

MASTER OF ARTS DESIGN

Duration:

Full-Time — 1.5 Years (3 Semesters)

Part-Time — 3 Years (6 Semesters)

Award:

Master of Arts Design

Mode:

Full-Time or Part-Time

Classes will be conducted
mostly in the evenings

Intake:

January



"What does it take to prepare future designers who will design and create the world to be understood? A world that demands creative ideas beyond the typical boundaries of design.

The MA Design Programme fosters a process of asking valid, significant and complex questions, using an innovative pedagogical approach that seeks to mediate between past and future, global and local, traditions and contemporaries. The programme presents content which is underpinned by relevant context. This is the starting point. Design and all its ramifications."

*Nur Hidayah, Dean, Faculty of Design
& Acting Programme Leader, MA Design*

What is the role of design and the designer in today's fast-changing world? As technologies progress rapidly, so do the possibilities of what constitutes design expand. Along with the growth of societies, as communities re-imagine themselves, the designer's canvas evolves as well from not only creating solutions, to preserving the values and thinking behind them in response to constrained resources as diverse needs increase.

Therefore as design exists within an increasingly complex and interconnected world, we need to emphasise the social, environmental and downstream impact of designed products, services and systems. We will need to factor in not just market-driven forces and material possibilities, but what the making process itself means. This is why the practices of Design and Design Research are increasingly important across industry contexts, whereby we rethink not only the makeup of the solutions, but the process of inquiry that generate those solutions as well.

The complexity and unpredictability of the problems we face entails that solving them will require us to bring multi-disciplinary skills, expertise and processes to bear on any one problem, as not one domain of expertise has the monopoly on the solution. As more individuals and organisations recognise this, designers today are applying their craft in a staggering variety of contexts, from products to services, organisations, systems and policies, beyond the previous conventional domains of design.

Against this backdrop, we have designed the MA Design Programme to respond to the important role of design in re-imagining the world we live in. You will be challenging your thinking and making process. You will emerge fully proficient in being able to articulate and produce design as a force for impact. You will be part of a new generation of research-based creators, innovators and inventors challenging conventions and creating well-informed positions of what Design is, what it is positioned to do, and how it can help strategically transform lives.

The MA Design is a programme to develop design research and practice capabilities in critical analysis, collaborative engagement and intellectual argument. As a student, you will learn by doing along the iterative process of research-led design practice. You will hone your critical thinking and ability to identify problems and formulate solutions, increasing your agility to perform across the roles of thinker, researcher, strategist and innovator.

The MA Design Programme provides a learning environment for interdisciplinary, collaborative processes. You will explore research themes through modules on context, discourse, methodology and interdisciplinary design labs. You will experience active learning, dialogue and debate with your fellow students, faculty and industry partners with diverse backgrounds, expertise and experience.

In order to support your exploration of the emerging applications of design and where you can best apply your skills towards them, the programme provides a supportive environment full of advanced practical and research-driven opportunities for you to experiment across a wide range of domains.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

This full-time programme spans three consecutive semesters within a 1.5-year duration. Semesters 1 and 2 each have two 30-credit modules. In Semester 2, a 30-credit elective module option is made available to you with a choice to take the module offered by your respective programme or, in consultation with your Programme Leader, select a module offered by another MA programme. The 60-credit module in the final (3rd) semester will support you to develop a thesis or a practice-based project/exhibition based on your research interests.

FULL-TIME

SEMESTER 1	CREDIT POINTS
Research Methods in Creative Arts	30
Design Lab 1: Design in Context and Integrated Design Practice	30
SEMESTER 2	CREDIT POINTS
Design Lab 2: Design Synthesis and Hypothesis	30
Critical Discourse in Design	30
SEMESTER 3	CREDIT POINTS
Final Research	60

In the part-time mode, the programme spans six consecutive semesters within a 3-year duration. You are required to complete one 30-credit module each in Semesters 1 to 4. The Final Research 60-credit module will span the last 2 semesters in the final year. Part-time students will begin with the Research Methods in Creative Arts module as this establishes core principles and skills necessary across all MA programmes, while also introducing techniques of research, and enables you to present and write analytically and critically across relevant issues in your field of study. You will undergo academic guidance from your Programme Leader to organise your course of study.

Research Methods in Creative Arts

This module introduces you to arts research through a thorough study of research methods and analytical techniques informing artistic and critical practices at the MA level. Research operates within a critical context and this module aims to prepare you to confidently articulate your practice, formulate your own critical arguments, and formulate methods to investigate and probe issues.

