

NEW YORK STUDIO SCHOOL **OF DRAWING, PAINTING & SCULPTURE**

Spring 2022 Sculpture Marathon

Bas-Relief – Touching Space

Instructor: Jilaine Jones
Class Hours: 9am-1pm ; 2pm-6pm ET
Dates: Thursday, January 18 – Friday, January 28 (no class on Sunday, January 23)
Contact Info: Program Office

Description

Bas-relief is a territory which joins sculpture, drawing, and painting; material ideas formed across the plane of a wall between the three- and two-dimensional. This Marathon will explore bas-relief through conveying the spatial construct of a perceptual source and by focusing on ideas and feelings offered by materials and approaches of process. Working perceptually, the topography of space is bas-relief's revelation. The bas-reliefs will be made in clay, chip board/cardboard, plaster, and mixed media. The source will be a setup with a model in the sculpture studios at the New York Studio School; the nature and ideas within this setup will be unconventional and will enable responding both to the wide span of an installation and a closer experience of forms. The direction this project takes will be oriented to the interest of each student. Some may stay within a rectangular format, or others not; some may rework with the viewed source again and again, others may extrapolate an essential idea. Discussion of the subject by images of precedents will be integrated throughout the Marathon. This course is as much a particular experience of seeing as it is of making, for the sculptor or painter it becomes a way to touch and form the spatial.

Course Outline

As introduction to the experience and logistics of the bas-relief process, smaller bas-reliefs using clay over a vertical board and construction with paper will begin the work. To begin, the use of the source – an installation with model and objects – will take a section of the view, or simplifications of the broader view, and different viewpoints. Whatever the participant's experience with drawing from life is, this will naturally participate and any level or sensibility will be supported by the Instructor. Images of bas-relief through history will be shared throughout the course. This will cover its broadness of possibility and how its specific ability (articulating space) works, evolved, and has played a role in the evolution of artistic consciousness. In the first half of the Marathon, basic systems to organize the perceived through the act of seeing and through the material will be taught. The possibilities in the broader view of the setup will be taken on. Exploring idea and presence directly through process will be integral to the organization of our time in the Marathon. Works will increase in scale, in clay over board, of plaster, and of paperboards/cardboard, and some mixed media. Various ways to technically finalize the clay works will be demonstrated. In the last third of the course, each student will forward an idea orientation which has grown through their work in the Marathon, either continuing a close connection with the perceptual source or disconnecting from it to varying degrees.

Learning Outcomes

Through participating in this Marathon, students will be able to make a bas-relief and gain an understanding of how this process can expand their penetration into the spatial organization of a viewed setting. This course will enable the student to parse out incrementally: space, form, and materiality. The opportunity to physically construct that which is a perceptual phenomenon will give the student the ability to realize topographical structure in relation to this concentration and will allow the direct handling of materials to "think" and to feel responsively. Students will be able to take ideas and realizations developed from this experience of bas-relief and extrapolate it into sculpture or painting independently. Students will have a knowledge, and sources to refer back to, about the history of bas-relief. They will realize its very broad variation, and understand how it is integral to our usable and deeply self-reflective art history.

Assessable Tasks

It is expected that each work will find resolution at different pace: sooner – its speed enabling and holding an idea, or perhaps as a study for its potentials, or slower – even being reconsidered and reworked throughout the course. There will be between 10 and 20 bas-reliefs produced. Participation in group discussions to the degree that is individually comfortable. Attention by viewing, and engagement to precedents and the work in progress of the group.

Evaluation and Grading

NYSS MFA students participating in this marathon will receive grades. Grading is on a High Pass/Pass/Low Performance/Fail basis. To achieve a Pass grade, students must show engagement in the work of the project. Persistence, experimentation, and evolution in addressing the ideas will be evaluated. Through the proposed processes and materials, work should lead to unforeseen questions and answers. Participation, as is comfortable, with the group: for the project, realization of precedents, and the ongoing work of the group. The making of at least 10 bas-reliefs is expected.

Readings and Resources

Passages in Modern Sculpture, Rosalind Krauss
The Language of Sculpture, William Tucker
Modern Sculpture Reader, edited by Jon Wood, David Hulks, Alex Potts
The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space, John White
The Stones of Rimini, Adrian Stokes

Materials and Tools

Heavy duty scissors.
Wire snips for cutting wire cloth.
Heavy duty Stapler and long staples at least 9/16" best.
Hammer and long Brads, assortment of small nails.
Basic Clay Tools: paring knife, fettling knife, wire tool, ribs, wooden modelling tools, wire loop tools.
Larger scale Cardboard: to be purchased at NYSS.
Drawing Paper c 10 x 15"
Hard Papers, Chip Boards, Cardboards bought and found of varying thicknesses;
(4x) 6 pieces each, c 18" x 30".
Tacks.
Tapes.
Charcoal, Pencils, Red and Blue Pencils.
Indian Red and Ultramarine Blue tempera paint. Brushes.
Gesso.
Paper Glues, Wood glues.
Laundry Clips.
Glue Gun and Glue sticks.
Thin Plastic. – example: 4 mil. Husky roll. 10' x 15' approx., dry cleaner's plastic, large garbage bags.
Rubber gloves for plaster work.
Leather gloves for work with wire cloth.

Materials supplied by NYSS include: clay, wirecloth, burlap, plaster, wood backing for clay reliefs.

School, Department & Class Policies

Please refer to the Student Handbook for information regarding the School's policies on academic integrity and plagiarism. All students must abide by the general health and safety regulations – ***inclusive of any current Covid-19 protocols*** – laid out in the Student Handbook and School website, as well as any specific instructions given by the Instructor.