



Studio Block Offerings - Spring 2024

We're excited to offer a strong slate of studio blocks for the fall semester. Studio Blocks will be held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings during B & C blocks. Studio blocks will begin on September 7th. This information below is designed to help students make appropriate choices. Students are required to take studio blocks for at least three periods each semester. The fourth period can be used as a study hall, if desired.

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

Art

Beginning Wheel Throwing with Eric Smith (grades 6-12)

In this class we will learn all of the fundamental building blocks of working on the potter's wheel. From preparing your clay, gathering your tools, centering, opening, pulling up the walls and developing the muscle memory to do it again and again. It's not easy, but it's incredibly gratifying when it all "clicks". From cups to bowls, we will create useful and beautiful objects. Intended for those with no or very little previous clay experience. This course is limited to only five students.

Eyes, Ears, Lips with Sergei Isupov (grades 9-12)

In this course, students will learn how to portray the human head, focusing on eyes, ears, and lips. Students will combine drawing and sculpting these features, building their technical abilities along the way. The final projects will be collaborative works involving collaging, drawing, and ceramics which can be semi-permanent on campus.

Other

Dungeons & Dragons with Liam Birkets (grades 6-12)

Dungeons & Dragons is a tabletop roleplaying game that asks players to create personal and unique characters, and explore a collectively imagined world through those characters' eyes. Open to both brand new players and Dungeons & Dragons veterans, we will use the double block to play full sessions of D&D in one or two small groups. Our focus will center on the many creative challenges of D&D: writing compelling characters, and considering the ways they change as the story progresses; collectively inventing and expanding upon a fascinating new world; making pieces of art that tie into that world, like maps, portraits, and backstories.

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

Music Offerings

Pop 2000! with Nick Clark and Vanessa Brewster (grades 6-8)

If you thought music studio blocks at The Academy were just about playing songs from 70s rock bands, think again. In Pop2000!, we're going to sing and play all the pop hits you grew up with. It will involve a lot of

singing at the top of your lungs; along with all that singing, we'll add some creative instrumentation and percussion to the mix. If you're ready to have fun, you're ready for Pop2000!

Roots/Rock/Soul with Scott Hoffman (grades 9-12, preference given to 9-10)

Do you like good music? Folk, blues, gospel, rhythm and blues, early rock and roll, and soul music are the building blocks of virtually everything we listen to today. This was groundbreaking, forward-looking music that challenged norms and gave a voice to people who often struggled to be heard. Over the coming weeks, we'll listen, talk, and learn to play some of this material and prepare for an amazing performance at the end of the semester

Women Who Rock with Erin McKeown (grades 9-12)

In this class, we will represent and honor a unique and powerful community of musicians by creating and refining a performance (or two) of their work. Be prepared to try a new instrument, to use your voice in a new way, and support your classmates as they do the same.

Art Offerings

Basket Weaving with Charlene Neeley (grades 6-8)

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!

Digital Photography with Doug Mason (grades 6-8)

Welcome to the world of digital photography! This course offers a comprehensive introduction, covering composition, exposure, editing and manipulating the photographic image. We'll explore different genres and emphasize storytelling. Through hands-on exercises, you'll develop practical skills and receive feedback. By the end, you'll confidently capture, edit, and present images. This class will require an hour of work per week outside of class time. Join us on this creative journey in digital photography!

Figure Drawing with Katherine Weinstein (grades 6-12)

Drawing people offers unique challenges to the artist and can be intimidating, but it is also one of the most exciting images to draw. I have drawn and painted the figure for decades and I am passionate about this art form. I will share strategies for drawing specific facial features and body parts in addition to drawing from the full (clothed) figure. Examples of "master drawings" and contemporary figurative artists' will be presented as guides. Students will draw from their own reflection and from observation of their peers. Anyone can draw the figure with great success and satisfaction as long as they are willing to really look.

Other

Chess with Jasper Butler-Kurth (grades 6-12)

Chess Club is the best club.

Tuesday, C Block (11:00-11:50)

Music Offerings

Musical Theatre Chorus with Erin McKeown (grades 6-12, preference to 9-12)

Do you love Hamilton? Hedwig? Hadestown? Let's dive into the wonderful world of musical theater! This will primarily be a singing class where we'll work on solo, harmony, and choral arrangements of rock and pop-tinged musical theater songs. There may be a few opportunities for accomplished instrumentalists to contribute to the accompaniment.

Under the Radar with Scott Hoffman and Vanessa Brewster (grades 9-12, preference given to 9-10)

In Under the Radar, we'll dive deep into the weird and wonderful world of music that doesn't always see the light of day. We'll draw from genres such as garage and glam rock, punk and new wave, indie and alternative. We'll listen and learn great songs by bands you probably have never heard of. Get ready and embrace your inner outsider!

