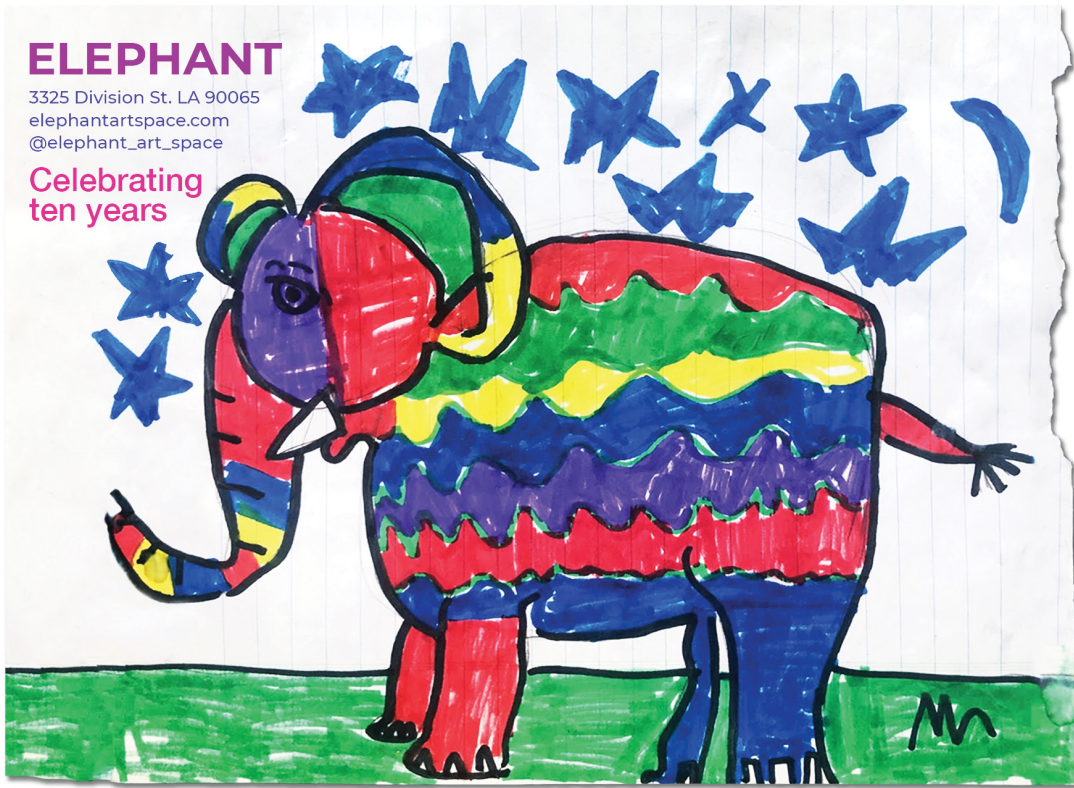


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ten years



Origin of War

1

(El Paso Texas & Dayton Ohio, August 4, 2019)

Another weekend another tree mass shooting in America.

Headlines run stubbing what used to toe.
The character in this book didn't novel.
They ran slower.
Who forgot to kiss them before they went to sleep last night.

What kind of love believes 2, let's do our job.
How many times do we send back where your fuck-uncle thinks she orders.
Which haircut makes the most sense for ripping a small hand from another.
When does the bed make for bodies we refuse to name.

Too many loan servicers,
with teacher cheese sucking an End of dick story.
Too many student spies,
400 files sewn into the skin of their bleeding peers.
Too more squads
shopping
no problem in
a lot
with
a
ten
year
old
girl
screaming
what
the
fuck
America.



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Self-Identified Ethnicity



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Self-Identified Gender Statistics

