# ARTSSCI 4VC3: Visual Culture Inquiry

**Winter (Term 2) 2023**

**Fridays, 11:30-2:20**

**Instructor: Dr. Kristin Patterson**

**Email: pattekr@mcmaster.ca**

**Office Hours: Fridays, 2:30-3:30 pm, or by appointment**

**Office: LRW-3038**

## Course Description:

This course focuses on socially engaged artistic and activist practices. We will consider the strategies and uses of artistic aesthetics taken up by individuals and collectives for the purpose of social interaction, intervention, or political change. We will explore the materials, methods, and theoretical approaches taken by artist activists through readings, case studies, and student projects. We will consider existing scholarship on socially engaged art, as well as closely analyze specific practices on a local, national, and global scale. Together we will investigate and assess the value of these hybrid practices as aesthetic, social, and political activities.

## Course Objectives:

* Students will gain exposure to a wide range of activist and socially engaged artistic practices.
* Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of how various political groups, past and present, utilize creative forms of media to advance their interests and/or effect social change.
* Students will engage with theoretical concepts and scholarly debates on artistic and creative activism and art as a means for social change.
* Students will discuss and engage with issues of social relevance i.e., refugee crisis, gender and racial injustices, Indigenous social justice.
* Students will gain knowledge of art activism on local, national, and global scale.
* Students will be encouraged to analyze and critique the political potential of art.
* Students will make critical use of articles and primary sources in assignments and discussions.
* Students will refine research, writing, and critical thinking skills through course assignments.

## Required Texts and Materials:

Students will be responsible for reading articles, watching interviews/videos and visiting websites provided on Avenue to Learn under weekly headings.

## Course Assignments:

Zine or Timeline, due Feb 12th, 15%

Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography, due March 5th, 10%

Project Progress Presentation, due March 24th or 31st, as assigned, 10%

Final Project or Paper, due 5 days after presentation (March 29 or April 5th), 25%

Student Led Discussion, as assigned, weeks 2-9, 15%

Participation & Discussion, weekly, 15%

Post a Quote, weekly, 10%

*\*\*Details of all course assignments will be posted on Avenue to Learn>Content>Assignments.*

**Lecture Topics:** *Schedule may be subject to changes*

## Week 1: January 13: Introduction; Dada Disruptions

**Readings:**

* Marcel Duchamp, “Apropos of Readymades,” talk at Museum of Modern Art, New York, October 19, 1961. <http://courses.ischool.utexas.edu/kimsmith/2009/fall/INF385H/Duchamp_Readymades.pdf>
* “Dada and the Power of Nonsense,” BBC Arts & Ideas Podcast, July 22, 2020. (Link on Avenue).

**Websites:**

* Dada: The Art Story: <http://www.theartstory.org/movement-dada.htm>

## Week 2: January 20: Spectacle, Situationists and Détournement

**Readings:**

* Asger Jorn, “Detourned Painting,” (May 1959) <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/painting.html>
* Guy Debord, “The Situationists and the New Forms of Action in Art and Politics,” (1963).<http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/newforms.html>
* Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, (1967). Read whole book or minimum Chapters: 1-4 & 8-12. <http://library.nothingness.org/articles/SI/en/display/16>“
* Détournement as Negation and Prelude,” Internationale Situationniste 3 (1959), available online at <http://library.nothingness.org/articles/SI/en/display/315>

## Week 3: January 27: Fluxus and Feminist Activism

**Readings:**

* Angie Kordic, “What is Fluxus?” *Widewalls*, May 11, 2016. <https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/what-is-fluxus>
* Clive Phillpot “Manifesto I,” from *Fluxus: Magazine, Manifestos, Multum in Parvo*. <http://georgemaciunas.com/about/cv/manifesto-i/>
* Leslie Hill, “Suffragettes Invented Performance Art,” in Lizbeth Goodman and Jane de Gay, eds. *The Routledge Reader in Politics and Performance*. New York and London: Routledge, 2000, pp. 150-156. ebook: <http://www.tandfebooks.com.libaccess.lib.mcmaster.ca/doi/view/10.4324/9780203141571>
* Adrian Piper, “Notes on Funk I-IV” (1983-85); “My Calling (Cards) #1 and #2” (1990)

## Week 4: February 3: Posters and Propaganda

**Readings:**

* Richard Meyer, “This is to Enrage You: Gran Fury and the Graphics of AIDS Activism” in *But Is It Art?* (1995)
* Alison Green, “Citizen Artists: Group Material” (2011): <http://www.afterall.org/journal/issue.26/citizen-artists-group-material>
* Suzanne Lacy, “Introduction,” *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (1995), pp. 19-47.

