



POST OFFICE BOX 110034 BROOKLYN, NEW YORK 11211

Updates for May 10th

25 Apr - New Poetry From Connor Stevens

Below are three new poems by Cleveland 4 prisoner Connor Stevens.

MORE:

Weeping the World

There are moments
so small we are thought crazy
for thinking they matter
but their gravity
warps our very Being
with their passing.

How can I speak to the dead?
Why bother speaking to the living?

Here, in this pile of graphite and wood dust
I exist suspended between the two.
There is the carcass of a lady bug
that left me weeping.
The world within a grain of coffee
envelops me entirely.
Do you know what it means
to inch along the cold concrete floor
through the cobwebs and urine?
Do you think, really, the world is so small?
I have spent years
in a single puff of smoke.

It is so easy
to get lost where a strand of hair
meets the eraser shavings.
Or to wander dazed in the scent of animal musk.
Who encompasses all of this?

It is to the Source that I am falling.

The Truth They Cannot Kill

I don't pretend
or expect to be understood.
If that were my intent
I would leave it at this:

Islam is the Truth.
This society is falsehood.
Lo! Falsehood is ever bound to vanish.

An Opening, Darkening

Beauty exists.
Between the concrete
and concertina
even here
balanced on a blade's edge
suspended
from a rope of hair-thin steel,
the Finality
of six walls.

(they yearn to smother us, but
they only harden our resolve
to grind their world into dust)

Beauty endures
but there is a lesson buried beneath
the beast's boot:
We must learn to make our beauty light,
to feed it nothing but raw essence
for how else can we survive
but to fling our hearts into the vast sky?

25 Apr - Two to One

Crime and punishment questions still surround 1970 killing that sent Omaha Two to life in prison.

MORE:

by Leo Adam Biga (*Omaha Reader*)

When Mondo we Langa died at age 68 in the Nebraska State Penitentiary last month, he'd served 45 years for a crime he always maintained he did not commit. The former David Rice, a poet and artist, was found guilty, along with fellow Black Panther Ed Poindexter, in the 1970 suitcase bomb murder of Omaha police officer Larry Minard. With his reputed accomplice now gone, Poindexter remains in prison, still asserting his own innocence.

Poindexter and we Langa have been portrayed by sympathetic attorneys, social justice watchdogs and journalists as wrongfully convicted victims framed by overzealous officials. The argument goes the two were found guilty by a nearly all-white jury and a stacked criminal justice system for their militant black nationalist affiliations and inflammatory words rather than hard evidence against them. Supporters call them the Omaha Two in reference to a supposed population of American political prisoners incarcerated for their beliefs.

The crucial witness against the pair, Duane Peak, is the linchpin in the case. His testimony implicated them despite his contradictory statements. we Landa and Poindexter dispute his assertions. Today, Peak lives under an assumed name in a different state.

Two writers with Omaha ties who've trained a sharp eye on the case are Elena Carter and Michael Richardson. Carter, an Iowa University creative writing graduate student, spent months researching and writing her in-depth February article for BuzzFeed. She laid out the convoluted evidentiary trail that went cold decades ago, though subsequent discoveries cast doubt on the official record of events. Just not enough to compel a judge to order a new trial.

Richardson has written extensively on the case since 2007 for various online sites, including Examiner.com. He lives in Belize, Central America.

Both writers have immersed themselves in trial transcripts and related materials. They visited we Langa and Poindexter in prison. Their research has taken them to various witnesses, experts and advocates.

For Carter, it's a legacy project. Her father, Earl Sandy Carter, was with the VISTA federal anti-poverty program (now part of AmeriCorps) here in the early 1970s. Richardson, a fellow VISTA worker in Omaha, says he "came of age politically and socially," much as Carter did, during all the fervor of civil rights and anti-war counterculture. Ironically, they did things like free food programs in the black community closely resembling what the Panthers did; only as whites they largely escaped the harassment and suspicion of their grassroots black counterparts.

Earl Sandy Carter edited a newsletter, *Down on the Ground*, to which we Langa and Poindexter contributed. Richardson knew we Langa from Omaha City Council meetings they attended. With their shared liberal leanings, Richardson and Carter teamed to cover the trial as citizen journalists, co-writing a piece published in the *Omaha Star*.

Elena Carter grew up unaware of the case. Then her father mentioned it as possible subject matter for her to explore. Intrigued to retrace his activism amid tragic events he reported on, she took the bait.

"The more I read about it the more I wanted to look into this very complicated, fascinating case," she says. "Everything I read kept reinforcing they were innocent – that this was a clear wrongful conviction. Until now, my writing has been personal – poetry and memoir. This was my first journalistic piece. This was different for me in terms of the responsibility I felt to get everything right and do the story justice."

That sense of responsibility increased upon meeting we Langa and Poindexter on separate prison visits. They were no longer abstractions, symbols or martyrs but real people grown old behind bars.

"It was a lot more pressure than I usually feel while writing, but also a really great privilege for them to trust me to write about them," she says.

She visited we Langa three times, the last two in the prison infirmary, where he was treated for advanced respiratory disease. Though confined to a wheelchair and laboring to breathe, she found him "eccentric, super smart, optimistic, exuberant and still in high spirits – singing, reciting poems," adding, "He wasn't in denial he was dying, yet he seemed really determined to live."

She says, "He was on my mind for a year and a half – it did become highly personal." She found both men "even-keeled but certainly angry at the situation they found themselves in." She adds, "Mondo said he didn't have any anger toward Duane Peak. He saw him as a really vulnerable kid scared for his family. But he did express anger toward the system."

Richardson, who applied for Conscientious Objector status during the Vietnam War, never forgot the case. Ten years ago he began reexamining it. Hundreds of articles have followed.

"The more I learned, the more I doubted the official version of the case," he says. "I reached the conclusion the men were innocent after about a year of my research. It was the testimony of forensic audiologist Tom Owen that Duane Peak did not make the 911 call (that drew Officer Minard to a vacant house where the

bomb detonated) that made me understand there had been false testimony at the trial. My belief in their innocence has only grown over the years as I learned more about the case.

“Also, my visits and correspondence with both men helped shape my beliefs. Mondo was unflinching with his candor and I came to have a profound respect for his personal integrity. Their stories have never changed. Their denials seem very genuine to me. The deceit of the police agencies has slowly been revealed with disclosures over the years, although much remains hidden or destroyed.”

There are as many conspiracy theories about the case as folks making it a cause. Everyone has a scapegoat and boogeyman. Richardson and Carter don't agree on everything but they do agree the men did not receive a fair trial due to mishandled, concealed, even planted evidence. They point to inconsistent testimony from key witnesses. They see patterns of systemic, targeted prejudice against the Panthers that created an environment for police and prosecutorial misconduct.

