

# Safe Space Sculpture Exhibition Devonport Regional Gallery

Oct 3- Nov 14 2020

# SAFES SPACE SCULPTURES



**Task:** Visit the *Safe Space* sculpture exhibition currently on at the Devonport Regional gallery (until Nov 14) and create your own sculpture around the theme/ concept of *safe space*. What is a safe space? What is an un-safe space?

Thinking about the concept of safe space, have a think about what this means to you? Where do you feel safe/ unsafe? What makes you safe/unsafe? Visit the *Safe Space* exhibition at the gallery for further insight into how other artists have incorporated this concept into their work. Create a three dimensional artwork around this concept that reflects your idea of Safe Space.

*Perhaps it evokes a feeling of terror or comfort and warmth. How can you send the viewer your message through your visual art? Art packs containing some basic materials for constructing a three dimensional artwork such as: milk cartons, paper Mache glue, newspaper, paper and wire are available from the gallery. From this you could create a diorama of a scene or create a sculpture using these and any other materials you may have at home. You might like to do some brainstorming sketches before you begin to construct your work. In this process have a think about how you will construct the object and the materials you will use.*



# Definitions

## Safe

*Adjective*

Protected from or not exposed to danger or risk; not likely to be harmed or lost.

## Space

1. A continuous area or expanse which is free, available, or unoccupied.

*“a table took up much of the space”*

2. The dimensions of height, depth, and width within which all things exist and move

*“the work gives the sense of a journey in space and time”*

## Concept

*Noun*

1. A general notion or idea; conception
2. An idea of something formed by mentally combining all of its characteristics or particulars; a construct.
3. A directly conceived or intuited object of thought





Here are some examples of artworks that contain messages around the concept of safe space. What do you think each is saying? How/ what clues does the work give you about it's message?



Gun Legler, *Dream Bubble*, digital artwork, 2012



Image from New York Times, Hanna Barczyk





The current pandemic and its influence on street artists is apparent in cities around the world. Why do you think I chose this work when discussing the concept of Safe Space?







Another example of current pandemic inspired street art.

## You Will Need:

- Any materials you think will be suitable for the construction of your idea in three dimensional form. Materials such as: milk cartons and plastic bottles, sticks, wire, aluminium foil, found objects, clay, skewers, Paper Mache, soap, plaster of Paris, wet sand.
- Materials to help you with your process of assembling/ creating your sculpture such as: glue, PVA glue, sticky tape, string etc.
- Art packs (limited number) containing some wire, Paper Mache glue, Newspaper, paper, balloon, paddle pop sticks, and a skewer, are available from the gallery while stocks last (22nd October 2020).

