

San Francisco Art Institute – Fort Mason

Building Fact Sheet



San Francisco Art Institute's (SFAI) stunning campus at Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture (FMCAC) in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area is a 67,000 square foot renovated pier, originally an embarkation point for WWII's Pacific theater, with spectacular views over the San Francisco Bay.

Designed by Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects (LMSA), recipients of the American Institute of Architect's 2017 Architecture Firm Award, the new site at the prow of the city represents the largest development effort by SFAI since the opening of its landmark Paffard Keatinge-Clay addition in Russian Hill in 1969. The new campus joins the historic Chestnut Street campus to radically advance SFAI's commitment to positioning artists at the center of public life in the Bay Area and globally.

Studios and Educational Spaces

San Francisco Art Institute – Fort Mason is the new home for over 160 art studios for students, faculty, and visiting artists. This facility replaces rented studios in the Dogpatch neighborhood, which SFAI had occupied since 2002.

Studios

Individual artist studios (150 square feet each) are grouped in suites of six to encourage a sense of community amongst artists and invite collaboration.

Artists working in the facility include:

- Graduate students (Master of Fine Arts, MFA/MA Dual Degree, and post-baccalaureate)
- Undergraduate painting students and Honors Studio recipients
- SFAI's Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD) Teaching Fellows. This fellowship program provides professional practice opportunities to high-achieving recent alumni from AICAD member schools, aimed at increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of faculty and valuing diversity as central to excellence in art and design education.
- Several tenure-track faculty members
- Artists-in-residence including Harker Award recipients Michael Jones McKean and Postcommodity
- Master of Arts students have a collaborative work space on the historic mezzanine

Amenities

- Woodshop and fabrication facility, featuring woodworking equipment and spray booth
- Two seminar rooms (one with a direct view of the Golden Gate Bridge), used for classes and as meeting spaces
- Four installation rooms, controllable for light/sound, in which students can present installations, performances, and other work for critique
- Digital media suite
- Student lounge on the mezzanine, overlooking the full scope of the facility
- Gender-neutral bathrooms (multi-stall and single-stall)

Exhibitions and Public Programs Spaces

San Francisco Art Institute – Fort Mason offers 4,300 square feet of new public exhibition space, open to the public and free of charge.

Atrium Gallery

This 2,052 square-foot flagship exhibition space with 24-foot-high walls anchoring the front of the pier will host an array of site-responsive, curated and commissioned projects. It is open to the full height of the historic pier shed.

Swell Gallery

The 1,187 square-foot Swell Gallery is a graduate student–run art space with bi-weekly Friday night receptions open to the public. The gallery is dedicated to the examination of the role of the gallery in an educational sphere, showcasing varying artistic perspectives from the student body.

Grey Box

The 1,060 square-foot Grey Box media theater is an installation, film/video and performance space outfitted for maximum flexibility. It can provide both intimate viewing experiences or open up to the atrium space through sliding glass doors.

Mural Wall

A large central mural wall at the heart of the building will host long-term rotating artist commissions. The first, by alumna and faculty member Alicia McCarthy, was completed August 21, 2017 to mark the building’s opening and will be on view through 2019. The mural wall measures 15 feet, 6 inches on each side.

Amphitheater

The wide staircase at the north end of the building doubles as amphitheater seating, with a raised platform at the base ideal for presenting informal lectures and group events.

Flex Space

The 30-foot-wide central corridor, lined by hangable walls across both levels, provides ample space for students to work on large-scale projects, convene for critiques, and display new work direct from their studios.

Historic Preservation and Sustainability Upgrades

SFAI's transformation is the final phase of a major, \$50 million historic rehabilitation of the pier accomplished over the last decade.

The pier shed was originally built in 1912 and had deteriorated over the decades. In 2007, the National Park Service seismically upgraded the pier substructure. Fort Mason Center then worked with LMSA on a rehabilitation of the pier shed, including roof replacement, steel column repair, new concrete flooring, new windows, and energy efficiency upgrades, which was completed in 2014.

Construction began June 2016 and was completed in August 2017.

The renovations incorporated a variety of sustainability strategies, including installation of a 255-kilowatt photovoltaic (PV) solar panel array — the largest on any National Park Service building — that meets up to 85 percent of the building's electricity needs, an economical heating/cooling system that incorporates cool bay air, radiant-floor heating, enhanced building insulation, and high-efficiency lighting.

