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**Political artist Tania Bruguera and YBCA present  
*Escuela de Arte Útil* (School of Useful Art)**

**YBCA turns its galleries into a classroom where students explore art as  
a tool for social and political change**

***Featured instructors include Jeanne van Heeswijk, Alistair Hudson, Rick  
Lowe, Debt Collective, WochenKlausur, Tania Bruguera***

**June 20–August 10, 2017  
4–8 pm, Tuesdays–Thursdays**

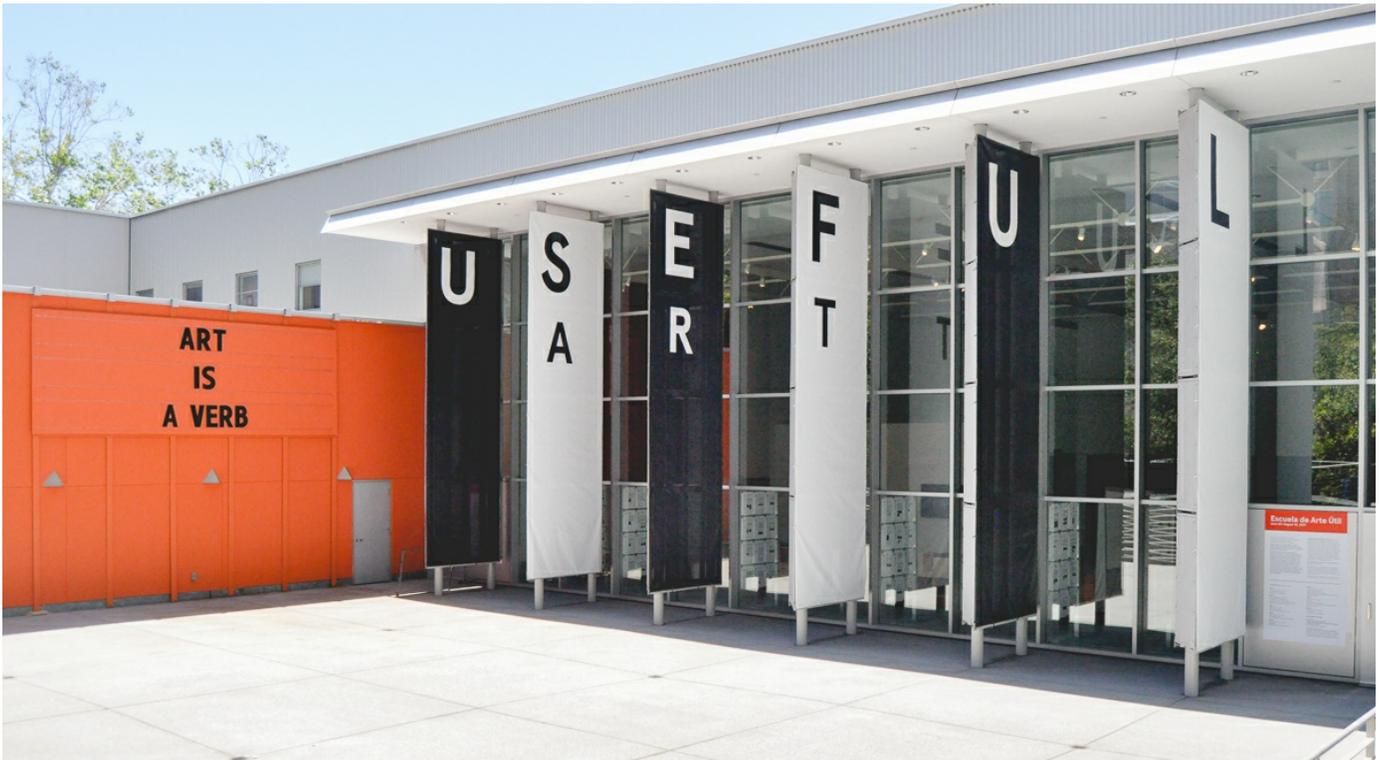


Photo: *Escuela de Arte Útil*, 2017–ongoing.

Installation view, *Tania Bruguera: Talking to Power / Hablándole al Poder*, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 2017.

Courtesy Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Photograph by John Foster Cartwright.

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**SAN FRANCISCO - (June 21, 2017)** It's not uncommon for college students to take classes during summer vacation. But this summer, fifty Bay Area students will have the unique experience of taking their college classes in the middle of a contemporary art gallery as they join renowned Cuban political artist **Tania Bruguera** in exploring how art can be used as a tool for social and political change. As part of the exhibition [\*Tania Bruguera: Talking to Power / Hablándole al Poder\*](#), the artist and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts have launched the [\*Escuela de Arte Útil\*](#) (School of Useful Art) in YBCA's gallery-turned-classroom. At the escuela, students will explore the concept of *arte útil*—useful art or art as a tool—with Bruguera, guest instructors, and prominent Bay Area artists and organizations, including Ted Purves, Susanne Cockrell, Anti-Eviction Mapping Project, Bonnie Ora Sherk, and Karissa McKelvey of Debt Collective.

