Lesson #1 Art school isn't just for artists.

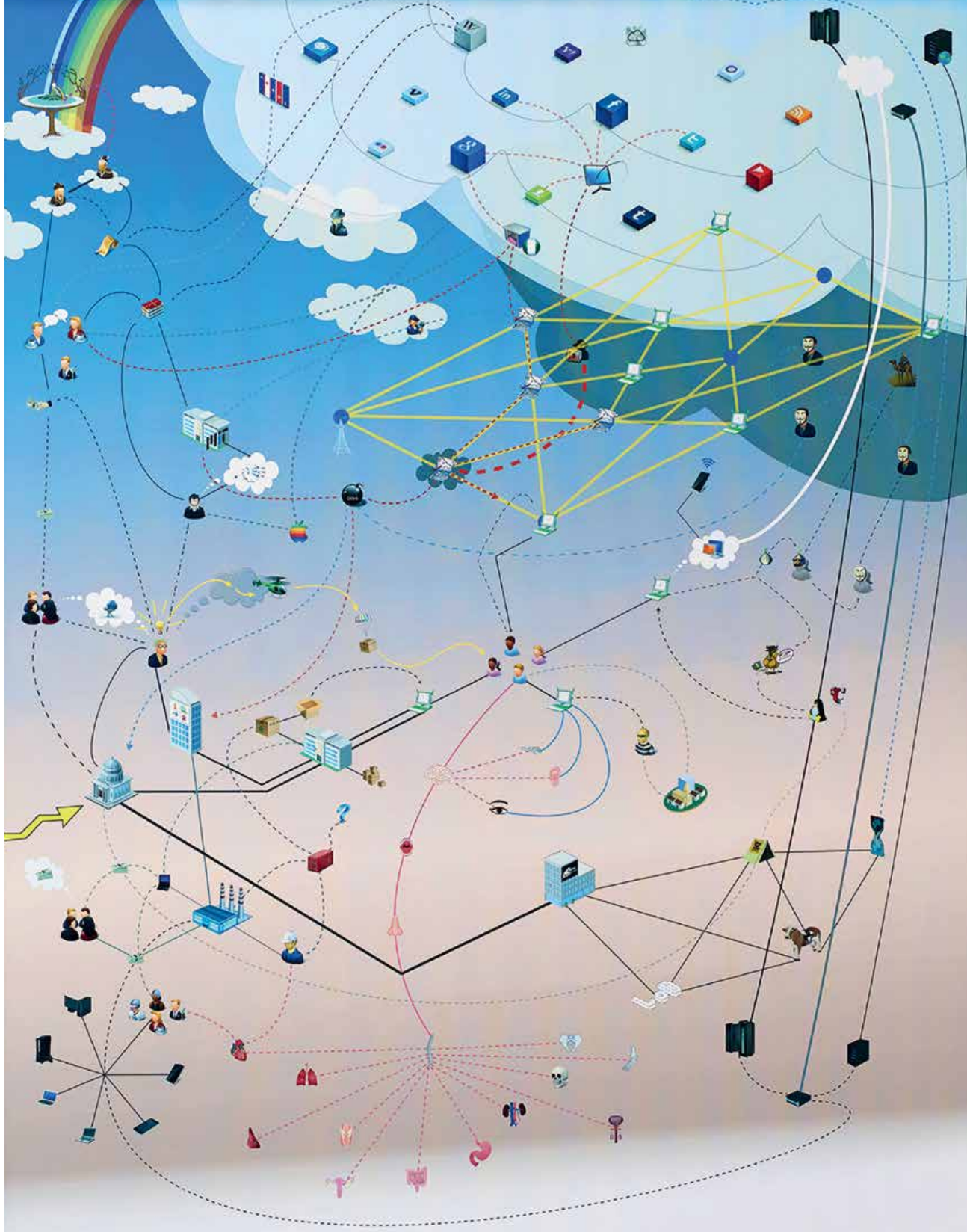
What's taught in any curriculum can only take you so far. **Real-world knowledge and advice is key.** **And that's the focus of this year's art school guide:** real arts grads talking about what's worked for them—really—across careers in writing, architecture, craft, film, small business and more.

Lesson #2 There's a need for cultural workers to take on different jobs and develop business skills, according to the latest survey

from the Cultural Human Resources Council of Canada. Look far beyond what's on the next quiz or crit. Fresh options like microcourses can help.

Lesson #3 There is no one path to becoming an artist.

Creativity, innovation, flexibility and resourcefulness are hugely useful attributes for anyone to have right now. "Everything influences you: your friends, your environment, even people you don't like," says artist and designer Geoff McFetridge. And you never know where your most valuable insights will connect. So keep on learning, always.



MATT GOERZEN *OLPC (One Laptop Per Child) Attack Vector Network Security Didactic* (detail) 2015 Latex on wrapped canvas 2.18 m x 1.2 m x 6 cm COURTESY FUTURE GALLERY, BERLIN

Curtis Talwst Santiago, O dia depois do carnaval "The Day After Carnival", 2019
Acrylic, aerosol, charcoal, pastel on canvas 60 x 60 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Rachel Uffner Gallery

Pursuing their passions

RBC recognizes, and deeply values, the role of artists as innovators within our communities—their work evokes emotion, renewed perspectives and important conversations.

