

---

**JOHN BELARDO**

7771 South Main Street, Pine Plains, NY. 12567

(917) 280-2207 · [belardojohn@me.com](mailto:belardojohn@me.com)

[www.johnbelardo.com](http://www.johnbelardo.com) · [instagram.com/johnbelardo](https://www.instagram.com/johnbelardo)

---

### Statement of Teaching Philosophy

My specialization as a sculptor is the figure developed through life drawing and the study of anatomy. Representation in art is an acknowledgment that human consciousness is unique in this world and that the human condition is what art is about. Anatomy and perspective are the rational ideas that transformed art in the Renaissance into a human-centered form. Strong skills-based training in materials and techniques follow from these primary ideas. This focus helps students in the process of understanding the human figure and its place in the world. Empirical observation is at the heart of art education and it is the unifying wisdom.

Teaching is continually finding ways of inspiring students to take the initiative towards learning. My objective as a teacher of sculpture revolves around three principles essential to the development of an artist: visual intelligence, creative practice, and inspirational research. These foundations will lead students to realize their capacity as artists.

Students develop visual intelligence with empirical observation through drawing and modeling from life. Drawing and modeling from life is both a rational and empirical exercise, the students are constantly comparing what they know of anatomy to what they see on the model. This process is the way to a sophisticated representation of the figure. Developing visual intelligence allows students to absorb more and have a greater aptitude when analyzing principles of design or images from art history and when thinking critically about one's own work.

The creative process is essential to training in sculpture. Embedded in great works from art history are countless iterations in sketches and maquettes that lead to the refined work of art that we see in museums and in the public square. Students need to understand this iterative creative process to develop as an artist. An example of this process is the fellowship program I teach through Newington Cropsey Foundation Academy of Art. Fellows spend several weeks developing small maquettes, working through compositional alternatives, assessing interpretations, and engaging with historical examples. Once the student has worked through this conception, a maquette is chosen to be enlarged to a more significant and sophisticated sculpture. The work is then cast into bronze, which is a lesson on permanence and that ideas transcend our finite time.

An important component of my teaching involves inspirational research. Reading and discussion of classical text from literature and philosophy as well as in-depth analysis of great works from art history, help students learn how ideas are formed and incorporated into art. All students are encouraged to search deeply and with humility for inspiration from broad interdisciplinary sources.

This scholarship is fundamental to a Liberal Arts education and the philosophy of the "Medici Garden".

Art is not created in a vacuum, an artist should be aware of the role art plays in history. A teacher must be accessible to students as a resource as they find their way to growth and maturity. I know students leave my class with a sense of respect for the skills of art and an understanding of the creative process and the confidence that comes from this strengthens their passion for sculpture.