

Arts Organizing Tips for Mobilization & Actions

Adapted from a document prepared by David Solnit, 350 US Arts Organizer

KEY QUESTION FOR PLANNING

- What is the campaign strategy and goals?
- Who are we trying to reach or pressure?
- What are the goals of the mobilization?
- What is planned so far?
- What, when, where, who is participating and who is planning and making decisions?
- What different groups and communities are involved?
- Have organizers agreed to any core messages and narratives yet?
- What arts elements —visuals, movement, music do we know will be there or are available?

ARTS ELEMENTS

Think about all the arts elements of the action:

VISUAL

- What do we look like?
- How are we physically positioned?
- Group photo?
- What are we wearing?
- What are we holding?
- What are our visuals?

SOUND

- What do we sound like?
- Song, chant, music, percussion instruments, noisemakers, amplification, call and response?

MOVEMENT

- How do we move as individuals?
- How do we move as a Group? Choreography, dance, theater, procession, formations?

CONSIDERATIONS

PARTICIPATION

- How will people participate? With our bodies, our voices, etc

LOCATION

- Where will be?
- What is the significance, visual, design and size of the location/s?
- How can we use it/them most powerfully?

STORY

- What is/are our story/stories?
- How can we communicate it/them in various ways?

UNIFYING VISUALS; COMMON VISUAL ELEMENTS

Choosing common key visual elements - colours, images, words or phrases to use when creating our banners, flags, signs, posters, and art - unifies and amplifies our action. Guide participants to integrate these elements into their design.

UNIFY

- Participants will feel connected to each other and to the larger movement, even if they are in different towns and cities.

AMPLIFY

- Make our communities, the public and media recognize that many diverse actions and locations are all part of something bigger.
- Make our movement and mobilizations visually recognizable.

COMMON VISUAL ELEMENTS

COLOUR

- Choose a key colour and a secondary colour that we can encourage use of in visuals, art, t-shirts, etc.

WORDS

- Are there key words or phrases that capture the spirit and messages of our movement?
- Perhaps focus on key lyrics from songs, like "Everyone's got a right to live."

IMAGES

- Are there some simple powerful and iconic symbols or images that could be used widely?
 - The image of the Thunderbird Woman has been widely used in the Standing Rock campaign against the Dakota Access Pipeline.
 - The Sunflower has become a symbol and common image of the climate justice movement.
 - Tomato bucket and tomato signs have become common visual images of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers campaign for farm workers' justice in Florida.

ART PLAN

VISUALS

- What do we want to have?
- How will it all look (sketch?)
- What is already made?
- What do we want to make—how many, what size, color, image/message.

MAKING

- Hold an Art Build to make what we want?
- Where? When? Who? What's needed?

STORING

- Where will our art live until the event?
- After the event?

MOVING

- How will it get moved to the event?
- From the event?

ART COORDINATION AT EVENT

- Who will unload, assemble, recruit and hand out, steward (take care of and keep an eye on), repair, collect, load?

LOOKING GOOD

- Would it help to rehearse holding and moving with the visuals before or at the beginning of the event?