

MA IN CONTEMPORARY ART 2009/2010 SINGAPORE

This thirteen-month long taught MA course, accredited by the University of Manchester, is unique in combining academic study with a practical approach to the study of recent art. It is for people with a commitment to and passion for contemporary art and who intend to pursue a related career. Career possibilities for successful graduates include curating, art consultancy, art magazine and art book publishing, careers in private and public galleries, auction houses, museums and academia.

The first Sotheby's Institute MA in Contemporary Art started in 1995, the equivalent New York MA in 2006 and the Singapore Programme in 2008. Just as the London Programme has a particular focus on European Contemporary Art and the New York Programme on American art so the Singapore programme whilst giving an overall survey of all contemporary art and its issues has a particular focus on Asian Art.

It is divided into three very different, but related semesters. Teaching usually takes place from Monday to Thursday, allowing one to two full days for research.

SEMESTER 1

Semester 1 is the most heavily taught and most pressurised of the three semesters. The aim is to make students aware of the full range of work made in this period (1960-2008) and the reasons for it. This forms the necessary basis for the development of the student's own critical position.

Course Components:

Lectures: These form the major component of Semester 1 and provide a detailed chronological survey of art since 1960. In addition to the art of Asia, the lectures will also examine the development of art in Europe and North America. Necessary background information on the preceding post-war years (1945-59) is thematically provided in the introductory week. Overall, the intensive course of lectures across this semester gives students the knowledge on which to build and develop their own critical position.

Seminars: These are conducted in groups not exceeding twelve. Certain seminars are given over to discussions of critical texts and artists' statements relating to the period under review. Others are more 'professional' in scope, examining, for example, comparative gallery exhibitions, public sculpture projects, art magazines and issues of quality.

Visits: These are treated as seminars, never as guided tours. The course has an object-based or ekphrastic philosophy where an understanding and appreciation of art must always begin with actual experience of the specific art object rather than theory. In order to emphasise the object-based nature of the course, visits occur frequently throughout it. In Semester 1, one afternoon on most weeks is allocated to visiting exhibitions in Singapore galleries and museums. Midway in the semester, there is an intensive six day study trip to China in order to visit museums, galleries and artists' studios in Shanghai and Beijing. Nearer the end of the semester there is a six day visit to Australia, visiting the collections of Western contemporary art in Canberra and Sydney and the Asia Pacific Triennale in Brisbane.

Research Methods: In order to assist the student with further practical and academic skills necessary for a career in the contemporary art world, a series of lectures, seminars and workshops on research methods are also provided throughout this semester.

Guest Lecturers: In most weeks a special session takes place where guest speakers are invited to

come and talk to the entire group about their work. These guests are drawn from a variety of professions within the contemporary art world including artists, curators, gallerists, editors, critics, auctioneers or consultants. The talks are informal and offer students exceptional opportunities to both meet and question significant figures in the art world.

Tutorials: Each student has a personal tutor and is allocated at least four time-tabled tutorials during the semester in which to discuss his or her work and progress.

Assessed Elements

At the beginning of the fifth week of the course, a Research Method seminar is held to outline the range of assessed elements in Semester 1, and how to approach them.

Slide Identification and Analysis Tests (SIATs): There are three of these and they take place periodically throughout the semester. Students are asked to identify, analyse and compare works of art from particular periods and regions.

Essays: In the seventh week, students are asked to hand in a 2-3,000 word essay on some aspect of Western art between 1960 and 1972 (the first period to be studied in depth). The essay gives tutors the opportunity to assess at an early stage students' literary, organisational and expository abilities, and offer appropriate advice. Students will also be required to submit a second 2-3,000 word essay on an aspect of Asian contemporary art in the twelfth week.

Professional Studies: With help from the research methods seminars, students are asked to write a 500 word exhibition review and two catalogue entries, one in the style of a museum catalogue and one in the style of an auction sale catalogue. They will previously have presented these works orally to their fellow students in a visit. As the ability to talk clearly and confidently about artworks is a professional necessity students will often be asked to explain and criticise works of art seen in visits.

