

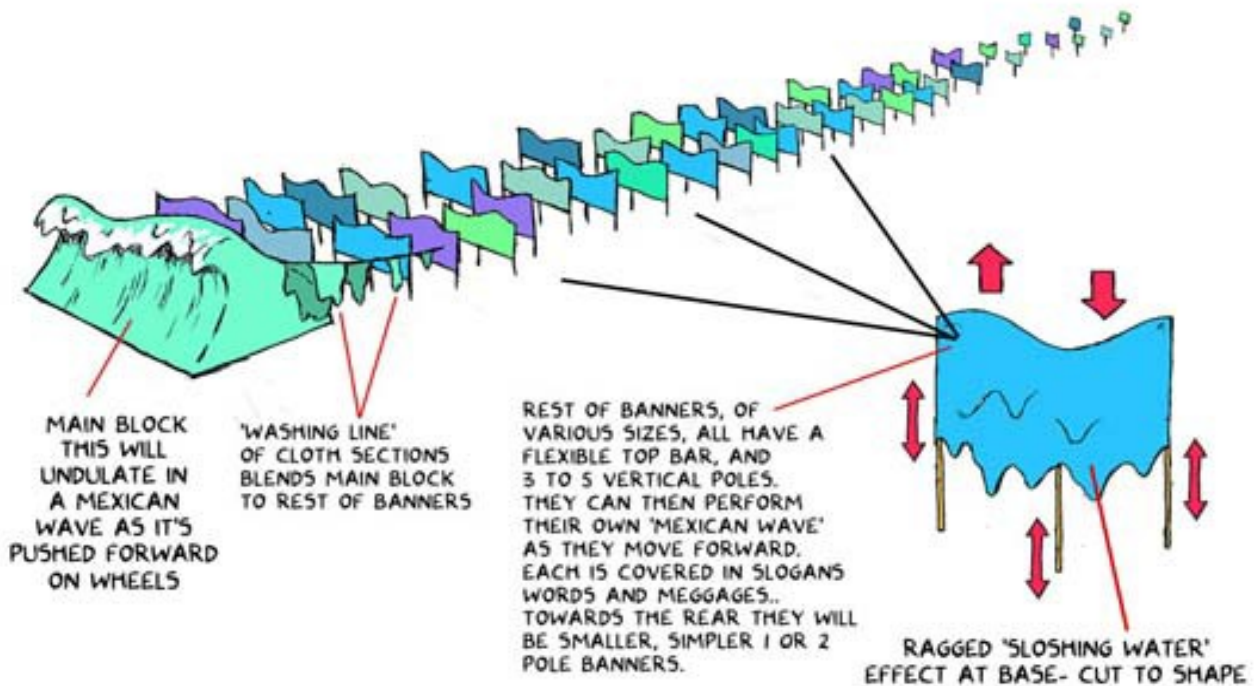
THE BIG WAVE PROP BUILDING GUIDE

A D.I.Y. GUIDE FOR HELPING BRING THE STUNT TO LIFE...

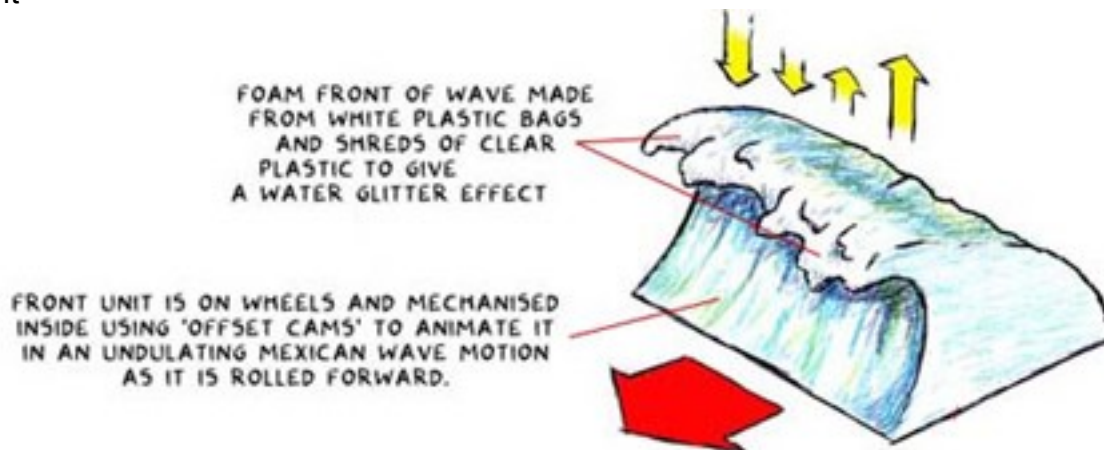
For The Wave on 5 Dec, People & Planet have commissioned Agitprops and renowned political artist, Polyp, to create a huge mobile wave prop / kinetic sculpture / human powered spectacle. Here's his guide to making some fantastic banners...

