

ART IN GENERAL and THE VERA LIST CENTER FOR ART AND POLITICS

What Now?

Lawrence Abu Hamdan
Anne Barlow
Bigert & Bergström
Rich Blint
Rashida Bumbray
Grégory Castéra
Christoph Cox
Joshua Craze
ESTAR(SER)
Seeta Peña Gangadharan
Lauren van Haften-Schick
James Hudspeth
Iman Issa
Carin Kuoni
Brian Larkin
Shannon Mattern
Naeem Mohaiemen
Beatriz Santiago Muñoz
Julie Beth Napolin
Mendi + Keith Obadike
Laurie Jo Reynolds
Mohammad Salemy
Wato Tsereteli
Kade L. Twist

**THE POLITICS OF LISTENING
APRIL 24-25, 2015**

INTRODUCTION

“What Now? 2015” is a two-day annual symposium, organized by Art in General in collaboration with the Vera List Center for Art and Politics, which investigates critical and timely issues in contemporary art. Dedicated to the topic of “The Politics of Listening,” the 2015 symposium comprises four panel discussions spanning Friday and Saturday, a keynote delivered by Lawrence Abu Hamdan, and a program of sound installations, audio works, film screenings, and performances.

“What Now? 2015” examines the idea of listening as a political act, a pedagogical process, and a protocol for engagement. Opening with an analysis of listening, the symposium considers the scientific definition of the term alongside perspectives on listening that are shaped and informed by diverse social, cultural, technological, and spatial considerations. As keynote speaker Lawrence Abu Hamdan has noted, “Listening is not a natural process inherent to our perception of the world but rather constructed by the conditions of the spaces and times that engulf us”.⁽¹⁾

In a world in which the production and reception of information encompasses print and digital media, spoken narratives, and the ever-expanding space of social media, the symposium considers how one can listen with agency and intent in an environment characterized by such an onslaught of data. It also explores the often complex relationship between truth and fiction in relation to interpretative listening, media communication, and acts of testimony, translation, and redaction. To what degree are we able to listen to different kinds of intelligences, and how can we incite receptivity? How do we address the fact that the right to listen is relative, and that the right not to listen, or to remain silent, is also a genuine stance? Can we press on and position listening as a political act? And how do we further develop our ability to “listen for what is left out, and why”?⁽²⁾

Highlighting the work of artists and other practitioners interested in expanding dialogue beyond the confines of the art world, “What Now? 2015” ultimately considers the notion of listening with intent, and imagines new possibilities that might arise when listening involves a more expansive state of activity. How can we take the procedures of listening—which involve disciplined attentiveness and an active questioning—as a means to assist a constituency to find its own power and solutions to diverse sets of problems? How can working across disciplines, or rethinking the processes of how we learn, expand on and deepen our understanding of an issue—ultimately enabling us to listen, and act, with a more informed mind?

⁽¹⁾ Lawrence Abu Hamdan (Tape Echo)

⁽²⁾ UltraRed, in Notes on the Protocols for a Listening Session (Glasgow Variation), in *On Listening*, edited by Angus Carlyle and Cathy Lane, Uniformbooks 2013, p.33.

FRIDAY APRIL 24, 2015

12:30–1:00 p.m.

AN ORIENTATION TOWARDS LISTENING

The Narma Tapes: Polyphony and Politics in the Postwar by ESTAR(SER)
“Listening to understand, listening to forget. An exercise.”

1:00–1:10 p.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Anne Barlow and Carin Kuoni

1:10–1:45 p.m.

PRESENTATION: A Scientific Definition of Listening

Dr. James Hudspeth

James Hudspeth conducted undergraduate studies at Harvard College and received PhD and MD degrees from Harvard Medical School. Following postdoctoral work at the Karolinska Hospital in Stockholm, he served on the faculties of the California Institute of Technology, the University of California, San Francisco, and the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. After joining Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Hudspeth moved to The Rockefeller University, where he is the F. M. Kirby Professor and Head of the Laboratory of Sensory Neuroscience. Dr. Hudspeth conducts research on hair cells, the sensory receptors of the inner ear. He and his colleagues are especially interested in the active process that sensitizes the ear, sharpens its frequency selectivity, and broadens its dynamic range. They also investigate the replacement of hair cells as a potential therapy for hearing loss. Hudspeth is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

1:45–3:15 p.m.

