

Master of Fine Arts

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VISUAL ARTS
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Our low-residency Visual Arts Program challenges and supports students in developing their art both technically and conceptually. The goal of the program is to assist students in creating and maintaining a sustainable art practice. Faculty take an individualized approach that guides each student toward his or her personal vision, while addressing how that vision fits into the larger society. Work developed in the program is discussed with an awareness of social context and the way in which the work is situated in the global, contemporary art world.

THE PROCESS

You will begin the program by presenting for critique the portfolio that you submitted with your application. During the first residency you will give a five-minute slide presentation to introduce yourself to the collected faculty and students. This presentation allows the faculty and student body to better engage you, as a first residency student, in critique. Critique remains a primary focus during residencies two through four, and the dialogue focuses on work done during the previous semester, between residencies.

Over the course of the program, you will take three graduate seminars that focus on the historical and cultural development of the visual arts. These include readings and discussion of theories and artworks from the historical contexts of Modernism and Post-Modernism. In addition, you will take a Professional Practice seminar and Thesis seminar. These various seminars, lectures and discussions expand your working knowledge of the visual artistic tradition and help to develop your understanding of your work and its place in the contemporary visual world.

Throughout the program you will be engaged in serious, thoughtful discussion about your professional aspirations and your understanding of where your work fits conceptually, thematically, and/or technically in the current and historical art world. You will write critical papers based on the ideas presented as well as writing reflections and analysis about your own work. This process culminates with an extensive thesis paper that articulates your work and its position in relation to contemporary art. In the final residency you will present completed work in a formal professional exhibition.

First Residency - MFV801 Graduate Seminar I, Visual Arts and Photography

This first residency seminar seeks to place contemporary art in context. Students are given an overview of the primary theoretical and art historical events of the Modernist and Post-modern periods (1900-present). Students are asked to consider that art exists in a social and cultural context. Each student will produce short writing assignments that accompany assigned readings.

Second Residency - MFV802 Graduate Seminar II, Visual Arts and Photography

The second residency seminar concentrates on students assimilation and articulation of the primary theoretical concepts explored. Students develop their ability to articulate these concepts and to consider the points of connection and differentiation with their own work. The seminar will examine artist writings, art history, and theory. Each student will produce short writing assignments that accompany assigned readings.

Third Residency - MFV803 Graduate Seminar III, Visual Arts and Photography

This seminar explores the issue of identity. Identity, since the 1980s has been a central cultural concern. Historically, the idea of a fixed/authentic identity has been called into question by a variety of cultural shifts and critical inquiry. The status, role, and activity of the artist has likewise shifted under ongoing reappraisals, beginning with the Impressionists. Students will participate in writing assignments and class discussions as well as readings, video and film viewing. Each student will produce short written papers that accompany assigned readings.

Fourth Residency - MFV804 Thesis Research and Writing, Visual Arts and Photography

Students learn to apply the critical understanding of the integration of theory and practice within their own studio practice. Content for this class is driven by student work and research, and each student's thesis paper is guided by their particular interests and studio work. The thesis is seen as an extended artist statement, a useful document that articulates who they are as artists and an understanding of what context their work strives to operate within.

Fifth Residency - MFV805 Professional Practices, Visual Arts and Photography

In this seminar students will explore tactics for creating and sustaining their art profession. Students will create a professional portfolio including a CV, artist statements, images of their work, a business card, and other promotional materials, as well as develop a website or blog. Discussion will focus on potential professional opportunities for each individual, now and in the future. Each student will set professional goals and develop skills to succeed in meeting these goals. This course concludes with students giving a 15-minute professional public artist presentation about their work in their final residency.