

Joyful Beings

Inspired by the Art of Niki de Saint Phalle



Niki de Saint Phalle spread joy through her art. What makes this sculpture seem happy?

What makes you joyful?

What do you do when you feel that way?

Use the wire, newspaper, tape, plaster bandages, and paint in this kit to make a joyful sculpture of your own.

Niki de Saint Phalle, *Dawn*, 1995.

Let's get started

You can make anything that brings you joy. In addition to sculptures of strong, powerful women like the one on the cover, Niki made



a snake tree



a larger-than-life alligator

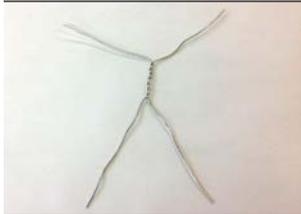


a firebird fountain

Here's how to make a four-limbed creature:



Gather your materials: newspaper, wire, tape, plaster bandages, water, wood block, paintbrush, and paint.



Twist the wires together in the middle to create a body with four limbs.



Scrunch a full sheet of newspaper so it is still long, and fold it in half.



Tape it around the body, leaving some for the head and wrapping each end around a leg.



Wrap more newspaper around the head, arms, and body to give more volume where you want it.



Dip each plaster bandage in water just before you put it on your sculpture.



Cover the body with plaster bandages, overlapping them in opposite directions.



After placing each bandage, lightly massage it with your finger to smooth the plaster and fill in all the holes in the cloth.



Make sure to leave the end of one wire exposed so you can attach it to the base.



Stick the wire into the hole in the block.



Add some plaster bandage around the connection to make a hand or foot. Once the plaster is hard and dry, you can paint it.

About Niki

Niki de Saint Phalle was born in France in 1930 but grew up in New York City. As a girl, she liked to read stories about dragons. She especially liked comic books starring supergirls and tales in which the maidens defeated the monsters.

When she grew up, Niki's art reflected her early interests. Her most famous sculptures are *Nanas*, a French slang word for women, like chicks or broads. Niki's Nanas were heroes—they were strong and bold and could do anything. She painted them many different colors to show that people of all colors should be celebrated and treated equally.

Niki also made sculptures for children to play on. In Jerusalem, she made *The Golem*, a monster from a Jewish fairy tale. Her golem had three tongues, each of which was a slide.

To learn more, visit nikidesaintphalle.org

Right: Portrait taken in 1983 by Norman Parkinson.

Inside: *Abre Serpents (Serpent Tree)*, 1999. *Nikigator*, 2001. *La Fontaine Stravinsky*, 1983.

