

MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY VISUAL ARTS

Introduction

The MFA in Interdisciplinary Studio Arts is the first of its kind in the state of Ohio and the surrounding region. The program reflects contemporary artmaking practice and prepares students to collaborate with multiple disciplines, expanding opportunities and providing the tools for future success. The intimate size of the program fosters one on one faculty-student relationships.

The curricula structure requires students to work with multiple faculty each semester for an optimal variety of feedback and exposure while cultivating critical research, innovative problem solving and collaboration both within the department and the university at large. Specifically structured to support individual goals and interests, students are paired with faculty from various disciplines across the university creating meaningful partnerships.

The program offers studio space within a private graduate studio suite, a continuous roster of nationally and internationally recognized visiting artists and proximity to The Butler Institute of American Art, and the McDonough Museum. A short drive to Pittsburgh or Cleveland offers more access to exhibitions and venues. Multiple opportunities are available locally for alternative exhibition spaces. Students have access to innovative technologies within the department and through partnerships with Launch Lab and other departments.

Welcome Letter from Chair

Welcome to the Department of Art at Youngstown State University. We are the department at YSU that concerns ourselves with the creation and design of all of the visual media that surround us every day. The MFA is a newer program for our department and one we are very excited about. The unique interdisciplinary nature of the program allows you to work in a collaborative manner and for you to expand your work in ways you didn't realize possible.

The program supports community and inter-university partnerships. To date students have worked with faculty from Biological Sciences, Psychology, Kinesiology and Sports Science, History and Museum Studies, Computer Science, English, and Engineering to extend their personal research. Students have participated in numerous collaborative projects including an installation in conjunction with the Empty Bowls project at the McDonough Museum for the Rescue Mission of Mahoning Valley, the design and fabrication of four school crosswalks for the Community Foundation of the Mahoning Valley, the Design and fabrication of a three dimensional relief, penguin docking station for KilcawleyCenter, the development of an exhibition investigating African American steelworkers for the Steel Museum, and the development of an animated video for student-athletes that illustrates the effects of concussion on the brain.

The intimate size of our programs guarantees students one-on-one interaction with their professors. Our facilities in Bliss Hall feature 70,000 square feet of studio spaces, media labs, and exhibition spaces. Our department has state-of-the-art equipment, from large-format digital and 3D printers to dozens of ceramics kilns.

We are neighbors to two major art museums, the Butler Institute of American Art and the McDonough Art Museum. In the convenient and quiet city of Youngstown, which will allow you the mental space to concentrate upon and develop your work, we are also an easy drive from the major cultural hubs of Cleveland and Pittsburgh.

We have everything in place for you to come and achieve a great visual arts education. We are ready to answer any questions you might have. If you would like to have further conversations with faculty members, arrange a visit, or simply get an answer to a specific question, please do not hesitate to contact the department at 330-941-3627. Hope to hear from you soon!

Best,

Joy Christiansen Erb
Professor and Chair
Department of Art
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jchristiansenerb@ysu.edu

Contact Information

To learn more about the degree programs, scholarships, exhibitions, faculty, and students, visit [art.ysu.edu](http://artdept.ysu.edu) (<http://artdept.ysu.edu>) or contact the Department of Art directly at 330-941-3627. To schedule a personalized campus visit, contact the Cliffe College Coordinator of Admissions and Recruitment at 330-941-2346.

Program Director

Christine McCullough, MFA

Bliss Hall 4077
cmccullough@ysu.edu (<http://catalog.ysu.edu/graduate/graduate-programs/ma-interdisciplinary-visual-arts/mailto:/cmccullough@ysu.edu>)
330-941-1862

Email: [Connect Form](http://art.ysu.edu/connect) (<http://art.ysu.edu/connect>)

