Art & Public Policy Course Archive

1968 – An All School Seminar
Professor Karen Finley

This class will study artist responses to the political and cultural events of 1968. We will examine the influences of the provocative times of 1968: the Vietnam War, Civil Rights, The Woman’s Movement, Gay Rights and sexual liberation within the genres of music, dance, writing, theater, visual art, television and film. We will compare and strategize art making as a politic response in 2008. The All School Seminar is in conjunction with Day of Community, an annual event that focuses on a particular theme or discourse held at Tisch. This year the seminar is in conjunction with 1968, a photo exhibit that is presented by the department of photography.

In addition to reflecting on 1968 and the creative response of its day, the students will reflect on their own witnessing of political events today and translate this into an artist project. Students will be able to either respond to earlier seminal works or movements for a new interpretation, a re-envisioning, or to identify their current concern into a project. This is with the intent and purpose to foster the students own participating into the long tradition of the artist as historical recorder.

Advanced History Seminar: Global Issues in Photography
Professor Shelley Rice

This will be a course about “The Big Picture,” in both a literal and a metaphoric sense. It will serve, in essence, as an exploration of the impact of globalization on both visual expression and its “consumption” in the worldwide marketplace. Lectures will focus on periods of great social change, and the art works that expressed them. The invention of the hot air balloon and of huge mass media “panoramas” at the end of the 18th century in Europe will be the foundation stone of the class; the self-described “panoramic” century, the 19th, gave us World’s Fairs, department stores, trains, steam boats and global traffic in photographs and artistic styles. Moving on to Courbet and the changing middle class markets of the Second Empire in France, the lectures will then describe the importance of the Russian Revolution (including the revolutionary redefinitions of visual culture, its purpose and its audiences). Several classes will examine the United States during and after the Second World War, the years that still define our mass media experience as well as the contemporary image exchanges which will be the focus of Terry Smith’s lectures and student seminar reports. Whatever the historical period, all discussions will highlight two important issues: major social changes and their visualizations, expressed in huge public or private art projects and images. The shifting relationships between social scale and visual scale will be the focus here, leading us toward an understanding of the role of today’s art market and international media.

Advocacy, Documentary Filmmaking and the Law
Professor Linda Mills
Advocacy, outside and inside the courtrooms, increasingly depends not simply upon argument or protest, but upon supporting images. As such, documentary filmmaking has become one of the most powerful tools for advocates to convey their messages. Michael Moore (Bowling for Columbine, Sicko), Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady (Jesus Camp), and Andrew Jarecki (Capturing the Friedmans) are but a few documentary filmmakers who have effectively sparked debate through confrontation, vérité footage, and filmmaking techniques that are deliberately designed to change the course of a nation's dialogue, and even affect the ultimate outcome of how a case is decided or an issue is resolved. From health care to sexual abuse, organized religion to the Holocaust, documentary filmmaking is now a force with which to be reckoned.

Visual literacy is crucial to advocates of all stripes, including lawyers, and this course takes up that challenge by addressing in detail the development of documentary filmmaking, the skills and tools, as well as the critical apprehension necessary to make use of the extraordinary opportunities that this new media proffer. This course will help activists of all persuasions (artists, law students, and others) locate themselves in this powerful art form: when is it effective to use film in advocacy? When is it counterproductive? What can we learn from the methods that filmmakers use to influence the public? Student assignments will include shooting and editing a short film, preparing a film treatment, or writing a paper on a selected topic within the syllabus.

Anarchism and the Arts
Professor Richard Porton

Since the nineteenth century, anarchist theory and practice have enjoyed a productive and complex relationship with the arts. This course will offer a comprehensive survey of affinities between important anti-authoritarian political currents and major trends in painting, literature, music, theatre, and cinema. Topics to be discussed will include the relationship of the Paris Commune to Courbet’s realism, anarchist motifs in art movements such as surrealism and lettrism, anarchist allegories in Franz Kafka’s novels, the utopian anarchist vision of Ursula Le Guin’s science fiction, the anarchist roots of “bohemianism,” the representation of the struggle within the left during the Spanish Civil War in the cinema, anarchist elements in avant-garde as well as punk music, anti-authoritarianism and sexual politics in the films of Lizzie Borden, and the anarchist impetus in theatrical collectives such as the Living Theatre and the Bread and Puppet Theatre. The course will culminate in an assessment of the ties between art and activism in recent social movements involving anti-globalization and antiwar militants. Readings will focus on the history and the theory of classical anarchism from Proudhon to Bookchin, post-structuralist critiques, and important critical pieces by leading figures ranging from Emma Goldman to T.J. Clark. Students will be asked to coordinate their final essays with in-class presentations.

Anatomy of Difference
Professor Sheril Antonio
History/criticism or Humanities - 4 points Prerequisite: One intro. Film history/criticism class
This course looks at how difference is constructed in film through reading assignments, in class screenings and critical analysis of full-length features including main stream Hollywood, independent, and international films. This inquiry will take note that while some of these films may be conventional in form, in content they challenge accepted notions of differences, or stereotypes. Our goal is to catalog films that resist accepted notions of the "other." To accomplish our goals we will deal primarily with textual analysis that focuses on story, character, as well as cinematic space and time. With the help of the required texts we will examine socially accepted notions of the "other" and see how they are derived and or challenged in and by films, thus looking at how an art form can interact with socially accepted forms of "othering." The objective of the course is to train emerging artists and scholars to engage in critical analysis that can make profound contributions to the individual's unique creative or analytical process. Another intention of the course is to delineate and occupy the space left for debate between authorship as expressed from a directorial perspective from authorship from the spectator's point of view.

Appropriation, Creativity and Permissions:
The Points of Tension Between Intellectual Property Law, Culture and the Arts
Professor Rina Pantalony
Digital invention and innovative means of communication have altered the way art can be created, communicated and consumed. Artists now use new media as a creative tool, either to reach out to their public or as a medium for their creativity. Cultural institutions use new media as a means of both direct communication about art and as a means of providing the public with immediate access to and interaction with art. By contrast, the legal concepts of property, and in particular, intellectual property reward individual and not necessarily collective processes, thereby creating noticeable tension in contemporary society. Such tensions transcend both creativity and communication and affect both organizations and individuals either claiming ownership and the related economic benefits or in wanting to create anew. Over the past 15 years, these points of tension have been, increasingly, referred to the judiciary that has been preoccupied in trying to reinterpret legal norms to suit the Internet age. This course will explore the points of tension created by intellectual property law in society for the artist in creating and communicating his work, the cultural institution in communicating, interpreting and preserving art and in society’s insatiable need to consume new artistic works.
This course is a graduate seminar course. Undergraduates in third or fourth year may take the course, depending on availability and upon advance permission from faculty. Grades will be based on a final paper due at the end of the course and upon class participation.

Around Magicians of the Earth : Independent Studies Graduate seminar
Professor : Annie Cohen-Solal
Following the Fall seminar, we will concentrate on Magicians of the Earth, the mythical show presented in Paris, during the year 1989, simultaneously at the Centre Pompidou and at the Musée de la Villette. We will analyze its genesis, the theoretical and political context in which such a show has been produced, during President François Mitterrand's second septennat, with Jack Lang as Minister of Culture, and investigate the motivations of commissioner Jean-Hubert Martin.

We then will analyze the many reactions (both negative and positive) of such a show for the non-western world, and scrutinize the next events in the visual arts (Partage d'Exotismes, Lyon, 2000; Dokumenta XI, Kassel, 2002; Africa Remix, Paris, 2005), which explicitly referred to it.

