

THE CHICAGO ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS

The Chicago Academy for the Arts



The premier performing and visual arts high school in the country.
Proudly independent, since 1981.

CHICAGOACADEMYFORTHEARTS.ORG

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go for the Arts



WELCOME!

Dear Families,

For 40 years, The Chicago Academy for the Arts has been one of Illinois' great independent schools, an important Chicago cultural institution, and "home" to hundreds of brilliant young artists characterized by their passion, purpose, and excellence.

The Academy's "co-curricular" educational model is simple, yet transformational. Our rigorous academic program and immersive, pre-professional arts training prepare our students for an incredible variety of paths beyond high school, leading successful, meaningful lives in the arts and well beyond.

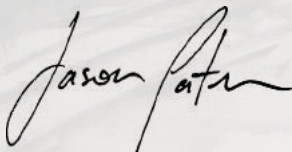
The 180 graduates from 2017 to 2021 earned nearly **\$39 million** in college scholarships (that's not a typo!) and gained admission to the nation's best colleges, universities, and conservatories, from CalArts to Juilliard; from Stanford to Princeton.

From the Grammy Awards to the New York Times Bestseller List, our alums are not only succeeding in the professional arts world, they are prepared to define it. And as physicists, entrepreneurs, attorneys, software developers, and more, Academy grads are thriving in a breathtaking variety of fields.

Most importantly, however, The Academy is characterized by its community: inspired academic teachers, professional artists with a passion for mentorship, and an incredible student body. It is a unique privilege to be immersed every day in a community of people so deeply invested in being here.

Thank you for taking a closer look at our school: we are eager to show you what makes The Academy such a special place to be.

Welcome to The Chicago Academy for the Arts. And, welcome home.



Jason Patera
Head of School



THE ACADEMY EDUCATIONAL MODEL

ARTS

Since its inception in 1981, The Academy has provided a home to serious young artists inspired to test the limits of their potential. Our students are immersed in 3-5 hours of daily arts training in one of six disciplines: **Dance, Media Arts** (filmmaking, animation, and writing), **Music, Musical Theatre, Theatre,** and **Visual Arts.**



COMMUNITY

We often say that there is nothing more important here than our community. Academy students and faculty alike are characterized by their **passion, sense of purpose, and pursuit of excellence,** and thus everyone at The Academy is deeply invested in being here.



ACADEMICS

While The Academy is famous for its arts programs, **our academic coursework is just as rigorous.**

Students engage deeply in courses designed to develop critical thinking skills across a broad array of subjects, including Women's Literature, AP Computer Science, Global Affairs, Business and the Arts, World Religions, AP Statistics, Philosophy, and many more.



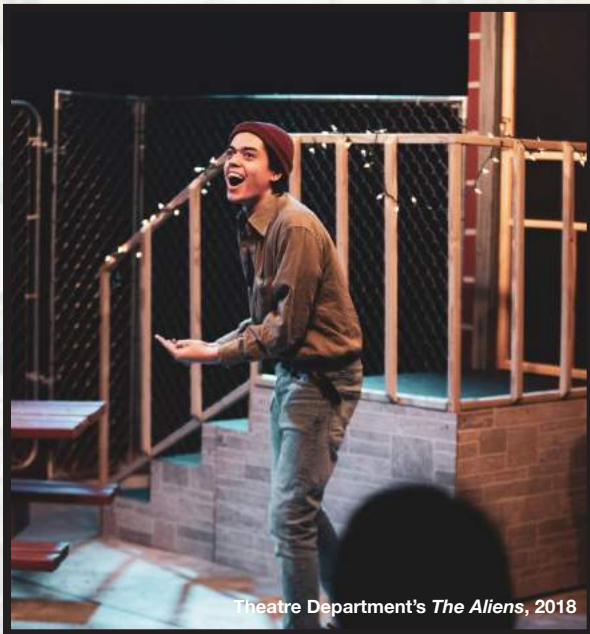
The Academy experience is deeply influenced by a variety of factors, including the legacies left by generations of students, teachers, and administrators (and at a small school, *everyone* has an impact on the culture), the non-arts lessons inherent in learning how to make great art, and the fact that everyone in this community really wants to be here.

Each year, we revisit a list of statements we informally call **"The Academy Method"**—things we believe are critically important to the Academy experience. It is not a complete list, but rather some of the most important reminders about how we do what we do. Learn more on the next page.

THE ACADEMY METHOD

Academic study and arts training are co-curricular. Neither is more, or less, important than the other, but the authentic, disciplined immersion in each (separately) creates a powerful reciprocal relationship between the two.

Environment matters. Four decades ago, The Academy's first students built a community that was safe, inclusive, welcoming, and supportive — a community where students were united by their common sense of purpose, passion, and pursuit of excellence. In the decades since, one of our primary goals has been to protect that culture, and as a result, our students truly want to be here.



Hire experts, and give them the authority and autonomy to be the experts. We believe that placing decision-making as close to the classroom as possible dramatically increases the teacher's ability to create transformative experiences for their students. Our teachers' abilities to change students' lives are not compromised by geographically (and philosophically) distant administrators, or powerful standardized testing corporations.

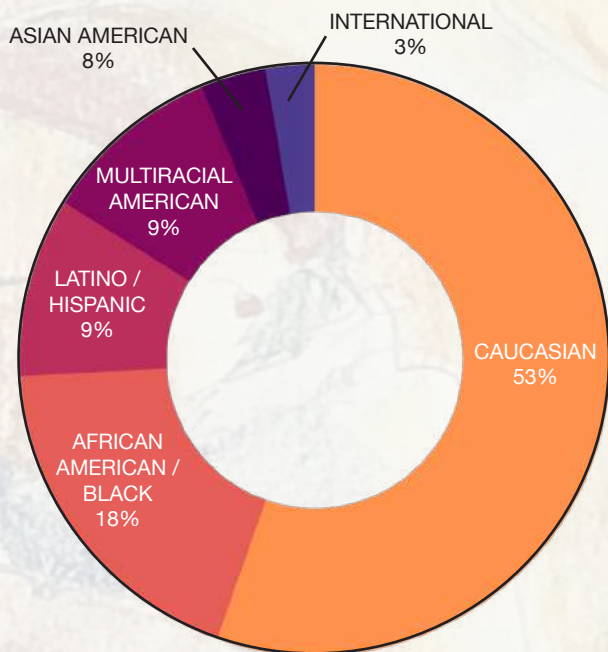
Cultivate relationships. No one is anonymous at The Academy, partly because we are a small school, and partly because we value the potential for mentorship and human relationships at every level: from upperclassmen to lowerclassmen, from teachers to students, and across all levels of the staff and administration. Community matters.

