

*The Human
Figure &
Form*





This weeks activity is inspired by the life sized performing paper Mache people by Ruth Rees and Pam Thorne that are stored in the Devonport City Council and gallery storage facility.

Devonport Regional Gallery and the Performing Paper People sculptures...

The Performing Paper People are life sized paper sculptures created using recycled hand-made paper. The paper used in the sculptures was made at the Burnie paper Mill. It is a life sized representation of a musical quartet called the Scherzando Quartet. It consists of:

Peter Tremolo (Viola), Polly Pizzicato (Violin), Patricia Leggerissimo (violin) and Primrose Passionato (cello).

The Scherzando Quartet sculpture was formed in early 1997 by Pam Thorne and Ruth Rees in their studio in Burnie. The Burnie Regional Gallery was the setting for their first public performance.



Body Language

Our human form is held up by a strong skeleton underneath. All of our muscles are attached to it by tendons which allow us to stand up and move around.

Move your arm out in front of you. Lots of things just happened in your body to allow this to happen. First your brain had the thought "move arm" and it then sent the command to the ligaments and muscles that are attached to your skeleton in order for them to move... and all of this happened in a micro moment!

Think about all the ways we move our bodies, walking, running, dancing. What do our bodies look like when we are happy? How do we move when we are sad? What about when we are excited? Even if you cannot see a face, our bodies still show our emotions by the way they move. For example, when we are sad or afraid our shoulders might slump and our heads may hang down and we may drag our feet. But when we are happy we might dance around excitedly. This is called body language and expresses our emotion through movement and actions, it means our emotions can be seen in the form (shapes) our body makes. Look at the silhouettes below. How do you think each one is feeling?



angry

disgusted

fearful

happy

sad

surprised

neutral



A famous artist working with human form...

Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966)

Alberto Giacometti was a Swiss sculptor, painter, draughtsman and printmaker and was one of the greatest artists of the 20th century. In 1962 he was awarded the Venice Biennale grand prize for sculpture with his sculpture titled *L'Homme qui marche I*. It became one of the most expensive works to ever be sold at auction and is currently featured on the Swiss 100 Franc bank note. Born in 1901 to a creative artistic family, Giacometti discovered his enthusiasm for art early creating his first oil painting at age 12. He is best known for his works of human figures that are elongated and stick thin, often in standing or walking postures.

From Tate website: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/alberto-giacometti-1159/eight-things-know-alberto-giacometti>



Alberto Giacometti, *Man walking version I*, 1960, bronze



Alberto Giacometti, *Falling Man*, 1951, bronze



Alberto Giacometti, *Man Pointing*, 1947, bronze

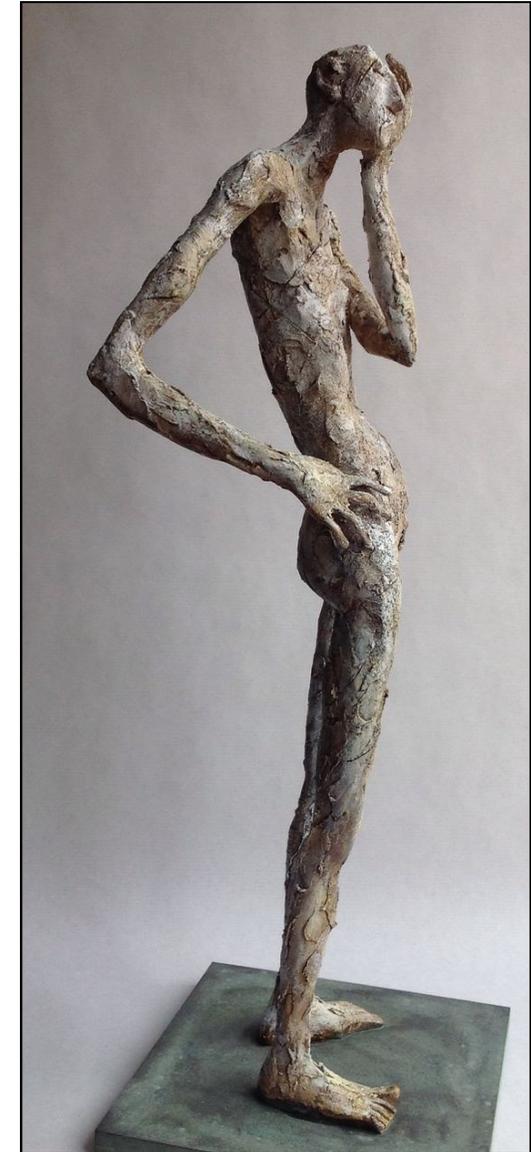
More artists and their sculptural works of the human form...



