PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS COLLEGES

ATTENDING AND APPLYING DURING COVID-19

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Today, social media can make an unknown performer become a national headline, emerging technologies allow artists to create entire immersive worlds, and constantly evolving video tools let artists experiment and develop their work in ways that we thought impossible. For an aspiring artist, it can be an exhilarating challenge to figure out where and how to pursue their dreams.

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If you’re hungry for more, go to www.TeenLife.com. Our website can help you find a summer arts program, an independent portfolio coach, or a test-prep expert – whatever it is that you need to find your place in the world of performing and visual arts. Break a leg!

GOT QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS?
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2020 GUIDE TO PERFORMING & VISUAL ARTS COLLEGES

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BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS (BFA)

Animation
Drawing + Painting
Drawing + Painting
   with Illustration Emphasis
Drawing + Painting
   with Sculpture Emphasis
Entertainment Design
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Laguna College of Art and Design:
MARIA (MARIFER) PAGOLA
Senior in BFA Illustration in Entertainment

I discovered my passion for art at a very young age. My parents say I was always drawing and sculpting with playdough when I was little, and that creative bug never left me, but I didn’t become serious about art as a career until my junior year of high school, when, after spending a semester sculpting a still-life, I fell in love with the process of creating and bringing images from my own mind to life.

“I BELIEVE THAT A STRONG TECHNICAL FOUNDATION IS THE KEY TO BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL ARTIST.”

My favorite part of creating is a tie between two parts of the process: the moment when you finish a sketch and begin lining it, as I love seeing a nebulous idea become a finished concept, and the moment you get to add final details, because that’s when the satisfaction of having made something peaks.

Although I love art, I do sometimes struggle with it, such as when I am faced with art block or when I make the mistake of comparing myself to others, which for me is the most difficult part of creating, the nagging feeling that someone out there is doing things better than you are. Fortunately, I am surrounded by wonderful, supportive people who help get me out of my own head, so I can better enjoy the process of what I do. I chose LCAD for the supportive artistic environment the school cultivates, as well as for its location and most importantly the curriculum’s emphasis on technical drawing skills, as I believe that a strong technical foundation is the key to becoming a successful artist. However, my favorite thing about the school are the people I’ve met and the connections I’ve made with them, connections I know I will have for the rest of my career.

I believe LCAD has provided me the technical skills I’ll need to be a successful artist, as I’ve learned a great deal about anatomy and good design in my time here, and I hope to use those skills so that in 10 years I’ll be a successful character maquette artist, sculpting characters for animated films.
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In the spring of 2020, Celia Krefter, a sophomore theater major at Columbia University, was supposed to get her first experience as a stage manager for a one-act play in the senior thesis festival. “When everything went online, at first we were all kind of in such shock from being booted from campus,” she said. But the students and teachers needed to quickly adapt so the seniors could complete their theses projects and graduate.

“Everyone in the department felt the same way: ‘We are going to make this virtual. Let’s all just figure it out together.’”

That included six days a week of Zoom rehearsals (from 1 to 3 in the morning for a student who lives in Tel Aviv). Set designers who had spent the first weeks of the semester developing stage concepts had to scrap everything and start over. In the end, they were able to live-stream an hour-long show on YouTube.

“I’m so amazed by the innovation of all kinds of theater makers whose response was, ‘No, we refuse to be on pause. We’re going to keep doing this. Whether it’s through Zoom or in a garden or in a drive-in theater, we’re going to make it happen,’” said Krefter.

That reaction was common among schools with performance and visual arts programs. “Artists are collaborative and creative problem solvers,” said Anne Van Gelder, professor and director of dance at the University of Richmond.

“Certainly, the health, safety, and well-being of all in our community are paramount. Despite the uncertainties that we all are facing, we are trying to identify opportunities and possibilities within the present restrictions.”

Van Gelder said instructors and students are looking at what is possible, instead of allowing themselves to become discouraged by what is no longer possible. »
“We are encouraging our students to look at this time of uncertainty, and the new modes of learning that we will engage with, as an opportunity to keep moving forward creatively, intellectually, and physically,” she said.

“While there are some aspects of our classes and performances that are not possible during the upcoming semester or semesters, recognizing that enables us to shift our goals toward seeing other options, perhaps even exciting opportunities that we may not have noticed otherwise. Like many other programs, we will do more dance for the camera and site-specific projects. Our guest artists will work with our students in a virtual format. New doors are opening!”