SESSION ONE: AN ANALYSIS OF LISTENING

Moderator: Shannon Mattern

Participants: Christoph Cox, Seeta Peña Gangadharan, Brian Larkin

This panel explores listening in terms of its relation to various contexts including space, media, ethics, communication, and networked culture. It considers the act of listening in terms of the orientation of the listener in relation to one that is listened to, and the process of listening as something that is “socially coded” rather than merely a physical act. How has our understanding of phenomenology, the idea of the un-learned, un-mediated, un-processed, and the related concept of “real-space” shifted with the rise of Internet based media and in particular social media? What other approaches or ways of understanding have emerged? Surveillance is an intentional form of listening, in many if not all instances, without consent. How can we explore mythologies and norms of surveillance culture today, as personal data is constantly being acquired from Internet users? When corporations such as Facebook and Google are capable of gathering, saving, and analyzing our conversations, listening becomes the site of a power struggle, scrambling the codes of subject and object.

3:15–4:00 p.m.

SOUND INSTALLATION: “Blues Speaker [for James Baldwin]”

Walkthrough with Mendi + Keith Obadike and curator Rashida Bumbray

Location: University Center, 65 5th Avenue, Social Justice Hub

Artists Mendi + Keith Obadike present *Blues Speaker [for James Baldwin]*, a multichannel sound artwork installed in The New School’s University Center from April 1 through 30. Part of the city-wide celebration *The Year of James Baldwin*, it celebrates James Baldwin’s keen understanding of the social role of the blues. Baldwin (1924-1987) was a key figure at the political juncture of music and words in the United States. This immersive sound installation turns the entire University Center into one speaker, resonating across four floors on three sides of the new building. Conference attendees are invited to experience the sound installation before attending the discussion with the artists and others about how listening contributes to interdisciplinary studies of power, inequality, and social justice. Preceded by a reading of excerpts of Baldwin’s *Sonny’s Blues* (1957) by musician and poet Karma Mayet Johnson at noon.

4:00–5:30 p.m.

SESSION TWO: TAKING LISTENING SERIOUSLY

Moderator: Julie Beth Napolin

Participants: Rich Blint, Rashida Bumbray, Mendi + Keith Obadike

Taking its cue from James Baldwin, who was greatly influenced by sound and music, particularly the blues, this panel explores what it means to take listening seriously. How are those who are largely “un-listened to” being heard? How can one avoid polarizing discussions, paternalistic approaches, or reinforcing stereotypes in an attempt to open up channels of listening? What do different soundscapes say about class and inequality? In his important 1957 short story *Sonny’s Blues*, Baldwin argued that attending to the blues required the listener to confront and accept both literal noise (sounds beyond the listener’s understanding) and ideological noise (elements of the lives of those whose journeys have taken radically different paths.) How can tuning into literal noise help sensitize us to ideological noise? What is the contemporary role of the blues—a musical form inextricably linked to America’s history of racism and oppression—and what potentialities remain?

5:30–6:15 p.m.

DRINKS RECEPTION

6:15–7:00 p.m.

KEYNOTE: Presented by Lawrence Abu Hamdan

Lawrence Abu Hamdan is a multi-media artist with a background in DIY music. In 2015, he was the Armory Show commissioned artist and participated in the New Museum Triennial. The artist’s forensic audio investigations are made as part of the Forensic Architecture research project at Goldsmiths College, University of London, where he is also a PhD candidate and associate lecturer. Recent exhibitions include solo shows at institutions such as The Showroom, London; Casco, Utrecht; Beirut, Cairo; and forthcoming at Kunsthalle St. Gallen and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

SATURDAY APRIL 25, 2015

2:00–2:10 p.m.

AUDIO WORK: “The Revolutionary”

Iman Issa, 5:58 min. audio, 2010

Issa’s work explores the relationship between history, memory, language, and objects. She does this through the presentation of multiple forms, including sculpture, text, video, photography and sound. The Revolutionary, an audio work created using text-to-speech software, tells the convoluted story of a political radical, using contradictions and ambiguity to present an enigmatic portrait.

