S V A School of VISUAL ARTS

MFA ART CRITICISM AND WRITING DEPARTMENT FACT SHEET

The MFA Art Criticism and Writing Department is one of the only graduate writing programs in the world that focuses specifically on criticism. It is designed to give students a grounding in the philosophical and historical bases of criticism, to improve both their writing and their seeing, and to provide sources that they can draw on for the rest of their lives.

In addition to the foundation seminar Bases of Criticism I & II, three levels of writing practicums, and the thesis seminar, the program offers an array of continually changing electives taught by prominent writers and critics. Students concentrate on the essay as form, as well as on shorter forms of review, and learn criticism by doing it. The thesis that students write at the end of their course of study is intended to be a substantial piece of criticism. From its inception, the program has also had a special emphasis on the history and current transformations of the image. The critics of tomorrow must study images in all of their manifestations, in order to better understand how we are subject to them.

2011 - 2012 student population
25 matriculated students

Department chair
David Levi Strauss, writer, scholar and critic (*From Head to Hand: Art & the Manual*; *Between the Eyes: Essays on Photography & Politics*; *Between Dog & Wolf: Essays on Art & Politics*; *The Fighting Is a Dance, Too: Leon Golub and Nancy Spero; Abu Ghraib: The Politics of Torture)*

Some notable faculty members
Suzanne Anker (*The Molecular Gaze: Art in the Genetic Age*), Susan Bee (*M/E/A/N/I/N/G: A Journal of Contemporary Art Issues*), Michael Brenson (*Acts of Engagement*: *Writings on Art, Criticism, and Institutions*), Thyrza Nichols Goodeve (*How Like a Leaf: An Interview with Donna Haraway*), Tom Huhn (*The Wake of Art: Criticism, Philosophy, and the Ends of Taste*), Ann Lauterbach (*The Given & the Chosen, Or to Begin Again*), Nancy Princenthal (*The Deconstructive Impulse: Women Artists Reconfigure the Signs of Power*), Raphael Rubinstein (*Polychrome Profusion: Selected Art Criticism 1990-2002*)

Some notable guest lecturers
Bill Berkson, Susan Buck-Morss, T.J. Clark, Arthur Danto, Dave Hickey, Ann Lauterbach, Lucy Lippard, Sylvère Lotringer, W.J.T. Mitchell, Avital Ronell, Peter Schjeldahl, Leo Steinberg

Departmental publication
Student writings are published in *Degree Critical*, an online art magazine reviewing contemporary exhibitions.

For further information, please visit our Web site at http://artcriticism.sva.edu.

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