



*intellectual*  
growth through  
*creative*  
expression

Milwaukee high school  
of the  
**Arts**

<http://www.milwaukeehighschoolofthearts.org>

# Milwaukee high school of the Arts

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414-934-7000  
[www.milwaukeehighschoolofthearts.org](http://www.milwaukeehighschoolofthearts.org)

“Intellectual Growth Through Creative Expression”

## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide an educational experience which enables all students to nurture their academic and artistic talents to the fullest. Students will develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, communicate effectively and become proficient in the use of modern technology. The MHSA staff, in collaboration with parents and community, will create an educational atmosphere fostering excellence and achievement. The school's curriculum, based on respect for people of all cultural backgrounds, prepares students to be responsible citizens of a democratic society.

## Artistic Excellence

Milwaukee High School of the Arts (MHSA): the name alone infers the highest quality of arts education. MHSA is the only high school in the city and state to provide two hours of dedicated arts instruction daily. Adjunct faculty from prominent local and national arts organizations provide group classes

American Players Theatre  
Danceworks  
Dayton Ballet  
First Stage  
Florentine Opera  
Haggerty Museum of Art  
In Tandem Theatre  
Ko-Thi Dance Co.  
Li Chow Ping  
Marquette University  
Milwaukee Art Museum  
Milwaukee Ballet  
Milwaukee Children's Choir  
Wisconsin Conservatory of Music

Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design  
(MIAD)  
Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra  
Milwaukee Chamber Theatre  
Milwaukee Repertory Theatre  
Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra  
New York Dance Theaterworks  
Next Act  
Pier Wisconsin  
Present Music  
The Skylight  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
Wildspace Dance Company  
Wisconsin Conservatory of Music

Artists such as:

Berkely Fudge, local musician  
Melissa Anderson, professional dancer  
Wayne Frank, local playwright  
Rolando Yanes, Milwaukee Ballet School Director  
Damien Jacques of the Milwaukee Journal/ Sentinel  
Bruce Murphy, Milwaukee Magazine  
Gayle King, professional model  
Jeffrey Hatcher, playwright and author

# Milwaukee High School of the Arts

Milwaukee High School of the Arts is a creative, challenging, and nurturing cultural community, providing a distinguished foundation for higher education. A unique characteristic of the student body is found in how they embrace differences and appreciate the worth of every person. Acceptance and tolerance are hallmarks of students pursuing and concentrating on their artistic dreams, supporting the belief that our common interests are more powerful than the differences between us.



Home of the "Crimson Stars"

- Current Enrollment: 903 students. (Range over the years ~850 to over 1000 students)
- This is MHSA's 24th year as a designated arts school. MHSA has served over 18,000 students in that time.
- MHSA is the only high school in the state where every student receives a minimum of two class hours of study, in the arts, each day.
- MHSA is a college prep school offering Advanced Placement courses in the areas of Studio Art, Art History, Biology, Calculus, English, US History, Physics, Chemistry, and American Government. Honor/Accelerated courses are available in English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Visual Art.
- MHSA consistently scores among the top two MPS high schools for AP and ACT tests.
- Over 60% of the MHSA instructors hold advanced degrees, including PhD.'s and National Board Certified Educators
- Graduation and attendance rates are near 95%
- 74% of MHSA graduates go on to post secondary education while maintaining a life-long interest and participation in the arts. Graduates have been accepted to top colleges and universities like NYU Tisch School of the Arts, University of the Arts, Oberlin, Harvard, Northwestern, Julliard, MIT, St. Olaf, Lawrence, and The Art Institute of Chicago to name just a few.
- Studying the arts does not mean a profession in the arts any more than the study of English makes us authors. A portion of MHSA graduates will have professions in the arts, but many go on to serve their communities as nurses, engineers, therapists, teachers, tradesmen, entrepreneurs, attorneys and physicians, and many others too numerous to list here.
- Students come from all over the city of Milwaukee and its suburbs. MHSA is a leader in accepting Foreign Exchange students and often has 3 or more per school year. We have hosted students from Japan, Germany, Thailand, Italy, Spain, Netherlands and others.
- MHSA's student body is socially, racially and economically diverse: 63% of the students are female and 37% are male; Ethnicity breakdown: 2% Asian; 1% Native American; 51% African American; 10% Hispanic; 34% White (12% for the district). There are 16% Special Education students. 47% are Free/Reduced lunch eligible students. MHSA has a very low mobility rate at 3% compared to an overall district rate of over 20%.
- MHSA's student body is disciplined and peaceful.
- Classrooms display trophies from local and national competitions.
- MHSA participates in the interscholastic athletics programs offering Cross Country and Tennis. Soccer, Track, Swim, Girls Golf, Volleyball, Softball, Football, Wrestling and Basketball are available through the Arts/Pulaski partnership. We are the "Crimson Stars".

