

Digital workshop handout and activist guide to the exhibition

# Everything Comes Together at the Table

Mixed media installation by Lynn Hutchinson Lee and Ingrid Mayrhofer  
with contributions from Neri Espinoza and Miguel Lima  
2023

## contents

- background and links to information about US intervention and human rights abuses in Guatemala
- links to groups currently active in Guatemala, still looking for detained/disappeared family members
- hands-on step-by-step guide to designing a poster, flyer or card
- space to post your contributions

workshop guide by Ingrid Mayrhofer with help from Neri Espinoza, Eric Mills, and the CERLAC Resource Centre

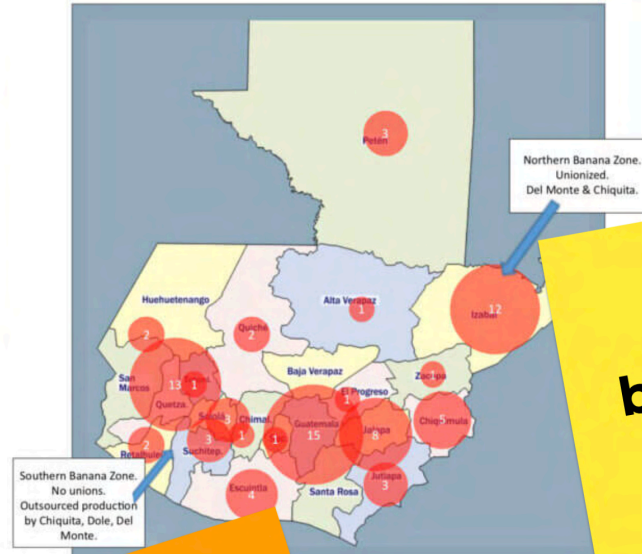
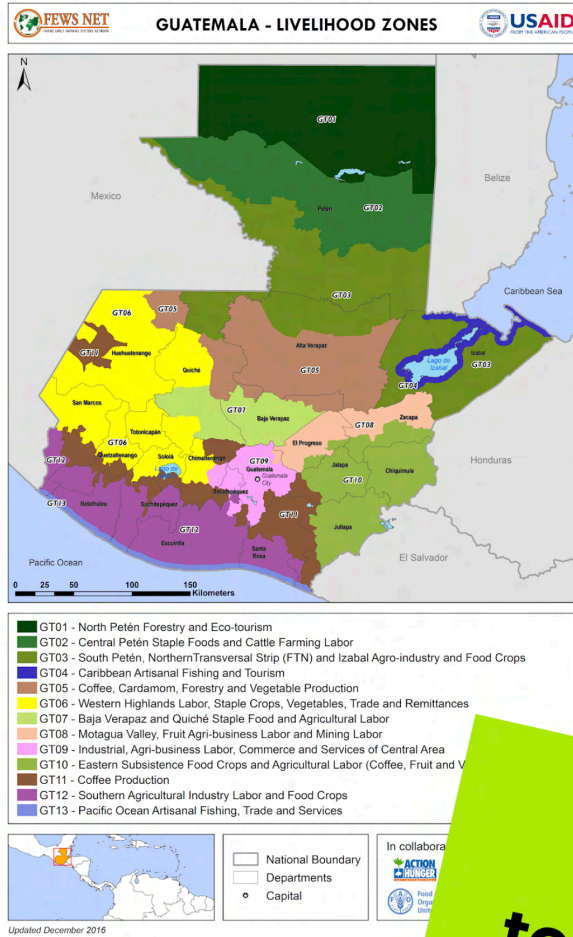
"Everything Comes Together at the Table" is based on "kitchen table" activism that led to us founding the artists' collective Red Tree in the late 1980s. Red Tree supported and participated in actions and campaigns launched by CDGUA (Committee for the Detained Disappeared in Guatemala) and other solidarity groups throughout the eighties and nineties. While CDGUA dissolved in 2000 after lengthy peace negotiations in Guatemala, Red Tree and other activists continued to work on human rights issues through community arts collaborations.

for details on our collaborative memorial for the Detained/  
Disappeared in Guatemala, please see

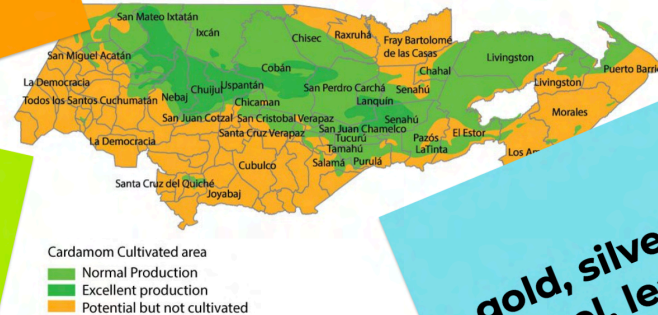
<https://redtreecollective.org/nunca-mas/>



"Our privileges are located on the same map as their suffering, and may -



GUATEMALA CARDAMOM AREA



Guatemala, Four Main Mining-Related Community Defence Struggles. (Sch, 2019).

