

Fine Arts

Fine Arts Curriculum Overview

Fine Arts at Francis Parker take the form of studio art, music, and photography/filmmaking. The studio art course offers experience in the basics of achieving classical drawing skills in a range of media; experience in the collaborative creation of conceptual art; some work in 3-D art; and an introduction to art history. The classroom is informally structured to encourage students to work individually yet find encouragement and inspiration from classmates around them. The music class focuses on ensemble performance, technique, and history, and has a formal performance twice per academic year. Music students can also take Music Theory and/or Jazz Ensemble alongside Music Performance. The photography/filmmaking class focuses on making art from behind the camera, combining creativity and technique. Students also learn to edit their work with various programs. Students choose one fine arts course in 10th grade and can continue taking fine arts courses on an elective basis thereafter.

Current work from the studio art course and the photography/filmmaking class is invariably on display in the hallways; music students perform for the school community several times throughout the year.

Teachers in fine arts classes are designated as artists-in-residence. The goal of the artist-in-residence is to help students find that unique individual voice that presents itself in any given media and encourage its growth. All the artists-in-residence have active professional careers distinguished by years of dedication to their crafts and by reputations that extend beyond the school community. Their career focus provides a window into the highly competitive world of art and music as professions.

Art and music students are asked to keep open minds and work thoughtfully. Their shared experiences with art- and music-making are discussed in critiques that emphasize each person's growth and unique vision. Perceptions are challenged in discussions that lead to a greater appreciation of the unlimited range of expressiveness.

Fine Arts Department Course Offerings

Studio Art *(1 credit)*

In this course, students will work and play with ideas almost as much as actual physical materials. Alongside learning advanced techniques in drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and installation, emphasis is placed on developing a sense of conceptual creativity and an advanced vocabulary for discussing art. Students will learn that in today's postmodern world, there are many ways of being a great artist and there are no definite rules for what art should look like--except that good and important work must be made with rigor, energy, meaning, and/or relevance to its context. Students that come to this class with an open mind and a commitment to improving their skills will leave with new knowledge about art processes, about themselves, and about what art can mean to society at large.

Advanced Studio Art (1 credit)

Prerequisite: Studio Art and permission of the instructor

This class aims to foster self-motivation, self-discipline, curiosity, and a strong spirit of independence in students wishing to expand their education in studio art. Students may explore in-depth a particular area of interest throughout an entire school year, resulting in a final cohesive body of work. Time management is an essential skill to develop in this class in order to be successful and an emphasis is placed on the importance of finding a balance between experimentation and focus. Students are asked to do research outside of the classroom in the form of visits to local art collections to increase their awareness of relevant historical and contemporary contexts. Weekly group discussions among the Advanced Art students, along with twice-yearly formal group critiques, contribute to creating a dynamic and supportive community within which Advanced Art students may cultivate their work.

**Students may take this class at the same time that they are completing a Senior Project focusing on art, but their work in Advanced Art must be separate from that for the Senior Project (though one can be complementary to the other).*

Photography/Filmmaking (1 credit)

This class will provide a basic background in and working knowledge of the art and craft of photography and filmmaking. Students view the world through a lens, shooting, editing, and critiquing their work. They will spend time getting to know the tools of these crafts while also exploring the artistic possibilities they afford. From the technical details of how cameras work to editing programs to managing images and files, students will get a thorough understanding of the art and the mechanics of working behind and with cameras.

** Students who have taken Photography and are interested in advanced study should discuss that with the Registrar. Students may take this class at the same time that they are completing a Senior Project focusing on photography or film, but their work in this course must be separate from that for the Senior Project (though one can be complementary to the other).*

Music Performance (1 credit)

This course will build on the fundamentals of musicianship and creativity through performance. Unit topics and repertoire will include a wide variety of styles and musical eras ranging from, but not limited to, Baroque, Folk, Mountain, Jazz, Rock, Pop, and Hip Hop. Other styles and genres will be explored as well, but this will be based on the abilities and desire of the ensemble. Students in Music Performance are expected to perform at school functions where music is a desired element. Students are expected to perform two concerts outside of the school day. Typically, these include one evening concert which will be scheduled in the winter and a spring concert. In addition to the above performances, students will also learn basic music theory and will write and have the opportunity to arrange music for the ensemble. Grades will be awarded based on attitude, participation, musical growth, weekly written assignments, and attendance at performances. Requirements include regular practice at home; daily ensemble participation, and auditioning for All-State/All-District Band, Orchestra, Choir, Jazz Band, GSA, regional honors groups, or other pre-approved outside ensembles. Students in this course will be fully graded.

Music Theory (*½ credit*)

Music Theory is an advanced course for music students. Participants will learn how to read, write, analyze, and perform music in preparation for music theory courses after high school. The course is designed for the advanced musician to more thoroughly understand the components of music and music composition. All assignments and topics are studied to enable the student to successfully complete basic college theory classes. Students will also be able to compose music and understand the guidelines used in music composed by others. It is preferred that students can already read music and have been a member of one of our music ensembles before taking this course, but it is not required. Students will need access to basic technology at home to complete the course.

**Students who have already taken this course may take an Advanced Theory course with the permission of the instructor.*

Jazz Ensemble (*During Projects, 1/4 credit*)

Jazz Ensemble is open to interested vocal and instrumental students and will be held yearlong during the Projects period. The course will be centered on jazz history and appreciation, as well as learning and performing jazz repertoire. The jazz history/appreciation portion will be focused on jazz standards, famous albums, and artists. Students will learn style as well as try to transcribe recorded solos. The performance portion will be focused on jazz combo repertoire and ensemble performance. Please note, participation in concerts and occasional rehearsals outside of the school day are required for credit in this course. These performances include, but are not limited to the winter and spring performances and various school functions. In addition, all students will be strongly encouraged to audition for the KMEA All-State Jazz ensembles in December. A strong knowledge of scales and chord structures will be helpful for all students but is not a requirement for entering the ensemble.