

# AP<sup>®</sup> Studio Art 3-D Design

## Syllabus 1

### Course Description

During the first week of school, the course is outlined to the students. The individual sections of each portfolio—Quality, Concentration and Breadth—are discussed in detail. [C1] I show extensive slide examples from both the College Board and past students' work that correspond to each section of the portfolio. Additionally, the students review the images and instructions from the AP<sup>®</sup> Studio Art Poster. Students are expected to produce work that develops mastery in concept, composition, and execution of ideas. [C2]

**C1**—The course promotes a sustained investigation of all three aspects of portfolio development—Quality, Concentration, and Breadth—as outlined in the Course Description or Studio Art poster throughout the duration of the course. (Note: The body of work submitted for the portfolio can include art created prior to and outside of the AP Studio Art course.)

### Summer Assignment

**Instructions:** You are to complete at least four of the following assignments over the summer for the AP 3-D Design class; it is also recommended that you be working in a personal sketchbook/visual journal/altered book. These pieces will be due at the beginning of the third week of school. Your outside work will constitute 50 percent of your grade throughout the year in AP. Consequently, if you do not do this work, you will not pass the first six-week period.

**C2**—The course enables students to develop mastery (i.e., quality) in concept, composition, and execution of drawing, 2-D design, or 3-D design.

I also want you to take time over the summer to think about ideas that you may want to pursue as a Concentration. Please return with a list of 20 potential ideas to be discussed with the class during the second week of school.

- Using either Popsicle<sup>®</sup> sticks, wooden matches, toothpicks, dowel rods, mat board cardboard, or any combination of the above, create an architectural model for a house (domestic architecture), a city skyscraper, or a museum of modern art to be built in the year 2075. (This should be the exterior structure, not an interior cut-away.) You may want to reference the work of Frank Gehry, Robert Venturi, Frank Lloyd Wright, or Philip Johnson.
- Using Sculpty<sup>®</sup> of different colors, fashion full-figure caricatures of your family.
- Using clay, fashion a three-dimensional self-portrait bust, or, a portrait of a friend or family member.
- From a block of wood or plaster (at least 7 inches square), fashion a handheld organic sculpture that is inviting to the touch. Tools necessary to manipulate these materials include a rasp (a very rough file), possibly a bandsaw for the wood, a variety of sandpaper grits, and fine steel wool to finish it off. You may choose to oil the wood sculpture as a protective finishing coat. You might look at the work of Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, or Isamu Noguchi.
- Create a three-dimensional sculpture from found objects. You may choose to look at the work of Pablo Picasso, Julio Gonzales, Richard Chamberlain, or Robert Rauschenberg.

The following assignments are from the text *Art Synectics* (Davis Publications, 1984) by Nicholas Roukes: [C4]

- **Creating a Soft Sculpture Figure:** Make a life-size character. Select a theme to portray. Gather materials you'll need: Nylon hosiery, Fiberfill, flesh-tone thread, needle, scissors, scrap materials, and special accessories to finish the character. Start by filling the hosiery with Fiberfill. Pinch, gather, and sew the surface to create anatomical features: eyes, nose, ears, mouth, etc. Use same technique to create wrinkles, puckered faces, and finer anatomical details. Use acrylic paint for painting lips, details. Sew or glue on buttons, beads, or taxidermy eyes; add accessories such as eyeglasses, hair, eyebrows, eyelashes, hat, clothing, gloves, shoes, etc. (Hands can be made by stuffing gloves with Fiberfill.)
- **Transform an Ordinary Shoe into a Symbolic Monument:** Get an old shoe or boot from the basement, attic, or local flea market. Select a theme from the following list, or make up your own subject: Ode to Carl Jung, Ode to Lemuel Gulliver, Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte, Ode to Icarus, Ode to Albert Einstein, Ode to John Dillinger, Ode to Mohammed Ali, Ode to Rene Magritte, Ode to Pablo Picasso, Ode to Roy Lichenstein, Ode to Salvador Dali, Ode to Marilyn Monroe, Ode to Houdini, Ode to Toulouse Lautrec. Embellish the shoe with elements to portray the theme; for example, add papier-mache wings, roller skates, miniature toys, ladders, lights, taxidermy eyes, sails, transistors, plumbing fixtures, coins, papier-mache appendages, etc. Decorate the surface with bits of mosaic, glitter, yarn, mirror, paint, etc. Mount on a base and affix a nameplate to it.
- **Changing Perceptual Responses to an Object by Making it Larger:** Select a subject for your composition that is normally quite small, such as a paper clip, nail clipper, wrist watch, corkscrew, electrical or mechanical parts, bugs or other small creatures, etc. and recreate the subject on a giant scale: Make a soft sculpture by cutting fabrics and flexible materials, which are then sewn, stuffed, stitched, and decorated; or create a large rigid structure by using cardboard and tape.
- **Creating an Aesthetic Object from an Abandoned Derelict:** Find an interesting object from the garage, attic, flea market, auction, or second-hand store. Transform the object by covering its entire surface with textural materials: mosaic, pebbles, glass, mirrors, feathers, flocking, yarn, paper, sand, photos, rope, coins, marble or granite chips, smaller objects, etc. Do this by using white glue: Spread glue on the surface, then sprinkle fine-particled materials such as sand, marbledust, or sawdust on it. (Use tile cement to attach heavier materials.)
- **Redoing an Old Master:** Select a sculpture or well-known image from art history for interpretation. Redo the work three-dimensionally: update it, change colors, media, characters; or, recreate a two-dimensional Old Master, three-dimensionally.

