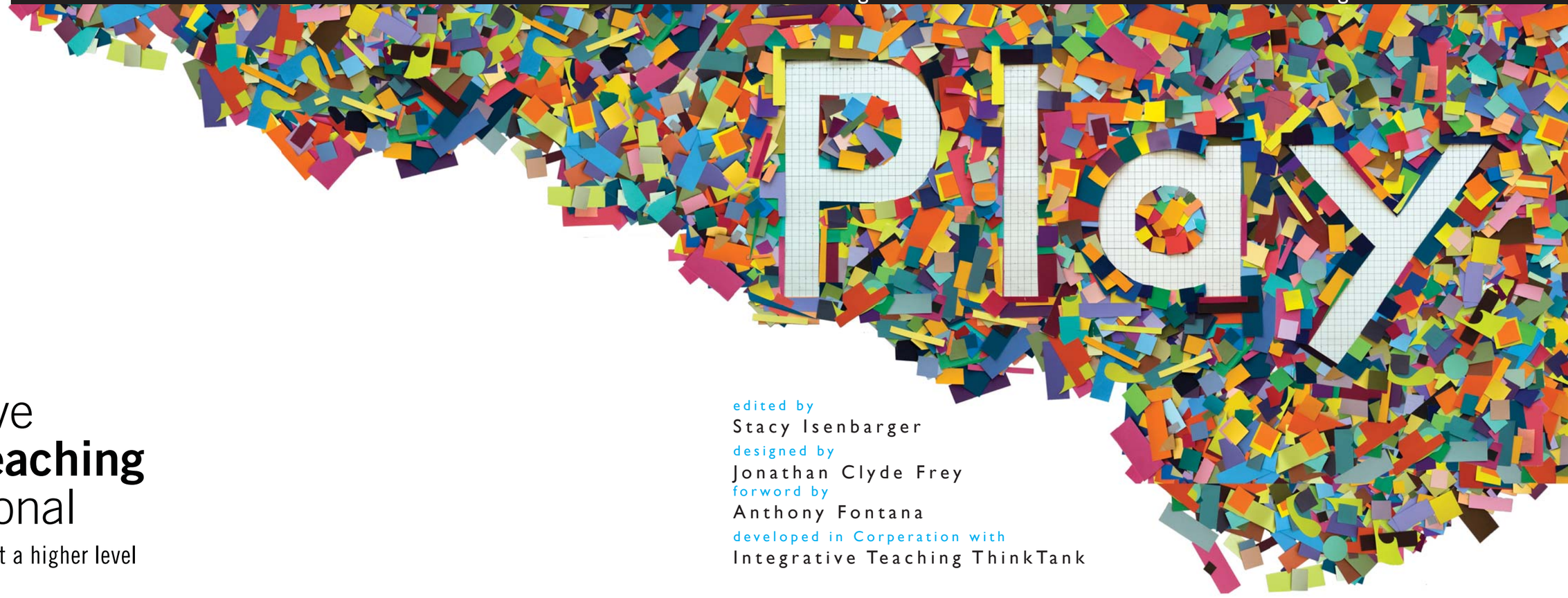
State of PLAY

divergent methods for creative exchange



integrative **teaching** international

higher education at a higher level

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Play

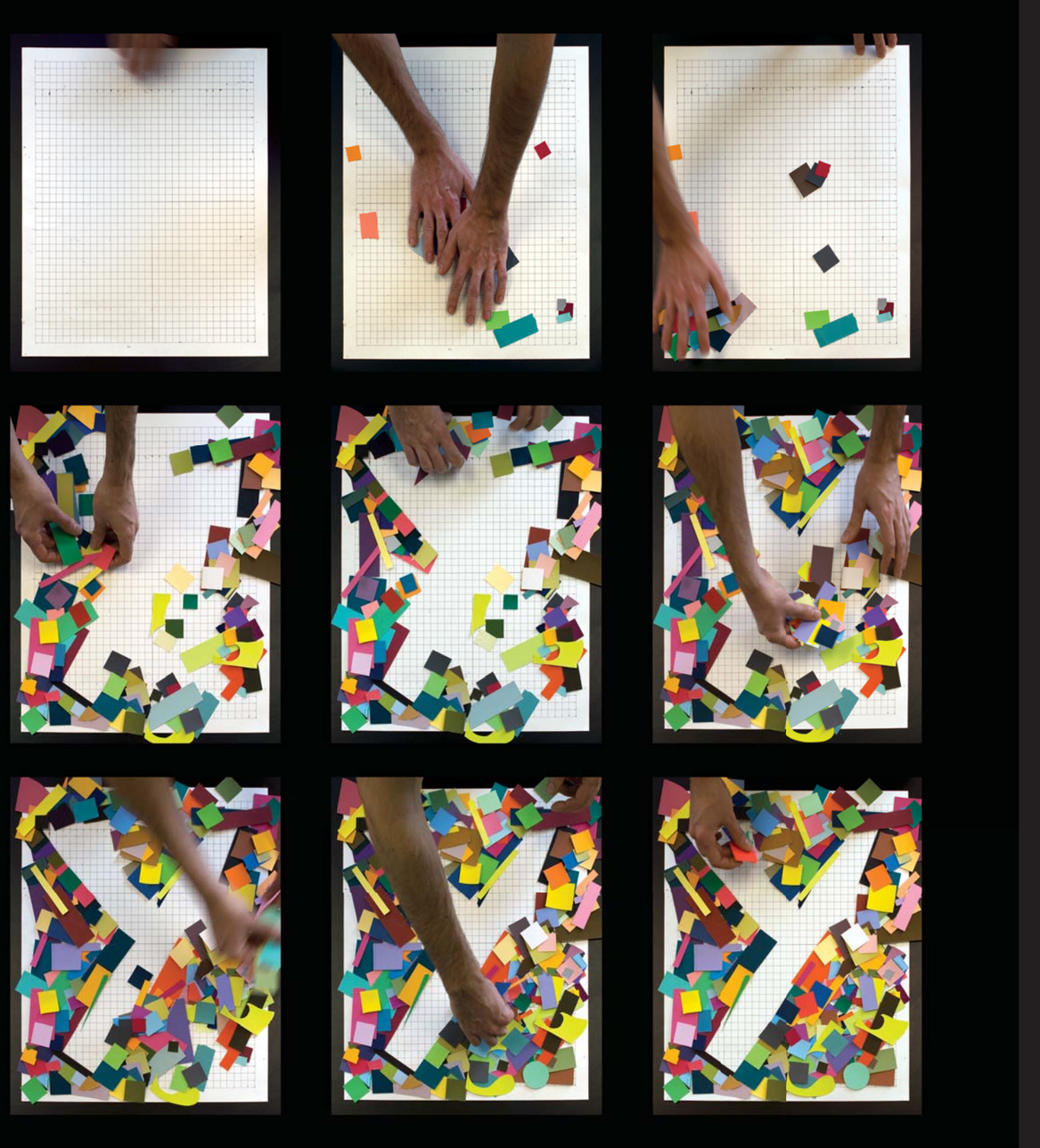
is an organized activity that is disguised as something fun and/or competitive.

