FEMINIST MANIFESTOS

SEMINAR NO. 2 OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH: 
A CURRICULUM FOR STUDIES INTO DARKNESS

Monday, December 3, 2018

Vera List Center for Art and Politics
The New School

Wollman Hall
65 West 11th Street, 5th floor
New York City
The Vera List Center for Art and Politics is a research center and public forum for art, culture, and politics. It was established at The New School in 1992—a time of rousing debates about freedom of speech, identity politics, and societies investment in the arts. A pioneer in the field, the center is a nonprofit that serves a critical mission: to foster a vibrant and diverse community of artists, scholars, and policy makers who take creative, intellectual, and political risks to bring about positive change.

We champion the arts as expressions of the political moments from which they emerge, and consider the intersection between art and politics the space where new forms of civic engagement must be developed. We are the only university-based institution committed exclusively to leading public research on this intersection. Through public programs and classes, prizes and fellowships, publications and exhibitions that probe some of the pressing issues of our time, we curate and support new roles for the arts and artists in advancing social justice.

### FREEDOM OF SPEECH:
**A CURRICULUM FOR STUDIES INTO DARKNESS**

Feminist Manifestos is the second seminar in a year-long examination of freedom of speech. The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States guarantees four specific freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and protest, and freedom of religion. With Indian artist Amar Kanwar’s film Such a Morning (2017) as a point of departure, this seminar series imagines these four freedoms enshrined in the U.S. Constitution as points on the compass rose, which can be overlaid with intersectional thinking from artists, Indigenous peoples, feminists, and innumerable other perspectives, to question current circumstances, and to confront the inequities and uncertainties in our times, especially as they pertain to freedom of speech.
Manifestos have been historically used by feminist activists, artists and writers to boldly state their ideas and demands. Usually brief and direct in tone, they point to circumstances deemed unacceptable and in need of change, and propose pathways to move forward in order to overcome the status quo. From Olympe de Gouges in revolutionary France to the Redstockings in the streets of New York City and the Zapatistas in the remote mountains of the Mexican southeast, women have employed manifestos as a means to be heard and circulate their ideas, but also as a way to build coalitions with others who might recognize themselves in their struggles. As part of the year-long seminar cycle Freedom of Speech: Curriculum for Studies into Darkness, this event proposes speech as a collective act of re-appropriation. It calls for a network of resistance and transformation through the enactment of a series of documents written by women in different corners of the world during different moments in time, resonant with the explosive reality we experience now.

Feminist Manifestos is presented as a two-part public program that will activate written statements challenging cultural production, food distribution, knowledge creation, land ownership and other systems of oppression that the patriarchy, still today, refuses to acknowledge. Starting at 10am on Monday morning, a diverse group of self-identified women from across The New School—students, alumni, administrative and maintenance staff, union members, and faculty—will be reading and performing a selection of historical and contemporary manifestos at various locations within the university's architecture. Those specific spaces have been selected because they relate to the content of the texts, and play a significant role in the performers’ daily lives. Through the acts of public speaking and collective listening, quotidian spaces become the context for socio-political struggles while also pointing out at the emancipatory potential of our everyday activities and choices.

The second part of the event serves as a gathering to discuss the conditions from which the manifestos emerged and the ways in which they have catalyzed new forms of cooperation and collective action. Along with feminist scholars and visual artists, we will explore ideas—gleaned from the documents—such as the perpetuation of capitalism based on the unpaid reproductive labor women perform, or the unexpected advantages of anonymity within the arts. Additionally, women who enacted the manifestos earlier in the day will be sharing their experiences of performing Free Speech, embodying the knowledge, perspectives and emotions embedded in those statements.
PROGRAM
Monday, December 3, 2018
READINGS AND PERFORMANCES
10:00am-6:00pm
The New School Campus

Melanie Crean
*Cyborg Manifesto* by Donna Haraway, 1985
10:00-10:45am
Main lobby
Alvin Johnson/J.M. Kaplan Hall, 66 West 12th Street

Abby Zan Schwarz
10:00-11:00am
Stairwell, 5th-6th floor
University Center, 63 Fifth Avenue

Hannah Roodman
*A Manifesto* by Agnes Denes, 1970
10:30-11:30am
Elevators
Albert and Vera List Academic Center, 6 East 16th Street

Gabriela López Dena
*Palabras a nombre de las mujeres Zapatistas al inicio del primer encuentro internacional, político, artístico, deportivo y cultural de mujeres que luchan* by the Zapatista Women, 2018
11:00am-12:00pm
Lobby, 8th floor
Alvin Johnson/J.M. Kaplan Hall, 66 West 12th Street

Zara Khjadeeja Majoka
11:30am-1:30pm and 2:00-4:00pm
Entrance of the List Center Library, 8th floor
Albert and Vera List Academic Center, 6 East 16th Street

