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Program Overview

The School of Animation and Visual Effects (VFX) is one of the most dynamic programs in the country. Join us, and get hands-on experience with the full animation and VFX production pipeline.

WHAT SETS US APART
• Studio X offers hands-on production experience working on real projects that are faculty mentored. Recent projects: Beasts of the Southern Wild, Theeb, Fruitvale Station, and Soar (2015 Gold Medal Student Academy Award winner)
• Instructors teach marketable skills that succeed in this exciting and lucrative field as they are active members of the animation industry themselves
• Interact and collaborate with outside animation and VFX studios on group projects, contests, portfolio reviews, and guest lectures
• FAT Tuesdays, (Feature Animation Training), is taught by Academy alumni animators who are currently working in the industry

OUR MISSION
In the School of Animation and Visual Effects, you’ll learn traditional skills and storytelling abilities that can then be applied to digital technology. If you aspire to be a storyboard artists, visual effect artists, or a 2D or 3D animator, we’ll help you obtain the skills you need for a career in this vibrant and growing industry.

Our San Francisco campus puts you in the heart of the animation industry, giving you opportunities to meet and mix with professionals. You’ll rub elbows with experts from both in and outside the Academy who will mentor you and help you perfect your skills. In fact, Academy graduates are often recruited by companies like Pixar, Electronic Arts, Industrial Light and Magic, Blue Sky, Laika, Sony, Nickelodeon, Paramount, Marvel, CoSA Vfx, Ingenuity, Atomic Fiction, DNEG, The Mill, and Illumination Entertainment.
GOLD WINNER
Best Animated Film
STUDENT ACADEMY AWARDS
2015

WINNER
USA FILM FESTIVAL
2015

WINNER
MEDIA AWARDS
2015

WINNER
BEST 3D ANIMATED SHORT
SCHOOL OF ANIMATION & VISUAL EFFECTS
SPRING AWARDS
2015

WINNER
BEST STUDENT ANIMATION
PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL SHORTFEST
2015

RUNNER-UP
AUDIENCE AWARD BEST ANIMATION SHORT
PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL SHORTFEST
2015

FINALIST
BAFTA US STUDENTS FILM AWARDS
2015
What We Teach

Our curricula reflect the latest industry standards. You will learn by utilizing the newest technology and by participating in collaborative projects among programs.

**3D MODELING**
Modelers digitally build objects for manipulation in a 3D environment - these could be models of characters, both cartoon and realistic, natural shapes like animals and plants, or solid object like buildings and cars. Models must be specially built in a way so that they can be moved, painted, and lit properly for use in CG imagery.

**3D ANIMATION**
A 3D animator creates movement by utilizing computer graphic imagery including characters and inanimate objects such as robots or cars, for use in television, feature films or games.
ADDITIONAL TOPICS
Modeler, rigger, dynamics animator, puppet fabricator, lighting animator, producer and more.

STORYBOARDING
The storyboard artist takes the printed word and translates it into cinematic images. Storyboard artists must be able to draw people, buildings, costumes, vehicles, guns, horses, spaceships - all executed quickly with attention to draftsmanship and perspective. They provide the first look at what the final film or video game might look like and a career track to directing.

VISUAL EFFECTS
The Visual Effects program is designed to provide students with expertise in directing a complete, short animated film. This includes fully integrating visual effects shots from concept to post-production.

2D ANIMATION & STOP MOTION
A 2D animator creates 2D images by either hand drawing each frame or digitally manipulating flat media for games, television, the web, or feature films.
The School of Animation & VFX Difference

Academy of Art University and the Junior Giants, the youth baseball program of the San Francisco Giants’ community fund, have partnered on an innovative animated video series aimed at helping underserved youth learn essential life skills. Plus, Studio X gives you real-world career preparation.

STUDIOX

Often students coming straight out of school lack the practical real-world experience to be able to handle demands of the production—this includes working on a team and under a deadline. For this reason, we have developed what we call “StudioX,” which are a series of advanced level classes that emulate a production environment and is faculty mentored. In these classes, the students are working on real shows, with real deadlines, and encounter real problems and challenges that come up in the course of making a film.

