

# Matt Moyer

## Foundations Teaching Philosophy

### **Philosophy: Interaction, Production, Connection, Application**

During my formal education I gained the most insight and artistic inspiration from instructors who employed a philosophy nurturing participation and sharing. Using my combined experience and education I have developed a teaching pattern that focuses on meaningful interactions with my students that build connections between artistic application and their personal experience, encouraging their growth, engagement and interest.

My teaching method for both foundations and advanced level courses is founded and grounded by the interactions I maintain with my students. I initiate this with a clear explanation of expectations and application to curriculum. This method encompasses the connectivity and application of material to our world. A rapport is developed when I provide students the opportunity to enjoy learning and give them the support to develop their art.

Getting a group of students in a ceramics or foundations class to open up and learn is challenging but deeply important. Often these classes are some of the first collegiate art courses for students and therefore can establish positive working, self-assessing and critiquing habits that set precedence for their remaining studies. As a result, I plan courses that allow a fun and expansive exploration of a subject, while incorporating careful guidance, and I have found that when I make these investments my students reciprocate by providing evidence both of skill mastery and the excitement that comes from being in a warm community of likeminded artists. I have found that this frequently results in amazing work: well-executed, thoughtful objects that enhance our lives.

To aid my students in their understanding and exploration of art in ceramics or at the foundations level, I make connections to our modern world as well as to the historical cultures from which we have evolved. I do this by combining specific assignments with thoughtful one-on-one interaction and focused group discussions. I believe strongly that students benefit from class interaction and constant reinforcement of new ideas and new techniques, and have found that my students' best work results when I maintain the same level of interest in their assigned project as I expect them to maintain in their own work. This collaboration is developed deliberately and consistently, guided through dialogue pertaining to the assignment, and applied to the materials, issues (both physical and social), and the student's own investigations.

I have been fortunate to learn from a handful of very special and talented artisans and mentors. Through their instruction I came to see artful connections all around me. This constant reinforcement of artistic concepts within my students' lives is part of a very individualized approach that I model. In fact, I believe it is my most valuable asset as a teacher.

-Matt Moyer