

Maquette to Monumental Scale Portrait

When preparing for a monumental scale sculpture (2X life size or larger) it is wise to first make a maquette. A maquette is a small study or clay sketch that is low in detail.



Here we see a small sculpture of a bust of Jesus. The height of the sculpture is 6.5 inches and the width is 10 inches. This sculpture has very low detail.

The next step is to decide how big to make the final sculpture. I decided the height of the big sculpture would be 26 inches and the width 40 inches. This inherently makes the maquette a $\frac{1}{4}$ scale study.



In the photo above we can see a large project board that is 24 inches x 42 inches. The large sculpture will be built upon this project board and I want an extra inch on each end of the sculpture, which is why the board is 42 inches wide and not 40 inches. Other materials present for the construction of the large sculpture are (bottom left moving clockwise): bendable aluminum wire, Styrofoam, wire nippers and pliers, steel wire, Iron Rebar, clay, calipers, wooden sculpting tools, metal sculpting tools and a $\frac{3}{6}$ inch thick steel plate.

The steel plate has holes drilled through it and is bolted to the board. The Iron Rebar is welded to the steel plate and bent as appropriate. a series of calculations are made such that at Iron Rebar infrastructure will support the Styrofoam and clay to be added.



The finished clay sculpture is shown here from two angles. Note the way this bust is artfully cropped to maximize the gesture and flow. There is no right or wrong answer on how to crop a bust, but rather it is an intuitive feeling that will have much to do with the pose or the subject matter.

There is little detail on the backside of this sculpture and the thorns on the head of Jesus are subdued because the intent is not to create focus on the suffering that has transpired, but rather what follows.

If you are lucky, you will be able to display your work in a very public place for others to view. Keep in mind the type of work you are displaying and the message you are trying to project, if any. This particular project was very specific and the intent was to display it in a church that has an old-world feel. Here we see the display of “The Greatest Sacrifice” sculpture in a cathedral.



Make the most of your experience and professionalize all aspects of your efforts. In this case, I created a visual layout of the imagery and superimposed it onto a floor plan layout of the cathedral that was available to visitors.

