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The Origin Story

In 1929, a young husband and wife couple, Clara and Richard S. Stephens, established a small school to teach advertising classes out of their rented loft apartment in San Francisco. Richard taught the 45 students who were officially enrolled, and Clara ran the day-to-day and kept the books.

Today, Academy of Art University offers more than 124 accredited degree options spanning 30 areas of study including art, design, music, acting, and writing for media. Dr. Elisa Stephens, granddaughter of the school’s founders, directs hundreds of instructors and staff to support a student body of thousands.

"All are welcome here. Our diversity gives students a place to truly be themselves, and to go for everything they have ever wanted."

— Dr. Elisa Stephens, President since 1992
What We Believe

Academy of Art University has maintained a set of values which we have held fast to since our founding in 1929. These are the things that set us apart from the competition and are key benefits for our students:

**FACULTY**
Creative professionals teach from their industry experience.

**FACILITIES**
Access to tools and equipment that prepare students for success.

**ALUMNI**
Our network of 50,000 alumni reflects our core values globally.

**LOCATION**
San Francisco is a hub of culture, art, design, and technology.

**ONLINE CLASSES**
Innovative, engaging, and flexible online degree programs.

**PARTNERSHIPS**
Networking with industry leaders creates lasting career connections.

**CURRICULUM**
Hands-on, portfolio-building, career-prep courses.
Campus Life

Academy of Art University sits at the heart of California’s most dynamic artistic, cultural, and technological resources, making it an extraordinary place to be an artist, designer, and college student.
Join students with similar interests to discuss ideas, promote your work, form collaborations, and share information. The following clubs and organizations are available to join:

- American Institute of Architecture Students
- Anime Club
- Beyond the Front Row (Fashion Club)
- Black Student Union
- Chinese Students Association
- Christian Student Fellowship
- Crochet Club
- Comics and Concept Art Club
- Drama Club
- Drawaholics Anonymous Crew
- Fine Arts Online Club
- Gaming at Academy of Art
- Improv Club
- Interior Architecture & Design
- Indian Student Association
- Indonesian Student Association
- Jewelry & Metal Arts Club
- Kappa Sigma Fraternity
- Mandarin Animation Community
- Outloud! LGBTQ Club
- Sigma Delta Sorority
- Tea Time Animation
- Urban Knights Radio
- Veterans Club
Our Facilities

Our purpose-built facilities include the industry-standard technology and equipment you’ll likely use in your future career. To ensure you have the best possible environment for practice-based learning, our facilities and programs are updated regularly.

Touring the facilities seals the deal for many prospective students. To schedule your personalized tour, call 415-618-8576 or email campustours@academyart.edu and we will customize a tour that’s right for you!

Tips for Success

Our Summer Hospitality Program gives prospective students and a guest a complimentary 2-night stay in Academy housing, including a full guided tour of campus. For details call 1-800-544-2787.
Housing

At Academy of Art University, you live and study as part of a diverse community of artists and designers in one of the most dynamic cities on earth. Our Department of Housing & Residence Life works to ensure that our residence halls offer a welcoming, inclusive, and safe living environment that supports student growth, artistic development, and learning.

Tips for Success

Some of your best friends in life will be the people you meet on your floor. Introduce yourself. Ask if anyone wants to grab some food. Start a movie night. Be friendly! Putting yourself out there early is a great way to make a lifelong impression.
Cafés and Dining

DINING
Stay healthy with delicious and filling meals from our dining halls with flexible meal plans and Knight Kash. The Knight Kash program enables your student ID for dining on campus and at select off-campus vendors, giving you convenience, variety, and value.

MEAL PLANS
We offer a variety of meal plans to give you options based on your schedule and dining preferences. Choose between our platinum, gold, silver, or bronze meal plans. For more information, please contact the Department of Housing and Residence Life at housing@academyart.edu.

LOCATIONS
Café Dior, 625 Polk St.
Café Rodin, 1055 Pine St.
Art Café, 655 1/2 Sutter St.
Café 180, 180 New Montgomery St.
620 Café, 620 Sutter St.
I-House Café, 860 Sutter St.
Extended Campus

“If you’re alive, you can’t be bored in San Francisco. If you’re not alive, San Francisco will bring you to life.” — William Saroyan, American author.

The Bay Area is a dynamic, evolving, and beautiful place. From inspiring natural scenery and classic institutions to new traditions and only-in-S.F. events, the Bay Area has something for everyone — and a lot of things everyone should experience at least once.

