

Finding the Public in the Contemporary Public

Spring 2016
Tue, 2–5 pm

GSD O2484, Harvard University
Carpenter Center, Room 401

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Description The seminar will explore a recent history of critical discourse about public space. It will use a selection of readings and case studies to equip ourselves with the knowledge and tools for addressing questions around the politics of public space. Class discussions, screenings, art, design, communication technologies and exhibitions will guide our critical reflections around these issues.

Goals Students will become familiar with and proficient in a vocabulary for speaking about topics related to current arguments on public space within the context of art, architecture, visual culture, gender identity, and technology. Students will acquire perspectives in how to evaluate the politics of public space. They will be introduced to a range of models to help shape and guide their practice.

Requirements (1) Each week two class members are required to introduce assigned readings for the session. About 15 minutes, these introductions will address the main points of the readings and guide the remainder of the class conversation. The students responsible for introducing the session's readings are responsible for compiling at least 3 relevant images (or video and sound) per reading to assist with class discussions. The images are organized in PowerPoint and will be uploaded to the Canvas course site by 8 am on the day of the class meeting.

(2) Each student is required to provide 250-word written summaries of each reading for each course meeting.

(4) Students are expected to participate fully in class conversations, respond to peers, engage actively with materials and readings, and overall contribute to generating a convivial and collegial classroom atmosphere.

Project Each week we will set aside time to discuss ideas for the final project, considered within the context of the readings. Module 2 led by Frida Escobedo will take final projects by students to completion during the second part of the term.

Evaluation Students are evaluated on the quality and frequency of participation in the course. This evaluation is based on organization, content, attendance, presence and communication of ideas through speaking and writing.

Attendance Attendance is required. Students will fail the course with more than two unexcused absences. Notification of absences must be given in advance by email.

Schedule

January 26 Introduction

Simon Sheikh, "Publics and Post-Publics," *Open Cahier* 14 (2008), 28–36.

February 2

Michael Warner, "Publics and Counterpublics," in *Public and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone, 2005), 65–124.

Hito Steyerl, "Is a Museum a Factory," (2009) in *Hito Steyerl: The Wretched and the Screen* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2012), 60–76.

Nina Möntmann, "Playing the Wild Child: Art Institutions in a Situation of Changed Public Interest," in *Cahier on Art and the Public Domain* 14 (2008), 16–27.

February 9

Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October*, vol. 110 (Autumn 2004), 51–79.

Liam Gillick, "Contingent Factors: A Response to Claire Bishop's Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October*, vol. 115 (Winter 2005), 95–107.

Chantel Mouffe, "Art and Democracy: Art as an Agnostic Intervention in Public Space," in *Cahier on Art and the Public Domain* 14 (2008), 6–15.

Judith Butler, "What is Critique? An Essay on Foucault's Virtue" (2001), in *The Judith Butler Reader* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 302–322.

February 16

Maria Lind, "Dilemma of Love, Humor, and Critique: Notes on the Work of Anton Vidokle," in *Anton Vidokle: Produce, Distribute, Discuss, Repeat* (New York: Lukas and Sternberg, 2009), 21–30.

Anton Vidokle, "A Questionnaire on 'The Contemporary,'" *October*, vol. 130 (Autumn 2009), 41–43.

Boris Groys, "Marx after Duchamp, or The Artist's Two Bodies" in *Going Public Boris Groys* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2010), 121–134.

February 23

Maria Lind, "Kitchens," (2009) in *Selected Maria Lind Writings* Brian Kuan Wood, ed. *Selected Maria Lind Writings* (Berlin: Sternberg, 2001), 99 – 116.

Alexander Kluge and Oskar Negt, *Public Sphere and Experience: Analysis of the Bourgeois and Proletarian Public Sphere* (New York: Verso, 2016).

March 1

Anton Vidokle, "Exhibition to School: *unitednationsplaza*," in *Curating and the Educational Turn*, eds. Paul O'Neill and Mick Wilson (London: Open Editions, 2010), 148–156.

Taraneh Fazel, "Class Consciousness: Taraneh Fazeli on Night School," *Artforum* (Summer 2009), 129–130, 132.

Jacques Rancière, "The Paradoxes of Political Art," in *Dissensus. On Politics and Aesthetics*, 2010, 134–51.

March 8

Review and Discussion with Frida Escobedo

March 17

Spring Recess

March 24

Continuation of Course with Frida Escobedo