

# Advanced course for **SET DESIGNERS**

A.Y. 2025/2027

ACCADEMIA  
TEATRO ALLA SCALA

COESIONE  
ITALIA 21-27  
LOMBARDIA



Cofinanziato  
dall'Unione europea



Regione  
Lombardia





# AT SCHOOL WITH LA SCALA

The La Scala Academy provides thorough, in-depth training to the various professional figures involved in the performing arts through its four departments: Music, Dance, Stagecraft, Management. Its broad curriculum ranges from basic and core training courses to advanced courses, Level 1 and 2 AFAM (advanced training in art, music, and dance) university-level academic diploma programs, Level 1 master courses, workshops, and summer programs. The highest level of instruction is ensured by Teatro alla Scala professionals, acclaimed performers, and prominent experts in the performing arts. The teaching method derives from the philosophy of learning by doing and prepares students for their future career through intensive daily exposure to the performing arts in a realworld context.



Ph: Noemi Ardesi

## FOUNDING PARTNERS



The course is implemented with resources from the Regional Operational Program co-financed with the European Social Fund Plus 2021-2027 of the Italian Lombardy Region.

More info [www.fse.regione.lombardia.it](http://www.fse.regione.lombardia.it)

# THE COURSE

The course represents one of the original training programs at the La Scala Academy. Instituted by Tito Varisco in the 1970s, the program provides in-depth training in the techniques necessary for the creation of stage sets, costumes, and props for a ballet or opera production.

Technical and artistic coordination of the course is entrusted to the Teatro alla Scala Chief of Technical Direction, Franco Malgrande. The two-year course is conducted principally in the Teatro alla Scala stagecraft workshops, alternating classroom lessons with intensive practical exercises. This is followed by an internship with a performing arts organization.

During the course the students actively participate in Teatro alla Scala opera and ballet productions, rotating into the various teams (set makers, painters, sculptors, costume-makers, props) for up-close, hands-on experience in all the steps in scenic design from the drawing table to the stage. Indeed, practical exercises alone or in small groups are a fundamental element of the program, leading up to the fully autonomous conception and creation of original stage sets for shows produced by the Academy in collaboration with prestigious theatres.

The practical training is accompanied by lessons in theory to expand knowledge of the specific field of work (e.g., lighting design, introduction to musical theatre, information science applied to set design) while also developing the necessary competencies to pursue a career in the chosen field (e.g., career orientation, contract law, workplace health and safety, self-entrepreneurship).



Ph: Mario Wurzbürger

# PROFESSIONAL FIGURE

A scenic designer is an eclectic figure who is able to function effectively in various contexts: opera, plays, ballet, musicals, cinema, television, fashion, exhibitions, advertising, and live events.

The course produces a fully trained professional who is able to handle the entire creative and construction process of preparing a stage for a production, complete with specific competencies relating to choice of materials and best techniques.

*Eighty-five percent of Academy students are employed six months after the end of the course, and 40% of contracts are extended after the internship experience.*



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# MEETINGS WITH EXPERTS

Meetings with the most accomplished and authoritative experts in the field provide an important additional opportunity for professional growth. In recent years, the Academy Set Design Course has enjoyed the collaboration of such notables as Milena Canonero, Mauro Carosi, Hugo De Ana, Gianluca Falaschi, Maurizio Millenotti, Odette Nicoletti, Margherita Palli, Franca Squarciapino and Luisa Spinatelli.

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# PROJECT WORK

During the two-year course, specific projects are envisioned not only for opera and ballet productions but also for cinema and plays, with the objective of providing a broad overview of the different fields in which a scenic designer may work. Some projects are limited to the concept phase, while others involve the complete process all the way through to production. In recent years, stage sets have been created for the Piccolo Teatro of Milan, the Teatro Sociale of Bergamo, the Teatro Fraschini of Pavia, and the Teatro Donnafugata of Ragusa.



# STAGE

A fundamental phase in the training process is the internship—300 hours each year—at a major performing arts institution in Italy and abroad.

Teatro alla Scala is a favored host, but other venues include the Teatro Real of Madrid, the Festival of Aix-en-Provence, the Teatro Antico of Syracuse, and the Teatro dell'Opera of Rome, not to mention workshops such as Giò Forma of Milan and Art for Art Theaterservice of Vienna.



