



Dear Students,

This week, during Wednesday's Critiques, I talked to students who were in lockdown in apartments in the city, with their families in the Midwest, and as far away as England. I was thankful for the opportunity. I saw a range of wonderful work-in-progress which always energizes me.

It was great to step away from the challenges of the moment for a couple hours and focus instead on the challenges of making art. As always, it re-connected me with our mission: teaching the skills and techniques necessary to make vital contemporary art. I am happy to report our artists are doing just that. This week your progress was on full parade.

I saw work that had dramatically changed since you started at the school. You were telling your own stories in your own ways, with singular visions and unique voices. Bravo. None of the work looked the same as anybody else's. It all had a deep conceptual underpinning. It was anything but "academic." It seemed personal, unique and urgent. Nothing inspires me more.

Here's the news of the week:

- We're very happy to announce that Nina Levy has agreed to be the Interim Director of Sculpture for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Dexter Wimberly interviewed Nathaniel Mary Quinn on Instagram Live on Wednesday. (If you missed it will be posted on our website.)
- We held 12 mini-townhall meetings so we could hear your most pressing concerns. They included:
  - summer and fall schedules at the Academy
  - plans for ensuring the health and safety of our community in the building
  - the risks of taking public transportation
  - the financial position of the school
  - student tuition concerns
  - the availability of merit scholarships next year
  - the timing and format of Thesis II Final Critiques
  - missed studio and facility access
- The town halls were very helpful as we work through the issues and challenges resulting from the pandemic. Thank you for your time and the candid dialogue. An FAQ section is being posted on the COVID-19 page of the school's website to provide information and answers as we have them. It will be updated continuously. We will continue the mini-townhall sessions throughout the summer as circumstances evolve. And, remember, staff and faculty are available during Office Hours as an additional forum for questions and dialogue.

This weekend, we'll also be sending out a student poll so we can get your feedback on workshops, Thesis II Critiques, and to better gauge who will be around to participate in summer studio contingency plans.

Have a productive weekend. Art calm and carry on.

Yours,  
David