



**Carnegie Mellon University**

art.cmu.edu  
@cmuschoolofart

**Combining a renowned studio program with the interdisciplinary resources of a cutting-edge research university, the School of Art at Carnegie Mellon University bridges traditional studio practice with the experimental practices of new and unconventional media.** Driven by conceptual thinking and expanded notions of artistic practice, we stand among the world's most innovative programs. We offer two tracks for undergraduate students: the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree and the three interdisciplinary degrees collectively known as the BXA Intercollege Degree Program.

In both tracks, students progress from foundational coursework to an advanced and individualized study of art that fosters a personal practice. The School of Art serves students with diverse interests, creating unique opportunities for collaborations that bridge the arts, humanities, and sciences unlike any other program in the nation.

In a small and intimate learning environment, we provide mentorship and guidance that merge scholarship, medium, and creative inquiry. With distinguished faculty, exceptional fabrication facilities, generous access to new technologies, and abundant studio space—including dedicated, independent, 24-hour studio space for all juniors and seniors—we offer our students an unparalleled experience of learning, questioning, and creating contemporary art in the twenty-first century.









# BFA

**The Bachelor of Fine Arts program provides focused foundational instruction over the first two years that builds toward a broad range of individualized study in the second two years.** In their first two years, students experience a wide array of intensive medium-specific and thematic transdisciplinary research studio courses, developing both technical skill and critical thinking. In their last two years, students direct their study across four primary concentrations with the freedom to pursue either in-depth study, hybrid study across concentrations, or specialized practices:

**Drawing, Painting, Print Media & Photography** combines traditional studio practices with unconventional techniques and electronic processes to expand the possibilities of two-dimensional imagery.

**Sculpture, Installation & Site-Work** embraces the challenging and ever-evolving definition of sculpture. Students are pushed to explore many methods of fabrication including digital, virtual, and human-computer interactivity, in addition to time-honored tools for building and assemblage.

**Electronic & Time-Based Media** focuses on animation, video and performance, tactical media, computational and interactive art, bioart, tangible media, and game arts, among others. Across all courses, students harness emerging technologies for cross-disciplinary exploration.

**Contextual Practice** engages students in the production of socially-engaged projects that respond to specific public contexts and audiences. The first undergraduate program of its kind in the US, Contextual Practice includes experimental approaches to art making such as street art, participatory art, urban interventions, interactive social media, public installations, and politically engaged art.

As the culmination of their studies, BFA students produce a cohesive body of work during their senior year for exhibition at the University's Miller Institute for Contemporary Art.

**The BXA Intercollege Degree Program formalizes the interdisciplinary approach to education at Carnegie Mellon University by offering a degree that combines art with the humanities, sciences, or computer science.** Students who pursue BXA degrees have the support of faculty and advisors in both programs, as well as an advisor in the BXA office. A final capstone project demonstrates the synthesis of the two areas of study. The following BXA degrees are offered:

#### **Bachelor of Humanities & Arts (BHA)**

Students following the BHA program many choose from the many majors and minors offered by the Dietrich College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Popular concentrations include: Gender Studies, Global Studies, Psychology, Cognitive Science, and Statistics & Machine Learning.

#### **Bachelor of Science & Arts (BSA)**

The BSA program is designed for students who have strong interest in the natural sciences and mathematics. Students may choose from the following concentrations: Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Mathematical Sciences, Neurobiology, or Physics.

#### **Bachelor of Computer Science & Arts (BCSA)**

The BCSA program is designed for students interested in computer science theory and in-depth coding, in addition to the formation of their own artistic practice.



# BXA





## IDeATe (Integrative Design, Arts & Technology)

The IDeATe network is a centralized hub for design, art, and technology that brings together faculty and students from many different colleges and schools on campus. A resource heavily used by School of Art students, IDeATe offers undergraduate minors and courses in **Game Design, Animation & Special Effects, Media Design, Sound Design, Learning Media, Innovation & Entrepreneurship, Intelligent Environments, and Physical Computing**. IDeATe courses give students foundational skills in emerging technologies that students are encouraged to apply to experimental art making.

Courses are taught by experts from across the University including faculty in the Schools of Art and Design, the Colleges of Engineering and Computer Science, the Entertainment Technology program, and the Tepper School of Business, among others. These courses are interdisciplinary, project-driven, and collaborative.

IDeATe courses give students the technological background to land jobs at some of the leading animation, gaming, and technology companies including Pixar, Google, Apple, and Activision, among many others.



## Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry

Housed in the College of Fine Arts, the Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry examines the intersection of the arts, science, technology, and culture and provides School of Art students with the support to pursue trailblazing projects outside the classroom.

The STUDIO, directed by School of Art professor Golan Levin, distributes grants of up to \$10,000 or microgrants for projects under \$500. Past STUDIO projects have uncovered previously unknown Andy Warhol artworks on floppy disks, launched successful start-up companies, and created an artwork to send to space with contributions from more than 150 individuals.

With its robust lecture program and rotating visiting fellows, the STUDIO also gives students the opportunity to learn from and work with a wide range of cutting-edge artists, researchers, and technologists on projects that expand technology's potential and redefine artists' role in society.











## Selection of Advanced Courses

School of Art courses range from foundational instruction in traditional media to classes that emphasize experimental approaches and independent projects. Below is a small sampling of our most popular advanced courses:

### Experimental Game Design

Taught by **Paolo Pedercini**, a leading experimental game designer whose work (under project name “molleindustria”) addresses social issues, Experimental Game Design challenges students to expand the idea of gaming and encourages students to create their own innovative and expressive forms of gameplay.

### Screen Printing for Sculpture & Installation

Conceptual print and paper artist **Imin Yeh**’s advanced screen printing intensive expands the notion of traditional print media. In this course, students create immersive wall installations, participatory social sculpture, objects that act as interventions, and hand-printed textiles that can be used in soft sculpture or in wearable forms.

### Concepts of Figuration

**Devan Shimoyama**, called an “Artist to Watch” by the *New York Times*, pushes students to think about the human figure beyond observational drawing. Concepts of Figuration looks at the figure as a symbol to explore narrative, anthropological, cultural, sociopolitical, gender, and dream-life imaging.





## Animation, Art, & Technology

Team-taught by School of Art Professor **James Duesing** and School of Computer Science Professor **Jessica Hodgins**, this course is in equal measure advanced technology and innovative content. Technical skills taught include motion capture and algorithms for animating cloth, hair, particles, and grouping behaviors.

## Environmental Sculpture

Moving outside the University campus, Environmental Sculpture not only challenges students to make sculptural work with a focus on the environment, but also gives students the skills required to negotiate permission for unconventional sites. This course is taught by ecoartist **Bob Bingham**.

## Black Utopias: Writing Ourselves into a Better Future

Taught by Afrofuturist artist Alisha Wormsley, this advanced Critical Studies course engages with historical and contemporary literature, film, and art to explore the empowerment and self-determination that Black Americans use to visualize a better world for themselves.







## Study Abroad

School of Art students have the option to study abroad in locations around the globe during the fall or spring semester of their junior year. From prestigious art schools in Europe—including Central Saint Martins in London and the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris—to universities in Africa and the Americas, CMU’s Office of International Education works to find the right fit for each student. In addition to these locations, students have studied abroad in programs at the Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand, Temple University’s Japan campus in Tokyo, and Universidad de Belgrano in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

“Studying abroad allowed me to experience a new culture while learning, which not only enhanced my education, but also influenced the way I lived my life.” — Ariana Nathani, England

“Study abroad allows the flexibility of travel and school work. I visited volcanoes, climbed mountains, and rode on ferries without sacrificing the integrity of my school work.” — Jarel Grant, New Zealand

“Studying abroad completely changed the course of my life, and therefore of my art.” — Ella Hepner, Cuba



## Facilities

The School of Art occupies over 50,000 square feet of fabrication facilities, multi-purpose classrooms, media-specific studios and workshops, student and faculty studios, presentation rooms, and exhibition space, offering students access to both traditional and state-of-the-art tools. Facilities include:

### 2D

Naturally-lit painting and drawing studios

Traditional and digital print facilities

Photography studios for silver-based darkroom and digital practices

### 3D

Woodshop

Digital fabrication facilities with CNC routers, laser cutters,  
and 3D printers

Small and large metal shops

Ceramic sculpture studio

Physical computing classroom

### Media

Classrooms equipped for high-definition video in a variety of formats

Multimedia studios with a comprehensive range of hardware  
and software

Chroma Key (green screen) studio

Lending collection with high-end digital cameras, video cameras,  
lighting kits, projectors, and sound equipment

Additionally, students taking courses in the IDeATe network have access to an additional digital fabrication shop, physical computing lab, and interactive media black box. Students in some advanced animation courses may also have access to the vast resources of the School of Computer Science.







