

SHORT COURSE DETAILS

3D6543 MAKING AUTOMATA

Tutor: FI HENSHALL

Dates: 3 DAYS SUNDAY 30 OCTOBER – WEDNESDAY 2 NOVEMBER

ABOUT YOUR COURSE:

This course aims to introduce you to basic types of mechanisms and to experiment with ways in which these can be combined with form to create automata with a narrative theme.

On Sunday evening you will be introduced to a selection of books and automata that demonstrate the aims of the course and also draw attention to the use of different materials, colour, texture and composition. We will discuss what aspects you particularly hope to reflect in your own work.

On Monday you will be shown examples of the few basic mechanisms which you will be working with, and the various ways these can be exploited, as well as the range of materials and techniques to be used during the course. We will explore and discuss the combination of movement and materials you wish to work with and the narrative theme of your work, so that you are ready to start work on your own automaton by Monday afternoon.

We will be working with wood, wire, metal tube and sheet, old tins and found objects. Most materials will be provided by the tutor but you will be asked to bring at least one interesting old tin and any other materials or objects you want to incorporate in your work to make interesting figures to articulate with these simple mechanisms.

The skills used on the course include use of a jewellers' saw, a fretsaw/bandsaw, a pillar drill, wood carving with knives and chisels, and painting. You will generally be able to choose which materials, techniques and level of complexity you are most comfortable with, with an emphasis on the combination of different materials, textures and colours. You will continue to work on your own automata until Wednesday afternoon.

On Wednesday afternoon we will play with the finished pieces and discuss ideas for improvement, development or future projects.

LEVEL: SUITABLE FOR ALL

A subject focused course that is delivered to suit any level of experience from beginner to advanced practitioner. A structured start is followed by guided independent practice.

A basic knowledge of workshop skills will be helpful but not essential.

ABOUT YOUR TUTOR:

Fi Henshall makes automata from wood, metal, broken machinery, old tins and odd objects, working largely in recycled materials. She borrows techniques from any discipline she can pick up (carving, soldering, engineering, painting, modelling, jewellery making and more) to illustrate stories about strange characters and creatures.

Currently Fi is working on pieces for Cabaret Mechanical Theatre's new touring exhibition.

TIMETABLE:

Arrival day: Sunday 30 October

From 4.00pm	Arrival for residential students
6.45pm	Non-residential students please arrive by 6.45pm for welcome chat and dinner

Arrival day continued: Sunday 30 October

7.00pm	Dinner
8.00pm–9.00pm	First teaching session – attendance is an essential part of the course. Demonstration and discussion of some automata and relevant books as well as discussion of what you hope to demonstrate in your automata.

Other days: Monday 31 October – Tuesday 1 November

9.15am	Morning classes start
10.30am	Coffee
11.00am	Morning classes continue
12.45pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Afternoon classes
3.30pm	Tea
4.00pm	Afternoon classes continue
5.00pm	Classes finish
From 6.30pm	Dinner
8.00pm	Evening working: workshops are available up to 10pm for those wishing to work on providing this has been discussed with the tutor. These sessions are untutored.

Departure day: Wednesday 2 November

(Residential students to vacate rooms by 10am)

9.15am	Morning classes start
10.30am	Coffee
11.00am	Morning classes continue
12.45pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Afternoon classes
3.00pm	Classes finish
3.30pm	Tea then departure

REQUIRED PREPARATION:

Please bring:

- An old tin at least 12cm wide x 12cm high by 12 cm deep which will form the base of your automaton (they needn't be square but if they are smaller that this everything becomes extremely fiddly). The tutor will provide a few spare tins.
- A notebook/sketchbook and pencil.
- Any additional old tins of any size to cut up and any found objects you would like to work with.
- Acrylic paint and paint brushes if you have them.

MATERIALS FOR YOUR COURSE:

We have a generously stocked craft shop, which opens daily from 8.30am–2pm.

For any materials you need to purchase from the shop, we suggest you do so during the first morning of your course, after having discussed with your tutor.

Materials included in the course fee:

Ply wood, lime wood for carving, metal wire and sheet, rod, a limited supply of found objects and old tins, fastenings and fixings, adhesive, acrylic paints.

Additional charge:

There will be a small charge for a few of the additional materials the tutor will make available – these will include various bits of brass Meccano and pulley belts.

Available from the Shop:

Scalpels
Paint brushes
Any additional paint required
Piercing saw blades

Available from the tutor:

A few extra materials to purchase if required

Please bring any of the above, if you have them, and in addition:

Any favourite hand tools (marked with your name)

Items listed under Required Preparation on page 2

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

The tutor instructs students in health and safety issues relevant to this course. Students may work unsupervised on agreed projects once they have satisfied the tutor as to their competence. There may be restrictions on the equipment available to students in the tutor's absence. All Personal Protection Equipment, apart from footwear, is provided by the College.

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