Tips for Success

Remember to get out of the studios and dorms once in a while. Classes are challenging and require a ton of hard work. Taking breaks is a must and fresh air helps clear your mind. Have some fun.
Online Education

We are early innovators in online education—creating visually engaging and effective online degree programs that prepare students for success. We also create our own online tools specific to the needs of art and design students.

Our online degrees provide the same rigorous education that we offer on campus with greater flexibility. Take full-time or part-time classes. Let nothing stand in your way of pursuing your creative goals.

Tips for Success

Don’t leave your online homework to the last minute. Work on managing your time: it will save you from feeling stressed, and help your semester go more smoothly.
Athletics

We are the only higher arts education institution in the U.S. to have an NCAA athletics program—14 varsity athletics teams that represent the Urban Knights in NCAA Division II intercollegiate sports.

**WOMEN’S**
- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Soccer
- Softball
- Tennis
- Track & Field
- Volleyball

**MEN’S**
- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Soccer
- Track & Field
Art U Athletes Drafted by Major League Baseball

**NATE GERCKEN**
Multimedia Communications BFA
Elizabethton Twins, MiLB

Gercken was selected by the Minnesota Twins in the 17th round with the 500th pick overall in the Major League Baseball draft.

**BRANDON POULSON**
Multimedia Communications BFA
GCL Twins, MiLB

Poulson was offered a professional sports contract from the Minnesota Twins.
Student Work
Creating the Future

The Academy’s 50,000-plus alumni are some of the most sought-after professionals in art and design today. They use their skills, talent, and influence to make a real difference in the world.

“ There are 1.3 billion people across the word with various disabilities. So how can we not design for them? It's a need and it's smart business. „

— Stephanie Thomas
Thought Leader, creator of Cur8able
MA 2013, Fashion Journalism

Cur8able is a disability fashion lifestyle hub for those with disabilities or physical challenges. During a speech at TEDxYYC in 2016, Thomas shared her mission of imparting confidence, reassurance, and self-reliance to those with disabilities. Cur8able’s message was born from more than 20 years of research on the clothing industry and retail trends for people with disabilities. She is now the go-to stylist in Hollywood for actors and influencers with disabilities.
“Never rest on your laurels when you’ve done something great—continue to try doing something greater. It’s always about looking for that next challenge.”

— Jason Sperling  
Chief Creative Development at RPA  
MFA 1998, Advertising

Winner of Cannes Gold Lion, Cannes Gold Cyber Lion, several One Show Golden Pencils and Clio Gold awards, and the Yahoo Purple Chair Award. Adweek declared Sperling’s “Get a Mac” ads for Apple the best campaign of the decade in 2010. He is also co-creator of the “Imaginary Friend Society,” a pro bono campaign for the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation.

“I’m very happy I studied at the Academy because it gave me a well-rounded perspective on art, not just visual effects. The experience grew me as an artist.”

— Jan Philip Cramer  
Animation Director at Digital Domain  
BFA 2004, Animation & Visual Effects

Cramer has worked on some of the highest-profile, and highest-grossing, feature films ever made. His list of credits include Avengers: Infinity War, Spider-Man: Homecoming, X-Men: Days of Future Past, Deadpool, and many more. In 2011, he received Academy of Art University’s Emerging Artist Alumni Award, and in 2017, he became a member of the prestigious Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.
Our Faculty

The Academy was founded on a revolutionary principle: professional artists, who make their living on their creativity, should develop the curriculum. In fact, creative professionals are the best equipped to impart the demands of the working world to their students.

We are first and foremost a professional school; a specialized place to study for a career in art, design, acting, music, or communications. Useful skills and practical principles are taught here by professionals in the industry. Below are a few notable companies our faculty have worked for:

- Hermès Paris
- Cartier
- Gensler
- Disney Pixar
- Lucasfilm Ltd.
- Apple
- Microsoft
- Calvin Klein
- EA
- Adobe
- DreamWorks
- Versace
- Sony
A History of Success

Since 1929, artists and designers have called Academy of Art University their home. While a lot has changed over the years, our primary goal stays the same: preparing aspiring artists and designers for professional careers in creative industries. And because our goal remains the same, our future will always be bright.

1929
1 LOFT STUDIO / 1 INSTRUCTOR
1 DISCIPLINE / 1 DEGREE PROGRAM
45 ADVERTISING STUDENTS

2020
38 BUILDINGS / 1220 INSTRUCTORS
22 DISCIPLINES / 144 DEGREE PROGRAMS
11,000 STUDENTS
Industry Partnerships

NETWORKING IS KEY
Our industry partners—established and emerging companies, artists and designers—continually seek to hire, mentor and collaborate with our students and graduates.

