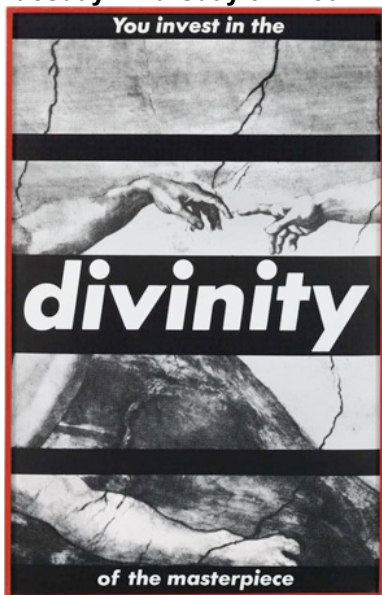


## Visual Concepts

2013

Tuesday/ Thursday 9-11:50

Geraldine Ondrizek – [ondrizeg@reed.edu](mailto:ondrizeg@reed.edu)



### **Projects**

**Body Language**

**Plate Stories**

**Mechanical Reproduction**

**Video Black**

**Mapping in Book Form**

Visual Concepts is an introductory studio course that exposes you to methods and materials used by artists from the Renaissance to the present. We will begin the course with western Renaissance perspective and figurative based drawings. A second project, "Plate Stories" will address issues of relational and performative works as well as the ancient tradition of narrative on vessels. We will then explore the influence mechanical reproduction has had on art from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the present by making a set of block prints for a particular location. In a digital video project we will question the camera's ability to document and control our lives via electronic devices. For your final "Mapping", we will investigate the use of mapping everything from actions to spaces. Your work will take the form of a book and techniques in binding and printmaking will be covered.

Each studio exercise is designed to introduce you to the visual language inherent in all art forms. Technically you will have rigorous training in drawing with various tools, sculpting in clay, block printing, digital video, book and map construction. Each project is linked to historically significant conceptual issues and asks you to make thoughtful and thought provoking works.

The class meets 6 hours a week. Approximately 40 min. a week of this time is dedicated to discussion of readings and art historical images that further illuminate the concepts, medium and process we are working on in class. You are required to spend 2 hours a week outside of class working on sketchbooks and assignments, which include taking notes or drawing from the readings.

Group critiques of the work done in class will occur bi-weekly. You will hand in a portfolio at mid semester and I will write comments on your work and progress. I will have individual conferences with you at the end of the semester and verbally give you a review of your progress. I am available to meet with you during the week during posted office hours (Monday- Wednesday-Friday 10-12) or by appointment.

### **Goals of the Course**

- Understanding of your body as the drawing tool and the page as space.
- The expressive ability and technical mastery of materials, tools and techniques.
- The development of a visual vocabulary and an understanding how this vocabulary works to affect how we see and read a work.
- Creating work that is visually and conceptually rich.

## September

### 3. Intro to Visual Concepts + Attendance + Projects.

#### Reading:

Petherbridge, Deanna. *The Primacy of Drawing*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010. p. 162 – 165.

**Assignment:** Get supplies and a sketchbook.

### 4. Opening 5-7pm

### 5. A brief history of Drawing and Gesture, recording the body and Figure Drawings

Figure drawing – Gesture/Proportion

#### Reading:

Berger, John. *The Sense of Sight*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1985. p. Drawn to the Moment 146 – 151. Stiles, Kristine and Peter Selz. *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996. The Figure p. 168 – 182.

**Assignment:** Gestures in sketchbook and draw the front/back of the skeleton.

### 10. Slides: Contour Drawing Revealing Anatomy.

Figure drawing – Gesture/Anatomy.

**Assignment:** Draw the front/back of the skeleton.

### 12. Figure drawing – Anatomy/ Cross Contour.

#### Reading:

Jones, Amelia, and Adrian Heathfield. *Perform, Repeat, Record*. Chicago: Intellect, 2012. p. 11 – 25, 28 – 35.

