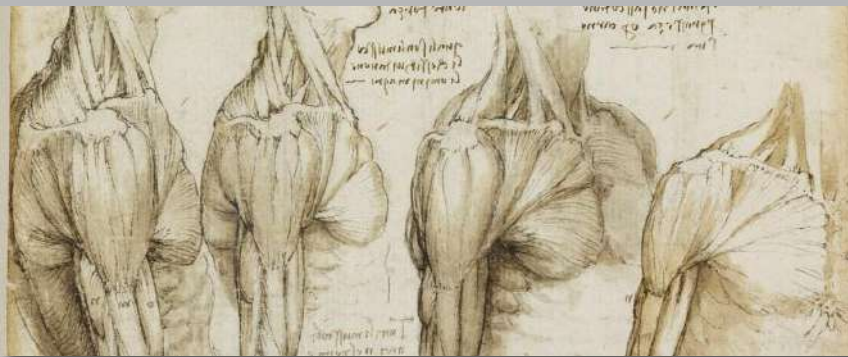




Da Vinci Experience: Cadaver Dissection of Torso and Limbs

Learn anatomy in depth



Pioneering anatomists

Artists like Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo understood that to master form, they had to study structure.

Through their drawings and notes, they laid the foundations of anatomical art—creating studies that captured not just the surface, but the inner workings of the body: bones, muscles, proportions, and harmony.

These works remain timeless because they reveal a way of seeing—a bridge between science and creativity that still inspires artists today.

This course follows that same spirit, bringing anatomical knowledge to the hands of modern creators through a visual and artistic approach that respects tradition while embracing new tools and technologies.



The significance of anatomical understanding

Whether you're creating stylized characters or pursuing anatomical realism, understanding the human body from the inside out brings depth, accuracy, and credibility to your work.

When an artist truly understands the structure beneath the skin, they can invent, exaggerate, or stylize with confidence—because their choices are informed, not improvised.

The body is not just form, its function. Knowing how bones, muscles, and fat interact improves the way we sculpt movement, weight, and personality.

Who teaches the course?

The course is taught by Rafa Zabala, an artist and educator with an uncommon journey that bridges the worlds of sculpture, digital creation, and academic anatomy.

Rafa began his artistic path over three decades ago through traditional sculpture, working on large-scale artistic and religious commissions. His passion for form and structure eventually led him into the digital world, where he became a character and creature artist for some of the most prestigious studios in the film and video game industries.

His credits include major productions such as *The Hobbit*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Avatar: Frontiers of Pandora*, and collaborations with filmmakers like George Lucas and Steven Spielberg, as well as global icons like Paul McCartney and Lady Gaga.

Over time, his fascination with the human body evolved into a deeper exploration of anatomy, guiding him back to the foundations of form. Rafa now collaborates with the Faculty of Medicine in Valencia, assisting in cadaver-based anatomy courses and developing anatomical learning tools for medical education.

Combining his hands-on experience in dissection with decades of sculptural expertise, Rafa offers a unique perspective—equally visual, structural, and artistic. His teaching is direct, inspiring, and built to empower digital artists with a clear, intuitive understanding of the human body.

"Anatomy is not just science—it's the language of form. And once you speak it, you sculpt with purpose."—RZA



Instructor
Rafa Zabala

- Founder of Rafa Zabala Anatomy
- Tradicional sculptor
- Character and creature modeller
- Art Director
- Anatomy instructor



Anatomy as the driving force of my career



Since an early age, I've been passionate about anatomy. Its study and observation have always guided my artistic path.

What began as curiosity became a lifelong journey—from traditional sculpture to digital characters and creatures in film and games.

Today, my work reflects a deep anatomical foundation, not only in human forms but also in animals and imaginary beings. Recent years teaching at the University of Valencia and working with real human anatomy have brought new depth to my creative vision.



