GRADUATE STUDIES
A PLACE FOR DEEP INQUIRY AND EXPLORATION
Recognized by its peer institutions for excellence in graduate education, Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts has earned the reputation as one of the great schools of arts and design. We attract students of the highest caliber from around the world and promise them a life-long passion for, engagement with, and conversation about the arts. We offer a community of intellectually curious faculty who support interdisciplinary and experimental inquiry.
CREATIVE IMMERSION

The VCUarts experience is focused on an energized immersion in the creative culture of Richmond, Virginia — one of the region’s most culturally vibrant cities and a key part of the graduate experience. Richmond is a combination of charm, history, architecture, a do-it-yourself ethic and more culture per-capita than any city its size. The city is home to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, which holds one of the country’s top public collections; numerous galleries; performing arts venues; theaters; and the forthcoming VCU Institute for Contemporary Art, designed by Steven Holl Architects. From VCU, it’s a quick trip to Washington D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, as well as many museums, libraries and research facilities along the east coast. It is also an hour’s drive to the ocean, the Blue Ridge Mountains and Shenandoah Valley.

VCUarts lives at the center of something special — a university classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a “Research University—Very High Research Activity,” the highest ranking afforded by the foundation. For our students and faculty, opportunities abound to explore the surrounding academic, intellectual and professional landscape to gain experiences outside of a traditional arts education.
STUDENTS ARE IMMERSED IN THEIR RESPECTIVE DISCIPLINES AND CONSCIOUSLY CONNECTED TO THE WORLD(S) IN WHICH THEY LIVE, CREATE, DISCOVER AND ENGAGE.

— JAMES FRAZIER, ASSOCIATE DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND FACULTY AFFAIRS

INTELLECTUAL CURIOITY, SUPPORTED

VCUarts alumni are artists, scholars, educators and entrepreneurs who’ve made an indelible mark on their professions. They are MacArthur “genius grant” recipients; Guggenheim, Fulbright and Javits Fellows; Emmy and Grammy awardees and more. Our faculty is recognized nationally and internationally for their artistic, research and scholarly achievements while never losing sight of their important role mentoring the next generation of creative visionaries. We offer access to and support from a community of creative intellectuals that cannot be matched elsewhere.
FUNDING

VCUarts offers scholarships and competitive, merit-based Graduate Teaching Assistantships that provide tuition support and a nine-month stipend. For our most outstanding candidates, we offer Graduate Assistantships with tuition support and a twelve-month stipend. These awards are granted through the departments and require an outstanding academic history in combination with work that demonstrates the highest level of accomplishment and potential. Graduate funding is awarded upon acceptance into a program and all applicants are considered for support.

Graduate students are eligible for Graduate Travel Grants to mount exhibitions, to present academic papers, to give performances and for other opportunities that bring their work to a larger audience. VCUarts typically funds more than $30,000 annually for graduate student travel. An additional $30,000 is committed annually for Graduate Research Grants, competitive grants for eligible students who have completed candidacy.

Graduate students are encouraged to apply for additional funding directly through the university and other external funders.

— ANDER MIKALSON, PAINTING + PRINTMAKING MFA ’12

I HAVE A LOT LESS DEBT THAN MY PEERS AT OTHER ART SCHOOLS, AND THAT MEANS THAT I CAN AFFORD A STUDIO AND I CAN AFFORD TO SPEND MORE TIME IN IT.
Facilities

VCUarts features comprehensive facilities and technology that serve true arts and design disciplines. Resources include large format printing, photographic quality digital output, 3-D printing, metal and wood workshops, laser cutting, CNC routing, letterpress, ceramics, glassblowing, metalworking and many other specialized equipment. The newly renovated Depot building is home to 3-D printing facilities, a motion capture studio, a cyc wall and green screen facilities, as well as interdisciplinary working space.

Many MFA thesis exhibitions are held on campus at the VCUarts Depot Gallery and the Anderson. MFA candidacy exhibitions, occurring at the end of the first year, are typically held in off-campus spaces, frequently using Richmond’s historic turn-of-the-century buildings and commercial spaces. The Fine Arts Building houses the FAB Gallery, devoted to special projects and graduate student work.
## NATIONAL RANKINGS

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The rankings come from U.S. News & World Report’s 2012 evaluation of graduate schools.
WHAT HAPPENS HERE IS SPECIAL.
WE LOOK FOR ARTISTS TO MINE THE RICH HISTORY OF OUR FIELDS, TAKE RISKS AND HONE IN ON THEIR AUTHENTIC OBSESSIONS.
HERE IS SPECIAL.
ARTISTS TO MINE
RICH HISTORY OF OUR FIELDS,
TAKE RISKS AND HONE IN ON
AUTHENTIC OBSESSIONS.

