



LUNVIKEN

ISSUE
142
VOLUME
33
NUMBER
01
SUMMER
2024

Democrazy

Introduction

This Won't Save Us: A Search for Repair

“Bad news friends, I’m not funny anymore,” writes Brynne Musser at the start of her voter guide, *This Won’t Save Us: A Progressive’s Guide to Kansas City Elections*. “This one really sucked the life out of me and I’ll just say that up front to lower expectations,” she adds. For each election Brynne provides an anti-cop, anti-corporation analysis of our municipal ballots using an ultra precise colored scoring system of “favorable” to “utter trash.” Candidates’ names are scattered throughout, at times finding themselves dumped in a cutout of Kansas City’s municipal waste bin. I’ve always found these guides to be funny, researched, and deeply honest about the limits of electoral politics. Indeed, it can be hard to feel excited about democracy lately. Like Stephanie Skora’s *Girl, I Guess Progreesive Voter Guide*, a Chicago-based voter guide meant to appeal to the Lefts’ increasing disillusionment with electoral politics, Brynne’s *This Won’t Save Us* was created with the deep understanding that we can not vote our way to liberation.

In this year’s Democracy issue, contributors talk about conventions past (Jeffrey Dorchon), the failures of democracy, (Brian M. Mier and Ruslana Lichtzier), and its opportunities for radical intervention (Jerry Boyle and Matt Muchowski). In truth, “Democracy” was a theme I initially resisted due to its implication that American democracy is only now taking a turn for the worse. It might be tempting to call this moment “crazy,” deriving from the Germanic *crasen* or *craisen*, or possibly Old Norse *krasa* meaning “to shatter, crush, break to pieces.” Indeed this moment is one that is breaking us as we witness one of the most visible and reported genocides happening in Palestine, with a conservative death toll of over 37,000 people that per capita exceeds all other major conflicts in modern history. Late U.S air force officer Aaron Bushnell proclaims, “I’m about to engage in an extreme act of protest but, compared to what people have been experiencing in Palestine at the hands of their colonizers, it’s not extreme at all” before setting fire to himself outside of the Israeli Embassy in Washington D.C. However it would be reductive to

talk about these extreme acts of protest without talking about the extreme conditions we live in. Jex Blackmore in *The Burning Body: Martyrdom in the Liberation Movement* writes, “By focusing solely on mental health, we fail to recognize the deliberate and calculated nature of these sacrifices. This evasion prevents us from addressing the underlying societal and systemic issues that contribute to their protest.”

So how do we begin to repair? To Silvia Inés Gonzalez and Melissa Ferrer-Civil, transformation happens through care. To heal is to address the day-to-day violence of racial capitalism and its effects on our collective health. It means pivoting away from the systems that don’t serve us and building something new. Abolition is about addressing the root causes of violence and its intersections with feminism, racism, queer liberation, decolonization, disability justice, and environmentalism. The impulse to reform broken structures instead of abolish them narrows our framework for true liberation. As explored by Liz Davis and Noah Karapanagiotidis, organizing is about changing the conditions of what’s possible through relationships, community, and collective struggle. Organizing naturally lends itself to relationship-driven models for building power, and collaboration and exchange are both critical and necessary to the survival of movement work.

This introduction is not meant to dissuade readers from participating in our upcoming election, nor is meant to dismiss electoral politics entirely. Rather, it is a search for repair in a moment that feels irreparable. In preparation for the DNC, I hope this year’s *Lumpen Magazine* agitates, mobilizes, and serves as a powerful toolkit for organizing. Between each flashpoint in history, we are moving, building, and learning together in preparation for the next crisis- because there will always, inevitably be a next.

— Hope-Lian Vinson

Published by	Creative—Design
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Contributions by	Generous Support
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Seiya Abe-Bel Alexee Aitken August Abitang Ahniya Butler Mairead Case John Cronan Charly Garcia Noah Karapanagiotidou Kimberly Kim Jordan Lee S J Lee S.Y. Lim Ariandy Luna Stephanie Manriquez Ed Marszewski Janelle Miller A. Nemic Sara Prado Mario Smith Sandra Treviño Jamie Trecker Julie Wu Nick Wylie	

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INSIDE AGITATORS

BY JERRY BOYLE

As the Democratic National Convention (DNC) looms on the horizon for Chicago this summer, some draw analogies to the infamous 1968 Convention at the old Amphitheater, while others point to the relatively tame 1996 Convention at the United Center. Neither is on point. Chicago is a very different city than it was in ‘68 or ‘96, and the US is a different nation. Those differences make for a new dynamic.

The DNC is legally designated as a National Security Special Event (NSSE), which means \$75 million in Federal security funding will be poured into the city’s coffers. But a lot of that money will focus on a security dimension which has no relationship to protesters. Very Important People will be arriving in town, including the biggest VIP of all, Biden. So the Secret Service and all branches of the military will be here to prevent paramilitary assaults by insurgents and mitigate mass casualty events. It’s a formidable arsenal, but it’s not aimed at us, and an insurgent attack is very unlikely. It’s best to avoid that dimension, to the extent you can. It’s unwise to cross Secret Service lines.

Our concerns are for our protest crowds, the Chicago Police Department (CPD), and the FBI. Other agencies may join them, but they come mainly to learn and to serve as scare-crows. Don’t fear the scarecrows—the CPD and FBI will be leading the charge against us, but the FBI will mostly make their moves on individuals or small groups, not crowds. It’s the order of forces on the street that matters, and the biggest potential problem is CPD.

CPD: Inside Agitators

In the last 25 years, the CPD earned a national reputation for their expertise with crowd management. Yes, NATO ‘12 sucked, but it could have been so much worse. By police standards, there was justification for the accolades CPD got for the last NSSE here. Two years later, they were able to handle the Laquan McDonald protests without provoking civil unrest. But twelve years of micro-management by ignorant neoliberal mayors effectively gave CPD a lobotomy. Almost everyone with a brain got sidelined, demoted, fired, or quit. Abolitionists like the concept of CPD crashing and burning, but unless and until it burns to ash, a dysfunctional police department is a threat.

We saw that on May 30, 2020. The CPD response was brain-dead, disorganized, and brutal, a spectacular failure provoking civil unrest. And CPD doubled down on stupid all summer, repeatedly getting punked until cold weather cleared the streets. CPD only has about 8-9,000 officers working three shifts on the streets. These officers have to be rigidly organized, restrained, and smart to respond to a crowd bigger than theirs, and at the moment they lack those qualities.

To his credit, our new mayor, Brandon Johnson, is trying to restore basic competence to CPD. But it’s like we handed him the keys to an off-course aircraft carrier. “Here ya go. Set it straight. Oh, by the way—the rudder’s broken, the officers jumped ship, the crew mutinied, and the engine room is on fire.” Johnson is trying, and making some good moves, but it will be hard to right that ship in time for the DNC. Clueless media commentary to the contrary, the biggest risk we face at DNC is a police riot. If the DNC goes south, that disaster will most likely be owned by the inside agitators, CPD.

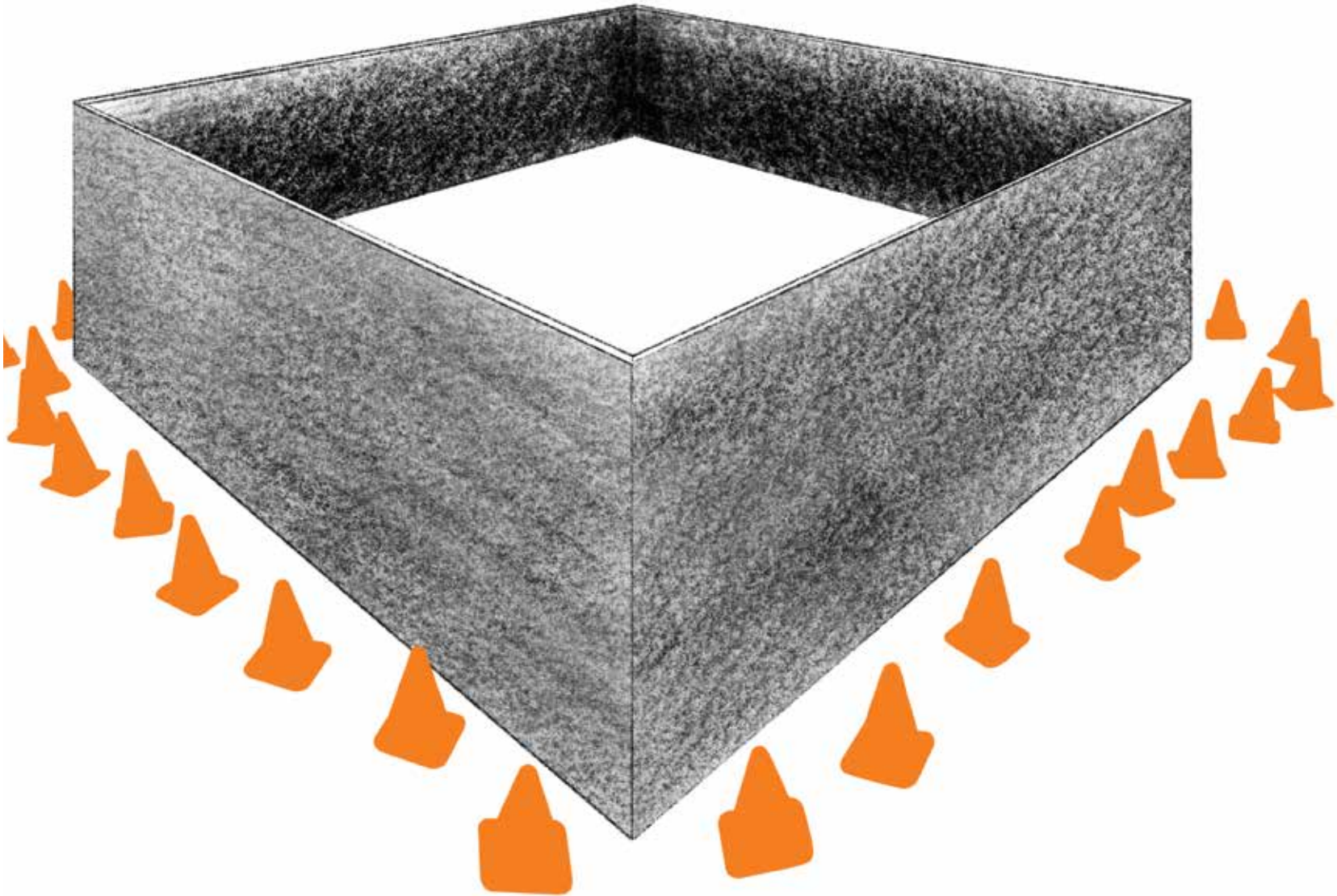
Chicago’s Got The Pros

I’m biased, but I submit that Chicago has the best activists in the US. I’d die on that hill. Our people are smart, tough, committed, and have succeeded in changing the political equation dramatically. I’m just one of their lawyers, so I’m not blowing my own horn here. To the extent I’m sharp, it’s because they keep me on my toes and expect my best. They’re awesome.

I am confident that Chicago activists will do a professional job of confronting Democrats and holding Biden to account for his abject failures. They will run the streets, and they will run them well, so long as the CPD doesn’t get in their way. They’d do it even better without the CPD but, as a practical matter, that’s not going to happen.

The only wild card here is that an emergent event could light up the streets in the run-up to DNC. One bad shot by CPD could set Chicago on fire. But our brilliant activists have demonstrated that they can handle crises deftly. Trust them. Follow them. I do.

So, ignore the copaganda about outside agitators, good protesters/bad protesters, Black Bloc, terrorists, bombs, and weapons. They always spout that bullshit in the run-up to a National Special Security Event (NSSE). They want to spread terror to suppress crowds. This is where raids and the FBI come in. The FBI and CPD will try to insert spies in the crowds. Their job is to identify gullible people who pose no risk to anyone, then talk them into saying and doing things solely to generate scary headlines. Raids are not about real threats. They are about terrorizing the public, thereby suppressing turnout for protests.



Joseph Josué Mora - Overprotective Formation #1

The biggest risk we face at DNC is a police riot. If the DNC goes south, that disaster will most likely be owned by the inside agitators, CPD.

Don't fall for their copaganda of the deed. Turn out. Our activists will protect you. But there will be some other wild cards.

Protesters Gone Wild: Our Guests

National Special Security Events typically draw activists from across the country. Some are experienced and make crucial contributions to the cause. Others are random supporters away from home. The latter are vulnerable, for two reasons: (1) they do not know how to interact with CPD, and (2) the relative anonymity conferred on tourists often leads them to do things they'd never do at home.

Chicago is welcoming to visitors, and out-of-towners need local folks to reduce their vulnerability. We have a good history of protecting visiting protesters, and we can expect that history to continue at this DNC.

What that means for us is that we should distinguish actions organized by locals from actions organized by visitors. Realize that the latter entail more risk. Show up for them if you can help reduce that risk, or even if you just have a higher tolerance for risk. The presence of local allies alone will help, but even better is the contribution of specific skills relevant to protests (for example:

legal, medical, jail support, independent media). We are obliged to protect our own. Who keeps us safe? We keep us safe.

Long Shots: Fascists

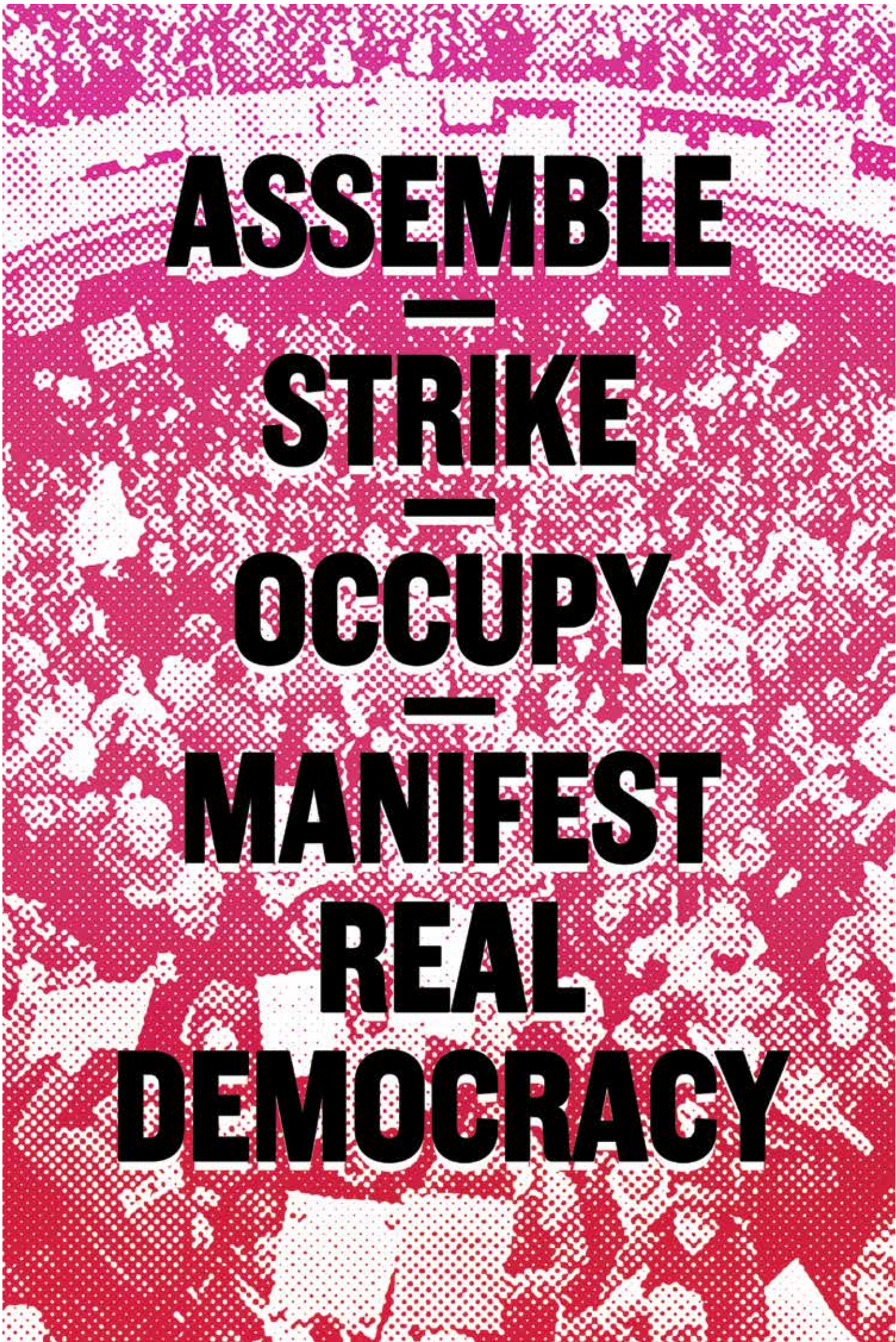
I know what you're thinking: I already covered this subject with my discussion of the CPD above. But it gets worse. Many police are indeed fascists. The only precincts in Chicago that voted for Trump are in the cop ghettos (which also delivered thousands of votes for an open, unapologetic Nazi in a congressional contest). It still gets worse. The Chicago Police Department is openly, persistently affiliated with violent fascist groups, even sharing personnel with them. Proud Boys, Oath Keepers, and 3% Militia are represented on the CPD payroll, and those are just the ones we know about for sure.

After we humiliated Trump in 2016 at the UIC Pavillion, fascists are generally afraid to operate openly here. But fascists make an exception when their CPD allies are there to protect them. Be aware that if fascists show up to troll our protests, CPD will protect them, enable their attacks on us, and punish any action we take in self-defense. Such confrontations are complex, dangerous, and best left to experienced antifascists. Newbies are better off moving away from the conflict zone to a safer part of the crowd. The crowd will protect you.

Conceivably, it could get even worse. The odds are unlikely, but there is the slight possibility of a violent attack or even a mass casualty event mounted by fascists on the streets. If that event occurs, be sure to snap pictures of the grinning cops, thumbs parked in their vests, when the fascists mount their attack. Cops simply don't see the risk, and they like it when their fascists attack us. We may need proof that CPD enabled an atrocity. But don't be deterred. This scenario is a very long shot indeed.

Show Up: The Whole World Is Watching

Numbers count, and the more people we put on the street, the stronger we are. The DNC should be good for us, subject to the wild cards discussed above. And, hey, the wild cards aren't deterring this Boomer with rickety limbs, so what's your excuse? Your presence, your voice, and your energy matter. Join us on the streets. We'll give Biden and his lackeys the Chicago Welcome they deserve: a symbolic footprint on their butts, just like we did with Trump.