Critical Discourse in Design

This module examines an interdisciplinary area of study discussing and analysing the theoretical foundations of design and the cognitive processes and methods used to explore, develop and communicate design solutions. You will be expected to question issues surrounding the nature of design, the processes guiding design, knowledge of design and theories developed from neighbouring disciplines that inform design.

Design Lab 1: Design in Context and Integrated Design Practice

This module introduces you to the impacts of design on human civilisation through its changing values in relation to political, social, economic and technological developments. You will be required to identify design beyond the scope of problem-solving or outcome-based activities and analyse it as a form of social critique and self-enquiry leading towards design thinking.



2 Linking Cities, Design Experiences



3 Wood/Paper/Cloth

Design Lab 2: Design Synthesis and Hypothesis

In this module, you will develop your research and design project beyond the initial proposal stage through independent practical work, testing and critical analyses.

You will undertake a Residency Programme which will take place off-site during the June-July semester break. The focus of the Residency Programme is to provide you with a platform to test new ideas and engage in further research and scholarship within the creative industry and academic community.

Final Research

This module requires you to contextualise and present a substantial body of creative design work and/or written thesis, informed by the critical and conceptual thinking developed over the previous two semesters and supported by a research-led, critical discourse.

POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH

LASALLE has a long tradition of practice-led research in art and design. The College aims to assume a significant role in Singapore for practice-led research in visual, performing and literary arts, and aspires to add the distinctive viewpoint of Singapore to research into artistic practice in the 21st century.

The Research Methods in Creative Arts module is a common module which all students are required to undertake. You will have the opportunity to interact with one another in the first term (7 weeks), to network with peers in other MA programmes and foster a stronger community of research practice that enhances your respective discipline of study as well as within the College.

You will be introduced to relevant professional methods of research and creation which may include profiles of and/or dialogue with creative professionals, critical/theoretical discourse, action research, visual object analysis, textual analysis, case studies, historical and ethnographic research, interviews, life-stories/ autobiographies, etc. You will also be introduced to research practices such as literature reviews, process-based discovery, bibliographical searches, quantitative & qualitative methods, citations and the construction of research questions

Postgraduate students are constantly exposed to first-hand experience in current practices of research and creation, leading to the acquiring powerful knowledge and of a wide set of skills by the time you graduate. You will have opportunities to develop expertise in accordance with your research interests.

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

The programme focuses on helping you to develop a research-led design practice with developmental opportunities to stimulate interdisciplinary exchange. You will examine and contextualise analytical and systematic approaches to design research methodology and formulate a design discourse in three broad areas:

- Research in Design
- Research-based Design
- Research through Design

Through the programme modules, you will examine, critique, and propose contemporary, emerging ideas through design practice using one or more of four research themes:

Contemporary Cities

Design influences the social world through a set of values or symbols through which culture is constructed. This research theme focuses on how designers can transform everyday urban experiences and the worldviews of urban dwellers. We will explore how the contemporary city can be both local yet global, and how it encompasses complex economic, political, social, environmental factors at play. This theme gives you a critical vocabulary to create opportunities for dialogue between various social, technological, economic or political aspects influencing urban growth and development, to propose new ideas of how we will live in cities in the future.

Objects and Representation

How individuals perceive and understand designed objects is socially and culturally dependent. The study of material culture has long been rooted in cultural and historical research. This theme focuses on designed objects and their various effects on the material culture of today so as to open up discussions on history, philosophy and the relationships between people, objects and representations. As design evolves, so does the value of objects. Thus we will explore interesting interactions, narratives and relationships between people and their objects.

Citizen Designer

Citizen designer is a term coined by design critics Steven Heller and Veronique Vienne (2009). It is about designers questioning how they can affect political or social change, what it means to be a social designer or to be design-conscious against the fast-changing environments of Asia and beyond. This theme questions the impact of design on citizenry by raising issues existing in the minds of conscientious designers dealing with issues at the educational, individual, corporate and grassroots levels.

Future Identities

The emerging design issues of today are typified by complex and interdependent problems. In the era of globalisation and growing digitalisation, the concept of design is blurred in terms of its methodological and professional boundaries. Reflective design is about proposing new creative perspectives and critical paradigms for design futures. In this theme we will explore what the future might hold for design and develop innovation strategies to address changing markets, competitive forces, organisational capabilities and business objectives. We will explore changing trends and new research models on how design can be applied to improve our human and built environment.