Finally we will try to describe the new ecology of the art world that has been taking shape after Magicians. How to describe the new form of ritual that is being invented? How to define the regional poles that have emerged and that have blurred traditional definitions of national boundaries? How to chart the new geographic routes that are being designed between the continents? How to describe the new (nomadic) actors who are reorganizing this order in the twenty-first century? What about the new information channels that have been forced to emerge? Which standpoint are the US Museums, Fairs, galleries, magazines taking around such a shift? What importance should we give to Havana Biennales and the Cuban experience in a South-South nexus? The seminar will try to chart the new order of the art world, with a set of international experts in their own field. Visitors to the seminar will include Jack Lang (french Minister of Culture 1981-1995), curators Jean-Hubert Martin, Simon Ndjami, Okwui Enwezor, and other personalities such as Susan Vogel (Columbia University), Alain Seban (president of the Centre Pompidou in Paris), museum Directors Thelma Golden (Studio Museum of Harlem), Adam Weinberg (Whitney Museum of American art), artist Alfredo Jaar or else gallerists GianEnzo Sperone and Tony Shafrazi.

Art, Artists, and Social Change
Professor Laurin Raiken

Historical forces are transforming the arts and the role of artists. New innovations are influencing the nature of creativity, producing major changes in the lives and work of artists. This course develops an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the arts and artists in a social context. What are the key factors that link the evolution of the arts from prehistoric and ancient times to the present? Is there continuity between the “ritual dramas” of First Peoples and the efforts to create arts based rituals in the present? How are the arts influenced by social change? How are artists interpreting and challenging the major social forces transforming the planet? In what ways are artists creating alternative visions of the present and future? How do they influence our own daily lives? In exploring these issues, the course seeks to illuminate the contributions of art to an understanding of our age. Readings may include Rainer Maria Rilke’s Letters to a Young Poet, May Sarton’s Journal of a Solitude, John Berger’s Ways of Seeing and The Shape
of a Pocket, Joseph Chaikin’s The Presence of the Actor, Mary Anne Staniszewski’s Believing is Seeing, Toni Morrison’s Playing in the Dark and Wallace Shawn’s The Fever. Students produce performances and projects that interact with course readings and topics. Students develop their own insights, vision and creativity, their own commitment to art and social action through brief writing.

**Art and Catastrophe**  
**Professor Radhika Subramaniam**

The aim of this course is to examine the demands placed on the practices of art – writing and image-making – by catastrophe. The work of art in the aftermath of catastrophe is confronted with several conflicting responses – that catastrophe cannot or should not be represented; that the recovery of the past has a historical and contemporary urgency; that the past is irrecoverable; that only art can heal the wounds of the past; that such healing must take place without directly addressing the politics of the trauma. Art after catastrophe has therefore variously played the role of testimony, memorial, mourning, indictment, advocate and healing; it has been considered both essential and a luxury. Catastrophe itself takes many different forms – genocide, natural disasters, war, state-sponsored killings, torture, but also the catastrophe in which humanity itself is not recognized such as slavery.

The course will work through several key questions: How are artists provoked by the mechanisms of destruction and terror? How does art intervene in the erasures of history, demand recognition and restore voice? What is the effect of trauma on narrative? What remains and must remain unspeakable, ineffable and unknowable? How do memory and forgetting affect the recovery of daily life after catastrophe? These questions are staged in several different geographical contexts, the particularities of which sharpen the focus, even while the artistic texts gesture toward broader concerns.

The course does not presuppose a familiarity with these geographical contexts or with political art or trauma theories, only an engagement with the intersections of aesthetics, psychology and politics. It can be used to serve a number of different purposes: introducing students of psychology, history, anthropology and political science with an interest in media and politics to the fundamental questions of representation that underpin the world around us; encouraging those with an interest in policy and human rights issues to embrace issues that stem from artistic practice rather than seeing art as an instrumental tool for advocacy or documentation; stimulating critical reflection on the centrality of imagination to the activities of recovery and reconciliation.

assignments and their class projects.

**Art and/as Research**  
**Professor Karen Finley**

This class will concentrate on research methods of art making. It has been argued that
creativity has seven stages: orientation, preparation, analysis, ideation, incubation, synthesis, and evaluation. Each of these steps will be explored and researched with complimentary writing assignments and individual or group creative problem solving exercises. These seven steps of creativity will be a platform to structure the class and hopefully come to understand the mystery of inspiration, originality and invention. We will examine other related theories such as trauma and creativity, spontaneity, chance, creativity as a voice for empowerment and the function of freedom and lack of freedom to heighten artistic movement. How are we inspired? Is there a method to our creativity? Can the creative process have a formula? How does research inform the creative process? The class will utilize the archives, galleries and libraries as a research tool and NYU as research University. We will visit the Fayles library, the Tainamont library, NYU Grey Art Gallery as well as visit with scholars and artists to consider the furthering of ideas into a series of stages to a final project and paper.

Art and War: Battle Lines of the Graphic Novel
Professor Pato Hebert

This course explores storytelling about war through the use of the graphic novel. Students will be introduced to both recent and historically significant comics about war. Our goal is to gain a deeper understanding of the interplay between image and text in sequential art, the fundamentals of graphic novel development, and the ability to critically analyze graphic novels that deal with challenging subject matter. What are the ethical and methodological issues that arise when constructing sequential narratives of war? Are there differences between war narratives that are autobiographical, documentary or fictional? Is there something unique about the format of graphic novels that enables artists to tell a different kind of war story than filmmakers, musicians or performers? How do comic books circulate culturally, and how might this expand or limit their ability to inform our understandings of war? We will explore these questions through close readings, robust discussions and careful written analysis of well-known works by Art Spiegelman, Marjane Satrapi and Joe Sacco, as well as graphic novels by Keiji Nakazawa, Mira Kirshner, Jason Lutes, J.P Stassen, Gipi, Emmanuel Guibert and others.

Students must be of Sophomore class standing and above. This course will count toward general education requirements for TSOA students (Humanities).

Art, Design, and Political Ecology
Professor Olga Kopenkina

This course responds to an urgently needed ecological approach as an imaginative and practical method of addressing sustainability of living environment. It starts with the critique of mass consumption and the late 1950s environmental movement, which inspired the “green imperative” – innovations in the design of living spaces, everyday objects, renewable energy, and land use – and moves to the works of visual artists, who
have been confronting the disintegrating global environment with the projects ranging from green sustainability to militant ecological radicalism. Art and design is considered as a creative laboratory, which serves as alternatives to the governments and corporate negligence in addressing environmental issues, and, by certain extent, provides a tool to forge political consciousness in relation to ecology. This interdisciplinary course combines visual arts, politics, economics, sociology, science, history, and will include guest speakers who are practitioners in various aspects of art and ecology.

Art & Law
Professor Sérgio Muñoz Sarmiento

This class will incorporate reflections on the first amendment and the legal restrictions of art and society. It will include discussions of censorship, civil disobedience, intellectual property, public spaces and private property, and what happens when artists find themselves on the other side of the law. We will also consider how law and legal issues get incorporated into artistic production.

Art and the Public Sphere
Professor Bob Holman

Nowhere is the relationship of art to the body politic more critical, dynamic or debated than right here and now in the NYU landscape of Lower Manhattan. This class serves as a precise adjunct to this moment: a cross-disciplinary course exploring intersections between art, community and social change. Students in the arts, political science, government, urban studies, Africana studies, journalism, anthropology, and others are invited to join this investigation into utopia by rolling up our sleeves and diving into the physical and cultural neighborhoods of the Village and Lower East Side at a time of brutal change. Is Art necessary? Is Art a priori political? Can art induce social change? Will be some of the questions that frame the class. Half the classes will be in the field, among them.

Art & Politics: The Art Space Movement in New York, 1960 to Now
Professor Martha Wilson, artist and Founding Director of Franklin Furnace

The Art Space Movement introduced Post-modern, activist works to the mainstream of cultural discourse in this country. Now, “performance art” has gone beyond the art world to become a household term; and the installation – another art form which blossomed and thrived in art spaces – is now a de rigueur mode of exhibition in mainstream galleries as well as high-end retail venues, such as the Prada flagship store in New York City designed by architect Rem Koolhaas. Art spaces are embedded in their social and political environment because avant-garde artists have historically ignored national boundaries as well as aesthetic ones; Cabaret Voltaire, founded by Emmy Hennings and Hugo Ball in Zurich, Switzerland in 1916, was comprised of artists from a half-dozen
European countries who created sound poetry, made outrageous costumes, and employed film. These artists were political activists; Emmy served jail time for forging papers for friends who wanted to avoid the draft. The contemporary art space movement takes this avant-garde legacy as its own, championing visual artists who may incorporate musical, theatrical, literary, dance, film and now technological elements in their work in order to address the pressing issues of our time.