“The students learn to work together as a team, how to work well under pressure, and how to creatively solve problems. The work that has come out of the these classes speaks for itself but beyond that, the experience students gain in these StudioX classes (the X stands for eXperience) has been tremendously important in preparing them to be ready to go from school and into a studio job.”
– Derek Flood, Associate Director of VFX

ACADEMY OF ART
“ANIMATES” THE JUNIOR GIANTS

The video series, called Foodiecats, features delightfully animated cats in the shape of different foods – an apple, carrot, broccoli, egg, sandwich and cheeseburger -- that teach youth ages 5-18 the Junior Giants’ four bases of character development: Confidence, Integrity, Leadership, and Teamwork. The videos also highlight the Junior Giants’ emphasis on the importance of good Health and Education as well as Bullying Prevention.

Working with the Junior Giants, more than 250 Academy of Art School of Animation & Visual Effects students developed the Foodiecats concept and created seven educational and entertaining videos. For example, the Health video is the story of couch potato EggCat who finally starts moving so he can catch a baseball flying around him like a helicopter. The Bullying Prevention video shows bully CheeseburgerCat continually ruining the fun that AppleCat and SandwichCat are having. After CheeseburgerCat stumbles and breaks apart, AppleCat and SandwichCat put him back together, and all three become friends and play baseball.

academyart.edu
Faculty

Our instructors don’t just teach you about the Animation and VFX industry, they are the Animation and VFX industry. They are nationally recognized professionals who maintain careers on the leading edge of industry trends. They will challenge you to reach your creative potential.

Chris Armstrong
Executive Director

Chris Armstrong worked as an animator and animation supervisor at Industrial Light & Magic for more than 10 years prior to joining the School of Animation & Visual Effects in 2004. He worked on many major projects at ILM, including Star Wars: Episode I, Star Wars: Episode II, The Mask, and Galaxy Quest. His work experience includes CG supervisor, senior CG animator, director and more.

Tom Bertino
Graduate Director

Tom Bertino is a renowned animator and director with more than three decades of experience. He worked at Industrial Light & Magic for nearly 20 years and was nominated for an Academy Award and a BAFTA Award for Best Achievement in Visual Effects for the CG imagery he created for The Mask. He is credited with animation direction on Men in Black II, Star Wars: Episode I, and many others.
David Nethery
*Online Director 2D Animation*

David Nethery has amassed 25 years of experience in the field of classical animation, specializing in theatrical feature film projects as an animation artist for various studios, including a long stint at Walt Disney Feature Animation. His work has been featured in animated films such as *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Aladdin*, *The Lion King*, *Pocahontas*, *Mulan*, *Tarzan*, and *Lilo & Stitch*, and more.

Charles Keagle
*Online Director*

Charles Keagle’s animation and storyboarding credits include *FernGully: The Last Rainforest*, *The Ren & Stimpy Show*, *Toy Story 2*, and *South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut*. As story supervisor for Pulse Entertainment, he oversaw the production of *Kung Fu 3D*, an online series for Warner Bros., and co-designed an interactive Coyote and Roadrunner project for the studio.

Sherrie H. Sinclair
*MFA Director 2D Animation*

Sherrie Sinclair joined Academy of Art University more than 10 years ago, after spending nine years as a clean-up animator with Walt Disney Feature Animation in Orlando, Florida. Her film credits include *The Lion King*, *Pocahontas*, *Mulan*, *Tarzan*, and *Lilo & Stitch*. 
CERTIFICATE
The four-year certificate program provides students with a disciplined approach to the study of Animation & Visual Effects. Student portfolios will demonstrate the variety of skills and creativity developed.

ASSOCIATE OF ARTS (AA)
Our AA program offers students a strong introduction to the core principles of animation production. Courses include visual effects, 3D animation, 3D modeling, 2D animation, stop motion, and storyboarding.

BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS (BFA)
Gain the skills to master today’s digital technology. Students choose one primary area of emphasis between visual effects, 3D modeling, 3D animation, 2D animation and stop motion, and storyboarding.

MASTER OF ARTS (MA)
Focus on storytelling, exhibiting technical skills, and eliciting emotional responses. In our MA program, students work on 2D animation and stop motion, 3D animation, 3D modeling, or visual effects.

MASTER OF FINE ARTS (MFA)
Our MFA program educates students in all aspects of animation and visual effects, from ideation to post-production. Students develop skills in any one of the many areas of expertise within the animation and visual effects industry.
Our Facilities

Learning to use the software, tools, and equipment used by the industry is essential to preparing you to enter the work force. That’s why we make it a point to keep our facilities as up-to-date as possible with current advancements in technology and equipment.

FULL ARRAY OF DIGITAL EQUIPMENT
In the largest green screen in Northern California, you’ll use real-time composite monitors and a full array of lighting equipment, including grid lighting, scrims, gel frames, green props, key lights, and more to bring your creations to life.

DIGITAL WORKSTATIONS
Use the latest high-end PC and Mac workstations, along with Cintiq tablets, scanners, and a large format printer.

VOICEOVER AND SOUND
Record voiceover tracks and sound effects in our industry-standard sound booth.

VIDEO
Edit and process video on Mac workstations with Final Cut Pro for input and output. In our video lab, get access to a control room for production and high-end transfers and rent cameras, lenses, and lighting kits for all your assignments.
Student and Alumni Testimonials

Our 50,000-plus Academy alumni are some of the most successful and sought-after professionals in art, entertainment, and design today. But we’re just getting started. Our current pool of creative and innovative students are preparing to redefine the future.
“StudioX is the one place where, as an animation student, you are given the opportunity to work on real world collaborative projects and get real, unique shots on your reel before you graduate. I found this extremely beneficial and important.”

William Sokoloski  
*Dynamics Alumnus*

“I can say from experience, that the Academy offers a multitude of class options in exciting, industry-leading, fields. They equipped me and all other students with the resources needed to follow our dreams.”

Shaun Dunn  
*Animation Student*

“Academy of Art allowed me to collaborate with other artists, some of whom are my best friends today. Those friendships I made have supported and motivated me every step of my professional career.”

Alvin Geno  
*Animation Alumn*

“This degree is tailored towards a specific field with enough electives to keep it flexible and unique for every student. I was able to take classes in different departments without needing to change my program.”

Olga Rudi  
*Modeler*
Partnerships

We are located in the San Francisco Bay Area, one of the capitals of the animation industry. Thanks to our location, we offer some of the most exciting industry experiences you will find at any school.

THEEBO

The School of Animation’s Studio X had the opportunities to collaborate with industry experts and work on visual effects for various projects and films, such as Advantageous, Fruitvale Station, Saving Lincoln, and Oscar nominated films Beasts of the Southern Wild and Theeb.

Shaheen—a StudioX vet who collaborated on projects including the films Advantageous, Fruitvale Station, and Saving Lincoln while at the Academy—was able to steer the production of Theeb’s VFX assets at StudioX by working closely with Rupert Lloyd, the film’s producer. Lloyd, whose credits include the Oscar-winning The Hurt Locker, turned to StudioX after learning about the work other students did on Beasts of the Southern Wild, another critical darling. “I was impressed by the quality of [those students’ VFX] work, and the huge role it had played in bringing this low-budget indie to life.”

For Shaheen, the experience of working on prestigious films such as Theeb as a student at Academy of Art University was invaluable. To collaborate on, “not a school project but an actual, real-life project,” was incredible, she says. “I applied to the Academy on a lark, after a friend told me about the school, and I found out about the quality of its faculty.

“Once I got to class, I couldn’t believe I could learn how to make things like 3D models and work on all these advanced projects, with the best technology at my fingertips. It’s an awesome school that teaches you art and how to apply art to business and to the real world. Without the Academy, I wouldn’t know how to perform in an animation studio.”

academyart.edu
THEEB
A FILM BY NAJI ABU NOWAR
Career Paths

As one of the top art and design schools in the country, Academy of Art University helps prepare graduates for a range of career opportunities. Our facilities, faculty, and hands-on learning approach are designed to provide you with the tools you need to succeed as a professional in the animation and visual effects industry.

