

# Sculpture I

## Course Description

This course is an exploration of 3-dimensional art forms including mobile, stabile, sculpture-in-the-round, and relief. Students will practice various techniques of fabricating 3-dimensional works, including additive and subtractive techniques as well as modeling in clay. Subjects will include abstract and the representational forms in plaster, portraiture in clay, and figures in papier mache. The course consists of eight units of relative equal length. As an integral part of the coursework, students learn to evaluate, analyze and critique their own work and the work of others, gaining fluency in the language of art criticism. The overarching goal of this course is to empower students to use art for self-expression and as a pathway to greater self understanding. In alignment with the Holy Cross **Portrait of the Crusader** students learn to be resilient and use feedback from critiques as an opportunity for growth. The classroom environment fosters respect, kindness, and service to others in a collaborative culture in which students assist each other in skill-building with compassion and support.

## Essential Questions

- What must the artist consider when creating 3-dimensional works?
- What elements and principles of art are dominant in the 3 dimensional work?
- How do artists choose the sculpture types that are best suited to express their vision?
- What are the methods sculptors use to transform material from its raw form into a completed work?
- What are the important logistical concerns when creating 3-dimensional pieces?

## Course Curriculum

### Unit 1: Planar Mobile

Focus Questions:

- What is a mobile?
- How does the artist create a sense of unity and visual interest in a planar mobile?
- What are the principles and elements at play in a monochromatic, non-representational sculpture?
- What are the criteria for evaluation of a non-representational sculpture?
- What are ways in which paper may be manipulated to transform it into a work of art?

Concepts/Skills:

Create a 3 dimensional form designed to be hung as a mobile:

- Manipulate poster board by cutting, curling, bending, and twisting material into shapes.
- Explain the concept of balance and its role in the aesthetic and logistical concerns of a mobile.
- Explain how harmony and variety are achieved when creating the mobile: harmony by repeating the same kinds of cuts (rectilinear or curvilinear); variety by varying the lengths and positions of cuts relative to each other and to the whole.
- Create harmony and interest in a non-representational sculpture by repeating some elements and limiting differences in other elements

### Summative Assessment:

- Three-dimensional form designed to be hung as a mobile and viewed from all directions.
  - Without cutting any piece off of the board, transform the flat plane into one that includes curved planes; use scissors and one large piece of cardstock.
  - Do not use glue or tape, but rather use slots, folding, twisting and other methods to manipulate the material.
  - Demonstrate both harmony and variety.

### Unit 2. Relief Sculpture

#### Focus Questions:

- What is relief sculpture?
- How can the artist marry aesthetics and logistics, such that the vision of the artist is achieved while maintaining strength and adhesion of the various parts to each other?
- What is the design principle of *progression*?
- How can we change elements of a design such as space and shape/form sequentially across a space to create the illusion of movement?
- What materials are best suited for relief sculpture at the scale used in class?
- How do we select the best adhesives?

#### Concepts/Skills:

##### Create a low-medium relief sculpture demonstrating progression:

- Draft a sketch of the sculpture and discuss logistical limitations such as weight, size, scale, the strength of fastening agents and adhesives in designing the work
- Articulate the plan for producing the relief over several work sessions.
- Use spacing and clustering of small units in a sequential way to create progression and thus the illusion of motion. Articulate your reasoning.
  - spacing - closer to farther
  - elevation off the surface, lower to higher
  - angle - horizontal orientation to vertical orientation
  - wholeness as compared to brokenness
  - hollowness as compared to solidness
  - smooth as opposed to rough
  - detailed as opposed to simple
  - angular as opposed to curvy
  - large as opposed to small

### Summative Assessment:

- Monochromatic low - medium relief using small units arranged on and fastened to a rigid or semi-rigid surface, and to each other in such a way as to create a sense of motion and rhythm.

### Unit 3. Human Figure Sculpture

#### Focus Questions:

- Why is proportion important when creating a figure sculpture?
- How does the artist portray the structure of the body using materials such as wire, newspaper, tape and paper towels to mimic the bones, muscles and skin of the figure, respectively?
- How does the sculptor personalize the figure sculpture by adding exterior accouterments once the base structure is complete?
- What is the benefit to the artist in terms of the economy of using newspaper and/or other inexpensive materials to create bulk in the initial formation of the sculpture?

