



Australia's
Global
University



ARTS2128

Art, Activism, Publics

Semester One // 2018

Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

| Name | Email | Availability | Location | Phone |
|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|--------|
| Theron Schmidt | t.schmidt@unsw.edu.au | Thursdays 12-2 or by appointment | Webster 121 | x53218 |

School Contact Information

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The School of the Arts and Media would like to Respectfully Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Bedegal (Kensington campus), Gadigal (City and Art & Design Campuses) and the Ngunnawal people (Australian Defence Force Academy in Canberra) of the lands where each campus of UNSW is located.

Attendance Requirements

A student is expected to attend all class contact hours for a face-to-face (F2F) or blended course and complete all activities for a blended or fully online course.

A student who arrives more than 15 minutes late may be penalised for non-attendance. If such a penalty is imposed, the student must be informed verbally at the end of class and advised in writing within 24 hours.

If a student experiences illness, misadventure or other occurrence that makes absence from a class/activity unavoidable, or expects to be absent from a forthcoming class/activity, they should seek permission from the Course Authority, and where applicable, their request should be accompanied by an original or certified copy of a medical certificate or other form of appropriate evidence.

A Course Authority may excuse a student from classes or activities for up to one month. However, they may assign additional and/or alternative tasks to ensure compliance. A Course Authority considering the granting of absence must be satisfied a student will still be able to meet the course's learning outcomes and/or volume of learning. A student seeking approval to be absent for more than one month must apply in writing to the Dean and provide all original or certified supporting documentation.

For more information about the attendance protocols in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

Academic Information

For essential student information relating to: requests for extension; review of marks; occupational health and safety; examination procedures; special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure; student equity and disability; and other essential academic information, see <https://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/current-students/academic-information/protocols-guidelines/>

Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

Subject Area: *Theatre and Performance Studies*

Artistic strategies have emerged as powerful means of making social and political messages heard by a wider audience, and strategies such as culture jamming, flash mobs, guerrilla theatre, and online activism have had an impact across political campaigning, social advocacy, and community mobilisation. This course will introduce you to some of the key historical developments and debates around how art has been used to inspire change and to intervene within public space. You will have the chance to work with your peers to devise your own form of activism or community-engagement around an issue of your choice. This course is part of the Theatre and Performance Studies stream. It can also be taken as an elective in the Bachelor of Media (Public Relations and Advertising).

At the conclusion of this course the student will be able to

1. Identify significant moments and debates in the development of public art, activism, and the politics of public space in the 20th and 21st centuries
2. Assess key theoretical concepts as well as practical modes of activism and public awareness-raising, and apply them to contemporary issues
3. Work collaboratively with others in undertaking research and presentation of findings

Teaching Strategies

Readings, videos, and a combination of online and face-to-face lectures will provide historical context and critical terminology for understanding the various interrelations between art and activism. A flipped model of tutorials will support student-led engagement with issues and case studies of their own choosing, leading toward the development of the final group project that devises a way to mobilise public awareness around a current issue.

Assessment

Assessment Tasks

| Assessment task | Weight | Due Date | Student Learning Outcomes Assessed |
|-------------------------------|--------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Workshop presentation | 10% | 19/04/2018 09:00 AM | 1 |
| Research paper | 40% | 11/05/2018 11:59 PM | 1,2 |
| Contribution to group process | 10% | Not Applicable | 3 |
| Group project | 40% | 01/06/2018 11:59 PM | 2,3 |

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Workshop presentation

Start date: 19/04/2018 09:00 AM

Details: 5 minutes. This task will help prepare the way for your research essay. Students receive individual reports assessed according to a rubric of marking criteria.

Additional details:

You will choose and present to the class an example of activism, public performance, community mobilization, or awareness-raising, including historical and conceptual context for the case study and a critically-informed assessment of its effectiveness, demonstrating what might be learned from this example for use in other contexts. This task will help prepare the way for your research essay. You are encouraged to be creative with your presentation - within the very strict limits of 5 minutes.

Your choice can be from examples we have already covered, or you are also encouraged to choose an example of your own, using the edited collections or your own experience as a resource. The only constraint is that you cannot replicate what someone else has chosen.