**tourism**

**cardamom**

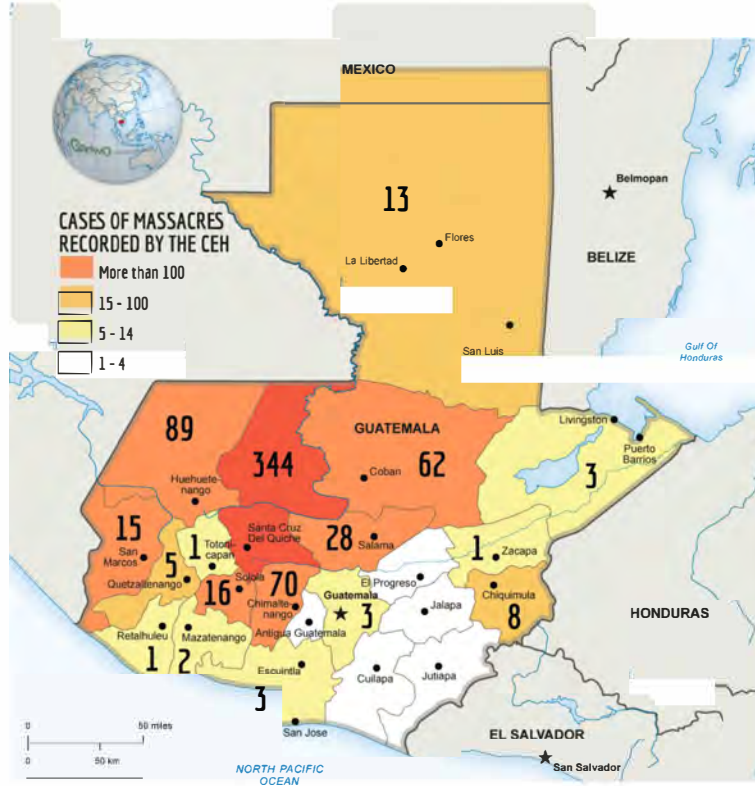
**bananas**

**coffee**

**gold, silver, nickel, lead, zinc, oil**

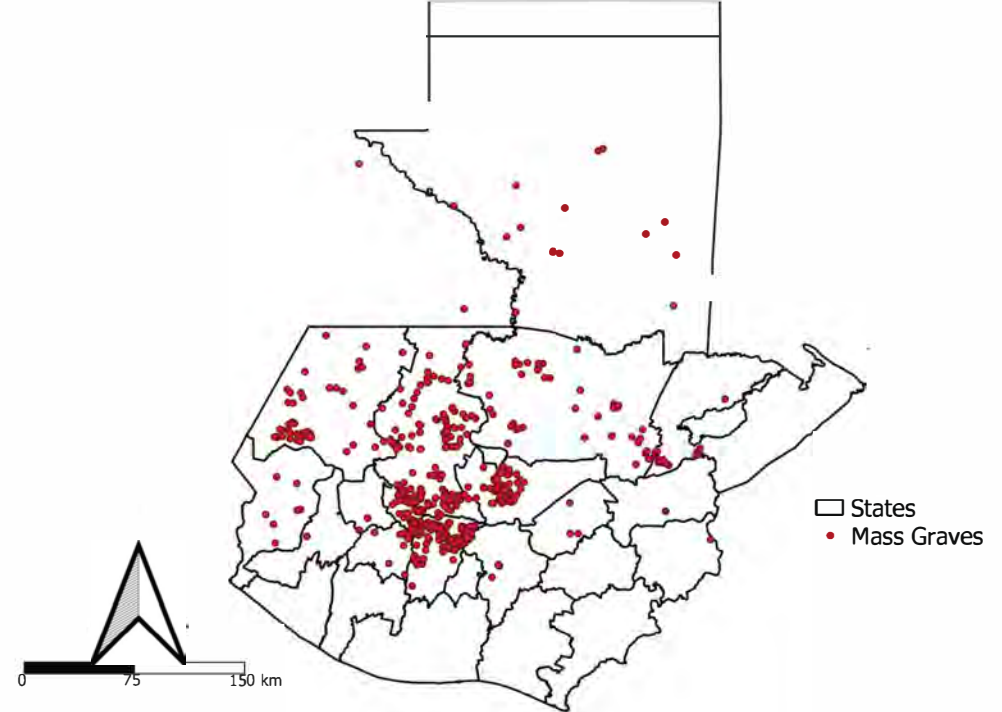


in ways we prefer not to imagine - be linked to their suffering...