2:10–3:40 p.m.

SESSION THREE: FACT, FICTION, AND THE IN-BETWEEN

Moderator: Lauren van Haaften-Schick

Participants: Joshua Craze, Naeem Mohaiemen, Beatriz Santiago Muñoz

This panel addresses the slippages between fact and fiction in relation to interpretative listening, media communication, and acts of testimony, translation, or redaction. What is the place of language and translation in this evolving narrative space? Every translation sets into play distinct vocabularies and systems of listening and interpreting, and it is in these encounters that priorities and positions are negotiated. In forensic analysis, for example, how are ideas of truth, testimony, propaganda, translation (or “untranslatability”) played out? In terms of oral histories, why are narratives meant to be listened to rather than read alone, and what is the relative role and importance of accuracy, credibility, and the spinning of truth within this realm?

3:40–4:00 p.m.

BREAK

4:00–4:15 p.m.

FILM SCREENING: “Moments of Silence”

Bigert & Bergström, 14:00 min. HD, 2014

A meditative memento on the importance of collective memory, Moments of Silence compiles a series of these moments into a film to examine one of the few remaining activities that shape a collective human experience. Bigert & Bergström are an artist and filmmaker duo based in Stockholm. Their films and artworks have been shown in institutions worldwide—including Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; ICA, London; and Mori Art Museum, Tokyo—and included in the Venice Biennale, the Moscow Biennial, and the Singapore Biennial, among other exhibitions. They are currently working on a trilogy of short films that examine the public statement as a performative act. Moments of Silence (2014) is the first film in the series, and will be followed by Important Message to the Public (2015) and Explosion of Speech (2016).

4:15–5:45 p.m.

**SESSION FOUR: LISTENING ACROSS DISCIPLINES
A CALL TO ACTION**

Moderator: Mohammad Salemy

Participants: Grégory Castéra, Laurie Jo Reynolds, Kade L. Twist

In what situations has listening not just been the goal, but also the means to a tangible end? What kinds of attentive actions or collaborations can advance specific issues of urgency? This session focuses on initiatives that explore critical social issues through interdisciplinary lines of enquiry, research and projects over an extended period of time. Case studies include Council that works across the arts, scholarly and scientific research, and civil society in order to propose new representations of social issues. Postcommodity is an interdisciplinary arts collective that works to promote a constructive discourse that challenges the social, political, and economic processes that are destabilizing communities and geographies; and connect Indigenous narratives of cultural self-determination with the broader public sphere. Legislative artist Laurie Jo Reynolds is the organizer of Tamms Year Ten, a grassroots campaign to close the state supermax prison in Illinois that included intensive lobbying and cultural projects like Photo Requests from Solitary. The New Centre for Research & Practice is conceived upon the idea that the space of knowledge is a laboratory for navigating the links between thought and action; their pedagogical approach bootstraps the conventional role of the Arts and Sciences to construct new forms of research and practice alongside, within, and between the existing disciplines and technologies.

FRIDAY THROUGH SATURDAY

ONGOING: “Ping Pong Drawing”

Friday, April 24, 12:30–7:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 25, 2:00–6:00 p.m.

Wato Tsereteli

Wato Tsereteli, artist and Founder of CCA Tbilisi, leads a non-verbal listening exercise adjacent to the What Now? symposium lecture hall. Providing an experimental space for reflection and response for audience members in between and following the conference programming, artists and non-artists alike are invited to share a plain sheet of paper, leading to conversation by means of visual expression. In contrast to a table tennis game that is based on competition, Ping Pong Drawing develops a perspective built on collaboration, respect, and serendipity, and furthermore articulates the potential to have individual dialogue within oneself while drawing. This simple situation positions drawing as an extraordinary practice—comparable to yoga—that has the potential to disrupt habitual patterns. The project aims to amplify an essential quality of artistic practice as a process based upon unexpected consequences, creating new narratives in our collective consciousness and the world around us.

