

GREAT PLACES TO LEARN

Art & Design Schools

New York Film Academy

Do you yearn for a creative outlet? Whether you dream of becoming the next Georgia O'Keeffe or Steven Spielberg, or whether you're looking to rediscover an old hobby or perhaps start a new one, your artistic options are virtually unlimited. > Today's art and design schools are home to a wide range of full- and part-time opportunities for all skill levels, offering associate's, bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as certificates, continuing education programs and even online learning. And you can choose from a seemingly endless array of concentrations including fashion, filmmaking, animation and visual effects, architecture, industrial design, graphics, curatorial practice and writing, along with traditional staples such as sculpture, painting, and photography. > From Northern California to the South and across the Eastern Seaboard, learning opportunities exist for every type of aspiring artist, wherever your interests lie. Come take a tour, and give the artist within you a chance to fly.

I left my heart...

Let's start our tour in Northern California—San Francisco, to be exact. This historic city, home to the 49ers, cable cars and the Golden Gate Bridge, is a metropolis of myriad cultures and influences where the arts thrive and art students find endless inspiration.

It's been said that the M.F.A. is the new M.B.A., and educators at the **Academy of Art University** would agree wholeheartedly.

"Visual literacy is the language of business and culture," said academy president Elisa Stephens. "Attaining visual literacy is important now more

Faculty members in all disciplines are professionals actively working in the fields they teach. This helps ensure that students stay abreast of the latest developments in their areas of study.

"Many aspects of communication disciplines literally change weekly or monthly," Stephens said. "Our teachers work in these professional fields and share updated information with students. This is knowledge that cannot be learned in an outdated curriculum or a book printed 10 years ago."

At neighboring **California College of the Arts** (CCA), students learn to tell stories—theirs and others. "Poets and painters have a lot more in common than many people think," said CCA pres-

"Visual literacy is the language of business and culture."

President Elisa Stephens, Academy of Art University



Academy of the Arts University, San Francisco

than ever because of global marketing and communications, and corporations need to be able to communicate in a universal language. A student leaving this school will be well-versed in any form of visual language."

Enrolling more than 7,000 students, the academy is the largest private art university in the nation, offering certificates, undergraduate programs and master's degrees in a dozen fields. You'll find courses in 70 disciplines and concen-

"Poets and painters have a lot more in common than many people think."

President Michael Roth, California College of the Arts

trations, as well as 313 courses online.

Above all, the academy prides itself on being a practical art school, teaching students the skills they need to ultimately thrive in the world of commerce. Graduates enter the workforce as illustrators, editors, designers, painters, printers, photographers or animators, many working with nearby studios such as Disney and Pixar. Signature programs such as fashion, acting for television and film, and automotive design are nationally and even internationally renowned.

ident Michael Roth. "All students have a story to tell. We help them find the most compelling way of telling it."

Founded in 1907 to provide artists and designers with an education that would integrate both theory and practice in the arts, CCA is home to 1,500 students, including 300 at the graduate level.

With campuses in Oakland and San Francisco, the college offers a broad-ranging curriculum in art, architecture, design, performance and writing, with bachelor's degrees in painting, photography, ceramics, glass-making, filmmaking, electronic music, writing and literature and visual studies, and M.F.A.s in curatorial practice, design, visual criticism and writing.

