

Jocelyn Lee, Natalie Del Castillo, Klytie Xu (Color Study Group) in collaboration with Tim Young, Solitary Gardener

“Struggle is not a ‘branch,’ it’s a ‘tree.’ See beyond the individual branches that afflict you, uproot, plant anew!”

-Timothy James Young

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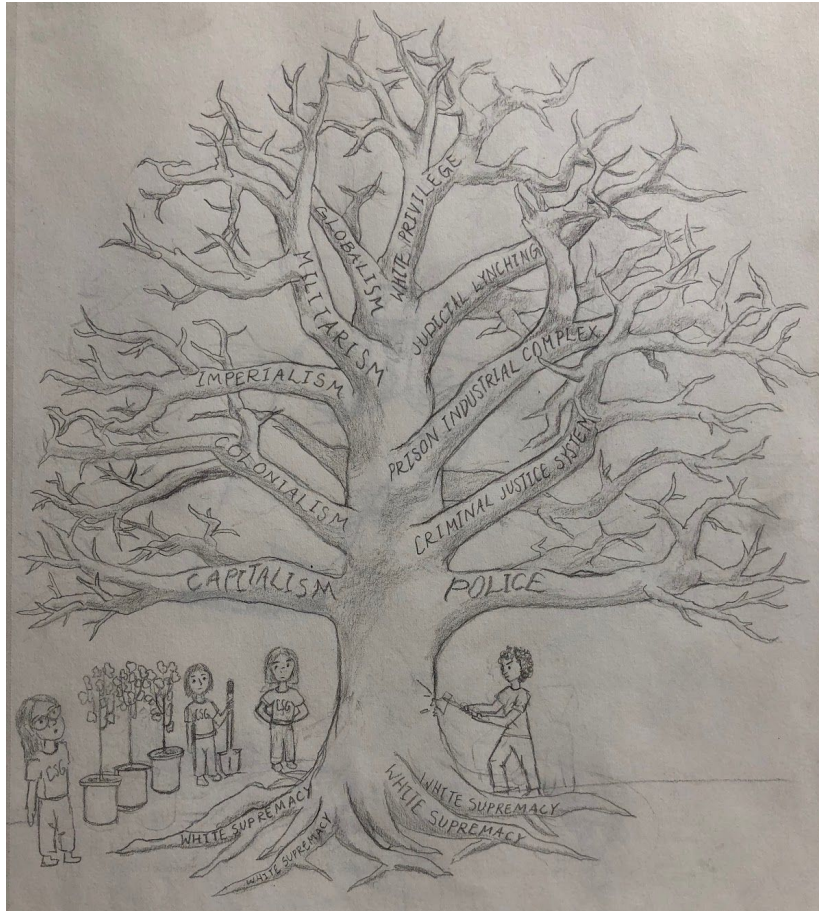
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Desired mural space



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Root of the Matter (working title)

Material description of mural

We do not currently have the dimensions of the anticipated wall space, but the mural design can be easily altered to best fit the space. We have not fully decided on a means of installation as we are unsure which method will best suit our mural image given the wall space. We would like to paint this mural as opposed to wheatpasting this project, in the hopes that a painting will have more longevity than wheatpasting. This painting would ideally be on mounted wooden boards or canvas, but we seek the M.U.R.A.L. Committee's guidance for technical approach.

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Concept

ROOT OF THE MATTER

“Struggle” typifies a thousand branches
Sprawling from a tree,
Each limb and “Ism”
Products of the same seed.

Branches pestilent
Sexism still prevalent
Racism evidently not dead
Complicit are those who allow it to spread.

“Ism” is a plague
Purge or be ruined
Uproot
Plant anew!
-Timothy James Young

Over the past few weeks we have been corresponding with Timothy Young, a wrongly convicted and death row imprisoned Black man about the *Freedom Garden*, a sister project of sorts to the already-planted *Solitary Garden* on UC Santa Cruz’s campus outside the Elena Baskin Visual Arts Print Studio. Tim is brimming with ideas that are perfect for creative outlet, and we see this mural as the perfect opportunity to give Tim a public-facing voice and tell his story. Tim has shared his writings, essays, and poetry with us that cover a wide range of topics that are personal and often pressing to him. His writings interrogate what it means to be a Black man in America and face systemic racism and the prison industrial complex, and we hope to use this mural to further interrogate these systems while visualizing abolition and Tim’s freedom.