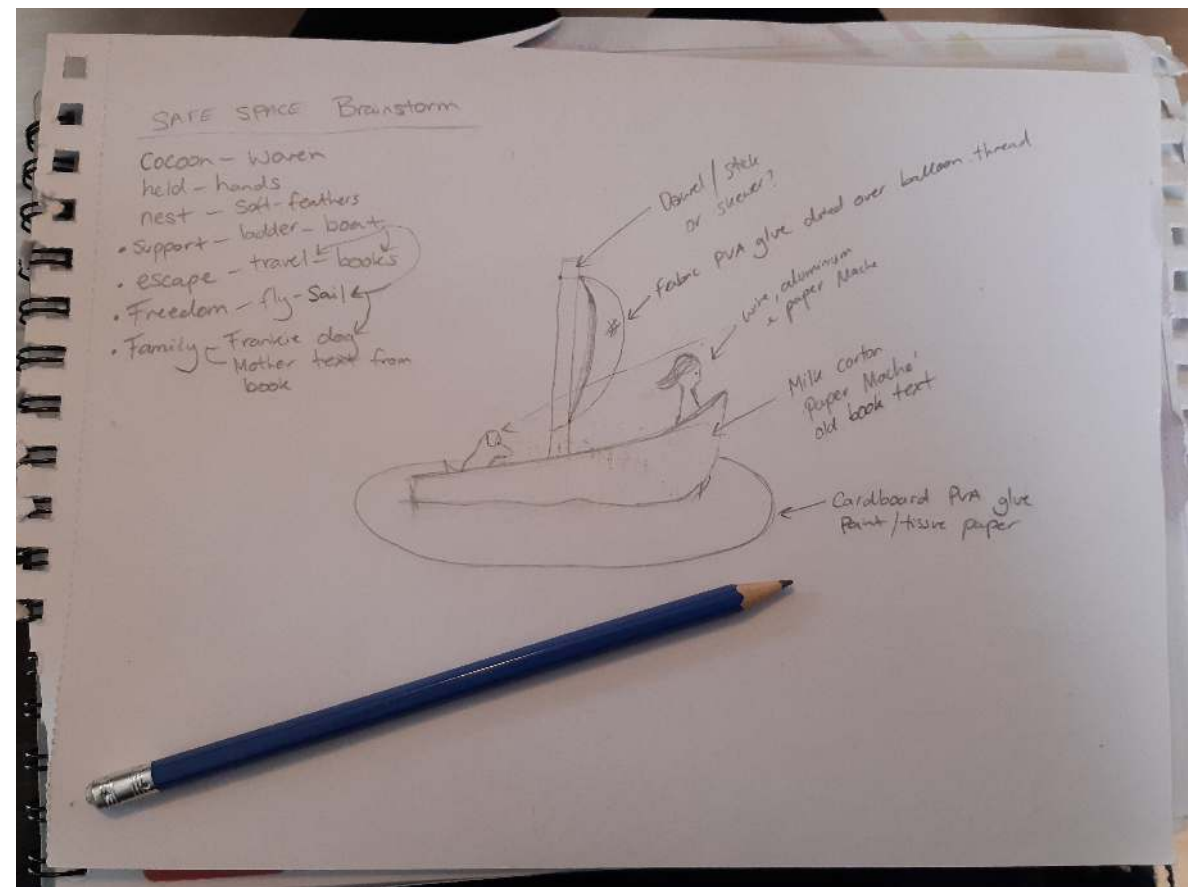


Materials in this weeks art packs available from the gallery in limited number: Cel Mix paper Mache glue, newspaper, paper, wire, balloon, skewer, paddle pop sticks, milk carton.





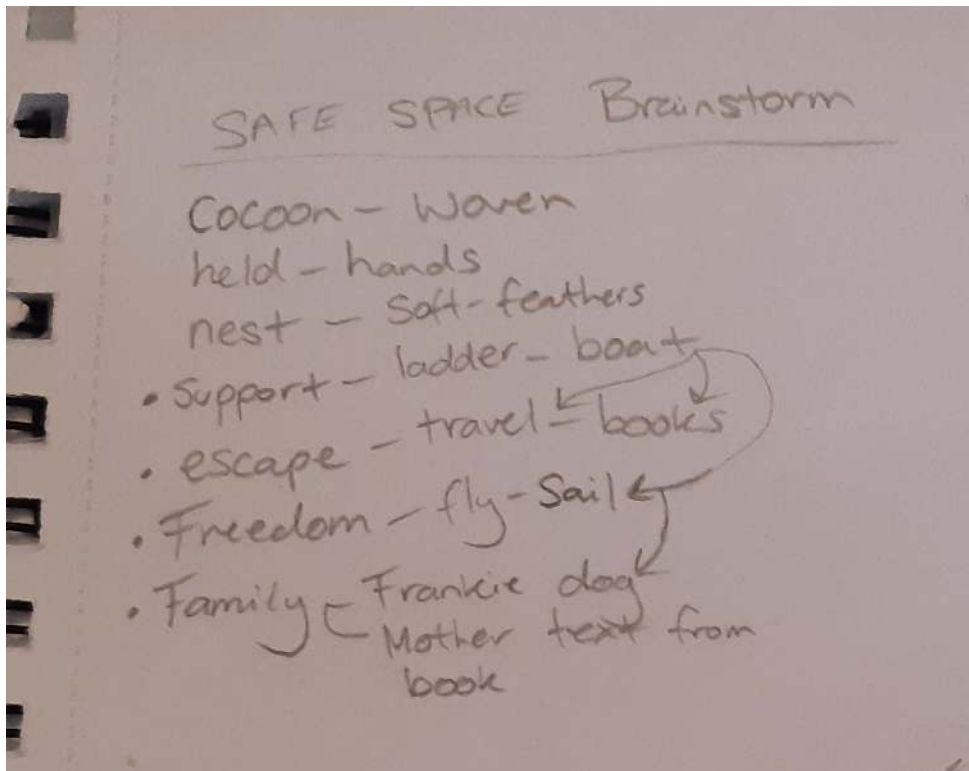
Brainstorming sketches and text.