Anthony Abrahams, *Walking*, 1926, bronze



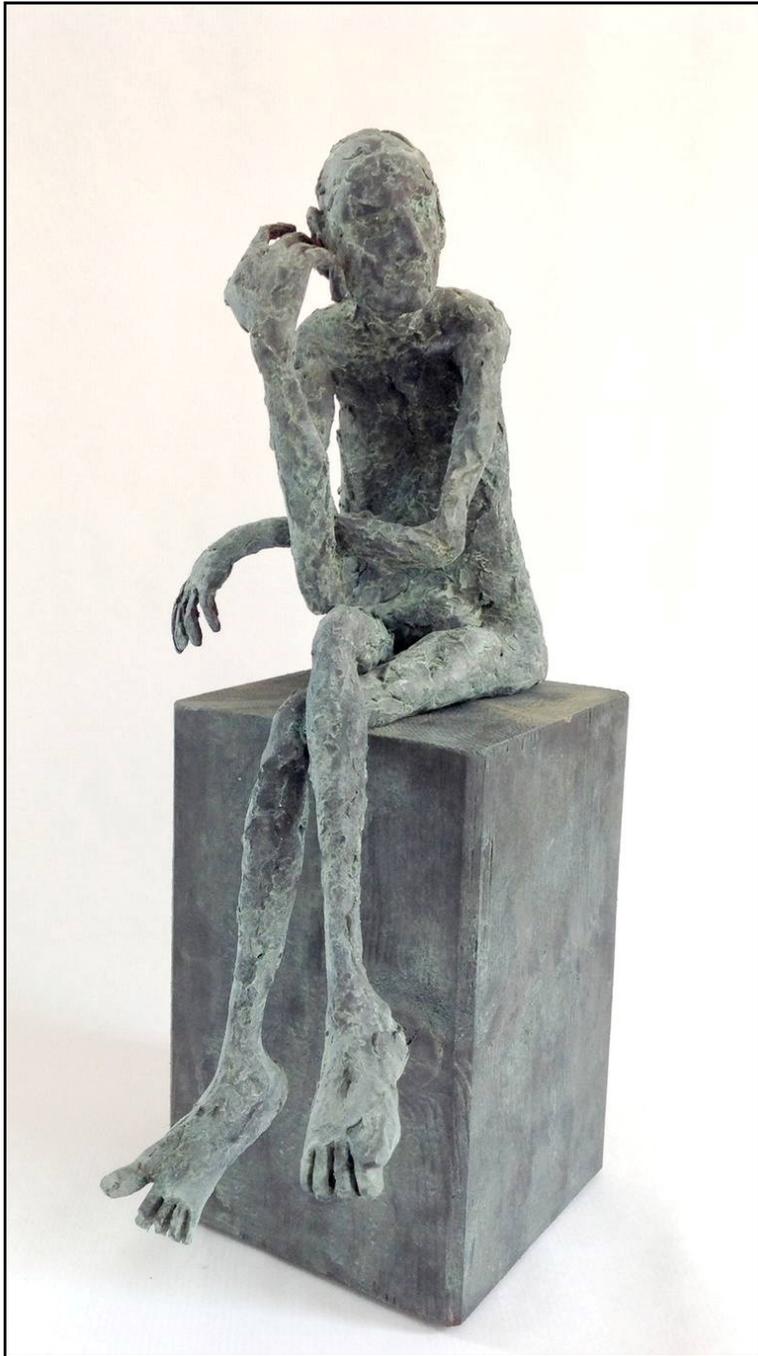
Anthony Gormley



Pablo Hueso

How do you think each of these figures is feeling?

Or what could they be thinking?



Pablo Hueso, *Pensador*



Pablo Hueso

Task: Create a human figure in a pose of your choosing.

