How to Organize an Art Build

Simply put, an Art Build is when a group of people get together to create art for a common project. Art builds are great ways to get people motivated about an upcoming event, because it is an easy way for individuals to make a tangible difference. Making art is also fun and provides an environment where people can casually get to know each other and speak about their own projects. Plus, with all this creative energy, any event is bound to be more exciting.

This section is designed to help you with the logistics of setting up and running an Art Build. If set up well, it's amazing how much art can get produced quickly with a few volunteers.

Finding a Space—Art builds can be held just about anywhere, but your needs depend on what you are planning to make. Places that it's ok to get a little paint on the floor (such as garages, warehouses, basements, etc.) can make the build less stressful. If the Art Build is part of a conference or in a rented space, perhaps they have an outdoor space, a loading dock, or a basement you can use (rented places often charge for stray paint). Outdoor and public spaces are often great as they attract a crowd (just be conscious of electrical needs you might have, and access to water/toilets). Having a flat floor to work on is useful for painting on fabric (especially big pieces).

3 Types of Art Builds

1. Laissez-Faire: You provide materials and people do what they like.
2. A build with a plan: The build has a clear goal, often used for mass production of visuals for protests.
3. The mixer: People can choose if they want to work on their own project or a group project.

Preparations—Before you start setting up your Art Build, it's a good idea to set up a schedule of when you plan on being where and when you need volunteers (e.g., set-up, clean-up). Ask volunteers to sign-up for specific time slots. Also, have a clear plan and know what your priorities are (i.e., this should get made before that) and know how many of each thing you would like to make.
SETTING UP AN ART BUILD

PUTTING A LITTLE TIME AND THOUGHT INTO PREPARING THE SPACE WILL MAKE AN ART BUILD RUN MUCH MORE EFFICIENTLY.

☆ IF YOU CAN GET OR MAKE SOME TABLES (IT'S JUST MORE COMFORTABLE TO WORK ON A TABLE THEN ON THE FLOOR). TABLES CAN BE MADE EASILY BY PUTTING PIECES OF PLYWOOD, WOOD, OR AN OLD DOOR ON TOP OF SAW-HORSES, CHAIRS, GARBAGE CANS, OR STURDY CARDBOARD BOXES.

☆ PROTECT WHAT NEEDS TO BE PROTECTED: THINGS CAN GET MESSY WHEN YOU HAVE 15 PEOPLE WITH PAINT BRUSHES IN THE SAME SPACE. COVER OR REMOVE ANYTHING THAT NEEDS TO STAY PRISTINE. BUYING A ROLL OF THICK PLASTIC TO TAPE DOWN ONTO THE FLOOR IS A GOOD INVESTMENT AS IT MAKES DRIPS AND SPILLS MUCH EASIER TO CLEAN UP. (IT CAN BE REUSED).

☆ IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE PAINTING ON FABRIC OR PAPER, SETTING UP SOME DRYING LINES WILL GIVE YOU A SPACE TO HANG THINGS TO DRY. PUT PLASTIC OR CARDBOARD UNDERNEATH INCASE THINGS DRIP OR DO THIS OUTSIDE.

STATIONS (AKA AREAS FOR A SPECIFIC USE) WILL HELP TO KEEP THINGS ORGANIZED AND WILL FACILITATE PEOPLE WORKING IN TEAMS. IT WILL ALSO GIVE TOOLS AND MATERIALS A "HOME" SO PEOPLE KNOW WHERE TO FIND THINGS.

☆ PAINT STATION: KEEP ALL YOUR PAINT IN ONE PLACE. PROVIDE SMALL CONTAINERS SO PEOPLE CAN BRING SOME OF WHATEVER COLOR THEY NEED WITH THEM, BUT ASK PEOPLE TO LEAVE LARGE PAINT CONTAINERS AT THE PAINT STATION. PROVIDE WATER AND ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO DILUTE THEIR PAINT. PROVIDE RAGS OR PERHAPS SMOKES. ASK PEOPLE TO WASH THEIR BRUSHES WHEN DONE. YOU MIGHT WANT TO MAKE SIGNS FOR ALL THIS SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL IT TO EVERYONE.

☆ TOOL STATION - THIS COULD ALSO BE CALLED "THE USEFUL STUFF STATION" BECAUSE IT IS REALLY HELPFUL TO HAVE ONE CENTRAL LOCATION TO KEEP USEFUL STUFF SUCH AS TAPE, STRING, DRILLS, SCISSORS, KNIVES, TOOLS, ETC.

