

GREG SHOLETTE

PORTFOLIO

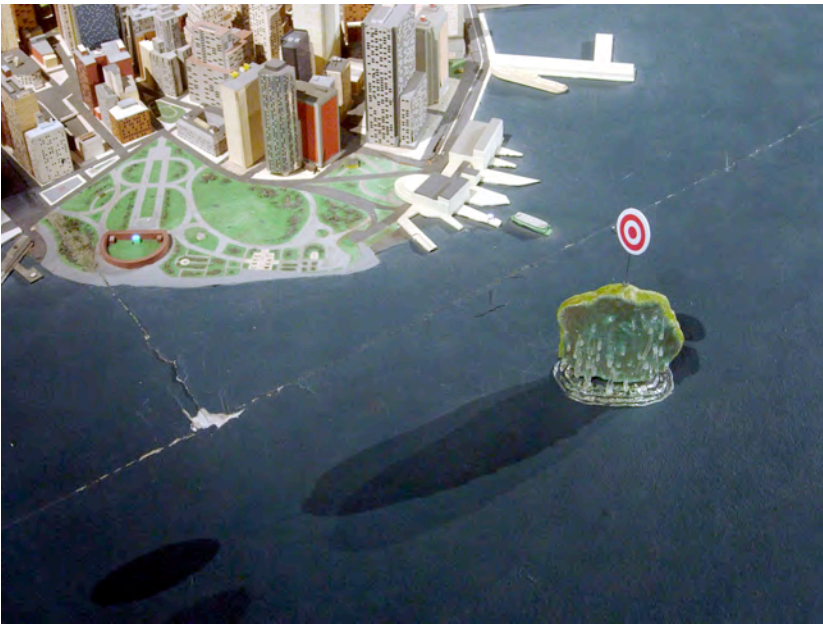




WORKS

## 15 ISLANDS FOR ROBERT MOSES

Queens Museum of Art 2012



*Dunkn' Island (above) + Snuggle Island (right)*



A site specific infiltration into the *Panorama of the City of New York*, which was built for the 1964 World's Fair by urban planner Robert Moses.





11Million Person Tower Island imagined by Brett Bloom, interpreted + realized by Greg Sholette, Queens

“Greg Sholette made and placed new islands about the Panorama’s waterways, where they exist as silent, post-9/11 observers of the city’s past, present and future. Modeled in the same style as the Panorama, each island represents Sholette’s interpretation of a question he posed to a group of other artists and art theorists: “If you could add an island to New York City, what would that new landmass be like?” NYC Panorama Queens Museum of Art Feb 4-May 20, 2012.

**11 Million Person Tower Island**  
Brett Bloom



Greg,

Thanks for the invitation. Can you make a tower for the 11 million people of NY to be moved to so all the land can be given back to the native folks who used to live there? This would have to be a very large tower, and maybe won't work. Let me know what you think of the idea.

- Brett

**Brett Bloom** is an artist, activist, writers, and co-founder of the Chicago-based art group Temporary Services and the Copenhagen-based group Learning Site.



**Island of Light/Island of Illusion**  
Aaron Gach/Center  
for Tactical Magic



Greg,

When I first thought about creating an island, I vacillated between isolated utopias, secret lairs, fantasy escapes, and mysterious training grounds. In the end, my island is an amalgam of all of the above: a cross between Francis Bacon's New Atlantis and Robert Antea Wilson's Discordia, with a gloss of the Sephiroth, and a pinch of H.P. Lovecraft, for good measure. I envision it as an invisible island wandering through the sea. It lies just below the surface, extending into the abyssal depths in the form of a giant, inverted ziggurat. Some may happen upon it by accident or fate, others seek it out intentionally. To enter, one is literally sucked into it by an eddy that threatens madness (or worse). Once inside, the visitors encounter a vast confederation of independent lodges representing all sorts of opinions, often hostile to one another, and posturing each to own "the" or "conclusion." Philosophy, magic and occultism alike find a shelter in it. Each Tier of the inverted ziggurat is characterized by a quote from a particular magical text, rite, or ritual as follows:

- Tier 1 - Sun-souled Lucifer: With Love and Knowledge drove out innocence; The Key of Joy is disobedience.
- Tier 2 - Magicians guard an empty safe.
- Tier 3 - Reaction is inevitable. In their abuse of analysis they had too persistently sacrificed sentiment to reason. Here and now, they become intoxicated on enervation.
- Tier 4 - Make conditions to suit yourself! But make it dead certain of not holding you.
- Tier 5 - The orators of the Mysteries speak again, bidding all welcome to the House of Light. The great institution of materiality has failed.
- Tier 6 - One technique is as effective as another. You cannot know which one will best serve your needs until you know what those needs are. Choose the one that you can handle most deceptively. In many cases you can present the same basic illusion as either fantasy or reality.
- Tier 7 - A lamp is lit on a dark and stormy night. A candidate is introduced and has to run round the interior three times on all fours. In the morning, all have disappeared, returning to their daily labour, whilst the candles and mantles sat on fire in the night and their kind flames up to the sky.
- Tier 8 - knock often and banish often. What I tell you three times is true.
- Tier 9 - *... ..*
- Tier 10 - The Great Work performed.

-Aaron

**Aaron Gach/Center for Tactical Magic** uses the forces of the artist, the magician, the ninja, and the private investigator in order to animate latent energies focused on positive social transformation.



“Island of Illusion, Island of Illusion” in progress above and finished below created for 15 Islands For Robert Moses, Queens Museum of Art





**Graphic posters surrounding 15 Islands and panorama 2012**

Touching on issues from environmental and economic justice to the overflowing archives of human memory and immigrant's rights, the new fantasy islands interrupt the familiar geography of the Panorama, subtly haunting a favorite destination for students, tourists, and urban planners. Surrounding the Panorama is a series of posters about the project's participating collaborators: Hana Shams Ahmed, Brett Bloom, Larry Bogad, Marc Fischer, Libertad Guerra, Dara Greenwald, Marisa Jahn, Karl Lorac/Themm!, Ann Messner, Ted Purves, Rasha Salti, Dread Scott and Jenny Polak, Jeffrey Skoller, Nato Thompson, and Aaron Gach/Center for Tactical Magic.



**The Other Saadiyat Island on the Panorama.**

# Saadiyat Island, NYC

## Hana Shams Ahmed



Dear Greg,



Saadiyat is a desert island directly off the coast of Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It is also where the Louvre and Guggenheim are developing new museums using the labor of thousands of "guest workers" from nearby South-Asian countries such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India. The May 2009 Human Rights Watch report documented cases of "severe exploitation and abuse, in some cases amounting to forced labor."

Some important improvements have been made since then, though working conditions are still below human rights standards in developed countries. Now imagine a previously uncharted island materializing off Pier 13 in the East River near to where the Guggenheim once planned to construct another new museum. This small, sandy island is also filled with precarious construction workers who labor in a special, extra-judicial cultural empowerment zone established in response to the art market crash of 2012. Based on my experience in the Middle East and South Asia, I imagine the inner-dialogue of one such displaced worker housed on Other Saadiyat Island:

"My son had not left my side in the first six years of his life. It had been difficult to think of a life without him. But that's how it has been for the last two years. Working as a construction worker was not exactly a 9 to 5 air-conditioned affair. I remember with a smile the conversations back in Bangladesh about going to the gym, trekking in the mountains of Nepal, cycling to work. All to stretch the limits of one's body. I have muscles now, but no mirror to look at it with. No interest to look at it either. After the twelve-hour ordeal and the food that I wouldn't even feed the crows back home, all I could look forward to was the bug-infested bunker. My mind keeps going back to thoughts about bringing my son here. The island is huge, so space is not a problem. He would love it. We would spend the next six months building things for us. Those buildings that we built for other people, we would finally build for us. Those buildings that we got kicked out of after the last tile was set would be ours. With thoughts of my son and big glass buildings I went to sleep."

- Hana Shams Ahmed

**Hana Shams Ahmed** is a journalist and human rights activist. She lives in her native country of Bangladesh.







Modern Library  
**The Works of Plato**  
Translated by Benjamin Jowett  
Edited and with an Introduction by Irwin Edman





## ***IMAGINARY ARCHIVE***

A traveling, mixed media participatory project

- Friedrichshafen, DK – Oct. 2015
- Philadelphia, Pa – Feb. 2015
- Kyiv, Ukraine – April 2014
- Graz, Austria – Sept. 2013
- Galway, Ireland – Nov. 2011
- Wellington, New Zealand – 2010

Imagine yourself uncovering a cache of materials and documents that record a past whose future never arrived? Imaginary Archive Galway (IAG) is just such a repository: printed materials, objects, and narratives that imagine an alternative history, which nevertheless sheds a surprisingly strong light on concrete realities. New York based artist Gregory Sholette invited participants from Galway, New Zealand, Europe and the United States to produce this “what if” collection of archival materials addressing topics from forgotten Irish inventors and fantastic nation-branding campaigns, to uncharted offshore islands and mysterious pirate radio broadcasts. On display at 126 Gallery, IAG consists of under-represented, unknown, invisible, or merely hoped-for “historical” materials that point to multiple ways of interpreting the past, the present, and the future.





