

Education

Passion for art

Trista Yeung

I F YOU HAD the chance to go back to college, would you take up art as a subject? Don't fret even if you have already passed college age. Art lovers can take up the Professional Diploma in Fine Art program, which can provide them with well-rounded knowledge of the arts.

Started in 2012 by the Hong Kong Art School, a division of the Hong Kong Arts Centre, the vocational art education program is designed to complement similar academic programs on offer in other institutions.

"Many of our students are full-time workers with an interest in studying arts, but who missed the opportunity of taking up formal art education," said Wylie Chan Kwok-pui, academic head of the Hong Kong Art School. "It intends to ignite participants' interest in arts and provide them with an overview of a wide range of selected topics."

The program offers two curriculum levels. The Gateway to Art program is accredited at Qualifications Framework Level 4, and the Into Art program at



The program provides many out-of-classroom experiences including, below, gallery visits and opportunities to talk to gallery owners.

Qualifications Framework Level 5. They represent the level of higher diploma and bachelor at the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications.

"Many universities and institutions require certain academic qualifications with a fixed timetable. Our programs are comparatively more flexible where students can choose the right module at a chosen time," Chan explained.

Although formal articulation or credit transfer to

higher education is not available for the program, students can look instead at the importance of lifelong learning, Chan said.

"Apart from art theory, we also offer hands-on operational or administrative modules, like art marketing, proposal development and gallery operation in Level 5. This enables students to get practical ideas of [what's happening in] the actual art scene," he added.

The modules on offer cover three designated streams of studies. They are: art administration and management; art and culture; and art making and tasting. They can make their choice according to their background, interest and needs.

Ka Kee Pyne, a student of the program, said she is impressed by the practical nature of the modules on offer. Inspired by what she has learned, she put up her own gallery, Ka Kee Gallery of Objects, in Sai Ying Pun last month.

"I used to work in a well-established and renowned art consultancy company. I joined it to equip myself," she said. "It [the program] provides different out-of-classroom experiences comprised of gallery visits and

opportunities to talk to gallery owners. It provided perfect opportunities to make connections and acquire critical understanding of how art galleries operate."

Chan added: "Participants were also taught by a team of professionals in different areas, including marketing and exhibition planning."

"There were curators who offered real-life case studies and experiences."

Pyne said her classmates were a source of inspiration as they often had spirited and substantive discussions after class. "Many of them come from different industries and they offered varied and distinctive points of view on art. Those discussions really broadened my horizon," she said.

The program can be taken on a part-time basis in one year over three terms.

Participants also have the option of taking up individual modules. Each module consists of eight lessons and each session lasts for three hours.

Website: www.hkas.edu.hk/3programmes/pdf/index.html

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