Success in Media Arts & Illustration

In our visual culture, the demand is high for artists who give form and expression to cultural content and interpret the world in which we live.

SPOTLIGHT ON: Will Niu ’12

MICA media artists and illustration grads use their skills in many industries, from publishing to film and from games to education. One alum, Will Niu ’12 (ILL), is a background designer at Nickelodeon Animation Studio, where he is currently working on the show Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Niu, who won an Annie Award in 2013 for Individual Achievement in TV production design for his work on Nickelodeon’s the Legend of Korra, credits his education at MICA for his professional success, saying that his ability to study under fantastic faculty mentors and alongside a talented peer group gave him the skills to succeed and a passion for his craft that continues to this day. For more stories of career success from MICA media arts and illustration grads, turn the page.
MICA media arts and illustration graduates shape the way we see the world...

...entertainment, film, & tv

Sarah Kujubu ’12 (ANIM) is a production coordinator at Nickelodeon Animation Studio.

Adam Golfer ’07 (photo), a highly successful freelance photographer, is developing a book, A House Without A Roof, for release in 2015. Over the past year, Golfer’s work was seen in a Runner’s World story covering the 4.15 Strong running team whose members were injured in the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, and in Die Zeit Literatur profile of German author Daniel Kehlman.

Derek Blanks ’00 (ILL) is a high-profile professional photographer and business owner. He works with clients that include Beyonce and Usher, as well as Universal Studios and the record label Def Jam.

Many MICA graduates work in the gaming industry.

Firaxis Games is home to both 3D artist John Ward ’11 (ANIM, ILL) and Chris Sulzbach ’06 (ANIM), a lead modeler and senior artist. Jenna Croarkin ’11 (ILL) is a 3D artist at Super Boise Studios, and Stephen Stone ’11 (ANIM) is an artist at Sparkypants Studios.

Jeremie Talbot ’98 (ILL) is a character technical director at Pixar Animation Studios, where she worked as a character modeling and articulation artist for the Oscar-winning animated movie, Brave.

Kit Turley ’10 (ANIM) is a production coordinator at Walt Disney Animation Studios in Los Angeles, where she worked on the Oscar-winning Frozen, the 2014 Best Animated Film, and the 2013 Oscar-winning animation short, Paperman.

The youngest cinematographer ever to shoot an Oscar-winning film when the documentary short, Music by Prudence, won in that category, Errol Webber ’08 (video) also shot American Promise, a special jury award winner for U.S. documentary at the 2013 Sundance Film Festival.

Lofty Nathan ’09 (photo) is a New York-based filmmaker whose debut documentary, the Twelve O’Clock Boyz, was released in theaters in 2014 and was featured at over 100 film festivals worldwide. Nathan is currently in production for a science fiction miniseries.

Adam Sauermilch ’08 (video) is an independent filmmaker based in New York who worked on the Oscar short-listed documentary Golden Boys. His films have shown at festivals in New York, New Jersey, and California.

Christine Holmes ’10 (ANIM) is a production coordinator at DreamWorks Animation. She is currently collaborating with the company’s Effects and Crowds departments for the upcoming 3D animated film, Home.

Javier Ameijeiras ’05 (ILL) is a successful storyboard artist who recently won an Emmy for Outstanding Main Title Design for HBO’s Bored to Death. He was also the concept illustrator for the movies Noah and Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.

...corporations & nonprofits

Graham Wilson ’08 (ANIM, GFA) is a toy designer for KidDesigns, whose lines of toys include Nerf, Littlest Pet Shop, and Transformers.

Nick Kalivas ’11 (ILL) is an interactive designer at AOL.

Chand Nirankari ’03 (photo) is a senior digital communications manager for America India Foundation in New York, NY.

Jess Neil ’08 (ILL) manages the design team for Anthropologie’s BHLDN/Wedding division.

Yaeri Song ’07 (video), communications director for Vatos International, the Korean restaurant group behind Vatos Urban Tacos and Vatos Express, is also founder and editor-in-chief of the English language online art and culture magazine, Seoulist Mag.

Kristin Noble ’11 (ILL) was hired as assistant designer for Target during her senior year at MICA.

Rafael Soldi ’08 (photo) is marketing director at the Photo Center NW, a fine arts photography school and gallery in Seattle.

