

## The Post Baccalaureate Program Faculty

The four members of PAFA's Post Baccalaureate faculty are dedicated to helping the program's talented artists learn to step outside the base of knowledge they have when they arrive in order to find the answers they seek in their work.

### Michael Moore, Program Chair

"We attempt to respond to the multicultural community of artists worldwide and to help each of our students—individually—to learn one another's artistic language, so they can value one another's artistic production. Our belief is that, if you become conversant in as many languages as possible, it benefits your own artistic practice. We do not presume to know how to make anyone's work better until we know what he or she is trying to do."

Mr. Moore chairs the Post Baccalaureate program at PAFA. He came to the Academy in 1992 to teach in the MFA program, and has taught in the Post Bac program since its inception in 1995. He was the director of PAFA's graduate programs from 1994 to 1998. Mr. Moore has a BFA from Syracuse University and an MFA from the University of Washington. He was the recipient of a Fulbright Teacher Exchange to Scotland and was a member of the faculty at the University of Southern Maine from 1967 to 1991.

### Jan Baltzell

Ms. Baltzell "seeks to fully engage students to understand their own potential and individual vision" and wants, "ultimately, for them to be curious enough to explore the possibilities; to explore the unknown."

Ms. Baltzell is a full professor and member of the Faculty Critic Program. She has a BFA from the Philadelphia College of Art and an MFA from Miami University in Ohio. She is represented by the Schmidt Dean Gallery in Philadelphia and in numerous collections including PAFA, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, and the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

### Mark Blavat

"The program is designed to meet each student precisely where they are artistically when they arrive, and try to help them bring that unique point of view into focus. As a faculty, we try to build a bridge of dialogue that connects this individual perspective with our own understanding and experience, so we can meet in the middle. We strive to support each student so that, ultimately, his or her own practices become the real teacher."

Mr. Blavat teaches painting and drawing in the undergraduate program at Tyler. Mr. Blavat has a Bachelor's from the Tyler School of Art at Temple University, and an MFA and MA from the University of Iowa. Professionally, Mr. Blavat describes himself as having "detached from the commerce machine."

### Neysa Grassi

"The strength of the Post Bac is that each of the faculty brings something different to the program. It is a real team commitment to the process. I believe that understanding is the key to working with an incoming artist. My goal is to assist them in feeling safe enough to find their individual voice within the larger realm of experimentation. Students coming to the Post Bac program might or might not know exactly what they want. That's okay. For each, it's a different journey."

Ms. Grassi is a Faculty Critic in PAFA's Post Baccalaureate and MFA Programs. A graduate of the Academy's Certificate Program, she has won numerous awards, including a Pew Fellowship in the Arts, Works on Paper Fellowship from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a fellowship from the Ballinglen Arts Foundation in Ireland, and a Residency Award from the Fundación Valparaíso in Mojacar, Spain. Ms. Grassi is currently represented by Locks Gallery in Philadelphia.

ON THE COVER: Works by Mark Goodson and Olive Thomas, photo by Michael Moore INSIDE: Work by Diana Dodson



# POST BACCALAUREATE

A Year of Exploration ■ Preparation ■ Transformation at the

PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY OF THE FINE ARTS



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Founded in 1805, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) is America's first school of fine arts and museum. A recipient of the 2005 National Medal of Arts presented by the President of the United States, PAFA is a recognized leader in fine arts education. Nearly every major American artist has taught, studied, or exhibited at the Academy. The institution's world-class collection of American art continues to grow and provides what only a few other art institutions in the world offer: the rare combination of an outstanding museum and an extraordinary faculty known for its commitment to students and for the stature and quality of its artistic work.

## About PAFA

The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) is America's first art school and museum of fine arts. The school-museum campus in Philadelphia trains talented students from around the globe and also houses one of the world's greatest collections of American art. Within the traditional forms of drawing, painting, printmaking, and sculpture, PAFA prepares graduates to pursue successful careers as practicing fine artists who make cultural contributions far beyond the walls of their studios.

PAFA's School of Fine Arts features a diverse faculty of practicing artists, first-class facilities, and private artist studios for its students. The campus is located at the gateway to the Museum Mile in Center City—the geographic and conceptual center of Philadelphia's thriving arts community.

## What is a Post Baccalaureate Certificate?

The Post Baccalaureate (Post Bac) Certificate in Graduate Studies is a one-year, non-degree program. The 30-credit curriculum incorporates independent studio work, graduate-level classwork, and critiques from designated graduate faculty.

