

University of Warwick  
Sculpture Park

ART AND  
NATURE TRAIL



1.2 miles – approximately 3000 steps

This booklet is designed to be used with the Sculpture Park map.

It gives information about the sculptures and the natural environment on this trail.

It has spaces for you to draw and to record your ideas and other things you see, so have your pencil ready.

## **Directions**

This guide contains walking directions for each section of the route. You may want to pick up a **free map** of the Sculpture Park in case you want to look at fewer sculptures and return.

## **Gradient**

The Art and Nature Trail has a gentle gradient. The steepest area is going down the slope into Tocil Field. You can go further along the pavement to a less steep area down into the field.

## **Access**

Apologies, but users of wheelchairs are not able to go deep into Tocil Wood. This area was the site of medieval claypits so there are narrow paths and sudden steep areas. The rest of the route is pavement, narrow paths and some grassed areas.

After rain, paths may be muddy. Please wear appropriate boots and shoes.

An RNIB guide for some sculptures is available from Warwick Arts Centre Box Office.

## **Outline description of the route**

The trail starts at the Arts Centre and then heads east to Tocil Field by the Oculus building. Back onto pavements, it loops back down Health Centre Road to the lakes. It turns west and crosses the Canley Brook to Tocil Wood. Then it goes back on itself and heads east, on the narrow path alongside the lakes to Claycroft meadow. It returns to the Arts Centre on paths and pavements via Car Park 8, the Humanities building and then round to the left, past the Chaplaincy to the Arts Centre.

## **1. Senate House Lawn (Sculpture 3 on map)**

Leave Warwick Arts Centre by the side entrance that faces the large, red tiled Faculty of Arts building. On the grassed area between the Arts Centre and the Faculty of Arts you will see three stone sculptures by the artist Atsuo Okamoto.

**Atsuo Okamoto**

**Forest Planets**

**2011**

**Basalt**

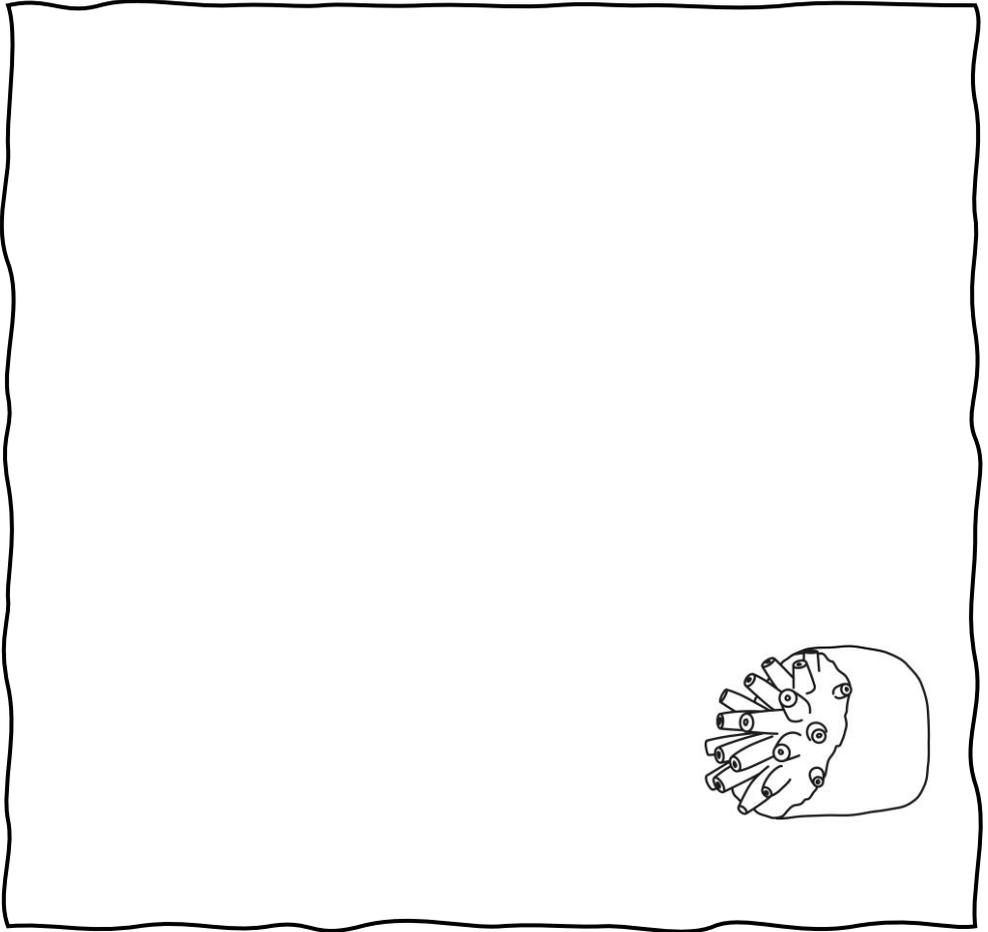
The sculptures are made from a type of rock called basalt. Basalt is formed from the rapid cooling of volcanic lava on or near the surface of a planet or moon. The dark areas on the face of our moon are areas of basalt.

