

Pedagogy for Dissent through Experimental Documentary

Session 3, Wednesday, April 26, 7-9:00pm – Tactical & Strategic Media

About this roundtable series:

A how-to and critique of techniques and tactics for political activism, direct action, and dissent taught through radical and experimental documentary. In this roundtable series we will present screenings and discussions with media makers, theorists, thinkers and activists.

Pedagogy for Dissent surveys documentary media created at the intersection of art and activism, exploring the power of the image, culture jamming experiments, tactics and strategies of media making and distribution. We will take a critical and grateful look at activism of the past in order to design effective contemporary modes of dissent.

This session is a how-to primer on using media as part of a larger activist strategy. Presenting innovations, interventions, tactics, and techniques to get attention for your cause (or avoid unwanted scrutinizing of your activities).

Organizers:

Pedagogy for Dissent is curated and hosted by Liz Flyntz and Anna Scime

Screenings:

Undeniable Evidence, by Igor Vamos, 1995 (30:40 min)

A provocative half-hour of guerrilla artists caught in the act on videotape, *Undeniable Evidence* is a public art extravaganza assembled by Igor Vamos and anonymous culture jammers.

Ephemeral pieces documented include *Grupo Baja Mar/The Low Tide Group*. An artists' group uses the unique geologic and architectural features of Spain's San Sebastian's beaches to create a giant public billboard that wipes itself clean each day with the incoming tide. In English and Spanish.

Human Target Flag Responding To Operation Desert Storm. A Portland, Oregon group hangs an enormous U.S. flag, composed of human silhouette targets, off a bridge directly in front of U.S. Navy ships during war homecoming celebrations.

Reverse Peristalsis Painting. Outside Vice President Dan Quayle's fundraising brunch for Bob Packwood, an organized group of 24 people in ill-fitting suits engage in the event by vomiting the colors of the American flag.

Malcolm X Street. At a time when the city of Portland is considering stripping Martin Luther King Jr.'s name off a local street, a covert organization calling itself Group X changes the name of another downtown street to Malcolm X Street in a clandestine overnight action.

Canine Edible Sculpture. After overcoming their initial fear, fifteen dogs consume a sculpture made of 480 pounds of grisly beef bones and dry dog food on a football field.
(description via Video Data Bank)

The Uprising, by Peter Snowdon, 2013 (excerpt)

<http://theuprising.be/the-movie>

The Uprising shows us the Arab revolutions from the inside. It is a multi-camera, first-person account of that fragile, irreplaceable moment when life ceases to be a prison, and everything becomes possible again. This feature-length documentary is composed entirely of videos made by citizens and long-term residents of Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Libya, Syria and Yemen. The film uses this footage, not to recount the actual chronology of events or analyse their causes, but to create an imaginary pan-Arab uprising that exists (for the moment) only on the screen.

Guest:

Igor Vamos is a media artist and culture jammer living and working in New York. Vamos is internationally renowned for his collaborative public art projects such as the Center For Land Use Interpretation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the increase and dissemination of knowledge about the nature of human interaction with the Earth. He is also a co-founder of RTMark, a registered corporation run by an anti-consumerist, activist collective known for their SimCopter hack and Barbie Liberation Organization (BLO) intervention. He has won many awards for his work including a Guggenheim Fellowship and Creative Capital award. He received his BFA at Reed College and holds an MFA in Visual Arts from the University of California, San Diego. Currently, Vamos is teaching at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Vamos is also known as “Mike Bonanno,” in his work with “The Yes Men,” the performance-activist duo who impersonate captains of industry and surprise unsuspecting audiences with satirical, poignant actions that comment upon pressing social and environmental issues.

Additional online resources:

Action Switchboard:

<https://actionswitchboard.net/>

<https://vimeo.com/112220827>

Actipedia:

<https://actipedia.org/>

Beautiful Trouble:

<http://beautifultrouble.org/>

Center for Artistic Activism:

<https://artisticactivism.org>

Center for Land Use Interpretation Database:

<http://www.clui.org/ludb>

Coal Cares:

<http://www.coalcares.com/>

<https://vimeo.com/129600054>

Critical Art Ensemble:

Digital Resistance, Critical Art Ensemble, 2001 – <http://critical-art.net/?p=274>

“Electronic Civil Disobedience, Simulation and the Public Sphere”–

<http://www.critical-art.net/books/digital/tact1.pdf>

The Electronic Disturbance, Critical Art Ensemble, 1994 – <http://critical-art.net/?p=244>

“Video and Resistance: Against Documentaries” – <http://critical-art.net/books/ted/ted3.pdf>

Electronic Frontier Foundation, Digital Privacy at US Border:

<https://www.eff.org/wp/digital-privacy-us-border-2017#download>

<https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights-governments-100-mile-border-zone-map>

On the “#DeleteUber” hashtag and campaign:

<https://techcrunch.com/2017/01/30/lyft-surges-to-the-top-10-on-apples-app-store-following-the-deleteuber-campaign/>

On online security:

<https://hackernoon.com/what-youre-revealing-to-your-isp-why-a-vpn-isn-t-enough-and-ways-to-avoid-leaking-it-503816542951>

Other 98%:

<https://other98.com/>

Share the Safety:

<https://sharethesafety.org/>

<https://vimeo.com/171642887>

SubRosa:

<http://cyberfeminism.net/>

What the Fuck Just Happened Today:

<https://whatthefuckjusthappenedtoday.com/>

Yes Lab:

<http://yeslab.org/>

Additional video resources:

Abel Raises Cain, by Jenny Abel & Jeffrey Hockett, 2005

<https://www.amazon.com/Abel-Raises-Cain-Jenny/dp/B001M0A1BK>

Anonymous! We are Legion!, by Anonymous, 2013

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3SsLGPaYjvM> & Netflix

Citizenfour, by Laura Poitras, 2014

Netflix & YouTube – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AP5r7iKiYeU>

Edward Snowden and The Yes Men surprise crowd at Roskilde Festival, 2016

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wCB-H7lg6i8>

Forest Man, by William Douglas McMaster, 2013 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HkZDSgyE1do>

Guerrilla Theater of the Absurd, by Daniel Levin, 2013

<https://vimeo.com/49340870>

If a Tree Falls: A Story of the Earth Liberation Front, by Sam Cullman & Marshall Curry, 2011
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UmZkNNJqr1I>

The Yes Men, by Dan Ollman, Sarah Price & Chris Smith, 2003
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmuF3SJhWI4>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZpXn8sRZTUY>

The Yes Men Are Revolting, by The Yes Men & Laura Nix, 2014
<https://vimeo.com/127276632>
“Tar Sands”: <https://vimeo.com/166273523>

The Yes Men Fix the World, by The Yes Men & Kurt Engfehr, 2009
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ajkItiDgTLY>

Additional readings/Amazon book lists:

Amazon book lists including tactical media, video and documentary history, art and activism, guides for activism, and theory.

Tactical Media/Video Documentary

Link: <http://a.co/iMslDtF>

Video Art History

Link: <http://a.co/e6nxWkh>

Downloads:

Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns:
<https://www.wri-irg.org/pubs/NonviolenceHandbook>

Training for Change:
<https://www.trainingforchange.org/tools>

Resistance Manual:
https://www.resistancemanual.org/Resistance_Manual_Home

Indivisible Guide:
<https://www.indivisibleguide.com>