

Sophia Narrett  
Teaching Philosophy

I plan to empower each student with the necessary tools to grow and develop his or her own artistic process beyond our coursework. To do this, I will assist each student in developing productive methods of critique, promote an understanding of art history and contemporary art, and encourage students to develop sustainable methods of problem solving and self-awareness within the studio context.

Developing productive methods of critique during a course will allow each student to leave with an understanding of how to evaluate his or her future work. My critical philosophy places importance on the intentionality of a work, the formal qualities, and the way that the work operates conceptually in a larger social or artistic context. The best way for students to learn to critique work is to actively participate, and to contribute their own arguments within a safe yet rigorous classroom environment. By acting as a generous moderator, I maintain a stance of enthusiastic objectivity. I put forth an understanding of how a given work might be criticized by various schools of thought or in relation to pre-existing work, while at the same time championing the nature of each student's own practice, and working towards the achievement of his or her own unique potential. For beginner level students I primarily focus on encouraging them to develop conceptual interests, to improve upon technical skills, and to experiment with possible artistic approaches. In a beginning level drawing class assignments would vary from observational drawings of the figure, space, and objects geared toward finding methods of rendering light and form to conceptual challenges such

as to make a drawing that is a fact and make a drawing that is a fiction. It is important to me that each student fully realizes his or her unique potential. By working together we can heighten the degree to which students are able to realize their goals and to successfully execute ideas.

It is my goal that upon the completion of an upper level art course each student has the ability to contextualize his or her work within the contemporary art landscape. Thus it is important to encourage each student to develop an enthusiasm for art history, contemporary art and art criticism that will encourage them to further investigate these fields upon the completion of our coursework.

While I design a standard course of readings and slide talks of relevant artists for any course, I also find it important to recommend individualized readings, articles, and artists to each student as they may apply to his or her work. For instance, I would ask that an abstract oil painter read Clement Greenberg's "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," Yve-Alain Bois' "Painting: The Task of Mourning," as well as recent reviews of contemporary provisional painting to ensure that he or she is aware of the debate around the trajectory of abstract expressionism to contemporary abstraction. Additionally I try to make all students aware of the resources available to them as artists, including contemporary art journals such as Artforum and October, websites, museums, and galleries that may be good educational resources. In this way I give each student a foundation to continually understand and contextualize his or her studio practice even as it develops and grows beyond the classroom environment.

When left to their own devices, many artists operate within a set of habits, parameters and assumptions, sometimes to the detriment of their work. While working with advanced students I plan to draw attention to these habits and assumptions so that each student may engage in a critical process of reflection that may accelerate their artistic development. By drawing awareness to the strategies that an artist depends on I will encourage him or her to find new ways to step outside of these limitations and to move forward in the manner of their choosing. For instance if a student has always used source material from google images without trying any other research or drawing methods, I would discuss this dependence with her and make her aware of the meaning that appropriation brings to the work, and historical examples of artists who have used appropriation such as Richard Prince, Julian Schnabel, Sherrie Levine, David Salle, etc. I always refrain from a prescriptive approach; instead I work to guide each student to the questions that their work and interests raise, in order that they may invent their own solutions, answers and responses. I would suggest options such as taking her own photographs, drawing from nature, or setting up a model so that she incorporate a new approach for her next project instead of or in addition to using google images. When students are encouraged to think or work in ways that may not be their default approach, they often make the most valuable discoveries. By instilling these methods of questioning and problem solving in each student, I can give them a sense of self-awareness that will continually push their work forward.

## Sophia Narrett Course Proposals

### Basic:

#### **Painting 1: Material Exploration Through Seriality and Focus**

Fall 2013

Schedule: Mondays 1:10-6:10pm

Office Hours: By Appointment and Tuesdays 5-6:30pm

Room: 412 Memorial Hall

Credits: 3

Instructor: Sophia Narrett

Capacity: 15

Lab Fee: \$100

Prerequisite: Visual Art Foundations Course

Basic Level Course for Undergraduate Major

This course is an introduction to oil painting technical and conceptual practices, and a prerequisite to upper level painting courses. Coursework will begin with basic instruction on safe and effective practices for use of materials, stretcher building, and surface preparations.

