

# Ephemeral Bodies Wax Sculpture And The Human Figure

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the critical history of wax is fraught with gaps and controversies these eight essays explore wax reproductions of the body or body parts throughout history and assess their conceptual ambiguity material impermanence and implications for the history of western art

in this splendidly detailed generously illustrated text the well known american sculptor richard mcdermott miller introduces the art of modeling the human figure in two media known for their liveliness and spontaneity recognizing the needs of the beginner as well as the interests of the professional artist the book masterfully puts you quickly in possession of the basic procedures you ll need to get started provides specific details on materials and tools and launches you into actual projects specifically designed to teach you sculptural skills the book first analyzes the human figure and describes the way the sculptor translates the figure into the modeled form finding a personal style working from photographs or memory working from life and capturing gesture proportion and anatomy mr miller then describes step by step how to work with wax how to sketch a small figure in wax how to model the figure on a wax armature and the process of hollow wax modeling he follows the same procedure as he introduces working with plaster from mixing it to modeling a hollow torso many other important topics from mold making techniques to working with models to finding out where and how to buy materials and tools are presented throughout mr miller emphasizes the practice rather than the theory of sculpture emphasizing that apart from the artist s need for personal expression sculpture is a physical task involving the manipulation of materials his concentration on the sculptor s working problems makes this an unusually useful and valuable guide to sculpting the human figure dover 1987 unabridged slightly updated republication of the edition originally published by watson guptill publications new york 1971

step by step guide to materials and tools modeling in wax and plaster hollow wax modeling plaster molds and much more introduction the beginning artist will find the step by step instructions to be like having a personal tutor enchantment 281 photographs

the seventeenth century saw a marked increase in wax sculptures across europe capable of producing powerful realistic representations of the human form and anatomy wax was used to create anatomical models effigies portraits and tableaux celebrating themes of man s mortality davide stefanacci argues that a common theme runs through seventeenth century wax sculptures a preoccupation with death through wax representations europeans could achieve immortality of a sort the grim realism the medium was capable of representing was used to promote meditative thought while the sculpture s ability to move was quickly recognized by a catholic church eager to control lives and keep order during the counter reformation stefanacci combines the study of noncanonical works of art with an examination of the social crises gripping seventeenth century europe to interpret the intention and effect of wax sculptures in unprecedented ways he sheds light on the previously overlooked use of sculptural polychromatic representations in wax and makes the compelling case that by interpreting wax sculptures as

representations of life art history has neglected the concrete and powerful presence of death in seventeenth century life straightforward in style and compelling in scope the vision of death challenges accepted views on the intent and impact of european wax sculpture

london 1921 the world s greatest wax sculptor watches in horror as flames consume his museum and melt his uncannily lifelike creations twelve years later he opens a wax museum in new york crippled disfigured and driven mad by the fire he resorts to body snatching and murder to populate his displays preserving the bodies in wax in a thousand years you will be as lovely as you are now he assures one victim in the mystery of the wax museum 1933 director michael curtiz perfectly captures the macabre essence of realistic wax figures that have excited the darker aspects of the public s imagination ever since madame tussaud established her famous museum in london in 1802 artists too have been fascinated by wax sculptures seeing in them and in the unique properties of wax itself an eerie metaphoric power with which to address sexual anxiety fears of mortality and other morbid subjects in waxworks michelle e bloom explores the motif of the wax figure in european and american literature and art in particular she connects the myth of pygmalion to the obsession with wax statues of women in the nineteenth century fetishization of prostitutes and female corpses and as depicted in such wax fictions as dickens s the old curiosity shop 1841 filmmakers too have sought inspiration from wax museums and bloom analyzes works from the silent era to such waxwork themed hollywood horror films as mad love 1935 and house of wax 1953 bringing her discussion to the present bloom examines the work of contemporary artists who use the medium of wax in ways never imagined by madame tussaud as extravagant new wax museums open in las vegas times square and paris waxwork offers a provocative cultural history of this enduring and disturbing art form

the royal london wax museum in victoria british columbia canada offers a history of wax sculpture the art form of wax sculpture began in the ancient civilizations of egypt and greece the history highlights the contributions of french wax modeler marie tussaud 1761 1850 who founded the madame tussaud s wax museum in london england

a survey of greek sculpture from the earliest mention to graeco roman times

this comprehensive guide to every aspect of making sculpture presents all the tools that the contemporary artist will need for translating ideas through technique into finished works the book offers step by step advice on traditional styles as well as avant garde modes that challenge the

limits of technique and the imagination

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