#### Concepts/Skills:

##### Create an additive human sculpture demonstrating proportion:

- Explain the general proportions and bone structure of the average human figure.
- Create an armature to form a base structure for the finished sculpture.
- Attach the sculpture to the base for the most stability and strength.
- Establish correct average human figure proportion and general surface anatomy.
- Use available, inexpensive common place materials to achieve an aesthetically pleasing refined sculpture of the human figure
- Incorporate accessories, clothing, hair and other add-ons to give the figure personality and individuality and improvising with found materials to accomplish that.
- Build a 3 dimensional form through stages from the armature to the finished surface using additive sculpture techniques.

#### Formative Assessments:

- Armature for figure in correct average human proportion including base made with wire for stability and sound structure.
- Solid figure made with newspaper, masking tape, and paper towels adhered with white glue to achieve correct generalized musculature and contrapposto pose.

#### Summative Assessment:

- Additive human figure sculpture finished with clothing and additional accessories of choice demonstrating correct human figure proportion and individualized aesthetic.

### Unit 4. Mask Making

#### Focus Questions:

- What are the aesthetic viewpoints?
- What are some ways artists use additive techniques to fabricate masks?
- How can artists invest their mask with meaning and a message, in the context of the aesthetic view-content using particular materials, forms and textures?
- How can the artist build the mask such that all aspects of it are strong, stable and exhibit permanency in their construction?

### Concepts/Skills:

Create a finished, solid mask that expresses meaning:

- Explain the 3 aesthetic views in art:
  1. Subject: Representational of an actual, recognizable thing such as a portrait, landscape, interior, figure or still life, etc.
  2. Content: Expresses meaning, symbolism or a message such as in surrealist works, or symbolist works, political art, etc.
  3. Composition: Employs the **elements** of art such as color, form/shape, pattern/texture/ line, space and the **principles** of art- movement/rhythm, emphasis, harmony, variety, balance, proportion in non-representational works
- Sketch the front and side views of the mask idea.
- Explain varied types of casting methods for masks. Apply the casting process for this project.
- Use a new material and become familiar with its unique logistical and aesthetic considerations
- Marry logistics and aesthetics to create a stable sculptural piece that manifests the artist's vision.
- Strategize to express content and meaning through the use of materials, textures, forms and structure.
- Select color design choices that will enhance but not be the primary means of expression.

### Formative Assessments:

- Paragraph about the message or meaning the mask will express. It may represent a topic such as a political or social commentary, or it may be an aesthetically powerful, beautiful or difficult mask to view. It is highly personalized. It may be something you aspire to be, expressive of a quality you wish to embody or one you wish to purge yourself of.
- Sketches of the front view and side view of the mask that you intend to create.

### Summative Assessment:

- Finished mask that is solid, exhibits permanence, and expresses some content or meaning through the use of specific materials and structures.

## Unit 5. Clay Modeling- Animal Sculpture

### Focus Questions:

- How do I choose the best clay?
- What tools are specific to modeling in a soft medium such as clay?
- How does the artist use both additive and subtractive sculpture methods when using the modeling technique to achieve realism?
- How does the artist manage drying time to avoid cracking and splitting?

### Concepts/Skills:

Create an animal sculpture using an armature and clay:

- Explain the purpose of common tools used to model with clay and practice with each tool.
- Cut, remove, pull, average, smooth, and carve into clay to copy a pre-existing animal figurine by observing it from all angles.
- Manipulate soft clay by additive and subtractive methods using hands and tools.
- Use calipers to re-create accurate proportions

- Create an armature in accurate proportions and pose of the original figurine.
- Use newspaper to “Flesh out” the figure.
- Cover the under-structure with clay and refine the surface forms and texture to duplicate those of the original figurine, thus making a 3 dimensional copy of the original.
- Problem-solve and determine the best methods to revise the sculpture as needed.

Formative Assessment:

- Armature in accurate proportion and displaying the accurate pose of the original figurine.

Summative Assessment:

- Animal sculpture in clay based on an original figurine

## Unit 6. Subtractive Carving in Plaster - Curvilinear Monolith Form

Focus Questions:

- What is the proper method of measuring and mixing plaster for pouring plaster into a mold?
- What are curvilinear forms? Rectilinear forms?
- How does the artist use a mallet and chisel to carve away material in the subtractive method?
- How does the artist progress from the general to the specific in the process of subtractive carving?
- What are the appropriate safety supplies and precautions when using subtractive methods in plaster?