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## Mass Graves in Guatemala



<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1556-4029.14889>

<https://en.gariwo.net/education/insights/guatemalan-genocide-7841.html>

...as the wealth of some may imply the destitution of others. ..."

Susan Sontag

Do you  
drink coca  
cola?

## labour's world



### In Guatemala — 'Things go better with union-busting'

"Ods no estau solos" (You are not alone). These words of encouragement were included in a recent telegram sent by the CLC to 460 workers occupying a Guatemalan bottling plant of Coca-Cola (EGSA). After a frustrating series of negotiations, EGSA announced on February 17, 1984, that it had gone bankrupt and was closing its operations immediately. The overwhelming response of the workers to this obvious union-busting tactic was to occupy the plant. The workers are determined to continue the occupation until the problem is resolved and the CLC along with the international trade union community is determined to support them in every way possible.

To be fully understood, the drama which has unfolded in Guatemala must

be seen in light of the innumerable events of 1979-80 when several union leaders of the plant were killed during a dispute with the plant and its parent Coca-Cola. The international trade union community led by the International Food Workers, a trade secretariat affiliated with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, became involved in the dispute (which involved recognition of the plant union and the negotiation of a collective agreement), during its early stages and was instrumental in achieving a settlement.

The CLC announced a boycott of Coca-Cola during the dispute and this measure was instrumental in placing pressure on the employer. The settlement, which was reached in September 1980 included removal of police from

the plant, reinstatement of dozens of fired workers, the appointment of a new management by Coca-Cola, union recognition and respect for union rights, the negotiation of a collective agreement and the establishment of a special fund to assist the families of workers killed during the dispute. At the time President McDonald said "this agreement is just another example of the power for good that can be generated by workers' collective action in Canada and across the world".

Unfortunately, the decision taken by Coca-Cola to undertake the recent "bankruptcy by proxy" action threatens to wipe out the gains made in 1980.

In responding to CLC demands that negotiations resume, Coca-Cola in Atlanta has denied any responsibility for the labour dispute and has advised the CLC that EGSA is completely independent from Coca-Cola. Despite these pious claims, the CLC has learned that Coca-Cola owns the EGSA mortgage, owns the bottling equipment in the plant and is EGSA's largest creditor. The CLC has also learned that EGSA undertook the services of a well-known legal firm, which has been used by Coca-Cola in union-busting actions, prior to the so-called bankruptcy and the company deliberately let its markets and even bottle suppliers go to competitors (which also bottle for Coca-Cola products), situated outside Guatemala City.



### Report from Guatemala

John Barker, director of the CLC International Affairs Department discussing the Guatemalan situation with Rick Jackson, CLC national representative. Jackson returned

from Latin America in 1983 after working for a year as an ICFTU-CLC project planner in the region.

— (CLC/Labor News-Photo Editors)

Do you cook  
or bake with  
cardamom?

Are you an  
eco-tourist?

Do you  
drink  
coffee?

Do you  
eat  
bananas?

How \$1 worth of bananas is divided throughout the supply chain



Do you know  
where your  
Canada  
Pension Plan  
invests?





-Solidarity  
-Canada

"Disappeared": Members of a Mutual Support Group gathered in Guatemala City last August with a huge list of the names of those who have vanished in recent months. Reader, below, says Canadians should become concerned with issues beyond our borders, such as this one.

## 'Canadians should be concerned with human rights abuses abroad'

Compared to the average living conditions of the world population, Canadians enjoy a high standard of living. However, I believe that we Canadians are generally too concerned with our own affairs to bother looking beyond our own borders. It is time we took notice of other countries where people are denied the most basic of human rights.

Look, for example, at Guatemala. In a country with a population of approximately 7 million, it is estimated that 100 people "disappear" or are killed outright every month. This is the Guatemalan military regime's effective method of silencing opposition to its policies.

At least 37,000 people have "disappeared" in Guatemala in the past 18 years. In Canada, we

often hear of missing children — their pictures are printed in newspapers, and the general public is alerted to watch for them. In Guatemala, the chief of state has declared that, "to look for disappeared relatives is a subversive act."