## Studios

All juniors and seniors are provided with a shared or individual studio space that is accessible 24/7. Studios are located in the sky-lit top floor of the historic College of Fine Arts or near the School's fabrication facilities in Doherty Hall. In addition, we maintain several project spaces that can be reserved for critique, installation, documentation, or temporary exhibitions.

## Exhibition Spaces

The School of Art offers a variety of exhibition spaces to highlight student work. In the College of Fine Arts, students may reserve the Ellis Gallery and the prominent north and south foyers. The Frame Gallery, a non-profit, student-run art space, organizes rotating student exhibits throughout the year. This space also gives students hands-on experience with the administrative and curatorial responsibilities of running an art space.

## Miller Institute for Contemporary Art

The Miller ICA houses the annual Senior Art Exhibition, giving students the opportunity to showcase final projects in a professional setting. In addition, the Miller ICA's robust exhibition program brings cutting-edge contemporary art from around the globe to campus.











*Koupe Tet, Boule Kay, 2020, digital illustration*

### Steven Montinar

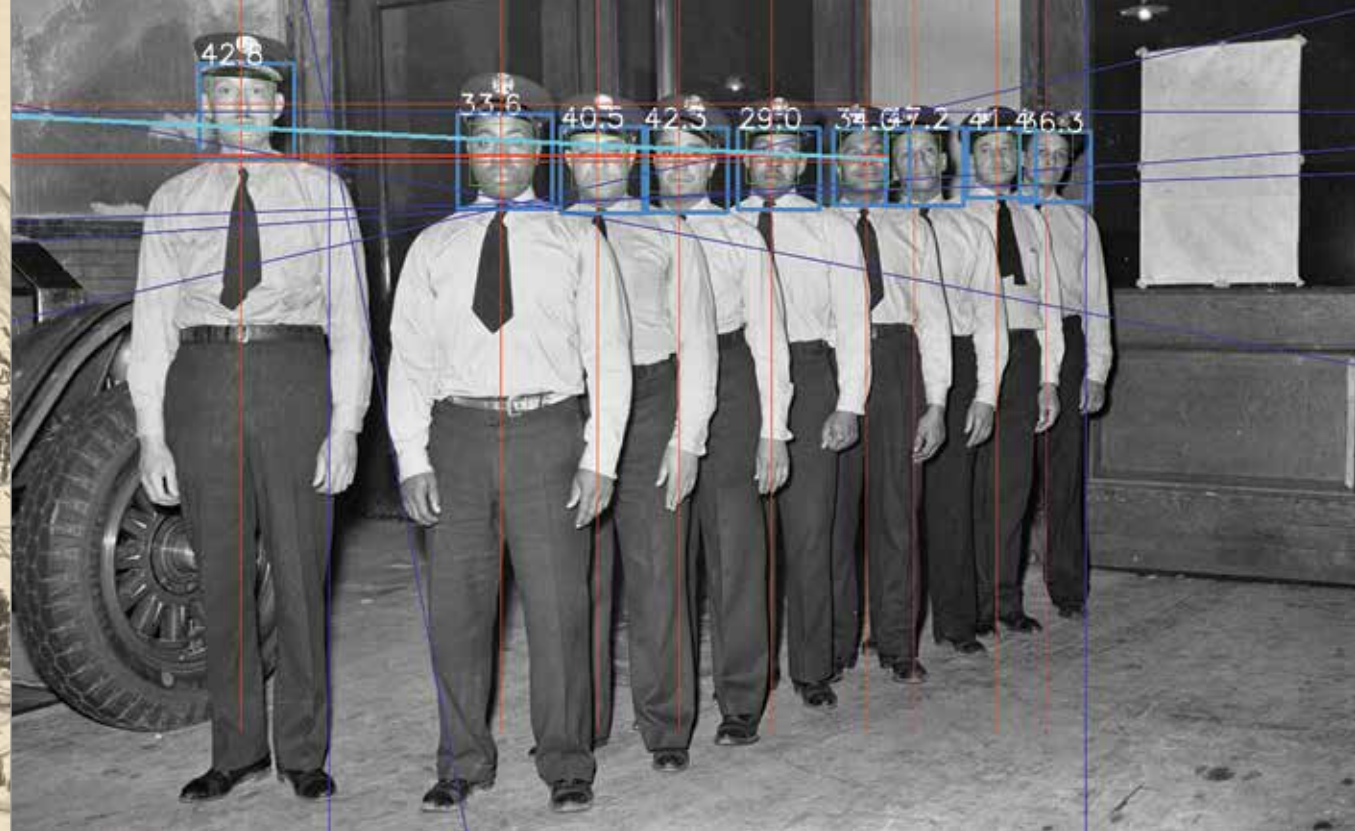
The Whitney Museum of American Art added BFA student Montinar's artwork "Koupe Tet, Boule Kay" to its permanent collection during his senior year. The work gives the titular phrase—a rallying cry of the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804) that translates to "cut heads, burn houses"—new significance in the context of the Black Lives Matter movement. The dollar bill represents the oppressive power of money in a capitalist society while elements on the bill allude to important dates in U.S. history and the current struggles for social justice. Montinar originally made his work available for free download to use in protest or display in windows through Printed Matter, a nonprofit focusing on artists' books and publications.