TECHNICAL ARTIST: LIGHTER
Create mood, illuminate objects or surfaces, and direct where or what the audience should pay attention to.

MODELER
Modelers digitally build objects for manipulation in a 3D environment - these could be models of characters, both cartoon and realistic, natural shapes like animals and plants, or solid object like buildings and cars.

WHO IS HIRING OUR ALUMNI
Atomic Fiction
Ammunition
Blizzard Entertainment
BlueSky
Cartoon Network
CoSA
D-Neg
Disney Studios
Dreamworks Animation
Electronic Arts
Facebook
Ingenuity
Illumination Ent.
Laika
Naughty Dog
Nickelodeon
Marvel
Paramount
Pixar
Riot Games
Sony
The Mill

STORYBOARD ARTIST
Translate script and story into cinematic images.

CHARACTER ANIMATOR
Bring characters to life using your deep understanding of the subtleties of movement.

MATTE PAINTER
Create photorealistic environments to immerse the audience in imaginary worlds.

PUPPET FABRICATOR
Create elements in stop motion animated films using a diverse range of sculpting and materials expertise.

STOP MOTION ARTIST
Create a television, film, or advertising piece using frame-by-frame manipulation of posable puppets.

RIGGER
Create the skeletons of 3D models—the bones that form and animate specific parts of the character—so they can be controlled by the animators.
3D ANIMATOR
Focus on the movement in computer graphic imagery including characters, inanimate objects such as robots or cars, or cameras for television, feature films, or games.

2D ANIMATOR
A 2D animator is concerned with creating 2D images by either hand drawing each frame or digitally manipulating flat media for games, television, the web, or feature films.

PRODUCER
Supervise all aspects of production, ensuring the director’s creative vision is realized.

COMPOSITORS
Assemble all the elements that were shot and stitch them together to create a seamless result.

TECHNICAL ARTIST: DYNAMICS
Create natural phenomena; a large body of water, air, smoke, explosions, and more.
Additional Learning Experiences

Academy of Art University has a hands-on program for every interest at every level. If you are looking to upgrade your career, explore something you have never tried before, or hone existing skills, we have a program for you.
PRE-COLLEGE ART EXPERIENCE (PCAE)
This dual-scholarship program allows current high school students to take art and design courses at no tuition charge. In addition, they earn scholarship dollars towards future undergraduate studies at Academy of Art University.
Visit https://www.dev.academyart.edu/academics/pre-college-art-experience-program or call 415.274.2200 for more information.

STUDY ABROAD
One of the best ways to learn about the world is to see the world. Take advantage of one or all of these exciting Study Abroad opportunities.

The Liberal Arts Seminar in Europe is a three-week intensive traveling course visiting some of Europe’s greatest cities and collections.

The Fine Art Intensive in Italy takes you to Florence, Italy, for seven and a half weeks during Summer semester.

The School of Fashion at awards scholarships to study in Paris with Studio Berçot and L'École de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne.

The Illustration Department also has a summer semester in Florence emphasizing cultural awareness in painting and drawing.

For more information about these Study Abroad opportunities, including cost and visa matters, visit www.academyart.edu/academics/study-abroad

CONTINUING EDUCATION
Time for a career upgrade? Want to follow your passion? Learn, be inspired, and expand your creative potential by taking hands-on courses from industry-experienced faculty. Flexible art and design courses are available online and in San Francisco.
Visit https://www.academyart.edu/academics/continuing-education or call 415.274.2200 for more information.
Academy of Art University is committed to the highest standards of achievement in art and design. Here’s a small sampling highlighting some recent accomplishments of our outstanding students, faculty, and alumni.
FIND YOUR PLACE. MASTER YOUR CRAFT.

