

MFA | PHOTOGRAPHY,

VIDEO

AND

RELATED MEDIA



Graduate Programs

The lens and screen arts affect every discipline

within our ever-changing digital universe. The camera has always been a multidisciplinary tool that encompasses the sciences, the humanities and the arts. Our students are engaged in the management, understanding, creation, production and interpretation of the lens-generated image. The future of lens and screen arts is in the hands of these emerging talents who are making a distinct image culture. Mastery of the “vision machines” is the stuff of their profession. A new artist is an interlocutor who enables others to create and see.

A newly renovated space now houses the MFA Photography, Video and Related Media Department at SVA. This is the place where image-makers initiate investigations into the creative practices of

the lens and screen arts. Since 1988, the department has produced remarkable graduates who have flourished as exhibiting artists, journalists, curators, scholars and teachers. The hub of New York City provides an invaluable network of inspirational and professional support that students require throughout their matriculation and long after graduation, as they continue to pursue their goals.

The MFA Photography, Video and Related Media program nurtures interdisciplinary activity and multimedia integration, and provides ever-expanding opportunities for lens-based students; we continually push the boundaries of the techniques, theory and practice of the developing technologies. Our students are encouraged to rethink their own assumptions and engage an enlightened audience, not only visually but also contextually. We provide the critical thinking and visual literacy necessary for students to expand their ideas and make notable contributions to culture. The department’s celebrated faculty actively immerses students in contemporary and responsible creative initiatives, including experimental, narrative and documentary video; installation and conceptual art; and tableau and real-world-witness photography.

—Charles H. Traub, chair

About the Program

The MFA in Photography, Video and Related Media program is dedicated to the creative practice of the lens-based arts. We encourage diversity in our student body and welcome applicants from a wide range of educational and professional backgrounds.

The program is designed for full-time study over a two- or three-year period. Candidates for the Master of Fine Arts degree must complete at least 60 credits and all course requirements, maintain a 3.3 grade point average and produce a successful thesis project to be eligible for degree conferral. Students are approved to proceed to each successive level of study based on yearly faculty assessments.

Students personalize their program from a wide variety of electives. Certain courses in other SVA undergraduate or continuing education departments are also available as electives via the audit program. Fulbright, DAAD scholars and other students on similar scholarships or grants are encouraged to apply.

TWO-YEAR PROGRAM

Applicants accepted to the two-year program have met specific artistic standards and academic prerequisites for graduate study. The focus of the two-year curriculum is a required Master Critique class in each semester. Other first-year requirements include Studio: Imaging I and II, and at least three other academic courses chosen out of four subject categories (historical perspectives, criticism and theory, studio, and contemporary issues). Students in the two-year

program will take Thesis Forms I in the fall of their Thesis (final) year, and focus on completing the thesis in the spring during Thesis Project, Thesis Forms II and Thesis Project Presentation classes.

Entry to the second year is based on successful completion of all first-year requirements and a portfolio review.

THREE-YEAR PROGRAM

The unparalleled three-year program is designed to give exceptional students with baccalaureate degrees in fields other than photography or video an opportunity to pursue the lens and screen arts at the graduate level. The first-year course of study allows students to engage in coursework such as history, theory and criticism, as well as studio practice, which may not have been included in their undergraduate education. With the successful completion of the first year of the three-year program, students automatically continue on to the two-year MFA Photography, Video and Related Media program. These students are given the time and exposure to develop as fully matured artists and practitioners, and many of our most renowned graduates have matriculated in this manner. The curriculum is tailored particularly to those who have not concentrated on the lens arts during their undergraduate studies, adults interested in pursuing a career change and international students who may need additional support adapting to a new educational environment.

“The program helped me develop an intellectually rigorous creative practice where artistic intention and process are linked inextricably, which is rooted in an understanding of the history of lens-related media.”