Assessment criteria:

- Creativity and effectiveness in evoking the qualitative aspects of the event and its context within 5 minutes
- Clarity in summarising and distinguishing the particular features of the selected action
- Identification of selected theoretical concepts or debates relevant to the example
- Judgement in situating this example in relation to your own experiences or issues you have encountered, or in demonstrating what might be learned from this example for use in other contexts

Submission notes: In-class presentation

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assessment 2: Research paper

Start date: 19/04/2018 09:00 AM

Details: 2000 words. Students receive written feedback and a numerical grade.

Additional details:

This assessment asks you to demonstrate your understanding of critical concepts introduced in the lectures and readings around ideas of the public sphere, the theorisation of space, and different models of socially-engaged art. You are asked to demonstrate appropriately selected theories and concepts from the course in relation to a specific example (of your choosing) of community engagement, site-specific art, performance intervention, or activist awareness-raising.

Assessment criteria

- Effectiveness in presenting the context and history for your example, drawing on course materials and independent research
- Clarity in summarising and distinguishing the particular features of the case study
- Application and interrogation of selected theoretical concepts or debates relevant to the example
- Organisation of essay structure and presentation in a clear, grammatical, and appropriately-referenced style

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 3: Contribution to group process

Start date: 26/04/2018 09:00 AM

Details: In the group project section of the course, each group will present weekly updates on their progress. Each group member will be assessed on their participation in the group process according to a rubric of criteria.

Additional details:

In weeks 9-12, you will present weekly updates in-class on the research and development you have conducted within your group. These presentations can be informal and the emphasis is on what you have done during the preceding week, rather than a polished presentation. This weekly update should help you to feel comfortable presenting in front of a group.

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Assessment 4: Group project

Start date: 26/04/2018 09:00 AM

Details: Students will work in small groups of 5 to devise a form of activism, performance, or mobilization. Each group will produce a zine, website, or some other form of documentation (in consultation with the course tutor). For this assessment 50% of the mark will be awarded based on the overall group project and 50% on the individual contribution. This is the final assessment task for

attendance purposes. Each student will receive written feedback on the overall group project and on his or her own contribution as well as a numerical grade.

Additional details:

To complete this assessment you will work in small groups to devise a form of activism, performance, or mobilization. This action may remain conceptual but should be detailed in its plan for execution, and should be based on both primary and secondary research into a contemporary issue. Each group will produce a zine, website, or some other form of documentation (in consultation with the course tutor) that includes both the context for the group's conceived action and real or imagined documentation of the action itself. For this assessment 50% of the mark will be awarded based on the overall group document and 50% on the individual contribution.

You are encouraged to be creative with the format of the final document of the group process, incorporating images, text, and media as your group strengths allow. Physical objects or websites are also acceptable submissions, so long as the below elements are included. I will advise each group on this process and on appropriate lengths for each submission based on its format and size of the group. As a rough guide, each group submission should be equivalent to a 8000-10000 word essay (depending on group size).

Essential elements:

1. Explanation of context and history of the issue/site/community with which the project is engaging
2. Theorization and history of the modes and methods of activism, performance, or mobilization being used
3. Evidence of primary research: observation, mapping, interviews, field work, etc.
4. Documentation of experimentation with forms of activism, performance, or mobilization, including critical reflection and development. (Things going wrong is okay!)
5. Plan for implementing and disseminating the "final" action .
6. Representation of your group organization and process (as well as showing clearly the contribution of each group member.)

Assessment criteria:

- Evidence of research into relevant history and contexts related to the issue/site/community and the form of action, drawing on course material but also independent research (30%)
- Appropriate planning and implementation of primary research (15%)
- Commitment to testing and developing mode(s) of activism, performance, or mobilization (30%)
- Creativity in form of representation of the project in a way that relates to the theme or mode of the action itself, and that reflects the constituency of the group (25%)

This is the final assessment for the course.

Submission notes: One submission per group

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Students are expected to put their names and student numbers on every page of their assignments.

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

Late Assessment Penalties

An assessed task is deemed late if it is submitted after the specified time and date as set out in the course Learning Management System (LMS).

