Who We Are

The nation’s first and foremost boarding fine arts high school, Interlochen unites five hundred of the world’s most talented and motivated young artists who study comparative arts, creative writing, dance, motion picture arts, music, theatre arts, visual arts, and challenging academics in a college-like setting. The Academy is a fast-paced environment that challenges, focuses talents and develops creativity. Academy students also master a comprehensive college-preparatory academic curriculum that prepares them to take prominent roles in any professional endeavor.

Academics and the arts are partners at the Academy. Students and faculty understand that liberal arts, math and science can enhance the artistic experience.

Interlochen Arts Academy is situated on a 1,200 acre wooded campus in northwestern Michigan near Traverse City.

Our Mission

Interlochen Arts Academy provides pre-professional arts instruction, college preparatory education and life skills development to artistically gifted high school students.

Our Philosophy

Interlochen Arts Academy offers a curriculum committed to excellence in the arts and academics. Under the guidance of an exceptional faculty of artists and educators, the Academy creates an environment in which students can achieve the highest possible artistic, intellectual and ethical standards as individuals and as responsible members of a diverse community. The Academy provides opportunities for character and leadership development through individual initiative within a framework of healthy competition and frequent presentations.

Faculty

Of the 82 outstanding artists and educators who make up the faculty, 62 hold master’s degrees and 12 hold doctorates. Exemplary faculty include instructors named Distinguished Teachers in the Arts by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts.

National Recognition

Interlochen Center for the Arts is a recipient of the National Medal of Arts, the nation’s highest honor in the arts. This award was established by Congress in 1984 and is given by the President of the United States to honor individuals and organizations that have encouraged the arts and inspired others.
Interlochen Arts Academy Overview

The Academy is in session 162 days a year. The school day is from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Students receive accelerated academic instruction along with intensive artistic studies. Courses at Interlochen are neither weighted nor labeled, but should be considered rigorous, either meeting or exceeding honors or advanced placement levels.

2014-15 Test Results

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<th>Academy S.A.T. Mean Scores</th>
<th>National Merit students</th>
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<td>Math</td>
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The Academic Curriculum

Math

The mathematics department provides courses from Algebra I to AP Statistics and AP Calculus. All courses require the use of calculators and computer software as investigative tools. Students create and use graphs of data and functions to develop mathematical skills, to reason through problems and to understand complex relationships. The curriculum encourages experimental and exploratory problem-solving and communication of mathematical ideas verbally and in writing.

Science

The science department provides a rigorous, college-preparatory curriculum with small classes and well-equipped laboratories. The department develops critical thinking skills and emphasizes technology as a means of fostering 21st century skills. The wooded 1,200-acre campus is located between two lakes and provides an ideal laboratory for coursework in the natural sciences. Students may select from a core curriculum of courses (Biology, Chemistry and Physics) or more specialized course offerings (Advanced Chemistry, Forensics, Astronomy and Ecology).

World Language

Course offerings include French and Spanish. Instruction is exclusively in the target language, and all communication between the teacher and students takes place in the target language, including grammatical explanations and cultural topics. In essence, the language classroom begins to approximate a microcosm of the foreign country. Contextual clues, cognates, gestures and visual aids assist the student in understanding without the need to translate to or from his or her native language. Participation at weekly language tables is required to promote meaningful communication in a less structured environment.

History and Political Science

The department stimulates an awareness of the human condition, emphasizing the application of rational thinking to an understanding of our historical, economic, political and social development. Course offerings may include History of Hatred, Century of Conflict, History Research, Film and Economics, Parties and Elections, Republic on Trial, Foundations of America, Contemporary America, Rise of Modern America and International Relations and World History.

English

Employing both traditional and innovative methods of intellectual inquiry, the Interlochen English faculty assist students in the exploration of human experience through the pursuit of literary appreciation and the development of language skills. English I and II are required, and literature-based college-preparatory courses emphasize the study of literary works and the development of formal composition skills. Upper-level elective English courses are academically accelerated, using methods and materials that are comparable to or exceed advanced placement courses. Course offerings may include: American, Russian, British and Psychological Literature; Short Story; Southern Literature; Modern European Literature; Shakespeare; Women in Literature; Classical Mythology; Articulating an Argument; Writing About the Arts; Native American Literature; Middle Eastern Literature; and Outsiders, Misfits and Weirdos.

English Learners

The English Language department includes a variety of language and content courses. Faculty address the immediate linguistic and social skills needed of non-native English speakers to fit into life in an English-speaking society. All levels are taught.

Physical Health & Wellness

To ensure a healthy mind and body, the brand new Dennison Center for Recreation and Wellness is a 23,000-square-foot facility devoted to year-round physical activity. It includes a large gym that can be partitioned for basketball, volleyball, indoor soccer, archery and other activities. It also boasts weight and fitness rooms, a climbing wall, a game room, a yoga studio and more.

Hybrid Learning Consortium

Interlochen Arts Academy is a member of the Hybrid Learning Consortium (HLC), a consortium of likeminded national and international independent schools offering online courses. Students often use their summers to take these academic courses in order to engage in a curriculum more weighted in the arts during the school year. Commonly taken courses include AP Psychology, Latin and Human Migration.
The Arts Curriculum

Comparative Arts
The comparative arts department’s mission is to develop relationships with cutting edge artists that explore connections among unlikely things, through collaboration. The only program in the country to offer an interdisciplinary arts major for high school students, the curriculum seeks to develop innovation, guiding students from idea to inception, with a group of extraordinary teaching artists from the arts, humanities and sciences.

