Art Therapy
SVA’s Master of Professional Studies

MPS Art Therapy is an immersive two-year, 60 credit program that prepares students to become licensed, credentialed art therapists. It integrates the experiential components of art therapy within a comprehensive framework of academic theory, clinical application via an internship program, and art practice. Students learn to adapt the creative process to the specific therapeutic needs of the individual, population, and setting, with a consideration of how systems of theoretical and social constructs impact treatment. SVA believes in active engagement with the community at large, which allows for utilization of the diverse, innovative, creative atmosphere of NYC and beyond to enhance training.

Program History

The MPS Art Therapy Program developed from a single undergraduate course in collaboration with the Bronx Psychiatric Center in New York City over three decades ago. The undergraduate certificate program, guided by its founder, Estelle Bellomo, expanded and developed affiliations in a variety of settings and gained a reputation for excellence in both academic and clinical training. Subsequent changes in the field of art therapy made a master’s degree program the natural progression, which was initiated in 2001. The program is approved by the American Art Therapy Association, as well as New York State’s Department of Education and is an educational provider for the Licensure in Creative Art Therapy (LCAT) credential by the New York State Office of the Professions, and as such meets the education standards of the art therapy profession.

—Deborah Farber, chair
Program Learning Outcomes

Objectives

1. Obtain an understanding of the complex relationship between cognition, emotion and behavior and analogizing these areas to art therapy diagnosis and treatment.

2. Cultivate the capacity for productive self-reflection, empathy, critical thinking, examination of personal assumptions and biases, and insight to enhance clinical practice.

3. Develop a distinctive approach to art therapy practice based on the client’s needs while taking into account the student’s individual talents and working style.

4. Demonstrate artistic growth through realized handling of materials, process and product as they relate to art therapy practice.

5. Develop an active leadership role, learning to advocate and collaborate in a professional setting.

6. Gain a thorough understanding of professional practices within the field, i.e. ethical/legal standards, career strategies and expectations.

Artwork from the 2017 MPS Art Therapy Spring Exhibition “Your Turn.”
Ayde Rayas, a sculptor and painter, mother of three, and graduate of SVA’s MPS Art Therapy program maintained a razor-like focus, starting at age 13, on attending SVA. (She used to doodle “SVA” in the margins of her eighth-grade notebooks.) Though she was accepted as an undergraduate at her dream school, circumstances didn’t allow her to attend. Undaunted, she headed off to Jersey City State College and Ithaca College, then returned to her hometown of El Paso to teach art to first graders. She kept her eyes on the prize, biding her time until she
found a way back to New York City and eventually to SVA. She currently works as the art therapist at Cooke Center Academy in SoHo, a school for kids ages 14–21 with diverse disabilities, including language-based learning issues, autism and physical challenges.

Her ninth-grade art teacher recognized that her interests pointed the way toward a career in art therapy, and urged her to investigate the options. She says, “I was like: Wow, I can combine these things I’m passionate about, art and psychology?” Although she enjoyed her job in Texas as an art educator, she realized that an important piece of the process was missing. “I explored materials with the students to create products and felt successful creating those products,” she says. “But for an art therapist, it’s about the process, not the product; it’s about having a holding space to create an energy that makes kids feel they can be themselves. What they create doesn’t have to be pretty. They can rip it up, throw it out; they can project all kinds of symbolism around it, and I had to have the clinical background to be effective with them.”

Her path took a slight detour after her SVA graduation, when she and her husband bounced off the map to spend a year in Costa Rica as legal guardians for 18 orphaned boys living in a group home. “I didn’t just jump into my art therapy career or do my clinical hours, which was the next step in the licensing process. So on the one hand, I felt incredibly behind,” she says. “On the other hand, I had this completely enriching experience. I don’t regret it a bit. I’m still in touch with those boys.” When she returned to the U.S., she felt she could count on her old department at SVA for support and guidance as she planned her next steps. Rayas says, “The beauty of
the art therapy department is their constant support at every stage. I called my old supervisors right after the birth of my first child, and said: ‘How do you combine being a mom and an art therapist?’ Even now I can reach out to the department for help formulating what my next move might be. I feel like I grew up in a community where I’ve seen my peers grow up, too, and go on to become supervisors, faculty and department chairs. I attend the Art Therapy conference every year to see familiar faces and reconnect. I always feel welcome: that’s the bottom line; it’s what’s most important.”

Rayas’s colorful studio at the Cooke Academy, where she works with children with disabilities.
Students are trained in the psychodynamic roots of the art therapy profession. Contemporary theories of human development and creativity are also thoroughly explored as students analyze changes in physical, cognitive, artistic and social-emotional development across the lifespan. Courses work in tandem with two years of internships and special projects in clinical, academic, medical and community settings. First-year course work involves training in fundamental theories, methods and evidence-based art therapy research. This includes an in-depth academic and experiential exploration of the therapeutic use of art materials with specific populations. The second year focuses on specialization, professional development and practical application. Students develop a clinically oriented thesis, which includes designing and conducting research that follows ethical guidelines. In addition, students choose from two specialization tracks: Addictionology or Trauma. To see all courses visit sva.edu/arttherapy/curriculum.