The murder of a white cop who was a husband and father and the conviction of two black men who used militant language resonates with recent incidents that sparked the Black Lives Matter movement.

Considerable legal and social justice resources have been brought to bear on the case in an effort to have it reopened and retried.

As Elena Carter wrote, “we Langa and Poindexter's case has penetrated every level of the criminal justice system, from local officials to former governors to the FBI to the Supreme Court.” Yet, we Langa languished in prison and died there.

Carter reported we Langa's best chance for a new trial came in 1974, “when he filed an appeal in federal district court, arguing the dynamite and blasting caps recovered from his home during a police search for Duane Peak should never have been received in evidence” because the officers who entered his home “had no probable cause Duane was there.” Contravening and contradictory court rulings affecting that decision have apparently had a chilling effect on any judge taking the case on.

She and Richardson surmise no judicial official in this conservative state wants to overturn or commute a convicted cop killer's sentence.

“Sadly, when you talk to people about a dead policeman and Black Panthers, the conversation sort of stops,” Richardson says.

“I don't think enough people know about this case,” says Carter. “Why this case hasn't been taken as seriously as it should perplexes and frustrates me.”

She and Richardson believe the fact the Omaha Panthers were not prominent in the party nationally has kept their case low profile. The Washington Post did report on it decades ago and Carter says, “I feel like that's the only time a serious national publication had put it out there they could be innocent.” Until her story.

A documentary examined the case. Noted attorney Lennox Hinds has been involved in the defense effort.

Locally, Ben Gray made the case a frequent topic on KETV's Kaleidoscope. Other local champions have included State Sen. Ernie Chambers. Then-Gov. Bob Kerrey was prepared to pardon we Langa, but the prisoner refused on the grounds it would be an admission of guilt. Nebraskans for Peace and others keep the case before officials.

“I would say the Omaha Two case shows the critical need for the news media to monitor the police and courts,” says Richardson.

No major exoneration projects or attorneys have adopted the case,

“I’m not entirely sure why that is after all these years,” Carter says. “I don’t know what their reluctance would be looking into this case more.”

Most observers speculate nothing will change unless or until someone comes forward with dramatic new evidence.

Carter hopes “something more could be done for Ed (Poindexter) at this point.” Barring action by the Nebraska Board of Pardons or Gov. Pete Ricketts, the 71-year-old inmate likely faces the same fate as his late friend given the history of denied appeals attending the case.

“Mondo told me he was paying a debt he did not owe,” Richardson says. “Poindexter deserves a fresh look at his case. I believe in their innocence. They were guilty of rhetoric, not murder.”

26 Apr - “Sincere Appreciation to Each and Every One of You”

Please read the following gratitude offered by Maliki Shakur Latine.

MORE:

Warmest Greetings of Love, Peace, Solidarity and Sincere Appreciation to Each and Every One of You:

At this time I wish to give my heartfelt appreciation and sincere gratitude for all the letters of support for my parole release that you sent to my NLG Parole Preparation Project team to be sent to the Parole Board Commissioners.

As members of society and the community to which I shall be returning upon my release on parole, your letters do reflect and convey the community’s collective and diverse voices calling for my release. Indeed, a heart that would not be moved and inspired by the words expressed in each of your letters, would be deemed blind, hollow and void of humanitarian compassion.

So in closing, I want each of you to know that I truly appreciate your support, solidarity, friendship and letters of support for my release.

In Unity and Love

27 Apr - More Solidarity Statements for Palestine

From a series of solidarity statements from US Political Prisoners to the people of Palestine published in a collection of letters brought to Palestine by a recent prison & labor solidarity delegation.

MORE:

Tom Manning

A minute after midnight, in this cell reading Ramzy Baroud’s March 17th piece on the BDS/Boycott of the Zionists who occupy Palestine and slaughter Palestinians at will.

I watch TV in here, this prison hospital, a lot and see what the American public is fed and accept passively every day. Things that seem minor to my fellow captives when I mention it – which I do. They look at me as if I'm the TV grouch.

The blond actress [Scarlett Johansson] is pro Zionist factories in West Bank Palestine. She is a super hero in Captain America – the movie. An Israeli soldier who plays Wonder Woman in another movie super hero, who gets more air/interview time than the Palestinian shot in the head by an Israeli soldier while laying on the ground under arrest. Bang! Big joke.

I see a news clip. It shows two men, a father and son maybe, tending their fishing gear on a beach with the open sea beyond. Open? The Zionists have just allowed Palestinians of Gaza to fish nine miles out – the limit has been six miles. While I take in this view, I have the visual memory of the four boys in a tight, athletic group running this way then that – trying unsuccessfully to outrun the bursting shells the Zionists are lobbing at them from out on that sea.

Then *CBS Evening News* shows us the young men of Gaza who do amazing acrobatic jumping and tumbling amidst the ruins of their city – looking for moments of freedom when their feet are off the ground between leaping and landing.

And as the American reporter interviews them for the little news novelty moment at the end of the evening, we can see the shining ribbon of prison/apartheid wall in the background – from one side of the TV screen to the other with the very high-tech, highly lethal watchtower, guard tower, shining against the blue sky.

I try to focus my fellow captives on the real story behind the diversionary propaganda – try to explain apartheid and how it can be applied in places other than South Africa.

When asked “How do you know all this shit?” I tell them I'm here in this prison with them for fighting against apartheid.

I can't capture on paper the Abbott and Costello like conversation that grew out of this. And as I left the TV room, I heard someone say, “That mother fucker's crazy,” and someone else says “what time's the game on?”

Oso Blanco

Osiyo (Hello in Ja la gi – the Cherokee language – my language)

I know what you are going through, because for 500 plus years, since 1492, our lands have been invaded also – yes, like yours was in the late 1940s.

My land here is “very vast.”

Back in 1838, they forced genocide on my tribe – only 1000 people escaped their attack. The survivors were forced to relocate, walking on foot, horseback or wagon from the east to the west. 4000 of my people died of exposure to cold and rape. Babies froze, old people, children, pregnant women, men – all died on the /Trail of Tears/.

We who survived came back in a powerful way.

We are still speaking our language – we dance our dances – we practice our ceremonies – we came back stronger.

But we are still occupied by the Zionist-loving hypocrites – these monsters who place money above life – whose wealth is more important than the Mother Earth.

I've had chains and cuffs and shackles cut into my hands and legs for days and days in these American prisons. I've been beat, shot in the back with an AR 15 rifle, I've had police dogs rip into me – forcing me to heal in bed for a month.

I – Oso Blanco – “know” fully 100 percent what you are suffering.

