

Studies into Darkness: Manifestos, in Genre and in Practice

WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK

NOTICE TO ALL GOVERNMENTS

The women of the world are serving notice. We clean your homes and factories. We raise the next generation of workers for you. Whatever else we may do, we are the backbone of the world. In return for our work, you have only asked us to wait longer.

We are serving notice to you that we intend to be paid for the work we do. We want wages for every dirty toilet, every painful childbirth, every midnight assembly, every cup of coffee and every smile. And if we don't get what we want, then we will simply refuse to work any longer.

We have brought our children to be good citizens and to respect your laws and you have put them in factories, in prisons, in ghettos and in typing pools. The children deserve more than you offer and now we will bring them up to EXPECT more.

We have borne babies for you when you needed more workers, and we have submitted to sterilization when you didn't. Our wombs are not government property any longer.


We have scrubbed and polished and oiled and waxed and smeared until our arms and backs ached, and you have only created more dirt. Now you will not in your own garbage.

We have worked in the facilities of our homes when you needed us to and we have taken on a second job too when you needed that. Now we want to decide WHEN we work, HOW we work, and WHO we work for. We want to be able to decide NOT TO WORK AT ALL. —like you.

We are teachers and nurses and secretaries and domestics and waitresses and saleswomen and childcare workers and business and waitress.

500 cooks and cleaning ladies, the majority of every industry. We have sweated until you have grown rich. Now we want back the wealth we have produced. WE WANT IT IN CASH, RETRIBUTIVE AND IMMEDIATE. AND WE WANT ALL OF IT.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK



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LOVE DOESN'T PAY THE BILLS

MONEY IS CHOICE

The New York WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK COMMITTEE is part of a nationwide organization that is campaigning for WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK from the government for

ALL WOMEN

married or not with or without children with or without babies or illegitimate babies or straight a second job HOUSEWORK IS OUR COMMON PROBLEM LET'S MAKE IT OUR COMMON STRUGGLE

We demand WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK because we cannot afford to work overtime hours in the home and then depend on a man or on welfare or have to take a second job BECAUSE WE HAVE NO MONEY we can call our own. Nobody works as much as we do. WE ALL NEED MORE MONEY FOR MORE WORK.

WE'RE NEVER UNEMPLOYED WE'RE JUST

Business and Government profit from our work - THEY SHOULD PAY FOR IT. We know they need us so we can not be their.

WE DEMAND WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK

To get down on homework - to get out, get machines to do some of the work, and refuse to be slaves to the house

WE HAVE SACRIFICED ENOUGH OF OUR LIVES

To be able to decide working conditions and wages on the second job, and if we want it in the first place

To stand up to men when we work WITH them and when we work FOR them - if we had our own money we could

To decide what our own lives should be like

To decide if, when and under what conditions to have children

To give our children what we want them to have

To demand and WIN paid holidays away from ALL work

To demand and WIN decent housing

JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN

All over the US and in several other countries of the world women are organizing open air, rallies, marches for WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK. We speak in different languages but we are all saying the same thing.

WE ARE OPENING OUR CAMPAIGN OFFICE IN A GYMNASIUM
288 B 84th Street (off 54th Ave) in BROOKLYN
SAT. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. WED. 9:30 a.m. to 12 a.m.
New York WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK COMMITTEE - We have discussion groups, video tapes, newsletters, literature, speakers available to talk with your group. Call 625 5780 or 788 2822

March 9, 2024 4:00–6:00pm

Francis Kite Club
40 Loaisaida Ave, New York
Co-presented by the Vera List Center for Art and Politics

About

A collection of texts, artist projects, and archival documents, *Studies into Darkness: The Perils and Promise of Freedom of Speech* emerges from a provocation by artist Amar Kanwar: Is there an idea, concept, or social construct that would benefit from a retreat “into darkness”—into a space of profound reconsideration and rethinking? “Darkness” here holds the promise of complexity, discovery and, in Kanwar’s words, “visions from within the depths.” The book itself—in content and form—plays with the concept of darkness as both a tonal variation and a factor of legibility. Designed by Nontsikelelo Mutiti and Julia Novitch, the blackness of the printed word is arrived at through layering spectral color inks where, as they say, “things may be shining through.” Alongside newly commissioned texts, Gabriela López Dena’s selection of republished historic feminist manifestos speaks to the medium of manifestos as both a form of expression and a proposal for political pathways forward.

With a dialogue and a participatory manifesto-building exercise, this gathering brings the book’s design into conversation with its content, touching on the rigidity and slippages inherent in speech, translation, and comprehension. Artist and book designer Nontsikelelo Mutiti and contributor Gabriela López Dena engage with co-editors Carin Kuoni and Laura Raicovich to address key elements and strategies used in manifestos as a genre.

This event is co-organized by The Francis Kite Club and the Vera List Center for Art and Politics. To order the print edition of *Studies into Darkness* or to read the free open access e-book, please visit www.veralistcenter.org.

Cover image: Detail from “Feminist Manifestos,” in *Studies into Darkness: The Perils and Promise of Freedom of Speech*. Edited by Carin Kuoni and Laura Raicovich. Co-published by Amherst College Press and Vera List Center for Art and Politics, The New School, 2022. Designed by Nontsikelelo Mutiti and Julia Novitch. 390 pages.