Project: This is the major element of the first semester. Students, working in teams, undertake one of two projects. They present a proposal for a hypothetical exhibition in either: a commercial gallery; a publicly funded museum; an independent non-profit art space; the pilot issue of a magazine. Each project must include an illustrated critical essay by each student of 3-4,000 words.

SEMESTER 2

Semester 2 is where students, with help from the teaching staff, further develop their own critical positions, their ability to research and to present arguments.

Course Components:

Seminars: In the second semester, students take a more independent, leading role in presenting their own work and hence, the seminars form the main component of Semester II. The presentation of ideas by one student in each seminar is followed by active discussion and constructive criticism from the rest of the group. Three separate seminar strands take place. In the first strand, each student presents in a seminar a research paper on some aspect of the "Interchange of Word and Image", that is, the connections between objects and the written word: what are the ideas behind a work of art? How do we interpret it? This seminar strand analyses issues of intention, meaning, interpretation and criticism. In the second strand, "Network," each student presents in a seminar a research paper on an aspect of the art network such as galleries, collections, museums or magazines. The purpose of the Network strand is to examine how the art world works. In the Third Strand "Post-Colonialism and Globalisation" the seminars are discussions of the theoretical issues arising for art in the particular circumstances of Asia in the Late Twentieth and Twenty First century.

Options: In semester 2 it is possible for students to choose from a wider range of modules. The two modules Network and Post-Colonialism and Globalisation can be substituted or mixed with modules from the Art Business programme. These Art Business modules would be, Art

Evaluation and Assessment and Business Planning and Finance. In addition it is also possible that students could take the “Singapore Challenge” where 2-3 students working in liaison with a similar number of students on the Art Business MA visit and give an in-depth report of another art centre in South East Asia. The purposed of the options section of the programme is to offer more choice to students and the plan is to have a choice of any 2 modules from a range of 5 options.

Lectures: In addition, there is also a series of lectures which analyses in detail, major international exhibitions which have had a significant impact on art and the art world in recent years. They address such issues as how and why the shows were successful, the intentions of the curators, the nature of the events themselves and their critical reception, as well as looking at exhibition making in general. Other lectures, “Artists in Focus” look at key artists in depth.

Visits: As in Semester 1, an afternoon on most weeks is given over to visiting galleries, museums, collections or artists’ studios. There is also another major study trip abroad this semester, the first is a six-day trip to Indonesia (Yogyakarta, Jakarta and Bandung), there will also be another shorter visit to another centre of South East Asia.

Guest Lectures: As in Semester 1, there will be a visiting lecturer on most weeks.

Tutorials: As in Semester 1, each student has a personal tutor whom he or she meets at least three times during the semester.

Assessed Elements:

Extended Research Papers: Three papers are written as the result of research produced for the three seminar strands, “Network” and “Interchange of Word and Image”. Each paper must be 4-5,000 words long.

Dissertation proposal: Students must present a short research proposal for their dissertation topic both as a seminar and in written form in the final weeks of Semester 2. Those students not proceeding to Semester 3 must do an essay.

N.B. Transition to Semester 3 depends upon the successful completion of Semesters 1 and 2. Students who successfully complete the first two semesters, but who either are considered unlikely to complete a dissertation successfully or who opt not to do a dissertation, will be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma.

SEMESTER 3

In this semester students develop a more specialised area of study, show their ability to research in an extended manner, weigh evidence and present a complex argument. They will spend the rest of the semester researching and writing a 12,000–15,000 word dissertation. Students need not be resident in Singapore for all of this period, but tutorial assistance will be available throughout.

Assessed Elements:

The Dissertation: Three copies must be handed in, typed and complete, by the end of September. Students who wish to complete within a calendar year may hand their three copies in at end of August; tutorial support will continue to be available through early September to those wishing to hand in later.

THE FACULTY

The MA in Contemporary Art programme is conducted by some of the most established and well respected scholars and academics from Asia, Europe and North America. The combination of academic faculty, visiting tutors, specialist lecturers and Sotheby’s experts provides student with a wide breadth of knowledge and experience as well as an opportunity to develop a network of professional relations.

