

PHOTOGRAPHIC

CENTER

NORTHWEST

Certificate Program

Information Session

February 28, 2026

Welcome to Photographic Center Northwest!

PCNW is a place for everyone to explore the photographic arts. We promote lifelong learning and creativity through resources and programs that inspire and empower.

www.pcnw.org



About Us

Photographic Center Northwest (PCNW) was founded in Seattle, WA in the 1980s and has grown to serve as an important photographic institution offering:

- A Certificate Program in Fine Art Photography
- Classes and workshops open to the general public
- Exhibitions that are free to visit and open to the public
- Free public programs such as artist lectures, panel discussions, professional development opportunities and more
- Publicly accessible rental facilities including darkrooms, digital labs, and studios



About Us

PCNW is:

- A non-profit 501(c)3 organization – this means that revenue is invested directly into resources that support our programs, from education to facilities to exhibitions
- An accredited institutional member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)
- Licensed in the state of Washington under Chapter 28C.10 RCW (Private Vocational School)

What does accreditation and licensure mean?

- PCNW is held to standards established by NASAD and the state of WA Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
- Regular review of our curriculum, program structure, delivery and administration of programs, and overall institutional health by these outside agencies

Certificate Program in Fine Art Photography Overview



Installation view of 2025 Thesis Exhibition

Immerse yourself in the study and practice of photography, at any stage of life, through a unique and rigorous program

Led by faculty of engaged professionals, courses are technically and creatively demanding

Develop your own style of photography, engage in critical discussion, and build the foundation to sustain your creative practice

Why Apply?

Knowledge, credentials, and access as an alumnus to a lifelong community of practitioners dedicated to the medium of photography

Immersion in the history, theory and practice of creating photographic work, taught by engaged professionals

Evening courses and small class sizes make the Certificate Program personal, flexible and accessible



Installation detail view of 2025 Thesis Exhibition

The Details

53-credits; Most students complete the program in 3-5 years

Courses are offered year-round on a quarterly basis: Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer

Estimated cost to complete the program is ~\$27,000

Application Deadline: March 16, 2026



Installation detail of Gwen Emminger's work from 2022 Thesis Exhibition

Course Requirements & Structure

- Courses are offered year-round on a quarterly basis
- Each class typically meets once per week over the course of 8-10 weeks
- Class meetings are structured to include lectures, discussion, demonstrations, critiques, and weekly assignments
- Students can expect to spend an average of 4-10 hours on assignments per week, per class

COURSE REQUIREMENTS | 53 CREDITS

CORE COURSES | Total 27 Credits

Photography I: Black & White
Photography I: Digital
Photography II (in B&W or Digital, student choice)
Photography III: Digital
Contemporary Color
Fine Art Printing (in B&W or Digital, student choice)
Studio Lighting Basics
History of Photography
Professional Practices in Photography

ELECTIVE COURSES | Total 8 Credits

ADVANCED COURSES | Total 9 Credits

Visual Literacy Seminar
Junior Seminar
Senior Seminar

THESIS | Total 9 Credits

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Certificate in Fine Art Photography 3-Year Completion Timeline

Note: the below timeline represents an example of a possible course outline for a 3-year completion of the Certificate in Fine Art Photography; exact course offerings in a given quarter subject to change.

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Fall Quarter Photography I: Black & White Photography I: Digital History of Photography	Fall Quarter Professional Practices in Photography Elective	Fall Quarter Thesis
Winter Quarter Photography II Studio Lighting Basics	Winter Quarter Contemporary Color Junior Seminar Elective	Winter Quarter Thesis
Spring Quarter Photography III: Digital Visual Literacy Elective	Spring Quarter Fine Art Printing Senior Seminar	Spring Quarter Thesis

Thesis Year



Graduates at 2025 Thesis Exhibition Reception & Graduation

- Year-long commitment, meets Fall - Spring
- Students explore frameworks for building a long-term project, with conceptual, visual and thematic components
- Develop a project appropriate for public exhibition, and defend your visual and conceptual decisions in the context of fine art photography practice
- Thesis group led by designated faculty meets 6 times over the course of each quarter
- In addition to group meetings, each student meets with an individual advisor (of their choosing) throughout the year
- Culminates in a gallery exhibition of student work and artists talk

Thesis Year

◆ PERKS ◆



CLASS TRIP

Thesis trip to regional location for artist studio visits, museum and gallery exhibits

Image from 2019 trip to San Francisco



THESIS ARTISTS TALK

Present your work to the broader community via Thesis Artists Talk

Image from 2019 Thesis Artists Talk

Recent Thesis Exhibitions | 2023



Jenny Hansen Das *Notions*



Recent Thesis Exhibitions | 2023



Leila Kirske
à pied



Recent Thesis Exhibitions | 2023



Chad Lund
Keyholes



Recent Thesis Exhibitions | 2025



Martin Dorn
Fifteen Stones



Recent Thesis Exhibitions | 2025



Keylor Eng
Fast Forward



Recent Thesis Exhibitions | 2025



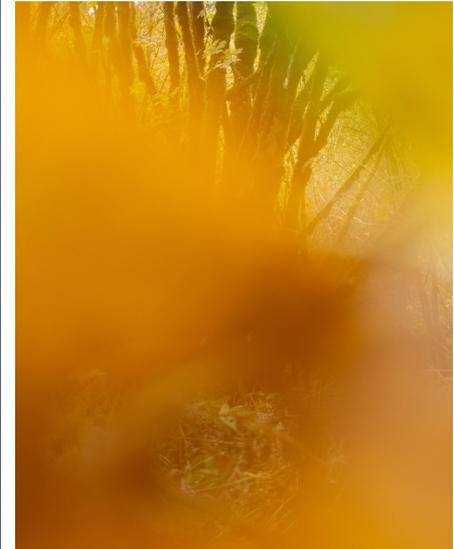
Victoria Hunter
(re)Constructing Memory



Recent Thesis Exhibitions | 2025



Holly Pendragon *Surrogate*



Thank You for Joining Us!

Information about our Certificate
Program in Fine Art Photography can
be found at:

www.pcnw.org/certificate-program

See more Alumni work here:

www.pcnw.org/alumni