RBC supports and shares Canadian Art's desire to provide insights and advice to the next generation of artists in Canada. Valued and diverse mentors within the art community generously shared their words of wisdom within this guide and we hope this knowledge helps to enrich the journeys and practices of early career artists.

Creative people succeed together. "I've never written my own grants. But I've surrounded myself with people who can write. We trade work a lot. Some grantwriters will work for a percentage too."

A creative career doesn't have to look the same a whole life through. It can be stitched together out of many different materials and experiences.

Bear Epp has worked in some of the smallest art forms—like jewellery soldered during a residency at the Harbourfront Centre in Toronto. And she's also created some very large structures, like props for the Vancouver Olympics Opening Ceremonies stage. Now, she runs Common Craft, a makerspace in Elora, ON, co-directs a textile art festival and does rug hooking with a group.

Hers is a practice "fuelled by direct engagement, a practice of networking and making connections," Epp says. "It's a creative practice that's evolved over the years," she notes. "I'm not the same person I was back in my twenties."

Some common threads do appear, though. For one, the importance of hands-on learning and doing, and prioritizing any apprenticeship opportunities a school or organization might offer. "When I first went to school, it was at Niagara College for props and theatre," Epp says. "They had the head of Shaw Festival's props come in and teach, and then he asked me if I'd like to come apprentice at the Shaw props shop. I quit [school] that day and went."

From there, Epp went on to apprentice in the Banff Centre's props area as well. Then, when she wanted to shift into her own design work, she started taking classes at Sheridan College. Learning through working with three different professional jewellers came next. Those professionals "gave me knowledge of how to do a craft show, know what it was like to rent a studio and see how hard these people had to work to make a living."

When she had her son, Epp's creative practice shifted again. "Because my husband is in film, there was no way I had a stay-at-home partner, so I built a job around my son and went into teaching —and found I had a knack for it," she says.

Now, she's back to running her own business, but she hasn't stopped growing. "The most rewarding thing of all is working with other artists and holding space for other people to come in and work."

At Common Craft, Epp loves passing along real-world advice she's learned. "I try to let younger artists know how important keeping up on social media and having a good-quality photo and a properly written blurb is," Epp says to start. When younger artists are teaching workshops, she helps them learn how to collect payment and introduce themselves to students—tips they don't get in art school.

Epp's Mennonite background structures the long-term weft of her practice too. "I grew up with family and friends who made beautiful and practical works out of the materials available to them. They were natural teachers. They shared knowledge, materials and a real understanding of how to put things together.... Now I look for connections with other creators all the time."

Bear Epp

Owner, Common Craft, Elora
Co-director, Black Sheep Festival of Contemporary Textile Art
Studied at Niagara College and Sheridan College
Apprenticed at Harbourfront Centre
and Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity

PHOTO PAUL DIMOCK ARTOGRAPHY

Aisling Macken

Conservator, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, UK
BFA, Fibre, ACAD
MPhil, Textile Conservation, University of Glasgow

Conservation of a midshipman's frock coat dating from 1748 © NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH, UK

For her BFA graduation show at Alberta College of Art and Design in 2009, Aisling Macken embroidered plant roots on hanging fabrics and created a lace sculpture mimicking patterns of growth found in nature. What she didn't know then was that her art-school education was providing her with the roots she needed to grow a successful career as a textile conservator at a big UK museum.

