



Studio Block Offerings - Spring 2022

We're excited to offer a strong slate of studio blocks for the spring semester. Studio Blocks will be held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings during B & C blocks. Students will be asked to indicate their interests on a paper form during an assembly period on Tuesday, January 4th. This information below is designed to help students make appropriate choices. We're also excited to continue offering instrument lessons.

- *Students are required to take studio blocks for a minimum of three periods each semester.*
- *7th grade students are required to take a one semester foundational Introduction to Guitar course either first or second semester.*
- *All middle school students must take at least one music studio block or lesson, and at least one art/other studio block.*

Tuesday B & C, Double Block (10:00-11:50)

Art Offerings

Advanced Ceramics with Eric Smith (grades 7-12)

A more intensive study and exploration of clay as a medium to create works either sculptural or functional, this class is designed for students with a base knowledge of the material (preference given to those who have already taken a clay class with me). This class is more self directed, with individual attention and instruction to move students forward on goals that they will set for themselves at the start of the semester.

*students required to indicate whether their intention is to focus on hand building or wheel work when signing up.

Dungeon and Dragons with Liam Birkerts (grades 7-12)

This semester in the Dungeons & Dragons studio block we will focus on collaborative storytelling and thoughtful character development, using D&D as our creative medium. Each week we will tell another chapter of an ongoing story in small 'adventuring' groups, working together to vividly imagine the world of our story through the eyes of our own unique characters. Players will be challenged to understand their character — beyond just a name and 'stats' — with regular character building assignments, and game masters (narrators) will be asked to create detailed and believable worlds for the players to explore. Open to new players and veterans alike!

Tuesday, B Block (10:00-10:50)

Art Offerings

Things in Space: Sculpture and Installation with Rafael Kelman (grades 7-9)

In this class, you will develop techniques in carving, casting, building and modeling in a range of materials including plaster, cloth, clay, paper, cement, string, and found objects. You will make drawings, models, and sculptural objects in varying scales; you will participate in a collaborative, public installation; you will engage with the artwork and ideas of a wide range of artists and thinkers; you will make things for both outdoor and indoor spaces. In our making, looking, reading and talking, we will explore questions about and beyond art: what is our relationship to the objects and spaces that surround us? What makes a thing into art? How do objects carry meaning? How have we transformed the land? How should we transform the spaces we inhabit?

Project Upcycle: Textiles Reimagined with Heather Wynne (grades 7-12)

In this class students will explore up-cycling materials into usable forms - baskets, bowls, mats + more. We'll create with machine stitching, hand stitching, and yarn craft techniques. Materials will be provided, although students may bring pre-owned materials to work with as well. No previous sewing experience required.

The Illustrated Book with Riley Brown (grades 9-12)

Students will learn about various kinds of paper making, bookmaking, and binding, culminating in a final project of creating and illustrating a book on a subject of their choice.

Music Offerings

Back in Plaid with Andy Cass (grades 7-12)

In the late 1980s the winds of change were afoot in music. Glam and hair metal was getting tired and tarnished, and people were looking for a change. Bands such as Nirvana, Pearl Jam, Soundgarden and Alice in Chains were more than happy to oblige by kicking down the door with their heavy, stripped down music style that became known as grunge. So grab your flannel and ripped jeans, throw on a pair of chucks, crank your guitar to ten, and get ready to rock!

Bluegrass Ensemble with Max Wareham (grades 7-12)

Imagine the "high and lonesome" singing of old mountain ballads with the twang of instruments strumming along. Bluegrass is a music of the mountains and of the cities, and is a highly social music, oftentimes shared among musicians in jam sessions.

In the "Bluegrass Ensemble" we will develop the skills required to understand how bluegrass music works and how to make it. We will develop a common repertoire of songs and will study the cultural history of the music. Students will learn "jam etiquette" so that they will feel confident participating in new bluegrass jams in a fun and respectful way. Semi-weekly listening and readings will be assigned. Any students who play (or want to play) guitar, mandolin, fiddle/violin, banjo, or bass are welcome to sign up!

Women Who Rock, Jr. with Karl Helander (grades 7-9)

Women Who Rock celebrates the important and often underappreciated influence women have made in popular music throughout the decades and across all genres. Students will be encouraged to pick up an instrument, grab a mic, and push their boundaries. Just like Women Who Rock, but for younger students!

