



El Cafe Luddista-The Luddite Cafe-Wed. January 20, 7PM, 1921 S. Blue Island

Taller de macrame para hacer pulseras! vengan a hacer nudos, pulseras, y conecciones con la gente de nuestras comunidades. El taller es gratis y abierto a todos, sin importar edad, language, o identidad :)

Este taller es presentado por arte y realidad, un colectivo basado en la Villita que apoya y trabaja para crear espacios donde la gente pueda venir a aprender uno del otro y aprender cosas nuevas a traves de las artesanias. alexiwasa@gmail.com

Bracelet making workshop. come makes knots, bracelets, and connections with the people in our communities! Open to everyone, any age, any language :)

workshop presented by arte y realidad, a collective based in La Villita, who actively support the creation of more art spaces in our communities for people to come together, learn something new, and learn from each other. cardweaver@hushmail.com

Urban Wood Carving
Tuesday Feb. 2, 6:30PM



Mess Hall
6932 N. Glenwood Ave.
(West side of the El tracks)

There is a remarkable variety of wood being thrown away all around you. You may have never thought about it and possibly have no idea of its potential. Now you can be introduced to woodcarving as a path of knowledge and door of perception. It's not "whittling", it's not cute, it's not folksy, it's not about kitschy little figurines, it's not about a way for Grandpa to kill time.

Cont'd. on Pg. 2

On Woodcarving by David Stein

As a kid I was always fascinated by the shapes of things-stones, shells and driftwood on the beach, fruits and vegetables in the kitchen, snow on a branch, a root unearthed, a hill against the sky, clouds, skulls and bones. I took wood shop in school but it did nothing for me-it wasn't about wood at all, it was about machines. And fear-every lesson was about how to use a certain machine without losing any fingers. I don't remember the day I was first inspired to put a knife to wood on my own; it might have taken place on one of the cluttered Atlantic beaches that still appear in my dreams. Maybe the angels sang at the moment I realized that I could do more than look and marvel at shapes, I could make shapes, and the material from which to make shapes was all around me at all times, free for the taking. I could by the act of carving make myself a force of nature like the water or wind or the growth impulses encoded in plants and animals. So I taught myself to carve wood and 35 years later I am still teaching myself to carve wood.

I've never felt much drawn to the making of representational art; rather than try to duplicate the form of something already existing in nature I've always preferred to create or discover new forms that have never existed before. I'd discovered modern art in library books and so I decided that abstract sculpture was what I wanted to do. The problem with this was that nobody around me got it.

"What is it?"

"A sculpture."

"A sculpture of what?"

After a few years of this I discovered a way out: make functional things. That way I could be as sculptural as I wanted, within the functional requirements of the object, but the dreaded "what is it" question could easily be answered. It also enabled me to make things that stood a chance of fitting into regular peoples' lives somehow. I'm afraid something is lost in the process, in that I think naming something, sticking a noun on it, saying what it "is", will always limit the ways it can be seen. You see something and the first noun that pops into your head will define that thing and exclude the possibility that it can be other things as well. Nouns block our sight and I always hope that people will be able to see beyond them when they look at things I've made.

I promote woodcarving as a point of entry to a personal relationship with nature and the world of matter. We live in a time when most people are only dimly aware that the physical world even exists, and any one of us who wants to connect with his/her surroundings will have to find his/her own point of entry and path of exploration. Nobody ever thought it important to teach me to tell one tree from another, but working with wood gave me a reason to learn my trees and consider their ways. This led me to take an interest in edible plants, which led me to gardening. Gardening led me to birdwatching. Birdwatching will in time lead me to something else. Over a lifetime the world unfolds before you, although a lifetime is nowhere near enough.

Upcoming Luddite Cafés (cont'd. from front)

Paper making, Tuesday Feb. 16, 7PM, La Biblioteca Popular, 1921 S. Blue Island.

Macrame, Tuesday March 2, 6:30PM pot luck, 7:30 workshop, Mess Hall, 6932 N. Glenwood Ave. (west side of the tracks).

arte y realidad by Ireri

The world is not perfect and neither are our societies or communities. In our community of Little Village, like in many other communities, there are gangs, there is a lack of well paying jobs, there is a lack of funding for schools, there is police harassment, there is violence. But there is also an incredible amount of talent and skills ready to be shared, and people ready to take on these challenges.

Arte y realidad came together in the summer of 2006 as a response to the lack of opportunities the youth in our community face that make violence and gangs viable options in our lives and from a realization that people have a lot to offer if given the chance and space to do so. The members of the collective, who live in and around Little Village, had something they wanted to share with the rest of the community: art workshops! From bracelet making, to dancing, to drum making. We began to give free art workshops out of a garage on 24th and Sawyer that a church lent to us.

Arte y realidad is based on the premises that art and expression are valuable ways to connect to one another, that everyone can learn, that everyone has the capacity to teach and has something valuable to offer to the people around them. With these ideas we conduct our workshops, and have taught people to make a variety of things, showing them through the workshops that they can do certain things if they want to even when older people might think they are too young, or when someone says they are too old. We believe that the more public spaces there are for people to come together and learn from one another the more united our community will become and the more options our youth and families will have.

