NIETZSCHE FOR OUR TIMES

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Nietzsche is the premonitory horizon of the 21st century, the remorseless thinker whose writings represent the future, not the past, of contemporary politics, culture and society. To read Nietzsche, particularly On the Genealogy of Morals, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, and The Gay Science, is to approach closely, in word and deed, the essence of current politics and society, certainly its palpable anger, nihilism, and fierce ressentiment but also the existential situation of solitary individuals today tensely living between courageous optimism and surges of pessimism. That the destiny of Nietzsche’s thought still lies in the future, that he was the first of all the truly posthumous thinkers, is evidenced by the fact that the sign of Nietzsche remains the gathering point for many of the most important theoretical reflections of the 20th and 21st centuries, including the writings of Judith Butler, Wendy Brown, Gilles Deleuze, Peter Sloterdijk and Jean Baudrillard. Nietzsche for our Times, then, as an interdisciplinary graduate seminar in which the writings of Nietzsche will serve as a talisman for a form of 21st century thought that takes the fundamental measure of its politics, culture and society—the fully ambivalent future that is forecast by The Gay Science, overcome in Zarathustra, and experienced in On the Genealogy of Morals.

Faithful to the spirit of Nietzsche who always thought life under the sign of the artistic imagination, the interdisciplinary graduate seminar, Nietzsche for our Times, will be guided in its reflections by the indigenous artistic imaginary. Here, a series of important contemporary indigenous artists, including Jackson 2bears, Rebecca Belmore, Nadia Myre, Skawennati Tricia Fragnito, Jason Lewis, Cheryl L’hirondelle and Jeneen Frei Njootli, will be discussed as ways of understanding the politics of nihilism in relationship to questions of decolonization, dispossession and violence.

Readings: F. Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Power, Thus Spoke Zarathustra, The Gay Science

Supplementary Readings:  
Judith Butler, The Psychic Life of Power  
Wendy Brown, States of Injury (Selections)

Indigenous Artistic Imaginary:  
PDF available online: http://press.ucalgary.ca/books/9781552387061
Nadia Myre


Rebecca Belmore

