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ART AGAINST TRUMP

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*Elephants remember everything
except the many things they're stepping on
deadening.*

*Stomping out the fight silent
incite violent, while we're
stuck
to the tarmac,
looking for a pilot.*

*Everywing ziptied behind our backs
on the racks. We're hanging by the necks.
Their fear-laced tusks fork-spear our husks.*

*They got big ears, but can't hear
our coos,
our cause,
our clucks.*

*I swear I'm migrating to Canada for the winter.
When the landscape thaws,
will the hatchlings remember?*





DEAR READER,

ArtAgainstTrump.com was birthed Nov. 8th, a knee-jerk domain purchase. A force of nature had inspired the support of our nation, somehow won, somehow held the keys to the kingdom. A golem acting in absolute opposition to core values. Throw out character, throw out truth, throw out compassion, throw out the integrity of a nation. Many critical and well spoken words have been written, from people louder and more intelligent than us - about the unprecedeted dangers of this presidency. Threats to women, to science, to democracy, to the health and security of so many of the citizens this man will swear to protect.

The purpose of this zine, the purpose of AAT, is to react and proact to the momentum of a nation - to combat the spread and normalization of misogyny, racism, nationalism, anti-science and anti-truth rhetoric. To combat political apathy and despair. To fight the now quite real threat of proto-fascism. Trump now holds the most powerful megaphone in the nation (arguably the world), he acts as an amplifier to ideologies of poison, building a platform and cabinet with the power to inspire, promote, validate, and normalize hatred and fear.

How do you combat this?

What the hell can *art* do to combat this?

“*Art Against Trump?*”

We don’t have the answer. We’re still in beta mode.

But we have energy. We have ideas. We have an obvious-as-hell name that people say “Oh cool” to. We’ve got fear and compassion and lives on the line and we’re a drop in the sea of folks fighting a similar fight.

The least we can do is help stimulate conversation.

But what does it take to retake a nation?

What does it take to put the right people in office?

The power of AAT rests entirely on the contributions/energy of the community - local or otherwise - first entering the conversation and more importantly adding to it. Centrally we plan to operate a quarterly zine and a website. But how do we decentralize leadership? What does nationwide independent art insurgency look like?

This is the blueprint. Simple and by no means original. We must create a space for voices - freedom to think and speak. Decentralizing the concentration of power and influence by amplifying the voices of the “other.” But the dialogue must be coupled with conversation that enacts tangible action. This includes outreach/education/creation/donation/protest/disruption - with a targeted end goal of replacing current ideologies/systems in power.

Begin with local activism. Build community through support/care. Spread posters and Zines and performances and thoughts and ideas. Projection of art (voices) functions twofold: allows the sharing of experience and the validation of shared experience. Change/expand thoughts. Art is an experience and a shared event. Reduce ego - amplify stories. Art not as an end goal but means for current care and eventual change.

Protect and preserve the facilities we have. Remain diligent and fight apathy.

*art as a tool to teach,
as a tool to start conversation,
as a tool to build community,*

And as a tool to create change.

Of course this is all stupid ambitious - and we definitely aren’t leading the charge - but that’s the point. It’s up to *us*. It’s up to every individual who feels *something* to do *something*. Converse, organize - be thoughtful, angry, honest...

...and make art.

<3 AAT Team

*just because you feed
us shit, doesn't mean that we
have to swallow it*

*because, after all,
we all know the old adage,
“you are what you eat.”*

In 1990 the world wide web ushered in the age of the Internet and ushered in the Information Era. Society was transformed — more interconnected than ever with seemingly boundless access. We were sure to evolve, to flourish with the world literally at our fingertips. But why now, in 2017 are facts seemingly dead and the institutions that are supposed to support us crumbling?

The Internet is all of those things — the information superhighway, a sign of the modern age, the steam engine of the 20th century, and more. It's also anonymity and a lack of accountability. Those who wield this tool correctly can make something crazy happen, like, say Donald Trump becoming the 45th President of the United States.

Personal thoughts plastered on Facebook walls and misguided twitter rants ricocheting off algorithm-created echo chambers serve only to widen the gap in the splintered party system. The divisiveness of our political sphere, our country, coupled with this access partly enabled the success of Trump's candidacy and continue to support him now.

