

WORKSHOP: "FIBRE WRAPPED FISH"



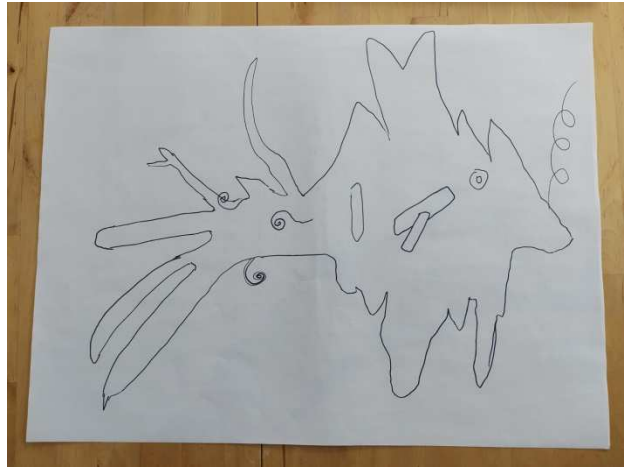
Summary: Participants used scrap flexible wire wrapped in old clothing and coated with a final colourful layer of fabric to build repurposed fish and other animal shapes on flat narrow boards using hot glue and/or small nails. Repurposed/found materials were used to embellish and define personalities for their creatures, such as eyes, bubble spirals and spines. A hanger was added to the back.

Materials and Equipment:

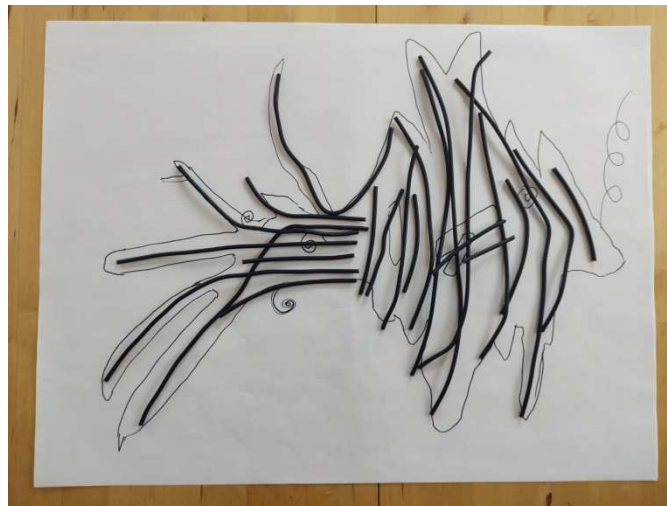
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| flexible thick black wire | pencil, eraser, sharpener |
| 3 t-shirts to cut up | sketch paper |
| colourful fabrics | paint brush |
| colourful yarn | t-shirt scraps |
| a button for an eye | plastic lids for palettes |
| colourful wire | plastic container for water |
| colourful beads | scissors |
| long narrow wood piece | pliers/cutters |
| acrylic paint assorted colours | sandpaper |
| glue gun and glue | safety glasses |
| cardboard for under glue gun | picture frame wire |
| coated gloves | d-rings and screws |
| fish sketch | screw driver matching screws |
| optional: found objects (not provided) | sewing kit |
| instructions/ideas sheet | 2 picture hooks and 2 nails |

Class Plan:

1. Decide what kind of animal shape you would like to create with your fibre covered wires.
2. Optional: sketch the outline of your animal shape to use as a guide. You can use the sketch provided if you prefer not to draw your own.



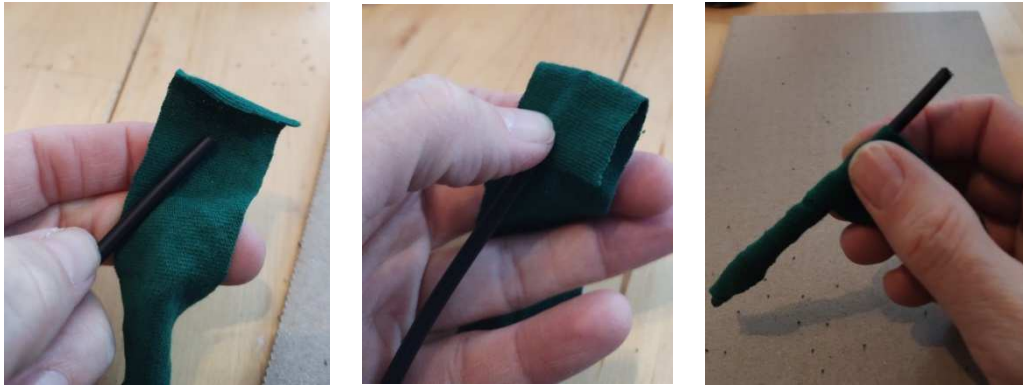
3. Choose or cut a selection of thick wire lengths by arranging them over your long narrow board to achieve the outline animal shape you are aiming for. You can add extra wires on top for things like fins.



4. Cut up the t-shirts provided into strips.



5. Wrap t-shirt strips around each length of wire, wrapping over the ends with extra thicknesses to protect your fingers from cut wire ends creating "fibre noodles".



