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**NO**



VOL. 2

5.25.17

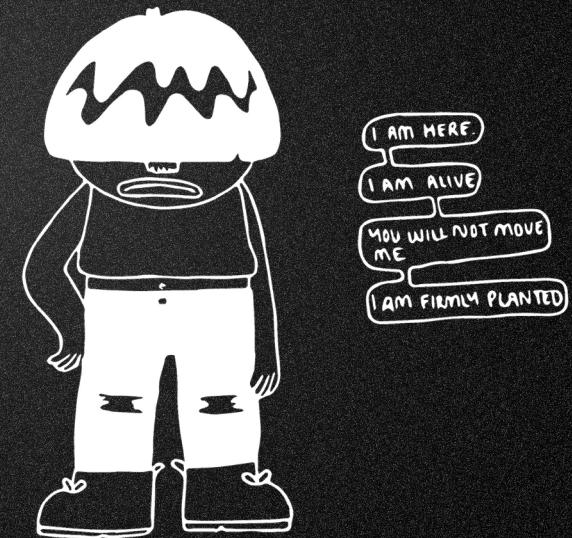
**ART AGAINST TRUMP**

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# DEAR READER

What does it mean to be an artist in **Trump's** America?

In Volume 1, we spoke at length about the concept of art as a personal and political tool: the responsibility of individuals to react and create. We also spoke of its importance as an accessible resource.

Best we've been able to figure out, our most vital function as an organization is acting as a knowledge vessel - providing a space for sharing thoughts and emotions relevant to the struggles that come with existing in this particular political climate. This means absorbing the most art as possible -- finding projects and work that we can help support, cultivate, and/or distribute.

This all sounds great on paper - but how does it manifest? This is the existential crisis at AAT. Just as you are struggling to find the best way to help and make an impact in this very vulnerable America, we are too. We're a small organization. We're new and relatively unknown. On one hand that means the stakes are low, but on the other, our reach is small.

We're always going to have insecurities because we've got a big name. Big shoes to fill.

Our first letter was optimistic - the power of creation and conversation. Spreading truth and ideals. But something feels much darker now, maybe we haven't done as much as we hoped since Volume 1, maybe the world hasn't done as much

as we hoped since inauguration. Where will we be in a year? We're unsure. We're a little lost BUT we're still moving and doing. We have plans and ideas but execution is limited. Regardless, our goal is still simple: create genuine work, put on amazing art shows and find where that takes us.

We genuinely thought there was a possibility we wouldn't have to make Volume 2. Maybe some sort of justice or political responsibility would occur and our namesake would no longer be in power. Everyone's done so much but **Trump** is still the leader of the free world. With that looming over our heads, no matter how much we do, it doesn't feel like enough. Maybe we're a bit upset and jaded. America sucks right now, but rather than wallow in this anger and sadness and confusion, we're trying to find a way to express ourselves, find warmth, talk, create, share, protest.

Since **Trump** was elected to office, we [the American people] have demanded our voices be heard. The passive comfortable existence we've all had during the previous presidency was snatched away -- overnight we assumed our role as activists. Whether we're marching, protesting, calling

representatives, talking to neighbors, signing petitions, making anti-**Trump** zines, or maybe just singing sad songs-- we're working together and we're all doing our part. As activist and former Governor Madeleine Kunin said:

*"What we learned in school about the separation of powers - the executive, legislative and judicial, is being played out before our eyes. For years, we preached about the importance of citizen participation in government to little avail - yet here it is.*

*We're not all in agreement to be sure, but the election of Donald Trump has inspired us to get off the couch and "do something." This is a vibrant, sometimes angry, but fundamentally healthy exercise - it is the life blood of democracy.*

*Thank you Mr. President, for waking us from our slumber."*

We couldn't be more excited to participate in the resistance with you.

Welcome to Volume 2.

