

## MA IN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ASIAN ART

This MA course is a twelve-month taught program validated by the University of Manchester. It is designed for students who wish to gain an in-depth understanding of modern and contemporary art from Asia and who intend to pursue careers in this growing and dynamic field. Its approach is a combination of rigorous academic study along with continuous professional development through direct exposure to artworks, artists and Asian art specialists working in the international art world.



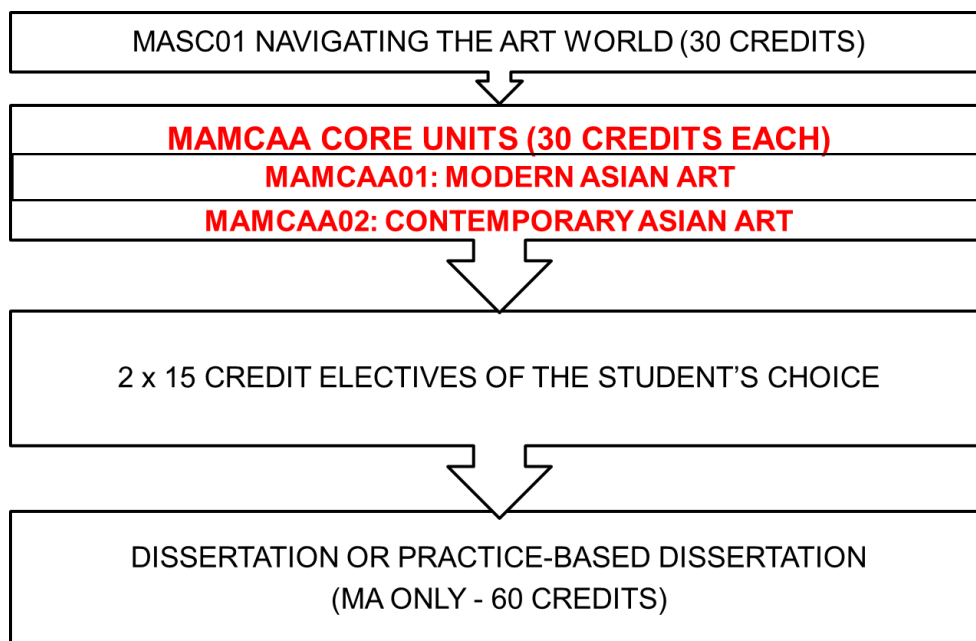
### **PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND CONTENT: OVERVIEW**

The program is of twelve months' duration, from September to September. The first two semesters (before and after Christmas) are intensively taught on three to four days per week. In the second semester, specialist electives can be chosen from other Institute Masters programs, meaning that a student can build a personalised Master's profile. During the third semester (June to September inclusive) there is no formal teaching, with students researching their dissertation topics under the guidance of individual supervisors.

### **MA IN MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ASIAN ART STRUCTURE**

The post-graduate diploma is awarded for 120 taught credits across two semesters. For the MA, students take an additional semester and complete the 60 credit dissertation.

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**Assessment:** Students complete a range of assignments during the program, aimed to help them become sophisticated graduates with high calibre practical and theoretical skills and knowledge, preparing them for success in the world of work. Some assignments are intended to develop skills connected with research, analysis, contextualisation and criticism, and to promote students' ability to present material in different written and spoken modes. Object-based assignments foster students' skills of observation, description and attribution. Essays invite students to explore themes connected with artistic contexts, art business or the networks in which art is created, bought, collected and exhibited. Much assessment responds directly to the practical demands of employers, so that all students will be involved in assignments which simulate 'real world' tasks, projects and scenarios; for example, reviews, catalogue entries, exhibition projects and business planning.

For many assignments students can choose their particular focus of interest, so as to develop more specialised knowledge and understanding in areas which particularly interest them. Throughout the program, students are fully supported by tutors to help them reach their potential.

For MA students, the third semester is devoted to the production of a dissertation. The standard dissertation is between 12,500 and 15,000 words and involves original research on a topic chosen by the student. The practice-based dissertation comprises a practical and/or creative project alongside a written component of between 8,000 and 10,000 words. Students receive guidance and support throughout the dissertation process via workshops and tutorials.

**Quality assurance and validation:** Sotheby's Institute of Art – London is proud of the high quality of its academic programs. It is an affiliated institution of the University of Manchester, one of the UK's largest civic universities and a member of the prestigious Russell Group of universities. The University of Manchester closely scrutinises the quality of Sotheby's Institute of Art – London programs and validates the MA.