Autonomous Democracy - by Aaron Hughes courtesy Just Seeds

AN ANARCHIST GUIDE TO RUNNING FOR LOCAL OFFICE

BY MATT MUCHOWSKI

Anarchists in America have a disinclination towards running for political office. Their vision for a society without the violence of ‘law & order’ and without the exploitation of capital seems to conflict with running a political campaign.

Anarchists believe in small ‘d’ democracy — a world where equality and democracy are extended into the workplace, the family, and every aspect of our communities. Anarchists oppose the world that so many elected officials represent and maintain — one that deprives workers of a voice, denies women and trans people bodily autonomy, denies racial minorities safety, denies the poor clean air and water, and more.

In many ways, Anarchists argue that Anarchism is less of an ideology than a description of the world- the assertion that authority is a lie and that rules are socially constructed and enforced with violence. Anarchists recognize the contradiction of a state that commits violence through racialized police brutality, wars for oil, poverty enforced by securing private property rights, letting thousands die for the for-profit healthcare system, and more - while condemning even the most trivial civil disobedience, direct action, or minor property damage as ‘violence.’

Anarchists see mutual aid as the driving force of humanity- not obedience through the threat of violence.

The idea and purpose of an Anarchist running for office is not fundamentally contradictory, especially for local offices such as a precinct committeeperson, school board member, union officer, or even state representative.

Why run for office?

It is understandable for anyone to feel that electoral politics follows community organizing. In many ways it is the superstructure to the infrastructure. If we build up unions and community groups strong enough, politicians and politics will follow.

However, community organizing and politics is a feedback loop. Unions and community groups engage with politics to pass legislation that allows them to better organize and oppose the tyranny of capital and state violence. The role of the Anarchist office-seeker is to bring their experience, knowledge, networks, and perspective into politics to help complete that feedback loop.

It might be helpful to think of the government as a network of dysfunctional cooperatives in the midst of a hostile takeover by private reactionary interests. An Anarchist running for office should seek to expand democracy and oppose those who use democratic avenues to undermine democracy in the form of voter suppression, privatization, union-busting, criminalization of dissent, and other strategies. As long as we all have a vote and a way to influence the government, we should use every tool at our disposal.

Government and political parties are not monoliths; they are sites of contestation. An Anarchist in office can be a voice in those spaces to empower communities and oppose efforts to silence them. Their goal is not just to win, but to use the conversation to expand democratic conditions and to advocate for issues and policies that will improve and empower people to live their lives to their fullest.

Who to run for office?

An Anarchist campaign for office understands that the campaign is more than the candidate. If there was a void where a candidate or office holder were, who would be the coalition of communities and interests seeking to fill it?

The 1% organize for their interests and recruit willing candidates. The 99% can do the same for their interests.

An Anarchist campaign can look at a candidate’s background and see whether they have a compelling and relatable story. They can look at their voting record, their experience bringing coalitions together, their skills, and whether they can assist with campaign work such as fundraising and communicating with voters.



Policy should take priority over personality politics, but a candidate’s personality can matter as well. Their ability to stay calm and be outgoing can prevent gaffes that hurt the campaign’s scope and ability.

Politics is a team sport that has consequences beyond the fate of the players. An Anarchist candidate does not engage with politics simply for their own benefit, but to improve the quality of life for all those impacted by politics.

A strong candidate hits their marks like an actor, collaborating with their team to build a well organized campaign.

What office to run for?

There are a wide variety of offices an Anarchist campaign could run for. Down Ballot races such as county board member, city alderperson, school, park or water board may not receive as much media attention, but they can have an enormous impact on people’s day to day life. Even non-government positions such as offices in unions, cooperatives, or community groups can have a dramatic effect on communities.

Decisions such as investments in infrastructure, jobs, healthcare, environment, policing, and more are often made at the local level. A candidate should think about whether they would be effective in a particular role or campaign. Do they have knowledge about what that office does or is capable of? Will they be able to identify opportunities for democratic expansion and build opposition to the threats to democracy?

Where to run for office?

Political districts in America are devised and descended from a system that only acknowledges white male landowners as worthy of a voice in governance.

While an office in unions, cooperatives, and community groups is not inherently tied to where a candidate lives, an elected office in government is subject to the address one lives at.

Until this changes, candidates running for

office in government need to look at the maps of their districts. They should understand what the geographic boundaries are and the composition of their communities within those socially constructed lines. An Anarchist candidate will seek to understand the process of how political districts in government are drawn and how to make that process and the results more beneficial for democratic participation.

The size of the district will determine how many signatures are required to qualify for a spot on the ballot. Many local positions require as few as seven signatures. Candidates can look on the website for their county clerk, or consult with an election attorney to find out the requirements for ballot access.

All politics are local, but local politics exist in a feedback loop with larger politics. When the Supreme Court rules against abortion rights, that impacts local communities’ access to healthcare. A demonstration for Black Lives Matter in a small suburb can inspire a movement across the continent.

An Anarchist candidate for office will work to use that geographic feedback loop to amplify democratic impulses.

When to run for office?

A successful campaign for office has a timeline. The people organizing the campaign must factor in required administrative tasks such as deadlines for petitions to secure ballot access. Successful campaigns will plan fundraising efforts in advance to secure broad participation. Campaign organizers will schedule time for volunteer recruitment and voter mobilization as well as communications with the array of communities impacted by the election. Most county clerk’s websites will have information on election timelines.

Campaigns often have an atmosphere like a start-up. You are building the racecar while participating in the race. But even if you finish building the car before the finish line, you have to continue upgrading the components to remain competitive for the next race.

Election day is only the beginning. Just like swinging a baseball bat, you have to swing through the ball. An Anarchist campaign sees election day as just one form of community engagement. Win or lose, anarchists need to continue to engage and expand their coalitions. In victory, they prep for the next campaign and legislate with an eye toward democratic empowerment. In defeat, they study how to improve their outreach, hamper authoritarian efforts, and use their prior endeavors as proof that the office– that society– can be different.

How to run for office?

Campaigns for office win by communicating and engaging with people to motivate them to take action. That action exists on a scale; at the base level is the vote. As one climbs the ladder of engagement, they can talk to other voters, fundraise, prep mailings, organize meetings, and more. At the core, a campaign for office boils down to voter contact.

While the air war of tv, radio, digital and print ads, and e-mail is important, studies show that the ground war of one-on-one communication is the most effective way to turn out the vote. A recommendation from a trusted friend or community leader such as a union leader, pastor, or family member has the biggest impact. Campaigns do not win by being shy; they are social endeavors with door-to-door canvassing, phone banks, meet and greets, and friends and family mail to contact as many potential voters as possible in the limited time and space of a campaign.

Campaigns rely on volunteers, paid staff, and contractors such as printing presses to connect with potential voters. Fundraising is a key component to running a campaign. An Anarchist campaign will recognize the financial hurdles to democratic participation and make participation more accessible while working to democratize the system.

Money is a social construct, and the Anarchist campaign can see that it is a medium to mediate social relationships. The people who donate to a campaign and those whose work is paid for by those funds reflect the social bonds a campaign creates.

Campaign contributors can be found by asking family, friends, and community



networks to give a contribution. Many community groups like unions or criminal justice reform groups have a Political Action Committee (PAC) that pools their money to make campaign contributions. You can use opensecrets.org to find PACs that share campaign goals. Campaign contributions over a certain dollar amount are public records maintained by the state board of elections and the Federal Election Commission. These records have some legal restrictions on how they can be used, so consulting with an attorney is a good idea, but they can be a list of potential donors to engage with as well.

Often holding a fundraising event or advertising a particular purpose can motivate donors. Websites like secure.actblue.com help make recurring donations easy to set up and help with tracking data for reporting requirements and further fundraising asks.

Few campaigns have the resources and time to connect with every potential voter before an election, which is why they target certain groups of voters with specific messages.

Campaigns can get a list of registered voters from their county clerk or their local parties voter database to develop profiles of different types of potential voters. Some voters will have a strong likelihood of voting Democratic, but rarely turnout to vote; some voters will turnout for every election, but will have less party preference. Often demographics such as race, gender, and income will impact those voting trends.

Campaigns often seek to boost turnout among voters with a profile they expect to support their campaign and candidate. They will rank voters’ support for their candidate on a scale. Supporters of the campaign will be encouraged to vote and volunteer; undecided voters will be given reasons to support the campaign. Voters who oppose the campaign will be left alone. Campaigns will track these interactions with a voter database and identify which voters need to be followed-up with and how. Successful campaigns operate with the understanding that every voter is a real person and each profile is an approximation of their voting habits. It is up to the campaign to interact with people and mobilize them to take action.

Campaigns rely on the power of persuasion to convince undecided people to take action. Training volunteers for canvassing and phone banking is crucial for campaigns. Volunteers often role play scenarios and act out potential discussions to learn how to persuade potential voters.

All organizing stems from the premise that persuasion is possible, and that we can persuade others to take action to improve their lives and our world.

A winning campaign is calculus. There is never one single issue or voting block that determines an election’s results, but each is a subset of equations that need to add up to votes.

Beginning

An Anarchist campaign for office will engage with the contradictions within society and the individuals it connects with to change them. Every campaign is partly trial and error and an iterative process fueled by the transformative power of organizing.

Some Anarchists might argue that engaging with the electoral process is hopeless and a waste of time. An Anarchist running for office sees such a campaign as a reduced risk strategy to promote hope over despair and acknowledge that a diversity of tactics is necessary in the struggle for a new society. The Anarchist campaign will face its own contradictions - and struggle with how to resolve them in an emancipatory manner.

A better world is possible. There are no shortcuts to it. We simply have to organize; we have to out-organize the organized ruling class. They have their organizations and we need ours. Local political campaigns of, by, and for the people can be part of that.

Who Will Fill The Baconcy Left By Pigasus?

BY JEFF DORCHEN

Famously, the Yippies brought a pig to the Democratic National Convention as a candidate for President. The nomination of Pigasus was the kind of political theater at which they excelled. But, like most good satire, it didn’t confine itself to conventional boundaries, not even to those of the bloody police riot the protest turned into. The comedy bled into the courtroom.



During the trial of the Chicago Eight, folk singer Phil Ochs was on the witness stand. Defense counsel William Kunstler was questioning him about Pigasus. What follows is from the actual trial transcript:

KUNSTLER: Did you have any role yourself in that?
OCHS: Yes, I helped select the pig, and I paid for him.
KUNSTLER: Now, did you find a pig at once when you went out?
OCHS: No, it was very difficult. We stopped at several farms and asked where the pigs were.
KUNSTLER: None of the farmers referred you to the police station, did they?
OCHS: No.
CHIEF PROSECUTOR THOMAS FORAN: Objection.
JUDGE JULIUS HOFFMAN: I sustain the objection.

Kunstler’s question about pigs at the police station was artfully posed. Not a surprise, since his name is also the German word for “artist.” Pigs and the art of satire are never far from each other.

Onstage in London one night, concluding a joke about the original Planet of the Apes movie and book—the latter written by French post-war left intellectual author Pierre Boulle—English socialist standup comic and writer Stewart Lee said, “Satire is where it’s the same as it is now, except there’s animals in it.” For most of Lee’s listeners, Napoleon the pig in George Orwell’s Animal Farm no doubt came immediately to mind. I hope it comes to the minds of most readers of this, too, especially now that I’ve given you an unsubtle jab in the ribs.

Aside from rumors of pigs put to humorous use during medieval carnival entertainment, until Pigasus, the first, or maybe just the best, recorded satirical performance by a pig was contrived by Vladimir Durov in Berlin, 1907. According to theater historian Joel Schecter,

“Durov placed a German officer’s cap, or ‘helm’ as he called it, in the circus ring, and his trained pig ran to retrieve it. Using ventriloquism, Durov made the pig appear to be saying ‘Ich will helm,’ meaning ‘I want the helmet.’ But the phrase could also be translated ‘I am Wilhelm,’ thereby equating Germany’s Emperor, Wilhelm II, with a trained pig. ‘The audience understood the pun at once and applauded it. The German police understood it too,’ according to Russian critic Emanuel Dvinsky’s account of the event. Durov was arrested. The pig escaped without prosecution.”

Theatrical satire, as it was understood at that pre-World War I moment, and between and during the wars, was not something that needed to happen in a place as genteel as a theater. Staged in beer halls, circus rings, and the streets, satire was low comedy with the aim of knocking the powerful down to the level of the public, or even better, to the level of a pig, where they could be judged by those they presumed to rule.

Democracy, in its ideal form in the ideal mind of an ideal Enlightenment thinker, is supposed to achieve the same outcome by ballot. We’re all supposed to be, in a legal sense, equal. At least, those are the conjuring words in some incantation about the promise of the Constitution of the United States. There’s some doubt. Some have doubts. We, the people, have our doubts. Satire has done a better job at bringing down the rich and powerful than democracy seems able to do.

Sadly, our hero, Pigasus, is no more. The September after the trial, the Tribune reported that, after Pigasus was busted by the bipedal pigs, he and his wife, Mrs. Pigasus, and their piglet child were taken to the Anti-Cruelty Society, after which detention they were all transported to a Grayslake, Illinois farm. Today the entire Pigasus family is presumed deceased by the same natural causes that could also take Trump and/or Biden at any moment.

There is no known porcine heir to Pigasus’s theatrical legacy. What’s going to happen this year? Are the only pigs to show up going to be the nasty, brutish, armored sort? Spraying pepper juice, firing teargas, and cracking skulls? Surely blood will be spilled. But the fact that the Pigs, Chicago-style, violent as they are, are inherently perfect targets for mockery should not be forgotten.

Kaiser Wilhelm was a vain man easily offended by mockery. Each cop is just another Kaiser, a puffed-up silent movie villain in a farce, especially this time around in their over-the-top dystopian military gear like they’re going into battle against Mad Max: Fury Road marauders. The cops are there to preserve disorder!

All the reasons for protesting the convention were no less serious in 1968 than they are this year. It’s a given, now as it was then, that cop violence indicts the cops and those who unleash them more than it does any protesters they assault. The dangerous fools now in charge are no less foolish than they were in the past. Even if they can’t be beaten at violence, they can definitely be brought down, the way the people always have.

A final highlight from the trial—again, from the actual transcript. As you read, I ask you to picture it as it might be performed by a couple of Marx Brothers and a pair of exasperated old-time movie stuffed shirts:

OCHS: Jerry Rubin was reading a prepared speech for the pig. The opening sentence was something like, “I, Pigasus, hereby announce my candidacy for the Presidency of the United States.” He was interrupted in his talk by the police who arrested us.
KUNSTLER: Were you informed by an officer that the pig had squealed on you?
OCHS: Yes.
FORAN: Objection! I ask it be stricken.
JUDGE HOFFMAN: I sustain the objection!

*Why, I oughta—*Pies fly into faces. Zany music up. Dissolve to end titles.

Th-th-th-that’s all, folks!!

DISPATCH FROM THE QUAD

by Nick Merlock Jackson

For 16 days it had stood, its chief demands being the university's financial transparency + ultimate divestment from Israel-aligned companies.



I'd come to the encampment around 7 PM the previous day.



A basic operating principle of the camp, however, was no distinction between students and non-students.



At 1 PM on Thursday, May 16, I met a crowd of about 200 in a gas station lot on Fullerton Ave.



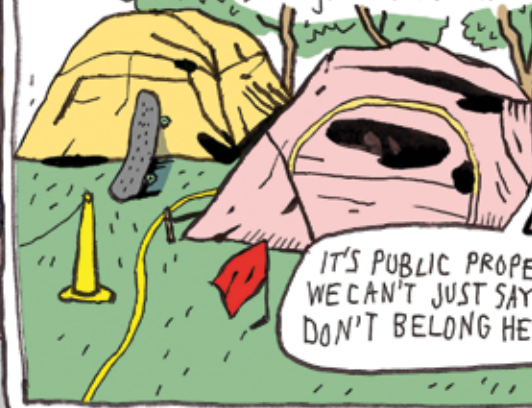
It had been the last such student protest camp standing in Chicago.



I just walked through the gate, where some kid was singing a Neil Young song.



In fact, I was even offered a tent to sleep in. They had a system in which a red flag meant a donated tent was vacant - you could just move in.



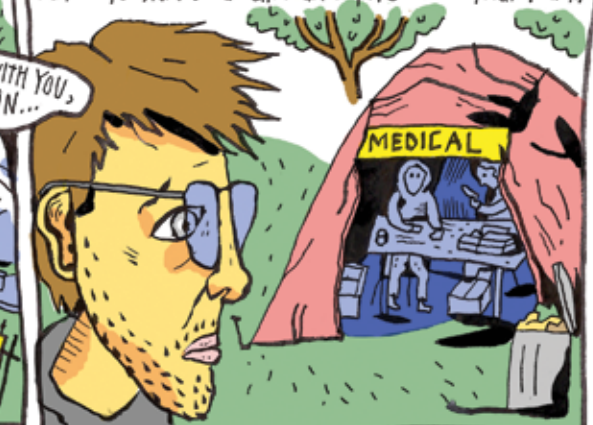
They were across the street from where the "Free People of Depaul University's Gaza Solidarity Encampment" had been raided at 5:30 AM.



Nevertheless, organizers say "we will not stop until there is divestment."



I wondered if people might be suspicious of me. "Don't trust anyone over thirty" the 60s radicals had said and I'm five over that mark.



I spoke to Henna Ayesh, a Depaul sophomore and the camp's media representative about how it all developed.



*STUDENTS FOR JUSTICE IN PALESTINE

Students split into working groups that communicated over Telegram: City Planning, Revolutionary Studies, Laundry, etc. And many came from outside - participants from other, now disassembled encampments as well as local Palestinian Americans.



One coalition member, Bri, told me that they learned from other encampments about tension between organizers + the camp. Here they tried keeping the structure as flat as possible, with daily check-ins between specialized groups + the broader camp.



She said she was a little afraid of being suspended, but was mostly worried about the camp getting raided and not getting to finish her memorial.



The woman just played with a glow-in-the-dark yo-yo until she noticed Coco, the encampment's pet rabbit.



At 7 PM, a meeting was held in the quad's center. Reps from the different working groups delivered updates to a crowd of a few dozen.



Nearby, another student had wrangled two friends to help wheat-paste on the bricks of the library the names of Gazans who had been killed.



Two people had come through the gate with lawn chairs and set down in a thoroughfare. Some camp personnel stood around them to dissuade engagement.



They were all victims who died before they turned 21. Her 21st was in a few days, which got her thinking.