Practical exercises will encourage students' exploration of various mediums and techniques of paint application. We will investigate the basics of color theory by working with excerpts from Josef Albers' *Interaction of Color*. These material experiments will lead to a series of fifty miniature paintings, allowing students to experiment with different approaches to assigned problems, including landscape, still life, painting the figure, and working with digital source imagery. This ambitious body of miniature paintings will allow students to discover a range of techniques in paint application which can create light, spatial dynamics, motion, texture, and form, while also allowing them to locate personal curiosities and propensities for content and imagery. The students will then be able to pursue these interests further in a series of three open ended, conceptual prompts that they will respond to in order to create their own ambitious projects for presentation in group critiques. Slide talks on contemporary art and critical articles will elaborate these prompts. The course will culminate in a final painting addressing the content and formal concerns of the student's choosing. Visual Art Foundations course is a prerequisite of this course.

### Elective:

#### **Beyond Paint**

Wintersession 2014

Schedule: Thursdays and Fridays 1:10-6:10pm & Every Other Wednesday 1:10-6:10pm

Office Hours: By Appointment and Tuesdays 5-6:30pm

Room: 412 Memorial Hall

Credits: 3

Instructor: Sophia Narrett

Capacity: 15

Lab Fee: \$50

No Prerequisites

Elective Open to Undergraduate and Graduate Students

What does it mean to call a video, sculpture, digital print, quilt, found object, or even a performance a painting? There is a rich tradition of artists who have challenged Clement Greenberg's call for "medium specificity" within painting, while still maintaining a connection to the critical discourse and image-based nature of painting. In fact, unusual materials often present painters with unique opportunities to communicate a variety of conceptual messages. We will look at the evolution of this tradition as well as the plethora of contemporary artists that attempt to

create paintings in this way in order to understand the possibilities available to us today. Students will engage in their own material explorations through open assignments and will present work at periodic group critiques of varied formats. These assignments may be materially based, such as making a painting that incorporates recycled or found objects as a primary material, or conceptually based, such as making a durational work. The final project will allow students to return to and build upon any one of the previous assignments, or to invent a new problem to explore. Throughout the course, we will work to form our own definitions of what painting is and can be defined by. Students will be encouraged to develop and pursue their own interests in relation to their existing practices. There are no prerequisites to this course and students from all backgrounds are encouraged.

Advanced:

**Fall Semester Thesis Development:**

**Building Self-Awareness and Criticality Within the Studio**

Spring 2014

Schedule: Mondays and Wednesdays 1:10-5:10pm

Office Hours: By Appointment and Tuesdays 5-6:30pm

Room: 512 Memorial Hall

Credits: 6

Instructor: Sophia Narrett

Capacity: 15

Lab Fee: \$50

Prerequisite: Successfully completed the Freshman-Junior Requirements of Major  
Advanced Level Course for Undergraduate Seniors Within Their Major

Required for first semester seniors majoring in Visual Art, this is a chance for students to design and execute an ambitious body of work in a self-directed manner, in preparation for thesis work during the following spring semester. Students will build toward a thematic yet discursive approach that will be the basis for a thesis project. Each student will be asked to question their previous assumptions and art making habits, in order to develop a greater level of awareness and intentionality within their practice. We will consider canonical authors including Greenberg, Fried, Krauss, Foster and other important writings from *Artforum* and *October* in order to help each student better understand, develop and form their own position within the contemporary art landscape. Contemporary themes in art such as form as content, identity, fiction and narrative, technological approaches, psychosexual investigations, and globalism will be openly discussed. Individual reviews will alternate with group critiques, allowing students to build a community and dialogue while still receiving personalized feedback. Each student will present the entire body of work to their peers and a guest critic during the final review. In addition to this body of work, students will complete a reflection paper on the assigned article of their choosing, a slide presentation on three contemporary artists of their choosing, as well as a final artist statement regarding the body of work that they have produced and outlining future goals for the spring semester.

Rhode Island School of Design  
Painting Department

## BEYOND PAINT

**Wintersession 2014**

**PAINT-4430**

B Class: Thursdays and Fridays 1:10-6:10pm & Every Other Wednesday 1:10-6:10pm

3 Credits

Instructor: Sophia Narrett

Contact: snarrett@risd.edu

Location: Memorial Hall Room 204

Office Hours: Wednesdays 2:00-4:00pm and by Appointment

Maximum Capacity: 15 Students

Elective Studio Course Open to Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Lab Fee: \$50

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

What does it mean to call a video, sculpture, digital print, quilt, found object, or even a performance a painting? There is a rich tradition of artists who have challenged Clement Greenberg's call for "medium specificity" within painting, while still maintaining a connection to the critical discourse and image-based nature of painting. In fact, unusual materials often present painters with unique opportunities to communicate a variety of conceptual messages. We will look at the evolution of this tradition as well as the plethora of contemporary artists that attempt to create paintings in this way in order to understand the possibilities available to us today. Students will engage in their own material explorations through open assignments and will present work at periodic group critiques of varied formats.