How Blue Can You Get? with Nick Clark (grades 9-12)

This is your favorite musician's favorite music. Picture a smokey juke joint in the middle of the Mississippi Delta in the 60s. Entertained by the likes of B.B. King, Koko Taylor, Willie Dixon and many many more highly influential blues artists this is where an entire subculture of the 20th century was born. In this group we will be focusing on just that, the blues legends who influenced nearly every musician since then.

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Drawing and Painting with Katherine Weinstein (grades 6-12)

In this second semester course we'll work on longer projects; beginning with drawings that develop into paintings. Students will learn how to create three-dimensional images by honing their skills of observation, use of line, tone, and color, first with charcoal, then learning how to transfer the image into a painting. We'll work from still life, the figure, reference photos, and a bit of imagination.

Watercolors and Wild Foragers with Paloma Hsiao-Shelton (grades 6-12)

Dive into the local environment which holds such an abundance of wild edibles and frolic in the tick-filled grass. Not only will we collect and taste them but also explore their beauty with watercolors. We will learn about the wild plants' gourmet, medicinal, and nutritional value by tasting them in different forms: raw, in teas and as cooked dishes. We will back up these observations and activities with biological information about the plants and their purposes in land-based communities. Students can choose to pursue watercolor compositions by repeating drafts or creating something new each week. This studio block aims to bridge the gap between art and science and to show students how foraging is a practical, beautiful, and fun way to bring healthy food into our lives.

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

Advanced Clay with Eric Smith (grades 7-12)

Prerequisite: Students must have taken Beginning Ceramics. 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 must indicate whether their interest is in wheel or non wheel work when signing up.

Analog Photography with Doug Mason (grades 8-12)

Analog Photography is an introduction to the magic of photography and the science behind it. It's a chance to learn the chemistry and physics of the camera, film, and printing. We will process our own film and see images that we imagined come to life in a developing tray. There will be an emphasis on photography as a fine art, and as a fine craft. We will explore the interaction of technique, perception, and communication in making and responding to photographic images.

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

Music Offerings

Under the Radar Jr. with Scott Hoffman (grades 6-8)

Under the Radar Jr. is a new ensemble specifically for younger students. In this class, we will talk, listen, and learn how to play in a band together. We'll draw from genres such as garage and glam rock, punk and new wave, indie and alternative. It will be challenging and fun.

Bluegrass with Max Wareham and Vanessa Brewster (grades 6-12)

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, often shared among musicians in jam sessions. In 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. Weekly listening and readings will be assigned. Any students who play guitar, mandolin, fiddle/violin, banjo, or bass are welcome to sign up!

Rock of Stages with Nick Clark (grades 9-12)

Tired of Academy studio blocks playing music your grandparents listen to? Are you someone who I've heard say the Academy needs to "do more rock and roll" blocks? Grab your hair spray and leather pants because this is the studio block for YOU! Get ready to rock out to the loudest, most overproduced, overblown rock songs ever made! Get ready to blow the roof off Ellington with the likes of Foo Fighters, Def Leppard, Pat Benatar, Paramore, and Bon Jovi, we have it all faster than you can put up the devil horns!

Art Offerings

Creative Writing with Hannah Smith (grades 9-12)

This studio block is a workshop in creative writing for students in 6th through 8th grade. In each class, students will free-write. They will be guided by unique writing prompts that engage their memory, imagination, or a combination. Students will be introduced to various poets, images, objects, and prose to help inspire their own writing. Students will also listen and give positive feedback about other students' writing. This course centers on the student's development of voice, growth in individual craft, and ability to unlock their creative thoughts.

COLOR! with David Kearns (grades 6-12)

There's just so much of it. Looking for color, mixing color, using color, and exploring the interaction of color. Using found color, different techniques for mixing colors with paint, light, and other means. The focus of this class will be how to have fun working with art and science of color even if you are not into drawing.

Basics of Metal Fabrication with Cyndee Fand (grades 6-12)

Students will explore fine hand-made jewelry and small metal sculpture, including shaping, cutting, piercing, punching, forming, riveting and other cold connections, finishing, and simple stone setting techniques with basic metals such as copper, brass and nickel-silver. We will spend some time discussing design and do some preliminary sketching to familiarize students with the process of design and metal fabrication.

(This will be a pre-requisite for future soldering classes.)

Health Safety: It is strongly advised against taking this class if you have sensitivity to chemicals, metals, or hand and wrist problems.

Other

Model United Nations with Alex Zendejas (grades 9-12)

The Debate and Model United Nations Club is a platform designed to foster critical thinking, public speaking skills, and global awareness among students. Whether you're passionate about diplomacy, international relations, or simply enjoy expressing your thoughts eloquently, this club is the perfect space for you. This is not a prerequisite for participating in Model UN this spring.

