MFA Curatorial Practices

MFA Curatorial Practice is a program aimed at fostering professional and academic excellence in contemporary curatorial practice. It is located within the Department of Art and explores the international scope of contemporary arts practice. The course focuses on aesthetic, social, political, and philosophical inquiries, as well as practices relevant to contemporary cultural production. It also anticipates future curatorial practices through aesthetic and critical scrutiny of curatorial projects.

The MFA Curatorial Practice course focuses on aesthetic, social, political, and philosophical questions in contemporary art. It offers a practice-led research context for aspiring curators, cultural organizers, producers, and creative practitioners. The two-part program focuses on student-centered learning, allowing students to experiment and innovate in curatorial practice through Independent Research Projects, seminars, collective research, and workshops. Students participate in lectures, reading groups, and site visits.

This MFA Curatorial Practice will teach curating as a contemporary practice and examines a diverse array of curatorial strategies. Students will acquire practical expertise in curating and presenting work, as well as engaging with theory and history in conjunction with current practice. Students will be encouraged to expand practice beyond conventional collection and exhibition-based curation in order to engage new audiences, situations, and sites of encounter. This can include art interventions in public spaces, initiatives in unexpected locations, and digital and web-based experiences. Students will have opportunities to collaborate with artists, curators, businesses, and educational institutions, as well as galleries and museums.

- Regular Course
- Duration – 2 years – Four Semesters
- Credits- Each Semester will be of 48 credits so total of 192 credits
- Number Seats – 10
- Eligibility Criteria- BFA in Art History, Painting, Sculpture, Art Education, Print Making, B.DES,Bachelors in animation and BA Hons in Humanities
- Teaching Method
    - Teaching will include Lecture, Tutorials and Seminars
    - Teaching will be module based
    - Professional personalities will be engaged for each modules.
    - Students will work under the mentorship of the professionals
    - Students will do the internship with museums, galleries and other institutions.

Semester 1

1. Historical Frameworks of Curating
2. Curatorial collabs
3. Curatorial Practice and Contemporary Art Practices
4. Internship in Art Gallery
5. Critical Theory
6. Individual Curatorial Projects

Semester 2

1 Contextual Diversities of Curating

2. Critical Theories
3 Curatorial practice and contemporary Art Practices
4 Internship with Museum
5 Individual Curatoiral Projects

Semester 3

1 The Object Experience
2 Critical Theory
3 Curatorial Practice and Contemporary Art Practice
4 Expanding horizons of curating folk, tribal and artisanal artworks
5 Curatorial Project under the Mentorship of professional Curator

Semester 4

1 Curatorial Project based dissertation
2 Critical Theory

- ## Assessment Process
  - Students will be assessed on the basis of Seminar papers, Curatorial Projects, Mentorship reports, Internship Reports written exam and Viva
  - Following papers will have End Semester Exams

Semester 1 – Four papers - Historical Frameworks of Curating,
Curatorial collabs
Critical Theory,
Curatorial Practice and Contemporary Art Practices
Semester 2 - Three Papers - Contextual Diversities of Curating
Critical Theories
Curatorial practice and contemporary Art Practices
Semester 3 – Three Papers - The Object Experience
Critical Theory
Curatorial Practice and Contemporary Art Practice
Semester 4- One Paper -
Critical Theory

- For other papers the end semester assessment will be done by Jury appointed by the Department

Detailed Syllabus

Semester 1

- **Historical Frameworks of Curating**

  It assists students in situating their evolving practice critically within a variety of historical and contemporary curatorial frameworks, as well as addressing challenges in critical and cultural theory, through seminars led by program tutors and visiting tutors.

This semester will cover the definition of curation, curatorial practices, and curatorial thinking, including the meaning and history of museums and galleries as institutions, as well as the shift in the concept of patronage from the medieval to the contemporary period.

- **Curatorial Collabs**
  This paper will explore curatorial practice within a collaborative framework, focusing on developing research-based and practice-oriented curatorial skills such as analysis, conceptualization, and communication through group project work. Students will respond to a specific project brief provided by an external arts organization and will collaborate with peers to create a curatorial proposal for the Shortlist Feasibility Stage aligned with sector standards. They will present this proposal to their external partner for feedback. The unit will follow the various stages of proposal development, including analyzing the project brief, researching the context of the brief, identifying curatorial and programming opportunities, and progressing through commissioning, context analysis, audience projection, visualization, documentation, presentation, and advocacy.