During the spring 2020 semester, the University of Kansas School of Music was able to adapt a pre-existing distance-learning program.

Pianos Without Borders launched in 2015 as a way to offer piano lessons to pre-college students, some as far away as China, who didn’t have access to an instrument or teacher. Lessons took place online, with students using portable electronic keyboards. Their keystrokes were connected to a grand piano at the school, allowing instructors to offer real-time guidance.

When the school closed because of the pandemic, the program was tweaked for college use.

“It provides a high-quality piano lesson combining the best of new and old technologies,” said Scott McBride Smith, the Cordelia Brown Murphy Professor of Piano Pedagogy at KU. “This tool has the potential to solve a lot of our problems with social distancing in piano lessons without sacrificing quality.”

The Savannah College of Art and Design convened a task force made up of university professors and professional artists to consider all of the options that could be offered. The difficulty was in the making of the keyboard, to create a real piano sound that could be transmitted across the internet. When that was solved, they were able to use this tool for the orchestra, for the school’s 42 permanent faculty members to take piano lessons. It’s possible to offer a high-quality piano lesson combining the best of new and old technologies.”

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leaders with expertise in public safety, emergency management, higher education, human resources, and student success to develop procedures in response to the pandemic.

“We are living inside the ultimate teachable moment for students pursuing creative careers,” said Jason Fox, associate vice president for academic services at SCAD.

SCAD already had thousands of recorded class sessions that were used to teach visual arts remotely.

“Drawing demonstrations, sewing techniques, sound editing, and painting are all part of the virtual curriculum,” said Fox. “The world is virtual now, but many of the disciplines we teach have been remote for many years.”

SCAD ramped up its investment in online teaching technology, including green screens and additional monitors provided to faculty to enhance the classroom experience.

At Dickinson College in Carlisle, Penn., performing arts students are finding ways to make collaboration between disciplines happen in the virtual world, said Sarah Skaggs, director of dance.

“One exciting development is that virtual space offers dancers the possibility of inviting well-known dance teachers and choreographers to conduct master classes,” she said. “Without the high cost and logistical headache of travel, inviting established artists to our Zoom studio is a real opportunity that we’re taking advantage of.”

While teaching dance remotely can be difficult, instructors have discovered more possibilities than they initially thought. “We have the opportunity to explore connections that transcend walls, time zones, geography, schedules and traffic,” she said. ●

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I discovered my passion for music very early in life. As the daughter of a drummer, I grew up falling asleep on my dad’s lap while he played the drum set. I then started taking piano lessons and then cycled through several other instruments. Finally, I realized my underlying love for percussion and decided that I wanted to pursue it seriously. Upon starting college, I realized that, very specifically, the vibraphone was my passion.

Performing and creating is liberating for me. While this may sound cliché, performing (as well as composing) helps me express myself in a way that words cannot. Music is truly the best way I can communicate and share my experiences.

The hardest part of being a performer is finding balance in my life. I struggle with balancing working hard and taking time to relax; there is definitely a gray area. As a performer I must work hard, but it is just as important to relax, reflect, and enjoy the human experience. Without experience, what is my art?

Right off the bat, the UMKC Conservatory felt like the right fit for me. Here at the Conservatory, my education is personalized. I can honestly say that I have a personal connection with each and every one of my professors here. They encourage and inspire me. Larger conservatories and music schools do not often allow for this type of personal connection and specialization, especially as an undergraduate.

My favorite part of this institution is the strong sense of community. Not only do my professors inspire me, but my classmates and colleagues do as well. The students here are striving to better themselves every day and achieve excellence, all while being very supportive and uplifting to one another.

I am growing as an artist right now, focusing on honing my craft, and am learning so much about the field and all the different career opportunities. That said, the next step in my life will be grad school. I want to get my Master of Music in Jazz Studies, while teaching private lessons and freelancing. The education I am receiving right now will help me get into another good program, hopefully on a fellowship.

In 10 years, I imagine myself teaching jazz theory and/or history at a collegiate level. I also want to maintain a successful performing career as a vibraphonist in both solo and ensemble settings, as well as teach private lessons. Most of all, I want to inspire others through my music.
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I first discovered my love for music and performing when I was quite young. I used to perform impromptu performances in my backyard with my sister and my neighbors growing up, and that was where I first really found my passion for performing. I soon began to seek opportunities to sing and perform in choirs, musicals, and plays in school and community theater.