Expose young people to challenging material, high expectations, and critical feedback. We believe that young people are capable of so much more than they are typically given credit for when they are exposed to the combination of these elements. There are no sanitized-for-school novels here, students routinely do jaw-dropping work, and even our most advanced students are used to receiving and integrating feedback. (Those are all good things.)

Cultivate individual responsibility. A small school does not need to create long lists of rules to prescribe and control every element of a student's behavior. While we of course have policies and rules, one theme guides student behavior more than anything else: *At all times, work hard to be sensitive enough to your environment to know what the right thing to do is. Then, do that thing.*

Process matters. So does the product. We expect our students to work incredibly hard, seek and embrace the discomfort of receiving and integrating critical feedback, and get excellent results.

THE ACADEMY AT A GLANCE



STUDENT BODY

The Academy enrolls approximately 145 students each year.

Academy students routinely score 20% higher on the ACT than the national average.

The average academic class size is 15 students. The school has a 4:1 student-to-teacher ratio.

The Academy is among the top-ranked private high schools and is the #1 arts high school in Illinois (*Niche, 2021*).

Academy students come from 75 different zip codes, from 4 different states.

Students participate in more than 100 productions throughout the course of the school year, including concerts, plays, screenings, and exhibitions.

About 2/3 of Academy graduates go on to careers in the arts, while 1/3 pursue the sciences, the humanities, business, and more.

ACCREDITATION

The Chicago Academy for the Arts is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and a member of the following organizations:

Independent School Association of the Central States (ISACS)

Illinois School Board of Education (ISBE)

National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)

Arts Schools Network (ASN)

Lake Michigan Association of Independent Schools (LMAIS)



ACADEMICS AT THE ACADEMY

Designated a National School of Distinction by the John F. Kennedy Center, The Academy offers a rigorous, college-preparatory academic program built upon core studies in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and world languages. Honors courses are offered in selected disciplines. Advanced Placement courses are offered during a student's junior and senior years.

ACADEMIC COURSE OFFERINGS

ENGLISH

- African American Literature
- American Literature
- Analysis and Composition
- AP English Literature & Composition
- Chicago Literature
- Detective Fiction
- Freshman English
- Gothic Literature
- Latin American Literature
- Literature and Composition
- Literature and the Comedic Form
- Literature of World War I
- Literature Through Film
- Native American Literature
- Postcolonial Literature
- Shakespeare as Literature and Drama
- Women's Literature
- Myth and Hero

MATHEMATICS

- Algebra I
- Algebra II
- AP Calculus AB
- AP Calculus BC
- AP Statistics
- Discrete Mathematics
- Geometry
- Honors Algebra I
- Honors Algebra II
- Honors Geometry
- Honors Precalculus
- Precalculus

SCIENCE

- Anatomy & Physiology
- AP Computer Science Principles
- Astronomy
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Health and Wellness
- Physics
- Plagues, Pests, and Politics
- Scientific Discourse and Debate

SOCIAL STUDIES

- AP Art History
- AP European History
- Civics
- Honors Philosophy
- Honors World Religions
- Intro to Sociology and
- Modern American History Through Film
- U.S. History

WORLD LANGUAGES

- AP French
- AP Spanish
- French I-III
- Honors French IV
- Honors Spanish IV
- Spanish I-III

ARTS ELECTIVES

(Offered to students of all arts departments)

- Business & the Arts
- Digital Arts and Media
- Introduction to Acting
- Music Composition
- Rhetoric, Discourse, Speech, and Debate
- Studio Art
- Urban Design



Graduation, 2016

ACT SCORING

ACT SCORES 2019 & 2020

| Section | Academy Average | National Average | Academy % Higher |
|-----------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| English | 25.2 | 20.1 | 25% |
| Math | 23.4 | 20.3 | 15% |
| Reading | 26.5 | 21.2 | 25% |
| Science | 23.3 | 20.6 | 13% |
| Composite | 24.7 | 20.9 | 18% |

ACT COLLEGE READINESS* SCORES

| Section | % Academy Students | % National Students | Academy % Higher |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| English | 91% | 60% | 52% |
| Math | 77% | 39% | 97% |
| Reading | 73% | 45% | 62% |
| Science | 64% | 36% | 78% |
| Meeting all four | 59% | 26% | 127% |

*The ACT's "College Readiness" statistic predicts the likelihood of a student earning an 'A' or a 'B' in a particular college course.

"The faculty really push the students towards their certain path and figure out what their strengths are. At the same point they are pushing you to do more."

Sydney, Dance Department



FACULTY

The Academy's faculty consists of 55 members, including full-time, certified academic teachers and arts instructors, as well as part-time artist-teachers of local, national, and international acclaim. The student-to-faculty ratio is 4:1. Seventy-one percent of Academy teachers hold graduate degrees. The average faculty tenure is 10 years.

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

“The faculty are unique in that you really know them. You have teachers that you consider friends. And in respect to the amount of training they can provide you — I don’t know anywhere else like it.”

Jacob, Theatre Department



Markeise Russell
Assistant Principal



Elizabeth Cunningham
Director of Learning Resources



Anna Mijalski
Humanities Department Co-Chair



Nick Roux
Humanities Department Co-Chair

“As we complete the school year and reflect on the growth, accomplishments, and connections our daughters have made, it feels very much like a place like no other in preparing them for a demanding future.”

