

Course Information: MW 9:00 am – 12:00 pm Room JAC 117
Professor: Diane Levesque Office: JAC 115 Office phone#: 551-5853
Email: dlevesque@carthage.edu
Office Hours: MW 1:00pm – 3:00pm am and Tuesday 4-6 pm

Course Catalog Description:

This is a studio class introducing basic and intermediate techniques in polymer clay. Students will learn color theory, create a repertoire of textures and patterns and develop compositional strategies resulting in work samples, jewelry, vessels and sculpture/installation. Instruction includes technical demonstrations, presentations on polymer artists, critiques, visiting artists and a field trip. This course is open to all students.

Full Course Description:

Recent innovations by contemporary polymer artists have resulted in museum quality works of art, while numerous multi-media artists are utilizing polymer in mixed medium and installation pieces. Studying the development of these innovations while learning basic and intermediate techniques in polymer clay, students will gain an appreciation and understanding of color theory and other fundamental art components. Previous experience in art is helpful, but not required. Open to all students.

Required text:

Polymer Clay Color Inspirations: Techniques and Jewelry Projects for Creating Successful Palettes by Lindly Haunani and Maggie Maggio

Recommended texts: (Also available in class)

Making Polymer Clay Beads: Step-by-Step Techniques for Creating Beautiful Ornamental Beads by Carol Blackburn

Terra Nova: Polymer Art at the Crossroads by Rachel Carren, Bruce Pepich and Lena Vigna

Masters: Polymer Clay: Major Works by Leading Artists by Rachel Carren and Ray Hemachandra

Relief Beyond Belief: Silhouette Dieforming in Polymer Clay by Dan Cormier and Tracy Holmes

Creating Lifelike Figures in Polymer Clay: Tools and Techniques for Sculpting Realistic Figures By Katherine Dewey

The Art of Polymer Clay Millefiori Techniques: Projects and Inspiration for Creative Canework by Donna Kato

Mixed Media Mosaics: Techniques & Projects Using Polymer Clay Tiles, Beads and Other Embellishments by Laurie Mika

The New Clay: Techniques and Approaches to Jewelry Making by Nan Roche

Polymer Clay Global Perspectives: Emerging Ideas and Techniques from 125 International Artists by Cynthia Tinapple

Field Trips & Special events:

1. H.F.Johnson Gallery of Art Exhibits

- *Ebb and Flow: Judith Geichman, Jessica O'Hearn and Octaviano Rangel*
February 6- March 21, 2014
Opening Reception: March 8, Saturday 1-4 pm
- *Chance Aesthetics: Clarence Morgan and Zachary Wursum*
April 1 – May 3, 2014

Opening Reception: Thursday, April 10th 4:30- 7:30pm

2. Field Trip to the Racine Art Museum April 9 th Entry fee: \$3.00

Materials and Supplies:

You are required to bring your sketchbook to each class to use for in class assignments and to take notes. Please purchase all required art supplies listed on the last page and bring to the second day of class. Some secondary supplies will be provided in class. **Materials estimate: \$ 150- 200**

There are three main objectives of this course:

1. To introduce and develop basic skills

Students leaving this course should demonstrate an understanding of and proficiency in using tools, conditioning clay, safety practices in curing and working with polymer clay, and the primary techniques needed to manipulate polymer in 2-D and 3-D formats.

2. Learning and understanding a 4-step process for creative work

- Research: gathering information, taking notes, correct attribution of source materials and documentation
- Sketch stage: exploring ideas, visual thinking, working out design possibilities
- Creating the work: utilizing techniques, research, knowledge and expertise of media appropriate to the project.
- Craftsmanship; Understanding and practicing a variety of approaches for the finish and presentation of the final work.

3. Increase the ability to critically discuss and analyze art.

- Students will learn the innovations and innovators of Polymer Art, while identifying the formal terms and the language used to describe it.
- Students will be able to further critique and analyze works of polymer art based on elements of design; composition, balance, symmetry, asymmetry, surface, color theory and identifying focal point.

Techniques:

- Skinner blends
- Basic forms: log & bead
- Basic caning
- Patterns & Veneers
- Surface effects
- Sculpture applications
- Mixed media approaches

Class time will be comprised of:

- Discussing and critiquing projects
- PowerPoint presentations of artists work
- In class exercises and assigned projects
- Demonstrations of various techniques/media
- Guest speakers and interactions in the field when possible
- Field trips

Course work will consist of the following:

1. Class projects: (60% of Grade)

The first half of the course will consist of applied color theory projects and creative explorations of basic techniques. In the second half of the course we will explore surface and structural approaches in 2-D and 3-D formats. In addition to the required six hours of class/studio time scheduled each week you can expect to put in at least six more hours weekly outside of class on course related material. Grades will be determined on both progress and results.

