

Art, Art History, and Design

Interim Director

- Downing A. Thomas

Undergraduate majors: art (BA, BFA); art history (BA)

Undergraduate minors: art; art history

Graduate degrees: MA in art; MA in art history; MFA in art; PhD in art history

Faculty: <https://art.uiowa.edu/people/faculty>

Website: <https://art.uiowa.edu/>

The School of Art, Art History, and Design provides a creative, multidisciplinary environment for students of the studio arts and the history of art. Established in 1936, the school is firmly grounded in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. It encourages interaction among its diverse faculty as well as collaboration with related disciplines across campus.

Iowa's art, art history, and design graduates enjoy success as practicing professional artists, professors of art history, teachers, museum directors and curators, theater designers, commercial designers, and art administrators.

The School of Art, Art History, and Design's Visual Arts Building opened in fall 2016 and is identified by architectural publications as one of the best designed new buildings in the world. The Visual Arts Building is adjacent to the second School of Art, Art History, and Design building, Art Building West. Visit the School of Art, Art History, and Design website and MyUI for information about studio, office, and classroom sites.

Studio Art

The School of Art, Art History, and Design is committed to students' professional futures. The studio laboratories, some of the finest facilities nationally, are updated annually with leading-edge production equipment. Students have the opportunity to develop the visual vocabulary and cross-media literacies required by the rapidly changing contemporary world. The visiting artist series introduces students to national and international leaders in the field, while a varied, diverse, and professionally active faculty ensures that the area is contemporary in its approach and pluralistic in its scope.

Undergraduate and graduate students select their major and minor studio art disciplines from ceramics, drawing, graphic design, intermedia, jewelry and metal arts, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, and three-dimensional (3D) design.

Art History

Art history, a broad intellectual discipline, is central to the humanities. Diverse approaches characterize the school's art history faculty, who have interdisciplinary ties within and beyond the university. Their primary mission is to help students develop skills for exploring issues and problems central to the history of art as a whole as well as to its specialized areas. Because the major in art history stresses the development of critical visual thinking and writing, it prepares students for graduate work in art history and for other professional fields as well.

Student Organizations

The undergraduate Art History Society and the graduate Art History Society sponsor activities for students. The Faculty/Graduate Student Art History Colloquium meets five times each semester to focus on professional development and issues of broad interest in art. Other student organizations include Students in Design, Children of the Clay (formerly the Ceramics Society), and the Iowa Smith Guild.

Interdisciplinary Resources

Colloquia, visiting artists and lecturer programs, and graduate workshops bring visitors to the School of Art, Art History, and Design and provide open forums for discussion of issues in art and scholarship.

Among the school's major assets is the Project for the Advanced Study of Art and Life in Africa (PASALA), an interdisciplinary program that brings together faculty with international reputations in art history, anthropology, film, history, and literature to offer courses and independent study of art in West, Central, East, and South Africa. The result is a program of unusual breadth and depth of expertise. PASALA offers scholarships and support for research in Africa and dissertation preparation to outstanding students. A major resource for PASALA is the Stanley Collection of African Art. Visit African Art on the Stanley Museum of Art website to learn more.

The School of Art, Art History, and Design affiliates with the Department of American Studies, giving students opportunities to study not only the history of American art but a variety of interdisciplinary programs in American history, literature, and politics. The school also is linked to the Medieval Studies Program, which offers an undergraduate certificate and courses in the history, literature, and culture of the Middle Ages.

Related Certificate

Certificate in Book Studies/Book Arts and Technologies

The Center for the Book and the School of Art, Art History, and Design enable students to earn the Certificate in Book Studies/Book Arts and Technologies and the MFA in art. Students may wish to earn the MFA in a studio art area (printmaking, drawing, painting, design, etc.) in combination with the Certificate in Book Studies/Book Arts and Technologies. If accepted to both programs, students are advised and matriculate through both programs independently. Most, if not all, of the 18 s.h. of elective coursework required for the MFA may be applied toward the Center for the Book certificate. It is possible for students to earn both credentials in the same amount of time required to earn the MFA degree.

Advisors in both areas of study assist interested students in discerning whether the MFA in book arts (Center for the Book) or the MFA in art and the certificate option is most appropriate to a student's background and career goals. In large part, this is determined by the degree to which books and book arts are central to the applicant's chosen path.