Continuing Bruguera's concept of "updating" long-term, socially engaged performances, the ***Escuela de Arte Útil*** is based on the model of her earlier ***Cátedra Arte de Conducta (Behavior Art School)***, which took place at her home in Havana from 2003 through 2009. Bruguera has designed a new curriculum for YBCA and the Bay Area that continues her interest in, and use of, the form of transitional institutions—in this case an art school—to harness the potential of art to shift perspectives, and initiate and contribute to social, political, and cultural change.

This immersive public art project is divided into lectures and workshops, and ends with an exhibition of *arte útil* projects generated by the students. The focus on *arte útil* is coupled with the aims of the *Arte Útil Archive* (2013–ongoing)—the main resource for the school that is presented here for use, and is also available online at [arte-util.org](http://arte-util.org). The bulk of the full-time student body is comprised of students from UC Berkeley, San

Francisco Art Institute, California College of the Arts, and San Francisco State University. Other students are part of the [2017 YBCA Fellows](#) cohort who are exploring the topic of creative dissent.

The school is also **open to the public**, allowing YBCA gallery visitors to drop in on classes and lectures as part of their exhibition experience, Tuesdays and Wednesdays 4 to 6 pm, and Thursdays 4 to 8 pm. Visitors are encouraged to take advantage of YBCA's pay-what-you-can membership to gain free admittance to the galleries and classes.

Throughout the eight-week duration of the school, students meet three times a week to learn about the concept of *arte útil* from renowned practitioners and theorists. The class schedule is as follows:

### **Week 1: Introduction to Arte Útil**

**Instructor: Tania Bruguera**, a political artist who has worked at the intersection of activism and performance for more than thirty years, opens the course with an introduction to the concept of *arte útil* and an analysis of its effectiveness.

### **Week 2: Institutional Self-Criticism**

**Guest Instructor: Alistair Hudson**, director of Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art, has been with the *arte útil* project since the beginning, creating a permanent *arte útil* office in the mima galleries. He will speak about the limits and responsibilities of institutions.

### **Week 3: Active Hyperrealism**

**Guest Instructor: Debt Collective** meets the criteria of *arte útil* by creating art that has real-world impact, specifically by buying student debt from financial institutions as a form of resistance and renegotiation. They will discuss how artists can work on this 1:1 scale to make useful art.

### **Week 4: Reforming Capital**

**Guest Instructor: Jeanne van Heeswijk**, whose practice harnesses the structures of capitalism to ethically help communities. She has set up cooperative restaurants, bakeries, and a clothing atelier in struggling communities neglected by the government in Rotterdam and Liverpool. Her projects continue to be active. She will be presenting case studies and discussing the process of leveraging capitalism to create *arte útil*.

### **Week 5: A-legality**

**Guest Instructor: WochenKlausur**, an Austrian collective that has been working since 1993, operating within the gray areas of legality. Its first ongoing project took place in Indiana, where it used the budget allocated for an exhibition to instead set up a van and medical treatment for the homeless. WochenKlausur will be lecturing on the effectiveness of art and loopholes versus a-legal and illegal strategies.

### **Week 6: Sustainable Outcomes**

**Guest instructor: Rick Lowe** is a social practice artist who in the 1990s initiated projects in poor neighborhoods that aimed to combat gentrification. These projects continue to be successful. He will be discussing sustainability and community.

### **Week 7: Usership**

**Instructor: Tania Bruguera** returns as lecturer to discuss audiences, constituencies, and usership. She will be meeting with art and ecology pioneer Bonnie Ora Sherk, who created the Living Library in the Bernal Heights neighborhood of San Francisco.

## **Week 8: Conclusion**

**Instructor: Tania Bruguera** concludes the *escuela* with an analytical eye on the material presented over the last eight weeks.

**Escuela de Arte Útil** is organized by Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in collaboration with California College of the Arts, the San Francisco Art Institute, the University of California at Berkeley, San Francisco State University, the Asociación de Arte Útil (Alessandra Saviotti and Gemma Medina Estupiñan), and the YBCA Fellows program.

Running from **June 20 to August 10**, classes are held **Tuesday through Thursday, 4 to 8 pm**, and are open to the public during open gallery hours.

For a detailed schedule, visit: [https://admin.ybca.org/app/uploads/2017/06/Tania-Bruguera\\_Escuela-Syllabus\\_6-20-17.pdf](https://admin.ybca.org/app/uploads/2017/06/Tania-Bruguera_Escuela-Syllabus_6-20-17.pdf)

**COST:** Free with gallery admission

(general: \$10; seniors, teachers, and students: \$8; YBCA members: free)

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### **About Yerba Buena Center for the Arts**

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA) is one of the nation's most innovative contemporary arts centers. Founded in 1993, YBCA's mission is to generate culture that moves people. Through powerful art experiences, thoughtful and provocative content, and deep opportunities for participation, YBCA is committed to creating an inclusive culture that awakens personal and societal transformation. YBCA presents a wide variety of programming year-round, including performing arts, visual arts, film/video and civic engagement. YBCA venues include the Forum, Screening Room, Galleries and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Theater. For tickets and information, call 415.978.ARTS (2787).

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