Imaginary Archive, Philadelphia. Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Penn, 2014.





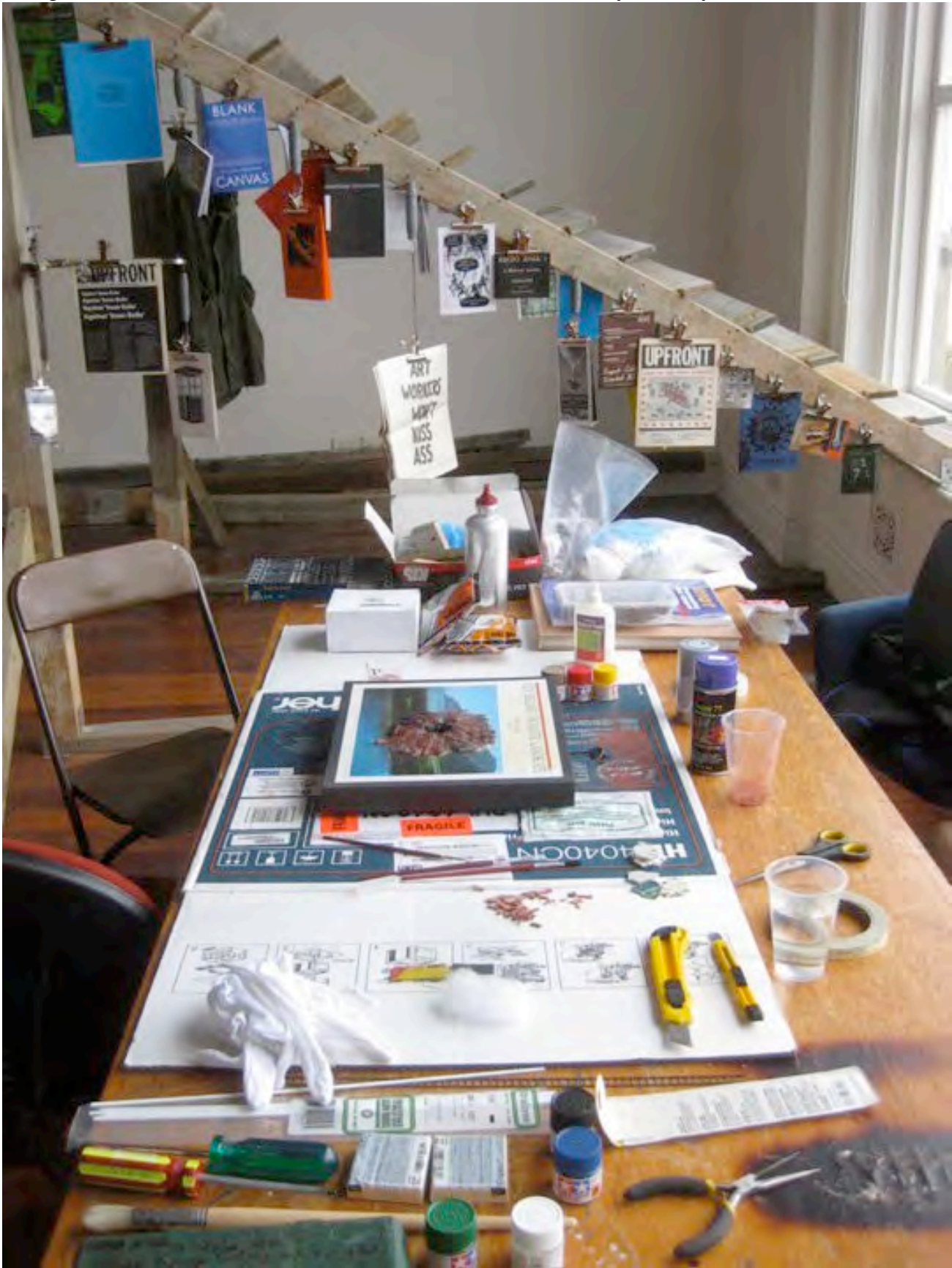
Imaginary Archive, Germany. White Box gallery at Zeppelin University, Friedrichshafen, 2015.