WHAT WE'RE GONNA DO

Here's a rough sketch of what we have planned-



We're Agitprops, a campaign prop building company based in Manchester. We're constructing the mechanized animated front section ('main block' in picture above) of this giant human powered wave. It'll be 9ft tall, and driven by the volunteers inside it pushing it forward, it'll undulate in a Mexican wave motion as it flows down the street. Here's a close up of it-



And a photo of one of the 5 mechanized ('offset cams') gizmos inside it-



It'll be 5 metres wide, and 2.5 metres tall, decorated to look like water. Some of you may have seen this weird creation at Shared Planet last weekend.

Here's a mock up sketch of it coming down the street...

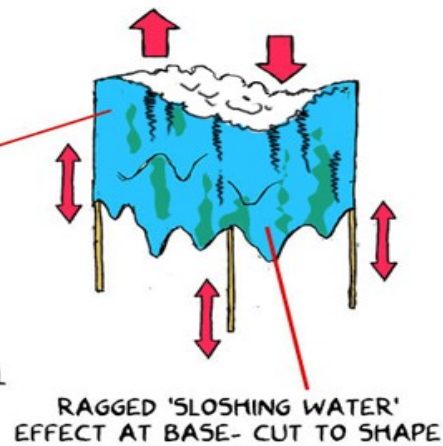


WHAT WE WANT YOU TO DO

Although this prop on its own will be very jolly and fab, what'll make the thing really spectacular are the crucial 'follow on' sections we want YOU TO BUILD and bring to add to it!

Have another look at the sketch at the top... we want you to make the animated banners behind the main prop- here they are again in a bit more detail...

REST OF BANNERS, OF VARIOUS SIZES, ALL HAVE A FLEXIBLE TOP BAR, AND 3 TO 5 VERTICAL POLES. THEY CAN THEN PERFORM THEIR OWN 'MEXICAN WAVE' AS THEY MOVE FORWARD. EACH IS COVERED IN SLOGANS WORDS AND MEGGAGES.. TOWARDS THE REAR THEY WILL BE SMALLER, SIMPLER 1 OR 2 POLE BANNERS.



WE'RE HOPING TO GET AS MANY OF THESE AS POSSIBLE TO THE DEMO, OF ALL SIZES! They are what will bring the prop to life and make it huge!

We've used this technique quite a few times before- we make the large section(s), everyone else brings their own elements, and they all add together into a stunning whole...



They're fairly simple objects- decorated banners, but with a flexible horizontal top bar. This allows you to animate them as you carry them- in a Mexican wave motion that mimics the movement of the main mechanized section at the front. With enough of them we'll create a huge roiling wave pouring down the street!

What's important is we get a LOT of them of ALL DIFFERENT SIZES AND SHADES OF BLUE...

HOW WE THINK YOU CAN DO IT

Since this is a Blue Peter guide, HERE'S ONE WE PREPARED EARLIER! (At Shared Planet, in just a couple of hours...)



It basically consists of-

SEVERAL STRONG VERTICAL POLES 4 TO 6 FEET TALL (3 POLES MINIMUM)

A LONG, FLEXIBLE / BENDY HORIZONTAL TUBE / BAR AT THE TOP

BLUE CLOTH

PAINT AND DECORATIONS ON THIS CLOTH

VERTICAL POLES- these can be strong wooden poles, thick bamboo poles, 3 thin bamboo poles taped together, or even plastic tubes... as long as they can hold a bit of weight, they'll be fine. Use *gaffer / duct tape* to tape the thin poles together.

BENDY HORIZONTAL TUBE- ideal thing for this is blue water piping- you can buy this from any DIY store, or often find it dumped in skips etc...



.. but any flexible length of anything at all will do- plastic curtain rail rods... hoola hoops cut open... anything! As long as it can be bent and twisted without breaking, and it springs back into it's original shape- it's great.

It can be any width you like, to a maximum of 5 metres. (We don't want it wider than the front section or that'll look weird.) Try and make it wide enough to have at least 3 equally spaced vertical poles, as that's the minimum you'll need to 'animate' the banner in a wave motion. If it's longer, add more. 1 pole per metre is a good rough guide.