<3 AAT TEAM



**Alt. Fact No1.**  
**Sean Spicer is just a wad of**  
**gum in a man suit.**

*Views already great,  
Survey landscape greenery  
open see sight search view.*

*United states court  
House foundation rooted in  
Sides not guilty. Again.*

*Black women life does.  
Black women hair, skin, love, does.  
It matters to me.*

*Beautiful black. yes  
Brown is black and yellow too,  
Red, green, its all true.*

*Coffee bean mornings,  
Orange juice sunrises. Pancake  
Days were the greatest.*

*Are one, Are two, Left  
One, left two, left up right down...  
Bust limitlessly.*

*Count your stripes go on.  
Count the many stars please do  
I shall have a seat.*

*Their red white and blue.  
It sure would look great with black,  
The well must be dry.*

*Explain yourself sir.  
Punishment will be given.  
We will find a way.*

*Do you have papers?  
Well, look at what we have here,  
Seems you found trouble.*

*You can leave now boy,  
Go on. It's what you do best.  
That's apple season.*

*Damn that pie was hot!  
Scorched tongue and numb finger tips,  
But fuck was it good!*

*Astronomers teach.  
And cereal we will eat,  
Spoonful's of freedom.*

*The aching lives on.  
Empty stomachs full of lust  
From clogged head headaches.*

*Don't believe me just  
Watch where you goin' boy. Don't?  
Believe me just watch.*

*Take a nap dear boy  
Rest. Everything will be,  
Chilly winds here to stay.*

*Fuck! What did you do?  
My pen is blue! Why the fuck  
Now it's fucking blue!*

*Get off my fucking  
Line. Leaders make their own mark.  
My words you blue fuck*

*Blue lives matter. Yes,  
Blue ink pens from motels too.  
Blue mix red purple*

*Hearts bleed in Project  
Streets. Chalkboards are stranger here.  
Hollow points too lost*

*And some blue has black  
You see, so black that it is blue.  
Indeed, it is true*

*All colors matter.  
No matter ink pen or life,  
Until all is Black.*

The tortured atlas begs for closure & for release  
from tiny hands steering a fascist regime  
with a fucking twitter account.

You can't take a break from trump's america.  
There is no opting out of this, no leaving the country  
with celebrities who do not take accountability.  
There is no country that he does not touch right now.

As your breakfast gets cold in the hotel lobby,  
you talk to a man who could be your grandfather,  
talk to him because he is the dead father you forgot  
you are missing, forget until you find yourself traveling  
the country alone still hoping he'll call to check up on you.

As the man in the hotel lobby shakes your hand,  
you can't help but wonder how he voted in the election,  
wonder if he voted against your human rights and  
those of the people you love- wonder if his daughter  
is one of the 53% of white women who voted for ~~trump~~  
or if she is a facebook feminist with her pussy hat & white supremacy.

But politics don't come up in your brief conversation-  
just the arts & theater.

And isn't that ironic now that we are living in the united states of a greek tragedy?  
We are all just archetypes.  
But trump is not our hero.

Last night, you turned on the hotel TV because you haven't had cable in years  
& wondered if you will get blood on the white hotel sheets as the TV read:

~~trump~~ launches airstrike against Syria.  
~~trump~~ launches airstrike against Syria.  
~~trump~~ launches airstrike against Syria.

What would Aristotle say about this one?  
Who will write the ending?

To understand those who aren't like you: act.  
No- Listen. Do not think you understand.

Return to your cold breakfast, can't finish all your milk,  
wonder if you got blood on those white hotel sheets,  
wonder how much more blood'd got splattered on the white house last night.

In the car, you drive home.  
the sun is warm and heavy on your bare skin.  
you open the window to get some air.  
we all just need some air here in ~~trump~~'s america.

Out the window,  
your wrists look more delicate than you remember.  
Your hand pushing against opposing wind like  
the bodies standing in between trump and his agenda.