Polka Band with George Adair (grades 7-12)

Students in this studio block will do a review of the many different genres / styles of polkas. Then choose examples to perform based on the instrumentation available.

Other

Beginning Chess with Michael Campbell (7-12)

The introductory block will be very similar to those of previous years: We will begin by learning chess notation, (the language of chess). From there we will begin to look at basic opening theory, essential tactics,

different forms of check mate and how to employ them. We will rely heavily on chess puzzles to illustrate many of the ideas.

As always, at least half of each class will be devoted to having students play actual games against one another--arguably the best way to learn the game.

Coding (online, in partnership with Whizara - 7-12)

Computers are all around us, and they seem like incredibly smart devices. However, you might be surprised to learn that everything that a computer does is represented by many 1s and 0s called binary code. This means all programs that run on a computer are just manipulating these 1s and 0s. However, it would be incredibly tough for a human to tell a computer what to do using only binary code. It would be much better if we had a language closer to human language to tell the computer what to do.

Welcome to Python, a programming language that lets us give instructions to a computer in a simpler language that is then converted to binary. This lets us write much more complex programs in a fraction of the time. This course introduces students to text-based programming and lays a sound foundation of programming fundamentals. Through a mix of fun real-world programs and graphics, animation, and game-based engaging activities, the course provides a holistic understanding of the applications of coding while promoting creativity among students. Students learn programming concepts including variables, user inputs/output, conditionals, loops, functions, events and lists, that are transferable to any other programming language. The course ends with a project that puts together concepts learned during the course.

Tuesday, C Block (11:00-11:55)

Art Offerings

Basket Weaving with Charlene Neeley (grades 7-12)

In basket weaving class, students will work with reed, which is the inner core of the rattan vine, to make a variety of baskets both functional and decorative. We will use several different weaving techniques such as twining, continuous weaving, twill, and stop and start weaving. Students will have the opportunity to experiment with colored reeds to produce different patterns. By semester's end you will have several baskets to take home!

Make + Mend Sashiko Sewing with Heather Micka-Smith (grades 7-12)

In this class students will learn to sew, decorate, and repair with the Japanese process of sashiko hand stitching. We'll learn basic patterns and experiment with artistic approaches. An emphasis on up-cycling materials, and the students' personal project interests are at the forefront of the course, and advanced or returning students may customize projects or build on existing projects and skills.

Beginning Analogue Photography with Nora Bates-Zale (7-12)

Learn all the basics of film photography--using a single-lens reflex camera, processing film, and printing in the darkroom! We'll learn a decades-old (almost centuries-old) process and draw inspiration from historic and contemporary photographers. Join us to become a part of a long-standing tradition in the Academy art world!

Music Offerings

Off the Grid with Karl Helander (grades 9-12)

This semi-acoustic band will focus on vocal harmonies and creative arrangements. Our song choices will not be restricted by genre, era, or original instrumentation. You should be prepared to push yourself and work hard.

Generation Y2K with Andy Cass (grade 9-12)

Charlemont is back from winter break, what better time to break out some new classics? For any student who has ever asked, “why can’t we rock out to something written in the last 20 years?”, this is the class for you! The aim of Generation Y2K is to play songs from the two decades that have just flown by us, with an emphasis on the more “indie” side of things. Songs you love but nobody knows, songs so fresh nobody’s heard them before, and all in between. Bands with strange names like The Brook and the Bluff, Death Cab for Cutie, Dirty Projectors, and all other manner of silliness are included! Let’s get contemporary!

Jazz Ensemble - Max Wareham (7-12)

Beautiful chords, jagged rhythms, and the freedom of improvisation. Find all of these and more in the “Jazz Ensemble”. In this studio block we will function as a jazz band, rehearsing each week and learning several standard compositions from the jazz repertoire. Students will learn the several musical components required to understand how jazz works, and semi-weekly reading and listening assignments will be given to assist in developing a cultural understanding of who the people were who helped create jazz and the challenges they faced. Vocalists and instrumentalists welcome. Ability to read music is required.

Other

Math Team with John Schatz (7-12)

Students will spend time grappling with logic puzzles, Ken Ken, and also, if interested, attempt some work in the New England Math League. Regardless of grade level or math class, students will find a challenge waiting for them here!

