

The Body Politic
Birkbeck, University of London, Jan - Mar 2004
Course tutors: PLATFORM

Hopes for the Course
Extracts from students' writing (weeks 2 and 3)

'a journey through unfamiliar terrain'

'a wish to make a constructive contribution'

'take away something positive to work with in the wider community'

'to hear other people's ideas and experiences'

'to discuss creative ways in which we can make issues visible to the world'

'to create change'

'I think this is the first time in my life that I am not expecting anything'

'maybe the course could learn from me?'

'This is my biggest hope: to 'think'. Thinking about everything: politics, art, education'

'to gain confidence in my own voice as an artist'

'to understand collaboration'

'not to feel so isolated about my work, my vision'

'the educative role of art forms'

'how art makes us think and feel as we did when we were children'

'art as a tool for 're-learning', or in contributing to a state of social 'sustainability''.

'I have no idea where the course will take me'

'an ability to think through my priorities, to figure out where I would like to be more actively engaged'

'this course could well be an important catalyst and signpost for my own way forward'

'to make a difference/to want to/to be able to'

'to find ways to fulfil rebellious urges'

'to rekindle activist tendencies of youth'

'to *develop a framework* for thinking about social, political and environmental issues, particularly in the context of achieving 'justice''

'to *engage more meaningfully with the issues* and then to *live out* the understanding'

'to broaden my social circle and forge links'

'to re-engage, get excited/animated'

'to listen to new ideas, new ways of expression, new people'

'to have something to offer'

'a space for ponderance, long-term strategies in my work and emotional life'

'gain a better understanding of what PLATFORM does and considers important'

'I'd like a map of ideas and areas I'm drawn to pursuing further than this course'

'Embarking on this course, I feel a sense of urgent excitement'

'to find a rhythm of working that allows for surprises, allows for the play of original thought'

'I wish to connect the billion personal moments that make up a life with the constant hidden beat of global politics'

'Presently I'm not sure that Art really matters/is able to create lasting change as a force for good'

'I want clarity on how creative work (an individual's creative energy and passion) can be used as a force for good'

'Clarity on what the problem is (in the world and in people) and what can be done about it'

'a forum to share and discuss ideas about art, politics, and activism'

'point me in the direction of new literature, approaches'

'to hear from people who work with art and activism on a daily basis what has worked or not and why?'

'learn about different processes where we can put/involve art as a social strategy'

'to feel I can face some situations that maybe in the past I couldn't'

'to increase my cultural knowledge'

'I expect a lot from this course, not in terms of quantity of topics covered, but of quality'

'looking for a place to think and explore'

'to leave a mark on this tormented little planet'

'to understand how people in the so-called 1st world deal with troubles that I've known so well'

'to be in a different academic environment'

'to be open for new ideas, exchange knowledge.'

'to gain a better understanding of the interdisciplinary idea'

'to explore my politics outside of the 'campaign' box'

'to understand and explore PLATFORM more fully'

'to be describing the course to friends and family as sociology meets art meets activism meets project management'

'to sometimes feel politically conservative and cynical when in conversation with others in the group'

'to feel the residue of course conversations, content and exercises for some time to come'