

# MASTER OF ARTS **ASIAN ART HISTORIES**

**MODE**

Full-Time/ Part-Time

Classes will be conducted mostly in the evenings.

**INTAKE**

January

**DURATION**

Full-Time — 1.5 Years (3 Semesters)

Part-Time — 3 Years (6 Semesters)



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Image:  
MA Asian Art History students  
in the studio of Indonesian  
contemporary artist Agus  
Suwage in 2018.

v  
Image: Aung Ko, *Aung Ko's Village*



GAIN A FINER  
APPRECIATION FOR  
THE RICH HISTORIES  
OF ASIAN MODERN AND  
CONTEMPORARY ART.

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VISIBILITY OF ASIAN  
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Image: Lee Wen, *Ping-Pong Go Round*



## OVERVIEW

The MA Asian Art Histories is the first MA programme in any tertiary institution worldwide to focus on Asian modern and contemporary art. While Asian art history programmes generally focus on classicism or the grand traditions, the programme gives you the opportunity to undertake original research in largely underexplored fields, investigate recently emerged artists and movements and contribute to contemporary discourse and scholarship. In addition, the programme encourages you to establish and expand your professional practices and networks, developing your potential to become leading thinkers and cultural producers in the field.

These are exciting times for Asian art and artists, many of whom have attained international stardom buoyed by market demand and greater visibility in the international art circuit. At the same time, Asian countries have been transformed into major centres for the arts. The success and visibility of Asian art means that researching and studying in this area is all the more timely and relevant.

The MA Asian Art Histories Programme allows you to take advantage of these emerging networks by offering opportunities to participate in conferences, publications and research projects alongside industry leaders. The programme is also committed to supporting innovative individual and collaborative research projects by making available a number of grants for current students and alumni.

By studying at LASALLE, you will benefit from being located in Singapore — the arts and cultural hub of Southeast Asia — with an arts infrastructure that is unmatched by any other country in the region. The MA Asian Art Histories Programme takes full advantage of Singapore's vast resources in Southeast Asian art by including in its curriculum regular off-site visits to galleries and other cultural institutions, as well as one overseas study trip to an area of relevance and interest. Previous trips have included visits to artist studios, galleries, archives, museums and collections in countries including Hong Kong, Vietnam, India and China. Students wanting to undertake in-depth field research will also benefit from Singapore's strategic proximity to resources around the region.

Expanding the purview of conventional art histories, the programme encourages analysis of Asian modern and contemporary art from Asian perspectives rather than through Euro-American approaches alone. By studying Asian Art Histories in LASALLE's practice-based environment, you will also experience an immersive environment within which to engage with practitioners and artworks, fostering interdisciplinary approaches towards the study and writing of art histories.

The programme will equip you with the appropriate expertise and academic rigour to undertake a higher level of independent research work such as a PhD.



# 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 allow you to develop a thesis based on your research interests.

SEMESTER 1	CREDIT POINTS
Research Methods in Creative Arts	30
Histories and Theories on Asian Art	30
SEMESTER 2	CREDIT POINTS
Exhibitions and the Making of Art Histories in Asia	30
Society and Politics in Asian Art	30
SEMESTER 3	CREDIT POINTS
Final Research	60

In the part-time mode, the programme spans six consecutive semesters within a three-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 two 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 is an introduction 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 as well as methods to investigate and probe issues.

## Histories and Theories on Asian Art

This module examines the multiple intersections between art histories and critical theories in the 20th century that are used to frame the development of Asian art discourses. In the last two decades, scholars in the field of Asian art have developed theoretical frameworks and perspectives that critiqued the monolithic Euro-American paradigm of art history. This module will give emphasis to histories and theories that are specific to the Asian context such as postcolonial theory, as well as more recent cultural theories that deal with identity and difference.

## Exhibitions and the Making of Art Histories in Asia

This module examines the history of exhibitions as one of the primary drivers of Asian art histories through a series of detailed case studies starting from the 1980s to the present day. It will discuss the issues that surrounded art academies as well as galleries and museums in Asia,

before focusing on the phenomenon of the exhibition. It will discuss different approaches to exhibition-making by Western and Asian curators as well as the reception of exhibitions on Asian contemporary art in the West. This module will also analyse the role of artist-curators in the shaping of art histories in Southeast Asia, as well as issues surrounding the art market and new exhibition formats such as biennales.

## Society and Politics in Asian Art

This module investigates the ways in which new paradigms in artistic practices are influenced by local and regional issues and events as well as the critical engagement of artists with those developments.

## Final Research

The thesis is a major component of the programme that is a consolidated application of the skills and knowledge that you have acquired throughout the programme. In the thesis, you will demonstrate your ability to undertake academic and scholarly research by your critical engagement with historical and theoretical issues in modern and contemporary Asian art within an appropriate methodological framework.

Image: **Jompot Kuswidananto, Indonesia, Java Phantasmagoria.**  
v



Image:  
**Dr Caroline Turner speaking at Art and Ethical Responsibility: Contemporary Asian Contexts.**  
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# 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 (seven 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.

