

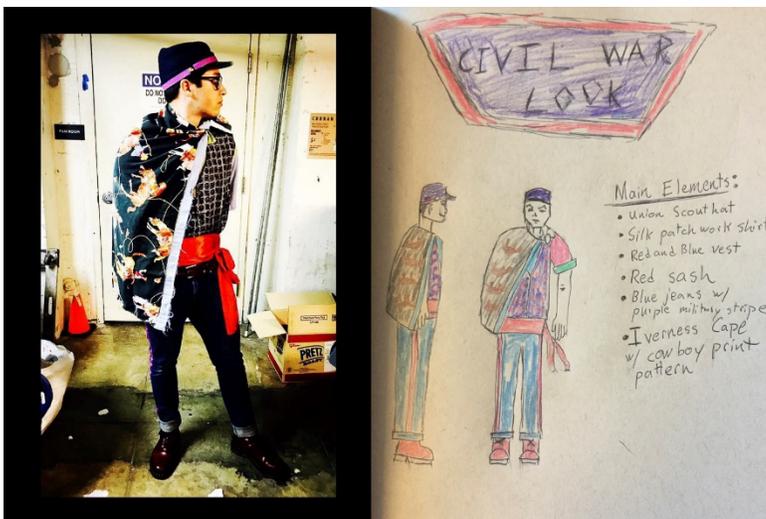
# Stanford University Visiting Artist Program

Studying with a visiting artist can transform students. They may shift from learning about the arts to creating professional-level work.

Take the recent visit from performance artist Taylor Mac for example. Seven students from various majors designed Mac's majestic costumes and created the innovative set pieces for the show, which was performed for thousands at Stanford's Bing Concert Hall and San Francisco's historic Curran Theater. Others even performed on stage alongside Mac.

One of the students who worked with Mac described the Visiting Artist Program as the bridge that links the work art students do in school with the work they want to do after graduation, as professionals. That, in fact, is one goal of this aspect of Stanford's experiential arts program. Working with visiting artists helps students determine what they want to pursue after graduation. They also gain valuable experience in their field. And they have an amazing time.

In addition to working with students, the visiting artists who come to campus (100 last academic year) also give talks and perform or display their work for both the campus community



Undergraduate Sam Sagan with his sketch and finished costume.

## The History of the Arts at Stanford

The arts have been an integral part of Stanford since the university first opened in 1891. The Stanford family planned for a museum and art galleries in the founding grant, and in a letter to the university's first president, Leland Stanford wrote, "The imagination needs to be cultivated and developed to assure success in life."

However, as Stanford developed into a world-class teaching and research center over the next century, its fostering of that creative imagination did not keep pace with the remarkable advances it made in other fields. Stanford did have nationally ranked programs and world-class faculty in the arts—but the arts were not a core part of the student experience and the university.

In the last eleven years, Stanford has undergone a cultural shift that has expanded and deepened the arts on campus. This started with the launch of the Arts Initiative in 2006, which took on an ambitious mandate: to re-imagine the role of the arts in a 21st century education and integrate art more fully into student life. President Emeritus Gerhard Casper, who chaired the Arts Initiative Committee, said, "A university is not complete if it does not stretch its students' minds with the help of the arts." The Arts Initiative's goal, he wrote, was to have the arts permeate all corners of the campus.

**And it is succeeding.**

and the public. In turn, the artists gain from the rich resources of the University, collaborating with experts from many different departments. For example, visiting artist Trevor Paglen used his time on campus to engage with artificial intelligence (AI) experts, allowing him to deepen the visual/musical piece he created, which explored AI technology through art.

## **Continuing the Transformation**

With a strong foundation in place, Stanford Arts is ready to expand—to take a leap forward. One of the first areas of focus is the high-impact, high-visibility Visiting Artist Program. Already the program attracts prominent, productive artists. In fact, more than 20% of the 2017 MacArthur Fellows were recent Stanford Visiting Artists.

But we want to bring an even greater number of these high-caliber artists to campus to work with students for longer time periods. We need your help in order to do this.

A gift of \$2 million will endow the Visiting Artist Program, which can be named in the donor's honor.

## **A Campus Transformed**

The Arts Initiative has transformed the campus through new buildings, new faculty, new programs and, very importantly, through a student body that is more interested than ever before in the arts.

Exciting advancements include:

**Three buildings in three years.** Bing Concert Hall opened in 2013. The Anderson Collection opened in 2014. The McMurtry Building, which houses the Department of Art and Art History, opened in 2015. Then in 2016, a major renovation of the Roble Arts “Gym” was finished. Roble includes a state-of-the-art dance studio, theater, and drop-in maker spaces. Now, renovations of the beloved Frost Amphitheater are underway.

**New position.** As a sign of Stanford's commitment to the arts, earlier this year a new position was created to oversee the strategic future of arts programs: Vice President for the Arts. Harry Elam was appointed to this position, and he is elevating the arts through engagement, outreach, and interdisciplinary programs.

**Engaged Students.** The McMurtry Building provides opportunities for many more art courses than before; since the building's opening, Art Practice course offerings have expanded by 50%, and enrollments have increased by 75%.

Students also have opportunities to live in an arts-themed dorm, intern in the arts, and apply for grants to support their art making. In addition, there are more than 100 student arts groups: 34 dance, 7 film, 9 creative writing, 16 theater, 10 visual arts, and 40 music. And these are only the ones that are registered!

**The Arts at Stanford are leaping forward.**