

17 FALL CREATE CNO

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS MAGAZINE | WEBER FINE ARTS BUILDING

WEBER 25 YRS

Celebrating the 25th year of our award-winning building



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA | SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION, FINE ARTS AND MEDIA

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha

Weber Fine Arts Building | School of the Arts
6505 University Drive South | Omaha, NE 68182 | cfam.unomaha.edu/school-of-the-arts





Welcome to the College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media



The College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media (CFAM) at the University of Nebraska at Omaha is dedicated to inspiring the creative expression and cultural growth of all of our students.

We are comprised of three distinct schools in three unique facilities, the School of the Arts, the School of Communication and the School of Music, each built on a rich tradition and a diverse array of courses led by a nationally-known faculty of artists, performers, writers, and scholars.

Art and art history, communication studies, journalism and media communication, music, theatre and creative writing provide unmatched opportunities, skill development and experiences for every student in preparing them for their professional fields.

I invite you to create your future with us and learn how a degree from one of our programs can put you on a successful path. I also invite you to attend one of our many theatre and musical performances, gallery exhibitions, public readings and other events throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Hilt, Ph.D.
Interim Dean, College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media
Associate Dean and Professor of Communication
General Manager of Classical 90.7 KVNO

[cfam.unomaha.edu]

Welcome to the School of the Arts

It is my honor to introduce you to UNO's School of the Arts, located in the most distinctive architectural achievement on campus, the Weber Fine Arts Building. With programs in visual art, theatre, and creative writing, we are the creative heart of the university, dedicated to making the world a better place through critical reflection and artistic expression.

Our course of study provides rigorous professional training in combination with a broad-based education. We develop in the scholar-artist powers of observation, reflection, critical analysis and creativity. More importantly, our students come to feel a deep sense of belonging with their community, seeing the arts as a means to connect diverse ideas and people.

The Weber Fine Arts Building is itself a community of practicing artists and scholars. In just a few steps down any hallway one encounters remarkable student work in print-making, drawing, book arts, painting, graphic design, media arts, acting, directing, theatrical design, poetry, fiction, screen-writing and scholarship. Our building is an invigorating, indeed inspirational, place.

The School of the Arts gives students full access to this extraordinary range of activities and offers other compelling advantages. In addition to a comprehensive curriculum delivered by a world-class caring faculty, we also focus on occupational preparation and planning—guiding students to flourishing careers and meaningful lives. Successful professionals are frequent guests

and serve as models of excellence and personal counselors in both large and small group settings. We also teach classes in professional practices and are developing new coursework in applied entrepreneurship for artists—all designed to give our students a competitive advantage in already highly competitive fields.

Our plans for the future are guided by many dreams, large and small. We want to make our educational programs available to students of all means by replenishing scholarship funds. We want to deepen our cross-disciplinary connections in artistic works jointly created by students and faculty across all three of our programs. Conversations are afoot regarding programs in arts management, film studies, musical theatre, and the arts in health care. We envision enhancements to computer labs, and even expansion of the building itself. All this will require resources, and the support of our friends.

We look forward to continuing our efforts to nurture creative thinkers and innovators for many generations. We are thrilled to part of the UNO family, and proudly say, **"We are Mavericks...Maverick Artists"**

[cfam.unomaha.edu/school-of-the-arts]



Jack Zerbe
Director, School of the Arts
Professor of Theatre/International Studies
jzerbe@unomaha.edu

CFAMILY

SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVE SPIRIT



HISTORY

Starting in 1911, the university offered a robust program of 12 studio art classes under the tutelage of Augusta Knight. With studio art as the continuing core, the program has dramatically expanded since its founding.



ART & HISTORY

UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVE SPIRIT

ART & ART HISTORY MISSION

To educate artists, scholars and teachers by fostering visual literacy, creative expression and critical thinking through practice and research. In developing mastery of various disciplines in art, students are prepared to become leaders in their chosen careers and to make positive contributions to the world.