# CURRICULAR UNITS & TEACHING STAFF

## CORE UNITS

### Workshop techniques (practical experiences)

Emanuela Finardi, Sergio Mariotti,  
Costanzo Zanzarella, *Chief Set  
Designers at Teatro alla Scala*

Pietro Renga, *Head Sculpture  
Designer at Teatro alla Scala*

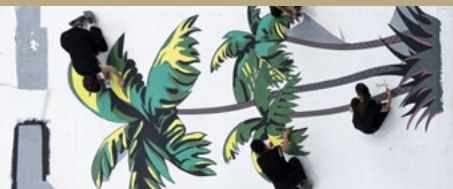
Carlo Balestrazzi, Elena Colombo,  
Giuseppe Giordano, Roberto Panza,  
*Teatro alla Scala professionals*

- Role of the Production Designer
- Scenographic and painting techniques
- Sculpture techniques
- Elements of thermoforming techniques
- Techniques of prop processing
- Analysis of materials, study and implementation of the main scenographic techniques applied to scenes and props
- Practical exercises at the Teatro alla Scala Workshops

### Stage set-up

Ruggero Bellini, *Head of La  
Scala Set Design Workshops*  
Stefania Cavallin, *Assistant to the  
Technical Director, Teatro alla  
Scala*

- Stage set-up elements and vocabulary
- Specific nomenclatures
- Geography of the stage
- Reading and understanding plans and sections
- Theatrical special effects
- Simulated stage set design



### Costume-making techniques (practical experiences)

Lucia Lapolla, *Set Designer,  
Teatro alla Scala*

- Painting techniques on fabrics
- Decoration of fabric
- Methods of dyeing and aging
- Embroidery techniques
- Creation of jewelry
- Analysis of materials, study and realization of the main scenographic techniques applied to costumes
- Practical exercises at Workshops of Teatro alla Scala

### Cinematic scenography

Esther Musatti, *Set Designer*

- Role of the film set designer
- Knowledge and use of new technologies for theatrical staging
- Production techniques for film and television sets
- Use of light
- Hints of film and television shooting language

### IT in Set Design

Gianluca Dentici, *Visual Effects  
Supervisor*

- Role of the scenographer in relation to new design and implementation techniques
- Knowledge of Maya 3D animation and modeling software
- Use of the main tools of the software
- Techniques for presenting a sketch or scenic design
- Practical exercises in digital modeling of scenic elements

### Lighting design

Angelo Linzalata, *Set & Lighting Designer*  
Massimo Guerri, *Lighting Designer*

- Basic theoretical and practical knowledge for approaching aspects of lighting engineering as applied to theatrical staging
- Analysis of possible uses of light in various performance contexts
- Safety regulations
- Study of light-producing equipment and uses
- Reaction of light on materials and people
- Analysis of lighting plan drawings
- Notions of stagecraft design
- Practical experiences

### Photoshop

Beatrice Laurora, *Set Designer*

- Knowledge of Adobe Photoshop photo editing software
- Using the main tools of the software
- Processing and editing images
- Analysis of lighting plan drawings
- Applied exercises on personal and group projects

### Videomapping

Mattia Diomedi, *Video artist,  
Set and Lighting Designer*

- Knowledge and use of the tools needed to design a mapped video projection
- Creating mapped video projection installations
- Videomapping and set design
- Technical concepts on digital design
- Exercises applied to personal and group projects



### After Effects

Michele Innocente, *Video Designer*

- Knowledge of the software After Effects
- Using the main tools of the software
- Fundamentals of animation
- Technical concepts on digital design
- Applied exercises on personal and group projects



## GENERAL BACKGROUND

### Music appreciation

Fabio Sartorelli,  
*Musicologist*

- Introduction to opera and musical theatre
- Analysis of repertory operas and ballets



### Introduction to musical theatre

Andrea Massimo Grassi, *Musicologist,  
Accademia Teatro alla Scala*

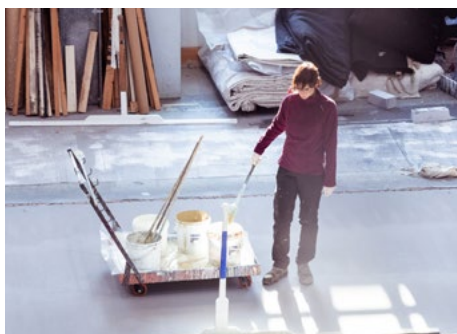
- Introduction to performing arts, crafts, and language
- Social and cultural function of performing art
- Musical theater lexicon
- Bibliographical tools and tools offered by the network

## SELF-ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### Contract law

Piergiuseppe Sciotti, *Business  
Consultant*

- Types of businesses
- Characteristics of self-employment
- Types of contracts
- Managing a job interview effectively



