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Teaching Philosophy

I believe in the power of art and its potency to question, if not to change, people's perceptions and belief systems. The process of innovative thinking and creative making has the ability to impact our current society and evoke social awareness in each of our selective communities. By pairing critical analysis with a demonstrative practice, art can become abstractly (philosophically) engaging while also sobering and concretely (pragmatically) relevant.

I believe in the education of artists. With relevant guidance, support and motivation, an artist's practice can be enhanced and the mastery of a medium can begin to take form. Whether the artist is single discipline-oriented or amalgamates many disciplines simultaneously, a teacher can, by means of instruction and encouragement, guide an artist so that he or she can use each medium aptly and significantly.

My studio practice both influences and gives validity to my teaching. The discoveries and failures that occur in my studio give weight and substantiate my discourse while in the classroom. My practice gives tangible perspective to students and also deepens my library of resources by extending my catalogue beyond the latest essays and most current art journals to that of personal experience. Beyond the studio I find it very helpful to be active in other aspects of the community as well. Whether that activity comes from exhibiting, curating, writing, facilitating events or various social engagements, this greatly influences what I bring into the classroom. Lastly, my convictions as an artist and instructor make it pertinent for me to be not only aware of current (political and sociological) events but also to be well-informed art historically and contemporarily.

In the classroom I would hope to be a catalyst expanding the formal and conceptual vocabulary of the artist-student, increasing the capacity for critical dialogue and making aware the historical significance of art practice today, its relevance to art practice 50 years ago, 100 years ago, 500 years ago, etcetera. Because I am convinced that it is vitally important for artists to be aware of both history and theory, I also implement selected readings and have contemporary, modern and pre-modern visual lectures. I commonly use individual and group critiques as well. This action encapsulates the history and theory with practice and equips each individual student (and simultaneously the collective class) with the information and tools necessary to have a successful and socially relevant art practice.