Try to capture an emotion or sense of movement in your figure.



You Will Need:

- Wire, very thin and one piece a bit thicker
- Aluminium foil (optional) or...
- Yarn, thread, string (optional)
- Paper (thin paper works best)
- Cel mix (provided in materials packages available for pick up from the Devonport Regional Gallery front desk) or Paper Mache glue (recipe on next page)
- Container for glue



Paper Mache Glue Recipe

What you need

- flour
- water
- mixing bowl
- spoon

Method

Mix one part flour with one part of water (eg, 1 cup flour and 1 cup water, or 1/2 cup flour and 1/2 cup water) until you get a thick glue-like consistency. Add a bit more water if it's too thick.

Mix well with a spoon to get rid of all the lumps. If you find you are getting lumps in your glue, you can use a small kitchen electric mixer to whiz them out.

Add a few tablespoons of salt to the final mixture to help prevent mould.

NOTES:

- You need to use strips of newspaper only, or even paper tissues or towels.
- Let the newspaper strips soak in the Paper Mache glue a little before using.
- Cover your artwork with only 2-3 layers, then let dry completely. This is an important step.
- Once a layer is dry you can add 2-3 more layers, remembering to let each layer dry before adding the next one.
- The final layer can be plain paper - so it's easier to paint - but use the thinnest paper possible and make sure it's soaked well in the Paper Mache glue.

Recipe sourced from: <https://www.kidspot.com.au/things-to-do/activity-articles/make-paper-mache-glue/news-story/ceb59e78216f566a15b75932462f274c>

Mixing up Cel Mix Paper Mache Glue

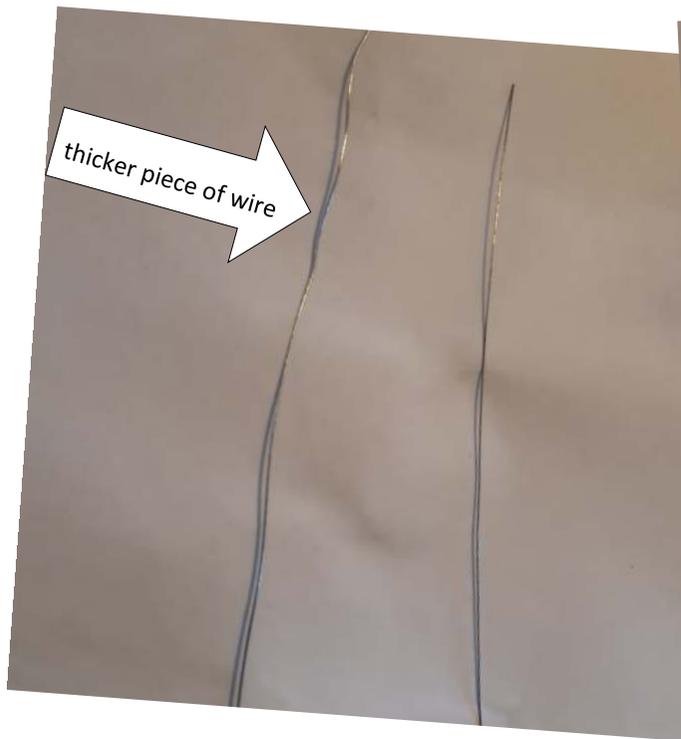
(available in materials packages from paranaple arts centre front counter)

- *Fill container with 500ml water*
- *While stirring sprinkle entire Mix Cel Mix contents (1 teaspoon/ 5 grams approx.)*
- *Stir until all the lumps are dissolved*
 - *Allow to sit for 10-20 minutes at least before using.*

Step 1: Wire skeleton... start with correct proportions..

Using the wire provided in your materials package or thin bendable wire you have at home, create a skeleton frame of a human figure and bend into shape. Start off by making a two dimensional stick man (like a drawing outline) and build up from there.