Throughout the dialogue and exercise, consider how manifestos:

- Identify an issue that seems unacceptable, urgent and in need of change
- Denounce a situation that affects people in specific ways
- Have a sense of urgency
- Use direct and unambiguous language
- Find a format/design to speak to the aspirations of the manifesto
- Use visuals or art to convey the manifesto's goals
- Are written using short, simple sentences
- Propose strategies and a vision to achieve change
- Map out a desired outcome
- Are meant to be shared widely
- Are distributed on accessible platforms
- Are designed to contribute to delivering their message
- Are a tool to imagine a better future
- Condense the political views of a collective sharing a set of principles

Participant Biographies

Gabriela López Dena works across curation and social practice to address the relations between the built environment and its social dynamics. Based in Brooklyn, NY, she is the Associate Curator of Public Practice at Public Art Fund and works on exhibitions, public programs, and community engagement initiatives. López Dena has collaborated with institutions like Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, the Museum of Arts and Design, and the Vera List Center for Art and Politics. She is also a teaching artist at Swiss Institute/Contemporary Art and a member of the volunteer-run project Interference Archive. In Mexico City, where she is originally from, López Dena trained as an architect at the Universidad Iberoamericana and founded DENA—a transdisciplinary practice to design and build spaces, develop films, and collaborate with artists on architectural-scale installations. She also holds a master's degree from Parsons School of Design at The New School.

Nontsikelelo Mutiti is a Zimbabwean-born visual artist and educator. She is invested in elevating the work and practices of Black peoples past, present, and future whilst also acknowledging interconnected histories and serving those whose narratives have been or under-recognized. Mutiti's work appears through a conceptual approach to design, publishing, archiving practices, and institution building. Mutiti holds a diploma in Multimedia from the Zimbabwe Institute of Vigital Arts (ZIVA) and an MFA from the Yale School of Art, with a concentration in Graphic Design. Mutiti is the Director of Graduate Studies for Graphic Design at Yale School of Art. She has held academic positions at Zimbabwe Institute of Vigital Arts (ZIVA), SUNY Purchase College and VCUart at Virginia Commonwealth University.

The Francis Kite Club is a bar and cultural forum; a site of fellowship and a shared space in the East Village of Manhattan founded by friends and co-conspirators. The Kite hosts a range of activities, including live music, art, performance, workshops, and special convenings in a bar setting. The effort reflects a desire to come together, think, share, have a good time, and escape the norms of our professional and social trenches. www.franciskiteclub.com

The Vera List Center for Art and Politics is a non-profit research center at The New School in New York. Through its dynamic interdisciplinary programs, prizes, fellowships, publications, and exhibitions, the VLC imagines and supports new forms of politically engaged art, research, public scholarship, and community around the world. www.veralistcenter.org

The Spring 2024 programs of the Vera List Center for Art and Politics are generously supported by members of the Vera List Center Board, other individual donors, and the following institutional donors: The Boris Lurie Art Foundation and the Schaina and Josephina Lurje Memorial Foundation; The Dayton Foundation; Mellon Foundation; Native Arts and Cultures Foundation; National Endowment for the Arts; New York State Council on the Arts; and Terra Foundation for American Art. We also gratefully acknowledge the support of The New School, our academic home.

The VLC Producers Council is a group of individuals whose leadership support ensures the success of the VLC's dynamic two-year program cycles. VLC Producers Council members commit to providing at least two years of support at one of the following levels: \$1,000+; \$2,500+; \$5,000+; \$10,000+; or \$15,000+. To learn more, contact Tabor Banquer, VLC Director of Strategy and Advancement, at banquert@newschool.edu or 646.909.3564.

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Notes

COMING UP AT THE VLC

READING SERIES

New School New Books 2024

Friday, March 22, 2024

11 am–12:15 pm; 12:30–1:45 pm; 2–3 pm EST

Malcolm Klein Room, The New School

66 West 12th Street, New York

At a time of heightened concern about freedom of speech—both within and outside the academy—*New School New Books 2024* serves as a crucial reaffirmation of these rights, for everyone at the university and beyond. The second edition of the series introduces the latest publications by New School faculty in a three-part collective reading event, starting with a brief recital by Ahmed Abdullah, author of *A Strange Celestial Road: My Time in the Sun Ra Arkestra*. The event is co-presented by the VLC, the Creative Writing Program, and the Office of Equity & Belonging in conjunction with Spitting Image Art Book Fair, a community exhibition and trading event organized by students of Eugene Lang College and Parsons School of Design.

CONVERSATION SERIES

Studies into Darkness Revisited

February–April 2024

Online

From February–April 2024, a series of three conversations revisit Vera List Center’s 2022 publication *Studies into Darkness: The Perils and Promise of Freedom of Speech*, presented by the *Brooklyn Rail* in partnership with the VLC. For Part I, artist Amar Kanwar joined curator Rattanamol Singh Johal for a timely reconsideration of darkness, silence, and speech. Save the date for Part II (March 14) and Part III (April 25) of the series, in which Rail contributors engage with the book through dialogues that examine contemporary contradictions to free speech discourse.

WORKSHOP & SCREENING

Mental Wellness Film Workshop with Fox Maxy

May–June 2024

Online and in person

Fox Maxy is a filmmaker known for her kaleidoscopic and thrilling films. Her 2022–2024 Borderlands Fellowship project is a film about portals and mental health, anchored in the belief is that anyone and everyone can be a filmmaker. Wrapping up her fellowship, Maxy hosts a filmmaking workshop that explores links between storytelling and mental wellness. Bringing this workshop to New York City, where her feature film will be set, Maxy invites participants to learn and create a short film with her over the course of several weeks.