

## Advanced Studio: Arts 480.01

Prof. Claudia Esslinger

W/F 2:30-4

Office: 210 Horvitz Hall

Office Hours: MWF 11-12 and

by appointment

Cell 740-504-5896

*"Talent is a word almost never used by professional artists. It is a way of thinking about one's abilities that minimizes the importance of hard work, the impact of education and the ability of an individual to transform him or herself." Ken Steinbach in Creative Practices for Visual Artists: Time, Space and Process*



Image by Reed Esslinger-Payet

This is a class of transitions and transformations. It will enable a transition in your life from student/artist to artist/student as you generate your own work, beyond the assignments of the past. It is not meant to be a class where you learn new techniques, but rather expand on the ideas and skills that you have been developing throughout your time at Kenyon. You will do research, read and discuss a common text, write artist's statements and document your progress in your artistic evolution on a google website. The second half of the semester you will already be doing work for your senior exhibition! Support from your classmates, critiques, and written comments from the professor will provide feedback. Workshops together with the other advanced section will be presented and required. A presentation to the art faculty near the end of the semester will give them an idea of your direction. At the end of the semester, a celebration with Open Studios will help you share your work with the wider community. By this time, your self-generated work will have produced some compelling results!

### Departmental Learning Goals:

Development of the ability to make visual art works of high quality. Success will be characterized by demonstrating creativity, gaining new art making skills, working through conceptual problems, and making formal decisions relevant to each media. Student creative development takes into consideration two different categories: (1) the progress of each student during an individual course, and (2) the progress over four years of the studio art majors.

Development of the ability to evaluate one's own artwork and the artwork of others within the context of an inclusive learning environment. Success will be characterized by gaining an understanding of the vocabulary of art appreciation, using vocabulary to speak and write about art, and demonstrating a heightened sense of individual, social, and cultural awareness while participating in artistic evaluations.

### General Class Goals:

- Be Generative: develop a consistent art practice that embraces the process of making, taking risks, showing initiative, motivation, preparedness, responsibility. Structure your time well. You are expected to spend at least 12 hours/week working.
- Deepen your content: be curious, develop metaphors, irony and mystery while avoiding cliches. Experience progress in areas that are difficult for you. Pay attention to detail.
- Develop research, writing and documentation skills that compliment your work. Anchor your work in its appropriate context: historically, culturally, socially, aesthetically and with regard to other courses you are taking and knowledge you have.

- Be Generous: Help each other and make art in relationship to others: class, community, beyond.  
Attend class on time and participate.

**Specific Evaluation Criteria** for each project based on the above goals and more: Does the work show that you have followed the above goals in general and specifically does it show:

1. An approach that is visually, intellectually and emotionally compelling? Is there something that initially draws the viewer in to want to see more?
2. Originality/ creativity/ innovation/ surprise/ cleverness? Does the work avoid clichés and pat expectations? Did you take a risk ...step away from your comfort zone?
3. Conceptual depth, sophistication or complexity that allows a sustaining interest on the part of the viewer.
4. Form (its color, media, rhythm, etc) that supports the content (the idea or concept). Does it make sense to use this form for this subject?
5. An awareness of the appropriate audience/ social context of your work as relating to other artists and non-artists, those of your generation and beyond, what era you are working within, what cultural knowledge you can refer to and what will be lost on the viewer.
6. An appropriate degree of technical skills, attention to detail and artistic integrity for your idea.
7. Progress - How much did you grow in the following: deepening your artistic vision conceptually, improving technical skills, developing effective processes of brainstorming, work habits, and resourcefulness? All relating to the above goals.

**Evaluation Process:** We will schedule rolling group critiques and individual tutorials. During the group critiques we will go to your studio. All of us will participate in constructive comments (this participation will be part of your grade for each project). After each critique, you will write me an email that summarizes what you learned from that critique about your work and what your thoughts are about your next step. After I receive this email, I will send you written comments and a letter grade. For the first project (One-a-Day) the grade will be based on number of projects and self-reported hours, supported by work and journals (not qualitative evaluations).

**Communication:** Individual and group meetings, personal digital journals, email communications are all part of the process of interactions. Always feel free to email or even text me if the need is urgent! In order to communicate we will share email and phone numbers. You are responsible to read email and texts in a timely way.