These assignments may be materially based, such as making a painting that incorporates recycled or found objects as a primary material, or conceptually based, such as making a durational work. The final project will allow students to return to and build upon any one of the previous assignments, or to invent a new problem to explore. Throughout the course, we will work to form our own definitions of what painting is and can be defined by. Students will be encouraged to develop and pursue their own interests in relation to their existing practices. There are no prerequisites to this course and students from all backgrounds are encouraged.

## **GOALS:**

- To develop an understanding of arguments for and against medium specificity, to become familiar with artists who challenge the idea of medium specificity, and to formulate artistic responses to this debate.
- To gain exposure to a wealth of available materials, challenge the limits of material capabilities, achieve unexpected results and ways to use materials, and to experiment with form.
- To integrate imagery, content, and conceptual goals with use of materials and to gain exposure to contemporary artists who have pushed the boundaries of materials for both abstract and representational purposes.
- To become aware of the conceptual implications that materials and process can hold for works of art, and to develop modes of working that can integrate into each student's future studio practice.

## **OBJECTIVES/ASSESSMENT:**

- Consideration of the potential that found and recycled objects hold for art making, and an understanding of found materials within contemporary modes of working. (*Project 1: Using Found Objects and Recycled Materials 15%*)
- An expanded view of one's formal and conceptual interests and abilities, and a deep awareness of the diverse effects that materials can realize in terms of both representational and abstract goals. (*Project 2: Three Challenges in Form and Content 20%*)
- Recognition of the material possibilities that process may provide and analysis of the meanings that various types of processes may create. (*Project 3: Process Driven Results 15%*)
- The ability to design a self-directed, ambitious final project that builds upon or reacts to themes we have covered in class while taking execution, conceptual content, use of materials, experimentation and presentation to an unprecedented level. (*Final Project: 30%*)
- Participation in group critiques, class discussions, and a sustained high level of effort during work time. (*Participation/Effort 15%*)
- A written reflection on the contemporary artists and ideas that have been discussed, the successes and failures of Projects 1-3, and possibilities for future work. (*Written Reflection 5%*)

Please note that basic and advanced levels of competency which correlate to letter grades will be described specifically on handouts for each of the Projects.

## **CRITIQUE CRITERIA:**

During critique students are expected to give thoughtful, empathetic critical feedback, and to engage in a dialogue that contextualizes the work within the artist's studio operations as well as in relation to contemporary art, assigned readings and the external world. Questions posed to students may ask them to analyze the stages of a project's development, to engage in a comparative discussion of a work with that of predecessors, to contextualize a work through metaphoric or descriptive terms, or to predict future opportunities for improvement based on the scope of a current work.

Work should be completely installed before class begins, or during the allotted installation time. Care should be taken to achieve professional artistic presentation. Critique formats will vary and at times will consist of group discussions, individual meetings, and written peer responses. Critique structures will be designed suited to the needs of each specific group of students, and may be altered as the class unfolds.

## **SCHEDULE:**

### **Week 1:**

#### **Thurs February 9<sup>th</sup>**

- Introduction/Review Syllabus
- Artist Lecture: Artists Working against medium specificity with an emphasis on those who use recycled, repurposed or found materials (Lynda Benglis, Jessica Stockholder, Cheryl Donegan, Isa Genzken, Alex Da Corte, Unmonumental curated by Richard Flood, Laura Hoptman, and Massimiliano Gioni for the New Museum 2007-08)
- Introduction to *Project 1: Using Found Objects and Recycled Materials*
- A list of local places to find materials will be distributed
- Surface Preparation Demo: Each student will prepare a small stretcher, stretch it with canvas and build a gesso ground
- Introduction to Acrylic Paint Demo

Assignment: By tomorrow, Friday the 10<sup>th</sup>, please read Clement Greenberg's "Avant-Garde & Kitsch" (1939) and Jan Verwoert's "Why Are Conceptual Artists Painting Again? Because They Think It's a Good Idea" (2005) and complete a painting on your prepared ground from class. The goal here is to briefly share our ideas about what a medium specific painting might look like. Feel free to work in any style, from source materials, from life or in an abstract manner. You may consider this a chance to introduce your classmates to your previous studio work/interests, or to experiment with new content.