### Workplace safety

Michela Songini, *Health &  
Safety, Teatro alla Scala*  
Sergio Tasca, *Safety Instructor*

- Legislative background
- Information related to health and safety protection in the workplace
- PPE and emergency procedures in workplaces
- General training and specific training: low-risk activities
- Analysis of stage set designs
- Knowledge and skills for safe design

### Career counseling

Sarah Dominique Orlandi, *Consultant  
& Planner*  
Staff Accademia Teatro alla Scala

- Tools for presenting the professional profile
- Active job search and its channels
- Planning in professional activity
- Personal branding
- Using social media for the presentation of one's professionalism
- The Web and its rules
- Cultural institutions and professionals in the Web
- Internship orientation pathway



### English

Polly James, *Native-speaker Teacher*

- Terminology specific to the stage and live performance industry
- English-language presentation of the professional profile

### Self-entrepreneurship

Gianfranco Daniele, *Consultant & Instructor*

- Elements of business management to set up your own business
- Knowledge of a business plan
- Creating a business plan

### Teambuilding & training

Valeria Miglio, *Coordinator*  
*Accademia Teatro alla Scala*

- Group socialization
- Personalization of learning project
- Individual and group meetings





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# KEY POINTS

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## TEATRO ALLA SCALA

Working on a daily basis on productions alongside the professionals at Teatro alla Scala is a unique and invaluable experience.

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## COSTANT PRACTICE

The students not only observe work on stage sets in the Teatro alla Scala workshops but are also expected to conceive and create projects on their own.

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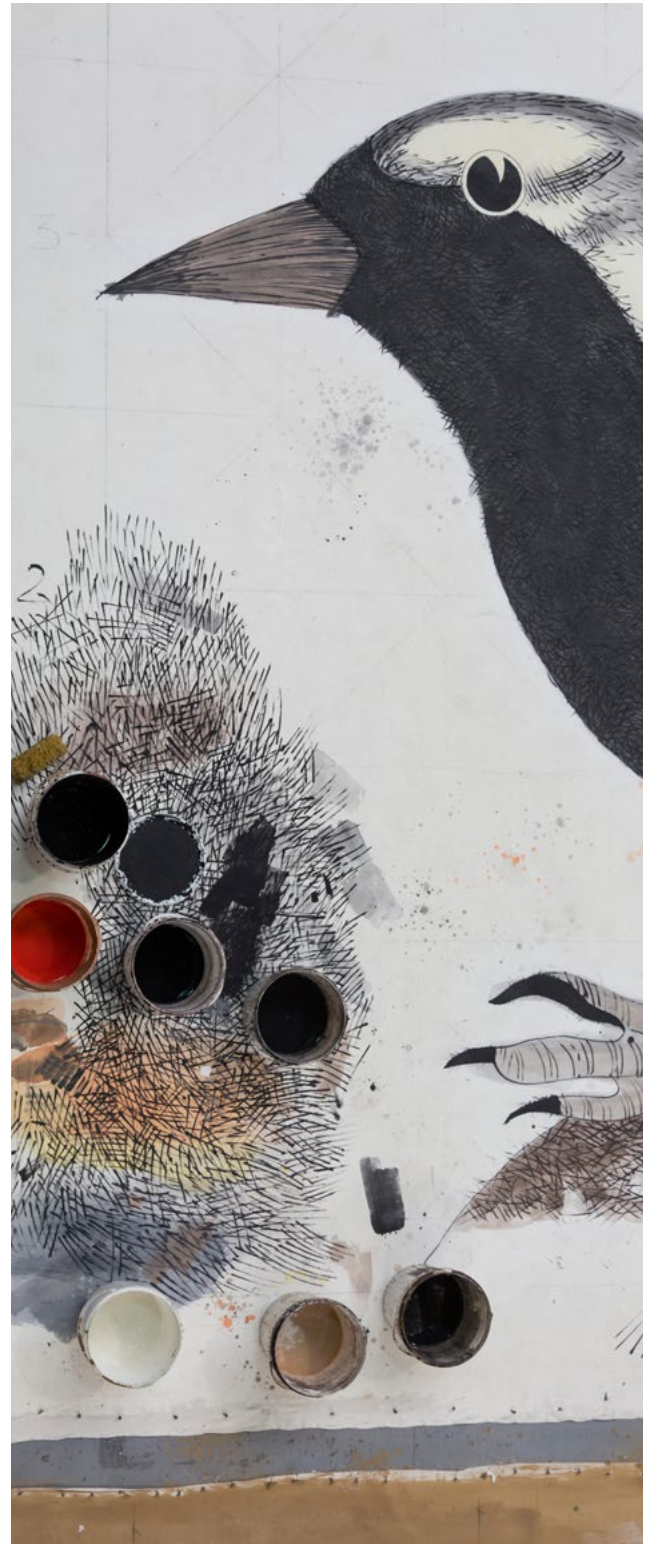
## ON-THE-JOB

The individual internships (300 hours per year) take place at major performing arts venues in Italy and abroad.

