

GRADUATE STUDY OF DESIGN

Painting

Graduate Program Coordinator

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Painting Department

Rhode Island School of Design

Two College Street

Providence, RI 02903 USA

About the Program

The two-year MFA program in Painting emphasizes critical and artistic development through a focus on studio work. The department nurtures the potential of each student by promoting strong visual skills, keen critical reasoning and a clear understanding of historical, analytical and social contexts.

The faculty encourages students to engage in an individual search for meaning and representation. Ideas rooted in the tradition of the medium are examined and exchanged, challenged and refined. Freedom of expression is highly encouraged as students explore both the possibilities and realities of painting. The ultimate objective of the program is for each student to develop direction, purpose and critical skills — all necessary for the creation of art and the individual's future as an artist.

Throughout their two years in residence at RISD, graduate students in Painting engage in critical dialogue with faculty, visiting artists and peers while participating in group and individual critiques, seminar courses, lectures and field trips. The program culminates in the completion of a mature body of work accompanied by a written thesis. The studio component of the thesis project is included in the annual *Graduate Thesis Exhibition*.

Individual Painting studios are located in the Fletcher Building, a recently renovated facility in downtown Providence. Photography, Printmaking, Sculpture and Glass graduate studios are also housed in the building, which offers a woodshop, computer lab and spaces for student exhibitions and group critiques.

Enrollment

of currently enrolled graduate students: 20

of currently enrolled undergraduates: 134

Frequently Asked Questions

Will I have an opportunity to meet faculty during the admissions process?

If you are a finalist for our program you will be invited to come to RISD for an in-person interview with a team of Painting Department faculty members. You will be asked to bring actual works that you can show and discuss with us. There is also the opportunity to talk with current grad

students and get their take on things. In addition, tours are offered to see the studios and the entire RISD campus.

Can a Painting grad take courses in other departments?

We have strong majors at RISD – but with permeable borders. Part of what makes RISD exciting is the mass of talent assembled between our own faculty and Brown University's. Many students seek expertise and guidance beyond their own departments; some take courses, while others meet with and/or ask a professor to visit their studio for a crit. Your grad advisor can help you to find the right opportunities and conversations. *Note: Brown's academic calendar has different start and end dates than ours, but students who are motivated manage to take diverse courses suited to their personal research.*

Is there a specific style of painting promoted at RISD?

The graduate Painting program at RISD is committed to assisting each student in developing his or her own vision. To that end, you will find an enormous diversity of painting styles and interests among the various art practices of the full-time and adjunct faculty. This wide range of formal and conceptual approaches is bound together by a shared passion for the craft and history of painting.

What are the studios like?

A few years ago the grad program in Painting moved to the Fletcher Building — a few short minutes from our departmental offices and undergrad studios and classrooms. The downtown graduate center and studios offer very generous spaces with good natural light and there is also a large public gallery for graduate student work on the first floor. The facilities house graduate students from other departments such as Photography, Printmaking, Sculpture, Textiles and several design disciplines, so you will naturally meet people from other departments. These studios are also in close proximity to restaurants and nightspots in downtown Providence.

How much contact with the New York art world will I have while at RISD?

Trips to New York are scheduled as part of specific required courses. For instance, you might visit the studios of five or

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six different artists as part of the drawing class that Painting MFA candidates take in their first semester. These trips allow students to learn firsthand about what it is like to be a practicing artist in New York City while giving them a taste of the larger professional art world. It is also common for the New York-based faculty to meet their students in the city for gallery and museum visits. It takes roughly an hour to get to Boston and just over three to get to New York, so each city is accessible as a day trip. If you are eager to visit Chelsea or see a particular museum exhibition, you will find that you are not alone. RISD grads often organize their own trips to Boston or NYC on the weekends. In addition, the majority of the visiting artists and critics who come to campus hail from New York City.

Are there opportunities for graduate students to teach at RISD?

