THE MURAL ZINE

A ZINE ABOUT THE S.O.U.R.C.E. WALL OF RESILIENCE
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ZINE CREATED BY DESTA CANTAVE
Artist Statement

The Wall of Resilience reflects the power, connectivity, and divinity of femmes and trans femmes of color in the fight for Black and Brown liberation. The medium of muralism was chosen for its ability to express political realities through collective imagination. Murals take the form of a monumental public installation, that is accessible and reflects community dialogue.

From the conception of the project, we recognized the importance of working collaboratively, valuing the voices of many. Spearheaded by Mikaela González and imagined and co-created by members of Hampshire College SOURCE (Students of Under-Represented Cultures & Ethnicities), the mural responds to a need to simultaneously claim space and build resilience in community. Meetings held at the Cultural Center and open to SOURCE members activated a space of brainstorming and reflection to
create an image that centered Black trans femmee resilience and liberation.
Volunteers from the SOURCE community devoted many hours painting pieces of the 25-foot mural. The completed mural is installed on the west-facing exterior wall of Franklin Patterson Hall, where it stands as a permanent offering to past, present, and future communities of color at Hampshire College.
The mural, its documentation, the unveiling, and the afterparty celebrating BLQ PWR (a moniker used by SOURCE to queer Black Power) pay tribute to Black and Brown joy.
Together they work against white supremacy, patriarchy, and transphobia within the campus culture and far beyond.

Introduction
It is in this public sphere to which I, as well as generations of activists, artists, and visionaries, have gravitated towards for its potential for collective subversion, imagining, and conscientización (consciousness raising or being “woke”): in other words, resisting oppressive structures.

My own inspirations come from my Mexican culture. I have seen Rivera's and Siquieros' murals in Mexico City,
Jenni Pena

I came into my last semester of college itching to do some sort of major art project. Painting and drawing has always been a hobby of mine. I was feeling terrible about not having produced any art whatsoever in college (because Hamp's registration process makes it nearly impossible to take a decent art course if each semester you are struggling to pay tuition).

I showed up to paint and prime almost every day of those many weeks! Art is very time consuming and requires a lot of patience but there was something about the collective effort excited to go back every day, and I never really had that feeling on Hampshire campus. Now that I'm leaving Hampshire, I hope to find or create an opportunity like this again.

I saw first-hand the use of community muralism as an essential element to the autonomous Zapatista resistance, and was invited to contribute my work to the walls lined with paint.

In New York City and Los Angeles, I have felt the power of the monumental murals embodying resilience, history, culture, and reclamation. It is easy to glorify a medium or practice as inherently successful in enacting liberatory politics, but situational nuances complicate this view.

Any attempt at social change within a hyper-capitalistic and oppressive setting also risks cooptation from the very target of its resistance.

I have approached my own practice and this mural with these concerns very much in mind, and made attempts to confront them whenever possible.

As a first attempt to leading this kind of work, there were definitely mistakes, misunderstandings, miscommunication, and mis-direction; but the project was completed, and my hope is that everyone involved (especially me while I further pursue mural work) can reflect on how to improve methods of mural process and collaboration.