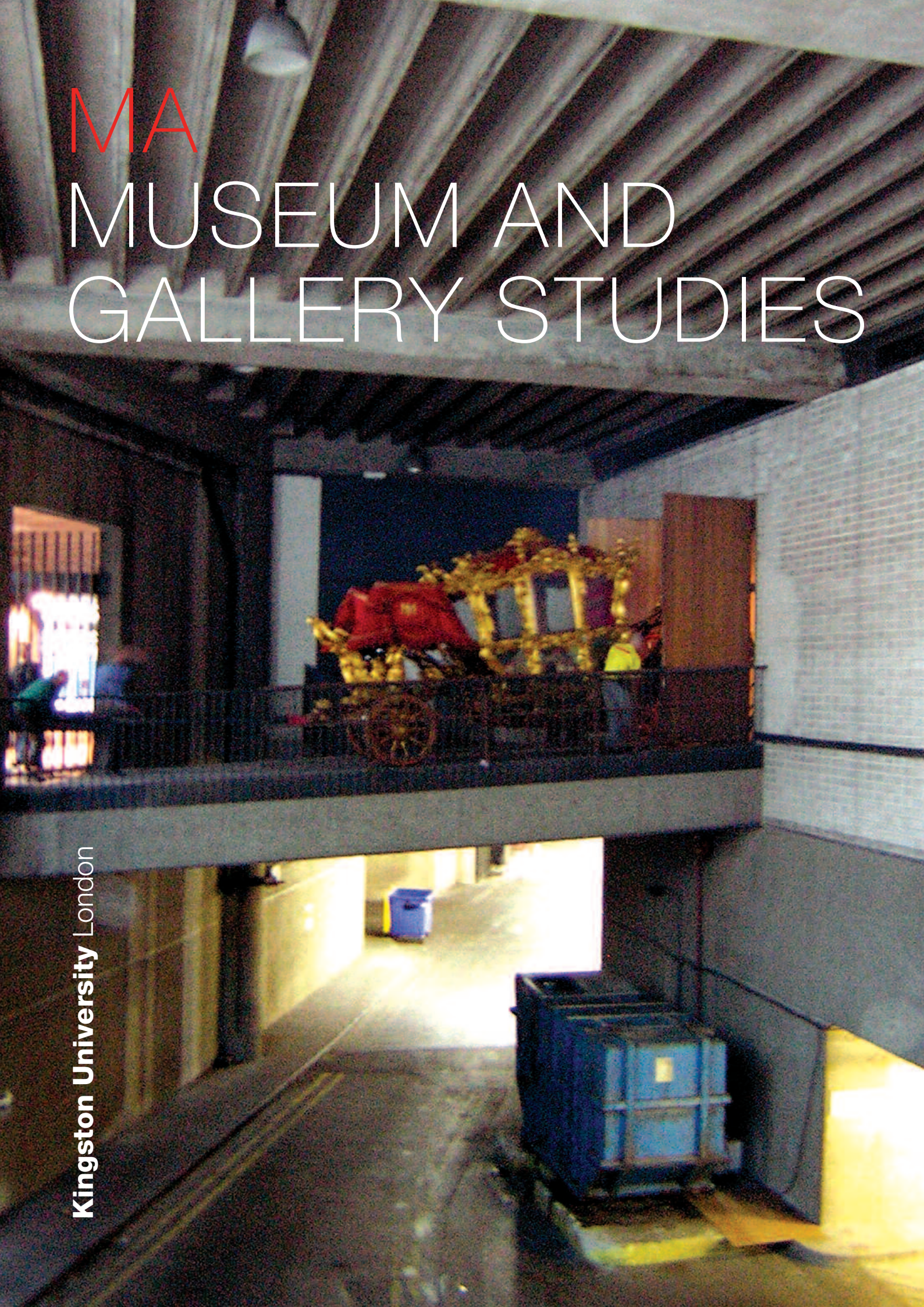


MA

# MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

Kingston University London



# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## FAST FACTS

### Further information, including fees

See [www.kingston.ac.uk/museumgallerystudies](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/museumgallerystudies)

### Duration

Full time, 1 year; Part time, 2 years

### Attendance

Full time, 2 days per week; Part time, 1 day per week

### Qualification, recognition and accreditation

MA

### Entry requirements

Applicants should have a good BA(Hons) degree or equivalent qualification. We welcome applicants from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds. We also welcome applicants with relevant work experience. You should be able to demonstrate an ability to work creatively and within a team. International students must have an IELTS score of 6.5 or equivalent.