#### **Friday February 10<sup>th</sup>**

- Class Trip to the RISD's Material Resource Center
- Class Discussion of the assigned readings in the context of yesterday's artist lecture, the trip to the Material Resource Center, and our initial paintings
- Work Time to begin formulating ideas for *Project 1: Using Found Objects and Recycled Materials*
- Assignments: Complete *Project 1: Using Found Objects and Recycled Materials* and read "Unmonumental: the Object in the 21st Century" by Richard Flood as well as Dina Deitsch's Catalogue essay for Paint Things at the deCordova Museum (2013) by Wednesday the 15<sup>th</sup>

Week 1 Learning Outcomes: Knowledge of building gesso grounds, awareness of the preconceptions we bring to painting, consideration of the potential that found and recycled objects hold for art making, an understanding of these materials within contemporary modes of working, and an initial artistic response to the question of medium specificity.

## Week 2:

### Wednesday, January 15<sup>th</sup>

- Critique of *Project 1: Using Found Objects and Recycled Materials*
  - Critique format will consist of a brief time to individually reflect on and write comments about each student's work. We will then share the recorded comments and pursue an organic discussion based on the written critiques.
- Artist Lecture: Material Manipulation (Sheila Hicks, Cordy Ryman, James Hyde, Vadis Turner) and Rendering without Paint (Jamie Vasta, Erin Riley, Todd Knopke)
- Introduction to *Project 2: Three Challenges in Form and Content*
  - A menu of 100 formal challenges and 100 content-based challenges will be distributed. Students will then plan and execute three distinct art works. Each of the three works should respond to two (or more) formal challenges and one (or more) content challenge. Students should aim for a diverse selection of challenges that will push the boundaries of previous modes of working/interests and will lead to a wide range of results.
- Demo: Additional Techniques in Acrylic Paint

Assignment: Select the challenges you will respond to for *Project 2*, gather materials in order to make good use of the next two work days and read "*Not About Paint* at Steven Zevitas" by John Pyper (2011)

### Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>

- Work Day

Assignment: Continue *Project 2: Three Challenges in Form and Content*

### Friday, January 17<sup>th</sup>

- Trip to the RISD Museum: Each student will locate the following works that can be viewed as non-traditional paintings. Choose one to view for an extended period and take notes or sketch your impressions. Be prepared to discuss why it may or may not be valuable to view this work as a painting. How might it relate to the history or practices of painting?
  - *Untitled*, Stella Waitzkin, American, 1920 - 2003, *Untitled*, n. d., Polyester resin, Gift of the Waitzkin Memorial Library Trust 2011.43, part of the Everyday Things: Contemporary Works from the Collection exhibition
  - *Historia de Vampiros (Vampire Story)*, Jorge de la Vega, Argentine, 1930-1971, Mixed media and oil on canvas, Nancy Sayles Day Collection of Modern Latin American Art 65.068, part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Painting Collection
  - *T.K.O.*, Pepón Osorio, Puerto Rican, b. 1955, *T.K.O.*, 1989, Mixed media, Helen M. Danforth Acquisition Fund 2001.30, part of the Everyday Things: Contemporary Works from the Collection exhibition
  - *El Greco's Doves*, Ernesto Pujol, American, b. 1957, *El Greco's Doves*, 2000, Mixed media; acrylic paint; colored pencil; graphite; acrylic polymer, Helen M. Danforth Acquisition Fund 2001.17.1, part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Collection
  - Any other work of your choosing which can be considered non traditional painting
- Discussion of findings in the RISD Museum
- Work Day

Assignments: Complete *Project 2: Three Challenges in Form and Content* by next Thursday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>

Week 2 Learning Outcomes: Evaluation of the success and failures of our work with found and recycled materials in *Project 1*, and the creation of three distinct art works that embody expanded boundaries of each student's formal and conceptual interests and experimentation with the diverse effects that materials can realize in terms of both representational and abstract goals.

### **Week 3:**

Thursday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>

- Group Critique of *Project 2: Three Challenges in Form and Content*
  - Critique Format will consist of a cold read method where the artist remains silent while the group interprets the work. After a discussion of the work the artist will have a chance to respond to the group and to discuss the challenges that were selected for each work.
- Artist Lecture: Process Art and Its Roots in Painting/Process as Content (Hilary Tolan, Sheila Pepe, Eva Hesse, Robert Morris, Lynda Benglis, "Procedure/Materials" at the Whitney 1969, "When Attitudes Become Form," curated by Harold Szeeman for the Berne Kunsthalle 1969)
- Introduction to *Project 3: Process Driven Results*
  - Students will design a material process that may be durational, experimental, or repetitive and builds meaning through an investment in technique, action, or procedure.