Concepts/Skills:

Create a monolithic form in plaster with intentional surface texture:

- Measure and mix plaster to create a plaster mold.
- Plan and strategize to realize the artistic vision; articulate this vision to others.
- Use carving tools such as mallet and chisel to remove material, thus employing subtractive sculpture methods to transform a block into a curved/biomorphic form.
- Envision the final product from all directions in order to avoid removing material that cannot be restored once removed.
- Create both harmony and interest in a monolithic sculptural form, thus creating unity.

Formative Assessment:

- Sketches of design for monolithic form from 5 angles, front, back, sides and top

Summative Assessment:

- Monolithic form in plaster with intentional surface texture achieving harmony, variety and unity.

## Unit 7. Human Portrait Bust in Clay

Focus Questions:

- How does the artist construct an armature for a human portrait bust?
- How does the skeletal anatomy of the skull influence the external surface anatomy and forms?
- How does the artist use the knowledge of average human facial proportions coupled with visual references to create a likeness of an individual in three dimensional work?
- How does the sculptor preserve the moisture in the clay over time?

### Concepts/Skills:

Create a human portrait bust in air-dry clay using modeling methods:

- Use a 3D model of a human skull to create a clay skull as a base for the portrait bust.
- Incorporate average human facial proportions into the portrait bust.
- In the absence of a live model, use photographic references of a model taken from side, front, back and top views to sculpt a likeness in clay.
- Using a plumb line and straight edge to observe negative/positive spatial relationships and alignment of features.
- Hone the ability to use clay carving tools and techniques.
- Patch any cracks and integrate repairs with the body of the sculpture.

### Formative Assessment:

- Armature for the human portrait bust padded with newspaper to create a foundation for clay.
- Model skull on the padded armature using the 3D skull model for reference

### Summative Assessment:

- Portrait of a human bust in clay. Apply clay to the skull in proportions specific to the photo references and finish the portrait of human bust in air dry clay including neck, done in realist style.

## Unit 8. Plaster Casting Technique in Bas Relief

### Focus Questions:

- What is plaster casting and how does the sculptor use it to create a permanent hard relief?
- What are the formal parameters of bas-relief?
- What are the best soft, impermanent materials for use in creating the original bas-relief?
- How does the artist create the plaster negative?

### Concepts/Skills:

Create a realistic bas-relief:

- Use sculpture tools and techniques in plastilina clay or other pliable sculpture medium to create a realistic bas-relief.
- Create a plaster negative/mold from the clay positive.
- Cast or create a plaster positive/cast from the plaster negative, keeping the mold and the cast separable.
- Prevent the poured plaster from adhering to the plaster negative. Add a barrier to the surfaces of the mold to ease the separation of mold and cast in the final stage of the process.

### Formative Assessments:

- Realistic bas-relief using non-drying clay
- Negative/mold of the relief using plaster with added pigment.

### Summative Assessment:

- Final relief positive by pouring white plaster into the mold and removing the colored negative.

[See the image gallery below.](#)

