Photographers are the visual explorers of concepts, light and relationships. As we frame the world in our viewfinders, we are creating and expressing the world we are an integral part of. As we digitally create and enhance the image, our skills and imagination are constantly challenged to create better images that are conceptually sound and technically flawless. Digital photographic hardware and software give the artist the ability to refine and explore the still and moving image to the fullest expression of the photographer’s vision. But this inherent power comes with an even greater responsibility to use the digital tools appropriately in relationship to the artist’s creative intent.

The Master of Professional Studies in Digital Photography is an intensive degree program that seamlessly blends the most current technical and aesthetic aspects of contemporary image-making. The program meets the needs of professional photographers, photographic educators and visual artists who want to advance their skills in digital image capture, image processing and high-quality output to remain competitive in a variety of image-making fields and professions.

The ideal MPS Digital Photography candidate has a strong photographic background, is dedicated to developing and completing a professional and unique body of work, and has a deep passion for exploring the confluence of aesthetics and technology. Our student body mirrors the diversity of the 21st century in terms of heritage, age, technical acumen, professional experience and photographic interests that include but are not limited to photojournalism, fine art, portrait, commercial, fashion, landscape and documentary photography.

The program benefits greatly from both its outstanding faculty and its location in the heart of the photo district and gallery scene in New York City. Our instructors are working professionals with extensive expertise in professional photography and digital-imaging technologies. The entire faculty and staff are dedicated to challenging students to take complete control and responsibility for every decision and detail in their images. A variety of guest lecturers from the industry complement the core faculty to enrich each student’s learning experience.

—Tom P. Ashe, chair
About the Program

The course of study addresses a wide range of topics, including: capture to image processing, workflow and asset management, digital portfolio design and distribution, working with video and sound, and exhibition. The program emphasizes cutting-edge training via in-depth course work, critically focused workshops, special interest seminars, and presentations by technical experts and contemporary photographers. The primary instructional goal is to enable students to excel in their creative or commercial photographic imaging careers.

Degree candidates must successfully complete 30 credits, including all required courses, pass all non-credit classes and maintain a 3.0 grade point average. During the spring semester and summer session, each student completes a thesis project that culminates in an online project, branding materials, printed book and exhibit prints. The thesis project must be reviewed and approved by the thesis committee and the department chair for the student to be eligible for degree conferral.
In April 2017, Shravya Kag (MPS 2016) found herself walking a red carpet in London. She was at the Sony World Photography Awards as a finalist in the Student Focus category. “I didn’t quite realize the magnanimity of the event until I was on that carpet,” Shravya remembers. “I thought, Oh, this is serious.”
The Sony World Photography Awards sent a call to more than 300 eligible photography schools around the world to submit one student’s image that fit this brief: “Recreate one of your favorite memories in a single image.” Former Digital Photography chair Katrin Eis- mann chose to submit Shravya’s self-portrait, Pages of Memories at Strand Books (above). “Whenever I saw Shra, she had a book with her, and I also knew how much she loved the Strand,” Eismann explains. “So that image, created in James Porto’s Photo Illustration class, resonated with memories, adventures, being alone but not being lonely.”

Out of more than 300 submissions, Shravya’s image was among 10 that made the short list. For this she won a full-frame Sony digital camera and a second assignment in the competition. This time the brief was on emotion: “How can photography best portray the way we think and feel?” Shravya’s solution was to try to capture contrasting reactions in portraits. “I told my subjects that I’d be photographing them remembering their happiest moment,” Shravya says, “but when they closed their eyes, I had a friend pop a balloon right next to their ears to trigger shock and surprise.” This resulted in a series of diptych portraits, titled The Element of Surprise (see next page, top right).

