

MAY DAY BOOK LAUNCH AND CELEBRATION

ASSUMING BOYCOTT: RESISTANCE, AGENCY, AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION



MAY 1, 2017
6:30 PM

Vera List Center for Art and Politics
The New School
John L. Tishman Auditorium
63 Fifth Avenue
New York City

VERA LIST CENTER FOR ART AND POLITICS

The Vera List Center for Art and Politics is an idea incubator and a 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 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 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.

www.veralistcenter.org

Assuming Boycott: Resistance, Agency, and Cultural Production, image courtesy OR Books, with an image by Interference Archive.

PROGRAM

The refusal to participate in an oppressive system has long been one of the most powerful tools in the organizer's arsenal. *Assuming Boycott: Resistance, Agency, and Cultural Production* is the essential reader for today's creative leaders and cultural practitioners, and includes original contributions by artists, scholars, activists, critics, curators, and writers who examine the historical precedent of South Africa; the current cultural boycott of Israel; freedom of speech and self-censorship; and long-distance activism. Far from representing withdrawal or cynicism, boycott emerges as a special condition for discourse, artmaking and political engagement.

As U.S. cultural and academic organizations are increasingly subjects of boycotts—in response to the ban on immigration from majority Muslim countries issued by the current U.S. administration—the question of boycott attains additional urgency. This May Day Book Launch features the three editors, **Kareem Estefan, Carin Kuoni and Laura Raicovich**, in a lively exchange with book contributors artist **Mariam Ghani** and art historian **Chelsea Haines**, joined by **Claire Potter**, Professor of History, The New School, and investigates the potential of boycott as a tool for organizing and art making.

A festive reception with **DJs ConVex and DJD** (Salome Asega and Derek Schultz) follows, in celebration of the book and other May Day assemblies in the city. Co-sponsored by **Interference Archive**, on the occasion of Sowing Resistance, Propaganda Party No. 5.

6:30

Introduction by book editors
Kareem Estefan, Carin Kuoni and Laura Raicovich

Discussion between
Claire Potter and book contributors Mariam Ghani and Chelsea Haines

7:30

Reception with
DJ's Convex and DJD

Light refreshments served.

BIOGRAPHIES

Salome Asega is a Brooklyn-based artist and researcher whose practice celebrates dissensus and multivocality. She is the co-host of speculative talk show *Hyperopia: 20/30 Vision* on bel-air radio and the Assistant Director of POWRPLNT, a digital art collaboratory. Salome has participated in residencies and fellowships at Eyebeam, New Museum, and The Laundromat Project, and she has given presentations at New Inc, Performa, Eyeo, and the Schomburg Center. She received her MFA in Design and Technology from Parsons The New School of Design and her BA from New York University in Social Practice.

Kareem Estefan is an art critic, writer, editor, and PhD student in Brown University's Modern Culture and Media department, where he researches contemporary visual culture and the intersections of art, media, and politics, with a focus on the Middle East. His writing on contemporary art and cultural activism has appeared in publications including *Art in America*, *Art-Agenda*, *BOMB*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Frieze*, *Ibraaz*, *Movement Research Performance Journal*, and *The New Inquiry*. From 2012–2015 Kareem was associate editor of *Creative Time Reports*, an online magazine of the New York-based public art nonprofit Creative Time, where he worked closely with artists such as James Bridle, Mel Chin, Molly Crabapple, Mariam Ghani, Emily Jacir, Naem Mohaiemen, and Ahmet Öğüt on texts that addressed pressing political issues. Previously he worked as an editorial assistant at National Public Radio and the Creative Capital | Andy Warhol Foundation Arts Writers Grant Program. Kareem holds an MFA in Art Criticism and Writing from the School of Visual Arts and a BA in Comparative Literature from New York University.