FACULTY

TONY GODFREY

PROGRAMME DIRECTOR, CONTEMPORARY ART

Professor of Fine Art, University of Plymouth; MA in Anglo-Irish Literature, University of Leeds
Tony Godfrey has taught at Sotheby's Institute since 1989 and was one of the co-founders of the MA in Contemporary Art (London). His books include *Conceptual Art, Drawing Today* and *The New Image: Painting in the 1980s*. His new book on contemporary painting will be published by Phaidon in 2009. A book of essays on individual art works edited by him is also due to be published then. He has taught at Yale, New York and Oxford Universities, and many art schools. He is a regular contributor to exhibition catalogues and periodicals including *Art in America*, *Art Monthly*, and *The Burlington Magazine*.

HO TZU NYEN

MA (by Research) in Southeast Asian Studies, National University of Singapore

An artist and critic, Ho Tzu Nyen writes on art and the cinema for a number of international journals such as *Broadsheet* (Australia), *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* (UK/Taiwan), *FOCAS* (Singapore), as well as contributes the occasional essay for catalogues. He has taught at the National University of Singapore, LASALLE College of the Art and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. He is a member of the Singapore Section of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA Singapore). Currently, he is the Singapore Editor for *Art Asia Pacific* (US).

LEE WENG CHOY

MA in English Literature from Mills College, California, USA

Lee Weng Choy is an art critic and the artistic co-director of The Substation arts centre in Singapore. He has lectured on art and cultural studies, convened a number of international conferences, and written widely on contemporary art, including the essays: "The future was when: art criticism and the comparative tenses of Hong Kong and Singapore" in *Journal of Visual Culture* (2007); "Authenticity, Reflexivity & Spectacle; or, the Rise of New Asia is not the End of the World" in *Theory in Contemporary Art since 1985* (Blackwell, 2005); "Just What Is it that Makes the Term Global-Local So Widely Cited, Yet So Annoying?" in *Over Here: International Perspectives on Art and Culture* (New Museum & MIT Press, 2004); "Biennale Time and the Spectres of Exhibition" in *Forum On Contemporary Art & Society* (2002). He is currently President of the Singapore Section of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA Singapore), and also serves on the academic advisory board of the Asia Art Archive (Hong Kong).

VISITING FACULTY

EUGENE TAN

PhD in Art History, University of Manchester

The first programme director of the MA Contemporary Art (Singapore) he currently works as curator for Osage Gallery (Hong Kong, Singapore, Shanghai, Beijing). An art historian, critic and curator, Eugene Tan was the founding director of the Institute of Contemporary Arts Singapore, LASALLE College of the Arts and among exhibitions he has curated include *The Last Laugh: Humour in Contemporary Video Art*, *Painting as Process: Re-evaluating Painting*, *Jason Salavon: Brainstem Still Life* and *On Kawara* in 2004, *A Work by Lim Tzyy Chuen* and *Antony Gormley: Asian Field* in 2005, *islanded: Contemporary Art from New Zealand Singapore and Taiwan* in 2006 and *Thermocline of Art: New Asian Waves* at ZKM | Museum of Contemporary Art, Karlsruhe, Germany in 2007. He was also curator for the Singapore Pavilion at the 51st Venice Biennale in 2005 and co-curator of the inaugural Singapore Biennale in 2006. He is the co-author of the publication *Contemporary Art in Singapore* and has written for many exhibition catalogues as well as publications such as *Art Asia Pacific*, *Art Review*, *C-Arts*, *Contemporary*, *Contemporary Visual Arts*, *Flash Art*, *Metropolis M* and *Modern Painters*.

THOMAS J. BERGHUIS

PhD, University of Sydney

Thomas Berghuis is currently Senior Project Curator at Casula Powerhouse - International Centre for Cultural Diversity, and the Postdoctoral Research Associate and primary Research Coordinator in the CCAP's Linkage Project, Construction, Connection, Community: Measuring Asian Art's Contribution to Contemporary Culture in Australia. He holds a PhD on Performance Art in China from the University of Sydney, following an MA in Chinese Studies at Leiden University (The Netherlands). During the past 10 years he has frequently travelled to China for his research, and from 2003 to 2004 he was a visiting scholar at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing. He has curated a number of international exhibitions and performance events, including as Associate Curator for the 6th Sharjah International Biennale, U.A.E (2003), Curator for the 1st Dashanzi International Arts Festival at the 798 Factory in Beijing (2004), and Associate Curator for the 3rd Israel Video Art Biennial in Tel Aviv (2006). His book, *Performance Art in China*, was published in 2006 with Timezone 8, Hong Kong. In recent years he has become actively involved with the contemporary art scene in Southeast Asia, with special attention to contemporary art from Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore.