Gary, Dance Department Parent

RECENT COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

DANCE

Belmont University
Boston Conservatory at Berklee
Butler University
Calvin College
Carthage College
Chicago State University
Clark Atlanta University
Cornish College of the Arts
Dominican University of California
Drexel University
Fordham University
Goucher College
Hofstra University
Howard University
Illinois State University
Indiana University
Joffrey Ballet Company
London Contemporary School of Dance
Loyola University Chicago
Make-Up Designory
Marquette University
Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance
Marymount Manhattan College
Mercyhurst University
Morehouse College
New York University
New York University Shanghai
Northern Illinois University
Northern Michigan University
Northern School of Contemporary Dance
Northwestern University
Point Park University
Purdue University
Sarah Lawrence College
Simon Fraser University (Canada)
SUNY Purchase
The Juilliard School
The New School
Trinity Laban Conservatory for Music and Dance (London)
University of Arizona
University of Hartford — The Hartt School
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
University of Minnesota
University of Southern California
University of Toledo
University of Wisconsin Madison

Recent Areas of Study / Majors

Chemistry
Computer Science
Criminal Justice and Elementary Education
Criminology and Business
Make Up and Special Effects Film/Print
Mechanical Engineering and Dance
Pharmacy
Psychology and Dance

MEDIA ARTS

Bard College
Columbia College Chicago
Cornell College
DePaul University
Drake University
Indiana University Bloomington
Kenyon College
Lawrence University
Lewis & Clark College
Maryland Institute College of Arts
Marymount Manhattan College
Pratt Institute
Ringling College of Art and Design
Savannah College of Art and Design
School of Visual Arts

Scripps College
Seattle University
St. Andrews University (Scotland)
Syracuse University
University of Iowa
University of Minnesota
University of Vermont
University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee
Hofstra University

Recent Areas of Study / Majors

Computer Animation
English and History
Film Directing & Film Production
Marketing and Photography
Modern Languages and Literatures
Radio, Television & Film Production

MUSIC

American University
Baylor University
Belmont University
Berklee College of Music
California Institute for the Arts
Carthage College
Colorado State University
Columbia College Chicago
DePaul University
DePaul University — School of Music
Eastman School of Music
Hofstra University
Indiana University Jacobs — School of Music
Johns Hopkins University — Peabody Institute
Lawrence University
Los Angeles College of Music
Lynn University
Manhattanville College
New England Conservatory of Music
Oberlin Conservatory of Music
Roosevelt University (CCPA)
San Francisco Conservatory of Music
The Catholic University of America
The New School — School of Jazz
University of Colorado Boulder
University of Colorado Denver
University of Kansas
University of Missouri
University of North Texas
University of Pacific -Dave Brubeck Fellow
University of Southern California
University of St Francis
University of the Pacific
Valparaiso University

Recent Areas of Study / Majors

Audio Engineering and Sound Design
Composition and Jazz Performance Studies
Double Bass Performance
Music Education
Organ
Political Science
Popular Music

MUSICAL THEATRE

The American Musical and Dramatic Academy
American University
Ball State University
Carnegie Mellon University
Central Michigan University
Colorado State University
Columbia College Chicago
Cornish College
Denver University
DePaul University
DePauw University
Drew University
Elon University
Emerson College
Florida State University
Hartt School, University of Hartford
Indiana University
Indiana University Jacobs School of Music
Indiana University Bloomington
Johns Hopkins University — Peabody Institute
Manhattan School of Music
Millikin University
Muhlenberg College
Northern Colorado
Northwestern University
Oberlin College
Oklahoma City University
Otterbein University
Princeton University
Rhode Island College
Rollins College
Sarah Lawrence College
St. Edwards University
Stanford University
Temple University
Texas State University
The University of Oklahoma
University of Hartford — The Hartt School
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Northern Colorado
University of Oklahoma
University of Southern California
University of Virginia
Western Connecticut State University
Western Michigan University

Recent Areas of Study / Majors

English and Theatre & Performance Studies
Liberal Arts
Musical Theatre
Music
Music Theory
Musical Theatre and Political Science
Musical Theatre and Vocal Performance
Theatre
Theatre and Cognitive Science

THEATRE

The American Musical and Dramatic Academy (New York)
Bard College
Bellarmine University
Belmont University
Beloit College
California Institute for the Arts
Carroll University
Carthage College
College of Wooster
DePaul University
Earlham College
Elon University
Emerson College
Fordham University
Illinois Wesleyan University
Kalamazoo College
Kenyon College
Lawrence University
Loyola Marymount University
Loyola University Chicago
Marquette University
Miami University (Ohio)
Michigan State University
Milwaukee School of Engineering
Mount Holyoke College
Northern Arizona University
Oberlin College
Saint Louis University
Seattle University
Smith College
Stevens Institute of Technology
The College of Wooster
University of Denver

Recent Areas of Study / Majors

Acting
Computer Science and Mathematics
History and Theatre International Affairs and Theatre Studies
Nursing

VISUAL ARTS

Arizona State University
Art Center College of Design
Bard College
Bard College Berlin (Germany)
Baylor University
California College of Arts
Central St. Martins (London)
Cleveland Institute of Art
Cooper Union
The Theatre School—DePaul University
Dominican University of California
Drexel University
George Washington
Glasgow School of Art (Scotland)
Hampshire College
Kansas City Art Institute
Kean University
Loyola University
Maryland Institute College of Arts
Massachusetts College of Art and Design
Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design
Minneapolis College of Art and Design
New Hampshire Institute of Art
Ohio University
Ohio Wesleyan University
Otis College of Art and Design
Parsons School of Design (New York & Paris)
Pratt Institute
Rhode Island School of Design
Rider University
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
School of Visual Arts
School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University
Syracuse University
Temple University
Temple University
The American University of Paris (France)
Tufts University
The American University of Paris (France)
Tufts University

Recent Areas of Study / Majors

Animation
Architecture
Art
Art Education
Costume Technology
Criminology and Graphic Design
Drawing and Sculpture
Environmental Studies
Fine Arts
Illustration
Interdisciplinary Sculpture
Interior Architecture and Design
Painting

ARTS AT THE ACADEMY

Academy students are immersed in 15-20+ hours of arts training per week.



"I love how secure I feel when I am in the building. Bad day or good, I always feel supported. Being able to have friends and teachers that feel like part of your family is awesome."

Isaiah, Dance Department



ARTS LEADERSHIP

“You guys are ahead of the curve. I was in college before I knew the difference between linear and non-linear films. This is an exciting high school. When you study the arts, you study life.”

