futureforward

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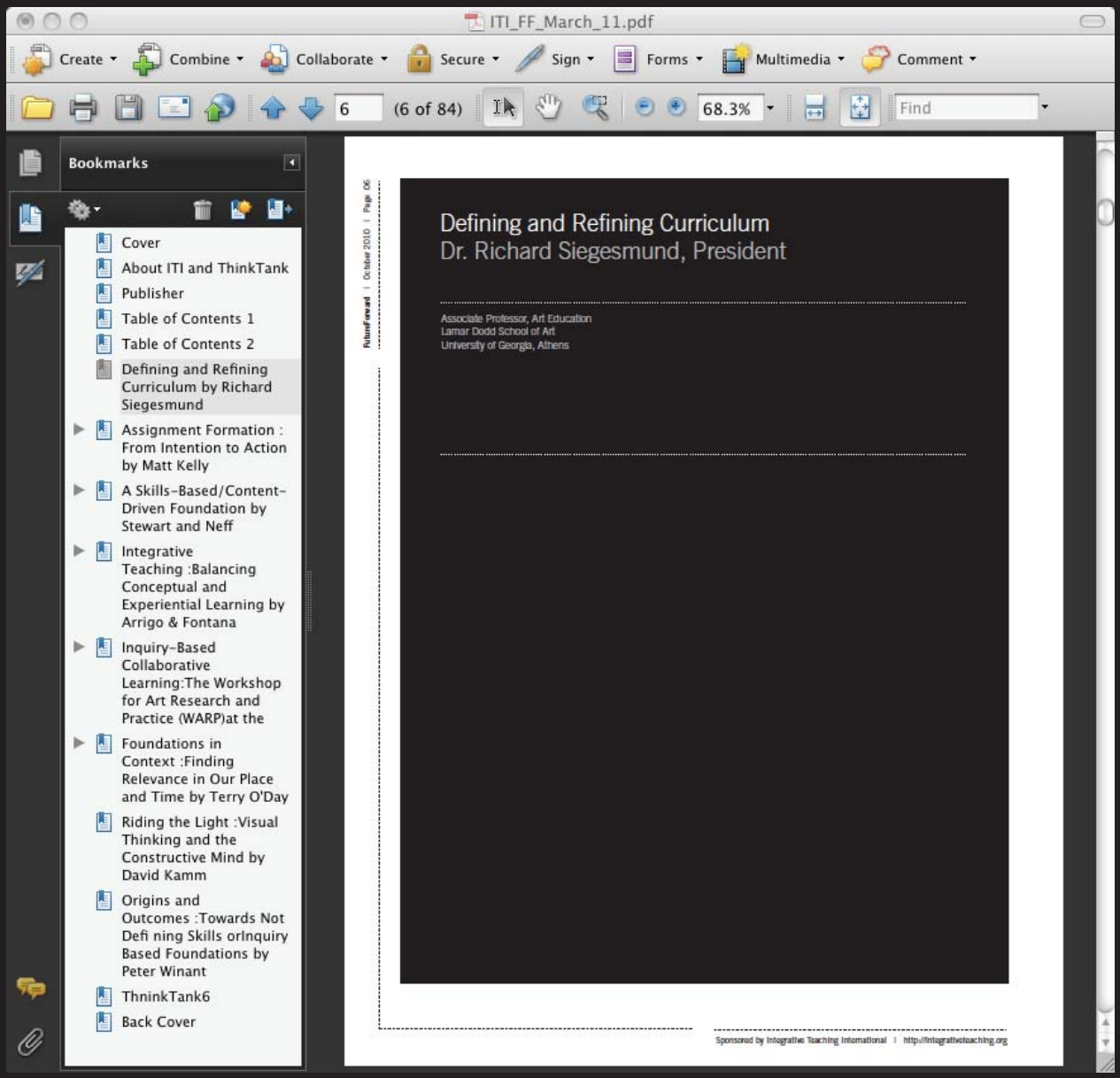

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futureforward

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futureforward

Image
A Full Blown Insta-Inflato-Utopia. Go to page 66 for more details.

Defining and Refining Curriculum
Dr. Richard Siegesmund, President

Associate Professor, Art Education
Lamar Dodd School of Art
University of Georgia, Athens

Print

More than thirty years ago, the educational theorist William Pinar pointed out that the word curriculum comes from the Latin word *currere*, an infinitive indicating the course to be run. It implies action. A curriculum is a journey along path that has been set out. Why do we ask our students to run this course? What do we hope they accomplish through this journey?

One answer is that the completion of the racecourse is an end in itself. It is a long respected rite of passage. In the case of Foundations, art students for the past 100 years have completed a standard set of exercises. Even if we acknowledge the exercises are repetitive and boring, they are nonetheless the rituals through which artistic status is bestowed. If the classes require enduring and suffering, so be it. Perhaps we believe that some kind of mystical transformation occurs through enduring and suffering. Those who have gone before have weathered these challenges. Each new generation must pass through this same gate.

One problem with conceptualizing Foundations as a rite of passage is that it becomes self-justifying. Simply completing the ritual is the curricular objective. Everyone does color wheel studies because everyone is supposed to do a color wheel study. We draw from observation because drawing is good—and more observational drawing is better. When this happens, we are no longer thinking about what we do. Through rituals, we simply introduce our students to a mythology of art. As Theodor Adorno cautioned, if we lose sight of learning, then our academic institutions cease to be places that promote thinking. For artist/teachers who prepare students for the challenges of the 21st century, curriculum as rite of passage is a deeply unsatisfactory conceptual framework for defining a paradigm of instruction. Our students face a world of unprecedented change. While there is great wisdom in the past, our new world demands fresh conceptual approaches. Thus, the critical challenge to teaching is not in making sure that students are busy with time-tested projects, but in asking ourselves what critical aspects of art making and being an artist our students need to gain upon course completion.

In the spring of 2010, three members of the board of Integrative Teaching International (Jim Elniski, Adam Kallish, and I) worked on rhetorical exposition on inquiry-based teaching. We realized that the tone was something of a manifesto, but we liked that. We wanted to provoke a conversation. Provocation is a good way to initiate a brainstorming session around curriculum.

This edition of *FutureForward* is a response to that manifesto. It features artist/educators who are not afraid to challenge old systems. They ask questions such as "what if?" and "why not?" These articles feature instructional methods that push the envelope and seek new associations. For making this edition of FutureForward a reality I want to thank its lead editor, Mary Stewart. Gloria Wilson, graduate assistant at the University of Georgia helped prepare these essays for publication, and Adam Kallish—as always—provided yeoman's service in layout and design.

Teaching From a Point of View

Where does an artist teacher, who seeks to rise to the challenge of 21st century curriculum, begin? First, an artist teacher must take a stand. You have to have a big idea about what you want to teach. Mixing tertiary colors is not a big idea. Just drawing from a live model is not a big idea. A big idea is a manifesto.

In this edition of *FutureForward*, each artist/educator takes a stand. Each makes a case for new ways of thinking about learning in art. They clearly articulate values and skills they want students to possess.

However manifestos are just theories until students put them into action. In *FutureForward*, manifestations (in the form of sample assignments) follow the manifestos. These assignments provide tangible examples of practice derived from theory.

Here, a word of caution is important. Elliot Eisner points out that every way of seeing is a way of not seeing. Each of

these manifestos opens a door into the possibilities of Foundations curricula, and yet each also closes a door. Therefore, no single manifesto maybe the "right" answer for you. The challenge to each of you as you read this edition of *FutureForward*, is to consider what aspects of each of these manifestos and manifestations you can build upon in your own institution. In the end, you must construct your own racecourse—the curriculum—that your students will follow. Building that course thoughtfully, and with an eye to the needs of the 21st century, is a critical part of your teaching.

What is an inquiry-based art+design foundation?
An inquiry-based approach engages students in investigating real world questions through technical, material, and formal skill development. Inquiry is authentic problem solving and forms minds through questioning, seeking, examining, finding and connecting. An authentic problem is one where a teacher does not know the answer when posing a task to a student: both teacher and student are motivated by cooperation working toward exploring and solving a problem. The solution should evoke deep insights for both teacher and student as neither expected the particulars of the answer at the outset of the task.

Inquiry-based art+design instructional methods reaffirm a Euclidian approach to thinking. Hand is not separate from mind. Instead, training the hand, in relation to the eye, is training the mind. Just as Euclid, 2300 years ago, set out the cornerstones of geometry through the physical manipulation of materials, so too foundations teaches a pathway into visual thinking through the constraints and affordances of visual media. In addition, inquiry-based methods may also be Cartesian (shaped by ideas). Both methods are means for articulating concepts that enter social interaction. In either situation, technology (mediums) becomes an interface that can accelerate, expand, and deepen communication.

Inquiry complements the Socratic dialogue in which the teacher guides a student into a preconceived enlightened state through a series of questions. It is different from critical thinking when defined as analysis through a single, deconstructive theoretical lens. In inquiry-based education, the teacher and student work together for an outcome that is glimpsed, but not fully articulated, at the beginning of the journey. The process of instruction is inductive—building empirical evidence into plausible arguments—utilizing the visual tool kit of the elements of art and the principles of design to gather clues that inform the emergent hypothesis.

Inquiry is the engine of creation and creates new value by making new connections, or revitalizing existing ones. Inquiry should beget insight, or a genuine type of knowing where the power of the idea and possible outcomes are compelling, convincing and desired. The process of art+design is a

If we lose sight of learning – if all we ask is mastery of ritual – then our academic institutions cease to be places that promote thinking.

dialogue of meaning making between maker and society. Inquiry trains the voice of the aspirant artist/designer so that it can be heard.

Inquiry is also iterative, either through trial and error or by using life experiences towards new ones. It cycles, changes variables and continuously evolves. Inquiry should motivate exploration and action. It conceives of artifacts of instruction as initiators and markers of a dialogue between the artist/designer and a specified audience. A measure of the success of an object is the quality of conversation the artifact evokes.

Inquiry is creative in that it generates new possibilities. It is constructive as it works through inferential, rather than deductive reasoning.

It is critical because is incorporates multiple theoretical frameworks.

It is connective as it seeks links and partnership with diverse audiences.

At its core, training in art and design is not just skills acquisition in artifact making, but training the habits of mind through a cyclical and reiterative process of the hand shaping ideas and ideas guiding the hand.

Assignment Formation : From Intention to Action

Matt Kelly

Assistant Professor of Art
Central College

Print

An assignment is a focused experience an educator uses to share information, build skills, promote creative inquiry and encourage independent thinking. Ideally, when organized in a deliberate sequence, assignments build a network of substantial experiences that are self-sustaining, creating new possibilities that help each student grow beyond a singular event.

Creating a strong and effective assignment however, can be a surprisingly difficult task. The knowledge and experience you bring to building the project is far greater than the knowledge and experience the students may initially gain in carrying it out. While the long-term relevance of the assignment is obvious to you, your students are likely going to need more explanation.

Clearly stating your objectives and assessment criteria is often the best way to start building a successful assignment. This answers the question "Why are we doing this?" for you and your students. What do your students need to learn and how will they understand that they have learned it? An assignment may include inquiry and skill based objectives, methodological investigations, critical thinking and even community outreach. Clear objectives emphatically linked to pedagogical intentions will give students a rationale for investing their time and energy in any given assignment. For the grade conscious it can provide a list of criteria that will be used for assessment. It will also tell the students what they are going to learn. Some examples from some of my own assignments are:

1. To manipulate the elements and principles of design in order to expand visual communication
2. To seek out and use a generative word as a conceptual anchor.
3. To use found objects and materials in the creation of an artwork.
4. To develop your own creative voice.
5. To learn to critically assess your own work as well as the work of others.

For the instructor, starting with the objectives can let you know if you need to strengthen or modify the assignment. Beyond the particular assignment itself you may need to review the objectives of the course as a whole and ask yourself how this particular assignment advances those goals. If you are unable to come up with clear objectives the students are likely to question the value of the project. Nothing saps momentum more than an assignment that feels like busy work or where expectations are unclear.

Defining the problem your students need to solve generally happens simultaneously as you consider the objectives. Again, this is something you need to present clearly and succinctly. This answers the question "What are we doing?" The following is a clear and concise description: "Create a dynamic non-representational image using black and gray markers that communicates one of the following words: Mechanical, Dance, Fluid, Viral, or Smoulder." Such a description provides the instructor and student a firm conceptual, technical and visual framework.

In writing the description, we may be tempted to launch into an extended discussion of the myriad possibilities, connections and discoveries students might experience while working on the project. More than likely, these possibilities are the reason you wanted to assign the project in the first place. However, it is generally more productive to save such information for the "strategy" section of the assignment. This will encourage students to make their own discoveries as the process unfolds.

The "strategy" section of the assignment can provide the springboard into productive action and answer the question "How do we start?" This is where you can set your students on a particular path that will likely give them the greatest chance for success while also reinforcing learning and creative inquiry outlined in your objectives.

The more exposure students get to wide ranging modes of inquiry the greater the chance they will find their own unique ways of working

In my own assignments I often follow the pattern of "research, sketch (build a model), analyze and execute." In the research stage I often present many different resources including artists, techniques, and historical information that may help expand the creative possibilities. For example, "Consider the term mechanical, what is its definition? What words are similar or mean roughly the same thing? What objects, textures or spaces are mechanical in nature? Can organic forms be mechanical? Create a list or idea web of everything that comes to mind including things that are the opposite." This tells students that they shouldn't rely solely on what they already think they know of the topic and helps to instill an appetite for learning. Second, I require preparatory steps such as sketches, models or other investigations into materials. "Make at least three well-developed sketches that are possible solutions to this problem. Be inventive, creative, take risks and challenge yourself."

This encourages students to expand beyond their first idea. The first idea is usually derived from something they have already seen and is only a cursory examination of the possibilities. It is important to develop many ideas choosing the strongest for further development. Preparatory work also provides students with a way of testing an idea, making mistakes and solving some basic technical problems along the way. Students can then analyze what they've done and pursue the most promising solution. At this point, an in-process critique is an effective way to reveal unrealized potential in an idea and to help ensure your students are on track. At the end of the critique, students can work toward creating a more informed or refined final solution to the problem.

This approach is not the only approach to the problem-solving part of an assignment but it is effective in guiding beginners toward creative and productive inquiry. After setting up a particular strategy I often find it valuable to break that pattern and ask students to pursue a methodology that is clearly the opposite to reinforce the idea that solutions to problems can be found using a wide variety of methods. The more exposure students get to wide ranging modes of inquiry the greater the chance they will find their own unique ways of working.

"Key Questions" are an integral part of creating an effective assignment. These are the big and little questions you want students to consider as they work on their projects. Key questions can also help frame the critique. One of the most important things we can do as educators is to teach our students to ask themselves questions that will expand their critical thinking. "How well does your image communicate the concept? Does the craftsmanship advance your idea or detract from it? What is the greatest strength of your image? What is its greatest weakness and how would you improve it?"

After developing a number of assignments for a particular class examine how well those assignments fit together. Does the length, complexity, playfulness or seriousness of these assignments work together to build momentum, change the pace or try the patience of the class? The way these assignments are organized can make a big difference in the experience of the student and instructor. Starting with assignments that are smaller in scope then building to larger more complex projects is generally effective. The smaller projects lay the groundwork for the course while building student confidence. As your students gain more knowledge they will likely be better able to motivate themselves and start thinking independently. It will require experimentation and careful observation but this will help keep you on your toes and help keep the class fresh and engaging.

On the following pages are examples of assignments taken from classes I teach at Central College. The Archaeologist, Artist and Architect – parts one, two and three is a series of assignments I give to my Visual Language students at the beginning of the semester. These assignments introduce students to the elements and principles of design, critical thinking, creative process and a link between two and three-dimensional design. Mechanical Imagery is the first assignment for the Printmaking I class and their first introduction to hard ground etching. Systematic Drawing is an assignment from my Drawing II class that focuses on the process rather than the final product as a way to explore an alternative approach to creating artwork.

Please Note
All assignments in this article are by Mathew Kelly.
For more information, please visit :
http://mathewkelly.wordpress.com

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01

Assignment Building: From Intention to Action Assignment
Archaeologist, Artist and Architect – Part One

Problem
Create an aesthetically engaging design in black, white and gray tones using a single object as the source for inspiration.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

- To investigate the aesthetic potential of any ordinary object.
- To recombine pieces of this object in creative ways to make a dynamic visual image.
- To break the limitations of what we think an object is supposed to look like.
- To develop your own creative process and creative voice
- To learn to critically assess your own work as well as the work of others.

Materials

- Black and gray markers on 8.5 x 11" white paper

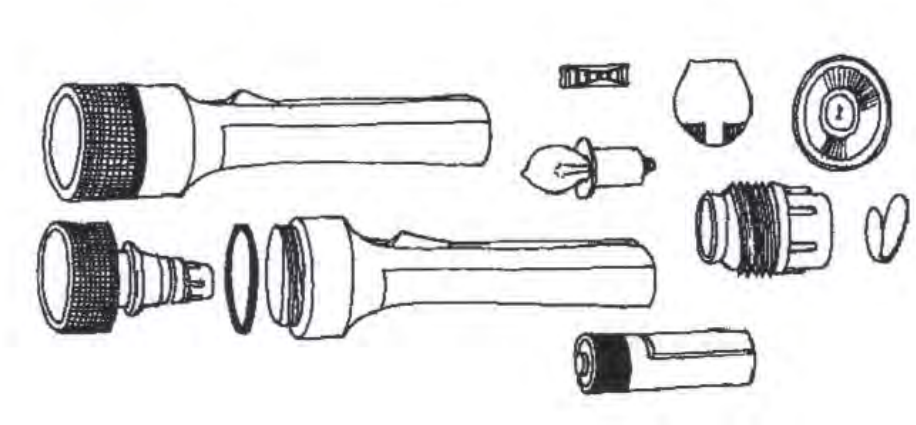
Strategy
It is important for you to understand that accurate representation of an object or space is NOT the focus here. Feel free to alter, distort, fragment, invert and invent any and all of the objects, textures and spaces you use for inspiration.

1. The Archaeologist, Study an object that you are going to use for this project as if you have no idea what it was used for. Inspect every angle, part, reflection, texture and contour. Draw each part from several points of view. Draw the reflections on the surface if any, draw the textures that you are seeing and any other element that catches your eye.

2. The Artist: Take these sketches; whole, fragmented or altered and start to organize them into an aesthetically engaging design. Use a pencil so that you can erase and modify the image. Do not worry about creating a masterpiece...just sketch. Think of it as brainstorming or writing a rough draft.
3. Please play again: When you have completed the first design to your satisfaction, set it aside and make at least four more. Take another look at your object and study it some more. Did you miss something? Borrow elements of your first design and expand upon them or start entirely from scratch. Never rely on your first idea! Generate many ideas, edit and then follow through with the most promising solution.

These designs will be the stepping-stones to a larger and more complex design in Part Two.