The college's overriding

California College of the Arts, Oakland campus

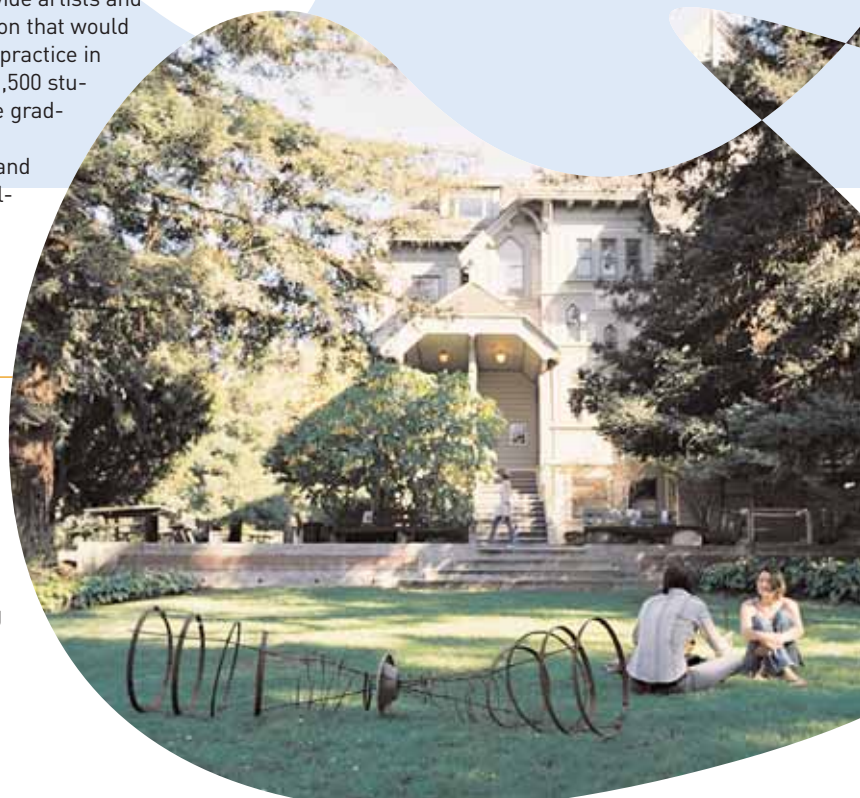
philosophy stresses the relationship between art and commerce, encouraging students to adapt and contribute to society through their artistic expression.

"We feel strongly that the arts thrive when put in relation to other sectors of society and culture," said Roth, "and that society benefits from an infusion of arts."

Georgia on my mind

Now let's take the longest journey of our tour, across the country and into Georgia, where art is alive and well in Savannah. While perhaps not as well known for the visual and performing arts as other cities, this lovely seaport town is filled with historic 19th-century architecture and has all the cultural and commercial advantages of a contemporary metropolitan center—museums, theaters, restaurants and a thriving business community.

The **Savannah College of Art and Design** (SCAD), located in one of this country's largest National Historic Landmark districts, offers a traditional college experience for students who want to pursue a specialized education



SAVANNAH
COLLEGE

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in art and design fields. How traditional? Savannah fields teams in several intercollegiate sports, all buttressed by a rowdy cheer-leading squad.

Students here might choose to spend a 10-week stretch at the school's branch campus in Lacoste, France, immersing themselves in French culture, art and design. Or they might attend SCAD's state-of-the-art Atlanta facility, located in that city's midtown business district.

The college's more than 7,000 students, who hail from across the country and around the world, can choose from among 78 degree

programs and 30 majors ranging from animation to jewelry to film and television, along with a number of minors, concentrations and certificate programs. Class size is small, and most of the professors teach full-time. Online courses are available at the undergraduate and graduate levels, leading to accredited certificates and degrees.

Tiffani Taylor knew she wanted to be an artist from the time she was old enough to draw. At 16, when the Ogden, Utah, native saw a poster for the college, she knew it was the place to make her dream come true.

"I worked day and night to get scholar-

ships, and my family encouraged me to follow my dream," said Taylor, now 25. "At SCAD, the professors are passionate and take an active interest in you. And they teach you how to market yourself, so you can make a living with your art."

Taylor received her undergraduate degree in painting and graduated as valedictorian, along the way supporting herself by selling paintings, pottery and murals. She then earned her master's degree in art history and now works as a professional artist and enjoys growing success. Her work has been exhibit-

"We don't want our students to be starving artists." Pamela Rhame, vice president for recruitment and communications, Savannah College of Art and Design

ed in galleries across the South, and in August she was named artist of the month at shopSCAD, a downtown Savannah gallery store that showcases the work of students, faculty, staff and alumni of the college. Taylor is also creating her own fabric line with Jeffrey Erdheim of Jeffrey Fabrics.

"I tell people that even though it may entail sacrifice, emotionally and financially, college is a great endeavor, and well worth it," said

Savannah College of Art and Design, Lacoste campus



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Taylor. "Art is long, life is short. It's important to surround yourself with dream believers, with good people who believe in you, who believe you can make it as an artist. I met those kinds of people at SCAD." The college embeds the study of fine arts within a core curriculum in the liberal arts. Its overarching goal is to create well-rounded graduates who will be able to find work in their chosen field.