Top, Rotor Art Center, Graz, Austria, 2013, Bottom 123 Gallery, Galway Ireland 2011





*iDrone*, 2012. A virtual sculpture showing a slow-moving predator robot that is “skinned” with an archive of the artist’s own past activities created for the site:  
<http://exhibition.cyberartspace.net/2012/?gregory-sholette>



“Our Barricades” mixed media installation for Station Independent Projects, NYC, 2014.



*Exposed Pipe*, Byblos Bank Art Gallery, Beirut Lebanon, 2013.



AUB Art Galleries and Collections  
celebrates the opening of the new AUB Byblos Bank Art Gallery with the exhibition:

# ART IN LABOR

SKILL / DESKILLING / RESKILLING

May 20–July 27, 2013

[http://www.pan.ci.seattle.wa.us/seattle/spd/WTO/wto\\_suspects.htm](http://www.pan.ci.seattle.wa.us/seattle/spd/WTO/wto_suspects.htm)

# WTO ACTION COLLECTIBLE

with removable  
direct action arm



The WTO Task Force  
is looking for tips  
about this suspect  
from Seattle:12-2-99



*Counter-WTO Action Figure:  
With interchangeable street-action arms.*

A miniature figurine modeled on a 1999 Seattle demonstrator originally posted on a police surveillance website soon after the event. 10 X 5 X 5 mixed-media. 2004.



# PUBLIC COLLECTIVE ART

Week 7 . Matt Greco & Greg Sholette . Saadiyat Island Worker...

<http://gulflabor.org/2013/week-7-matt-greco-greg-sholette-saadi...>

## Who's Building the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi?

### Week 7 . Matt Greco & Greg Sholette . Saadiyat Island Workers Quarters Collectable, 2013



*Matt Greco & Greg Sholette*

*Solomon R Guggenheim*

*Saadiyat Island Workers Quarters Collectable, 2013*

*"Shop-Dropped" 3-D Prints, printed label, plastic boxes: unlimited edition.*

This week's contribution to Gulf Labor's 52 Weeks is by **Matt Greco & Greg Sholette**

To view more [images](#) and a [video](#) from this week's contribution please click on the links via "images" and "video"

Repayment of recruitment fees by foreign workers on Saadiyat Island often takes months or years and is "the single greatest factor in creating conditions of forced labor." – Human Rights Watch Report

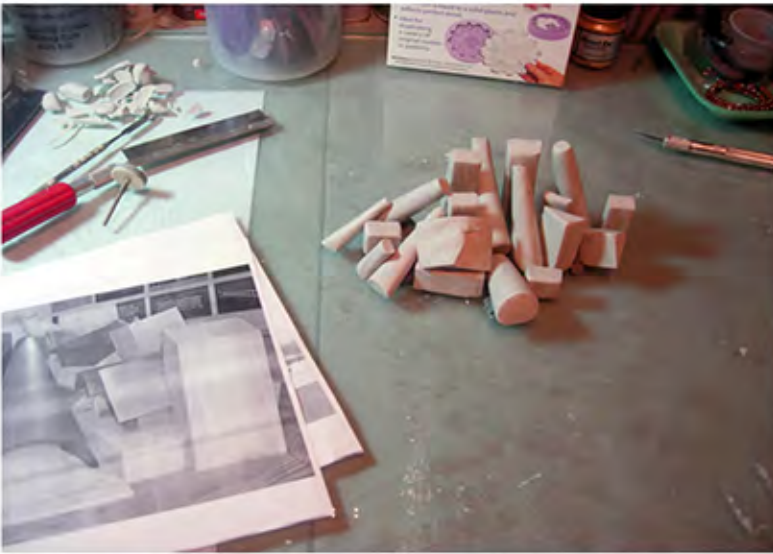
Despite being one of the wealthiest nations in the world Abu Dhabi has yet to agree on measures to assure fair labor conditions even as they seek to legitimize their cultural endeavors by purchasing the choicest of Western brands: The Guggenheim, Louvre, New York University. The Workers Quarters Collectable was "shop-dropped" at the Guggenheim Museum gift shop in New York as part of a larger campaign by Gulf Labor Coalition called "52 Weeks."



SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM  
SAADIYAT ISLAND WORKERS QUARTERS COLLECTABLE

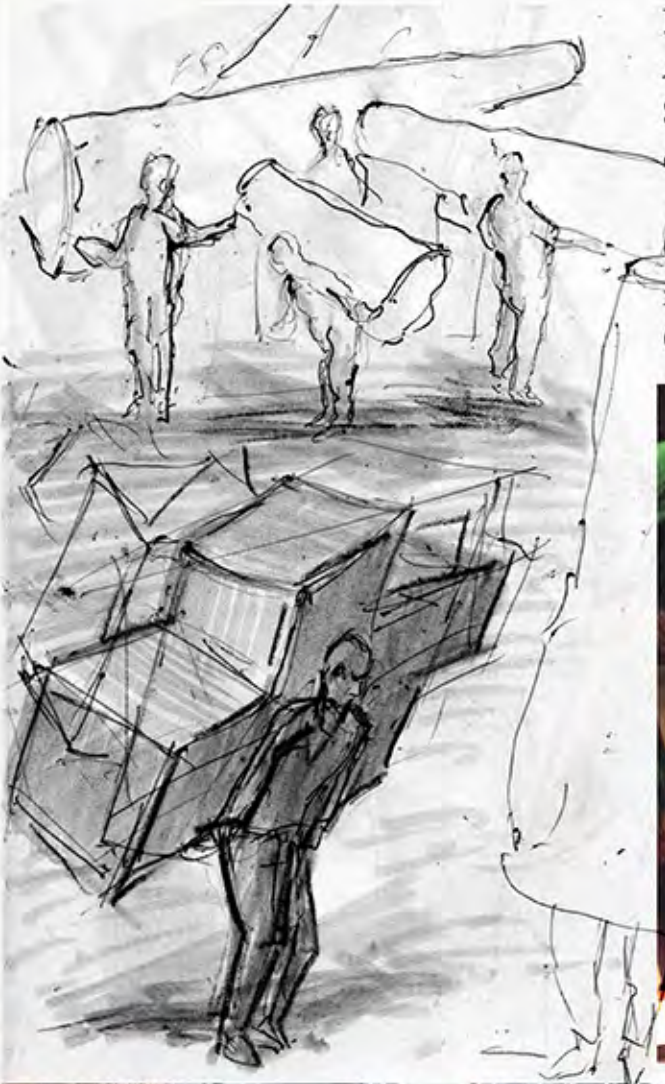




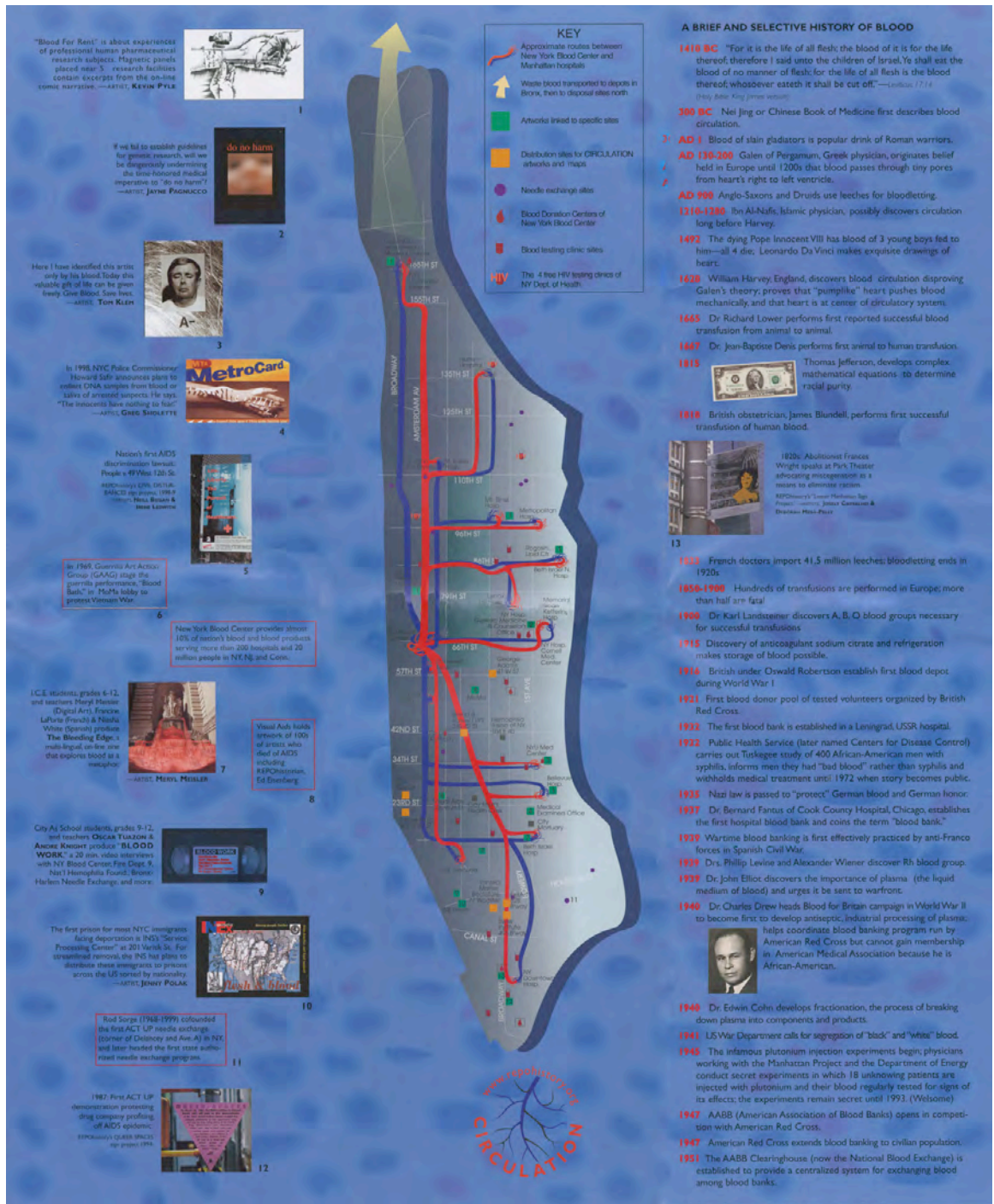




Precarious Workers Pageant, Venice Italy, performed August 7, 2015 with NYC construction workers and Social Practice Queens students “deconstructing” the deconstructivist architecture of Frank Gehry’s proposed Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Museum, UAE. Clockwise: One of my sketches for the project, constructing props in Venice, pageant heading to the Peggy Guggenheim Collection for a performance of “our commons.”







REPOhistory project map for CIRCULATION a collective mapping of human blood as socially shared urban service, valued commodity, and historical metaphor. NYC, 2000.

"Blood For Rent" is about experiences of professional human pharmaceutical research subjects. Historic panels placed near 5 research facilities contain excerpts from the on-line comic narrative. —ARTIST: KEVIN PYLE



If we fail to establish guidelines for genetic research, we will be dangerously undermining the time-honored medical imperative to "do no harm". —ARTIST: JAMES PAGNUCCO



Here I have identified this artist only by his blood. Today this valuable gift of life can be given freely. Give Blood. Save lives. —ARTIST: TOM KILBY