## Step 1: Brainstorming ideas.

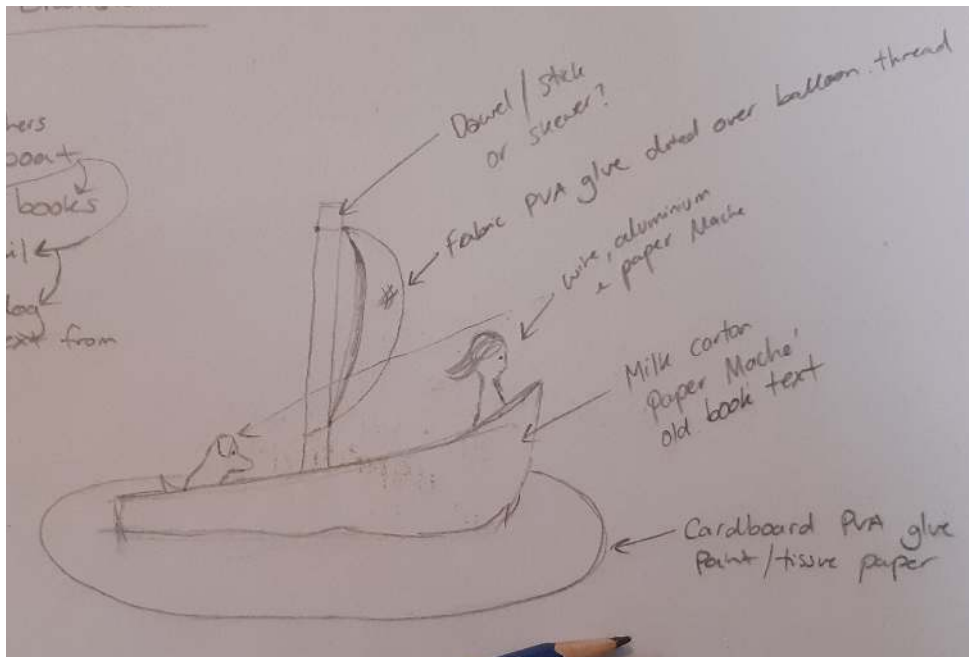
Thinking about what safe space means to you, write down or sketch your ideas for ways you can represent this in a three dimensional sculpture. Writing down some words that come to mind is a good starting point. When you have decided on what you want to make, have a think about how best to go about constructing your sculpture. Gather any materials you may have at home and materials from the art packs...*The following pages give examples from my working process and construction of my Safe Space sculpture. It is just one example... Your sculpture and processes will vary depending on what you construct.*

