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Chicago

2020



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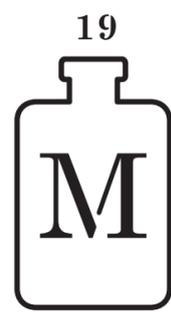
Artists

Run

Issue
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Volume
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Number
02
Fall
2020



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SLAMMING KOREAN AND
POLISH FOOD TOGETHER



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by Jim & Reuben

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 All of Artists Run Chicago
 Annette LePique
 Bad at Sports
 Brandon Alvendia
 Cecilia Resende Santos
 Christina Nafziger
 Dan Gunn
 Gareth Kaye
 Hyde Park Art Center
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Chicago 2.0

Artists Run Lumpen

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Introduction

Just a few weeks feels like ages ago, making it even harder to imagine back to 2009 when Hyde Park Art Center presented the first Artists Run Chicago exhibition. Between then and now, the nation emerged from the Great Recession, elected President Barack Obama, and witnessed the birth of Instagram. ~~Donald Trump~~ became President and racial, economic, and political tensions increased.

On March 21, 2020 we were ordered to shelter-in-place indefinitely in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, which has caused people to hoard toilet paper, bringing new meaning to Puppies Puppies' installation Toilet Paper Grid (2016) currently installed at the Art Center for the upcoming Artists Run Chicago 2.0. While the world has gone mad, it becomes clear that artists and their

methods, models, and networks for organizing are greatly needed to provide alternate structures for human engagement when our current system collapses.

A
Artists Run Chicago 2.0, 2020, courtesy of Hyde Park Art Center

B
Installation view of LVL 3 at Artists Run Chicago 2.0, 2020, photo courtesy of Tran Tran

Hyde Park Art Center is grateful to partner with Public Media Institute and Sixty Inches from Center to create Lumpen 137, an optimistic issue on the collaborative power of artists. Conceived as a companion guide to the 2020 exhibition Artists Run Chicago 2.0, this issue both documents and provides context to the artist-led initiatives in operation between 2009 and 2019 featured in the show, while extending beyond these spaces to address the larger Chicago tradition of do-it-together camaraderie and culture.

Artists Run Chicago 2.0 is a major Hyde Park Art Center exhibition for which roughly fifty artist-led entities (galleries, roving spaces, businesses, non-profits, public art collectives) were asked to present artwork by the artists they champion. This exhibition of mini-exhibitions samples the past decade of artists' energy directed toward supporting other artists' practice through exhibiting, producing, and discussing new art throughout the city. Spanning neighborhoods from Beverly to Rogers Park, Oak Park to Englewood, the exhibition identifies a diversity of operational models, audiences, and programmatic intentions that offer fodder for the next generation of artists determined to create their own place in the world.

In 2009, Hyde Park Art Center introduced the first Artist Run Chicago exhibition to survey the abundance of independent exhibition spaces directed by artists from 1999-2009. Threewalls published a small edition of The Artists Run Chicago Digest in parallel with the exhibition, combining threewalls' signature phonebook-style listing of participating spaces with critical essays. It was an hypothesis to spark further debate, a translation of a moment in time for a community of artists, and a jumping-off point for further investigation.

Lumpen magazine, an artist-led publication established in 1991, has brought critical perspectives on art, music, and culture to millions of people through free distribution and without compromising its Midwest humor or humility. The magazine's accessible format matches Hyde Park Art Center's intention to be a gathering and production space for artists and the broader community to cultivate ideas, impact social change, and generate new networks. The Artist-run nonprofit Public Media Institute (PMI) is the parent organization for Lumpen, and PMI's gallery Co-Prosperity participated in both the 2009 and 2020 Art Center exhibitions. For these reasons, Lumpen is the ideal outlet for the Artists Run Chicago 2.0 publication.

Valuable resources, such as maps and a directory of alternative art spaces in Chicago, are included in Lumpen 137 to help navigate the (mostly free) art activity out there. Other content includes insightful texts and images that directly relate to Artists Run Chicago 2.0: Dan Gunn and Noah Hanna separately address considerations in creating an exhibition-as-documentation of artist-run spaces; participating artists Gareth Kaye (Apparatus) and S.Y. (Gallery 062) share their thoughts on making space for artists to experiment; Bad at Sports embeds images that, when viewed

with a mobile app, prompt podcast interviews with artists about working in Chicago; and Lise McKean explores Terrain, founded by the dearly departed Sabina Ott. The Art Center commissioned authors affiliated with the online publication Sixty Inches from Center, Nicole Lane, Annette LePique and Christina Nafzinger, to dive deep into synchronicities between three artist-run spaces in the exhibition. Artists and writers independent of the exhibition also contributed their accounts of the benefits and struggles of running spaces, and speculated on the future of the artist-run space.

Many people worked their editorial, organizational, and creative magic to make this publication possible in a shifting reality. Special thanks to Nick Wylie, Maddy Stocking, Marina Resende, Nora Catlin, Mána Taylor, Cecilia Resende and Ed Marszewski for working hard and having total enthusiasm for the project. Tempestt Hazel generously offered her collaboration from the onset of the exhibition and Greg Ruffing for his editorial and writing skills. Keen observations from Dan Gunn and the 60 wrd/min project by Lori Waxman build on their past contributions to The Artist Run Digest and attest to their commitment towards supporting artists projects over time. The team of colleagues at Hyde Park Art Center, Andi Crist, Max Guy, and Noah Hanna were essential for making sure the exhibition could reach its full potential.

The exhibition Artists Run Chicago 2.0, the corresponding public program of free events (printed in this magazine), and this publication together demonstrate the collaborative spirit and genuine investment that artist-led organizations have toward helping each other accomplish ambitious goals.

Allison Peters Quinn
Co-curator of
Artists Run Chicago 2.0
and Director of Exhibition &
Residency Programs at
the Hyde Park Art Center
March 2020



Allison Peters Quinn



From the onset, conversations around mounting a second iteration of Artists Run Chicago at the Hyde Park Art Center were rife with questions and possibilities. At the heart of these debates was:

What would a reinvention of exploratory actually look like?

Noah Hanna, Co-organizer
Artists Run Chicago 2.0

Artists Run Chicago 2.0

Hyde Park Art Center



at the

The original Artists Run Chicago (2009), organized by Allison Peters Quinn and Britton Bertran, brought together contributions from over thirty artist-run galleries and project spaces in Chicago. These spaces were united under the common banner of experimentation, and recognition for the hard, often underappreciated work these spaces provide to the art community at large. While these objectives remained critically important to the organization of Artists Run Chicago 2.0, new attention needed to be paid to the role of transition, and the ever widening definition of what an artist-run space embodies and aims to attain. Such theoretical considerations pushed this exhibition to be more than just a celebration of artist-run spaces. It is also an opportunity to reevaluate structural hierarchies, community engagement, and the role of the artist in the discourse of contemporary art.

Of the spaces featured in the original exhibition, only six make a return appearance in Artists Run Chicago 2.0: 65 Grand, Co-Prosperity Sphere, Devening Projects, Julius Caesar, Roots & Culture, and The Suburban (now located in Milwaukee). The realization that nearly eighty percent of the previous participants no longer exist was often met with solemn resignation, and inquiries into what good fortune has allowed these few spaces to endure far beyond their life expectancy. While this is a viable question, it quickly became apparent that the language surrounding the artist-run space was in need of revision for this exhibition. When describing the trajectory of artist-run spaces, the consistent use of terms such as “survive,” “fail,” or “disappear”, fails to capture the reality of the ecosystem in which they thrive. Artist-run spaces are not businesses, and as such are not subjected to the timeless moniker that they must “sink or swim within the first three months.”

In our conversations with the spaces in this show, it became clear that an artist-run space never truly disappears, rather it finds itself manifest in different forms, locations, and identities, through a web of interconnected communities that bring Chicago’s artmakers and followers together. In exploring the histories of just these spaces alone, we uncovered a mosaic of mutual support systems. There were moments of property exchange, in which galleries have permanently or temporarily filled the spaces of others, ensuring the physical space remains a beacon for artistic expression. Similarly, the tremendous overlap of artists exhibiting in these spaces created opportunities to see the artist-run community as a sort of roving disconnected exhibition, evoking common themes while simultaneously encouraging observers to consider the ways each space recontextualizes an artist’s practice and engages with its own unique environment, whether it be a store-front gallery, apartment, or itinerant curatorial program. Examining the changes of the course of ten years should not be melancholy, but a moment of reflection. A common lifeblood flows through all of these spaces, as it did in 2009 and will no doubt ten years from now too.

Even with these common threads, things have certainly changed since 2009. Artists Run Chicago 2.0 (2020) brings together an eclectic selection of spaces, in which the core function of the artist-run operation is widely defined and executed. I often asked Allison Peters Quinn, my co-organizer who oversaw the 2009 exhibition, what differences she’s observed between then and now? She was quick to respond that spaces are now far more polished and objectively organized. The traditional “DIY” aesthetic has been substituted for an appearance that is far more clean and intentional. That is not to say that the underground vibe no longer exists, but that spaces have learned to adapt to a changing expectation within art. The growth and sway of MFA programs, and the strict enforcement of artistic decorum taught in professional practices, as well the integration of social media, have made marketing a critical component of what it means to be an artist in 2020. An artist or space must have a carefully curated website, social media presence, mission statement, and stack of fully captioned installation images ready at a moment’s notice. Yet despite this, spaces have found ways to expand within this infiltration of capitalist marketing trends.

A demand for transparency and social engagement has encouraged spaces to put to paper what they stand for and which communities they activate, resulting in a tremendous growth in structural variation. In the fifty spaces presented in this exhibition, there is a wealth of exploration and individuality. Spaces both mimic each other’s successes and build on the personal experiences that comprise their art practices in the first hand. While many spaces continue to exhibit work and hold exhibitions in a traditional sense, others such as Annas, Chuquimarca, and table have found their calling in residencies, workshops, and conversations. Additionally, others have moved away from the space entirely and embedded themselves in the city, with organizations such as Terrain, ACRE, The Franklin, Sweet Water Foundation, and Western Pole setting the standard for what boots-on-the-ground artistic engagement with the community can look like.

I don’t know what Chicago’s artist-run space will look like ten years from now. I very much wish continued success for the spaces who have blessed us with the chance to get to know them. For many here, the future is a loose concept. A space is often an extension of an artist’s ideology as a maker, and while artists seek to sustain themselves, few make art with the singular goal of becoming wealthy from it. The artist-run space is no different. They are not the seeds of mega galleries aiming to one day become the next Gagosian or Zwirner. They are exactly where they want to be. In an age of intense institutional critique, art feels safe in the hands of those who truly love it.

Artist Residencies, Collaboration,

and

Alternative Models *of* Education

Christina Nafziger



A

In 2018, artists Julia Holter and Olivia Block came together to write and compose a new piece titled *Whenever the Breeze*, creating immersive sound by combining voice, instruments, bells, and recording of wind and water. The making of this piece culminated in an album recording and a live performance at the May Chapel in Rosehill Cemetery. This dynamic, collaborative piece was created during Experimental Sound Studio's Outer Ear Residency.

A
The White Wanderer group rehearsing *Requiem: A White Wanderer* in a studio at ESS, composed by Katherine Young and created in collaboration with Luftwerk. Image courtesy of Experimental Sound Studio.

B
Detail of *Reserve/Reservoir*, work by 2018 summer artist resident Tracie Hayes. Items such as cigarette butts, a Cheetos wrapper, rocks, and a plant sit inside different ceramic sculptures. Hayes spent the duration of her residency conducting fieldwork in nearby Humboldt Park and created ceramic vessels to house and disseminate her findings. Photo by Holly Murkerson, courtesy of ADDS DONNA.



B

Artist residencies offer a place for artistic exploration, a space where artists can work and think collectively, and potentially collaborate with like-minded individuals as well. Although this environment sounds similar to a classroom, residencies often subvert the power dynamics found in traditional academic settings. Without a type of hierarchical knowledge structure, residencies often form an alternative learning space.

bell hooks describes this kind of learning community in *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, saying, "Since the vast majority of students learn through conservative, traditional educational practices and concern themselves only with the presence of the professor, any radical pedagogy must insist that everyone's presence is acknowledged... There must be an ongoing recognition that everyone

influences the classroom dynamic, that everyone contributes. These contributions are resources." hooks describes the authoritarian model in the classroom as hierarchical and coercive. Instead, she proposes an engaged pedagogy that emphasizes each person's active participation. Through this, the voices, opinions, and experiences of each person, including those that have been historically marginalized, are given equal consideration and value. In accepting each person as a potential collaborator, a type of community is formed.

Artists often seek alternative modes of education and an open learning environment that does not command a privileged voice of authority. In the competitive, capitalist structure in which we live and work, it becomes necessary to actively and intentionally form the communities we want to have.

Such communities can give much-needed resources and support for artists---support that is not often provided by traditional institutions, especially after graduation.

Similarly alternative models of education have existed in schools like the Black Mountain College (founded in 1933), which used non-hierarchical methodologies and encouraged interdisciplinary experimentation, and artist residencies such as the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture (founded in 1946), a nine-month program that describes itself as neither a school nor a retreat.

In accepting each person as a potential collaborator, a type of community is formed.

In Chicago, there are a number of art organizations and residency programs that have sought alternative education models and potential avenues for collaborative art making. In 2010, four artists came together to form the artist collective ADDS DONNA. In their current location in Humboldt Park, the group has expanded their numbers to eight. Current member Kaylee Wyant explains that when forming the collective, the original

members “missed the rigor and the conversations they experienced at school and wanted to recreate that kind of community.” The artists originally shared a studio space, which sparked an exchange of ideas and later led to collaborating under the name ADDS DONNA as an artist persona, one that Wyant says can “exhibit work on its own outside of individual identities and practices.”

Along with exhibitions, ADDS DONNA’s programming through the years has included artist residencies and study groups. In 2018, their artists-in-residence included Tracie Hayes and Zakkiiyah Nejeebah, who created work for five weeks in the gallery and installed their work for one week of viewing. This residency model aimed to invert the typical exhibition formula. In ADDS DONNA’s study groups, the syllabus is malleable and discussion is open-ended. Wyant explains that creating this kind of educational space came from the “desire to make engagement with a subject more democratic, to eliminate the hierarchy within traditional pedagogy in order to make learning more collaborative and approachable.” In these ways, ADDS DONNA can function as an experimental institution.

Currently in its 34th year, Experimental Sound Studio (ESS) promotes and supports the sound arts in different disciplines, such as music, dance, videography, and visual artists. This unique organization houses a professional recording studio and curates live public programming, sound installations, gallery exhibitions, artist residencies, workshops, and tutorials. For ESS, bringing together artists to support and spark collaboration has culminated in three different artist residencies: the Alba Residency, the Wavefront Artist Residency, and the Outer Ear Residency. The Alba Residency functions as a postgraduate sonic arts program available to students graduating from the Sound Department at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, and provides guidance in the next steps in their art practice. In contrast to this hyper-local residency, the Wavefront Artist Residency operates as an exchange program with international artists at Soundpocket, a Hong Kong-based sonic arts organization. The week-long Outer Ear Residency offers artists full access to all of the studio’s resources with the purpose of facilitating experimentation in the creation of new work.

Managing Director Adam Vida explains that ESS believes “collaborative projects are a key to breaking new ground and finding areas of experimentation that have yet to be explored.” All three of the residency programs at ESS are structured in a way that makes room for collaboration, as they allow participants to bring in additional artists to collaborate with. With a cross-disciplinary approach, the organization “plays a big role in pairing artists together that may not have the opportunity to collaborate otherwise. [During the residencies,] artists bounce ideas off each other and sometimes force each other out of their comfort zones.”



C



D

C Installation view of the group show *unsettled*, 2019. The show included artists Kayla Anderson, Justin Berry, The Institute of Queer Ecology (IQECO), Sayward Schoonmaker and Tanya Fleisher, John Steck Jr., and Katie Waugh. Photo by Holly Murkerson, courtesy of ADDS DONNA.

D Installation view of Jomo Cheatham’s exhibition *Reparations for Interruptions*, 2018, curated by Amina Ross and Justin Chance as a part of the *Eclipsing Festival*. On the right there is a small house structure with a white and red checker pattern. There is a two-dimension piece depicting a similar structure hanging on the wall. To the left, there are three smaller pieces hung in a vertical line. Photo by Holly Murkerson, courtesy of ADDS DONNA.

E ACRE residents stand in a green valley surrounded by hills in rural Wisconsin. Three of the people in the field are standing with their hands raised above their heads, and the person to the left is crouching towards the ground. Photo by Zachary Hutchinson, courtesy of ACRE.



E

For the organization ACRE (Artists’ Cooperative Residency & Exhibitions), collaborative projects are a major component of their purpose and programming. ACRE hosts three artist residencies in rural Wisconsin and also supports exhibitions organized by six Curatorial Fellows each year. ACRE’s acting director Kate Bowen explains how the residency and exhibitions build a space for collaborative learning and making: “The residency gives the opportunity to work, live, eat, collaborate, and experiment together, while caring for and challenging each other. The exhibitions program brings folks back together, and creates new connections in the year that follows.”

Founded in 2010, ACRE was formed by “a group of artists and co-conspirators with the goal of providing an alternative to the traditional institutions that serve artist and art communities,” Bowen says. “As emerging artists in a world full of collapsing institutions, I think what the founding artists needed most was each other. The structure of ACRE’s residency program is a direct response to traditional education models; it is designed to reshape the way one learns and distributes knowledge through a collaborative environment. What artists need most are other artists—in addition to money, space, and time.”

In the essay “(Extended) Footnotes on Education,” (e-flux, 2010), author Florian Schneider states, “Our only teachers are those who tell us to ‘do with me,’ and are able to emit signs to be developed in heterogeneity rather than propose gestures for us to reproduce.” Schneider is proposing that a top-down model of knowledge distribution doesn’t work effectively because it discourages critical thinking. By working collectively, knowledge sharing can become horizontal. With everyone working on an equal plane, participants are positioned in a way that gives everyone the power to initiate dialogue and critique.

Organizations like ADDS DONNA, Experimental Sound Studio, and ACRE are not just building programs that encourage non-hierarchical ways of learning and making, they are building spaces for support. They aim to facilitate a radical form of alternative education that fosters spontaneous collaboration and ideas, cross-disciplinary approaches, and community-based pedagogy. By creating work in a collaborative environment and decentralizing authority, new dialogues are able to form that engage all participants, allowing everyone to have a voice and potential to challenge the traditional trajectory of knowledge and authority.

The Big Tall Wish:

Gareth Kaye

A Primer for an Escape

During the first iteration of Artists Run Chicago in 2009, I was just finishing seventh grade, and little was as it is now. The Liberal optimism found in 2009 from the Obama election has since long waned, and the dangers of financial inequity and post-recession growth have revealed themselves. Climate change is no longer a punchline for jokes about Al Gore—it is here, it is real, and it has a gun to the head of everyone under 40 years old. The institution is back in the crosshairs where it belongs, and the values of an increasingly financially unsustainable contemporary art world are being questioned.

How do we as artist-curators and curator-artists develop empathic and meaningful social experiences at the end of our world? It hasn't ended yet, but shouldn't we be prepping? When the empire crumbles, will we be ready to rebuild without looking for the corresponding shapes and pieces from the past to reconstruct another model that never worked, or will we find new combinations and arrangements ahead of time?

The future and imagination have been foreclosed and expropriated by capital, and an increasingly stagnant present finds itself to be defined by the speed of communication and corporatized insistence on "disruption." In this scenario, can there be an avant-garde, or are we sprinting towards the future on a treadmill, garnering fatigue for our efforts but unable to gain any ground ahead of where we currently run? How can we imagine the future when the present is our running partner—when the present is not the now, but actually tomorrow. Futures are being sold and traded in the art world capitals of London, New York, and Hong Kong, while we are still here, trying to figure out what personalized austerity measures we can impose on ourselves to survive the week we pay rent for our apartments, studios, and spaces. In some of our cases, we condense all three together to save money at the expense of comfort and space, and at moments, sanity too.

Capital and its forces need not dream of tomorrow, because they already bought it and the day after on credit. So where are we to resist? How do we skip ahead and break the loop? As precarious artists, we are uniquely positioned to imagine the future in a manner that capital cannot—while finance flattens the distinction between tomorrow and today with 24/7 global trade, shipping, freeport, and military operations across time zones, it doesn't soothsay a future that is much more than copied and pasted models from the past into the empty spaces that lie ahead. Artists, on the other hand, have to dream, soothsay, and read patterns in the firmament that haven't already been targeted by patented algorithms. We need a way out of the loop, and if the speed of cultural and economic production now turns the clock, the best way out is to stop, close our eyes, and make a wish, or to take a nap and dream a little bit, maybe sleeping through the next opening.

Looking for an exit, maybe we can find some help from the late Mark Fisher's idea of the "Weird and Eerie," which he defines

How
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artist-curators
and
curator-artists
develop
empathic
and
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social
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at
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end
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our
world?



as that which comes from outside. If we can't find a way out, maybe we should lock onto those things that seem to come from that troublesome "beyond" we are looking to reach, and follow them to the cracks they slipped in through. Looking towards the outside, I cannot think of any better example than The Twilight Zone episode "The Big Tall Wish." The episode follows Bolie Jackson, a haggard, down-and-out boxer and surrogate father for a young boy named Henry, as Jackson prepares for a fight that could be his come-back match. His son Henry has a strange penchant for making wishes that seem to always come true, to the benefit of those he loves. Before the fight, Henry offers to use "the Big Tall Wish," if needed, to make sure Bolie comes out on top. Henry's mom tells Bolie that it's no laughing matter for Henry to use "The Big Tall Wish."

During the fight, Jackson is knocked out and Henry clutches the TV, wishing for his dad to win. When Jackson comes to, he looks down on his opponent, who has been KO'd, yet Jackson cannot shake the doubt of having been defeated just moments ago. When he comes home and expresses his disbelief to his son, Henry yells that if Jackson doubts the power of the wish, it won't be true anymore, to which Jackson angrily responds that Henry should grow up and stop wishing. The episode then ends with the typical outro: "Mr. Bolie Jackson, who shares the most common ailment of all men, the strange and perverse disinclination to believe in a miracle, the kind of miracle to come from the mind of a little boy, perhaps only to be found in... the Twilight Zone."

While the cynical nature of neoliberal discourse will differentiate wishes from action, we know they need not be mutually exclusive. Rather, the choice of acting is in itself a form of wish making. The act of making an art object or an exhibition is, at its best, a wish as well. Wishes are ways in which to put into the world that which we feel is lacking, in order to articulate something better than what we had before.

So let's start looking for a way out, and to do that, we need to ask some questions (of which only the most general are present here): what are the unfulfilled promises of Contemporary Art? Where is its hollowness most resonant? Are we satisfied to let Too-Big-To-Fail Institutions lead the way, when at their best they appropriate the groundwork, discourse, and alternative forms Artist-Run Spaces have been pioneering, and at their worst, they toe a weak line with insipid and uninspired shows that tell us to stop wishing and to let the status quo run its course? How much is our labor as cultural producers worth, and how do we convince the public of our worth as artist-run spaces?

It seems we are caught between the alternatives of needing to make the Big Tall Wish and build enough solidarity and actual work around it to see its reification, or to just accept the knockout.

I currently don't have any precise wishes to put forward into language, because this wish is communal in every way. Rather, I hope this serves as a primer to let ourselves know that the wish will exist beyond dreams, and maybe lead a way out into the beyond, and the future that Capital has been obscuring with its shadow. But if the conversations don't start in Artists Run Chicago, I am afraid the knockout might be inevitable.

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Yollocalli Arts Reach, a youth initiative of the National Museum of Mexican Art, began serving youth in 1997. Yollocalli thrives to provide youth with opportunities for creative growth and development that strengthen their voices, supports their agency, and makes them successful makers. Projects are developed by contemporary artists whose practice is relevant and accessible to youth and their cultural practices.