The man threw heckles at everyone within earshot.



When I left around midnight, the camp felt peaceful. But in several hours, it had all been dismantled. School president Robert Manuel sent an email citing safety concerns, community complaints, and a stalemate in negotiations - all points that the coalition disputes.

By that night, a crowd of hundreds marched around the periphery of campus, chanting, "Fuck you, Rob!" Eventually organizers struggled to get the fired-up crowd to disperse for the time being. "We'll be back!" they shouted as they walked into the night.

FIN

Building Community Through A Love Ethic To Create Change

BY SILVIA INÉS GONZALEZ



Photo By John Lee

This text was adapted and edited from opening remarks given during the Association for Community Design conference in Chicago in 2023. The theme, **How are WE creating change in a(n) _____ way?**, invited participants to define new models of collaborative community-led practice.

As an artist, cultural worker, and educator, I wanted to speak on the ways that I engage my work within the larger fabric of Chicago history, art, and community building.

When prompted with the general theme of this conference **How are WE creating change in a(n) _____ way?**

I wrote down the following:

- **How are we creating spaces to collectively grieve in a tender way?**
- **How are we creating spaces of becoming together in a loving way?**
- **How are we creating spaces of justice in a sustainable way?**
- **How are we creating spaces of abundance in a reciprocal way?**

I think of these as the core to the work that I am developing in the different tenets of my work as well as critical components to change.

My work is first and foremost relational.

In the past year, I have facilitated programs and curated exhibitions related to grief practices, repair as an art form for liberation, ceremony as a seed for environmental futures, and the cultivation of reciprocal relationships for sustainable abundance. While people are the center of the work, the spaces we build together are also important. Which leads me to another question what builds our liberation? What does the radical imagination envision for the places we want to see in existence? What does it mean to both carry and architect spaces with sacred recognition of who we were and want to become together?

Cherrie Moraga’s book *Loving in the War Years and Other Writings* begins with a description of a dream that she is waking. Her mother appeared to her, and Moraga reflects, “It lasts for an extended moment—somewhere between the material and the dream world. And in that place, I am reminded that I am loved.” I like to think that the place between the dream and material world is where we can begin to connect our

vision of what’s possible with what we can do to activate that space as a collective force. I think these portals of possibility require us to reframe our understanding and the purpose of love in social movement building. If we are to allow our dream/real states to activate, we must have the proper conditions in place for our complex state of being. Safety, belonging, healing, trust, and hope materialized look like spaces where our voices can be heard, grief felt, rage against injustices acknowledged, and dreams developed. I believe that movement building requires layers of these and other states of being human. Detroit activist Grace Lee Boggs once said, “We never know how our small activities will affect others through the invisible fabric of our connectedness. In this exquisitely connected world, it’s never a question of ‘critical mass.’ It’s always about critical connections.” The constant here is people. It’s in our connections. I believe it’s in how we develop an ethic of love with one another.

I recently wrote a reflection on the concept of a love ethic inspired by bell hooks. A love ethic reminds me we are what we got: a body. Yours. Mine. (And of water. Of land). In *All About Love: New Visions*, bell hooks states, “A love ethic presupposes that everyone has the right to be free, to live fully and well. To bring a love ethic to every dimension of our lives, our society would need to embrace change.” Our frameworks around love would need to be re-visioned to make space for our multi-dimensional existence. Artist and cultural worker Chiara Francesca says, “Love is a compass...” and I get hopeful about that compass’s guidance.

I think of how our lives are intimately interconnected and navigated:

- **Self**
- **Others (self in other-selves and cells)**
- **Life cycles**
- **Natural world**
- **Imperceivable and yet felt forces (dark matter, the universe, frequencies)**

A love ethic invites us to live well. To lay bare oppression and its impact so that we may nurture dignified and honest living. What are some examples of what this could mean?

Food sovereignty

Livable wages and fair labor practices

Strategies toward abundance in land stewardship

Decriminalized modalities of care
Wellness of: mind, body, feelings, spirit--the soul of living

Harm reduction supports

Community responsive care
strategies and shared knowledge

Within a love ethic is a compass navigating us toward deep listening. It is a space where decisions are cultivated by those most affected when harm is identified. It means we hold ceremony for our healing as an accountable collective moving through multi-layered grief. Love is the commitment to collective dreaming. It considers methods to sustain our forward movement as we build toward liberated futures. Love is how we rehearse freedom deliberately with grace, trust, and responsibility. Love honors our humanity in the form of boundaries that hold space for our grieved and burnt-out bodies. Love loves into the tired sigh and says, “Here, rest here. Let this be enough for today.” The act of preservation (self, community, ancestral) is a sacred act of love. Love makes us question the exploitative systems that led us to our exhaustion and to resist them.

Love is something we do every day in our acts of reciprocity. Through mutual aid, it asks, “Do you have what you need?” Abolition work questions, “What can we make possible from the radically re-imagined, free, and caring world?” Environmental justice says, “I want your inhale to be full and clean and your exhale offer your body respite it longs for as it works for you to move in this world the way you move.”

As we approach the portals leading us to the world we want to see in existence—the spaces that fill our bodies with hope, our breath with strength for another day, and our hearts with tender alignment, I am trusting that we are what we got.

I would like to end this moment with words from assata shakur.

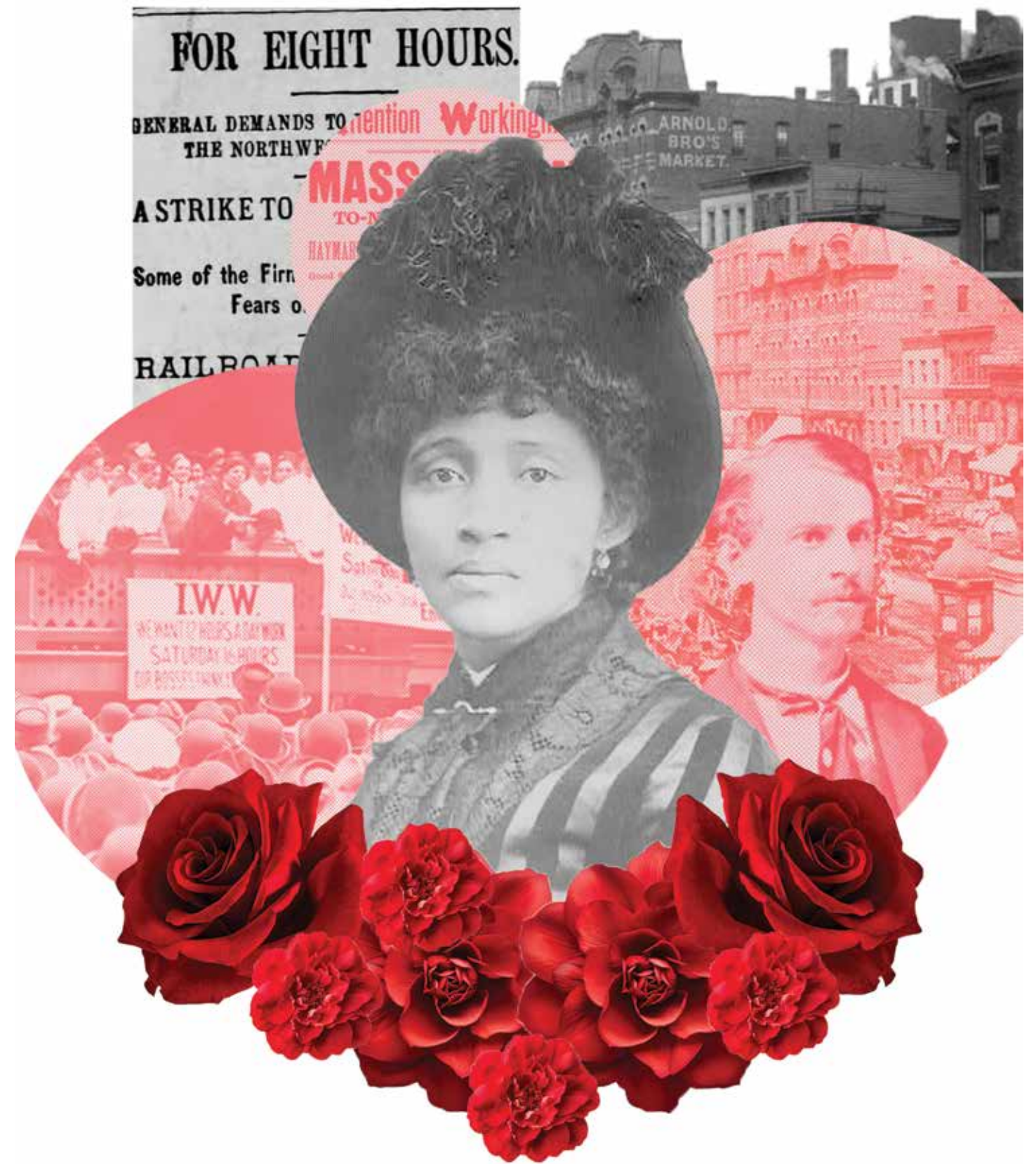
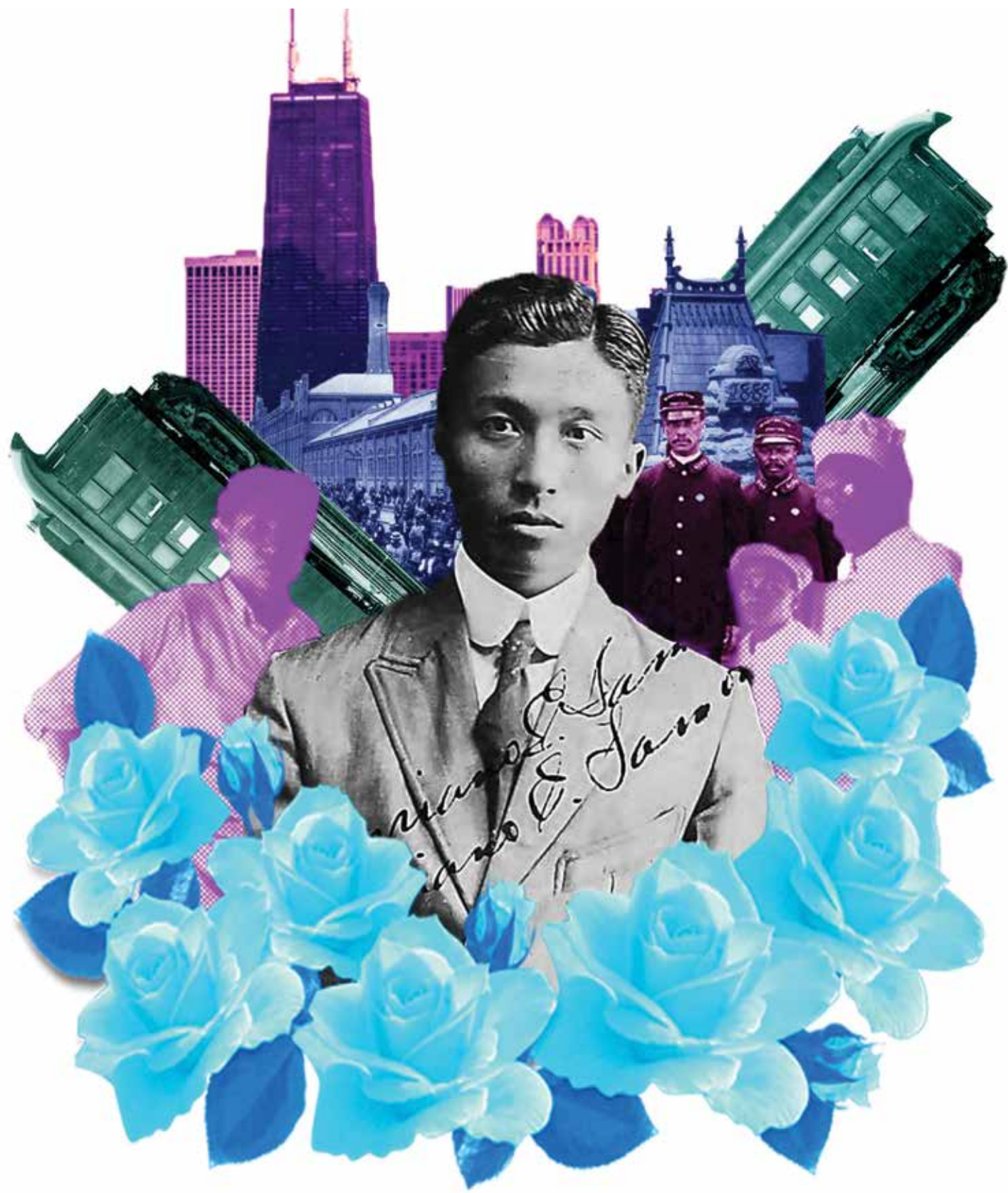
i believe in living

i believe in birth.

i believe in the sweat of love

and in the fire of truth

May we move toward repair in truth and with abundance in mind of the spaces we wish to see in existence. May we approach the portal of collective creation, bravely.



People's History of Chicago:
Collages by Silvia Inés Gonzalez

Chicago Series: Cipriano Samonte, 11x14, 2021

Cipriano Samonte was a Filipino Pullman Club attendant that advocated for Filipinx solidarity with Black workers at Pullman organizing in Chicago and St. Louis. Samonte became part of the Brotherhood of Sleeping

Car Porters, a labor union organized in 1925 by A. Philip Randolph and Milton P. Webster. In an attempt to divide, Pullman hired 400 Filipinx workers during the early stages of BSCP. Samonte was a great help in bridging the worker divide and in 1938, BSCP fought and won a case defending a Filipino club car attendant D.B. Pascual. Randolph stated, "There can be no such thing as a colored labor union or a Filipino labor union. All unions are worker's unions, or should

be... The Brotherhood put all of its forces behind a Filipino member to give him protection just as it will put them behind a Negro member."

Chicago Series: Cipriano Samonte, 11x14, 2021

Lucy Gonzales Parsons was described as "more dangerous than a thousand rioters" by the Chicago Police Department. In her 1930 Mayday Speech titled I'll Be Damned If I Go Back To Work Under Those Conditions, Parsons describes the spirit of the labor movement as one that began with spontaneous and driven fervor for better working

conditions. Parsons states, "The movement of 1886, the eight-hour movement was a grand success. For a few days, they had the capitalists on the run, you might say. They were taken completely by surprise." Several of her speeches recall the importance of a "radical imprint" beyond a moment in history and into a movement toward justice for working-class folks.

"It is the moving inspiration of our age, the only

question worth struggling for: the question of how to lift humanity from poverty and despair." - Lucy Gonzales Parsons



Chicago Series: Black Panthers, 11x14, 2021

The Chicago Series is like a love letter to the justice work, healing, and cultural brilliance of our city. It stems from my own learning as a result of grassroots political education, daily personal reflections/relationships with people and places, as well as the ways in which community builds and heals. When I visited the Westside Justice Center here in

Chicago, I had an opportunity to learn directly from a Black Panther organizer and view the resources that were available there which included a 50-year retrospective exhibit of images, the work of Emory Douglas, and the Black Panther newspaper. I wanted to create a piece that honored the work they developed to feed young people by providing meals as part of their 10-point program. There were 68 national chapters of the Black Panther Party--including

the leadership of Fred Hampton in Chicago. Dressed in black berets and leather jackets, the Black Panther Party surveyed police misconduct, and created numerous programs to feed, clothe, medically provide for and support community residents most disenfranchised and historically marginalized.



Chicago Series: Young Lords Organization, 11x14, 2021

Jose "Cha Cha" Jiménez was politicized by a Black Muslim librarian while incarcerated at Cook County Jail in '68 for drug-related charges. He was originally in a street gang that turned into a politically organized group. Inspired by the Black Panther Party, Malcolm X, and MLK Jr., the Young Lords sought to

empower the barrios through political education, provided support through food programs, sought to secure investment for low-income housing, and created a free health clinic and people's law office.

Reflections from the UChicago Popular University for Gaza

BY NOAH KARAPANAGIOTDIS

There is a lot to be said, and a lot being said, about the university encampments taking place across the US and Europe in solidarity with Gaza and Palestinian liberation. But one of the main takeaways from this historic wave of activism is being overlooked by media coverage of encampments: these encampments involved the formation of a different kind of community, one with a comprehensive acknowledgement and fulfillment of the needs of its members.

As someone who was born and raised in Greece by classic 1980s hippies, I am no stranger to communal living, camping, and mutual aid. During my five years living in the US, I have come to realize that these sensibilities are not commonly found here. I will admit that I did not believe Americans had it in them to create conditions so friendly to human needs, and I certainly did not expect to find them during a deeply urgent, escalatory political movement, but that’s exactly what happened at the University of Chicago’s Popular University for Gaza.

As an alumnus of the University of Chicago who still lives in the Hyde Park neighborhood, I have avoided campus as much as possible since graduating. I needed to feel as far removed as possible from the oppressively elite and cutthroat culture I experienced at UChicago. When my organizer friends from UChicago

United for Palestine informed me about the encampment, I knew I was going to be there and help out, but I felt a reluctance that revealed my social anxiety and hesitation to re-enter that environment. To my surprise, that feeling completely evaporated the moment I set foot in the Popular University’s campus occupation. The air was not University of Chicago air. In fact, it didn’t even feel like American air. It was the most beautiful way I’ve seen the University, by a large margin. The university’s main lawn was bustling with people young and old from all over the city. The camp was strewn with hand-painted art on canvas, wood, and paper, and had an energy unlike anything I’ve seen before.

The Popular University for Gaza was a project of political urgency. The demands at the forefront were a call for ceasefire, disclosure of University investments,

divestment from the Israeli war machine and apartheid state, and repair to communities harmed by these investments, as well as communities harmed by the University’s reckless policing and displacement of South Side communities.

Not secondarily, urgency and endless care were sublimated into community building and a much-needed acknowledgement of unfulfilled needs within my geographic community. The extremely well-organized camp recognized and fulfilled a number of needs among its participants and visitors: food, water, medical supplies, mental health services, music, dance, and art, in addition to a sense of togetherness, sharing, and care. I have not encountered, outside of anarchist spaces in Europe, any other spaces free and open to the public that fulfill all of these needs.

The encampment was marked by a very strong sense of consciousness and purpose. In transforming how they live, people were becoming politically conscious in ways not previously thought possible. The folks who inhabited the camp were, like me, showing up whenever they could, spending all of their hours somewhere unpaid, and prioritizing the encampment with an abnormal amount of selflessness. Children as young as one month old, families, students, professors, and neighbors spent days and nights on campus rallying and building relationships and hope. Much care was put into treating UC affiliates and non-affiliates equally. When cops started to identify and harass non-students, the Popular University asked campers to avoid showing cops their student IDs to prevent non-students from being singled out. People came together to actively form an inclusive culture that worked for us and made us feel less alienated from the society we are used to passively occupying.