Mariam Ghani is an artist, writer, filmmaker, and member of the Gulf Labor Working Group. Her work looks at places and moments where social, political, and cultural structures take on visible forms. Solo exhibitions include the Queens Museum of Art, the Saint Louis Art Museum, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Rogaland Kunstsenter, and the Gatchina Museum. Notable group exhibitions and screenings include DOCUMENTA 13, the Liverpool Biennial, the Sharjah Biennial, the Dhaka Art Summit, the National Gallery in DC, the Secession in Vienna, the CCCB in Barcelona, and the Met Breuer in New York. Recent texts have been anthologized in *Critical Writing Ensembles*, *Dissonant Archives*, *Utopian Pulse*, and *Social Medium: Artists Writing 2000-2015*. Ghani holds a B.A. in Comparative Literature from New York University and an MFA from the School of Visual Arts, and has received a number of awards, grants and fellowships, most recently from Creative Capital. She is a member of the Vera List Center Prize Council and teaches at Queens College, CUNY, and Cooper Union.

Chelsea Haines is an independent curator and doctoral candidate in art history at The Graduate Center, City University of New York. She is currently a Presidential Research Fellow at The Center for the Humanities where she recently curated *Christian Palestinian Archive: A Project by Dor Guez* at the James Gallery. Since 2009, she has organized exhibitions and public programs for institutions such as Independent Curators International, Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, and the Vera List Center for Art and Politics at The New School where she co-edited *Entry Points: The Vera List Center Field Guide on Art and Social Justice*. She is currently adjunct lecturer in the Spitzer School of Architecture, the City College of New York.

Carin Kuoni is a curator and editor whose work examines how contemporary artistic practices reflect and inform social, political, and cultural conditions. She is the director and curator of The New School's Vera List Center for Art and Politics, and also teaches at The New School. Prior to joining the Vera List Center, she was Director of Exhibitions at Independent Curators International and Director of The Swiss Institute, New York. A founding member of the artists' collective REPOhistory, Kuoni has curated and co-curated numerous transdisciplinary exhibitions, and edited and co-edited several books, among them *Energy Plan for the Western Man: Joseph Beuys in America*; *Words of Wisdom: A Curator's Vademecum*; *Speculation, Now*; *Entry Points: The Vera List Center Field Guide on Art and Social Justice*; *Jill Magid: The Proposal*, and *Assuming Boycott: Resistance, Agency, and Cultural Production*. She is the recipient of a 2014 Andy Warhol Foundation Curatorial Fellowship, directed *SITAC XII: Arte, justamente* in Mexico City in 2015, and is a Travel Companion for the 57th Carnegie International in 2018.

Claire Potter joined The New School in 2012, and teaches courses in history, digital humanities, the recent history of digital media, and gender and sexuality. She is the author of *War on Crime: Bandits, G-Men and the Politics of Mass Culture* (Rutgers, 1998) and co-editor, with Renee Romano, of *Doing Recent History: On Privacy, Copyright, Video Games, Institutional Review Boards, Activist Scholarship, and History That Talks Back* (University of Georgia Press, 2012). She is affiliated with the university history department, and teaches in the Creative Publishing and Journalism program at NSSR. Claire is Director of the Digital Humanities Initiative, dedicated to promoting digital practices in the classroom, faculty research and the community that surrounds the New School. A member of the editorial board of the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, Claire is also a director of OutHistory.org and an editor at *Public Seminar*. She is currently working on a book of essays about digital history, a co-edited collection of essays about *Hamilton: the Musical*, and a monograph about the politics of anti-pornography campaigns in the late twentieth century United States.

Laura Raicovich is President and Executive Director of The Queens Museum. She is a champion of socially engaged art practices that address the most pressing social, political, and ecological issues of our times, and has defined her career with artist-driven projects and programs. Recent projects at the Queens Museum include *Mierle Laderman Ukeles: Maintenance Art*; *William Gropper: Bearing Witness*; *Mickalene Thomas: Untitled*; *Mariam Ghani: Garden of Forked Tongues*; *Duke Riley: That's What She Said*; *Hey! Ho! Let's Go: Ramones and the Birth of Punk*, as well as a series of programs designed with Rebecca Solnit and Joshua Jelly Shapiro to launch their *Nonstop Metropolis: A New York City Atlas*. Prior to the Queens Museum, Raicovich launched Creative Time's Global Initiatives, expanding the institution's international reach. Raicovich came to Creative Time following a decade at Dia Art Foundation, where she served as Deputy Director. Previously she worked at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Public Art Fund, and NYC's Parks Department. She graduated from Swarthmore College and holds a Master's Degree in Liberal Studies from the Graduate Center at the City University of New York. She lectures internationally, has contributed regularly to *The Brooklyn Rail*, and is the author *A Diary of Mysterious Difficulties* (Publication Studio 2014) and *At the Lightning Field* (Coffee House Press, 2017).