☆ GARBAGE/RECYCLING STATION: SET UP AN AREA WITH GARBAGE + RECYCLING CANS

☆ SEWING STATION: A TABLE FOR SEWING STUFF

NOTE: YOU MIGHT WANT TO DIVIDE THE SPACE INTO A PAINTING AREA AND A BUILDING AREA SO THERE ISN'T WET PAINT EVERYWHERE.
ART FOR AN ART-BUILD:

IF YOU ARE RUNNING "A BUILD WITH A PLAN," IT IS A GOOD IDEA TO MAKE SAMPLES OF WHAT YOU WANT PEOPLE TO MAKE. PUT THESE SAMPLES UP SOMEWHERE VISIBLE WITH THE QUANTITIES YOU WANT OF EACH.

IF POSSIBLE, MAKE ALL STENCILS + WOODCUTS/CARDBOARD CUTS, AHEAD OF TIME (AND HAVE A COPY AVAILABLE, IN CASE SOMETHING HAPPENS TO THE ORIGINAL).

BRING IMAGES THAT INSPIRE YOU TO HANG UP AROUND THE SPACE, PERHAPS THEY WILL INSPIRE OTHERS.

BRING MUSIC TO PUT ON, OR INVITE MUSICIANS TO COME PLAY WHILE YOU WORK.

RUNNING AN ART BUILD IS A REALLY ENJOYABLE EXPERIENCE, ESPECIALLY IF YOUR WELL PREPARED. TRY TO THINK AHEAD SO YOU CAN AVOID DELAYS (EX. DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH STAPLES FOR TOMORROW?) AS THE GUARDIAN OF THE ART SPACE, ALWAYS BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR TWO THINGS: PAINT BRUSHES THAT ARE DRYING OUT AND PAINT SPILLS (SOMEONE STEPPING IN STAINED PAINT THEN WALKING AROUND CAN BE A NIGHTMARE TO CLEAN.) MAYBE ASK PEOPLE TO TAKE OFF THEIR SHOES, FEEL FREE TO MAKE LOUD ANNOUNCEMENTS INSTEAD OF SAYING SOMETHING 50 TIMES, AND ASK FOR HELP IF YOU NEED IT. MAYBE BRING SNACKS OR INVITE A LOCAL COOK TO SELL (OR DONATE) FOOD.

AND TAKE PICTURES!

MATERIALS:

THE MATERIALS YOU NEED WILL DEPEND ON WHAT YOUR DOING, BUT HERE IS AN OVERVIEW OF MATERIALS THAT ARE USEFUL FOR AN ART BUILD.

FOR TIPS ON HOW TO GET FREE MATERIALS, SEE THE "BASIC MATERIALS FOR EXTRAORDINARY BEAUTY" PAGE EARLIER IN THIS FANTASTIC BOOKLET.

SET-UP:
- TABLES
- PLASTIC FOR FLOOR
- DROPCLOTH
- BROOM/MOP

DRIYING LINE:
- CLOTHES LINE OR STRING
- CLOTHES PINS OR SAFETY PINS OR CLIPS
- PLASTIC/DROP CLOTH

PAINTING:
- PAINT
- BRUSHES (MANY)
- ROLLERS
- SMOCKS
- WATER BUCKET
- RAGS
- SMALL CONTAINERS (CUT THE TOP OFF SODA BOTTLES)
- SIGNS

FASTENERS
- STAPLE GUN/STAPLER
- STAPLE Pliers
- STAPLES
- STRING/TWINE
- HARDWARE (NUTS, BOLTS, ETC)
- TAPE
- RUBBER-TIES
- WIRE (WIRE HANGERS)
- GLUE/WHEAT-PASTE

TOOLS:
- SCISSORS
- CUTTER/KNIVES/X-ACTO
- DRILL+BITS
- SAW
- PENCIL/ERASERS
- MARKERS
- CHALK
- SEWING MACHINE
- THREAD+EXTRA NEEDLES

MATERIALS FOR MAKING
- CARDBOARD
- FABRIC/BED SHEETS
- STICKS+POLES
- PAPER
- PLASTIC FOR STENCILS
- MATERIALS FOR JUNK INSTRUMENTS
- BUCKETS, CANS, POTS
- TUBES
- SODA CANS/BOTTLES
- RICE, ROSES, BEANS

NOTE: IF YOU BORROW MATERIALS OR TOOLS, ASK PEOPLE TO WRITE THEIR NAME ON, AND KEEP A LIST OF WHAT THEY LOAN YOU.
**BASIC MATERIALS FOR EXTRODINARY BEAUTY**

Literally anything can be used to create art, the materials listed here are some of the most versatile and easy to come by. Almost everything in this booklet can be made almost entirely out of garbage - a manifestation of the belief that creativity can turn even a pile of garbage (or an unsustainable society) into something beautiful and productive.