Basalt has a fine-grained mineral texture due to the molten rock cooling too quickly for large mineral crystals to grow. You can see this in the carving of the tubes.

The basalt from which these boulders were formed, probably developed during a period of volcanic activity in south Asia about 16-11 million years ago. At this time, dinosaurs had died out on earth but there were prehistoric animals, fish and birds.

Over millions of years, the basalt has broken into pieces and been rubbed smooth by water and other rocks. When the artist found them, he felt as if there were creatures inside the boulders. He drilled holes into them so the creatures could breathe. Then he started to carve into the boulders to make these forms.

Draw an environment where you might have found a boulder like this. Is it millions of years ago? Is it on another planet?



The trees on this lawn include a Pin Oak tree that was planted by the US President Bill Clinton. Can you find it?

This tree is native to east and central America. Some Native American people used it to make a drink to treat stomach-ache.

## **2. Tocil Field (Sculpture 15 on map)**

Cross the road carefully and walk past The Oculus on your right-hand side – it's another red brick building with a curved glass front. On the grassed area next to it, you will see an oversized stile. From a distance, it looks as if it's made from wood, but it is made of unpainted Corten steel.

**Lucy Tomlins**  
**Concrete Country in Red**  
**2018**  
**Corten and mild steel**

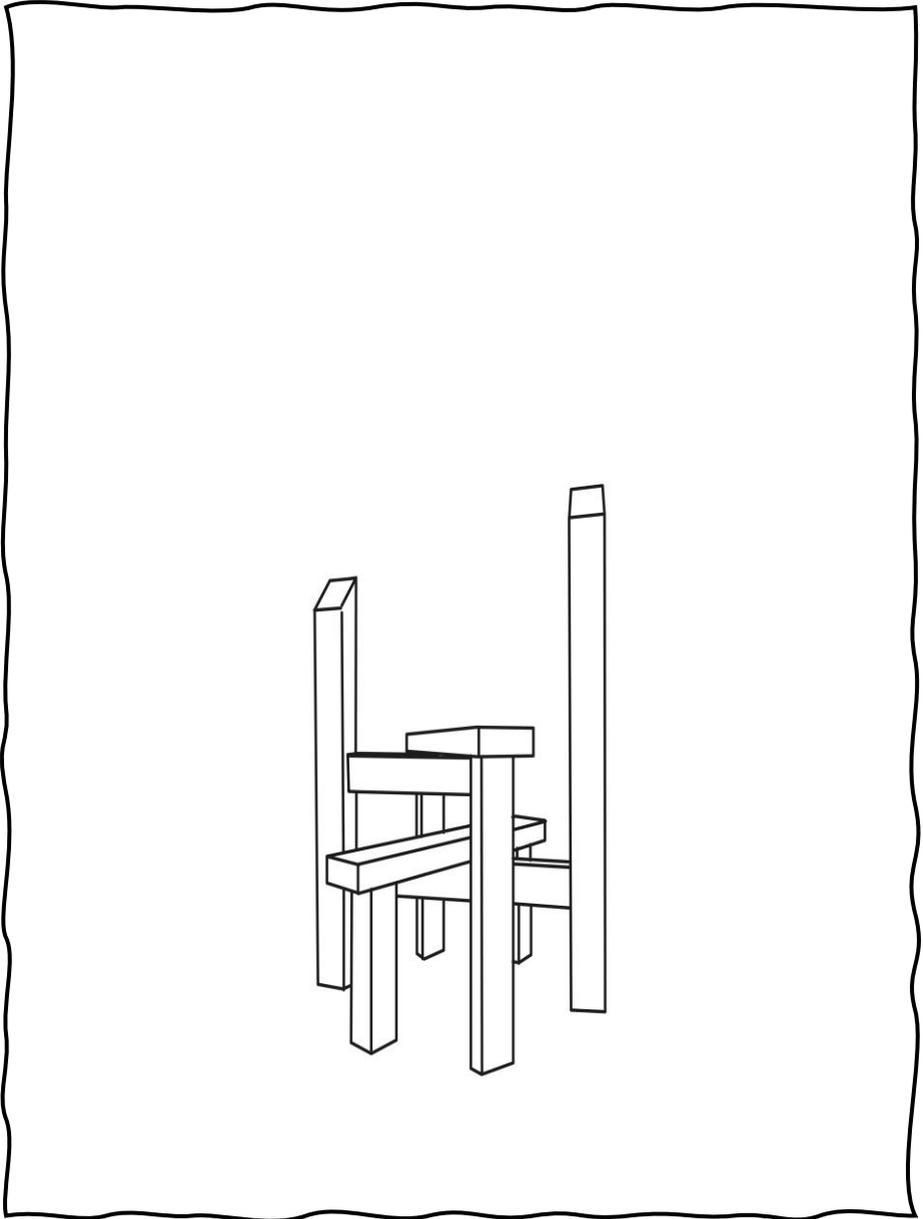
The word “stile” was in use in Britain over 1600 years ago. Stiles allow people to walk across areas that are fenced to keep animals or crops safe. They are both barriers and gateways. Nowadays, stiles are being replaced by gates to allow people with disabilities to cross boundaries more easily.