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## VERSATILITY

The skills acquired in this course apply to all types of productions—operas, ballets, plays, cinema, television—and also to photography, fashion, advertising, and events.



# PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS

→ Applicants must pass a selection process to be admitted to the course. ←



## LENGTH

2 YEARS

From October 16, 2025  
to July 31, 2027

*Curricular needs may require postponing the end of the course and the final exam to December 2027.*



## TOTAL HOURS

1000 hours

per year divided in:

- 700 hours in classroom, workshops and practical exercises
- 300 hours of internship



## ATTENDANCE

Monday through Friday,  
9 am to 5 pm.  
Times may vary but will not  
exceed 8 hours per day.  
**Attendance is mandatory.**

Some practical exercises  
may take place in the  
evening or on Sundays.

Absences must be justified  
and may not exceed 25% of  
total hours or the student  
will be expelled from the  
course. The Academy and  
Teaching Committee  
reserve the sole right to  
make exceptions to this  
rule.



## LOCATION

Accademia Teatro alla Scala  
Via S. Marta, 18  
20123 Milan

Scuola di Ballo  
Accademia Teatro alla Scala  
Via Campo Lodigiano, 2  
20122 Milan

Teatro alla Scala  
Via Filodrammatici, 2  
20121 Milan

Laboratori scenografici  
Teatro alla Scala  
Via Bergognone, 34  
20144 Milan

Magazzini Teatro alla Scala  
Via Gottlieb W. Daimler, 57  
20151 Milan



## LANGUAGE

The course is  
conducted in Italian

# COURSE MATERIALS

Each student will receive protective clothing and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) for the Teatro alla Scala workshops. All other course materials will be provided by the Academy. Students should preferably be equipped with a portable computer for exercises in the classroom and at home.



Ph: Margherita Gnacciolini



# PARTICIPANT PROFILE



## REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

Age 18-28

Bachelor's degree or higher academic degree

Aptitude in set design and costume design;

Good knowledge of scenic, pictorial, and prop and costume processing techniques

Knowledge of sculptural technique



## PREFERENTIAL FACTORS

Deep desire to work in the performing arts



## OTHER FACTORS

Applicants who have passed the selection process will be able to formalize their enrollment only if they meet the following requirement before the course starts: residence or domicile in the Region of Lombardy



# SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process consists of:

- ◆ preselection
- ◆ practical exam
- ◆ personal interview

## ◆ WHEN AND WHERE

The practical exam is currently scheduled for **September 9, 2025** at the La Scala Academy at Via Santa Marta 18, Milan. The interview will take place approximately on **September 16, 2025** at the La Scala Ansaldo Workshops at Via Bergognone 34, Milan.

The Accademia is in a central area of Milan, not far from Piazza Duomo and La Scala Theater. It is easily accessible: the nearest subway stops are Cordusio and Duomo (M1) and Missori (M3). The Teatro alla Scala Stage Workshops, on the other hand, are located not far from MUDEC, Museo delle Culture. The nearest subway stop is Porta Genova (M2). The Laboratories can also be easily reached by Tram Line 14. Once there, you will find directions to the classrooms where the tests will be held. It is advisable to make travel arrangements by ensuring a good amount of time in order to arrive on time for the appointment.

## ◆ HOW

After registration closes, an email will be sent with the date and time of convocation. The selection test will be held in three stages:

### ◆ Preselection

The preselection involves paper or hand delivery to the Accademia Teatro alla Scala headquarters of two boards (one with a scenic theme, the other with a costume theme, inspired by Giuseppe Verdi's opera *La forza del destino* or the ballet *The Nutcracker*, to the music of Pyotr Il'ič Tchaikovsky) as below:

- ◆ one on the scenic theme, accompanied by a concise description of its design execution, with optional realization of technical-execution drawings. The panel must also include a sculptural element and a prop;
- ◆ one on the costume theme, accompanied by a concise description of its design execution, with optional realization of a sample proposal.