Each semester, the Academy hosts top partners for industry panels, company presentations, in-class lectures, portfolio review sessions, and interviews. Businesses post jobs, arrange on-campus and online industry panels, and host recruiting sessions.

Our annual Spring Show Student Showcase gives Academy students an opportunity to strut their stuff. Open to the public, the event is a favorite for industry professionals who have been known to hire our talented students on the spot. A few of the other networking opportunities that put students in direct contact with hiring companies include: New York Fashion Show, San Francisco Fashion Show, the Ideate Conference, and our advertising (Young & Hungry) and animation (Studio X) studios.

Here is a list of some of the companies our students have partnered with in recent years:
Schools and Degree Programs

We offer pre-college, certificate, undergraduate, and graduate degree programs in a number of creative fields covering art, design, technology, media, and communications. See more below:

**ACTING**
AA, BFA, MA, MFA
The School of Acting helps prepare you to become a leading artist in theatre, film, and television. Gain marketable skills while developing the ability to deliver truthful performances that qualify you to work on a wide array of acting projects.

**ADVERTISING**
CERT, AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Learn to mix pop culture with storytelling, art, media, and design. Gain a comprehensive suite of advertising skills, including the strategic use of photography, illustration, typography, graphics, color palettes, cinematography, UX/UI, and aesthetics.
ART EDUCATION
BFA, CRED, CRED2, MA, MA2
The best teachers are lifelong students. The greatest art instructors are lifelong artists. Our studio space, workshops, diverse design courses, and field training will help you learn to inspire a new generation of artists and guide others to artistic fulfillment.

ANIMATION & VISUAL EFFECTS
CERT, AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Animation brings dreams to life using the force of imagination. Limitless worlds both familiar and strange exist at your fingertips. Get hands-on experience with the full animation and VFX production pipeline.

ARCHITECTURE
B.Arch, BA, M.Arch, M.Arch2, MA, MA2
The School of Architecture is a progressive design laboratory of highly passionate students and a distinguished faculty of practicing architects, who work together to explore the boundaries of this compelling profession.

ART HISTORY
BA, BFA, MA
The masterpieces of the past set precedents for the future. The art historian curates inspiration for the next generation. Learn to understand form and expression in our fine art studios, while gaining an understanding of history and cultural context in the classroom.
COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES
BA, MA
Learn to tell compelling stories on all screens and in media. Learn by doing as you communicate within a dynamic, ever-changing media landscape—from broadcast and streaming, to mobile and social.

FASHION
CERT, AA, BA, BFA, MA, MFA
The School of Fashion degree options span the full fashion career spectrum—from design, to the business and communications of fashion. Gain a thorough knowledge of the fashion industry as you prepare to become a part of it. Degree programs include Art Direction, Design, Knitwear, Textiles, Costume, Footwear & Accessory, Styling, Art Direction, Journalism, Product Development, Merchandising, Visual Merchandising, Merchandising & Management, Marketing, and Marketing & Brand Management.

FINE ART
CERT, AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Master techniques in painting, sculpture, jewelry making, printmaking, and the business skills necessary to make a living. Explore your creativity, define your vision, and graduate prepared to share your talent with the world.

GAME DEVELOPMENT
AA, BFA, BS, MA, MFA
Experience the entire game development cycle—from creating concept art and UI & UX for games, to writing robust code and artificial intelligence (non-player character behavior). Develop the skills for an exciting career in one of the most vibrant and expansive industries today.
GRAPHIC DESIGN
CERT, AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Learn 21st-century skills in a studio setting. Our Graphic Design program integrates practice, theory, and inquiry—while encouraging and refining innovation, critical thinking, visual literacy, conceptual problem solving, and technical excellence.

ILLUSTRATION
CERT, AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Develop expert technique, focusing on the subtleties of color, expression, and environment to inspire the world with your boundless imagination. Learn the business and marketing savvy required to succeed in your career.

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN
CERT, AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Create the future. We focus on the art, science, and business of the industrial design discipline. Our curriculum and facilities reflect the trends and requirements of our industry, and our teaching faculty is comprised of award-winning practicing designers.

INTERIOR ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN
CERT, AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Create dynamic interiors using innovative approaches to spatial organization, materials, and lighting. Curated for the serious professional designer, the program teaches the skills to help you succeed in a number of architecture and design careers.
MOTION PICTURES & TELEVISION
CERT, AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Taught by professionals working in the industry, including Academy and Emmy Award winners, our students learn their craft through hands-on filmmaking experience. Direct. Produce. Shoot. Edit. Design. Write. Follow your passion for creating entertainment.