Roger Ebert, Film Critic



Randy Duncan
Dance Department Chair



Jessi Meliza
Media Arts Department Chair



Rachel Brown
Music Department Chair



Andrew Robinson
Musical Theatre Department Chair



Ben Dicke
Theatre Department Chair



Margy Stover
Visual Arts Department Chair

“I feel like I was given the independence I needed for the real world. There is no padding at this school, no constant monitoring or micromanagement. You are put into an environment with expectations, and if you don't meet them, you are not letting down the faculty, you are letting down yourself. It's all about you and your ability to work for your future.”

Elena, Music Department

ARTS DEPARTMENT COURSES

Each student is a member of one of The Academy's six arts departments: **Dance, Media Arts, Music, Musical Theatre, Theatre, or Visual Arts.** Each department provides core courses that immerse the students in the discipline of the respective department. Faculty members assess students individually in each course each semester. In addition to their regular arts classwork, students participate in numerous productions throughout the school year.

Seniors in each arts department also present major final projects (such as recitals, exhibits, and films) as a graduation requirement.

DANCE

- Allegro
- Ballet A, B, & C
- Dance Composition
- Jazz A, B, & C
- Men's Class
- Modern Graham Technique A, B, & C
- Pas de Deux
- Pointe A & B
- Pre-Barre Body Alignment

MEDIA ARTS

- Animation Studies
- Animation Techniques
- Audio Production
- Cinematography
- Creative Non-Fiction
- Directing
- Expanded Narrative
- Fiction
- Film Aesthetics
- Introduction To Creative Writing
- Media Design
- Poetry
- Publications Lab
- Screenwriting
- Sequential Narrative
- Studio
- Video Production
- Workshop

MUSIC

- Chamber Ensemble
- Classical Vocal Workshop
- Composition
- Contemporary Writing and Production
- Jazz Combo
- Jazz Vocal Workshop
- Music History
- Musicianship I, II, III, and IV
- Piano Lab
- Studio
- Theory and Ear Training I, II, and Advanced

MUSICAL THEATRE

- Advanced Acting
- Dance (Ballet, Modern, and Jazz)*
- Intermediate Acting
- Introduction to Acting
- Musical Theatre Dance
- Musical Theatre Studio I and II
- Private Voice Instruction
- Voice Repertoire and Music Theory

THEATRE

- Acting for the Camera*
- Advanced Acting
- Circus*
- Directing
- Ensemble
- Intermediate Acting
- Introduction to Acting
- Introduction to Theatre
- Playwriting*
- Production & Design I & II
- Script Analysis
- Senior Seminar
- Stagecraft I & II

VISUAL ARTS

- Color Theory
- Design
- Digital Photography
- Drawing
- Four-Dimensional Studio
- Interdisciplinary Art
- Painting
- Printmaking
- Sculpture



DANCE



Icons of Choreography Dance Concert, 2019

At the core of the Dance Department is the intensive study of technique. In addition to a foundational class in ballet every day, where students delve deep into classical technique, dancers study jazz, modern, pointe, and pas de deux.

Students perfect jetés, attitudes, expressive movement, and arabesques. Furthermore, Academy dancers will have the opportunity to audition for The Academy's Repertory Dance Company, and perform in Chicago and beyond.

"We thought we were choosing The Academy for the guidance for our daughter's dance career. What we received was that plus so much more. Now as we end this chapter of our lives, our daughter begins her next chapter at Juilliard, and a dream has come true. A dream we could not have accomplished without The Academy."

Dean, Dance Parent

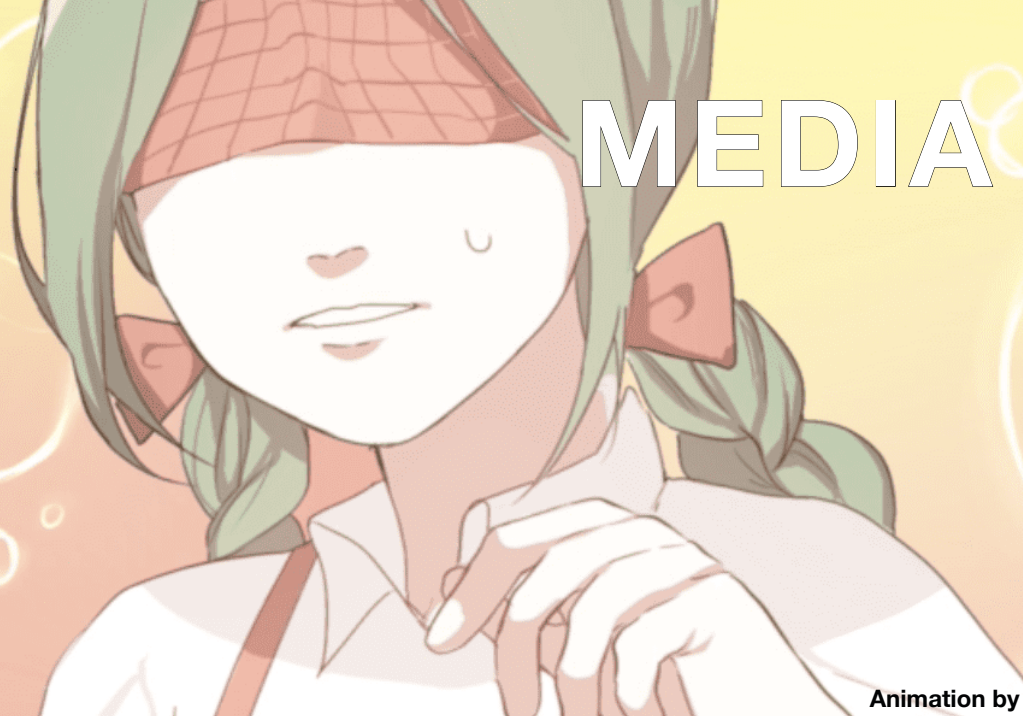
What can students expect from the Dance Department?

