

Dear Friends,

So many of you have been with me during different phases of my career and education. There is a part of me that is shocked that I am here. That we are here together.

I have arrived at this place carried by so many of you.

Thank you.

This package of care comes from thinking, sleeping, dreaming, and scheming about where we are now with the reflection of what the past three years in an MFA Program has made me see more clearly.

I am able to reimagine further than I was ever before. It has everything to do with all of the artists, arts workers, and organizers who have been shaping Portland, Oregon, other cities across the nation, and places across the world. At this moment when the world has turned, here is an offering of some light, a glimpse into the possible with what we already have. Possibilities of un-precarious lives, of systems that we design that care for us.

Thank you for pausing to consider these ideas.

It is entirely for you.

It is entirely for us.

<3

Roshani

June 2020

some light

shades of support in our art ecosystems

by roshani thakore

JUNE 2020

PSU Art + Social Practice MFA Program

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Dear Roshani,

Congratulations on your retirement and your pension.

This is to remember the process, remember the details of how your sense of security was formed. It took a lot of convincing, mostly to yourself, but you challenged the status quo with the tools and liberation you gained from digging deep and calling onto your instincts. Although you were quite skeptical, you knew your options were limited because of the undervalued role artists play in our current society and risked going for an MFA at PSU. You were able to draw upon those instincts and use the pedagogy, community and resources this institutional program provided to create your own set of tools to dismantle the master's house.

You moved from a place where race, class, language, ability, and status were always on top of each other (Queens, NY), to a big town generationally segregated, separated, and siloed (Portland, OR). A utopia for few.

You were in shock. Without your community, you didn't know how to communicate to make the others understand. You weren't a representative of your culture but you valued it as a part of your identity. Time and again, you asked, "why do I have to explain that to you?"

You became even more politicized in your loneliness and found comfort, respect, and support through a non-art institution. Even though it confused some of your colleagues, your whole self became more visible over the duration of the three years you shared space with them. You were outnumbered, but that was nothing new. It's because of your values, your drive, your obsessive nature that kept you fighting.

And so you were faced again with the opportunity for economic stability. That choice to make again in working, using your labor, to fulfill someone else's vision.

But this was different; you could influence the organization with the voices and ideas from your community and implement a collective vision. It's because of their work that you are inspired. You learn to trust, you own up to your ideas and expectations, you experiment, you collaborate, you challenge, you heal, you repair, and you thrive in a way you have never known.

This is what support looks like.*

You learn that the systems that have continually disappointed and caused harm are not needed. The world is cracking open in 2020 and other worldviews are becoming more visible. You take a risk. I hope you are reading this surrounded by the justice and multiplicity that you have longed for.

Sincerely,
Roshani Thakore
February 2, 2020

Dear Roshani,

I know you are incredibly uncertain right now, and it isn't without a lot of pain, struggle, and fight—but I'm writing to tell you that it will be ok. It's 15 years since the Great Transition of 2020 began. I have retired from The Pension at the ripe age of 55. But the beautiful thing is, so have so many of our friends and colleagues.

Capitalism is becoming a fossil. People have been turning the soil for each other to reach the horizon of collective liberation together. The horizon is still a ways away, but it's closer than it has ever been before for all of us.

I know you are trying to figure things out. Continue to do what Ancestor Lee Boggs told us - transform yourself to transform the world. I'm not going to lie - the Great Transition was full of darkness. Yet, those who made it out were our friends who knew how to adapt, create, collaborate, organize, and look within. The ones who reflected on their actions were the ones with the most light to lead the way out of the darkness.

Communities around the world started organizing their own care to create their own healing thanks to the work of the Feminists Economic Department in 2020. The bottom of the ocean started emitting natural resources to clear out half of the toxins in the world. With this new-found physical, mental, and emotional strength, people transformed the police departments and prisons into restorative justice centers. Civic engagement and political education are taught at these centers and everyone exercises their right to vote.

Because of your commitment to collective care and your creative and adaptable nature, you will make it to The Great Resilience where the world will start to be in balance again. In this time, relationships are prioritized above anything else and collaboration is the way. The elders and children are the leaders and the regeneration of Earth has created enough bounty to provide for the remaining humans.

So please, hold on. Gather all your tools and your allies. Keep them close and know we'll make it to the other side.

With love,
Roshani
July 2035

**This is what support looks like:*

sup•port
/sə'pôrt/

transitive verb

1a: to pay the costs of : MAINTAIN

support a family

b: to provide a basis for the existence or subsistence of
the island could probably support three

– A. B. C. Whipple

2: to hold up or serve as a foundation or prop for

3: to keep from fainting, yielding, or losing courage : COMFORT

4: to keep (something) going

Definition provided by google dictionary

ar•tist
/är'tist/

noun

1. A maker of art

a. A person familiar with risk taking, resistance, empowerment
and transformation

b. A person who is familiar with collaboration/collectivism

c. A person who is conscious of the world

2. A person practicing in a field currently undervalued by our current
society

Definition provided by artist

support

ARTISTS: I ASK US

Do the art ecosystems we currently operate in "pay the costs of" our creative labor?

If so, is that the norm?

If not, do the art ecosystems we currently operate in provide a foundation for us to do our work?

Do the art ecosystems we operate in serve as a foundation for our creative practice?

Do the art ecosystems we operate in keep us from yielding our values or losing courage?

Do the art ecosystems we operate in allow for our creative practice to be sustainable, to keep going?

ARTISTS: I ASK US

where are the places in our lives where we feel supported?

where have we learned to trust?

where have we been able to experiment?

where do we collaborate?

where do we heal?

where do we repair?

where do we thrive?

ARTISTS: I ASK US

do we think it's possible for art ecosystems to be/become the places where we are fully supported?

If so, are we ready to live out a new imagination?

W h a t w o u l d i t t a k e?

sup•port

"Given the decay of today's social structures, artists are forced to design their own safety nets, and they recognize that in designing them for their immediate communities, as a group they test ideas, accrue skills, edit process, and have the potential for modeling best practices back to the institutions who claim to support artists and culture, but whose practices are somewhat calcified.

Is it possible for artists to redefine the field for themselves?"

-Shannon Stratton, "As Form," lecture at Cranbrook Academy of Art, delivered October 1, 2012.

Here is a small curated collection of projects of artists and organizers who have used art and organizing to design their own safety nets. This collection is of course incomplete and is only an attempt to remind us that during this time when we are apart, there are plenty of folks in our world who initiate and practice creative strategies for survival and resilience.

- Margaret Burroughs, *A Poem for the Artists*, originally printed by MAAH Press, 1976, from *Social Networks* with permission of the DuSable Museum of African American History.
- Mess Hall, *Ten-Point Statement* poster, 2007
- Axe Street Artists statement in *Panic 1*, no.1, March 1986. with [Axe Street Artists \(closing statement\)](#)
- [Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective Pod Mapping](#), 2014
- [Hologram](#), Feminist Economics Department, 2020
- [Black Girl Maqik Resource Guide](#), 2020
- [Project Row Houses](#), 1993 - present

A Poem for the Artists

Margaret Burroughs

We are the artists
We are the image makers
We are the creators
We are the makers of magic
We are the makers of illusion
We are the creators of reality
We are the creators of the unreal
We make things to seem what they are not.
We make things to see what they are.
We have the power to produce
Both to seen and the unseen.

We are the artists
We are the recorders
We are the historians
We are the story tellers
We are the dreamers
We are the artists
We are the children of the Universe.
We are the children of the Cosmos.

We are the communicants
We are the celebrators
Our subject matter is the essence of humanity.
Our medias are lines, forms, colors, and textures.
Our medias are words, rhymes, verses, and paragraphs.
Our medias are tones, rhythms, melodies, and movements
Our instruments are sound and sight and feeling

We are the artists
We are the creators
Our art is a time capsule
What we set down today is for the future
Those unborn and generations hence
Will learn from and build on what we have done
We are the artists we are the creators.
We are the architects and the builders
We are the enemies of destruction
We are the cleansers and the purifiers
We are the enemies of pollution
We are the artists.
We are the priests and the priestesses
To the people.

THE ARTIST ORGANIZER

This poem was originally printed by MAAH Press, 1976, and is reprinted with permission of the DuSable Museum of African American History.

WE DEMAND CULTURAL SPACES RUN BY THE PEOPLE WHO USE THEM.

WE CREATE THE SPACE TO REMIX CATEGORIES, EXPERIMENT, AND LEARN WHAT WE DO NOT ALREADY KNOW.

MESS HALL EXPLODES THE MYTH OF SCARCITY. EVERYONE IS CAPABLE OF SHARING SOMETHING.

THE SURPLUS OF OUR SOCIETIES SHOULD BE CREATIVELY REDISTRIBUTED AT EVERY LEVEL OF PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION.