Assignment: Work on designing your process for *Project 3*, gather the necessary materials to have a productive work day in class Friday and read "Anti-Illusion: *Procedures/Materials*" by Cindy Nemser (1971)

Friday, January 24<sup>th</sup>

- Work Day

Assignment: *Complete Project 3: Process Driven Results* by next Wednesday the 29<sup>th</sup> and read "Notes on the New" by Scott Burton (1969)

Week 3 Learning Outcomes: Assessment of the findings of *Project 2: Three Challenges in Form and Content* and the successful design and execution of a process that may provide meaning through the use of materials.

### **Week 4:**

Wednesday, January 29<sup>th</sup>

- Group Critique of *Project 3: Process Driven Results*
  - Critique format will consist of three smaller group discussions.
- Artist Lecture: Transitive Painting and Performance (Jutta Koether, RH Quaytman, Jeff Wall)
- Introduction to *Project 4: (Final Project)*
  - Students will respond to the topics we have covered in an ambitious, self-directed work or series of works. We will work together closely to discuss the scope of these works during individual meetings and work days.
- Sign up for individual meetings which will occur during class time the next day

Assignment: Plan your final project and organize sketches, plans, thoughts, or other useful materials to discuss in our individual meetings tomorrow, Thursday the 30<sup>th</sup> and read "The Postmedia Perspective" by Domenico Quaranta (2011) by tomorrow Thursday January 30<sup>th</sup>

Thursday, January 30<sup>th</sup>

- Work Day
- Individual critiques/meetings and to discuss plans and/or troubleshoot for the final project

Friday, January 31<sup>st</sup>

- Work Day
- Introduction the Written Reflection (500 words)

Assignments: Complete the final project by next Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup> and complete the written reflection by next Thursday, February 6<sup>th</sup>

Week 4 Learning Outcomes: Analysis of the meaning that various types of processes created in *Complete Project 3: Process Driven Results*, Planning and the initial undertaking of a self-directed, ambitious final project that builds upon or reacts to themes we have covered in class while taking execution, conceptual content, use of materials, experimentation and presentation to a new level.

**Week 5:**

Thursday, February 6<sup>th</sup>

- Work day to complete final projects and address any remaining concerns before the final critique

Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup>

- Group Critique of *Final Projects*
- Written Reflections will be returned with comments

Week 5 Learning Outcomes: Assessment of and reflection on the effects of the final projects and to projection of the ways that each student's work may continue in their studio practice beyond the scope of our course.

**FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITIES:**

Feedback on projects will be given during group critiques, individual meetings, and class work days. Written feedback will be returned with the written reflection on the last day of the course. Students are encouraged to schedule additional outside of class meetings for feedback if desired, attend office hours, or to contact the instructor with any additional questions or requests.

## **GRADING CRITERIA**

A letter grade will be assigned for each of percentile divisions described under the course objectives.

- A**      -Surpasses the requirements of the assigned project, technically and conceptually  
             -Displays a great deal of thoughtfulness and originality  
             -Shows a high level of effort and creative risk taking  
             -Participates in highly productive and meaningful ways in group discussions and class work sessions
  
- B**      -Satisfactory work, which meets the requirements of the assigned project  
             -Shows some thoughtfulness, originality, and effort  
             -Participates in group discussion and class work sessions
  
- C**      -Completes the minimum level of work for each project  
             -Minimal evidence of effort or participation
  
- D**      -Incomplete, late or poorly done work  
             -Is a negative or distracting presence in critiques or during work days
  
- F**      Project is incomplete or missing, or there are excessive absences or a complete failure to engage in class work/discussions.

## **SAFETY ISSUES:**

Safety issues and concerns will vary with the materials that students choose to work with. Students are responsible for their own safety (and that of classmates during course hours) and are required to read all safety labels and adhere to best practices in working with materials. Any questions should be brought to the attention of the instructor.

A good resource concerning the safe use of acrylic paint:

<http://www.goldenpaints.com/healthsafety/health/index.php>

## **MATERIALS LIST:**

As the goal of the course is to experiment with materials the required materials are left open. Materials and sources for materials will be discussed on a day by day and project by project basis. Please do not hesitate to ask for advice on obtaining any necessary materials.

