

Design Resource

Contemporary Cement Sculpting Camp

Agumbe, Karnataka

by

Prof. Bibhudutta Baral and Sandhya B.

NID, Bengaluru

Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/contemporary-cement-sculpting-camp>



1. Introduction
2. Tools and Raw Materials
3. Sculpture Making
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Introduction

Concrete art is a composition of basic visual features. The group Art Concrete initiated the idea of 'concrete art'. Only geometrical concepts were focused and tried to exclude lyricism and symbolism. This movement was intended to originate 'directly from mind' ideas. Over the period of time, the use of concrete turned into a user of another media over the abstract art concepts that were supposed to be made. Stone, glass, metal, wood and cement are a few of the materials from which the sculptures are made. Sometimes it doesn't count on the media and the concept can be visually represented with available materials and this could be called an assembling technique.

Sculptural works appear freestanding such as statues that are not attached to any other surface, and reliefs that are partly attached to the background surface. There are additive and subtractive methods followed while building the work. The term sculpture mainly describes the larger statues or monumental sculptures, meaning either or both of the sculpture is large or that is attached to a building. The contemporary sculptures involve a mix of new media invasions. Among a few types of cement, sculptures are the boom.

The contemporary cement sculpting camp organized at Agumbe by the Karnataka Shilpakala Academy becomes a great program for all the artists from respective sculpture backgrounds to meet and exchange knowledge on sculpting techniques on various topics and enhance. The sculpture camps help the young artists meet the seniors and the working brings an intense understanding of work ethics. This helps them to get to another dimension that the young artists could adopt while working solely.

The camp was conducted at Manipal Educational and employment trust. These sculptural camps are regularly conducted by the Karnataka Shilpakala Academy in various places. Through the wish of Mr. Balakrishna Shenoy (administrator of Manipal Educational and employment trust) the contemporary sculpting camp was prearranged in this misty foliage land of Agumbe for 15 days that is from 2-06-2016 to 16-06-2016. Before getting into the work of sculpture the artists prepare with the concepts. The sculptures planned to construct are all focused on the traditional and cultural figures to represent the typical events of Karnataka, especially in the Malnad region. Sir M Vishveshwaraya, The Yakshagna performer, the Bootha Aata (regionally worshipped God), water buffalo and ploughing, ladies grinding grains and a few others are the sculptures that were made.

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The cement sculpting camp is conducted by Karnataka Shilpakala Academy.



Senior artisan making basic clay model.



Director of the camp Mr.Venkatachalapathi making clay model.



Work station of cement sculpting

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Fiber model of Sir.M.Visvesvaraya.



Mr. Shenoy organizer of the camp.



Clay model of king Krishnaraja wodeyar.



Team involved in cement sculpting.

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Tools and Raw Materials

Tools and raw materials that are used in contemporary cement sculpture camp:

- **Cement:** It is used to mix with sand and gravel to form concrete.
- **Cement Bowl:** It is used to hold the cement.
- **Trowel (Metal Karni):** It is used to mix cement, sand and gravel.
- **Sculpting Tools:** They are used while shaping.
- **Marble Powder:** It is used to get fine finishing (usually while working on facade).
- **Iron Rods:** It is used to get a firm structure to build the form.
- **Binding Wire:** It is used to knot the steel rods and GI wires.
- **GI Wires:** Galvanized wires are used for the armature.
- **Mesh:** Meshes are used to get appropriate forms.
- **Sieve:** It is used to filter sand to remove bigger particles.
- **Sand:** Fine sand is used to mix with cement.
- **Gravel:** It is used with cement and sand to strengthen the mixture.
- **Small Pieces of Brick:** Brick pieces are used to fill the armature and obtain the form.
- **Finger Cots:** They are used to avoid injuring fingers while working.
- **Machine to Cut Wires:** Machines help to cut strong iron rods
- **Wire Cutter:** To cut wires small binding wires.
- **Iron Rod Bender:** It is used to bend the rods to the required shape.

