



# WHITECLIFFE

## COLLEGE OF ARTS & DESIGN

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TE WHARE TAKIURA O WIKIRIWHI

### **Master of Fine Arts Course Information 2010/2011**

This degree is approved by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority under the provisions of the Education Act 1989, and Whitecliffe College of Art and Design is accredited to offer it.



## Course Description

**National Qualifications Framework (NQF) Level:** Nine(9)

**Credits:** 240

**Exit qualification:** Master of Fine Arts

**Qualification Code:** PC2275

**Duration:** 2 years low residency

**Next Intake:** 14 January 2011

**Application Deadline:** 30 November 2010

**Places Available:** Maximum 12 per intake

**Campus:** Main Campus, 24 Balfour Road, Parnell, Auckland 1010, New Zealand

The Master of Fine Arts is a two-year, low residency programme, which requires, as a prerequisite for matriculation, a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree or equivalent education and professional experience. The course is designed to enable students with demonstrated commitment, experience, and ability to build on their maturity as creative individuals, and establish a robust basis for continued creative expression. It is built around a comprehensive programme of supervised studio research and theoretical studies requiring self-directed learning and continuing professional development.

## Programme Aims

The principal aims of the Master of Fine Arts course are:

- To enable students to extend their established creative capacity through advanced work in studio research and art theory
- To develop students' critical skills and foster a mature understanding of the relationships between their work and contemporary culture, enabling them to address topical problems in the visual arts and to explore new avenues
- To encourage students to apply their studio and scholarly talents, abilities and philosophies toward both expanding and preserving humankind's cultural heritage

## Programme Outcomes

By the end of the Master of Fine Arts course successful students will be able to:

- Present, to a professional standard, a significant body of studio work representative of an extended exploration of personal aesthetic concerns
- Analyse critically their own work and that of others in a manner which demonstrates scholarly competence in the organization, evaluation, interpretation and communication of knowledge

In addition students should be able to:

- Demonstrate the ability to professionally manage the dissemination of their work through galleries, museums, and/or journals
- Gain ongoing support via grants, commissions, exhibitions or other means
- Communicate aesthetic ideas in teaching and other contexts



## Courses required of all students

### **5030 Studio Research Preparation** 60 credits

Preparatory study establishing advanced visual and theoretical research skills; linking creative research with theoretical research, critical thinking and writing, under the supervision of a Studio Research Supervisor and Dissertation Research Supervisor.

### **5031 Studio Research** 180 Credits

Independent production, presentation and documentation of an integrated body of visual and theoretical research under the supervision of a Studio Research Supervisor and Dissertation Research Supervisor.

Seminars involve group discussion and critique of each student's visual research, individual research progress meetings between student, Studio Research Supervisor and Dissertation Research Supervisor, and seminar guests.

## Programme Information and Delivery

The studio component of Studio Research Preparation (5030) and Studio Research (5031) combine to result in a two-year, self-directed exploration within the student's studio practice. Studio Research Preparation (5030) comprises a six-month block during which an initial investigation into a broad range of studio interests is undertaken. Studio Research (5031) is a three-semester self-directed research process that involves a rigorous analysis, extension and expansion of studio interests and techniques identified in Studio Research Preparation.

Investigation within the student's studio practice is intended to generate ideas and issues the student wishes to explore theoretically. In this way, practical and theoretical concerns are closely aligned. The interplay between studio practice and dissertation research should be organic in nature; however, studio practice should be seen as "driving" theoretical concerns.

Studio practice involves regular consultation with Studio Research Supervisors, who report through the Postgraduate Programme Manager to the senior MFA faculty. The studio practice process also involves consultation between the student's Studio Research Supervisor and Dissertation Research Supervisor to ensure practical and theoretical concerns are fully integrated. The studio practice process results in an Exhibition produced to a professional standard and accompanied by both an Artist's Statement and Exhibition.

Taken together the dissertation component of Research Preparation and Studio Research comprise a four-part process designed to support, extend, and document the student's studio exploration and exhibition work. One essay is undertaken each semester for the first three semesters during the two-year programme. During Studio Research Preparation (Semester One) research skills workshops (Research Tool Box) are offered to support the development of postgraduate research and study skills. During the final semester the three essays are brought together as a final dissertation.

The dissertation is based on or extends issues and problems related to some aspect of the student's studio interests. The dissertation process involves regular consultation with Dissertation and Studio Supervisors and results in production of both a research document and a seminar presentation. The research document demonstrates proficiency in graduate level writing and scholarship, and is circulated among peers, Whitecliffe faculty and faculty at other institutions. The dissertation must be between 8,000 and 15,000 words in length. It is presented according to the guidelines laid out in this manual, in the Whitecliffe Study Guide, and the instructions of the Dean of Research and Postgraduate Studies.

