



Edinburgh Art Festival invites
you to get creative at home

A Float for the Future

Tune into your senses to make a mini float for the future
inspired by your favourite outdoor green space



Home Creativity Kit by Pester & Rossi

A Float for the Future by Pester & Rossi

What is a Float for the Future?

Our float is going to be a small raft that we are going to build from materials we find around us that float on water. The float will have a set of sails which we are going to design using a series of drawing exercises which reflect and meditate on the natural world around us, exploring ways we can use our senses to connect with nature.

Each image is accompanied by a short visual description, which can be found on pages 11-13.

A Float for the Future – DIY Art Home Creativity Kit was created by Ruby Pester. Ruby is an artist based in Glasgow, and she collaborates with artist Nadia Rossi under the collaborative artist name Pester & Rossi. As Pester & Rossi, their practice derives from visual art, and leads to creating live art, sculpture, installation and public interventions, in response to people and places. They embrace a collective working approach, hosting public events and workshops, often working with young people to inform their practice.

What you will need

- A bundle of sticks – various lengths and medium thickness
- A ball of string
- Scissors
- Paper or card
- Paint(s)
- Paintbrushes
- Cup of water
- Something to use as a paint palette

When you have made your artworks, we'd love to include them in an online exhibition on our community engagement blog. Share your creations by emailing images to learning@edinburghartfestival.com, and look for ideas and inspiration at edartfestcommunityengagement.com

Finding a special green space



1. Choose a green space with a body of water you love to go and spend time in – it might be a park, garden, by the canal, a pond, a loch, or a river. I've chosen my Dad's garden which I love to hang out in and I'm going to make my float for the pond in the garden. Next, gather a bundle of sticks from your surroundings. Take a moment to find a comfortable spot to make your float, this could be outdoors or indoors if the weather is bad.

Knots



2. We will start by making the structure for our float. Take 4 sticks roughly the same length and thickness, string and scissors. This is going to be the base of your raft. Now we are going to learn 2 basic knots, a clove hitch and a square lashing, which you will need to put your raft together. First we will start with the clove hitch. Take 1 stick and cut about an arms length piece of string. Near the top end of the stick wrap the string around the stick in a cross shape with 1 short tail and 1 long tail end. Take the short tail end and thread it through the middle of the cross, make sure it is threaded through underneath the string which makes the cross.

Tip: If you are looking for more detail about creating knots, I recommend looking up *Animated Knots* – www.animatedknots.com



3. Pull the short and long end of the string tight and bunch the cross of string together on the stick so that it is tight and secure. You should still have a short end and a long end of string with a secure knot around the stick.



4. Take your second stick and place it on top of the first stick with the knot on to create a cross shape at the top end of the sticks. Almost like the shape of the letter A or an upside down V. Take the long end of string and wrap it over the stick on top, then under the bottom stick, then over the top stick, then under the bottom stick and so on as you wrap the string around in a sort of square.



5. Once you have done this about 3 times over, wrap the string around the middle of the 2 sticks where they cross. Again repeat 3 times pulling everything tight as you go and then tie the 2 ends of the string together tightly in a knot. Trim any long ends if need be.