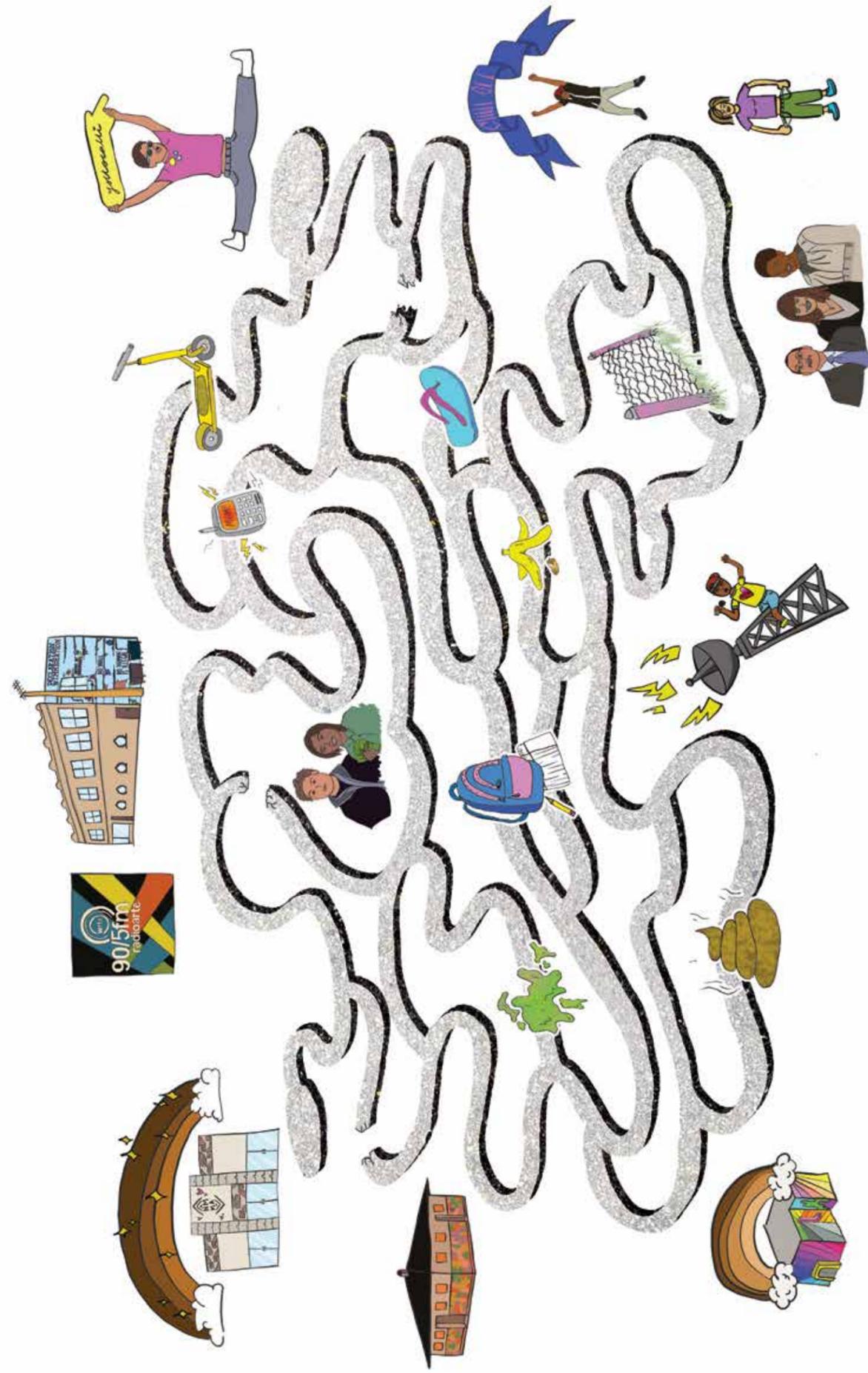
By collaborating with local and international artists, Yollocalli is a space for intergenerational making, where both the teaching artists and youth are able to learn and make with each other.

This drawing by Yollocalli youth artist Emmanuel Ramirez and Yollocalli staff Whitney Ross shows a maze about how Yollocalli became a youth-led, artist-driven, intergenerational, magical space from Pilsen to Little Village. From the purchase of a building by the museum to the development of the

Yollocalli youth council, to being recognized nationally as an award-winning youth program, to moving to new homes, Yollocalli's paths have one thing in common—the love and honor of being a part of this unique, creative space and culture.

Yollocalli

Yollocalli Art Reach



AMFM and the Lifespan of



S. Nicole Lane

Chicago's artist-run spaces are key players in the creative ecosystem. They stretch down all avenues in the city, and beyond into the sprawling suburbs. Whether they are found in old storefronts, auto shops, backyards, or basements, some hold their space for decades while others reconstruct or retire.

Succumbing to the rise of rent and the heavy financial responsibilities that come with running an alternative venue can play a large role in the changing of spaces or changing of hands. Artist-run spaces go through fluctuations, especially those who persist for a few years. Some turn into non-profit gallery spaces, while others host a few pop-ups or begin satellite locations. Others simply shutter.

Deciding to close an artist-run space shouldn't equate to failure. The conditions for closure—or change—are endless. The eventual ending of DIY spaces don't eradicate the work that was done. And often, the spaces simply exist in a new form. For Ciera McKissick of AMFM, that's exactly what happened.

For over a decade, Ciera's project—whose original form was a web magazine—has developed and transformed into various models. Originally from Milwaukee, Ciera has always been drawn to art communities. "I do believe it to be my life's work to support artists, build connections, and offer space and platforms to help elevate artists' work, voices, and stories," she says. After releasing several issues of AMFM, she simultaneously began working pop-up events and organizing her own programming around Chicago, curating art and music shows at Cultura in Pilsen, and also running The Jazz Series, which traveled to different locations like Stony Island Arts Bank, Soho House, and the Chicago Art Department.

In 2016, Ciera opened up a physical space for AMFM, where she could combine event planning, art, and music. "I was wanting to have more autonomy over space and overhead, and to do more, so I was really excited when we got our first space, which we crowdfunded on GoFundMe," she explains. The 1,000 square foot gallery space worked as a venue, and had resident artists, a shared studio space, and a music production studio. There's a show every night of the week in Chicago, whether it's music, art, theatre, or performance, but a space like AMFM brought together all facets of Chicago's creative communities to one physical location. Ciera was able to curate and direct art exhibitions and music shows, plus everything in between.

Ciera says AMFM was different than most. "We were DIY, but appeared more established. I had a plan, but I was teaching myself things and learning along the way. I didn't expect it to blow up like it did, and so fast."

After a year of running the gallery on her own, Ciera decided it was time for a team. "We needed someone to handle the bookings, the books, and actual numbers financially, to be extra hands and present at all the events, the marketing, etc.," she explains. "An obvious challenge in running a space is trying to make rent month after month, plus pay for utilities. We did more shows than we needed to, some less vetted, to make sure we stayed booked and could hit our numbers for the month to ensure we could pay rent."

The displacement of arts spaces impacts the entire city. "When you take the soul out of a neighborhood, that's when it's gone too far," says Alma Weiser, Director of Heaven Gallery. "We cannot forget that cities are about culture." As a result, she began Community Arts Wicker Park (CAWP), a group of stakeholders looking to purchase the Lubinski building and create a permanent art fixture. "The center will focus on collective wellbeing, and house arts organizations committed to showing 60% ALAANA [African American, Latinx, Asian, Arab and Native American] artists," Alma explains. "We know that historically Chicago has been intentionally segregated, and now we want to help reverse that intention toward integration. We want to create an art center that addresses multiple community needs of surrounding arts organizations and small businesses."

Running an alternative gallery is incredibly laborious and involves investments in money, time, commitment, and resources. Curating, working with artists, and organizing promotional efforts are all emotionally and mentally intense, which can ultimately take a toll on the individual or team running the space.

Heaven Gallery has been operating in Wicker Park since 1997, when Dave Dobie founded the space in the Flatiron Building. For the last 10 years, Dave's wife, Alma Weiser, has been running the gallery in the Lubinski Furniture building, where it has found a way to prosper in a neighborhood that continues to grow and expand. Over 15 years ago, Alma could be found dancing in Wicker Park at Red Dog, Cimabari, Ezuli, Rodan, Danny's, and The Silver Room. "I remember 'The Silver Room's Block party on Evergreen,'" she says. "It was beautiful. My DJ hero Ron Trent was the closing set, and it was a sea of people dancing together in the rain. That was the city I knew and love."

Since then, Heaven has found itself sandwiched between Yeti shops, restaurants, and more storefront vacancies. Other spaces have had to move locations, find funds through crowdsourcing, or shut down completely. Silver Room and the Double Door left Wicker Park a few years ago. "These two establishments were the last cultural institutions of Wicker Park," Alma says. "Once they were gone, I decided that Heaven must remain as a reminder of what Wicker Park once was."

A Performance art set up for Compton Q at the Old Black Magic Exhibition, Chicago Art Department, 2016. Photo by Ryan Barayuga, courtesy of AMFM.

B Opening of the exhibition Presence and Absence, featuring work by Myungchan Kim, Jeong Hoon Park, Yena Park, Joonghan Bae, Seuil Chung, and Ray Im. January-March 2020. Photo by Nadia Stiegman, courtesy of Heaven Gallery.



Chicago Artist-Run

Spaces

Eventually, AMFM had to close its gallery doors. Due to racial tensions and complaints from a few neighbors, Ciera said the closure took a toll on her and the arts community. Ciera had quit her full-time marketing job to run AMFM and invested all of her efforts into the success of the project. Around this time, The Dojo, another artist-run space in Pilsen, had also closed.

Where commercial galleries tend to represent more established artists, DIY spaces don't have barriers to entry—they can open the floor for experimentation, more creative control, and encourage the curatorial process. "I think that these types of spaces are crucial to the community and artists of color," says Ciera. "I've heard from a lot of people that the closing of AMFM and a bunch of other DIY spaces, particularly those that work with a lot of black and brown artists, that it was the end of an era." And for many artists, alternative and DIY spaces are where they often get their first shows. She says that spaces like AMFM are "essential and allow artists to have a launching point to cultivate their careers because, in order to elevate, you have to start somewhere."

Another South Side gallery, Produce Model, operated in Pilsen from 2015 to 2019. Directed by Javier Bosques and curators Maggie Crowley and Guillermo Rodríguez, the space was located on 19th St. in an old storefront that welcomed the surrounding community and hosted dinners, parties, screenings, and art shows. In a concluding post, Produce Model stated on Instagram that the gallery's core mission will still exist "mainly as an idea," and that viewers can expect to see them "soon," but they won't know "when or where." This message is similar to many other artist-run spaces, where the closing is hopeful, positive, and assures the arts community that the gallery won't evaporate forever. They almost never fully die, but simply take on new forms.

In the case of Threewalls, which began in 2003 with a group of friends running a DIY space, the gallery transformed into a completely new beast. In 2016, the staff at Threewalls was let go and a new base was established—an itinerant non-profit model that programs and sponsors exhibitions and events. Threewalls is a clear example of how artist-run-spaces can remodel and morph into something entirely foreign from their original foundation.

Many artist-run galleries take on a more nomadic approach to navigate changing real estate, personal gallery space interest, and community. AMFM is in this wayfaring form at the moment. "I finished up our major projects and took some time off to figure things out, reconfigure, and we have sort of returned back to our roots of popping up around the city for events," says Ciera. Although it's not as regular or frequent as before, AMFM currently partners with the Chicago Park District, Saatchi, SAIC, and Red Bull for larger events.



C
Performance art set up for Compton Q at the Old Black Magic Exhibition, Chicago Art Department, 2016. Photo by Ryan Barayuga, courtesy of AMFM.

D
AMFM Gallery Grand Opening, 2016. Photo by REAna Naitsas, courtesy of AMFM.

E
Musician Shawnee Dez at the former monthly pop up The Jazz Series, 2018. Photo by Ryan Barayuga, courtesy of AMFM.

F
Portrait of Ciera McKissick in the AMFM space in Pilsen. Photo by Joseph LU, courtesy of AMFM.



Working behind the scenes, Ciera said she's ready for the next iteration of AMFM, and to introduce the new form of what this decade-long project has become. "I definitely want another space, a bigger space, an institutional type of space, a building I can call my own, so that I can lay the groundwork and be more sustainable," says Ciera.

Artist-run-spaces have always been a strong heartbeat in the city. It's a fiercely vibrant, ever-changing community where some galleries thrive and others dwindle. Nevertheless, they exist.

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Are you a Foreign Artist?

Are you a Foreign Artist?



Li-Ming Hu

When I told Lori about an idea I had to get art writers to generate press to aid artists with their O-1 visa applications, I did not dream that she would volunteer herself. It was a perfect fit with her fifteen-year-long project, 60 wrd/min art critic, where she writes reviews live, in 25 minute increments, for any artist who wants one. The performative element doesn't really hit home until you actually witness it, watching Lori's words and thoughts form before your eyes on a 50-inch monitor connected to her laptop, with the artist's submissions nearby. Apparently self-consciousness is not a problem, nor is noise, as was evidenced in her smashing through one set of reviews in the midst of a full blown disco party, then joining in the dancing afterwards.

Lori Waxman

So here's how it works. I set up an office in an art space, artists bring me their work, I write reviews fast, and then afterwards everything gets published. The idea is to provide reviews for people who want that sort of feedback, whatever the reason, and especially in cities and towns where there is a scarcity of art writing. Also, to make a normally discrete and obscure profession public and transparent. One need not be a professional artist to apply—one can be a retired homemaker taking watercolor classes for the umpteenth time, a priest with a conceptual landscape painting practice, or twelve-year-old twins who like to draw fauna and flora (these are all real examples from past iterations). For this version of the project, which took place over the course of three Saturdays in February at the Co-Prosperity Sphere, Li-Ming and I made the review slots open only to foreign artists who needed to gather reviews for the express purpose of putting together their visa applications. It's a real need, and the project as a whole is trying to serve the critical needs of artists, so why not. Plus, as a foreigner myself, though one lucky enough to have found a nice American guy to marry, I am extra sensitive to the precarities of being from somewhere else and wanting or needing to stay here.

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Li-Ming Hu

Love it or hate it, disco was a pleasure-seeking global music phenomenon to be reckoned with. And was it ever hated, especially locally, where on July 2, 1979, the White Sox baseball team managed to fill (and nearly ruin) their stadium by offering cheap tickets to anyone who brought with them a disco LP to blow up. New Zealand artist Li-Ming Hu fills the windows of the Co-Prosperity Sphere—debuting a promising exhibition program that more galleries with big storefront windows ought to copy—with a fabulous array of documentary images, glittery props and a six-minute video exploring the origins of “The Day Disco Died”—or didn't. What better way to prove the significance of a form than to try to destroy it? Hu, who stars in the video, has fun swinging on mirrored balls of all sizes, pumping a limp purple plush bat, and, in her trademark gesture, wearing a simple paper mask of the people she's investigating. Here, it's DJ Steve Dahl, the frustrated rock radio host who came up with the Comiskey Park gimmick, and there's nothing lo-fi about seeing his schlubby head atop Hu's cool, petite body. It's as uncanny as Freud on the dancefloor. Shake that.

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Sungjae Lee

What's a man? What's a gay man? What's a South Korean gay man? Plenty of people believe strongly that they know the answers to these questions; it is this sureness that compels others to work so hard at proving the fallibility of the very questions themselves. The performance practice of Sungjae Lee is exemplary in this respect, and I wish it as required viewing for anyone who thinks they know what no one can ever really know beyond pigeonholing and stereotyping. Watch Lee flex his clay six-pack until it collapses; see him transfer chest hair from a hirsute lover to his own smooth torso; watch him laboriously make and then smash dozens of “Yellow Hairy Balls.” With grossness and humor and a deep sense for tactility and affect, he willingly uses his own body to ends beyond its own.



*Efrat
Hakimi*

I have always found it strange that place names reoccur from city to city, country to country. Really? Can't town planners show a little more originality? The coincidences do provide for all sorts of artistic exploration, however, and Efrat Hakimi's exhibition "Zion," curated by Avi Lubin at Hamidrasha Gallery in Tel Aviv, is no exception. Hakimi chose her subject well: there is Zion, Illinois, just north of Chicago, where Hakimi currently lives. There is Zion National Park in Utah, one of the great national parklands, set amid the state of Mormonism. And there is the first Zion, the hill on which King David built the ancient citadel of Jerusalem, origin of the term Zionism and the practice of referring to present-day Jerusalem as Zion. How this all figures into one exhibition owes much to contemporary modes of storytelling: through narrative and exploratory video footage, archival research and photography, and the culling of choice facts from often convoluted histories. The coincidences are always surprising, sometimes startlingly profound. Plus, there's promise of more: with dozens of Zions across the globe, Hakimi could just keep on going.

*Haerim
Lee*

At the artist's request, a letter in support of her O1 visa application was written instead of a review. This was necessary because one of her recommenders had to pull out suddenly due to an institutional conflict.



*Guanyu
Xu*

What's it like to live a secret life? To need to live one's true life in another country, far away from disapproving parental eyes? Guanyu Xu presents these overlapping realities with the help of his camera, recording through documentary and staged photographs his life as a gay man in the United States; himself and other men in intimate domestic environments; pavement or plants or architecture that caught his eye. So far, so good—Xu's pictures fit squarely in the tradition of Wolfgang Tillmans and Nan Goldin. But then he goes home, to his parent's apartment in Beijing, a place where nothing is out of order and everything is heteronormative. Worlds collide. In "Temporarily Censored Home," Xu takes over the apartment while mom and dad are out and fills it to the brim with the images of his other life. They hang from the ceiling, spread out over the sofa and tables, cover the fridge and the windows, even jut out into doorways. And then, just before mom and dad come home again, Xu packs it all neatly away, into the literal and proverbial closet—though not, of course, before taking enormous hi-resolution photographs of his makeshift installation.



*Eunhye
Shin*

What makes millennials comfortable? Since I haven't got a clue, I've watched two experimental videos by Eunhye Shin that offer partial answers to the question. "Make Yourself Comfortable" poses its titular query to four Berlin-based artists, while "Molka (hidden camera)" sets up a secret camera in a women's bathroom stall. Bits of narrative appear on the screen here and there: the Berliners talk about their language issues and about living away from home for the first time, the women do or don't use the toilet. (Maybe they knew about the camera? Two of them seem to be looking for it.) The true source of millennial comfort exists elsewhere, however, in the formal devices Shin employs. The Berliners get fragmented into biomorphic shapes, disappearing into a perfect blue screen. The women get pixelated on the opposite half of a split display, dissolving into rectangles of neutral color. Being bits of people never looked so comforting.



Leticia Bernaus

In "Not Exactly Love," a series of simultaneous videos, Leticia Bernaus caresses a dead fish, a big beautiful shell, brown-gray fur, a large side of meat, a bag of trash, a dead bird, and green grass. It's not too much a stretch of the imagination to imagine a person experiencing real love for any one of these things (honestly, it's not), but nevertheless that is not quite what Bernaus is doing. Her gesture is faultlessly gentle, seemingly endless, mesmerizingly patient—she is not being a lover here, she is being a caretaker, and she is doing it through the touch of her fingers. But caretaking what? Not an elderly relative or an ill child, but rather the things of the earth, rendered somehow inanimate. That's where we live, folks, on a planet full of all sorts of things, extraordinary and not, being decimated one by one by one. At this point, it's starting to seem like the best we can do might be to caress them gently after they die.



Catalina Tuca

Some people just arrange things better than others. The rest can improve through lessons in ikebana and like arts. I don't know what training Catalina Tuca did or didn't undertake, but her work of the past decade proves her to be profoundly more accomplished in this area than all but the most skilled painters of Dutch still lifes. (Or whoever it was that set up those flowers, dead animals and edibles before the master sat down at his easel.) Tuca doesn't just position objects in meaningful compositions, she also finds them: in Medellín, Colombia; in the Mapocho neighborhood of Santiago; in the Sugunami part of Tokyo. Maybe they come from the trash, maybe from thrift stores, maybe from donation—any which way, Tuca intuitively knows how to put them together in a newly symbolic or aesthetic configuration that tells a story about the place from which they came. If only she'd come to my neighborhood one day, I'd like to know what it has to say.



Maryam Faridani

The only social media that remains unfiltered in Iran is Instagram. That makes it the go-to source for expats like Maryam Faridani, who are seeking news and information from home. The difference with Faridani is that she gives as good as she gets, maybe better. Since 2018, this weirdly profound digital artist has produced dozens of—for lack of a better term—editorial cartoons that she puts up as stories on the site. They comment on the daily news, whether it's the suspicious death of former president Rafsanjani, the smuggling of tomatoes into the country disguised as cauliflowers, or the mysterious smell that permeated Tehran for days. What do Faridani's gifs look like? Many feature her face, more or less obscured behind cute little animals, torrential waves, diagrams, headlines, and other randomly coherent items. They're bizarre, unkempt, clever, critical, utterly contemporary, very silly, and totally their own thing. If this is what happens when newspapers fall to censorship and bankruptcy, maybe there's hope yet.



Pegah Pasalar

I can't watch Pegah Pasalar's short film, "Saturday." I mean, I watched it, but it hurt too much. A family goes to the beach, one of their small children drowns, and since the film is finely shot, the tragedy is unbearable. I don't think this is only because I have small children, or because I know someone whose young child died in a pool, but perhaps it is. Pasalar's equally well-made "Phenomenology," in which a young woman (the artist) dresses herself in a roomful of clothes, starting with a dozen panties and bras, moving on through pants and shirts, all the way to a long, black abaya, entrances with its cinematic cleverness. Because the film was actually shot in reverse, as an undressing, the clothes fly magically up to her body, as if she were not just a female done in by the strictures of conservative religious requirements, but a superhero with a secret identity: Clothing Woman! Underneath that abaya and that frown, she hides, unbeknownst to all but always there, ready to save the day. If only she could have saved that little kid.

Cherrie Yu

“Cherrie and Matthew” is a dance, and a film of a dance, in which the two titular people do many of the same motions. They swing their arms, wave their hands, reach high, sweep with brooms, kick, bend, etc. Some of these gestures are familiar from contemporary dance, including pieces by Trisha Brown and Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker. Others come from the work that Matthew does in his day job as a condominium maintenance worker. This makes sense: Brown, de Keersmaeker and others of their generation were interested in vernacular movement, and vernacular movement is what Matthew must do every day, no matter how repetitive it gets. The radicality of Yu’s performance is her direct collaboration with the everyday person, rather than her theatrical citation of their labor. Both worker and dancer speak, contribute, act, and analyze. It wouldn’t have happened without Cherrie and it would be nothing without Matthew. “Why the hell not,” Matthew responded to Cherrie’s initial invitation. Indeed.



Hyun Jung Jun

It can take me hours to prepare a meal that my family consumes in fifteen minutes. That’s okay, not everything in life must total an equivalent end product. Many such unequal-seeming equations explain the output of Hyun Jung Jun: elaborately lumpy candles, an endless list of active verbs, eggshells that sprout nasturtiums. She has cut and marked hundreds of shiny little strawberries in a rainbow of colors, written words in a carpet of dirt, tenderly enlarged old grocery lists. Cats lurk in her paintings, of course, because cats are both otherworldly and totally quotidian, marvelously languid and terrifyingly fast. How it all fits together is how it all fits together: not everything can or must make perfect sense. Two hours of cooking does not equal two hours of eating. Except when it does.



Amay Kataria

The world has been digitized. This is true of people’s attention, attracted this way and that by phone and desktop apps; money, funneled evermore through cryptocurrency; statistical analysis, which can compute information greater and faster; and even human communication, arbitrated by social media and voice-activated software. But has the world been improved? Amay Kataria’s artworks use sophisticated computer coding, interactive software, and more to interrogate the seemingly intractable place of technology in the world today. His grandest proposal takes data visualization to a whole new level: a doomsday clock counting down the time until a disastrous two-degree rise in global temperature is no longer avoidable. Kataria envisions this hi-tech timer front and center in Times Square, in Tokyo’s Shibuya district, and on the Eiffel Tower, proposing that what got us into this mess in the first place, if used judiciously, might get us out, just in the nick of time.



