

PUBLIC ART EXPLORER



Stick Man
Patrick Dougherty



STICK MAN PATRICK DOUGHTERY (b. 1945)



A Bird in the Hand
Ash, hickory, red maple, oak and willow saplings
2015-2017
Reston Town Square Park,
Reston, VA

In these pages you will learn about an artist who makes temporary things. That's right, Patrick Dougherty makes art that's not meant to last. Read on to learn more about Patrick Dougherty and his kind of art!

But first, look at the pictures of *A Bird in the Hand* below and throughout these pages. While the sculpture was temporary, the photos make it last. These pictures also remind us to look at sculptures from all angles. Patrick Dougherty's sculptures look different from the outside, inside and even from above!



Want to see more Patrick Dougherty sculptures? Check out his website at www.stickwork.net to see the sculptures he has made all over the world!

LEARN



Who is Patrick Dougherty?



A Natural Builder

Patrick Dougherty grew up playing in the woods of North Carolina where he built forts and hideouts. He liked the woods so much that he decided to build a house there (see photo!). He made it out of wood and stone using **traditional*** construction methods and no power tools. Doing this kind of work inspired him to go back to school. But not to learn to build houses (that's an **architect**). Instead, he wanted to learn how to make **sculptures**. Patrick Dougherty wanted to be an artist!

A Stick Worker

Patrick Dougherty says, "Sticks are my thing." While some sculptors **weld** metal or **carve** stone, he bends and weaves what are actually **saplings**, to make all kinds of fantastical structures. He chose this unusual **medium** after one of his teachers in art school saw things he was making with sticks at home. Dougherty kept experimenting. More and more people liked what he was doing with sticks. He has made over 300 sculptures so far! That's around 10 sculptures a year for more than 30 years. That's a lot of sticks!

Dougherty knows kids love to play with sticks. What do you imagine a stick can be? Use this space to write down your ideas.



A People Person

Patrick Dougherty makes **public art** that involves the public, or you and me. He likes to work with **volunteers** and enjoys teaching them how he makes his sculptures. And since he works outside, everyone can watch him work. Dougherty likes to talk to the people that stop to look. He knows they are curious about what he is doing. This way he also learns about the people and places where he makes his sculptures.

*Go to page 10 to see the definitions for the words in **bold!**

FUN FACTS

Three weeks! That's the time it took to make *A Bird in the Hand*, and every Patrick Dougherty sculpture, from start to finish. To do such big sculptures in such a short time, the artist needs many helpers.

At the start of a new project, Dougherty says, "Let the wild rumpus begin!" Making sculptures is an exciting adventure where he challenges himself to turn big, messy piles of sticks into magical, playful structures to spark our imagination. Dougherty wants you have to have the same kind of fun while exploring, and even touching, his sculptures!



The type of sculptures Patrick Dougherty makes are called **site-specific** because he makes them for a particular spot. *A Bird in the Hand* is also called **temporary** because it was made to last a few years. Dougherty thinks of his sculptures as having the same lifespan as the sticks he uses.



Every sculpture Dougherty makes is different. He spends time exploring a place and making **sketches** to get ideas. Look at the sketch he made for *A Bird in the Hand*. Notice how the artist wrote, "Thinking about an exaggerated line or ribbon . . . Topped with a crust of willow." The swirling lines also have numbers that show different heights. He planned for one part to be 18 feet high!



The sketch also guided Dougherty to spray paint lines on the ground that became the shape of the sculpture. When you see *A Bird in the Hand* from above, it looks like the swirly lines in the drawing.

WATCH: [Click here](#) to watch the trailer for the film about the making of *A Bird in the Hand*

EXPLORE: FORM

In art, the word **form** is used to describe something that is **three-dimensional** as opposed to something that is flat or two-dimensional. For example, a triangle is a shape while a pyramid is a form that has height, width, and depth. Just like a pyramid or our bodies, *A Bird in the Hand*, is a three-dimensional form that exists in our space.

Patrick Dougherty's forms often look and feel like buildings. They include walls, windows, doorways and sometimes even **domes**. (He even uses **scaffolding**, like builders, to help him make his tall sculptures.) Dougherty is not only inspired by the forms used in man-made buildings, but also the ones made by animals. Like bird nests and insect cocoons, Dougherty's forms curve and twist. That's why he likes saplings. They are bendable!

Can you imagine living in *A Bird in the Hand*? Use this space to design your own imaginary building. What materials would you use? Would you use sticks like Patrick Dougherty? Include the location too! Is it in the mountains? A tropical jungle? In outer space? There is no limit to your imagination!



EXPLORE: TREES



Patrick Dougherty knows trees! Including the perfect ones to use for his sculptures. He likes willow saplings because they are easier to bend than other kinds of wood.