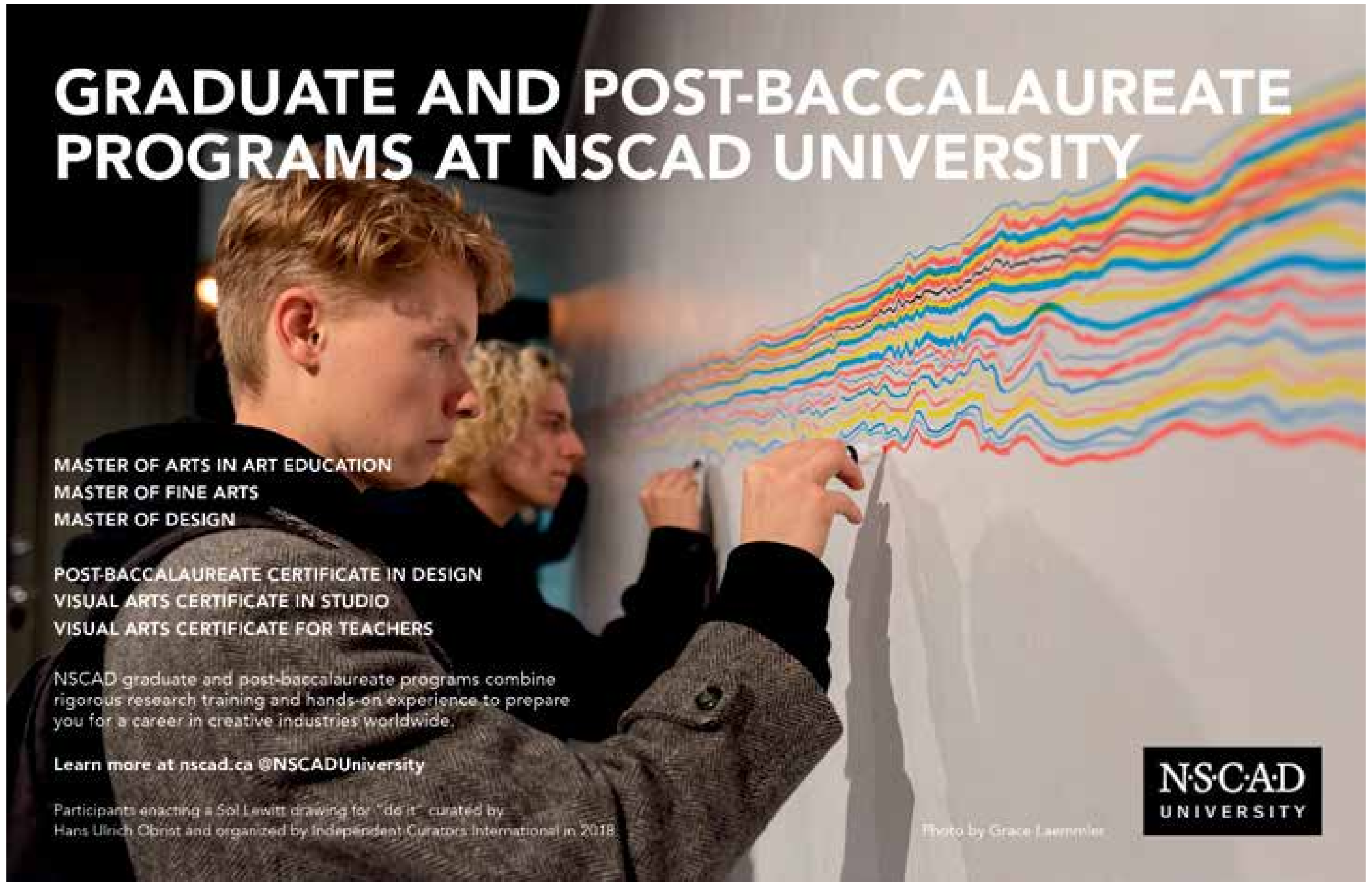
"What I really liked about art school was looking at historic textiles and historic artifacts and using that as inspiration to create my own work," says Macken. "I did quite a bit of weaving, embroidery and lacemaking, and that's really helpful to me now: understanding the construction of a textile helps you know which part is vulnerable to more damage, or is weak."

Today, Macken is part of a team helping preserve and manage two and a half million objects, many of them fragile, in the collections of the National Maritime Museum. But her first conservation job was a volunteer one for a much smaller institution—the Museum of the Highwood in High River, AB. And it was under much more dramatic circumstances—following the 2013 Southern Alberta floods. "I saw textile conservator Gail Niinimaa on the news talking about what she was doing there and I was really thinking about doing conservation, so I contacted her out of the blue and asked her if she needed any volunteer help. She said yes." After volunteering for a few months, Macken became a part-time employee of the museum helping recover flood-damaged textiles. "Everything was very silty and brown; a lot of times you couldn't tell what you had till after you cleaned it. It was amazing to see all these 19th-century dresses come back to life."

From that experience, Macken went to the UK to do her master's. Study placements through conservation institutes landed her in her current job. Macken still uses skills from art school every day—and not just sewing and mending.

"One thing I did find quite useful in art school is critiques," says Macken. "I think they're a really good learning exercise for a career and for life: to be able to think and react critically to what you are seeing and observing." She explains: "In conservation, there are guidelines as to how you treat objects, but lots of people have different ideas and different preferences. When you are handling objects hundreds of years old you really need to know what you are doing. You need to think about treatment options, think about the literature out there, think critically and then be able to discuss and maybe defend your opinions if asked by a colleague. And that is definitely something you need to do in art school in a crit too."

"I wasn't sure what I wanted to do for a while actually," Macken says. "There was a six-year window between when I finished my undergraduate degree and when I started my master's, so it took me quite a while to decide on conservation."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Participants enacting a Sol Lewitt drawing for "do it" curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist and organized by Independent Curators International in 2018.
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Photo by Julia Bonavita, Smudge (2019). Design by Tina Wang


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Artwork by: Ziyi (Ian) Jiang, Independent Illustration Student

Matthew Hickey has spent a lot of time thinking about space and how people move through it. That's true of his work with the Indigenous-owned firm Two Row Architect, where he is building with wood and steel. It also reflects his early life as a figure skater, carving actions into ice. And it's a skill set he honed in a bachelor of design program at OCAD.

"When I was a skater, it was very much about time management and work ethic," says Hickey, who is Mohawk from Six Nations First Nation. "But OCAD made me think creatively: how would you solve a problem in a way others wouldn't? This can often lead you to an answer more quickly."