DEGREES

- Bachelor of Arts, Art History
- Bachelor of Arts, Studio Art
- Bachelor of Fine Arts, Studio Art

CERTIFICATES

- Bachelor of Arts, Studio Art with K-12 Certification
- Bachelor of Fine Arts, Studio Art with K-12 Certification

MINORS

- Art History
- Studio Art

#1 ART SCHOOL IN OMAHA.
TOP 15% RANKED ART SCHOOL IN NATION.

— bestartcolleges.com

ACCREDITED BY NASAD / The National Association of Schools of Art and Design

FACILITIES

Our Weber facilities include:

- art gallery
- 2 computer labs
- seminar and lecture rooms

Studio spaces for:

- painting
- art education
- graphic design
- electronic imaging
- drawing
- printmaking
- papermaking
- book arts

Ceramics and sculpture studios are located just across the street.

AREAS OF STUDY

Art Education

Art History

Book Arts

Ceramics

Drawing

Game Design

Graphic Design

Painting

Printmaking

Sculpture

Video Arts





THEATRE

UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVE SPIRIT

HISTORY

Theatre at the university started as an extracurricular activity sponsored by a dramatics club. The first production, "Hicks at College," was in 1913 on a makeshift stage in the Jacobs Gymnasium. Classes were first offered through the Speech department, and greatly expanded in the 1950s under the leadership of Dr. Edwin Clark with performances occurring in Arts and Sciences Hall's dual purpose gymnasium-auditorium. A free-standing dramatic arts department was launched in the early 80s, and renamed Theatre in 2001.



THEATRE MISSION

To offer a rigorous education and disciplined professional training that focuses on the intersection of academics and theatrical practice with collaboration as a common thread. The program ignites critical thinking, compassionate feeling and the skills required to create theatre that has the capacity to delight and engage the community.

DEGREES

- Bachelor of Arts
- Master of Arts

MINOR

- Theatre

OUR SEASONS

Four fully-mounted productions plus assorted studio work. Selections are deliberately diverse to give students the experience of working on different periods and styles of theatre.

#1 THEATRE PROGRAM IN OMAHA.
20% RANKED PROGRAM IN NATION.

— theatre-schools.com

FACILITIES

Our Weber facilities include:

- state-of-the-art multi-form Black Box theatre

Studio spaces for:

- acting
- directing
- design
- seminar rooms
- scene and costume shops
- dressing rooms
- comfortable green room

AREAS OF STUDY

Acting

Directing

Design

Stage Management

Technology

Theatre History & Scholarship

[cfam.unomaha.edu/theatre]





WRITER'S WORKSHOP

UNLEASH YOUR CREATIVE SPIRIT

HISTORY

Originally housed in the English department, creative writing became a free-standing discipline in the early 70s when Richard Duggin moved his desk, chair and bookcase into the old carriage house known as Annex 21 that used to sit west of Criss Library. With \$300 from English and a Pepsi machine whose profits helped bring in visiting writers, the Writer's Workshop became the very first creative writing BFA in the country.



WRITER'S WORKSHOP MISSION

To provide studio-based instruction from professional writers that gives students a solid grounding in craft techniques. The program develops in students the necessary skills to continue on their own, find their unique voice and fulfill their ambitions as professional writers.

THE WRITER'S WORKSHOP READING SERIES

Hosting nationally-renowned writers for on-campus public readings, book-signings and discussions on designated Wednesday evenings.

13TH FLOOR JOURNAL

A student-edited literary journal that publishes original poetry, visual art, fiction, creative nonfiction, graphic narratives and other hybrid genres.

DEGREES

- Bachelor of Fine Arts
- Master of Fine Arts

MINOR

- Creative Writing

MFA IN WRITING

An innovative low-residency program: distance learning with a professional mentor for four 16-week semesters and five 10-day face-to-face symposium style residencies at the renowned Lied Lodge and Conference Center in Nebraska City.

AREAS OF STUDY

- Creative Non-Fiction
- Fiction
- Poetry
- Playwriting (Graduate)
- Screenwriting

MEMBER OF AWP

The National Association of Writers and Writing Programs

[cfam.unomaha.edu/writersworkshop]



BEFORE WEBER

Since its birth in 1909 as the University of Omaha, the academic program at UNO has included an abiding interest in arts education. Given the manner in which the university was founded, changed locations, and expanded, for many years those programs' facilities were shoe-horned into structures originally designed for other purposes and scattered across campus, with some disciplines housed in multiple buildings. Long-time Professor of Theatre Doug Paterson remembers that "the physical program was perhaps a dream only Rube Goldberg could conceive."

