

# SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

## Application Process / Portfolio Preparation Guidelines

Many students join ArtWorks specifically because they are interested in auditioning to attend School of The Arts. Some who attend develop an interest in auditioning because of their experience in our program. We are often asked by parents to assist their child with preparation of the 3 components required in the application process; 1) the Visual Arts Portfolio, 2) a letter of recommendation, and 3) the audition. We are more than happy to work with students toward these goals, provided that we have ample time to do so.

SOTA views its program as pre-professional training and is looking for a high level of self-motivation and commitment on the part of applicants. They want to see students who are focused, responsible, disciplined and able to work independently. Student work should reflect both strong observational skills and personal expression. Artistically they want to see originality and individual creativity expressed in strong artistic choices, and bold use of light, shape and color.

Portfolio preparation for the School of the Arts audition is an intensive and time-consuming process. It is extremely competitive and requires a great deal of dedication as well as personal time, working independently. SOTA's portfolio requirements are always very specific. All pieces submitted for the Visual Art Portfolio must be rendered FROM LIFE. Because of this, much of the work that students create in the ArtWorks Foundations Program cannot be included in the portfolio. We have seen that it is advantageous to submit a wide variety of mediums and styles, and to include both 2 and 3-dimensional work if possible, as well as a sketchbook and self-directed projects. The portfolio can include pieces from formal programs such as ArtWorks as well as work from other art classes, and also evidence of independent pursuit of artistic development. It is important that all the work submitted be of a consistent quality.

The most recent portfolio requirements involve submitting portraiture, landscape and still life, ALL FROM LIFE, in both color and black and white. They require that 3-4 mediums be represented and 12-15 total pieces be submitted, as well as a sketchbook. Completing this volume of work at the level of finish that they expect is a huge challenge. That is why it is so vital that students begin to prepare as early as possible.

As part of the application process students are required to "audition". Visual Arts students will be scheduled for a group drawing session where they will draw both still life objects and a clothed figure, uninstructed, while the selection committee observes them. They will also be interviewed by a panel of staff and upper level students, and will be expected to talk about their work. The third component of this process is submitting applications, transcripts and letters of recommendation by specific deadline dates. We are happy to write letters of recommendation provided we have ample time to work with students and feel that we can assess both their level of development and their potential.

**\*\*\*\*\***If you have a student who is planning to apply to School of The Arts, it is imperative that you notify his/her teacher **as soon as possible and at least 1 year PRIOR to his or her audition.**

Auditions are scheduled months in advance for the first week of January for students who will be attending high school the following September of that year. The portfolios are due approximately 1 month prior to the auditions (mid-December for 1<sup>st</sup> auditions in January). If your child is planning to apply to SOTA please notify his or her teacher at least **by January of the year prior to the week of auditions.**

**Please contact SOTA early, to verify all application deadlines, as well as updated portfolio requirements and timing for scheduling auditions.** If you have any questions that we can assist with, please speak with an instructor or feel free to contact us in the office at 759.5757.