

This is one of three activities offered to engage participants with the works of Rose-Aimée Bélanger. Each activity aims to deepen the participants' understanding and appreciation of the artwork, while developing their creativity as well as visual and cultural literacy. Activities can be readily adapted to accommodate different abilities and levels of learning.

### Activity 3: Make Your Own Sculpture

Sculpture is art in three dimensions.

Traditionally, “sculpture materials were marble, wood, clay, or metals. But contemporary sculpture can use any material the artist desires, from plastic and even found objects.

Modern and contemporary artists may also include lights, projections, audio, or other technology as part of their sculptures. The use of 3D printing in sculpture is also becoming more common.”<sup>1</sup>

Pottery is making things from clay - often the things are useful objects like bowls and dishes, but pottery can also be art. Pottery dates back as far as 6,000 BC, and “can be found in all ancient civilizations. Ancient peoples used pottery as tools, as a way to communicate stories, and as objects of beauty.”

Rose-Aimée Bélanger used the “lost wax process” to create her sculptures, which begins by molding a creation in clay, just as people do in pottery. Read more about Rose-Aimée Bélanger’s process at the end of this activity.

In this activity, we will make sculptures using the “pinch pot” method of pottery. Our pinch pot creations can simply be “objects of beauty”, or, if you want, can be used later as a dish!

#### Clay Pinch Pot Animals<sup>2</sup>

##### Materials

- air dry modeling clay
- wooden skewers and/or other clay tools
- small container of water
- clay placemat or work surface
- paintbrush and acrylic paints



##### *Step 1: Prepare the clay for the participants*

Start with a ball of clay that can fit inside a child’s hand.

<sup>1</sup> Eden Gallery < <https://www.eden-gallery.com/news/what-is-art-sculpture> > accessed 2023-09

<sup>2</sup> Adapted mainly from articles found on [kinderart.com](http://kinderart.com), [craftykids.com](http://craftykids.com), and [education.com](http://education.com), accessed 2023-09



*Step 2: Split clay into 2 parts (one larger than the other)*  
Split a little bit off the hunk of clay. The bigger chunk of clay can be rolled into a ball.



*Step 3: Push thumb into the middle*  
Have kids push one hole with their thumbs as far as they can go without going through.



*Step 4: Make the pinch pot*  
Use your hands to pinch **around the edge** and make sure not to make walls too thin. The walls should probably be around 1/8" thick to support the shell when flipped on its side.



*Step 5: Place the pot on its side*  
Put the clay pinch pot on its side.



*Step 6: Sculpt monster details from the other piece of clay*

Begin sculpting eyes for your monster. Make sure the eyes are not too thick. Use a skewer to poke in the pupils. This will also help to ensure eyes are not too thick.



*Step 7: Attach parts by scoring and adding a bit of water*

Attach eyes to **pinch pot monster face** by scoring the eyes and where you are attaching to the face of the monster.



Use one finger dipped in water to add “slip” and secure.



Use your finger to help blend the seam where the eyes are going if possible.



**Step 8: Sculpt and add more monster features**

Create monster details. Roll a coil for eyebrows. Add texture by drawing lines with a skewer. Make sure to score and add water when attaching to clay.



**Step 9: Add hair and monster horns**

Create and attach horns.



**Step 10: Add more details**

Create a tongue, teeth, and other interesting monster details. Be creative, have fun!

Finally, add texture to your monsters. A simple wooden skewer and/or popsicle stick will work, or you can also use other clay tools if you have them.

### Step 11: Finish!

Let your creation dry, then paint with acrylic paints.



### Tips

- make sure pinch pots are not too thin but still create a hollow form to start with; if they are too thin, it will make it hard to attach pieces to the main form
- always blend seams with your fingers after attaching the clay parts
- use water to smooth out any rough areas, remembering that a little goes a long way, and being careful not to make “mud pie”!
- write the artist’s name on the bottom of the pinch pot with a sharp skewer or needle tool

A few more fun pinch pot creation ideas



## Rose-Aimée Bélanger's technique:

### from clay to bronze using the "Lost Wax Process"

#### *Creation in clay*

- A sculpture in clay is modeled with supporting metal rods.
- A layer of shellac is sometimes applied to facilitate final corrections with plasteline.
- The sculpture leaves the studio without being fired to head to the foundry.

#### *Molding*

- The foundry makes a mold out of latex [elastomer].
- The model is removed from the mold. Liquid wax is then poured into the mold to create a wax copy of the original clay model.
- The wax model is then covered with a ceramic shell, inside and out.
- The ceramic shell is placed in a kiln, and the wax melts away [is "lost"].

#### *Bronze creation*

- The molten bronze is then poured into the shell, replacing the wax.
- After cooling, the ceramic shell is shattered, exposing the raw bronze.

#### *Bronze finish*

- To achieve a satin surface, the raw bronze is subjected to a progressive polishing: from sandblasting to fine abrasives.
- A patina is then applied to the bronze. To obtain coloration, oxides are sprayed or brushed on a preheated bronze.
- Finally, to both protect and give depth to the patina, the bronze is waxed and polished.
- Sometimes, Rose-Aimée Bélanger would paint parts of her bronze sculptures.