Yes. All of our grad students have Teaching Assistantships (TAs). Working with a number of experienced faculty members during your two-year program offers amazing experience that will serve you well in later years if you apply for teaching positions. This also gives you an opportunity to meet and get to know some of the approximately 150 undergrads in our department. This is a huge asset as they are as talented a bunch of young artists as you would find at any school. Many of our second-year grad students go on to interview for teaching positions at the annual CAA (College Art Association) meetings and do very well. Alumni are employed all over the country. There are also chances to teach a course completely on your own during Wintersession of your second year. These six-week courses are assigned competitively based on syllabi and course descriptions that you create. The →**Sheridan Center** at Brown also offers training in teaching, and most of our grad students take part in its fascinating programs.

Application Requirements

Application Form + Fee

The graduate application form must be filled in completely and accompanied by a \$60 application fee (non-refundable).

Academic Transcripts

You must submit official transcripts (displaying the registrar's signature and school seal) of all undergraduate and/or graduate study indicating satisfactory completion or evidence of anticipated completion of an undergraduate degree program from an accredited college or university.

If you are an international student completing requirements for a diploma, rather than a degree, before your application can be reviewed you must submit a written

statement prepared by an appropriate official at the school you are attending verifying the status of the diploma to be the equivalent of a baccalaureate degree in the United States. All academic credentials must be translated into English.

Letters of Recommendation

Applicants should arrange to have three letters of recommendation written by professors, instructors or professionals with whom you have recently worked or studied. These letters are required. We strongly suggest that your recommenders use our form (pdf), which you may →**download here**. (Recommenders may also use their own stationery, but it is critical that they include your full name in their letter.) Each person who writes a recommendation should send it directly to the Admissions Office in time to meet the deadline of January 21, 2009.

Portfolio

Applicants are required to submit 10 to 20 examples of their work as digital image files on a CD or DVD. We no longer accept 35mm slides.

Each image should be submitted as a separate file in .jpg format. Individual file sizes should not exceed 3MB. Do not combine images in a prepared presentation or slideshow of any type (i.e. PowerPoint). DO NOT affix any adhesive labels to your CD or DVD. You should also include a printed thumbnail page of the images on your disk.

Time-based work or performance pieces may be submitted in video format or as QuickTime files on a CD or DVD.

Your portfolio must include a work description sheet. Number the examples you are submitting and on your description page list the corresponding number, medium, size, date of completion and title for each work. *It is very important that your full name and address appear clearly on your CD/DVD and on the description sheet and thumbnail pages.*

CDs and DVDs will not be returned. *Please note: All portfolio materials will be handled with great care, but neither RISD nor the Admissions Office takes responsibility for loss or damage.*

Statement of Purpose

Please submit a written statement (500-750 words) outlining your interest in graduate study. Please be certain to include your full name and address on your statement form.

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TESTS

Graduate Record Exam (GRE)

Results from the Graduate Record Examination are not required for admission to this department.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

If English is not your native language, you must submit results from the TOEFL. Proficiency in English is a prerequisite for acceptance and applicants must attain an acceptable score on this test.

On the Internet-Based TOEFL (IBT), which is becoming more widely available, we expect a minimum score of 93. On the paper-based version, which is still in use in some testing centers, we expect a score of 580. Finally, some applicants may have taken the Computer-Based TOEFL (CBT), which uses a different scoring scale; we expect a result of at least 237 if you used this version of the test.

You should schedule to take the TOEFL well in advance of the application deadline you have chosen, as it may take (depending on the test center location and the test format) six weeks for your scores to be sent to RISD. Further information about TOEFL is available at →www.toefl.org.

International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

Students may choose to submit their result from IELTS in place of TOEFL. RISD expects a minimum score of 6.5 from an IELTS examination. Further information is available at →www.ielts.org.

Summer Program in English Language Studies

The Summer Program in English Language Studies is recommended for non-native speakers of English who either need or would like to increase their fluency in listening, reading and/or writing formal English. The program runs for six weeks and prepares students for the regular RISD curriculum with a rich mix of classes. Students who successfully complete the summer program will receive three Liberal Arts elective credits.

