

## Art of Olive Green

Towards Art, an Ethics & a Laugh

## Archives

All posts for the month October, 2012

### Spanish Revolution 1: “Farmer, Work for the People That Have Freed You”

Posted by *getraer* on *October 24, 2012*

Posted in: Art, Engaged art. Tagged: posters, propaganda, Spanish Civil War, Spanish Revolution. Leave a comment



FARMER:  
WORK FOR  
THE PEOPLE THAT  
HAVE FREED YOU  
Artist: Anonymous  
Issued by: Office  
of Press and Propaganda  
Size: 71 x 102 cm.  
(28 x 40 in.)

([https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/20121024185155\\_00001.jpg](https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/20121024185155_00001.jpg))

In my ongoing paean to the activities and work of politically engaged artists, I'd be remiss to omit posters from an illiterate age that required graphics as hortative as the text they illustrated.

During the Spanish Revolution (or Spanish Civil War) of 1936-1939, Spanish illiteracy was at 45% (<http://www.socialismtoday.org/102/spain.html>), and 70% of the population were peasants. Unlike today's wars of choice, everyone had to be involved, so a proliferation of posters and lyric poems ([http://books.google.com/books?id=TL7fBA1uqWoC&pg=PA11&lpg=PA11&dq=illiteracy%2Bspanish+civil+war&source=bl&ots=LgfNECN3Fa&sig=D8f\\_pz0rUhjUm9Du8jwbeQXDc\\_c&hl=en&sa=X&ei=sneIUIrOLPS80QH6kIH4Dw&ved=0CGgQ6AEwCQ#v=onepage&q=lyric%20poem&f=false](http://books.google.com/books?id=TL7fBA1uqWoC&pg=PA11&lpg=PA11&dq=illiteracy%2Bspanish+civil+war&source=bl&ots=LgfNECN3Fa&sig=D8f_pz0rUhjUm9Du8jwbeQXDc_c&hl=en&sa=X&ei=sneIUIrOLPS80QH6kIH4Dw&ved=0CGgQ6AEwCQ#v=onepage&q=lyric%20poem&f=false)), holdovers from an oral poetic tradition, spoke to the people on all sides of the conflict.

Today, advertising has conditioned us to depend on the image, often to the calculated exclusion of the words—think of the small financing print in a car commercial or the 2-point font “credits are unlikely to transfer” in a technical college ad. Even full-size text in marketing material is rife with typos; I recently drove behind a pizza truck that informed me it was delivering for a “Food Service Distributor Suppling Pizzerias and Restaurants.”

To a war-torn society devolving into aliteracy, I (re)introduce the propaganda poster as a weekly series on Olive Green.

SIMILAR RESOURCES (continually updated)

Brandeis University's Spanish Civil War poster collection (<http://lts.brandeis.edu/research/archives-speccoll/spanishcivilwar/posters.html#file://posters.html/AN>)

## Horseradish — Edible Plant of the Year

Posted by *getraer* on *October 16, 2012*

Posted in: Gardening. Tagged: ecology, edible plants. Leave a comment



(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/nakedroot.jpg>)

Just over two feet long. I should have left the runners in the ground; they become new plants and aren't as tasty. Oh well, at least 4 more to go!

My five years of outdoor gardening have proven a crapshoot. Indoors, I ran a hydroponic sprouter big enough to provide at least 40% of my food, grew medicinal plants from the world over and raised habanero bushes 3' tall and bearing 30-40 peppers per. I naively thought the same results could be obtained outside with the same effort.

Squirrels, shade from a centenarian oak, extreme rain, high nighttime temperatures, and countless other complications have made it difficult to get consistent results. There have been just enough surprises to keep me going.

I thought when I planted 3 horseradish plants in spring of 2011 that I would have some roots to experiment with, but when I harvested my first one I learned a lot that I could have read somewhere—but it wouldn't have been as fun:





(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/horserad.jpg>)

The major (right, one leaf), the minor (note that tiny root needs to grow), and the poor sage that got between them.