Art in General and the Vera List Center for Art and Politics thank all participants in this symposium for their contributions. Program directed by Anne Barlow and Carin Kuoni. Special thanks to: What Now 2015 advisers Regine Basha, Pablo Helguera and Wato Tsereteli; Lindsey Berfond, Kristen Chappa, and Regis Trigano, Art in General; and Emily Donnelly, Vera List Center for Art and Politics.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Lawrence Abu Hamdan is a multi-media artist with a background in DIY music. In 2015, he was the Armory Show commissioned artist and participated in the New Museum Triennial. The artist's forensic audio investigations are made as part of Forensic Architecture research project at Goldsmiths College, University of London, where he is also a PhD candidate and associate lecturer. Recent exhibitions include solo shows at institutions such as The Showroom, London; Casco, Utrecht; Beirut, Cairo; and forthcoming at Kunsthalle St Gallen and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Anne Barlow is Director of Art in General, New York where she most recently launched its International Collaborations program and the What Now? symposium, and curated exhibitions with Marwa Arsanios, Basim Magdy, Jill Magid, Shezad Dawood, Meriç Algün Ringborg, Anetta Mona Chisa and Lucia Tkáčová. Barlow was formerly Curator of Education and Media Programs at the New Museum, New York, where she organized numerous exhibitions and initiated and developed its Museum as Hub program. She has published with the Henry Moore Institute, Leeds; The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, Philadelphia; the New Museum; and Tate Modern, London, among others, and has lectured or moderated talks at organizations including ArteEast, New York; Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw; MUMOK, Vienna; IASPIIS, Stockholm; and the Sharjah Art Foundation. Barlow was Curator of Tactics for the Here and Now, the 5th Bucharest International Biennial for Contemporary Art, Bucharest, Romania, 2012, and Co-Curator of the Latvian Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale, 2013.

Bigert & Bergström are an artist and filmmaker duo based in Stockholm. Their films and artworks have been shown in institutions worldwide—including Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; ICA, London; and Mori Art Museum, Tokyo—and included in the Venice Biennale, the Moscow Biennial, and the Singapore Biennial, among other exhibitions. They are currently working on a trilogy of short films that examine the public statement as a performative act. *Moments of Silence* (2014) is the first film in the series, and will be followed by *Important Message to the Public* (2015) and *Explosion of Speech* (2016).

Rich Blint is Associate Director of Columbia University School of the Arts, Office of Community Outreach and Education, and Research Affiliate and Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Institute for Research in African American Studies at Columbia. He is co-editor (with Douglas Field) of a special issue of *African American Review* on James Baldwin (Winter 2013); contributing editor of *The James Baldwin Review*; co-curator (with Ian Cofre) of the exhibition *Bigger Than Shadows*; and curator of the exhibition series *Built Environments*, an initiative conceived to engage contemporary issues in fine art concerning aesthetics, value, difference, and public space. Blint earned his Ph.D. in the Program in American Studies at NYU and sits on the boards of Vanderbilt University's *Issues in Critical Investigation: The African Diaspora*, and *CLAGS: The Center for LGBTQ Studies* at the Graduate and University Center, CUNY.

Rashida Bumbray is a curator and choreographer living and working in New York. She was a guest curator at Creative Time for the public art exhibition *Funk, God, Jazz and Medicine: Black Radical Brooklyn* in 2014. From 2006 to 2011, Bumbray was Associate Curator at The Kitchen, where she organized projects and commissions including solo exhibitions by Leslie Hewitt, Simone Leigh, Adam Pendleton, and Mai Thu Perret as well as performances by Sanford Biggers, Kalup Linzy, and Mendi & Keith Obadike. Bumbray began her career as Curatorial Assistant and Exhibition Coordinator at The Studio Museum in Harlem, where she co-founded the ongoing lobby sound installation *StudioSound and Hoofers' House*, a monthly jam session for tap dancers. Bumbray earned her BA in African American Studies and Theater & Dance from Oberlin College and her MA in Africana Studies from New York University with a focus on Contemporary Art and Performance Studies.

Grégory Castéra served as co-director of Les Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers from 2010 to 2012. During this period, he conducted various projects on discourse formation within artistic practices, giving rise to publishing projects, shows, events, and exhibitions. He is co-author of the *Encyclopédie de la Parole* (Encyclopedia of Spoken Words), an ongoing collaborative inquiry into the formal properties of speech initiated in 2007. From 2010 to 2014, to explore the notion of an ecology of art, he developed *Ecologies*, a research-based inquiry focused on the various modes of existence of works of art (including spoken words). In 2013, with Sandra Terdjman, he co-founded Council, an art-agency that composes artistic, scientific, and political practices. One of its inquiries, *Tacet*, addresses hearing through the deaf community's relation to sound.

