

Labor, Globalization and Art

TCXG 392a – Winter 2008

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Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday

Class Meeting Time: Monday/Wednesday 6-7 pm or by appointment Classroom: WG 308

Course Summary

Through reading, writing, discussion, studio art practice and the analysis of contemporary media and art, we will examine issues of work, labor, and the effects of globalization on our contemporary life. Students will make art about their own work experiences and learn about art history and contemporary art that depicts labor. In particular we will look at some the exciting new art projects created by the global justice movement.

Course Objectives

- ◆ To explore a conceptual approach to art making
- ◆ To develop formal skills and fluency with visual grammar
- ◆ To experience hands-on collaborative art processes
- ◆ To be exposed to a wide variety of contemporary art forms including digital imaging, found object/text work, site-specific installations, puppetry and Theater of the Oppressed improvisations
- ◆ To develop facility with the terms INTENTION, AUDIENCE and CONTEXT when discussing the goals of an artwork
- ◆ To become familiar with a variety ways of understanding how stories about work can become art
- ◆ To encourage critical thinking in relation to labor issues as they relate to the global and local contexts

Course Requirements

- ◆ Reading of e-reserve articles and course texts, *Liberating Memor* and *Globalize Liberation*. See attached bibliography.
- ◆ Journal – you will put photos, notes about readings and class discussions, sketches, media literacy exercises, any ideas for projects about your work experiences and the effects of globalization. The Journal will be graded twice – once at midterm, and again at the end of the quarter. There should be two entries per week, **minimum!!!**
- ◆ Assignments: Photo/text project based on your work story and a mixed media project based on the story of an everyday object/commodity tracing its global pathway
- ◆ A collaborative project that looks at labor issues in relation to global justice
- ◆ A research project presented orally (7-10 minutes) about an artist whose work addresses labor or globalization issues. The artist being discussed can come from the course bibliography. Research can be done on the web, but **MUST** include journal articles that critically assess the artist's work

Class participation is essential and unexcused absences will affect grades. Attendance is extremely important in studio art classes. **Missing more than two class meetings during the quarter, regardless of the reason, will have a negative effect on your class participation grade.**

Classroom Behavior

Food and drink are acceptable as long as you do not disrupt the class or bother your neighbors. **No food or drink is allowed on the computer side of the art studio.** Please turn off all electronic devices including cell phones and pagers when you come to class. Please be respectful and attentive when others are speaking in class. Arriving late or leaving early should never happen except on rare occasions; if you must arrive late or leave early, please do so in as unobtrusive a way as possible

Grades and Self-evaluation

Students will turn in their journals, documenting their work during the first 5 weeks of class on Feb 6. A self-evaluation statement is required as part of that review. The self-evaluation should reflect on participation in class discussions, the art process in relation to collaborative and individual work, and the insights culled from writing, reading and research. Students are required to share their studio projects during group feedback sessions and to participate in the discussions about their work.

All assignments are assessed according to the following criteria:

1. Familiarity with visual grammar in relation to the student's intention
2. Ability to be inventive both with content and form, and to take risks
3. Attention to craft and process
4. Responsiveness to suggestions to strengthen projects

Grades will be weighted in the following way: Midterm journal: 10%, Final Journal: 10%, Labor Story Project (20%), Global Pathway Project (20%) Collaborative Global Justice, Site-Specific project (20%), Oral Presentation: 10%, Participation: 10%

Grades will be given according to the grade point system. Please refer to this website for information about the grading scale: http://www.washington.edu/students/gencat/front/Grading_Sys.html

Grades are distinguished by the following characteristics:

3.5–4 = OUTSTANDING work, significant extra time spent in developing work, risks taken, unity of concept and handling of materials to create an imaginative visual statement that challenges conventional thinking and image making

2.5–3.4 = ABOVE AVERAGE work, solid concepts and skillful handling of materials, exploration of conceptual ideas evident with thought provoking results

1.5–2.4 = AVERAGE work, competent execution of ideas but not pushing conventions, craftsmanship acceptable with no outstanding qualities, overall investment fulfills requirement but no risk-taking apparent, no evidence of extra time invested to strengthen technical and conceptual issues

.5–1.4 = BELOW AVERAGE, little involvement in exploration of ideas or misunderstanding of assignment with little attention to craftsmanship

0 = FAILING, no attempt to articulate ideas and total lack of regard for craftsmanship

The following factors will be considered when determining a final participation grade: amount of effort expended throughout the course, amount of progress made in creative development, development of focused and productive work attitude, lateness, absences, and attendance.