This sculpture is placed in line with an ancient hedgerow and field boundary that survives from the time when the campus was a farm. This hedge was the boundary between a field that was called Tocil Close and a field that was called White Field.

Today, the sculpture sits on a route that connects the residences where the students live, with the area of campus where they study.

You may have noticed lines of hedges, interplanted with wild flowers, at right angles to Gibbet Hill Road at key entrances to the university. This allows us to maximise habitats for birds, insects and small mammals and improve bio-diversity. The hedges also act as a carbon sink.

Draw a picture of someone close to our stile. Can they cross or are they being held back by the stile? Are they sitting on it? Are they little or are they big?



### **3. Tocil Wood via the lakes (Sculpture 13 on map)**

Follow the ancient hedge line to the right, behind the back of the Oculus building. You'll see little fruit trees and herbs planted in the seating area here.

Turn left and walk down Health Centre Road and then carry straight on, following the footpath down to the lakes.

Turn right here and walk along by the lakes. To the right you will see a row of young Dawn Redwood trees. The Dawn Redwood is a living fossil that has barely changed in 150 million years. It is only found in China in the wild.

At the crossroads, turn left. There is an avenue of Horse Chestnut trees here. In autumn, you might find conkers.

Cross the bridge over the Canley Brook. The Canley Brook is home to the protected species of otters and water voles.

