

Art and Global Justice

TGH 302b – Spring 2017

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Office: Whitney 001

Office Hours: M/W 3-4 pm

Class Meeting Time: M/W 4:15-6:20 pm Classroom: Whitney 004

Course Summary

Through reading, discussion, making art and the analysis of contemporary media, we will examine issues related to global justice and how art can raise questions, express feelings, synthesize research, educate, provoke and visualize solutions. We will discuss how local challenges relate to global ones and look at ways that we can contribute to more justice in the world via our creative citizenship.

We will make artwork, both individually and collaboratively, that explores personal and collective stories about many different related topics including climate and food justice, labor issues, immigration and human rights, while looking at contemporary art that addresses similar concerns.

Course Objectives

- To explore a conceptual approach to art making
- To develop formal skills and fluency with visual grammar
- To experience hands-on collaborative art processes
- To be exposed to a wide variety of contemporary art forms including digital imaging, photo-collage, posters, culture jamming, site-specific installations and performance art
- To develop facility with the terms *INTENTION*, *AUDIENCE* and *CONTEXT* when discussing the goals of an artwork
- To become familiar with a variety ways of understanding global justice as they relate to art and to contemporary society
- To apply critical thinking in relation to the course topic

Course Requirements

- Reading and discussion of articles and view highlighted on this syllabus and on Canvas
- Journal – this will contain photos, collages, sketches, proposals, stories and notes about readings and from discussions. All ideas for art projects or in relation to the topic of global justice are expected to be in the journal. The journal will be graded twice – once at midterm (10%), and again at the end of the quarter (10%). **Using the journal daily will assure the best learning and creative experience and assessment.** See more about what is required in the journal at the end of this syllabus.
- Assigned mixed media art exercises – *Immigration poster* project, Collaborative *Global Justice Proposal* and *Mask/Costume/Puppet with Text Project*
- Class participation is essential and unexcused absences will affect grades. It will be difficult to

make up the work outside of class. **Missing more than two class meetings will definitely take its toll on your work and affect the strength of your journal.**

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. **Texting and doing any internet activity other than research is off-limits during class time.** All phones should be put away and journals should be used for all note taking. 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 share their journals, documenting their work during the first 5 weeks of class on May 1st in a private conference with the instructor. A self-evaluation statement is required as part of that review and is due via email by April 30th. 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 (questions to be answered are listed in the syllabus). 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 (work created the night before the due date is usually painfully obvious and graded accordingly)
4. Responsiveness to suggestions to strengthen projects

Grades will be weighted in the following way: **Midterm Journal: 10%, Final Journal: 20%, Immigration Issue Poster 20%, Collaborative Public Art Proposal for Global Justice Organization 20%, Mask/Puppet/Costume Project with text (poem or script) 20%, 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/genclat/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 feedback sessions 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, pencils, erasers, glue stick, digital camera (they can be borrowed from media services) or traditional film camera.

You will be required to use a computer for creating some of the projects in class. You are strongly encouraged to get access to Adobe Photoshop or Gimp (free online) for this course. You can download trial copy online at adobe.com or you can purchase or rent a copy with an education discount via their website. It's also possible to use the free shareware, paint.net, or to download an older version of Photoshop (go to the computer labs on the campus to learn how to do that). Photoshop files transfer easily between Macs and PCs. Our lab has only Macs. You can save your files in a folder in the Whitney lab or bring a USB drive to upload and download files. The files should always be saved at 300 dots per inch (dpi) and can be saved as jpgs or psds.

The Whitney Lab is typically open 10 hours per week. You can contact our lab technician for more information: Jugal Gandhi, please email jugalg@uw.edu or text (425) 240-7356. You can also request time to work with me on your projects.

Aside from the Mac computers and scanners in our classroom, you are welcome to work with the lab technicians in the Multimedia Lab in the basement of Cherry Parkes. Any students with mild or severe technophobia should schedule time with me or the lab technicians AS SOON AS POSSIBLE so we can figure out a strategy that will ease you through the process of learning Photoshop and working with the computers.

Support Services:

Campus Information, Resources, Policies and Expectations

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

Calendar

March 27 - Introductions. Review course syllabus and goals. Questions to consider: *What does global justice mean? Which global justice issues do you feel most passionate about? How does art interface with this topic? What are the ways that art can illustrate, document, inquire about and invite others to share and explore the paradoxes of living in the world today? One of those paradoxes: the notion of being an immigrant, displaced by persecution, economic forces and more. How have you been an immigrant? When have you felt without*

power and authority? How do we develop empathy for those who are struggling to transition to a new life? Who does the punishing of undocumented people serve? What are the myths that we have about the latter?

