

# GONZAGA-IN-FLORENCE SYLLABUS

Course: **SCULPTURE** VART 331 and VART 332

Credits: 3 Credits

Instructor: **YVONNE DI PALMA**



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## OFFICE HOURS

The **SCULPTURE COURSE** is offered in both the Fall and Spring Semesters, and there are two sections of the course each semester. (The Fall Semester VART 331 is also offered in the **SUMMER**.) The teaching of the courses and extra work time occupies Monday, Tuesday and/or Wednesday afternoons from 2:00 -7:00 p.m., but the instructor may also be contacted on **Thursday afternoon at the Sculpture Studio, or at [yvdip@yahoo.com](mailto:yvdip@yahoo.com)**. (Gonzaga address: [dipalma@gonzaga.edu](mailto:dipalma@gonzaga.edu) is being refined at this time.)

It should be noted that Art Majors can also definitely profit from this course, because the sections are kept small, and there is **much individual attention** geared towards developing each student's abilities according to his or her past experiences. It is possible to take both the first and second semesters, or also to take only the first or second semester.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

In the **Fall Semester VART 331 Sculpture Course** (and **Summer Semester VART 331 Sculpture Course**) the student is taught the fundamental techniques of kneading, construction, modeling, hollowing and firing the famous water-based, Italian terracotta clay. The sculptural concepts of Space, Form, Volume, and Dimension are thoroughly researched through exercises where the student learns to create bas-relief sculptures, high-relief sculptures and small to medium sized sculptures in the round and fire them. The introduction to the making of 3-d portrait heads and basic human anatomy, enhances the perception of works from Etruscan to Modern periods found at every turn of the Florentine (and European) experience. Our touring the nearby churches, monuments, and museums of San Marco, Santissima Annunziata and the Archeological Museum, the importance of relief sculpture on tombs, on pottery, and in architecture as a means of narration and ornamentation throughout history becomes evident. The particular 3-D development of sculpture in the High Renaissance and Baroque will be viewed as rising from both medieval reliefs, and then from Della Robbia's and Donatello's reliefs in the Early Renaissance.

The **Spring Semester VART 332 Sculpture Course** includes basic techniques of terracotta clay, resins, plaster molds, papier mâché, (wax), armatures, patina and refinishing processes, and sculpting the human body from life. In addition to individual consultation, and frequent demonstrations, various texts are available at the studio, with examples of both Classical and Modern works of Art and the Instructor's personal production. The role of relief work, mold-making, and the use of the full human figure throughout the entire course of sculptural history becomes obvious by our visiting The Florentine Academy as well as the Marino Marini Sculpture Museum, private studios, and The Palazzo Strozzi Contemporary Art Museum in the hopes that the student will combine the techniques and skills learned with the observation of the way other artists have used them through history in order to develop his own personal style based on solid techniques.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objective of the **VART 331 Sculpture Course** is to explain and demonstrate the necessary basic clay techniques so that the student will be able to utilize them to create sculptures which are both expressive and properly made and to relate their own work to the monuments they have seen in Florence.

The **VART 332 Sculpture Course**, in addition, encourages the student to appreciate the important possibilities of both papier machè and plaster mold making in connection with the tradition of the Italian Carnival, and the symbolism of masks, and gain a basic knowledge of Human Anatomy in order to understand its fundamental importance in sculptural forms in both historical and contemporary times.

## GRADING AND OTHER POLICIES

FOR BOTH OF THESE COURSES NO CLASSES CAN BE MISSED AND EXTRA WORK IS SUGGESTED. THERE IS A SCHEDULE OF PROJECTS WHICH MUST ALL BE COMPLETED BY THE MID-.TERM AND FINAL GRADES. IMPROVEMENT AND PROFICIENCY IN THE MEDIA MUST BE SHOWN. Extra work and effort, preparation for the projects, and artistic expression and development are very important.

## COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE

### SCULPTURE VART 331 Sections I and II

- September: Basics of Clay Sculpture  
Kneading.- the consistency and chemistry of the terracotta clay,  
Construction- avoiding breakage.  
Strength, thickness and air pockets.  
San Marco and Santissima Annunziata reliefs *en plein air*
- October: What is a Relief? Dimension and Illusion  
Realistic versus Abstract. An object in Space in clay Bas- Relief.  
References to historic importance of Donatello. Visit to OrsanMichele reliefs.  
High-relief. Tangibility and Distortion on a flat surface.
- November: Relief with background. ( The Doors of Paradise)- Baptistry  
Observing reality and transforming it  
Sculptural manipulation of Perspective, Space and Contemplation  
Donatello's famous "*stiacciato*" technique  
Life-sized 3-d head.  
Introduction to facial anatomy.  
Human expression. Archeological Museum
- December: Refinishing, Sanding and Firing – proof of proper construction technique  
Final Display and Project showing techniques learned and personality.  
Setting up of work and participation in a Critique.

### SCULPTURE VART 332 Sections I and II

- January: Basics of clay Sculpture for the beginners in course .  
Continuing students start more advanced piece which will later adhere to the  
Anatomy Studies from model.  
Introduction to the historic symbolism of the Mask in Art. ( Greek theater,  
Michelangelo-New Sacristy of San Lorenzo, masters of the Carnival in Venice, etc.)
- February: Casting in Plaster of Paris from life.  
Face Mold- Mixing , casting and handling a mold  
Utilization of a mold, for clay, wax and/or papier mâché sculptures.  
Multiple productions.  
Painting, refinishing and patinas to personalize sculpture.  
Famous studios in Viareggio

March: Importance AND limitations of Anatomy.  
Use and abuse of the Human Body in Sculpture throughout history.(examples)  
Museo Marino Marini  
Basic muscles, bones and Expression with Volumes..  
Female Torso from live model.  
Male Torso from live model. Museo dell'Accademia  
Hollowing and firing a good-sized sculpture.

April: *Grande Finale-*  
Palazzo Strozzi Contemporary Art Museum  
Final Project utilizing expertise and expression acquired during the year.  
Setting up the Final Group Show and learning to choose and display  
Sculptures properly.  
Criticism as a means of personal growth.  
Final Critique.