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
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.
PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

This full-time programme spans three consecutive semesters within a 15-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 acquire 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 dynamics 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

This module 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 inspired 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.

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 aspire 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 practitioners that enhance 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 discourses, 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.

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

Designs for cities are created through a set of values or symbols through which culture is constructed. This research theme focuses on the development of an understanding of urban design and the region. As part of an increasingly important discipline, 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 social, technological, economic, 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 individual perceptions and understanding of 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 as we 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

The idea of citizenship and a citizen cannot be solely understood within an object-based or cultural construct. Thus we will explore the role of the social designer or to be design-conscious against the fast-changing social, technological, economic and political aspects influencing urban growth and development, to propose new ideas of how we will live in cities in the future.

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 has blurred into new methodological and professional boundaries. Reflective design is about exploring new creative strategies and critical paradigms for design futures. In this theme, we will explore what the future might hold for design and develop innovative strategies to address the fast-changing environments of Asia and beyond. This theme questions the impact of design on society by raising issues existing in the realms of conscientious designers dealing with issues at the educational, individual, corporate and grassroots levels.

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 somewhat of talent, you will participate in the positioning of Singapore and Asia as a rigorous environment and connect your design practice with design and the broader world of practical and creative design. As a graduate of the programme, you will be sought after for your ability to understand the multi-faceted nature of design and the cognitive processes and methods used to explore, develop and communicate design solutions.

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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 communications.

Prior to joining LASALLE, Nur Hidayah worked in a full portfolio of design communication systems ranging from corporate, 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 local design institutions and publishers. She has been a member of the Kumon International Design Symposium in Seoul, which covered the Role of Design Education. With faculty staff members, she is currently developing design curricula with communities in Asia and investigating issues around social enterprise for 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 three 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, and undertaken the Global Design Initiative involving five international universities looking at design as a research tool.

Andreas currently heads LASALLE’s Media Lab. After graduating from Mary Akmeed, the Stuart Hall School 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 synthform, where many of his collaborative projects are based. His studio has created an open source artwork that is a relevant public space in the world today and contributes to the open source community "mapworkshoping".

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

Andreas has several years of experience in the creative industries in Germany. He is a practicing artist who has exhibited his individual and collaborative works internationally. His works have been shown at SEAD (Nagoya, Japan, 2002; Singapore, 2003), Overlay (Tokyo, Japan, 2007), AICD (Malab, Spain, 2006) and SFROMA (San Francisco, US, 2002).

**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
- Diplomas (Graphic Design), Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore

Dr Harash Chon

Programme Leader, Diploma in Design Studies

- 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

Dr Nadine Ouellet

Programme Leader, Diploma in Specialist Studies

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

**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, Bishopsgate College, UK

Mitha is a lecturer for BA(Hons) Product Design Level 3 students who are working on their project work. She is responsible for BA(Hons) Fine Art Level 2 tutorials on Art Theory. Alongside her academic position, she continues to maintain her practice as a curator.

**Andreas Schlegel**

Lecturer, Design Communication

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

She is the lead educator for our design curriculum branding and identity, design for communication strategies and advertising communications.

Prior to joining LASALLE, Nur Hidayah worked in a full portfolio of design communication systems ranging from corporate, 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.

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**ENTRY REQUIREMENTS**

**Academic requirements**
- A minimum of IELTS 7.0, TOEFL IBT 100 or PTE Academic 65 for applicants from English speaking countries or whose qualifications are obtained from institutions where English is the medium of instruction.

**Statement of Purpose**

In 500 – 1,000 words, highlight your reasons for applying to this programme and how the degree will benefit you in your future plans. You should also include a brief description of your research intention / interests (maximum 200 words) that you are keen to explore.

**Reference letter**

Provide a reference letter to support your application.
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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www.lasalle.edu.sg

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

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Partner Institution:
Goldsmiths
University of London

Cert No.: EDU1-1002

LASALLE College of the Arts is registered with the Committee for Private Education (CPE). It receives financial assistance from the Singapore Government and expenses from parents. The College is a registered Private Education Institution (PEI) and the degree programmes are validated by Goldsmiths, University of London.