Jones, Amelia. *Seeing Differently: A history and theory of identification and the visual arts*. New York: Routledge, 2012. p. xvii – xxvi, 1 – 16.

Velasco, David. "Jamie Isenstein." *Artforum*, May 2010.

**Assignment:** Draw the front/back of the skeleton. 3-5 Contour line drawings.

### 17. Discussion Performance and Theatricality in work of art.

Tonal rendering of a model in space.

#### Reading:

Reading: Green, Julie. "The Last Supper."

McQuaid, Cate. "Artists with conscience: Husband-wife duo use whimsy to comment on social issues." *Boston Globe*, September 4, 2012.

### 19. Tonal drawing and introduce "Plate Stories"

**You Must Attend and Take Notes At:**

**JAMIE ISENSTEIN: WILL RETURN**

**Public reception and catalog release party:**

**6 p.m. at the Cooley Gallery**

#### **Amelia Jones Lecture 7:30pm Vollum Lecture Hall**

Performance and "Relationality" in the 1970s: Chris Burden and the Conceptual Body  
This paper provides a historical framework for currently trendy notions of "relationality" in contemporary art by looking at Chris Burden's early performances and performance installations anew. I argue that Burden's work from the 1970s participated in the wide scale opening up of relations among performer, art materials, and spectators or participants, shifting art making into a social, temporal, spatial, and intersubjective practice with explicit political valence, setting the stage for "relational aesthetics" as defined in the late 1990s and 2000s.

**Reading:** Pinto, Roberto, Nicolas Bourriaud and Maia Damianovic. *Lucy Orta*. New York: Phaidon Press Limited, 2003. p. 90 – 99.

**Assignment:** Drawings for images/forms for “Plate Stories”

**Friday- 10-4 Press mold your bowl in the Ceramics Studio!**

21. Opening of the Performing Art Building!  
HIEDI DUCKLER PERFMRANCE 3.PM  
GOLDEN MOTORS 6.PM
24. Work on Plate Stories, A Bowl as a Record of a Performance- Clay
26. Work on Plate Stories, A Bowl as a Record of a Performance- Clay  
**Assignment:** Finish Plate Stories

### October

1. Discuss bowl. Introduce Mechanical Reproduction  
**Reading:** Benjamin, Walter. *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. p. 297 – 307. Notes: List 5 ways Benjamin predicts Mechanical reproduction will influence politics, commercialism and the art world. List 5 ways it is used in Politics, commercialism and the art world today
3. Visit collection to look at prints.  
**Assignment:** Drawings for prints.
8. Draw on blocks
10. Cut blocks
15. Print block
17. **Crit** -Put you print in a location Bring a photo of your location. Introduce video assignment.  
**Reading:** \_Viola, Bill. “Video Black—The Mortality of the Image.” *Art and Technology*. p. 446 – 450.  
**Assignment:** Drawing For video  
**Portfolio and Sketchbook Due before you leave for break**

### FALL BREAK October 22-24

29. **Discuss** “Video Black” Begin Video  
**Assignment:** Drawing Perspective
31. Video  
**Assignment:**Shot Video

### November

5. Finish videos and turn in camera
7. View videos  
**Reading:** D’Ignazio, C. *Art and Cartography*. Elsevier Ltd., 2009. p. 190 – 206.  
Artist Books <http://cdm.reed.edu/cdm4/artbooks/index.php>  
Look at handout on book construction: Smith, Esther K. *How to Make Books*. New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2007. p. 14 – 15, 26 – 45.  
**Assignment:** Draw/Plan Concepts for Final
11. **Meredith Monk Lecture**
12. **Meredith Monk Performance**
12. Visit Artist book collection
14. Learn to fold and bind book  
**Assignment:** Work on project

19. Work time

21. Work time

**Assignment:** Work on project

26. Work time

28. **Thanksgiving**

**Assignment:** Work on project

## **December**

3. Work time

5. Last day to work on Book!

10. **Final Crit with Book and Plate**

16/17. **TBA Individual Portfolio reviews**

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

This calendar will be updated throughout the semester if any dates change.