Derek Schultz is a Brooklyn-based video artist, photographer, and DJ. He is music producer on the speculative talk show *Hyperopia: 20/30 Vision* and produces digital content for a major record label. Hailing from Detroit, Derek has a passion for exploring the histories of techno and niche genres of electronic music—and has utilized these explorations when DJ'ing major events at the Crofoot Detroit, the launch party for forward-thinking fashion line òL New York, and more. His video work has been exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, the Main Art Theatre Royal Oak, and featured on *The New York Times*. He received his BFA in Video Art & Production from College for Creative Studies.

ASSUMING BOYCOTT: RESISTANCE, AGENCY AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION

Boycott and divestment are essential tools for activists around the globe. Today's organizers target museums, universities, corporations, and governments to curtail unethical sources of profit, discriminatory practices, or human rights violations. They leverage cultural production – and challenge its institutional supports – helping transform situations in the name of social justice.

The refusal to participate in an oppressive system has long been one of the most powerful weapons in the organizer's arsenal. Since the days of the 19th century Irish land wars, when Irish tenant farmers defied the actions of Captain Charles Boycott and English landlords, "boycott" has been a method that's shown its effectiveness time and again. In the 20th century, it notably played central roles in the liberation of India and South Africa and the struggle for civil rights in the U.S.: the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott is generally seen as a turning point in the movement against segregation.

Assuming Boycott is the essential reader for today's creative leaders and cultural practitioners, including original contributions by artists, scholars, activists, critics, curators and writers who examine the historical precedent of South Africa; the current cultural boycott of Israel; freedom of speech and self-censorship; and long-distance activism. Far from withdrawal or cynicism, boycott emerges as a productive tool of creative and productive engagement.

Including essays by Nasser Abourahme, Ariella Azoulay, Tania Bruguera, Noura Erakat, Kareem Estefan, Mariam Ghani with Haig Aivazian, Nathan Gray and Ahmet Ögüt, Chelsea Haines, Sean Jacobs, Yazan Khalili, Carin Kuoni and Laura Raicovich, Svetlana Mintcheva, Naem Mohaiemen, Hlonipha Mokoena, John Pepper, Joshua Simon, Ann Laura Stoler, Radhika Subramaniam, Eyal Weizman and Kareem Estefan, and Frank B. Wilderson III.

Assuming Boycott is published by OR Books, in association with the Vera List Center for Art and Politics.

To purchase your paper or e-book copy, please visit www.orbooks.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS
Vera List Center for Art and Politics

PUBLIC ART FUND TALKS AT THE NEW SCHOOL

ANISH KAPOOR

Wednesday, May 3, 2017 6:30-8:00 pm

THE NEW SCHOOL, THE AUDITORIUM AT 66TH WEST 12TH STREET
\$10 ADMISSION; FREE TO ALL STUDENTS AND THE NEW SCHOOL FACULTY, STAFF,
AND ALUMNI WITH VALID ID. TICKETS MAY BE PURCHASED ON THE DAY OF EACH TALK
BUT WE RECOMMEND PURCHASING IN ADVANCE.

ICI CURATOR'S PERSPECTIVE LECTURE

TREVOR SCHOONMAKER

Monday, May 24, 2017 6:30-8:00 pm

THE NEW SCHOOL, THERESA LANG CENTER

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

*Schoonmaker will present on Prospect4, the fourth iteration of New Orleans' international
exhibition opening in November 2017.*

THIS EVENT IS BEING LIVESTREAMED - THE FOOTAGE WILL BE AVAILABLE ON OUR
WEBSITE SHORTLY FOLLOWING THE EVENT

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THE NEW SCHOOL

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