- **Cardboard** - You can make just about anything out of cardboard. Large pieces can often be found in the dumpsters behind stores that sell large things (refrigerators, big chairs, or car windshield or ask inside the store.

- **Paint** - Almost everything can be painted using regular latex water-based house paint. Ask around, it is very common for people to have left-over paint they are happy to give away or ask paint stores if they have mismatched paint. Fabric can be dyed by a mixture of lots of water + latex paint. If you buy paint, get: primary colors (red, yellow, blue) from which you can mix other colors; strong colors (you can always add white) and 0% or low VOC paint.

- **Fabric** - Thin cotton fabric can be used for most projects. Used bed sheets are great and are frequently thrown out by hotels - call or stop by a few hotels and ask if you can have their stained ripped sheets.
**Rubber Ties** — A great material for attaching things together are strips of rubber (because it's elastic, it doesn't slip). You can make rubber ties by cutting up bicycle inner tubes into strips of rubber. Go to any bike shop at the end of the day and they probably have burst inner tubes to throw out.

**Wire** — Wire can be useful for hanging + attaching, just cut the top off wire hangers for some good, strong wire.

**Wooden Poles** — Wooden poles are useful for anything you want to get up or anything big you want to make. Bamboo is great because it is lightweight, but any tree branch or broomstick works too.

**Staple Pliers** — These you would have to buy, but they are super useful for attaching cardboard pieces together, as a quick alternative to sewing, or for attaching fabric or rubber ties to cardboard.

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**Banners**

Banners are perhaps the most traditional form of protest art. But there is an art to it. Think carefully about what you want it to say. Keep it simple, but understandable — this might be your best opportunity to share your message, and make it creative. You want this to not only say your message, but also to reflect the feel of your message. Creativity is your way to give depth and context to your message. Also, the more remarkable it is — the more likely it is to get noticed (and photographed).

**Tip:** Don't put dates on banners so they can be used again. Maybe put your website on it.

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**Banner Making:**

**Step 1: Gather Materials**
- Paint: Latex water-based house paint or artists acrylic paint or ink.
- Fabric: Anything — a bed sheet, a drop cloth, canvas. Thicker fabric is generally nicer to work with. You can sew small pieces together to form a bigger piece.
- Brushes: Any brushes work, try and have various styles. Warning: Brushes dry out quickly. Keep them in water.

**Step 2: Gather People** — Kids often make enthusiastic and creative volunteers.
STEP 3: SKETCH IT OUT—LAY YOUR FABRIC OUT FLAT ON THE FLOOR OR PIN/STAPLE/TAPE IT TO A FLAT WALL. PUT PLASTIC OR CARDBOARD BEHIND IT SO THE PAINT DOESN'T BLEED THRU. CHALK OR PENCIL ARE GOOD FOR SKETCHING, THEN YOU CAN OUTLINE WITH PEN OR MARKER.

TIP: FIND THE MIDDLE AND PUT AN EQUAL NUMBER OF LETTERS/WORDS ON EACH SIDE.

STEP 4: PAINT YOUR BANNER!—HAVE FUN, AND MIX COLORS SO YOU HAVE MORE OPTIONS TO WORK WITH. USE CONTRAST AND PAINT THE BACKGROUND FOR A MORE READABLE BANNER.

OTHER IDEAS:
- USE A PROJECTOR TO PROJECT YOUR IMAGE AND THEN TRACE IT. THIS MAKES FOR VERY SMART-LOOKING BANNERS.
- YOU CAN USE TAPE TO GET VERY CLEAN LINES JUST PUT IT ALONG THE EDGE—REMOVE IT AFTER WITH TAPE, THEN PAINT THE WHOLE MESSAGE/IMAGE REMOVE THE TAPE AFTER PAINT HAS DRIED.

TIP: PUT YOUR BANNER ON POLES TO GET ABOVE A CROWD. NO ONE CAN SEE HOW BEAUTIFUL IT IS IF PEOPLE ARE STANDING RIGHT IN FRONT OF IT.

