CDIL-208-04 Digital Illustration   Fall 2017

Schedule: Tuesdays, 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
Location: Tower 308
Credits: 3.00
Instructor: Abraham Evensen Tena
Phone: █████████
Email: ████████████████
Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm (T614)

Course Description

This class introduces students to the field of Digital Illustration, specifically through techniques of digital painting, digital drawing, photo-manipulation, scanning, file handling, and printing. This class also highlights the importance of continuous digital sketching for the mastery of digital illustration. Taking advantage of bitmap and vector editing software, we will explore the issues of concept, composition, value, color and technique.

Departmental Goals

By the end of the semester, you are expected to:
1. Demonstrate an understanding of image making technology
2. Develop an understanding of the importance of observational drawing and painting
3. Begin to use implied and sequential narrative
4. Apply conceptual thinking skills
5. Gain confidence in experimentation, investigation and risk taking
6. Begin to develop a strong personal voice
7. Implement an active studio practice
8. Identify the importance of effective creative collaboration
9. Demonstrate strong visual, written and verbal presentation skills
10. Assess professional ethics and practices
11. Begin to assess the role of artists and illustrators in historic and contemporary context

Course Goals

Based on the departmental goals, by the end of the term you are expected to:
1. Create solid, communicative artwork using Bitmap and Vector editing software (Photoshop and Illustrator, plus a few extra tools at the end of the semester)
2. Develop and sustain an observational drawing and painting practice using digital tools
3. Utilize the freedom afforded by the Digital Illustration form to create narrative-driven illustration
4. Understand how the multiple visual effects and other competencies of Digital illustration can support strong concepts in your Illustration
5. Learn the fundamental principles behind Digital Illustration, with the aim of exploring the software's capabilities, as well as establishing the practice of self-education in the use of image-making software
6. Identify the digital tools and techniques that allow you to create opinionated images and develop your personal voice
7. Utilize digital tools to supplement and enhance your studio practice, from the capture and creation of sketches, to editing and printing of finished illustrations
8. Use the internet to acquire and share knowledge, references, and your own artwork
9. Create high-quality prints of your illustrations, in context with text, titles and other typographical arrangements.
10. Understand issues of copyright and the ethical use, distribution, and marketing of illustration in the digital age
11. Understand how historical precedents in art and communication inform digital illustration trends, as well as the creation of new tools.

Class Materials and Technology

During the semester we will use Adobe **Photoshop** CC for Bitmap editing, and Adobe **Illustrator** CC for Vector editing. You can download these programs through a student membership at **www.adobe.com**. You are allowed to use older versions of these programs for your homework, but keep in mind that we will use some of the newer features by the end of the semester. Likewise, if you prefer to use different bitmap and vector software (Corel Painter, Paint Tool Sai, etc) you will have to find the homologous tools and techniques described in class. We will use a few extra digital tools during the semester, but they will be free and easy to access. Please contact the instructor if you need help acquiring any of these programs.

You will need a **digital tablet**, and its respective **stylus**, to work during class and for homework. You can borrow both tools in tech central or bring your own. You will also need an **external digital storage** device (such as an external hard-drive, or USB thumb-drive) save your projects (minimum 16 GB.) In terms of printing, you will be allotted printing credits at the start of the semester. You can replenish this credits when depleted. Contact Tech central with any hardware and printing issues.

Lastly, make sure to bring a **sketchbook** every week. Use it to write down notes, create thumbnails and sketches. Since you may want to scan some of those images, I recommend that you get a spiral-bound or semi-perforated sketchbook for easy page removal. 8.5" x 11" is a good size to pick.

Assignments and Grading

Every week you will be assigned process work leading to one of **four main** assignments for the semester. Process work counts for 50% of the grade, and the final illustration the remaining 50%. The instructor will give specific instructions for process work, but regardless of particularities, there are 5 elements of image-making that you should address in your work:

- **Concept**: Clear and concise description of the idea you wish to communicate in your final illustration. Measure your final illustration against your original concept, to asses your clarity and identify the new conclusions discovered through the process. Write a small paragraph describing the concept or goals before sketching.
- **Composition**: Deliberate arrangement of pictorial elements in the service of your concept. This is where perspective, pictorial weight, readability, gesture and point of view matter the most. Create small thumbnails, testing variations on size and position of pictorial elements.
- **Value:** The darkest darks, the lightest lights, and all tones in between in an image. Value, which is derived from rendering and lighting, helps conduct the eye and establish hierarchy. Create simple sketches of just a few value levels (black, white and two grays, for example.)
- **Color:** From its use in naturalistic rendering, to its symbolic and cultural dimensions, color can be the most powerful visual device. Even a limited palette, or monochromatic image, implies choice and meaning. Create a few color compositions, testing different harmonies or organizing principles for your color (local color, design palette, reference to an artistic period, etc.)
- **Technique:** Formal properties such as form, shape, texture, anatomy, line quality brushstroke, and others. A solid technique is not enough to make an illustration, but a good illustration can be hurt by poor technique. Make small samples to test different ways to achieve a visual effect.

