VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS
COLLEGES AND CAREERS: A COMPLETE GUIDE

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MYTHS AND REALITIES

“what can you do with an arts major?”
Art School Myths

Lack rigor and/or structure
Do not prepare for career opportunities
No academic challenge
Should be pursued as a hobby, not a profession
Graduates are unemployable outside the arts
Must be famous to be successful
Miserable, wearing black, living in the basement
Art School in the News

Visual/Performing Arts majors are the...

“Worst-Paid College Majors” – Time

“Least Valuable College Majors” – Forbes

“Worst College Majors for your Career” – Kiplinger

“College Degrees with the Worst Return on Investment” – Salary.com
Art School Reality

Artists learn and practice intense discipline skills

Graduates are desirable across industries for their ability to think creatively

Can have great successes in arts or non-arts careers without becoming household names

Can make a highly respectable living through art

Often live lives that are not “typical” but are hugely fulfilling in work values and interests

Artists integrate their learning and their output across many intelligences
What is the economic value of THE ARTS?

- $698 Billion: What the arts contribute to the U.S. economy
- 4.7 Million: Number of workers in the arts and cultural sector
- $334.9 Billion: Total compensation of arts and culture workers
- $105 Billion: Total capital investments in arts and culture
- $869 Billion: Contribution to GDP from copyright-intensive industries
- 62: Number of additional jobs created for every 100 from new demand for the arts
- 50%: is from the arts sector!

Top Arts and Culture Industries:
- Broadcasting
- Motion Pictures and Video
- Publishing
- Arts/Culture Retail
- Performing Arts and Independent Artists
- Advertising

The arts and culture trade surplus in 2012 was $25 billion.

70%: Percentage of investments from entertainment originals, such as movies, TV shows, and books

Advances economies depend on growth. The arts help the creative economy grow.

Source: Arts and Cultural Production Satellite Account (1968-2012), National Endowment for the Arts and U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis
ACCESSORY DESIGN Buyer for major department stores + Consultant for fashion magazines + CAD accessory designer + Children’s wear designer + Eyewear designer + Home decor designer + Accessory designer + Luxury footwear designer + Showroom manager + Small leather goods designer + Store planner + Stylist ADVERTISING Account executive + Advertising designer + Art director + Copywriter + Creative director + Creative services manager + Freelance advertising designer + Graphic designer + Illustrator + In-house marketing staff + Web designer

ANIMATION 2-D animator + 3-D animator + 3-D pre-visualization artist + Animation producer + Art director + Character designer + Digital modeler + Motion capture artist + Stop motion animation + Storyboard and concept technical director + Texture/lighting technical director ART HISTORY Art appraiser + Art conservator + Art critic/writer + Art dealer + Art librarian/archivist + Art educator + Auction house administrator + Collections manager + Curator + Historic site supervisor + Preservationist ARTS ADMINISTRATION Art gallery owner/manager + Arts and law specialist + Community outreach director + Arts organization exec director + Fundraising and development coordinator + Grant and proposal writer + Music, theater or visual arts organization manager + Public policy and arts advocate + Public relations and marketing manager + Teacher CINEMA Arts administrator + Educator + Film archivist + Film critic + Film festival organizer + Film/TV producer + Journalist + Researcher + Writer + Writer for film and TV + DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY Sustainable interior designer + Consultant + Educator + Fashion and fibers + Landscape architect + Product developer + Service designer + Transportation planner + Urban planner DESIGN MANAGEMENT Architect + Account manager + Art director + Brand design manager + Corporate brand manager + Creative director + Design director + Design manager + Director of design strategy + Graphic designer and manager + Product developer + Visual experience designer DRAMATIC WRITING Arts administrator + Book publisher + Film critic + Magazine writer/editor + Novelist + Playwright + Public relations and marketing manager + Script reader + Theater consultant + Theatrical agent FASHION Apparel designer + Couterur + Fashion buyer + Fashion forecaster + Fashion illustrator + Fashion stylist + Image consultant + Menswear designer + Textile designer/colorist + Theater costume/wardrobe stylist + Visual merchandiser FIBERS Display designer + Embroiderer + Fine artist + Knitwear designer + Rug designer + Stylist + Surface designer + Textile designer + Textile colorist + Textile stylist + Upholstery designer + FILM AND TELEVISION Art director + Cable and television network producer + Camera of the Steadicam operator + Director + Director of photography Documentaries + Film producer + Production designer + Screenwriter + Videographer FURNITURE DESIGN Design consultant + Design manager + Environmental designer + Exhibition designer + Instructor/professor + Lighting designer + Luxury production furniture + Mass production furniture designer + Product designer + Project director + Studio artist GRAPHIC DESIGN Advertising display designer + Art director + Corporate identity designer + Design educator + Editorial designer + Graphic designer + Multimedia designer + Package designer + Typeface designer + User experience designer + Web designer HISTORIC PRESERVATION Archivist + Conservator + Grant developer + designer + Historic preservation officer


