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Teaching Philosophy

The ability of a visual image to communicate depends on the meshing of intention and technique into a succinct vocabulary. To this end a successful educational program must emphasize both content and technique within a historical context.

Teaching is a huge responsibility as it lays the foundation for the future. Students come to class with a wide range of backgrounds and experience. It is important that the students be responded to as individuals while developing a sense of community in the classroom. From this grounding of the pressure/spontaneity and stress/thrill of the creative process can be explored.

Classroom management and activities center around developing the student ability to communicate ideas and concepts. They are encouraged to participate in open dialogue during lectures and critiques. Students are also guided to develop writing skills with journals, research projects and assessments for each project. Assignments are developed to explore and refine the students ability to translate ideas by executing visual works of art that blend technique with content.

Critiques and spontaneous discussions are a very important part of the educational process. Among the most valuable skills a student can acquire is a critical eye toward their own work and developing the ability to be articulate about their work and the work of others. This will aid the student after leaving the supportive environment of the classroom.

Students need to have a firm grounding in traditional techniques and equipment. They also need to be encouraged to be innovative and explore alternative processes and new technologies. This search must not stop at materials. Content must be explored with the same openness and spirit of adventure. Students must be prepared to take risks and challenge their preconceived notions concerning themselves and society. It is this risk taking, along with problem solving that builds confidence.

Projects should be structured to allow students to utilize their strengths while working on less familiar areas. They should be able to work from their own level while still contributing to the group dynamic. In addition students need to have a historical awareness and to understand their work as part of a continuum. Stylistic movements and technical innovations must be viewed in relation to the ideas that were the driving force behind their development.

The result of a successful educational program is in the ability of the student to prosper outside the classroom, to continue to search and to explore. As a working artist I practice this philosophy on a daily basis and share the results with my students, peers and the community at large.