Both phases of the project were supported by the Federal Historic Preservation Tax incentives program, and completed in strict conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

The Crossing

The new floor installed during the building renovation contains darker concrete to indicate the location of historic train tracks, which were used by the army during the period the pier was active as a port of embarkation. The tracks converge in an "X" at the center of the building, above which a diagonal bridge crosses the mezzanine.

San Francisco Art Institute – Fort Mason Public Programming Highlights



San Francisco Art Institute is an institution marked by a radical history and an urgent present — and the addition of this Fort Mason campus signals SFAI’s belief and commitment to positioning artists at the center of public life in the Bay Area and globally.

SFAI’s Fort Mason campus will serve as both an educational facility and an innovative, hybrid institution that, architecturally and programmatically, integrates higher education in contemporary art with civic engagement; cultivates intimate experiences with the creative process; and creates a magnetic cultural destination.

In its inaugural year, the new campus will launch the following public events and projects:

Opening Celebration

The free Opening Celebration takes place Friday, November 10, 2017 from 6-9pm and Saturday, November 11, 2017 from 12-5pm and features:

- A site-responsive exhibition of work by more than a dozen artists—SFAI alumni, faculty, and affiliated artists—in the new galleries, throughout, and beyond the building
- A new large-scale mural commission by SFAI alumna Alicia McCarthy (BFA 1994)
- Unveiling and activation of newly commissioned projects and installations
- Open Studios, offering a chance to see the work of over 160 emerging artists
- A special edition of SFAI’s annual Concentrate: a family friendly exhibition and festival that gives visitors the opportunity to purchase student artworks and participate in a host of art-related activities at both SFAI campuses

Artist Commissions

Over the next year, SFAI’s Fort Mason campus will be home to a series of newly commissioned temporary public projects, developed in partnership between SFAI and THE OTHER THING (a creative studio formed in 2013 as an offshoot of THE THING Quarterly), designed to activate the public realm in, around, and beyond the building.

The first of these will be on view this fall and include a new large-scale mural commission by SFAI alumna Alicia McCarthy, whose work is currently featured in the 2017 SECA Award exhibition at SFMOMA. *You are here*, an outdoor installation referencing the red arrow found on maps to describe your location, by art collective Sans façon, will be on view in the fall leading to SFAI's Opening Celebration on November 10 and 11. Sans façon's work is a small-blimp-sized inflatable that will fly above the pier building and the campus as a beacon for SFAI's new site.

Additional commission and projects in this series will be announced over the coming months.

Exhibitions and Residencies

Alongside the Walter and McBean Galleries at the historic Chestnut campus, San Francisco Art Institute – Fort Mason's exhibitions and public programs provide direct and free access to artists and ideas that advance our culture. The galleries at both campuses will together serve as a laboratory for innovative and adventurous projects and commission new work from emerging and established artists.

The inaugural exhibition in the Atrium Gallery advocates for the role that artists play within public life and highlights SFAI alumni, faculty, and affiliated artists who have contributed to the historically charged dynamic between artists, SFAI, and the public realm. This exhibition features over a dozen participating artists and will be on view through Spring 2018.

The Swell Gallery is a graduate student-run art space with free, bi-weekly Friday night receptions open to the public and is dedicated to the examination of the role of the gallery in an educational sphere, showcasing varying artistic perspectives from the student body.

The Grey Box media theater is an installation, film/video, and performance space and will feature year-round programming as well.

Harker Award Artists-in-Residence

Integral to SFAI's programming strategy at the Fort Mason campus is The Harker Award for Interdisciplinary Studies, which supports annual artists-in-residence. The Harker Award was established through a generous bequest by artist and SFAI faculty member Ann Chamberlain and is administered by the San Francisco Foundation. Past recipients are Alejandro Almanza Pereda and Katrín Sigurdardóttir (BFA 1990).

Fall 2017: Michael Jones McKean

Michael Jones McKean is the 2017-18 Harker Award resident and will be in residence at Fort Mason in Fall 2017, leading to an initial exhibition in Spring 2018 within the public galleries at Fort Mason. This exhibition is both an outgrowth of the residency and an initial unveiling of McKean and SFAI's long-term effort to realize *The Rainbow* — a permanent, ambitious, and transformative public work at SFAI's campus and throughout Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture. The project is being developed in partnership with FMCAC.