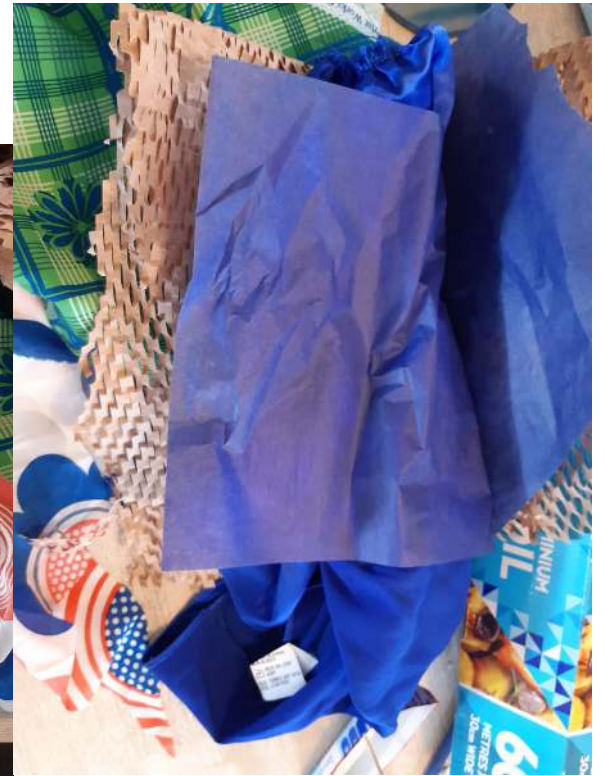




## Step 1 continued... Developing your ideas

I started by writing down words that came to me that related to my idea of what safe space is including the things and feelings that evoke the idea of safe space. From these first words I then wrote down words that related to them, thinking about how these words could be represented. For example: "escape" which led to "travel" which led to "books". This is one way you can start putting your ideas around a concept together. From my list of words I put a few together to form the basis of my work. These were: support- boat, escape- travel- books, freedom- fly- sail, and family- Frankie dog- mother. Using these words I developed my final sketch.





## Step 2: Gather more materials as needed...

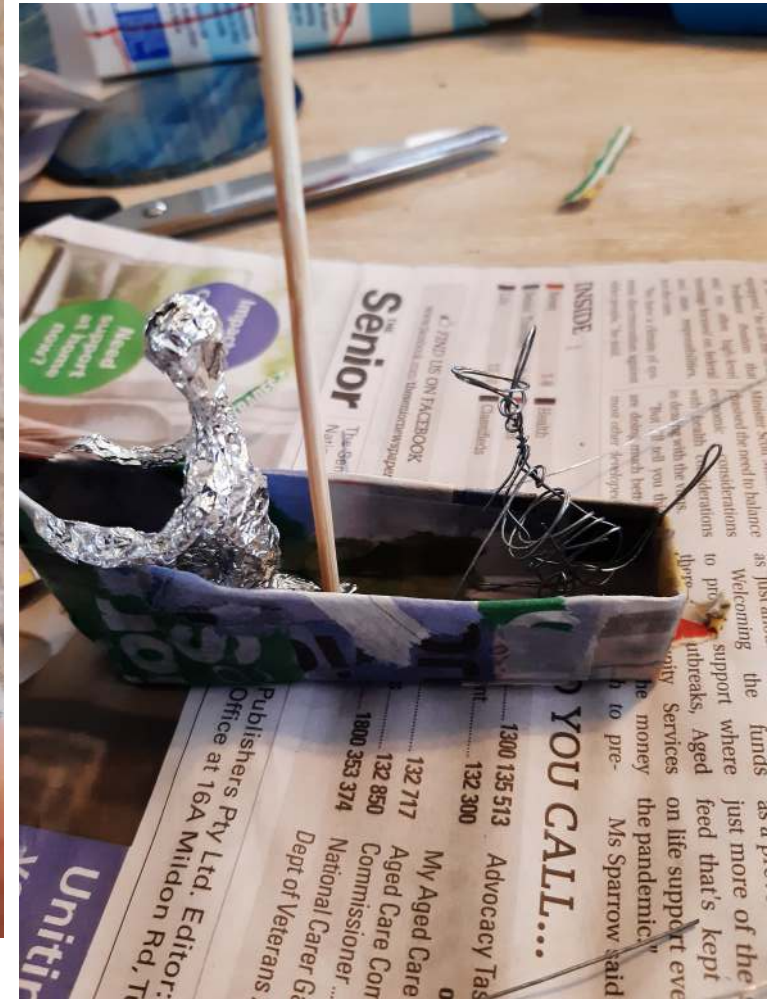
When you have decided what you are going to make, have a think about what materials you need and have a look around the house for suitable materials to use. For my sculpture I needed materials to make the boat, the mast and sails, the figures and the sea. In addition to what was in the art pack at home I found some blue tissue paper, paint and PVA glue for the sea, fabric for the sail and old book pages for the boat.