To complement your assignments, we will keep a **Digital Sketchbook**: a class-wide social media account were we will post everyone's weekly, smaller assignments. Every class, you will be given a specific exercise that involves a tool to try, an observational challenge, or other skill building activity. Make sure to fulfill all requirements, and deliver the digital file at the beginning of class in the proper format.

This is how your final grade will be divided:

Assignment 1   15%
Assignment 2   15%
Assignment 3   15%
Assignment 4   15%
Digital Sketchbook 20%
Participation   10%

Attendance   10%

While the instructor will provide feedback and a grade for every assignment, it is your responsibility to keep track of your progress during the semester. The instructor keeps a record of every assignment and attendance, so do contact him with any questions or concerns. You may receive an academic warning at mid-semester due to absences, poor performance, and/or lack of professionalism (late assignments, no communication, class disruption.) Reach out to your instructor as soon as possible with any question or concern.

At different points during the semester, the instructor may require that you work outside of the classroom and come back with your results. Likewise, visits to the museum and field work may happen at any point, so bring your ID for every session. Keep in mind that the instructor will pass attendance at the beginning and end of the class, so be sure to be back on time from any break or off-class assignment.

Consistent with other classes, <u>more than two unexcused absences will result in failure of the course.</u>

Finally, here is an explanation on the meaning of each letter grade:

A   Professional level work, or uniquely insightful work.
A -   Outstanding development, comprehension and quality
B +   Very good development, comprehension and quality
B   Good development, comprehension and quality
B -   Average development, comprehension and quality
C +   Marginal development, comprehension and quality
C   Unclear development, comprehension and quality
C -   Lacking any development, comprehension and quality
D   Not acceptable/did not follow direction
F   Not attempted and/or Missed Project/Critique

Departmental Academic Progress Statement

A student whose average is below C+ in a semester's required and elective Illustration courses is placed on departmental probation and subject to remediation. Such remedial work may include any or all of the following: a mid-semester review; repeating one or more classes; repeating a semester or an entire year's requirements. A student whose average is below C+ in Illustration courses for a second semester is subject to dismissal from the department. A student who has repeated a year and whose semester average falls below C+ in Illustration courses will be dismissed from the department.

Classroom Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Massachusetts College of Art and Design is committed to fostering the academic, personal, and professional growth of our students. We are especially committed to ensuring that students with documented disabilities, as defined under the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), are provided equal access to all campus resources and opportunities. If you believe you have a disability that may warrant accommodations, I urge you to contact the Academic Resource Center (ARC) at arc@massart.edu or 617-879-7280. The ARC is located in the Tower Building, Rm 811. The Academic Resource Center provides academic support to all matriculated MassArt students through access to academic advisors, a learning specialist, academic coaches, professional writing and subject tutors, and training on assistive technology.

Assignment Descriptions:

(1) <u>3 Materials: Pattern and Texture:</u>
- Use reference: find 3 materials that you would like to explore, using everyday objects. For example, you could use an onion, an egg, or the fur on your pet. These form-principle spheres should be black and white .Think in terms of pattern and texture.
- Identify a light source and a cast shadow: You can set up a simple spherical object on a table, under a lamp or next to a window. Make sure to have a clear understanding of the direction of the light.
- Test the transparency and line width variables: it will be easier to achieve some effects with one setting or the other. You can also explore the brush tool settings, but keep in mind that we will go into more detail about it in the following classes.

(2) <u>3 Materials: Color and Reflectivity:</u>
- Use reference AND Imagination: a Find a good source object, with interesting colors and material properties. Consider also how you can make the sphere interesting: could you put a cold object under a warm light? Mix two different objects? Invent a story where this sphere is an important prop? Look at your own previous assignment and think about ways to make it more challenging and opinionated.
- Analyze (and play) with the light temperature: Every light source around you has a relative temperature bias. If you wish to make it very noticeable in your digital painting, try using cellophane paper to create a blue, red or yellow light.
- Use transparency layers to help your work.
- Make sure to add a hint of background and a surface.

