



The Art of the Automobile

For the Lifetime Learning Institute - NOVA

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SAAM Docent

Today's Road Map

- About Albert H. Small and his Collection
- Walk-Thru the Gallery
- Connect Model Cars to the other SAAM works
- The **Automobile** is Art
- Your Car Stories
- Come for a Visit





Albert H. Small

- ***DC area real estate developer***
- ***Generous supporter of GW University and University of Virginia***
- ***Served on the board of the now DC History Center***
- ***Gave immensely of himself to DC area museums, libraries, orchestras, universities***
- ***Collector of books and manuscripts with a focus on the DC area ...***
- ***and he was a model car collector***



Georgia O'Keeffe – Hand and Wheel

Alfred Stieglitz

1933, printed ca 1945

Gelatin silver print

Museum purchase made possible by Albert
H. Small



Walk Thru the Gallery



The Automobile and American Art

What could be more American than the car?

From drive-ins to road trips on the open highway—cars are an essential part of American culture.

Since the birth of the automobile, cars have also been a central theme in American art, from the paintings of William H. Johnson, which highlight the perils of driving in segregated America, to the large fiberglass sculptures of Luis Jiménez, which evoke lowrider car culture.

Some artists, such as sculptor David Smith, incorporated techniques they learned working on auto assembly lines into their art. Others, including Edward Hopper and Georgia O'Keeffe, used their cars as mobile studios.

The Smithsonian American Art Museum's collection includes hundreds of artworks featuring cars. Albert H. Small's prolific collection of model cars, a gift to the museum, provides a unique lens through which to explore these works and the role of the automobile in American art.



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Above: Artist Alexander Calder (1898–1976) poses with a 1934 race car for the painting, 1975. Photo by Art Collection/Smithsonian American Art Museum. Photo by Getty Images.

Right: Photographer Dorothea Lange (1895–1965) sits atop the roof of a car holding her camera. Photo by © Corbis/Outline via Getty Images.

Below: Art dealer Charles Farnington and artist Rainey Bennett rush to a gallery opening in Chicago. Photo by Art Museum/Art Images Collection via Getty Images/Photo Images.





*Connect Model
Cars to the SAAM
Collection*



Checker A11
Taxi-Cab,
New York,
1981
Model Car 1:18 scale



Dowager in a Wheelchair

Philip Evergood

1952

Oil on fiberboard

47 7/8" x 36"





Studebaker Champion, 1950

Model car, 1:18 scale





Reclining Figure

David Smith, 1935, 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 32 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ ", Iron



Ford Mustang GT, 1968

Model Car, 1:18 scale



San Francisco West Side Ridge

Wayne Thiebaud

2001

36" x 36"

Oil on Canvas





Cadillac Eldorado

Biarritz

1959

Model car 1:18





Elvis, the Artist, and Pink Cadillac

Donald Paterson

1988

Crayon, colored pencil, felt tipped pen and ink

14 ¼" x 47 ½"



