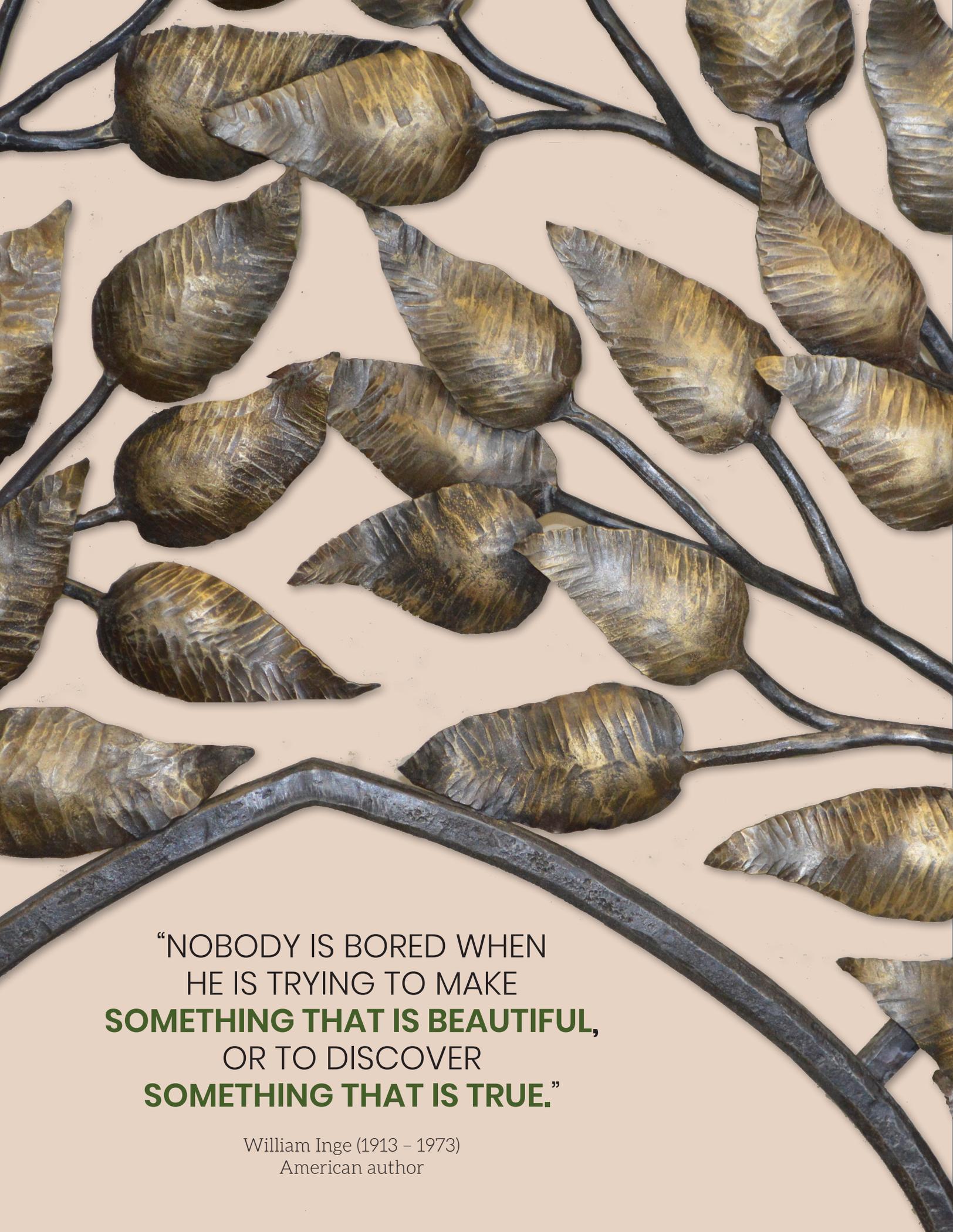


AMERICAN COLLEGE OF THE  
BUILDING ARTS

EDUCATING TOMORROW'S  
ARTISANS





“NOBODY IS BORED WHEN  
HE IS TRYING TO MAKE  
**SOMETHING THAT IS BEAUTIFUL,**  
OR TO DISCOVER  
**SOMETHING THAT IS TRUE.”**

William Inge (1913 – 1973)  
American author

# EDUCATING ARTISANS



## At ACBA, our students...

### **Go beyond textbooks**

Learn not only by using textbooks, computers and libraries, but also by using drafting tables, trowels, chisels, hammers and anvils

### **Have passion**

Are passionate about creating with their hands, their hearts and their heads

### **Do amazing things with their hands**

Shape timbers into soaring architectural edifices, create masterworks from limestone and plaster, and twist red-hot iron into finely wrought designs

### **Earn an accredited degree**

Earn an accredited, four-year Bachelor of Applied Science degree with specializations in classical architecture and design, heritage masonry and architectural stone, plaster, timber framing, architectural carpentry, or blacksmithing

### **Secure jobs in their chosen field\***

Typically graduate having already secured job offers in high-demand fields with significant earning potential

### **Have diverse skills**

Acquire the liberal arts-based academic skills that prepare them for leadership positions in their fields

## What We Do

ACBA trains artisans to foster exceptional craftsmanship and encourage the preservation, enrichment and understanding of the world's architectural heritage based on a core liberal arts curriculum.

