COEX250: The Arts of Building Peace
Spring, 2009

PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS AND CALENDAR

Instructor
Cynthia Cohen, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Slifka Program in Intercommunal Coexistence

Office: ASAC (Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex) 3rd Floor
Phone: 781-736-2133
Email: cecohen@brandeis.edu

Office hours by appointment. Schedule directly with me via email cecohen@brandeis.edu. In case of any difficulty, please contact Barbara Epstein, Slifka Program administrator at bepstein@brandeis.edu, x65001, or Fernanda Senatori (see below). Please don’t plan on conferring immediately before class, unless we have an appointment.

Teaching Assistant
Fernanda Senatori, MA in Cultural Productions (anticipated ’09)
Assistant producer of documentary Acting Together on the World Stage

Office: ASAC (Abraham Shapiro Academic Complex) 3rd Floor, Room 325
Phone: 781-736-5027
Email: senatori@brandeis.edu

Office hours:
Tuesdays: 9:30pm – 10:30pm
Fridays: 9:30pm – 10:30pm

Class
Tuesdays, 1:40 – 4:30
Block S2
Shiffman Humanities Ctr 201
Introduction

COEX 250: The Arts of Building Peace is an exploration of the creative dimensions of peacebuilding practice and the contributions of cultural work and the arts to coexistence, reconciliation and the non-violent transformation of conflict.

Why a course that explores the relationships among peace, cultural work and the arts? Throughout the world, artists, cultural workers and peacebuilding practitioners are incorporating the arts into efforts to strengthen relationships across difference, struggle for social justice, and create less violent societies. They work in and with a wide array of genres – music, literature, theater, visual arts, storytelling, digital art and broadcast media and folk expressions of all kinds. Their projects are intended to accomplish different goals, such as helping enemies perceive each other’s humanity, helping survivors recover from trauma, and supporting people to mourn losses, to empathize with each others suffering, to address injustices and to imagine a new future. They involve people as creators, performers, participants, audience members, and critics.

Some of these initiatives operate in single neighborhoods; some are international in scope. Some are one-time events, others involve creating sustainable institutions, and processes that last for decades. Some are highly effective, some less so.

Although there is a great deal of activity in this field, very little has been written that gives an overview, or assesses what comprises excellent work in this area, or would help policy-makers or practitioners understand the range of contributions, the accomplishments and the limitations of interventions that incorporate the arts and cultural work. Rarely do the artist-peacebuilders who design such projects have the opportunity to reflect on them, to assess them honestly, and to explore the ethical questions that emerge from this kind of practice. Rarely do they understand the larger peace-building field or work in coordination with practitioners in other fields who are working toward similar goals. At Brandeis we are working to begin to fill this gap.

This course is designed for students in the arts and cultural production, and for students in coexistence and conflict and peace studies. It is for those already engaged in peacebuilding/cultural projects, and for those who think of doing this kind of work in the future. It is for students who are practitioners (of both the arts and coexistence) and for those who might work as administrators, advocates and/or policy-makers, or collaborate with artists from their positions in other kinds of agencies.

In the spring of 2009, the class will explore several different theoretical frameworks related to peacebuilding and the arts. It will explore in depth a set of thirteen case studies that document performance and peacebuilding in conflict regions throughout the world. These case studies are being developed as part of a project entitled Acting Together on the World Stage: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict. As a class,
we will design a website to accompany an anthology and a documentary, both in progress.

In addition, we will participate in two different Intercultural Residencies: a virtual residency with Shubha Mugdal, an Indian musician who visited the Brandeis campus in the fall of 2008; and Nettle: Music for a Nu World, a “cultural collaboration in a globalized age” that will be visiting campus from March 19 – 21. You can read about these artists and listen to their music at http://www.musicunitesus.info/residency.html.

In addition, you will have the opportunity to craft a modest creative, research or reflective project, consistent with the course goals, that engages your own particular questions, interests and talents.

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**Course Goals**

The Arts of Building Peace engages students in exploring the actual and potential contributions of the arts and cultural work to peacebuilding theory and practice, and supports them to acquire the tools to design and assess arts- and culture-based peacebuilding initiatives, and to advocate for such efforts. We explore dilemmas and constraints as well as accomplishments and possibilities.

