


rapid response to outbreaks of disease. When nearly 200 people were diagnosed with HIV in rural Scott County, Indiana, over a fifteen-month period in 2014-15, the Midwest AIDS Education and Training Centers provided in-depth training to doctors and care providers and helped get those newly diagnosed with HIV into immediate care.

- Reduce funding for the National Institutes of Health by seventeen percent, and cut funding for the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, where most HIV/AIDS research is conducted, by eighteen percent.
- Reduce by \$1.1 billion U.S. funding for treatment of people living with HIV in Africa and other parts of the world. AmfAR estimates that this cut of nearly twenty percent in global HIV funding would cost more than one million lives and cause

300,000 children to become orphans.

While what ultimately passes the Congress and is signed by Trump may be less draconian, it is likely that major federal policy and budgetary changes will be enacted that significantly reverse the expansion of access to health insurance that disproportionately benefited LGBT people and PLWH. This will have major fiscal implications for the states, many of which are already straining to balance their budgets. The Trump/GOP proposals would make it much more difficult for people with pre-existing health conditions such as HIV, as well as older Americans, to obtain affordable health insurance, and would reduce the health benefits for those who keep their coverage. Both of these changes would disproportionately harm LGBT people, PLWH, and other people with chronic diseases. 

## ART MEMO

# People of Colors vs. the Whiteness House

JAY CRITCHLEY

**C**OLORS play tricks on us. What we see is not always what we get. And what we think is not always what we see. Is seeing the same as perception? Is white the binary opposite of black? Can one exist without the other?

As a queer, white, male artist, I'm closely following the political "deconstruction of the administrative state." The unraveling of our historic democratic underpinnings demands a deep resourcefulness and an intersectional creative response. Issues of race, ethnicity, and the marginalization of otherness are there at the origins of our democratic foundations. Black Lives Matter's agenda is queer-affirming and has as a guiding principal to do the work required "to dismantle cisgender privilege and uplift Black trans folk."

There is a heightened awareness of the fragility of significant civic benchmarks such as same-sex marriage, voting rights (particularly vulnerable in cities, with a concentration of LGBT people and people of color), environmental protections, HIV, and affordable health care.

Race and otherness are inextricably linked. Two of my recent projects tackle these issues: *People of Colors* and *The Whiteness House: Tarred and Feathered*.

How white is the White House? What shade of white is it? The house as a national symbol takes on an ominous presence with a white president

whose campaign was substantially based on color—along with misogyny, white privilege, homophobia, fear, etc.—following a black president. How white is a Whiteness House after a black president? How does a white house express its whiteness?

*The Whiteness House—Tarred and Feathered* proposes to build a walk-in scale model of the White House, tar and feather the exterior, and activate it collaboratively with other artists and activists. Tarring and feathering is a form of public humiliation used to enforce unofficial justice or revenge. It was used in feudal Europe and in

colonial America, mostly as a type of mob vengeance. It is meant to humiliate and severely criticize a person.

So what are some of the associations that whiteness evokes? Let's take a look: White Christmas, white flight, whitewash, a white elephant, Snow White, white collar, a white Russian, whiteout, white supremacy, white race films, white light, white lightning, black-and-white mixed race films, whitened teeth.

The natural materials of down feathers and sand remind us of our connection to the materiality and ecology of the planet. I've been covering up objects, initially with sand, and redefining their significance since the 1980s. *People of Colors* employs naturally colored sand as paint, drawing on recent fashion magazine advertisements. Working with the sands of time for over thirty years—encrusting cars and a motel, sandblasting and filling a car—these sand drawings seem frail and intimate. Fracturing the stylized gloss of the flimsy paper with the rawness of sand exposes the bones and artifice of the human body on the flat page.

How is our perception of an image altered when a gritty veil or mask of sand is applied in this *People of Colors* series? The sand may be black, white, pink, orange, or beige. What shades of color do we perceive? What shades of color do we defy?

*Jay Critchley is an installation and performance artist based in Provincetown, Mass.*



Jay Critchley, Larger Sand #2