ON SOLIDARITY: THE ART OF DOING IT OURSELVES

by

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MASTER OF FINE ARTS

ATHENS, GA
On Solidarity: The Art of Doing it Ourselves

by

COURTNEY MCCRACKEN

Approved:

Mary Pearse, Major Professor

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“I went from being an artist who makes things, to being an artist who makes things happen.”

— Jeremy Deller

“I don’t want an art that points at a thing, I want an art that is the thing.”

— Tania Bruguera

PREFACE

My creative practice lies somewhere between art and organizing. I use the phrase “creative practice” here to distinguish from the production of art objects, and to instead focus on the application of ideas or methods. Within the movement of socially engaged art, I apply artistic methods and strategies to create or disrupt social forms. Like most social practice artists, there was a point where I digressed from “making things”, to “making things happen” (Thompson 17). It is under this guise that I confront issues of social and ecological sustainability without metaphor, but in action. Inside the studio I develop systems of reuse and non-waste, while outside the studio I work to encourage creative civic engagement and broaden social imagination. Specifically, I am on the board of the slow fashion project, Georgia Sewn, as well as the co-founder of the free learning network, Athens Free School; two major ongoing social projects I will be explaining in the following pages.
I. MATERIAL CULTURE & CREATIVITY

“What makes us feel liberated is not total freedom, but rather living in a set of limitations that we have created and prescribed for ourselves”

— Andrea Zittel

There isn’t a conversation with my friend Lindsay that we don’t bring up our relationships with material possessions. We are obsessed by our habits of collecting, but the manner in which we collect is on opposite ends of a spectrum. Lindsay collects or salvages all thing that cross her path that show the slightest prospect of being useful. There is a constant flow of found materials making their way in and out of her life. Filling her home with vibrant or uncanny objects or left behind at a Sunday’s brunch. I on the other hand, have an extreme filter of what I acquire. I had the great privilege of being raised on a boat as a adolescent where we were limited to a small vessel of possessions [figure 1]. Everything we owned had to have been of immediate and regular use, and often a contained artifact had not one, but many uses. I have fond memories of our dinning/ kitchen / living room table and it’s numerous transformations. It could unfold to become bigger, slide down to become shorter, and covered with cushions for a temporary bed with the adjacent bench that was, itself, doubling as storage space [figure 2]. I have continued to practice these habits over the years and although they contrast greatly from Lindsay’s, we both claim that they allow us to feel equally creative and liberated. Considering the differences in approach, both strategies are rooted in values of non-waste, environmentalism, and resourcefulness.
I agree with artist Andrea Zittel that “What makes us feel liberated is not total freedom, but rather living in a set of limitations that we have created and prescribed for ourselves” (Morsiani 14). As an extension, I would go as far to say that limitations produce creativity. I think it is important here to separate creativity (lowercase) from Creativity (uppercase) and acknowledge myths that have been corroding at the concept for two reasons. First, there is the idea that “creative” is a type of person and that there also exists the “non-creative” person (Kelley and Kelley, 2011). And second, that creativity is a product, for example an artwork, a poem, a painting, and so on. I attribute this isolation to our cultural view of the artist since “artist as celebrity” or “artist as genius” that led to the objectification of creativity and the idea that an Artist or a Creative person is gifted, even destined, to create works of art (Runco 2-3). There is no clear definition of creativity, but we can proscribe traits of agency: It is divergent, it is comfortable with ambiguity, and it is rebellious, a trait least favored by our educational systems (Westby 8). Consumer culture relies on the understanding that we “need” something and that we can’t get it ourselves, making the isolation of creativity a convenient narrative to capitalize on talent. Mark Fisher declares in his book Capitalist Realism, “all that is solid melts into PR, and late capitalism is defined at least as much by this ubiquitous tendency towards PR-production as it is by the imposition of market mechanisms” (Fisher 44). When we look outside of this media entanglement, we can see that creativity can in fact mean cooking breakfast from an empty pantry or fixing a leak with a wad of bubble gum.

I have built up these concepts to say, it is my belief that through a culture of consumerism we have been learned out of creativity. I acknowledge that creativity takes many faces and classism must be taken into account as well, but on a basic level, we have lost cre-
ative muscles that have allowed us to improvise with simple tools or artifacts. For example, the impulse to use a chair as a step stool or a rock as a hammer. There is a lack of motivation to repair or improvise when a temporary solution is quickly bought through the global marketplace for a handful of change. And in consequence, we have become more wasteful than ever.