In this age where media fails to label white supremacists as white supremacists and demonizes peaceful protests it often feels like we're left floundering with our heads under waters of fake news. Biases and political beliefs aside, where are the facts? If we silence Breitbart and mute certain twitter accounts, what rings true?

Here is what we know:

~~Donald~~ Trump is a racist

1. “I have a great relationship with the blacks. I’ve always had a great relationship with the blacks.” - ~~Donald~~ Trump
2. In 1973, he violated the Fair Housing Act in the operation of 39 buildings when he refused to rent or negotiate rentals based on race and color. When he did rent to people of color he had different rental terms and conditions depending on race. ~~Trump~~ Management was later sued by the Department of Justice.
3. However, a mere three years later, he violated the terms of the settlement was sued again on the basis of continued discrimination.
4. A former worker at ~~Trump~~’s Atlantic City casino said that in the 80s “when ~~Donald~~ and Ivana came to the casino, the bosses would order all the black people off the floor... they put us all in the back”
5. In 1992 he was fined \$200,000 for keeping black casino employees away from a racist mafia leader’s table
6. He has a history of using racial epithets and racist language
7. ~~Donald~~ Trump led the charge against the Central Park 5, a group of young black men who were wrongfully convicted of rape. He put out a full page newspaper advertisement calling for their execution.
8. Endorsed by the KKK and refused to disavow their support multiple times during interviews
9. According to public polling his supporters maintain similar views
 - 60% support banning Muslims from entering the United States
 - 50% support the Confederate flag hanging on the capitol ground
 - 30% support shutting down all mosques in the United States
 - 30% wish the South won the civil war
 - 25% believe Islam should be illegal in the United States
 - 25% support the policy of Japanese Internment
 - 20% support banning homosexual from entering the United States
 - 10% say whites are the superior race

~~Donald~~ Trump is a misogynist

1. “Just kiss. I don’t even wait. And when you’re a star, they let you do it. You can do anything. Grab them by the pussy. You can do anything.”
2. ~~Trump~~ has a long and disturbing history of misogyny and objectifying women
3. He believes all women are either bimbos or gold diggers
4. It doesn’t matter to him what the media writes about as long as he’s “got a young and beautiful piece of ass”
5. Reduced Olympic ice skater Katarina Witt to her appearance say she had a “bad complexion” and was “built like a linebacker”



MELTS FACE OFF



6. Told New York Magazine you have to treat women “like shit”
7. “When I come home and dinner’s not ready, I go through the roof.”
8. Has continuously on various occasions made lewd and inappropriate comments about his daughter, Ivanka Trump.
9. Has compared women to literal objects: “Beauty and elegance, whether in a woman, a building, or a work of art, is not just superficial or something pretty to see.”
10. Refused to hire mothers because “she’s not giving me 100%. She’s giving me 84% and 16% is going towards taking care of children.”
11. Notable sexist comments against Megyn Kelly, Rosie O’Donnell, and Hillary Clinton.
12. Claimed abortion was “punishable”
13. Trump’s terrifying sexual assault track record
14. Various former employees have come forward about Trump’s workplace sexual misconduct
15. A journalist said Trump sexually harassed her after an interview
16. In a tweet defended military personnel accused of rape: “26,000 unreported sexual assaults in the military-only 238 convictions. What did these geniuses expect when they put men & women together?”
17. Accused of rape and sexual assault by various women over several decades including a case with a 13-year-old girl
18. Video surfaced of him leering at a 10-year-old girl
19. Caught on tape describing how he would sexually assault women

Mike Pence, Vice President:

1. Believes in conversion therapy
2. Passed bills that allows discrimination against members of the LGBTQ+ community
3. Believes smoking doesn’t kill people
4. Thinks Mulan was propaganda to get women to join the military instead of staying home
5. Took HIV funding money to look into research to finding a cure for the nonexistent “gay gene”
6. Tried to make abortion considered as murder

Steve Bannon, white house chief strategist:

1. Arrested for three counts of domestic violence
2. Was outraged when he found out Jews were allowed at his daughter’s school
3. Helped to promote a white supremacist novel
4. Accused of sexual harassment and opposed to the women’s liberation movement

Trump and his cabinet are ideologically detrimental to American society

Michael Flynn, National Security Advisor:

1. Says Islam is cancer
2. Ordered female Defense Intelligence Agency employees to “dress sexy”
3. Wants to bring back torture
4. Anti-semetic retweets
5. Board member for ACT America, the biggest anti-Muslim hate group in America

Jeff Sessions, Attorney General:

1. KKK supporter
2. Called an attorney a “race traitor” for defending black client in voting rights act
3. Considered too racist to be a judge during the Reagan administration
4. Believes the ACLU and the NAACP are “un-American” and “communist”
5. Received a 0% rating from The Human Rights Campaign

Myron Ebell, Director of the Environmental Protection Agency

1. Lobbyist for climate change deniers
2. Has no scientific background or training though he pretends he does
3. Has received millions of dollars from oil companies such as Exxon Mobile
4. Blatantly disregards science when it comes to climate change
5. Believes pesticides are harmless
6. Has received money from pesticide and seed giants Monsanto and Syngenta
7. Fought to take away all protection for endangered species in the name of “property rights”
8. Was labeled as one of the most dangerous people by environmental and animal welfare groups such as Greenpeace

(full sources for all above text on our website: artagainstrump.com)



A jam velvet staircase surrounding
The square of my mind.

An idea arises like smoke pulled from an eye...

I was talking to
My eccentric friend
About
~~Trump~~
And I complained about how his personality
Just kind of gobbles up the space,
Everything he says is so refracted
Most of his quotes don't say
Anything and he is
A rapist
Among
Other
Horrors.
And my friend said,
Well,
You see,



Trump is a spirit from an extremely evil dimension,
Just listen to the way he talks.

Is that what he is?
Intolerant,
violent people are
Drawn to a personality like his,
Because he is violent,
And intolerant.

You know,
Over the past year I've
Been seeing a therapist about my
Gender identity and
It is strange how the political climate
Has made a difficult thing
So much more difficult.
I always thought the punishment for
Being trans was just always feeling like
I have tension in my heart,
And my brain is in fact

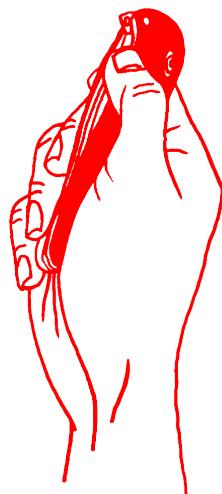






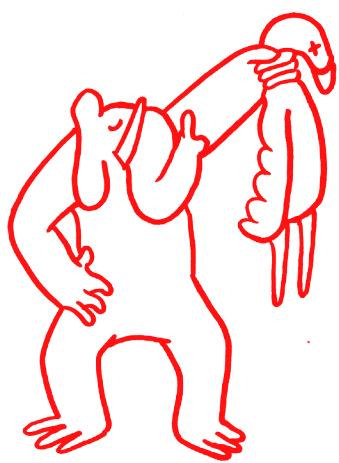
An expert gay conversion therapist that
Has tried several hundred thousand times
To fix me.

But,
Trump and his world of goons insist
That more punishment is needed,
That states get to decide whether
Trans individuals should be chained
To the friendly restrooms they discover
In their locale.
I can see the way everyone is afraid,
And I worry for everyone effected
By this evil spirit.
Some have it far worse than I ever will...



My sister told me
Several years ago
That she believes in resilience.

I do too!



I. identity politics

“The assumption that what currently exists must necessarily exist is the acid that corrodes all visionary thinking”

-- Murray Bookchin

In the ensuing months following the election of Donald J. Trump to the presidency of the United States, much has been written and spoken about “Identity Politics.” First came the essays by the centrists, then the libertarians, and even the progressive left; the latter’s own demagogue-lite, one Bernard Sanders, declaring that the left must “move beyond identity politics”.

Following these declarations, the inevitable happened; arguments - often emotionally based - were written and spoken on why identity politics was necessary to the future of this country, and how it had succeeded, playing no part in the white-lash of Trump’s election.

Let us be clear: The arguments of the right, the centrists, the progressive left, positioned against identity politics, are poor. They do, as the rebuttals argue, re-center the experiences and emotions of white america. In an article for The Establishment, Ijeoma Oluo states:

“Identity Politics are everything that its critics fear. Identity Politics are decentralizing whiteness, straightness, cis-ness, and maleness. Identity Politics brought you equal marriage, the voting rights act, and abortion access. Identity Politics has got people believing that black is beautiful, that disability is nothing to be ashamed of, that fat people deserve respect, that a woman can say no. Identity politics are forcing the world to consider what it has spent hundreds of years ignoring—everyone else.”