Date all drawings done in class for portfolio assembly and review.

All notes will be taken in the sketchbook

All assignments will be done in the sketchbook.

Date your sketchbook drawings and notes and bring them to class everyday.

### **Materials Needed**

Portfolio (black or reddish) 24 x 36"

Sketchbook - at least 8.5 x 11"

3-ring binder

4 Pads newsprint (rough surface) 18 x 24"

2 Pads white drawing paper 70lb

Ebony Pencils

2 Kneaded erasers

1 box Compressed charcoal - CHAR-KOLE

4 Conte crayons

Chinese bamboo brushes (Cheep)

2 Glue sticks

Scissors/mat knife



## Figure Drawing

*The study of anatomy increases the sensitivity of the artist's eyes and makes the skin transparent; it allows the artist to grasp the true form of the surface contours of the body because he knows the parts that lie hidden beneath a veil of flesh. It is as though anatomy were a magnifying glass, making forms more visible in minute detail. Through this glass the artist is able to see more clearly and more quickly. When the knowledge of anatomy is applied in the plastic arts, it leads to an understanding of exterior forms through the relationship that exists between it and the underlying forms. The study of anatomy teaches the artist why exterior forms appear as they do, in action and repose.*

—Dr. Paul Richer, Professor of Anatomy at the École des Beaux -Arts and the Academy of Medicine, Paris, 1889

Gestural figure drawing will give you the tools to deconstruct any form you are drawing. It is an active, dance-like process that will give you the sense of a gestalt or presence of the body. Concepts covered will include drawing with your body, the central axis within the figure and the hip shoulder axis. You will learn the system of proportion and how to break down the figure to basic shapes and forms.

The tradition of western academic figure drawing began in the Renaissance. The academies of the past, reflecting the official artistic cultures of their time, considered the figure to be central to their artistic training. Each academy represented a different ideal and featured its own style of presentation. The tradition of western figure drawing centers on the body's response to gravity, volume, and weight within a solid floor plane seen in perspective.

### Week 1

#### **Gesture – 0.5-2 min/Contour – 1-8min**

Standing at the drawing horses, use your body to make marks that reflect the action the figure is making. Your body will be as active as the model.

1. Look first to the spine for the directional movement in the body
2. Look at the angle of the shoulder, then the hip, then mark the secondary axis
3. Using the side of the drawing tool, sweep the shape of the torso, leg and arms
4. Break all body parts down to basic oval forms so to quickly unpack the body

### Week 2

#### **Skeletal Structure – 5-10 min/Contour/Cross Contour – 10-20 min**

Attention to the positions of the bone structure is key to forming the body.

1. Spinal column established
2. Rib cavity: scapula and breast plate
3. Pelvic bone and femur

4. Elbows at waist, knees, and ankles

**Proportion – 2-5 min**

Measure the proportions of the model using the head as the given dimension. The body is 7.5 heads tall. This is the standard; every person's body is a bit different. Shoulders are 3 heads wide, torso is 3.5 long, and legs are 3.5; mid-point is the basket of the pelvic region.

**Week 3**

**Tone – 10-20min/Composition – 20-30 min**

Begin with underlying gesture and compositional structure of the pose. Plan the body's position in space. Look at how the dynamic of dark and light function in the space. Training in charcoal and graphite rendering.

**Artist works reviewed:**

Durer, Michaelangelo, Raphael, Rubens, Rembrandt, Ingres, Delacroix, Degas, Cassat, Renoir, Kollowitz, Munch, Blake, Hokusai, Gaicomettie, Alice Neel, May Stevens, Susan Rothenberg, William Kentridge  
Marlene Dumas, Eric Fishel

## Plate Stories



A ceramic vessel in the form of urns to everyday dishware reflects the culture from which it came. These forms have been part of human culture for centuries. From Grecian pottery that tells stories of triumph and victory to Wedgwood dishware as a symbol of wealth (it made with the finest porcelain in England and painted with the very expensive cobalt blue glaze) ceramic dishware tells a story through materials and form.