Christoph Cox is Professor of Philosophy at Hampshire College and visiting faculty at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College. He is the author of *Sonic Flux: Sound, Art, and Metaphysics* (forthcoming) and *Nietzsche: Naturalism and Interpretation* (California, 1999) and co-editor of *Realism Materialism Art* (Sternberg, 2015) and *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music* (Continuum, 2004). The recipient of an Arts Writers Grant from Creative Capital/Warhol Foundation, Cox is editor-at-large at *Cabinet* magazine. His writing has appeared in *October*, *Artforum*, *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, *The Wire*, *Journal of Visual Culture*, *Organised Sound*, *The Review of Metaphysics*, and elsewhere. He has curated exhibitions at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, The Kitchen, New Langton Arts, and G Fine Art Gallery.

Joshua Craze is a writer and an Assistant Professor at the University of Chicago. He was a UNESCO-Aschberg artist laureate in creative writing in 2014. He has published work in *The Washington Monthly*, *the Guardian*, *the Institute of War and Peace Reporting* and elsewhere, and he has exhibited his writing on redacted documents at the New Museum. He has also worked in South Sudan as a researcher for Small Arms Survey and Human Rights Watch.

ESTAR(SER): The Esthetical Society for Transcendental and Applied Realization (now incorporating the Society of Esthetic Realizers) is an established body of independent scholars, amateurs, and interested parties who work collectively to recover, scrutinize, and (where relevant) draw attention to the historicity of "The Order of the Third Bird." Associated researchers sift the historical record for evidences of Bird-like attentional practices, and present their findings to critical readers. In this ongoing project the ESTAR(SER) community is fortunate to be in possession of an extensive body of source materials—known as "The W Cache"—which appears to have been assembled by an aspiring historian of the Order seeking to write a comprehensive history of its activities. He or she did not succeed, but bequeathed to the Society a diverse archive. The academicians of ESTAR(SER) have made it their business, over the years, to publish critical editions of these primary sources, materials that see print in the *Proceedings of ESTAR(SER)*. Offprints and other communiqués can be found at: www.estarser.net

Seeta Peña Gangadharan is a Senior Research Fellow at the New America Foundation's Open Technology Institute (OTI). Her work lies at the intersection of technology, civil society, and communication policy. She focuses on the nature of digital inequalities, data and discrimination, social dynamics of technology adoption, communication rights, and media justice. Since joining OTI in July 2011, she has written and spoken widely about digital inclusion, privacy, surveillance, and data profiling of marginalized populations. Her work has identified privacy and surveillance norms and practices among members of underserved groups and exposed the lack of privacy and surveillance knowledge among frontline staff at digital literacy organizations. She has also compared current-day data profiling to pre-digital examples of surveillance of poor people and communities of color. With colleagues, she looked at individuals reliant on public Internet access and the challenges they face in adopting end-user solutions to improve privacy and security.

Lauren van Haften-Schick is a curator, writer, and artist working towards a PhD in Art History at Cornell University studying the intersection of art and law, and histories of artists' labor, economic, and property rights. Her research focuses on Seth Siegelau and Robert Projansky's The Artists' Reserved Rights Transfer and Sale Agreement from 1971, and its origins and legacies in artistic, political, and juridical spheres. Exhibitions include *Canceled: Alternative Manifestations & Productive Failures* at The Center for Book Arts, NY, Smith College, MA, and others (2012-14), and *Non-Participation* at The Luminary, MO, and the Art League Houston (2014-15). Recent publications, workshops, and lectures include *Cariou v. Prince: Toward a Theory of Aesthetic-Judicial Judgments* (with Sergio Muñoz Sarmiento) in the Texas A&M Law Review, *Valuing Labor in the Arts* at the Arts Research Center, UC Berkeley, and *Conceptual to Legal: The Siegelau-Projansky Agreement* at the Law, Culture, and the Humanities conference, Georgetown University.

