“In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's mind there are few.”
– Shunryu Suzuki, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*

**Course Objectives**
- To become familiar with the basic methods, techniques & tools of acrylic painting
- To take part in a community of artists
- To *enjoy* the challenging and nuanced process of painting

**Course Methods**
- Practice & repetition
- Experimentation & play
- Observation (inner & outer)
- Creative synthesis
- Mutual support & feedback

**Course Requirements/Grading/Rules**
Please make a *commitment* to the work we’re going to do together. Students who want to get the most out of this class should be on time, have regular attendance, and complete all assignments.

Grading options:
- No Grade Requested: Default option
- Letter Grades: *Not offered*
- Credit/No Credit: No more than two absences and completion of all assignments and active participation in discussions is required

Guidelines:
- **Do** actively participate in discussions
- **Do** listen to the instructor and fellow students
- **Do** complete all projects, including home assignments, and follow directions
- **Do not** talk while the instructor or a fellow student is speaking
- **Do not use a digital device in class (make calls outside)**
- **Do not** be mean, rude, or disrespectful to *anyone* in the class
- Students who cannot follow the rules or instructions of the teacher might be asked to leave
- Please note: Photography of any kind is strictly prohibited while a model is present

**Course Structure**
We’ll be painting (and drawing) the majority of the time, but there will also be slide lectures, demos, class discussions, and short writing projects. At the start of every class we will have a warm-up before the main project. You'll receive information via email before each class that explains which materials to bring and what to work on at home.
Course Materials

For the first class you will need:

- **Work Clothing:** Always wear old clothes, coveralls or an apron that can get dirty.
- **Acrylic Paints & Brushes:** An inexpensive student/beginner/basic set of acrylic paints and a small assortment of inexpensive short-handled brushes (e.g., #0 fine point, #3 fine point, #2 flat bristle, #6 flat bristle, 1.5 inch utility, etc.). Also, one small or medium-sized “Asian-style” bamboo calligraphy brush.
- **Surfaces:** Get at least three (to start) 11 x 14 in. pre-primed canvas boards.
- **Painting-related Materials:** Mixing cups (jars, yogurt containers, etc.), a mixing palette, rags, small palette knife, small spray bottle (for water), and a small color wheel.
- **Painting Transport:** You’ll need a way to safely transport wet paintings, as there is no storage at school. One option is to bring a cardboard box large enough to put a painting into without the wet surface touching anything.

**Portable Art Kit (PAK):**

- A PAK is a small, portable container with supplies and a small sketchbook. The key aspect of the PAK is that it is truly portable—it must fit in a backpack, pocket, or purse. Use it to write down ideas, plan a piece, sketch on the fly, and brainstorm freely without judgment.
- For your PAK you need:
  - **Sketchbook:** Must be 5” x 7” or smaller.
  - **Pencils and/or Pens:** A small assortment of your choosing.
  - **Container:** A small and portable box/bag for supplies.

During the semester you will also need:

- **Pencils:** A few 4H (hard) pencils, eraser and small pencil sharpener.
- **Additional Surfaces:** Get as needed throughout semester. Some options: canvas board, wood panel, stretched/unstretched canvas, watercolor/printmaking paper, cardboard, etc.
- **OPTIONAL:** Gloves, masking tape, scissors/utility knife, sandpaper, acrylic mediums, mini-watercolor paint kit, etc.

**Where to buy supplies:**

- **Maido Fine Stationery & Gifts (SJ):** 378 Santana Row, St. 1125 @ Olsen Dr.
- **Accent Arts (PA):** 392 California Ave. @ Ash St.
- **University Art (Redwood City):** 2550 El Camino Real @ Center St.
- **University Art (SJ):** 456 Meridian Ave. @ Saddle Rack St.
- **Michael’s (Sunnyvale):** 818 W El Camino Real @ S. Pastoria Ave.
- **Michael’s (Mountain View):** 2415 Charleston Rd @ Independence Ave.
- **Michael’s (Cupertino):** 20640 Homestead Rd @ Forge Way
- **Michael’s (San Mateo):** 1750 S Delaware St. near Concar Dr.

**Course Outline**

**Week 1:**

- Introductions, syllabus & materials
- Class objectives & prior experience
- Demo: Location, body position, set-up & clean-up
- **Project:** Head-y Plunge
- **Home Project:** 1) Get PAK & other supplies. 2) Define “good” vs. “bad” painting in PAK.
Week 2:
- Discuss: Good vs. bad painting
- Demo: Fast & furious layers/textures & mixing colors
- **Project:** Lay-Tex Pileup
- **Home Project:** Finish Lay-Tex painting.

Week 3:
- Slide lecture
- Demo: Starting a painting & composition
- **Project:** Landscape (Photo)
- **Home Project:** 1) Work on Landscape (Photo). 2) Make gestural Plein-air Landscape painting(s) in PAK.

Week 4:
- Demo: Shading, blending, contrast
- **Project:** Landscape (Photo or Plein-air)
- **Home Project:** 1) Finish Landscape(s). 2) Bring mixed media materials and choose subject matter for Abstract project.

Week 5:
- Slide lecture
- Demo #1: Mixing media
- Demo #2: Strategies of abstraction
- **Project:** Abstract (Mixed Media)
- **Home Project:** 1) Finish Abstract painting. 2) Make gestural self-portrait painting(s) in PAK. 3) Bring three photos of yourself.

Week 6:
- Demo: Carving out heads (Presto--Impasto!)
- **Project:** Self-Portrait (Photo)
- **Home Project:** 1) Work on Photo Self-Portrait. 2) Bring portable mirror. 3) Bring all paintings for a discussion.

Week 7:
- Discuss: All work up to this point
- Demo: Ovoids & crosshairs
- **Project:** Self-Portrait (Photo or Mirror)
- **Home Project:** 1) Finish Self-Portrait(s). 2) Gestural paintings of people walking.

Week 8:
- Demo: Volume, mass, form & foreshortening
- **Project:** Figurative Gestures (we’ll have a nude model)
Class Goals & Past Experience

Directions:

1. Pair up with the person next to you.
2. Ask your partner the two questions below.
3. Write down her/his answers carefully (and legibly) and be prepared to tell the class what your partner said.
4. Give this handout to your partner at the end of the exercise.

Your Name & Partner's Name:

- What is your past experience with painting in particular and art in general?

- What do you want to get out of this class?