This year, Guatemalan high school students are not attending school. This is not because of a teachers' strike, but because the army and police have occupied the schools and suspended classes in order to silence protesting. The students were vocalizing their dissent because of a 50 per cent increase in the price of public transportation and bread.

In a community where the average worker already hovers at or is below the poverty line,

such an increase on basic commodities is outrageous. Imagine the protests if bread prices were to increase by 50 per cent in Canada tomorrow morning.

The situation in several other countries is similar. Yet most Canadians are unaware, or at least do nothing about the continuing exploitation of fundamental human rights in such countries. I invite readers to take a more active role in what is going on in the world.

Get involved! As Live Aid sang, "We are the World. We are the Children. We are the ones who make a brighter day, so let's start giving." What have we got to lose?

KATHY MORTIMER  
Missouri

## THE UNION BUILDER DEC. 87 (USIA DISSENT 2) Union Leaders Continue To Be Killed In Guatemala

Three representatives of the new independent labour movement in Guatemala have been on a tour of Canada for five days, and they were guests at the District 8 Human Rights Conference in November.

The delegation is made up of José Francisco Cui Viquez of the Union of Guatemalan Workers' Unions, José Manuel del Cid of the Union of Workers of Quetzaltenango, and Jorge Enrique Pineda of the Union of Workers of the National Electrical Institute.

The three told Union Builder that their purpose in visiting Canada is to make people aware of the new trade union movement in Guatemala as well as appeal to the international solidarity of the steelworkers and other unions in order to help them in their struggle.

And protection does need to be restored with respect to the human rights records in the world.

The close and of the risk of being trade union leaders in Guatemala. The spirit of humanism comes in many forms — from threats on their lives through anonymous letters and telephone calls to their lives, at these families. They are often directed in their jobs, often before of

higher jobs, or blacklisted from working at other companies. They face the possibility of kidnapping and assassination.

"Death squads," although supposedly brought in to end by the kidnapping of Guatemala's human rights police, have re-emerged with their members were simply criminal and targeted into regular police units. As a recent Amnesty International report on Guatemala pointed out, "A significant number of politically motivated killings and disappearances continue to take place and little effort is made to punish those responsible." According to the trade union activists, the killings are now made to look like the work of criminals rather than fear of discrimination violence. The workers have learned to be more subtle, yet the killing continues.

When asked what the Solidarity can do to help, the activists suggested letters and aid in Guatemala, subsequent demanding aid and to the repression, support for the strikes in Guatemala and ending kidnappings, there is no funding mission. All this puts huge needs pressure on the government, they said.

The federal government has actually decided to resume bilateral relations.

ment to government and in Guatemala, which it had suggested in 1981 because of the human rights abuses. Many Canadians and their organizations, including the Toronto Office and Mail, have decided this year because of the delay in clearing up the abuse. According to the Office, "If Canada were to do this (cancel trade with aid), it runs the risk of reversing the declining value that a more productive commitment to peace."

The trade union activists suggest, instead, that Canadians send international aid through non-governmental organizations so that it would reach the people who need it most.



These trade union leaders from Guatemala told Union Builder of the human rights abuses and that they are part of every day living in that country.

Great - Sol. Peace

## Photos and solidarity

TORONTO — One thousand children have been orphaned in Guatemala's dirty war. Almost a quarter of the population lives in "model" villages, a euphemism for concentration camps where forced labor and brainwashing prevail.

Malnutrition and infant mortality in the camps run rampant. The living is subsistent for the thousands of women who support themselves through handicrafts while the men are forced to join patrols to fight guerrillas.

These scenes were captured by Canadian journalist Alison Acker during her month stay at the Xecopol camp in El Quiché. They are gathered in a photographic and handicraft display sponsored by the Toronto Guatemalan Solidarity Committee and now showing at Partisan Gallery on Queen West.

Acker was more than an observer at Xecopol. Noted for her solidarity work on behalf of Latin America, she has travelled and written extensively on Chile and El Salvador in addition to Guatemala. In her traditional style she threw herself into the

daily life of the people at Xecopol. Her resulting photographs are a clear accusation of a system which is maintained through force of bayonets, which exterminates people for the benefit of a ruling oligarchy and behind them Yankee imperialism.

— A. Alard

Partisan Gallery, 1140 Queen St. West, Thurs. & Fri. 6 to 9 p.m., weekends noon to 6 p.m. Show runs until March 2.



From Partisan show on Guatemala

Partisan

How old were you:  
when this  
happened? when  
you found out?  
when you took  
action?