The form of play can be very structured (with rules and deep strategies, as in chess) or more loosely defined and open-ended (as in playing with blocks).

In a state of play, teaching and learning flow naturally, opening up opportunities for exploration and experimentation by every person in the room.

Play is something students understand.

Anthony Fontana



ThinkTank is a facilitated forum offered by the Integrative Teaching International organization. It brings together art and design master teachers, administrators & emerging educators to address thematic issues of higher education.

By linking educational theory to practice, ThinkTank identifies innovative new approaches to higher education.

Integrative Teaching International evaluates ThinkTank outcomes and creates or modifies theories, policies and curricula for future ThinkTank sessions.

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THINK TANK

integrative **teaching** international

higher education at a higher level

Richard Siegesmund

Integrative Teaching ThinkTank
President

Integrative Teaching International (ITI) promotes identifying, teaching, and assessing visual thinking skills for today's artists and designers. During our ThinkTank intensives, master and emerging educators collaborate through hands-on workshops, presentations, and discussions. We work in small groups to openly exchange—and sometimes challenge—ideas. We seek to heighten understanding of curriculum design and explore innovative assessment strategies.

The concept for State of Play arose during ITI's ThinkTank 4 held at the University of Georgia in June 2009. The publication exemplifies the mission of ITI. It presents practical, innovative assignments that prepare students to learn the technical skills that ground study in art and design by introducing habits of mind that are the foundation for creative inquiry.

State of Play is also an excellent example of how, as Elliot Eisner has put it, the teaching of art is more than the teaching of art. The lessons presented here help students encounter and engage in authentic self-directed learning while simultaneously presenting base-line vocabulary and essential skills.

There are many different approaches and purposes for teaching art and design. There is no single best method. ITI celebrates this diversity at the same time it seeks to find exemplars of best practice.

Anthony Fontana

State of Play
Co-Creator

"Games are the most elevated form of investigation." – Albert Einstein

Play became an important topic in one of the final breakout group sessions at ThinkTank4 in the Lamar Dodd School of Art at The University of Georgia in 2009. The First Edition of State of Play, published in the Fall of 2009 by Integrative Teaching International, became a collaborative project to collect and identify activities & assignments that encouraged play. In this Second Edition, we expand our search for classroom activities that explore divergent methodology, remembering that play can be an activity done by one or a game with objectives for many. We encourage educators to take a second look at divergent methodologies and states of play that foster creative outcomes and challenge old models of the same old thing.

What is play? Play might be defined as an organized activity that is motivated by pleasure. Sometimes play is competitive. Play is for the most part, essential, serious fun. Play can be very structured with rules and deep strategies, such as those in the game of chess, or more loosely defined and open-ended, as a child might play with blocks, cars, or dolls. In a state of play, teaching and learning flow naturally, opening up opportunities for exploration and experimentation by all participants.

Today's students play a lot of games. They play games on Facebook, Playstation, Wii, Xbox and on their phones. Researcher Jane McGonigal, articulates an under recognized truth, when we're in game worlds, we are "motivated to do something better", we are "inspired to collaborate and cooperate." (TED Talk, http://www.ted.com/talks/jane_mcgonigal_gaming_can_make_a_better_world.html February, 2010) Students' engagement in games is guaranteed, and instructors can use this given interaction to their advantage when seeking ways to facilitate creative approaches to teaching and learning in their studio classrooms.

In foundational art education, a state of play, this engagement may need to be facilitated by instructors. To play a game we first learn, or sometimes invent, the rules, and too often the first rule is that breaking these rules is wrong. Deviating from the proscribed path of an assignment is often frowned upon and we get upset, without explanation, when rules of a game aren't followed. In online gaming willfully changing the game's structure is called "nerfing" the rules, and due to most educational constructs—and our inherent understanding of game play, nerfing seems to be out of the question. Students are fearful of what might become of their grade if they were to rewrite any assignment, but perhaps some inspired nerfing could work in their favor. Our students are socially conditioned to play by the rules in the age of standardized tests. Yet, in the arts we strive to teach that you learn rules in order to break them. But besides teaching the rules, how are we teaching the act of breaking them?

If each art movement is a rebellion against the one that came prior, how are we teaching students to rebel against the rules?

In teaching art, we assume it's in students' nature to know how to be creative. Often we assume someone else has taught them how to be creative. We encourage them to think "outside the box", but set up strict rules, which prevent them from doing so. This sort of pedagogy does not match our often proclaimed goals; we should instead practice what we preach and help students become more independent in their creative actions and challenge their conventional thinking. In a state of play where the definition of rules is a facilitated, shared endeavor, students can begin to constantly build and reshape their own "box" of thoughts.

Traditional Foundations pedagogy adheres to the inherent rules of the academic system: a system of standards and graded expectations. Systems are different than games, yet systems can be gamed. To "game a system" means to use the rules and procedures meant to protect a system in order to manipulate the very same system for a desired outcome. The English language, for example, is a system students are not afraid to "game". The youth have redefined the rules for writing through the platform of texting on mobile devices.

OMG U dnt believe me? LOL!

At the FATE, Foundations in Art, Theory and Education 2009 conference in Portland, Oregon, ThinkTanker Brian Evans, University of Alabama, said in his presentation "Leveraging the Analogic" that he considered Algorithms (by way of repetition and contrast) the missing principle in Foundations Art. In his book, Why Art Cannot Be Taught, James Elkins states "the supposed seriousness of art has a widespread effect on teaching." Professional Athletes train, practice and take their play very seriously. Game designers take seriously their professional play with algorithms or sets of working instructions to solve a problem. In other words: teaching students to create sets of working instructions that create their own artworks, to create their own methodologies, is an important skill missing from many Foundations programs today. Creating algorithms becomes creating games. Playing games becomes working with process and materials; divergent non-goal, open ended or experimental methodologies. Play, as it were, can happen before or after the algorithm is identified.

Professional artists generate questions from the things that interest them, which then become expressed as artworks. This practice is based on an applied state of play. Mary Stewart, in her textbook *Launching the Imagination* refers to this as "Problem Seeking, Problem Solving". So why is it that traditional art and design pedagogy, from K-12 through Higher Education, determines that the teacher decides what students create, in both medium and concept? Many in education expect students to develop interests without games or playful inquiry As a result, students thereby separate their interests in playing from working, i.e. school and making art. The "fun" of divergent play methodologies is replaced by a disdain for "homework".