## **READING LIST:**

Readings are listed under assigned days and will be provided to the students via email.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- The Whitechapel Documents of Contemporary Art Series available on reserve for our class at the RISD library
- Art21 Video Series <http://www.pbs.org/art21/videos>

**POLICIES:**

Students are expected to attend every class. Promptness is expected and is considered a fundamental participation in the class. Each class time is just long enough for our meetings and group discussions so any delays are very disruptive to our work. Emails notifying me of absence should be sent before the class to be missed and excused absences need to be verified by an applicable source. After the fact emails are not valid excuses for missing class except under medical or other unavoidable circumstances. Do not hesitate to visit my office hours or arrange a time to speak with me about any questions or issues that may arise during our work together.

*“Any consideration of painting in isolation tends to be reactionary, because the dismissal of Modernism's dogmatic restriction of artistic practice to a particular medium must be understood as the most significant progress in art in recent decades. Today every medium represents only one possibility among many. The only thing that counts is the artist's conceptual project. The choice of a particular medium only has meaning inasmuch as it relates to a strategic gain within the overall project. If a conceptual statement can be adequately formulated in terms of painting, then artists paint, but if a different medium proves to be more useful, they turn to video or build installations. In this context anybody who looks at the medium alone is missing the most important thing.”*

- Jan Verwoert, “Why Are Conceptual Artists Painting Again? Because They Think It’s a Good Idea” (2005)

Rhode Island School of Design Painting Department  
Beyond Paint  
Instructor: Sophia Narrett

## Three Challenges in Form and Content

### **Project Description:**

We have already experimented with found objects and recycled materials, and become familiar with ideas and arguments surrounding medium specificity. The importance of this project lies in the fact that it is a chance to use unusual or new materials in an abstract, representational, or expressive manner to create meaning. We will ask how various materials can contribute to or further each person's formal and conceptual goals.

### **Project Aim:**

- The goal of this project is to encourage students to make unexpected, challenging, and new formal and conceptual decisions to create nontraditional paintings.
- To use unusual or new materials instead of or in conjunction with paint so that students may locate and create formal and conceptual meaning within the materiality of a piece.
- To encourage experimentation, risk taking, and growth as students approach unfamiliar topics and materials and strive to achieve their unique formal and conceptual goals.

### **Objectives:**

- Production of three works, each of which responds to a *content challenge* (for a total of three different content challenges addressed) and at least two *formal challenges* (for a total of at least 6 formal challenges addressed)
- The ability to work in new modes, recognition of the different ways that materials or material manipulation may impact a work, and an achievement of a new sense of material manipulation
- An understanding that beginning a piece with a set goal or challenge can be a productive studio strategy.

### **Methods:**

Each student will create three distinct pieces. For each piece you must choose one Content Challenge to respond to, and two (or more) Formal Challenges to respond to. Do not try to think of the pieces first and then fit them into Challenges, rather select Challenges and attempt to allow your ideas to evolve from there. Make an effort to select Challenges which you do not already address in your outside studio work.

The goal should be to stretch capabilities in different directions. For instance do not bring in three similar paintings done on stretched canvas and say one is Flat/Hangs on the wall, one Uses Acrylic Paint/Has a Smooth Surface, and one Uses layering/Is Abstract if these six categories could each apply to all three pieces. However if there is an obvious attempt to engage with a variety of challenges it is certainly fine for there to be overlap. We will work together to discuss the challenges you are selecting, and go over any questions about this.

In the end we will discuss each piece as an autonomous work, regardless of the challenges you chose, although there may be parallels between the works. Please feel free to interpret each challenge as broadly, abstractly, or experimentally as possible, they are meant to be helpful jumping off points rather than limitations.

### **Materials:**

As always, it is up to you to obtain the necessary materials for your work. Please refer to the list of material sources that was distributed the first day of class for suggestions on where/how to do this.

### **Resources:**

- The artists we discussed in the slide lectures on Material Manipulation (Sheila Hicks, Cordy Ryman, James Hyde, Tara Donovan and Vadis Turner) as well as the artists we discussed during the Rendering Without Paint lecture (Jamie Vasta, Erin Riley, Todd Knopke) are great people to google or research at the library for material inspiration.
- Many of the Content Challenges relate to themes in contemporary art that have been explored in the Art21 PBS video series, accessible at: <http://www.pbs.org/art21/> and the Documents of Contemporary Art book series published by Whitechapel Gallery, on reserve at the RISD library for our class's use, or available online at: <http://www.whitechapelgallery.org/shop>. It may be helpful to read about how these themes and issues have been critically framed or discursively investigated by other artists, either before, during, or after you respond to the challenges yourself.

