

Master of Fine Arts

www.nhia.edu/mfa

PHOTOGRAPHY PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The low-residency Photography program promotes students exploration of traditional and contemporary photographic methodologies to express your individual creative concepts and vision. Discussion during the program will focus on the understanding of historical traditions as well as the contemporary use of photographic mediums. Discourses will connect history to contemporary concepts and will cover the impacts of developing technologies and social media on photography. These discussions will support a students informed creation of a body of work.

You will begin the program by presenting for critique the work that you used for their application. During the first residency you will give a five-minute presentation to introduce themselves to the collected faculty and students attending the residency. During residencies two through four, you will present for critique all work done during the previous semester. Critique groups are made up of students in all stages of the program as well as at least one faculty member or visiting artist. In addition, individual critiques occur throughout each residency, you will sign up with or are assigned faculty who will critique your work.

Over the course of the program, you are required to take three graduate seminars that focus on the historical and cultural development of the visual arts and photography. These include readings and discussion of theories and artworks from historical contexts though modernism, postmodernism, and into contemporary times. In addition, you will take one Critical Theory (Semiotics) seminar, one Professional Practice seminar and one Thesis Research and Writing Seminar. These lectures and discussions expand your working knowledge of the photographic tradition well beyond an undergraduate level, and help in developing your understanding of your work and its place in the contemporary photographic world.

Throughout the program you will be engaged in serious, thoughtful discussion about your professional aspirations. Your independent research will assist you in understanding where your work fits conceptually, thematically or technically in the contemporary photographic and visual art. You will write critical papers based on the ideas presented to you as well as on ideas about your own work. This culminates in an extensive thesis paper proving your comprehension of History and Theory and describing your work's place within the contexts of photography and visual art. In the final residency you will present your work in a formal professional exhibition.

First Residency - MFP701 Graduate Seminar I, Visual Arts and Photography

This first residency seminar will be a review and overview of Western and Non-Western art and it's place within culture from its conception through to the early 1900's. What is art? Why does art matter? How and why has art changed? How does it continue to develop? How does it affect and how is it affected by cultural attitudes and shifts? Discourse about major artists and art movements as well as cultural events will address these questions. Each student will produce short writing assignments that accompany assigned readings.

Second Residency - MFP702 Graduate Seminar II, Photography

This second residency seminar will be an overview of the technical and aesthetic developments in photography from it's inception in 1827 in France as a tool for documentation, through the first part of the twentieth century when American and European photographers embraced and promoted photography as a fine art medium. Major bodies of work produced during this time period, including European portraiture by Nadar and Julia Margaret Cameron; photographic documentation of the unexplored American western landscape wilderness; war photography and the documentation of social issues such as child labor and poverty during the Great Depression, will be presented and discussed along with the Photo-Secession movement and Modernism in photography as reflected in the work of the F64 group. Topics are explored in writing assignments and class discussions as well as through readings, video and film viewing. Each student will produce short writing assignments that accompany assigned readings.

Third Residency - MFP703 Graduate Seminar III, Photography

This third residency seminar explores the major figures working in photography after WWII as the medium begins to be accepted widely as a fine art by museums, galleries art historians, and the general public. Significant technical advancements in photography including color imaging, the Polaroid instant process and digital imaging reshape the language of the medium and revolutionize the way photographers and artists are able to communicate with an audience. Digital advances now allow photographers to compete with painters and other large-scale artists exploring a range of environmental and social issues in a postmodernism culture. Topics include the concepts that led to the development of modernism, postmodernism, feminism, colonialism, and racial representation; commodity culture, as well as ideas about collecting; technology; and the digital revolution. Topics are explored in writing assignments and class discussions as well as through readings, video and film viewing. Each student will produce short writing assignments that accompany assigned readings.

Fourth Residency - MFP726 Thesis Research and Writing, Visual Arts and Photography

Students learn to apply the critical understanding of the integration of theory and practice within their own studio practice. Content for this class is driven by student work and research – each students thesis paper is guided by their interests and work. Each student's Thesis begins with a written proposal that outlines the student's artistic practice and research plan and what each student aims to accomplish within their thesis writing. Students then work on subjective and objective writing skills, develop short papers over the semester that will become the basis for their thesis.

Fifth Residency - MFAP727 Professional Practices, Visual Arts and Photography

In this seminar students will explore tactics for creating and maintaining their art profession. Students will create a professional portfolio of CV, statements, images of their work, business card and other promotional materials as well as develop a website or blog. Discussion will focus on potential professional opportunities for each individual, now and in the future. Each student will set professional goals and develop skills to succeed in meeting these goals. This course concludes with students giving a 15-minute professional public artist presentation about their work in their final residency.