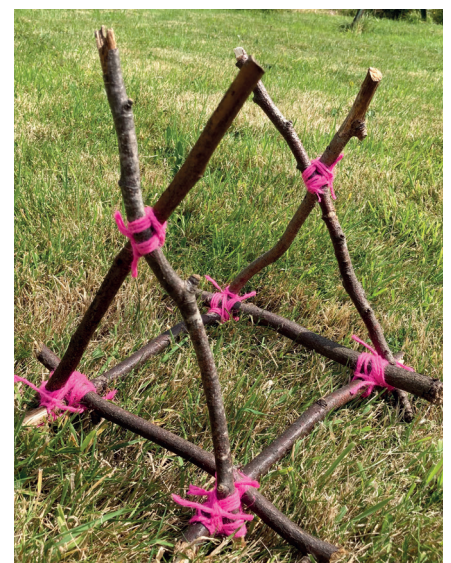
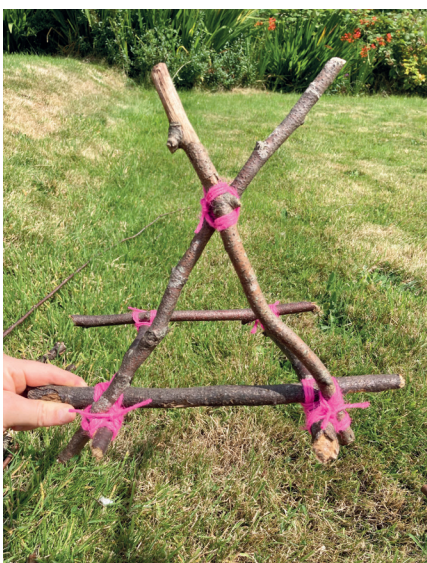
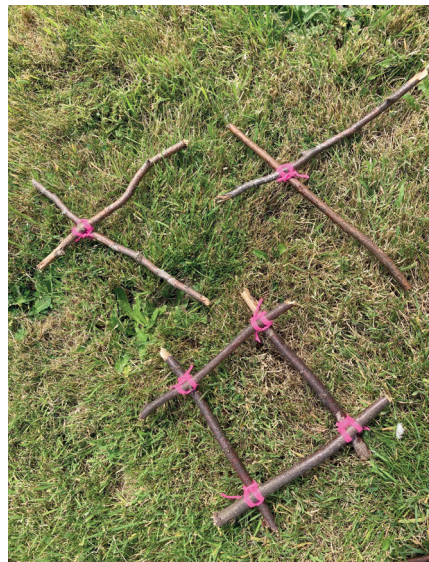


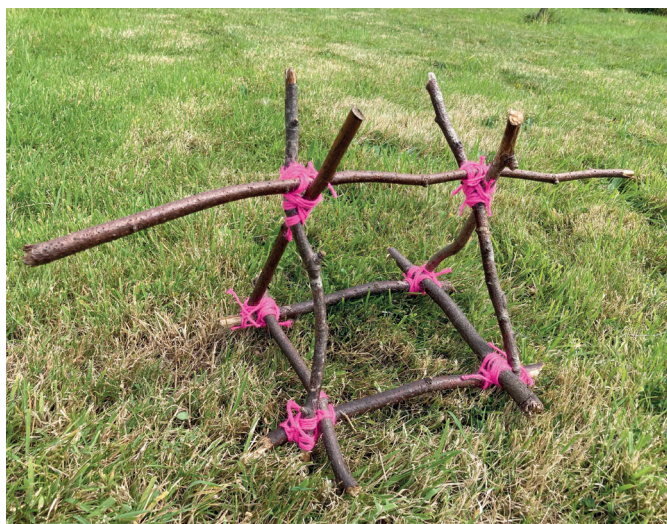
6. Repeat this process always starting with the clove hitch knot and then the square lashing with the next 2 sticks until your sticks are knotted in a complete square.

Building the float structure

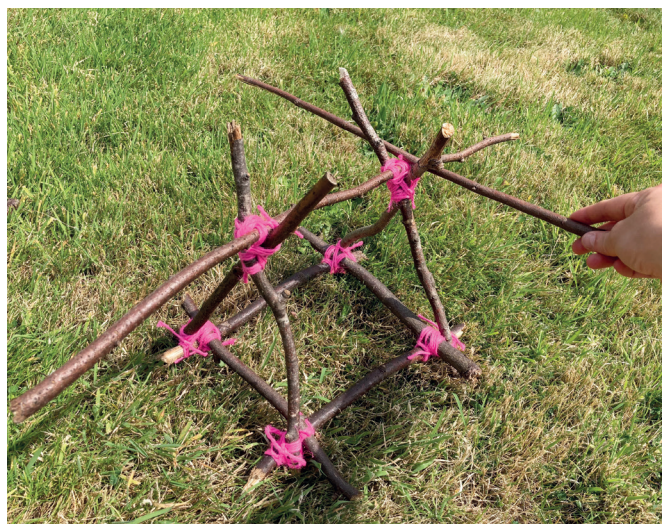
7. Once you have your square base, make 2 more V shapes (you will need 2 sticks for each so 4 in total) using the same knot tying processes. You should have 1 square and 2 separate V stick shapes.

