

COURSE TITLE	MATERIALS IN THE HISTORY OF SCULPTURE (FROM MARBLE TO VIDEO INSTALLATION)
COURSE CODE	OC2101AHT1
TUTOR	DANIEL GREANEY
START DATE	01/11/2021
DAY & TIME	MONDAYS, 6.30PM - 8.00PM
LEVEL	ALL LEVELS
LOCATION	ONLINE

DAILY BREAKDOWN

Date	Topics/ Skills covered
1 November 2021	Marble and Stone. Stone carving, one of the earliest forms of human artistic expression, originated among prehistoric groups and in their artefacts, the human form features prominently. This theme continued with civilised cultures, reaching something of an apotheosis with the Ancient Greeks who were unrivalled in marble figurative carving. The pure white we associate with Greek sculpture is a later attitude, at the time of production, these works were painted in lifelike colours in an effort to make the figures appear more realistic. Baroque masters such as Gian Lorenzo Bernini exceeded the achievements of his Classical predecessors, composing complex multi-figured works from a single block of stone. In the Modern Era, artists such as Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth adopted 'direct-carving' methods, a process more closely associated with prehistoric man and demonstrating how art had gone full circle.
8 November 2021	Wood. Less stable than other materials, wood was nevertheless a popular medium in specific locations and periods, most notably from the Middle Ages through to the Renaissance. Germany in particular was home to renowned practitioners such as Tilman Riemenschneider who excelled at lime wood carving. His elaborate and intricately carved altarpieces are iconic examples of the process. Italian artists of the time were not immune to this trend, Donatello produced one of the most memorable figurative works of the Early Renaissance from poplar. An advantage to working in wood was the ability to paint it after carving, in pursuit of realism, a characteristic which reached an apogee during the Spanish Counter Reformation. At the close of the 20th Century, artists including the German born Georg Baselitz revisited the traditions of his homeland, albeit in a more radical, politicised manner.
15 November 2021	Bronze. Bronze, an alloy of other metals, was first used as a material over 5,000 years ago. Its prominence among various civilisations in the millennia which have followed saw it repurposed for a variety of everyday objects including coins and utensils but also votive objects. As techniques developed, figurative works of increasingly impressive design were created. Examples such as 'the Riace Warriors' give an insight into the skills of the Ancient Greeks and the laborious processes required in casting bronze. 'Lesser' materials, such as brass, were used in a similar manner and resulted in equally prized works of art, namely the 'Benin Bronzes', created during the 15th and 16th Centuries in what is now Nigeria. During the 19th Century, both Edgar Degas and Auguste Rodin worked with bronze to present the human figure in unique new ways.
22 November 2021	Clay. A humble material, more usually associated with functional objects, clay has the ability to be transformed into creations so unique that we overlook the simplicity of the process itself. Some of the finest examples of ceramic art originate from Asia. These include the Terracotta Warriors, a vast project produced by teams of nameless artisans who laboured for decades to push this natural resource to its limits. Clay, a staple fixture in studios, is most often employed in the creation of maquettes but rarely finished sculptures, an exception being the Renaissance era workshop of the della Robbia family. In the hands of creators such as Picasso, clay was once again elevated to an art form. His residency at Vallauris in the South of France during the mid 20th Century brought about a revival in ceramic art, contributing to a hybrid of art and craft which continues to this day.
29 November 2021	Found Object/Installation. In the 1880s, Edgar Degas would use the detritus of his studio to create armatures and internal structural supports for his figurative sculptures. However by the 20th Century, such everyday objects were being presented unaltered as works of art in their own right. Marcel Duchamp, the earliest proponent of 'readymades' and 'assemblages', usurped prevailing sculptural processes and the conventions of art history by rejecting orthodox materials and working methods. 'Concept' had now become the fundamental aspect of sculpture for many. Video, installation and performance art are all categorised as sculpture. Pop artists including Robert Rauschenberg in the 1960s, through to the Young British Artists of the 1990s and beyond, have all challenged our view on the value placed on works of fine art in consideration of materials and the skills required in their production.