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- **Cutting Pliers:** They are used to cut wires.
- **Hammer:** It is used to fix nails on the sculptures.
- **Nails:** They are used to fix the wire mesh.
- **Flat Paintbrush:** It is used to get a smooth surface and add textures.
- **Spade:** It is used to fill cement in the bowl.
- **Customized Rod:** It is used to roll binding wire and knot.
- **Saw:** It is used to cut.
- **Measuring Tape:** It is used to measure the lengths.
- **Chalk:** It is used to mark the lengths.
- **Rod Bender:** It is used to bend the iron rods.



Bar bending key is used to bend the iron rods.



Binding wires are cut using cable cutter.

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Iron bars are cut using rod cutting machine.



Sand is mixed with cement to make idol.



Bricks are used to give thickness to the idol.

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Rubber tubes are worn on fingers to prevent from injuries.



Cement is applied to make the idol stronger and to give good finishing.



Grubber is used to mix cement.

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Iron rods are used to make the skeleton of the idol.

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Iron hook is used to bend the binding wire.



Mesh is used to make body of the idol.



Binding wires are used to make the detailing of the idol.

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Sculpture Making

The art of making two or three-dimensional forms have four basic techniques that are followed by the artists. The processes are carried on with either addition or subtraction method.

Carving: Chipping away to achieve the shape from a mass of stone, wood or other hard material. It is a subtractive process where the material is eliminated systematically from outside.

Casting: These castings are made from materials that can be poured into the mold. The castings are removed from the mold. The metal, for example, is meltdown into a mold and the mold is allowed to cool down, hardening the metal. This is an additive process.

Modelling: These sculptures are created with a malleable material such as clay. They are built up, sometimes over an armature and shaped to create a form.

Assembling: Different materials are brought together to create an assembled sculpture.

The contemporary stone sculpting camp follows a Modeling technique where most of the sculptures are built by the additive process. To build a sculpture work there are rough steps that are followed imperceptibly. The armature is the very basic step, where a structure is built out of wires and iron rods. The cement mix is applied to the armature, the second step. The consistency of the cement mix and the finishing of the forms that need to be created becomes the third final step while working on the modelling technique. The structure follows the form that has to be made. Needed lengths of iron rods are cut with the help of a hacksaw. A set of rods are arranged horizontally first and another set of rods is placed vertically on top later. With the help of binding wires, these rods are locked together. This forms the base, to begin with, the armature or the skeleton.

Armature:

The armature is begun with the welding of iron rods to the base. The iron rods are bent and tied with binding wires to achieve the skeleton form of the sculptures. This becomes one of the important steps as the final outlook depends on the armature perfected. Once the foundation is right, it allows the anatomy to be right, and hence the armature has to be corrected before beginning with the cement coating. The armature or the skeleton is ready, it is checked if it needs a sheet of mesh to be covered that helps the armature gain a strong form. Sometimes covering with a sheet of mesh saves the amount of cement that goes into making. There are various kinds of mesh that are available, depending on the work and the style of the sculpture, the wire mesh must be chosen. The wire mesh is also used to get a fine finish of forms this helps in the final outlook of the sculpture.

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Sand, Brick Pieces and Cement:

The sand is filtered and the grains are removed. Small brick pieces and gravel are gathered. The dry materials cement and sand are taken in appropriate proportions and mixed with water. Measurements are given as volumes. Applying to the wire mesh needs a drier mix of cement that feels more like clay and stays in place until it sets. The small pieces of brick are stuck along with the cement to achieve the form in armatures where the mesh is not used. After the form is roughly achieved by the small pieces of brick, the form is built with the addition of cement layers. The cement mix is carried on the consistency that the work needs.

Cement Sculptures:

The cement gets hard depending on the mix and the temperature. It can be worked with rough layers or carved once the initial layers are applied. Whilst the structure of cement dries completely then it becomes harder comparable to working with stone. It is best to work in the initial stages or set so that the bonding of layers and the addition of the layers are possible.

Sculpting and Finishing:

The forms of the sculpture are inclined to be controlled from the inside. There are no external enclosing forms and planes, as in carved sculpture. The overall design of the work is achieved or estimated from its volumes, proportions, and axial arrangement determined by the fundamental forms and the smaller forms, surface modelling and enhancing details are all formed around and sustained by this fundamental structure. The modelling method allows dimensions of material to have no limits and extend into space. The surface is given textures with the sculpting tools. The majority of the sculptures appear to be finished in their original forms for some, final textures are added.