JEWELRY & METAL ARTS
AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Our degree programs are designed to nurture your personal creative visions, and give you the skills to bring them to life. Collaborate with your peers from the other art and design departments and learn to tell larger stories through integration.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
AA, BFA, MA, MFA, MFA2
Learn to create relevant, innovative, and artistic solutions for all kinds of different outdoor places. From urban plazas and parklets, to tidal marshes and bike trails—we teach the skills needed to resolve contemporary design challenges, large and small.

MUSIC PRODUCTION & SOUND DESIGN FOR VISUAL MEDIA
AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Turn your love of audio into a successful career. Cinema, video games, virtual reality—today’s audio professionals have both technical and aesthetic skills to create soundtracks of impeccable craftsmanship and artistry—and we will teach you how to do it.
PHOTOGRAPHY
CERT, AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Turn your passion for photography into a creative career! Learn the skills required to relay advanced storytelling concepts in a visually compelling way. We’ll help you develop a professional-level portfolio to advance your career in the industry.

VISUAL DEVELOPMENT
AA, BFA, MA, MFA
Gain the skills to realize anything you can imagine in traditional and new media. Learn to create elaborate scenes and characters for movies or video games—or concepts for both. Create an artistic portfolio of work that you can carry into your career.

WEB DESIGN & NEW MEDIA
CERT, AA, BFA, MA, MFA
We prepare you for a leading career in experiential design and digital media. Learn the skills needed to create a professional portfolio that meets the needs of today’s most innovative industries—web, technology, advertising, entertainment, and more.

WRITING FOR FILM, TELEVISION, & DIGITAL MEDIA
BFA, MFA
Study feature film and television writing with Academy and Emmy Award-winning writers, producers, and development executives. Learn visual storytelling from the ground up. Explore basic production realities, including how directing and acting enhance the work of the writer.
Academy of Art University is looking for dedicated students who want to become great innovators, storytellers, collaborators, and problem solvers. Now is the time to start your creative journey.

HOW TO APPLY
Apply online at academyart.edu
Or call 1.800.544.2787
Or apply in person in San Francisco at
79 New Montgomery St. San Francisco, CA 94105
(Monday-Saturday)

YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION MUST INCLUDE:
• $50* application fee ($150 international)
• $95* enrollment fee (domestic only)
• Onsite international applicants require a $300 international student services fee*
• Fees can be paid by MasterCard, Visa, Discover. By mail: check or money order
*all fees are non-refundable & non-transferable
A degree from Academy of Art is an investment that can create personal, intellectual, and professional gains for the rest of your life. Full costs for attending the Academy are covered in detail on our website.

Here are two things you can do now to get started:

1. **Fill out an application.** This costs $50, and will take about 15-20 minutes. When you submit your application, you will be assigned an admissions representative. Your “rep” will be your go-to person for all things Academy.

2. **Complete the FAFSA** (the Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Visit www.fafsa.gov and be sure to include our school code: **007531**. Note that parent involvement is often needed for the FAFSA.

Once you have completed the steps above, you will meet with a financial aid representative to help you create an estimated financial plan. Together, we will tailor a manageable financial plan to help cover the costs of your educational investment. Questions? Call 1-800-544-2787.
Find Your Place

Ask any Academy students how they ended up here, and you’re likely to get a different answer every time.

Some have known for a long time that they wanted to go to art and design school.
Some decided at the last second.
Some had to defend their choice to come, even to friends and family.
Some almost didn’t make it, because everyone else wanted them to do something more “normal”.
Some had to fight to get here.
Some had all the support they needed.
Some came straight from high school.
Some took a more roundabout path.
Some came from the other side of the world.
Some came from right here in the Bay Area.

No matter how they got here, they all had questions about the Academy. What’s the campus like? What’s San Francisco like? Am I going to get along with the other students? What courses do you offer? What opportunities will I have as a student? We hope this brochure answered some of those questions for you. Don’t worry about fitting in—because you’ll fit in perfectly.
Explore the City

SAN FRANCISCO
- GALLERY
- MUSEUM
- THEATER
- MUSIC VENUE
- BLICK ART STORE
- BART STATION

ACADEMY OF ART FACILITIES
- ACADEMIC BUILDING
- AUTO MUSEUM
- CAMPUS HOUSING
- CAMPUS DINING
- CAMPUS GALLERY
- ACADEMY HEADQUARTERS

*Map is not drawn to scale
Academy of Art University is located in downtown San Francisco and provides instruction around the world through its online campus.

We offer training in many specialized creative disciplines:


*The following degree programs are currently not offered 100% online: Acting and Auto Restoration.