James Hudspeth conducted undergraduate studies at Harvard College and received PhD and MD degrees from Harvard Medical School. Following postdoctoral work at the Karolinska Hospital in Stockholm, he served on the faculties of the California Institute of Technology, the University of California, San Francisco, and the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. After joining Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Hudspeth moved to The Rockefeller University, where he is the F. M. Kirby Professor and Head of the Laboratory of Sensory Neuroscience. Dr. Hudspeth conducts research on hair cells, the sensory receptors of the inner ear. He and his colleagues are especially interested in the active process that sensitizes the ear, sharpens its frequency selectivity, and broadens its dynamic range. They also investigate the replacement of hair cells as a potential therapy for hearing loss. Hudspeth is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Iman Issa is an artist based in Cairo and New York. Recent group and solo exhibitions include the Perez Art Museum, 12th Sharjah Biennial, 8th Berlin Biennial, MuHKA, Antwerp, Tensta Konsthall, Spånga, New Museum, New York, KW Institute of Contemporary Art, Berlin, Sculpture Center, New York, and the Contemporary Image Collective in Cairo. Books include *Thirty-three Stories about Reasonable Characters in Familiar Places* published by the SculptureCenter (2011) and *Common Elements* published by Glasgow Sculpture Studios (2015). Awards include the HNF-MACBA Award (2012) and the Abraaj Group Art Prize (2013). Issa teaches at the Cooper Union School of Art.

Carin Kuoni (M.A. University of Zurich; B.A. Sorbonne) is Director of the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at The New School. From 1998 to 2003, she was Director of Exhibitions at Independent Curators International, from 1992 to 1997 Director of The Swiss Institute in New York. She is a founding member of the artists' collective REPOhistory (1989-2000) and has curated and co-curated numerous transdisciplinary exhibitions on issues such as contemporary Native American identity and colonial, 19th century portraiture (*Red River Crossings*, Swiss Institute); democratic, participatory processes (*OURS: Democracy in the Age of Branding*, Parsons The New School for Design); artistic and social networks (*The Grand Tour*, Swiss Institute, #searchunderoccupy, Parsons); or agency (*The Puppet Show*, ICA Philadelphia et al). Kuoni is editor or co-editor of anthologies such as *Energy Plan for the Western Man: Joseph Beuys in America*, *Words of Wisdom: A Curator's Vade Mecum*, *Considering Forgiveness*, and *Speculation, Now*.

Brian Larkin writes about the history of media technologies in Nigeria. He has explored a series of questions around aesthetics, piracy, Islam and media, and the global circulation of cultural forms. He is particularly interested in the infrastructures that organize media, how media operate, and also how they breakdown and fail. Larkin has written on topics as diverse as the building of cinema theatres, loudspeakers on mosques and churches, pirated cassettes, and distortive radios and generators. He is the author of *Signal and Noise: Infrastructure, Media and Urban Culture in Nigeria* (Duke, 2008) and the co-editor of *Media Worlds: Anthropology on New Terrain* (California, 2000).

Shannon Mattern is an Associate Professor in the School of Media Studies at The New School. Her research and teaching address relationships between the forms and materialities of media and the spaces (architectural, urban, conceptual) they create and inhabit. She writes about libraries and archives, media companies' headquarters, place branding, public design projects, urban media art, media acoustics, media infrastructures, and material texts. She is the author of *The New Downtown Library: Designing with Communities* (2007) and *Deep Mapping the Media City* (2015), both published by the University of Minnesota Press; and she is a columnist for *Places*, a journal covering architecture, landscape, and urbanism. You can find her at wordsin.space.net.

Naeem Mohaiemen works on projects on borders, wars, and belonging within Bangladesh's two postcolonial markers (1947 and 1971). In 2014, a survey show and publication, *Prisoners of Shothik Itihash* (Correct History), brought these projects together at Kunsthalle Basel. He also researches the 1970s revolutionary left in the project *The Young Man Was*. Chapters include the films *United Red Army* (2011), about a 1977 plane hijack; *Afsan's Long Day* (2014), which twinned a case of mistaken identity with the afterlives of Rote Armee Fraktion; and *Last Man in Dhaka Central* (2015), about a Dutch man arrested after the 1975 military uprisings, which will premiere at the Venice Biennial. Historian Afsan Chowdhury (the namesake of the 2014 film) has bracketed Mohaiemen, Mukherjee, D'Costa, Siddiqi, and Saikia as a "second wave of history writing" about Bangladesh. Naeem is a Ph.D. student in Historical Anthropology at Columbia University and a 2014 Guggenheim Fellow (film).

