

SHORT COURSE DETAILS

S5D08120 STONE CARVING ALABASTER – TRANSLUCENCY IN A ROCK

Tutor: PAULA HAUGHNEY

Dates 5 DAYS SUNDAY 9 SEPTEMBER – FRIDAY 14 SEPTEMBER

The Romans called Alabaster Selenite as they thought it came from moonlight, it has been celebrated and utilised throughout history. Sometimes known as the poor man's marble, ancient Egyptians used it for statuary and vessels. In Medieval England "the alabastermen" were renowned across Europe for their sacred painted narratives. Libraries and religious buildings had windows giving a soft diffused light and it adorned interiors with decorative markings and turned objects.

More recently as supplies have become more available it is being carved by contemporary sculptors for its beautiful colours and translucency.

ABOUT YOUR COURSE:

Gypsum (Hydrated Calcium Sulphate) is relatively soft depending on the colour. White is the softest but it can be pink, orange, grey, brown, blue and mottled with red. Though easily worked it has strength and can be filed quite thin without breaking. It is different from other types of stone and requires a steady, soft and methodical approach. Particular methods and ways of working will be demonstrated in stages, from shaping to the polishing stage. Covering tools, textures and different finishes.

To begin you will shape and smooth small pieces of different types of alabaster to gain experience and knowledge of how the material works. This will inform another longer project tailored to your skills and ambitions. Alabaster has wonderful properties and will provide you with a rewarding outcome.

You will learn more about the history of alabaster and its use in ancient civilizations and contemporary sculpture. There will be resource materials and images available for inspiration and ideas. A talk with images will be given on the first evening. Also relevant printed information will be given throughout the course. All tools and equipment are provided by the college for the student to use during the course. A selection of alabaster will be available to carve. It is too quickly affected by damp weather so best kept for interior use.

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.

Is there anything a potential student needs to be able to do to succeed on this course?

This course can be physical and it is better to stand when carving, though it can be achieved sitting down. It is held in the sculpture courtyard which is a short walk away from the main house and it is open to the elements on one side. Morning coffee and afternoon tea are provided in the Garden Restaurant.

ABOUT YOUR TUTOR:

Paula Haughney is an experienced stone carver, sculptor and teacher having practised her skills for over 30 years. All types of stone have featured in her work from soapstones to granite. Her sculptures are in many public places in Britain and Europe, including St Katharine's Dock, London, Lee Valley Park and Heme Bay in Kent which won the Rousse award for Public Art. As a site specific sculptor she often carves the stone in its destined area as this informs the design and lets the public observe progress and ask questions. This helps in the understanding and acceptance of the sculpture.

"I enjoy the physicality of working in the landscape be it urban or countryside with the challenge of the elements and the task of reducing the stone to be a finished piece in the eye of the public" Paula recently won a sculpture award at the Chelsea Arts Society annual exhibition.

TIMETABLE:

Arrival day: Sunday 9 September

From 4.00pm	Arrival for residential students
6.45pm	Non-residential students please arrive by 6.45pm for welcome chat and dinner
7.00pm	Dinner
8.00pm–9.00pm	First teaching session – attendance is an essential part of the course. Introductions and talk on Alabaster, history, sculpture and other uses.

Other days: Monday 10 – Thursday 13 September

9.15am	Morning classes start at the sculpture courtyard.
10.30am	Coffee at the Garden Restaurant
11.00am	Morning classes continue
12.45pm	Lunch at the College
2.00pm	Afternoon classes
3.30pm	Tea at the Garden Restaurant
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: Friday 14 September

(Residential students to vacate rooms by 10am)

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

REQUIRED PREPARATION:

Come open minded as the alabaster rock shapes will be unknown. Look at examples. There is a display of painted medieval alabaster carvings at the V&A and Ancient Egyptian examples at the British Museum. Bring any gypsum ornaments you have to display. Artists to look at – Jacob Epstein and Plensa.

MATERIALS FOR YOUR COURSE:

We have a generously stocked craft shop, which opens daily from 8.30am–2pm. Stone is stored in the sculptor courtyard and is paid for in the craft shop. There will be different types and sizes of alabaster available to purchase from £2.45 to £6 a kilo

Available from the Shop:

Alabaster and a range of general art materials

Available from the tutor:

Some Alabaster

Please bring:

Strong boots or shoes to wear during the class
It can be dusty so overalls and gloves
Alabaster dust can make hands very dry so bring handcream

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.

Please Note: Traffic may be heavier than usual, with some road diversions in the immediate vicinity, due to the Revival Meeting – the motor racing event taking place **September 7–9** at the nearby Goodwood Estate.

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