BIRTH OF AN IDEA

Faculty and the administration had been musing over a new arts building with real teaching spaces since the early 1970s. The dream took a quantum leap in 1988 when during his final term State Senator Vard Johnson approached two theatre faculty members. On one occasion, he connected with Bob Welk, head of design and technology, for what was then called "Dramatic Arts," during intermission of "Two Gentlemen of Verona" in the gymnasium/theatre at Arts and Sciences Hall. He praised the performance, while saying of the venue, "This place is a dump. I want to help you with a new building." A second encounter took place at a Sunday

morning Unitarian Church coffee hour, during which Johnson approached then-Chair of Dramatic Arts Doug Paterson, and, after a few pleasantries, declared his desire to sponsor legislation to fund a new fine arts building.

The administration eagerly accepted Johnson's support and made what was perhaps the most critical decision in the project's history: to pursue a building that would house a community of creatives—art historians, studio artists and bookmakers, creative writers and theatre people of every stripe.

A committee of interested parties was formed including representatives from those programs and

the College of Fine Arts Dean's office. After visiting a regional fine arts building, the administration offered \$6 million as the proposed budget, while the faculty representatives presented a list of needs that totaled \$24 million. In the end, a compromise was reached at \$11.4 million. Ironically, in downsizing the vision, one of the first things to go was a proscenium theatre, the original raison d'être for the building. This was not going to be an extravagant structure, but one that focused entirely on student learning, and so, for a time, the committee named the proposed facility the UNO Fine Arts Educational Building.

CREATING A VISION

A call for proposals from architectural firms yielded 15-20 submissions, and from a list of four finalists, Hardy, Holzman, and Pfeiffer of New York City was selected with Malcolm Holzman, who had designed some of the most innovative arts facilities in the country, as the chief architect. Omaha's own architectural firm, Schemmer Associates, was chosen as the onsite associate architect.

In navigating the smaller vision necessitated by reduced funding, the primary goal was to create a building that declared something interesting was going on inside of it. For this project, Holzman imagined a structure of different angles and many

skins—standard as well as "clinker" bricks manufactured in local beehive kilns, Minnesota limestone, South Dakota granite, plus metal and poured concrete; the interior was similarly shaped by the use of eclectic materials. The resulting conceptual plan was designed to meet the various needs of practicing artists in an adventurous structure that harmonized with existing materials and design elements across campus—something quite different from the usual uniform rectangular brick architecture at the university and in the city.

During an approval audition with the NU Board of Regents in February 1990, a debate ensued



REALIZATION AND RECEPTION

It took two years to complete the building, which exudes creativity and invites one to explore the arts. It has an almost medieval quality to it with its pinnacled towers, the caps of which mirror the campus campanile, rusticated stone walls and curved brick spine. Like most classroom buildings, a central corridor runs down the middle, but here it is lined with windows that look into classrooms and offices that help build a sense of community, a feeling of sharing and fellowship. This allows one, upon entry, to have some sense of the life of the building and what is happening in it.

David Shrader, Dean of the College of Fine Arts from 1982-92, noted that, "The arts are out of the ordinary. At least a major component of the

arts is that you use your imagination and that you don't limit yourself to past approaches. So, it would be unusual if the arts decided to be involved in the design of a building that didn't embody the same approach." The final distinctive character was precisely what officials from the university and the College of Fine Arts were seeking when they chose the designer. Nothing about the structure could be considered anything but extraordinary.

In analyzing the building for faculty member Nick Newman's Modern Architectural History class, students invariably claim it is "post-modern," noting a slew of visual references from the medieval period all the way up to iconic modernists, and admiring the fit between the quirky design and its function as

a site for creative artists. Newman himself observes appreciatively, "the structure's lack of a single stylistic unity and its pastiche of competing aesthetics not only reflects the many creative activities inside, but radically proclaims it is a home for the arts."

