

Stanford Arts

CREATING CHANGE THROUGH THE ARTS

Art enriches our lives, brings us joy, and moves us to action. From improving personal health, to bridging the barriers that divide communities, to challenging and shifting societal perceptions and norms, art effects change. Stanford is committed to ensuring that the arts play an integral role in student and campus life, bringing the arts to the entire university community and beyond.

THE POWER OF ART

About Stanford Arts

Artists are visionaries who can imagine new ways of being, help us to see different perspectives, and creatively tackle human challenges that cannot be solved by science and technology alone. In our rapidly changing world, artists are needed more than ever to help interpret the current challenges and create a better future. Through the Office of the Vice President for the Arts, Stanford is championing the arts and cultivating a thriving ecosystem of artists, faculty and scholars, and community leaders on our campus and beyond. Top priorities include expanding campus programs that make the arts central to the Stanford experience, energizing our arts community by welcoming new and diverse artists, and engaging the broader community in the arts.



Campus Programs

Stanford offers a variety of programs to prepare future leaders in the arts and make it possible for all students, regardless of their majors or interests, to experience art as an integral part of their lives. These range from the Arts Incubator, which supports interdisciplinary teams harnessing the power of art to make a positive impact on society, to internships and neighborhood programs that encourage creativity where students live.



VISITING ARTIST WEAVES NEW NARRATIVES USING DIGITAL TOOLS

Stanford's visiting artist programs encourage experimentation in interdisciplinary arts research, teaching, and practice. Visiting artist Sarah Rosalena creates hybrid works rooted in indigenous cosmologies using digital tools like machine learning, computer-sequenced weaving, and 3D printing. During her residency hosted by the Stanford Arts Institute and the Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence, she used Stanford's TC2 computer-controlled loom at the Product Realization Lab to weave textiles using indigo, cochineal-dyed yarns, and pine needles. "Being here and working with people from a variety of disciplines, not only in the arts but in the sciences, has been very fruitful," she says.



STUDENT MUSEUM GUIDE WRITES AWARD-WINNING ART HEIST NOVEL

The Cantor Arts Center and Anderson Collection offer undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to engage with their collections as student guides. Medical student Grace Li, MD '23, served as a student guide at both museums, an experience that informed *Portrait of a Thief*, her bestselling debut art heist novel. Now set to become a series on Netflix, the novel explores questions of history, power, Chinese American identity, and the role of museums in society. "As someone who grew up loving museums, but who also struggled to 'figure out' or 'connect with art,' I would always try and understand, 'What does this art mean?'" she told the *Palo Alto Weekly*. "I would get worried if I didn't understand it because I never had any formal training in art history. Making art a little more accessible and welcoming has been very valuable for me."

Diversity in the Arts

Twenty-five years ago, the Institute for Diversity in the Arts (IDA) grew from the Committee on Black Performing Arts. Today, as one of the country's oldest student- and community-facing centers focused on stewarding the power of the arts toward social justice, IDA considers new questions and explores new possibilities: What happens to art and to work in the arts when we center the voices, spaces, traditions, and imaginings of those who have been told they do not belong? What happens when our very definition of what constitutes art and arts leadership comes from those communities?

CONNECTING ART AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Each year, IDA serves hundreds of students from diverse backgrounds with courses, workshops, fellowships, events, and opportunities to engage with visiting artists. Stanford alum and musical artist Lizzie No, '13—described by NPR as a “magnetic performer and a rising star in the folk world”—performed at Stanford Live's Bing Studio during her 10-year class reunion. Reflecting on how IDA impacted her life and career in music, she said: “I still remember the first time I came to the Harmony House to take a class at the Institute for Diversity in the Arts, and I immediately felt like I'd found my people. I wasn't here just to learn a craft; I was here to put art in context and find out how art could be part of a social movement. That's really what I gained by being a student and an intern at IDA.”

SPRINGING INTO ACTION

One of IDA's signature offerings is a large-scale spring course open to all students and community members that introduces the themes of art and social justice. The spring 2023 course, *Transformative Art-Practices for Engaging in Community*, explored how artists address issues central to communities of color, including housing, access to healthy food, abolition, human trafficking, Land Back, and cultural sovereignty. Students participated in classroom discussions with local and nationally recognized artists, activists, and scholars and visited surrounding communities where they observed the impact of art.



Community Engagement

Stanford seeks to deepen its engagement with the broader community by amplifying the work and securing the future of its three iconic arts organizations: the Anderson Collection, one of the world's finest private collections of modern and contemporary art; the Cantor Arts Center, whose 38,000 artworks span 5,000 years of human history from across the globe; and Stanford Live, which brings world-class performances to campus and the surrounding community.



PERFORMANCES THAT CELEBRATE COMMUNITY AND COLLABORATION

Members of the acclaimed Australian performance company Circa spent a month in residence at Stanford, collaborating with students in Stanford's *Art of Circus Movement* course and other Bay Area performers to launch the North American premiere of *Leviathan*. The cast rehearsed at EPACENTER, initiating a fruitful partnership between Stanford Live and the East Palo Alto-based community arts center. In two sold-out shows, *Leviathan* combined acrobatics and contemporary dance to celebrate community while exploring the tension that can exist between individualism and interconnectedness in modern society.

EMBRACING THE RICHNESS AND DIVERSITY OF ASIAN AMERICAN ART


Asian American art has long been under-recognized by art institutions. As co-directors of the Asian American Art Initiative (AAAI), Marci Kwon, assistant professor of art history, and Aleesa Pitchamarn Alexander, the Robert M. and Ruth L. Halperin Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Cantor Arts Center, seek to change this by making the Cantor one of the country's preeminent centers for artists of Asian descent. Rather than a discrete identity category, AAAI approaches the term "Asian American" as a heterogeneous, relational term that connotes the interplay of social inclusion, exclusion, and racialization,

as well as connections among East, Southeast, and South Asia, the Pacific Islands, and the Americas. The AAAI encompasses a range of activities, including collecting and exhibiting works of Asian American and Asian diaspora artists; preserving archival materials; fostering undergraduate and graduate education; and cultivating community collaboration and dialogue through public programming. "We're not trying to build a canon," Kwon told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. "We're trying to highlight the sheer multiplicity of cultural production by Asian American or Asian diaspora makers."

FROM ALUM TO ARTIST-EDUCATOR

Artists who graduate from Stanford often stay connected to the arts community on campus. Artist and educator Stephanie Syjuco, MFA '05, returned for a solo exhibition at the Anderson Collection called *White Balance/Color Cast*. The exhibition interrogated the construction of American history and colonialism using photography, video, and other media. For example, photographers commonly use the term "white balance" to describe the process of adjusting an image's color to what might be deemed a "neutral" or accurate representation. Syjuco uses traditional terms like this to question how imaging standards, such as the notion of "correct" color, reflect biases. Her work was also included in *At Home/On Stage*, a flagship Asian American Art Initiative exhibit at the Cantor Arts Center.





IT TAKES ALL OF US, INCLUDING YOU.

Art is essential. Art is consequential. And so much is possible when we come together. At Stanford, we are pursuing these priorities with an unwavering commitment to equity and inclusion, ensuring that diverse artists and diverse cultural perspectives are visible in everything we do. With your help, we will execute a distinctive vision that demonstrates the consequential impact of art in society. We hope you will join us.

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