**C4**—The course teaches students a variety of concepts and approaches in drawing, 2-D design, or 3-D design so that the student is able to demonstrate a range of abilities and versatility with technique, problem solving, and ideation (i.e., "breadth"). Such conceptual variety can be demonstrated through either the use of one or the use of several media.

- **Discovering the Skeleton of a Mythological Creature:** Select a theme based on a mythological character or legendary beast: Big Foot, the Lochness Monster, Cyclops, Cyborg, The Troll, Bionic Beast, etc. Using pottery clay, fashion a skull, skeleton, or anatomical fragment of the legendary beast. Place the “evidence” in a display box.
- **Create a Three-Dimensional Sculpture that Produces Sound Effects:** Collect materials and objects that produce different sounds. Construct a three-dimensional sculpture with them. The structure may involve spectator participation, insofar as it can be “played” like a musical instrument; react to environmental conditions on its own (having elements that capture wind, rain, etc.) and translate them into sounds through appropriate devices; or be a kinetic sculpture programmed with switches, timers, or other devices.
- **Creating a Surreal Portrait:** Get a Styrofoam wig head from a department store or fashion a head from wadded up newspaper that has been taped to form the approximate shape of a head. Transform it: Add cloth, leather, buttons, rope, mechanical gadgets, bottle caps, wool, hat, paint, etc.
- **Creating a Surreal Monument:** Make up an imaginary event that would rival a performance in the *Guinness Book of Records*, or choose an actual record from the book itself. Create a trophy, monument, or shrine that recognizes and pays tribute to the meritorious achievement.

## Course Schedule

Modified block scheduling is used. Classes meet every other day for 80 minutes, with the exception of a “flex period”—a one-hour class that meets every day. The course focuses on both sections of the portfolio (Breadth and Concentration) throughout the year, with the best art work selected for use in the Quality section of the AP Studio Art portfolio. [C1, C2]

The Breadth work is generally teacher driven. As I am (very much) against a formulaic response to the completion of the AP Portfolio, students will develop a body of work that shows evidence of a variety of concepts and approaches to problem solving and ideation. Students will be expected to use a variety of techniques and media to develop and illustrate their ideas. I try to vary assignments from year to year, and encourage individual and unique responses to all work. [C4, C5]

The assignments made are based on a variety of collected problems commonly encountered in college-level 3-D design courses. The students have specific in-class and out-of-class assignments; they also are expected to complete some in-class work out of class, depending on the schedule of assignments. Often students have work from their 3-D studio classes (jewelry, ceramics, and sculpture) that is used for breadth.

**C1**—The course promotes a sustained investigation of all three aspects of portfolio development—Quality, Concentration, and Breadth—as outlined in the Course Description or Studio Art poster throughout the duration of the course. (Note: The body of work submitted for the portfolio can include art created prior to and outside of the AP Studio Art course.)

**C2**—The course enables students to develop mastery (i.e., quality) in concept, composition, and execution of drawing, 2-D design, or 3-D design.

**C4**—The course teaches students a variety of concepts and approaches in drawing, 2-D design, or 3-D design so that the student is able to demonstrate a range of abilities and versatility with technique, problem solving, and ideation (i.e., “breadth”). Such conceptual variety can be demonstrated through either the use of one or the use of several media.

**C5**—The course emphasizes making art as an ongoing process that involves the student in informed and critical decision making.

The following are examples of types of work previously submitted for the Breadth section of the portfolio. [C4]

- Earrings and pendants fashioned in jewelry, including wire and cast pieces
- Cups, bowls, and plates thrown on the potter's wheel emphasizing inventive form
- Hand-built ceramic vessels—coil and slab emphasizing inventive form
- Hand-built ceramic birdhouses
- Portrait heads, busts, and entire figures sculpted in clay
- Hats and bags constructed from woven fibers
- Figures and animals constructed from welded metal
- Modular designs created by combining paper tubes and other geometric forms constructed from matte board
- Functional cardboard chairs
- Constructed chairs inspired by the work of another artist (e.g., Nevelson)
- Assemblages of found materials
- Figures constructed from found materials
- Nevelson-inspired wall pieces
- Organic sculptures inspired by the work of Hepworth, Moore, or Noguchi
- Plaster casts
- Plaster carvings
- Combination” pieces that involve 2-D and 3-D elements (Rauschenberg)

In the past I have also used assignments from the summer list—especially those that the students avoided attempting.

For Concentrations, students are expected to develop a body of work that grows from a planned investigation. Students are encouraged from the beginning of the class to formulate ideas for their concentrations and, where allowable, to start working on those ideas in their studio classes. [C3]

The following are examples of types of work previously submitted for the concentration section of the portfolio: [C3]

- A series of welded metal sculptures that investigated formal design elements and principles including line, shape, texture, balance, repetition, harmony, variety, etc.
- A series of cast silver rings with stone settings.
- A series of thrown and hand-built ceramics that were enhanced by the attachment of appendages reminiscent of sea anemones—the theme was “Horned Pots.”