Learning Outcomes

1. The ability to integrate interdisciplinary methods, theory, skills and insights with depth, breadth and professional competence as demonstrated by the production of a relevant body of work.
2. To cultivate and promote interdisciplinary models of hybrid thinking and artistic practice based on collaboration and diverse perspectives, methods, media and processes to solve complex and creative problems.
3. To gain a broad theoretical, historical and cultural understanding of contemporary art and the relationship of art to contemporary society.
4. The capacity to develop ideas and the ability to conduct meaningful research into various fields as necessary for the exploration and production of creative work.
5. The ability to write and speak articulately about personal artistic works and practice as well as other art and theoretical issues.
6. Develop an understanding of the pedagogy of teaching and other business practices as related to career opportunities in art.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Art at Youngstown State University is to provide a teaching and learning environment for the development of skills, concepts, and sensitivities essential to professional artists, designers, art educators, and art historians. This mission and the cultural enrichment that it entails are directed at the entire student body and the community as a whole. This mission is accomplished within the context of a local multicultural society, thereby demanding a special concern for the dissemination and sensitivity to a wide cultural heritage.

Program Description

The Master of Fine Arts in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts is a two-year residency program with 60 semester credit hours, as required under the guidelines from the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD),

the accrediting agency for art institutions of higher learning. The MFA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts is unique in that it will require students to examine and integrate the methods, theory, skills, and insights from two or more traditional or non-traditional visual arts with non-art coursework. The program is highly flexible to allow students unfettered access to the excellent faculty and resources within the Department of Art and provides the opportunity to connect with diverse faculty outside of the visual arts from the University at large. It fosters interdisciplinary activity, balanced integration of media, processes, and exploratory models of thinking and making. Engagement with disciplines and learning resources outside of Art & Design and within the local, national, and international community is expected and supported. The program is designed to cultivate the practice of interdisciplinarity: to promote different perspectives, methods, media, and processes to creative problem-solving. Drawing from the diverse expertise of an outstanding faculty, students in the MFA program are grounded in interdisciplinary theory and practice. They explore interdisciplinary exchanges that revolve around material study, concepts and critical dialog in a studio-based environment. Students explore and combine a variety of media that cross studio practices working individually and collaboratively with and across a range of traditional, analog, and digital mediums and experimental formats infused with ideas and collaboration from disciplines outside of the visual arts. The primary goal of this program is to educate Interdisciplinary visual artists who have the potential to contribute to and move forward the dialogue of contemporary art in the 21st century.

Application Deadline

Admission to the MFA program is granted for the fall semester only. The application deadline for Fall 2019 is July 15.

Accreditation

The MFA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts is currently under evaluation for plan approval with the National Association of Schools of Art & Design (NASAD).

Admission Requirements

As the terminal degree in studio art, the MFA Program at YSU will provide an opportunity for advanced conceptual and technical development for qualified students wishing to pursue a professional career in contemporary studio art research and practice. Admission to the program will be highly competitive and selective. Successful applicants will have a superior academic background and a strong commitment to interdisciplinary practice. MFA students are expected to have a thorough understanding of the principles of form, proficiency in various mediums and technical skills as well as a fluency in language and discourse in the historic and contemporary contexts. Applicants must follow standard procedures and normal requirements for admission into YSU College of Graduate Studies. In addition to the Graduate Admission requirements, applicants are required to have the following:

- An undergraduate degree from a regionally accredited institution (i.e., BFA, BA or equivalent experience). The undergraduate degree need not be in Studio Art but the applicant must demonstrate the competence to undertake the challenges of MFA Studies in Visual Art.
- a minimum of 48 credit hours of undergraduate work in studio courses and 12 credit hours in art history courses (the normal course of study for a BFA or BA in Art)
- a minimum cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale
- a portfolio of work (20 digital slides or equivalent) which shows technical and conceptual competency and demonstrates the commitment and potential necessary for growth and success in the program
- A statement of purpose/artist's statement (500 to 700) words that specifically addresses your portfolio of work as well as your goals and

interest in pursuing an MFA in Interdisciplinary Visual Art. Include mention of your current practice in relation to your proposed graduate study.

- a resume (no longer than two pages)
- three original letters of recommendation
- the graduate selection committee may require a personal interview of selected applicants

Provisional Admission

Provisional admission may be recommended if the applicant does not meet the minimum requirements. For example, if the overall undergraduate GPA is deficient (2.7 – 3.0) but the Studio Art GPA is 3.0 or higher or the portfolio of work is inadequate but suggests strong potential for success.