Creative Writing
The creative writing program provides the experience necessary for students to continue their development as writers. Recognizing that most students are only beginning their writing careers at this age, the Academy is strongly committed to providing extensive writing experience in conjunction with critiques from peers and faculty.

Dance
The dance program educates dancers to be versatile, well-rounded artists who are prepared to face the rigors and technical demands of today’s dance world. The Academy provides a classical ballet-based curriculum that includes pointe, pas de deux, variations, and men’s class with additional emphasis in modern technique, composition and anatomical awareness. The faculty create a challenging, yet encouraging environment where dancers are encouraged to explore their potential as technicians, artists and creative thinkers.

Motion Picture Arts
The motion picture arts program (MPA) offers students a progressive, interdisciplinary education in cinema through story, digital production and critical studies courses, with foundations in film history, screenwriting, creative writing, and the related disciplines of theatre, visual arts, dance and music. The MPA curriculum is designed to provide leadership opportunities, practical training and cross-disciplinary collaboration, preparing students to become articulate, creative visual storytellers.

Music
The Academy is recognized as one of the foremost pre-professional school for musicians. Students can specialize in voice or a specific instrument, study additional instruments, investigate jazz history and improvisation, explore their potential as composers and singer-songwriters, and gain a solid background in music theory as they develop their total musicianship. Master classes with visiting guest artists, off-campus programs and tours complement the curriculum.

Theatre Arts
Recently named the top high school program in the country by the Hollywood Reporter, the theatre arts department provides pre-professional training in all aspects of performance as well as design and production. Performance students receive strong foundational acting training augmented by electives ranging from Acting Shakespeare to World Theatre and a wide range of Musical Theatre classes.

Visual Arts
The visual arts program helps young artists develop personal vision and technical abilities through experimentation with a variety of media. Problem solving, critical thinking and experimentation with processes integral to the medium build a foundation for aesthetic and original thinking.

Inter*semester
The Inter*semester term is an opportunity for the Interlochen community to explore exciting new curriculum designed with an emphasis on collaboration, interdisciplinary themes and the creative spirit of the artist. The shorter elective classes are intended to introduce students to new skills, topics and ideas in order to expand student knowledge and interests.

Exchange Programs
Interlochen has several active exchange programs with schools in China, Australia, France, Singapore and Wales. These programs are designed to allow opportunities to experience different cultures, modes of instruction, and unique artistic programs.

Academic & Artistic Achievements

- Academy students participate in over 300 artistic presentations each school year, both on campus and through tours and outreach programs.
- During the 2015-2016 Academy year, five students were named as a finalists in the YoungArts awards from the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts (NFAA).
- Comparative arts majors find success in a wide variety of artistic and academic paths. In 2015 the Heart & Art project was selected as the National Winner of the College Board Award for Excellence and Innovation in the Arts and was a Michigan Arts Council grant recipient.
- Creative writing majors are routinely recognized on the national level. Nineteen writers have been selected as Presidential Scholars in the Arts, more than any other school in the nation. Recent graduates have pursued writing, publishing, editing and other interests at universities and colleges including Oberlin, Emerson, Bard, Knox, Harvard, Stanford, NYU, the University of Michigan and the University of Virginia, among others.
- Dance majors are routinely accepted to their first choice university programs and several graduates have held professional engagements with classical ballet and modern dance companies including Miami City Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Lines Contemporary Ballet and Paul Taylor Dance Company. Additionally, dance majors have been featured as dancers and choreographers for Broadway musicals.
- In 2015-16 four musicians were selected as YoungArts finalists. Recent Academy music majors have received honors from associations including Morton Gould, ASCAP, Downbeat, Falcone, Fischoff, Percussive Arts Society, Lennox International Young Artists Competition and Michigan Music Teachers Association. Students make regular appearances on the radio program, From the Top.
- The theatre arts program has had more than 27 YoungArts finalists, including two Presidential Scholars, since 2001. The program places graduates in major audition-based college and conservatory programs around the world, including The Juilliard School, Carnegie-Mellon University, and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. Alumni can be seen working on Broadway, regional theatre, film and television.
- In the last five years, nine visual arts students have been nationally recognized as YoungArts Finalists; nine visual art students received nationally ranked Silver and Gold Portfolios in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards with an additional 42 nationally ranked Silver and Gold individual medals. In 2015, a visual arts student was named the nation’s first Presidential Scholar in Design.
- The MPA program was established in 2005; our graduates have enrolled in top media and film schools including NYU, USC, CalArts, Johns Hopkins, Princeton and Northwestern. Students have received honors including the Panavision New Filmmaker Grant, National Gold Key Awards in the Scholastics competition and Finalists in the YoungArts competition. MPA majors works screen internationally with the first high school student to be awarded the Cannes Pavilion internship at the Film Festival.
- Presidential Scholars
Since 1980, 43 Interlochen graduates have been chosen as Presidential Scholars in the Arts/Academics; more than any other high school in the United States.