Following the unexpected is another art-school edge. "Thinking in a lateral sense is what I gained from OCAD. It's about thinking conceptually and being in spaces and places and classes that are going to allow you to think that way." During his M.Arch at the University of Calgary, Hickey won a President's Medal. His projects were featured at the 2018 Venice Biennale in Architecture. Two Row also collaborated on Seneca College's new Odeyto First Nations House, named to *Azure*'s Best Canadian Architecture list. For the latter, Hickey and colleagues used a canoe pulling up to a dock, as well as the structure of a Haudenosaunee longhouse, as inspiration.

Leadership in sustainability and regenerative design—"encompassing ecological, cultural and economic principles"—is key. Collaborating on a design for the Northwest Territories Métis Nation Assembly building, Hickey looked to the drum, snare and sled as forms, while designing to maximize natural lighting and reduce the impact of winter wind. "I don't see art and design and sustainability as separate things," Hickey says. "They need to be woven together. We're at a time when the scales are tipping and as an artist or designer you have an ability to comment on it in a very clear way or assess usages for people on a daily basis."

Hickey's research includes "Indigenous history and the adaptation of traditional sustainable technologies to the modern North American climate." He leads workshops for other architects so they can "gain a better understanding for how the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action can be manifested in contemporary architecture."

"We designers all have choices we can make in line with sustainability. We should repair the things we've been doing wrong for 25 or 35 years," Hickey says. Now, as an OCADU instructor, he remains a believer in art-school education. "We think differently," Hickey says of his colleagues and students. "And that's very powerful in a landscape where many people think the same way."

Council Chamber of the Seneca Nation of Indians Administration Building, Allegany, NY COURTESY TWO ROW ARCHITECT

Matthew Hickey

Architect, Two Row Architect
Instructor, OCADU
M.Arch, University of Calgary
BDes, OCAD
B.Ed, Native Education, Brock University

"Go to the textiles or jewellery studio when you're taking a break from your own work. Being exposed to all the other artists and the ways they were thinking is what kept me going in school. You can be inspired by other people."

In 2015, after just a few lessons on a potter's wheel, Janet Hinkle started making ceramics. It wasn't long until Anthropologie placed an order, and her work gained praise in *Elle Canada* and on HGTV. It's a place many independent craftspeople would like to be in, and Hinkle did enjoy it for a while—but it was extremely stressful too. Now, as she transitions her business model, she's become an advocate for talking about the ways that self-employed craftspeople need self-care.

"I want to be open, talking about burnout, so that other people can get through it as well," Hinkle says. One of the biggest problems with burnout in the arts is that it can be hard to recognize, even when you're going through it. "I never took any time off, I never took any vacations or sat back and thought, 'Maybe you should focus on something else for today.' I didn't do that for two to three years straight. When you are in the thick of it, it's hard to be aware of limitations and set boundaries—even boundaries around something as simple as email."

One of the ways Hinkle is recovering is by working on collaborations with restaurants and other organizations "that have a clear start and finish," rather than filling unending individual orders. Hinkle is also moving forward by working as marketing and programming coordinator at Akin, a nonprofit Toronto studio collective. "Finding a network of artists or makers in your area to act as your support network is really helpful in general," Hinkle says, and being at Akin, where she also has a studio, "allows me to help other artists and makers in pretty much everything I do. At the same time, my employers are artists themselves, so they understand when you need an 'art day' to step back and think about your own process."

In programming workshops at Akin, Hinkle often learns something herself, whether the program is about taxes, grantwriting or critiques. "I think the biggest lesson you learn in organizing everything is time management and how to juggle all of the different projects that are going on," says Hinkle. "One thing I regret [about school] is that no one ever tells you how to set up your own business, unless you go to business school," so that is also part of her interest in programming.

These days, Hinkle is seeking some well-deserved balance—and some more fun, which got lost during her big publicity rush. "Sculpture is my thing, and I'm really interested in exploring printmaking too," says Hinkle, who also studied painting and photography in art school. "I really admire anyone who says they are going to have their own business. But right now, for me, it's a period to play around and explore what the possibilities are."

"It can start out really fun, but if at any point you are looking at growing your project, look for the ways to grow it smartly. That might mean hiring more staff to help you at busier times of year."

Janet Hinkle

Independent artist and craftsperson
Marketing and Programming Coordinator, Akin
BFA, York University

PHOTO SATY + PRATHA

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A few tips to help with managing resources while pursuing an art education

Building Up Support

Take advantage of work-based learning opportunities. "Even in high school, if you know your path, don't waste your co-op hours—do them with an arts organization."
—Bear Epp, owner, Common Craft

Recognize that much can be learned from doing some commercial work with your creative skills. "We shouldn't be afraid, when we are starting out, to do commercial work or corporate work or work for hire. I think these things sharpen the soft skills that we need to do well for ourselves—soft skills like professionalism and punctuality and the ability to take direction. At the same time, I would say, don't let these jobs swallow your schedule."
—Omar Mouallem, writer; Film Arts alum, Langara College