Bridging the Gap Between Entertainment and Anatomy

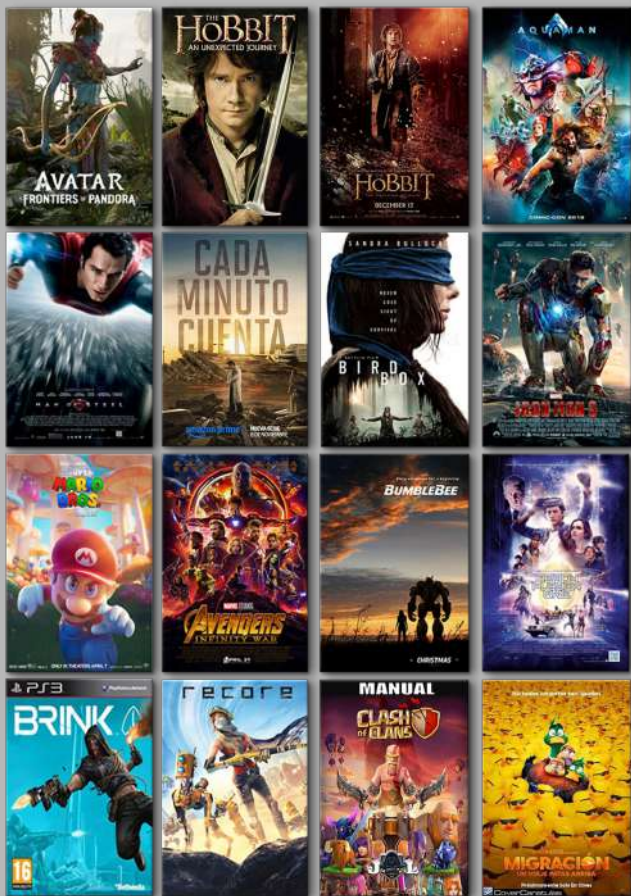
I've found a deep sense of purpose in my path as both an artist and educator.

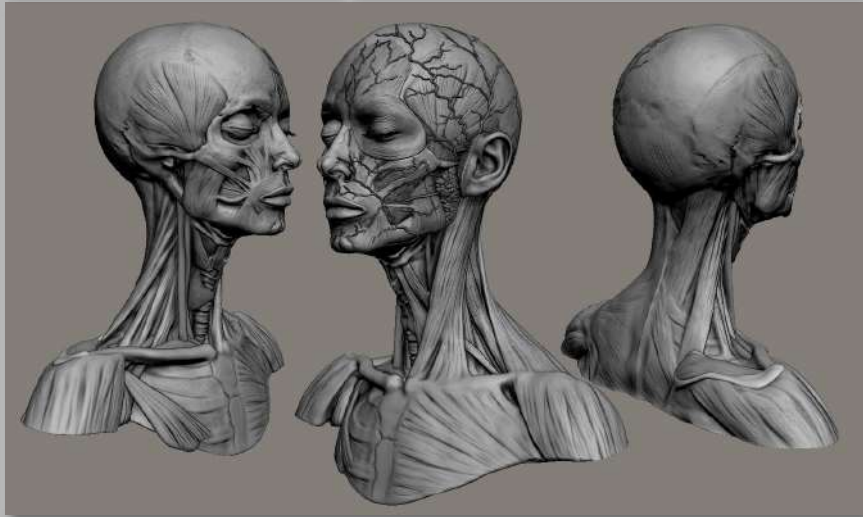
This journey has taken me across countries and cultures, connecting me with amazing people along the way.

At the heart of it all is my passion for anatomy—the driving force that led me to explore new creative horizons and eventually feel at home among doctors and surgeons, who now embrace me as one of their own.

They have become my mentors in a more demanding anatomical stage, offering knowledge that has profoundly shaped my perspective.

I believe every artist can benefit from a solid foundation in anatomy, and I'm here to share that knowledge with those who wish to truly understand the human body.





Exploring new applications

These are examples of medical simulators I've created in collaboration with the private company *Iface Simulator*. You can find more about their work on their official website.

Currently, I'm developing new and challenging projects for both the medical and industrial sectors—combining anatomical precision with innovative materials and sculptural techniques.



Learning by building the body

This course takes place within the academic environment of the Faculty of Medicine of Valencia and offers an intensive three-session experience focused on the study of the human torso and limbs through direct observation of cadavers.

Unlike approaches based solely on art or books, this course blends academic precision with a visual and structural perspective that helps consolidate learning. Each session is designed to bridge theoretical knowledge—acquired through atlases, models, or illustrations—with its practical application on the real human body.

