



## STUDIO · HISTORY · EDUCATION

### **Guidelines for Application to the MFA in Studio Art: Letter of Intent, Artist Statement, and Portfolio**

The letter of intent, artist statement, and portfolio are complementary. All three should be strong for an application to be successful. We want to see coherence and excellence across all three, and a solid connection amongst them. We highly recommend having a mentor or advisor review your letter of interest, artist statement, and portfolio for feedback and guidance on putting your best foot forward.

#### **LETTER OF INTENT:**

Your letter of intent should not be less than one page, and not more than three pages. Your name, address, phone number, and email address must be at the top of the first page. In the first paragraph or the title, indicate which area you are applying to (Confluence Low-Res Interdisciplinary MFA).

#### **Further Guidelines:**

The letter should demonstrate focus and direction. Include a brief introduction of yourself. Describe why you are applying to grad school, what you hope to gain from the MFA program, and why our program would be a good fit for you. Discuss your goals for the program, as well as for your professional career. Even if your goals are not 100% clear at this point (which is why you might be interested in grad school), try to project what you would like to accomplish, to the extent possible. This will help us learn more about you and your art practice. Our faculty are interested in students who are highly engaged, deeply involved in their art practice, and willing to work hard—as evidenced in their undergraduate studies and outside of the classroom. Express what you know about your discipline and your specific approach to it. Speak to your own strengths and include anything significant that you think we should know about you. The relationship between what you write and what you show in your portfolio will indicate how you place yourself in the art world(s). We expect our students to have a strong background both in studio techniques as well as in the histories and practices of contemporary art.

#### **ARTIST STATEMENT:**

Your artist statement should be no more than 1 page. The artist statement provides the opportunity to describe the ideas, methods, and motivations driving your work. Why do you make the work that you make? Why is it important to you? Describe your work, in terms of mediums, materials, or practices. Why does it matter in the world? Who are the artists or theorists that you see yourself in conversation with? How and why might other people connect to it?

#### **PORTFOLIO:**

Technical considerations: The portfolio consists of 15-20 images of your best recent work.

Images should be submitted as a single, high-resolution (compressed) PDF document, uploaded during the application process. If you are including video, please upload each of your videos to Vimeo or Youtube, and include the links in your application. Please make sure all links are functional before submitting your application! Links to websites may be included as supplements, but a PDF portfolio is required.

Artistic considerations: We are looking for conceptual thinking and technical competence, suitable for graduate work, combined with inquiry, focus, and direction. Additionally, the quality of your images themselves should be considered: good lighting, high resolution, and color balance help to showcase your work.

You should present a body of work that goes beyond undergraduate assignments—work that comes from yourself, and that stands out from the crowd. It is most important in the portfolio to show your best work, not necessarily one sample from each medium worked in, but the very strongest pieces that you've created. We're looking for a consistently high level of excellence. The work that is accepted is likely to be a relatively coherent body (or bodies) of work, and is rigorous in skill and content.