Ever since that first summer we have continued to work every summer (and going on two winters now) in Little Village with these free art workshops. We have worked in the Manuel Perez Plaza, in Cafe Catedral, on the garage in 24th and Sawyer, and now in the Mision de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe on 26th street near St. Louis Ave. Currently we have bracelet weaving workshops on Tuesday and Friday afternoons. We sit and make bracelets, talk, and learn new techniques from each other. Sometimes we play games, or read books and make bracelets. Some of the people who have worked with us, particularly the children, have sold some of their work to their classmates. We work with families, adults, children, classrooms, teenagers, at special events, with other organizations, as long as it is to help create a closer sense of community.

Arte y realidad is open to everyone. We have had people doing drawing workshops, a classical guitar class, clay workshops, anything anyone wants to do if they are committed to doing so. The classes we offer change as people come and go. We are part of a vibrant immigrant community, and sometimes the people in our collective leave or can not come for a variety of reasons, such as having to work, or due to the current immigration laws which have made it hard for some of our members to come back after deciding to go back to Mexico.

We have collaborated with various organizations over the years to participate in events like Basketball on the Block, Open streets, Little Village Youth Forum, Fiesta del Sol, as well as cultural events around day of the dead and dia del niño. The collective has worked with individual schools like Eli Whitney and Rosario Castellanos, bringing the workshops into the after school summer programs. We are a part of Villarte, a coalition of artists, residents, community organizations, and businesses in Little Village who promote the creation of exhibit and performance spaces in our neighborhood; and we have been part of the Little Village Artfest for the past four years.

Our group grows bigger and smaller depending on a lot of things, but we continue to work towards the creation of spaces where we can feel free to learn from each other and where we can be present with out fear of criminalization by the authorities or being caught by gang wars. Spaces where we can show the talent that exists in our neighborhood. Spaces were we can talk about what we want and eventually, how to get to it.

For more information send us an e-mail at arteyrealidad@hotmail.com, find us on myspace, or (more directly) call us at 773 653 3665



The Chiapas Project-Proposal for Funding by Richard Flamer,
flamerrichard@hotmail.com

We, at our little Catholic Worker Farm in Chiapas (La Casa de Camillo Torres) are working with a group of weavers, a small quasi-organized group of 14 Tso Tsil women weavers who work on backstrap looms. The women, from 16 to 70, live in the town of San Andreas Larrainzar in Chiapas and are trying to keep alive their traditions. With Australian wool at a third of the local wool they must, of necessity, sell their work for more and are facing increasing problems as those who know the old ways are dying off or changing to simpler designs that don't require as much time or materials to make..

Several years ago my wife, Araceli Benitez Moya, a good photographer friend (Javier Nicolas, a Catalan now living in Chiapas) and I decided to try and produce a film of the work of these women.. We initially recorded over four hours of video with several hundred still photographs of the weavers at work in all stages of their production.. From boiling the dyes, to shearing the sheep, to weaving with all points in between we now have a record of the process. We need, however, to edit and preserve the work of these women. We have a young woman with several years experience in editing film who is now working independently here in San Cristobal. She has agreed to edit the film and to try and produce it in English, after which, we will try and alter the language for a Spanish and a Tso Tsil versions.

We would like to pay Laura six hundred dollars for the editing. She has to eat, as well. Saludos from Chiapas, Richard Flamer.

Donations can be sent to Holy Family Catholic Church; 1715 IZARD Street; Omaha, Nebraska 68102 and marked "For the Chiapas Project"



Useful Unemployment By Alex Iwasa, cardweaver@hushmail.com

A number of years ago my comrade Eddie Casarez got me into the work of Ivan Illich by lending me his *Energy and Equity*, and telling me the Zapatistas were proponents of his concept of Useful Unemployment.

I recently read Illich's *The Right to Useful Unemployment and its Professional Enemies*, and was greatly disappointed. By usually working directly for my room and board at Catholic Worker houses, farms, communes, hostels or what have you, and only rarely for wages, I've been usefully unemployed but working nearly all the time since February 2003 when I moved into my first commune.

The Right to Useful Unemployment is a post script to his earlier work *Tools for Conviviality*, so perhaps I accidentally put the cart before the horse. The post script deals far more with Useful Unemployment's professional enemies, only making passing references to forms of Useful Unemployment such as growing ones own food instead of earning the money to buy it, one of my personal favorite practices.

At least mentioning subsistence farming made me think of his example of a person walking a very long distance again and again in the time someone else took to earn the money to buy a car in his *Energy and Equity*, the kind of story that makes me appreciate his work.

If anyone else is interested in reading then discussing *Tools for Conviviality*, please let me know!

PAZ,



The Luddite Worker
4652 N. Kenmore Ave.
Chicago, IL 60640
-or-
cardweaver@hushmail.com