The Automobile
is Art



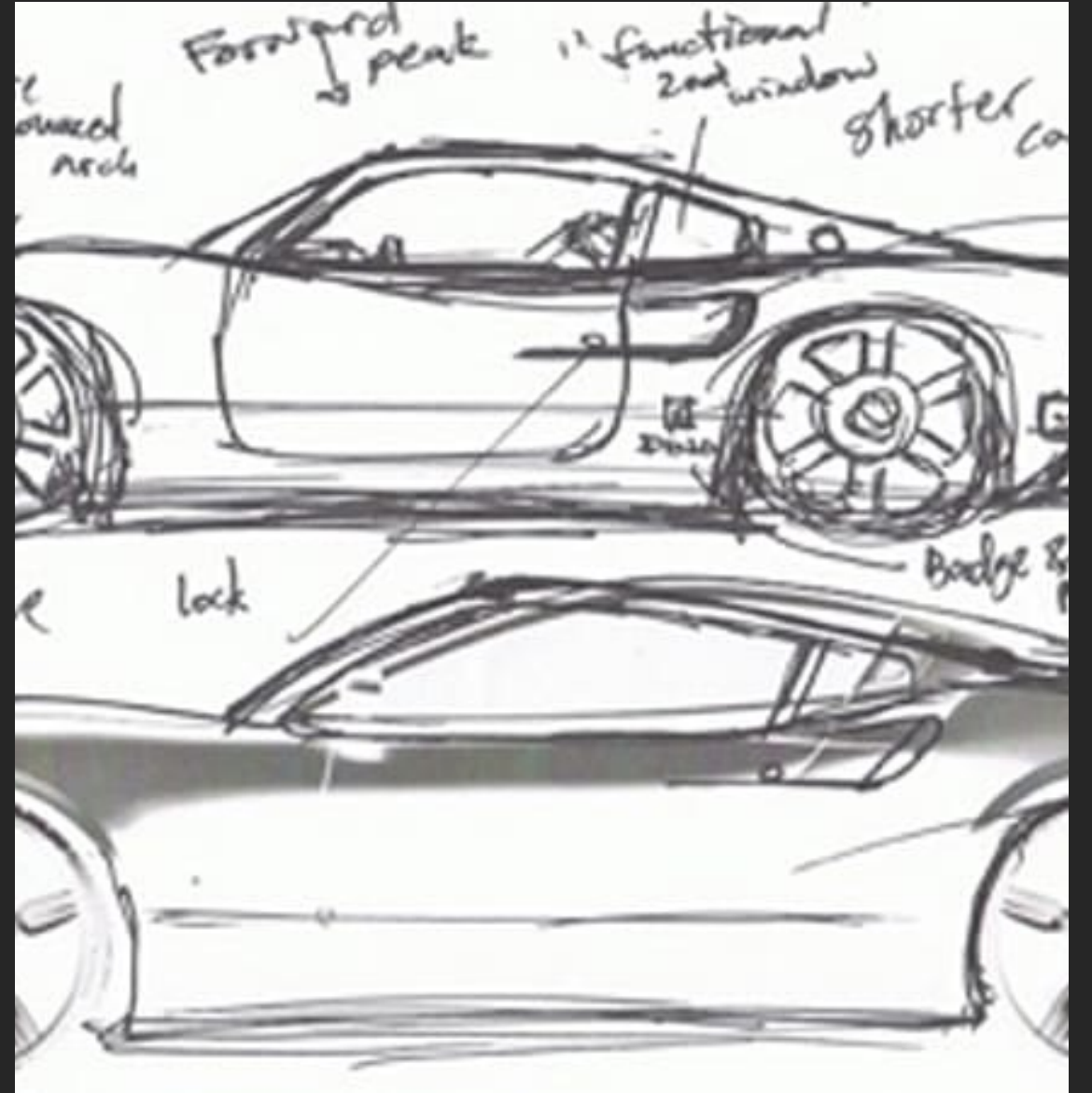
Four Sculpture Techniques

Carving – cutting or chipping away;
stone, wood, hard metals

Casting – melted material is poured
into a mold

Modeled – soft or malleable material
(clay) built up over an armature

Assembling – gather and join
different materials









Elements of Art

- Line – a long, narrow point or band; straight or curved
- Color – quality of an object with respect to light reflected, usually determined by measurement of hue, saturation and brightness
- Shape – the result of closed lines, 2 dimensional or flat, geometric (triangles, squares) organic (curved, abstract)
- Texture – the feel, appearance, surface characteristics