8. Attach the upside-down V shapes at 2 sides of the square using the same knot tying processes.





9. Take a longer stick and prop it between the 2 upside down V crosses and tie it on. There should be a bit of length on the stick either side of the Vs, approximately the same length on either side as the sticks you have used in the square base. This is where our sails will tie on to the float.



10. You can continue to add more sticks to the base for more floating power and/or more sticks to hang sails from if you want to.



Does it float?

11. See if it floats! Test run! Use a long stick to fish it in and out of the water if you need to!



Nature gathering

12. Hurrah we now have our float ready to go! Now we are going to start making our sails but first take a little break, take a breath, take a drink, take a nibble and have a wander around to take in the sights. See what catches your eye. Zoom into something small. Open up your senses – what can you see, hear, smell, taste, touch? Gather a few small cuttings or natural things you find of interest in the area.

Paper sails



13. Have a seat and set up your work space so it feels good for you. Lay out your objects, get out your paints, water, palette, choose some colours. I went for primary colours to draw with and black to write words with. Cut out 4 pieces of paper or card for your sails – measure them up against your float structure to get the right size.



14. For the first painting choose 1 of your objects, close your eyes and touch it and begin to make marks on the paper of what it feels like to you. Is it soft or jagged? Smooth or furry? Feel each part of it for a few seconds and tune into the different sensations. Make every mark on the page a sensation you are feeling through touching this object.



15. Now look at your wonderful drawing! Do you want to add some words to it? Paint any words that come up for you when experiencing this object, maybe it is a memory of it in your past or a vision of it for the future. Does it make you feel a certain way? I tasted my object as it was a fruit and used words to describe the taste. It reminded me of making fruit potions in the garden with my sister when I was a child and I imagined a huge fruit forest with loads of different fruits for people to come to and pick all the fruit they liked for free.



16. Take a new piece of paper you've cut out for another sail. For this drawing try to focus on where you are and what your body feels like in this place. You could close your eyes again to zone in. I felt the warm breeze on my skin and the heat from the sun on my leg. Choose a colour and make marks on the page of the sensations you are feeling. Try not to think too much about how the marks should look, just draw the feeling on the page. Once you have made your marks you can also use words to describe where you are and what your body feels like.



17. For the next sail painting, take a fresh piece of paper and pick up another object. This time we are going to focus on our sense of smell and touch. I chose a sprig of rosemary and lavender. As you carefully touch the object(s) all over, paint marks on the paper to show the textures you are discovering. What does its surface feel like? Does 1 part feel different to the other? Do this until you feel you have fully discovered every part of the object through your fingertips.

Then start to take a sniff of the object. Paint words on top of your texture painting to describe the smells and any memories of the scent that comes to you. How does the smell make you feel? You can also paint words to describe the texture of the object.



18. For your last sail painting, we are going to open our eyes and our ears. Pick up another object and take a very close look at it. What do you notice about it? Paint the shapes you see within this object on the paper. Does it remind you of something else? Then listen closely to everything around you all together and then try to separate the sounds. There will probably be louder sounds and quieter sounds and everything in between. Closing your eyes might help to focus on this. What sounds do you hear first, second, third? What do you hear close to you and what do you hear far away from you? Again paint big bold words on your paper to describe what you noticed whilst looking at your object and the sounds you hear around you.

