

132 W. 21st Street
New York, NY

The role of brands is in the midst of a massive revolution. Brands now telegraph our affections, signal our beliefs and project how we want to be perceived in the world. In the SVA Masters in Branding program, we believe branding is a profound manifestation of the human spirit. Join us on Saturday, November 6 for how does design with the faculty and alumni from 2:00-5:00pm and the program and curriculum overview from 3:00-5:00pm to find out more!

MASTERS IN

MASTERS IN

MPS | BRANDING



School of Visual Arts Graduate Programs

Contemporary culture is now

almost entirely composed of brands.

Everything we consume—even the most basic commodities like water and salt—are brands. Experiences are brands. People want to be brands. Brands are so persuasive in their personal, political, economic, aesthetic, psychological, moral, ethical and social consequences that they leave no part of us untouched, unaffected or unaltered. Any knowledge of culture is impossible now without an understanding of the implications of “brand.” We have entered a day and age where brand is an extension of human facility, whether it is psychic or psychological.

Rarely are design, branding and strategy discussed in terms of a synergistic relationship in academia. There are design schools and there are business schools, but there is no one academic environment

that comprises a rigorous, robust education of the intersection of design and business in the art and science of branding. The world’s first-ever master’s degree in Branding is the only program in the world that offers a unique opportunity to pioneer the examination of the relationship between design and strategy as well as the power of brand thinking as a way to combine creative skills with the problem-solving and decision-making processes of both design and business.

The SVA MPS Branding program provides a radical, innovative look at the relationship between strategy, design, anthropology, psychology and market research. And it focuses on how students can leverage this learning to innovate, sustain and reinvent the purpose, place and power of brands in our culture.

—Debbie Millman, chair

Mission

The master's of professional studies in Branding is the first and longest running program of its kind in the world, and it offers a select group of students an opportunity to study with some of the most accomplished brand experts working today.

This accelerated one-year graduate degree program is a challenging multidisciplinary experience of in-class lectures, real-world client projects, unique and progressive workshops, examination of classic business school case studies, individual one-on-one professional mentorship, and group and personal projects.

The foundation of MPS Branding is the deep exploration and understanding of the role brand strategy plays in business, behavior, marketing and culture.

During the year, students will develop an understanding of diverse brand and business strategies and will include courses on diverse market research techniques, brand development life cycles, semiotics and visual communication, business-to-business and business-to-consumer brand frameworks, history, cultural anthropology, trend forecasting, economics, statistics, behavioral psychology, communication, persuasion, brand management and design.

In addition, we investigate marketing challenges involved in creating, sustaining and reinventing brands as well as gain an understanding of corporate-level discourse.

DUAL-TRACK LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The world is evolving and so are we. The MPS Branding program offers two opportunities to earn your graduate degree. You can choose how and where you earn your degree: onsite from our campus or remotely from your home. Our online platform is 100% identical and 100% in sync with our onsite classroom.

Utilizing the latest technology, students participating in the online program can seamlessly stream into the classroom, facilitating active discussion with professors and the onsite cohort. Experience the same rigorous courses, collaborative real-world projects, renowned faculty, and dedicated peers from wherever you are. It's a new brand of learning for a new generation of brand builders.



Designing the Past, Present and Future of Branding

Tosh Hall, executive creative director at the branding agency Jones Knowles Ritchie (jkr) and MPS Branding faculty member, is an expert at creating brands that last. For the 10th anniversary of the MPS Branding program at SVA, Hall and his team at jkr took up the task of rebranding the department, a project that required Hall to both tap into the internal ethos of the program and to reflect on the ever-changing culture of branding. ►



As professor of Brand Failures: 1970 to the Present and having worked on some of the world's biggest brands such as Bayer, Budweiser, Kellogg's and PepsiCo, Hall was uniquely positioned to define how the new branding should project the values of the program. "The program is very focused on what's in the moment today and how to prepare students for going into the world [to become] the branders of tomorrow," Hall says. "So in some ways, the identity program, the communications and the content we create is more outward looking, rather than inward looking."

With that in mind, the driving idea behind the rebrand is "branding at the speed of culture. We span the continuum of things that will remain classic and things that are very contemporary and connected to culture," says Hall. In recognition of how culture has impacted the design and branding industry through the years, the department's new branding features photographs of some of the objects that made the greatest impact, including the Popeyes chicken sandwich, Kanye albums, burning Nikes and pink pussy hats.

In addition to these objects of culture, the brand's adaptive typography is heavily inspired by the long history of design at the School of Visual Arts. "We went to the archives, we saw some of the SVA heritage," Hall says. "We pulled out some of the famous alumni and typographers, and referenced from the last 70 years and found a style that we really liked." To determine an appropriate palette, the branding team collaborated closely with Pantone Color Institute to build an ever-changing range of hues to ensure that the brand will be mindful of the future of color in the industry.

Samples of branding by Tosh Hall and the jkr team.

Hall hopes that former, present and future MPS Branding students will go on to define what the world of branding will look like and, thus, what the program's branding will look like. "What I really want to do is train the branders of tomorrow," Hall concludes, "so that someday, in an effort to capture what's happening in the world, we're capturing some of the things that they have created."



