

Understanding the Comic with Cihan Sesen

Master Class: Interdisciplinary Arts/Creative Writing/Visual Arts



Cihan Sesen, Interdisciplinary Arts/Creative Writing/Visual Arts: *Understanding the Comic.* *Understanding the Comic* will be a two-part master class taught by alumni Cihan Sesen, with subsequent mentorship (Part III). Part I will survey comic history and a background of the life of the master class artist. Part II includes a workshop and studio: students will exercise their graphic skills both in illustration and writing. Students will produce a comic, individually or in groups. Part III is a comic-making mentorship with for two students to work with Sesen, culminating in a final project of a comic book in Spring 2011. This comic is now, viewable at: www.lulu.com/product/paperback/comics-mentorship-2011/15744819.

Summary of the Comics Master Class and its resulting influence by Katherine Factor, coordinator:

I am so glad we could offer something pertinent and popular, something not normally offered here. It has



created important programming for us, and created interest and vitality in the program. Attendees included students from Interdisciplinary Art, Creative Writing, and Visual Art. Over 20 students and four faculty members benefitted from the master class.



Cihan is an alum of this school who lives nearby so the master class easily transitioned into the mentorship. His bio and work can be found here www.invisibletriangle.com or spine.invisibletriangle.com/wp-content/pages/about_author. His understanding of the students has been really topnotch. He presented many materials - texts, comics, slideshows, personal work - and really connected with the subject. Passions came through and students

were very responsive, each one diving in and trying out comics. Also, his subsequent contact with his mentees has been thorough and stimulating. here.

Several pieces from the workshop were displayed at the Interdisciplinary Mixed Media Show in late February. Students and faculty were able to see work that had a variety of themes, styles, and interests.



As the coordinator of this project, I learned how to better manage students and talent and how to ensure the master teacher – in this case an alum more focused on his art than teaching – learned how to be a mentor, mentoring students in a fluid way. In this way, the master class artist learned from the grant too. In all, we affected numerous students from several departments plus several faculty that attended the class; we enabled an alum to learn more about mentoring, focusing on two students who – despite challenges sticking to a deadline – were able to complete the project.

I am so glad we could offer something pertinent and popular, something not yet normally offered at IAA. Gladly, as a facilitator I learned about managing those involved and getting past pitfalls, but I particularly looked more closely at youth comics as a cross-genre and contemporary practice, there fore growing professionally. Thank you, AEL!

Katherine Factor, coordinator
May 2011

Master Class feedback from Cihan :

"I'd like to thank Katherine Factor for this amazing opportunity. Being back in Idyllwild Arts as a facilitator of a master class was a phenomenal experience. Sharing my methods and my knowledge, not only thought me a few things about myself, but also was greatly rewarding. Seeing my students' artwork on the Interdisciplinary Arts Show was the icing on the cake. I feel like if I had more time, we could've done a lot more; yet, the kids accomplished so much in such a small amount of time, it even surprised me. We set out our goals and carried them out. It was a successful and a gratifying workshop that I would like to do again. I love comics and I got to share my passion with the next generation of artists in order to open new doors for them - what more can anyone ask for?"

Feedback from students:

"Cihan was an amazing drawer, and he inspired me to really try on my drawing and I thought it turned out well. He also helped me and everyone else figure out what we wanted to do with our drawings to take them further. I really enjoyed doing it and I hope I can do something similiar again." - Hannah

"The comic class was fun! Even though I'm not a great drawer I enjoyed drawing & learning about comics. It was also fun to watch other people draw."

“The comic class/workshop was awesome. It inspired me to draw to draw a different style of art than I usually do. I learned a lot though, and had fun. So THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME!” - M. T.

“I liked making comics!!! ;)”

“Good times. Would've loved to be mentored. But, sadly, I couldn't due to my chedule.”
- Eric

“The comic workshop was... TOTALLY RAD SPLAT! SWOOSH! BAM!! POW!” - Kat

Part III : MENTORSHIP & Final Feedback

Jake Nowell: “What I took from this experience was invaluable knowledge on the process of drawing, inking, scanning and effectively creating a comic book. But what I learned from this was far more than just that knowledge. I learned that comic book making is one of my passions in life. Making comics is something that puts me in that indescribable state that all artists know well.

“I've always loved reading comics and comic books, ever since i was young. I've also loved drawing in that style and have been developing my own personal style of comic book making. With this mentorship I've been able to fully realize my style and I've also learned how to execute it. From making a rough sketch, to putting it down in light yellow pencil, to inking it over with brush pen and adding text, to finally scanning and editing the finished product. I love every moment and step of the process, but what I love more is the feeling I get when creating something from my world, my inner thoughts and sharing it with the world.

“None of this would have been possible if I hadn't gotten the mentorship. I am eternally grateful for what I have received, the knowledge and skill of comic book making. I now have something to aim my career as an artist, and even my entire life towards. Thank You, AEL!”

Sincerely,
Jakob Nowell

Jimmy Park: “It was certainly nice top work with a professional artist like Cihan. If only I had more time, maybe I would've produced much better work. I highly recommend people to it during freshman or sophomore year. Anyways the project was great. Also, I can't wait until I get my published work! Thank you Cihan and Katherine for giving me the opportunity,”

Jimmy Park

Comic Book Master Class FINAL ARTIST feedback:

Cihan Sesen: “I am delighted to be the mentor of this master class. In this two day master class, my goal was to show kids what comics can be, how to make them and how to publish comics.

“In the first day of the workshop, We studied the history and form of comics in general. By exploring the artworks of cartoonists from different cultures, ranging from America, Europe to Japan, the students understood the unique styles and variations of the comic form. By showing comics from time periods ranging from the invention of the printing press to webcomics, I illustrated the different forms of publishing.

“The second day, I demonstrated how I make my comics via the Four Step Method; Rough Sketch, Pencils, Ink and Finish. I did not invent the four step method, it is the industry standard. However, my method is a little different and doable with the least amount of waste and it’s also cheaper. We used yellow pencils to pencil the drawings then inked it with our brush-pens right on the same piece of paper, without any transparency. The third step, The Finish, is when we take the yellow pencils out with the use of a computer.

“In the workshop, we did those the first three steps. The fourth step was only demonstrated to Jimmy and Jake who signed up for the mentorship program, where I helped them through the obstacles of writing a storyline and transforming that piece of writing into an actual comic. This process is called pre-production and it took several months. Jimmy and Jake had to write an outline, a script and storyboards for their stories. I’ve met up with them twice during this time and contacted them via email in between the meetings. It was very good watching their ideas grow into the finished products.

“Jimmy’s project evolved tremendously during this time and Jake found a style that suited his writing better. Jimmy adopted a more philosophical topic, and Jake grounded himself with a picture book style to tell his good vs. evil themed story.

“In our final meeting, we scanned their comics and showed him what it looks like when you actually take the yellow pencils out. Jake’s reaction was incredible. He finally understood why we use yellow pencil and not red or blue.

“In short, they learned about every single step to make a comic in a short time. They learned about all the pre-production that goes into creating a comic: writing an outline, and finalizing a script. Once the pre-production is done, they dove right into production, the Four Step method. At the end, they made their first published comic book.

“If I suggest one change to the process of this workshop would be to have a three initial in-class days to show everyone the full Four Step method and a better structure overall. Dates for the meetings were not set up from the start and we had to come up with them on the fly. It might be better from the start when each step needs to be done. Now, that I’ve done one of these master classes, I would be able to come up with an outline from the start and we could work with three or four kids, for the on-going mentorship program. This workshop was a great opportunity for myself, as an artist, and for the students’ and their growth as future artists themselves.”