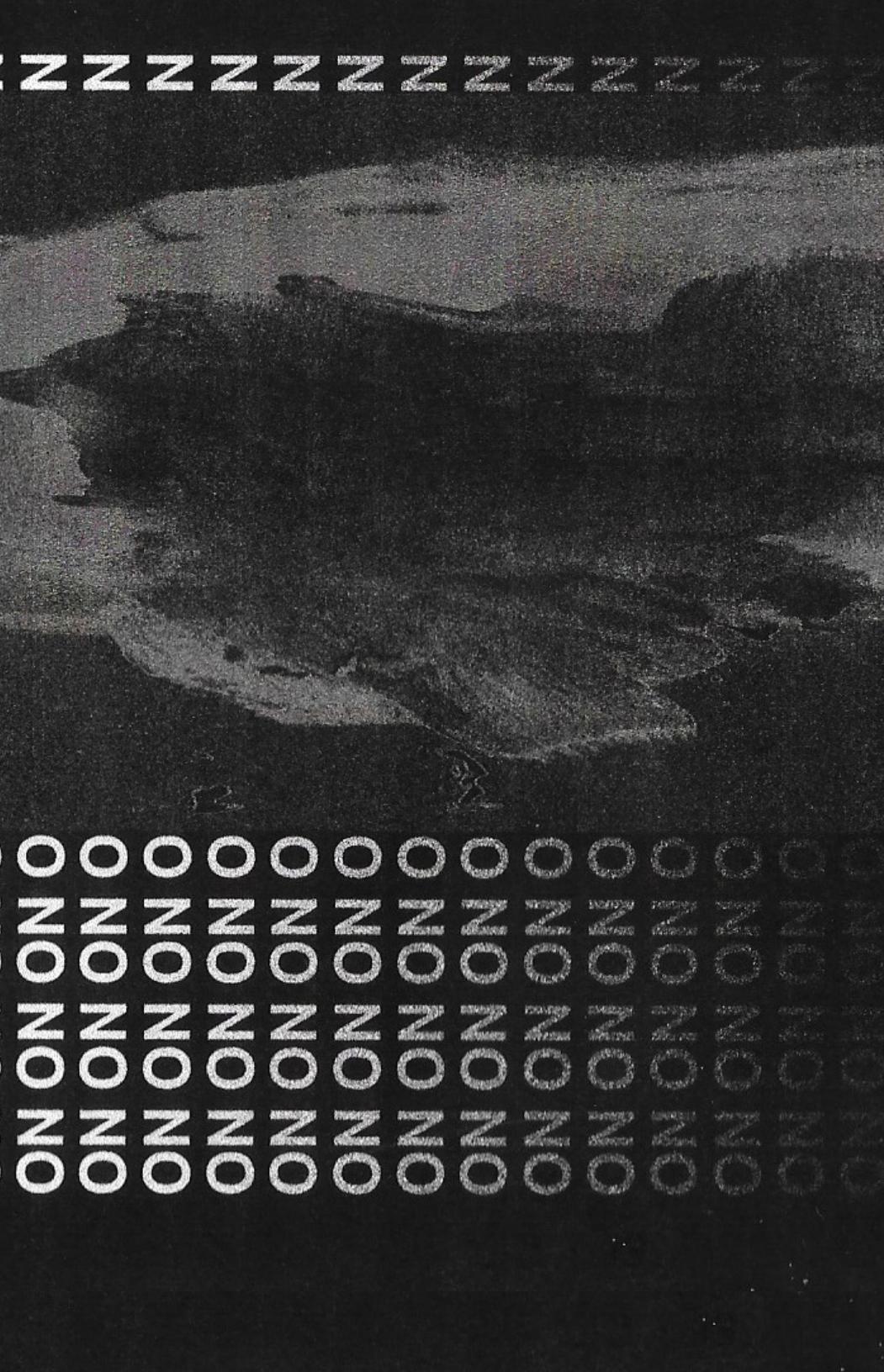
So how do we pull the tortured atlas from his tiny hands?  
Maybe pull like teeth, maybe like military troops out of Syria.  
Maybe we just stop capitalizing his name.  
Maybe we pull like this tug of war between sides.  
Maybe we keep pulling, pulling for those who can't, or who won't  
and we don't let this one go.

