



CARLOS CRUZ-DIEZ · CHROMOSATURATION



BAHAR YÜRÜKOĞLU · PLEXIBERG

FOUNDING PROGRAM · SUMMER 2026

Art Studio Intensive:

Surface, Space, and Color

ADVANCED PORTFOLIO PREP

An immersive two-week, full-day studio intensive led by **Claire Ashley**, senior faculty at the **School of the Art Institute of Chicago** — consistently ranked among the world's top art and design schools, visiting faculty at the **Kentucky College of Art + Design**, and an internationally exhibiting contemporary artist.

Drawing on SAIC's undergraduate studio pedagogy, students experience the discipline, creative freedom, and intellectual rigor of a world-class arts education — here in Mumbai.



FACULTY LEAD
Claire Helen Ashley
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Dept. of Contemporary Practices · Painting and Drawing
Also visiting faculty at **Kentucky College of Art + Design**

DATES June 22 – July 3, 2026	FORMAT 10am – 4pm, Mon – Fri	OPEN TO Rising 9th – 12th Grade
ENROLLMENT Limited to 15 students	FEES ₹1.20L · All supplies included	HOST VENUE École Intuit Lab, Prabhadevi (Mumbai)



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uncommonLABS

Outstanding faculty from leading institutions around the world, in India.

Create compelling, portfolio-quality artworks and explore a range of creative strategies used by contemporary artists.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course engages students in **critical and interdisciplinary thinking** that underpins creative practice across art, design, architecture, and technology.

Through readings, lectures, discussions, and critiques, this course introduces the concept and content of **color as an expansive framework for artistic production**.

Students build technical skills by exploring a variety of mediums including non-traditional drawing and painting, sculptural fabrication, photographic manipulation, video/audio, performance, and installation. They have the freedom to experiment across materials and disciplines, developing independent approaches to making that **go beyond the canvas**.

We also engage in discussions about the work of significant historical and contemporary artists and art movements that have pushed the boundaries of their media.

STUDIO PRACTICE & EXPLORATION

Students learn how to critically engage with the history of drawing, painting, and sculpture through an **energetic, hands-on making** process. We **connect painterly gestures and drawing methods with non-traditional surfaces** such as modular, flat-pack, and portable sculptural form, found objects, photographic imagery, architectural space, virtual space, video projection, performative action, and the body. By moving beyond the canvas, students explore ideas more freely — discovering new perspectives and new ways to give them form.

Class presentations and discussions take place in parallel with making to provide historical context, connections to the traditions of drawing and painting, and practical solutions. Material sourcing field trips, video projection tests, digital image manipulation, and site-specific installations are part of studio practice. Students **gain confidence** and the language to discuss their work clearly through **critique and discussion**.

BE INSPIRED BY — EXAMPLES OF ARTISTS AND MOVEMENTS WE WILL EXPLORE



Kazuo Shiraga

Action Paintings

Jackson Pollock & Kazuo Shiraga (Gutai group)



Rebecca Horn

Restraint Drawings

Matthew Barney & Rebecca Horn



Abigail DeVille

Sculptural Paintings

Sam Gilliam, Jessica Stockholder, Abigail DeVille & David Hammons



Sumakshi Singh

Spatial Drawings

Fred Sandback & Sumakshi Singh



Jessica Warboys

Process Paintings

Oscar Murillo & Jessica Warboys



Ranbir Kaleka

Technology Paintings

Wafaa Bilal, Ranbir Kaleka & SunYuan/PengYu

Spend six hours a day in the studio — working through an iterative process of making, testing, critique, and revision.

SAMPLE DAILY RHYTHM

10:00 AM	Morning Discussion
10:30 AM	Studio Work Block I
12:30 PM	Lunch + Lecture & Discussion
1:30 PM	Studio Work Block II
3:30 PM	Group Critique + Reflection
4:00 PM	Day Closes

The intensive format allows for a depth of **focus**, **continuity**, and **sustained engagement** rarely possible during the school term. Students experience what it's like to be a practicing artist or designer.

Site visits and guest conversations are woven into the weekly rhythm.

STUDIO PROJECTS

Students create **individual projects** shaped by their interests, starting from open-ended prompts that encourage interpretation and experimentation. They move beyond traditional drawing and painting, using different materials, surfaces, space, and action under close guidance. The emphasis is on **bold risk-taking** and iteration to develop a visual language that more fully reflects their artistic voice. These works will be presented in a **final exhibition** at the end of the course.



WHO THIS IS FOR

This course is intended for students with a foundation in visual art who want to add new work to their portfolio, are considering art school, or seek a creative challenge beyond the pace and scope of a standard school term.