Consider the range of education options out there. "At colleges, tuition can be cheaper than it is at a lot of universities. At our school, that fee also includes materials, which can help. And if your college has arrangements with universities that allow transfer of credits, you can transfer to university after college and eventually get a BFA or other degree, but at a rate that is cheaper economically."
—Gary Spearin, professor and coordinator of the Fine Art Program, Fanshawe College

Apply for grants, scholarships and bursaries. "Apply for grants. Look for help and resources when applying for grants. Talking to granting officers can help—they can give you suggestions and advice. I also went to grant-writing workshops where they would explain the best way to say things. Ask colleagues for feedback if you can. And then put it out there. I've received lots of grants and I've not received lots of grants. But you can't get one without applying."
—Jessica McMann, hoop dancer and performer; MFA, SFU

Seek out the resources of your local student union or student wellness office. "I recommend reaching out to your counselling office, financial aid office or student union. A lot of these can refer students to social supports, housing supports, and more if needed."
—Sarah Jo, student wellness coordinator, ECUAD

Leverage the support of your school's career centre to increase your self-marketing or job prospects. "We can help with resumés: a CV is a critical document, it needs to look really polished. We also look at building out artists' websites, and participation on other platforms like Instagram, where a lot of students are facilitating the sale and curation of their work. We also have information on negotiation, pricing or contracts, and getting student work into things like the Toronto Outdoor Art Fair."
—Zev Farber, director, Centre for Emerging Artists and Designers, OCADU

Emily Carr University of Art and Design summer class PHOTO JEFF VINNICK/ECUAD

Art School 101

Use art school as a time to take some risks. "I feel like in art school it's a pretty safe environment, so it's a great place to try new techniques or new styles."
—Aisling Macken, textile conservator, National Maritime Museum; BFA, ACAD

Be aware that the major you start with may not be the major you end up with. "If you're struggling in art school, maybe you're not exactly in the area where you should be. Maybe you're in environmental design and you should be in industrial design. Or you're in drawing but you should be in sculpture. You really have to explore. Or talk to other people around you, go to their classes, go in and watch them work. It may pique some interest in you."
—Matthew Hickey, architect, Two Row Architect; BDes, OCAD; M. Arch, University of Calgary

Respect and honour the learning style that works for you—and recognize learning can continue after graduation. "I had tried ceramics just a little bit in high school and university. Then a friend gave me a pottery wheel and I wanted to try it again. I wanted lessons, but not a class 8 or 12 weeks long. Then I found a makerspace that offered one-on-one lessons. The owner of the space would sit beside you on a wheel and she would hop on and help you whenever you needed it—that was the perfect structure for me."
—Janet Hinkle, BFA, York University

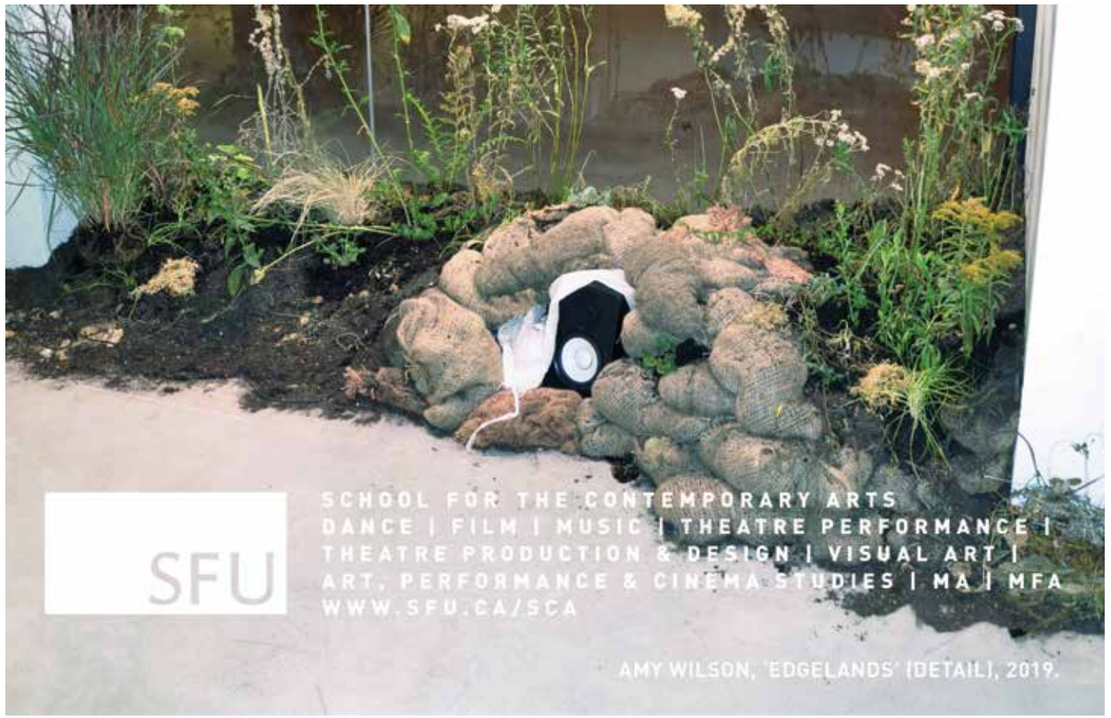
Creating art on your own terms, outside of school, could help you keep your motivation up while you are still taking structured classes. "The world is greater than what's in school. During my master's, which was about performance and composition, doing dance and music outside of that kept me more balanced."
—Jessica McMann, hoop dancer and perfomer; MFA, SFU

