The Master of Arts degree in Curatorial Practice is a two-year program that focuses on professional training with a thorough grounding in the relevant study of art and exhibition history, research and theory, and with an emphasis on hands-on work with experts in the field, professional networking and the foremost goal of placing graduates of the program 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, which provides countless opportunities for study, mentoring and professional development. Our faculty members work as curators, directors or in other professional capacities at major New York institutions. Our weekly guest lecturers are curators, artists, conservators, writers, architects, critics and theorists who come to the program from around the world to talk about their exhibitions, programs, projects and events.

There has never been a moment so potent in the explosive growth of venues for curatorial work across the globe, while the political urgencies we now see around the world are a call to curators everywhere to turn their attention toward the intersection of social and cultural concerns. Our
program in Curatorial Practice (MACP) is predicated on the fact that the global enterprise of the art world—including museums, Kunsthallen, commercial and nonprofit galleries, private collections, alternative spaces, biennials, art fairs, online art sites, and a vast number of other publicly and privately supported art platforms—has increased the number of curatorial ventures for programming on local, national and international stages that seek to effect change.

To emphasize the deeply entwined nature of education and professional engagement, MACP considers itself a hub for practitioners in the global field, 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 professionals in the field on a continual basis for our students. They have the opportunity to create, curate and collaborate with leading professionals and institutions from 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 artists and 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 space that MACP occupies, close by the galleries in Chelsea and within reach of muse-
ums and other exhibition venues in Manhattan, Brooklyn and the other boroughs, affirms our pro-
grammatic approach, which fluidly mixes prac-
tice, research and theory. Our facilities have been
designed from the ground up specifically for us by
Charles Renfro of the world-renowned architec-
tural practice of Diller Scofidio + Renfro, in asso-
ciation 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 an immensely flexible, technologically sophis-
ticated and comfortable work environment. Our
beautiful facilities fit within the exceptional
network of studios, workshops for every creative
practice, libraries, labs and galleries that make up
the School of Visual Arts. The faculty and artists
of SVA’s other programs offer still more possibili-
ties for collaboration.

No other curatorial program in the world brings
more extraordinary resources, more creative enter-
prises, more curators, artists and experts as faculty
and visitors, and 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
The MA in Curatorial Practice offers a preliminary boot camp 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 take place 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. 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 come from Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, Germany, Iran, Iraq, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the UK and the United States, and 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.
From Lisbon to NYC to Singapore, a Curator’s Journey

Ana Salazar

is assistant curator of exhibitions at the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore, one of that country’s premier spaces for exhibiting art from around the globe. Ana was initially introduced to the center by way of an internship she completed while getting her master’s in the MACP program. The program requires that students enter into an internship/mentorship program ahead of their second year. How did Ana find this internship? “I tried to figure out a
strategy and decided to research curators and find people that I identified with. So instead of looking for the place I looked for the person. I discovered that Ute Meta Bauer was directing this newly established institution in Singapore and I thought it sounded interesting! So I just reached out.” The director, who was a longtime friend of MACP chair Steven Henry Madoff, welcomed Ana enthusiastically. So, Ana booked a flight, rented a room and headed off for a three-month sojourn in Singapore. It was her first time in Asia. “I interned in the Research and Education department, and was assisting with all matters related to the visiting research fellows and their activities at the center.”

Did the full-time position come up while she was interning? “No, nothing of the sort was discussed. I actually had other plans for after graduation. What happened was that shortly before I graduated, Ute wrote to me, saying that CCA might have an opening in September and that I should apply. So I waited for the posting and applied. I interviewed via Skype in August, received the offer in September and started working in November.”

Ana grew up in Portugal and was a musician before finding a calling in curatorial work. She had an undergraduate degree in piano, but had also always been interested in the visual arts. In Lisbon, she had been working at Frame Colectivo, an art and archi-
tecture collective, and started thinking about going back to school: “My main goal was to be able to do this shift from musician to curator. I wanted to learn as much as possible about curating and visual arts.” Why did she ultimately choose the MACP program? “I was drawn to it because of the careful language used (she liked that it was called curatorial practice, not curatorial arts) and the structure of the program seemed relevant in today’s context.”

