

# CRENSHAW DAIRY MART

*We are the dandelion.  
We are  
beautiful weeds rising  
from ghetto  
neighborhoods! Locked  
up in cages.  
Our spirits  
Won't fit in their cages.  
#riseofthedandelions*

-

patrisse cullors

As part of ongoing programming and projects for the #PrayForLA initiative, the Crenshaw Dairy Mart revisits Arundhati Roy's essay, "The Pandemic is a Portal," to organize, prototype, and pilot language and vocabulary around an abolitionist imagination and future of what comes after this pandemic, and how systems of mutual aid, community safety and care, healing practices, prayer and accountability may become as subsidized as the evident ways capitalism and the lack of healthcare infrastructure, policing, punishment, and prisons may be divested from. What particularly will be a meaning of returning to "normality" after this pandemic? *abolitionist pod (prototype)* emerges from this urgency which has preceded the covid-19 pandemic, which has only exacerbated resources beyond their previously existing scarcity.

In abolitionist praxis, Mariame Kaba writes, we have to be given space to breathe and stumble. "There are no soloists in abolitionist praxis - abolition is a group improvisation, working together, learning together, failing together by building 'a million different little experiments, just building and trying and taking risks and understanding we're going to have tons of failure.'"

Prototyping an abolitionist imagination for care, reimagined safety and power begins with the propagation of ecologies and ecosystems - an abolitionist imagination is led by self-sustenance and autonomy, for communities, by communities; where, the practice of abolition includes the gathering of collaborators and kin, bringing folks together, to build together, and to step into futures which prioritize healing, compassion, and love. These abolitionist practices are an echo to studies the Crenshaw Dairy Mart co-founders have modeled after Fannie Lou Hamer's Freedom Farm Cooperative, the Republic of New Afrika's "Free the Land!," and more recently, the Soul Fire Farm.

The first *abolitionist pod (prototype)* will be able to house anywhere from 700 to 2000 fruits and vegetable plants sourced by Black farmers and gardeners across Los Angeles County for the public to access and harvest food to feed themselves and their families in the Little Tokyo Historic District at The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA. This library of plants and vegetables will index the larger ecosystem of

localized farmers within Los Angeles County, in ways which can implement a language around neighborhood micro-farming and modular farming in localized city blocks. The pods have been designed to autonomously and self-sustainably water all existing plants in the structure as well as recycling water powered by solar cones. These practices are akin to new languages around modular and micro-farming practices; where, in future iterations, these pods will dissect and reverse, hanging from existing buildings, collecting and recycling water from existing building gutters. Ultimately, the abolitionist pod is designed to build community structures around garden tending, in order to imagine the healing capacities of community, gardening with your neighbors, and hands in soil.

*Growing is our birthright.*

The pod is a prayer, imagining food and farming as a birthright to our lineages, to our ancestries - where there may be an abundance of food, food in plentitude, which may train young gardeners in the same ways reading and books become a part of our education training. We imagine libraries and county buildings as an infrastructural component to the pedagogy of food justice and food abundance - integral to our youths' and adults' education. As part of the ongoing endeavours for the abolitionist pods, toolkits for community programming and maintenance will be provided as an ongoing extension to the practice of liberation.

Like dandelions, which propagate through seeds blown in the wind, we imagine the seeds of community autonomy and an abundance of food security propagating through Los Angeles County initiatives by implementations of modular and autonomous garden pods, which in turn fulfill an imagination of community care and safety. The first *abolitionist pod* will be prototyped using the organic language and form of the geodesic dome, akin to the dandelion itself, where the botanical theatre is ultimately a space for community healing; and, like the dandelion seeds which propagate by being blown in the wind, the walls of the pod are built by shoots of bamboo - a grass which doesn't propagate by the wind, but underground, in rhizomes. Ultimately, both rooting and propagation systems become emergent strategies for liberation - on the ground, above the ground, and under ground.

*We choose abolition as our North Star.  
Come join us on this journey.*

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*abolitionist pod (prototype)* is supported, in part, by Art Rise, a project of WERISE.LA, an initiative of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, with generous support from the Environmental Council of the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) .

*#PrayForLA*, an initiative of the Crenshaw Dairy Mart, is supported, in part, by the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture and the Art for Justice Fund, a sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.