{Shan, Shui}\*, 2018, infinite procedurally generated digital image

## Lingdong Huang

During the last few weeks of his senior year, Lingdong Huang, a student studying art and computer science, developed the world's first successful computer programming language based on the Classical Chinese grammar system. The programming language, Wenyan-lang, has since become popular on the software development site GitHub, where developers have used it to write dozens of programs. This wasn't the first project that combined Huang's passion for Chinese art and culture with computer science; previous projects include an infinite procedurally generated Chinese landscape painting and an opera performance entirely generated by machine learning techniques.



Illustrative image prepared by Zaria Howard; courtesy and copyright Carnegie Museum of Art, Charles "Teenie" Harris Archive

## Zaria Howard

In Professor Golan Levin's Interactive Art and Computational Design course, Howard, a student pursuing a BHA degree in Art and Statistics, developed a keen interest in the Carnegie Museum of Art's trove of 80,000 photographic negatives by Charles "Teenie" Harris. The collection, which arrived at the Museum without names, dates, or identifying information, spans over four decades and is one of the most important records of African American life in the mid-20th century.

Using advanced machine learning and computer vision techniques, Howard and a team in the Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry organized the collection to make it more easily searchable by scholars and the general public. To further the research, the project was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.





*Sun Showers*, 2018

## Miranda Miller & Lumi Barron

During the summer between their sophomore and junior years, Miranda Miller and Lumi Barron were awarded a Tough Art Residency to make an interactive artwork for the Pittsburgh Children's Museum. The residency challenges artists to create work that can withstand the wear-and-tear of an interactive environment for children. Inspired by the joy of creating rainbows with a garden hose, Miller and Barron's work, *Sun Showers*, allows visitors to create mist and discover rainbows within a custom-built installation.



*what would I be?*, 2018; 2-channel video; 14:12 (loop)

## J Houston

BHA student Houston fuses their education in gender studies and art to reimagine stereotypical domestic spaces through a non-binary, femme lens. Houston's intimate portraits of Pittsburgh's queer community in their homes seeks to subvert the dominant representation of white, male queerness, showing a multifaceted representation of a diverse community. During their senior year, Houston was invited to show these portraits at the Ace Hotel and at Bunker Projects, a Pittsburgh experimental art gallery, and was featured in a *W Magazine* article on queer photographers illustrating pride outside of mainstream representations.



## Alumni

The School of Art has fostered over 100 years of remarkable alumni including Andy Warhol (BFA '49), Mel Bochner (BFA '62), Deborah Kass (BFA '74), John Currin (BFA '84), and Kathy Lee (BFA '15), better known as techno musician Yaeji.

Here's a closer look at five recent grads.



*In Polite English One Disagrees by First Agreeing*, installation view,  
Dallas Contemporary, September 14–December 22, 2019

## Jessica Vaughn

BFA 2006

Conceptual artist Jessica Vaughn examines the underlying systems of everyday life to expose hierarchies of power and embedded injustices within public and private bureaucracies. Bridging her interest in social history and art making, Vaughn's work uses quotidian materials to poetically explore how systems and institutions perpetuate inequality. Her recent solo exhibitions include Dallas Contemporary, the *Cleveland Triennial*, Emalin Gallery in London, and Martos Gallery in New York.

"I would highly recommend taking as many studio courses in a variety of mediums as possible. The facilities at the University are unmatched, so take advantage of it particularly if you are new to a medium."





Housewives Making Drugs, 2017; video still

## Mary “Maggic” Tsang

BSA 2013, Minor in Environmental Science

Tsang’s work at the intersection of biotechnology, cultural discourse, and civil disobedience uses science to investigate body and gender politics, subverting the idea of identity as biologically fixed. After graduating from the BXA program at CMU, Tsang earned an MS in Media Arts and Sciences from MIT Media Lab. Their projects have been covered by *The Guardian*, *Vice*, and *Gizmodo*, among others.