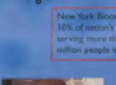
In 1998, NYC Police Commissioner Howard Safir announces plans to collect DNA samples from blood or saliva of arrested suspects. He says, "The innocents have nothing to fear". —ARTIST: GREG SHIFFLETTE



Nation's first AIDS discrimination lawsuit: People v. NYNEX (2010). APPROXIMATELY 100,000 BARRIERS (2010). —ARTIST: JAMES BROWN & JESSIE LORBER



In 1969, Guerrilla Art Action Group (GAAG) stage the guerrilla performance, "Blood Bath" in MoMA lobby to protest Vietnam War.



New York Blood Center provides almost 10% of New York's blood and blood products, serving more than 200 hospitals and 20 million people in NY, NJ, and Conn.

I.C.E. stations, grades 6-12, and teachers Meryl Meisler (Digital Arts), Françoise LaFura (French) & Mikaela White (Spanish) produce "The Bleeding Edge," a multi-layered on-line site that explores blood at a metaphor. —ARTIST: MERYL MEISLER



Visual Arts holds network of 1000s of artists who died of AIDS including KIP Christian, Ed Eisenberg.

City At School students, grades 9-12, and teachers OSCAR TUXSON & ANNE ROBERT produce "BLOOD WORK" a 20 min. video installation with NY Blood Center. Five Days, 9. First Hemophilia Found; Brown: Harlem Needle Exchange; more.