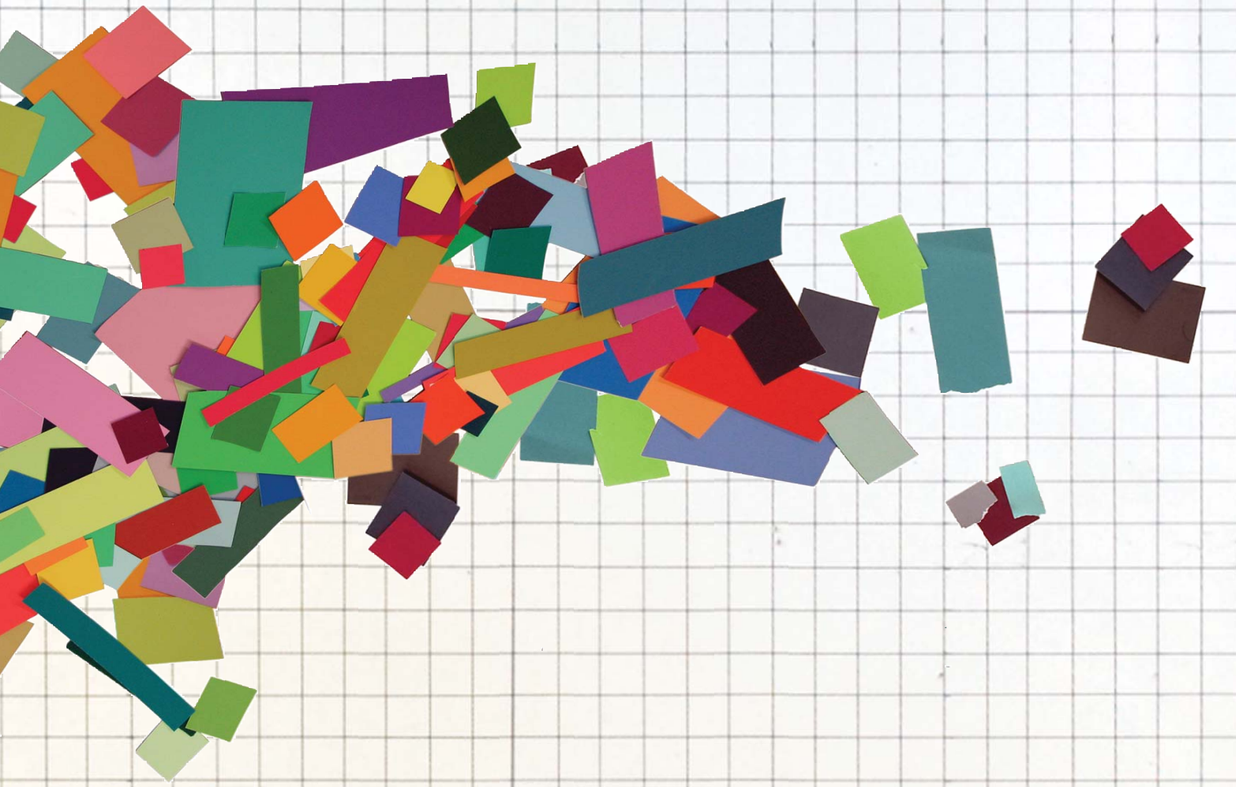
K-12 art education brings students to higher education Foundations who have only created works based on templates or simple algorithms set forth by the teacher using convergent methodologies, i.e. having the end product in mind. This opposes the idea of divergent play as a valid methodology for the creative output of artwork. There is no state of play there.

In David Kamm's article in FATE in Review, Volume 30, 2009 "What about Creativity: Six Pieces in an Unsolved Puzzle", he wrote that his students found creativity in the "computer lab where the students surfed the Internet in search of an image they could reproduce and call their own." A practice they no doubt were taught, not through a playful process of investigation, but through a repeated convergent methodology in previous art classes, where step one was perhaps outlined as "find an inspiring resource image."

In the Second Edition of State of Play, we continue to explore the line between providing the structure, content, methodology, and materials we ask our students to explore and the need to rediscover the role open ended creative play holds within a higher education foundations program.

Warm Ups

Projects



Warm Ups

Suitcase Tetris

Three-Dimensional Design

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Challenge

Students will stack boxes, suitcases, etc. of various shapes and sizes to create a rectangular wall.

Objective

- To negotiate form relationships with construction techniques
- To achieve physical balance with varying forms

How to Play

Mark off a pre-outlined rectangle on a wall. Groups of 4-5 will then work together to try to balance and build a wall out of box forms while staying within the boundaries.

Equipment

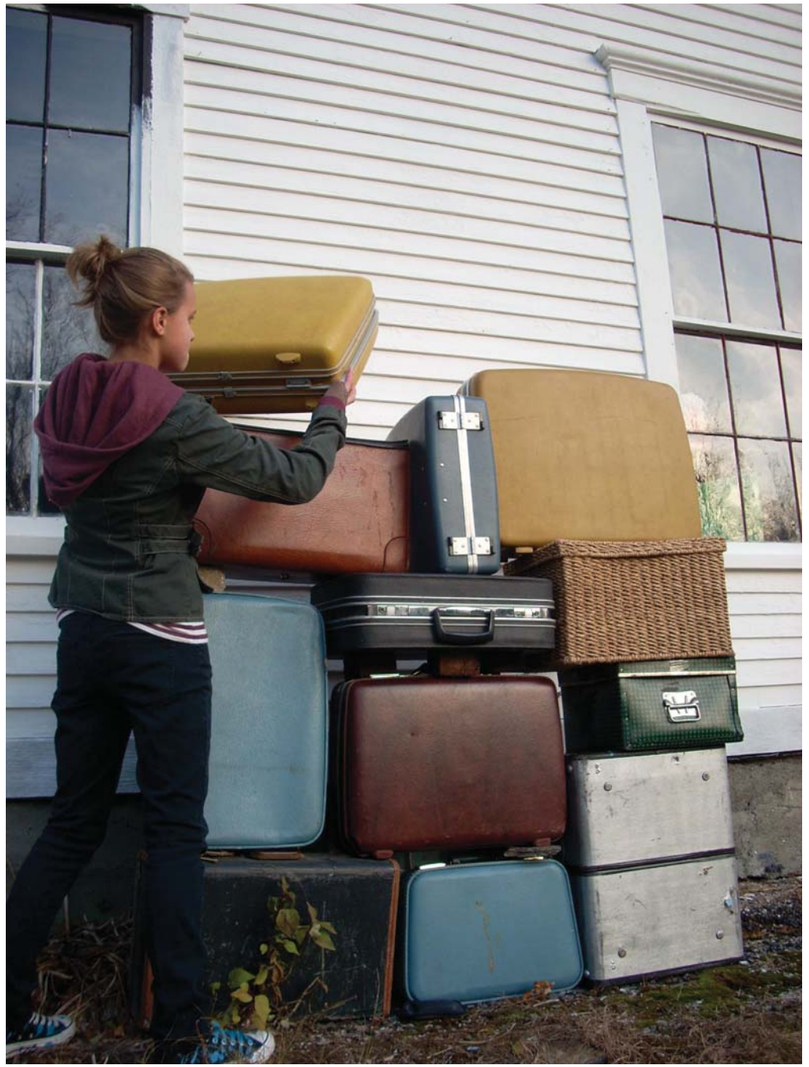
7 to 10 suitcases, cardboard boxes, anything box-like in a variety of sizes

Timetable

10-15 minutes per group

Notes to Instructors

Stability can be an issue, so having cardboard or plywood shims available will helpful. Duct tape could also be useful. This challenge can be heightened by changing the wall shape to a circle, triangle, etc.