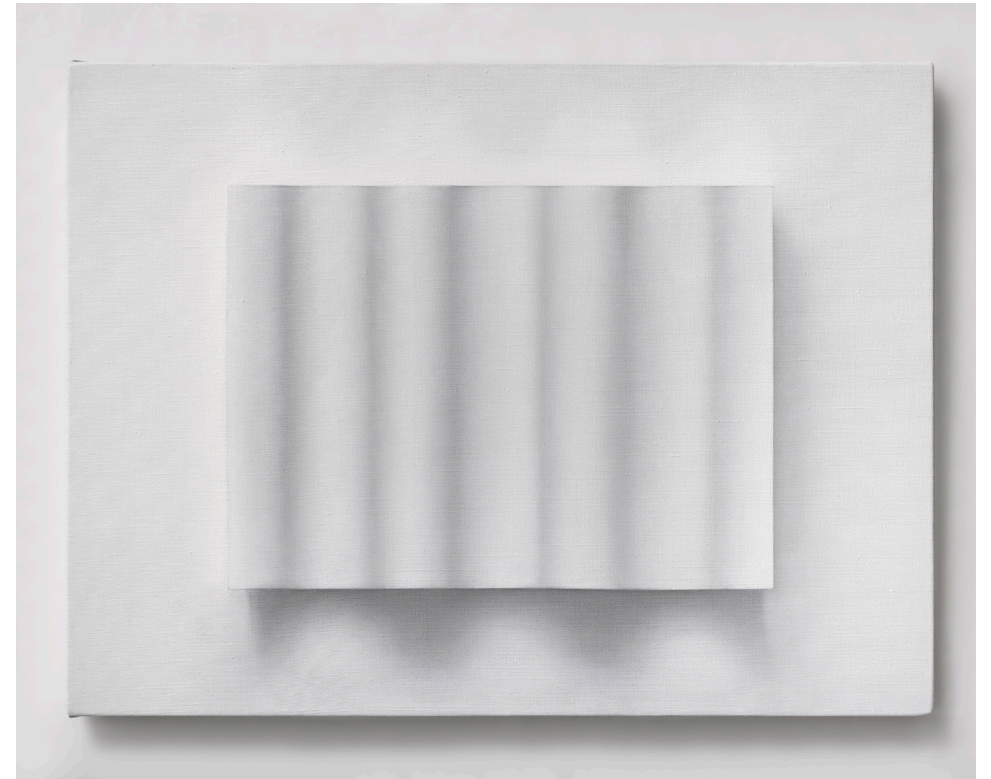


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Leila Weefur (They/He/She) is an artist, writer, and curator based in Oakland, CA. Their video installation practice examines the performativity intrinsic to systems of belonging. The work brings together concepts of the sensorial memory, abject Blackness, hyper-surveillance, and the erotic. The installations are an interrogative, multi-sensorial space designed to prompt self-questioning, revealing the overlapping of violence and eroticism deeply embedded in desire and the performance of identity. These architectural video installations pose unanswerable dilemmas for viewers to confront their placement in the physical space and in their participation in the racialized dynamics of blackness.

5/5 (fivefifths) is a multimedia collective co-founded by Tania Balan-Gaubert, Troy Chew, and Nkiruka Oparah during their MFA at California College of the Arts. 5/5 is dedicated to exploring Black(ness) as an idea, consciousness, reference, and embodied experience through space, language, and visual culture.

Balan-Gaubert uses photography, found and ready-made objects, assemblage, and video to contemplate exodus, long-distance nationalism, and belonging. Chew's work explores the African Diaspora within the urban culture through painting and sculpture, while also questioning the definitions of "Fine art" and "Folk Art." Employing collage, installation, video, craft, and assemblage, Oparah builds multimedia portraits from found objects, familial and personal images, and repurposed materials to investigate spiritual-spatial histories, memory, and Black identity.

5/5 aims to disrupt the idea of a formal gallery space by curating exhibitions according to five pillars known only to its founding members. Each project is curated based on the space, ritual, intuition, and current research.

Flame from the Dark Tower



an installation by **Leila Weefur + 5/5 Collective**

Hi Leila,

Here is our counter-move. We are extremely excited about it. We sent this email to you and to D'Ette. Hope you don't mind a little extended reading. Here goes:

Wow. Art is so incredible. What an amazing situation this is. It keeps unfolding and through the trauma of the shake-ups the meaning and need for our little "catalog" has exponentially exploded. What a privilege it is to get to occupy this intellectual space with you brilliant people. The work we are all doing on this is SO worth it (even if all our hair falls out from stress) and we feel that because of your two brilliantly conceived artworks the exhibition will be infinitely stronger. We have come up with a counter-move that we feel honors everyone's essential needs, including our need to honor everyone and to make choices beneficial to the artworks and the execution of the exhibition both conceptually and logistically.

We are out of time to make these choices due to printing logistics. The two of us discussed at great length last night and are now so excited about the solution we devised that we wouldn't want to trade it for any of the iterations we momentarily landed on along the way. We feel that your two artworks have allowed for an incredibly beautiful, active, and critical scenario that would not have developed without your brilliantly measured moves.