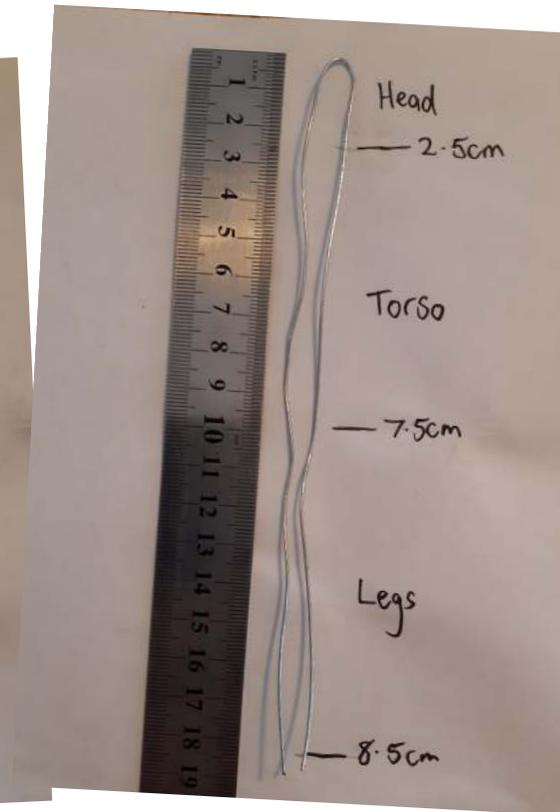
1: use the thicker piece of wire for the skeletons core... his head, backbone and legs. Fold the thicker wire in half with loop at top for the head. Lay it next to a ruler as shown. Divide into 8 equal sections. The head is equal to one section. The torso including neck is equal to 3 sections, the legs are equal to four sections. Mark out on wire and twist wire into shape as shown.



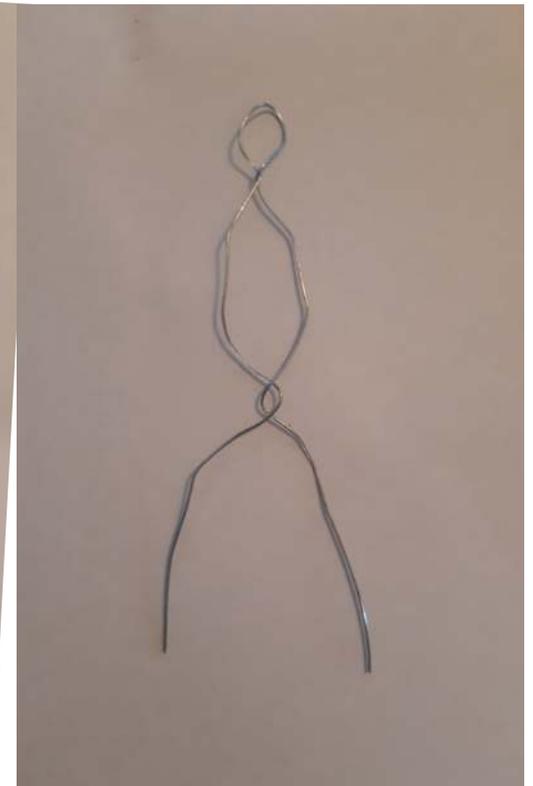
Use the thicker piece of wire for the skeletons core



