

USC Roski School of Art and Design

ART 120: Painting I (4.0 units, section: 33880R)

Spring 2018 M/W 2:00-4:50pm, HAR 203

Professor: **Karen Liebowitz** Email: kliebowi@usc.edu, Roski Main Office # 213.740.2787,

Office Hours: By appt. only, M/W 5-7pm. Painting Office: HAR 204 (Possibly other days/times.

Email in advance).

Catalogue Description: Practical introduction to oil and acrylic pigments, painting equipment, processes, and media. Primary experience in: color, composition and perception through representational and abstract painting.

Course Description

Painting has been a primary human activity for thousands of years and it continues to be. Some 40,000 years ago, “painters” were spiritual leaders and documentarians of tribal life. In the ensuing millennia, the development of civilizations has fostered a symbiotic relationship with the medium. Technologies have evolved, cultural movements have come and gone, and the role of painting in society and in art has changed over and over again. So here we find ourselves in the 21st c., shouldering the burden of a massive painting history that presents a daunting wealth of choices to an artist in training. Where do we start? How do we find our own voice? Well, the answer is, before (or at least alongside) we begin to grapple with the bigger questions surrounding painting, we have to learn to paint!

In this introductory course, students will learn the fundamental building blocks so that each may gain the facility to more deeply explore painting and all its possibilities. Students will learn to use painting tools, mediums, and processes (and safety with hazardous materials). We will also hone skills for visual perception and dexterity, along with creative problem solving and conceptual development.

For the most part, the painting assignments are based on direct observation. We will explore the technical and formal aspects of painting, including value and color relationships, mixing, glazing, brush and paint handling, medium usage, composition, and more. As the semester progresses, there is a growing emphasis on artistic expression, experimentation, and developing personal ideas, aesthetics, and direction in painting. We will focus on how technique, materials, and content ally to make meaning in paintings.

The class will further be structured around group discussions, critiques, and slide presentations of historical and contemporary works to investigate a range of concepts related to painting. Students will also be given the opportunity to participate in a field trip to local galleries or museums. A list of current, local exhibitions will be made available, along with announcements of artist talks and other opportunities.

(The class will be taught in oils, although students may make a case for using other painting media.)

“I have learned that what I have not drawn I have never really seen, and that when I start drawing an ordinary thing, I realize how extraordinary it is, sheer miracle.”

–Frederick Franck, *The Zen of Seeing*

“Painting is a high art, a universal art, a liberal art, an art through which we can achieve transcendence and catharsis. Painting has an essence and that essence is illusion, the capacity to materialize images rendered up by the boundless human imagination. Painting is a great unbroken

tradition that encompasses the entire known history of man. Painting is, above all, human.”
–Douglas Crimp paraphrasing Barbara Rose in *The End of Painting*, 1981

“One must really be engaged in order to be a painter. Once obsessed by it, one eventually gets to the point where one thinks that humanity could be changed by painting. But when that passion deserts you, there is nothing else left to do. Then it is better to stop altogether. Because, basically, painting is pure idiocy”. –Gerhard Richter, in conversation with Irmeline Lebeer

"From today painting is dead"- Paul Delaroche (his pronouncement after Daguerre's invention)

Course Goals

The ultimate goal of this class is for each student to deeply engage with painting, and thus expand skills, and gain insight into his/her creative process, individual aesthetic, vision, and direction as an artist.

Specific goals are as follows:

- *Develop basic proficiency with various painting tools, materials and techniques.
- *Learn the best ways to use the tools and apply paint for optimum results, and create an illusion of space.
- *Learn painting vocabulary.
- *Learn about contemporary and historical painting, and become familiar with the various strategies of those painters.
- * Learn studio protocol– a safe and ecologically sound use and storage of painting materials.
- *Develop research, problem solving, and time management skills, along with professional skills such as presentation of works.
- *Develop an understanding and appreciation of the profession of the painter/ artist, and recognize that painting continues to be a universally valuable and valid means of engaging the world at large.
- *Develop the ability to analyze, discuss, and critique your own work as well as that of others.

Production Expectations

Homework: Expect to devote all free class/studio time and additional weekly hours to painting for this class. The USC guideline is that “for each unit of in-class contact time, the university expects two hours of out of class student work per week over a semester”. Along with the paintings, you are often expected to generate sketches or smaller studies in relation to the finished works.

“Portfolio”: You must save everything!

Sketchbook: A sketchbook is required and you should bring it to class. You may use your sketchbook for different purposes– experiment with materials, record thoughts, observations, and questions in class, take notes on lectures, technical advice, and response to your work in critiques. And most importantly, make drawings from life, have a place to brainstorm ideas, record your research and conceptual development for the paintings, make compositional sketches, keep clippings and photos of your sources of visual inspiration, show announcements, articles, etc. You may also use your sketchbook like a journal.

