The Graduate Programs at the School of Visual Arts
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AN INTERVIEW WITH THE PRESIDENT

“As an art school in the United States, it is entirely appropriate that we are guided by the American philosophy of Pragmatism. As a college we have always been willing to experiment and learn from trial and error. I’m proud that one of the things we’ve made function effectively at SVA is a culture of working professionals—leaders in their fields—who head programs that are deeply connected to current creative work. Equally important, these programs continue to evolve by taking account of innovations in the professions and the shifting concerns and opportunities of the department chairs, faculty and students. With a renewed emphasis on advanced education as central to economic development and growth, and an ever deeper appreciation of how much students can (and must) contribute, I believe New York City will continue to grow as a top international destination for graduate-level study.”

What are the challenges of organizing staff and programming in the way that SVA does? “There is a certain tension between faculty members’ professional commitments and their teaching responsibilities,” Mr. Rhodes admits, “but I think we’ve solved that here. A typical institution hands faculty a lot of work that they’re not necessarily expert at. We don’t do that; our faculty is here to teach what they know, and to impart what they focus on in their working lives. And since they are actively involved in their professions, what they’re doing is current and immediate. Not to dispute the virtue of drawing from plaster casts, we have found it more useful—to make another pragmatic point—to be doing something of the moment. The content of our programs changes almost annually. No one’s lecturing from yellowed notes made 30 years ago.”

And it’s not just the curriculum of existing departments that keeps moving: SVA continues to introduce new graduate programs, responding to emerging interest and demand. “In the last four years,” President Rhodes begins, “we’ve opened seven. An MFA in Art Practice, developed by curator and former Whitney Museum of American Art director David Ross, began in summer 2011. Its mission is two-fold: The continuous development of art-making through extensive studio work, and a thorough understanding of contemporary art practice, including critical and curatorial endeavors.

“That fall we welcomed our first class to a one-year MPS in Fashion Photography. Chaired by Jimmy Moffat and Stephen Frailey, the program is designed to immerse students in the narrative, conceptual and cultural subtext of fashion photography, and to provide direct engagement with the leading figures in fashion and fashion photography in New York City.”
“The next year,” he continues, “we launched our first purely research-based degree, an MA in Critical Theory and the Arts, developed by philosopher Robert Hullot-Kentor. We also opened two new advanced design degrees: MFA Products of Design, a strategic making-based curriculum considering purposeful artifacts, systems, and design offerings, supported by a remarkable Visible Futures Lab and chaired by Core77 founder Alan Chochinov, as well as MFA Design for Social Innovation, which, as Chair Cheryl Heller says, ‘considers the new challenges of working at the intersection of business, society and the natural world.’ Later that year we launched our third low-residency offering, an MFA in Visual Narrative. This program is an innovative mix of on-campus and online study established by illustrator and comic artist Nathan Fox to enable students to become creative, responsible arbiters of visual storytelling.

“This past fall we opened an MA in Curatorial Practice, created by international curator and scholar Steven Henry Madoff to provide both professional training and a thorough grounding in history and theory, addressing a growing global practice.”

Recently, the College has expanded physically as well as in its range of programs. As we move a number of facilities into Chelsea, one particularly striking development is the SVA Theatre on West 23rd Street. “This is something we had wanted to do for a long time,” the president reveals. “To create a cultural center on our urban campus. Pedagogically, it allows our graduate programs to convene significant conferences and collaborate on lectures and multimedia presentations.”

Along with the many innovations, the president is equally proud of the College’s longstanding strengths. “Illustration has been around for a long time and our MFA in Illustration as Visual Essay, celebrating its 30th anniversary this year, embodies our ideal pattern, shifting and adapting with the profession and technology. Half of its graduates have published books and graphic novels. Some regularly show their work in galleries. That’s not what we expected when we developed it, but that program has stayed out ahead of the field.

“It’s clear,” President Rhodes concludes, smiling, “that we are open to creating and supporting many new paths for our students to explore. We just want them to be of the moment and, of course, of the future. Ultimately, pragmatic.”

David Rhodes, President, School of Visual Arts
Could other products be recycled and used to package ice cream pints?