Luke Schneider ’13 (video) is a photographer at Creekside Digital, a firm providing digitization services for microfilm, books, photographs, artwork, and more.

Christina Dacanay ’13 (ILL) is a graphic designer for the Society of Illustrators in New York City.

Saralyn Rosenfield ’06 (ILL) is manager of public programs and interpretation at the Delaware Art Museum in Wilmington, Delaware.

Eric Varela ’12 (video) is currently a 3D artist at Mosaic Learning, a corporation that creates eLearning solutions for clients such as Audi and Volkswagen.

Jennifer Light ’12 (ANIM) is a project coordinator at Be A Mentor, Inc., a San Francisco Bay Area nonprofit that connects youth with challenging lives with dedicated volunteer mentors.

Sneha Pai ’07 (ANIM) is a user-experience designer at American Express.
...publishing

Zach Montoya ’12 (ILL) is a successful freelance illustrator whose work was featured in 2014’s Spectrum 21. He has designed seven covers for Valiant Comics, and his other clients include Marvel, Microsoft, and Mindgrub Games.

Orpheus Collar ’09 (ILL) who adapted, illustrated, and colored the New York Times best-selling graphic novel version of Rick Riordan’s The Red Pyramid in 2012, also created the animatics and storyboards for the CG-animated show, Space Racers, which premiered last year on PBS. His adaptation of Riordan’s The Kane Chronicles: The Throne of Fire, will be released in 2015.

Annie Wu ‘10 (ILL) recently co-created the new Batgirl Beyond #27, which is part of the Batman Beyond series by DC Comics, and is currently working on a storyboard revision for the sixth season of Adult Swim’s The Venture Bros.

Corinne May Botz’s ’99 (photo) work, including photographic installations and books, has been reviewed by the New York Times, the Washington Post, Art Papers, and the Village Voice, among others. She exhibits widely, including in the United States, Germany, and The Netherlands.

Ramsey Beyer ’07 (ANIM) is the author of Little Fish, a memoir chronicling her foundation year at MICA and recently released by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Noelle Stevenson ’13 (ILL) inked her first book deal while a senior at MICA. Her young adult graphic novel, NIMONA, is set to be published by Harper Collins in 2015.

Gina Tripplett ’97 (ILL) is a successful freelance illustrator who has been featured on the cover of Step Inside Design and created a new visual identity for Whole Foods Market. She continues to exhibit personal work in New York, Los Angeles, and internationally.

Ana Benaroya ’09 (ILL) authored Illustration Next, a survey of 50 international illustrators that showcases their individual talents on their own and in collaboration with one another.

Sam Bosma ’09 (ILL) is an illustrator who has been recognized by the Spectrum, American Illustration, and the Society of Illustrators. His FANTASY BASKETBALL! won the 2014 Ignatz Award for outstanding artist, which recognizes excellence in independent comics.

Babs Tarr ’10(ILL) is currently the pencil and ink artist for DC Comics’ Batgirl.

Freelance illustrator Kali Ciesemier ’08 (ILL), whose clients include Time magazine and Education Week, has also worked for Google, illustrating the “Google Doodle” celebrating renowned opera singer Maria Callas’ 90th birthday.

...featured online, in print, & on TV

Michael Hoeweler ’10 (ILL) illustrated Time magazine’s 2014 story titled “100 Most Influential People.” Hoeweler has a successful freelance career with clients including GQ, Cosmopolitan, Newsweek, Travel + Leisure, Saveur, the National Park Service, Field & Stream, TV Guide, Samsung, and Brooks Brothers.

Fawad Khan’s ’01 (ILL) work has been featured on CNN and in the New York Times, as well as at The Bronx Museum, Exit Art, and ARCO Madrid. He was recently a resident fellow at Institut Américain Universitaire in Aix-en-Provence, France, and had a 2014 solo exhibition at Lu Magnus Gallery in New York City.

Daniel Shea ’07 (photo) shot the photos for the January 2, 2014 New York Times Magazine’s article, “A Speck in the Sea.” He also recently covered General Motors for Bloomberg Businessweek as well as the largest underground public works project in Indianapolis’s history for Indianapolis Weekly.