### Interviews

We will usually invite shortlisted candidates to an interview. You will need to demonstrate evidence of enthusiasm and commitment for the subject, plus the ability to analyse written material. We can make alternative arrangements for international students based overseas.

### Prior learning – AP(E)L

Applicants with prior qualifications and learning may be exempt from appropriate parts of a course in accordance with the University's policy for the assessment of prior learning and prior experiential learning.

### Fees

For the latest information on fees please visit:  
[www.kingston.ac.uk/fees](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/fees)

### What is Museum and Gallery Studies?

One might believe that museum and gallery studies is a stable field of academic inquiry based on a set of familiar institutional forms and functions. But, as ideas and institutions, museums and galleries have never been stable or singular. They have always been in motion, crafted from an ongoing weaving of information and emotion, knowledge and imagination, politics and environment, space and time. The aim of MA Museum & Gallery Studies at Kingston University is to establish a more critical and imaginative approach to this unstable field and in the process to re-imagine the relationships between academic and 'museum' practice.

### What will you study?

The programme of study attempts to dissolve the unhelpful barriers that have been erected between academic practice and professional museum practice using a critical intellectual framework shaped throughout by creative research and its application.

The programme of study offers students a genuinely interdisciplinary approach. You will study a series of core taught modules, each framed by critical-theoretical inquiry and a broad approach to research practice. Case studies explore real-world contemporary issues and practices, many of which will be visited by the group in our use of museums and London as an expanded classroom.

Students can take full advantage of the creative and studio-based resources within the Faculty. Throughout the course you are actively encouraged and supported in the development of your own approaches to museums and galleries as a subject of academic inquiry and professional practice, finding your own pathway through the course and the opportunities that it presents.

### Who is the course aimed at?

This course is designed to accommodate students from a wide range of academic backgrounds and research interests, those with existing professional experience or students considering a new career. For example, some may already be in museum or gallery employment and are looking for the space and time to think critically about their practice, some may be interested in pursuing doctoral research after the MA, and others will be either working within or towards other, related areas of the creative economy, heritage and cultural sectors.

# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## COURSE STRUCTURE: MODULES

### Modules

- Ideas and Institutions
- Critical Issues in Research
- Invention and Experimentation
- Collaboration and Craft
- Dissertation

Please note this is an indicative list of modules and is not intended as a definitive list.

### Ideas and Institutions

Museums and galleries are highly prominent features of the contemporary cultural landscape. They have experienced significant investment in their intellectual and physical development over the past twenty to forty years. To some this has been a Golden Age, to others it represents an age of great uncertainty, even malaise.

“...like most contemporary institutions, museums have descended from the heaven of authoritative certainty to inhabit the flatlands of doubt.”

Hein, H (2000) *The Museum in Transition: A Philosophical Perspective*. Washington DC, Smithsonian Institution Press. p142

This module establishes a progressive interdisciplinary framework for critically and creatively questioning museums and galleries as ideas and institutions and as a field of academic inquiry. By weaving together history, theory and practice this module introduces a range of critical perspectives and contemporary issues with which to interrogate museums and galleries, their purpose, presence and relevance.

“[The] biggest challenge now is how to collect or classify things if you think the world through connections.”

Gane, N (2006) “When we have never been human, what is to be done? An interview with Donna Haraway”, *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol.23 (7-8), p145



# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## COURSE STRUCTURE: MODULES

### Critical Issues in Research

The main business of universities and museums is research; doing research and making research knowable. Research methods and materials may differ (documents and images, objects and specimens, places and people) as will the communicative media through which research is made knowable (articles, books, exhibitions, buildings, events and performances). But research, and the drive to communicate that research, is the shared and central feature of both the academic community and the museum profession.

