

Carving Sculptures Out of Plaster Process, Stages and Presentation

with Jeannine Bestoso
www.bestosostudio.com



*Creating sculptures out of plaster is wonderful way
to stimulate the mind in an unusual path of discovery.
All else falls away as a relationship develops
between yourself and the object being created.*

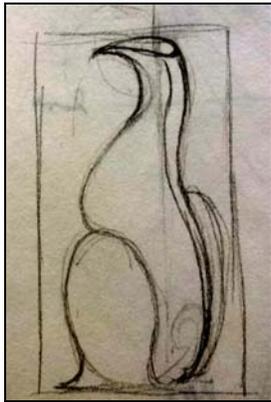
Following is some encouraging information on how to start
the methodical and sustaining process of carving from a block of plaster.
It can be a very pleasurable and intuitive experience as time falls away and the form emerges.



At some point along into the process something happens.

How it happens

- ~ A browse through books gives a sense about different sculpture styles and presentations.
- ~ A choice is made by choosing qualities that one has an affinity for and wants to emulate.
- ~ Determine what stands out for making final choice.
- ~ Planning and drawing are beginning steps.
- ~ The process can start with a simple shape drawing giving a general idea or direction.
- ~ Determine if the sculpture will be vertical or horizontal.
- ~ Mixing and pouring plaster is the first step, followed by approximately 12 more hours of drilling, scribing, chiseling, carving, gouging, shaving, scraping, and sanding.
- ~ Blocks that are kept moist in their containers and plastic are easiest to carve.



Sculpting Tools

Sculpting is a hands-on process using a variety of tools and applications.



- ~ Negative space openings are drilled out with different size drill bits.
- ~ Chunks are removed with a mallet and chisel.
- ~ Rasps shape the form, and a double sided carving tool scrapes and shaves curves and recessed areas.
- ~ Large, round and flat files can clean up edges and smooth surfaces.
- ~ Small to tiny files, both straight and curved, pick out and smooth the details.
- ~ A lazy Susan helps to display all views of sculpture while carving.

*We all have an innate sense of design within us.
We just generally don't have time to access it,
may not be inclined toward using it,
or we allow it to surface in other ways not related to art.*

Some steps are noted in the three images below.

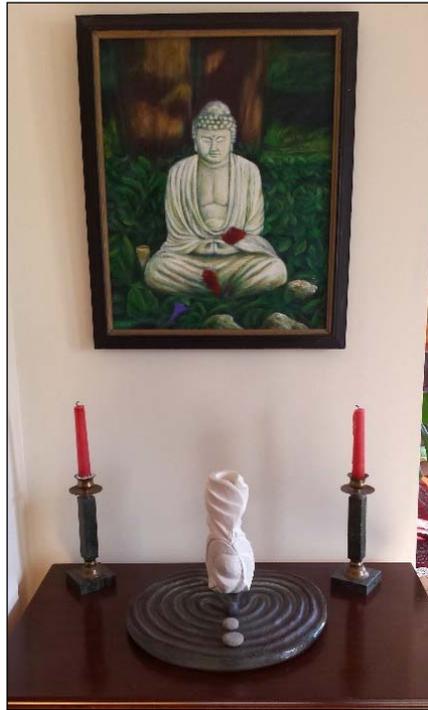
- ~ Drawing on the block on all surfaces determines how the form fits in the block including top and bottom.
- ~ High points are noted so they are not cut away. Scribe marks are evident on the left block.
- ~ Some chiseling has removed some small sections.
- ~ A predetermined hole is drilled into the moist plaster using several sizes of bits. Round files smooth it out.
- ~ Rasping a more rounded curving form has begun and a section carved away leaving a rounded protrusion.
- ~ Attention is being given to the whole form.



*All that is required in creating something unique with sustained attention
is a desire to meet the challenge,
have intention and goals, a trust for the process
and a mantra to not give up.*



You will find your own way.



Having a teacher that knows the process helps too.



A two sided sculpture for different presentations. This piece is ready for a final sanding to ensure there are no interruptions in the flow of the surface. Before the piece can be mounted to its base it needs to be sanded and varnished. To accommodate the two different forms on one piece the base is curved on one side and round on the other side.



The sculpture above is has a rough, pitted surface treatment resulting from a good amount of vermiculate added to the plaster mix. The addition of the vermiculate keeps the block soft for a longer time period making it easier and quicker to carve. The minimally carved bottom section becomes the base.



A new work in progress that beckons attention and completion.

For regular updates on classes I teach at the Newport Art Museum please visit http://www.bestosostudio.com/bestoso_new_classes_events.html