**C4**—The course teaches students a variety of concepts and approaches in drawing, 2-D design, or 3-D design so that the student is able to demonstrate a range of abilities and versatility with technique, problem solving, and ideation (i.e., “breadth”). Such conceptual variety can be demonstrated through either the use of one or the use of several media.

**C3**—The course enables students to develop a body of work investigating a strong underlying visual idea in drawing, 2-D design, or 3-D design that grows out of a coherent plan of action or investigation (i.e., a concentration).

- A series of animal sculptures constructed from welded metal.
- A series of portrait heads sculpted from clay.
- A series of hand-sewn figures based on sketches of “mutated creatures.”
- A series of boxes inspired by Joseph Cornell.
- A series of “combines” inspired by the work of Robert Rauschenberg.
- A series of figures created from old computer parts.
- A series of figures created from Sculpty® based on family members and close friends placed within constructed vignettes.
- A series of vessels created of blown glass that actively and inventively engaged space.
- A series of nude figure studies fashioned from clay.
- A series of organic sculptures carved from wood.
- A series based on abstracted architectural forms.
- A series of large “soft” sculptures of everyday items (Oldenburg).

At present, the goal for the first semester is to complete about four Breadth pieces and three to four Concentration pieces. This may vary from year to year depending on the amount of time spent on specific Breadth assignments. If the students were successful on all the work they produced for their summer work, they may have enough work to complete the Breadth section by the end of the first semester. In that (rare) case, the students might not be expected to do any additional assignments for Breadth and may be allowed to focus on their Concentration.

The second semester is then devoted to completion of the Breadth and Concentration. As the Portfolios have been due at the end of the first week of May, we generally try to schedule the last due date for work around the third week, of April, thus allowing time for photographing the work. This date may be pushed forward a week with the AP Exams being moved up a week.

## Critiques

Critiques are an integral part of all classes. All students are brought together for critiques when they have major assignments due. Each student must show his or her work and briefly discuss his or her intent. The class is then expected to provide positive feedback and offer suggestions for improvement. All students participate. The vocabulary of art is introduced through the foundation classes and is reinforced through the verbal and written critique and exhibition reviews—the latter two also a requirement of all visual arts classes. These critiques generally take the entire class to complete, sometimes more than one class period. I do very little of the talking during these sessions—other than beginning the process with a recapping of the criteria for the project and a reminder to students to address the criteria as part of their discussion. I will only interject when I feel that there is something that has not been addressed or have an idea about a possible solution or suggestion for a next piece. In many instances, after I take the work up to grade it, I will provide the student with brief written commentary. For grading

purposes, I use a simplified rubric based on the actual AP Scoring Guidelines for Studio Art. I think it is important for AP students to be familiar with the rubric that will be used to score the work in their portfolios. Additionally, there is ongoing dialogue with students on an individual basis during class time which is used to assess strengths and weaknesses in their works as well as an opportunity to provide immediate feedback. As well, the students dialogue with each other about their work. [C5, C6]

## Copyright

Students are not allowed to work from published photographs or other copyrighted work in the foundation drawing courses—those classes being based on drawing from direct observation. Many students will come into the program with the idea that there is nothing wrong with drawing from photographs, and many of them are quite accomplished at it. Nonetheless, it is a practice that we do not allow in any class and strongly discourage out of class. Even if students take their own photographs, the resultant image has a distinctly flat and stiff look about it. Copyright issues are discussed with the students early on—they are made aware of the legal issues involved with working from someone’s published work. Though this tends to be more of an issue in the drawing and 2-D classes, admittedly, there are specific things that students could only reference through a photograph (such as certain animals). In these instances, students thoroughly understand that the image is merely for reference and must be transformed through their individual expression in a three-dimensional media. These issues are presented and discussed at the beginning of each semester, throughout the day-to-day operations, and during critiques as appropriate. [C7]

## Selecting and Preparing Section I Pieces

After spring break the students are instructed to identify the pieces to be photographed for the Quality section of the portfolio. Simply put, they are to pick their very best examples. I stress variety if they have it—variety of subject, media, technique or process—though variety is not a requirement for Quality work. The students have a strong understanding of Quality, as it has been exemplified in critiques, portfolio evaluations, and in in-house and out-of-school competitions since their freshman year. [C2]

**C5**—The course emphasizes making art as an ongoing process that involves the student in informed and critical decision making.

**C6**—The course includes group and individual student critiques and instructional conversations with the teacher, enabling students to learn to analyze and discuss their own artworks and those of their peers.

**C7**—The course teaches students to understand artistic integrity as well as what constitutes plagiarism. If students produce work that makes use of photographs, published images, and/or other artists’ works, the course teaches students how to develop their own work so that it moves beyond duplication.

**C2**—The course enables students to develop mastery (i.e., quality) in concept, composition, and execution of drawing, 2-D design, or 3-D design.