

MFA | ART



PRACTICE



School of Visual Arts
Graduate Programs

The Art Practice program offers an interdisciplinary approach to an MFA degree.

Artists in the program are not defined or separated by medium or discipline. The students in our program engage in research-based practices and are encouraged to converse and collaborate across subject matters using a combination of traditional and nontraditional media, technologies and techniques. We aim to facilitate a global conversation about the arts. Ultimately, the program endeavors to foster an atmosphere of risk-taking and experimentation, and to create a community of artists and culture producers who look beyond a consensus-driven approach to how we define what's important in contemporary art.

To accomplish this, we bring together a small, carefully selected group of MFA candidates who will devote three successive summers and the two intervening years to a program in which they will engage with artists, theorists, art historians and curators.

Faculty members include: Angel Abreu, Xavier Acarín, Gaelyn and Gustavo Aguilar,

Haseeb Ahmed, Jeremy Cohan, Deanna Evans, Lia Gangitano, Beatrice Glow, Thyrza Nichols Goodeve, Katya Grokhovsky, Allison Hewitt Ward, Miatta Kawinzi, Iviva Olenick, Phil Rabovsky, Tarah Rhoda, Stefan Saffer, Heather Schatz, Sarah G. Sharp, Jovana Stokic, Jacquelyn Strycker, Keioui Keijaun Thomas, Nicolas Tournon and Andrew Woolbright.

Recent visiting artists, mentors and guest lecturers have included: Phong Bui, Alessandro Facente, Jason Farago, Heide Hatry, Portia Munson, Meg Onli, Tony Oursler, Seph Rodney, Jessica Segall, Claudia Sohrens and John Yau.

Like the nature of the work we hope to help students produce, this program is continuously redefined as a function of the experience of all its participants.

—David A. Ross, chair

About the Program

ABOVE: Maya Ballen's thesis project installed at Invisible Dog Art Center. BELOW: Reception for second-year cohort exhibition at the SVA Flatiron Gallery.

The MFA Art Practice program approaches art making holistically. We view process as a kind of critical thinking. An underlying thread running through the low-residency program is the ability to situate one's creative practice within a thoroughly considered social context and the ability to remain open to the revision of one's operating premises. Students combine personal narrative with critical theory to be active citizen-artists.

Through a low-residency framework, students participate in seven weeks of NYC-based coursework and studio practice for three successive summers. During the

intervening academic semesters, participants engage in media-rich online coursework. Additionally, each participant is assigned an alumni mentor for the entirety of the program.

Degree candidates must successfully complete 60 credits, including all required courses. The final summer session includes the presentation of a thesis project and accompanying written thesis document. All candidates must have their thesis proposals approved by the department chair and thesis committee at the conclusion of their second summer residency period. MFA Art Practice uses a pass/fail grading system.

“Texting, memes, standardized tests, all these things break language into pieces. But it’s the brokenness that allows us to enter, to inhabit and remake knowledge from the inside out.”

—Brandi Yu (MFA 2015)



An Artist Finds a Place to Experiment and Explore at SVA

Jason Mena's (MFA 2019) practice combines conceptual strategies with visual immediacy in an effort to disrupt and challenge inherited notions of economic, social and political hierarchies. It is, however, the MFA Art Practice program that helped him further understand what he was experimenting with. The student body as well as the faculty engaged in precise and open dialogue which helped the artist communicate his work: "Being in the Art Practice program made me realize that I was on an experimental path, and along the way work happens," declared Jason. ►





The low-residency program meets on campus over three summers, and the contact in between the summers is constant. Jason spoke fondly of the community that he built with his colleagues; the periodic meetings held on the Canvas platform; as well as the exchange of information, readings and discussions. The program pushed him to better his writing skills, as it was essential to write and communicate ideas about his work to cohorts.

After graduation, Jason took some time to unpack what he'd learned during those two years. He taught at a school in Mexico and has since been nominated for the AICAD Post-Graduate Teaching Fellowship and has received a grant from the Pollock-Krasner

Foundation. His studies at SVA prepared him to apply for grants and fellowships as well as provided him with the exposure he needed to thrive and continue his research-based practice. He is a firm believer in growth, allowing the work to organically grow along the way and take varied shapes and forms. "Trial and error is part of my process," he proclaims, while explaining that he tries to put out two to three projects a year.

LEFT: *El Universal* (detail), 2013, installation.

BELOW: *Entfremdung*, 2014, ink on found world map.





