

Art 270: Introduction to Sculpture

Project # 1: *Ephemera and the Index*

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ephemera /ə'fem(ə)rə/

plural noun

- things that exist or are used or enjoyed for only a short time.
- items of collectible memorabilia, typically written or printed ones, that were originally expected to have only short-term usefulness or popularity: *Mickey Mouse ephemera*.

index /'in,dex/

noun (pl. -dex-es or esp. in technical use -di-ces / -dæ,sēz/)

- an indicator, sign, or measure of something: *exam results may serve as an index of the teacher's effectiveness*.
- a figure in a system or scale representing the average value of specified prices, shares, or other items as compared with some reference figure: *the hundred-shares index closed down 9.3*.
- a pointer on an instrument, showing a quantity, a position on a scale, etc.
- [with *modifier*] a number giving the magnitude of a physical property or another measured phenomenon in terms of a standard: *the oral hygiene index was calculated as the sum of the debris and calculus indices*.

Process

Plaster casting and single use molds

Research

Look for materials that have the potential to be single use molds

Read

All That Is Solid by Nancy Princenthal

Materials

plaster, water, mixing bucket, mold materials of your choosing, release agents of your choosing

Description

This project focuses on the potential of single use molds and the transition into more complex mold making. Single use molds can be made from many materials: cardboard, wood, clay, fabric, tape, and numerous found objects. This project is as much about the potential of experimentation as the potential of plaster as a material.

Considerations

Sometimes the mold is more interesting than the cast result. Single use molds are often destroyed when removing the cast plaster part.

Technical Information

To determine the total volume of your mold, fill the mold with water and pour the water into a graduated container. If the mold cannot easily hold water, fill with rice and then pour that into a graduated container.

Plaster must be added to water. Always use cold water; it will trigger the chemical reaction of the plaster setting less quickly than hot water. Start with a volume of water that is $\frac{2}{3}$ the amount of the total volume you will require. Add plaster until several peaks appear at the top of the water line. Let sit for several minutes. Mix.

Do not add additional plaster after you have started to mix the plaster and water together; it will begin to set very quickly.

Plaster gets warmer as it begins to set. It must be poured before this happens. Setting plaster should not be in extended contact with skin.

Plaster will attach itself to many materials; be aware that it may be difficult to completely remove the plaster cast from the mold. Release agents of various kinds may be of use.

Grading Rubric

Craft: plaster has set correctly, cast is intact, no air bubbles /20

Mold: form used to create cast is compelling, sophisticated, innovative /30

Composition: work is formally dynamic in terms of positive/negative space, texture, existing in the round, or other attributes /20

Concept: work is theoretically, conceptually intriguing; concept driving cast is thoughtful and creative /30