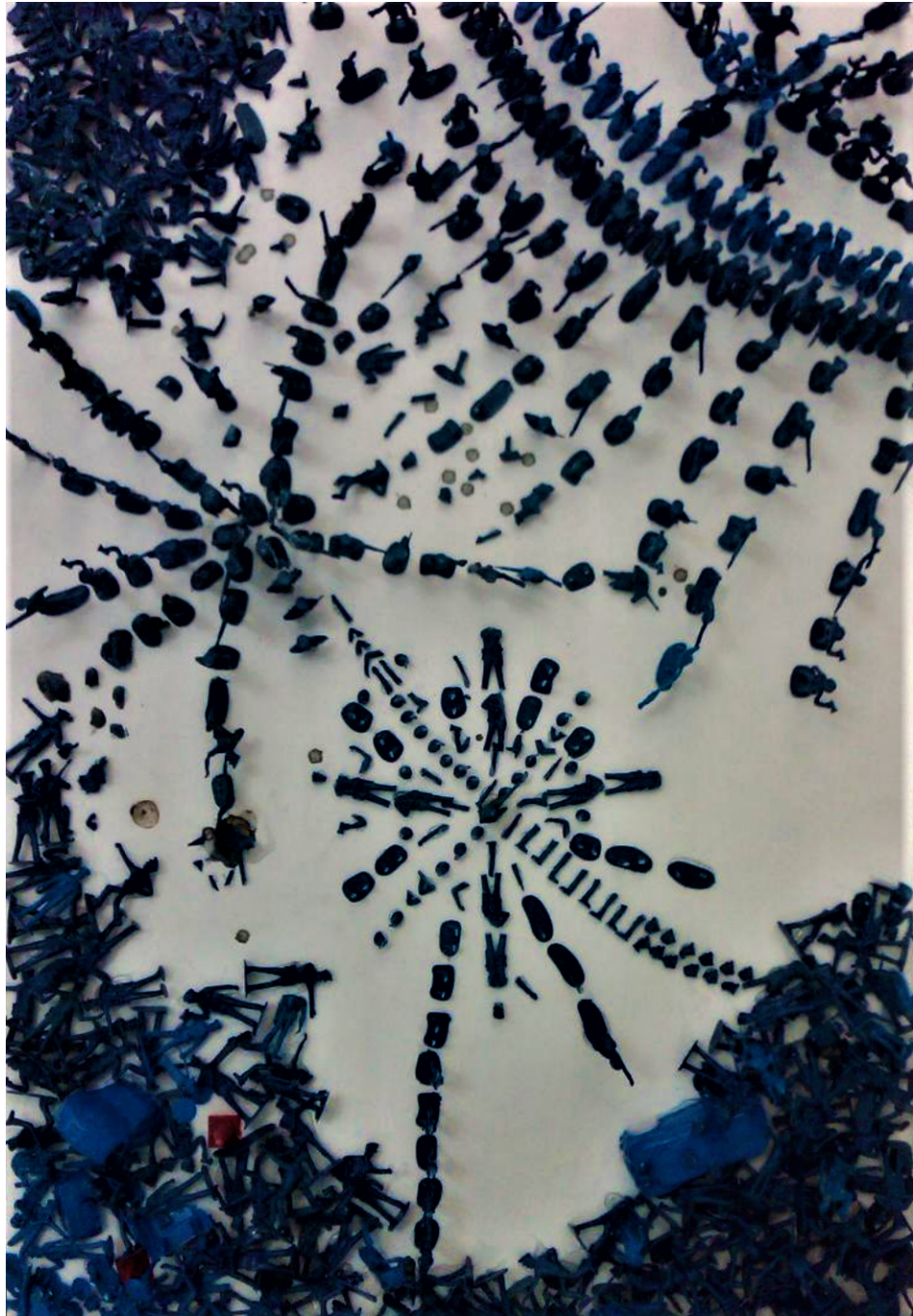
<https://holycross.instructure.com/courses/1742/files/356168?wrap=1>