Spring 2018: Postcommodity

During their 2018-19 residency, the indigenous interdisciplinary artist collective Postcommodity will create a music composition informed by data generated from the sinking and tilting luxury San Francisco condominium skyscraper Millennium Tower. The composition will be housed within a purpose-built acoustic architectural space at SFAI's new facility. Opening to the public in late 2018-early 2019, *The Point of Final Collapse* will conclude when the tower is stabilized through interventionist engineering, or it is purposefully demolished, or it collapses from lack of appropriate intervention.

San Francisco Art Institute

Organizational Overview



Founded in 1871, San Francisco Art Institute (SFAI) is the oldest art institution west of the Mississippi and the sole remaining institution of higher education in the United States dedicated exclusively to contemporary art.

SFAI is dedicated to the intrinsic value of art and its vital role in shaping and enriching society and the individual. As a diverse community of working artists and scholars, SFAI provides students with a rigorous education in the arts and preparation for a life in the arts through an immersive studio environment, an integrated liberal arts and art history curriculum, and critical engagement with the world. Committed to educating artists who will shape the future of art, culture, and society, SFAI fosters creativity and original thinking in an open, experimental, and interdisciplinary environment.

SFAI strongly believes that a rigorous artistic and intellectual community is enriched by diversity and inclusion. SFAI promotes artistic and intellectual freedom by fostering environments that value diverse students, faculty, and staff and provide all community members with a respectful and challenging space in which to address divergent opinions and ideas.

History

Founded in 1871 by artists, scholars, and community leaders who possessed a cultural vision for the West, SFAI has produced generations of creative leaders who have profoundly shaped the cultural life of the Bay Area, United States, and world. Artists at SFAI have been at the vanguard of the most important art movements of the last century, including fine art photography, the Beat movement, Abstract Expressionism, Bay Area Figuration, Funk art, avant-garde film, Conceptualism, video and performance art, and social practice, and continue to investigate and further define contemporary art and the role of artists in today's society.

The institution boasts scores of notable past faculty and alumni — a raucous band of outsiders and instigators who also happen to be some of the biggest names in art and culture: Lance Acord, Ansel Adams, Jonathan Crary, Aziz + Cucher, Lewis Baltz, Devendra Banhart, Bill Berkson, Kathryn Bigelow, Elmer Bischoff, Gutzon Borglum, Stan Brakhage, Joan Brown, Iona Rozeal Brown, Jerome Caja, Enrique Chagoya, Bruce Conner, Imogen Cunningham, Angela Davis, Jay DeFeo, members of DIS, Richard Diebenkorn, Kota Ezawa, Geoffrey Farmer, Karen Finley, Howard Fried, Jerry Garcia, Robert Graham, Don Ed Hardy, Michael Heizer, David Ireland, Sargent Claude Johnson, Spike Jonze, Rachel Khedoori, Toba Khedoori, Laura Kipnis, Paul Kos, George Kuchar, Annie Leibovitz, Sharon Lockhart, Liza Lou, Courtney Love, Mike Mandel, Paul McCarthy, Barry McGee, Bruce Nauman, Manuel Neri, Catherine Opie, David

Park, Peter Pau, Mark Pauline, Paul Pfeiffer, Laura Poitras, Man Ray, Phil Ross, Jason Rhoades, Rigo 23, Mark Rothko, Peter Saul, Larry Sultan, Clyfford Still, Scott Trattner, Kehinde Wiley, and William Wiley, to name but a few.

Since 1926, SFAI's main campus has been located at 800 Chestnut Street in Russian Hill, in a building designed by Bakewell & Brown that incorporates elements of both Italian and Spanish colonial styles. It features a 1931 fresco painted by Diego Rivera, and murals throughout the building by other prominent artists of the period. In 1969, SFAI opened a striking Corbusian concrete addition designed by architect Paffard Keatinge-Clay, which added the Emanuel Walter and Atholl McBean Galleries, a café, and a lecture hall with a roof-top amphitheater.

From 2002-2017, SFAI operated a graduate center in an industrial building in the Dogpatch neighborhood of San Francisco.