There was a great deal of beauty and strength in this community and I, along



Photos by Tafari Melisizwe

with many of my friends, have been mourning it since. Needless to say, I have reverted to my habit of avoiding campus. During the eight days of the encampment, I woke up every morning buzzing with concern, ready to pour my energy and time into this project that meant so much both politically and anthropologically. It seemed to me like a marker of human perseverance, in the form of mutual care, in the face of a cold world that wants to wring people dry and keep them cold and alienated for profit.

It is clear from this show of encampments across the world that communities rooted in care can, and are, created and maintained in cities and villages across

the world. They can be hard to find, though, and in my five years in Chicago, I hadn’t encountered such a space. In this country, I’ve witnessed similarly dedicated, tight-knit community spaces in anarchist co-ops and artist collectives in states with draconian anti-queer, anti-woman, racist and anti-Native laws and sentiments. Which begs the question, how can the strength and unity of these encampments achieve longevity? Are they inherently fleeting, tethered to specific moments of political escalation and urgency?

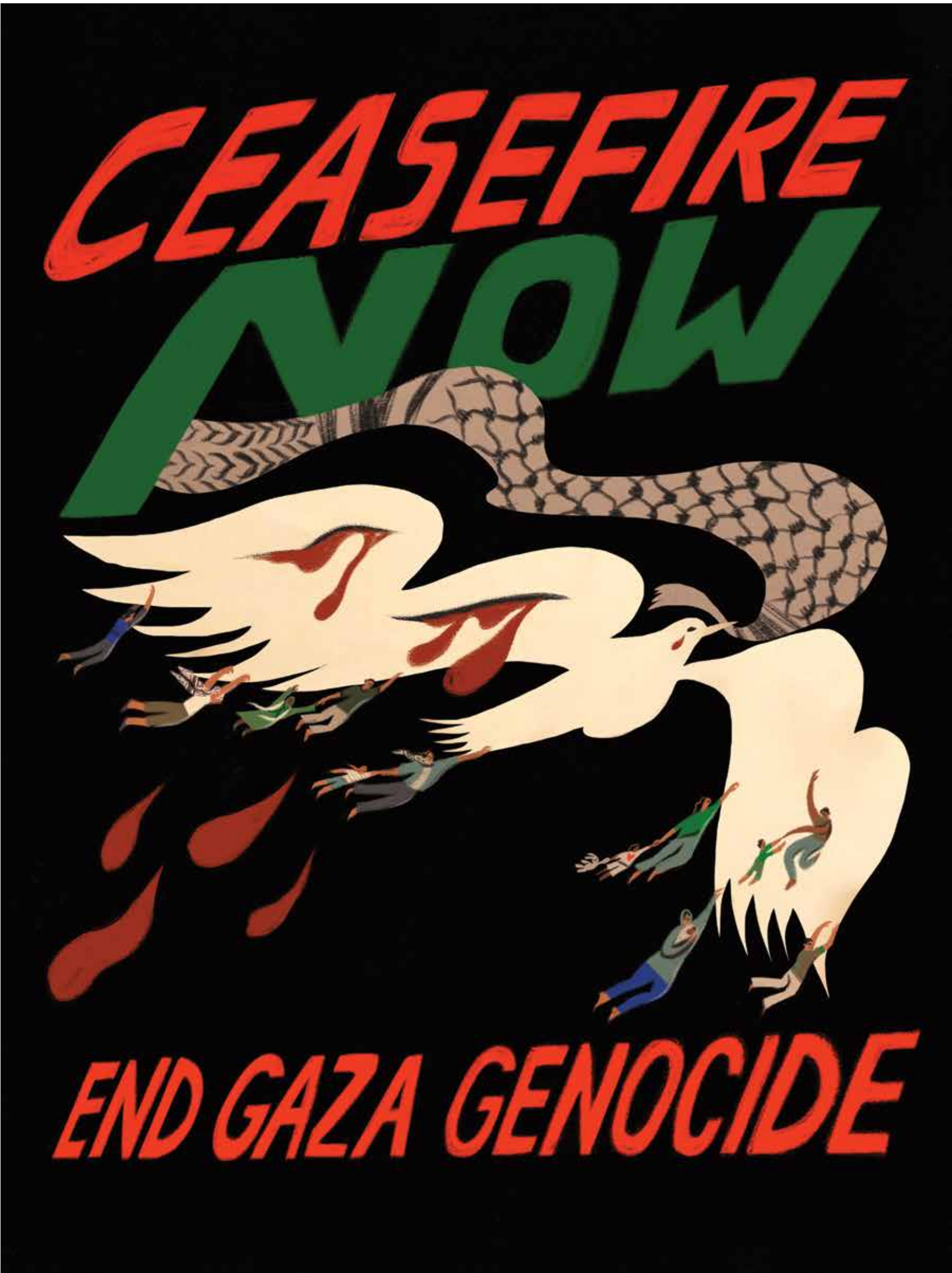
At the time of writing, the UChicago encampment was violently removed by the university’s private police force exactly one week ago, but the one at DePaul University is still going strong at 12 days. There is a good

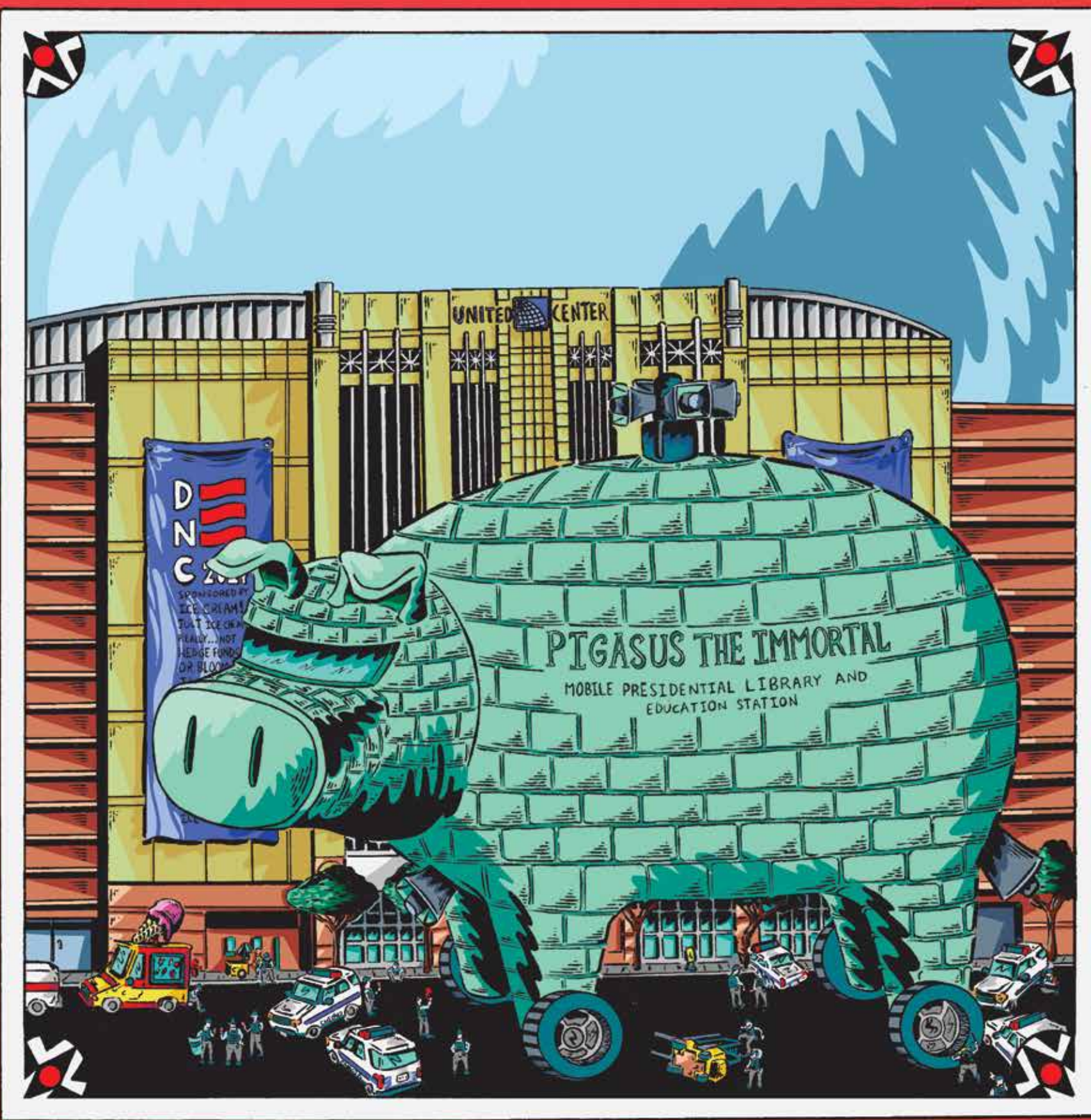
deal of overlap and knowledge exchange between the two encampments, and a sense among all of us involved that this movement is building towards something greater, no matter how many camps are shut down. My hope is that we can keep the Popular University for Gaza’s lessons in care and community and carry them forward into the world.



Tafari Melsizwe

Ceasefire Now by Ashley Lukashevsky





Introducing **Pigasus the Immortal Mobile Presidential Library and Education Station (PIMPLES)**, the first presidential library to be in active conversation with incumbent and future presidential hopefuls by rolling its giant hog-shaped husk right up to the front door of any and all future Democratic National Conventions. The library itself is a living learning center for some of the nation's most powerful forms of political change: protest, defiance of authority, and willful obstruction of traffic. PIMPLES will be the first institution of its kind. It has a max speed of 75 miles per hour and an outwardly projected PA system that can project sound up to 3 miles in distance. Unlike most presidential libraries, instead of a predominant staff of archivists, PIMPLES has an active legal team operating within it, dedicated to legal assistance for all individuals acting in collaboration with the library's mission of civil protest. To collaborate with PIMPLES, you must be a movement just in cause, incensed by apathy, and willing to pilot a multi-story, hog-shaped building that police will attempt to move with forklifts or some other stupid crap.

For all groups that stand in the face of authoritarianism and the countless forms it takes, the institution of the **Pigasus the Immortal Presidential Mobile Library and Education Station** would like to remind you your strength does not come from any structure that you have, except the one you form in solidarity with each other and your unity to defy the systems that demand you be small and complacent. Make the pig too big for the pigs to lift and never stop fighting for a better day.

I CAME HERE

TO

WEEP

EXORCISM-LIBERATION.NET/WEEP

SCAN TO LISTEN

EXORCISM

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LIBERATION

EXORCISM-LIBERATION.NET/LIBERATE

🔊 SCAN TO LISTEN



WHAT YOUR FIRST

MEMORY OF DIRT?

EXORCISM-LIBERATION.NET/DIRT

🔊 SCAN TO LISTEN





L I F E O N T H E P R A I R I E .

The Trappers defence "Fire fight Fire".

NEW YORK, PUBLISHED BY CURRIER & IVES, 150 NASSAU ST.

mac

Bad Governance and a Catastrophe Foretold: My Week in Porto Alegre’s Disaster Zone

BY BRIAN M. MIER

On April 31, 300 mm of rain fell in the mountains of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil in less than twenty-four hours. Hundreds of streams and rivers overflowed their banks, causing dam bursts and leaving a trail of destruction, sweeping away bridges, destroying highways, and submerging entire towns. As they converged in the Guaíba drainage basin, Porto Alegre, a metropolitan area of 3.3 million people, began to flood.

In 1941, Porto Alegre was hit with a massive flood after the river level rose by five meters. Over the next thirty years, the local government slowly built an integrated flood prevention system based on Dutch technology, which included forty miles of dykes and two dozen pumping stations designed to contain rises in the river level up to six meters.

During the 80s and 90s, Porto Alegre became a world model for progressive city governance during a sixteen-year reign by the Brazilian Workers Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores, or PT*). For example, it was there that the World’s first participatory budgeting program was formed. Now replicated in over a thousand cities around the world, participatory budgeting creates a system in which control over a city’s investment budget is turned over to its citizens, who meet in neighborhood schools and libraries to create and vote on local development projects and elect voluntary delegates. Proposals are presented in city hall, where the delegates council prioritizes, votes, and ratifies them. Another example of the prestige Porto Alegre used to have in the international Left is that it was there in 2002 where a world-wide coalition of working

class social movements, leftist academics, and labor unions created the first World Social Forum as an alternative to the World Economic Forum. However, a conservative coalition which took power in 2005 has spent the last nineteen years systematically dismantling nearly all of the gains from the Workers Party years.

For three days, the citizens of Porto Alegre waited anxiously for the water to arrive from the mountains. When it got there, they were shocked and angered to learn that years of neglect had caused the flood prevention system to fail miserably. As the water level rose to 5.3 meters, the citizens discovered that half the pumping stations were inoperable. Furthermore, most of the flood containment gates along the two meter high dyke along the riverside were missing their rubber seals. Some had rusted into their tracks and had to be closed with improvised excavators then soldered shut. This repair failed to fully stop the flood water. Within three days, hundreds of thousands of people had fled their homes as large swathes of the city were underwater. Eighty-five percent of the city had no running water, and half of the residents had no electrical power. The airport, along with several commuter train

stations and the intercity bus terminal, were submerged and inoperable. Weeks later, with the river level still four meters above normal, and big parts of the city were still flooded.

On May 18, *TeleSur*, the multilateral TV news network founded by Hugo Chavez where I work as the Brazil correspondent, flew me from my home in Recife to Florianopolis, where I spent the night drinking beers at a friend’s house before getting up at 5:30 the next morning to head to the bus station. There were still no direct buses, so I rode six hours to a little town called Osorio and found a local bus to take me the final two hours to an improvised city bus terminal on the outskirts of Porto Alegre.

It was cold and rainy when I arrived. Southern Brazil is not located in the tropics. It was late fall, and the temperature was 48°F. This may not seem very cold to people from northern US cities like Chicago, but most houses don’t have insulation or heat, so when it’s 48 degrees, outside it’s 48 degrees inside. A fan from my Brazilian web TV program, *Globalistas*, offered me her vacant one-bedroom apartment in the middle class neighborhood of Partenon. It had electricity, water, and high speed Internet—a necessity for television production. Here, on the other side of a tall ridge that spreads out from downtown, everything seemed totally normal. I walked two blocks to a mall that had a huge supermarket and stocked up on food staples for the week, including a few cuts of the beef that Rio Grande do Sul, land of the Gauchos, is famous for. Rio Grande do Sul is one of the only regions of the World where cattle can meet their nutritional needs by free grazing entirely on the indigenous vegetation of the *pampas*.

The next morning, I organized my video production kit and headed downtown to the edge of the historic district, a neighborhood full of low-rise Belle Époque buildings that is surprisingly not the oldest section of the 380-year-old city. After filming people traveling down the streets by boat and sloshing through the water in fishing waders, I cut up to the ridge and headed over toward the Municipal Market, one of the nation’s best. I’d seen footage from the previous week showing the market underwater, but the level had dropped enough to leave parts of the surrounding area covered in stinking mud. As I walked around with my tripod shooting B-roll, the smell got worse and



worse. A group of elderly women recognized me from *Globalistas* and called me over.

“Look at that,” one of them said. “Do you think that’s a pig?” Due in part to the damage my ears took during the Chicago noise scene in the early 80s, my hearing is not that great. I had to ask her to repeat herself, and I still initially misunderstood her. “Porco” is the word for pig in Portuguese, but she was saying, “corpo”, or corpse. The smell was coming from underneath some plastic bags on the steps of the market building. Suddenly I flashed back to my days in Haiti after the 2010 earthquake, when the streets of Port-au-Prince were heavy with hundreds of thousands of rotting bodies. I was running late for an interview with a socialist housing movement leader in a squat on the other side of downtown, so I walked uncomfortably back up the ridge, scraped my shoes off, and jumped in a taxi.

Over the next few days, I interviewed social movement leaders, a former Water and Sewage Department commissioner, a communist state congresswoman, and a number of displaced people living in shelters. During my final day of filming, I got ahold of a pair of rubber boots and walked through three blocks of sewage-infested flood water to visit a slum that had turned into an island.

How did this happen? Why was so much of the city still underwater?

In 2002, Workers Party Mayor Tarso Genro stepped down to run for governor and turned power over to his vice mayor, a competent but bland technocrat who lost reelection in 2004 to a conservative coalition which has been running the city ever since.

Just as Chicago’s mayor Richard Daley did after taking power after the Washington / Sawyer years, the conservatives began to gradually and methodically dismantle every gain that had ever been made by the progressives. In the name of a minimal state ideology, they privatized everything they could. In 2017, they shut down the Municipal Department of Rainwater Drainage, along with 16 other departments, laying off half of the workers in water and sanitation and butchering funding as they prepared it for its privatization. Four years ago, Governor Eduardo Leite and Mayor Sebastião Melo—both Jair Bolsonaro supporters at the time—announced plans for a London-influenced riverfront revitalization project that would rehab historic warehouses into fancy restaurants and microbreweries. Both gave now-embarrassing interviews about how important it was to rip down the flood containment dyke, which “separated citizens from their beautiful riverfront.” Last November, when a smaller flood hit the city, residents learned that Pumping Station 17 was inoperative. The Mayor promised to fix it, but he didn’t. In February, he privatized a three kilometer stretch of the riverfront

adjacent to downtown to a private real estate developer and announced that they were going to rip down a portion of the wall.

If there is any silver lining in this catastrophe, both Porto Alegre Mayor Sebastiao Melo, who is up for reelection this year, and Rio Grande do Sul Governor Eduardo Leite, who flexibilized 480 environmental laws over the last four years, are now political has-beens. With an initial operating budget of around \$10 billion USD, Workers Party President Lula da Silva has bypassed both governments by creating an Extraordinary Ministry of the Reconstruction of Rio Grande do Sul. One of its initial tasks will be guaranteeing the federal housing program’s promise to build new houses for every family in the state whose homes were destroyed by the floods. As President Lula recently said, “It’s going to cost at least twice as much to fix this as it would have been to prevent it.” Bad governance kills. Here’s hoping the citizens of Porto Alegre will remember this when the next elections arrive.

Brian Mier is a writer, pundit and TV news producer who grew up on the North Side of Chicago and has been living in Brazil for over two decades. Starting in 1996, he has written over 100 articles for Lumpen, under his byline and with multiple pseudonyms.