The following guidelines and directions should be followed when making and submitting boards:

- ◆ boards should be made with any artistic techniques: e.g. tempera, acrylic, oil, watercolor, pencil, ink, etc;
- ◆ the boards must be no larger than A2 cm.42x60.

No black-and-white or color photocopies or plates made with the total aid of computer technology will be accepted. Submitted papers will not be allowed to be returned.

The 2 boards, complete with the name and surname of the candidate and the caption "Set design Course - Biennium 2025/2027," must be mailed or delivered by 4 p.m. on **July 10, 2025**, as follows:

- ◆ sent (without being rolled or folded) to the address of the Accademia Teatro alla Scala in via Santa Marta n. 18 - 20123 Milan. **Please note, the postmark will not be used as proof.**



or

♦ hand-delivered to the Students' Office of the Accademia Teatro alla Scala in via Santa Marta n. 18 - 20123 Milan.

### ♦ Practical exam

The practical exam can be entered only after the boards submitted during the preselection phase have been evaluated as eligible.

The practical exam, which will last 4 hours, consists of a life drawing from a choice of set design, costume design, sculpture, or prop design.

In order to conduct the practical exam, candidates are asked to bring tools and materials (pencils, India ink, tempera, acrylic, watercolor, etc.) of their choice.

The Academy will provide No. 2 sheets (1 smooth and 1 semi-rough), size 50 x 70.

### ♦ Personal interview

The interview, which can be accessed only after passing the practical test, will last about 20 minutes and is intended to verify candidates' professional experiences, motivations, attitudes and expectations.

During the interview, in order to help candidates bring out their best characteristics, the committee, consisting of a number of lecturers, the educational coordinator and the course tutor, will propose:

- ♦ questions about the curriculum vitae;
- ♦ questions about the motivations for choosing the advanced Course in Set design at the Teatro alla Scala Academy;
- ♦ questions about interest and passion for musical theatre, ballet and drama theatre;
- ♦ photographic portfolio analysis.

## How to set up your portfolio

The portfolio, to be submitted in hard copy only, must consist of projects made by the candidate/applicant that include references to set design, sculpture, prop making and costume making.

Images must be printed.

Images in electronic format will not be accepted.

Applicants are free to bring, in addition to the portfolio, any samples, small sculpture and/or prop elements, artifacts representing examples of costume elaboration techniques.



## WHAT TO BRING

For the selections, it will be necessary to show up with a valid ID.

To conduct the practical exam, you are also required to bring tools and materials of your choice (pencils, ink, tempera, acrylic, watercolor, etc.) and, at the interview, present your art portfolio.

**Some advices:** present yourself with a clear idea of why you want to study Set design at the Teatro alla Scala Academy - devote time and care to the preparation of the boards and interview, so that it will be more effective and stimulating - inform yourself about the activities of the Academy and Teatro alla Scala - do not be afraid to ask questions.

The Selection Committee will determine who is eligible for admission to the course, admitting the top candidates. If one or more of these candidates chooses not to attend the course, the next-ranked eligible candidate(s) may be admitted. The Examining Committee's decisions are final and incontestable. No explanations or justifications of its decisions will be provided.

# COSTS

The fee for participation in the selection process is **€100 (including VAT)**, to be paid online during the application process. The selection process fee may be paid by major credit/debit cards or credit transfer. The Academy uses the MyBank service (for a list of participating banks, see: <https://mybank.eu/participating-banks-and-psps/>). Annual tuition for the course is **€5,235 (five thousand two hundred and thirty-five/00 including VAT)**.

Tuition for the first year shall be paid in three installments via SEPA Direct Debit (SDD)\* as follows.

If the Italian Ministry of Finance and the Economy raises VAT, the above amounts will be adjusted accordingly.

\* Those who do not have a bank account in the SEPA zone, please contact the office by phone or email (contact info at end of document).

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1 INSTALLMENT

€ 2,635 on Oct. 14, 2025

2

2 INSTALLMENT

€ 1,300 on Jan. 30, 2026

3

3 INSTALLMENT

€ 1,300 on Apr. 30, 2026



Ph: Anna La Naia



# SCHOLARSHIPS & STUDENT LOANS

Student loans, scholarships, and tuition waivers and other forms of financial support ensure that students have access to a curriculum characterized by unrivaled artistic quality and close contact with the professional world.

## Scholarships

Students who pass the selection process and whose ISEE (Equivalent Financial Status Indicator) does not exceed 20,000 euros may apply for a scholarship to cover all or a part of tuition. The application process will be communicated in a separate announcement delivered to all those passing the selection process.

