A Complete Guide to Admission the Performing and Visual Arts:

Choosing the right fit, admissions preparation and post graduation statistics

ED SCHOENBERG

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Myths and Realities about the Arts Profession

WHY GRADUATES ARE SELF-SUFFICIENT
Myths About Arts Education

- Lack rigor and/or structure
- Do not prepare individuals for a career opportunities
- Not for those looking for a academic challenge
- The arts should be pursued as a hobby
- Unemployable outside the arts
- Must be famous to be successful
- Creates starving artists
Don't Let Your Kids Study These Majors: Fine Arts

From YAHOO: Education, May 13, 2013:

Imagine your son creating magnificent pieces of art that are featured in well-known galleries. It's a nice fantasy - right up until your newly-minted college graduate realizes how broke he is because he isn't selling work, exhibiting in a gallery, or getting commissions.

The sad truth, is that this isn't 15th-century Renaissance Italy when artists were paid by kings and queens to create artwork. In fact, according to the Georgetown report, there's a 12.6 percent rate of unemployment amongst recent graduates who majored in fine arts.

Here's why: In these tough economic times, there just aren't a lot of people buying expensive pieces of art, Reynaldo says. So it can be tough to be a self-sustained, financially-stable artist.

All things considered, your kid is probably better off relegating this field of study to a hobby.
A Culture of Questions & Revisions

Critique:

• analyzes, interprets, and evaluates the art, answering the questions How? Why? And how well?
• how does the viewer respond to the piece?

It is up to the artist to interpret the critique, make decisions based on the interpretations and ultimately decide to adjust based on the critique or move forward as is.
Art Degree = Creative Capital

The Rise of the Creative Class (Richard Florida):

• the creative class now comprises 30% of the workforce
• the creative economy is about innovation, business and culture

The MFA is the new MBA (Daniel Pink)
Due to the importance of *creativity* in the *innovation economy*, more people are working in arts than ever before:

More than **25 million** in 2013

Projected **28 million** in 2020

More than **25 million people** are working in art related industry. By 2020, this is projected to be more that **28 million** – a **15% increase**.
SNAAP – Strategic National Arts Alumni Project

A project of the Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research in collaboration with the Vanderbilt University Curb Center for Art, Enterprise, and Public Policy.

Based on the 2011 survey responses of 33,801 arts alumni from:

- 66 - Institutions
- 8 - Arts high schools
- 58 - Postsecondary institutions in the United States

http://snaap.indiana.edu/snaapshot/
Q: How much did the institution help you to acquire or develop creative thinking and problem solving?

- Very Much: 61%
- Some: 31%
- Very Little: 6%
- Not at all: 2%

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Q: The importance of creative thinking and problem solving to performing effectively in profession or work life?

- Very Much: 92%
- Some: 7%
- Very Little: 0%
- Not at all: 0%
Choosing the Right Program

FINDING THE RIGHT FIT
Choosing The Right Fit

- Four-Year Colleges and Universities
- Performing and Visual Arts Schools
- Conservatories
- Community Colleges
- Vocational/Trade-Technical
Four-Year Colleges and Universities

- Public and Private
- Broad based liberal arts curriculum
  - *Liberal arts studies can and should inspire your artistic practice.*
- Opportunity to double major or minor
- Ability to switch majors
- University experience
  - *Clubs, sororities, fraternities, sports, etc.*
- Professional Schools
Performing and Visual Art Schools

- The majority are private non-profit colleges (AICAD)
- Smaller campus atmosphere (150 to 3000+)
- Critique based education
- All degree majors are in the arts
- Surrounded by others that have a same passion for the arts
- Liberal arts are still required for graduation
  - *Usually courses are geared towards or designed for artists*
Conservatories

• Designed to preserve and perfect the knowledge of the performing arts
• Looking for polish from a prospective student
• The majority of students will self-select or will be recommended by private tutors and/or instructors
• Many do not grant degrees
• Directed education in the performing arts
Community Colleges

• For the student not yet ready to enter the rigors of a competitive arts-based program

• Use to build or expand arts knowledge to create a more competitive audition or portfolio

• Increase GPA – clean slate from high school

• Save money while completing lower division coursework

• Important to be self-directed
Trade / Technical Colleges

• Majority are for-profit/proprietary institutions
• They can receive up to 90% of their revenue from federal student aid
• For the student who is not looking for the same rigors
• Hands-on training
• Employment-targeted education
• May or may not grant degrees
• Many of their credits may not non-transferable to a four-year colleges or universities
Summer Programs