Students admitted provisionally must complete the requirements and deficiencies outlined in the letter of provisional admission within the specified timetable and must earn at least a 3.0 in the first semester (or 9 credit hours) of graduate work to continue in the program.

The curriculum assumes adequate preparation for advanced work in studio art. Students who lack that preparation may be asked to take undergraduate level courses to successfully address any deficiencies in their technical or aesthetic training in order to change their admission status from provisional to regular. These courses will not count toward the requirements for the MFA degree.

Graduate Faculty

Samuel Adu-Poku, Ph.D., Professor

Art education; Curriculum development; Multicultural education; Teacher education

Anthony Armeni, M.F.A., Part-time Faculty

Sculpture

Lauren Baker, M.F.A., Part-time Faculty

Sculpture

Stephen Chalmers, M.F.A., Associate Professor

Photography

Joy Christiansen Erb, M.F.A., Professor

Photography; Portraiture; Installation

Dragana Crnjak, M.F.A., Associate Professor

Painting; Narrative work; Drawing

Joe D'Uva, M.F.A., Associate Professor

Printmaking; Non-toxic and digital printmaking methods, Collaborative Printing; Study Abroad

Johnathan Farris, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Art History; Arts of Asia; Art and design related to colonialism and cross-cultural exchange; History of architecture; Arts of tourism and travel; Landscape and topographic art; the relation of gardens and art; History of ceramics, metal, and glass

Rich Helfrich, M.F.A., Assistant Professor

Graphic Design; Visual Communications, Branding, Identity Design, Typography, Graphic Typeface Design, Persuasive Graphics Medical and Recreational Marijuana Labeling Standards

Jennifer Kirkpatrick, M.F.A., Part-time Faculty

Digital Fabrication, Sculpture, Ceramics, Architecture

Lillian Lewis, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

Art Education

Missy McCormick, M.F.A., Associate Professor

Ceramics; 3D Studies; Craft; Design; Interdisciplinary Art; Mix Media; Sculpture

Christine E. McCullough, M.F.A., Professor

Representational Painting and Drawing; Encaustic Painting; Interdisciplinary Curriculum

Stephanie Smith, Ph.D., Professor

Art History; Funerary art in the ancient Roman world; Roman glass; Late Antique portraiture

Jonathan Dana Sperry, M.F.A., Associate Professor

Digital Media

R.J. Thompson, M.F.A., Assistant Professor

Graphic Design; Community branding, engagement, communications; Creative placemaking; Design entrepreneurship

Louis Zona, Ph.D., Professor

Art History

Degree Requirements

Students will take courses based on the following plan:
 Interdisciplinary Studio (Sculpture, ceramics, painting, drawing, photography, printmaking, mixed media, installation, digital and new media) 30 semester hours
 MFA Seminar in Interdisciplinary Theory 9 semester hours
 Strategies in Interdisciplinary Practice 6 semester hours
 Electives (Graduate Interdisciplinary and/or Cross Disciplinary) 9 semester hours
 MFA Thesis Project & Capstone Research 6 semester hours
 Total 60 semester hours

Year 1		
Fall		S.H.
ART 6990	Interdisciplinary Studio	6
ART 6994	Strategies in Interdisciplinary Practice 1	3
ART 6996	Seminar in Interdisciplinary Theory 1	3
Elective		3
Semester Hours		15
Spring		
ART 6991	Interdisciplinary Studio 2	9
ART 6997	Seminar Interdisciplinary Theory 2	3
Elective		3
Semester Hours		15
Year 2		
Fall		S.H.
ART 6992	Interdisciplinary Studio 3	6
ART 6995	Strategies in Interdisciplinary Practice 2	3
ART 6998	Seminar Interdisciplinary Theory 3	3
Elective		3
Semester Hours		15
Spring		
ART 6993	Interdisciplinary Studio 4	9
ART 6999	MFA Thesis Project and Capstone Research	6
Semester Hours		15
Total Semester Hours		60

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2. To cultivate and promote interdisciplinary models of hybrid thinking and artistic practice based on collaboration and diverse perspectives, methods, media and processes to solve complex and creative problems.

