

# Being the Media: Designing a New Rrradical Media

Friday and Saturday, February 10 & 11, 2012 The New School, Theresa Lang  
Community and Student Center 55 West 13<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, New York City,  
Admission: Free RSVP required for day 2-  
Call 212 229 2436 or email [vlc@newschool.edu](mailto:vlc@newschool.edu)

What is radical media? What has radical media been in the past? What can radical media be in the future? What is media's relationship to social justice and movement building? In partnership with the Vera List Center for Art & Politics at New School University, Paper Tiger TV (PTTV) is organizing a two-day convening of activists, artists and media makers to celebrate, reflect and build on 30 roarin' years (and counting!) of media art and activism.

Since 1981, PTTV has been challenging the profit-driven mainstream media by making fun, yet incisive video that demystifies the information industry and provides a platform for underrepresented perspectives. Collaborating with activists and artists, Paper Tiger TV videos take many forms- from critical "readings" of the mass media & popular culture, to traditional style documentaries on social justice issues.

Thirty years later, how can we harness collaborative culture, critical analysis, participatory technologies and aesthetics to incite social change? What content and platforms can we create that will respond to the limits and possibilities of the ever-shifting contemporary media landscape?

We invite artists, activists, scholars and media makers, movers and shakers of all stripes to explore these questions. Participants will be challenged to collaboratively design prototypes for a new rrradical media, building on the ideals of non-hierarchical-participatory culture, critical analysis, activism and innovative aesthetics. A broad cross section of individuals, working together with varied proclivities, interests and abilities, opens up the potential for something truly revolutionary to develop.

The convening kicks off Friday evening with a keynote address, screening and discussion. The following day begins with a media intensive and presentations on:

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Media Justice & Media Autonomy New Media Activism & Movement Building  
Collectivism & Collaborative Culture Media materiality & Aesthetics

After lunch participants will break into teams to collaboratively design a radical new media. Selected prototypes will be shared during Documentary Fortnight 2012: MoMA's International Festival of Nonfiction Film and Media on February 24, 2012 from 8-10pm.

## DAY ONE

### **Radical Media Then & Now**

Keynote Address, Panel Discussion & Screening Friday, February 10, 2012,  
6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. *"The power of mass culture rests on the trust of the public. This*

*legitimacy is a paper tiger.” –PTTV Manifesto*

While the mass media may be the bedrock of culture, few are aware of how the mass media manipulates the public issue by issue, ad by ad. Borne of the residual political optimism from the sixties and a flush of infatuation with small-format video, Paper Tiger TV began as a series of shows on *Communications Update*, a public access TV show. Featuring Herb Schiller, ever the Tiger, tearing apart the *New York Times* and “all the news that is fit to print,” Paper Tiger’s penetrating and playful critiques of *Time*, *Rolling Stone*, *National Geographic* and *Cosmopolitan* soon followed.

The public access movement took root at a moment of maximum disillusionment with network television, generating hope that cable would offer a genuine alternative to the vast TV wasteland. Over the last 30 years, the accessibility of public access TV centers has significantly declined, while for-profit corporate media has tightened its stronghold over the media landscape-- consolidating from 50 into 5 companies that control 90% of the public’s media consumption.

Yet, with the proliferation of consumer grade production equipment, Internet distribution platforms, social media, crowd sourcing, online video, live streaming, wireless technology, today’s media environment is rife with opportunities for innovation and collaboration. Still, from the digital divide, to online filter bubbles, to the echo chamber of social (distribution of mass) media, to SOPA and Net Neutrality, an analysis of how these developments are used coupled with the threats coming from the policy level reveals that even these seemingly promising trends are nuanced.

Given these developments, what does a vibrant, radical media look like, how could it function? What lessons can we apply from Paper Tiger’s innovative media activism? How can we use media strategically and creatively in the pursuit of social justice?

#### **KEYNOTE:**

**Malkia Cyril**, executive director of Center for Media Justice

A screening of Paper Tiger’s work will be followed by a panel featuring some of today’s most innovative, inspiring leaders in media, art & activism including:

**Jamilah King**, news editor at Colorlines.com, where she writes about media, politics and technology

**Jennifer Pozner**, media critic, founder and executive director of Women In Media & News

**Andy Bichlbaum**, YesLab, a genderless, loose-knit association of some 300 impostors worldwide who agree their way into the fortified compounds of commerce

Moderated by: **Daniela Capistrano**, DCAP Media, multi-platform producer, brand strategist and youth media consultant

#### **DAY TWO:**

#### **BUILDING THE FUTURE OF MEDIA ACTIVISM**

Saturday, February 11, 2012, (National Inventors' Day) 10:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**MEDIA INTENSIVE: 10:30 A.M. – 12 NOON**

Succinct, fast-paced and provocative presentations by four leaders on the key topics of the convention.

Presenters

- ***Media Justice & Media Autonomy***

**Martha Wallner** is the media & communications coordinator for Legal Services for Prisoners with Children. She joined the Paper Tiger TV Collective in 1984 and co-founded Deep Dish TV in 1985. She has taught courses on media policy and civil society at New York University and the University of San Francisco and served on the boards of Scribe Video (Philadelphia), and Media Alliance (San Francisco).