SOCIAL INTERACTION GENERATES CULTURE!

WE EMBRACE CREATIVITY AS AN ACTION WITHOUT THOUGHT OF PROFIT.

WE DEMAND SPACES THAT PROMOTE GENEROSITY.

MESS HALL INSISTS ON A CLIMATE OF MUTUAL TRUST AND RESPECT – FOR OURSELVES AND THOSE WHO ENTER OUR SPACE.

NO MONEY IS EXCHANGED INSIDE MESS HALL. SURFING ON SURPLUS, WE DO NOT CHARGE ADMISSION OR ASK FOR DONATIONS.

MESS HALL FUNCTIONS WITHOUT HIERARCHY OR FORCED UNITY.

MESS HALL, 2007

"We reject a world in which education and information are touted as the answers to all our problems, while in reality they are seen as other mechanisms to intimidate and control. We also reject an art which panders either to the investment-minded art collector and careerist art-maker, or the narrowly propagandist left. Instead, we desire to indulge ourselves in such forbidden activities as dreaming and conversation, principled action and determined inaction. From these things, real art, that strange fruit of mysterious intuitions and indefinable connotations may, we hope, be encouraged to participate in our futures."

AXE ST. ARENA

BAY AREA TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE COLLECTIVE

Building Transformative Justice Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Mission:

The Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective (BATJC) is a community collective of individuals, based out of Oakland, CA that is working to build and support transformative justice responses to child sexual abuse.

Vision:

We envision a world where everyday people can intervene in incidences of child sexual abuse in ways that not only meet immediate needs such as stopping current violence, securing safety and taking accountability for harm; but that also prevent future violence and harm by actively cultivating things such as healing, accountability and resiliency for all — survivors, bystanders, and those who have abused others.

SHARE THIS:



Blog at WordPress.com.

Monthly Community Potlucks

The Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective began hosting **Monthly Potlucks** in June 2019 as a way to offer consistent space to be in transformative justice (TJ) fellowship together—something that many BATJC community members have asked for over the years. Our Monthly Potlucks are free and open to the public and open to people at all different TJ knowledge levels. This is a great chance to engage your personal networks, friends, and pod people with TJ.

We hope these gatherings can be a place where we connect with one another, build relationships, and share, learn, reflect, and practice together, all in the service of growing TJ in the Bay Area. The BATJC orients all of our work from our [values, principles and practices](#) so please take a moment to read over them before attending a Monthly Potluck.

Recurring Details about our Monthly Community Potluck

WHEN: First Tuesday of every month from 6:30pm-8:00pm. Please try to arrive 10 minutes early to get settled in.

WHERE: 2501 Harrison St, Oakland, 94612 – First Congregational Church of Oakland in Reidenbach Hall. Enter through the blue door from the parking lot.

FOOD: Please bring a dish to share with a serving utensil. We will provide labels for food. Several BATJC community members (adults and children) have very severe airborne nut allergies, so please **DO NOT** bring any nuts into the space, in your food or as a snack. **NO NUTS PLEASE.**

CHILDCARE: We are happy to provide free childcare, but you **MUST REQUEST CHILDCARE 2 WEEKS IN ADVANCE.** Folks are also welcome to have their children with them in the room if they like as well.

ACCESS: If you have any specific access needs that you'd like to share with us, please don't hesitate to get in contact via batjinfo@gmail.com

First Congregational Church of Oakland is a church at the top of a steep hill, and there is currently no accessible route from the street-level sidewalk and bus stop to the accessible entrance. We are looking into ways to address this, but for now, guests in wheelchairs or scooters need to drive or be dropped off at the top of the back parking lot.

Wheelchair users do access the building with assistance by driving or being dropped off at the top of the back parking lot. There are several designated disabled parking spots and there is a ramp with ADA-compliant slope from the back parking lot to a sidewalk leading to both the sanctuary side door and the blue door through which most ground-floor rooms are accessible. NOTE: This is NOT the steep ramp but the more gradual one to its right as you face the building. Even so, assistance might be helpful with this ramp. Unless a member of your group has propped the door open, wheelchair users will need assistance opening the blue door since there is not yet a push button switch on it. Once inside, most ground-floor rooms are accessible using a wheelchair.

There is one gender neutral ADA compliant and restrooms and two ADA compliant stalls in the women's restroom.

Scented cleaning products are used in the space. We are currently in conversation about reducing and/or eliminating scents in the space. For more information on scent free practices, please check out: <https://eastbaymeditation.org/resources/fragrance-free-at-ebmc/>.

Again, we ask that you don't bring any nuts into the space due to known severe allergies in our community.

PARKING: There is some parking available in the church lot, which they share with the school next door and which is accessed via 27th St—use any spot marked "Church" or "Church and Center." There are two designated accessible parking spots. *As always, we encourage people to carpool whenever possible.

PUBLIC TRANSIT: The AC Transit 33 bus line is 0.1 miles from the church. There are also multiple bus stops within 0.5 miles, including a stop for the Broadway Shuttle (free!) which is 0.2 miles away and stops at both 12th Street and 19th Street BART stations. The 19th Street BART station is 0.7m away, just west of Lake Merritt.

POD

Your pod is made up of the people that you would call on if violence, harm or abuse happened to you; or the people that you would call on if you wanted support in taking accountability for violence, harm or abuse that you've done; or if you witnessed violence or if someone you care about was being violent or being abused.

People can have multiple pods. The people you call to support you when you are being harmed may not be the same people you call on to support you when you have done harm, and vice versa. In general, pod people are often those you have relationship and trust with, though everyone has different criteria for their pods.

Once we started using the term "pods," we realized a bunch of things:

– **Most people have few solid, dependable relationships in their lives.** Much of this is from the breaking of relationships, isolation, fear and criminalization that capitalism requires. We found that for many people, mapping their pod was a sobering process, as many thought their pod would be larger than it actually was. It is not uncommon for most people to have 1 or 2 people in their pod. We reassure people this is not a popularity contest, but rather a chance to reflect on why we have so few relationships with the kind of deep trust, reliability and groundedness we need to be able to respond *well* to violence.

– **Many people have less people they could call on to take accountability for harm they've done than harm that happened to them.** Though competent support for surviving violence is few and far between, we have found that accountable support for someone taking accountability for harm they have done is even harder to find. More often than not, people end up colluding with abusers or reinforcing the shaming and blaming of survivors in their attempt to support someone in taking accountability for harm, if they stay in relationship with people who have harmed or been violent at all.

– **Asking people to organize their pod was much more concrete than asking people to organize their "community."** Once we had the shared language and concept of "pod," it allowed transformative justice to be more accessible. Gone were the fantasies of a giant, magical "community response," filled with people we only had surface relationships with; and instead we challenged ourselves and others to build solid pods of people *through relationship and trust*. In doing so, we are pushed to get specific about what those relationships look like and how they are built. It places relationship-building at the very center of transformative justice and community accountability work.

POD

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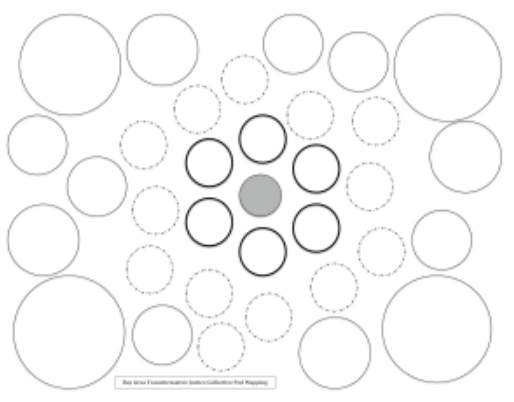
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- **Asking people to organize their pod was much more concrete than asking people to organize their "community."** Once we had the shared language and concept of "pod," it allowed transformative justice to be more accessible. Gone were the fantasies of a giant, magical "community response," filled with people we only had surface relationships with; and instead we challenged ourselves and others to build solid pods of people *through relationship and trust*. In doing so, we are pushed to get specific about what those relationships look like and how they are built. It places relationship-building at the very center of transformative justice and community accountability work.