**Websites:**

* Group Material: <http://www.franklinfurnace.org/research/projects/flow/gpmat/gpmattf.html>
* Act Up: <http://www.actupny.org/documents/capsule-home.html>
* Keith Haring Foundation: <http://www.haring.com>

## Week 5: February 10: Art and Protest: War and Memory

**Readings:**

* Laura Cottingham, “The War is Always Home,” <http://www.martharosler.net/reviews/cottingham.html>
* Roland Bleiker, “Art After 9/11”*Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* Vol. 31, No. 1, Art and Politics (Jan.-Mar. 2006), pp. 77-99.
* Robert Bailey, “Unknown Knowns: Jenny Holzer’s Redaction Paintings and the History of the War on Terror,” *October* (Fall 2012): pp. 144-161.

## Week 6: February 17: Culture Jamming and Art Pranks

**Readings:**

* Mark Dery, Culture Jamming: Hacking, Slashing and Sniping in the Empire of Signs, 1993 <http://markdery.com/?page_id=154>
* Julie Perini, “Art as Intervention,” in *Uses of a Whirlwind* (2010)
* Jacques Ranciere, “Problems and Transformations of Critical Art” (2004)

**Websites:**

* Beautiful Trouble: A Toolbox for Revolution: <http://beautifultrouble.org>

Read the following from the “toolbox”:

TACTIC: Hoax, Identity Correction, Infiltration  
PRINCIPLE: Play to the Audience that Isn’t There, Everyone has Balls/Ovaries of Steel, Making the invisible visible

CASE STUDY: Dow Chemical Apologizes for Bhopal

**At Home Screening:**

* Yes Men Save the World (2009)

**Reading Week: February 20-26**

## Week 7: March 3: Participatory Art and Relational Aesthetics

**Readings:**

* Nicolas Bourriaud, Excerpts from “Relational Aesthetics” (1998)
* Hal Foster, “Arty Party,” *London Review of Books* (2004)
* Claire Bishop, “Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics” (2004)

## Week 8: March 10: Migrant and Refugee Art and Politics

**Readings:**

* T.J. Demos, “Charting a Course,” in *The Migrant Image* (2013)
* Jean Fisher, “Diaspora, Trauma and the Poetics of Remembrance,” in *Exiles, Diasporas and Strangers* (2008)

## Week 9: March 17: Indigenous Art and Activism

**Readings:**

* Taunton, Carla. "Indigenous (re)memory and resistance: video works by Dana Claxton." *Post Script*, vol. 29, no. 3, Summer 2010, p. 44+
* Jasmeen Siddiqui, "Necessary Affairs: Exploring the Relationship Between Indigenous Art and Activism,” *Scholarship at Western*, Western University (2017)
* Zuzana Pick, Storytelling and Resistance The Documentary Practice of Alanis Obomsawin, in *Gendering the Nation*, 1999, pp. 76-93.

**At Home Screening:**

* Alanis Obomsawin, My Name Is Kahentiiosta 29 min. (1995): <https://www.nfb.ca/film/my_name_is_kahentiiosta/>

## Week 10: March 24: Student Presentations

## Week 11: March 31: Student Presentations

## Week 12: April 7: Good Friday, no class.

## Policy on Late Submissions of Coursework

The penalty for late assignments is 5% of the grade per day following the deadline to a maximum of five days after which the assignment will no longer be accepted. Students are expected to contact the Arts & Science Program Office immediately if special consideration for medical or compassionate reasons is required. Late submissions for the Post-a-Quote assignment are not accepted.

## SENATE-APPROVED ADVISORY STATEMENTS

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy-1-1.pdf)*,* located at [https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures- guidelines/](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-%2520guidelines/).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

* plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
* improper collaboration in group work.
* copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

## AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., online search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster’s use of Turnitin.com please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](https://mcmasteru365-my.sharepoint.com/personal/rbishop_mcmaster_ca/Documents/www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

## COURSES WITH AN ONLINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use online elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses online elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

## ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

## CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Code-of-Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities.pdf) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](https://sas.mcmaster.ca/) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Academic-Accommodations-Policy.pdf) policy.

## REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the [Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/Requests-for-Relief-for-Missed-Academic-Term-Work-Policy-on.pdf).

## ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/app/uploads/2019/02/Academic-Accommodation-for-Religious-Indigenous-and-Spiritual-Observances-Policy-on.pdf) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office ***normally within 10 working days*** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors. The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done either by the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

## EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

## NOTES FOR ALL ARTS & SCIENCE COURSES

1. Some of the statements above refer to a “Faculty Office”; please note that the Arts & Science Program Office serves in this capacity.
2. It is the responsibility of students to check their McMaster email regularly. Announcements will be made in class, via A2L, and/or via the course email distribution list.
3. For additional information regarding requests for accommodation, relief for missed term work (e.g. MSAF), deferred examinations, etc., students should read carefully the [Requests](https://artsci.mcmaster.ca/forms-requests/) and [Resources](https://artsci.mcmaster.ca/current-students/resources/) pages on the Arts & Science Program website.