- ***New Media Activism & Movement Building***

**Pablillo Jose** is a student in Political Philosophy and History from City College (CUNY) and a "hacktivist" whose interests revolve around the investigations of accessible network infrastructure that potentially empowers the commons to control and crowdsource their own data. The political reality of his country (Puerto Rico) and its forgotten communities has led to his current work on "radical transparency" under the ideals of the horizontalism.

And **Isaac Wilder** is the co-founder and executive director of the Free Network Foundation. He studied Computer Science and Philosophy at Grinnell College until 2011, when he left Grinnell to pursue free network advocacy full-time. He is currently based in New York City.

- ***Collectivism & Collaborative Culture***

**Jesse Drew** is a long-time Paper Tiger TV collective member, as well as a member of many other media collectives. He has written extensively on radical media and in particular the role of collectives. He is currently a professor of technocultural studies at the University of California, Davis.

- ***Media Materiality & Aesthetics***

**Shannon Mattern** is an assistant professor in the School of Media Studies at The New School in New York. From 2006 to 2009 she directed the Graduate Program in Media Studies. Her research and teaching address relationships between the forms and materialities of media and the spaces (architectural, urban, conceptual) they create and inhabit.

**Lunch\*\*PROVIDED\*\*:** 12 – 1:00 p.m. Presenters and grassroots media advocates host informal discussions dedicated to conference themes.

**PRODUCTION DESIGN CHALLENGE/CHARRETTES:** 1:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Groups of 8-10 participants will be challenged to collectively create a prototype for a new form of radical media. Representatives from MAG-NET, People's Production House, Democracy Now!, Manhattan Neighborhood Network, Housing is a Human Right, Deep Dish TV and Paper Tiger TV will help facilitate.

- **Media Action Grassroots Network (MAG-NET)** is a local-to-local advocacy network of grassroots community organizations working together for media change to end poverty, eliminate racism, and ensure human rights. With over 100 member groups nationwide, regional chapters, an online action network, a media justice learning community, and collaborative campaigns- MAG-Net is advancing an exciting new vision for media justice.
- **People's Production House (PPH)** is a journalism training and production institute focused on producing stories that bring unheard voices to the fore. We teach students, immigrants, and working families how to create ground-breaking news critical to a vibrant democracy.
- **Democracy Now!** is a national, daily, independent, award winning global news hour hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez. Pioneering the largest public media collaboration in the U.S., Democracy Now! is broadcast on Pacifica, NPR, community, and college radio stations; on public access, PBS, satellite television (DISH network: Free Speech TV ch. 9415 and Link TV ch. 9410; DIRECTV: Free Speech TV ch. 348 and Link TV ch. 375); and on the internet. DN!'s podcast is one of the most popular on the web.
- **Housing is a Human Right** is an ongoing multi-platform documentary project that creates a space for people to share stories of their community and ongoing experiences trying to obtain or maintain a place to call home. We are growing a collection of powerful first-person stories exploring the complex fabric of community and home, painting a living portrait of human rights. Stories are recorded in sound in the tradition of oral history and shared as audio stories, photographs and multimedia across multiple platforms-including interactive exhibitions in unconventional spaces & broadcasts via traditional and new media outlets.
- **Diana Quiñones Rivera** is an independent filmmaker.
- **Deep Dish TV (DDTV)** Since 1986, Deep Dish has been a laboratory for new, democratic and empowering ways to make and distribute video. It is a hub linking thousands of artists, independent videomakers, programmers and social activists. The network has produced and distributed over 300 hours of television series that challenge the suppression of awareness, the corruption of language, and the perversion of logic that characterizes so much of corporate media.
- **Tracey Noelle Luz** is the director of *They Will Be Heard*, the first feature length film on Cuban heavy metal to be released in June of 2012. A documentary photographer and filmmaker, Luz was also the founder of the first documentary photography program for 6th graders in Newark, New Jersey.
- **Robby Herbst** is a co-founder and former editor of the *Journal of Aesthetics & Protest*. He is an active instigator of the Los Angeles based Llano Del Rio Collective, whose newest project, "An Antagonist's Guide to the Jerks and Assholes of Los

Angeles,” is due out in the late winter of this year. Opening February 10th at the Dumbo Arts Center in Brooklyn is his project New Pyramids For the Capitalist System, that documents acrobatic tableaus created during the occupation of LA City Hall this past fall.

**TEAM PRESENTATIONS: 4:30- 6 PM**

Each group will be given 10 minutes to present their rrradical media prototype. Selected prototypes will be featured in Documentary Fortnight 2012: MoMA's International Festival of Nonfiction Film and Media on February 24 from 8-10p.

Organized by the Vera List Center for Art and Politics and Paper Tiger Television, in conjunction with the center's focus theme “Thingness.”

Co-presented by School of Media Studies at The New School for Public Engagement.