Beatriz Santiago Muñoz is an artist and a co-founder of Beta-Local, an artist-run space in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Her work arises out of long periods of observation and documentation, in which the camera is present as an object with social implications and as an instrument mediating aesthetic thought. Her films frequently start out through research into specific social structures, individuals or events, which she transforms into performance and moving image. Santiago Muñoz's recent work has been concerned with post-military land, Haitian poetics, and speculative futures. Recent exhibitions include: *La Cabeza Mató a Todos*, TEORética, San José, Costa Rica; *MATRULLA*, Sala de Arte Público Siqueiros, México City; *Under the Same Sun*, Guggenheim Museum of Art; *Post-Military Cinema*, Glasgow International; and *The Black Cave*, Gasworks, London. She is a recipient of a 2015 Creative Capital Visual Arts Award. Her work is in the collections of the Solomon Guggenheim Museum and Bronx Museum as well as other private and public collections.

Julie Beth Napolin is Assistant Professor of Digital Humanities at The New School, a musician, and radio producer. She received a PhD in Rhetoric from the University of California, Berkeley. Her work participates in the fields of sound studies, literary modernism, and aesthetic philosophy, asking what practices and philosophies of listening can tell us about the novel as form. She served as Associate Editor of *Digital Yoknapatawpha* and is writing a book manuscript on sound, race, and memory in the works of Conrad and Faulkner titled *The Fact of Resonance*.

Mendi + Keith Obadike are interdisciplinary artists who make art, music, and literature. Their intermedia work has been commissioned by The NY African Film Festival and Electronic Arts Intermix, Rhizome/The New Museum, Yale University, Whitechapel Art Gallery (London), and The Whitney Museum of American Art, among other institutions. Their major works include the sound installation *American Cypher*; the sound installation *African Metropole*; *The Sour Thunder*, an Internet Opera (Yale/Bridge Records); *Crosstalk: American Speech Music* (Bridge Records); *Black.Net.Art Actions*, a suite of new media artworks including *Blackness for Sale* (republished in *re:skin* on M.I.T Press); *Phonotype* (Ramapo), a book & CD of media artworks; and a poetry collection, *Armor and Flesh* (Lotus Press). They have contributed sounds/music to projects by a wide range of artists, including loops for soul singer D'Angelo's first album and a score for playwright Anna Deavere Smith at the Lincoln Center Institute. Mendi + Keith Obadike were invited to develop their first "opera-masquerade" by writer Toni Morrison at her Princeton Atelier. This project, *Four Electric Ghosts*, was later commissioned by the Kitchen and listed in *Artforum's* Best of the Year. Other honors

include the Rockefeller New Media Arts Fellowship, the Pick Laudati Award for Digital Art, the New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Fiction, and the Vectors Fellowship from USC. Their music and sound works have been featured on New York and Chicago public radio, as well as on Juniradio (104.5) in Berlin. **Keith Obadike** received a BA in Art from North Carolina Central University and an MFA in Sound Design from Yale University. He is Associate Professor in the College of Arts and Communication at William Paterson University and serves as an art advisor for the Times Square Alliance. **Mendi Obadike** received a BA in English from Spelman College and a PhD in Literature from Duke University. After working as a Cotsen Postdoctoral Fellow at Princeton University, she became a poetry editor at Fence magazine and Assistant Professor in the Department of Humanities and Media Studies at Pratt Institute. Upcoming projects include a collaboration with Urban Bushwomen on their new work Walking with Trane and a commissioned series of public artworks in Chicago created from the archives of the Center for Black Music Research at Columbia College to complete Mendi + Keith Obadike's third American History Intermedia Suite, Free Phase.