Dishware is also what we eat from and what food is served on. The food we chose to eat on the plates, the table setting, the guests at the table, the family that gathers to eat from the dishes daily tell stories of great significance. Food as a material and subject has played an extremely significant role in the last decade of art making and viewing. It is a material for gathering communities.

This project brings together the craft traditions of ceramic plate making, the craft tradition of making food, the ritual of dining, conceptual art practice begun in the 1960 of "Art of the Everyday" and the recent phenomena of artist desire to create convivial relationships through the offering of food.

### **The object of this assignment:**

1. To see art in the everyday objects we live with and use and to consider everyday action as a performance.
2. To consider the offering of food, the meals we eat to be a ritual, a story to be told.
3. To see art as a social relationship rather than a singular object and phenomena of sharing a meal with another as a significant event.
4. To make a work similar in form to your classmates so that when these are all brought together at a table, they are individual faces, individual points of view, individual stories as one collective whole.

**Works we will review:**

1. Traditional Greek Funeral urns for libation vessels and the work of contemporary artist Ed Ederle who creates stories on the surface of his vessels.

2. The concept of the commemorative plate with portraits of great rulers of Rome compared to "She's a dish" project by contemporary artist Angela Lorenz in which she depicts Roman beauties on plates.

3. Traditional Wedgewood china compared to Christen Borland recast the skulls found in the archives of the Eugenics Labs of Germany using the Wedgewood china porcelain and the blue paint to depict the places these people were from- (a slave ship departing Africa, a Chinese Junk etc.)

4. Decorative tableware showing food and floral design in 17-18th dish factories of Germany was a sign of great wealth and power of the ruling class. Contemporary artist Julie Green paints the last meal of a prisoner to make us aware of the rate of incarceration and question the death penalty.

5. The role of the banquet, from table lines, to flowers, to entertainment is a ritual that has been part of human culture for many centuries.

From the Marentties "Futurist Cook Book" to FOOD- Gordon- Matta Clarks Restaurant in SOHO, dinner parties are a part of an artwork.

Contemporary artists Lucy and Jorge Orta have taken their banquet to the streets making tables that extend through a town, dinners made from the left overs from the farmers markets, they create plates that tell stories of those without food. Their work is both convivial and relational. It sets a new way for us as makers and citizens to consider the roll of art in society.

**Process:**

1. Please read and consider the work reviewed for this assignment.

How can you make a socially conscious work that sparks conversation? Or can you make a Work that tells a story. What would you serve on the plate, who would you serve it to?

What issues would you like to bring forth in making your plate? Do you want to make a very specific point or is this going to be a subtle piece of information?

2. Draw images for your plates in your sketchbooks.

Consider the various ways to form the images/text/decorative element.

For example, a free hand painting with calligraphic brushes, stencils, carvings, relief?

Is there a particular style you are emulating?

Ultimately the style and format must match your message.

3. Learn to prepare the clay and form the plate, draw the images onto your plate, learn to do relief carving and forming, and learn to use clay slip to draw on the clay.



## Mechanical Reproduction: Block Prints



Warhol  
Jackie Print and Jackie Bag

From the first bookplate done in 1460 to the Xerox copy machine, we are a culture that relies on the repetitive dissemination of images and text. We will begin this lesson considering the effects of this mechanical reproduction in Eastern and Western art today. After reviewing the article “Art in The Age of Mechanical Reproduction” you will be asked to choose from 6 categories of objects or images.