Cutting Through To Tomorrow, Today

BY LIZ DAVIS

On a video call, my coworkers and I ask HR if we can start a PTO donation pool. The deflection is typical but still stings. “So are you asking for this instead of short-term disability?” At the end of the call, HR proudly reminds us that employees come and go, but the university will live on. I am regularly reminded that we are a work-family, but that I should step away and forget about this family over the weekend.

At work, the reality of the world looks like a vague haze of troubling times that should be combated with a good attitude. In staff meetings and all-staff email blasts, there’s no specifically harmful or wrong thing going on outside the workplace mentioned, just vague references that “times are tough.” A few exceptions, like inflation, are mentioned, but it’s clear that there’s no conception of how that really impacts anyone in the room.

Off the clock, I see the realities of the world in detail—the anguish brought by racial capitalism and the commitment of profiteers to keep that system intact. Slumlords and developers raise rent while mold, bugs, and rats deteriorate the health of tenants. Almost half of Kansas City residents are renters; Kansas and Missouri face some of the fastest rising rents in the nation. The cognitive dissonance between these two realities sometimes re-shocks me, even when I am intimately familiar with it.

My landlord tells my partner over text message that mice always find a way in. We

spend the weekend putting steel wool anywhere we can. We have been waiting two weeks for him to come fix our toilet that won’t flush.

But organizing cuts through time. It interrogates what has happened, what is now, and what is to come. I see another reality every week, in every meeting with my comrades. I see tenants organizing after being without heat in the dead of winter, ultimately winning a year-long rent subsidy from the City of Kansas City, the first of its kind in history. Weeks ago, when the Astor building caught fire, tenants organized with the Midtown Tenant Union and won a payout that totaled over \$10,000.

I see a reality where I can live in a home for a lifetime, where I never debate if a keepsake will make it hard to move. Where I have more than one person to call if I’m in crisis. Where I will feel the collective power in my bones and refuse to pre-negotiate isolation and suffering in my life. I know my future has no room for me to suffer alone when there’s so much at stake and so much more to gain.



I essentially gave up on professional creative work about a year before completing my BFA program. That dream was for someone more talented, more well-read, more ready to sacrifice any amount of time or money for any new accolade on a resume. I couldn’t keep up. I felt alone and exhausted in every critique and class that told me that I was anything but an artist. I internalized a judgmental atmosphere and was caught up in academic hustle culture.

In my freshman year, my studio instructor told us that she was monitoring the timestamps on the ID reader to see who was really committed to coming in. The following year, a tenured faculty member that I never took a class with leaned over my shoulder, touching my cheek with his own for an instant while making a snide remark about what I was working on.

I am technically off the clock and run up the stairs so I can let the director know that I put the photo equipment away. I open the door, and he cuts me off almost instantly. “I don’t talk to people when they’re out of breath. Can you step out?” I am speechless and don’t understand. He says nothing and stares at me. I walk out of his office, and the two other employees give me exasperated, silent apologies. I count to ten before walking back inside.

There was never an open conversation about what to do if you didn’t have a large amount of personal financial support for your pursuits. A local gallery owner gave a talk to students, and after several questions, he finally explained that he could afford his business because was a former Amazon executive. He didn’t mention that his father was a developer in



the West Bottoms. Another guest lecturer explained that she could afford to paint full time as a young person because they rented out their basement while her husband finished law school.

I talked with my advisors and mentors at length about how to get my foot in the door, but I never mentioned the shame and confusion I felt about the environment we were in. By the end of college, it was clear that artistic skill was equally important to being endlessly productive. All I felt was burn-out. I continued to change my goals until the plan was just to finish my degree and not move back in with my parents. After graduating, I had almost no creative energy and preemptively excluded myself from artistic opportunities to avoid the feelings that grew over those four years.

In 2022, I met with a KC Tenants organizer who asked me what I envisioned myself doing in the tenant union. I said that it didn’t really matter. He suggested that I could join the Art and Propaganda Team. I said sure, but the insecurities from art school welled up

inside me instantly. I still have to combat those feelings, but I’ve learned that organizing isn’t about “keeping up,” accolades, or having artistic mastery. Organizing is about bringing a new vision of the future into being, one project at a time, and perfectionism will only slow us down.

I paint a banner with my comrades on a Sunday morning. We are nearing the end of one of the largest, fastest campaigns we’ve worked on together to fight against a \$2 billion subsidy for a private business. It is the first time my partner and I see his nephew sew on a sewing machine. Folks bring food to share and we listen to music. Two weeks later, we do it again. Two days after that, KC Tenants won the campaign with a 16-point margin.

Being in a powerful collective gives me a front-row seat to watch infinite realities being generated, reviewed, and interrogated. Leaders share their vision of the world, justice, and their future homes and lives in detail. I am a part of more joyful collective imagination and radical envisioning than any other point in my

adult life. The Arts & Propaganda Team in KC Tenants is my organizing home. I get to be in community with artists in a way that I didn’t dare consider when I entered college.

Twelve of us are on a video call; we celebrate the campaign win, debrief what we should remember going forward, and dig into what’s next: training, organizing projects, and a potluck. Seven of us give reflections on what we learned during a six-week training series. We wonder when the VOTE NO APRIL 2ND banner on 75th Street will be taken down.

Every month I meet someone who sharpens my outlook, and the reality of my future becomes bigger, more real. Organizing gives me the lens to see it all.

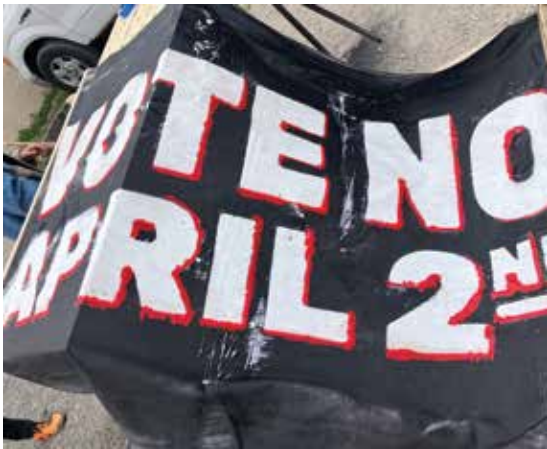




Photo Credit: Jae Arnold

An Interview with Melissa Ferrer-Civil

BY HOPE-LIAN VINSON

For anyone who has taken a look at a newsfeed lately, there is a deep unsettling reality that the world has continued to regress even after the outbreak of a global pandemic. I remember the feverish summer of 2020, my sweaty skin sticking to the leather seats of my car as I listened to the harrowing recording of George Floyd saying “I can’t breathe” on NPR, a haunting backdrop to the racial reckoning and tear gassed consciousness that swept the nation. We find ourselves in yet another moment of radicalization, witnessing the groundswell of community organizing

Melissa Ferrer Civil (&), (she/they), formerly known as Missy T. Ferrari, is a poet, performer, organizer, and educator living on unceded Kaw, Kansa, Kickapoo, and Oceti Sakowin lands (KCMO). Rooted in the practical and the possible, their spoken word poems and songs are mostly responses to the world around them and their own internal journey. Melissa is the founder of the arts and organizing event series A Nation In Exile.

Melissa received a Bachelor’s Degree in both Creative Writing and Italian from Florida State University. She has also received her Master’s of Education with a specialization in Urban Education from Park University. She was also long listed for the Palette Poetry 2021 Emerging Poet Prize. They are a Charlotte Street Studio Resident and a Chrysalis Institute Alumnus. Melissa Ferrer Civil is the inaugural Poet Laureate of Kansas City, Missouri.

and the distribution of mutual aid, an inflated police budget, an increased surveillance state, a growing sense of unreality, and a deep desire to find something to anchor ourselves to. The case for abolition is clear to me now more than ever, based on the basic principle that we need to defund the shit that harms us and invest in more intentional and sustainable infrastructure that is rooted in care. How can we develop community around the wellness of those most impacted?

I asked poet, performer, and organizer Melissa Ferrer-Civil to talk about how we can sustain ourselves in the moment and organize for the future. Recently selected as Kansas City’s inaugural poet laureate, Melissa is the founder and organizer of A Nation in Exile, an event series that connects audiences to critically necessary art and introduces folks to organizers actively nurturing our communities. We discuss the intersections of art and organizing, the harms of individualizing “wellness,” and how movement spaces must be invested in the wellness of everyone in order to move collectively towards the world as it should be.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

Hope-Lian Vinson: Prentis Hemphill, a Black movement worker and Somatics practitioner, founded the Embodiment Institute, which teaches that relationships are at the foundation of organizing and healing is essential for transformative change. Similarly, I’m invested in how building power is predicated on creating a space for healing and care, and especially in looking more deeply into the relational work that goes into community organizing, which I feel is the less visible and examined part of our work. How do we show up for each other to sustain the work that we

“...so often we don’t acknowledge that in our friendships, in our deep relationships, we are living in the world as we should be—in the relationships where we feel most open, and most belonging, and loved, and loving.”

do? How can organizing spaces better hold those most impacted?

Melissa Ferrer-Civil: I think sustainability is such an important concept to really stoop and meditate and practice. Usually the reason you organize things is because whatever the conditions are, they’re unsustainable, right? They’re not maintainable for all people. But when an organization comes together, I think it is of the utmost importance to acknowledge what is a sustainable way of engaging with this work.

We say “the people closest to the problems are closest to a solution,” so we follow the lead of the most impacted, but truthfully that is hard, right? That is actually very hard, because those who are most impacted are in continual crisis, and when you’re in continual crisis, you do not have the capacity to organize in the way that organizing demands when you are trying to keep up with the pace of white supremacy. To me, this is one of the conundrums of organizing. And so the first thing I’m thinking is one needs to be part of a responsive organization rather than a reactive organization, of one that takes things in, processes them, and learns how to respond so that you’re not moved by the same energy or pacing as the institution of oppression.

So the question, “What does care look like,” it’s not chronological—like, *first I heal, then I organize*. It’s like, *as I organize*, I heal. As I’m in relationship, I heal because truly it is these relationships, it is this love, it is this community that helps me to heal.

Self advocacy is of the utmost importance, which takes self-love, self-respect. It’s hard to advocate for yourself if you don’t know yourself and love yourself enough to listen

and be like, “Oh, this is actually not healthy for me, and I am not willing to put up with a severely unhealthy situation.” Otherwise, you’re going to get steamrolled in any organizing space, right? Because the reality is we’re dealing with the world as it is, not as the world should be. The world as it should be exists outside of organizing. If the world was what it should be, we wouldn’t be organizing, right? But so often we don’t acknowledge that in our friendships, in our deep relationships, we are living in the world as we should be—in the relationships where we feel most open, and most belonging, and loved, and loving. That is the world as it should be, right? And that’s where we should get our understanding on how to interact in other spaces as well.

H-L V: Leaning into our closest relationships is such a helpful grounding and reference point for what security feels like and how healthy, affirming relationships can help us grow. Having safe places to have those develop those relationships and not fear rejection reminds me of this idea of the “political home,” a place people can feel the safest and most inspired to imagine a future beyond their immediate reality. So I’m curious if you can talk about the spaces where you felt most held and inspired by those around you.

M F-C: That’s a beautiful question. First, I want to name that there are no safe spaces. I don’t really believe fully in safe spaces unless I myself am a safe space. In order to be a safe space, I also have to be a very accepting space in myself. I have to not be easily offended. I have to be able to deal with discomfort within myself. That way I can feel safe wherever I like. That being said though, I’m going to go back on everything I literally just said and say—

“I think we should have more expansive conversations around illness, around wellness, around individuality and collective community, and the implications and the ways they not just intersect but relate, because that’s also what we are healing.”

H-L V: We exist, and we accept contradiction, *hahaha*—

M F-C: Right, right, the multitudes. The multitudes! I think for me, the places I feel safest begin with my faith, which is not a place but a state of being, right? It’s when I’m feeling connection and in relation and in community with God. And an extension of that is the relationships I have with my beloveds. Those are safe spaces where most times we are aligned politically, but if we are not aligned politically, we feel safe enough to unpack things upon the basis of love. It’s not about having the same political standing. I really feel like the place where I feel comfortable to disagree and to continue in conversation would be among the relationships I’ve built. That’s why I’m building *A Nation in Exile*, because it’s a space where I can be myself and do the work, and hopefully other people feel free to be their full selves, which they’ve told me they do.

H-L V: Your current project, *A Nation in Exile*, deals with questions of place, belonging, and the idea of “returning home” as a pretense for self-discovery and imagining what’s possible. Can you talk more about the event series and the relationship you see between art and organizing?

M F-C: This nation was built by exiles. In the creation of this nation, people were exiled from their homes, right? There was the forced exile upon Africans through slavery, and then the forced exile upon Indigenous people through occupation.

In that way, we are a nation of exiles *in exile*. We are in exile because we are exiled from one another. We are in a society where people are afraid of other people all the time. We’re also exiled from the land. We’re exiled

from an understanding of and relationship with the very living organism that we are a part of that is called the earth. And then we are exiled from our cultures, right? Most Americans do not have a deeper understanding of where they come from or deep lineage. All of those forms of exile culminate and manifests materially into forms of mental illness. But it’s this questioning o, “What does it mean to be human? What does it mean to be alive?” that is literally in our very hands and our very essence, but we don’t know our essence anymore. So *A Nation in Exile* is based off of this analysis.

If you look at artists, they are people who organize the internal, who burst open perspectives and broaden our horizons for our imaginations; who help materialize the ethereal, imaginative realm that exists and transcends the normal seeds of our existence. And organizers are creating those conditions externally to expand and manifest what else is possible. And so I feel like they’ve always been intricately linked together in all of the major movements, because organizers are creating, and creators are organizing. *A Nation in Exile* is based on that movement. I don’t believe in building new worlds. It’s more about uncovering what already is there, much in the same way that *A Nation in Exile* shines on the connection between arts and organizing and how both are necessary to change the conditions of our existence.

H-L V: What you’re saying reminds me of Toni Cade Bambara’s quote: “As a cultural worker who belongs to an oppressed people, my job is to make revolution irresistible.” This has similar tones to cultural anthropologist Eduardo Mondlane’s assessment: “Culture loads the gun, but armed struggle pulls the trigger.” How does art work in tandem with the struggle for liberation, and

how might poetry serve as your own medium for change?

M F-C: I really like something that my friend Robert Bordeaux said. He said that Indigenous people do not see art in the way we see it. Before capitalism, before supremacy, before all of that shit, everything that was art was part of community. It served a purpose. So what we see in art that’s revolutionary and urgent is a people who are in certain conditions, in what Toni Cade Bambara calls “the oppressed class,” who are dreaming outside of their conditions or interrogating the conditions they’re in. Either way, in their being, the conditions are bumping up against what they know to be true, right, good, and healthy, and they are communicating that vision of what is true, right, and good. When people witness this, they feel validated and affirmed, or agitated into a new perspective, or like they’ve just been granted permission to say something that they didn’t know they were allowed to say. Either way, this starts to open up the floodgates for action and for movement. Because for even the person who is creating the art, at some point in their life, someone else granted them permission to create the art.

For me, it was Maya Angelou’s “Still I Rise” when I was 12. I realized, “Shit, I’m rising! I’m rising!” I was like, wait. Art helps people? That’s what is so exciting.

H-L V: Is there anything else you would like to add to this conversation about art, wellness, and community organizing?

M F-C: As a diagnosed insane person, I want to talk on this insanity thing, this idea of “Democracy.” Back to the etymology of “insanity,” which means unhealthy, the word *insanus* is the same word that we use for

“sanitation”—so something that is literally not healthy for us, right? “You’re not living in a healthy way.” “Your mind is not healthy.”

So it is not out of the realm of definition to call this society what it is—which is truly insane. There’s this book called *How to Go Mad Without Losing Your Mind* by La Marr Jurelle Bruce. In it, he breaks down four definitions of madness—psychosocial, enraged, medical, and phenomenal—and this idea of madness as a deviation from the norm in some way. So when we talk about insanity, when we talk about madness, there are deeper definitions, right? I don’t think of these words as labels for individuals, which is a very big differentiation that I make. They have semantic meanings.

On a grounded note, “real crazy recognizes crazy.” Like, “it takes one to know one.” If you’re going to tell me that I’m on the

schizoaffective spectrum, I will tell you exactly how this society has made me crazy, or specifically in my language, “has placed a challenge within me.” Because I also don’t believe in labeling myself. Truly, truly, speaking from my own diagnoses, whether bipolar or schizoaffective, the oversaturation of information and over sensationalization of our media and society is truly bipolar in nature, in the way it affects our brain patterns. The lifestyle in which we are forced to live, where we live split lives of professional and personal for instance, that is schizophrenic. Literally on every level—and you can name any mental illness that has been diagnosed—I can tell you, our society is the thing that created that mental illness. So I think we should have more expansive conversations around illness, around wellness, around individuality and collective community, and the implications and the ways they not just intersect but relate, because that’s also what we are healing.

We have to be able to call it for what it is in order to get to where we need to go. It’s not an individual basis either. That’s why I don’t fuck with the medical industrial complex, especially when it comes to psychiatry and psychology, because it is so heavily individualized and it doesn’t truly address the positions in which a body is living.

And that’s the thing—when we talk about “where do you feel held,” it’s never going to be an institution or organization that holds you, just never. It’s people that hold people. We hold ourselves. We hold each other. Even if your institution or organization is built on relationships—like the mark of any good organization is built on relation—the truth is, all organizations are built on relationships, even the oppressive ones. Therefore, I personally think any good institution knows that it has to be destroyed at some point.



RECLAIM RESOURCES FROM THE WAR INDUSTRY, REINVEST IN LIFE-GIVING INSTITUTIONS,
REPAIR COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE EARTH AND PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

DIRECT ACTION



We know there are many individuals and systems that uphold US militarism, but we believe that political and corporate elites are ultimately responsible for endless wars. We focus our energy on taking away their power, and dismantling their systems.

Buildings collapsing
Hands touching under the rubble

The Baptist Hospital
Jabalia refugee camp

NICU babies
left on machines,
left to their fate
Bodies in ice cream trucks
Unknown #3

The hospitals,
The mosques,
The universities,
The churches,
The bakeries

AI to generate
bombing targets

11,000 bombs in
25-square mile that
has 1 million children

Canceling voices

Journalists,
Poets,
Artists

Unknown #347

Men naked,
lined up,
handcuffed

"We did what we could.
Remember us."

"The kids died hungry."

Move south

Zone 43

Al-Shifa Hospital

Names written on limbs
"Soul of my soul"

"And if I go,
who treats my patients?"