— SONIA CLARK, CHAIR OF CRAFT/MATERIAL STUDIES
THE DEPARTMENT HELPED ME GROW AS AN EDUCATOR; I LEARNED TO GUIDE STUDENTS TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN CONCEPTS AND METHODS AS ARTISTS.

— STEPHANIE O’DELL, MAE + LICENSURE CANDIDATE

ART EDUCATION

MAE
MAE + LICENSURE
PhD IN EDUCATION: ART EDUCATION

Our students stretch, risk and lead through real-life engagements with diverse people, museums and nonprofits in the Richmond community. Our nationally and internationally prominent faculty focus on impact, guiding students to imagine new possibilities and to cultivate the skills and resilience necessary to develop their vision into reality. We emphasize museum education, technology, curriculum, critical thinking, service-learning, aesthetics, assessment, program evaluation, gaming, culturally relevant pedagogy and urban education.

VISIT THE PROGRAM ONLINE
arts.vcu.edu/arteducation/mae
arts.vcu.edu/arteducation/phd

CONTACT
Ryan M. Patton, PhD
Assistant Professor and
Director of Graduate Studies
804.828.3772
rpatton@vcu.edu
THE DEPARTMENT PROVIDED ME WITH THE NECESSARY CONNECTIONS IN THE RICHMOND MUSEUM COMMUNITY TO GAIN THE HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE I NEEDED TO BE A COMPETITIVE PROFESSIONAL.

— OWEN DUFFY, ART HISTORY DOCTORAL CANDIDATE

ART HISTORY

MA IN ART HISTORY: HISTORICAL STUDIES OR MUSEUM STUDIES
PhD IN ART HISTORY: CURATORIAL OR HISTORICAL STUDIES

Come engage in critical conversations about philosophy, anthropology, history, religious and literary studies with scholars, artists and curators in the department of art history. Our interdisciplinary approach is complemented by our setting in a dynamic city and within a large, urban university that is nationally ranked for research. The department has robust offerings in modern and contemporary art; German art and historiography; African and African diaspora art; and museum/curatorial studies.
CRAFT/MATERIAL STUDIES

MFA IN FINE ARTS: CERAMICS, FIBERS, FURNITURE DESIGN, GLASSWORKING OR JEWELRY/METALWORKING

We promote artistic practices rooted in the values of craft that investigate craft’s inherent relationship to the world with fearless innovation. We’re a community of artists who explore the conceptual, historical, technical and haptic aspects of clay, fiber, glass, metal and wood — and take them to new places.

VISIT THE PROGRAM ONLINE
arts.vcu.edu/craftgrad

CONTACT
Sonya Clark, MFA
Professor, Department Chair and Director of Graduate Studies
804.828.1477
crafts@vcu.edu
Entering our program means joining a community of learners – students and faculty jointly engaged in intellectual and creative growth and development. We look at the influence of visual communications design on society and culture and how it affects both the perception and reality of the individual’s quality of life. Our faculty emphasizes a rigorous theoretical framework, a historical perspective and an awareness of contemporary issues as the basis for addressing present and future communication problems.

VISIT THE PROGRAM ONLINE
arts.vcu.edu/graphicdesign/mfa

CONTACT
Director of Graduate Studies
804.828.1709
gdesmfa@vcu.edu
INTERIOR DESIGN

MFA IN DESIGN: INTERIOR ENVIRONMENTS,
POST-PROFESSIONAL + PROFESSIONAL ENTRY LEVEL

Our two-year intensive prepares students to adaptively and creatively solve problems, to communicate visually – and verbally – and to be empowered to make a difference through design, whether they’ve already been a practicing interior designer, or if they’re just beginning in the field. During the program, students work together in a supportive, close-knit community that encourages vigorous exchange and constructive peer learning.