The late penalty is the loss of 5% of the total possible marks for the task for each day or part thereof the work is late. Lateness will include weekends and public holidays. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.

Work submitted fourteen (14) days after the due date will be marked and feedback provided but no mark will be recorded. If the work would have received a pass mark but for the lateness and the work is a compulsory course component, a student will be deemed to have met that requirement. This does not apply to a task that is assessed but no mark is awarded.

Work submitted twenty-one (21) days after the due date will not be accepted for marking or feedback and will receive no mark or grade. If the assessment task is a compulsory component of the course a student will automatically fail the course.

Special Consideration Applications

You can apply for special consideration when illness or other circumstances interfere with your assessment performance.

Sickness, misadventure or other circumstances beyond your control may:

- * Prevent you from completing a course requirement,
- * Keep you from attending an assessable activity,
- * Stop you submitting assessable work for a course,

* Significantly affect your performance in assessable work, be it a formal end-of-semester examination, a class test, a laboratory test, a seminar presentation or any other form of assessment.

For further details in relation to Special Consideration including "When to Apply", "How to Apply" and "Supporting Documentation" please refer to the Special Consideration website:

<https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another's ideas or words without credit.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing and a student's own analysis to bring the material together.

Collusion: working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices:

- Paraphrasing, summarising, essay writing and time management
- Appropriate use of and attribution for a range of materials including text, images, formulae and concepts.

Individual assistance is available on request from The Learning Centre (<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/>). Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study and one of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library also has the ELISE tool available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study.

Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose

- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Some of these areas will be familiar to you, others will be new. Gaining a solid understanding of all the related aspects of ELISE will help you make the most of your studies at UNSW.

(<http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/aboutelise>)

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

| Date | Type | Content |
|-------------------------------|------|--|
| Week 1: 26 February - 4 March | | Irresistible Images: This preliminary session introduces the convergence of two traditions on which this course will draw: imaginative activism—activist practices that recognise creativity and the imagination as a site for action and transformation—and engaged arts—artist practices that seek to have a transformative relationship with the locations and communities with which they work. Following L.M. Bogad’s idea of ‘irresistible images’, we will think about how performance, theatricality, and experiential engagement can complement, and be informed by, theoretical concepts. |
| Week 2: 5 March - 11 March | | Beneath the pavement, the beach! This week introduces the legacy of the Situationist International and the May 1968 student uprisings in Paris, which inaugurated a ‘carnavalesque’ approach to political action that continues to influence contemporary protest. We will encounter and practice some key terms from this movement, such as psychogeography, <i>dérive</i> , and <i>détournement</i> , as well as Certeau’s later distinction between strategy and tactics. |
| Week 3: 12 March - 18 March | | Space invaders. This week we think about how to theorize the spaces around us and how they shape us, from the disciplinary origins of the modern classroom, to the contemporary rise of the surveillance state, to the proliferation of the ‘non-place’ of the airport or shopping mall. Building on the Situationist idea of psychogeography, we will look at the hidden structures and divisions of so-called public space—considering, for example, how a space might be gendered—and how these structures might be mapped or made visible. |
| Week 4: 19 March - 25 March | | The consumer strikes back. Following on from our consideration of different kinds of spaces, this week looks specifically at the production of consumer experience and how we might use performance to understand how it affects us—as well as how activists might perform back consumer culture through public interventions, adbusting, culture-jamming, and satire. |
| Week 5: 26 March - 1 | | Integration v. intervention. This week looks at the |