In addition to the written work, the student must present the results of their research in an oral presentation. This is scheduled as part of the official seminar programme.



## Semester Format

Seminars occur quarterly throughout the year and are generally scheduled during the New Zealand school holidays. These seminars act as the theoretical backbone of the programme and involve rigorous analysis of student work as well as guest presentations and workshops. Each seminar integrates a variety of contextual themes. In addition, seminars focus on issues relevant to individual student areas of investigation.

Themes for the quarterly five-six day seminars of the Master of Fine Arts programme may include Psychology, Artefact as Text, The Contemporary, Language, Technology, Career Management, Gender, Cultural Theory, and Global/Local.

## Online Learning

**Blackboard.com** is the platform for our online delivery. Online Learning is an essential tool in student communication with programme faculty. In addition, it provides a valuable mechanism for exchange of ideas, networking and engagement in discussion between monthly seminars, and meets the need for low residency students to maintain contact with their peer group.

## Attendance at Seminars

Students are required to attend every Seminar. Students are required to attend all events on each of the five or six days of the Seminar.

## Normal Progress

The two-year full-time programme starts with the one semester Studio Research Preparation course followed by the three-semester Studio Research course. A student makes “normal progress” from semester to semester by sustaining an overall grade point average of “C-”.

Normal progress into Studio Research requires written permission from the Dean of Research and Postgraduate Studies.

## Requirements for Award of the Qualification

Award of the Master of Fine Arts qualification is dependent on the student achieving the required minimum number of credits (240), with a grade of C- or better on their end-of-course assessment.

## Minimum and Maximum Duration of the Programme

The Master of Fine Arts Degree is a two-year full-time course (a total of 240 credits). All Whitecliffe qualifications require the completion of a minimum of 120 credits (one year of equivalent full time study) at Whitecliffe. Furthermore, award requirements must be met within four years of initial matriculation on the course.

## Monitoring/External Assessment

The Master of Fine programme is monitored not only internally, by established Whitecliffe review processes, but also by a NZQA Monitor. At various times throughout the programme students may be required to give feedback to the NZQA Monitor. The New Zealand Qualifications Authority also regularly reviews the quality of Whitecliffe's programmes generally, and students may also be required to present their feedback to a NZQA review panel.



## Whitecliffe Facilities, Access and Postgraduate Privileges

Postgraduate students are encouraged to make use of Whitecliffe facilities, including the staff room and library during the seminar period and at other times when visiting Whitecliffe.

Postgraduate students are entitled to attend and participate in undergraduate (and graduate) courses subject to space and availability at no extra cost, on an “auditing” basis. Postgraduate students doing so will receive no credit for undergraduate/graduate courses on this basis, and are not required to complete assignments etc. Attendance however does imply participation, the degree of which must be negotiated with the lecturer and/or Head of Department for the course. Material and other course related costs must be met by the student.

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Students entering the MFA programme will already have obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree or have equivalent learning and experience. Applicants who do not hold a BFA may be required to undertake additional undergraduate study to remove deficiencies in prior learning (e.g. art history and contextual studies).

In addition, applicants are required to have exhibition and/or professional experience prior to enrolment. MFA students are expected to have mastered the basic skills and acquired the general knowledge, which are the basis for self-directed learning prior to matriculating on the programme.

The significant expectations for self-directed inquiry and collegial contribution to learning necessitate that candidates for admission to the course demonstrate not merely potential, but established ability to meet programme objectives. Pre-requisites to meet this requirement may be established on a case-by-case basis as Conditions of Admission.

Prerequisites for admission to the MFA programme include:

- Bachelor of Fine Arts degree (or equivalent experience)
- Exhibition and/or Professional experience as an artist/designer
- Academic record, professional CV and portfolio (including reviews, written work, and references) demonstrating maturity and ability to successfully complete the course

### Specific Requirements For Admission Include:

The following materials are required in support of applications:

- **Whitecliffe Application Form** (including statistical information)
- **Official Transcripts** of all prior post-secondary academic work
- **Evidence of Professional Recognition** e.g. reviews, awards.
- **Curriculum Vitae** - chronology, academic and professional accomplishments
- **Portfolio** - minimum 20 images. These can be presented on in digital media format. (at least 6 of work completed within the last twelve months).  
NB: Whitecliffe will retain portfolios of all applicants offered a place in the programme
- **References** - three letters of reference. It is recommended that at least one letter be written by an academic who can comment from direct experience about the applicant’s potential as a graduate student. Letters should address candidates’ ability to work independently, their ability to contribute to Whitecliffe’s learning community, and their promise as artist/scholars
- **Studio Facilities** - description of facilities and equipment available for pursuit of Studio Research and/or plans for establishing/providing same



- **Computer Literacy**  
High level of computer literacy for purposes such as word processing, email and searching the Internet. Ability to work competently with current Microsoft Office for Word software e.g. Vista  
NB. If you need to brush up your computing skills before coming on the course, we strongly advise that you try out the free BBC [Webwise Online Course](http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/course/).  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise/course/>
- Public speaking competency
- Business/management/interpersonal skills (e.g. teamwork, personality, problem solving)
- Study and work behaviour – independent learning, time planning, responsibility etc
- A clear understanding of the aims and objective of the MFA programme.
- **Studio Research Supervisor Nomination** (optional) candidates may nominate suitably qualified individuals to serve as Studio Research Supervisors, subject to the approval of the programme faculty.
- **Evidence of Language Proficiency** applicants for whom English is a second language must submit evidence of a minimum score of 627 on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) examination or a score of 7.5 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) examination.
- **Letter of Intent** (500-1000 words), including reasons for seeking the degree. The letter of intent will be assessed for form as well as content. It should be reflective of the candidate's ability to produce written work to postgraduate standard. It is recommended that the letter of intent indicate a personal philosophy of art, place the candidate's work in a cultural context, and indicate areas of inquiry the candidate intends to pursue.

#### **Your Letter of Intent**

*The letter of intent is an important part of your application process and needs to be composed to with care and consideration. The Admissions Board will use the letter of intent when considering your application for acceptance on to the MA programme. It will give a preliminary indication as to whether you are able to participate at the required level in the theoretical and practical components of the course. The letter will also be used to make an initial assessment of your ability to communicate in a style appropriate to the academic demands of the programme. The information you provide will inform the decision made by the Admissions Board and then assists the Director of the Programme to advise you more effectively.*

When Whitecliffe is in receipt of completed information, applicants will be interviewed and Senior Faculty will review their portfolios in order to determine the suitability of the programme to their needs and their ability to successfully complete the programme. Assessment of candidates may include identification of any areas of additional study considered necessary, either to strengthen skills or to meet pre-requisites, which will be required as a condition of matriculation or advancement in the programme.

#### **Transfer Credit**

Whitecliffe Regulations ([www.whitecliffe.ac.nz](http://www.whitecliffe.ac.nz)) outline procedures for evaluation and granting of transfer credit. In the case of the MFA degree, transfer credit may be granted for work undertaken at the postgraduate level in accredited institutions in New Zealand or overseas. Transfer credit may be applied to meet first year Studio Research or Seminar requirements.

#### **Fees**

Basic tuition fees will be aligned with those currently in place at Whitecliffe. Please see current application form for Course Fee details. Membership in the Student Association is encouraged but not required. Materials and supplies expenses will vary from student



to student, and are the responsibility of the student. Studio space is the responsibility of the student, but Whitecliffe will work with students who are relocating or whose present studio space is inadequate to identify suitable facilities.

Regional Fees - \$500 is charged up-front each semester for everyone living out of the greater Auckland area. This is accounted for on a cost recovery basis and any excess will be credited to the following semester. The regional fee policy has been developed so

that visit costs incurred by Studio Research Supervisors /MFA Senior faculty for students' resident out of Auckland are not unfairly distributed to students resident in the greater Auckland area. Visits include visits to the student's studio by the programme faculty or out of town Studio Research Supervisor, and visits to the seminar by the student's Studio Research Supervisor if living in the student's local community. The fee covers transport, accommodation, and meals costs associated with these visits.

#### Dates for 2010 – 2011 Admission

Semester Starting	Interviews Commence	Application Deadline Dates
14 January 2011	1 September 2010	30 November 2010

**Note: While the application deadline for the MFA is 30 November of each year, applications received after this will still be considered for entry subject to places being available. Applicants will also be granted interviews before the September interview period where necessary.**



### Contact Information

For an application pack please contact:  
Receptionist  
Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design  
64-9-309-5970

For further information:  
**Pam Young**  
Postgraduate Programme Manager  
Email: [pamy@whitecliffe.ac.nz](mailto:pamy@whitecliffe.ac.nz)

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