

WE TBD



We meet at HR to feel the space

Met at HR — what are we doing? (Confusion)

A. Pulley, elevator, access, bereavement pumpkin for mourning groups, open upper space, WhatsApp, not group show, collaborative, how to activate high ceilings? Make a hole through the wall to change bodily movement and creative flow of energy in the space. How to make the space supportive to us, to artists to Human Resources and their mission?



Series of meetings at Olga's

PRODUCTION

Sketch design for scaffold

Occupying space, cleaning, Niko skateboarding insideHR, in Chinatown,



Series of performances

Olga and John move the soda machine into space and try to get it to work.

1st ENCOUNTER

Olga is offered to show at Human Resources. She contacts us. Why?

- A. Inspired by Sense 8
- B. Rosi Braidotti
- C. How people can truly work things out when coming from different places in life? Using art as platform to compress time and model stressors

Met at Alex's house for dinner → shared our work

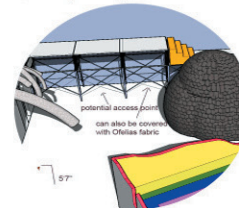


Met at Olga's — broke down workload, subgroups

Disagreement about need for physical buildout, disagreement about architects, disagreement about scaffolding (difference of opinion based on differing philosophies, beliefs, tastes)

We decide no architects (compromise, empathy, understanding after discussion)

Building pumpkin



Cutting hole open, everyone helped paint upstairs room red. Olga begins ancestral cleansing ritual.



Play space for Hey Baby

Radio show



Daytime crew and after day job work evening crew. Sometimes we didn't see each other. (dissapointment at isolation and lonely feeling)
A. Expected others to contribute a bit more to building pumpkin
B. Olga's outside labor for scaffold, hiring queer carpenters to build steps and do finish work, we screw boards down

Labor/manpower was thin towards the end. (Expectations & Overwhelm of tasks)



Felt overwhelming (help!)



Abandoned idea that was initially Alex's idea (supposed to be intimate [closed] and open for performances)

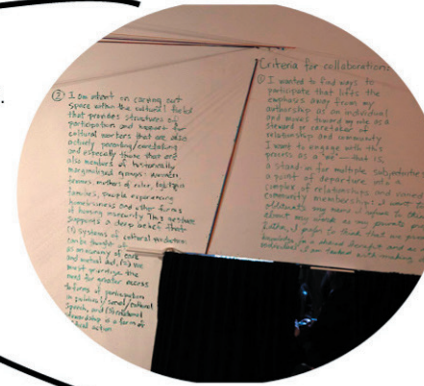
SOFT OPENING

Scaffold up, open wall, pumpkin structure, Fran casting John, all of us. Plaster cast of some of us get placed in red room. Video synopsis created by Kristy of our process is projected on second floor panel. Alex brings lots of hot dumplings for everyone to eat.



Where should Alex's painting go?

Jennifer maps out all the participants.



restorative justice dinner, (feeling of warmth as community forming) Hey Baby play group takes place during the whole installation and art opening times. Niko skateboards inside HF (our kids and other youth welcome in space during work hours makes me happy)

Queer Poets do a reading



CLOSING

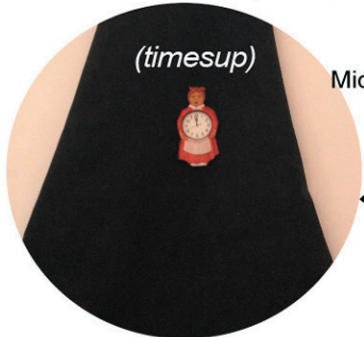
von screens his video on big wall and does live performance with sound. Ofelia's sister makes hot posole.



