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FREEDOM

ROUTINE

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Freedom Routine

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Mac Benson

Alexander Boeschenstein

Anahita (Ani) Bradberry

Ted Carey

Sean J Patrick Carney

Lyman Hardy

Bucky Miller

Britt Mosley

Phillip Niemeyer

Sean Ripple

Tiffany Smith

Hannah Spector

Matt Steinke

Katherine Vaughn

Lisa B Woods

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instructions

Northern–Southern

Austin

2025

organized by Phillip Niemeyer

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# Freedom Routines

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*Instruction art as a genre grew up in the 1960s and 70s alongside our culture's growing use and understanding of cooperative/corporate work structures and process oriented bureaucracies, aka high-modernism. Instruction art is portable and scalable. As algorithms for aesthetics, instruction art informed early computer graphics and the generative digital work that followed.*

*Yoko Ono published a seminal collection of art instructions in a book called Grapefruit in 1964. My first encounter with the genre was with a Dutton paperback I picked up in a used bookstore, Conceptual Art edited by Ursula Mayer, 1972. It features short text pieces by Vito Acconci, Fredrick Barhelme, Hans Haacke, Sol LeWitt, and others.*

*Instruction art is like music. It is written as a score and performed. The scores are not the art any more than sheet music is the symphony. The recipe is not the dish.*

*Some instruction art gives steps for the creation of an object or picture. Some instructions have no tangible outcome; they are recipes for experience. One follows instructions, and in so doing experiences the art by being the art.*

*The media of instruction art is life. An instruction art delineates a portion of life.*

*Thank you to the artists participating. Creating a 'zine of instruction arts has long been a flower I wanted to sniff.*

—Phillip Niemeyer

a note on the organization of the text:

*The instructions in this zine are organized alphabetically by the artists' last names. By chance some of the instructions may respond to one another across the pages.*

## Sunset Piece

Mac Benson

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1. pick a spot to watch the sunset. observe the sunset.
2. record what you see in great detail.
3. repeat steps 1 & 2 at the same location 5 times.

## Sunset Piece w/ a Friend

Mac Benson

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1. pick a spot to watch the sunset. observe the sunset.
2. call your friend and recount to them what you remember about the sunset.
3. repeat steps 1 & 2 at the same location 5 times.

## <Word Event>

### Alexander Boeschenstein

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- look up a list of palindromes
- use one in conversation
- you have traveled forward and backward in time

## Birth & Death of a Star

### Anahita (Ani) Bradberry

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Wait until dark.

Light a match and hold it up to the sky. Gaze through the flame and keep still until the heat reaches your fingertips. Blow it out.

Observe the afterimage and its planetary presence among the stars.

## Angle of Reposer or Dietgonal

### Ted Carey

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1. Choose a canned beverage of your liking.
2. Drink the drink until approximately  $\frac{1}{8}$  full.
3. Begin making attempts to balance the can on its edge. This may require subtle adjustments in fluid level, + or -
4. Achieve equilibrium.
5. Consider Chapter 11 of the *Tao Te Ching*.



## *Tao Te Ching*, Chapter 11

### Lao Tzu

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Thirty spokes share the wheel's hub;  
It is the center hole that makes it useful.

Shape clay into a vessel;  
It is the space within that makes it useful.

Cut doors and windows for a room;  
It is the holes which make it useful.

Therefore profit comes from what is there;  
Usefulness from what is not there.

**4'33" in Oz**  
**Sean J Patrick Carney**

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start *The Wizard of Oz* on mute

when the MGM lion starts to roar for the third time

don't do anything

**untitled**  
**Lyman Hardy**

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Find a place to sit.

Close your eyes and Listen.

What is the most interesting thing you hear?

Reproduce that sound with whatever tools you have available.

# How To Be In The Room (Loud)

Bucky Miller

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- There should already be too many theremins in the room. If there aren't, wait.
  - Every theremin must be powered "on."
  - Wake up in the room.
  - Too many theremins.

# Simple Device for Surface Analysis

Britt Mosley

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## Supplies Needed:

Scissors or X-Acto Knife

This 'Zine

## Time Required:

1-3 minutes

1. Bend back the remaining pages in the 'Zine to isolate this text
2. Cut out the square around the dotted lines:



3. Place the page on or against another surface  
Suggested Surfaces:
  - Sky
  - Table
  - Skin
  - Wall
4. Observe
5. Use notes section for feedback or complaints

Notes:

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# Step Backwards

Phillip Niemeyer

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## For one or two players

Take a step. Remember something that happened last year, from your personal memory or a fact or event in your community or in our world.

Articulate the memory by deliberately thinking it, or, if you are playing with a friend, by giving it voice.

Take a second step, and remember something a year before the last memory. With every step remember an earlier year. When you reach the edge of your personal memory, remember something from the lives of your family, friends, or facts learned from history or science. Continue stepping backwards past the year of your birth. Stop when you no longer have space to safely step unobstructed or when you feel you have remembered enough.

Played alone this is a quiet game. Played with a friend it is a conversation.

The step does not have to be a walking step. Any set distance of travel will do: a block on a bike, a highway mile in a car, a lap in the pool, etc.

One can travel in smaller time units—instead of years: seasons, months, weeks, days, even hours. One can reach a more distant past by stepping over decades, centuries, or eons.