This course will introduce students to the history and current practice of art spaces in New York through site visits; guest lecturers; archival and bibliographic research; reading assignments; interviews; and preparation of a Case Study, a plan for the intellectual content of a documentary project focused on one art space.

**Art and/as Research**  
**Professor Karen Finley**

This class will concentrate on research methods of art making. It has been argued that creativity has seven stages: orientation, preparation, analysis, ideation, incubation, synthesis, and evaluation. Each of these steps will be explored and researched with complimentary writing assignments and individual or group creative problem solving exercises. These seven steps of creativity will be a platform to structure the class and hopefully come to understand the mystery of inspiration, originality and invention. We will examine other related theories such as trauma and creativity, spontaneity, chance, creativity as a voice for empowerment and the function of freedom and lack of freedom to heighten artistic movement. How are we inspired? Is there a method to our creativity? Can the creative process have a formula? How does research inform the creative process? The class will utilize the archives, galleries and libraries as a research tool and NYU as research University. We will visit the Fayles library, the Tainamont library, NYU Grey Art Gallery as well as visit with scholars and artists to consider the furthering of ideas into a series of stages to a final project and paper.

**Beyond Comfort and Crisis: Arts’ Publics**  
**Professor Randy Martin**

If we were to gauge the state of the nation from the elections of 2004, our political landscape would be pelted by a torrent of signs. Just what did the people want? Who was addressed by the process and who was left in the dark? Are we a nation divided by color codes of red and blue? Scratch the surface and what hues emerge? Statistics paint a complicated picture of disparate dispositions arrayed across various demographics. And what of art itself? Does art admit of a more complex vision still? Can it capture the countercurrents and render them sensible?

Just as politicians must generate a mode of address that imagines and ultimately reaches a particular public, so too must artists. How do artists appraise their own sense of what the
public is? By what means do they access a public and render it responsive to their work? What gives artistic endeavor public resonance? What makes people care about certain art forms at certain times?

It is sometimes said that public life is in decline. Did the public have a golden age? Has the ideal of the public as an unsullied domain of common, critical and sober dialogue fallen into disrepute? If comedy or hip hop are bards of a rising generation, what does this tell us about the tone and timbre of authenticity today? What do the likes of Jon Stewart, Eminem, Puff Daddy, Ani DiFranco, Michael Moore, Charlton Heston, Karen Finley, Jawole Zollar, Susan Sarandon, model about the ways in which artists assume a civic voice?

This course will explore the ways in which art can create a critically engaged audience and incorporate the national mood—whether it e as a shared sentiment or as a sea of countercurrents. We hope to stimulate the dialogue that can make sense out of seemingly contrary temperaments of comfort and crisis—the quest for security in troubled times and the urge to trouble complacency and quiescence.

We will look at a series of readings that will help us to make sense out of the national mood, and then place these in dialogue with contemporary art and artistic controversy. Our aim will be to craft an approach that allows us to engage art and politics in such a way that they mutually inform one another.

The Bridge: The Art of Dialogue and Relationship in Transforming Society
Professor Kathy Engel

Perhaps the time and care it takes to listen to a relative stranger, respond, and inevitably transform as a result, would seem to contradict the immediacy of responding to a news event or passing a legislative bill, for example. There are real, persuasive pulls at work in this tension. This course will work from the proposal that the building of relationships and the act of "bridging" are not only valuable, but essential elements of developing strong communities which have the potential to create change.

In recent years there has been a renewed attention to the necessity and value of meaningful dialogue and relationship-building in the process of creating community-based, creative, grounded, and also boundary-breaking, accountable, authentic efforts for social change. This course will explore reasons leading to the renewed recognition of the value of activities built on story or narrative sharing as essential components to community building. We will interrogate the substantive contribution of the process as well as the complications and limitations. What does it mean to emphasize “bridging,” in relation to location and identity? How does intentional relationship building strengthen and make more effective social change efforts, and what is the role of artist within this process? We will consider “bridging” in itself an art, and that making art, through story, dance, music, mural and other forms, lends itself to the process of “bridging,” by opening up avenues for empathy, challenge, exploration. We will also discuss the temporal,
spacial, and production aspects of this work.

**Case of the Visual Arts Scene Towards A Global Observatory of the Visual Arts**

Professor Annie Cohen Solal

The cultural historian Neil Harris formulated the idea that the visual arts world functions as an allegory of social order. The seminar will take this statement as a starting point. It will first give an overview of the different periods of the history of the art world since the mid-nineteenth century, in order to provide a better understanding of the characteristics of this field. The analysis will be based on our model which presents the two categories of actors interacting in the art world: on the one hand, the "manifest actors" (the artists) which produce the art; on the other hand, the "dynamic actors" (the patrons, trustees, museum directors and curators, gallerists, critics, professors), which lay out the conditions of production for the artists.

The course will first consider the period of the French hegemony (1850-1950) and analyze the different elements which constructed Paris as the center of the art world. It will then compare the option offered to the artist by a very different context, that of the United States of America, and consider the years of its preeminence (1950-1999) under the leadership of American gallerists, dealers, and institutions, before considering the contemporary period (1999-2006), with the emergence of non-western countries. Among them, the most characteristic might be the Cuban art scene, which produced wonderful generations of artists for the last three decades. After our "Summer Tisch in Cuba seminar" (which will take place in July 2008) the Cuban cultural policy model, will be largely described, analyzed and debated.

How to describe the new actors, the new configurations of actors who are reorganizing the global ecology of the art world in the twenty-first century? By considering those challenging questions, which are the center of all cultural debates today and will remain so in the years to come, the Observatory of the Visual Arts will be the first institution of its kind in the world.

**Censored Bodies: Gender, Race, Sexuality, and the Politics of Culture**

Professor Ella Shohat

This interdisciplinary seminar will interrogate “the body” as a site of contested representations, discourses and ideologies, studying its implications for the politics of culture over the past century. Some of the questions we wish to pose are: what have been the discursive parameters within which the body has been represented? What arguments have been used to legitimate and enforce these representations? How have these representations changed since the 19th century to the present? Our approach to the issue of censorship will cover some of the formal codes established by diverse institutions (such as Hollywood’s Production Codes) as well as legal and constitutional practices and precedents raised by censorship. Our discussion will highlight the ways hegemonic
taboos shape and define what is permitted and what is prohibited. We will also be concerned with the ways such taboos are naturalized and internalized, thus, circulating in the world as a norm by which everything else is measured. The seminar will challenge the discourse of normality, using examples from marginalized representations of the body in alternative cultural practices. Our examples will be drawn from diverse resources that will include: visual art, film/video/media, performances, popular music, and fashion culture. Among the issues to be raised: sex tourism, the consumption of stars, the production of the “exotic”, porn’s racialized body, cyber-censorship, subversive appropriation. In our study, “the body” will be viewed as situated at the intersection of race and sexuality, bringing in feminist, queer, multicultural and postcolonial perspectives.

**Special Topics: Circulatory Systems**  
**Professor Pato Hebert**

The last decade has seen a proliferation of digital production and dissemination tools. This course will explore some of the ways that artists are responding to these changes. How are social movements and creative subcultures forming virtual communities? What do these communities enable, and whom might they exclude? The ubiquity of the screen in concert with more accessible production platforms and advanced communications structures mean that artists are able to make and distribute work in ways that were previously considered utopian. But how might we strengthen our practices through a strategic use of technology that does not confuse gadgets and gear for growth and goals? How might artists encourage our accelerating culture to shift from a pervasive posture of iConsume to a participatory purpose of weCreate? These are some of the questions students will address through critical readings, focused writing, exposure to image-making, design, publishing and fundraising strategies. We’ll pilot test your ideas through the creation and presentation of artworks created both individually and as a class.