Create a collage about feelings of displacement – either experienced through empathy for others or from your own experience. <https://www.facebook.com/siemnykiro7/videos/1279722578784013/>

Homework: Answer the questions above in more detail in your journal and finish your collage. Begin your research about the NW Detention Center, visit the physical site (if you choose) and take photos of the exterior, visit the website <https://www.nwirp.org/resources/about-the-nw-detention-center/> Interview immigrants, family members, coworkers and friends to learn about their concerns.

March 29 – Slide show of poster art. Discussion about concerns re. immigration, immigrant prisons, refugees and displacement in general. Visual grammar discussion. Photoshop demo. Brainstorm strategies with partner.

Homework: Brainstorm ideas and create images for poster. Read: “Art and Human Rights.” <http://www.jstor.org.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/stable/pdf/j.ctt18mbfqc.6.pdf>

April 3 – Bring in rough sketches for posters for feedback. Discussion about art activism in relation to overwhelming global issues.

Homework: Develop posters based on feedback. Read short history of the global justice movement: <http://www.black-rose.com/articles-liz/globjustice.html>

April 5 – Introduce Collaborative Proposal Project and a variety of global justice issues (labor, environmental, climate, food, health, refugee/displacement issues). Pair students to begin work on collaborative proposal project. Look at some of the websites that can be used for research. Watch the Story of Stuff and its sequel. www.storyofstuff.org

Homework. Collect magazine advertisements (not photos from articles) to deconstruct value systems in relation to health, labor, human rights, food justice and environmental issues. Extra points for ads that seem to be advocating a global perspective or seem international in flavor. Read the first 30 pages of *Hope in the Dark* by Rebecca Solnit. Continue to work on poster project.

April 10 – Media Literacy workshop. Continue working in pairs and on poster project. Discussion about *Hope in the Dark*.

Homework: Read another 30 pages of *Hope in the Dark*. Work on your poster.

April 12 – Slide show of proposals for public art interventions. Work session. Discussion.

Homework: Read another 30 pages of *Hope in the Dark*. Work on your poster.

April 17 – First draft of poster project due. Discussion.

Homework: Read another 30 pages of *Hope in the Dark*.

April 19 – Discussion and work session. Revise your poster.

Homework: Finish *Hope in the Dark*.

April 24 – Discussion of readings. Work and feedback session.

Homework: Read: <http://www.greenpeace.org/usa/4-ways-art-is-essential-to-activism/>

April 26 – Discussion of readings. Work session. Present final draft of poster project.

Homework: Send via email your answers to the self-evaluation questions below and bring your journal and USB drive with poster to conference with instructor.

Self-evaluation Questions

- 1) How have the discussions about the many aspects of global justice helped you to develop your opinions on this topic?
- 2) What are some aspects of the reading that have opened your eyes to new ways of thinking about these topics?
- 3) In what ways did the poster project and the collaborative project help you connect with the issues?
- 4) What aspects of the media literacy workshop were useful to you?
- 5) What do you feel has been one of the most important things you have learned about your creative process so far this quarter?

May 1 - Midterms conferences. Film (*Where to Invade Next?* is one possibility)

Homework: Begin brainstorming ideas for final project in your journal. Read <https://weadartists.org/science-art> <http://www.utne.com/environment/poster-art-for-the-food-justice-movement>

May 3 – Discussion of film. Work session for Proposal Projects. **Print posters for hanging on campus.**

Homework: Work on proposal project. Read: <http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/miranda/laca-jc-nato-thompson-culture-as-weapon-20170313-story.html>

May 8 - Presentation of proposal first drafts.

Homework: Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EfEKcXHAE94>

May 10 –Share ideas for mask/puppet/costume with text performance. Theater of the Oppressed Exercises.

Homework: Develop final project. Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cJJ_u0KOpBE

May 15 –Discussion. Work session.

<https://www.facebook.com/theguardianaustralia/videos/623969811124119/>

Homework: Read: <http://we-make-money-not-art.com/global-activism-art-and-conflict-in-the-21st-century/> - lots of short videos embedded in this article

May 17 - Presentation of collaborative proposal projects.

Homework: Read: <http://billmoyers.com/story/what-grace-lee-boggs-wouldve-taught-activists-in-this-moment/>

May 22– Discussion. Work session to prepare for performances.

May 24 – Video or campus performances. Turn in your journal.

May 29- Memorial Day Holiday

June 5 – Video or campus performances. Return journals. Closing discussion.

Bibliography

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

Boyd, Andrew and Mitchell, Dave Oswald, *Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution*, 2016

Thompson, Nato, *Seeing Power: Art & Activism in the 21st Century*, Melville House, 2014

Reed, T.V., *The Art of Protest: Culture and Activism from the Civil Rights Movement to the Streets of Seattle*, University of Minnesota, 2005

Kingsnorth, Paul, *One No, Many Yeses: A Journey To The Heart of the Global Resistance Movement*.

London: Free Press, 2003.

