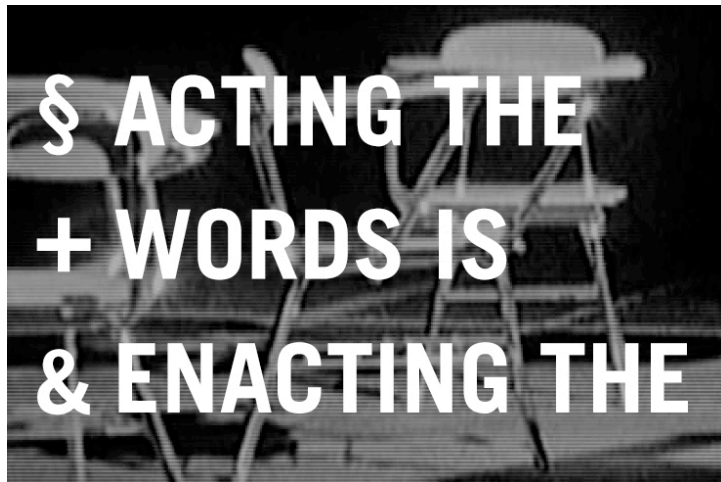


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Acting the Words is Enacting the World



Workshop Dates:
May 17 – May 28, 2011

Reception:
Thursday, May 26, 6 – 8 pm

Public Viewing:
Friday, May 27 - Saturday, May 28

EFA Project Space
323 West 39th Street, 2nd floor
New York, NY 10018
between 8th and 9th Avenues
www.efanyc.org

Experiments in radical arts education: artists **Huong Ngo** and **Hong-An Truong** team with **EFA Project Space** and New York City students to use art and theater to talk about the economy.

Gallery Hours:
Wed through Sat, 12-6 pm
T. 212-563-5855,
projectspace@efanyc.org

Acting the Words is Enacting the World is a two week long experiment in radical education which will mobilize Brazilian popular education activist **Augusto Boal**'s techniques of *Theater of the Oppressed* to prompt students to engage with the economy in a series of intensive workshops, discussions and performances. Among the topics covered, the program will explore how youth culture glamorizes consumerism to further examine capitalism through the lenses of art, history and culture.

With current debates and concerns on the future of the U.S. economy mounting in the news, high school students and young adults are faced with many complicated questions about how they fit into this overwhelming equation. While economic issues substantively affect young people as much as adults (especially upon their eminent entrance into higher education), it seems that students are widely excluded and sheltered from the economic conversation.

This group of young people, ages 16-20, will use public performance to explore different angles of capitalist issues in a format designed to empower themselves through direct participation. Considered by many activists as a fundamental tool in collective organizing and active learning, *Theater of the Oppressed* techniques will encourage students to use performance to generate a democratic discussion about economic issues with Ngo and Truong who will act more as arbiters and facilitators than as traditional teachers. The students will then reflect on their experiences through a collaborative video performance to be installed in the alternative art venue **EFA Project Space** in midtown Manhattan, along with other creative materials.

As Truong explains, “The workshop is designed around two major ideas. First, it takes a pedagogical approach that raises a series of concrete questions about the economy and encourages the students to articulate their lived realities within the capitalist system. Then, it prompts the students to use performance to explore what *could* be through enacting potential, imagined realities in public spaces. We envision it not just as a class but as an exercise in action.”

Ngo says, “Most of the students are realizing that there are few jobs and limited opportunities currently out there for them in art and design. Most of them balance school with part time jobs in retail and the restaurant industry. Our hope is that [*Enacting the word*] will help them mobilize ideas that they can then take away from the experience and use in action in their own lives and the working world.

About the students: The participants were recruited from all five boroughs through high school educators who had worked with them before and recognized their desire for experimental learning. The students range from seniors in high school to sophomores in college, and come from a range of cultural backgrounds and experience with art. Some aspire to be writers, others designers and performance artists.

About the artists:

Huong Ngo is an artist and educator based in Brooklyn. She is interested in how art can offer proposals for more empathetic relationships with the world. She has exhibited at The Kitchen, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, the Aldrich Museum, Smack Mellon, the Soap Factory, the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, and the National Gallery in Prague. She is working on a collaborative project among students in the United States and Baghdad entitled *Fantastic Futures* and teaches at Parsons The New School for Design. Ngo received her MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is an upcoming studio fellow in the Whitney Independent Study Program.

Hong-An Truong is an artist and writer based in Brooklyn and North Carolina. She has exhibited at the Godwin-Ternbach Museum in Queens, the ISCP, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Laguna Art Museum, Torrance Art Museum, and DobaeBacsca Gallery in Seoul. Recent group shows include Art in General, the BRIC Rotunda Gallery, and DeSoto Gallery in Los Angeles, and the International Center for Photography. She recently mounted a public audio and video installation in Long Island City called *Rehearsal for Education*, made in collaboration with students at LaGuardia Community College. Truong received her MFA at the University of California, Irvine and was a studio fellow in the Whitney Independent Study Program. She is an Assistant Professor in the Art Department at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

For press inquiries, please contact Michelle Levy at: michelle@efanyc.org

EFA Project Space is a Program of **The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts**.

EFA Project Space, a multi-disciplinary contemporary art venue focused on the investigation of the creative process, aims to provide dynamic exchanges between artists, cultural workers, and the public. Art is directly connected to its producers, to the communities they are a part of, and to every day life. By contextualizing and revealing these connections, we strive to bridge gaps in our cultural community, forging new partnerships and the expansion of ideas. Through these synergies, artists build on their creative power to further impact society.

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts (EFA) is a 501 (c) (3) public charity. Through its three core programs, **EFA Studios**, **EFA Project Space**, and the **Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop**, EFA is dedicated to providing artists across all disciplines with space, tools and a cooperative forum for the development of individual practice. www.efanyc.org

EFA Project Space is supported in part by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. Private funding for the Gallery has been received from Lily Auchincloss Foundation and The Carnegie Corporation Inc.

efa project space

A Program of the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts

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