She is correct. The dismantling of white supremacy, of patriarchy, is essential to the advancement of society henceforth. We have seen tangible successes due to those fighting them. It is also reductionist to claim that those systems were brought about by capitalism; this is simply not true.

What cannot be denied is how, as the dominant cultural ideology, capitalism has engulfed those pre-existing systems of oppression to suit its needs - and strengthened their oppressive power through that. It has also left any opposition to it with few avenues to properly rebut, with the ideological mechanics of the free market having ingrained itself in our collective consciousness to such a point that even our challenges against it must be on its terms. And therein is where the limitations of identity politics lay - in its reliance on capitalistic notions of the self, of community, and human relations.

II. beyond neoliberalism, beyond individualism

If we are to discuss, in depth, how to remedy the limitations of identity politics, we must first examine what causes them, and what seemingly makes identity politics the most viable option to marginalized groups in the current epoch. An initial step will be to define what was previously mentioned - “the ideological mechanics of the free market.”

Being that this is a short essay, it is simply not possible for me to elaborate in depth and provide a more multifaceted analysis. I must resort to some reduction. With that noted, the following can be characterized as three of the dominant cultural tenets of (late) capitalist society:

- scarcity
- competition
- individualism

Scarcity is generally defined as fundamental economic issue that there are “unlimited human wants in a world of limited resources.” From scarcity, competition must then logically follow. Pricing and the market system is a way to allocate those scarce resources. If resources must be acquired through a market, then in theory individuals will be inclined to compete with each other to create for themselves the means to participate in that market.

This is all basic economic theory, and the bedrock of capitalism. How then does individualism relate to this? Under these conditions, individualism must be the de-facto ideology, as the goal of each person is to compete against one another. To find their way through the world, to accrue capital and acquire scarce resources, it must also then be necessary that one formulate a unique identity; a defining of the self to act in opposition - competition - with others, even if only in the most minute ways.

Communities, states, and continents do of course compete with each other - but even with macro geopolitics at play, competition occurs within those borders, even within families.

Identity is formulated by the circumstances of our growth; where we do and don’t grow up, what did or didn’t happen throughout our lives, what we were or weren’t born with. To be clear, the idea of self and identity would form through these factors regardless - but filtered through the macro-ideological basis of competition and scarcity, individual identity becomes a tool of defense, and a powerful one at that.

It is natural, then, that in the face of white supremacy and patriarchy, which are intangible, multifarious systems entwined with capitalism, identity must be used to fight back, as it is the most clearly available tool to do such. It's fighting fire with fire. And, more to the point, it can and does work.

But by inheriting and expounding upon individualism, what then do the limitations of identity politics become, especially considering the conditions of the internet age? It cannot be denied we live in a time where identity can be quickly and easily signaled, and the spaces with which that identity operates easily curated and tailored, all while culling the nuance of verbal interaction, body language, and face to face contact. The most easy example to look at is Facebook. We choose who we friend, what we see and don't see in our feed, the things we want people to know about, and Facebook as an organization has done as much as it can - for the sake of profit, mind you - to make its algorithm as you-centric as possible. We commodify ourselves into something truly presentable and sellable.

The problem with this is that in our effort to curate our experience and make ourselves viable for the social market-place, it becomes even more difficult to see human beings outside of our bubble as that - human beings. For us on the left, they are the republicans, the fascists, the ignorant. Under competition, the other competitors are not human - they are an opposing commodity, and through that, most tangible as simply the other.

As a personal example - and a foray into more individualistic relation, on my part - my Facebook feed consists of constant signaling of my own identities. Through news sites, pages, and so on, I am constantly reminded I am latino and indigenous, that I am queer, that I am a Marxist, that I make films, that I love dank memes. It is bombarded into me, every day.

On the one hand, it has built pride in those things - on the other hand, it has inspired jealousy in those who seem to be "more" those things than I am, or better at them, and created a bubble where I rarely see something beyond my individual experience as Queer, POC, commie filmmaker with a penchant for bizarre internet images. I know Trump voters exist - but I don't know any, and there's none in my feed.

