

Building Local Autonomy Networks

Workshop: Thursday, May 2, 9:00-1:00

UWM's Hefter Conference Center (3271 N. Lake Drive)

Performance: 8:00 pm, Pabst Brewery (901 W. Juneau Ave)*

*workshop participants will participate in this performance

Workshop: The Autonets workshop will engage participants in a discussion, using Theater of the Oppressed, dance and performance exercises, of how we can form local networks of autonomy and solidarity in order to create community based responses to violences, which are personal, gendered or state sponsored. Join us for a three-hour workshop that will culminate in a performance where we will use Theater of the Oppressed to embody community based responses to violence. The workshop will invite participants to consider these questions: what kinds of violence you face on a daily basis and how can we respond as a community to prevent these forms of violence, with or without digital technologies. No experience is necessary to participate in the workshop and performance, as both rely on what our bodies already know.

More about Local Autonomy Networks: Local Autonomy Networks (Autonets) is an activist project focused on creating networks of communication to increase community autonomy and reduce violence against women, LGBTQI people, people of color and other groups who continue to survive violence on a daily basis. The networks are both online and offline, including handmade wearable electronic fashion and face to face agreements between people. The networks are being established through a series of workshops, performances, presentations and discussions at art, activist and academic venues in the Americas and Europe. The project was started by Micha Cárdenas but is rapidly expanding into an ecology of networks involving many artists, hackers and activists. Autonets includes a line of mesh networked electronic clothing with the goal of building autonomous local networks that don't rely on corporate infrastructure to function, inspired by community based, anti-racist, prison abolitionist responses to gendered violence. The Autonets garments, when activated, will alert everyone in range of the the local mesh network who is wearing another autonet garment that someone needs help and will indicate that person's direction and distance.

These technologies are being developed through workshops and collective design processes, inspired by existing networks of horizontal knowledge production in queer, transgender, survivors of gender violence and diasporic communities. We are currently in collaboration with groups wanting to use Autonets to reduce violence against genderqueer and trans people of color in LA, prevent disappearances in Bogotá, Colombia, help provide safety for sex workers in Toronto and facilitate queer youth of color to avoid violence in Detroit. Autonets is fashion hacking for social reorganization, recoding the meaning of fashion symbols such as hoodies that have associations ranging from Trayvon Martin to the Black Bloc, or femme fashion elements like dresses and bracelets, into symbols of connectivity and autonomy. <http://autonets.org>

PLEASE EMAIL C21@UWM.EDU TO REGISTER FOR THE WORKSHOP. FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE: WWW.C21.UWM.EDU