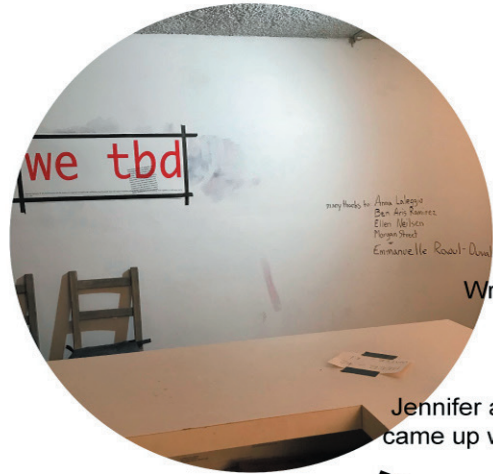
DEINSTALL

Olga has emotional crisis painting over red wall. (emotional trigger from family trauma) Jennifer helps paint it white and finishes task for her. (empathy- soothing help) We get tall ladder and fill holes, Olga and Jennifer paint walls over all the marks from the mapping project.

Lumber collected so Niko can build halfpipe. Arrangements made with one collective member to borrow truck for pick up Other member of HF calls trash pick up. Olga arrives with truck to find lumber is thrown out in trash. (anger at poor communication of collective)



Microaggressions against Grandma Clock Artwork (racist actions against work is provoking and triggering- why didn't HR stand behind artwork?)

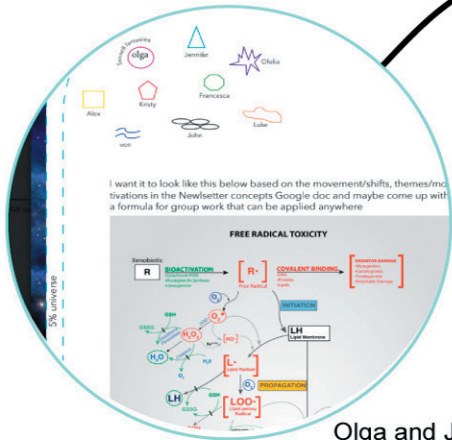


TOOK BREAK

Met at Olga's

Wrote about our experience with project (exquisite corps)

Jennifer and Olga spoke on phone and came up with questions about why from our words?



We responded to questions

Olga and Jennifer talked on phone → Olga expressed that this project was about making friends while being artists? (how personal needs are multifaceted and messy and typically not accounted for in work)

Fran offered to design the timeline in InDesign

1. Due date for final timeline: Wed, February 12th
2. Fran lays out content provided timeline by Sat, February 15th
3. Fran sends timeline to us and we fill in what we want in response to timeline: feelings, thoughts, actions, images, etc.
4. Fran designs structure.

MEETING FOR POSSIBLE PUBLICATION (Luke)

Didn't happen, exhausted and irritated, no capacity (drained)

JOURNAL OF POLITICS & AESTHETICS (Olga emailed us)

Brought us to think about what we had done, why share this process? (Emergent Strategy)

Tiny Tortures writing

Fran and Jen met w/Olga about design of newsletter



Meeting w/Olga (Jennifer FaceTimed in for a bit)

A. In phone conversation Jennifer shares her dread about participating because she is so busy pulled in too many directions, but once she speaks to us she feels better. (Olga takes it personally. She is hurt by her expression of dread and lashes out at group.)

B. Olga expressed frustration, wanted us to be more open and honest, write more

Olga stepped back from group (had to self reflect about my tendency to want to control others when my expectations of others weren't happening- challenge inherent within collective work)

Fran, Ofelia, von, and Jennifer met at Jennifer's and made this timeline

Hey olga, I'm sorry I haven't been able to add very much to this process. I have been in Oakland all week and the past several weeks have been very trying at work... Lots of tension, intense trauma exposure and very tight capacity personally. Its extremely challenging to hold it together each day doing this work and come home to be present for family. Its felt difficult to find time and emotional energy to dig into the task of recounting conflict or figuring out what to add to this document. I struggle to articulate with folks in my life how draining my job is. I really have to work very hard each day to keep on track and not internalize all that I see and interact with. And the last phone call we all had your stepping back and all that was in that made me feel unsure that I've had the emotional capacity to add more than I already have or that I was able to have the mental space to process this project, recount, etc. I've been a little unclear about the objectives inside a recounting of emotional conflict, not sure what it produces, that it feels like intense emotional/intellectual labor but I don't know to what end? Maybe this text should go in? At any rate, I'm sorry I haven't been more present but haven't really known how to.

