

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

## Syllabus 2

### Overview of Visual Arts Curriculum

Our visual arts department's philosophy is that we believe art is an intellectual process. We stress visual thinking, creativity, skill development, and critical analysis. Our program emphasizes design, skills of seeing and drawing, problem solving, persistence, and personal expression. Learning to take informed risks and being inventive in making images and objects are central to the program. [C5] We use the critique process regularly to clarify conceptual issues and to celebrate the uniqueness of personal vision. [C6] We view the study of historical and cultural traditions as essential in expanding students' visual awareness.

The visual arts courses are generally full year and meet four days a week for 50 minutes per class period. Composition, color, observation, design, conceptual thinking, and craftsmanship are emphasized in all studio art courses.

### AP Studio Art: 3-D Design

The AP 3-D Design students generally have taken sculpture or ceramics for two years following the Foundation in Art class. They have been documenting, or at least saving, their strong work all along to put toward their portfolio. They tend to be devoted to object making and less experienced in drawing. Therefore I push developing ideas and drawing from life in their sketchbooks. This being a 3-D class, plagiarism is rarely an issue. However, every student is taught the difference between being inspired in their own work by the work of other artists and merely copying. Instruction throughout the year focuses on how students can express their own voice, even if they build upon the works of other artists. [C7] In the spring preceding the AP<sup>®</sup> course, I meet with students who will be enrolled in AP 3-D Design in the fall and go over the content and structure of the class. I make my expectations clear and give them their summer project assignments.

I strive to make clear that by enrolling in the AP course, the students are declaring themselves serious and committed to their work. Doing considerable work outside of the structure of the classroom is the norm for the course. Students enrolled in the AP courses are required to investigate all three aspects of portfolio development: Quality, Concentration and Breadth. [C1]

### First Semester

The first week of class, I give students a binder with three slide sheets and a form for documenting finished work. As they finish a piece for the portfolio, they take slides of it and put the slides in the sheets. The binders are kept safe in the classroom. Students feel excitement as they see their portfolios growing.

The first half of the year is devoted to making work for the Breadth section of the portfolio. The pace set is fast compared to other art classes, and the students are expected to work outside of class to make the deadlines for the projects. Each

**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.

**C1**—The course promotes a sustained investigation of all three aspects of portfolio development—quality, concentration, and breadth— as outlined in the AP Studio Art Course Description 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.)

Tuesday throughout the year, we keep all the visual arts studios open late, until 7 p.m. The students then have the opportunity to deeply immerse themselves in the process of creating art and develop mastery in concept, composition and execution. [C2] This block of uninterrupted working time is extremely valuable. Students have the time to develop a variety of concepts and approaches to demonstrate their ideas. Students also experience a variety of media to illustrate their ideas. [C4]

I introduce each assignment with a slide presentation showing historical and contemporary artists' solutions to the project's issues as well as past students' work. Students understand that working from a published photograph or the work of another artist is a copyright violation unless the image moves beyond duplication and becomes substantially transformed into their own personal statement. [C7]

Projects that do not require power tools and studio use are generally given as homework. Technically based, labor-intensive projects usually take two or three weeks of class time. We hold a class critique at the completion of each project. Individual and group critiques are a required part of all classes. Students are required to write and speak about their own and their classmates' work. As students discuss and write about their work and the work of their peers, they are required to use the vocabulary of art to make informed decisions about the ideation. Furthermore, individual instructional conversations with the teacher will assist students in discovering ongoing ways to improve their art making. [C6]

### Possible Breadth projects:

- Animal effigy vessel
- Artist-inspired sculpture
- Body extension/distortion sculpture
- Book reorganization
- Combined organic and geometric forms
- Container created completely out of scavenged material from student's environment
- Cubist self-portraits in cardboard or paper
- Familiar object cast in a material that radically changes its impact
- Found-object insect
- Functional cardboard chairs
- Hand-built clay forms
- Jewelry cast in pewter
- Life-size, nonfigurative self-portrait
- Outdoor installations

**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.

**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.

**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.

- Plaster casting in balloons (abstraction)
- Sculptural clothing
- Sculpture designed to target a specific sense
- Surreal objects
- Teapot and cups
- Thrown vessels
- Vessel designed to hold something specific
- Wire figure or animal forms [C4]

## Second Semester

The second semester is devoted to creating the Concentration portion of the portfolio. Students have been thinking about the Concentration since the beginning of the year. Students develop a body of work that is well planned and investigates a theme or an idea for their Concentrations. [C3] I show slides of thematically related bodies of work from contemporary artists as well as past AP Concentration projects. Most students have themes that reappear in their work, and they are encouraged to develop these preoccupations into a project. Over winter break, I assign them a proposal for their project, designing their first three pieces and creating the first piece in their Concentration. We go over these proposals in class, and most students revise their ideas slightly based on feedback. By the end of the first week back, they rewrite their proposals and begin their second pieces. As the students complete each piece, they list it on a form provided in their slide binders. The development of the Concentration is an ongoing process that uses informed decision making and critical thinking skills to refine their ideas. [C5] Every few weeks or so, they are expected to have another piece finished. Their grades in the third and fourth marking periods are based on their focus and dedication to staying on schedule as well as on the quality of their work.