\*Based on third-party review, 28 of 28 graduates were employed in their professional field.

# WHAT MAKES ACBA UNIQUE AMONG AMERICAN COLLEGES

THE LAST GENERATION OF HIGHLY SKILLED TRADESPEOPLE WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE OF OLD WORLD ARTISAN CRAFTSMANSHIP WAS QUICKLY DYING OUT. That realization led to the founding of the American College of the Building Arts.

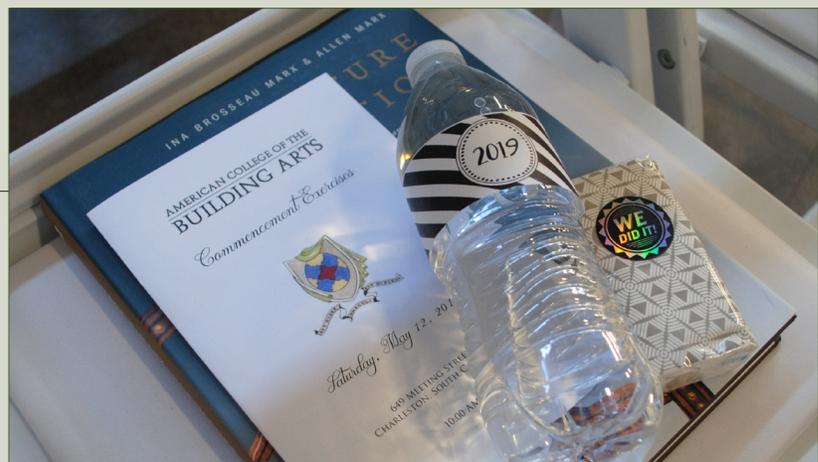
In 1968, the National Trust for Historic Preservation issued its Whitehill Report, warning of the near extinction of the traditional building trades during the post-World War II building boom, with its emphasis on pre-fabrication and mass-production automation.

The Whitehill Report initially drew limited interest among most. For Charlestonians and other communities, however, its warnings became real when, in the aftermath of hurricanes such as Hugo (Charleston, 1989) and Katrina (New Orleans, 2005), it became painfully obvious that America was not producing enough skilled artisans to meet the demand for high-quality repairs and restorations.



PHOTO FROM THE POST AND COURIER

This realization led to the founding of the American College of the Building Arts, the only college in America that integrates professional training in the building trades with a liberal arts core curriculum.



## Why integrate the liberal arts with professional trade training?



HERE YOU WILL BECOME A LEADER IN YOUR FIELD. You will understand not only how to do something but to think critically ...

“In the liberal arts, students learn the humanist traditions like architecture, history and English, and the practical skills like math and science, along with design skills such as drawing and drafting, that impart the creative thinking and problem-solving skills that great builders need.”

### **Dr. A. Wade Razzi** **Chief Academics Officer**

D. Phil. English, Oxford University (Merton College)  
MA English, University of Maryland  
BA English, Rutgers University  
BA History, Rutgers University

## How is an ACBA education different from a trade school or a traditional college?

If you want to learn how to lay a brick or weld a piece of metal, there are a lot of good trade schools around the country where you can do that. An ACBA degree, however, teaches you much more, as you learn from some of the finest artisans in their fields.