It is along these sentiments that I began the project *Improvisations with Rope*. Leading up to this point, my art practice had been taking a major shift. My early work had been in criticism or concern for materialism and the lust of domestic property [figure 3]. But as I accumulated these object based sculptures I felt discontent with their lifespan and my own attachments to them. As if I was participating in the very thing I had critiqued. My work had always been an expression of my personal philosophies and I felt it would be productive to instead use my practice as a platform to search for alternatives within a consumer culture. I took inspiration from my childhood and began exploring simple tools of hybrid function; a tea infuser that could double as a brooch [figure 4], a corded necklace that was also a measuring device.

The more I stripped down these artifacts of their specificity I found myself contemplating the vast utility and implications of rope. As opposed to a can opener, a tool defined by the one task it is meant to perform, a piece of rope can be defined only by its character, its construction, its weight or length. Like a rock can be a hammer or a log can be a seat, neither use takes claim to a definition. A rope is a grouping of fibers that are twisted or braided together into a larger and stronger form. The Egyptians moved their heavy stones; the Europeans harbored their massive ships; a scavenger ties a sling to carry a bundle of sticks. Rope can en-
able, or it can constrain. It can drag, bind, carry, lift. It is an extension of the hand, a lifeless object that's purpose is limited only by the imagination of the user.

My work with rope reflects the dichotomy but blurs the distinction between art object and use object. Conceptually, how I think about this intersection is captured in the phrase “material culture”. Beth Preston explains that material culture covers artifacts ranging from artworks to instruments which she notes was the original meaning of the Greek term techne:

The dual narrowing of the focus on philosophy of technology is problematic: first, because the distinctions between art and instrument (or between the practical and the aesthetic/contemplative—however you wish to formulate it) that drives the partitioning of the field between aesthetics and philosophy of technology is widely acknowledged to be specific to recent Western intellectual history. It was all techne to the ancient Greeks, for instance, and the distinction is absent from non-Western cultures, as well. (Preston 3)

The handmade rope included in the installation embodies an esthetic value through aspects such as color and composition while also representing various functions of rope as a utility object.

It was at the same time that I had been limiting my studio practice to exclusively found and reused materials. So logically, I made my own rope-making machine [figure 5]. Case in point, limitations producing creativity. I scoured the internet learning about medieval rope-making techniques and 21st century DIY versions via Youtube; the closest thing to democratic education. After some trial and error, I had a working machine made from reused wood and rigged hardware. I found spools of fibers that local weavers had discarded at donations cen-
ters as my primary rope-making material, and any waste I produced in the process I set aside for future projects. I consider my innovations in closed loop systems and reuse to be directly influenced by my environment since moving to Athens, Georgia. Here there is a strong sense of agriculture, natural resources, and artisans. I have been inspired by the ‘added value’ operations of local farms driven by sustainability such as Three Porch Farms, holistic construction strategies of the Athens Material Reuse Program, and the vibrant local slow fashion movement.

_Improvisations with Rope_ [figure 6] is represented in the gallery as both evidence of improvisational exercises, and an invitation to join in the imaginative labor or wielding rope. Upon entering the space, one is confronted with a regal mass of handmade rope, vertically hung in assorted colors of muted greens, blush pinks and ochers. Discrete wooden objects scatter the surrounding wall with various activations of rope: a bundle of sticks, a knotted doorknob, a temporary shelf, rope ends recycled as tassels. Each material within the installation was salvaged or resused. The forms accompanying the rope are made from scrap pieces of wood, and even the paint was found as abandoned house paint from a friend’s basement. To the left holds an iPad featuring a Tumblr site [figure 7] that keeps record of ongoing improvisations that I perform or see being performed, as well as those submitted from participants. I consider this to be an accompaniment to the installation that bridges the work into the social while still, acknowledging the power of objects as communicators. The forms on the wall are compelling and poetic, but perhaps the nature of the mundane tasks collected online are more representative of a true act of improvisation. Aside from this project’s advocacy for utility and resourcefulness, the visual motif of rope continues to be a useful metaphor
for my social practice as a connector and community organizer. I am constantly finding and employing connections to resources and nurturing networks of cooperation.

