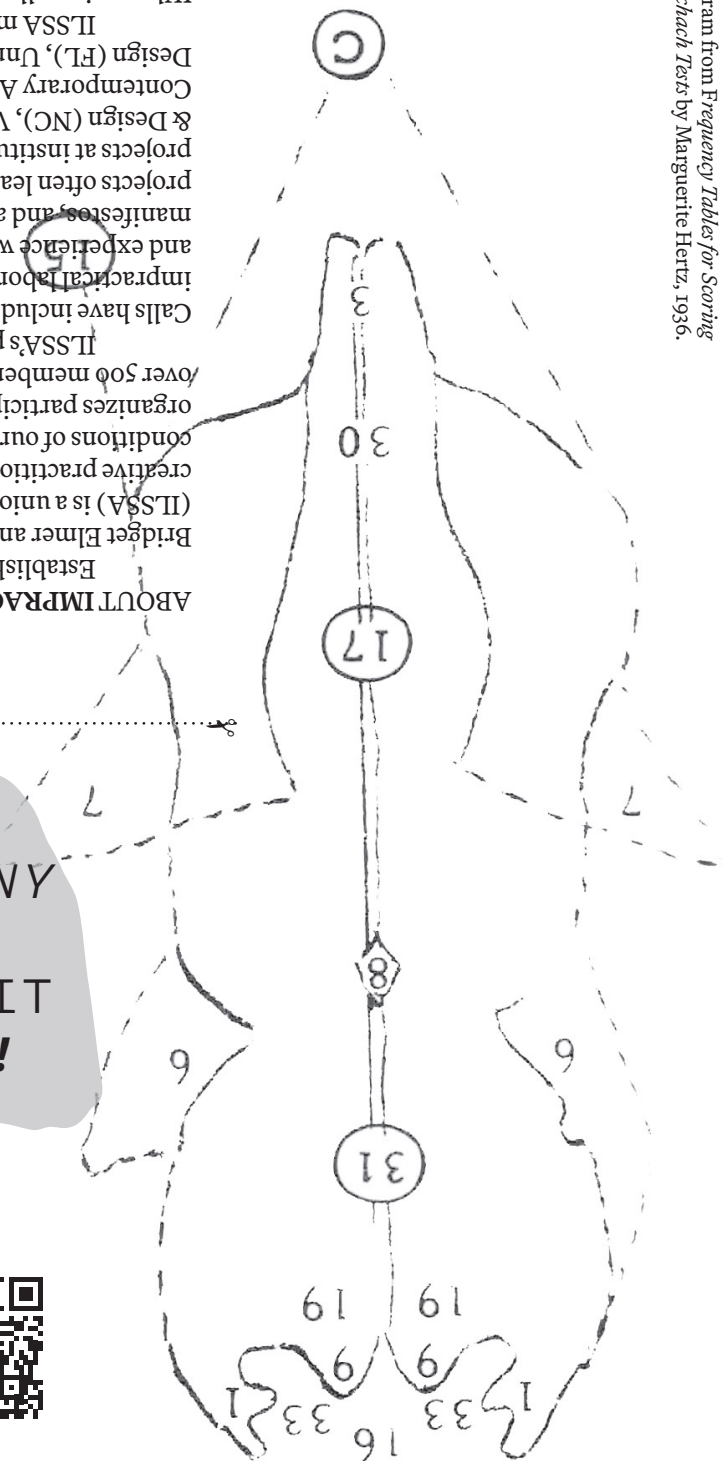




AS MANY
HOURS
AS IT
TAKES!



IMPRACTICAL-LABOR.ORG

ABOUT IMPRACTICAL LABOR

Established in 2008 by letterpress printers turned socially engaged artists Bridget Elmer and Emily Larned, Impractical Labor in Service of the Speculative Arts (ILSSA) is a union for reflective creative practice. As a union for artists, makers, and creative practitioners of all kinds, ILSSA focuses on improving the *immaterial* working conditions of our members. ILSSA publishes contemplative tools and resources and organizes participatory projects, exhibitions, and events. To date, ILSSA has attracted over 500 members in 37 states and 7 countries.

ILSSA's projects and publications often take the form of a call-and-response. Calls have included a survey asking members to assess their working conditions as impractical laborers, a workbook inviting members to ruminate on their relationship and experience with time, a chronobiological self-test, a request for member manifestos, and an inventory of essential tools for living. Participation in these projects often leads to additional publications and exhibitions. ILSSA has installed projects at institutions across the USA, including the Center for Craft, Creativity, & Design (NC), Visual Studies Workshop (NY), IS Projects (FL), the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum (CT), Colorado College (CO), Ringling College of Art + Design (FL), Unrequited Leisure (TN), Webster University (MO), among others. ILSSA members' interests vary widely, from fiber arts to listening practices. What unites all members is a valuation of process, exemplified by our motto, *As Many Hours As It Takes!* Join us at impractical-labor.org.