PERFORMING ARTS Actor + Casting agent + Casting director + Choreographer + Dancer + Director + Dramatic coach + Producer + Publicist + Theater consultant + Voiceover actor PHOTOGRAPHY Advertising photographer + Art director + Cinematographer + Commercial photographer + Fashion photographer + Fine art photographer + News photographer + Photo archivist + Photo editor + Photographic studio PRINTMAKING + Architect + Art teacher/professor + Conservator + Curator + Exhibition designer + Independent artist + Master printer + Museum specialist + Public installations consultant + Screen printer + Studio artist PRODUCTION ARTS Art director for film and television + Costume designer + Fine artist + Lighting designer + Model maker + Production assistant + Scenic designer + Stylist/wardrobe designer for advertising + Theater production designer + Theme entertainment/event designer + Theme park designer SCULPTURE Art consultant + Art director + Artist-in-residence + Character modeler + Curator + Exhibition designer + Gallerist + Independent studio sculptor + Moldmaker + Specialty metalsmith + SEQUENTIAL ART Cartoonist + Children’s book illustrator + Colorist + Comic book artist or writer + Illustrator + Ink + Production artist + Storyboard artist + Syndicated comic artist + Video game designer + Webcomic artist SERVICE DESIGN Application designer + Customer experience manager + Design and analysis services manager + Design project manager + Experience designer + Interaction designer + Product designer + Retail designer + Service designer + User interface designer + Web designer SOUND DESIGN + ADR recordist/ADR mixer + Dialog editor + Foley mixer/Foley recordist + Game audio designer + Live sound reinforcement engineer + Location sound specialist for films + Music editor + Production mixer + Sound designer + Sound effects editor + Supervising sound editor TEACHING Adult education + Community arts and cultural groups + Corporate training + Education administration + International teaching + Museums + Nonprofit groups + Private and public pre-K-12 schools + Special needs TELEVISION PRODUCING Animation/digital media producer + Assistant/associate producer + Commercials director + Development executive + Line producer + Music and entertainment producer + Post-production supervisor + Producer + Production assistant/coordinator + Script supervisor + Television news and documentary producer URBAN DESIGN Architectural team manager + Engineer + Planner + Planning and development manager + Preservation planner + Principal urban designer + Project manager + Senior planning services officer + Transportation planner VISUAL EFFECTS Compositor + Digital effects artist + Digital environment artist + Lighting technical director + Pre-visualization artist + Surfacing artist + Technical animator + Technical director + Art directors + Producer + WRITING Commissar + Critic + Editor + Grant writer + Managing staff writer + Narrative writer
How artists earn a living

90% of current artists have been self-employed

57% of current artists hold at least 2 jobs concurrently

multiple income streams + flexibility + management + variety =

Working Artist

Source: Strategic National Arts Alumni Project, snaap.indiana.edu
Artists = Entrepreneurs

- High level of personal investment.
- Work 24x7 and wear lots of hats.
- Solve a big customer problem.
- Come up with a differentiated strategy.
- Know their market.
- Have a strong leader with a solid team.
- Raise capital all the time.

“Art is for people who want to lead self-directed lives”

~ Suzanne Lacey, Artist/Educator
“Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art.

Making money is art and working is art and good business is the best art.”

~Andy Warhol
What are artists great at?

Emotionality

The person with creative literacy — a basic understanding of the mental, emotional, and sociological tools used for creative thought and communication — is able to find purpose and apply meaning to the world rather than having meaning handed down and purpose assigned to them.
A Culture of Questions & Revisions

CRITIQUE

- A critique analyzes, interprets, and evaluates the subject (not just a summary)
- Answering the questions **How?** **Why?** And **how well?**
- How will a viewer/audience respond to the subject?

It is the responsibility of the artist to:

Interpret information,

Make decisions based on the interpretations, and

Ultimately decide to adjust/redirect based upon the information or move forward as is.
## Arts Education and Benefits

Data of 25,000 students demonstrate that involvement in the arts is linked to **higher academic performance**, **increased standardized test scores**, **more community service**, and **lower dropout rates**.