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Flow Chart:

The Contemporary Cement Camp				
Making Process of Sculptures				
Modeling Method		1. Armature	2. Cementing	3. Finishing
Armature	Cementing	Finishing		
1. The base (ground level base) for the armature to stand is made from the iron rods, tying them with the help of binding wires.	1. Cement, sand and gravel are mixed in proper proportions to obtain concrete.	1. The form is obtained and next coat of concrete is applied.		
2. The iron rods are bent to the required shapes and attached to the base, the form is attained like wise.	2. The concrete is applied to the armature.	2. The concrete is shaped according to the form.		
3. The wire mesh is used to precisely obtain the form of the sculpture.	3. The mixture goes in three levels depending on the consistency of the mixture.	3. A mix of Marble powder is used for the final details of facade and other.		
	4. After a coat of concrete on armature, brick pieces are stuck along with cement to bring the three dimensional form.	4. Flat brush is used to smoothen the surface and get a texture.		

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Bhootha Aradhane



Women Grinding Rice



Kambala



Lord Shiva

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Mermaid



Sir M. Vishveshwaraya



Saving Rain Water



Yakshagana

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Source:

<https://dsource.in/resource/contemporary-cement-sculpting-camp/sculpture-making/bhootha-aradhane>

Bhootha Aradhane



Using iron rods the skeleton of the sculpture is made.



The skeleton of the sculpture is strengthened by a thick layer of concrete.



The cement is filled to make the legs of sculpture.



Small pieces of brick is fixed to make anatomy of the sculpture.

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Small strings are attached to make different designs.



Basic shape of the face is made using cement.



Fine Mesh is tied to the armature of sculpture to apply cement layers.

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The mesh is covered by a layers of cement.



Basic detailing of the sculpture is made using rough cement.



To give thickness bricks are place on the sculpture.

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Detailing are made on the sculpture with smooth cement.



The extra ornaments are attached.



Sculpture of Bhoota Aata art form of Karnataka.

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Kambala



Initially skeleton of the sculpture is made using iron rods.



The base of the sculpture is strengthened with a layer of concrete at the base.



Mesh is tied around the skeleton to hold the cement.



Cement is applied all over the sculpture.

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Small brick pieces are pasted to make the anatomy of the sculpture.



Raw cement is sprinkled all over the sculpture.

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Cement is applied to make a complete detailing of the sculpture.



The iron rods are fixed together to make a skeleton of the sculpture.

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Anatomy of the sculpture is made by fixing bricks to it.



Face of the sculpture is made.



Sculpture of a farmer with buffalo in race.

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Women Grinding Rice



Skeleton of the sculpture is made and bricks are placed on the gape of the skeleton.



Bricks are placed to make the anatomy of the sculpture.

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A layer of cement is applied over the bricks to hold it tight.



Basic detailing are made on the sculpture.



Mesh is fixed on the sculpture to make cloth detailing.



Face is made with a traditional hat on the sculpture.

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Pot is made and the sculpture is placed in position.

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Lord Shiva



The skeleton is fixed to concrete and mesh is fixed to the rods.



Bricks are fixed to make the anatomy of the sculpture.



Head of the sculpture is made with the details of hair.



Basic shape of the snake and weapons are done.

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Full detailing of the body is made.



Meditating posture of Lord Shiva.

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Mermaid



Using iron rods skeleton of the sculpture is made.

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Small bricks are fixed to skeleton to make the anatomy.



Hand portion is bend and cement is applied.



Cement is applied all over the sculpture to make sculpture stronger.

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Detailing of scales are made on the tail portion.



Face is made with hair details.



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The cement is smoothen by applying water using brush.



Beautifully made mermaid sculp.

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Saving Rain Water



The skeleton of the sculpture is made initially.



Strong base is made by using concrete.

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Detailing of the sculpture is made using binding wire.



Mesh is covered all over and cement is applied over to make it stronger.

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Bricks are fixed for the thickness of the sculpture.



Sculpture with the concept of save water.

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Sir M. Vishveshwaraya



Basic anatomy of the sculpture is made by placing bricks on the skeleton.



Cement is covered to make the detailing of the sculpture.

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Face and hat is made in detail.



Body and cloth details are made.



Cement Sculpture of Sir M. Vishveshwaraya.