II. SUSTAINABILITY

While living in Athens, my commitment to sustainable practices led me very organically to the local slow fashion movement. I made my first articles of clothing from recycled curtains and found fabrics in 2014 [figure 8], and I was surprised by the empowerment I felt from making functional clothing that embodied so much of what I believed in. It was a jumping off point to explore DIY ethics and to start the conversations that I was interested in having about low-impact environmentalism and consumer goods.

A brief background on DIY culture: Today, our most visible associations with DIY, or ‘do-it-yourself’ are the the home improvement aisles of major corporations such as Walmart or Lowes. But before its corporate appropriation, DIY culture was a thriving expression of community and anti-capitalism. Permeating the DIY punk music scene, roots of anarchist thought and practices can be traced through various groups such as the Situationist International formed in 1957, feminist and lesbian record labels of the 60s and 70s, and the alienation felt by youths of the time seeking alternatives to consumer culture (Mattern 40). The phrase “do-it-yourself” was supposedly uttered by English artist, journalist, and activist, Caroline Coon in 1976, and spelled out further by fanzine writer Mark Perry telling punk fans to “take their destinies into their own hands” and “go out and start your own fanzines”(Mattern 40). Although the DIY production aesthetic of cut-n-paste, photocopied collages, and typewritten texts were popularized by the 1970’s punk music subculture, self published
fanzines were being made since the 1930s to communicate underground culture and disseminate information (Triggs 69).

DIY cultures of resourcefulness are certainly a good way to be sustainable, but ideas of sustainability are much more broad and often misunderstood, adding to the confusion of overused terms like “green” and “eco-friendly”. Simply meaning the ability to sustain, one might not directly make the association with the ecological agenda to sustain the earth’s natural resources. After the 2013 collapse of the Rana Plaza Factory in Bangladesh, killing 1,129 garment workers, a spotlight was shone onto fast fashion merchandisers, bringing attention to unsafe work environments and the undeniable impacts on climate change. Shortly after, we see companies like H&M, one of the worlds largest fast fashion retailers, begin to market toward sustainable fashion by committing a small percentage of the companies cotton to more sustainable sources, a relatively small gesture for a company that produces nearly 600 million garments a year (S. Whitehead et al.). Coined as a phrase in 2007 by fashion and sustainability pioneer Kate Fletcher, “sustainable fashion” has been a cause to rally behind. However, fashion and sustainability are fundamentally opposed concepts. The term “fashion” is supportive of a culture industry led by trends. Trends that phase in and out of style over time, and some quicker than others. What used to be a fashion turnover of four seasons a year is now commonplace as 25 micro-seasons in stores like Forever 21 (S. Whitehead et al.). No matter how much organic cotton we use or garment workers who are paid fair wages, Americans currently consume “five times as much as they did in 1980” (Cline et al.) Even with only 15% of the the 12 million tons of textile waste making it to recycling facilities, donation centers are overwhelmed, and typically can only manage to put 20% of what they receive on
the shelves for customers (Cline et al.). The fact of the matter is, we need a cultural change to consume less and make use of what we have.

I began collaborating with Sanni Baumgartner, the owner of downtown sustainable fashion boutique, Community, in 2015 over an educational zine on sustainable fashion [figure 9]. They provide redesigned vintage clothing, sustainably sourced local designer names, educational programing, and alterations. They are also the hub of a vibrant slow fashion movement through the Athens Fashion Collective. After many conversations with our network of activists and countless hours of research, I designed a distributable zine that observed the life of a traditional garment from seed to landfill, as well as various sustainable alternatives. While making myself an expert of sorts in the field, our collaboration naturally led to my involvement on the board of Georgia Sewn, the first annual local garment industry expo. The goal was to connect local designers to local manufacturers and sourcing for the pursuit of transparency, sustainability, and cooperation.

