

MA | CURATORIAL

PRACTICE



Graduate Programs

The Master of Arts degree

in Curatorial Practice (MACP) is a two-year program that focuses on professional art-related training with a thorough grounding in the relevant study of history, research and theory, with an emphasis on hands-on work with art experts in the field, professional networking and the foremost goal of placing graduates in curatorial jobs. The program takes full advantage of the vast number of arts institutions and professionals on the doorstep of the School of Visual Arts in Chelsea and throughout New York City, providing countless opportunities for study, mentoring and career development. Our faculty members all work as curators, directors or other specialists at major New York institutions. Guest lecturers are curators, artists, conservators, writers, architects, critics and theorists who join us in person or online to talk about their exhibitions, programs, projects and events.

From its inception, our program has taken its mandate practical, historical and theoretical work, along with keen attention to issues of equitable inclusiveness and social justice in society and the many ways in which curators can address the profound concerns we face now. Our students, faculty, guests in our classes, and speakers in our regular schedule of programmed events represent that diversity. Our book, *What about Activism?*, published in 2019 and commissioned and edited by our department chair, takes as its subject the ways across the globe that distinguished curators and thinkers have both questioned the art world and worked with their communities to shift and change perspectives, to derail injustice and to improve our lives through the visions of artists. Our course-

work covers many forms of curatorial activity, using diverse texts as anchors, with examples of exhibitions and the experiences of our working curatorial faculty as guides. Our new course in transnational art history underscores MACP's intent to inclusively engage in multiple histories and expressions of creation and concern.

Today, in a time of enormous tumult, in which new ways of working and living and heightened calls for social justice promise the possibilities for change, our program offers an approach to professional preparation that underlines the intersection of practical and intellectual training and social engagement. MACP is predicated on the fact that the global enterprise of the art world must continue to be analyzed and critiqued for its systemic problems toward revision, while acknowledging that in its complexity and vastness—including museums, Kunsthallen, commercial and non-profit galleries, private collections, alternative spaces, biennials, art fairs, online art sites and a vast number of other publicly and privately supported art platforms—there is also the potential for curatorial work on local, national and international stages that brings to bear creativity and new philosophical, social and theoretical thinking in the making of curatorial projects. We put this to practice in our own gallery and other venues, where each student in MACP produces exhibitions.

To emphasize the deeply entwined nature of education and professional engagement, MACP considers itself a hub for practitioners in the field around the world, not an academic cloister. What this means in real terms are exhibitions, performances, panel discussions, workshops and ample time in the city for one-on-one encounters with artists and art on a continual basis for our students. They have the opportunity to create, curate and collaborate with leading professionals and institutions in New York, with further opportunities in projects and internships, including research, exhibitions and publications that span the globe. These events and

collaborations, along with all of the New York art scene, give the students daily access to professionals who become the basis of their own networks for the future. Nothing can beat the proximity of these encounters in the everyday life of New York's teeming, international art scene.

The spot that MACP occupies, close by the galleries in Chelsea and within reach of museums and other exhibition venues in Manhattan, Brooklyn and the other boroughs, affirms our programmatic approach, which fluidly mixes practice, research, history and theory. Our facilities have been designed from the ground up specifically for us by Charles Renfro of the world-renowned architectural practice of Diller Scofidio + Renfro, in association with the design firm Leong Leong. Their mission was to create a dynamic space in which discussion, study, professional visits, critical encounters, research and production take place in a flexible, fully equipped and comfortable work environment. Our elegant facilities fit within the exceptional network of studios, workshops for every creative practice, libraries, labs and galleries of the School of Visual Arts.

MACP seeks diversity in all forms, and we offer small support scholarships that are merit-based.

No other curatorial program in the world brings more extraordinary resources, more creative enterprises, more curators, artists and experts as faculty and visitors, more opportunities for hands-on work and professional networking than our Master of Arts in Curatorial Practice at the School of Visual Arts in New York.