"Our mission is to prepare talented students for careers," said Pamela Rhame, vice president for recruitment and communications. "We don't want our students to be starving artists; we want them to use their talent and education in their life's work."

Carry me back to old Virginny

Moving a bit north, we find **Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts**. Situated in the heart of Richmond, just two hours from Washington, D.C., and six hours from New York City, VCU offers students a chance to explore their creativity in a comfortable, well-mannered city located within reach of major artistic centers.

Ranked by U.S. News & World Report as the country's best public university program in art and design, VCU School of the Arts enrolls 3,000 students across undergraduate and graduate programs in art history, art education, and all of the visual, performance and design fields.

The school prides itself on its commitment to students and its warm atmosphere. "This is a very open-hearted place," said Dean Richard Toscan. "We have a very welcoming

"Here I get the chance to experiment and find myself as an artist."

Tasha Cortimilia, student, Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts

culture, and students respond to that. The faculty is also very committed to the growth and development of the students, as well as to helping the students' transition to the professional world."

As part of a 28,000-student university, School of the Arts students have access to myriad resources, such as events, lectures and study abroad programs.

Tasha Cortimilia, a junior from Baltimore majoring in sculpture, didn't have to travel far to find the art education she was looking for. "The facilities here are amazing, and I like that we have strong women figures in the department, all currently working artists," she said. "Here I get the chance to experiment and find myself as an artist."



Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts

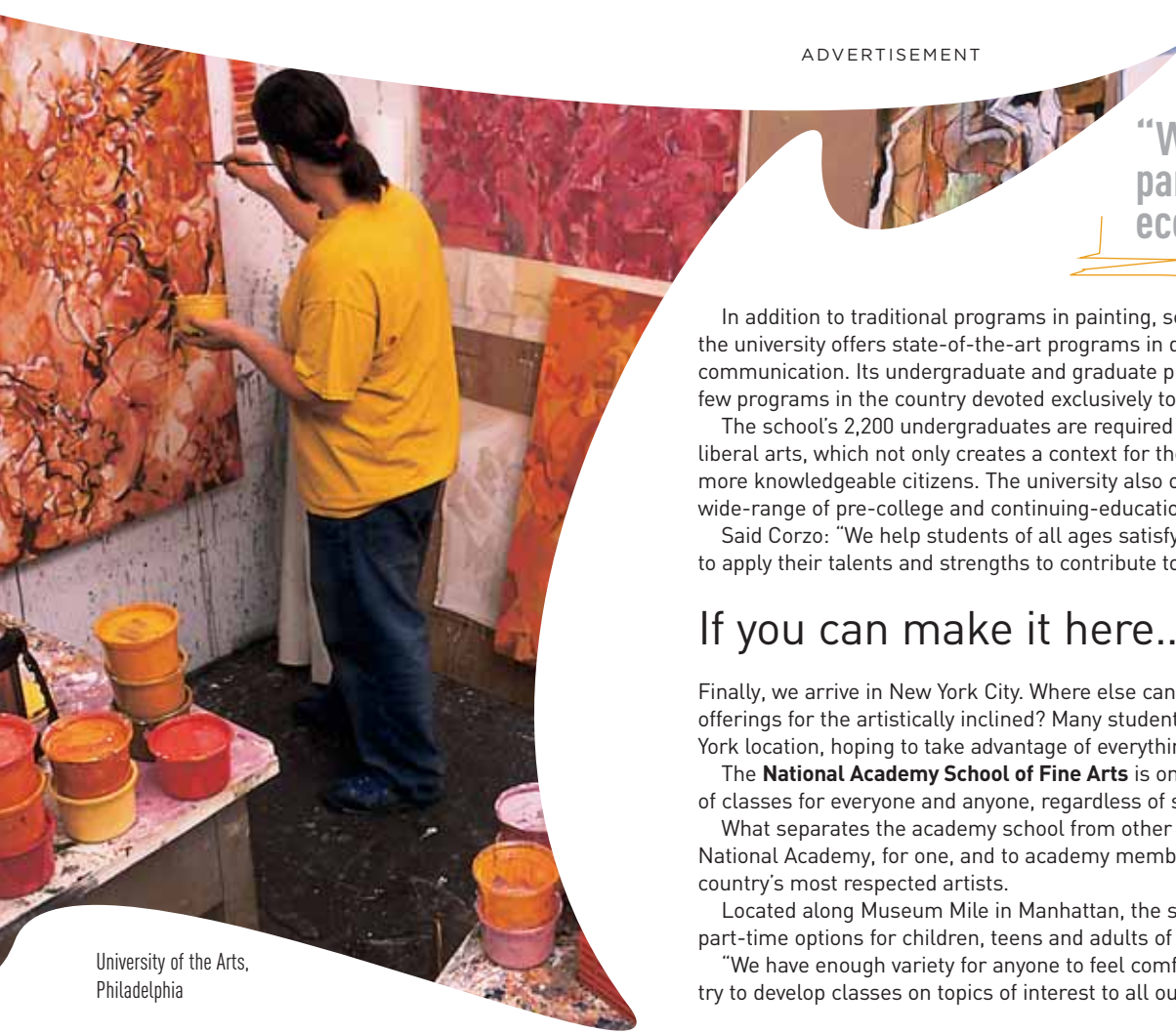
Philadelphia freedom

Continuing our march northward, we land in Philadelphia, a vibrant city filled with history, happenings and all forms of artistic endeavors. The Avenue of the Arts, the city's premier entertainment and cultural district, is home to 37 cultural organizations and venues. And right on that three and a half mile strip of Broad Street lies the **University of the Arts**.

The only university in the nation dedicated exclusively to the visual, performing and media arts, University of the Arts offers 25 majors in which students and faculty alike inspire each other with their creativity, focus and drive.

"Our arts education is very broad," said President Miguel-Angel Corzo. "The arts are playing an increasingly important role in society, and we train our students to be strong participants in this new, creative economy."





University of the Arts,
Philadelphia

“We train our students to be strong participants in this new, creative economy.”

President Miguel Angel Corzo, University of the Arts

In addition to traditional programs in painting, sculpture, printmaking and photography, the university offers state-of-the-art programs in digital video, graphics and multi-media communication. Its undergraduate and graduate programs in jazz studies are among only a few programs in the country devoted exclusively to jazz and contemporary music.

The school’s 2,200 undergraduates are required to take about one-third of their courses in liberal arts, which not only creates a context for their artistic disciplines but makes students more knowledgeable citizens. The university also offers 12 diverse graduate programs and a wide-range of pre-college and continuing-education programs.

Said Corzo: “We help students of all ages satisfy their need to create while preparing them to apply their talents and strengths to contribute to society as a whole.”

If you can make it here...

Finally, we arrive in New York City. Where else can you find such a depth and breadth of offerings for the artistically inclined? Many students choose a school based solely on its New York location, hoping to take advantage of everything the city has to offer.

The **National Academy School of Fine Arts** is one such institution, featuring a wide variety of classes for everyone and anyone, regardless of skill level.

What separates the academy school from other local art institutions? Its connection to the National Academy, for one, and to academy members—a select cadre of about 400 of the country’s most respected artists.

Located along Museum Mile in Manhattan, the school offers a wide range of full- and part-time options for children, teens and adults of all abilities.

“We have enough variety for anyone to feel comfortable,” said Director Nancy Little. “We try to develop classes on topics of interest to all our students.”

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Pratt Institute, New York

Many students begin taking classes at the academy to explore a long-forgotten creative desire, only to find themselves hooked for life.

Ruth Carlucci, a decorative painter by trade, began taking Saturday oil painting classes at the academy five years ago. She's now working toward making a living as an artist. "The academy has been the perfect place for me to develop myself as an artist," said Carlucci. "And classes with the National Academicians, particularly some of the pioneering women artists, have been really inspirational, and have been a turning point in my art."

The nearby **Pratt Institute** has many distinguishing characteristics of its own. One is its traditional campus feel. Located on 26 acres of lush grounds, Pratt features five residence halls and campus-wide activities such as weekly student exhibitions, concerts, films, and even a comedy club.

