Major Possibilities:
Art and Art History

Career Services

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Here to help you get ahead.

Summary

- Pairing an art degree with a strong computer background can open doors in the areas of graphic design and advertising.
- About 62 percent of artists and related workers are self-employed.
- The New York Arts Program offers Studio Art and Art History majors the opportunity to serve as apprentices or interns during a semester in New York City, working with faculty sponsors and taking related seminars.

Studio Art major synopsis

Studio art majors can select from a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Fine Arts track. The BFA in Studio Art is a pre-professional program in a liberal arts context that deals with art as an expressive medium. The major helps students acquire technical proficiency in a principal medium, knowledge of a variety of media processes, and liberal arts breadth in critical and verbal skills. The program is a preparation both for students who intend to apply to Master of Fine Arts programs and/or go on to professional work as artists and for students who wish to acquire a liberal arts degree which can lead to work in fields such as art history, architecture, commercial art, design, arts administration, and art education. Art majors take courses in ceramics, painting, sculpture and other media and are expected to choose a medium of focus by their sophomore year. An Architecture and Design minor is also offered by the Studio Arts department.

Art History major synopsis

The Art History major is a writing-intensive academic liberal arts program that seeks to understand the significance of visual culture within specific cultural and historical contexts. The Art History major enables the student to develop visual literacy and to critically assess the complex meanings of material culture within diverse settings. To foster such understanding, Art History courses take a broadly contextual approach, situating art objects in relation to contemporaneous political and historical events; issues of race, gender, class and power structures; intellectual history and aesthetic criticism. Course offerings span a range of geographical areas, including Asia, Latin America, and Europe, and all of recorded history, from the world of the Ancients to our world today. The program culminates in a capstone research seminar to be taken in the junior or senior year. Students are encouraged to develop strong foreign language skills. Additionally, students may choose Art History as their disciplinary major as part of a 56-credit International Studies major.

Sample occupational areas

Teaching
Art teaching positions allow artists the opportunity to use their creative abilities in a hands-on environment, but they are more restricted in their creativity because they must tailor their art projects to the students' ability levels. Art majors who receive their teaching certificates are qualified to teach art in K-12 schools. Teaching positions in higher education require at least a Master's degree in a specialized field.

Visual art
Artists who create art for the sake of art and seek customers on their own are referred to as visual artists. They are often self-employed but may hold a part-time job that is unrelated to art in order to have a steady income.

Commercial art
Graphic designers and illustrators who use their creativity to create works for a business are called commercial artists. They have less artistic freedom than visual artists, since they create works based on guidelines from their employer, but they have the benefit of a steady paycheck.

Art museums and galleries
Working in art museums and galleries requires knowledge of art, not necessarily the ability to create art. The difference between art museums and galleries is that an art gallery depends upon the sales of its artwork to stay open, while art museums receive government funding and private donations in order to function.

Sample job titles

Advertising Executive
Antiquarian Book Trader
Antiquities Dealer
Archivist
Architectural Conservation
Art Investor
Art Journalist
Art Law
Art Librarian
Art Representative
Art Supply Store
Art Teacher
Arts Organization Consultant
Auction House Employee
Cartoonist
Clothing Designer
Corporate Curator
Curatorial Consultant
Freelance Collection Manager
Gallery Assistant
Graphic Designer
Interior Designer
Language Teacher
Lawyer – Copyright, Property, etc.
Marketing Manager
Medical Illustrator
Music Executive
Museum Work / Preservation
Photographer
Printmaker
Publisher
Purchaser
Sculptor
Set Designer
Textile Designer
Visual Resources Curator

Sample internship employers of SU students

Ann Weber Interiors – Austin, TX
Badgerdog Publishing – Austin, TX
Beverly Knowles Fine Arts Gallery – London, UK
Bruce Pearson, Independent Artist – New York, NY
Dougherty Arts Center – Austin, TX
European Film Festival
Flatbed Press – Austin, TX
Ford, Powell, & Carson Architects – San Antonio, TX
Galerie W – Paris, France
Infinity Broadcasting – New York, NY
Kerville State Hospital – Kerville, TX
Kimbell Art Museum – Fort Worth, TX
Mobile Film School – Austin, TX
Pentagram Design, Inc – Austin, TX
Robert Blackburn Printshop – New York, NY
Shirley Weiss, Independent Seamstress – Houston, TX
Spin Studios – New York, NY
St. Andrew's Episcopal School – Austin, TX
SU Special Collections – Georgetown, TX
Texas Film Commission: Office of the Governor – Austin, TX
Williamson County Crisis Center – Georgetown, TX
Women and Their Work – Austin, TX

Possible internship sites

American Art Clay (Indianapolis, IN)
Arthouse at the Jones Center (Austin)
Austin Museum of Art
Bill Buttram Photography (Fredericksburg, WA)
Blanton Museum of Art (Austin)
Future Designs
George Washington University
Hachette Filipacchi Magazine
Portland School of Arts and Crafts
The Museum of Modern Art

Sample full-time employers of SU grads

Art Instructor (Rodriguez Juvenile Facility)
Designer (Unlimited 3D Design)
Framer (Hobby Lobby)
Graphic Designer
High School Art Teacher (Cypress-Fairbanks ISD)
Kitchen Designer and Sales Specialist (Lowes Home Improvement)
Gallery Assistant (Mexican American Cultural Center)
Operations Executive (London School of Marketing)
Potter (Francisco Pottery)
Potter Apprentice
Program Assistant (Tampa Museum of Art)
Student Activities Coordinator (Southwestern University)

Professional associations

Alliance of Artists Communities: www.artistcommunities.org
American Art Therapy Association: http://www.arttherapy.org/aata-careers.html
American Institute of Architects: http://www.aia.org/
American Institute of Graphic Arts: www.aiga.org
Art Dealers Association of America www.artdealers.org/
Association of Art Historians : www.aah.org.uk/
Confédération Internationale des Négociants en Oeuvres d'Art: www.cinoa.org
The Art League: www.theartleague.org
National Art Education Association: www.arteducators.org/careers

Web resources

Americans for the Arts: www.artsusa.org
Art and Technology Careers: www.intstudy.com/articles/saww4a12.htm
Art Career Network: www.artcareer.net/
Art Career Project: www.theartcareerproject.com/
Art History Jobs: http://arthistoryjobs.com/
Art Museum Connection: www.amn.org
Museum Employment Resource Center: www.museum-employment.com
National Endowment for Arts: www.nea.gov
Virtual Library for Art History: www.chart.ac.uk/vlib/
Visual Nation Careers in Art: www.visualnation.com/197artcareers.html

Many additional links at Career Services' page for art and theatre: http://www.southwestern.edu/offices/careers/arttheatre.php

Career Services' print resources

Becoming a Graphic Designer
Becoming an Urban Planner
Careers in Media and Film: The Essential Guide
Career Opportunities in Art
Career Opportunities in Journalism
Career Opportunities in Photography
Career Opportunities in the Publishing Industry
Careers for Color Connoisseurs & Other Visual Types
Careers in Social & Rehabilitation Services
Careers for History Buffs & Others Who Learn from the Past
Creative Careers: Paths for Aspiring Actors, Artists, Dancers, Musicians and Writers
Everything You Need to Know (and Do) As You Pursue Your Art Career
Opportunities in Visual Arts Careers
Opportunities in Architecture Careers
Opportunities in Museum Careers
Museum Careers: A Practical guide for Students and Novices
The Business of Being an Artist
Vault Career Guide to Media and Entertainment