Sotheby's Institute of Art – London is also reviewed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), the independent body entrusted with monitoring and advising on standards and quality in UK higher education.

## SEMESTER I



Semester I is designed to provide students with a theoretical and empirical grounding in Asian art during the modern period (1860s to 1960s), examining key developments, art movements and major artistic figures within their respective cultural and political contexts. By the end of the semester students will be able to discuss and debate specific works, styles and movements in relation to important issues such as colonialism, modernisation, the metropolis, independence movements, communism and the avant-garde in different parts of Asia, including China, Japan, India and South-East Asia. They will have a strong understanding of theoretical issues and frameworks through which to approach Asian art in relation to modernity within localised and global contexts. Major modern artists from Asia will be examined, such as Lin Fengmian, Katsushika Hokusai and Rabindranath Tagore.

**Core Curriculum: *Navigating the Art World*.** This unit brings students from all MAs together for an introduction to the art world. Taught at the beginning of Semester I, it comprises lectures, seminars, visits and workshops that together provide a compelling set of critical understandings and professional skills that equip graduates for successful careers in the art world. These sessions focus on the key organisations, networks and relationships that constitute the international art world. They introduce students to aspects of art business and the art market, and the legal and ethical frameworks that influence their functioning. The unit also considers the different ways in which art objects are displayed, interpreted and mediated. *Navigating the Art World* introduces students to a variety of postgraduate research skills and methodologies within the disciplines of art history and art business.

### **Unit MAMCAA01: *Modern Asian Art***

**Lectures:** A series of lectures in Semester I provide a range of Asian art from the 1860s to the 1960s, focusing on a period of about one hundred years to give a solid historical and theoretical perspective on its complex and diverse developments against the backdrop of the specific philosophical, social and political circumstances that inform it. The lectures focusing on core material addressing artistic movements are complemented by an engagement with theoretical frameworks throughout the semester to allow students to debate and articulate the specific styles and cultural issues that are crucial to its aesthetic and material forms. The lectures delivered over the course of the semester provide students a platform of knowledge from which to develop their reading and research skills further.

**Seminars:** Seminars complement the lectures allowing students to develop strong reading and research habits in the field. Each seminar is designed to give the students maximum opportunity to develop their ideas and to give space for serious intellectual engagement and critically informed debate. Students are strongly encouraged to gain confidence in speaking about artworks and putting forward interpretations through close readings of texts that deepen their understanding of artists, art movements and concurrent historical and cultural developments across a range of modern Asian art. They also allow students to enhance their presentation skills and encourage discussion amongst their peers.

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**Visits:** There are frequent visits to collections, specialist dealers and auction house departments. The approach of the course is object-based, with a focus that places particular importance on direct exposure to artworks so that students have the opportunity to discuss specific works in detail with other students and tutors, whether in a museum, dealership or an art fair. In Semester I, several days are spent visiting exhibitions in London. Students go on visits in London and elsewhere to visit major museums and galleries. Later in the semester, students travel to a major city in Europe such as Berlin or Paris to visit collections, galleries and art studios during an intensive five-day study trip. During Semester I students also visit Asian Art in London, where they will see galleries, meet dealers in modern Asian art and attend talks. They will also visit any major exhibition relevant to the course during the course of the semester.

**Research Methods:** Research methods are vital and enhance students' ability in writing, reading, referencing and consulting specialist material on the subject. A series of lectures, seminars and workshops on research methods are provided to students in order to help them develop the practical and academic skills necessary for a career in the art world.

**Guest Lecturers:** Guest speakers are regularly invited to talk to the group about their profession and experience in the field. These speakers are drawn from a variety of professions in the contemporary art world, including artists, curators, gallerists, critics, auctioneers and academics. The talks are both formal and informal and offer students excellent opportunities to have contact with significant figures in the Asian art world.

**Tutorials:** Each student has a personal tutor and has at least three scheduled tutorials during the semester in which to discuss his or her progress. These are an integral part of the course as they provide students with oral feedback on assignments submitted through the semester. They also give students a chance to discuss any assignments.