(3) <u>Self portrait with odd material:</u> By now your form principle spheres should start to take on unique shapes, while maintaining a strong sense of light, shadow, and temperature bias. The true power of the form principle becomes clear when we use it to understand the natural world. Eyes, noses, cheekbones, entire skulls: they all can be understood as simple solids, with local colors, that change in reaction to a light's temperature.
- Find an object with an interesting material, and draw it for your digital sketchbook assignment: search for something that would create an interesting image, or say something about you.
- Set up a mirror nearby AND take photos of your face from multiple angles: while I won't demand "realism" just for the sake of it, there are two important goals when making your self portrait:
  - The result should look recognizably like you: that means a degree of accuracy in proportions, facial structure, hairlines, etc. Distortions and modifications can be attempted AS LONG as it is clearly a portrait of you (a caricature may be ok, for example.) Ask you friends around you if you are in doubt!
  - The result should be modeled with light, shadow and color: This is a test to your understanding of the form principle and color in nature, as it applies to observation. You don't have to model every single pore or hair strand, nor is necessary to have many steps in the value between light and dark. Often, the best results come from a few well defined steps: lightest light, darkest dark, and 2 or 3 in-betweens tones.
- Replace one of the materials in your portrait with your observed materials: this should be the fun and creative part.

(4) <u>The Book of No:</u> This book will have a minimum of 8 pages, so think about 8 scenarios were you could use the word "NO." It could be in speech bubbles, legends (words at the bottom of the page) or other creative solutions. Make at least 15 thumbnails of these scenarios, and we will work together as a class selecting the best ones for the book. Keep in mind that, for this assignment, you should have a minimum of 4 illustrations that you drew from observation (the rest can be from imagination.)

Note: the instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus at any point during the semester. If that is the case, the instructor will outline the changes and provide you with the proper replacement documentation.

(5) <u>Something Large Fell From the Sky:</u>
   •   Think about the prompt "Something large fell from the sky:" One day a large object fell from the
       sky in the city of Boston. What object? How large? Where did it fall? How did it affect the city?
       You must answer those questions in your illustration. I suggest you write a small paragraph in
       your sketchbook, thinking about the most interesting, weird and/or exciting story you can come up
       with, based on this prompt.
   •   Take multiple photos of the location to use as reference: lets say that your large object fell in the
       middle of the Boston Public Gardens. If that is the case, go there with your camera and
       sketchbook, and take as many photos as needed to locate the perfect angle to show the action.
       This is an exercise in which we will use the camera to compose our image, so be inventive! Don't
       take all your photos from eye level. Get on top of a bench, or kneel down to get an interesting
       angle. Tilt the camera to elicit a disorienting mood, or find a beautiful, symmetrical composition if
       you wish to communicate harmony.
   •   Take your best image to Photoshop or Illustrator, and manipulate it to create a narrative piece: it
       is ok to start with a photo, but you should change it sufficiently to make your viewer believe that
       something large fell from the sky. You can use the color picker, clone tool and any other method
       to emulate the photo's naturalism. Conversely, you may paint on top of the buildings (or objects,
       or people) to make them fit your drawing style. This a test to your ability to rise above simple
       photorealism and really deliver a narrative. The photo should help you get started, but the
       resulting image should be a wholly imaginative piece of narrative art.

Class Calendar

Date	Class	Homework	Digital Sketchbook
9/5	Intro. Syllabus. Intro to Photoshop. Brush tool	4 Materials: pattern and texture	Something you found on the floor outside
9/12	Selection. Layers and transparency	4 Materials: Reflections and color	Something you use every day
9/19	Color and printing. Digital figure drawing	Portrait: thumbnails, reference and comps	Copy your favorite portrait from art history
9/26	Custom brushes and textures. Scanning, levels and curves	Portrait: value and color	Make 5 different brushes from your own photos/scans. Paint something wth all of them
10/3	Pen Tool and masking. Digital figure drawing	Portrait: Finish	A toy, figurine or some other small statuesque object
10/10		**NO CLASS**	
10/17	Vectors: Illustrator. Pen tool and primitives	Editorial: research, thumbnails, value	Interesting silhouettes of made-up characters
10/24	Color in Illustrator. Patterns. Text tools	Editorial: finish	Your own logo
10/31	Effects. Perspective and technical drawing	Matte painting: thumbnails, research, photo	One perspective drawing of your room/studio
11/7	Photoshop and Illustrator, integrated pipeline	Matte painting: value and color	Your favorite observational subject, started in one program and finished in the other
11/14	Animating in Photoshop and Illustrator	Matte painting: finish	An animated gif
11/21	Other Tools: Alchemy	Narrative Piece: writing, thumbnails, reference	A vehicle design (use reference)
11/28	Other Tools: Open GL	Narrative Piece: value color, composition	Heads from multiple angles (3 minimum)
12/5	Tutorials presentation	Narrative Piece: finish	Find a tutorial and follow it
12/12	Final Critique		