Be strong! Stand strong! Be pure in your hearts!

Janet, Janine, and Debbie Africa

Even though we have been in prison for over 37 years, we have never and will never give up the fight for freedom. Our fight is your fight because we want all of life to be free from the restricting confines of this system that causes so much pain and suffering.

We feel the tide is turning in the right direction every time we see groups of people working together for the common good of all living beings.

The power is in the people and the people have to realize this and use this power to free life, protect life. Life is the force that keep us alive.

Stay strong and we're doing the same.

28 Apr - Parole Letters Needed for Robert Seth Hayes and Jalil Muntaqim

Two amazing warriors need our help as they prepare for parole hearings.

MORE:

Robert Seth Hayes 2016 Parole Campaign

Once again, we are preparing for Seth's upcoming parole hearing on June 7, 2016. Since the PBA, the FOP, and the Correctional Officers union are able to collect thousands of signatures against parole, we must work to gain as many signatures and letters of support for Seth as possible. In addition to the online petition, there is a hard copy that can be downloaded at http://www.jerichony.org/images24/2016_Seth_Parole_Petition.pdf. Since many members of our community do not have regular access to the internet, it is important to use the hard copy and return it to us.

You can also download and print out the parole campaign brochure explaining Seth's case as a way of educating people about the political nature of the case and the parole board's constant denials despite national and international support for Seth's release on parole. That is available at http://www.jerichony.org/images24/Seth_Parole_Brochure.pdf

Seth has also prepared a fact sheet <<http://www.jerichony.org/sethparole2016facts.html>> for those who would like to write letters to the Parole Board on his behalf.

Write to Seth:

**Robert Seth Hayes #74-A-2280
Sullivan Correctional Facility
Post Office Box 116**

Fallsburg, New York 12733-0116

To contribute to ongoing efforts supporting Robert Seth Hayes, please donate online at:
<https://fundrazr.com/campaigns/810a58>

Jalil Muntaqim 2016 Parole Hearing

Once again, we are preparing for Jalil's upcoming parole hearing on June 14, 2016. In addition to the online petition, there is a hard copy that can be downloaded at
http://www.freejalil.com/images2/2016_Jalil_Parole_Petition.pdf

His parole campaign brochure is available at http://www.freejalil.com/images2/Jalil_Parole_Brochure.pdf

Jalil's fact sheet is available for download at <http://www.freejalil.com/2016paroleletterfacts.html>

Write to Jalil:

Anthony J. Bottom #77A4283
Attica Correctional Facility
Post Office Box 149
Attica, New York 14011-0149

Deadlines are fast approaching for letters and petitions to the board. The lawyers would like to have these a month ahead of time. This means May 7th for Seth and May 14th for Jalil.

Please go to www.jerichony.org and www.freejalil.com for more information.

Click on the fact sheet links to make sure you have the correct addresses for Eve Rosahn (for Seth) and the Parole Preparation Project (for Jalil)

NOW IS THE TIME TO BRING OUR FREEDOM FIGHTERS HOME!

29 Apr - J11 Convergence In Support of Eco-Prisoners & Against Toxic Prisons

Since the issue of prisons and ecology are gaining more relevance, we wanted to pass on some information about an important convergence happening in DC this summer. On June 11-13, people will gather to discuss, strategize and protest toxic prisons, in general, and the BOP's plans.

MORE:

Check out the call at <https://fighttoxicprisons.wordpress.com/2016/03/18/convergence-in-support-of-eco-prisoners-against-toxic-prisons/>

June 11 – 13, 2016 in Washington D.C.
June 11 and 12th – Converge and Strategize
June 13th – Mass Direct Action against the Bureau of Prisons
<https://www.facebook.com/events/216514898709848>

OVER A DECADE, June 11th has been a day of action in solidarity with environmentalists and anarchists imprisoned for their actions in defense of the Earth. The day has its origins in an international outcry over the extreme and unprecedented sentencing of Jeffrey Luers to 22 years in prison for damaging several SUV's at a car dealership. Since its inception in 2004, the June 11th day of action and other acts of solidarity have been instrumental in winning shorter sentences or early release for eco-prisoners, including

Luers himself as well as Eric McDavid, who was entrapped by an informant. Yet committed earth defenders such as Marius Mason, targeted in the FBI's "Green Scare," are still serving harsh sentences in maximum security prisons for taking direct action against earth destroying industries.

MEANWHILE IN APPALACHIA, the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) plans to build a massive maximum security prison, on top of a former mountaintop removal coal mine in Letcher County, Eastern Kentucky, surrounded by sludge ponds and coal processing and transport operations. This amounts to an environmental justice nightmare, where prisoners who are disproportionately low-income and people of color face toxic conditions behind bars.

It also happens that this prison site is about a mile as the crow flies from a rare and very biodiverse pocket of Eastern old-growth called the Lilley Cornett Woods. Learn more in the December 2105 issue of the Earth First! Journal.

As of December 2015, the BOP got over \$400 million approved for the prison's construction. The newly-formed Campaign to Fight Toxic Prisons (FTP) is organizing to stop it, and looking to grow a coalition of opposition.

STOPPING ONE PRISON IS NOT A MAGIC BULLET to ending the U.S. police state, the one that gave way to world's largest prison nation and in turn serves as the apparatus of repression that keeps the planet shackled to industrial capitalism...

But it's a pretty good place to build from. In particular, it is a powerful place that the environmental movement can express solidarity with the growing rage over the racist criminal justice system.

We will converge on to DC put dual pressure on both the BOP and the EPA to stop this prison, and highlight environmental justice issues related to prisoners in general, while continuing to fight for the release of eco-prisoners in the spirit of June 11th. We hope to see this effort build stronger bonds between the eco-defense movement and the movements against police and mass incarceration.

We'll bring the momentum of the weekend convergence into the streets on Monday June 13 to take direct action against the Bureau of Prisons' plan to build their new maximum security prison in the coalfields of KY; and let those locked up for defending the Earth know they are not forgotten. Bring your affinity group, crew, friends, banners, noisemakers and your desire for disruption.

In many ways, the prison experiences of activists like Luers, Mason, McDavid, and others such as Daniel McGowan, Rebecca Rubin and Tim DeChristopher, have provided courage and inspiration rather than the desired effect of intimidation. They also gave the environmental movement an inside look at the prison epidemic in the U.S. With the steady stream of urban uprisings against the police state, there has never been a better time to organize at this intersection of ecology and incarceration. We hope you'll join us.

Additionally, the PR company that is contracted to produce the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the BOP's Letcher prison is called Cardno, and has offices in most every U.S. city, and other cities all over the world. This is the same firm that was contracted by the U.S. State Department to produce an EIS for the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline.