What must it be like to occupy a position of real power? Can a person who hopes for equity between parties ever actually achieve such a thing? How can it be possible to dole out an illusion of equity while occupying a type of "decider" role in the process? How must power be made visible and transparent? Who's labor and intent must be considered within power structures? How do ethics, friendships, group dynamics, aesthetics, logistics, and intellectual approaches affect decisions within a structure? Why do people even want the power to decide on behalf of others? What is the difference between a demand and a weighted request? What are the implications of responding to one or the other? What are the rules of engagement in a general sense and how might those be shaped within our art exhibition trajectories? What is most valuable to this particular exhibition from all perspectives? What should the priorities of an exhibition organizer be? What the fuck is an exhibition catalog?

These are our favorite types of questions. We feel honored to have produced a situation that has allowed people the space to carry on such a remarkable exchange.

The goal of our counter-move is to try to figure out a way to embrace everything essential in both of your projects and allow those works to properly function, while simultaneously honoring the labor and intents of all contributors to the catalog, AND making choices consistent with our curatorial vision for the best possible outcome for the exhibition (both logistically and conceptually/aesthetically). We hope that our need to try to somehow find a balance that works for all parties is not perceived as frustrating or as a failure to make a difficult choice. We are playing out our role here from a very carefully considered perspective that is not at all simply about smoothing things out. From a calculated perspective we want this result for the meaning it produces for the exhibition, not to help us sleep imagining that everybody has been fed an illusion of equity.

That said, we do feel confident that we are not skirting the responsibilities of our power, nor ignoring an ethical approach toward distribution/amplification of space/voice and appropriation of labor.

Before presenting our plan, we feel we should walk through the steps thus far as we perceive them. You might not be aware of every factor listed here, but most have already been discussed:

—This exhibition has been in the process of forming for several years.

—Once we decided that we wanted to include a "catalog", it was never going to be a traditional document, but an active space that allowed for several types of results, and provided a platform for Anthony Carfello to develop a specific text to publish.

—We worked with our great friend, brilliant artist/designer Brian Mann to conceptualize a design for the catalog. Brian is a longtime collaborator and commonly operates in very slippery spaces between art and design. We wanted to give him some room to generate ideas within the catalog.

—Working together we developed the format of a booklet inspired by High School Football programs. There were several reasons for that. One reason was just from a design perspective it provided a model to bounce off of. Secondly it was going to make the thing logistically possible because Night Gallery wasn't going to fund the printing of the booklet (though they were willing to pay Brian to design). The plan was to ask small businesses to purchase ad space in the book so it would be possible for us to afford to self-publish it.

—The show was originally supposed to open in April 2020. We were cranking on everything in early 2020 and had secured ads from several parties. We actually needed as many as we could get because more ads meant a cheaper book for us, even though more ads also meant more pages in the book and thus a more costly larger booklet. Still though we had received enough gracious support from people promising to buy ads that we had struck the right balance.

—Then the reality of 2020 hit. In that moment for ethical reasons we became unwilling to ask other small business people to reach into their pockets for this, since many were struggling just to remain afloat. The ads and "ads" had become essential to the design of the book, and we really liked them, plus we felt very appreciative of the parties who had offered

to support us, so we made a decision to open a credit card to pay for the whole book, now filled with ads that cost us considerable money rather than saving it. We wanted to retain the connection to the contributors for the benefit of the exhibition.

—So obviously everyone designed a contribution specific to the structure and sign-value of a booklet and entered an agreement with us that we intended to produce such a design. Some designs were more specific to the intended formatting than others, and in the case of Leila Weefur and 5/5 Collective, the provided material was designed with specific referent to a printed publication (Fire!!) and with intent to occupy their own spread within the designed structure.

—In the process of discussing union printers (whom we tried for but couldn't afford), we let it leak to D'Ette that we were looking at very high costs to self-publish the booklet.

—Very soon after that D'Ette proposed her work for the exhibition.

—A potential shift from printed booklet to printed poster came with the trace of design intent specific to another format (of the booklet), and what it could mean to reshuffle that and embrace the many complicated effects that resulted from the adaptation.

—Upon describing it to Leila (occupying an artist/organizer role in the exhibition), Leila felt that at the very least a response was necessary in relation to a perceived privileging of one perspective over the intents of many, and the possibility that what it boiled down to was an appropriation of labor from a power source not made publicly available for questioning.

—From our perspective we argued that D'Ette was occupying space as a means of getting to the subject of the very problems Leila perceived in the project, but we couldn't disagree with Leila's perspective regarding the publication contributors' lack of agency within the situation.

