

# Arthur Fields

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## *TEACHING PHILOSOPHY:*

Reflecting on my own education as an artist, I recognize that the key to my growth was the combination of structure and mentoring received from my instructors. Such structure gives students the basic tools for building an artistic future. Mentoring is the guided relationship that happens throughout the artistic process. Combined, they fuel creative growth. By providing both a solid academic structure and mentoring to my students, they too can flourish as independent and capable artists. I model my approach to teaching this way as an outgrowth of my own learning experience.

My teaching process blends demonstration, discovery and presentation. Assignments usually start as technical projects with specific guidelines and parameters, leaving the creative content open to the student. To fire up imaginations and provide inspiration, I present students with numerous examples of historical and contemporary artists. I then demonstrate the process step-by-step, so that the student can learn the mechanics of the task. Throughout the duration of each assignment, we schedule one-on-one meetings, which provide support and feedback. The feedback is essential in challenging the student to find creative solutions to their artistic research.

In addition to classroom demonstrations of examples and techniques students are in charge of finding other learning opportunities. Discovery often occurs when students visit galleries and museums, and participate in artist lectures in person or virtually. This interaction keeps students abreast of current artistic trends and modes of presentation. The artist lectures also give the students the opportunity to listen to working creatives talk about their art and see what inspires them. After this type of interaction, students respond with reflective writing assignments. These writing exercises help the student understand the breadth of context in which all artwork lives, while allowing for a more profound and personal experience. It is essential that students understand that art is not made in a vacuum.

Presentation, in the form of student critiques, is the final element in the process. Critiques, which include both written and verbal evaluation are shared between the audience and the artist. First, the audience reviews the work and provides written feedback that details the technical and emotional aspects of the work. The artist then speaks about the work using a project statement. After presenting their intended purpose and meaning of the assignment, the audience responds with their feedback and the student is given opportunity to further consider his or her research. This manner of critique trains the students to look at art both technically and emotionally while also encouraging the articulation of ideas and in-depth discussion about perception and intention.

With the abundance of imagery available through print and social media today, the power of the image is staggering. My goal as an educator is to impart the knowledge that art is about expressing one's own ideas clearly and meaningfully.