1. Everyday objects that you use respectively such as a toothbrush, food, utensils, etc... or that is repetitive, a leaf, a flower, a doorknob
2. Commercial or political images/products
3. Valuable objects/emotive objects or art
4. Clothing
5. Machines
6. Religious objects

You will first do a line drawing of the object, figuring out how to break it down to a simple negative/positive image. For example, if you chose a commercial product, you will need to take out unnecessary detail and design and make it a clear black and white graphic. You will transfer the image to the 4 x 6” rubber block using carbon paper (larger blocks are available for the ambitious). We will cover the techniques of block cutting and printing and will assist you as you work on the piece.

The image will be printed on rice paper and block paper. You will be asked to print the image at least 2 times to see the impact of reception. The class will display all of the work as a group.

Artist: Durer, Kollowitz, Beckman, Warhol, David Hockney, Raymond Pettibon, Keith Haring, Sue Coe, Popova, Barbra Kruger, Xu Bing.

## **Perspective assignment**

Reading Video Black by Bill Viola, consider the revolution in art and thought the invention of perspective has been.

In class we will look through a camera obscura.

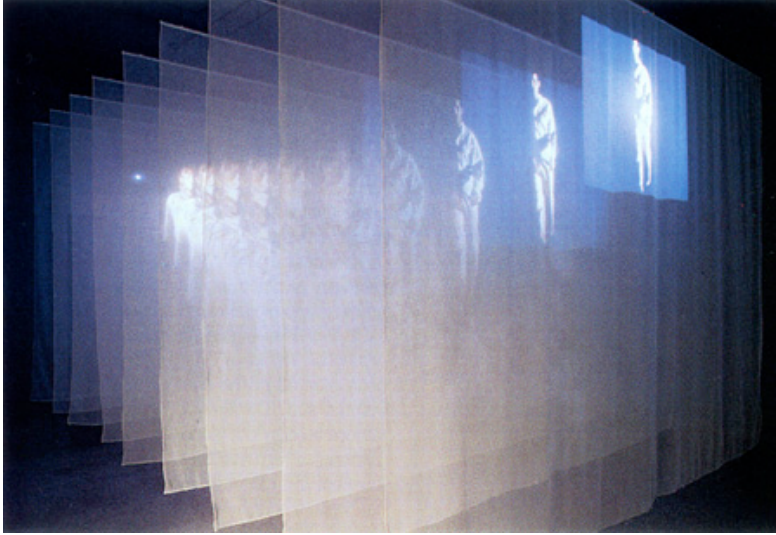
Using the guide to drawing a one-point perspective, draw a space as if looking through a wide-angle lens. Choose a space, a hallway, an alley of trees (Reed College Way) a parking lot, a city street as the origins of the image.

The image can be made from observation or from a photo you have taken or Google earth images street view you have experienced.

The objective is to exaggerate the space- as if it goes on forever, or takes you into a black center. It is very important that you know the space so that you are drawing from what you are seeing and what you have experienced.

The Objective:

1. To learn the basic skill of drawing a perspective
2. To work from existing forms and enhance the image so that it becomes a vast screen
3. To consider the difference of what the mechanical eye can do and what your eye can do.



## Video Black

*“Somewhere there is a camera that has not been turned off for the last twenty years. Its unblinking eye has been scanning a parking lot some place, silent witness to all the comings and goings of the last two decades. It has seen the same man get out of his car each morning, his body gradually sagging, less resistant to gravity, as his gait imperceptibly slows over the intervening time. It has seen an unbroken procession of days and nights, the cyclic changes in the sun and moon, the growth of trees and the perpetual variations of weather with the accumulation of its harsh marks...” Bill Viola*

### **Over View:**

The camera has no stories to tell and the mechanical perspective is flat, the center is fixed. There is no peripheral vision or sense of what might be happening beside, above, and beyond the camera. There is nothing around but what the lens is focused on observing.

