

# Sally James Farnham and Model Horse Sculpting

## Grades 6-12

Farnham was commissioned by the Venezuelan government to sculpt an equestrian monument of Simon Bolivar, who was a military and political leader who played a great role in helping Hispanic empires in the struggle for independence against the Spanish empire. For our project, the students will be exposed to horse sculpting using wire armatures, Sculpey clay, horse models, and sculpting tools.

### Lesson Overview



The grade level this lesson is designed for is 6-12 and the subject is art. The length of the lesson will be 45 minutes. This lesson will be considered a meaningful use task (M.U.T.) in a class that revolves around Sally James Farnham who enjoyed a career as a sculptor.

Farnham was from Ogdensburg NY but spent most of her life living on Long Island. For the course offered, students will view a Power Point presentation about Farnham and her life, view her artworks first hand at the Frederic Remington Art Museum, and create the M.U.T. using model horse sculpting kits.

### Essential Question(s)

- Who was Sally James Farnham?
- How did she become an artist? Was there studying involved or was she self taught?
- What kind of art did she make?
- Does the fact that Sally James Farnham was a woman hold significance in her career choice?
- Was she successful in her career?

### Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the students will be able to:

- Tell the instructor who Sally James Farnham was and what she did for a living
- Tell the instructor what types of artwork Sally made
- Describe the significance of Sally's involvement in the art world as a woman artist competing for work

## **NY Curriculum Standards**

- NY.ART.K-12.1 Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance, music, theatre, and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts
- NY.ART.K-12.2 Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in the arts in various roles.
- NY.ART.K-12.3 Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought

## **Anticipatory Set- Description of the Lesson Launch activity**

Students will arrive at Kid's Place and be verbally led into the lesson. For the launch, students will be shown a Power Point presentation. Power Point will include:

- A background on the life and times of Sally James Farnham
- Pictures of Sally and her family
- Pictures of many of Sally's works
- Slides devoted to the process of how to create a sculpture

## **Description of how objectives will be communicated to students**

This will be done using the Power Point presentation. Students will see Sally's work and be led in a discussion about how a sculpture is created. The next few slides of the presentation will be devoted to the process of building an armature, adding clay to it, and how to use sculpting tools. After we travel to the Museum to see Sally's work firsthand, we will head back to the classroom and begin our pieces using small play horses as our models.

## **Description of the relevance of the learning**

By combining the information provided in the Power Point with a field trip to the Museum to see original art works, the group now has the foundational knowledge to create a M.U.T.

The connection should be brought to their attention that there were and are very famous artists that are from the same area that they themselves are from and are currently living in. Coming from an underprivileged area, this realization may open these student's eyes to a bigger and brighter world and future waiting for them beyond our area.

## **Connection to standards**

NY.ART.K-12.1- Students will engage in the process of art work creation through completing their M.U.T.

NY.ART.K-12.2- Students will become aware of sculpting materials through the M.U.T.

NY.ART.K-12.3- Students will respond critically to a variety of works when they view Farnham's work in the Power Point and in person. They will connect the individual work to other works when they compare her castings side by side. They will connect other aspects of Farnham's human endeavor and thought to their aspects of them when they embark to create an artwork based on Farnham's artwork.

## **Introduce New Information & New Concepts**

The students will learn declarative and procedural knowledge in this lesson.

**Declarative Knowledge-** Factual knowledge that they will learn

- Where Farnham was from
- What she did for a living
- Who her inspiration was

**Procedural Knowledge-** How-to knowledge that the students will learn

- How to examine original art work
- How to infer meaning from an artwork
- How to visualize a three dimensional work
- How to create a three dimensional sculpture

## **Guided Practice**

- The objectives will have been communicated through the Power Point presentation
- Students will be given paper, pencils and rulers with play children's play horses
- Students will draw their play horse after and while they look at it
- Students will then examine their drawings to see if they look accurate
- Students will use their rulers to measure the play horses so they can have an accurate scale to work with
- They will then redraw their horses using the new scale
- A demonstration showing how to apply the Sculpey clay to the armature will be provided
- The students will begin to add the clay
- The students will continuously check their sculpture using their rulers to make sure the piece stays proportionate and on scale

## **Assessments**

The successful completion of the M.U.T. will assess understanding of the art lesson. By asking students the essential questions and hearing answers, assessment of learning for the entire class will be complete.

