Choosing Art as a Career after High School

A Resource Packet for Parents and Students

Santa Margarita Catholic High School Visual Arts Department
Choosing Art as a Career after High School

The staff of the Visual Arts Department at Santa Margarita High School is frequently asked by parents what their son or daughter should do if they decide to choose art as a career after high school. Frequently asked questions include; what courses should my son or daughter take in high school to help prepare them for a career in art? What are the career opportunities in art? Where should my son or daughter attend art school? What is the best way to build a portfolio for art school submission?

This resource packet will give the parent and student information to help meet the goal of choosing art as a career after high school.

List of Career Paths for Visual Art Majors: What can you do with a degree in art?

Advertising Artist, Advertising Designer
Airbrush Artist, Animator
Architect, Architectural Renderer
Art Administrator, Art Buyer
Art Center Education Director, Art Conservator
Art Consultant, Art Critic
Art Curriculum Director, Art Director
Art Dealer, Art Exhibition Coordinator
Art Fair Coordinator, Art Graphic Assistant
Art Historian, Art Lawyer
Art Magazine Editor, Art Museum Director
Art Restorer, Art Teacher
Art Therapist, Art Professor
Artist, Artist’s Agent
Assistant Curator, Audio Visual Artist/Designer
Author of Art Education Materials, Author of Art Education Texts
Art Museum Educator, Billboard Artist
Book Jacket Designer, Cake Decorator
Camera Person, Caricaturist
Cartoonist, Catalog Illustrator
CD Cover Designer, Ceramic Artist
Ceramic Engineer, Cinematographer
Color Expert, Costume Designer
Decorator, Designer
Design Consultant, Courtroom Sketcher
Direct Mail Layout Designer, Display Artist
Display Designer     Editorial Illustrator
Educational Software Designer     Engraver
Etcher     Exhibit Designer
Fabric Designer     Fashion Designer
Fiber Artist     Film Editor
Floral Designer     Furniture Designer
Floor Covering Designer     Gallery Owner
Game Designer     Graphic Arts Technician
Graphic Designer     Greeting Card Artist
Illustrator     Industrial Designer
Interior Designer     Interior Decorator
Internet Homepage Designer     Interior Design Photographer
Jewelry Designer     Label Designer
Landscape Designer     Landscape Architect
Layout Artist     Leather Worker
Lighting Designer     Magazine Cover Artist
Magazine Designer/Illustrator     Mail Order Art Supplier
Make-Up Artist     Mechanical and Production
Artist     Drafter
Medical Illustrator     Metal Smith
Mold Maker     Motion Picture Animator
Municipal Graphic Designer     Museum Curator
Museum Docent     Mural Artist
Newspaper Layout Artist     Newspaper Illustrator
Paper Maker     Photographer
Photojournalist     Photo Stylist
Portrait Artist     Printing designer
Printing Layout Artist     Product Designer
Quick Sketch Artist     Scene Painter
Sculptor     Set Designer/Illustrator
Silkscreen Artist     Space Planner
Studio Artist     Textile Designer
Trademark Designer     Typographer
Typographical Artist     Wall Covering Designer
Website Designer

This list of art careers does not end here. Check the site below for more interesting careers in the arts.

http://www.naea-reston.org/research_students.html
Suggested Course(s) of Study for Students Planning on Majoring in Art in College

The Visual Arts Department at Santa Margarita High School has compiled a list of suggested courses for those students interested in pursuing a career in the visual arts after high school. The following courses are recommended for the career path listed. These courses do not need to be taken in any particular order except in the order of prerequisite requirements.

**A Career in Graphic Design**
- Graphic Design I
- Graphic Design II
- Graphic Design III
- Photography I
- Drawing I
- Drawing II
- Application Class - i.e. - Yearbook, Journalism, Web Design

**A Career in Art Education**
- Art History (multiple)
- Drawing I
- Drawing II
- IB Art I
- IB Art II
- College Prep Portfolio
- 2 2D Studio Courses (Painting I-II, Photo I-II, Digital Image Design I-II,)
- 2 3D Studio Courses (Ceramics I, II, III, Sculpture I, II)

**A Career in 3D Fine Arts**
- Drawing I
- Drawing II
- Sculpture I
- Sculpture II, Ceramics III, or Wheel Throwing
- Ceramics I
- Ceramics II
- IB Art
- Art History (multiple)

**A Career in 2D Fine Arts**
- Drawing I
- Drawing II
- Drawing III
- Painting I
- Painting II
- Painting III
- College Prep Portfolio
- IB Art
- Art History

**A Career in Art History**
- Drawing I
- Drawing II
A List of Courses Offered in the Art Department at Santa Margarita High School - Course descriptions are available in the Course Description Booklet through guidance.

### 2-D Courses
- Drawing I
- Drawing II
- Advanced Drawing
- IB Art
- AP Art Studio
- Photo I
- Photo II
- Graphic Design I
- Graphic Design II
- Painting I
- Painting II
- AP Art History

### 3-D Courses
- Sculpture I
- Sculpture II
- Ceramics I
- Ceramics II
- Wheel Throwing

The following area institutions offer classes for high school students outside of the high school setting. Taking art classes outside of high school offers the student the opportunity to build extra work for their portfolio.

