



THE THISTLER

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ISSUE FIFTEEN ★ SUMMER, 2011 ★ FREE ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A Message From The Thistle Collective!



art and words
by Sarah Lum

The collective would like to give a big shout out to all the incredible people who have participated at the Thistle this year! You are the reason we exist. Whether you dropped in to use the printer and internet, drink tea, learn some screenprinting, record an album with our humble facilities, participate in our workshops or events, or had the chance to get to know and work with our great mentors, you make the Thistle alive.

We saw lots of great changes at the Thistle really take form this year. Different pods have successfully run over the course of the year and will continue to work next year. The community kitchen has found a home at the Toast Collective, the garden has secured a new site and will continue to work on getting to know plants, growing food and soil remediation, the institute is launching this summer, and RAINzine turned into SLUGzine and put out a radical collection of writings and art from our varied communities. Carla Bergman took on her role as director with verve and the collective is ever grateful of and appreciates all her support and hard work. We look forward to her rocking out next year as our main anchor again!

We would also like to say thank you to all the community groups that utilized our space over the year making it really shine. Whether you just needed space for banner making or you ran a program through our space, like NYAC and Freewrites, we are happy that our space can be home, however temporary, to projects that are working so hard to make a better world and work in service of youth as creators of culture and radical change. We remain committed to being an open free space for your workshops, classes, events, happenings next year and can't wait to see you at our collective meetings in the fall.

Thanks also go out to all of our friendly anchors, mentors, and adult supporters! Especially Marla, Mike Jo, Sylvia, Anthony, April, Stephen, Weronica, Chris Bergman, Morley Faber, Afuwa Granger, our tech crew, Am Johal, the Dreamseeds program, both the participants and its incredible facilitators Ange, Manisha and Miriam and the long standing support of Matt. The Thistle as a youth driven space is healthy and enriched with the knowledge, skills, time and creativity all of you bring in your work at the Thistle. Thank you.



As a collective, we look forward to reconvening in the fall. And if any youth out there are interested in what we do as a collective and are thinking about joining in the fall, send us an email! Come work in the garden over the summer! Or just drop by a collective meeting this fall!

There will be lots of great collective members around to get in a good conversation with and maybe you'll find a reason to get your projects happening at the Thistle.

SUMMER RADICALS GARDENERS of the Purple Thistle



all ages work in the garden!

The sun is out and dancing about, and so are the plants! (they boogie in our dreams) Take a gander outside of the thistle and you'll see new creatures reaching for the light - kale, broccoli, beets, kohlrabi, carrots, chard, wildflowers, sunflowers, poppies, flax, borage, nasturtium, cilantro, chamomile, mint, lupin, tomatoes, peppers, pumpkins, raspberries, blueberries.. and even a fig tree! as always, we're looking for youngblood to help us tend and feast on these beasts, so join us if you're so inclined:

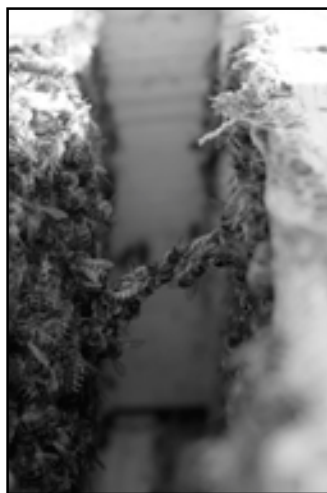
tuesdays 2-6 (weekly meeting at 5), fridays 4-6, and saturdays 12-3.
and if you're keen or just plain curious, come on in **fridays 2-4 for some permaculture food forest scheming, starting again on June 24** (adamthuggins@gmail.com for more info).
burning questions? thoughtful advice? encouraging words?
hit us up through marlarenn@gmail.com
sweet summer shenanigans to you all,
the guerrilla crew!

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BEES!



No an alien ship has not landed! This is one of our star beekeepers learning the wonders of a bee's life. These little critters do so much more than produce tasty honey and do handstand dances to show the other bees where the sweet cache of pollen is to be found...come learn about their amazing world and how to keep them happy and alive with the Purple Thistle beekeepers! We are open to new folks joining in the action, no prior experience necessary! For more information or to get updates on when we meet contact Hannah: hmjcarpendale@hotmail.com.



THISTLE SCHEDULE

Please visit our website for up-to-date information on our schedule

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The Purple Thistle Institute! July 4-23!

There is a lot to be pissed off about when considering the state of contemporary universities. The high cost, the tepid classes, the bored students, the even more bored faculty, the grades, the shallow credentialism, the overwhelming corporatization - all of it so irritating/enraging that there is every reason to just say 'Fuck it. I'm not going into numbing debt for that BS.'