—Steven Henry Madoff, chair

About the Program

MA Curatorial Practice offers a series of preliminary boot camps as part of its first semester, introducing fundamentals of research methodologies, art and exhibition history and theory texts in the field, and conceptual thinking, followed in the full four semesters of the program with rigorous practical and intellectual training. The course work is designed to offer macro and micro views of the field, with the study of different curatorial practices and histories, constant practical exercises in curatorial craft, and engagement with working curators and other experts across disciplines and from around the world.

The curriculum is founded on a series of case study seminars; writing workshops; practicums in every aspect of exhibition-making and other forms of curatorial presentation; and programmatic engagements with curators, artists and experts who will meet with the students as a group and on an individual basis. Students will also take a semester of art practice in their first year to have a hands-on experience of what it is to engage in the production of art. Students may draw from the resources of SVA's other undergraduate and graduate programs, as well as its workshops, labs and libraries.

During the summer between the first and second years, students enter into an internship/mentorship program while they begin work on their curatorial plan for a final

curatorial project. Internships are held at major institutions around the world, as well as at national and New York institutions, with mentors who are internationally renowned. The final projects take many forms and are often fully interdisciplinary, as befits the expanded field of curatorial work today. These projects are exhibited in public spaces in New York City and in virtual space, replete with catalogs and documentary online presence.

Degree candidates must successfully complete 50 credits, including all required courses, while maintaining a high level of academic and practical performance, as judged by faculty and mentors. Students are required to maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (B) in order to remain in good academic standing. Applicants with a prior background in curatorial work are especially encouraged, as are art historians and artists whose enterprises are relevant to advanced work in the curatorial field.

Our students and faculty have come from Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, Germany, India, Iraq, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, the UK and the United States. It is intrinsic to the program that we continue to develop our global network of connections that serves our graduates in all of their future curatorial work, while affirming our belief in the free movement of knowledge without regard to borders.

A Writer Brings Skills Off the Page into Curating Performance Art

Ikechukwu Onyewuenyi was led to his interest in curating dance and performance through an unusual and circuitous route: writing.

While studying health and clinical psychology at the University of Pittsburgh, Ikechukwu—who is known to friends as Ike—co-founded and was editor at large of the contemporary culture magazine *Pop’Africana*. He was also writing about technology, food and design for *Cool Hunting*. ►





He quickly realized that perhaps there was an intersection at which all his interests converged. “I think just being in that writing space and working with publications, it was interesting for me to think about how to take some of those ideas into the physical form beyond just the page,” he says. “So I decided to apply to SVA’s MA Curatorial Practice program. Writing led me to this.”

While many graduate programs in curatorial studies rely on critical readings and theory to shape their students’ curatorial practice, Ikechukwu was excited to find that Steven Henry Madoff, chair of the program at SVA, emphasized writing as part of the curator’s role. “Every week we had to write

something or go to galleries and write reviews about shows,” Ike says. “Which was good because a lot of the stuff I published in grad school came out of writing stuff for Steven, which I later expanded.”

The program believes in this blended approach to hands-on practice, history and theory, with students putting on a number of exhibitions, both in groups and individually. “That kind of experience really helps to get a sense of producing a show: budgeting, figuring out what artists need, contracts, press. It taught us how to think about a show from A to Z,” Ike says. “When I got to the Hammer [Museum in Los Angeles], I felt like I knew how such an institute would operate.”

After working at Performa and BRIC in New York, Ike landed a job as curatorial assistant at the Hammer, where he works on curating performance.

With the political urgencies that exist around the world, curators now have a responsibility toward social and cultural concerns. Ike is clear about his politics: he is critical of the convoluted logic of applying higher capital value to certain art forms over others, which stops institutions from actually doing the radical work they say they want to do. “What came to light for me was: *How can institutions support the act of performance given that this medium is difficult to collect?*” he says. “Performers need good rehearsal spaces. But many performance spaces are just glorified rooms for donors to have meetings. That is where my politics lie while working at the Hammer on Made in L.A. 2020 [the museum’s biennial]: the structures that support performance and dance.”

