

Teaching Philosophy

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Learning to draw, paint or design is learning to see. My assignments challenge students to look at images and the world around them in a new way allowing them to be more sensitive to form, design and content. 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. In a practical way this means working general to specific, reading form as well as learning to apply the ideas of 2-D design as well as understanding the conceptual implications. While they are becoming more astute draftsmen they are also learning visually literacy and understanding the link between form and content.

Teaching from observation gives me a chance to talk about abstraction, perspective, deep and shallow space, and metaphoric meaning as well as the translation process itself. One assignment that has produced some interesting results is the torn paper drawings. Torn newspaper and black paper is used to construct an image from observation. Using paper instead of graphite or charcoal expands the concept of drawing and reinforces basic volumes while emphasizing the greater abstractions. The black and white keeps the drawings less literal and more in the realm of abstraction. I like this assignment because it is very painterly and changes the hand to emphasizes shape and form over detail.

I find it natural to teach visual literacy through drawing, painting, design and the history of art because it is a direct way to introduce abstraction and its relationship to content found in all art making processes. Analytical thinking is the backbone of a creative problem solving and developed by the study of art history and the making of art. Visual literacy and the creative problem solving that is inherent in these disciplines makes these practices the cornerstone of a quality liberal arts education. Through drawing and painting students access the works of the masters and learn to fully explore the creative possibilities of art-making. I bring together images from across art historical movements, and place them into context with what is currently going on in the art world. Design being the element that holds them all together sharpening their analytical skills. Ultimately I hope that my students come away with a new understanding of image making, one that will allow them to utilize what they have learned about how to read form but also how to create meaning allowing them to express their own ideas.