Websites

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

<http://waimmigrantsolidaritynetwork.org/>

<http://colectivalegal.org/>

<https://www.aclu-wa.org/>

http://culturalpolitics.net/social_movements/global

<http://afgj.org/about>

<http://ggjalliance.org/WMWlaunch>

<http://ittakesroots.org/about/>

<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/>

<https://350.org/>

<https://climatealliancemap.org/resources/climate-justice-alliance/>

<http://www.globaljustice.org.uk/>

http://www.ourpowercampaign.org/cja/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss

<https://grassrootsonline.org/what-we-do/advocacy/us-climate-justice-alliance/>

Activist Artists and Arts Activism Groups

Many different groups listed here: http://culturalpolitics.net/social_movements/art

Favianna Rodriguez - <http://favianna.tumblr.com/>

Platform London <http://platformlondon.org/>

John Jordan <http://labofii.net/reflection/>

<http://www.kronotop.org/folders/we-are-insurgent-we-are-everywhere/>

<http://beautifultrouble.org/case/reclaim-the-streets/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/27/europes-biggest-polluter-protesters-lignite-mine-germany-direct-action>

<http://www.makery.info/en/2015/05/11/climate-games-nous-sommes-la-nature-qui-se-defend/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1HuZ_Ak1v0

Gulf Labor <http://gulflabor.org/>

<https://therules.org/about/>

Mona Caron <http://www.monacaron.com/>

<http://uhc.org.uk/about-us/an-introduction/>

The Yes Men <http://yeslab.org/>

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

<http://borgenproject.org/boundless-city-art-for-global-justice/>

<http://globaljusticeecology.org/tag/art/>

<http://fpif.org/art-activism-global-intersections-dialogue-shailja-patel/>

<http://geeksandglobaljustice.com/?cat=92>

<http://weadartists.org>

Criteria for Poster Project

The goal of this project is to make a digital image that speaks to the immigration issues that are most important to you. If you were unaware of the for profit prison for undocumented neighbors, please research the NW Detention Center and respond to how its existence makes you feel. If you know people who are concerned about their DACA status and the current legal challenges and political situation around immigration, visas, green cards, etc. then interview them and make art from their stories. If you have discovered strong feelings about immigration issues, translate them into metaphor and visual images. You can take your own photos or find some on the Internet. All “found photos” must be transformed by you (using filters, composition, lighting, etc.) to make them your own. Make sure your photos, whether downloaded from the internet or taken by you are high resolution. 300 dots per inch (dpi) is essential for a high quality image. Use transparencies to create depth. Develop a strong composition. Find fonts that speak to the emotional and intellectual content of your poster. Remember that a dominant shape, color, texture or line will make for a more coherent design.

Criteria for Collaborative Proposal Project

Find an organization that you are passionate about and research what aspects of the organization need enhancement through more compelling public education. Find a way to translate complex issues as a proposal for a public art piece. Develop your concepts into a proposal for a performance, an art action (see examples at beautifultrouble.org), an interactive game, a living design (see eco-art projects) or a graphic narrative. Brainstorm your ideas in your journals. The proposal should be digitized and shared as a series of images and text, as a power point or a video.

Criteria for Mask/Costume/Puppet performance with text

Choose a global justice topic that is dear to your heart and create a character (as a mask, costume or puppet) that represents the power needed to reach justice in relation to that issue. For example, if food justice is a crucial issue, you might create a pollinator species mask to represent the resurgence of that pollinator due to new legislation preventing the production and sale of pesticides that were affecting that pollinator's survival. Then write a text (poem or script) to read while wearing or holding your mask, costume or puppet. You can use recycled materials to make your mask, costume or puppet and Tinkertopia is a great place (on Pacific Ave to the right of the bottom of the main staircase) to purchase supplies, if you don't have some sitting around at home or elsewhere. First brainstorm your idea in your journal, then find materials that would best convey what you want to express. Make sure to think about visual grammar in relation to your concept.

*How to Make a Strong Journal

Your journal is your open book exam – it's how I learn about what you've learned, what you're questioning, where you are taking risks. You need to make images (with any medium) at least 2 times per week. Follow these guidelines:

1. Make notes that are REFLECTIONS about the class discussions, readings and videos - not just what was said, but how do YOU feel about them. 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 or a drawing in response to some of the ideas expressed in class or in the readings, at least twice a week. Bend your journal to your will, take risks, don't be afraid to make ugly, royal failures and lose your inhibitions.
3. BRAINSTORM all your assignments in the journal – don't just think about them – do sketches, crude or otherwise.
4. 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?). Play with materials, collect things relevant to the course content or images you're working with.
5. If you come to class bored, you can always open your journal and slip away into its pages. I never complain when students are working in their journals during class time.
6. Use your journal as a place to dream about the world you would love to live in.
7. 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.
8. **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).

9. 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 at how it blossoms for you.