

# New Museum Seminars: (Temporary) Collection of Ideas

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: SPECULATION

**Application due date: Tuesday February 10, 2015**

**Seminar dates: Mondays March 2–May 18, 2015 from 6:30–9 PM**

**Associated Public Program: early fall 2015 (date TBD)**

The Spring 2015 R&D Season theme will be **SPECULATION**. The term “speculation” has been frequently turned to of late; the aim of this Season is to explore at least three interrelated interpretations in depth. One such use of this word has been to describe the increasing monetization of the art world and the ways in which artworks are bought, traded, sold, and understood as commodities or assets. Yet, as much as the term aids in our assessing a global condition in which art is no longer seen as outside the purview of qualitative valuation and exchange but firmly accounted for within those operations, it offers other, equally powerful readings. Complicating this economic interpretation of the term is, on the one hand, “speculative realism,” as posited by a number of contemporary philosophers, a reading that grants new agency to objects in the material realm (and destabilizes the ultimate authority and hierarchical power of human beings); on the other, “speculation” points forcefully to older conversations about how and whether it is possible to imagine (or speculate) oppositional or alternative conditions for politics and social formations. In this sense, “speculation” embodies the realm of fantasy and critically considers the space of imagination and future radical possibility. Just one of the considerations that might emerge in the Seminars is how to approach making art or other forms of culture that envision such future political and social imaginaries precisely as these works become increasingly more valuable to forces of capital that appear to limit critical visions of futurity.

Applications for the Spring semester are due on Tuesday February 10. Applications should be sent to [seminars@newmuseum.org](mailto:seminars@newmuseum.org). Please send a CV, a relevant work sample, a statement of interest detailing an overall directional approach to interpreting SPECULATION (approximately five hundred words), and a one-page proposal for how you envision leading, teaching, or facilitating one session’s presentation, including three to four objects of study (such as texts, artworks, cultural ephemera, and exercises). You can view the “VOICE Seminar Presentations and Ongoing Bibliography” for examples of how you might structure your proposal. While you are free to alter your direction once

accepted—the semester is meant to be cumulative, and the hope is that you might find someone in the semester you would like to co-develop a presentation with based on compatible interests of study—this will give us a sense of your stakes/interest in pursuing the thematic.

Prior to the first meeting, selected participants will receive the Education Department's research on the topic as well as the other participants' proposals. From these materials, the group will prioritize the direction for the semester's study by jointly crafting a syllabus in consultation with New Museum staff and R&D Season artists in residence **Chelsea Knight and Constantina Zavitsanos**, who will be members of the Seminar. A schedule of the presentations for the semester will be mapped out in the initial meeting.

In your application, please indicate any sessions you are not able to attend. Regular attendance is a critical aspect of the Seminars.

Admissions will be announced by the week of February 23, and the initial meeting will take place on Monday March 2.