"Critical Evidence: How the Arts Benefit Student Achievement" – Sandra Ruppert, National Assembly of State Arts Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving with Feedback</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Knowledge</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>71%</td>
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Source: Strategic National Arts Alumni Project, snaap.indiana.edu

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Art School = Career/Life Skills

Arts Undergrad Degree + experience / training / degrees =

Other forms of art

Business / Entrepreneurship

Education

Law

Medicine

...
Art School = Career/Life Skills

57% of recent SNAAP respondents spend the majority of their work time in a job within the arts.

Compare this with other majors...

- 54% chemistry
- 48% business administration & management
- 47% economics
- 44% mathematics
- 38% sociology
Creativity = Career/Life Skills

- Creative, and comfortable with expression
- Good planning and project management skills
  - Work Ethic / Discipline
  - The ability to lead and to take responsibility
  - Able to manage time wisely (handle several projects at once)
  - Able to identify patterns in behaviors, processes, and systems
- Able to work closely with others and collaborate to meet group and individual goals
  - A desire to pursue excellence, time and time again
Automation Potential for Jobs in the U.S.

Technical feasibility, % of time spent on activities that can be automated by adapting currently demonstrated technology.

Least susceptible: 9, 18
Less susceptible: 20, 25
Highly susceptible: 64, 69, 78

Time spent in all US occupations, %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Managing others</th>
<th>Applying expertise</th>
<th>Stakeholder interactions</th>
<th>Unpredictable physical work</th>
<th>Data collection</th>
<th>Data processing</th>
<th>Predictable physical work</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st quarter 2018</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Capabilities such as creativity and sensing emotions are core to the human experience and also difficult to automate.”

CHOOSING THE RIGHT FIT

“what is the best program for me?”
Choosing the Right Fit School

Four-Year Colleges and Universities

Conservatories

Art Schools

Community Colleges

Vocational/Proprietary Schools
Four-Year Colleges/Universities

• Public and Private

• Broad based liberal arts curriculum
  
  -Liberal arts studies can and should inspire your artistic practice.

• Opportunity to double major or minor

• Ability to switch majors

• University experience
  
  -Clubs, sororities, fraternities, sports, etc.

• May have professional programs
Performing and Visual Arts Schools

- The majority are private colleges whose funding is primarily from student tuition and endowments
- AICAD/NASAD - accredited
- Smaller college atmosphere
- All degree majors are in the arts
- Be surrounded by others that have a passion for the arts
- Liberal arts are still required for graduation
  
  - Usually courses are geared towards or designed for artists.
Conservatories

- Designed to preserve and perfect the knowledge of the performing arts
- Looking for polish from a prospective student
- The majority of students self-select or are recommended by private instructors
- May not always grant baccalaureate degrees
- Directed education in the performing arts
Community Colleges

• For the student not yet ready to enter the rigors of a competitive arts-based program

• Use to build or expand arts knowledge to be create a more competitive audition or portfolio

• Increase GPA – clean slate from high school

• Save money while completing lower division coursework

Know where you want to end up: Students should be self-directed when choosing community colleges as a stepping stone to arts-based programs.
Vocational/Technical Schools

- Majority are for-profit/proprietary institutions
- Receive up to 90% of their revenue from federal student aid
- For the student who is not looking for the rigors of college
- Hands-on training
- Employment-targeted education
- May or may not grant degrees
- Most credits are non-transferable to a four-year college or university
Summer Programs

• “Test drive” a school or a particular major

• Develop artistic work (portfolio or audition)

• Meet new artist mentors, some of whom may sit on admissions panels

• Expand arts knowledge, taking students beyond their comfort zone and exposing them to more advanced techniques and concepts

• Meet other students of similar ages/artistic inclinations to compare and contrast ideas, schools, ambitions, and goals

• Build resume of extracurricular material for the college application
Degree Types

BA vs. BFA / B.Mus (~120 semester/~200 quarter units)

B.A. (Bachelor of Arts)
50 - 60% coursework in liberal arts & sciences
40 - 50% coursework in the arts

B.F.A. (Bachelor of Fine Arts – also BCA, BVA)

B.Mus (Bachelor of Music – also B.M., Mus.Bac., Mus.B)
30 - 35% coursework in liberal arts & sciences
65 - 70% coursework in the arts
Degree Types

Other Undergraduate Arts Degrees

B.Arch (Bachelor of Architecture)

5-year program (~160 semester/~225 quarter units)

Undergraduate degree designed to satisfy the academic component of professional accreditation bodies, to be followed by a period of practical training prior to professional examination and licensure.