One of the largest private art and design

schools in the country with 4,500 graduate and undergraduate students, Pratt offers a rich variety of courses in 45 major fields of study at the associate's, bachelor's and master's degree levels.

"Indeed, Pratt's highly diverse and specialized course offerings enable students to pursue in-depth study in their chosen disciplines.

"This isn't a university; it's a private school, so it can cater to the private needs of artists," said Lee Rubenstein, a 20-year-old animation major from Rhode Island. "The school creates the courses we need to really master our discipline, and the faculty here, being mostly artists themselves, helps us connect with the professional world."

Pratt caters not only to artists but to those interested in the study of art, architecture, and their relationship to culture. The institute's undergraduate program in Critical and Visual Studies, now in its fourth year, consists of a core curriculum of social sciences and humanities combined

with electives in the liberal arts and sciences and in architecture, art history, and art and design. Graduates are prepared for further study or careers in media, arts, cultural organizations, publishing, and government organizations.

"As our culture matures, we can understand what makes it tick, what forces drive it," said Provost Peter Barna said. "This is a really exciting program for people who are interested in the products of our culture and in the things we create. And there is no better place to study this than New York."

Of course, no school can guarantee its students a successful career when they graduate, but some come close.

"One of the most common questions parents ask us is, 'Will my child find a job when he graduates?'" said **School of Visual Arts** provost Christopher Cyphers. His answer is a resounding "Yes."

The short- and long-term success of students graduating from this Manhattan school is virtually unparalleled, Cyphers said. He credits the school's top-tier faculty, the quality of its studio facilities, its relationships in the industry and its New York City location.

"The array of teachers and lectures I've encountered here is staggering," said Kirsten Sorton, a Chicago native who received her M.F.A. in design from the school.



School of Visual Arts, New York

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"Companies are clamoring for people who can approach problems in a creative way."

Provost Christopher Cyphers, School of Visual Arts

The school enrolls about 3,000 undergraduates in majors ranging from advertising to cartooning to photography, along with 400 graduate students pursuing degrees in art education, computer art, design and art therapy, as well as a new program in art criticism. U.S. News & World Report ranked the school's M.F.A. program 10th out of 213 nationally.

"Companies are clamoring for people who can approach problems in a creative way," Cyphers said. "Between our liberal arts education and the assignments given in the classroom and in the studio, we are educating our students to have the kind of creative and visual problem-solving skills that employers find attractive."

Some students, however, may prefer to concentrate their studies on one specific discipline. Take filmmaking, for instance. Many would-be filmmak-

ers simply want to learn how to make films.

They'll find that opportunity at the **New York Film Academy**. The academy was designed for a new generation of filmmakers, screenwriters, actors, producers and animators who share a passion for motion pictures. Students here learn by making their own projects in a hands-on, intensive program.

"All we do is filmmaking," said Jerry Sherlock, the academy's director, "so we can devote our resources to instruction in film production and acting. And because



New York Film Academy

"We can't teach talent, but if you have talent and tenacity, you can rise to the top."

Jerry Sherlock, director, New York Film Academy

we're small we can be extremely flexible in meeting the needs of our students."


With facilities in Manhattan's Union Square and in Soho, the academy also features campus locations across the country and in Europe. Only 13 years old, it's already the world's largest independent film school.

Workshops run from a month to a year, and faculty for these programs include current filmmakers and producers. In academy courses, designed for people with little or no related experience, students learn how to operate a camera, light a scene or edit a film. More broadly, they learn how all the aspects of filmmaking relate to, interact with and depend upon each other. The goal is to give students practical, hands-on experience needed for filmmaking that lays a solid foundation for future work.

"It's like skipping undergraduate school and going straight to grad school," said Ian Henson, a screenwriter and director who completed the academy's one-year program in 2002. "It's a very intense program."

Graduates follow various career paths around the world. Some direct commercials or music videos. Others seek employment with major studios. Still others attempt to produce their own independent films. Whatever they choose, they remain mindful of one overriding maxim: The film industry is a tough business with no guarantees.

"We can't teach talent," Sherlock said. "Filmmaking at best is a very difficult profession, but if you do have talent and tenacity, you can rise to the top."

This concludes our brief tour of art and design schools. Here's hoping you find the right avenue for expressing your own creativity and talents. 

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