# A Peasant's Privacy II

Sean Ripple

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At 7:30 pm on April 10th, arrive at the Half Price Books parking lot located at 5555 N Lamar Blvd and park northward in such a way that you have good visibility of the property marquee.

Once parked, turn off any sound that might be coming from your car radio and make sure your phone volume is on the highest setting. Send me a text @ 512-699-8168 once this has been completed.

Once I receive your text I will send a file to your phone. Please confirm receipt via text once it has been delivered.

After you've confirmed receipt, play the file. Please text me to let me know when the file has been played in its entirety.

After I've received the text indicating that the first file has been played in its entirety, I will send a second file to your phone. Please confirm receipt via text and then play the file.

Once the second file has finished, linger for approximately 3 minutes and then feel free to depart.

# How to Find Portals

Tiffany Smith

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1. Look for places where the air is heavy, humming, charged.
2. Check the edges of mirrors and doorways at dusk for reflections and shadows that don't match their surroundings.
3. Run your fingers along old books, tree bark, and the cracks of abandoned buildings.
4. Step where no one else steps between train cars, behind curtains, into the space just before sleep.
5. Listen for a sound that doesn't belong and follow it.
6. Ask a question out loud. Wait for a response.

When you find one, don't hesitate. Step through if you can accept not coming back.

# Turn Your Body Into a Parenthesis

Hannah Spector

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1. turn your body into a parenthesis.
2. understand that a parenthesis divides the world between those who understand and those who do not.
3. find another person and ask them to turn their body into a parenthesis.
4. with your parenthesis companion, stand on either side of objects in your vicinity (for example: parenthesis your bodies around a chair, another person, a dog, a leaf, a rock at the bottom of a shallow river, etc.). you are pitching a tent. you are making a wordless sentence. you are making silent snow.
5. repeat until you are satisfied. or until you parenthesis three dogs (at once or separately).

# House Knot

## Hannah Spector

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tie your house into a knot:

first, find several ropes.

then, go out the door, around the corner, over the roof,  
and through the window.

fasten knots as you go.

please, take the most circuitous route until you arrive  
at the beginning.

complete this circle of understanding.

# Follow the Directions

## Matt Steinke

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When given an instruction, resist the urge to act immediately. Instead, pause for 20 seconds to 1 minute.

Focus on key words in the directive, not just as language but as physical objects—each with shape, texture, and form. Imagine holding them in your hand, turning them over, studying their weight.

Now, project these words onto the wall in front of you with your mind's eye. Let them shift, morph, appear, and disappear. For each word, let your thoughts wander—what memories, sounds, textures, or colors do they evoke?

Visualize these associations as a chain of objects descending toward the floor, like the tail of an animal skeleton. Only once this process is complete should you proceed with the requested action.

If the moment requires, offer an apology—for the pause, for the space you took to process, or for any incongruity between your response and the expectations placed upon you.

# Dog Walk

## Katherine Vaughn

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Go outside

Tune your ears to the layered cake of sounds around you Hear a sound, then turn a body part towards its source Hear a sound, move towards the source

Shake vigorously your head and shoulders, down to your arms, your torso and waist Shake out your tail, down to your legs and feet

Stretch your muzzle out and your ears up

Spread the pads of your palms and grip the earth

Feel the earth pressing up through your paws with each step you take One two three four

Face the ground

Allow a scent to pull you forward as your ears tune to what is behind you

Run in circles

Pace and survey Wag your tail

Eat a blade of grass

Be still and sniff, listen, feel, watch

Press your muzzle into the earth

Let the scent fill your head

Paw through layers of dirt, loam, silt Smell its layered past

Lift your head towards the sky

Smell what is coming, what was once here, the path a possum took, the emotions around you

Put your heart on the ground

Feel the rays of the sun penetrating layers of fur Feel the magnetic fields undulating out of the earth

Follow your nose Find where home is Follow your nose Find your family Follow your nose

Press your face into the earth and let its scent fill your nasal cavities and chest and stomach Hold it there

Release and sigh

# Eight Instructions

Lisa B Woods

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1.

Find something you throw away every day (floss, daily wear contact case, coffee pod, car food can, soda can, banana peel, etc.) Collect this item for 30 to 365 days. Make a sculpture or drawing from the collection.

2.

Find a rock and cocoon it in thread. Repeat daily for a decade.

3.

Put a baby monitor in your bedroom to listen to it while at work. Put a baby monitor on your work desk to listen to while in bed.

4.

Light a match. Watch it burn. Touch the hot tip to a piece of paper. Repeat daily. Accumulate burn marks in rows and columns until the paper is full.

5.

Gather a group. Give each person a lozenge. Invite them to suck on the lozenge while humming their favorite song, and to stop humming when the lozenge is done.

6.

Have a friend attend an art show for you. Have them call you on the phone from the gallery. Drink a glass of wine while they describe each artwork to you.

7.

Take a friend to the paint swatch section of the hardware store. Secretly choose a color. Describe the color to your friend. Take your time and answer all your friend's questions. Give your friend one chance to guess the color swatch.

8.

Imagine you are the water in the pipes of your house. Consider what you, the water in your pipes, experience:

- i. in the morning
- ii. At lunchtime
- iii. In the evening
- iv. In the dead of night

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