In Fall 2017, SFAI opens a new campus at Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture, transforming Pier 2 into a dynamic hub of artist studios and public engagement.

Programs

SFAI offers undergraduate and graduate degrees, a post-baccalaureate certificate, and a range of exhibitions, public programs, and public education courses.

Degree Programs

SFAI's innovative and interdisciplinary curriculum is informed by a strong tradition of rigorous studio work and research in all the visual arts. Balanced with that tradition is an equally strong emphasis on critical analysis, openness to ideas, support for individual perspective, and the teaching of artistic and cultural traditions beyond the Western model.

Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA)

- Art and Technology
- Film
- New Genres
- Painting
- Photography
- Printmaking
- Sculpture

Bachelor of Arts (BA)

- History and Theory of Contemporary Art

Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Studio Art

Optional emphases:

Art and Technology

Film

New Genres

Painting

Photography

Printmaking

Sculpture

Master of Arts (MA)

History and Theory of Contemporary Art

Exhibition and Museum Studies

Dual Degree MA/MFA

History and Theory of Contemporary Art (MA) / Studio Art (MFA)

Exhibition and Museum Studies (MA) / Studio Art (MFA)

Low-Residency MFA in Studio Art

Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Studio Art

Exhibitions and Public Programs

SFAI's Exhibitions and Public Programs provide direct access to artists and ideas that advance our culture. The galleries at both campuses together serve as a laboratory for innovative and adventurous projects and commission new work from emerging and established artists. Last year, exhibitions and public programs drew more than 50,000 visitors and participants. All exhibitions and lectures are free and open to the public.

Galleries/Exhibition Spaces

- *Walter and McBean Galleries* (Chestnut Street campus): The Walter and McBean Galleries present several exhibitions per year and commission new works from emerging and established artists. Recent featured artists include Leslie Shows, Alejandro Almanza Pereda, Doug Hall, M. Lamar, Javier Tellez, Francis Cape, Jill Magid, Mariana Castillo Deball, Mel Ziegler, and Katrín Sigurdardóttir.
- *Diego Rivera Gallery* (Chestnut Street campus): Weekly exhibitions in this student-directed gallery showcase new works by BFA, MFA, and post-baccalaureate artists side-by-side with Diego Rivera's 1931 mural, *The Making of a Fresco Showing the Building of a City*.

- *Atrium Gallery* (Fort Mason campus): This new gallery is a flagship exhibition space anchoring the front of the pier that will host an array of site-responsive, curated and commissioned projects.
- *Grey Box* (Fort Mason campus): The Grey Box is a dedicated installation, film/video and performance space.
- *Swell Gallery* (Fort Mason campus): The Swell Gallery is a student-directed space for graduate students to curate and present their work.

Lecture Series

The Visiting Artists and Scholars Lecture Series and the Graduate Lecture Series spotlight dozens of artists, curators, critics, and historians each year, providing students and the general public direct exposure to pioneering figures in international contemporary art and culture. Recent speakers have included: Tania Bruguera, Mel Chin, Karen Finley, Donna Haraway, Trenton Doyle Hancock, Alfredo Jaar, Brad Kahlhamer, Nina Katchadourian, Lucy Lippard, Takeshi Murata, Ron Nagle, Narcissister, Peter Plagens, Postcommodity, Carolee Schneemann, Mickalene Thomas, Paul Sietsema, and Rikrit Tiravanija, among many others.

Public and Youth Education

SFAI's Public and Youth Education Programs develop meaningful interactions between artists, students, and audiences, and serve over 700 community members annually. Programs include:

- *City Studio, participant ages 11-19*: City Studio provides free arts instruction to more than 150 youth from underserved communities in satellite locations throughout San Francisco and Oakland, in partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs and other community organizations.
- *Youth Artist Program, participant ages 13-15*: A summer-intensive program for youth that offers a focused and fun environment for exploring new techniques and developing artistic expertise in photography, drawing, and painting.
- *PreCollege Program, participant ages 16-18*: The PreCollege Program is a four-week, four-college-credit course of study in the arts that connects participants to renowned professional artists who help young artists build skills and develop their portfolios
- *Public Education, participant ages 18 and up*: Invites artists and creative individuals to join non-credit evening and weekend courses.