- **“Pod people” don’t fall neatly along traditional lines**, especially in situations of intimate and sexual violence. People don’t necessarily turn to their *closest* relationships (e.g. partner, family, best friends), especially because this is often where the violence is coming from, but also because the criteria we would use for our pod people is not necessarily the same as what we use (or get taught to use) for our general intimate relationships. We have different and specific kinds of relationships with our pod people, often in addition to relationship and trust, they involve a combination of characteristics such as, but not limited to: a track record of generative conflict; boundaries; being able to give and receive feedback; reliability. These are characteristics and skills that we are not readily taught to value in U.S. society and don’t usually have the skillset to support in even our closest relationships.
- **Building analysis was much easier than building the relationship and trust** required for one’s pod. Once people started to identify their pod, it became clear that most of the people they would call on were not necessarily political organizers or activists and usually didn’t have political analysis. This was true, even for political organizers and activists who were mapping their pods. Using the language of “pods” was a way to meet people where they were and reveal what was already working in their intimate networks. People *already had individuals in their lives they would turn to when violence happened (even if it was just one person)*. So this is where we needed to focus our work, instead of trying to build new relationships with strangers who might share a political analysis, but had no relationship to each other, let alone trust. We set out to build *through our relationships and trust*. We then worked to support our folks in cultivating a shared analysis and framework for understanding intimate and sexual violence through many things, most notably our transformative justice studies.
- **The BATJC focuses on transformative justice responses to child sexual abuse. Growing and deepening our pods helps us build where children already are.** Utilizing the concept of pods is a way to reach children where they are because a 5 year old is not going to reach out to us for support, nor should they be expected to spearhead a community accountability process. The more we can grow our own pods and have conversations about protecting and supporting the children and youth in our lives, the better prepared we will be to respond to child sexual abuse in our intimate networks.
- **Relationship and trust, not always political analysis, continue to be two of the most important factors in successful TJ interventions**, whether in supporting survivor self determination and healing, or in accountability processes. Though shared language, values, and political understandings can be very useful in responding to violence, we find that these are easier to build where relationship and trust already exist. By building where there is already authentic relationships and trust, rather than trying to piece together shallow versions, we help to set the conditions for, not only, *successful* TJ responses, but the likelihood that people will respond to violence at all.

– **There are many people who do not have any pod people.** This a very real reality for many oppressed and isolated communities/individuals because of how capitalism, oppression and violence shape our lives. For example, many disabled people are extremely isolated because of lack of access and resources; many immigrant women of color are isolated because of language or documentation; adults, youth and children who are surviving current abuse such as domestic violence may be isolated by their abusers. We hope that by beginning to build and grow pods where they *already exist* (or could exist), we can help build the conditions to be able to support people who do not have pods. By growing the number of people in the Bay Area who can recognize, talk about, prevent and respond to violence, we hope to make it that much more likely that people in need of support will find it in their daily lives. We also believe that orienting from a place of growing pods can help us gradually move away from the structures that keep people isolated. In this way, building our pods is not only useful for ourselves and the people in our immediate circles, but has the potential to help build a network of pods that could support *anyone* experiencing violence.

BATJC POD MAPPING WORKSHEET

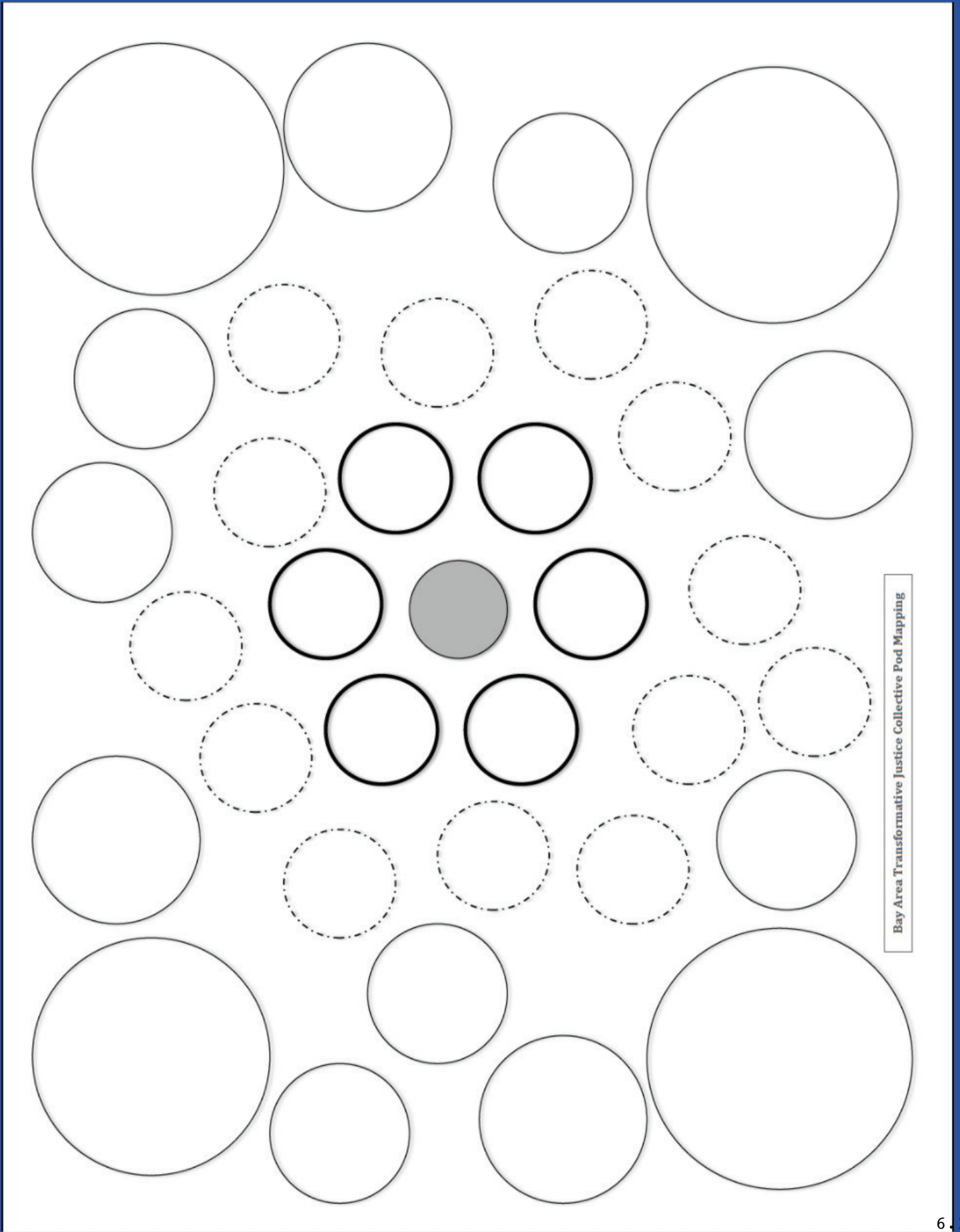


Above is our Pod Mapping Worksheet, which you can download [here](#). We use this as a template to help people start to identify who could be in their pod(s). We invite people to fill out multiple worksheets for their different pods. This is only a basic template, people are welcome to create their own pod maps.

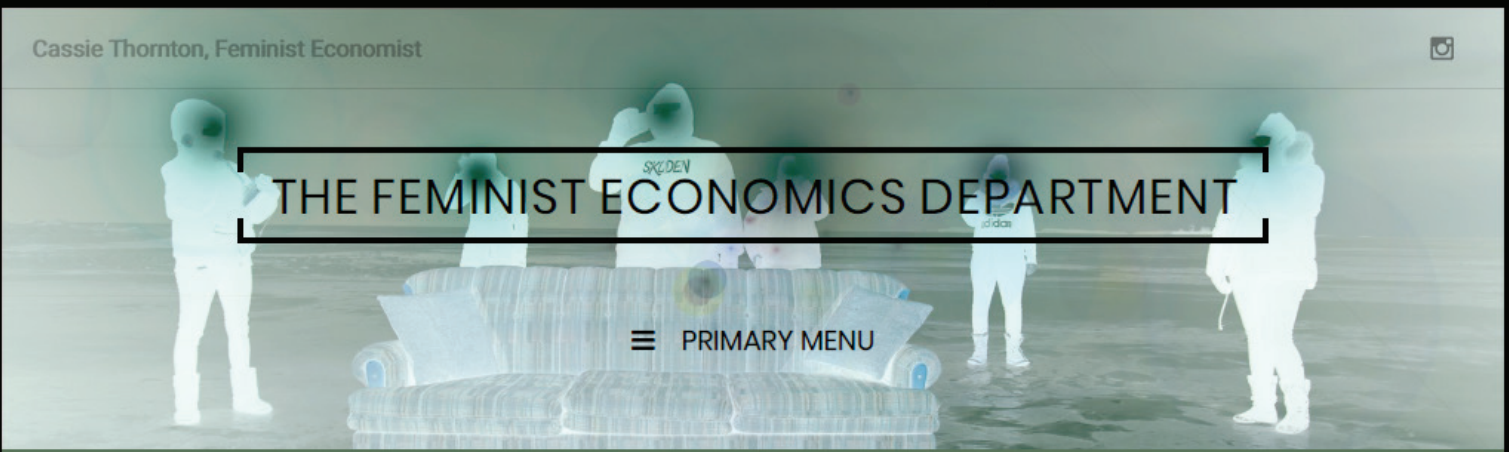
- 1) Write your name in the middle grey circle.
- 2) The surrounding bold-outlined circles are your pod. Write the names of the people who are in your pod. We encourage people to write the names of actual individuals, instead of things such as "my church group" or "my neighbors."
- 3) The dotted lines surrounding your pod are people who are "movable." They are people that *could be moved* in to your pod, but need a little more work. For example, you might need to build more relationship or trust with them. Or maybe you've never had a conversation with them about prisons or sexual violence.