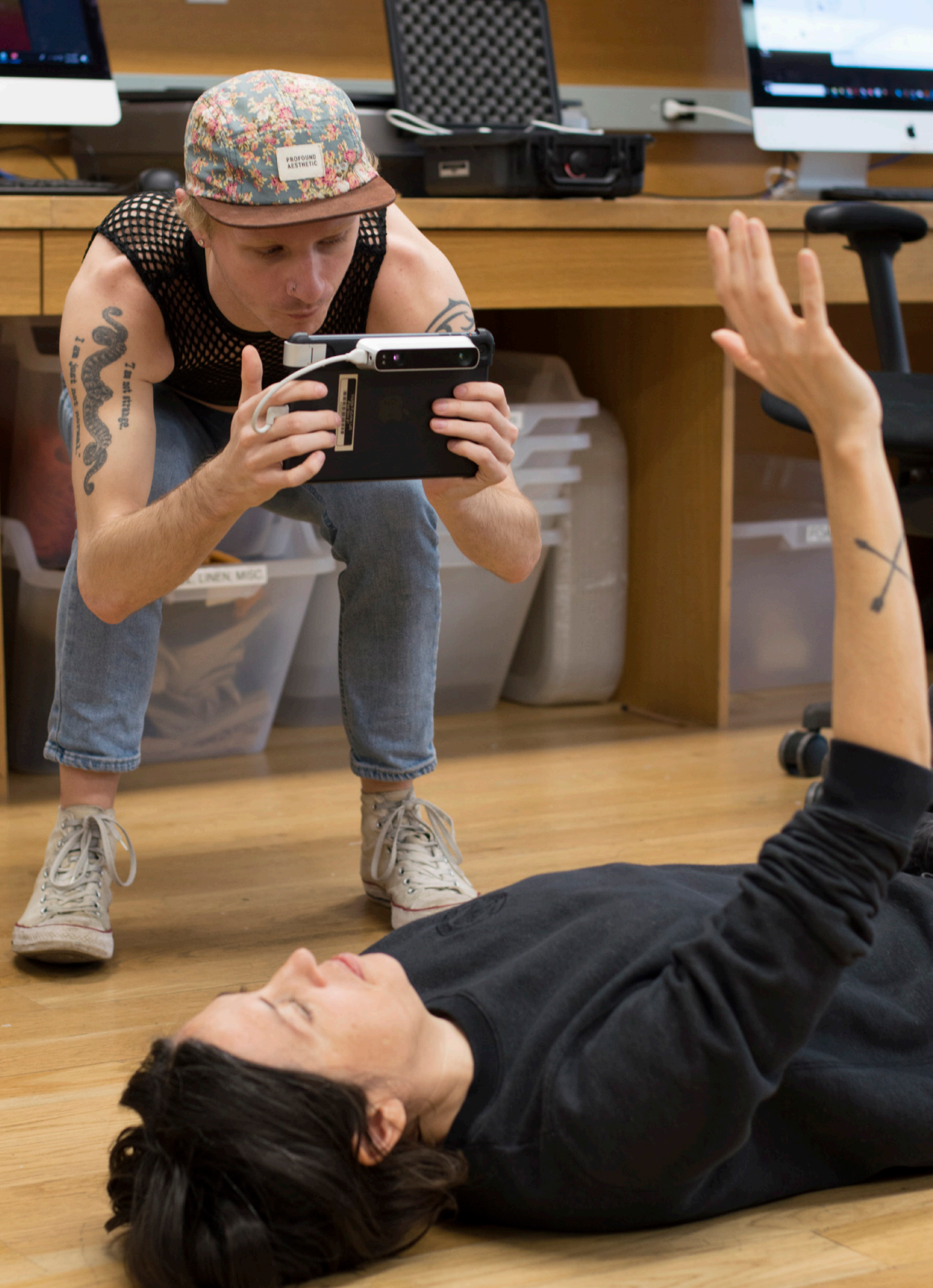
— Candice Kwan, MFA 2020

Much of what we know about the culture in which we live in the 21st century is, for good and bad, the result of what is captured through the lens and displayed on the screen. The record of events and the stories we tell are abstractions, but the issues that create those narratives are very real. This MFA program, as a very diverse, multicultural community, embraces the responsibility of image-makers to highlight the need for change in our human relations and find ways through creative practice toward a common humanity. We stand for freedom of expression, civil liberties and justice.

Pushing Beyond the Camera Lens

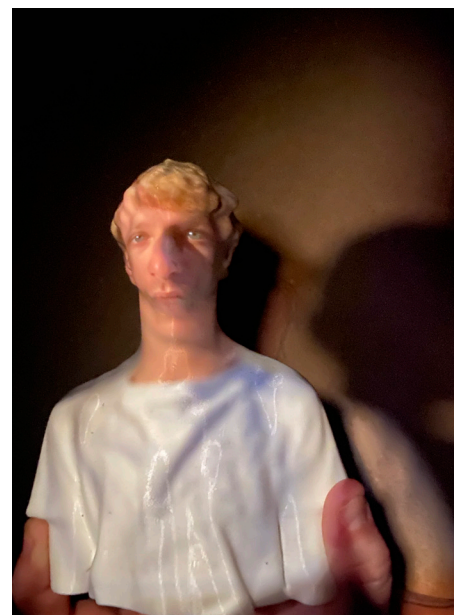
From being one of the first graduate programs to teach Photoshop in the late '80s, to encouraging students to push the limits of what traditional lens-based art can be, the MFA Photography, Video and Related Media Department is at the forefront of technological innovation. With its Studio: Related Media course, the program aims to equip students with the latest technical tools they need to make their most creative work. ►