How does Ana define the role of a curator? “For me the curator is the good friend of the artist. She is a person who appreciates and understands or at least wants to understand the artists and their practices and is keen to share the experience of the artwork with a public. It’s about curiosity and learning together and wanting to share and connect with each other. The role of the curator is often a mixture of a co-conspirator and facilitator, researcher and conceptualizer, mediator and producer, thinker and educator.”

Ana explains her role as assistant curator at CCA: “I assist the curators on all the exhibition projects. We usually put together four exhibitions a year. There is a lot of administrative and production work involved, as well as research and content development, delving into each project and being able to convey this to our public.”

What upcoming exhibitions is she working on now? “I’m currently working on the next two exhibitions, both very exciting! One is a solo show by the German artist Ulrike Ottinger and the other will focus on different rituals and beliefs in the region. The latter is called ‘Ghosts and Spectres’ and it will include four artists working in film.”
Curriculum/ Sample Program

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

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As part of a special series of panel discussions, Johannesburg-based Gabi Ngcobo (left), the curator of the 2018 Berlin Biennial, speaks with Adrienne Edwards, curator of performance at the Whitney Museum of American Art.

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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 1: RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES
This two-week intensive is held during the first weeks of the first semester. It is dedicated to instruction in research methodologies that are crucial to the formulation of exhibitions, catalogs and other curatorial ventures. Research exercises focus on curator and exhibition histories, with training in the use of online resources, bibliographical information and physical archives at a major New York museum. At the end of this practicum, students will be better prepared to develop exhibition concepts and texts of various kinds, from wall texts to catalog essays, related to curatorial projects.

PRACTICUM 2: LOGIC AND RHETORIC
This second two-week intensive, held during the first weeks of the first semester, is a formal introduction to training in 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 are largely unexamined. Through readings and exercises in 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.

Students at work in the spaces of the MACP program in Chelsea in New York City.
CASE STUDY SEMINAR 7: 20TH- AND 21ST-CENTURIES EXHIBITION HISTORY

This weekly seminar focuses on curatorial innovation through an historical examination of the work of a number of significant curators during the previous and the current century, using as texts curators’ writings, images of installations, the reception of their exhibitions in contemporaneous critical assessments and related socio-historical readings. Attention is paid to work in the fields of design, film, performance and new media, as well as the traditional visual arts. This close examination of particular curators will not only touch on the intellectual shape of their oeuvres as curators but also on the specific formats they deployed to present work and ideas. This will be a means to develop the students’ broader and deeper understanding of curatorial craft.

CURATORIAL ROUNDTABLES 1-3

Every week a curator visits with the students and faculty to discuss a current project. The curators are from all over the world, work across all disciplines, and represent different kinds of institutions and practices. The format is informal and intimate, with the curator’s presentation followed by questions and answers and a reception that allows students to interact with guests and develop a growing professional network. This is augmented by the in-house availability of space for invited institutions whose curators can use our facilities for brief periods of time while they are in New York, giving students further access to working professionals from across the globe. The Curatorial Roundtable is an integral part of the program throughout its two years. Because these roundtables cultivate relationships with curators and other professionals from New York institutions, as well as national and international colleagues, a substantial network for professional development is acquired that augments the internship program and leads to future opportunities.
PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL THOUGHT SEMINAR: CURATORIAL PRACTICE, BODY AND WORLD
As it is a common task of curators to use objects to develop narratives, this weekly seminar focuses on an in-depth survey of philosophical investigations of objects, with an emphasis on phenomenology, object-oriented ontology and the school of speculative realism. The relationship of the body to objects in space, investigations of subjectivity, and concepts of autonomy and agency will be investigated using texts by Husserl, Merleau-Ponty and Heidegger, among others. This thinking will be toward the goal of engendering a deeper philosophical thoughtfulness in the use and reception of objects in curatorial work.
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 of course the artists whose works provide the content of exhibitions and other curatorial projects. In order to fully value this work, students have the opportunity to try their hands as art practitioners during their first year. They will be enrolled in an art course of their choosing at the undergraduate level, across all disciplines, taking advantage of the training and facilities that the School of Visual Arts offers. Students will receive ongoing reviews and critiques from their instructors and peers. At 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 9:
THE EXPANDED SPACE OF ART
Taught by an architect, this course 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.

