

## 2025 Drawing & Painting Applicant Guide

### How to apply:

To apply to the drawing & painting program, applicants may submit **up to three (3) previously created works** and must complete **one (1) still life drawing**. The three portfolio pieces can be any combination of paintings, drawings, mixed media, and/or 3-D artwork. The still life drawing must be completed using a #2 pencil and one sheet of 8.5" x 11" paper. Applicants will photograph their artwork to upload online. Applicants will also complete a brief description of work that includes the title and medium of each piece. Please label each piece with the title of the work or component name (e.g., "Still Life").

### Portfolio Guidelines:

- Artwork must be no larger than 18" x 24".
- Artwork must have been created after March 1 of the prior year, and former OSAI students cannot submit artwork created at OSAI.
- Your three portfolio pieces can be any combination of paintings, drawings, mixed media, and/or 3-D artwork. (Photography is not permitted.)
- When selecting artwork, choose whatever best represents your personal strengths and style. Submit portfolio pieces that are based on original ideas and subject matter.
- There should be no identifying information in your images (including social media handles/watermarks).

### **Subjects that have historically been more successful:**

- Abstract work
- Landscapes, drawn from life
- Portraits or sketches of people (not based on posed photos)
- Unusual perspectives on or compositions of everyday scenes
- Topics about which you are passionate, that you have explored first-hand

### **Subjects NOT recommended for your portfolio:**

- Cartoon/anime characters
- Brands, words, numbers, or symbols
- Subjects you are unable to explore first-hand
- Drawings of floating, context-free objects (e.g. eyeballs, hearts, butterflies)
- Drawings based solely on photos, especially posed photos (e.g. photos of friends or pets)
- Drawings based on any still image that does not come from your real life (e.g. images from the internet like celebrities, cityscapes, cars, sunsets)

### Still Life Drawing Requirements and Tips:

Applicants are expected to complete their still life within one (1) hour. Due to the nature of the compressed timeframe at the Oklahoma Summer Arts Institute, it is important for evaluators to get a sense for an applicant's ability to work within a short timeframe and therefore be successful at OSAI.

You must use the following supplies to draw the still life:

- #2 pencil (HB)
- One sheet of 8.5" x 11" unlined paper

There should be 3-5 objects in the still life, and all objects must appear in your completed drawing:

- One or two organic forms or objects found in nature (e.g. driftwood, figurine, flower, fruit/vegetable, plant, rock, skull, tree branch)
- One piece of cloth - This can be draped over the table and perhaps over a rectilinear form like a box or stack of books. It may also be taped or tacked to the wall behind, to serve as a backdrop.
- One or two various 3-D geometric objects: something conical, cubical, cylindrical, pyramidal, or spherical (e.g. roll of paper towels, basketball or baseball, books or boxes, funnel or hourglass, door wedge, etc.)

It can be helpful if there is some variety to sizes of these forms, as opposed to having objects that are all the same scale. Objects should be arranged in a way that their spatial configuration is clear. Place forms in front of other forms so overlapping is apparent, rather than lining the forms up next to each other.

Direct a single light source on the still life from above or to the right or left of the still life (not in front of, behind, or below the still life). The single light source should allow you to see both light and shadow sides of these forms, as well as cast shadow shapes from these forms.

When drawing the still life, pay attention to composition, scale, overlapping, volume, and how light changes across the forms. Think about how line, mark-making, and tone can help relate to these things.



### How to Photograph Artwork:

Photograph each piece of art individually: up to three pieces of your choosing and one still life drawing.

Please use the following resources when you are ready to photograph your portfolio pieces and still life drawing:

- [How to Photograph Art](#)
- [9 Common Mistakes when Photographing your Artwork with an iPhone](#)

### Evaluation Criteria:

#### **Still life drawing – 20%**

To what extent does the applicant's still life show thoughtful use of composition and technique and follow the requirements as set forth by OAI? To what extent does the still life drawing incorporate bold use of mark-making and a demonstrated understanding of value and proportions?

#### **Portfolio – 40%**

To what extent do the applicant's chosen portfolio pieces demonstrate technical skill, appropriate and/or thoughtful choice of media in conveying their subjects, and personal artistic style with mature vision?

#### **Creativity – 20%**

To what extent do the applicant's four pieces demonstrate an overall sense of originality and present novel ideas and/or techniques?

#### **Potential – 20%**

To what extent do the applicant's four pieces captivate the viewer and demonstrate potential for artistic achievement?

[Read general information about our evaluation procedures here.](#)