Attaching your sails



19. Next you should make holes in the corners of your sails and thread a piece of string through each hole to tie them onto your float. You can use scissors to make little slots or a small stick to punch a hole through the paper. I tied 2 sails to the middle section of my float and then 2 sails at either side of the float. All of the sails can be tied to the longer stick you tied onto the top of the float. Feel free to play around with different placings with your sails on the float.

Launch your Float for the Future!



20. Now your float is complete with sails and you are ready to take it to water! You might find it helpful to use a long stick to fish it in and out of the water. You can also guide it in the water by tying a long piece of string between the supporting stick and the float to pull it along. Take photos of your float in its environment and enjoy!

Image Descriptions

FRONT COVER

The artist Ruby Pester's Float for the Future raft, made from sticks knotted together with pink string and 3 paper sails with painted imagery and words. It floats on a pond, surrounded by green duckweed.

PAGE 3

Top image: A pond in a garden. The pond has duckweed and a grey plastic ornamental duck floating on it. The pond is surrounded by large stones.

Bottom images show the process for tying a clove hitch knot with 1 stick and pink string. The background is grass.

Further detail:

Right image: A hand holding a stick with string attached to it. The background is grass.

Left image: A close up of the stick with the string arranged in the shape of a clove hitch knot.

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Images show the process of tying a square lashing knot with 2 sticks and pink string. The background is grass.

Further detail:

Top image, left: A stick with a piece of string attached.

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Top image, centre: 2 sticks overlapping, arranged in a cross shape with a hand holding them together with a piece of string.

Top image, right: The sticks tied together with the string being pulled taught by the artist's hand.

Bottom image, left: A close up of the 2 sticks bound together with the string being pulled through by the artist's hand to create the knot.

Bottom image, right: A close up of the 2 sticks from a different angle, with the stick on the left out of focus held by the artist's hand. The knot is central.

PAGE 5

Images show the process of creating the structure of the raft using the clove hitch and square lashing knot techniques, using more sticks and pink string. The background is grass.

Further detail:

Top image, left: The artist's hand holds 2 sticks, that have been tied together through knots, forming an upside down v-shape.

Top image, right: The image shows a hand holding 4 sticks which have been knotted together into a square shape.

Middle image, left: 2 sets of sticks, creating cross shapes lie at the top of the image, tied together with string where they cross. At the bottom of the image lies a square shape made of sticks tied together with string.

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Middle image, right: The artist's hand holds the square base made of strings and knots from the side, showing how the upside-down v-shape sticks knotted together have been attached. In the foreground there is foliage and flowers.

Bottom image, left: The artist's hand holds the square base, showing how the upside down v-shape sticks have been attached, showing the raft structure from the front angle. Foliage and flowers are in the foreground.

Bottom image, centre: The artist's hand holds the square base, showing how the upside-down v-shape sticks have been attached, showing the raft structure from the side angle. Foliage and flowers are in the foreground.

Bottom image, right: The raft structure, comprised of a base of 4 sticks tied together, and 2 crossed sticks tied together at either end of the base attached with string, sits on grass.

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Top image, left: The long stick is held up by the crossed sticks at either end of the raft. The raft sits on grass.

Top image, right: Sat on grass, the raft structure, and on the left hand side the artist's hand holding another long stick in place at 1 end of the raft as an example of where you could continue to attach sticks.

Bottom image, left: The raft structure in the pond surrounded by duckweed.

Bottom image, right: A selection of plant cuttings on white paper.

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Images show the artist painting and writing words on card to create the sail paintings. The materials are laid out on a white bistro style garden table.

Further detail:

Top image, left: A bramble cutting, pair of scissors and a piece of cardboard with the artist's hand painting red and green paint marks.

Top image, right: A close-up of the artist's hand holding a bramble and 'sweet seed' written in black on the card.

Bottom, left: A close up of the card with more words added – 'garden potions' and 'fruit forest'.

Bottom, right: The artist's hand holding a paintbrush, painting words on top of yellow marks, on a new piece of card.

