Cultural Daily

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Read This if You're Feeling Lost About Art School

Our Friends · Friday, October 1st, 2021

Art school has long been touted as a waste of money by people who believe the only degrees worth pursuing involve business and marketing. Granted, the average professional artist doesn't rake in a doctor's salary, and you might find it difficult to get noticed regardless of where you went to school. But art is an incredible field, and when you've been fortunate enough to discover your creative calling, it's not easy to throw it all away for a 9-to-5 somewhere. But art school costs a lot of money, employment is far from guaranteed and it can leave you wondering whether you've wasted an entire degree for nothing. Don't let these doubts deter you. While they are valid concerns, there are also ways to still pursue your love of art and creativity while securing a good job in the future.

You Can Double Major

For starters, you aren't roped in to attending a prestigious art school and dedicating years of your life to honing one craft. If you want to expand your options, you can explore double majors at a university. Here, you could pursue something practical alongside your passion. If you find a great school, you can start figuring out how to balance the cost of your studies with a private student loans. Scholarships and federal options are also available, but you may need more if you're going to be studying two bachelor's degrees at once. Borrowing from a private lender could give you lower interest rates and more freedom to set up a flexible repayment plan after graduation.

Consider a Creative but Profitable Field

There are many ways to express yourself artistically through your work. You aren't limited to your favorite medium when it comes to earning a living. Graphic and web design, for example, are two highly sought-after degrees that can let you work as a freelancer or for a company. You might not be selling paintings for a living, but you can put your drawing skills to good use while you make custom logos and build websites for clients. You can also question what it really means for you to live as an artist. In some cases, that may be shifting your focus to something bigger than you once thought. Maybe you feel equally creative on the yoga mat, so you decide to become an instructor. Or maybe you like helping other people realize their full potential, so you look into education or counseling. You are not forced to choose between earning a livable wage, working a dead-end job or being an artist.

Find the Best Way to Grow for You

You shouldn't go to an expensive art school because you think it's the only way to become a real

artist. Many professionals in the field have no formal training at all. There are other ways to refine your skills and improve without getting a degree, but you aren't forced to turn away from your passion either. Art school is great for someone who wants to network, receive critiques and learn technical abilities. But if you go there expecting to graduate with a ton of job offers, you should reevaluate. In reality, art is a hard field to work in as a professional, and there's nothing wrong with having a Plan B if you don't break into it right away.

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