*Fictitiously Fright*  
*Full From Fabulous Fables*  
*Foraging False Faith*

*Undeniably*  
*Universally Useless*  
*Undeserved Unwind*

*Cancerous Cartoon*  
*Continuing Commercial*  
*Common Castration*





## ***With the election of Donald Trump,***

a new atmosphere has pervaded the American political arena that many have decried as Fascist. While true that his election was part of a worldwide reactionary shift towards Fascist tendencies, Trump's brand of power is distinct in its purely American qualities. What differentiates the ideology that Trump represents from the Fascist movements of Europe are its roots in economic, rather than racial identity. While yes, on the surface Trump's use of race baiting and anti-immigrant sentiments are clearly tactics straight out of the traditional Fascist toolkit, the basis of his (or more accurately, the 1%'s) objective is to utilize the economic aspects of the American identity to maintain the system of power that allowed them to gain the influence they now hold. It is not traditional Fascism, but a new purely American form of cultural identity based totalitarianism that we will call Economic Fascism.

Economic Fascism is an American invention, a form of populist oppression that utilizes institutional (and open) racism in conjunction with economic theory to maintain a system by which the poor support the rich on a false promise of possible upward mobility. It is distinctly different from traditional forms of Fascism in several key ways. The distinct differences are what this essay will attempt to point out, in order to better identify both the tactics and objectives of the administration so that they can be combatted most efficiently.

I want to clarify right off the bat that when I speak of Trump, I am speaking of the movement that he represents, the network of billionaires that has worked to put him in power and runs his office through the men in the White House, both the ones we see on TV (Bannon, Miller, Kushner) and those we don't. Donald Trump the individual likely has very little to do



with any actual decision making, other than signing the legislation. When his name is said in this paper it is as a way to say the team, not the man himself. Fascism is by definition the promotion of ultra-nationalism to unify power in a single entity. It was created after WWI, when for the first time in modern history societies were introduced to the concept of "total war," wherein the entirety of a society is involved in the war effort. The idea was that in the new modern world where "total war" is a possibility, to protect the country a single party government must be in total control, in order to maximize efficiency in a potential war effort. This was how Fascism rose and succeeded in what would become the Axis powers of WWII. Nazi Germany and Mussolini's Italy are the obvious examples, but it should be noted that Stalin's Russia could also be classified as a Fascist government, in addition to its typical classification as Communist. The reason for this distinction will become clear later.

Obviously, the parallels to the **Trump** administration are clear. Utilizing a war effort (the war against "radical Islamic" terrorism) to promote expanded powers are clearly a Fascist tactic. Clarifying the "Islamic" terrorism in order to utilize racial lines to separate people is a clearly Fascist tactic. However, **Trump**'s objectives are not purely Fascist in the traditional sense, and should not be labelled as such for the reason that adding a pejorative label distracts from what

they truly are and what dangers they truly pose. **Trump**'s Fascism is really the American 1%'s Fascism, and it was begun well before the election of the Donald. **Trump** is merely the pinnacle of the process by which they consolidate control, in order to keep themselves in power.

The key factor to a Fascist power is that the atmosphere within the populace must be right to establish a singular authority. Fascism succeeds when the ultra-nationalist movement has already begun, when the populace feels that their national identity is at risk. In the era of Hitler and Mussolini, the populations of Italy and Germany already had a unified national identity based on historical familial (racial) lineage. When they felt that identity was under attack, they were ready to support a unified power to combat that attack, and thus Fascist powers took hold. The United States lacks that unified racial identity of European states, and therefore remained somewhat immune to the potential for Fascist authority. However, the formation of an American identity based not (as much) on race but on economic principles has developed to a point at which that identity is strong enough that when threatened, the populace will attempt to protect it.

The promotion of Ultra-Nationalism in the United States differs from that of European states in several ways. Since its inception, the United States has lacked a unifying racial

## ***discrepancy in wealth distribution was a natural state, regardless of if it "happened" to correlate with race***

identity. Its creation as a "melting pot" did not allow for the cultural identity of Europe, and therefore the unifying principles of being an American centered around economic properties. The basis of the American identity was economic freedom and opportunity, often referred to as the American dream. The notion of unregulated free market capitalism, focusing on the individual, allowed both rapid growth and development, and obscene accumulation of wealth by several individuals.