2. Sketchbook: (10% of Grade)

The sketchbook is your portable studio and design workspace. All class projects will be documented in the sketchbook with concept notes, research, class notes, preliminary designs and final sketches in color. Professional presentation & appearance counts!

I will be collecting the sketchbooks three times during the term for grading. One of the most important tools in any art studio practice is an active sketchbook.

3. Blog Responses and Pinterest Board: (10 % of Grade)

- Blog: In addition to your sketchbook, you will be posting responses to the class blog prompts. Examples of past and current innovators in polymer art will be posted on the blog. It will also serve as an archive of student work made in class.

4. Artist Presentation: (10% of Grade)

Each student will choose a polymer artist from the Artist List on the course blog to research, write and present a 15-minute class presentation. Presentations will include 10- 15 images of the artist's work and information pertaining to techniques, type of work (jewelry, vessels, sculpture, etc.) and content. Assigned presentation times will be made at the beginning of the semester and will be followed by discussion of the contribution of the artist and work.

5. Critiques and participation: (10 % of Grade)

Critiques will be held on the due date of each project assignment, informally as needed, and formally at mid-term and at the end of the semester, when you will present your best (and finished!) works to the class. Critiques are a significant part of the art experience allowing you to apply art terms learned from the text, in class and through other sources.

NOTE: Participation:

Your participation at critiques and in class is a crucial part of your grade. Learning to be articulate and inquisitive about the work of your peers will be a significant component to the growth and improvement of your work in this class. Each student will develop their verbal skills by explaining and discussing their choice of ideas and solutions.

Class participation is defined as follows:

- Asking pertinent questions during presentations, guest lectures, and critiques.
- Being prepared by doing required research, bringing in materials requested, and preparatory sketches.
- Paying attention to in-class demos, respecting/listening to the professor's comments and taking notes.
- Interactions inside and outside of class including appropriate response to e-mails, and attending any meetings if necessary.
- Attendance is critical. You must be on time and not leave early.

Attendance Policy:

1. Each student is granted two absences. After those two absences, each additional absence will be considered unexcused. Unexcused absences will count against your grade—and any student with three unexcused absences will automatically fail the course.
2. If you are missing class due to a family emergency, you must contact the Dean of Students (Jason Ramirez at jramirez@carthage.edu). If he is able to document and confirm your situation, he (not you) will then email all of your instructors.

3. All missed activities and work will need to be made-up outside the regular class. You are responsible for the information missed as a result of an absence. Make an appointment to see me for missed lectures or if you are having difficulties that we can address.
4. Three instances of tardiness will equal one absence. Missing more than 15 minutes of a class at the beginning or at the end will be considered an absence. If you have trouble attending class, please discuss your attendance problems privately with me after class.

Academic Integrity

Each class project, assignment, and presentation must be entirely your own work. You are responsible for reading and understanding the College's academic policies at <http://www.carthage.edu/campus-life/code/academic-concerns>.

To understand the importance of creative and intellectual property as it applies directly to this course please review Harriette Estel Berman's Online Presentation: "The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly in the Age of the Internet".

<http://www.slideshare.net/Harriete/the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly-in-the-age-of-the-internet>

ALWAYS REMEMBER: WORK THAT IS CREATED AS A DIRECT COPY OF AN ARTIST'S WORK FOR THE PURPOSES OF STUDY AND LEARNING SHOULD NEVER BE SOLD AS ORIGINAL WORK.

Disabilities Statement

If you have a disability-related need for accommodations in this course, please contact me during the first week of class. You will also need to provide documentation of your disability to Diane Schowalter in the Advising Center, x5802.

Technology in the Classroom

The use of cell phones or other mobile devices is strictly prohibited during class. Phones must be turned off/silent during break. Students may make calls and text during designated breaks.

It is important in a studio art course that the instructor is able to give both individual and class comments. However, I find that music helps to provide a creative atmosphere, so there will be an iPod speaker for students to take turns bringing in their music to share with the class.

On certain days, computers will be allowed in the room for research or pre-approved online tutorials.

FOR SAFETY REASONS FOOD AND BEVERAGES ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOM.

There will be a 15-minute break period around 2:30pm and you may use the lounge area to have a snack at that time.

Polymer Art Resource:

**Items from permanent polymer art collection on rotating display
Visit:**

Racine Art Museum
441 Main Street

Racine, WI 53403

<http://www.ramart.org/collections/polymer>