Academy Dancers are dedicated and committed to additional rehearsal time after school and on weekends for special performances. The Department has two major performances every year: a Senior-Choreographed Dance Concert in the winter, and a Faculty- and Guest-Choreographed Dance Concert in the spring. In 2019, the Department debuted its *Icons of Choreography Dance Series* presented by Barbara Levy Kipper. This series showcases the work of iconic choreographers such as Martha Graham, Gerald Arpino, and Alvin Ailey, and allows Academy dancers the opportunity to learn difficult pieces that are typically only available to elite professional companies. At the end of each semester, Dance Department faculty evaluates each student individually intended to inform dancers of their achievements and challenges.



Senior-Choreographed Dance Concert, 2020

MEDIA ARTS



Animation by Jenny Zhang, Media Arts 2019

The Academy Media Arts Department introduced the first comprehensive digital motion picture program for high school students in the country, and continues to be at the forefront of teaching storytelling through film, animation, and creative writing.

The Media Arts curriculum includes courses in animation, poetry, fiction, screenwriting, and cinematography, as well as fictional, documentary, and experimental video. Above all, the Media Arts Department focuses on storytelling.

“As an animator and filmmaker he has been able to learn and utilize his talents and skills every day. It’s safe to say that even though most teens don’t enjoy homework, he does, especially when it has to do with creating film. And being able to learn the arts at their age puts them ahead of the majority of their peers outside of The Academy.”

Danielle, Media Arts Parent

What can students expect from the Media Arts Department?

While students in the Media Arts Department usually focus on a specific discipline (film, animation, or creative writing), they all work together on idea development and critique. Filmmakers and animators benefit from studying the written form, and writers develop their work by exploring visual mediums.

At the end of each year, students meet privately with Media Arts faculty to evaluate their work. In these narrative evaluation sessions, students receive specific notes from faculty, perform self-evaluations, and lay foundational plans and priorities for the next school year. Seniors present their thesis during their Senior Showcase, which highlights a Media Arts student’s growth during their Academy tenure.



MUSIC



Jazz Combo at Showcase, 2019

The Music Department curriculum is firmly rooted in the traditions of classical music, jazz, recording arts, and commercial music. It is comprised of high-level private study, academic music courses, chamber and jazz ensembles, music composition, and performances.

Private instruction with The Academy's world-class faculty is central to the Music Department's curriculum. Students take two weekly 45-minute private lessons which prepare them for masterclasses with world-renowned artists, performances, juries, competitions, and college auditions.

"At auditions and college visits, when I tell people that I've already composed three operas, they think I'm a graduate student. I tell them 'No, I'm about to be a freshman!' And they can't believe it."

Karen, Music Student

What can students expect from the Music Department?

Music department students perform in several jazz and classical performances per semester, some of which take place at professional jazz clubs like the legendary Jazz Showcase, and classical venues such as Curtiss Hall. Other major department events include the annual student-composed opera, and festivals and competitions attended by the Academy New Music Ensemble.

Each student takes courses and private lessons in classical and jazz performance and composition, and every student learns piano. Additionally, students study commercial music and production in our state-of-the-art Justin Tranter Recording Studio. See page 27 for more about the studio and the Recording Arts and Commercial Music Program.



Spring Jazz Concert
at Jazz Showcase, 2019

MUSICAL THEATRE



The Pirates of Penzance, 2019

In the Musical Theatre Department, students master storytelling in three different disciplines: voice, dance, and acting. Performance is a key part of learning the art form, and students have ample opportunity for it.

The Department produces three to four mainstage shows per year, including two musical productions, and several plays as part of the Shakespeare Festival collaboration with the Theatre Department. In acting classes, students focus their studies on the work of Shakespeare, Thornton Wilder, Oscar Wilde, Tennessee Williams, and Anton Chekhov.

“If you are looking for a career in the arts, the training that you get here is second to none. We do three challenging musical productions a year, in addition to a Shakespeare festival. You get so much exposure to different works and techniques that by the time you are going to college, you have the confidence to audition and succeed.”

Jack, Musical Theatre Student

What can students expect from the Musical Theatre Department?

Outside of Musical Theatre Department classes, students rehearse four to five weeks throughout the fall and spring for their semester productions, often 4-5 hours after the end of the normal school day. In addition to mainstage productions, the department produces content for a variety of audiences outside of school.

As opposed to Theatre students, Musical Theatre students train intensively in voice and dance. Both departments participate in the annual, four-day Shakespeare Festival, where students perform two to three Shakespeare plays.

Each semester, students participate in a formal jury capstone of musical theatre and classical songs, and scenes from acting class and Musical Theatre Studio. They receive written feedback from their instructors and from other theatre industry professionals.



Sunday in the Park with George, 2018

THEATRE



Peter and the Starcatcher, 2020

The Theatre Department engages students in a unique project-based curriculum that focuses on theatre and performance studies. In addition to regular and intensive work in the acting studio, Theatre students explore up to twenty topics in the discipline, including all facets of stagecraft and scene design, directing, makeup, stage combat, improvisation, on-camera, and playwriting.

This model is supplemented at every stage with an integrated look at some of the most important dramatic texts in the canon.

“My child has really enjoyed the challenges associated with all aspects of the Theatre Department. Watching her tackle Shakespeare, Ionesco, and develop a level of confidence and maturity has been incredible. Her academic growth has been equally impressive and we believe her theatre experiences have absolutely underpinned her intellectual and academic development.”

Emily, Theatre Parent

What can students expect from the Theatre Department?

The discipline of theatre-making is one that requires full commitment to its processes. This is as true at The Academy as it is at the professional level. Whether a student’s role is that of a principal or supporting actor, Stage Manager, or Assistant Director, full engagement is necessary for both personal growth and the development of a strong ensemble.

Alongside the Department Chair and other faculty members, theatre students sit before juries at the end of each semester to discuss progress and their trajectory within the department. Seniors focus on college plans and their Senior Showcase. Reflecting a culmination of each student’s work over the course of their Academy tenure, this final production allows seniors to freely engage with material that most interests them as artists.



Sense and Sensibility, 2018



VISUAL ARTS

Karen Duncan, Class of 2021

Within the Visual Arts Department framework of studio practice, critique, and exhibition, students develop skills to articulate their ideas and process, and become self-directed in pursuing their own subject matter and concept areas in their artwork.