Throughout the course, we closely examine the osteology and musculature of the main anatomical regions, addressing key concepts such as insertions, layer relationships, and how these structures appear on the body's surface.

With the aid of anatomical sculptures created as educational tools, we demonstrate how certain visible forms on the cadaver translate into specific body volumes. This dialogue between direct observation and visual representation helps resolve doubts that many manuals fail to fully clarify.

A unique opportunity to connect theoretical knowledge with the tangible reality of the human body—allowing students to understand anatomy with clarity, not guesswork.

A Golden Finale: Dr. Alfonso Valverde



As a distinguished conclusion, this course is endorsed by Dr. Alfonso Valverde—surgeon, tenured anatomy professor, and head of the body donation program at the University of Valencia.

With over 30 years of experience in the Department of Anatomy and Embryology at the Faculty of Medicine, Dr. Valverde has devoted his career to the study and teaching of human anatomy. He served as the department director for six years and oversaw the university's body donation program—a role as delicate as it is essential for medical education.

His unwavering dedication to teaching, pedagogical clarity, and scientific rigor have inspired generations of medical students. His international recognition is reflected in his work as a **reviewer for the prestigious *Gray's Anatomy for Students, 4th Edition***, a reference text used by thousands of students around the world.

Dr. Valverde's presence in this course brings a mark of excellence and offers students a rare opportunity to ask questions and learn directly from one of the finest anatomists I've ever had the privilege to meet.

Who is this course for?

This course is designed for artists who feel that anatomy books don't fully answer their visual questions—those who need direct experience to truly understand the human body in a clear, three-dimensional, and realistic way.

It's also ideal for individuals with a medical or scientific background who wish to revisit and reinforce their anatomical knowledge from a more artistic and practical perspective—especially if their specialization has taken them away from deep anatomical study.

No previous knowledge is required, as we'll build a solid foundation from scratch. We begin with osteology and move step by step through each muscle, understanding its form, function, insertion points, and how it appears beneath the skin. We'll also touch on the most visible blood vessels and briefly explore relevant nerve branches to gain a broader view of the musculoskeletal system.

This course isn't about memorizing names. It's for those who want to truly grasp what they see in illustrations, sculptures, or 3D models—and confidently apply that understanding in their artistic or educational work. Through direct observation of the real human body, students can bridge theory and reality, finally resolving doubts that may have lingered for years.

Anatomy is a language learned through time and passion. This training is not a shortcut—it's a transformative experience that will reshape how you see, interpret, and represent the human form.

Throughout the course, we'll contrast what we study in the classroom with carefully selected anatomical sculptures and classical artworks, identifying how real anatomical volumes observed in the cadaver translate into sculptural representation.



Program

Day 1

- Theoretical study in preparation for hands-on practice
- Osteology of the upper limb
- Anterior region of the arm and forearm, thorax, and abdomen
- Palm of the hand and dorsum of the foot

Day 2

- Theoretical study in preparation for hands-on practice
- Osteology of the lower limb
- Anterior region of the thigh and leg
- Posterior region of the thigh and leg

Day 3

- Theoretical study in preparation for hands-on practice
- Review of the osteology of the upper limb
- Posterior region of the arm, back, and neck
- Dorsum of the hand and sole of the foot

This intensive course takes place over three full days, from Wednesday to Friday, totaling 18 hours of in-person training.

Each day combines theoretical sessions and hands-on practice with direct work on human cadavers in the dissection room at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Valencia.

We will identify skeletal, muscular, and vascular structures, and contrast this knowledge with images of anatomical sculptures to understand how these volumes are represented in form and structure.

Location: Faculty of Medicine, University of Valencia

Schedule: 9:00-13:00 and 15:00-17:00



Things to Keep in Mind

No materials are required. All you need is a willingness to learn, punctuality, and a focused attitude.

At the beginning of the course, each student will receive all the necessary materials for the practical sessions, along with a lab coat to be used throughout the training.

We recommend reviewing the day's content at the end of each session, as every class will begin with a brief Q&A to address any questions from the previous day.

Student Benefits

As a student of this course, you'll enjoy exclusive discounts on future training programs and in our online store *Locos por la Anatomía*, where you'll find sculptures, anatomical models, and educational products related to both artistic and medical anatomy.