Angeliki Chaido Tsoli

A woman crosses the road with a tire. A woman interviews people about their financial debts. A woman tries to stop the passage of time. These could be the first lines in a riddle, and in some sense they are, of the riddles that are the deceptively simple gestures and tools of Angeliki Chaido Tsoli. Tsoli repeatedly seeks what has become so tragically hard to achieve in our dystopian times: some kind of balance. In her attempts, she is sincere, generous, friendly, and also a little bit absurd. At dfbrL8r gallery recently, as the opening event of the venerable performance space’s 10 year anniversary celebrations, Tsoli flew from her native Greece to Chicago, trekked across the cold city with a suitcase, greeted everyone in the gallery personally, gave them each a commemorative sticker, unpacked and built and hung a flag, and hung also a Polaroid that documented the final moments of a past performance project. How do we keep a moment alive, she asked? And she answered: by documenting it, sure, but also by sharing it with others.





Noa Ginzburg

Imagine the therapeutic participatory sculptures of Brazilian modernist Lygia Clark, her so-called relational objects, and cross them with the junk combinations of Robert Rauschenberg, then pass them through the sieve of forced migration and its obligation that one be ready to pack up and go at a moment's notice. Do that and you might, if you're very lucky, end up with Noa Ginzburg's marvelous "Extra Ocular Objects." Three of these impermanent constructions will be on display at the Langer over Dickie gallery, and the intrepid visitor will not simply look at but with and through them. "EOO Number Five," a hanging clump of ribbons, twine, crocheted yarn and sequin threads, is my favorite of the lot, especially when a person sticks their head into the mix, extending the sculpture to the length of their body, funneling their eyesight through two suspended viewfinders, allowing the EOO to transform into a puppet, a mask, a kinetic construction, and themselves into a performer. What do they see? You'll have to try it to find out.



Anna-Sophia Vukovich

Sometimes everything's up and then everything's down. Some days I swear I even feel sideways. At Erin Stump Projects in Toronto, Anna-Sophia Vukovich's "Where is your/The Compass" provides visual aids for keeping track of emotional coordinates, your own and the world's. In the center of the gallery, a steel structure modeled on a weather vane offers four bars on which to hang your choice of seven hand-painted signs, whose friendly geometric language will hopefully provide a visual symbol of the moods you are sensing. Life feeling too chaotic? Try the handful of red arrows scattered in every direction on an azure background. Loneliness lurking everywhere? That black circle suspended on a grey ground seems just right. Things looking up? The single black arrow rising on a slight tilt, that's the one. Real weather vanes measure what's happening in the air at any given moment, and I suppose Vukovich's could too, depending on the sensitivity of its participants. But it could also be aspirational, marked by our hopes for how the wind might change. Way finding meets way seeking.



Sam Thomas

Sam Thomas is a Pakeha, a white New Zealander, and in this solo exhibition at Bowerbank Ninow in Auckland he made a number of sensitive sculptural gestures in acknowledgment of that complex reality. Intensified by its exhibition in 2019, the 250th anniversary of Captain James Cook's landing in the port of Gisborne, "Pakeha Gifts" features a handblown glass chandelier in the shape of a bunch of yellow and green plantains, and a wall hung with forty cast-recycled-aluminum patu (a short Maori club). The installation remakes important local trading objects into elegant replicas, but in that translation much that is not always so tidy comes to bear: the fate of forty brass patu made for but never re-gifted to the Maori by Cook's boatmate Joseph Banks, the massive Tiwai Point aluminum smelter owned by the multinational Rio Tinto, the relationships Thomas himself has with artisans, and the availability of raw materials in the places where he lives. This has always been the basis of world trade: materials, relationships, obligations, currency, transformation. The radicality of Thomas's version is the thoughtfulness with which he acknowledges his own place in that economy.



Millie Mac

I have long been jealous of the Victorians, whose every book was bound by marbled endpapers. The bubbly swirls, the murky depths, the irrational curves—what better way to approach and depart from the other worlds contained within the pages of a great book? In her "Ranbu" series, Millie Mac has created a painter's version of this lost literary treasure, bound by a white canvas frame rather than cloth-bound boards. Using acrylic paints mixed to varying degrees of viscosity and eschewing a brush for the tools of palette knife and gravity, Mac creates strange and wondrous panels as gaseous as they are liquid, as luminous as they are cavernous. No wonder that she has borrowed the Japanese word for "wild" as her series title. But the chaos is ultimately controlled, encased in layers of thick glazing, which present a surface as smooth as a ceramic plate—and you're allowed to touch!



Jack Hogan

I have always loved looking at maps. And cows. So Jack Hogan's video, "Cows and Flies," pleases me immensely, for how it explores the flattening and distortion of the spherical world created by reducing it to two dimensions; for retelling beloved stories about the absurdities of adults and language; for spending real time with a herd of cattle and making a one-to-one photographic print of them and then putting a herd of humans underneath it; for trying to draw longitude and latitude lines by stringing colorful ropes across a field in a grid; for acknowledging that the drone technology that allows them to film a farmer's field from above is the same technology that allow for all kinds of new surveillance and extraction; and for a whole lot more, still, for far too many sensitive and unexpected observations to do justice to here, even in a massively run-on sentence. But not for the flies, no not for the flies. The cows never seem to mind them, though I always do. One wonders what the herd thought of the drone overhead, with its incessant buzzing.



Dier Zhang

Most of us do not give a whole lot of thought to the functional objects that we encounter in the kitchen, at the library, at the doctor's office. Dier Zhang does, with a wry sense of humor that refuses to take anything for granted. In "Comfort Touch," a deceptively simple zine, she pairs gynecological instruments with the kitchen tools they resemble—think forceps and tongs, speculums and can openers—setting off a domino effect of feminist deconstruction. Why are the metal objects made and marketed for women so violent? One wonders if female designers might have imparted a more comfortable touch. In "Make/Use," Zhang tests that theory out, allowing liquid resin in plastic bags to harden in specific places, taking on the shape of a corner that needs a wall hook or a row of books that needs a stopper. The results are uniquely harmonious and individualized meldings of object, need and site, as those gynecologists, with their bayonet shaped vaginal retractors, certainly never managed.



Farah Salem

Landscape has long been considered a genre of art making separate from others—portraiture, history, the nude. Not so in the performances, videos and installations of Farah Salem, where landscape is revealed in all of its intricate connections. "Mirage" emulates the Kuwaiti children's game "Bar/Bahar," in which players shift their body position based on which word is called out—bar means desert, bahar means sea—only here it is Salem's body that is being transformed, and with the added elements of actual sand and water, ceremoniously poured into her voluminous skirts by the audience. In "Caustic," Salem wanders the Arizona scrublands in a black abaya, then uses a bucket of bleach to transform it into something more at one with the dusty hills. The five painted abayas she and other performers wear in "Disclosed" have been transformed to better match their environments, too: a ship for the ocean, fronds for a palm grove, small yellow flowers for the desert. The body—the female body, at least—and its surroundings are one.



Adnan Faysal Altunbozar

What is the space of desire in a world of online dating, chat sites and digital porn? In "Interior Irruptions," his solo exhibition at Amazigh Contemporary, Adnan Faysal Altunbozar offers the curious viewer a chance to enter an anonymous erotic encounter—quite literally, beginning with the poster announcing the show, which mimicked a certain kind of ad found on Instagram. Having DM'd for the address and hours, take the elevator up and find the very first artwork on view: a pair of spiky steel conches at the end of an extra-long keychain. Follow the chain and find a key to a door to an apartment. Turn it to explore what's inside: prints of a man's arm tattooed with a depth gauge—a nod to the outdated average-man stats according to which architecture used to be sized, and a very different nod to the not-so-average-man stats for fisting. A bright blue table holds a cluster of large jars—the kind for selling protein powder to bulk up men to meet some of those stats—remade in delicate ceramic, some with bulging veins. Two smartphones, elegantly mounted on a tripod, scroll the deeply intimate text "SOON I WILL BE IN YOU," letter by letter, which is how it sometimes goes. Slow can be good. One thing at a time can be good. The whole city lies out below the gallery's thirty-third-floor glass window-wall, while way up above an encounter not of desire but about it is happening.



Dan Miller

Chicago has a long history as a city of magic, or rather a city of magicians. Artists Dan Miller and Aaron Walker slip seamlessly into this lineage with “Handkerchiefs and Flowers,” a spry exhibition at Roots & Culture that slyly performs a series of tricks on the unsuspecting audience. Some of these feats are architectural: a room vanishes where there was one, two triangular closets materialize where there were none. Some are decorative: curtains move from their usual window perch to become the backdrop of a theatrical stage. Some are human: audience members suddenly become performers, in subtly comical costumes, able to transform objects from one thing into another. But the best are, as always, the props: a half-dozen colorful custom packaway tables that, when grabbed at the handle—by those surprise performers—instantaneously go from flat thing to functioning table with a click-click-snap. Is it design? Is it art? It’s magic, that’s what it is, and if you think magic ain’t art, well, I’ve got a bunny just waiting to jump out of a hat and into your arms.



Sahand Heshmati Afshar

A maker of delicate and idiosyncratic objects that often reference food, the body, and their containers, Sahand Heshmati Afshar is also the holder of a fine sensibility about cultural appropriation. It is perhaps not entirely unexpected then, that when invited to host a dinner at 6018North as part of its Justice Hotel, a program of events organized on social justice themes, he would balk at simply presenting Iranian food for the taking. Because too much has historically been for the taking in terms of Iranian heritage, as evidenced in Afshar’s “OI Toilet Papers,” an installation that projects a slide image of Persian artifacts in the famed collection of the University of Chicago’s Oriental Institute above a globular arrangement of toilet paper rolls. It’s a shitty situation, in other words, and the twelve-plus guests at Afshar’s “Kolempheh” dinner were not going to get off easy. Instead of the cultural communion they were expecting, they got lettuce, raspberries, pepitas, engraved copper plumbing fittings and salt, plus black tea to enjoy. It could have been so much worse.



Xu Han

If our tears are fake, if we cannot be seen, are we still human? In her experiments, Xu Han poses these and other questions about the mysteries and assumptions that lie somewhere near the core of our understanding about what it means to be a person. For “Cocooned” she lived inside a giant handknit body-stocking, emerging only after twenty-one days of drinking through straws, being unable to speak, not caring how she looked, having severely limited vision, and needing immense amounts of help. Does any of that make her less than human? It may ironically have made her more so, by certain measures. In “Five Facts About Tears,” Han tries out a quintet of devices that use or alter tears to produce speculative gestures about our ocular discharge. One employs tiny fans to create a cooling effect via evaporation; another collects the tears for sprinkling on fruit; a third fills goggles up with saltwater until vision is occluded. And so it goes—our pain and suffering, the causes of crying, do indeed alter how we feel, the way we see, our capacity for enjoyment. It is to Han’s credit that she has found novel objects through which to express these observations.



Sara Abbaspour

What can a photograph really tell us about the people and the places delimited by its frame? If we no longer believe that the camera offers a window on a particular truth, nevertheless we continue to hope that in the accumulation of images, even sometimes in between them, others sorts of truths might be revealed. An ongoing portfolio of black and white pictures by the Iranian photographer Sara Abbaspour offers emblematically more than a simple description of its subjects: a boy twisting at a roadside, a young woman and her mother in the mirror, two women perched moodily on a rooftop at night, an empty lot, a boy lying across a sofa back, shadows at the top of a set of stairs, the bottom half of men sitting in a living room, forlorn women on a bus. Shot in the artist’s home country of Iran, the images taken individually are many of them quite poignant, but they mostly seem unrelated. Abbaspour, however, puts great faith in sequencing, and considered one after the other her photographs begin to tell stories about who can do what where, what we feel indoors and out, where we go and where we come from. Indeed, the very name of her series points to the importance of order and connections: ingeniously titled “II,” it begs the questions, what was “I” and will there be a “III?”

Apartment Show

Act 1

A Nokia camera phone held by Party Crasher is pointed at the floor and slowly pans up and to the right, to point to Famous Artist from Los Angeles, directing the other artists.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:
She a, she a pirate, kinda Rastafari.

Artist Lease Holder:
giggles nervously

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:
...and then like YO, she bring a computer...

Camera pans gradually counter-clockwise around room with artists sitting roughly in a circle, around a pile of disassembled furniture.

Another small group is off-center, half-heartedly noodling improvised noise on random instruments and non-music making objects.

Conceptual Painter:
No, take sketches.

Party Crasher:
Try to get everyone in fifteen seconds. Say something clever, something clever, big finish, three seconds...

Neo-Expressionist Painter:
Apparently we should always behappy and...

Camera pans slowly to the left and back around, to show same group improvising noise, now a tiny bit louder, more aggressive, and erratic after the first few rounds of cocktails.

Neo-Expressionist Painter:
Go big finish go big finish!

Party Crasher:
Alright, you've got three seconds...

Conceptual Painter:
(softly) Your Mom.

Party Crasher:
Two more seconds...

Conceptual Painter:
(even softer)Your Dad.

Act 2

Camera fixed on center of room on Famous Artist from Los Angeles, beginning vague ceremonial speech with flash bulbs going off intermittently.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:
I don't know. Look, do me a favor, everyone's doing everything each other, HYBRID STYLE (bows head).

Crowd:
Allllright.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:
New Midwest City HYBRID HEART MIND ONE STYLE, YEA!
(raises hands)

Camera pulls back: In the center of the room, Famous Artist from Los Angeles, awkwardly yet passionately playing bass hooked into smallish amplifier, while Artist Lease Holder watches carefully. Camera views a plant sculpture (plant on white pedestal) with Famous Artist from Los Angeles and Local Artists standing behind it.

*Famous Artist from Los Angeles
(raising fist):*
Cold lock man.

Conceptual Painter:
Boy or Girl?

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:
You are boy.

Artist That Makes Literally Nothing:
Hey Hey.

Artist Lease Holder:
Maybe you can play some music?

Camera on Famous Artist from Los Angeles playing bass again louder and more expressive. (Getting drunker.)

Crowd (singing):
Find it, get it, get some Chanel jackets..

Party Crasher: Yes Sir

Camera angled down facing Famous Artist from Los Angeles sitting on floor sloppily painting the pristine white pedestal blue green gray.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:
Get me a little more, man.

Local Museum Curator:
You alright?

Unpaid Assistant:
I got this blue.

Artist That Makes Literally Nothing:
I'm not trying to grab that one.

Act 3

Famous Artist from Los Angeles is finding it harder to paint pedestal and beginning to lose coordination. Local Museum Curator is crouched, laptop on knee, furiously typing in the background.

Artist Lease Holder:

You think Local Museum Curator is busy right now?

Party Crasher:

He left, he got a cab.

Group:

(laughs)

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:

What, I dunno, what?

Camera furtively panning around ground.

Stripes and /or Photorealist Painter:

He's in touch with his yoga.

Unpaid Assistant:

This is for you, right here.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:

(incoherent)

Unpaid Assistant:

This is your paint, it's good paint.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:

(slurring) Look... like... some shit.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles is encouraged to try to paint the pedestals again.

Party Crasher:

There's a peach, there's a peach there you could mix.

Unpaid Assistant:

You can mix colors.

Party Crasher:

No, there's a peach you can mix, um something.

Tiber and Materials Studies Artist:

Wait Wait Wait!

Famous Artist from Los Angeles

(energetically):

NO I DON'T NEED IT!

Act 4

Famous Artist from Los Angeles and Unpaid Assistant working on a painting off in the corner.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:

Pepepe Popopo, hohoho.

Unpaid Assistant:

What color?

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:

No nono, that looks good... let me finish this (mumble mumble).

Unpaid Assistant:

Now?

Camera same angle, wider shot Famous Artist from Los Angeles, slowly rubbing paint randomly on pedestal with wide brush, turning everything grey-green.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:

love to put it together eh.

Unpaid Assistant:

Come with a...

Famous Artist from Los Angeles, struggling to turn over pedestal, puts arm on not-turned over pedestal to rest, head down, ready to fall asleep.

Unpaid Assistant:

It's ok, whatever you do is fine, you know what, I'm gonna...

A coat is placed over Famous Artist from Los Angeles and Unpaid Assistant is consoling Famous Artist from Los Angeles.

Party Crasher:

Paintings, that's probably a good idea.

Unpaid Assistant:

What is that? What's that?

Party Crasher:

While we're still sharp, while we're still sharp ok, we're doing the paintings.

Camera pans around piled furniture, paintings are getting slowly brought over one by one. Famous Artist from Los Angeles has gone missing.

Party Crasher:

The piece is finito, it's over...

Neo-Expressionist Painter:

HE's arriving!

Artist That Makes Literally Nothing:

No no no.

Act 5

Camera centered on Local Museum Curator reading a printed-out email, flash bulbs going off.

Local Museum Curator:

with proceeds going to charity, please note...

Artist Lease Holder:

What charity?

Local Museum Curator:

It doesn't list.

Artist Lease Holder:

Uh, that's New York City Artist and Curator the Group Is Giving The Paintings To For Free, Minus Shipping.

Crowd:

(laughs)

Local Museum Curator:

The New York City Artist and Curator the Group Is Giving The Paintings To For Free, Minus Shipping Foundation.

Crowd:

(more laughs)

Local Museum Curator:

Please note, while the ...

Jump Cut

Local Museum Curator:

By submitting your paintings, you agree to the terms of this letter, you agree that the Big Important Museum of Art in New York City, Executive Director of Big Important Museum of Art in New York City, International Independent Curator invited to curate at Big Important Museum of Art in New York City, and any of their employees, and board members...

Jump Cut

Local Museum Curator:

So we ask that you sign below, and we've already done this, and return it back, tomorrow, and we'll keep you abreast of...

Jump Cut

Local Museum Curator:

Any further developments of the paintings' future, and certainly if you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me, being Communications Manager of Important Museum of Art in New York City, or my assistant.

Jump Cut

Local Museum Curator:

...at hotmail dot com.

Artist Lease Holder (sarcastically):

That's the only email they have.

Crowd:

laughs

Local Museum Curator:

so I have to coordinate...

Unpaid Assistant is painting over other people's work while group looks on, unsure of what to do.

Party Crasher:

Uh Oh, the hot glue gun, it's starting to smell! Oh no, it's ok, thought it was burning something.

Assistant:

(repeating) J...R... J...R...

Conceptual Painter:

Hey...

Camera cuts to Famous Artist from Los Angeles, now awake from being passed out, lovingly hugging Artist Lease Holder.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:

Thank You.

Artist Lease Holder:

Everyone, Thank You.

Famous Artist from Los Angeles:

Thank you Artist Lease Holder.

Party Crasher:

Everyone, let's thank Artist Lease Holder!

Everyone:

Thank You Artist Lease Holder!

Fin

Questions in Time:

Annette LePique



In our current moment, Chicago's artists and creators find themselves exhaustingly entrenched within the gig economy, where artist-run spaces and projects commonly exist in liminal zones of financial and programmatic instability. Neoliberalism's acceleration has only illuminated how the

Looking

endeavor to make and create within the art economy is demarcated by racism, classism, and technological isolation, ie the art world's role in gentrification, the exclusionary cost of many MFA programs, the growing scarcity of funding, and the fleetingness of social capital within the attention economy. Uncertainty and anxiety permeate our current moment. We live in a constant state of reckoning. How can one meaningfully create and work while maintaining a constructive and reparative critique of one's own complicity within systems of oppression? In a maze of disenfranchisement, how can the art world be a roadmap for advocacy? Is such change even possible?

have we met the changes that have formed the early aughts? Where can we go in 2020 and beyond? I shift the focus of my questions to artists and arts communities, in order to illuminate how we have met scarcity and continue to face our own complicity and investment in inequality. It is through this people-powered lens that I intend to explore the growth, resilience, and advocacy of the makers and thinkers of this city. I intend to delve into how Chicago's ecosystem of art and artists has changed over the last decade. Where are we now, where have we been?

In order to understand this interplay of time, anxiety, change, and art, I spoke to Eric May of Roots & Culture and Alden Burke and Stephanie Koch of Annas about the struggles, successes, trials and tribulations of their spaces. Roots & Culture has been a part of the Noble Square and West Town communities for more than a decade, and Annas is heading into their second year of programming and artist residencies in Pilsen. I asked May, Burke, and Koch the same questions as a means to pinpoint moments of interchange, convergence, and divergence between Roots and Annas. I hope that providing a forum for two spaces at different moments within their lifetimes depicts how artists in this city have met, critiqued, and overcome the challenges we face. As I hope for the artists' words to speak for themselves, it is my intent for the conversation below to embody the generosity and reciprocity of Artists Run Chicago. It is also my hope that this piece illustrates how their respective vision, creation, and determination are what give this city its beating, achingly alive heart.

Interview with Eric May

AL How do you create and conceive of Roots & Culture's multi-faceted approach to programming: the CONNECT and Double Exposure proposals, alongside exhibitions and openings? How has the process changed in the last ten years?

EM CONNECT is the older of the two programs, though it has also evolved the most. In our earliest days (2006-2007) I did most of the curating, though I felt that it would be appropriate to mix things up and invite outside curators to propose shows, so that was our first submission-based program. And for the most part, it simply ran like that for about eight years. Emerging curators would propose shows, and we'd run one or two of them per year.

I do not know the answers to these questions. However, I do believe that there is something—a hint, a clue, a discovery—to be uncovered within an examination of time and how it has shaped us, for better or worse. How

A Caroline Dahlberg, Mariel Harari, Azalea Henderson, Maggie Wong, and 12 dinner guests, a yolk, suspended, vestiges from a performative dinner, 2019, wood, wrapped polyester, pewter, hollow egg, muscle memory, dimensions variable. Twelve yellowed sheets with artists' texts are positioned in four vertical lines of three. Abstract smears of blue, purple, and brown paint mark the sheets in a random pattern. Post-its with lines of artists' text are positioned on several of the sheets and marked by paint. Photo courtesy of Annas



Together

Back & Ahead



B

I'd like to think that the work we do at Roots at least suggests an alternative, redistributive model to the insecurity of the art economy.



There's an apartment in the mezzanine space above the kitchen, where I lived until 2014. When I moved out, this opened up the opportunity to run a residency, which is something I had always considered in the back of my mind. So we re-imagined CONNECT as a summer curatorial residency, which kicked off in 2016. After the 2017 season, our programming committee evaluated who the residency was serving; the first two residents were both women of color. And taking into consideration the current moment of assessing representation and equity, we identified a need to prioritize opportunities for historically underserved people.

Double Exposure was launched at the onset of 2008, when we were granted our nonprofit status and began behaving more like a proper institution, establishing a board of directors and mission-specific programming. Serving emerging artists has always been our focus and we saw a lack of high profile opportunities for artists at this stage of their careers, though we like to keep the term "emerging" as inclusive as possible and not discriminate by age or educational background. Group shows seemed to be the springboard for many early career artists—which can be great, but are often confined by space limitations and the conceit of the curator. So we wanted to offer something meatier. On the other hand, we liked the idea of the dialogue that happens when bodies of work are shown in proximity to one another. So the answer was a two-person exhibition series.

We admit both proposals from pairs of artists who have chosen to submit together and solo submissions that our programming committee matches up. We really like the range of possibilities that happens with this flexibility—the duos that apply are often more collaborative, but we also like the tension and contradictions that happen when we bring together two artists who may be unfamiliar with each others work.

AL What are some challenges, learning experiences, and successes Roots and Culture has encountered over the last ten years? How do you envision Roots & Culture within the cultural landscape of Noble Square and Chicago?

EM Ugh, of course the major challenge is always money. Receiving our 501(c)(3) status the same year as the market crash was a tough one. Even in the current (supposedly) strong economy, it doesn't seem like foundations and government agencies have rebounded funding to a bygone era of robustly funded small to medium organizations. We've had to rely mostly on the generosity of our community to stay afloat—to this day our spring benefit and individual donations account for 75% of our revenue. On one hand, it's never enough to do everything we'd like to, but on the other, it's heartwarming to feel so loved!

I'll never live down when Martine Syms called us the "suburban basement of the Chicago art world," and now I can admit she was right. The vision I had for the space was always "community-centered," but for our first few years that meant my immediate social circle, which was mostly white dudes chugging beer and slamming chicken wings after hours. But our constituency opened up as we started to accept proposals and grew our reach. Now I make friends through the program rather than making programs for my friends. These days, I like to think we serve as a welcoming hub and a significant giver of opportunities to the Chicago emerging art community.

