

Colorado State University, Fall 2003, **Drawing Workshop I, AR235-L01 & L02**  
room B107, MWF, office J104A, tel: 970-491-5659  
Marius Lehene, mlehene@lamar.colostate.edu  
office hours: MWF 3:00-4:00 & by appointment

### **Course Description:**

This is an intermediary drawing course attempting to address at a higher level issues that you are familiar with from your previous 2 drawing courses. I would prefer to begin the course by learning about you. In dealing with the assignments, you are encouraged to address valid contemporary problems as they relate to your own work. As you would expect, we will still be concerned with the technicalities of the studio practice but we shall begin addressing the content as well. All these issues will ultimately send us back to how the work is being made; for artists there is no strict and clear differentiation between matter and meaning. Of special interest for us will be to investigate how matter *becomes* meaning.

Along the way we will discuss the projects and filter your efforts through theoretical concerns.

Of great importance will also be to develop a vocabulary for eloquently communicating ideas surrounding your own work and ideas surrounding art in general. I will expect you to (occasionally) write about your studio experience (studio journal, sketchbook). From time to time I may ask you to formalize your thoughts into short essays about class projects.

### **Course Content:**

Observation, experiment, risk taking, harmony, expression, abstraction, non-objective will be the overall coordinates. Other issues: composition in general with all its specific aspects, other elements of plastic vocabulary (line, value, texture), traditional materials (dry and wet media), mixed media, perspective, space (picture plane vs. pictorial depth), notions of color, notions of human anatomy,

**Calendar:** Midterm Critique: October 15<sup>th</sup>, room B101 (or our regular classroom)  
Final Critique: to be announced, room B101 (or our regular classroom)

### **Course Requirements:**

A willingness to invest time, concentration, and courage is essential. In-class projects as well as outside projects will be formally presented by the students and will be discussed along the way, sometimes individually with the professor, occasionally in small groups, and sometimes with the whole class. Active participation in class discussions and willingness to participate in a group effort to learn are crucial. Please keep all work, even unsatisfactory work, unless given specific permission to re-work it. The teacher and the colleagues will get a better chance to understand your thought processes if all range of work will be present when discussed.

**Readings** that may be relevant (not necessarily in the library nor required for the class – they are rather recommended books):

Umberto Eco – *The Open Work*, Harvard University Press, 1989

Rosalind Krauss – *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, MIT Press, 1990

I also have a list of movie titles I would like to recommend to you.

**Grading** is based on:

Quality of work and thought, including that which extends beyond visual art;

Degree of energy, time, hard work, initiative and enthusiasm spent;

Degree and quality of contributions to discussions in class and critiques;

Oral presentation and written expression;

Attendance and work outside class;

Interest and depth of knowledge of traditional and contemporary works of art and art processes, and theoretical concerns.

**Note: Doing everything expected from you with average effort and intellectual involvement will bring you the average grade, i.e. C.**

**Five kinds of students** (one of my grading tools; I owe this to Prof. Mary Vernon, SMU) - I invite you to assign grades to each of these categories:

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1. Likes to draw, paint, (work in general); does it particularly well, at least towards the end of the course; tries new things and has insight into most works she/he sees; always works hard and enthusiastically; speaks in critiques and says perceptive things, especially about the work of colleagues;

discusses ideas intelligently; always comes to class and does a lot of work outside of class; studies deeply the works in the history of art; looks at the contemporary art scene including the local art scene; does small studies and experimental drawings constantly and keeps them organized into a growing portfolio.

2. Does good work (at least by the end of the course) and is open to most new ideas; works hard and willingly; speaks in critiques and makes good contributions; discusses ideas; always comes to class in time and prepared and works significantly outside class; studies the works of other artists; does small studies and drawings.

3. Does satisfactory work (at least by the end of the course); works in a satisfactory way; often speaks in critiques and makes standard kind of contributions; listens to discussions of ideas and occasionally participates in discussions; misses no more than two classes and does a small amount of work outside class; pays some attention to the works of other artists; has few studies and small drawings to show.

4. Does poor work (not worked on, not evolving, clichéd, not engaged with the act of looking at the world, not developing a role for form and materials) without much improvement by the time the course ends; does not work hard; is not enthusiastic; silent in critiques; inattentive to discussions; misses 2 or more classes and one critique; frequently late to class; does little work outside class; shows little interest in the work of others.