Get in touch if you are interested in helping to organize this J11/FTP convergence or if you are part of a group who wants to co-sponsor it. More details are forthcoming. Contact: FightToxicPrisons@gmail.com

29 Apr - Gary Tyler is FREE!

On Friday 4/29/16, political prisoner Gary Tyler was release from Angola prison!

MORE:

by Karen Brooks (*Reuters*)

A Louisiana man walked free from the state's notorious Angola prison late on Friday after serving 41 years of an unconstitutional life sentence over the shooting death of a white high school student during a violent and racially charged chapter in the state's fight to segregate schools.

The high-profile case of Gary Tyler, 57, ended when he entered a guilty plea and was sentenced to 21 years - just over half of the time served - and told he could go home Friday, according to a statement released on behalf of Tyler and his attorneys.

Tyler is among a generation of prisoners who faced harsh conditions and years or even decades in solitary confinement for convictions during racially charged events in Louisiana.

Angola is considered among the toughest of the state's prisons, once a part of a Deep South plantation and known for seething racial tensions and harsh treatment of inmates.

At age 16 in 1974, Tyler was the youngest person on Louisiana's Death Row, where an all-white jury sent Tyler, who is black, to die for the slaying of 13-year-old Thomas Weber, a fellow Destrehan High School student in St. Charles Parish in southern Louisiana.

Tyler was aboard a bus filled with black students who were passing an unruly crowd of white students when Weber was shot, the statement said. Police found a gun on the bus and Tyler was charged with capital murder and tried as an adult.

After his death sentence, black and white students who testified against him recanted their stories. The 5th Circuit Court of Appeals called his conviction fundamentally unfair and said he was never given his right to the presumption of innocence. But he never received a new trial.

In 1976, his death sentence was commuted to life after the state's mandatory death penalty was ruled unconstitutional. In the following two decades, the Louisiana Board of Pardons and Paroles voted three times to lessen his sentence.

Still, Tyler served eight years in solitary confinement and more than 30 years in the general population, where he became a mentor and a leader. His case drew national attention as an example of the unfair convictions and over-the-top sentencing and treatment of minorities in the Louisiana justice system at the time.

In 2012, life without parole for juvenile offenders was also ruled unconstitutional, and earlier this year, a court decided the ruling should be retroactive - giving prosecutors a legal avenue to reduce Tyler's sentence with a guilty plea on Friday.

30 Apr - Help Print and Distribute Fire to the Prisons #13

Help our comrades print 10,000 copies of Fire to the Prisons and give them out for free!

MORE:

In February 2015, we returned to publishing Fire to the Prisons. After a three year hiatus, we came back to this project with full force. Over a year later, we are happy to report that almost all of the 10,000 printed copies have been distributed across North America and abroad. Thanks to the support, donations, and contributions of comrades across the world, we were able to create a very loud voice.

Now, in 2016, we want to do it again.

We want to expand our coverage, scope, and the reach of the publication while remaining true to the spirit of Fire to the Prisons. We will continue with our long term commitment to counter-information, original writing and content, and the amplification of the anti-authoritarian/anti-prison/anti-repression struggle that you have come to expect from us.

We will have both a domestic and international voice this issue. While remaining true to reporting on repression and anti-prison resistance across the states, Canada, and Mexico, we have committed articles from abroad promising insight on struggles and happenings that will help to bridge and unify an array of social tensions through a mutual awareness and solidarity.

We truly want FTTP to become a global publication and one that links anarchists and other autonomous combatants together in a dialog about the commonalities that we all face, as well as a discussion on the actions and struggles that we can all engage in.

We will be covering the resurgence of fascism in mainstream American politics, as well as updates on communities resisting further eco-devastation across the states. We have committed articles from prisoners domestic and international. We have commitments from NYC Anarchist Black Cross to use the project as a resource for raising awareness on repression and prisoner status in North America. We will also focus on the pacification of favelas in Brazil, the current reality and history of anarchist struggle in Chile, and the refugee situation in Greece. We will have further reports on anti-police struggle across the United States, and will be continuing a tradition of news on broader prisoner strikes across America since our last issue. We are also intent on original articles on indigenous resistance in western Canada. Plus accounts and updates of the struggle in Rojava and general Kurdistan. Also all our featured articles will be available in Spanish for free on our website.

We are a committed collective. We are prepared to invest a lot of time and energy into producing this project, but we ask any and all sympathetic readers to help us with printing and distribution. by donating to our funding page. To print 10,000 copies of this it will cost us \$2,000 dollars. While in the past we have had to ask people to pay the postage to our distributor, we would like to be able to send out more copies for free, to encourage broader distribution. We are asking for another \$2,000 dollars for this. With maximizing our distribution efforts through contacts and friends across the world, we can distribute and mail out almost all of the new issues to anyone interested in distributing it. This leads us to asking for \$4,000 dollars. We know this is an ambitious amount, and most likely those supporting us aren't very wealthy, but it will absolutely secure this project, and help with the expansion of our readership. We hope that reaching out this way will put a dent into that fiscal goal, as our collective members are all working people.

We hope that in returning from our hiatus last year we have re-ignited a feeling of support for this project, and hopefully have reached a new generation of anarchists, revolutionaries, insurrectionists, radicals, and the generally angry and discontent. By taking part in our crowd funding, we also promise to ensure that you will receive copies of the magazine upon its completion.

While we have some content intended for our new issue, we are also very open to new ideas and submissions. We will be happy to hear from you via email at firetotheprisons@riseup.net. You can also read all of our old issues in pdf form on our website at: firetotheprisons.org

We hope to make our next issue another success, and we hope to strengthen a global voice that generalizes resistance and tension to the global order that reigns upon us all.

1 May - Reminder: Deadline for submission to Certain Days 2017 Calendar is May 15

Just a heads up. We know you are busy but the deadline for submissions for the 2017 Certain Days: Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar is approaching. Please do what you can to get us art or writings by May 15th.

MORE:

What: A call for art and article submissions on sustaining movements for the 2017 Certain Days: Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar

Deadline: May 15, 2016

The Certain Days: Freedom for Political Prisoners Calendar collective (www.certaindays.org) is releasing its 16th calendar in the Fall of 2016. Over the years, we've turned our attention to various themes: grassroots organizing, resisting repression, and visions of justice. The theme for 2017 is focused on what it takes to sustain our movements.

We are looking for 12 works of art and 12 short articles to feature in the calendar, which hangs in more than 2,000 homes, workplaces, prison cells, and community spaces around the world.

We encourage contributors to submit both new and existing work.

THEME GUIDELINES

Social justice movements face formidable challenges, from state repression to internal conflict to organizer burnout. Yet there are movements that manage to thrive and grow over time, welcoming new participants and contributing to ongoing struggles.

