

BOSTON UNIVERSITY STUDY ABROAD VENICE

FALL SEMESTER 2015

Course: CFA VN 321 Sculpture Studio

Instructor: Prof. Giuseppe La Bruna

Class location: @ Accademia di Belle Arti, Room 4

Class appointments: Wednesdays 12.00pm-6.00pm

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Value: 4 credits

Course description

The course aims to provide students with Sculpture fundamentals starting from the *bas relief* to the *full relief* sculpture with cultural references to the History of Sculpture and past and modern Art. It includes an analysis of artworks of modern and past artists so as to help define the peculiarities of each student and their individual language, but also artistic language in general.

Students will learn how to correctly use tools and materials with respect to their peculiarities and to the project.

Students will be introduced to the understanding of sculpture as a *whole*, substantial and well-*coordinated*. At first, students will investigate the pure concept of volume – shapes, lines, relationship among mass, light and shadows, with relation to the different kind of materials, to the space where the artwork will be collocated and so on.

The instructor will provide some technical sheets with regard to the sculptures proposed during the class. Details and characteristics will be read and discussed in class.

Drawing is considered a required exercise and it is fundamental for each preparatory study.

The course is taught on a project-approach so that students will learn the specificity of the profession, of old and modern tools, techniques, as well as the poetics and artistic languages of sculpture.

Through their work and the interaction with the instructor, each student should be able to develop the most important goal of their career becoming independent thinkers who are able to proceed in their life and work with self-confidence also outside of the academic environment.

The course will culminate in the organization and staging of a final exhibition that will be the Venetian debut of each artist. Students will be expected to show their work as a part of their curriculum and of their role as artists in the Venetian context.

REQUIRED MATERIALS to be purchased after the first class appointment

Sculpting tools come in a variety of shapes, styles and sizes and each tool has one or more specific purpose.

Metal-headed Hammer (250 gr);
Pincer;
Plier;
White or brown wrapping paper;
Pencils (B, 2B, 4B);
Rounded edges wire end tools;
Hardwood modeling tool.

Tools will be available in kit at:
La Beppa, Venice Castello shop (ferramenta di belle arti) for about 50 Euros.

Tools can be bought also in single pieces.
Other materials will be indicated depending on the projects.



COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A sculpture course uses special materials and equipment to create its unique characteristics. In order to create a sculpture, you need to learn the techniques that support its aesthetic uses. Unlike painting or drawing, you will complete much of the work in the sculpture laboratory. You must arrive prepared for class, with progress on your projects.

Starting at the end of October, you will share the sculpture studio with Italian fellow students - it is a requirement of the course that you learn a responsible use and care of the facilities. *You will meet with the professor at all class sessions. Technical demonstrations, coaching, and critiques are given during class - **promptness and attendance are required at all sessions.***

GRADING

Your grades will reflect your investment and success in both ideas and technique.

Components of the final grade

Participation and attendance: 10%

2 Response paper: 10%

Ability and approach to tools and materials: 15%

Poetics skill: 15%

Midterm critique: 15%

Final project: 35%

Participation and attendance:

Students must attend all classes, lectures, field trips, and **must be punctual**. Tardiness is unprofessional and will not be tolerated. All students are required to attend classes with all necessary materials and are **committed** to engage in class work and discussions, and to present their work(s) during class.

Homework expectation is 6 -8 hours per week.

Students are also expected to actively take part of the studio class and to interact with the other students as well as with the instructor. They are expected to ask questions in order to improve their skills and/clarify doubts, ask questions or have a feedback. Students are also invited to experiment media and concepts in order to find their way to express their personality and creativity.

Ability and approach to tools and materials:

Students are expected to learn how to use sculpture tools also in relation to the history of art. In fact, the evolution and modification of tools during time, have affected how sculpture is realized, and have allowed artists to better express themselves.

Sculpture requires a technical and professional approach which is necessary to gain a satisfactory final product. In order to succeed, the first classes are dedicated to and will test the ability and the technical skills of each student.

