



As artists, we lean on our mediums and we turn to art for joy, to ease pain, and to make sense of the world. In this issue's feature we look to another relative from the so-called global South, someone from a long line of land tenders. We are excited to feature this artist, a dear friend and comrade, and dig a little deeper into what makes their art special, how their art came to be, and maybe offer readers some fresh leads on checking out their influences.

So Banderita Negra, thank you for sharing your energy with us.

Stay Wild!
xoxo,
Art Anarchist

Do you want to give any background on who you are and anything that's inspiring you or keeping you up at night?

My name is Banderita Negra, I use they/him pronouns, and I am a trans undocumented artist and yerberx, with roots in the Andes and the Amazon Rainforest. I am an anarchist herbal street medic and a printmaker who is constantly inspired by nature.

What medium do you work in?

I went to school for printmaking and graphic design, and tend to do a lot of it in my work. Working with layouts and helping others with composition and with print projects is something I'm very passionate about. These days I'm doing a lot of calligraphy and sign painting at the Medicine Walls studio here in Brooklyn, and taking detailed notes while attending Horticulture and Botany classes, also in Brooklyn.

What kind of art or books did you like as a youth? Do you think that influences your work now? Do you have any artist or book suggestions for readers?

I grew up reading a lot of Ursula K LeGuin, Octavia Butler, and other science fiction, as well as Paolo Coelho, and Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Growing up in South America I was always surrounded by colors and textiles, and was really inspired by the diy counterculture there, we didn't make things on our own because it was trendy, but simply because we didn't have any money.

What inspired you to start doing art?

I've been making art all of my life. I think of every picture I've ever made as a visual love letter to the world. I like to paint about the things that I'm passionate about, and the people that I care about. I feel passionate about preserving my people's culture and our traditions through art. I grew up in a quechua-hablante home and immigrating here made me think about the way that the representation of immigrants was always shown through a perspective heavily centering the United States. I didn't cross the border because the United States is a good place to live, I came here because this government bankrupted my homelands.

I like making art that centers our narrative, the narrative of migrants from Indigenous communities who are separated by the border, those of us who can't go home because of criminal charges, and who are not here because "this land is your land" or because of an "american dream" - but in spite of it.

What are some of your art dreams, schemes and plans?

I want to continue creating images that highlight antifascist realities, and the way that so many of our communities and families raised us to fight back, to attack what attacks you. I want to keep collaborating with groups that inspire me like FTP Bakeshop and Fight Toxic Prisons, and would love to keep making book covers for people who write about community organizing too.

Last year I started studying horticulture and botany, and creating salves for friends who have experienced violence at the hands of the state. A big dream of mine is to collaborate with other antifascist herbalists to create herbal care packages for survivors of police violence, with an illustrated guide on how to use many different kinds of herbs and salves. When you inhale tear gas, it really hurts your lungs in the long term, and there is a lot that herbal street medics have learned from traditional herbal practitioners.

A lot of my big life dreams are around plant care, herbal studies, and land restoration. Next year I'm starting an artist in residency fellowship upstate, which I hope will help make some of these dreams a reality.

Who are your art inspos? (Could also not be artists but like a list of things or places or circumstances that inspire you)

I am constantly inspired by the writing of Harsha Walia, the storytelling and illustrations of Gord Hill, the resilience of our people, the ingenuity of life to continue finding ways to break through concrete. My best friends, Jackie Fawn and Crystal Clarity, are my two favorite artists.

I kinda know some background about you, but do you want to share how punk has influenced your life and your art?

“Direct action is a necessary tactic, because our rivers are being polluted without our consent, our bodies are being filled with microplastics, our cities are flooding while falling apart- we must protect that which protects us, and attack that which attacks us.”

Punk houses were some of the first spaces that felt exciting for me- they've always reminded me of growing up in South America in brick houses that couldn't afford to replace tiles or windows. Punk to me has always come from a scrappy place of necessity and a way to make something exciting and noisy with very little resources. As a forest punk in a big city, anarchist spaces and infoshops where I can feel connected to others and make friends are pretty important to me.