## Merit loans & Student loans

The La Scala Academy has established conventions with credit institutes to provide other forms of financial aid covering tuition and/or lodging to all students in good academic standing.

For further information, please contact the Students' Office:

[segreteria.didattica@accademiascala.it](mailto:segreteria.didattica@accademiascala.it)



# ADMISSION PROCESS

You must apply to the selections by **July 10, 2025**.

Please follow the steps below to apply:

①

## ENROLLMENT PLATFORM LOGIN OR REGISTRATION

Login to the Academy enrollment platform at <https://iscrizioni.accademiascala.it> (if you do not already have login credentials from a previous application to another Academy course, you will need to register first).

You will apply for the selection process in a subsequent step.

Please enter all information accurately.

Make a note of your email address and password because they will be your login credentials [username and password] for your personal page.

You will be asked to accept the Academy privacy policy.

②

## APPLICATION PROCESS

The Academy enrollment platform will guide you through the application process.

③

## ACCEPTANCE OF GENERAL CONTRACT CONDITIONS

The next step is to download and sign (either digitally or by printing and scanning) the "Condizioni di contratto per la partecipazione" [Contract conditions for participation (in the selection process)]. Upload the signed document where indicated.

You must complete this step to continue the application process.

④

## ATTACHEMENTS

You will be asked to attach the following documents:

◆ A detailed, signed CV ending with the following statements:

*1. I, the undersigned, aware of criminal penalties provided in Article 76 of Italian Presidential Decree no. 445 of December 28, 2000 (D.P.R. 445/2000) in the case of false statements and acts, declare, pursuant to Articles 46 and 47 of said Presidential Decree, that all information contained in this CV is truthful;*  
*2. I authorize processing of the personal data I have provided for the purposes inherent to using my CV per Italian Legislative Decree no. 196 of 30 June 2003 (D.Lgs. 196/2003) and the European General Data Protection Regulation (EU 2016/679).*

◆ 1 digital photo (passport size)

◆ Candidate identification (identity card or passport)

◆ Copy of academic certification (If you do not have your official diploma/certificate at this time, you may attach a self-certification. However, please note that this is only a temporary solution: you must provide the Academy with a copy of the official diploma/certificate on or before the day the course begins or you will be excluded from the course. Undergraduates may register by enclosing a copy of the document stating that the thesis will be discussed within the calendar year).

⑤

## APPLICATION FEE

You will be asked to pay a fee of €100



(including VAT) to apply to the selection process. Payment may be made by credit or debit card or credit transfer. The payment must be made online during the application process (do not close the page and attempt to pay elsewhere).

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## COMPLETION OF PROCEDURE

Once the above steps have been completed, a summary will be generated of all information provided. You must print and sign this summary, scan it, and attach it where indicated. This completes the application for the selection process and all forms will be sent to the Academy Teaching Office [Segreteria Didattica]. Please follow all instructions on your screen or received via email from the enrollment platform.

Make sure all the information you provide is correct. Any inaccuracies will result in automatic rejection of your application. The Academy reserves the exclusive right to accept applications submitted after the above deadlines but before the beginning of the selection process. The Academy also reserves the right to postpone the application timeframe, the selection process, and the beginning of the course.

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## BOARDS

By 4 p.m. on July 10, 2025, it is necessary to have sent 2 boards, complete with the surname and first name of the candidate and the wording "Set Design Course-Biennio 2025/2027" (postmark will not be taken as proof) or hand delivered (to the Teatro alla Scala Academy Students' Office, via Santa Marta 18, 20123 Milan).

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## NOTIFICATIONS

No later than **September 3, 2025**, candidates whose boards have been deemed eligible by the Selection Committee will receive by e-mail the convocation to the second stage of selections, which involves passing a practical test.

No later than **September 12, 2025**, the convocation to the third and final stage of selections, which consists of an individual interview, will be sent by e-mail.

No later than **September 23, 2025**, eligible students admitted to the course will also receive an e-mail with directions and timelines for proceeding with enrollment, which must be formalized through the restricted area at [iscrizioni.accademiascala.it](https://iscrizioni.accademiascala.it) no later than the date indicated below:

◇  
*Enrollment no later than*  
**30/09/2025**

By **September 30, 2025**, applicants who wish to apply for the scholarship must complete the application form, also attaching their valid ISEE certification; applications received after this deadline or sent via e-mail will not be accepted.

Notification regarding the eventual awarding of the scholarship will be sent by October 6, 2025.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND ITALIANS RESIDING ABROAD

Academic certification earned outside of Italy must be accompanied by a document certifying its legal validity pursuant to Italian law.