Student Presentations: You will each give a 10-minute presentation on an artist. Guidelines will be provided.

Participatory Requirements

Group Critiques: In critiques, students and instructor discuss the merits and weakness of each painting, as well as offer suggestions and constructive criticism. The purpose of the critiques (crits) is to develop the ability to articulate your observations of art and to hear how your work is received and interpreted by others. It is also an opportunity to present completed work in a professional manner, and learn a visual and critical vocabulary. For the critiques, you should be prepared to speak about your work and to contribute meaningful comments and critical observation about the work of your classmates. For the crits later in the semester, I encourage you to address both the content and formal components of painting, with an emphasis on the relationship between the two. Your engaged participation during class critiques is expected and will be part of your grade.

For the final, a written paragraph (artist' statement), outlining the conceptual framework for your piece, will be due and read by you at the critique, and will form the basis of our subsequent discussion of your work. A general guideline will be handed out for assistance in writing about your work. I will provide written comments to you regarding your statement if you turn it in in advance.

Readings/Handouts Discussion: Your engaged participation during class discussions on distributed texts and topics is expected and will be part of your grade. I will upload all mandatory readings to Blackboard (under "Content"). I am also happy to suggest texts on an individual basis as well.

Student Presentations: You will each give a short presentation on a contemporary painter. Guidelines and a list of possible people to research will be provided.

Field Trip: A class day is cancelled/traded to devote hours to a field trip.

Attendance

This is a studio-based class and therefore attendance is mandatory. Every class session will begin as a group meeting, usually brief, allowing time for discussion, demo, slide presentations, announcements, and role taking. If you are unable to attend, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor via email. You should also exchange email addresses or phone numbers with your classmates so you can find out what you missed if you are absent, and get the homework assignment.

- After missing the rough equivalent of 10% of regular class meetings (3 classes) the student's grade and ability to complete the course will be negatively impacted.
- For each subsequent absence (excused or otherwise), the student's letter grade will be lowered by the following increment: 1 absence over 3 = the lowering of the final course grade by one full grade. 7 absences constitute an automatic failing grade.
- Being absent on a critique day (think of it as a due date or an exam) is strongly discouraged and your work will be marked down for being considered 'late' with a penalty of 1/3 of a grade (B+ to B) for each class period it is late. You will also have no credit for class participation in that crit. The final project will not be accepted late. It is always the student's responsibility to seek means (if possible) to make up work missed due to absences, not the instructor's, although such recourse is not always an option due to the nature of the material covered.
- It should be understood that 100% attendance does not positively affect a final grade.

- Any falsification of attendance may be considered grounds for a violation of ethics before the University Office of Student Judicial Affairs.
- Tardies accumulate and become equivalent to an absence. 3 tardies, early departures, and returning late from breaks = 1 absence.
- Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class.
 - Any student not in class after the first 10 minutes is considered tardy.
 - After a first warning, students who persist in the following disruptive activities: sleeping, texting, emailing or online browsing for purposes other than class research, will result in a tardy for that class session.
 - Students will be considered absent if they leave without the instructor's approval before the class has ended or if they take un-approved breaks that last longer than 45 min.

Evaluation/ Grading

Grades are based on the paintings produced, meeting deadlines, class participation, attendance, and attitude.

- Attitude refers to enthusiasm about your own work, level of involvement, preparedness, respect for the work of others and the studio.
- Participating in class means engaging in discussions and critiques through feedback, questions, comments, etc., and also includes studio civility and overall functioning in a group setting.
- Coming to class unprepared (without materials and/or assignments) will also be noted and reflected in your grade. Class time is not to be used to purchase supplies.
- Final grades are also based on overall growth, dedication to developing your painting skills, and level of commitment towards your work in general.

87% All Production (Exercises, research, preparatory work and all paintings including final project and final writing assignment. This also includes a consideration of amount of work put in outside of class)

13% Class Participation (in critiques, discussions and includes presentation)

→**A full breakdown with specific percentage points is on the Blackboard Grade Center.** Grades for each project will be posted on Blackboard after the critique. A midterm grade will be determined by the “weighted total” on Blackboard, but if you have any questions at any time, please come see me.

The following will be considered when grading the paintings:

Longer projects will count more than short exercises. Paintings will be evaluated on portrayal of accurate observation (when applicable), technical skill and the use of media, complexity, and development of images and ideas.