In terms of the neighborhood, Noble Square is funny. It's only, like, four blocks by three blocks. The Milwaukee Avenue corridor and West Town area have long been home to art spaces, and I see us as a part of a rich history.

AL How has gentrification impacted your space and programming? How has Roots & Culture negotiated being both a communal space and, like all cultural producers, a potential agent of the gentrification process? How do you navigate those challenges?

EM I can't say that gentrification has impacted us, per se. I mean, the rental market has gone up in the neighborhood, but from our relatively privileged position, it has not impacted us to the point of discussing relocating or anything.

I think about how we might contribute to gentrification though—

The gallery is located on a commercial corridor with a 40-year history of being home to DIY art spaces. We chose this location intentionally. Of course, we have neighbors, and a lot of them are fancy condo developments. However, much of the east side of Milwaukee, from the highway up to Division, is a housing cooperative that dates to 1970, with many original occupants. It's a largely African American community. I can admit that we have not done enough to welcome them into the space. For several years, my



friend, artist Mike Wolf lived in the basement at R&C while he was working on his second show at the gallery "Hey, We're All Beginners Here." Part of the mission of the show was an effort to increase accessibility to the space, including for the immediate neighbors. He offered open mic events that were pretty successful at engaging folks from the coop. I lament that we haven't been able to carry Mike's torch with his project. This is a weak excuse, but we just don't have the human resources to establish and maintain outreach with the coop's community. We need another Mike Wolf!

We largely chose our neighborhood for its centrality and accessibility to public transportation and major roads, so that we could be accessible to wide ranging communities. Our demographic is not neighborhood-specific, but rather a community of shared culture, interests, and values.

I honestly believe that most of the art economy is complicit in gentrification. A significant and dominant demographic of the art world, middle to upper class people with art degrees, has the privilege to pursue this precarious career path. And whether seeking an "authentic" artist lifestyle or limited by scarce paychecks, many artists look for affordable rents in lower income neighborhoods. But it was ultimately a choice for most artists to live in these neighborhoods, while many folks who live there did not have that choice.

I'd like to think that the work we do at Roots at least suggests an alternative, redistributive model to the insecurity of the art economy—offering artists career-boosting opportunities and straight-up cash for their labor. We hope to provide a model for a more equitable, sustainable art economy, and we know we have more work to do. In a broader vision of this world, maybe artists can find more flexibility and thoughtfulness in their housing choices.

AL Where will Roots & Culture go from here? What's next?

EM After 13 years, our program is running pretty smoothly. We always hope to provide more resources to artists—I'd love to double our stipends, and offer professional services and mentorship, like regular studio visits. If we had more staffing resources, I could envision more shoulder programming, like regular artist talks and community discussions. We hope to keep on keeping on for at least another 13 years!

Interview with Alden Burke & Stephanie Kock

AL How do you both create and conceive of Annas' multi-faceted approach to programming: the collaborative residences, events and happening rooted in community building practice, and other ongoing programs alongside Annas' exhibitions and openings?

AB When conceiving Annas, Stephanie and I wanted the space to be a living, breathing representation of what we are curious about: collaborative making through flexible, process-based structures. That meant creating a multifunctional concept that unfolds and responds to what we learn during any program that Annas works on. To achieve this, we consider Annas as a site, a collective, and a person.

As a site, the spatial design of Annas is malleable, and transforms to the needs of its program. It is both studio and gallery, dining room and institution. As a collective, Annas is a growing network of collaborators, each of whom expand what Annas might be through their own capacity to imagine, produce and facilitate what Stephanie and I never could. For example, the focus on intimacy building over dinners grew out of the first cohort (Caroline Dahlberg, Mariel Harari, Azalea Henderson, and Maggie Wong), iterating on what a collaborative exhibition looks like started with The Overlook (Jenn Sova and Graham Feyl), and evolved with Flatland (Curt Miller and Chris Reeves). The arm of pop-up programs materialized with Doodle Jam (Logan Kruidenier), and will continue to evolve in 2020.



B

B CONNECT Curator-in-residence Catherine Feliz, with work by Manal Kara, show "Mutant Dust Bunnies", 8/2019. In frame Feliz holds the edges of a piece by Manal Kara. Kara's work is hung aloft by a metal chain. The piece is sculptural, composed of a clear lucite material in a softly rectangular shape with translucent bumps and swirls dominating its body. Deconstructed letters and stains are placed throughout the piece. The letter and stains are various shades of grey and brown. A sliver of a black and white photograph peeks out from behind Feliz's profile right frame. Two figures are in the photograph. Photo courtesy of Roots & Culture

C In front of a trapdoor, an iteration of Doodle Jam, a series of quick, fun drawing sessions produced by Logan Kruidenier. Tables of four to five gallery visitors participate in artist Logan Kruidenier's community program Doodle Jame. The crowd sits around three large cardboard structures. At each structure, each person utilizes markers and other tools to sketch and doodle on post-it notes. These post-its are then displayed in a free, associative arrangement on the gallery's white walls. Photo courtesy of Annas

Lastly, we like to think of Annas as a person in itself. To us, Annas is someone who constantly finds inspiration and energy in the people they are surrounded by, someone who wants to invite friends into their home and get to know each other over dinner. But Annas is also someone who is curious and eager to explore the communities and happenings in Chicago. Annas is someone who wants to learn from new environments, contexts, and expertise.

For Stephanie and I, a driving programmatic philosophy during this whole process is to listen to Annas and let the space tell us what is possible, what can be challenged, and who to reach out to along the way.

AL What are some challenges, learning experiences, and successes Annas has encountered over the last year? How do you both envision Annas within the cultural landscapes of Pilsen and Chicago?

SK A lot of what Alden and I think about are the constraints that make artistic production difficult, particularly for emerging makers, and how to think of those constraints as generative prompts: lack of funds, supplies, and studio space; maintaining energy and creativity while balancing multiple hustles and everyday stress and relationships; and time management, as in dedicating time to an ideal of productiveness. Those challenges that we recognized in artists and from which we created Annas, manifested in their own versions as challenges that we've faced in our first year, like budgeting and funding; not overextending ourselves; and checking in and communicating expectations between each other, our residents, and collaborators.

Directors of independent spaces know the drill. Because of the innate scrappiness of the project and the low to no funds, you're the director of the space, but you're also the social media intern, custodian, accountant, bouncer, manager of development, art handler, and preparator. You wear all the hats. And additionally, by nature of what Annas is, this process is self-reflexive, improvisational, and focused on attending to the human-scale. We're constantly evaluating, responding, and rebuilding. That requires a level of energy and attention that, if we're not careful of ourselves and each other, can burn us out. And we have burned out a few times. We took a month off to rest. We don't have a regular calendar or administrative infrastructure that could add some ease. There are some constants, like the physical space and our values, but for each program or residency cycle, a lot is built from scratch.

Of course, Annas faces the challenges that all art spaces face, like money, time and peoplepower. But on an everyday level of what that looks like, and how crazy our schedules can get when we both also work a regular 40-hour week job; and every night has some kind of meeting, studio visit or program for Annas; and two friends have exhibition openings this weekend, and we want to be supportive and attend all of those; but then

Annas' walls need to be repainted before Sunday so we can be on time for our exhibition install, and now Annas has a leak that is squidging out a mysterious thick, brown liquid onto our freshly-painted wall; and I need to call my mom back; and Alden is moving into a new apartment, etc. etc. etc.; our biggest challenge folds into what has been a great learning experience, which is: remembering to take care of ourselves and each other, and how that needs to be a priority so we can hold and take care of others.

This last year has also been a self-directed crash course in arts administration. When Alden and I conceived of Annas, we reached out to directors of spaces that did great work like Roman Susan, Candor Arts, ACRE, The Overlook, Public Access, Experimental Sound Studio, and others to learn from their experiences and how and why they built the spaces they did. Beyond the practical knowledge we gained from them, we learned and continuously appreciate the generosity of the Chicago arts community, and that seems uniquely a Chicago spirit. Every person we reached out to was very generous and supportive, and more often than not became a friend. We learned that those informal moments shared over a coffee or a beer are not only informative but nourishing, and encouraged us to keep moving and be creative, so we tried to fold that spirit into Annas' values.

Annas' name comes from a similar informal moment. When Alden and I began talking about our space, we were more acquaintances, and one day, casually chatting in-between meetings, we discovered that both of our closest friends are named Anna. And that was a wonderful connection moment where, if I can be cheesy, it felt like a deeper friendship began. So the name commemorates that moment, points to an intention to create similar moments between makers, and is also a feeling. When each of us go to our Annas home, it is a place to be ourselves, to be vulnerable, to be creative in unexpected ways, to explore, and to feel supported and understood. And we aim to foster those feelings for anyone that comes to Annas.

Beyond the opportunities that we've been able to build for ourselves, when a job market is not as providing as we'd like, the greatest success is the affinities between the first cohort of residents. Caroline, Mariel, Azalea, and Maggie didn't know each other when their residency started, and throughout and at the end, to see the amount of love, trust and creativity between and within each member was amazing and truly indescribable. When Alden and I shared the meaning of Annas, the cohort said they felt we definitely accomplished what we set out to do, and that they felt those feelings at Annas through conceptual and practical infrastructure. So our greatest success is not only that we fulfilled our intentions, but that we did so in a way that created meaning and lasting relationships for others.

A lot of what Alden and I think about are the constraints that make artistic production difficult, particularly for emerging makers, and how to think of those constraints as generative prompts: lack of funds, supplies, and studio space; maintaining energy and creativity while balancing multiple hustles and everyday stress and relationships; and time management, as in dedicating time to an ideal of productiveness.



C

C Mike Wolf performance at Wolf's show "Hey, We're All Beginners Here!" 8/2010. Artist stands on stage in front of a white and blue background. The blue portion of the background contains one large orange triangle positioned at the same height as the artist's head. On stage with the artist there are two singers and a seated drummer. A guitar player and keyboardist play in front of the stage closer to the foreground. Audience members can be seen near the bottom of the frame. Photo courtesy of Roots & Culture

AL How has gentrification impacted your space and programming? How does Annas negotiate being both a communal space and, like all cultural producers, potential agents of the gentrification process? How do you both navigate those challenges?

AB This is something we're regularly grappling with: who is Annas for? Starting Annas right after both finishing grad programs, our immediate community to work with and from was one that makes up a good chunk of Chicago's art world: artists with graduate degrees, a lot of whom are coming out of SAIC. While this network has been invaluable to shaping Annas, we have to continually remind ourselves to step outside the circles we know—and this takes time, because it's easy to pull from the incredible artists immediately around us.

Being located in Pilsen further complicates the question of who Annas is for. We inherited our space from Prairie Gallery (now on Cermak near Damen), and moved into an industrial building filled with artists. The place was ideal for us because (a) it has an art space history so people knew where it is, (b) it is affordable for the two of us to pay rent—\$420 total, plus utilities, (c) it is near public transportation, and (d) it is within walking distance of several other new or deeply established art spaces—ACRE, Lithium, Baby Blue, and Chicago Art Department, to name a few. For us, especially being so new, running a space in Pilsen was a huge asset, and we felt a sense of comradeship and alignment with the affiliated neighborhood spaces that was important for us as we were learning what Annas might be.

But now with a year of experience, we're starting to peek our heads out of the 600 square foot tunnel we've lived in for the first year, and are, with greater focus, considering the larger landscape(s) that Annas operates with/in, and strengthening the relationships we have with our Pilsen neighbors, art spaces or otherwise.

AL Where will Annas go from here? What's next?

SK "Here" is an interesting word for Annas. Our foundation is based on three points: exhibiting process, creating structures to support collaboration, and foregrounding vulnerability and empathy. But the rest of Annas' architecture, conceptually and practically, is flexible and constantly moving, and that flexibility is intentional, so that we're always responding to the people and work in front of us, and creating the structures (programming, administration, exhibitions, publications, etc.) from there. So, to think of Annas' "here," our current place from where we're going, is interesting because our "here" is constantly shifting and contingent and our movement from "here" is thoughtfully improvised. And we find that place to be really generative. During our last meeting, Alden and I talked about how much we've been able to accomplish in the last year, and how many

people became friends and collaborators, beyond what we could visualize and plan, and to think of where we'll be this time next year feels impossible to imagine, in a really exciting way.

But that's a roundabout answer. We have a calendar and plan for 2020, and within that we hold space for collaborative opportunities and potentials that may come our way. And when creating that calendar, we discussed questions within Annas' values (collaboration) and in our personal practices (for Alden, educational models and syllabi as a studio practice, for me, institution-building as a curatorial practice) that we want to explore, and how can we fold that into our 2020 year. In the short-term, we're focusing on our 2020 residency (to begin in mid-January and run through July) and thinking through and with the six residents: How can collaboration hold across distance? And we're doing that work through a syllabus beginning with the simple question of "What is reading? What is writing?" Annas' residency is a way for Alden and myself to practice what we're individually interested in, interleaving with the interests and works of our residents.

When Alden and I started Annas, we decided on a few values that were, and continue to be, important to us, but we also let Annas tell us what she wanted to be. For a moment, it seemed like a gallery, then a project space, and now it seems to be a residency. But considering that our residents are Chicago-based, what does it mean to be in-residence in your home and everyday life? Annas' form seems to be moving naturally toward becoming a kind of school (school in the gooiest sense) predicated on empathy, human-scale, and horizontal knowledge production. Annas might be settling into her final form, or we might move into another kind of shape.

Long-term, we're thinking through scale. And not so much a hierarchical scale with a capitalist impulse, such as scaling up what we do at Annas, and making Annas bigger, and an institution in the traditional sense. We are thinking about scaling out and with. There are so many other people who are thinking through learning, (arts) education, and other forms of pedagogy in creative ways. Focusing on Annas' value of collaboration, we're working on how to scale out the methods and intentions of what we do at Annas, bringing that into other spaces and inviting others to come into ours, and co-mingling with what other makers and small arts organizations are also thinking about learning and togetherness. 2020 is about scaling out and with.

Permission, Parasites, *Profit,* & *Prostitution*



James Schenck &
Margaret Welsh

The Setup

For a few intoxicating days, Chicago becomes the epicenter of the art world—and with it comes a dense gravity. Community, Spectacle, Academia, and the ultra-polished opportunities The Fairs seem to promise are all squashed into a few square blocks of this beast of a city. It's exhilarating and terrifying.

As artists, we not only strive to make great work, but we also long to share our work—to engage in the Great Art Dialogue—be seen—be heard. This desire pulls on us, teases us, even breaks us, and it is never as disruptively felt as in the full presence of the Global Art Market.

Engagement is the lifeblood for an artist. The activation a viewer provides, a shared experience, and the transference of ideas provides fertile ground for art to thrive. Communities and artist-run spaces pop up like flowers—nurtured, fed, challenged, and directed by an often-unfelt entity. It has become the air, the currency, the cage, the glue that shapes this fertile ground into gods and golems. Am I locked in? Out? Words like “invitation,” “fee,” “cannon,” “juried,” “star,” “booth,” “record-breaking,” “private,” and “does not accept unsolicited submissions” feed like mosquitoes.

As the shadow looms closer and larger over the city, my feelings of alienation rise. Our practice comes under question. We seem to lack permission to engage. Looking for a point of exit/entry becomes frustrating (if not futile) as money makes stakes high in this brave new world.

The Room

It is called “ROOM,” in reference to where it takes place, AND the critically important space needed for artists in the art world. In a proud and transparent way, we aim to connect our work and our selves with old friends, and engage new ones in the ever-evolving global art community. We called it a “pop-up installation,” as branding norms dictate, but it feels like something else: a disruption, something more urgent, honest, playful, and raw. A place we created as close to the assumed epicenter as we could get.

We work under the mantra
“Just show up and stay open.”
Showing up: We bring our whole selves to a specific place and time.
Staying open: We see, listen, and take in what is there.

In this “ROOM,” we are showing up for our work. We are open to our work. With our own permission, we were staying “shown up” and “open” for our friends, our community, our world, and, ultimately, our market.

The Work

“ROOM” wasn’t a preconceived terminus. We believe it to be an ongoing process. “ROOM” grew (and grows) quickly and quietly where defeatism meets loopholes. We had been looking for the elusive path that would lead us in, welcome us to the Show of Shows with open arms. A bridge that could grant us passage, that connects local artists to a global event. That bridge didn’t exist.

Looking to engage the GLOBAL ART WORLD that would soon descend from the heavens like a holy moth swarm towards the bright, flashing lights of the Fair shouldn’t be that hard, right? An open studio? Maybe a few studios in the building work together to throw a party? Maybe even a local gallery or two would participate? We put out feelers. CRICKETS. We put out more feelers. Gloomy crickets that explained how “Nobody would come anyway,” hinting at a fixed game.

We could hear the discouragement rumbling within the polite criticism of the art fair scene as we approached other artists and galleries around East Garfield. There were general feelings of alienation—physical, financial, conceptual. As we pitched different ideas, we could hear the anxiety about the juice being worth the squeeze, and the ROI on just setting up a face: rent a shuttle, find a security guard, can we build enough sizzle to make a blip on the radar? We also heard the fear of not being there: Who are we if we don’t participate? It’s the next big step for any emerging artist, right? How can you be anything without a booth? We heard a lot about money: Fairs are just for buying, it is a pure dog and pony show... How are THEY showing there? We didn’t hear much about the art, especially local art, and we didn’t hear anything about the artist. Most of them seemed to be going dormant for the weekend. We realized there was a polarization happening—pro fair and anti fair—and no inbetween. Those who ignore it, and those who buy in. We saw a parasitic pattern, and we saw an opportunity.

There was the Fair. There was the sub-Fair. There was

the sub-sub Fair... Why couldn’t we just hitch a ride too?

Our simple quest for visibility had accelerated us into an exploration of the artist’s role in a market-dominated system. Where is our space? Who pays for it? Who is granting the permission? We conceived the project at the intersection of art and access.

There was a conceptual question within the dominant practical question:

“How do I connect with the art world?”

Our plan was to tackle the practical to understand the conceptual.

With a quick Google search and \$750, we positioned ourselves with a room for the weekend in the same hotel where an art fair would also be hosting rooms right down the street from the primary art fair. We were even closer than that other art fair.

In the weeks leading up to “ROOM”, we dove deep into the act of what we were doing. The “disruption” of our presence and all the overtones it may have, our favorite being the “Art Prostitute”—holed up in a hotel room, we would hand out self-made key cards to coyly invite people up to look at work.

Centered on the Body, the work evokes the vulnerability of the artist, and echoes the pleasures one may seek when engaging in the adventure travel cum circuit party that the Fairs provide. Margaret Welsh’s yonic “bed spread” dominates the room. An open, inviting view that brings into focus the “quid pro quo” that may take place. James Schenck’s collages surround the bed and spill into the bathroom, their masculine content urging the viewer around the space. There’s a risky, rebellious feeling of a rock ‘n’ roll hotel party.

The night after we installed the work, we sat proudly in the room, surrounded by the work now living in that space. We mused about what people would think. Was it rude? Was it aggressive? Feedback has been positive—encouraging even, but you never know. Ideas of private and public come up... do we even want people in our space?

“ROOM 715” became the conceptual and literal heart of our installation.

The Burn

It was a lofty idea. It was a fantastic idea. It was a “Why didn’t I think of THAT?” idea. It was a stupid idea. It was an expensive idea. It was a brave idea. It was born out of excitement, necessity, pride, privilege, desperation, anxiety, terror, and hope. We were Chicago-based artists lucky enough to live in a city where (now) TWO major art fairs are drawing in global audiences to live out art fantasies. We bought the tickets, we finalized our gala looks, we blocked out our work calendars. Not cheap, but in for a penny in for a pound. We got the room. We filled the room.

The morning of the 20th we open up... Live from INSIDE the Art World!!

Fifteen minutes in, just as we were having the room documented—we receive a knock at the door: Representatives from The Hotel.

We are asked to take everything down—from the “ROOM,” from Instagram. We were told only four people are even allowed in the room at once.

After a brief but informative conversation that we only half heard due to the sounds of our artistic pride crumbling in our minds, we negotiated permission to keep what was in the room up. After all, even third class paying customers had the right to do what they wanted within the confines of their own room.

There we sat like Icarus, melted wings and all. We had flown too close to the sun for the comfort of all invested. It was made clear that we lacked the appropriate permission to be “there.” It became obvious that our role as artists was to produce, not to participate.

We let this all sink in as our day dragged on. Our beacon of a room became our own prison cell. Quarantined away from the action—tolerated, but barely.

We never get a single call from the front desk announcing a visitor.

Visitors tell us that they were discouraged from coming up. “Illegal.” “Not part of this.” Some were denied access to the elevator.

The Aftermath

In the days following “ROOM” we began to question our actions. Wasn’t the “shut-down” exactly what we needed? An action against the artist that could be used as a political weapon? We could make signs, we could protest... but that wasn’t what our work was about.

We created “ROOM” to ask questions, not to make a single statement.

We went in curious and excited to see if there could be a place for the artist in an art world that is dominated by a market. What we found was an entity more insidious that we had imagined. By exploring art and access we had stumbled upon a dangerous path of permissions. All along the way are gatekeepers that promise legitimization via the use of capital.

As the art world becomes global, priorities begin to shift and aesthetic is dictated by need. Pieces that are an appropriate size—portable, and an appropriate color—saleable begin to rise. As sales increase, criteria begin to form—criteria that legitimize and re-legitimize themselves. These criteria become the keys to access. These criteria satisfy the gatekeepers for permission. These criteria can become profitable for the artist but debilitating to the artistic spirit.

It is in the shadow of the Market that the spirit of the artist can glow brightest. The visibility of what we became galvanized the moment we were placed into, in proximity of what we were not. We were artists, not just producers, and we are risk takers. We should be proud of that. Taking risks is at the core of what we as artists do, and risks benefit every corner of the art world except one—where work is currency and a gamble could take it all down. As there is a limited place for the artist in the market, it becomes critically important not to allow the art market to dominate the art world, and to activate spaces that acknowledge and work against the market systems. Moving forward, we believe that “ROOM” can ignite the celebration of the artist, and empower other artist-run spaces to grow their missions beyond the confines of sales-driven events, WITH the full support of the established market(s).

Chicago is a big city with a rich arts culture full of diverse artists. While art fairs can be fantastic, we have to appreciate that they are not the end-all.

It is the artist that makes the magic, and the enduring need to spread that magic is what makes the art world so exciting and important. As for-profit institutions reinvest in ways to keep bottling and selling that magic, artist-run spaces become even more critical. We need spaces and maps to take us away from systems that divide and alienate the artist and lead us towards places of community, creativity, and risk.

It is with “ROOM” that we celebrate the Artist, that we celebrate making room for ourselves, and that we celebrate not asking permission.

“If I look at the different choices of how to spend your life, it seems interesting to find a way where you hire yourself.. not quite hire yourself. where you give yourself your own program. I’m doing my own assignments—that’s my definition of art, actually. Art isn’t a material. It’s not a medium. It’s not a certain product. It is the choices I’ve been able to make.”

—Liz Magor

HOW TO START & RUN A DIY ARTSPACE

NON-PROFIT
= ALL THE PAPERWORK

1. BE PRESENT
2. FOLLOW THROUGH
3. COMMUNICATE
4. LEARN

MAINTENANCE IS A
* VIRTUE *

1. HUSTLE EVERY DAY
2. FUNDRAISE
3. HAVE YOU SEEN OUR

\$ HOW DO WE PAY FOR IT? PATREON? *WINK*
- DUES - @ AGITATOR GALLERY

PARTICIPATE

REPEAT

- * GROUP TEXTS
 - * GROUP MEETINGS
 - * GROUP HUGS
- 

♥ = COMMUNITY

"IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME"



FIND YOUR
100 TYPE OF CRAZY

(DIFFICULT PEOPLE ≠ CHALLENGING PEOPLE)



FIND A SPACE

HOST

- EXHIBITIONS
- LECTURES
- ARTIST TALKS
- MUSIC
- PERFORMANCE
- WORKSHOPS
- POP-UPS
- ANYTHING THAT UPHOLDS OUR MISSION

A SIDEWALK
AN ATTIC, A FENCE
YOUR SCHOOL, YOUR ROOM
THE INTERNET, A GALLERY

SCHEDULE



BE ON TOP
* OF THAT
GOOGLE
CALENDAR!

