

E90.1022 sect 003 Interdisciplinary Projects: Environmental Monitoring, 2-4 credits

E90. 2980 sect 003 (for grad students)

Prof. Natalie Jeremijenko

W 8:55 am – 12:15 pm

Open to all students.

Contemporary environmentalism is an issue dominated by scientific, technical and policy discourse. Examples include lists of endangered and extinct organisms; metrics for quantifying the value of biodiversity; LEEDS ratings for improving the environmental performance of the built environment; carbon trading and emissions monitoring for air quality; alternative energy research and many other market based incentives and strategies. The terms of this political environmental discussion begs the questions: what role does and can art practice play in contemporary environmental movement? What kind of force is contemporary art practice in the cultural imaginary of social change? What have artists contributed to contemporary urban environmentalism? And what is the Hudson River School 2.0?

To explore these questions we will use the local urban street as our site of ecological analysis, intervention and exhibition. When Victor Hugo claimed that Congress was harmless as long as they don't do it in the streets" he observed that political change reaches the cultural imaginary when it can be seen on the street. Hence, in this class, the work of re-imagining our relationship to natural systems will be produced in and for the street. Building on a history of ephemeral political actions of the "Reclaim the Streets" and other political movements we focus on durable or sustainable interventions in urban ecosystems involving both human institutions and infrastructure, and the work of other nonhuman organisms.

Class activities will include but are not limited to:

- Participating in Urban Camping Trips; which will include the design (and curating) of urban camping equipment
- Building NoParks; will include reinterpreting the work of a Department of Transportation
- Parade Duties; will include using and producing alternative locomotion and the design and use of an alternative trans-sport
- Social Climbing events; group climbing activity exploring alternative human traffic routes;
- DATAmating: Participating in novel environmental and social monitoring projects

- Nutrient cycling in the Meatpacking district and Chelsea Artworld
- Morning and Evening News reporting: learning and developing bird songs