Thursday B & C, Double Block (10:00-11:50)

Art Offerings

Ceramics Independent Study with Eric Smith (previous experience required)

The independent study is open to 3 students, wheel focused work only. This class will meet on the same day that I teach my intro class which will allow us to spend time during B block to check in, look at work in progress, give demos as needed and address any concerns. C block you will be working independently. Much like Advanced Ceramics we will work together at the start of the semester to talk about a direction you’d like to move with your work and identify goals for the semester.

Thursday, B Block (10:00-10:50)

Art Offerings

Digital Photography with Matthew Cavanaugh (grades 10-12)

The secret behind an effective photograph is not the camera, or even the scene viewed through the viewfinder - it is in the mind of the photographer: this is where an image is created before it is committed to a

memory card. In this workshop, you will not only master using your camera in manual mode, you will learn how to access your creativity and hone your vision. This course will include hands-on demonstrations with the camera as well as basic digital image editing techniques using Adobe Lightroom. We will discuss the work of great photographers alongside your own photographs in order to better understand the fundamentals of composition to create compelling imagery. Expect to leave the class with a project you are proud of and a working knowledge of your camera.

Things in Space: Sculpture and Installation with Rafael Kelman (grades 10-12)

In this class, you will develop techniques in carving, casting, building and modeling in a range of materials including plaster, cloth, clay, paper, cement, string, and found objects. You will make drawings, models, and sculptural objects in varying scales; you will participate in a collaborative, public installation; you will engage with the artwork and ideas of a wide range of artists and thinkers; you will make things for both outdoor and indoor spaces. In our making, looking, reading and talking, we will explore questions about and beyond art: what is our relationship to the objects and spaces that surround us? What makes a thing into art? How do objects carry meaning? How have we transformed the land? How should we transform the spaces we inhabit?

Silk Painting with Susan Draxler (grades 7-12)

This will be an introduction to a variety of methods for painting on silk -- using silk paints, dyes, resists, and salt. Students will learn to stretch the silk on a frame in preparation to paint and to set the colors of finished paintings by ironing or steaming. Painting on silk is an ancient Asian art form and uses techniques that are similar to watercolor but the texture of the silk produces a very different look from that of paper. After practicing and experimenting with the various materials, students will be encouraged to develop their own style while completing finished pieces ranging from decorative wall hangings to functional items such as a scarf or tie.

Introduction/Advanced Observational Drawing and Painting with Riley Brown (grades 7-12)

Students will learn how to draw from life, in mediums like charcoal, pen, and acrylics. Emphasis is placed on learning to accurately reproduce anatomy and the world around you, through portraits, still lifes, interiors, and landscapes.

Music Offerings

British Invasion with Andy Cass (grades 7-9)

In 1964, four lads from Liverpool called The Beatles led a musical revolution in the USA. The term "Beatlemania" was used to describe their own uniquely frenzied following, but with bands among their ranks like The Rolling Stones, The Kinks, The Who, and The Animals, their collective reign was known as The British Invasion. In this ensemble, we'll learn and perform this timeless Brit-pop and rock 'n' roll. Simple forms, catchy hooks, a bit of distortion, and bold showmanship – how could you go wrong.

Synth Ensemble with Max Wareham (grades 7-12)

While synthesizers were initially developed to imitate the sounds of acoustic instruments, they quickly grew to be prized for their own unique sounds, and now occupy an integral place in the landscape of contemporary music.

In “Synth Ensemble”, students will learn to produce a vast array of musical tones using keyboard synthesizers. We will arrange several songs for the ensemble, pulling from any genre we like- if it can be imagined, it can be realized. We will also learn about the development and history of the synthesizer and how it came to fill a fundamental role in many different genres. Semi-weekly reading/listening assignments will help provide a context for this understanding. While this studio block is open to anyone with curiosity to explore electronic music, basic keyboard skills and the ability to read music are strongly encouraged.

Jam Band with Liam Birkerts (grades 9-12)

In this band, we will jam! This studio block will explore various aspects of crafting interesting, long-form improvisations. We'll practice close listening and tight ensemble work, while working with simple and open ended forms that will allow the musicians to stretch out. We'll work on developing solos with structure and a narrative arc, practice sensitive accompaniment and groove, and even create our own tunes over which we will 'jam out.'

