

McKINZIE TROTTA
teaching portfolio

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Printmaking '20

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Teaching Philosophy

How can it be better, how can I be better? Being an artist is difficult both practically and emotionally. Everything leads to these moments of reflection, highs and lows, problem solving, and hopefully perseverance. As an educator I am lead to contemplate a variation of these questions. *How can they be better, how can I best assist them in being better?* While these questions are still in response to my own performance, the stakes are higher. My success or failure as a teacher becomes about my student's ability to ask and answer my former set of questions for themselves as they embark on being artists themselves.

My main objective as an educator is to share the knowledge I have acquired through my own education and personal experiences as an artist. With this objective in mind, it is not only important but inevitable that my art practice and teaching career grow in unison. Expanding my own pool of knowledge is necessary for advancing in both disciplines and providing the most relevant education to my students.

The most basic form of knowledge for a maker is technical skill. Craftsmanship is the cornerstone of communicating ideas through visual language. A lack of technical skill should never be the reason a project fails. When poorly executed, craftsmanship acts as a complete barrier that overtakes the work. When done well, craftsmanship is invisible. The same is true for teaching. When done effectively, the knowledge seamlessly integrates with the student's existing skillset. If this does not happen, it is important to acknowledge that not every student will excel in my own areas of expertise. Helping students find the areas where they do excel is just as important.

Developing confidence in a particular medium leads to finding a conceptual identity. If craftsmanship is the cornerstone of communicating ideas visually, conceptual identity is the blueprint that tells us what we are building. A major part of my role as a teacher is to motivate my students to make the work they are deeply compelled to make. Physical work may take on many forms but the conceptual foundation is often what can unify different technical interests. This has been my experience with my own studio practice and something I push to instill in my students.

My most effective professors shared their technical knowledge while providing the space needed for me as a student to execute my ideas. I liked feeling like they trusted my own direction rather than forcing me to rely on conceptual prompts. They also share how they personally engage with the world of contemporary art and this in turn provoked me to ask myself how I see myself and my work functioning in the contemporary art world. It is important that my students ask themselves these questions. The most desired learning outcome for my students is a heightened sense of personal development that inspires their life-long exploration in learning, making, and maybe even teaching.

Inclusivity Statement

To put it simply, we should treat people with respect.

However, we live in a complicated world. It can sometimes be easy to forget that every person exists in their own version of this complication. Through visual art it is apparent that our society is not only diverse but, the ways we all express our differences vary greatly. The self-expressive qualities of visual art leads to conversations about the life experiences that makes us who we are and inspire the art we create.

All we know for certain when someone enters into the classroom is that by our complex histories and personal journeys, all our paths have now crossed. This is true for everyone in the class, myself included. And once these paths have crossed there is an immense amount of collaborative and critical possibilities. My classroom is a place to take advantage of these possibilities.

In my classroom, these conversations are possible learning experiences for everyone. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are considerate of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. It is important to listen and have inclusive responses, especially to opinions that differ from your own. You can expect to receive the same respect you give. As a teacher, it is my responsibility to facilitate these exchanges and set the tone for the room. I am also open to learning from the experiences my students share.

I know what it is like to share an unpopular opinion in a class of fellow students. I know how difficult it can be to do this when I know I am being negatively judged by my teacher. In my time as a student I have had other classmates tell me that a teacher or faculty member was complaining about me to them. That lack of professionalism is unacceptable. In my specific experience, I lost any interest in sharing ideas or reaching out for help from that specific teacher. To put it simply, I felt disrespected.

Just as impactful, I also know how big a difference it makes when I have a teacher who has my back regardless of their personal opinions. I hope my students can know that I have their backs and support the act of sharing their expressions.

Three Course Proposals

Silkscreen I - PRINT 129

3 Credits - Capacity: 14

Prerequisites: none

Estimated Material Cost: \$100

How does screen-printing fit into the contemporary artist's toolbelt? As an introduction to silkscreen, this course will provide students with the technical competency necessary to execute screen-printed works on paper. There will be an emphasis on figuring out how each individual student can effectively use the medium for themselves. This is a personal exploration. Therefore, class assignments will follow a basic schedule, but will be catered to the individual. One on one meetings will be a major component of class time. The main objective of this course is for students to walk away with not only a higher appreciation for screenprinting but a deeper interest in developing their own studio practice. It will incorporate both hand-drawn and digital methods of stencil creation. We will look at the history of screenprinting in every sense of the word. The projects will have technical themes that relate to class demonstrations however, they will be entirely open concept.

What don't you know? - GRAD 300

3 Credits - Capacity: 14

Prerequisites: none

Estimated Material Cost: \$100

Ideas are great but, execution is what really matters. This course is designed to give grad students the time to explore skills and material knowledge necessary to bring their ideas to fruition. Everyone comes from a different background and brings a unique set of skills to grad school. As a foundation, we will cover essential woodworking techniques and identify gaps in our base pool of knowledge. This course will also highlight the existing experience each student has through student lead demos. Not only will you be exposed to the expertise of a wide range of makers, your peers, you will have the opportunity to practice sharing your own specialized skills in a classroom environment. There will be an emphasis on using all the resources the school has to offer as well as fabrication solutions available to artists outside of school. *What don't you know and how can you learn?* As a graduate level course, this is your opportunity to take the time to learn how to learn and share that research.

