

Learning to draw or paint is learning to see. My assignments challenge students to look at images and the world around them in a new way thereby allowing them to become more sensitive to form and design. As an instructor I familiarize my students with a system of image making that will give them the tools to express themselves. They learn how to build a work of art through methods of construction that combine a sense of design with technical draftsmanship and personal expression. In a practice this means applying the ideas of working general to specific, reading form as well as to apply the concepts of 2-D design. While they are becoming more astute draftsmen they are also learning to become visually literate and understand the link between form and content. The read of a piece is applicable to all areas of the arts.

Teaching from observation gives me a chance to talk about abstraction, perspective, depth of space, and metaphoric meaning as well as the translation process its self. One assignment that has produced some interesting results is the torn paper drawings. In this assignment students summarize the forms in a way that reinforces the basic volumes while emphasizing the greater abstractions. This technique gives them a different hand, maybe removing them from their comfort zone, while changing their ideas about drawing. I like to use this assignment because it is painterly, and the limited value pallet keeps the drawings less literal and more abstract.

Visually literacy is the basis for all art making. I find it natural to teach the language of image making through drawing and painting. It is the way students access the works of the masters as well as fully explore all the creative possibilities of art making. I like to bring together images across art historical movements into what is currently taking place in the art world today. Design functions as the cohesive element. Ultimately I hope my students will come away with a new understanding that will allow them to transfer what they have learned to a variety of mediums by giving them the tools to express their own ideas.