1 1/2 460
Bottle = 1 QT

1 QT = 2 Pints

Half the bottle holds ice cream cap made of:

Remove tab to mark
итель вилке
Ice cream liquid
after each eating
session

Yeti spits
Ice cream out

Push pint in

Kid friendly
MFA ILLUSTRATION AS VISUAL ESSAY
Matthew Denton Burrows (MFA 2014), Fifty Four Forty or Fight!
MFA COMPUTER ART
Daniel Sierra, 2013, Oscillate, animation
John Delaney’s Hoboken Passing: The Hoboken Originals is a series of portraits of locals who work in Hoboken’s mom-and-pop shops that have survived a changing neighborhood, economic hardship and Hurricane Sandy.
Performance choreographed by Jae Wook Lee (MFA 2014). Photographed by Brandi Martin.
MFA ART PRACTICE
Student Kevin Townsend shows off his hands following a performative graphic wall drawing.
MPS BRANDING

(left and right) Views of the department’s space located on East 21st Street in Manhattan’s Chelsea neighborhood.
MFA FINE ARTS
Yue Lin (MFA 2014)
For a class assignment, student Cassandra Michel attempted to redesign a cup of coffee, which led her to research ways in which to revive energy. This headdress is meant to encourage power naps over caffeine. It’s an alarm clock, designed to have its lights softly grow brighter and gently awaken the midday power-napper.
MFA PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO AND RELATED MEDIA

Jean Bettinger, Negative Dimension, 2014
MFA DESIGN
Student Mohammed Sharaf reused old typewriters to create a chair.
MPS ART THERAPY

This two-weekend art-making intensive alumni workshop was run by faculty member Peter Hristoff in preparation for an alumni show ("Life’s Work") held in Provence in France.
Faculty member Lynne Tillman hosting the thesis presentations.
MPS DIRECTING
Darshon Crudup (MPS 2014) behind the camera.
MA CURATORIAL PRACTICE

Brown Bag Lunch Presentations and Encounters with artists, curators and current students in the MACP lounge.
MPS DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY
(left and right) Hsin Wang, from the project De-selfing, 2014
MFA VISUAL NARRATIVE

Jenny Goldstick, Theories of Relative Disengagement, digital short story project
MA DESIGN RESEARCH, WRITING AND CRITICISM

Department space located on West 21st Street in Manhattan’s Chelsea neighborhood.
2014 activist art exhibit, “Putting it All on the Table” explored social issues related to food systems. Shown in front, “Cronut,” a parody of trendy fast-food worship.
MFA INTERACTION DESIGN

2014 graduate Tyler Davidson’s unVeil uses projection to transform ordinary surfaces and objects into platforms for delivering information. Here, the unVeil Bar transforms a table into an interactive cocktail-creating workspace by projecting recipes and step-by-step instructions based on user input.
MPS ART THERAPY
Studio Art Therapy in Florence program
MFA PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO AND RELATED MEDIA

Students Caryn Coyle and Christina Arza
MFA ILLUSTRATION AS VISUAL ESSAY
Federico Infante (MFA 2013)
MFA PRODUCTS OF DESIGN
Richard Clarkson, The Cloud
MFA SOCIAL DOCUMENTARY FILM

Olga Klyachina testing out the Sony EX1 camera in class.
(clockwise from top left) Amitabh Joshi (MFA 2013) on location in northern Nepal. Student Yuqi Kang films a herd of sheep in Mongolia. Justin Thomas (MFA 2013) and Andres Arias (MFA 2013) on a shoot in NYC. Olga Lvoff (née Klyachina, MFA 2013) and her husband, Basile Lvoff, at the Student Academy Awards in NYC.
MA CRITICAL THEORY AND THE ARTS
36 credits | One-year residency

- This one-year MA program is unique in presenting the philosophical, sociological, political, art and social historical contexts a student must be familiar with to meaningfully pursue the questions that the contemporary situation of art poses. Society and art are studied in their actual tension, without reducing art to society, or pretending that society somehow amounts to the world of art.
- The curriculum is made up of courses in aesthetics, political theory, social history, the history of art and social theory. Classes involve open discussions concerning the most important questions we have about art, politics, society and our lives.
- Focal points of the program are the Proseminars on “The Situation of the Arts: The Level of the Problem” and the Serious Times Lecture Series, which poses the question, “Why doesn’t the United States make social progress?”
- Up to 14 students are selected annually by the Committee on Graduate Admissions. Philosophy, social history, and political science often engage the arts, and students in the program come from many disciplines, no less than from the art studio.