*“Distanced critique is a useful but boring tool. I like the idea of throwing myself into the fray.”*

Mark Dion in Kwon, M (1997) “Interview: Miwon Kwon in conversation with Mark Dion”, in Kwon, M et al (eds.) (1997) Mark Dion. London, Phaidon. p20

An aim of this module is to do away with the unhelpful and poorly-conceived divide that has developed between university-based study and museum practice, and between theory and practice. The module re-casts research as a creative, communicative practice crafted with theory, method, materials, media and audience, empowering students to become confident, creative practitioners in their own right.

*“The academic world describes a museum that most people entering practice fail to find... This slippage between theory and practice results in an illusory museum, or a series of illusory museums.”*

Rice, D (2003) “Museums: theory, practice, and illusion” in McClellan, A (ed.) (2003) Art and its Publics: Museum Studies at the Millennium, Oxford, Blackwell. p77



# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## COURSE STRUCTURE: MODULES

### **Invention and Experimentation: Museum as Transformative Media**

A largely rational and highly ordered approach to interpretation, exhibition and display has been central to the conception of the modern museum and gallery. This module introduces new ways to critically engage with exhibition through artistic practices and platforms for communication. This module argues that the museum's relevance and its potential as a transformative media rest in part on its ongoing ability to re-imagine exhibition through invention and experimentation. The module draws on aspects of modern and contemporary artistic practice such as collage, assemblage and montage, documentary film, installation art, time-based media, illustration and design.

*"If museum exhibitions continue to cover the same ground, I'm not sure they will have a future, particularly if the future is anything like the predictions looming on the horizon."*

McLean, K (2007) "Do Museum Exhibitions Have a Future?" *Curator*, Vol.50, No.1, p119

This module has been developed and is co-delivered in collaboration with the Museum of London (MoL). Students will be set the task of responding to a real brief that MoL staff are currently working towards through a creative exhibition treatment or scenography in the form of a portfolio.

*"As the primary task of exhibitions, I contend, they ought to encourage visitors to stop, suspend action, let affect invade us, and then, quietly, in temporary respite, think."*

Bal, M (2007) "Exhibition as Film", in Basu, P and Macdonald, S (eds.) (2007) *Exhibition Experiments*. Oxford, Blackwell, p91



# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## COURSE STRUCTURE: MODULES

### Collaboration and Craft: Future Museum Making

Museums and galleries are key landmarks in the everyday heritage of place and have become prominent features of primarily urban regeneration schemes. So physically concrete do they appear that the collaborative, contingent and uncertain nature of the planning process is often overlooked. This module draws on collaboration as positive and necessary to the sustainability of the contemporary museum; re-conceptualising museum planning as a more ecological, place-based craft.

“As a tool, place is as pervasive as language: we are place-makers and users as much as we are language-makers and users.”

Sack, R (2003) A Geographical Guide to the Real and the Good. London, Routledge. p4

Collaboration and Craft provides an opportunity for students to critically examine sustainable museum and urban planning practices and develop their own future museum brief – very often the most creative part of the planning process. The module’s assessment is based on the living landscapes of Kingston as our local environment, locating our work within a world city and a progressive sense of place.

“London is... a field of multiple actors, trajectories, stories with their own energies – which may mingle in harmony, collide, even annihilate each other.”

Massey, D (2007) World City. London, Polity Press. p22

### Dissertation: Two Pathways

The dissertation can be pursued in two ways: a 12-15,000 written essay or students can pursue a creative project option. Under this second option students write a 5,000 critical-reflective essay supporting a piece of individual or group creative practice of their choosing.



# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## COURSE FEATURES

### Assessment

Essays, creative project work (group and individual), seminars, portfolio, dissertation.

### Creative Practice

The MA Museum and Gallery Studies develops a critical framework of analysis and engagement with museums and galleries as a route to more creative, experimental practice; thinking, reflecting, and doing. This framework revisits the assumptions of museum and gallery study as an academic field and the dominant conceptions of the institution, institutional space and institutional practices. Ideas of, and approaches to, practice are therefore central to the course as are opportunities for engaging directly in experimental and creative practice-based research in institutional and more-than-institutional contexts.



