

# New Museum Seminars: (Temporary) Collection of Ideas

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: VOICE

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In fall 2013, the New Museum's Department of Education and Public Engagement spearheaded **R&D (Research and Development) Seasons**, connecting various projects in the galleries, Theater, and Resource Center around a new organizing theme each fall and spring. The inaugural Season examined **ARCHIVES** (for more on this Season see [the press release](#)); the upcoming spring 2014 Season will focus on **VOICE**. The seasonal research-based approach allows artists and audiences to engage across multiple initiatives, and to experiment and test the limits of ideas, connecting individual projects in active and rigorous dialogues over the duration of several months.

This new focus on sustained research and ideas in development has stimulated the establishment of a Seminar Series, unique among museums, in which small groups of multidisciplinary thinkers gather to discuss pressing thematics related to art and the expanded art context over a three-month period. Entitled **New Museum Seminars: (Temporary) Collections of Ideas**, the series will launch in late February 2014 and will be held twice a year—following a semester-length format that culminates in a public conference. The series' name directly references the Museum's history of "collecting" ideas, rather than art objects.

The goal of the Seminars is to provide a platform for discussing and debating ideas as they emerge, in real time, and to develop scholarship directly referencing art's place in culture. Seminar participants are selected through an application process that takes into account the strengths and interests of a diverse group of thinkers and practitioners. A group of ten to twelve participants from various backgrounds (including artists, curators, critics, and scholars, but also those with specialties not directly art-related) will constitute each Seminar group. The Seminars utilize some recognizable graduate level and reading group pedagogical strategies, such as syllabi and weekly closed peer-led reading sessions, but are distinct for their context within and about the contemporary art museum. To accomplish this, a topical theme—usually related to the Education Department's Seasonal theme—is identified in advance for the open call, to which the applicants respond with areas of focus and readings they'd like to consider during the semester. In the first meeting, selected participants will prioritize the direction for the semester's study by jointly crafting a syllabus in consultation with New Museum staff and Seasonal artists-in-residence.

Over the course of three months, the group meets weekly to discuss the texts and associated materials that have been assembled. At the culmination of the semester, participants will work with New Museum staff to produce a public conference highlighting participants' findings and present original research by four to five invited speakers (chosen by participants) whose work was fundamental to the concepts explored in the semester. The day following the public talk, participants will engage with the invited speakers in a private roundtable, responding to the papers and addressing ideas or questions that came up during the course of the semester.

The first Seminar is tied to the Seasonal theme of **VOICE**, with potential lines of inquiry including: non-linguistic utterance, affective declaration, political speech, the destabilization of language, spoken word vs. sung word, communication as agency, and cultural translation. The 2014 spring Season Seminar Conference on **VOICE** will take place on Friday June 6 at 7 p.m. in the New Museum Theater, followed by a closed session on the afternoon of Saturday June 7 for Seminar participants only.

Applications for the spring semester, **VOICE**, are due on February 14.

Please send a statement of interest, including directional approach to the Seasonal theme (approx. 500 words), CV, and a work sample to: [seminars@newmuseum.org](mailto:seminars@newmuseum.org).

Admissions will be announced Friday February 21, and the preliminary organizational meeting will take place on Wednesday March 6. Regular sessions will occur for the twelve weeks following, on Wednesday evenings from 6:30–9 p.m. at the Museum.