- **Curatorial Practice and Contemporary Art Practices**

  Curatorial practices involve researching, selecting, and presenting art, transforming individual artworks into a cohesive experience that carries social, political, and art-historical significance. Contemporary art practices encompass the diverse and experimental methods that artists use to create meaning in the present moment. These methods often employ interdisciplinary approaches to engage with current social, technological, and cultural issues. Curators in contemporary art play a vital role as connectors and critical thinkers. They design exhibitions, manage institutions, and collaborate with artists and communities to create inclusive narratives and facilitate meaningful dialogue.

  The lectures and seminars aim to introduce students to the theoretical and visual dimensions of modern and contemporary art practices in both the West and Asia. This semester will explore key concepts such as Modernism, modernity, the avant-garde, the modern artist as flâneur, Orientalism, and the relationship between Asia and the West, encompassing both colonial and non-colonial perspectives.

- **Understanding of concept & Working of Art Gallery through internship**
  During the first semester, students must complete a one-month internship at a gallery coordinated by the Department. Both the gallery and the students will submit reports. The student's report will detail the experiences gained through exhibitions, displays, and various other activities at the gallery.

- **Critical Theory**

  Through lectures and seminars, Critical Studies aims to enhance students' analytical awareness of conceptual and critical themes in and around contemporary art, while encouraging their creative and unique contributions of ideas. Writing workshops, critical studies seminars, and lectures make up this study component. The lectures

and seminars are designed to help students enhance their ability to evaluate others and, second, to improve their ability to express themselves.

This semester will cover concept of seeing in the visual arts and visual culture which will include the concept of seeing in the making of art, concept of seeing as an audience, concept of seeing in the process of curating, concept of seeing with the introduction of camera and later technological devices.

- **Individual Curatorial Projects**

  This paper provides an opportunity to create a proposal and organize a public curatorial event. This event can take place in a gallery or in a public space to explore the concepts presented in the student's proposal. The goal of this paper is to enhance students' understanding of critical thinking and its application. Assessment for the program will be based on a combination of critical writing, presentations, curatorial practice (including display and public programming), and critical reflection, which will be produced both individually and in groups.

Semester 2

- **Contextual Diversities of Curating**
  Considering the ecosystems of diversified curatorial practices and cultures. This paper will introduce students regarding the curatorial interventions in biennales, art fairs, contextual art practices/ cutting edge and spatial negotiations of Contemporary art practices, new media art practices and reintroduction of traditional/conventional aesthetics production technologies(stitching, knitting, traditional printmaking and various other technologies)

- **Critical Theories**
  Through lectures and seminars, the Critical Studies program aims to enhance students' analytical understanding of contemporary art and related critical themes, while encouraging their unique and creative contributions. This component includes writing workshops, critical studies seminars, and lectures. The lectures and workshops are designed to enhance students' ability to evaluate the work of others and improve their own self-expression.

  This semester will focus on the concept of space within the context of visual arts and visual culture. Topics will include the role of space in art creation, the concept of exhibition space, museum space, gallery space, public space, the space involved in the curatorial process, and the space as it relates to new media art practices. It will also study theories related to the relation of body and space.

- **Curatorial practice and contemporary Art Practices**

  Curatorial practices involve researching, selecting, and presenting art, transforming individual artworks into a cohesive experience that carries social, political, and art-historical significance. Contemporary art practices encompass the diverse and experimental methods that artists use to create meaning in the present moment. These methods often employ interdisciplinary approaches to engage with current social, technological, and cultural issues. Curators in contemporary art play a vital role as connectors and critical thinkers. They design exhibitions, manage institutions, and collaborate with artists and communities to create inclusive narratives and facilitate meaningful dialogue.

  The lectures and seminars aim to introduce students to the theoretical and visual dimensions of modern and contemporary art practices in both the West and Asia. This semester will explore key concepts such as, internationalism, nationalism, national identity, abstraction, conceptual development in the art practices, and the global and local concerns in Asia and the West.

- **Understanding of concept & Working of Museum through internship**
  During the Second semester, students must complete a one-month internship at a museum. Both the museum and the students will submit reports. The student's report will detail the experiences gained through exhibitions, displays, and various other activities at the museum.