OPPOSITE: Christopher Marklein Tice and Julie Dodge, Visual Futures Lab



“Lens-based arts” is a broad term referring to a range of innovative practices. “That could be someone doing traditional photo-journalistic work with a camera, or people who are doing experimental film, for someone who may be doing performance-based video work, or others who are combining sculpture with photographs and projection,” explains Adam Bell, photographer and departmental academic advisor. “We try to allow that freedom for our students to explore the possibilities for creative endeavors.” The Studio: Related Media course is where first-year students learn different methods to prototype ideas that may translate into their more conceptual projects—from 3D capturing and printing to coding websites to UV and vinyl printing and laser cutting, students experiment freely with fascinating results.

For many, the course is an eye-opener to the potential of their medium, as well as to new insights into their personal process. “I am not good at science and engineering. So I worried that I would probably find it difficult to follow the class and use the different equipment in the proper way,” says Changhe Liu, a student from China. “But after taking this course, my digital world opened up to new possibilities. This course pushed my concepts from two-dimensional to three-dimensional or a combination of both. For example, I began to make more videos. I am also going to create a multichannel video installation by using the Epilog Laser cutter and Roland Printer/Cutter in the lab.” Another student, Shuwan Chen, photographed berry-colored pieces of resin, which he made by 3D printing a mold in SVA’s Visible Futures Lab.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Kyle Henderson, MFA 2019;
Bella Klein, MFA 2020; Angie Nam, MFA 2019



The first part of the course, taught by Tak Cheung, utilizes one of SVA's most cutting-edge facilities, the Visible Futures Lab, a maker-space open to graduate students from all departments. "Students have made amazing projects and really seem to enjoy the class," says Adam. "When you're a graduate student it is easy to get lost in your departmental bubble. This was part of an effort to push students out to explore the incredible things available." The second part, taught by designer Elizabeth Kilroy, focuses on introducing students to coding, a valuable skill in today's increasingly digital world. The students also use other SVA facilities, like the sculpture studio in the Fine Arts department.

Eventually, the course aims to jump-start students' thesis ideas and encourage them to take risks they may not have considered before. "Many come in as more traditional photographers, and they start seeing these new possibilities and they might end up being a filmmaker or doing web-based work using photographic images," says Adam. Studio: Related Media empowers students to explore the sides of their creative personas they may not have known existed.

Calello Brianna, MFA 2019

Curriculum/ Sample Program

Degree candidates must successfully complete 60 credits for the two-year program and 72–90 credits for the three-year program.

Two-Year Program

FIRST YEAR/FALL	CREDITS
Criticism and Theory: Contemporary Criticism	3
Critique	3
Studio: Related Media	3
Studio: Imaging I	3
Historical Perspectives: Past Tense, Present Tense	3
FIRST YEAR/SPRING	
Historical Perspectives: Issues in the Moving Image—A History of Hybrids	3
Critique	3
Studio: Imaging II	3
Contemporary Issues: Video Culture	3
Criticism and Theory: Aesthetics of the Machine	3
SECOND YEAR/FALL	
Interactive Programming for Artists	3
Master Critique	6
Studio: Film and Video Installation	3
Thesis Forms I	3
Studio: Photo Books—Past, Present, Future	0
SECOND YEAR/SPRING	
Contemporary Issues: Past and Future Looking	3
Thesis Forms II	3
Thesis Project	6
Thesis Project Presentation	3
Contemporary Issues: Photography and Film—A Practical Relationship	0

Three-Year Program*

FIRST YEAR/FALL

	CREDITS
Bases of Critique	3
The Laws of Light and How to Break Them	3
Modern Art I	3
The Social History of Photography	3
Studio: Imaging I	3
Contemporary Issues: Right Here, Right Now	0

FIRST YEAR/SPRING

The Aesthetic History of Photography	3
Critique	3
Modern Art II	3
Studio: Imaging II	3
Studio: Introduction to Video	3
Criticism and Theory: Global Issues and Strategies	0

*After successful completion of the first year, students in the three-year program continue into the first year of the two-year program.