THE FACULTY



Nur Hidayah

Dean, Faculty of Design & Acting Programme Leader

- Master of Arts, Design for Communication, University of Central England, UK
- BA Design (Advertising Design), Curtin University of Technology, Australia

With extensive teaching experience of more than 14 years, Nur Hidayah is instrumental to LASALLE's Faculty of Design. She manages the demanding and challenging task of leading the pedagogical development and strategic growth of all the design programmes. Under her leadership, the design programmes have achieved great success at regional and international design competitions and showcases including D&AD Student Awards, The Crowbar Awards, Furniture Design Awards, and Graduate Fashion Week in London. Nur has also initiated several collaborative partnership projects with different design institutions and organisations. Her research focuses on communities of practice, design innovation and pedagogy and issues on Contemporary Cities. She has presented in conferences across Asia and continues to develop insights on the role of Design and the future role of Designers. She chaired the Programme Development Team for the MA Design Programme and saw to its successful validation in July 2016.



Dr Harah Chon
Lecturer-in Charge

- PhD in Design, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, School of Design
- Master in Business Administration, Graduate School of Business, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
- Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fashion Design, Parsons the New School of Design, New York

Harah Chon is a Korean-American design practitioner, researcher and educator. She began her professional career in New York as a fashion designer at Ralph Lauren before pursuing postgraduate studies in Hong Kong. Harah holds a PhD in Design Epistemology, through which she examined the ontological structures of knowledge representation to produce a culture-based taxonomy of design knowledge. The research framework of her PhD thesis was published as a book chapter in "Routledge Companion to Design Research". Harah was a Visiting Researcher in the Department of Science of Design at Musashino Art University in Tokyo, studying design metaphors through narratives and cultural epistemologies. Her current research activities focus on design theory and philosophy across the themes of collaborative design frameworks, disruptive approaches to interdisciplinary design, intangible culture and heritage, and knowledge transference. She advocates the furthering of discourses on design and cultural sustainability, social design, and design knowledge.



Dr Mitha Budhyarto
Lecturer

- PhD in Humanities and Cultural Studies, University of London, Birkbeck College, UK
- MA in Philosophy (Aesthetics), University of Sussex, UK
- BA in Philosophy and Art History, University of Surrey, Roehampton College, UK

Mitha is responsible for developing and implementing a joint project for the different programmes within the Faculty of Design with a focus on Southeast Asian Design Studies. Mitha is also a lecturer for BA(Hons) Product Design Level 3 students who are working on their graduation thesis. She is responsible for BA(Hons) Fine Arts Level 2 tutorials on Art Theory. Alongside her academic position, she continues to maintain her practice as a curator. Her 2015 academic paper, "Interdisciplinarity and Institution" was published in the proceedings of The 3rd International Conference of Interdisciplinary Program in Studies of Arts at Sungkyunkwan University, Korea.



Andreas Schlegel
Lecturer

- MA European Media, University of Portsmouth, UK
- MSc Media Arts & Technology, University of California, USA

Andreas Schlegel currently heads the Media Lab at LASALLE College of the Arts. He works across disciplines and develops artefacts, tools, and interfaces where art and technology meet in a curious way. Many of his works are collaborative and have been presented on screen, as installation, workshop or performance. His practice is concerned with emerging and open source technologies where outcomes are driven by computation, interaction and networked processes.

After graduating from Merz Akademie Stuttgart (Germany) with a Diploma in Communication Design, he went on to attain a Master of Arts from the University of Portsmouth (UK) in 2000 and a Master of Science at the University of California, Santa Barbara (USA) in 2004. In 2007, he co-founded Syntfarm, an art collective interested in the intersection of art, nature and technology. Since 2004 he contributes to the open source project Processing.org and he collaborates in the performance collective electromagnetic objects.



Dr Nadine Ouellet
Lecturer

- Doctoral Equivalency, Graphic Design, Université Laval, Quebec, Canada (Quebec)
- MFA, Graphic Design, Yale University School of Art, United States
- BFA, Visual Communication, Université Laval, Canada (Quebec)

After completing her BFA in Visual Communication, Nadine worked for creative firms in Canada before pursuing her graduate studies at Yale University, in the United States. Nadine's MFA's thesis on *Indexical Portraiture: Graphic Design as Evidence* was supervised by the American academic, author and designer Jessica Helfand. Nadine started her academic career at Université Laval (School of Design) in Quebec City in 2002, while she also pursued a Doctoral equivalency research project and various graphic design residencies. Nadine received her academic tenure in 2007 and led the graphic design undergraduate program for one year before moving to Hong Kong in 2008. In Hong Kong, Nadine continued her academic journey at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, as a Visiting Professor, and at the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD, Hong Kong campus), as a Full-Time Professor.