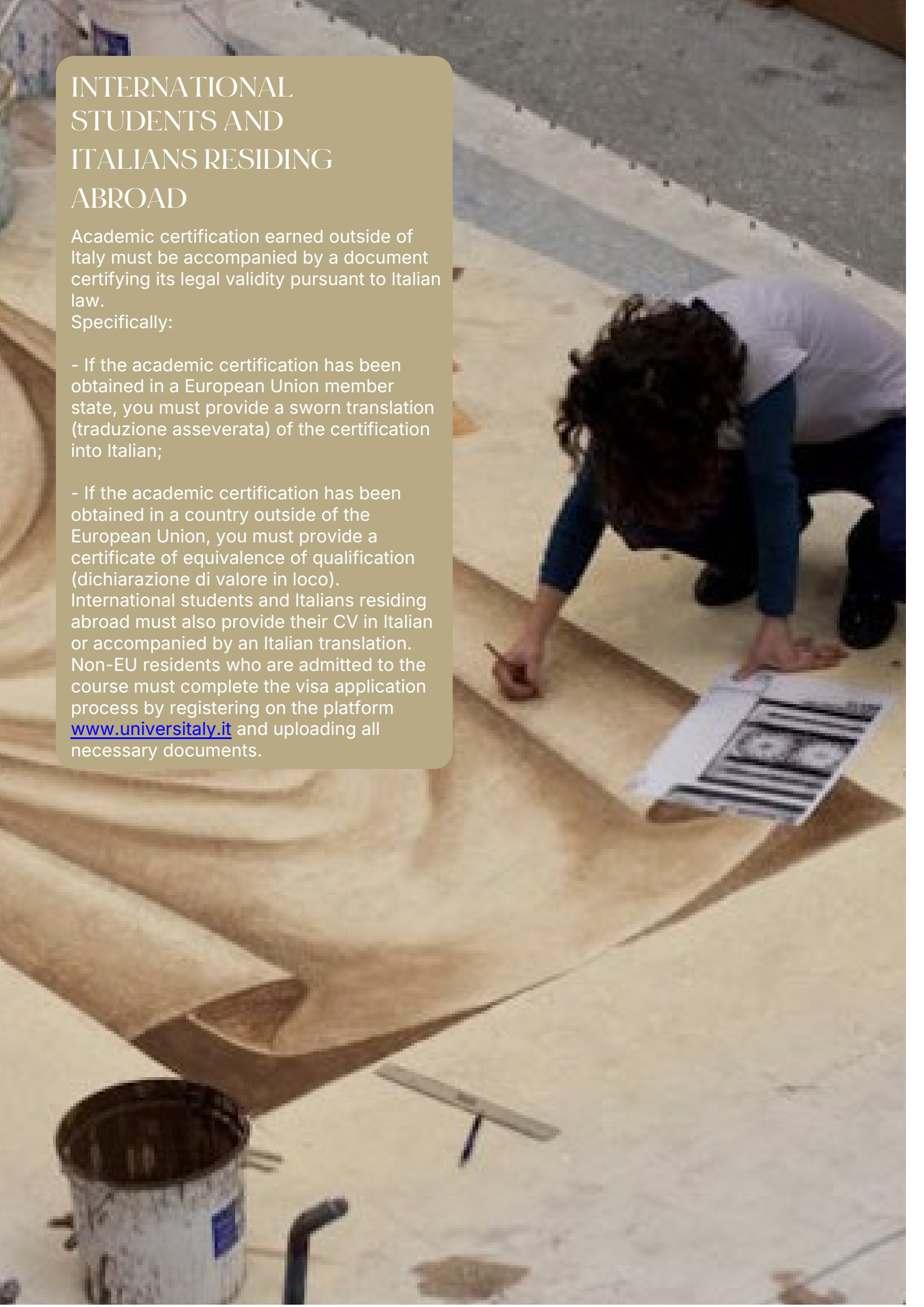
Specifically:

- If the academic certification has been obtained in a European Union member state, you must provide a sworn translation (traduzione asseverata) of the certification into Italian;

- If the academic certification has been obtained in a country outside of the European Union, you must provide a certificate of equivalence of qualification (dichiarazione di valore in loco).

International students and Italians residing abroad must also provide their CV in Italian or accompanied by an Italian translation.

Non-EU residents who are admitted to the course must complete the visa application process by registering on the platform [www.universitaly.it](http://www.universitaly.it) and uploading all necessary documents.





