

Sprinkled across the plaza, people wearing knitted pink hants pose for photos, while music blasts occasionally from the mobile scene in the background. Maybe it's a food vendor gathering, a fair, or some makers festival? In a city like San Francisco, offerings are abundant regardless of the time of year. And the devil is in the details: stands belong to various local grassroots movements, organizations & emerging political parties, and the instantly recognizable cat-eared pink "Pussyhats", which emerged as a symbol of the Women's March, held shortly after Donald J. Trump's inauguration. As for the scene, that's for the superstar of the opposition, Nancy Pelosi, the Speaker of the House of Representatives; worshipped by Democrats, despised by Republicans.

On that Saturday morning, I meet up with four other people (including a little girl), with whom I was emailing back and forth the night before. We have a common purpose; we're part of the five groups of volunteers, which will be responsible for an inflatable chicken that bears an uncanny resemblance to Trump. Yeah. A 13 foot, inflatable chicken. It's hard not to grin at this assignment, but our email instructions stress the following: "don't allow anyone to pluck out his eyes (bring tire tape!)"

Originally these bloated poultries were meant to celebrate the Chinese Year of the Rooster, as they hatched in a factory in western China, to beautify local shopping malls. However, one can't not point out the striking resemblance, or at least be suspicious, that these frowning & golden-combed decorations were (un)subconsciously molded by their creator, Seattle's Casey Latiolais, in Trump's image. In the end, their form carries the dominant theme of this march: Trump's too chicken to release his taxes. A wholesome family-friendly insult.

Our chicken wasn't field-tested.

We have no clue as to how many sandbags are needed to balance it, nor if it needs to be plugged into the generator at all times, or if - most importantly - it's not a dud. We scout the plaza around City Hall, and discuss the optimal location. We take two things into consideration: stability & photo op. Organizers don't seem to sweat too much about it; we're given a free hand here. As we hear the hum of the generator, the wrinkled golden sheet transforms into a towering chicken, which brings out gasps and attracts every smartphone and camera within sight. We're the first of all the "Chicken Wranglers" (our official title - for real). An hour later, a 33 foot chicken directly stationed in front of City Hall, will overshadow ours. With the extra height, he seems to be ever more antagonized, self-absorbed, and won't budge under the people's pressure.

I've been a resident of San Francisco for about three years (as someone from Sanok, I'm drawn to cities starting with "San"), and can say firmly that this City, and the Bay of which it's part of, is incredibly skilled at expressing their disapproval on all matters - from police violence on minorities to fighting for an increased minimum wage for Uber drivers - through marches, rallies & other initiatives. Although, since the announcement of the presidential election results in the States - as soon as we picked ourselves up (61% of Californians voted for the counter candidate, Hillary Clinton) - these outbursts of discontent, have become visibly amplified and gained substantial momentum. This isn't another Presidency by the book, this is a battle for the survival of the Republic. I myself spent Trump's inauguration on Golden Gate Bridge, where clothed in purple, holding hands with over 3000 other attendees, I shouted at the top of my lungs "Love Trumps Hate" over and over again, while waving at the passing cars and hovering over our heads choppers, starved for historically-charged footage. I didn't want to be shackled emotionally the same way as I was on Election Night.

The Tax March was another installment of showing our disapproval of the Oval Office holder. Trump became the first sitting president in over 40 years, that hasn't released his taxes, thus raising questions about his lack of transparency. Where are his assets? Do any corporations have him "in the bag"? Which countries is he financially tied to? We The People, don't take such blatant disregard for procedure well. Thus, volunteering for the march didn't require tremendous soul-searching, but it was rather a decisive "Heck yeah, I will!" - be it the States, or Poland, the civic responsibilities are the same.

I can't give an estimate for how many people stopped by "our" balloon. But the scope of attendees was broad: from young to old, with banners oozing with creativity, bewilderment and complete firmness of their resolve. With a strong grip on the state of affairs, Nancy Pelosi, addressed the crowd, while the towering Trump chicken looked utterly displeased. The masses got energized, banners waving left and right, the anti-Trump element ready to charge at a moment's notice. A few minutes later, with a police escort, the rally turns into a march, and an unofficial battle cry is heard: "Hey hey! Ho Ho! Donald Trump has got to go!". Once more, the transformation is complete: the palpable bitterness, anger and contempt that accumulated as a result of this Administration's successful and failed legislations is out. The new White House proved very quickly, it can do without the public's opinion. Winner takes all.

It's after five, everything's packed, time for goodbye hugs, quick summaries ("You don't think this is the last time we'll see these balloons?") and exchanging contact info. Either way, we'll all find each other under the Facebook event's posts. We regained some balance for a few days. Or was it just hours?

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