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Teaching Philosophy

Creativity and critical thinking are core values that are central to my teaching practice. Technology is constantly evolving and students need to adapt to current trends in order to adjust to the changing artistic, cultural, and social climate. Teaching basic skills and techniques, while drawing upon historical and theoretical examples, provides students with a strong foundation for developing their own ideas. As an educator, the main challenge for me is to teach technical mastery while encouraging and nurturing a creative and critical mind.

My sensibility in the fine arts informs my work in new media and design and one of my primary interests as both an artist and educator is the hybridization between these two areas. Working with technology requires a combination of investigative skills and expertise, including interactive design, video, sound, photography, typography, 3D animation, and illustration, to name a few. When teaching courses in design and new media, it is essential to address this interdisciplinary quality and always be prepared for changes within the context of the discipline. I view the computer as a tool that has vast creative potential. However, at the same time, I advise students not to be seduced by the spectacle of technology and I encourage them to rely mostly on concept and strong design principles. Work that can communicate a compelling message while upholding strong aesthetic qualities will continue to have a life beyond the present, regardless of the process or medium used to create it.

Another one of my many roles as a teacher is to break down any preconceived notions that might hinder a beginning artist's creativity. This includes encouraging students to uncover their personal issues in order to discover what exactly drives them in their creative life. I require students to question all stages of the art making process. I believe that art is not just about the final product but begins with developing an idea, and includes both process and presentation. I stress to students that the process is a journey and all the conflicts or challenges involved in the making are just as valuable as the resolution.

In the classroom, I often address the class as a whole, but in a studio situation, I find it equally, if not more important to work with each student individually. A good teacher knows how to listen, keep an open mind, be flexible and spontaneous, respond intuitively, interject, gain control, and then be able to let go and allow the student to come to there own conclusions. Critique is a time where students can reflect and discuss their work as well as have a constructive dialogue about various issues explored in the course. It is just as important for students to listen to what their peers have to say as it is for them to express their own opinions and formulate their ideas. Students can learn as much from their peers then they can from the professor. Within each student is a new method of creating or self-discovery.

I believe that a student's potential for learning and excelling in any chosen field is based on certain key attributes: openness to a subject, past experiences, and a individual passion or desire to be creative. With an open mind, a student is more willing to experiment, ask questions, and investigate their topic. Past experiences can help frame an area of interest and create a

personal direction. The desire and passion to be creative provides the drive to follow through and even go beyond expectations.These characteristics can help shape and mold a student's way of thinking and looking at the world. I believe that this can be furthered nurtured through teaching.

As a professional artist and designer, I am personally invested in the mediums that I teach which gives me a deep respect and appreciation for both design thinking and the artistic discipline. My past experiences grant me foresight into what students potentially might go through in their creative endeavors. In turn, the teaching experience gives me inspiration to learn and grow in my own creative research.