

Art and Global Justice

TGH 302b – Winter 2019

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Office: Whitney 101

Office Hours: M/W 12:30-1:30 pm

Class Meeting Time: M/W 1:30-3:30 pm Classroom: Whitney 104

Course Summary

Through reading, discussion, looking at and making art, 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 of many different kinds, both individually and collaboratively, that explores personal and collective stories about many different related topics including climate justice, racial justice, 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 of 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 **Playing for Time: Making Art as if the World Mattered** by Lucy Neal, discussion of the book and readings as they arise from student interests
- 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 student's chosen topics 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.

- Mixed Media art exercises: digital imagery for posters, photo/text series, a collaborative proposal for a public art project that addresses some aspect of the mission of an organization working on climate, racial, labor or food justice issue,
- Oral presentation on an artist or art collective whose work addresses some aspect of global justice.
- 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. 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.

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 Feb 6th in a private conference with the instructor. A self-evaluation statement is required as part of that review and is due via email by Tuesday, Feb 5th at 10 pm. 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%, Poster piece: 10%, Collaborative Public Art or Tactical Performance Proposal created for an organization doing work on Food Justice, Racial Justice, Climate Justice, Immigration Issues or Labor Justice: 20%,**

Performance piece (using handmade puppet or mask and spoken or audio text): 20%, 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

Supplies

You will be provided with an unlined, blank-page, drawing journal for all your notes, collages, sketches, brainstorming, experiments in different mediums, etc. Drawing tools will vary depending on the student's interest and experiences. Options are pen and ink, graphite, charcoal, watercolor pencils & crayons, etc. You are also encouraged to work with collage materials (available in class), a digital **camera** (they can be borrowed for FREE from media services) or traditional film camera and to purchase a **removable flash or thumb drive** to use for class projects. You can purchase or rent **Adobe Photoshop** or use a free download of another digital imaging program that saves files as a jpg. Photoshop is by far the most versatile of these programs. GIMP is one of several free photo-editing program that you can download online). Paint.net is another option for PC users: <http://www.getpaint.net/index.html> Photoshop can be purchased online (at educational software sites) or through the bookstore (with student discount). A free trial version can be downloaded online for a week from the Adobe website (not enough time to truly be useful), but we do have photoshop on all of the computers in the Whitney and you can find the software on a couple of computers in all of the computer labs on campus.

Our new lab assistant, Samantha Lewis, can introduce you to Photoshop. She will be available 10 hours per week, and those hours will be determined soon.

Aside from the Mac computers and scanners the Whitney Mac Lab, there are open labs with Macs, scanners and printers in WG 108, SCI 105 and the Multimedia Lab is CP 001. You can work on your projects with lab assistants in the Multimedia Lab (M-F) but you need to save what you do there to be printed in the Whitney lab. Your lab fees cover all printing costs in the Arts Lab ONLY, and the inks and paper are archival (the inks stay color true for a hundred years).

If you decide to work in video, installation, performance or other mediums, you will need to scavenge or purchase those supplies on your own.

Support Services:

Campus Information, Resources, Policies and Expectations

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

Calendar

Jan 7 - Introductions. Review course syllabus, **Playing for Time** (class text) and course goals. Discuss stereotypes about artists and activists. Look at the roles of art in our time, and what impact might it have on social change. What are the global justice issues this class will be investigating?

Watch: Are You Lost in the World Like Me? Animation by Steve Cutts (Moby and the Pacific Void Choir) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VASywEuqFd8> Weeds by Mona Caron <https://monacaron.com/weeds>

Meditation/Visualization exercise. Free writing exercise on an issue related to climate, food, labor, race or human rights that is affecting you on a gut level. Work with a partner to develop your idea as an image. Create an image (drawing or collage) that connects with that idea.

Homework: Read short history of the global justice movement (up until 2002): <http://www.black-rose.com/articles-liz/globjustice.html> Answer the following questions in your journal. *What does global justice mean to you? Which global justice issues do you feel most passionate about? What are the ways that art can illustrate, document, inquire about and invite others to share and explore the issues that most concern you?*

Jan 9 – Slide show of poster art. Discussion about students' concerns re. global justice. Discuss the yellow vests movement. Visual grammar discussion. Photoshop demo. Brainstorm strategies for creating a poster or photo/text series with partner.

Homework: Brainstorm ideas and create images for project. Read: **Playing for Time**, p 1-59.

Jan 14 – 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: **Playing for Time**, p 60-107.

Jan 16 – Introduce Collaborative Proposal Project and a variety of global justice issues (labor, environmental, climate, food, health, refugee/displacement issues). Pair or trio 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 and <https://www.facebook.com/theguardianaustralia/videos/623969811124119/>

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. Continue to work on poster project. Read: **Playing for Time**, p 109-148.

Jan 23 – Media Literacy workshop. Continue working in pairs and on poster project.

Homework: Work on your poster. Read: **Playing for Time**, p 152-193.

Jan 28 – Slide show of proposals for public art interventions. Work session. Discussion.

Homework: Work on your poster. Read: **Playing for Time**, p 198-249.

Jan 30 – First draft of poster project due. Discussion.

Homework: Read: **Playing for Time**, p 260-320

Feb 4 – Discussion of readings and work session. Revise your poster.

Homework: Read: **Playing for Time**, p 324-370 Send via email your answers to the self-evaluation questions below and bring your journal and USB drive with poster to conference with instructor. Choose a global justice artist or collective to present on and share that with me at the conference.

Feb 6 – Midterm conferences.

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

Feb 11 – Discussion of readings. Work session. Present final draft of poster project.

Homework: Read: **Playing for Time**, p. 371-428.

Feb 13 – Instructor speaking at conference in NYC.

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>

Feb 20 – Oral presentations. 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>

Feb 25 – Oral presentations. Presentation of proposal first drafts.

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

Mar 4 – Oral presentations Share ideas for mask/puppet/costume with text performance. Theater of the Oppressed Exercises.

Homework: Develop final project. Watch: John Jordan's creative activism talk <https://vimeo.com/162248834>

Mar 6 – Oral presentations. Discussion. Work session.

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

Mar 11 - Presentation of collaborative proposal projects.

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

Mar 13 – Return journals. Final discussion.

Bibliography

Neal, Lucy, *Playing for Time: Making Art as if the World Mattered*, London: Oberon Books, 2015

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 one of the global justice issues that is most important to you. 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 or a tactical intervention or performance. 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 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 or puppet. You can use recycled materials to make your mask 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.

Oral Presentation Information:

- Present a few examples (minimum of 5 images, maximum of 10) of the artist's work that deals with global justice 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.
- If the artist is alive and has time, you can email them questions. Tell them that you are student in my class. **BUT getting your information 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. So 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.**
- While you are speaking, make sure there are images for us to look at. You will be given 10 min. max. to speak.

*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.