He also makes sure not to harm the environment. *A Bird in the Hand* was made from saplings being cleared from a building site. Once his sculptures start to disintegrate, Dougherty likes them to be ground into mulch to help protect young trees and plants.

A Bird in the Hand is made of many different kinds of trees including ash, hickory, red maple, oak and willow. These are all types of trees that grow in Virginia. Each of them has a different color, texture and shape.

Explore your local library or the Internet to learn more about the life cycle of one of the trees used in *A Bird in the Hand*. Use this space to draw the different phases from seed to mature tree, copying its particular shapes and colors. Like trees, Patrick Dougherty's art starts with an idea or you could say a seed!

Look at the leaves... are they round? Jagged? Light or dark green?

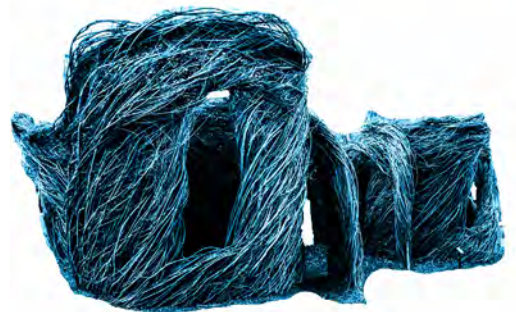
CREATE: OUTSIDE

Sketching Nature

No matter what kind of art an artist makes, every artist draws. We have seen how Patrick Dougherty makes drawings to get ideas for his sculptures. He also thinks the sticks his sculptures look like a bunch of lines.

When you look at the photos of *A Bird in the Hand* what kinds of lines do you see? What does the sculpture make you **FEEL, THINK, and WONDER?**

- What are some of the first things you notice about it?
- What does it remind you of?
- How would you describe it to someone who can't see it?
- How do you think you would feel walking through it?
- What does it make you think about?
- What would you like to ask Dougherty about his work?



Be a Nature Artist

Grab something to draw with and to draw on (or use the space here) and head outside! A blanket, towel or folding chair is also useful. While walking around your neighborhood, a local park, or taking a hike in the woods look up and down to observe everything around you. You can start with quick sketches like Dougherty and then make more detailed drawings. Don't forget to use up all the space on your page! Share your drawings with your group and notice how each one is different. That's what makes art interesting!



CREATE: AT HOME

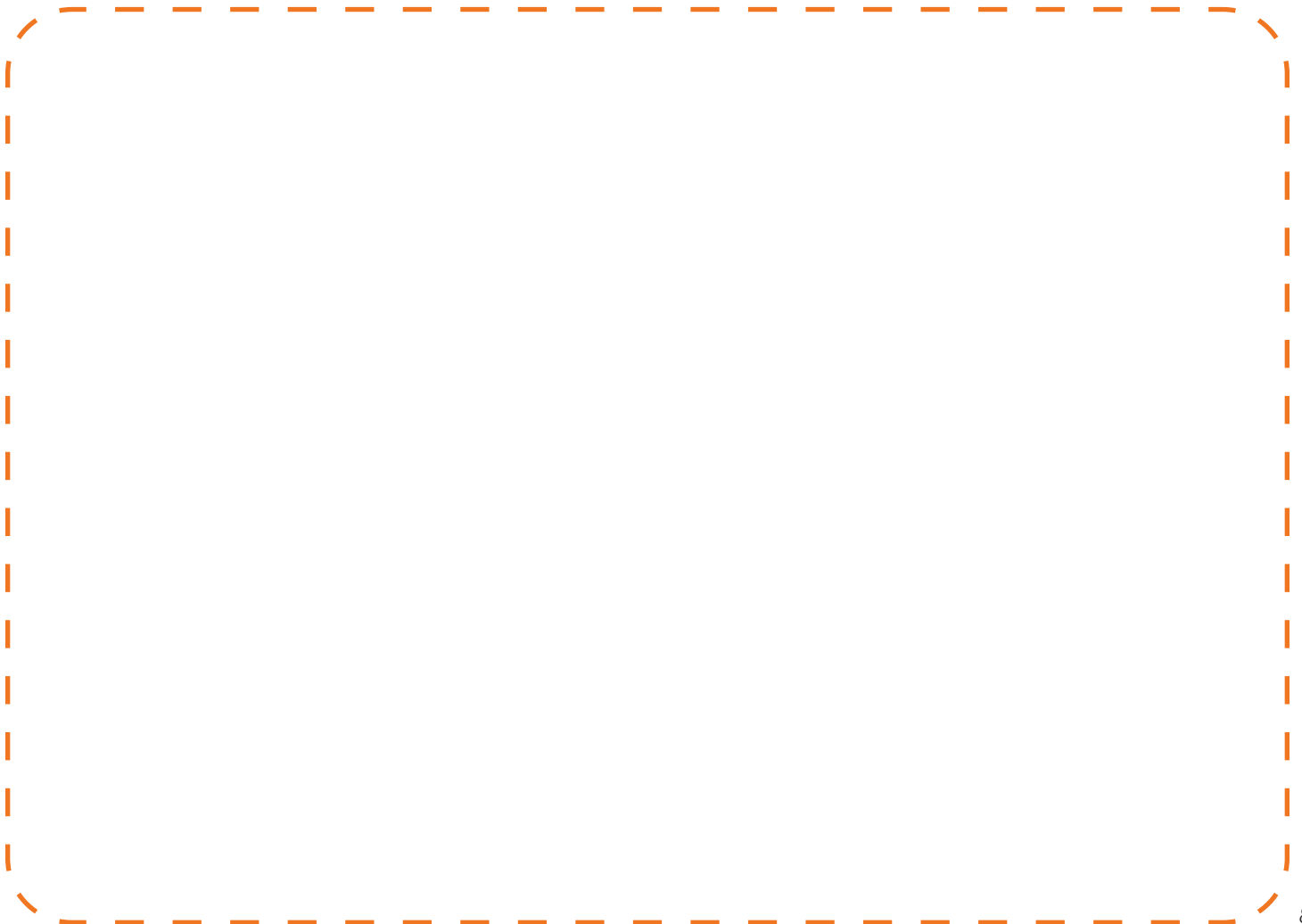
What's in a name?

