Art Curatorship Now & Beyond

A symposium celebrating 25 years of Art Curatorship at The University of Melbourne

Thursday 17–Saturday 19 September 2015

This symposium celebrates 25 years since art curatorship was first offered as a degree at The University of Melbourne. As well as recognising this legacy through reflection and debate, the symposium program provides the opportunity to construct a new roadmap for contemporary curating through dynamic interaction and the exploration of new ideas. Engage with professional colleagues from a range of Australia’s leading art museums and visual arts institutions to examine past, present and future directions in art curatorial research, teaching, and the career development of visual arts professionals. The symposium welcomes academic colleagues, professional peers, art curatorship students and graduates of the course, as well as Arts Faculty alumni and members of the wider public.

Participants

Keynote lectures by:

- **Dr Thomas Berghuis**, Museum MACAN, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art di Nusantara, Tuvalu Pavilion for the 56th International Art Exhibition - la Biennale di Venezia, Collection Jaap Berghuis

- **Carol Yinghua Lu**, Contributing Editor of *Frieze* magazine and Co-artistic Director of the 9th Gwangju Biennale.
Other participants in the three-day program of events include:

Julie Banks, Thomas Berghuis, Roger Butler, Naomi Cass, Rebecca Coates, Dagmar Eichberger, Alex Ellem, Charles Green, Paul Gurney, Doug Hall, Alison Inglis, Shaune Lakin, Julie Lomax, Susan Lowish, Christopher Marshall, Alice Mathieu, Caroline Moes, Fiona Moore, Tara McDowell, Pippa Milne, Felicity Strong, Mikala Tai, Miya Tokumitsu, Carol Yinghua Lu, Catherine Speck, Lesley Alway, and many more.

Admission is free
Bookings are required
Seating is limited
To register visit: alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au
For further information on the full program please contact Colleen Boyle
boyle.c@unimelb.edu.au

Program

Thursday 17 September

Keynote Lecture One
Time: 6:30 – 8:00pm
Date: Thursday 17/09/2015
Venue: Sidney Myer Asia Ctr-B02 (Carrillo Gantner Theatre)

Dr Thomas Berghuis in Conversation: Curating as a Profession

What does it mean to build a career as a professional curator working in the expanded field of contemporary art, art history and practices of art? Often discussions focus on defining the role of curator, but less attention has been given to curating as a profession. The Master of Art Curatorship at the University of Melbourne offers a range of specialisations, including collection management, event development, exhibition management, exhibition interpretation, and conservation. But what about the impetus of curating in seeking new social relations and motivating people, spaces and objects to be reinterpreted at different times, locations, and contexts? What are the tools and skills that make curating an effective profession in the expanded field of contemporary art? Instead of asking "what do curators do?" – perhaps we should ask, "how do we teach curating?"
**Friday 18 September**

**Session One**
**Time:** 9:40 – 11:00am  
**Venue:** Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Level One, Sidney Myer Asia Ctr-106  
**Panel Discussion: Art History & Art Curatorship.**  
Professor Dagmar Eichberger (Universities of Trier and Heidelberg), Dr Rebecca Coates (University of Melbourne), and A/Prof Alison Inglis (University of Melbourne) will discuss the development and progress of the Master of Art Curatorship at the University of Melbourne, trends in Masters of art curatorship courses in Europe, and connections between art history, art curatorship courses and professional practice.

**Session Two**
**Time:** 11:30am – 1:00pm  
**Venue:** Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Level One, Sidney Myer Asia Ctr-106  
**Debate: There is no royal road* to becoming an internationally recognised curator**  
*(or natural path): Euclid of Alexandria’s response to Ptolemy I (King of Egypt, 4th century BC) when asked if there were any shortcuts to learning Geometry. His now famous response: ‘There is no Royal Road to Geometry’ - even kings, it seems, have to do it the hard way.

Curators, art historians, artists, alumni and current students will debate the motion that “There is no royal road* to becoming an internationally recognised curator.”

**Moderator:** Naomi Cass (Director, Centre for Contemporary Photography)  
**Speakers include:** A/Prof Tara McDowell (Monash University), Pippa Milne (Curator CCP), Paul Gurney (CEO Open House Melbourne), Professor David Cross (Deakin University), A/Prof Doug Hall, and Alice Mathieu (Graduate, University of Melbourne).

**Session Three**
**Time:** 1:45 – 3:00pm  
**Venue:** Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Level One, Sidney Myer Asia Ctr-106  
**Panel Discussion: What Does the Industry Need and What Does it Want?**  
With graduate degrees now a prerequisite for many positions, what else do those in the cultural sector look for in aspiring professionals working in the visual arts and cultural sectors? This panel will examine some of the prerequisites (written and unwritten), and desirable attributes for aspiring curators and professionals in the cultural realm.