Curriculum

The MPS Branding curriculum allows students to create frameworks to guide brand, design and business development; critically evaluate brand, business, marketing and design frameworks; and master the intellectual link between strategy and creativity.

All students must complete a total of 36 credits in 10 months as well as defend a thesis. All courses are graded on a pass/fail system. Students are required to attend every scheduled class meeting, complete required readings, participate actively in class discussions, and create an original body of work, culminating in the successful defense of the graduate thesis.

FALL

CREDITS

The Anthropology of Branding	3
A Unified Theory of Branding	3
Business and Branding Strategies	3
Brand Failures: 1970 to the Present	3
The Evolution of CPG Brands and Package Design	3
Lecture Series: Design Matters Radio Podcast I	0
The Meaning of Branded Objects	0

SPRING

CREDITS

A Brand Called You	3
Analysis, Insight and Forecasting	3
Brand Physics	3
Lecture Series: Design Matters Radio Podcast II	0
Pitch Perfect: How to Win New Business	3
The Power of Persuasion	0
Practices in Design and Market Research	3

SUMMER

CREDITS

Thesis: Repositioning Brands and Experiences	6
Summer Workshops	0



Course Offerings

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

A BRAND CALLED YOU

The good news: we are now living in what *Business-week* has called a “creative economy.” The bad news: more than ever before, design will be called upon to deliver a return on investment and measured performance in the marketplace. How can you truly quantify your talent and develop strategic and competitive intelligence? How can you quantify meaningful differentiation in a world already filled with branding firms, creative strategists and brand gurus? This course will address: how to create a meaningful philosophy that can guide your career, how to present yourself in meetings and interviews, how to network and stand out from your competition, how to create discipline in your approach to work, and how to sell yourself with more confidence. Additionally, students will participate in a 100-Day project, an individual experience of undertaking a design/brand/marketing/creative operation that each student will repeat every day for 100 consecutive days during the second half of the program.

hone their skills in pattern recognition and learn how to identify critical observations and their business implications. We'll also practice the art and science of evidence-based insight development through qualitative and quantitative research methods. Etymology and storytelling in service of creating emotionally connective and differentiated brand positioning will also be examined. Students will then apply all of these skills as they work with a client who will provide us with a real brand challenge to solve.

BRAND PHYSICS

Brands, at their best, create emotional bonds between people and organizations as well as movements, businesses or products. They guide and shape behavior, establish instant recognition, and become valued and valuable by facilitating achievement of ambitions, large and small. In order to ensure a brand is meaningful, relevant and remarkable, a brand brief is created. The brief acts as instructions as well as a guideline and a set of tools that unify understanding, intention and action. In this course students will explore the physics of branding and how to apply them to create differentiated and desired brands. Students will



ABOVE: Chair Debbie Millman lecturing.
BELOW: MPS Branding students in the classroom.





BUSINESS AND BRANDING STRATEGIES

From developing a brand personality to discovering invisible brand assets, this course is about creating brand value, strategy and business literacy. We'll review core branding disciplines such as developing brand positioning, mission statements, brand character, naming and brand architecture. We'll take a look at financial valuation models as well as creative methods for discovery and ideation. We'll also investigate why a strong brand strategy is like an organization's DNA, serving as a blueprint for strategy and informing other activities such as leadership, marketing, product development, communication, design and advertising. Discussions based on case studies and readings will also use worksheets as a lens and provide a platform to examine forces and dynamics that shape brands from traditional corporate structures to entrepreneurial startups. We'll touch on globalization, technology, critical thinking, culture and lifestyle.

Students in the classroom.

THE EVOLUTION OF CPG BRANDS AND PACKAGE DESIGN

Consumer brands, and the retail marketplace that supports them, have evolved through several stages in the last 150 years. Each has been strongly influenced by culture, events and the changes of the retail markets of which they are a part. The first three stages, from the 1850s through the 1990s, can be described as the era of the retailer, the era of the manufacturer and the era of the brand, respectively. The last decade has seen an evolution of brand activity toward a focus on consumer experience and lifestyle. Where does the CPG brand stand today and what is its future? This course will review the historical evolution of CPG brand identities through the lens of retail brand identity and package design. We will review, decade by decade, the relatively brief history of CPG brand identities as well as the aesthetic and cultural influences that have shaped their path. While reviewing these historical precedents, students will develop an informed judgment on where CPG brand identities are today and where they may be headed.

THE MEANING OF BRANDED OBJECTS

Brands transform objects into meaning-bearers. This course will explore the collective and individual history of this transformation. As we have evolved from hunter-gatherers into robustly cultural beings, objects themselves have also evolved from disposable, purely functional extensions of the body to deeply personal, even cherished, expressions of an individual's life. We will examine the history and insights of individual and social psychology in shaping the context for 21st-century perceptions of, and relationships with, the things that surround us. We will investigate the increasingly sophisticated manner in which brands have gained and integrated quantitative and qualitative insights into our lives (and our cultural contexts) to create opportunities for complex, meaning-centered relationships between people and things. Students will use their own experiences as the starting point for this exploration into the lived-meaning of individual brands and their collective role in the construction of modern personal identity.