**Community Collaborations: New York City Teens Speak Out**  
**Professor Lorie Novak**

Community Collaborations: New York City Teens Speak Out is a Photography & Imaging and Art and Public Policy Course where the NYU students collaborate with teens in Lower Manhattan to create photo stories about their lives. Working in teams of two, the NYU students will co-facilitate workshops of small groups of teens from the Lower East Side Girls Club and Norman Thomas High School. The teens will be given digital cameras to photograph their families, friends, and communities to create photographic essays exploring their day-to-day lives, dreams, concerns, and social-political challenges. (The cameras will be provided.) Working with the NYU students in Photography and Imaging’s digital labs, they will develop their stories and the necessary skills (photographic, writing, and speaking) to tell their stories. During the course time for NYU students, focus will be on workshop development, discussion of challenges, and supervision. There will also be guest speakers and visits to other community-based art
programs. The course will produce a website where the final projects will be published at the end of the semester. With a grant of the NYU Office of Community Service, funding has been provided to hire a web designer and assistant who offers Photoshop and web tutorials as needed. As a result, no photo/digital skills are necessary. Although the final outcome of the course will be a website, the workshops can include drama, writing, movement exercises, etc. as determined by the workshop co-facilitators. When you are planning your schedule, make sure you have two afternoons free a week; Saturdays are also a possibility.

Conceptual Studio  
Professor Karen Finley

This class is to consider artists, historical recording and the methods of art making that work outside of traditional norms; being time based, breaking expectations of the medium, the audience and or the placement and transaction in spectatorship. Other cultural mainstays such as interruptions, scrap books, outtakes, overheard conversation, the scandal, the accident will also be material for study. While examining and researching artifacts, footage, imagery, found objects that exist and resonate outside of the proposed point of focus we will look at the underlying meanings and the interruptions into our expectation of perception. After looking and studying examples students will create and design their own projects that can be performance, installation, new media or text based. Accompanying paper is also required.

Content and Meaning: Discovering and Participating in Artistic Purpose  
Professor Karen Finley

What should my art be about? How can I make relevant art in today’s world? How can I make a personal statement that is not self-referential? Can my art inspire change in society?

We will examine the artistic processes and look at the artistic impulse to create. We will study artists who have contributed to society with cutting edge content, who have established new directions in discourse. Art and its relationship to identity, gender, race, class, beauty, and society will be observed.

This class will study artists from the Downtown Show at the Grey Art Gallery.

Covering the World: Cultural Politics and the Imperial Imaginary  
Professor Ella Shohat

Whether in the representations of Columbus’s “discovery,” the US “Conquest of the West,” the “expansion” in Africa, or in those of the Vietnam, the Gulf and the Iraq wars, the spectator has often experienced the shocking imagery of catastrophes as embedded in
the seducing voyeurism of the spectacle. This interdisciplinary course will explore the role of visual culture in shaping our outlook of a clashing world, of race and gender in the context of the “West and the rest.” Looking at diverse visual media—illustration, exhibition, photography, cinema, television and digital technologies— we will suggest that imperial culture casts a long shadow over contemporary representations of “other” peoples and “alien” geographies. Deconstructing such simplistic ideas as “seeing is believing” and “images do not lie,” our analysis will also move beyond any facile dichotomies of “savagery-versus-civilization,” “us-versus-them” and “here-versus-there.” Moving back-and-forth between present-day and past colonial discourses, we will address the interconnectedness of aesthetics and ideology, as in the case of the Western movie genre that deploys wide-screen perspective and soaring crane shots to express a vision of wide-open possibility, of inevitable progress and manifest destiny. Some of the issues and questions to be addressed include the following: Has the myth of the frontier given a fantastical self-aggrandizing shape for the “American” national self-image? How do contemporary photojournalism, cinema and television suture the spectator into an omniscient global perspective that privileges a Western master-subject? In what ways have the imperial adventure novel and the Hollywood war movie subliminally structured contemporary media coverage of “civilizational conflict”? Has colonial photographic fascination with the “exotic” left its imprint on contemporary glossy and colorful imagery, such as that of the National Geographic? How have scientific discourses of modernity have led early ethnographic films into a quasi-sadistic gaze at “primitive” and “savage” people? What was the role played by popular sideshows and fairs in legitimizing the display of real human beings—largely Indigenous Americans, Africans and Asians—in exhibitions to be consumed as entertainments, while also turning the world into a theme park with Epcot center as a distant descendent? Reading and the study of visual materials will form an important part of the course.

Creating Contemporary Culture
Professor Karen Finley

This class will examine the relationship of creative expressions to society. Meaning we will look at the political and social struggles that influence creative content. Although this class is a humanity course, it is a theory class to inspire the student artist to be able to facilitate their talent and translate it into a meaningful dialogue with contemporary art. We will look at collective societal drive and impetus.

This class values the artist as historical recorder, translator of societal uprisings and transgressions. The class will frame the artist and her/his importance within the political fabric of soul, equality, and justice.

Creative Response: Performance Matters, Between Imagination and Experience
Professor Karen Finley
Performance Matters will consider what influences private and public performance, to consider what is performing, what we perform and how we perform. This class will look deeper into varying aspects of staging such as everyday experience, lists, menus, rituals, timing, gathering and collecting. Performing and communicating the body: gender, race and identification. Awareness of work in progress, process, such as text, script, online and improvisation will be utilized. The visual aspect of performing: such as accessories, design and costume. Listening, finding voice and giving and taking commands, and deviation from dominant norms of entertainment and product. Hopefully with deeper understanding, we will seek to challenge and stimulate our own creative content to produce original, thought provoking performance. Students will present their own work either individually or in groups, write about the theory and content of their production and have assigned readings to supplement their areas of concentration.

Critical Topographies  
Professor Pato Hebert

This course explores how visual artists have worked with the city as the location and catalyst for their work. To inform our creative production and play, we will draw from theories of place, space and the urban as developed by critical geographers and city planners. We will also conduct close readings of contemporary art historians' examinations into key artistic interventions in cityscapes over the last thirty years. How have artists understood the city itself as material, content, creative convergence? While we will look at artistic projects from various global urban contexts, New York City will serve as a primary ongoing site for reference, investigation and engagement. New York will be explored through the work of essayists and fiction writers who have taken the city as subject. We will also direct and make regular excursions into the surrounding urbanscape to shape our creative practices. Students will engage in weekly readings and discussions, complete writing assignments to hone conceptual skills, and create and evaluate their own original artworks both individually and in groups.

Cultural Equity and the Community Arts Imperative  
Professor Marta Vega

This course provides the opportunity for students to historically contextualize the growth of the community cultural arts movement grounded in the social and cultural equity activists movements that grew out of the Civil Rights Movement. The continuing mission and work of multidisciplinary community based cultural arts organizations challenge cultural and social inequities framing their creative work and organizational practices to assure equitable inclusion of the varying aesthetic criteria and expressions that reflect the multiethnic communities that are integral to the nations cultural identity.

The first section of the course will take place in advocacy cultural arts community based organizations in the city. Community arts leaders in the field in collaboration with the
class instructor will teach the course. This team teaching approach will afford students direct exposure and learning experiences with practitioners in the field within the communities they serve. In the second section of the course students will develop a project in collaboration with staff of one of the participating institutions. Students will have direct immersion within the community and the community organization understanding the operational and programmatic realities of the field as well as direct engagement in advocacy creative work. Students will be exposed to teaching strategies for working within communities that include readings, open discussions, as well as working on multidisciplinary collaborations in the field.

Cultural Governance  
Professor Michael J. Shapiro

The Culture Industries  
Professor Mark Crispin Miller

The Culture Industries will offer a historical overview of the major media businesses in the United States—film, TV, radio, newspapers, music, magazines, book publishing. The aim will be to show how each of those major industries has been affected by their respective economic structures. Specifically, we will examine how in each case the opportunities for and the pressures of “the business” have shaped both the content and atmosphere within the industry.

This course is for those who intend to seek employment in the media industry. Students are required to do extensive background reading, and we will hear from various professionals with long experience in the industries under consideration.