## **Closure**

For a closure, students will be reminded of the wide, wonderful world that waits for them beyond the borders of our small city and state. They will also be reminded of how proud they should feel when thinking of the talented artist from our small area.

## **Materials Needed**

- Power Point presentation
- Model Horse Sculpting Kit
- Pencils and paper

## Supplies Needed

**Model Horse Sculpting Lesson:** Farnham was commissioned by the Venezuelan government to sculpt an equestrian monument of Simon Bolivar, who was a military and political leader who played a great role in helping Hispanic empires in the struggle for independence against the Spanish empire. For our project, the students will be exposed to horse sculpting using wire armatures, Sculpey clay, horse models, and sculpting tools.

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Supplies Needed:

Net Equestrian

[http://www.netequestrian.com/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=940&gclid=CL7sgPGs77MCFcqY4AodcUkAIA](http://www.netequestrian.com/product_info.php?products_id=940&gclid=CL7sgPGs77MCFcqY4AodcUkAIA)

Model Horse Sculpting Kit

\$19.99/1 kit

10

\$199.99



IN- 4113- Sculpt like a top equine artist with this super sculpting kit! All materials included: wire armature form, Sculpey clay, sculpting tools, paints and brush

## Sally James Farnham and Model Horse Sculpting

Sally James Farnham (1869-1943) was born in Ogdensburg NY into a prominent local family. She and her sister enjoyed a lifestyle of travel with their father, who was widowed when Sally was ten years old. Instead of attending college as her sister did, Sally stayed behind and managed her father's household. She and her father took trips to Italy, France and Japan, and Sally was provided with a foundational knowledge of art and developed an art appreciation, aiding her when she became an artist. Along with art and travel, another true passion of Sally's was horseback riding.



Sally was married in 1896 at the age of 27 to one of America's leading jewelry designers, Paulding Farnham. Paulding had helped Tiffany & Co. elevate themselves to international recognition beginning in the late 1880's. The newlyweds settled in a Manhattan apartment and soon began a family having three children: James (1898), Julia (1900), and John (1907).

Sally's father passed away in 1901, shaking Sally deeply, as the two were very close. During that year, she suffered an unknown malady which required a hospital stay. It was during this hospital stay that the vision of her career as a sculptor began. Her husband brought her some modeling clay and from there she began replicating people and objects in her room. When she was released from the hospital, she rented herself studio space. By 1903 Sally's studio at 1947 Broadway in New York was listed in the *American Art Annual*.

In 1904 she created a model for a Civil War memorial to be displayed in the city of Ogdensburg she titled *Victory*. Her model won over 16 other artist's submissions. Good friend and mentor Frederic Remington wrote to Sally about the piece: "I'm no judge of women's faces, but you've got a leg and a knee there that will make you famous." In years that followed, she was commissioned to create works based on such people as Warren G. Harding, Theodore Roosevelt, and Simon Bolivar, calling on Remington for his expertise in different instances.

Sally also became involved in the Women's Suffrage Movement and was a support system and voice of justice for many women in her community and women living in that era. At the height of her forty year career, Sally James Farnham held a position enviable to most artists of any generation, having secured an international reputation and critical acclaim. She was one of the few women sculptors of her time to successfully compete for large-scale commissions in a largely male-driven field, cementing a foundation for equal rights between men and women in the future.



*Cowboy Fun*, ca 1905, one of the many pieces based on horses Sally sculpted and had cast throughout her career



Sally with "*Bolivar*" clay model, ca 1919, Sally's major career triumph. The bronze casting resides in Central Park, New York City.