“My best advice is to stay confused. Navigating boundaries, borders, edges, and undefined spaces means you are bound to encounter confusion, and you should never shy away from that encounter.”



Cove illustration; © Humane Engineering

## Alex Rothera

BFA & BS in Human-Computer Interaction 2013  
Google Area 120 & Humane Engineering

Rothera is a designer, artist, and inventor. Currently a Project Lead at Google Area 120, a workshop for Google’s experimental projects, Rothera is also the co-founder of Humane Engineering, a startup that aims to make products for the betterment of society. As an artist, he has also shown work in the Venice Biennale and ARS Electronica, among other international venues.

“The professional world requires graduating students to have both creative minds and technical skills, and the School of Art helped me develop both.”





*Car Accident*; 3D animation

## Vidya Vinnakota

BFA 2017, Minor in Animation & Special Effects

After having spent a summer as an intern at Pixar, Vinnakota was selected for an animation apprenticeship for Walt Disney Animation Studios, where she's worked on films such as *Ralph Breaks the Internet*, the sequel to *Wreck-it Ralph*, and *Frozen 2*.

“Take advantage of the interdisciplinary offerings of CMU. It really helps you become a well-rounded person.”



*Vicky reading Gloria Fuertes* (Historia de Gloria: Amor, Humor y Desamor, 1980), from the series *Reading Women*, 2012–2014; Chromogenic print; 36 x 30 inches; courtesy the artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago

## Carrie Schneider

BHA 2001

Schneider's work in photography and film quietly confronts politics through solitude, intimacy, and interiority. Her recent series, *Reading Women*, which depicts the artist's friends and colleagues silently reading books written by women, was sparked by a conversation about how the literature canon has largely excluded women. Her work has been exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; The Andy Warhol Museum; and Slought at the University of Pennsylvania; among many others.

“When I was an undergraduate at CMU, the art faculty was extraordinarily generous. They created a safe and supportive space for each of us to make and experiment.”

## Admissions

The School of Art seeks students with a wide range of talents and backgrounds, and approaches admissions based on a holistic consideration of each applicant's portfolio, inclusive of academic and other achievements.

All prospective students, BFA and BXA, must complete the Admissions Application and submit a portfolio through SlideRoom. Your portfolio should consist of 12 to 20 recent works that demonstrate technical and creative thinking skills. Artwork can include a wide range of media. We particularly love to see what you make for yourself, so we ask that your portfolio include as much work as possible done independently and outside of the classroom.

Students wishing to be admitted to the BHA, BSA, or BCSA program must be admitted to both the School of Art and their other program of interest. Students may enter the BXA program as either an incoming student or an internal transfer student.

Each applicant is encouraged, though not required, to arrange a virtual interview with a professor in the School.

**Detailed instructions for admissions can be found at [art.cmu.edu/application](https://art.cmu.edu/application).**

## Important Deadlines

**November 1 > Early Decision  
CMU Application & SlideRoom Portfolio Submission Due**

**January 4 > Regular Decision  
CMU Application Due**

**January 15 > Regular Decision  
SlideRoom Portfolio Submission Due**

## Financial Aid

Carnegie Mellon offers need-based financial aid to admitted students and is committed to meeting their demonstrated need. This means our admitted students receive financial aid based not on their grades or test scores but on their family's financial need.

Carnegie Mellon follows a need-blind admission policy, which means we don't admit U.S. citizens or permanent residents based on their ability to pay for their education. Applying for financial aid will have no effect on your chances for admission. However, it may affect those students we're able to admit from the waiting list.

When you complete a financial aid application, the university can determine if you're eligible for all forms of financial assistance, including federal, state and Carnegie Mellon aid. We offered assistance to 75 percent of first year students who applied for financial aid for the 2020–21 school year.

Carnegie Mellon only offers financial aid to U.S. citizens, permanent residents and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students. If you don't fit any of these criteria and plan to enroll at Carnegie Mellon, you and your family must assume the total cost of attendance.

For more information about current tuition, housing costs, fees, and financial aid, visit the Office of Admission's website at [admission.enrollment.cmu.edu](https://admission.enrollment.cmu.edu)





## Living in Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh combines affordability with a top-notch arts scene. From established institutions that provide internships to grassroots organizations where students can exhibit their work, the city offers many opportunities to be involved in the arts outside of the classroom.