OPEN CALL FOR

D I A G R A M
A R M S

(YOU, PERHAPS?)

BY
IMPRACTICAL
LABORERS

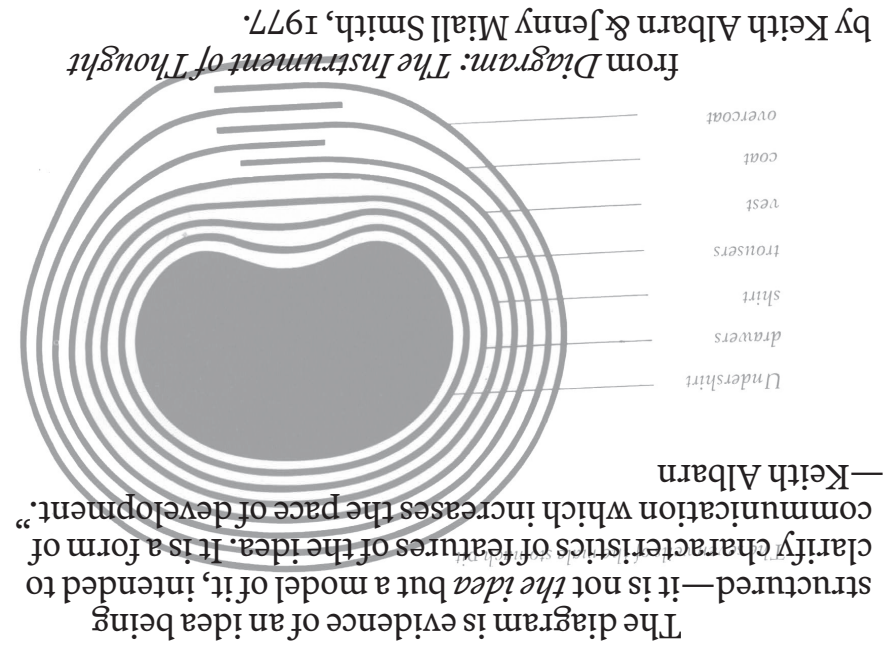
“It began with an interest in why fellow artist-designers and I did such curious things: What was the attraction of novelty on the one hand and modular systems on the other? Why did one order or organize things in particular ways for particular functions? How did one’s physiology relate to one’s psychology, and how did this whole relate to its immediate context and were those elements related to the greater whole? These questions usually occurred during or after a making or doing activity, or in contemplating someone else’s doing or making. Why that idea and not this one; was process inevitably the cause of concept, or vice versa? The first of many apparent contradictions seemed to lie in the notion that ordering is understanding or understanding is ordering, but during the attempt to understand, apparently spontaneous and unrelated incidents of thought occurred, which, although temporarily disrupting or, indeed, transforming the order, caused good ideas to occur with sufficient structure to hold together and develop...”

1. *Diagram* your creative practice. Consider practices, processes, methods, spaces, tools, materials, sources, influences, histories, places, contexts, communities, resources...

2. Diagram your practice as it currently is. If it is helpful, consider also speculating on how you would like it to be.

3. The end is in the means: what will you discover about your practice & your process through diagramming it?

4. Join ILSSA (it’s free) & mail in your diagram for contextualization and dissemination.



The diagram is evidence of an idea being structured—it is not *the idea* but a model of it, intended to clarify characteristics of features of the idea. It is a form of communication which increases the pace of development.” —Keith Albarn

Diagram of “The seven veils of the male stomach pie” from *The Unfashionable Human Body* by Bernard Rudofsky, 1971.

Join ILSSA at impractical-labor.org (it is free!). Then please mail in your original diagram (any size, any shape, any color, any media) for potential exhibition or publication. Please clearly identify your work so you may be credited and contacted (use this form). Your diagram will not be returned, as it will become part of the ILSSA Archive.

Impractical Labor
c/o Emily Larned
830 Bolton Rd Unit 1099
Storrs, CT 06269-1099

Submissions will be accepted on an ongoing basis, but are encouraged to be postmarked by January 15, 2026.

Questions? Write to ILSSA at operator@impractical-labor.org

Name: _____

Email: _____

Website or Social Media: _____

Mailing Address: _____

☐ I’m a new ILSSA member!