A UNIFIED THEORY OF BRANDING

Leading the definition and evolution of a world-class brand requires more than intellectual rigor and insight. You must unify and leverage the expertise and efforts of an astounding array of people—leaders, followers, scientists, artists, magicians (consultants), engineers, establishmentarians and revolutionaries. In

this course, you will learn to use powerful frameworks that harmonize and focus the efforts of diverse teams as they develop ambitious brand programs. Using real-world case studies—including Caterpillar, Bank of America, DuPont, Harley-Davidson and National Semiconductor—we will look inside the processes that enable organizations to define the future of their brands. The course will provide you with a unique perspective of how research, strategic definition, identity, expression, communications and behavior are shaped into great brands.

PRACTICES IN DESIGN AND MARKET RESEARCH

Brands have historically relied heavily on marketing techniques to help establish and strengthen their presence. That is changing quickly, as instant global communication and various forms of social networking have replaced the need for consumers to rely on brands for confidence in a purchase. In this project-based course, students will learn how to

create a research plan, find participants and integrate research methods in the context of a specific branding project. Some of the topics explored will be qualitative, quantitative, online and ethnographic interview techniques; video and photo documentary; immersion; participant-aided data gathering; prototype-assisted observation; methods for organizing data; and finding patterns and distilling insights that lead to actionable and inspiring design directives. We will also explore the differences between market research and design research as well as understand the goals and appropriateness of each.



Students in the classroom.

“One of the biggest assets of the program is that the teachers are involved and active in the industry. So they have knowledge that is current and fresh.”

—Maria Silva (MPS 2015)

Below is just a sample of guest lecturers who have spoken with our students.

Warren Berger	Steven Ginsberg	Sagi Haviv
Tina Essmaker	Malcolm Gladwell	Diana Rubino
Roxane Gay	John Grace	Rolf Wulfsberg

Faculty

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

Debbie Millman
chair, MPS Branding, School of Visual Arts; radio show host, *Design Matters with Debbie Millman*

Brad Davidson
SVP, director of medical anthropology, Havas Health & You

Sem Devillart
co-founder, managing partner, Popular Operations

Dan Formosa
design consultant, Dan Formosa!; co-founder, 4B Collective

Tom Guarriello
chief idea officer, principal, TrueTalk, Inc.

Tosh Hall
global CCO, Jones Knowles Ritchie

Kenna Kay
principal, creative strategist, Kenna Kay

Mark Kingsley
creative lead, Malcontent

Scott Lerman
chief executive officer, founding partner, Lucid Brands

Andrew Miller
executive strategy director, Interbrand

Carolina Rogoll
senior brand manager, Downy North America, P&G

Bret Sanford-Chung
VP, CMO, executive partner, Forrester Research

Richard Shear
creative director, Invök

Andrea Sullivan
CMO, VaynerX

Elizabeth Talerman
founder, strategy director, Nucleus

Pablo Ulpiano
consumer solutions, Johnson & Johnson Design

Melanie Wiesenthal
principal, creative director, Deerfield

Alumni

Aru Agarwal (MPS 2014), associate strategy director, R/GA

Nourah Alammery (MPS 2013), senior manager of brand strategy, Banque Saudi Fransi

Noah Armstrong (MPS 2011), creative director, VSA Partners

Carter Bird (MPS 2017), senior strategist, Gretel

Ryan Bone (MPS 2018), senior interactive designer, AKQA

CJ Draper (MPS 2016), design director, Pearlfisher, NY

Rebecca Etter (MPS 2011), global marketing director, Grupo Bimbo

Salka Fernandez (MPS 2014), director for corporate brand, Johnson & Johnson

Jenna Halbert (MPS 2018), brand strategist, Reddit

Kejal Macdonald (MPS 2015), co-founder, managing partner, Zuzu Digital

Jessie McGuire (MPS 2011), managing director, ThoughtMatter

Graham McMullin (MPS 2014), associate director of strategy, Aruliden

Anna-Rae Morris (MPS 2016), design strategist, TRIPTK

Anna Paskow (MPS 2012), director of people & culture, theSkimm

Michelle Poler (MPS 2015), founder, Hello Fears

Purva Sawant (MPS 2015), digital product designer, United Nations Development Program (UNDP)

Marla Stough (MPS 2012), creative director, Erno Laszlo

Melinda Welch (MPS 2017), co-director, strategy, Brand Bureau

“The program prepared me to tackle complex problems collaboratively within interdisciplinary groups by being continuously inquisitive.”

—Gena Cuba (MPS 2014)



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 departmental 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.

Debbie Millman, chair
Emily Weiland, director of operations
Amelia Nash, brand and marketing manager

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Department site: branding.sva.edu

   @svanyc

 I gained
invaluable

knowledge that

includes an understanding of the
frameworks and tools used to guide
complex engagements for global
corporations that span strategy, visual
identity and in-market experiences.”

—Andrew Miller (MPS 2012)

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: Samples of department branding jkr.

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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