

Teaching philosophy

By their nature, teaching and learning are inexorably connected. Teachers teach students, students learn from teachers--the cycle continues. I think that while there is truth to this explanation of teaching, it is not a holistic picture, and it neglects the fact that while as a teacher I am responsible for sharing knowledge and creating situations that foster critical thinking among my students, there is also my responsibility as a teacher to learn from my students. It is this kind of "open channel" that I allow for me to not only create the situation I described above, but also to observe the students as they learn and grow, and to adapt my methods in response to these changes. Through this, teaching styles move away from rigid methods, and engage the fluidity of a variety of learning styles and processes making it easier for students with a diverse variety of needs, backgrounds, and learning styles to grasp material, and grow in their ability to think critically and independently.

These roles can be summed up somewhat hyperbolically, if not poetically, by John Cage in his "Some Rules for Teachers and Students", rules 2 & 3.

RULE TWO: General duties of a student - pull everything out of your teacher; pull everything out of your fellow students.

RULE THREE: General duties of a teacher - pull everything out of your students.

In order to do this, it is essential that students understand that while I am an authority of sorts on the subject that I am teaching, the ways in which I deliver the material and consider it are fluid and open to change. By creating this expectation students have the opportunity to analyze and challenge both the methods and material presented. This provides students both a model for their own critical thought as well as a delivery system for knowledge, skills, and ideas that doesn't simply demand trust, but earns it through rigorous investigation, honesty, and evaluation.

In offering not just knowledge, ideas, and skill in teaching, but providing this structure for practicing critical thought the evaluation of both teacher and student become closely tied. Both can be looked at in terms of the growth of the students' abilities to form critical thought, which is inevitably reflected in the degree to which they choose to engage and challenge the ideas that are presented.



Becca VanRyzin - Slip-cast porcelain, oxidation fired porcelain



Eben Tobar- Slip-cast and altered porcelain, oxidation fired.



Allison Fawcett- Wheel-thrown and hand-built stoneware, reduction fired, low-fire iron-oxide decals.



Madeline Fowler- Slip-cast porcelain, oxidation fired.



Nick Mudd- Slip-cast porcelain, oxidation fired.



Nicole Abele - Hand-built earthenware, oxidation fired.



Phoenix Crane- Hand-built earthenware, oxidation fired.



Wen Liu- Slip-cast porcelain, oxidation fired.



Delphine Gamin- Hand-built earthenware, oxidation fired, digital photograph.



Rosemary Lakin Howell- Fiberglass insulation, wood.



Rosemary Lakin Howell- Wood, cast plaster.