Gal Cohen
*Manifesto for Maintenance Art 1969!* by Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 1969
12:00-1:00pm
Main lobby
Sheila C. Johnson Design Center, 2 West 13th Street

Iayana Elie
*The Combahee River Collective Statement* by Combahee River Collective, 1977
1:00-2:00pm
The Walter A. and Vera Eberstadt Student Lounge, 5th floor
University Center, 63 Fifth Avenue
Aleksandra Wagner
_Feminist Manifesto_ by Mina Loy, 1914
1:30-2:30pm
Security booth
Alvin Johnson/J.M. Kaplan Hall, 66 West 12th Street

Thalia Rondon Raffo
_Manifesto de práctica feminista_ by Asociación de Revistas Culturales Independientes de Argentina, 2018
2:00-3:00pm
Social Justice Hub, 5th floor
University Center, 63 Fifth Avenue

Claire Potter
_Declaration of the Rights of Woman_ by Olympe de Gouges, 1791
2:15-3:00pm
O Café
Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts, 65 West 11th Street

Chasity Wilson
_Wages for Housework_ by The Wages for Housework Committee, 1978
3:00-4:00pm
Housing and Residential Education
318 East 15th Street

Caroline García
_Xenofeminist Manifesto_ by Laboria Cuboniks, 2018
3:30-5:30pm
Arnold and Sheila Aronson Galleries, 66 Fifth Avenue

Quenessa Barnes
_Women's Declaration on Food Sovereignty_ by Nayéléni: Forum for Food Sovereignty, 2007
4:00-5:30pm
Sushi Bar, 2nd floor
University Center, 63 Fifth Avenue

Caroline Macfarlane
_Redstockings Manifesto_ by Redstockings, 1969
4:00-5:00pm
Classrooms across the 6th floor
Albert and Vera List Academic Center, 6 East 16th Street

Ola Ronke
_Transformation of Silence Into Language and Action_ by Audre Lorde, 1977
5:30-6:00pm
University Center Library, 6th floor
University Center, 63 Fifth Avenue
CONVERSATION
6:30-8:30pm
The New School | Wollman Hall
65 West 11th Street, 5th floor
New York City

6:30-6:45pm
**Introduction**
Carin Kuoni and Laura Raicovich

6:45-7:15pm
**Manifesto Readings**
Becca Albee, visual artist and musician
Chiara Bottici, Associate Professor of Philosophy, The New School for Social Research
Silvia Federici, philosopher, scholar, writer and activist from the radical autonomist Marxist tradition
A.L. Steiner, visual artist, teacher, collaborator and co-founder of Ridykeulous and Working Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.)

7:15-8:30pm
**Discussion**
Moderated by Gabriela López Dena, Vera List Center Graduate Student Fellow, Art and Social Justice

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**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Becca Albee** is a Brooklyn-based visual artist and is currently an Associate Professor of Art at The City College of New York, CUNY. Albee’s experience as an artist began in music as a member of the band Excuse 17, and in the feminist music community in Olympia, Washington. Albee’s recent solo exhibitions include SITUATIONS, New York; Et al., San Francisco; and 356 S. Mission Rd, Los Angeles. Recent group exhibitions include the Portland Museum of Art, Portland, ME; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; CAM, Raleigh; and Art in General, Brooklyn. Albee has received fellowships and residencies awarded by The MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Fundación Botín, Artlink Ireland, Blue Mountain Center, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, and Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture. Albee’s papers are in the Riot Grrrl Collection at New York University’s Fales Library & Special Collections.
Chiara Bottici is a philosopher and writer. She is Associate Professor at Philosophy at New School for Social Research and Eugene Lang College (New York). She is the author, among others, of Imaginal Politics: Images beyond Imagination and The Imaginary (Columbia University Press, 2014) and Men and States (Palgrave, 2009). She also co-edited the collections of essays The Politics of Imagination (Routledge, 2011), and Feminism, Capitalism and Critique (Palgrave 2017). Her short stories have appeared in Il Caffe illustrato, while her feminist ’novel of novels’ Per tre miti, forse quattro was published by Manni Editore in 2016. She is currently working on a book-project on Anarcha-feminism.

Silvia Federici is a feminist activist, teacher and writer. In the 1970s, she was one of the founders of the international Campaign for Wages for Housework. She was also one of the founders of the Committee for Academic Freedom in Africa and the Radical Philosophers’ Anti-Death Penalty Project. She is the author of books and essays on women’s history and feminist theory, political philosophy and education. Her published works include: Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation, Revolution at Point Zero, Witches, Witch-hunting and Women, Re-enchanting the World: Feminism and the politics of the Commons and The New York Wages For Housework Committee: History, Theory, Documents. 1972–1977. Silvia Federici is Emerita Professor at Hofstra University.

