

A Note from DE NICHOLS

Author of *Art of Protest: Creating, Discovering, and Activating Art for Your Revolution*

When I was a kid growing up in Mississippi and Tennessee, I learned pretty early about social injustices that exist in the world. I remember defending myself against bullies who did not like me because of my dark skin. I recall watching my favorite TV shows and learning about South African apartheid, police brutality, the global AIDS crisis, and historic movements for civil rights through episodes that dared to highlight these causes.

As I recognized the power of the media in expanding my knowledge, I began to create art in my teens that reflected the issues happening around me—9/11, Hurricane Katrina, the Jena Six trials. And by the time I found myself as an arts organizer on the ground in the 2014 Ferguson Uprising, I felt equipped with the experience to deploy art as a way of bringing people together to raise our collective voices.

Throughout this book, you will learn the art of protest through the many artworks, experiences, and campaigns that have been created across the world to protest social injustices and advocate for the rights and liberties of diverse communities. You will learn a bit of my story as well as the stories of others—leaders, artists, youth, and everyday people—who have used art as a tool for organizing community and catalyzing change. However, I hope you will also learn the art of *protesting*. Tips and strategies are shared throughout this book to help you exercise creative ways to mindfully organize, create, and protest with others. Suggested art activities range from writing simple protest signs to designing banners, building sculptures, organizing flash mobs, and making cause-specific artworks.

With this, you might be more compelled to raise your voice about the issues, causes, and global concerns that matter to you. Our society constantly experiences waves of social movements, campaigns for justice, and fights against climate issues and disease on a global scale. And no matter where you live, or what language you speak, or what cause you choose, it is my hope that this book will encourage and equip you to use art as a language and instrument that can help you champion your chosen cause.

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