TIP: MAKE THE POLES LONG ENOUGH SO YOU CAN PUT THEM ON THE GROUND WHEN YOU GET TIRED OR STOP.

WHAT IF YOUR BANNER WAS DOUBLE SIDED, SO IT COULD BE READ FROM BEHIND TOO...?

FLAGS

"MAKE YOUR OWN FLAG"

- D.N.R.

FLAGS CAN BE USED IN JUST ABOUT ANY ACTION. THEY ARE EASY TO PRODUCE, FUN TO USE AND CAN GET ABOVE A CROWD.

☆ SMALL FLAGS CAN BE MADE FROM PAPER, CARDBOARD, OR FABRIC AND CAN BE MOUNTED ON WOOD OR CARDBOARD POLES. YOU CAN STAPLE THE FLAG TO ITS POLE. THESE CAN BE SINGLE SIDED OR DOUBLE SIDED. IF THE FABRIC/PAPER IS THIN, YOU WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO MAKE EACH SIDE SEPARATELY, OR ELSE THE PAINT WILL BLEED THROUGH.

☆ LONG FLAGS: ARE BEAUTIFUL AND ARE BEST MADE OF THIN FABRIC ON A LONG POLE, YOU WILL NEED TO KEEP WAVING THE FLAG AS IT WON'T STAY UP ON ITS OWN.

SEW A SLIP FOR THE POLE TO SLIDE INTO, AND SEW THE TOP SHUT

PLACCARDS ARE BASICALLY CARDBOARD ON A STICK (THOUGH WITHOUT STICK WORKS GOOD TOO). TRY AND MAKE THESE DOUBLE SIDED (AKA PUT ONE SIGN ON EITHER SIDE OF THE STICK). GET CREATIVE, THESE DO NOT NEED TO BE RECTANGLES, MAKE THE SHAPE OF THE PLACCARD REFLECT YOUR MESSAGE.
**Banner Flags** are different than regular flags because they have cross-pieces that support them, so they can always be clearly seen.

To make well, sew two sleeves on either end of a piece of fabric (to make less-well, just staple the fabric to the sticks).

After the sticks are in, poke a hole in the top and use a rubber tie to attach the top stick to the pole. You can do the same for the bottom stick, or you can let it blow (but then you will need to make sure the bottom stick doesn't fall out, either by tying it to the fabric or closing the sides of the sleeves with staples.

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**Stencils**

For reproducing images or text, stencils are your best tool.

Stencils have many advantages: they are easy and cheap to make, can be used on a variety of surfaces, and can produce many images from a single stencil.

**How to make stencils:** The key to making a good stencil is finding a thin but sturdy material from which to cut it. Cardboard or thick paper works, but the best material is thin plastic. Most art stores sell rolls of Mylar, or you can use plastic notebook covers, or laminated paper (ask at copy shops if they have leftovers).

**Basic designs** should be two colors (one color will be whatever you are painting onto; the other color will be your paint). Remember that no pieces of the background color can be islands (i.e., surrounded by your paint color) because if you cut all around it, it will fall off. For example: if you have thin bridges, you can reinforce them by taping wire to them.

For additional colors, each color will need its own stencil. Put marks on each stencil so you know how to line them up easily. For some sample stencils, see the back of this booklet.
A good way to transfer images onto your stencil material is to cut it out of paper first, and then paint or trace the image onto your stencil material. This way you can also make sure there are no islands.

To cut out your stencil, you will want a razor or an X-acto knife. Having a sharp tool will make this process much easier and the result better. Cut onto cardboard so you don’t dull the blade as quickly.

If your stencil is on a thin material, you might want to mount it by making a cardboard frame to go around it. This can be done very quickly and makes it more durable and less likely to roll up. You can also reinforce it with wire if it has thin parts, or will get used many times.

Different paints can be used. Spray paint works well if you need to be quick or working on a rough surface. It tends to leave the crispest image—but is more expensive and more toxic than house paint. Latex house paint works well with stencils. The trick is to get just the right amount of paint on the roller (or brush or sponge) you are using. Do a few practices on cardboard.