# Milwaukee High School of the Arts



The centerpiece of MHSA is the strong and cohesive integrated arts curriculum that challenges students to connect learning across disciplines. Field trips, concerts, professional and community performances, recitals, and visiting arts demonstrations enrich the curriculum. The MHSA performance season includes over twenty-five performances and exhibitions representing each of the five art areas, showcasing students' talents and training. Advanced Placement classes, the Balanced Literacy initiative and a grant from the Gilder-Lehrman Foundation further strengthen the academic offerings. Homework help, tutoring, and enrichment activities are offered after school. Students may also participate in interscholastic athletics programs.



Students at MHSA demonstrate the talent, potential, and desire to grow to the best of their ability. Students spend two class hours per day in one of the following areas: Creative Writing/Journalism, Dance, Music, Theater, or Visual Arts. The Academic program is rigorous and includes Honors and Advanced Placement courses. Every student must participate in their chosen art area. The goal of MHSA is to foster personal as well as academic growth and confidence in every student.

**All students must complete and pass a mandatory audition in their field of interest.**

# M H S A D a n c e D e p a r t m e n t



## **Dance Department Mission**

The mission of the Milwaukee High School of the Arts Dance Department is to provide all dance students comprehensive study of dance as an art form and a profession.

## **Curriculum**

- Beginning to advanced study in modern, ballet, and jazz dance.
- Workshops in tap ethnic dance, musical theater aerobics composition and improvisation. Academic dance areas covered include anatomy, nutrition, injury prevention and treatment, dance history, and writing for the professional dancer.

## **Special Programs**

- **Performance Opportunities** There are two annual mainstage dance concerts as well as two blackbox concerts. Choreography is by MHSA faculty as well as advanced composition students. Beginning level students perform in annual recitals.
- **Tour de Force** is MHSA's student dance company. Each season the company has new works set on it from the previous year's dance concert as well as new pieces by community choreographers
- **Off Campus Program** These advanced dance students study at various off-campus sites in the city. The program has offered classes at Danceworks, UW Milwaukee, The Milwaukee Ballet, City Ballet Theater and The Milwaukee Dance Connection.
- **School to Work** students are advanced dancers who choose a course of study in the professional world while remaining a high school student. The programs are based on the needs of the individuals and range from university study to dance company internships.

**Audition Requirements** - For detailed audition requirements please visit the MHSA website.

- Resume - each auditioned must submit a resume at the time of the audition.
- Dance Clothes - We highly recommend a leotard and tights for female students and biker shorts or tights and a tight T shirt for male students. If you don't have these available you may wear tight fitting exercise clothes that you can move in. No students will be allowed to audition in street clothes.
- Report Card - all auditioning students must have a copy of their most recent report card.

MHSA dance students attend physically demanding dance classes for two periods each day. If you have a preexisting physical condition like bad knees, chronic asthma, heart or back problems, you should seriously reconsider if dance is the right choice for you.

## **What happens at the actual audition?**

During the audition students will complete a dance class which includes a ballet barre and a modern/jazz center combination. They are observed by the Dance department faculty and evaluated on natural ability, movement potential and previous training. For a more detailed explanation of the criteria on which students are evaluated see MHSA'S website.

# M H S A Theatre Department



## Theatre Department Mission

The mission of the Milwaukee High School of the Arts Theatre Department is to provide all theatre students comprehensive study of theatre as an art form and a profession.

## Curriculum

- Beginning to advanced study in acting and technical theatre.
- Workshops in improvisation, makeup, set design, acting theory, and lighting design.

## Special Programs

- **Performance Opportunities** There are two annual mainstage plays as well as three studio shows. Senior students are allowed to direct Senior Projects. Beginning level students perform in semester presentations.
- **TeenWrites** This partnership between The Skylight and MHS A gives students the opportunity to work as playwrights and composer of an original musical piece.

**Audition Requirements** - For detailed audition requirements please visit the MHS A website.

### Before you come to the audition:

- a. Get a copy of your most recent report card. If you are auditioning for more than one art area, make multiple copies
- b. Prepare a TYPED resume. There is an example on the MHS A website. You can find many resume formats on most word processing software or ask at the local library.
- c. Prepare a 1 minute monologue from a published play. Please bring a copy of the monologue with you. You should be “off- book” for this monologue.
- d. Write a 1-2 page essay on **ONE** of the following topics. Please type (computer) this essay.