Ike remains grateful for the access to New York City art institutions that comes with being a student at SVA. That access gave him exposure to many different kinds of curatorial practice. “SVA and Steven were great at knowing people and bringing them straight into the classroom,” he says. “My first year in New York I just threw myself into the art world. Through seeing shows you can meet people and familiarize yourself with the city.” Ike’s passion for curating was born in New York and transported to Los Angeles, and continues to grow in unexpected ways across cities, themes and platforms.

OPPOSITE: The Hammer Museum in Los Angeles.

Curriculum

While the program makes incremental changes every year to reflect new issues and the interests of new faculty, this sample curriculum indicates the main subject matter and the narrative development of the courses, as well as the essential organization of the program into practicums, case study seminars and workshops.

First Year

FALL	CREDITS
Practicum: Research Methodologies	0
Practicum: Logic and Rhetoric	1
History Seminar: Post-1945 Transnationalism and the History of Art	3
Case Study Seminar: Curating Digital Art Through Network, Gallery and Public Space	1
Philosophy Seminar: Curatorial Practice, Body and World	1
Curatorial Roundtable 1: Visiting International Curators Program	3
Workshop in Critical Writing: Exhibition Analysis	2
Workshops in Professional Practices	1
Art Practice	0
CP Exhibition (fall or spring)	0
SPRING	CREDITS
Case Study Seminar: Models of Thinking—Curating a Program	1
Case Study Seminar: History as Commodity—On the Contemporary	1
Case Study Seminar: 21st-Century Contemporary Collecting Practices	1
Case Study Seminar: Returning the Gaze: Models of Curating Film and Video in Contemporary Art	1
Practicum: Exhibition-Making	2
History Seminar: 20th and 21st Centuries Exhibition History	1
Curatorial Roundtable 2: Visiting International Curators Program	3
Workshop in Critical Writing: Curatorial Analysis and the Writer's Voice	2

Second Year

FALL	CREDITS
Case Study Seminar: Performance and Institutions	1
Case Study Seminar: The Expanded Space of Art	1
Artists Roundtable	3
Internship and Fieldwork Program	3
Independent Curatorial Plan	3
Curatorial Roundtable 3: Visiting International Curators Program	3
SPRING	CREDITS
Workshop in Critical Writing: The Catalog Essay	3
Curatorial Roundtable 4: Visiting International Curators Program	3
Final Exhibition/Curatorial Project	6

Renowned Canadian Indigenous curator Candice Hopkins speaks during the weekly Curatorial Roundtable. Sixty international curators visit the roundtable during the two years of the program.





Course Offerings

A sample of our course descriptions follows.
All course descriptions can be found online at
sva.edu/macp/curriculum and macp.sva.edu/courses.

PRACTICUM: RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

In this practicum, students will examine basic art-historical research methods through scholarly investigation of a curator (historical or contemporary). Working independently and in collaboration to seed a database on the topic, students will seek out and visit primary and secondary source collections in the New York City area, demonstrate investigative skills and present their research in the form of a database contribution and a brief presentation.

PRACTICUM: LOGIC AND RHETORIC

This practicum will be a formal introduction to logic and rhetoric, founded in the classical canon. It is commonplace in art practices to talk about “conceptualism” and the concepts that are the basis of works of art, particularly in the post-Duchampian era. However, the foundational ideas of what concepts are and the way logical structures and rhetorical arguments undergird the formation and expression of a concept is largely unexamined. Through readings and exercises, students will examine logical rules for concepts, classification and definition, as well as how to construct arguments using Aristotelian syllogistic logic and modern symbolic systems. By acquainting students with the basics of logic and rhetoric, this course will provide a background that will help curatorial practitioners rigorously address the practice of concept formation as it relates to artists’ works and to their own formulations of exhibitions and other curatorial expressions.