3. To gain a broad theoretical, historical and cultural understanding of contemporary art and the relationship of art to contemporary society.
4. The capacity to develop ideas and the ability to conduct meaningful research into various fields as necessary for the exploration and production of creative work.
5. The ability to write and speak articulately about personal artistic works and practice as well as other art and theoretical issues.
6. Develop an understanding of the pedagogy of teaching and other business practices as related to career opportunities in art.

Graduate Courses

ART 5840 Topics in Ancient Art 3 s.h.

The art and architecture of the ancient cultures of the Mediterranean region and the Near East. Topics vary by semester, and include Egypt, the Ancient Near East, Greece, and Rome. May be taken twice if content is different.

Prereq.: Junior standing.

ART 5850 Topics in Painting and Drawing 3 s.h.

Selected topics in advanced painting and drawing. Specific content varies by semester and includes Landscape and Interiors; Portraiture; and Personal Narrative. May be repeated with a different topic for a total of three times.

Prereq.: ART 2650 or portfolio presentation and permission of instructor.

ART 5860 Topics in Design 3 s.h.

Selected topics in graphic design including typography, layout and computer applications. May be repeated for a total of three times with different topics.

Prereq.: Permission of instructor and portfolio.

ART 5881 Twentieth Century Art to 1960 3 s.h.

A survey of the visual arts history of the 20th century beginning with its 19th century roots. The influential artists, movements, and motivating theories will be covered against a backdrop of world events. Primary emphasis is placed upon French Impressionism, German Expressionism, Fauvism, Surrealism, and American Abstract Expressionism.

Prereq.: ART 1542 or permission of instructor.

ART 5882 Twentieth Century Art from 1960 3 s.h.

A survey of the visual arts history of the late 20th century beginning with those ideas and trends which followed Abstract Expressionism. Beginning with the late 1950s every principle artistic movement from Pop through post-Modernism will be explored against a backdrop of Post-War world events.

Prereq.: ART 1542 or permission of instructor.

ART 6910 Studio Problems in Sculpture 1-3 s.h.

Individual research of the technical, visual, conceptual, and aesthetic issues of contemporary sculpture. Professional studio practices are explored as well as conceptual art issues dealing with non-traditional formats, idea-oriented artworks and the notion of 'research', and the blending of theoretical and material practice. Students develop a self-critical, articulate, and individual approach to solving aesthetic solutions to self-determined visual narratives and challenges. Repeatable for a maximum of six s.h.

Prereq.: Permission of instructor.

ART 6911 Studio Problems in Sculpture 1-3 s.h.

Emphasis on building on ideas researched in ART 6910 to develop greater conceptual, aesthetic, and technical sophistication. Directed readings and writing assignments in addition to professional studio practice are used to promote further development of individual approaches to solving aesthetic solutions to self-determined visual narratives and challenges. May be repeated for a maximum of six s.h.

Prereq.: ART 6910.

ART 6912 Studio Problems in Sculpture 1-3 s.h.

Students engage in the final phase of conceptual and technical refinement that will result in a cohesive body of work that demonstrates their conceptual direction and technical proficiency. Studio practice together with intense analytical discourse of current studio work and exhibition thesis drafts prepare students for the visual, written, and oral defense components of their ART 6924 capstone course experience. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 s.h.

Prereq.: ART 6911.

ART 6920 Historical and Philosophical Foundations of Art Education 3 s.h.

Evaluation of the historical, chronological, and philosophical developments in art education with emphasis on significant trends and movements which have impacted its growth and structure.

Prereq.: Graduate status.

ART 6921 Current Issues, Perspectives, and Curriculum Practices in Art Education 3 s.h.

A survey of current issues and legislative mandates that affect art education curriculum. Students will gain insight into curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation of art education programs.

Prereq.: Graduate status.