Specifically, students will:

- Become familiar with key concepts and frameworks from the fields that inform this inquiry:
  - Coexistence and Conflict Studies
  - Arts and Aesthetic Theory
  - Folklore and Ritual
  - Community Cultural Development
  - Performance Studies
- Explore these concepts and frameworks in depth relation to specific case studies of performance and peacebuilding from conflict regions around the world
- Work collaboratively to create a website to accompany Acting Together on the World Stage: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict
- Participate in two on-campus inter-cultural music residencies
- Explore creative approaches to addressing key tensions in the peacebuilding field, such as those between
  - integrity and interdependence
  - restorative and retributive justice
  - remembering the past and imagining the future
  - the need to effectively challenge abuses of power and a commitment to non-violence
- Pursue a research or creative project related to the course, defined in collaboration with the instructors
Course Requirements

1) Complete weekly assignments and actively participate in class discussions and exercises, both expressing your own ideas as well as eliciting and responding to the contributions of others. Lead a class discussion about your case studies. (10%)

2) Work in small groups to design webpages in support of two case studies on performance and peacebuilding. Keep a log of your contributions to the website, and write a reflection paper documenting and reflecting on your personal contributions to the group project (40%)

3) Contribute to and reflect on one or two residencies that are part of the Brandeis Intercultural Residency Series and write a two-page paper documenting your participation and assessing the residency in terms of coexistence, reconciliation and building peace. (10%)

4) Complete a final paper or project synthesizing your learning in the course, focusing on a topic and using a format agreed upon by you and the instructor. (20%)

5) Collaborate with classmates and instructors in completing a website for the anthology that meets high intellectual and aesthetic standards (20%)

6) All students will need to sign up for CMS (training for web editors using Cascade Web Content Management System). The training sessions are hands-on and the duration is one hour and a half. Students will perform all the tasks associated with managing, editing and designing the website that will be developed during the course. We reserved four training sessions (see below), each of which can accommodate up to eight students.

   CMS Training: Goldfarb Library - Vershbow Room (Mezzanine)
   Wednesday, February 25, 10-11:30am
   Thursday, February 26, 3-4:30pm
   Monday, March 2, 1:30-3pm
   Tuesday, March 3, 10:30am-12pm
Course Readings and other Resources

Most readings, dvds and cds will either be posted on Latte (the electronic bulletin board) or are available on-line.

There are two books that you should acquire, listed below. The first is a novel, which we will read in its entirety. The other is a basic book on peacebuilding practice. We will return to it at various points throughout the semester. We’ve discovered that the least expensive way for you to acquire books is to order them on-line. They are also on reserve in the library.


Course Policies

Attendance is required at all class sessions. Because everyone’s learning in the class is strengthened by the contributions of other members, please prepare thoroughly and ask to be excused only in cases of serious health or other emergencies. If you are unable to attend class, please let Fernanda know ahead of time if at all possible.

Keep a log of your own contributions to the group project, and turn this in along with a reflection paper on your learning and your role.

You are welcome to confer with each other on papers and class presentations. Writing, however, should be your own. Please be sure to credit the source of any ideas borrowed from or inspired by others.

Note: If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you, please see the instructor before the third session of class.
UNIT I: Overview of theory and practice in peacebuilding, the arts and cultural work. Focus on Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani, Peru.

Session 1: January 13. Overview of the course.

BREAK [Tuesday, January 20 is a “Brandeis Monday”]

Session 2: January 27 Key concepts from Peace and Conflict Studies. Background on Peru.


ASSIGNMENT DUE: POST WORKPLANS FOR WEBPAGES, INCLUDING DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND TIMELINE.


BREAK -- Brandeis vacation February 17th.

Session 5: February 24 Transitional justice. Websites as resources for education and for social change.

ASSIGNMENT DUE: POST DRAFT OF CASE STUDY SUMMARIES ON LATTE BY MARCH 1.


UNIT II. Overview of case studies. Developing summaries.

Session 7: March 10. Overview of case studies and feedback on draft summaries.
How do communities remember the past in a way that supports them to imagine a different future?
How do communities balance imperatives toward accountability and toward restoration?

Session 8. March 17th: Case studies by Varea and Walker. (Argentina, Australia, United States)

Session 9: March 24 Case Studies by Filloux and Margraff. (Cambodia and India)

ASSIGNMENT ON INTERCULTURAL RESIDENCY DUE MARCH 28.