While that is my experience, that insulation and its effects are demonstrable and shared with many others. When that insulation is combined with unlimited information is when things get especially ugly. Aside from having that identity affirmed, I can also seek out quickly anything that pertains to it - information without context or critical, outside guidance. I can then pick and choose from it what best fits my identity. My political ideology, my critical theory becomes that - just mine, and re-iterated through my insulation. If then this ideology is challenged, it's not a debate. It's a personal attack; an attack on my identities,

an attack on my individualism from the competitor, from the other.

This thought process does not apply to just the left, and the marginalized groups that utilize it do so only to the same extent as the dominant groups who pioneered it. But something particular has been appropriated by the left wing of identity politics, and this is the appeal to individual, emotional authority. Because I am queer, because I am latin, it only I who can discuss and speak on these issues; the other, the dominant groups, cannot have a stake.

I must clarify; that is partially true. The inability to ever fully understand other individuals is a true facet of society - and if you are from a dominant group, you likely cannot ever truly understand my experiences on the other end. Talking over me to explain these things would indeed be a racist or homophobic action. But within left identity politics, what can and does happen is that we take this - this micro-aggression, which is just that, not invalid, but micro - and make it into a disqualifier. A disqualifier of your status as more than the other.

This is what we must move beyond.

That you, by speaking over me, or unconsciously expressing a prejudiced view, is an act of racism, or homophobia, or for others, sexism, or ableism is true. That you are also a human being, and more likely than not, somebody deserving of understanding and love, is also true. You, the other, are not merely that, not merely a commodity. And the truth about you, and the world around you, is multifaceted. This is not to say even that I love or forgive you for your actions - I'm not required to, and sometimes keeping that anger may help me. But I can still see you do deserve it, even if it's not from me.

Binary thinking, otherization, and the lack of desire to move beyond aspects of these thought processes - as they're comfortable, and they do empower us - is the limitation of identity politics. But it can be evolved past, while still respecting and understanding the historical context of racism, of patriarchy, of ableism, of heterosexism and transphobia.

When white America voted for Trump, they did vote for him because of identity politics. We appropriated identity for us to empower us, but in the process, fell into otherization. White America saw this, and they felt fear. For the first time in American society, they have gotten a taste of being denied their human complexity, on a very small and justified scale. But that small scale attack felt, for them, a symbol of something larger - and it is. White, Christian America is dying. And Trump was their backlash, their response, their attempt to radically reappropriate identity politics to the dominant group. This does not make identity politics bad, wrong, to be tossed out in favor of class reductionism, as people like Bernie Sanders have argued. Instead, it means we

must stop thinking of so many ideals as being in conflict with each other, of individual empowerment as the main resource for community empowerment.

As I said, it's true White Christian America is dying. And it should. We should make White People jokes, because it isn't reverse racism. We should shut down fascists and their normalization out of white desperation. But instead of kicking it while it slowly fades, with its last, desperate breathes, I want to ensure it dies in relative peace. Not because I want to protect their feelings, but because making them not the other, but human beings, is an important step to moving beyond binary, and beyond individualistic competition.



III. reparations, art, and sacrifice

"What is art? Like a declaration of love: the consciousness of our dependence on each other. A confession. An unconscious act that none the less reflects the true meaning of life—love and sacrifice."

-- Andrei Tarkovsky

How, then does all of this relate to art? I shall keep this section more brief. As white America dies, and as we cope with its attempts to regain life, how do we fight against them while also respecting humanity and moving beyond individualism? As difficult as it may seem, all of these things can be done, but it must require the working together of multiple groups - of allies, of the marginalized, and of all intersections of the two.

Firstly, art has not escaped the line of individualist thinking. Under competition, it remains to most an outlet of solely personal expression, and at times, personal politics. But is art truly about the self?

The self, of course cannot be divorced from it - that is not easily contested. But nor can the context with which art occurs. If we are to release work out into the world - to be consumed, considered, and extrapolated from - of what use is it to us to be only about us? How then will others see our humanity, and not simply our identity? Admittedly, the two blur, yet must it not be that those appreciating the work must see a larger picture - not simply us, as individuals, but of the space and time with which the art arose so that they may then go on to better engage the world around them?

