

Labor, Globalization and Art

TARTS 406a – Spring 2019

Instructor: Beverly Naidus, Associate Professor, UWT bnaidus@uw.edu

Office phone: 253-692-4623)

Office: Whitney 001

Office Hours: T/Th 12:30 –1:30 pm

Class Meeting Time: TTh 1:30-3:30 pm Classroom: Whitney 004

Course Summary

Through studio art practice, reading, writing, discussion, and the analysis of contemporary media and art, we will look at the impact of our work life, labor history and the effects of globalization on our contemporary life. Students will make art about their own work experiences and economic struggles. We will look at art history and contemporary art that depicts labor issues. We will look at art projects created by various contemporary social justice movements and develop work in class in response to some of the issues raised by these challenging times.

Course Objectives

- ◆ To explore a conceptual approach to art making
- ◆ To develop formal skills and fluency with visual grammar
- ◆ To participate in hands-on collaborative art making processes
- ◆ To experience a wide variety of contemporary art forms including digital imaging, found object/text work, interactive installations, puppetry and Theater of the Oppressed improvisations
- ◆ To develop facility with the terms INTENTION, AUDIENCE and CONTEXT when discussing the goals of an artwork
- ◆ To become familiar with a variety of ways of understanding how stories about work can become art
- ◆ To apply critical thinking in relation to labor issues as they relate to the global and local contexts

Course Requirements

- ◆ Reading of articles linked to syllabus and Canvas, as well as class text: Agitate, Educate and Organize: American Labor Posters and participation in discussions based on questions posted and raised in class
- ◆ Journal – you will put photos, notes about readings and class discussions, sketches, media literacy exercises, any ideas for projects about your work experiences and the effects of globalization. The Journal will be graded twice – once at midterm, and again at the end of the quarter. **Using the journal daily will assure the best learning and creative experience and assessment.**

- ◆ Assignments: *One poster project* based on your work/labor/union story or globalization issues, *the Black Box project* (that looks at the journey of an everyday object from raw resources to factory to consumer), and a *Global Justice mask or puppet* that may be used for a community project
- ◆ Oral presentation on a contemporary or historical artist who works on labor, economic or globalization issues
- ◆ Class participation is essential and **unexcused absences will affect grades**. Attendance is extremely important in studio art classes.

Classroom Behavior

Food and drink are acceptable as long as you do not disrupt the class or bother your neighbors. **No food or drink is allowed on the computer side of the art studio.** Please turn off all electronic devices including cell phones and pagers when you come to class. Please be respectful and attentive when others are speaking in class. Arriving late or leaving early should never happen except on rare occasions; if you must arrive late or leave early, please do so in as unobtrusive a way as possible

Grades and Self-evaluation

Students will meet with the instructor to discuss their journals for a midterm assessment on April 30th. A self-evaluation statement is required as part of that review and will need to arrive in my email inbox by April 29th. The self-evaluation should reflect on participation in class discussions, the art process in relation to collaborative and individual work, and the insights culled from writing, reading and research. Students are required to share their studio projects during group feedback sessions and to participate in the discussions about their work.

All assignments are assessed according to the following criteria:

1. Familiarity with visual grammar in relation to the student's intention
2. Ability to be inventive both with content and form, and to take risks
3. Attention to craft and process
4. Responsiveness to suggestions to strengthen projects

Grades will be weighted in the following way: **Midterm journal (10%), Final Journal (20%), Poster Projects (20%), The "Black Box" project (20%), Mask (10%) Oral Presentation (10%), Participation (10%)**

Grades will be given according to the grade point system. Please refer to this website for information about the grading scale:http://www.washington.edu/students/genocat/front/Grading_Sys.html

3.5–4 = **OUTSTANDING** work, significant extra time spent in developing work, risks taken, unity of concept and handling of materials to create an imaginative visual statement that challenges conventional thinking and image making

2.5–3.4 = **ABOVE AVERAGE** work, solid concepts and skillful handling of materials, exploration of conceptual ideas evident with thought provoking results