80% Form & Content– Form refers to execution, craftsmanship, technical quality and handling of materials, aesthetic quality. Content refers to conceptual clarity, originality, complexity, consideration of the image and appropriateness to the assignment (when applicable)

10% Research– Sketches, studies, brainstorming/ writing

10% Professionalism– Completion, presentation, punctuality- (late work will be graded down)

*Effort demonstrated, degree of challenge, ambition, thoughtfulness, and creativity will factor into each of these categories.

Studio Maintenance and Classroom Conduct

This painting studio is used by several classes, so you must thoroughly clean your work area at the

end of each class session. No still-life material, paintings, paints, or trash may be left. Paints and solvents are toxic and flammable! You must properly handle any toxins (paint rags, solvents, etc.)

for everyone's health and safety. DO NOT ever throw used solvents, paint, thick washes, or any solid materials down the drain (scrape everything possible into the trash can). Solvents and oily paint rags DO NOT go in the normal trash, they must be disposed of in the red metal bins.

When there is no lecture, you are welcome to listen to your own music, provided you keep it low enough to hear an announcement, or use only one ear-bud. Time in the studio is not used for phone calls, texting, or surfing the web. Enter the studio and set all that aside. This time is for creating and thinking about painting.

Studio Access: Your student ID will be programmed with the door's card reader for 24/7 access if your ID is a "prox-card" (see form). **You must get a prox-card.** The temporary access code is: **25823#** This code will be good until the add/drop period passes.

You can come work on your paintings whenever other classes are not in session. Class times are posted on the door. After-hours access to Harris Hall can be gained via the southern bridge from Watt Hall. There is a card swipe outside of the glass doors (northeast side) of Watt Hall. Enter Watt and take the elevator to the 2nd floor. Get off the elevator, go left and left again to walk outside on the bridge that is over the Watt/Harris courtyard; then go down the staircase to the Harris courtyard, and turn back towards Watt to find the hallway with our staircase in it.

- DO NOT PROP OPEN ANY DOOR AT ROSKI!! Not even to run to the bathroom. Propping the doors open jeopardizes the safety and security of yourself and others in the building and will result in the reporting of the violation to the office of Student Judicial Affairs. (Also, there have been many thefts in the past).
- Do not share or lend your USCard to anyone. Remember that you are responsible for the individuals that you allow into the buildings.
- In the event that your USCard is lost or stolen, please notify the USCard office by calling 213.740.8709 or by visiting the Customer Service Office Located in Parking Structure X.
- Please immediately notify DPS at (213) 740-4321 if you believe that secure access to the USC Roski School of Art and Design buildings or classrooms has been jeopardized through the unauthorized use of the access system or USCard.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" <https://policy.usc.edu/student/scampus/part-b>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, and harassment are prohibited by the university. You are encouraged to report all incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity/Title IX Office* <http://equity.usc.edu> and/or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://dps.usc.edu>. This is important for the health and safety of the whole

USC community. Faculty and staff must report any information regarding an incident to the Title IX Coordinator who will provide outreach and information to the affected party. The sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> fully describes reporting options. Relationship and Sexual Violence Services <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp> provides 24/7 confidential support.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://ali.usc.edu>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://dsp.usc.edu> provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Roski admissions information

For information and an application to become a Fine Arts **minor**, please visit <http://roski.usc.edu/minors/> Please contact the art advisors at 213-740-6260 with any questions about a minor in the Fine Arts. Office: HSH-101. To become a Fine Arts **major**, please visit http://roski.usc.edu/undergraduate_programs/ Please contact Penelope Jones at penelope@usc.edu or 213-740-9153 with any questions about majoring in FA. Applications are due October 1st and March 1st every year.”

Course Outline

Specific dates are subject to change. Many class days will begin with a brief showing of slides, even if not noted. The slides are meant to visually demonstrate, inspire, and help place what we are doing in the classroom into a larger art context. Although not all noted below, short readings will be assigned with due dates for class discussion.

Week 1

M 1/8: Introductions. Review syllabus, art supplies and viewfinders. Slide lecture for first assignment: Value and chiaroscuro. Assignment: Have supplies for Wednesday, and read: 1. *Knowing Painting Mediums*, 2. *Value Terms and Light Logic* on Blackboard. Bring pencil, b/w paint, mediums, palette, palette knife, brushes, **JAR** and squirt bottle.

W 1/10: Intro to painting mediums and tools, how to mix and apply paint, cleaning brushes, and health and safety factors. Demo for Project: Exercises- **Monochrome/ Tonal** B/W scales and copy of rendered sphere, on provided canvas. Homework (HW): 1. Finish b/w exercises. 2. Paint warm/cool grid with ultramarine blue, orange, and white (instructional handout on Blackboard). 3. Read short handouts on *Perspective* and *Picture-Plane*. Bring sketchbook on Monday.

