INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

I assume most of you have not painted in at least 3 months, are terrified to start again, are sure you have lost all painting skills and are probably convinced that any skill you exhibited was just a fluke. Have no fear, we will ease back into painting--by diving right in!

Painting II will be a transitional period. I hope that you will expand the way you think about, practice and approach painting - broaden your awareness and experience of ways of manipulating various technical elements of painting and broaden the conceptual basis from which you work.

As a transitional period, Painting II may be difficult for those of you who were just getting comfortable in Painting I. We will be working in a variety of ways, some of which will suit you, some of which will not. We will look into the work of a variety of contemporary artists, some of which will suit you, some of which will not. We will start off with technical concerns within the picture frame and then examine how to think about paintings outside that frame. Hopefully, this examination will lead to greater mastery of painting in the broadest sense. By expanding your concerns and skills as a painter, you will be able to make more effective and intelligent decisions about why you paint, how you paint and what you paint.

The art of painting is the search for the appropriate relationship between form and content, between the HOW and the WHAT of a painting. WHY one paints is inextricably related to decisions about HOW and WHAT. In Painting II we will focus on the relationship between form and content with the hope that it will lead not only to more sophisticated paintings but to a clearer understanding of why you are interested in painting as a medium of expression.

Advanced Painting, extending directly from Paint II, concentrates on the maturation of understanding the WHY and its relation to WHAT&HOW. In Advanced Painting you determine what you want to paint based on why you like art and I help you develop the best paintings possible based on the goals you set for yourself. Painting II helps lay the ground work for your mature paintings by exposing you to various technical and conceptual approaches and starting points. Not all approaches will work for you, but at least you will be aware of them so that you can make informed, appropriate choices for your own artwork. Paint II, then, is the stage where you are exposed to skills (technical and conceptual) in order to create completely independent work and master those skills in Advanced Painting.

What follows are some brief statements and suggestions of issues in painting for you to think about. These are very broad issues and can provide fuel for thought for years, not just the few weeks we have in a semester. Consideration of one aspect of your work can, and may, provoke more questions of the how, what, and why of your painting and of painting in general. It is the willingness to ask the next question that will strengthen the technical, personal and conceptual aspects of your artwork.
HOWWHATHOWWHATWHATWHATWHATWHATHOWWHATHOWWHO
WWHATHOWWHATWHATWHATWHATWHATHOWWHATHOW
(THESI ELEMENTS ARE INEXTRICABLY BOUND TOGETHER)

*HOW

Compositional Structure
Space
Scale
Light
Color
Style, Paint Quality
Medium

WHAT

Content
Subject matter

*Decisions of style, imagery and structure often fall somewhere on these continuums:
representational<--------non-representational
naturalistic<------expressionistic<----abstraction

Part 1: TECHNICAL EXERCISES; Basic HOWS

Value Sketch
Focused Color
Inventive Approach

We will begin with a simple WHAT (straightforward formal stilllife). And I will run you through several HOWS, several technical approaches. This will get you back into painting and will give me a chance to see how your "hand" and your "eye" work. Hopefully you will become more flexible in your approach to painting. There will not be time for mastery of each technique. However, I expect concentrated analysis of the characteristics of the "means of expression" (i.e. of the qualities of each technique) and of the way form, light and space may be translated through these means. This will require thought, analysis, trial and error, courage and consistent effort. (AND, believe it or not, I want you to have some fun with this! You should think of it as getting the chance to "ride" alot of different types of "bicycles"!!)
Part 2: ADVANCED HOWS
Alternative material project
Appropriated image project

By this point, you should be warmed up. I hope you will be moving fluidly in painting and will be able to approach the last projects in a sophisticated manner. You will be asked to work with an inventive HOW [(create a painting using alternative media (and/or using appropriated imagery))]. This project should originate from your own interests and desires, and you will focus on developing the appropriate format for you. It would take a year to run through the possibilities presented by all these different formats; obviously, that is not possible in one semester. But, I want you to be aware of these possibilities and I want you to brainstorm through different ideas related to these approaches. It is good exercise for concepts for future work.

Part 3: Starting from an Idea, the WHAT
The LIGHT Project

Then we will shift emphasis from a mere technical starting point (How), to starting from a concept (from a conceptual WHAT). You will have to determine first the subject matter/content (WHAT, WHY) and then decide which format can best be manipulated to express your WHAT and WHY. You will have to determine the specifics of WHAT & HOW based on the concept you choose from the broad theme of light. This may sound intimidating, but you really will just be consciously determining and analyzing what you already do intuitively when you develop your art projects.

****FINAL NOTE:

Though I initiate the assignments, it will be up to you to decide on your specific subject matter and concept and how best to paint them. Projects will start to overlap; you will be finishing one while starting to plan the next. This pacing takes getting used to and requires concentration. Once you get into the rhythm, however, the painting process becomes more fluid and you will accomplish a great deal of learning. Begin EARLY to develop ideas and formats you would like to explore for each painting. This is not something you can do the night before. We can adjust the pace, if necessary, but we will not lessen the intensity!!

HAVE FUN WITH THE ASSIGNMENTS! LET YOUR IMAGINATION AND INTELLECT ROAM OPENLY! THERE ARE NO RIGHTS OR WRONGS IN ART, ONLY BETTER OR WEAKER SOLUTIONS. There is a great deal of self-determination built into all the assignments. Use that freedom (it is a privilege); challenge yourself. The return is authentic; the rewards are lasting.