

SHORT COURSE DETAILS

SLW08630: SCULPTING WITH WAX – BOTANICAL

Tutor: ANNETTE MARIE TOWNSEND

Dates: LONG WEEKEND THURSDAY 28 MARCH – SUNDAY 31 MARCH

ABOUT YOUR COURSE:

This short course is an introduction to the traditional skill of making botanical sculptures from wax. You will study practical techniques to produce your own accurate sculpture of a plant in wax. Discover more about the history of wax sculpture and the use of wax flowers in museum displays and dioramas.

The tutor will provide an overview to botanical wax sculpture in both a historical and modern context. Using PowerPoint slides, examples of her current work and a sculptural piece loaned from the collection at Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales.

Through practical demonstrations and hands on creative experimentation, you will investigate the melting, colouring and forming of wax shapes and learn how to create support frames for wax from mixed materials such as wire, fabric and paper.

Working from living spring flowers and pressed plants, you will learn how to make 2D templates and 3D moulds of petals and leaves, how to cast wax into moulds to make multiple parts and how to attach pieces together to create whole plant structures.

Finally the different methods for finishing wax surfaces will be considered, from sanding and smoothing, to the successful application of paints and varnishes to achieve a life-like appearance. The appropriate housing and display of wax sculptures will be discussed.

By the end of the course you will have created your own spring flower sculpture from wax to take home. You will have gained a good working knowledge of wax moulding, casting and sculpting techniques used to create botanical sculptures, enabling you to begin working with wax independently.

LEVEL: BEGINNERS/INTERMEDIATE

For those with little or no experience and for those who have taken a related course. Suited to those who would like a structured introduction to a subject, with further building of skills to work towards independent practice.

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

Good level of manual dexterity and an interest in producing detailed work. Good eyesight/glasses for close up work.

ABOUT YOUR TUTOR:

Annette was employed as Scientific Artist at the National Museum of Wales for almost 20 years, making and caring for a collection of 1500 wax botanical models. She now works as a Natural History Artist from her private studio in Cardiff creating bespoke pieces for collectors and institutions around the UK.

TIMETABLE:

Arrival day: Thursday 28 March

From 4.00pm	Arrival for residential students
5.30pm	Workshops available for dropping off equipment and materials
6.45pm	Non-residential students please arrive by 6.45pm for welcome chat and dinner
7.00pm	Dinner

Arrival day continued: Thursday 28 March

8.00pm–9.00pm First teaching session – **attendance is an essential part of the course.**
An evening PowerPoint presentation giving an introduction to the history of botanical wax sculpture, looking at the basic techniques and materials used to recreate plants in wax.

Other days: Friday 29 and Saturday 30 March

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: Sunday 31 March

(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, please vacate workshop by 3.30pm
3.30pm Tea then departure

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:

Materials shared amongst the group: beeswax and paraffin wax, wire, plastic beads, tracing paper, polyester pockets, Japanese tissue paper, cotton thread, ground artist's pigments or pastels, oil paint, soft plasticine, Plaster of Paris, acrylic paints, acrylic varnish, white spirit, disposable gloves, and paper towels.

Available from the Shop:

Sketchbook or notebook and pencil
Fine artist's paintbrushes for finishing models with acrylic paint
Tissue paper to wrap work to take home
Small metal modelling/sculpting tools

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

Camera or phone to take reference images
Old clothes or an apron
Old artist's paintbrushes to use with wax (or you can buy new from the shop)
Small cardboard boxes to transport models home at the end of the course.

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.