Printing in the third dimension - PRINT 489

3 Credits - Capacity: 14

Prerequisites: one of the following- PRINT 129, PRINT 130, PRINT 144

Estimated Material Cost: \$100

What makes a print an object? Are prints functional, are they dysfunctional? How might they exist if not hanging on the wall? From the framed print to the tee shirt, this course explores how prints exist in the world and how we as artists can make prints that exist as full-fledged objects. Prints in this class will be pushed to their final form. This may mean addressing framing and methods by which works on paper are displayed. The focus of the work will then shift off the wall. We will look at functional uses of prints and how artists can use these methods for objectmaking. The assignments will ask students to push the functionality of printmaking while questioning the conceptual boundaries of everyday objects.

Syllabus
Silkscreen I

PRINT 4610
BENS 306

Jan. 6 – Feb. 5, 2020
MT 11 AM – 4 PM, W (alternating) 11 AM – 4 PM

McKinzie Trotta, instructor: mtrotta@risd.edu

Course Description

How does screen-printing fit into the contemporary artist's toolbelt? As an introduction to silkscreen, this course will provide students with the technical competency necessary to execute screen-printed works on paper. There will be an emphasis on figuring out how each individual student can effectively use the medium for themselves. This is a personal exploration. Therefore, class assignments will follow a basic schedule, but will be catered to the individual. One on one meetings will be a major component of class time. The main objective of this course is for students to walk away with not only a higher appreciation for screenprinting but a deeper interest in developing their own studio practice. We will look at the history of screen printing in every sense of the word. Demos will incorporate both hand-drawn and digital methods of stencil creation. The projects will have technical themes that relate to class demonstrations however, they will be entirely open concept.

Goals

Technical: production of well-crafted screenprints, maintain cleanliness and organization of the community studio, experiment with the methods taught in class as they best serve the prints you make

Conceptual: identification of themes and content that you are interested in making work about, research of artists that give insight to achieving your personal goals within screenprinting/your work as a whole, begin to think of ways you might encounter the limitations of screenprinting

Learning Methods

In the beginning, we will spend most of the class time learning basic and alternative techniques of screenprinting through demonstrations. Group critiques will accompany each project. Later in the semester, we will shift class time toward individual meetings and open studio to focus on personal development. Additionally, we will go on field trips and

each student will give a presentation on an artist they have researched who utilizes screenprinting in their practice to some extent.

Projects/Assignments

1. Project 1: One-page instruction manual -**15%**
-one layer, 8"x 10" paper, folded one-page book about a topic you are knowledgeable
2. Project 2: Multi-layer -**20%**
-multiple registered layers, larger than 8"x 10", edition of 5, open-concept
3. Project 3: Alternative method -**20%**
-utilize at least one alternative method (stencil-creation or print surface), no mandatory edition or print size, open-concept
4. Artist presentation -**10%**
-make/give a 10-minute presentation on an artist whose work relates to the conceptual themes you are dealing with in your own work
5. Project 4: Final -**25%**
-open-method, open-concept, make a print that best serves your interest in silkscreen

Attendance/Participation -**10%**

-arrive on time to class, attend all demos and class activities, be prepared to work, participate in group discussions and critiques, contribute to the cleanliness and organization of the print shop

Grading Rubric

A - Well Above Average (91-100)

1. **Craftsmanship**: Innovative and advanced level of control and competency of techniques
2. **Personal Development**: Highly-developed ideas and thoroughly investigates personal concepts
3. **Assignment Requirements**: Exceeds expectations of the project, meets deadlines
4. **Participation**: Always engaged in class discussions, comes to class prepared

B - Above Average (81-90)

1. **Craftsmanship**: Complete control and competency of techniques
2. **Personal Development**: Well-developed ideas and shows interest in further development

3. **Assignment Requirements:** Ambitious approach to the project requirements, meets deadlines
4. **Participation:** Regularly engages in class discussions, comes to class prepared

C - Average (71-80)

1. **Craftsmanship:** Projects are executed using the correct techniques but contains distracting printing errors
2. **Personal Development:** begins to investigate personal ideas
3. **Assignment Requirements:** Meets minimum project requirements
4. **Participation:** Occasionally participates in class discussions, usually comes to class prepared

D - Below Average (61-70)

1. **Craftsmanship:** Does not show understanding of techniques taught in class and contains many printing errors
2. **Personal Development:** Does not show an interest in developing personal ideas
3. **Assignment Requirements:** Does not meet project requirements or deadlines
4. **Participation:** Does not participate in class activities, rarely comes to class prepared

F - Well Below Average (<61)

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

I would like to create a learning environment that engages students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives. The diversity that students bring to this class is viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. The academic community places a special obligation on all members to preserve an atmosphere conducive to the freedom to teach and to learn. It is the responsibility of each member of the RISD community to maintain a positive learning environment in which the behavior of any individual does not disrupt the classes of teachers or learners.