ART 6922 Graduate Seminar in Art Education 3 s.h.

Explores contemporary events, theories, issues, trends, and practices that are influencing the field of art education.

Prereq.: Graduate status.

ART 6923 Graduate Art Thesis 1-5 s.h.

Students will develop a thesis in one of three modes: scholarly thesis, studio inquiry and essay, or teaching project and report. Repeatable for up to 5 total semester hours.

Prereq.: Graduate status.

ART 6924 Graduate Studio Project and Exhibition 1-5 s.h.

A professional art exhibition and written artist statement as an exit requirement and an alternative to the graduate research thesis option. Activities will include design and production of artworks for exhibition, directed readings, portfolio development, written assignments including an artist statement, oral defense of exhibition, and faculty review. The 5 s.h. requirement can be fulfilled through enrollment in ART 6924 over successive semesters at between 1-5 s.h. credit; however, students are encouraged to complete the course within two semesters.

Prereq.: 18 studio credits.

ART 6930 Studio Problems in Ceramics 3 s.h.

Individual research in spatial arts imagery. Concentration on individual study in ceramic construction, firing process and calculation, formulation and firing of clay bodies, and low-fire and high-fire glaze systems. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours of credit.

Prereq.: Permission of instructor and evidence of previous work.

ART 6931 Studio Problems in Ceramics 1-3 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6930. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours of credit.

Prereq.: ART 6930.

ART 6932 Studio Problems in Ceramics 1-3 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6931. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours of credit.

Prereq.: ART 6931.

ART 6940 Studio Problems in Printmaking 3 s.h.

Individual research into monoprinting, intaglio etching, relief printing, silkscreen, lithography, and monotype. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours.

Prereq.: Portfolio presentation and permission of instructor.

ART 6941 Studio Problems in Printmaking 1-3 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6940. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours.

Prereq.: ART 6940.

ART 6942 Studio Problems in Printmaking 1-3 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6941. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours.

Prereq.: ART 6941.

ART 6950 Studio Problems in Painting 3 s.h.

Individual research of two-dimensional form through various media, including oil, acrylic, watercolor, collage, etc. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours credit.

Prereq.: Permission of instructor and evidence of previous work.

ART 6951 Studio Problems in Painting 3 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6950. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours credit.

Prereq.: ART 6950.

ART 6952 Studio Problems in Painting 1-3 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6951. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours credit.

Prereq.: ART 6951.

ART 6960 Special Topics in Art History 3 s.h.

Study in one of the many areas of art history. May be taken up to three times for credit if the topic is not repeated.

ART 6970 Studio Problems in Photography 3 s.h.

Individual research of photography through selected technical and aesthetic photographic topics using a variety of approaches for advanced fine art applications. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours of credit.

Prereq.: Permission of instructor and documentation of previous work.

ART 6971 Studio Problems in Photography 3 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6970. May be repeated for six semester hours of credit.

Prereq.: ART 6970.

ART 6972 Studio Problems in Photography 3 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6971. May be repeated for six semester hours of credit.

Prereq.: ART 6971.

ART 6980 Studio Problems Digital Media 3 s.h.

Individual research in digital forms of expression through various media, including but not limited to printed digital collage, video and Internet-based projects. May be repeated for a maximum of six semester hours of credit.

Prereq.: Permission of instructor and documentation of previous work.

ART 6981 Studio Problems Digital Media 3 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6980. May be repeated for six semester hours of credit.

Prereq.: ART 6980.

ART 6982 Studio Problems Digital Media 3 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6981. May be repeated for six semester hours of credit.

Prereq.: ART 6981.

ART 6990 Interdisciplinary Studio 1-6 s.h.

Self-motivated graduate study informed by contemporary theory and discourse. Students follow a personal, self-proposed, conceptual direction and work independently, supported by faculty. First year placed on challenging traditional ideas about creative practice by connecting and integrating various creative processes, materials and methodologies. Through scheduled critiques students present and discuss their studio research with peers and faculty.

Total of 6 s.h. with a minimum of two different faculty first year fall semester.