Cultural Institutions, Communities And The Politics Of Change  
Dean Mary Schmidt Campbell

The course will examine the relationship between the institutional prerogatives of cultural organizations and the urban communities in which they reside. Particular attention will be given to those communities which have undergone cataclysmic change. The course will make use of a case study approach to public policy decision making. Each case will present a specific cultural institution within the five boroughs of New York City, analyze its community and investigate the public policy options available to the institution and the community as the institution sets forth its cultural development plans and the community seeks to re-invent itself. Conflicts between communities and institutions, the imposition of the will of public policy makers, the influence of politics on decision making, will be examined. The course will weigh the impact of the decision making on the long term health of the Cultural institution, urban community and individual artists. The course requires students to consider a variety of perspectives from disparate actors with diverse interests and diverse approaches. Students will be asked to develop their
own case studies and to present them at the end of the semester. The premise of the course is that arts institutions are not only important in their own right as specialized venues for particular artists and scholars, but that they are also players in the reinvention and reinvestment of urban life. How these organizations engage and transform their environment becomes a bellwether for gauging the vitality of the city.

Dean Mary Schmidt Campbell will draw from her own experience as a leader of a range of institutions including the Studio Museum in Harlem, NYC Dept of Cultural Affairs, TSOA, and now chair of the New York State Council on the Arts. In addition, a series of guest lecturers including leaders of major NYC cultural institutions and scholars specializing in urban culture will be part of the course. Dean Campbell will be co-teaching this course with Tom Finkelpearl, Executive Director of the Queens Museum of Art and the author of “Dialogues in Public Art.”

**Special Topics: Derivative Logistics**  
**Professor Randy Martin**

This course examines derivatives not simply as a financial instrument, but as a broader social logic that allows us to think differently about economics, politics and the arts. Derivatives, the financial risk management tools that slice up attributes of assets and bundle them together have also exacerbated the volatility that led to the ruin of our economy as we have known it. But our political realm is also said to be in crisis, with the public realm now derivative of private values. So too, a cultural crisis issues from a sense that autonomy, originality, and authenticity are replaced with derivative forms of art that is sampled and self-disseminated. Readings will range from political economy and political theory, postcolonial and dance studies, and popular accounts of recent economic, political and cultural crises.

We will examine the implications of the financial bailout from 2008; the dynamics of nonprofit organizations and philanthro-capitalism; and the movement practices such as hip hop, boarding, and postmodern dance that emerged from the urban ruins of the last financial debacle in the 1970s. These examples will allow us to reflect on the ways in which derivative logics undo existing social and epistemological boundaries and yield a situation of the present that is after economy, polity and culture—which have been the pillars of our societal architecture. We will consider the relation between derivatives and decolonization as well as the relation between expert knowledge and an unabsorbable excess of critical capacities, or nonknowledge, and the implications of these analyses for how we assess the values of current political mobilizations by applying the logic of the derivative.

**The End of Modernity/The End Of Utopia: Art after the fall of political utopias of the XX c.**  
**Professor Olga Kopenkina**
How do we look at the utopian past today? Are the revolutionary ideals (of 1917 and 1968) and utopian radicalism of the 20th century being resurrected by contemporary artists engaged in the struggle against global capital? In post-utopian and post-Communist era, do artists still have an important role imagining a future of social justice and equality? This class will address these questions while bringing to the fore the consequences of the defeat of the 20th century's political utopia – as a part of the project of modernity – in visual arts and cinema. It intends to discuss how the nature of political art has changed in the 2000s, which is also defined as a period after Communism. The main objectives of this course are to familiarize students with the latest tendencies in political art, and related critical theory, as well as to examine the political position of contemporary art with respect to its past history.

Female Cultural Rebels in Modern Times
Professor Karen Finley

the lives and contributions of women who have challenged the status quo with their unique self-expression. These women are all examples of a cultural Rorshak test where the culture projects the fear of losing power onto the profile of the individuals. The lives and talents become mutually exclusive of “A Realized Self” that becomes legend, a phenomenon, an archetype that society embraces on a pedestal with accompanying ridicule. We will use these women’s lives and the times they lived in as a departure point to understand the climate of fear that coupled their grip of national attention and neglect. Via lecture, assigned readings, study of their art and trouble making we will learn our heroine’s history and the mark she made on a political world.

Graduate Seminar in Cultural Politics
Professor Ella Shohat

This seminar aims to give students both a conceptual and practical grounding in the range of issues and approaches by which cultural politics can be understood. It will be framed by the following considerations: What are the institutional, discursive, and ideological contexts that shape the objects, images, sounds or texts we call “art?” What are the links between cultural spaces—the movie theater, the museum, the fashion runway, the public street, the media—and the larger realm of politics? And how do these relationships impact, implicitly or explicitly, the ways we create, curate, or study the arts? How do consumers play an active role in the reception of cultural products? What is the relation between formally promulgated cultural policy and the tacit knowledge that artists call upon to get their work into the world? What dimensions of the broader cultural terrain are made legible through artistic practice? What are the means through which art intervenes in the political arena? “Art” will be studied as a site of contested representations and vision, embedded in power formations—themselves shaped by specific historical moments and geographic locations. Given contemporary global technologies, cultural practices will also be studied within the transnational “travel” of ideas and people. Such germane issues as the legal and constitutional dimensions of censorship, the social formation of taste the consumption of stars, the bio-politics of the body, transnational copyright laws will all pass through an intersectional analyses of gender, race, class,
sexuality, ethnicity, religion and nation.

Green World  
Professor Kathy Engel

This course brings together important voices in the arts and design worlds who advocate sustainability practices in their work. How do artists respond to the global “environmental crisis” caused by the rapid growth of economic activity, human population, the depletion of natural resources, damage to ecosystems, and loss of biodiversity? Art and design are powerful tools, and when applied to issues of sustainable development (economic, social, and environmental), they can contribute meaningful long-term solutions that can enhance quality of life. Students will explore sustainable art and design efforts in the context of science, health, consumerism, and social and environmental justice. The class will also explore how artists, designers, and architects employ developments in science, genetics, and technology to address public policy advocacy of sustainability. The goal of this course is to bridge links between research, artists, design practice, and societal relevance. Case studies of art and design work, as well as artistic and public policy issues, are central to the theme of this class. Additionally, guest speakers will showcase methods and materials for the design and creation of environmentally responsible products and places.

Imagination and Social Change: The Art of Organization Building  
Professor Kathy Engel

We often talk about how artists interact with social movements. In this course we will examine how organizations are born, how they grow, and survive, (or don’t), and the art and imagination involved in creating them. We will discuss the relationship between time, place, constituency, and questions about how work is defined and carried out, the roles of language, image, narrative, documentation, representation. We will explore the difference between an organization, a coalition, a campaign, a movement, and a project, and ask ourselves what we can learn about structure, purpose, character, location, agility, culture, to name a few of the questions. We will read accounts by artists engaged with organization and movement, including choreographer Liz Lerman’s Hiking the Horizontal, a book about the musical group “Sweet Honey in the Rock,” among others. Each student will research an organization or project, to share with the group, and we will meet with organizational leaders to learn firsthand of their journeys.