But there is something that's really great about university. Sitting around reading complicated and powerful texts with a bunch of good people who are really interested is awesome. Talking about ideas with people who are really jacked up to make an impact on the world is awesome. Encountering new and exciting ideas is awesome.

So the PTI is us trying to pull the best parts out of the university experience and ditch all the crap. We're hoping we've put together a challenging, exciting, inspiring three weeks that has some great classes, work experience placements, a bunch of really cool folks, some wicked evening events and lectures and readings - all of it for really cheap.

We're bringing together about 40 participants and 10 staff: anarchists, socialists, lefties, progressives, anti-colonialists, anti-authoritarians, ecologists of all stripes are welcome. The idea is to work, think and talk together - to articulate and comprehend differences sure - but to find common ground, get beyond factionalized pettiness and stimulate radical ecological and egalitarian social change.

It's open to all ages. It's not an alternative college, but an alternative to college. We'll be working clearly with college/university level material and a similar kind of intellectual engagement, but with a radical, engaged praxis. You'll be fine if you have never been to college, and fine if you have. It is for folks who want to revitalize and deepen their understanding of radical social change, meet other cool folks, build networks, get new ideas and also to communicate and build on our vision for the Thistle's core ideas and principles - horizontality, user-control, radical generosity, funk, collective action.

There may not be any spots left by the time you read this - we're almost full - but maybe. So if you're at all interested for this year or next, please do check us out: thistleinstitute.ca.



image by Sarah Lum "hero"

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CONTRIBUTORS

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Institute: Matt Hern
Eat The Rich: Maya Motoi
Youngunz: Sylvia McFadden/Carla Bergman
Art: Sarah Lum and Julie Flett
Thistle Flower: Sarah Lum
Bees! and photos by Marla Renn

Democracy in Action!

Happy 40 years Windsor House!



Windsor House is a K to 12 parent participant democratic school that is publicly funded. It is located in North Vancouver and has been around for 40 years! Students at Windsor House are free to learn what they want and when they want! They have access to teachers, every sort of class imaginable, and many other resources! But, the real topper and I'd say the most impressive part of this school is the students' involvement in the running of the school! This mostly takes place each day at school meetings.

When projects are part of the state they often have to make concessions, and Windsor House is no exception. So over the years the school has had to battle an external system that isn't particularly friendly to how the school is run. Often these institutions impose many different ideas of what they deem as a better life for kids, more times than not this takes shape in systems of hierarchy being imposed. But despite these limitations to their ideal school, the folks at Windsor House, staff, parents and students alike, worked hard to sustain its core values of utmost respect for young people and a truly democratic school. It can be a big pain in the ass to have to fight for something you believe in but one thing is true: this sort of community engagement only helps to make you a stronger more politically engaged school, and nothing but good can come from that! And now Windsor House seems to have landed some good solid support and can move on to their next 40 years with more good work going towards the inside rather than fighting the beast outside!

One of the core principles of the thistle is deschooling: many thistlers in their younger days attended Windsor house and because of this, many of us attribute our deschooling time to these years and are forever grateful. As well, and equally notable, the founders of the thistle were former students and staff at the school prior to starting the thistle -- this of course had an impact on how the thistle came to be, and the Thistle has always had a wonderful relationship with Windsor House! As Matt Hern says, "For forty years now Windsor House has been a fantastic project that has inspired the Purple Thistle in all kinds of ways. The original crew that founded the Thistle were all from WH and we have learned so much (and continue to learn) from them. I hope that the Thistle can emulate the kindness, generosity, tenaciousness and commitment that WH has always exemplified."

Thank you Windsor House and congratulations on your 40 years!

image by Julie Flett

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Radical Art In Nature: Guerrilla Art Group and ZINE

RAIN is a community-based project that has seeds in deschooling, micropublishing, skill-building/sharing, guerrilla art, and grassroots activism. our goal is to create a horizontal culture in which communities and individuals are empowered. To this end we, the RAIN collective, host events such as local music showcases, outdoor films, and workshops (which could range from digital design/layout to herbalism). We also produce the journal-like zine SLUG, a collaborative art and culture project which also gives us an opportunity to learn the skills of self-publishing. This Summer we will be launching a new project and it's pretty darn exciting - stay tuned! come, hang out, have tea, and make stuff!! (in September!) love, RAINERS for further information contact: rain@purplethistle.ca or carla@purplethistle.ca