The Georgia Sewn Expo took place in January of 2016 and included vendors, workshops, speakers, a documentary screening, a runway show of Georgia designers from Athens, Atlanta, and Savannah, and an exhibition that I curated to visualize moments in the life of a garment as well as current innovation [figure 10]. We were honored to have Natalie Chanin, the founder of the highly influential sustainable clothing line Alabama Chanin as a speaker and contributor to the exhibition. Set inside the industrial space of One Press Place, a former newspaper plant in downtown Athens, the exhibition lived at the start of the runway featuring three free standing sculptures by myself and three collaborators, a series of photographs by Rinne Allen, and textile innovations by Erin Geagon.
The three collaborative sculptures I created with Ry McCullough, Zipporah Thompson, and Lindsay Pennington represent three stages within the life cycle of a garment: agriculture, reuse, and waste. With a focal point in materiality, each work was made from 100% regionally sourced or reclaimed materials, making visible the largely invisible journey of the clothes we wear and drawing attention to both the destructive realities and sustainable alternatives of our fashion culture. Starting in the foreground, the sculpture entitled Carolina [figure 11] was made in collaboration with local fiber artist, Zipporah Thompson, from the flees an Icelandic sheep by the name of Carolina at Fiddlehead Hollow Fiber Farm just 20 minutes away in Colbert, GA. Two masses of wool suspend in crocheted nets from a triangular framework of wood and handmade rope, feeling light and airy with the aroma of lanolin, the natural wool grease produced by sheep. The neighboring sculpture, End Knot [figure 12], made in collaboration with artist and paper maker, Ry McCullough, is also supported by temporary structures of rope and wood as three descending slopes. A large paper patchwork floats horizontally from repurposed organic cotton clothing scraps from Alabama Chanin, and remnants of thread from the rope making process peeking out and showing through transparent sheets of paper. As a counterpart, the six foot vertical stack of clothing made with Lindsay Pennington stands ominously in the corner [figure 13]. Titled 68 lbs., this work represents the amount of clothing the average American discards in one year. All sourced material were donated from Habitat for Humanity; only a small portion of what was already headed to the recycling facility due to overcapacity.

Also included in the exhibition, photographs by local photographer and Athens native, Rinne Allen, document the process of Alabama Chanin’s organic cotton project, Field to Fiber.
In 2012, the designers at Alabama Chanin & Billy Reid decided to grow their own cotton in a 7 acre field near their hometown of Florence, Alabama. Everyone told them it wouldn’t work, but, 6 months later after hundreds of hours of weeding, watering, and watching, 150 of their friends and family descended on the field on a sunny November day to hand-harvest the cotton. Over the next two years, the harvested cotton was then ginned, spun into yarn, woven into fabric and then finally sewn into finished garments.

On the adjacent wall held woven textile innovations by Erin Geagon. Through Geagon’s experience with the US textile manufacturing industry, she came to understand the enormous amount of waste generated during the manufacturing process, from short ends of yarn to second quality fabrics that never see commercial use. These studies are among the first steps in her research of salvage and reuse processes in order to yield effective artistic utility for some of our most common waste. Woven into cotton weft are compelling materials such as manufacturing waste, strips of plastic grocery bags, magnetic polyester tapes reclaimed from old cassettes, and perhaps most impressively, hand harvested, processes, and spun kudzu, an unwelcome invasive species that blankets the region.

Needless to say, the event was a success, receiving praise in numerous press releases from start to finish. The town was buzzing for weeks with conversations around sustainability, the local garment industry, and choices around how to contribute to the cause. With the recent opening of fast fashion retailer, Urban Outfitters in downtown Athens, I would say we had an impact on the forming of opinions about their arrival.
III. SOLIDARITY

Just a couple months earlier, in November of 2015, I was simultaneously establishing Athens Free School with my co-conspirators, Logan Shirah and Lulu Lacy. Athens Free School is a free learning network by and for the community centered around compassion, autonomy, and play. Anyone can take a class and anyone can teach a class as long as it is absolutely free. Classes are held in public spaces or more often peoples homes. Subjects range anywhere from practical skills such as bread baking and bee keeping, to discussions on theories of anarchism, to creative techniques like paper marbling and mask making, just to name a few. Each month we collect teacher submissions through our email and Facebook page and organize the calendar in a DIY fashion to then be distributed around town and online [figure 14].