My favorite thing about performing is bringing the message of whatever work I am doing to life. Embodying the character of my piece is the most exhilarating thing. Being able to look deep into the character and their purpose in the story is one of my absolute favorite parts about performing, and then bringing that character to life for an audience is just the best feeling. One of the hardest things for me about performing is being vulnerable without tarnishing the integrity of the performance or the character.

Many times, performers and actors tend to touch on personal events and feelings that we have experienced ourselves - which is really helpful with creating an authentic performance. But creating that perfect balance between yourself and the character is something I struggle with at times. I love this work that I get to put into my character, although I struggle with certain aspects at times, it is so rewarding in the final performance being able to embody your character and tell this story to your audience.

I chose to attend DePaul University for a number of reasons. When I was first looking for colleges, I knew I wanted to be located in a city but still didn’t want to lose the feel of a traditional college campus; DePaul was the perfect mix for me. Everyone I had reached out to for help with auditions and information were extremely kind and helpful - something that I truly appreciated when looking at schools.

The community and sense of camaraderie is my absolute favorite aspect about DePaul and for sure one of the biggest reasons I chose this university. The staff and faculty here at the School of Music want nothing but for their students to succeed. They encourage a supportive and friendly community between students and colleagues, which can be hard to find in this business, but DePaul makes it one of their top priorities. Along with the sense of community, I was very intrigued by the abundant performance opportunities and learning experiences offered by DePaul.

In ten years or so, I hope to be able to make a living out of performing and be able to travel the world doing what I love - singing. I know that DePaul has the connections, resources, and opportunities to help get me to where I would like to be and help support me in achieving my goals and dreams. I am so glad that I chose to attend DePaul’s School of Music, and am extremely grateful for all of the opportunities I have been given, connections I have made, and friends I have gained here at this amazing university.
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Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD):

REBECCA ALBERT

Entrepreneurial Studies

Why did you choose to pursue entrepreneurial studies here at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD)?

I really like the idea of combining business with art. I have both the creative background, but I also think very linearly and when I learned about MCAD’s entrepreneurial studies program I realized that this would be like a really good fit for the way that I think and what I want to go into.

What do you enjoy most about this program?

I enjoy all of the classes that I’m in and the teachers here feel more like friends, in a way, which I love. They are very much on your side. They’re looking for new opportunities for you. They’re looking to benefit you.

How has your MCAD experience been so far?

I love the campus, I love the people here. It feels like wherever I am I can go to somebody and they will actually care about what I’m doing they’ll want to listen. I’ve just had a really genuinely good experience so far and I’m really happy with it.

How do you think MCAD will help in what you want to do next?

I’ve definitely become more confident with who I am and my practice. MCAD has really shown me how the work I’m doing can be moved into a professional practice and how I can take what I enjoy doing and make a career out of it.

Where do you imagine yourself in 10 years?

I would love to go in the creative director direction, but I also really want to stay focused on UI/UX design. I’m learning both design and web development so that I can bridge the gap between the creatives and the more analytical thinkers and be able to direct and work with all of the people involved in a project instead of just being siloed to the creative fields.

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I first discovered my passion for art in middle school when I learned how to draw from life, but I always loved to draw and paint growing up. My favorite part of creating my work is being able to share my own narrative and experiences through art that may be different from others. I can do this through a variety of media, including printmaking, painting, book arts, interactive art, and sound art. The hardest part of creating for me is figuring out the best way to convey the message I want to communicate—like what medium to use or how to display my work.

I picked the studio arts program at Syracuse University because it allowed me to explore in a variety of media as well as be involved in different student groups on campus like dance organizations and being a founding member of the printmaking club Command Print. This involvement has helped me learn important leadership skills for the future. I am also a member of the Renée Crown University Honors Program at Syracuse, and through Honors I have participated in civic engagement as well as taken academic courses that have challenged me and influenced my art-making practices. I have also had the opportunity to study abroad in Florence, Italy, during my junior year, and I took courses in painting, printmaking, and art history in my semester there.

Syracuse University has helped me make a lot of great connections with alumni and professionals that will help me after graduation through visiting artists, gallery openings, participation in conferences, and artist talks. I am also a SOURCE (Syracuse Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Engagement) Grant recipient, and through this financial and academic support I am able to create a thesis and body of work that I am extremely proud of and excited to share.