When painting many of the same stencil, wipe off extra paint or let it dry when the image stops being crisp. Never put anything on top of a wet (or even damp) stencil or it will stiffen and rip the stencil.
Effigies

Politicians hate seeing themselves as puppets, which makes them a particularly effective tool to target specific politicians on specific issues, and to get their face in the newspapers. They are also fun for street theater. Basically an effigy is a big piece of cardboard in the shape of a person (big heads make them sillier) mounted on a stick. What makes them really effective is having a photograph as the head. This can easily and cheaply be done at any copy shop (black & white and thin paper is fine). If it is expensive to print big, you can print parts of the face separately on smaller paper and then put them together on the cardboard. This photo/photocopy head can then be glued or wheatpasted to the cardboard body.
EFFIGY ACCESSORIES:

☆ SPEECH BUBBLES: CAN BE USED TO DRAW ATTENTION TO SOMETHING SOMEONE HAS SAID. USE REAL QUOTES.

![Cardboard person with speech bubble]

☆ THOUGHT BUBBLES: CAN BE ON ITS OWN STICK OR TAPE WIRE OR THIN STICKS TO CONNECT THE DIFFERENT PARTS.

☆ NAME TAGS: IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO PUT THE POLITICIAN/CEO'S NAME DIRECTLY ON THEM IN CASE PEOPLE DON'T KNOW WHO IT IS (IT ALSO GETS THEIR NAMES INTO PHOTOS + NEWSPAPERS).

☆ SIGNS: EFFIGIES CAN CARRY THEIR OWN SIGNS. ATTACH THEM TO BOTH HANDS AND THEY CAN SWING.

☆ FAT CATS: EFFIGIES CAN HAVE FRIENDS. WHO DO THEY SPEND TIME WITH? THESE CAN JUST BE PAINTED CARDBOARD ON A STICK.

☆ SALARY: $10,000,000

☆ MONEY HANDS: YOU CAN PUT MONEY INTO POLITICAN'S HANDS (WORKS IN WASHINGTON TOO). THESE CAN EITHER BE PAINTED OR PHOTOCOPIED.

☆ IF YOU PUT A WIRE HOOK ON THE HAND, THESE CAN BE REMOVABLE + VELCRO WORK TOO.

☆ GARbage INSTRUMENTS TURN JUNK INTO MUSIC!

HERE ARE A FEW SIMPLE "MUSICAL" INSTRUMENTS THAT CAN BE MADE USING EASY-TO-FIND TRASH. USE THESE TO ADD A BIT OF RHYTHM TO ANY MARCH, PARADE, PERFORMANCE OR BIKE-RIDE.

☆ SHAKERS/MARRACHAS: THESE LITTLE GUYS ARE SUPER EASY TO MAKE AND PLAY. JUST CUT TWO PLASTIC SODA BOTTLES IN HALF AND PUT IN SOME ROCKS, RICE, OR BEANS. PUT THE TWO HALVES TOGETHER (TAPE IF NECESSARY). NOW SHAKE. THESE CAN ALSO BE MADE OUT OF SODA/BEER CANS. JUST PUT ROCKS/BEANS OR RICE INTO A DRY CAN AND TAPE A PIECE OF CARDBOARD THE SIZE OF THE TOP OF THE CAN (TRACE IT) IN PLACE. SHAKE, MAKE LOTS - THEY SOUND GREAT TOGETHER. AND PAINT THEM - YOU DON'T WANT TO ACCIDENTALLY ADVERTISE A HEARTLESS MULTINATIONAL
DRUMS are perhaps the best (and simplest) of all musical garbage. Drums, in large numbers, can have a big impact on the feel of an event. Never underestimate the power of rhythm. Boom, boom, BOOM, pow, ZAP, ding, DONG!

Small drums can be made using a tin can and hitting it with a stick, a paintbrush, a large nail or a coin. Simple, very, very simple.

Medium drums can be made using large tin cans, buckets or flower pots. If you put a neckstrap on it, you are free to play it with both hands while walking. The easiest way to do this is to put two holes on either side of the drum (near the top) and make a strap using a thin piece of fabric. Tie knots around small sticks inside the drum to stop the fabric from slipping out. (If you don’t want to make holes in good buckets, wrap rubber ties around the bucket and tie to that). Hit with stick.

Big drums are the same as medium drums but bigger and louder. Use barrels, garbage bins, etc. for these. You will want a different type of drumstick for deeper sounds. Tape a ball of fabric firmly around the end of a sturdy stick (socks work well). It should look like a chicken drumstick. Next: Hit. BOOM, BOOM, BOOM.