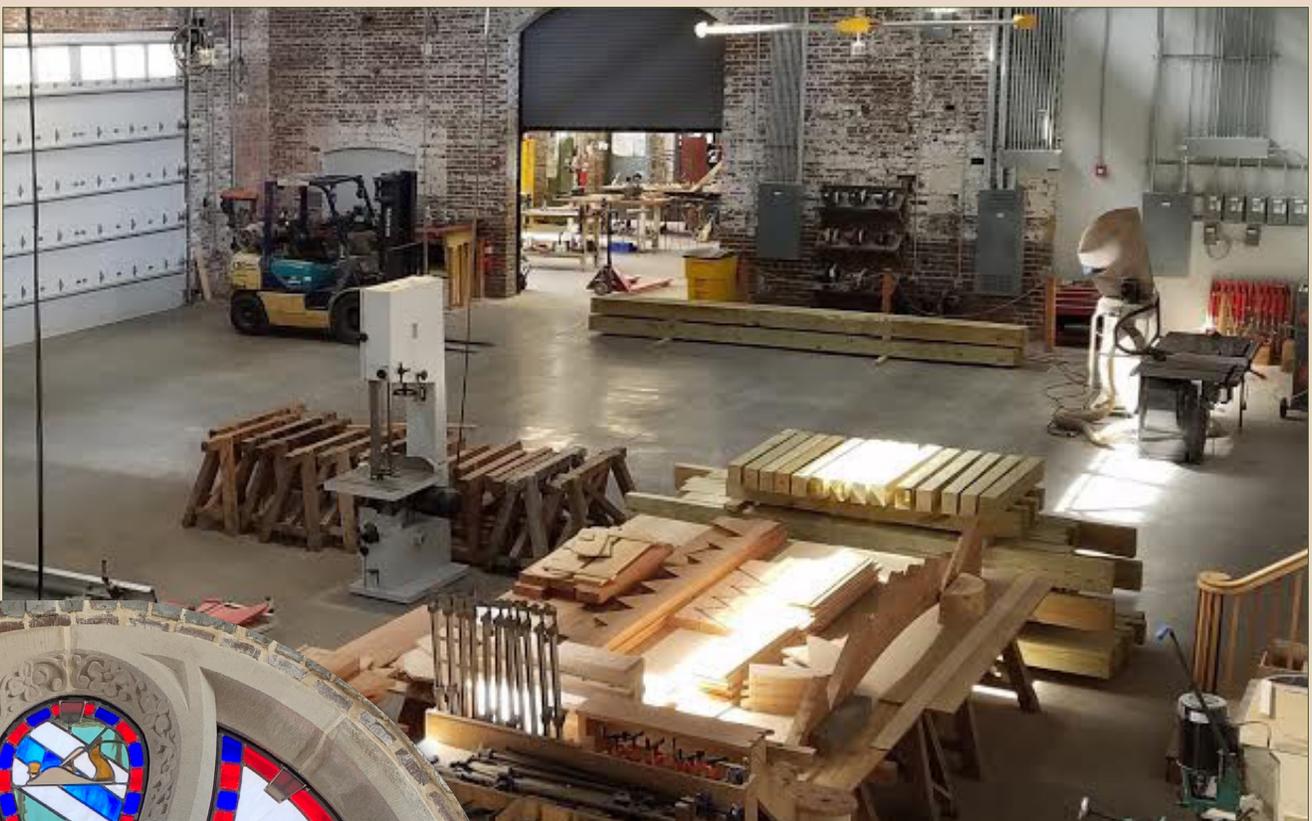
Here you will not only learn the skills of your trade, you will also acquire the broad liberal arts knowledge that allows you to design, to be a leader in your field, to understand not only how to do something, but to think critically within the context, science, and history of your craft, to manage a business, to communicate effectively with clients, to market your skills.

