



In establishing New World Academy (NWA), artist Jonas Staal and BAK (Basis voor Actuele Kunst) conjoin their efforts to launch a new academy that invites political organizations invested in the progressive political project to share with artists and students their views on the role of art and culture in political struggles. Together, they engage in critical thinking through concrete examples of transformative politics and develop collaborative projects that question and challenge the various frameworks of justice and existing models of representation. NWA proposes new critical alliances between art and progressive politics, as a way to confront the democratic deficit in our current politics, economy, and culture.

The first three sessions of NWA are organized at BAK in collaboration with the cultural workers of the National Democratic Movement of the Philippines, the collective of refugees We Are Here, and the open-source advocates of the Pirate Parties International. Each session is followed by collective public presentations, performances, campaigns, and exhibitions.

The curriculum of NWA develops from concrete case studies—models of cultural activism as both an imaginative and practical force in shaping the democratic project—ranging from the educative “protest puppetry” of the Maoist National Democratic Movement in the Philippines and the cultural protests organized in the Netherlands by the refugee group We Are Here, to the attempts by the international Pirate Parties to advance open-source models in favor of free, digital distribution of knowledge. These examples propose an alternative collective infrastructure to confront what Staal calls “democratism,” that is, “the disastrous present of the world dominated by the condition of capitalist democracy.” In recognizing the commonalities in the entangled discontents and massive civil uprisings across the globe, NWA actively engages the role of art within movements that challenge the maddeningly complex network of contemporary power relations.

Project author or developer:
Jonas Staal and BAK

Where:
NL / The Netherlands / Utrecht

Website:
newworldsummit.eu/news/new-world-academy/

