

## Rules of Engagement: Art, Process, Protest, ASAP/Journal

Deadline: Jun 1, 2017

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Call for Papers: ASAP/Journal Special Issue

Rules of Engagement:  
Art, Process, Protest

Special Issue Editors: Melissa Lee, Jonathan P. Eburne, Amy J. Elias  
Essay Submission Deadline: June 1, 2017

ASAP/Journal seeks essays for a special issue that examines the procedural logics and practices of protest art today. Beyond measuring the political intentions and consequences of protest art or simply describing protest art that has not yet been identified, essays should consider the processes—tactical, conceptual, material, formal—through which contemporary art encounters the political and how those processes are manifested specifically in form.

This special issue of ASAP/Journal investigates how “the political” leaves its imprint on the very project of artistic production, but also how the reverse may be true. How, in other words, does the exigency of “protest” bear upon the means through which art is made and encountered—the media, institutions, concepts, and affects through which it becomes knowable? Recent critical attention to notions of relational aesthetics, social aesthetics, and tactical media has sought better to understand how art can function politically. How, though, does the specificity of protest demand new iterations of the way artists—as well as audiences, spectators, critics, institutions, and the art market—approach the very practice of art making? How does protest inform process?

Protest has been most commonly defined as an action or statement expressing dissent; considered more broadly, the term invokes a public form of assertion and witnessing (*testari*) on behalf of political transformation. One understanding of politically activist art centers on the ways in which artists deploy their practices to promote values of social reform. Another understanding holds that art, through its combination of aesthetic value and the spectacularization of politics (including political protest), can engineer new collective, insurgent, or revolutionary relations, a “redistribution of the sensible,” in the words of Jacques Rancière. Today, however, many of the older tactics of protest are easily coopted by a culture industry itself designed to operate in the realm of the aesthetic and to predetermine rules of engagement, thus seemingly uniquely able to incorporate and neutralize protest art. Protest art (as well as its critical identification and definition) always runs the risk of belatedness or naiveté—one thinks of Micah White’s post-Occupy contention that protest is now “broken”—and so while the question of art’s relation to the political has

fueled critical and practical debates for over a century and a half, the discussion has become both more fraught and more urgent in the new, post-1960s millennium.

We are primarily interested in how the arts now figure in this protest debate under these conditions. Certainly, considerable work has been done concerning how artists such as Pussy Riot, Banksy, the Guerilla Girls, and Ai Weiwei have gained global recognition as major figures associated with protest movements, while the diverse forms of protest art in public uprisings such as Zuccotti Park (2011), Tahrir Square (2011), and Tamar Park (2014) have generated debates for some time now about the relation between art and activism worldwide. Critical studies and exhibitions attempt to articulate the rationale and effectiveness of such arts protest. In literary studies, recent books have identified components of protest literature, argued for its national alliances, and presented anthologized work by practicing protest writers. Museum exhibitions have turned their attention to the material culture of social protest, documenting the repurposing of vernacular objects toward explicitly activist ends, while other exhibitions offer histories of the visual culture of political movements and crises of the 20th and 21st centuries. Choreographers such as Jawole Willa Jo Zollar and Chandralekha have used dance as embodied protest politics, while Black Lives Matter and other movements have returned to music as a vehicle of protest—as in rapper J. Cole’s release of “Be Free,” a song that NPR’s Ann Powers tweeted was “the first fully-formed protest song I’ve heard addressing the death of Mike Brown.”

We welcome submissions that do not limit themselves to close readings or descriptions of specific artworks but that by contrast use specific arts examples to address the larger question: What are the (formal, epistemological, aesthetic, political, ethical, national, racial, gender, class) rules of engagement for protest art?

Whereas the print journal is limited to presenting articles in traditional print format, the editors will consider essay submissions in the form of visual, electronic, and musical text, images, and other forms of writing.

Essays due by June 1, 2017

Please send queries or abstracts via email to [editors\\_asap@press.jhu.edu](mailto:editors_asap@press.jhu.edu). Articles should be submitted to the journal’s online submission site at <http://journals.psu.edu/asap/index.php/testJournal/announcement>

Essay submissions of 6000-8000 words (including notes but excluding translations, which should accompany foreign-language quotations) in Microsoft Word should be prepared in accordance with the Chicago Manual of Style. All content in the journal is anonymously peer reviewed by at least two referees. If the contribution includes any materials (e.g., quotations that exceed fair use, illustrations, charts, other graphics) that have been taken from another source, the author must obtain written permission to reproduce them in print and electronic formats and assume all reprinting costs. Manuscripts in languages other than English are accepted for review but must be accompanied by a detailed summary in English (generally of 1,000–1,500 words) and must be translated into English if they are recommended for publication.

Authors’ names should not appear on manuscripts; when submitting manuscripts, authors should remove identifying information by clicking on “File”/“Properties” in Microsoft Word and removing

identifying tags for the piece. Authors should not refer to themselves in the first person in the submitted text or notes if such references would identify them.

For additional submission guidelines, please see:  
[https://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/asap\\_journal/guidelines.html](https://www.press.jhu.edu/journals/asap_journal/guidelines.html)

Reference:

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