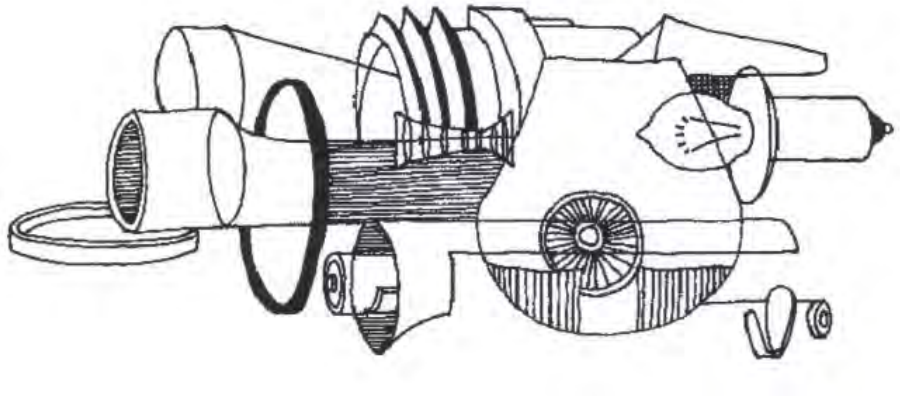
(continued)



A sketch of a flashlight from several points of view as the starting point.

01

Assignment Building: From Intention to Action Assignment
Archaeologist, Artist and Architect – Part One (continued)



A design created from elements found in the sketch above. Some shapes have remained the same yet their scale and relationship to the original flashlight has changed. What is important is that this design no longer has anything to do with a flashlight in any way.

Key Questions

- What is the greatest strength of this image? Why?
- What is the greatest weakness of this image? Why?
- Does the image still resemble the original object or has it been transformed completely?
- Have you explored a wide range of possibilities or narrow?
- In what ways can you improve upon each of these images?

Critique Strategy
Discussions will focus on the key questions for this assignment.

Timetable
6-9 hours

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02

Assignment Building: From Intention to Action Assignment
Archaeologist, Artist and Architect – Part Two

Problem
Create a dynamic non-representational image using black and gray markers that communicates one of the following words: Mechanical, Dance, Fluid, Viral, Cacophony, or Smoulder.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

- To manipulate the elements and principles of design in order to expand visual communication
- To seek out and use a generative word as a conceptual anchor.
- To rely on non-representational forms to carry the content rather than recognizable imagery, such as gears, instruments or burning logs.
- To develop your own creative voice.
- To learn to critically assess your own work as well as the work of others.

Materials

- Black and gray markers and 22" x 30" white paper

Strategy

1. For each concept word create a list of things that come to mind when you think of that word. Congestion: stuffed nose, traffic jam, tight fitting, overcrowded, bottle neck, pressure, clogged…
2. Look at the designs you have previously worked on and see how you might alter them to fit one or more of these concept words.
3. Start some new sketches and/or modify the old ones to incorporate this additional element of content. Consider the format of the page: horizontal, vertical, diagonal… Which orientation might be the most effective?
4. Once your idea is clear enough, move on to the large sheet of paper for the final image. Start in pencil and draw very lightly to begin with keeping an open mind to the new developments that may happen along the way.

Key Questions

- How well does your design communicate the concept?
- Does your craftsmanship advance the idea or detract from it?
- What is the greatest strength of this image?
- What is the greatest weakness of this image?
- In what ways could you improve upon this piece?

Critique Strategy
Discussions will focus on the key questions for this assignment.

Timetable
6-9 hours

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03

Assignment Building: From Intention to Action Assignment
The Archeologist, Artist and Architect – Part Three : Paper Sculpture

Problem
Create an etching using hard ground and line only, based on the concept "mechanical."

Objectives/Assessment Targets

- To explore the unique qualities of liquid and ball type hard ground
- To explore image development in line only
- To explore the concept "mechanical" in the broadest terms possible
- To create a dynamic and unusual composition
- To further develop your own creative voice

Materials

- A well-equipped printmaking studio.

Strategy

1. Research. Consider the term "mechanical", what does it mean? What objects, shapes or textures are mechanical in nature? Can organic forms be mechanical? Create a list or idea web of everything that comes to mind and the research you have done for this concept.


Lars Larsen

2. Sketch. Make at least three well-developed sketches that are possible solutions to this problem. These images may be realistic, non-representational or abstract. Be inventive and creative. Play a little and challenge yourself. DO NOT COPY AN IMAGE FROM THE INTERNET!
3. Analyze. Consider these three solutions, choose the one that is most promising and improve upon it.
4. Execute. Recreate the image on the plate by using an etching needle or other tool that will scratch away the waxy hard ground and expose the copper underneath.
5. Etch. Once you are satisfied with the image as it is on the plate, immerse the plate into the acid bath for the appropriate amount of time required for the desired tone of the lines.
6. Proof. Print a proof of the image to see how it turned out.
7. Rework. Examine the print and image and make any changes or improvements you see necessary.

Key Questions

- What is "mechanical" about your image?
- Is your image simply of something mechanical or about the concept "mechanical?"
- Does your technique enhance the concept or detract from it?
- Is the composition dynamic and unusual or expected?
- Did you explore a wide variety of line?

Critique Strategy
Discussions will focus on the key questions for this assignment.

Timetable
9-12 hours

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04

Assignment Building: From Intention to Action Assignment
Systematic Drawing

Problem

Develop and use a system that dictates the form of a drawing leaving the composition and materials used up to chance.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

- Learn to place an emphasis on the drawing process rather than the drawing itself.
- Learn to leave some of the decision making process up to chance to avoid falling into old habits.
- Learn to build a tolerance for randomness, uncertainty and the absence of control.
- Learn to encourage experimentation with the creative process.
- Learn to develop limits for yourself as a way to unlock creative potential.

Materials

- Open

Strategy

Start with simple elements to begin with such as pencil, an open and solid circle and an open and solid square and develop a few rules. As you test out your system, modify it to use different materials, increase complexity and/or remove your control and continue to experiment.

Start with one open circle and square, and one solid circle and square anywhere on the page. Roll several (three or more) six sided dice 20 times and follow the system below:

1 = a single large textured circle

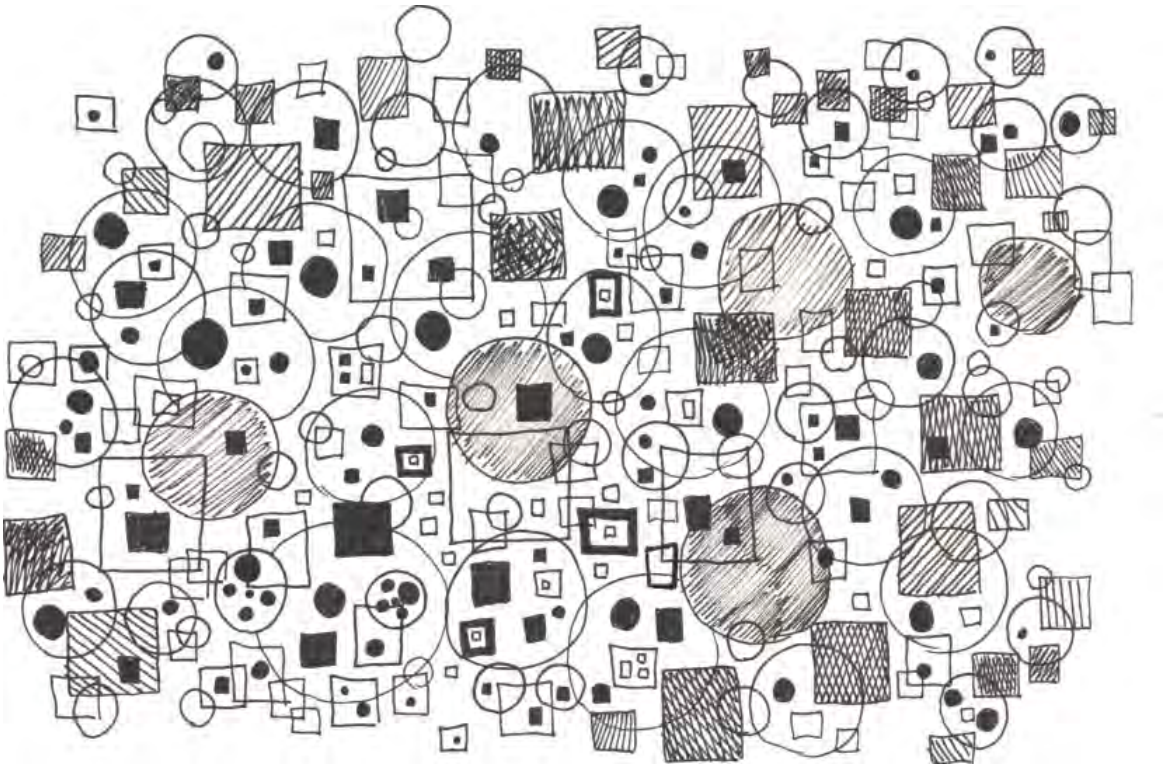
2 = two large open circles. The circles must touch at least one corner of a square whenever possible

3 = 3 textured squares that overlap an open circle by at least 25%

4 = 4 open squares that do not touch anything

5 = 5 solid squares and circles that must be contained by a square or circle

6 = 6 open squares and circles and they all must overlap a square or circle by at least 25%



A resulting image of the system described in this assignment

04 Assignment Building: From Intention to Action Assignment

Systematic Drawing (continued)

Stategy (continued)

Other possibilities could include:

Setting a timer to limit the duration of drawing.

Turn over playing cards to indicate a line, shape, material, or medium.

Throwing cards or paper onto a surface to determine composition.

Pulling numbers, shapes, materials out of a hat.

Rolling dice to determine shape, size, material, color, number, or medium.

Key Questions

- To what degree does your system allow you to control the outcome?
- Does your system need to allow for more chance?
- Does your system create a starting point for your creative work or is it an end in itself?

Critique Strategy
Discussion will focus on key questions.

Timetable
9-12 hours

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A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation

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Print

We want our students to develop their own voices and means of visual expression, to listen more critically to other voices, to respond more thoughtfully, and to become responsible and passionate participants in contemporary society. A skills-based/concept driven curriculum is our best means of achieving these goals.

What is the value of this approach? At many public universities and community colleges, beginning students need a strong foundation in skills as well as a challenging immersion in concept development and creativity. Because very few public institutions require an entrance portfolio, student skills at entry are extremely varied.

Art history majors (who often take several Foundations classes) may have no prior studio experience, and may find studio course requirements especially daunting. By building the skills needed to express increasingly ambitious concepts, our students develop essential ideas and their means of expression simultaneously.

An initial emphasis on composition develops visual and verbal vocabulary, increases students' confidence and provides a strong foundation for subsequent inquiry. Exploration of traditional elements and principles combined with an introduction to various techniques can provide a useful baseline for two-dimensional design, three-dimensional design and time-based design.

Just as a skilled carpenter understands the unique strengths of many types of saws (from band saw to radial saw to table saw) so a skilled artist or designer must understand and exploit the unique strengths of each visual element. This is especially valuable in time-based foundational courses, as discussion of duration, chronology, tempo and other temporal elements is generally absent from K-12 coursework.

The first step in marrying skills and content is to define "skills" rather broadly. A skill is a basic and teachable process or procedure. When gaining skills, students focus on mastering processes and materials rather than focusing on open-ended inquiry. The following types of skills are especially valuable:

1. Technical skills, such as observational drawing, safe use of woodshop equipment and so forth.
2. Perceptual skills, such as awareness of value nuances and of negative space, cropping and heightened color acuity.
3. Ideational skills, including specific brainstorming strategies, journaling, and research.
4. Conceptualization skills, through which raw ideas are transformed into effective communication.
5. Critical thinking skills, such as problem definition, distillation, creating categories, comparing and contrasting and understanding of relationships between the parts and the whole.
6. Research skills, using a wide variety of resources.

More ambitious inquiry-based assignments begin around midterm, when students have had experience with these six types of skills. This may culminate in a self-designed capstone project. Through this gradual transition in emphasis, students realize that technical, perceptual, ideational, conceptual and critical thinking skills are necessary to create meaningful artworks.

As a result, when they are given free rein to develop their own ideas in later assignments and in upper level courses, they are less likely to abandon the skills that they have learned. When they have a solid vocabulary and substantial experience with the compositional basics, students can focus on what they want to say rather than struggle with the skills that they lack.

Developing solid skills in order to express ideas effectively advances student learning and sets the stage for their subsequent development as artists and designers.

Our approach requires frequent critiques, using a wide variety of approaches. Critiques help highlight technical strengths and weaknesses, heighten perceptual skills, hone ideas and intentions and develop critical thinking. These critiques range from 20-minute progress reports and team-based idea generation exercises to extended discussion of completed artworks. Written critiques, student critique teams, guest speakers and other strategies can expose students to a wider range of approaches and increase their level of engagement.

Ultimately, participatory learning clearly must extend beyond simple mastery of technical skills and into the realm of personal inquiry. Authentic questions combined with facilitated discussions greatly advance this inquiry. Poised between the top-down pedagogies of the past and an open-ended "do-it-yourself" model, we seek to integrate skills with concepts, and structure with freedom. Developing solid skills in order to express ideas effectively advances student learning and sets the stage for their subsequent development as artists and designers.

A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundations Overview

Studio Courses

Drawing Foundations. Creative expression and communication using a variety of black and white mediums.

This course combines straightforward observational drawing with basic composition and a modest exploration of materials. Inventive homework assignments and storyboarding are used expand concepts.

Three-Dimensional Foundations. Experience in designing and constructing expressive three-dimensional forms using a variety of materials and methods.

This course provides an introduction to 3D composition and construction using a range of basic materials, including wood, wire and paperboard. Research into contemporary sculpture, brainstorming and extensive maquette construction helps students expand their ideas and their aesthetics.

Two-Dimensional Foundations. Experience in conceptualizing, creating, and critiquing two-dimensional compositions using the elements and principles of design.

Concept development using thumbnail sketches and team-based learning are a major aspect of this course.

Digital Imaging Foundations (Time-based Foundations) Introduction to digital processes and the basics of time-based art and design.

Designed to provide students with the fundamental digital understanding required for professional success in contemporary art and design, this course offers extended work with three raster, vector, and video editing programs.

Lecture Courses

Success Strategies Foundations. One credit orientation/inspiration course designed to increase first-year student success, introduce departmental concentrations and explore career possibilities.

Contemporary Art and Design Foundations. Lectures and visual presentations present the myriad forms and expressive content of contemporary art and design.

01

A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation
Example of Capstone Project Guidelines

Problem
Design and complete an ambitious project requiring at least 30 hours of work, in class and out, over a three week period.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

In this project, you will need to demonstrate the following:

- Extensive idea generation, resulting in numerous alternatives.
- Clear decision-making. Of the alternatives you invent, which will best convey your idea?
- Capacity to turn inventive concepts into effective compositions.
- Self-discipline and effective time management.

Strategy
Assess your strengths, weaknesses, and interests. What would you most like to explore in this final assignment? Write up a clear, concise proposal, describing the project, suggesting questions to address, and determining how the work can best be completed.

Example

Visualizing the Invisible Man
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ART 1200

Description: I plan to complete a series of five 18" x 24" Conte drawings based on the concept of invisibility as defined by Ralph Ellison in *The Invisible Man*. I will interpret his idea of invisibility using the various design elements and drawing techniques I have learned this year, including forms of balance, degrees of definition, contrast and illusion of space. The first and last images will serve as a prologue and epilogue, from the narrator's point of view. The remaining three images will be designed to express the points of view of the three major characters in the book.

Primary Concerns

- How many ways can I visually suggest invisibility?
- How can cropping, layering, and focus suggest invisibility on a psychological level?
- How can I show the power plays that are so closely related to the concept of invisibility in the book?
- Should my drawings work in any narrative way, or should each one stand alone?

Time Management

Week 1
Idea Development, thumbnails and rough drafts.

Week 2
Completion of two drawings.

Week 3
Completion of two drawings.

Week 4
Complete final drawing and present project in critique.

02

A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation
Creating an Imaginary Museum

I get everything that satisfies my soul from bringing together objects that are in the world, manipulating them, working with spatial arrangements, and having things presented in the way I see them. – Fred Wilson

Museums are powerful places, especially for artists. Here we have our first direct experience of the great works of art, and perhaps our first encounter with the notion of the artist. Museum displays help us conceptualize and concretize our world and our history. The creation of a museum is, in essence, the formulation and presentation of a world.

Problem

Draw an imaginary museum, minimum size 18x24". You are given unlimited funds to create your own museum. What will that museum display, investigate, or preserve? Will your museum explore a theme, present the history of something, or will it be purely fantastic?

Objectives/Assessment Targets

- To generate multiple solutions to the inquiry: what is a museum and what can it become? (Ideational skills)
- To demonstrate robust idea generation and intellectual engagement with a wide range of conceptual possibilities (what is a museum) through sketches and verbal presentation. (Conceptualization skills, Critical thinking skills)
- To create a well-crafted drawing that adheres to the laws of one and two point perspective. (Technical skills)
- To position your "collection" effectively in the space you have constructed. (Perceptual skills)

Materials

- 18"x24" or larger Bristol paper, graphite pencils (b-6b), erasers

Strategy

Part I: Complete a one-, two- or three-point perspective drawing based on hallways in the art building. Present three sketches of possible ideas for your Imaginary Museum.

Part II: Add invention. The Imaginary Museum will be drawn in graphite directly on top of the in-class exercise; use the long empty hallway as the basic architectural space in which to build your museum.

Key Questions

- Will you be altering the architecture (the walls, ceiling or floor) of the hallway itself to suit the concept of your museum, or is your focus primarily on the display of objects themselves?
- Will you use traditional modes of display such as pedestals and dioramas or seek alternate means of exhibiting? The answers to these questions will depend on your particular museum concept.

Examples

- Wunderkammer, the curiosity cabinet of the 17th century
- Athanasius Kircher, examples of traditional museum displays
- David Wilson's "Museum of Jurassic Technology"
- Museum Practice of Fred Wilson,
- Mark Dion's "Bureau of Surreal Investigation"
- Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder by Lawrence Weschler

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03

A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation
Body Language

Premise

Our gender, race and other physical attributes are "read" by people we meet. People make all kinds of assumptions based on how they read our bodies. By combining body language and actual words students have the opportunity to decide how they want to be read in this self-portrait assignment.

Problem

While exploring notions of identity, create a full-sized full-body self-portrait using overlapping handwritten text only to create a full value range.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

- To accurately depict the proportions of the body in real size. (Perceptual skills)
- To create a full value range using overlapping marks and pencil pressure. (Technical skills)
- To discuss the body and how it creates identity. (Critical thinking skills)
- To become familiar with feminist ideas such as "the personal is political" and écriture féminine. (Critical thinking skills)
- To create a self-portrait that shows a mental or emotional state as well as a physical one. (Conceptualization skills)

Materials

- Pencils ranging from HB to 9B.
- Approximately 6 feet of paper from a large roll.

Strategy

1. Collaboratively, students take digital photos of themselves in various standing poses with a strong light source. Make sure they know a little bit about the assignment beforehand, so that they can wear clothes that they want to be part of the assignment. Help them pick a photo with a strong value range to work from (this is a good opportunity for discussion about value ranges.)
2. Then the students will map out their bodies with a light pencil scaled to their actual size on large white paper. They can grid their photographs if this is helpful, and if there is no foreshortening involved, actually measure parts of their body to make sure this is accurate.
3. The students then need to think about what text they are going to use. This can be an important text to them that describes them in some way or words that they write for the project. If they are choosing a text, they might want to use song lyrics, a favorite short story or a religious text from their religion.
4. The final and most time-intensive part of this project is for the students to lay in all the value by writing on their paper bodies. They can make an area darker by overlapping, putting letters more closely together, pressing harder, using a softer pencil or a combination of the above.