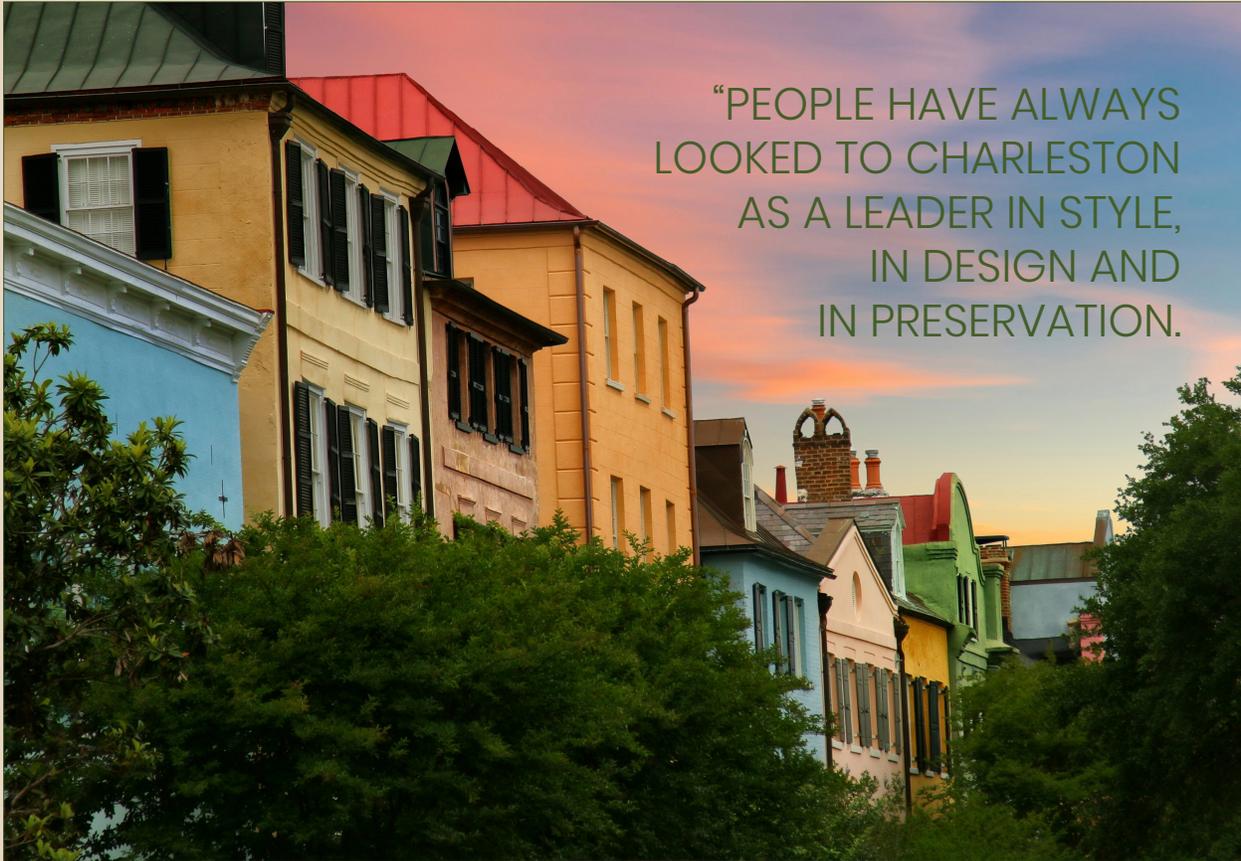
Traditional colleges offer majors such as history or preservation, and while those programs can educate you about these topics, they do not prepare you for an active career actually working hands-on to preserve, restore, rehabilitate or build architecturally significant structures.

# OUR CAMPUS

Founded in 1670 with an architectural spectrum spanning more than 300 years, Charleston provides an ideal living/learning laboratory for creative thinkers and independent workers. Recognized by *Travel & Leisure* and *Conde Nast* magazines as one of the Top Five Cities to visit in the world, no other American city has Charleston's blend of rich history, authentic culture, a thriving arts and entertainment scene, and a picture-postcard beauty along the coast.

ACBA's campus is housed within the award-winning, beautifully rehabilitated Old City Trolley Barn, c. 1897, located near the heart of Charleston's historic downtown. The 38,000 sq. ft. facility was renovated with the capacity to provide an ideal modern learning environment and work spaces to accommodate three principal workshop areas: trowel, wood and iron. New apartment communities surround our campus in Charleston's trending new "No Mo" neighborhood, while more affordable housing options are available in nearby suburbs.

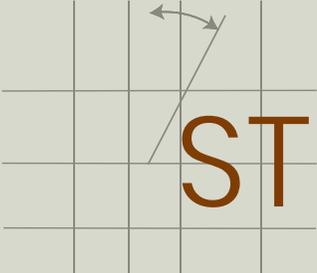




“PEOPLE HAVE ALWAYS  
LOOKED TO CHARLESTON  
AS A LEADER IN STYLE,  
IN DESIGN AND  
IN PRESERVATION.”

People come from all over the world to experience the building arts in Charleston. Now they will come to Charleston to study those arts and to preserve them and to carry them back out into the world. ACBA will be Charleston’s gift to America.”