This is where Zines like the one you read now come in. Rather than being singular statements, they act as a tapestry - a collectivistic vision, not an individualistic one. For sure, there are personal experiences, and deeply personal art at hand here. But they are removed from the masturbatory gallery, from the pedestal, and contextualized by being placed in contrast to one another in order to form a collective vision of the current historical point..

That must be the future of art; collective spaces, collective works, divorced from the over-emphasis on singular persons, on competition with other artists. This is not to say there must never be singular works; in fact, for the time being those with the most social capital should use their status to push forward radical singular works, as the art of powerful individuals still currently carries the most weight in an individualist society. But for the rest of us, collectivization and presenting as a communal force must be at least considered.

As part of that, it is vital that sacrifice be made. First and foremost, scarcity has become a myth, and it is true for the resources needed to create art. But artificial scarcity is real, and those with the most capital in the world of art now are the artists from the dominant groups. It is then the duty of those dominant group artists to sacrifice much of their capital to be seized by the marginalized groups. This means that your idea for a piece, as a white artist, or a straight artist, or a male artist, should be considered but not prioritized. And you must not allow it to be prioritized. If you receive funds, divide them out to the communities who will have far more difficulty getting them. If you have resources at hand to inhibit the creation of art, you must donate some of them to a community.

This is reparations through art.

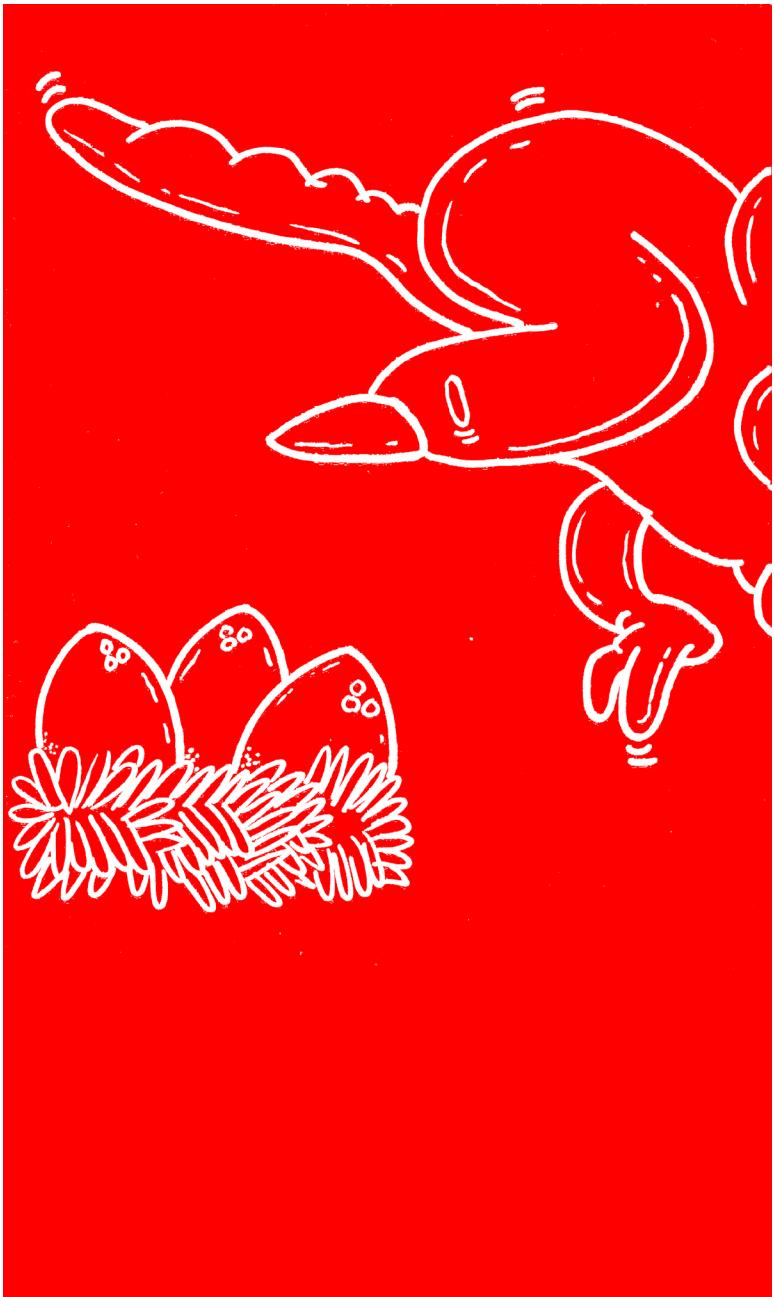
White Americans, and straight Americans, and male Americans, should make art about their experiences. But they cannot operate in a bubble anymore. Funding must be equalized, and openness to communal criticism of their art - even before it is made - must be incorporated to break the individualistic ideal around art. With ~~Trump~~ now president, it is easy to want to retreat into individualism, into our own self expression and how I feel about it.