Take care of yourself, and remember that your art is not you. "In order to do their creative practice, art students need to take care of themselves—not just in their physical well-being but also mentally and emotionally.... For some students it really helps for them to build personal structure within an unstructured environment—managing their time, setting deadlines, incorporating breaks, putting aside time to feed yourself.... I think we are really pushing up against this culture of celebrating exhaustion, like, 'I only got two hours of sleep and I've had five espressos today already.' Some of us can do that but none should have to do that. We also really recommend learning to separate the person from the art practice—because it can be devastating in a critique if your identity is completely wrapped up with your art practice."
—Sarah Jo, student wellness coordinator, ECUAD; MA, UBC

Use the opportunities to work in your field through school placements. "Internships and co-ops were definitely my entry point to what I do now. I interned at Sotheby's and at a commercial gallery, both for course credit. These very different experiences gave me the opportunity to build real relationships with individuals who went on to become really important members of my network, and helped me to understand what working in the field was like."
—Corrie Jackson, senior curator, RBC; MVS, University of Toronto

Advice on how to get the most out of your art-school or art-learning experiences

Cover for Fine Art at Fanshawe 3rd Year Graduation Catalogue, 2016 PHOTO GARY SPEARIN/GERARD PAS



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Amanda Boulos, Banff Artist in Residence. Photo by Jessica Wittman.

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Omar Mouallem

Writer

Film Arts Certificate, Langara College

Omar Mouallem is on quite a journey right now. "I've been travelling from the Arctic to Brazil, trying to create a more humanizing and complicated portrait of Muslim communities," he says during a quick phone call from his Edmonton home base. "I'm working on a travel memoir about Muslims in the Americas that will be out in fall 2020."

It's not where Mouallem imagined he would be when he entered the Film Arts program at Langara College years ago: "I had aspirations of being an auteur filmmaker," he admits. Back then,"writing was just the first step to telling that story." Now, writing is his full-time career. "The fundamentals of storytelling transfer very well from screenwriting to literary journalism. It was natural for me to write an article in a more dramatic way, with the quotes working like dialogue that drives the story forward."

Earlier on, Mouallem also made rap music: another art form that has transferred into writing-career success through "comfort with public speaking and comfort with being on stage or being on the radio." Mouallem's rap resumé led to his first bylines when a Langara classmate asked him to review hip-hop for a small Vancouver arts magazine. "Then I started pitching myself as a film critic," he says. "There's a lot of latitude in arts journalism to be creative or funny or mocking or satirical or serious, which also transfers well to feature writing."

Making corporate films around the same time was less thrilling, but useful. "I was learning pretty quickly I was not cut out for film," he says. "I don't really enjoy working in big teams, and film is, like, the most collaborative art form!" Writing freelance was a better fit: "It was very encouraging to see my name in print not long after writing something, as opposed to in film, where you might be sweating it out for years before anything happens at all." It also honed areas he hadn't yet focused on much. "I would encourage artists to get out of their comfort zones early, to cultivate some flexibility as early as possible, because our mediums, whatever they may be, are always changing," Mouallem notes.

Ambition and self-discipline came very early on for Mouallem—and those values continue to inspire his path. "The ability to pitch a larger publication, like the *New Yorker* or *Rolling Stone*, I think came from growing up in an immigrant household where life was all about bold decisions and everything came with risk," Mouallem says. "My parents uprooting themselves from Lebanon and coming to Canada was probably the biggest risk that I ever witnessed.... And that, I think, forced me to consider any work that I did, creative or otherwise, as a high-stakes endeavour."

PHOTO SHAYNE WOODSMITH

"Check your ego at the door, and go to every book launch or exhibition opening or album release you have time and money to go to, and make genuine friends in the industry. I think one of the most valuable assets is being easy to get along with. Also, for writers, getting out and meeting people is what exposes you to the lives of other people, and what is that if not inspiration for your next project?"

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A vagrant is a different kind of
carrot. You don't get peeled. ▪

UNIVERSITY of GUELPH

Have you whistled with your mouth full ? Summer camp swimming lessons, and the first lesson is to put a pin on it and sing whatever comes to mind first.

José Andrés Mora, (MFA 20). *Gross Astray.*
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Over eight seasons of *Game of Thrones*, millions of people tuned in to a dramatic saga full of unexpected twists. The life story of Paula Fairfield, who recently won an Emmy for her sound design of the show, has also had some unpredictable shifts.

