

zones of emergency

09/26/11

**tess thackara, director,
survival international (USA)**
popularizing the fight
for indigenous rights: how using
films and images can shift public
opinion and change history
respondent: ute meta bauer, act
associate professor, MIT (USA)

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jack persekian, curator (Jerusalem)
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enabling emergent voices and
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power of art, or the art of transformative
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creative responses

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**james wescoat, aga khan professor
& shun kanda, senior lecturer, MIT (USA)**
mit japan 3/11 initiative
respondent: jegan vincent de paul, act
lecturer, MIT (USA)

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amar kanwar, filmmaker & artist (India)
respondent: bish sanyal, ford international professor of urban
development & planning, MIT (USA)

act

MIT program
in art, culture and
technology
School of Architecture + Planning

lecture
series
fall
2011

SA+P

MIT

act.mit.edu

The *Zones of Emergency: Artistic Interventions – Creative Responses to Conflict & Crisis* Fall 2011 lecture series investigates initiatives and modes of intervention in contested spaces, zones of conflict, or areas affected by environmental disasters. The intention is to explore whether artistic interventions can transform, disrupt or subvert current environmental, urban, political and social conditions in critical ways. A crucial question is how can such interventions propose ideas, while at the same time respecting the local history and culture.

The Fall 2011 lecture series is directed by Ute Meta Bauer and is part of the courses 4.365/4.366 *Zones of Emergency: Artistic Intervention – Creative Responses to Conflict and Crisis*, (instructors Ute Meta Bauer/Jegan Vincent de Paul), 4.330/331 *Intro to Networked Cultures & Participatory Media* (instructor Gediminas Urbonas), and 4.360/4.361 *Performance Workshop* (instructor Joan Jonas).

The ACT lecture series is free and open to the public.

Zones of Emergency: Artistic Interventions – Creative Responses to Conflict & Crisis

september 26, 2011

tess thackara, director, survival international (USA)

popularizing the fight for indigenous rights: how using films and images can shift public opinion and change history

respondent: ute meta bauer, act associate professor, MIT (USA)

This lecture explores the work and methodology of human rights group Survival International, with a particular focus on the group's efforts to generate a groundswell of support for tribal people all over the world. Using Survival films and campaigns as case studies, the lecture will focus on the need to popularize the narrative surrounding indigenous land rights. Tess Thackara directs the USA office of Survival International, whose major campaign successes include the Indian government banning aluminum giant Vedanta Resources from mining the sacred lands of the Dongria Kondh tribe in 2010, and the High Court of Botswana's affirming the Bushmen's right to access water on their ancestral lands in 2011.

Survival International: www.survivalinternational.org

october 3, 2011

jack persekian, curator (Jerusalem)

in the meantime

respondent: nitin sawhney, assistant professor, the new school (USA)

In 1992 Jack Persekian founded Anadiel Gallery, the first and only independent gallery for Palestinian artists in Jerusalem. Persekian later founded the Al-Ma'mal Foundation to continue the gallery's mission and to further promote, instigate, and disseminate the production of art in Palestine. In his talk, Persekian will share his experience – the challenges and the outcomes – of creating a space for Palestinian artists in Jerusalem. Have the methods for working in contested spaces, such as Israel, changed over the years? Does art have the potential to engage a zone of conflict in a different way than politics? Persekian was Head Curator of the Sharjah Biennial (2004–2007), Artistic Director of the Sharjah Biennial (2007–2011), and Director of the Sharjah Art Foundation (2009–2011). Al-Ma'mal Foundation: www.almamalfoundation.org

october 17, 2011

joichi ito, director, MIT media lab (USA)

enabling emergent voices and expression through technology

respondent: tba

Moore's law and the Internet have dramatically reduced the cost of producing and distributing information. This has greatly lowered the cost of collaboration and has empowered a qualitatively different "public" to think, express, and act without, or in spite of, central authority. These changes and advances in technology enabled interventions such as low-cost video cameras in the case of WITNESS; blogs (Global Voices); or open hardware and software used to build, distribute, collect and visualize data from geiger counters (Safecast). Ito will discuss how these trends relate to media, citizenship, academics, and conflicts. Joichi Ito was named Director of the MIT Media Lab in April 2011.