—Because D'Ette's work (her demand) was designated and authored as an artwork and because the poster objects are not themselves art objects that appropriated other people's designs in that sort of literal sense (again the posters are not the work, the demand is the work), we felt that an artwork trumped the catalog contributors' design intents, though many of those were flirting with being artworks, and we truly believe that the trace of the design intents would still be present and perhaps even further articulated by being moved into a new context that they were not designed for. That information would be a part of the move by D'Ette, to imagine how these items were designed for a different format and reshuffled at the last second. Then of course we get to contemplate how booklets and posters are different.

—Leila and 5/5 Collective's brilliant strategy used our own reasoning regarding the privileging of claimed official "artworks" and did just that, claimed a new artwork. Their counter-proposal pre-supposes that D'Ette's demand has been enacted. In fact it has. The booklet concept (conceptualized but not yet laid out at all by Brian), was scrapped and Brian designed and laid out a 2-sided poster. We told Leila of the plan to shift to poster. Leila's response was explicitly described as not coming from a position of being a demand. Their request was to shift again to a design consistent with the original intents and preferences of those who planned for the original formatting. That should not be confused with shifting "back" because it truly would be a move forward dependent on D'Ette's previous move. It was also discussed that the results of this exchange could be articulated and claimed as an artwork by Leila and 5/5 within writing by Leila that could even exist in the publication, thereby tracing the meaning in the steps, and making it possible for D'Ette's work to still exist in the history of the exchange, even while "failing" to result in a printed poster. How could Leila and 5/5's work exist after all, without D'Ette's proposal having been enacted? So while negating some of the physical results of the move by D'Ette, much of the intent and impact of that project would be maintained, and maybe even reinforced.

—As brilliant as this reasoning is we have reasons why we prefer a counter-proposal to take us one step further.

First, here is what we understand as the essential elements of your two artworks (one by D'Ette Nogle and one by Leila Weefur and 5/5 Collective):

1. D'Ette's work:

Demanded that we no longer publish printed booklets, but rather publish printed posters. For this, Brian was to restructure the existing contributions into a poster format. Implied in D'Ette's demand is that she give us an "out" to not have to pay an enormous amount out of pocket. As we felt unease in asking others to take on costs, so too did D'Ette in relation to us.

2. Leila's work:

Bounced off of D'Ette's work and requested that the designs of the many be honored for their specific intent and that D'Ette's work stay intact in some way in order for Leila's project to exist as a response. The form of the work is to be basically dematerial as D'Ette's was, but could be described in writing by Leila that could exist in the publication. That writing could trace the results of these exchanges and how Leila and 5/5 feel regarding the power structures at play.

Based on all of the above we have formulated the following response:

Part One:

The poster will be printed. We want to print the poster for a number of reasons. First, though Leila presented a beautiful scenario, we don't think it's necessary for D'Ette's work to "fail" in that particular way as such, for it to be open to active and critical response by Leila's work, even as it pertains to the subject of failure, and we think that the essential elements of Leila's request can still be honored in a way that allows both works to function even in a scenario in which the posters are printed. We definitely agree with Leila that D'Ette's work would have still officially existed by virtue of Leila's response to it, even if the posters weren't printed, but we think the printed posters add many things to the exhibition AND to the

possibilities for Leila's work. We became fascinated with the possibility that the exhibition "documentation" within the booklets (which prioritized ads and "ads" as a design structure) would enter the visual space of the gallery walls during the exhibition, in a sort of gallery "display" format somewhere between advertising poster and museum didactic panel. Anthony Carfello's exhibition text could be read off the wall within the space of the exhibition, and posters could hang in both Night Gallery and as-is.la, connecting the spaces via "advertising" language. The 2-sided design by Brian is a very exciting concept to us. As a curatorial/organizational "problem" we really think the shift from booklet to poster needs to be played out in order for Leila's response to properly function because the poster really viscerally embodies the moving of ideas from one structure/context that they were designed for and into another that they were not. That has all the loaded implications we really want to feel in this move, contained within the form of the poster object, setting the stage for response. Of course all participants will be given the opportunity to pull out of the poster but we certainly hope they won't upon reading the second half of the proposal.

