

# Sculpture & Intercepting the Waste Stream

## 16 Week Syllabus

### Course Description

Sculpture & Intercepting the Waste Stream is an introductory sculpture course in creative stewardship with a primary focus on transforming waste material into 3 dimensional works of art. The course introduces environmentally conscious techniques and processes as well as experience in terms of professional exhibition and presentation of work to the public. Group discussions and critiques, video screenings, and readings complement studio time. The class commences with a river, creek or shore cleanup, conducted in collaboration with a local water cleanup organization. The class culminates with a pop-up exhibition of the course work created by the students at a public local gallery or cultural venue. The exhibition also functions as a silent auction/fundraiser with proceeds from the sales of the art work supporting continued clean up of local waterways, parks or shores.

### Course Objectives

Students will create one artwork made from debris that cannot be confused with debris. The sculpture must include at least one piece of material collected during the cleanup, and be made of a minimum 95% debris. Hardware or fasteners may be used, as well as non-toxic paint and adhesives. Other environmentally conscious techniques are to be explored.

Through this course students will:

1. Investigate and develop sustainable art and design practices.
2. Explore fundamentals of sculpture, engage in critique.
3. Develop experience and understanding of safety/etiquette issues for working sustainably in a shared studio.
4. Develop their own visual language.
5. Participate in a public exhibition gaining professional experience presenting and speaking about their work.
6. Develop skills to transform waste into viable works of art.
7. Participate in restricting the flow of debris to our oceans.
8. Become acquainted with the exhibition process, planning an exhibition and the importance of professional documentation and presentation of work.
9. Become familiar with sustainability issues in the arts as they pertain to both material and practice.

Students will meet the objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities in this course:

- Attend scheduled lectures and classes
- Complete assigned coursework
- Participate in the group cleanup, discussions and final exhibition/auction of artwork created during the course.

### Text & Course Materials

#### Estimated Course Fee: \$50 - \$150

In addition to using the materials students collect from the “waste stream” other supplies and tools will be necessary to transform the debris into works of art.

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## Required Readings:

*The World Without Us* by Alan Weisman (Chapter 9, *Polymers Are Forever*)

<http://projectvortexuniversity.blogspot.com/p/required-reading.html>

*The ReEnchantment of Art* by Suzi Gablik (Chapter 11, *The Reenchantment of Art*)

<http://projectvortexuniversity.blogspot.com/p/required-reading.html>

## Recommended Screenings:

*A Plastic Ocean* <https://plasticoceans.org/about-film/>

*Bag It* <http://www.bagitmovie.com/>

*The Story of Stuff* <https://storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-stuff/>

*Waste Land* <http://www.wastelandmovie.com/>

*Tapped* <http://tappedthemovie.com/>

## Schedule:

### Week 1: Screenings, River or Shore Clean up / Collection of Raw Material

Screen: *A Plastic Ocean*.

Students begin to develop a greater sense of context and participate in group discussions about the film.

Students start collecting debris of any kind that compels them from their own waste streams. Students participate in a river, creek or shore cleanup where they will be responsible for collecting waste materials (in addition to those collected from their own waste streams) to be used in the creation of their artwork throughout the semester.

### Week 2: Sorting, Cleaning and Organizing

Screen: *Bag It*.

Students develop a greater sense of agency and participate in a group discussions about the film.

In class demonstrations and discussions on how to clean and organize found materials without harming health or the environment. Students sort through and organize debris materials so that students can determine which items they would like to use from the clean up. Each student will use at least one item from the clean up in their final piece.

Set up work spaces, create safe storage area and organizational methods for sorting and cleaning of debris materials etc...

### Week 3: Context / Experimentation

Reading: *The World Without Us*

Students develop a greater understanding of the complexity of human impact. Students participate in group discussions about the reading.

Studio time, students organize, clean, prepare and start experimenting with their specific debris to assess ideal methods for sculpting with their particular material.

### Week 4: Planning / Organization / Quality Over Quantity

Screen: *The Story of Stuff*

Students participate in group discussions about the short film.