In 10 years, I hope to see myself continuing my interdisciplinary artistic practice, as well as receiving an M.F.A. in studio arts. I plan on taking a break between my undergraduate and master’s degrees, and I would like to travel and learn about art-making practices around the world. I would also like to teach on the college level after receiving my M.F.A.
Our undergraduate programs span the disciplines of art, design, transmedia, drama, music, and communication and rhetorical studies. Add a focus on the student experience and all the benefits of a prestigious research university, and it’s easy to see why we’re the right college for you.

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The National Portfolio Day Association (NPDA) is a non-profit organization whose members are accredited international colleges and universities of art and design (USA, Canada, Europe).

The NPDA’s purpose is to assist students in embarking upon their post-secondary or post-graduate educational journey through the coordination of "National Portfolio Days.

WHAT ARE NATIONAL PORTFOLIO DAYS?

These unique events are hosted by member institutions for the purpose of assisting artists and designers in their pursuit of higher education in the fields of visual art, design, and media.

These events provide an opportunity for students to meet one on one with trained professionals »
who provide reviews and feedback on student portfolios. Schools typically require a portfolio for entry into art or design programs, and these one on one feedback sessions are invaluable for students’ successful applications.

**HOW WILL COVID-19 AFFECT THE NPDA 2020/21 SEASON?**

As a response to the challenges future artists and designers are facing this year with a global pandemic, the NPDA Board has met regularly to assess how best to move forward in this coming season.

Recognizing that safety for students, faculty, and the general public is paramount, and that situations are changing on a daily basis, the NPDA assessed that the most prudent way forward is to develop a new platform that would enable the organization to provide students with the Portfolio Day experience, albeit virtually.

**WILL THE NPDA GO VIRTUAL?**

This fall NPDA will be hosting 16 virtual portfolio days beginning in September and running to January. Additional events for spring 2021 will be held to provide support to rising juniors and seniors as they begin their post-secondary/graduate search.

The robust virtual platform will enable students to visit and meet with representatives from any of the 105 members schools through a custom interactive booth, one-on-one video portfolio reviews, as well as provide students with digital access to art and design school viewbooks, videos, and other supporting materials.

While COVID has certainly forced everyone to up their game, NPDA has embraced these changes and is still dedicated to the mission of supporting future artists and designers.

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WHY DOES THE NPDA EXIST?

NPDA is a service-oriented organization. Its’ members believe that through the systematic support, education, and encouragement of art students, a significant contribution is made to their viability as professional artists and designers of the future.

The NPDA also serves to promote professionalism and ethical practice among art and design school admission offices. Through the cooperation and productive interaction of their members, NPDA’s goal is to ensure that educational integrity is not compromised by unethical recruitment practices.

The organization has existed informally since 1978 as an amalgamation of admissions officers who represent art schools accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Membership has met annually since then to plan and coordinate National Portfolio Days as well as to share and exchange professional information. In 2013 NPDA gained 501(c)3 status and reorganized into a new, board-structured organization led by elected volunteers from the membership.

HOW TO ATTEND A VIRTUAL NATIONAL PORTFOLIO DAY?

Visit their website at nationalportfolioday.org for the upcoming schedule and links to all events. Once you decide which event(s) you will attend, you will have the opportunity to upload your digital portfolio, which will then be available for you to share with reviewers and the schools you are interested in.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A DIGITAL PORTFOLIO?

Your digital portfolio can include finished pieces, work in progress, and sketchbooks. Keep your presentation simple; the work itself is what is of interest to us. It is recommended to have anywhere from 10-12 pieces of your work.

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Trojan Barbie. Photo by Craig Schwartz.

dramaticarts.usc.edu
How did you discover your passion for Fine Art?

Fine Art was an instinctive choice for me, ever since I was little my parents have fostered creativity and so I just found myself time and time again finding opportunities to create. It felt so incredibly natural that I pursued it and eventually felt that I wanted this as a career and not just as a hobby.

Why did you choose to study to NUA? Is it how you expected?

I chose to study at Norwich University of the Arts because during the interview I discovered that I would be able to explore different areas of art in the course and see where my practice would take me. A lot of schools require you to choose a medium, like sculpture or painting, so it was really intriguing to me that NUA didn’t have constraints in that way. I’m doing sculpture this year which I’d never done before, and I love it! I would not have known that if I had to go in saying I want to do painting, so it’s better than I expected.

What is your favorite thing about studying at NUA or your course?

I love how the tutors encourage you to try different perspectives, to go bigger in your work and try things you’d never thought of. They’re really verbal and hands-on with helping you. I also love that the university is incorporated within the city and close to everything.

