



Santa Reparata International School of Art  
Course Syllabus

**Semester Course**

**Course Title:** Advanced Studio Practices

**SRISA Course Number:** SART 4601

**Maryville Course Number:** TBA

**Credits:** 3, Contact Hours: 90

**1. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this advanced studio art course students will focus on learning what it means to be a contemporary artist. All art media may be used throughout the semester, though students may choose to concentrate on one medium if that is their chosen pathway. The professor will introduce prompts to students as a means to encourage them to think conceptually about their work. Practitioners will ultimately be required to push their artwork to a high degree of resolution by assessing and contextually clarifying how their work addresses the contemporary artistic landscape. Studio work will be augmented by readings meant to provide further investigative material in relation to cultural production. At the end of the semester students will be expected to have understood what it means to be a working studio artist and to take this knowledge with them into the real world.

**2. CONTENT INTRODUCTION**

During the semester, students are given prompts that are meant to guide them towards the completion of works of art. In connection with the prompts are readings that challenge students to expand their initial ideas surrounding any given prompt. Class sessions begin with a group conversation regarding assigned readings. Importantly these conversations are student lead. Equally salient is the fact that the course is a non-media specific class. This means that students may focus on their medium of choice for all the prompts given in the semester, or conversely they may choose to vary their media. Professors will discuss with students how best to proceed with each prompt. Though students are expected to be proactive in their understanding of their artistic practice.

**3. PREREQUISITES**

Students are required to have completed two years of foundation in the fine arts at the college level before taking this course.

**4. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

At the successful completion of this course students will...

- 1) have understood how to read a critical text and discuss it with their classmates
- 2) talk about their artistic practice in front of their fellow students and professors
- 3) be able to curate their own work in relation to an exhibition space
- 4) be able to make work at an advanced level
- 5) be able to make work after the course is over
- 6) understand what it means to have a pertinent contemporary artistic practice in the 21st century

**5. REQUIRED MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES**

Materials necessary for this course are:

- materials that are best suited to a specific student's artistic practice

**6. GRADING POLICY AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES**

Your final grade will be based on the following percentages:

- 20% prompts 1 and 2
- 20% Mid-Term critique
- 20% Classroom participation and attendance
- 15% prompts 4 and 5
- 25% Final Prompt

The following grading system will be observed:

- A Excellent 4.0 (grade points awarded) 95% percentage of 100%
- A- 3.7 (90% to 94%)
- B+ 3.3 (87% to 89%)
- B Above Average 3.0 (83% to 86%)
- B- 2.7 (80% to 82%)
- C+ 2.3 (77% to 80%)
- C Average 2.0 (73% to 76%)
- C- 1.7 (70% to 72%)
- D Below Average 1.0 (60% to 69%)
- F Failure 0.0 (59% and below)
- W Withdrawal 0.0

## **7. PLAGIARISM AND COPYING**

SRISA severally condemns ignorant plagiarism and copying during examinations. Any student that makes use of words or ideas taken from another person's work without properly citing credit for the specific purpose of deceiving their professor will receive an automatic "F" on that assignment or exam. Should the offense be repeated, the student will receive an automatic "F" in the class. Students utilizing the strategy of appropriation in a work of visual art for political, religious or social reasons may do so. It is fundamental that students pursuing strategies of appropriation understand that in the United States *fair use* allows them to copy copyrighted material for a limited and "transformative" purpose. Given the complicated nature of how artists utilize appropriation in the 21st century, SRISA students are required to discuss ideas regarding fair use and copied imagery with their professors before turning in their assignment.

## **8. CRITIQUES**

Critiques are friendly group discussion of each student's course work. They allow you to see your own work through the eyes of your peers and instructor, and also encourage you to develop critical insights about your work and the work of others.

Students in this course will be required to take a significant role in critiquing their fellow students.

## **9. ATTENDANCE AND BEHAVIOR POLICY**

Students should attend all classes if they are healthy and able to come to class. Students who miss more than 1 class will have their final grade lowered by one letter grade for each additional absence. For example, if you have an "A" in this class and you are absent 3 times you will receive a "D" in the course. If you are absent more than 3 times you will receive an "F" on your transcript.

- Tardiness: After 20 minutes into class time, students are considered absent.
- Students who leave 20 minutes before class time ends will be considered absent.
- Excused absences require a doctor's note or a written note from the Director.
- Arriving in class unprepared to work is considered an unexcused absence.

Students are expected to participate in class, act responsibly, and behave properly while on the school premises. Classrooms are to be left in order and clean. Students must take care of equipment and materials and promptly report any damage and/or loss.

## 10. COURSE CALENDAR

### Day 1-5

Introduction to the course and development of exercises and studio time for Project I

### Project I/ Beliefs

#### Concept:

As sometimes we need a reality check, we will engage this project as we step into new territory fostered by a beliefs check that will look at the state of our current belief system. The project should reflect upon the nature of our personal references and artistic values and what it means to go to the root of our sources. I ask that you work out a genealogy of your beliefs consisting of a series of studies and sketches.

We will be using a poem by Saul Williams as a point of departure in relation to an examination of beliefs. Our beliefs are in every aspect of how we approach the world. This is especially true when we create art, as our work is often an externalization of things that we reflect upon. The question is..... 'What is your minds immigration policy? What do we reject at our minds borders and why?