**Attendance** - Especially because of the group interdependence and only bi-weekly meetings, your attendance is critical. A second unexcused absence will lower your grade for the semester by 5 pts (out of 100) for that and each additional absence. If you must miss a class, the courtesy of a phone call or email is expected. You are also required to attend all workshops, Art Department speakers and Gallery openings.

**Class Structure:** This class meets twice a week as a group, but individual worktime spreads to all hours. Visits from the professor outside of class time are possible. Group meeting time will include presentations, workshops, occasional demos, discussions, and critiques with some worktime. The first part of the course will emphasize process and development of one's artistic practice. The second part of the course will emphasize individual projects that maintain a sense of process but move toward completion.

**Class Etiquette:** Keeping good communication with your studio partner, your class colleagues and me is a primary goal. Your studio and college equipment should be cared for... no phones while we meet.

**Academic Honesty:** Being honest academically in an art class is more difficult to define than in other classes. Sometimes using another image is intended as a cultural reference. It even has a name: "appropriation." Whenever this is intended, the image is well known enough in the culture for most people to know where it came from, and therefore it evokes some ideas or feelings tied to the original. This is fine for an artist to do.

Taking another artist's image, composition or idea directly and passing it off as your own is a case for dishonesty however. I suggest that if you have a question, come talk to me first. We are now in another era with AI imagery and text part of our culture. You may only use these as conceptually appropriate (which we will discuss).

**Accessibilities Accommodations:** A student with a disability who thinks he or she may need an accommodation to access a campus program, activity, or service should contact Student Accessibility and Support Services (SASS) to discuss specific needs. Advance notice is required to review documentation, evaluate accommodation requests and provide notice or arrangements for any accommodation. It is helpful for you to notify me about these accommodations as well.

**Privacy vs Confidentiality:** *If you are having a particularly hard time for any reason, please let me know early and keep me in the loop...this need not be specific, but some general communication.* As a faculty member, I am deeply invested in the well-being of each student I teach. I am here to assist you with your work in this course. If you come to me with non-course-related concerns, I will do my best to help. It is important for you to know that all faculty members are mandated reporters of any incidents of harassment, discrimination, and intimate partner violence and stalking. I must report any such discussion to the Civil Rights/Title IX coordinator. I cannot keep information involving sexual harassment, sexual misconduct, interpersonal violence, or any other form of harassment or discrimination based on a protected characteristic, confidential. However, the Health and Counseling Center, the College Chaplains, and the staff at New Directions Domestic Abuse Shelter & Rape Crisis Center are *confidential* resources.

<https://www.kenyon.edu/directories/offices-services/ocr/title-ix-vawa/kenyon-policies/title-ix-policy/>

**Civil Rights:** Kenyon College does not discriminate in its educational programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, medical condition, veteran status, marital status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by institutional policy or state, local, or federal law. The requirement of non-discrimination in educational programs and activities extends to employment and admission. <https://www.kenyon.edu/directories/offices-services/ocr/discrimination/>

**Statement on Names and Pronouns:** As noted by the Office for Civil Rights, Kenyon College is committed to diversity, inclusion, equity and non-discrimination. Many people might use a name that is different from their current legal name. In all areas of campus, we refer to people by the names, in addition to the pronouns, that they use for themselves. Students are invited to share their names and the pronouns that they use. Students are also encouraged to use gender-neutral language, if they aren't sure of someone's pronouns. For more information on Kenyon's commitment to diversity and non-discrimination, please refer to the Office for Civil Rights and/or the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

## **Materials**

Each student has a budget of \$500 for the year towards the purchase of materials for art work. Receipts are REQUIRED, and must be submitted in one bundle, to the Studio Art Dept Administrative Assistant.

## **Suggested Texts and resources: links on the class website**

Required: Creative Practices for Visual Artists: Time, Space and Process by Kenneth Steinbeck, 2018

Themes of Contemporary Art by Jean Robertson and Craig McDaniel 5<sup>th</sup> edition

<https://www.gyst-ink.com/> website of professional practices

2009 wooloo.org. (opportunities for artists)

Plus various articles that I may send and give you throughout the semester links on the class website.