Of course, the promise of opportunity in America was available almost exclusively to white people. Part of the principle of the idea though was that it was available to everyone that any discrepancy in wealth distribution was a natural state, regardless of if it "happened" to correlate with race. (The definition of institutional racism.) The institutional racism

that the United States was founded on is written into the capitalist free market, in that non-whites were granted admittance so late that only reparative initiatives could repair the disparity, and no such initiatives have been undertaken. This is all contradictory to the principle of universal opportunity however, and is therefore ignored by the traditional cultural identity. When we speak of **Trump**'s economic oppression, we are speaking of the systemic oppression of predominantly minorities. What must be made clear though is that this oppression is predominantly economic, the most powerful form of oppression in a society that bases its heritage on those economics. The institutionalized racism is rooted in the propagation of an economic system that will forever leave non-whites heavily disadvantaged, thus giving those with a leg up (whites) a further reason to believe in the possibility of their success.

## ***That is the true American identity, that no American is ever poor; they are simply not rich yet.***

By 1950, to be an American was a pure cultural identity. However, it was not based on one's cultural heritage, as even today almost everyone is proud to trace their heritage to a separate nation. What made (and continues to make) one American is their participation in the capitalist economy that has become the bedrock of the culture. Everything from sports to the military is commodified, and to question the core principles was (and is) considered "un-American." The central factor of American identity is the belief that one may one day be wealthy, and therefore any restriction of the free market, from taxing the wealthy to socialized medicine, are restrictive to all Americans, regardless of socioeconomic status.

This is the core of what **Trump** represents; the idea that he embodies the power of the United States, that he is a symbol of wealth that anyone

could one day be. That is the true American identity, that no American is ever poor; they are simply not rich yet.

In order for Fascism to succeed, the populace needs to be united in a national identity. In the case of the United States, the identity has been manufactured and engrained for decades, allowing individuals to grow incredibly wealthy, maintaining the ideals of the American economy as shining examples of what could be. However, the growing amount of income disparity, mechanization, and technical innovation has pushed the national economy to the point of slow collapse, allowing a movement to challenge the unregulated free market principles, and thus the American identity entirely. The virtues of the capitalist society that have for so long been "the American way" are being challenged, and naturally a large portion of the population are looking to protect them.

Make America great again, the slogan of the movement. The identification of America, the state, as the unregulated free economy that allowed "anyone" to prosper is what makes the movement Nationalist. By marrying the principles that have allowed **Donald** and his cohorts to prosper with a national identity, they are able to use simple patriotism to rally their support. It leaves the "average American" no choice but to follow, as they see potentially no other option. The dream that they had been raised on, the belief that they could one day be rich, is impossible to let go of, for without it they have nothing. To acknowledge that the dream does not exist would be to say not only that they have lost faith in their country, it would mean that their country is ultimately a failure.

No clearer is this notion made than in **Trump**'s own obsession with "winners and losers," the mouth breathers vast oversimplification of the free market. By creating two basic categories, the propagators of the imbalance are able to make it a choice for their subjects. Are you, like us, a "winner," prepared to uphold the principles of your country to protect your "freedom" to one day own a gold plated toilet? Or are you a "loser?" It is not about have's and have nots, for that would be glaringly obvious. It is not about blue or white collar, proletariat or bourgeois, it is completely in your mindset. Are you for a system in which you can "win," in which you can have everything

through this system we're offering you? Fascists of old prayed on one of the most basic, primal human emotions: fear. Today's Economic Fascists pray on a different primal emotion, possibly the only one more powerful: hope.

In today's United States, the divide between the wealthy and the poor is larger than it has ever been. More than half of the population can not afford a \$1,000 expense. In many nations, this would have led to revolt long ago. In America however, that is not our way. We are Americans, and to be American means to believe in the American dream, and thus your own superiority and potential. Of course they would choose to protect that identity, that patriotic devotion to an America that may or may not exist. They have to believe it exists, for without it they have nothing. Without it, in the words of the **Donald**, they are "losers," and who wants to be a loser when you can know that by simply living in "the greatest country on Earth," you have won?