# FINAL CERTIFICATION

Students who successfully complete the course with attendance of at least 75% and pass the final exam will receive:

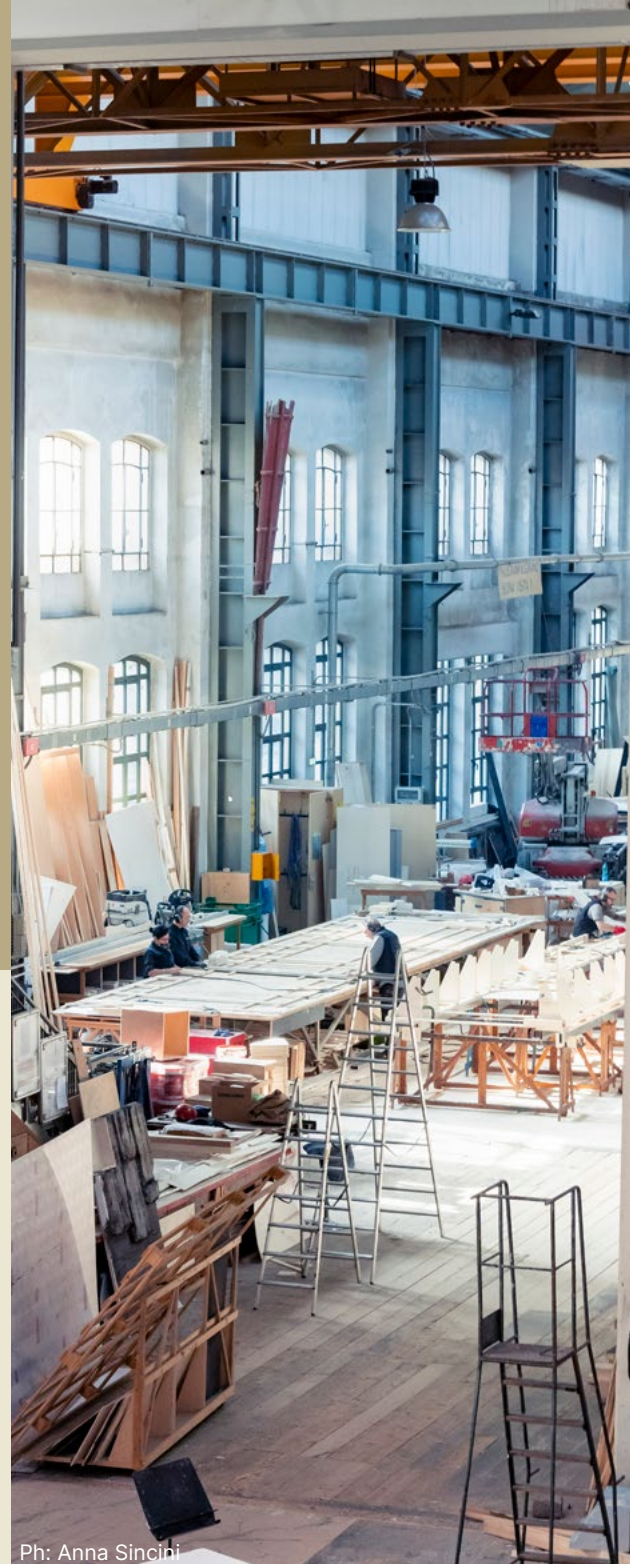
- ❖ a Diploma issued by the Academy;
- ❖ a Certificate of Competency issued by the Region of Lombardy;
- ❖ a Certificate of Competency in Workplace Safety.

The Academy may also issue a Certificate of Merit to outstanding course participants, who will be selected by uncontested judgment of the Office of the Director and the Teachers' Committee.

## ALUMNI

Students who complete the course may join the community of La Scala Academy Alumni, a platform providing a series of exclusive services to former Academy students: job offers, networking, post-Academy training initiatives, mentorships, events, project incubators, as well as special rates and discounts.

Find out more at [alumni.accademiascala.it](http://alumni.accademiascala.it)



Ph: Anna Sincibi

## MEET THE STAFF

Valeria Miglio  
*Coordinator*

[infocorsi@accademiascala.it](mailto:infocorsi@accademiascala.it)

OPEN DAY

Register at [bit.ly/OpenDayATS](http://bit.ly/OpenDayATS)

For information on the application process: Giovanna Coletta - Students' Office

☎ +39 02 85451160/22

✉ [segreteria.didattica@accademiascala.it](mailto:segreteria.didattica@accademiascala.it)