A.D. (Artistic Diploma)

2-year program (~20-30 units)

Non-degree program for the specialized training of unusually accomplished performers. The program focuses on the practical aspects of artistic training: private instruction, skills, performance, and participation in ensembles.
“what questions should I ask?”
Should I major in the arts?

I. Do you make/do art unprompted?
If nobody told you to make/do art, would you do it anyway? Do you look for opportunities during evenings/weekends/summers? Do you do it because it feels essential/important? Do you feel like you learn more about the world through making art?

II. Do you want to develop your work?
Do you research your arts area for inspiration? Do you look for teachers/other adults/friends, competitions, online communities/social media, for the purpose of asking for opinions so that you can make your art better?

III. How do you react to feedback?
Do you feel crushed and discouraged for long periods of time after receiving negative feedback? Or do you use any and all information you have as an opportunity for growth?
Find The Fit: Size and Location

ENROLLMENT
- Overall size of the institution?
- Student:teacher ratio in arts based courses vs. liberal arts courses?

LOCATION
- Access to professional venues (museums, galleries, theaters, and concerts)?
- Attraction of regional, national, or international talent?
- Opportunity to perform or exhibit?
- Availability for internships?
Find The Fit: Facilities and Reputation

**FACILITIES**

- Is there adequate studio space and/or practice rooms?
- Do the research resources meet my needs?
- Do I have access to labs, classrooms and practice facilities after hours?

**REPUTATION**

- Are the instructors known in their field?
- Is the school respected in the industry?
- What created the school’s reputation, and is this image still valid?
- Even though the school is well known, is it right for me?
ADMISSIONS QUALIFICATIONS/CRITERIA

- How much value is placed on academics such as GPA, test scores and writing?
- How much emphasis is placed on the strength/content of my portfolio/audition?
- How will they view my creative talent in relationship to my academic achievements?
Finding the Fit: Research

- Visit school websites
- Talk to an admission counselor
- Attend an info session (live or online)
- Get a portfolio review
- Talk to instructors
- Go on a campus tour / visit a class
- Pre-college / summer programs
Performing Arts
PERFORMING ARTS: Pre-screening

Pre-screening requirements are a way that admission committees can determine if a student is performing at a level commensurate to the program. Live auditions are a significant commitment that often involve expensive travel and coordination between multiple school dates, and are taxing for both the applicant as well as the admission reviewers and staff, and pre-screenings are a great way to make sure that nobody’s time, efforts, and money are being wasted.

If a student passes the pre-screening, they can be assured that their performance level is competitive with the program to which they are applying, and that the admission committee is interested in seeing them audition live.

Pre-screenings are requested earlier in the application season, typically a few months before the audition dates.
PERFORMING ARTS: Audition

PUNCTUALITY
Arrive early and allow plenty of time before the audition to warm up and organize your thoughts.

INTERVIEW
Prepare for a personal interview about yourself. Be ready to articulate your immediate goals and your goals for the future. Understand the mission of the school you are auditioning for, so that you may tell the interviewer how attending that particular school will help you achieve your goals.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION
As requested from the school, at least one from your primary performance instructor.

ACTING / DANCE / MUSIC / MUSICAL THEATER
If a physical and/or vocal warm-up is not part of the audition, leave enough time do so on your own.

REMEMBER!
Appearance and attitude do matter. The audition begins the minute you walk on campus.
PERFORMING ARTS: Audition

VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION:

What is the *family role* on the day of the audition?
ZERO
Visual Arts
The portfolio represents an applicant to a college as a potential student and young artist.

For most competitive university art programs and private art schools, the portfolio will be a determining factor in the admission process to that particular college.

A strong portfolio is an edited portfolio.

Most students will have completed 5-10 finished pieces for every one that is included in the final portfolio.
Most art programs will want to see works that fall into three distinct categories:

1. Observational art
2. Personal art
3. Home exam

Some colleges require a combination of two or three categories, and others want to see only one category.
1. Observational Art

- Observational art is drawing or painting in a traditional method using a still life, figure model, portrait or landscape as the subject and rendering the subject as accurately as possible.

- The image should not be taken from a photograph or the artist’s imagination but from real life.

