

## Background Questions •

### **What is Visual Art Institute (VAI)?**

The Visual Art Institute is a nonprofit after-school art program for youth ages 5 - 18. The purpose of VAI is to foster and preserve the creative voices of youth by assisting them in exploring their imagination and artistic abilities through in-depth training, independent study, and experimentation in all aspects of visual art.

### **What makes VAI different from other youth art programs?**

The innovative way in which VAI seeks to educate the whole person makes it a remarkable art program. This is achieved by fostering each individual's unique creative voice, while teaching him or her to integrate their creativity into every aspect of their thinking, education, and life. This results in a greater thirst for knowledge in many areas of study, while at the same time strengthening their personal character — all of which are essential tools in today's world of constant change.

### **What is VAI's Mission?**

Established in 1978, Visual Art Institute's mission has remained unchanged: it is to foster and develop the creative voices of youth, by assisting them in exploring their imagination and artistic abilities through in-depth training, independent study, and experimentation in all forms of visual art.

### **What is VAI's Vision?**

The vision of the Visual Art Institute is to provide exceptional visual art programs as a powerful tool in enhancing the educational experiences of the students we serve. Although our focus is on quality instruction in the visual arts, we hope participation in our programs will enhance all areas of our students' lives. We especially seek to reach out to under served youth from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Our ambition is to encourage excellence in their work and to develop positive mentor and peer relationships. We strive to accomplish this through giving them the opportunity to express themselves in a safe and nurturing creative environment, to work with traditional art media and new technology, to be instructed and mentored by dedicated professional artists from the community, and to interact with other youth interested in the arts. The desired outcome is to have students build life skills of problem solving, self-confidence, independent and critical thinking, and collaboration.

### **What are VAI's Aim's?**

- \* Expand knowledge
- \* Enlarge creativity
- \* Encourage community service
- \* Build character
- \* Develop lifelong learners

### **What is VAI's History?**

Stephanie Burn established Visual Art Institute in 1978. Stephanie started VAI after teaching art classes at Utah State University. During her experience teaching there she felt that college students had lost their ability to think creatively. VAI came as the result of her desire to teach children how to maintain and foster their creativity throughout their lives. Since the founding of the institute, thousands of youth have had the opportunity to work with hundreds of local working artists in the community in a variety of media. Within the first ten years, students began to be offered scholarships from top art schools from across the country. In 1998, Bruce Robertson took over as Executive Director. That same year, VAI began working with public schools and offering tuition assistance to provide better access to low-income youth. By expanding these programs, services, and instruction to more youth, VAI has become an essential part of Salt

Lake's art community. In 2005, VAI's media lab and art library was created. Many students earn local, state, and national awards, with many receiving scholarships and entrance into top universities and art schools throughout the country. 2008 marks VAI's 30th anniversary serving the community.

## Program Questions •

### **What is VAI's community involvement?**

Over the past year Visual Art Institute has been involved with the community extensively. VAI exhibited 375 pieces of student artwork in 15 different art shows, painted 4 community theater production sets and participated in the Utah Arts Festival and other community events. The art shows, presentations and workshops at public schools and theater productions have a collective audience of over 100,000 people.

### **What is VAI's involvement with local schools?**

VAI works with local schools throughout the Wasatch front to assist teachers and schools in providing the best arts experiences possible for our community's youth. VAI works with local schools to bring workshops to children at schools. We also judge between 20 and 50 school's reflections contests each year. VAI actively participates in various collaboration projects at schools, and VAI Faculty members also give classroom presentations about many art related topics in classrooms.

### **What is the College Preparation Program?**

The College Preparation Program (CP Program) is for Junior and Senior high school students. The CP Program is geared to help students prepare a portfolio to apply to university art programs and art schools, we have also helped students prepare award winning portfolios for high school Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Utah State Sterling Scholar, and other scholarships.

## Classes Questions •

### **What Is VAI's Teaching Approach?**

Teaching at VAI is done through a non-directive teaching method. Students are provided with specific learning objectives without dictating step-by-step instructions, maintaining their individuality and unique creativity. Students are encouraged to generate their own original ideas from their imagination, observation, memories, and experience. We teach them skills, techniques, and experimentation in a variety of media. Students learn skills in independent thinking, problem solving, and critical assessment.

