

# NEW YORK STUDIO SCHOOL

## OF DRAWING, PAINTING & SCULPTURE

Spring 2024

Monday Evening Sculpture – IN-PERSON

*the mid-century modern head from life.*

**Instructor:** Brandt Junceau  
**Class Hours:** Mondays, 6:30-9:30pm ET  
**Dates:** January 29 – April 15, 2024  
**No Class:** Monday, February 19, 2024  
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### Course Description

The postwar moderns, Henry Moore, Marino Marini, Picasso, Giacomo Manzù, Hans Wimmer, Alberto Giacometti, left we millennials plenty of work to do. The Spring *Monday Evening Head from Life* proposes to occupy their points of departure, physically, step by step.

By a series of exercises keyed artist by artist, we'll step in their shoes, by doing what they did. By isolating, and performing aspects of their method, we can see what these artists were about-- as if from the inside, and also see the path outward from there. This is how one artist steals from another, and moves the game forward.

What the class will be depends ultimately on who shows up. I'll tell you now that day one I'll pick and choose from the exercises I have in mind, and propose others, based on the direction we take. The list of names named above is not fixed, nor complete. One other thing: no model. We use each other. That keeps things interesting. The technique is basic throughout. If you haven't modelled in clay before, you could start here. And take a few good terra cottas away with you. Along the way, frequent short slide talks. We see a lot.

Observation is a skill that can't be taken for granted. It has to be inspired, and nurtured. This class has to be as much about seeing as making. And taking a trip to the third dimension, which hardly anyone can take for granted anymore. The screen has got in the way. This class is a conceptual eye-opener. It makes the museum a different place and you won't ever see people in the street, or at home, the same way again.

### Course Outline

The course is working from models (other students), in clay. We meet 11 times. You'll become familiar with the clay. Hands-on *is* thinking. Our great grandparents knew that without hearing it out loud in so many words. In 2024, we have to talk about it, and will.

The first class includes a quick slide talk on the head and likeness, from Carpeaux to the recent postwar era—artists of the 50's, 60's, 70's and 80's. Each time we start another exercise (from another artist), we'll make a quick study of them in their work and in their person. The two are all but the same. So, frequent short slide talks, which like everything else, take their shape from the ongoing conversation in the room.

### Learning Outcomes

The class is learning by doing. Students will make a credible likeness from their models—each other. This really works, believe me. You take away credible portraits of people you get to know, Monday night by Monday night. The work will be mostly under life-size, for speed and concision's sake.

How much anatomy and what chops you develop is a personal matter— as much as you need, as much as you want. A little can be enough. Persistence counts. If you have not done this before, do not hesitate to try it. I'm always pleasantly surprised by how much unknown talent appears in the room, and how much one can do without it. I mean it when I say *if you can think, you can make. And Making is thinking.*

The evening class always includes non-sculpture-major students, from many walks of life; I take each student for an artist in the making.

*For fulltime students: this class is a foundation point for the student's contemporary practice. There is at the moment no practice of the portrait bust corresponding to the painted portraits of Elizabeth Peyton, Claire Tabouret and Marlene Dumas. Wide open field. Take a look.*

### **Evaluation and Grading**

Grading is on a High Pass/Pass/Low Performance/Fail basis for NYSS MFA candidates. To achieve a Passing grade, students must demonstrate the full application of their interest, diligence and commitment to address two basic skills and one basic idea. The skills are careful observation of the model, and the construction of a corresponding structure in clay. The basic concept is the matter of difference and exchange between the thing seen and the thing made. My means of evaluation are primarily the things made. Of course, individual talents vary, and everyone's understanding takes a unique path at a unique pace; that's a given. Work, as is practice for a musician, is the essential element. "Beauty" will not be a criterion, diligence, understanding and progress are.

### **Readings and Resources**

I occasionally distribute photocopy images and text apropos the day's work or discussions during the previous class. I sometimes read aloud during periods of work from the model. And frequently cite reading material, which people scribble into their phones. Phones come out a lot in class. *But please do not listen to anything else in class.* That's not allowed. We're short on time. Never enough.

### **Materials and supplies**

Students should have basic wooden modelling tools, and at least one "elephant ear" sponge, all of which can be had from Compleat Sculptor. The best stuff can't be store-bought. We make it for ourselves. Bring small plastic tubs with lids, so you can keep clay at couple different states of plasticity. And some old medium-nap towel, or washcloth. 2-3 clear plastic recycling bags, to keep work fresh between sessions.

### **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 laid out in the Student Handbook, as well as any specific instructions given by the Instructor. All students will follow the School's current guidelines and procedures to maintain a healthy and safe working environment for the NYSS community.