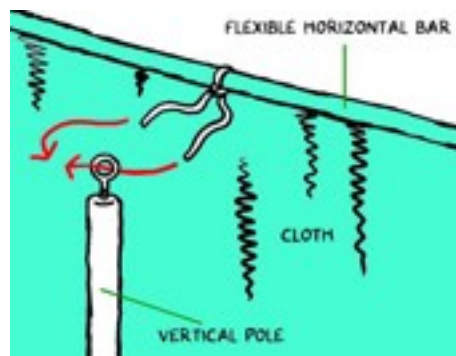
The cloth hanging from this can be anything you like- as long as it's blue, fairly lightweight, and can survive getting rained on, it's great! Old bedsheets/ cloth from a jumble sale? A

really easy option is a large blue plastic tarpaulin sheet, the kind used to cover things from the rain, any DIY shop will sell you one, they cost roughly 5 quid... but if you can 'tat' an old battered one from a skip- even better, and much more rewarding / eco friendly...

Attach / glue / sew / tape the cloth along the flexible rod. Cut the lower hanging edge into a fluid looking shape- see the sketch and photo above. This will help avoid them looking like traditional rectangular banners. Heavy duty white 'cloth' tape (called gaffer / duct tape- from all DIY and craft stores) should be ideal for attaching the cloth along the horizontal pole. If not lots of 'cable ties' in a row will do the job...

Once you've got the cloth attached to the horizontal pole, you'll need to add some rope ties to it at the points where the vertical poles will join it. Simply tie these around the pole with the two ends of the rope sticking out the 'back' of the banner... glue or tape them in place so they can't slide along the bar... firmly attach a tough 'eyelet' ring of metal or plastic to the top of the vertical pole, and bingo!

The big advantage of this is you can then attach and detach the vertical poles- otherwise transporting your banner to the demo will be a pain. The flexible horizontal tube should make it easy to transport the rest of it, as you can fold it up...



PAINT AND DECORATIONS ON THIS CLOTH

Here's some visual references for a wave. Google some more...



The thing is to get loads of texture on the cloth- both the vertical 'ribbing' in the waves and the foam / spray at the top. Mix up some blue / green, dark / light shades of paint, and then paint them in bold, thin dry layers onto your cloth. (They'll dry much quicker if they're not thick and pasty) Add some vertical cascades of glitter / sequins / scraps of tin foil along the painted vertical ribs to mimic the sparkle of real water...

The foam at the top is equally as simple... shred some white / clear / pale blue / green

plastic bags (or sheets of plastic) and glue / tape / stitch them to the top of the cloth in scrunched up lumpy 3D shapes. Try and blend them together in layers. Bubble wrap is great for this as well. Do lots of layers to get bulk. Make sure you add some right to the top edge of the pole so it doesn't look like a flat horizontal line, and has a sculpted look. You can always just paint the white foam on the banner as a 'fall back' position.. or do a mix of paint and *some* clear plastic...

Er... that's it!

They're gonna look great! You can then write or attach loads of slogans or messages (on blue paper) from friends and relatives... pictures of loved ones... anything that gives the banners more meaning. As long as the dominant colour of these is a shade of blue, that's great.

SIZES

As in the illustration at the top, we need these banners to get smaller / thin out towards the back of the sculpture / march, to complete the wave look. (We don't want it to end abruptly with a final big banner and then nothing...) So banners of all sizes are great- a few at the back that are desk / table sized ones on a single pole (A 'T' shape vert / horiz combination?) will be crucial. **PLEASE TRY AND BUILD MORE THAN ONE**, of contrasting sizes!

The maximum height of the top of the banners, when you're holding them in the air, should be 7 ft. Again, if they're wider or taller than the big front block it'll look weird...

Some banners with no foam toppings will fit in as well...

ANIMATING THE WHOLE THING

As you walk along with them, we want you to make them move in a wave fashion. This will look stunning! You're looking at a left to right Mexican wave motion. This needs a fair bit of practice, so try and get them out on the street for a dry run beforehand. Maybe make them into a street stall before the march- that way you can get people to add messages to them and help publicize the whole event.

IT'S UP TO YOU

As far as we know, this is THE major visual prop being taken to THE WAVE... presumably you don't need a pep talk from us about how great an opportunity this is to create a stunning, high profile, collective piece of artwork, do you..? LET'S ROCK N ROLL!!

cheers

Polyp, for Agitprops.