visual and performing arts!

AT COLORADO ACADEMY
The arts are a part of every student’s experience at Colorado Academy. Our goal is to empower our student-artists to explore the creative process and engage in the artistic habits that are so critical in the world today. Our artists practice joy, patience, courage, adaptability, persistence, expression, self-direction, and engagement in the world.

CA offers courses of artistic study for all students, allowing exposure and experience to the new learner, as well as advanced programs of study for those seeking a professional path in college and beyond.

Katy Hills
Director of Visual and Performing Arts
**Visual Arts**

The Visual Arts Program combines a choice-based exploration with a discipline-based study of art. In Pre-K through Middle School, students explore and develop the foundational skills and artistic mindset necessary for creating art. These artistic behaviors empower the artists to direct their own learning and guides them to work that is meaningful to them. As students progress to Upper School, they begin to dive deeper into discipline-based art, where they learn and practice technical skills and approaches that lead to sophisticated work. Portfolio-level Senior artists create a body of work that culminates in a curated group show in the Ponzo Center. Student work is on display in all three divisions throughout the year and in CA’s annual All-School Arts Festival every spring. Our visual arts teachers are experienced educators and artists who provide a continuity of instruction for students from Pre-Kindergarten through Upper School.

**Theater**

Theater study at CA offers a focused and progressive program in Acting that teaches students to work moment to moment and live truthfully on stage. Beginning in Middle School, young performers are introduced to the creative process through improvisation and scene study before having the opportunity to branch out into more advanced scene study, musical theatre, and acting for the camera in the Upper School. There is also a fully developed Technical Theater program through which students study stage management, lighting, sound and set design, and also acquire hands-on experience in stage crew assignments. The Upper School produces four major productions per year, in addition to the 24-Hour Play Project, which brings together student writers, directors, and performers for one intense day of rehearsal, culminating in a performance. Middle School’s performances include both a musical and non-musical main-stage production, and Lower School performs three grade level presentations through the music program.

**Music**

CA’s music program trains students in vocal and instrumental music with numerous performance opportunities throughout the year. Lower School students begin with an active collaborative music program, progressing in Middle and Upper School to participation in Choir, Orchestra, and Jazz and Rock Combos. In addition to the music course offerings, there is an instrumental music program providing private music lessons during the school day in piano, strings, guitar, and wind instruments. Students may also participate in specialized programs, including specialty choirs, chamber ensembles, and the music composition program.

**Dance**

The Dance Program at Colorado Academy provides opportunities in a variety of dance genres for students at all levels of interest and experience. We explore and engage a variety of styles, techniques, and practices. Students have the opportunity to choose a class with emphasis in Contemporary Styles (Jazz, Lyrical, Hip Hop, Ballet), Tap, Theater Dance (all styles found on Broadway), and Vertical Dance. All students have opportunity to choreograph their own work and will learn important historical content. Our students develop skills in collaboration, perseverance, creativity, and communication through movement. Performance opportunities occur throughout the year.
The Orff-Schulwerk Method

The Lower School Music program is grounded in both the Orff-Schulwerk approach and traditional choral singing. We strive to teach students musicianship and innovative expression skills so that music becomes a way of life for them, starting in these early years.

Lower School

The Lower School Arts program engages students in music, theater, dance, and storytelling through a collaborative experience. Students learn choral singing and to play on Orff instruments, as an inventive ensemble, leading up to grade-level performances each spring. The Visual Arts program engages the imagination and enthusiasm of our young artists. A variety of materials serve as a springboard for self-expression as students challenge themselves to persist through the artistic process as they learn to develop craftsmanship. Throughout the year, students reflect on their work and the work of contemporary and historical artists to deepen their understanding of the larger art community. Students have the opportunity to show their work throughout the year, including the fall K-8 show and the All-School Arts Festival each spring.
Middle School

Students begin the exploration of the arts in Grade 6 through an arts rotation that includes exposure to the following disciplines: vocal music, theater, visual arts, and coding/design. In Grades 7-8, students are allowed to express preferences for electives; however, they are directed to investigate a wide range of classes that will help them to discover the genres in which they may want to specialize as they move on to high school. Options include vocal music, theater performance, technical theater, studio art, photography, film, ceramics, dance (contemporary and traditional styles, including Tap), wood shop, and band (Jazz or Rock). Students also have the opportunity to study strings, woodwinds, flute, brass, piano, and orchestra through our private music program. Artistic observation and critical thinking are emphasized across disciplines as students begin to develop an aesthetic vocabulary for discussing the arts.

Recent & Upcoming Productions

- The Pirates of Penzance
- Babes in the Wood
- Dirk Smirk Secret Agent
- Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat
- Thoroughly Modern Millie
- The Silver Whistle (outreach production)
- Xanadu
- Jazz/Rock Combo Concerts
- Choir Concerts
- Orchestra Concerts
- Chamber and Piano Ensemble Concerts
- Solo Instrumental Recitals
In Upper School, students have the opportunity to specialize in an artistic area of their choice, but it is not unusual for a student to concentrate in more than one art form. The approach to study is twofold: elective classes open to all students, and advanced courses of study for students who wish to pursue the arts on a professional level or who would like a more focused arts experience in high school. A wide range of electives is offered in both performing and visual arts. Advanced programs include Specialty Vocal Groups, Acting, Technical Theater, Dance and Portfolio Study. All arts classes at CA receive academic credit, and grades are part of the student’s cumulative average.
Upper School Course Selections

Visual Arts
- Studio Art
- Digital Photography
- Digital Video
- Ceramics
- Graphic Design and Publication
- Introduction to Architectural Drawing
- Digital Art
- Advanced Portfolio Study (by application and review)

Theater
Special production opportunities open to Upper School students include The 24-Hour Play Project. Courses marked with an (*) are by audition.
- Acting/Scene Study
- Technical Theater
- Musical Theater
- Performance Innovations (cross-curricular class with Computer Science and Engineering Design)
- Acting for Film
- Theater Production(*)

Music
- Chamber Choir
- Multiple Specialty Choirs(*)
- Orchestra
- Rock Combo
- Jazz Combo
- Audio Engineering

Dance (*) by audition
- Contemporary/Hip-Hop
- Tap
- Broadway Dance
- Conservatory of Dance(*)

What Our Students Say

“At Colorado Academy, theater productions offer an environment where I can grow and develop as a performer, a leader, and a human being. Theater has taught me that, with a group of focused and genuine people, extraordinary things can be accomplished.”
Rachel Harris ’19

“I’ve had a positive experience studying in Colorado Academy’s Audio Engineering course, taking private lessons for seven years, and performing with multiple combo groups. Being a part of the Colorado Academy music program has expanded my knowledge about music and my passion for it.”
Caleb Aguirre ’20
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AT COLORADO ACADEMY | 2020-2021

Creating curious, kind, courageous, and adventurous learners and leaders.