6. You can hold your t-shirt in place in several ways, from easiest to hardest:
- Use hot glue to secure the ends of the fabric. We recommend wearing protective gloves and using pliers to press the fabric into the glue. Allow the glue to dry before holding that part of your noodle.



- Wrap and tie yarn over your t-shirt coated wire.



- If you like sewing you can stitch the ends down but this takes a lot longer.



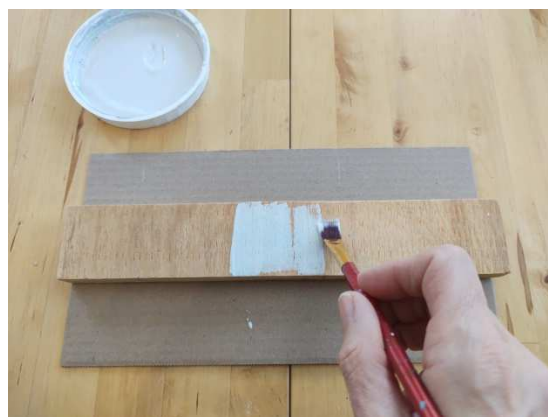
7. Wrap with t-shirt until your fabric noodles are about ½" thick. Thinner works better for smaller creatures. You can make them all different thicknesses for interest or lumpy. Add 2-3 layers of t-shirt fabric. Stop just before the thickness you want, because the decorative fabrics next will add a bit more thickness.



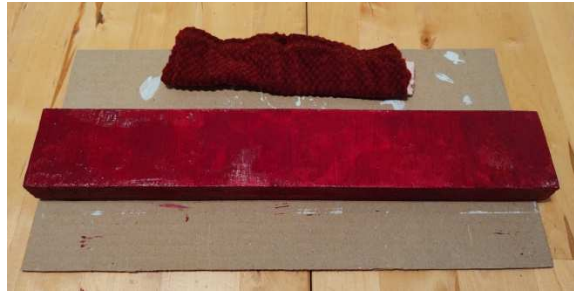
8. Cut strips of decorative fabrics.



9. Prepare your backing piece of wood:
- Add a coat of sludge primer to the front and edges of your board and allow to dry.



- Coat your backing board with paint similar to your main embellishment fabric. That way it won't show if your fibre noodles don't completely cover your wood.



10. Wrap each fibre noodle with one type of decorative fabric as a base coat.



11. Wrap another colour of decorative fabric over alternate noodles for the fish's body (left). We used a third decorative fabric just for the noodles to make the fins (right).



12. Wrap alternate tail noodles with yarn.



13. Optional decorations:

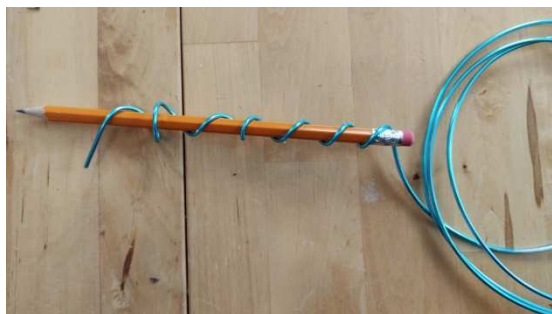
- a. Add embroidery stitches if you like to stitch.
- b. Wrap thin colourful wire threaded with beads over a few of your tail noodles for decoration.



- c. Add colourful wire spines to some of your fibre noodles. Bend your wire into a zigzag by hand, loop wire ends over your noodle ends. Wrap yarn over the zigzag and tie to hold the wire in place.



- d. Add a bubble wire spiral from your fish's mouth by wrapping coloured wire around a pencil. Pull the pencil out, thread the wire with a few beads and put a loop in one end so they don't fall off. Wrap the other wire end around the first noodle of your fish's face.



14. Line your fabric noodles up on your long narrow wood board in the order you like to create the shape you are aiming for. Bend your wires to add dimension to your creature if desired.



15. Glue your fabric noodles to your backing board applying hot glue to your wood board one noodle at a time. Press them into place, keeping your fingers away from the hot glue. We recommend wearing protective gloves when working with hot glue.



16. Keep adding noodles gluing them to the back board and each other. Glue the vertical body ones first, leaving space to attach the tail horizontally. Noodles can be glued to the edges of the backing board too.



17. Remove the glue hairs by hand or with masking tape once the glue has thoroughly dried.
18. Glue on a button eye.



19. Tie on found objects and other pieces of fabric to add decoration e.g. to create fins on a fish.
20. For a hanger, screw the d-ring hangers into the back of the wood, spacing them to balance the weight (left) and twist a wire around the hangers at each end (right).



21. Happy creating, and please share pictures of your creations if you feel comfortable.

Useful Information/Adaptions/Variations:

- Use driftwood and nails instead of wire, clothing and glue for a more organic feel.



Trouble Shooting:

- If your fabric noodles droop off your back board, add another layer of fabric wrapped very tightly. Tie it in place with yarn and try gluing your fabric noodle to your board again.
- If your hot glue shows, remove it with pliers or add another fibre noodle to cover it.