

London's creative cluster is one of the fastest growing sectors in the city and the ideal place to inspire and showcase creative talent.

CREATIVE CAPITAL

Creativity is the lifeblood of London. One short stroll down the South Bank of the River Thames will take you from the bedrock of English theatre, Shakespeare's Globe, past the world's most cutting-edge art at the Tate Modern, towards Britain's leading theatre productions staged at the National Theatre, and onto the Festival Hall, which has celebrated world-class classical and modern music and dance for decades. Take a few steps further and survey the stunning and contrasting

architecture London has to offer from one of London's biggest tourist attractions and finest examples of industrial design, the Millennium Wheel. Take in one of the classic films screening at the National Film Theatre, or one of the many street performances that use the Thames as a backdrop to their art. All this is just a fraction of what London has to offer through its Creative Industries.

London has 167 galleries and museums, 205 theatres, and 7 concert halls that support and showcase a profusion of creative talent produced in this city. It is

no surprise that leading cultural personalities like American actor Kevin Spacey, currently artistic director of the Old Vic Theatre, are declaring London to be the 'cultural capital of Europe', and why London has long been considered one of the best places in the world to embark on a creative degree.

London attracts more students from across the globe than any other English-speaking city. Over 86,000 international students from 200 countries are studying in London, and the numbers are growing each year. They are drawn to the UK's capital not only because of the quality of education, resources and opportunities it offers, but also to take advantage of London's famously cosmopolitan environment. Multi-cultural exchange of ideas and knowledge are vital for the creative process, which is one of the reasons why the 40 institutions that offer creative subjects in the capital, are producing dynamic graduates who are equipped to contribute to global creative markets.

London is home to the largest community of artists in Europe. Anthony Gormley, Gilbert and George, Damien Hurst, Frances Bacon and Lucian

Paul McCarthy exhibits outside Tate Modern



Freud, artists who broke the mould for their generation, have all been nurtured by the city's institutions, which continue to produce cutting-edge artists. Kajoli Khanna, 20 came from New Delhi to London to study Fine Art at Chelsea College of Art and Design, one of the colleges of the University of the Arts London. "I'd wanted to come to London since I was a child," she explains. "There is something unique and exhilarating about this city. I have met people from all over the world and have therefore broadened my knowledge of international art through the friendships I've made. I've also been really inspired by the exhibitions and museums here." Chelsea College is opposite the Tate Britain Art Gallery, and Kajoli spends a lot of time there. She is impressed by the range of professional sculptors and painters giving lectures at the college, and concludes: "I would never regret coming here. In fact, I don't want to leave."

As a student in the city you can rest assured that the creative sector you are working towards is thriving. Creativity in London has never had so much funding and support as it has done in the last 10 years. Both new and established institutions have support from strategic government bodies like the London Development Agency, who are working to ensure that London's creative sector is performing at its peak. The creative industries are the second biggest sector in London and are expanding at double the average rate of growth for the economy as a whole. More than one in five people living in the city are employed by the creative industries; that is over

half a million people. Many headquarters of internationally renowned creative employers are situated in London, including advertising agents Saatchi & Saatchi and the publishers Penguin and Macmillan. It is also the city of choice for many company's European headquarters like Sony and CNN. The city is the best place to network in the country, if not the world, with over 90% of the UK's music business activity taking place in London, and with 45% of its advertising agencies and 85% of its fashion designers based in the city. A massive 75% of the UK's film and broadcasting revenues also come from London.

The opportunity to do internships is therefore, just a call away. Alicia Lui came from Beijing to study at King's College London, where she recently graduated from their innovative Creative and Cultural Industries degree. The degree focuses on both the theoretical and the practical sides of arts management, an increasingly important and popular subject. Alicia found the course led to some exiting placements: "I joined the international team at Freud Communications, a leading public relations and marketing company, working on the project 'China in London 2006', and, since graduating, I have continued to work for them on a freelance basis. I also went to New York for an internship at a famous image company, Bridgeman Art Library." Alicia is now organising the 2008 'Creative China: Contemporary visual culture, Architecture and Design', part of the Victoria & Albert Museum's forthcoming 'China Design Now' exhibition, of which King's College London



Shakespeare's
Globe Theatre

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is a key partner. "I plan to live in London and China," she says, "developing the cross-cultural artistic possibilities of both countries. Studying here has made that life-choice possible."

London has a dedicated body, the London Centre for Arts and Cultural Enterprise, to ensure there is a continual dialogue between the capital's creative schools and the arts and cultural sectors. Many institutions have forged direct links with these sectors. The University of Westminster is in partnership with leading fashion retailers New Look and Top Shop, making sure that the UK's top fashion brands are furnished with the cream of London's fashion graduates. The Central School of Speech and Drama are directly associated

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with the National Theatre, where students are given expert advice along with the chance to collaborate on their famous productions. At the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, students (coming from 40 different countries) have the opportunity to be trained by international leaders in their industry. The school is even located within the acclaimed arts centre, the Barbican, where students showcase their talents to the general public.