## Blood on our hands

The Cliffe's story of a Guatemalan woman tortured and murdered before her emigration to Canada (Guatemalan Woman Set To Come To Canada Found Dead, Twisted — Dec. 14) is but one of a library of horrors from Guatemala.

In March, the head of the group representing families of the disappeared was found murdered, his tongue cut out. Another leader was killed in April, alongside his baby which had its body pinned to a wall. And earlier this month, Oscar Revilla — International, which supports the group, was expelled by the military government.

Yet we hear that the Canadian Government is much more considerate, giving aid to the Guatemalan regime, counting on the recent election of a Christian Democrat to head the Guatemalan's new government.

We have already witnessed that life in El Salvador, promising aid because elections there have given repression a supposedly cleaner face. If we fail for the same low in Guatemala — where soldiers and children are treated as "strategic families," Vietnamese, and want give up any control over the countryside — then Canada must accept that there is blood on our hands, too.

Alison Acker  
Toronto

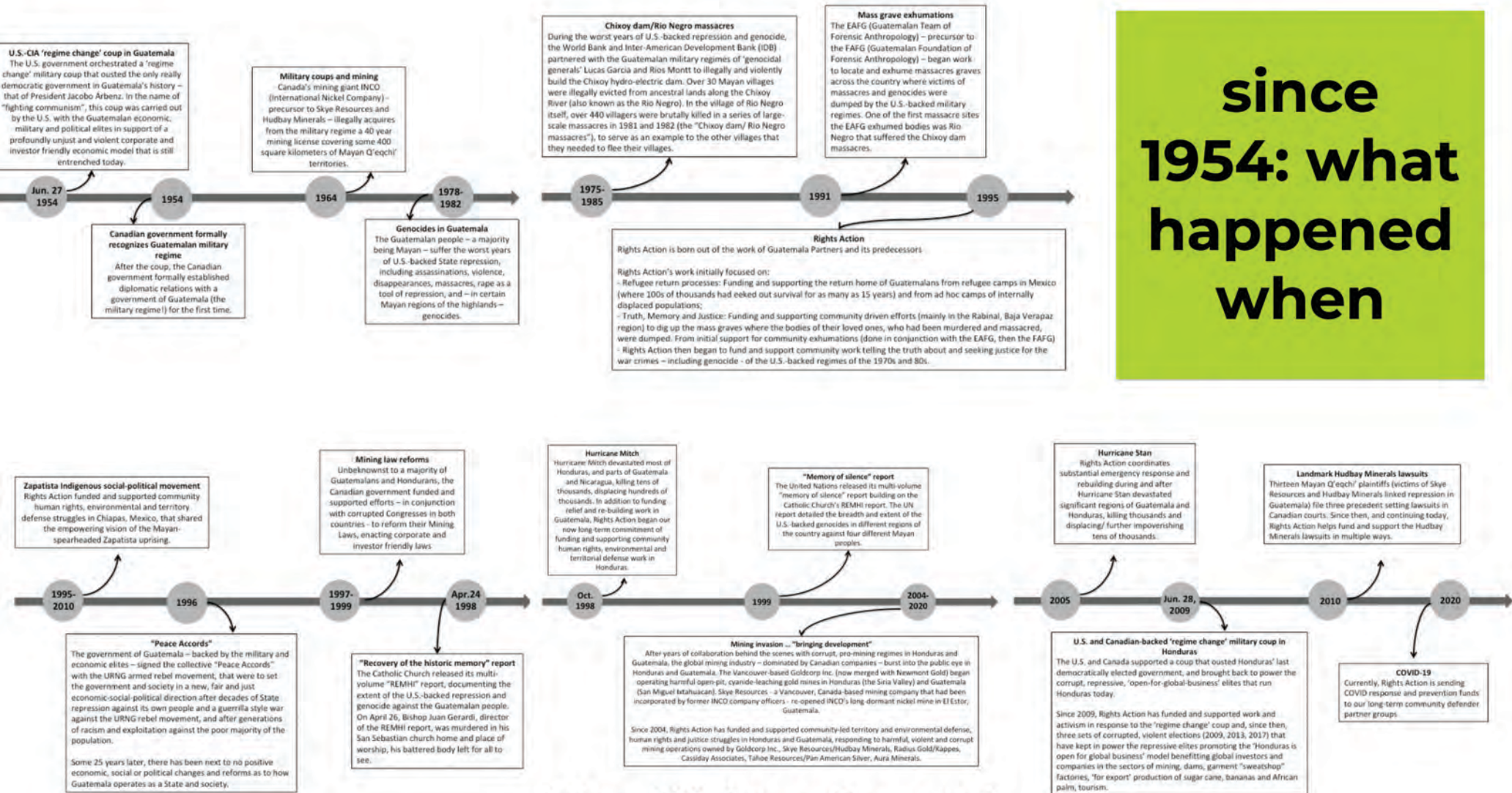
Great - Sol. Peace

Partisan

Partisan



# since 1954: what happened when



<https://rightsaction.org/>

## US interference in Guatemala leading up to the 1954 coup

### **Monroe doctrine:**

United Fruit Company owned the railroad and had banana monopoly

### **Cold War-mongering:**

"Operation PB History" claimed Soviet influence, planted "proof" after the 1954 coup

CIA attempted "regime change" in Guatemala:

PBSuccess, Harry Truman 1952

Operation PB Fortune, John Foster Dulles, Allen Dulles

Eisenhower 1953

### **Tactics to undermine the elected government of Jacobo Árbenz in response to agrarian reforms:**

-arms and trade embargo

-naval quarantine (affected exports to Europe and Middle East)

-"fake news" radio station broadcasting from Miami

-fabricated reports of growing opposition (fake "Liberation Army") and government repression, threat of communism, location of the radio station

-CIA armed, funded, and trained a force of 480 men led by Carlos Castillo Armas.

#### 65. Draft Memorandum for the Record<sup>1</sup>

Washington, November 12, 1953.

##### SUBJECT

Program for PBSUCCESS

##### REFERENCES

- A. "Guatemala—General Plan of Action", TS# dated 11 September 1953<sup>2</sup>  
B. Project PBSUCCESS Status Report, dated 29 October 1953<sup>3</sup>

##### A. Objectives

1. To remove covertly, and without bloodshed if possible, the menace of the present Communist-controlled government of Guatemala.
2. To install and sustain, covertly, a pro-US government in Guatemala.