1/12, 6pm & 1/13, 10am: “Live Artists Live Simultaneity” (multiple performances). Roski Talks and Visions & Voices. At Graduate Fine Arts Building (IFT), 3001 S Flower St, LA, 90007. Reservations required: Visionsandvoices.usc.edu [*List of all Roski Talks on separate handout*]

Week 2

1/15: No class, MLK Jr. Day

1/17: B/W and W/C Exercises DUE, mini-critique on exercises (share problem-solving). Slide lecture: Limited palette paintings. Project: 1. Begin **Painting #1: Chromatic Black, Limited Palette, Warm/Cool Full-Value painting** with u. blue, orange and white on 11x14", of provided still-life. Demo on finding a composition and drawing what you see– review of fundamental drawing techniques (sighting, etc.). Go over how to set up and “start”, blocking in. HW: Work on painting #1

Week 3

1/22: Continue painting. Go over different techniques– alla prima, wet-in-wet, (post blocking in).

1/24: Continue#1. HW: Work on painting #1.

1/24, 7pm at CAAM: Roski Talks w/Visions & Voices– Theaster Gates (artist/ social practice). Reservations required: Visionsandvoices.usc.edu

1/25-28: Art Fair: *Art Los Angeles Contemporary @ The Barker Hangar* in S.M. Opening Th Jan 25, 7–9pm. Fri 11–7, Sat 11–7, Sun 11–6. (I may be able to get students free tix)

Week 4

1/29: **#1 DUE**, critique. Demo, follow along: Stretch and prime a 16x20 canvas. If time permits, Slides: Color theory and still-life as content (*or roll to Wednesday*).

1/31: Apply 2nd coat of gesso. Look through material to use for #2 and work in sketchbook. Mix & match paint chips. HW: Read handouts on Color and create prep/ start painting #2

Week 5

2/5: **Painting #2: Full/ complementary color paintings**, with direct and indirect painting techniques. See how light on objects changes hue, value and intensity of colors; a practical application of color theory.

2/7: Continue painting #2. HW: Work on #2 and read *Indirect Painting*

Week 6

2/12: Continue #2. Demo on glazing, scumbling/ dry-brushing.

2/14: Continue #2 & Slides: Landscape painting (in a broad sense). HW: Work on #2
2/13, 7-10pm: LACMA College Night. Free tix! www.lacma.org/event/college-night-6

Week 7

2/19: No class. President's Day

2/21: **Class cancelled** to trade for a weekend field trip! HW: 1. Work on #2. 2. Brainstorm/ sketch/ prep/ scout for **#3: Landscape painting**. Be prepared to discuss ideas next week and have preliminary sketches and any reference images to share. 3. Read *A. Dillard, Seeing*

2/22: Graduate Open Studios, at IFT

Week 8: (*Begin student 10-min. presentations, 2/class; may move depending on class size*)

2/26: Continue #2, due Wednesday.

2/27 at 6pm: Roski Talk– Patty Chang (Roski Professor, Performance & Film), at IFT

2/28: #2 DUE, critique. Discussion/feedback on **Landscape painting** ideas. HW: Start on #3

Week 9 (Mid-term meetings)

3/5 & 3/7: Work on #3. HW: Work on #3

*****SPRING BREAK March 11-18*****

Week 10

3/19 & 3/21: Continue #3 & slides for portrait/figure painting, demo proportions of the head, etc.
HW: Work on #3

Week 11 (begin 3 days with model)

3/26: #4 **Portrait/figure painting** from the model

3/28: Model painting continued. Assign **FINAL #5** (slides), w/artist' statement. HW: Work on #3 (& #4 if you wish) & bring ideas/ project proposal for FINAL for group discussion on Wed. Proposal should include preliminary sketches and any reference images. It is fine to pitch a few ideas.

Week 12

4/2: Model continued

4/4: Work on #3 & #4. Discuss ideas for Final painting. HW: Finish paintings for critique & prep for final

Week 13

4/9: #3 & #4 DUE, critique

4/11: Work on final in class

Week 14

4/16 & 4/18: Work on final in class

Week 15

4/23: Work on final in class

4/25: Work on final if, depending on everyone's schedule, we can stay past 2 hours on our final exam day. If not, we will begin final critiques today. Turn in all work for grading if re-worked!

FINAL EXAM-CRITIQUE DATE: Monday 5/7, 2-4pm

*Please note, syllabus subject to change