What do these sustained movements have in common? What does it take to keep on keepin' on, over many years and hurdles? What groups can we look to and learn from as we try to find ways to strengthen our work? What lessons can we draw from liberation movement history? How can we envision our work spanning several generations?

Artists - is there a visual way to represent sustained struggles over time? What visual images from movement history prompt us to engage with these questions? (Both new and archival works are welcome).

As one of our editors Herman Bell writes, "[We need to] review the way we, the progressive community, do our business: In other words, review how we organize, how we elicit support from other groups in support of our particular issue(s); what do we say to them, how do we foster stronger support from them and they from us."

We welcome both artwork and articles that explore this theme.

We encourage submissions from prisoners – please forward to any prison-based artists and writers.

FORMAT GUIDELINES

ARTICLES:

1. 500-600 words max. If you submit a longer piece, we will have to edit for length.
2. Please include a suggested title.

ART:

1. The calendar is 11" tall by 8.5" wide, so art with a 'portrait' orientation is preferred. Some pieces may be printed with a border, so it need not fit those dimensions exactly.
2. We are interested in a diversity of media (paintings, drawings, photographs, prints, computer-designed graphics, collage, etc).
3. The calendar is printed in colour and we prefer colour images.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES:

1. Send your submissions by May 15, 2016 to info@certaindays.org.
2. ARTISTS: Please send images smaller than 10 MB. You can send a low-res file as a submission, but if your piece is chosen, we will need a high-res version of it to print (at least 300 dpi preferably 600).
3. You may send as many submissions as you like.

Chosen artists and authors will receive a free copy of the calendar and promotional postcards.

Because the calendar is a fundraiser, we cannot offer money to contributors.

2 May - Solitary confinement is 'no touch' torture: Chelsea Manning in new op-ed

"I spent about nine months in an isolated cell behind a one-way mirror. It was cruel, degrading and inhumane." —Chelsea Manning

MORE:

by Chelsea E Manning (*The Guardian*)

Shortly after arriving at a makeshift military jail, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, in May 2010, I was placed into the black hole of solitary confinement for the first time. Within two weeks, I was contemplating suicide.

After a month on suicide watch, I was transferred back to US, to a tiny 6 x 8ft (roughly 2 x 2.5 meter) cell in a place that will haunt me for the rest of my life: the US Marine Corps Brig in Quantico, Virginia. I was held there for roughly nine months as a "prevention of injury" prisoner, a designation the Marine Corps and the Navy used to place me in highly restrictive solitary conditions without a psychiatrist's approval.

For 17 hours a day, I sat directly in front of at least two Marine Corps guards seated behind a one-way mirror. I was not allowed to lay down. I was not allowed to lean my back against the cell wall. I was not allowed to exercise. Sometimes, to keep from going crazy, I would stand up, walk around, or dance, as "dancing" was not considered exercise by the Marine Corps.

To pass the time, I counted the hundreds of holes between the steel bars in a grid pattern at the front of my empty cell. My eyes traced the gaps between the bricks on the wall. I looked at the rough patterns and stains on the concrete floor – including one that looked like a caricature grey alien, with large black eyes and no mouth, that was popular in the 1990s. I could hear the "drip drop drip" of a leaky pipe somewhere down the hall. I listened to the faint buzz of the fluorescent lights.

For brief periods, every other day or so, I was escorted by a team of at least three guards to an empty basketball court-sized area. There, I was shackled and walked around in circles or figure-eights for 20 minutes. I was not allowed to stand still, otherwise they would take me back to my cell.

I was only allowed a couple of hours of visitation each month to see my friends, family and lawyers, through a thick glass partition in a tiny 4 x 6ft room. My hands and feet were shackled the entire time. Federal agents installed recording equipment specifically to monitor my conversations, except with my lawyers.

The United Nations special rapporteur on torture, Juan Mendez, condemned my treatment as “cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment”, describing “the excessive and prolonged isolation” I was placed under for that period of time. However, he didn’t stop there. In a preface to the 2014 Spanish edition of the Sourcebook on Solitary Confinement, written by Méndez he strongly recommends against any use of solitary confinement beyond 15 days.

As Mendez explains:

Prolonged solitary confinement raises special concerns, because the risk of grave and irreparable harm to the detained person increases with the length of isolation and the uncertainty regarding its duration. In my public declarations on this theme, I have defined prolonged solitary confinement as any period in excess of 15 days. This definition reflects the fact that most of the scientific literature shows that, after 15 days, certain changes in brain functions occur and the harmful psychological effects of isolation can become irreversible.

Unfortunately, conditions similar to the ones I experienced in 2010-11 are hardly unusual for the estimated 80,000 to 100,000 inmates held in these conditions across the US every day.

In the time since my confinement at Quantico, public awareness of solitary confinement has improved by orders of magnitude. People all across the political spectrum – including some who have never been in solitary or known anyone who has – are now beginning to question whether this practice is a moral and ethical one. In June 2015, US supreme court justice Anthony Kennedy called the prison system “overlooked” and “misunderstood”, stating that he welcomes a case that would allow the court to review whether or not solitary confinement is cruel and unusual under the US constitution.

The evidence is overwhelming that it should be deemed as such: solitary confinement in the US is arbitrary, abused and unnecessary in many situations. It is cruel, degrading and inhumane, and is effectively a “no touch” torture. We should end the practice quickly and completely.

2 May - June 11, 2016: Against Maximum Security Prisons. Against Every Prison.

For June 11th, 2015, we emphasized transition in the struggle and in the lives of the prisoners we support. This year we’re focusing on a different kind of transition: the restructuring of the prison system and thus doubling down on opposition to Maximum Security, isolation, and Communications Management Units.

MORE:

High-security facilities are not new: for example, Communications Management Units isolated Daniel McGowan and Andy Stepanian for years. But now we are at a new juncture: there is both a fresh focus on the part of the authorities reorganizing prisons to maximize repression against long-term and combative prisoners, while simultaneously cutting costs. In response there has been a wave of resistance and revolt—in the streets and in the prisons. As this wave spreads organically, we feel impelled to contribute in support of our imprisoned friends and comrades.

Around the world, repression intensifies against anarchists, their comrades, and their families. The left-wing SYRIZA government in Greece continues the isolation of rebellious prisoners in the C-type maximum security prisons. The Spanish state attempts to criminalize anarchist solidarity through an “anti-terrorist” spectacle of raids, arrests, and show trials. Anarchists from Santiago to Kansas City face decades in prison for choosing the path of revolt and for their refusal to bow before pressure from the state. Everywhere we look: the state’s jaws clamp down on rebellion.