*Recall the last theatrical production you were in or the last production that you saw. Include who, what, when, and where in your description of this event. Comment on how well you think it went and why you think it went that way.*

*Describe a theatre where you've seen a play or concert or ballet or any other performance. Comment on the way the theatre was designed or laid out that you found beautiful or creative in the use of the space or poorly conceived and badly done. Justify your opinion with evidence from your memory.*

*Actors have fantasy productions about which they dream. Describe a theatrical production of which you've always wanted to be part. Write about what part you'd play in this production and why it's significant to you.*

## What happens at the actual audition?

Two things will happen at the audition:

1. You will be part of a small group workshop/class. During this time you will be asked to interpret, learn and perform a VERY short scene.
2. You will be part of a small group that will be given a short class in design concepts and asked to design and sketch a VERY basic design.
3. You will be performing your monologue for faculty.

# M H S A Music Department



## Music Department Mission

The mission of the Milwaukee High School of the Arts Music Department is to provide all music students comprehensive study of music as an art form and a profession.

## Curriculum

- Beginning to advanced study in orchestra, piano, band, jazz, or choir.
- Workshops in improvisation, tuning, hand/breath control, and stamina.  
Academic music areas covered include music theory, music history, and technique.

## Special Programs

- **Performance Opportunities** There are several mainstage music concerts as well as several off-campus recitals.
- **Musical and Opera** Students have the opportunity to play in the pit orchestras for our annual musical and opera productions. We are the only high school in Wisconsin to offer an annual opera production.

**Audition Requirements** - For detailed audition requirements please visit the MHSA website. Please bring the following to the audition:

- Letter of recommendation—This letter should be written by a music teacher you have had within the last 2-3 years. The letter should include information about attitude in class, attendance, behavior, performance in class and musical ability.
- Report Card—Bring a copy of your last report card
- WSMA solo—You may audition using a piece from the Wisconsin State Music Association contest list. This list can be viewed at [www.wsmamusic.org](http://www.wsmamusic.org)
- Exceptions for voice: If you cannot find a song on the WSMA list, you must sing *To the Sky* by Carl Strommen: sheet music and a recording is available in the MHSA main office and online at [www.milwaukeehighschoolofthearts.org](http://www.milwaukeehighschoolofthearts.org)
- Exceptions for jazz: Jazz auditions will consist of a solo using the pentatonic scales over a blues pattern. Instructions can be found on our website or in the MHSA office. You do NOT need a WSMA solo to audition for jazz.

## What happens at the actual audition?

It depends on the ensemble:

- Band: WSMA solo, Bb concert scale in half notes, and sight-reading
- Voice: WSMA solo or *To the Sky* and a brief interview
- Piano: WSMA solo, two octave, C and D Major scales, sight-reading, and interview
- Strings: WSMA solo or Suzuki #3 book, Violin: 2 octave D Major All others: 2 octave G Major
- Jazz: Solo using pentatonic scale over a blues pattern. Drums: prepare swing, bossa nova, rock, funk, and Latin beats

# M H S A Visual Art Department



## Visual Art Department Mission

The mission of the Milwaukee High School of the Arts Visual Art Department is to prepare students for the competitive world of art schools and other art related fields.

## Curriculum

- Beginning to advanced study in drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, and computer graphics
- Workshops in

## Special Programs

- **Gallery Opportunities** There are 6 art gallery show every year as well as several opportunities for off-campus displays.
- **Milwaukee Art Museum** A partnership between MHSa and the Milwaukee Art Museum allows students to travel to MAM on a weekly basis for in-depth study of relevant works of art.

**Audition Requirements** - For detailed audition requirements please visit the MHSa website.

- **Portfolio**— Students must submit the following 3 artworks:
  - A. A self-portrait: A drawing done of your face while looking in a mirror. Do not work from a photograph.
  - B. A still life drawing: Thoughtfully arrange 3 natural objects on a flat surface and draw them with a pencil. The objects might include nuts, rocks, sticks, pods, shells, bones, fruit, leaves, etc. Indicate shadows and values by the use of light and dark.
  - C. A piece of your choice done within the past year: This piece may include a drawing, painting, print, sculpture, collage, original photograph, video, pottery, textile, etc. You may bring slides if the pieces are too large or fragile. All work should be in a folder or envelope with you name printed on the front. Do not bring cartoons, superhero images or copied work
- **Report Card**—Bring a copy of your last report card
- **Letter of recommendation**—This letter should be written by a teacher you have had within the last 2-3 years for an art class. The letter should include information about attitude in class, attendance, behavior, performance in class and art ability.