CLACKERS are loud. All you need to make one is 3 pieces of flat wood, a drill and a piece of string.

\[ \text{Drill two holes through each piece of wood.} \]
\[ \text{(You want these holes to line up.) Then run the string through all three pieces. And through both holes. Tie it loose enough so the tops of the side pieces can flop around. That’s what makes them clack.} \]

CHIMES: Hang metal pipes from a stick-hit.

TUBE HORNS are ridiculous. Rediculously fun! Just get a short piece of hose-pipe or plastic tube (rigid or flexible), and tape the top of a soda bottle (or a cone of cardboard) on it. Play it like a bugle. It should sound like a goose.

Shopping Cart Drum Set: Put a bunch of drums, horns, whatever on a shopping cart and you can be a 1 person band, or have a whole drumset that can move. Very useful for marches.

Now make an ORCHESTRA!
BICYCLE PARADES
FOR ONE OR FOR MANY

CAMPAIGN IDEAS FOR BIKES

Here are a few ideas for bicycle-oriented campaigns:

- Campaign for more bike lanes (or paint them where they are needed). More space for bikes is less space for cars — a double victory.
- Demand bikes be allowed on public transportation. Allowing bikes to easily integrate into other modes of public transport is crucial for a sustainably accessible city. Perhaps organize a civil disobedience.
- Demand (or install) public bike parking where needed.
- Encourage your community to designate “bike only days” (called summer streets in NYC), where certain roads are closed to cars. This is a great way to show how living lightly can help grow community.
- Many cities now have public bike-borrow systems as part of their public transport system. Paris, Barcelona, why not your community?
- Petition your workplace to offer incentives for employees who bike to work. Encourage them to install showers and bike parking racks.
BICYCLE TOURS AND VOYAGES

There is a global movement rising to meet the climate crisis. Let's use all this movement to get somewhere.

- Carbon Criminal Tour: Organize a bicycle tour through your community, stopping at the sites of various "carbon criminals." At each stop, explain how that particular business is engaged in the carbon cycle. Bring information to pass out to passer-bys, and invite the press. Possible targets could be banks (for dirty investments), gas stations, chain supermarkets that don't offer local food, advertising agencies that greenwash, etc., suggest positive alternatives.

- Problem to Solution Voyage: Organize a voyage that goes from a cause of climate change to a solution. Start at a coal plant and bike to a school that has installed solar panels. You can use this voyage to speak to the benefits of local, community-controlled power sources.

- Cause to Effect Journey: Start at a cause of local pollution (oil refinery, chemical plant, coal plant, etc.) and journey to a visible effect of that pollution (destroyed watershed, damaged ecosystem, the people who are sick because of it, etc.)

For unity, think of how you can incorporate the number 350 into your journey: travel 350 miles/km for 350 hours/minutes, involve 350 people. Invite an artist to document your journey.

BICYCLES AS POLITICS:

Sometimes bicycles are so graceful, silent and common that one forgets that every bicycle ride is a protest to a carbon addicted society and attests to the obvious beauty of living lightly. So, sometimes it doesn't hurt to make bicycle rides overtly political.

Make signs, have asks, make demands, make noise, block roads, gather in large numbers!

In short, until the concept of constant growth seems a little less obvious and a little more unrealistic, sometimes we need to explain the obvious.

Explain with beauty.
Few things capture the grace, simplicity, and beauty of living lightly better than the bicycle. They are one of the ways in which one can make daily decisions that manifest the changes one wishes to see in the world.

Unlike a car, with its closed windows and temperature controls, on a bike you are participating in the world around you: you can speak with other bikers stopped at a stoplight, or smell the flowers that surround you.

All this, while getting the exercise that exhilarates the mind and keeps your breathing deep and happy.

Art for Your Bike

Here are a few simple projects that can help your bike ride get noticed, create unity, and share your message with the public and the press.

Bicycle License Plates:

- Cut a small rectangle (approximately the size of this book) out of thin wood, milk carton, cardboard (will get wet), or anything.
- Drill or cut two holes.
- Paint it! Hold a workshop and invite everyone to paint their own or use a stencil to make a lot to give out at your event.
- Attach this below your bike seat using string, wire, rubber bands, or thin strips of fabric.
HANDLE BAR SIGNS:
These are signs that can be attached to the front of your bike, very similar to the bicycle license plates.
Sizes vary depending on your bike, but these can generally be larger than license plates.
• Follow instructions for license plates, but instead handle bar signs can be hung from your handle bars.
  (Make sure to leave or cut space for your hands.)
  Make sure the sign doesn’t touch the wheel, as it could cause an accident.

