

NEW YORK STUDIO SCHOOL

OF DRAWING, PAINTING & SCULPTURE

Spring 2023

Monday Afternoon Sculpture – Master Class

Instructor: Brandt Junceau
Class Hours: Monday afternoons, 2pm – 6pm ET
First class: January 30, 2023
Last class: April 24, 2023
No Class: February 20, 2023, and April 3, 2023
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Course Description

“The afternoon master class is an ongoing forum for review and development of individual independent work. *This studio is your studio.* Some students will continue work with life-size figures begun in the summer Marathon. That entails work in plaster on life-size plaster castings, and assembly of terra cotta chunks, with plaster. *If you might be a new-comer, do not hesitate to join in. Just bring what have, or we’ll start from whatever’s on your mind.*

Class begins with general conversation, sometimes a slide talk, then one-to-one reviews. People are working as I make rounds. We look at ongoing work in the room, and progress made between meetings. The afternoon closes with a group review. I put together slide talks on subjects that happen to be in mind-- frequently current exhibition or recent publication-related. We throw together a few slides during class, when we need to see something we’re talking about. The sit-down slide talks are Zoom recorded, for those of us who can’t make a date, and for later reference. We make field trips. Studios, exhibitions, foundries, moldmaking shops. More to come. We discuss options and coordinate according to individual’s availability throughout the semester.”

– Brandt Junceau

Course Outline

Ongoing, hands-on work is typically in clay and plaster and wax, so exercising modelling skills is basic, as is Mold-making. So basic that you just have to be able to do it yourself. A number of molds were built last semester, more may follow, as needed. Working with a mold, each fresh start is like shooting an alternate take of the same scene. Additions and subtractions in clay and plaster make the alternative performances. You may expect to leave with a number of distinct works, and, of course, whatever molds you’ve made. Your work needn’t (I say mustn’t) stop with the class. Working from terra cotta fragments may lead to setting a head in straightforward bust form (deciding height and inflections for effect) or building a further extension of the body with the terra cotta as a starter. As to plaster figures, the transposition for original wet clay to plaster casting is an opportunity to see the thing afresh, in another color and material, and to employ numerous techniques for direct modeling (and carving) plaster to the piece’s advantage.

As to a course narrative, the head and figure are the basis of a conversation that begins in the room and takes shape according to who we have in the room. Although Rodin’s Hanako busts and Jonathan Silver’s bust and figures (recently exhibited at Victoria Munroe-- we’re not done with them) are built-in core elements of the forthcoming discussion, our conversation isn’t ever predictable, though it gathers shape and urgency, and takes on new references each week as we meet.

Learning Outcomes

Modelling and moldmaking skills (toward a plaster and urethane flexible mold) are taught, and invented. With some toolmaking, since you will need and should have a thing or two that can't be bought off the shelf. A fair dose of art history, always. Beyond that (and skills, above) what you learn depends on what you want to know, what you ask, and who else is in the room. The chemistry between us comes out in what we learn and how we remember. The things you walk away with might be answers to your questions, and someone else's, or sometimes best of all, the question itself. I can promise you that issues of sitter, sitting, physiognomy, likeness, perceived character, caricature, implied narrative, indicated time, sequence, baseline and exaggeration will be discussed, for starters.

Evaluation and Grading

For NYSS MFA students, grading is on a High Pass/Pass/Low Performance/Fail basis. To achieve a Pass grade, students must be present, punctual, produce sculptures in accordance with the prompts, participate.

Readings and Resources

Sometimes I bring photocopies of text and images to the room, but the Reading List is essentially the Zooms mentioned above. I will mention and quote texts. Be ready to take a note or two, but citations will be made available. After the Zoom, I send out the Powerpoint, so you have the images. Many are unpublished elsewhere. If you cannot make the Zoom date (always an evening), you can catch up via the link.

Materials and supplies

NYSS supplies clay, plaster and mold "rubber."

Tools are your responsibility:

1. For moldmaking, a bunch of things are needed; see the attached list.
2. For modelling, you should have basic wood modelling tools, at least one "elephant ear" sponge all of which can be had from Compleat Sculptor, and elsewhere.

Some modelling tools are not available off the shelf. I will show you how to make them for yourself.

School, Department & Class Policies

Please be punctual. We have only so much time. Never enough. *Please do not listen to devices in class.* What's said in the room is invaluable. So is the quiet between—it should not be filled up. 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 laid out in the Student Handbook, as well as any specific instructions given by the Instructor.