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october 31, 2011

lucy walker, filmmaker (UK)

99 is not 100 – documenting the transformative power of art, or the art of transformative documentary

respondent: claude grunitzky, chairman, TRUE, sloan fellow, MIT (USA)

How do we observe or quantify the impact of an artistic intervention or the impact of a documentary film? Lucy Walker will be reflecting on the experience of making and showing the film *Waste Land*, a documentary about artist Vik Muniz's collaboration with the self-designated recyclables materials pickers of Jardim Gramacho, the largest landfill in the world. The film has won over thirty international awards and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Documentary. Lucy Walker has directed four award-winning feature documentaries: *Devil's Playground*, *Blindsight*, *Waste Land* and *Countdown To Zero*.

november 07, 2011

stella mcgregor, director, urbano project (USA)

ploughshares from swords – social sculpture and cultural agency

respondent: gediminas urbonas, act associate professor, MIT (USA)

How does creative activism contribute to society? How do we moderate crises through individual and collective art practice? How do we reconcile the arts, activism, and pedagogy? Stella McGregor, Founder and Director of Urbano Project, will share her experience of working with inner city youth and introduce projects such as *Violence Transformed*, and Pedro Reyes' *Palas por Pistolas*. Stella McGregor has been an artist and a cultural worker for over 25 years, working on projects in Boston, New Orleans, Macedonia, and Taiwan. Urbano Project: <http://urbanoproject.org>

november 14, 2011

james wescoat, aga khan professor

& shun kanda, senior lecturer, MIT (USA)

MIT japan 3/11 initiative

respondent: jegan vincent de paul, act lecturer, MIT (USA)

In the aftermath of the disaster suffered in Japan, MIT launched the MIT Japan 3/11 Initiative, a multi-year collaborative project focused on disaster-resilient planning, design and reconstruction. Back from the first MIT Japan 3/11 workshop which took place this summer, Shun Kanda and Jim Wescoat will discuss the process and challenges in planning and implementing alternative strategies for disaster-preparedness. Shun Kanda is a Tokyo native and the Director of Architectural Studies for the MIT-Japan Program. James L. Wescoat, Jr. is Aga Khan Professor in the School of Architecture and Planning at MIT.

MIT Japan 3/11 Initiative: <http://web.mit.edu/japan3-11/home.html>

november 21, 2011

amar kanwar, filmmaker & artist (India)

title tba

respondent: bish sanyal, ford international professor of urban development & planning, MIT (USA)

Indian artist and well-known filmmaker Amar Kanwar creates documentary-based multi-channel installations that deal with the politics of power, violence, sexuality, and justice. In *The Torn First Pages*, Kanwar unfolds the struggle for democracy in Myanmar. The eight-channel video piece *The Lightning Testimonies* reflects upon a history of conflict in the Indian subcontinent through the experiences of sexual violence against women during and after the 1947 partition. Kanwar's work has been shown in museums across the globe, and he received numerous awards for his works and humanitarian engagement. Kanwar participated in *documenta 11*, *12*, and currently works on a commission for *documenta 13*.

mon 7–9 pm

MIT Bartos Theater

Wiesner Bldg (E15) Lower Level
20 Ames Street
Cambridge, MA

act@mit.edu
617-253-5229

directions

Located in Kendall Square, Cambridge.

Take the MBTA red line to the Kendall/MIT stop. Follow Main Street west to Ames Street, turn left, and walk one block.

Ames Street has limited on-street parking. Visitors may park in MIT campus lots after 5PM. (The Hayward Lot is on Hayward Street, off of Amherst Street.)