Carry on and turn right down an earth path into Tocil Wood, near the sign. Be careful, it can be muddy and slippery after wet weather.

Tocil Wood is over 400 years old. It is made up of oak woodland with some ash, elder, hazel, rowan and sycamore trees that create a shady canopy for bluebells in the spring. In the autumn you might find different fungi including the stinkhorn and buttercup.

**John Newling**

**Our shadows alone touched you trying to find where here is  
2018**

**Aluminium**

Looking to the east, you will find an oak tree with a text running up it. The artist John Newling wrote 81 letters to Nature in 2019, trying to understand how our relationship

with Nature works. He thought that part of the problem is that we don't seem to live in the real world and understand how important nature is to us. The text comes from one of his letters. What do you think it means?

If you had to write a letter to nature, what would you say?

Dear Nature

From

#### **4. Claycroft Meadow (Sculpture 17 on map)**

Retrace your steps, back to the lakes and walk beside them with the water on your right-hand side. You will see lots of waterfowl on the lake: male mallard ducks with blue-green feathers on their heads, greylag geese with orange beaks, Canada geese with black necks, small coots with white beaks and smaller moorhens with red beaks. If you're lucky, you might see a large grey heron, standing still at the water's edge, looking for fish to eat.

Along this path are various beams, bars and steps for different sorts of exercise. By the balance beam you will see the small path which leads up to the allotments. Why not have a look to see what's growing?

Go back to the path and continue along it as it runs between the meadow and the residences. Cross the stream at the bridge. Turn right and follow the path along the edge of the big meadow.