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MA CURATORIAL PRACTICE
50 credits | Two-year residency

- Rigorous curatorial training in the heart of Manhattan with leading curators and experts from New York’s major arts institutions.
- Historical and theoretical study of the expanded curatorial field.
- International network of institutions and organizations for career development.

Steven Henry Madoff, chair
Jovana Stokic, deputy chair
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MA DESIGN RESEARCH, WRITING AND CRITICISM

30 credits | One-year residency

- The MA in Design Research, Writing and Criticism is one of the only graduate programs of its kind in the U.S.
- Prepare for careers in design research, publishing, curating, education, and management.
- Contribute to the public discourse on design, architecture, and cities.
- Enrich your multi-dimensional practice with research, writing and critical tools.
- Learn how to create compelling narratives about images, objects and spaces.

Alice Twemlow, chair
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MAT ART EDUCATION

36 credits | One- or two-year residency

- Develop an educational philosophy while continuing to create personal artwork.
- Gain specialized teaching experience through the School of Visual Arts’ innovative children’s program within the New York City community.
- Start teaching next fall with our one-year intensive program, or attend part-time with our two-year program.

Rose Viggiano, chair
Christina Mazzalupo, assistant to the chair
Barbara Salander, thesis director
Michael Filan, student teaching supervisor
Anna Roman, secretary
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MFA ART CRITICISM AND WRITING
60 credits | Two-year residency

- One of the only graduate writing programs that focuses specifically on criticism.
- For us, criticism is a way to ask bigger and better questions.
- We want students with wide-ranging curiosity about contemporary culture.
- Emphasis on the history and current transformations of the image.

David Levi Strauss, chair
Annette Wehrah, assistant to the chair

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vimeo.com/user6822793

MFA ART PRACTICE
60 credits | Low residency

- Multidisciplinary program that addresses the intellectual, aesthetic, technical and practical concerns of the artist.
- Low-residency format combines online coursework with three summers of studio practice in NYC.
- Students will engage with artists, designers, curators and others from New York’s art world and beyond.

David Ross, chair
Jacquelyn Strycker, director of operations
Allison Simpson, assistant to the chair

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MFA COMPUTER ART

60 credits | Two-year residency

- The MFA Computer Art Department emphasizes creativity and a multidisciplinary approach to making art with computers and emerging technologies.
- The goal of the program is to develop artists who will produce significant creative work throughout their careers and become leaders in their chosen field.
- The faculty comprises internationally renowned artists, curators, critics, theorists and industry professionals—a who's who of New York's art world.
- State-of-the-art facilities; named one of the top ten digital art schools in the world.

Bruce Wands, chair
Hsiang Chin Moe, director of operations
Ashley Rae Pearsall, assistant to the chair

Milan DelVecchio, project coordinator
Jose Vargas, senior systems administrator
Milos Paripovic, systems administrator

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MFA DESIGN

60 credits | Two-year residency

- We emphasize entrepreneurship as an alternative to conventional practice, and as a means to raise the level of design expertise and achievement.
- We teach a broad set of visual, verbal and textual approaches as foundation for design.
- We focus on creation to optimize the designer’s abilities to rise to the next professional level.

Steven Heller, co-chair
Lita Talarico, co-chair
Esther Ro-Schofield, director of operations
Ron Callahan, senior systems administrator

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MFA DESIGN FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

60 credits | Two-year residency

- Design for Social Innovation is an emerging discipline that works at a systems level, shifting cultures, igniting collective creativity, and realizing the kind of transformational opportunities for business and society that we need most right now.
- We offer a uniquely holistic approach—at the intersection of design, social innovation and enterprise. We teach design as a tool for social and environmental impact, not an end in itself.
- The DSI curriculum encompasses a broad range of issues including conservation, health, food and agriculture, poverty, women's rights, social justice, fair trade, education and community revitalization.
- DSI students work with real clients throughout the program, gaining hands-on experience.
- Graduates are prepared to work in business, government, creative services, philanthropy, non-profits and as entrepreneurs.