This project is designed to force a meditation on your new surroundings in Florence and a critical examination of the vision that you came with in relation to this cultural landscape. Going beyond the façade of Florence's Renaissance history, each student will engage in work to contextualize themselves and their backgrounds in this setting. A visit to Palazzo Vecchio and an engaged look at history are pivot points for your work.

The work to be carried out can take any form but must include:

A broad range of different types of studies

Artistic and socio-cultural references

Readings that are key to your work and research

**Site References:** Palazzo Vecchio

**Artists:** Saul Williams, Anselm Kiefer, Saya Woolfalk, Carrie Mae Weems

#### Exercises:

Genealogy of beliefs

Metaphor as language exploration

Charting our beliefs as present in our work

Meditation on borders

### Day 6

Critique for Project I

### Day 7-13

### Project II/ Failure

#### Concept:

This project is meant to push each of you to examine new approaches to thinking and making in relation to the societal framework of Failure and a meditation on the "function" of art. The project engages process, repetition and experimentation as core principles of any studio process. I want you all to go dramatically further than you are accustomed to breaking down barriers and experimenting new language with dedication and seriousness for this project which I am hoping will plant the seeds for much to come in the future of your creative endeavors. You are to take the series of writings that I have provided that examine notions of Failure in contemporary society and create a work that responds to this in your own way. You should use the myth of Sisyphus mentioned in the Emma Cocker reading as a starting point.

Each student should attempt to push beyond the inherent limitations of every chosen medium through combinations and layering. You are to do a series of studies that are about expanding range of artistic voice (Studies of the whisper, Studies of the Spoken Voice and Studies of the Yell). Begin with a series of studies along with a basic proposal. We will be using Museo Gallileo Gallilei as a starting point for looking at aesthetics in relation to function and scientific approaches to experimentation.

The work to be carried out can take any form but must include:

A broad range of different types of studies

Artistic and socio-cultural references

Readings that are key to your work and research

**Site References:** Museo Gallileo Gallilei

**Artists:** Francis Alys, Kate Gilmore, Calixto Ramirez, Doris Salcedo

**Exercises:**

Failing on purpose

Meditation on usefulness

Altered functionality

Fixing failures

**Day 14 Oct 24**

Critique for Project II

**Break**

**Day 15-20**

**Project III/ Agency**

**Concept:**

This project is designed to examine our assumptions and shortcomings around ideas of agency (our ability to act or make choices) and the socio-cultural frameworks that mold these choices. The project examines the social capacity and “responsibilities” connected to art making and arts ability to go beyond the frameworks dominated and proliferated by mass and social media. Thinking about the relationship between research done through a direct engagement in the city and its manifestation through an in studio practice this project is meant to connect our personal and social lives with our studio practice.

We will be asking ourselves if artists have social responsibilities? This will be a question that guides the aesthetics and conceptual content of studio work. We will be reflecting additionally on what it means to make socially engaged art and studio based objects that reflect the same content. We will work towards understanding our own audiences and how to engage them. Each student will look beyond the art context for reference points and language to be interpreted and reframed. The history and current use of the Ex-Insane Asylum San Salvi and Ex-Convent turned Prison Le Murate will be used as starting points for thinking about this project and what social work can look like.

The work to be carried out can take any form but must include:

A broad range of different types of studies

Artistic and socio-cultural references

Readings that are key to your work and research

**Site References:** San Salvi

**Artists:** Theaster Gates, Mierles Ukeles, Theresa Margolles, Ai Weiwei

**Exercises:**

Identifying social need

Finding our heroes/heroines

Public space as site

The knowledge production of others

**Day 21**

**Nov 26**

Critique Project III

**Day 22-27**

**Project IV/ Ambition**

**Concept:**

This project aims to allow us to focalize and better visualize an our understanding of ambition. A range of readings on ambition and the pros and cons associated with it are looked at as a starting point to think about our studio practice beyond logistical restraints. Feasibility is not central to the founding principles of this project. A series of studies and proposals for works that extend beyond our current limitations is to be the seed for new work that engages fragments of the bigger project or a scaled down interpretation of the project itself.

An examination of non monetary resources and forms of collaboration are central to this project. Maquettes are looked at as methods for developing the language of ambitious work without the restraints of scale. Additional layers of content are looked at as ways of expanding the potential and strength of this final work. You are to each combine the various languages and aspects of the projects developed this term to create the foundation of this piece which should investigate the language of performance in some way in regards to an interest and understanding of space.

The work to be carried out can take any form but must include:

A broad range of different types of studies

Artistic and socio-cultural references

Readings that are key to your work and research

**Site References:** Museo dell'Opera del Duomo

**Artists:** Cai Guo Qiang, Julie Merehtu, Jannis Kounellis, Anish Kapoor, Anne Hamilton

**Exercises:**

Maquettes and getting beyond material specificity

Layered language

Material explorations

Space analysis

**Day 28**

**Dec 17**

**Critique Project IV**

**Day 29**

**Dec 18**

Student Show

**11. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

SRISA strives to foster an all-inclusive learning environment that best caters to its students' needs. While faculty frequently work one-on-one with students, there are some situations in which special accommodations are required. Should a student have any academic accommodations regarding test taking or otherwise, they must present an official letter from their home University to the SRISA Director within the first week of class stating the accommodations.

**12. DISCLAIMER**

This Syllabus may be amended as the course proceeds. You will be notified of any changes.