Quick Facts

- Artists are 3.6 times more likely to be self-employed, compared with other workers.
- Pairing an art degree with a strong computer background can open doors in graphic design and advertising.
- 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. Internships help shape professional identities, develop 21st century career-readiness skills, and make meaning of the academic experience.

Studio Art Major Synopsis

Studio art majors can choose either a Bachelor of Arts or a 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 prepares students who intend to apply to Master of Fine Arts programs and/or go on to professional artistic work as well as students who wish 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, drawing, 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.

Sample Occupational Areas

VISUAL ART

Visual artists are those who create art for its own sake. Usually seeking customers independently, they use a variety of materials and techniques to create art for sale and exhibition. Often self-employed, visual artists may hold a second job unrelated to art in order to have a steady income.

- **Craft Artists** create handmade objects such as pottery, glassware, textiles, or other objects that are designed to be functional.
- **Fine Artists**, including painters, sculptors, and illustrators, create original works for their aesthetic rather than functional value.
- **Photographers** use creativity with composition and technical skills to produce and preserve images that visually tell a story.

COMMERCIAL ART

Artists 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 Directors** are responsible for the visual style and images in magazines, newspapers, product packaging, and movie and television productions. They create the overall design of a project and direct others who develop artwork and layouts.
- **Graphic Designers** create visual concepts (by hand or using computer software) to communicate ideas that inspire, inform, or captivate consumers. They develop the overall layout and production design for advertisements, brochures, magazines, and corporate reports.
- **Industrial Designers** develop the concepts for manufactured products, such as cars, home appliances, and toys. They combine art, business, and engineering to make products that people use every day. Industrial designers focus on user experience in creating style and function for a particular gadget or appliance.
- **Multimedia Artists and Animators** create animation and visual effects for television, movies, video games, and media.
- **Sustainable Design** is a field of architecture that seeks to incorporate functionality, efficiency, aesthetics, durability, and long-term social, environmental, and economic sustainability into design across all sectors of society.

ART THERAPY

Recreational therapists plan, direct, and coordinate recreation-based treatment programs for people with disabilities, injuries, or illnesses. Art is one of the modalities recreational therapists can use to help maintain or improve a patient’s physical, social, and emotional well-being.
ART EDUCATION

Teaching positions in art allow artists to use their creative abilities in a hands-on environment, though the need to tailor projects to students’ ability levels restricts creativity. 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.

ARTS ADMINISTRATION

An arts administrator manages activities and services that support the arts sector, including projects and initiatives provided by places such as theatres, galleries, museums, art festivals, community organizations, etc. In a small company, an administrator is likely to cover a number of functions, from marketing and managing performers/audiences to handling finance and insurance. In large companies, the role may be more specific to an area such as programming, education, or sponsorship.

Sample Job Titles

- Advertising Executive
- Animator
- Art Appraiser
- Art Critic/Reporter
- Art Director
- Art Librarian
- Art Supply Store Clerk
- Art Teacher
- Art Therapist
- Auction House Staff
- Audio-Visual Specialist
- Cartoonist
- City Planner
- Exhibit Designer
- Fashion Designer
- Gallery Owner/Operator
- Graphic Designer
- Illustrator
- Interior Designer
- Lawyer (copyright, property, etc.)
- Medical Illustrator
- Museum Education Coordinator
- Photographer
- Picture Framer
- Printmaker
- Scenic Artist (film/theatre)
- Sculptor
- Set Designer
- Textile Designer
- Visual Merchandiser
- Web page designer

Sample Internship Employers of SU Students

- Art Palace – Austin, TX
- Austin Art and Frame – Austin, TX
- Bruce Pearson, Independent Artist – New York, NY
- Christi Center – Austin, TX
- Dougherty Arts Center – Austin, TX
- Flatbed Printshop – Austin, TX
- Ford, Powell, & Carson Architects – San Antonio, TX
- Kerrville State Hospital – Kerrville, TX
- Kimbell Art Museum – Fort Worth, TX
- Melissa Meyer Studio – New York, NY
- Mobile Film School – Austin, TX
- Pentagram Design, Inc. – Austin, TX
- Robert Blackburn Printshop – New York, NY
- Shirley Weiss, Independent Seamstress – Houston, TX
- Southwestern University – Georgetown, TX
- Warm Heart Worldwide – Phrao, Thailand

Sample Full-Time Employers of SU Grads

- Apple Certified Macintosh Technician (Tyrosys Corp.)
- Art Instructor (Rodriguez Juvenile Facility)
- Art Teacher (Art Works)
- AutoCAD Drafter (Durcon)
- Development Assistant (UT Austin College of Fine Arts)
- Digital Producer (Raise Your Hand Texas)
- Drawing Assistant (Artist Marina Zurkow)
- Freelance Visual Artist
- Gallery Assistant (Mexican American Cultural Center)
- Gallery Attendant (Kimbell Art Museum)
- Gardener (Monument Café Group, LLC)
- Graphic Designer (Kick It Marketing)
- Graphic Designer/Photographer (J. Bryant Boyd, Architect)
- High School Art Teacher (Cypress-Fairbanks ISD)
- Kitchen Designer and Sales Specialist (Lowes Home Improvement)
- Potter (Francisco Pottery)
- Print Assistant (D&J Blueline)
- Studio Manager (The Art Garage)

Professional Associations

- Alliance of Artists Communities
- American Art Therapy Association
- American Institute of Architects
- American Institute of Graphic Arts
- American Society of Media Photographers
- Art Directors Guild (art directors in film and television)
- National Art Education Association
- National Association of Independent Artists
- National Association of Women Artists
- Society of Illustrators
- The Association of Medical Illustrators
- The Art League