

## What's this all about?

Sally de Courcy worked as a young medic with refugees before she became a GP in England. Later she became an artist, when she revisited these experiences in her art. Her work the **Colour of Mourning** concerns the escalating number of refugees that have crossed the English Channel to a new home in the UK. The English Channel is one of the most dangerous and busy shipping channels in the world. At least 8,400 people crossed in small boats in 2020 10% of whom were children, that figure more than tripled in 2021. Sadly over 300 refugees including children have drowned.



The sculpture uses objects to reflect this dangerous journey. All the objects are made to look like bone to make the viewer think about mortality and vulnerability. The cast objects are arranged in a mandala, representing the circle of life. The circle reflects the movement of wheels and journeys made, cogs functioning because of actions by others. The sculpture is white which for some cultures is the colour used when they are mourning the death of a loved one.

## Get creating!

The point of the game is to think about how the objects have been used to make a story about the dangerous journey made by refugees crossing not only the English Channel but other seas too.

Can you identify these objects in the sculpture and list them? Try to think why they have been used and write your ideas down next to the object you list. For example bones are about our mortality, and lower limb bones are used as refugees are often fleeing from war and persecution. Why are there different sized bones? Why has the artist used teddy bears?

The artist has made a list of the objects and the reasons for using them. After you have made your own list of objects and reasons have a look at the list by the artist, are any of them the same? Maybe you have thought of something that she has not! There are no wrong or right answers.

Perhaps you could make your own very small mandala, using the box of tiny bones the artist has made for you. Please put these back in the box after for the next person. The artist has made some examples which you can copy or make something new.

### What you will need?

- You will need a work sheet and a pen.
- A clipboard if you have one or hard surface to write on.
- You will need a copy of the artists list to look at after you have completed your own.
- You will need the box of little bones and driftwood.

## Step by step

1. Make a list of all the different objects on the work sheet.
2. Under the object write down why the object may have been used.
3. Have a look at the artists list.
4. Are they the same or have you different ideas?
5. See if you can make your own mini mandala out of the little bones.
6. Put the bones back in the box for the next person.



These are some examples of making mini mandalas out of bones and driftwood.

Take the bones and driftwood from the box; can you copy them or perhaps you could make your own different mandala.

When you have finished you can take a photo. The artist, Sally, would love to see your work you can email her: [sadec@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sadec@hotmail.co.uk).

Please put the objects back in the box for the next person.



<b>Sally de Courcy's list of objects</b>	<b>Sally de Courcy's reason for using the objects. Can you think of any more that she hasn't thought of?</b>
<b>Small child pelvic bones</b>	The bone is needed to run away, it is part of our pelvis and connects to our leg bones. The bone is symbolic of death, grief and being at risk of danger. They are small bones. There are many child refugees who flee with their families. Some travel alone.
<b>Life buoy</b>	Used to rescue people who fall into the sea. Sadly, this is not available in the middle of the English Channel but the artist uses it to show how dangerous the crossing is.
<b>Adult pelvic bones.</b>	The bone is needed to run away, it is part of our pelvis and connects to our leg bones. The bone is symbolic of death, grief and being at risk of danger.
<b>Teddies</b>	The teddy bear is a child's toy and makes the viewer think about children. It is used to comfort children but is also in our culture left where a child has died tragically. Sadly, many child refugees have died crossing the channel.
<b>Knives</b>	Weapons are used to make the viewer think about violence and war happening around the world.
<b>Femur, thigh leg bone.</b>	The femur bone is needed to run away. The bone is symbolic of death, grief and being at risk of danger. It is placed next to the knife as knives are a dangerous weapon. How many different sizes of femur bones can you see? The different sizes are because adults, teenagers and children can all be refugees.
<b>Child's trainer</b>	Tiny velcro trainers acknowledge the iconic photo in 2015 of Aylan Kurdi that made global headlines and a subsequent international response to the refugee crisis in Europe.
<b>Dinghy</b>	Dinghies are the main form of transport that refugees use to cross the channel. Many dinghies are such poor quality they deflate or flood at sea. A small femur bone is placed in the boat to show how dangerous it is.
<b>Driftwood</b>	Driftwood washes up on our beaches and returns in waves. Waves of refugees are arriving nearly every day on English beaches and elsewhere in the world.
<b>Paddles</b>	In 2020 two Sudanese teenagers attempted to row across in a toy boat. One drowned and one rescued. They used spades as paddles.
<b>Grenades</b>	Are about war and conflict, they are placed next to bones.
<b>Guns</b>	Are about fighting they are used to articulate like a bone into the pelvic bone.
<b>Driftwood with faces</b>	There is one piece of driftwood with a face for each refugee who has drowned in recent years. The faces are miserable. Driftwood returns to our beaches over and over again.