

Program of Studies

Berkshire Country Day School

Where you belong.

Arts Block
2010–11

Music

Vocal Ensemble

Grades 7, 8, 9; fall & winter

Amy Hilliard

The Upper School Vocal Ensemble performs several times during the school year for both school and community activities. Various song styles are used including folk, Broadway, popular, and gospel. Emphasis is placed on vocal health and well-being, which is explored through physical warm-ups, stretching and movement.

Electronic Music

Grades 7, 8, 9; fall & winter

Amy Hilliard

Electronic Music presents an introduction to composition using various programs including NoteFlight and Garage Band. Students will learn how to compose music in standard notation on the computer as well as create, mix, and edit digital music. Students will study musical form and structure, melody and beginning harmony as well as various musical terms. The emphasis of the class is on composition, including multi-media and compositions for musicians at BCD to perform. The class format includes listening, discussion, lab sessions and a final concert showcasing works created throughout the semester.

Introduction to Classical Guitar

Grades 7, 8, 9; fall & winter

Jon Suters

This class will focus on the basics of playing the nylon string (classical) guitar: right hand and left hand positioning, tone production, scale and arpeggio technique, basic music reading for the guitar, playing solo, and playing within a guitar ensemble. Some rudimentary knowledge of the guitar would be helpful but not necessarily required. Students must have access to a classical guitar, or at the very least steel string acoustic.

Jazz Ensemble/ Upper School Band

Grades 7, 8, 9; fall & winter

Jon Suters

We will learn and perform music focusing on songs from the "Great American Songbook" (i.e. Ellington, Gershwin, Carmichael, etc...) as well as Latin and jazz fusion classics. Emphasis will be placed on improvisation and playing within an ensemble. Students need to have at least a rudimentary ability to read music and have facility on their respective instrument

with regards to major and minor scales. All instrumentalists (and vocalists) welcome!

Studio Art

The Studio Arts department hopes to provide time, place, materials and instruction to allow every student to experience the power and joy of creation. Students gain hands-on familiarity with a variety of mediums, including but not limited to drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, collage, and photography. They have the opportunity to discover their own path to fulfilling an assignment, to make choices, to develop self-expression, and to become comfortable with reading visual images. Students become familiar with a variety of styles and time periods in art, with the work of many artists, and with art from many cultures. They see connections between art and other subject areas, linking the interconnectedness of the real world for them.

A student who has attended BCD for most their school years is curious, is comfortable with reading a work of art, with analyzing the flood of images our society generates, and with museum experiences. Students learn principles and elements of art and become aware of their own best abilities to create art work. They have the opportunity to work independently and in a group, and to show their work. They become sensitive to the fact that choice shapes all human efforts. They develop tolerance for one another's efforts. They should also know that creating can be fun. The art teachers hope to challenge and nurture creative thinkers in society.

Art throughout history deals with durable human concerns. Exposure to art contributes to being a well-rounded member of society.

Arts Foundation

Grade 7, fall & winter

Marilyn Cromwell

Increase your knowledge of color theory, your drawing skills, and your awareness of the possibilities for working in three dimensions while studying in a class of other enthusiastic artists. Build on what you already know. Learn new skills, try new mediums. Try the same assignment in different mediums to see how it changes. Learn to construct the box so you can work outside it.

Drawing, Painting, and Sculpture

Grades 8 and 9, fall & winter

Marilyn Cromwell

All students will work with a variety of mediums. Pastels, recycled materials, clay, and paint are the tip of the iceberg for materials that we will be using. Ninth graders, with their greater skill base, will have more latitude in defining the direction of their response to assignments. This is the place for fun, hard work, and best efforts.

Graphic Design

Graphic Design courses are offered to students in Grades 7–9 as additions to standard studio courses, in recognition of the growing field of art which is digitally based. Much of our world has become electronic and so, just as artists have always done, artists communicate in the medium “of the times.” Today there are artists whose entire body of work may be produced through use of computers and other digital methods. Graphic Design courses focus on learning the software necessary to produce graphic design. Additionally, each course will look at basic design principles which apply to all graphic communication.