Cheryl Heller, chair
Jill Teckenbrock, director of operations
Aubrey Hays, assistant to the chair

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MFA FINE ARTS

60 credits | Two-year residency

- Interdisciplinary studio program emphasizes exploration and experimentation.
- Internationally renowned artists comprise the faculty.
- Visiting artists, curators, and critics give lectures and visit students’ studios.
- Mark Tribe, chair
- JP Forrest, director of operations

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svamfafinearts.tumblr.com
MFA ILLUSTRATION AS VISUAL ESSAY

60 credits | Two-year residency

- Develop your personal vision in our highly selective program.
- Classroom-based curriculum, where close interaction between faculty and other classmates is an essential part of the creative process of the program.
- New York City’s diverse and celebrated professional world provides mentors, guest lecturers, advisors and faculty.

Marshall Arisman, chair
Kim Ablondi, director of operations

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mfaillustration.tumblr.com
vimeo.com/channels/310230

MFA INTERACTION DESIGN

60 credits | Two-year residency

- MFA Interaction Design focuses on concepts central to interaction design, design research, human-computer interaction, interface design, graphic design, information architecture and ubiquitous computing.
- Create innovative approaches to human problems.
- Develop fluency in prototyping and the practical application of visionary ideas.
- Transform entrepreneurial concepts into new products and services.

Liz Danzico, chair
Gwendolyn Kurtz, assistant to the chair

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vimeo.com/svaixd
**MFA PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO AND RELATED MEDIA**

60 credits | Two-year residency + Three-year residency option

- Extensive and innovative courses in all aspects of the lens arts—still and moving.
- Understanding the need to create new technologies, new histories, new criticism and professional practices for success in a changing world.
- New York City is the creative hub of a worldwide network from which we readily draw our mentors, faculty and lecturers.

Charles H. Traub, chair
Randy West, director of operations
Kelly Sullivan, assistant to the chair
Adam Bell, academic advisor

Michelle Leftheris, coordinator of curriculum and special projects
Seth Lambert, systems support specialist

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**MFA PRODUCTS OF DESIGN**

60 credits | Two-year residency

- Products of Design transforms designers, educating head, heart and hands to reinvent systems, create new types of value and catalyze positive change through the business of making.
- An optimistic re-imagining of the artifacts of design, reconciling the challenges of production and consumption, systems and consequence.
- Students use a hands-on, making-driven approach to master strategic, technical and narrative skills.
- Industry leaders, interdisciplinary practitioners, passionate iconoclasts and savvy entrepreneurs comprise the faculty.

Allan Chochinov, chair
Gabrielle Kellner, director of operations
Marko Manriquez, systems administrator

Alisha Wessler, administrative assistant
Leif Mangelsen, director, VFL (Visible Futures Lab)
Boris Klompus, manager, VFL
Tak Cheung, manager, VFL
John Heida, digital fabrication specialist, VFL

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twitter.com/svapod
vimeo.com/user6147977
MFA SOCIAL DOCUMENTARY FILM

60 credits | Two-year residency

- The MFA in Social Documentary Film program guides and supports emerging artists to fully explore the social documentary film form.
- Trains students to find innovative ways to examine and communicate the core experiences and events that define us.
- Open to qualified students at any level—no filmmaking background required.
- A tailored curriculum designed for students to attain artistic and technical fluency in documentary filmmaking.

Maro Chermayeff, chair
Niki Bhattacharya, director of operations
Timothy Doyle, assistant to the chair
Kristian Gonzales, senior systems administrator
Joseph Eisenstein, video production manager

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MFA VISUAL NARRATIVE

60 credits | Low residency

- Low-residency MFA program in visual narrative with two years online and three summers in NYC.
- Offers a distinctive and evolutionary approach to storytelling on a graduate level.
- Focuses on the growing need for original content creators in advertising, video games, picture books, graphic novels, film, illustration and animation.
- Prepares artists and authors to become innovators in the ever-evolving art of visual storytelling.

Nathan Fox, chair
Joan McCabe, director of operations

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**MPS ART THERAPY**

**60 credits | Two-year residency**

- The MPS in Art Therapy program at SVA is interdisciplinary in approach, integrating the experiential components of art therapy practice within a comprehensive framework of academic theory and clinical application.
- Students learn to adapt the creative process to the specific therapeutic needs of the individual, population and setting, with a consideration of how socio-political and cultural issues impact treatment.
- SVA believes in active engagement with the community utilizing the diverse, multi-dimensional, artistic, and innovative atmosphere of NYC and beyond to enhance training.
- The Department offers larger group information sessions and experiential workshops each year, as well as individual information sessions.