## Image Gallery

Figure 1 Planar Mobile



Figure 2 - Additive Relief Sculpture Showing Progression







Figures 3 and 4 - Human Figure Sculpture





Figures 5 and 6 - Mask Making

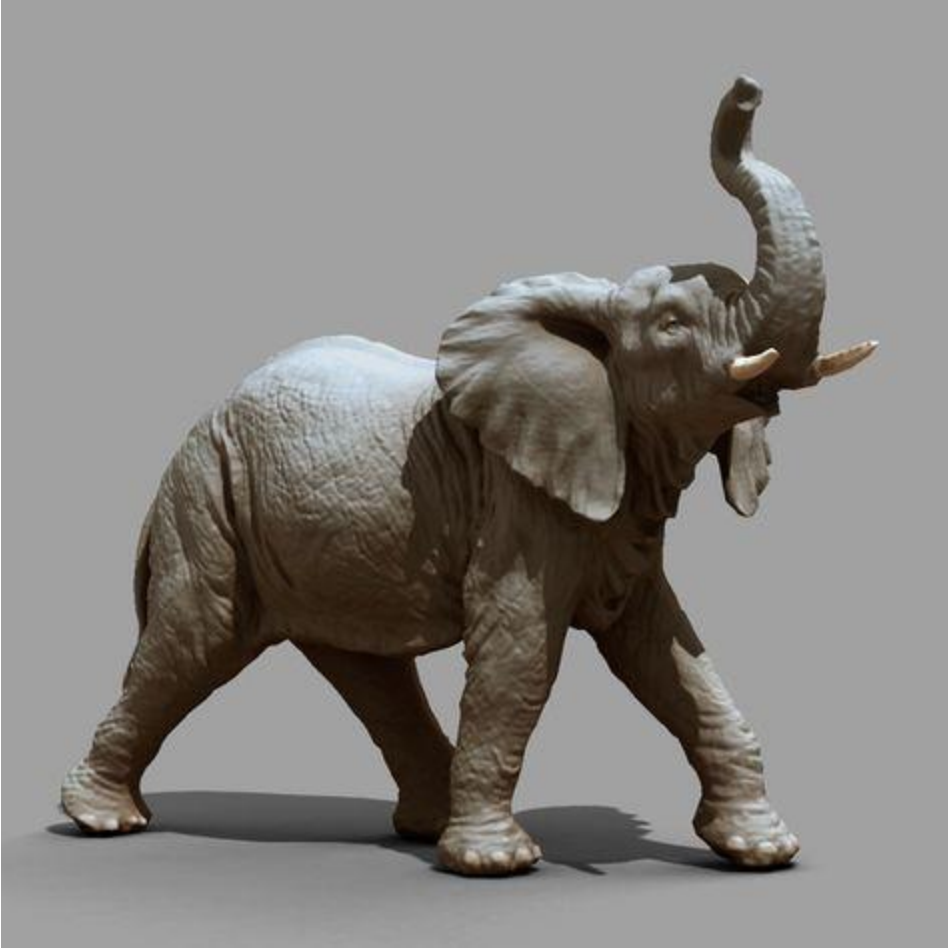


Figure 7 - Realistic Animal Sculpture in Clay



Figure 8 - Plaster Monolith



Figure 9- Plaster Monolith

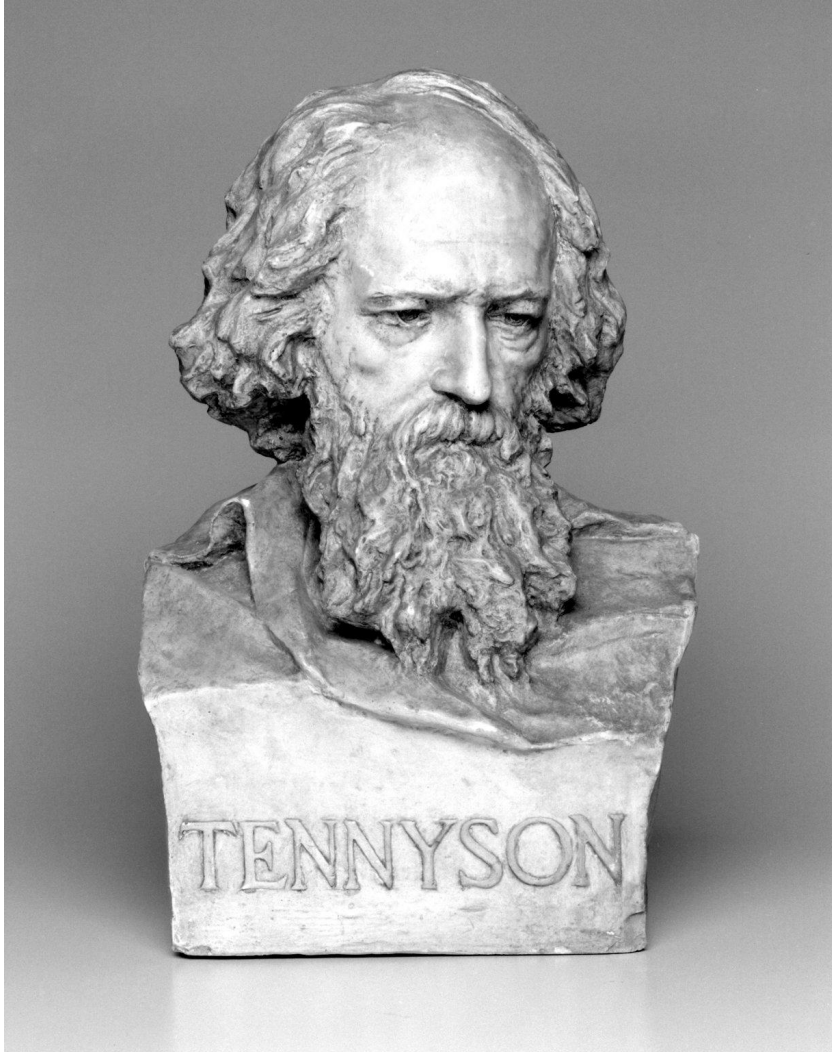


Figure 10 - Portrait Bust



Figure 11 - Portrait Bust



Figure 12 - Bas Relief





Figure 13 - Bas-relief



Figure 14 - Coating the Clay positive



Figure 14 - Fully Coated Clay Positive



Figure 15- Mold and Cast