### **What Is the Curriculum taught?**

VAI's comprehensive curriculum is designed to give deep learning in a broad variety of art concepts, media and techniques. Each course is designed to dovetail with the other courses to give students a strong visual language, resulting in award-winning portfolios. Alumni report that their experience at VAI has improved their ability to think creatively and learn in all areas of education.

VAI teaches 60 different art courses rotating every few years. Depending on the semester each course runs for 10-15 weeks. Classes are divided by age group, Studio Arts I (Elementary) classes are for ages 5-10. Studio Arts II (Jr. High) classes are for ages 11-14. Studio Arts III (High School) classes are for ages 15-18. Examples of classes include:

Elementary Courses - Studio Arts I (Ages 5 - 10)

Animation  
Architecture  
Art Appreciation (Art History)  
Color I, II  
Drawing I, II, III, IV, V  
Film Making  
Computer Media  
Illustration  
Painting I, II  
Sculpture I, II, III  
Zoo Drawing & Painting Summer Workshop

Jr. High Courses - Studio Arts II (Ages 11 - 14)

Animation  
Book Making  
Drawing I, II, III, IV, V  
Film Making  
Computer Media  
Illustration  
Painting I, II, III  
Photography  
Printmaking I, II, III  
Sculpture I, II  
Figure Summer Workshop

High School Courses - Studio Arts III (Ages 15 - 18)

Drawing I, II, III, IV, V  
Film Making I, II  
Computer Media  
Painting I, II, III  
Portfolio I, II, III, IV  
Printmaking  
Sculpture I, II, III, IV  
Independent Study  
Figure Summer Workshop  
Mural Painting

**When are classes held?**

Each class is held once a week. Currently, classes are offered Monday through Thursday. All elementary classes are 1 1/2 hours from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. All Jr. High and High School classes are 2 hours from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

**What are the age groups and class sizes?**

Class sizes are generally no larger than 12 students. Classes are divided into age groups in the following manner: ages 5 - 10 year olds are in the Elementary classes together. When possible we separate students into smaller groups, placing 5 - 7 year olds together and 8 - 10 year olds in the same class. Students ages 11 - 14 are in Jr. High classes together. Students ages 15 - 18 are in High School classes together. Depending upon class size and interest, Jr. High and High School students are sometimes combined.

**What is the classroom climate like?**

VAI's classes are highly stimulating, creative environments for the purpose of focused artistic and creative learning. Every part of a class is organized to enable students to expand their creativity and skills. While students do find a creative peer group, these classes are not intended as playtime or a social hour. Some of the values they must uphold include:

- Punctuality - be on time to class, students who are late disrupt the class.

- Respect - show respect to other students and faculty by being quiet during work time.
- Listening - listen carefully and follow instructions.
- Participation - participate in class activities in a positive manner.

Students showing a lack of respect for other students or staff may be asked to call their parents to come pick them up. Parents are asked not to go into the classrooms while students are in session; this disrupts the focus of a class. The faculty is responsible for instruction only. Administrative questions are answered in the office. Early release of any student must be cleared with the administrative office.

Parents are asked not to enter the studios during class time to help the instructors maintain the student's creative focus.

### **What Holidays are observed?**

VAI observes the following holidays: Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years. A make up day will be provided for classes that fall on any of these holidays.

### **What if a student misses a class?**

Missed classes are generally not made up or reimbursed. During Spring and Summer terms we understand that vacations, etc. may interfere with normal class scheduling. Upon registering for spring and summer terms, it is possible to subtract the cost of days that will be missed from the overall cost of tuition; however, a schedule of the specific classes that will be missed must be given to the administrative office by the end of the first week of classes. This policy does not apply to Fall and Winter semesters, however, written appeals maybe addressed to the Executive Director for review if you have special circumstances.

### **What is VAI's liability?**

While every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of your child, VAI is not responsible for personal injury, damage to or loss of property during, before, or after class, at the school, at off site locations, or in transit.

### **What Classes are Currently taught?**

See website for all current classes or contact the office.

