



Arpilleras

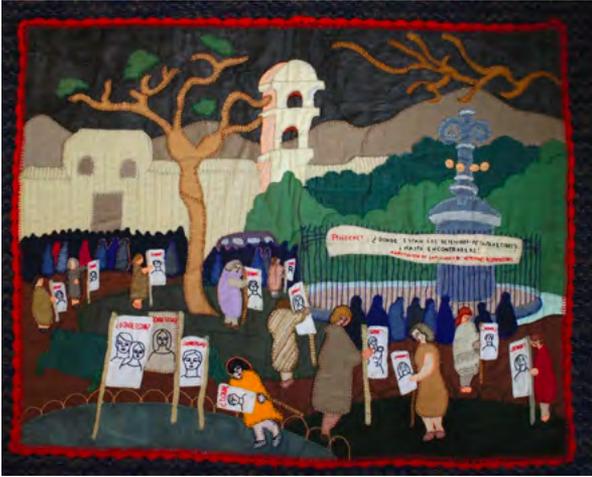
Family Friday Project



Peninsula School of Art

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A brief history



Chile

Arpilleras (are-pea-air-uhs, burlap in Spanish) are patchwork pictures stitched onto sackings. They were first made by women in Chile in the 1970s and 1980s to document their lives during the totalitarian military regime of Gen. Augusto Pinochet. The quilts were smuggled

out of the country to tell the outside world of the Chilean people's hunger, fear, unemployment, housing shortages, and the many missing men abducted by the regime. These men are still referred to in Chile as the "disappeared" and "detained." The arpillera shown above portrays women protesting, holding up signs that say "¿Dónde están?" (Where are they?).

Elsewhere

Over time, the practice of making arpilleras showing scenes from daily life spread to other South American countries like Peru. They often featured three-dimensional elements, with some parts of the fabric stuffed or sticking up off the surface. ([The William Benton Museum of Art](#))



Learn More

[The Arpilleras of Chile with Marjorie Agosin](#) (video)

[Stitching Resistance](#) (pdf)

Let's get started . . .

Use the fabric in this pack to create a scene from your daily life or a symbol that is meaningful to you. Instead of stitching the fabric onto burlap, you can press it into foam.

Gather Supplies

In addition to what's in this pack, you'll need a scissors and ballpoint pen. Older kids will also need a butter knife and something thin and flat to push in the edges of fabric, like a triangle cut from a used gift card or plastic lid.

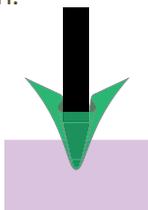


For Young Children

- 1 Cut the fabric into squares.
- 2 Draw a simple shape on the foam.



- 3 Push a piece of fabric into the foam using a ballpoint pen.
- 4 Starting from one edge, continue until you fill the shape.



For Older Kids

- 1 Draw a simple design.



- 2 Cut along the lines, only going halfway through the foam. If an adult can do this with a sharp knife, even better.



- 3 Cut a piece of fabric slightly bigger than your shape.



- 4 Push the fabric edges into the cuts.



- 5 Continue all the way around the shape.



- 6 Add texture by poking bits of fabric into the foam.



Share what you made!