

## **Guidelines for Art Students' / Participants' Interactions with Art Models**

Models are ordinary people performing a service which is greatly misunderstood outside, and sometimes even within, the art community. Models are not super-humans who can perform extraordinary acts of contortion or endure more physical stress than the average person. Neither are they objects to be manipulated into whatever positions the artists desire.

Nude models deserve special respect. Working with a nude model is a privilege, not an entitlement. Just because someone removes their clothes does not mean they are removing their boundaries, or giving up their rights. The converse, in fact, is true: they need stronger boundaries, and acquire more rights.

In mainstream American culture, nudity is generally associated (incorrectly, to those of us who value the human figure in fine art) only with sexuality and vulnerability. In addition, a model, while posing, is immobilized—almost as if they were physically restrained. Finally, in a culture where nudity is not the norm, a nude person in a room full of clothed people becomes a powerful magnet for attention.

For someone to take a position where they are exposed, restrained, and at the center of attention, is to put themselves in an extremely vulnerable position. Please appreciate the risk a nude model is taking, to perform the valuable service of posing for fine art work.

Always treat the model with the utmost courtesy and respect. Crude remarks, gestures or facial expressions directed towards the model are totally inappropriate and will not be tolerated.

Remember that the model is posing for the artists, who are (or at least should be) focused on their art. Do not bring visitors, including children, into the studio where a nude model is posing. Since such persons' focus will **not** be on art, it will by default be on the nude body of the model, because that is such a powerful presence in the room. The model is not there to be on display for curious onlookers. He or she is there to provide material and inspiration for the artists.

During the modeling session, the modeling stand or area is the territory of the model; it is their space in which to feel comfortable and safe. Please do not use the model stand, even during breaks, for seating, storing your work or materials, holding food or beverages, or any other purpose, without permission from the model.

If you want to photograph a model so that you can work on your piece later, you need to ask the model's permission. Do not assume that anyone who is willing to model for drawing, painting or sculpture is also willing to be photographed, or that the model is an object, rather than a human being with the right to set boundaries for themselves.