Mass grave in blue bags

"Please come on
mom, I can't see you."

Humanitarian corridor

Safe passage got bombed

Meta shadow ban

No morphine

WCNSF:
Wounded
Child
No
Surviving
Family

Families erased from civil registry
**Neighboring countries
should take the Arabs**

Starvation policy

Children sleeping
in muddy tents

NICU babies
found at
Nasser hospital
decomposing

Bombing aid trucks
Contaminated water

"Where is Hind?"

"Why did you die, my love?"

**A genocide?
Not really. Not fully...
There has to be intention.**

"I took 580 injections to have him."

Graveyard for children

Don't cease
only pause.

Collateral damage

Al Maghazi refugee camp

Evacuate to Rafah

Communication blackout

Go to Khan Younus

Kids dragging yellow
gallons to find water

White phosphorus

Cold,
Dark,
Shivering,
Alone

Day 49: 8,176 children killed

Rainwater ban

Children holding
press conference:
"We want to live."

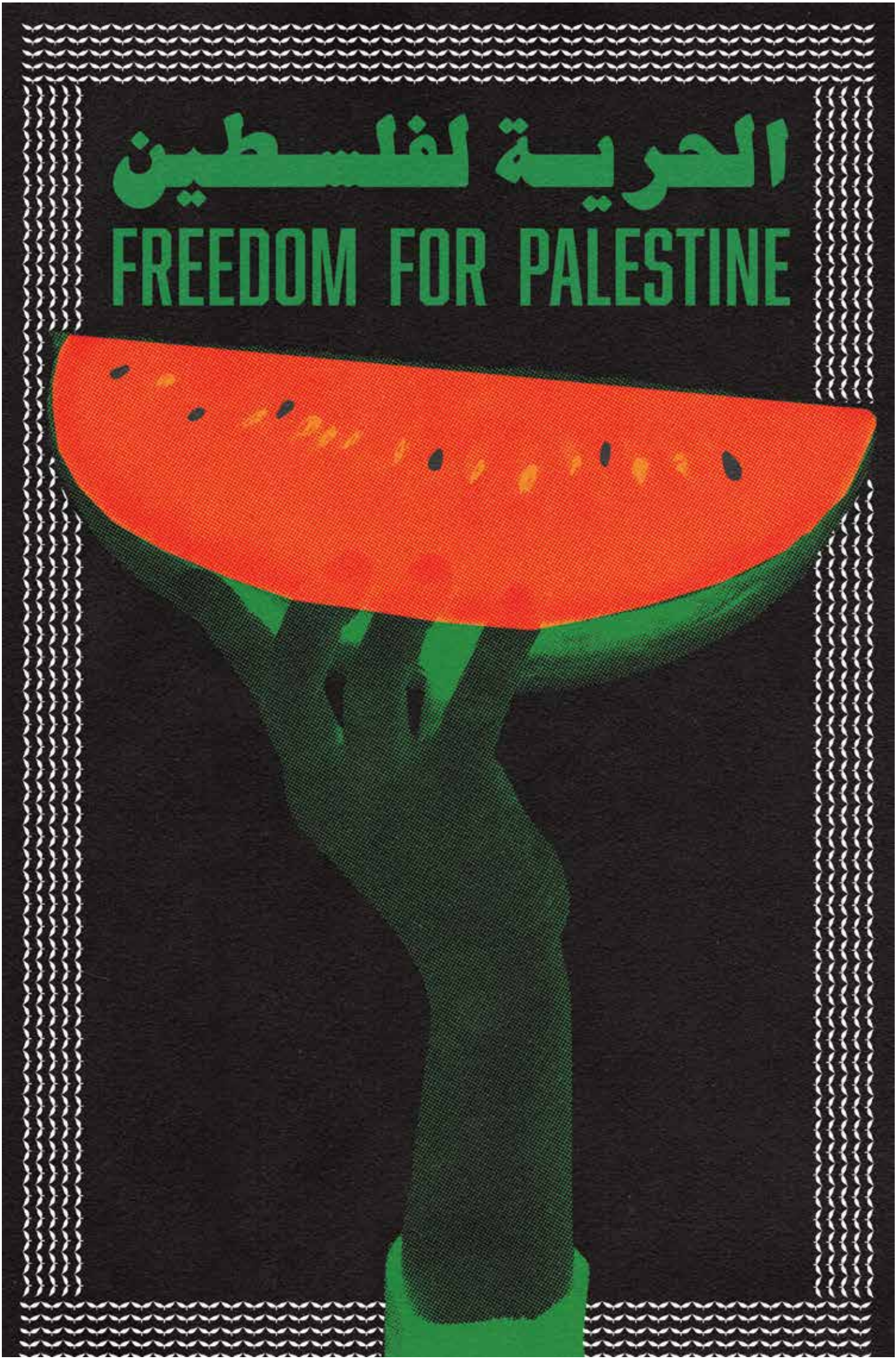
Zones 42, 44, 45
Buried alive

Carrying his kids' limbs
in black plastic bags

Hugging bodies
wrapped in
white cloths

Amputation on
the kitchen table
with no anesthesia

Nakba, Again by Linda Abdullah



An Interview with Asaf Calderon

BY RUSLANA LICHTZIER



I met Asaf Calderon over Zoom in November 2023 during the first big public meeting that introduced Shores, the movement of anti-zionist Israelis in the US that he co-founded after October 7. Shortly after, I joined Asaf and the team that leads the movement.

Shores stands for the same ethical position I held for years. We use our privilege as Israeli Jews to speak against the country we belong to, and to advocate for the end of the genocide and apartheid in Palestine/Israel. In Hebrew and Arabic, shores means “root.” We address the root of the problem: Zionism, which we work to dismantle from the river and the sea. Our work is grounded in abolitionist practices and propelled by a deep love for the place we came from.

Since October, Shores has been growing rhizomatically while emphasizing on internal and external political education, advocacy, and direct action. We decided to use this opportunity to discuss why we both believe that the fall of a Zionist Israel will be beneficial for all the people who live in Israel/Palestine.

Asaf Calderon: Let’s first define Zionism for our purposes. When I say Zionism, I mean the idea of a Jewish ethno-state, and I am contrasting it with a multi-ethnic, Jewish, and Palestinian democratic state. In Israeli discourse, this is often termed “a state for all its citizens.”

Ruslana Lichtzier: Let’s stay with this for a moment and clarify some terms. Under Zionism, Israel is a state that prioritizes one ethnicity—the Jewish one—over all the others. It begins with the Israeli Law of Return, which gives all Jews, or people with one or more Jewish grandparent, and their spouses the right to immigrate to Israel and acquire Israeli citizenship. It continues with a two-tier legal system that segregates Jews into one category and the rest to another, in effect creating second-degree citizens. This results in what we term an ethno-state. Zionism justifies this structure as a form of protection against global antisemitism and for Jewish safety.

AC: Right. The only problem is that the State of Israel is not safe for Jews, and it never has been. Zionism promised the Jews all kinds of things—connection to the land of our forefathers, “healing” of the “sickness” of the diasporic Jew, the coming of the Messiah—but the most important promise has always been Jewish safety. Instead, Zionism unleashed violence. We turned our own children into soldiers and sent them to police, dehumanizing people while we try, and mostly fail, to live a “normal” life. Yet we are not safe; we are hiding in shelters, evacuated from towns, and attacked in urban centers. The toll of enacting ethnic cleansing for decades upon decades results in a deeply disturbed and violent society. It is an unbearable reality.

RL: Of course, the violence that Israeli Jews suffer is incomparable to the Pales-

Photo Credit: Yusef Khatib



tinians, especially now during the genocide we enact on the people of Gaza.

AC: Yes, of course. But I think an important part of dismantling Zionism is examining how Zionism fails the Jews. Jews are raised to believe that the state of Israel must remain Jewish for our safety. Yet, as we learned from other abolition movements, we know that there will be no peace for the Jews in Palestine—no safety—without justice for Palestinians.

RL: Right. By dismantling the ethnonational state of Israel, which is another way of saying that ending Zionism and creating a multi-ethnic democracy between the river and the sea is the only way forward. A key element of this is the Palestinian Right of Return. This is an integral part of the bond between justice and peace.

A second element is to resist the American-backed solution to return to the 1967 borders (plus a lot of annexed territories) in a two-state solution. This is not a solution because first, territorially speaking, in this proposal, Palestine will look like holes of Swiss cheese. Second, this “separation” ignores how enmeshed the two societies are both socially and economically. Third, it does not address the historical crimes of Israel. While we believe that Palestinians deserve to return to Ramallah which is in the West Bank and to al-Lidd (now Lod) which is within 1948 borders, this solution, in a typical

white supremacist manner, asks people to move on.

AC: The two-state solution adheres to Zionism. Under Zionism, Palestinian refugees who were expelled from the land from 1948 until today will never be able to return because that will change the demographic balance: the Jewish majority, won artificially through ethnic cleansing and discriminatory immigration policy, will be lost, and with it the Zionist notion of a “Jewish State.” For many Israelis, for most, I must admit, the discussion about the Palestinian Right of Return is taboo. Yet return is a necessary step towards healing the deep wounds caused by Zionism and envisioning a future beyond Zionism.

RL: Exactly. When you think about it, what we propose is quite simple, almost obvious. Israel’s ethno-supremacist ideology kills Palestinians and Israelis. Dismantling it will break the racist structure of the state and create a society that is based on equal rights for all. Zionism tries to persuade us that segregation, occupation, full-blown apartheid, and now genocide are the only ways forward that keep the Jews safe. It is not only absurd, it is disastrous. I must admit that I hesitate that our text will be read as an overly optimistic vision of the day after Zionism. I keep thinking of the phrase from the Talmud, “Whoever kills one life

kills the world entire, and whoever saves one life saves the world entire.” Witnessing the worlds our people kill, entire bloodlines, in unfathomable numbers—how can a single being compute 37,000 dead and 10,000 missing? I am not sure we are in a position to imagine a different future. All I can say is that dismantling Zionism is an urgent ethical obligation of Israeli Jews. We must do it to save ourselves.

AC: It is absolutely an ethical obligation. It is also in our material interest. Yes, we will have to give up privileges. Yes, some of us will have to give up land and wealth. What we might gain is that normal life, that safety that we have been seeking. I think it’s worth it. This is obviously far in the future. The most important thing right now is to continue pressuring Israel to end the genocide in Gaza. As Israelis in the US, we are in a unique position to be heard by the American administration and the general public, and we are using our voice to try and get the US to force Israel to stop the genocide. Our focus must be on the here and now. However, I think it’s important for effective organizing to be able to always see the horizon in the background. Our horizon is freedom and equality to all from the river to the sea.

The Burning Body: Martyrdom in the Liberation Movement

BY JEX BLACKMORE



In 2006, Chicago resident Malachi Ritscher made a chilling declaration in his final statement: “If I am required to pay for your barbaric war, I choose not to live in your world.” Then, he set himself on fire in protest.

In February, Aaron Bushnell, a 25-year-old active duty airman, live-streamed his self-immolation at the Israeli embassy in Washington DC, defiantly declaring his refusal to remain complicit in genocide. His poignant final words: “Free Palestine.”

Spanning nearly two decades, these political suicides lay bare an ongoing and unresolved struggle against systemic brutality, spotlighting the persistent injustices that drive individuals to such extreme actions. In the relentless march of history, acts of profound sacrifice compel the world to confront its own indifference. These self-immolations cut through the noise, demanding attention and action, yet leaving us to question if the world truly listens and responds.

One of the most striking acts of self-immolation in modern history was carried out by Buddhist monk Thích Quảng Đức , who set himself ablaze on the streets of Saigon on June 11, 1963. His protest was against the brutal persecution of Buddhists by the US-backed South Vietnamese government. The image of his burning body, seated in meditation amidst the flames, shocked the world and ignited a firestorm of political dissent. His action inspired five more Buddhist monks to follow his example with politically motivated suicides by fire.

Thích Quảng Đức’s protest became an iconic and haunting symbol of the war, and effectively brought global attention to the corruption, abuses, and brutality of the American-backed Diệm regime. The now infamous photograph of “The Burning Monk” sent shockwaves throughout the world. “No news picture in history,” John F. Kennedy once said, “has generated so much emotion around the world as that one.”

The U.S. government viewed South Vietnam’s autocratic leader Ngô Đình Diệm as a crucial defense against Communism. Consequently, they provided his military regime with funding, armaments, and training. This support enabled Diệm to suppress the Buddhist monks. However, Historian Seth Jacobs believes that Quảng Đức’s immolation had “reduced America’s Diệm experiment to ashes” and that “no amount of pleading

could retrieve Diệm’s reputation.” Shortly after Thích Quảng Đức’s death, the US turned on their alliance. Five months after his death, Diệm was overthrown in a US-backed coup and executed. Two years later, over 60,000 U.S. troops were deployed to Vietnam, initiating a conflict that resulted in some 3 million deaths.

The ripple effects of Quảng Đức’s protest extended beyond Vietnam. Inspired by the powerful impact of his protest, the first American political self-immolation occurred in March 1965 in Detroit. Eighty-two-year-old peace activist Alice Herz set herself on fire to oppose US military action in Vietnam, “the arms race, and a president using his high office to wipe out small nations.” Her protest didn’t stop the war nor the arms race; instead, it highlighted the worsening conflict, which only escalated further with time.

Several more self-immolations followed. An anti-war activist named Norman Morrison set himself on fire below Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara’s Pentagon office. Morrison took his daughter Emily, then one year of age, to the Pentagon, and either set her down or handed her off to someone in the crowd before setting himself ablaze. Morrison’s wife Anne later recalled that Emily “was a powerful symbol of the children we were killing with our bombs and Diệm who didn’t have parents to hold them in their arms.”

One week after Morrison, 22-year-old Roger Allen LaPorte set himself on fire in front of the United Nations building in New York City to protest the United States’ involvement in the war. When asked in the hospital why he had burned himself, LaPorte calmly replied, “I’m against war, all wars. I did this as a religious action.” He died the next day.

Since 1965, thirty-eight people in the US have self-immolated for political reasons, driven by various injustices. In 1972, civil rights organizer and former military veteran Willie B. Phillips self-immolated in Atlanta to highlight violence towards African Americans. In April 2018, pioneering human rights lawyer David Buckel emailed a statement to media outlets decrying humanity’s passivity in the face of pollution and climate change,

then walked to nearby Prospect Park in Brooklyn and set himself on fire, hoping his death would galvanize mass action.

Similarly, in 2022, climate activist Wynn Alan Bruce, a 50-year-old climate protester from Colorado, self-immolated outside the Supreme Court on Earth Day. Kritee Kanko, a friend of Bruce, wrote that his action was “not suicide” but rather “a deeply fearless act of compassion to bring attention to climate crisis.”

Just a month before I wrote this text, Maxwell Crosby Azzarello self-immolated in New York City, outside the courthouse where jurors were being chosen for the New York state criminal trial of former US President Donald Trump. In Azzarello’s manifesto, he wrote, “This extreme act of protest is to draw attention to an urgent and important discovery: We are victims of a totalitarian con, and our own government (along with many of their allies) is about to hit us with an apocalyptic fascist world coup.” “The Democrat vs. Republican division has been entirely manufactured,” he added.

Azzarello was unfairly maligned in the press as a conspiracy theorist with mental health issues, despite the absence of evidence to support these claims. His friends lamented the media’s portrayal, calling it a “really inaccurate depiction of him.” A former colleague described Azzarello as “highly intelligent, thoroughly dedicated, funny, and kind.”

This trope, sadly, is all too common. It’s perhaps an understandable reaction, as it is wildly unsettling to contemplate how someone could endure the pain and brutality of such an act. Yet, this reductionist narrative not only dishonors the complexity of the individual but also obscures the thoughtful political statements these acts are intended to convey. By focusing solely on mental health, we fail to recognize the deliberate and calculated nature of these sacrifices. This evasion prevents us from addressing the underlying societal and systemic issues that contribute to their protest.

Furthermore, we must consider who benefits most from the narrative of mental illness; dismissing political self-im-

molation only serves the comfort of those unwilling to confront harsh realities and the interests of those in power who seek to obscure them. This is precisely how regimes and political systems discredit self-immolators: by labeling them as psychologically disturbed.

In contrast, placing one’s body in danger is a fundamental aspect of protest and a powerful means of asserting agency. Commonly, people place their bodies at risk as a means of rebellion through actions such as sit-ins and occupations, marches and rallies in hostile environments, crossing dangerous borders, climbing or hanging from structures, blocking traffic, exposing themselves to environmental extremes, or engaging in hunger strikes. By risking their bodies, protesters bridge the gap between abstract ideas and tangible reality, transforming their convictions into physical acts. The body becomes a poignant symbol of resistance and commitment.

This willingness to endure physical danger underscores the urgency and importance of their message, demonstrating that the issue at hand is significant enough to warrant personal sacrifice. Moreover, this act of placing their bodies on the line often comes from a place of sheer necessity—when all other options have been exhausted, the only resources that remain are their literal skin and bones. This desperation emphasizes not only the critical nature of their cause but also their determination to make their voices heard against overwhelming odds.

In contrast, it is a deeply ingrained norm, celebrated and valorized, to place one’s body at risk in service to the state and the ruling class. When soldiers deploy into conflict zones, their sacrifice is glorified; their willingness to endure the horrors of war is seen as the pinnacle of honor. Workers in hazardous jobs, who risk life and limb to keep the wheels of industry turning, are praised for their rugged determination. These acts of bodily risk are sanctified because they serve the interests of power, upholding the structures that benefit the ruling class.

But when bodies are placed on the line to challenge these very structures, to protest

systemic oppression and demand justice, the narrative shifts dramatically. Suddenly, the same act of risking one's body is pathologized, dismissed as the irrational behavior of the unhinged. This stark contrast exposes a profound hypocrisy: the state and the elite only celebrate sacrifice when it perpetuates their control. When the body is used as a tool of resistance, it is no longer noble but condemned and marginalized. This reveals the uncomfortable truth that our society venerates sacrifice only when it maintains the status quo, not when it threatens to upend it.

Even in the most notorious cases of self-immolation, the results are often ambiguous and complex. Thích Quảng Đức's infamous act of self-immolation in 1963 drew international attention and contributed to the overthrow of the autocratic leader who was oppressing Buddhist monks. However, it did not prevent the looming horrors of the Vietnam War, which continued to devastate the region. Similarly, when Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire in 2011 to protest poor economic conditions and political corruption, his sacrifice ignited widespread demonstrations that led to the ousting of Tunisia's long-time President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali. This act of despair sparked the Arab Spring, a wave of protests across the Arab world. Yet, despite these powerful moments of change, the region remains engulfed in turmoil, and many of the underlying issues persist.