What do you think about the community/student experience at NUA?

It’s incredibly friendly, everyone’s willing to help each other with their work and bounce ideas off one another. I like the relatively small class sizes; my class is 80 students so you really get to know everybody. We all help each other if there are any issues, and there’s a group chat so we’re constantly talking if there’s any issues about class. It’s a really positive experience.

How do you think your course will help you in what you want to do next?

It’s going to give me experience in making and networking which will help me in a lot of ways. The course also gives us so many options to take part in external exhibitions and competitions, and we get advice from our tutors on how to approach those and put proposals together so I can see that really helping me going forward in my career.
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Student work by Lorna Kelley, BA (Hons) Photography

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How did you discover your passion for design?
I’ve had a passion for design before I even attended pre-school; I had two artistic influences in my life—my parents. My mother saw the beauty in everything, and my father was a musician and florist. Both their lifestyles had a creative influence of how I developed my love for design.

What’s your favorite part about creating?
While growing as a visionary, I’ve created a passion for capturing the essence of the design experience users want to remember and can relate to. This past year I’ve been able to do that as evidenced by competing and winning several design competitions by capturing the identity and developing a space students and staff can use efficiently.

What’s the hardest part for you about creating?
Nothing!! I love creating new and different experiences for clients. I do my best to empathize with their desires and needs to create the ideal proposal for the project.

Why did you pick this particular college?
After spending my freshmen year in Alabama, I realized that I missed home and wanted to return to Michigan. I applied to many schools in Michigan, but realized I wanted to be in Detroit and a part of the resurgence of the city. WSU is also in the middle of the cultural center and as a student I have access to many opportunities just by proximity.

What has been your favorite part of college?
I can’t find one definitive moment but my entire college experience has been instrumental in my development. Wayne State has provided countless opportunities for me to grow not only as a designer, but also as an individual. I’ve gained leadership skills, time management strategies and been able find my voice to advocate for myself and others when necessary.

How do you think this program will help in what you want to do next?
The interior design program has started to blend industrial and interior studio courses. I felt it pushed me as a designer and made the studio course more competitive—which I secretly loved. My favorite class was the Exhibit Studio course, where we had sponsored projects in which a student could attain an internship/job opportunity from the sponsored company. The program helped me hone my drive as an individual; when I want something I put all my creative energy into it. In the long run this energetic passion for success will help with whatever endeavor I decide to take on next.

Where do you imagine yourself in 10 years?
I envision myself as a creative director still growing, learning and expanding my knowledge and expectations within the advertising and/or experiential design industries.
The James Pearson Duffy Department of Art and Art History is a division of Wayne State University’s College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts, educating the next generation of visual artists, designers and art historians. Wayne State University is a premier urban research university offering more than 350 academic programs through 13 schools and colleges to more than 28,000 students.

For more information visit art.wayne.edu.
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EARLY ACTION AND PRIORITY MERIT SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE NOVEMBER 15 CLASSES BEGIN FALL 2021
For students who are pursuing an education and career in the performance and visual arts, social distancing and online schooling are even more difficult than they are for other academic majors. Online learning might be okay for English or history classes, but for students studying dance, music, film, theater and visual arts, training usually relies on in-person practice with rehearsals and private instruction.

Here are five things parents can do to help:

**Redefine Your Role as a Parent of a Young Adult**

If your child will be studying from home this semester, creating guidelines and boundaries will make everyone happier. College students want less active support and more distance than high school students. Developmentally, they are supposed to be bonding with their peers, not mom and dad. One of the worse things you can do is hover over them, making sure they are doing their work.

Virtual practice and lessons are going to be harder, so your college student might need some extra support and encouragement. But remember that support and encouragement are not the same as supervision. You are a parent, not a teacher.

**Give Your College Student Plenty of Space – Both Physically and Emotionally**

Performing arts students need more space than traditional academic students. If possible, help your student set up their own “studio” space, whether it is a ballet bar in the back yard or an easel in the garage. When they are practicing their art, give them plenty of privacy. Encourage your students to create boundaries that work for them. For example, they can put a note on their bedroom door saying, “In class now,” to let you know they don’t want to be disturbed.

Let your students choose their own schedule. Even though they may be home, they might not be keen on engaging in too much family time and that’s okay. College is a time where young adults experience freedom from parent’s rules. Treat them like an adult. Let them set their own schedule for schoolwork, time with friends and even meals.

