Careers in the Visual Arts
Department of Visual Art
December 1, 2015
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This Afternoon’s Goals:

- **Start** a conversation
- **Consider** how you want to approach questions about careers and how we can help
- **Provide** some ideas about next steps
Find The Thing You're Most Passionate About, Then Do It On Nights And Weekends For The Rest Of Your Life

I have always been a big proponent of following your heart and doing exactly what you want to do. It sounds so simple, right? But there are people who spend years—decades, even—trying to find a true sense of purpose for themselves. My advice? Just find the thing you enjoy doing more than anything else, your one true passion, and do it for the rest of your life on nights and weekends when you're exhausted and cranky and just want to go to bed.

It could be anything—music, writing, drawing, acting, teaching—it really doesn't matter. All that matters is that once you know what you want to do, you dive in a full 100 percent and spend the other 90 torturing yourself because you know damn well that...
Just in case you’re freaked or annoyed:

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Here’s a Red Panda
Resources at UChicagoGRAD

- **Advising**
  - 60 min. Career Appointments
  - Oral Communications (crits, talks), Fellowships
  - Writing Advising

- **Programming**
  - Communications, Networking, Presenting
  - Career-specific; GRADUCon

- **Graduate Global Impact Internships**

- **Business Cards; Versatile PhD**
What do you want to know about?
Workshop Agenda:

- Framing questions
- Kinds of Work
- It’s all Context
- Things To Do Next
Workshop Agenda:

- Framing questions
- Kinds of Work
- Your Skills in Context
- Things To Do Next
Framing Questions:

- What is a career to you? What’s a job? How are these different?
- What kinds of work have value to you?
- What skills do you have? What’s most important to you when you feel as though you’re using your skills?
- What do you enjoy about your work? What work do you hope to continue?
Sharing time

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Teaching
Teaching 1

- **Know where to find jobs**
  - Inside Higher Ed, CAA, Chronicle Jobs

- **Know what FT job descriptions look like**

- **Know what adjuncting looks like**
  - $1,300 - $1,500/class
  - High number of students per section

- **Know how to support work:**
  - artistcommunities.org
  - Chicago Artists Resource
  - CAA / NYFA (nyfa.org)
  - Foundation Grants to Individuals
Teaching 2: What matters to you?

- Geography / proximity to cities
- Community of artists
- The kind/quality of teaching
- Freedom to do your own work
- Mobility into other teaching positions
Teaching 3: Make Yourself Competitive

- Get Teaching Experience
- Make excellent art (I can’t help here)
- Polish documents and practice interviewing (I *can* help here)
- Demonstrate a commitment to talking about the arts in public; connect with artists
- Get experience with university service and/or admin work (grants, events, programs, etc.)
Teaching 4 (coda):
Wait. What is Teaching?

Lots of other jobs can count as variations on teaching...learn about them:

- Museum Education
- Program Development at Arts Organizations
- Arts Communication/Advocacy
- Instruction at organizations (nonprofit or for-profit) that promote the arts
- Sharing art across media and in new ways
Know where to find jobs
- Idealist, Indeed, NPO.net, individual institutional sites (keep in mind that jobs are often posted after candidates are already identified)...

So important to network

Understand the diversity of work and structure of organizations
Museums/Nonprofits 2

- **Designing an organization’s mission**
  - Curriculum Design / Exhibition Design
  - Program Development
  - Curatorial Work

- **Implementing the mission**
  - Marketing and Advertising
  - Communications and Public Relations

- **Assessing program effectiveness**
  - Program evaluation, audience analysis

- **Supporting the mission**
  - Fundraising or Donor Relations
In other words, these are complex institutions with lots of diverse work.
Museums/Nonprofits 4
Make Yourself Competitive

- Volunteer or Intern with an organization that aligns (or doesn’t!) with your interests
- Get trained to be on a board (Graham School offers classes; Civic Knowledge Project offers trainings)
- Polish your documents
- Talk to others engaged in work that you could see yourself doing (or not!)
Industry
Industry 1

- How proximate to the arts do you want to be?
- Galleries, auction houses
- Many different types of consulting (fundraising, curatorial, exhibition design, audience design, etc.)
- Advertising, marketing
Industry 2
Make Yourself Competitive

- Understand the landscape and don’t rule anything out—there are good people doing interesting work in industry related to the arts
- Understand what skills you need (advertising especially is moving online—you can’t just draw anymore)
- Polish your documents, network, you get the drill
It’s not Creepy to Network
It’s not Creepy to Network

- LinkedIn is essential. Be sure to make a profile with a strong summary of your accomplishments
- Use UChicagoAlumni.org to locate email addresses of alumni
- Don’t forget that you went to an undergraduate institution once
- Get started earlier rather than later
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- Framing questions
- Kinds of Work
- Your Skills in Context
- Things To Do Next
Your Skills in Context

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What skills do you have?

- Making art!
- Teaching others about art!
- Writing about art!
- Depending on several factors (financial, methodological, aesthetic, dining preference): eating art!
- Evaluating the work of others!
- Administrative leadership!
Sure, but what does this work look like, broken down?
What do these activities actually entail?
Making Art

- Planning long/short-term projects
- Thinking conceptually, but building objects out of concepts
- Understanding different creative tools / skills / processes
- Finding funding/ “selling” work / web design
- Managing expectations
Teaching Others About Art

- Communicating difficult concepts
- Leadership and management
- Facilitation of stakeholder views
- Assessing and addressing needs
- “Client” service
- Use of technology
Writing About Art

- Analyzing objects and evidence; understanding the landscape
- Domestic/international travel
- Meeting regular deadlines
- Completing self-directed work
- Writing for multiple audiences
- Publishing work
Evaluating Work

- Sensitive communications; delivering constructive feedback
- Assessing/addressing problems
- Working in a team environment
- Detail-oriented analysis
Administrative Experience

- Event / exhibition planning
- Curating content
- Web promotion
- Managing budgets/logistics
- Corresponding with experts, curators, designers, etc.
Workshop Agenda:

- Framing Questions
- Humanities Crisis!
- It’s all Context
- Jobs / Careers Stuff

Things To Do Next
Cosimo de Medici

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EDUCATION

University of Chicago | Chicago, IL | Ph.D. Art History | Expected May 2015
Coursework: Florentine Renaissance Painting; Intellectual History of Western Europe; Public Humanities
Awarded five years of full funding to support research

Rutgers University | New Brunswick, NJ | B.A, Political Science | May 2011
Study Abroad Semester in Morocco (coursework in Arabic and North African Literature)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Department of Art History, University of Chicago | Chicago, IL | September 2008 – Present
Doctoral Researcher
- Conducted six-month independent archival research work in Milan, Florence, and Rome
- Presented work-in-progress at workshops and national/international conferences
- Completed intensive summer of Italian language training
- Compiled and analyzed extensive archive of sources (~75 primary documents)
- Led History of Ideas workshop; planned & implemented logistics for biweekly events (10-15 attendees)

Lecturer and Teaching Assistant
- Created syllabus and all course exercises for 2 courses; provided written feedback; advised 7 students
- Taught 65 total students over five academic quarters; completed extensive pedagogy training
II: Reaching Out

- Schedule an Appointment
- Get started on your outreach to alumni in diverse fields
- Remember you’re an alum of this institution, not just of DOVA.
- Attend events in “safe spaces” where you can ask even crazy-seeming questions and practice skills with peers
- Practice writing cold emails
Wrapping Up
Questions?

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