ABOVE: *El Universal* (details), 2013, installation.
BELOW: *Nothing Is Mine Everything Is Stolen* (detail), 2019, installation.



Jason has participated in residencies in Belgium and Chile and has received several awards, including the Lexus Grant for the Arts. His work has been featured in a plethora of publications, such as *Relational Undercurrents: Contemporary Art of the Caribbean Archipelago*, published by the Museum of Latin American Art in Los Angeles, and *The Yale Architectural Journal*, published by the MIT Press. His work has been exhibited in noteworthy institutions such as Palais de Tokyo in Paris, the Museum of Contemporary Art and Design in Costa Rica, CCA Center for Contemporary Art in Beijing, National Museum of Fine Arts in Argentina and the Hessel Museum of Art in New York.

Jason is excited about what the future holds for him: he is curating two shows in Mexico—one of which makes use of a building's large façade, transforming it into a public projection screen, and the other a show in Peru where he plans on inviting artists to respond to the current geopolitical and environmental state of affairs. He is committed to placing artwork in its related environment and most importantly outside of the white cube.

Untitled (Charts & Graphs), 2015, magazine and newspaper cutouts on graph paper, 27.2x37.4 cm.

Curriculum/ Sample Program

As an interdisciplinary program, the course of study addresses a wide range of intellectual, aesthetic, technical and practical concerns.

| SUMMER ONE | CREDITS |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Graduate Seminar | 3 |
| Studio Practice I | 3 |
| Practice Lecture Series | 1 |
| Foundations of Criticism | 2 |
| Artist-in-Residence Workshop | 1 |
| Group Critique for Studio Practice | 2 |

| FALL ONE (ONLINE) | CREDITS |
|--|---------|
| Beginning Video and Sound Editing Workshop | 1 |
| Intermediate through Advanced Video and Sound Editing Workshop | 1 |
| Studio Practice Review I | 2 |
| Art History: Exploring the Interdisciplinary | 1 |
| Art History: Diasporic and Decolonial History, Theory and Practice | 1 |

| SPRING ONE (ONLINE) | CREDITS |
|---|---------|
| Studio Practice Review II | 2 |
| Art and Politics | 1 |
| Art and Pedagogy | 1 |
| Special Topics: Ecofeminism | 1 |
| Special Topics: The History of the Object | 1 |

| SUMMER TWO | CREDITS |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Practice Lecture Series | 1 |
| Group Critique for Studio Practice | 2 |
| Graduate Seminar II | 3 |
| Studio Practice II | 4 |
| Performance Workshop | 2 |

| FALL TWO (ONLINE) | CREDITS |
|--|---------|
| Artists' Writing | 2 |
| Studio Practice Review III: Thesis Production | 2 |
| Special Topics: Psychoanalysis and Gender | 1 |
| Special Topics: Exhibition Planning and Design | 1 |

| SPRING TWO (ONLINE) | CREDITS |
|--|---------|
| Studio Practice Review IV: Thesis Production | 2 |
| Thesis: Documentation | 2 |
| Special Topics: Art and Ecology | 1 |
| Special Topics: Art in the Age of War | 1 |

| SUMMER THREE | CREDITS |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Practice Lecture Series | 1 |
| Group Critique for Studio Practice | 2 |
| Graduate Seminar III | 3 |
| Studio Practice III | 4 |
| Thesis: Presentation | 2 |

Class of 2021 in performance with Eleanor Kipping, 2019 artist in residence.



“I was surprised how much the platform provided a sense of community, despite our distance. You cannot hide online. In a physical classroom you can show up and not participate, yet still get credit for being in the room. If you don’t participate online, no one knows that you were there at all.”

—Pippi Zornoza (MFA 2016)



Course Offerings

A sample of our course descriptions follows.
All course descriptions can be found online at:
sva.edu/artpractice.

ART AND POLITICS

Drawing on art history, philosophy and political theory, this course will explore strategies for creative interventions in the political arena. Topics of discussion will include race, gender, biopolitics, identity, power structures, public space, cultural policy, censorship and social justice.

ART AND PEDAGOGY

This course will explore pedagogical strategies for art practice, including collaborative dialogues, action research and experiential learning. Topics of discussion will include the role of art in society, aesthetic inquiry into social systems, institutional critique, artist accountability and evaluation of social practice projects.

ARTISTS' WRITINGS

This course will explore a range of artists' writing forms, including journalism, manifestos, poetry, theoretical writing, letters, artists' books and artist-run publications. Students will develop an understanding of the research process,

including finding sources, organization, and proper academic formatting and citation. A deeper appreciation of one's own writing in relation to the development of one's artistic practice will be underscored throughout the semester.

