

SOUTHERN  
EXPOSURE

KQED Arts

### Local Artists Organize 100-Day Calendar of Creative Resistance

By Sarah Hotchkiss  
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100 Days Action, 'We the People.' (Courtesy of *100 Days Action*)

At the first gathering for *100 Days Action*, held at Oakland's Royal NoneSuch Gallery on a cold and rainy night at the start of the new year, the organizers and their assembled audience went around the room explaining why they were there.

"I'm angry," many of them said. "I want to do something with this anger, but I'm not sure where to start."

*100 Days Action*, a project organized by 15 Bay Area artists, educators, activists and writers, is in its simplest sense a web-based calendar of local artistic events created in response to Donald Trump's presidency. But behind the smooth-scrolling website and its catchy GIFs is a network of multi-talented organizers and partner institutions involved in countless hours of meetings, outreach, creative actions and mutual support.

Like the other people attending the *100 Days Action* info session, writer Ingrid Rojas Contreras and her husband, artist Jeremiah Barber, found themselves feeling angry and isolated after the elections. The couple posted their feelings on Facebook, inviting others to gather and discuss how they could take productive action in the face of the next four years. The *100 Days Action* "collective of concerned citizens" was formed.

“That first gathering was a direct response to how isolating it felt,” Contreras says. “It was about working together to counter the loneliness and fear.”

Barber, whose own artwork is often based in performance, pointed to Trump’s 100-day plan, published in Oct. 2016 and officially titled “Donald Trump’s Contract With The American Voter.”

To Barber, the plan sounded like an instructional performance piece, something akin to the work of Yoko Ono, Marina Abramović, Tehching Hsieh or Emma Sulkowicz. That is, something Ono, Abramović, Hsieh or Sulkowicz might produce in an alternate universe, if these artists aligned themselves with priorities like canceling all federal funding to sanctuary cities.

If Trump’s first 100 days in office can be viewed as a performance piece by a skilled entertainer, Barber says artists are uniquely positioned to respond in kind. “We’re actually trained in this language,” he says. “We can offer up our own performance as a counternarrative.”

Thus, “*100 Days Action*,” the project’s website proclaims, “is a call to all bodies that stand against bigotry, xenophobia, racism, sexism, and the destruction of our environment to act together.”

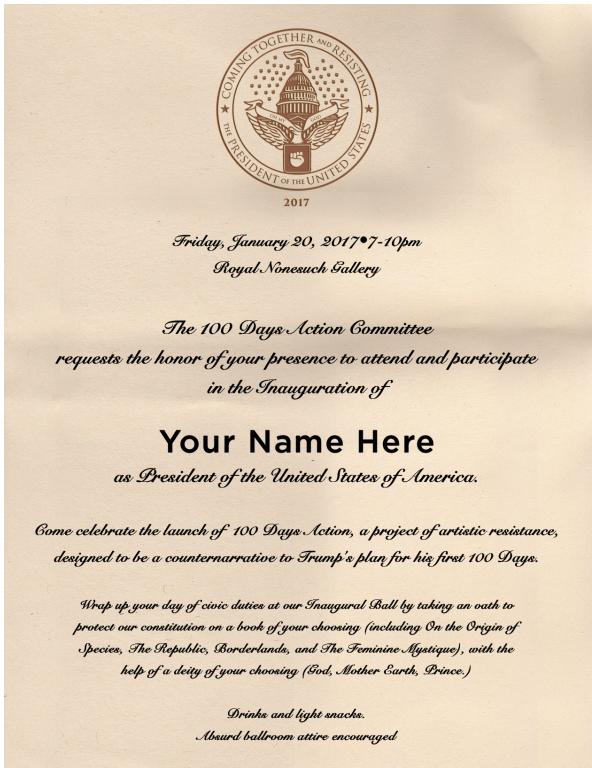
With rolling submission deadlines, *100 Days Action* aims to list as many artistic happenings that fall under its mission statement as possible, with a single action given a feature spot on the site every day. The organizers are in conversation with several partner organizations — including Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Southern Exposure and the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts — to pair submissions with host venues. *100 Days Action* hopes to be a hub, connecting artists, institutions, organizers and volunteers to amplify a given project.

The group is particularly interested in highlighting creative actions that can be undertaken by anyone, anywhere. Instructional pieces, like those contained in Ono’s 1964 publication *Grapefruit*, decentralize the authorship of a particular performance, potentially helping its power to spread far and wide.

In *Grapefruit*, Ono’s “Voice Piece for Soprano” instructs readers to “Scream. / 1. against the wind / 2. against the wall / 3. against the sky.”



100 Days Action, Striking poses for the ‘100 Days Action Inaugural Ball.’  
(Courtesy of *100 Days Action*)



100 Days Action, 'Invitation.' (Courtesy of 100 Days Action)

choosing — anything from the Constitution to the Quran to the *The Feminine Mystique*. In keeping with the tone of all Trump-related festivities, the suggested attire is “absurd ballroom.”

**100 Days Action** takes place Friday, Jan. 20 through Saturday, Apr. 29. For more information visit [100daysaction.net](http://100daysaction.net).

“The little gesture is underestimated,” says Contreras. In concert, she says, gestures like Ono’s “Voice Piece” can become strongly symbolic, especially in the era of the ever-powerful hashtag.

*100 Days Action* organizers also have their own projects in the mix, including Katina Papson’s *Values Vault*, a group of time capsules that invite participants to submit answers to the question, “What do you value?” Revisiting the submissions a year from now, Papson wants to evaluate how priorities might shift in the political, economic and social climate ahead.

And for those without artistic inclinations, who simply want to lend their bodies in support of *100 Days Action*, events begin with an alternative inauguration ball on Friday, Jan.

20 at Royal NoneSuch Gallery. Swear the oath of office on a tome of your own