Felt Principles

Two-Dimensional Design

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Challenge

Students will create compositions depicting principles of design in a race against the clock.

Objective

To visually define principles of design quickly

How to Play

1. Clip a white piece of felt to each clipboard and give one to each student.
2. Pile a variety of felt shapes in the center of a table or workspace.
3. The instructor calls out a set of instructions such as: "In one minute or less create a design with a harmonious color scheme that is symmetrically balanced."
4. The instructor times the activity and alerts students when their time is up.
5. The instructor initiates a class discussion of which designs meet the criteria of the instructions given and clarifies any confusion about the terminology/ concepts being presented.
6. Continue calling out other sets of instructions until the class understands and is comfortable using design terminology.

Equipment

Clipboards, 8x10 sheets of white felt, wide array of felt shapes

Timetable

1-2 hours depending on the specific objectives of the instructor

Notes to Instructors

This assignment has greatly increased my students' use of design terminology in the classroom and during critiques. It also engages students in talking and working with one another. I do not discourage them from following the lead of a specific classmate instead of trusting their own knowledge of the material. Due to this, the entire class can derive the incorrect solution; I then embrace the opportunity to discuss the importance of trusting their own instincts as an artist.

5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Do Something Unexpected

Three-Dimensional Design

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Challenge

Given limited materials and time, students are challenged with creative invention and collaboration.

Objectives

To think outside the box and challenge assumptions

How to Play

Students are divided into pairs and are each given the items listed below. They are given 30-60 minutes to "do something unexpected" with these items. They can also use one other additional material or tool they have with them or find nearby.

Equipment

Each pair receives:
5 paper clips, 4 toothpicks, 3 pebbles, 2 pieces of string and 1 roll of tape

Timetable

30 minutes to an hour

Notes to Instructors

It is best to do this project on the first day of class. Students make various assumptions when presented with this problem such as assuming they have to use all items or they have to "make something" with the items. When presenting the problem, I give no examples of possible solutions, so as not to lead students one way or another.

Examples from previous solutions include:
students created a cell phone video of a performance piece, a pair used the materials to build a bridge between themselves, another replaced a student's clothing with the materials, and other students invented a game out of the materials complete with rules and strategy.

Rhythm Lineup Challenge

Two-Dimensional Design

Stacy Isenbarger
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Challenge

Using only their bodies and objects from the classroom, student groups participate in photographic "duels" to create rhythmic compositions depicting various emotions.

Objectives

- To develop a stronger understanding of how rhythm and grouping can portray ideas
- To create dynamic positive shape and negative space relationships
- To collaborate constructively

How to Play

Split the class in half and challenge them to three rounds of photographic duels. Using only their bodies and props found in the classroom, they must work together to pose for various rhythmic compositional challenges. Beforehand a camera is set up on a tripod about 15 feet from a wall and the area within the viewfinder is taped off on the wall—as if set up for a line-up. For each round, students are prompted by an emotional state and must create a composition where rhythm plays a key role in the understanding of this feeling for the viewer.

- Round 1 Challenge – Suggest exhilaration rhythmically.
- Round 2 Challenge – Suggest sorrow rhythmically.
- Round 3 Challenge – Suggest anxiety or tension rhythmically.

Together students will plan and stage a rhythmic grouping in front of the marked compositional edge. Any part of their body or object that falls within this frame will become part of the photographic composition.

How to Play (continued)

Students cannot rely only on facial expression to present their emotions; instead, they are pushed to focus on how their own bodies can become dynamic shapes that work in relation to the negative space of each composition. They have10-15 minutes to plan and execute each composition and are allowed only 3 takes to get their best image for each round. The instructor or a group member can take each photograph. Following all rounds, images are projected and the class critiques the design decisions and discusses which are more successful compositions.

Equipment	digital camera, tripod, cleared out space near a wall, surveyors tape (or something bold to mark off the composition on the wall)
Timetable	approximately 30 minutes, followed by a short critique of projected images from the challenge
Notes to Instructors	If time allows, have groups challenge each other by picking their own emotional state and challenging the other group to a duel. Also, be sure to mark off the wall with something bold or bright and do not crop these boundaries out of the photograph. The compositional edge becomes an important element of discussion in the concluding critigue.

Talking Color

Color Theory

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Challenge	Working in pairs, students are challenged to match color swatches by mixing color based on their partner's verbal instructions. Students compete to see which pair can make the most matches in an allotted time.
Objective	To effectively describe color by referring only to its three constituent parts: hue, value, and saturation
How to Play	Partner students and give one student a swatch of color. The other student in the pair should NOT see this swatch. The student with the swatch then begins to describe the color on the swatch while the other student attempts to match this color by mixing paint. The describer can only use clues about its hue, saturation, and value, saying things like: "No, it is less green and darker in value," "You're in the value range, now make it less saturated," etc. Students should continue until they have matched the color on the swatch (starting over if necessary). When the goal is met, the pair gets a point. The pair will then receive a new color swatch and the students will switch roles as paint mixer and describer. This will continue for the predetermined duration of the exercise. The pair with the most points wins.
Equipment	Paint for mixing, palette, palette knives, and assorted color swatches (these could be color swatches from a paint store or previously prepared swatches)
Timetable	One hour for each student to take turns mixing. Students should continue until they have matched the color on the swatch (starting over if necessary).
Note to Instructors	This exercise is a fun way to get students to stop being subjective with language (ie. using names like "midnight blue" or "velvety pink") and also builds color-mixing skills.

Systematic Drawing

Drawing II

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Challenge

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

Objectives

- To place emphasis on the process of drawing rather than the drawing itself
- To learn to build a tolerance for randomness, uncertainty and the absence of control in order to avoid falling into old habits
- To encourage experimentation with the creative process
- To develop limits as a way to unlock creative potential

Strategy

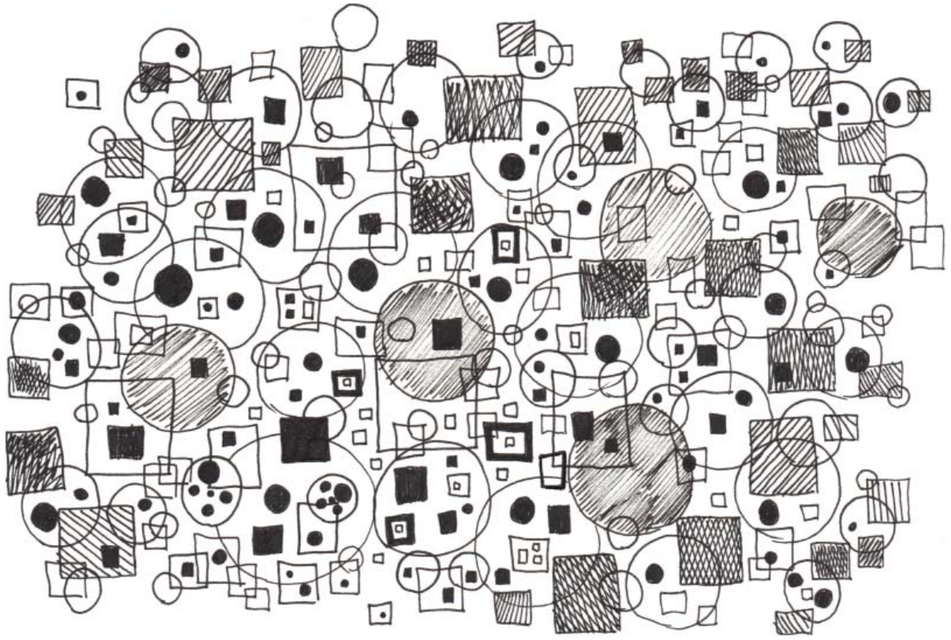
Studests will start by developing a few rules using simple elements such as a pencil, an open and solid circle, and an open and solid square. As they test out their system, they begin to experiment. They will modify it to use different materials, increase complexity, and/or remove their control.