Before Fairfield became a student at NSCAD in the 1980s, she'd spent her life in the rural Maritimes, by the sea. But then, while studying photography and intermedia in Halifax, she met an artist and teacher who shaped her ideas for decades: "Jan Peacock taught me about the many conceptualizations of alternative narrative structures, and I think that's stayed with me in my work to this day. Jan's work is really deep: it's emotional and visceral, and often extremely poetic. It's about narrative being able to go off in many directions, and that has been the approach in my work."

After college, Fairfield apprenticed at the National Film Board's Studio D with picture and sound editor Les Holman: "I fell in love with the magic of it," she recalls, and started to explore more aural forms.

Fairfield then went on to co-run Charles Street Video in Toronto, a non-profit independent media production organization. "The whole purpose of Charles Street Video was to provide the top level of tools to artists. A lot of us would crew for each other, and on one of the last projects I did there, I learned Pro Tools."

During those same years in Toronto, Fairfield started focusing her own art on sound and electroacoustics. "I remember one day listening to the work of Robert Norman, which he described as 'cinema for the ears'—and I thought, oh my god, I want to do that." Two of her video works—*Fragments* and *Relative Activities*—were already in the collection of the National Gallery of Canada, but she shifted into less visual approaches.

With renewed tech expertise under her belt from working on friends' productions, Fairfield also started doing sound design on Canadian shows like *Due South*.

"Sound design fit in with my more experimental background as an artist," Fairfield recalled. "But there were not many women doing it at the time and it was very hard to get hired. I started to take on sound supervising roles, and it seemed all I could get as a woman were low-budget or mid-range projects—but I did those projects and learned as much as I could so I could experiment later."

After moving to LA in the late 1990s, Fairfield built up her contacts and experience, working on shows like *The River* and *Lost*. She also built her own sound studio, Eargasm Inc., in her garage to have the autonomy she needed. Now, post–*Game of Thrones* and post-Emmy, this Nova Scotian is coming creative full circle in a California desert.

"Twenty-five years later, I have returned to my own artwork again," Fairfield says happily. "I just started a new piece, an immersive sound poem about grief that's also deeply immersed in my background as a Maritimer growing up by the sea.

"In my own art, I could never get to this place of vulnerability before," Fairfield explains. "But on *Thrones*, I learned the power of being vulnerable with your work, even when you are voicing someone else's role." Fairfield wants others to feel safe doing that too: "The call for diversity and room for more voices is really, really necessary. It's an especially potent call in sound, because it's all about expressing voice."

"You've got to love what you do. Go towards the thing that makes you happiest, because that is where you will find your strength in moments that are not that joyous."

Paula Fairfield

Artist and Emmy-Winning Sound Designer for *Game of Thrones*
BFA, NSCAD

ART

▷ (LEFT–RIGHT) AILEEN YADOKORO, FINE ARTS STUDENT | SPRIG VESSEL (2019) SARAH COXON | FEAST, DETAIL (2019) JESSICA FRASER

For students learning about Canadian art history—particularly those students located in Quebec—a few lessons about the 20th-century Automatistes movement are often in order. But it's much less ordinary for those lessons to lead to a career researching international media manipulation in the 21st century. Nonetheless, that trajectory is the one researcher Matt Goerzen experienced following his BFA studies at Concordia University in Montreal.

"As someone who worked as a journalist before art school, I was really taken by these artists who were finding ways to subvert the media," Goerzen recalls of his BFA art history classes. "I was very taken by the way that artists have historically hacked the media in order to deliver their ideas."

That fascination then led him to write a paper about the way online trolling mirrored artists' anti-establishment techniques—techniques developed long before computers, the internet and social media."I was interested in not only how artists were taking up a kind of 'trolling,' but how art was a safe environment to explore those techniques," says Goerzen. "When used outside of the art world those same techniques can have real social harms," so they are worth understanding and testing in ways that are safe, he notes.

In relation to the real social harms that trolling can yield, Goerzen has in recent years researched the way white supremacists communicate and spread messages online, and has spoken about it with *Rolling Stone* and other media.

Goerzen currently works on Data & Society's Media Manipulation Initiative, which examines "how different groups use the participatory culture of the internet to turn the strengths of a free society into vulnerabilities, ultimately threatening expressive freedoms and civil rights."

It's a long way from the paintings and drawings Goerzen created at Concordia in "trying to understand how representation relates to public opinion." But, as Goerzen observes, working with art techniques and contexts can provide insights that other methodologies of research and interpretation might not.

"One thing I've learned from being involved with art is the value of what hackers call 'the hands-on imperative,'" says Goerzen. "It's the idea that if you are interested in something and you need to understand how it works, you should be involved in it yourself to a certain extent."

There's even more to be gained where artmaking's playful methodologies and practices come in. "I think there's a tremendous amount of understanding and knowledge that can come from engaging with something in a playful way, where you are not immediately trying to extract profit or deliverables from it," Goerzen observes. "Just engaging with something on its own terms, you can often learn a lot that people who are approaching it in a more instrumental manner cannot."

Ultimately, art permits "a lot of freedom to look at a topic from different angles," says Goerzen—a lesson he carries forward now into research around some of the most urgent and fast-changing social issues of our time, where news, civil society and media merge.