During these classes, students listen to and write English, focusing on the specifics of art and design studies. In the reading and writing course, they develop critical reading and writing skills, whereas in the studio class they focus on the language of art critiques and develop self-confidence in speaking in front of their peers. Students in the summer program live on-campus in RISD's residence halls, make use of the collections of The RISD Museum of Art and the Fleet Library at RISD, travel as a group to New York City and visit the many art galleries and smaller museums in and around Providence. During the six-week program, which begins in late June, students have the opportunity to practice both formal and informal English within the larger

community of students who study at RISD during the summer months.

In rare circumstances, a student may be required to attend and successfully complete this program as a condition of their acceptance to RISD.

Curriculum

1st year

Graduate Painting Studio: Critique I + II
Graduate Drawing
Graduate Printmaking Project
Graduate Seminar
Electives
Wintersession

2nd year

Graduate Painting Studio: Critique III
Graduate Painting Studio Thesis
Graduate Seminar
Electives
Wintersession

Thesis

The program culminates in the completion of a body of work and a written thesis, which are presented to the faculty for approval. This work is then included in the annual graduate student show.

Equipment + Facilities

Individual studio spaces in the Fletcher Building are large, light-filled, well-ventilated private spaces ranging in size from 175–200 sf (for first-year students) to 300–375 sf (for second-year students). Studios are accessible 24 hours a day.

Campus Locations

Fletcher studios
CIT complex, 169 Weybosset Street

College Building
Two College Street

Memorial Hall
226 Benefit Street

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Faculty

department head

→ **Dennis Congdon**

Professor

BFA, Rhode Island School of Design

MFA, Yale University

Fellow, American Academy in Rome

full-time

Donna Bruton

Associate Professor

Certificate, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

BFA, Michigan State University

MFA, Yale University School of Art

David Frazer

Professor

BFA, Rhode Island School of Design

MFA, University of New Mexico

Holly Hughes

Professor

BFA, State University of New York – New Paltz

Carrie Moyer

Assistant Professor

BFA, Pratt Institute

MFA, Bard College

Duane Slick

Professor

BFA, University of Northern Iowa

MFA, University of California, Davis

Kevin Zucker

Assistant Professor

BFA, Rhode Island School of Design

MFA, Columbia University

adjunct faculty

Debra Bricker Balken

BA, University of British Columbia

MA, University of Chicago

Kevin Bewersdorf

BFA, Rhode Island School of Design

Dike Blair

MFA, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Daniel Bozhkov

BFA, University of Fine Arts, Sofia

MFA, Hunter College

Angela Dufresne

BFA, Kansas City Art Institute

MFA, Temple University

Sara Greenberger-Rafferty

BFA, Rhode Island School of Design

MFA, Columbia University

Christopher Ho

MA, Columbia University

Mary Jones

BFA, MFA, University of Colorado

William Miller

BS, University of Dayton

BFA, Rhode Island School of Design

Jerry Mischak

BFA, Rhode Island School of Design

MFA, University of Wisconsin

Bobbie Oliver

Professor (Retired)

Center for Creative Studies, Detroit

St. Alban's School of Art, England

Jackie Saccocio

BFA, Rhode Island School of Design

MFA, School of the Art Institute, Chicago

Craig Taylor

BFA, Maine College of Art

MFA, Yale University

Recent Visiting Artists, Critics + Curators

Ellen Altfest

Christopher Bedford

Phong Bui

Dan Colen

Daniel Dove

Dana Frankfort

Jeff Gibson

Tim Griffin

Marc Handelman

Julie Heffernan

Byron Kim

Lucy Kim

Tala Madani

Chris Martin

Daniel Martinez

Tom McGrath

Carter Mull

Wangechi Mutu

Linda Norden

James Rosenquist

Lisa Sanditz

Anna Schuleit

Dana Schutz

Gregory Sholette

Lisa Siegel

Charlene Von Heyl

Terry Winters

Alexi Worth

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