Each student takes courses in drawing, design, and color theory, and selects from electives in printmaking, painting, sculpture, photography, four-dimensional studio, and interdisciplinary arts.

Through pairing traditional arts training with contemporary art-making practices, the Visual Arts Department's curriculum equally values process and product. Faculty teach technical skills that build critical integrity to cultivate young artists who are independent and ambitious thinkers and makers.

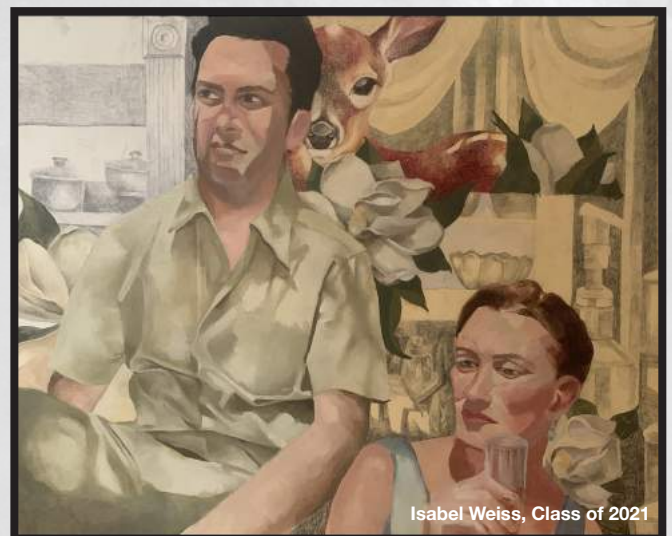
"I'll never forget the excitement of installation week and the long hours Marsha would spend in the studio—plaster dust footprints left behind. The Visual Arts Department represents a unique bond among its students and instructors."

Michele, Visual Arts Parent

What can students expect from the Visual Arts Department?

While the Visual Arts curriculum is student-centered and portfolio based, students value their peers and understand their unique artwork is a result of a collaborative and rigorous student environment. Courses encourage students to explore, experiment, and develop proficiency with different processes, materials, and art forms, on route to finding their own artistic voice as exemplified in their portfolio.

During the first year of the Visual Arts Program, students focus on building foundation and technical skills. In advanced years, students develop a portfolio for college admission and create a body of work for their Senior Exhibition.



Isabel Weiss, Class of 2021

ADMISSIONS

Dear Future Academy Parents and Students,

Thank you for considering The Academy for your high school experience! Reading this means you already know you love science labs and reading novels just as much as you love dance rehearsal and doodling in your sketchbook. An Academy education is all about exposing you to what you are passionate about, while building the foundation for whatever you decide to do next. Our recent graduates will attend schools like MICA, Juilliard, Princeton, and Stanford, continuing their education in a variety of fields, including computer programming, international relations, business, and of course, the arts.



Amanda Avery
Director of Enrollment Management

We know that the high school application process can be daunting, and yet, exciting. Our Admissions Associate Nina Karakos and I are here to give you the tools that you and your family need. The best place to start is by simply getting to know us better. We invite you to attend any of our admission events in the fall and any of the hundred-plus concerts, plays, readings, screenings, recordings, and exhibitions produced by Academy students throughout the year. Additionally, we invite you to register for our Saturday Program and Summer Program.

After your visit with us and complete your online application, we will coordinate your shadow day and audition with our arts departments. Once you successfully advance through the audition, we will review your academic paperwork. Priority consideration applications are due on Friday, January 7, along with the tuition assistance application through FACTS. All academic paperwork must be submitted by January 28 for admission decision notification in early March.

Please contact Nina or me by email or phone with any questions.

Warmest regards,

Amanda Avery
Director of Enrollment Management
admissions@chicagoartsacademy.org
312.421.0202

IMPORTANT ADMISSIONS DATES

Midyear Transfer Application Deadline - October 22 • **Audition Day #1** - December 11
Priority Consideration Application Deadline - January 7 • **FACTS Tuition Assistance Application Deadline** - January 7 • **Priority Consideration Applications Academic Paperwork Due** - January 28
Audition Day #2 - January 29 • **Second Round Application Deadline** - February 18
Admission Decision Notifications - March 4

ADMISSIONS EVENTS

ARTS DEPARTMENT OPEN HOUSES

Families have the opportunity to visit the arts department their student is interested in and hear from department faculty and current families about curriculum. Most of these events are scheduled around a department's regular performance, exhibit, or show, so prospective families have a chance to see the work of our current students.

- Music Department Open House** - October 1 • 6:00 p.m.
- Media Arts Department Open House** - October 2 • 12:30 p.m.
- Theatre Department Open House** - October 30 • 1:00 p.m.
- Visual Arts Department Open House** - November 12 • 4:00 p.m.
- Dance Department Masterclass** - November 13 • 10:00 a.m.
- Musical Theatre Department Open House** - November 13 • 1:00 p.m.
- Dance Department Open House** - November 20 • 11:00 a.m.
- Theatre Department Open House** - December 4 • 1:00 p.m.
- Visual Arts Department Open House** - January 28 • 4:00 p.m.



ACADEMICS AT THE ACADEMY OPEN HOUSES

Academic Open Houses allow interested families to visit and learn more about our academic curriculum. Families will participate in a schedule of five academic classes to explore each of our core subject areas. Each class will be a unique look into our curriculum and direct access to our award-winning faculty.

- October 21 • 5:30 p.m.**
- December 2 • 5:30 p.m.**
- January 13 • 5:30 p.m.**

CONVERSATIONS WITH THE HEAD OF SCHOOL EVENTS

Conversations with Academy Head of School Jason Patera give families an opportunity to learn more about The Academy's educational philosophy, culture, and community.

- October 13 • 9:00 a.m.**
- November 9 • 9:00 a.m.**
- December 1 • 6:00 p.m.**

7TH GRADE PREVIEW DAYS

7th Grade Preview Days are events specifically designed for 7th grade families who are just learning about The Academy. Students observe an arts department they are interested in while parents attend an informational session with our Head of School.