Leading up to this point, I had been experimenting with bartering and alternative solidarity economies. During a residency in the Painting and Drawing Area of the Lamar Dodd School of Art, I used the space to set up a Barter Shop [figure 15] in which I offered goods and services in exchange for a negotiated barter. I gave sewing lessons [figure 16] for commissioned illustrations, jewelry for homemade soup, harvested muscadines for photography services, and a collection of handmade rope for tool rental. Throughout the month long experiment I had multiple encounters of people coming into the shop saying, “I like what you have to offer, but I have nothing to give in exchange.” Over the course of a conversation or after a nights rest, almost everyone returned discovering that they did indeed have something to offer; whether it was a skill unassociated with their career path, like baking or plant propagation, or a sewing serger one could lend out for a couple weeks. Out of all the bartering exchanges, the most fruitful creation perhaps was in the personal discovery of ones own resources. Along these sentiments, I relate to the ideas of Joseph Beuys and his notion of “social sculpture”; that as a painter manipulates paint, one can also manipulate and create forms out of social environments:
My objects are... stimulants for the transformation of the idea of sculpture...or of art in general. They should provoke thoughts about what sculpture can be and how the concept of sculpting can be extended to the invisible materials used by everyone./THINKING FORMS – how we mold our thoughts or / SPOKEN FORMS – how we shape our thoughts into words or / SOCIAL SCULPTURE – how we mold and shape the world in which we live: SCULPTURE AS AN EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS; EVERYONE AS AN ARTIST. / That is why the nature of my sculpture is not fixed and finished. Processes continue in most of them: chemical reactions, fermentations, color changes, decay, drying up. Everything is in a STATE OF CHANGE. (Quoted in Kuoni 19)

Gleaning from the significance of the generated discourse throughout the experiment, the resulting exhibition, Knot for Sale, presented pieces of handmade rope in exchange for the imaginative labor of filling out a barter profile [figure 17]. Participants listed the goods and services that they have and want and left them in the gallery for display. At the end of the week, the result was a version of a community portrait. I ask myself, what if next to the change we hold in our pockets we also hold another form of currency, a currency that we define ourselves and negotiate terms of value that are relevant to us.

By the nature of performing an experiment, at the conclusion of the Barter Shop I came to some surprising discoveries that gave me suspicions about the underlying narrative of bartering. In the book Debt: The First 5000 Years, David Grabber demystifies the myth of bartering as a romantic past time and reveals the unrealistic feasibility of the "double coincidence of wants". That is, "to effect a trade, I need not only have to find someone who has what I want, but that person must also want what I have" (Graeber 23). In effect, I developed skepticism of the bartering format as a way of relying
on similar marketing strategies to capitalism rather than supporting a desire for mutual aid, a value perhaps more successfully supported within structures of gift economy. In fact, some of the more successful barter exchanges were perhaps more appropriately framed as gifts. Through gift economy, rather than capitalizing on profit that collects in isolated pools, a gift flows as a current, finding reciprocity and abundance in silent gratitude (Hyde 15-23). Appropriately so, the closing reception for the bartering project doubled as the event of the first Athens Free School workshop. In the gallery among the completed barter profiles, we held a natural fabric dying class [figure 18] taught by Ziperah Thompson and a round table discussion on radical alternative education models by the Athens Free School founders.

The simple format of Athens Free School is nothing new. Co-founder, Logan Shirah, had been a student of Atlanta Free School a couple years back; just a small expression of a long lineage of free schools and alternative education models dating back to social radical groups of the 60s. Although student enrollments have traditionally been small in number, “in terms of visibility, public impact, and symbolic significance, the importance of this new schools movement is relatively great” (Graubard 5). Over the course of 6 months, as we have grown in teachers and students, I have seen an increased urgency toward self empowerment, cooperation, and the advocation of free local resources. With the support of the community and reinforcement by the press, it is as if the talent and willingness was already present, and we just created a structure for agency.
IV. SOCIAL PRACTICE

“What Strikes me is the fact that in our society, art has become something which is related only to objects and not to individuals, or to life. That art is something which is specialized or which is done by experts who are artists. But couldn’t everyone’s life become a work of art? Why should the lamp or house be an object, but not our life?”

— Michel Foucault

“As Duchamp placed the urinal in the museum at the beginning of the twentieth century, perhaps it should be no surprise to find artists returning it to the real at the dawn of the twenty-first.”