During the course, students should be able to choose the material that best expresses their ideas and subjects. Beside this, students also need to know all materials investigated during the course, paying attention to languages and poetics discussed with classmates and instructor.

Poetics skill:

Students are expected to have a general knowledge of the History of Sculpture and of Art. Their work should synthesize what they have learned during the studio time and expresses the birth or affirmation of a personal poetic.

Midterm critique:

The final project will be preceded by a preparatory study that will be evaluated during the midterm critique. It should be comprehensive of:

- title
- material chosen by the student
- Sculpture size
- sketch: students are expected to realize a sketch (bozzetto), take a photo of it and, using photoshop or drawing, create the exhibition context and the sculpture as they imagine it in its final shape.
- pedestal (if necessary)
- written motivation of the subject and of the concept, and the personal poetics expressed

though the work: 4-pages length, Times New Roman 14, double spaced

- 10 to 20 photos that will capture the whole sculpture (360°), details, realized with different kind of light. All photos don't need to be printed, rather digitally supported by a pen drive for critique.

Final project:

During the final examination, students need to show and discuss all projects and drafts they have done during the course as a sign of their artistic progress.

Each student is expected to realize a final project that will be preceded by a preparatory study, discussed during the midterm critique.

Students are free to choose the material of their sculpture and also the subject of it. The final project should show which is their personal poetic with relation to what they have learned during the course.

The final project will be discussed during a final critique session by the end of the course and evaluated in terms of originality and creativity with respect to the basics of sculpture languages.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Critiques of work, both finished and in-progress will be held as announced in class.

The sculpture studio is a resource used by many students. SAFETY PROCEDURES AND STUDIO POLICIES MUST BE CAREFULLY FOLLOWED.

You are expected to act responsibly and cooperatively at all times in using these facilities.

May you need to use some tools, please ask your instructor first.

Venice Studio Art Program Learning outcomes

1. Demonstrate increased proficiency in Italian language.
2. Articulate an individual artistic voice and methodology and express how this has been influenced by Venice.
3. Gain a deeper understanding of art and aesthetics and generate a body of work which will be evaluated in terms of how it has progressed and matured.
4. Develop an awareness of cultural difference and an understanding of culture's role in shaping beliefs and practices.

BU Policies

Attendance

Boston University Venice students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, and field trips required for the class. Students should note that attendance will be taken into account by faculty when determining final grades.

Plagiarism

Simply stated, **plagiarism** is taking another's work and presenting it as you own. Dictionary definitions of plagiarism frequently include terms such as 'theft' or 'steal'. Plagiarism is, in fact, intellectual theft. It is one of the most serious forms of academic misconduct. Plagiarism committed by a student will certainly result in course failure and may result in suspension or dismissal. For more details please see Boston University's Academic Conduct Code:

<http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/>

Religious Holidays

Boston University's Office of the University Registrar states:

"The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled." See Chapter 151C of the General Laws, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Disabilities Accommodations

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the Office for Disability Services (ODS) at 617-353- 3658 to coordinate any reasonable accommodation requests. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.bu.edu/disability>

CALENDAR

Lesson 1 – Sept. 9

- Syllabus and introduction to the course, spaces, materials, method and projects. Materials review and studio orientation. Cutting, scraping, shaping and smoothing, detailing. Introduction to work tools.
- Safety procedures and space rules
- How to prepare a perfect base plane of clay and start working on the *bas relief*.

Lesson 2 – Sept. 16

- Tools and facilities. Supplies and their use with respect to the different materials and projects: clay, wood, marble, wax, plasticine, pongo/modeling clay (similar to play dough), etc. How to start a project.
- How to create the work supplies like wire end tools, hardwood modeling tools.
- Fourteen hundred sculptors

Friday, Sep. 18 – Program Field Trip to Padua

Lesson 3 – Sept. 23

- Introduction to the theory of sculpting materials and to the poetics of materials (clay, plaster, wood, marble, bronze, resins and plastics used in contemporary works).
- The Light, the Space and the Substance.