1. Plants whose taproots are frustrated from direct downward progress will reroute as possible, which makes them a lot easier to harvest—but probably smaller. This took me an hour to dig up with minimum damage or disturbance to nearby plants, like this poor Dalmation Sage whose root bundle was cleft by the detoured taproot.
2. Horseradish plants spread by runners. As you can see from this photo, this 18 mo. plant sent out a runner that became another plant just 18 inches away, probably in spring or summer. I left that one in to harvest next year. I've found five plants but that may not be all.
3. I lamented tearing off the leaves to dig up the plant; they were the greenest and biggest thing in my garden this year. Against my better judgement, I nibbled on a young one, and found that it exploded with horseradish zest. Research yielded the consensus that the leaves are edible (<http://www.chefsconsortium.com/to-eat-or-not-to-eat.html>), with a small minority claiming they are poisonous—but a more credentialed majority saying they can be eaten young in salads and steamed or sauteed like collard greens when older. One post (<http://www.chatzos.com/messages/viewtopic.php?p=14682&sid=e215f6bac78da95b59bfe58e2522335a>) even claimed Hungarians stuff them like cabbage leaves. I can't imagine that a member of the *Brassica* family (which includes broccoli, cabbage, radishes, mustard), widely sprouted and cultivated for vegetables, could have a dangerous leaf. Young ones taste like horseradishy young spinach, cooked adult ones have broccoli rabe's bitterness with the toothsome of mustard greens. Yum! (May 2013 addendum: There is no horseradish taste to the leaves in spring.)



(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/wormedit1.jpg>)

Worms bloom. The trespassed-upon sage is at right.



4. The earthworms in my yard congregate around horseradish roots. As soon as I pitchforked the soil to loosen it, they emerged. I pulled five of the largest worms I've seen outside of the compost from the area immediately around the taproot.
5. Eating raw juvenile leaves made both a Guinness and a single malt scotch—three hours apart—taste like sandalwood smells.
6. The root is delicious grated into vodka. A Microplane works best. Friends came over for brunch the day after the harvest, and naturally we spiked our Bloody Marys with fresh horseradish by infusing it grated into the vodka for a couple of minutes. I tasted sandalwood again, but was alone in that. It was so exciting we took a shot-bottle of it to an Oktoberfest party later, where it was again marveled at.

Not many plants reproduce themselves, have edible young and old leaves of totally different characters, and provide a root that can be eaten raw as a condiment, in cocktails or – though it seems a waste – cooked as a parsnip substitute. As I eat sauteed adult horseradish leaves with golden tofu and sprouted black lentils in black bean sauce, I'm grateful for both the bounty of nature and the networked information that saved my 4 meals' worth of leaves from the compost heap. Sorry, worms.

## Rebel Sell

Posted by [getraer](#) on [October 3, 2012](#)

Posted in: [Activism](#), [Engaged art](#). [Leave a comment](#)

This  
[recent](#)  
[fretting](#)



(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/huey-p.jpg>)

Huey Newton, Black Panthers. Rebel enough for you? He sees Che's beret and raises it several weapons.

(<http://t.co/Eb6rxsUQ>) at yet another fusillade of Che Guevara phlegmorabilia has rekindled the debate: Was Che a murdering Stalinist maniac who personally killed and watched 100(0)s die (probably with a boner), or a beretted Christ figure who liberated 10 for every oppressor cur or bourgeois swine he liquidated? As ever, the truth is somewhere inbetween, but the debate is so fraught with baggage that a rehash only does the latest Chexploitationist's marketing for them. Hell, I didn't know Urban Outfitters had (new) Che T-shirts, and likely no one reading Huffington Post would either until the traffic kept the story indexing in the top items long enough to clear out those T-shirts before they could collect even a mote of Urban dust.

The Che image quickly eclipsed its creator and arguably its subject. The "[20th century's most famous photo](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1352650.stm) (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/1352650.stm>)" never provided Alberto Korda any royalties. He didn't mind Che's image being used to further



revolutionary visions, but what did he think about it becoming shopworn and cynical?

Still, this post is neither about flogging a dead horse nor T-shirts. It's a brief note of other revolutionaries that are both easy on the eyes and principled, at least from what I'm able to tell; I'll welcome critiques in the comments. They differ in politics, fame, and CVs, and have fewer bloodstains. Besides, their lack of berets and Five-Year-Plan stares makes them more like you or me...except perhaps for sunbathing in the buff at P-town.

Given the Che precedent, I must have one "beret+stare" photo to grab the attention. The above is of Huey P. Newton, who needs no introduction. Those who misunderstand the Black Panthers as framed by smears, infiltration and revisionism are directed to Mr. Newton's doctoral dissertation ([http://weblog.liberatormagazine.com/2012/07/huey-newtons-doctoral-dissertation.html?utm\\_source=dlvr.it&utm\\_medium=twitter](http://weblog.liberatormagazine.com/2012/07/huey-newtons-doctoral-dissertation.html?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter)), "War Against the Panthers: A Study of Repression in America." ([http://archive.org/stream/WarAgainstThePanthersAStudyOfRepressionInAmerica/WATP\\_djvu.txt](http://archive.org/stream/WarAgainstThePanthersAStudyOfRepressionInAmerica/WATP_djvu.txt)) The threat imputed to the above type of picture is discussed therein, and merits reproducing a cited quote from famed psychologist Erik Erikson (emphasis mine):

"Most readers of the news, of course, did not and do not know that according to California law, every citizen then had the right to carry a gun, one gun for self-defense and joint defense. ...Inclined to disregard the rights of black citizens, [police] break the law under the guise of defending it. [The BPP] made of the police, then, the symbol of uniformed and armed lawlessness. **But [it] did so by ingeniously turning the white man's own imagery (especially dear to the American West and the Western) around against the white world itself.** And in arming [themselves] and [their] brothers against that world, [the BPP] emphasized a disciplined adherence to existing law. In fact, [the BPP] patrol member traveled equipped not only with a gun but also with a law book."