• Gives a student a chance to “test drive” a school or a particular major
• Opportunity to build a portfolio or audition repertoire
• Meet new artist mentors, some of which may sit on admissions panels at that particular school or program
• Expand arts knowledge, taking students beyond their comfort zone and exposing them to more advanced techniques and concepts
• Meet other students of similar ages/artistic inclinations to compare and contrast ideas, schools, ambitions, and goals
• Build a resume of extracurricular material for the college application
• Shows colleges that the student is willing to put in time outside of regular classes to develop his/her artistic discipline
Degree Types . . . BA and BFA

BFA:
- The majority of course work focuses on intensive visual or performing arts studio classes supported by a program of general studies
- Usually requires an area of specialty
- 66% of courses in the arts; 34% in general liberal studies

BA:
- Focuses on art and design in the context of a broad program of general studies
- 33 – 40% in the arts; balance in liberal studies and electives
Degree Types . . . B.ARCH and AD

B.ARCH (Bachelor of Architecture)
- 5 year program
- 160 undergrad credits

AD (Artistic Diploma)
- Non-degree program
- Specialized training of unusually accomplished performers
To Find Fit . . . Size and Location

ENROLLMENT

○ Overall size of the institution?

○ Student teacher ratio in arts-based courses vs. liberal arts courses?

LOCATION

◦ Access to professional venues (museums, galleries, theaters, and concerts)?

◦ Attraction of regional, national, and international talent?

◦ Opportunity to perform or exhibit?

◦ Availability of internships?
Find the Fit: Facilities and Reputation

FACILITIES
- Is there adequate studio space and/or practice rooms?
- Do the research resources meet my needs?
- Do I have access to labs, classrooms and practice facilities after hours?

REPUTATION
- Are the instructors known in their field?
- Is the school respected in the industry?
- What created the school’s reputation, and is this image still valid?
- Even though the school is well known, is it right for me?
Find the Fit . . . Admission

ADMISSIONS QUALIFICATIONS/Criteria

◦ How much value is placed on academics such as GPA, test scores and writing?
◦ How much emphasis is placed on the strength of my portfolio/audition?
◦ How will they view my creative talent in relationship to my academic achievements?

BALANCE
Portfolios and Auditions
Performing Arts . . . Auditions

PUNCTUALITY . . . Arrive early and allow plenty of time before the audition to warm up and organize your thoughts.

INTERVIEW . . . Prepare for a personal interview. Be ready to articulate immediate goals and your goals for the future. Understand the mission of the school so that you may tell the interviewer how attending that particular school will help you achieve your goals.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION . . . As requested from the school, at least one from your primary performance instructor.
Performing Arts . . . Auditions

ACTING / DANCE / MUSIC / MUSICAL THEATER
- Make time for a physical and/or vocal warm-up prior to the audition
- Wear appropriate clothing
- Picture/Resume
- Collect and prepare audition material well in advance
- Be prepared for the unexpected

**REMEMBER!**: Appearance and attitude do matter.

*The audition begins the minute you walk on campus.*
Question

What is the parent’s role in the audition process?
Visual Arts . . . Portfolios

THE PORTFOLIO:

- Represents an applicant as a potential student and young artist
- Preparation should be an exciting and thoughtful process
- Most composed of ten finished pieces for every one that is included in the final portfolio
- For most competitive programs and private art schools, will be a determining factor in the admission process to that particular college

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Visual Arts . . .

Portfolio Composition

Selecting what to include should not be a nerve-wracking experience. Most art programs will want to see works that fall into three distinct categories:

1. Observational art
2. Personal art
3. Home exam

Some colleges require a combination of two or three categories, and others want to see only one category.
Many performing and visual arts college and universities use online digital upload systems to collect performance material, portfolios, statements/essays, transcripts and other evidence of creativity.

• Read the instructions thoroughly before you begin the process.
• Prep digital files in advance.
• Follow provided submission guidelines.
• Some may require an additional payment.
• Don’t wait until the last minute!
Website Resources

www.nacacnet.org/college-fairs/PVA-College-Fairs
Performing and Visual Arts College Fairs

http://snaap.indiana.edu
Strategic National Arts Alumni Project

http://www.portfolioday.net
National Portfolio Day Association

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Additional Resources

The Rise of the Creative Class - Richard Florida

Talent is Overrated: What Really Separates World-Class Performers from Everybody Else - Geoff Colvin

The Critique Handbook: The Art Student’s Sourcebook and Survival Guide - Kendall Buster and Paula Crawford

A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future - Daniel Pink

A Whole New Mind: Moving from the Information Age to the Conceptual Age - Daniel Pink

Design Ecologies: Essays on the Nature of Design - Lisa Tilder and Beth Blostein, Editors
Additional Resource

A Guide to College Choices for the Performing and Visual Arts

By Kavin Buck & Ed Schoenberg

Available at: www.amazon.com
paperback and e-book
Questions?

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