FINE ART SCULPTURE + ENVIRONMENTAL ART (BA)

The Department of Sculpture and Environmental Art offers two programmes, each with its own distinct focus. Sculpture has been taught at the GSA since before the turn of the 20th century, with the Environmental Art programme being established a 100 years later in the mid 1980s.

It is a dynamic department, and in all years, students share some aspects of the programme, such as seminars, the visiting lecture programme and group tutorials/critiques.

Study is guided and challenged by committed and supportive staff exposing students to a wide range of work and philosophies. Staff carry out commissions, residencies, and exhibit, curate and publish at national and international level.

The result of our ethos and passion for our subject is clearly shown at the Degree Show but also through the success of our graduates, many of whom are now some of Scotland’s leading international artists.

We invite you to join us.

Paul Cosgrove
Head of Department (Acting)

OUR ETHOS

Sculpture

The scope of Sculpture has widened, extending the conventional boundaries of object making to encompass both traditional and contemporary materials and media. The language of spatial and material practice taught by the department is based on construction, casting and fabrication and extends through to more time based art practices such as video, performance and installation. The course recognises and embraces this breadth, and actively encourages students to think independently and critically in order to gain a command of the conceptual and technical processes appropriate to this expanded field of sculptural practice.

The core objectives of the Programme are to develop the practical and philosophical understanding of the subject of sculpture; to develop practical skills and the ability to mediate ideas through materials and process; and to develop the ability and confidence to critique and communicate about sculpture, both historical and contemporary. This is achieved through a programme of study that integrates both theory and process, informing the experience of sculpture practice from its historical beginnings to current contemporary practice.
Environmental Art

The Programme prepares students for working as artists in the contemporary world. While galleries and museums remain major places for art to be viewed, opportunities for artists to make work in and for other contexts and places have increased enormously. To this end, the course offers not only the opportunity to exhibit in the traditional sense, but also explores these other contexts. This contextual approach to art is explored through the Public Art Project, which each student carries out in each year of the course. In this respect, Environmental Art is one of the few programmes in the UK in which students are specifically prepared for this kind of art practice.

Skills and understanding are gained through students experiencing a broad range of skills in drawing, casting, wood and metal fabrication, photography, video, computers and sound. Seminars and lectures on the history, theory and professional practices of public art, in its broadest sense, are an integral part of the programme. Students are expected to focus their activities in terms of concept and medium and to develop a self-directed art practice with a considered understanding of the context in which the work resides and is understood.

Core objectives are to develop in students an informed understanding and use of language in materials/media and ideas, and to make art in response to a context. Students will also have formed a confident, critical language in response to contemporary art practice.

EACH YEAR OF STUDY

The BA (Hons) Fine Art is a four year, full-time degree programme and students are recruited into one of three specialist departments (Photography, Painting + Printmaking, Sculpture + Environmental Art).

The Fine Art programme employs a variety of learning and teaching methods which may alter and adapt according to the perceived needs of students. The main methods of programme delivery are lectures, seminars, artists’ presentations and group discussions, tutorials, progress reviews. Projects, group crits, workshops, students’ exhibitions, field trips, independent study, and formative and summative assessments. In addition to this, the School provides students with opportunities to take part in placements, residences and exchanges. All students undertake a programme of study in the Forum for Critical Inquiry.

In addition to applications for first year level entry, the School also welcomes applications for second and, exceptionally, third year level entry from suitably qualified applicants.

The course aims to:
• Enable students to develop their intellectual and imaginative abilities;
• Guide students’ critical and creative thinking through an understanding of philosophical, historical, social and economic contexts of art and culture;
• Encourage students’ creative independence, as well as to foster their ability to work collaboratively;
• Develop students as self-critical, socially aware and responsible individuals;
• Develop in students a high level of technical skill and an integrated understanding of fine art process;
• Cultivate in students high standards of visual articulacy linked to the ability to formulate ideas and concepts efficiently in both speech and writing and in the gathering and use of information;
• Stimulate in students an inquiring and imaginative approach in addressing formal, technical and conceptual creative problems;
• Encourage and enable students to experience the professional practice and application of their fine art skills in a broader cultural context.
YEAR 1

The First Year Fine Art programme is the first of the four years of the undergraduate course in Fine Art at the Glasgow School of Art.

First Year of Fine Art differs from traditional diagnostic foundation programmes in that students are recruited on a subject-specific basis to one of the five specialisms: Painting, Printmaking, Sculpture, Environmental Art or Photography that are structured into the three academic departments of Fine Art Photography, Painting and Printmaking and Sculpture and Environmental Art.

The First Year programme deals with the generic creative processes of fine art practice and with medium specific studies of the three academic subject areas is designed to develop confidence and understanding in the management, manipulation and resourcing of ideas from both observation and concept. A wide variety of learning and teaching methods are used to enhance, support and facilitate learning through practice both at a group and individual level.

YEAR 2

Sculpture

Second year in Sculpture focuses on the development of visual ideas through materials, process and theory. Set projects identify key aspects of sculptural language providing opportunities to develop new skills in casting, metal and wood. Strategies for critically analysing work are taught through group critiques and tutorials, with history and theory examined through a parallel seminar programme.

Environmental Art

In second year Environmental Art, while drawing forms the basis of work throughout the course, there are introductions to research techniques and to a broad range of materials, media and skills all of which are linked to projects introducing the main concerns of the course. These are complemented by the lecture/seminar programme, for which essays are submitted, and are more fully explored in the Public Art Project, which concludes the year.

YEAR 3

Sculpture

Third year in Sculpture, these approaches are extended into the expanded field of sculpture practice. Individual and personal programmes of study are established, supported by seminars, tutorials, group viewings and international exchange opportunities.

Environmental Art

In third year Environmental Art, advanced workshops are offered to further develop material and media skills, and there are opportunities for one term international exchanges. Students mount a public exhibition in the first term and complete a Public Art Project in the second. The lecture/seminar programme continues to support individual practice through discussions, group and individual tutorials. A study trip is usually arranged to another country.
YEAR 4

Sculpture

The fourth year in Sculpture aims to consolidate study by encouraging a highly-motivated and independent practice. The programme of work is agreed with the year tutor and directed through individual research, and supported by individual tutorials, seminars and group viewings with both staff and visiting artists.

Environmental Art

The fourth year in Environmental Art is self directed and aims at encouraging a highly motivated and independent practice with a high level of technical and conceptual skills, and an understanding of contemporary fine art practice.

UCAS Information:

Institution Name: GSA
Institution Code: G43
UCAS Code: W130