Today we have no shortage of police impunity splashed across the Internet in images of protestors being beaten ([http://www.salon.com/2011/11/10/police\\_beat\\_occupy\\_protesters\\_at\\_uc\\_berkeley/](http://www.salon.com/2011/11/10/police_beat_occupy_protesters_at_uc_berkeley/)), peppersprayed (<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2012/09/26/161839245/uc-oks-1-million-settlement-in-pepper-spray-suit>), soundcannoned (<https://www.commondreams.org/headline/2011/11/17-6>), and teargassed (<http://thelede.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/26/police-said-to-fire-tear-gas-at-protesters-in-oakland-calif/>). Yet I still see more "Free Tibet" bumperstickers than I do "Free USA," just as I see a lot more of Che than I do of Huey.



(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/sacco.png>)

Nicola Sacco

One of the best known unjustly executed men of the 20th century also happened to be a handsome fellow and a natty dresser. He disproves most of the stereotypes about anarchists, except that he was sometimes armed...the '30s were dangerous times for anarchists anywhere in the world. In any event he and his comrade Bartolomeo Vanzetti were accused of two murders and put to death after 7 years of incarceration, a farce of a trial, and spitefully-rejected appeals (presiding Judge Thayer asked a fellow

Dartmouth alum, "Did you see what I did to those anarchist bastards?"). This in spite of much of the world sustaining a chorus calling for their release. I haven't known him to wax as poetic as Vanzetti, but his better looks would sell more T-shirts. Maybe with a Scarface caption: "Say hello to my little friend!"

Francisco Ascaso was a notable figure of the Spanish Revolution that died early on in the 1936 fighting

(<http://blog.arqueologiadelpuntdevista.com/2010/01/agusti-centelles-y-los-hermanos-ascaso.html>). (A picture at that link was probably the last taken of him, 20 minutes before he was shot dead raiding the Ataranzas barracks.)

Bookchin writes that Francisco, his brother Domingo, Garcia Oliver, and anarchist superhero Buenaventura Durruti "included terrorism in

their repertory of direct action. Gun play, especially in 'expropriations' and in dealing with recalcitrant employers, police agents, and blacklegs, was not frowned upon." None of those gentlemen is ugly, but of the existing photos on the web, Francisco's indirect, contemplative look best lends itself to merchandising. I see Ascaso beach towels next to the Che T-shirts.



(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/ascaso1.jpg>)

Francisco Ascaso

It's funny that we live in a time when sexy women stacking heaps of corpses is popular fodder, but what woman—not including the fictional Rosie the Riveter—has festooned articles of everyday life exhorting us to strive/revolt/stick it to (The) Men? It only seems fair to include a couple here.



(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/spmacdonalde5.jpg>)

Ethel Macdonald, is this a school photo? Erm.. Credit: Spartacus (<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/SPmacdonaldE.htm>)