- March 25 • 3:00 p.m.**
- April 15 • 3:00 p.m.**



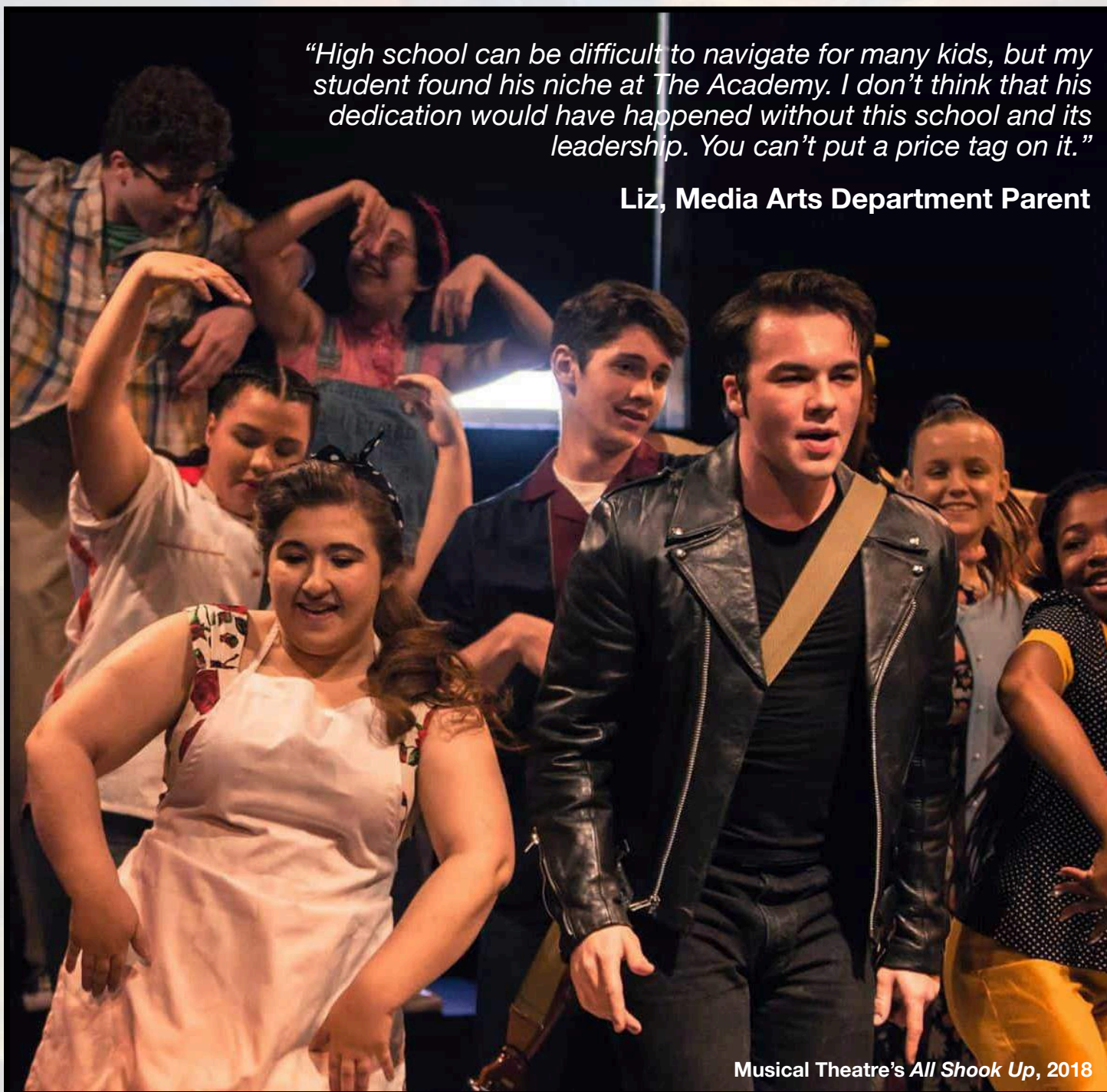
TUITION AND TUITION ASSISTANCE

The Chicago Academy for the Arts is one of the most diverse—**socio-economically, racially, geographically, artistically, and culturally**—independent schools in the Midwest. We value every member of the community and believe all members enrich our school.

The base tuition fee is **\$30,800**, plus various fees. **The Academy awards over \$1 million in tuition assistance each year, and 50% of the student body receives assistance.** More information can be found at chicagoacademyforthearts.org/tuition.

“High school can be difficult to navigate for many kids, but my student found his niche at The Academy. I don’t think that his dedication would have happened without this school and its leadership. You can’t put a price tag on it.”

Liz, Media Arts Department Parent



Musical Theatre’s *All Shook Up*, 2018

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does my child need to have formal training to audition? How difficult is it to be accepted?

The Academy generally accepts about 50% of its applicants. Students must be able to fulfill the audition requirements, but that does not mean that they will necessarily have formal training in or outside of school or with other local arts organizations. Formal training is more common in some arts disciplines, like dance or music, but is not necessarily a prerequisite.

I do not live in Chicago. How do families from outside of the city get to school?

A: This year, 53% of Academy students commute from outside the city of Chicago. We provide buses from the four major Metra stations (Union, La Salle, Van Buren, and Ogilvie).

Are students with learning differences eligible for admission?

The Learning Resources Department at The Academy is designed to provide academic support to students in consultation with their teachers. Additionally, the director of The Learning Resources Department is responsible for the case management of students whose families have submitted documentation of school-related learning issues.

My student is interested in multiple arts departments. Why do they have to choose? Can they take courses in other departments?

One of The Academy's primary goals is to prepare students to successfully audition at the most selective college, university, and conservatory arts programs in the world. Therefore, it is important that students pick one area of concentration, and focus on the depth of the discipline. However, we do provide arts electives to junior and seniors. During the academic blocks, each art department offers a course (ranging from studio art and acting for non majors to film production and music theory).



Shakespeare Festival, 2020

ACADEMY SPOTLIGHT

The Academy has over 100 productions each year, including concerts, plays, musicals, readings, screenings, and exhibitions. The Academy's urban location offers students unparalleled access to — and partnerships with — some of the world's most renowned arts organizations and professionals.



"It immediately feels like you're home. I'll never forget the relationships I've made with my peers, teachers, and faculty members."