UNIT IV: Performance and Peacebuilding in Contexts of Direct Violence.
How do communities resist abuses of authority without resorting to violence?
How do communities challenge violence using non-violent means?

Session 10. March 31. Case Studies by Milosevic and Mulekwa. (Serbia and Uganda)

Session 11: April 7. Case studies by Palihapitiya and Musleh. Tentative visits to class by the authors. (Sri Lanka and Palestine)

UNIT V: Performance and Peacebuilding in Contexts of Structural Violence.
How do communities celebrate and develop identities in ways that acknowledge and strengthen interdependence?

Session 12: April 14. Case studies by Nasrallah/Perlman; and Gardener/van Erven. (Israel and The Netherlands and Brooklyn/Kenya)

BREAK No class April 21.

Session 13: April 28. Case Studies by Banks and Hunter. (Ghana, South Africa, Australia)

ASSIGNMENT DUE: WEBSITE ASSIGNMENTS DUE APRIL 28.

ASSIGNMENT DUE: FINAL PROJECTS DUE ON MAY 10.

UNIT V: Synthesizing Learning

Session 14: Tuesday, May 12 (tentative). Sharing of final projects and celebration. Location To be determined.
UNIT I: Overview of theory and practice in peacebuilding, the arts and cultural work. Focus on Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani, Peru.

Session 1: January 13. Overview of the course.

In class
- Introductions
- Overview of the course, review of the syllabus and assignments
- Sign-up for CMS Training.
- Screening of trailer for documentary *Acting Together on the World Stage* (link on LATTE) and discussion of the anthology/documentary/website/networking project and how the class relates.
- Socially engaged art and dilemmas of instrumentalism.
- Story circles.

BREAK [Tuesday, January 20 is a “Brandeis Monday”]

Session 2: January 27 Key concepts from Peace and Conflict Studies. Background on Peru.

Read
- *Acting Together on the World Stage* - Brief Description of Cases (on LATTE)
- Varea, Roberto. “Fire in the Memory: Theatre, Truth, and Justice in Argentina and Peru.” (on LATTE) Focus on background on Peru.

Watch
In class
- Discussion of film and historical/political/cultural context of Peru.
- Overview of peacebuilding field
  o Review of key terms, concepts, questions and dilemmas
  o Stages of conflict, kinds of violence, levels of intervention.
- Indicate preferences for case studies
- Review general assignment for website

[Special class session: Virtual Residency with Shubah Mudgal in February – TBA: Day/time/location]


ASSIGNMENT DUE: POST WORKPLANS FOR WEBPAGES, INCLUDING DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND TIMELINE.

Read


In class
- Discuss Lederach’s theory of the moral imagination.
- Review of key terms, concepts, questions and dilemmas related to ‘art’ and ‘the aesthetic.’
- Discuss Bel Canto, the transformative power of beauty, and music as a resource for building peace.
- Tentative: 4:00 p.m: Roundtable on Poetry from Guantanemo, part of Cultural Productions symposium Hitting Close to Home.
- Definite for all who are able to stay: 4:30 p.m. Atem Aleu’s gallery talk on arts and human rights in relation to the genocide in Southern Sudan.

Read

• (Re-read) Varea, Roberto. “Fire in the Memory: Theatre, Truth, and Justice in Argentina and Peru.” (on LATTE) Focus on sections on Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani.


Watch

• Alma Viva. Video on Yuyachkani’s work in Peru (on reserve - Goldfarb Library).

• Rosa Cuchillo. Performance at Brandeis. (on website-test)

In class:

• Discussion of “Memories of Fire”, focusing on Peru and Yuyachkani.

• Review of key terms, concepts, questions and dilemmas related to community cultural development, ritual, collective expressive forms.

BREAK -- Brandeis vacation February 17th.

Session 5: February 24  Transitional justice. Websites as resources for education and for social change.

ASSIGNMENT DUE: POST DRAFT OF CASE STUDY SUMMARIES ON LATTE BY MARCH 1.
Read

• Minow, M. Between Vengeance and Forgiveness. Boston : Beacon Press, c1998. Chapters 1 and 6 (on LATTE)

Read the following and other articles that you can find related to the example of Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani.

