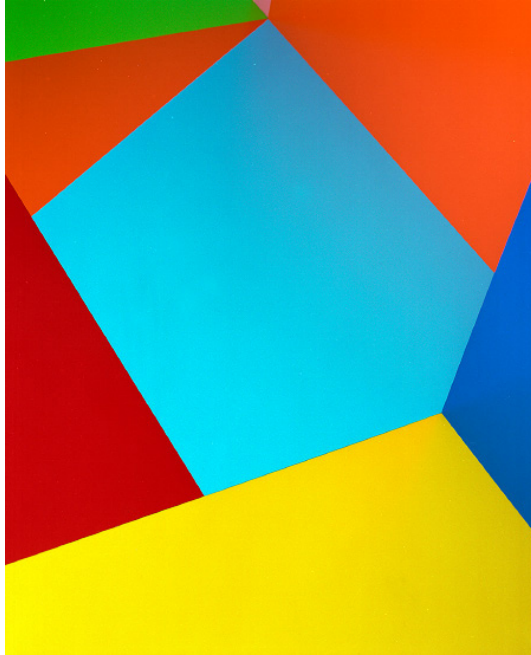


SEMINAR II OF THE SERIES
ASSUMING BOYCOTT: RESISTANCE, AGENCY, AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION

CULTURAL PRODUCTION DURING BDS



OCTOBER 20, 2014
4:00–9:00 PM

Vera List Center for Art and Politics
The New School, Theresa Lang Community and Student Center
55 West 13th Street, 2nd floor
New York City

ABOUT

Cultural production opens avenues for new ways of thinking. But how can withdrawal and boycott be productive or conducive to politically oriented artistic practices? This series of seminars poses an alternative view: to consider boycott and withdrawal as special conditions for discourse and artmaking. The seminars address timely questions on the agency of artists in the social and political sphere, and how culture can enact and perform change within a politics of disengagement.

Cultural Production During BDS

In the face of the intractable conflict and inequity between Israel and Palestine, Palestinian civil society called for Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel in 2005, and has recently renewed the call. There has been passionate and profound debate in the United States and internationally about what this boycott stands for, particularly as it pertains to cultural boycott, and how individuals and organizations might respond to it. While these debates continue, this seminar proposes to open another front in the discourse as it relates to artists and cultural producers. Too often the discussion of boycott is a proxy for the underlying political issues and does not address what the contours of artistic production within boycott looks like. What do we actually mean when we talk about cultural production within a boycott? How might culture do what it does best—provide new lenses through which to see matters at hand? What role might culture play in this context?

The teach-in by New School faculty and students wrestling with the contours of cultural boycott in the afternoon is followed by a talk featuring Ramallah-based curator and writer **Tirdad Zolghadr**. His presentation opens into a public discussion led by invited respondents including teacher **Riham Barghouti**, curator **Reem Fadda**, artist **Mariam Ghani**, and writer **Suhail Malik**.

In his presentation, **Tirdad Zolghadr** argues that boycott initiatives in contemporary art are surprisingly common, but are yet to be theorized. It also challenges the notion of boycotts as bringing dialogue to an end; the notion of restrictive, silencing mechanisms has little

to do with historical experience, or any particular cause célèbre, and more to do with the self-understanding of contemporary art as something inherently indeterminate, open-ended, and dialogical. It is this notion of dialogue in particular that makes boycotts seem antithetical to dialogue in general. It is why boycotts are often held, but rarely acknowledged in any broader fashion. To be sure, a boycott is not an automatic departure from indeterminate, open-ended orthodoxy. But in the best case, it shows how art can shape the discourse as a hegemonic phenomenon in its own right.

PROGRAM

Teach-in, with select New School faculty and students
And Lamis Deek, Mariam Ghani, Laura Raicovich, and
Tirdad Zolghadr
4:00–6:00 pm

Lecture by Tirdad Zolghadr
Don't Say Yes When You Want to Say No
6:30–7:30 pm

Discussion, with respondents and audiences
8:00–9:00 pm

Lecturer and Respondents

Riham Barghouti, teacher and co-founder Adalah-NY
Reem Fadda, Associate Curator, Middle Eastern Art, Abu Dhabi Project at the Guggenheim
Mariam Ghani, artist, member of Gulf Labor
Suhail Malik, Co-Director of MFA Fine Art, Goldsmiths, London
Tirdad Zolghadr, curator, Al Quds Bard College and the International Academy of Art in Ramallah

PARTICIPANTS

Riham Barghouti is a New York City teacher, a founding member of the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, and a co-founder of Adalah-NY: The New York Campaign for the Boycott of Israel.

Reem Fadda is Associate Curator, Middle Eastern Art, Abu Dhabi Project at the Guggenheim. From 2005 to 2007, Fadda was Director of the Palestinian Association for Contemporary Art (PACA) and worked as Academic Director for the International Academy of Art Palestine, which she helped found in 2006. She has been involved in many international exhibitions, including *Liminal Spaces*, a four-year artistic and political project consisting of conferences, tours, art residencies, and exhibitions in Palestine, Israel, and Germany; *Ramallah Syndrome*, and *Tarjama/Translation*, organized by ArteEast, which featured 30 artists from the Middle East and Central Asia at the Queens Museum of Art, New York. In 2009, she organized the 3rd Riwaq Biennale, Ramallah, with Charles Esche. Fadda is on the general assembly of the International Academy of Art and Kamandjati Association, the selection jury of the Young Arab Theatre Fund, and the steering committee of Decolonizing Architecture.

