

# **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



## **VERA LIST CENTER FOR ART AND POLITICS**

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.

## FEMINIST MANIFESTOS

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**

*Women's Environmental Rights: A Manifesto* by Leslie Weisman, 1981

**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**

*The Charter of Feminist Principles for African Feminists* by the African Feminist Forum, 2006

**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**

*Manifiesto 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

## 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 Caffè 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.

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

**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.

## CREDITS

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.

## THANK YOU

To the participating artists, scholars, thinkers, and makers; to our partner organizations, to all those whose labor is invisible but make The New School function, to Christiane Paul; to Gina Walker; to Maya Wiley; to Emily Donnelly, Nina Olivetti, and Sonia Zhang at the Vera List Center; and to the members of the Vera List Center Advisory Committee:

James Keith (JK) Brown, Chair  
Carlos Basualdo  
Frances Beatty  
Michelle Coffey  
Gabriella De Ferrari  
Ronald Feldman  
Andrew Francis  
Marilyn Greene  
Susan Hapgood  
Elizabeth R. Hilpman  
Norman L. Kleeblatt

Carin Kuoni  
Thomas Lax  
Jane Lombard  
Lydia Matthews  
Susan Meiselas  
Megan E. Noh  
Mendi and Keith Obadike  
Nancy Delman Portnoy  
Ingrid Schaffner  
Mary Watson

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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

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