Development of a critical language is essential to your constructive participation in group crits and discussions. Evidence of this skill in the discussion of your work and other's work is expected and will be considered in your final grade.

Supplies

Small sketch pad or journal (7" x 9" minimum) digital camera (they can be borrowed from media services) or traditional film camera. Adobe Photoshop is the software used for photo/text projects and can be downloaded for a 60 day free trial period from the Adobe website:

www.adobe.com This software can also be purchased at the student rate from the UW bookstore.

You will be required to use a computer for creating some of the projects in class. Students with mild or severe technophobia are advised to meet with me or a lab technician ASAP. In some situations, class projects can be completed without the use of a computer.

Aside from the Mac computers and scanner in our classroom, there are open labs with Macs & PCs with Photoshop, scanners and printers in WG 108, SCI 105 and the Multimedia Lab is MAT 251.

Dropping this class

If you choose to drop the course, you are responsible for reporting the change to the registrar's office. If you stop coming to class and do not contact the registrar, you will end up receiving a failing grade even if you attended only once.

Disability Support Services

If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a temporary or permanent disability, contact Lisa Tice, Manager of Disability Support Services (DSS) in the Mattress Factory Building, Suite 206. An appointment can be made through the front desk of Student Affairs (253-692-4501), by phoning Lisa directly at (253) 692-4493 (voice)/(253) 692-4413 (TTY) or via e-mail at ltice@u.washington.edu. Appropriate accommodations are arranged after you have conferred with the DDS Manager and presented the required documentation of your disability to DSS.

Calendar

Jan 7 – Review syllabus and course goals. Instructor introduction. Student introductions: Introduce yourself in relation to history, thinking of your identity as something in motion. Describe the moment in history that we are living in.

Homework: Write down in your new journal work stories from different jobs you have held. Stories should be short (less than one page) and reveal some tension that existed in the job between workers and customers, workers and bosses/managers, workers and workers, work and home life, work and health, etc. and make notes in your journal. . Register at Blackboard (where grades and other relevant course material will be posted). The address to register at is bb.tacoma.washington.edu, you will have to enter your Net ID and your password, and then enroll in my course listed as Labor, Globalization and Art, Winter 2008 and the password to enroll is "justice".

Read the article: <http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?sectionID=19&itemID=12018> and make notes in journal.

Jan 9 – Slide show – labor posters and photo projects. Strategies for making narrative images. Visual grammar. Roles of the artist. Discussion about class identity.

Homework: Start taking photos, making drawings, or collecting objects for first project. Read two stories from *Liberating Memory* by Janet Zandy. Make notes.

Jan 14 – Photoshop workshop. Discussion of reading. View examples of labor art

Homework: - Read essays about Globalization. Bring in Ads for Media Literacy exercise.

Jan 16 - Media Literacy workshop. Discussion about globalization. Work session.

Homework: Read <http://www.coopamerica.org/pubs/caq/articles/InvestingfortheWorld.cfm>
<http://www.commondreams.org/views06/0219-30.htm> and more stories from Zandy.

Jan 21 – MLK Jr. holiday. No class.

Homework: read <http://www.rethinkingschools.org/publication/rg/RGIntro.shtml> and make notes.

Rework labor story projects.

Jan 23 – 1st Feedback session on labor story projects. Look at some web art about labor/globalization issues.

Jan 28 – Introduce the Global Journey of an Object/Commodity project. Looking at a material object or commodity through the lens of globalization. Student work in teams of two and pick an object or commodity to research. Example: A plastic fork with stamped logo. Based on the logo, the students can do a web search for the source of the fork – where it is made, what resources were used to create the plastic and where they were taken from environmentally and regionally, who made it and what were their working conditions (including environmental health stresses), what are the material and social costs of transporting and advertising the object, etc. There will probably be more than one dead end in this research. Be imaginative. Ask people who might know more about the object's history. You may have to create some fiction to fill in the blanks, but the fiction should be based on some research about another similar object. Create an art piece based on this research – the most provocative aspects of your research can be included, but not every detail needs to be. Examples of previous projects will be shared in class. All art forms (from performance to photo-text to installation) are available to explore and use.

Homework: Begin research on object. Watch film from list at end of bibliography and make notes. Read *Globalize Liberation* – Chapters tba Make notes in Journal.