• Ore, D. and Wade, T. “Shining Path Expands Role in Cocaine Trade” at http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N12457145.htm;
• AlertNet. “Peru’s Rebels Hit Again” at http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N29316009.htm

Explore the following websites and others you can find related to the case study

• Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani (Spanish) http://www.yuyachkani.org/
• Yuyachkani: Performance and Politics and Peru http://hemi.nyu.edu/cuaderno/yuyachkani/index.html
• Yuyachkani Collection: Hemispheric Institute Digital Video Library http://hidvl.nyu.edu/search/?start=0&fq=collectionId%3AYuyachkanicollection&q=&facets=

Watch the following videos and others you can find related to the case study

• Interview with Roberto Varea (on website-test)
• Interview with Anna Correa (Spanish) (on website-test)
• Interview with Augusto Casafrabca (on website-test)
• Rosa Cuchillo (Spanish) (on website-test)
• Adios Ayayacucho (Spanish) (on website-test)

To prepare: Research images, websites, maps, background documents; read texts; watch videos; as assigned in class on February 10th. Read framing chapters for the anthology.

In class

• Discussion on Transitional Justice
• Reports on research and brainstorm about materials for website.
• Guest presenter about website as educational resource
Session 6: March 3. Theories of Change. Review key concepts associated with peacebuilding, the arts, and community cultural development. Complete discussions related to “Memories of Fire” and related website. Assess Grupo Cultural Yuyachkani as peacebuilding performance.

Read


• Lacayo, Virginia. “When it Comes to Social Change, the Machine Metaphor Has Limits” at http://www.communicationforsocialchange.org/mazi-articles.php?id=374


Watch

• Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why Know One Saw it Coming (5 minutes) at http://www.blessedunrest.com/video.html

Review

• All readings, videos and class notes related to Yuyachkani and Peru

In class

• Reports on any additional research for website
• Selecting elements for website; website design.
• Wrap-up of Unit I.
UNIT II. Overview of case studies. Developing summaries.

Session 7: March 10. Overview of case studies and feedback on summaries.

Read
• Summaries of all case studies, noting suggestions for classmates about what works well, what could be improved, what is missing, etc. Note any ideas for your own case studies.

In class:
• Workshop on revising case studies, led by writer/editor Lesley Yalen.

How do communities remember the past in a way that supports them to imagine a different future?
How do communities balance imperatives toward accountability and toward restoration?

Session 8. March 17th: Case studies by Varea and Walker.

Read
• Varea, Roberto. “Fire in the Memory: Theatre, Truth, and Justice in Argentina and Peru.” Focus on Argentina examples. (on LATTE)

• Walker, Polly “Creating a New Story: Ritual, Ceremony and Conflict Transformation between Indigenous and Settler Peoples.” (on LATTE)


• Cohen, Varea, Walker. Draft Introduction to Part II Section 2 of anthology. (on LATTE)

Watch
• Two Rivers Pow Wow, directed by Rodney Mitchell, USA, 2007 - 90 minutes, (on reserve – Goldfarb Library).
• Australia says Sorry to a Stolen Generation, at http://es.youtube.com/watch?v=C9mJpL67QUw&NR=1
• Rabbit Proof Fence, directed by Phillip Noyce, Australia/USA, 2002 - 93 minutes, (on reserve – Goldfarb Library).

In class
• Presentation by working group and discussion on Varea’s case study, focusing on examples from Argentina.
• Presentation by working group and discussion on Walker’s case study.
• Class gives feedback on plans for and drafts of material for website.

[Participation in Intercultural Residency Series, March 19 – 21 - TBD]

Session 9: March 24  Case Studies by Filloux and Margraff.

Read
• Filloux, Catherine. “Alive on Stage: Time, Histories and Bodies.” (on LATTE)
• Margraff, Ruth. “Hidden Fires: Artistic Responses to Hindu/Muslim Ethnic Violence and Oppression in India”. (on LATTE)

Watch
• Photographs from S-21 (on reserve - Goldfarb Library).
• Where the Elephants Weep, at http://www.whereelephantsweep.net/
• Tenative: video from India (TBD)

In class
• Presentation and discussion led by working group. Class brainstorms ancillary materials and website.

