

**SCHOOLS OF
VISUAL ARTS**

The Royal Danish
Academy of Art

The Individual and The Community

Strategy for The Royal Danish Academy
of Fine Arts, the Schools of Visual Arts and
Kunsthall Charlottenborg

2015–2018



1. Mission and Vision

Mission

The mission of The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts and Kunsthall Charlottenborg is:

- *To offer BA and MFA study programmes on art, art theory and art interpretation and learning*
- *To carry out artistic research and academic research on art and art theory in collaboration with relevant players and to the highest international level*
- *To provide genuine insight into contemporary art and art education and to support awareness of the many forms taken by contemporary art in Denmark and abroad.*
- *To arrange exhibitions at the exhibition venue located in Charlottenborg Castle*

Together, the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts and Kunsthall Charlottenborg constitute a single state-operated cultural and educational establishment. Through study programmes, research and learning activities it promote the continual development of studies of art that give rise to new insights and new information about art, its techniques and its contexts.

Key tasks include offering bachelor and master study programmes as well as supervision for PhD fellows. The study programmes must provide students with relevant, up-to-date insights while also supporting the development of each student's artistic practice in co-operation with professors and fellow students. Graduates must be able to sustain their own artistic practice, carry out independent artistic work and enter into collaboration with others.

The institution must also promote awareness and knowledge about contemporary art among the general public. This is done through the exhibitions presented at Kunsthall Charlottenborg as well as through the various activities staged at the Schools of Visual Arts.

Vision

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Art and Kunsthall Charlottenborg will take steps to strengthen its position internally and externally, clearly defining itself as an important European institution for education, research and exhibition activities within the field of contemporary art – all based on innovation and originality.

The Academy of Fine Arts will evolve as a national and international platform for the production and presentation of contemporary art, adding value to society through explorative, experimental and theoretically well-founded artistic work and presentation work conducted at an international level.

2. The Aesthetics of the Age

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts is a venerable institution, but at the same time it must always renew and reinvent itself to reflect its current times. Few fields are as changeable as that of art, where artists look towards new horizons in their endeavours to find their own voice – and to give voice to the times in which they live. Art absorbs and transforms impressions, giving rise to all manner of aesthetic modes of expression. Hence it is important to continually develop and evolve art education so that the starting point for artistic creation is always vibrant and in keeping with the aesthetic and social consciousness of its era. The academy must create a motivating, stimulating platform for the students' growth as artists and serve as a springboard for the unfettered development and realization of ideas.

Art has been created at Charlottenborg Palace for 260 years. This centuries-long history has seen many changes and many movements: from the Golden Age to the avant-garde, from Modernism to Postmodernism. The old walls still form the backdrop for all kinds of innovation. Even though the palace is steeped in tradition with its royal pedigree and venerable professorial chairs, The Schools of Visual Arts are now a space where creativity and innovation take centre stage.

This is a place that encompasses all the prevalent values of the age, for better or worse: innovation, creativity, personal growth, independence, self-governance, self-reflection and reflection, independence, freedom, individuality and competitiveness.

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These values are crucial aspects of any fine arts education, and at the same time they require considerable skills, talent and the ability to stand confidently alone.

Art is always changing, always in a state of flux. The academy must embrace the ongoing changes in order to remain attractive to applicants and students; it must be able to accommodate the ceaseless mutability of art.

The academy must be a flexible institution that is capable of quickly incorporating change in its study programmes while still retaining its long experience and continuity. Doing so requires a flexible organisation, flexible study programmes and strong communication skills.

3. Between the local and the global

Today, art operates in a global context. International sources of influence and international circulation are basic conditions of contemporary art today. Yet the fact of being anchored in a national context remains important. The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts contribute actively to the Danish art scene, but they prepare their students for careers on the Danish and international art scenes alike.

The international dimension is crucial to ensure a sustainable future for artists. Hence, all efforts must take into account local and global concerns. The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts see themselves as a national cultural institution with an international reach, but also as an international school.

The institution must develop and strengthen its international collaboration, thereby establishing itself firmly on the Danish art scene and on the international education scene. The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts must be seen as a distinctive place of education characterized by the highest quality.



