Arts and Politics journalist ShazDada’s remarks on the drop of Red Betty. First published in Dada’s blog, Situations.

20 April – On Falling, Failing, and Flying

It must be said today that as a community we are again confronted with expressing an unambiguous feeling of loss in the face of ambiguous success and fulfillment. Deeply saddened by the passing of Red Betty of the notorious art propagandists The Bettys, we nonetheless, according to her own wishes, joyfully observe her adventurous life. Red Betty consistently walked the talk, inspiring generations of ethically vibrant artists, activists, theorists, and precarity workers of all stripes, patterns, and colors. We have The Bettys to thank for the anti-neocon-consumerist approach to daily shopping and of course the twisted Shop Til You Drop slogan among other memorable idioms. “Cleavage Rules” is my personal favorite. When Red Betty dropped to her demise at TAP on 15 April she was, like so many courageous and vigilant predecessors, cleaving her artmaking to her life and death.

Until her untimely passing, Red Betty had been an aggressive advocate of the non-monetary exchange of services
and goods. Her strong teeth and broad back had carried more than her body weight in perishables and necessary toiletries over the years. While the others have opted to play and pay with J-coins, she chose for barter only and the ingenious scrutiny of what she referred to as the “really free” market. Living healthfully off conspicuous urban food waste, she'd convened a band of rat-masked activists, daily foraging for ample spoils in a gluttonous city. Well fed and well read, her tireless advocacy of a better way had given her iconic status in an urban field fast approaching 22,000,000 inhabitants. Her drop will surely have an effect on the art of dissidence.

I interviewed Red several years ago when Blue Betty first went missing. She was articulate, funny, concerned, and unassuming, exuding, like her color, a very powerful aura. Perhaps more than any other Betty, she helped to construct the TAP project as a singular actualization of aesthetic resistance. She made a difference. Arguably, the transactional agency of placemaking that occurs in that arcade is of the profoundest sort [hyperlink to interview]. So it is with sadness and muted celebration that I extend my “RIP & DIFRACT” to Red Betty, her friends, family, colleagues, comrades, and many admirers.
The Birth of Feminism

Equality Now!

Marla Anderson
de Bittencourt
Guilia Storino

Julie Kerr
Claudine Jones
Pia Kinney
Bella Alvez

They made women's rights look good. Really good.

A roughewn project. London 2001. All but two women to exist ANYWHERE.