

*Report on the Add-on Course*  
*Organised by the*  
*Department of English (UG and PG)*  
*Entitled*

*Visual Culture: The Many Ways of Seeing*

*7<sup>th</sup> August to 7<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

*Duration – 34 hours*

*Course Co-ordinator*

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*St. Paul's Cathedral Mission College*

## *Visual Culture: The Many Ways of Seeing*

### **A Report**

We, in the Department of English, at St. Paul's Cathedral Mission College always feel that our students, are constantly subject to visual metaphors within or without their formal curricula. There are many instances where we need to explicate to them the nuances of visual culture as visible in the fine arts and even the performative arts. The metaphor of the visual and the many ways of seeing may also be extended to the affiliated fields of photography and cinema. These and similar observations prompted us to design the Add-on course entitled *Visual Culture: The Many Ways of Seeing*.

Accordingly, both the undergraduate and the postgraduate sections of the Department of English, of St. Paul's Cathedral Mission College organized this Add-on Course between the **7<sup>th</sup> of August and the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, 2023**. The course also hoped to open up new career opportunities for our final semester students, in such fields like advertisement, photography or journalism. **Eighteen (18) students** enrolled for the course and they belonged to both the postgraduate and undergraduate sections of the Department of English of our college. The course was concluded in **thirty-four hours**, and stretched over a period of two months. Most of the classes were held on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, in the latter half of the day, and some spilled over to **after-college hours** as well. As the course demanded the projection of **visuals and pictures**, they were organized in venues which were enabled with LCD projectors and screens. We opted for the Sesquicentenary Seminar Hall of the College and room 100 in the Jani Ali Block building.

It was our purpose to introduce a subject like visual culture, which is certainly beyond our regular curricula, through as **many external resource persons and speakers** as possible. We were, accordingly, blessed with the presence of **several experts** from the fields of **journalism, photography** and, of course, from other **academic disciplines**. We had among us,

**Shri Debasis Mukhopadhyay**, well known scholar and journalist, **Shri Atanu Paul**, founder of Third Eye photography, **Dr. Ananya Dutta Gupta** from Visva Bharati, **Dr. Shubham Dutta** and **Dr. Siddhartha Biswas** from the University of Calcutta. All of these speakers encouraged our students and congratulated us on the choice of this novel course. Shri Atanu Paul's sessions were closer to workshops on photography. Our in-house speakers were, respectively, **Dr. Chaitali Maitra**, **Ms. Ananya Sasaru**, **Dr. Uma Biswas**, **Shri Kush Sengupta** and **Dr. Anasuya Bhar**, who was also the course co-ordinator. All of our speakers made extensive use of ICT to display several visuals including still photographs and film clips as well as other stills from the fine arts, including sculpture.

Our aim in this course was to make a comprehensive, yet succinct study of the visual metaphors through distinct modules encompassing the visual arts, the world of photography and cinema. Our speakers made a distinctive study of the visual arts and its history, keeping in mind both the orient and the occident. They also introduced the concept of 'mechanical reproduction' of art, from which the concept of the camera and photography originated. From there on came the concept of the photo film and that of cinema. **Our students learnt to interpret visual artefacts and their critical eye became sharper**, by the end of the course. They gave us a '**positive**' feedback and response, asking for more such courses.

The students were given a short assessment to test their understanding of the course. The closing ceremony, where our students were awarded with participatory certificates, found them happy and fulfilled.

The course, organized under the aegis of the IQAC of the college, could not have seen the light of day without the co-operation from the college authority, the Teacher-in-Charge, the IQAC Co-ordinator, the Add-on Course Committee, the Bursar, and the support staff of our college. We were **constrained to charge the nominal sum of Rs. 500/-** (rupees five hundred only), each, from our students to meet the expenses of the course. The sum so accumulated was

much less than the original budget submitted to the college for this purpose. Nevertheless, we managed with the sum collected, making some changes in the original plans of expenditure.

The detailed schedule of the lectures, their dates and duration may be found In the program schedule, enclosed herewith. The brochure to the course, designed by our course co-ordinator and illustrated by our colleague Shri Kush Sengupta, clearly specifies the course objectives, the modules, and the course outcomes planned in the course. Some photographs here would help re-live the moments from the course.



### Inauguration



### Distinguished Speakers



Students attending with rapt attention



Closing Ceremony and Certificate Distribution



Course Co-ordinator with Students