Deborah Farber, chair
Aaron Cockle, director of operations
Christine Kelly, assistant to the chair
Valerie Sereno, special programs and projects coordinator
Elizabeth DelliCarpini, internship coordinator

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**MPS BRANDING**

**36 credits | One-year residency**

- The masters in branding offered by the School of Visual Arts is the first program of its kind in the United States.
- Create frameworks to guide brand, design and business development
- Critically evaluate brand, business, marketing and design strategies
- Master the intellectual link between leadership and creativity

Debbie Millman, chair
Mark Dudlik, director of operations
J’aime Cohen, program coordinator
Emily Weiland, studio manager

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MPS DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

36 credits | One-year residency or two-year part-time

• Earn your graduate degree in digital photography with a one-year, full-time program or through our low-residency option.

• Master digital photography’s latest tools and techniques in this intensive program.

• Working professionals comprise the faculty—numerous guest lecturers enhance the technical and creative curriculum.

• Available as an online/summer residency or on-campus/summer residency program for a cutting-edge education in current digital photographic practices and aesthetics.

Katrin Eismann, chair
Thomas P. Ashe, associate chair

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vimeo.com/masterdigitalphoto

MPS DIRECTING

36 credits | One-year residency

• Learn filmmaking in this unique 10-month program chaired by one of the legendary commercial and video directors, Bob Giraldi.

• Transform an idea into a film using the latest in digital technology.

• Connect with industry professionals: working directors, screenwriters, editors and producers.

• A practical, hands-on curriculum where students gain experience in every aspect of filmmaking.

Bob Giraldi, chair
Anelisa Garfunkel, director of operations
Megan Hessenthaler, systems support administrator

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vimeo.com/svadirecting
MPS FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY

30 credits | One-year residency

- Study fashion photography in the fashion capital of New York City.
- One of the few graduate programs specifically devoted to fashion photography.
- A program aimed at proficient photographers who want to develop their craft in this genre.
- The program utilizes the resources of NYC as a world fashion and media capital.
- Merit-based scholarships available.

Stephen Frailey, co-chair
Jimmy Moffat, co-chair

Christopher Labzda, director of operations
Kimberlee Venable, systems support specialist

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vimeo.com/mpsfashionphoto

ADMISSIONS INFORMATION

GENERAL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS
(REQUIRED FOR ALL PROGRAMS)
For detailed instructions and submission guidelines, visit: sva.edu/grad/howtoapply
- Online Application and $80 Application Fee: sva.edu/apply
- Statement of Intent/Personal Statement
- Résumé
- Official College Transcript

Some applicants may be required to submit the following:
- Proof of English Proficiency
- Copy of Permanent Resident Card
- Declaration of Finances
- Verification of Finances
- Foreign Transcript Evaluation

DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENTS
Submission of the materials listed below varies by program. For detailed instructions, visit: sva.edu/grad/deptreq
- Portfolio
- Writing Sample
- Letters of Recommendation
- Interview

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
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DEADLINES
For information on application deadlines, visit: sva.edu/grad/timeline
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 and Video; Fine Arts; Illustration; Interior Design; Photography; Visual and Critical Studies; and to confer the degree of Master of Arts on graduates of the programs in Critical Theory and the Arts; Curatorial Practice; Design Research, Writing and Criticism; and to confer the degree of Master of Fine Arts on graduates of programs in Art Criticism and Writing; Art Practice; Computer Art; 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 the programs in Art Therapy; Branding; Digital Photography; Directing; Fashion Photography; Data required by the U.S. Department of Education on “Gainful Employment” for each of the above programs may be found on each individual program page at sva.edu/ge.

The School of Visual Arts is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (msche.org), 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, 215.662.5606. 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. 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), 146 Monroe Center NW, Suite 1318, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2822. 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. The Master of Arts in Teaching in Art Education program is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

The School of Visual Arts does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, creed, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin or other legally protected statuses.

The College reserves the right to make changes from time to time affecting policies, fees, curricula and other matters announced in this or any other publication. Statements in this and other publications do not constitute a contract.