— Nato Thompson, Living as Form

When I am asked to describe my art practice, I am often met with questions concerning my medium of choice, which immediately puts me in a place of defense in order to describe the nuances of sociality and my intentions in sustainability. At times I am matched with the confusion of artistic relevance, and I have struggled to communicate merit through a western trajectory of art history referencing Duchamp’s “Ready-mades”, Situationism, Fluxus, Relational Aesthetics, Rirkrit Tiravanija serving Pad Thai, or Thomas Hirschhorn’s temporary monument. As difficult as it is to describe the growing and elusive movement of socially engaged art, a linear narrative through the perspective of art is narrow and problematic. It fails to communicate the complexities of a discipline that expands beyond traditional studio arts and into life itself. Nato Thompson, the director of Creative Time, articulated in Living as Form that “these cultural practices indicate a new social order — ways of life that emphasize participation, challenge power, and span disciplines ranging from urban planning and
community work to theater and the visual arts” (Thompson 19). In the book *Artificial Hells*, Claire Bishop expresses criticism in its inability to stand up to the criteria of aesthetic judgement in that “Emphasis is shifted away from the disruptive specificity of a given work and onto a generalized set of moral precepts” (Bishop 181). Since “art is no longer the primary influence for culture” Thompson suggests it is the agenda of social practice artists to motivate people to stop asking “What is art?” and to start asking “What is life” (Thompson 19,33).

With respect to its avant-garde predecessors, it is no surprise that social practice has been met with skepticism, a validating and necessary factor in moments of change. French philosopher Jacques Ellul argues that ultimately there is no distinction between technique and technology because for him the essence of *techne* lies principally in functionality and instrumentalization (Ellul 4). For example, a hammer functions to drive in a nail, but under the same principle of technique, hammering with a rock achieves the same goal. Likewise, instruments of sociality and the gathering of people can be applied for the same function performed by a work of art. This is because aesthetic experience largely occurs in the minds of spectators as they consider a range of ideas that the art evokes. Just as the works in Georgia Sewn raised questions of sustainability, consumption, and waste, so too did the larger social method of organizing people create discussion around cultures of the fashion industry.

Socially Engaged Art may not be easily traced through areas of discipline but there is cause to find order between methodologies such as sustainability, environmentalism, education, gentrification, race, gender, etc. Artists have been seeking ways to merge art and life since the twentieth century, and it comes as no surprise to see social practice artists following their avant-garde predecessors by breaking out of the representational white cube and occupying the real. Contextualized within the public domain, it becomes inevitable and appropriate that works intertwine with political agendas and often get grouped in with activism.
I have found liberation in acknowledging the artistic methods and strategies that can be applied in facing the complex problems of our time. Artist Frances Whitehead makes a compelling account of “What do artists know” in her work Knowledge Claim, a collection of skills, processes, and methodologies including the ability to synthesize, problem solve, contextualize, and make visible the invisible (F. Whitehead 1). With the emergence of popular platforms such as Design Thinking and Placemaking as processes that prioritize creativity, collaboration, and disruption, I find her articulations to be both timely and appropriate. There are more students graduating with art degrees than ever before. We have objectified creativity into the realm of the culture industry, but we are at a point where culture does not center around art, it is lateral and complex. Under the merit of social practice, artists are being embedded into fields of structural change with the authority to disrupt.

CONCLUSION

In the rise of a creative class, we are able to tackle issues of sustainability in a ways that we have never before imagined. But even during the excitement of a ‘makers movement’, we cannot lie to ourselves that industry is returning to America. Yes, we do need systemic change, but ‘sustainable development’ is an oxymoron. We need to ‘un-develop’, and most importantly, we need a cultural change that prioritizes creativity, resourcefulness, and cooperation. In leveraging the culture industry, it is an exciting time to be an artist. With the authority to take risks, we can disrupt forms of the social sphere in pursuit of a more sustainable planet.
I am more interested in the way things can be used

than the way they can be used up.