1.5–2.4 = **AVERAGE** work, competent execution of ideas but not pushing conventions, craftsmanship acceptable with no outstanding qualities, overall investment fulfills requirement but no

risk-taking apparent, no evidence of extra time invested to strengthen technical and conceptual issues
.5-1.4 = BELOW AVERAGE, little involvement in exploration of ideas or misunderstanding of assignment with little attention to craftsmanship
0 = FAILING, no attempt to articulate ideas and total lack of regard for craftsmanship

The following factors will be considered when determining a final participation grade: *amount of effort expended throughout the course, amount of progress made in creative development, development of focused and productive work attitude, lateness, absences, and attendance. Development of a critical language is essential to your constructive participation in group crits and discussions. Evidence of this skill in the discussion of your work and other's work is expected and will be considered in your final grade.*

Supplies

Blank-page, hard-cover journal (8"x 10" minimum), digital camera (they can be borrowed from media services) or traditional film camera. Adobe Photoshop is the software used for photo/text projects and can be downloaded for a 30-day free-trial period from the Adobe website: www.adobe.com This software can also be purchased at the student rate from the UW bookstore. You can also use freeware or shareware online, such as GIMP, for manipulating photographs.

You will be required to use a computer for creating some of the projects in class. Students with mild or severe technophobia are advised to meet with me or a lab technician as soon as possible to get support. In some situations, class projects can be completed without the use of a computer.

Aside from the Mac computers and scanner in our classroom, there are open labs with Macs & PCs with Photoshop, scanners and printers in WG 108, SCI 105 and the Multimedia Lab on the ground floor of Cherry Parks. The Art Lab printers are the only ones with archival ink.

Support Services:

Campus Information, Resources, Policies and Expectations

<http://www.tacoma.uw.edu/teaching-learning-technology/e-syllabus-campus-information-resources-policies-expectations>

Calendar

April 2 – Review syllabus and course goals. Instructor introduction. Student introductions. Introduce yourself in relation to history, name an event shifted your sense of who you are in relation to the dominant culture. Introduce yourself to a peer in class and tell them something about a current or past job you've had, talk about jobs that have made you feel a sense of meaning, and jobs that gave you a sense of alienation and loss of dignity. Collage activity in class.

Homework: Write down a story about your own work life or collect stories from a family member or friend. What was good about the job? What was challenging? In class you will make a sketch or collage that speaks to that story, but you can begin to doodle ideas in your journal. Go to this link <http://www.laborarts.org/exhibits/#artwork> and find a visual art piece (painting, poster, photograph, or cartoon) that really speaks to you. Read about it and come to class prepared to explain why it spoke to you.

April 4 – Discuss visual grammar and roles of the artist. Slide show – Discuss the WPA and art of the labor movement. Watch video: <http://streetpictures.org/chalk/>

Discuss strategies for making posters that tell stories. Discuss your chosen visual art piece from the link <http://www.laborarts.org/exhibits/#artwork> Work session.

Homework: Take or do an online search for photos that will support your idea for a poster. Do thumbnail sketches in journal to develop a composition. Read **Agitate! Educate! Organize!** Pp1-49. Make notes. Choose one artist to research more fully from list at the end of the syllabus.

April 9 – View more examples of labor art. Photoshop workshop. Discussion of readings. Work session.

Homework: Read **Agitate! Educate! Organize!** P 51-121. Bring in Ads for Media Literacy exercise.

April 11 - Media Literacy. Watch *The Story of Stuff*. <https://storyofstuff.org/movies/story-of-stuff/> Discussion of reading. Work session.

Homework: Prepare first draft of poster for feedback. Read the rest of **Agitate! Educate! Organize!** Make notes for discussion.

April 16 – 1st Feedback and work session. Discussion.

Homework: <https://wp.nyu.edu/gallatingalleries/past-shows/2010-2008/finding-work-representing-labor-in-contemporary-art/>

April 18– Work session. Discussion.