Studio time to clarify and edit their debris materials in accordance with their concept.

Students make maquettes to conceptualize 2-3 ideas for their pieces.

### Week 5: Reductive / Additive

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Reading: *The ReEnchantment of Art*

Students participate in group discussions about the reading.

Studio time to start experimenting with methods of fastening and assembly of their debris items.

Students test materials and methods for viability for their concepts.

Discussions and demonstrations of techniques for sculpting, both reductive and additive approaches. Students assemble various types of debris material to clarify their chosen methodology.

## **Week 6:** *Focused Studio Time.*

Screening: *Waste Land*

Students participate in group discussions about the film.

Studio time.

## **Week 7:** *Fastening / Assembly.*

Screening: *Tapped*

Discussion and demonstration of various techniques for assembling materials without using toxic materials.

## **Week 8:** *Fastening/ Assembly/ Presentation Development/ Critique*

Students determine most effective mounting or interface between their works and the floor, wall, or other option for presentation.

Class discussion/critique on proposed presentation methods and on student work in progress.

## **Week 9:** *Focused Studio Time / Exhibition Planning*

Students work to create a rudimentary scale model of the exhibition space with the works to be included in situ.

Students begin to develop a title for the exhibition.

Students determine finishing/paint/color/sealant or proposed other finishing methods for their artworks and conduct tests for adhesion and effect.

## **Week 10:** *Focused Studio Time*

Students planning to add coloration or surface treatments finish assembly and dimensional fabrication of their works.

## **Week 11:** *Focused Studio Time*

Final week to complete all fabrication and three dimensional aspects of artworks.

## **Week 12:** *Focused Studio Time / Titles / Selection of Image for Invitation*

Airbrushing, coloration and/or surface treatment.

## **Week 13:** *Reflection*

Students create titles, descriptions and statements about their artwork.

Students make final preparations and adjustments for art work to be photographed.

## **Week 14:** *Documentation / Promotion*

Students photograph their work and then decide which photograph will be the image for the digital invitation and press release for their exhibition.

Students create and share a digital invitation with their individual networks.

Students prepare a press release, and promote the exhibition via social media and word of mouth.

## **Week 15:** *Exhibition / Auction*

Students set reserve price for their artwork.

Students draft, plan and prepare auction paperwork and accompanying exhibition logistics including delivery of sold artwork, transporting and installation of artwork.

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Students prepare any paperwork to accompany sale of artwork with cleaning and care instructions for the artwork if necessary.

## **Week 16:** *Exhibition/Silent Auction*

Students install and photograph their exhibition.

Students attend the reception / silent auction.

Students remove and arrange delivery of sold artworks.

Students deliver funds from sales of artworks to local water conservation group.

## **Evaluation**

Grading will be based primarily upon the student's effort, which is reflected in the following:

- Overall quality of the work that is produced.
- Level of success in meeting the objectives of given exercises and projects.
- Participation in critiques and class discussions.
- Level of environmental awareness / conscientiousness throughout the process.
- Receptivity to ideas and constructive criticism.
- Quality of photography of their artwork.
- Quality of text about their work.
- Attendance.

## **Course Policies**

### **Attendance Policy**

Class attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to be in class in a timely fashion, and to remain for its duration. Students will be responsible for the completion of all assignments and for all materials covered during their absence. Students are expected to come to class prepared to work on the given problem and to dedicate a number of working hours on their own time.

### **Participation**

Students are expected to participate in all activities as listed on the course calendar.

Students are expected to share their responses to readings and screenings.

Students are expected to attend the reception/silent auction for their exhibition and invite friends, family and colleagues.

### **Extra Credit**

Students may earn extra credit by volunteering to update and maintain a class blog to share the progress of the class.

Extra credit will also be given to the student or students who create a digital invitation for the exhibition, the student who creates the press release, the auction paperwork, and/or photographs the completed pieces of artwork by each student.

Students may also earn extra credit by photo documenting classes progress each day and sharing these class work and related engagements on social media with the hashtag #creativestewardship.