

HEWILLNOTDIVIDE.US

LaBeouf, Rönkkö & Turner

From 16 October 2017, LaBeouf, Rönkkö & Turner's ongoing durational artwork HEWILLNOTDIVIDE.US has been adopted by Le Lieu Unique in Nantes, France. A flag emblazoned with the words "He Will Not Divide Us" will be live-streamed from the top of the landmark building's tower in the centre of Nantes to www.hewillnotdivide.us for the remainder of the 45th Presidency of the United States.

Launched the day of the inauguration in January, HEWILLNOTDIVIDE.US has become one of the most high-profile political artworks of recent years. Acting as a counter to division and an embodiment of resistance, the project has been continually targeted by far-right extremists mobilising online, making it a symbol both of the challenges of our times and the necessity of collective resilience.

In the wake of recent events, in particular those of Charlottesville—where the assembled hordes of white supremacists chanted "You will not replace us" and "Jews will not replace us" in a grotesque response to LaBeouf, Rönkkö & Turner's artwork—the piece's enduring public show of resistance is more vital than ever.

Originally located at the Museum of the Moving Image, New York, the artwork centred on the participation of the public, with visitors invited to deliver the words "He Will Not Divide Us" into a live-stream camera mounted on a wall outside the museum. The project quickly became the focus of impassioned political engagement, interaction and debate from all corners, both on and offline.

However, three weeks in, the project was abruptly abandoned by MoMI due to outside political interference.

The artists subsequently relocated the work to Albuquerque, where the spirit of community engagement continued. Sadly, due to disturbing threats and attacks from the far-right, the work was forced once more to relocate to an undisclosed private location.

There, the artists adapted the work to its present form, with a flag flying in resistance to division and defiance of those that would wish to silence the work. However, the violence against the artwork continued. Due to these escalating threats against the artwork and those associated with the project, the United States was no longer deemed safe enough for the work to exist. On 22 March, the project was adopted by FACT, Liverpool, who offered the artwork safe haven, yet within 24 hours, a group of men scaled the roof of the building in an attempt to vandalise the work, and the arts organisation removed the installation. The artists were once again forced to continue the artwork without the requisite institutional support, and the flag was moved indoors, where the live-stream has continued

to broadcast up until this point.

The lieu unique, national center for arts in Nantes (France) is glad to be able to provide (after FACT in Liverpool) a safe harbor for an artwork which has been threatened. The lieu unique is a place where artists express their involvement with the world through their practice; in that context we strive to support them and provide them with the best conditions to show their work. The project HEWILLNOTDIVIDE.US has been censored through acts of violence and abuse, even though it promotes unity and cohesion: for us at the lieu unique it feels like this work deserves a special attention in our current political, economical and social context, where artists are often prevented from expressing their political stance. The national center for arts in Nantes prides itself in being involved with the world: far from being cut off from political or societal issues, it has a mission of observing and deciphering the complexity of what surrounds us. With the help of philosophers, journalists, scientists, visual artists, musicians, theater directors, choreographers or DJs, the lieu unique shows the best of contemporary cultures to those who are building the world we live in, our audience.

In that perspective He Will Not Divide Us and the artists that have created the work have their place fully in our programme.

the artists

Luke Turner (1982, UK), Nastja Säde Rönkkö (1985, Finland), and Shia LaBeouf (1986, USA) have been making art together since 2014 as LaBeouf, Rönkkö & Turner. Their participatory projects and performances utilise emotion and social interaction to foster new forms of communality across digital and physical networks.

Their previous works include #ALONETOGETHER, Kiasma, Helsinki (2017); #ANDINTHEEND, Sydney Opera House (2016); #TAKEMEANYWHERE, BMoCA, Colorado (2016); #TOUCHMYSOUL, FACT, Liverpool (2015); #ALLMYMOVIES, New York (2015); and #IAMSORRY, Los Angeles (2014).

important note

Unfortunately, there has been a widespread failure to correctly attribute HEWILLNOTDIVIDE.US as an artwork by LaBeouf, Rönkkö & Turner, particularly in media headlines about the work. This only contributes to a longstanding erasure of artists—particularly female artists—over the course of art history. We therefore kindly ask that media outlets respect the authorship of the artwork, and correctly identify LaBeouf, Rönkkö & Turner as the artist in their headlines when covering the work.

Artwork from 16 of October on *hewillnotdivide.us*

le lieu unique

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