### Step 3: Start your construction.

Think about what steps you need to take to construct your sculpture and what order best to do them in. This involves thinking through your process a bit first. For my sculpture I needed to create a sail boat to hold two figures and a stand that resembles the ocean/ water. I used a milk carton and Paper Mache to create the boat first. I cut out the two sides of the boat from the milk carton allowing extra for the sides to create the three dimensional form. I stuck it together using sticky tape and cut a piece of skewer for the mast. I then Paper Mache'd over the boat.





## Step 4: Construction continued...

Continue the steps necessary to construct your sculpture. You may have a couple of different steps/ pieces to your sculpture. For my next step I constructed the figures that were going in the boat. I used some wire for their skeletons so they could be bent into shape, then foil to fill out the shape, followed by a layer of Paper Mache with newspaper, then a layer with thin white paper.





Step 4: continued...





## Step 5: Construction Continued...

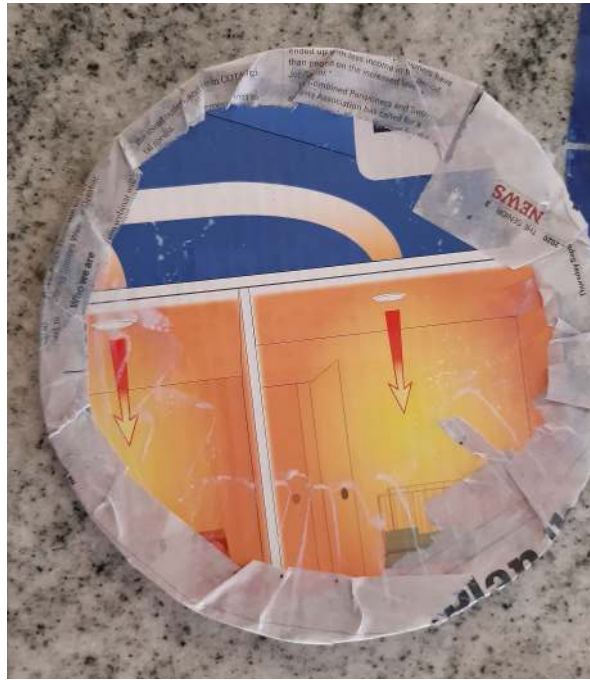
After the figures were done I finished off the boat with a layer of Paper from an old book. I chose some of the text (mother) to further represent the concept of Safe Space in my work.





## Step 6: Construction continued...

After I had constructed the boat and the figures I created the sail. I used some fabric I had at home and PVA glue and balloon from the art pack. I blew up the balloon enough to make a good shape to give the illusion of wind in the sail. I dipped the fabric in PVA glue and draped it over the inflated balloon. I left it overnight to dry and set in shape.



## Step 7: Construction Continued...

For the sea/ stand for the boat I used some cardboard I had at home, cut it into a circle, Paper Mache'd over with the last layer done in blue tissue paper. I then put it between some boards under heavy books to dry overnight. The heavy books were to stop it from warping and bending as it dried. This is a simple way of creating a blue water effect.





## Step 8: Putting it all together

Once everything was dried I assembled the pieces together. I used a hot glue gun to attach the sail I had made to the mast and attached some string.



## Step 9: Decorating and final touches.

When everything is dried its time to add any finishing touches and decoration including paint if needed. I decided to leave my figures plain to contrast against the text on the boat so will give them a couple of coats of white acrylic paint (not pictured). I also researched online how to make realistic water as I was not happy with the blue tissue paper result. I discovered that layering toilet paper with PVA glue then using a brush to create waves is very effective. See YouTube tutorial [here](#). This process is not as simple as the blue tissue paper and takes more time. Once the toilet paper waves have dried I will add a coat of paint then coat it with clear PVA glue to give the water some shine.



