

Head Structure and Portrait Workshop

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Overview

The Head Structure and Portrait workshop will run for five days. Each day will consist of two three-hour sessions with a break for lunch in-between. Student will model one portrait bust from life using water-based clay. Through an in-depth exploration of the structural integrity of the head, students will gain a foundation in form interpretation and sculptural composition. There will be ongoing lectures and demonstrations covering the fundamentals of portrait modeling. This course *does not* include mold making.

Syllabus:

- fundamentals of sculpture: armature building, balance, gesture and proportion
- the vitality of the sketch
- simplification, the perfect egg
- observation and perception
- abstracting, interpreting and transposing form
- the importance of anatomy, understanding how the skull influences form
- design and sculptural composition
- relationships!
- the features, eyes and ears, nose and mouth
- compositional unity

Numerous discussions of these and other issues facing the student in the creation of a head study, plus teacher demonstrations will occur throughout the workshop

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Day 1 - 2

Introduction: lecture on the art of portraiture throughout time and the use of abstraction in representational sculpture

Armature building

The fundamentals of sculpture, the vitality of the sketch, balance, gesture, and proportion

Demonstration: massing in the bust, analyzing the basic proportions of the model and seeing the skull as the major structural influence of the head

Develop and refine a sculptural simplified head, neck and shoulders with an aim for accuracy of the general proportions and with careful consideration for subtlety in gesture

Day 3 – 4

Shifting the focus between understanding the anatomy, observing the model's individual characteristics and how to represent them in clay will be a constant lesson here and throughout the course

Demonstration: the individual features, eyes, ears nose and mouth, their qualities and how they are modeled in clay

Day 5

Study of the hair, refining forms and overall sculptural unity, taking them to the conclusion of their head study

Note: This timeline is flexible as each student progresses at different speeds.

Recommended Texts

Stephen Rogers Peck, *Atlas of Human Anatomy*

Dr. Paul Richer, *Artistic Anatomy*

Kenneth Clark, *The Nude*

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Materials

Clay and other modeling tools are available for purchase at various art stores in the city. If you already have a head armature, please let me know ahead of time. Below is a list of material you will need for this class.

- 50 lbs. water base clay
- spray bottle
- plastic trash bag
- notebook, drawing book
- head armatures- (*see diagram*)

- modeling tools
 - 12" Flat wood tool
 - 6" flat wood tool
 - ribbon rake
 - wire rake
 - loop tool
 - calipers
 - flat-head screw driver
 - pliers/wire cutters
 - tape measure

Head Structure

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Head Armature diagram

- 15" x 15" x 3/4" plywood board with runners
- 1/2" pipe flange
- 12" x 1/2" galvanized pipe
- 4, 2" bolts
- 4 washers
- 4 nuts
- 40" of 1/4" aluminum wire
- 40" of 1/16" aluminum wire
- 2 hose clamps
- 2 to 4 butterflies (tongue depressors work well)