Laurie Jo Reynolds is an artist and policy advocate. She was the organizer for Tamms Year Ten, a grassroots campaign to close the notorious state supermax prison in Tamms, Illinois, shuttered in 2013 by Governor Pat Quinn. As a 2010 Soros Justice Fellow, Reynolds researched best practices to stop sexual abuse and reduce recidivism, creating functional and dialogical art to support policy change. She recently produced work for Citizen Culture: Art and Architecture Shape Policy, Santa Monica Museum of Art; A Proximity of Consciousness, Sullivan Galleries, Chicago; and Museum of Arte Útil, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Netherlands. Reynolds is the recipient of a Creative Capital grant, a Blade of Grass fellowship and the Lenore Annenberg Prize for Art and Social Change. In 2014, she was on the staff of Governor Quinn's re-election campaign. She is now Assistant Professor of Public Arts, Social Justice, and Culture at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Mohammad Salemy is an independent NYC/Vancouver-based critic and curator from Iran. He has curated exhibitions at the Koerner Gallery and AMS Gallery at the University of British Columbia, as well as the Satellite Gallery and Dadabase. He co-curated the exhibition Faces at the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery. In 2014, He organized the Incredible Machines conference in Vancouver. Salemy holds a masters degree in Critical and Curatorial Studies from the University of British Columbia. Salemy is an organizer with The New Centre for Research & Practice, where he oversees the Art & Curatorial Program.

Wato Tsereteli is an artist, curator and creative administrator. He studied Film in Tbilisi and obtained an MA from the Department of Photography at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp (Belgium). Tsereteli's artistic works are two, three, and four-dimensional objects with well-structured spatial organization. He has curated the international art exhibition Appendix and multiple exhibitions and projects in and outside Georgia. In 2010, he established the Center of Contemporary Art Tbilisi. The center serves as an educational, research, and exhibition platform for artists and art professionals. The Center of Contemporary Art Tbilisi has organized numerous exhibitions and presentations of local and international artists. In 2012, Tsereteli initiated the Tbilisi Triennial – a long-term project focused on education and research.

Kade L. Twist is an interdisciplinary artist working with video, sound, interactive media, text and installation environments. Twist's work combines re-imagined tribal stories with geopolitical narratives to examine the unresolved tensions between market-driven systems, consumerism and American Indian cultural self-determination. Twist is one of the co-founders of Postcommodity, an interdisciplinary artist collective. On October 9-12, 2015, Postcommodity will stage Repellent Fence, a 2 mile long land installation intersecting the US/Mexican border near Douglas, AZ and Agua Prieta, Mexico. In addition to his art practice, Twist is also a public affairs consultant specializing in American Indian health care, technology and community development. Twist received his MFA in Intermedia from the Herberger Institute School of Art at Arizona State University. He is an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.



**THE VERA LIST CENTER
FOR ART AND POLITICS
THE NEW SCHOOL**

WHAT NOW? 2015: The Politics of Listening

Friday, April 24, 2015, 12.30–7:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 25, 2015, 2:00–6:00 p.m.

The New School
Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen Auditorium
66 Fifth Avenue
New York City

“What Now? 2015” is organized by **Art in General** in collaboration with **the Vera List Center for Art and Politics**, as part of Alignment, the Vera List Center’s 2013–15 curatorial focus theme. Art in General would like to extend special thanks to the key funders of “What Now? 2015”: **the Institute of Museum and Library Services; the Lambent Foundation; and the Trust for Mutual Understanding** for their generous support of this initiative. The Vera List Center would like to also thank the Center’s Advisory Committee.

A new book series relating to the “What Now?” symposia from 2015 through 2017 will be produced with Black Dog Publishing Ltd., a project that was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Founded in 1981, **Art in General** is a nonprofit organization that assists local and international artists with the production and presentation of new work, primarily through its New Commissions Program and its International Collaborations program with numerous arts organizations around the world. It informs and engages the public about artist’s work, through public programs and the annual symposium “What Now?” on critical and timely issues in artistic and curatorial practice. www.artingeneral.org

The Vera List Center for Art and Politics is an idea incubator and a public forum for art, culture and politics. It was founded at The New School in 1992 – a time of rousing debates about freedom of speech, identity politics and society’s investment in the arts. A pioneer in the field, the center 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 of this intersection between art and politics through public programs and classes, awards and fellowships, publications and exhibitions. www.veralistcenter.org



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