Key Questions

- Is there a strong light source so that many different values can be used?
- Does the text used relate to how you feel about the parts of your body that it is making up?
- Could the text respond to how you feel other people view you because of the way your body looks?
- How does your body affect your identity? How can the text be chosen and/or placed to reflect this?
- How important is it that the text is legible? Should some of the words stand out more than other words? What about the placement of the words?

Critique Strategy

Some time will be needed for this critique, as students will likely try to read all that is written on each drawing. Because of this it is best to have students break into small groups of 4 or so to discuss each drawing. The drawings can also be left on the wall longer, and students can be encouraged to write private letters to students whose work they were not able to discuss.

(continued)

03 A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation
Body Language (continued)

Timetable
2 hours to layout the figure with proper proportions. 4 hours reading, writing, researching appropriate texts, 12 hours+ in or out of class to complete drawing with the text as value.

Examples
Artists: Michael Waugh http://michaelwaugh.com/art/michael_waugh.html

Thomas Broome http://www.thomasbroome.se/work.htm

Film: The Pillow Book

Reading: Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of Medusa"

Other: Shelly Jackson's Skin Project http://ineradicablestain.com/stain.html

"Words on Skin" flickr group. http://www.flickr.com/groups/wordsonskin/

Note to Emerging Educators
This is best done in a second semester drawing course or at the end of the first semester, after students have had some experience with human proportion and value. It also might make a great final project, as it is very time intensive. This assignment could also be adapted on a smaller scale by having the students only draw part of their bodies or their faces.

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04 A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation

Picturing History : The Aesthetics of Power

Premise

The genre of history painting was a form of painting taught in the academies from the Renaissance to the 19th century. The paintings were usually executed in a realistic manner and at its apotheosis were regarded as the highest form of art with the still life at the lowest of the hierarchy. Classical and Christian histories as well as mythologies were common themes. Many of Diego Velazquez's and Peter Paul Rubens' works as well as Picasso's Guernica would fall into the genre of history painting. The stories depicted wielded enormous socio-political influence.

While contemporary society no longer looks to history painting for its socio-political-cultural cues, today's media does play a powerful role in shaping our views. Artists such as John Heartfield, Hannah Hoch, and Pedro Meyer used collage and Photoshop to question this process.

How can painting, collage and/or Photoshop be used to challenge the viewer to question how past beliefs and value systems continue to influence and shape how we see others, the world and ourselves?

Problem

Create a painting or collage that looks critically at the genre of history painting in order to reflect and comment on the representation(s) of history. This might include your personal story as well.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

- To use various techniques related to acrylic paint such as texture, transparency, fluidity, as well as the manipulation of drying time of the medium. (Technical skills)
- To demonstrate an understanding of how to render skin tones from a multicultural perspective. (Technical skills)
- To demonstrate an understanding of institutional biases of the history of painting in regards to class, gender, race and ethnicity. (Critical thinking skills)
- To visually communicate an awareness of the role that contemporary visual media play in the process that shapes our historical consciousness. (Conceptualization skills)

Materials

- One 18" x 24" flexible canvas support.
- Acrylic paints in a full color spectrum.
- Brushes and various acrylic mediums.
- This assignment can also be executed with traditional collage or Photoshop.

Strategy

To start you will choose an event from the first ten years of your life that you feel shaped your understanding of the world. Then you will:

1. Research the years of your life and choose events that 'show' your relationship with the past in order to help the viewer understand "his-story or her-story" in a new way.
2. Then with some events chosen, sketch out a composition from references from photos as well as your own thumbnail drawings. The painting/collage can take the form of homage to or a parody of a specific history painting. It can even be a new way of looking at history.

Key Questions

- What color scheme(s) did you use and why?
- How did you manipulate the paint?
- How did collage / Photoshop techniques influence your creative process?
- What events did you choose and why?
- What aesthetic(s) did you utilize to depict your narrative and why?
- How did you combine your story, history and aesthetics to present a unified painting?

Critique Strategy

For the preliminary critique, students will utilize "speed-critique" (three-minutes for each) by quickly writing comments on a separate sheet of paper for each painting and then handing it to the artist. For the final critique each artist will comment on how they did (or did not) incorporate the suggestions given.

(continued)

04 A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation

Picturing History : The Aesthetics of Power (continued)

Critique Strategy (continued)
Students will also hand in a one-page typed self-reflection commenting on their process, which must include at least three historical/cultural events from their research that served as inspiration for their paintings. In your opinion, what is the most successful part of this piece? What is the least successful part of this piece? What criteria did you use to come to this judgment? Be very specific.

Timetable
First preliminaries are due in a week. Secondary preliminaries (works-in-progress) are due the following week and the "speed-critique" occurs at this time. Final paintings are due week three.

Readings

Guerrilla Girls. The Guerrilla Girls' Bedside Companion to the History of Western Art. Penguin, 1998.

Resources: Bjelajac, David. American Art: A Cultural History, Pearson, 2000.

Wypijewski, JoAnn, editor. Painting by Numbers: Komar and Melamid's Scientific Guide to Art, UC Press, 1998.

Zinn, Howard, et al. A People's History of American Empire: A Graphic Adaptation, Metropolitan, 2008.

Artists
Ida Bloomberg, Mary Cassatt, Wei Dong, Marlene Dumas, Lalla Essaydi, Leon Golub Guillermo Gomez-Pena, Frida Kahlo, Eduoard Manet, Yasumasa Morimura, Kerry James Marshall and Cheri Samba.

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05 A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation

Silhouette Narrative

Problem

Working in groups of three to four students, develop six to eight 11x14" narrative-based paper cut-outs.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

- To activate both negative and positive space and shape within and outside central characters. (Perceptual skills)
- To create consistency in character development and setting depiction, without sacrificing individuality and creativity in design. (Technical skills, Perceptual skills)
- To demonstrate unity and harmony through repetition of form/object/character, continuation of a scene or backdrop, and recognition of the whole over the individual parts. (Perceptual skills, Conceptualization skills, Critical thinking skills)
- To use emphasis and focal point, taking into consideration "close-ups," "action shots," and "wide shots." (Perceptual skills)
- To work effectively as a collaborative team. (Ideational skills, Conceptualization skills)
- To identify and harness stereotypical "hero, villain, joker, victim" character types, pushing for inventive and original interpretations, yet politically correct representations. (Critical thinking skills)

Materials

- 11x14" White Bristol paper, black paper Optional: grey paper and tracing paper.
- Exacto Knife
- Tape
- Rubber Cement
- Foamcore/matboard

Strategy

As a group, develop a storyboard with group based on essential scenes of the chosen story. The story you choose can be a fairytale, a legend, a historical event, or something invented by the team. Each person is responsible for completing two scenes, each measuring 11" x 14".

1. Pay special attention to what scene precedes and follows yours. Consider the edges and how one panel will lead into the next. Aim for fluidity in layout.
2. Provide a variety of angles to harness the unfolding action. Play with perspective by over-accentuating scale or introducing tracing paper and/or grey paper to highlight foreground, middle ground and background.
3. Experiment with using one piece of black paper to represent more than one form. For example, a single silhouette may serve as a human figure, a boat and water.
4. Display method options: foamcore vs. black matboard border. Consider the contour outline of each cut-out and find an articulate way to frame the main action.

Key Questions

- How and where might an individual scene connect to the scene/panel that precedes or follows it?
- How and where might more than one scene exist within one panel?
- What appropriate props, features or costuming could accentuate the attitude of a character and support or refute stereotypes?
- What is the mood and atmosphere of the narrative?

Critique Strategy

Observe and critique individual groups' series of 6-8 panels displayed altogether. Example questions: How has the group of artists created a sense of continuity and harmony? What indicators are used to create climax within the narrative? Where do tension, surprise and/or emphasis occur within the narrative? What mood is established in the first panel—how does it evolve by the time we reach the final panel?

(continued)

05 A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation

Silhouette Narrative (continued)

Timetable

10 hours in class, 9 hours out of class (3-4 weeks).

- Week 1: Introduction to shadow, silhouette and paper cutouts. Using black paper, white pencil, scissors and clamp lights, capture each others' profiles: exaggerate features to make one villainous and one heroic profile. Handout reading and assign groups.
- Week 2: Discuss reading. Groups meet and determine their story. Introduction to storyboarding.
- Week 3: Display methods and layers. Share student examples.
- Week 4: Group critique

Examples

Reading excerpt from Shadows: Unlocking Their Secrets, from Plato to Our Time by Roberto Casati, 2004. PBS Art: 21 season one, series: Power, interview with Kara Walker. Video clips of Lotte Reiniger's Prince Achmed, Paul Chan's First Light and Shadow Puppetry on www.youtube.com.

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06

A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation
Material and Immaterial

Problem

"Truth to materials" and "form follows function" are pillars of Modernist thinking. Modern architecture tends to exploit the unique characteristics of metal: plastics and glass often accentuates the very means of construction. At the same time, modern painters such as Barnett Newman and Ellsworth Kelly embraced the flat picture plane as the idea playing field for their visual expression.

By comparison, Postmodernists tended to emphasize conceptual complexity over compositional refinement, and use all sorts of materials and methods to express themselves. Kiki Smith constructed life-sized figures from beeswax, Petah Coyne includes dead animals in many projects and broken furniture or trash has served as a beginning point for many assemblages. And, the Conceptual artists of the 1970's often presented art as ideas alone, without any physical manifestation.

Are you a technical purist, an anarchist, or even a conceptualist, moving beyond the material realm?

Problem

1. Working with a single material, explore every use and modification you can within the limitations of safety. Then, create an artwork that uses the inherent qualities of your material inventively and expressively.
2. Working with the same material or a different selection, explore ways to work against our expectations. What happens when a hammer is constructed from rose petals? A teacup is lined with fur? A portrait is made of nuts, bolts, and other hardware?
3. Create a final piece, using immateriality to push your ideas even further. How can traces of materials expand communication and emotion? What happens if your artwork is purely an idea?

Objective/Assessment Target

- To connect technical skills to ideational skills. Start thinking with your fingers!
- To explore metaphorical implications of various materials.
- To expand creativity through multi-dimensional investigation. Each approach affects communication.

Materials

- Open

Strategy

- Start with technical and conceptual research. How has your material been used in the past? What are its physical limitations? How can it be taken apart and then re-formed, as an artwork? Create at least 30 thumbnail sketches, 10 maquettes and/or test strips for discussion in class. Then, complete Stage 1 (described above).
- For Stage 2, consider trying a material that is not commonly associated with art. Expand your conceptual research as well as your technical research. Create at least 30 thumbnail sketches and10 maquettes and/or test strips for discussion in class. Then, complete your second artwork.
- For Stage 3, consider the implications of material residue. For example, a fossil can be any evidence of past life—from a dinosaur's footprint to an earthworm's burrow track. And, what ideas are best expressed through concepts rather than physical construction?

Key Questions

- What are the predictable physical and conceptual characteristics of each material you try?
- How can our expectations be challenged or subverted?
- What happens when materials are used in unexpected ways?
- What is it that the original advertisement is saying that you would like to change or expose?

06 A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation
Material and Immaterial (continued)

Critique Strategy
Small group, in-progress critiques, followed by extended facilitated discussion by full class.

Timetable
20 to 40 hours, depending on number of variations, level of collaboration, complexity of construction.

Readings

Sculpture Magazine, Art in America, Launching the Imagination Chapters 8, 11, 12.

Artists

Artists: Ned Kahn, Marcel Duchamp, Liza Lou, Joseph Kosuth, Rudolf Stingel, Xiao Min, Tom Friedman, Robert Irwin and David Adjaye.

Note to Emerging Educators
Find the balance between wide-ranging experimentation and safety, including limitations in uses of dorm rooms, and expect to do a lot of demos. This is also a great time to invite colleagues in to talk about their uses of materials.

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07

A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation
Chalk Animation

Problem

Working collaboratively with one or two others, create a short narrative animation combining a chalk drawing setting with the interaction of actors. Additionally, create an accompanying art object/book that documents or commemorates the event.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

- To demonstrate the fundamentals of stop-motion animation. (Technical skills)
- To use storyboards to pre-visualize an animated narrative. (Ideational Skills, Conceptualization skills)
- To explore ways to integrate 2D and 3D elements in an animated narrative. (Perceptual skills, Critical thinking skills)
- To explore the advantages and disadvantages of working collaboratively. (Critical thinking skills)

Materials

- Paper
- Pen/Pencil
- Digital camera
- Chalk (sidewalk chalk)
- Clean-up Materials (Bucket/Water/Sponge)
- Tripod
- Misc. Items for Book
- A digital program for building the animation such as "monkeyjam" or "frame thief" specific to stop motion or "iMovie."

Strategy

- Storyboarding: Gather in small groups of 2-3 and collectively decide on a short narrative. Create a storyboard for your narrative animation.
- Filming: Select a location that provides your group with the space and seclusion to draw on the floor, and a spot to shoot images from above. SAFETY should be the main consideration when choosing this location. Be aware of the passage of time and light (sun, shadows, etc.) and how that will affect the end product. You will be using chalk to draw a 2D setting in which you will interact. The use of water and a sponge can help "erase" unwanted chalk drawings, and will be helpful during cleanup. Avoid using large areas of fill when drawing with chalk due to time constraints.
- Animation: The final animation should include a title screen and closing credits. Consider the pacing of your moving images and how this can affect emotion in the animation. Sound (music, effects) may also be added.
- Art Object/Book: For the final art object/book, construct something that thematically relates to your animation/narrative.
- Presentation: Be prepared to present your project to the class as a group. Present your storyboards, discuss the alternate narratives considered and explain the ideation of your project. What problems did you encounter and how were they resolved?

Key Questions

- How can chalk be used most eloquently?
- How does your body relate spatially to a 2D drawing?
- How can expansion or compression of time affect your narrative?
- How do you function in a group setting? How does your role in this group change as the project progresses?

Critique Strategy

Animations can be composited in many digital programs so the focus in the critique should be less about the software and more about the strengths and weaknesses of the narrative. The accompanying art object/book is intended to spark discussion about ephemera, documentation, and presentation.

(continued)

07 A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation

Chalk Animation (continued)

Examples

Robin Rhode, William Kentridge, Banksy, James Barany, Kara Walker, Julian Beever. Student Project Examples: http://www.rosichelli.com/teaching/index.php?/d3/2d-3d-chalk-animation/

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08

A Skills-Based/Content-Driven Foundation
Quick Cut

Problem
Create a short 5-10 minute digital video based on one of the following concepts: panic, realization, suspicion, or celebration using only a straight cut editing technique with at least 5 transitions.

Objectives/Assessment Targets

- To focus on the advantages and limitations of one particular editing technique. (Technical skills, Critical thinking skills)
- To make the editing technique an integral part of the story. (Technical skills, Conceptualization skills)

Materials

- Any camera that can take video and an editing program such as iMovie

Strategy

1. Research. Consider the four concept words Panic, Realization, Suspicion and Celebration. What are the things that prompt any of these four responses in a person? What kinds of emotions are involved? What expressions and gestures are exhibited? Are they subtle or overt?
2. Experiment. Develop a rough draft of a story for each. The story could be a snippet of a larger narrative, a complete narrative itself or something that presents more questions than answers. For example, we may never see in your movie the actual reason people are panicking, what someone has just realized, what someone else is suspicious of or the reason they are all celebrating, but the emotion they are feeling is clear. How will your movie keep the viewer interested?
3. Analyze. Of your four rough drafts, choose the one that is most promising and start fleshing out the idea.
4. Story board. Start sketching out the shots you would like to use paying close attention to the transitions between them and how the viewer will be able to make connections between the various shots using only the straight cut.
5. Execute. Start filming the shots being sure that you keep your mind open to making changes along the way and altering your idea.
6. Edit. This is where filmmaking really begins. Carve down all the footage you have into the most essential material needed to tell the story.

Key Questions

- To what extent are the transitions helping to tell the story? Are they integral or arbitrary?
- Is the footage predictable and trite, or does it offer a unique view?
- Does the film hold the viewer's attention?
- Is there any unnecessary imagery?

Critique Strategy
Small group, in-progress critiques, followed by extended facilitated discussion by full class, exploring types of stories and means of communication.

Timetable
12-18 hours

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Integrative Teaching : Balancing Conceptual and Experiential Learning

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Print

Integrative teaching in the context of studio art foundations can best be described as a meta-pedagogy, one that consciously embraces multiple pedagogies in order to:

- Incorporate functional motivation. Students create things they care about. Instructors, expand student awareness of problem solving methodologies rather than focusing on individual media and their associated techniques.
- Introduce meta-cognitive skills, including thinking about thinking, self-reflection, planning, and creative processes.
- Encourage and develop those student attitudes and behaviors that are the major predictors of student success: curiosity (play), work ethic, creativity and critical self-reflection.
- Educate students to be capable of creating more conceptually sophisticated art objects earlier in their program of studies.
- Employ strategies that are more in line with contemporary practices. Media and design principles are deployed as part of a rhetoric of meaning and display, not as ends in themselves.

An integrative teaching approach employs multiple pedagogic perspectives and critical frameworks. Most notably, this approach:

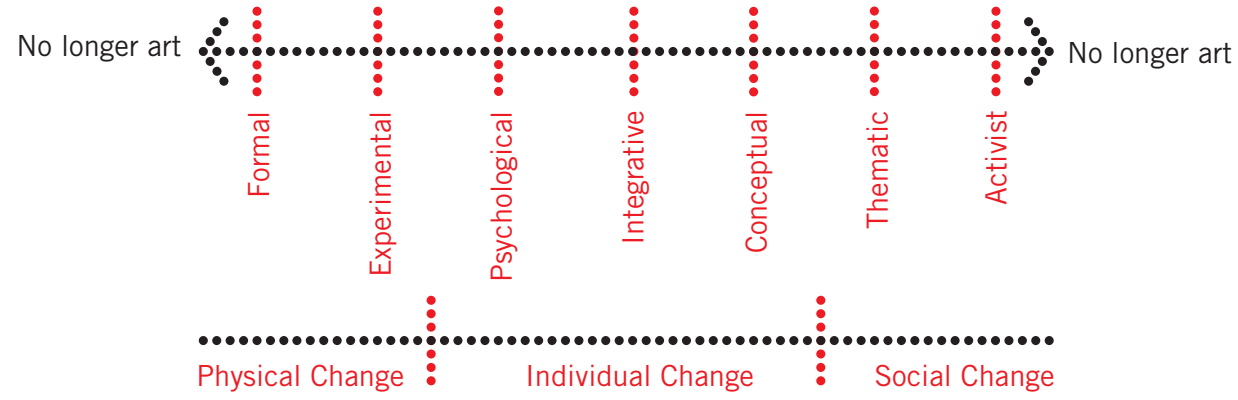
- Includes an action plan that directly addresses and encourages skills often considered more attitudinal than cognitive:
- Curiosity (play and inquiry)
- Creativity
- Critical self-reflection
- Work ethic
- Vertically connects foundational coursework to upper level or real world experiences and advanced concepts. This may be done through disciplinary critique, activism, internships, mentorship or modeling, and/or capstone projects and exhibits.
- Presents skills in a curricular context that stresses methodology. Interests evolve into questions, questions into methodologies, and methodologies into artworks.

