VISUAL ARTS
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
FROM THE CHAIR

The Visual Arts MFA Program at Columbia University School of the Arts attracts emerging artists of unusual promise from around the world. They comprise a vibrant community studying with an exceptional faculty at a renowned research institution in the global center that is New York City. Upon graduating, our students join a diverse and welcoming circle of distinguished alumni.

Led by a passionate faculty of internationally recognized artists, Columbia University’s Visual Arts Program is committed to creative inquiry within a cross-disciplinary learning environment. MFA candidates are encouraged to explore a wide range of media while developing sustained relationships with specific materials as tools for articulating their singular visions. These media include drawing, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, installation, performance and video, each understood in its broadest contemporary terms. Our student-teacher ratio of five to one affords each MFA candidate valuable time with full-time faculty and keeps the program responsive to individual interests and needs. Students participate in a multifaceted curriculum, meeting with visiting critics and artists, traveling to the studios of established artists in New York, working intensely with artist-mentors, and taking elective offerings in other departments across the University. Students gain teaching experience and contribute their own expertise to Columbia’s undergraduate arts program through Teaching Assistantships.

We foster a strong creative community founded on collaboration, shared experience and dialogue. Our students are committed artists asking challenging questions about the state of art-making in contemporary society. I encourage you to visit us and meet current students at our fall-semester information session and open studios, or by scheduling a tour for prospective students via our website at arts.columbia.edu/tours.

Shelly Silver, Chair
Yola Monakhov, Of how terrible orange is, 2010
Digital C-Print, 30" x 40"
FULL-TIME FACULTY

Shelly Silver, Chair

Gregory Amenoff
Sanford Biggers
Matthew Buckingham
Jon Kessler
Nicola López

Thomas Roma
Sarah Sze
Rirkrit Tiravanija
Tomas Vu Daniel
Kara Walker

For a list of adjunct faculty see arts.columbia.edu/visual-arts.

MENTOR PROGRAM

First- and second-year MFA candidates are assigned two mentors with whom they work on- and off-campus for one week each semester of their program. Recent mentors have included:

Gregg Bordowitz
Ann Craven
Mark Dion
Rineke Dijkstra
Michael Joo

Josiah McElheny
Matthew Ritchie
Aki Sasamoto
Dana Schutz

RECENT VISITING ARTISTS AND CRITICS

Marina Abramovic
Lothar Baumgarten
Huma Bhabha
Elinor Carucci
Paul Chan
Trisha Donnelly
Okwui Enwezor
Omer Fast
Sharon Hayes

Barbara Hammer
Nancy Holt
Pierre Huyghe
Glenn Ligon
Sharon Lockhart
Yoko Ono
Gabriel Orozco
Trevor Paglen
Lari Pittman

Genesis P-Orridge
Cai Quo-Qiang
Yvonne Rainer
Dr. Oliver Sacks
Kaja Silverman
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak
Wolfgang Tillmans
Nicola Tyson
Charline von Heyl
Performance and single-channel video, featuring Annie Fox & Rafael Jordan. Photo: Yola Monakhov
Oil on linen, 30” x 40” (detail)
CURRICULUM

Course of Study: First Year
Graduate Studio, I and II; Visiting Artist Lecture Series, I and II; Studio Practice and Criticism, I and II; Critical Issues in Art, I and II

First-Year Exhibition
The first year of study culminates in an exhibition curated by an outside curator and mounted in the Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Art Gallery.

Course of Study: Second Year
Graduate Studio, III and IV; Visiting Artist Lecture Series, III and IV; Studio Practice and Criticism, III and IV; Critical Issues in Art, III and IV; Thesis Project

Thesis Project & Exhibition
The Thesis Project begins in the second year with a written proposal that delineates the student's artistic practice and outlines what he or she aims to accomplish for the Thesis Exhibition. A Thesis Committee, composed of full-time and adjunct faculty, is chosen by the student. The Thesis Exhibition opens in May and is curated by an outside curator.

Students are encouraged to take electives outside of the Program to develop a broad base of art history and theory upon which they can build a solid studio practice. Students may take electives in the Writing, Theatre and Film Programs of the School of the Arts, and in Art History, Architecture, Philosophy and other areas of study throughout Columbia University.

In collaboration with the Department of Music and the Computer Music Center, the School of the Arts also offers a multidisciplinary program in Sound Arts. For more information, visit arts.columbia.edu/sound-arts.
Financial Aid

Visual Arts students with documented financial need receive financial support from the School of the Arts. Offers of support include a combination of tuition scholarships, teaching assistantships and paid service positions. In addition, the School of the Arts works closely with students to explore other options including federal work-study, loans, on- and off-campus employment, and outside scholarships and grants.

Application

The School welcomes applications for the fall semester of each year. Visit arts.columbia.edu/apply for application information. Please note specific guidelines for international students, including visa information.
David Altmejd, Untitled, 2011
Epoxy resin, foam, plaster, glass eyes, artificial hair, artificial eyelashes, quartz, assorted minerals, acrylic paint
37-3/8” H x 6-5/8” W x 8-1/2” D (detail)
Paula Wilson, Remodeled, 2007
Relief woodcut, offset lithography and silkscreen with collaged elements and hand coloring, 19-1/2” x 25-3/4” (detail)
ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Columbia University School of the Arts awards the Master of Fine Arts degree in Film, Theatre, Visual Arts and Writing and the Master of Arts degree in Film Studies, and offers an interdisciplinary program in Sound Arts. The School is a thriving, diverse community of artists from around the world with talent, vision and commitment. The faculty is composed of acclaimed and internationally renowned artists, film and theatre directors, writers of poetry, fiction and nonfiction, playwrights, producers, critics and scholars. Every year the School of the Arts presents exciting and innovative programs for the public including performances, exhibitions, screenings, symposia, a film festival and numerous lectures, readings, panel discussions and talks with artists, writers, critics and scholars. For more information, visit arts.columbia.edu.

Visit arts.columbia.edu/visual-arts-brochure for application requirements and financial aid information.