

# Denise A. Wallace

3878 Meadow Creek Dr.  
Norcross, GA 30092  
404-642-2624

[awphoto@bellsouth.net](mailto:awphoto@bellsouth.net) (email)  
[www.awphoto.biz](http://www.awphoto.biz) (url)

---

## Teaching Philosophy

I enjoy teaching art because of the service I am able to provide to my students. The benefit of this service is that I get to look at, share, and discuss lots of great art along the way. I give students tools, show them how they work, challenge their current expectations, guide them toward new experiences, and watch their grand discoveries. I enjoy teaching photographic arts because unlike other media, photography gives a greater glimpse at how students see the world. I am able to see the diverse nature of the students' personal vision and understanding through the images they present. They share their home life, their activities, and what catches their attention through their exploration and experimentation with the photographic media. Each class and each student is a learning experiment where diversity and inquiry can lead to greater wisdom and understanding on both sides of the student/teacher relationship.

My teaching objective is to assist students in becoming not only better image makers (regardless of the media used to create the images), but better learners who can solve problems visually and technically; and are aware of the learning resources available within and without academia. I want my students to be excited about the possibilities and experiences that they and their art can bring into the world. I strive to impart to students an awareness of the importance of communicable visual literacy in our visually dominated culture. I use the following teaching and learning practices/methods to achieve my objectives:

### Teaching:

- 3 fold teaching presentation:** verbal, written (textbook, handouts, and web based), visual and in the case of studio arts-hands on demonstration.
- clear explanation of expectations:** written and web based, covering the course objectives, supplies, participation, grading, policies, and providing clear directions and grading criteria for each project or assignment
- linear organization and application of material:** course objectives/skill sets build on each other as course progresses and projects increase in conceptual difficulty that challenge the students
- **setting reasonable high standards/encouraging/challenging** students to meet or exceed expectations
- group critique:** discussion and sharing of project results (success and/or failure) to the benefit of the entire class
- timely feedback:** regarding student progress on assignments and projects.
- an aspect of fun:** takes the pressure off and stills gets the students working with the concepts-scavenger hunts, special effect photography, side detours in history, in class challenges: drawing or shooting within an hour deadline, encourages thinking on your feet
- accessibility of instructor:** email, phone, office hours, special appointments, before class and after
- professional social interaction** of instructor within the artistic community that also encourages students to participate in the larger art world through attendance at galleries, museums, conventions, workshops and special events. Interaction should also encourage student participation in juried shows, contests, professional learning opportunities and exhibition/curation opportunities
- providing examples of projects:** gives firm visual expectations
- using field trips:** to attend galleries, museums, studios, behind-the scenes and for photography/image making adventures that allow the students to garner a new awareness of how information can be applied in practical applications.
- relating real world experiences with the material:** seeing the art in person, making art, attending galleries, curating, getting paid for art, business concerns (copyright, contracts, and self employment)
- honesty and fairness:** sharing with students information and researching unknown information together, treating everyone equally

-**ensuring that students learn by encouraging their diversity** in learning styles and life experiences; and by acknowledging the importance of their particular understanding of the world and how it can add to the learning of everyone in the course

-**seeking student feedback** concerning course material and relevance; and keeping course content revised as needed to reflect current research and advances in technology, applications, discoveries, or methods

### **Learning:**

-**brainstorming** approaches to projects lets the ideas flow and gets the students thinking of greater possibilities; also used to assign topics for image gathering and allows students to take part in the direction of class by writing topics on the board and discussion of images gathered based on their choices

-**using small groups** to encourage team work, support and collaboration opportunities, uses peer editing with constructive criticism to present projects to the class. Also to discuss student experiences in finding best approaches to projects and problem solving

-**student demonstrations** used to allow the student to demonstrate understanding of information in his or her own way, generally used during lecture and in review of material

-**writing to reinforce reading** material used to encourage critical thinking skill through answering Socratic questions based on the material

-**image journals** with introspection allow students to explore personal image making and their reasons behind technical and visual design choices.

-**image sharing** to encourage individual vision and continued networking through traditional and web based image sharing applications

-**weekly research:** getting outside of the classroom by going to galleries and by researching other artists to see what is out there; also generates cross interest and discussion with students

-**hands-on skills activities** used to apply course material during class and give students confidence in mastering technical skills so they can spend more time working toward conceptual visual ideas

My educational objective is toward enhancing arts education by facilitating a stronger union between traditional fine arts practices, commercial arts and digital arts. I feel that it is important to prepare tomorrow's image makers with the visual sensibility of historical artists, the business tools of commercial arts and the visual tools of the digital age. I feel that traditional skills in: color theory, 2D design, 3D design, lighting, drawing, and painting are essential in giving students a solid foundation for visual production. Digital skills in: photography, the Adobe Creative Suite (to include Flash), Corel Painter, and 3D applications can then build on the traditional foundation and can be expanded upon congruently with courses in art history and theory. Advanced studies would interchange traditional and digital skills with either visceral or premeditated results. The combination of business skills in intellectual property management and marketing are essential for establishing practicing image makers. I feel that advances in visual technology should be embraced and celebrated; they have allowed unprecedented access to great works of art, rebuilt the supportive/creative atmosphere of sharing and discussing art work outside of academia, and opened wide the doorway of exploration that has obliterated the edge between traditional arts, commercial arts, and digital arts.