Sony flew Shravya and Eismann to London to attend the awards ceremony. “The entire event was fabulous—from the black-tie dinner with 600 attendees to the portfolio reviews to the exhibit and the lecture with world-renowned photographer Martin Parr,” Eismann remembers. “Everyone was very open, curious and supportive, and many good memories and the start of lasting friendships were created.” Although Shravya did not ultimately win the final competition, she was among three students awarded a grant by Sony to work on a collaborative project to be exhibited at the following year’s ceremony. “This was the first time that Sony awarded that grant to students,” Eismann said.
Being a part of the greater New York City creative community is an essential aspect for our students, alumni, faculty and staff to foster exchange and support the development of cutting-edge ideas and visual literacy. The SVA Masters in Digital Photography department plays an active role in the photographic community by hosting a critically curated lecture series and presenting two to three exhibitions per year, all of which are free and open to the public.

Open to the Public: Fostering Community

How did Shravya get to this point? While pursuing her master’s in her native India, Shravya had fallen into freelance photography and video: “I happened to be at a music video shoot and I started shooting behind the scenes, just for myself. Those images ended up on the desk of the CEO of the production company. He contacted me and said, ‘You’re going to shoot all the videos from now on.’” She decided to give full-time freelancing a shot and set up a company, doing documentary and wedding photography. One summer she decided to go to New York City to take a course, “and I just fell in love with the city. I thought, I have to come back. So I applied to SVA.” Why the Digital Photography program? “It catered to all my interests,” she explains. “I wanted to learn about business, and this program teaches that and about the gallery world, the fine art world and editorial photography—and James Estrin [The New York Times senior staff photographer] teaches here! I was like, ‘I’m sold.’”

Since she earned her degree, Shravya has been keeping busy. She works as a digital assistant for photographer Ira Block, produces video for the nonprofit Harlem Arts Festival and does freelance work—all while shooting her personal projects. “My interest in photography started with my phone camera on the streets in India. I spoke to random strangers and got to know them. I was attracted to the serendipity and just the raw energy.” Shravya has been working on a project about musicians and performers in the New York City subway system, which started as her thesis project. She’s also working on a photo essay of Punjabis living in Richmond Hill, Queens. “Apart from that, I’m just on the streets, roaming around taking pictures.”

Shravya describes herself as a street photographer and guerrilla filmmaker.
I3 LECTURE SERIES
Images, Ideas and Inspiration are the backbone of our lecture series that features leading-edge digital fashion, editorial and fine-art photographers. Industry experts, including editors, curators, art directors, and retouchers, as well as hardware and software developers, who each bring unique and current insights about the ever-changing field of digital photography and content creation. The regularly scheduled bi-weekly lectures are open to the public on alternating Tuesday evenings from 7–8:30pm. Additionally, an archive of past lectures can be found on the SVA YouTube page that is updated regularly with recent lectures. Popular speakers have included Bon Duke, fashion photographer; Deborah Willis, artist, author, educator and curator; Jordan Matter, dance photographer; and Carrie Beene, beauty and product retoucher.

EXHIBITS
Photographers create work to share and have their work seen by a greater audience. The MPS Digital Photography department presents two exhibits in New York City and one in St. Remy, France each year. Our primary exhibits take place each fall and can be seen in Brooklyn and Manhattan. In September we participate in Photoville, the annual festival with gallery spaces built from re-purposed shipping containers. Photoville provides a unique opportunity to engage with a diverse audience — a veritable cross-section of the world’s photographic community.

OPPOSITE, TOP: Installation of the 2017 Photoville exhibit “Ten Years,” which celebrated the MPS Digital Photography’s 10-year anniversary. The 40-foot container gallery featured one image per year by an alumnus from that year.

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: An evening view of Photoville 2017 under the Brooklyn Bridge as photographed Katrin Eismann. Each year over 92,000 visitors attend Photoville, making it one the world’s largest photo-related events.
In October, the department curates and presents the thesis projects that are the culmination of the graduating class’s work. The work is presented as exhibition-quality large-format prints, books and videos, a comprehensive exhibit website and has also included installation work. Including a celebratory reception, the annual thesis exhibit is one of the brightest highlights of our school year. Our student’s work is also featured in ongoing exhibits during the summer semester in a variety of SVA Galleries.

For the past four years, the MPS Digital Photography department has worked closely with the SVA Gallery staff to develop and print cohesive exhibitions that are displayed in St Remy, France where Vincent Van Gogh lived and worked as an artist. The exhibit takes place in the fall and is seen by countless visitors.