### **Project Assessment:**

An advanced level of achievement will be constituted by a project in which all three pieces are conceptually rigorous, and formally unique, ambitious, and considered. A student at this level will have challenged him or herself to develop work in three distinct directions, and show three unique efforts at content and methodology. Not only has the student made an immense effort towards his or her interests, but the final products are all fully realized art works that speak to issues of form and content in unexpected and valuable ways.

A basic level of achievement will consist of a body of three works that demonstrate effort at formal and conceptual practices, but may not achieve a deeper sense of experimentation, risk, and involvement as shown in an advanced project.

### **Formal Challenges:**

1. Make it Flat
2. Make it 3D
3. Make Something that Hangs on the Wall
4. Make Something the is Displayed on the Floor
5. Make Something the Hangs from the Ceiling (Only use the approved hooks)
6. Make it Monochromatic
7. Make it Abstract
8. Render Something/Make it Representational

9. Use String or Thread
10. Use Fabric
11. Use Objects found in Nature
12. Use a Canvas Stretcher
13. Use a Frame
14. Use Photography or Photos
15. Create a Rough Surface
16. Create a Smooth Surface
17. Use Only Straight Lines
18. Use Only Curved Lines
19. Use Acrylic Paint
20. Use Dye
21. Use Ink
22. Use Watercolor
23. Use only Paper
24. Use Layering
25. Incorporate text
26. Use Tissue Paper, Wrapping Paper, or Construction Paper
27. Use Balsa Wood
28. Use Printmaking Techniques
29. Use Wire
30. Make a Collage
31. Make an Assemblage
32. Use Artificial flowers
33. Apply paint on an Untraditional Surface
34. Use Plastic
35. Use Clay or Sculpey
36. Use Sound
37. Use Obsolete Technology
38. Sew or use Sewing Techniques on Something that isn't Fabric
39. Use Stencils
40. Use Resist
41. Use Subtractive Techniques
42. Use Additive Techniques
43. Use Mirrors
44. Use Sequins, Cellophane or Glitter
45. Use Unconventional Materials on a Traditional Surface (Board, Canvas, Paper, etc)
46. Cut up/Take Apart/Re-use an older piece of your Art work
47. Use Charcoal
48. Use Pencil
49. Paint/Draw/Render from Life
50. Paint/Draw/Render from a Photo
51. Make it Miniature
52. Make it Highly Detailed
53. Make it to Human Scale
54. Use Plexi-Glass
55. Use Wax
56. Use Goauche Paint
57. Use Wood
58. Use Wicker Strips
59. Use Found Objects
60. Make a Series
61. Use a Minimalist Aesthetic
62. Don't Use Your Hands
63. Make a Book
64. Use Braiding, Weaving, Crocheting or Knitting Techniques

65. Make a Pile
66. Use Pouring
67. Create Digital Collages or Images to Print and then Manipulate
68. Use Transparency
69. Use Pom Poms, Pipe Cleaners, Popsicle Sticks, Felt, or other Children's Craft Materials
70. Make a Flat Painting and then Fold, Cut, Or Re-Purpose it to Be 3D
71. Wrap an Object in Something Else
72. Make Something that the Viewer Should/Can Walk On
73. Use Many Pins, Staples, Thumb Tacks, or Nails
74. Use Magnets
75. Use Dowels, Rods, or Pipes
76. Make a Flag
77. Use Carpet, Foam,
78. Use Tape
79. Use all of the Ink in a Pen
80. Use Beads
81. Set Up a Still Life and Work From It
82. Use Plastic Bags, Water Bottles, Newspapers or Magazines
83. Use Eating Utensils
84. Use Artificial Hair
85. Erase Something
86. Use Chalk Pastels or Oil Pastels
87. Use Watercolor Crayons
88. Use Ephemera
89. Rework or Paint on a Towel, Bed Sheet, Piece of Clothing Or Pillow its Unrecognizable
90. Work Within a Grid
91. Use Layers of Transparent Papers
92. Incorporate Jars, Storage or Containers Into the Final Presentation
93. Use Tools in the Final Piece (Paint Trays, Brushes, Palettes, Etc)
94. Use Cosmetics
95. Make it Barely Visible
96. Break things
97. Use Tiny Objects As Pixels to Form an Image
98. Create an Illusion
99. Carve Something
100. Use Unmatched Socks, Jewelry, Gloves, or Other Discarded Objects

