



# Sculpture

by Sophia



## WHAT'S COVERED

Art, including sculptures, can be created from many materials, or mediums. In this lesson, you will begin to identify different types of sculpture. You will learn specifically about:

- [1. Different Media Used in Sculpture](#)
- [2. Additive Sculpture](#)
- [3. Subtractive Sculpture](#)
- [4. Assemblage Sculpture](#)

## 1. Different Media Used in Sculpture

Sculpture is a 3D art form, and sculptures can be made out of almost any material you can think of, although some materials are more commonly used than others. Materials such as metal, stone, and wood are traditionally used when creating sculptures.

### IN CONTEXT

An example of a sculpture is this wooden bodhisattva statue pictured here:



Artist unknown

*Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara in Water Moon Form (Shuiyue Guanyin)*

China

11th century, Liao dynasty (907–1125)

Wood (willow) with traces of pigment; multiple-woodblock construction

Take a look below at this example of the stone head sculptures found on Easter Island, a tiny island off the coast of Chile in South America:



**Artist unknown (Rapa Nui people?)**

***Moai***

**Easter Island, Polynesia**

**between 1250 and 1500**

**Volcanic tuff (solidified ash)**

The next example is a large steel sculpture, *The Angel of the North*. This sculpture can be found in England:



Antony Gormley (1950 - )

*Angel of the North*

Gateshead, England

Steel

## 2. Additive Sculpture

Sculpture can be categorized based upon the manner in which it was created. There are three forms often used when creating sculpture:

- Additive
- Subtractive
- Assemblage

**Additive** refers to the addition of a raw material. Metal or clay are raw materials that can be used to create a sculpture.

### IN CONTEXT

Take a look at this sculpture, a bronze casting of a deer:



**Artist unknown**

**Bronze Deer**

**Sofia, Bulgaria**

**approx. 4th and 6th century BC**

**Bronze**

Below is an image of the molds that would be used when forming castings:



#### DID YOU KNOW

**Casting** and **modeling** are good examples of additive sculpture. Casting doesn't always use just metal. Plaster or wax, for example, can be cast as well.



#### TERMS TO KNOW

##### Additive

Any sculptural technique, such as casting or modeling, that involves adding material.

##### Casting

The production of sculptures by pouring a liquid, such as plaster, molten metal, or wax, into a mold and letting it harden before the mold is removed.

##### Modeling

The production of sculpture by adding bits of clay together until they start to resemble the desired shape.

## 3. Subtractive Sculpture

**Subtractive** is basically the opposite of additive. The sculpture is created by removing material. **Carving** in wood or stone is an excellent example of this.

☞ **EXAMPLE** Below is a marble sculpture of Moses, who is considered an important prophet within Christianity, Islam, the Bahá'í Faith, and other Abrahamic religions. This is an example of subtractive sculpture:



Michelangelo (1475 - 1564)

*Moses*

Rome, Italy

c.1513–1515

Marble



TERMS TO KNOW

### **Subtractive**

Any sculptural technique, such as carving, that involves taking material away.

### **Carving**

The production of a sculpture by scraping away, or removing, extra material from a block of stone, piece of wood, or other hard substance until the desired shape emerges.

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## **4. Assemblage Sculpture**

**Assemblage** is formed from the root word assemble, and it means to construct a sculpture from objects that are found. Unlike raw materials such as metal or clay, assemblages are formed from materials that were once something different, such as tin cans or Popsicle sticks.

☞ **EXAMPLE** A famous example of assemblage by the African American artist Betye Saar. Saar constructed this work out of found objects that depict African American women as mammy figures, or servants whose job was to care for White children. The "mammy" was a stereotype that many people found offensive but was often reproduced in U.S. popular culture in the form of household objects (here it is a notepad holder) and in the figure of Aunt Jemima, who represented a brand of pancake mix. Saar "liberates" the mammy by adding a Black Power fist associated with the Black Panthers in the early 1970s, and by adding guns to her broom.

- If Saar had made this sculpture using carving or any other technique, do you think it would have been just as effective in communicating its message.
- Why or why not?



Betye Saar

Liberation of Aunt Jemima

Berkeley, California, USA

1972

Mixed media assemblage



## BIG IDEA

Sculpture is a three-dimensional type of artwork made by adding, removing, or assembling almost any type of material.



## TERM TO KNOW

### Assemblage

Creating a sculpture by putting together a series of found objects.



## SUMMARY

Sculpture is a form of 3D art that can be created using various materials and by using differing methods. **Different mediums used in sculpture** include metal, stone, and wood. Sculpture can be categorized by how it was created. The three forms often used when creating sculpture are additive, subtractive, and assemblage sculpture. Remember, **additive sculptures** are created by adding raw materials, such as in casting and modeling. Carvings, where materials are taken away, are **subtractive sculptures**. **Assemblage sculptures** are created from objects that are found.

Source: THIS WORK IS ADAPTED FROM SOPHIA AUTHOR IAN MCCONNELL.



## ATTRIBUTIONS

- [Lost Wax-Model of apple in plaster](#) | Author: José-Manuel Benito Álvarez | License: CC
- [Angel of the North 2010](#) | Author: saw2th | License: CC
- [National Archaeological Museum Sofia - 3,000 Year Old Bronze Deer](#) | Author: Ann Wuyts | License: CC
- [Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara in Water Moon Form \(Shuiyue Guanyin\)](#) | Author: Metropolitan Museum of Art | License: Public Domain
- [Moais, Isla de Pascua](#) | Author: Horacio Fernandez | License: CC
- [Michelangelo's Moses \(Rome\)](#) | Author: Livioandronico2013 | License: CC



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