System Example

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

a1 = 1 single large textured circle.
a2 = 2 large open circles. The circles must touch at least one corner of a square whenever possible.
a3 = 3 textured squares that overlap an open circle by at least 25%.
a4 = 4 open squares that do not touch anything.
a5 = 5 solid squares and circles that must be contained by a square or circle.
a6 = 6 open squares and circles and they all must overlap a square or circle by at least 25%.

- The image on the right is an example of this system.



Variations

Other possibilities for the system may 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.

Equipment

Open

Timetable

Open. This project could be a simple warm up or an extended project depending upon the complexity of the system.

Walkabout

Studio Foundations

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Challenge

Students are introduced to experiential research methods and given the opportunity to explore their new home through a walkabout.

Objectives

- To explore new surroundings and create relationships to a new environment
- To generate ideas of how to discuss mapping, spatial experience, and the power of objects and images to convey information

How to Play

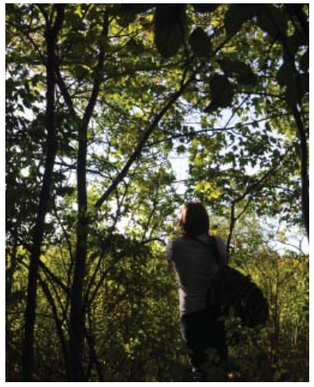
To create the rules of their personal walkabout have students write a letter (A, B, C, or D) and a number (1, 2, 3, or 4) on a piece of paper. Next, reveal the code that determines the time and length of the students' exercise (see code below). Starting at a pre-determined main point on campus, each student works their way through their individual pilgrimage by flipping a coin to determine which direction to turn, observing and collecting objects as they walk.

Code

Time (hours):
A. 1
B. 1.5
C. 2
D. 2.5

Change direction every (minutes):
1. 5
2. 10
3. 15
4. 20

Flip of coin determines direction:
HEADS = RIGHT
TAILS = LEFT



Directions for Students

1. Start at a central location on campus
2. Choose a spot around the area to begin.
3. Flip the coin to determine direction.
4. Walk for the number of minutes above in the determined direction.
5. Stop and observe your surroundings.
6. Select one object within your frontal view to place in your bag. (Walk up to that object if necessary.)
7. Make a notation as to where the object was found and any other interesting things you notice about the site.
8. REPEAT STEPS 1-7 until you have completed the hours specified above for the walkabout.

Having completed their journey, students come to the following class period with materials collected. Photos of landmarks are posted in the classroom in relationship to their real location on campus. Students are given a ball of string and directed to 'map' their experience along with their classmates. They should show the distance they traveled and arrange all of their objects on the string. How to show the scale of their walk, position, and time may be determined by talking to other students and using the reference points (images) posted in studio. Following this activity, discuss with students map ping, spatial experience, and the power of objects to convey information.

Equipment

Student - The code and directions, a coin, time keeping device, bag, notepad, pencil, observation skills.

Faculty - String, photos of local landmarks placed in room in relation ship to actual site to create a room-sized map of the town.

Timetable

- 2.5 hours, outside exercise for student
- 1.5 hours to organize room-sized map and discuss

Notes to Instructors

After students complete the walkabout and before a classroom discussion, you may have them read Chapter 16: "The Shape of a Walk" from *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* by Rebecca Solnit. This exercise may be used as a fieldwork component for assignments that explore: pilgrimage, walking, collection, landscape, nature, and guidebooks.

Abstract Puzzling

Three-Dimensional Design

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Challenge

To memorize puzzle shapes and then, blindfolded, place them in the correct spot using the mind's eye.

Objective

To attempt to visualize form and space without sight

How To Play

Two people team up. One person is the facilitator and will help in the process.

1. Let student examine the wooden picture puzzle.
2. Blind fold student and mix up all the shapes.
3. Let student puzzle out positive shapes in the negative spaces.
4. Facilitator should encourage and help blind folded person with small hints, so frustration is kept in check.
5. Reverse facilitator and puzzler when complete.

Equipment

7-8 Melissa and Doug Wooden Peg Puzzles. They are around $5-10, but you could try to borrow from Day Care or find them in thrift shops.

Timetable

10 minutes each

Notes to Instructors

This is harder then it seems. Over time it gets easier. Consider continuing this periodically throughout semester. It is quite fascinating to imagine the shapes in your mind. Another variation: have a student memorize a room and its contents then traverse the space slowly while blindfolded.

Rapid Practice and Perfection Through Blind Contour Skeletons

Drawing I

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Challenge

Students will create a proportionally accurate, linearly extravagant blind contour drawing of a skeleton on first day of class with limited instruction.

Objectives

- To make connections to the same sense of attempt and re-attempt that they may exemplify in an effort to perfect a video game button combo
- To use the effort necessary to create an accurate well proportioned drawing

How to Play

Contact students prior to class and instruct them to bring a large newsprint pad and sharpie marker to the first day of class. After a brief explanation of blind contour ideas of continuous line, fixed gaze, and the marker's limited but potential line variation, students are asked to produce blind contour after blind contour of a skeleton. A variety of techniques can be used to keep the students guessing such as time restraints, image size restraints, and seat adjustments left or right, as well as full seat swaps.

Equipment

Skeleton, Sharpie marker, 22"x 30" newsprint pad

Timetable

1-2 hours. This can be repeated on the second day of class, giving students 1 hour to warm up and 30 minutes to produce a final drawing for grading.

Note to Instructors

Keep the students moving and their energy high. As soon as students show the slightest sign of slowing or tiring make a change in the approach or provide a new challenge. Encourage students to approach repetitive atempts towards accurate lines as opposed to their preconceived idea of perfection with the first mark.

What's in a Name?: Expressive Line Quality Exercise

Two-Dimensional Design

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Challenge

Students will create variations on the manner in which they write their name, and then assign descriptive and associative terms to each variation.to each variation.