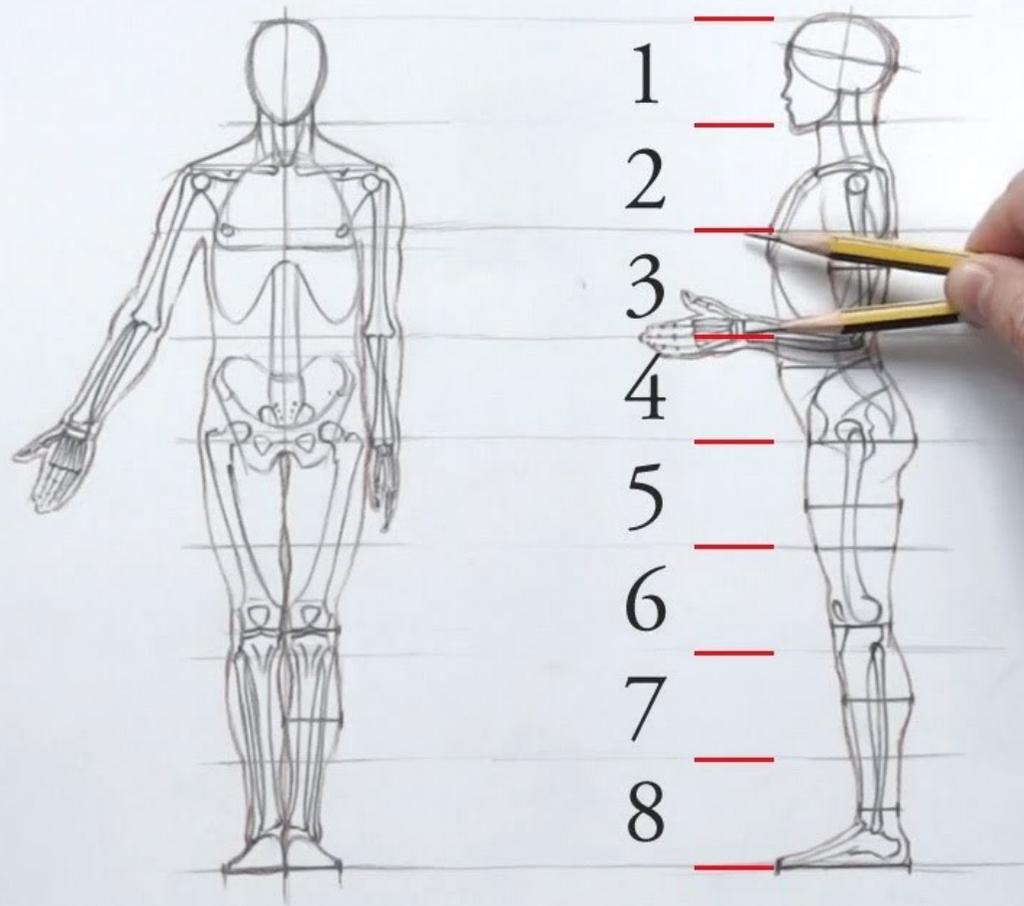
Bend in half with loop at the top



Measure out into 8 equal parts. Head one part, torso 3 parts, legs 4 parts.

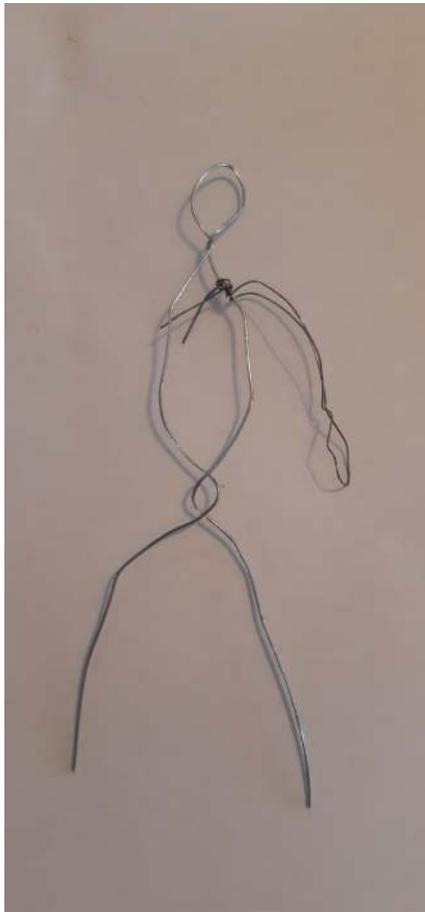


Bend into human figure shape, head, torso legs



Human figure proportions

Step 2: Add the arms. The hands should reach just below the hips. Stand up and let your arms hang by your sides. Notice where they come to on your own body. The arms are longer than you might think!