Mariam Ghani is an artist, writer, teacher, and member of the Gulf Labor working group. Her exhibitions and screenings include the Rotterdam and CPH:DOX film festivals, dOCUMENTA (13) in Kabul and Kassel, MoMA in New York, the CCCB in Barcelona, Secession in Vienna, and the Sharjah Biennial 10. Recent texts have been published by Creative Time Reports, Foreign Policy, Ibraaz, and Triple Canopy. Ghani collaborates with artist Chitra Ganesh as the experimental archive Index of the Disappeared; with choreographer Erin Kelly on the video series Performed Places; and with media archive collective Pad.ma on the Afghan Films online archive. Ghani holds a B.A. in Comparative Literature from NYU and an MFA from SVA. She is currently the Freund Teaching Fellow at Washington University in St. Louis and a Visiting Scholar at the Asian/Pacific/American Institute at NYU.

Suhail Malik is Co-Director of MFA Fine Art, Goldsmiths, London, and 2012-15 Visiting Faculty at CCS Bard, New York. Malik writes on political economy, theory, and art's axioms.

Tirdad Zolghadr is a curator and writer, currently affiliated with Al Quds Bard College and the International Academy of Art in Ramallah. His writing includes novels, essays and criticism. The working title of his third novel is *Headbanger*. Curatorial work includes a large number of discreet durational projects and several biennial settings. Zolghadr is curator of the 5th Riwaq Biennale.

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

RESOURCE GUIDE

- Barghouti, Avishai, Ratner, and Alterman, "OpinionNation: a Forum on Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS)." In *The Nation*, 5/3/2012
- Chomsky, Noam, "On Israel-Palestine and BDS." In *The Nation*, 7/2/2014
- Responses to Noam Chomsky in *The Nation*
- Dana and Blumenthal, "Who is Afraid of BDS?" In *972 Mag*, 2/6/2011
- Klein, Naomi, "Israel: Boycott, Divest, Sanction." In *The Nation*, 1/7/2009
- Lerman, Antony, "The End of Liberal Zionism." In *The New York Times*, 8/22/2014
- Nelson, Cary, "The Problem with Judith Butler: the Political Philosophy of the Movement to Boycott Israel." In *The LA Review of Books*, 3/16/2014
- Zolghadr, Tirdad, "Shades of No." in *WDW Review*, 6/2014
- Zonszein, Mairav, "How Israel Silences Dissent." In *The New York Times*, 9/26/2014

Webpages

- PACBI guidelines <http://www.pacbi.org/etemplate.php?id=1047>
- Center for Palestine Studies, Columbia University <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/palestine/>
- B'Tselem - The Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories <http://www.btselem.org/>
- Who Profits? The Israeli Occupation Industry <http://www.whoprofits.org/>
- Visualizing Palestine <http://visualizingpalestine.org/infographic/gaza-water-confined>
- Institute for Middle East Understanding (IMEU) <http://imeu.org/>

ASSUMING BOYCOTT - ALL SEMINARS

The seminars are organized by the Vera List Center for Art and Politics, as part of the center's 2013-2015 curatorial focus on Alignment. They are curated by Carin Kuoni, director/curator, Vera List Center, and Laura Raicovich, Creative Time's director of global initiatives.

The Legacy of the Cultural Boycott in South Africa

Thursday, September 18th, 2014

Video documentation available at www.veralistcenter.org

Cultural Production During BDS (Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel)

Monday, October 20th, 2014

The Architect's Dilemma: How Far Is Far Enough (to Let Go of Responsibility)

Monday, December 1st, 2014

Self-Censorship

Monday, January 26, 2015

Institutional Reviews: What New Forms of Organizations Emerge for Select Engagement with Select Initiatives?

Monday, February 23, 2015

Marking the Moment: Colloquium on the Efficacy of Current Strategies of Disengagement

April 10 and 11, 2015

UPCOMING EVENTS
Vera List Center for Art and Politics

PUBLIC ART FUND TALKS AT THE NEW SCHOOL

Abraham Cruzvillegas
Wednesday, October 22, 2014, 6:30–8:00 pm

THE NEW SCHOOL, THE AUDITORIUM AT 66 WEST 12TH STREET
\$10, FREE TO ALL STUDENTS AND
THE NEW SCHOOL FACULTY, STAFF, AND ALUMNI WITH VALID ID

THE YEAR OF JAMES BALDWIN

Artist Leslie Hewitt in
conversation with curator Thomas J. Lax and
cinematographer Bradford Young
Monday, November 3, 2014, 6:30 pm

WOLLMAN HALL, 65 WEST 11TH STREET

THE YEAR OF JAMES BALDWIN

“James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket”
Special 25th Anniversary Screening
Wednesday, November 12, 2014, 6:30–8:30 pm

TISHMAN AUDITORIUM, UNIVERSITY CENTER, 65 FIFTH AVENUE

THE AICA-USA DISTINGUISHED CRITIC LECTURE AT THE NEW SCHOOL

Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev
Thursday, November 20, 2014, 6:30–8:00 pm

THE NEW SCHOOL, THE AUDITORIUM AT 66 WEST 12TH STREET

ADMISSION TO ALL EVENTS IS FREE UNLESS STATED OTHERWISE.

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