

Art, MFA

HIARTMFA

As a student in this program, ranked No. 15 nationally (U.S. News & World Report, 2020), you'll have access to funding, specialized facilities, individualized feedback, and a vibrant community of art professionals situated in the high Sonoran desert.

Program description

Degree awarded: MFA Art

The ASU School of Art's MFA program is one of a few nationally ranked, tuition-funded, three-year Master of Fine Arts programs. Students benefit from graduate assistantships, scholarships and awards that support student travel and research.

Program curriculum provides artists with a formal and conceptual foundation in contemporary art, a visiting artist and scholar lecture series, professional development workshops, teaching opportunities and pedagogical training. The curriculum fosters global awareness, civic engagement, social responsibility and collaborative action. Augmenting the curriculum are numerous internships offered by a wide variety of arts organizations; more information is available at [Creative Career Services](#).

Students work closely with faculty to develop knowledge, expand technical skills and participate with communities to create research and a lifelong professional arts practice. The coursework is designed to advance discourse across a range of fields and establish intersections between disciplines and shared research interests, including representation, advanced technology, materials, ecology and sustainability.

The program culminates in a solo thesis exhibition in one of the four [School of Art galleries](#). Prior thesis projects can be explored on the [School of Art](#) webpage.

Graduate students are provided world-class studio space at [Grant Street Studios](#), located in the cultural hub of downtown Phoenix, which includes a wood shop, printmaking presses, darkroom, kilns, computer lab and 3D print lab.

The Master of Fine Arts program emphasizes collaboration and immersive learning, providing students access to specialized facilities and collections. The [Northlight Gallery](#) is a dedicated photographic gallery directed by Cecilia Fajardo-Hill, a curator in modern and contemporary art. The gallery houses two important historical photographic collections: the Northlight Gallery permanent collection and the Solari Foundation collection. The [Pyracantha Press](#) is an independent publishing imprint with publications in

105 national and international public collections. The press includes the largest collection of type at any institution of higher education in North America and several printing presses, including an 1834 Columbian.

In addition to the expansive curriculum, students benefit from the vast resources afforded by a Research I university. Students are encouraged to engage with faculty across all disciplines and with world-renowned researchers from a variety of departments across ASU. Students also have access to the vibrant community of museums, galleries, businesses and cultural organizations in Phoenix, as well as in nearby Los Angeles, Santa Fe and Denver. Special initiatives also add dynamic opportunities for professionalization and connecting with artists and curators. The School of Art galleries, the [Ceramics Research Center and Archive](#) and the [ASU Art Museum](#) support a robust schedule of public exhibitions and visiting artist and scholar lectures. These [events](#) offer students the opportunity to develop their knowledge and appreciation of contemporary art and culture while they build a professional network.

Applicants can visit [School of Art advising support](#) to learn more about the program.

At a glance

- **College/School:** [Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts](#)
- **Location:** [Tempe](#)

Degree requirements

60 credit hours and an oral comprehensive exam (defense of MFA exhibition)

The 60 hours of graduate credit are subject to committee approval and must include:

ART 680 Practicum, resulting in an MFA exhibition (10-15 credit hours)

graduate studio (18-27 credit hours)

graduate-level academic coursework (at least 6 credit hours)

graduate-level ART seminars (9-18 credit hours)

required courses in contemporary art theory (3) and cross-practice critique (3) (6 credit hours)

Admission requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirements of both the Graduate College and the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree from a regionally accredited institution.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program or a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. current resume or curriculum vitae
4. portfolio
5. statement of intent
6. three letters of recommendation
7. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information

An applicant whose native language is not English must provide [proof of English proficiency](#) regardless of their current residency.

Admission is a two-step process. Although applicants fill out one application through the online graduate application process, they must be admitted to both the MFA program and the Graduate College.

The portfolio should include a combination of 20 images sized with a maximum dimension of 1024 pixels and video files with less than 60 MB each; it should be accompanied by an image list. The statement of intent (not to exceed 1,000 words) should address the applicant's artistic interests, reasons for applying to graduate school in general, and the ASU School of Art in particular, as well as professional goals.

The three letters of recommendation should be from faculty members with whom the applicant has studied or from recognized professionals in the field. All the instructions for letters of recommendation must be followed when submitting them with the application to the Graduate College.

The method for submitting the resume or vitae, portfolio, statement of intent and letters of recommendation is online via SlideRoom: <https://asuherberger.slideroom.com/#/Login>. Applicants may upload images (.jpg), video (.mov, .wmv, .flv), music (mp3) or PDF documents.

Applicants should see the program website for application deadlines.

Tuition information

When it comes to paying for higher education, everyone's situation is different. Students can learn about [ASU tuition and financial aid](#) options to find out which will work best for them.

Application deadlines

Program learning outcomes

Program learning outcomes identify what a student will learn or be able to do upon completion of their program. This program has the following program outcomes:

- Apply concept development and knowledge of material practice in their focused media area to contextualize their research.
- Demonstrate professional preparedness by developing a comprehensive toolkit for self-promotion that will position them for success in the field of art and design.
- Demonstrate how their cohesive body of artwork fits within the context of the fine art world holistically.

Global opportunities

Global experience

More and more ASU graduate students are pursuing [Global Education opportunities](#). Although participating in a Global Education program as a graduate student presents unique challenges, it can also provide a meaningful opportunity to deepen the educational experience and connect an international opportunity with a student's career aspirations.

Career opportunities

Graduates are prepared to initiate creative careers in the public and private sphere. The terminal degree is a necessity for employment as a university or college teacher and for responsible administrative and curatorial positions in the museum and publishing world.

Studio art graduates find employment opportunities as artists in the field, selling their works through commercial galleries and commissions and to private collectors; as museum or gallery professionals, art dealers and directors; as private school art teachers and college professors; and as community-based artists (venues might include health care settings, nonprofit agencies, and local and national public arts). Master of Fine Arts degree holders have the credentials necessary to teach courses in their discipline at colleges and universities, and to enter the art market, working in art administration or other competitive creative fields. Graduates of the program also go on to start their own galleries or small businesses and exhibit at notable institutions, and some have been awarded prestigious grant and residency opportunities. A graduate degree is essential for many professional positions; a master's degree prepares individuals to teach at the community college level, to practice and publish as an art critic or writer, to enhance one's own practice as an artist, or to gain entry into museums, archives, historical societies, art libraries, auction houses, publishing companies and academic presses.

Contact information

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[Admission deadlines](#)