HANG UP ART

HOW MANY CO-OPERATIVE MEMBERS DOES IT TAKE TO

- * CHANGE A LIGHT BULB
- * CLEAN THE TOILET
- * DO THE DISHES
- * THROW OUT MOLDY FOOD



EXHIBIT
THOUGHT PROVOKING

ART THAT AGITATES
- OR CAMPAIGNS TO PROVOKE -
DIALOG AND PROMOTE DIVERSITY
WHILE RESPECTING EACH OTHERS
SELF IDENTITY



- SPACKLE
- PAINT
- DRILL
- MEASURE
- HANG



Public Access was a multi-use project space in Humboldt Park (3306 W. North Avenue), collaboratively run by Abbye Churchill, Keeley Haftner, David Hall, and Greg Ruffing. The space was active from 2016 to 2018, during which time we organized exhibitions, publications, performances, film screenings, readings, artist talks, music events, and other public programming. There was a hoped-for play on the concept of Public Access TV, and its historical ability to generate “non-commercial” content positioned toward rarified and cult values. We were seeking to enable discursive platforms through less conventionally attenuated forms. As someone else once said, the objective is not necessarily to make gold, but to become golden. Public Access was, after all, a “storefront.” Not quite, but a promise of fetish. The space received one 5-star Google review as a gallery, and one 1-star review as a printing store with disappointing hours.

Public Access

Abbye Churchill,
Keeley Haftner, David Hall,
Greg Ruffing



A
Exterior view of the exhibition Standards Variance, featuring contributions from 32 artists and non-artists which were rotated weekly between the gallery walls and the storefront windows. May - June 2017. Photo courtesy of Public Access.

GREG Chicago’s lineage of artist-run spaces and apartment galleries had a major influence on my thinking about what Public Access could be. For a few years prior I was organizing events at The Perch, a publishing project and sometimes exhibition space started by Matt Austin out of an apartment in Pilsen—an early foray for me into alternative programming. Additionally, getting to know some folks from Mess Hall (and their “gift economy” ethos) or Axe Street Arena (and their experiments on the margins of art and politics), as well as spending time at spaces like Threewalls, The Hills, ADDS DONNA, or The Franklin, provided a number of instructive models. One major takeaway was seeing how different organizers navigated between their own studio practices and expanded curatorial practices, which resonated with my own aims to articulate something in the interstices of artist / writer / curator.

At its core, Public Access was simultaneously a site for showing and making: a platform to feature other artists’ practices, but also a backroom studio for our own work. In addition to monthly exhibitions, we succeeded—and sometimes failed—at a variety of different uses for the space, including dinners organized by David, music and multimedia events in our basement, publication launches, local fundraisers, and occasional spilling into the studio to accommodate artist talks or performances. Knowing that our converted storefront—tucked between a beauty supply store and an evangelical church—had also most recently been an insurance office, then a record store, felt apropos for pursuing such a multiplicity.

Perhaps fittingly, people told us that there was sometimes confusion about what our storefront actually was. This could certainly be a negative if it made the space feel less accessible or led to disengagement.

In another sense though, the fact that it didn’t immediately translate as an art gallery was also a small way of limiting its gentrifying potency, and disappointing any landlord who hoped our presence would inherently catapult the cultural cache of the block.

Artist-run culture still unfolds in broader social and spatial contexts—our modified warehouses, storefronts, and back units exist within the daily flow of neighborhood lives and spaces. Just as the arts may reckon with important questions about power dynamics, representation and appropriation, so too should we keep an eye on the hyper-local footprint of our spaces of production, and vigilantly monitor our complicity in the profit schemes of greedy developers and real estate speculators.

KEELEY The personal pixie dust I sprinkled on Public Access was a mandate for care, be it for artists or for the space itself. In my own practice, I care with my labour, and as a Canadian artist, I am used to (and indeed, expect that) artistic labour is paid for. In Canada, Canadian Artists’ Representation / Le Front des artistes canadiens (CARFAC) is the non-voluntary W.A.G.E. equivalent, which any institution receiving funds from the Canada Council for the Arts is obligated to honour. It has a straightforward fee structure that leaves no uncertainty as to what artistic labour is minimally worth. In the US, no such system exists, as a result of a lack of successive governmental support going back nearly 40 years.

Public Access had no source of funding other than the pockets of the four artists who founded it. But each of us did as much extra paid and unpaid labour as we could so that, in spite of our inability to provide artist fees, at the very least our artists incurred no major extra costs. For me, this meant driving

artist Tammi Campbell's painting across the border between Canada and the US, stripping down and reupholstering my apartment furniture to exhibit Karen Reimer's alphabetized romance novel, and lending the gallery my own television to exhibit !Mediengruppe Bitnik's "Random Darknet Shopper." This kind of tenacity has its own aesthetic—one that in our case endeavoured to appear as professional and intentional as possible, and yet always had a dash of DIY and personal taste. I remember an established artist I admired telling me Karen would hate the way I installed her work. If Karen felt that way, she kindly never expressed it. At Public Access, as in many other artist-run spaces, where funds run out and labour makes up the difference, care becomes visual.

In the United States, the powerlessness of being in a system that is the opposite of care—that snubs its nose at maintenance and actively fears social infrastructure—can be felt in every aspect of society. My question for Chicago, a city that has managed to eke out an attitude toward culture that is politically counter to much of the country, is how can some of its impressive surge of artist-run initiatives begin to stand the test of time? What needs to be fought for, on a local, state-wide, and national level, in order for W.A.G.E. to be more than a pipe dream honoured voluntarily through the sweat and blood of the few? What do artist-runs look like when they do (or don't) have budgets to pay and play? What is the aesthetic of tenacity, and is it really all that pretty?

DAVID My initial interest in participating and contributing to an artist-run space was an interest in the genre itself. The distinction "artist-run" already opens possible forms of functioning and organizing, from its principles to its executions. Perhaps most importantly, this distinction granted me, and by extension each other, permission to take further unknown risks, to allow myself to stay an artist while attempting something else too.

As I embraced being an artist who curates, I framed my role closely to presenting a platform for artists that I admire, in the form of a gift: a collectively self-assembled space in which the possibility of the work can exist. This platform in the form of a gift also fed my desire to approach artists whose work I knew, when I had yet to be acquainted with the artist themselves. The gift was not only a matter of resource-sharing, which is still deeply needed, but also an approach to how the work is made and shown, an opening of the space to be more conversational and reflect its porousness. I was committed to making the work by means of showing, or showing the work by means of making: to show and make in the same act. In this way, Public Access became a literal and metaphorical meeting point, a kind of third mind where the gift became the work through the act of meeting.

The general momentum of our collective work and ambitions also allowed for inter-institutional relationships, so these meeting points could extend beyond our

physical space. We shared audiences, when schedules allowed, with our neighbors ADDS DONNA and 65 Grand, and after producing our second and final set of publications, we coordinated with the late Sector 2337 to host our book launch, which included performances, readings, and screenings. Some of these encounters, both intra- and inter-institutional, led to other futures after the life of Public Access. What I admire most about artist-run spaces, such as the ways in which a non-curator curates, or a platform in the form of a gift, are the allowances they provide so that one can meet, show, and make the work.

ABBYE The desire to create an artist-run space must come out of some necessity. Or else why do it? For me, the formation of Public Access was something like a necessity to tendrill out. We were four graduate students exiting the institution, looking to maintain connection, rigor, and critical conversation to propel our work forward through shared resources. Simultaneously, I saw that the same thing that makes Chicago an incredible place to make art is also what made it a challenging place to be an artist: its insularity can be as generative as it is restrictive.

The
objective
is
not
necessarily
to
make
gold,
but
to
become
golden.

I wanted to create a space within Chicago that engaged the local community with artists and arts organizations from around the world, while also acting as a site of production and studio for us all individually. That meant ensuring that the group shows I curated included a mix of artists from outside of Chicago as well as inside, and across stages of their careers. I invited curators into the city to co-curate works—as with Daisy Nam of the Carpenter Center, and our show based on (and including) Dara Birnbaum's 1979 video "Kiss the Girls: Make Them Cry." I wanted to lean into that complexity of making-space and thinking-space and presenting-space, and jumble it all up a little. This is the advantage of artist-run spaces everywhere: you can muddle it all up. And perhaps the advantage of artist-run spaces in Chicago in particular: you're encouraged to.

The publishing program added another layer to the space's ever-growing list of hyphenates. Artist-run space, studio, performance space, storefront, and now bookstore. I imagined the publications created by the gallery as little emissaries, ambassadors of the space dutifully proliferating the ideas contained within our walls into corners unknown. At the same time, I brought in publications, poems, zines, posters, pins—merch!—from internationally distributed artist publishers, bringing the outside in as we were sending our inside out.

The ambition of Public Access is the energy I crave and feel limitless joy to discover in any artist-run space: purposeful complexity, fueled in equal parts by passion, labor, collaboration, and a desire for community. An outstretched hand beckoning, an unfurling, a declaration.



B

Installation view of the exhibition *What Is?*, featuring artists Felipe Steinberg, Karen Reimer, Tammi Campbell, Ai Weiwei, March - April 2017. Photo courtesy of Public Access.



C

Performance during the opening night of *Phantom Limb, Chapter 1: The Relic*, featuring work by El Coyote Cojo (Adela Goldbard, Emilio Rojas, Matias Armendaris), December 2016 - January 2017. Photo courtesy of Public Access.

Terrainists and Their



A
Edra Soto, 2013

B
Sabina Ott on bicycle with
Caulleen Smith's *The Black
Love Procession: Conduct
Your Blooming*, 2016
Oak Park 4th of July Parade

Lise McKean

Commercial interests drive action at the apex of a hierarchy that relegates most artists to its base as individualized cultural workers. Endowed art institutions with corporate structures, rich board members, and donors propagate top-down power. Artists reluctantly inhabit and readily challenge this so-called art world.

Artists make spaces of their own to show art—and to cultivate and sustain conversations and friendships, community and careers. These spaces come and go, along with the people who establish and participate in them. Each one has its own personality and trajectory, and none escapes the vagaries of time.

Terrain appeared in the imagination of contemporary artist and art professor Sabina Ott during a short residency at Poor Farm, an artist-run space founded by Michelle Grabner and Brad Killiam at the former Waupaca County Poor Farm in Wisconsin. Phyllis Bramson recalls Sabina telling her that the idea of starting a gallery on her front lawn occurred while bike riding with another artist on a country road near Poor Farm. Shortly afterward in 2011, Sabina incarnated her idea as Terrain in Oak Park, Illinois. Her front yard, porch, and home's façade became the inspiration and site for Terrainists to use the outside of private property for sharing art and creating conversation with visitors, neighbors, and passersby.

Anyone who cares about art knows that there's not enough space for artists to make and show work. Studios bulge with unseen art, revelations of performance artists are neglected, and sonic feats of poets and musicians go unheard. Acute shortage of space constricts opportunities for all artists, and especially recent arrivals to art-making or Chicago. Competition is structural, and ferocious. Like a day at the beach, Terrain and similar spaces offer a reprieve from the grit and grind of life as an artist.

Since they're artist-run, these spaces have the chops for innovation. According to Bramson, the lackluster response to Terrain's initial openings disappointed and frustrated Sabina. Turnout at openings steadily grew as word spread about Terrain's "generous amounts of food, Sabina's outgoing persona, and the salon-style welcoming environment, where artists could hang out and everyone was graciously welcomed!"

By the time I met Sabina and started going to openings in 2013, Terrain had taken root in the Chicago art community. Through the changing seasons, I'd walk the five blocks to her house and find loads of regulars and newcomers laughing, eating, drinking, and talking together—and yes, partaking in art that might be perched on the roof, suspended from the porch, hanging in the tree, alighted on the lawn, or resonating in the mind.

Like others, I showed up at Terrain because Sabina was my friend and I was sure to chat with her. Whatever my mood when setting out, I knew I'd be energized by the whirl of an opening. Terrain had an extra attraction for me as a social anthropologist, who writes about contemporary art and artists, their underpinnings and dynamics. Artist-run spaces give artists relaxed de-institutionalized places to be themselves and foment fun.

Whether visitors gathered inside Sabina's home to warm up, eat, or look at her huge assemblage of art, Terrain is synonymous with outside art—with Sabina's campaign to bring art out of museums and galleries and into the daily life of her neighborhood, and to bring people together through art too. Since 2012, Terrain makes itself known to Oak Park by participating in the Fourth of July Parade with a public art work or performance. One year, Terrainists carried banners from the Protest Banner

Outside Art



B

With each Biennial, the tide of Terrainists rises, and along with it, the number of people who experience art in friendly environs.

Lending Library. Anyone undaunted by the July sun continues to Terrain's post-parade cookout. This concoction of art, merry-making, and social justice consciousness-raising characterizes Terrain year-round.

If the Fourth of July Parade brings Terrain to the main streets of Oak Park, the Terrain Biennial, Sabina's 2013 brain-child, brings Terrainists and their outside art to even more streets, in and beyond the village. In fall 2019, the fourth Terrain Biennial featured 200 sites, with clusters in Illinois (Oak Park and Evanston); Iowa City, Iowa; Newburgh, New York; Portland, Maine; Santa Fe, New Mexico; and Lubbock, Texas. Outside the US, 2019 Biennial sites appeared in Dhaka, Havana, and London. As an opt-in artist-run space, the "How to Terrain" section on the website recruits artists and host sites for biennials, and can be used as a guide for establishing an outdoor art space. With each Biennial, the tide of Terrainists rises, and along with it, the number of people who experience art in friendly environs.

Terrain's installations and activities also delight children, usually brought by their parents, or because they are students at Longfellow Elementary, which is across from Sabina's house. The outside setting nudges Terrainists to create work that invites exploration and play. Two women who live in the neighborhood share recollections about Terrain (quotations via John Slocum and a neighborhood Facebook group, February 29, 2020):

My family loved the surprise and wonder when we walked to school or took a stroll through the neighborhood. We would pause and take it all in and sometimes take pictures. My kids loved the house with pieces of telephones stuck in the dirt.

Amy Henderson

My favorite one was an installation where people could leave items that had a personal meaning to them and they were having a hard time parting with it. A memory place.

Jen Feasley

Founding and running Terrain became integral to Sabina's life as an artist and art professor. Its growth benefitted from Sabina's expansive digital presence, through which she knitted the community of Terrainists even closer by posting about their exhibitions and successes. She made opportunities for artists and in turn, created a community. In doing so, she modeled how artists can reimagine their resources and devise ways to use them in support of themselves and each other. By mobilizing artists into voluntary communities, artist-run spaces such as Terrain transform visibility and credibility into social and cultural capital for their participants.

As Sabina's own art practice turned to large-scale installations, the Terrainists she championed showed up for her too, for example, helping to construct and install major exhibitions at the Chicago Cultural Center and Hyde Park Art Center. And when Sabina's time was running out, the demographically diverse community of artists that she dreamed possible sardined itself into the small lot at 704 Highland for a farewell fanfare.

To round out ethnographic observations and reflections on my own experiences and research about Terrain, I asked artists to send me a quotation about their Terrain experiences. Those who responded created projects for Terrain, were regulars at openings, and are themselves hubs connecting Terrainists and other ecosystems of artists.



C

Terrain for me is Sabina, a warm, loving, smart, funny and so talented artist and friend. She gave me my first show in Chicago, she gave me a chance with all her great heart and soul. She gave her home as a place to meet, to talk, to laugh, and of course one of the most important things... to eat.

• Nelly Agassi

During my time working with the inimitable Sabina Ott, the experience opened me up. It allowed me to question the boundaries of my practice, ultimately eliciting an important shift and expansion of my work. For this I will always be profoundly grateful to the generosity and spirit of Terrain.

• Karen Azarnia

Sabina saw the Terrain project as a way to jumpstart (or continue) the idea of reciprocity in the Chicago art community. It was a gathering place for artists, and an extension of core ideas in her work—gestures of generosity, nurturing, unconditional love—and it satisfied her desire expressed even more through other artists' work.

• Anna Kunz

As much as it is a public exhibition, Terrain Biennial is also a significant collaboration opportunity with hosts. I've described it as a love letter to the individuals who have chosen me for their site homes. It is a conversation that builds deep friendships and artistic bonds and has profoundly impacted my work in Chicago and beyond.

• Melissa Potter

As an artist and curator, producing shows for Terrain Exhibitions and Biennial has been an amazing platform for community-building through interactive public art. Each project in its own way has facilitated conversation and collective engagement around reclaiming public space as safe space, radical acts of occupying space or merciful acts experienced while traveling space. For me, Terrain has provided me the opportunity to experiment, create and collaborate with a divers group of art practitioners

• Sadie Woods

Before Sabina's death in 2018, she and her husband, co-founder John Paulett, planned with friends for Terrain's transition to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. With its incorporation as a nonprofit organization, a home-grown community was reborn as a legal entity.

The enthusiasm of artists and their audiences around the 2019 Terrain Biennial, and the dedication of its voluntary organizers and participants, continue to demonstrate that whether in Chicago, Dhaka, London, or unincorporated rural Texas, artists acting together have the power to create space for art and community.



D

C
Krista Franklin reading at Terrain, 2014

D
Ryan Peter Miller and Marco Rosicelli, Laboratory Co, with Outstanding in the Field, vinyl wrapped scaffold emulating the exterior of Gagosian Gallery in New York City, Terrain Biennial 2019, New York, Texas.

What is the character of the cultural capital of the artist-run space: is it a form of proto-access to the art market or is it a new model of community engagement around art?

Way back in 2009, I attempted to write a history of artist-run spaces in Chicago using Alternative Spaces in Chicago, the 1984 exhibit at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art, as a jumping off point. Curated by Lynne Warren and Mary Jane Jacobs, Alternative Spaces in Chicago chronicled the previous decade's significant alternative spaces. As a plucky recent MFA grad, I compiled the subsequent 25 years into "Artist-Run Spaces: A Brief History Since 1984," which ran in Lumpen's cousin magazine Pr, alongside the original Artists Run Chicago exhibition at Hyde Park Art Center. In addition, I conducted interviews with each artist-run space for the "Artist-Run Digest," published by Threewalls and Green Lantern Press in 2009, that stands as a document of ARC 1.0.

In hindsight, reading through the Pr piece, I see how inadequate it was as an effort. I definitely omitted very important groups and projects out of sheer naivete and a bit of negligence. I was young and attempting to map what Chicago offered as a social, intellectual, and financial place for artists. At the time, I felt that I lacked basic facts about what had come before me. I still feel that way, really. What is Chicago artworld lore? How is it passed down? I craved a sense of place, and doing research on artist-run initiatives gave me a deep and enduring appreciation for spaces, groups, and events that I would not have otherwise encountered.

Communities mythologize themselves. New York has been doing this forever, in song and dance, and by naming whole schools of artists after the city. Los Angeles's origin myth focused on movies, so other kinds of artists built their identity out of being not New Yorkers, and generations of outsiders went to the beach. Subsequently immense cultural effort has been put into finding, recording, and publicizing LA art history, most notably The Getty Center's initiative Pacific Standard Time, which began in 2011 with "Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945-1980," when more than 60 organizations presented exhibitions and programs that "told the story of the rise of the L.A. art scene." The Chicago scene also has its history, which involves a fair amount of change 2009. The Obama presidency brought more global attention to the city, as have new cultural efforts like the Chicago Architecture Biennial or the rejuvenated EXPO Chicago. Yet, there is something still missing.

My piecemeal first attempt only points to the necessity of greater research by trained art historians or curators—not artists. Honestly, so many of the stories that I could only touch on then are still worthy of pursuing. To get a glimpse of what a deep survey might uncover, one can look at the efforts of the Chicago Cultural Center, like the exhibition The Wall of Respect: Vestiges, Shards and the Legacy of Black Power, which highlights a mural originally painted by the Organization of Black American Culture's Visual Artists Workshop in 1967, or the reperformances they staged by the performance group Goat Island for the "goat island

archive—we have discovered the performance by making it" series. Other efforts, like RESIST, RELATE, UNITE (1968-1975), the DePaul Art Museum's 2017 showcase of work by AfriCOBRA founder Barbara Jones-Hogu, and the general art market interest around AfriCOBRA, stand as examples of what else might be out there to be featured.

To the extent that artist-run spaces are determined to not interface with the art market, the necessity to self-mythologize or to intentionally leave a record is imperative. Writing in X-TRA, LA-based critic Catherine Wagley documented artists assuming the art-historical role in response to various erasures. Wagley begins her essay "The Conversation: The Young Female Artist as Historian" with the line "Why do I not know about this?" and continues with examples of feminist artists unearthing art-historically sidelined role-models. This recovery process enables new models of inquiry to re-enter the imaginative space of art practice. Extending the analogy to artist-run spaces, awareness of historical precedents enable current artist-gallerists to build their mini-institutions in different and innovative ways, by building on past successes. In a review of the original HPAC show for Frieze, writer and curator Jason Foumberg referred to some of the spaces engaging in "institutional role-play." It's important to expand the available roles for new players.

Art market and curatorial support help ensure the creation of an historical record as a byproduct of their marketing. Yet explicitly anti-capitalist spaces must create their own record, or have others do it for them. In many cases, these spaces have a kind of pedagogical bent and produce material records of their work and ideas. (Off the top of my head: Threewalls' Phonebook directory of national artist-run spaces, the Common Field network of independent arts-organizations, and Temporary Services online forum for artist-book publishing are good examples.) But just as many don't have this inclination or lack the funds to do it. Nineties' era anti-capitalist spaces made a model out of "surfing on surplus," by self-funding and occupying marginal, vacant spaces. Yet from the vantage point of a generation of gig-based, economic precarity, the marginal space looks more like a tragic or ridiculous symptom of an economic (not aesthetic) problem. Hence the post-2008 financial crash activism of organizations (like W.A.G.E.), around fair pay for artists in the nonprofit world. In an era where the museum hierarchy (board / trustees / donors -> curator -> public) model is itself being interrogated, serious efforts at creative institution building are important to catalog and fund. At some point around 2012, a friend sent me an image of the "Artists Run Chicago Digest" on the bookshelves of a London gallery, so at least anecdotally there is still interest in alternative models, and what happens here can be influential elsewhere. Take, for example, the impact of InCUBATE's simple idea for the Sunday Soup grant, where visitors paid for soup, creating the funds for a microgrant. Then artists presented grant

ideas, and visitors voted for their favorite project. This communal distribution model for artist granting had dozens of others national and international adopters.

When there is no mechanism or marketing reason for recording the activity of artist-run spaces, they quietly go away. This is part of what makes efforts like Artists Run Chicago 2.0 so important. The original Artists Run Chicago, which included spaces from the early 2000s as well as contemporary spaces, had a kind of documentary mission. The HPAC still houses a small archive of materials and ephemera from that 2009 show. This year's show, Artists Run Chicago 2.0, includes mostly current spaces, a few of which existed in 2009 that were either too newly formed, or the earlier show had missed. This grouping of spaces, both then and now, is stunningly heterogenous. From barely-discernible-as-alternatives commercial spaces to community centers, this group shares little in the way of approaches. What is the character of the cultural capital of the artist-run space: is it a form of proto-access to the art market, or is it a new model of community engagement around art? Which of these spaces was or is important, and why?

It's not enough to handwave at vague notions of artistic influence or spaces as incubators for young artists as a kind of justification for continued activity. One of my frustrations with Chicago, and it's very Chicago to be frustrated with Chicago, is that "No" is usually silent. In art criticism, the absence of negative coverage is virtually indistinguishable from the absence of coverage. The rarity of this negative coverage is entirely understandable in a landscape with few options. I'm convinced that people do have real opinions about the problems going on in art spaces around the city, but reserve them for social media or like-minded friend groups.

What might Artists Run Chicago 3.0 look like? Will it look the same, but with different names? There needs to be a robust discourse about what progress looks like and how to foster it. Surfing on surplus chases art spaces to the margins, and it only goes so far. At a time when museum structures and hierarchies are being questioned, why don't artist-run spaces suggest new horizontal organizational ideas? Why don't more artists go into real estate? Politics? As nonprofit spaces record alternative practices, they should consider ways to make them more viable and sustainable. Perhaps Artist Run Chicago 3.0 should be a training conference. This is really another iteration of the problem for artists—that in order to create the world they want to participate in, they have to do things other than art, namely administration, curation, art criticism, real estate, politics, etc. Artists might have to be more than artists.



