



FALLEN FRUIT U

An arts organization in Los Angeles “jams” in a whole new way

BY GIGI RAGLAND, A FOOD WRITER IN LONGMONT, COLO.

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ON A HOT SUMMER DAY IN AUGUST,

a group of Los Angelenos gather over vats of bubbling fruit to make jam and boost community involvement. Organized by Fallen Fruit, an art collective founded by David Burns, Matias Viegner and Austin Young, this year’s event, August 10th at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, is the collective’s seventh annual “jam.”

“The Public Fruit Jam is modeled around the idea of improvisation like musicians playing live together in the form of public participation,” Young says. In true “jamming” style, recipes are not used. People arrive with fruit they’ve harvested from trees on public property and from their own backyards and negotiate with others on what kind of jam to make. If one person has figs, and another lemons, a lemon-fig jam is the order of the day.

“The goal of the Public Fruit Jam is to make the event incredibly easy to experience for everyone including children, grandparents and even the random person passing-by,” Young explains. Fallen Fruit provides hundreds of cutting boards, knives, bowls and cooking pots.

Fallen Fruit got its start in 2004 by mapping fruit trees on public property in Los Angeles.

“We noticed fruit trees in the margins of public space—a lot of them. We mapped the fruit trees and thought about getting out of our cars, off our cell phones and meeting our neighbors. We posted the map and a manifesto on the web. People responded to the idea and so did we. We decided to keep going with it,” Young says.

“We aren’t about money being exchanged or keeping the jars of jam you make to take home and eat by yourself. This is about sharing with everyone—those you love, those you know and those you may never have the chance to meet. Our favorite person in the world is the stranger or the passerby. Sharing is an action that doesn’t expect anything in return, and to us it is the highest form of culture.”

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Austin Young
Fallen Fruit co-founder

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