

New York Academy of Art
HISTORY OF COMPOSITION & DESIGN 1
Cynthia Eardley
Room 301
Thursday 9:30am-12:30pm; uninstructed studio,

Purpose of the Course

This class will investigate historical methods of compositional construction and design in western figurative art, as well as their applications in contemporary art, with the aim of providing a broad understanding of options available to the students in the development of their own work and ideas. Topics covered will include mass relationships (open/closed form, positive/negative space), proportions, rhythm and flow of surface form, hand-modeling/ stone carving/ "industrial" carving (their influence on surface form and the expression of ideas), single vs multiple perspectives ("multifaciality"), scale/color/mass/ light relationships, site/placement relationships, pedestals/bases, and materials. The class will function primarily in a workshop atmosphere.

Outline

The instructor will provide lectures in a survey format starting with 6 C Greek figurative art and continuing up to the early 20 C; two classes will be devoted to field trips to museums and/or galleries to augment the lectures.

Course Requirements

Students will be required to complete one of the following assignments as a final project:

1) A series of works on the same theme derived from an investigation of various compositional approaches. This process will require written analysis explaining which compositional approach best expresses the ideas and the content of the work and why.

OR

2) A larger, finished work (if sculpture, at least two figures, 24" or more) based on analysis of (a) the composition of a specific example of figurative art or (b) an overall direction in composition from the periods covered in class. This process will require drawings and/or maquettes, as well as a written analysis, citing influences.

In-class work will include individual and class analysis of the compositional studies. Students in this class are expected to produce a wide range of sketches and maquettes. Live models will be provided in all classes, on a 5-week rotational basis.

Evaluation

Students will be evaluated as follows:

Quality of final projects and sketches/maquettes: 70%

In-class participation and attitude: 30%

Please note: punctuality and attendance are *mandatory* and will be reflected in the final grades; reasons for any incidence of lateness or absence must be conveyed to the instructor as soon as possible and no later than the following class.

Required Materials and Book List

A variety of sculpting and drawing materials will be described in class.

For drawing majors, bring one medium-surface, white, acid-free, 80-lb drawing pad, 18 X 24; one newsprint pad, 18 X 24; a kneadable eraser; a few sticks of vine charcoal; and drawing pencils (B, 2B, 3B, 4B, and HB), to start. Additional materials (Conte crayons, charcoal sticks, additional pencils and papers will be needed later on; a list will be provided in the first class.

For sculpture majors, bring a 12"X24" or preferably 14" X 26" board and a 25-lb bag of water-based clay, to start, for modeling of maquettes. The board should be of 3/4 inch plywood, with a 1 X 2 pine runner glued and nailed or screwed lengthwise on the bottom, about one and a half inches in from each edge. *Make sure to stand the runner up on the 1-inch side and glue it that way.* Then shellac or polyurethane the *entire* surface (bottom and sides too). If you need help with this, contact me beforehand and I will show you an example, or if absolutely necessary, wait until the first class for further instruction. Additional water-based and oil-based clay, paint, and armatures (24" H, for final project), will be needed later on.

Reading assignments may vary from student to student.

Instructor Contact Information

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