Course Offerings

This is a sample of our recent course listings. For our full curriculum, please visit: sva.edu/mfaphotovideo/curriculum.

THE AESTHETIC HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

This course examines the history of photography from the perspective of aesthetic theory and networks of crossovers with fine arts, particularly with respect to avant-garde painting of the 19th century and experimental art practices throughout the 20th century. We also consider the historiography of photography, with an eye toward revisionist texts that valorize women's practices and colonial usages, as well as key exhibitions and collections that facilitate the canonization of photography as bona fide fine art. What criteria apply when photographs function or are designated as fine art? This and other questions that arise will point us to an exploration of present-day issues. A research paper and short in-class presentation will be required.

CRITICISM AND THEORY: GLOBAL ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

The course is designed to examine changing currents in a world understood as complex, variant and global, with no specific path or set of standards for the creation of images. We will identify themes, issues and artists from global and comparative perspectives. The issues may derive from art, art history and sources such as cultural and commercial practices, geopolitics, topical events and current intellectual trends. The purpose is to explore contemporary issues, images, contexts and challenges in relation to image-making in any media. Readings will be discussed for context, and to broaden personal orientations and strategies. Students will help select topics and direct reading sessions, and will produce a paper (print, hypertext or image essay) that explores a theme relevant to their own interests and uses strategies different from their previous orientation to image production.



Serichai Traipoom, MFA 2019

HISTORY OF VIDEO ART: 1985 TO PRESENT

As video art became more widely accepted and the tools became increasingly affordable and available, the medium quickly emerged as a primary site for the global dialogue that characterizes contemporary art practice. Among the topics to be addressed in this screening, lecture and discussion course will be the emergence of Asian, Latin American and European Video Art, the continued development of sculptural video installation work and the emergence of the market for video art. The blurring of the lines among video art digital art forms, digital cinema and art made for the Internet will also be addressed. Artists whose works will be viewed and discussed include Nam June Paik, Wolf Vostell, Bruce Nauman, Yoko Ono, Peter Campus, Vito Acconci, Frank Gillette, Juan Downey, Joan Jonas, Chris Burden, Lynda Benglis, Ira Schneider,

MODERN ART I

The emergence of the avant-garde as it develops in Europe and morphs into international modernism is the focus of this course. We begin with the academic tradition, and work from neo-classicism to romanticism and realism with an eye to political revolution and tumultuous social change. From impressionism to post-impressionism to fauvism, we take measure of art's engagement with the issues of the day: new urbanism, questions about class, consumerism and mass culture, and the rise of entertainment culture, among others. By the end of the 19th century, emphasis on symbolism of personal experience opens new doors concerning art's narrative and expressive capacity. Assigned museum visits and writings will complement in-class work.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES: NON-WESTERN PRACTICE

The significance of non-Western perspectives in the history of photography is the focus of this course. Beginning with an overview of Western history, we will examine how the non-Western perspective is determined, and its contemporary status within the practice of photography. To this end, a range of discourses will be considered, including historical context, politics and identity, as well as individual artists and their work.

Andy Mann, Martha Rosler, Allan Sekula, Shigeko Kubota, Bill Viola, Gary Hill, Mary Lucier, Steina Woody and Steina Vasulka, Ilene Segalove, William Wegman, Tony Oursler, Antoni Muntadas, Keith Sonnier, Bruce and Norman Yonemoto, Dara Birnbaum, Ant Farm, TVTV, Videofreex, Marcel Odenbach, Dan Graham, Doug Hall, Richard Serra, Terry Fox, Howard Fried, Paul Kos, Paul McCarthy, Mike Kelley and Ernie Kovacs.

MODERN ART II

This course surveys modern art of the 20th century, beginning with the influences that underwrite the developments of the historical avant-garde and culminate in cubism, Dada, expressionism, surrealism, suprematism and constructivism, de Stijl and the Bauhaus. Throughout these congruent movements we find scattered the seeds of the present in the form of performance art, installation and social sculpture, as well as conceptual practices that include the mobilization of identity as artistic material. We also undertake an examination of art at mid-century, including abstract expressionism, pop, minimalism and conceptual art, which takes us into the 1960s. Assigned museum visits and writings will complement in-class work.