**Convened by Professor Charles Green. Speakers include:** Julie Lomax (Director Visual Arts, Australia Council for the Arts), Mikala Tai (Director, 4A Centre of Contemporary Asian Art), and Dr Shaune Lakin (Senior Curator, NGA).
Session Four  
**Time:** 3:30 – 5:00pm  
**Venue:** Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Level One, Sidney Myer Asia Ctr-106

**Panel Discussion: Curatorship and the Region**

Traditionally, curators gained their training ‘on the job’, with the rise of university degrees in museum studies and curatorship only taking place since the 1980s in Australia. In this session, leading arts professionals will discuss different curatorship training programs and professional development opportunities available within this country and the wider region.

Speakers include: Roger Butler AM (Senior Curator, Australian Prints and Drawings, NGA) with Rebecca Edwards (Assistant Curator, Australian Painting, Sculpture and Decorative Arts before 1980, NGV); Professor Catherine Speck (Co-ordinator Art History program, University of Adelaide); Lesley Alway (Director, Asialink Arts).

Convened by A/Prof Alison Inglis (University of Melbourne).

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**Keynote Lecture Two**  
**Time:** 6:00 – 7:30pm  
**Venue:** Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Level One, Sidney Myer Asia Ctr-106

**Carol Yinghua Lu: An ‘Internal’ Report**  
(Contributing Editor of *Frieze* magazine and Co-artistic Director of the 9th Gwangju Biennale.)

Lu will discuss the issues and challenges she has encountered surrounding contemporary independent curatorship in a global environment. How can curatorship engage global issues in a local context whilst recognising diversity and specificity of local histories as well as individual experience and positions?

Several of her curatorial projects have addressed the issue of practice from the perspective of practitioners. She bases her curatorial practice on the belief that the equality of practice is based solely on the practice itself, not on the hierarchical nature of the art system, not on geographical politics, not on length of existence, not on historic remoteness or proximity, not on ideological stand and not on its position in the structure of art perceived in popular opinions. Many of her projects propose the precedence of the creative subjectivity, talent and vision of the practitioners, ahead of the existing categories - movements of art, regional and national characterization, market value, the hierarchy of disciplines and role divisions in terms of evaluating practice.

She will also discuss a recent research project she has been working on in collaboration with artist Liu Ding and how such research is translated into the language of an exhibition. This research revisits and re-examines the tradition and notion of socialist realism in the context of contemporary art practice in China, and how it exerts its lasting influence not only as an artistic language, but as an ideology and an organizational principle of social relationship on artistic practice, the perception and discourse about art.
Saturday 19 September

Session Five
Time: 9:30 – 11:00am
Venue: Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Level One, Sidney Myer Asia Ctr-106

Presentations: Exhibition Histories and Controversies

Presenters include: Dr Christopher Marshall (Art History and Curatorship Senior Lecturer University of Melbourne) “The Reluctant Masterpiece: Exhibiting Michelangelo at the Castello Sforzesco, Milan”; Dr Miya Tokumitsu (Art History Lecturer, University of Melbourne) “Artefact, Art or Neither? Decorative Arts in the 21st Century”; Damian Smith (PhD candidate RMIT, freelance curator and curator of Australian artists for Havana Biennale 2017) “From Ark to Archive: the historical context for curating”. Chaired by A/Prof Alison Inglis (University of Melbourne)

Session Six
Time: 11:30am –1:00pm
Venue: Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Level One, Sidney Myer Asia Ctr-106

Presentations: Current Perspectives on Collections & Exhibitions: Research, Ownership, & Authenticity

Presenters: Felicity Strong (PhD candidate, University of Melbourne) discusses the issue of exhibiting and/or collecting fakes; Caroline Moes (Independent Project Manager, University of Melbourne student) will present a paper on current international best practice regarding the catalogue raisonné online; and, Julie Banks (Manager, Special Project (Immunity) Art Gallery of NSW) will speak on Immunity from Seizure protocols and policy.

Chaired by Fiona Moore (Sessional Lecturer, MA Art Curatorship, University of Melbourne, independent collection manager)

Session Seven
Time: 1:30 –3:00pm
Venue: Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Level One, Sidney Myer Asia Ctr-106

Presentations: Further Perspectives on Art Curatorship and Conservation

Presenters: Alex Ellem (University of Melbourne) will delve into the history of teaching art conservation to curatorship students at The University of Melbourne; and Marcelle Scott (University of Melbourne) from the Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation will discuss the new two-way learning partnership between the Grimwade Centre and Warmun Art Centre in the East Kimberley, WA.

Chaired by Jude Fraser (Manager, The Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation – Commercial Conservation Services, UoM Commercial Ltd, University of Melbourne)

Session Eight
Time: 3:30 –4:30pm
Venue: Yasuko Hiraoka Myer Room, Level One, Sidney Myer Asia Ctr-106

Six Slides in Six Minutes!

Current students, graduates and staff from the art curatorship program showcase their current projects. Presenters will share their story with just six slides in six minutes. Come hear what we’ve been up to beyond the walls of the university.