Line





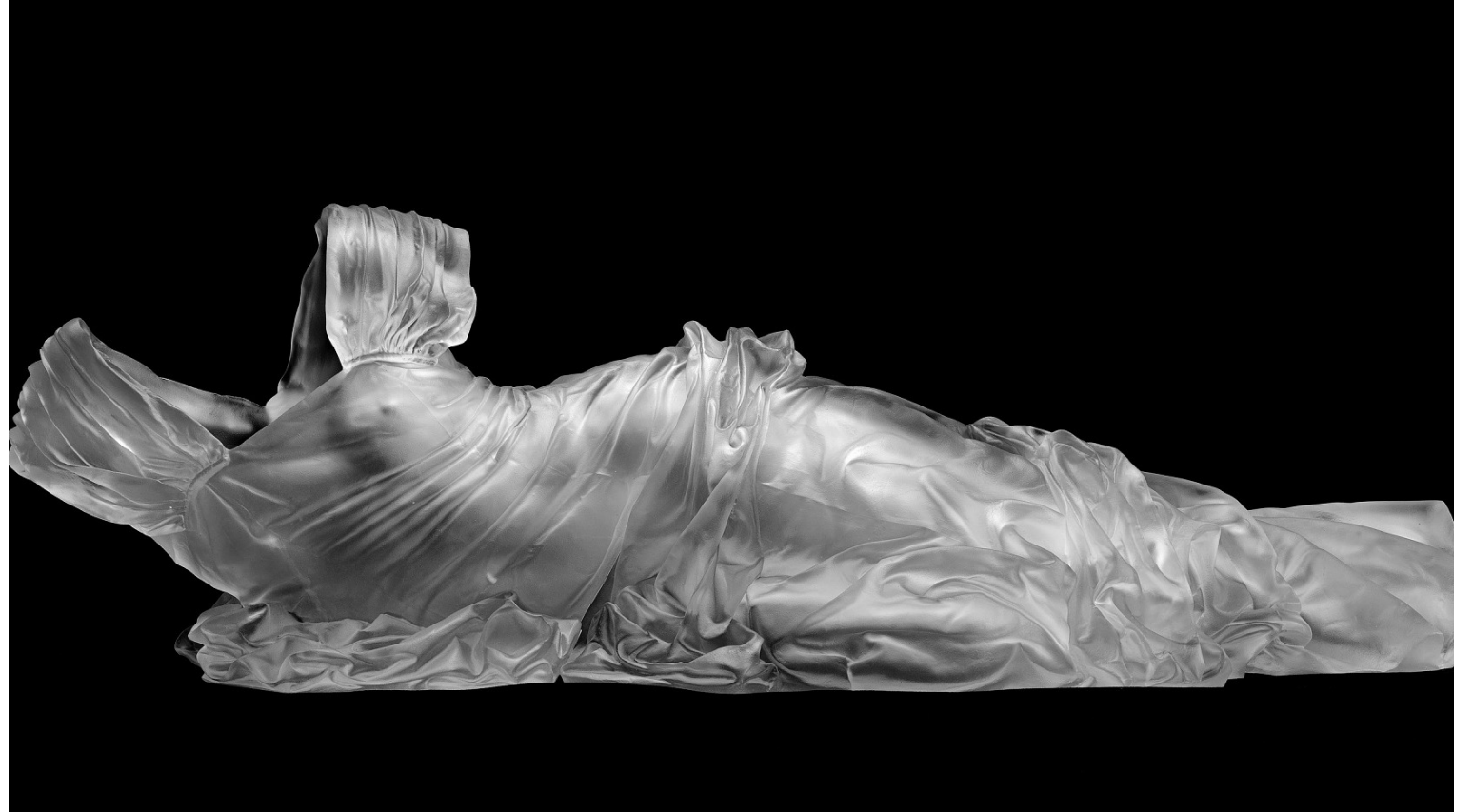
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Color





Shape





Texture





See More Artistic Elements



Look Closer ... Grills



Look Closer Rims



Look Closer ...
Hood Ornaments and Logos

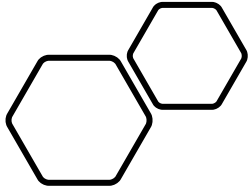




TOP 10 Taillight Designs



Look Closer ... Tail Lights



Your first car.

Ever own a sports car?
A muscle car?
An electric car?

Emotional attachment to a car?

Your favorite car?
Why?

What did a car do for you?

Why did you buy it?

Your dream car today?





Want a Taste of More Traditional Art? Come Visit Us.

- Reopened and Reimagined Modern and Contemporary Galleries
- Current exhibits
 - Composing Color: Paintings by Alma Thomas (thru Jun 2, 2024)
 - Many Wests: Artists Shape an American Idea (thru Jan 14, 2024)
 - Sharing Honors and Burdens: Renwick Invitational 2023 (thru March 31, 2024)