Upon the announcement of Chancellor Del Weber's retirement in 1997 after twenty years of service, the decision was made to name the Fine Arts Building in honor of him and his wife Lou Ann. During his tenure, the Webers were regular attendees at arts events, but more importantly, he played a significant role in campus expansion and improvement, including the Henningson Memorial Campanile, the Durham Science Center, HPER, acquisition and development of the land west of Criss Library, which paved the way for the Weber Fine Arts Build-

ing and finally, securing the gift of seventy acres in Ak-sar-ben to make the Scott campus possible. Not surprisingly, faculty in general, and specifically in the College of Fine Arts, had a deep appreciation for Weber's years of distinguished service.

LASTING LEGACY

Twenty-five years after its debut in 1992, the Weber Fine Arts Building continues to stand as one of the region's most intriguing structures, inside of which interesting things continue to happen.

The design was modular in its approach, which helped earn it the post-modern appellation, but more importantly, allows for future wings without harming the overall look. Current occupants dream of additional classroom space, expanding the gallery,

creating a formal sculpture garden and even adding the proscenium theatre that inspired the project in the first place. The architect's vision has ensured that the structure will readily accept these additions should an angel one day step forward with funding.

When asked about his feelings on this exquisite structure so long after its creation, Holzman said, "I'm so pleased that the building is being well-used. In creating public buildings, longevity is an important part of the design. I think about it as a hundred-year project."

What will the next 75 years hold?

One can only imagine...





Lisa Fay Coutley
Writer's Workshop



Adrian Duran
Art & Art History



Jenna Lucas Finn
Writer's Workshop



D. Scott Glasser
Theatre



Amy Haney
Art & Art History



David Helm
Art & Art History



Grant Hilgenkamp
Theatre



Jeremy Johnson
Art & Art History



Robbie Jones
Theatre



Susan Kurtz
Staff



Steve Langan
Writer's Workshop



Tom Lowe
Staff



Lilly Lu
Art & Art History



Ashley McFeely
Art & Art History



Anna Monardo
Writer's Workshop



Amy Morris
Art & Art History



Nick Newman
Art & Art History



Russell Nordman
Art & Art History



Bonnie O'Connell
Art & Art History



Howard Paine
Art & Art History



Doug Paterson
Theatre



Bridget Sandhoff
Art & Art History



Lisa Sandlin
Writer's Workshop



Luke Severson
Art & Art History



Barbara Simcoe
Art & Art History



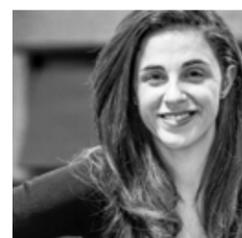
Valerie St. Pierre-Smith
Theatre



Megan Timanus
Art & Art History



Miles Waggener
Writer's Workshop



Lauren White
Theatre



Brett Williams
Writer's Workshop



Steven Williams
Theatre



Charleen Willoughby
Theatre



Jave Yoshimoto
Art & Art History



Jack Zerbe
Theatre

NOT PICTURED

Kenneth Be' / Art & Art History | Cindy Melby Phaneuf / Theatre

PART-TIME FACULTY

ART & ART HISTORY

Byron Anway
Denise Brady
Jennifer Bockelman
Jody Boyer
Alexandra Cardon
Adam Casey
Peter Fankhauser
Erin Foley
Camille Hawbaker
Joshua Johnson
Joe Pankowski
James Sewing
Colin Smith
Jackie Spackman
Bart Vargas
Esther Ward

THEATRE

Denise Chapman
Maire Creegan
Charlene Donaghy
Matt Gutschick
Mark Hoeger
Shea Saladee
Doran Schmidt

WRITER'S WORKSHOP

Emily Borgmann
Cat Dixon
M. Michele Phillips
Ted Wheeler
David Ravenberg
Frank Shimerdla
Todd Robinson

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We'd enjoy showing you more with a visit or answer questions. Email: cfam@unomaha.edu Visit: cfam.unomaha.edu/school-of-the-arts

MAVERICK
ARTISTS

CREATEUNO17

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