Interventionist Art: Strategy and Tactics  
Professor Todd Ayoung

The Frankfurt school philosopher and sociologist Herbert Marcuse’s brief, but relevant remarks from a 1969 essay about form, and it's relation to politics titled,"Art as a form of reality", will be our framework for this course.
This text, although symptomatic of its time, is also revealing given our post 9/11 wartime situation. Marcuse tracks the struggle many artists had then, with the traditional notions of form, and its disability with the changing realities of the social, specifically around the global upheavals of the 1960's and 70's. He weights the possibility of a socially engaged art in a period of "the end of art", without the historical persistence of traditional aesthetics. Along with unpacking Marcuse's essay in detail, this course will also mine other readings, images, performances, videos, and exhibitions to understand the many paths avant-garde art movements have taken in the 20th century, specifically during the 1960's till now. How do these artist, or artists collectives reconcile historical aesthetics, with the "art into life" drive that has defined art since Constructivists to Interventionists? How did notions of aesthetics change in order to engage a politics of Revolution - at the beginning of the 20th Century; Confrontation - during the 1960's, 70's, 80's, and 90's, and currently notions of Interventionism - in our post 9/11 condition? How do approaches to aesthetics and politics vary, say, for sexually, racially, culturally, and ethnically different socially "marginal" groups? How do notions of the private, and public sphere relate to how artists understand art and politics, in an age of "terrorism", and government surveillance? How do our current notions of art and politics engage the "alienated nomad" who drifts through a multitude of frameworks? Students will research a wide range of tactics in groups from X-PRZ, Critical Art Ensemble, Interim Sites, Yes Men, PAD/D, Group Material, Guerrilla Girls, RepoHistory, Godzilla, Retort, and a diverse group of artists working with the many faces of political action, from Adrian Piper, Hans Haacke, Joseph Beuys, Martha Rosler, Conrad Atkinson, Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kuger, David Hammonds, Alfredo Jaar, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, William Pope, Johan Grimonprez, Krzysztof Wodiczko, Mel Chin, Santiago Sierra, Thomas Hirshhorn, DJ Spooky, and Mierle Ukeles. Students for the first half of the term are required to research, critique, and formulate an art and politics ontology of their own, based either on "revolution", "confrontation", "Intervention", or a cut 'n' mix. For the second half of the term students will develop a model(s) articulating this way of being in the world, by giving possibility (in the form of a performance, speech, website, music, video, action, street stencil, fashion, bumper stickers, manifesto, rally, etc) to this reality.

Issues in Arts Politics
Professor Randy Martin

This seminar aims to give students both a conceptual and practical grounding in the range of issues and approaches by which arts politics can be understood. We will think about the complexities that lie between the politics that make art and the politics that art makes—which is to say the array of forces that give rise to specific artistic practices and the agency and efficacy of artistic work.

The course will be framed by the following considerations: What are the institutional, discursive, and ideological contexts that shape the objects, images, sounds or texts we call "art?” What are the links between cultural spaces— the museum, the movie-theater, the gallery, the music/dance hall, the bookstore, the fashion runway, the public street, television, cyber space—and the larger realm of politics? And how do these relationships
impact, implicitly or explicitly, the ways we create, curate, or study the arts? How do consumers play an active role in the reception of artistic products and practices? What is the relation between formally promulgated cultural policy and the tacit knowledge that artists call upon to get their work into the world? What dimensions of the broader cultural terrain are made legible through artistic practice? What are the means through which art intervenes in the political arena? “Art” will be studied as a site of contested representations and visions, embedded in power formations—themselves shaped by specific historical moments and geographical locations. Given contemporary global technologies, cultural practices will also be studied within the transnational “travel” of ideas and people. Such germane issues as the legal and constitutional dimensions of censorship, the social formation of taste, the consumption of stars, the bio-politics of the body, transnational copyrights law—will all pass through an intersectional analyses of gender, race, class, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, and nation, incorporating the insights of such areas of inquiry as multiculturalism, feminism, postcolonialism, and queer studies. Each session is organized around the exploration of a key term, with readings that develop conceptual and practical issues. Art examples will be shown in class.

Is This What Democracy Looks Like: Art, Elections & Beyond
Professor Caron Atlas

The goal of this course is to broaden our perspective and deepen our understanding of the intersection between art, culture, democracy, and community change. Our discussions will be grounded in the principles and values of how participatory democracy connects to systemic change, and how artists and creative organizers can play an integral role in this process. Our context will be the political, social, and economic transformations that will be unfolding this spring.

The class will emphasize dialogue, inquiry, and on-the-ground experience. The instructor will bring her networks and experiences of linking art and activism through the Arts & Democracy Project, Animating Democracy, Place + Displace, and the Pratt Center for Community Development. Students will bring their volunteer experiences and projects; and guest artists, organizers, and policymakers will stimulate critical thinking and reflection through their range of practice.

We will begin by developing a series of questions to pose to ourselves and our guests about: the intentions and approaches of our work, our concepts and strategies for change, the systems that support and sustain the work, the methodologies and processes we engage, and the impact of the work. We will consider the relationship between creativity and strategy and build our capacity to work across disciplines and sectors.

Ideally students will come from all disciplines in the arts, with students from liberal arts and sciences, education, community organizing, and public service also encouraged to enroll.
Language as Action
Professor Kathy Engel

This is a close reading and craft writing class that will look at the poetry, essays, and narratives of writers who traverse forms, their work inextricably related to community and social engagement. We will look at the question of what constitutes “action” or “activism” and how writing and language can be those transformative engagements, deconstructing cliché’s that suggest the contrary. At the same time we will discuss the relationship of writing to other forms of action and the complex ways conditions mandate form. We will explore the work from the perspectives of craft, impact, identity, “scripting,” community, the relationship of personal to political, memory, and boundary breaking, to begin with. We will examine the texts to understand the connection to community and activism, looking at the complexities and conflicts that arise in the context of making art and working to make an impact on public life. We will interrogate questions of quality and aesthetics, popular culture, compromise, truth, authenticity, voice, beauty, responsibility, fact, and translation as a world view in the 21st Century.

While studying the work of June Jordan, Martin Espada, Mahmoud Darwish, Alexis De Veaux, Eduardo Galeano, D.A. Powell, Gloria Anzaldua, Joy Harjo, Patricia Smith, Muriel Rukeyser, Adrienne Rich, Cornelius Eady, Valzhyna Mort, Suheir Hammad, and Tina Chang, the students will concurrently delve deeply into their own writing processes.

We will explore questions related to the work of the scribe, the teller or artist, to a given community, event, and history itself, the ethical issues involved in “truth” and “story,” how writers and social narrators deal with plural and counter narratives and some of the problems inherent, and the many traditions within telling. We will examine questions of voice, power, silence, the question of “persona” writing, inhabiting another’s experience.

Making Art/Impacting Policy: Artists in/and Dialogue
Professor Mariam Ghani

This seminar will present critical frameworks for and in-depth case studies of art that creates, stages, facilitates and/or provokes public dialogue on public policy. Readings will alternate between the historical, theoretical and practical, with a focus on texts by and interviews with artists and their collaborators. Much of the semester will be spent studying several key projects from initial context through inception, collaborations, implementation, and community and critical responses. Case studies will include Suzanne Lacy’s Oakland projects in the context of the California “war on youth” of the 1990s; Jeremy Deller’s Battle of Orgreave, Thatcher labor politics, and the culture of historical re-enactment; Rick Lowe’s Project Row Houses and the experiences of the women in its Young Mothers Residential Program; and Group Material’s year-long Democracy project as a model for recent exhibitions like Creative Time’s Democracy in America: The National Campaign. Each student will be expected to lead one discussion session and produce and present in class an 8-12 page final paper, which may be
substituted by a creative project of equal commitment. Through a collaboration with the New Museum, students in the course will also have the opportunity to observe firsthand, and/or participate in, the research for and production of a new Jeremy Deller project that will launch in mid-February.

The Media of Displacement: Postcolonial Culture
Professor Ella Shohat

“We are here because you were there” has become a common slogan for postcolonial diasporas in the metropolitan “centers” of the West. With the growing numbers of immigrants and refugees from the Middle East/North Africa in cities such as London, Paris, Berlin, New York, Los Angeles, Montreal, and Sao Paulo, the construction of “us” versus “them” can no longer correspond to one geography, simplistically imagined as “over there.” This seminar will study questions of displacement as represented, mediated and narrated in diverse cultural realms, especially cinema, media, visual culture and writing. How such texts have confronted exclusionary and essentialist discourses with a rich cultural production that foregrounds a complex understanding of such issues as “home,” “homeland,” “exile,” “hybridity” and “minorities.” We will look at the past few decades of artistic work within the larger context of post-independence and globalization politics. We will mainly examine the ways films/videos, novels, memoirs, and visual work have represented dislocations that have come in the wake of colonial partitions, and of regional, ethnic and religious conflicts; as well as into the ways they challenge traditional genres about immigration, transcending the neat divisions among the social documentary, the ethnographic media, the experimental autobiography, and the fictional narrative. We will also examine these texts in relation to contemporary cyber diasporic practices, problematizing especially such issues as “nostalgia” and “return” in the context of new communication technologies.

