

CUE Questions

1. Logistically, how do you plan on attaining all of the inner tubes? Please be more specific than what you outline in your proposal.

An estimated 150 million pounds of rubber inner tubes are discarded in the U.S. each year and only 20 percent collected for recycling purposes. Because butyl rubber inner tubes never decompose, they stay in landfills forever. *Conduit* requires a large number of scrap inner tubes of various sizes -- bicycle, car, truck, tractor, earth mover and beyond -- with diameters ranging from 2 feet in diameter (bicycle) to over 7 - 8 feet in diameter (earth mover). We have a two-part plan to collect the inner tubes.



First: The vast majority of inner tubes we plan to collect well in advance of the opening. AV has a pick-up truck and we plan to make collections at waste tire storage facilities in New York State: there are 18 sites registered with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. We have worked with tire repair shops in NJ as a source in the past, and we will call on similar facilities in New York as well. We have also established a connection with Harmony Recycling in North Carolina, which deals in massive quantities of scrap truck tire inner tubes. We plan to make one collection there as well.

Second: During the exhibition, however, we would also like to have a “drop-box” outside CUE where the community can drop off used inner tubes in response to our outreach campaign. An important aspect of our proposal is to integrate the gas stations, auto body repair and bike shops in and around Chelsea -- there are approximately 20. For this, we intend to contact each business separately and schedule visits for pickup of discarded rubber as well as to extend invitations and give information about our project at CUE.

We will also reach out to organizations such as Bike Messenger Association, Bike NY, and New York Truck Delivery Association as well as various green groups throughout the city and encourage them to visit CUE and drop off used inner tubes. We plan to collect most of the scrap bike inner tubes in this manner. Also, our experience with conducting meaningful outreach has shown that, in addition to ads, fliers, e-blasts and the

like, personal contact and follow-up is essential. To that end, we plan to schedule brief presentations at the membership meetings of these various organizations with the two-fold benefit of encouraging groups to drop off their used inner tubes as well as visit the gallery and/or attend workshops.

Following the trail of discarded rubber is a pretty fascinating story, which we are currently documenting and plan to incorporate into an essay, video, blog or other form of documentation in conjunction with the exhibition.

2. What percentage of the exhibition space will be filled with tubes by the opening reception?

The percentage of filled space at the opening reception will depend on both the exhibition schedule (i.e. amount of preparation time) and the configuration of the space itself. Assuming our project can take the entire ground floor space at CUE, we expect to need at least four months to prepare in order to fill approximately 25% of the exhibition area.

3. Have you tested the helium concept? Does the helium tank nozzle fit rubber inner tubes?

We have tested -- and continue to test -- the helium concept and, while we still believe in the theoretical possibility, there are several issues that remain to be resolved. These include compensating for the additional weight of the inner tube's nozzle and ensuring that the helium is nearly pure rather than the more common 60:40 ratio of helium to air. A standard industrial helium tank nozzle will inflate the rubber inner tubes -- due to sheer pressure -- but it is not ideal and would likely require an adapter. We have reached out for technical support from both art-and-technology organizations as well as contacts at MIT.

An additional technical problem is making an airtight seam for the new shapes and forms of cut-up inner tubes. While we have previous experience working with the material, an airtight seam -- as opposed to an airtight patch -- remains elusive. There are various options that we are still pursuing and we recognize that our current technical issues may give pause. However, these are our thoughts and back-up plans:

- 1) Even if we cannot create the new inflatable forms we originally envisioned, the use of inner tubes of various dimensions will enable both us and visitors to create 3-dimensional "drawings" with air-inflated tubes. The differences in size will read as depth as we stack and suspend the tubes in the semi-darkened gallery space. The material is soft and light and bounces easily when inflated with regular air and we anticipate a playful interaction between tubes and audience. To encourage visitors to manipulate with the inflated forms, we plan to create different installations on a daily basis, take a snapshot with a time stamp and post in the gallery and/or online.

- 2) The collaborative, participatory and recycling aspects of *Conduit* are essential and will

not be diminished by the outcome of our technical experiments. The idea of cleansing or purifying waste materials in a fundamental, literal sense also remains unaffected by the outcome of the ongoing technical experiments.

3) We're mad, dogged problem-solvers.

4. Please provide more specific details on how you would run the workshops. Please address how you would target participants, how often the programs would run, and how long the programs would last.

We plan to conduct weekly workshops, lasting approximately an hour and a half, on Saturdays. The workshops will, at minimum, demonstrate inner tube patching as well as tell the sordid tale of rubber recycling in the U.S. as well as feature innovative responses abroad like Uca Ruffatti's in El Salvador. Inflation Day will immediately follow the workshops, where newly patched inner tubes -- both those of workshop participants and any others we may have worked on during the week -- will be inflated and added to the installation with participants encouraged to reconfigure the installation of the tubes any way they wish.

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5. Will the public be utilizing color in their hands-on workshop? If so, what are your plans for drying time?

No, there will be no color application and/or painting of the inner tubes; they will be handled in their "natural" state. However, we do plan to paint the walls of the exhibition space in gradations of white to black, but that will be done prior to the opening.

6. How do you plan on handling the cleaning process? Would it be important for you to do this within the gallery setting or would you do this behind the scenes?

