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Rudresh Mahanthappa

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Ultra-Red "Legaron los Jornaleros" [2004]

★★★

Los Angeles activist collective and Mille Plateaux alums Ultra-Red have made available for free download at their Public Record site (www.publicrec.org) the fruits of their dialogues, interactions, and audio-veritic MiniDisc snoopings in the rehearsal space of Los Jornaleros del Norte ("Day Laborers of the North"). It's a risky, and fascinating, maneuver.

Los Jornaleros are a group of immigrant workers living in Los Angeles who play a mixture of cumbia, ranchero, and salsa, and their interjections and reactions to the practice pad presence of Ultra-Red range from gently gung-ho worthiness ("should we play something that needs a lot of practice?"), one offers politely, as a squad car siren tears past) to the inevitable Laptop-Marxists-Can't-Jump laughlines, as when a Jornalero finally sputters "We can't take you down on the corner, you guys look like La Migra", and the room erupts in guffaws.

Ultra-Red's willingness to place the sound of themselves being cloned by their own collaborators front and center in the first track of this internet-only album is crucial: It telegraphs immediately the risks, anxieties and false-starts involved in the convergence of any group, political or musical. As poignantly truncated fragments of accordion and guitar and drums flit and caper around the punched-in discussions between and across this cast of characters, Ultra-Red's rapid-fire snippets and sudden lurches transcend glitch cliché and instead model the antagonism implicit in both political coalition-building and musical partnerships, turning the loosest of raw material into something hammer hard and mirror bright.

Posted by Drew Daniel in [glitch](#) on Fri: 12-17-04: 12:00 AM CST | [Permalink](#)

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