

“Synapses”
A community building experience
Invites your Participation

Synapses is:

A Six Part, Large Scale Burning Art Project for Burningman 2005
With elements being built in New York, Georgia, Texas, California, Washington, &
Colorado

By teams of 10 or more people of all levels of experience
Lead by Charlie Smith and Jaime Ladet
Transported to Burningman, Black Rock City NV
Assembled, burned and removed from Burningman,
and returned to each of the cites for use by their communities.

(PUT URL OF IMAGE HERE)

THE STORY

This will be the first interactive sculpture of its kind. A fully collaborative, group built, and cared for fire caldron. The sculpture is made up of six units built in six regions across the United States. The sculpture consists of six dynamic parts. The five somewhat similar outer sculptures will make up a pentagonal shape, the sixth is the central core. The outer sculptures will stand 12 feet tall, four feet wide, and five feet deep. The central section will be 18 feet tall and 4.5 ft wide. The five sections will have two tracks coming out from the central unit. These sculptures can be repositioned and locked down creating different compositions during the week. This will result in a spectacular ever changing art piece during Burning Man.

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

This is the first call for participation in this project. Being involved with “Synapses” has many facets. Participation does not require any previous skills or knowledge though it does demand dedication to building a large scale work of art in conjunction with people of all skill levels.

Charlie Smith, a long time builder of fire cauldrons (<http://synapses.howhowhow.com>), and a champion of cross community participation, and Jaime Ladet will travel to each of these regions and conduct a weekend long building session. During this session, each team member will weld, cut, and fabricate a large scale art sculpture.

This is a hands on experience. You will MIG weld, use an plasma torch, and learn metal fabricating techniques. If you have no previous experience at all you will not be forced to watch experienced people build something. You will not be a runner. The focus of this project is not simply to build a piece, but to ensure that each of the team members gains the active, hands on knowledge and experience that could quite possibly lead to further art participation.

If you already have experience, this project will be an advanced look into the making of fire art, cauldrons and the art process at Burningman. Your skills and participation are necessary to ensure the completion of this work.

The requirements for participation on the team are as follows:

A.) Time commitments

One Weekend consisting of

Friday night Orientation

Saturday and Sunday long work Days

Monday Clean up (This will probably not entail all of the team so please

do not remove the idea of your participation because of this)

*Help in the shipping of Synapse from your city to the Playa and Back

*Help with moving and setting up the piece on the Playa

*Spending time as a “Synaptic Fire Guardian” (tending to the fire on the Playa and speaking to Participants about your experience as an artist on the piece.)

*Taking down and cleaning up the structure on the Playa

*Transporting the art back to your city

*Storing and being a keeper of the art piece for the community when it returns to your city

B.) Financial

Team members will be required to pay a fee for the educational section of the workshop. True, Synapses is a Burningman funded piece of Art, though in no way is it funded in entirety. Charlie and Jamie will be traveling the entire summer to make this work happen and they are not being paid nor will they make any money on this project. The fee will be on a sliding scale \$150.00 - \$300.00 per person as per income and need. We are currently trying to secure a few “Hardship/scholarship” places on the team.

Ways to justify this expense in your own mind:

An intense two day metal working seminar

Dues for participation in a large scale art project

Theme Camp fee

C.) Community building

These teams will be the care takers of the sculptures at Burning Man and back in their community. Each community will take shared responsibility for the operation, tending, and clean up of the sculpture during Burning Man. This will create a central space (“synapse”) where all of the participants from around the country will get to know each other as they tend the sculpture during its nightly

firings. After the event, each regional group will be responsible for the return of their sculpture to their region. Post Burning Man 2005 the regional group can use this icon for their gatherings. The sculpture in the community will act as an iconic symbol of our sub cultural art community. The community retains and takes ownership of the sculpture from its creation in their community and on through the life of the sculpture.

Workshop Description

The ten participants of the workshop will have a hands on collaborative learning experience. They will discover aspects of the layout and construction techniques involved in building the sculptural volume from metal. They will also be learning fabrication techniques which will include welding, plasma torch cutting, grinding & sanding to create the sculptural form.

Day One (Orientation) 4 hour meeting.

We will meet and get to know each other and what we are preparing to build. We will go over the basic skills of welding and fabrication. We will evaluate the plans for the sculpture and how it all fits together. We will have an orientation of the equipment and how to use it.

Day Two(build day) 8-10hrs

We will split into groups and work on layout and parts preparations for the sculpture. Each person in the workshop will cut, weld, sand and grind on the sculpture. There will be no spectators in this workshop. Everyone will do what they are capable of doing.

Day Three (finish day) 8-10hrs

We will work together in shifts welding, grinding and sanding on the sculptural sections. by mid-day we will be assembling the two sections. We will then draw the regional icon onto the front of the sculpture and plasma cut it into the piece. Each participant will make a cut into the sculpture creating the symbolic icon that the community has designed. We will assemble and admire the finished product of our hard work.

Day Four (clean up) 4hrs

We will, as a group, clean up the space we used to build the sculpture .Then we will disassemble and pack the sculpture for shipment to Burning Man.

The criteria for the participants is based on the dedication and interest to learn, develop, and refine skills in metal fabrication and sculpture building. No experience is necessary to participate. However, possession of good motor skills is a plus. There will be no alcohol, drugs, or smoking in the workshop. It is suggested to bring a lunch and/or snack with you. There will be a one hour break in the middle of each day.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

The method of making participation in this project open to the whole community is the responsibility each region's team leader. One of the methods of choosing the participants (most notably in the New York region) is for each person who has the desire to participate and can fulfill all of the responsibilities to write a 50 word or less explanation of why they'd like to participate. If you do not have any faith in your writing, you can simply write and say, "Much better on the phone" and leave a phone number and best time to call.

The submissions will then be read by a team leader from another city. The other cities team leader will choose the participants. This is another way for cross connecting the regions and their teams.