

Natalie Macellaio, Assistant Professor of Sculpture

<http://natalie.macellaio.net> | nataliemacellaio@gmail.com | 1804 Forman Ct. Plano, TX 75074 | 630.728.7074

Teaching Philosophy

As an educator my goal is to share my knowledge of craftsmanship, communicate effectively with a diverse population of students and help them develop a personal vision in their work. I strive to create a safe environment where students are open to expressing their ideas, experimenting with materials and having constructive critique. I maintain high expectations for my students in the work they create and their work ethic so they can continue to grow as artists outside of the classroom.

I stress the importance of understanding the fundamentals of 3 dimensional design and a strong foundation in their craft so students can then apply those theories to other technologies and practices. Students are faced with new technology and processes that generated products so efficiently they make the craftsman seem obsolete. But in order to use these new technologies as an effective tool the student needs to understand the physical object, material integrity and a relationship to space.

A foundation of technical skills will help students begin to explore complex conceptual ideas in the classroom and beyond. Technical skills and processes are taught in the beginning courses to help students gain an understanding of space and the logistics of object-making. Working with contemporary and traditional materials also helps the student to explore a variety forms and begin to develop a relationship with the object. Students must learn *how* to create something so they can develop the *why*. As the instructor, my goal is to share the knowledge I have gained through my studio practice as well as assist the students in experimentation and problem solving with their ideas.

Students are asked to research contemporary artists who are working on concepts or materials that they are interested in. Through observation and research of a professional artist, students are able to use their new vocabulary to articulate an opinion about the artist and therefore begin to develop a personal aesthetic. Students also begin to critique each others work in a constructive way because their comments are coming from a more educated source.

As an instructor, my goal is to facilitate a classroom where students are comfortable and confident to share their ideas with the class and communicate freely. As I look back on my education I realize that the relationships I made with my peers have been the most influential and encouraging on my studio practice. I hope that the classroom environment I have created nurturers those types of lasting relationships.