Rationale

Defining “integrative teaching” is a challenge. Recurring terms like “holistic,” “connective,” “real world,” “enriched,” “active,” and “reflective” point to common philosophical threads that are in play whenever integrative teaching is invoked. However, the specific learning outcomes and pedagogical methods espoused in the literature vary widely depending upon the disciplinary, institutional, and curricular context. Integrative teaching has been implemented as interdisciplinary courses, service-learning initiatives, mentorship programs, team teaching, student peer review, disciplinary critique, capstone projects, learning communities, experiential learning, linked general education courses, and self-directed study. In fact, almost any teaching method that goes beyond rote memorization or the standard “chalk and talk” delivery has had proponents that lay claim to the integrative label.

One way to think about integrative art foundations education is to imagine it on a spectrum of teaching strategies.

These pedagogical orientations run from purely formal curricula at one end, to programs that emphasize art as social activism or cultural intervention on the other.



One way to think about integrative art foundations education is to imagine it on a spectrum of teaching strategies.

Extreme formal and extreme activist orientations are peripheral to the teaching of art in a literal (not an evaluative) sense, in that they serve as the "bookends" on the domain that we recognize as art instruction.

Visualizing various pedagogical orientations in this way is not meant to privilege the central approaches over the others. They are all valid and useful ways to teach visual art and design. Rather, this spectrum can help to reveal a few aspects of foundations pedagogy in general and of integrative teaching in particular:

- Teaching philosophies to the left of the spectrum emphasize physical change. Formal and experiential pedagogies focus more on the art object and upon material properties and transformation. Pedagogies on the right of the spectrum tend to focus upon social change, viewers, audiences, meaning production, and communication. Those orientations in the middle emphasize individual change. Their primary focus is upon transformation of artist/student and consequently upon process, methodology, creativity, problem solving, perception, attitudes, assumptions, and behaviors.
- The reality is that most instructors teach from a combination of orientations. Many draw most heavily from those orientations that are closest to a program's or an instructor's "native" or primary personal orientation. However, all foundations teaching (wherever it falls on the spectrum) has as its goal the transformation of the students. This spectrum makes no inferences as to the end goal or of the efficacy of a particular orientation. It simply identifies a curriculum's bias or primary objects of study: objects/artworks/facts, artists/processes/behaviors, or audiences/meanings/communication.
- An integrative curriculum intentionally draws from a range of pedagogic orientations, with an emphasis on the physiological and conceptual orientations. As a practical matter, this means more curricular focus on the "how" and "why" than on the "what" of course

All foundations teaching has as its goal the transformation of the students

Course name	8 wk. workshop	Course Content
ART 1020 Design Studio	2-D	Elements and principles focusing on: syntax and context; unity and variety; gestalt principles; compositional dynamics, POV & cropping; rhythm & dynamics; spatial clues
	AMP Art Methods and Practices	Problem identification; thinking with process; creativity techniques; conceptual and studio based research strategies; visual logic; design integrity; drawing as a thinking tool; thinking with vs. thinking about; issues of representation & types of signification: literal, associative, metaphoric, allegoric, symbolic
ART 1030 Drawing Studio	Color	Elements and principles of additive & subtractive color & color interaction; applied extended split pallet & applied color systems symbolic/expressive/physiological color and meaning; effects of light and lighting: placement, direction, intensity, focus & temperature
	Drawing	Drawing from observation focusing on the ability to alter perceptual frameworks; enhanced acuity, drawing as mapping conceptual/perceptual information
ART 1120 Media Studio	4-D	Seriality; synchrony/asynchrony; continuity/sequence/ pacing/transition; narrative structures; performance; audience/installation/site; kinetics; intro to non-linear editing
	3-D	Elements and principles of 3D focusing on: materiality and context; unity and variety; gestalt principles; rhythm & dynamics; construction & methods (add./sub.); materials and surface; form/volume/mass;

The specific structure of an integrative foundations curriculum will take many forms depending on institutional contexts and disciplinary philosophies.

content. Rather than glossing aspects of process, ("Brainstorm three ideas for Thursday...") or identifying the principles of design ("You can establish unity and variety through..."), an integrative curriculum foregrounds how to brainstorm and why you need to establish unity and variety. It emphasizes students' self-awareness-- the monitoring and evaluating of their own affective responses, perceptual frameworks and cognitive habits.

So, how can integrative teaching inform first-year art instruction? We have used the following strategies:

- Horizontal integration can link content domains horizontally between courses within the program, and also links the content to other fields of study and to the broader popular culture.
- Vertical integration includes opportunities to rehearse skills directly related to upper level or real world experiences and advanced concepts (disciplinary critique, self-directed study, internships, mentorship/modeling, capstones and exhibits).
- At the core of an integrative curriculum is the acquisition and rehearsing of those skills and behaviors that are the most transferable and also the most predictive of student success: curiosity, creativity, critical self-reflection and work ethic. Other important disciplinary content areas such as design principles or skills such as specific studio techniques are covered in the context of these four primary learning objectives.

Inevitably, the specific structure of an integrative foundations curriculum will take many forms depending on institutional contexts and disciplinary philosophies. The Bowling Green State University curriculum consists of three courses structured according to key skill domains (design, perceptivity and material awareness) rather than by discipline. Students enroll in Design Studio, Drawing Studio and Media Studio.

Each studio is divided into two eight-week workshops. Students have a new instructor for each workshop, exposing them to a wider variety of perspectives and approaches. The instructors teach the same workshop twice during the semester, trading students with the concurrent section at midterm. Design Studio consists of 2-D Design Workshop and AMP (Art Methods and Practices). Drawing Studio encompasses the Drawing Workshop and the Color Workshop; Media Studio is made up of the 4-D Design Workshop and the 3-D Design Workshop.

The most novel aspect of this curriculum is the AMP workshop. AMP (Art Methods and Practices) is expressly focused upon making students more flexible, creative, reflective and critical thinkers. It also stresses thinking as an active engagement with materials, processes and people. Creativity and problem solving are certainly part of every foundations course, but these are usually collateral learning outcomes in curricula expressly structured around the elements and principles or studio skills.

The AMP workshop is especially emblematic of our approach to an integrative foundations curriculum in that it reverses this relationship, structuring the workshop around teaching creativity, methodology and critical self-reflection as the primary content with the elements and principles and studio skills as the collateral knowledge domains.

However, much of what makes our First Year Program integrative doesn't necessarily show up in the curricular structure. Instead it is reflected in coordinated approaches to content delivery, project design and co-curricular activities. As a practical matter, this means more oversight, guidance and coordination of the various faculty members and graduates teaching in the program because they are being asked to teach in ways that for many differ largely from the way they were taught.

Projects and major assignments must meet curricular design standards that require traditional content areas such as design, craft, and studio skills be explored in the context of a larger conceptual exploration that links art practices to other knowledge domains (science, humanities) or cultural issues. Additionally every assignment has at least one fieldwork component that requires students to "think with process" engaging in activities that facilitate discoveries that lead to novel solutions to the problem. On a final note, our approach acknowledges that much (if not most) of the learning happens outside of the classroom. Horizontal and vertical integration is carried out through co-curricular activities such as:

- Arts Village, a residential learning community for art, music and theater majors with its own weekly independent programming of events
- artsXpose, a program that requires all freshman majors students to attend four lectures or visit four art venues per semester
- Three large scale First Year Program exhibition/events per year (Arts Extravaganza, (a)R(t)SVP, and Freshman Talent Awards)
- At least one First Year Program field trip per year

These scheduled and other less formal co-curricular activities are important in helping students to synthesize and integrate their experiences and knowledge into sustaining artistic practices and behaviors.

01 Balancing Conceptual and Experiential Learning
3 Shapes 3 Times

Problem

Juxtapose 3 geometric shapes, 3 representational shapes, and 3 abstract shapes in an interesting composition that creates tension, or balance between contrasting elements. Stress dominance through definition, or line weight and clarity or density of detail.

Objectives

- To rehearse "thinking with process": using a methodology to invent unique and novel shapes.
- To demonstrate the ability to use synaesthesia as a means of generating creative design solutions and as a means of self-evaluating the affective power of their own designs.
- To employ design principles with special attention to emphasis and definition to manage a complex design that displays visual tension.
- To demonstrate sophisticated use of the design elements that balance unity and variety.
- To evoke a synaesthetic response: make visual what we normally hear or smell.

Materials

- Strathmore paper, , pencil, sketchbook
- Ink Pens
- Pencil
- Sketchbook

Fieldwork

- Make two Brainstorming lists, one list for sounds and one for smells, 25 in each list.
- Pick one sound or smell to work with based on evocative qualities or emotional resonance. Create a new list imagining 15 visual objects that are associated with the sound or smell.
- Sketch each object as a contour line drawing in ink. You may need to add some detail to make the shape more recognizable, but keep them simple. Seek visual resources (objects or images).

Strategy

With lists and ink drawings in hand:

1. Select 3 of your contour line sketches to serve as your representational shapes in this composition.
2. Select or modify the 3 sketches that will serve as your abstract shapes. How can the form of the object be abstracted to represent qualities of your sound or smell? How can you modify the line quality so that it represents aspects of your sound or smell?
3. Now that you have chosen your 3 representational and 3 abstract shapes, do no less than 15 thumbnails in your sketchbook laying out your composition. Remember the rules of dominance. Shapes may overlap one another and can be freely oriented on or off the page. The goal is to create tension!
4. Play with the line definition or calligraphic thickness of each shape. How do line weights affect visual dominance or spatial characteristics?
5. Layer 3 new geometric shapes to divide the remaining space. These will surely overlap many other elements in your composition.
6. Each thumbnail should include 3 representational shapes, 3 abstract shapes, and 3 geometric.
7. Individual critiques will be held with the instructor to determine which thumbnail should be made final.
8. Render your shapes and lines on an 18" x 24" piece of paper using your ink pens. Pay strict attention to craftsmanship. All edges should look clean and free of excess ink marks.

Key Questions

- How does synaesthetic thinking short circuit symbolic thinking and cliché?
- How have you translated your synaesthetic response into line quality, shape, scale and representational style?
- How have you established dominance?
- Have you maintained visual tension?
- What is the difference between illustrating an experience and producing an experience?
- What does your piece do?

01 Balancing Conceptual and Experiential Learning

3 Shapes 3 Times (continued)

Critique Strategy

The first round of thumbnails may be critiqued in small groups with the instructor. Critique of the final work can focus on questions of a synaesthetic response or the formal two-dimensional manipulation of line, shape, definition or detail.

Timetable

4-6 studio class periods.

Notes to Emerging Educators

- All people are low-level synesthetes, meaning that we can determine the tactile sensation of something by looking at it. Explain how artists use synesthetic techniques to translate visual imagery into the other senses. A more complete description of senses also includes: arousal, tension, balance, harmony and excitement.
- Students will find some degree of difficulty determining abstract from representational sketches of objects, i.e. smoke or water already are abstract shapes. The exact numbers of how many representational, abstract, and geometric shapes are used serve as a guide and almost ensure that tension will evolve from the contrast in stylistic contrast.
- Line quality refers to the way an object is represented with the line that describes it. Is it furry? Hot? Smooth? Warm?
- Line definition refers to the weight or thickness of the line. Thicker lines tend to come forward in space while thinner lines tend to recede into the background. Urge students to play with these phenomena.
- Another step may be added if time allows to create an 9" x 12" sketch of the chosen thumbnail. This intermediary step allows for further development of the original idea.

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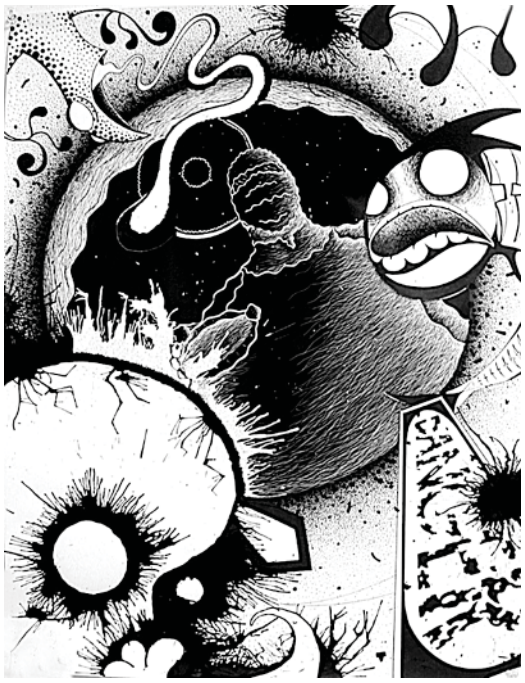

Example : Brian Rutter

Example : Bethany Simon-Straub

02

Balancing Conceptual and Experiential Learning
A Method to the Madness

Problem

Create three related artworks that are the result of two forms of fieldwork research.

Objectives

- Students will engage in meta-cognition: thinking about their own thinking, critically analyzing their own thinking processes as demonstrated by the level of visual sensitivity and creativity in their artworks.
- Students will demonstrate their awareness of the difference between methods (process, media, technical skills) and methodologies (strategies for problem solving & creativity) by designing and sticking to a methodology to generate three related artworks.
- Students will be able to generate and evaluate appropriate methodologies for a specific visual problem and be able to invent or select methods, processes and materials that are consistent with a given methodology, their artworks will evidence processes and materials that are rigorous and coherent.
- Student artworks will evidence an increased level of craftsmanship and an ability to "think with process" (allow interaction with materials to be part of the generative process).

Materials

- Materials will vary for each student. A large part of this assignment is identifying materials that are consistent with their research question and processes that are conducive to investigating it.

Strategy

- Fieldwork 1: Indentify three aesthetic issues that interest you. These can deal narrowly with the aesthetics of a particular artistic medium or discipline (ex. Does mixing color really yield more pleasing results then working from the tube? Why do found object sculptures often evidence extreme repetition?), or your research may focus on broader issues of cultural aesthetics (ex. deconstructing manga- Why the crazy hair? Or, Commodification- How can a mass-produced and mass marketed product project a sense of individual expression? or "greening" of corporate America- How does Shell's cooperate identity differ from BP's/ How are they similar? How do they counter the un-American (both are foreign owned) and un-green realities of their businesses?). Turn these into three artistic/design questions (problems) that are sufficiently narrow in scope. With your instructor select one question to serve as your focus.
- Fieldwork 2: Type three research methodologies that deal with or "get at" the question- not answer it. As part of each methodology you must define the scope, the approaches, strategies and critical framework that seem the most promising and establish some criteria by which you would be able to identify successful or novel solutions. Your methodology should include media, scale, materials, technique(s) and a plan for how you will conduct visual research. Type your three methodologies in one to two pages. Make sure to address all the points above. You will go over it one-on-one with the instructor and turn it in.

Key Questions

- We are all familiar with hand-eye coordination. How might we develop hand-ear coordination?
- Even though we are not always consciously aware of our perception, it is highly controllable. Attention and discrimination are two dimensions of perception we can put under conscious control. What other aspects of perception can we alter?
- What kinds of visual similarities do we find in our sound drawings? Are these similarities due to cultural influences, common physiological responses or are they just synchronicity?
- When have you experienced syneasthesia?
- Most of the terms that we use in the visual arts are actually "imported" terms used in other sense modalities: warm &cool color, texture are originally haptic terms. Balance and tension are kinesthetic. Loud or clashing color and rhythm are auditory terms, and on and on.

(continued)

02

Balancing Conceptual and Experiential Learning
A Method to the Madness (continued)

What accounts for this? Especially if vision is the "master" sense? What are the relationships between synaesthesia and metaphor?

Strategy

Create three related artworks that are the result of your research. Keep in mind that these will most likely be related (they are after all the result of the same methodology) and should be "variations on a theme". Do not "go commando" and abandon the support of your research strategy and completely switch gears in the process. The constraints set in place are to keep you focused and enhance (not curtail) creativity. All three pieces will be presented together for critique. Use the following approach:

- Develop a methodology that utilizes various forms of visual research and has iteration built in. In general a larger resource pool is better than a paltry one.
- Consider working in parallel, all three pieces at the same time, rather than serial due to the time constraints.
- Keep things manageable but not simplistic.
- Challenge yourself by not using all studio practices with which you are familiar. Shift a couple of them (work with a new material or technique or support, develop new routines, or work with unfamiliar genres or at a new scale.)
- Don't however, use all new studio practices
- Don't' completely abandon your methodology. It's ok to be a little flexible, but the structure and constraints really are helpful.

Key Questions

- All artworks display evidence of the methods that were used to create them. However, not all artworks show evidence of a methodology. What is the difference between the two? What are the visual clues for each?

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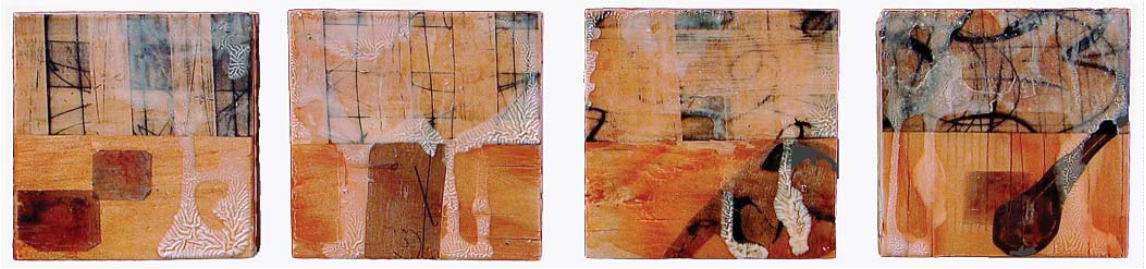

Example : Ryan Burghard

Example : Megan Cutcher

02

Balancing Conceptual and Experiential Learning
A Method to the Madness (continued)

Key Questions (continued)

- Why is it important to establish a methodology? List at least five questions that it can help us answer as artists embarking on a new project.
- How have your three pieces established an internal visual logic? Are there sufficient clues for a viewer to intuit or deduce what it is that you are investigating?

Critique

Because student solutions to this assignment are so varied in subject and media, I find it helpful to critique the students' work in pairs, chosen on the basis of similar media, style or subject. By comparing and contrasting the two groups of three pieces, it is much easier for students to tease out the different methodologies used by each artist and allows for good discussions about how every choice has visual consequences.

Timetable

Ideally this is a three-week assignment (6 class periods). Days 1 & 2: Lecture on methodology, artist examples, introduce assignment, show student examples, assign fieldwork. Day 3: Go over fieldwork as a class, offering suggestions. Days 4 & 5: In-class workdays. Day 6: Critique.

Timetable

When working individually with students, constantly remind them and yourself that a useful methodology does a very straightforward thing: it turns an interest into a question, the question into a methodology (an action plan of research, processes and materials characterized by parsimony, discipline and responsiveness). Actualizing the methodology produces artworks. Notice that there is no mention of solving or answering the question! The artworks are not illustrations of answers. Methodologies are not solutions. Thinking with process is about actively engaging questions not about answering them.

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03

Balancing Conceptual and Experiential Learning
Pregnant Pause

Problem

Concentrating on common everyday activities, create a video (90-300 seconds in duration) that primarily uses sequencing, pacing, editing and shot rather than dialogue or action to construct a narrative that gives the activities poetic, visual and/or metaphoric impact and meaning.

A pregnant pause is a full empty space, a meaningful lull in a conversation, or a delay in speech used to give time to consider the consequences of a statement. In this project I am asking you to focus on pregnant pauses. The content of your video should focus on the kinds of common, generally unnoticed activities that exist between the "big" memorable events of our lives. Also, I am asking you to primarily rely on editing your video to create meaning (as opposed to action, dialogue, or plot). Editing creates a "third meaning" exists in the spaces, the pregnant pauses, between shots.