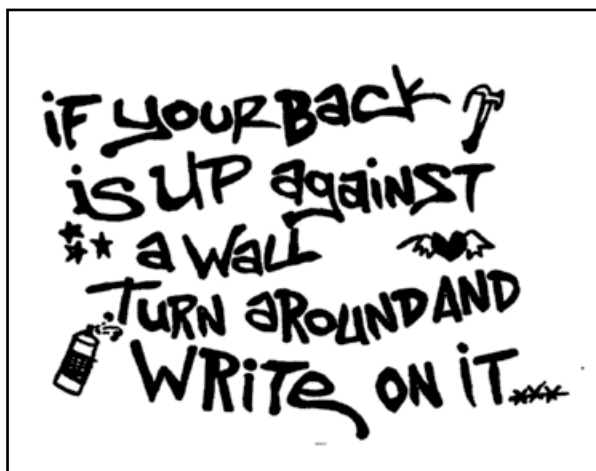


image by Sarah Lum

The Thistle is a youth-run community centre for arts and activism
 We are a free place (both free-of-charge, and we are Interested in freedom) where youth can engage with each other and their community.
 The Centre is a physical space to root ourselves, a place to work together, and a site to learn new ways for radical organizing for social change. We have plenty of resources, so do come on down! All Welcome!

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YOUNGUNZ

Youngunz is an arts project for our younger folks in the community! youth between 11-15 come every Sunday to learn skills in the arts from amazing mentors -- song-writing, knitting, photography, film making and well pretty much anything they want! Dream big and we'll try our best to make it happen!



check out the purple thistle website www.purplethistle.ca/youngunz to find out more!
 We had an amazing year! and are looking forward to September! If you are interested in joining contact Sylvia at: corvus_photography@hotmail.com

EAT THE RICH!

COMMUNITY KITCHEN

About a year since the idea of a Purple Thistle Café was first talked about, now having morphed into that of a community kitchen, we are finally moving into a physical space! We are moving into the Toast Collective! It has been a year of long discussion, research and thinking on the idea with a few fundraiser events, and it's exciting to be able to move into a kitchen where we can actually start to do all the things - the events, classes, workshops and eating together that we have been talking and dreaming about. On July 2nd (Saturday) we are planning to have our first event at the Toast. There will be music, food and a workshop. Come and bring your ideas and inspiration about this kitchen and how you would like to use it or just bring yourself to have fun. We will have more details about the event soon. For more information about this project, about how you could help us, or about the event check out our page on the Purple Thistle site: http://www.purplethistle.ca/eattherich

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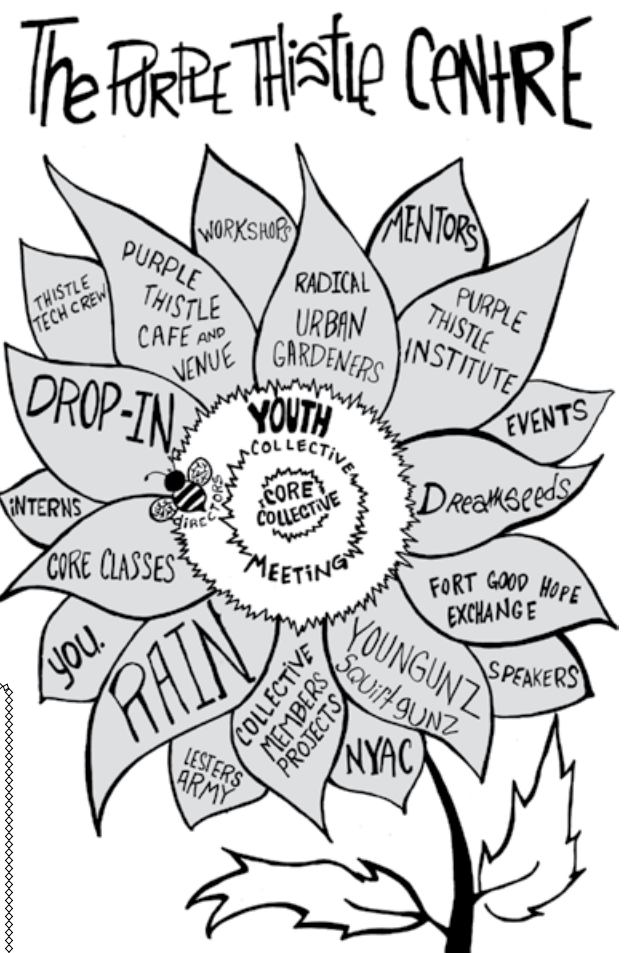


image by Sarah Lum

Find us at the corner of Parker and Vernon in East Van!

