

Establishing a New York City Maroon Exchange

by Bryan Olamo and Lee Miscere

Too many of us are consumers within a system that robs us of the fruits of our labor and maximizes profit for corporations. For a long time, US and global production has had little to do with satisfying the needs of human beings. Instead, production is driven by the endless accumulation of wealth, resources, and power. Too many people spend their lives as just one moving part in a machine built to deplete and destroy the planet.

The New York City Campaign to Free Russell Maroon Shoatz is investigating the possibility of an alternative, something we are calling a “Maroon Exchange,” so we can begin to take back our own labor, our relationships with each other, our collective relationship to the earth, and thereby our lives.

The concept behind the Maroon Exchange is nothing new. It draws from the rich legacy left by the Maroons of North and South America, Jamaica, and other locations dating back to the 17th Century, relations which are described by Russell Maroon Shoatz in his book, *Maroon the Implacable*. These Maroons revolted against their would-be oppressors with guerilla tactics, establishing their own societies in which they provided for themselves in ways that preserved their land, food, families, and culture. These examples of self-reliance and harmony with nature are what we aim to embody in The Maroon Exchange, even though we can only suggest a beginning for such a process right now in the context of capitalist America.

The Maroon Exchange will be a place where individuals can exchange products and services with each other, without the intermediary of money. We are still working on the exact mechanisms that will enable this to happen, and we hope to engage other interested activists in the process of developing those mechanisms.

The Maroon Exchange will work hard to provide clarity and transparency between the producers and consumers with accurate labeling from the source, doing away with false advertising.

If this idea interests you, please complete The Maroon Exchange Questionnaire linked below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/11kktXkz1-Tofl-Xf4_oVFg LZ97E-UMymRPQcKfK_fGs/viewform?c=0&w=1

For more information please email us at:

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