

# ARTUP NEWSLETTER



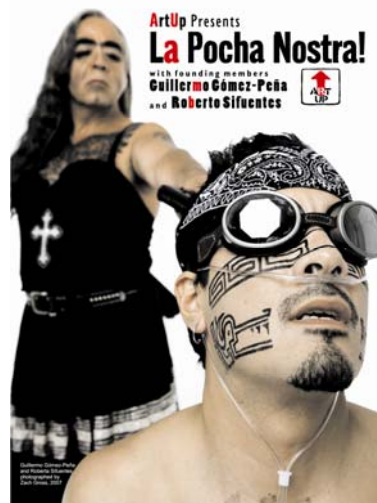
**2010- 2011**

**TO 9/11**

This past summer, in an artful partnership between Bricolage, the Mattress Factory Museum and the Three Rivers Arts Festival, ArtUp brought Guillermo Gomez-Pena to perform and run workshops with local, national and international artists.

**Project I.D.** was an exhibition and workshop with the performance artist and writer, who for twenty years has been exploring intercultural issues through the use of mixed genres and experimental languages. Artists came from San Francisco, NYC and originated as far as South Africa and Korea.

Gómez-Peña who is a MacArthur Genius Award winner, creates what critics have termed "Chicano cyber-punk performances," which are multi-centric narratives that examine cultural borders while pushing mainstream ideology to the margins, treating the norm as exotic and unfamiliar and placing the audience members in the position of "foreigners" or "minorities." In Gómez-Peña's own words: If there is a common denominator, it is our desire to cross and erase dangerous borders including those between art and politics, art practice and theory, artist and spectator-ultimately to dissolve borders and myths of purity whether they be specific to culture, ethnicity, gender, language or métier."



**Event 1** Mattress Factory Museum  
STRANGE DEMOCRACY: An Evening with Spoken Word Brujo Guillermo Gómez-Peña

**Event 2** 937 Liberty, downtown as part of Three Rivers Arts Festival  
CORPO ILICITO: THE POST-HUMAN SOCIETY #69

**Event 3** Thursday, Friday and Saturday, June 11-13, Bricolage, 937  
Liberty, downtown as part of Three Rivers Arts Festival  
HOMELAND INSECURITY: an expose of local artists discovered in the La Pocha  
Nostra Workshops

With three different events, the project was a great success and the founder and director of ArtUp, Tavia La Follette, plans to bring Guillermo and La Pocha Nostra back!

La Follette, who this year is the Artist-in-Residence at Carnegie Mellon University's Center for Arts in Society, is currently working with the Center, ArtUp and the Mattress Factory to bring them back this winter. The theme this year at CMU is Border Crossing and ArtUp plans to be a part of that mission.

After the La Pocha experience, La Follette headed north to Glover, Vermont. Here she worked with Bread & Puppet Theater, whose puppets can be considered "choreographed sculpture" steeped in a tradition of experimental "rusticism".



Sourdough Philosophy



Bread and Puppet Museum, VT

La Follette, knowing that politics would be on everyone's mind this past fall, invited Bread and Puppet to come back to Pittsburgh for the G20. Bread and Puppet earned their reputation in the 1960's and 70's for the giant puppet pageantry during anti-war demonstrations.

Bread and Puppet has recently been to Pittsburgh via ArtUp and the University of Pittsburgh Theatre Department, touring with the Sourdough Philosophy Spectacle and Circus. Bread and Puppet was ready to hit the streets with their Iraqi Women puppets, who holding their dead children, made quite an impact.



La Follette marched with Bread and Puppet, actually with child herself!

Along with Bread and Puppet, **WORKPLACE FUNNIES** played a role in the G20, opening September 10<sup>th</sup> for the AFL-CIO Convention, it ran through G-20 and closed with the Cultural Trust's Gallery Crawl on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Curated by Gary Huck, the exhibit included sculpture, photos, scratch-board prints, animations, paintings and political cartoons.

Among the distinguished cartoonists contributing to this exhibit were three Pulitzer Prize winners, Clay Bennett, Joel Pett, and Signe Wilkinson, as well as a runner-up for this year's Pulitzer, Matt Wuerker. The late, great Fred Wright (1907-1985) was the full time cartoonist for the United Electrical Workers (UE) for five decades and his cartoons are archived at the University of Pittsburgh, <http://images.library.pitt.edu/f/fredwright/>. Mike Konopacki, who along with Howard Zinn published the landmark graphic history *A Peoples History of the American Empire* in 2008.



Signe Wilkinson



Joel Pett

ALL of the participating cartoonists and artists consistently interpreted the political economic times of this country and the world from a bottom-up perspective. The images by photo journalist Renee Rosensteel introduced visitors to Pittsburgh through a true treasure of working class art; the unusual murals of Maxo Vanka adorning nearby St. Nicholas Croatian Catholic Church. Vanka's work carried strong condemnations of both war and injustice.



Work by Renee Rosensteel



Fall Gallery Crawl 2009

ArtUp took on its new season with the provocative series **Via Crucis and a Procession of Pilgrimage Art**. This is a series that reflects on journey and transcendence. The project refers to humankind's journeys through life, as well as playfully hinting to our own voyage as artists looking for a "new home".