Snippet of the detailed memo outlining the program for Operation PBSUCCESS. The CIA outlines their objectives, their statement of the problem, and the advantage of the operation.

<https://narratively.com/the-literally-unbelievable-story-of-the-original-fake-news-network/>

[https://soundcloud.com/narratively/tape-288?utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_campaign=wtshare&utm\\_medium=widget&utm\\_content=https%253A%252F%252Fsoundcloud.com%252F%252Fnarratively%252Fta](https://soundcloud.com/narratively/tape-288?utm_source=clipboard&utm_campaign=wtshare&utm_medium=widget&utm_content=https%253A%252F%252Fsoundcloud.com%252F%252Fnarratively%252Fta)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1954\\_Guatemalan\\_coup\\_d%27%C3%A9tat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1954_Guatemalan_coup_d%27%C3%A9tat)

search:

"Bill Clinton's 1999 apology for US role in Guatemala"



TORONTO — One thousand children have been orphaned in Guatemala's dirty war.

social media links of groups looking for detained/disappeared relatives in Guatemala

Sábado  
28 agosto 2021  
Conmemoración virtual



Caso Diario Militar

DÍA INTERNACIONAL DE LAS VÍCTIMAS  
DE DESAPARICIONES FORZADAS



Hijos Guatemala  
@hijos.guatemala Art

<https://www.facebook.com/hijos.guatemala>

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100081652175485>

<https://www.facebook.com/CasoDiarioM>

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=famdegua>



Colectivo Estamos Aqui  
3 mutual friends



<https://www.facebook.com/hijos.guatemala>

second and third generation relatives of the detained/disappeared still searching for their loved ones






# Colectivo Estamos aquí (the we-are-here collective)

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100081652175485>

illegally adopted as children, many of them in Quebec, they are still searching for their birth parents and families in Guatemala



what we can do in Canada:

- inform yourself and tell your friends
  - sign a petition, write a letter, make a poster
  - support a group that supports social justice initiatives
  - join a group that works in solidarity
- 

#### mining

<https://thewalrus.ca/is-canada-to-blame-for-human-rights-abuses-in-guatemala/>  
<https://nowtoronto.com/news/is-canada-to-blame-for-human-rights-abuses-in-guatemala/>  
<https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/guatemala-mines-ex-security-chief-pleads-guilty-to-murder-of-indigenous-leader/>  
<https://www.halifaxexaminer.ca/commentary/it-pains-me-to-tell-you-that-the-image-of-canada-is-severely-damaged/>  
<https://rightsaction.org/>  
<https://sfpirg.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Canadian-Mining-Impacts-and-Resistance-Movements-Online-Version.pdf>