The Hon. Joseph P. Riley Jr.  
Mayor of Charleston



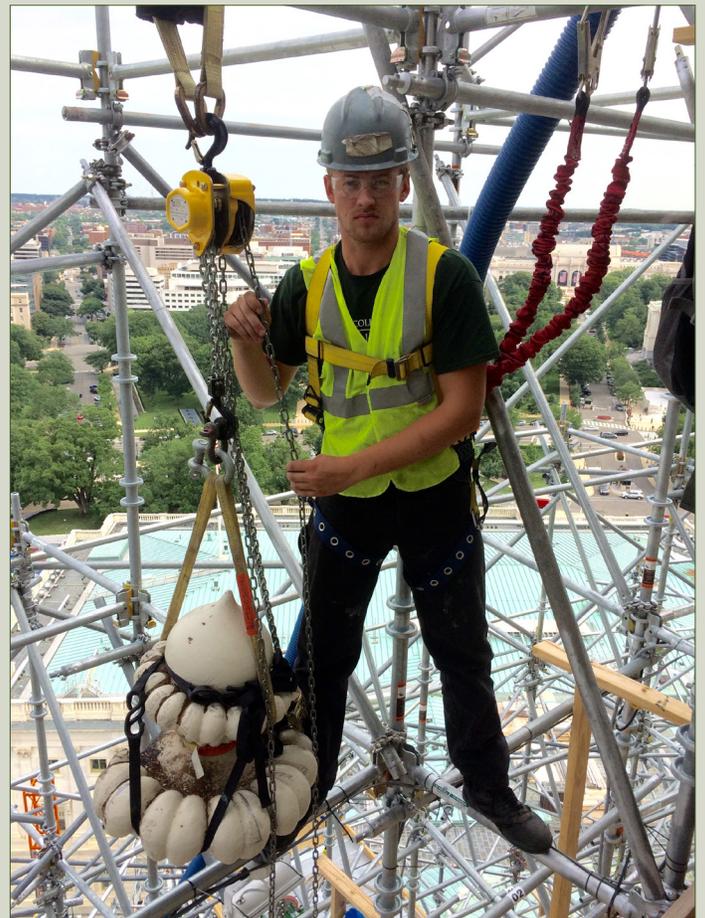
# STUDENT LIFE

BECAUSE OF ITS SMALLER STUDENT BODY AND 6:1 STUDENT/FACULTY RATIO, IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT ACBA STUDENTS FORM CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS with each other, as well as with the College's faculty and staff.

Our Office of Student Life provides support for those with special needs, helps instill a sense of camaraderie, and supports social activities across campus. ACBA alumni often provide mentoring and networking opportunities, making valuable career connections after graduation.



MIDWESTERN GARDEN FOLLY



REPAIRING THE U.S. CAPITOL DOME IN WASHINGTON, DC



## Externships

An ACBA education is grounded in real-life, hands-on experiences. All ACBA students complete summer externships between each academic school year (one for an Associate's degree, three for a Bachelor's degree). Students gain new experiences working under talented trade professionals, allowing them exposure to more diverse professional training opportunities as well as setting them up for success with a strong business network for jobs after graduation.

Along with restoration projects in Charleston and America, ACBA students have worked on restoration, repair, rehabilitation and the creation of new projects all over the world. Students have traveled to Italy, England, Germany, Portugal and other places where they learn about new cultures and building techniques from some of the world's finest craftspeople.

ABOVE, STONE MASONRY AT THE NATIONAL CATHEDRAL IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

RIGHT, STUDY ABROAD WITH PROFESSOR WILLIAM BATES IN ITALY



# FACULTY

As ACBA's founders considered how best to create a new institution to educate the next generation of highly skilled craftspeople in America, they looked toward the academic model found at France's Compagnons du Devoir. With a history that dates back to the Middle Ages, Les Compagnons is a 10-year academic program during which students travel throughout the country completing apprenticeships with master artisans. ACBA then condensed the French program into a four-year American curriculum where educational methods are rooted in the medieval guild system, training craftspeople to master a trade and teach it too.



"ACBA provides a unique chance to earn a college degree that enables graduates to continue their education and have almost unlimited career opportunities, while also receiving a broad-based education in a specialized trade field."

**Professor Markus  
Damswerth**

***Architectural Carpentry***

3rd generation Master Carpenter  
Münster, Germany; Graduate,  
Dual Apprenticeship System;  
Master School of the Chamber  
of Craftsmanship, Lower Bavaria

"I BECAME A BLACKSMITH BECAUSE OF THE GENEROSITY AND SHARING OF MY MENTORS. Now, after 45 years as a smith and business owner, I am able to complete the circle and mentor the next generation. ACBA is a great fit for me to work on an extended basis with my students."

**Professor Jack Brubaker**

***Blacksmithing Department Chair***

MFA, Indiana University; BFA, Syracuse University; Art Institute of Chicago; Past President, Artist Blacksmith Association of North America; Co-founder, Indiana Blacksmithing Association; Presenter, First World Congress of Artist Blacksmith, Aachen, Germany

“I think women fit into our educational programs extremely well, because trades are not gender-specific, despite long-standing gender stereotypes. ACBA’s female students excel at both the building arts component and the academic because they are creative and strong critical thinkers.”