5. Does few works and poor ones; does not speak in critiques; shows evidence of listening, misses 4 classes or more; misses one or more critiques; does not work outside class; gives no evidence of interest in the work of other artists.

## ⇨ **Rules !!!**

Turn off cell phones, radios, tape players, and other distractions for the duration of each class!!!

Do not miss class and do not be late for class; both of these would lower your grade!!!

Spend the class-time involved with your drawing!!! Short breaks are allowed.

Attendance may be taken at random times; a.e. 5 min. into the class or 2 min. to the end of the class!!!

Missing more than 20 minutes of a class is equivalent with being absent!!!

It is your responsibility to make sure I record your attendance!!!

Once you have 2 absences, every class you miss will lower you grade one letter ( for example 3 absences means that you will not get a grade better than B, 4 absences – you will not get a grade better than C, and so on)

Have **all** your materials for **each** class!!!

You are expected to spend 6 hours per week working for this class **outside the class-time!!!**

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## **MATERIALS**

Consider *the problem of the materials you use* as a project for you to work on. In most cases you work with, say, charcoal because that was the vehicle of your studio training so far, but can your work (or rather the content in your work) be expressed similarly, or maybe even more powerfully, in a different media? Think of this and feel free to try everything. Here are some absolutely necessary materials:

### **Mark-making tools**

Graphite pencils (2B, 4B, 6B) – at least TWO of each

Charcoal pencils (soft, medium soft) – at least TWO each

Compressed charcoal - ONE BOX

Soft vine charcoal – ONE BOX

Crayon Conte 2B or softer – 3 or 4 sticks, choose both black color & sanguine color

Reed pen (a bamboo stick shaped like a pen)

Drawing pen (get a standard size holder + a number of **DRAWING** nibs, not calligraphy nibs!!!)

ROUND acrylic brushes (or watercolor; these are very expensive)

- # 12 - ONE; # 16 - ONE; # 20 - ONE (can be a Filbert shape)

- # 32, ONE (this is expensive!!! You can replace it with the biggest bamboo round brush you can find)

For utilitarian purposes buy at a couple of cheap China Bristle brushes (2" at least) – they are cheaper in a paint store than in an art store.

### **Inks, colors, etc**

Black India ink – up to ONE PINT

Acrylic tubes (one each) of the following colors: white, burnt umber, Venetian red, black

Acrylic gesso – 16 oz.

Dry pastels – they are different from the oily ones – (Alpha Color by Webber is an example; get at least the 24 color set, but feel free to get as many as you can afford)

Watercolors – a basic set of colors (primary & secondary colors); try to find some that are not powder-like but rather like a solidified gel (those sold in little cubes are expensive but they are also very good)

Color Inks

Oil pastels and cattle markers

Tempera colors (you can simply get the oxides, i.e. the colors as a powder) + egg-tempera emulsion

Gouaches

### **Paper and other supports**

100 sheet newsprint size 18"x24" – or larger - (Jerry's Artarama sells them as a notebook for \$ 8.79)  
24"x30" white paper (comes in a drawing pad); find it at the bookstore or at Jerry's – I think it is the largest you will find there  
Various kinds of drawing and/or watercolor paper (try everything, see what you like)  
Index paper  
Mylar paper (semi-transparent)  
Fine sandpaper from a hardware store (for pastel drawings)  
Alternative supports for drawing (wood panels, plexiglas, et cetera)  
Large Sketch Pad (Canson, Strathmore) 18"x24"  
A stiff, large portfolio that is rainproof (at least 25"x37" or the biggest you can get at Jerry's) for you to keep your work

**Other**

Large drawing board 24" x30" with clips or tape / (OR) try see if you like 24"x30" mylar frosted  
Masking tape ¾" - ONE  
Kneaded erasers – ONE  
A regular eraser – (Mars/Staedler) -ONE  
Empty plastic jars (for ink) – 16 oz – get 2 or 3 of them  
A piece of plexiglas at least 11"x15" (or a tin butcher tray) (also for ink and watercolors)  
Spray fixative – ONE  
Utility knife – the ones with retractable blades are the cheapest and most useful  
Have some pieces of cloth (small towels) and/or paper towels at hand at all times

***Get some more of the above materials whenever (or better before) you need it!  
I may ask you to get some other materials along the way!***