PAGE 8

Images show the artist painting and writing words on card to create the sail paintings. The materials are laid out on a white bistro style garden table.

Further detail:

Top image, left: A piece of white card with green and purple painted marks. There is a cutting of lavender to the left and with a cutting of rosemary to the right.

Top image, right: The same painting but with text in black added on top. The artist's hand on the left holds a cutting of rosemary. In the top of the image there is a roll of pink string.

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Bottom image, left: 3 pieces of card with marks, shapes and words. On the left is a piece of cardboard being used as a paint palette and on the right is a pair of scissors.

Bottom image, right: A close up of the painted cards with text. On the left there is a cutting of a fern and a montbretia flower.

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Top image, left: 4 sail paintings on the table.

Top image, right: A close up of 1 sail painting, being held up by the artist's hand, with pink string being threaded through holes made in the corners. In the background are the other sail paintings and a roll of pink string.

Bottom image, left: Tying sails onto either side of the float. The image shows a hand holding the float up from the front angle with the sail paintings tied onto it in different parts of the float. There is grass, plants, trees and blue sky in the background.

Bottom image, right: The image shows the same again, from the back angle.

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The 2 Images show the finished raft in the pond surrounded by duckweed from 2 different angles.

DIY Art is a series of activity packs from Edinburgh Art Festival and selected artists, inviting you to get creative at home. The instructional creativity kits give insight into an artist's practice, showing how you can use their processes and techniques to create your own unique artwork.

E.A.F.
Edinburgh
Art
Festival

Edinburgh Art Festival, founded in 2004, is the platform for the visual arts at the heart of Edinburgh's August festivals, bringing together the capital's leading galleries, museums, production facilities and artist-run spaces in a city-wide celebration of the very best in visual art. The festival features leading international and UK artists alongside the best emerging talent, major survey exhibitions of historic figures, and a special programme of newly commissioned artworks that respond to public and historic sites in the city. The vast majority of the festival is free to attend.

Edinburgh Art Festival Community Engagement runs a year-round programme of learning and engagement activities building long-term relationships with partner organisations, community groups and schools. Through our bespoke tours, workshops and projects we introduce and inspire people to get creative, removing barriers and broadening access to visual art and our festival programme.

edinburghartfestival.com | [@EdArtFest](https://twitter.com/EdArtFest) | edartfestcommunityengagement.com

As part of the Edinburgh Art Festival's Commissions Programme in 2022, Pester and Rossi presented ***Finding Buoyancy***, a project commissioned in partnership with Whale Arts and Bridge 8 Hub and Paddle Café, inspired by the stretch of the Union Canal at Wester Hailes, marking the 200th anniversary of the Union Canal. Over the past year, through a series of activities with residents living near the canal at Wester Hailes, the artists invited members of Whale Arts groups to explore ways we can connect with nature on our doorstep 'to help us stay afloat in uncertain times'. For the festival in August 2022, the artists presented an installation of colourful sail banners at Bridge 8 Hub. The artwork included drawn and written responses by local people generated through ***Finding Buoyancy – Sound Meditations*** and related drawing workshop – weaving together the voices and ideas of individuals who live, work, and play on the canal. ***A Float for the Future*** raft making workshops followed with collaborator and artist **Sarah Kenchington** working with Whale Arts participants, SCOREScotland Women's Group and residents of all ages for the **Wester Hailes Canal Connections Trail** part of the Flotilla200 celebration on 20 May 2022. The resulting ***Float for the Future*** raft was launched at Pester and Rossi's ***Setting Sail*** performance event – a highlight of Edinburgh Art Festival's opening weekend on the 31 July 2022 – with Rhubaba Choir and local people singing celebration songs they had penned together over a 3-month period, performed on The Sorted Project's Panacea canal boat, travelling from Bridge8 Hub to the Lochrin Basin.

www.pesterandrossi.com | [@pesterandrossi](https://twitter.com/pesterandrossi)

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