#### illegal adoptions

20K between 2000 and 2007  
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100081652175485&mibextid=ZbWKwL>  
<https://pbi-guatemala.org/en/news/2022-09/stolen-childhood-we-are-seeds-state-tried-kill-now-we-bloom-morning-light>

#### current petitions

<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/say-no-to-dirty-gold-mining-in-guatemala>  
<https://earthworks.salsalabs.org/lapuya/index.html>  
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/location/americas/central-america-and-the-caribbean/guatemala/report-guatemala/>  
"Guatemalan coffee has lost its flavour"  
<https://guatemalahumanrightscommission.salsalabs.org/URGENTTELEPHONECAMPAIGN/index.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&id=f3642661-7747-4122-b77b-ae194d0e8ea6>  
<https://nisgua.org/tag/famdegua/>  
[https://memoriavirtualguatemala.org/?page\\_id=1990](https://memoriavirtualguatemala.org/?page_id=1990)  
<https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/raising-funds-for-military-diary-crimes-against-humanity-trial>

#### human rights issues in Canada

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/sudbury/first-nations-ontario-court-1.6608276>  
<https://www.haudenosauneeconfederacy.com/2021/11/statement-cease-and-desist-blue-triton/>  
<https://nctr.ca/records/reports/>  
<https://www.indigenousclimateaction.com/>  
[https://rabble.ca/environment/fight-water-privatization-on-world-water-day/?utm\\_source=Newsletter](https://rabble.ca/environment/fight-water-privatization-on-world-water-day/?utm_source=Newsletter)



# make a poster, a flyer, a card, a banner using principles of design and activism

## some principles of design

- balance: negative space is the space that surrounds an object or figure - it can be a shape that says something, balance the use of space for your object/subject (positive space) and what surrounds it.
- contrast: visual opposites can create a third image; contrast images and text, dark and light colours, textures
- emphasis: what stands out from its surroundings?
- proportion/scale: is one figure or word larger, or smaller? What does the size mean to your message?
- perspective: what's closer, what's in the distance - the problem or the solution?
- movement: when a figure or object is static, monumental, dynamic or rhythmic, it takes on a different meaning
- pattern/repetition: a recurring image, photo of a photo, mirror, tv, cellphone screen, can show how embedded it is


## some principles of activism

from <https://beautifultrouble.org>, a toolbox for artist/activists

- bring the issue home: what would it look like if they were digging up your front yard, poisoning your water, kicking you out of your home, in order to extract something that you will never get to use?
- make the invisible noticed:  
what is behind injustice, who profits, who thinks they are gaining, but are just being used? what/who else is affected directly or indirectly?
- turn the tables:  
upside down, inside out, what does a better world look like? Banksy has given us some very good examples.
- reframe:  
capitalism is behind everything, if you change the settings, who does what?
- balance art and message: Neri's posters use the geographic shape of Guatemala as both positive and negative space. How does the meaning change?
- just because something is serious, doesn't mean it can't be funny: the anti-communist propaganda of the cold war was a simple case of Chicken Little - the sky is falling... Yes, you may draw a caricature of the puppet dictator, or mock our deMockracy.

look for these principles in the posters on exhibit, and on page 14 of this guide

# step by step hands-on with paper, pencil markers or any design software

 STEP 1. put your ideas on paper, fold a piece of sketching paper into four parts, use a pencil, draw simple outlines, draw your words into shapes

on part 1- text: write phrases, slogans, sentences - words that state your concern

on part 2: draw what is wrong, broken, needs action  
this can be a symbolic image, or shape, or a photograph

on part 3: draw or write a demand or call to action, how to right the wrong

on part 4: draw an image/use a photograph that signifies or alludes to social justice - human rights: shelter, safety, food security, equality, home, peace



STEP 2: organize your sketches, arrange text and images according to the principles that you feel best express your idea

- decide on a format: portrait, landscape, square. Most posters are portrait format, postcards can be any format

  - what is the space/shape where your idea lives?

