



Child's clay giraffe found in a thrift store.

JULY 2013

"Sculpt the Giraffe"

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*"Painting is so poetic, while sculpture is more logical and scientific
and makes you worry about gravity." — Damien Hirst*

This month we're going to do some cross-training by exploring **SCULPTURE!**

Following are two specific projects you can do (either one or both):

- Clay Giraffe
- Thrifted Giraffe

Or, alternatively, you can conceive of your own project in paper maché, carving, or even a 3D assemblage.

But first, a word on cross-training and the creative process.

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Why Cross-Train?

Sculpture might not be our first-choice medium. And yet, when we occasionally tackle 3D projects, our 2D creative pursuits will also be aided. Why?

It's the magic of cross-training. Athletes know the benefits.

Dr. Todd Schilfstein states,

"When you only do one fitness activity — like running or weight lifting, for example — and you only work on the muscles involved in that sport, you may discover that you are far less fit than you think."

So what do athletes typically do? Cross-train.

Professional athletic trainer Jim Thornton sums it up this way:

"Cross training takes into consideration the fact that many muscles in different parts of the body contribute to a single activity. So to get the most out of any activity, and to do it safely, you must pay attention to all the muscles in your body that are involved, not just the ones directly related to that activity."

I believe it's the same with creativity: Just as working different muscles in our bodies makes us more fit in general, so does working in different media every once in awhile.

Here are four ways I think sculpting a giraffe this month will help us be more creative in general:

1. **You become more "fit" creatively.**
2. **Working in 3-dimensions can improve your drawings/paintings.** For some reason, when I work in sculpture, the character of the giraffe seemed to jump out a little more easily and it's easier to identify the character of my unique giraffe. This "knowledge" of your giraffe's personality can inform future drawing or paintings.
3. **It gives you a rest.** Think of this month as working alternate creative muscles so your "normally used" muscles can have a rest. (Remember also that "rest" is part of the W.R.A.P. steps of creativity we talked about in January — **W**restle, **R**est, **A**ha!, **P**roduce.)
4. **You might find a new passion!**

If you're still not sure, perhaps Pablo Picasso can help:

"Sculpture is the best comment that a painter can make on painting."

Let's get started!

1.

CLAY GIRAFFE



Supplies

“Laguna” Ovenscraft Clay (or similar)

Newspapers to protect tabletop

Acrylic paints

Tips

- To make a stronger giraffe, start with a large ball of clay and “pull out” its legs (rather than rolling the four legs separately and trying to attach them).
- Similarly, “pinch” out the ears and ossicones from the head.

- Do your whole sculpture in one session, if possible, so that your clay doesn't dry out.
- Work from a photo or your imagination.
- If your giraffe is more than 1" thick in areas, poke a hole in the bottom to allow for more thorough drying.
- Let dry COMPLETELY before baking in your oven according to package instructions.
- Paint as desired!

2.

THRIFTED GIRAFFE



Supplies

Tall vase from the thrift store or basement

Newspaper

Gel Medium (matte or glossy)

1" flat brush or similar

White Gesso

Acrylic Paints

Tips

- Use lots of masking tape when applying the newspaper to the head area (I pretty much covered all the newspaper).

- Ball it up tightly for strength.
- Use your hands to “mold” the newspaper and tape.
- Attach ears in one long piece for strength.
- Tear newspaper into small pieces. Use larger pieces on the neck and smaller pieces for the smaller head details.
- Wear gloves if you don’t want to get messy!
- Once first layer of newspaper is dry, go over the giraffe with your hands and smooth out any rough areas. Apply a second layer of newspaper bits in various areas if needed.
- Once completely dry, turn over and newspaper the bottom.
- Once dry, apply an even coat of white gesso over everything.
- Paint as desired using acrylic paints.