

Careers in the Arts

Majoring in Art

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How can a BFA in studio art benefit a student?

Our BFA offers concentrated, professional study in a wide range of media and approaches to art, some of which go beyond the typical studio art program. If you are serious about art, and want to take advantage of the breadth offered by a major university, then you will definitely benefit from our program. You will develop and grow as an artist, since the BFA program is intense and demands real maturity and concentration. The rewards are substantial; you will learn how to become an independent artist, and will get a great deal of support to find your own voice and practice your specific interests. More than that, you will be working with artists who are practicing professionals in their own right, exhibiting across the world. At every step of the way, we find that students who enjoy initiating work and who are curious, disciplined and filled with a passion for art. While we recommend students for the program who are serious about art pursue the BFA, we have other options, too, for those students who would like to study more than one subject. To accommodate these students, we offer a BA in art. You will select from the same courses as the BFA student, but are required to complete only about one-half the credits in advanced courses. Some may be interested in digital and new media or video games design. In this case, you should look into the BFA/MIT program, which leads to a Masters in Interactive Technology from The Guildhall, or consider double majoring in Creative Computing and BA Art.

What should high school students who are interested in pursuing the arts do to prepare themselves for college?

If your school offers Advanced Placement (AP) courses in Art and/or Art History, take these. If not, see if you can find courses outside school, on the weekends or in the evenings, where you can develop your skills and learn new ways of making art. The main thing is to do as much work as possible outside the assignments. To help prospective art students develop their skills, we offer a series of week-long intensive courses on campus during the summer: the Meadows Academy for Young Artists. Here, you will work in a university setting, taught by professional artists, in a variety of studio and extra-studio practices. These run the gamut from painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics and printmaking to photography, video, creative computing and public art projects. If you can't make the summer program, we also run life drawing sessions all year long for high school students.

What do art schools look for in the portfolios of prospective students?

We look for a range of expertise and work that demonstrates serious self-motivation. We like to see work from observation in a variety of media (pencil, charcoal, colored pencils, watercolor, acrylic, oils . . . Whatever you feel shows you to the best advantage) that goes beyond the standard high school assignment. We also like to see work using photography and video, if this is something that interests

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you. Or, digital art, animation and three-dimensional work. We ask for 15-18 pieces of work, in digital photographic format, to be uploaded to our portfolio review website, SlideRoom. You will find more information about portfolio submissions at our website ([Division of Art, Meadows School of the Arts, SMU](#)).

What advice do you have for high school students who are interested in pursuing a career in the arts?

Make art every chance you have! Keep a sketchbook and don't be afraid to experiment with new techniques and materials. Most of all, keep informed about contemporary art: visit museums, galleries and special art events at local colleges and universities. Surf the web, visit the websites of the major museums in DFW, LA, Chicago, NY, London, Paris, Berlin, Tokyo, Beijing and elsewhere. Read art blogs, like [Glasstire](#) or [Artforum](#). Visit the library and read about art and artists. Immerse yourself in art and learn to teach yourself. But if you are lucky enough to have some friends that are also interested in art, get together regularly with them and share your work with each other.

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