The Program

Pratt Institute’s MFA in Photography is a two-year (four-semester) terminal degree program. We welcome advanced applicants with interests in contemporary art practices—of all varieties—that rely heavily on the role of photographic imagery and imaging. This can include artists who use lens-based cameras; photosensitive materials and/or sensors; re-photography, aggregation, and quotation; and all approaches that fall under the umbrella of the photographic—including research and critical positions with relation to the histories and practices of photography, both still and moving.

Our pedagogy encompasses both lens- and print-based technologies alongside the history and context for the making of photographic images, objects, and installations in the 21st century. Fluency in the language and currency of images in our cultural and media landscapes is a core value of our program. In addition to courses in photographic and interdisciplinary practice, each student in the program works independently in their own studio and in shared production facilities.
The Curriculum

The 60-credit curriculum includes a wide variety of core and elective studio courses, along with a complement of liberal arts offerings geared toward artists. The core curriculum in Photography is largely shared with the MFA in the Fine Arts Department and includes the following required courses: Studio Practice and Context, Thesis, and Graduate Symposium.

For photography majors, the curriculum includes Acts of Recognition, a seminar that introduces perspectives on art, ethics, visual culture, race, and equity. This required course addresses the relationship between photography and lens-based media and the politics of representation through art history, cultural studies, critical race theory, gender studies, and queer studies.

The students’ studio experience is augmented by the Visiting Artists Lecture Series and the Pratt Photography Lectures, which together bring approximately 12 relevant artists and scholars to campus per year for talks and studio visits.

In addition, students participate in periodic and constructive interdisciplinary reviews: Survey in their second semester, Public Critique in their third, and Preview in their final semester. During the course of the program, there are robust opportunities for individual studio visits with visiting artists, critics, curators, and writers, as well as exhibition and open studio opportunities here in Brooklyn.

Each student mounts a capstone solo thesis exhibition on campus during their final semester in the program.

The Facilities

In addition to individual, 160-square foot private studios, graduate students in Photography utilize state-of-the-art facilities and equipment to help them produce a variety of photographic works.

Faculty and Visiting Artists

Core MFA Photography faculty currently include Program Director Sara Greenberger Rafferty; Allen Frame, and Ann M. Mandelbaum. Affiliated faculty include Chair of Photography Shannon Ebner, Farah Al Qasimi, James Costanzo, Patrice Helmar, Stephen Hilger, John Lehr, Malika Pollack, Aura Rosenberg, Carrie Schneider, Carla Shapiro, and Anna Shteynshlyuger. In addition to Fine Arts and Photography faculty teaching core and elective classes throughout the interdisciplinary program.


Admission Requirements

Applicants for admission to the MFA degree program in Photography must have an undergraduate degree from an accredited U.S. college, university, or art/design school, or the equivalent degree from a recognized international institution. It is not required that applicants have majored in studio art or photography as undergraduates, only that they demonstrate the maturity, preparation, and readiness for the intensity and challenges of graduate study.

International Applicants

The minimum required TOEFL score is 79 (internet) and the required IELTS score is 6.5.

Application Guidelines

The MFA Admissions Committee is looking for work that demonstrates the applicant’s aesthetic and conceptual development and potential for successful growth over the two years of the program. We value depth over breadth in graduate applicants.

The Fine Arts and Photography Departments are committed to creating a graduate community of artists from many different backgrounds and cultural heritages that is reflective of the city and the world in which we live.

In addition to Pratt’s general graduate admission requirements, applicants to the Photography MFA program are required to upload the following materials to pratt.slideroom.com:

• A portfolio of 20 well-selected images (including detail views) of works made in the last 2–3 years

Information for each image, including the work’s title, dimensions, materials used, and date of completion (please do not include information about work in the image file, save that for caption field)

Campus Visits

The Photography Department welcomes visitors to Pratt at any time during the academic year. Interested applicants should contact Anna Collette, Program Liaison, at gradphoto@pratt.edu to schedule an appointment and tour the facilities and studios.

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Cover Image: Cougar Vigil, MFA ‘18, (detail)

To learn more about the program, schedule a visit, or apply, please visit: www.pratt.edu/gradphoto

Request a catalog online at: www.pratt.edu/request

Contact us
718-687-5372
gradphoto@pratt.edu