**Think of Ways to Help That Don’t Interfere**

While it is important to give your child the freedom to manage their time and space, it is okay to ask if there is anything you can do to help. Maybe you could hold their camera or phone as they create a YouTube or TikTok video or help them brainstorm other ways to connect with an audience or peers over the internet. You could offer to pose as a model for your visual artist student.

One of the other benefits of in-person instruction in the arts is it helps students build connections with mentors and with other students. Those connections can influence future employment. With that in mind, encourage your student to keep in touch with fellow students through Zoom meetings and Facetime. They can try out new artistic endeavors or practice together.

**Encourage Your Student to Try New Things**

This is also the perfect time to tap into the power of the internet to make new connections and create a new audience for their work. They can follow other artists on social media websites. Another idea is to »
join an online community like the Facebook group called “Cabin Fever Creative Community” or the Co 19 Project, an online place to share art, music and the written word.

Encourage your child to take a positive approach and focus on strengthening their presence online, whether it is a YouTube video of a violin performance or a virtual gallery of their artwork. They can join webinars and digital art critiques.

OFFER HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Even the most optimistic students will experience sadness and anxiety over the things they have lost this academic year. That's understandable. For performing arts students, not being able to be onstage before a live audience is heartbreaking. One of the biggest benefits of an on-campus experience is that it gives students accessibility to facilities, materials and equipment they probably don’t have at home. Be understanding when they express frustration and remind them that even though it doesn't feel like it right now, this pandemic will eventually end.

Remind your student that the arts community is famous for its creativity and innovation. For acting students, many schools are creating virtual college showcases where they can post a video of themselves performing. One advantage of this virtual performance is that instead of relying on remembering one live performance, casting directors can watch the taped performances more than once. Those tapes will also remain available as a go-to resource for directors when Broadway finally reopens and television and movie sets can get back to work. The same is true for musicians.

Even though live performances and art shows have been put on hold for now, the arts will never die. The arts have always brought people together and while artists and performers may not be able to gather physically right now, they can still provide much needed inspiration during these difficult times.

Illustration: Kaci Kwiatek, Graphic Design, 2019

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Seton Hill University:  
LEXI JENKS  
THEATRE BUSINESS MAJOR

How did you discover your passion for theatre?
When I was little, my mom took me to a lot of local community theatre productions, and at the end of every single one, I would burst into tears. I just didn’t want them to be over. Those experiences sparked my love for theatre; even as a seven year old, I knew how special and fleeting it was.

What’s your favorite part about performing/creating?
I love seeing everyone “in their element,” from the actors to the directors to the designers. I have not performed since high school, but I am highly involved backstage in college, particularly in the area of stage management. There’s also a magical moment in the production process where everything comes together and I think, “wow, we really did this” and that is always special too.

What’s the hardest part for you about performing/creating?
Working on a show consumes your entire life; both a blessing and a curse. The time commitment would have to be the hardest thing for me; sleep is a luxury for those at the mercy of theatre.

Why did you pick this college?
There were so many deciding factors. I needed a school with an active Theatre Program I could get involved in, and the theatre business major at Seton Hill fulfilled that need perfectly. I also wanted a smaller school, as it is important to me to be able to create relationships with professors instead of just being another face in class.

What has been your favorite part of this program?
My favorite part of Seton Hill’s Theatre Program is how much opportunity for student involvement there is. Students here aren’t just acting, they’re building, designing, stage managing, board running, assistant directing and choreographing. Seton Hill’s faculty is incredible, so supportive, and definitely one of my favorite parts of the program here as well; it was them who made me believe I could stage manage as a second year student.

How do you think this program will help in what you want to do next?
The curriculum at Seton Hill is extremely well-rounded, which will definitely help me in whatever I do next. I am taking classes in directing, marketing, design and entrepreneurship. I am also being given the opportunity to work with so many different people and build an amazing network of professionals which is crucial to any job, but especially to the theatre.

Where do you imagine yourself in 10 years?
In ten years, I would love to be living in downtown Pittsburgh and doing marketing or PR for a theatre company.
The School of Visual & Performing Arts

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Kean University
1000 Morris Avenue, Union, NJ 07083 • kean.edu
Why did you choose to attend this college?
I auditioned the day before a huge snowstorm in New England, so the day was crazy, and I didn't feel like I was able to really experience campus. After my acceptance letter came, I decided to shadow a lesson with my future voice teacher, as well as observe a vocal seminar and vocal literature class.