Part Two:

In understanding both projects we perceive D'Ette to be revealing and interrogating illusions of equity as doled out by power structures that might prefer to remain invisible. But in taking that action as an artwork the somewhat satirical language of D'Ette's proposal and the non-negotiable terms set something in motion that was destined (in the best way) for resistance. Leila and 5/5 definitely responded from the perspective of wanting to protect the rights of all of the contributors to the publication, and rightfully indicated that D'Ette herself was occupying a position of invisible power and that much of everyone's carefully considered aesthetic efforts would be subverted by this artwork. Why should D'Ette's work be allowed to discount the efforts of so many who carefully designed something meaningful for a particular format? How many participants were excited about a booklet layout and would have similar concerns about their design feeling out of place, or operating with a different sign value, or being used within the mechanisms of someone else's artwork? We feel the weight of all the implications of D'Ette's move and think that it must exist in this palpable way for Leila's work to have all the potential it can to have affected a change in relation to it (we'll get to that change in just a sec). We are dissatisfied with the aesthetic results of simply inverting the process and turning it "back" into a printed publication. We feel that even though Leila's masterful description of events (perhaps within the publication) could alone describe all these steps to great effect, we are more excited by the possibility of taking the essence of Leila's request and producing a third scenario in which both artworks exist in a very specific way. Logistically we are a day late now on our (barely flexible) deadline for getting design art to the printers for the publication. We never anticipated any of this but want to capture it all in the most beautiful way possible without any superfluous decisions and need to act now. The poster has been laid out by Brian and we intended to let all participants know about the shift to poster in the past couple days (that obviously got delayed as we work this out). The poster was to be a quicker turnaround for printing. Brian indicated that he could quickly put the book design together and we could probably still get it in on time to print, but that would mean either a light speed completion of Leila's text about the steps within these two works to put in the publication for print, or that Leila would have to house that text in a less ideal space later. Perhaps more crucially the return to printing a booklet (with or without the poster) would subvert an element of the functioning of D'Ette's work that alleviates our fiscal responsibility. The reality is that we need to take that opportunity to "blame" someone else for requiring us to print a considerably more affordable object, but we would not have made our choices based on that alone. It is convenient that the work allows us an "out" of a certain type, but we are not comfortable leaving it at that. We agree with Leila that too many things have been compromised in that result. So we wanted to honor the original designs of the booklet contributors, add a move that provides clarity and amplification to the functioning of all projects while avoiding unnecessary redundancy, and make the moves best for the exhibition in the process. So we have decided that the exhibition "catalog" will exist in two formats, using essentially the same material. Anyone who chooses to remove contributed material from one of the formats can do so but we are going to try to convince people that both versions are active and different and the whole thing is way more amazing this way and infinitely more "useful". Here's the deal: The poster is the printed object AND Brian takes his time to ALSO layout the original book version WITH Leila's text added in describing all steps which Leila has an extended period to work on because the "booklet" version of the publication will NOT BE PRINTED by us but rather made available ONLINE for self-printing or downloading through the gallery webpages and/or maybe its own devoted website. We never intended to share the catalog online, but this provides us with an incredible reason to do so. People could then print their own versions as desired and we could produce a couple examples of that for the galleries to have on hand to show people. Everyone's original designs will have a place to exist as designed in a sharable active format that ultimately reaches more and is free to view. The self-printed option will contain the DIY working class aspirations of the original design, while the poster will be a printed object to share with each contributor and a "display" version of the publication. Two versions that speak to each other, both necessary, and neither discounts the other. And the self-aware space for Leila to reflect. Anyone who might wonder why there are two formats will be treated to the story of two artworks. It's so Delusionarium. Better than any version we've had along the way we think. Do we not all get the space and agency and effect we need out of this?

Very much looking forward to your response to this idea. Please remember that we are essentially out of time to decide upon this. We have tried to capture everything amazing within this and we have tried to treat everyone respectfully. We no doubt have failed or compromised or revealed ourselves in some way and welcome a critical response to these choices in Leila's text. We will need to open a couple days for people to decide how they feel about their designs shifting to the printed poster and online printable booklet. Anyone who chooses to pull or alter their material for either version

will have a couple days to do so before we absolutely have to go to print on the poster, so that provides an emergency response window for anyone (including Leila and 5/5) who wants to quickly adjust or add to their contribution to that.

Thanks so much for reading all this we really wanted you to understand how carefully we have considered it.
All the best,
Becky and Jesse

Hi Jesse and Becky,

Thank you for putting together this thoughtful response. I actually anticipated that this would be the result of my proposal and have a ready response. I would like to present another proposal to further move both of these artworks forward and to remain aligned with my original critique of the power structures —unfortunately pronounced by privilege, whiteness, & capitalism. The proposal hopefully brings this to a resolution suited for all parties involved, including D'Ette Nogel, Leila Weefur, 5/5 Collective, Jesse Benson, and Becky Koblick.