Other

Advanced Chess with Michael Campbell (grades 7-12):

This semester we will take a close look at queen pawn openings. Our focus will not be on memorizing a string of moves, but on going through the first four or five moves an opening one move at a time, understanding what the thinking behind each successive move is in light of what middle game positions players are struggling to achieve. As usual, the second half of each day will be devoted to head to head play.

Thursday, C Block (11:00-11:55)

Art Offerings

Beginning Ceramics with Eric Smith (grades 7-9)

This class is an introduction for those students with little or no clay experience. Students will learn traditional hand building techniques such as pinching, coiling, slab building or a combination of these to create functional as well as sculptural work. We will think about form as it occupies the space before you as well as investigate the surface of clay as a canvas and the infinite possibilities it holds as it applies to both wet work and glazing.

Digital Photography with Matthew Cavanaugh (grades 7-9)

The secret behind an effective photograph is not the camera, or even the scene viewed through the viewfinder - it is in the mind of the photographer: this is where an image is created before it is committed to a memory card. In this workshop, you will not only master using your camera in manual mode, you will learn how to access your creativity and hone your vision. This course will include hands-on demonstrations with the camera as well as basic digital image editing techniques using Adobe Lightroom. We will discuss the work of great photographers alongside your own photographs in order to better understand the fundamentals of composition to create compelling imagery. Expect to leave the class with a project you are proud of and a working knowledge of your camera.

Creative Writing with Hannah Smith (grades 7-9)

This course is a workshop in creative writing for students in 7th through 9th grade. In each class, students will generate freshly written work guided by unique writing prompts. Students will be encouraged to engage all their senses and will be introduced to various poets, images, objects, and prose to help inspire their own writing. Students will be prompted to write from memory, imagination, or a combination. This course centers on the student's development of voice, growth in individual craft, and ability to unlock their creative thoughts.

Traditional Animation with Riley Brown (grades 9-12)

Students will learn the process of creating hand-drawn animations and create short films in collaborative groups. Work will mostly be done on paper and with flipbooks.

Music Offerings

Introduction to guitar with Andy Cass (preference given to grade 7)

Have you wanted to get into guitar but have found yourself frustrated and unsure of how to start? Did you give it a shot a few years ago and gave up, only to wish that you could try again? Come take Introduction to Guitar. We'll go through the basics on how to play the most common chords, beginner fingerpicking, using a pick, and learn a few songs! *Don't have a guitar? The Academy can provide you one for this class to take on a test drive and see if you take to it!*

Singing in Harmony with Lily Sexton (grades 7-12)

This class will explore vocal harmonies, beginning with developing technique and an understanding of basic chord structures, then pushing on towards more complex ways of singing together. We will experience harmony through many genres of music, from hymnal singing to rock'n'roll to 1960's folk

Improv Collective with Liam Birkerts (grades 7-12)

Come with open ears — the improv collective will take a wide view of the language of musical improvisation, without the restrictions of genre. Improvising as both soloists and as a group, we will investigate ways of conveying ideas and emotions using musical gestures and colors. We will learn about improvising using scales and motifs, interesting sounds and timbres on our instruments, and listen to masters of different improvising traditions from around the world. No improvisation experience is necessary, but be willing to jump in and try!

Women Who Rock with Karl Helander (grades 9-12)

Women Who Rock celebrates the important and often underappreciated influence women have made in popular music throughout the decades and across all genres. Students will be encouraged to pick up an instrument, grab a mic, and push their boundaries.

Other

Yearbook with Dana Stiepoek (grades 7-12)

Want to learn how to put together a yearbook? Well, this class is for you! And the best part? The entire community gets a copy at the semester!

Private Lessons

30 minutes blocks, offered by our music studio block staff, sometimes outside of Tuesday & Thursday B & C blocks.

For those students who may be interested, we may be able to offer private music instruction. Our instructors will organize lessons according to instructor and student availability, including times outside of Tuesday & Thursday B & C blocks. Slots for lessons will be limited. Students are responsible for their own instruments. If a student does not have access to an instrument, contact Karl Helander at khelander@charlemont.org

Guitar
Bass
Drums
Piano
Voice
Ukulele
Sax

Flute
Clarinet
Conga/bongo
(Tin)whistle
Mandolin
Audio Recording