4) The larger circles at the edge of the page are for networks, communities or groups that could be resources for you. It could be your local domestic violence direct service organization, or your cohort in nursing school, or your youth group, or a transformative justice group.

Your pod(s) may shift over time, as your needs or relationships shift or as people's geographic location shift. We encourage people to have conversations with their pod people about pods and transformative justice, as well as to actively grow the number of people in their pod and support each other in doing so. Growing one's pod is not easy and may take time. In pod work, we measure our successes by the quality of our relationships with one another and we invest in the time it takes to build things like trust, respect, vulnerability, accountability, care and love. We see building our pods as a concrete way to prepare and build resources for transformative justice in our communities.



Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective Pod Mapping

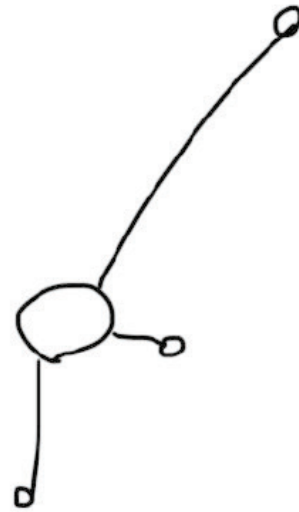


The screenshot shows a website header with the text 'Cassie Thornton, Feminist Economist' in the top left and an Instagram icon in the top right. The main visual is a group of people in a virtual space, with a central text box containing 'THE FEMINIST ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT' and a 'PRIMARY MENU' button below it. The background image shows several people in a virtual environment, some wearing white hooded outfits, standing around a large, colorful, abstract object that resembles a sofa or a piece of furniture. The overall aesthetic is digital and futuristic.

HOLOGRAM

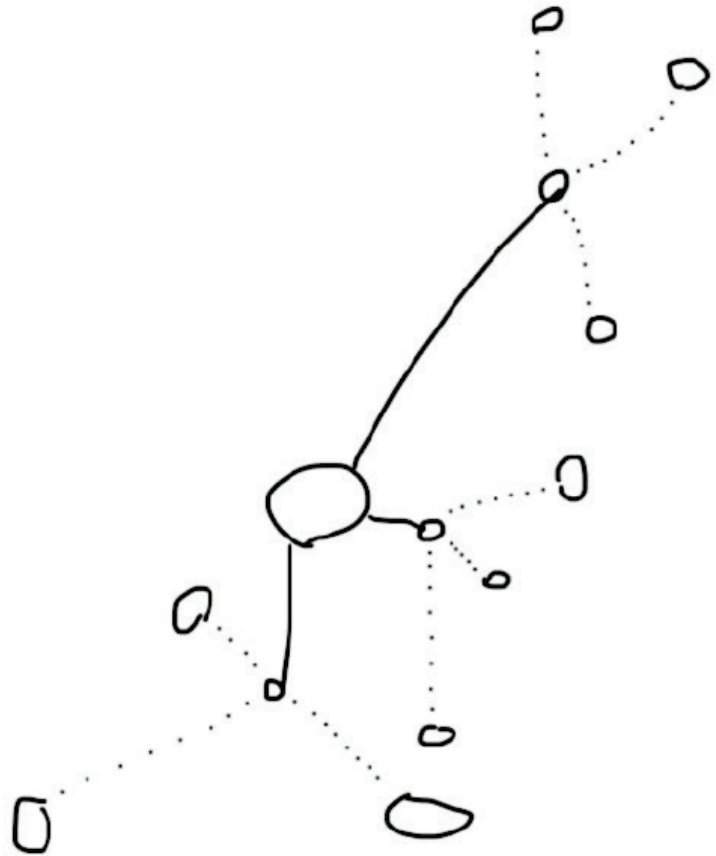
You are invited to make *a hologram*—by joining a feminist social health-care project that aims to provide accountability, attention and solidarity as a source of long term care. This project aims to serve anyone falling between the widening cracks of highly regulated, finance-driven police states, regardless of where they live. This viral care system functions to empower small groups of people to focus rigorously on the medical, emotional and social health of one person at a time. By looking at all three dimensions, the idea is that the person and their health become a hologram, instead of a financial instrument for the medical industry. The goal of this project is to find a semi-systematic way that we can attend to and track the health of people around us through regular conversations (in person and virtual), close observation, and good documentation.

The process works like this:



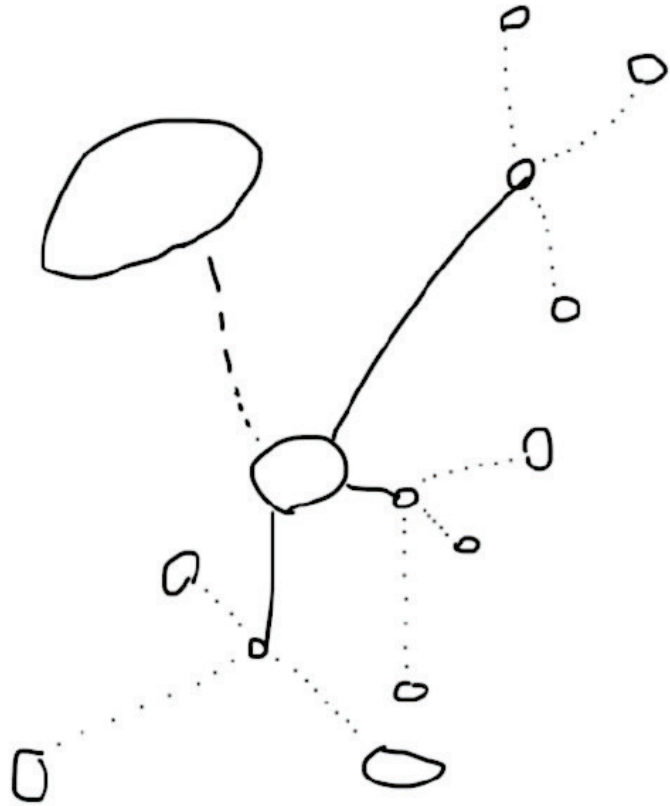
A group of four people meet to select one person who will become a hologram—which means that they and their health will become ‘dimensional’ to the group. The three people who are not the hologram are human records, seeking to truly understand and to hold onto the information shared by the hologram about what makes them healthy, and what doesn’t. By being close observers, good question-askers, patient listeners, and deep note takers, the people who see the hologram become co-responsible for the health of the hologram—WITH her, not for her. Each of the three people watching the hologram will look after one aspect of health at a time, focusing on either the physical, emotional/mental, or the social well being of the person. Through a long intake and then regular follow-ups, the group develops knowledge and records for the hologram so that if and when a medical concern or emergency comes up, the group can show up to support the hologram to make positive decisions about care, without feeling that they are alone without

anyone who understands their situation.



This project is inspired by the Greek Solidarity Clinics and their experiments with free, radical medicine, but also by the conditions we live in denial of in the US—that we have all been made itinerant and exiled from our physical communities of support (by the forces of capitalism including nationalistic borders, the transformation of land and home into speculative real estate investments, privatization of healthcare, financialization of all social necessities, and changing life circumstances). Denied any access to quality healthcare, many of us also distrust conventional profit driven healthcare systems which are isolating, individualizing and often toxic. So we need another model. For that reason, this three-person health monitoring and diagnostic system works without clinics, hierarchies, experts, or money, and can be used across the sometimes great geographical distances that separate us from those we trust. If you are interested in participating in a trial, please email feministeconomicsdepartment@gmail.com or

call 347-499-8424.



To learn more about the research and inspiration that went into it, read [this article](#) soon to be published in CareNotes.

For a related project, and first trial of the Hologram, see [Sick Time, Sleepy Time, Crip Time: Against Capitalism's Temporal Bullying](#) curated by Taraneh Fazeli at EFA Project Space in NYC, March 31-May 13, 2017.

BLACK GIRL MAGIK

Global Gathering Hub: Community Recommendations, Resources & Relaxation ✨

About:

We invite you to this collaborative, co-creative open source doc for our community - *you and the rest of humanity*.

The goal of this creation is to share resources, recommendations and leads that help us access funding, receive rooted information, experience relief, spark curiosity and overall elevate our connection to one another. It is our hope that this experience nourishes social bonding, relieves tension, diminishes emotional isolation and establishes a greater sense of trust - in each other.

We got y'all - and we know you got us.

[Click here to make a submission of any resource\(s\) to the doc](#)

Who We Are:

Black Girl Magik is a global movement creating safe spaces - both on and offline - for Black women around the world to voice, listen and encourage each other with unconditional vulnerability and acceptance.