Jan 30 – Look at global justice movement art. Discussion of reading. Theater of Oppression games.

Homework: *Globalize Liberation* – Chapters tba

Feb 4 – Instructor absent. Watch: *Wal*Mart: The High Cost of Low Price*. Make notes. Send in self-evaluation via email. Each question can be answered with a short paragraph (2-5 sentences).

- 1) How have the discussions about labor history, work, class, globalization, and global justice helped you to develop your opinions on this topic?
- 2) What are some aspects of the reading and art we have seen that have opened your eyes to new ways of thinking about the topic?
- 3) How did the media literacy exercise help you connect with the topics of the course?
- 4) How do you feel about the evolution of your art project about your own work story?
- 5) What do you feel has been one of the most important things you have learned about your creative process so far this quarter?
- 6) How do you feel about your participation in class discussions?
- 7) What skills would you like to develop during the second half of the quarter?

Feb 6 – Midterm review - individual meetings. Film screening: *Letters from the Other Side* (Heather Courtney –2006) and *China Blue*. Make notes on the films.

Guidelines for Oral presentation about artist

Present a few examples (minimum of 5 images, maximum of 10) of the artist's work that deals with labor and/or globalization issues and discuss the meaning of the work and questions that you may have about it.

Research should be from books or journals. A good place to find journal articles is via JStor or Project Muse - both search engines are easily accessible via the library electronic journals (go to the UWT

library home page) - you will need to login to access them. There are many other search engines available via the library web page. You can also email the artists and ask them questions directly. Tell them that you are student in my class.

Getting your information only from the artist and his/her website is not sufficient. You need to read interpretations about the artist's work written by others.

If you discover that not much has been written about the artist you have chosen, then you will need to change artists. So it will be good to begin looking for articles several weeks before your presentation, just in case you have little luck finding material.

After reading three articles by art writers or critics, summarize what you think that these writers feel are the intentions of the artist's work. It is fine to share quotes from these writers.

Offer us a rough bio about the artist - it would be good to know where and when the artist was born, where or if s/he went to school, what class background the artist has, whether s/he teaches somewhere and what you think or what s/he says provoked him or her to be an artist who is dealing with the topics s/he is dealing with. The majority of your presentation should focus on the artwork itself (several different projects, if possible), and you should make a good effort to explain the artist's intentions through your discussion.

In your conclusion, suggest a question that the class might want to respond to regarding the work.

Presentation format can be in power point or you can just project scanned images of the artist's work on the large screen. Do NOT put the text of your presentation on the screen, only the title, date and medium of the works shown and then read biographical information, discussion regarding the content and intentions of the work and quotes from your notes instead. While you are speaking, make sure there are images for us to look at. You will be given 10 min. max. to speak.

Feb 11 – Oral presentations - Brainstorming collaborative project

Feb 13 – Oral presentations - Continue collaborative project

Feb 18 – President's Day – no class.

Feb 20 – Oral presentations – Collab project

Feb 25 – Global journey feedback session #1. Collab project work sessions

Feb 27 – Collab work sessions

Mar 3 – Sergio De La Torre & Vicky Funari of Maquilopolis give talk on campus

Mar 5 – 2nd feedback session for Global Journey projects. Feedback on collaborative projects.

Mar 10– Install Public, site-specific, interactive projects

Mar 12 – Final critique. Drop off journals

(possible class Mar 19 depending on whether we are behind schedule) Pick up journals

Bibliography

Alewitz, Mike, **Insurgent Images: The Agitprop Murals of Mike Alewitz**, Monthly Review Press, 2002

Armbruster-Sandoval, Ralph, **Globalization and Cross-Border Labor Solidarity in the Americas**, Routledge, 2004

Bigelow, Bill and Peterson, Bob (eds.), **Rethinking Globalization : Teaching for Justice in an Unjust World**, Milwaukee, Wis.: Rethinking Schools Press, 2002

Foner, Philip and Schulz, Reinhard, **Other America: Art and the Labor Movement in the US**, Journeyman Press, 1985

Johnson, Mark Dean (ed), **At Work: the Art of California Labor**, Heyday Books, 2003

Solnit, David, **Globalize Liberation: How to Uproot the System and Build a Better World**,

Citylights Publishers, 2003

Tarrow, Sidney, **The New Transnational Activism**, Cambridge U Press, 2005

Zandy, Janet (ed.), **Liberating Memory: Our Work and Our Working-Class Consciousness**,