Objectives

To explore expressive line quality—both physically and verbally

How to Play

Each student is asked to write his/her name in cursive at the top left of the piece of paper. The task is repeated, making the signature a continuous line. Several variations are introduced, such as:

- Writing with non-dominant hand
- Writing with eyes closed
- Jump on one foot
- Write slowly
- Write backwards, etc.

Each variation is written under the last on the left of the paper until a range of signatures is created.

Next students isolate a section of each signature and assign it a name. Students are then asked to jot down words they would use to describe each line segment as well as associative or connotative qualities. Students share their signature/lines in small groups, followed by class discussion on expressive uses of line.

Equipment

Pencil or ballpoint pen, 8 ½" x 11 typing or notebook paper (scrap paper is fine)

Timetable

20 minutes

Notes to Instructors

This exercise is conducted in the first twenty minutes of the class as an introduction to expressive line quality and a long-term assignment.

Scavengers & Dignitaries

Three-Dimensional Design

Stacy Isenbarger
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Challenge

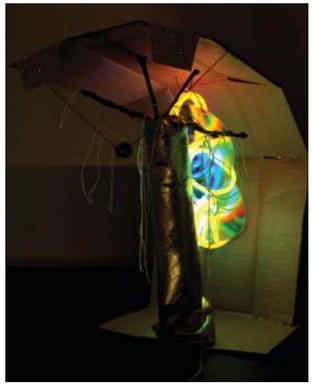
Students are pressed to let go of the idea that their work is precious by working in pairs to create cohesive three-dimensional forms using materials from classmates.

Objectives

- To investigate individual connections to materials and how three-dimensional form can be used as communicative structures
- To appreciate further how we collect information and materials
- To collaborate effectively

How To Play

1. Early in a semester, students are asked to bring a shoebox full of found objects that they are willing to transform in class and at least 3 forms of adhesives or materials that could be used to connect them. At the beginning of class, students display all they've brought including adhesives.
2. Ask students to draw a card from a hat (or whatever is handy) that is labeled either Scavenger or Dignitary.
3. All those with the Scavenger card are asked to go around the room and scavenge materials to create a new pile for themselves. During this time no one is allowed to speak. (approx. 10 minutes)
4. Dignitaries are asked to select one of the new Scavenger piles and investigate & organize this collection in a way that makes sense to them using whatever means necessary, again without speaking. (approx. 10 minutes)
5. Now the pairs created must attempt to work together, without speaking, to create a cohesive structure that includes all items. Adhesives do not necessarily have to become part of the final works. (approx. 20 minutes)
6. For the final 10 minutes of the construction, allow them to speak to one another and attempt to solidify their structure.
7. Follow this with a discussion of each pairs work, allowing the students to present their decisions to the class.



Equipment	Found objects, adhesives, & camera to document.
Timetable	Approximately 1.5-2 hours
Notes to Instructors	Discuss this exercise with the class to highlight characteristics of each student and build a better sense of the unique community within the classroom. This project exposes the connection skills students have, the types of materials they are drawn to, and the kind of object-makers they already are. If there are an odd number of students, assign one extra dignitary to a team.

Projects

Foundations 500!

Three-Dimensional Design

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Challenge

Students will participate in a 3-D Foundations version of the soapbox derby.

Objective

- To explore the power of scale in relation to sculptural form
- To create rudimentary kinetic art
- To develop interpersonal communication skills through collaborative work

How to Play

Students are asked to bring in an object of their choice. The object should be three-dimensional (nothing flat, no pictures) and no larger than approximately 3 inches in any dimension—the more interesting and volumetric the form the better. The class should be divided into teams of three (it works best if teams are randomly selected by drawing names out of a hat).

After examining all the objects that each of their members brought in and discussing their artistic potential, the teams are to select the one object they feel is the most interesting form. Then, working as a team, they will create a scaled-up version of the object as a kinetic, sculptural form. This sculptural object is intended to serve as a rather crude vehicle that will be their entry into the Foundations 500 soapbox derby. Students will have to strategize about possible design solutions and methods of construction in regards to the following criteria.

The Rules

- The work must be able to exist on its own as a work of art/sculptural form
- The work must be able to carry/support one team member the entire time
- The work must have at least one wheel
- The work must make noise
  (audible vocalizations from team members does not count)
- The work cannot be motor driven or use gearing mechanisms
  (these are simple push, pull, or carry vehicles)
- Bonus points are given if all of the team members are wearing appropriately themed costumes

The Rules (continued)

The students have two weeks to create their work. On the day of the race, students parade their work from the studio to the "race track". Once assembled on the raceway, let the race begin. Prizes should be given both for first place and for best vehicle.

Equipment

3/8" Plywood, 2x4's, chicken wire, paper mache, found objects, rope, screws, bolts, and paint.

Notes to Instructors

This is a great end of the semester project. It utilizes many skill sets that they have been developing over the course of the semester through a fun, team-building exercise. Once they have decided upon their chosen object, students will want to rush into the construction. It's a good idea to remind them that this is a design problem as much as it is a sculptural exercise and that taking the time to plan out the design will yield better results and a more satisfying experience. You may need to help them to find ways to reduce the weight while still meeting the criteria.

The race day can also be a real event that serves both to publicize your program on campus but also to celebrate the efforts of the students in a tangible, public, and humorous way. You will need to map out a race route on campus. Try to find a space that will allow for good viewing for spectators and passersby to watch, but is also wide and accessible enough for the "race cars" to assemble and race. A large parking lot works well or a circuit that follows the college/university sidewalks and paths.

Variation

Sculptural "Cardboard Regatta" (for those of you who have access to water)

Timetable

2-3 weeks or approximately 20 -25 hours of fabrication time terminating in a 1-2 hour parade and racing event.

Rule Based Drawing (RIP Sol Lewitt)

Drawing XYZ

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Challenge

Students work as a class to develop a set of written instructions that will yield a large-scale non-representational drawing in pencil.

Objectives

- To execute a dynamic drawing as group
- To produce text that clearly explains the process of creating this drawing to the public

How to Play

Students are responsible for working together to create their own set of "rules" that they then have to follow. Give them the following parameters to help guide their project:

- You may work as a whole group, work in shifts, or split off into competing splinter groups. How you collaborate should be included as part of your set of instructions.
- You can specify the type (hardness, thickness, color) of pencil and type or eraser if it is important.
- Make use of the entire wall.
- The public may not be involved in the execution of the drawing.

Example Instructions

1. The center of the first circle is determined by the tallest point reached by the hand of the shortest person in the class
2. The center of the second circle is determined by the mark made when a piece of charcoal is thrown at the center of the wall by someone who is good at throwing
3. The center of the third circle is determined by the distance one's arm can reach from the nearest window or door
4. From each center, lines of painter's tape will be extended out in all directions to create starburst shapes that intersect and vary in thickness according to the taper's discretion

Instructions (continued)	5	Each person on the team, represented by one color, will draw a ring (circle) around each center, going one by one in the order of the rainbow with whomever is present at the time
	6	Each person will draw until his or her pencil needs to be sharpened and then switch to the next circle and repeat
	7	After two days of drawing, the starburst tape designs will be removed to reveal clean white strips of wall
	8	If music is available, it will be played
	9	Meditative sounds are preferred to emphasize the ritual of the wall drawing
	10	Whatever music is chosen will intermingle with the conversation of negotiating art students and teachers setting up the show
Equipment		Pencil, erasers, tape, ladder, etc. as determined by the students' set of instructions
Timetable		Open
Notes to Instructors		Start with a discussion about the theoretical implications and history of Conceptual Art, including its relationship to the ideas of authorship, spontaneity, expression, and play. Readings included Sol Lewitt's "Sentences on Conceptual Art," 1969, and selections from *Recording Conceptual Art,* Norvell, Patricia and Alberro, Alexanders ed. University of California Press, 2001.

