



April 20, 2020

Dear VCFA Community,

I hope this note finds you, your loved ones, and all your students well and in a good place mentally as we continue to navigate what it means to live with this slippery and dangerous virus.

I'm writing to let you know that after much thought and consideration we have made the decision to conduct all the residencies and workshops through the end of August remotely. This decision was made with the safety and health of our entire community in mind, as well as all the people and communities affected by our decisions. While we are heartened to see the progress sheltering at home has made in slowing the spread of the virus, we feel it would be premature to plan on hosting summer campus events that require large gatherings and widespread cross-country and international travel.

We are confident we are making the wisest decision possible at this time, but it is not without sadness. We will miss sharing the vibrant energy that happens when the campus is full with residency activity. We will miss the hugs and personal reunions. We will miss the smiles and greetings while passing students and faculty on the endless staircases in College Hall.

Yet, having just concluded our first remote residency in Graphic Design, I am confident our summer remote residencies and workshops will offer high quality experiences. The Graphic Design residency was replete with focused faculty-student exchanges and interactions, workshops and critiques that brought epiphanies and deepened learning, and visiting artists who offered new and provocative perspectives; new students were deeply affected and graduating students felt both full in their accomplishments and bittersweet about leaving. As graduating Graphic Design student Patricia Childers put it, in reflecting on what she learned during the remote residency, "[My] most significant realization was that whether sitting hip-to-hip on the sofa in Dewey Lounge or thousands of miles away, I am part of an amazingly diverse, astute, open, and ever-changing family that has forever changed my life."

As always, each program will bear the mark of our distinguished and dedicated faculty and have the full support of the college staff. We are working to prepare guidelines, recommendations, and important findings from the Graphic Design residency, so that each remote residency can benefit from the wisdom of those that came before.

This is an unprecedented and extraordinary time, and it is with that backdrop that we continue to draw on the creative and audacious practice that has always characterized VCFA in finding new ways to offer the best artistic education to our students. We are looking forward to sharing news with you as this journey continues to unfold.

Be well,

Leslie Ward
Interim President, VCFA
President-elect, VCFA