What Students Gain

FOR ALL STUDENTS

- **UNDERGRADUATE STUDIO ENVIRONMENT**
Experience an undergraduate studio environment: critique culture, sustained practice, and creative risk-taking
- **INDEPENDENT ARTISTIC VOICE**
Develop a clearer artistic voice and the critical language to discuss art, process, and ideas
- **PORTFOLIO-READY WORK**
Produce ambitious new work over two weeks to strengthen your portfolio
- **MENTORSHIP**
Build a mentorship relationship with Claire Ashley, a practicing artist and experienced educator, during the program and beyond
- **REAL-WORLD EXPOSURE**
Engage with Mumbai's contemporary art community through site visits and guest conversations
- **FINAL EXHIBITION**
Present work in a final public exhibition

FOR STUDENTS APPLYING TO ART SCHOOL

- **PORTFOLIO CONSULTATION**
Dedicated portfolio consultation with Claire Ashley, who is actively engaged in art and design school admissions
- **ADMISSIONS INSIGHT**
An admissions conversation with representatives from art and design schools in the U.S., Europe, and Asia
- **LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**
Consideration for a letter of recommendation based on participation and performance (at faculty discretion)

Portfolio consultations are honest, one-on-one conversations about where your work is, where it could go, and what admissions committees are looking for.



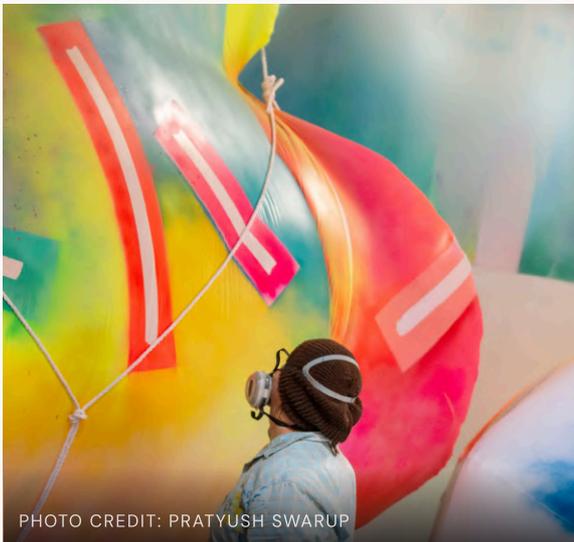


PHOTO CREDIT: PRATYUSH SWARUP

FACULTY LEAD

Claire Helen Ashley

School of the Art Institute of Chicago

Dept. of Contemporary Practices · Painting and Drawing

Also visiting faculty at [Kentucky College of Art + Design](#)

Scottish born, Chicago-based artist Claire Ashley mines the language of painterly abstraction, monumental sculpture, and slapstick humor to investigate inflatables as painting, sculpture, installation and performance costume.

These works have been exhibited nationally and internationally in galleries, museums, site-specific installations, performances and collaborations such as the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds, UK, Beacon Arts Center, Scotland, the Louis Kahn Library at Phillips Exeter Academy, NH, and the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, AR.

Her work has been featured in Studio International, VICE, Hyperallergic, Artforum, Sculpture Magazine, Art Papers, Boston Globe, Chicago Tribune, and Condé Nast Traveller.

Ashley received her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) and her BFA from Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen, Scotland. She teaches at SAIC in the Department of Contemporary Practices and the Department of Painting and Drawing, and at the Kentucky College of Art + Design.

Selected Works



IMAGES COURTESY OF THE ARTIST · [CLAIREHELENASHLEY.COM](#)

ABOUT UNCOMMON LABS

Exceptional pre-college programs exist on university campuses around the world. Uncommon Labs brings the educators and pedagogy behind those experiences to India.

Our programs create space for serious engagement with big ideas, exceptional mentors, and sustained practice at a formative stage — when a student's *why* begins to take shape. Each experience offers both a window into a field and an invitation into deeper self-understanding.



ABOUT THE FOUNDER

Anuja Mehta started Uncommon Labs after noticing how rarely students in India get the chance to learn from exceptional educators working at the forefront of their fields — and how powerful it is when they do.

We are built on a simple belief: when people find work that connects to their curiosity, they don't just build careers — they shape the world around them.

Anuja holds an MBA from Columbia Business School and has worked across the U.S. and India in technology, consulting, and international development, including roles at Google, Bain & Company, Amazon, and TechnoServe.

APPLY

Applications are open: uncommonlabs.asia/apply 

Need-based support available — if cost is a barrier, note it in your application and we'll follow up.

Questions? Reach us at:

apply@uncommonlabs.asia · +91 74004 54339

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