

MASTER OF ARTS **DESIGN**

MODE

Full-time / Part-time
Classes will be conducted mostly
in the evenings.

DURATION

Full-time — 1.5 Years (3 Semesters)
Part-time — 3 Years (6 Semesters)

INTAKE

January

HONE YOUR CRITICAL DESIGN PRACTICE TO CREATE, CHALLENGE AND RE-IMAGINE THE WORLD WE LIVE IN.



Image:
Sin Shiu Heng, *Rippling Conversations*, MA Design (Class of 2020).

Be part of a new generation of research-based creators, innovators, and inventors challenging conventions and creating well-informed positions of what design is.

OVERVIEW

The MA in Design is a research-led practice programme that challenges current conventions of thinking, making and communicating.

In an increasingly complex world, design is positioned at the forefront to propose future possibilities and produce cultural impact. Redefining learning and making approaches through research-led interdisciplinary practices, the programme nurtures students to propose possibilities and question the discipline of design.

Fielding design and artistic experts, the programme provides an independent learning environment for experimentation and play with design. The programme attracts students who want to break out of the mould of contemporary design thinking.

As technologies progress, societies must evolve for communities to reimagine themselves. The designer is positioned to create solutions, preserving the values and thinking behind them in response to constrained resources and diverse needs.

To emphasise the social, environmental and downstream impact of designed products, services and systems, we 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 also the process of inquiry that generates them.

Against this backdrop, the MA Design Programme is designed to respond to the important role of design in re-imagining the world we live in. You will be challenging your thinking and making processes. 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 able to do, and how it can strategically help to transform lives.

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

You will explore research themes through modules on context, discourse, methodology and interdisciplinary design labs in a learning environment that is interdisciplinary and collaborative. You will experience active learning, dialogue and debate with fellow students, and 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.

Image:
Andreas Schlegel leading the 'Coding, Sensing, Making' workshop



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 or a practice-based project/exhibition based on your research interests.

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 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 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 methods to investigate and probe issues.

Design Lab 1: Design in Context and Integrated Design Practice

This module introduces you to the impact 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.

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.

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.

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.

Image: Muhammad Andri Bin Afandi, *A Dirty-Bitter-Not So Sweet Story*, MA Design (Class of 2019).



Image: MA Design student Ramya Chandran developed a sculpture key during her design residency with the Tamil Heritage Trust.

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 of powerful knowledge and a wide set of skills by the time you graduate. You will have opportunities to develop expertise in accordance with your research interests.

Image: Sin Shiu Heng, *Shifting Mindsets, Bridging Generations*, MA Design (Class of 2020).



CAREER PATHS

The MA Design Programme at LASALLE builds upon the dynamically evolving design culture in Singapore and the region. 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.

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 Bte Abu Bakar

Dean, Faculty of Design & Acting Programme Leader, MA Design

- MA (Design for Communication), University of Central England, UK
- BA (Design), Curtin University of Technology, Australia
- Diploma (Graphic Design), Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore

Nur Hidayah is a design-educator engaged in furthering design thinking and education in Singapore and Southeast Asia. Her expertise lies in design curriculum branding and identity, design for communication strategies and advertising communication.

Prior to joining LASALLE, Nur Hidayah worked in a full portfolio of design communication systems ranging from copywriting, design and art direction projects across major industry segments. This coupled with her extensive teaching experience of more than 15 years, Nur Hidayah has been instrumental to the transformation of the Faculty of Design into a leading faculty for Southeast Asia.

A deep believer of the interconnectedness of design aesthetics, education and industry, Nur Hidayah has initiated several collaborative partnerships with various design institutions. She presented a research paper at the Ubuntu International Design Symposium 2011 in Seoul, which covered *The Role of Design Education*. With faculty staff members, she is currently developing design capability programmes with communities in Asia and investigating issues around social enterprise for a more inclusive design culture. She has led the research and study of design cultures in contemporary Asian cities between Singapore, Seoul and Shanghai and undertaken the Global Design Initiative involving five international universities looking at design as a research tool.

Over the years, her excellent interpersonal and management skills have enabled her to inspire many students. Her vision and foresight has helped nurture these students into leaders that have contributed to Singapore's creative landscape. 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.

Today, Nur Hidayah continues to serve as an expert on various boards in Singapore. Her current appointments include the National Gallery Singapore, Singapore Note and Coin Advisory Committee (Monetary Authority of Singapore), and member of the Design Education Review Committee Workgroup, DesignSingapore Council (Ministry of Communications and Information). Her past appointments include the Malay Heritage Foundation (National Heritage Board, 2011), Malay Heritage Centre (National Heritage Board, 2012) and advisory member for MDA's Malay Programmes Advisory Committee (InfoCommMedia Development Authority of Singapore (2016–2018)).