VISIT THE PROGRAM ONLINE
arts.vcu.edu/idesgrad

CONTACT
Christiana Lafazani, MFA, IDEC, NCIDQ
Associate Professor
Interim Department Chair
and Director of Graduate Studies
804.828.1713
clafazani@vcu.edu
I WAS ABLE TO EXPERIMENT FREELY WITH A MULTITUDE OF METHODS, FROM STOP-MOTION ANIMATION TO DIGITAL COMPOSITING AND SOUND. NOT ONLY WAS I ABLE TO LEARN NEW TECHNICAL SKILLS, BUT I WAS ENCOURAGED IN CRITIQUES WITH FACULTY TO CREATE CONCEPTUALLY MOVING WORK.

— MARTA FINKELSTEIN, KINETIC IMAGING MFA ’15

KINETIC IMAGING

MFA IN FINE ARTS, KINETIC IMAGING

Kinetic Imaging students challenge the rapidly evolving dialogue in media arts. Each year, eight students explore their relationship to culture and society, and develop ways to expand the fields of video art, experimental animation and sound. The intimate size of the program ensures fruitful exchange among students whose direction may not fit traditional film, animation, digital media or media studies programs. Studio space in the Fine Arts Building gives Kinetic Imaging students the opportunity to connect and exchange ideas with students in other fine arts disciplines.

VISIT THE PROGRAM ONLINE
arts.vcu.edu/kineticimaging/mfa

CONTACT
Stephen Vitiello
Professor and Director of Graduate Studies
804.828.7204
smvitiello@vcu.edu
VCU’S ATTENTIVE FACULTY AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM MAKE ME GLAD I CHOSE THE MATX PROGRAM.

— GARRETH BLACKWELL, MEDIA ART & TEXT DOCTORAL CANDIDATE

MEDIA ART & TEXT
PhD IN MEDIA ART & TEXT
Our interdisciplinary MATX program gives students with an MA, MFA or MS the flexibility to further research an issue at the intersection of media, art and text. Taught by faculty from VCUarts, English and Mass Communications departments, the program emphasizes innovative, original scholarship and cross-disciplinary interaction with a focus on writing. Dissertation projects may combine traditional research with creative practice.

VISIT THE PROGRAM ONLINE
matx.vcu.edu

CONTACT
Eric Garberson, PhD
Associate Professor of Art History and Director of MATX
804.828.7295
eggarberson@vcu.edu
THE VCU GRADUATE PROGRAM SAVED MY CAREER...
IT RE-INVIGORATED ME AS AN EDUCATOR AND RE-INVENTED ME AS A CLASSROOM TEACHER.

— AMY BIRDSONG, MM '08

MUSIC

MM IN MUSIC EDUCATION

Experienced music educators hone their skills to become transformative leaders in the field through the VCUarts graduate program in Music Education. Our program — completed over three consecutive summers — emphasizes practical experience, development of the individual interests of our graduate students and the strength of our professional network. Students produce original research under the guidance of our faculty of decorated music education professionals.
Painting + Printmaking

MFA in Fine Arts: Painting or Printmaking

Each of our 15 graduate students engages in two years of full-time course work and intensive studio experience with the ultimate aim of sustaining a meaningful practice as a professional artist. Paintings and prints in all imaginable forms are created in our studios, among them conceptual and parameters-based projects, deliberately de-skilled abstractions, narrative works and paintings as objects and interventions. Since an emphasis is placed on working from concept to form, our students often include other disciplines, such as installation, video and performance, to their practice.

Visit the Program Online
arts.vcu.edu/paintingprintmaking/mfa

Contact
Holly Morrison, MFA
Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies
804.828.1697
hjmorrison@vcu.edu
I DEVELOPED THE TECHNICAL SKILLS I NEED TO BETTER EXPRESS MYSELF THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM, BUT EVEN MORE IMPORTANT TO ME WAS THE UNDERSTANDING THAT I GAINED ABOUT MY RELATIONSHIP TO ART, ART HISTORY, AND THE WORLD.

— CYNTHIA HENEBRY, PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM MFA ’14

PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM

MFA IN FINE ARTS: PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM

The department works to advance the highest standards of photography and film practices by cultivating an artistic community for the development and exchange of progressive visual ideas. We seek dynamic degree-seeking emerging artists whose work challenges the common definitions of photography, film and video, while maintaining the disciplinary integrity of traditional practice. Our MFA students find themselves in an energetic, creative atmosphere that extends beyond the classroom into the local and global art community.