Do you have any projects or goals for your art at the moment? I would love to see patches or shirts would you want to collab with earth first! to make some merch?

I would love to collab with EF! and make some shirts! I've made shirts for Black Rose Anarchist Federation and music shows and fundraising events before, it's always something I'm open to. My goal right now is to build a bridge

across my herbal practice and my printmaking.

We are a new collective at EF! Journal, anything you want to say about EF! and direct action in general?

It is so necessary for projects like the EF! journal to continue existing. The climate crisis is not going away on its own and as long as capitalism exists, climate change will continue to accelerate. It is not enough to demand for the fossil fuel industry to take accountability. The largest institutional fossil fuel user in the world is the United States Department of Defense, over and over we see these huge budgets go towards military and policing, and over and over we see our communities, and our people, be murdered by police. The state is only invested in keeping billionaires safe, and to continue to keep things moving, business as usual, in spite of the calls for accountability from our community.

wings to be an ode to printmakers everywhere and our love for detail. With a sprig of rosemary and a small little black flag, this little friend is a symbol of freedom, of a love for herbal care, and a dedication to the skies.

Lo Quemamos Todo: I made this in my typography class, after seeing a picture of some graffiti in Chile during the 2020 uprisings that said: “Yo si te creo, y si te pasa algo, amor mio, lo quemamos todo” which translates to “I do believe you, and if anything happens to you, my love, we will burn everything down”. I think this phrase encompasses so much of what I believe in: trusting survivors, community defense, grief as action, and a deep commitment to love.



FTP Kitchen and Bakeshop: One of my dearest friends R asked me to draw an O’odham woman with jewelry from her community, holding a tray with baked treats and a molotov. I’m really grateful for the opportunity to create this image, because of what it represents to R’s community, as a kitchen that specializes in mutual aid and fundraisers, and as a medicinal bakeshop that creates medicine from traditional foods.

Plant Studies: A lot of my artwork these days are notes from my horticulture classes. Studying horticulture and botany with the intention of growing food and medicine takes up a lot of my time these days. I dream of compiling my drawings to create illustrated zines to accompany the salves and medicines that I am creating.

Herbal Salves: I began creating these after being the first herbal responder to a large action, where police threw tear gas and mace into a crowd. I’ve made a few different kinds, some for joint pain, some for lung care, as well as herbal steams and blends. I’m probably going to print my labels next time, but for the first 100 salves that I made, I wrote by hand “with love for water protectors and land defenders”, because I really wanted it to feel like a handmade, personal gift. Like a little

care package made specially for your beloved brave heart.

Direct action is a necessary tactic, because our rivers are being polluted without our consent, our bodies are being filled with microplastics, our cities are flooding while falling apart- we must protect that which protects us, and attack that which attacks us.

Do you want to write anything about the pieces you contributed?

Banderita Negra: In Spanish it means “Little Black Flag”, which to me is a lot about little acts of anarchism, and small anonymous actions. I wanted to draw a bird with a bean in her belly and keys in her beak, I wanted the background to look like something shattered and broken, and maybe exploding. I wanted her

“I spend a lot of time trying to encompass this love into what I create, to say ‘I love you enough to fight for your future and mine.’”

I love the elements of love, bravery and anarchism I see in your work. Do those resonate with you? Or what do you want people to get from your work?

I talk about my artwork and writing as love letters, and I think those elements are often visible in my work because of that.

To love someone, is not just to want to kiss them or to yearn for them, but to love them and respect them as a human being- to want to protect them from harm and build a future for them. I spend a lot of time trying to encompass this love into what I create, to say “I love you enough to fight for your future and mine”.

Love, as a practice of solidarity. Love, as a devotion to building a better world. Love, as a promise, and a commitment.

When I write about anarchism and autonomy, I’m referring to a commitment to a different world. As a

trans undocumented person, this world has failed me and my kin in so many ways. Another world is possible and necessary.