WORKSHOP IN CRITICAL WRITING 1 AND 2
Each week students attend museums, galleries and alternative venues in New York City, ranging across mediums and disciplines. They are then expected to write short reviews with specific reference to the curatorial aspect of the project being analyzed. These reviews are critiqued in a workshop setting, refining the students’ writing and analytical skills. As one of the goals of the program is to make its candidates highly professional explicators of their ideas, this workshop will improve the students’ writing fluency and refine the author’s voice, while making them more attentive to curatorial craft as practiced in the city’s immensely varied spaces and forms of presentation and deepening their knowledge of methodologies as well as execution.
To learn more about the faculty members and to read their biographies, visit: sva.edu/macp/faculty. Faculty at large noted with asterisks.

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

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 Kranes Kossak Professor and Distinguished Lecturer, Hunter College, New York

Clémentine Deliss* independent curator, Berlin

Álvaro Rodríguez Fominaya* artistic director, Center of Contemporary Creation of Andalusia, Córdoba

Kate Fowle director, MoMA PS1, New York

David Frankel former editorial director, Department of Publications, Museum of Modern Art, New York; contributor, Artforum

Tim Griffin executive director, chief curator, The Kitchen, New York; former editor in chief, Artforum

Hou Hanru* artistic director of MAXXI, National Museum of 21st-century Art, Rome

Sofía Hernández Chong Cuy* director, Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam

Brian Kuan Wood founding editor, e-flux journal

Daniel Kunitz editor in chief, Sculpture Magazine

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

Chus Martinez* director, Institute of Aesthetic Practice and Theory, Academy of Arts and Design, Basel

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

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


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

Marina Abramović
performance artist, New York

Defne Ayas
former director, Witte de With, 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, Studio Museum in Harlem, New York

Madeleine Grynsztejn
director, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago

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

Udo Kittelmann
director, National Gallery, Berlin

Lars Nittve
former executive director, M+, Hong Kong

Lisa Phillips
director, The New Museum, New York

Paul Schimmel
independent curator

Olga Viso
former executive director, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis

Sheena Wagstaff
chairman, Modern and Contemporary Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
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 institutions from the inside. Many students also intern in New York during their second year.

Art in General, Brooklyn
Asia Contemporary Art Week, New York
Bold Tendencies, London
Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn
Center for Creative Photography, Tuscon
Collección 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
Kunst-Werke Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin
MAXXI Museo nazionale delle arti del XXI secolo, Rome
Museum of Modern Art, New York
NTU Centre for Contemporary Art, Singapore
La Panacée, Montpellier
Perforama, New York
Queens Museum, New York
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York
Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah
The 9th and 10th Berlin Biennales, Berlin
The 11th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju
The Shed, New York
Tensta konsthall, Stockholm
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York
Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS
For detailed instructions, visit: sva.edu/grad/howtoapply
- Online Application and $80 Application Fee: sva.edu/apply
- Statement of Intent/Personal Statement
- Résumé
- Letters of Recommendation
- Official College Transcript

Some applicants may be required to submit the following:
- Proof of English Proficiency
- Copy of Permanent Residency Card
- Declaration of Finances
- Verification of Finances
- Foreign Transcript Evaluation

DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENTS
For specific guidelines about these requirements, visit: sva.edu/grad/deptreq
- Writing Sample (Proposal)
- Interview

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
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
Michael Severance, director of operations
Brian Kuan Wood, director of research

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Department site: macp.sva.edu

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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; Cartooning; 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 the programs in Critical Theory and the Arts; 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; Art Writing; 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 the programs in Art Therapy; Branding; Digital Photography; Directing; Fashion Photography. Data required by the U.S. Department of Education on “Gainful Employment” for each of the above programs may be found on each individual program page at sva.edu/ge.

The School of Visual Arts is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (msche.org), 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, 267.284.5000. 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 School of Visual Arts is an accredited institutional member of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (nasad.arts-accredit.org).

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 Master of Arts in Teaching in Art Education program is 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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School of Visual Arts

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