Work Station

This assignment is an exploration of work, the tools of work, and the spaces of work. You are asked to create an image or images of a workplace or workstation (no people) used to carry out the craft, or vocational, or professional activities of a particular individual. The work space itself, the furniture in it and its arrangement, the tools and equipment and their arrangement will identify the work carried out, will illuminate the processes used in the work, and will create an implicit portrait of the worker using the space. Examples of the types of work stations you might consider are: a mechanic’s bay in a car repair shop, a dentist’s chair and its surround, a glassblower’s studio station, a carpenter’s shop, a chef’s station in a restaurant kitchen, a hairdresser’s station, a watchmaker’s work table, and so on. Note that the work space that you choose should be one in which a particular individual carries out his or her manual tasks using tools specific to that task. An individual’s way of working is unique; your painting(s) should make this uniqueness clear to the viewer. Do not choose a generalized work place used impersonally by a series of people. One way that you can see how a work space is actually used is through wear marks in the space. These might include scuffs on floors or walls or distribution and characteristics of remnants or debris resulting from the worker’s tasks and habits.

Research, Process, Format and materials

The research for this project involves real field work outside of the confines of the University and art practice. Outside of class-time during the next week, you will check out various work stations in town and decide which one interests you the most. Then you will need to get permission to schedule information gathering drawing sessions from the person in charge. This project is generated from several comprehensive drawings from observation on site. Working from photo sources is not part of this project. Bring into the drawings as much information as possible and make the drawings good. Use the drawing materials with sensitivity to mark, surface and spatial representation. Try to develop an attractive and captivating visual vocabulary right from the start. The clarity and detail of these on-site drawings are essential to the success of the process and your final painting. Part of the research that you do on site will be writing a long list of sights, sounds, smells, vibrations and touch based experiences. This will help you to connect deeply with your source, noticing both fundamental and quirky things which may involve all of your senses.

We will be looking at your studies and your writing. I can’t overstate the importance of this preliminary work, this engagement and the richness of your studies and writing are what you will base your final painting(s) on. Also, prepare several good quality small surfaces for painted studies derived from your on-site drawings so you can experiment with paint before moving on to your final surface(s) This will be a large scale painting. Important formal aspects to consider include the space you create, the “feel” of the materials you use, colour choices, the qualities of shapes and edges in the work and lots of other things that we will discuss as they come up in class.

The larger work may be on canvas or on a high-quality or well-prepared rigid surface the size of the free stretchers or larger, feel free to go larger.

Dates

October 16 - report on various workstations you thought of and visited and permission sought, also, critique of the model paintings
October 23 - Have descriptive drawings of work station and writing finished and ready to present
Begin Work Station Painting directly afterwards
6 November - Work Station Painting due