I take a piece of rope,

a linear object with a beginning and an end,

and with a knot I learned from a teacher, a friend, or a stranger on Youtube,

I can create a loop.
Figure 1 | image of childhood boat
Figure 2 | image of childhood table
Figure 3 | *Play House #2*; pearlescent acrylic, fiber, straight pins; 9 x 2 inches; 2013
Figure 4 | Nonspecific Object 1; tin plated copper, stainless steal; 2015
Figure 5 | studio view: rope machine; 2015
Figure 6 | *Improvisations With Rope*; handmade rope, repurposed wood, iPad; 2016
Figure 7 | www.improvisationswithrope.tumblr.com
Figure 8 | Self Portrait
Figure 9 | Sustainable Fashion: Who What When Wear & Why (detail); 2015
Figure 10 | Georgia Sewn; Exhibition View; 2016
Figure 11 | Carolina; Courtney McCracken & Zipporah Thompson; Icelandic sheeps wool from Fiddle Head Hollow Fiber Farm in Colbert, GA, repurposed wood, handmade rope from repurposed fibers; 3 1/2 ft. x 3 1/2 ft. x 8 ft.; 2016
Figure 12 | End Knot; Courtney McCracken & Ry McCullough; handmade paper from Alabama Chanin's cotton clothing scraps, ropemaking scraps, repurposed wood, handmade rope from repurposed fibers; 11 ft. x 5 ft. x 3 1/2 ft.; 2016
Figure 13 | 68 lbs. (the average amount of textiles American throw away per person per year); Courtney McCracken & Lindsay Pennington; donated clothing from Habitat for Humanities, Athens, GA, repurposed wood, handmade rope from repurposed fibers; 1 ft. x 1 ft. x 6 1/2 ft.; 2016
AHMNS FREE SCHOOL
APLRL

Buddhist meditation to cultivate loving-kindness
Monday the 6th @ 8pm
280 Appleby drive #241
Jeremy: 912 381 5111

Really Really Free Market
Saturday the 9th @ 12-2pm
Reese & Pogue Park
facebook.com/390mathews

Car Tire Changing
Sunday the 10th @ 5pm
832 Oconee Street
Garrison: 404 210 7598

Hands-On Intro to Bee Keeping
Wednesday the 13th @ 3pm
785 Little Oconee Street
Email: 930 519 6558

Sewing 101: Mother's Day Hat Packs
$10 (You need to bring your own fabric)
Wednesday the 13th @ 6:30-7:30pm
ACC Library, 2095 Baxter Street
Michelle: 706-265-9512

Intro to Cyanotype Printing
Saturday the 16th @ 3 pm
Lamar Dodd School of Art Room 2281
Erin Nance: 940 577 2776

Baklava Making
Thursday the 21st @ 7pm
205 Little Street Apt. 2
706 248 9432

Birthday Yoga
Bring a mat or towel
Thursday the 21st @ 4pm
170 West Broad Street
Molly: 912 571 1676

Paper Marbling
Saturday the 23rd @ 4pm
1st Northridge Drive
Meghan: 913 941 6061

Tea Party/Quiz: Outlaw
Thursday the 26th @ 7pm
1805 Danielsville Road
Courtney: 904 303 0522

Anarchism 101
Friday the 29th @ 8pm
275 Big Oak Circle
Will: 706 208 3967

A Dance Party: Movement Meditation
Tuesday the 9th @ 8pm
785 Little Oconee Street
Lulu: 930 519 6558

Food not Bombs
Saturday the 9th @ 12-2pm
In front of the Ben & Jerry's downtown
Will: 704 206 3067

Short Story Circle
See Facebook event page for text
Sunday the 10th @ 6:30pm
"Love & Grief on the Thing" by Clarice Lispector

Wednesdays the 10th, 24th & 31st @ 8pm
"A Lesbian Appetite" by Dorothy Allison
317 W Chath St
Sara: 860-918-5807

Mask Making
Thursday the 14th @ 8pm
1085 Sandy Creek Road
Courtney: 904 303 0522

Guerrilla Art: Banner Making
Monday the 18th @ 8pm
190 Baxter Drive Apt 101
Christine: 706 224 6234

ATHENS FREE SCHOOL is a learning network by and for the community. All classes are totally free! To subscribe to our newsletter or send us your class ideas email athensfreeschool@gmail.com

Submission deadline for the following month is the 25th of each month.
Figure 16 | Barter Shop (dimensional sewing lessons exchange); 2015
Figure 17 | Knot For Sale; 2015
WORKSHOP:
NATURAL FABRIC DYING
(with Zapparrah Thompson)
(Friday, 11/6, 5-8)

- French knotting: start with cotton
- Use medium to high heat
- Be careful not to over-dye
- Mix the dyes in small quantities
- Use a small amount of dye
- Work with the natural fibers
- Try different techniques
- Experiment with different dyes
- Be creative and have fun!
WORKS CITED


