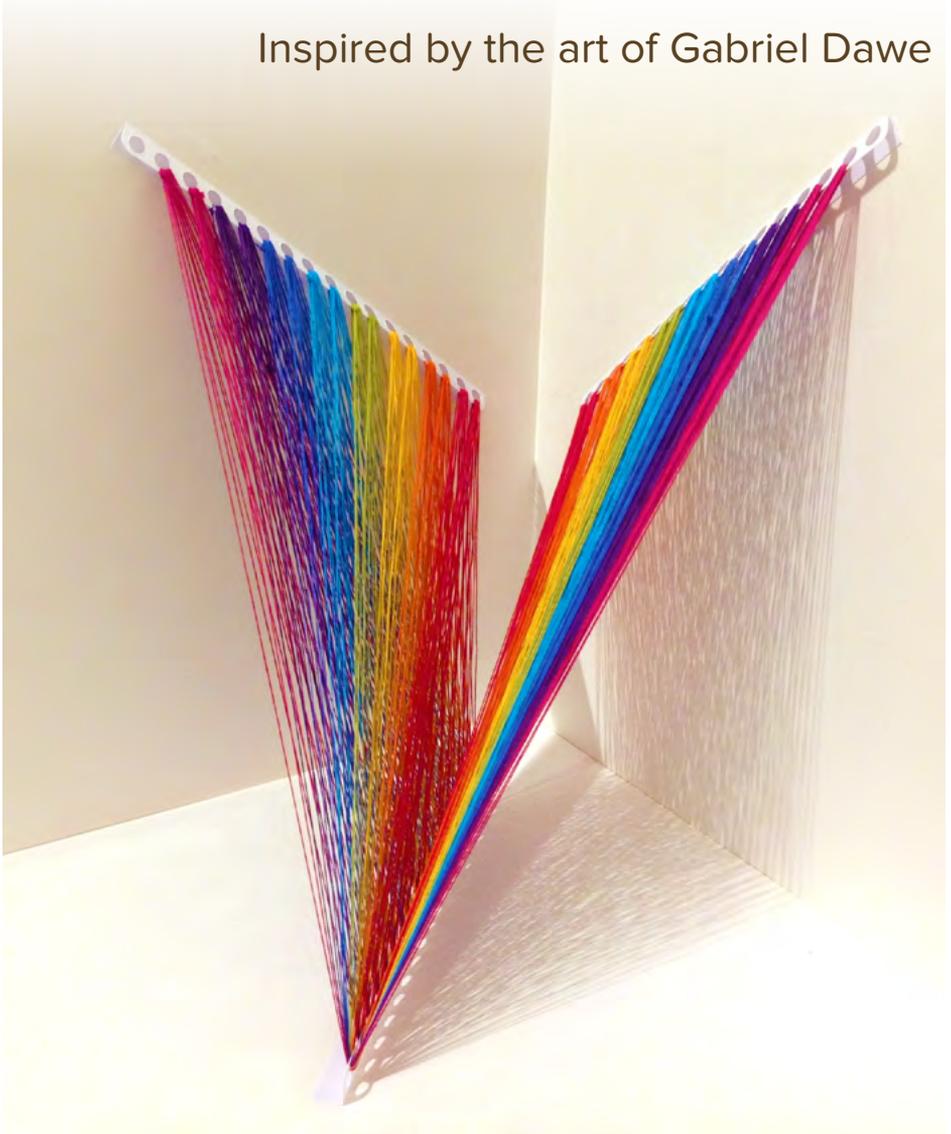




Rainbows in the Room

Inspired by the art of Gabriel Dawe



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Artist Spotlight



Gabriel Dawe

Gabriel Dawe is best known for creating rainbows of thread, often spanning from floor to ceiling. They are an example of what is known as **installation art**—work that is created for a specific place and designed to change the way you experience that space.

Gabriel grew up in Mexico City and now lives in Texas. His interest in light, color, and thread comes from observation of

these places and childhood memories of his family. He says:

When I was growing up, my father was fond of clouds, particularly when a ray of light pierced through them, so luminous you almost wanted to touch them. He sometimes followed such sightings with a sketch on a scrap of paper, deftly portraying the light breaking through.

As a child, I often heard my mother express her admiration for the beauty of the sky, particularly on holidays any place in Mexico outside of Mexico City. The bright blue skies of her childhood there, which by the time I was a teenager were often infested with pollutants, had made an impression on her in her youth. [...] I never quite understood her admiration at the time, particularly because what she seemed to admire the most was the blueness of the sky in plain daylight. As a young boy, I would roll my eyes, since the sky was obviously much more interesting at sunset when the colors were more intense and dramatic. If there really was a blue worth looking at, it was the rich blue that seemed



See more of Gabriel's installations at gabrieldawe.com



to intensify after the sun dropped below the horizon. And despite my jaded attitude towards my mother's appreciation of the not-so-intense blue of the sky in daylight, today I am able to appreciate her fascination with it. It pointed to something that might have otherwise gone unnoticed.

My own admiration for the sky, with all its subtleties of form and color, peaked when I moved to Texas. The dramatic overturns of the Texas sky captivated me, particularly during my long train rides [...].

What is your favorite color of sky? Look at the sky right now. How would you describe its color? Is it the same throughout, or does it change?

I remembered the frustrations from when I was a kid that my grandmother would teach my sister how to embroider but she wouldn't teach me because I was a boy. So when I decided to become an artist, I remembered that frustration and decided, "Well, now I'm a grown man and I can decide for myself to actually do embroidery." I just taught myself how to embroider and that's sort of what took me to the trajectory that eventually landed me on making the installation [using thread].

What things have you heard are only for boys or only for girls? Do you think anything should be that way? Why?

Let's get started...

Find a place

Look for a spot to install your rainbow. Places like corners that are out of the way and that have at least two surfaces work best. Be sure to ask permission before you start working—the tape on the plastic strip could damage finishes. You could always make your rainbow inside a cardboard box.

Make a plan

Will your rainbow be long and narrow or short and wide? Will it twist in the air? Will its colors cross? Will it attach to the surface in curved or straight lines, in two or more places? Find more of Gabriel's installations at gabrieldawe.com, and look carefully at the places the threads attach to get ideas. Keep in mind that your rainbow will need to be much smaller. Just one of Gabriel's installations used 60 miles of thread— $\frac{3}{4}$ the length of Door Peninsula! This kit does not have nearly so much.

Attach the anchors

Your kit contains a strip of plastic with regularly punched holes you will use to anchor your thread. Cut it into the number and length of pieces your plan needs. Fold each piece along its crease, peel off the protective strip, and stick it to your surface. If you want to make a circle or a curve, make a series of cuts across the sticky side before attaching it.

String your rainbow

The thread is wound on long, narrow bobbins that can fit through the holes. Tie the end of the thread to one hole to start. Unwind more than enough thread to get to the next hole you want to reach, and slide the bobbin through that hole. Keep going—it's just like lacing your shoes!