Urban Fabric: The City as Text

Two-Dimensional Design

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Challenge

After in class exercises and visits to chosen outside locations, students will create a thematic, narrative mixed-media artwork based on their environment.

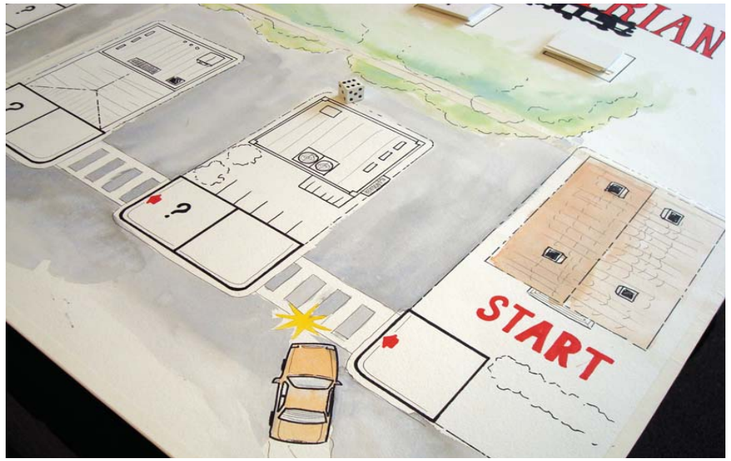
Objective

To utilize students' surroundings and examine sequence, context, and meaning

How to Play

Part I: *Playing*
To play with and look at the impact of sequence and context, each student writes down one thoughtful sentence. Make photocopies so that each member of the classroom gets a collection of all sentences. In an hour or less, have them create a piece of writing using all the words they have. They cannot delete any words, but can cut the sentences into fragments to rejoin them with other sentences and can add words in between sentences if necessary. This word play allows them to see how sequence and context of words affect meaning.

Part II: *Generating*
Begin by asking students to take a close look at their urban surroundings—both the natural and constructed environment. When walking through a city, their path creates a sequence of encounters on a daily basis. This sequence will operate as the inspiration for their imagery and content. Ask students to organize a narrative of sequential events or movements to create a path through the city. Students should make rubbings, tracings, and transfers of signage and "landmarks" they encounter to record their environment. Students will then bring this raw material into class, break into small groups, begin to brainstorm ideas based on their collections. Then draw, trace, color, and collage ideas into a sketches or studies for a composition.



How to Play (continued)

Part III: *Developing*
Have students expand on their ideas by going back out into the city and collecting again, but with new ideas in mind. In addition to making more rubbings, transfers and note taking, students are asked to bring a camera along. These recordings will combine tracing, transferring, drawing, rubbings and photos. Students may use color and elect to incorporate digital technology into this project when needed.

Part IV: *Producing*
At this point students will have worked through a number of ideas and discussed them with their classmates. They will need to narrow their content and select a theme to complete their project. Ask students to consider how the juxtaposition or scale of images, along with value and color can affect meaning, narrative, mood, or expression. Visual elements are brought together to interpret their experience of how they see life around them. Encourage students to incorporate any techniques in addition to those that are explored in the course—drawing, gesture, rubbings, textures, photo material, digital media, found objects etc. The final outcome should utilize the equivalent of 5 sheets of quality 22"x30" paper. They may keep the paper whole or cut the paper into multiple sheets.

Equipment

mixed media, paper, and camera

Timetable

3 weeks

Color Scavenger Hunt

Color Theory

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Challenge

Students hunt for certain color combinations and phenomena outside of the classroom and document them through photographic compositions.

Objectives

- To identify and utilize defined color schemes in dynamic and unified compositions
- To create a sense of light and space through the use of color
- To work effectively as a team and develop cooperative and collaborative skills
- To develop a unifying, thematic strategy

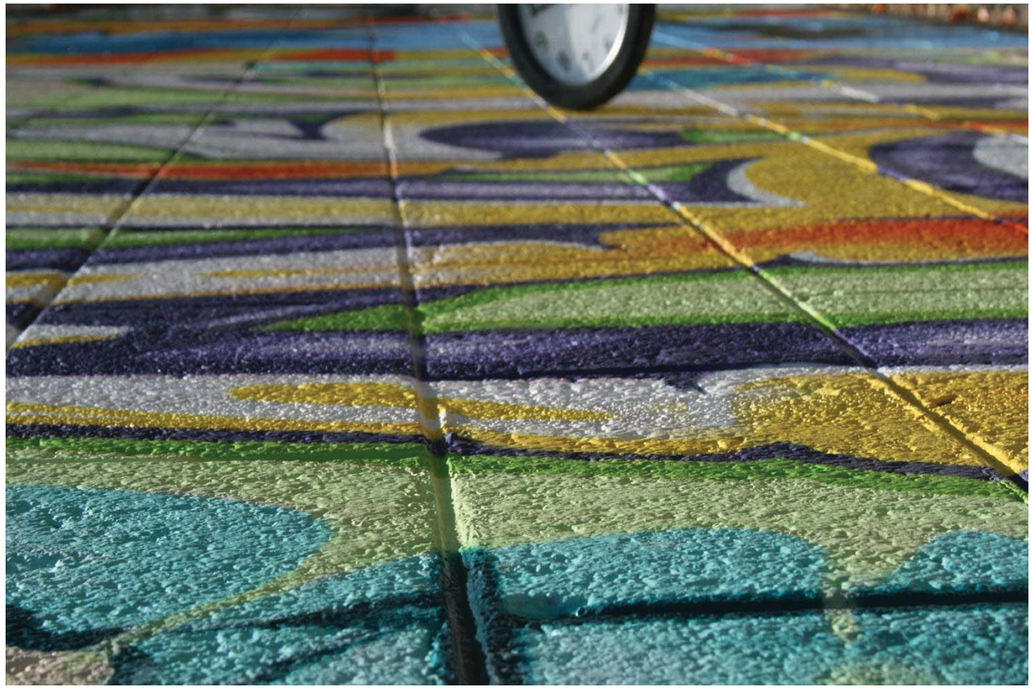
How to Play

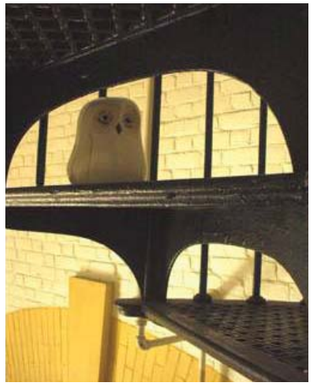
In lieu of the regular class format, students will meet with groups of 3-4 to work toward the above objectives. Students will be provided with a list of Color Destinations and must provide a unique (no duplicates) photographic composition that proves they arrived at each destination. Students are advised to take multiple shots and explore multiple solutions for each problem, so that they are able to select the most effective and related photos.

