



Q & A with Armory Artist Instructor Clarence “Skip” Measelle

When did you first realize you were an artist?

Early Memories: A "Boomer" description of me when I was a child in the 50's was, "He's all boy!" I loved throwing rocks, climbing trees, running, making things out of scrap wood discarded mechanical parts, etc. I was an only child for nine years until my brother was born. I was good at entertaining myself and very curious. My parents loved music and had a sizable record collection, but they didn't like noise, so instead of buying me a musical instrument they bought colored pencils, crayons, water-colors, drawing pads, "How to Draw" books, model plane, car, and ship kits, and Plastiline modeling clay. All these arts and craft things kept me happy, busy, and quiet. (The real reason I wanted a musical instrument was I liked the cool black musical cases some of the kids carried on the school bus.)

Recognition: When I was in the first grade, I saw a man on our B&W TV carve a bird, like a Blue Jay in flight, out of wood. The realism was amazing! I immediately went down the street to where a new house was being built and found a piece of scrap 2"X4" pine. I took it home and got a steak knife out of the kitchen and started to carve. The knife was dull, and the wood was way too hard for carving. I gave up! I didn't know until years later the man on TV had been carving soft Balsa wood. The next day in school, during some free time, I drew from memory "the bird in flight" that the man had carved on TV. My teacher and the other kids gathered around and praised my drawing. The same thing happened when there was a holiday. I was good at drawing candles, ornaments, wreaths, turkeys, rabbits, and valentine hearts. Like most kids I liked the attention. People would say, "Oh, you're an artist". It was many years before I thought of myself as an artist. I thought that lofty title was reserved for only a few. Now, anyone can say they are an artist.

Later, when I began to participate in organized sports I was recognized again for my talents. I never thought about it at the time, but apparently the same Dopamine was being released in my brain while playing sports as making art. A feeling of well-being! It was a place where I could lose myself in timelessness. I know this all has to do with ego. Yet, I still lose my "self" working in the studio. I like gardening too, so I can "get there" mowing the lawn as well.

What would you say to encourage artists and the enjoyment of art – to any age group and skill level?

"Follow your Bliss!" -Joseph Campbell. Go to art events, galleries, museums, and Art Centers whenever you can. Also, start a personal art library. I started collecting art books about art and artists, and art magazines in 1967 when I was in college. I still have the first art book I bought. Whenever I travel to a metropolitan city here or in Europe, I always try to visit the museums and buy at least one book from their bookstore. I have about 100 art books now. The more art

you see, the more informed and articulate your taste becomes. If you want to make art, you probably already have the predilection. Find a school, or art center with instructors that are professional artists that will share their knowledge and experiences.

In your opinion, what does ‘surrounding yourself in art’ do for a person?

Looking at art can improve your health! Recent studies have shown that visiting art galleries, art museums, art centers, and festivals can impact your health and well-being in several ways, like lowering anxiety and depression and boosting critical thinking skills. Additionally, science has shown that viewing beautiful artwork can actually cause you to experience the same physical reactions we get when we fall in love.

What is one thing you learned about the Armory Art Center that surprised you?

I've been teaching painting and drawing at the Armory since 1987. The growth and expansion of the school and studios is phenomenal. The Armory has a diverse group of world class professional artists/teachers presenting a variety of artistic directions. In addition to offering classes and presenting exceptional exhibitions, nationally known artists are invited each year to conduct workshops in their area of expertise. The Armory Art Center continues to be a cultural gem in Palm Beach County by offering the space and time for an exceptional creative experience for children and adults - from beginners to advanced seasoned artists.

About the Artist – Clarence “Skip” Measelle:



Clarence “Skip” Measelle has been featured in over 100 gallery and museum exhibitions, competitions, group shows, and solo shows throughout the US. He is best known for his work in photorealism and abstract illusionism. <https://measelleart.com/>

Read his full bio here: <https://armoryart.org/faculty/clarence-measelle/>

*Contributed by Laura Louse Tingo
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