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| April | | history of socially-engaged and site-responsive art, and outlines some of the problems and tensions that emerge out of such work. |
| Break: 2 April - 8 April | | |
| Week 6: 9 April - 15 April | | Week 6: Tweets and the streets. Moving between real spaces and virtual ones, this week looks at the impact of 'clicktivism', the role of social media in the movement of the squares, and the comparative merits of online and physical encounters as various kinds of 'public space'. |
| Week 7: 16 April - 22 April | Assessment | <p>Festival of Ideas.</p> <p>At this halfway point, we will begin to flip the classroom, beginning with your first assessment task, in which each of you will choose and present to the class an example of activism, public performance, community mobilization, or awareness-raising, including historical and conceptual context for the case study and an assessment of its effectiveness. This task will help prepare the way for your research essay due in week 9, in which you will develop your analysis further (or choose a new example if you wish).</p> <p>This day will give us a sense of the kinds of methods and issues that interest each of us individually, and will be the basis on which I will choose your groups for the second half of the module.</p> |
| Week 8: 23 April - 29 April | Project | <p>In the second half of the module, you will work in small groups to devise a form of activism, performance, or mobilization. This action may remain conceptual but should be detailed in its plan for execution, and should be based on both primary and secondary research into a contemporary issue.</p> <p>I will support your work through structured workshops and additional mini-lectures and readings on group process, best practice for social engagement, and documentation. I will also give mini-lectures will present case studies that may inspire your work and your thinking.</p> <p>Each week your group will present an update on your work during the lecture slot, which will inform your mark for 'Contribution to group process.'</p> <p>By the end of the course, each group will produce a zine, website, or some other form of documentation</p> |

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| | | (in consultation with me) that includes both the context for the group's conceived action and real or imagined documentation of the action itself. |
| | Lecture | Structure and structurelessness. The lecture will introduce theories and practices of collaborative work as a learnable skill, including pragmatic approaches to avoiding what Jo Freeman called 'the tyranny of structurelessness.' |
| Week 9: 30 April - 6 May | Project | Lecture slot: Each group presents a status update on their work. Tutorial slot: Continue with group work through structured workshops. |
| Week 10: 7 May - 13 May | Project | Lecture slot: Each group presents a status update on their work. Tutorial slot: Continue with group work through structured workshops. |
| Week 11: 14 May - 20 May | Project | Lecture slot: Each group presents a status update on their work. Tutorial slot: Continue with group work through structured workshops. |
| Week 12: 21 May - 27 May | Project | Lecture slot: Each group presents a status update on their work. Tutorial slot: Continue with group work through structured workshops. |
| Week 13: 28 May - 3 June | Project | Tutorial slot: Final sharing of group projects with each other. |

Resources

Prescribed Resources

All resources on Online Reading List at

https://ap01-a.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/readinglist/lists/22542804950001731?institute=61UNSW_I NST&auth=LOCAL

Recommended Resources

The publication and website *Beautiful Trouble* is a terrific resource to which we will refer several times. The bookstore should have copies of the publication:

Boyd, Andrew, and Dave Oswald Mitchell, eds., *Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution* (New York and London: O/R Books, 2012)

And the website is <<http://beautifultrouble.org>>

Other recommended collections on public art and activism:

Doherty, Claire, ed., *Public Art (Now): Out of Time, Out of Place* (London: Art / Books, 2015)

Felshin, Nina, ed., *But Is It Art? The Spirit of Art As Activism* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1994)

McLagan, Meg, and Yates McKee, *Sensible Politics: The Visual Culture of Nongovernmental Activism* (New York: Zone Books, 2012)

Neal, Lucy, *Playing for Time: Making Art as If the World Mattered* (London: Oberon Books, 2015)

Notes from Nowhere, *We Are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism* (London: Verso, 2003)

steirischer herbst and Florian Malzacher, eds., *Truth Is Concrete: A Handbook for Artistic Strategies in Real Politics* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014)

Thompson, Nato, and Gregory Sholette, eds., *The Interventionists: Users' Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life* (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2004)

Thompson, Nato, ed., *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011* (Cambridge MA and London: MIT Press, 2012)

Weibel, Peter, ed., *Global Activism: Art and Conflict in the 21st Century* (Cambridge MA and London: MIT Press, 2015)

ZKM, *global aCtIVISm*, <<http://www.global-activism.de/>>

Journal of Aesthetics & Protest, <<http://www.joaap.org/>>

Course Evaluation and Development

I value your feedback and will use the myExperience anonymous survey, as well as in-class reflection, to inform how I shape future teaching.

Image Credit

Liberate Tate, *Human Cost*, Duveen Gallery, Tate Britain (2011). The performance took place on the first anniversary of the start of the BP Gulf of Mexico disaster. It lasted for 87 minutes, one for every day of the spill. Image from www.liberatetate.org.uk/performances/human-cost-april-2011/ (no copyright)

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