JOHN CLARK

PhD, University of Sheffield

John Clark is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities and Professor in Art History and Theory at the University of Sydney. In 2003 he was also awarded an Australian Centenary Medal. He served as chair of the Department of Art History & Theory from 2000-2002, and acting director of the Power Institute, Foundation for Art & Visual Culture, from 2001-2002. Ongoing work includes a comparative study of Chinese and Thai art during the 1980s and 1990s, and an examination of the functions of international biennales in Asia.

PATRICK D. FLORES

PhD in Philippine Studies, University of the Philippines

Patrick D. Flores is Professor in the Art Studies Department, University of the Philippines. He has written extensively on art and popular culture to local and international publications. His publications include books on the humanities, colonial art, and cinema. Dr. Flores was also the curator of the Arts Division at Philippine National Museum from 2004 to 2008. His latest book *Past Peripheral: Curation in Southeast Asia*, published by NUS Museum (Singapore) was released in 2008.

CHAITANYA SAMBRANI

PhD in Art History and Curatorship, Australian National University. Chaitanya Sambrani is Senior Lecturer in Art Theory at the ANU School of Art, Canberra. He was co-curator on the Asialink exhibition-residency program Fire and Life involving Australian and Indian artists (1996-97), and participating theorist and curator for the Open Circle International Artists Workshop (Bombay, 2000). Recent projects include crossing generations: diVERGE a major exhibition spanning four generations of contemporary artists in India (co-curated with Geeta Kapur) at the National Gallery of Modern Art, Mumbai, December 2003. He was the curator of Edge of Desire: Recent Art in India a major travelling exhibition organized by the Art Gallery of Western Australia and the Asia Society, New York (2004-07). His work on contemporary art in Asia has been published in journals, books and catalogues in India, Australia and other countries. He is currently writing a monograph on the work of the artist G.M. Sheikh, and working towards an exhibition involving Indian and Chinese artists.

CHARLES MEREWETHER

PhD in Art History, University of Sydney
Charles Merewether was until recently Deputy Director of the Cultural District (Saadiyat Island) for the Tourism Development & Investment Co. in Abu Dhabi. He is currently Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Hong Kong International Art Fair. In 2007, he was the Arts and Culture Consultant for the Emirates Foundation in the UAE and between 2004-2006 the Artistic Director & Curator of the Biennale of Sydney. Born in Scotland and educated in Australia, he received his Bachelor's Degree in Literature and doctorate in Art History at the University of Sydney. From 1994 to 2004 he was Collections Curator at the Getty Center in Los Angeles and between 1991-1994 the Inaugural Curator of the Museo Arte Contemporaneo de Monterrey (Mexico). He has taught at the University of Sydney, Universidad Autonoma in Barcelona, the Ibero-Americana in Mexico City and University of Southern California and been recipient of various Fellowships including at Yale University (USA), Japan and Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Cross Cultural Research, Australian National University 2004-2007. Merewether has published widely on modernism and contemporary art in East Asia, Australia, the Americas and Europe. His most recent book publications include *Under Construction: Ai Weiwei* (2008), *Art, Anti-Art, Non-Art: Experimentations in the Public Sphere in Postwar Japan 1950-1970* (2007); General and Commissioning Editor, *Zones of Contact* (2006) and Editor, *The Archive* (2006). He is currently writing a book on the cultural history of looting, and another on postwar photography in Japan.