Paige Vickers ’12 (ILL) is an illustrator for Mr. Boddington’s Studio in New York, where she has designed for Penguin Books and Anthropologie. She continues to freelance as well, with clients such as Time Out New York and Johns Hopkins.

As head of production at Dime Media Haus, Jacqueline Wheeler ’13 (video) creates promotional materials, including videos used on client websites and social media outlets.

Lindsay Bottos ’14 (photo) took the internet by storm with her Anonymous project, which imposed harsh messages she received online on top of her self-portraits. The project received national attention from Good Morning America, BuzzFeed, MTV, and Huffington Post.

Elena Rosemond-Hoerr ’08 (photo) released The American Cookbook: A Fresh Take on Classic Recipes in 2014. The author, whose successful blog Biscuits and Such has been featured in Saveur and Southern Living, also owns a small photography studio.

Kristen Lepore ’07 (ANIM) is a director and animator whose films have taken top prizes at SXSW, the Stuttgart Festival of Animated Film, the Vimeo Awards, and the Annie Awards, among others. She is currently writing and guest directing a stop-motion episode of Cartoon Network’s Adventure Time.

Nicholas Grinere ’14 (ILL) and Kristy Hambrick ’15 (ILL) had pieces chosen by American Illustration 33 that will appear permanently online as part of The American Illustration-American Photography (AI-AP) Archive.

Olivia Huynh ’13 (ANIM) is currently part of the Doodle Team creating Google’s homepage doodle animations.
The Illustration Department is chaired by Harvey Award-winning colorist José Villarrubia, who is widely known for his collaborations with author Alan Moore. Villarrubia is the recent recipient of a Harvey Award as Best Colorist for *Cuba: My Revolution*. His experience in the comics industry, along with student interest, led to the development of a sequential art and pre-production track for illustration majors who want to specialize in comics, graphic novels, film, and video game industries.

Other illustration faculty members include Jonathon Scott Fuqua, the author of award-winning young adult novels, *The Reappearance of Sam Webber, DARBY*, and *The Willoughby Spit Wonder*; Willy Hartland, an animator and recipient of the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Film; and Shadra Strickland, who co-illustrated *Our Children Can Soar*, winner of a 2010 NAACP Image Award. Illustration seniors connect with regional and national art directors and editors through the annual Illustration Showcase event.

Photography majors are taught by a host of full-time and adjunct faculty with a variety of professional backgrounds. The department is led by Regina DeLuise, a Guggenheim Fellowship recipient who is represented by Bonni Benrubi Gallery in New York and has exhibited internationally. Full-time faculty members include Nate Larson, whose successful Geolocation project was just featured on wired.com; and Jay Gould, who has won numerous national awards such as the Berenice Abbott Prize for an emerging photographer.


MICA video and film students have gained experience in professional filmmaking through a number of off-campus, project-oriented courses taught by renowned cinematographer and filmmaker Allen Moore, a longtime MICA faculty member and Emmy Award winner. Moore was director of photography for several of documentary filmmaker Ken Burns' historical films shown on PBS, including *The Civil War, The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*, and the recent *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*. Students in these courses have produced trailers for Baltimore’s local independent cinema, an advocacy video for Maryland Charter Schools, and video documentation in partnership with MICA’s Center for Design Practice for their Bio-Diesel University project. Video and film arts students have also had the chance to work with Oscar Award-winning producer and department chair Patrick Wright, who worked on the short documentary Academy Award winner, *Music by Prudence*.

A studio concentration in filmmaking, offered in partnership with Johns Hopkins University’s Film and Media Studies program, gives students access to industry professionals with a wide variety of expertise and cinematic strengths. Students have access to a faculty from both institutions who will teach about the making and distribution of films, offer insight into the business of cinema, and help them begin to build a professional network.

A weekly workshop series from Joseph Meyerhoff Center for Career Development includes topics of special interest to artists who choose to run their own businesses. Here’s a sampling: Expanding Your Connections, Starting Your Own Business, Pricing Your Time and Work, Contracts for Artists, and Legal Dos and Don'ts for Artists and Designers.

Those MICA students and alumni who achieve the highest rate of career success are those who take full advantage of career services and of the education programs offered by MICA.