Located within the Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture, the MA programme of study engages across artistic, urban planning, architectural and design practices as alternative creative approaches to museum study and practice. Our genuinely interdisciplinary approach to creative practice is one of the unique features of our curriculum.

### A Place-Based Approach

Our programme develops through a strongly place-based approach to the contemporary museum. The broad aim is to offer a more sustainable, place-sensitive approach to our understandings of museums, museum practices and their academic study; to further open the museum up to the world in an ethical engagement towards collaborative, sustainable, more-than-institutional futures.

Our place-based approach draws on our location in London as a world city and museum metropolis. Place, locality, ecology and community are essential to museums and museum practices wherever they may be found and from whichever country our students might come from. The course aspires to be international in its scope and vision whilst being grounded in a sympathetic and progressive sense of place.

### Scholarship, Showbusiness and Sustainability?

It might be argued that scholarship, showbusiness and sustainability are in conflict in a museum context, or at best out of balance. But are there other ways of thinking with these ideas? Perhaps they are mutually co-dependent features of a re-modelled idea and institution that has a future? The MA programme provides students with space and time to think through the complexities and contradictions of museums and galleries in the contemporary world.

### Where is the Faculty based?

The Faculty is based at the University's Knights Park campus. Our well-equipped facilities offer a modern study environment.

# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## INDUSTRY LINKS

### **Professional Engagement and Progressive Practice**

The inhabitants of our shared world face many challenges, some of a planetary scale. Our assumptions of the role of museums and galleries in society need to be re-thought and opened up if they are to remain relevant and vibrant social ideas and institutions. Opened up, museums and galleries have the potential to help individuals and communities to better understand their world and to meet the challenges of change in a more thoughtful, connected and compassionate way.

There is a growing international demand for professionals able to work critically, creatively and collaboratively at the edges of the conventionally understood museum and gallery and across institutional and disciplinary boundaries. In light of this we believe that the conventional postgraduate qualification in 'museum and gallery studies' also needs to be reviewed; to re-imagine how an academically-based course should engage with, and be an active part of, progressive museum practice. The MA in Museum & Gallery Studies at Kingston University is for those who want to think for themselves, to explore new ways of doing things and to lead the field.

The MA programme has been constructed to achieve a greater sense of balance between critical inquiry and creative practice. Our aim is to enable students to develop genuinely critical perspectives, to reflect on and debate these perspectives, and to apply this new thinking to their own work. The MA is not a narrowly-conceived vocational course. As a field, museum and gallery studies must diversify if we are to benefit from the creativity, talents and vision of new professionals and new ways of thinking and doing. For example, some module assessments take the form of creative responses to a brief devised by academic staff and an external partner museum or gallery. Students are challenged to produce examples of progressive practice themselves throughout the course.

Where appropriate and available students are encouraged to pursue work experience placements. This is not a mandatory course requirement but is an opportunity for those less-experienced students to develop their interest in a particular career or industry. Placements would be structured collaboratively by the student, the host organisation and the Faculty to ensure that all sides get the most out of the experience.

### **Guest Speakers and Visiting Lecturers**

The course will benefit from the ideas and experiences of guest speakers and visiting lecturers from academic and diverse areas of professional practice.

### **Critical Study Visits**

London is a major international centre for museums and galleries. Critical study visits will be scheduled throughout the course giving students the opportunity to explore and examine examples of practice in this exciting and diverse world city. Destinations include the Natural History Museum, British Museum, Tate, Hampton Court Palace, and visits to places outside of London including Oxford.

# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## STAFF PROFILES

### Who teaches this course?

The Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture teaches this course. The course is developed and delivered by specialist academic staff and also benefits from contributing museum and gallery practitioners. The interdisciplinary breadth and depth of our research, teaching, and practice-based experience ensures that our teaching staff are at the forefront of contemporary museum and gallery study.

