

Statement of Professional Expression Art Department, Augustana College

According to the College Art Association Standards for Retention and Tenure of Visual Arts Faculty, the visual arts faculty is on a full-time annual appointment basis, other than visiting artists, critics, or artists-in-residence. They are to be regarded as having regular faculty status including eligibility for academic rank, promotion to all academic ranks, tenure, retirement, and other benefits, and participation in college and university governance. The work of visual arts faculty is not extra-academic. (Standards for Retention and Tenure of Visual Arts Faculty, CAA Board of Directors, April 24, 1993; Revised October 27, 2002; and October 24, 2004)

CAA standards define that visual art faculty holds Master of Fine Arts degree (M.F.A.) which is the terminal degree for visual artists. No academic degree other than the M.F.A., Doctorate in Fine Arts or Design, or equivalent professional achievement should be regarded as qualification for appointment to professional rank, promotion, or tenure. Degrees in education and related fields shall not be required except for faculty appointed specifically to teach courses in education. Similarly, education degrees should not be regarded as constituting appropriate preparation for teaching studio art. Their commitment to creative work (production, expression, research, etc.) is regarded as the same as that of academics in other disciplines. Exhibition of creative work is regarded as analogous to publication in other fields. (Standards for Retention and Tenure of Visual Arts Faculty, CAA Board of Directors, April 24, 1993; Revised October 27, 2002; and October 24, 2004)

The Art Department of Augustana College expects a pre-tenured faculty member to hold a degree of Master of Fine Arts and maintain an active career as an artist and/or designer. An art/design educator at a premier college of liberal arts must demonstrate intellectual and artistic excellence in the individual's media of training. By continuously making and showing their art, art faculty members serve as models of excellence for the future artists and art educators whom they teach.

Professionalism for a visual artist should be demonstrated through continuous artistic pursuit and annual participation in juried competitions, one/two person exhibitions, or group shows in professional art venues of the region and beyond. To a visual artist, being selected by professional jurors, i.e. museum directors, curators, reputable art critics or artists, for inclusion in group exhibitions held in art museums and galleries is in itself proof of professionalism, and one/two person exhibitions in the same settings are landmarks of accomplishments. For the purpose of assessing the extent of professional achievement, however, written evidence (#1 below) must accompany visual evidence. Other events of professional achievements to be considered include being written about or cited in professional art journals, writing art reviews for such journals, curating shows or giving presentations or workshops at an established art venue, participation in residency programs, or serving as juror for professional competitions and art fairs.

Marks of professionalism vary as do venues of art exhibitions. Among the factors for consideration and pertinent evaluations are size of art community (#2 below), type of

exhibition space (#3 below), level/size of competition (#4 below), credentials and specialty of juror (#5 below), nature and size of exhibition (#6 below) and when invited, details of such invitation (#7 below).

#1 Such as jurors' written statements for competitions, information about the jurors and competitions, published professional reviews, printed endorsement by the gallery establishment and evaluations by respected members of the artist community.

#2 Exhibitions in larger urban centers such as Chicago or Des Moines are more difficult to be included in than those in the Quad City area due to the larger pools of professionals who are in the former regions.

#3 While art museum shows are most respected, the differences of import of shows at commercial art galleries, nonprofit art centers and galleries of educational institutions are harder to generalize. Many variables exist such as the size, reputation and management styles of the exhibition galleries, or the sizes and levels of urbanity and artistic awareness of the communities in which the galleries are located. Artist-run galleries tend to be quite selective and therefore are impressive venues in which to exhibit.

#4 Winning public commissions is more competitive than participating in art fairs. Commissions approved by a professional panel should count more than those by committees of nonprofessionals. Degrees of competition for professionally juried shows increase from regional to state to multiple states to national. Information about the jury panel and the levels of competitions, when available, would be very helpful when provided.

#5 The director or curator of an art museum or a reputable critic serving as juror would carry greater weight than a less worldly, perhaps less educated artist does. When the juror and the artist share the same art specialty, however, being chosen may have particular meaning for the latter.

#6 All other factors being equal, one/two person shows carry far greater weight for artists than inclusion in a group show, due to the recognition and the higher level of commitment that the exhibition establishment makes to the artist. Highly regarded exhibitions are those which feature a cohesive body of current work - usually requiring months of preparation - accompanied with an artist statement. It is not unusual for a show to be simply tagged "recent works", however. Influential artists, often of seniority, are given retrospective shows.

#7 Exhibitions by invitation differ in terms of professional validity. Invitations from an art museum may carry more prestige than being juried into competitions. High levels of creative energy and intellectual strengths can also come through theme shows that artists organize themselves or take place in established or unconventional settings.

Professionalism for a graphic designer can be demonstrated through any of the means available for studios artists outlined above, but also may include additional activities such as design competitions at the local, regional, national or international levels, paid or unpaid freelance design work for corporations, companies, non-profits, charities, churches, grass roots organizations, political parties, or any other cause, consulting work, art direction or the management of a graphic design studio.