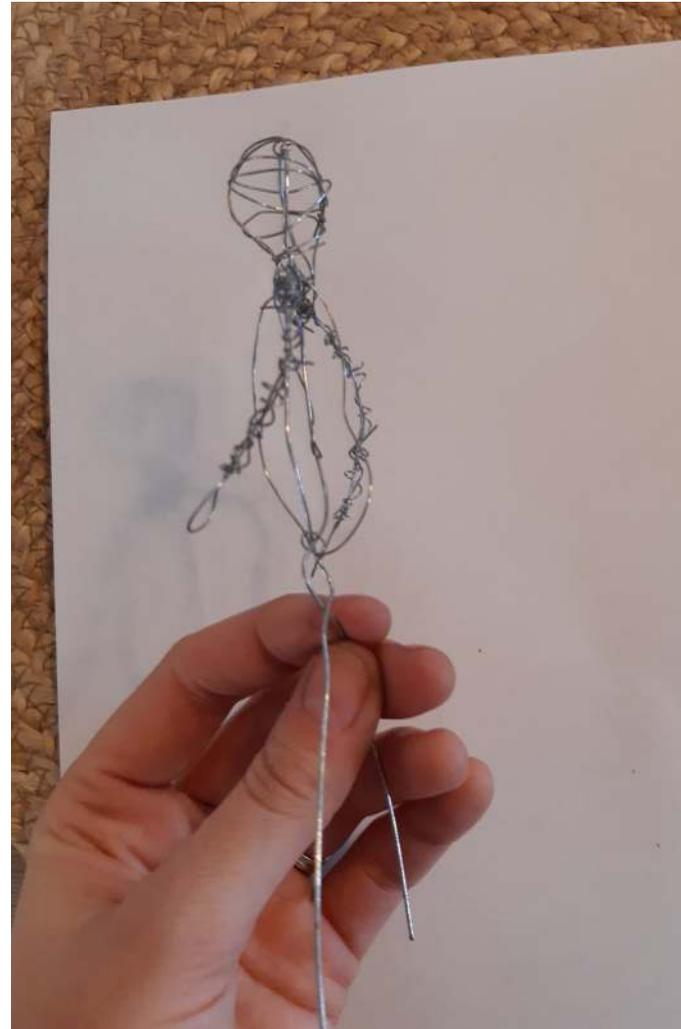
Fold wire in half, make loop end for hands and twist to secure onto the body...watch out for sharp bits!



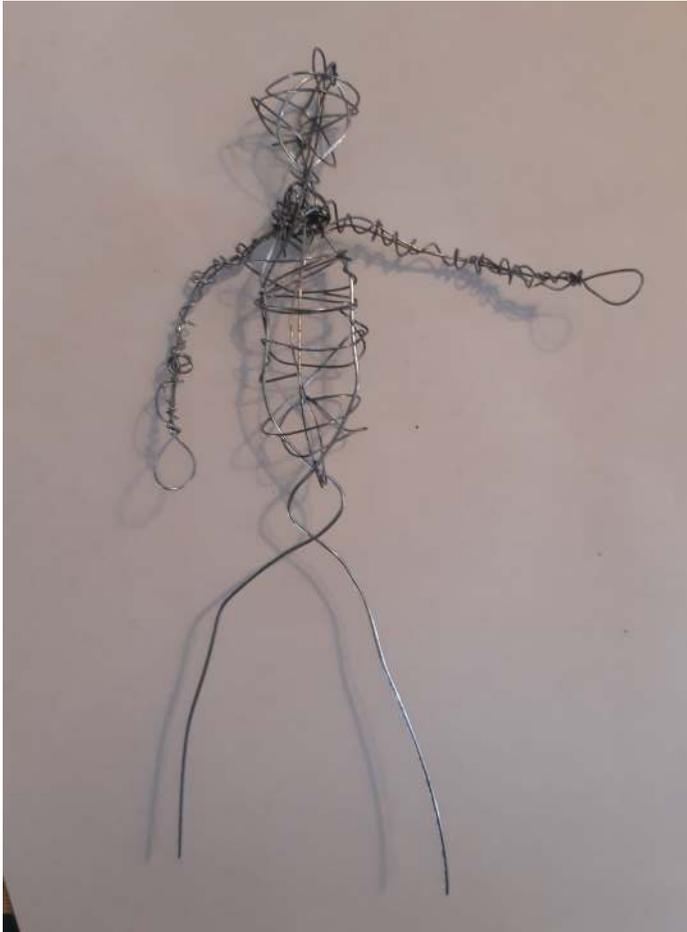
Wrap around pieces of wire to fill out the arms and add stability.

Step 3: The Head

Wrap pieces of wire around the head to make it three dimensional and add form.



Step 4: The legs and torso. Wrap and twist thin wire around torso and legs to create volume and form and make your figure three dimensional.