Memoir and Cultural Memory: Representing Postcolonial Displacements
Professor Ella Shohat

With the growing numbers of immigrants/refugees in cities such as London, Paris, Berlin, Barcelona, New York, Los Angeles, Montreal, belonging no longer corresponds to one geography, simplistically imagined as “over there.” This seminar will study questions of displacement as represented, mediated and narrated in a wide variety of texts. It will focus especially on memoirs, whether in written or audiovisual form, which confront exclusionary and essentialist discourses with a rich cultural production that foregrounds a complex understanding of such issues as “home,” “homeland,” “exile,” “hybridity” and “minorities.” How are identity and history performed in these colonial, post-colonial and diasporic contexts? What is the status and significance of the oral, the visual and the performed within the context of memory? We will examine different narrative forms of memory-making, analyzing how post/colonial authors and media-makers perform “home,” “homeland,” “diaspora,” and “exile.” How does memory become a filter for constructing contemporary discourses of belonging, especially in the context of post-
independence and transnational dislocations? We will also address questions of genre, and the socio-political ramifications of certain modes of writing and performances of memory that create new hybrid genres such as the poetic documentary and experimental autobiography. We will analyze works where a fractured temporality is reassembled to form a usable past where the body serves as an icon of migratory meanings. We will also examine contemporary cyber diasporic practices, problematizing such issues as “nostalgia” and “return” in the context of new communication technologies.

Narrating Iraq
Professor Ella Shohat and Professor Sinan Antoon

Iraqi culture is in a unique state: its cultural production has gradually shifted from Iraq itself to a vast diaspora scattered across the globe, in the Middle-East, Europe, Australia and the Americas. A disproportionate number of Iraqis, about five million—i.e. one sixth of the entire population—now live outside of Iraq’s borders, often in a stateless limbo. Out-of-place Iraqi intellectuals and artists have been attempting to represent their country’s ongoing devastation and fragmentation, amidst a precarious existence and rapidly shifting definitions of belonging. If Iraq is foundationally a composite of multiple ethnicities, religions, and dialects, cross-border dispersions have introduced new hyphenated identities and cultural syncretisms. This course seeks to offer a transnational framework to examine Iraqi culture(s) as embedded in a complex multi-directional itinerary, between “nation” and its diasporic geographies.

Out of the Box, Out of the Frame: A Conceptual Studio
Professor Karen Finley

This class is to consider artists, historical recording and the methods of art making that work outside of traditional norms; being time based, breaking expectations of the medium, the audience and or the placement and transaction in spectatorship. Other cultural mainstays such as interruptions, scrap books, outtakes, overheard conversation, the scandal, the accident will also be material for study. While examining and researching artifacts, footage, imagery, found objects that exist and resonate outside of the proposed point of focus we will look at the underlying meanings and the interruptions into our expectation of perception. After looking and studying examples students will create and design their own projects that can be performance, installation, new media or text based.

Parodic Correctness – An All School Seminar Course
Professor Andrea Thome

How do you engage in “civic dialogue” when all the channels for communication seem inaccessible, unproductive or just plain uninspiring? How do you get your message heard in a world dominated by mass-market millionaires and corporate media monopolies? How do you change society when you feel trapped on its margins? From the Roman
poets to Dave Chappelle, satire, parody, caricature and other forms that combine humor and criticism have been an important part of public discourse, articulating social and political dissatisfaction and inspiring resistance to the status quo. Satire allows you to make the powerful ridiculous – and when you’ve got them laughing, you can sneak inside their stronghold and destabilize the foundations. In the hands of those who are dispossessed, marginalized, or otherwise kept out of the dominant systems of power, satire can be a tool for empowerment and expression that allows them to infiltrate the forms and languages of power in order to communicate their own message. Yet satire is not only a weapon of resistance and a channel to express criticism; creating satire also requires the satirist to engage in civic dialogue. In order to appropriate a form, or pointedly criticize and mock a social behavior (or a public figure), you have to observe it carefully and understand how it works, what strategies it uses.

This class uses two interwoven approaches to study satire and civic engagement: 1) the analysis and examination of the social/moral/political goals, mechanisms and effectiveness of satirical works, and 2) the practice of using satire’s techniques of “creative criticism” to respond to current issues. In the analytical thread of the class, we will look closely at works of satire, parody and caricature and examine how they integrate humor, social criticism, and civic action. We’ll investigate how laughter gets people to let their guard down and analyze how satirists take advantage of this opening in order to challenge closed minds, provoke discussion where there was none, and plant the seeds of social change. The class will survey a wide range of satirical forms, focusing particularly on parody but also including caricature, political cartoons, radical clowning and ridiculous spectacles. We will look at case studies of satirical performances, literature, visual arts, media and internet projects created by artists and activists including Reverend Billy, the Yes Men, the Guerrilla Girls, Jesusa Rodriguez, Culture Clash, Jon Stewart and my own parody collective, Fulana, as well as work by non-contemporary artists as diverse as Lenny Bruce, Jonathan Swift and Richard Pryor.

In the second thread of this class, students will also explore satire practically and creatively: by making satire of their own. By coming to understand the uses, goals and techniques of satire (and its related forms), students can unlock a toolbox of strategies, tactics, and aesthetic maneuvers that can empower them to respond to problems in their own world.

**Performance of Post Colonial Memory**
**Professor Ella Shohat and Professor Deborah Kapchan**

How is identity and history performed in colonial and post-colonial contexts? What is the status and significance of the oral, the visual and the performed within the context of written memory? In this seminar we will examine different narrative forms of memory-making, analyzing how post/colonial authors perform “home,” “homeland,” “diaspora,” “exile,” and “nostalgia.” We will explore the ways in which memory becomes a filter for constructing contemporary discourses of belonging, especially in the context of post-independence and transnational dislocations. We will also address questions of genre, and
the socio-political ramifications of certain modes of writing and performances of memory that challenge neat divisions between genres, creating new hybrid forms such as the poetic documentary, the experimental autobiography and performed fiction. Focusing particularly on the genre of memoir, we will examine how temporality is fractured and reformed, how a usable past is constructed and how the gendered and sexed body serves as an icon of migratory meaning.

**Politics of Passion**  
**Professor Jenny Romaine**

In this class we will develop techniques and methods for “seeing” New York City and vibrantly making work here. Our inquiry will weave together several kinds of thought about the city from the disciplines of history, anthropology, aesthetics and politics. We will study the ideas of key thinkers, artists, and activists, as well as write, screen (videos and images), do in-class exercises, and observe seemingly everyday events to develop a fine grained analysis of the ‘mise-en-scène’ of New York. The goal of the course is for each student to discover models for bringing work of great artistic excellence to a vast array of audiences; from neighborhoods to jails to high and low art venues.

During the course we will explore the archives of the city. We will observe streets and open spaces, study concentrations of power, big hair, and oppositional practices. We will look closely at everyday life, the way people put their unique imprints on the built environment to express their values (graffiti, sidewalk alters, casitas, customized cars, vendors, street art, Christmas lights), and the festivalizing of the city (from Brooklyn Hasidim to Holi in Richmond Hill). We will think about home and homelessness, about culture jamming, noise, dancing, and the dead. We will also consider technology in everyday life.

**Political Theatre: Making Art, Impacting Policy**  
**Professor Jan Cohen-Cruz**

Course focus is aesthetic and activist approaches that position art to impact public policy; that is, how art helps bring about sustainable change. The course has three components:


Research skills: practical experience with techniques used to develop policy components of art projects including surveys, interviews, story circles, and community inventories. Methods to impact policy emanating from other arenas such as community organizing, interactions with media, and strategies to ally oneself with an ongoing organizational effort vis-à-vis the policy issue in question. The course prepares students to incorporate these techniques into concrete art projects.
**Political Theatrical Spectacle in New York City**  
**Professor Jennifer Miller**

In this class we look at the ongoing historical relationship between “political” theater and New York City. Of this mutually shaping relationship, we ask: How does public policy shape public space in the city, and how has (and how might) theater shape public policy? What exactly is political theater? What kinds of theater are most affected by public policy? What kinds of theater do you enjoy, and why, and what role does pleasure play in politics and political theater? The theaters and theater histories we will look at include: ACT-UP’s various street actions, Reverend Billy, Crystal Fields’ street theater, Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, Billionaires for Bush/Glamericans, Bread and Puppet Theater, Traveling Puerto Rican theater, Jennifer Monson’s urban migrations, Great Small Works, Martha Bowers, Drag queens at Escuelitas, Drag King shows at clubs, and street performers/buskers.