ArtUp made a decision this year to leave the 820 Liberty Ave space. Although the organization feels that its home is in the Cultural District, most of the projects that it has coming up are not based there and 820 was too small for the type of performance and art projects that ArtUp produces. However, the Cultural Trust still houses our items free of charge in the basement of 937 Liberty. Thank you Cultural Trust! So once again, we live the vagabond lifestyle, working from project to project and space to space, the nomadic artist organization!

After the G20, ArtUp got right to work with Jovenes Sin Nombre. However, La Follette took a little break to have her twin boys, Maxwell Michael Huck and Calder Carlin Huck. Welcome to the world Max and Calder!

Jovenes Sin Nombres is "a progressive Latino youth movement founded in Pittsburgh, PA in 2009. The majority of the youths are first generation Latinos from Mexico, South America and the Caribbean and are supported by community activists, artists and academics". ArtUp is playing a supporting role, running workshops out of the Carnegie Museum's studio, teaching the jovenes (youths) about political and socially conscious art.



Politically conscious art works



laying out mural ideas

ArtUp found a kindred spirit in the youths who “aspire to strengthen Latino youths’ civic engagement in Pittsburgh by encouraging their participation in the public sphere through projects in the arts that allow them to explore the relationship between their cultural traditions and the history of the city they now consider home” ([joveneslatinos.wordpress.com](http://joveneslatinos.wordpress.com)).

It was during the work with the Jovens Sin Nombres that ArtUp started to work with the Center for Arts in Society at CMU. ArtUp has been working on border crossing issues (metaphorical plus physical) and found the Jovens Sin Nombres mission to “to elicit new ways of thinking about issues and misconceptions that are at the heart of urgent national (and more recently local) debates on the border and immigration” both a inspiration and a focus.

ArtUp has been working with Michal Friedman, founder of the organization to both educate the juvenes and design a mural for the Latino Family Center. They have been doing a number of different workshops, meeting at the Carnegie Museum, CMU and in the ArtUp Garage Works (La Follette and Huck’s studio space) in the East End.



Performance workshop



Latino Family Center in Squirrel Hill-look for the mural this fall!

Although the Family Center is not the best building for a mural, with the giant glass windows, ArtUp and Friedman agree that it is the spirit of the building that is important, being the only Latino Family Center in Pittsburgh. “This is a commercial for future mural works”, says Friedman. “We want Pittsburgh to know we are here”.

This July the Jovenes Sin Nombres had a preview of their work at the Tango Café. The café was packed, standing room only! The opening included live music, food, declarations, raffle tickets and visual art.



"we are here" declaration



standing room only at the Tango Café

After the incredibly successful Tango Café opening, ArtUp hopped on a plane to Egypt where La Follette was invited to perform **Recycle Souls**. This is an Object Theatre performance piece that was workshoped at the Grey Box Theatre for the SWAN Festival in Lawrenceville this winter. It is a poetic and transformational journey through archetypal insights. Archetypes are universally familiar characters or situations that transcend time, place, culture, gender, and age. **Recycled Souls** seemed like a good traveling partner as ArtUp went to the Middle East. La Follette also brought Maxwell and Calder.



And this is Cairo with Calder and Max!



The Riddle Mother in the *Recycled Souls* performance

While in Cairo, ArtUp was officially in residence at ARE (Artists Residency Cairo). This is when La Follette laid the ground work for the Firefly Tunnel Project. This is an ArtUp artist exchange project between Egypt and the U.S. La Follette ran a 3 week performance art and installation workshop, curating in Egyptian based artists to work with U.S. based artist this up coming year.

The Firefly Tunnel Project will be ArtUp's main focus this year, hoping to have a final physical expose on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 9/11 here in Pittsburgh. La Follette explains, "The Firefly Tunnels are metaphorical passageways for the exchange of ideas through the language of Performance Art. One can think of them as an Underground Railroad that crosses the borders of language, a system of tunnels that doesn't believe in the barriers of countries or the obstruction of segregated tongues."

The tunnels are virtual and the artists exchange material through the Internet. ArtUp will be working with CMU to “dig” the tunnel.

The goal behind the tunnel is to break down the barriers between a Muslim based society and a Christian based society, addressing general xenophobia, gender and class issues. Cairo and Pittsburgh are rich in academia and the arts. The project hopes to tap into these fields, birthing a hybrid language of communication.

Below are some of the artists and the performances/exercises that were captured during the workshop this summer.



the view in/out



burning

These exercises and instant performances were taken place in public locations and at the residency space (ARE).



monastery performance



all you Egyptians look alike



Crucified Muslims 1



Crucified Muslims 2

To find out more about the Firefly Tunnel project go to [fireflytunnel.net](http://fireflytunnel.net) or contact Tavia at 412-443-8132 or [tavia@artup.org](mailto:tavia@artup.org).

ArtUp will also be celebrating Part III of Remembering Hiroshima, Imagining Peace this September!



**WWW.ARTUP.ORG**