

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

As teachers we are mentors, not monitors. We motivate and inspire students to find their identity and voice in the process of art making. As instructors, we are responsible for remaining current and engaged in research, art making, and scholarship. We must be conversant in current issues of aesthetics, theories, and contemporary practice.

Education in the classroom must be a reciprocal process. It must be flexible and versatile, rich in discussion and in conversation. We must recognize that each class has its own dynamic and adjust our teaching approaches to create an atmosphere in the classroom that is safe, honest, and conducive to learning.

The teaching process must encourage students to become independent critical thinkers and challenge their art making process and preconceived ideas. Students warrant the opportunity to receive realistic, constructive, honest, unbiased feedback from peers and instructors, and have quantifiable ways to measure successes and weaknesses. Students must be equipped with rich problem-solving strategies that promotes creative impulses, and we must teach through collaborative communication and open-minded inquiry.

I value honesty in the classroom and out. I truly believe that good informed discussion, hearing from professionals in the field, and trips outside the studio can sometimes be just as effective, if not more so than an in-class lecture. I am available to my students and encourage them to ask the questions we don't have answers to. I believe in challenging students with new techniques and asking them to return with world changing ideas that they are passionate about. Simply put, I want my students to know that they are valued as humans, that they have gifts not replicated by another, and that they have a skill set to share. I want to be their cheerleader, encouraging intellectual and emotional growth. I want to help them to find their worth and realize that they are truly awesome. I want them to find what they love, or what makes them uncomfortable, and help them find out why. I want them to seek out ways to beat the system, to rise above, and to pass learning along. I want to challenge them to think harder, consider others first, to be aware of current events and find a way to be the future of those events. I want them to be realistic, yet excited about the future, and strive to be the absolute best humans this world has seen. This is why I am an educator.