We will also visit the sites of some of this theater making; a park in the South Bronx, the congested corners of Wall Street, and small stages of a dying breed of downtown club performance art spaces. We will examine their relation to their local community, the community of New York, and the government of New York. We will look at the position of the artists as they come to these spaces. Are they seen as outsiders or insiders? Must theater in public spaces be popular theater to be effectively understood? To whom is more conceptual work speaking? How do these languages and the spaces from which they are uttered effect the life of the city and conversely, how does the city shape the work?

**Public Culture and American Values**  
**Professor Stephen Nunns**

This course will explore the relationship between politics and the arts in the United States, while simultaneously investigating the love/hate relationship that Americans have with the arts and the various cultural environments that influence that relationship. Using both critical analysis and primary sources, we will delve into questions of individualism in American life; whether free speech is a right or a privilege; why the “culture wars” took place exactly when they did; what is the link between American culture and the arts; and whether uncontroversial public funding of the arts in a truly attainable goal in a popular democracy.

It is highly unlikely that we will be able to solve the social, cultural, and political problems that lie at the heart of these issues. This course is not designed to provide “answers”—it is intended to make you think critically about the issues involved.

**Representing the Middle East: Issues in the Politics of Culture**  
**Professor Ella Shohat**
This interdisciplinary seminar will explore the various dimensions of the cultural politics of representation with regards to the Middle East/ North Africa. Drawing on various texts from diverse disciplines (including visual culture, literary theory, performance studies, ethnography, and film/media studies) we will examine issues of representation in their various ramifications, all within a postcolonial perspective. We will begin with travel narratives to the region, orienetalist paintings, photography and cinema, and continue with the "takingback" by contemporary writers, artists, and media makers, dissecting such images as harems, veils, etc. The seminar will be organized around key concepts and questions having to do with Orientalism, the imperial imaginary, contested histories, imagined geographies, gender and national allegory, diasporic identity and postcoloniality.

Seminar in Arts Activism  
Professor Karen Finley

This seminar will focus on developing our work, theory, and art into a realized production. Each student will start with presenting his or her ideas and goals of creating a public project. This may take the form of public art, exhibition, performance, narrative but bringing it to a goal of actualizing the work out of the school student world. But the class is more than just bringing the art into the public light. We will scrutinize and examine intent and where to bring a production. Media, reviews, current events, intent, audience, controversy, economics, politics and other issues and challenges that is vital to a successful professional life. These connections and awareness of the outside world out of school will be a reality check of all the responsibilities of participating in culture.

The class is interested in original and dynamic thought, provoking associative thinking and awareness. The class is designed to transform and consider challenging your process and opinion. You are encouraged to bring awareness of different approaches to create new and borrowed strategies in cultural activism. The class is considered process oriented and the professor is encouraging conceptual principles. Process is encouraging original thought over guaranteed knowns.

Spoken Word  
Professor Karen Finley

This class will focus on writing, oral interpretation of original text, and the understanding of narrative structures in visual composition and sequence. The book Paris Review book of madness sex love betrayal outsiders intoxication war whimsy horrors GOD DEATH DINNER BASEBALL TRAVELS THE ART OF WRITING AND EVERYTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD SINCE 1953, picador 2003, is the textbook required to read. A chapter a week with a writing assignment based on the chapter’s theme is the usual structure of the seminar with an occasional variance.

In order for students from all aspects of the school to feel welcome with creative writing,
I encourage a communality with their selected discipline rather than only having extroverted students performing their work. I encourage an extension of their already known abilities. This strategy frees the student from a preconceived notion of “spoken word” and allows the student to make risks in being available for inspiration and critical evaluation of other students’ compositions.

**Theater Matters**  
**Professor Oskar Eustis**

The theater as an art form was invented at the birth of democracy, and has always flourished when it interacts with social movements and issues that extend beyond the walls of the theater and past the moment of performance. This course examines the complex and exciting interaction between theater and the broader culture, and seeks to understand exciting molds of how it can interact with society.

The first half of the course will focus on historical examples—from ancient Athens to Elizabethan England, from the Weimar Republic to America in the 30’s and 60’s. Through readings of plays, theoretical writings, and contemporary sources, we will study models of how theaters have reflected, impacted, and changed the world.

The second half of the course will focus on contemporary examples of theater artists working to change their society. We will meet with artists, study film, see performances, read texts, and debate ferociously.

**Tactical Media**  
**Professor Steven Kurtz**

Interventions. It is designed to bring artists from various specializations together to discuss methods and possibilities for independent public art activities, and to experiment with soft interventions in locations not typically accessed by artists. Particular attention will be paid to process (as opposed to product), to what can be created, organized, and/or produced outside of the artist’s studio, and to engaging the immediate and specific qualities of a given socio-phenomenological field.

**Urban Ensemble**  
**Professor Chris Chan Roberson**

This course affords opportunities to learn how to teach in community-based arts settings. Class meetings will be devoted to expanding students' knowledge of teaching methods; exploring techniques and strategies for working with people in diverse situations; reading about and discussing selected collaborative and community projects; and brainstorming responses to challenges that arise at the internships. Emphasis is given to interdisciplinary tools—the combined use of photography, theatre, video, dance,
and writing—although one form is usually prominent in any given situation. Guest lectures will be given by artists working with theater, photography, storytelling, and video.

In addition to a weekly class session, students participate once or twice a week in an arts-based internship with a community-based artist or organization. Internships are available in all disciplines with opportunities for students to lead their own groups or assist a practicing artist in the field. Sites include an after-school program for kids at a housing project, institutions that use the arts for healing, an arts for literacy project, programs dedicated to self-growth and community building, and local NYC public schools. A once a week internship for 10 weeks is required for 2 credits. To receive more than 2 credits, a more intensive internship must be arranged.

**What's Love Got To Do With It? All School Seminar**

**Professor Kathy Engel**

This course will explore the meaning and practice of building relationships and community in the process of creating projects, campaigns, and organizations for social change. Telling stories, listening well, learning how to understand and value the full array of human resources available to any endeavor, are all essential components of building and cohering communities and campaigns. Opening up spaces that have been historically closed as the result of power inequities and traditional forms of domination, both overt and subtle, and imagining new ways of coexisting, are built on these practices, when employed with care and consciousness. In some cultures within the U.S., the power of the conversation has always been recognized, on the porch, in the kitchen, at the place of worship, on the street corner. But have all our languages been honored, written and unwritten? Our understandings of work, time, legacy, beauty, for example? Even within organizations seeking to create social change, the value of story and all that implies, and relationship, have more often than not been minimized, if not disregarded, in the attempt to create strategies, affect policy, within a perception of urgency and scarcity. Perhaps the time and care it takes to listen to a relative stranger, respond, and inevitably transform as a result, would seem to contradict the immediacy of responding to a news event or passing a bill, for example. There are real, persuasive pulls at work in this tension. We will look at current efforts led by young people in groups such as The Young People's Project, and activists in the "Occupy" movement, who are utilizing methods of communication and processes of decision making that have evolved from earlier traditions, designed to ensure the value of each participant's voice and perspective. Readings will include "Letters to Poets," (Ed Jennifer Firestone & Dana Teen Lomaz) "The Gift," (Lewis Hyde) "Bridge Conversations,"(Arts & Democracy) "New Map of Love," (Carol Gilligan) and "Enacting Pleasures"(ed Peggy Cooper Davis and Lizzy Cooper Davis), "The World Cafe," (Juanita Brown with David Isaacs and the World Cafe Community) and "The Next American Revolution" (Grace Lee Boggs). Students will engage in individual and group projects that involve collecting stories.