But all this cannot break our comrades or the spirit of our struggle. As Mónica Caballero and Francisco Solar are sentenced to twelve years in prison, anarchists respond to their persecution with smoke and shattered glass. As the Greek state levels its force against the families of the imprisoned comrades of the Conspiracy of Cells of Fire and condemns Nikos Maziotis to life in prison, fugitive comrade Pola Roupá attempts to hijack a helicopter to free the imprisoned fighters. As Osman Evcan and Eric King both fight the state’s attempts to starve them for their refusal to consume flesh, comrades mobilize to ensure that their demands are backed with acts of solidarity. As the Chilean state continues to arrest and imprison anarchists, an intransigent minority strikes back in vengeance. As the State of Ohio continues to restrict Sean Swain’s communications, those holding the controls find their names and addresses spread online. As the state constructs an “anti-terrorism” roundup in Belgium, the multiform struggle against prison society there continues, unflinching and defiant. As the United States prison system continues its brutal enforcement of white supremacy and the social liquidation of undesirables, prisons from Alabama to Nebraska face the flames of rebellion. Everywhere we look, the revolt against prison society deepens and spreads.

Increased Control Within Prison...

The movement towards absolute control within prisons is the state’s movement towards complete “security”: maximum and supermax security prisons, secure housing, isolation, control, and communication management units. In Spain, FIES; in Greece, C-type. Though they go by many names, they serve the same function. These institutions are an exaggeration of the tools and logic of prisons: complete isolation in small, windowless cells for 22-23 hours per day; restricted phone access; few, if any, write-outs. Non-contact visits means one might not touch another person for months or years. Guards, cameras, and mail censoring maintain constant surveillance. Erratic administrations and useless grievance procedures means pervasive uncertainty, indefinite punishment, and no recourse for one’s placement. Anarchist prisoner Sean Swain explains, “What you are experiencing is designed to be painful...to cause debility, dependence, and dread.” Greek prisoner Angeliki Spyropoulou wrote that “prison has always been built upon...submission of those who do not conform to the predefined standards of society and...domination aims at dissemination of fear.” This illuminates who these prisons are designed for.

Control units in the US are primarily populated by Muslim “extremists” (mostly young men entrapped by the FBI) and black and brown people labeled as gang members. There are also politically outspoken prisoners and rebellious “troublemakers.” What they have in common is that these are the people the state does not want communicating: with each other, or with the outside. Subversive communication and real relationships would be a threat to security. While in the US these control units are often justified by the threat of terrorist bogeyman, in other cases the motivations are more explicit. It is clear C-type prisons in Greece were created in response to combative anarchists, guerrillas, and other rebels.

While these facilities are intended to isolate and control rebellious populations, the inverse often results: instead of dampening the fires of rebellion, high security facilities spark powerful resistance. In 2013 30,000 California prisoners started an indefinite hunger strike followed by years of ongoing struggle, initiated by some prisoners confined to isolation in the maximum security Pelican Bay facility. They focused their demands on the intolerable conditions of the control unit, and their struggle contributed to minor but meaningful reforms to California’s procedures for solitary confinement. Isolation is now banned from federal juvenile facilities. Last year Greek prisoners engaged in a hunger strike for 48 days against the

creation of the C-type prisons, anti-terrorism laws, and forced DNA sampling, ending in renewed indications of government capitulation. And earlier this year Fabio Dusco (footnote/hyperlink: <http://325.nostate.net/?p=18924>) chose to reject the State's attempt at neutralization and to fight against the conditions of his detention. Sean Swain has seen some of the deepest and darkest parts of the ODRC, yet still he continues to fight, laughing in the face of his censors. In defiance of the state's attempt to silence and punish him, Marius continues to write and fight in defense of the earth, animals, and trans prisoners. In March at Holman prison, Alabama DOC's notorious high security facility, an uprising took place in which a guard and the warden were injured, prisoners temporarily took control of some spaces, and one participant declared, "We're tired of this shit, there's only one way to deal with it: tear the prison down." (footnote/hyperlink: <https://itsgoingdown.org/uprising-currently-underway-holman-prison-alabama/>)

...Increased control without prison

Even as governments around the world institute harsher forms of control within prisons, they spread glib platitudes about prison reform, community accountability, and the unmanageable size of prison populations. Prison reform has been in the air for several years now, due both to pressure from rebels and the resulting bad press, as well as an economic imperative: prisons are expensive and unwieldy, unfit for the lean, flexible new governmental and productive regime. Conservatives want to cut back spending, and the president has decided that prison is a human-interest issue. However, we know that the controlled shrinking of the prison system will not look like the liberation that some prison abolitionists dream of. Rather, it will advance a rationalization of control – cheaper, smaller prisons targeting the incorrigible, non-adaptive, and rebellious prisoners, alongside expanded surveillance and “smart” state intervention on the outside of the prison walls. Razor wire and guards are being replaced by GPS monitoring, strict probation requirements, “soft” policing, and privatized community security forces (footnote/link: <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/citizen-anti-crime-movement-afoot-in-seattles-neighborhoods/>)

While we can't deny our tenuous relief when daily conditions improve for those in prison, we remain deeply suspicious of these improvements. We know that the goal remains increasingly sinister social control, even if the techniques are softened or made more palatable. We know that these measures, while improving conditions for some, simply serve to justify the heaviest repression against others. The state separates the sheep from the goats, while the reformists look on silently. This world relies on imprisonment and social control, and it is only by fighting against this world and against control in all of its forms that we might grasp moments of freedom.

Long-term Imprisonment

We are opposed to prison in all of its forms, and we remain skeptical of dividing prisoners into “political” and others. June 11, however, is a specific day of solidarity with long term anarchist prisoners. By focusing on long-term imprisonment, we want to ensure that none of our comrades are forgotten, even if they've already been behind bars for decades. But when we speak about long-term imprisonment, we aren't making reference to a specific criteria, a length of sentence or extended limbo (for us, any day that anyone spends in prison is already too long). Rather, we want to bring light to those who've been identified by the state as the most guilty and intransigent, the ones who won't be first in line for a pardon as certain aspects of prison are phased out. Marius Mason, Marco Camenisch, Monica and Francisco, among others, act as reagents, by which we can test various proposals for addressing the prison system. Will such-and-such proposal lead to their release? The reformist proposals will leave the eco-arsonists, the anti-nuclear saboteurs, and the desecrators of cathedrals inside the prison walls, condemned to expanded maximum-security units.

