



Dear Academy Community,

First, I want to thank you as we all navigate through these unprecedented times. Thank you for your offers of help, your advice and your perspective. Thank you for your support. Thank you for your commitment to the Academy. Our community of artists, friends and patrons never fails to sustain and nourish us.

As I think about the situation, I am reminded of something I recently read: that one of our greatest freedoms in life is how we react to things. I want to share how the New York Academy of Art is reacting to the current crisis.

Art is our focus. Our daily practice. Our life's work. The mission of the school is to teach the skills and techniques of fine art making in the service of vital contemporary art. In the face of the current challenges, we are choosing to deliver on that mission.

We're teaching ourselves how to teach online. Remote learning classes began today. Our students have moved out of our school studios and turned their apartments into home studios. Friday, our Building Manager drove around town delivering clay and other supplies to the sculptors.

We're organizing online portfolio reviews where our students can meet and get feedback from many of the same high-profile gallerists and artists who would normally have visited the studios this semester. These art world leaders are essential sources of information and guidance to our emerging artists as they enter the real-world arena. We will continue to create opportunities for our students to meet them.

Academy patrons and supporters have always sustained our artists. It's a deeper engagement than just buying a painting, in some cases it's a scholarship, in others, a life-long connection. In this time of social distancing, these relationships are more vital than ever. In order to keep the two connected, we're organizing virtual studio visits and an online gallery.

Our academic year normally ends with full panel critiques of the MFA candidates' thesis work. It's one of the most important events at the school, attended by all our students and many of our supporters. If we can't hold them in person this year, we will hold them online and we'll invite you all to join the audience.

Instagram, always the perfect tool for image sharing and artist connection, is more useful than ever. Our students started [@NYAA2020gallery](https://www.instagram.com/NYAA2020gallery) in order to share the work of this year's graduating class.

We are so grateful to our friends for their words of encouragement. We will keep you informed as we respond to this difficult situation. We could not be more appreciative of your support.

In closing, I offer this quote from John Baldessari: "Great art is clear thinking about mixed feelings." The current situation is sure to provide many mixed feelings. I am certain, if we stay focused, great art will come of it.

Sincerely yours,

David Kratz
President
New York Academy of Art