**Laura Ellen Bacon**

**Don't let go**

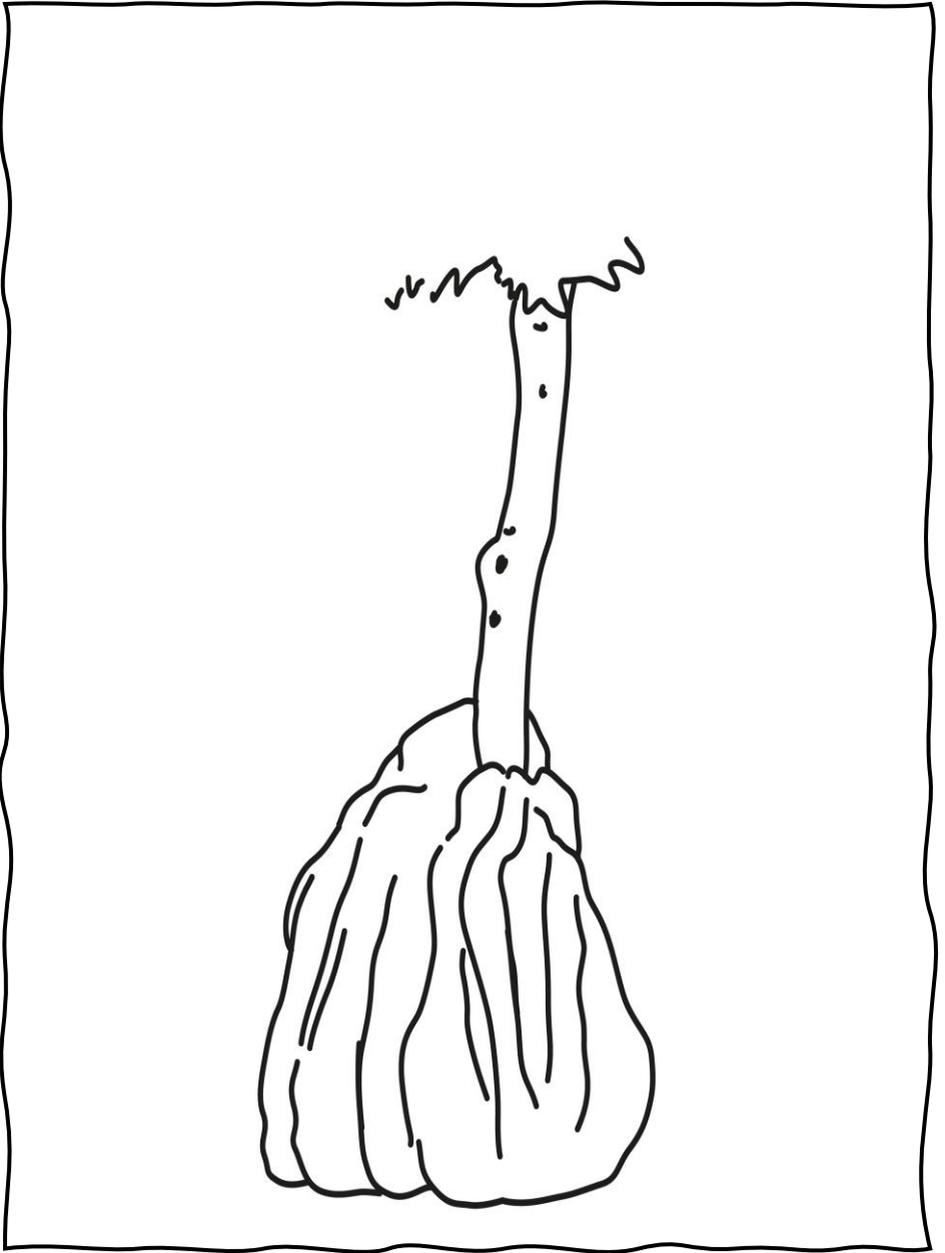
**2019**

**Willow**

By the path, you'll find a sculpture made of willow stems. It was made on site by the artist in June 2019 and took four weeks to construct. The sculpture looks like roots which nourish trees and also like a climbing vine or fungus that takes nutrition from the tree. It will provide a home for insects and possibly small birds such as wrens.

Can you see any insects, spiders' webs or cocoons in the structure?

Draw an insect or bird that you would like to see living here.



## 5. Library lawn (Sculpture 7 on map)

Retrace your steps to the start of the field. Turn right and follow the path through the woods and past a large, deep pond. The path forks to the left. Follow it and walk through the car park to the University ring road.

Cross at the Pelican Crossing and walk straight ahead, through the Humanities building and up the steps. On your left you will see one of the historic trees on campus. Opposite it, there is a work by Peter Randall-Page