**Name:** Dr Duncan Grewcock

**Title:** Course Director

Duncan is Senior Lecturer in museum and gallery studies at Kingston University and Course Director of the MA programme. Duncan's professional background is in museum and heritage consultancy. His consultancy experience ranges across all kinds of museums and galleries from the smallest volunteer run operations to large international institutions. His recent doctoral research challenges existing approaches to the theory and practice of contemporary museum and gallery study; disrupting the museum and doing museology differently.

**Name:** Dr Helen Wickstead

**Title:** Senior Lecturer

Helen Wickstead is an archaeologist specialising in European Prehistory and Landscape Archaeology. She worked as a field archaeologist for more than fifteen years in Britain, France and the Czech Republic. She currently teaches in Forensic Archaeology at Kingston University alongside museum and gallery studies. Dr Wickstead has a long standing cross-disciplinary interest exploring the interface between archaeology and art. She is director of art+archaeology - a project which creates residencies for visual artists on excavations and in museums, and has co-ordinated exhibitions in the UK, Ireland and China.

**Name:** Chris Horrocks

**Title:** Principal Lecturer

Chris has published widely in the field of cultural theory and art. His publications include Marshall McLuhan and Virtuality, and Tokyo Glamrock. He is currently working on a publication, Cultures of Colour - Visual, Material, Textual and is on the editorial board of Imprint Publications, whose output includes Bob and Roberta Smith's A is for Book and Fashion Forever by Ian McKell and Liz Farrelly. He has recently visited Beijing to present a paper on the Gao Brothers banned sculpture MissMao.

**Name:** Helen Potkin

**Title:** Acting Head of School

Helen is Course Director for the BA (Hons.) History of Art, Design & Film, the BA (Hons.) Visual & Material Culture, and the BA (Hons.) Museum and Gallery Studies. Her particular research interests are in twentieth-century sculpture, public art, performance and body art.

**Name:** Dr Paul Mickelthwaite

**Title:** Research Fellow Sustainable Design

Paul undertakes research, knowledge transfer, and enterprise activities across a wide range of areas within sustainable design. Particular areas of research interest, evident in research outcomes, are design and manufacture with recycled materials and 'green' branding. Paul has delivered numerous refereed papers at international conferences, and published in refereed journals.

# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## RESEARCH GROUPS AND CENTRES

All staff and student researchers in the Faculty are part of a research centre through which they engage both with collaborative and individual projects and with a range of local, national and international research events, including workshops, seminars, visiting lecture series, conferences and symposia.

### **Visual and Material Culture**

Museum and gallery study is located within the interdisciplinary Visual and Material Culture Research Centre. The Centre enables academics, emerging scholars, and students to conduct research within a stimulating and collegiate environment that actively seeks to shape the future of Visual and Material Culture as field of inquiry. Committed to the continuing development of a wide range of interdisciplinary research methods and activities, the Centre provides an intellectual infrastructure through which researchers engage with both individual and collaborative projects. Its distinct albeit inter-animating areas of study are:

### **Historical and Critical Studies**

Staff and students untangle the knotty historiographical and methodological questions of the past, present, and future of the history of art, architecture, and design. Interests and expertise include: History and Genre Painting; patronage, dealers, and the art market; English and European avant-gardes; the history of the art school; inter- and cross-disciplinarity; archives; and the practice of 'research' itself in the Arts and Humanities.

### **Place, Space, and Global Futures**

Researchers are committed to interrogating the historical and theoretical comprehension of local, national, and international identity, of located-ness and dis-location in our contemporary global visual and material cultural context. Interests and expertise here include: Museum and Gallery Studies; public sculpture; art beyond the gallery; transcultural practices; Arab women artists; Japanese popular culture; contemporary Chinese art; Orientalism and the Middle East; the global art market.

### **Gender, Technology, and the Human Image**

Staff and students engage with thorny discourses of gender, technology, and the human image in our volatile, mediated, and often traumatising visual, material, and immaterial cultures.

Interests and expertise include: beauty; fashioning the body; performance art; feminism; masculinity and conflict; heterosexuality; mass media; new media; photography, film, and informational networks; technological reproducibility; and our bio-cultural futures.