The proposal:

1. Print the poster as designed by Brian, including the works from the artists who agreed to be included with the additional text by Leila Weefur.
2. Include the same pages in the online version of the catalog.
3. The pages of Leila Weefur's text will no longer be an original writing by Leila Weefur. The pages to be included in the Poster and Catalog are the contents of this email written by curators Jesse Benson and Becky Koblick.
4. Email the contents of the email from Jesse Benson and Becky Koblick to all participants in the exhibition to make visible all of the labor put forth by all parties involved, including Brian Mann, D'Ette Nogel, Leila Weefur, 5/5 Collective, Jesse Benson, and Becky Koblick.
5. Add the contents of this email sent by Leila Weefur to the email sent to participants and included in the pages of the poster and catalog.

Make it all visible.

Many thanks,

Leila Weefur & 5/5 Collective, Flame from the Dark Tower

Hierarchy



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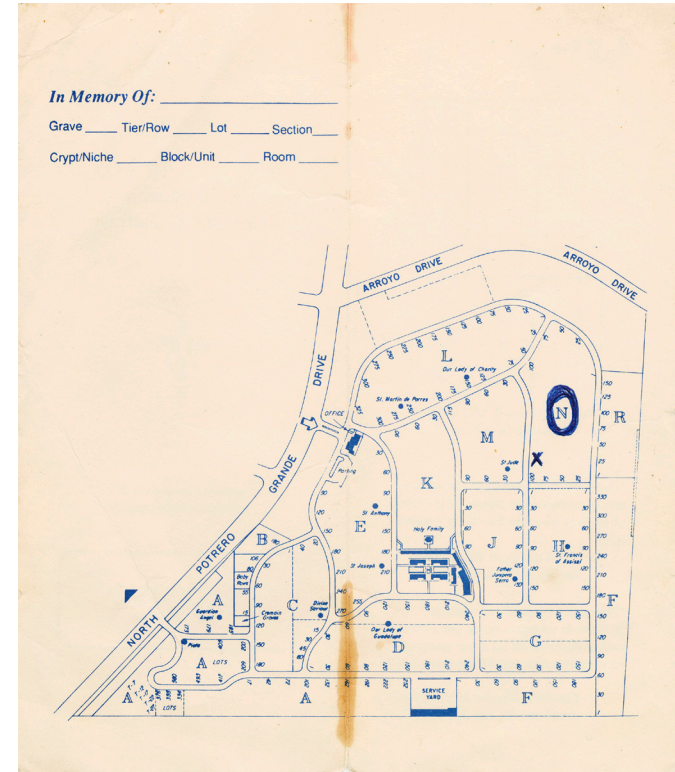
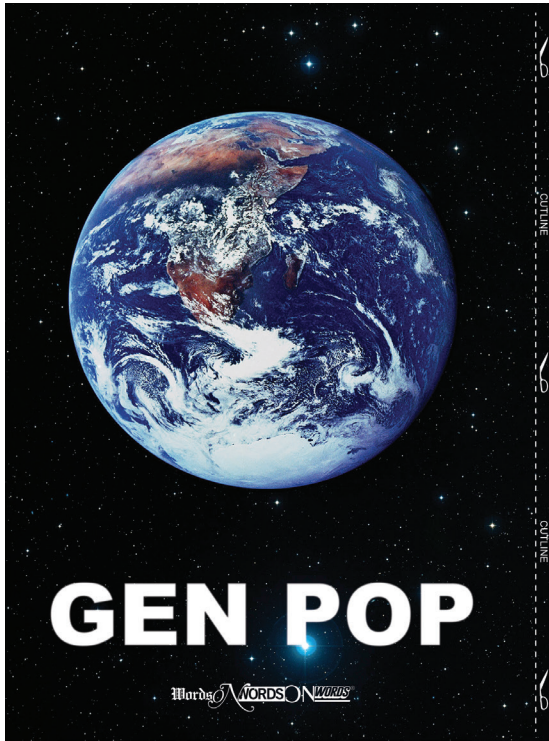
Regards,

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MONEY HUNGRY WOLVES

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and the Los Angeles
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Department
are terrorist
organizations.**





DOWN TO EAT THE RICH

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Regards,