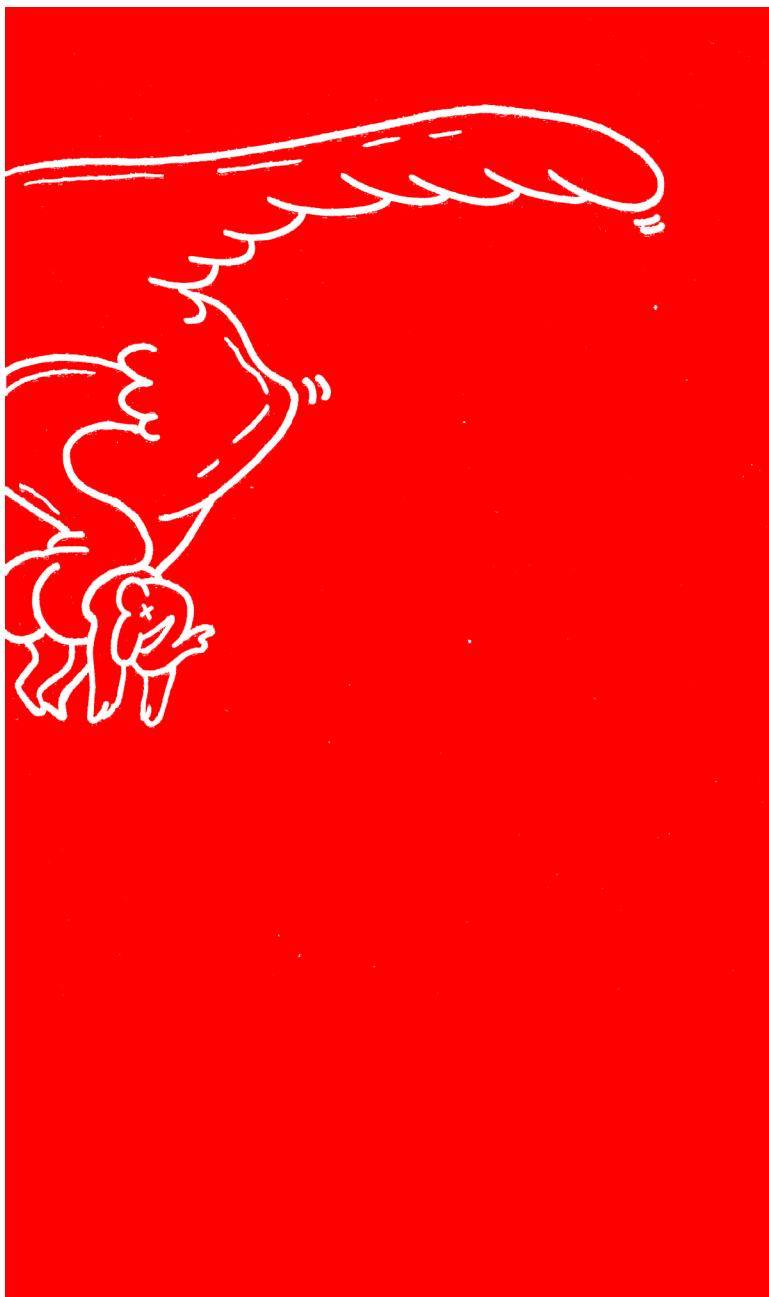
But we must resist.

To resist individualism, through our art, is to resist ~~Trump~~:

~~Donald Trump~~ is the culmination of the American individualist experiment - he was born into capital, and crushed all competition in his path. He created himself a character; a celebrity who's sole goal was personal satisfaction, and used the media-propagated American belief in superheroes to make himself into one. He alone would be the one to save us, to rise above all others.

We must not forget this, period. And we must pursue our art and lives in duality, not competition.





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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.