Started in 2015, Black Girl Magik reached popularity through their signature BGM Meetups. BGM meetups are intimate gatherings crafted to empower women and girls to care for their emotional health, define their own narrative and discover sisterhood.

BGM designs safe spaces that get people talking about real issues and lead community building "workouts" that nurture courageous self-acceptance. As a community, we dismantle limitations, challenge stigmas and lift each other higher. Together, we are transforming the world for Black women and girls.

[See a video of BGM meetups here](#)

[Learn more about our work here](#)

Before You Get Started:

- 1. Guidance:** There are different sections divided up through the tabs down below. Each section offers a clear guideline to what resources or recs lie within.
- 2. Inclusivity:** We want this to be a rich, diverse and inclusive doc. Thus, we invite you to provide aligned information for BIPOC, non-binary, LGBTQIA, disabled, college students, high school students, elderly communities - and other (equally as valuable) folks we may not have mentioned.
- 3. Safety:** This is a public doc so we want to keep it safe. Please help us in keeping this space safe, supportive and inclusive.
- 4. Spread The Word:** Sharing goes a long way - share this guide [bit.ly/BGMGuide](https://blackgirlmagik.typeform.com/c/pQuZUIForm) with your communities online and offline.

Need Support?

If you have any questions, want to support further or have a special ask, send us a love note at info@blackgirlmagik and we're happy to help!

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Digital Workshops Coming Soon:

We are planning socially and wellness-focused digital workshops for the community. It's safe to say, we are collectively seeking a space for healing and connectivity at this time.

Do you have a something special, nourishing, inspiring, informative that you can offer in a workshop?

[Fill out this form: https://blackgirlmagik.typeform.com/c/pQuZUIForm](https://blackgirlmagik.typeform.com/c/pQuZUIForm)

Take Care: Self Care Tools and Resources		
Description: Share mental health resources for coping with anxiety and stress from the coronavirus.		
Name + Link	Location	Notes
Mental Health Resources		
Digital Workshop & Wellness Form	On the Interwebs	By Black Girl Magik + Community
Open Path (Sliding Scale Therapy)	US	
Loveland Foundation	US	FREE Therapy Vouchers for Women of Color
Emotional Support Hotline - open 24/7	USA	
NYC Well - mental health support texting/calls/online	USA	Free support text/call line for New Yorkers
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	Global	
Therapy for Black Girls	USA	
No Panic	UK	
Anxiety UK	UK	
OCD Action	UK	
Mind	UK	
Virus Anxiety by Shine app	USA/Global	
Sane	UK	
Free Online Community and Resources for Self Healing/Care	Global	
SisterCARE Alliance Self Family Community Care Needs Assessment Tool	Global	
How to protect your mental health	Article	
Free Grounding Group Counseling	March 19, 2020 (Requires Sign up)	
Get matched with a therapist - My Well Being	Global	
Apps		
Shine, Inc.	Free Stress/Anxiety Relief App	WOC-owned app; The Shine app is your support system for daily stress and anxiety. Learn a new self-care strategy every day, get support from a diverse community, and explore an audio library of over 500+ original meditations, bedtime stories, and ambient music to help you shift your mindset or mood.
Calm	Free Meditation App	This app helps users sleep better, boost confidence and reduce stress and anxiety, all with the help of guided meditations, soothing music, and bedtime stories
Forest	Free Productivity App	An app helping you stay away from your smartphone and stay focused on your work or rest.
Headspace	Meditation App	Highly recommended by BGM
Insight Timer	Free Meditation App	Free app and online community for meditation. Features over 30k guided meditations, music and talks posted by contributing experts
Liberate	Free Meditation App	The only meditation app. by and for the Black & African Diaspora
Marco Polo	Connectivity	In a time of isolation, this app helps you to stay connectde with loved ones, without the barriers like phone compatibility or even time zones.
Off Time	Headspace App	
Talkspace	Online Therapy App	Online counseling via text, audio, or video messaging. At any time, from anywhere. Professional support when you need it, at the fraction of the cost of in-person therapy.
Untangle	Free Meditation App	Podcast and Meditation studio: a wide collection of interviews with thoughtful, provocative, inspirational and sometimes funny guests who share their true and heartfelt experiences.
MindGem	Meditation App	
Whatsapp	Connectivity	
Quilt	Free Workshops for women	Quilt makes it easy for you to connect with other women to talk about things you care about. The Quilt community is diverse, made up of 30+ year old women who are going through change: entrepreneurship, breakups, motherhood. They come because they desire connection to other women and a safe place for breaking through boundaries, identities, challenges and hardships.

Finding Fun: (Fun, Relaxing, Curious) Things To Do

Description: Your shares can be mental health and wellness related or simply awesome stuff that'll make us sigh, laugh and access some joy in the present moment because finding fun must be taken seriously ;-)

Name + Link	Notes	Comments from Community
Books		
Black Girl Magik E-Library	Radical Community E-Book Collection	
Free Library	E-book / Audio powered by Overdrive	
Pleasure Activism	E-Book	
The Heart of A Woman - Maya Angelou		
Teaching My Mother How To Give Birth - Warsan Shire		
My Mother Was a Freedom Fighter - Aja Monet		
Things I Should Have Told My Daughter - Pearl Cleage		
Homie - Danez Smith		
Black Leopard, Red Wolf - Marlon James		
Freshwater - Akwaeke Emezi		
The Courage to Be Disliked		
If I Can Cook/You Know God Can	Culinary memoir by Ntozake Shange	
Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds		
Stupid Black Girl: Essays from an American African Woman	Collection of short stories from a brilliant, black woman	
Soul Sister Revue: A Poetry Compilation - Cynthia Manick	Anthology of poems about Soul and community; has an accompanying Spotify playlist	
Extra Directories		
Slow Factory Directory		
Resource Guide for Founders & Investors		
Open businesses in Bedstuy/Clinton Hill Directory		
Database Localized Resources During COVID Outbreak		
NYC Food Locator		
Digital Events		
Backstage Captial	Sign Up Conference focused on professional leadership, business building and financial literacy	
Metropolitan Opera streaming	Metropolitan Opera to Offer Up Nightly Met Opera Streams at 7:30 p.m. EST each night and will then be available for an additional 20 hours thereafter	
Village Market ATL		
Free Breathwork for 3/18 5:30pm PST	Online	
Social in Isolation Letter Exchange	A digital letter exchange	
SOL TV (Solo in Solidarity)	Online platform that will launch on 3/30	
Weekly Timeline Healing Meditations Online	Group Meditations led by Timeline Healer, Reiki Master Teacher and Astrologer on Fridays at 6pm.	
Group Meditation Session with Reiki Master	Use Promo Code: BLACKGIRLMAGIC	
The Well - Virtual Coworking, AMAs with Black women and Book Club	Free online (must first apply)	
Care For Your Homies Membership	Digital Wellness Club for POC	
Education		
Creative Business School	Creative Business School is an online business education platform that teaches artists, content creators, designers, writers and creatives of all types how to successfully find & sell your own product.	
Free Harvard Courses	Harvard university is offering 64 online courses for free on all different types of subjects.	
Ivy League Courses	Here are 450 Ivy League courses you can take online right now for free	

Black Girl Magik Resource Guide

Education	
Free College Classes	450 Ivy League courses you can take online right now for free
Podcasts	
Coronavirus: Wisdom from a Social Justice Lens	Social Justice
Hey Girl by Alex Elle	Intimate conversations with inspiring women
Therapy for Black Girls	Mental health and personal development convos with Dr. Joy
In The Telling: Black Family Podcast	Conversations about memories and familial ties
Brown Girl Alchemizing	Spirituality
Be School	Self development
Brown Ambition	Podcast with Mandi Woodruff and Tiffany Aliche (The Budgetnista)
Modern Love	True stories of love, loss and redemption
Soul Beauty Chat	Self-care from a Christian perspective
On Being	Pursuing deep thinking + moral imagination, social courage and joy
She's Beauty And Beast	Emotional empowerment for dope, millennial women
Your Attention Please	Kimberly Drew + conversations with nine Black Visionaries
Bottom of The Map	Southern Hip-Hop: Explored. Explained. Exalted.
What Was Said?! with Queen Liz	Goals, dreams, life and loss - a podcast about humanity
Live Awake Podcast	Tender, heart centered meditations
The Secret Lives of Black Women Podcast	Inspiring Conversations with Dope Black Women
The Read	comedy. pop culture
Wellness in Color	Mental Health Podcast
Things to Watch	
Master playlist of Videos / Films	Open source links (youtube / vimeo) of films
Netflix Party	Create a watch Party with your favorite nextflix flim / show via google chrome extension
CAS African Cinema	Open source links (youtube / vimeo) of films
High Fideillity	Hulu / Trial or account needed
Broken Silenze	Black reality tv shows
Fast Colors	Amazon Prime. Literally, Black girl magic.
A Black Lady Sketch Show	HBO/HBO Go trial. Hilarious sketch show!!!
The Therapist	A therapist sits down with musicians to discover what lies beneath their public personas (youtube)
Style Like U	A radically honest interview series exploring the power of self-acceptance (youtube)
Interior Lives	Outrageous, extravagant, and unusual interior spaces crated by New York Magazine (youtube)
Sweet Digs	Cool series that let's you see how much people pay for rent + what their space looks like (youtube)