Objectives

- Students will demonstrate increased discernment and perception by carefully observing and creatively transforming common everyday events and activities.
- Students will demonstrate an awareness of how context and juxtaposition create meaning.
- Student videos will evidence knowledge of alternative (non-linear accumulative) narrative strategies.
- Student videos will evidence of careful consideration of editing principles:
- Continuity/Sequence/Pacing: (tempo, rhythmic relationship): speed, rhythmic flow and connections between shots and sequences.
- Transition: The movement from one shot to the next (cross-cutting, cut, fade, dissolve, non-sequitur, movement-to-movement, aspect-to-aspect)
- Intensity and Scope: Macro vs. micro-narrative; Close up vs. establishing shot; etc.
- Student videos will evidence of careful consideration of shooting principles:
- Movement: The motion of objects in front of the camera or of the camera itself.
- Point of View (camera angle): The choice of placement of camera and its effect on the viewer; cropping.
- Setting: The place, lighting or emotional atmosphere with which the video is shot.

Materials

- 3" X 5" index cards
- 2 gigabyte (min.) flash drive
- Video Camera
- Editing Software

Fieldwork

- Fieldwork 1: With a partner brainstorm one everyday activity (ex. Washing a car, tying a shoe) and one common occurrence (ex. sun rising, coffee brewing). Outline each activity into no less than 3 and no more than 7 steps. Create a card for each step of the activity and the occurrence on 3"x5" cards. At this point you need only use words to describe the step (ex. "scoop grounds from coffee can"). Make 3 copies of each card. (You should end up with a minimum of 18 & up to 42 cards). Shuffle the cards randomly in order to find new ways of ordering the events in sequence. Each student should now create a storyboard based off of one or two of these new shuffled sequences (you may use only part of a sequence, say 13 of 33 cards) to serve as the basis for their video project.
- Fieldwork 2: You now are ready to storyboard your sequence. Translate each card in your sequence into a storyboard panel. This is a sketch that indicates point of view (PoV) and scope. It should also include notes about imagery, style, camera movement, subject movement, transition (typically only exit transitions) and structural juxtapositions.

(continued)

03 Balancing Conceptual and Experiential Learning

Pregnant Pause (continued)

Strategy

You are now ready to shoot or find your footage and edit your video. The video must be no shorter than 90 seconds and no longer than 5 minutes. You may use a video camera, a video capture device, or "found" footage. Many point-and-shoot cameras shoot excellent video these days. Turn in your video as a 960 X 540ppi .mp4 or .m4v. Use a tripod when appropriate to minimize camera shake. You may repurpose found video footage or still images for your video, but be sure to use footage with good resolution. You may choose to have audio or not. Music may only be used if it is original (you made it) or if it forms a background layer of audio under ambient sound or something you have produced. Think about using ambient (actual sound). You are being graded primarily on the visuals so make sure to spend the bulk of your time on this. You may edit using any non-linear editing program, however I strongly recommend using iMovie 9 as your editor. We will be using iMovie 9 in class.

Assessment

Your video will be graded on the following 3 criteria. You will note that "narrative" nor "plot", nor "acting", nor "story", nor "soundtrack" appears below. Do not focus on these!

1. Evidence of careful consideration of editing principles:

- Continuity/Sequence/Pacing: (tempo, rhythmic relationship): speed and rhythmic flow and connections between different elements in the video
- Transition: The movement from one shot to the next (cross-cutting, cut, fade, dissolve, non-sequitur, moment-to-moment, aspect-to-aspect):
- Intensity and Scope: Macro vs. micro-narrative; Close up vs. establishing shot; etc.
- Duration: The length video

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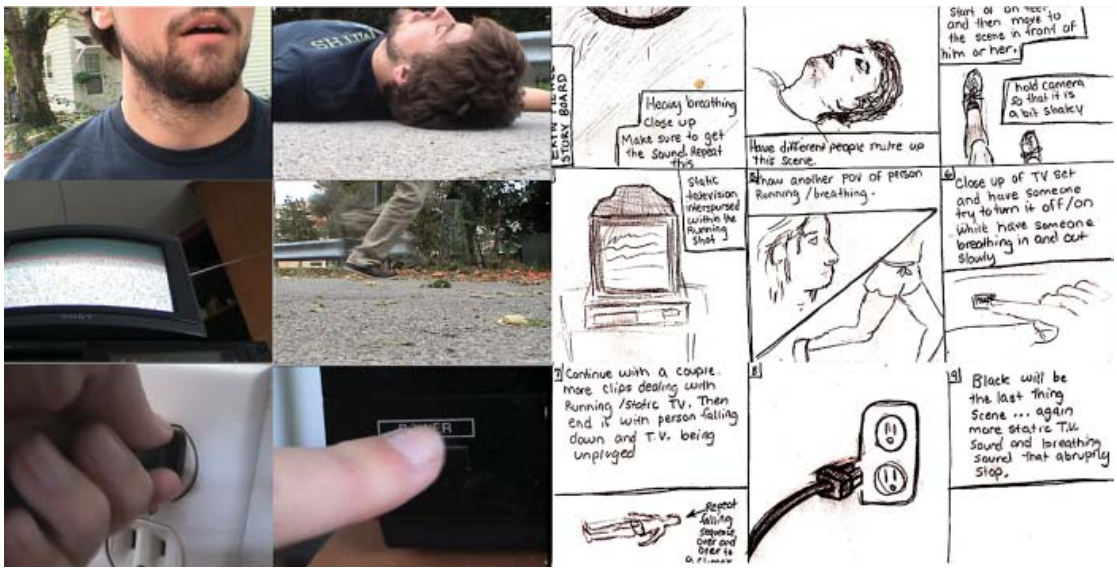

Example : Stills and storyboard from "Static Runner" by Erin Truex

03 Balancing Conceptual and Experiential Learning

Pregnant Pause (continued)

Assessment (continued)

2. Evidence of careful consideration of shooting principles:

- Movement: of objects in front of the camera or of the camera itself
- Point of View (camera angle): The choice of placement of camera and its effect on the viewer; cropping
- Setting: The place, lighting or emotional atmosphere in which the video is taken
- Duration: The length shot or sequence

3. Successful completion of the two fieldwork exercises

Critique Strategy

We screen each video twice. The first time through neither the students nor I make commentary or ask questions. During the first viewing I make a mental note of what needs to be discussed—formal elements that are especially effective, ineffective or decisions that seem puzzling. Before the second screening I tell the class to pay special attention to the way that that the artist used sequencing, pacing, and editing. Students are encouraged to comment and question during the second screening. I regularly steer the conversation back to the way that narrative is achieved through the temporal structure.

Timetable

This is a 2.5-week or 5 class period assignment. Day 1: Lecture on history of video, important film theory concepts and editing, shot and transition principles. Introduce assignment and assign fieldwork one. Day 2: Lecture on narrative. Go over fieldwork one. Assign fieldwork two. Day 3: iMovie tutorial and workday. Day 4: Workday. Day 5: Critique.

Notes to Emerging Educators

Notes to emerging educators: Students tend to greatly underestimate the time that it will take to actually edit their footage. Get them logging footage and on the computer as soon as possible. Students also tend to overestimate the importance of plot, dialogue, settings and costumes. The fieldworks are purposefully designed to challenge their preconceptions about video. Left to their own devices most students try to make little "indie" films or music videos. I encourage them to get interesting footage and allow the narrative to develop as a function of the editing process.

All students have to compete the first fieldwork. For those couple of students per class who have a clear vision of the video that they want to make and a realistic sense of what is achievable in the time that we have for this project, I do not hold them to creating their video based on this fieldwork. They have the latitude to storyboard their idea and make the video that they envision. All other students follow the process listed above to get them over the "crisis of content" and get them shooting and editing as quickly as possible.

Working in a systematic way is essential: assemble shots into scenes, scenes into sequences and sequences into the final video. Students who lose sight of this "nested" structure are soon overwhelmed and their videos lose their narrative arc, cohesion, pacing and closure.

Except for a one-hour demo/tutorial, we do not "teach the software." We cover the basics of the interface, efficient workflow, and give them a taste of what is possible with some of the advanced features. iMovie is great in that it is intuitive and simple for those intimidated by the technology but also a powerful and precise tool for the technologically savvy. Students are encouraged to take advantage of online tutorials and our university student tech lab if they feel that they need additional one-on-one help with the software.

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Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning: The Workshop for Art Research and Practice (WARP) at the University of Florida

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Print

The Workshop for Art Research and Practice (WARP) is a unique, semester-long course offered at the forefront of the art foundations curriculum at the University of Florida, Gainesville. WARP pairs a three-credit lecture and a six-credit studio course. This nine-credit intensive is team-taught by two full-time faculty members and four or more graduate teaching assistants in an off-campus facility called *WARPhaus*. This multifaceted environment provides flexible space where students can work indoors, outdoors, reconfigure walls, and view films and exhibitions by fellow students, faculty, and nationally/internationally exhibiting artists.

Before entering college, many students have largely experienced teaching that relies on relating explicit outcomes. As a result, learning is merely a confirmation of expected results. Placing a program such as WARP at the beginning of the foundations curriculum proposes to break this standardized educational model in favor of inquiry-based or open learning essential to the practice of art-making.

WARP instructors guide students through carefully constructed assignments, compelling students to discover what is meaningful through their own exploration. In this approach, we collectively consider possibilities rather than focusing on narrowly defined products. Students actively engage in a process of invention, experimentation and research and the results are interpreted, evaluated and considered in light of their intent. Since students reflect on learning objectives most relevant to their project, they are actively engaged in recognizing the value of what they learned and how it can be applied to subsequent creative pursuits.

This type of highly individualized teaching can be very demanding, and instructors must recognize that there is often an incubation factor for this type of student learning. Instructors in an inquiry-based program, therefore, must adjust their trajectories to include process-oriented objectives.

Rather than simply teaching “art”, what if we instead teach the “artist?” The subject of “art” and the knowledge base required for the discipline are constantly expanding and changing. Teaching core skills and content of art-related disciplines is extremely important, but is not in itself an adequate outcome for a foundational experience. Instead of teaching design principles in isolation, far removed from students’ individual interests and potential creative contributions, perhaps our focus should be on nurturing and facilitating curiosity, and active habits of inquiry commonplace to working artists and designers. Within a carefully constructed and highly malleable conceptual framework, developing artists make their own unique observations—synthesizing, analyzing, and connecting core knowledge gained from personalized, meaningful interactions with materials and methods.

Promoting student/artist freedom without appropriate structure and mentoring, however, can be as debilitating to beginning students as the denial of individual contribution and choice. In shaping the program and responding

to student needs, WARP faculty adhere to the following principles:

- WARP instructors, responsive to all discipline specific areas, act as initiators, determining the common skills, theory, and practices necessary for successful artists and designers in the 21st century.
- WARP's structure is inclusive and malleable, and must change in concordance with significant changes in art and society.
- We encourage first-year students to identify themselves as beginning artists and designers, with guidance, capable of immediate participation in the field of contemporary art and design. We feel it is important to empower them to think that their career is not something that begins after they "jump through a series of academic hoops" but rather something that begins as soon as they enter the university. Identifying with the active role of "artist" instead of a passive role of "student" is imperative to the development of necessary habits of life-long learning we wish to impart.
- We must promote a community of active, empathetic and engaged citizens, empowered by imagination and curiosity with the agency to participate in an ever-changing, pluralistic, and global culture.
- A team-taught approach encourages students to value different critical opinions. Our team of faculty and graduate teaching assistants work to foster an environment in which students begin to model our respect for alternate approaches and viewpoints. When students realize that problem solving often evolves through open discussion, critique, and group ingenuity, they begin to engage in this process purposefully, working with their peers on their own accord.
- A collaborative, open learning environment fosters a community spirit that provides encouragement, and peer support to take risks, and experiment with new ideas and directions.
- Faculty and graduate teaching assistants must be dedicated, nimble, interdisciplinary, and able to pinpoint ways for students to gain access to various methods and approaches allowing for maximum growth and differentiated orientation.
- WARP project assignments are designed to encourage ambition, self-actualization, acquisition of new skill sets, and collaboration. They require research supporting multiple lines of inquiry, and engage students with skillful, innovative and experimental manipulation of materials. All parts of the creative process are valued and evaluated as vital components of an art or design practice.

The more exposure students get to wide ranging modes of inquiry the greater the chance they will find their own unique ways of working.

- Research, skills and learning experiences must be purposefully interconnected. Students are guided to research artists, art history, contemporary culture, community and local history, interdisciplinary topics of interest, pluralistic, and multicultural perspectives.
- In addition, students are challenged to interpret, consider, and use their newly acquired knowledge in relation to their own work. As they engage in projects designed to promote connected research they gain necessary motivation to learn the skills that will translate their independent research into practice.
- Skills such as drawing, design, use of color, visual literacy, use of text and image, performative and time-based strategies, conceptualization techniques, documentation, transformation of materials and many more are acquired through demos, as well as individual and group research efforts.
- A diversity of practical experiences help students to develop an understanding of the complexities of art practice. These include exhibition planning, formulation of individual and collaborative project proposals, and many modes of critique.
- Museum tours, guest speakers, visiting artist lectures, and a range of hands-on experiences in different disciplines build versatility. Opportunities for engagement through community art projects, or as participants in guerrilla and gallery exhibitions are also built into the course.
- The studio environment should always be active. Projects and individual student planning is varied, eclectic, and self-motivated, and the studio is intended to function like an artist's studio or progressive collaborative laboratory rather than a typical studio classroom.

Because the WARP program is fortunate to have a large, dedicated and highly flexible space, students create their own working conditions and adapt the environment to their own particular needs. Rather than relying on instructor-driven projects with limited outcomes, students are given catalysts and creative influences to then explore self-initiated projects. Students have greater responsibility for their learning process, and are encouraged to seek out faculty, teaching assistants and peers for guidance.

WARP challenges students to adopt a wide range of methods in the brainstorming, planning, and production of work. Assigned projects typically involve a wide range of activities. On any given day in this learning community, students not only work diligently on individual projects, but also become models, participants or assistants to other students working on completely different types of projects. The reciprocal learning that occurs naturally between peers in this "laboratory" type of environment is integral to that which occurs between instructors and students.

The range of possibilities in an inquiry-based, collaborative program is inspiring. Students create metaphorical large-scale public murals, respond visually to the psychogeography of Gainesville, seek out unfamiliar non-art related events or experiences, create obsessive autobiographical accounts or respond to international current events. They are asked to write group manifestos and employ strategies of 20th century art movements. They research and utilize color as a narrative subject, organize art parades, or create inflatable environments to inhabit. Performance projects, fictional collaborations with contemporary artists, and other short exercises and demos all work to enhance the students' repertoire of possibilities for embarking upon ambitious and inventive, multidisciplinary projects. Rigorous research, planning, and critical discussion inform all assignments.

Mid-project critique groups meet regularly, and as work moves into final production mode, everyone in the workshop benefits from continual questioning and active project revision. Early in the semester, project grades are determined by averaging two earned grades, one assigned to the process and planning of a project, and another assigned to various aspects of the actual finished product. Students are often asked to complete a self-evaluation of projects prior to completion, or before a grade is given by the collaborative teaching team. We also employ small group project development or critique teams that monitor and advise each other throughout various stages in a given project. Practices such as these teach students to value process and final product equally.

In developing a fully functional learning environment and workshop where diverse experimentation and critical evaluation may occur, the largest hurdle to overcome is the overall cultural homogenization of the students. How do art educators promote aesthetic excellence, cultural understanding, conceptual rigor, and critical insight when first year college students remain strongly affected by earlier standardized educational experiences, the commercialization of culture, and personal distractions while adjusting to a new college lifestyle?

One of our strategies to combat this barrier to learning is to present opportunities to re-define and re-evaluate stereotypical views of art and artists and investigate diverse ideas about how and why art is produced. Through projects, lectures and discussion topics aimed to challenge students' assumptions about art and artists, we establish opportunities for students to debate and re-consider ideas in open dialogue.

Realizing that students hold certain myths about artists and biases toward art, that they are extremely interested in pop and material culture, and that they gravitate toward goals they feel will be practical, we deliberately devise ways to "greet incoming students at the door" to immediately establish some degree of common ground. For example, we have found that many students are concerned about their identity, social status, and general acceptance. Although they love drawing, design, photography, or some other creative activity, they worry about their own personal future in the arts and the cultural perception, function or value of art. They are concerned about establishing autonomy, day-to-day survival, managing stress, achieving recognition, and still having adequate time for play. Connecting course content with student concerns allows us to build the necessary trust and understanding to accomplish our collective goals.

Designing this type of primary college art experience where students collaborate in their own learning is both challenging and worthwhile. Ultimately we proceed with the belief that a creative and critical learning experience should be a process of discovery and exploration, not a set of rules to be conquered. It should connect student's art making to their experience in the culture, not alienate them from it. And last, an art education should send students confidently on their own path to unknown possibilities. The following sample assignments serve as vehicles for students to understand and embrace their unique perspectives, connect with the culture, build the necessary skills for creative production, develop self-confidence and trust in one another, and enable them to take risks in their future studio practice.

University of Florida Foundations Curricular Overview

Each studio student is required to take the following four courses			
9 credits	(WARP) Workshop for Art Research and Practice	Art 1802 Art 1803	
3 credits	(WIFT) Workshop in Fundamental Digital Technologies	Dig 1000	
3 credits	Perceptual Drawing	Art 2305	Drawing
3 credits	Visual Literacy	Pgy 2101	Photo
Each studio student chooses one class from each of the four topics listed below:			
3 credits	2D Principles	Art 2468 Art 2500 Gra 211	Printmaking Painting Graphic Design
3 credits	3D Principles	Art 275 Art 2701	Ceramics Sculpture
3 credits	4D Principles	Dig 2131 Dig 2282	Digital Media Digital Media
3 credits	Color Theory	Art 2501 Art 2401	Painting Printmaking
Students take three selections from the additional 2000 level foundations courses:			
3 credits	Image Order Idea	Pgy 2441	Photo
3 credits	Figure/Ground	Pgy 2442	Photo
3 credits	Typography	Gra 2208	Graphic Design
3 credits	Movement + Motion	Art 2374	Drawing
3 credits	Figure Drawing	Art 2330	Drawing
3 credits	Observational Painting	Art 2510	Painting
3 credits	Gravity and Buoyancy	Art 2701	Sculpture
3 credits	Ceramics: Figure Sculpture	Art 2704	Ceramics
3 credits	Ceramics: Wheel Throwing	Art 2752	Ceramics

01

Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning : (WARP)
You Are Just Not Yourself Today …

Problem

Interrogate the complexities of representation by inventing a persona or alter ego, and by living a day in the life of this constructed identity.

Objectives

- To employ imagination to invent of a new identity, an alternate point of view, and lifestyle.
- To effectively communicate the complexities and range of influences involved in the shaping of identity through a variety of media.
- To recognize and resist tendencies to idealize or stereotype in the representations of others.
- To take risks and participate wholeheartedly in a thoughtful examination of identity to be evidenced in the WARPbook, performance, mail art, and zine.