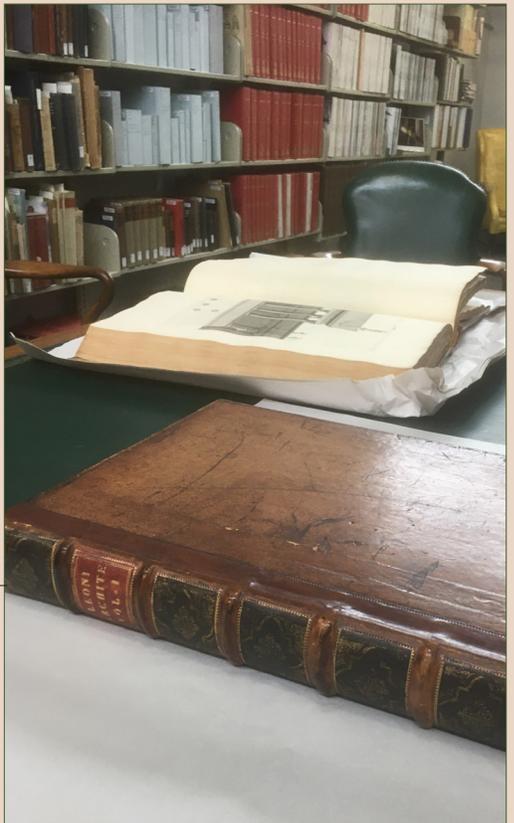
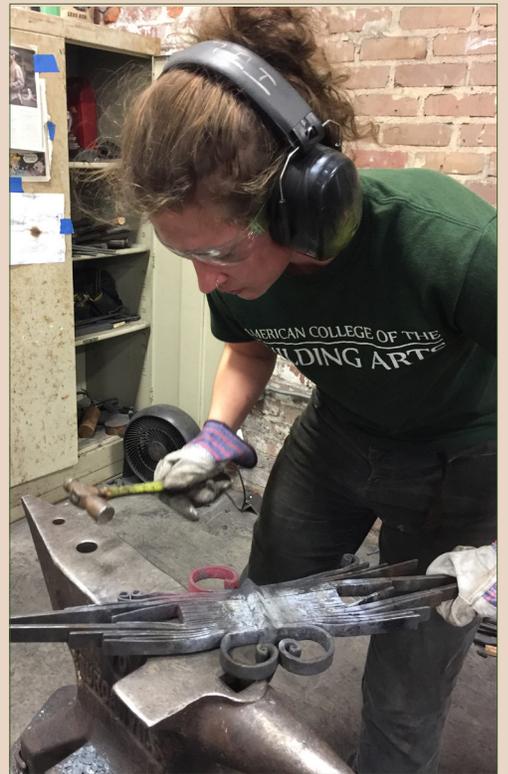
**Professor Christina Butler**  
***Preservation and Architectural History***

MA, History, The Citadel & College of Charleston;  
BA, Historic Preservation & Community Planning, College of Charleston; Certificate in Construction Technology, Auburn Career Center; Licensed Specialty Contractor, State of South Carolina; Business Owner, Butler Preservation, LC, specializing in historic property research, preservation consulting and restoration

“Our library’s focus on the building, visual and decorative arts is what sets it apart from other libraries in Charleston and the Southeast. My goal is to teach students to be self-sufficient researchers through the use of credible academic resources. The greatest satisfaction I take from my work as a librarian is leading another person to the information they need.”

**Morgan Kinder, MLIS**  
***Director of Library Services***

MA, Library & Information Science, USC  
BA, English Classics, College of Charleston



ABOVE, ITS RECENT LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS OF PALLADIO’S FOUR BOOKS OF ARCHITECTURE, A 16TH CENTURY COPY OF L’ARCHITETTURA DE LEONBATISTA ALBERTI, THOMAS CHIPPENDALE’S GENTLEMAN’S DIRECTORY (C. 1754), AND A C. 1693 COPY OF MOXON’S MECHANICK EXERCISES, ONE OF ONLY 14 KNOWN COPIES IN THE WORLD, ESTABLISH ACBA AS A NATIONAL REPOSITORY OF GREAT LITERATURE IN THE BUILDING ARTS.

# CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

The Classical Architecture and Design program teaches students to become what the ancient Greeks understood to be Arkhitekton - a master builder. Students in this four-year specialty will learn how the classical tradition has evolved throughout history and, more importantly, how it can inform our built environments today and in the future.