VISIT THE PROGRAM ONLINE
arts.vcu.edu/photofilm/mfa

CONTACT
Paul Thulin, MFA
Assistant Professor and
Director of Graduate Studies
804.828.1695
pbthulin@vcu.edu
SCULPTURE + EXTENDED MEDIA

MFA IN FINE ARTS: SCULPTURE

Our department is a major force, best measured by the challenging, talented and curious students we attract from around the world. Ours is a collegial community where sympathetic and differing opinions lead to spirited, heartfelt discussions and a thorough examination of each student’s practice. Graduate students are provided with generous studio spaces, state-of-the-art equipment and the time, support, and encouragement to pursue their independently determined goals. The faculty spans a diverse spectrum of practices, and all share a profound commitment to their studio practice and to the education of artists. It’s no surprise that U.S. News & World Report has ranked our Sculpture MFA program first in the United States for more than a decade.

VISIT THE PROGRAM ONLINE
arts.vcu.edu/sculpture

CONTACT
Matt King, MFA
Associate Professor, Department Chair, and Director of Graduate Studies
804.828.1511
sculpture@vcu.edu
MY TIME WORKING WITH [THE FACULTY] HAS ALLOWED ME TO WALK INTO ANY CLASSROOM WITH UNDENIABLE CONFIDENCE AND EXPERIENCE. I COULD NOT HAVE ASKED FOR A BETTER EDUCATION.

— BRAD WILLCUTS, THEATRE MFA ’15

THEATRE

MFA IN THEATRE: PEDAGOGY/LITERATURE, PEDAGOGY/PERFORMANCE, COSTUME DESIGN, OR STAGE DESIGN/TECHNICAL THEATRE

Students interested in a career in theater higher education or theater design find the support from our dedicated faculty and from the diverse VCUarts community to explore and hone their focus. Students in all areas of pedagogy and design frequently have the opportunity to assist VCU theatre faculty when working on Broadway, off-Broadway or on regional theatre productions.

VISIT THE PROGRAM ONLINE
arts.vcu.edu/theatregrad

CONTACT
Noreen C. Barnes, PhD
Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies
804.828.1514
theatre@vcu.edu
We believe the designers of the future will need to navigate between forms of practice, combining elements and skills to create new products, visuals, environments and interactions. The purpose of our program is to produce designers who are experts at negotiating and utilizing elements of many different fields to construct new tailored experiences. Students must grasp the myriad of variables involved in meaningful design, while simultaneously having the discipline and rigor to formulate their own assessment of what being a designer entails today.
DEADLINES

JANUARY 15
FALL ENTRY ONLY
MAE in Art Education
MA in Art History (Historical Studies, Museum Studies)
PhD in Art History (Historical Studies, Curatorial)
MFA in Fine Arts (Ceramics, Fiber, Furniture Design, Glassworking, Jewelry/Metalworking, Kinetic Imaging, Painting, Printmaking, Photography and Film, Sculpture)
MFA in Design (Visual Communications)

FEBRUARY 1
FALL ENTRY ONLY
MFA in Design (Interior Environments)
PhD in Education (Art Education)

FEBRUARY 15
FALL ENTRY ONLY
MFA in Theatre (Pedagogy/Literature, Pedagogy/Performance, Costume Design, Stage Design/Technical Theatre)

APRIL 1
SUMMER ENTRY ONLY
MM in Music (Music Education)

INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS
should apply one month before the above deadlines to ensure all application materials are received by the deadline.

GRADUATE STAFF
Melanie Christian, MFA
Co-Coordinator of Graduate Studies
Susan Martin
Co-Coordinator of Graduate Studies
James Frazier, EdD, MFA
Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Faculty Affairs

COMPLETE INFORMATION FOR APPLYING CAN BE FOUND AT:
arts.vcu.edu/apply
FOR GENERAL INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:
artsgrad@vcu.edu
ART EDUCATION
ART HISTORY
CRAFT/MATERIAL STUDIES
DESIGN STUDIES (VCUQATAR)
GRAPHIC DESIGN
INTERIOR DESIGN
KINETIC IMAGING
MEDIA ART & TEXT
MUSIC
PAINTING + PRINTMAKING
PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM
SCULPTURE + EXTENDED MEDIA
THEATRE
VCU OPENED UP MY UNDERSTANDING FOR A MORE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THINKING AND MAKING, FOR LETTING ROOM TO SURPRISE MYSELF, TO WORK TOWARDS SOMETHING BEYOND MY OWN PERSONAL LIMITATIONS.

— OSCAR SANTILLAN, SCULPTURE MFA '11