Traditionally, the Post Bac recognizes specialized study and is targeted toward preparation for additional advanced study, comparable to liberal arts graduates applying to medical school.

## Who is a good candidate for the Post Bac Program?

- You already have an undergraduate degree, either in the liberal arts or in studio art, and seek to broaden and refine your artistic practices.
- You aspire to a Master of Fine Arts program, but need an additional year of studio work to develop a strong, cohesive, and competitive body of work. (A number of our Post Bac students go on to the MFA program at PAFA.)
- You already have a degree in art, but want to pursue a different medium.
- You are contemplating a career change.
- You simply seek a supportive community of artists working earnestly to redefine their artistic practices.

**To learn more about the Post Bac program, visit our website [www.pafa.edu/postbac](http://www.pafa.edu/postbac) or contact the Office of Admissions at 215-972-7625 or [admissions@pafa.edu](mailto:admissions@pafa.edu).**



Photo: Michael Moore

### Shelley Hedlund Post Bac, 2005

*The Post Bac helped me find my voice.*

"Through working closely with both my peers and the Post Bac faculty, I came to understand more clearly my weaknesses and strengths as an artist. I felt really encouraged to experiment . . . even if I failed. I had been making art for other people and for assignments for so long [that] I was a bit stuck. The Post Bac allowed me to break free of many of the preconceived notions I had about my art.

The Post Bac also warmed me up for graduate school, since I attended a liberal arts school, where critique was less formal and less stringent. The Post Bac helped me find my voice—not only in my art, but in my presentation skills, in my interests—in many ways."

*Currently:* Shelley is the program director at the Multicultural Youth eXchange, an arts non-profit in Philadelphia that is dedicated to tolerance building through the arts. "I still make art," she says.



### Jeremy McGill Post Bac, 2006

*The program laid a great foundation for me to enter the MFA program and get where I am today.*

"I had gone to a weekend master class with PAFA alum Bo Bartlett at the Academy and began to think about returning to school. . . Committing to go back to school was a big decision, and being able to be part of the Post Bac program was a good place for me to have a dedicated work space and time to develop my ideas."

*Currently:* Jeremy is teaching at Temple University and Delaware County Community College.

### Nadya Hussain Post Bac, 2007

*Halfway through the program, I had a breakthrough.*

"The experience [at PAFA] was life changing for me. I had already been in school for 8 years, [had] two undergraduate degrees, and was teaching art. In Pakistan, I grew up being afraid—even artistically. There was always nervousness and a lot of hesitation and anger.

The Post Bac program was just what I needed. With time, the compassion of the professors and critics here changed me . . . I had a breakthrough of sorts and my work changed . . . I was 'allowed' to show myself through the program and within the group. The program changed my perspective. The seminars allowed me to think beyond permissions and what was conventionally 'seminar talk' at all the schools I had been to before. The critiques were [often] intense dialogues on the culture of humanity. That is more than anything I could have asked for."

*Currently:* Nadya is an assistant professor in the Fine Arts Department of the National College of Arts, near Islamabad, Pakistan. "I teach fine art undergraduates that it's all right to be who they are in a crazy world," she says.

### Stephen Halko Post Bac, 2005

*I like to think I pressed a reset button on everything I thought I knew about art.*

"When I applied for an MFA, [the PAFA Admissions staff] encouraged me to look at the Post Bac program. They suggested I could use the extra year of studio time to improve my work and be better prepared for the MFA program. This was some of the best advice I ever received. When I entered the MFA, I already had a year of experience and growth under my belt. My fellow MFA students spent a lot of the first of their two years making the adjustments I had already made. And the Post Bac faculty was wonderful in dealing with the 'growing pains' specific to this transition phase.

PAFA (and the Post Bac faculty) had a way of exposing our shortcomings in a nurturing manner. I felt safe to admit what I didn't know and take advantage of the instruction available. It was like saying, 'OK, let's break down all the attitude and misconceptions. I'm confident that I am in good hands to be "rebuilt" even stronger.' I matured mentally. My work and understanding grew beyond anything I thought possible.

I landed an academic position just two years out of graduate school (four years out of the Post Bac). I am positive that my Post Bac experience gave me insight and knowledge crucial to landing, keeping, and excelling in such a highly competitive field."

*Currently:* Stephen is a tenure-track assistant professor of drawing at Kendall College of Art and Design.