### **What independent courses are taught?**

Jr. High and High School students can typically register for the independent study courses at any time. Tuition for the Figure and Special Projects courses is \$285 each, for 15-weeks. Tuition for the Portfolio Preparation course is \$200 (Non refundable), for 12 - 18 months. Contact the office for more details about any of these courses.

#### Figure (Drawing/Painting)

Through this course students will learn to draw and/or paint the human figure, while expanding their abilities with the principles and elements of art. Students will have the opportunity to explore a variety of materials if they wish. This course is for students who are self-motivated and willing to create a lot of work on their own. Students will attend open studio figure drawing sessions in the community and meet with a faculty member once a week at VAI to discuss their progress in-depth, receive critiques of their work, and discuss the work of contemporary figurative artists. This course will be an engaging exploration of considerations of the human figure in contemporary artwork, while developing technical skill. This course is specifically designed to help develop strong portfolio artwork.

#### Special Projects (Any Media)

In this course students will have the opportunity to design their own project. This course requires students to be self-motivated and willing to create work on their own. Students will have the opportunity to meet with a faculty member once a week to discuss their progress in-depth and receive feedback and critiques of their work. Students will also study the work of relevant contemporary artists. This course will build individual skills and creative thinking. This course is specifically designed to help students accomplish outstanding artwork in a broad array of art disciplines for their portfolios.

#### College Preparation Program (Portfolio - Preparation)

Students will take a closer look at the quality and quantity of their artwork. They will create new work and select their very best artwork for portfolios to apply to university art programs and art schools. Students will learn to demonstrate competency and proficiency with the elements and principles of art, while developing a personal direction for their portfolio. They will also be required to keep a sketchbook to show their personal growth, ideas, and changes in their personal imagery. Each student will also learn the process of documenting and producing a professional presentation of their work. Learning to put together a professional portfolio will be a valuable skill for any art career. Students will meet with faculty periodically from the date they begin this program until they submit their portfolios during their senior year of high school.

Ideally students should register for this Program after an interview with a faculty member the first quarter of their Junior year of high school. See College Preparation Program on the website for more details.

#### **What summer classes are taught?**

##### Figure Academy - Junior High and High School Students

The Summer Figure Academy Workshop is a series of 2 intensive 2-week workshops geared towards Jr. High and High School aged students. Students will study figure drawing in the mornings and figure painting in the afternoons. Daily in-depth critiques help students engage in each other's work and give student's personal direction and feedback for successive studies. Through this intensive study, students will develop new skills and strong artwork for their portfolios. Students are also introduced to the artwork of contemporary figurative artists and may have opportunities to hear from visiting local artists.

##### Summer Drawing Safari - Elementary Students

Each summer elementary students take part in Visual Art Institute's Drawing Safari workshop at Utah's Hogle Zoo. We will explore exotic animals, sights and sounds. Students learn to draw animals through the elements of line, shape, texture, and color. Drawing animals will be both challenging and fun, expanding each individual's creativity and artistic skills.

To see examples of student's artwork from past Figure Academy workshops look at our Figure Academy Gallery on the website.

Also, look at our website for information regarding our current classes, the independent study - Figure (Drawing/Painting) class or to register for any of these.

#### **Why should my student take two classes?**

An essential part of the CP Program is the attendance of two regular semester classes in addition to this program. This helps the student have an ample amount of artwork to choose from for their portfolio. This means students will take two classes per week to create artwork, gain a better understanding of concepts and techniques, as well as expand their knowledge of art history and contemporary art. To learn more about the classes that VAI offers visit: About our Classes or Current Classes or Upcoming Classes on the website.

**How can I help my student prepare a portfolio for applying to universities and art schools?** The Visual Art institute has been helping students obtain entrance and scholarships to over 25 institutions of higher education for over 30 years (see awards on website for details). VAI encourages its students who wish to pursue an education in the visual arts are to attend classes each semester at VAI, attend a national Portfolio Day, and maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better. For more information about preparing for college visit: [College Preparation Program](#) on the website.