I felt so welcomed, not only by the students, but by the professors too! They answered all of my questions, told me all the best study spots, and, most importantly, made me feel so excited for the fall! That one day really helped solidify my decision.

How did you decide which college and program was right for you?
I really enjoyed the opportunities that the vocal program offered, such as being a part of the Hartt

Opera Theater, access to a huge music library, and talented professors and peers from all over the world. I also loved being part of the UHart campus community. I was involved with a lot of University clubs and activities such as working as an RA in the dorms and being a part of the orientation leaders program!

What was a typical day like in your college experience?
A typical day of a musician is always a super busy one! During my undergrad, I would try to get to Hartt an hour before class so I could warm up and practice for ear training or study for a piano quiz. Other classes we would all take would be diction, vocal coachings, choir, and my favorite, music history!

I know it sounds like a long day, but I really like being busy! I would usually stop and grab a coffee at the Starbucks on campus, if I needed some energy between classes. Sometimes in the evenings, I would have some free time but more than likely, I was in rehearsals either on campus or performing in the West Hartford area.

What was the most memorable moment of your arts program?
One of my favorite memories at Hartt was being a lead in the Hartt Opera Theater’s production of Lehar’s The Merry Widow. Though the role was musically and physically demanding, I had so much fun being a part of the production! Not only was it a great experience to share with my classmates, it helped to remind me how far I had really come musically in four years.

What advice do you have for teens looking at arts colleges?
You are going to grow and stretch yourself in ways you could have never expected so be open to new things! It can be daunting, but you never know where an opportunity may take you, and how it can influence later artistic opportunities!
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Colleges and universities offer many options for degrees in the visual and performing arts. I attended the University of Colorado, Boulder, which is also known as CU Boulder. CU has an array of degree options and distinctions in music, visual arts, theater, and architecture.

I got my Bachelor’s Degree from CU in Music Education (the BME) with an emphasis in Instrumental Band. On top of that, CU has its own College of Music within the University.

I took four years of classes in the College of Music that were for all music majors, such as music theory and music history. My fellow classmates and I attended courses specific to music pedagogy, including Teaching Instrumental Music, String Instrument Methods, Brass Instrument Methods, and Jazz Techniques for the Music Educator.

In addition to these music and music education courses, we also were required to apply for and get into the CU School of Education. We concluded our fourth year in the undergraduate program with a semester of Student Teaching, accompanied by a useful and memorable Student Teaching Seminar course.

The two most common bachelor’s degree programs taken and completed at CU’s College of Music are the BME and the Bachelor of Music Performance degree, known as the BM. BM students major in performance of their primary instrument or voice. Students may also double major in the BME and BM program.

My classmates and I attended each other’s ensemble concerts and solo recitals throughout our College of Music years. We gave each other informal lessons to learn more about the specifics of secondary instruments.

We completed group projects together in aural (music listening) skills and Introduction to Music Education. We also learned and progressed by offering peer feedback in teaching music lessons, both one on one and in Colorado public schools. I had some excellent peer tutors in both music theory and aural skills, which were courses I found difficult.

My BME cohorts and I all graduated in May of 2010, in the midst of the US Great Recession. This made for a trying experience in obtaining a job as a public school music teacher. I was among the graduates unable to find a teaching position right away.

Thankfully, I was able to begin substitute teaching and have a studio of private music students in the Los Angeles area. I taught trumpet lessons, and my BME degree also enabled me to offer fundamental private lessons on a number of secondary woodwind and string instruments.

Three years after graduation, I was able to at last land a full time music position at a junior high on California’s Central Coast. Most of my classmates were teaching in full time music positions by this time as well. The majority of them are at elementary, junior high, or high schools across Colorado. Those of us who attended CU from out of state did tend to wind up back in our home states!

