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Art education with an extra dimension



Jane Bassolino and Liz Nofle are two of the first graduates of a new collaborative program with the Museum of Fine Arts school. Photo by Lauren McFalls.

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As part of a **new studio art program for undergraduates**, Jane Bassolino spent a semester in Ireland studying with Art + Design professor Mira Cantor, producing large-scale impressionistic landscape paintings and immersing herself in the beauty of the Irish countryside.

The program, a collaboration among the University's Art + Design department and Boston's School of the Museum of Fine Arts, combines studio art courses at the museum school with art and design history courses and general electives at Northeastern. It also offers experiential learning opportunities of the kind that

Bassolino pursued in Ireland.

The curriculum, which includes courses on topics ranging from ceramics and drawing to film and sound, prepares students for careers as professional artists, art teachers, and in other creative fields.

Bassolino, a recent graduate who is moving to New York to work with a professional artist whose mediums include sculpture and video, praised the program for its ability to adapt to students' artistic passions, both on campus and abroad.

"I was given a studio and told to produce whatever I wanted with the teacher's guidance," Bassolino said. "The program gave me the tools and a loose structure that really allowed me to focus on my own work and explore."

Another recent graduate, Liz Nofle, said the museum school's courses on drawing, printmaking and career preparation took her artistic skills to another level.

"It's very supportive of you and your vision as an artist," said Nofle, who currently freelances for Boston Magazine, doing in-house illustration and page layout. "It's a very nurturing environment."

Art + Design department chair Russell William Pensyl echoed Nofle by pointing to the expertise of the program's faculty and diverse course offerings. He said the museum school's classes compliment those offered at Northeastern.

"The museum school has a great reputation for offering a broad range of studio art classes with qualified faculty who focus on specific disciplines such as painting and printmaking," he said.

Bassolino and Nofle, who count 20th century impressionistic artist Oskar Kokoshka and modern-day Scottish painter Jack Vettriano as two of their favorite artists, respectively, have ambitious plans: Bassolino wants to open an art gallery, while Nofle wants to design magazines and pursue a career as an illustrator.

No matter what, art has always been — and always will be — part of their lives. "I always knew I'd end up doing something creative," Nofle said.

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