

## TEACHING STATEMENT

I aim to engage my students in an ongoing process of artistic quest and discovery. Along with the acquisition of a strong technical foundation, my curriculum stresses experimentation, collaborative and interdisciplinary approaches, community engagement, and a thorough understanding of traditional and contemporary practices.

In my courses, I emphasize developing a robust technical base while maintaining a conceptually broad framework. At every stage, I integrate and ground the material within the larger context of art history, theory, and criticism. Beyond printmaking, my curriculum also reflects an expanded interpretation of the medium, featuring book arts, papermaking, and digital practices. Other pedagogical components include technology-based initiatives (such as individual portfolio websites & blogs), and the adherence to non-toxic/ sustainable practices in the studio.

I lead my students into meaningful experiences inside and outside the classroom, and I am very interested in incorporating other disciplines into my courses. In that light, collaborations—particularly those with a social practice/ community engagement component—are a significant element of my curriculum. My courses have recently collaborated with other classes and organizations, including Detroit elementary school students, university music and theater courses, as well as the *Prisoner Creative Arts Program* and *Humanize the Numbers*. This last project entailed building connections with incarcerated citizens in the local community, and the students producing artwork reflecting their experiences. The resulting pieces were exhibited at several university venues, projected onto theater stages during performances, and distributed at prison art-workshops. Students also participated in an associated outdoor event at the university campus, which included printing posters on-site. Furthermore, several faculty and I led a related exhibition and panel at the national *Imagining America Conference* in Milwaukee, WI.

Besides the collaborations listed above in the local community, my classes participated in an international project with print students from the San Alejandro Academy of Fine Arts in Havana, Cuba. The resulting artwork was recently exhibited at the University of Michigan's Residential College Gallery. As someone who immigrated to the US from Spain at a young age, and pursued several study-abroad programs as a college student here, I recognize how deeply transformative international experiences can be. I strongly believe that integrating such involvement within the art curriculum can be a very powerful pedagogical strategy, as it offers a chance to develop qualities such as endurance, innovation, risk taking, flexibility and problem-solving, which are essential to students in any creative discipline. These experiences can further the students' understanding of art in connection to social issues, collaborative practices, and world cultures. They also provide the faculty an opportunity to expand the scope of their teaching, and to establish a dialogue with scholars and artists abroad.

As my commitment to collaborating with community partners illustrates, I enjoy working with diverse educational settings and student populations, and I am able to adapt to differing institutional objectives and resources. In my courses I foster a supportive social climate that is inclusive of students from all backgrounds. I view the class environment as a forum where important dialogue and artistic exchange takes place, and all involved have a presence and a voice. The students are expected to be fully active and responsible participants who are accountable for their artistic decisions and who are able to discuss them. In that context, it is important to be aware and sensitive to the uniqueness of each student's background and to appreciate the richness of their approaches and contributions. Given that premise, my goal is to accommodate all students and integrate their histories and interests into the material being taught.

Education should ultimately expand one's sense of self and of others. In that regard, my task as a teacher and mentor involves instilling a rigorous ongoing practice of self-awareness, inquiry and evaluation. Self-discipline and labor are also crucial to a sustainable creative endeavor, and I try to establish those via progressive exercises and assignments. I follow this approach with the aspiration that, upon graduation, the students will have acquired a strong direction and a commitment to their art. I consider myself successful if it brings the students further along that path, providing them not only with improved skills but also with a sense of excitement and insight.