Materials

- WARPbook, drawing and collage supplies
- Materials of student's choice
- The student's own body and lived experience

Strategy

1. Students communicate the ideology and experiences of a "new person" in an all day performance, a photographed portrait, writing and drawing in their WARPbook, entry in an actual international mail art exhibition, and the creation of a zine or artist's book.
2. In the creation of this "living sculpture" students address questions pivotal to identity.

(continued)

Example : WARP Student, Heather Foster, Persona Journal, Fall 2009

01 Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning : (WARP)

You Are Just Not Yourself Today … (continued)

Strategy (continued)

3. Students "perform" their persona in the studio, and the day culminates in a student directed "photo-shoot' where students carefully orchestrate how their persona should be represented or immortalized photographically.
4. Students record all experiences, observations and insights in their WARPbook, including documentation photos taken during the day by an assigned partner.

Key Questions

- What is a persona or alter ego and why might an artist adopt a fictitious self?
- How does one's identity affect one's participation in culture?
- Does personal experience and ideology affect the production of art and design?
- In what ways is your own real identity already a construction?
- Is it possible to be objective or unbiased in your representations of others? How? Or, why not?

Critique Strategy

Groups of five exchange zines/artist's books and mail art and provide written critiques based on a series of questions developed collaboratively by faculty and students in a larger group discussion. Examples of student-generated assessment questions might include but are not limited to:

- What is communicated about the identity of the fictional person who created this work?
- How does the content, including aesthetics, contribute to your understanding of this person?
- How are the aesthetic, thematic or material choices consistent with your understanding of the persona you met in class? How could they be better articulated?
- What suggestions would improve the zine and mail art, both in terms of content and overall craft, including composition, material use, thematic and aesthetic choices?

Timetable

Two weeks. Three days to invent persona, a day to live the life of this new persona, including a presentation/photo shoot and the creation of mail art for an actual exhibition, one week to create a zine, and two hours to discuss and critique zine and mail art projects in small groups.

Examples

- Film: How to Draw a Bunny (2002), by John Walter and Andrew Moore.
- PBS Video Series: (Art 21) Art in the Twenty-first Century, Eleanor Antin, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Raymond Pettibon, Andrea Zittel.
- Video: Aspect, Chronicle of New Media Art: Personas and Personalities vol. 7. Boston, Aspect.
- Reading: Weintraub, L. (2003). In The Making: Creative Options for Contemporary Art, Reverend Ethan Acres, Kim Jones, Isaac Julien, Alix Lambert, and Eve Andree Laramie, New York: D.A.P./ Distributed Art Publishers.
- Artists: Matthew Barney, Joseph Beuys, Gilbert and George, Guillermo Gomez-Pena, Coco Fusco, Orlan, Cindy Sherman, Kehinde Wiley, among others.

Note to Educators

"You Are Just Not Yourself Today," is the first assignment of the semester. Students explore the notion of a self and environment in flux. Using narrative to investigate the construction of experience and representation, they carefully consider stereotyping as they construct an entirely new persona and live a full day in the life of this new identity.

The project always involves lived experience, reflective journaling, a student directed photo shoot and entry in a mail art exhibition. Some years we vary the final culmination of the project alternating the creation of a zine or book art with the creation of a functional product that may be useful to the daily life of this imagined persona. For example, Spring 2011 we took advantage of content presented by

(continued)

01 Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning : (WARP)
You Are Just Not Yourself Today … (continued)

Note to Educators (continued)
visiting speaker and futurist, Ray Kurtzweil. Students still developed a complex persona and created a functional artwork, but they were also asked to imagine the historical, environmental and social conditions possible in the year 2061, and how an individual might contribute to or solve potential realities.

Students learn a number of important and fundamental concepts through this persona project. They learn how a projected self-portrait may communicate a desired representation of oneself rather than an honest one, that is difficult to see the world objectively, that a world view is not neutral or natural, and that how an artist chooses to represent something or someone else conveys as much about the artist themselves, as the subject matter they intend to describe.

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02

Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning : (WARP)
Meandering To The Corner Of Metaphor And Mainstreet

Problem

Students Investigate notions of place and create a work of art in any media demonstrating a use of visual metaphor.

Objectives

- To reflect on one's relationship to space traveled and the sites, sounds, and revelations experienced in the environment or community, and to carefully observe and record insights as research.
- To engage in an active process of idea development and revision.
- To understand, interpret and employ the use of visual metaphor as a vehicle for suggesting meaning and conveying perceptions, ideas and experiences.
- To create a complex artwork in any media most relevant to one's idea.

Materials

- WARPbook and drawing supplies
- A camera (if desired)
- Other materials of student's choice

Strategy

1. Students watch the cult film, The Cruise, featuring New York City bus tour guide Timothy "Speed" Levitch, who not so subtly, détourns the eye of the tourist into the more discerning eye

(continued)

WARP Student, Noel Kassewitz, Installation and Performance, Meandering to Metaphor Project, Fall 2009
Water was served out of a pitcher containing a live goldfish to willing audience members unaware of the strategic leak in the bottom of their cups.

02 Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning : (WARP)

Meandering To The Corner Of Metaphor And Mainstreet (continued)

Strategy (continued)

of an artist. "The Cruise" is something Levitch describes as an integral part of his unique worldview, equivalent to the Situationist strategy of dérive.

2. By random assignment of a direction imposed by a compass, students are sent on a "cruise" or dérive to suspend their usual motives for movement throughout Gainesville, Florida in favor of a relationship to space that involves chance encounters, intellectual musings, strange attractions and sensitivity to the way everyday life is conditioned and controlled. Students begin to develop an awareness of psycho-geographical effects on the individual, and other local, environmental, social and political influences outside of the self.
3. Students are asked to explore the use of mapping, abstract and metaphorical thinking, and to develop a keen awareness and observation of their surroundings.
4. Students return to studio to process their research and develop three proposals for artworks employing visual metaphor.
5. After discussion with peers, faculty and teaching assistants, students ultimately create one artwork in the media that best communicates their insights and ideas inspired by their dérive.

Key Questions

- What conditions impact our everyday life?
- Are there better approaches we might adopt or consider than those currently in place?
- What are the differences between illustrating an idea/making a literal statement and employing the use of visual metaphor to communicate a complex idea?
- What are various strategies one might employ to construct a visual metaphor?

Critique Strategy

Students are broken into critique groups where they develop a team identity/critique philosophy. Teams are rotated through individual critiques where they collectively interpret visual metaphors and develop questions for the individual student being critiqued. The student then discusses their intent with the larger group and responds to any questions posed. The critique team offers suggestions for improvement in light of the student's intent. Faculty and TAs step in with questions to probe discussion about aspects of the work that are not being addressed by the critique team, or to occasionally open up the dialogue up to the larger group.

Timetable

This assignment takes three weeks. Three days for field research, with project proposals due at the end of week one. In-progress small group critique sessions occur at two weeks. Project due at the end of third week.

Examples

- PBS Video Series: (Art 21) Art in the Twenty-first Century, Ann Hamilton, Pierre Huyghe, William Kentridge, Do-Ho Suh, Josiah McElheny, Matthew Ritchie, among others.
- Reading: Weintraub, L. (2003). In The Making: Creative Options for Contemporary Art, Matthew Ritchie, Pipilotti Rist, Michal Rovner, Yukinori Yanagi and Charles Ray, New York: D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers.
- Artists: Francis Alys, AES+F group, Maurizio Cattelan, David Hammons, Tim Hawkinson, José Antonio Hernández Diaz, and Erwin Wurm, among others.

Note to emerging educators

Another version of this assignment titled, "Mural Painting at the Intersection of Metaphor and the 34th Street Wall," occurred Fall 2010 where students followed the same process of conducting lived research on the streets of Gainesville and translating collected insights into project proposals. However, the final product (rather than an independent project exploring metaphor) culminated instead, in a series of twenty-six collaborative 16 ft. murals executed over two days on Gainesville's public community 34th street graffiti wall employing visual metaphor and text and image.

03 Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning : (WARP)
Artist Collaboration Project

Problem

Produce a mock-collaborative artwork with a contemporary artist. Students research the strategies, motivations, processes, subject matter, worldview, and biographical information of a randomly selected contemporary artist, and embark on a fictional collaborative project with the artist.

Objectives

- To engage in comprehensive research and to show an understanding of an artist's work and strategies as well to explore the student's own influences and motivations.
- To evidence research through informal discussions, a written fictional interview comparing student and contemporary artist, a formal presentation with multiple images of exemplary artworks, and by observing the completed artwork itself.
- To produce a mock-collaboration project reflecting a 50/50 consideration of the researched artist's work and the students own sensibilities.
- To exhibit ambition, superb craft, thoughtful display, ingenuity, and conceptual risk.

Materials

- WARPbook and drawing supplies
- Materials of students' choice, most relevant to individual projects.

Strategy

1. Through a random draw, students are given the name of two contemporary artists to potentially "work with" on a mock collaboration project. After initial research, students select one to research in depth, and are encouraged to look beyond their first impressions of the artist's work into the content, including the artist's background, ideology, experiences, influences, working habits, strategies and motivations. Students are likewise, asked to reflect on their own.
2. A written comparison and analysis of the artist and student is submitted in the form of a faux interview transcript and independent research is presented to the class.
3. Students create an artwork that equally reflects the selected artist and student. The hybrid results in an artwork that challenges the student to new ideas and processes and involves experimentation and risk. In addition, students learn to approach works of art with the understanding that visual language is not neutral or natural but often subject to the forces of politics, history, gender, and race. Students learn to appreciate an artist's influences, motivations, processes, and aesthetic or conceptual decisions, and begin to analyze and question their own.

WARP Student, Dragan Radovanovic, Mock Collaboration with Catherine Chalmers, Fall 2010

Key Questions

- How might one artist's work inform that of another?

(continued)

03

Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning : (WARP)
Artist Collaboration Project (continued)

Key Questions (continued)

- What is authorship? What are the complexities involved in the collaborative process?
- What are effective strategies in researching and interpreting the work of another artist?
- How do you recognize the influence of previous art movements in the work of an artist?
- How do you recognize central themes, values, and content relevant to an artist's work?
- How do personal or socio-political events impact the life of artists and influence their work?
- What considerations are involved in conceptualizing and producing a complex work of art?

Critique Strategy

During a traditional group critique over two days, students first present the work of their artist. Following the presentation, students in critique teams respond directly to the artwork the student has produced. After interpretations, responses, suggestions, and criticisms are offered, the student responds to questions raised in the critique and discusses the nature of the collaboration and the intentions and decisions that informed the completed artwork. Closing comments provide further suggestions from peers and faculty for improvement, or offer "what if" scenarios for further elaboration of the work.

Timetable

Thee weeks. Three days to research, write, and discuss the artist selected with research consultations with faculty, TAs and students in small groups, two days to propose projects as possible responses, and two weeks to produce an ambitious artwork.

Examples

- PBS Video Series: (Art 21) Art in the Twenty-first Century, Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla, Mel Chin, Walton Ford, Pepón Osorio among others.
- Reading: Weintraub, L. (2003). In The Making: Creative Options for Contemporary Art, chapters on Sourcing Inspiration (pp. 121-191) and Crafting an Artistic Self (pp. 193-231) New York: D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers.
- Artists: Ant Farm, Art Guys, Dearraindrop, Komar and Melamid, Forcefield, Gilbert and George, Goat Island, Guerilla Girls, Guillermo Gómez-Peña, Christian Marclay, Maywa Denki, Starn Twins, Survival Research Laboratories, Vienna Vegetable Orchestra, among others.

Note to Emerging Educators

Inspired by a project utilized by early WARP educators, Kate Morrison Catterall and Helen Maria Nugent, The Artist Collaboration Project, has been adapted in many different forms. It is a wonderful project that promotes a connectedness with contemporary art practices and research. This project fosters students' identification of personal influences, sensibilities, and inclinations, and empowers them to interpret artworks and interrogate artists' materials, strategies, processes and intent.

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04

Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning : (WARP)
A Full Blown Insta-Inflato-Utopia

Problem

Design and produce a large-scale portable inflatable sculpture/environment that will allow viewers/participants to consider the notion Utopia in relation to their everyday life.

Objectives

- To collectively consider ideals regarding everyday life and mass culture.
- To engage in a creative process of collaborative design and implementation.
- To learn how to produce a public art proposal, including a design statement, a set of instructions, a group identity, graphics, diagrams, images, and models.
- To develop relational strategies to engage viewers and users of the inflatable sculpture or structure.
- To develop a new understanding of space, scale, sculpture, architecture, and utopia.

Materials

- 4 mil transparent, black or blue plastic sheeting and recycled plastic, or colored plastic tablecloths if more color is desired. (Note: the materials used in this project are recycled or re-used from semester to semester, broken down for use as studio tarps, or donated locally for re-use.)
- Aluminum foil, clear packing tape, metal straight edge, house-hold iron and a leaf blower
- WARPbook and drawing supplies
- A camera, computer, or other materials of students choice

Strategy

1. Teams of six collectively design, produce, present, and perform a large-scale inflatable sculpture to an outdoor audience of viewers and participants.
2. Students collaboratively consider, the notion of Utopia, how architecture or space affects thinking

(continued)

Insta-Inflato-Utopia Collaborative Project, (detail) Inside A Two-Story, Three Layer Cake, Fall 2010

04 Inquiry-Based Collaborative Learning : (WARP)
A Full Blown Insta-Inflato-Utopia (continued)

Strategy (continued)

and behavior, and how time and scale affect meaning. They consider the use of performative objects and how to best engage audiences. Quite practically they contend with the planning required to build a two-story tall sculpture, the nature of public art practices, and the benefits of temporary and site-specific portable art.

3. The project culminates in an outdoor inflatable exhibition usually in conjunction with another exhibition or College of Fine Arts event. Students carefully plan and present their projects and they literally cover a lot of ground. The inflatables are accompanied by performance, print materials, relational activities, and may include sound art, projections, music, and more.

Key Questions

- How might an inflatable installation or radical architecture alter a users perceptions or outlook?
- What is the relationship between sculpture, architecture or design and everyday life?
- How might one design a space to promote a sense of comfort, optimism, self-actualization, or solve some other public vs. private need?
- What would Utopia look like in the 21st century?
- What do we most need at this particular time in history?
- What is the relationship between surface/outside and the inside of a form?
- Simply speaking, what would it be like to be inside of a life-sized whale, a giant cupcake, a television, a series of pyramids, or to share a set of headphones with a group of 12 or more people?

Critique Strategy

After an initial plan has been approved, groups of six go into production. Each team offers in-progress presentations to another inflatable group, teaching assistants, and faculty. The presentation involves project plans, models made of grid paper, graphics, performance plans, and the initial inflation of the inflatable itself. Faculty and students offer analysis, interpretations, and formal and conceptual suggestions. Once the inflatables have been exhibited and performed at a public venue, a follow-up discussion occurs in the studio to reflect on the event as a whole.

Timetable

Two weeks. Two-three days to conceptualize and design inflatable. One week to construct, troubleshoot, and test inflatable. In addition students work to design print materials and devise a performance or intervention-style strategy to accompany inflatable. Two hours to exhibit and perform inflatable at a public venue.

Examples

- Film: Ant Farm Video: Inflatables Illustrated (1968-78), Chip Lord.
- PBS Video Series: (Art 21) Art in the Twenty-first Century, Tim Hawkinson.
- Reading: Topham, S. (2002) Blow-Up: Inflatable Art, Architecture, and Design.
- Artists: Absalon, Ant Farm, Archigram, Buckminster Fuller, Paul McCarthy, Claes Oldenburg, Phillipe Parreno, Michael Rakowitz, Superstudio, Andy Warhol, Andrea Zittel, among others.

Assignment Notes

Insta-Inflato-Utopia is a mid to late semester project. Students work together to create an artwork that is very ambitious in scale--in most cases it is the largest artwork they have ever produced. As they design cooperatively and divide responsibilities they rely on each other's judgment and expertise. Future expert designers, sculptors, performance artists, graphic designers, and fabricators all emerge within each group and share various techniques and solutions. Inflatables are a surprisingly forgiving medium and an easy medium for first-year students to use. Students surprise themselves and engage in healthy play while discussing such things as radical architecture, utopia, and functional and communicative design.

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Foundations in Context : Finding Relevance in Our Place and Time

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Throughout history, art has been a mirror of culture, reflecting the fears, aspirations, and realities of people in a particular place, and time. Our current time is one of change, fraught with disturbing messages about social injustice, environmental degradation, and political inadequacy. Many artists/designers are actively re-orienting themselves in response to current conditions. Emerging genres such as culture jamming, community-based art, social sculpture, eco-art, and sustainable design reflect this re-orientation. Others are embracing place-based practices intended to reshape dysfunctional behaviors, reconnect broken communities, and restore damaged ecosystems.

To respond to these new realities, our professional associations are calling for new goals for academic programs. For example, the Guidelines for Foundations that were adopted and approved by FATE membership at the 11th Biennial Conference in 2007 state that one of the four goals of foundations content is to "introduce and explore an expanded definition of the artist/designer within an historical and contemporary multicultural context; e.g. facilitator, organizer, community activist, collaborator, cultural producer".1 This goal is echoed by these statements made at a Stanford Centennial Roundtable Discussion (1991):

- "Art is an invitation to become part of something that is larger than yourself."
- "The artist's job is not to reject the society, but to engage it."
- "Art is usually a criticism of the world as it is and a vision of the world as it might be."
- "Most artists wake up and say, 'What do I want to do this morning?' That is not a very interesting or probing question. It should be: There's a whole world out there. What does that world require?" 2

While these claims present a clear and compelling vision of the artist/designer as engaged citizen, foundations programs rarely address the skills and behaviors needed for an informed response. For example, a review of foundation drawing and design textbooks yields few examples of assignments whose primary learning goals help students contextualize their art and design activity. "What does the world require and how can I, as an artist/designer, meet that requirement?" is a question we rarely ask. While exploring avenues of self-expression and experiencing the joy of skillful making are important motivators, it is also important for students to explore the artist/designer's role in society. Acting in the service of the greater good is both empowering and compelling.

This article includes three assignments that explicitly focus on engaged learning within specific contexts. However, it is also important to note that it's possible to contextualize our existing assignments or even entire courses through use of directive framing questions in critiques and discussions. We can think of this framework as the A, B, C's of contextualization and some examples are listed below. By asking our students to consider questions of context alongside their development of skills, we create a much richer learning environment. In this environment, individual creative activity can be expanded through understanding of the complex communities and systems (both human and non-human) in which we live.

The A, B, C's of contextualization:

A is for **Audience** or client -

- Who is the work for? Is it for members of a particular culture? Members of a particular social class? Does the audience need to be human?
- What does that audience require? How do you know this?
- How does your work address that requirement?
- In what ways are you making your work accessible to your audience? (Venue, materials, language, etc)
- What response are you trying to generate from your audience? Is that response a productive one? How would you define "productive"?

B is for **Bias** or point of view -

- What is your perspective on the issue with which you are working?
- Is this issue important to you personally? To whom else is it important? People you know? People in your community? Is it a global issue?
- What is the significance of this issue? Where does it fall on the scale ranging from decoration or entertainment to earth-shattering importance for the human and non-human community of life? Is it important to you where on this scale your work fits? If so, why or why not?
- What perspectives do others have on this issue? Is yours a dissenting view or one of affirmation?
- Why is your work relevant to the issue? Does it offer something new? Does it clarify or expand on what others have said?

Artists and designers could be considered "culture workers" that integrate and apply information from across the humanities, the natural and social sciences in pursuit of the common good.