**Peter Randall-Page**

**Flayed Stone III**

**1998**

**Finnish glacial boulder**

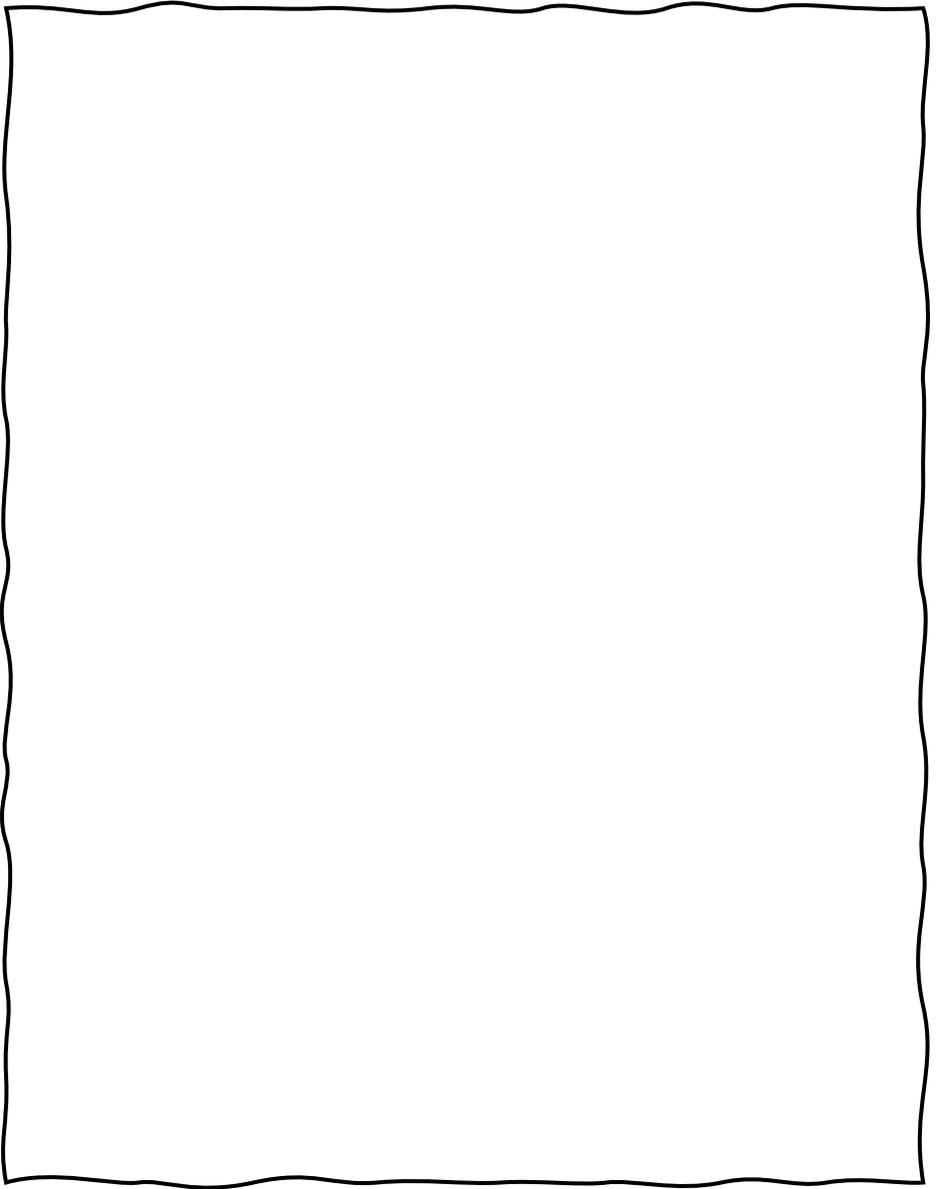
Peter Randall-Page takes many of his ideas from nature, particularly seeds, pods and fruits. He says he uses nature as a kind of pattern book to inspire his carved forms.

Follow one of the curved forms around the sculpture with your hands. Can you feel the crystals in the granite?

Look for colourful pink, yellow or green oval shapes which are potassium mineral deposits in the granite. Unlike the basalt rock at the start of this trail, granite is formed deep in the earth's crust from large masses of cooling magma that never reached the surface of the earth. Slow cooling allows large crystals to form. Different minerals form different coloured crystals.

This boulder came to the surface through the action of glaciers that swept away the earth above it and then carried the boulder itself. Peter Randall-Page has carved a rolling movement into the sculpture and made it even smoother.

Press this page onto the sculpture and make a rubbing.  
Draw around some of the crystals on your rubbing to make  
a pattern.



## 6. Chaplaincy Garden (Sculpture 5 on map)

Walk away from the large, red tiled Faculty of Arts building towards a smaller red brick building to the west of the sculpture. At the top of the path turn left and walk past the Chaplaincy towards the Arts Centre. Bear left again and go into the Chaplaincy Garden.