#3 BEST ONLINE ART PROGRAMS IN AMERICA

#1 ANIMATION & VISUAL EFFECTS SCHOOL IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

RANKED IN THE TOP TEN BEST PHOTOGRAPHY SCHOOLS

RED DOT RANKS SCHOOLS OF GRAPHIC DESIGN AND INDUSTRIAL DESIGN TOP 10 SCHOOLS FOR DESIGN 7 YEARS IN A ROW

8 YEARS WORKING WITH NASA

70+ STUDENT AND ALUMNI ART EXHIBITIONS IN SF EACH YEAR

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR DEDICATION • PASSION • COMMITMENT • CREATIVITY
Online Education

Take any online course at the Academy, and experience the visual, interactive, and dynamic courses we’re known for. You will have the same quality instructors, the same hands-on learning opportunities, and the same attentive support as our onsite students. The difference? The flexibility to earn your art and design degree on your terms.

ONLINE BENEFITS

• A support staff of over 100 Academy of Art employees offers 900+ online courses and 1,500 instructional videos per semester, spanning 35 online majors, and teaching students from 50+ countries
• Course content is proprietary, created in-house by industry experts, and exclusive to the Academy
• The classes are a mix of lecture content, video, written content, recorded audio, interactive slide-shows, and hands-on work
• The innovative curriculum is created by instructional designers and industry professionals
• A student-run Facebook group, AAUHOO, has more than 4,000 members and invites you to join this thriving online community
• We’re constantly building new courses, reworking old ones and adding features to our LMS based on student feedback

Visit academyart.edu or call 415.274.2200 for more information.

“Taking classes online really benefited me as a student in allowing me to hone in on each of my skills and develop them before I got a job in the industry.”

— Mark Cofer
Graduate School of Music Production & Sound Design for Visual Media Alumn 2014
Hollywood Film Composer and Academy of Art University Instructor
A substantial part of an artist’s growth and inspiration occurs outside the classroom or studio. At Academy of Art University, we understand this. Here are some resources and opportunities that are available to all students.
EVENTS
Campus Life is designed to inspire, educate, and promote fun. Our events are created in coordination with student-run groups and organizations. Make the most of your university experience: grow, learn, laugh, and run with us.

Visit https://www.academyart.edu/students/clubs-organizations/events for more info.

URBAN KNIGHTS RADIO
Listen live online to our athletics teams, hear unique talk shows, and dance to your favorite tunes on UrbanKnightsRadio.com, an iHeartRadio partner.

HOUSING
Housing is guaranteed for all new, full-time onsite students. We have 17 different housing options to choose from located in the heart of San Francisco.

DINING
Stay healthy with delicious and filling meals in one of our dining halls with flexible meal plans and Knight Kash. Use the Knight Kash on your student ID for dining on campus and at select off-campus vendors.

ACADEMIC CLUBS
Join students with similar interests to discuss ideas, promote your work, form collaborations, and share information.

FITNESS & RECREATION
Campus Recreation classes and workshops—and access to our free gym, pool, basketball courts, and skateboard ramp—will help you stay active healthy.

VIRTUAL BOOKSTORE
All required textbooks are available at our virtual bookstore.

CULTURAL CLUBS
Everyone needs a break from the studio. With dozens of clubs and organizations, find a new creative outlet and build lifelong relationships.

ESPORTS
Our active gaming community hosts and attends regular gaming events for both casual or competitive players.
San Francisco

One of the world's great creative capitals, San Francisco has been our home since 1929. Our neighbors include giants in everything from advertising, animation, and architecture to communications, game development, and web design.

