GUERRILLA ART COLLECTIVE OF ARTIVISM II/III SPACE STUDENTS.

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The Guerrilla Art Collective is comprised of the teacher (a practicing artist), students and alumni from the advanced ARTivism (II-H & III-H) courses at Curie H.S. In addition, the collective membership includes local artists, activists, and teachers who partner with the students on various levels. This partnership has been fostered for the past 6 years through the SPACE program (School Partnership for Art and Civic Education) of the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and has included an embedded resident artist from 2017 - 2022. The 2017 GAC class was the pilot for this powerful program that now functions in several schools in Chicago. GAC students work with the teacher as collaborating artists and have input as to the curriculum and projects planned for each year. Our guiding concepts are: social justice, student voice, collectivity, interdisciplinary artistic process, contemporaneity, and community engagement.

The 2022 GAC is developing 4 collaborative installation artworks as part of our final exhibition. Each will focus on a different social justice issue and includes interactive and community engaged components.

EXHIBITION: Scheduled for week of May 23, 2022.

The exhibition will have one part located in the SPACE studio/gallery and additionally installed in the hallways of Curie and the outside courtyard. Parts of this exhibition are interactive and require audience participation and artist facilitation. Will coincide with a separate but related installation/parade by the introductory students from ARTivism 1 classes. Also coincides with dance performances by Melinda Wilson’s Curie Dance Collective (in the auditorium, possibly in hallways as flash performances) around the theme of Refugees

IMMIGRATION RIGHTS: *(TITLE TBD)*

The guiding theme for the work is an investigation into immigrant/refugee rights. The particular focus will be on the inequity experienced by Latinx refugees and undocumented people who suffer from U.S. policy. Students hope to create awareness of the personal impact and trauma experienced by Latinx immigrants who live in fear of deportation, detention, and separation from family due to institutional policy.

This installation will be composed of two components, starting with projected images of detention and immigration at the U.S. border. These will present as a slideshow and serve to illuminate the inhumane treatment of minority refugee/immigrants at the hand of our system. An audio component will present personal stories of Latinx immigrants/refugees coming to America. These stories are collected via anonymous surveys of members of our own community. The stories will be read aloud (English and Spanish) in audio recordings by the GAC artists which serves as a conceptual component to illuminate the fear and danger in the immigrant community who needs to remain anonymous, yet need their voices to be heard. Viewers will be able to listen to these stories as they view the slideshow. *This project was inspired and informed by artists/activists such as Andrea Bowers, Joseph Josue Mora, Jeeyeun Lee, Karina Mireya of BPNC (GAC 2017 alum), and Azul Nunez’s Sanctuary (GAC 2017 alum).*

ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE: *Don’t Let (U.S.) Die*

The guiding theme for the work is an investigation into the lack of access to affordable medical care in our community. GAC artists hope to bring awareness to not only the struggle to access care, but also the damaging results of being denied this care for both physical and mental ailments. Exploration into the origin of inequity will be further explored (economic, racial, gender, sexuality, etc). Digital surveys of the Curie community will result in written responses and verbal interviews that will be exhibited in an audio installation. The results of these recordings will give voice to those who struggle with medical care and share their stories in order to illuminate the inequity of our care system. Posters and resource materials will accompany the installation to provide the community with support in their struggle for care. Buttons with the group's logo and poster images will be given away as part of creating awareness. *This project was inspired by artists/activists such as Andrea Bowers, Andres L. Hernandez (GAC resident artist 2017, 2020 - 2022), Jeeyeun Lee, Karina Mireya of BPNC (GAC 2017 alum), and Azul Nunez (GAC 2017 alum).*

UNITY: *(TITLE TBD)*

The guiding theme for the work is Unity of the people. GAC artists hope to inspire the Curie community to work together to solve problems and create a unified collective force to overcome racism and inequity. They will call for solutions to problems unique to being a student in the Chicago Public Schools. They aim to emphasize the positive aspects of rising together to combat problems instead of the division prevalent in today’s society.

The installation will be embedded throughout the Curie community and neighborhood in the form of inspirational posters created by the students through both digital and hand-made processes. The posters will be everywhere on walls and fences and windows, so that students can see their inspirational messages in their everyday spaces and feel empowered to join forces against inequity. Furthermore, an interactive component will take place during the exhibition when viewers will be invited to decorate their own posters and buttons. The viewer will become the artist and the concept of Unity will be practiced as part of the exhibition work. *This project was inspired by artists/activists such as Andrea Bowers, Jeeyeun Lee, William Estrada, Andres L. Hernandez, and Marcela Chaidez.*

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: *(TITLE TBD)*

The guiding theme for the work addresses the prevalence of sexual harassment in our society. GAC artists are continuing an investigation into the experience of sexual harassment in our community. As part of an earlier exhibition in the Fall of ‘21, students collected personal stories of sexual harassment. That work was based on the practice of Tatyana Fazlalizadeh. While originally aimed at women, who statistically endure sexual harassment at alarming levels starting as children, the project has shifted to include boys and non-binary people. This is due to the number of responses gathered from teen boys and non-binary/trans people as well as teen girls. Their stories inform the installation for the May exhibition.

The May installation will function as a space of empowerment for those who have been traumatized by sexual harassment. Inspired by the work “Black Girlhood Altar” by the collective *A Long Walk Home,* this installation will be an altar to empowerment of women and non-binary folk against sexual harassment. It will be an altar to not only their empowerment but embody healing forces. The center of the work will display a clay sculpture of a female and non-binary body (torso) which will serve as a totem (much like the Venus of Willendorf or Cycladic sculptures). An object installation symbolizing empowerment and healing will be placed around the totem sculpture. Much of the surface of the altar will be empty and used to display a growing collection of small sculptures that will be created by visitors. This interactive component will have visitors take a fist-sized lump of air dry clay and use it to quickly sculpt an abstract totem of their own empowerment. They will leave it behind to become part of the altar. A backdrop will accompany the altar table. This backdrop is a wall/collage of the response slips from their Fall exhibition containing people’s responses and stories about their experiences with sexual harassment. Viewers will be invited to dip their hand in red ink to stamp handprints across the response slip collage. This is meant as a “me too” moment where victims can throw aside shame to say “here I am!” and mark their experience to challenge the normalization of harassment and call attention to its pain.

*This project was inspired by artists/activists such as Tatyana Fazlalizad*