OPPOSITE: C. Fodoreanu's thesis project
installed at Invisible Dog Art Center.

FOUNDATIONS OF CRITICISM

In the 21st century, critical theory has taken on a significant role not only in reflections on works of art but also in considerations in their production. Why is this the case? In this course artists develop a foundational knowledge of modern philosophy and critical theory while simultaneously considering how the modern world emerged in history, and how the form and role of art have changed alongside it. In the first half of the semester, cornerstone texts of modern thought—Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche and Freud—are considered alongside primary documents that reflect the historical struggles and contexts through which these ideas emerged. The second half explores how these concepts are taken up, transformed and sometimes rejected by the critical theories of the 20th century as the way is paved for the 21st.

GRADUATE SEMINAR I, II & III

In this foundational seminar, students develop their own art practice in conjunction with a deeper understanding of contemporary issues in art, theory and politics. Topics of special discussion include social engagement, collaboration, transdisciplinary practice and personal narrative.

BEGINNING VIDEO AND SOUND EDITING WORKSHOP

Through various methods including instructor-led workshops, field experiments, studio production and group critique, students will explore practices for creating audio and video projects, possibilities for installation, multichannel works and performance. Students will learn about high-definition video and proper compression for projection, web and DVD, and become familiar with basic editing software including Apple Final Cut Pro X. The workshop includes screenings of film, video and sound work from modern and contemporary artists. It considers the use of media as both a document and final product.

PERFORMANCE WORKSHOP

Formally born in the early 20th century—as a critique of the economic engineering of the art world through the European painting salons for the bourgeoisie—and influenced by cabaret, theater, dance, psychodrama, as well as feminist, queer, civil rights, political and environmental activism, performance practice has many traditions. Until recently, it was an alternative practice that offered few collectibles. Participants in this workshop will explore silence and walking as public performance art following Buddhist notions of mindful presence, engaging the city as laboratory. The group will function like an ephemeral company of soloists and collaborators in which students will perform and discuss a series of daily exercises.

STUDIO PRACTICE I, II & III

The core of the summer session is studio practice. The objective is to produce original advanced work with instruction and support from faculty and a robust roster of individual artists. Individual studio visits will primarily take place from Monday through Friday, with weekly group critiques on Tuesdays. Studio Practice is the central element and primary requirement of the program. Studios are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

PARTICIPANT SYMPOSIUM

Under the guidance of a faculty member, students work to develop and install an exhibition with an accompanying publication. They also develop and participate in skill-share workshops, organize a panel discussion, and go on guided field trips to artist studios, art centers and cultural institutions.

STUDENT WORKSHOP: NATURE AND TECHNOLOGY LAB

Students in this workshop will have the opportunity to explore the biological realm as it relates to art practice. Demonstrations include microscopy, plant tissue engineering, molecular cuisine and the production of micro-ecosystems. Students will be encouraged to discuss and explore how biomedical sciences alter social, ethical and cultural values in society. The workshop will take place in the Nature and Technology (NAT) Lab, which houses microscopes for photo and video, skeleton collections, specimen collections, slide collections, an herbarium and an aquarium as well as a library.

Where We Are

Our students and alumni have shown at prestigious institutions, including:

MoMA PS1

Queens Museum

**Corcoran Gallery of Art,
Washington DC**

**Palacio de Bellas Artes,
Mexico City**

Tate Modern, London

**National Museum of Modern and
Contemporary Art, Seoul**

Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art

**The Art Center Gammel
Holtegard, Denmark**

**The Living Art Museum,
Reykjavik**

Moscow Museum of Modern Art

Museum of Nebraska Art

Boise Art Museum

Werkstadt Graz/Graz Kunst

The Studio Museum in Harlem

El Museo del Barrio

Carriage Trade

Field Projects

**The New Museum's Festival
of Ideas**

Faculty

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

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

Angel Abreu
visual artist

Xavier Acarín
curator

Gaelyn Aguilar
visual artist; anthropologist;
co-artistic director,
TUG Collective