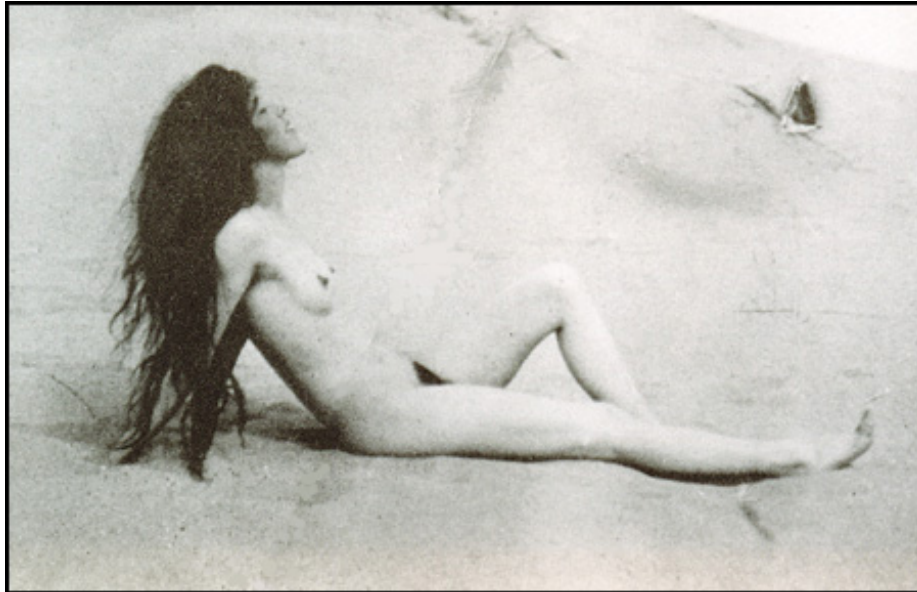


(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/09>

[/ananarchist27sstoryethelmacdonald.jpg](https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/ananarchist27sstoryethelmacdonald.jpg))

Ethel Macdonald? Probably the most T-shirtable photo yet. The Photoshop helps. Credit: [Ourunveilsecrets](http://ourunveilsecrets.wordpress.com/category/world-1930s/) (<http://ourunveilsecrets.wordpress.com/category/world-1930s/>)

include two photos of the Scotswoman **Ethel Macdonald** because she looks only cute in one, and the second may not be her. Her broadcasts from the CNT (anarchoid labor union) Barcelona radio station provided an English-language account of the Spanish Revolution, reporting daily on the progress made against Franco's fascist Falangists. She was committed to the Revolution because she was an anarchist herself from years back. She was an admirable revolutionary in that she lived life on a shoestring, risked her own skin and made an impact without wreaking death or destruction.



(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com>

[/2012/09/jbryant17.jpg](https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/jbryant17.jpg))

Louise Bryant sunbathing at Provincetown, more libertine than libertarian. Credit: Spartacus (<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Jbryant.htm>)

Suffragette, journalist and anarchist/Marxist sympathizer **Louise Bryant** gets two photos as well because one is a profile nude, not so illustrative but thematically irresistible. Wasn't Che printed on mugs? So would the above provide at least 280 degrees of blue from a Red.

Bryant was not spoiled by her good looks. She was an international correspondent for the Russian Revolution and Civil War, was imprisoned and went on hunger strike, interviewed Benito Mussolini and Enver Pasha, and wrote nuff books, essays, poetry and plays.





(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/jbryant18.jpg>)

Louise Bryant. Credit: Spartacus (<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/Jbryant.htm>)

Her nonfiction has been characterized as having “gullible schoolgirl charm” (<http://www.nytimes.com/1996/02/11/books/radically-chic.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm>)” (of “Six Red Months in Russia”). Yet she is also described as “beautiful, smart, ambitious and inclined to scandalous behavior.” Was it her appearance and vanity that led to such broadsides as Emma Goldman’s? “I do wish sometimes I were as

shallow as a Louise Bryant; everything would be so simple.”

Elisabeth Dmitrieff was also quite a looker. More significantly, she was ahead of her time, particularly for Russia. The illegitimate daughter



([https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/elisabeth\\_dmitrieff1.jpg](https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/elisabeth_dmitrieff1.jpg))

Elisabeth Dmitrieff (*née* Elisavieta Loukinitchna Koucheleva).

(<http://books.google.com/books?id=qix0CAaqZg0C&pg=PA27&lpg=PA27&dq=elisabeth+dmitrieff%20illegitimate&source=bl&ots=nr85UnweYw&sig=Uuq36e-qRho6172ok9wtHPkUtP4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=90I0UJCqKYfy0gHMy4G4AQ&ved=0CDAQ6AEwAw#v=onepage&q=elisabeth%20dmitrieff%20illegitimate&f=false>) of a Tsarist official, she was several years ahead of the 1917 revolution by her participation in the 1871 Paris Commune. Sent by Marx to cover the Commune and propagandize for socialism, she co-founded the Women’s Union (<http://www.icl-fi.org/print/english/wv/987/ysp-commune-women.html>), which organized women as workers and ultimately as fighters on the barricades when the French army arrived to crush the “world’s first workers’ government.” She, too, fought on the barricades, but survived to return to Russia, where she ultimately died in Siberian exile with a political prisoner she had married to rescue him from the death penalty.

I conclude with a widely-known picture of an enchanting young woman from the Spanish Revolution. Seventeen-year-old Marina Ginestà doesn’t fit in the above company, because as part of a young communist militia, the *Juventudes Comunistas*, she worked for the Stalinists who ultimately fought both Franco and the anarchists. But after starting with the controversy over Che, it’s only fitting to end with a visual artefact of the controversy over Stalin’s role in the Spanish Revolution. And following Che, faraway stares pregnant with promise are the standard, so this “come hither, new world” look is of a piece.

(<https://artofolivegreen.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/milic.jpg>)