The first prison for most NYC immigrants facing deportation is INS "Service Processing Center" at 201 Varik St. For streamlined removal, the INS has plans to distribute these immigrants to prisons across the US sorted by nationality. —ARTIST: JENNY POLAK



Rod Siegel (1968-1999) cofounded the first ACT UP needle exchange (partner of Destiny and Ave A) in NYC. Will later headed the first state authorized needle exchange program.



1987: First ACT UP demonstration protesting drug company profiteering of AIDS epidemic. REPOhistory's QUEER SPACE: NYC project 2014.

**A BRIEF AND SELECTIVE HISTORY OF BLOOD**

- 1418 BC "For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof; therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh; for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof; whosoever eateth it shall be cut off." —Leviticus 17:14 (they kill King James version)
- 300 BC Nei Jing or Chinese Book of Medicine first describes blood circulation.
- AD 1 Blood of slain gladiators is popular drink of Roman warriors.
- AD 130-200 Galen of Pergamum, Greek physician, originates belief held in Europe until 1200s that blood passes through tiny pores from heart's right to left ventricle.
- AD 900 Anglo-Saxons and Druids use leeches for bloodletting.
- 1310-1320 Ibn Al-Nafis, Islamic physician, possibly discovers circulation long before Harvey.
- 1493 The dying Pope Innocent VIII has blood of 3 young boys fed to him—all 4 die. Leonardo Da Vinci makes exquisite drawings of heart.
- 1620 William Harvey, England, discovers blood circulation disproving Galen's theory, proves that "pumplike" heart pushes blood mechanically, and that heart is at center of circulatory system.
- 1645 Dr Richard Lower performs first reported successful blood transfusion from animal to animal.
- 1687 Dr. Jean-Baptiste Denis performs first animal to human transfusion.
- 1815 Thomas Jefferson, develops complex mathematical equations to determine racial purity.
- 1818 British obstetrician, James Blundell, performs first successful transfusion of human blood.
- 1820s Abolitionist Frances Wright speaks at Park Theater advocating miscegenation as a means to eliminate racism.
- 1870 Darwin's "Descent of Man" Ignites controversy. John Cantowood & Brewster Hunt Reply.
- 1923 French doctors import 41.5 million leeches; bloodletting ends in 1920s.
- 1856-1900 Hundreds of transfusions are performed in Europe; more than half are fatal.
- 1900 Dr Karl Landsteiner discovers A, B, O blood groups necessary for successful transfusions.
- 1915 Discovery of anticoagulant sodium citrate and refrigeration makes storage of blood possible.
- 1916 British under Oswald Robertson establish first blood depot during World War I.
- 1921 First blood donor pool of tested volunteers organized by British Red Cross.
- 1923 The first blood bank is established in a Leningrad, USSR hospital.
- 1923 Public Health Service (later named Centers for Disease Control) carries out Tuskegee study of 400 African-American men with syphilis, informs men they had "bad blood" rather than syphilis and withholds medical treatment until 1972 when story becomes public.
- 1925 Nazi law is passed to "protect" German blood and German honor.
- 1937 Dr Bernard Fantus of Cook County Hospital, Chicago, establishes the first hospital blood bank and coins the term "blood bank".
- 1939 Wartime blood banking is first effectively practiced by anti-Franco forces in Spanish Civil War.
- 1939 Drs. Phillip Levine and Alexander Wiener discover Rh blood group.
- 1939 Dr. John Elliot discovers the importance of plasma (the liquid medium of blood) and urges it be sent to warfront.
- 1940 Dr Charles Drew heads Blood for Britain campaign in World War II to become first to develop antiseptic, industrial processing of plasma; helps coordinate blood banking program run by American Red Cross but cannot gain membership in American Medical Association because he is African-American.
- 1940 Dr. Edwin Cohn develops fractionation, the process of breaking down plasma into components and products.
- 1941 US War Department calls for segregation of "black" and "white" blood.
- 1943 The infamous plutonium injection experiments begin; physicians working with the Manhattan Project and the Department of Energy conduct secret experiments in which 18 unknowing patients are injected with plutonium and their blood regularly tested for signs of its effects; the experiments remain secret until 1993. (Welsome)
- 1947 AARB (American Association of Blood Banks) opens in competition with American Red Cross.
- 1947 American Red Cross extends blood banking to civilian population.
- 1981 The AARB Clearinghouse (now the National Blood Exchange) is established to provide a centralized system for exchanging blood among blood banks.





Adhesive postcard distributed around NYC for REPOhistory's CIRCULATION project.



