

FOUNDATIONS OF FINE ARTS

Philosophy

The fine arts are usually divided into two general categories: visual and performance. The visual arts include painting, drawing, photography, sculpture and carving, and architecture. The performance arts include music, dance, drama, and film. At their best, the arts explore how God communicates His glory, beauty, and holiness through man's artistic experience and expression.

Artistic man, who bears the divine image, reflects the creativity of God and interacts with the established structures of reality. Insofar as works of art glorify God and illuminate man's nature and destiny, they edify individuals and enrich cultures.

A Christian aesthetic cultivates a conscious appreciation of the attributes of the Triune God found in revelation, mediated through the senses, and illuminating the imagination. A Classical (pagan) aesthetic, while absent true knowledge of the Creator, nevertheless consciously reflects the beauty of creation, and thus has the effect of drawing the artist and audience out of themselves to enjoy and utilize objective standards of beauty. The purely modern aesthetic, however, has reduced art to subjective preoccupation of self-expression of the artist, designed to evoke an equally and merely subjective reaction from the audience. In accordance with the Cultural Mandate of Genesis 1:28, which calls covenant man, as made in the image of God, to be fruitful, to multiply, and to subdue the earth and to exercise dominion, Providence Classical Christian School aims to recover a Classical Christian perspective from the modern ruins.

Providence Classical Christian School aims to comport with a Classical and Christian, rather than a modern, view of art. Therefore, we will use four basic standards by which to critique art: technical excellence, validity (the artist's motive), intellectual content (worldview), and the integration of content and vehicle. Ultimately, we desire to satisfy the longing of humanity to transcend the ordinary through sight and sound to the glory of God.

In our curriculum, based on the Classical Trivium, the Grammar stage emphasizes basic elements, concepts, skills, and history of each art form studied. The emphasis in the Dialectic stage shifts to an inquiry into the meaning and purpose of the art being explored. Finally, in the Rhetoric stage, the student will continue to formalize his knowledge and skill through a variety of artistic expressions appropriate to each medium. The result is a spiral curriculum of increasing complexity, using age-appropriate methods at every stage of the student's development. Therefore, we teach for life change: to take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ, in who is hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Fine Arts Department Goals

1. Reflect and enjoy the absolute values of the truth, goodness, and beauty of God in artistic endeavors.

2. Appreciate human creative imagination and skill as gifts of God's common grace.
3. Recognize the fine arts as valuable means of the cultural engagement required both in the Dominion Mandate and the Great Commission.
4. Evaluate works of art through a Biblical perspective.
5. Achieve an appropriate balance of historical perspective, appreciation of master works, and technical skill for each art form and medium studied.
6. Emphasize the grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric of the fine arts at appropriate grade levels.