

CAST

Art and Objects

Made Using Humanity's Most Transformational Process



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Casters Are Fastidious

Any casting is dependent on the quality of its model. Experienced casters know all too well how aggravating it is to fix the same mistake over and over again, and so painstaking effort goes into perfecting the original model before it is molded, so that problems aren't duplicated in its reproduction. Models can be made from a wide range of materials; traditional options are wax, clay, plasticene, and plaster, but anything that can be molded can work. Each material requires a different approach—some are carved and some are modeled with fingers; others, like organic materials, need to be very carefully sealed with lacquer or polyurethane to ensure that an accurate mold can be taken. Regardless, the level of care given to the model creation is directly proportionate to the quality of the final casting.

Cleanup, also known as "finishing," "de-spruing," "sanding," "grinding," and "polishing" in various fields, can be just as labor-intensive as the model creation itself. These processes all boil

down to the same goal: addressing any unwanted aspects of the raw casting. Typically, this is anything in the casting that looks different than the original model. Sometimes, leaving evidence of the casting process is part of the concept and intention behind the piece, in which case less finishing would be done; but this is relatively rare. Parting lines left from the mold, sprues, bubbles, and porosity are common flaws that require correction.

Corners are often cut when it comes to the finishing done on low-quality mass-produced objects, because it requires patience and finesse. Poor cleanup is, in part, what contributes to the misguided notion that casting is an inherently substandard process. Attention to cleanup requires a surprising amount of time and skill; camouflaging a scar where a sprue attached to a form, blending a surface over a flaw, or hiding a pit in a polished area is the mark of a skilled caster.



Kristine Poole refining details on the clay model before the molding process. *Spectrum Muse* original clay model, 2015. Clay, 16" × 6" × 5".

Photo: Colin Poole.



Shenny Cruces working in her studio, on her piece *Accumulations*, attaching a rabbit figure to a pile of slipcast porcelain figurines made from collected objects, 2015.

Photo: Lucy Phillips.



Left Michael Boles. *Daphne*, 2013. Cast bronze; edition of 6, 7'8" × 2'2" × 1'10".
Photo: Christopher White, Collection of Mr. Frederic G. Levin, Pensacola, FL.

Below These cast bronze awards were created for *Spectrum: The Best in Contemporary Fantastic Art*.

Colin and Kristine Poole from KC Poole Studios, *The Spectrum Muse Award*, 2015. Bronze, sterling, silver, 24K gold, marble, 16" × 6" × 5".
Photo: Colin Poole.





Top Beverly Penn's sprued thistle castings, 2008. Bronze.
Photo: Christopher Zaleski.

Bottom Colin and Kristine Poole, *Spectrum Muse* wax models chased and sprued for casting in bronze, 2015. Wax, each figure 16" x 6" x 5". Photo: Colin Poole.