The title, *A Bird in the Hand*, comes from the proverb (or familiar saying), "A Bird in the Hand is Worth Two in the Bush", or it's better to keep what you have rather than risk losing it by trying to get something better.

This proverb popped into Dougherty's mind when he saw his finished sculpture for Reston. In fact, for Dougherty, titles always come after a sculpture is done. The shape, the place and the experience of making it can all bring a word or phrase into his mind. Titles are another way an artist creates meaning.

Picture Proverbs

Doing this with a friend, find something to draw with and ask your adult to help you look up some familiar proverbs and sayings. Without using words, describe your proverb in pictures in the space below. When you are finished, try to guess the proverb each of you has illustrated.



CREATE: AT HOME



Art for the Birds

Patrick Dougherty admires bird nests for their beauty and strength. Birds are natural sculptors. Do you know what birds use to make their nests? Click [here](#) to learn more about them!

*Let's make some art inspired by and for birds!
Remember to ask an adult to help you with
supplies and any tricky steps.*

Build a Nest

Think like a bird! Collect things that will make a good nest, such as branches. Once your items are collected, use a plate or tray to work on. Start by bending and weaving items into a bowl-like form (it does not have to be round) that has a solid bottom and a sturdy rim. Like birds, try not to use tape or glue.

Suggested materials:

- Plate/tray, scissors
- Branches, twigs, leaves, moss, flowers (careful not to pick poison ivy or prickly branches!)
- Left over yarn, string, ribbon, twists ties, rubber bands, beads, pipe cleaners

Make a Bird House or Bird Feeder

Empty milk cartons are perfect for this! First, cover the carton with masking tape or duct tape. Make sure to tape the top shut if it is open. Next, on one side cut a small hole for a bird house, or a larger one for a bird feeder. Make a small hole under it and insert a stick. Make small holes on either side of the top and attach a string or sturdy cord to hang it from a tree or other bird-friendly location (You can also add beads to the string before attaching it). Add seed for a feeder.

Suggested materials:

- Milk carton (any size), scissors
- Masking tape or colorful duct tap
- Non-toxic, waterproof paint or markers to decorate
- String, twine, yarn, short stick
- Bird seed (if making a feeder)

WORDS TO KNOW

Architect:	A person who designs buildings and directs their construction
Carve:	To make something (such as a sculpture or design) by cutting off pieces of the material it is made of
Disintegrate:	To come apart or break down into parts or pieces
Dome:	A rounded top or roof that looks like half of a ball
Form:	The shape of something, the way in which the parts of an artwork are arranged, and a type of artwork
Medium:	The type of material an artist uses to make an artwork
Public Art:	Any artwork purposefully made for and placed in a public site and accessible to everyone
Sapling:	A young tree
Scaffolding:	A temporary platform used to elevate and support workers and materials
Sculpture:	Three-dimensional artwork that is realistic or abstract
Site-specific:	Created to exist in a particular space
Sketch:	Drawing or painting made quickly and without a lot of details
Three-dimensional:	Objects with length, height and depth
Traditional:	Based on a way of thinking, behaving, or doing something that has been used by the people in a particular group, family, society, etc., for a long time.
Volunteer:	A person who offers to work or help without pay
Weld:	Join metal pieces together by heating the surfaces to the point of melting using a blowtorch

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