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# Fine Arts

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Salt Lake Community College | General Education

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## Fine Arts (FA) at SLCC:

Film, Dance, Music, Theatre, Photography, Digital Media, Drawing, Painting, Metalwork, Calligraphy, Printmaking, and Interior Design.

## The Applicability of the Arts

Many people fail to realize that science and engineering are highly creative fields. Creativity underlies the ability to design a polished experiment or write an elegant software program. Innovative, out-of-the-box thinking is also highly desired in the business world.

Beyond simply being useful in your career, facility with the arts and the ability to appreciate aesthetic standards enrich your engagement with our world, because it is filled with our sculpture, pottery, paintings, music, dance, and jewelry.



Rob Adamson, by permission—*Salt Lake City Nocturne*

## Inquiry in the Fine Arts

Courses in the fine arts help you **think like an artist** and **connect the arts with our broader society**. Each Fine Arts general education course may have a different subject—e.g., drawing, film, printmaking, or photography—but they all have a foundational interest in helping you go beyond mere technique to broader understanding and appreciation.

To think like an artist is to **think outside the box**—to think unconventionally and to approach projects from a perspective that differs from how you approached them before. This is not easy, but it's important to set aside our usual mental routines and try something unprecedented. Artists ask: What are the possibilities? What interesting combinations can we make? How can we take a new angle with established technique to bring about something the world has never before seen? How can we develop a novel or unorthodox approach to this project?

## What Do You Think?

Steve Jobs, one of the co-founders of Apple Computer, once said the following:

*Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things. And the reason they were able to do that was that they've had more experiences or they have thought more about their experiences than other people. Unfortunately, that's too rare a commodity. A lot of people in our industry haven't had very diverse experiences. So they don't have enough dots to connect, and they end up with very linear solutions without a broad perspective on the problem. The broader one's understanding of the human experience, the better design we will have.*

1. How does having broad experiences help one be creative?
2. In what ways is "connecting things" creative?
3. How might having "diverse experiences" and understanding the creative process help you in your career?

In order to be adept in the arts, we need to go beyond just mastering technique. We need to figure out how to generate ideas, perceive in new ways, and motivate ourselves to risk. Artists don't give up easily, and they have a **knack for suspending judgment** of their own work long enough for a new approach to come to fruition.

In the fine arts, **creative thinking** is a companion to critical thinking and a precursor to creative expression. Critical and creative thinking share a penchant for generating ideas, close attention to detail, and careful analysis. The creativity with which we approach a fine arts project is essentially the same that we would use to write an English paper or make an argument in the social sciences.

Finally, we are also concerned in fine arts that we understand two important things: One is the **aesthetic standards** by which we make critical and creative judgments in a particular artistic modality. The second is **how various forms of artistic expression depict and express the human condition**. In this way, the fine arts and humanities connect in their exploration of what it means to be human.



Radagast, Creative Commons—Louise Bourgeois' *Maman* in Ottawa