## What happens at the actual audition?

- A 10 minute creativity test.
- A 3 minute contour drawing. Single object.
- A 45 minute still life drawing based on 3 objects.

# M H S A Creative Writing Department



## **Creative Writing Department Mission**

The mission of the Milwaukee High School of the Arts Creative Writing Department is to develop students as creators, consumers, and publishers of literature.

## **Curriculum**

- Beginning to advanced study in writing and journalism.
- Workshops in media studies and spoken word performance.
- Intensive workshops focusing on writing poetry and short stories.

## **Special Programs**

- **Performance Opportunities** There is an annual blackbox concert featuring the works of CW majors.
- **Self-Express** This monthly magazine is created and published by CW majors
- **MHSA Comet** The yearbook and the student newspaper. CW majors contribute to both publications. View the MHSA Comet newspaper at [www.mhsacomet.org](http://www.mhsacomet.org)

**Audition Requirements** - For detailed audition requirements please visit the MHSA website.

- **Portfolio**— You must submit 3-4 contrasting examples of original writing that best represents you as a writer. **KEEP YOUR ORIGINALS! DO NOT SUBMIT YOUR ONLY COPY OF ANYTHING!** This portfolio will be remain at MHSA. Please duplicate or print extra copies.
- **Report Card**—Bring a copy of your last report card
- **Pen**—Bring a pen for writing

## **What happens at the actual audition?**

- **Writing**—You will be given one hour to write 1-2 pages of writing. If you chose poetry, you must write two contrasting poems, at least one of which is rhymed and rhythmic. If you are a playwright, write a simple scene that shows you understand dialogue and action. Paper will be provided. You may bring notes.

# Milwaukee High School of the Arts

## Alumni

Representative Sample

MHSA alumni have gone on to distinguished careers in the arts and beyond. Our graduates can be found across the United States and around the world.

Milwaukee High School of the Arts is your foundation for the future.

### Dance Alumni

Tina Wozniak— Dance Dept Chair at Pius HS  
Hillary Morgan—Faculty member of Brigham Young University, Teacher of Irish Dance  
Robert Ruffin—Dallas Black Dance Theater  
Samuel Pergande—Joffrey Ballet  
Valdemar Sanchez Lombardo—Feld Ballet, Jennifer Muller Dance Company

### Visual Art Alumni

Claire Gaynor— Graphic Designer, Helmut Jahn, Chicago  
Laura Luepke—Art Historian  
James Tomasello—Whitney Museum, NYC  
Nadav Bergann—artist/photographer, NYC  
Jacob Pfeiffer—artist, San Francisco

### Theater Alumni

Amy Pietz—TV Actress, *Caroline in the City* and *Aliens in America*  
Brooke Reinders—TV News Anchor, Eau Claire, WI  
Zac Duax—Lighting Board Operator, NYC  
Jessica Pabst—Make up Design, NYC  
Christina Grant—Make up Supervisor-Disney  
Kristin Nelson-TV Actress, *Psych*



**Milwaukee Public Schools**

### Music Alumni

Erin Aldridge-Head of Violin Studies, UW-Superior  
Angela Johnson-Swan—House Guitar for MTV's *Rock the Cradle*

### Staff Alumni

Some alumni have returned to MHSA as teachers:  
Pablo Amaya—Music, 92  
Chris Wszalek—Music, 98  
Amanda Wojnar—Art, 94

### Alumni

Every student chooses an art major but not everyone chooses a career in the arts. All graduates bring art to their life's work. A sample of how alumni contribute to their communities:

Paula Balzer—Balzer Literary Agency—Brooklyn, New York  
Ben Calhoun—NPR Reporter/Announcer—Chicago, IL  
Liza Carroll, MD—Pediatrician—Milwaukee, WI  
Amanda Kimball—Attorney—Chicago, IL  
Rose Hicks—Nurse—Milwaukee, WI  
Ben Hinkle-Wszalek—Mechanical Engineer—Milwaukee, WI  
Kate Hummel-Dosmann—MPS Montessori Teacher-Milwaukee  
David Evans—Writer—Milwaukee, WI  
Jason Bulmann—Architect—Seattle, WA  
Tamara Newell—Accountant-Chicago, IL  
Rebecca Nielsen—Education Manager, The Skylight—Milwaukee  
Christina Kolterman—Medical Doctor