Homework: Read Alan Howard's "*Labor, History and Sweatshops in the New Global Economy.*" – prepare notes for discussion. Read <http://www.globalization101.org/> <http://www.rethinkingschools.org/publication/rg/RGIntro.shtml>

April 23 – Work session. Discussion of global justice movement and art about the effects of globalization (*Black Box project or the journey of an object*). The Gig Economy <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/freelance-work/what-is-the-gig-economy/1/> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y180PWHdYLA>, The dangers of the gig economy <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cio8Aa-E-nk>

Homework: Revise labor story poster for midterm conference on 4/30. Read: <https://worksmart.org.uk/news/what%E2%80%99s-wrong-gig-economy>

April 25 – Work session to develop collaborative, public project. Rolling Jubilee <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Qs9w1XIJKE&feature=plcp>

Homework: Write self-evaluation and bring journal to class for midterm conference on April 30th. Read: <http://artanddebt.org/we-are-all-debtors-and-the-debt-shall-set-us-free/>, <http://strikedebt.org/>

Questions for self-evaluation will be posted on Canvas: Each question can be answered with a short paragraph (2-5 sentences). Journal must include notes on readings, films, gallery visit and researched

artist, as well as sketches, photos, collages and media literacy exercise. Please email (bnaidus@uw.edu) self-evaluation by April 29th, 9 pm.

April 30 – Midterm individual conferences. Group discussion about collaborative project.

Homework: Read <http://www.yesmagazine.org/people-power/behind-the-scenes-of-seattle>
And <http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/purple-america/the-battle-for-reality>

May 2 – May Day discussion. Slide show on Global Justice art projects/Theater of the Oppressed workshop.

Homework: Reading <http://field-journal.com/issue-1/loewe>
https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/assessing-the-art-of-the-occupy-movement/2011/12/05/gIQAFHgoXO_story.html?utm_term=.d54a03e0c5dd
<https://web.archive.org/web/20130514230107/http://www.occupytogether.org/>
<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-17872666>,

May 7 – Begin work on Black Box project. Brainstorm collaborative project about economic issues (poverty, job loss, global justice). *Story of Solutions*: <https://storyofstuff.org/movies/the-story-of-solutions/> Use this website for research: <https://www.greenamerica.org/>

Homework: Read <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-this-year-s-manifesta-radically-reimagines-modern-labor> and <http://listverse.com/2014/12/16/10-everyday-products-that-are-made-with-slave-labor/>

May 9 – Instructor is away attending memorial. Collaborative work session. Watch videos about cooperatives: Watch videos about cooperatives: Mondragon (Spain)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ZoI0C1mPek>, Cooperatives are Everywhere:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RCZPrUIU0o>

Homework: Watch Working Cooperatives vs. Capitalist Enterprises
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aij4wf7zcVQ>, ShiftChange Preview:
<http://shiftchange.org/video-clips/>

May 14 – Oral Presentations. Work Session.

Homework: Read <https://www.motherjones.com/food/2015/03/striking-mexican-farm-workers-vow-us-boycott/> Read: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/our-fruit-is-rotting-in-the-trees-as-laborers-are-kept-out-of-the-country/2018/08/24/bf119ad6-a6e6-11e8-8fac-12e98c13528d_story.html?utm_term=.62879d0bf488
Read <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/gallery/2019/mar/29/the-boy-on-a-raft-in-manila-bay-in-pictures>

May 16 – Discussion about global & migrant labor. Oral Work Session

Homework: Read: <http://www.steamiron.com/payday/bigwords.html>,
<http://www.steamiron.com/payday/class-20.html> Find some favorite quotes among these and comment on them in your journal.

May 21– Work Session. Discussion about unions and class.

Homework: Read <https://workingclassstudies.wordpress.com/2016/04/25/art-for-whose-sake-working-class-life-in-visual-art/>

May 23 – Work Session. Discussion

Homework: Read <https://institute.coop/what-worker-cooperative>

May 28 – Work Session. Discussion

Homework: Read <https://www.messynessychic.com/2012/04/23/turning-caveman-in-america/>
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/dec/13/leaderless-revolution-insurgency-gilet-jaunes-extinction-rebellion>

May 30 – Work Session. Discussion

June 4– Presentation of Black Box projects. Drop off journals with final self-evaluation. Visit the rest of the projects.

June 6 – Presentation of mask/puppet project.

June 11 – Pick up journals.