Simply put, Academy of Art University is an absolutely amazing place to be a college student.
MUSEUMS
Academy of Art University Auto Museum
Legion of Honor
de Young Museum
Asian Art Museum
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA)
California Academy of Sciences
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts
Cable Car Museum
Palace of Fine Arts
Theatre Exploratorium
Walt Disney Family Museum
Museum of Performance & Design
Museum of Craft & Design
Museo Italo Americano
Cartoon Art Museum
Museum of the African Diaspora
Museo de la Raza

THEATRES & VENUES
The Fillmore
Bill Graham Civic Auditorium
The Warfield
Bottom of the Hill
Rickshaw Stop
Alamo Drafthouse
Great American Music Hall
The Independent
The Fox Theatre
SHN Orpheum Theater
The American Conservatory Theater
The Castro Theatre
SFJAZZ
San Francisco Conservatory of Music
San Francisco Opera
San Francisco Symphony
San Francisco Ballet
AT&T Park

TRANSPORTATION
MUNI
AC Transit
BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit)
Cal Train
Golden Gate Transit
Athletics

We are the Urban Knights—the only higher arts education institution in the U.S. to have an NCAA athletics program. Urban Knight Nation is proud to support our fierce student-athletes as they fight on to victory. Go Urban Knights!

We are the Urban Knights—14 varsity athletic teams that represent Academy of Art University in NCAA Division II intercollegiate sports. We are dedicated to distinction, sportsmanship, pride, teamwork, credibility, and creativity.

As an artist-athlete in the Academy of Art University Intercollegiate Athletic program, you are empowered to realize your full potential academically, personally, and professionally while on the path to collegiate success. The Academy’s Urban Knights compete as members of the Pacific West Conference.

MEN’S
- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Soccer
- Softball
- Tennis
- Track & Field
- Volleyball

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

NCAA PROGRAM
Join one of our teams or come out and support your fellow artist-athlete. We play in great venues throughout San Francisco, including Kezar Pavilion, Paul Goode Field, SF Bay Tennis Club, and Presidio Golf Course, among others. Let the Fan Bus take you to the games.

The NCAA is a trademark owned by the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

academyart.edu
ARTIST ATHLETES
The Urban Knights have quickly made a name for themselves with numerous conference and national accomplishments including 10+ NCAA championships. We are the first athletic program to win two NCAA National Championships (indoor and outdoor women’s track & field) in our first year of postseason eligibility. We have made over 40 postseason appearances in men’s and women’s cross country, women’s basketball, men’s indoor and outdoor track and field, men’s and women’s golf, and women’s tennis. Go Urban Knights!
Apply Today at academyart.edu

Apply year-round, and begin taking classes in Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. Our Admissions Representatives will help you every step of the way. They want to help you succeed, and are trained to make sure your application best reflects your abilities. Apply today!

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

YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION MUST INCLUDE:
• $50* application fee ($150 international)
• $95* enrollment fee
• International applicants require a $300* international student service fee
• Fees can be paid by MasterCard, Visa, Discover.
  By mail: check or money order
  *all fees are non-refundable, non-transferable

TRANSFER STUDENTS
1. Complete the application
2. Submit electronic transcripts to:
   transcripts@academyart.edu
Or mail transcripts in a sealed envelope to:
  Academy of Art University
  Attn: Undergraduate Admissions Office
  79 New Montgomery St.
  San Francisco, California 94105

academyart.edu
GET STARTED TOWARD A CAREER YOU’LL LOVE

At Academy of Art University, Chase no longer felt like the odd man out. He turned his love for social media, shooting videos, and making flyers into a blossoming career as a top creative in the advertising industry. We can teach you to turn the things you love to do into a career you’ll love—and have a ton of fun along the way. Sometimes it’s not so much about finding who you are, it’s about finding the place where you can be who you are. Find out how your passion can become a creative legacy at academyart.edu

Find Your Place. Master Your Craft.
The 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:

- Acting
- Advertising
- Animation & Visual Effects
- Architecture
- Art Education
- Art History
- Fashion
- Fine Art
- Game Development
- Graphic Design
- Illustration
- Industrial Design
- Interior Architecture & Design
- Jewelry & Metal Arts
- Landscape Architecture
- Motion Picture & Television
- Multimedia Communications
- Music Production & Sound Design for Visual Media
- Photography
- Visual Development
- Web Design & New Media
- Writing for Film, Television & Digital Media

Visit www.academyart.edu to learn more about total costs, median student loan debt, potential occupations, and other information.