## SEMESTER II



### **Unit MAMCAA02 – *Contemporary Asian Art***

This unit focuses on Asian art in the period from the 1970s to the present, looking at key figures, art movements and artistic engagement with the international art world. Following the focus on modernity in Asian art in the first semester, this semester will look at issues of post-colonialism, postmodernism, diasporas and globalisation, further developing students' nuanced understanding of the field to prepare them for professional careers. A strong emphasis in this semester is the features and dynamics of the Asian art world and how it has developed over the past few decades and is continuing to develop in the contemporary period. During Semester II students further develop their own critical perspectives, working to enhance their research skills and their ability to present their views in the form of coherent, well-formed arguments.

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**Seminars:** Seminars form an important component of Semester II, with students presenting their ideas to their tutors and peers and developing interpretations of areas in contemporary Asian art through a series of set readings of journal articles or book chapters. The presentation of ideas by one student in each seminar is followed by active discussion and constructive criticism allowing for maximum discussion and exchange of ideas. Students are encouraged to connect the theoretical aspects of the subject developed through the readings with specific artworks and art world contexts that they experience first-hand on the visits and study trips.

**Lectures:** In Semester II, lectures are designed to give a solid platform of knowledge in the core areas of contemporary Asian art, complemented by the readings and seminars. The lectures focus on major art movements and artistic directions in contemporary Asian art, including the history of performance art in Asia, important exhibitions in the Asian context such as *Magiciens de la Terre* and *China/Avantgarde* in Paris and Beijing in 1989, the tensions between tradition and the contemporary, patterns of migration and the complexity of interactions across localised and global contexts. Other areas covered in lectures include curating in Asia, emergent markets and art fairs, biennials and triennials and the role of the artist and the curator.

**Visits:** Several days are given over to visiting galleries, museums, collections and artists' studios. Towards the end of the semester, students undertake a ten-day study trip to a major artistic centre in Asia, such as China, Singapore or Hong Kong. During the trip, students visit exhibitions and displays in museums and galleries, art districts, private collections, artists' studios and cultural institutions. The trip is designed for students to experience an area of the Asian art world first-hand, in order to better understand its geography, key players and dynamics across local and global contexts.

## **Assessment:**

Students undertake three assessments in Semester II. Students write a long essay on a topic relating to the unit, which develops their writing and research skills further and also enables them to work towards the much longer dissertation in Semester III.

The Critical Review is required to examine an artwork, artist or exhibition in depth, developing a critical perspective on a selected set of materials. This assessment is designed for students to enhance their skills in analysing artworks and exhibitions, and to develop a level of criticality in the field, for application in the art world in a gallery, museum or institutional context. Students are required to submit a catalogue entry written in the style of an auction or museum catalogue, similar to that required in many professional jobs in the art world.

## **Electives:**

Students will choose two elective units from subjects across the specialist MAs at Sotheby's Institute of Art. These will be studied in semester two. Students may wish to specialise their study and focus on elective units which are based in their own program, or diversify their experience through pursuing interests based in other programs. Example elective options available to students are listed below.

International Art World: Public Sectors	Photography and its Markets
Strategic Management for the Art World	Art and Authentication
Emerging Markets	Contemporary Design and its Markets
Ethics, Law and the Art Trade	East Asian Painting
Market for Western Antiquities and Old Masters	Performance Art
Curating Contemporary Art	Photography: Image and Power
Contemporary Chinese Art	Work Placement Unit (accredited internship)*

*Not all electives are offered each year and are contingent upon sufficient enrolment*

\*Admission to this unit is subject to application and selection during the academic year.

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**Dissertation proposal:** Students must put forward a short research proposal for their dissertation topic both as a seminar presentation and in written form in the final weeks of Semester II. Feedback is given on these proposals but they are not formally assessed. Those students not proceeding to Semester III must write an essay.

## SEMESTER III



For MA students, the third semester is devoted to the production of a dissertation. This may be either a standard dissertation or a practice-based dissertation. The dissertation is between 12,500 and 15,000 words and involves original research on a topic chosen by the student. The practice-based dissertation comprises a practical and/or creative project alongside a written component of between 8,000 and 10,000 words. Students receive guidance and support throughout the dissertation process via workshops and tutorials. Students need not be resident in London for all of this period. Tutorial assistance will be available throughout.

**Careers and Alumni:** Students on this program will be given tools to pursue careers in the art world in galleries, museums, auction houses, collections and foundations. Recent Asian art alumni are in numerous positions in galleries and museums in Europe and Asia, for example, Sworders Auction House, UK; Christies, Shanghai, Pace Gallery, London, Pearl Lam Gallery, Shanghai, Hanmi Gallery, London, Liang Yi Museum, Hong Kong, Bonham's, London, Sotheby's Chinese Department, London.