Nadine's design practice has been revolving around clients in the cultural, governmental and educational sectors. She worked for creative firms in Quebec City, New York, Paris, Porto and Hong Kong. She has been working on design projects for clients such as Phaidon Press, Art Directors Club of New York, The Friends of the High Line, Paris I Pantheon-Sorbonne University, Desjardins Bank, As Boas Raparigas Theater, Quebec Government, and Edipresse Media Hong Kong.



4 Red Melancholy



5 MA Design Showcase, The LASALLE Show 2018



6 Traces of the city



7 Linking Cities, Designing Experiences

GRADUATE CAREER PATHS

The MA Design Programme at LASALLE builds upon the dynamically evolving design culture we are seeing in Singapore and the region. Singapore is now home to more than 7000 multinational corporations, where an estimate of over 227,000 jobs were created for both local and foreign talents. In recent years, Asia has become a major player in design and has been influential to the creative economy. Places like Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore are emerging as major players on the creative world stage, due to the richness and sophistication of their cultural heritage. As part of an increasingly important but scarce pool of talent, you will participate in the positioning of Singapore and Asia as a rigorous environment and connection point for innovative design-based education. As a graduate of the programme, you will be sought after for your ability to understand the multi-faceted cultural, communicative, production, management and business demands so as to contribute across a spectrum of creative industries and business contexts.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for this programme of study should have:

- A good undergraduate degree (equivalent to a 2nd class honour classification) in any related discipline from a recognised tertiary institution.
- Expansive folio with relevant and substantial creative work (written or visual form).
- Preferred professional work experience either in full-time or part-time capacity or any other substantial related work experience.
- A satisfactory score in written and spoken English OR a minimum of IELTS 7.0 or TOEFL iBT 100 for applicants from countries where English is not the first language or whose qualifications are obtained from institutions where English is not the medium of instruction.
- Applicants who come from non-design fields but with the interest and relevant background to develop research work in related design fields can apply as well. Applicants are selected on the basis of their research proposal and interest in design. Applicants should have sufficient technical skills to realise intentions and show evidence of commitment to the study.

All applicants will have to submit a research proposal and will attend an interview to discuss their application. The applicant must outline their interest in design and how they wish to push the boundaries of design in related or non-related domains.

The written research proposal should consist of the intended design research enquiry and a brief study plan (1,000-1,500 words).

The proposal should include:

- A brief background research including contextual framing and a proposed design brief.
- Any visual examples as reference.
- Bibliography.

PHOTOS

page 2:

1. *Microcosm*, Faculty of Design exhibition, Tokyo Design Week, 2014.

page 4:

2. *Linking Cities, Design Experiences Version 5: The Flaneur*, 2016.

© Courtesy Gabriel Chee

3. *Wood/Paper/Cloth.*, 2015.

page 7:

4. *Red Melancholy*, 2016. © Courtesy C+C&Co

5. MA Design Showcase, *The LASALLE Show 2018*.

6. *Traces of the city*, 2014.

7. *Linking Cities, Designing Experiences*, 2013.

ABOUT LASALLE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

LASALLE College of the Arts in Singapore is a leading tertiary institution in cutting edge contemporary arts and design education and practice. The college offers more than 30 diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in fine arts, design communication, interior design, product design, film, animation, fashion, dance, music, theatre, arts management, arts pedagogy and practice, art therapy, Asian art histories, and creative writing.

Its faculty is led by a community of award-winning artists, designers, educators and researchers, and their practice-led research sets LASALLE apart as an international centre of excellence. Critically acclaimed alumni form the core of the cultural and creative sectors in Singapore and increasingly, internationally.

Founded in 1984 by De La Salle Brother Joseph McNally – a visionary artist and educator – LASALLE is a not-for-profit, private educational institution. LASALLE receives tuition grant support from the Singapore Ministry of Education. Its degree programmes are validated by Goldsmiths, University of London.

CONTACT US

For Programme consultation or to schedule a guided campus tour, contact our Admissions Office.

LASALLE College of the Arts
1 McNally Street
Singapore 187940

+65 6496 5111

admissions@lasalle.edu.sg

www.lasalle.edu.sg

Monday – Friday, 9:30am – 5:30pm
Closed on weekends and Public Holidays

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Goldsmiths
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