your head, it should come of very easily.

These make really great masks and great sculptures.

Sculptures can look pretty impressive done this way and next we discover how to add materials to finish the effect of sculpture building.



Create a full sculptured head



I added a plastic head I found in the opp shop because the mask needs some support if used in this way and so I could add hair, feathers and fabric without it being crushed under the weight.

Found an old wig at the opp shop, there are always old wigs there!, then I intertwined the hair with fabric and wool by plating in it, glued on feathers with craft glue and there is a ridgy didge fabric sculpture of a head.



I hope you enjoyed my lesson on dissolvable fabric techniques, stay tuned for more lessons coming soon to Elzinga Collective.

This has been another Karen Elzinga lesson for Elzinga Collective



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** Eccentric Fashion & Accessories * Original Art * Eclectic Oddities **

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