The MACP library specializes in art and exhibition history books that supplement SVA’s main library offerings.



HISTORY SEMINAR: POST-1945 TRANSNATIONALISM AND THE HISTORY OF ART

How is art presented to the broad public? What are the origins of exhibition-making, and with what intentions has it been carried out? How have governments, nonprofit cultural organizations, extra-institutional entities, independent curators and artists dealt with public exhibitions? At whose initiative were/are they organized? This course is conceived to consider a range of exhibition and public initiatives to understand how exhibitions have evolved from the earliest biennials (beginning with the Venice Biennial, the Carnegie International and Documenta) to community and locally based public art initiatives that have impacted and have been responsive to the public's expectations around their reception of exhibitions. The focus of the course will move between the international and local institutional models on a larger scale to more ephemeral and experimental approaches to exhibition-making, emphasizing how the production of exhibitions has shifted as the role of the curator has expanded.

ABOVE: Performance artist Garrett Allen.
OPPOSITE: Students curate exhibitions and performances in the CP Projects Space.

CURATORIAL ROUNDTABLES 1-2

Every week a curator or institution director visits to discuss a current project. The presenters come from all over the world, work across various disciplines and represent different kinds of institutions and practices. The format is informal and intimate; each presentation is followed by a reception that allows students to interact with guests and develop a growing professional network.

PHILOSOPHY SEMINAR: CURATORIAL PRACTICE, BODY AND WORLD

In a well-curated exhibition, one can “feel” that something has been done right (or wrong) through the exchange among the body, the objects in the exhibition space and the space itself. Understanding this relationship is crucial for curatorial practice, and this seminar offers a philosophical framework for thinking it through rigorously and critically. The phenomenological movement has made perhaps the most important contribution to this discussion, and we will engage various accounts of the body and its relationship to space and the world along with excursions into memory theory, the philosophy of technology, feminist theory and speculative materialism. This is a philosophy course, not an art history or curating course. Yet the subject of the course should bear directly on your practice as a curator: as every participant in an exhibition immediately enters into this unspoken relationship, the curator must be conscious of the manner in which perception, consciousness, objects and space are dynamically intertwined.





ART PRACTICE

The Curatorial Practice program intends to fully immerse its students in the world in which they will advance their careers as professional curators. Central to this world are the artists whose works provide the content of exhibitions and other curatorial projects. In order to fully value this work, students will try their hands as art practitioners by enrolling in a studio art course of their choosing at the undergraduate level (unless otherwise approved for graduate level). Ongoing critiques by their instructor and classmates will be given. By the end of the course, students will have a deeper understanding of the techniques, materials, conceptual challenges and risks of being a working artist. This will contribute directly to their curatorial practices and collaborations with artists.

CASE STUDY SEMINAR: THE EXPANDED SPACE OF ART

This course, taught by an architect, uses historical and contemporary examples to examine the expanded field of exhibition-making in the 21st century. The complex, dynamic and productive relationships between exhibitions and their sites will be explored as the class tackles the challenges and opportunities of found or made space, site specificity, site neutrality, object specificity, temporality and media. Using images, videos and texts, students will conduct independent research on exhibitions and their sites, and visit shows, performances and events throughout the New York area. Guest lecturers will include artists, curators, exhibition designers and other architects. Curatorial exercises dedicated to the reconciliation of space and art using conventional artworks, design pieces, time-based works and performance, as well as consideration of the virtual exhibition space, will be an essential element of the course.

Final exhibitions and performances for the program, at the end of the second year, are held in public spaces in Brooklyn and Manhattan and online. Here, performances by Jaimie Warren (bottom) and Vangelina of the Vangelina Theater/New York Butoh Institute.