Bill Viola's account leads us to the significance of the invention of Perspective using a Camera obscura to duplicate the world. This gave priority to the painter/artist vision, his perspective of the new wide-open world of space. This also gave the artist a new expanded retinal image and Viola points out, this is really the moment of the photography was invented, the next step was merely chemical fixing of the lens image to a plate.

But is the artist's eye and what he/she chose to see and to depict that controls the camera. Vision with the aid of a lens becomes thought. From the mind of the artist to the camera, a vision is made. Viola states that duration is the medium that makes thought possible. Duration is to consciousness, as light is to the eye, it allows us to see.

Black is the color of morning in the west, but it is the center of our eye- it is the space of reflection; the pupil of the eye is the pothole from the outside in. Staring into the eye is an ancient form of meditation; Socrates describes the process of acquiring self-knowledge from contemplation of the self in the pupil of another eye. Neo-Platonists practiced “speculation” or mirror gazing.

Meditation and concentration both refer to the centering process of focusing on the self. Viola emphasizes the Iranian concept of Black as the idea of origins, or the center, rather than the negative the void.

**Assignment:**

Make a work that is created through duration. Video record a thing, a space, a phenomena for a determined amount of time. The work should be a reflection on a phenomena rather than a narrative event or depiction of a space, place. This is a work of meditation and concentration rather than narrative of story telling.

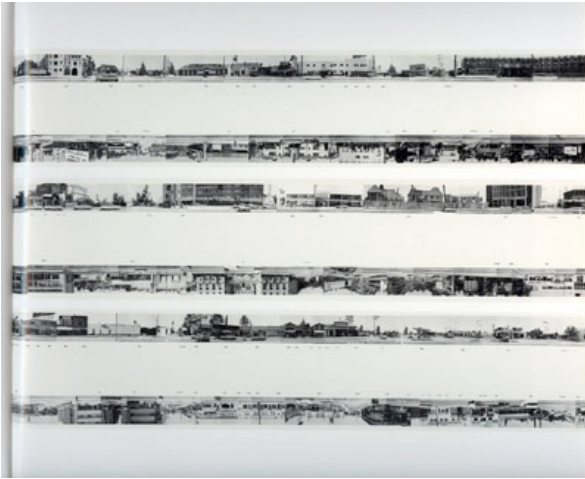
The lenses have a frame and you can only record what you point at. In your project, how can you give a deeper perspective or a sense of the space around or within the phenomena?

Choose strategy, you may wish to look at the same time daily, you may record some thing over the course of 10 hours or 2 days, you may record only water, only clouds....

What ever it is, it must be a thoughtful choice of where to place the lens and why to place the lenes on these particular phenomena.

**Rules:**

1. The piece you show the class cannot be longer than 5 minuets. You can either edit or you can show us a clip of the 5 minuets. You do not need to edit this work.
2. The work must be made by you- that is do not take another persons video clip.
3. The notion of the lenses as an eye and the eye as a porthole to the mind must be evident in the work made.
4. The video must be on a thumb drive to look at it in class.



## Mapping

This project asks you to consider mapping as central to artistic practice today. Navigational and survey devices have allowed us to map nearly the entire globe. On a macro-scale, satellites can map the spaces we move through on a daily basis. The invention of the microscope in the 17<sup>th</sup> century allowed scientists to look closely at and map, graph and chart natural phenomena.

For this project you will closely investigate mapping. What is an actual map and how do we use them? They are symbols of places, they tell us how to go and where we have been. What is a conceptual map? Are computer networks Maps? Could you make a map of your this may be based on your movements every day? Or a memory of a space you have moved through, or a reinterpretation of places you have known.

Part 1. You will choose a method to work towards rendering the space/place.

What images, spaces places, and roads will you be mapping? What materials, paper, cloth, best suit the mapping or magnification? What materials will you use to render, Pen and ink, Etching, graphite ect. How will the composition of each page fit with the great whole of the piece you are making?