5. Fran lays out our contributions and remarks into timeline format that will become newsletter for public distribution.
6. Jennifer asks for extension as she is very busy. (frustration with structure set up and deadlines set up by others and not aligning with her needs).
7. Olga Texts Marc at JOAP on Jennifer's behalf
8. Fran and Olga talk on phone and text. Olga frustrated since Journal although flexible needs our content on sooner side and Fran has other shows to work on)
9. Olga and Jennifer text negotiating about deadline and her inclusion.
10. Olga and Fran come to an agreement and new plan with Olga adding on behalf of Jennifer more emotional content in timeline respecting Fran's labor and time needs.

tiny-tortures

Microaggressions within the art community are common place, just as they are in the heteronormative. Allow this to stand as an example for both institutions. A friend and I are walking into a; gallery, a dinner party, a happening etc. My friend is lightskin, dapper, elegant. The host is polite and greets him with a hug and a kiss on the cheek, A standard greet. Naturally I expect the same formality. I extend myself in a moment of intimacy and they jeer away. Once again I am the Fool. We both tense up, with a twirl of my wrist I turn my gesture into a bow, "good day!" I say. A turn of phrase that has now come to mean f--- your life. And so I jaunt and somehow simultaneously shuffle away. I find my friend and ask, "do you know the hostess?" my friend retorts, "the hostess with the mostess. No, why?" I give no answer and try to enjoy myself. And after many a glass of whiskey. I do. Just to capitalize on the fact that this happens all the time. While writing this in the library (side note: I work in the library) an older gentleman comes to return some library material. The gentleman survey's the library workers and notices that we are all reading except for me. He comes up to me and asks what language are you writing in? To which I shrug my shoulders and say English. He says, "Oh I thought it was Ethiopian. I ignore the fact that Ethiopian is not a Language. I smile... slyly... and ask, why? His reply is standard, "I don't know", then promptly hands me several jazz/blues albums to return. I think to myself I should've said Jazz, should've said I'm writing in jazz... lol
Let us leave the present and return back to my past.
A while ago, my partner and I were featured in an art show with Olga and several other notable artist. I won't go into the specifics of the show. As I will solely be discussing the instance of the microaggression as it pertains to the artwork being produced.

My partner my spouse my love my lady (sometimes) my sculpture (allthetime) and I were tasked to create an addition to my grandmother's collection of Aunt Jemima perafamila as she collects old Black memorabilia and anything old and black is very racist not that quaint shi_ that happens now. By the time I was 12 I was completely desensitized to white white supremacy, as well as completely confused about white folk. All I knew was that somehow white folk where inherently racist. As I was saying my grandmother had tasked us to create Auntie Jay this time she wanted aunty Jay to keeptime. So she had us incorporate a circular clock she had hanging in the kitchen. You see all of the Aunty Jay paraphernalia was displayed in the kitchen and dining room. A nod to our ancestors that were forced to labor there. My grandmother referred to Aunty Jay as the "Queen of the Kitchen" holding dominion over the entire home and thus the well being of every individual in the household. She was and is responsible for our physical health and spiritual well being as typical of black families the daily comunel prayer happens at the dinner table called "grace" at this moment the family discusses their wants needs and concerns. As an artist/cultural author I thought this would be an excellent opportunity to extend the narrative of Aunt Jemeima beyond the familial and back into art discourse. Something I believe has been done many times, at this moment the most proper being Betty Sars' militant vision of aunty jay but there is also that giant mammy sphinx Kara Walker did. Both amazing works both very loud. I wanted my entry to be vibing off of those works but also, I wanted it to add something to the conversation and make-note of the present times we find ourselves in; while still adhering to the specifics of my Grandmother's wishes. The first decision I made was to allow the Mammy figure to have a lighter complexion. I wanted the messiness of that history to be present. The second was the positioning of the clock hands, which were to echo the doomsday clock which at the time was 2 ½ min. Till midnight the closest it's been since 1949 which was 3 min (as I'm typing this it's gotten closer its now 2 min till midnight. I guess the human race will have to become more or less either way, as men we are surely doomed). My final decision would be the name as I ended up calling it "times-up" in reference to the most recent progression of the #metoo movement condemning rape culture. Afterwards Ofelia and I presented it to the rest of the (active) artist in our cluster and we discussed its value and relevance to our show and where to place her within the project space. We decided upon a high overarching space in the center most part of the abandoned chinese theatre gallery. The collective then decided to add a large black drapery that billowed out of the second floor window invaginating aunty jay and connecting the lowerspace with the upperspace, the wall, the floor, the space. And with that particular gesture We were finished with Aunty Jay at least until the closing reception where I was to perform and screen a short film featuring my Grandmother. But, in the weeks that were to come something strange was to take place in our projectspace...