The chosen subject matter is open; however, their team will work to develop a thematic relationship between the photos taken. Each image must also contain a "constant" object of their collective choosing which will appear in every photo. This object will prove that this photograph is specifically for the given assignment and create a more cohesive series of images. Make sure students consider the color of the object they select, because it should be integrated into the color destination as much as possible.

Groups may not use any type of digital manipulation, meaning no value, hue, or saturation adjustments, as well as no additional cropping.

Groups will work independently for two class periods exploring environments and searching for color destinations. Groups must coordinate effectively and schedule a meeting time outside of class to assemble their presentations. Groups will present their scavenger hunt digitally during the following class period.





Destinations

The destinations are devided into two rounds. The first round focuses on comprehension and application of the formal properties of color. The second round focuses on the color's ability to express expressive specific emotions and ideas.

Round 1

1. monochromatic with a wide range of value
2. monochromatic with a narrow range of value and a deep space
3. analogous with limited value and a muted range of saturation
4. complementary with a high tonal key and a wide range of saturation
5. a prismatic, triadic composition
6. achromatic gray combined with deep atmospheric perspective
7. chromatic grays with a narrow tonal key

Round 2

8. a melancholy color composition
9. a violent color composition
10. an ecstatic color composition
11. an ironic color composition
12. a color composition that communicates ambivalence

Equipment

A camera, a "constant" object, a digital file of the photographic presentation (i.e. PowerPoint or something like it.)

Timetable

Approximately 2 class periods

Note to Instructors

For inspiration before their hunt, we give students a list of color photographers and other artists using color in space as examples. It is also helpful for them to have their "constant" when they present their portfolio of photographs.

Big, Crazy, and in Your Space

Three-Dimensional Design

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Challenge

Students will construct a sculpture that is as tall or taller than them using nothing but newspaper and masking tape.

Objectives

- To construct a structurally sound and stable form
- To create an amazingly interesting asymmetrical form that severs the space that surrounds it
- To consider the use of line, plane, repetition, and variety to push design interest

How to Play

Using only newspaper and masking tape for materials, students will construct a dynamic form that is tall or taller than them. Height is an important focus for this project; whoever creates the highest, free-standing form while meeting all other design requirements of asymmetry and space navigation qualities will get an "A." Design uniqueness and innovation is also an important aspect of this challenge. Ask students to consider how to manipulate the material to go beyond being 100% about structure and geometry so it does not look just like a simple paper tower. Their design focus should go beyond simple height expectations for this project.

Equipment

Newspapers (preferably multiple Sunday papers) and masking tape. They may not use lifting aids, ropes, ladders or cranes.

Timetable

Approximately 2 class periods. I make this project quick and crazy.

Notes to Instructors

I show students images of the Eifel tower, Buckminster Fuller, Zaha Hadid, and other sculptors/architects that make non-traditional building designs. These examples of innovation with materials challenge students to create new and interesting forms. These are recyclable, so if you have a paper recycling dumpster nearby this project will not become waste afterward.

VIDEO: GAME

Two-Dimensional Design

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Challenge

Students are challenged to generate quick video responses using competitive and collaborative game play.

Objective

- To produce narrative structures through a series of video responses
- To collaborate innovatively and resourcefully in order to make good use of time

How to Play

Have students partner to form teams. Give each team a video camera. The team to complete the most videos by the end of the class period wins. Each option under a category may only be completed once.

Directions for Students

- Complete the task by showing it to the Instructor
- Roll 1 dice for categories Format and Time
- Roll 1 or 2 die for categories Content and Wildcard
- Complete 6 tasks to win the game. If 2 teams tie, create an additional video for a tie breaker.

Form a task

Refer to the chart on the following page:

Equipment

Video camera

Notes to Instructors

Discuss how analogy, metaphor, algorithms, contrast, and variety may be used to problem solve during the game. Awards for winning may be physical prizes or extra credit. This game may be transformed into a longer assignment, having the students edit their footage in a later class to further explore narrative structures.

ROLL	FORMAT	CONTENT	TIME	WILDCARD
1	Linear Narrative	Show a person moving from one place to another without walking	1 min	Must talk funny
2	Non-Linear	Show two people having a conversation	2 min	All shots must be taken with camera on floor
3	Montage	Record a music video	3 min	All shots must be taken with camera 6 inches from subject
4	Repetitve	Make an abstract animation with line and shape	4 min	All shots must be taken from above subject
5	Cyclical	Reenact a famous scene from a movie	5 min	Must use the color (roll dice) 1-Red, 2- Blue, 3- Yellow, 4-Orange, 5- Purple, 6- Green
6	Tension/Resolution	Tell your life story	6 min	Must shout all lines of dialogue
7	--	Use an object as the star or main component of the video (roll dice) 1-Phone, 2-Computer, 3-Mp3 player or headphones, 4-Pen/pencil, 5-Keys, 6-Shoes	--	No verbal dialogue (no talking)
8	--	Reenact a Presidential speech	--	No people can be in this video
9	--	Show the meaning of life	--	Must use a dominant shape (roll dice) 1-Circle, 2-Square, 3-Line, 4-Triangle, 5-Oval, 6-Rectangle

Tall Straw

Three-Dimensional Design

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Challenge

In pairs, students create a tall, freestanding structure in 60 minutes made from drinking straws and tape. The tallest structure that stands for 15 minutes is the winner.

Objectives

- To problem solve and work collaboratively
- To create a strong, free-standing structure
- To use time effectively

How to Play

Give students the above challenge and assign partners. Each pair is given 30 minutes to strategize building techniques and which types of straws and tape will be used for their structure. An additional hour may be assigned to practice and revise building methods before the 60 minute challenge begins.

Equipment

Drinking straws and tape

Timetable

Day 1
- 30 minute strategizing session

Day 2
- 60 minute "practice and revise" session
- 60 minute challenge
- 30 minute discussion/critique

Notes to Instructors

Introduce and discuss issues of structure and various strategies of construction with the class, as well as problem solving methods and approaches for a timed project. During the measuring and critique portion of the assignment, have the large group identify successful and unsuccessful strategies to the problem.

Images

featuring student works from:

2 **Castleton State College**

6-7 **Department of Art, University of Kentucky**

10 **Central College**

12 **Alfred University, New York State College of Ceramics**

18-9 **Department of Art and Design, East Tennessee State University**

24 **Department of Art and Art History, Rollins College**

27 **School of the Arts, Virginia Commonwealth University**

30 **Savannah College of Art and Design**

32 **Department of Art and Design, East Tennessee State University**

38 **University of Wisconsin – Barron County**

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