# CAREER PATHS

Curator, Academic, Gallery Manager, Art Writer, Researcher, Art Administrator and Art Consultant

# PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

- Based in Singapore, the programme gives you convenient access to museums, archives and cultural institutions around the region to do research.
- The programme is taught in a practice-based institution which offers you opportunities to interact and collaborate with art practitioners.
- An innovative programme, it takes learning beyond the classroom and includes local and overseas field trips to museums, exhibitions, independent art spaces, and cultural institutions as well as seminars and conferences.
- The programme is taught by an established faculty that includes art historians and curators as well as guest lecturers from the arts industry such as art market specialists, art gallerists, museum professionals and artists.
- There will be opportunities and platforms for optional attachments in cultural institutions, to write and research as well as to curate exhibitions.

## STUDY TRIPS

A study trip will be organised to one of the countries in the Asian region, during which you will learn how artists and art communities respond to differing social and cultural contexts in the production of art. Harnessing the benefits of experiential learning, this study trip will include visits to artist studios, collectors' homes, galleries, biennales and art spaces. At the same time, it offers invaluable research opportunities through networking with local art communities.



Image:  
**Visiting the studio of Thai artist Pinaree Sanpitak during a study trip to Bangkok in 2018.**



# THE FACULTY



**Jeffrey Say**  
Programme Leader, MA Asian Art Histories

- MA Art History, The Open University, UK
- BA Honours, University of Queensland, Australia

Jeffrey Say is an art historian specialising in Singapore and Southeast Asian art history. Importantly, Jeffrey undertook pioneering research and study of the history of sculpture in pre-and post-war Singapore. An author of numerous essays on art, his seminal co-edited work *Histories, Practices, Interventions: A Reader in Singapore Contemporary Art* (2016) remains a critical anthology for researchers, curators and students on Singapore art to date. Prior to LASALLE, Jeffrey was a curator at the former National Museum where he was overseeing the collection of Buddhist and Indian artefacts. As a museum curator, Jeffrey curated exhibitions on Tibetan Buddhist art, the Maritime Silk Routes and *Alamkara: 5000 Years of India*. In his professional capacity, Jeffrey has curated visual arts exhibitions and contributed essays to both local and overseas exhibition catalogues. Jeffrey has been instrumental in the development of art history studies at LASALLE supporting artists to develop a contextual and historical understanding of the evolution of visual arts. In 2009, he designed the world's first Master's programme focusing on Asian modern and contemporary art histories. Jeffrey is a public advocate of the importance of art history to Singapore. He is a frequent public speaker at museums, universities and galleries, and conducts short courses which remain hugely popular among various publics. Jeffrey is also a regular commentator on the local visual arts scene. His current research interest is on Singapore modern and contemporary art histories. He has written an essay on the early contemporary art scene of Singapore which offers a revisionist view on the beginnings of contemporary art in Singapore (published in the July 2019 edition of *BiblioAsia*). He is also working towards a reader on Singapore modern art which will be a co-edited volume.



**Dr Clare Veal**  
Lecturer, MA Asian Art Histories

- Doctor of Philosophy (Art History), University of Sydney, Australia
- BA Honours (Art History) University of Sydney, Australia

Clare is an art historian and curator who undertakes research on Southeast Asian photography, art and visual culture, with a particular focus on Thailand. She received her PhD from the Department of Art History and Film Studies at the University of Sydney for her thesis entitled, *Thainess Framed: Photography and Thai Identity, 1946–2010*. She has research and teaching experience from institutions in Australia, Thailand and Singapore. From 2015–2016, she was a participating scholar in the Power Institute's *Ambitious Alignments: New Histories of Southeast Asian Art* research programme. She is the editor for the Asian Art section of the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism* (2016) and has contributed papers to a number of edited volumes, journals and exhibition catalogues. In addition to her work as a consultant for a survey of the Chang Tang collection in Bangkok, Clare has co-curated exhibitions including, *Storytellers of the Town: Works by Araya Rasdjarmrearnsook* (2014) and *Retold-Untold Stories: Phaptawan Suwannakudt* (2016).

The full-time faculty is supported by adjunct and visiting lecturers. The visiting lecturers include individuals from academia and industry such as art historians, curators, museum professionals and practicing artists. You are exposed to a broad range of perspectives and practices that reflect the philosophy of the programme. Some of the past and current visiting professors and lecturers include:

**Iola Lenzi** is a Singapore-based historian, critic and curator of Southeast Asian art. Through her exhibitions and writings, Lenzi charts transnational Southeast Asian art historical discourses predicated on regional art's critical dialogue with history, society, faith, and power. She has curated numerous institutional exhibitions in Asia and Europe, and has served as lecturer in the MA Asian Art Histories Programme in LASALLE since 2011. She is the author of *Museums of Southeast Asia* (2004), and the editor of and contribution author to four anthologies of Southeast Asian contemporary art. Iola is currently a PhD candidate at the Nanyang Technological University.