Intro to Graphic Design

Grades 7 & 8, fall & winter

John Neiner

In its essence, graphic design is communication—not verbal but visual communication. Since design is a form of communication it too is subject to principles and rules which govern its effectiveness. Through the study of graphic design, students will be more able to look beyond the words and images to the how and why of our intensely visual culture. Students will use Adobe Creative Suite®, the industry standard for creating digital art. A portion of the curriculum will include both Photoshop and InDesign and how these programs, with Illustrator, can be used to produce everything from posters to books. The class will be project oriented and each student will produce a portfolio of work. Making the effort to be creative, stretch boundaries, and produce graphic communication that is both arresting and understandable are the most important tasks for the each student.

Graphic Design

Grades 8 & 9, fall & winter

Prerequisite: Intro to Graphic design

John Neiner

Graphic design is part of virtually everything in our lives. From packaging design to car design, maps to cd covers, clothing and road signs, if you look behind

our visual culture there is a vast population of graphic designers directing us, enticing us, and informing us. Like a verbal conversation, design too directly interacts with the viewer to convey thoughts and moods or to prompt to action. Underlying each decision is, hopefully, a concept of design that attracts the viewer in order to communicate a message. In this class we will look at how that communication is done and how it can be powerful. A series of basic design principles will be studied. At the focus of this two-term class will be the creation of BCD's yearbook, The Penguin. Students will design the yearbook, compose pages, and be responsible for acquiring editorial content. Members of the class will form a design team and collaborate on the look and feel of the yearbook. Working collaboratively, students will decide layout, position, connecting design themes, dedications, and all other layout choices for the yearbook. One Saturday workday will be required during the winter term.

Shop

Arts Block offerings in the shop include wood, glass, pottery and community construction projects. Projects are student created. Wood and glass is offered in the fall and winter terms. Pottery and Community Construction are offered in the spring. Safety, creativity and cooperation are most important in Shop class.

Wood and Glass

Grades 7, 8, 9; fall & winter

Laura Gratz

In the first and second terms, students work in wood and leaded glass. The projects are student generated. The wood and glass classes begin with a lecture and demonstration of each skill or tool until all the necessary material is covered. All students are required to make a project in wood and one in glass. All students are taught to use the portable power tools such as the sanders, drill, and saber saw. Students in grades 8-9 may also use the router. Students in grades 7-9 are also instructed in the use of the stationary power tools including the band saw, drill press, lathe, and scroll saw. Projects (which are student generated) might include book shelves, wooden cups and bowls (on the lathe or hand carved), small furniture items, and wooden games.

Beginning in seventh grade, students learn to cut and grind glass. In eighth grade, boxes and pyramids are popular items. Ninth graders have to create an original design for their glass project.

Theater & Film Philosophy

The Theater and Film Department at BCD aims to develop students' appreciation for theater as a viable, relevant art form and expose them to the vibrant medium of filmmaking. Both traditions allow creative expression and can be, for some students, a pinnacle of their educations. The Arts Block courses offer them the opportunity to explore themselves; their voices, their visions with often surprising results. Actors, directors, playwrights, and filmmakers can exist deep within unsuspecting students and BCD's program can reveal hidden talents as well as nurture the obvious gifts.

The Actor's Instrument

Grades 7, 8, 9; fall & winter

Amy Brentano

Through movement, vocal work, games, and improvisations you will have fun learning about the discipline and skill of acting. Traditional acting technique as well as innovative approaches to the craft will be introduced. Ensemble work, self-awareness, and respect will be a primary focus. Even if you never thought you'd want to be onstage, you will enjoy this opportunity to explore the performer in you in a safe, supportive environment.

What is Theater?

Grades 7, 8, 9; fall & winter

Amy Brentano

Through an overview of many forms of theater, you will be on your feet delving into text and various performance formats. The class is a look into the relevance of theater throughout time from the Greeks, to Kabuki, to the Avant-garde of the late twentieth century. You will discover the importance of the art form politically, socially, and historically and emerge with your own ideas about the relevance of theater as a means of expression in today's world. Is theater still meaningful today? We will have a performance demonstration at the completion of the course.

Actors' Scene Study

Grades 7,8,9; spring only

Amy Brentano

Students learn to approach scene work using a range of theater texts and acting techniques.

Digital Filmmaking

Grades 7,8,9; spring only

Amy Brentano

This course introduces facets of digital filmmaking including, shot lists, camera angles, shooting techniques, and editing with Final CUT Pro. In addition, elements of style are explored including use of satire, voice-over, and visual economy. Students work in groups to make simple short digital film projects aimed at demonstrating knowledge of the techniques taught in class.