

amongst scholars, amateurs and professional artists since they were 'invented' in the 19th century. With recent new development such as digital image revolution, analogue nostalgia, art activism and global image dissemination, the 21st century seems set with the momentum to critically discuss, debate and theorise lens-based media.

To further Fried's pressing question, it could be asked how 19th century image science inspired and informed 20th century artistic invention? And from there it may be explored in what ways lens-based media provide critical and alternative artistic strategies for social intervention and art activism in the 21st century? What is the future of lens-based media if assessing it through a rear-view informed by media archaeology? Is Charlotte Cotton's essay "The New Colour: The Return of Black-and-White" (2007) adequate to address another revolution in image printing amongst young photographic artist in the 21st century? These historical and critical narratives not only situate lens-based media at the centre of discussion but also instigating questions important enough to sensitise thinking also in other visual arts.

This theory course will examine the emergence and development of lens-based media since their invention. In addition to identifying and interpreting key milestones that underscore the development of lens-based media, student will also be directed and engaged in thematic discussion, analysis and debate of works of image scientists, photographers, video artists, and media activists. Through contextualising historical narrative and introducing critical theory and discourse of lens-based media, student will be equipped with theoretical and analytical tools to research for lens-based media practice.

Key texts of lens-based media art historian and theorist will be brought into discussion to sharpen students' critical and analytical ability in research and writing. Such critical discussion will generate debate, criticism and novel perspective in conceiving lens-based media practice beyond canonisation. This theory course not only allow students engaging in the currency and critical debates of theorising lens-based media in the 21st century, but also through theorising, the course is able to enhance student's intellectual sensitivity in shaping their own personal practices.

#### **VART 3317 The Realities of Visual Culture (3,3,0)**

Prerequisite: VART 2305 Art in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century I

This course aims to extend students' knowledge and experience beyond the study of their major by exploring the interaction between art, advertising and luxury goods, within the wider context of contemporary visual culture. This will then allow a reverse examination of the relations and influences of visual culture on the production of the contemporary visual arts, their markets and audiences.

The course will strongly emphasise on analytical and critical thinking to consider answers to questions like: How an age-old painting grasps our imagination? How a piece of sculpture may change the outlook of our city? Or: how much money should governments spend on culture?

Debates and questioning will critically engage with the development of visual culture and its association with the art market and luxury goods markets. This course assesses the contrasts and similarities, of the public and private sectors of art consumption and reflects upon aesthetic significance and monetary value of art. It also considers the changing notions of art and visual culture in terms of traditional associations of status, education and evaluates the roles of gallery, auction house, advertising and shopping mall as the centre pin of 'brands'. Further, reviewing the role of the public sector in the advancement of the art exhibition 'blockbuster' and the commercialization of art through case studies of world leading galleries such as Tate Modern, MOMA and the Guggenheim.

#### **VART 3325 Chinese Literati Art: Identity, Transformation and Challenge (3,3,0)**

Prerequisite: VART 2305 Art in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century I

The Chinese literati artistic tradition plays a pivotal role in the development of Chinese painting and calligraphy, and their theories in Chinese culture. The literatis' artistic taste is often

characterized by an emphasis on the close relationship between calligraphy and painting, as expressed in inscriptions and poems on a painting, subject matters with self-referential or moral symbolism, and the plainness and simplicity of the imagery's aesthetics.

Ever since the early attempts to define literati art by Su Shi and his circle in the 11th century, there has been a long-standing debate among critics and art historians regarding the art of the scholar-artists as an artistic tradition. The modern and contemporary Chinese artists have been confronted with the challenge posed by Western culture and new trends of thought. Wrestling with their art during a prolonged period of social-political turmoil, they found themselves asking questions like "how to modernize or revolutionize Chinese art without forgoing the essence of the literati artistic tradition."

This course investigates into the different discourses and theories on the Chinese literati art over time, interpreting the notions of identity and transformation and the challenges of the literati artistic tradition. Students will be guided to develop their self-chosen research topics in:

Calligraphy as Embodiment of Personality

Social identities and cultural ideals: discourses and artistic practice of the Northern Song literati circle

Landscape and subject matters with self-referential or moral symbolism

Approaches and aesthetics: self-amusement, sketching of ideas (xieyi 寫意) in ink play (moxi 墨戲), the aesthetics of calmness or blandness, naturalness or simplicity, awkwardness or antiqueness

The Theory of Northern and Southern Schools

Transformation and the challenges of the literati artistic tradition in the modern and contemporary world

With the instructor's supervision in tutorials and group discussions, students will be able to acquire hands-on research skills and develop their own approach to scholarly research practice, which will enhance their ability to independently investigate artistic expressions and issues pertinent to Chinese literati art, and to synthesize new knowledge through application of appropriate theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches.

#### **VART 3326 Hong Kong Arts (3,3,0)**

Prerequisite: VART 2305 Art in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century I

Every place has its own story/stories that can be narrated, illustrated and represented creatively through visual arts if not in words. This course attempts to tell the many stories of Hong Kong by looking at examples of local art works, including painting, sculpture, cartoons, photography and architecture that are produced from the early 19th century to the present day, as a way to outline the character and history of the place. With the supplement of texts and documentaries, students will learn from the visual examples how Hong Kong transformed from a small fishing village to a metropolis city of over seven million people; or from a British colony to be a part of the People's Republic of China nowadays.

Alternately, the socio-political changes, technology development, education reform, cultural interaction of a place can also influence the production of works of art, in terms of style, medium and meaning. The search for identity before the return of sovereignty before 1997, for example, triggered off a substantial amount of art creation on the issue on Hong Kong identity.

The course will adopt a multi-disciplinary approach in reading stories of Hong Kong, not solely from the view points of visual arts, but also sociology, history, cultural studies, geography, and/or literature, whichever can bring new insight to enhance our understanding on the topics. The opportunity to study original works of art, either from museum or private collection, enables students to make direct encounter with the history of the place, which will ultimately inspire their thoughts and interpretation of the subject of Hong Kong.