Assignment 1 – At home, listen to a lute-concert and write your 2-3 pages response paper on your visit to the Scrovegni Chapel, describing and motivating your impressions putting in relation the co-presence of sculptural, painting and architectural elements there.

Please send it to prof. La Bruna (giuseppelabruna15@gmail.com) within Wednesday, Sept. 23 at 6pm.

Lesson 4 – Sept. 30

- The *bas relief*. Modeling the subject: draw and then realize a copy from an ancient greek/roman gypsum, drapery, objects of different nature.

Lesson 5 – Oct. 7

- The *full relief sculpture*: modeling a portrait. Reproduction from life or from a photograph.

Copy from a photograph:

No more than 4 photos are allowed: left side, right side, front view and close up. All photos will respect the A4 format and will be printed black/white on a neutral background.

- During this class, students will learn how to prepare an iron frame and wooden cross-support, starting from the idea that the sculpture will need to be emptied and become a “terracotta” or become the mold for a copy of plaster, resin or another material.

Lesson 6 – Oct. 14

- Plaster mold-making: how to realize it. Instructor demo and students work.

MID TERM CRITIQUE + discussion on Final projects.

– Students are expected to present their preparatory study on their idea of final project. Please read the syllabus regarding study requirement.

Lesson 7 – Oct. 21

- Poetics and plastic languages of Sculpture. Introduction to the History of Sculpture with relation to the more general Art History, Architecture, Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Music.

Homework: Stravinsky’s *Le sacre du printemps*, Ravel’s *Bolero*, Bach’s *Brandenburg Concertos*: listening and do a research about the birth of the composition (How and why it was composed? Where does the inspiration come from? etc.). **Necessary for next class on Oct. 28**

Friday and Saturday, Oct. 23 -24 – Two Days Program Field Trip to Milan

TRIP SUGGESTIONS: Manzù’s doors, Francesco Messina’s studio, Pinacoteca di Brera, Museo del Novecento, Monumental Cemetery.

Lesson 8 – Oct. 28

- Sculpting from a model in order to understand the plastic dynamics, and tensions derived from maintaining a pose.

- The transition from the frame to the shape. Lecture on relationship between body-movement-space in rapport to the rhythmic dynamics created through listening to music excerpts (e.g. Bach, Debussy, Ravel, Satie, Stravinsky, etc.)

- **Assignment 2** – write your 2-3 page response paper regarding your visit to Milan and describe and motivate which old or modern sculptures did impress or attract you. (e.g. Floriano Bodini, Adolfo Wild, Medardo Rosso, Giacomo Manzù).

Please send it to prof. La Bruna (giuseppelabruna15@gamil.com) within Wednesday, Oct. 28 at 6pm.

Lesson 9 – Nov. 4

- From the figure to the shape: considerations about sculpting from a model and introduction to the concept of shape.

Lesson 10 – Nov. 11

- Discussion about the shape
- The Installation: the urban space, the landscape, relationship between substance and space.

Friday, Nov. 13 – Program Field Trip to Vicenza

Lesson 11 – Nov. 18

- Work on final project

Friday, Nov. 20 – Program Field Trip to Florence

TRIP SUGGESTIONS – S. Croce Church, Marino Marini in the S. Pancrazio Church, Medici Tombs, The Old Sacristy in the S. Lorenzo Church (Donatello's pergamons), Museo del Bargello, Cantoria of Luca della Robbia inside the Santa Maria del Fiore Church, Loggiato di Piazza della Signoria, Gallerie dell'Accademia, S. Maria Novella Church (Michelangelo's Christ - attribution), Loggia dei Lanzi, Monsamichele Church (Verrocchio)

Lesson 12 – Nov. 25

- Work on the final project

Thursday Nov. 26 – Thanksgiving Day, Program Celebration @ BU PADUA

Lesson 13 – Dic. 2

- Working on final details

Lesson 14 – Dic. 9

- Working on final details

Dec. 16 – 9.00am

- Final project due and Final Critique

Program Final Exhibition and Celebration @ BU