

Three Dimensional Media

An artist can use the way they present their art to curate the perception of it. The artist can have a piece that is made to be viewed from all angles, in the round, or just viewed from the front, in relief. When a piece is in the round, a viewer can walk around it and look at every piece of it, when a piece is in the round the field of view is more concise. When sculpting in relief, an artist can choose to have varying levels of detail. A low detailed sculpture with little depth can be described as having bas-relief, and a highly detailed sculpture with a lot of depth can be described as high relief. The relief of a sculpture greatly depends on the tools that are being used, and the image that the artist wants to create. If the artist is using rudimentary tools, or wants to create a more simplistic piece, they may create a bas-relief piece. If the artist has more precise tools and wants to create a more precise piece, their sculpture may be high relief. The physical space of a sculpture is one of the most important aspects of it, so an artist must take time to consider what kind of piece they want to create.

Once an artist decides how they want their sculpture to be viewed, they have to figure out how to create that sculpture. The methods of creating sculptures can be separated into two main categories, subtractive or additive. Subtractive methods are when an artist will start with a large mass or material, usually stone or ivory, and take away pieces of the material until they reach their desired form. The most common ways to take away pieces of the medium are by chipping, carving, sanding, and polishing. Subtractive methods are most common in ancient sculptures, but there are still artists today who create art via subtractive methods. Additive methods are when an artist will start with nothing and build up a sculpture. Common mediums for additive sculptures are clay and wax because humans can shape them with pure hand strength. Another way to

create an additive sculpture is through casting. When casting, an artist can create the figure they want to cast through any method, then make a mold of that figure. Once they have a mold of the figure they can fill it with any casting agent they want and create a replica of the original piece. Casting isn't perfect though, and the artist may need to sand or shave down any parts of the piece that aren't supposed to be there. Additive methods of sculpting have been in use for thousands of years, and can allow for more freedom than subtractive methods. An artist will consider what method will work best for their individual piece, and use that method to create their sculpture.

A notable sculptor is Michelangelo. His sculpting method saw the figure as an object that needed to be released from the stone. He would carve away on a single side until he reached the figure that he was envisioning. This is not how many sculptors would approach carving a sculpture, many would chip away sections all around the piece until they reached the desired form. Michelangelo viewed sculpture as the "finest" art there was. Because of this, when working on the Sistine Chapel, he tried to rush through it so that he could go back to sculpting pieces for the tomb of Pope Julius II. Even when he was not creating sculptures, Michelangelo's art looked like sculptures. When in the Sistine Chapel some people describe the figures on the ceiling as looking like sculptures. This is because of their muscular definition and advanced shading.

Pieces of art like sculptures reveal important information about the culture they were created in. In Central Africa, artists have created Nkisi Nkondi figures. These figures represented a spiritual hunter who would track down anyone who acted immorally. The work put into these sculptures show how important they were to the people. First, the sculptor would have to carve away at a wooden block until it reached their desired form, then they would have to add clothes, furs, and medicines to the sculpture. The final act that demonstrates the cultural significance is

when the Ngaga, or spiritual advisor of the sculpture, will put a nail or blade into the sculpture to activate it. This activation, and the continual activation, of the sculpture show the cultural importance of these sculptures.

In the past centuries, the general understanding of sculptures has shifted from marble figures to elaborate multimedia pieces. Innovation of technology has also resulted in innovation of art in many cases. Sculptors use a variety of items from the Earth itself to sheet metal to preexisting objects. Construction techniques have allowed for larger, more grandiose, sculptures to be created. An example of this is *The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living*. This piece is a 7 foot tall and 17 foot long encased shark that represents the stark contrast between life and death. Without modern day construction equipment, this piece would be essentially impossible to create. The use of electricity and motors have also been able to enhance many works. Using motors can make a piece move, even when there is no outside force, and electricity can allow the piece to illuminate the areas around it, or even itself. Modern equipment has allowed for artists to become more creative, and more resourceful, with the pieces that they create.

In the work *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia* by Antonio Corradini. This is a sculpture that depicts a Vestal Virgin Tuccia. She was accused of no longer being a virgin, but was able to prove her innocence by carrying water in a sieve from the Tiber River to the Temple of Vesta. This sculpture was created using subtractive methods. Great care had to be taken to create the illusion of a meshed veil over the face of Tuccia. *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia* has many soft and curved lines. These organic lines give a liveliness to the sculpture and help the audience relate to Tuccia's humanity. A viewer can tell that she was a real person and had a real story. The texture of this statue could probably be described as rough where the mesh is, and smooth where the

mesh is not. The viewer can look at the statue and see the texture of the various fabrics and materials that the statue is based on. At 91 inches tall, the statue is larger than life, but when viewed at a distance, the statue will appear life-like. This furthers the feeling of humanity related to Tuccia. The mass that this statue takes up forces the viewer to imagine the time and work that it took to create the detailed sculpture of Tuccia. The use of a single medium and appearance of cascading fabric add to the unity of the piece. Everything looks like it belongs together, and no aspect of the sculpture is out of place. All of these pieces come together to help the viewer imagine the person Tuccia, a person who was accused of actions that violated her role as a Vestal Virgin and a person who proved her innocence. These aspects of the sculpture add to her perceived humanity and help her to feel real.

Antonio Corradini was the artist behind this piece. He was known for his sculptures portraying people covered in veils. The time and detail needed to create these veils has astounded people for centuries. He was an Italian sculptor in Venice who started sculpting in the early 18th century. One of his first projects was working on the façade of a Venesian Church. Many of his works were created for the church, or for patrons across Italy. Many of his notable works, including *The Vestal Virgin Tuccia*, can be seen in Vienna, Rome, and Naples.

