

MEDIA RELEASE

LASALLE College of the Arts to launch Singapore and Southeast Asia's first taught Master's degree in Creative Writing

Singapore, 30 August 2016

Starting January 2017, LASALLE College of the Arts will offer the first taught Master's degree in Creative Writing in Singapore and Southeast Asia. MA Creative Writing students will explore fiction, creative non-fiction, poetry, and dramatic writing within the vibrant and collaborative environment of LASALLE's full-fledged integrated arts campus, located in the heart of Singapore's Arts and Heritage District.

"Internationally, postgraduate education in Creative Writing is an exponentially growing field, and it is part of a broader interest in creative educations," says Dr Darryl Whetter, Programme Leader, MA Creative Writing, LASALLE, who shares that according to the Association of Writers and Writing Programs, the United States had 47 master's degrees in Creative Writing in 1975 but by 2014, there were 381 such programmes.

MA Creative Writing at LASALLE is a one-and-a-half year programme, conducted over three semesters, devoted to writing, editing and publishing. The programme provides students with a critical, theoretical and historical framework for the analysis of literature, art, communication and art pedagogy. At the programme's conclusion, students will write a full-length creative writing thesis in the genre of their choice.

Venka Purushothaman, Provost, LASALLE College of the Arts, remarks, "As the arts continue to grow and evolve to become increasingly interdisciplinary, we see a need to take creative writing to the next level. Writers can no longer work in isolation to produce the next great Singapore novel. Rather, we seek to nurture imaginative and flexible writers who can become leading creators of new content, from novels or poetry, to screenwriting, to journalism, and even story writing for digital games."

Dr Whetter, who has published three books of fiction, two collections of poetry, and numerous essays and scholarly articles as well as nearly 90 professional book reviews, bristles at the myth that Creative Writing cannot be taught. "First and foremost, that dismissal is always made by people who have never taken a writing degree. Take one of our workshops, and I guarantee your writing will improve."

Having taught Creative Writing and Literature at four different universities in his native Canada, he adds, "At LASALLE, I get to teach writers at an institution devoted exclusively to the arts, and a wide range of arts, from visual arts to performing arts. At most schools, Creative Writing students and faculty are isolated from other campus artist-researchers or overshadowed by science and business programmes. LASALLE is a creative milieu devoted exclusively to artists and art professionals."

Dr Whetter is excited to join the vibrant arts scene in LASALLE and in Singapore. "Just as Professor Edwin Thumboo had to break new ground convincing Singaporean universities that students should be able to study literature to earn a culturally and personally valuable

degree,” he notes, “we’re now making the same argument for a student writing their own novel, not just writing about the novels of others.”

The new MA Creative Writing is the latest programme to be added to LASALLE's comprehensive range of postgraduate degree offerings, which includes Singapore's only MA Arts and Cultural Management, Southeast Asia's first MA Art Therapy and the only MA Asian Art Histories in the world, as well as MA Fine Arts and MA Arts Pedagogy and Practice. As with all of LASALLE's degree programmes, the MA Creative Writing was developed locally to meet the needs of the creative industries in Singapore and beyond, and validated by LASALLE's partner institution Goldsmiths, University of London, world-renowned for its creative and innovative approach to research and teaching in the arts.

Members of the public are invited to find out more about MA Creative Writing and LASALLE's other postgraduate degrees at the College's upcoming Postgrad Info Day on 7 September, 7:00 pm.

Event Information

Postgrad Info Day

Wed 7 Sep, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

LASALLE College of the Arts

1 McNally Street, Singapore 187940

Register online: <http://www.lasalle.edu.sg/live-at-lasalle/events/?events/lasalle-postgrad-info-day-2>

Find out more about MA Creative Writing at:

<http://www.lasalle.edu.sg/programmes/postgraduate/creative-writing/>

Find out more about LASALLE's Postgraduate programmes at:

<http://www.lasalle.edu.sg/programmes/postgraduate/>

About LASALLE

LASALLE College of the Arts in Singapore is a leading tertiary institution in cutting edge contemporary arts and design education and practice. The college offers over 30 undergraduate and post-graduate programmes in art, design, film, animation, fashion, dance, music, theatre, arts management, artist education, art therapy, and Asian art histories.

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

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

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