Grania, Theatre Department

THE CHICAGO ACADEMY FOR THE ARTS



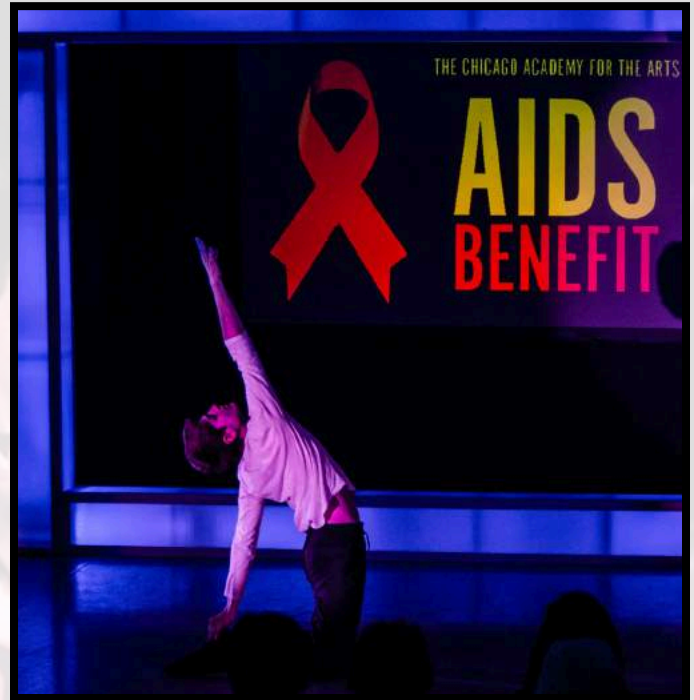
AIDS Benefit, 2019

ANNUAL STUDENT-RUN AIDS BENEFIT

Students are active in leadership roles outside of class and undertake significant student-led projects, including the annual AIDS Benefit, which routinely raises over \$10,000 for HIV/AIDS research and support. Since its beginning in 1997, the AIDS Benefit has become one of the staples of the Academy community.

Academy students present this variety show without faculty direction, and are responsible for not just the performance, but everything that goes on behind the scenes. In the years since the event's inception, students have expanded its scope, and helped support AIDS foundations in Chicago and beyond.

We are happy to celebrate The Academy's **24th anniversary of the AIDS Benefit**, and look forward to making it the most successful one yet.



"I think it's the best show of the year because students from all departments come together and create a really great show for an even greater cause. It's really heartwarming to know that over 20 years later we're still doing it. It just goes to show how dedicated and hardworking the students at The Academy are."

Grania, AIDS Benefit Director 2019 and Theatre Department Class of 2020



AIDS Benefit, 2019

SHOWCASE

“More than just a show”

Showcase has long been the source of defining moments for our community. Bryce Lunskey’s brilliant monologue from Mamet’s *Edmond* at the Goodman Theatre brought the crowd to absolute silence in one of the most moving performances we’ve ever seen. Justin Tranter, accompanied by Music senior Korgan Robb, brought the audience at the Harris Theatre to its feet with a rare live performance as the entire student body streamed onto stage behind him. And, in a moment I will never forget, the cast of *Columbinus* — barely 24 hours after the massacre in Parkland, Florida — began to tell the story of a different group of teenagers who will forever symbolize the beginning of one of our country’s most troubling legacies.

When Academy students test the limits of their potential, they’re not doing it for the peripheral benefits, the superficial successes. They’re doing it because they *need* to, and because they know how deeply the work matters. They are transformed in the making of art, and we, the audience, are transformed in experiencing it.

Showcase is one of The Academy’s most powerful traditions. Highlighting a collection of

top work from across all six of our arts departments always results in a breathtaking display of virtuosity, imagination, community, and joy. Showcase is more than just a show: it’s a statement of excellence, and a celebration of the power of the arts — especially in difficult times — to inspire, unify, comfort, broaden perspective, heal, give voice, mobilize, and bring joy.

Jason Patera
Head of School



Showcase, 2018

JUSTIN TRANTER RECORDING STUDIO

This state-of-the-art recording facility was made possible from a generous gift from Academy alum and hit songwriter **Justin Tranter** (Musical Theatre '98). In addition to the physical facility, Justin's gift funds the The Academy's new **Recording Arts and Commercial Music program**.

Recording technology has changed dramatically in the last two decades. Gone are the days when making a record required a giant mixing console, reel-to-reel tape machines, and racks filled with signal processors. (A free iPhone app has considerably more editing power than The Beatles ever had access to.) Students will gain hands-on experience working with state-of-the-art tools to produce original music. But most importantly, the program will foster their abilities as artists. These students will have another avenue to develop and harness the power of their creative voices.



The Justin Tranter Recording Studio features:

- Control room with top-of-the-line recording software, including ProTools and Ableton, the computing firepower to handle the processing, and all of the necessary hardware (including controllers, digital interfaces, and monitors)
- Tracking room with an extensive microphone collection, a vocal booth, and acoustic paneling (in addition to the school's existing professional instrument collection)
- Lab featuring four state-of-the-art production workstations (computer, software, controllers, interfaces, and monitors) for classroom use and individual projects



THE ACADEMY PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO



Whether for filmmaking, graphic design, animation, or mixed media, digital photography is an essential skill for any contemporary art-maker. With that in mind, The Academy launched a formal photography curriculum in the fall of 2018. The new photography course of study is a collaborative program between the Visual and Media Arts departments.

These two departments are excited to add this course to other historically shared curricula like drawing and animation. Photography is required ninth-grade study for students in both departments, and students in all grades will have access to equipment and guided studio time as an integrated part of other coursework and practices.

New students take Digital Photography as part of the Design curriculum. The principal skills and concepts of digital photography are explored as students take critical eye to the composition and content of photographs. Students experiment with the distinction of taking verses making a photographic image, and learn the basics of processing and printing digital images.

Students learn how to control manual setting on a camera such as exposure, aperture, shutter speed and ISO, how to edit images via Adobe Photoshop, and how to format and print images operating a high resolution photo printer.





The Chicago Academy for the Arts

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All Photos by Thomas Mohr Photography