C is for **Courage** or a willingness to engage with challenging issues -

- Is it easy to say what you want to say?
- What will your audience think of you for making your work? What will your friends think? Are you worried about the reaction?
- Is your work oriented towards the art market? Do the issues that you are dealing with make it likely that you will forego income? Can you afford to do that? Are there ways to both engage in these issues and also support yourself?

Though there are many ways to contextualize art practice, the assignments included in this chapter focus on the contexts of environment, need, and culture.

1. **Environment**. How does our work interact with the ecosystems that not only support life, but also provide us with the material resources that we need to do our work? One response is that the production of objects is a manufacturing process that requires an input of resources and energy and creates not only the output of an object, but also a certain amount of "waste. Both the inputs and outputs have impacts on the natural and social environments and an artist/designer has a responsibility to consider these impacts as part of the process of making. Operating from the premise that nature has been designing life forms adapted to a wide variety of situations for billions of years, design codes such as The Hannover Principles[3], Permaculture Principles[4], and the Natural Step Conditions[5] are all based on a scientific understanding of biological adaptations of organisms and the workings of ecological systems. These codes are broadly applicable and provide guiding frameworks for designing and making in the context of the environment.
2. **Need**. These assignments encourage students to reflect on which problems need solving. As highly skilled problem-solvers, artist/designers have much to offer, and authors such as David Orr (1991, 2004) challenge us to reorient our practice to addresses the deeper needs of our larger society. In this context, the artist/designer has the opportunity to live out a superhero fantasy by responding to cries for help from social and environmental systems in distress. Though it can be challenging to craft a productive response, the personal rewards for taking on work of this magnitude are great.
3. **Culture**. Where are we as a society, where might we go, and how might we proceed? As artists and designers, we are trained to notice cultural anomalies and through our work either articulate them so that they become apparent to others or capitalize on the opportunities produced by them. In this sense, artists and designers could be considered "culture workers" that integrate and apply information from across the natural and social sciences in pursuit of the common good. In this context, the impact of action by artists/designers could have a profound affect on a culture afflicted with destructive tendencies

Foundations in Context - Curricular Overview

Art/Craft/Design Studio Foundations
Courses in this section develop foundational art/design/craft skills

ArtSt 110: Observational Drawing I (3) Drawing as a tool to record information and to develop and expressively communicate ideas through a variety of media. Includes multiple sessions of drawing outside the studio in both natural and urban settings.

ArtSt 111: Two-Dimensional Foundations (3) Introduction to the elements and principles of visual design. Practice with concept development, composition, and critique. Includes discussion of human response to visual stimuli as a means to direct audience response.

ArtSt 112: Three-Dimensional Foundations (3) Introduction to 3D composition, construction, and use of associated tools through practice with a variety of materials. Discussion of sources, manufacturing processes, and disposal of art-making materials.

Ecoliteracy Foundations : Courses in this section provide an environmental context

Env 200 Environmental Science (3) How earth systems work and how human systems interact with natural systems. Discussion of energy and nutrient cycles and the natural world as a resource base. Includes outdoor experiences designed to develop attitudes of stewardship.

ENV 215&216: Permaculture Design I & II (6) Development of creative and systems thinking skills and introduction to design as an iterative problem-solving process. Also covers ecologically-derived design elements and principles, group work, client relationships, and visual presentation skills (such as SketchUp models and plan drawings)

Cultural Foundations (choose one option) : Courses in this section provide a cultural context

Option I : Contemporary Art History (3) Overview of contemporary art practice. – and
History of Craft (3) Overview of the craft object as a product of place that reflects historical, cultural, and philosophical contexts. Includes discussion of indigenous and industrial means of production and exchange, the maker's role as steward, and interpretations of making as art, community, or business practice.

Option 2, Art History Survey I&II (6) Historical survey of architecture, painting, sculpture, craft.

Art Practice as Civic Engagement (choose one option)

Courses in this section provide a context of need and emphasize the artist connection to audience. Each course contains a requirement of performance or presentation within the local community with the intent to raise awareness and promote positive change.

Option 1: ArtSt 246 Social Art Practicum (3) Studio course offers examples from social practice genres such as guerilla art, culture jamming, eco-art, and social sculpture. Includes discussion on motivations, efficacy, and transdisciplinary approaches.

Option 2: Thea 285 Eco-theatre (3) Exploration of project-based, community-outreach theatre. Production of a live performance project with goals of raising awareness of social and environmental issues, building community, and suggesting possibilities for positive change

Option 3: MEDA 153 Video Activism (3) Examines the blurring lines between art, documentary, journalism, and activism and explores the use of video media as a way to foster identity formation, self and community-empowerment, and social change. Students collaborate with a non-profit group to produce film that supports the group's work in the community.

01 Foundations in Context

Context of Environment : The Art Object as "Stuff"

Premise

The creation of an artwork requires the integration of many different conceptual and practical threads. Considerations of concept, audience, historical reference, and cultural orientation are all necessary ingredients that must be balanced and integrated in order for the artwork to be successful. But artmaking is also a sort of manufacturing process that requires material input and generates "waste". In this assignment, we will explore the relationship of the artmaking process to the natural and social worlds that produce the raw materials used to make art.

Problem

Choose a recent artwork you've made and write a paper that traces the materials used back to their origins in the natural world. Include a brief overview of the ways in which people have interacted with your chosen material in order to make it available for your use (such as resource development, manufacturing processes, and distribution networks).

Objectives

- To practice research and writing skills in relation to the artmaking process
- To become aware of the material nature of art activities and the various process and infrastructures needed to make art materials available to artists
- To consider the cost-benefit ratio of different kinds of artmaking activities to the natural and human worlds

Materials

- Any art project that you have recently completed.

Strategy

1. Read *Stuff: the Secret Lives of Ordinary Things* by John C. Ryan (88 short pages). Or, for a more condensed introduction, watch "How I Built a Toaster From Scratch, a 10 minute video: http://www.ted.com/talks/thomas_thwaites_how_i_built_a_toaster_from_scratch.html
2. Evaluate the physical composition of one of your recent artworks and identify the different materials that were used to make it (paper, paint, pencil, pen, markers, plaster, wood, etc.). As a simple example, canvas is made from cotton or linen, (plant resources made available through industrialized agriculture and the textile industry). A more complex example might be paint, which is made up of components (pigment, binder, and solvent) that each have their own resource bases and manufacturing processes. An extreme example might be an electronic device, which requires material inputs from many natural sources as well as support from multiple social infrastructures to produce and operate.
3. Use the library, Internet, knowledgeable humans (your environmental studies department might be helpful), or other information resources to help you trace these materials back to their sources in the natural world. If possible, try to identify the specific geographical location of the particular materials that you used (for example, did your wood come from Oregon, Arkansas, or Indonesia?).
4. Include information about the infrastructures that gave you access to the materials you used (such as energy and transportation systems, policies and laws, etc.).
5. Write a paper that describes your findings.

Key Questions

- What raw materials are used to make the art supplies you used?
- What processes did your raw materials go through in order to become the product you used?
- What kinds of policies and laws (trade agreements, mining laws, etc.) are needed in order to produce the product?
- In addition to raw materials, what other kinds of social infrastructures do artists need in order to make their work (food system, energy system, etc)? What kinds of jobs do other people need to do in order to support an individual life of artmaking

(continued)

Context of Environment : The Art Object as "Stuff" (continued)

Key Questions (continued)

(including jobs in the mining, manufacturing, and food industries)? Does your artwork benefit these people in any way? Does it matter if it does or doesn't?

- What happens to the materials that are left over after finishing your artwork?

Critique Strategy

To share individual research findings, engage students in a class, group, or online discussion. Some prompting questions might include:

- Were you surprised by any of your research findings?
- Were you unable to identify some of the different inputs that were necessary to provide you with your materials or were the connections between your artwork and the natural world straightforward and simple? Does the simplicity or complexity make a difference to you?
- In the class list of materials used to make artworks, which materials:
  - have the most convoluted history?
  - are the most benign to the environment and people?
  - have the biggest environmental or social impact?
  - are impossible to trace?
- What about the waste products that are a result of your artmaking process? What kinds of impacts do these have?
- Should the pure, conceptual underpinning of an artwork be compromised by a decision to use only environmentally and socially benign materials? Is it possible to make good art (even if it isn't "green" art) with such a restriction?

For Further Inquiry

"Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way we Make Things" : McDonough and Braungart (2002)

"The Beauty of Craft: A Resurgence Anthology" Mitchell and Brown (2005)

Discussion

- Should the things you make as an artist reflect their connection to the social and environmental infrastructures that are required to make them? Is it even possible to make a "pure" artwork that doesn't carry underlying power relationship statements due to the materials and processes used to create the artwork? (Explore the term "hidden curriculum")
- How does our culture shape our artmaking? What kind of art is produced by non-western cultures compared with non museum/gallery/market-based artists? What societal role do artists in these cultures play and how is it different or the same as the role of the artist in Western society?

Notes to Educators

The required reading is an inexpensive book ($2-$10 on Amazon). Because I use it often, I bought several copies and put them on reserve in the library. I give students a week to read it and rarely hear any complaints about the length.

Paper - Depending on the context of your department, this could be a culminating 15+ page "official" research papers or a 1-2 page informal paper that is mostly intended to lay the groundwork for class discussion. Other approaches might be to initiate a class project in which the studio is analyzed for energy/water/carbon footprint/etc with the objective being to come up with recommendations on how to improve these measurements. This approach offers a perfect opportunity to collaborate with your environmental studies department.

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Context of Culture : Different Strokes for Different Folks

Premise

An important consideration throughout the process of making is the intended consumer of the work. Typically we think of our audience as being composed of people who have the kind of education that encourages them to attend museums and galleries and/or to use their disposable incomes to purchase fine art objects or high-end design products. In other words, we often think of our audience as being people much like ourselves. But what if our intended audience doesn't fit that stereotype? What if we were making things for people who never went to school, who have a different cultural background or a different social class? What if our audience wasn't a person at all? In what ways would our work product change in relation to the different kinds of audiences we might encounter?

Problem

Deeply explore the meaning of the word "audience". To illustrate your thinking, choose a message/idea and make two different objects/designs that present your idea to two different audiences.

Objectives

- To explore the relationships between the type of audience, the mode/venue of presentation, and the physical manifestation of a given concept.
- To consider the diversity of life experience
- To practice creative brainstorming
- To practice turning an idea into a physical reality

Materials

- Open

Strategy

1. Consider the word "audience". Who defines the audience - is an audience self-forming or is it created through external manipulation? Is audience membership always a matter of choice for the individuals in it? Does audience membership imply physical proximity? Similar world-view? Similar languages? How expansively can an audience be defined before it loses its identity as an audience? Or, to say it another way, how many differences can an audience include before a given message looses relevance to any one individual within that audience? Does audience size matter? Is it worthwhile to make a work for an "audience of one"?
2. Write down at least ten potential audiences for your work. (Possible audience names might include Latino girls ages 12-18, the Republican Senate, everyone using the bathroom stall in the basement of the library, or families that were affected by the Bhopal chemical disaster.)
3. What are the characteristics of these audiences? How are they similar or different from each other? How are they similar or different from you? What do they need that you do or don't? What do they dislike, like, or think about that you do or don't? What do you want from you audience? Their attention? Their money? Their adulation? What do you have to say that they would want to hear?
4. After answering these questions, choose two audiences that seem the most dissimilar. Try to find a connection between them by making a list of at least ten ideas that both of your audiences might be interested in or messages that you think they both should hear. You may need to adjust your audience selection in order to find common ground between them.
5. Once you have two different audiences that share some common interests, choose one idea/message, and produce two works that illustrate that idea for each of your two audiences. As you choose your idea/message, take into consideration the following:

- Which ideas are most relevant to both audiences?
- Which ideas are most likely to generate interesting images or objects?

6. Finally, consider the mode of presentation or delivery that each audience would need in order for your work to be accessible to them. Options might range from a formal presentation in a museum or gallery to a guerilla street production.

(continued)

Context of Culture : Different Strokes for Different Folks (continued)

Key Questions

1. Are there some forms of art that are truly universal or does audience orientation always affect interpretation?
2. Is it always necessary to identify an audience before making a work of art? Why or why not?

Critique Strategy

This assignment focuses heavily on preparatory conceptual development through participatory discussion. During this inquiry stage, instructor comments should encourage expansive thinking. The Socratic method might be useful for this if the instructor is comfortable with that approach. The artwork itself could be critiqued using a standard framework of design principles and elements. Student success in achieving the objective of "creating an interesting image or object" should also be addressed.

Notes to Educators

Encourage students to really push the boundaries of the idea of audience. For example, different audiences might take opposite sides regarding a single issue so that one idea could generate two completely different treatments. In this scenario, a political cartoon for one group might show a new tax as a dangerous wolf and a cartoon for another group might show the same tax as a knight in shining armor. Or different groups might have different physical or cultural orientations. Thus a book for one group might use print, while another group might need brail, and a third group might have no need for a book at all, using instead the tradition of oral transmission.

Age, language, and cultural background all affect perception and therefore need consideration for effective communication. One possible method of generating discussion might be to engage students in a staged progression of exploration of the questions in step one - first give them 10 minutes to think about individual responses and then put them into groups to process the individual information into a group report to the class. Points to consider at the class level might be similarities or differences in group interpretation of audience. Another possibility would be to hold a critique after the completion of steps two, three, and four as a way to solidify a strong conceptual base for this assignment.

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03 Foundations in Context

Context of Need : Psychology Today

Premise

There are many behaviors that we know are bad for ourselves, for our communities, and for our environment. Public information campaigns attempt to alter behavior through the delivery of information, but these are often not as effective as we would like them to be. Why not? One reason might be that, though we tend to think that we make decisions based on what we know, science tells us that we actually make decisions based on what we feel. In this assignment, you will explore the possibilities of creating work intended to generate an emotional response that precipitates a needed behavioral change.

Problem

Design a strategy that will produce a response that is powerful enough to cause your audience to change its behavior (either individually or collectively). Collect information that will allow you to assess the effectiveness of your behavior changing strategy. Finally, based on your assessment, make recommendations to improve the effectiveness of your work.

Objectives

- To practice identifying problems and designing strategies to solve them.
- To focus on the "call and response" interaction between the designer/artist and the targeted audience
- To consider the kinds of approaches that might be successful if an active response is desired.
- To introduce the iterative process through assessment and modification.
- To practice public presentation of work

Materials

- Open

Strategy

1. Choose a problem that is caused by human behaviors. The websites below give information about large-scale problems, but small-scale problems (like getting your roommates to wash their dishes) are also fair game.

   Worldmapper http://www.worldmapper.org/

   Poodwaddle world clock http://www.poodwaddle.com/clocks/worldclock/

   The Story of Stuff http://www.storyofstuff.com/

   The Miniature Earth http://www.miniature-earth.com/

2. Review the following websites about behavior changing strategies:

   Social Marketing http://www.social-marketing.com/Whatis.html

   Neuromarketing,http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/persuaders/etc/neuro.html

   Social Entrepreneurship http://www.ashoka.org/social_entrepreneur

   The Fun Theory http://www.thefuntheory.com/

   Natalie Jeremijenko: The art of the eco-mindshift

   http://www.ted.com/talks/natalie_jeremijenko_the_art_of_the_eco_mindshift.html

   Liza Donnelly: Drawing upon Humor for Change

   http://www.ted.com/talks/liza_donnelly_drawing_upon_humor_for_change.htm

   Cafeteria line design and nutrition http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/10/21/opinion/20101021_Oplunch.html?ref=global-home

3. Design and implement a strategy that will produce a response powerful enough to change the behavior of your targeted audience in relation to the problem that you have identified.
4. Record the response of your audience to your design using whatever means of data collection you think is most appropriate (film, photo, interview, weights and measures, etc.)
5. Make a presentation of your strategy and the audience response to the class. This presentation will include:

(continued)

Context of Need : Psychology Today (continued)

Strategy (continued)

- A statement of the problem and the behavior that is the cause of that problem. Include information about the specific group that is the target of your behavior modification strategy.
- A description of the strategy you designed to change that behavior. Your description should include visual information.
- A description of your audience response
- Conclusions about the success of your behavior-modification strategy and recommendations for improvement.

Key Questions

- What feelings do you think create the greatest impetus for changing behavior?
- Does likelihood of response change depending on the situation (such as proximity to the effects of the problem behaviors)?

Critique Strategy

This assignment focuses on design as an iterative process. The critique process is equally iterative. A comparison can be made to the scientific method where a hypothesis is formed, an experiment performed, and the results are analyzed in preparation for the next cycle.

Notes to Educators

This assignment can be tailored for either 2D or 3D design class. Have students make a sign or a poster for a 2 d class. For a 3 d class, the strategy could be an installation such as a kiosk or an alteration of a space as shown in the VW fun theory videos. Emphasize this central question: To what extent can (and should) the artist/designer proactively incite change or reflect change?

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Footnotes

1 "FATE Guidelines for Foundations"
11th Biennial Conference, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
30 March 2007
www.foundations-art.org/FATEguidelines2007.pdf

2 "Panelists Discuss the Role of Art in a Changing Society" Stanford University News Service 30 Sept.1991
http://news.stanford.edu/pr/91/910930Arc1146.html

3 McDonough w. Braungart M. (1992)
The Hannover Principles: Design for Sustainability
Prepared for EXPO 2000, the World's Fair, William McDonogh Architects

4 Permaculture Principles Page
David Holmgren, n.d.
http://permacultureprinciples.com/principles.php

5 The Four System Conditions Page
Dr. Karl-Henrik Robèrt, n.d.
www.naturalstep.org/the-system-conditions

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Albany, New York : SUNY Press
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The Nature of Design: Ecology, Culture, and the Human Intention
USA : Oxford University Press
Describes ecological design as an emerging field that aims to recalibrate what humans do in the world according to how the world works as a biophysical system. Design in this sense is a large concept having to do as much with politics and ethics as with buildings and technology.

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Through compelling examples of innovative products and business strategies, the authors make the case that an industrial system that "takes, makes and wastes" can become a creator of goods and services that generate ecological, social and economic value.

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Forest Row, UK : Clairview Books
Volker Harlan talks with Beuys about the deeper motivations and insights behind "social sculpture" and his expanded view of art.

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Environmentalities: Twenty-Two Approaches to Eco-Art
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Author Linda Weintraub introduces innovative and accessible analyses of vanguard art practices that explore the dynamic intersections between environmentalism and contemporary art.

Riding the Light : Visual Thinking and the Constructive Mind

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Print

In 1969, Rudolph Arnheim published his ground-breaking book *Visual Thinking*, in which he argued that all thinking is perceptual. Since that time, the term "visual thinking" has become something of a mantra for art educators. Arnheim's book continues to be relevant for anyone interested in the psychology of thinking and perception, but it is not my intent to re-present, advance or dispute his work. Rather, I begin with the premise that Arnheim was correct: For (many) people perception is critical, if not inseparable, from cognition. For the purposes of this paper, I will treat perception and cognition as two sides of a coin with interchangeable heads and tails.

Consider for a moment the possibility of such a coin. How would it look? It would certainly not be the same as an ordinary coin, nor would it be a coin with different but undesignated sides. It would not be a two-headed coin or a coin with two tails. In fact, I don't recall ever seeing a coin with interchangeable sides so I must imagine what it might be like. My mind is filled with images, but the mental pictures seem insufficient for the full realization of such an object.

