LASALLE
COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

MASTER OF ARTS
DESIGN

MODE

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

DURATION

1.5 years (3 semesters)

INTAKE

January

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

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

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.

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

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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

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.

Randy Ang (Class of 2022) carried out case studies into how communities are creating projects from the ground up.
Image credit: **Bryan Van Der Beek for whatareyoudoing.sg.**

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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.

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Image: **Ramya Chandran (Class of 2021) 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, 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 and 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).**

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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:

DESIGN FOR SOCIAL CHANGE
Design is influencing the social world by presenting a construction of culture through common values and symbols. With a focus on how designers can transform the everyday experiences and worldviews of society, this research theme questions the ability of designers to influence change through notions of design citizenry to reimagine and redefine social, economic, political and environmental spaces of inquiry. As today's societal challenges become increasingly complex, there is a growing urgency for designers to collaborate and work across communities and sectors to develop new transformative processes and identify potential spaces for intervention. Design goes beyond problem-solving and requires a sense of social responsibility to address contemporary issues such as climate change, mental health or societal challenges. This research theme champions the practice of design for social innovation through inclusive design, service design, interaction design, design activism and transformation design.

SYSTEMS DESIGN
The study of design has long been rooted in historical and cultural research, focusing on material culture as the relationship between people, objects and representations. In today's interconnected world, interactions within social relations need to address the systemic challenges of how design actions affect individuals, networks and communities of practice. This research theme shifts away from the Western canon of mainstream discourses towards the practice of decolonising design to propose new epistemologies, methods and practices. Working beyond the traditional paradigm of design, systems-based thinking provides the ability to respond to changing behaviours and perceptions through the linking of concepts, developing frameworks and structures, and establishing common goals. Research in this area pushes the boundaries of material culture and the notion of human experience beyond the designed object towards a systems perspective for the decolonisation of design, critical issues around sustainability, studies on intangible culture and heritage, policy design and systems design.

TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN INNOVATION
Designers are positioned to propose future-oriented activities that transform the world through material and immaterial interventions. These propositions focus on emerging technologies to produce meaningful innovations addressing the growing uncertainty and complexity of today's design issues. This research theme questions the future of design through speculation, critical thinking and devising appropriate design and innovative strategies. Design leads to transformations that improve the built environment and the human condition, requiring the creation of transdisciplinary knowledge to redefine the role of designers, the transferability of design processes and practices, and establishing market relevance. Aided by new technologies and sensory modes of interaction, design can propose innovations to change how we live, work and play.

THE FACULTY

Nur Hidayah Bte Abu Bakar
Dean, Faculty of 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
Programme Leader, 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
Head, School of Design Communication and Programme Leader, Diploma in Design for Communication and Experiences and BA(Hons) 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 doctorial 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'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.

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Image: **Sin Shiu Heng, *Rippling Conversations*, MA Design (Class of 2020). This was a collaboration with MA Art Therapy graduate Bernice Lin (Class of 2021).**

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.

Yasser Suratman
Lecturer, Design Communication

- MFA, Yale University School of Art, United States
- Diploma in Graphic Design, Temasek Polytechnic, Singapore

Yasser studied graphic design at Temasek Polytechnic and was awarded The Creative Industries Scholarship by DesignSingapore in 2007 to read MFA at Yale University School of Art, US. He joined The Bureau for the Advancement for Lifestyle and Longevity & Success (B.A.L.L.S) as a partner in 2009, and has worked for Ogilvy & Mather, MTV Asia, Discovery Channel and BBH. He has worked in video, print, sculpture, and product development and won awards at the Promax/BDA Asia, Nike and Sony product design contests, Type Directors Club and Creative Circle.

His design practice is derived from the reverberations of his personal life. It stems from his multi-role as a father, husband, son and designer. His interests address issues of visual interruption, chance, science, play and the idealistic quest for personal heroism. He pursues projects that explore the use of organised systems to produce new and unexpected forms of creation.

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
Shortlisted 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 contemporary arts and design institution.

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. LASALLE is ranked within the top 151-200 institutions globally for art and design (QS World University Rankings 2021).
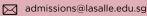
Founded in 1984 by the late De La Salle Brother Joseph McNally – a visionary artist and educator – LASALLE is a non-profit private educational institution, with degree programmes validated by Goldsmiths, University of London. The College receives tuition grant support from Singapore's Ministry of Education. It is set to become part of Singapore's new university of the arts, which is currently under development.

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

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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).
Registration No.: 199202950W
Validity: 25/03/2019 - 24/03/2023