Grit and Glitter with Ellis Wahlstrom (grades 8 and 9)

This studio block for 8th-9th grade girls/nonbinary students will center around finding empowerment and confidence through time spent as a group and in the outdoors. We will participate in discussions on topics like feminism, gender roles, mental health, and girlhood alongside preparations for the backpacking overnight we will embark on as a group in early May. From journaling to firemaking we will practice reflective and practical skills that will lead us to a successful expedition.

Cooking with Cassandra Haffner (grades 6-8)

This cooking class will focus on recreating favorite family recipes in the Honey Bear Hut. This will allow us to sample food from rich backgrounds and cultures.

Thursday, C Block (11:00-11:50)

Music Offerings

Women Who Rock Jr. with Scott Hoffman & Vanessa Brewster (grades 6-8)

Women Who Rock Jr. celebrates the important and often underappreciated influence women have made in popular music throughout the decades and across all genres. In this class, we will represent and honor a unique and powerful community of musicians by creating and refining a performance (or two) of their work. Be prepared to try a new instrument, use your voice in a new way, and support your classmates as they do the same.

British Folk Ensemble with Max Wareham (grades 6-12)

Are you going to Scarborough Fair? / Parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme / Remember me to one who lives there / She once was a true love of mine... The 60's were a time of great cultural revolution in the U.K. Young artists, dissatisfied with the ills of modern society, decided to create their own world. With imagination typical of the psychedelic era, they looked to their own past for inspiration—a world of ancient stone structures, herbal lore and annual rituals. Bands like Pentangle and Fairport Convention unearthed old songs and breathed new life into them using whatever they had at hand—banjos, sitars, drums and more. In this ensemble, we will follow their lead and do the same.

String and Woodwind Ensemble with Liam Birkerts (grades 6-12)

The new Strings & Winds ensemble will be an opportunity for players of bowed stringed instruments and woodwinds to hone their craft, develop their ensemble skills, and play some great music in a setting where you can shine! We'll work on music arranged for this ensemble specifically, and tailored to a diverse range of experience levels. Strings & Winds will also collaborate with other bands as the 'studio orchestra' for arrangements of your favorite classic tunes.

Don't Burn Down the Disco with Nick Clark (grades 9-12)

There is a disturbing lack of boogie in the force these days at the Academy and it is this group's duty to restore groove to the universe. Ok forgive all the Star Wars references, but you need to understand the peak of Disco was from 1977-1979 so it's relevant to the block. We will be focusing on the grooviest, funkier songs and groups from that era such as Earth, Wind and Fire, the Bee Gees, Rufus, the Isley Brothers as well as icons like Chaka Khan and Nile Rodgers who kept the funk alive in the 80s.

Art Offerings

Creative Writing with Hannah Smith (grades 6-8)

This studio block is a workshop in creative writing for students in 9th through 12th grade. In each class, students will free-write. They will be guided by unique writing prompts that engage their memory, imagination, or a combination. Students will be introduced to various poets, images, objects, and prose to help inspire their own writing. Students will also listen and give positive feedback about other students' writing. This course centers on the student's development of voice, growth in individual craft, and ability to unlock their creative thoughts.

Telling Stories with Pictures . . . with David Kearns (grades 6-12)

Using drawing, collage, and painting techniques to develop stand-alone narrative pictures as well as sequential images to construct and tell stories. Perfect for students into creating characters, illustration, comics, and graphic novels.

Fantasy Threads: Unleashing Creativity in Costume Design for the Stage with Kimberly Karlin (grades 6-12)

Witness your creations come to life on stage as you enter the exciting world of costume design. We will design and create costumes for this year's drama production: Rossum's Universal Robots. From mythical creatures to futuristic heroes, students will embark on a hands-on journey, learning the intricacies of crafting costumes that transcend the ordinary and transform the stage. Unleash your imagination and develop your artistic voice as you explore various themes, time periods, and cultures. Every costume becomes a vessel for storytelling, adding depth and richness to the characters in a play. Here's your chance to experience it yourself! The first half of the semester will have the primary goal of designing, compiling, and building costumes for drama, while the second half of the semester will be a more open-ended creative project designed by the students themselves.

Other

Magic: The Gathering Testing with Jasper Butler-Kurth (grades 6-12)

In the studio block, we will be testing a set for the game Magic: The Gathering. The studio block will be a fun way to learn about the game design process by participating in it. I am looking for participants of all skill levels in the game, especially people who have never played before!

Cooking with Cassandra Haffner (grades 9-12)

This cooking class will focus on recreating favorite family recipes in the Honey Bear Hut. This will allow us to sample food from rich backgrounds and cultures.