At the same time, I am also considering what it means for a coin to have interchangeable sides. Does that suggest a coin in which the two sides physically trade places, and if so how, and to what end? Or does it refer to the way in which we recognize identifying characteristics of objects? Are we dealing with a visual metaphor or playing a semantic game? Are we engaged in visual thinking? Are we using the Constructive Mind?

Arnheim may have written the book, but Albert Einstein is the poster child for proponents of visual thinking. Art educators never tire of repeating Einstein's comment, "Imagination is more important than knowledge," or reminding people (as I'm about to do) that Einstein developed his theory of relativity by first imagining what it would be like to ride through space on a beam of light. That story, or at least my highly condensed summary of it, may be apocryphal, but it is instructive nonetheless.

It would seem that when Einstein imagined himself riding a beam of light he was engaged in visual thinking, but that's just one side of our strange coin. His vision was the catalyst for the thinking that followed. However, Einstein didn't think only about riding light. Rather, he used that image to facilitate contemplation and analysis of what riding on a beam of light would do to his perception of spatial and temporal relationships. That's what led to his theoretical breakthrough, but the process didn't end there. He also gave his idea a tangible form - in this case, a mathematical equation – by using his Constructive Mind to embody the cycle of perception and thought.

As we try to re-imagine the process that led to Einstein's revelation, we begin to appreciate Arnheim's argument that perception and thinking are inseparable. After all, how are mental images created if not by thinking, and how is a mental image not a thought? Despite the difficulty of teasing apart perception and thought, "visual thinking" is a two-word phrase that encompasses distinguishable, if not distinct components, especially if we treat one (i.e. visual) as sensory and the other (i.e. thinking) as cognitive.

It may help to distinguish visual thinking from similar types of processes. When doing so, it will be good to remember that all dogs are mammals but not all mammals are dogs. To wit, visual thinking is not quite the same as visualization, which essentially limits itself to half the process. It is not a synonym for imagining, brain-storming or ideation, though it may represent forms of those activities. Visual thinking is not the same as imagination, inspiration, day-dreaming or brain-doodling. Visual thinking is not merely the ability to see things in the "mind's eye" or otherwise compose mental images, though it may be triggered and/or informed by all those types of mental activities.

What, then, is it? A working definition might be: Visual thinking is a process (but not a procedure) by which optical stimulation and/or visual images (real or imagined) trigger cognitive responses or ideas in a spontaneous, unpredictable and virtually inseparable cycle of seeing and thinking. Note that the process is initiated by perception.

Optically, that can occur when recognizable objects are seen in unfamiliar surroundings or familiar places are seen under unusual or unexpected conditions. Catching unanticipated glimpses of images or objects, seeing unidentifiable portions of familiar objects, or experiencing entirely new and unfamiliar sights can all ignite the visual thinking process. In each of these examples, uncommon perceptual experiences challenge our visual habits or ways of seeing and force us to rethink and re-contextualize what we thought we knew.

Many visual artists employ strategies that change the way in which they see their work in the hope that they might discover new ways of thinking about it. For example, turning an image upside down or looking at it in a mirror can reveal compositional relationships that might otherwise go unnoticed. Squinting at a work can diminish mid-tones and details while accentuating highlights and shadows. Conversely, peering through a partially closed fist can focus attention on details and reveal hidden relationships of parts to the whole. In all those cases, unfamiliar forms of perception provide a catalyst for creative visual thinking.

Seeing and thinking interact in a lively and unpredictable exchange in which each component informs and feeds the other.

Visual thinking can also be initiated by imagined, rather than optical, perceptual activities. Einstein imagined himself riding on a beam of light; it's not something he actually did or saw. The net effect, however, was similar, since the cognitive process that followed was triggered by an image. It just happens that Einstein's image was imagined rather than perceived.

We might assume that artists and art students are naturally engaged in visual thinking when they are working in the studio, but that is not necessarily the case. If creative work begins with a mental image or starts as an effort to replicate (more or less) an observed image or object, points of reference have already been established for an anticipated outcome. Although perception and thought are both important in that process, the imagined or observed image/object (the visual component) is a response to or the endpoint of prior thought that runs something along the lines of, "I think I'll make something that looks (more or less) like that." On the other hand, if mental images or observed phenomena provide the stimulus for a thought process which in turn leads to a tangible result that was not imagined beforehand, visual thinking has likely occurred. The difference is slight, but crucial.

It is entirely possible for visual thinking to appear in a creative process that started in a different way. For example, it often occurs as a form of spontaneous thinking triggered in response to seeing work develop, even if the work began with a preconceived outcome. It may also be possible, though perhaps less likely, for a process that began with visual thinking to end somewhere else. For example, incorporating chance or accident into the creative process may result in visual effects that are further developed in order to establish relationships to existing or identifiable (i.e. preconceived) forms.

Let's look at another example, this time from an area other than the visual arts. Based on conversations with fellow educators, it seems that students in all disciplines are often able to write acceptable paragraphs but frequently have a difficult time putting together coherent papers. One way to help them in that process is to place each paragraph of a draft onto a separate piece of paper and then physically move the pieces into different sequential relationships. The opportunity for students to actually see new sequences among the paragraphs may initiate new ways of thinking about their writing. The eye informs the mind. A related strategy with which many instructors are familiar is to suggest that students read their work aloud, knowing that the ear may detect problems masked by the mind.

The Constructive Mind is an invented phrase that describes the capacity or mechanism by which we are able to integrate physical and intellectual aspects of our lived experience. In the activity described above, the Constructive Mind is first responsible for giving ideas a tangible form as a rough draft of the paper. It then facilitates the physical manipulation of that form into new compositional arrangements that provide additional visual stimuli that in turn ignite further thinking about the work. Physical manipulation is critical to the process, especially since so many students seem unable to simply imagine new patterns for their writing. The Constructive Mind closes the imagination gap by providing tangible options that exist in the "real" world.

Without the Constructive Mind there is no tangible outcome to the visual thinking process, but it would be a mistake to think that it contributes only to the end result or that it is a purely physical act. We can see in the previous examples that the Constructive Mind is a vital and active player in the initiation, advancement and culmination of the process. It is responsible for orchestrating the visual call and cognitive response that takes place between seeing and thinking. It is the element of the process that fits the other pieces of the puzzle into a coherent and unified form. It is the vehicle essential for communication. It literally shapes our thoughts. When the Constructive Mind is engaged, making is thinking.

I have a friend who abandoned that portion of the visual thinking process. He once made good art, but he gave it up. He rationalized his decision by saying, "If I can think it, then there's no need to make it." For him, art became an entirely mental construct that began and ended as visual thinking. Although his ideas were probably creative and evocative, without the aid of the Constructive Mind they never became tangible outside his own head. For all intents and purposes, they simply did not exist for anyone else. Without engaging the Constructive Mind, his ideas, no matter how brilliant, had no shared use, meaning or value.

A beautiful example of a Constructive Mind at work in the visual thinking process appeared in a public television commercial some time ago. In the ad, a frustrated composer sat at a piano, obviously struggling with creative block. He looked out the window and saw a group of birds perched on electrical wires, much as notes appear on a staff of music. After "playing" the line of avian music, he quickly jotted notations on his score and the creative block was broken. The perceptual and cognitive cycle gained tangible form both in the written score we saw and in the music we heard in the commercial.

Although the sequence of image and thought is important, visual thinking is not simply a predictable two-step process in which one thing inevitably leads to the other. It is more often a complex interchange of perception and cognition. Together, seeing and thinking interact in a lively and unpredictable exchange in which each component informs and feeds the other. As Arnheim suggested, it is hard to say where one begins and the other ends. We might even ask what difference it makes. The only answer I have is this: If we can trigger creative thinking with optical stimuli, we can also create conditions that promote visual thinking in all students, not just those in the arts.

Here are some ways that might be done:

1. **Provide a rich and diverse visual learning environment** for all students that includes imagery and objects outside their immediate field of study. Having science images available in the art studio has led more than one of my art students in new and productive directions, and I suspect having a few high quality art objects in a science lab could do the same for some students.
2. **Help students find and nurture links between seeing and thinking**. Exposure to a variety of visual stimuli is a good start, but learning to see is an acquired skill, and the more we see the more we think.
3. **Remain perceptively and intellectually nimble** in order to facilitate and model visual thinking for your students. It's not our job to think for them, but it's perfectly fine to think with them.
4. **Provide students with opportunities to create tangible results from their visual thinking activities**. That need not be in the form of art. Remember that the end result of Einstein's visual thinking process was a mathematical equation. Whatever form the outcomes take, there can be a world of difference between ephemeral verbal responses and tangible physical responses that promote additional perceptual stimulation.
5. **Give students a chance to revisit, reflect and revise their work.** Productive learning often takes place after students have (literally) seen what needs to be done and are then able to reshape their responses.
6. Finally, **instructors must genuinely believe that visual thinking and the Constructive Mind are viable modes of learning**. This is not to suggest that they are the only or even the best approach to learning in all situations. However, they can be very productive for many students, not just those in art.

If mental images or observed phenomena provide the stimulus for a thought process which in turn leads to a tangible result that was not imagined beforehand, visual thinking has likely occurred.

If Arnheim is correct, visual thinking is an innate process by which humans understand and make sense of the world. It is the way we are wired. It is no accident that many of our earliest educational experiences - from matching games to picture books - are based on visual perception, and that visual aids (to learning) are or were a standard feature in many classrooms. As we grow, those types of activities are increasingly replaced by language-based experiences, often with unintended consequences, including the atrophy of perceptual acuity and the diminishment or devaluation of sensory experience in favor of more "intellectual" modes of learning. Those effects are exacerbated by educational systems that privilege the mind over the senses.

Insensitive or uninformed teachers can also short-circuit the visual thinking process. When my son was just starting high school a study hall teacher chastised him for drawing in his notebook. "It's better to do nothing at all," he said, "than it is to do that." What that brilliant educator apparently didn't realize was that my son is a visual and haptic learner who understands best by seeing and doing, not by reading and listening. When he was doodling, he was probably occupied with the most productive activity of his school day because his Constructive Mind was at work.

Seeing is thinking. So is making. That is something we should encourage and celebrate whenever we have the chance. Let's help our students ride their own beams of light and see where it takes them.

Origins and Outcomes : Towards Not Defining Skills or Inquiry Based Foundations

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Print

The essays you just finished reading coalesced around a question that apparently has no fixed, absolute or correct answer. They were drawn from experiences dispersed across a spectrum of school environments, authored by a disparate, passionate group of artist/educators. As the essays illustrate, it is best to recognize the discussion of skill-based versus inquiry-based foundations education as comparisons of emphasis rather than as opposing, mutually exclusive credos. We are in a period when the definition of skill is expansive, and the locus of art-based inquiry is a moving target.

When digital technological proficiency requires a cycle of constant re-education, when the media artists will use twenty years hence is unknown, when foundations programs are questioning the inclusion of drawing, and when art and design are occupying new ground with gleeful abandon, the questions this journal addresses are especially timely.

The degree of pedagogical overlap and the language used to describe the program intentions is perhaps more interesting than the differences between skill-leaning and inquiry-leaning perspectives. All of our authors recognize the need for a solid foundation as the base upon which the elegant architecture of our students' contextual knowledge, elastic skills, and critical and associative thinking must rest.

Programs as diverse as *Harford Community College* and *University of Florida* recognize the importance of where their students are coming from, and what experiences they carry into college level art and design programs. **Sean Miller and Bethany Taylor** of *University of Florida*'s inquiry-based WARP program write, "Before entering college, many students have largely experienced teaching that relies on relating explicit outcomes. As a result, learning is merely a confirmation of expected results." **Heidi Neff and Mary Stewart**, proponents of a skill based/concept driven foundations curriculum observe an additional challenge, *"Because very few public institutions require an entrance portfolio, student skills at entry are extremely varied."*

In the absence of a portfolio review, foundations faculty and program directors have neither a baseline entry gate, nor a reference point to assess the general level of aptitude and experience of their incoming cohort. However, anyone who has conducted high school portfolio reviews can attest to cookie cutter demonstrations of technical merit without evidence of generative thought. This leaves us with the task, as **Michael Arrigo and Anthony Fontana** of *Bowling Green University* suggest, that *"all foundations teaching has as its goal the transformation of the students"* as responsive, competent makers and active thinkers. Clearly, skill based and/or inquiry based programs present

potentially valid options, yet the conditions presented by a body of students as well as institutional conditions are site specific.

Arrigo and Fontana's approach to integrative teaching offers valuable insights into student motivation, program resources and institutional conditions. It strongly posits its core ethic as student responsive and student driven. They note that successful learning must begin with, and build upon student interest. Their approach, *"presents skills in curricular context that stresses methodology. Interests evolve into questions, questions into methodologies, methodologies into artworks."* Such an approach requires astute teaching. It may unleash individual student's aptitudes that might have been stifled by previous rigorous adherence to elements and principles. *"It also stresses thinking as an active engagement with materials, processes and people. Creativity and problem solving are certainly part of every foundations course, but these are usually collateral learning outcomes in curricula expressly structured around the elements and principles or studio skills."*

One of the impediments to the resolution of the skill-based versus inquiry-based question may lie in the very structure of foundations programs themselves. *University of Florida*'s WARP program is an immersive full semester structure, which is the introduction of a four-semester foundations curriculum. As such, Florida's curricular structure may allow for breadth and depth that incorporates significant technically based instruction as well as intensive conceptual, inquiry based curriculum not possible in a community college. Yet, Miller and Taylor acknowledge the necessity of a balanced approach that may be applied to more compact foundations programs, *"Promoting student/artist freedom without appropriate structure and mentoring can be as debilitating to beginning students as the denial of individual contribution and choice."*

Arrigo and Fontana discuss a structure that is gaining recognition in institutions that have populations who are mixed between four year and transfer students, but also has potential value for programs dominated by four year students. Their description of horizontal and vertical integration holds excellent possibilities for a synthesis of skill development and inquiry-based curriculum. They write, *"Horizontal integration can link content domains horizontally between courses within the program, and also links the content to other fields of study and to the broader popular culture.… Vertical integration includes opportunities to rehearse skills directly related to upper level or real world experiences and advances concepts (disciplinary critique, self-directed study, internships, mentorship/modeling, capstones and exhibits)."*

Seeing and thinking interact in a lively and unpredictable exchange in which each component informs and feeds the other.

Terry O'Day, of *Pacific University*, questions the structure of foundations programs even further, citing the *"Guidelines for Foundations that were adopted and approved by FATE membership at the 11th Biennial Conference in 2007… that one of the four goals of foundations content is to "introduce and explore an expanded definition of the artist/designer within an historical and contemporary multicultural context; e.g. facilitator, organizer, community activist, collaborator, cultural producer"*. She addresses the synthesis of skill development and importance of inquiry, *"While exploring avenues of self-expression and experiencing the joy of skillful making are important motivators, it is also important for students to explore the artist/designer's role in society."* Recognizing the importance of contextual awareness as foundational to a student of art and design, the program structure at Pacific includes observational drawing and traditional 2 and 3-D classes, but also includes cross disciplinary Ecoliteracy and Cultural Foundations, as well as Art Practice as Civic Engagement classes. O'Day observes, *"In this sense, artists and designers could be considered "culture workers" who integrate and apply information from across the natural and social sciences in pursuit of the common good."*

The nitty-gritty of curricular structure is the project assignments within an individual course syllabus. **Matt Kelly**, of *Central College*, describes an inherent synthesis that includes a spectrum of intents and outcomes, *"An assignment is a focused experience an educator uses to share information, build skills, promote creative inquiry and encourage independent thinking. Ideally, when organized in a deliberate sequence, assignments build a network of substantial experiences that are self-sustaining, creating new possibilities that help each student grow beyond a singular event."* His method emphasizes the connective tissue between inspiration, thoughtful research, building form and reflective analysis, and relates to Arrigo and Fontana's consideration of methodology that incorporates the cause and effect of the synthesis thinking and making; *"All artworks display evidence of the methods that were used to create them. However, not all artworks show evidence of a methodology. What is the difference between the two?"* While the underlying methodology of research may not always be visible, it is an essential aspect of arriving at successful results.

David Kamm, of *Luther College*, suggests that authentic visual thinking in the pursuit of resolving assigned problems unleashes the greatest potential for creative solutions. *"If mental images or observed phenomena provide the stimulus for a thought process which in turn leads to a tangible result that was not imagined beforehand, visual thinking has likely occurred."* Indeed, this process may be at the heart of inquiry. Kamm cites an apocryphal version of Einstein's experience of visual thinking in discovering the Theory of Relativity. *"His vision was the catalyst for the thinking that followed. However, Einstein didn't think only about riding light. Rather, he used that image to facilitate contemplation and analysis of what riding on a beam of light would do to his perception of spatial and temporal relationships."*

Miller and Taylor ask a significant question upon which many of us predicate our teaching strategies, *"How do art educators promote aesthetic excellence, cultural understanding, conceptual rigor, and critical insight when first year college students remain strongly affected by earlier standardized educational experiences, the commercialization of culture, and personal distractions while adjusting to a new college lifestyle?"* **Richard Siegesmund** challenges us to take a stand and critically evaluate the status-quo; *"Thus, the critical challenge to teaching is not making sure that students are busy with time-tested projects, but asking ourselves what critical aspects of art making and being an artist do we want to students to come away with after the term of our class has come to an end?"*

Studies indicate that 10% of students graduating with a degree in art will still be practicing art ten years after graduation. Yet, most value their education as effective in their careers. So, what matters most? Stewart and Neff perhaps articulate it as well as anyone; *"We want our students to develop their own voices and means of visual expression, to listen more critically to other voices, to respond more thoughtfully, and to become responsible and passionate participants in contemporary society."*

Apparently, school never ends. Joseph Albers had it right; there is no distinction between teaching and learning.

THINK TANK6
Leading Change

June 8 to 12, 2011
Lamar Dodd School of Art
University of Georgia

In *Leading Change*, Harvard Business School professor John Kotter describes factors that inhibit change and factors that advance change.

Combining various readings in innovative leadership with our unique perspectives as artists and designers, we will develop strategies for develop-g new approaches to teaching and g at the college level. Think-ank6 will build on Four Minds for the pic of ThinkTank5.

Sold Out! Apply for ThinkTank7

Objectives for ThinkTank6 include

- To explore uses of divergent, convergent and collaborative thinking as aspects of leadership;
- To understand ways to determine priorities and use quantitative and qualitative to the best advantage;
- To explore existing 'best practices' in curriculum design and rough draft curricula for a variety of institutional needs;
- To strengthen understanding of connections between mission and outcome and between coursework and the larger community.

Integrative Teaching Intrernational will be offering five $850 scholarships to emerging educators or administrators to defray the costs of attendance to ThinkTank.

Registration is by invitation, based on a simple online application process. Anticipated cost of ThinkTank6 plus lodging is $850.

Because there are pre-conference readings and post-conference writings required, all participants must bring a high level of commitment to ThinkTank.

The general application deadline is November 15, 2010. Deadline for fellowship applications is December 30, 2010. Candidates will be contacted by ITI in February 2011. Participants will pay the full registration fees online using credit card or PayPal. Refunds are not possible.

Integrative what?

ThinkTank who?

Combining various readings in innovative leadership with our unique perspectives as artists and designers, we will develop strategies for developing new approaches to teaching and learning at the college level. ThinkTank6 will build on Four Minds for the Future, the topic of ThinkTank5.

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