### **Cultural Activism Research Group**

Art has a long and celebrated history in struggles for social change. Drawing on and working across the thematic and critical areas above, this research group brings together researchers and artists to engage with the historical and theoretical connections between artists and social movements, the cultural production of social movements, and the many important but often overlooked practices which occupy a liminal space between these disciplinary positions.

Co Director: Professor Fran Lloyd

Email: [vamcrc@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:vamcrc@kingston.ac.uk)

### **Student research**

You may be able to publish any research you undertake on the Kingston University Research and Innovation Reports (KURIR) website. This site gives anyone associated with Kingston University the opportunity to publish articles, which will be permanently available to the academic community, see [www.kingston.ac.uk/kurir](http://www.kingston.ac.uk/kurir)

For further information on research within the Faculty, and to find out more about research opportunities, contact our research administrator:

T +44 (0)20 8417 9000

E [j.nobbs@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:j.nobbs@kingston.ac.uk)

[www.fada.kingston.ac.uk/fada/research](http://www.fada.kingston.ac.uk/fada/research)

# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## FACILITIES

The Faculty of Art, Design & Architecture began an ambitious and ongoing programme of investment during 2007. Consequently, we have been able to make significant improvements to our workshops and some other resources in order to support your learning.

The University has its own on-site galleries, including:

- Dorich House – home of the sculptor of Dora Gordine;
- Stanley Picker Gallery – featuring exhibitions of contemporary art plus exhibition space for students;
- Platform – an exhibition space for new staff and student work, and project spaces in the main University campus, which you can book for the construction of project work.

You also benefit from:

- well-equipped lecture theatres, seminar rooms and workshops;
- the library's extensive book and journal collection – as well as over 150,000 slides and visual references dating back to the 1600s;
- computer resources; and
- the dedicated Graduate Centre on campus – including IT facilities, seminar rooms and social spaces.

### Resources in London

Kingston is just a 25-minute train journey away from central London. Here you can access a wealth of exhibition spaces, museums and gallery environments.

### Learning support

We want to make sure you get all the support you need while you are with us. Here you can see the range of support we can offer you while you're doing this course. When you arrive at Kingston, we will allocate you a personal tutor to make sure you have access to appropriate advice regarding your academic development. You will also be able to use the University's Careers Service and counselling service.

### Personal training plans

We offer all students training sessions when they arrive at Kingston University, covering:

- project management;
- communication skills; and
- information research and retrieval.

The aim is to give you the chance to improve your study, research and life skills.

### Blackboard

Blackboard is an online learning management system. It is a potentially limitless resource for lecture notes and interactive teaching including:

- access to course materials – such as lecture notes,
- backup materials and presentations
- online chatrooms and bulletin boards – so you can interact with staff and other students; and
- multimedia features – such as video tutorials.

Because you can use Blackboard from any internet-enabled computer at any time, you can choose when and where you study.

### StudentSpace

The Kingston University student intranet provides a fast, easy way to find information and work online. It provides everything you need to know about student life at Kingston. You can also use StudentSpace as a virtual workspace, customising it to include:

- your chosen web-based applications;
- favourite web links;
- a useful calendar; and
- your recently opened files.

# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

## FACILITIES

### **The Graduate School and Centres**

All postgraduate students at Kingston have the support of the Graduate School. The Graduate School:

- runs special training programmes for research students;
- works with academics and administrators to develop graduate education and reinforce the links between teaching and research; and
- helps to introduce new initiatives to postgraduate activities.

It also manages the Graduate Centres, dedicated spaces for graduate students. These are ideal for private study or holding meetings.

### **Language support**

International students can access plenty of language support, both before and during your course:

- Pre-sessional English Language Course – improve your English language skills and learn about study methods and life in the UK;
- English Language Support Programme – after you enrol, this free programme offers a range of academic English courses and tutorial support throughout the academic year.

# MA MUSEUM AND GALLERY STUDIES

“IF MUSEUMS DID NOT EXIST, WOULD WE REINVENT THEM AND WHAT WOULD THEY LOOK LIKE?”

Janes, R (2009) Museums in a Troubled World: Renewal, Irrelevance or Collapse? Routledge, London. p14



## **CONTACT**

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