Following Aaron Bushnell's death, countless comments expressed sentiments like, "Such a tragic waste," and "what did that accomplish?," implying that his protest was ultimately futile. This perception was echoed when local resident Warren Beishir reacted to environmentalist David Buckel's self-immolation in Prospect Park by saying, "How do you do that to yourself? It's a terrible way to go, and I don't want to think about it after today." Such remarks reveal a discomfort with confronting the urgency that has driven individuals to such extreme acts of protest, often leading to a dismissal of the very issues they sought to highlight.

For those directly impacted by these

issues, such as the people in Palestine or Vietnam, extreme protests hold deep significance. These sacrifices are powerful expressions of solidarity and commitment from individuals who lack power and resources, yet find a way to vehemently assert the value of the lives of those they are defending. Beyond mere symbolism, the protest embodies a shared struggle and an urgent plea for justice and recognition. In a world that often turns a blind eye to their suffering, such sacrifices force global attention, demanding acknowledgment of their humanity and the imperative to address their plight.

Although largely forgotten in the US, Herz's act of solidarity with Vietnamese monks achieved, in part, what she intended. In Hanoi, crowds gathered to observe a moment of silent prayer upon learning of her death. Poets crafted songs and recitations honoring her unwavering dedication to pacifism, children were taught about Herz in school, and a street in Hanoi was named in her memory. A month after Aaron Bushnell's death, Abdul Karim Sidr, the mayor of Jericho in the occupied West Bank, unveiled a new street sign bearing Bushnell's name.

In *Fear and Trembling*, Danish theologian and philosopher Søren Kierkegaard delves into the existential aspects of faith, sacrifice, and the human condition through the biblical story of Abraham and Isaac. He questions the unfathomable and harrowing ordeal of being commanded by God to sacrifice one's own son, highlighting the sheer madness and heart-wrenching terror such an act would entail.

"Infinite resignation is the last stage before faith," wrote Kierkegaard, "for only in infinite resignation does an individual become conscious of his eternal validity, and only then can one speak of grasping existence by virtue of faith." In essence, true faith demands significant personal sacrifice and a deep acceptance of loss, which leads to the realization of one's true self. However, unlike the biblical narrative, self-immolation does not stem from a divine command but from the unbearable weight of a moral imperative. Their faith is not in an abstract deity but in humanity itself—a raw, searing belief in our potential for justice and change. This is a faith forged in the crucible of despair, a blazing

testament to their conviction in our collective conscience.

Lebanese-Palestinian poet May Ziadeh wrote, "The most important revolution is the one that takes place in our own consciousness. To see the world as it truly is, to understand our place in it, is to begin to change it." Self-immolation acts are a furious rejection of societal apathy, a blistering cry to awaken us from our indifference. We must consider that these actions of self-sacrifice may not be intended to directly change the power structures perpetuating these injustices, but rather profound declarations demanding recognition and action. They compel us to confront societal failures and acknowledge the nonnegotiable value of every life. Each act is a visceral, unignorable call to rekindle our humanity and stand against the injustices driving individuals to such extreme measures. Their flames remind us of the fierce urgency of justice and the unyielding truth that our collective inaction is intolerable.

In response to those who question what actions like Aaron Bushnell's death "accomplished," the true measure of these sacrifices is not for those who made them to determine but for us to decide. It is incumbent upon us to honor their memories by taking tangible actions to combat the injustices they protested against. We must organize, educate, and mobilize to create meaningful change. The power of their sacrifice calls us to awaken from complacency, to challenge systemic oppression, and to build a world where such desperate acts are no longer necessary. The impact of their sacrifices rests on our shoulders—our response and commitment to justice will define their true significance.

While there is insufficient evidence to indicate that these acts of self-immolation stemmed from suicidal intentions or mental illness, it's important to acknowledge that such topics can be deeply affecting. If you or someone you know is struggling, please reach out to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 for support. Your well-being matters.





CHema Skandal!



F*** THE GNC

[GENOCIDAL]

This August the Democratic Party will come to Chicago seeking to normalize its death-making agenda. We refuse to settle for genocide and mass imprisonment.

Join Chicago Dissenters **Aug 17-23** for a week of events and programming offering a space to exchange analysis, refine strategies and deepen relations across movements resisting US imperialism and colonialism, from the struggle for Palestinian liberation to the fight for total prison abolition.



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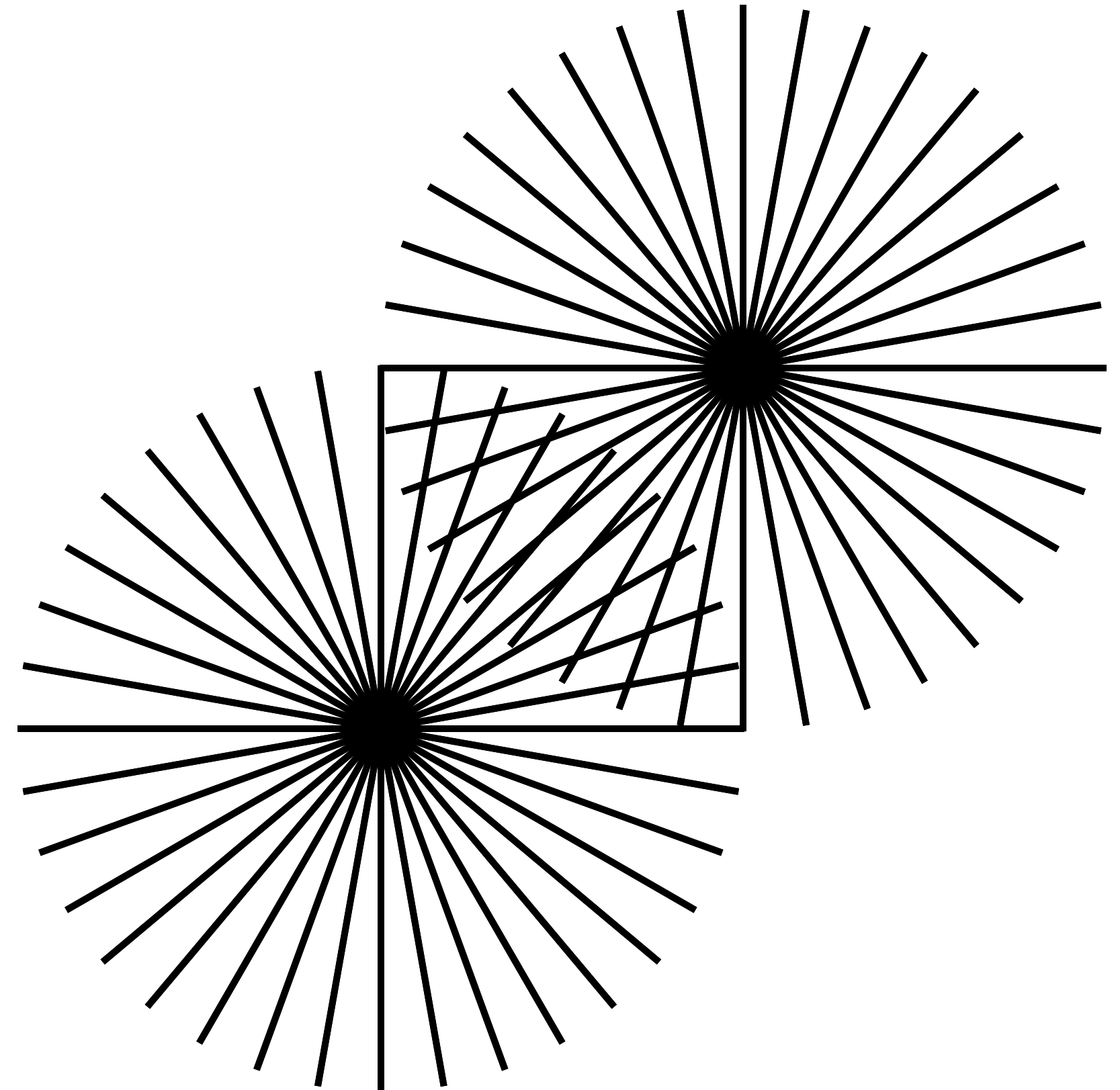
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Music, Community,
News, Art, Culture



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Lumpen Radio

MONDAYS

Vapor Radio

Monday-Thursday / 6-7AM

Let the vapor embrace you. New moods. New attitudes. New music.

Children of the Moon

Mondays and Friday / 7-8AM

Cult Music, music of the Occult

News, Weather and Traffic with Jamie Trecker

Mon-Friday / 7:40AM

Your weekday update to help you start the day.

Democracy Now

Monday-Friday / 8-9AM

Daily national news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan González.

Hitting Left with the Klonsky Brothers

Monday / 9-10AM

Hitting Left takes on issues of education, politics and social justice. We're joined in-studio each Friday from 11 to noon, by an interesting and provocative assortment of fellow activists, poets, musicians, journalists... or any friends who happen to pop in. Rebroadcast.

This is Hell! with host Chuck Mertz

Mondays / 10-11AM

This is Hell! is a weekly longform political interview program broadcast in Chicago since 1996. Rebroadcast.

Labor Express Radio with Jerry Mead-Lucero

First, Third and Fourth Mondays / 11AM-Noon
Rebroadcast of Labor Express Radio.

Midday Mix Vibes

Mondays / Noon-2PM

Hyper-curated mix sessions from local and international DJ talent.

Trqpiteca FM with La Spacer and Cqqchifruit

First and Third Mondays from 4-6pm

TRQPITECA FM is a radio show hosted by TRQPITECA co-founders and resident DJs, La Spacer & Cqqchifruit. Tune in to catch the Rush Hour Rave, where we'll be turning your Mondays up with our favorite new underground dance music and classic party tunes from Chicago and around the world!

alluvia's with Regina Martinez (Selective Listening)

Second and Fourth Mondays / 4-6PM

alluvia's fluid is an ongoing sound story about inevitable migrations of home. your host, Regina Martinez (selective listening), interlaces the signature narratives of her vinyl dj sets with personal recordings and other historic audio collections in the public domain. like finger painting. an evening walk. moving water slows to leave the richness of its life along the way.

Out of Vogue with Kisston

First and Third Mondays / 6-8PM

Playing a different version of punk rock each and every week. Sometimes poppier, sometimes more hardcore-ish!
8tracks.com/kisston
lumpenradio.com/outofvogue.html

The Ponderers with Sandra Trevino & Stephanie Manriquez

Second and Fourth Mondays / 6-8PM

The Ponderers feature global tracks, with a focus on Latin America, spinning an eclectic and dance-friendly medley of womxn-fronted sounds, in both digital and vinyl formats. The show includes musical guests, empowering interviews with womxn doing extraordinary things in arts and culture, and the freshest cuts in Latin alternative music. Hosted by Stephanie Manriquez (#FanitaBanana) and Sandra Treviño (#DJAngelfuk), members of Future Rootz.

Post Modern Talking with Bobby Conn and DJ LeDeuce

Mondays / 8-10PM

The end times are here - come celebrate the funeral of Western Civilization with fond musical memories selected by hosts Bobby Conn and DJ LeDeuce. It's hopeless - but it doesn't have

to sound that way. Exactly the same playlist as MeTV FM but with lots of Suicide, J Dilla, Strangled Beatoffs and Throbbing Gristle mixed in. Plus regular guest appearances by Reuben Kincaid, Bill Mummy, Stevie Wayne and Li! MOCL77MOXL!

Release the Hounds with Lidia Vomito and Bryan Chump Change

First and Third Mondays / 10PM-Midnight

Release The Hounds brings you Lidia Vomito spinning Metal and Hard Rock on vinyl for the first hour and Punk, Hardcore, etc. the second hour from cohort, Bryan Chump Change. Release The Hounds airs every first and third Monday of the month from 10 pm to Midnight. Tune in and howl out... Awooooo!

Dusty Sparkles' Spectacular Soundhouse

Second and Fourth Mondays / 10PM-11PM

Enter the Soundhouse, a sanctuary for the misfits, the outsiders, and the seekers of musical transcendence. From the depths of krautrock's hypnotic embrace to the outer reaches of heavy psych's trippy transcendence, this show is an expedition into the untamed territories of sound.

Screams of Combat with El Cardenal de Aztlán

Second & Fourth Mondays / 11PM-12PM

SCREAMS OF COMBAT is a bilingual radio show in which the midnight chronicles by El Cardenal de Aztlán explore the intersection of sports and modern mythology incorporating music, journalism, poetry and performance art. GRITOS DE COMBATE is inspired by the XXth Century Mexican avant-garde art movement known as "movimiento estridentista."

TUESDAYS

Vapor Radio

Monday-Thursday / 6-7AM

Let the vapor embrace you. New moods. New attitudes. New music.

Mashed Potato Time with Karin Fjellman

Tuesdays / 7-8AM

Kick back with the grooviest tunes from the 50s and 60s. Perfect to make breakfast to!

News, Weather and Traffic with Jamie Trecker

Monday-Friday / 7:40AM

Your weekday update to help you start the day.

Democracy Now

Monday-Friday / 8-9AM

Daily national news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan González.

Groove 5 with Neil Gainer

Tuesdays / 9AM-10AM

Groove 5 is a musical experience that puts the groove first, always pocket, and always going. In a world void of compassion and care, Groove 5 will make you feel some kind of way.

Mouth on Mic with Isra Rene

First and Third Tuesdays from 10-11AM

Mouth on Mic is a sound abyss for the curious minds and hearts. We linger in the absences and openings of sonic mundanity. With each episode, Isra and invited guests circle along the sounds currently animating their lives and ask you to trail along too.

Contratiempo Radio

Tuesdays / 11am-Noon

Contratiempo radio is a cultural program that showcases Latin American and immigrant art and thought in the United States, and Chicago in particular. Functioning as an extension of and a complement to Contratiempo magazine, the program creates a conversational space featuring poetry, music, art, cinema, literature, politics, immigrant stories and much more. contratiempo.org.

Entrelazadas with Andrea Reed-Leal (Seasonal / in Spanish)

Second & Fourth Tuesdays from 11AM-Noon

Entrelazadas is a conversation space with activists, writers, academics, and artists about the challenges they face in everyday life and how different feminisms respond to current issues. "Entrelazadas" is a series by Contratiempo and Amplified Communities of Lumpen Radio within the Contratiempo Radio space..

Midday Mix Vibes

Tuesdays / Noon-2PM

Hyper-curated mix sessions from local and international DJ talent.

Lumpen Radio Specials

Tuesdays / 2-3 PM

One hour of conversations, panel discussions and other special coverages from local events.

Mutual Aid Report with hosts Mario Smith, Stephanie Manriquez and Lumpen staff

Second and Fourth Tuesdays from 2-3PM (Seasonal)

The Mutual Aid Report is a radio and live stream series that delves into the concept of mutual aid. Our hosts, Stephanie Manriquez and Mario Smith, will unpack its historical significance and its role in local communities by spotlighting individuals who are making a real difference at the grassroots level in the city of Chicago.

Chit-Chat Cheer HKers (in Cantonese)

Tuesdays / 3-4PM

In response to the current events happening worldwide and in Hong Kong, VoxHK squad launched a live broadcast that allows audiences to join in with us and chit-chat together. Topics are not limited to the latest trends, philosophical topics, review traditional theories and thoughts in a fun way.

Radio Nopal + Lumpen Radio

Tuesdays / 4-6PM

Radio Nopal + Lumpen Radio is an exchange of practices from independent community radios stirring the ears of #CDMX and #Chicago. Radio Nopal content will be heard through Lumpen Radio's FM signal, and Lumpen programs will be broadcasted on radionopal.com.

bel_Air presents with Todd Carter

Tuesdays / 6-8PM

Music from Chicago, the Milky Way Galaxy, and beyond A variety of studio and live musical tracks with special guests.

SONORAMA with Charly Garcia, Edgar Baca & Marlowe Baca

First and Third Tuesdays / 8-10PM

A real sonic treat traveling back through Latin America during the 50's, 60's, 70's. With some contemporary surprises along the way. Our language is the music from those Vintage Latin Sounds past and present. mixcloud.com/sonoramachicago
sonoramachicago.com

Q.C. with King Hippo

Second and Fourth Tuesdays from 8-10PM

Q.C. is for listeners who are interested in how soul, jazz, r&b, funk, and hip-hop are shaping new underground music from around the world. Listeners will also enjoy interviews, guest-mixes,

and in-studio performances by potent new artists.

Slice off Pie with Pie (Henk Bakker)

Second and Fourth Tuesdays from 10PM- MID
Sounds, music, musicals mixed with interviews, collages, life synths and the occasional bit of cheese all lightly thematically linked.

WEDNESDAYS

Vapor Radio

Monday-Thursday / 6-7AM

Let the vapor embrace you. New moods. New attitudes. New music.

Global HiFi

Wednesdays / 7-8AM

The Global Get Down!

News, Weather and Traffic with Jamie Trecker

Mon-Friday / 7:40AM

Your weekday update to help you start the day.

Democracy Now

Mon-Friday / 8-9AM

Daily national news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan González.

City Dreams

First and Third Wednesdays from 10-11AM

City Dreams is a radio show hosted by journalist, historian, and organizer Annie Howard. Paired conversations with musicians, activists, artists, community builders, and more aim to explore the many different facets of urban life, exploring how everyday Chicagoans are working to make their city better.

Perceptions of the Real with host Sarah Conway and Eli Ramirez

Wednesday / 10-11AM

Rebroadcast of Perceptions of the Real

Bad at Sports Center with hosts Dana Bassett, Ryan Peter Miller, Brian Andrews, Jesse Malmed and Duncan MacKenzie

Wednesdays / 11AM-Noon

Contemporary art talk without the ego. The

Midwest's largest independent contemporary art talk show.

Art Design Chicago Talks with guest hosts

Second & Fourth Wednesdays from 11AM-Noon

The Art Design Chicago Talk Series by Lumpen Radio is set to explore and celebrate Chicago's rich artistic heritage and its diverse creative communities by examining the intersections of art, design, and activism and the city's relationship with indigeneity, migration, and displacement. Conversations in Spanish and English with the artists, curators and cultural organizers behind the exhibitions featured as part of Art Design Chicago.

Midday Mix Vibes

Wednesdays / Noon-2PM
Hyper-curated mix sessions from local and international DJ talent.

Wattz Up! and La Mesita with Yollocalli Youth

Wednesdays / 2-4PM
Rebroadcast of Wattz Up!