**Content Challenges:**

1. Self Portraiture
2. Address Environmental Issues
3. Address a Newspaper article from the past week
4. Respond to a Contemporary Artist we looked at in class
5. Embody a Mixture of Several Movies
6. Address Pop Culture
7. Respond to an Internet Meme
8. Respond to a Philosophical or Art Historical Text
9. Give a Gift
10. Address Globalism
11. Address Issues of Craft
12. Engage with Horror
13. Respond to a Song
14. Rework a Past Piece to mean the Opposite of its Original Idea
15. Address a novel
16. Embody Despair or Hope
17. Address a Paradox

18. Create a Fantasy
19. Address a Power Structure
20. Make Something Transformative
21. Address Romance
22. Address technology
23. Use Humor
24. Use Compassion
25. Engage with a Political Debate
26. Use an Ant's Perspective
27. Use a Child's Perspective
28. Embody Weightlessness
29. Mess with Scale
30. Deal with the Body
31. Engage in Institutional Critique
32. Address Identity
33. Take Inspiration from a Poem
34. Address History
35. Address Feminism
36. Make a Narrative
37. Respond to a Location or Place
38. Address Time
39. Propose a Miracle
40. Address the idea of Home
41. Address Holidays or a Holiday
42. Address Memory
43. Make Something In Balance or Out of Balance
44. Preserve Something
45. Address Consumption
46. Address Spirituality
47. Respond to or Create a System
48. Make it Obsessive
49. Deal with or Create Beauty
50. Deal with or Create Ugliness
51. Address Sport or A Sport
52. Respond to a Celebrity
53. Address Architecture
54. Be Self Indulgent
55. Make Something Rhythmic
56. Make Something that Negates Itself
57. Address the Sublime
58. Take Inspiration from Dance
59. Use Math
60. Engage in Documentation
61. Make a Utopia
62. Use Appropriation
63. Deal with Failure
64. Make an Archive
65. Make Something Cinematic
66. Use Color Expressively
67. Address Decay
68. Address Evolution
69. Address Flirtation
70. Be Nostalgic
71. Incorporate the Uncanny
72. Predict the Future
73. Reinvent the Past

74. Be Theatrical
75. Be Spontaneous or Random
76. Embody a Nuanced Psychological State
77. Use Detournement
78. Make an Art/Design Hybrid
79. Be a Curator
80. Deal with the Banal or the Everyday
81. Deal with Water or Fluidity
82. Educate or Instruct
83. Make a Relational or Participatory Work
84. Address Community
85. Deal with Mapping or Map Something
86. Deal with the Idea of Surprise
87. Work with Pathetic Fallacy
88. Use Parody or Hyperbole
89. Confront or Embody Perversion
90. Make a Sequence
91. Address or Depict Animals
92. Embody Motion or Gesture
93. Deal with Mass Media
94. Consider or Question your Relationship to Reality
95. Pretend you are a Impressionist, Surrealist, or Abstract Expressionist Who Has Been Transported to 2014
96. Make Form Be the Content
97. Suspend Disbelief
98. Reflect on a Personal Experience
99. Engage with the Decorative or Ornamentation
100. Depict a Search

**Rhode Island School of Design Painting Department**  
**Course: Beyond Paint, Wintersession 2014, PAINT-4430**  
**Instructor: Sophia Narrett**

Student Feedback Form

Name (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your year/major? How have you been able to address your own personal artistic interests and goals within the context of this course? Is there a way that this course could better allow you to do so?
2. Which of the readings and/or assigned materials have been most useful and least useful to your learning? What changes would you make in the reading materials?
3. Did the projects the instructor assigned in class prepare you for continuing a studio practice on your own after the course ends? Why or why not?
4. Have you found critiques and discussions useful and engaging? What has the professor done to encourage or discourage discussion? Is there anything you would like to see changed about these?
5. Are you as interested in the course as you were at the start of the semester? Why or why not?
6. Is there anything that you would like to tell me or any changes that you would like to see made for the second half of the course? Please feel free to make an appointment to speak with me if you would like to go over this in person.

Please rank 1 to 5 (1=Completely Disagree, 5=Completely Agree)

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I felt that I had a chance to speak during critiques/class discussions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The assignments have been valuable and interesting to me.               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I am excited about the work I have made during this course so far.      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| I have received valuable feedback on my work during this course.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