**Joanne Risley**

**Pollen Bomb**

**2017**

**Corten steel**

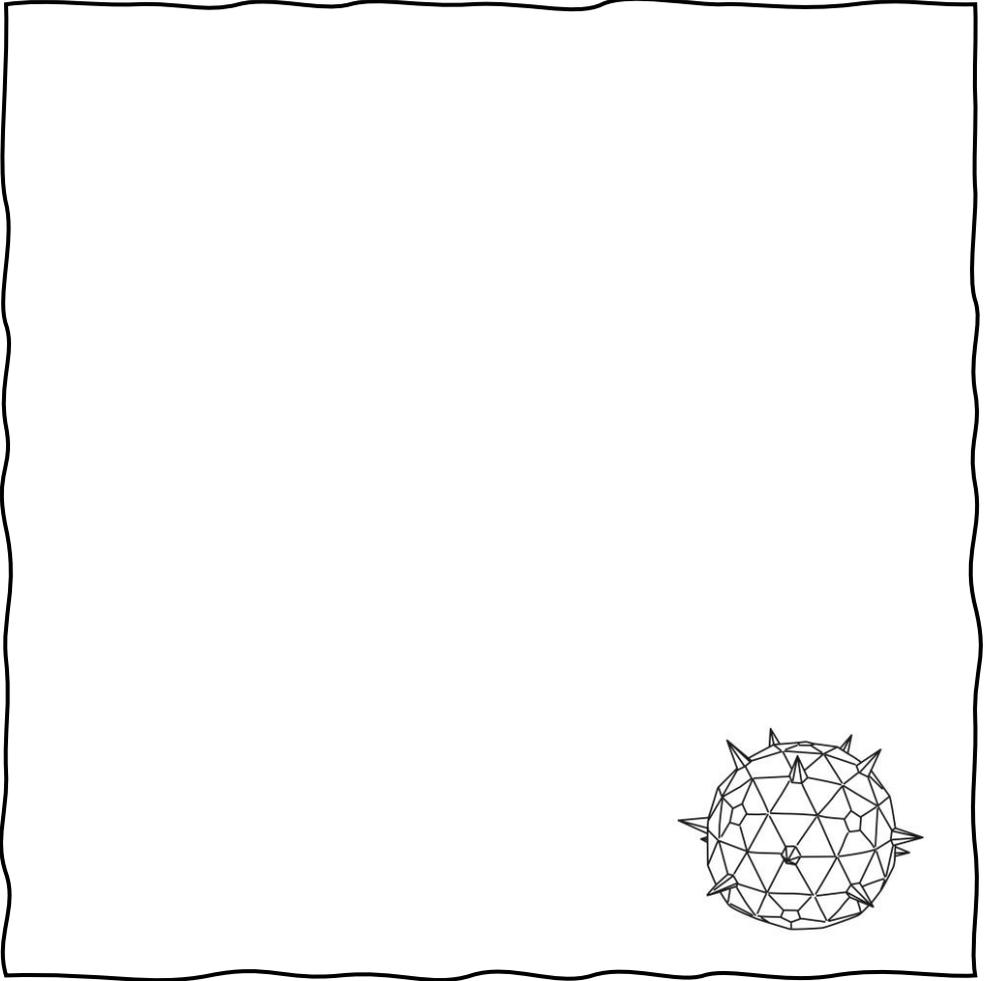
The shape of this sculpture is based on how a grain of pollen looks when it is magnified millions of times.

The artist has tessellated different shapes of flat Corten steel to create a three-dimensional object. She has used triangular shapes to make hexagons and pentagons and hexagonal pyramids.

At this size, the sculpture looks like an old sea bomb that would be placed in the sea to drift until a ship collided with them and it exploded.

The artist wanted to reflect some of the anxieties and uncertainties about our future. She believes that social media is like a pollen bomb – false news and toxic beliefs are spread through social media and people bump into them by accident and can be hurt.

Draw something that is tiny or perhaps invisible to the human eye and make it look menacing?



Walk back to the path and turn left. Follow it round to Warwick Arts Centre.

Next time, why not follow a different trail?  
Pick up a booklet from the Arts Centre.

Upload photos from your Art and History  
Sculpture Trail to Instagram **@warwickuniart**

For more information, visit our website  
[www.warwick.ac.uk/go/art](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/art)

THANK YOU  
PLEASE COME AGAIN

