

January 25, 2017

THE LO-DOWN

New Museum and A Blade of Grass to Host New Book Launch and Discussion



Public Servants: Art and the Crisis of the Common Good, left, published by the New Museum and MIT Press, and Future Imperfect, right, published by A Blade of Grass.

Tomorrow evening the New Museum and the socially engaged arts organization A Blade of Grass are co-presenting a book launch and discussion for two new books, *Public Servants: Art and the Crisis of the Common Good* (edited by Johanna Burton, Shannon Jackson, and Dominic Willsdon) and *Future Imperfect* (edited by Elizabeth M. Grady). Guest speakers offering presentations and discussion include contributors Ben Davis, Tom Finkelpearl, Rick Lowe, and Laura Raicovich.

Public Servants, is part of the New Museum's newly relaunched publication series, "Critical Anthologies in Art and Culture." The anthology examines ways the arts shape and are shaped by a rapidly changing social and governmental landscape.

Future Imperfect is the first publication by A Blade of Grass. The volume offers commentary from leading scholars and examples of socially engaged art.

They write:

Taking into account the topics covered by the Public Servants and Future Imperfect, and the fact that this event will take place six days after the 2016 US Presidential inauguration, a rapid response format offers a pertinent way to engage with the undesirable circumstances we must now navigate. Panelists will share brief position statements reflecting on our present moment as it relates to some of the central questions posed by these books. These questions may provide useful frames for further discussion moderated by the volumes' editors: How should we understand the purpose of publicly engaged art in the twenty-first century, when the very term "public art" is largely insufficient to describe such practices? In many countries, structures of democratic governance and public responsibility, driven by radical economic, political, and global forces, are shifting, eroding, and being remade in profound ways. According to what terms and through what means can art engage with these changes?

The event takes place on Thursday, Jan. 26, 2017, in the Sky Room at the New Museum (235 Bowery) at 7:00pm. Tickets are \$15 and can be reserved [here](#).