How will you approach "Looking"? Will you zoom in or out, go from realism to the abstract. For example, after focusing on a particular angle, area or sections, magnify that part so it is drawn twice as large as the first. Or you may choose to simplify the abstract design of the form after drawing it over and over.

Your map will be 5-10 drawings as a sequence or progression or one large work made into panels.

Part 2. You will learn to make an accordion book and map forms to house your drawing series in. The design of the book/map will directly relate to the form you are drawing from. You will need to consider composing the drawings so that they fit with the entire set. The work can be viewed as a traditional book and a long screen.

### Resources for the Project:

Reed's Artist Book Collection <http://cdm.reed.edu/cdm4/artbooks/index.php>

Sonia Delaunay [Trans Siberian Rail](#)

Sol LeWitt [Lines to Specific Points](#)

Ed Ruscha [All the Buildings on Sun Set Strip](#)

Barb Tetenbaum [Ode to a Grand Stair Case](#)

## **Evaluation:**

All students are required to follow the following guidelines for full course credit.

- Attend all scheduled class meetings.
- Work efficiently and attentively in class.
- Contribute to critiques & discussions.
- Do the readings review the artists and take notes.
- Complete all assignments.
- Clean up your work area. You must not leave any work out in this room.

I keep a record of each student's work, his or her progress, strengths and weaknesses.

I will dialogue with each of you in class daily while working.

We will have group critiques after each project is complete. I will make a point of giving you feedback on the final work during the group critique. We will have an individual portfolio review at midterm and meetings at the end of the class. I will give you an evaluation checklist for comments for the Midterm portfolio and book project. I keep records of our critiques for each assignment and I photograph the finished work for my records.

Please note that my response to your work will mainly come in verbal form. If at any time while making the project or when the project is complete you need an individual conference, I am available outside of class,

Monday from 9-12, Tuesday/Thursday 1-4.

I use the following criteria in evaluating student work.

### **Attendance- 50%**

The strength of a group studio art course comes from the interaction of ideas and observation of others. In missing the class, a student undermines the effectiveness of the course and the educational experience of all. Each student must arrive prepared to work with appropriate materials for the assignment, project, exercise, critique, discussion, or demonstration for that particular class day. Unprepared students may receive an absence for the day.

Attendance and active participation in critiques is critical to learning in the studio classroom. All students are expected to contribute verbally by commenting or questioning aspects of the work being critiqued. Attendance at critiques is mandatory. Any student who knows they will be absent from a critique must contact the instructor prior to the critique.

1. You must be in the studio by 9:15. We will begin the class with a discussion and or presentation. It is vital that you are here for the beginning of the class.

If you are more than 30 min. late for a class without a reasonable excuse, you will be marked absent.

2. Participation in the classes including contribution to dialogue, taking notes on technical skills or artist presented.

3. Coming prepared to work on projects in class.

### **Assignments 50%**

**20% is your sketchbook!**

**30% all finished work!**

Students should expect to spend 6 hours per week in class and approximately 4 hours outside of class working on assignments. The studio classroom is open for student use everyday.

All assignments will have a short reading and a list of artist to be read/reviewed prior to the introductory lecture. The readings will guide the conceptual framework and content of your work. For each assignment a series of technical skills will be gone over in class.

We will have individual conferences discussing preliminary sketches and models for the assigned projects.

1. Turn in projects on time. Your grade will be lowered 10% for each week the project is late.
2. Generation of basic ideas and exploration of solutions. This includes drawings in your sketchbook.
3. Visual organization of your forms. Your ability to follow a system of design.
4. Conceptual thought process put into visual forms. Your ability to convey the ideas covered in the assignment, the readings and artist referenced.

## Visual Concepts Bibliography

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i. John Cage: some rules for students and teachers

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ii. Sol Lewitt: Sentences on Conceptual Art



**DVDS**

**The Rape of Europa**

N8795.3.G47 R37 2008 DVD

**Exit through the gift shop**

ND2590 .E953 2010 DVD