Dr Harah Chon

Lecturer, MA Design

- PhD, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, School of Design, Hong Kong
- MBA (Distinction), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Graduate School of Business, Hong Kong
- BFA, Parsons School of Design, The New School, US

Harah is a Korean-American design practitioner, researcher and educator. She is currently Lecturer-in-Charge for MA Design and teaches in the BA(Hons) Design Communication, BA(Hons) Fashion Design & Textiles and BA(Hons) Fashion Media & Industries Programmes.

Harah began her professional career in New York as a fashion designer at Ralph Lauren before pursuing postgraduate studies in Hong Kong. She 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 *The Routledge Companion to Design Research*.

As a visiting researcher in the Department of Science of Design at Musashino Art University in Tokyo, Harah studies 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.



Andreas Schlegel

Lecturer, Design Communication

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

Andreas currently heads LASALLE's Media Lab. After graduating from Merz Akademie Stuttgart (Germany) with a Diploma in Communication Design, he went on to attain a MA from the University of Portsmouth (United Kingdom) in 2000 and a MSc at the University of California, Santa Barbara (USA) in 2004.

Andreas is also the co-founder of the art collective syntfarm.org, where many of his collaborative projects are based. He stays active within the international media arts environment and regularly contributes to the open source community 'processing.org'.

With a background in Design and Media Arts, his artistic practice focuses on using new technologies to seek new forms of expression. His research explores the potential of computational and generative processes, physical computing and human-computer interactions, i.e. the study of interaction between people and computers, in artistic and everyday life situations.

Andreas has several years of experience in the creative industries in Germany. He is also a practicing artist who has exhibited his individual and collaborative works internationally. His works have been shown at ISEA (Nagoya, Japan, 2002; Singapore, 2008), Dislocate (Tokyo, Japan, 2007), ARCO (Madrid, Spain, 2006) and SFMOMA (San Francisco, US, 2002).



Dr Nadine Ouellet

Programme Leader, Diploma in Design Communication

- PhD Equivalency (Visual Communication), Laval University, Canada
- MFA (Graphic Design), Yale University, US
- BFA (Visual Communication), Laval University, Canada

Dr Nadine Ouellet is an award-winning designer and educator, with expertise in visual methods, research through design, publication design and typography. Nadine started her academic career at Université Laval, School of Design in Quebec City, Canada in 2002, while she also pursued her doctoral studies. She received her academic tenure in 2007 and led the graphic design undergraduate programme 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 a full-time professor at the Hong Kong campus of the Savannah College of Art and Design. Apart from teaching undergraduate and graduate students, Nadine was also invited to participate in curriculum reconfiguration and school accreditation processes.

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

Her design expertise ranges from designing prints (books, catalogues, magazines and posters) and developing visual identities to creating in situ or digital experiences. Her latest research interest – the revival of traditions and historical sites through design – has expanded her body of work with designed objects, textiles experimentations and urban installations.

In 2012, Nadine co-founded OR Atelier, an experimental graphic design atelier, with Canadian designer Maxime Rheault. Their first project *OR Play* – a limited edition collection of design objects exploring the value of play, the love of nature and the importance of sharing traditions – was selected by the Quebec Beaux-Arts National Museum to be featured in their design boutique. A short documentary on the duo's creative process was presented on Radio-Canada's broadcast television network.

Nadine's design work has also won various professional awards and has been presented in international solo and group exhibitions in Canada, France, Poland, Japan and the USA.



Dr Mitha Budhyarto

Lecturer, Cultural and Contextual Studies

- PhD (Humanities and Cultural Studies), University of London, Birkbeck College, UK
- MA Philosophy (Aesthetics), University of Sussex, UK
- BA (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.



Image: Javier Jauhari, *The Value of Neglected Objects*, MA Design (Class of 2020).

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Academic requirements

- A Bachelor's degree from a recognised local or international 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.

Statement of Purpose

In 500 – 1,000 words, highlight your reasons for applying to this programme and how they relate to your future plans. You should also include a brief description of your research intention / interest(s) that you are keen to explore.

Reference letter

Provide a reference letter to support your application.

Portfolio

Your portfolio should contain relevant and substantial creative work in either written or visual form. You may include projects (including sketches, process, experiments, and iterations) and visual documents to reflect your research interest(s) and provide evidence of sufficient technical skills and evolved critical and creative thinking in design. You are required to upload your portfolio online.

Interview

All applicants will attend an interview. During the interview, you are required to participate in a dialogue regarding the purpose of your application. Please be prepared to talk about your background, what inspires you and your influences. We would like to find out what motivates you to learn, explore and experiment in your areas of interest. You should also share how you think the programme will benefit you in your future career choices or develop your research interests.

International applicants

If you are unable to attend the interview at LASALLE, an online interview will be arranged for you.

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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Closed on weekends and Public Holidays

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Partner Institution:



Cert No.: EDU-1-1002
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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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