Prereq.: Admission to MFA program.

ART 6991 Interdisciplinary Studio 2 1-9 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6990. Self-motivated, individual studio practice. At the end of the second semester students are assessed on the ability to integrate self-directed research with the ideas and concepts proposed in the Interdisciplinary Seminar and Strategies courses. Second semester culminates in a first year group exhibition. Total of 1 to 9 s.h. with a minimum of two different faculty first year second semester.

Prereq.: ART 6990.

ART 6992 Interdisciplinary Studio 3 1-6 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6991. Self-motivated, individual studio practice. In the second year students begin research and practice leading to the MFA Thesis Project and Capstone. Total of 1 to 6 s.h. with a minimum of two different faculty second year fall semester.

Prereq.: ART 6991.

ART 6993 Interdisciplinary Studio 4 1-9 s.h.

Continuation of ART 6992. Self-motivated, individual studio practice. In the final semester students are focused on studio research and production of work for their MFA Thesis Project and Capstone. Total of 9 s.h. with a minimum of two different faculty second year spring and final semester.

Prereq.: ART 6992.

ART 6994 Strategies in Interdisciplinary Practice 1 3 s.h.

Through a wide range of readings and presentations, this course will explore the significant moments, theoretical foundations and current trends within interdisciplinary and collaborative visual art practices. These explorations will be paired with a series of long and short projects that demystify strategies and problems within the range of visual art practices discussed. The course will also discuss modes of content communication that exist across the different disciplines such as the use of specific symbols, materials, processes and context. While ideas and readings may link with the MFA seminar, this course is designed to give students a solid theoretical and practical foundation in an interdisciplinary studio art practice.

Prereq.: Admission to MFA program.

ART 6995 Strategies in Interdisciplinary Practice 2 3 s.h.

Through a wide range of readings and presentations, this course will expand on the dialogue from Strategies in Interdisciplinary Practice 1. These explorations will be paired with a series of long and short projects that demystify strategies and problems within the range visual art practices discussed. The course will also discuss modes of content communication that exist across the different disciplines, such as the use of specific symbols, materials, processes and context. While ideas and reading in this course may link and connect with the MFA seminar, this course is designed to build upon the solid theoretical and practical foundation built in Strategies in Interdisciplinary Practice.

Prereq.: ART 6994.

ART 6996 Seminar in Interdisciplinary Theory 1 3 s.h.

Covering the key concepts and topics of modern and contemporary critical theory, the course examines various aesthetic, cultural, political climates in relation to developments of interdisciplinary art practice. MFA Seminar should be taken in sequence and serve as a dynamic forum for student research, critique, discussion, and the conceptual foundation for their individual studio practices.

Prereq.: Admission to MFA program.

ART 6997 Seminar Interdisciplinary Theory 2 3 s.h.

Topic will rotate each semester and address key concepts and topics of modern and contemporary critical theory. The course provides various perspectives towards the understanding of interdisciplinary art practice and critical discourses within contemporary art culture. Students will investigate interconnections between philosophical and theoretical issues and the ways they inform and impact interdisciplinary art practice today. MFA Seminar should be taken in sequence and serve as a foundation for individual studio practices.

Prereq.: ART 6996.

ART 6998 Seminar Interdisciplinary Theory 3 3 s.h.

Topics will vary each semester and address key concepts and topics of modern and contemporary critical theory. The course provides ongoing discussion surrounding the understanding of interdisciplinary art practice and critical discourses within contemporary art culture. Students will investigate interconnections between philosophical and theoretical issues and the ways they inform and impact interdisciplinary art practice today. As the last course within MFA Seminary sequence, it serves as a foundation for individual studio practice.

Prereq.: ART 6996.

ART 6999 MFA Thesis Project and Capstone Research 6 s.h.

Programmatic exit requirement and culmination of the 60 credit MFA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts. Activities include design and production of artworks for exhibition, directed readings, writing assignments including thesis and portfolio development, professional practices, exhibition design, oral thesis defense and faculty review.

Prereq.: permission of graduate advisor.