ENIN SUPRIYANTO

Enin Supriyanto is an independent curator and writer, whose interests lie in Indonesian contemporary art. He studied in the Fine Art and Design Department at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB, 1984-1989). He has curated various contemporary art shows and projects in Indonesia, and participated in many regional and international art forums. He initiated and established the *Indonesian Printmaking Triennale*, which is organised by Bentara Budaya as well as *i-Curate* a curatorial workshop programme for art students and young curators organised by Galeri Soemardja, ITB, Bandung. He is a member of the Academic Advisory Board of Asia Art Archive in Hong Kong, and he works as guest editor of *C-Arts Magazine*, Jakarta. His essays and writings have been published in local and international publications, including, *Indonesian Contemporary Art Now* (2007), *The Journey of Indonesian Painting*, *Bentara Budaya Collection* (2006, 2008) and *Indonesian Women Artists*, *The Curtain Opens* (2007). He lives and works in Jakarta, Indonesia.

PHILIP TINARI

Philip Tinari (b. 1979) is a writer and curator based in Beijing. He is a contributing editor to *Artforum*, and founding editor of artforum.com.cn, the magazine's Chinese-language website. His writings have appeared in publications including *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Parkett*, *Art AsiaPacific*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*, and the Chinese journal *Dushu*, as

well as exhibition catalogues for museums including the Guggenheim and the Serpentine Gallery. He is China Advisor to the international art fairs Art Basel and Art Basel Miami Beach, and was previously academic consultant to Sotheby's Chinese contemporary department. He is author of *Artists in China: Inside the Contemporary Studio* (Thames and Hudson, 2007) and editor of *U-TURN*, a six-part history of contemporary art in China. He was previously founding curator at Long March Space in Beijing and an editor of the English catalogue accompanying the First Guangzhou Triennial (2002). He has organized the exhibitions "Delirious Beijing" (PKM Gallery, Beijing, 2008), "CYLWXZ" (Esther Schipper, Berlin, 2008), "Made in Asia?" (Duke University Museum of Art, Durham N.C., 2001) and "Temporary Space: An Experiment by Wang Wei" (Long March Space, Beijing, 2003). Currently he is curating a survey of new art from Hong Kong to be presented by the Louis Vuitton foundation at the Hong Kong Art Museum in May 2009. He has led courses at China Institute (New York), and teaches criticism at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing. He holds an M.A. in East Asian studies from Harvard (2005), a B.A. from Duke (2001), and was Fulbright fellow at Peking University (2001-02). In 2007, he founded Office for Discourse Engineering, an editorial studio focused on research, publishing, and translation related to Chinese contemporary art.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Postgraduate Programmes

Admission to graduate level programmes requires the completion of a BA degree or equivalent. It is suggested that applicant for whom art history was neither a major nor minor discuss their qualification with the Institute's Registrar or Programme Director prior to submitting an application. Prospective students who have an undergraduate degree in a subject other than art history and no other art background may qualify for admission through relevant professional experience. Applicants with a degree in an unrelated subject and no directly relevant experience are welcome if they have a real commitment to the subject and are prepared to read advised relevant books before the beginning of the programme. In the past successful students have included applicants from the worlds of Architecture, Business, Dance, Design, Finance, Languages, Law, etc.

Applicants may apply using the form available online at www.sothebysinstitute.com/singapore. No application fee is required for application to the Singapore campus.

Applications are accepted throughout the year. However, we encourage candidates for admission to apply at the earliest possible date to ensure efficient time for consideration and the availability of space in the programme of choice. Official transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate-level programmes attended must be sent directly to the Institute's Registrar from an applicant's college or university and must be received prior to final action by the Committee on Admissions.

English Language

Applicants whose first language is not English must submit documentation of appropriate English proficiency test scores. The minimum requirement for all postgraduate programmes are fluent written and spoken English to British Council IELTS level 7 or TOEFL 100 (internet-based test) or 250 (computer-based test) or 600 (paper-based test) or equivalent.

Cancellation of Programmes or Courses

The Institute reserves the right to cancel any academic programme or course of study. Every effort will be made, but not guaranteed, to notify students of such cancellations well in advance of the programme start date.

Interviews

All full-time programme applicants will be invited to schedule an interview with an alumni representative and/or a member of the Institute's staff during the admissions process. Interviews will be scheduled by the Admissions staff. Applicants will be contacted at the appropriate time to make such arrangements. The interviewer will assess the candidate's aptitude for the programme, level of English proficiency and commitment to study.

CONTACT DETAILS

The Registrar
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