Paul Simon, MFA 2019



STUDIO: FILM AND VIDEO INSTALLATION

This project-based course explores the conceptualization and production of film and video installations. It will examine ways in which video installation exceeds dominant forms of movie consumption, such as screening environments, multichannel and projection mapping. These topics will be studied through a range of moving image works: artists' films, cinema, television, documentaries, animations and the internet. The course will include student presentations, lectures with screenings, workshops and field trips. Each student will be guided through the different stages of production. Workshops for specialized equipment will be offered, including operating and editing RED camera, green screen, sound recorders, media players, monitors, digital and film.

CRITIQUE

Critique seminars are a focal point of any given semester. Guided by prominent figures in the visual arts, and assisted by their peers, students will concentrate on producing a coherent body of work that best reflects their individual talents and challenges the current boundaries of their media. The program is designed to expose students to divergent points of view.

Faculty viewing video installation *Professional Amateur* by Junyan Hou (MFA 2019) during the thesis exhibition.

THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography manifests a distinct desire to capture and represent the entire world. Through a thematic survey of photography from its invention to the mid-20th century, this course examines its early practitioners and uses of photography as it spreads from private to public spheres. The rapidity with which photography spread will be discussed in relation to nascent consumer culture, myriad applications in the sciences and industry, colonial expansion and snapshots and candid imagery, among other topics. A research paper and short in-class presentation will be required.

STUDIO: MOVING IMAGE—POSTPRODUCTION STRATEGIES

A fundamental issue of time-based works is structure: the temporal shape and flow of a work are major determinants of its impact and meaning. What principles determine a work's shape-in-time, its temporal architecture? What binds image and sound components into a comprehensible unit? This course will examine, in detail, specific topics that emerge during the post-production phase of a moving-image project. It will focus on the organization of materials and workflow strategies, as well as sound, color, special effects and installation issues. Students will use their current projects as material in a series of exercises and assignments addressing macro- and micro-movie structures, including sound-picture relationships, multichannel and installation architectures and image manipulations and compositing. Student presentations will be balanced by examples drawn from movies, documentaries, television, online sources

and artists' cinema works for the white cube, the black box and public space.

STUDIO: PHOTO BOOKS—PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

This course aims to expand each student's sense of the possibilities of the photo book. The history of 20th-century illustrated magazines and photo books will be introduced, as well as recent developments in zines and e-books. Students will research and present historical and current examples and produce new work in traditional and electronic formats.

THESIS PROJECT

The thesis project represents a unique and original vision that furthers an understanding of creative visual expression. It is the culmination of the student's matriculation, suitable for public viewing, accompanied by written documentation that explains the historical precedents, evolution and generation of the project. Each student works in an integrated set of relationships with the Thesis Forms instructor, fourth-semester Critique class and an outside advisor chosen from the community at large.

STUDIO: RELATED MEDIA

This course will introduce students to a variety of tools and platforms at the forefront of lens-based imaging. It will combine readings and discussions with hands-on tutorials. Beginning with a discussion of technology and its relation to art practice, the class will move on to explore the following topics: coding for artists, 3D capture and printing, computational photography, VR and immersive video technologies. Guest lecturers will supplement the material covered in class.

Notable Alumni

Jacqueline Bates
editor

Kyung Ah (Jesse) Chun
visual artist

Kevin Cooley
artist/photographer

Renee Cox
artist/photographer

Gerald Cyrus
artist/photographer

Jeremy Dawson
filmmaker

Maureen Drennan
photographer

Murray Hill
performance artist

Dinh Quang Lê
artist/photographer

Jeff Chien-Hsing Liao
artist/photographer

Dina Litovsky
photographer

Shiyuan Liu
installation artist

Vera Lutter
artist/photographer

Yamini Nayar
visual artist

Thenjiwe Niki Nkosi
artist activist

Ryan Pfluger
photographer

Matthew Pillsbury
artist/photographer

Lynn Shelton
filmmaker

Christian Siekmeier
gallerist

Quinn Tivey
artist activist

Shen Wei
photographer

Serichai Traipoom, MFA 2019



Faculty

To learn more about the faculty members and to read their biographies visit:
sva.edu/mfaphotovideo/faculty.