Installation photographs of the Class of 2016 thesis exhibition “Sight Seen.”

TOP: Work by Ange Ong and Angelique Ambrosio.

BOTTOM: Work by Ashli Brooke Wallace, Quartz Brown and virtual reality installation by Boyz Bieber.

Curriculum/
Sample Program

The program emphasizes cutting-edge training via in-depth course work, critically focused workshops, special-interest seminars and presentations by contemporary artists.

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

Course Offerings

**ADVANCED IMAGE PROCESSING**
Advanced creative and production techniques are the focus of this course. Issues addressed include managing, processing and enhancing a wide variety of still and video files; developing a professional workflow; exploring creative digital darkroom, advanced masking and retouching techniques.

**EDITORIAL PHOTOGRAPHY**
This intensive seminar will simulate real-world, magazine and multimedia assignments. Students will develop story ideas and learn how to edit the work for final submission. Students will complete a body of work for either print or online publication and most importantly garner valuable inside knowledge of how prominent editors and photographers think about and execute highly sought after magazine photographic and video assignments.

**DESIGN ESSENTIALS**
This course concentrates on the software skills used in page layout, identity branding and web design that are essential for the successful completion of the thesis project. Working with the Adobe Creative Suite, students will be introduced to the fundamentals of logo design, page layout and web design, including working with HTML and CSS and publishing portfolios to tablets.

**BUSINESS PRACTICES**
Being a successful photographer requires more than talent and good fortune. This course will examine proper business practices in the photography industry that include budgeting; financial planning; negotiating and pricing concerns; image use and copyright registration; and developing the correct and proper paperwork needed, such as invoices and a variety of model and property releases.

COLOR MANAGEMENT AND OUTPUT
This course tackles the most prominent problem of making a print—accurately and consistently reproducing the photographer’s vision. Topics addressed include: creating files that are color managed from input to output, properly sharpened for a wide selection of media substrates, working with a variety of color management systems and equipment, taking advantage of Photoshop soft proofing and experimenting with a wide variety of papers and output options to achieve predictable and repeatable high-quality results.

PHOTO AND VIDEO WORKFLOW
This is a comprehensive survey of the terms, tools and technology of digital-image capture, lighting and workflow. Students will learn how to evaluate and improve image quality; understand and apply critical technical analysis to sensor, lens and workflow components; and how to manage still and video projects from capture and download to processing, editing and archiving.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION
From concept to capture and image processing, this course addresses the creative workflow that commercial and fine art illustrators use to make compelling photo montages and composites. Students will learn the essential attributes of a successful composite, including: planning the image before lifting the camera; lighting and photographing the image elements and background plates; selecting, color matching and compositing image elements; and working with an art director and production team to create the best image possible.

EXHIBITION PRINTING
In this course, students will learn to select, prepare and fine-tune their images for large-scale printing. Topics addressed include tonal and color adjustments, appropriate sharpening techniques, and understanding proofs in relationship to size, substrate and color. Students will work with wide-format printers to create exhibition-quality color and black-and-white prints.

I3: IMAGES, INSPIRATION, INFORMATION I, II AND III
This bi-weekly lecture series features leading-edge fashion, editorial and fine-art photographers. Industry experts, including editors, curators, art directors and retouchers, as well as hardware and software developers will each bring unique and current insights about the ever-changing field of digital photography and content creation.
The heart and soul of education begins with a clear vision. They’ve done a spectacular job building a masters program that strikes the right balance between technical skills and creativity.”

—William S. Geffert, senior imaging manager, Metropolitan Museum of Art

EXPLANATION OF DEGREES

MFA Degree: The Master of Fine Arts (MFA) degree is the terminal degree in the United States in the fine arts. Coursework consists of both applied and theoretical work and culminates in a Thesis Defense and participation in a Thesis Exhibition. The MFA degree is completed in two to three years and is ideal for those who wish to pursue a fine art career and/or are interested in teaching in tenure-track positions.