**Dr June Yap** holds a PhD in Cultural Studies from the National University of Singapore. She has been an independent curator since 2008 before joining the Singapore Art Museum as its director of curatorial programmes and publications. Prior to 2008, June worked in the curatorial departments of the Institute of Contemporary Arts in Singapore and the Singapore Art Museum. She curated an exhibition of the work of Ho Tzu Nyen for the Singapore Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2011. June was selected as the first curator for the Guggenheim UBS MAP Global Art Initiative from 2012 to 2014. Her work culminated in the exhibition *No Country: Contemporary Art for South and Southeast Asia*.

**Seng Yu Jin** is a senior curator with the National Gallery Singapore. His research interests cover regional art histories focusing on Southeast Asia, particularly diasporic communities, migration and intercultural dialogues. His curated exhibitions include *From Words to Pictures: Art During the Emergency* (2007) and *Cheong Soo Pieng: Bridging Worlds* (2010). He is co-editor of *Histories, Practices, Interventions: A Reader in Singapore Contemporary Art* (2016). Yu Jin is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne.

**Dr Caroline Turner** is an Adjunct Senior Research Fellow and Associate Professor in the Research School of Humanities and the Arts, Australian National University. Prior to that, she was Deputy Director of the Queensland Art Gallery where she organised and curated many international exhibitions from Europe, Asia and North America. She was co-founder and Project Director for nearly 10 years in the 1990s for the Asia-Pacific Triennial exhibitions (1993, 1996, 1999) at the Queensland Art Gallery and scholarly editor of the three major catalogues for the first three Triennials. Dr Turner's books include *Tradition and Change: Contemporary Art of Asia and the Pacific* (1993) and *Art and Social Change: Contemporary Art in Asia and the Pacific* (2005).

**T.K. Sabapathy** is a historian, curator, teacher, critic and advisor who has influenced artistic opinion and shaped knowledge of art over the past 35 years. His art historical methods, critical documentation and detailed explication of the works of key artists have defined Singapore and Malaysian art. His extensive studies of contemporary and modern art in Southeast Asia have added visual intelligibility and intellectual depth to art discourses in and of the region. Sabapathy is currently an adjunct associate professor in the Department of Architecture, National University of Singapore.

**Professor James Elkins** is an internationally renowned art historian and art critic. He is E.C. Chadbourne Chair of art history, theory and criticism at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. He is also the author and editor of numerous books, some of which have received critical acclaim such as *Stories of Art* (2002) or have sparked much debate in the discourse of art history, such as *Is Art History Global?* (2007). Prof Elkins' writings focus on the history and theory of images in art, science and nature.

**Professor Partha Mitter** is a writer and historian of art and culture, specialising in the reception of Indian art in the West, as well as in modernity, art and identity in India, and more recently in global modernism. At present, he is Emeritus Professor in Art History, University of Sussex, Member of Wolfson College, Oxford and Honorary Fellow, Victoria & Albert Museum, London. His publications include *Much Maligned Monsters: History of European Reactions to Indian Art* (Clarendon Press, Oxford 1977), *Art and Nationalism in Colonial India 1850-1922: Occidental Orientations* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), *The Triumph of Modernism: India's Artists and the Avant-Garde – 1922-1947* (Reaktion Books, London, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2007).

**Zhuang Wubin** is a photographer, writer and curator. As a writer/curator, he focuses on the photographic practices in Southeast Asia. Wubin was the recipient of a research grant from the Prince Claus Fund (Amsterdam) in 2010. This enabled him to write his book *Photography in Southeast Asia: A Survey* (published by NUS press in 2016), the first comprehensive survey of photographic practices in Southeast Asia. He has been invited to research residency programmes at the Institute Technology of Bandung (2013) and Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong (2015). He has lectured and conducted workshops in many institutions and universities around the region. As an artist, Wubin uses photography and text to visualise the Sinophone communities in Southeast Asia.



## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- A Bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognised tertiary institution.
- A minimum of IELTS 7.0, TOEFL iBT 100 or PTE Academic 65 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.
- A 300-500 word statement of interest highlighting the candidate's reasons for choosing to enrol in the programme and research interest in the area of Asian art histories.
- A reference letter (either an educational reference from the student's university or a character reference from an employer).
- Samples of academic writing or published work (where available).



# ABOUT LASALLE COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Asia's leading tertiary institution in contemporary arts  
and design education and practice.

LASALLE College of the Arts offers 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.

LASALLE provides a nurturing, interdisciplinary learning environment to inspire the next generation of forward-looking, globally engaged artists, designers and leaders of creative industries.

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.

Founded in 1984 by the late De La Salle Brother Joseph McNally – a visionary artist and educator – LASALLE is a non-profit private educational institution. The College receives tuition grant support from Singapore's 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.

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

## CONNECT WITH US

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Validity: 01/10/2019 - 30/9/2023

Partner Institution:

**Goldsmiths**  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

LASALLE College of the Arts is registered with the Committee for Private Education (CPE). The Committee for Private Education is part of SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG).  
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