- Size of the artwork should be approximately 18" x 24" or larger in scale, and fill the entire surface of the paper or canvas.

- Most work in this category is done in pencil, charcoal, or other drawing mediums, but it can also include painting and collage.
Observational Drawing - Still Life

Pencil on paper

18” x 24”
2. Personal Art

- Usually work done outside a classroom setting.
- Reflects the artist’s unique use of materials.
- Subject matter and concept is equally important to technique.
- Work can be completed in any media.
- Schools are looking at how students create outside the classroom environment.
Personal Art

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3. Home Exam

Specific work required by a particular college or department that is designed to showcase a distinct process and point of view when presented with a working context.

Example: Rhode Island School of Design [RISD]

Submit two drawing samples, each done on a sheet of white paper measuring 16"x 20" (40 cm x 50 cm).

Drawing #1: Create a drawing through a process of directly observing the forms, light, shapes and relationships of something in front of you.

Drawing #2: select one of the following options.

- Create a drawing instrument or tool. Make a drawing with the instrument you have created.

- Make a drawing of a bicycle
Home Exam

Example:
“make work about Blue”
VISUAL ARTS: Portfolio

PHOTOGRAPHY
Submit works that are shot and printed by you the artist (both traditionally and digitally). When it comes to photography, schools are just as interested in why you chose the subject matter as they are in how well it is printed.

TIME-BASED WORK (Film, Animation, Interactive Media, Game Design, etc.)
When presenting graphic or digital media work make sure that your work is as finished/complete as possible. Follow formatting instructions for still images as well as any time-based media (video/audio). URLs/websites should be easy to navigate and directive.

TECHNICAL THEATER (Directing, Stage Design, Costume Design, Stage Management, etc.)
Keep a resume of projects, credits and awards for creative work. Keep visual documentation of process work as well as finished visual project: sketches, preliminary designs, photographs.
Film & Television

WRITING SAMPLES

Film and Television programs may require one or more of the following writing samples in their portfolios: a. Personal essay b. Critical essay on a film c. Dramatic or comedic essay d. Character profile e. Screenplay or theatrical play sample (approximately six pages)

RESUME

A resume of projects, credits and awards for creative work, including film projects, is recommended. Although many programs do not require previous film experience, it is a good idea to list all production experience on a resume.

FILM/VIDEO REELS

Schools may require a produced live-action or animation film(s). The quality of the film is slightly less important than the content or creative ideas behind the film. Prepare and edit these materials well in advance of their due date, respective of the school’s maximum time allowances.

INTERVIEW

In addition to the portfolio, an interview may also be included in the application process. Punctuality and appropriate attire are recommended for the interview. The interview is an opportunity to communicate your educational and career goals to the faculty and ask questions about the program.
Many performing and visual arts college and universities are moving to online digital upload systems to collect supplemental pre-screening or out of state/region performance material, portfolios, statements/essays, transcripts and other evidence of creativity.

• Read the instructions thoroughly / follow directions
• Make a calendar of all deadlines
• Prepare audition/portfolio media
• Create a professional email address
• Check your own work
• Don’t wait until the last minute!
The Artist Statement
The Artist Statement

An artist statement is an introduction to your work: you want the reader to want to learn more about you.

Your reader(s) are artists/creative people themselves! Address them accordingly 😊

• **What am I doing, and why am I doing it?** What inspires you? What problems are you trying to solve? What does your art do for you? What challenges are you presenting?

• **How am I doing it?** What tools / materials am I using? What ideas / emotions are you conveying? What connections am I making?

**Optional Additional Details:**

• Personal History / Creative Influences: Include only if it’s compelling and directly relevant. Keep it brief.

• What is it about [institution] that is the ideal environment for you? How can [institution] best support your personal and professional goals?
Resources

National Association for College Admission Counseling  www.nacacnet.org
Western Association for College Admission Counseling  www.wacac.org
National Portfolio Day Association  www.portfolioday.net
PlaybillEDU  playbilledu.com
Strategic National Arts Alumni Project (SNAAP)  snaap.indiana.edu
The College Board  www.collegeboard.org

Super Special Resource Stash: goo.gl/3JbBW9

“Retire to what?”
~Duke Ellington, Musician/Composer

Thank you!

Laura Young
Director, Enrollment Management
UCLA School of the Arts and Architecture
lyoung@arts.ucla.edu
Here's your design sir.

But why do I have to pay you so much for something you took ten minutes to make?

Because I spent ten years studying to learn how to do it in ten minutes.