**SEMESTER ONE**
- Theoretical Foundations of Art Therapy
- Child Art Development
- Methods and Materials in Art Therapy
- Internship/Supervision in the Studio I
- Interviewing and Counseling Skills

**SEMESTER TWO**
- Adolescent Art Development
- Adult Art Development
- Group Therapy and Practice
- Internship/Supervision in the Studio II
- Psychiatric Populations and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual

**SEMESTER THREE**
- Art Assessment and Diagnosis
- Thesis Project I
- Internship/Supervision in the Studio III
- Multicultural Issues in Art Therapy
- OR International Multicultural Internship
- Clinical Topics in Addictionology
- OR Physiology of Trauma
- Elective Course

**SEMESTER FOUR**
- Community Access Through the Arts
- Family Art Therapy
- Internship/Supervision in the Studio IV
- Thesis Project II
- Physiology of Addictions
- OR Clinical Topics in Trauma
- Elective Course

**SPECIALIZATION TRACKS AND ELECTIVES**
In the second year of study, students choose between two areas of specialization: Addictionology or Trauma. Track selection informs the second-year internship placement and is the focus of thesis work. The Addictionology track explores neurobiology and its role in substance use and other addictive behaviors, the influence of attachment and trauma on capacities for self-regulation, and consequent reliance on chemical assistance and non-drug dependencies. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of art therapy in promoting enhanced capacities for integration among neural systems and networks, allowing for optimal self-regulation and overall functioning.

The Trauma track explores the nature and effects of interactions between the environment and physiology of the individual. The impacts of profound, event-related or shock trauma, as well as developmental, attachment-based, and strain trauma are examined throughout the life cycle. Students will understand the role of art therapy in promoting a sense of efficacy and mastery that offsets the learned helplessness acquired during traumatic experience, and reintroducing clients to experiences of pleasure and play in a safe and manageable way.

Students also select an elective class each semester in the second year, with courses focusing on exhibition, counseling, and studio art. Students can also opt to take an additional track course as an elective.

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS & PROJECTS**
Students are given the opportunity to work in short-term community-based settings beyond their internships, gaining exposure and hands-on experience with diverse client populations. Partnering with sites that do not offer art therapy services, students learn how to develop, advocate, educate and implement programming supervised by licensed, board-certified alumni or faculty. This further enhances their understanding of social constructs and how they impact clinical work.

**INTERNSHIPS**
The internship, a core component of SVA art therapy training, is integrated into all academic course work from the first semester of study, so that theory is consistently connected to practice. Students are required to complete an intensive 960 hours of on-site clinical work at two separate and diverse year-long internships where they gain in-depth art therapy experience and professional training under the supervision of a licensed art therapist.

Affiliations with a wide range of prominent institutions and non-traditional sites in and around NYC ensure students are exposed to innovative advancements and current trends in art therapy, the fine art world and related fields. Through ongoing individual consultation with a full-time internship coordinator, students select internships that correspond to their experience and SVA training standards while developing skills specific to seeking employment as an art therapist. Second-year internships are based on track selection and are the focus of thesis work so that didactic material is reinforced by work in the field.

Students are expected to take an active role on-site and in supervision, developing leadership, advocacy and critical-thinking skills. A fundamental part of internship training is considering the impact of socio-political issues, culture and power structures on treatment, as well as upholding the standards and ethical guidelines of the American Art Therapy Association, Art Therapy Credentials Board and the New York State Education Department Office of the Professions.
COUNSELING TEAM
Select second-year students comprise a team that provides art therapy services to undergraduate and graduate SVA students from other programs. Students are chosen for the team through an application and interview process at the beginning of the second year. The team of students augments its clinical skills by independently facilitating weekly one-on-one and group sessions.

EXHIBITION
Internship course work includes participation in a client/student art exhibition held each spring at an SVA gallery in the Chelsea neighborhood of NYC. Applying social action theory within an art therapy framework, students consider therapeutic goals and the role of art and the artist in a community context. Students and clients develop their identity as artists and examine the limitations of socially constructed labels and the impact of institutional policies.

ANNUAL ART THERAPY CONFERENCE
The Department is committed to the development and advancement of the field. Innovative and interdisciplinary in approach, the conference fosters a dialogue on a range of challenging and contemporary topics. The conference features speakers from diverse disciplines including art therapy; fine arts; psychology; academia; medical, political and social activism.

PART-TIME PROGRAM
The MPS Art Therapy program also offers three- and four-year part-time program options on a case-by-case basis.

VISITING ARTIST WORKSHOPS
Students and alumni are encouraged to develop their identity as artists. Drawing from the cultural richness of NYC and SVA’s faculty of renowned artists, workshops are offered in traditional techniques and cutting-edge processes with discussions on clinical reasoning and their applicability to art therapy.