Kiev Knifे Knitting  
Known Knickerbocker Kickbacks  
Kindly Killing Kin Measur<sup>en</sup>

Terribly Trotted  
Thoughts Tangerine Tails  
Trash Fing Tomoff



(RAYMUND PUNCHES HIS LOCAL NAZIS)

*People often talk about  
How the seasons are frustrating  
Because they melt in our  
Hands.*

*Just like the fall,  
My gender identity flows and  
Disintegrates like an air-born  
Spider web.*

*Every beam and plank of this  
House is rotting away...*

*So, you know...  
When you consider our mortality,  
Bigotry becomes absurd.*

*It feels a little like  
Two astronauts trying to kill  
Each other in space  
With high-powered lasers.*

*It's just torturous...*

*Trump's vacant words possess this strange warmth  
That attracts the wrong people...*

*They're drawn to him  
Like an incandescent light  
Attracts moths...*

*In his world  
My gender-identity is basically  
Transgressive,  
Or at least  
Simplified.*

*But those are false notions.  
My gender identity is real...  
It's so real that it's influenced me completely.*

*I've crisscrossed through my mind  
A million times in search of  
A way out, but the only  
Available door goes in.*

*What remains  
What influences me  
Is huge and silent  
Like an undiscovered  
Planet.*

*Like the seasons my hopes for  
A less transphobic world are always  
Changing.*

*Mountains of brush accumulate in the*



### **No Mas**

**Fear no more. For I am full of only anger & strength.**

**Hide no more. Handed down dreams of shade & timid exposure.**

**Cry no more. Crowns are beheaded & thorns shaved smooth.**

**Passive no more. Protections made active & actions will react.**

**Safety no more. Somewhere in the past & forbidden by the barking forest.**

**Future no more. Fading away into the night & burned cross-eyed by awake.**

**Shhhhhh no more. Silence in words & deaf in action.**

**Believe no more. Between realistic dreams of pain & fictional existence's of peace.**

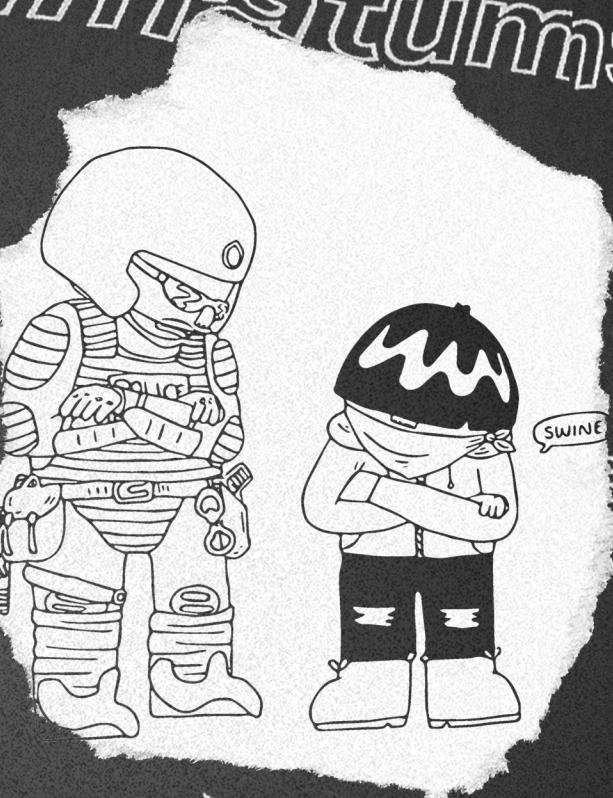
**Proud no more. Progress will answer questions & put your hand down in the back.**

**Shoot no more. Sorry I thought you were finished & Stop. Fucking. Killing. Me.**

Understood Union  
Utilizing Undeterred  
Urn Ultimatums

Meticul  
Masterin  
Messy M

Promptly Protruding  
Power Precisely by Pic  
Poor Ponderous Plodding



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***Art Against Trump is a community of artists and activists building a platform for dialogue, education, and critique of the current American political climate.***



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