



ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Department of Fine Arts invites students to experience art both as scholarship and as a process of creation. By uniting artistic excellence with intellectual inquiry, we affirm the importance of a broad education in preparing our students for creative participation in a changing society. The department offers programs in studio art and the history of art for undergraduates, and our postbaccalaureate program in studio art is recognized as one of the finest in the country. Founded in 1951 by social realist painter Mitchell Siporin, the Department of Fine Arts features a distinguished faculty of acclaimed artists and noted art historians.

What makes the program distinctive?

The School of Creative Arts was established by founding president Abram Sachar at Brandeis University to place an unprecedented emphasis on the centrality of the performing

and creative arts within a liberal arts education. This area of creative practice and study is now sought after in many universities, and it is a focus Brandeis has had from the start.

FAST FACTS

Current number of majors and minors: 52 studio art majors; 63 art history majors and minors

Number of faculty: 16

Can you minor in this program?
Students may minor in art history or in sculpture.

Emphasis within the department:
The department encourages a well-rounded understanding of art ranging from a more hands-on perspective to comprehending art's history, social and political culture, and stylistic innovation.

Popular second majors:
anthropology, political science

Website:
brandeis.edu/departments/finearts

ACADEMICS AND RESEARCH

Two tracks

The department hosts two separate majors. Students who concentrate in studio art are expected to take art history courses and are encouraged to extend their intellectual and creative involvement through summer art programs and participation in full studio faculty reviews of their work. The program in the history of art includes a required studio experience and offers a variety of courses in ancient to contemporary Western art and Islamic, Middle Eastern and Asian art.

Visiting artists in the studio

Each year a distinguished visiting artist is selected to return repeatedly during the semester. The artist generally will come to Brandeis for individual critiques with students and to present lectures and attend final critiques.

On-campus art museum

The Rose Art Museum on the Brandeis campus houses what is widely recognized as the finest collection of modern and contemporary art in New England. The Rose collection has particular strengths in European and American modernism, American social realism of the 1920s and '30s, surrealism, abstract expressionism, minimalism and post-war American photorealism. Recent acquisitions include works by Nam June Paik, videos by Anri Sala and William Kentridge, and photography by Thomas Demand and Matthew Barney. There is a sculptural installation with LED statements by artist Jenny Holzer based on Abu Ghraib transcripts. These artists comprise a virtual who's who of art since the 1980s.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Art and social justice

Brandeis' commitment to social justice is reflected in many of the university's arts programs and research centers. The International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life is home to the Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence. Working with theater, music and visual artists around the globe, the ethics center explores the intersection of the arts and peace-building.

An annual celebration of art

The Festival of the Creative Arts at Brandeis was established in 1952 by the brilliant composer and conductor Leonard

Bernstein, a founding faculty member at Brandeis. Each spring, the Brandeis campus blooms in a celebration of creativity and community, with work by national and regional artists as well as Brandeis faculty and students.

Museum internships

Students have performed internships at the Rose Art Museum on campus; the Museum of Fine Arts, the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston; the Museum of Modern Art and the Guggenheim Museum in New York; and many other venues.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Distinguished faculty

Professor Charles McClendon, the Sydney and Ellen Wien Chair of Medieval Art and Architecture, recently won the Haskins Medal from the Medieval Academy of America, as well as the Gruendler Book Prize from the International Congress on Medieval Studies, for his book "The Origins of Medieval Architecture."

AFTER BRANDEIS

Graduate programs

The graduate program in studio art focuses on painting and sculpture and emphasizes independent work achieved through critical interaction with faculty and visiting artists. Students can prepare portfolios for admission to graduate school or achieve the self-sufficiency necessary for continued studio work outside an academic environment.

Diverse career fields

Recent Brandeis graduates in the arts have gone on to law school or medical school as well as to flourishing careers in the arts. Many have become museum curators and directors, while one recent graduate is now assistant to the head of the National Endowment of the Arts. Other recent grads include a guide at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, an auction house representative, a Teach for America corps member, many architects and art historians, several conservators and a graphic designer.

"Professor Kalb is one of the most incredible teachers I have ever had in all my years of formal education. He will ask us provocative questions that push our understanding to higher levels. No student will leave his class without having expressed her opinion and having it respectfully considered, and then been challenged to develop that opinion. He is endlessly patient and always willing to help us improve. His office door is always open."

A former student of Professor Peter Kalb, recipient of the 2009 Walzer Award for Teaching at Brandeis



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