(so these mofos who were allowed to perform in the abandoned chinese theatre gallery art venue with us that is We tbd. kept climbing up a damn ladder to remove Aunty Jay from the wall wtf??)

In the meantime, I was mesmerized by the cluster of female energy doing what some might call masculine labor. (Something my dad once said to my mother, "your daughter does man work.") Nonetheless, build build build. We tbd must build something! How else can we manifest our togetherness as artists. Our thoughts can only be visible through our actions. For this reason we tbd write this essay as we build platforms, scaffolds, using words and layers of friendship. For this reason I wrap my thoughts in plaster. Yet in this journey, this journal, I have learned to be vulnerable, bare. We tbd have embraced the truth, things that we cannot control. We tbd have encountered the beauty of nature, that whatever will be will be. We have faced absurdity, negligence, unconscious racism, narcissism, care, love and ultimately ourselves.

****Sens-8 *** woohoo collective strength
Free Radicals, lefty dude idealism

Within fascistic political times, there is a need to come together to organize against brutal policies. A convening of people recognizing each other coming together in defense of state sanctioned attacks of power(ful) structures. This is a necessary process when folk need to mobilize defenses quickly. However, the practice of forming a functioning community with work, limited resources, trust based on notions of external markers of identity is a short term utilitarian defense and not our ideal long term aspiration. In a time characterized by intolerance of difference fueled by an increasing normalized narcissism, working together while holding space for our differences is one I wanted to explore... a skill to cultivate, an ideal to pursue. We are indeed all connected as explained in the understanding of contemporary physics, ecology, spirituality and chemistry. These ideas of shared consciousness and interconnectedness are an inspiring ethic and philosophical tenant many people can espouse easily. No to a mere thought experiment. Let's put our bodies in it! Make use of the real estate granted to us with high stakes. Vulnerable stakes. But how do we practice these beliefs and put it in action, live it together as a "we" in real time? With this prompt we came together to see what art could be, created in, shared in physical form and space with a clock ticking for one month. Now we will create an art form that embodies our discrete differences (not a melting pot) AND try to tend to our personal circumstances, needs, sustain ourselves in this art context with identities charged by this very mission.-We tbd.....

WE 8, together, open, possibilities, expressing, sharing, thoughts, feelings, ourselves, negotiating, time, space, labor, needs, outcome, new relations, habits, connections, time, discussing, building, shaping, Questioning I get anxious...

Our imagined structure starts as a fragmented entity(I enjoy this visualization)

It slowly becomes more visually abstract to serve everyones needs, wants, feelings.

I take in everyone and in the process feel like im losing my voice. I need to focus and redirect my attention to my needs and wants constantly.

I enjoy making, Building, Keeping to myself

Meticulous labor like sewing calms me, allows me to process

But also enjoy giving. This labor is about giving, being perceptive of our differences, allowing ourselves to be vulnerable and the possibilities of the outcome.

We keep building personally deciding we wanted to be part of this physical labor. Some time later as my energy is depleting I question "what was the point of the structure im helping create?", specifically the bereavement room. I feel like ive been laboring, giving my energy, to an idea that has been absent. The proposed bereavement groups never happened. The proposer was absent. I get frustrated.

Thinking back, I grieve the best on my own.

In the increased absence of 3

we 5 continue our efforts, respect and love for one another.

I was satisfied in our outcome and the many uses our structure took on. It was a space for children, parents, musicians, performers, artists, queer folk, community.