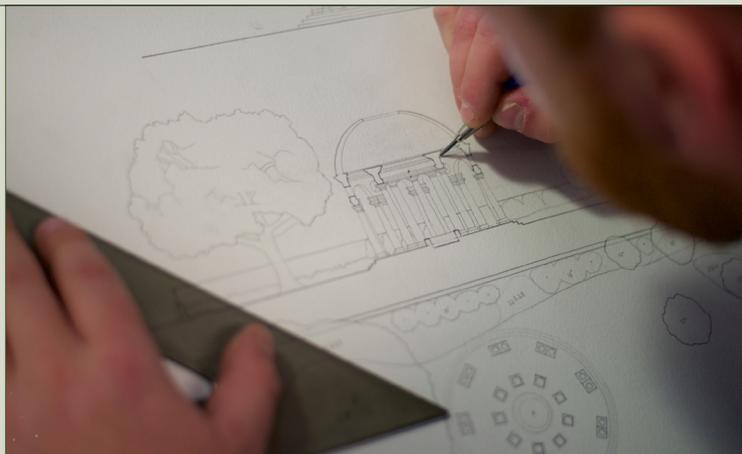
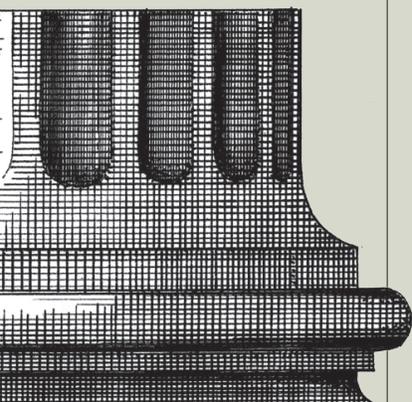
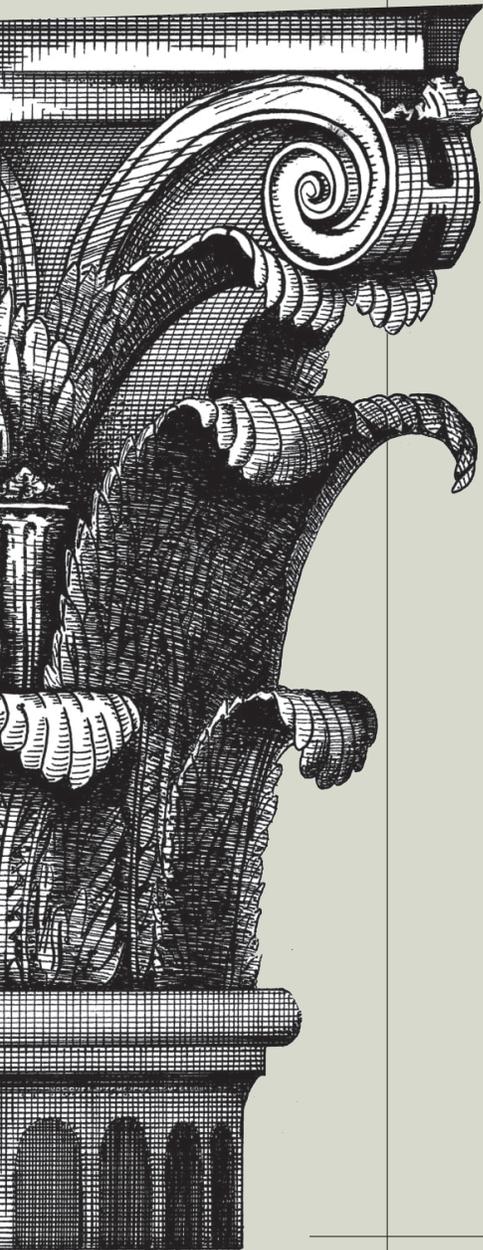
Eight design studio classes focus on categories such as fundamental classicism, as well as more complex subjects in residential, secular civic, classical interiors, and landscape design. Students learn to apply classical knowledge to all scales of building while learning practical applications of contemporary building practices. Students also may choose from hands-on trade electives that tie directly into the practical aspects of modern building techniques.

“ACBA’S DRAWING AND DRAFTING CLASSES TEACH STUDENTS HOW TO TRAIN THE HAND TO DO WHAT THE MIND TELLS IT TO DO. It develops hand/eye coordination and fine motor skills because students need to plan their iron and stone work, work out angles in complex wood projects. Everyone needs to be able to show clients what the work will look like.”

**Professor William Bates**

***Architectural Design Department Chair***

M.Arch., University of Miami School of Architecture (Florida and Italy)  
BID, Auburn University School of Architecture



# BLACKSMITHING

Blacksmithing students learn a broad range of metalworking techniques with an emphasis on historical and contemporary design. Using traditional and modern techniques both, students learn to create custom tooling, traditional joinery, and modern fabrications.

Student teams work with clients in design meetings and on site visits, as well as building and installing commissions. Interaction with professors and other students in a busy and productive environment is an important part of the program. The goal is to graduate a knowledgeable, free-thinking smith who can design, draw and produce fine metalwork.