Cleaning would preferably happen off-site and/or behind the scenes at CUE and will start long before the project itself, i.e. when we start collecting rubber inner tubes. However, any inner tubes dropped off at CUE would ideally be cleaned on site.

To achieve the kind of purification of the discarded material *Conduit* intends, it is not necessary for the cleaning to take place in the gallery. What is necessary, however, is that the rubber we ultimately pass on for re-purposing be clean -- both literally and metaphorically, i.e. "purified" by the process. We want to intervene in the cycle of a first

world country exporting its dirty garbage to third world countries for recycling. We could, at the very least, clean it!

7. Do you plan to be in the space at times other than the public workshops and the Inflation days?

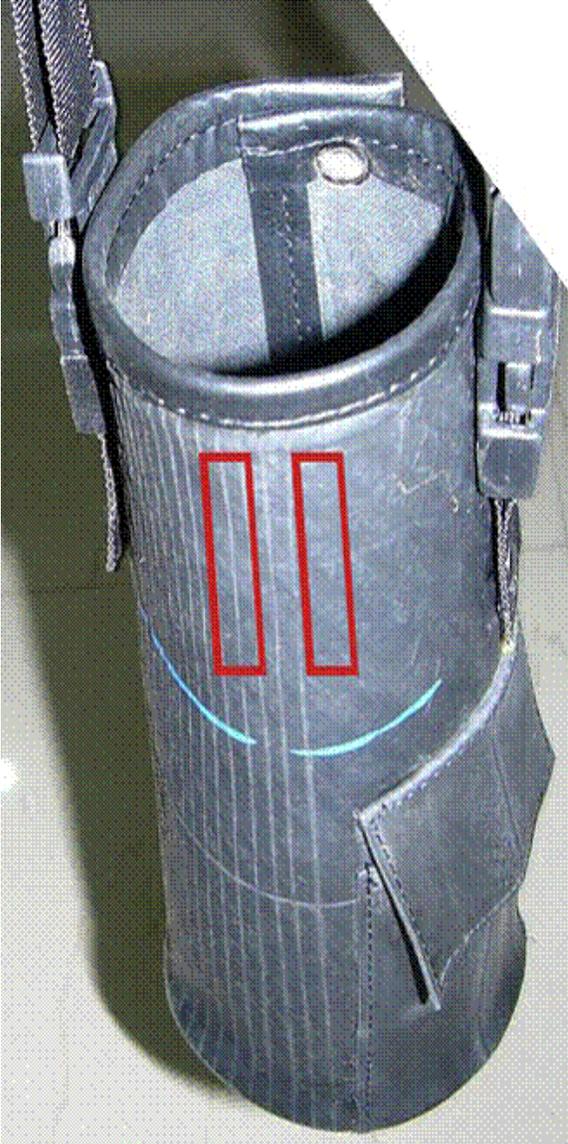
Yes. One or both of us will visit the space daily during gallery hours to create and document a new arrangement of inner tubes as discussed in #3.

8. There seems to be a discrepancy in your proposal regarding donating materials to either El Salvador or Ecuador. Please clarify.

Uca Ruffati, the previously mentioned rubber recycling organization, is in El Salvador. At the time of our first proposal, we were also researching another rubber recycling project in Ecuador. Our apologies for the mistake and any confusion it may have caused.

9. Do you have an established connection with that country(ies)? Please specify the organizations you wish to work with at this time.

One World Projects, Inc., a non-profit based in Batavia, NY, that is working on several rubber recycling projects that we would like to support at this time. Uca Ruffati in El Salvador is one of them. Another project is the creation of a fair trade water bottle carrier that will be produced in the slums of Chennai, India, to bring employment to economically marginalized women. Below is an image of the earlier prototypes of the carrier.



Phil Smith at One World Projects, Inc. is very enthusiastic about our project and has agreed to assist us with logistics. Please see his contact information below.

One World Projects, Inc.
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Batavia, NY 14020-2030
Tel: (585) 343-4490
Fax: (585) 344-3551
E-mail: phil-smith@oneworldprojects.com
Web: www.oneworldprojects.com

10. Please provide an installation mock-up based on our floor plan. See attached.

In order to experience the aesthetic aspects of *Conduit*, we find it important to maintain an uncluttered entrance to the gallery space. For that reason, literature about the project as a whole will only be available in binders at the reception desk. Materials, tools, etc., will be visible in the Studio area as a window into our thought process and working methods, becoming its own distinct area of the exhibition when workshops are not in session. During workshops, the Studio will be moved to the front section of the gallery space, please see floor plan below for explanation.

A. Outdoor drop-off box for scrap inner tubes.

B. Reception area: Simple poster with workshop information will be posted in reception area. Binders with information about the concept and project will also be available here.

C. East wall of exhibition area: Photographic documentation of the project -- including daily time-stamped photographs of the installation and video -- will be hung on the wall.

D. Exhibition area: Installation of inflated inner tubes.

E. The Studio: The Studio will be kept simple: a work table, plastic floor covering, a few chairs, tools, and materials; however, all the notes, images, documents, and objects that have informed and inspired the project will be displayed on the walls.

During scheduled workshops, we plan to move the studio into the Exhibition Area so that it will be visible to passersby as well as what first greets the visitors.

During non-workshop hours, the studio will be accessible to visitors in this work-in-progress state.