Gabriela López Dena is an architect from Mexico City. After receiving an architecture degree from the Universidad Iberoamericana, she founded DENA—a transdisciplinary studio in which she designed and built spaces, developed short and feature-length films about the built environment, and collaborated with artists such as Thomas Glassford, Etienne Chambaud, Claudia Fernández, and Tercerunquinto, mostly on large-scale art installations. She is currently enrolled in the Design and Urban Ecologies Program at Parsons. For her thesis project she has been exploring the concept of Feminist Urbanism through a series of workshops and public talks with partners such as Interference Archive and Art+Feminism. López is the Art and Social Justice Graduate Student Fellow at the Vera List Center for Art and Politics.

A.L. Steiner utilizes constructions of photography, video, installation, collage, collaboration, performance, writing and curatorial work as seductive tropes channeled through the sensibility of a skeptical queer ecofeminist androgyne. Steiner is co-curator of Ridykeulous, co-founder of Working Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.), a collective member of Chicks on Speed, and collaborates with numerous writers, performers, designers, activists and artists. She is faculty in Photography at Yale University, and is featured in permanent collections such as The Brooklyn Museum of Art, Marieluise Hessel Collection of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, The Hammer Museum and The Museum of Modern Art. She is the recipient of the 2015 Tiffany Foundation Biennial Award, The 2015–2016 Berlin Prize and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts 2017 Grants to Artists award.
ARTICLE 19 works for a world where all people everywhere can freely express themselves and actively engage in public life without fear of discrimination. They do this by working on two interlocking freedoms which set the foundation for all their work:

1. The Freedom to Speak concerns everyone’s right to express and disseminate opinions, ideas and information through any means, as well as to disagree with and question power-holders.

2. The Freedom to Know concerns the right to demand and receive information from power-holders, for transparency, good governance and sustainable development.

When either of these freedoms comes under threat as a result of power-holders failing to adequately protect them, ARTICLE 19, with one voice, speaks through courts of law, through global and regional organisations, and through civil society wherever they are present.

National Coalition Against Censorship promotes freedom of thought, inquiry and expression, and opposes censorship in all its forms. The Coalition formed in response to the 1973 Supreme Court decision in Miller v. California, which narrowed First Amendment protections for sexual expression and in turn, opened the door to obscenity prosecutions. Over 40 years, as an alliance of more than 50 national non-profits, including literary, artistic, religious, educational, professional, labor, and civil liberties groups, the Coalition has engaged in direct advocacy and education to support First Amendment principles. NCAC is unique in that they are national in scope but often local in their approach, and they work with community members to resolve censorship controversies without the need for litigation.

New York Peace Institute provides conflict resolution services in the form of mediation, conflict coaching, restorative processes, group facilitation, and skills training. Their programs are a resource to thousands of New Yorkers facing conflict each year—whether it is between parents working out a custody agreement, a noise dispute between neighbors, diverting a misdemeanor case from court, or a conflict between a parent and school regarding a student with special needs. Their services foster listening, empathy, and communication among their clients and help them develop their own creative solutions. As the city’s largest civilian peace force, their mission is to build peace and prevent violence in New York City and beyond.

Weeksville Heritage Center is a multidisciplinary museum dedicated to preserving the history of the 19th century African American community of Weeksville, Brooklyn - one of the largest free black communities in pre-Civil War America. Their mission is to document, preserve and interpret the history of this community, and make it relevant and resonant for contemporary audiences. They bring this history to life through innovative education, arts and civic engagement programming.
This public program has been curated by Gabriela López Dena as part of her graduate student fellowship at the Vera List Center for Art and Politics, and within the context of her thesis project Feminist Urbanism.

The seminar series Freedom of Speech. A Curriculum for Studies into Darkness is organized by the Vera List Center for Art and Politics as part of the center’s 2018–2020 curatorial focus If Art Is Politics. It is directed by Carin Kuoni, Director/Chief Curator, Vera List Center, and Laura Raicovich with assistance by Gabriela López Dena. Partner organizations for the seminars are ARTICLE 19; the National Coalition Against Censorship; New York Peace Institute; and Weeksville Heritage Center.

CREDITS

THANK YOU

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Seminar 3
Monday, February 11, 2019
6:30-8:30pm
In partnership with ARTICLE 19

Seminar 4
Monday, March 11, 2019
6:30-8:30pm
The New School

Seminar 5: Seditious Speech
Saturday, April 13, 2019
In partnership with Weeksville Heritage Center

Seminar 6: Feet on the Ground
Monday, June 3, 2019
In partnership with New York Peace Institute

ADDITIONAL EVENT

All Visible Directions Between Sky and Water
with Natalie Diaz and Maroa Hupfield
Wednesday, December 12, 2018
The New School, 66 West 12th Street