Solidarity, local and networked

We have worked to spread information, inspiration, and decentralized solidarity with long-term anarchist prisoners. The existence of a diffuse network of support is vital to both durable aid to our imprisoned comrades and the growth of a subversive movement. It's deeply exciting that this network is not only

diffuse but multiform, with solidarity expressing itself in many forms – from widespread efforts to fundraise and support prisoners, to efforts to link them with ongoing struggles, to combative actions that continue the fight against domination and ecological destruction.

But this network can't only express itself in local forms without risking either isolation or a reliance on digital "communication." We want to experiment with new and flexible modes of convergence and conversation in order to revitalize the struggle and enrich our discussions. As *Avalanche* magazine puts it in their argument for a new anti-prison coordination:

"This international proposal doesn't aim at the creation of some organisation, but at the opening of spaces of exchange, of mutual knowledge and debate. We won't doubt this will permit a better knowledge of what is going on elsewhere, creating the conditions for interventions considered in the perspective of international solidarity and common struggle, to give birth to temporary coordination between different struggles and fights, to deepen the informality out of which, according to affinities and projects, create initiatives. In this way, through the mutual knowledge of the projects of struggle, this international proposal aims at stimulating "organisational occasions", not with the aim of a growth in quantity but of the quality of revolutionary intervention."

For these reasons among many others, we welcome the call for a convergence in Washington DC this June 11th, combining a demonstration against the Bureau of Prisons with an occasion for discussion and sharing of ideas (<https://fighttoxicprisons.wordpress.com/2016/03/18/convergence-in-support-of-eco-prisoners-against-toxic-prisons/>). We hope this will create new combinations of diffuse, local action with coordinated, regional and international activity. Against the attempted greenwashing of prison initiatives (footnote/hyperlink: <http://www.pugetsoundanarchists.org/node/100>), we know that prisons are fundamentally toxic to human life: both the social conditions that they sustain and create, and the literal toxins that litter the site of a newly proposed maximum security prison in Letcher County, KY. Once Capital finished stripping coal from mountaintops, the State moved in to build a prison on the ravaged landscape.

June 11: Every year, everywhere, until the prisons burn and our comrades walk free.

We hope that June 11 revitalizes solidarity for those comrades facing the longest sentences and builds momentum against the cages they're locked in. Recent struggles against the expansion of these cages continue to demonstrate the expansive possibilities of solidarity. In situations of prison construction, by weaving together locals, residents, and prisoners who would both be harmed by a new prison. Or, in the case of the hunger strikes against the new C-Type maximum security wings in Greece, by knitting together prisoners from different groups, outside radicals, and family members. The potential of subverting the state's plans for restructuring prisons opens another front in the struggle, beyond supporting individual comrades and organizing to help prison rebellions. These struggles are currently proliferating in the US, from the opposition to the new youth jail in Seattle (<http://www.pugetsoundanarchists.org/node/17>)_ or the construction of the ICE facility in Gary, Indiana (<http://fusion.net/story/241657/gary-indiana-immigrant-detention-center-activists/>), to the community fight against the maximum security facility in eastern Kentucky (<http://fighttoxicprisons.wordpress.com>). Let's link these experiences together in order to strengthen ourselves, whether we're inside or outside the existing prisons. Successfully challenging the restructuring of the prisons and the existence of the Maximum Security and Communications Management Units, particularly through the combined power of organizing inside and outside of the walls, is a clear step towards the power to destroy prisons and the society that requires them.

The struggle against prisons must take many forms. It must be both slow and steady and fast and unpredictable. Supporting imprisoned comrades requires diligence, patience, and time to grow real relationships. Our imprisoned comrades remain in the struggle, and we will continue to support them and

conspire with them in whatever ways we can. But we also want to relentlessly attack the infrastructure and logic of prisons, to become complicit with struggles inside and against prisons. June 11 can be many things: a fundraiser; an opportunity to spread the word and raise awareness; a chance to connect personally with longterm anarchist prisoners via letter or phone; an intervention to begin struggling determinedly against a prison construction project; an attack; a chance to find a crack in the structure of prison society and exploit it.

Whether by yourself or with a hundred comrades, we hope that you take action this June 11: against prisons, and in solidarity with long term anarchist prisoners. Thank you for all the solidarity you show, on June 11th or any day. It means everything.

3 May - Hearing Update: Joseph sentenced to 2 years in prison

On the morning of May 2, in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of California, Joseph Buddenberg was sentenced to two years in federal prison for Conspiracy to Violate the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act.

MORE:

The sentencing follows his signing a non-cooperating plea agreement in which he plead guilty to conspiring to free thousands of animals from fur farms throughout the U.S. and to cause damage to businesses associated with the fur industry.

The releasing of animals from fur farms is a tactic that has been used for decades to give animals who live confined in filthy barren cages and await a nightmarish death a chance to run and feel the earth beneath their feet. Mink who are set free from fur farms are able to live in the wild, and research studies have shown that mink are able to adapt to new environments, reproduce with wild mink, and survive even if descended from generations of captive mink. Additionally, many fur farms have shut down as a result of mink being released, which saves many future generations of mink from being caged and killed.

The potential financial damage of freeing animals to the fur industry explains the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act. The AETA is a piece of legislation that criminalizes—as terrorism—acts taken to disrupt or cause economic damage to an animal enterprise. The government uses the word “terrorism” wherever it has a need to stir up public fear, and this landscape of manipulable language set the stage for the word to be applied to acts that threaten animal industry profits. The American Legislative Exchange Council (a group that includes corporate executives who are part of the agriculture, pharmaceutical, and other industries that profit from animal use) seized this opportunity and wrote the AETA as a piece of model legislation that it passed off to Congress—and thereby the corporations that are invested in animal use were able to intertwine acts of saving animals with terrorism.

“Today’s sentencing must be understood in the context of the complete illegitimacy of the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act,” said Rachel Meeropol, senior staff attorney at the Center for Constitutional Rights, and the lead lawyer on several constitutional challenges to the law. “This is a law bought and paid for by corporations that profit from the exploitation of animals, in the service of nothing but their own bottom line. Prosecuting non-violent liberation of animals as ‘terrorism’ is a transparent attempt to silence an entire movement. The AETA violates fundamental constitutional principles of free speech and due process, and we will continue to challenge it wherever it is used. ”

Buddenberg and his co-defendant Nicole Kissane were indicted under the AETA last July. Earlier this year, both signed non-cooperating plea agreements; Kissane’s sentencing hearing is scheduled for June.

3 May - Book Reviews April 2016 by Marius Mason

A great way to connect with Marius – read the books he’s been reading and write him your thoughts.

MORE:

Angels with Dirty Faces by Walidah Imarisha. An amazing in depth personal interview of two politicized (but not political) prisoners who are hard cases to deal with as prison abolitionists. Ms. Imarisha does not shrink from asking the toughest questions and bravely goes into the grey area. She also compares this uneasy territory with how we view rape and sexual assault by talking about her own experiences seeking accountability and healing and restoration as opposed to punishment and isolation. It’s a brave book; she’s a great writer.