  - examples:

    - the outline of a house could be symbolic for shelter

    - a dish, table, could symbolize food security

    - the map of Guatemala makes a strong frame and image in the posters made by Neri Espinoza for CDGUA in the eighties - see page 15, or look at the reproductions on display in the exhibition

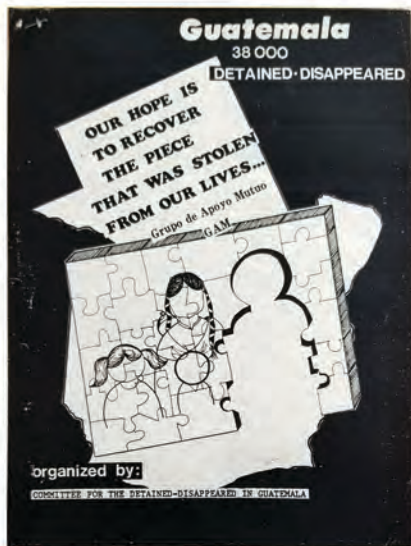
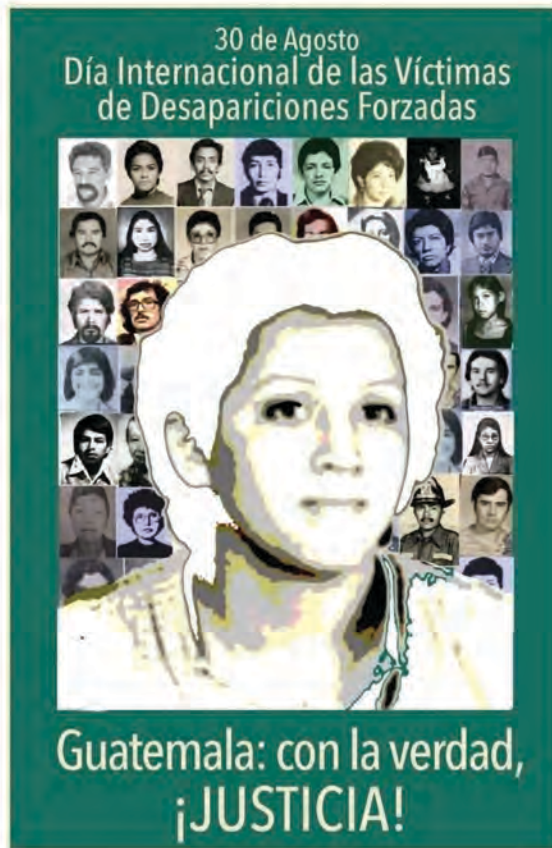
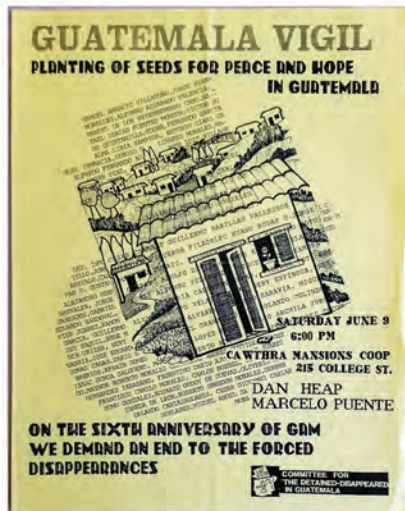
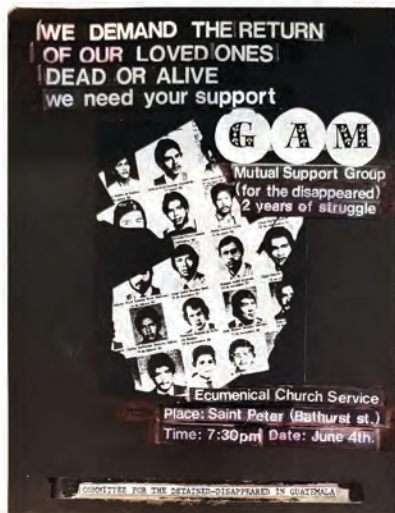
- cut out the negative space/shape to create a frame using construction paper

- place objects/text/photographs into the frame's shape and/or outside it

- is there one image/word that stands out?

STEP 3: re-arrange and/or re-size the parts, until you feel that the composition reflects your intent, add colours and employ the principles of design and activism that resonate with your message





Examples of posters, flyers  
and post cards designed by  
activists in Guatemala and in  
Toronto in the eighties and  
nineties



[https://  
redtreecollective.org/](https://redtreecollective.org/)

<http://zoeheynjones.com/al-lado-afuera-beside-outside-2018>

## **ARTISTS' RESPONSES:**

[https://  
artistsatriskconnection.org/story/  
el-arte-no-calla-episode-6-  
repression-and-emancipatory-art-](https://artistsatriskconnection.org/story/el-arte-no-calla-episode-6-repression-and-emancipatory-art-)

STEP 4: Post your work on the following pages if  
working on jam board,

or

-email your designs to [redtree@sympatico.ca](mailto:redtree@sympatico.ca)

or

-find the "design your own poster" link on the WAHC  
website, <https://wahc-museum.ca/> click on the  
digital tab

-please sign your contributions