Charles H. Traub
chair, MFA Photography, Video and Related Media Department; photographer, fine artist

Shimon Attie
visual artist

Jan Avgikos
art critic, historian, curator

Kiki Bauer
graphic designer; owner, Kiki Bauer Design

Adam Bell
photographer, student advisor

Elisabeth Biondi
independent curator, writer

Lucas Blalock
photographer

Robert Bowen
principal, Robert Bowen Studio

Ed Bowes
video producer, director, writer

Elinor Carucci
photographer

Natasha Chuk
curator critic, philosopher

Ann Collins
film editor

Liz Deschenes
fine artist, photographer

Isaac Diggs
photographer

Simin Farkhondeh
filmmaker, fine artist, activist

Ben Hagari
visual artist

Jeremy Haik
artist, writer

Marvin Heiferman
curator; writer; contributing editor, *Art in America*

Emmanuel Iduma
editor, writer

Seth Lambert
fine artist, senior systems administrator

Liz Magic Laser
fine artist

Richard Leslie
art historian, critic, editor, curator

Andrew Moore
photographer

Kunbi Oni
curator

Laura Parnes
film and multimedia artist

Mary M. Patierno
film and video producer, editor

Gus Powell
editorial photographer, fine artist

Lyle Rexer
writer; critic; curator; columnist, *Photograph* magazine

David A. Ross
chair, MFA Art Practice Department, School of Visual Arts; writer; curator

Steel Stillman
visual artist; writer; contributing editor, *Art in America*

Amy Taubin
filmmaker, curator, performer, film and cultural critic

Penelope Umbrico
fine artist

Sara VanDerBeek
photographer

Grahame Weinbren
film, video, installation artist; editor, *Millennium Film Journal*

Randy West
fine artist; director of operations, MFA Photography, Video and Related Media Department



Nam YoonJi Angie, MFA 2019

Application Process

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

For a full list of application requirements and detailed instructions, visit:

sva.edu/grad/howtoapply

- Online Application and \$80 Application Fee: sva.edu/apply

DEADLINES

For information on application deadlines, visit: sva.edu/grad/timeline

IMPORTANT LINKS

- FAQ: sva.edu/grad/faq
- International students: sva.edu/grad/intl
- Tuition and fees: sva.edu/tuition
- Visit SVA: sva.edu/grad/visit

Contact Us

We encourage applicants to visit our department. Contact us directly to schedule a department tour or sign up to attend an Information Session. For more information and to register, go to: sva.edu/grad/visit.

If you have any questions about the application process, contact Graduate Admissions at 212.592.2107 or email: gradadmissions@sva.edu.

If you would like to watch any video project excerpts go to: mfaphoto.sva.edu/videos.

Charles H. Traub, chair

Randy West, director of operations

Alice Lee, assistant to the chair

Adam Bell, academic advisor

Seth Lambert, senior systems support administrator

Liz Zito, coordinator of special projects


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 vimeo.com/mfaphotovideo

“Before the end of my first semester, it was clear I was part of a family hailing from all over of the world with a common desire to grow professionally, creatively and personally.”

— Jonathan Ellis, MFA 2019

ACCREDITATION

The School of Visual Arts has been authorized by the New York State Board of Regents (www.highered.nysed.gov) to confer the degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts on graduates of programs in Advertising; Animation; Cartooning; Computer Art, Computer Animation and Visual Effects; Design; Film; Fine Arts; Illustration; Interior Design; Photography and Video; Visual and Critical Studies; and to confer the degree of Master of Arts on graduates of programs in Art Education; Critical Theory and the Arts; Curatorial Practice; Design Research, Writing and Criticism; and to confer the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching on graduates of the program in Art Education; and to confer the degree of Master of Fine Arts on graduates of programs in Art Practice; Art Writing; Computer Arts; Design; Design for Social Innovation; Fine Arts; Illustration as Visual Essay; Interaction Design; Photography, Video and Related Media; Products of Design; Social Documentary Film; Visual Narrative; and to confer the degree of Master of Professional Studies on graduates of programs in Art Therapy; Branding; Digital Photography; Directing; Fashion Photography.

The School of Visual Arts is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (msche.org), 3624 Market Street, Suite 2 West, Philadelphia, PA 19104, 267.284.5000. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

The School of Visual Arts is an accredited institutional member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (nasad.arts-accredit.org).

The Interior Design program leading to the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design is accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (accredit-id.org), 206 Grandville Avenue, Suite 350, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-4014.

The School of Visual Arts' Department of Art Education is currently pursuing accreditation of its educator preparation programs by the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP).

Pursuant to Section 52.21 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, the educator preparation program offered by the School of Visual Arts is considered to be continuously accredited for purposes of meeting the New York State requirement that all such programs maintain continuous accreditation. The School of Visual Arts' Master of Arts in Teaching in Art Education program was previously accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

The Master of Professional Studies in Art Therapy degree program is approved by the American Art Therapy Association, Inc., and as such meets the education standards of the art therapy profession.

CREDITS

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COVER: Chongdao Ma, MFA 2019

School of Visual Arts

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