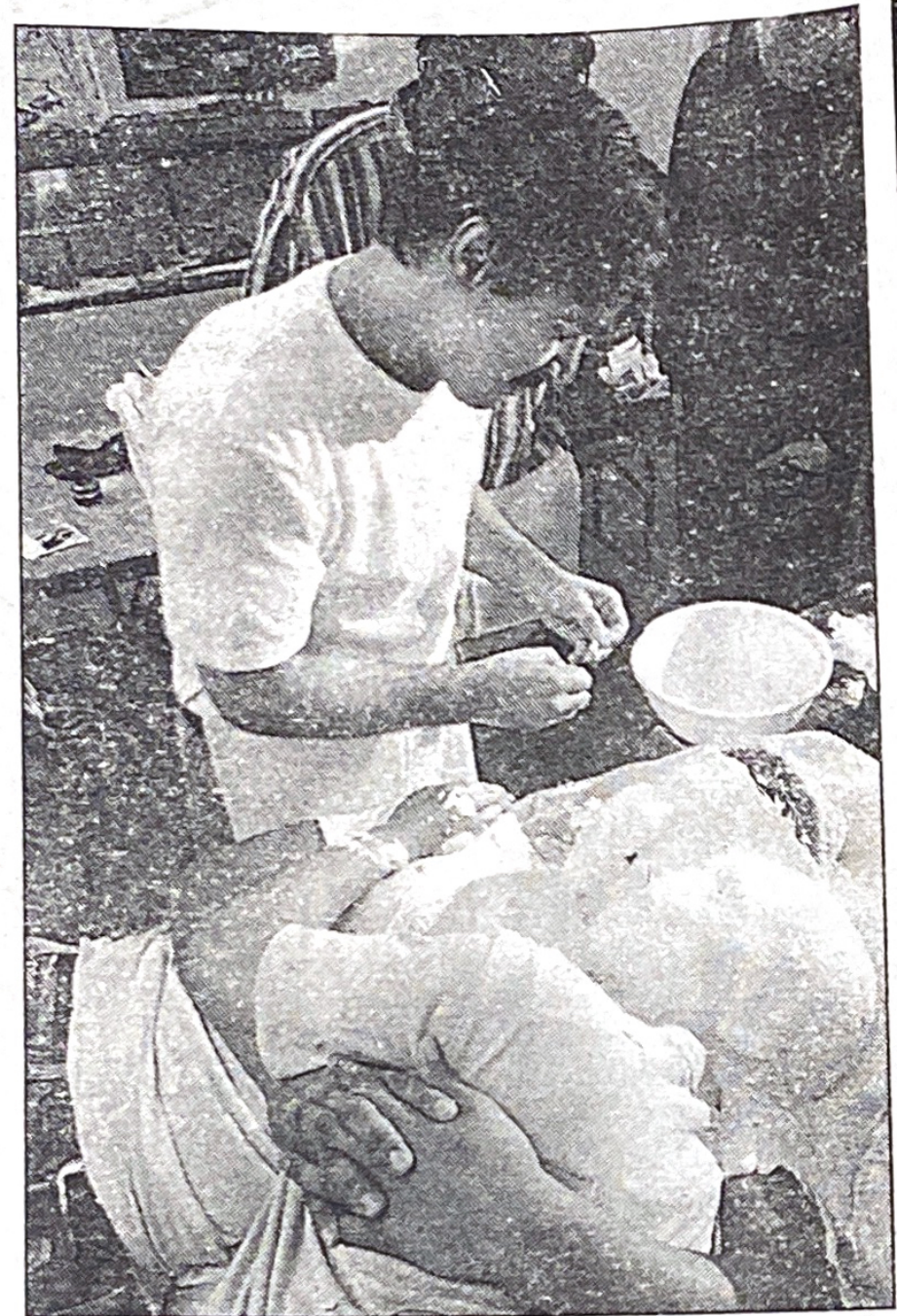


# 'Making Faces' Takes On Literal Cast at the Hudson Museum



Inset: finished sculpture painted by Mr. Torres, a Bronx artist, in a program of the Yonkers public schools and the Hudson River Museum.

Rigoberto Torres, left, prepares casts of ninth graders at Hudson River Museum. Above, Sharice Davis and Ricardo Lima assist after plaster is applied to Keon Iglehart and Jeanine Murray. Below, Keon poses with his cast.

**I**'M mixing, I'm mixing," Rigoberto Torres said, moments before slathering wet plaster onto the faces, necks and shoulders of Keon Iglehart and Jeanine Murray at the Hudson River Museum of Westchester here. The Bronx sculptor was demonstrating the art of plaster casting to ninth-grade students from the Museum Junior High School, participants in a magnet school program sponsored by the museum and the Yonkers public schools.

Keon and Jeanine reclined together on an elevated table in the museum workshop, holding a pose while the artist prepared his materials and advised them to relax. Soon they

would be breathing air through straws inserted into their nostrils while some of their classmates assisted the sculptor. Keon and Jeanine were not boyfriend and girlfriend, but the pose was a loving one: heads close together, with her left hand resting on his right shoulder.

Mr. Torres is known for his life-size plaster and fiberglass casts, many of which he makes at street-side events in the South Bronx neighborhood where he grew up. A show of his castings is on view at the Lehman College Art Gallery in the Bronx, where it will remain through May 3.

A work by Mr. Torres, "Fireman Chris," is also on view at the Hudson River Museum's current exhibition,



"Making Faces: American Portraits," which ends Aug. 27. In connection with the show, Mr. Torres will lead a casting workshop at the museum on May 7 at 1:30 P.M., where participants will work on self-portraits. The workshop's fee is \$3, including museum admission, and the member fee is \$2.

The plaster Mr. Torres pours on his subjects becomes the mold for his finished work, which he paints in acrylics in realistic detail. Mr. Torres is recovering from neurological complications of a severe asthma attack, and he said the casts he made recently at the museum here were the first since his illness. The bust of Keon and Jeanine, as well as cast-

ings of other Museum Junior High School students, can be seen in the school's exhibition "In Your Face" in the museum's Glenview Gallery, through May 21.

Keon and Jeanine were exemplary models, not moving a twitch as the plaster, layered over with bandaging material, encased them.

"What if I fall asleep?" asked a relaxed Jeanine, before the process started. "Don't worry, you won't," Mr. Torres assured her. The cast stayed on for about 20 minutes; then Mr. Torres sat the students up and gently peeled it off their faces and their T-shirts.

Text and Photographs  
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