Black Girl Magik Resource Guide

Fitness	
Debbie Allen Dance Class	Wednesday at 1pm PST/4pm EST
Mindfulness and Mediation for Black girls	
The class	14 day trial
Ra Ma TV	14 day trial
LEKFIT	7 day trial
Legs Up The Wall- YouTube	Restorative posture
Glo.com	10 - 30 minute yoga / meditation videos
Jen Sinkler has at home workouts either month to month subscription or full 12 week program	
Everybody Gym LA offering \$5 streaming classes	
LubbDubb Online Workouts, some are free	
Free Yoga	
MyYogaWorks: free through May using discount code ONLINE	
Melissa Wood Health Home Workouts	
Blogilates YouTube channel	
Walk at Home YouTube channel	
Invincible Hall	
Yoga for Mental Health - Free FB Group	Guided Meditations, Yoga Classes, Mantras + Affirmations
Recipes	
How to Made Homemade Hand Saniziter	
Elderberry Syrup	
Fire Cider	
Carrot Sweet Potato Soup	
Free Cooking Advice via Great Jones	

We Got Your Back: Financial & Tangible Resources		
Description: Share local resources, funds and fundraisers to help different communities in need.		
Name + Link	Location	Notes
How to Support the Homeless		
Nazareth Housing	New York	
Ali Forney Center for Homeless LGBTQ Youth	New York	
Bowery Mission	New York	
Atlanta Community Food Bank	Atlanta	
SFSUD Free meals for students	SF/ Bay Area	
COVID essentials for homeless	Global	
SOME	Washington, DC	
How to Support the Sick/Disabled/Elderly		
Meals on Wheels	Nationwide	
Free Food Delivery	Atlanta	
Department of Aging & Community Living	Washington, DC	
Free Food Delivery	New York	
Meal delivery	New York, NY	
Meal delivery	national helpline: 1-800-333-4114	
EFLRP @ New York Legal Assistance Group	New York, NY	
Support For Freelancers/Small Business Owners		
Thread Supporting Black Freelancer/Business Owner	Global	
Thread Supporting Trans/Queer Folks	Global	
Emergency Fund for Sex Workers	New York	
I Lost My Gig (A resource of freelancers who lost gigs because of COVID)	Austin	
The Creator Fund	Global	
C4 Atlanta: Lost Gig fund for Creatives	Atlanta	
Emergency Fund for Arts and Culture Leaders of Color	Nationwide	distributing grants up to \$200, portfolio + reference required
Virtual Workshops Application	Online	Provide a virtual workshop / set your pay
NYC grants for small businesses	New York	
BYP100 - Donate	New York	
BYP100 - Support	New York	
BYP100 - Request Aid	New York	
Homegirl Fund	Nationwide	
found objective	Chicago	Small black woman owned business, run by a freelancer
C19 Hardship Assistance Request	Nationwide	
Oakland Small Business Help	Oakland, CA	
Small Business Support- National	Nationwide	
Free Internet for Low Income Families	Nationwide	
The Giving Kitchen	Nationwide	
Bartender Emergency Fund	Nationwide	
Writers Emergency Assistance Fund	Nationwide	
Kansas City Emergency Fund	New York	for professionals in the creative arts
The Haven Foundation	Nationwide	for freelancers, professionals and legal us residents
Queer Writers of Color Relief Fund	Nationwide	
Covid Financial Solidarity Fund	Nationwide	
Funding for Sex Workers	Nationwide	
Fund For Independent Artists	Nationwide	
PGH Artists Emergency Fund Request	Pittsburgh	
Denver Metro Area Artist Relief Fund	Nationwide	

In The Know: Information About COVID-19

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please consider only adding links that are informative & productive – Our mission to provide resources that alleviate the mental effects of this time.

Actionable Articles	Link
Coronavirus: Why You Must Act Now	https://medium.com/@tomaspueyo/coronavirus-act-today-or-people-will-die-f4d3
How to Prevent Loneliness in a Time of Social Distancing	https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-to-prevent-loneliness-in-a-time-c
8 Questions Employers Should Ask About Coronavirus	https://hbr.org/2020/03/8-questions-employers-should-ask-about-coronavirus
5 Things To Know About Coronavirus And People With Disabilities	https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewpulang/2020/03/08/5-things-to-know-about
Coronavirus Is Wreaking Havoc On Our Mental Health	https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/coronavirus-covid-19-mental-h
How COVID-19 May Impact Mental Health	https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-future-brain/202003/how-covid-19-
Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.htm
Key things to consider if you're freelance and worried about coronavirus.	https://www.leapers.co/articles/2020-03-09/freelance-tips-for-coronavirus
Accessible Teaching In The Time Of Covid-19	https://www.mapping-access.com/blog-1/2020/3/10/accessible-teaching-in-the-tir
How to work from home without losing your sanity	https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/12/success/work-from-home-tips/index.html
How The Coronavirus Is Impacting Freelancers And Gig Workers	https://www.forbes.com/sites/jonyounger/2020/03/09/how-is-coronavirus-impact
NYC Health Department	https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/coronavirus.page
California Department of Public Health	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx
US Infection Tracker	https://infection2020.com/
How to Stay Human During a Pandemic	https://medium.com/@bethecatalyst/how-to-stay-human-during-a-pandemic-29e
Tips to Protect Yourself & Your Wealth from COVID-19	https://thepurposeofmoney.com/episode6/
Coronavirus: Why You Must Act Now	https://medium.com/@tomaspueyo/coronavirus-act-today-or-people-will-die-f4d3
How to Prevent Loneliness in a Time of Social Distancing	https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-to-prevent-loneliness-in-a-time-c
8 Questions Employers Should Ask About Coronavirus	https://hbr.org/2020/03/8-questions-employers-should-ask-about-coronavirus
5 Things To Know About Coronavirus And People With Disabilities	https://www.forbes.com/sites/andrewpulang/2020/03/08/5-things-to-know-about
Coronavirus Is Wreaking Havoc On Our Mental Health	https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/coronavirus-covid-19-mental-h
How COVID-19 May Impact Mental Health	https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-future-brain/202003/how-covid-19-
Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19	https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.htm
Key things to consider if you're freelance and worried about coronavirus.	https://www.leapers.co/articles/2020-03-09/freelance-tips-for-coronavirus
Accessible Teaching In The Time Of Covid-19	https://www.mapping-access.com/blog-1/2020/3/10/accessible-teaching-in-the-tir
How to work from home without losing your sanity	https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/12/success/work-from-home-tips/index.html
How The Coronavirus Is Impacting Freelancers And Gig Workers	https://www.forbes.com/sites/jonyounger/2020/03/09/how-is-coronavirus-impact
NYC Health Department	https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/coronavirus.page
California Department of Public Health	https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/ncov2019.aspx
US Infection Tracker	https://infection2020.com/
How to Stay Human During a Pandemic	https://medium.com/@bethecatalyst/how-to-stay-human-during-a-pandemic-29e
Tips to Protect Yourself & Your Wealth from COVID-19	https://thepurposeofmoney.com/episode6/



About PRH

About Us

Project Row Houses is a community platform that enriches lives through art with an emphasis on cultural identity and its impact on the urban landscape. We engage neighbors, artists, and enterprises in collective creative action to help materialize sustainable opportunities in marginalized communities.

Project Row Houses occupies a significant footprint in Houston's Historic Third Ward, one of the city's oldest African-American neighborhoods. The site encompasses five city blocks and houses 39 structures that serve as home base to a variety of community enriching initiatives, art programs, and neighborhood development activities. PRH programs touch the lives of under resourced neighbors, young single mothers with the ambition of a better life for themselves and their children, small enterprises with the drive to take their businesses to the next level, and artists interested in using their talents to understand and enrich the lives of others. Although PRH's African-American roots are planted deeply in Third Ward, the work of PRH extends far beyond the borders of a neighborhood in transition. The Project Row Houses model for art and social engagement applies not only to Houston, but also to diverse communities around the world

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Impact & Financials

The Impact Report for Project Row Houses summarizes accomplishments and achievements of the organization.