Dan Gunn

This directory presents 222 artist-run platforms that are (or were at some point) active in 2020, in Chicago. Much more data obtained via this process is also available in a new online map and directory, which can be found at publicmediainstitute.com. There, artists can submit or update their own projects and spaces, collaborating with us to keep the map as complete and current as possible.

During the months of the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, we collected an even longer list of past and new artist-run spaces in Chicago, through research directed by Marina Resende Santos with Cecilia Resende Santos and Miana Taylor Hjörleifsdóttir. The list was compiled with the help of data from The Visualist, the Hyde Park Art Center, threewalls, the MDW Fair archives, and Hey You Made It. From there, we relied on 130 responses to an online survey from the artist-run community to update our listings of active and recently ended projects. We are deeply grateful to the artists who responded to our requests for information about their projects.

2020 Directory of

Artist-Run

Projects Operating in Chicago

[bInk]haus gallery
3206 W Armitage Ave
binkhaus.com

**Art Gallery & Tangential
Unspace Lab**
1542 N Milwaukee Ave,
2nd FL
nonationartlab.cargo.site

062 Gallery
1029 W 35th St
062official.com

345 Art Gallery
345 N Kedzie Ave
345artgallery.com

4Art Space
1029 W 35th St, 4th Fl
4artinc.com

4th Ward Project Space
5338 S Kimbark Ave
4wps.org

6018 North
6018 N Kenmore Ave
6018north.org

65GRAND
3252 W North Ave
65grand.com

6740Micro
6740 N Sheridan Rd
facebook.com/6740Micro

A

Abstract Lunch
Online projects and
exhibitions
@abstract.lunch

**ACRE (Artists'
Cooperative Residency
& Exhibitions)**
between spaces; resi-
dency in Steuben, WI
acreresidency.org

ADDS DONNA
3252 W North Ave
addsdonna.com

Adler & Floyd
3537 S Western Blvd
adlerandfloyd.com

Ag47 Collective
3325 W Wrightwood Ave
ag47collective.com

Agitator Gallery
1112 N Ashland Ave
agitatorgallery.com

**Amazigh
Contemporary**
2 E Erie St
amazighcontemporary.com

AMFM
events and online
magazine
amfm.life

Annas
629 W Cermak Rd, Suite
240
annasprojects.com

**Any Squared Projects &
Studio**
2328 N Milwaukee Ave
anysquared.com

Apparatus Projects
2639 W Ainslie St
apparatusprojects.com

ARC Gallery
1463 W Chicago Ave
arcgallery.org

Archer Beach Haus
3012 S Archer Ave
facebook.com/archerbeachhaus

Ari's Art Space
4200 W Diversey Ave
facebook.com/ARIs-Art-Space

Art In These Times
2040 N Milwaukee Ave
artinthesetimes.wordpress.com

Art Space Chicago
3418 W Armitage Ave
artspacechicago.com

Arts of Life
2010 W Carroll Ave
artsoflife.org

Asterisk Arts Collective
1020 W Bryn Mawr Ave
facebook.com/AsteriskArtsCo

Axis Lab
1120 W Argyle St
axislab.org

B

Baby Blue Gallery
2233 S Throop St, Rm
518
babybluegallery.com

Backyard Series
Event-based, in back-
yards and partner
spaces
@backyardserieschi

Bad @ Sports
Online platform and
radio show
badatsports.com

**BASEMENT: A Project
Space**
836 W Cullerton St,
Basement level
facebook.com/basementpilsen

Basic Studios
3551 W Diversey Ave
basicstudios.space

bedsheet cinema
1914 N Spaulding Ave
facebook.com/afterglowings

Bill's Auto
3217S Archer Ave
billsauto.org

boundary
2334 W 111th Pl
facebook.com/boundarychicagospace

Boyfriends Chicago
3311 W Carroll Ave
boyfriendschicago.com

Brat Trap
955 W Cermak Rd
facebook.com/bratrapchicago

Buddy
78 E Washington St
communityofthefuture.org

C

Calles Y Sueños
1900 S Carpenter Ave
facebook.com/Calles-y-Sueños-Chicago

Camp/Us
2883 N Milwaukee Ave
facebook.com/campus1333

Candor Arts
1821 W Hubbard St
#301
candorarts.com

Casa Calle 20
1538 W Cullerton St
facebook.com/casacalle20

Chicago Art Department
1926 S Halsted St
chicagoartdepartment.org

Chicago Crowd Surfer
3536 W Wolfram St
chicagocrowdsurfer.com

Chicago Glass Collective
1770 W Berneau Ave,
#203-B
chicagoglasscollective.com

Chicago Manual Style
1927 W Superior St
chicagomanual.style

**Chicago Printmakers
Collaborative**
4912 N Western
chicagoprintmakers.com

**Chicago Public Art
Group**
3314 S Morgan St, Unit 1
chicagopublicartgroup.org

Chuquimarca
5000 W Bloomingdale
Ave
chuquimarca.com

Cinespace Projects
1524 S Western, 114A
cinespace.isthe.gallery

**Cleaner Gallery +
Projects**
1856 N Richmond St
cleanergallery.com

Co-Prosperity
3219 S Morgan St
coprosperity.org

Comercio Popular
currently solely online
facebook.com/pg/comerciopopular

Comfort Station
2579 N Milwaukee Ave
comfortstationlogansquare.org

Compound Yellow
244 Lake St, Oak Park, IL
compoundyellow.com

Congruent Space
1216 W Grand Ave
congruentspace.com

Connect Gallery
1520 E Harper Court
connectgallery.org

Constellation
3111 N Western Ave
constellation-chicago.com

Corbett vs Dempsey
2156 W Fulton St
corbettvsdempsey.com

Corner 52
1438 W 52nd St
facebook.com/C52HydePark

Crazy 8 Artists' Atlas
401 S State St
Crazy8art.com

D

**DADS Chicago (Digital
Art Demo Space)**
2515 S Archer Ave
dadschicago.com

Devening Projects
3039 W Carroll Ave
deveningprojects.com

Dfbrl8R
1029 W 35th St
dfbrl8r.org

Digital Art Demo Space
2515 S Archer Ave
facebook.com/dadschicago

Dock6 Collective
2100 N Major Ave
dock6collective.com

DOCUMENT
1709 W Chicago Ave
Documentspace.com

E

Eat Paint Studio
5036 N Lincoln Ave
eatpaintstudio.com

Eco Collective Chicago
2042 W 21st St
facebook.com/ecocollective2042

ECONLINE
1524 S Western, 114A
econline.isthe.gallery

Elastic Arts
3429 W Diversey #208
elasticarts.org

Electro Pepper Gallery
1109 W Berwyn Ave
electropepper.com

Elephant Room Gallery
704 S Wabash Ave
Elephantroomgallery.com

Enjoy the Film
6431 S Cottage Grove
Ave
enjoythefilm.org

Everybody Gallery
1726 N Western Ave
Everybody.gallery

**Experimental Sound
Studio**
5925 N Ravenswood Ave
ess.org

Experimental Station
6100 S Blackstone Ave
experimentalstation.org

Exploding House Printing
1058 W Taylor St
explodinghouseprinting.com

Extase
2523 W Chicago Ave,
Unit 2
extasechicago.com

F

Facility
3616 N Milwaukee Ave
facilitychicago.org

FDC Studios
2341 N Milwaukee Ave
thefdc.org

filmfront
1740 W 18th St
filmfront.org

Filter Photo
1821 W Hubbard St Suite
207 |
filterphoto.org

Final Resting Place
3350 S Bell Ave
facebook.com/finalrestingplaces

Firecat Projects
2124 N Damen Ave
firecatprojects.org

Flatland
1965 W Pershing Ave,
Building A, 3rd Fl
flatland.online

FLXST Contemporary
2251 S Michigan Ave
fixst.co

Fresh Bread Gallery
a kitchen in Rogers Park
@freshbread_gallery

Fulton Street Collective
1821 W Hubbard St
fultonstreetcollective.com

G

GAG
3528 W Fulton Blvd
facebook.com/GAGChicago

Gallery Guichard
436 E 47th St
galleryguichard.com

Gallery KIN
6319 N Greenview Ave,
3rd Fl
lindsayhutchens.com/gallery-kin

Gallery Studio Oh!
4839 N Damen Ave
art-studio-oh.com

Gallery19
1305 W 18th St
gallery19chicago.com

Glow Exhibitions
4045 N Lawler Ave
glowexhibitions.wordpress.com

Gnarware Workshop
1838 W Cermak Rd
gnarwareworkshop.com

Ground Level Platform
2001 S Halsted St
groundlevelplatform.org

H

H.G.Inn
2000 W Carroll Ave
facebook.com/h.g.inn.gallerya

Halftone Projects
2523 N Fairfield Ave,
Apt 1
halftoneprojects.com

Happy Gallery
902 N California Ave
facebook.com/HappyGalleryChicago/

Heaven Gallery
1550 N Milwaukee Ave,
2nd Fl
heavengallery.com

High Concept Labs
2233 S Throop
highconceptlaboratories.org

Hokin Project
623 S Wabash Ave
students.colum.edu/deps/
hokin-gallery

Hostel Earphoria
3464 W Diversey Ave
hostelearphoria.org

House of the Apocalypse
1908 S Halsted St
facebook.com/houseoftheapocalypse

G

Hume
3242 W Armitage Ave
humechicago.org

Iceberg Projects
7714 N Sheridan Rd
icebergchicago.com

Ignition Project Space
3839 W Grand Ave
ignitionprojects.org

In/Habit Roving Art Series
itinerant
inhabitarts.com

Independent Film Alliance
2558 W 16th St
ifachicago.org

Inga Bookshop
1740 W 18th St
i-n-g-a.com

Intersect Coffee and Fiber Studio
1727 W 18th St
intersectcoffee.com

J

Julius Caesar
3311 W Carroll Ave
juliuscaesararchicago.net

L

LATITUDE
1821 W Hubbard St,
Suite 207
latitudechicago.org

Laura
1535 N Ashland Ave
facebook.com/1535laura

Lawrence & Clark
4755 N Clark St
lawrenceandclark.com

Links Hall
3111 N Western Ave
linkshall.org

Loo
2153 W 21st St (bath-
room of Slow Gallery)
paul-is-slow.info/aboutloo

LVL3
1542 N Milwaukee Ave
lvl3official.com

M

Mantel
5136 S Blackstone Ave
adrienneelyse.com/mantel-space

Marimacha Monarca Press
1965 W Pershing Rd
issuu.com/marimachamonarcapress

MDL Contemporary
1524 S Western, Suite
114A
mdl.is.the.gallery

Milwaukee Avenue Alliance
2912 N Milwaukee Ave
@milwaukeeavenuealliance

Molasses
954 W Belmont Ave
molasseschicago.com

Monk Parakeet
6100 S Blackstone Ave
monkparakeet.org

Mujeres Mutantes Artist Collective
itinerant
facebook.com/mujeresmutantes

N

New Works
currently solely online
newworksprojects.com

Nightingale Cinema
1084 N Milwaukee Ave
nightingalecinema.org

Nomadicube
Itinerant
nomadicube.com

NON: op Open Opera Works
6333 N Hermitage Ave
and online performances
nonopera.org/

North Branch Projects
914 N California, Walton
Entrance
northbranchprojects.org

O

Occasional Gallery #3N
6321 N Greenview Ave,
#3N
@occasional_gallery

Oggi
2451 S Oakley Ave
oggichicago.com

Ohklahomo
2518 W Iowa St
facebook.com/Ohklah0m0; @
oklahomo

Ojo de Fortuna
2024 S Ashland Ave
facebook.com/OjoDeFortuna

Open Center for the Arts
2214 S Sacramento Ave
opencenterforthearts.org

Open sheds used for what?
Open spaces in Pilsen
and Bridgeport
openshedsusedforwhat.com

Open sheds used for what?
Open spaces in Pilsen
and Bridgeport
openshedsusedforwhat.com

OTV
2557 W North Ave
weareo.tv

Out of Site Chicago
Public sites and partner
spaces
outofsitechicago.org

P

Paper Hat
1953 N Campbell Ave
paperhatchicago.bigcartel.com

Parlour and Ramp
2130 W 21st St
parlourandramp.com

Patient Info
902 N Western Ave
patientinfo.club

Perennial Space
solely online
perennialspace.com

Phantom Gallery Chicago Network
436 E 47th St, Rm 205
phantomgallery.blogspot.com

Pilsen Art House
1756 W 19th St
facebook.com/ThePilsenArtHouse

Pilsen Arts & Community House
1637 W 18th St
pilsenartscommunityhouse.org

Plus Gallery
1800 W 18th St, 1R
Plusgallerychicago.com

PO Box Collective
6900 N Glenwood Ave
poboxcollective.us

Positive Space Studios
3520 W Fullerton Ave
positivespacestudios.com

PRACTISE
940 N Oak Park Ave (Oak
Park, IL)
practise.info

Prairie
2055 W Cermak
prairie.website

Produce Model
between addresses
produce-model.com

Project Onward
1200 W 35th St, 4th Fl
projectonward.org

Public Media Institute (Co-Prosperity, Lumpen Radio, Lumpen Magazine)
3219 S Morgan St
publicmediainstitute.com

Public Works
1539 N Damen Ave, 2nd
Fl
publicworksgallery.com

R

R.Mona Studio
1724 S Racine Ave
facebook.com/RMonaStudio

Read/Write Library
914 N California Ave,
Walton Entrance
readwritelibrary.org

Rebuild Foundation
6760S Stony Island Ave
rebuild-foundation.org

Red Rover Reading Series
1474 N Milwaukee Ave
facebook.com/
Red-Rover-Reading-Series

Regards
2216 W Chicago Ave
regardsgallery.com

Regional Relationships
research projects and
mail art
regionalrelationships.org

Resilient Art
3823 N Kedzie Ave
resilientart.com

Reunion Chicago
2557 W North Ave
reunionchicago.com

Rockwell Artist Collective Studio #3
3065 N Rockwell St,
Studio #3
facebook.com/
Rockwell-Artist-Collective

Rogers Park Art Gallery
6902 N Glenwood Ave
rogersparkartgallery.com

Roman Susan
1224 W Loyola Ave
romansusan.org

Roots & Culture
1034 N Milwaukee Ave
rootsandculturecac.org

Rootwork
645 W 18th St
facebook.com/rootworkgallery

Rover Gallery
1957 W Cullerton St
rovergallery.com

Rubberneck
2058 W Chicago Ave
rubberneckgallery.com

S

Satellite
1249 W 31st St
@satellite_chicago

Scheme Gallery
3823 N Lincoln Ave
@schemegallery

Selected Works Gallery
1524 S Western, Ste
114A
selectedworks.is.the.gallery

Showboat
2058 W 21st St
facebook.com/showboatshows

Siblings Collective
2700 W North Ave
siblingscollective.org

Sideshow Gallery
2219 N Western Ave
sideshowgallerychicago.com

Silent Funny
4106-08 W Chicago Ave
silentfunny.org

SITE Galleries
280 S Columbus Dr
sites.saic.edu/sugs/

Site/Less
1250 W Augusta Blvd
siteless.org

Slacks Window Gallery
5752 N Milwaukee Ave
facebook.com/SlacksGallery

Slate Arts And Performance
3203 W North Ave
slatearts.com

Slow Gallery
2153 W 21st St
slow.gallery

SoberSCOve Press
Publisher
soberSCOve.com

Soccer Club Club
2923 N Cicero Ave
soccerclubclub.com

Space p11
55 E Randolph St,
Pedway Level
space-p11.com

Spudnik Press Cooperative
1821 W Hubbard St,
#302
spudnikpress.org

Standing Passengers
1458 W Chicago Ave
standingpassengers.com

STF Gallery
1717 S Racine Ave
facebook.com/STF-Gallery

Stockyard Institute
6337 W School St; 2247
N Halsted Ct
stockyardinstitute.org

Swarm Artist Residency
Chicago-based; resi-
dency in West Branch, IA
swarmartistresidency.com

Sweet Water Foundation
5749 S Perry Ave
sweetwaterfoundation.com

T

table
3240 N Springfield Ave,
No 02
tableprojects.com

TCC Chicago
2547 W North Ave
facebook.com/TCCxChicago

Terrain Exhibitions
1155 Lyman, Oak Park
(multi-sited)
terrainexhibitions.org

The Alcove
623 S Wabash Ave
facebook.com/pg/ccalcove

The Bike Room
1109 W North Shore Ave
facebook.com/
bikeroomnancylorenheim

The Cliff Dwellers
200 S Michigan Ave
cliff-chicago.org

The Dial Book Shop
410 S Michigan Ave, Ste
210
dialbookshop.com

The Franklin
3522 W Franklin Blvd
thefranklinoutdoor.tumblr.com

The Green Lantern Press
publisher
thegreenlantern.org

The Learning Machine
3145 S Morgan St
facebook.com/
TheLearningMachineChi

The Neo-Futurists
5153 N Ashland Ave
neofuturists.org

TNL (The Neu Lithium)
online platform
lithium.gallery

The Night Gallery
3149 S Morgan St
(window of Future Firm)
thenight.gallery

The Overlook
3323 W Armitage Ave
theoverlookplace.com

The Silver Room
1506 E 53rd St
TheSilverroom.com

The Study Chicago
1837 W Fulton St
thestudychicago.org

The Yards
2028 S Canalport Ave
theyardsgallery.com

This Is It
1700 S Loomis
facebook.com/this.is.it.gallery

Three Seeds Gallery
2130 W 21st St
facebook.com/parlourandramp

threewalls
2738 W North Ave (with
itinerant projects)
three-walls.org

Tiger Strikes Asteroid Chicago
2233 S Throop, Unit 419
tigerstrikesasteroid.com

Transistor
5224 N Clark St
transistorchicago.com

Tritriangle
1550 N Milwaukee Ave
tritriangle.net

TRQPITECA
nomadic, event-based
trqpiteca.club

Ugly
1056 N Damen Ave, Unit
1F
yglugly.com

Uncle Art
1359 N Maplewood Ave
uncleart.com

Uptown Arts Center
941 W Lawrence Ave
uptownartscenter.wordpress.com

Uri-Eichen Gallery
2101 S Halsted St
uri-eichen.com

Uss Gallery
1620 N Richmond St
ussgallery.com

V

VGA Gallery
currently solely online
videogameartgallery.com

VillArte
throughout Little Village
facebook.com/VillarteChicago

W

Wayward Arts
1770 W Berneau Ave, Ste
506
wayward.art

Wedge Projects
1448 & 1442 W Howard
St
wedgeprojects.net

Western Pole
2201 S Western
westernpole.tumblr.com

Works Sited
1524 S Western, Ste
114A
worksited.is.the.gallery

Z

Zakaib Projects
3491 N Elston Ave
facebook.com/zakaibprojects

Zhou B Art Center
1029 W 35th St
zhouartcenter.com

Mapping 2009 *Artists Run* & Chicago 2020

Maps designed by
Maddy Stocking, 2020

In 2009, the Hyde Park Art Center organized the first Artists Run Chicago exhibition to celebrate the network of spaces and projects run by artists in the city. In fall 2020, HPAC presents Artists Run Chicago 2.0. Here, we have mapped the spaces participating in each show, in 2009, and in 2020.

Artist-run spaces are volatile. They are animated by the energy of people who come through this city, and often leave it; by artists who build them out their pockets and in their homes, doing the important and joyful work of sharing art and discourse in the city. Artist-run spaces often do not, and are not meant to, last forever, but they are especially vulnerable to cultural and economic changes in the city. Where was the scene 10 years ago? How have things changed in just a decade? And how much is the scene really in one or two places, in our city of many neighborhoods and cultures? Mapping and comparing projects featured in ARC 1.0 and ARC 2.0 begins to illustrate some of these trajectories.

Land Acknowledgement:

Artists' projects in the city of Chicago sit on the traditional lands of many indigenous nations, including the Hoocak (Winnebago/Ho'Chunk), Jiwere (Otoe), Nutachi (Missouria), Baxoje (Iowas), the Kiash Matchitiwuk (Menominee), the Meshkawahkia (Meskwaki), The Asakiwai (Sauk), The Myaamiaki (Miami), Waayaahatanwaki (Wea), Peeyankihsiaki (Piankashaw), the Kiikapoi (Kickapoo), the Inoka (Illini Confederacy), the Anishinaabeg (Ojibwe), the Odawak (Odawa) and the Bodewadmik (Potawatomi). In recognition of this, the maps of "Artists Run Chicago" show known Native American trails of the region that is now Chicago.

A Web Map Of Artist-Run Chicago

As a lasting supplement to this issue, Public Media Institute has worked to produce a new online map of artist-run Chicago projects. With the support of dozens of submissions from Chicago's artistic communities, as well as data compiled tirelessly by projects like thevisualist.org, we have already added over 250 artist-run projects, past and present. Not just a map but a living archive and directory, it includes the kinds of spaces these projects are housed in (if at all housed), the kinds of work they do, how they are funded,

and their institutional structure. We hope you will use and contribute to this resource!