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Yakshagana



Initial skeleton and the anatomy of the sculpture is made.



The cement layer is packed to make basic detailing.

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To get the cloth wrinkle details mesh is tied to the sculpture.



Cement is applied over the mesh to hold it strong.

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Face detailing and the kavacha (which is worn on head) are made.



Ornaments are made in detail.

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Basic anatomy of the sculpture.



To make the basic detailing cement is applied over bricks.

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Second layer of brick is fix to give more thickness in a particular place.



Detailing of the face and ornaments are done.

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Sculpture made in Karnataka folk form called Yakshagana.



Sculpture of a women playing chande (drum) in Yakshagana.

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Sculptures

The sculptures once completed would be installed in the specific areas. This site-specific sculpture would not be moved or changed later. The sculptures were:

Bhoothappa or the Bhootha Aradhane is a ritualized formal dance popular in the Karnataka state. The procession takes place with the sound of drums. The dance has many forms and several kinds of idols are represented through this form. The performer will dance to the special beat symbolizing the protection of the environment. He dances with a sword and bells round, decorated. One of those forms is thought about and represented in the form of sculpture.

Sir M. Vishveshwaraya, our much known Indian engineer whose birthday is celebrated as Engineer's day. He is held in high regard as a pre-eminent engineer of India for his contributions to the public good. King George V knighted him as a Knight Commander of the British Indian Empire, he was also the chief engineer responsible for the construction of the Krishna Raja Sagara dam. There are a lot of statues of him in educational institutes representing all the knowledge and achievements he has possessed.

Buffaloes and Ploughing, the traditional and conventional techniques that the farmers used to run the paddy field are depicted with the two buffaloes held by a man.

Mermaid: Aquatic creature with the head and the upper body of a female human and the tail resembling the fish is sculpted beautifully sometimes are associated with storms, or they can be benevolent bestowing wishes.

Swami Vivekananda: The Indian Hindu monk, a chief disciple of the Indian mystic Ramakrishna is best known for his speech that began with "Sisters and brothers of America" which he introduced at the parliament of the world religions in Chicago. The statue of Swami Vivekananda is done in the casting method where the mould is getting ready and cement is poured inside. When the cement is rock hard the mould is removed to get the form.

Tribal Women, Grinding Grains: A composition of women grinding grains together, earlier people carried out all the household activities by hand and even today some in the rural areas follow the same method.

Yakshagana performer: Yakshagana is a popular dance form in Uttara Kannada, Shimoga, Udupi, Dakshina Kannada and the Kasaragod district of Kerala. It is a performance that consists of background musicians, dance and dialogue groups performing together. The performers wear splendid costumes, and headgears and their faces painted.

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A Lady with Dhol: The dance forms have all originated in ancient times and the collective sound of the dhols dominates all other sounds and creates an atmosphere of composure. For a long time has played a significant role in gathering people of different tribes to bring them close.

Shiva 'the auspicious' is one of the major deities of Hindus. At the highest level, Shiva is considered limitless, supreme, ageless and indistinct. The sculpture work portrays the firm, formless supreme God in a form that everyone worships.

Water Fountain: The sculpture work enfolds the God, his creation- the earth and wild man. The top portion of the sculpture indicates the source of water from the Lord reaching down to the nature-the leaves and from leaves to the hands of man. The inspiration for the work is the place Agumbe itself, the immense greenery and the rain are portrayed in the sculpture work.



Idol of mermaid made beautifully out of cement.

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Beautifully made cement idol of theme save water.



Cement idol of lord Shiva in meditating posture.

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Cement idol made in Karnataka art form called Bhoota aata.

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Idol made in Indian art form called Yakshagana.



Beautifully made idol of woman playing chande in Yakshagana.

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The sculpture of traditional buffalo race.

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Cement idol of Indian philosopher swami Vivekananda.



Sir M Visvesvaraya idol made out of cement.

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Bhootaradhane - Sculpture



Kambala - Sculpture



Women Grinding Rice - Sculpture



Lord Shiva - Sculpture

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Mermaid - Sculpture



Saving Rain Water - Sculpture



M. Visvesvaraya - Sculpture



Yakshagana - Sculpture

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Indian Tribal Drummer - Sculpture



Swami Vivekananda - Sculpture

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