Step 5: Add more volume (the muscles)

Once you are happy with your wire skeleton, wrap some foil over it to add volume and define the form. If you don't have foil you can also use some thread/ wool or yarn if you have it. Bend your figure into the pose you want. If you want it in a standing position you can glue your figure to a board or create a stand for him.



Wool/ thread option



Foil option. Use small pieces of foil at a time. Be gentle on your wire skel-

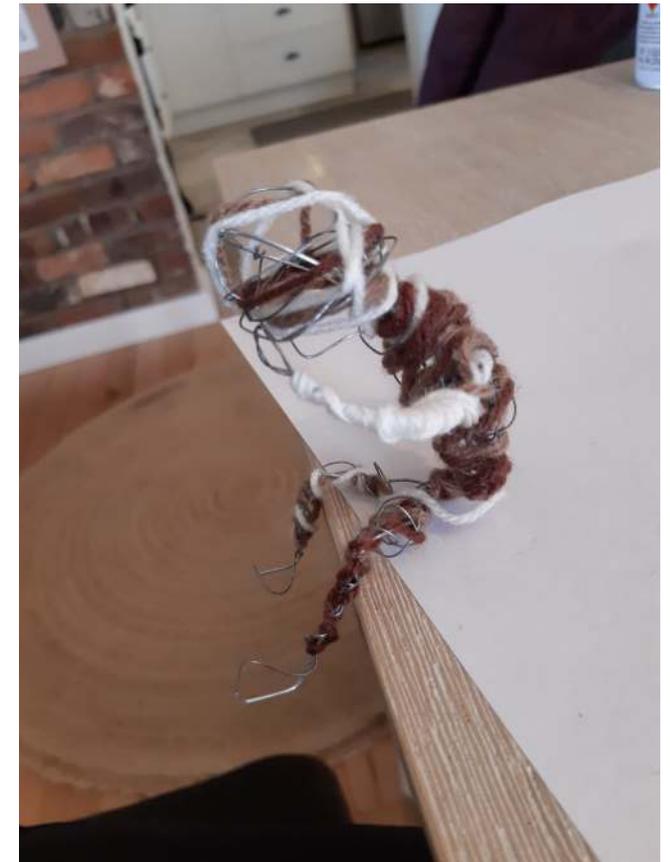


Step six: Strike a pose!

Bend your figure into the pose you want. If you want it in a standing position you can glue your figure to a board or create a stand for him.



Foil option



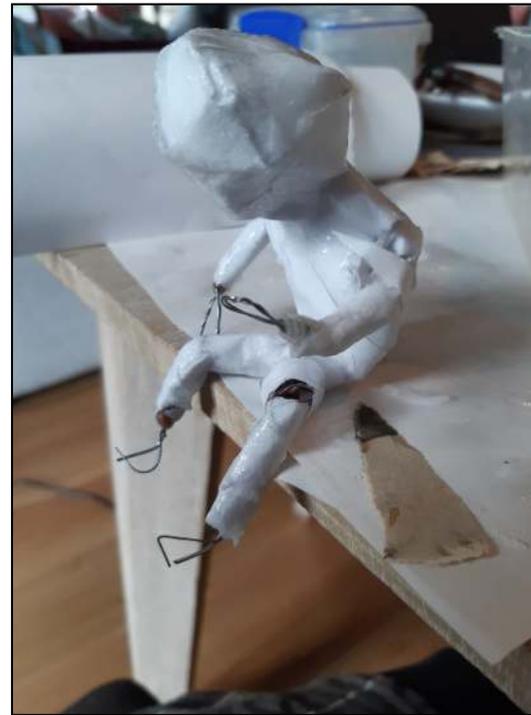
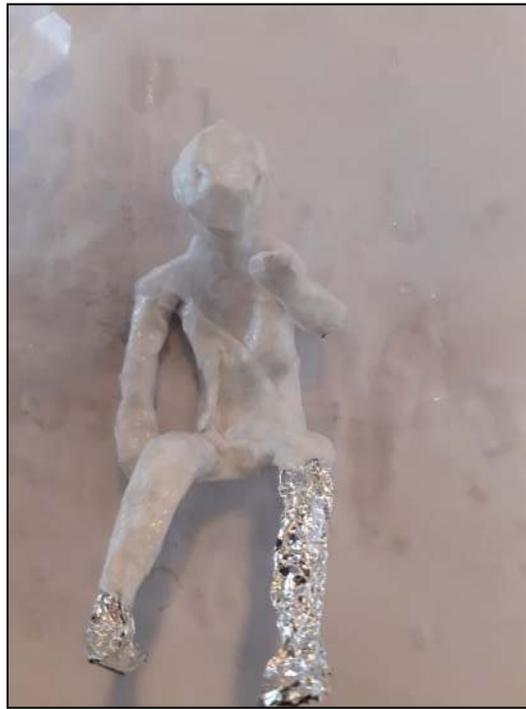
Wool/ yarn/ thread option