The Other J.P. Morgan for REPOhistory street sign project, 1992, New York City



CITY

# Signs of Olden Times Bring History to the Streets

By MERVYN ROTHSTEIN

**I**n these days of billion-dollar bankruptcies and trillion-dollar debts, the sign that went up this week on a lamppost outside the Municipal Building in lower Manhattan makes compelling reading.

"Guilt until the accused proved their innocence," the sign reads. "Indefinite incarceration at the hands of creditors. That was debtors prison. (You're standing where it once was.) Between 1775 and 1831, thousands were jailed for debt — sometimes for as little as \$1."

The two-sided, illustrated metal sign is one of 39 being installed at 36 sites in lower Manhattan this week by Repohistory — the name means repossessing history — a collective of 65 visual artists, performers, writers, historians, teachers and film makers who got together three years ago with the goal of creating public art about history and providing a view of history not always found in textbooks.

Among the signs is one by Tess Timoney and Mark O'Brien, at the corner of Wall and Water Streets, the site of the city's Meal and Slave Market between 1709 and 1762.

"Merchants sold corn, meal and other provisions," the sign reads. "But the principal trade was in slaves." In fact, the sign points out, "by 1746, one out of every five New Yorkers was black and, with rare exceptions, enslaved. New York ranked second, behind Charleston, S.C., as an urban slave center."

At Liberty and Greenwich Streets, a sign by Lisa Maya Knauer and Janet Koenig focuses on the nearby home of Ann Lohman, alias Madame Restell, "19th-century New York's best-known and most successful abortionist until her entrapment and arrest by morals vigilante Anthony Comstock in 1878. On the eve of her trial, facing a long prison term at age 67, she committed suicide."

Ms. Knauer said the group's members felt their work should be shown on the streets rather than in museums because the debates about history, multiculturalism and school curriculums are very public ones. "We wanted to take the issues in the debate and put them where everybody who walks through the streets of New York City can be confronted or provoked or challenged by the information," Ms. Knauer said.

The viewer's personal relation to the signs is also stressed. Each sign



Fred R. Conrad/The New York Times

An alternative view of history is being presented by the Repohistory group. Tom Klem installed one of the group's historical markers at the former site of debtors prison, in front of the Municipal Building.

asks two questions, among them "Are you part of this history?" and "Whose history is remembered?"

The Repohistory installations, known as the Lower Manhattan Sign Project, are sponsored by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. The signs are going up this week, and an opening parade is scheduled for Saturday at 3 P.M. beginning at Castle Clinton in Battery Park. The signs will stay up until Dec. 27.

Maps giving sign locations are available at the World Trade Center information booth and the downtown branch of the Whitney Museum, 33

Maiden Lane.

The project has cost between \$8,000 and \$10,000, said Greg Sholette, another Repohistorian. "Things sort of snowballed," Mr. Sholette said. "First we got the Municipal Art Society to go along. From that we got the New York Historical Society, and from that we got City Council President Andrew Stein. So by the time we went to the local community board and the Department of Transportation, we had a very professional-looking package."

Contemporary issues are very much a part of the project. At Stone



The New York Times

and Whitehall Streets, a sign by Tom Klem records in English and Spanish that "on the fourth day of the month of March in the year 1991, three homeless Americans passed a very cold and bitter night on this spot."

Other subjects for the signs include Potter's Field, the Ellis Island Immigration station; the Great Negro Plot of 1741, an alleged slave cabal to burn down the city; the Whitehall Street military induction center; J. P. Morgan's buying his way out of Civil War service; the first Chinese community in New York City; epidemics in the city, and the story of the waterfront.

History should record that the first passer-by to stop, stare up at and discuss the debtors-prison sign — which was created by Laurie Ourlight and Jim Clement — was Paul Sladkus, a marketing consultant.

The sign notes that among those jailed were sailing crews, sent there by captains who wanted to avoid paying the sailors' wages, and prostitutes, imprisoned by pimps when the women became old, diseased or pregnant. And the other side of the sign shows the masthead of a newspaper called the Forlorn Hope, written and edited from the debtors jail in the 1800's by one William Keteltas, who was an early Abolitionist and, not surprisingly, a prison reformer.

"This project is one of the good things about the city," Mr. Sladkus said. "It's important to make history more accessible."

Mr. Klem, high on a ladder installing the sign, said that another good thing about the city was the crucial help provided by the Department of Transportation. "The D.O.T. gave us brackets with special bolts," he said. "The bolts make it very difficult for vandals to steal the signs."