Even with the Recession, my fellow graduates and I never wavered in our dedication to music education. Our first teachers made such a profound impact on our love and passion for music, and we want to bring that same love and passion to the next generation.
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**Institution Type:** Private  
**Majors:** D, F, M, MT, T  
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**ANDERSON UNIVERSITY:**
**THE SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF ARTS**
**Location:** Anderson, SC  
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andersonuniversity.edu/school-of-the-arts

The South Carolina School of the Arts at Anderson University trains professional visual, musical and theatrical artists who are serious about both their art and Christian faith. The School of Arts is staffed by highly trained and world-class artists, musicians, actors, dancers, theatrical designers, and scholars. Students develop their artistry to its fullest potential so they may thrive professionally and serve others through the arts.  
[Learn More »](https://andersonuniversity.edu/school-of-the-arts)

**BLACKBIRD ACADEMY**
**Location:** Nashville, TN  
**Institution Type:** Private  
**Majors:** M, MT, O  
theblackbirdacademy.com

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BRIGHTON INSTITUTE OF MODERN MUSIC (BIMM)
Location: Brighton, UK
Institution Type: Private
Majors: M
bimm.ac.uk
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CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS (CALARTS)
Location: Valencia, CA
Institution Type: Private
Majors: D, F, G, M, P, T, V, O
calarts.edu
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COLUMBUS COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
Location: Columbus, OH
Institution Type: Private
Majors: F, G, P, V, O
ccad.edu
Columbus College of Art & Design teaches undergraduate and graduate students in the midst of a thriving creative community in Columbus, Ohio. CCAD has 12 undergraduate majors in its Bachelor of Fine Arts program and two Master’s programs that produce graduates equipped to shape culture and business at the highest level. Learn More »

CORNISH COLLEGE OF THE ARTS
Location: Seattle, WA
Institution Type: Private
Majors: D, F, G, M, MT, P, T, V, O
cornish.edu
Cornish College of Arts has been offering degrees in the Visual and Performing arts for over 100 years. Areas of study include Art, Design, Animation, Illustration, Film, Interior Architecture, as well as Dance, Music, Theater and Technical Theater. We offer opportunities to be part of on-campus events as well as intern, exhibit and perform outside of the College. Learn More »

DEAN COLLEGE
Location: Franklin, MA
Institution Type: Private
Majors: D, T, O
dean.edu
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Majors: M
music.depaul.edu
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drexel.edu/westphal
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corcoran.gwu.edu
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HUSSIAN COLLEGE LOS ANGELES
Location: Los Angeles, CA
Institution Type: Private
Majors: D, F, MT, T, V, O
la.hussiancollege.edu
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JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY: ARTS PROGRAMS
Location: Harrisonburg, VA
Institution Type: Public
Majors: D, G, M, MT, P, T, V
jmu.edu
The College of Visual and Performing Arts at James Madison University includes the School of Art, Design & Art History; School of Music; and School of Theatre & Dance. Our academic programs focus on high-level artistic training combined with entrepreneurial action and the integration of practical training along with liberal arts studies.
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KEAN UNIVERSITY
Location: Union, NJ
Institution Type: Public
Majors: D, F, G, M, P, T, V, O
kean.edu
Kean University is one of the largest metropolitan institutions of higher education in the region, with a diverse population and serving 16,000 students. Kean’s School of Fine and Performing Arts is home to three conservatories: theater, fine arts, and music. Through these conservatories, students can focus on majors like theatre, photography, and music education.
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LAGUNA COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
Location: Laguna Beach, CA
Institution Type: Private
Majors: G, V
lcad.edu
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Location: New Orleans
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mcad.edu
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Location: Beverly, MA
Institution Type: Private
Majors: F, G, P, V, O
montserrat.edu
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Majors: D, F, M, MT, P, T, V
muhlenberg.edu
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Location: New York, NY
Institution Type: Private
Majors: T
neighborhoodplayhouse.org
The Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre: Home of the Meisner Technique is a private, non-profit conservatory program located in the heart of NYC providing excellence in actor training since 1928. We are an accredited institution of higher education offering post-secondary education in Dramatic Arts Acting. Learn More »

NORWICH UNIVERSITY OF THE ARTS
Location: Norwich, U.K.
Institution Type: Public
Majors: G, V
nua.ac.uk
Norwich University of the Arts (NUA) is a leading UK university offering three year undergraduate and one year graduate programmes in art, design and media disciplines. For 170 years NUA has offered studio-based, practice-led learning that prepares graduates for success in the creative industries. Learn More »

NEW YORK FILM ACADEMY
Location: New York, NY
Institution Type: Private
Majors: F, MT, P, T, V, O, G
nyfa.edu
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Majors: MT, T, V
rssd.ac.uk
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ccm.uc.edu
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Institution Type: Public
Majors: F, M, T, V
cam.ucdenver.edu
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Majors: D, M, T
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Majors: V, O
art.wayne.edu
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Location: Rocklin, CA
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jessup.edu
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