## **Tuition & Registration Questions** •

### **What is the cost of tuition and payment process?**

For 15-week Fall and Winter semesters, tuition is \$285 per class. For our 10-week Spring semester it is \$190 per class. The cost of classes works out to be \$19 per weekly class session. (Taking this cost into consideration makes these classes a great deal when you compare the cost to music lessons, or sports leagues.) There is a 10% discount available for those who take two classes per semester.

Tuition is due on the first day of class each semester. If needed, we do offer a payment plan as follows: The first payment (1/3 of the full tuition) is due during class registration (about five weeks before a semester begins), the second payment is due the first day of class, and the third payment is due by the fifth week of classes.

Currently the only method of payment is in person, by check or cash. We hope to have an on-line payment method available soon.

### **What is the cost of supplies?**

Art supplies for elementary classes are included in the cost of tuition. The students in Jr. High and High School classes provide their own art supplies. Instructors will provide supply lists. Some Jr. High and High School classes have a supply fee in lieu of finding and buying their own supplies. It is hoped that students will take good care of their supplies and over time they will build an ample supply of materials so they will only have to replace depleted portions periodically. This will allow students greater flexibility in completing works in and out of class.

### **Is tuition assistance available?**

Tuition assistance is available for those who qualify based on need. If you are seeking to apply for assistance, specific guidelines and requirements can be requested from the Executive Director. VAI does not give talent scholarships.

### **What Is VAI's refund policy?**

The cancellation of class registration and a refund request must be done in writing. Refunds are calculated from the date a notification is received, not from the last day of attendance. A 10% processing fee is charged on all refunds.

- 100% of tuition may be refunded up to one working day before the class meets for the first time.
- A portion of tuition may be refunded up to one working day before the class meets for the fifth time. This refund will be prorated according to the number of classes left in the term from the time the notification is received. The 10% processing fee will be subtracted from the total amount of the refund.
- No refund is available after the date the class meets for the fifth time.

### **How do I sign my child up for classes?**

Currently our online registration method, requires downloading the registration form the registrations page on the website, fill it out, and send in with a check or money order of \$95 for

each class signed up for. This deposit will be applied toward the tuition for each class and hold a spot in each. An on-line registration form and payment method will be available soon. Please also download the media release form, fill it out, and send it in with your registration. Contact us if you have any questions.

## Other Questions •

### **Where can I see VAI's students' artwork?**

See website for current student art shows.

### **What is VAI's student artwork ownership agreement?**

Many students donate artworks to VAI for its permanent collection or for fundraising purposes. These pieces are designated as such; otherwise all artwork belongs to the individual student that produces it. Students wishing to display their work at community venues or in VAI's promotional materials must have a [Media Release Form](#) signed by their parent or guardian and on file in the office. This form can be downloaded from the registration page on the website or a copy can be obtained in the office.

### **Doses VAI need volunteers?**

VAI relies on volunteer help to create and maintain our dynamic learning experience. Volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to, the tasks listed on the volunteer page of the website. We also welcome your ideas, skills, and expertise. Contact VAI's office to set up times to volunteer.

### **How can I donate?**

The Institute would not be here today with out many generous contributions. We hope to have our on-line donation option available soon. In the meantime, donation checks can be made payable to Visual Art Institute and mailed or given to the Executive Director. We appreciate donations of any size. For tax purposes, we are a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. If you have any questions or need our mailing address please refer to our contact information.

### **Where is VAI located?**

Directions from I-80: Exit off of I-80 at exit 126. Turn on to 1300 East heading north. Go about .3 miles. Turn right heading east on to 2100 South. Go about .3 miles. Turn left heading north on 1500 East. Go about .3 miles. We are on the left or west side of the street.

The building is the old Garfield elementary school. You can park on the North side of the building and come in through the north doors. The office is in the southeast wing.

### **What are VAI's office hours?**

Monday - Thursday, 12noon - 6:30 pm

Hours are subject to change. Call before dropping by to make sure someone will be in the office

### **What is VAI's Address, Phone number and email?**

Phone: 801.474.3796

Email: [visual.art.institute@gmail.com](mailto:visual.art.institute@gmail.com)

Mailing Address:

Visual Art Institute

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