SIDE ART: Putting art on the side of your bike is a great way to get noticed by the people you ride past, or when your bike is parked.
• Trace the shape inside the frame of your bike onto a thin piece of wood or cardboard.
• Put holes close to the edge.
• Paint it (Have fun! This will be hard to read while you are riding).
• Attach using string, wire, rubber ties, or fabric.

FLAGS: Use flags to add color and movement to your ride.
Flags can be fabric or cardboard mounted on a pole and attached to a bike. The poles allow your visuals to get above the crowd so they can be better seen.

• Small flags—can be made from painted fabric, cardboard, or paper. Use two layers so you can paint on both sides, but paint each one separately so the paint doesn’t bleed thru.

• Large flags—can be beautiful and colorful. Use lightweight fabric so they can blow around. But be sure they are short enough that there is no chance the fabric could get caught in your (or anyone else’s) wheel.

ATTACHING: Flags are best mounted to bikes that already have rear racks. Attach the poles to the rack with a combination of rubber ties, string, tape, then staple, tape or tie the fabric to the pole. After you have painted it beautifully!
Mounted Banners:
- Mounted banners are very similar to flags, but they have cross pieces that hold the fabric out so the message can be easily read.
  - Staple, wire or tie sticks to top and bottom of fabric.
  - Poke a hole in fabric near the top.
  - Tie middle of stick to top of pole (through the hole) with a rubber, tie, wire or string.

Decorate Your Helmet:
- Since you (probably) only wear your helmet it makes sense to add a message.
- Decorate workshop on your own.
- Paint using normal house paint or acrylic paint. Perhaps pass over the helmet lightly with sandpaper to help the paint stick.
  - Add cardboard (or other material) wings or ears to give your helmet some personality and mythology. Attach using tape, wire, string or thin strips of fabric.

Bicycle Orchestras:
- Make some noise!
- Fortunately, many bikes already have musical instruments attached to them. Get a group together and you have a band! A bike can also be an instrument—just hit it with a stick to hear all the sounds it makes.
- Tin Can Drums—You can attach some tin cans to your handlebars and you've got a drum set.
  - To attach, use a nail to poke 4 holes in the can, then tie the can to the handlebar with string, wire, or fabric.
- Bring a musician:
  - If you have a bakrack or a cart for your bike, bring a musician along. Play some common songs so everyone can sing along.
- Bring a boombox (or any portable music system) in your backpack and play some music as you ride along.
- Ask your local radio station to DJ your group bike ride, and ask everyone to bring along a portable sound system that they can all tune to the same station.
IDEAS FOR LOTS OF BIKES

• Create an Aerial Photo: If you have lots of bikes, you have lots of material to create an image (plus you have all the people who rode them there). Create a design that can be photographed from above and use the people and bikes to form an image. [Tip: Sketch out the image on the ground ahead of time, use string or chalk, use the grid system if necessary to enlarge your image.]

[For more tips on making aerial art see: WWW.350.ORG/EN/AERIAL-ART]

• Create a Bike Blockade: If you have lots of bikes, chances are you have lots of bike locks. Gather discretely in front of a climate criminal headquarters that needs to be stopped, and lock your bikes together to form a blockade to stop cars or people from getting in (if they can't get to work, they can't do all the bad things their company does). You can also lock yourself to the bikes (a U-lock fits nicely around the neck). Note: This might well be illegal in some (many) places. Get informed first.

ACTIVISTSLEGALPROJECT.ORG.UK

MORE IDEAS FOR LOTS OF BIKES:

• Critical Mass:

Simply, a Critical Mass is a mass bike ride, organized to reclaim the streets (briefly) from gasoline addicted cars and to show bike power. Mass bike rides have been vital in raising visibility about the need for cities to adopt sustainable design practices, and have contributed to the spread of bike lanes.

• To organize a critical mass, pick a time and place to meet regularly (ex: 7pm, first Friday of every month at...)

(ex: 7 PM, first Friday of every month at...)

(Ex: 7PM, first Friday of every month at...)

Regularity makes it easy to spread the word and for numbers to grow.

• Tip: Public transportation is not the enemy, it is courteous to let buses pass.

• If you obey traffic signals, there is nothing illegal about this. However, when crossing intersections you might want a few people to block traffic. Or you risk having your group divided.

• Maybe you all should ride naked...?