Artistic institutions also work together so that their students have the chance to collaborate with one another in complementary fields of practice. In 2004, two of the UK's leading dance and drama schools, Trinity College of Music and Laban Contemporary Dance, joined forces to create Trinity Laban. It is the UK's first combined conservatoire of music and contemporary dance, and has allowed students in both

fields to broaden their skills and expand their creative horizons.

London's creative institutions don't simply look towards home-grown talent. They are continually working with the world's most dynamic creative companies. A good example of this is the leading drama school, Rose Bruford College, who recently acquired the David Bolland film and image collection of world-famous Southern Indian Kathakali dance troupes.

Every year London celebrates its creative sectors by putting on internationally recognised festivals. In fact, ever since it staged the legendary Great Exhibition of 1851, London has been recognised as one of the greatest festival cities in the world. Every year in May and June, London's degree shows attract industry leaders; confident they will find new talent among London's graduates. London's renowned festivals and fairs create business opportunities, the chance to network, and to showcase traditional creative sectors, like film (London Film Festival), literature (London Word Festival), art (Frieze Art Fair) and fashion (London Fashion Week), but the capital is also gaining a reputation for showcasing new and burgeoning sectors. London is the gaming capital of Europe and so the London Games Festival was created in 2006 to celebrate this creative industry that is growing at a faster rate than any other. The London Design Festival is another welcome addition to London's festival calendar. Launched in 2003, it quickly established itself as the ideal showcase for cutting-edge product and industrial design

for which London is renowned. Staging 180 events in 120 venues around the capital, it has already registered on the world stage. As Tom Dixon, one of Britain's foremost product designers, says: "The London Design Festival has become something that people make a special effort to visit."

London may be the ideal place to inspire and showcase creative talent, but the city is also aware that there is an integral link between business and creativity. For that reason, the Royal College of Art and Imperial College London have collaborated to form Design-London, a £5.8 million project which will create a centre of excellence in design, engineering, technology and business. The courses at Design-London will explore how creativity and business can work together to the benefit of both industries. London is also reaching across the globe, with a major new government-funded initiative called Creative Capital – World City. This exciting enterprise will promote and support the UK's creative industries expansion into India and China through international Creative Business Centres set up in Mumbai, Delhi, Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

While the capital is busy promoting its talent abroad, other countries are equally keen to take advantage of the talent present in London. In 2003, the famous Italian fashion school Istituto Marangoni set up a branch in London, attracted by London's famous colleges like Central St Martins College of Art & Design, who are known for turning out the best designers in the world (fashion designers Stella McCartney

Saatchi Gallery



“The capital is also gaining a reputation for showcasing new and burgeoning sectors”

and Alexander McQueen are graduates) and encouraging their fashion graduates to set up their own labels. In 2007, Malaysia’s Limkokwing University of Creative Technology opened a campus in London to take advantage of the creative energy and opportunities the city has to offer, and Samsung has recently opened one of its six design centres in London, recognising that being located in London is vital to maintaining their competitive edge.

One of the reasons why London remains a thriving creative hub is because the educational institutions in the city refuse to stand still. The University of the Arts, a consortium of institutions whose graduates include fashion designers Jimmy Choo and John Galiano, always have exciting projects afoot. One of their schools, Central St Martins, is planning to move the famous art and design college into a state of the art complex in King’s Cross, an area that has been regenerated and is now the gateway to Europe via the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. They are also embarking on a ‘Gallery Without Walls’, a landmark project in the Parade Ground of Chelsea College of Art & Design, which will display large scale pioneering installations, and that is already set to be London’s premier outdoors arts destination when it opens in 2008.

Colleges that prepare students

for writing careers have also been coming up with innovative courses to respond to the current international publishing market. There has been a boom in creative writing, and institutions like City University have recognised the need to provide a commercially focused Creative Writing MA to ensure their students grasp market trends and forces in order to stay ahead of the competition.

To enable students to reach the peak of their learning abilities, it is also vital they have access to the best resources possible. For a city steeped in centuries of creative history and learning, it goes without saying that London is a world leader for creative research. There are many lectures and seminars held by professionals like architect Richard Rogers taking place within almost all of London’s cultural institutions. As well as the private and national museums and galleries, most of them free to the general public, there is also the wealth of information kept by institutions like the British Library that houses 150 million items, and the British Film Institute’s National Archives. There are also smaller specialist initiatives to take advantage of, such as the American Film Director Stanley Kubrick’s archives at the University of the Arts London. With resources like these, opportunities to learn more about your field of study will never be exhausted.

In London, the creative arts are continually evolving and just a short stroll along the banks of the River Thames, from Shakespeare’s Globe to the Millennium Wheel, will show you that this has been the case for centuries.

FACTS AND FIGURES

London’s creative industries annual turnover is £21-29 billion, making it the second biggest sector after financial/business services.

The creative and cultural sector is expected to be the fastest growing sector in London’s expanding economy to 2016.

There are over 113,000 creative companies in London.

London is the third busiest film production centre in the world after New York and Los Angeles.

London is acknowledged as one of the three global capitals for the advertising industry.

There are 1,500 theatre companies, 1,700 visual arts and crafts groups, 2,500 amateur groups and 2,650 music businesses in London.

London attracts 22 million visits to performances of music, theatre and dance, and 30 million visits to museums and galleries each year.

Being guided around the British Museum