**Art Center Saturday School for High School Students**
Pasadena, CA

**Laguna College of Art and Design (LCAD)**
Laguna Beach, CA.

**Saddleback College Classes for High School Students**
Mission Viejo, CA.

**Irvine City College- Figure Drawing**
Irvine, CA.

**Building a Portfolio for Art School:**
One of the most important aspects of building a comprehensive portfolio is to start early. Begin saving work from your beginning classes and never throw any artwork away. You should also keep a sketchbook. Every school has different criteria for portfolios so check your art school of interest for their specific requirements. Most schools will want to see drawings from direct observation, a self portrait, personal artwork, and some sketchbook entries.
Most art schools will not want you to include cartooning or anime in your portfolio. Below are links from a few top art schools describing their portfolio requirements as well as some advice on how to go about organizing your portfolio. As you will see, each school has different portfolio requirements. Some schools have very specific requirements and others are more open. If you have any questions about what to include in a portfolio, ask one of the art department teachers.

**Cal Arts, Valencia, CA.**
https://calarts.edu

**Art Center, Pasadena, CA.**
http://www.artcenter.edu/accd/admissions.jsp

**Rhode Island School of Art and Design (scroll down to portfolio)**
http://www.risd.edu/apply_fresh.cfm

**Pratt**
http://www.pratt.edu/application/freshmen#

**School of the Art Institute of Chicago**
http://www.saic.edu/admissions/ug_admiss/portfolio/index.html

**Ringling School of Art and Design**
http://www.ringling.edu/AdmissionRequirements.28.0.html

**Savannah College of Art and Design**
http://www.scad.edu/admission/undergraduate/portfolio.cfm

**Kansas City Art Institute**
http://www.kcai.edu/admissions/portfolio/

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**Students at Santa Margarita High School have two major opportunities to get help with their portfolio outside of school.**

**National Portfolio Days**
National Portfolio Days takes place every October. Top art schools from across the country send representatives to review student portfolios. This is a wonderful opportunity for a student to get serious professional feedback on their portfolio as well as gain knowledge about schools they might want to attend. Students take their current portfolio of work to the Art Academy to have a review by as many schools as they want. Many of our students have been accepted to excellent art schools “on the spot” at National Portfolio Days.

**Tips for a Successful Portfolio Presentation**

1. Stay within the allotted number of works allowed for submission.
2. Quality of work is more important than quantity.

3. Artwork from real-life observation is always preferable to work from photo reference or exclusively from imagination.

4. Portfolios should be neat with no tattered or torn edges. Matting helps protect edges of paper but is usually not required. Lay a clean sheet of paper between each work but do not attach it to the work itself.

5. Organize your work by year completed with your earliest work first.

6. Drawing, paintings, etc. should show consideration of background and composition. Avoid floating or haloed figures or objects.

7. Check the portfolio requirements to see if you can include gesture drawings.

8. Most fine arts schools will not want to see cartoons or mechanical/technical drawings. If you show cartoons they will need to be original.

9. If showing a sketchbook, flag the best pages for viewing.

10. If you participate in a personal portfolio review, dress accordingly and act in a professional manner. Speak using proper English and do not use slang.

11. Try to show strongest work rather than work from many media.

12. If possible include finished figure drawings. (Take a class at the Art Academy!!)

13. CONCEPTS (ideas), ORIGINALITY, AND CREATIVITY are extremely important! Understand your work and be able to verbally communicate to the interviewer what your work is about.

14. Large or three-dimensional work can usually be shown as a slide or image. Make sure slide/image is good quality and include details if you need to.

Excellent Article on Building a Portfolio
http://www.artschools.com/articles/portfolio/

Things to Consider when Choosing an Art School:

Deciding on where you want to attend college is a big decision, one that should always be discussed with your parents. The following are some things you may want to consider as you embark on this journey.
• What part of the country do you want to attend school? Do you want to stay close to home? Go east? Etc. knowing what part of the country you want to attend school will help narrow your choices
• Financial responsibilities; who will be paying for your schooling? Your parents? Student loans? Scholarships? You? A little of each? Know how you will pay for college so that you can make necessary arrangement for scholarships and financial aid.
• Type of school. Do you want to attend a university such as Cal State Fullerton, a college such as Chapman University, or an art school such as CAL Arts or Pratt? Do you want to attend a school with a small student body or large? Do you want a 4-year degree or a 2-year degree?
• In what will you major? Some schools specialize in certain majors. Always check your school of interest to make sure they have your major. Remember that most of you will be trying to achieve either a bachelor or art or a bachelor of fine art. Within that degree will be your major. This will also help narrow your decision.
• Admission requirements, what type of GPA do you need to get into this institution? Make sure you check out admission requirements for the university as well as art department requirements.

Scholarships:
Check the guidance office as well as the University Website for a listing of available scholarships. There are also many websites that list the many scholarships available to high school students.

Become Involved:
Many Colleges and Universities like to see students participate in activities outside of school. Below are some suggestions on how to become involved in activities outside of school and build your show resume.

High School Art Shows:
The Art Department at Mason High School submits student artwork to the following high school art shows each year:

  Scholastics Art and Writing Awards (January)
  Santa Margarita High School Art Show (January)
  Color It Orange (LCAD) (March)
  Imagination Celebration (April)
  Laguna Beach Festival of the Arts (May thru August)

There are more opportunities to show your work. Do a search on the internet to find more opportunities to show your artwork.

Art Related Activities at the High School:

National Art Honor Society
Students must have at least a 3.0 in all art classes. To maintain membership, students maintain their GPA in their art classes and participate in art related community service activities each month. Students are recommended by their teachers for NAHS each year.

**Varsity Art Club**
Anyone can join and participate in various art activities throughout the school year.