Bibliography

Alewitz, Mike, **Insurgent Images: The Agitprop Murals of Mike Alewitz**, Monthly Review Press, 2002

Armbruster-Sandoval, Ralph, **Globalization and Cross-Border Labor Solidarity in the Americas**, Routledge, 2004

Bigelow, Bill and Peterson, Bob (eds.), **Rethinking Globalization : Teaching for Justice in an Unjust World**, Milwaukee, Wis.: Rethinking Schools Press, 2002

Foner, Philip and Schulz, Reinhard, **Other America: Art and the Labor Movement in the US**, Journeyman Press, 1985

Johnson, Mark Dean (ed), **At Work: the Art of California Labor**, Heyday Books, 2003

Mitchell, Stacy, **Big-Box Swindle: The True Cost of Mega-Retailers and the Fight for America's Independent Businesses**, Boston: Beacon, 2006

Solnit, David, **Globalize Liberation: How to Uproot the System and Build a Better World**, Citylights Publishers, 2003

Tarrow, Sidney, **The New Transnational Activism**, Cambridge U Press, 2005

Zandy, Janet (ed.), **Liberating Memory: Our Work and Our Working-Class Consciousness**, Rutgers University Press, 1994

_____ **Hands: Physical Labor, Class and Cultural Work**, Rutgers U, 2004

Relevant Websites

<https://www.joaap.org/>

Center for Working Class Studies - <http://cwcs.yasu.edu/resources/>

<http://www.docspopuli.org/>

<http://www.laborarts.org/>

<http://www.voyd.com/gab/>

<http://www.terminaltime.com>

<https://theyesmen.org/>

<http://www.beehivecollective.org>

<http://www.workersrights.org/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweatshop#Anti-sweatshop_movement

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Globalisation>

<http://www.globaljusticemovement.net/>

<http://www.globaljusticemovement.org/>

<http://www.laborheritage.org/>

<http://www.graphicwitness.org/ineye/index2.htm>

<http://faculty.washington.edu/gregoryj/strike/>

<http://depts.washington.edu/wtohist/>

<https://usas.org/>

<https://parisolnet.wordpress.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/events/212630605766495/>

<http://www.wslc.org/>

<https://wfse.org/>

<http://seiu6.org/>

<https://www.teamsters117.org/>

<https://www.workingmother.com/?src=SOC&dom=fb>

<https://adjunctcommuterweekly.com/>

<https://foodprint.org/>

<http://www.thematrix.com/>

<http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/>

<http://www.thirstthemovie.org/>

<https://wageforwork.com/home#top>

<http://www.transitionnetwork.org/>

<https://equitableeducation.ca/2018/community-organizing-resources>

<https://www.creativeworkerscooperative.com/>

<https://institute.coop/what-worker-cooperative>

Choose one artist or collaborative arts group to research for your presentation

The Yes Men, Mike Alewitz, Judy Baca, Ricardo Levins Morales, Lincoln Cushing, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Mark Priest, Patricia Ford, Rick Flores, Rini Templeton, Earl Dotter, Eva Cockcroft, The Beehive Collective, Eric Gottesman, Brett Cooke, Wendy Ewald, Carol* Simpson, Bill Yund, May Stevens, Jacob Lawrence, Ben Shahn, Sue Coe, Ralph Fasanella, Diego Rivera, David Avalos, John Jota Leanos, Carol Conde/Karl Beveridge, Critical Art Ensemble, SubRosa, RTMark, Don Fels, The Urban Homesteading Project, Hans Haacke, Terry Berkowitz, Fred Lonidier, Squeak Carnwath, Alan Sekula, Walid Raad, Margaret Harrison, Conrad Atkinson, Seth Tobocman, Leigh Brownhill, Loraine Leeson, The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination, The Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army, Bread & Puppet Theater, W.A.G.E. and Amplifier.

Oral Presentation Criteria:

- Present a few examples (minimum of 5 images, maximum of 10) of the artist's work that deals with labor/globalization issues and discuss the meaning of the work and questions that you may have about it. Research should be from books or journals.
- A good place to find journal articles is via JStor or Project Muse - both search engines are easily accessible via the library electronic journals (go to the UWT library home page) - you will need to login to access them. There are many other search engines available via the library web page.
- You can also email the artists and ask them questions directly. Tell them that you are student in my class. Getting your information only from the artist and his/her website is not sufficient. You need to read interpretations about the artist's work written by others.
- If you discover that not much has been written about the artist you have chosen, then you will need to change artists. It will be good to begin looking for articles several weeks before your presentation, just in case you have little luck finding material.
- After reading three articles by art writers or critics, summarize what you think that these writers feel are the intentions of the artist's work. It is fine to share quotes from these writers.
- Offer us a rough bio about the artist - it would be good to know where and when the artist was born, where or if s/he went to school, what class background the artist has, whether s/he teaches somewhere and what you think or what s/he says provoked him or her to be an artist who is dealing with the topics s/he is dealing with.
- The majority of your presentation should focus on the artwork itself (several different projects, if possible), and you should make a good effort to explain the artist's intentions through your discussion. In your conclusion, suggest a question that the class might want to respond to regarding the work.
- Presentation format can be in power point or you can just project scanned images of the artist's work on the large screen. Do NOT put the text of your presentation on the screen, only the title, date and medium of the works shown and then read biographical information, discussion regarding the content and intentions of the work and quotes from your notes instead.
- Please make sure that there are images for us to look at while you are speaking.
- Please conclude your presentation with a question for the class about the work we have just seen.

How to Make a Strong Journal

1. Make notes that are REFLECTIONS about the class discussions - not just what was said, but how do YOU feel about them. If you disagree with the dominant opinions in class, but aren't clear why, write about that. If you feel lost, write about that. The great thing about journals is that you are writing for yourself, and developing your voice. If your buttons get pushed, and you are feeling shy to respond, the journal gives you a venue in which to shout, cry, whine, argue or rally support. It is one of the most important tools I can offer you in this course, and journaling can truly help you the rest of your life, if you allow its power in, even in a small way.
2. Make a collage based on some of the ideas expressed in class or in the readings, at least twice a week. Watch those YOUTUBE videos listed in the early announcements at Blackboard (click on View All at the top of the Announcements page and scroll down to find the link) for more inspiration about how to bend your journal to your will and to lose your inhibitions.

3. If your journal is not feeling like it is yours (you have discovered you don't like its shape or color or texture), cut the pages out that you have written and drawn on, and paste them into a journal that really feels like home. You can make your own book using string, thread, wire, an old shoelace, and a hole punch or a drill. Nothing worse than spending time in a "space" that feels shabby or tentative or NOT YOU. Find some colors that speak to your mood, paint them in the margins of the pages you have just written on.
4. Glue in assorted things you find during the day: like fabric with textures and colors that speak to what you just wrote, leaves, buttons, paper clips, notes you find on the sidewalk. Make tabs, or pockets, or sew things in. Create hidden pages and fold outs. Record these moments in time that will never be repeated.
5. Although the journal project is not scrap booking, you may think this process is similar. Some people HATE scrap booking, so do an anti-scrapbook (what would that look like?). Do some parodies or satires about the whole process.
6. If you come to class bored, you can always open your journal and slip away into its pages. I never complain when students doodle, cut and paste in their journals during class time.
7. Use your journal as a place to dream about the world you would love to live in.
8. Remember to write down notes to the readings. If you haven't had time to read all the articles listed in the syllabus, read them now. Put in your thoughts about what your reading. Don't self-censor.
9. But remember THIS journal is not your diary. If you need a place to tell your innermost personal thoughts about your current life challenges (other than those related to the class topic), get another journal for that (OR you can create special pages that are hidden, pockets or envelopes in this journal that are off limits for anyone to read, including me).
10. Finally, your journal is an important part of your grade, and is truly an open-book exam. If your projects in Photoshop aren't going well, you can vent in the journal. If you have ideas for site-specific installations, and other forms, you can diagram them in the journal. If you are worried or excited about the collaborative project write about it there. USE it everyday if possible. Make it a discipline. You will be amazed how it blossoms for you.

THE BLACK BOX Project

Some current discussion about contemporary life asserts that we perceive most of the things we use in our daily lives as emerging from some mysterious "black box." We don't much about where the things we use came from, what materials were harvested to make the furniture, technology, clothing, toys and essentials, and what effect making the object had on the environment or the workers who made it. The task of this project is to do some research about an everyday object, learn more about its origins, how it was made and the price of making it on both the environment and those who make it. "Externalized costs," as video, "The Story of Stuff" describes it. Once you have done this research WITH A PARTNER, you will take what you have learned and turn it into an art piece. More information about this exercise will be given as we introduce it.