ALUMNI PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
The Department is invested in the professional development of its alumni. Free licensing workshops and board certification training, professional networking events, and employment opportunities are provided. Once credentialed, alumni have the opportunity to work closely with students as on-site supervisors, developing and facilitating Special Projects, lectures and workshops. Current alumni-run programs include the use of technology in art therapy settings and social action. Alumni consistently present their research at conferences and publish in professional journals.
Art gives students an opportunity to express themselves in a nonverbal way. Art therapy helps them discover their creativity and raises their self-esteem, which in turn helps them do better in school.”
—Lesley Achitoff, MPS 2004

COMMUNITY LECTURE SERIES
The Department provides free ongoing education to art therapy students, art therapists, related professionals, and the general public to broaden community outreach and highlight the field. Topics include current research on the therapeutic use of the arts, advancing the clinical practice of art therapy.

INTERNATIONAL ART THERAPY
In this immersive study-abroad program, an international location is used as a point of reference for examining the effects that power, privilege and identity have on the therapeutic process. Students consider culture on a broad level, exploring how social constructs, personal biases, assumptions and beliefs affect treatment, diagnosis and art-making.
Alumni

Lia Camion
art therapist, Lenox Hill Hospital

Danielle DeLade
art therapist, Safe Homes Project

Cristina Fort
art therapist, Kings County Hospital

RaeAnne Macmillan
art therapist, WomenAware

Ahn Hee Strain
art therapist, Art Therapy Project

Lynn Kapitan
art therapist

Judith Kuspit
psychologist, psychoanalyst

Cathy Moon
art therapist

Wangechi Mutu
fine artist

Shirley Riley
fine artist, educator

David Read Johnson
director, Institute for the Arts in Psychotherapy; co-director, Post Traumatic Stress Center

Bobbi Stoll
art therapist

Irvin D. Yalom
psychiatrist

Laurie Wilson
psychoanalyst, art therapist, art historian

Bessel van der Kolk
psychiatrist

Irvin D. Yalom
psychiatrist

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

Faculty

Deborah Farber
chair; art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Claudia Bader
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT; psychoanalyst

Samantha Commarato
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Irene Rosner David
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Elizabeth DelliCarpini
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Monica Duque
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Sheila Fontanive
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Stephanie Gorski
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Robert Abel Grant
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Tami Herzog-Rodriguez
art therapist, PhD, ATR-BC, LCAT

Judith Jordan
psychotherapist, LCSW

Markus J. Kraebber, MD
psychiatrist

S.J. Langer
social worker, LCSW-R

Eileen P. McGann
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Renée Obstfeld
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Valerie Sereno
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Brian Tepper
art therapist, ATR-BC, LCAT

Ted E. Becker Jr.
psychiatrist

Judi Betts
watercolorist

Philip Bromberg
psychotherapist

Lawrence Brown
physician

Teju Cole
writer, photographer

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

The Department seeks dynamic, well-rounded applicants who demonstrate achievement in studio art, psychology and community involvement. The program is emotionally and academically challenging; applicants are expected to prepare for the rigorous classroom and internship training. Applicants should have a basic understanding of the field of art therapy and be prepared to discuss issues that relate to their specific interest in the field.

PREREQUISITES
- 12 credits in Psychology (Abnormal Psychology and Developmental Psychology are REQUIRED; Introduction to Psychology and Theories of Personality are recommended)
- 18 credits in Studio Art (a range of coursework, including Drawing, Painting, Sculpture/3D, Design, Mixed Media, Photography, Animation, Computer Art and Film, is recommended)

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE
Applicants are expected to seek out relevant volunteer or work experience, ideally in an art therapy setting, to understand the professional expectations and realities of the field. These experiences should include exposure to diverse populations and settings.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
Applicants are expected to be familiar with the American Art Therapy Association (arttherapy.org), the official organization for art therapists in the U.S.; the Art Therapy Credentials Board (atcb.org), the credentialing organization for art therapists in the U.S.; the New York State Office of the Professions (op.nysed.gov/prof/mhp/catlic.htm); as well as the professional art therapy association of the state, region or country in which the applicant wishes to work upon graduating.

INFORMATION SESSIONS AND WORKSHOPS FOR PROSPECTIVE APPLICANTS
The Department offers group information sessions and experiential workshops for prospective applicants each year, as well as individual information sessions. For more information, please contact arttherapy@sva.edu.

APPLICATION PROCESS

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS
For detailed instructions, visit: sva.edu/grad/howtoapply
- Online Application and $80 Application Fee: sva.edu/apply
- Statement of Intent/Personal Statement
- Résumé
- Letters of Recommendation
- Official College Transcript

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

DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENTS
For specific guidelines about these requirements, visit: sva.edu/grad/deptreq
- Portfolio—accepted at svagrad.slideroom.com
- Interview

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
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.

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

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Department site: arttherapyblog.sva.edu

I think that self-reflection is so important as a therapist! Be open to supervision, explore counter-transference, and practice self-care! And don’t forget to make your own art!”

—Lena DeLeo, MPS 2012

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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; Fine Arts; Illustration; Interior Design; Photography and Video; 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 Practice; Art Writing; 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 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 Middle States Commission on Higher Education (msche.org), 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, 267.284.5000. 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 accredited by 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), 206 Grandville Avenue, Suite 305, Grand Rapids, MI, 49503-4014.

The Master of Arts in Teaching in Art Education program is accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

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.

CREDITS
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