Gustavo Aguilar
visual artist; musician;
co-artistic director,
TUG Collective

Haseeb Ahmed
visual artist

Jeremy Cohan
director, Honors Program,
School of Visual Arts;
sociologist

Deanna Evans
gallerist

Lia Gangitano
Founder, director,
PARTICIPANT INC

Beatrice Glow
interdisciplinary artist

Thyrza Nichols Goodeve
critic, writer

Miatta Kawinzi
visual artist

Jamie Keesling
visual artist, writer

Luis Rodrigo Navarro
new media artist

Iviva Olenick
visual artist

Phil Rabovsky
marketing director,
visual artist

Tarah Rhoda
Bio Art Lab manager,
School of Visual Arts

Stefan Saffer
fine artist

Heather Schatz
visual artist

Jessica Segall
visual artist

Sarah G. Sharp
visual artist

Jovana Stokic
art historian, curator

Jacquelyn Strycker
visual artist; director of
operations, MFA Art Practice,
School of Visual Arts

Keioui Keijaun Thomas
visual artist

Nicolas Tournon
ceramicist, visual artist

Allison Hewitt Ward
art critic; assistant to the
chair, MFA Art Practice
Department, School of
Visual Arts

Andrew Paul Woolbright
visual artist, gallerist,
curator, critic

Lecturers and Mentors

Here is just a sample
of guest lecturers who
have spoken to and
with our students.

Diana Al-Hadid
visual artist

Hilton Als
writer, critic

Cory Arcangel
visual artist

Edgar Arceneaux
visual artist

Charles Atlas
visual artist

Julie Ault
visual artist; curator; co-
founder, Group Material

Alice Aycock
visual artist

Huma Bhabha
visual artist

Kalia Brooks
curator

Holland Cotter
critic, *The New York Times*

Ben Davis
critic

Dawn DeDeaux
visual artist

Mark Dion
visual artist; co-founder,
Mildred's Lane

Andrea Fraser
visual artist

Coco Fusco
visual artist, curator

Jesse Greenberg
artist; curator;
co-founder, 247365

Katya Grokhovsky
visual artist; curator;
founder, The Immigrant
Artist Biennial

MacGregor Harp
artist; curator;
co-founder, 247365

Pablo Helguera
interdisciplinary artist, writer

Chrissie Iles
curator, The Whitney
Museum of American Art

Suzanne Joelson
visual artist

Paddy Johnson
writer; founding editor,
Art F City

Autumn Knight
visual artist

Shaun Leonardo
visual artist, activist

Melissa McGill
interdisciplinary artist

Lee Mingwei
visual artist

Wura-Natasha Ogunji
visual artist

Catherine Opie
visual artist

Tony Oursler
visual artist

J. Morgan Puett
visual artist;
co-founder, Mildred's Lane

Seph Rodney
critic

Martha Rosler
visual artist

Tom Sachs
visual artist

Jean Shin
visual artist

Jeanne Silverthorne
visual artist

Lorna Simpson
visual artist

Roberta Smith
critic, *The New York Times*

Risë Wilson
community organizer;
director of philanthropy,
Rauschenberg Foundation

John Yau
poet, critic, curator

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.

David A. Ross, chair

Jacquelyn Strycker, director of operations

Allison Hewitt Ward, assistant to the chair

Tel: 212.592.2781

Fax: 212.592.2245

Email: artpractice@sva.edu

Site: sva.edu/artpractice

Department site: artpractice.sva.edu



“Art is the
offspring
resulting from
unlatching and opening

up one’s invisible suitcase, taking out a
selection of items that were placed in
there, and making-thinking-playing with
them for a while.”

—Todd Hainline (MFA 2017)

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 3D Animation and Visual Effects; Advertising; Animation; Comics; 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; 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; 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; Fashion Photography; Film Directing.

The School of Visual Arts is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (msche.org), 1007 North Orange Street, 4th Floor, MB #166, Wilmington, DE 19801, 267-284-5011. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

COVER: Heather Link-Bergman (MFA 2023), *Melt*, 2022, collage with found material and map tacks, 7x 5.5 in.

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 305, Grand Rapids, MI, 49503-4014.

SVA is a member in good standing of the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP), a national accrediting organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. The MAT program in Art Education has been awarded full accreditation by AAQEP through December 31, 2030. Accreditation acknowledges that a program prepares effective educators who continue to grow as professionals and has demonstrated the commitment and capacity to maintain quality.

The MPS Art Therapy program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (www.caahep.org) upon the recommendation of the Accreditation Council for Art Therapy Education. Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs, 25400 US Hwy 19N, Suite 158, Clearwater, FL 33763, 727-210-2350. The program meets all educational requirements for licensure in New York State as a Creative Arts Therapist (LCAT) and Registered Art Therapist (ATR) with the Art Therapy Credentials Board (ATCB).

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School of Visual Arts

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