We are working in collaboration with Tim Young who envisioned the proposed image for a mural. Our mural design is a visualization of abolition, freedom, and the dreams of an alternative and better future as a landscape. The conceptualization of this mural is guided by one of Tim’s poems in particular, *Root of the Matter*. To illustrate struggle as universal and not individual, an oak tree sits at the center of the mural symbolizing that all fights for justice and freedom come from the same origin. The cause and origin of these “ills” in society begin from the bottom and reach towards the top. The oak tree is labelled “white supremacy” because the cause of most injustices in this country is the systemic racism that dictates and permeates into our daily lives and Tim’s life. The oak tree itself is historically significant because it was commonly used to lynch black people. The people poised at the bottom of the tree are literally chopping white supremacy down.

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The many issues listed on the tree's branches include capitalism, colonialism, imperialism, police, prison industrial complex, and so forth. The inclusion of all these big issues is to demonstrate the intersectionality of all the struggles, despite them appearing to be their own individual struggle. Rather than just pruning the tree of their singular branches or issues, this mural shows the act of chopping the tree down necessary for collective freedom. In addition, the individuals are also holding on to smaller, potted trees, ready to replace the oak tree. On the side of the tree, Tim's poem, *Root of the Matter* will accompany the illustration of the landscape.

Artist Statement on work in general

The Color Study Group was born from a desire to investigate the materiality of color. We are a group of UC Santa Cruz students at UCSC's Art Department and we interrogate the cultural, psychological, and metaphysical implications of color. Our interests in color and the world it inhabits are ever-expanding, but as of late this group is most focused on natural dyeing and the planting of a community dye garden. Our latest project, *Freedom Garden*, is currently being conceptualized in collaboration with Timothy Young, a wrongly convicted and death row imprisoned black man.

We hope to use this mural opportunity as a chance to extend the *Solitary Garden* and the story it tells, with the creative guidance of Timothy Young. Tim has shared his writings and poems with us while we correspond about the *Freedom Garden*, and we see great potential for creative projects such as a mural, to give Tim a public-facing voice and chance to tell his story.

Qualifications

All students involved in the production of this mural are Art Department students, two of which are recent graduates (Spring 2020). We feel qualified to do a mural because we have worked with painting, image transfers, wheatpasting, and printmaking. We feel qualified to do a mural in the specific proposed space in close proximity to the *Solitary Garden* because we have built a personal relationship with Tim Young already. We have agreed to collaborate with each other, and have been corresponding with him over the past few weeks to understand his creative vision and find ways to materialize them.

We do not have specific experience making public murals, but we do have experience with large-scale paintings and using image transfer methods that we feel can help with the production of this mural. We have considered wheat paste for this project but are looking for a more permanent option, so we are considering painting on mounted-wood boards or canvas. We will look to the M.U.R.A.L. Committee for technical assistance on production, but hope to install the mural ourselves as a group if administrative and safety protocols allow.

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Portfolio of 3-5 related artworks



Jocelyn Lee, silkscreen on newsprint wheatpaste project



Natalie Del Castillo, Intaglio aquatint print (left), acrylic painting (right)



Klytie Xu, Relief print (left), Intaglio print (right)

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Budget

Because there is no grant designated for the completion of a mural in this space, we are unsure how to budget our project. Without working in the parameters of a specific grant amount, we have listed the supplies we anticipate needing for the completion of this mural.

List of potential materials for this project:

- i. Wheatpaste - \$10
- ii. Wood panels - \$200
- iii. Paint - \$75
- iv. Paint brushes - \$35
- v. Printing from Blueprint Express (?) - \$25