Country, My Way with Lawrence Peters

Wednesdays / 4-6PM
Underplayed classics, and small-label gems, spanning all eras of honky tonk, bluegrass, outlaw, western swing, country soul/funk, Ameripolitan. Stubbornly curated by Chicago's country-est mofo: singer & songwriter Lawrence Peters. [lawrencepeters.com](#)

Guillermo Gómez-Peña's Mex Files: Audio Art & Strange Poetry from the US/Mexico Border

First and Third Wednesdays from 6-7PM
The series Gómez-Peña's Mex Files: Audio Art and Strange Poetry from the US/Mexico Border are a multi-lingual live radio and archived audio program by performance artist, writer, activist, and MacArthur fellow Guillermo Gómez-Peña addressing the multiple pandemics of racism, sexism, militarism, and colonialism..

Halftone Radio Supershow with hosts Dud Lawson and Manny

Second and Fourth Wednesdays from 6-7PM
Chicago Printers Guild presents Halftone Radio Supershow. Join your pals Dud Lawson and Manny of the Chicago Printers Guild & your favorite printmakers from across the city to chat

inky paper and play funky jams!

Communities Amplified (in Spanish)

Wednesdays from 7-8PM
Communities Amplified presents original Spanish content as part of the expanded multilingual programming on the WLPN airwaves each week. Some of our special segments and programs are: Entre sonidos y almas, Adentro de la voz hay un poema, Neta con Rebeca Fernandez y De inmigrante a inmigrante.

Xochipilli Radio with Pedro Pablo Marín (in Spanish)

First Wednesday from 7-8PM
Literature, Music, Film, Art, Popular Culture: It is a program that highlights the importance of Spanish and promotes the values of a Latino and Pan-Ethnic identity in the US.

Entre Sonidos y Almas with Yesenia Limón and Sandra Treviño (in Spanish)

First and Third Wednesdays from 8-10PM
The butter boys hit the airwaves every 1st & 3rd Tuesday of every month as they play their favorite underground electronic and dance music as well as deep cuts from all genres.

Neta with Rebeca Fernández (in Spanish)

Fourth Wednesday from 7-8PM
Neta with Rebeca Fernández is an exploration about lessons learned, resources, and adaptation when we immigrate to the U.S.

The Butter Hours with Scott & Eric

First and Third Wednesdays from 8-10PM
The butter boys hit the airwaves every 1st & 3rd Tuesday of every month as they play their favorite underground electronic and dance music as well as deep cuts from all genres.

InbetweenRadio/Stations with Glenn Russell

Wednesdays / 10PM-Midnight
Chicago's only show for and about DJs, vinyl collecting, and Sound Disbursement. Host DJs Glenn Russell and DJ Mykol discuss and play hidden gems of all musical types from all decades. Each show features a musical theme and/or musical guest! Distributing the sounds you'll only hear InBetweenRadio/Stations.

Spirit World Radio with DJ Heaven

First and Third Wednesdays from 10PM-Mid
Spirit World is a genre-fluid curation of otherworldly and dreamy music. Sounds that are designed to transport you to another world - a spiritual, ethereal and psychedelic world that we cannot see, but feel. A world that is happening around us all of the time and all we have to do is listen.

Listening Device with host Damon Locks

Second and Fourth Wednesdays from 10PM-11PM
The Listening Device focuses largely on experimental and improvisational music (but anything can turn up) pulled from Damon Lock's recording archive as well as his record collection.

Jungle Excursion with Sinsemilla

Second and Fourth Wednesdays from 11PM-1AM
Jungle Excursion is where the beat of the drum & the power of the bass is beloved internationally. An excursion to explore the past, current, and future states of Drum & Bass and its sub-genres. Buckle-in & brace yourself to hear both new & familiar sounds, names, and voices from the various communities spanning across multiple continents.

THURSDAYS

Vapor Radio

Monday-Thursday / 6-7AM
Let the vapor embrace you. New moods. New attitudes. New music.

Good Morning Mix

Thursdays / 7-8AM
Tunes to get you to work and back! LOL

News, Weather and Traffic with Jamie Trecker

Monday-Friday / 7:40AM
Your weekday update to help you start the day.

Democracy Now

Mon-Friday / 8-9AM
Daily national news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan González.

Pocket Guide to Hell with Paul Durica and

Elliot Heilman

First and Third Thursday / 9-10AM
Pocket Guide to Hell explores the intersections of art, politics, and culture as illuminated by Chicago's past. Along the way, hosts Paul Durica and Elliot Heilman talk with fine folks doing the work of keeping the past present and show you the places where the city's history resides today.

This is Hell! with host Chuck Mertz

Thursdays / 10-11AM
A brand-new episode of This is Hell! This is Hell is a weekly longform political interview program broadcast in Chicago since 1996.

How To Make A Scene (Seasonal)

First and Third Thursdays from 11AM-Noon
Want to learn more about Chicago's independent art scene of the 80s and 90s? Join us for How to Make a Scene, an in-person and virtual conversation series running from June to October that celebrates the history of artist-run cultural ecosystems.

MDW Atlas On Air by MDW Coalition (Seasonal)

Second and Fourth Thursdays from 11AM-Noon
MdW Atlas On Air is the audio component of the MdW Atlas, an ongoing online and print publication that archives the Midwest's cultural landscape, featuring a wide breadth of artistic practice, creation, and community-centered initiatives in the Midwest. Tune in to hear about the projects and musings of an array of editors, writers, curators, and artists spanning across geographic boundaries.

Mashed Potato Time with DJ Karin

Thursdays / Noon-2PM
Mashed Potato Time is all about the glory days of the recording culture that left us with stacks and stacks of forgotten 45s. [mixcloud.com/karin-fjellman](#)

News From The Service Entrance with Mario Smith

Thursdays / 2-4PM
Music, interviews and people from all walks of life. Famous and infamous. Radio with a purpose. Mario is joined most weeks by Michilla Blaise and producer Jamie Trecker.

Skerd To Dance with Jimmy Kaps

First and Third Thursdays / 4-6PM
Skerd To Dance is mixed live by Jimmy Kaps, featuring special guest local DJs and producers who take over the FM airwaves with vinyl/digital DJ sets and/or live gear performances. [mixcloud.com/skerdtodance](#)

Idiot Business with Mike Esposito

Second Thursdays from 5-6PM
Idiot Business is primarily an experimental electronic music show, although hip hop, rock, and comedy do slip in sometimes. The music is sometimes mixed together, sometimes collaged, and sometimes played one track at a time. For Idiot Business, experimental electronic music includes IDM, techno, jungle, electro-acoustic music, noise, and electronic pop, for starters. The goal is simply to provide good experimental electronic music irrespective of (sub-)genre.

The Mutant Hit Parade with Lawrence Peters

Fourth Thursdays / 4-6PM
The Mutant Hit Parade is a selection of classic power-pop and rock that would have been big hits had only anyone given it a chance. [Lawrence Peters does.](#)

Bi-Lengua Radio with Osvaldo Cuevas

Second and Fourth Thursdays from 6-8 PM
Bi-Lengua radio bridges the gap of the Americas with themed episodes that explore the collision of culture. Expect an eclectic tour of music and conversation in English and Spanish. [bilengua.org](#)

Beer Temple Insiders Roundtable with Chris Quinn

First, Third and Fifth Thursdays from 8-10PM
Chris Quinn, owner of the Beer Temple, sits down with craft beer insiders to discuss the topics that matter most to them. Each week features different guests sharing their insights and giving you an insider's view of the evolving craft beer scene.

Lumpen FC with Adrian Aguirre, Jaime J and Sebastian Aguirre

Second and Fourth Thursdays from 8-10PM
A Rondo on the world's most popular sport. Full of opinionated insights, humorous perspectives, and highly debatable points of view. From the 4-4-2 to VAR (and sometimes rampant bribery), we cover the Beautiful Game in full. Lumpen FC- the world's game brought to you by Lumpen Radio and Barra Brava Brewing Co.

Soultronic with John Simmons

First and Third Thursdays from 10PM-Midnight
DJ John Simmons (Chicago) presents SOULTRONIC: A listening session that features all styles of House, highlighting the deep and soulful, delving into Modern Funk, Disco/ Boogie, & Soulful Electronic.

CHANDO RADIO with the Chandeliers

Thursdays / 10PM-12AM
Presenting the best in modern electronica, Chando Radio combines underground and rare electronic, experimental, and progressive dance music hand picked by Chicago synth ensemble Chandeliers (Lisa Armstrong, Harry Brenner, Chris Kalis, Scott McGaughey) and special guests.

FRIDAYS

Vapor Radio

Fridays / 6-7 AM
Let the vapor embrace you. New moods. New attitudes. New music.

Global HiFi

Fridays 7-8 AM
The Global Get Down!

News, Weather and Traffic with Jamie Trecker

Monday-Friday / 7:40AM
Your weekday update to help you start the day.

Democracy Now

Monday-Friday / 8-9AM
Daily national news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan González.

Live from the Heartland with Michael James

Fridays from 9-10AM
Live from the Heartland is a weekly political news & entertainment show that has broadcast out of Chicago for over 30 years, with new episodes broadcast every Friday at 9AM.

Friday morning talks

Fridays 10-11PM
The best of our Lumpen Radio talk shows and special programs

Hitting Left with The Klonsky Brothers

Fridays / 11AM-12PM
Hitting Left takes on issues of education, politics and social justice. We're joined in-studio each Friday from 11 to noon, by an interesting and provocative assortment of fellow activists, poets, musicians, journalists... or any friends who happen to pop in.

Lumpen Radio Specials
Fridays / 12-1PM
One hour of conversations, panel discussions and other special coverages from local events

News From The Service Entrance with host Mario Smith
First and Third Fridays / 1-2PM
Hour-long rebroadcast of News From The Service Entrance.

Friday evening talks
Fridays from 2-4PM
The best of our Lumpen Radio talk shows and special programs

Gridlock Sound Lab with Saddle Woods
First and Third Fridays from 4-6PM
Sadie Woods brings you rush hour radio featuring House, Afro Latin Rhythms, Worldbeat, Disco, Funk, Soul, Electro, and Indie Dance music.

Enchúfate with Sandra Treviño
Second and Fourth Fridays from 4-6PM
Enchúfate explores the dynamic culture surrounding alternative sounds and artistry from across the Latine diaspora. Guided by music journalist Sandra Treviño, the live broadcast features new music, artist interviews, community projects, and conversations in support of independent cultural endeavors.

Lumpen Week in Review
Fridays / 6-7PM
Lumpen Week in Review is the show that covers the past week of news, happenings and programs presented on Lumpen Radio. Each week we present a sampling of news, programs and interviews with guests that were presented on Lumpen Radio.

Weird Lady Music by Jodie Baltazar
Fridays from 7-8PM
Host Baltazark (Jodie Baltazar) brings you WEIRD MUSIC made by ladies and music

made by WEIRD LADIES spanning genres, geographies, and generations. This show is about finding and celebrating the curious ways in which women confront social or artistic banality with sonic self-expression.

Star Creature Vibes Radio with Tim Zawada
Fridays / 8-10PM
Star Creature Vibes Radio is a penetrative exploration into the alternative world of Disco. The show begs to answer one of the defining questions of the last 1000 years: "What is Boogie?" Host Tim Zawada alongside notable guests from across the globe, play an assortment of underrepresented and left leaning with a large focus on the later 70s to early 80s Boogie Phenomenon with a healthy dose of contemporary Boogie Styles, House and Spaced Out Modern Funk.
<http://starcreatureuniversalvibrations.com>

Hello Weekend!!
Fridays from 10PM-Midnight
Start your weekend with danceable selections from the Lumpen Radio cool cats.

SATURDAYS
Soothing Sounds by UNCanned Music
Saturdays / 6-7AM
Soothing Sounds is curated by the fine folks at UNCANNEDmusic. This series aims to present calming tones for our stressed-out times.

This is Hell! with host Chuck Mertz
Saturdays / 7-8AM
Rebroadcast of This is Hell!

Lumpen Week in Review
Saturdays 8-9AM
Rebroadcast of Lumpen Week In Review.

Saturdays morning talks
Saturdays 9-11AM
The best of our Lumpen Radio talk shows and special programs

Perceptions of the Real with host Sarah Conway and Eli Ramirez
Second and Fourth Saturdays from 11-12PM
Perceptions of the Real is an exploration of what swims beneath our consciousness and how it

surfaces through writing. Every 2nd and 4th Saturday @ 11AM, hosts Sarah Conway and Eli Ramirez are joined by a guest who produces a piece of writing live on-air. Together we will detangle the question of why we make what we make.

Wattz Up! and La Mesita with Yollocalli Youth
Saturdays from 12-2PM
Wattz Up! is a youth produced and hosted variety talk show that reflects their culture and their communities. After Wattz Up! listeners can enjoy the sweet sounds of La Mesita, bringing independent and upcoming musicians to Yollocalli Studio Y, for a concert live performance and interview. <https://soundcloud.com/yollocalli>

Sala with host Silvia Inés González
First and Third Saturdays from 2-3PM
Sala: A living room of ideas. Sala invites artists, cultural workers, and civically minded people to discuss liberation, education, organizing, community, and practices toward healing, from the perspective of Artists' and their artistic process.

Staff Pick of the week
Fridays from 3-4PM
Rebroadcast of a show chosen by one of our staff members

News From The Service Entrance with host Mario Smith
Saturdays from 4-5PM
Hour-long rebroadcast of News From The Service Entrance.

Lumpen Week in Review
Saturdays from 7-8PM
Lumpen Week in Review is the show that covers the past week of news, happenings and programs presented on Lumpen Radio

AWCY FM with Cam Smedley and R. Sponsors
Saturdays from 8-9PM
AWCY FM is a parody news/talk/special interest variety program set in a surreal pastiche of Chicagoland. Join R. Sponsors, Cam Smedley and a wide cast of characters as they report the headlines, question the narratives, and broadcast YOUR CHICAGO NEWS and INTEREST!

Lumpen TV Live
Some Saturdays from 9PM-Midnight
Live DJ sets from Life on Marz Community Club

SUNDAYS
Soothing Sounds by UNCanned Music
Sundays from 6-7AM
Soothing Sounds is curated by the fine folks at UNCANNEDmusic. This series aims to present calming tones for our stressed-out times.

Lumpen Week in Review
Sundays from 7-8AM
Rebroadcast of Lumpen Week In Review.

Hitting Left with The Klonsky Brothers
Sundays from 8-9AM
Rebroadcast of Hitting Left

Contratiempo Radio
Sundays / 9-10AM
Rebraodcast of Contratiempo radio

This is Hell! with host Chuck Mertz
Sundays / 10-11 AM
A brand-new episode of This is Hell! This is Hell is a weekly longform political interview program broadcast in Chicago since 1996.
soundcloud.com/this-is-hell

Eye 94 with hosts Jamie Trecker, Jeremy Kitchen and Mike Sack
Sundays 11AM-12PM
Dubravka Ugresic called them the "Three Musketeers of Literature." Eye 94 is Lumpen Radio's books and literature show, covering reading worldwide. Interviews with authors, publishers and creators from contemporary literature and beyond. With readings by Shanna van Volt and music from some of Chicago's finest artists.

Radio Muévelo with host La Janesita and Violeta Vara
First Sundays from 12-2 PM
Radio Muévelo is a bilingual show carefully curated to showcase the most exciting and cutting-edge music from Latin American artists on the rise. <https://juke.mx/category/radio/radio-muevelo>

The Eastern Block/Wschodni Blok with Andrea Jablonski
Second Sundays / 12-2PM
Music of all genres from Poland (and other Eastern Block countries.)

The Changes with Julian Pujols
Third Sunday from 12-1PM
The Changes unites forward-thinking musicians from around the world, broadcasting in English, Spanish, and French.

Foreign Accents with Maria Tz & Josh Fox
Fourth Sundays / 12-2PM
Dedicated to the pure enjoyment of home listening. The show aims to juxtapose various genres together from different parts of the world, both past and present.
mixcloud.com/lumpenradio/playlists/foreign-accents

Tech Scene with Melanie Adcock
First & Third Sundays from 2-3PM
Tech Scene Chicago was founded in 2016 to showcase technology-related community events and meetups around the Chicagoland area. This show is designed for a general public audience so everyone can learn about technology and become part of the local scene. This show covers community events for job training and upskilling, civic tech, user groups, tech events for kids, meetups, community gatherings, and more.

Dish (with David) with David Weeks
Second & Fourth Sundays from 2-3PM
Dish (with David) is a show exploring Chicago's diverse dining scene dish by dish where we strive to understand what chefs, batistas, Mixologists and others in the industry are striving to achieve. Join us the second and fourth Sundays to talk with the good folks who make up our diverse food and beverage community whether it's front or back of house under or on top of the house.

Kowloon Hong Kong with American Ginseng (in Cantonese)
Airs: Sundays from 3-4PM
A Cantonese talk show hosted by American Ginseng, delving into the vibrant tapestry of Hong Kong's people and culture. Join us as we uncover the stories, traditions, and daily lives

that make this dynamic city truly unique, offering listeners a rich and immersive experience of Hong Kong's past and present.

Divisive with Leah Gipson and Craig Harshaw
First and Third Sunday from 4-5PM
DIVISIVE explores the intersections and interactivity between politics and cultural work. It's divisive.

Who Gives a S••t? with Host Matt Muchowski
Second and Fourth Sundays 4-5PM
Is it a commentary of the Sisyphean task of life as exemplified by the internet emoji "_()_/" or a question we answer every show with guests such as heavy metal musicians, elected officials, union activists, comic book creators, and other oddballs?

Love Supreme Radio with Sol Son
Second and Fourth Sundays from 5-7PM
Chicago Jazz, Ancient To The Future!

This is Hell! with host Chuck Mertz
Sundays 7-8PM
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Labor Express Radio with Jerry Mead-Lucero
Sundays / 8-9PM
For almost 25 years, Labor Express Radio has been the only English language labor news and current affairs radio program in Chicago... "News for working people, by working people." The program covers issues in the labor movement locally, nationally, and internationally. The program also addresses issues of concern to working people such as housing, education, health care, immigrants rights, the environment and U.S. foreign policy, from a working class viewpoint. Labor Express Radio is a member of the Committee for Labor Access, a non-profit entity which is also responsible for the production of the Labor Beat TV program on cable access television in Chicago.
<https://www.laborexpress.org>

Lumpen Week in Review
Sundays 9-10PM
Rebroadcast of Lumpen Week In Review.

Children of the Moon
Sundays from 10-11PM
Cult Music, music of the Occult