The online map of artist-run Chicago was designed by Graham Livingston, Marina Resende Santos and Maddy Stocking. This map is intended to be constantly under collective construction, and can be found at:

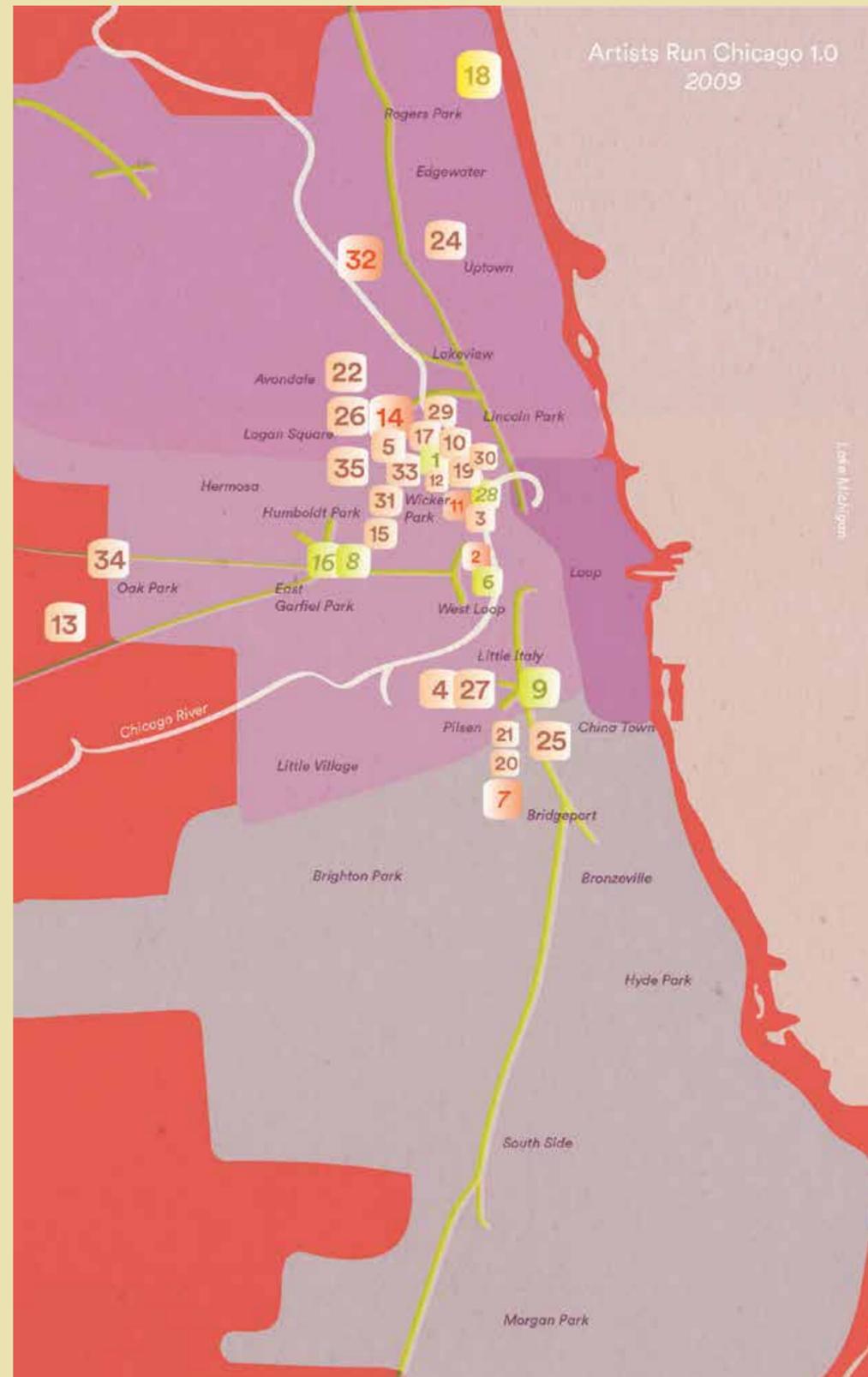
publicmediainstitute.com

ARC 1.0

- 1 1/Quarterly
- 2 65Grand
- 3 Alogon
- 4 Antena
- 5 artLedge
- 6 Butchershop
- 7 Co-Prosperity
- 8 Devening Projects
- 9 Dogmatic
- 10 Fraction Workspace
- 11 FGA (Fucking Good Art)
- 12 Green Lantern
- 13 He Said-She Said
- 14 HungryMan
- 15 Joymore
- 16 Julius Ceasar
- 17 Law Office
- 18 LiveBox
- 19 Margin Gallery
- 20 Medicine Cabinet/Project Space
- 21 Second Bedroom
- 22 Mini dutch
- 23 Modest Contemporary Art Projects
- 24 NFA Space
- 25 Normal Projects
- 26 Old Gold
- 27 Polvo
- 28 Roots and Culture
- 29 Scott Projects
- 30 Standard
- 31 Suitable
- 32 Swimming Pool Projects
- 33 Teti
- 34 The Suburban
- 35 Vonzweck

(ARC 1.0 + 2.0 Key)

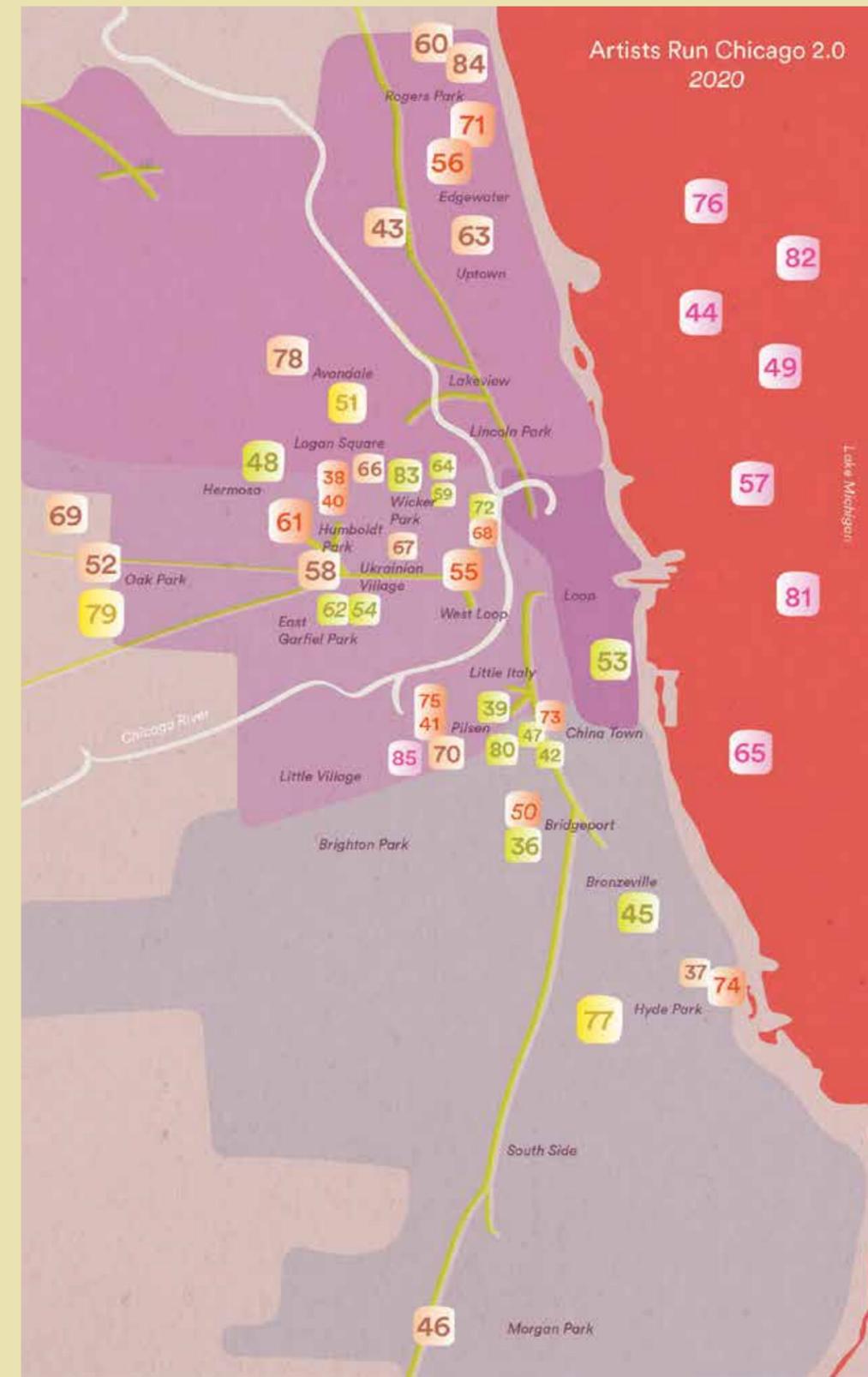
- Residential
- Storefront
- Warehouse/Larger Building
- Public Building
- Unfixed/Itinerant
- Native American Trails in Chicago, 1804



Participants in Artists Run Chicago 2009

ARC 2.0

- 36 O62
- 37 4th Ward Project Space
- 38 65Grand
- 39 ACRE Projects
- 40 Adds Donna
- 41 AMFM
- 42 Annas
- 43 Apparatus Projects
- 44 Bad At Sports (lake)
- 45 Blanc Gallery
- 46 boundary
- 47 Chicago Art Department
- 48 Chuquimarca
- 49 Clutch (Lake)
- 50 Co-Prosperity and Lumpen Radio
- 51 Comfort Station
- 52 Compound Yellow
- 53 D Gallery
- 54 Devening Projects
- 55 Document
- 56 Experimental Sound Studio
- 57 F4F
- 58 The Franklin
- 59 Heaven Gallery
- 60 Iceberg Projects
- 61 Ignition Project Space
- 62 Julius Caesar
- 63 Lawrence and Clark
- 64 LVL3
- 65 Mujeres Mutantes
- 66 Night Light Studios & Gallery
- 67 Ohklahomo
- 68 Nightingale
- 69 Practise
- 70 Prairie
- 71 Roman Susan
- 72 Roots & Culture
- 73 Rootwork Gallery
- 74 The Silver Room
- 75 Slow
- 76 The Suburban (Lake)
- 77 Sweet Water Foundation
- 78 table
- 79 Terrain Exhibitions
- 80 Tiger Strikes Asteroid
- 81 Trunk Show (lake)
- 82 TRQPITECA
- 83 VGA Gallery
- 84 Wedge Projects
- 85 Western Pole*



Participants in Artists Run Chicago 2.0 2020

On June 17, Public Media Institute launched a survey to learn about the effects of the pandemic and of social distancing practices on artist-run spaces in Chicago. The survey, which was designed by Cecilia Resende Santos, received 41 answers at the time of editing. The survey included 35 questions about the challenges that projects have faced, how they have adapted activities, and the good and bad outcomes of this process, as they were able to assess this summer.

The demographic information we collected from the participants conveys the diversity and resourcefulness of how these spaces are run. The data reinforces their independence—and helps define what “independence” means. It shows how these spaces are tied to communities of friends (including organizers/owners, individual donors, volunteers, artists) and neighborhoods (through educational and community programs). It seems that independent spaces can operate with flexibility, minimum resources and minimum institutionalization because they have always been driven by communities of people who care for them.

The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Artist-Run Chicago

Here is a summary of our findings thus far. The complete results of the survey will be published online.

Responses from the 41 projects that filled out PMI's COVID-19 impact survey as of August 25, 2020.

Infrastructure

Almost half (49%) of the respondents operate out of their apartments, backyards, basements, and garages, and 37% occupy storefronts (many of which are residential spaces themselves).

27% of respondent's organizations are located in large warehouse buildings, some of which are specifically dedicated to the arts. About a quarter of the responding organizations are itinerant or have no fixed location, including a few that operate solely online.

Activities

While most (80%) of artist-run organizations that responded maintain galleries, many of them do a lot more than hang exhibitions. Half of artist projects conduct educational programs, such as workshops and classes, and almost as many house studios for artists.

44% are event-based projects, organizing festivals and curatorial projects across the city, while another 44% operate artist residencies, 39% present film screenings as a main part of their programming, and 22% work as independent publishers or printmakers. And 10% of spaces support programming which, importantly, doesn't fit into any of the categories above, such as experimental performance nights or the exploration of new media and technology.

Organization Structure

37% of artist-run platforms that responded are registered nonprofits, and 7% are registered for-profit businesses, but the majority (56%) are non-registered, informal, and independent art spaces.

Major Funding Sources

72% of the projects are significantly funded out of the pockets of their organizers. 50% rely heavily on in-kind support, like donated space and volunteer work.

28% are supported by foundation grants, and only 13% receive significant government funding. About a quarter of the respondents receive funds from private donors and about the same percentage had success crowdfunding to sustain their projects.

20% of spaces are substantially funded by event sales or tickets. Others detailed their funding from space rentals, artist residency programs, production contracts, an organizer's freelance job, or fine art print sales.

What are the biggest challenges posed by the pandemic for your organization?

- Loss of revenue, grants and fundraising cycles that are needed to pay rent and hold on to the space
- Lack of health insurance”, “Secure employment, housing
- Real threats to those deeply impacted by isolation, no access to medical care, and the loss of income, and most importantly, the continued struggles of systemic racism
- The premise of our work is community-based, participatory, and focused on collective interaction and resource sharing. [The pandemic has been] a deep blow to the foundation of our practice and mission
- Maintaining capacity while still allowing for space and time for staff and partners to deal with the trauma
- Art is about communication and community—how can we bring that experience to people in an age of social distancing and financial hardships like lost jobs and higher priority purchases (like rent and food)?”

Do you foresee any permanent impacts to your organization?

- Closure
- Our organization has become more fragmented
- Our planned programming was years in the making (...),we may not be able to reschedule [it]
- The impact of moving our work online has been huge. We were reticent as we consider liveness an imperative part of what we do. But we have been able to facilitate public performances to happen in simultaneous countries, so we have become a more closely knit community. That has been fabulous and unexpected.
- We are thinking about how to integrate this new virtual space in a meaningful, long term way”

How has the pandemic affected audience engagement and attendance to your organization's programs? Has your audience decreased or increased? Has it become more local, or spread nationally and internationally?

- Increased locally, due to [our engagement] in specific discourse in the city
- Audience evaporated
- With live-streaming, we are engaging a dramatically wider community on an international scale

“We do have more national and international people engaging with our programs or online content. We suspect that as their own local economies re-open they will return to being more passive social media consumers (but hope they can and will remain engaged)”

“Our practice is grounded in community interaction, without the resources to build out a digital arm. As a result, we've been disjointed from our community and have felt failing to our artist collaborators”

If you are an artist running a project in Chicago, and would like to participate in the research about the impact of COVID-19 on artist-run Chicago, please fill out the survey at publicmediainstitute.com/covidssurvey

This survey also gathers information to list your project in a growing map of artist-run spaces in Chicago. Visit the map and submit new entries at publicmediainstitute.com/artistunchicagomap

Outside of any programming, how are you keeping in touch with your public or community during the pandemic?

- Newsletters and social media
- We are still publishing reviews and interviews but since we stopped for 3 weeks to focus on protests and supporting BLM, we have not had any content on our site.
- We are wheat pasting messages in solidarity with Black Lives Matter
- Mostly just checking in on artists friends, but not much, really, giving time for artists to feel and go through their thing while we do the same, no pressure here for a/the production line"
- What, if anything, will your organization take away from the pandemic for its programming and outreach? Are there any kinds of programming or ways of using digital tools you will continue after restrictions are lifted?
- Shutting down our usual arts programming and fully embracing our space as a functional resource hub will allow us to experiment with our relationship to the neighborhoods around us
- The pandemic has shown how vital and vulnerable the art ecosystem in the city of Chicago remains.
- Since the death of George Floyd, we've been thinking hard about our role in the systemic problems in the art world and how to move forward and what needs to be adjusted.
- The lesson learned is that we are dependent on gathering.
- All of the virtual developments will be maintained after restrictions are lifted because we will no longer have a physical space to return to.
- I'm interested in thinking about building a micro network where artists support each other in reciprocal ways internationally

As it becomes safe to meet again in person for larger events, we will continue to originate and include digital tools in program development, participation, and engagement. The pandemic has also provided an opportunity to consider what it truly means to serve all artists and audiences and given us tremendous opportunities to reach underserved artists and audiences who in the past might not make it to a live performance, including disabled and other financially and socially marginalized persons.

What would you rather not take away from the pandemic?

- I would rather not take the extreme juxtaposition of social isolation colliding with mass assembly in the streets. we need our in-between spaces of social life to sustain and heal us and bring us together for contemplation, listening, and imagination.
- We would hope that this results in more options and spaces for equitable experiences and expressions in the arts, not a reinforcing of current or introducing of new inequities. We hope that this opens the world up, versus carving new power structures. We hope to not take the fear and anxiety that accompanied the pandemic. We can leave that behind.

Permanent online social atomization. Public space is powerful and we need it for so many things.

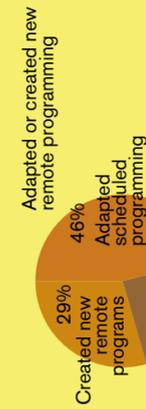


[I'd rather not take away] a return to the normal from before.

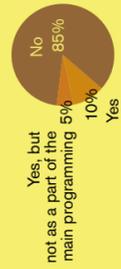
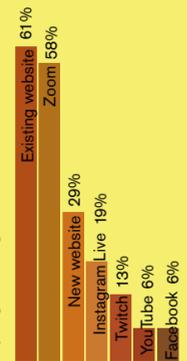
THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON ARTIST-RUN CHICAGO

As of August 25, 41 projects had responded to Public Media Institute's COVID-19 impact survey. These charts summarise their answers to key questions about how the pandemic affected their operations, how they adapted activities, and how they sought to sustain themselves and others in the continuing crisis.

THE LOSS

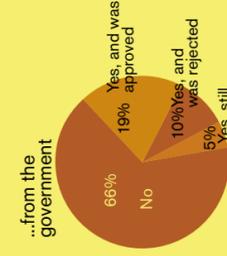


Those who made remote programming used

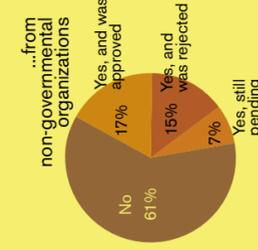
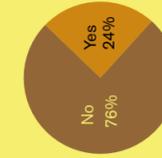


SEEKING AND GIVING HELP

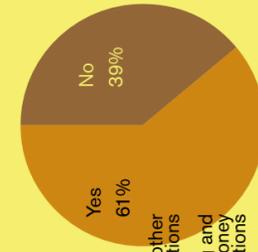
Applied for COVID relief funding...



Started a COVID relief crowdfunding or other fundraising campaign

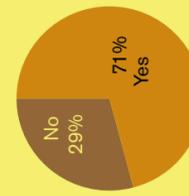


Started funding and resource distribution efforts for other groups, individuals and communities

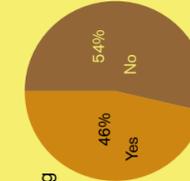


through funds awarded by other organizations
through crowdfunding and receiving material and money donations
through sales and commercial events
through donating money, supplies, or meals to movements and neighbours

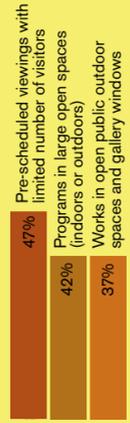
ADAPTING TO THE PANDEMIC



Eventually introduced in-person programming



Those who introduced in-person and physical programming organized



Join Hyde Park Art Center each Thursday, September-November 2020 for live and virtual programming featuring spaces participating in Artist Run Chicago 2.0

Artists Run Chicago 2.0

Movies in the Lot (In Person)

Date September 10th
Time 8pm - 10pm

Join us in the Hyde Park Art Center parking lot for a socially distanced screening event! Bring your own blankets, chairs, and snacks and enjoy films and shorts curated by Nightingale Cinema and Boundary. For safety measures, space is limited, please RSVP at cmckissick@hydeparkart.org

The Barbarians*

Date September 17
Time 6-8pm

Join SLOW Gallery and Sideshow Theater Company for a staged reading of Jerry Lieblach's experimental play, The Barbarians

Ignition Performances*

Date September 24
Time 6-8pm

Join Ignition Project Space for an evening of sound, music, dance, movement and performance art from artists who have worked at Ignition Project Space over the years.

Ohklahomo presents Into The Groove**

Date September 27
Time 12pm

Exhibition and performance space, Oklahomo, presents a day long event featuring performance, sound, and video from Chicago-based artists and artists from around the nation and globe

Artist Run Chicago 2.0 Curatorial Talk*

Date October 1
Time 6-8pm

Join us for a virtual Curatorial Talk with our Director of Exhibitions and Residency, Allison Peters Quinn and Noah Hanna moderated by our Exhibitions and Residency Coordinator, Mariela Acuna. Learn more about the history of Artists Run Chicago, and insight about the current exhibition.

ADDS DONNA presents Collection Studies*

Date October 8
Time 6-8pm

Join ADDS DONNA and featured artists for a virtual discussion on pieces from their collection. Artists will share materials related to the objects on display and participate in an informal discussion with ADDS DONNA curators, dissecting the material to relate it back to the artists' practices and the larger theme of the collection.

The Beautiful Journey with Mujeres Mutantes*

Date October 15
Time 6-8pm

Join Delilah Salgado of Mujeres Mutantes for a writing workshop and conversation about the Mexican-American experience as an artist in Chicago.

Experimental Sound Studio w/ Kamau Patton*

Date October 22
Time 6-8pm

Join Interdisciplinary Artist and Educator, Kamau Patton, with Experimental Sound Studio or a presentation of work from his post as Archive Artist in Residence - engaging the Sun Ra / El Saturn collection in the Creative Audio Archive at ESS.

Chuquimarca presents Tanda*

Date(s) October 29, November 5, 12, 19
Time 6-8pm

Join Chuquimarca for a virtual Tanda! Tanda is Chuquimarca's experimental program that aims to motivate self-directed and collective learning by structuring a short term club that aids artists and makers with personal practice through collective knowledge building.

More & updated information about ARC 2.0 events can be found at: <https://www.hydeparkart.org/events/>

** via twitch.tv/lumpenradio * via zoom

PRESCRIPTION FOR A HEALTHY ART SCENE:

- 01 A LARGE POOL OF ARTISTS THERE'S A CRITICAL MASS OR TIPPING POINT THAT MAKES A SCENE
- 02 TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES WHICH HELPS SUPPORT THE POOL OF ARTISTS
- 03 ACTIVE ART SCHOOLS WHICH FEED INTO THE POOL OF ARTISTS AND GIVE ARTISTS TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES
- 04 STUDIO SPACE THAT'S AFFORDABLE AS WELL AS LIVE/WORK LAW THAT ALLOWS ARTISTS TO OCCUPY LIGHT INDUSTRIAL SPACES
- 05 ALTERNATIVE SPACES THAT GIVE EXHIBITION AND RESIDENCY OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW ART AND IDEAS
- 06 ADVENTUROUS ART DEALERS WHO TAKE ON NEW ARTISTS, SUPPORT ARTISTS WITH SALES
- 07 ADVENTUROUS COLLECTORS WHO BUY LOCALLY AND BUY NEW WORK, MAKE THEIR COLLECTIONS AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS
- 08 SOPHISTICATED WRITERS TO DOCUMENT, DISCUSS AND PROMOTE NEW IDEAS/CONTINUING REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- 09 PUBLICATIONS FOR THEM TO WRITE FOR
- 10 NEWSPAPER CRITICS WHO ARE THOUGHTFUL AND SOPHISTICATED AND TALENTED
- 11 FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR ARTISTS AND WRITERS
- 12 ACCESSIBLE MUSEUMS AND CURATORS WHO TALK TO EACH OTHER AND DO STUDIO VISITS WITH LOCAL ARTISTS
- 13 INTERESTED AUDIENCES WHO ATTEND ALL OF THE ABOVE AND READ ABOUT IT
- 14 ACCESS TO SPECIALIZED MATERIALS OR BUSINESSES (SUCH AS HIGH TECH MATERIALS IN THE SF BAY AREA OR FILM INDUSTRY IN LA)
- 15 SOCIAL SPACE WHERE NEW IDEAS ARE BEING GENERATED ABOUT ART, ABOUT SOCIETY, ABOUT THE ROLE OF ART
- 16 HANGOUTS/PARTIES/SALONS/LECTURE SERIES/ RESTAURANTS/BARS WHERE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY IS MANIFESTED
- 17 ARTICULATE ARTIST LEADERS
- 18 HEROES, ICONOCLASTS, VILLAINS (PEOPLE EVERYONE LOVE TO HATE)
- 19 ARTISTS IN RESIDENCY OPPORTUNITIES
- 20 PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL CLIMATE THAT ENCOURAGES ART AS OPPOSED TO, SAY, GIULIANI USING HIS OFFICE TO GO AFTER THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM
- 21 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ARTISTS TO GET INVOLVED IN POLITICS
- 22 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ART (CITY OR PRIVATE)
- 23 EVENTS THAT BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER SCHEDULED MULTI-GALLERY OPENING NIGHTS FOR EXAMPLE

by Renny Pritikin

Prescription *for a* Healthy Art Organization



The Prescription for a Healthy Art Organization is a collectively drafted Google document that gathers best practices and aspirations in order for art organizations to thrive and for those involved with them to work in an atmosphere of equity and respect. These practices touch on both internal and external factors: everything from the labor conditions within an organization to the societal context in which it works.

While the document as a whole is primarily informed by experiences in more established nonprofit arts organizations, with their concomitant hierarchies and power differentials, for this special issue of Lumpen a selection from the Prescription was chosen with an eye to practices that may be especially relevant to more informally organized artist-run spaces and groups. This open-source, continually evolving text is created by many hands, both named and anonymous. You are invited to add your thoughts at:

www.bit.ly/rx4artorgs

With much gratitude to all contributors, the document is also indebted to adrienne maree brown's Emergent Strategy, Tema Okun's Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture, and ¹ Renny Pritikin's Prescription for a Healthy Art Scene for providing inspiration on the text's form, ³ process, and content.

Maya Gomez,
Valerie Imus,
Lisa Martin,
Vreni Michelini-Castillo,
Nick Wylie

¹ akpress.org/emergentstrategy.html
² cwsworkshop.org/PARC_site_B/dr-culture.html
³ s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/sfnomaopenspace/wp-content/uploads/2009/07/pritikin-prescription-for-a-healthy-art-scene2.gif

- The question “how are you?” (not “how are things?” but “how are you?”) is regularly asked. The emotional state of each team member receives attention. We are all humans doing the work.

- The social value of maintaining a community gathering space is prioritized.

- The surrounding art community offers a critical mass of fairly compensated opportunities for artists, educators, and arts administrators.

- Affordable light industrial spaces are available for rent.
- A culture of collaboration and consensus drives decision making. Unilateral decisions that impact others are expressly avoided.