ASSIGNMENT ON INTERCULTURAL RESIDENCY DUE MARCH 28.

UNIT IV: Performance and Peacebuilding in Contexts of Direct Violence.
How do communities resist abuses of authority without resorting to violence?
How do communities challenge violence using non-violent means?

Read

- Milosevic, Dijana. “Theatre as a Way of Knowing”. (on LATTE)


- “Interethnic Relations in Post-War Serbia,” and “Creativity, Social Development and Peacebuilding in East Africa”. In Pieces of the Coexistence Puzzle: Part II; Problem-Solving Workshops Brandeis University, October 2007. Written and organized by Williams, Kristin. (on LATTE). Also at http://www.brandeis.edu/coexistence/linked%20documents/ps%20workshop%20report%20FINAL.pdf

- “Serbs in the Twenty-First Century”. In Program on Ethnic Relations. (on LATTE) Also at http://www.per-usa.org/Reports/PER_Serbs21stCentury.pdf


Watch

- War/Dance, directed by Sean Fine and Andrea Nix, Uganda/USA, 2007-110 min (on reserve – Goldfarb Library).


- Video footage from Serbia - TBD

In class

- Presentation and discussion led by working group.
- Tentative: Visit by Charles Mulekwa, curator of case

Session 11: April 7. Case studies by Palihapitiya and Musleh. Tentative visits to class by the curators.

Read

- Cohen, Varea, Walker. “Introduction to Part II, Section 1 of Anthology”. (on LATTE)

- Palihapitiya, Madhawa. “Creating Space for Peacebuilding in Sri Lanka through Performance” (on LATTE)
• Musleh, Abeer. “Theatre and Non-violent Resistance in Palestine”. (on LATTE)


Watch

• Arna’s Children, directed by Juliano Mer Khamis, Israel/Palestine/The Netherlands, 2004 - 84 minutes, (on reserve – Goldfarb Library).

• Encounter Point, directed by Ronit Avni, Israel, 2006 - 85 minutes, (on reserve – Goldfarb Library).

• Tentative: The Art of Forgetting by Lisa Kois.

• Tentative: Footage of Ashtar from CalArts Conference

In class
• Presentation and discussion led by working group. Class brainstorm about
• Tentative: Class visit by Mads and Abeer, curators of cases.

BREAK  No class April 14.

UNIT V: Performance and Peacebuilding in Contexts of Structural Violence. How do communities celebrate and develop identities in ways that acknowledge and strengthen interdependence?

Session 12: April 21. Case studies by Nasrallah/Perlman; and Gardener/van Erven.

Read

• Nasrallah, Aida and Perlman, Lee. “Weaving Relationships, Embroidering Dialogues: Strengthening Coexistence in Israel through Performance”. (on LATTE)

• van Erven, Eugene and Gardner, Kate. “Performing Cross-Cultural Conversations: Creating New Kinships through Community Theatre”. (on LATTE).

Read at least one of the following:


Read and Watch

• “In the Name of the Fathers” by Eugene van Erven. (Read text and watch some of the videos inserted in it.) http://vredevanuntrecht.com/community-art/2008/06/27/in-the-name-of-the-fathers/

Watch

• Brookenya (on reserve – Goldfarb Library)
• **Saz: The Palestinian Rapper for Change**, directed by Gil Karni, Israel, 2006 - 54 min (on reserve – Goldfarb Library).

In class
• Presentation and discussion led by working group.


Read
• Banks, Daniel. “Youth Leading Youth: Hip Hop and HipLife Theatre in Ghana and South Africa”. (on LATTE)

• Hunter, Mary Ann. “Change the World as We Know It: Peace, Youth, and Performance”. (on LATTE)

Watch
• Video from Contact, Inc. - TBD
• Video from Ghana – TBD

In class
• Presentation and discussion by working group.
• Tentative: Visit by Will Chalmus, Brandeis alum who interned with Contact, Inc.
• Evaluation of course

**ASSIGNMENT DUE: FINAL PROJECTS DUE ON MAY 10.**

**UNIT V: Synthesizing Learning**

Session 14: Tuesday, May 12 (tentative). Sharing of final projects and celebration. Location To be determined.

Prepare
• Turn in final projects by May 10.

In class
• Share final projects
• Discussion
• Celebrate website!!