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War Chest Tour

Schiz-Flux

1988

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Schiz-flux held a 'roving' demonstration last May Day called the War Chest Tour. We sought to emphasize a total critique of the war economy by 'hitting' various businesses and institutions ranging from McDonald's to the ROTC. In between these confrontations were excursions into 'liberated zones', areas pre-designated for the free (fore)play of radical subjectivity. Plans included a smoke-in at the Memorial Union, the burning of American, Soviet and McDonalds flags, and a May Pole dance in Peace Link park where participants would dart from the dance to the porn shops on State St. where, charged with fertile adrenalin, they would form a circle inside of which a 'free exchange of pleasure' could occur. Artsy props and banners were prepared for the whole occasion and over 500 flyers were distributed prior to the event asking other activist groups to plan actions on the same day.

The response was dismal. At noon we arrived with sundry props at the steps of the union and danced around while taking turns with the bullhorn exhorting students to quit work, quit school and join the 'revolution of desire'. About 40 students gathered while huge joints of homegrown were shared with all in the vicinity. Chief of Campus Police Bozo Hansor appeared

with a walkie talkie in hand to keep an eye on this small-scale insurrection as we walked around the back of the union chanting “Smash the war machine”. Once inside more joints were shared and students were invited to join the march.

The pot must’ve spaced everyone out, though, because only 10 of us made it to the next target on the tour, the ROTC building. Also, the concept behind the Tour was not understood by the initial participants: the War Chest Tour was conceived as a fast-moving, highly-charged performance which integrated a militant anti-capitalist perspective with the liberating energy necessary to subvert the system. It was a failure because the crucial link between art, politics and pleasure is unfamiliar to most of the liberals, peaceniks and leftists that the Madison area is positively crawling with; where political asceticism and sad militancy are the prevailing models. But WATCH OUT! We may be back. If you’re interested in organizing War Chest Tour this May Day, get in contact with us!