- Volunteer labor is welcomed with gratitude, but unpaid internships are understood as replicating oppressive systems of privilege and avoided when possible.

- Intersectional leadership, specifically by POC and queer artists and administrators, is promoted and supported.
- Power inequity is understood as a danger to the powerful, the powerless, the organization, and the community. Hierarchies, when they arise or are inherited, are dismantled and replaced with horizontal and democratic models.

Sil' Orphi Annie



Allright, here's the last one.
word!

SIN



Hey, where's Gina?
I want to get the fuck outta here!

Ugh, drummers.

I'll go find her.



Yo, it's 5 bucks.



GINA!

SLAM



C'mon! We're all loaded out and it's time to go.

But loading out is fuckin' dumb.

I KNOW!



Gimme back my clothes later ok, guy?

Of course! Gina, I love you!

Yeh ok, guy...



WHAT?! I just played, I'm not paying a cover!

Dude, one of the DJs is from Moldova.

Support the scene.



Look, you and the dog can split this beer, but that's all I got.

SLURP! SLURP!

Siiiiick.



Fucking Drummers!

DOOM DOOM DOOM



Don't look back, don't look back, don't look back, don't look...

Babe!

Dude... Dude, You want a beer?



Yes! Finally out of that flesh market.

Wait, where's Gina...?



Hey this guy gave me these, I'm going to eat all of them right now, ok?



DOOM DOOM DOOM



Hey has anyone seen Gina?

Yo, baby!

Hey, wazzup?

Wanna bump?

Dude... HA HA! Like dude...



Gawd! Not interested!

But, babe!

Dude!



Gina wait!

BYE, BYE



Uhh gawd, I'll just drop it all off tomorrow before work.

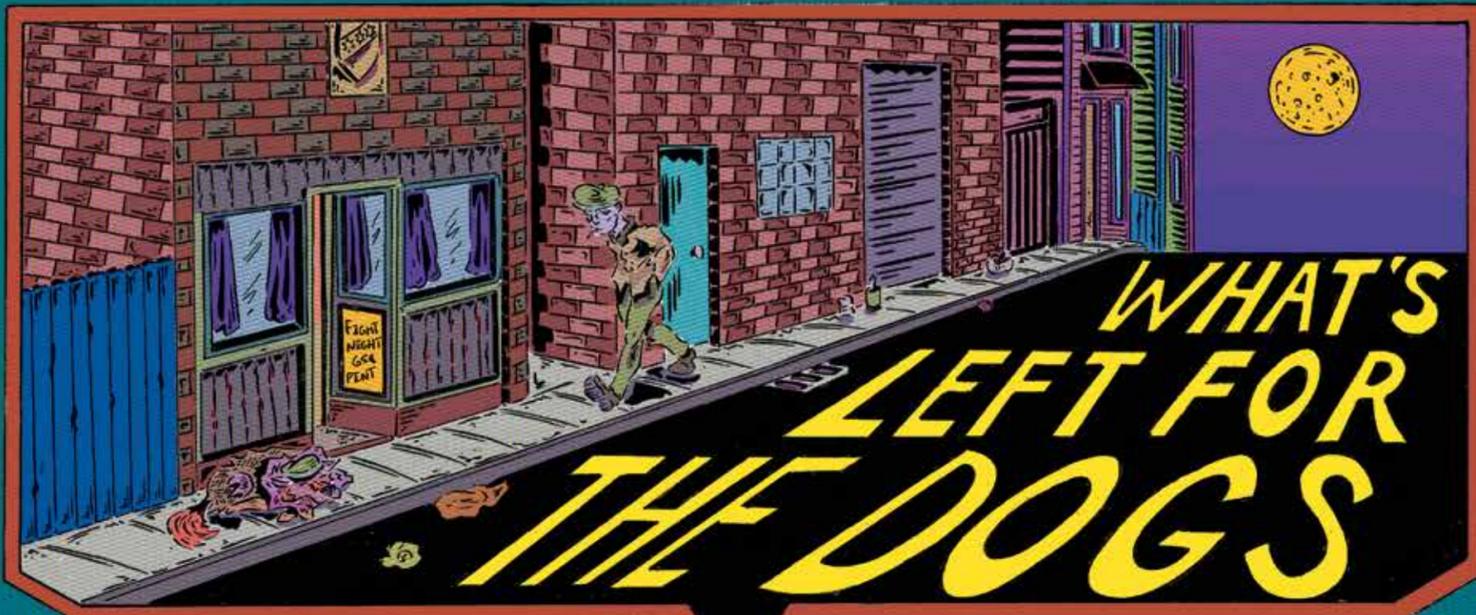
Um Annie? Don't bother.



Somebody stole the van.

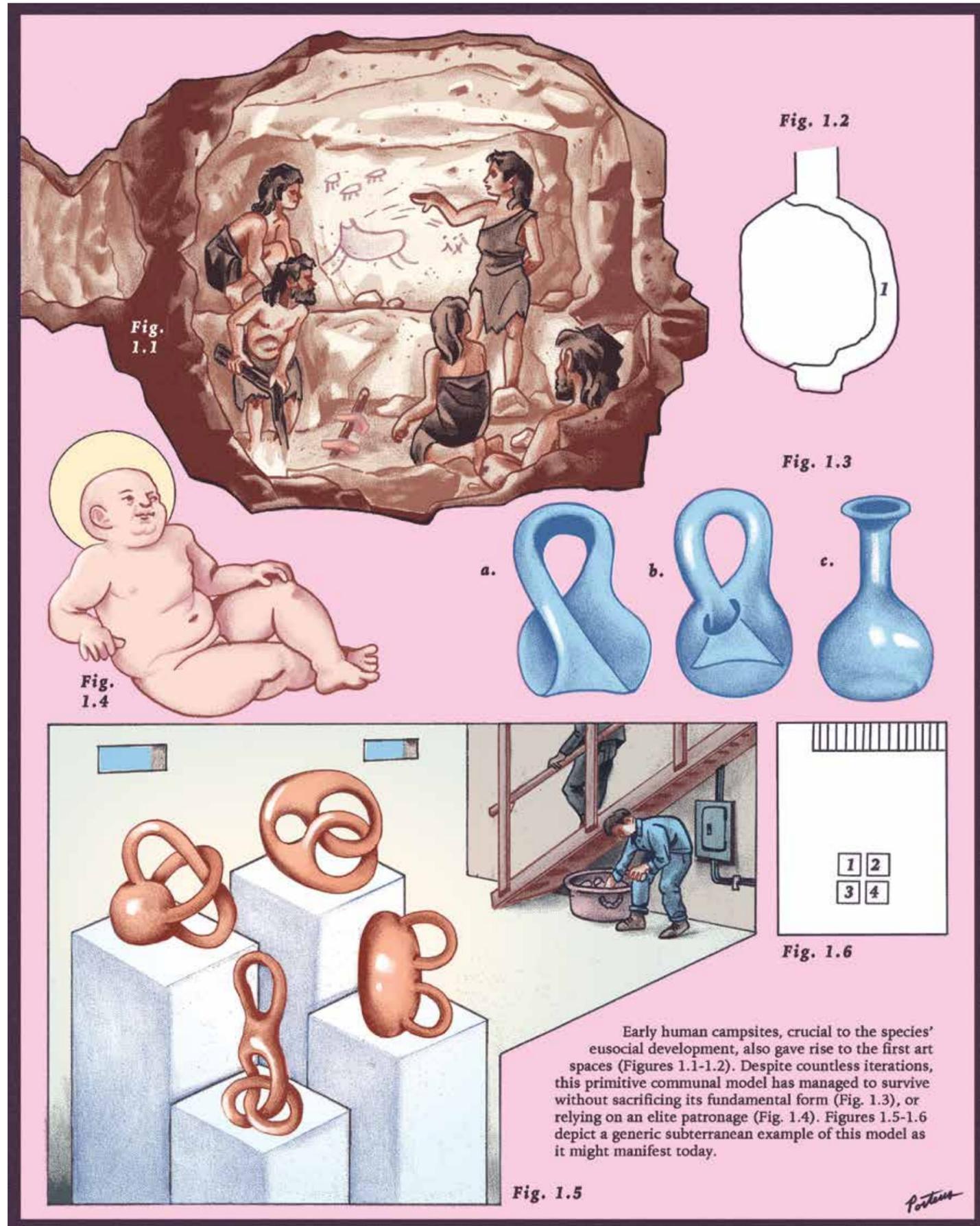
AHHH!!

FIN



THE SHOW

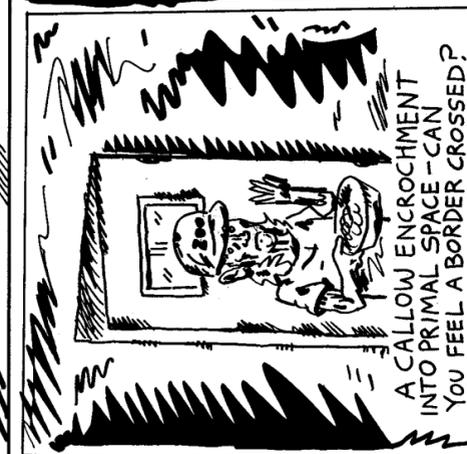
A COMIC BY DAVID ALVARADO







HOW TO SAY HELLO?
 AN ENCOUNTER
 A GLIMPSE
 WE ENTER A CAGE
 JUST UNLOCK
 THE DOOR



A CALLOW ENCROACHMENT
 INTO PRIMAL SPACE - CAN
 YOU FEEL A BORDER CROSSED?



WHY CAN'T IT BE A
 SATURDAY MORNING PAL
 YOUR CARTOON FRIEND?



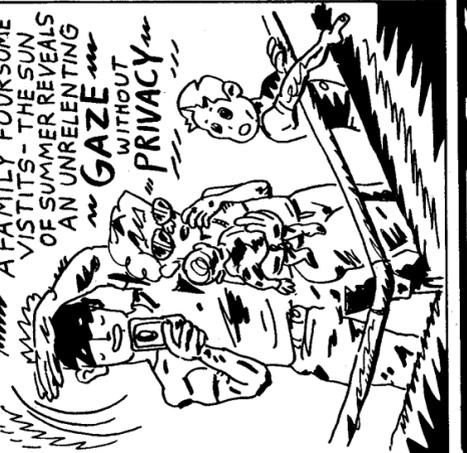
HE'S AFRAID
 AND ALONE
 WITH A BEAR



ONE WHO CAN
 GO ON ADVENTURES



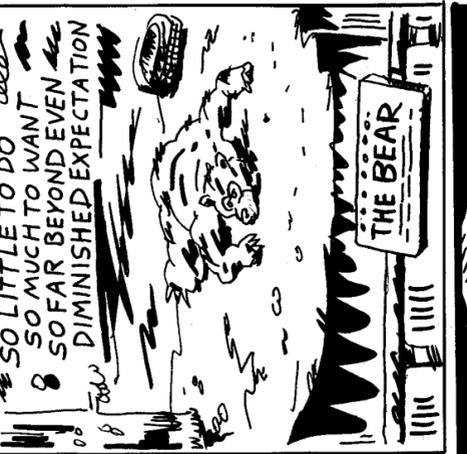
NO, THIS IS A WILD ANIMAL
 WALKING THROUGH THE FOREST
 AT DUSK, CRUSHING LEAVES



A FAMILY FOUR SOME
 VISITITS - THE SUN
 OF SUMMER REVEALS
 AN UNRELENTING
 GAZE
 WITHOUT
 PRIVACY



CAN IT RECALL TEARING
 FISH FLESH IN THE RAPIDS?



SO LITTLE TO DO
 SO MUCH TO WANT
 SO FAR BEYOND EVEN
 DIMINISHED EXPECTATION



FINALLY, FINALLY
 IT BECOMES TOO
 MUCH TO

BEER



UNTAMED,
 FACE YOUR
 CAPTOR
 RISE ON
 HIND LEGS
 AND CRY



ONE CAN PLEAD
 FOR EXPLANATION



THE BEAR HAS NO WORDS TO SPEAK



A FERAL URINATION,
 ALL FOUR ON
 THE FLOOR



NO HELLO
 JUST GOOD
 BYE



REMEMBER - NO EYE CONTACT

TAKE THE KEY CLUMSY
 IN THE PAW - OPEN THE DOOR
 AS A MAN DOES



WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO DO
 JUST LOOK OUT OVER THE MOUNTAIN



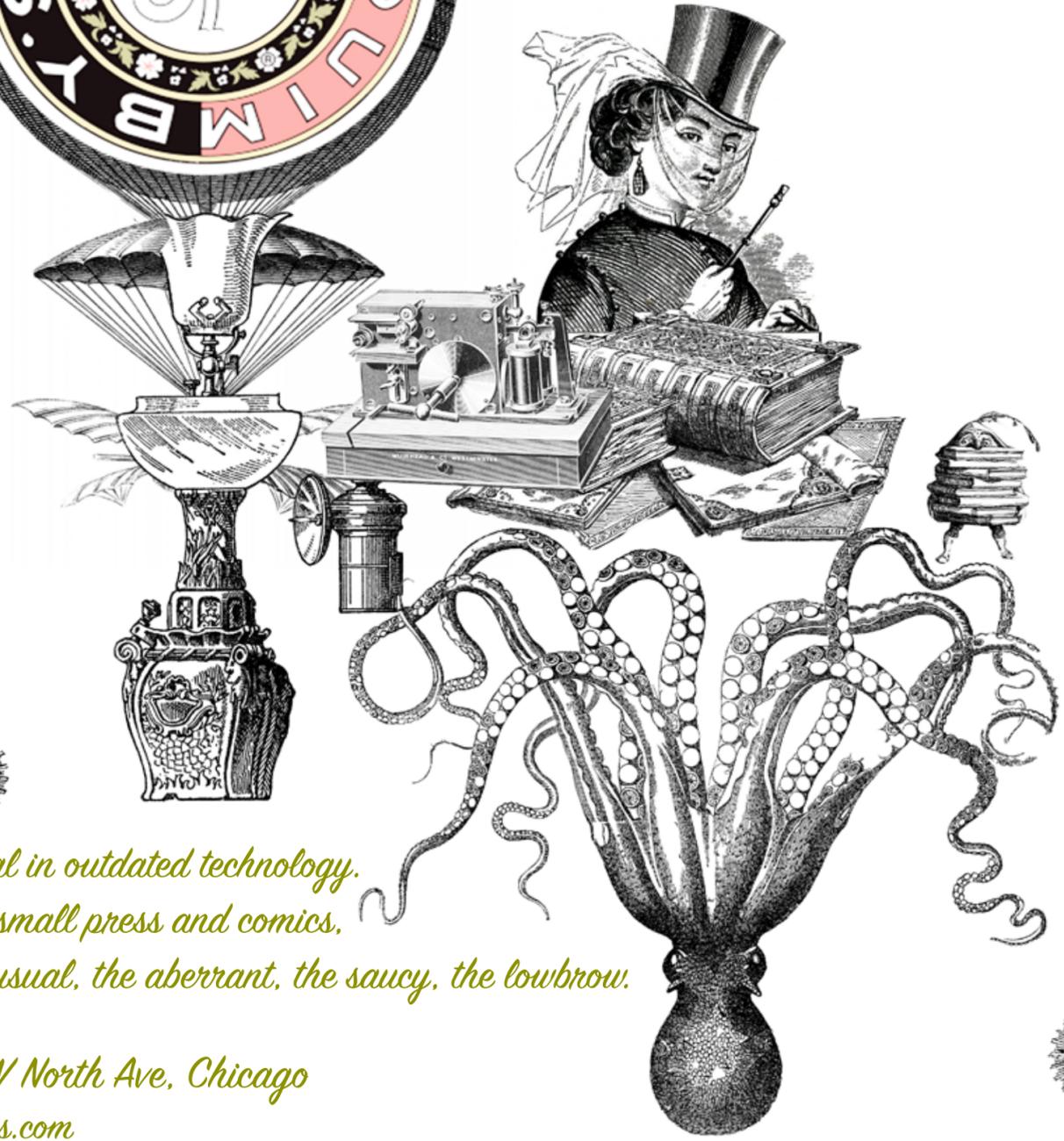
EXIT
 THE ROOM

RIGHT OUT THE DOOR





Quimby's Bookstore



*We deal in outdated technology,
zines, small press and comics,
the unusual, the aberrant, the saucy, the lowbrow.*

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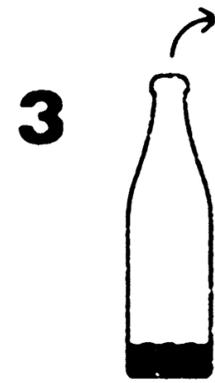
1

Je participe.



2

Tu participes.



3

Il participe.



4

Nous participons.



5

Vous participez.

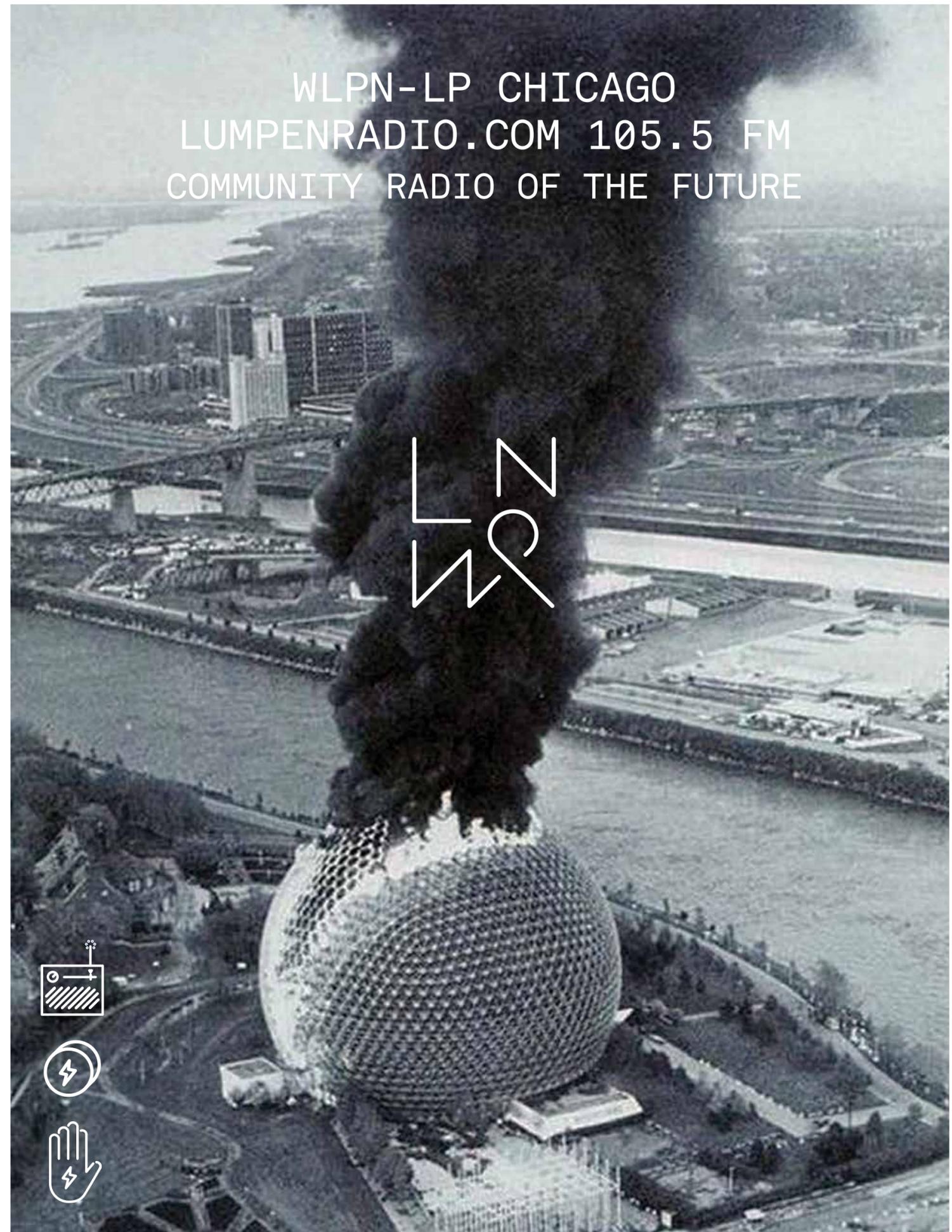


6

Ils profitent.

I participate.
You participate.
He participates.
We participate.
You all participate.
They profit.

Text on print by the Atelier Populaire in Paris, May 1968





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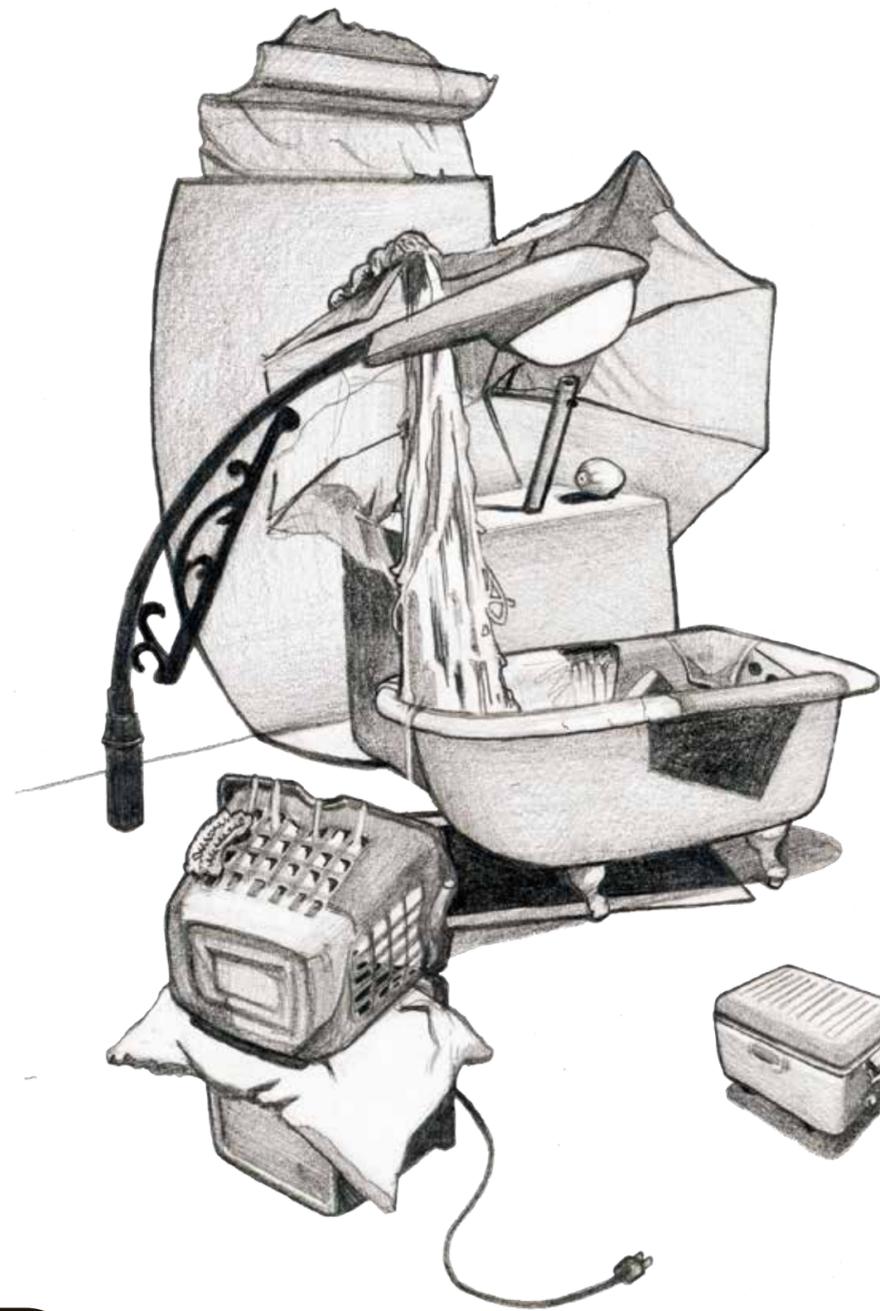
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