4. Fine Arts Education

Fine arts education is a type of education that is aimed directly at individuals, as is evident in its one-to-one tutorials and its focus on personal development. Nevertheless, collective and community aspects remain crucial factors – while studying and for graduate artists. A sense of community is required in order to have a strong art scene. Accordingly, the individual and the community are both important focal points for fine art education. Over the course of the next four years, the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts will merge the highly individualized practices with efforts to build strong collective communities. The strategy encompasses a wide range of initiatives, beginning with reorganizing the school structure and the study programme structure.

Reorganizing the school structure

The main objective behind reorganizing the structure is to create a greater sense of community at the academy and to ensure that responsibilities and decision processes are clearly defined. This applies to the academy as an institution, to the academic staff, and to the students. At present the academy has a highly fragmented structure, with very small collective units and teaching that focuses on individual tuition.

The current structure is based on the schools: Basic Studies, the Schools of Visual Arts (each headed by a professor), and the School of Art, Art Theory and Learning (Skolen for Billedkunst, Kunstteori og Formidling). The organization also includes a range of specialist workshops (laboratories) where students can work with specific techniques and materials. The Basic Studies programme offers introductory courses, whereas the Schools of Visual Arts and the School of Art, Art Theory and Learning specialize in specific disciplines. The laboratories echo and support these specialist fields.

The specialized disciplines are important; they define the School of Visual Arts as a place of education. The strategy for the next four years aims to define a new structure that remains based on such specialization, but also takes collective learning into account. The study programme structure will also be changed; and both activities will take into account issues of quality assurance and accreditation. The objective is to create larger collective units/communities where knowledge can be shared in mutually enriching ways while still preserving the specialist disciplines at the schools.

Study programme structure

The study programmes at the academy take their starting point in each individual student, with one-to-one tutorials as a focal point. Such tutorials are an inherent feature of this type of education, which aims to help student develop their own product: works of art. Now, individual tutorials will be supplemented by collective classes for larger groups where such a method is feasible. The study programme structure will undergo certain changes to facilitate the combination of individual tutorials and collective instruction. Greater transparency and a wider scope in planning will create better – and more – teaching for students. At the same time steps will be taken to ensure that the teaching is based on research; this will coincide with efforts aimed at quality assurance and accreditation.

Artistic research and academic research

Artistic research (kunstnerisk udviklingsarbejde (KUV)) and academic research will receive particular emphasis in future, thereby enhancing the entire basis for learning at the academy. Academic and artistic research is already being carried out at the academy, but now a separate research unit will be set up.

This unit will form the basis for raising the academy's profile as a place of research; it will act independently and support the various artistic research projects undertaken.

The new unit will also be responsible for preparing a research strategy.

Greater cohesion within the field is a major objective. For example, the academy aims to set up a PhD programme similar to the ones found at other Nordic art academies, and it wishes to facilitate a creative, independent research scene. In future, collaboration and partnerships with other institutions – whether academic or artistic – will support the dissemination of artistic research and the results of that research.

5. The academy as a cultural institution

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts has been a key cultural institution and a focal point of Danish art history and cultural history ever since it was founded, and it will remain so.

Bringing art out into the community is a key concern for the academy. This means that it is important to raise the institution's profile as a cultural institution and as a

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place of fine art education – on a national and international level – thereby calling attention to the contributions that the Schools of Visual Arts and Kunsthall Charlottenborg make to Danish society as such.

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts wishes to share its knowledge of art with audiences that reach far beyond the art scene itself; it wants to show the art created and the exhibitions produced at the gallery. Contemporary art must be visible and relevant to society, allowing everyone to see how artists contribute to society by generating value and cultural capital.

Art performs an important function in Danish society and contributes to producing a sense of cultural identity. The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts' Schools of Visual Arts has a special responsibility for raising awareness of art's function, of the academy's teaching and contributions to the wider world, and of fine art education in Denmark in general.

The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts must reflect and reaffirm its position in Danish society, make its position manifestly clear and give voice to the need for art in society. Society needs art as a space for reflection and insight.

6. Kunsthall Charlottenborg as a cultural institution

The Schools of Visual Arts run Kunsthall Charlottenborg as a separate function. Kunsthall Charlottenborg will be an exhibition venue and a place where Danish and international contemporary art can meet. A definite framework for the activities of Kunsthall Charlottenborg will be defined in the years to come; this overall framework will focus on contemporary art (from Denmark and abroad), on attracting wider audiences and on setting and keeping to realistic budgets. Emphasis will be placed on communication/interpretation and learning activities, on expanding the audience demographic, and on increasing the revenues generated through fundraising and ticket sales.