### Examples of Concentration projects:

- A series of kinetic sculptures based on simple crank toys
- A series of life-size figures exploring aspects of self
- A series of sculptures and documented performance pieces centered around cultural views of women and their bodies
- A series of sculptures based on interacting with horses
- A series of sculptures reinterpreting themes and deities from world religions
- A series of self-portrait busts
- A series of wind-driven sculptures [C3]

**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).

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

## Wrapping It Up

At the end of April, the students are nearing completion of their Concentrations. We have an AP art show at this time, where they exhibit their (mostly) complete Concentrations. It provides an occasion for celebration at a very stressful time for them. At about this time, each student makes an appointment to meet with me so that we can review the decisions made in building his or her portfolio. Together we finalize the student's choices for the Quality section, assemble the slides attractively in the sheets, and do any last-minute revisions to the student's Concentration statement. [C5] All AP Studio Art students are required to be in attendance for the final loading of portfolios and filling out of the official forms.

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

For the last few weeks of school following the send-off of the portfolios, we do special student-chosen projects: mosaic murals, throwing pots, playing with welding, and generally whatever we didn't have time to get to that school year. And finally, we spend about a week doing extensive studio maintenance with the students, cleaning, packing up, and getting ready for next year.

## AP Studio Art: 3-D Design

### Summer Assignments

Your summer project has three parts:

1. Looking at art
2. Reading and thinking about sculptors whose work you identify with
3. Making at least three sculptures

Your work on these summer assignments is due at the end of the first week of school. The assignments will be graded, and they make up a significant portion of your grade for the first marking period.

1. **Museum/gallery/studio visit:** Visit at least one place where art is being exhibited. Spend some time there and write descriptively about the place and the work. In your sketchbook, write about the show in general, including at least a page each about two different 3-D objects that interested you. Do a full-page drawing of each of these objects.

Describe the objects in detail. Describe materials and techniques employed. Describe how the object made you feel and what it made you think about.

2. **Research sculptors:** Find three sculptors whose work really interests you. Research their work in books, on the Internet, or in person. Describe the issues they explore in their work in your sketchbook and document with drawings and pasted-in photographs. You may choose any sculptors that interest you, but a list is provided below for your convenience:

Magdalena Abakanowicz	Ana Mendieta
Robert Arneson	Joan Miró
Jean Arp	Henry Moore
Joseph Beuys	Louise Nevelson
Christian Boltanski	Isamu Noguchi
Constantin Brancusi	Claes Oldenburg
Christo	Meret Oppenheim
Marcel Duchamp	Martin Puryear
Andy Goldsworthy	Richard Serra
Julio González	Charles Simonds
Ann Hamilton	Kiki Smith
Eva Hesse	Robert Smithson
Barbara Hepworth	James Turrell
Rebecca Horn	Peter Voulkos
Jeff Koons	Fred Wilson
Maya Lin	Jackie Winsor
Jacques Lipchitz	

Choose three of the following projects and complete for critique during the first week of school:

- A. Using any debris from your life (clothes, papers, food containers, cosmetics, reading material), assemble the materials into a life-size self-portrait bust, actual or metaphorical, in relief or in the round. You can use any means available (tape, glue, string, staples, screws, etc.) for attaching the material.
- B. Using only natural materials (twigs, grasses, pods, stones, leaves) and twine or string, create a container for an object that has special meaning for you. The container must be at least 10 inches in one of its dimensions.
- C. Make a temporary environmental installation addressing any of the following: time, viewpoint, pathways, celestial events, social issues. Document in photographs and drawings.
- D. Evolving form—create three objects whose forms are related yet different from each other. Each object must be at least eight inches high. Can be vessels, figures, or abstract form. Use clay and preserve for firing in August.
- E. Your choice. Anything you want.

Oh yes, one more thing . . .

**Trash picking:** Collect a sizable boxful (or more) of interesting objects and junk. Broken objects, machine parts, natural objects, household items—anything that interests you in terms of shape, volume, texture, color, meaning, or social significance. Objects that are modular or occur in multiples can be especially useful. Bring to school the first week.

## Bibliography

*Shaping Space*, Paul Zelanski, Pat Fisher, 2nd ed., 1995, Wadsworth Thomson Learning.

*Principles of Three-Dimensional Design*, Stephen Luecking, 2002, Prentice Hall.