[2017-2018 Form 990](#)

[2017-2018 Impact Report](#)

[2016-2017 Financial Statements Audit](#)

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fuck placemaking

(the tension between instrumentality and artistic autonomy)

For almost 10 years, creative placemaking has entered cities across the US with federal dollars using art as a means in the National Endowment for the Arts' words, "for spurring economic vitality, health and community well-being." It has been a device to improve the livability of disenfranchised areas. However, I always wonder who these decided improvements are for. Is it for the residents who currently live there that have been there with the good and the bad? In Jane Jacobs's 1961 book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, she introduces the idea of urban planning to be inclusive of community members. She also explicitly says that any improvements for a neighborhood, for a city, should be to keep the people already living there in place. The improvements are first and foremost for them to live in a dignified place. With private interests leading the charge, the pattern that has emerged from this decade-long initiative is the "creation" of place for future residents, not the ones that have called that neighborhood home.



San Antonio, Photo by John Fisch

This methodology of placemaking has opened up the idea for outside interests to shape the creation of place to become a magnet for a new middle class. In this process, there currently isn't enough accountability for the actual improvements needed and wanted by long standing residents within the culture and social systems already existing in a place.

In my practice, I have come across many instances with city agencies, non-profits, and municipalities interested in placemaking and wanting to work with artists. I have decided that for that kind of work to be created, it needs to have enough time, space, funding, energy, and accountability for art to be created with community. Without this at a bare minimum, the idea of "fixing" a community issue with a proposed artwork is impossible. These opportunities for artists to broaden their creative practice with public engagement aren't fully apt with conditions across the board to allow creative agency and collaboration to uphold a collective vision. The interests of the organizations are often different than the community members and long standing residents. The organizations and the funding entities need to prioritize supporting artists to do long, complicated work. This includes centering the needs of the community along with accountability devices led by long standing residents.



The launch of the CycleNews project, by Tania Brugera in collaboration with Mujeres in Movimiento and Kollektiv Migrantes, at NYC City Hall on May 30, 2017. Photo: NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

Working within a community is complicated. Privilege, positionality, and other power relations cannot be ignored. In his 2018 essay, "Caught Doing Social Work? -Socially Engaged- Art and the Dangers of Becoming Social Workers," Stephen Pritchard asks: "Are we, as artists

working in "the social", working as Missionaries preaching the Western, European, white, middle-class, male, able-bodied gospel of the neoliberal creative industries and Creative Class?" That is a good starting question for any artist to ask themselves when working in the public sphere. And not be afraid to answer it.

He continues to argue that artists entering this work first need to examine their intent, recognize the privilege they are bringing to the table, and how that privilege is used is what matters. Instead of performing for the funding entity, Pritchard asks for a Revolution of Everyday Life:

Human relationships, radical action and democratic grassroots participation must happen in our everyday lives.

We need a Revolution of Everyday Life:

revolutions of everyday lives.

As artists, we can help bring about a revolution of our everyday lives, of everyone's lives and ways of being and living.

We can help people self-organise, cooperate and reignite our understanding of ourselves as individuals who are stronger collectively.

This role for the artist as a facilitator that Pritchard is implying allows for a true collective vision to emerge. The artist can also use their positionality for the collective vision. That requires a lot of agency and self-examination as proper support and accountability is held for both the artist and the institution commissioning the work.



Bushwick Brooklyn. Sign by Pati Rodriguez

When we're on the other side of this time apart, what do we need to come back together in solidarity, honoring the cultural value of artists and organizers where ideas and community members for a collective vision are thoroughly supported without the compromise of private interests?

CONVERSATION WITH CANDACE KITA

I first met Candace Kita at an art event in summer 2017 when I first moved to Portland. She happened to work at the organization I wanted to get involved in, the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO). After some conversations, I applied and received a Creative Placemaking grant by APANO in 2018, was commissioned to create an Art Plan in 2019, and then was formally hired as the Cultural Work Coordinator later that year. Since the work I have been doing for this organization has always been through an artist's lens, I have been experimenting with how my official role at APANO can be claimed as my practice. I wanted to get Candace's perspective about that idea, as well as her thoughts on the relationships between artists and institutions. This conversation took place via video in March 2020.



What is your role at APANO?

I am the Cultural Strategy Director at APANO.

What do you do there?

I lead our cultural work initiatives, which means thinking about how we weave culture, expression, story, and narrative within the social justice work that we do. That seeing story and expression as a core part in change-making and as a strategy and not just an object or production. Stories, artwork, and creative methods can be a way to change people's minds, to shift the understanding of an idea, contest established ways of thinking, persuade legislators, change policy, bring people together, and even build trust and empathy. There are so many functions that these creative practices have that are beyond the making of a "thing" which is how we are traditionally taught to think about art and culture.

Besides this role that takes up at least 40 hours of your life a week, how else do you identify? I identify as a reader and learner. I read a lot and now even more so. I am also an astrologer and do birth chart readings for people and build my own astrology practice which I think is its own creative form itself. I see astrology as an interpretive artform because it is a way of telling a story using various symbols and archetypes. Thinking of it as an artform also gives it space to explore possibilities more so than if we think about it as just an esoteric knowledge system.

I am also a transplanted midwesterner. So I think a lot about what it means to be in a place, where is "home?" How do you tell an origin story? What does it mean to have origins in a place? Can it be many places?

I am a spiritual generalist. I practice yoga, meditation, esoteric stuff, and magic.

I'm also a plant-eater. I am a vegan person. I absorb plant energy through food and you know enjoying nature. I find there to be a spiritual component to eating plants. It's a way for me to be more in communion with the earth and non-violent practices.

What were you doing before working at APANO? I was always involved in arts organizations in some capacity. I've worked for a site-specific dance company, the Portland Art Museum, at a public murals agency, and even the Special Collections at the LA Public Library. I was also really interested in art and community intersection. When I was living in LA, I was doing grassroots organizing work with the Tuesday Night Project—which is a public art space that features work by Asian-American artists. I was helping curate visual art and participatory activities in that space.

What is your view on artists in society? Artists are necessary! Artists are so necessary for the sustainability of humankind and for our own health and wellness as well. But because our society is so production-oriented and capitalist driven, I don't think that their role is valued in the way that they should be. They don't get enough credit for continuing life.

How does that relate to a smaller component of society - an institution? Well, there's a lot of push and pull. Artists can help humanize institutions in a lot of ways. But institutions aren't usually built with the creative space that artists need. If we want to talk about collective liberation, I don't think artists working within institutions will be the core thing that gets us there, but think of it more as a step that gets in that direction. Maybe it's more of helping expand the institution and maybe even break it, or parts of it down. Historically, institutions have been built with other priorities in mind. They have been established to uphold certain social structures and paradigms. Artists within institutions can offer different ideas for how we can live our lives, but instituting those on a larger level is not necessarily going to be led by these institutions. Greater revolution is necessary.

What does that revolution look like? Reforming how we exchange resources for human survival. That would mean people would not amass wealth more than what they need to survive. A lot of our institutions are built around protecting these levels of wealth and protecting power, instead of sharing power. That would need to be broken down.

How has it been working with artists? I've really enjoyed it. I've benefited a lot from the inspiration and the different kinds of visions, ways of thinking about things, approaches, and methods that are brought to the table. Artists really help expand things. They help us see outside of our existing lenses. They have helped APANO expand through our visual presence—visualizing APANO's identity and image. They've expanded APANO's presence with the East Portland Arts and Literary Festival. APANO gets stronger because artists are a part of the movement! So many of APANO members are from the Artist Media Project (AMP) group.

Also it can be definitely challenging as well. Artistry doesn't happen on the same timelines of a lot of these institutions or funders. There are deliverables, and those things can be challenging. Other challenges with artists working under capitalism is capitalism incentivizes an individual hustle. Sometimes that individual ego, that individual need to win, can be detrimental to a more collective approach or collective vision. Seeing the kind of ways artists, because of this system, have to self-promote and be less willing to share resources can be challenging to confront.

From your experience, what is it that artists need? The first thing I want to say is MONEY because it's true. Half of my job is trying to give artists money. It's a tangible need although it makes me sad because of capitalism and the general undervaluing of creative labor. Along with the general undervaluing of the impact of artists and art on people. The sacred experience that art can cultivate should be invaluable. But it is treated like it doesn't have value at all.

Also, community and togetherness. That's what AMP shows - people want to spend time together and feel a sense of camaraderie. Artists also need a space to play.

It's such a core to being an artist - to be able to experiment. I think resources to support that togetherness and space to play which usually comes in the form of institutions now, but again that box already has a shape and that can be oppressive.



Art+Media Project, Spring Retreat, 2018

Interesting! Can you see artists helping institutions shape that box? I think it depends on the institution—some are more willing than not.

But I guess if there were more at the table in shaping that box, they would be more willing? And artists need to trust themselves? Yes, I think that's really on-point because within mainstream and established institutions, there is not a ton of will to advocate for art or see art as essential.