MPS Degree: The Master of Professional Studies (MPS) degree is an accredited graduate degree designed for professionals to advance and sharpen specific skills with emphasis on real-world applications and solutions. An MPS degree is ideal for working professionals to develop marketable skills to meet evolving career demands and expand their professional opportunities.

Photography graduate programs at SVA

In addition to the MPS in Digital Photography, SVA offers two other graduate programs to serve the diverse and ever-changing world of photography and visual communication: MFA Photography, Video and Related Media and MPS Fashion Photography. For more information, please go to sva.edu/grad.

THE ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO

Students will explore the grouping, sequencing, distributing and presenting of their images via a website, video or tablet delivery. Since this is a digital process, students have tremendous freedom to publish their images as well as to experiment with the most effective way to present and sequence images for a wide variety of on-screen portfolio options.

THE BOOK AND BRAND

This course addresses the editing and sequencing of images as students experiment with the layout of their images and provide the writing that will accompany their images. Final layout, design, image selection and writings will be produced using digital book publishing services or by producing a photographic portfolio. Additionally, students will design and produce their branding, business and marketing materials.

THESIS DEVELOPMENT

Dedicated to developing a thesis body of work that demonstrates the highest creative, conceptual and technical standards, this course will concentrate on the written thesis proposal, media research and exploration, rigorous critique, and a survey of electronic, book and exhibit image distribution and display options.
Faculty

Lecturers, mentors and thesis advisors play an active role in our program. Past and present participants include:

Tom P. Ashe
chair, photographer, consultant

Elizabeth Avedon
book and exhibition designer, curatorial consultant

Carrie Beene
owner, principal retoucher, CarrieNYC

Benjamin Bobkoff
designer

Michelle Brady
digital workflow consultant

Debra Klomp Ching
owner, director, Klompching Gallery

James Estrin
staff photographer, The New York Times; co-editor, Lens Blog

Michael Brian Foley
photographer; owner, Foley Gallery

Greg Gorman
photographer, Epson Print Master

Russell Hart
author, editor, photographer

Stella Kramer
photo editor, creative consultant

Jaime Permutth
visual artist, art educator

James Porto
photographer, conceptual illustrator, author

Jack Reznicki
photographer, writer

Matthew B. Richmond
director of user experience, Adobe Systems

Jaime Rosman
photographer, retoucher

Ellen Wallenstein
photographer, book artist

Jorg Badura
sports and lifestyle photographer

Ira Block
photographer, National Geographic

Dan Burkholder
fine artist, creative technology aficionado

Elinor Carucci
editorial, fine art photographer

Jon Cone
fine art printer

Jen Davis
fine art photographer

Natan Dvir
editorial photographer

Brian Finke
editorial, fine art photographer

Lois Greenfield
dance photographer

Cig Harvey
fine art photographer

Andrew Hetherington
editorial photographer

Pieter Hugo
photographic artist

W.M. Hunt
photography collector, curator

Loring Knoblauch
critic, blogger, photo collector

Dina Litovsky
editorial and fine art photographer

Douglas Ljungkvist
fine art photographer

Jorden Matter
dance photographer

Jerry Uelsmann
fine art photographer

Stephen Wilkes
commercial, editorial and fine art photographer

Deborah Willis
artist, author, curator

Richard Renaldi
editorial, fine art photographer

Claire Rosen
editorial and fashion photographer

Radcliffe ‘Ruddy’ Roye
photographer, Instagram activist

Timothy Sexton
fashion and beauty retoucher

Sarah Silver
fashion and beauty photographer

Maggie Taylor
fine art photographer

Lecturers, Mentors and Thesis Advisors

Notable Alumni

Yulia Gorbachenko
Ruo Bing Li
Kathryn Mussallem

Kenneth Gruenholtz
Clay Patrick McBride
Jaime Permuth

Tahir Karmali
Hye-Ryoung Min
Nichole Washington
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

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

Joy Li, Dreams, 2017.
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.

Tom P. Ashe, chair
Tel: 212.592.2170
Email: mpsphoto@sva.edu
Site: sva.edu/mpsphoto

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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), 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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Case study photographer: Jeremy Cohen

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