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This is a syllabus from a two week figure modeling, intensive course, with the theme of Terracotta Warriors. I designed this course, wrote the syllabus and assisted in teaching the course at University of Virginia, in January of 2012. The class was mostly beginners in figure modeling and the artwork produced was remarkable.



January Term, 2012

Course Listing and Schedule:

School: CLAS **Dept.** Art Studio (ARTS)
Course Subject and number: ARTS 2580
Course title: *Special Topics in Sculpture: Ceramic Figure, The Warrior*
Credit Value: 3 credits
Prerequisite(s) none

Course Description

This a two-week intensive course on figurative sculpture. This course is designed for all levels and will cover anatomy of the human figure, figure modeling techniques, history of figurative sculpture, and contemporary figure sculpture.

Theme

This course is a hands-on studio course on the practice and history of ceramic sculpture focusing on the Terracotta Warriors dating from 210 BC, discovered in 1974, and depicting the armies of Qin Shi Huang, the first Emperor of China. These sculptures will act as a starting point for the creation of contemporary figure sculpture.

Projects

2 Pinch pots
3 fist-size heads- one skull, one self portrait, one terracotta warrior head (there's a lot to choose from)
1 24" figure
1 life size head
Class project- life-size warrior

An exhibition of the art produced in the course will be held in the Ruffstuff Gallery of Ruffin Hall at the end of January 2012.

Recommended Books: *Modeling the Figure in Clay* by Bruno Lucche

Recommend Videos: *PBS, Secretes of the Dead, China's Terracotta Warriors:*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBP-ipNub7g>

WEEK 1

Class 1

- Introduction of the course: history, materials, and methods of Figurative Sculpture.
- Presentation on Terracotta Warriors
- Demo of 1st assignment – pinch pot
- Make 3 pinch pots; get a feel for working with clay
- Demo of 2nd assignment – Small Head, the size of your fist.
- Short lecture on human anatomy and modeling from images
- Begin work on small heads, one skull, one self portrait, one Terracotta Warrior head
- Introduction of 2nd assignment – 24” tall Warrior.

Homework: Write a one-page paper about the warrior you plan to make, include: What issues will they be defending? How will they reflect our current time and/or your life?

Work on small heads.

Class 2

- Presentation lecture- The History of Figure Sculpture.
- Presentation lecture- Contemporary Figure Sculpture.
- Demo of 3rd assignment – The 24” Warrior Figure.
- Start 24” figure in class.

Class 3

- Field Trip: Ceramic Sculpture at the University of Virginia Art Museum.
- More demos on 24” warrior figure
- Work on 24” warrior sculpture and finishing touches to small heads

Class 4

- Lecture about the clay firing process.
- Load kiln with pinch pots and small heads that are finished
- More demo and work with 24” warriors.

Class 5

- Introduce class communal project – Life Size Warrior (body)
- As a class, look at 24” warrior figures, and vote on one to become scaled up to life-size.
- Introduce the next individual project – Life-Size Head
- Each student will design and make one life-size head, which will then be made to fit on the life size warrior body.

Weekend Homework

Drawing, design for life size head

One-page written statement about the head you plan to make.

Finish 24” warrior, finish small heads.

WEEK 2

Class 6

- Demo of a life-size head.
- Begin life size head sculpture.
- Communal class project- a life size warrior.

Class 7

- More demo on large head. Students work on life-size head and class project- life-size warrior body.

Class 8

- More work on head sculpture and life size warrior.
- Small heads will be loaded in the kiln for glaze firing.

Class 9

- More work on heads and life-size warrior.
- Demo with glazes, oxides, and under glazes.
- Stains, glazes, and oxides get applied to small head sculptures.
- Underglazes get applied to life size heads and life size figure

Class 10

- Unload kiln.
- Have a discussion about small heads, 24" warriors, large heads, and finish up work on the life-size warrior.
- Work not yet fired will be fired during the next week.
- Two weeks after the course, there will an exhibition of all work from the course, in the Ruffstuff Gallery in Ruffin Hall, University of Virginia.