We Are Your Sons (about Rosenberg trial and their children’s lives). I am always so grateful to the Rosenberg Children’s Fund that has helped my kids come visit me here. The book was full of their letters, great investigative history, strong observations about correlations between times in this country’s history where hysteria won out over reason and humanity. The book is a loving tribute to their parents, but you can see through the lives of their children what courage and values were instilled, even if their time was so cruelly cut short.

The New American Revolution by Grace Lee Boggs, a Detroit native and powerhouse. Her project, Detroit Summer, is an immense, intergenerational and interracial collaboration that has built a stronger community in the city and helped a lot of people reconnect. The book sets out to connect the vision of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. to the present problems of unemployment, discrimination and food insecurity. Interesting essays on history and shifting the paradigm from a former dependence on a centralized authority (whether corporate or governmental) to a grassroots democratic decision-making community that seeks to identify real needs and provide local solutions to that. Ms. Boggs is so clearly motivated by genuine love and hope, her words are insightful and a motivation to action. She passed just recently, but her legacy, her life’s work, will continue to be celebrated.

Melting Away: A 10 Year Journey Between the Poles by Camille Seaman. What a beautiful and heartbreaking book, one that I wish I could send all my friends... rare view in photos of the changes caused by global warming at the poles— and of the harsh and magical light and beauty of these extreme places at the tips of the world. Ms. Seaman has made such a sacrifice in her life to bring this experience to the rest of the world. She movingly and eloquently writes about her own history and how she was taught by her Native grandfather that the water that makes up our bodies is always cycling into and out of the world around us— that we are literally part of the world and it is part of us. She has overcome such personal pain and gone on this dangerous quest to bring back something priceless, real wisdom and a message we need to hear. Please read this book.

7 May - Casey Brezik Fundraiser for College Classes

Casey Brezik is trying to get an associate’s degree between now and his release date in 2020 (or get as much accomplished toward that goal as possible).

MORE:

Casey plans on taking correspondence courses from prison to meet this goal. His family is covering a portion of the costs associated with his education, but he needs some help covering the gap.

Below is a list of fundraising goals Casey is asking for help with. The correspondence courses listed are sequential, and the first one begins in January. So our initial goal is to raise around \$1,026.00 between now and January so that Casey can enroll in Math 1550 through LSU. The remainder of the funds can be

gathered slowly over time as Casey works through the courses, so although these numbers seem kind of high, we have some time.

1. Calculus textbook (\$125.00) *Met by ACAB Fest KC
2. Typewriter (\$300.00)
3. Correspondence courses through LSU:
 - Math 1550 Analytic Geometry & Calculus 1 (\$1,026.00) 5 hrs
 - Math 1552 Analytic Geometry & Calculus 2 (\$827.00) 4 hrs
 - Math 2057 Multidimensional Calculus (\$619.00) 3 hrs
 - Math 2090 Differential Equations & Linear Algebra (\$827.00) 4 hrs
 - Math 3355 Probability (\$619.00) 4 hrs
 - Textbooks and fees for above courses (\$580.00)
4. 3 months rent estimate (\$1500.00)

“This is to provide me with a place to heal and get myself together once released from this shit hole. I know I’m going to need space to think and adjust at my own pace. I’m also adaptable, so I’ll make it with or without. It would just be helpful.”

If you would like to donate to Casey’s fundraising goals, you can send him money via the Missouri Department of Corrections <http://doc.mo.gov/DAI/Money_Transfer.php> and their outsourced inmate money transfer provider, Access Corrections. Or, if you would like to send a money order (which can be relatively anonymous) you can write to Casey and ask him to send you a deposit slip.

19 May - Oscar López Rivera in Brooklyn

WHAT: Cultural Presentation

WHEN: 5:00-7:00pm, Thursday May 19, 2016

WHERE: 9 Graham Avenue Bushwick, Brooklyn 11206 (J/M/Z trains to Flushing Avenue stop)

COST: FREE

MORE:

Who is Oscar López Rivera? Why is he in jail? Why is he called a political prisoner? Why are so many people demanding his release? Why is supporting his release so controversial?

Join us as we answer these questions and more! All are welcome at this conversation and cultural presentation.

Poetry by Rafael Landron and Angel Martinez.

Presentation by Benjamin Ramos Rosado.

21 May - The Hydra we Face: A benefit for the CLDC

WHAT: Civil Liberties Defense Center Fundraiser

WHEN: 7:00-11:00pm, Saturday, May 21 2016

WHERE: Brooklyn Commons - 388 Atlantic Avenue (Between Bond and Hoyt Streets)

COST: \$10

MORE:

Come hear from friends fighting the repression of eco, animal liberation & and social justice activists in the Pacific Northwest, Buffalo and in America's prisons. We will also hear what people are doing to fight back against this via the Freedom of Information Act, proactive lawsuits and more.

with:

- Lauren Regan, Executive Director, Civil Liberties Defense Center (Eugene, OR). <http://cldc.org>
- Leslie James Pickering, owner, Burning Books (Buffalo, NY), press officer, Earth Liberation Front Press office. <http://burningbooksbuffalo.com>
- Rachel Meeropol, Staff Attorney, Center for Constitutional Rights. <http://ccrjustice.org>

The Commons has a wonderful cafe and bar which features organic/fair trade coffee, beer, wine, non-alcoholic drinks, dessert and more. Please come on an empty stomach and support the Commons!

This event takes place during the Left Forum which is happening at John Jay College 5.20-5.22
<http://www.leftforum.org>

Presentations:

Lauren Regan will provide case examples, tips, and traps regarding government and corporate surveillance of climate activists and frontline communities, their campaigns, and their lawyers, and why everyone needs to take security issues seriously to be a serious activist, advocate or attorney.

Rachel Meeropol will discuss her legal challenges to the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, which allows for the prosecution of non-violent property damage as a federal crime of terrorism, as well as the suppression of dissent within the federal bureau of prisons, where animal rights and environmental activists are singled out post-conviction, along with other unpopular prisoners, for heightened restrictions and surveillance.

Leslie James Pickering highlights two decades of activism through secret files pried loose from the FBI. From living under federal surveillance to being targeted by informants to supporting underground liberation movements, this presentation offers a rare glimpse into maintaining the struggle in spite of repression.

Directions:

Hoyt-Schermerhorn: A, C and G

Bergen Street: F

Atlantic Avenue - Barclay Center: B, M, Q, R, 2, 3, 4 and 5,

Flatbush Avenue: LIRR; B63 and B65