The syllabus is open to change based on the individuals, interests and needs of those enrolled in the course. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated.

If you have a name and/or set of pronouns that differ from those that appear in your official RISD records, please let me know!

The Print Shop

The shop is a community studio shared by your fellow classmates as well as students from other classes. While working in the space act responsibly and be considerate of others.

Also, be aware of your health and safety. For the most part, we will be working with water-based inks, which are safe however at times solvents or other chemicals will be used. You MUST wear gloves when using them. Wash your hands after working. Lastly, clean up after yourself.

Class Schedule

Week 1

Class 1 (1/6): Read syllabus, discuss shop etiquette, tour studio, handout screens, in-class activity, assign project one, drawing film

Assigned: Project 1, reading

Demos: drawing film

Class 2 (1/7): Burning screen, printing demo, looking at examples of zines, studio time

Demos: screen burning, tape registration, printing

Class 3 (1/8): folding zines, zine exchange, presentation, assign project 2, reclaim screens, tearing paper, registration, coat screens

Due: Project 1

Assigned: Project 2

Demos: reclaiming screens, pins/tabs registration, tearing paper, coating screens

Week 2

Class 4 (1/13): Studio time, split fountain, color mixing

Demos: split fountain, color mixing

Class 5 (1/14): Class critique, alternative stencil-making demos, presentation, assign project 3

Due: Project 2

Assigned: Project 3

Demos: Drawing fluid, rubylith, digital stencil making

Emerging Ideas:

- Achieving competence and control of the material through following instruction
- learning from the collective mistakes of the class
- Beginning to think about personal areas of interest

Week 3

No Class MLK (1/20)

Class 6 (1/21): Class critique, presentation

Due: Project 3

Demo: CMYK/digital file creation

Assigned: Project 4, Artist Presentation

Class 7 (1/22): Print room visit, Final Project idea discussion, Watercolor demo, Studio time

Demo: watercolor monoprint

Developing Ideas:

- Attempting to problem solve printing errors through your developed understanding of the medium
- Engaging personal concepts with the subject matter of your work
- Engaging in class critique

Week 4

Class 8 (1/27): Artist studio visit, individual meetings, studio time

Class 9 (1/28): Class presentations, studio time

Due: Artist Presentation

Week 5

Class 10 (2/3): Studio time, individual meetings

Class 11 (2/4): Shop clean-up, Studio time

Class 12 (2/5): Final Critique, studio move out

Due: Project 4

Advanced Ideas:

- Thoughtful presentation of final work
- Demonstrated awareness and critical examination of the work of others
- Thinking about how what you have learned can have a lasting impact on your future work, *Does screenprinting have a place in your artist's tool belt, Are your ideas fruitful for continuing to produce work?*

Printing in the Third Dimension

Assignment 1: Mind Control Device

If you want to control someone's mind, you must first get their attention. Images we encounter on a daily basis may hold our attention for only a few moments but, our subconscious continues to digest the messages we see. Printmaking has a long history of creating images and dispersing ideas to mass audiences. This can be anything from propaganda posters to band tee shirts. Consider how the images we generate as contemporary artists can engage with an audience outside of the artworld. For this assignment, create a printed work, your mind control device, that can live in the real-world, a print that serves a visual purpose, but can infiltrate the subconscious of a casual viewer/user.

Goals

- To consider ways in which print can reach a wide audience
- To utilize the conventions of printmaking for an effective mind control device
- To gain greater understanding for one's own conceptual interests
- To attain a heightened awareness for how images have the power to shape public thought

Methods

Listen to your subconscious. Identify the images that feed your subconscious thoughts and consider what these images do to grab your attention in the short term and then what they do to sneak their way back into your mind long after the encounter. Develop a work utilizing either methods you've identified or new ideas you think may be even more effective. Spend equal attention to the visual and conceptual development of the work.

Outcomes and Assessment

- Creation of printed work – 30%
- Engagement with a casual audience – 30%
- A conceptually driven approach to image-making – 30%
- A demonstrated understanding of the impact the images make on an audience – 10%

Basic Competency: a well-crafted printed work that serves a casual audience

Advanced Competency: A work that not only serves the casual viewer but seeks to provoke the viewer after the visual engagement has passed.

Midterm Feedback Form

Please rate how much you agree with the following statements on a scale of 1-5 (1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree).

I have an adequate amount of time during class to work on projects.

1 2 3 4 5

comments:

I am learning the skills I expected to learn.

1 2 3 4 5

comments:

The instructor communicates the subject and class material clearly.

1 2 3 4 5

comments:

I look forward to coming to class.

1 2 3 4 5

comments:

If you have any additional comments or concerns feel free to share in the space below or on the back: