



# ULTRA-RED'S ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

## public workshops 1-2 April 2005

presented by  
**Fuse magazine**  
in conjunction with  
**Art Metropole**  
and **Ultra-red**

**Location: Art Metropole**  
788 King St W  
Toronto ON  
Canada

### Articles of Incorporation | Ultra-red

#### | Project Description |

Ultra-red has long distinguished itself from other politically-engaged artists' projects by working directly with and as community organizers. Rather than pursue a specific political agenda, the Los Angeles-based audio activist group has conceived of itself as a meeting place for political organizers to reflect on aspects of their work generally marginalized in the day to day work of organizing. This tactic is nowhere more apparent than in the group's approach to performance. Eschewing the absolutism of pure music, Ultra-red use real-time sound processing, field recordings and electronic music compositions to construct a space in which organizers discuss and debate their formal strategies for organizing. In this setting, performers reflect on and analyze questions about memory, affect, and desire — i.e., the political unconscious.

The project ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION accompanies Ultra-red's recent decision to re-constitute itself as a non-profit arts organization. Taking on the necessary legal and financial structures of a non-profit corporation, Ultra-red has directed its interrogation to the conventions of institutional organization. If the group's performances foreground the political unconscious of organizing, ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION explores the obscure engines operating within organizations driving, structuring and even undermining their work. This exploration gains particular exigency when we consider how a political or aesthetic organization continually confronts a bourgeois state hostile to genuine transformation.

Concretizing its own negotiations with the state, Ultra-red's text for ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION will eventually serve as the organization's legal application for tax-exempt status with the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The relationship between the IRS and the political unconscious delineates the discursive poles framing discussions around ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION and offers a fundamental antagonism: how does an organization confront its own internal exchanges (tenuous, fractured and inconsistent) in a context of an antagonistic state? The antagonism of the state frames any organization's efforts to work through the impossibility of fully-explanatory identification.

All organizations are coalitions. The challenge for any organization rests in how it incorporates differences, keeping the tensions of the coalition from overwhelming a fragile identification. The formulation of this challenge as "overcoming difference" must be understood in relation to an alienated state which presumes dissent to be a thing surmounted. What the state assumes surmounted, the organization experiences as the uncanny poltergeist in the house.

In an effort to work through the organizational unconscious, Ultra-red will convene three workshops with artists' cooperatives, arts organizations and political groups. Through conversation, participants will be asked to draw on their experiences to consider three different problematic terms Ultra-red hopes can generate a collective exploration in the organization's structural limits, constraints and facilitating conditions for the work of social transformation.

#### | Workshop Descriptions |

##### { Fri. April 1 } { 5:30 – 8:00PM } { FAITH [I] }

Organizations working to transform knowable material conditions draw on an original spark of daring possibility. Whether its mission is aesthetic or political, an organization begins from a founding conviction that the transformation of given materials remains a possibility. Even when the organization attempts to imagine that possibility within concrete objectives, the impulse towards the utopian soon surfaces in individual and collective narratives about the group's work. It is an impulse neither fully exhausted by any one mission statement nor intelligible without it. How does an organization structure its mission statement in ways that draw from, shape and constrain that impulse? Does an attenuation of a utopian impulse — or faith — serve well the objectives of the organization or merely trap the imagination within a cage of accommodation?

##### { Sat. April 2 } { 11AM – 1:30PM } { DIFFERENCE [R] }

Unity, oneness, singularity, consensus are all markers of and conditions for an effective organization. Individuals and groups participate in an organization upon coming to a common understanding that privileges identity over difference. Yet real experience offers up difference not as symptom but as something generative (or rather a symptom that precedes the readability of the cause). How can an organization incorporate difference without sliding into either sectarian arrogance or repressive tolerance? Because organizations often experience difference as resistance (leading to either regulation or splintering), is this indicative of the generative role of difference? Or is dissent a symptom of an organization's incapacity to incorporate real difference?

##### { Sat. April 2 } { 2:30 – 5:00PM } { MEMORY [S] }

When an organization talks about preserving a memory of past struggles and ideas in a set of communicable symbols, it is in fact often code for providing the financial security of its managers. In the memory of a legacy, a heritage, a proper name, authority is given to an orthodoxy and its inherent surplus value. Nevertheless, memory is one of those intangibles — like faith — either constrained within the law or kept alive in symbolic practice. While this opposition sets up practice as the preferred relation, in fact memory becomes plastic when employed for the purpose of authenticating current actions and programs. Each new invocation of a memory leads to its transformation. Can an organization account for both memory as a living force as well as all the ways in which the thing remembered is re-symbolized with each repetition?

#### | Workshop Logistics |

\*\*\* Each session will begin with an opening statement from the Ultra-red facilitators. The statement will serve to restate the problematic for that session. This will also give the facilitators an opportunity to contextualize the problematic within the objectives of the ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION project. (5 minutes)

\*\*\* Following the facilitators' introduction for the session, participants will be introduced by name and affiliation. After this brief introduction, participants will have 5 minutes each to offer a statement encapsulating their thoughts on the problematic. This will help establish perspectives and points of view for the other participants and the general audience. (20 minutes)

\*\*\* Having listened to each statement from the participants, the facilitators will help guide a conversation among the participants. At the appropriate time, the facilitators will open the conversation up to the general audience. (1 hour, 30 minutes)

\*\*\* Each session will require four support persons: butcher-paper secretary, computer secretary, videographer, audio engineer. The butcher-paper secretary (most likely the other facilitator) will write notes from the conversation on butcher-paper. These pages will be hung on the walls over the course of the exhibition/event. The computer secretary will keep notes from the conversations by way of word-processing. The computer screen will be projected on the wall during the session in the same place where the ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION video has been projected in off-times. A videographer will document the event as will the audio engineer.

\*\*\* The space will be arranged in a half-circle with the participants seated in the front-middle, with their backs to the audience. The facilitator will face the room. This will allow all participants to see the notes projected and written on the walls. If the participants want to turn to face the audience during their opening statements, they are free to do so. Microphones will be placed on a table around which the participants are seated. Flowers should be placed on the table.



for more information please consult:

[www.fusemagazine.org](http://www.fusemagazine.org)

[www.ultrared.org](http://www.ultrared.org)

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