GEORGIA MUSEUM *of* ART | UNIVERSITY OF **GEORGIA**

ART AT HOME

SAM GILLIAM COLOR EXPERIMENT

Object info: Sam Gilliam (American, b. 1933), untitled, 1974. Acrylic paint. 29 1/4 × 41 1/4 inches. Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia; The Larry D. and Brenda A. Thompson Collection of African American Art. GMOA 2012.123.

Sam Gilliam is a Black artist who experiments with painting and colors. Gilliam's paintings aren't stretched into rigid squares or rectangles. He often uses sheets of canvas fabric that hang from walls or makes his canvases into unique abstract shapes. His draped paintings can be giant. Some have been suspended on the walls outside a museum. Others are smaller, like a towel or coat on a hook. Clothing hanging on clotheslines outside of Gilliam's studio window in Washington, D.C., inspired this technique.

Look around your home. What fabric is hanging and from where? What do you notice about the shapes the folding material makes?

Instead of using paintbrushes, Gilliam drips, dyes or stains his canvases with colorful paint. Then he folds, crinkles and creases the wet canvas onto itself to make interesting patterns and sculptural formations. What kinds of patterns do you notice in this work? What colors have combined?

In this project, you will mimic Gilliam's process of mixing colors on wet canvas and folding it into a sculptural shape.

Once you're finished, share with us! Tag @georgiamuseum

For this activity you will need:
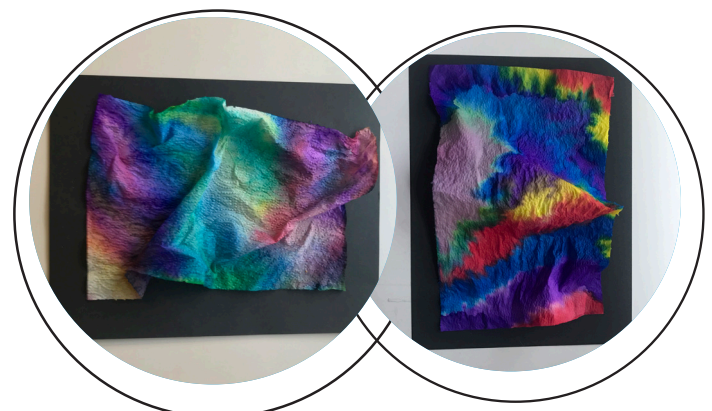
construction paper

glue

set of markers

paper towels

spray bottle

To make your color experiment:

1. Draw designs on a piece of paper towel with markers. Experiment using many colors. Think about what colors will look interesting next to each other. What will they create if they combine?

2. Spray the paper towel with water. Cover the sheet so it is completely saturated.

3. Set the paper towel down somewhere safe to dry. How has it transformed after drying?

4. Glue one small section of the dried paper towel onto a piece of construction paper. Twist and bunch the rest of the paper towel into a shape you find interesting. Attach more of it to the construction paper if you need to stabilize it.