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 fine arts department offers students a program with strengths in the areas of art history, studio practice and theory. Each student, whether pursuing proficiency in making art or studying art history, will have the opportunity to work within a small integrated community of artists and scholars. Students enjoy unique opportunities to work at the Rose Art Museum, participate in the museum’s endowed curatorial internship program or train as educators to be gallery guides.

FAST FACTS

Current number of majors and minors: 57 studio art majors; 58 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, business, East Asian studies, psychology

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 conducts individual critiques with students, presents lectures and attends final critiques. Other sponsored programs provide frequent lectures by visiting artists.

*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. 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.

**AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**

*Distinguished faculty*
Professor Aida Yuen Wong has published a new anthology, “Visualizing Beauty: Gender and Ideology in Modern East Asia,” with the Hong Kong University Press (2012) and has received a major research grant for work in Shanghai during 2012-13. Professor Tory Fair, a sculptor, was commissioned to create a year-long installation piece for the deCordova Museum’s ongoing Platform series, which she titled “Testing a World View (Again).”

**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*
Among our fine arts alumni there are architects and art historians, art conservators and graphic designers, museum curators and directors, and practicing artists who exhibit regularly. Other recent graduates have found work in the design department at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, at an auction house in the contemporary department and at a public art nonprofit group. Popular paths outside of the arts include Teach for America as well as graduate school in architecture, law or medicine.

“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 on Professor Peter Kalb, recipient of the 2009 Walzer Award for Teaching at Brandeis

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**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 peacebuilding.

*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.