

Blake's Portrait Bust Class

Syllabus (March, 2009, subject to minor revision)

Lesson 1 Measurements, allow 1 week.

Objectives:

- Photograph model
- Measure model

Digital Materials:

- Introduction.pdf
- Measurements.pdf
- MeasurementLesson.Pdf

Tools:

- 6" or 8" calipers
- Ruler with centimeters and millimeters. I recommend metric. Must be as big as the head you'll be sculpting, so a 12" ruler with cm on one edge will work fine.
- Digital Camera

Materials:

- Print out Measurement Lesson.pdf
- Printout Measurements.pdf

Lesson 2 Armature, allow 1 week.

Objectives:

- Build an armature for a bust

Digital Materials:

- Armature.pdf

Tools (see Materials.pdf for images of tools):

- Hammer
- Phillips screwdriver
- Brush for shellac or varnish
- 6" or 8" calipers
- Ruler with centimeters and millimeters. I recommend metric. Must be as big as the head you'll be sculpting, so a 12" ruler with cm on one edge will work fine.
- Two mirrors if you are doing a self-portrait.
- Digital Camera
- 1 pair slip-jaw OR linesman pliers (must grab and cut wire)

Materials (see Materials1.pdf for images of supplies):

- 12" x12" x 3/4" plywood
- Clear or blond shellac (and ammonia to clean up) OR polyurethane (and appropriate solvent for cleanup)
- 4 round-headed furniture tacks or 4 nail-in furniture glides
- 12" long 1/2" pipe nipple threaded on 1 or both ends
- 1/2" pipe flange
- 48" 1/4" aluminum armature wire OR 48" 1/4" or 4-gauge copper grounding wire (solid, not braided or wound).
- Soft iron wire. Usually found in the masonry section of the hardware store
- 4 3/4" Phillips wood screws- drywall screws will work fine.
- 20 Pieces of wood about 1/4" - 3/8" square and about 2" long. I split scraps of wood, but you can use sticks if you can't find any wood to split.
- Roll of aluminum foil- thin and cheap is fine

Part 3 Blocking it in, allow 8-16 hours anytime.

Objectives:

- Block in an accurately proportioned and positioned cranium, face, and neck.

Digital Materials:

- CraniumNeckFace.pdf

Tools

- Modeling tools (see Part I Materials1.pdf)
- About 24 1" nails with heads
- Pictures of your model and your measurements
- Calipers
- 2 mirrors if you are making a self-portrait

Materials

- 25lb low-fire white clay with no grog. It's usually the cheap stuff.
- Clean rags to moisten and wrap the clay sculpture
- Plastic bag to tightly cover the rag-draped head

Part 4 Blocking in the Features, allow 16-40 hours anytime.

Objectives:

- Block in an accurately proportioned and positioned facial features. You should have a recognizable bust at the end of this part.

Digital Materials:

- RoughFeatures.pdf

Tools

- Modeling tools
- Pictures of your model and your measurements

- Calipers
- 2 mirrors if you are making a self-portrait

Materials

- The remaining 1” nails with heads

Part 5 Anatomy, allow 8-16 hours anytime.

Objectives:

- Delineate and sculpt detailed anatomical features.

Digital Materials:

- AnatomyLesson.pdf

Tools

- Modeling tools
- Pictures of your model and your measurements
- Calipers
- 2 mirrors if you are making a self-portrait

Materials

No additional materials

Part 6 Blocking in Hair and Clothes, allow 8-16 hours anytime.

Objectives:

- Block in hair and clothes as appropriate.

Digital Materials:

- HairClothes.pdf

Tools

- Modeling tools
- Pictures of your model and your measurements
- Calipers
- 2 mirrors if you are making a self-portrait

Materials

No additional materials

Part 7 Refining the Form, allow up to 40 hours anytime.

Objectives:

- Learn to model form.

Digital Materials:

- modelingForm.swf
- ArchaicVsClassical.ppt

Tools

- Modeling tools (see Part I Materials1.pdf)
- Pictures of your model and your measurements
- Calipers
- 2 mirrors if you are making a self-portrait

Materials

No new materials.

Part 8 Making the Mold, allow 6 continuous hours.

Objectives:

- Make a plaster eggshell mold of the portrait bust.

Digital Materials:

- Eggshell.pdf
- Mold.swf

Tools

- Spray bottle of water
- 3 clean 2-3 quart plastic pails.
- Cheap 1" bristle brush
- Fat butter knife
- A few pounds of clay
- Organized workspace
- A helper who has read the materials
- Now's a good time for a tarp under your work area, papers on the table and wall behind the sculpture. It can be messy!

Materials

- 25lb. Plaster of Paris, room temperature
- Liquid Murphy's Oil Soap
- Laundry bluing. If you can't find this, a small tube of ochre water color paint. It must be ochre, which is a pigment and not a dye.
- Clean water

Part 9 Casting, allow 4 hours in one sitting, then an additional 2-10 hours anytime.

Objectives:

- Make a Hydrocal cast of your portrait bust.

Digital Materials:

- Casting.pdf

Tools

- Putty knife

- Spotlessly clean buckets
- Butter knife
- Spray bottle
- Sable-like ½” flat watercolor brush

Materials

- 15 pounds Hydrocal Gypsum Cement (USG)

Part 10 Finishing the cast, allow 1-10 hours anytime.

Objectives:

- Clean up imperfections in the cast
- Finish the sculpture for display

Digital Materials:

- Finishing.pdf

Tools

- Modeling tools (see Part I Materials1.pdf)
- Sand paper
- 4-in-hand file
- knife with smooth edge for scraping plaster.
- Brush

Materials

- hydrocal
- water
- disposable Dixie cups or the like
- Clear or blond shellac and denatured alcohol for dilution OR water-based polyurethane
- brush