Rutgers University Press, 1994

_____ **Hands: Physical Labor, Class and Cultural Work**, Rutgers U, 2004

Film List (most of these are available to screen @ the UWT library)

Life and Debt (Stephanie Black, 2003), The Take (Naomi Klein, 2004), The Global Generation (2001), Where Do You Stand? (Lescaze, 2004), A Day without a Mexican (2004), Bread and Roses (Ken Loach, 2000), The Navigators (Loach, 2001) Out of Darkness (Barbara Kopple, 1990), The Corporation, Balseros (2005), Destination America (2005), Roger and Me (Moore - 1990), Downsize This (Moore - 1996), Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price (2005), It's a Wonderful Life (1946), Modern Times (Chaplin 1936), Crossing Arizona (2006), Golden Venture (2006), The Store (Frederick Wiseman), El Norte (Gregory Nava - 1984), Manufactured Landscapes (2007), Salt of the Earth (1953), Life (TVE, 2000), Globalization and Human Rights (Globalvision 1999), The New Rulers of the World (John Pilger, 2001), Robert McChesney takes on Media Globalization (Paper Tiger Television)

Relevant Websites

<http://www.tjm.org.uk/about/statement.shtml>

<http://www.docspopuli.org/>

<http://www.iir.berkeley.edu/exhibit/>

<http://www.monthlyreview.org/insurgentweb/>

<http://chicanas.com/jalicia.html>

<http://www.laborarts.org/>

<http://www.ylem.org/artists/mmosher/grant3.html>

http://www.northlandposter.com/cgi-bin/Web_store/web_store.cgi

<http://www.riniart.org/mainframe.php?s=1>

<http://thedagger.com/thedagger/solidarity/>

<http://www.museumofthecorporation.org/why.htm>

<http://www.zeitgeist.net/wfca/wisefool.htm>

<http://www.zmag.org/LaborWatch.cfm>

<http://www.voyd.com/gab/>

<http://www.intelligentagent.com>

<http://www.terminaltime.com>

<http://www.rtmark.com>

<http://www.theyesmen.com>

<http://www.gatt.org>

<http://www.beehivecollective.org>

<http://americanart.si.edu/helios/newmedia/lichty>

<http://www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org/>

<http://www.workersrights.org/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sweatshop#Anti-sweatshop_movement

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Globalisation>

<http://www.globaljusticemovement.net/>

<http://www.globaljusticemovement.org/>

http://www.sentienttimes.com/03/dec_jan_03/global_justiceT.html

<http://www.sociology.emory.edu/globalization/glossary.html>

<http://www.laborheritage.org/>

<http://www.graphicwitness.org/ineye/index2.htm>

<http://www.ilr.cornell.edu/library/research/QuestionOfTheMonth/archive/laborArtOnline.html>
<http://faculty.washington.edu/gregoryj/strike/>
<http://depts.washington.edu/wtohist/>
<http://streetartworkers.org/help.html>
<http://www.oakland.edu/org/tergloba/terglobaframeset.htm>
<http://workingimage.ca/>
<http://www.sustainabletable.org/>
<http://www.eatwellguide.org/>
<http://www.newenergychoices.org/>
<http://www.thematrix.com/>
http://www.jhsph.edu/clf/programs/farming/proj_sg.html
<http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/>
<http://www.thirstthemovie.org/index.html>

Artists to consider for oral presentations (some with Creative-Capital website info)

The Yes Men
Mike Alewitz
Judy Baca
Ricardo Levins Morales
Lincoln Cushing
Mark Priest
Patricia Ford
Rick Flores
Rini Templeton
Earl Dotter
Eva Cockcroft
The Beehive Collective
Kathleen Farrell
Carol*Simpson
Bill Yund
May Stevens
Jacob Lawrence
Ben Shahn
Sue Coe
Ralph Fasanella
Diego Rivera
David Avalos
John Jota Leanos
Carol Conde/Karl Beveridge
Critical Art Ensemble: GenTerra
Peggy Diggs: Work Out
Ricardo Dominguez: Anchors for Witnessing: Post Media for Off-Grid Communities
Zoe Leonard: Analog
Prema Murthy: Mythic Hybrid
Ted Purves & Susanne Cockrell: Temescal Amity Works
Red Dive: Peripheral City
RTMark: www.RTMark.com
Joseph Scanlan: Pay Dirt
subRosa: Refugia