“TEACHING AT ACBA ALLOWS ME TO PASS ALONG MY EXPERIENCES AND EXPOSURE TO A RANGE OF TECHNIQUES, from blacksmithing to non-ferrous metalsmithing to restoring old work for prominent cultural sites such as the Louvre in Paris to traditional repoussé. Handmade metalwork has historically been very precise, and working at that level of precision on an architectural scale is a unique experience.”

## **Professor Addison De Lisle**

### ***Iron***

BFA in Metalsmithing and Jewelry, Maine College of Art;  
MFA in Blacksmithing and Metalsmithing, Southern Illinois University; 2014 Fellow, Fondation de Coubertin, France





# MASONRY & STONE



Students specializing in the masonry, stone and plaster fields will learn conservation and preservation techniques that are highly sought after within an industry endemic with skill shortages and an expanding backlog of ever-older structures needing maintenance and repairs. With such a high job demand, students can work in traditional and contemporary practice practically anywhere in the world.

ACBA's specialty creates a student artisan familiar with the knowledge, theory, technology and practice found within the broad field of masonry and stone. Students learn various techniques for laying brick, block and stone into patterns to create a stable structure. Students also learn to remove material from a block of raw stone to reveal the shape inside the block.

While hand mallets and chisels are taught as the foundational tools of practice, they are supplemented as appropriate with modern power tools. Other areas of study include basic letter and decorative carving.

# PLASTER



Of all the building arts, the art of applying plaster and stucco is the trade that has changed the least over time and maintained its original historical integrity. Artisans still largely use the same methods and tools that have been developed around the world over centuries. Newer materials, less costly to prepare and use, have caused a resurgence in the popularity of plaster, though the traditional skills needed to work in this medium remain time tested.



# ARCHITECTURAL CARPENTRY



Within ACBA's wood program, students spend their freshman and sophomore years learning the basics of working with wood. In their last two years, students choose to focus their training either on architectural carpentry or timber framing.

Architectural carpentry students learn to create highly crafted and precisely detailed millwork for both exteriors and interiors. Mastering the skills of traditional joinery, students are exposed to modern, production-oriented techniques. Course work is focused on structural restoration and conservation, where students are challenged to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary through problem-solving and quality workmanship.

The architectural aspect is designed to expose a student to the wide variety of opportunities and specialty pathways available for a well-trained carpenter. By graduation, degree candidates will have mastered both historical and contemporary practices to create works in wood that are useful, beautiful and unique.

# TIMBER FRAMING



The ancient building techniques of timber framing developed using logs and tree trunks to build structures capable of bearing extreme weight loads, such as barns and churches. Throughout the Middle Ages and up to the pre-Industrial era in Western Civilization, master timber framers, along with stone carvers, acted as architects (literally chief builder) because of their ability to think in three dimensions in the construction process.

Today timbers are mechanically squared off and carefully fitted with joints requiring precise engineering. With modern advancements in wood products, a 21st century timber framing student is as likely to use a laptop as he or she is an ax or chisel.

ACBA students study the traditional aspects of timber framing as well as modern technology to restore old structures and to build new ones, carefully mixing traditional joinery and modern fasteners to meet today's building codes.



# LET'S CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION



The best way to determine if the unique educational opportunities found at the American College of the Building Arts is the right choice for you is to come by for a visit. Meet our students, faculty and alumni and see for yourself what makes ACBA such a special place.

**Contact:** Director of Admission  
American College of the Building Arts  
649 Meeting Street  
Charleston, SC 29403  
admissions@acba.edu  
843-577-5245  
www.acba.edu

**Tuition:** \$9,936 per semester\*  
\$350 per semester shop fees\*\*  
\$50 one-time application fee

\* To keep this educational opportunity affordable, ACBA has not raised its tuition since its first class enrolled in 2005.

\*\* One-time tool and book fees vary by specialization: Drafting (\$225), Iron (\$300), Masonry (\$400), Wood (\$750). Students will own their purchased tools and take them with them upon graduation.

## **Financial Aid:**

ACBA is approved for the Title IV program administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Title IV is the U.S. DOE federal student loan program using the FAFSA and administering both federal grants and loans.

Through the generosity of our donors, ACBA offers scholarships for qualified students. All scholarships have been designed for students with demonstrated financial need as determined by student's EFC results. ACBA's receipt of each student's EFC will automatically enter them into the pool of available scholarships. For more information, contact [finaid@acba.edu](mailto:finaid@acba.edu)



The American College of the Building Arts is a 501(c)3 nonprofit educational organization, duly registered with the IRS under FEIN number 57-1075250. It is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges (ACCSC) to confer both Associate of Applied Science and Bachelor of Applied Science degrees. It is registered in full compliance with the S.C. Department of Education and the S.C. Secretary of State.