I am claiming my work at APANO as my practice. It wouldn't completely make sense if my medium was painting or sculpture, but since my main medium is relationships as a socially-engaged artist, I feel like the work I'm making as an employee holds similarly enough the same process, structure, audience as when I called myself an Artist-in-Residence for the 82nd+Beyond project. Therefore, my role relationally is a part of my art practice. Could this be problematic from an organizational point of view? Or could this be another way artists and institutions could operate together? My first reaction is that I could see so many sides of it... I could see how it can be problematic. I think the problematic nature comes down to power relations.

Artists have been posited under a capitalist economy as individuals. It's definitely problematic to say that "this is my practice, I'm owning these sets of relations, as something to display to the world

and to build my own artistic and social capital." That's why there's so much critique of Socially-Engaged art.

But it doesn't need to be problematic if the relationships are held with integrity and with an awareness and understanding of power relations and in an honest exchange dialogue between artists and people that you're working with. I think that is a way actually where we can rethink the role of even how we work. What if we all considered our work our practice. And all of our work was artistic or creative in some way. I think we might have much more interesting ideas. With the sense that everyone is practicing all the time. I was thinking where the word practice is used and it's in art, yoga, and sports, but why not in the workplace? But the way we think about our roles doesn't give us that kind of flexibility of "practicing". That could be a way where we could have more empathy, flexibility, and understanding within how we operate within institutions, as employees, or representatives of the institutions. It would be cool if over the years, institutions transformed where everyone on staff is an artist, or identifying as such. It doesn't mean that they are making paintings all the time, but they are approaching the work with a creative and expansive drive.

Why the hell not?

That question that Candace asks is something that I think about all the time - could artists and the institutions that want them work differently together to benefit both? With so many artists working in various institutions to make a living and create a life, could roles be carved out to encourage these kinds of art practices? Socially-engaged artists have an advantage on this with being able to work in social and relational contexts, but if it was integrated within the institutional framework could both the artist and institution be able to thrive together?

Since starting as the Cultural Work Coordinator at APANO, I have been experimenting on how to still be an artist at "work." It helped that for the two years prior to that transition into this employment, I had built my art projects commissioned for APANO around its relational dynamics. I saw what APANO wanted for their institution as an opportunity, as material.

For example, they wanted to engage with their community more, so I would introduce myself to the local residents and businesses and spend time with them. Hear their stories. Listen to their needs. It's true that my outside position of being a commissioned artist gave me liberty to advocate and critique actions that can be tricky when formally employed. However, I've been able to keep that artist agency as an employee. I think of the role as a hybrid of an artist and an organizer using the strategies of organizing but with more freedom, liberty, and creative agency. The history of socially-engaged practices allow for that.



Lab Work, 2020

An idea I am currently experimenting with is shaping a conceptual space, The East Portland Art + Justice Lab, within the site that is dependent on its social relations and informed by community desires. The Lab focuses on creating and keeping

The Lab focuses on creating and keeping cultural memories and the social fabric of the neighborhood intact through experimental art-making activities, discussions, and more.

It's through the trust that I've built that I am able to experiment in these ways. I hope in doing so, more artists making their lives within institutions can feel a sense of security and support not just as an employee, but for their art practice as well.

RECIPE FOR A CULTURAL INSTITUTION IN THE FUTURE (WHICH STARTS TOMORROW)

In collaboration with Co-Directors Nathanael Andreini and Molly Alloy of the Five Oaks Museum.

INGREDIENTS (~~no substitutions~~)

The following ingredients are the foundation for your cultural institution to be as nourishing as possible. Note that small batches are key.

Body: You cannot make this dish without first and foremost this important ingredient. This includes the most tender parts, the heart, spirit, and thought all together.

Land: As long as this dish is made on planet Earth, you also cannot make this dish without land. Invest in the people who are the original keepers directly. Genuine Acknowledgements will provide some flavor but that won't be enough. This essential ingredient is the binding agent that has the ability to unify all of the different flavors and textures of the dish.

Truth: There are varying kinds all offering different flavors. Some are more potent than others so it depends on what kind of dish you're wanting to make. The most satisfying taste comes with a few different kinds to complement the other flavors of the dish.

Justice: This ingredient will keep the flavors and textures grounded in a strong infrastructure.

Community: This needs a lot of cultivation but will be integrated in the process in making the recipe. Be intentional and generous with this.



Again, these are the core elements needed to even begin a cultural institution in the future (which starts tomorrow). If you have the following, your dish will become even more robust:

Multiplicity: This varies by season, so whatever you can find in your immediate environment will suffice. Even a pinch will bring out the most complex flavors of the dish.

Accountability: This is a nice complement to multiplicity. It is readily available but tricky to prepare. Luckily enough practice in using this ingredient will bring out its vibrancy.



Trust, Vision, and Courage: This trio can easily be found in markets off the beaten path. They may be a little on the pricier side, but it will be worth the investment as combined together, they go a long way.

PREPARATION

1. For the start, use any heat source you desire. The warmth needed will be determined by the scale and time that you have. It is entirely up to you.
2. In a large pot, stir in equal parts of the 5 core ingredients.
3. Try a spoonful.
4. Add a little bit more truth/justice/community.
5. Taste.
6. Keep adding and adjusting until the balance is felt.
7. Share a tasting with a friend.
8. Discuss and adjust accordingly.
9. Keep simmering the whole time.
10. Taste again.
11. Trust your sensibilities.
12. Share a tasting with more friends.
13. Discuss and adjust accordingly.
14. Keep simmering.
15. Taste.

Optional

Add a pinch of multiplicity.

Simmer some more.

Taste.

Repeat steps 7 - 15

Add a dash of the trust, vision, courage combo.

Simmer some more.

Taste.

Repeat steps 7 - 15



16. Leave on the lowest heat and keep simmering
17. Hand over to a friend
18. Rest
19. Repeat steps 9 - 18

After collaborating with Molly and Nathanael on the recipe, I wanted to get their take as Co-Directors of the Five Oaks Museum on how to implement these ideas into their own work. The response below was via email from Molly.

As you steer the ship of Five Oaks Museum, I'd love to hear what things you are implementing, how you are approaching the operating of a museum and how the institution fits within a site, within land, within a community. What contexts are you pulling from?

Nathanael and I as individuals pull immensely from art backgrounds, taking art as tactic, ethic, and context. We are also responding to innovation within the nonprofit sector and social justice movement building, and strive to grow towards indigenizing practices coming out of Native movement work. The combination of this little cluster of questions points my thinking to the fact that one of our most constant practices in operating the museum is to revisit the idea that no part of what we do is outside of or exempt from being held to account for the values that it expresses.

In implementation that means the org chart must express our values, the bathrooms must, the writing of the exhibits must, the hiring practices must, the relationship with the board must, the availability of food and drink on premises must, the use of utilities and physical materials must, the listening practices of leadership must, the use of our cultural resources must, the names of the lines in our budget must, the colors in our brand must - each and every thing that we do is equally understood to have that responsibility. Those examples are some of the places where specific action has been taken so far, and we are pushing every day to do better. Finding a pathway to full staff equity and more fully delivering our approach as a platform where community voices have ownership and agency are some of my personal top priorities. This work will never have an arrival point, it has to be living, iterative, and accountable, so will always be ongoing.

About Molly and Nathanael:

Leading the organization as a collaborative team, Nathanael Andreini (he/him) and Molly Alloy (they/them) utilize their shared brain to keep the Five Oaks Museum stable but never stale.

let's re-envision work

let's re-envision work
work that is based in values
work where severe boundaries do not have to be built
work that doesn't need recovery time from working
when not working
let's re-envision work

let's re-envision work
work that is nourishing
work that is based in collaboration
work for collective liberation
let's re-envision work

let's continue to harvest our stories
let's prioritize our relationships
let's have radical actions in our everyday lives
let's re-envision work

let's recognize our cultural value
let's no longer be capitalist foot-soldiers
let's bring art and culture back into our everyday lives
let's re-envision work

art is made from artists
for all of the expansion we bring to society
shall we not be nourished?
let's re-envision work

institutions need us
let's demand that from our institutions
let's refuse to compete with each other
let's re-envision work

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to engage with this work.

Thank you again for your support throughout my career and education.

I am extremely grateful to have taken the time to invest in this formal education and as the next phase begins, I hope that we can continue to dream, scheme, build, and practice the world where creativity is supported from all around. I know we will get there.

I also want to give a huge thanks to those who helped create this publication:

ariana jacob, autumn knight, candace kita, david wilson, eric j. olson, garima thakur, harrell fletcher, jordan rosenblum, justin langlois, jyothi natarajan, lisa k. bates, michael bernard stevenson, jr., molly alloy, nathanael andreini, nún studios, roz crews, sharita townie, tia kramer, and zeph fishlyn.