WORKSHOP IN CRITICAL WRITING: EXHIBITION ANALYSIS

Each week students must write a 500-word review as a curatorial analysis of a museum exhibition that gives ample evidence of the curatorial argument for the show, aspects of exhibition design that clearly manifest the argument and other manifestations (catalog, online presence, conference, workshops) worth noting. This is a good way to visit museum exhibitions on a weekly basis in the city and learn to analyze exhibitions for their curatorial work—not for the art itself but for the presentation of the art. Each review must exhibit clean writing, strong argument and proper use of syntax, grammar and punctuation.

Faculty

To learn more about the faculty members and to read their biographies, visit: sva.edu/macp/faculty.

Steven Henry Madoff
chair, MA Curatorial Practice;
curator; art historian and
critic; poet

Domenick Ammirati
institutional editor and
regular contributor to
Artforum, *Frieze* and other
publications

Daniel Birnbaum*
director, Acute Art, London;
former director, Moderna
Museet, Stockholm

Ivy Blackman
managing librarian, Whitney
Museum of American Art

Rebecca Clark
associate director,
SVA Library

Thierry de Duve*
Evelyn Krane Kossak
Professor and Distinguished
Lecturer, Hunter College,
New York

Clémentine Deliss*
independent curator, Berlin

Álvaro Rodríguez Fominaya*
director, MUSAC, Leon, Spain

Hou Hanru*
artistic director, MAXXI,
National Museum of
21st Century Arts, Rome

Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy*
director, Kunstinstituut Melly,
Rotterdam

Chrissie Iles
Anne and Joel Ehrenkranz
curator, Whitney Museum of
American Art

Daniel Kunitz
editor in chief,
Sculpture magazine

Maria Lind*
former director and chief
curator, Tensta Konsthall,
Stockholm

Chus Martínez*
director, Institute of
Aesthetic Practice and
Theory, Academy of Art
and Design, Basel

Christian Nyampeta
performance artist

Laurel Ptak
executive director, Art in
General, Brooklyn, New York

Sara Raza
former UBS MAP curator
for the Middle East and
North Africa, Solomon R.
Guggenheim Museum

Sara Reisman
artistic director, Shelley &
Donald Rubin Foundation,
New York

Charles Renfro
principal-in-charge, principal
designer, Diller Scofidio +
Renfro, New York

David A. Ross
chair, MFA Art Practice,
School of Visual Arts; former
director, Whitney Museum
of American Art; former
director, San Francisco
Museum of Modern Art

Roddy Schrock
director, Eyebeam, New York

Terry Smith*
Andrew W. Mellon Professor
of Contemporary Art History
and Theory, Department
of the History of Art and
Architecture, University of
Pittsburgh

Lumi Tan
curator, The Kitchen,
New York

Keith Whitmoyer
philosopher

Mick Wilson*
professor, Valand
Academy, University of
Gothenburg

Brian Kuan Wood
founding editor, *e-flux journal*

*Faculty at large

International Advisory Council

Marina Abramović
performance artist, New York

Defne Ayas
former director,
Witte de With Center
for Contemporary Art,
Rotterdam

Ute Meta Bauer
director, NTU Centre for
Contemporary Art, Singapore

Daniel Birnbaum
director, Acute Art, London;
former director, Moderna
Museet, Stockholm

Thelma Golden
director and chief curator,
The Studio Museum in
Harlem, New York

Hou Hanru
artistic director, MAXXI,
National Museum of
21st Century Arts, Rome

Udo Kittelmann
director, National Gallery,
Berlin

Lars Nittve
former executive director,
M+, Hong Kong

Lisa Phillips
director, New Museum,
New York

Paul Schimmel
independent curator

Olga Viso
former executive
director, Walker Art
Center, Minneapolis

Sheena Wagstaff
chairman, Modern and
Contemporary Art, The
Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York

Internship Institutions

Each year, students spend up to three months during the summer between their first and second years in for-credit internships at major institutions around the world, learning the day-to-day workings of these establishments from the inside. Many students also intern in New York during their second year.