Step seven: Cover your figure with its skin! (paper Mache)

Paper Mache your figure. Mix up your glue. Tear up small pieces of white paper. (thin paper works best) Dip your paper in the glue, scrape off excess glue with your fingers, and wrap the glue soaked paper around your wire frame carefully. Use your fingers to shape and smooth it down. This bit is fiddly and tricky so patience is required.



Foil option



Wool/ thread option



Hint: This is particularly tricky at first as the paper doesn't stick well to the wire or foil at first. Keep persisting and you will find that the Paper Mache sticks to itself. So once you have a few pieces on it gets easier!

Step 8: Leave to dry

Once you have done the first layer of Paper Mache you may find it a bit soft and delicate to work with. Leave the first layer to dry overnight before adding more layers of paper Mache until you are happy and you feel it is finished.



Layer one foil option

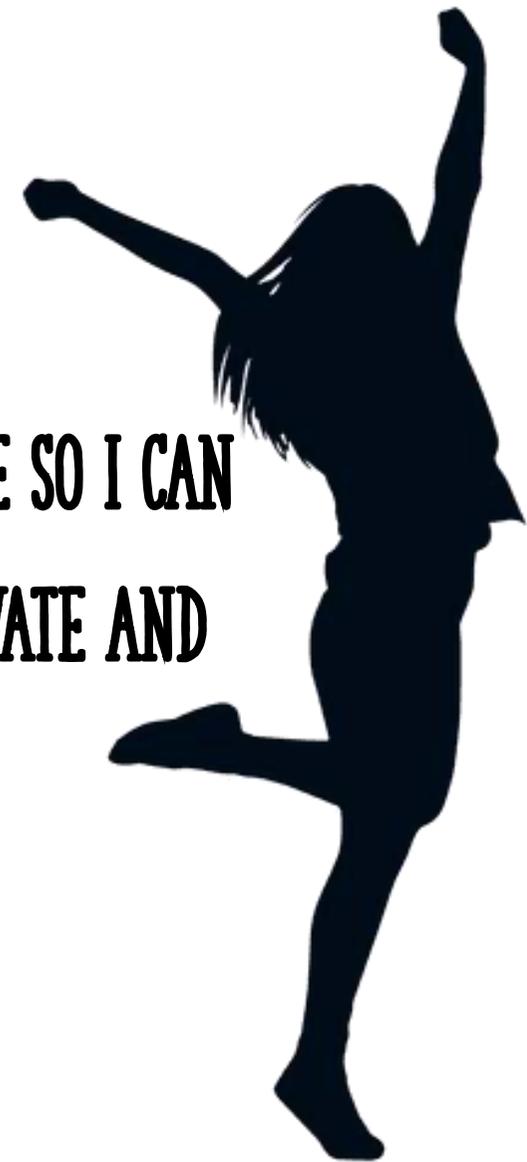


Layer one complete and left to dry
Overnight thread/ yarn option.

Step 9: Keep adding layers and layers of glue and paper until a desired thickness is achieved. If you want it thick you might have to let it dry after a few layers each time so it is easier to work with.



Layer 2 completed and left to dry overnight thread/ yarn option.



SHARE YOUR CREATIONS!

**SEND PICTURES OF WHAT YOU HAVE MADE TO ME SO I CAN
SHARE THEM ON THE GALLERIES BLOG TO MOTIVATE AND
INSPIRE OTHERS!**

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