Among the larger arts institutions are:

**The Andy Warhol Museum**, the world's largest collection of Warhol's artworks and archival materials.

The **Carnegie Museum of Art**, home of the *Carnegie International*, the oldest North American exhibition of global contemporary art.

The **Mattress Factory**, a site-specific installation art museum with permanent works by James Turrell and Yayoi Kusama.

These three museums—along with **Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens**, **The National Aviary**, the **Heinz History Center**, and more—can be accessed for free with a Carnegie Mellon student ID.

Midsized and grassroots arts organizations include:

**1Hood Media**, a collective of socially conscious artists and activists who use art to raise awareness.

**Boom Concepts**, an art gallery dedicated to the development of artists from marginalized communities.

**Center for PostNatural History**, a gallery focused on the complex interplay between culture, nature, and biotechnology founded and run by School of Art professor Rich Pell.

**LikeLike**, a neo-arcade/playable arts gallery founded and run by School of Art professor Paolo Pedercini.

The **Pittsburgh Glass Center**, where students have the opportunity to take a class and use the state-of-the-art glass studio.

**Pullproof Studio**, a screenprinting studio and gallery started by CMU alumni.

**Silver Eye Center for Photography**, a contemporary photography gallery focusing on emerging, mid-career, and under-recognized artists.



## Student Organizations

Carnegie Mellon has over 300 student organizations including arts, multicultural, professional development, gender/LGBTQ+, spiritual, political, and Greek groups. Here's a spotlight on a few organizations:

Started by School of Art students, **Tartan Art** aims to build community within the CMU art community through events, mentorship, and highlighting artwork created by students.

The only international film festival organized and run by university students, the **CMU International Film Festival** promotes cultural exchange and illuminates local and global ethnic communities.

The **Lunar Gala Fashion Show** is held every February to celebrate the Chinese New Year and features work by over 100 students, showcasing fashion, design, and dance.

**PRISM** is Carnegie Mellon University's LGBTQ & Allied student organization that provides a safe space for anyone with an open mind to find new friends, talk about issues, raise awareness, and relax after class.

**Feminists Engaged in Multicultural Matters and Education (FEMME)** provides education to the campus community on societal marginalization through an intersectional feminist lens.

The **Arab Student Organization** strives to create an awareness of the different Arab cultures through the sponsoring of Arab social and cultural activities.

The largest Asian culture and affinity group on campus, the **Asian Students Association** celebrates and promotes the diversity and unique traditions among all Asian cultures.

**Spanish and Latin Student Association (SALSA)** strives to increase awareness of issues specific to Latino and Hispanic-American students as well as international students from Spanish-speaking countries.

A Black Student Union, **SPIRIT** champions contributions of Black people and Black culture to society, as well as instills consciousness and awareness of the state of Black affairs at CMU and beyond.





**The School of Art at Carnegie Mellon University is deeply rooted in a culture of vital knowledge and endless potential.** We understand that the decision to study art is a bold move within our current culture, and we embrace the role of artists and creative thinkers in moving society forward toward a better future.

The School of Art fosters a rigorous interdisciplinary curriculum that allows students to move fluidly from traditional studio courses to cutting-edge lab environments, and from intimate roundtable discussion seminars to large-scale hackathons, symposia, and lecture series. Students range from focused painters and experimental programmers to social practitioners and politically engaged game designers. The School welcomes new approaches, processes, and categories of creative exploration.

Housed in one of the most progressive and respected research hubs in the world—home to AI, autonomous vehicles, and groundbreaking robotics—the School of Art is committed to the pursuit of expansive thought and radical expression that crosses the disciplinary boundaries of science, technology, the arts, and the humanities. We are proud to foster future generations of innovative thinkers and practitioners by cultivating unlimited exploration and creation.

Students are placed first in everything we do. The School of Art is continually redefining our parameters, growing our faculty, and rethinking our offerings, from new courses such as Art & Machine Learning to an evolving selection of classes in traditional media such as painting and printmaking. All courses are built on a foundation of creative and intellectual rigor with a commitment to social justice and professional preparation.

We offer an exceptional student-to-teacher ratio and provide vast resources of space, technology, and knowledge across the School and our campus. We are committed to never being satisfied with the present, continually asking how society can improve, progress, and mature. I am extremely proud to head such an extraordinary school, and to work alongside the artists and thinkers who make up our faculty and student community.

**Charlie White**

Head, School of Art  
Carnegie Mellon University



**Carnegie Mellon University  
School of Art**

**College of Fine Arts, 300  
5000 Forbes Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890**

**412 268 2409**

**art.cmu.edu  
@cmuschoolofart**



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