



Statement of Teaching Philosophy – Visual Art and Graphic Design:

I love to teach and I love the visual world we live in. I knew early on in my life that I wanted to be an artist and a teacher. I have taught at the college level for the past sixteen years and do not regard my position as an educator passively. I accept it with humility and consider it a position inherent with great responsibility and potential consequence. With that in mind, I regard each student I encounter as a creative individual that comes to the table possessing a particular set of skills, a direction, an intuitive sense and knowledge that is uniquely their own. I wish to focus on and nurture the strengths of the individual student, help form new strengths and rid or modify those traits and habits that are not as desirable for long term success. In doing so, I believe that the student will leave their educational experience with the confidence, vision and the proficiency to be a positive contributor to society within culture(s). I do believe, however, that it is only through a partnership between teacher and student that will lead to a truly successful learning experience that will be internalized and kept by the student beyond the confines of academic structure. I might see the potential within the individual and ignite their desire for visual creativity through my own passion but they must continually fuel the flame with commitment, energy and hard work.

Among many concerns that I have as an art educator, it is imperative for me to provide students with a sound knowledge base, inclusive of history, technical skills, contemporary trends and technology along with the basic understanding of visual form – how it is made, how it is perceived by others and what it can become. Ethical communication through the visual and digital arts and the understanding of a global audience is paramount. I incorporate in the classroom a schedule that is disciplined and rigorous, it is made up of problem solving assignments that often parallels real world experience. Some projects are driven by the individual and some are collaborative and solved through team strategy. Each student is encouraged to research and challenge themselves with new dynamic terms of creative expression and is asked to not just be a doer of the project but become a visionary for new visual language, advanced conceptual awareness and innovative design. It is a personal aim of mine to develop leaders not followers - I wish for all of my students to reach their goals. Both reading and writing are expected to supplement the students research experience. In all visual design it is of primary importance to first understand the scope of the project at hand, preparatory sketches called thumbs are encouraged, if working in the computer - thumbs are made to roughs, to computer comps to finalization. This process takes the student through the rigors of comprehensive research, critical analysis and development which most often yields a successful visual result.

The nature of art is one of revision, collaboration and evolution. I attempt to prepare the student to be flexible and open minded to new ideas by becoming engaged, listening to ones peers and accepting diversity. This act of listening carefully, with eyes wide open, will enable the individual student to have a decided clarity about their own personal direction and help them form an ideology which will define their own work. They will become stylistic authors with a personal, identifiable visual voice. This is important, as all art constructs are some sort of visual communication - be it for private expression or global concern as a fine artist; or within the graphics industry for market and commerce, social issues, or for educational and editorial cause. I have heard it often said that the design industry drives our



Statement of Teaching Philosophy – Continued:

economy, shapes our world view and will help guide and lead us into the future. Our paintings, sculpture, photography and the like are also markers within culture having a historical significance.

Additionally, as a visual arts teacher, I am particularly interested in fostering innovative thought and problem solving tactics in order that students will produce the most aesthetic and intellectually challenging image possible; aesthetics should not be bound by our past but should address matters of concern within our contemporary and ever-growing global society. All visual art is language, it speaks on many levels - historically, culturally, politically, socially – both collectively and to the individual. Part of my role as an art educator is to encourage students to represent themselves honestly, to provide our world with works that speak, works that can support itself through content and technique. Twentieth century artist, Keith Haring believed that if his work through semiotics (sign and symbol as language) could effect one person only, it was worth the making - I too, hope to have positive influence on individual students so that they in turn can speak fluently through their visual works to an ever changing and expanding world forum. In end, I strive for a dynamic, memorable impact on my students through their classroom experience; through the ideas, techniques, materials and dialogue presented by myself and through collaborative critique by their peers, other faculty members, internships and supportive external arts organizations.

I am committed in my own life to make art, creativity is an innate part of our being, I accept this responsibility wholeheartedly to maintain and foster it's continuum. To paraphrase artist Maya Lin "Although our existence on this is earth is brief, we as artists are part of a collective consciousness, we extend far beyond our times through our works, images, thoughts and writings. We communicate to future generations who we are, what we have been, and what we will become, hopefully influencing for the better".