The 9th and 10th Berlin Biennales, Berlin

The 11th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju

Art in General, Brooklyn

Asia Contemporary Art Week, New York

Bold Tendencies, London

Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn

Center for Creative Photography, Tucson

Colección Patricia Phelps de Cisneros, New York

FLORA ars + natura, Bogotá

Gropius Bau, Berlin

Guangdong Times Museum, Guangzhou

Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC

International Studio & Curatorial Program, Brooklyn

The Kitchen, New York

Kunstinstituut Melly, Rotterdam

Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin

MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Rome

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

NTU Centre for Contemporary Art, Singapore

La Panacée, Montpellier

Performa, New York

Queens Museum, New York

Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah

The Shed, New York

Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Tensta konsthall, Stockholm

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Application Process

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

For a full list of application requirements and detailed instructions, visit:

sva.edu/grad/howtoapply

- Online Application and \$80 Application Fee: sva.edu/apply

DEADLINES

For information on application deadlines, visit: sva.edu/grad/timeline

IMPORTANT LINKS

- FAQ: sva.edu/grad/faq
- International students: sva.edu/grad/intl
- Tuition and fees: sva.edu/tuition
- Visit SVA: sva.edu/grad/visit

Contact Us

We encourage applicants to visit our department. Contact us directly to schedule a department tour or sign up to attend an Information Session. For more information and to register, go to: sva.edu/grad/visit.

If you have any questions about the application process, contact Graduate Admissions at 212.592.2107 or email: gradadmissions@sva.edu.

Steven Henry Madoff, chair
Re McBride, assistant to the chair
LoREL Easterbrooks, coordinator




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 twitter.com/svacuratorial

“The exponential growth of the global arts enterprise—museums,

galleries, alternative spaces, biennials, art fairs, expositions, online art sites and the sheer number of publicly and privately supported art venues—has greatly increased the need for curatorial knowledge and production.”

—Steven Henry Madoff, chair

ACCREDITATION

The School of Visual Arts has been authorized by the New York State Board of Regents (www.highered.nysed.gov) to confer the degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts on graduates of programs in Advertising; Animation; Comics; Computer Art, Computer Animation and Visual Effects; Design; Film; Fine Arts; Illustration; Interior Design; Photography and Video; Visual and Critical Studies; and to confer the degree of Master of Arts on graduates of programs in Art Education; Curatorial Practice; Design Research, Writing and Criticism; and to confer the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching on graduates of the program in Art Education; and to confer the degree of Master of Fine Arts on graduates of programs in Art Practice; Computer Arts; Design; Design for Social Innovation; Fine Arts; Illustration as Visual Essay; Interaction Design; Photography, Video and Related Media; Products of Design; Social Documentary Film; Visual Narrative; and to confer the degree of Master of Professional Studies on graduates of programs in Art Therapy; Branding; Digital Photography; Directing; Fashion Photography.

The School of Visual Arts is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (msche.org), 1007 North Orange Street, 4th Floor, MB #166, Wilmington, DE 19801, 267-284-5011. The Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation.

The Interior Design program leading to the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design is accredited by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (accredit-id.org), 206 Grandville Avenue, Suite 305, Grand Rapids, MI, 49503-4014.

The School of Visual Arts' Department of Art Education is a member in good standing of the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP), a national accrediting organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The School of Visual Arts' Department of Art Education is currently pursuing accreditation of its educator preparation programs under the AAQEP standards with an anticipated quality assurance review in fall 2023. Pursuant to Section 52.21 of the

Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, the educator preparation programs offered by the School of Visual Arts are therefore considered to be continuously accredited for purposes of meeting the New York State requirement that all such programs maintain continuous accreditation. The School of Visual Arts' Master of Arts in Teaching in Art Education program was previously accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).

The Master of Professional Studies in Art Therapy degree program is approved by the American Art Therapy Association, Inc., and as such meets the Education Standards of the art therapy profession.

CREDITS

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COVER: The production of virtual, as well as physical, exhibitions such as this is part of the program's training—essential to curating in our current times.

School of Visual Arts

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sva.edu/grad