

JAS

Nathan Skiles

Sculpture: Woodworking

Written Assignment #1

At present, I do not know much about working with wood, and my expectation for this course is that I will learn and become proficient with basic woodworking skills. I would like to become adept at building functional objects such as tables, stands, and armatures. I think that most of my projects for the class will be pieces that are not inherently based in wood, but use wooden objects as part of their presentation or function. I am particularly interested in using the 3D router, and using it to develop some new sculptural techniques. I would like to make some reliefs and paint them, and also create constructions out of various cuts. I don't plan to do any hand carving in the class. I think I will mostly be using the machinery in the wood shop, to construct objects.

Several visions are flowing through my head as to the actual art pieces that I will make in the course. I would like to make a wooden toy or puzzle which functions in a kinetic manner. I'd also like to make a large figurative sculpture out of found material. It would be great to produce a piece that is simple to construct, so that I could produce multiples copies of an object to use as props, or devices in an installation. I don't plan on taking a very conceptual approach in this course as to working with wood, because I want to learn some traditional techniques, so that when I leave Ringling I'll have some confidence in carpentry and the basics of architectural construction.

I know we will be looking at various artists, and how they have used wood in their pieces. Learning about new artists always interests me, but I don't expect to be interested in displays of virtuosity. I am more interested in the processes and recipes of woodworking, rather than their outcome. I expect to be taking Buckminsterian approach. I would like to create the biggest effect (the most desirable outcome, etc.), with the least amount of materials and manpower. I feel that this economical approach to problem solving will be integral in all of my works for the semester. I feel that one, or some of my projects, may even manifest as formal studies of this ideology. I may choose to construct a wooden geodesic dome. The router would be a great tool to realize this project effectively, as the geodesic dome is very difficult to make, because of the accuracy of the angles required. They are usually made out of folded cardboard, and then coated with a type of resin, because constructing a dome from separate pieces can be quite difficult. However, the router is able to create very precise cuts, and this could be a plausible solution. I would maybe enjoy doing a project that is related to doorstoppers, or other wooden tools, which are created from a single block, and only require one or two cuts to become functionally recognizable. I look forward to the course, and expect to learn quite a bit.