**Visit the *Safe Space* exhibition at the gallery (on in the main gallery until November 14th!)**

As you walk around the room take notice of how each work relates to the concept of Safe Space. Also take notice of the materials the artists have used and how they have used them to create a three dimensional object.

There are two distinct methods for creating sculpture. Additive sculpture: a technique where materials are added together and/ or built up to create a sculpture including assemblage, construction, and modelling; and subtractive sculpture: a technique where materials are removed to create a work, including carving. There are many different methods for working with materials to create sculptural art works including gluing, tying, welding, modelling, and assembling.



**Assemblage:** adding pieces together. These can be found objects that are assembled together using techniques such as gluing, welding and tying.



**Additive:** constructing a sculptural form by adding to it and building it up into a shape/ object such as above when hand building with clay.



**Casting:** taking a mould of an object and casting it as seen below.



**Subtractive:** removing parts of the materials to create a shape/ objective such as when carving.

**Some words from the curator**  
**about the exhibition:** (Some notes  
for parents/ adults).

*Safe Space contemporary sculpture brings together three-dimensional art works by twelve Australian artists that explore psychological aspects of physical space.*

*It features a range of figurative elements and narrative themes with social, and sometimes political, resonances. Many of the works in this exhibition take as their point of departure: the human body, its dimensions, the spaces it occupies, the narratives that contain it and the theatre or spectacle that unfolds around it.*



Abdul-Rahman Abdullah, *The boy who couldn't sleep*, 2017

Painted wood, buffalo horn, 56 x 127 x 74 cm

Photograph by Abdul-Rahman Abdullah

Image courtesy of the artist and Moore Contemporary



*The tone of the exhibition ranges from humour and playfulness, nurturing and warmth, through to unease, psychodrama and melancholy. The social themes touched on include privacy versus public space, refuge and sanctuary, agoraphobia and claustrophobia. These blur into psychological themes of risk, exposure, harm, frailty, isolation, suffocation and protection. Political themes include sexual and labour exploitation of Aboriginal women in Australia's colonial history and the fate of refugees who come to Australia in boats: being turned back, detained or drowned at sea.*



Alex Seton, *Someone Else's Problem*, 2015

Marble dust, epoxy resin, Tasmanian Oak, cable ties

Dimensions variable (approximately 300 x 200 x 200 cm)

Photography by Mark Pokorny

Image courtesy of the artist and sullivan+strumpf

*The title of the exhibition coaxes viewers to consider the ways these art works engage the themes of safety and its lack; space in all its rich possibility and—perhaps unexpectedly—in all its difficulty. Sculpture is conventionally defined by the way it occupies three dimensions. Yet these works project into other psychological and cultural dimensions; those that cannot be contained within the physical realm.*

**Christine Toussainte Morrow**

**Curator**



Will French, *Self portrait with pickles*, 2013

Hand carved enamel-painted alloy figure, gherkins, brine, dill in 1-litre glass jar, 18 x 9 cm

Image courtesy of the artist



**Opportunity to be part of an art exhibition at the Devonport Regional Gallery!! Register your interest now!**



**Devonport  
Regional Gallery**  
*Presents*

**HOME IS WHERE THE 'ART IS**

**Exhibition** 30th January- 14th March 2021

An exhibition of works created in homes during the COVID 19 restrictions as part of the Devonport Regional Gallery's on-line art programs, 'Home is Where the 'Art is'.

Open to anyone who has or who would like to create works as part of the on-line art workshops available at: [paranapleartscentre.com.au/devonport-regional-gallery/public-programs-creative-learning/](https://paranapleartscentre.com.au/devonport-regional-gallery/public-programs-creative-learning/)

Please register your interest in participating by email:  
[artgallery@devonport.tas.gov.au](mailto:artgallery@devonport.tas.gov.au)



**DEVONPORT  
REGIONAL  
GALLERY**



SHARE  
YOUR  
CREATIONS!

Send in  
Photos of your  
Safe Space Sculptures

[artgallery@devonport.tas.gov.au](mailto:artgallery@devonport.tas.gov.au)