- **Individual Curatorial Projects**
  This paper provides an opportunity to create a proposal and organize a public curatorial event. This event can take place in a gallery or in a public space to explore the concepts presented in the student's proposal. The goal of this paper is to enhance students' understanding of critical thinking and its application. Assessment for the program will be based on a combination of critical writing, presentations, curatorial practice (including display and public programming), and critical reflection, which will be produced both individually and in groups.

Semester 3

- **The Object Experience**
  Students will engage with conservation, classification, narration, and categorization. The lectures and seminars will introduce them to the conservation process, how to classify artworks, and develop historical and conceptual narratives, which will aid in categorizing various art practices. This course will include lectures, seminars, and workshops led by professional conservators and curators.

- **Critical Theory**
  Through lectures and seminars, the Critical Studies program aims to enhance students' analytical understanding of contemporary art and related critical themes, while encouraging their unique and creative contributions. This component includes writing workshops, critical studies seminars, and lectures. The lectures and workshops are

designed to enhance students' ability to evaluate the work of others and improve their own self-expression.

This semester will focus on the concept of art object/practice within the context of visual arts and visual culture. Topics will include the process of creation of art object/practice, presentation of art object/project in a gallery space, in public space, or in museum space. It will also include the theories related to the visual presentation of history, contemporary art practices in curatorial context. This paper will also include theories related to the role of body in the creation and reception of the art practices in the context of new media art, performance art.

- **Curatorial Practice and Contemporary Art Practice**

  Curatorial practices involve researching, selecting, and presenting art, transforming individual artworks into a cohesive experience that carries social, political, and art-historical significance. Contemporary art practices encompass the diverse and experimental methods that artists use to create meaning in the present moment. These methods often employ interdisciplinary approaches to engage with current social, technological, and cultural issues. Curators in contemporary art play a vital role as connectors and critical thinkers. They design exhibitions, manage institutions, and collaborate with artists and communities to create inclusive narratives and facilitate meaningful dialogue.

  The lectures and seminars aim to introduce students to the theoretical and visual dimensions of modern and contemporary art practices in both the West and Asia. This semester will explore key concepts such as, Contemporary, Contemporaneity, Contemporary art practices, conceptual art practices, Body politics, photography and video art practices, and the global and local concerns in Asia and the West.

- **Expanding horizons of curating folk, tribal and artisanal artworks**
  Curatorial practices involve researching, selecting, and presenting art, transforming individual artworks into a cohesive experience that carries social, political, and art-historical significance. This paper will examine critical theories and the representation of folk art, ethnic tribal art, and artisanal artworks. The lectures, seminars, and workshops will encourage students to explore folk art practices, ethnic tribal traditions, and other artisanal artworks through the lens of various artists and art institutions. Students will have the opportunity to develop a curatorial project that critically analyzes and presents these artworks in new contexts.

- **Curatorial project under mentorship of professional curator**

  In the fourth semester, students will collaborate with the professional curator on a curatorial project coordinated by the Department. Both the mentor and the student will submit a report detailing the critical thinking, research, and curatorial practices they developed during their time working together.

Semester 4

- **Curatorial Project based dissertation**

  A practice-based research project will include the writing of thesis and development of public curatorial event. A dissertation based on a curatorial project merges exhibition practice with academic research, emphasizing curatorial methodologies and the exhibition itself as a significant research output. The process involves defining a research question, developing a curatorial concept, designing and executing an exhibition (which can be either digital or experimental), and then reflecting on the project's outcomes. The written dissertation analyzes this curatorial process, its theoretical foundations, and the exhibition's impact, often positioning curatorial practice as a unique form of knowledge production.

- **Critical Theory**
  The Critical Studies program aims to deepen students' analytical understanding of contemporary art and related critical themes through lectures and seminars, while also encouraging their unique and creative contributions. This component includes writing workshops, critical studies seminars, and lectures designed to enhance students' abilities to evaluate the work of others and improve their own self-expression.

  This semester will focus on recent theories such as post-humanism, critical race theory, new media art practices, counter-images, counter-visuality, counter-narratives, and the spatial approach to curatorial projects. Additionally, this paper will examine the reinterpretation of traditional art practices within the context of contemporary critical theories.

Prof. Mrinal Kulkarni