Matt Goerzen

Researcher, Data & Society, New York
MA, McGill University
BFA, Concordia University
BJ, Carleton University

"Art history classes got me thinking on how artists could play a role in challenging media that produce norms and ideas of common sense. In one paper, I considered whether Facebook was a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. That led to more critical thinking about new technologies."

"There are any number of things a person can do. For me, the ability to pursue my own voice artistically was something I wanted to do whether or not I could ever make a living from it. Everybody's different. My goal is to have a studio practice that is gaining in momentum."

Sky Glabush

Artist and Associate Professor, Western University
BFA, University of Saskatchewan
MFA, University of Alberta

One of the things Sky Glabush does as a university professor is teach a practicum course to fourth-year BFA students preparing them for life after graduation.

"The best sort of training I can think of is one that really creates an awareness of the difference between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation," says Glabush. "Very few people sail through a career in the visual arts without dealing with obstacles and challenges. So for me it's trying to help a student find that thing within them that will help sustain a practice even when things are not going their way."

Glabush knows this first-hand from a time, years ago, when he moved to Holland for his partner's work. "I had no audience, no community and no dealer," Glabush recalls. "And I had gone in thinking I would just kill it!"

Glabush would do childcare for his two young kids during the day, then work in his studio at night. When he realized he would not find much external success in Holland, he talked about it, and the implications, with his partner.

"Through talking about it, we came to a place of being okay that this may go on for a long time," says Glabush. "I resigned myself to the fact that I didn't have a great financial outlook, but I wanted to devote myself the best I could to painting. In my case, I had a partner who was willing to support me and the family."

Glabush also found novel ways to supplement his artistic education under those constraints. "For the first six months I was in Holland I had my 18-month-old son with me all day, while my daughter, who was 3, would go to preschool. After I dropped my daughter off I'd put my toddler in the stroller and we'd go to museums all day. That was, in some ways, my real education. It was overwhelming, but I started to develop a real love for the history of painting."

After returning to Canada, Glabush wrote about art for a decade, gaining a fluency with theory that helped him get his university job. "I think in Canada, if we're honest about it, it's extremely hard to make a living," Glabush says. "Very few people I know make a living from art. And the ones who do, it's a process of years and years to get to that place."

For Glabush, what works at present is having a "day job" that dovetails well with his own intellectual interests and explorations in the studio. "In the classroom, I'm constantly being surprised and challenged, and the conversation is pretty rich," Glabush says. "It's a little bit like when I am in the studio trying to be in a dialogue with the art and with my own creative process. That same dialogue, I feel, has certainly gotten richer during my work as an instructor."

Sky Glabush *Deadhead* 2018 Oil and sand on canvas 2.4 x 1.8 m COURTESY CLINT ROENISCH PHOTO TONI HAFKENSCHEID

Points of View

"Originality sustains you; study, guard your creative time, develop your creative strength, diversify, experiment, take risks, evolve, meet and elevate your own expectations. Don't necessarily depend on your work to support you."

—Katie Ohe, ACAD alum and teacher; 2019 Lt. Gov. of Alberta Distinguished Artist Award, on auarts.ca

"One teacher said, 'You know, Peter, you don't have to go to the studio only to paint.' It's good to look. Sometimes I spend a lot of time there just looking at things."

—Peter Doig, former OCA student; Whitechapel Gallery Art Icon 2017, on artspace.com

"Stop chasing trends. Learn how to draw, paint, sculpt, write, and just get good at your practice. Don't let the idea be the main event."

—Kent Monkman, graduate, Sheridan College illustration program; 2019 Great Hall Commission Artist for the Metropolitan Museum of Art, on partnersinart.ca

"For me, art is freedom: to speak and to think and to question."

—Rebecca Belmore, artist; 2016 Gershon Iskowitz Prize winner, in *Border Crossings*

"Artists today have multiple professions: artist, professor, curator, writer, community/cultural worker, activist, department chair, artist-run centre director. Artists also work at galleries and coffee shops. Not all artists will make a full-time living from 'just' being an artist, while others will. For some, becoming/being born an artist is not about selling art—it's about the magic of creating. Selling art is a byproduct to creation"

—Dana Claxton, artist and UBC associate professor; winner of the 2019 Hnatyshyn Artist Award, in *C Magazine*

"I don't think there's any singular path to being an artist. The first advice I would give is that you have to be clear-eyed about the reality of how art is both noble and ignoble."

—Ken Lum, professor of fine arts, University of Pennsylvania; MFA, UBC, on cultmtl.com

"Everything influences you. Influence is about your friends, your environment, even people you don't like. I think it's just context. "

—Geoff McFetridge, artist and designer; graduate, ACAD, on itsnicethat.com

"I call myself a visual activist—or, rather, a cultural activist, because this work is not only about the arts; I'm focusing on education, I'm dealing with culture in a way that confronts a number of issues."

—Zanele Muholi, Documentary Media MA, Ryerson University; visual activist; winner of the 2016 Infinity Award from the International Center of Photography, on ft.com

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