

ART IN ODD PLACES PRESENTS 2009 FESTIVAL



SIGN

OCTOBER 1-26, 2009 on 14th Street, NYC

A festival exploring the odd, ordinary,
and ingenious in the spectacle of daily life.

OVER 60 ARTISTS TAKE ON 14TH STREET THIS OCTOBER...

Press Preview: Thursday, October 1, 3pm at Gavroche Restaurant, 212 W. 14th Street. **RSVP:** aiop2009@gmail.com

NEW YORK, NY (September 8, 2009) When you walk down 14th Street this October, watch for signs that life isn't as it has been. For the second year, *Art in Odd Places*, NYC's **free annual public art and performance festival**, gives daily life from Avenue C to the Hudson River an artistic twist. Under the rubric '**SIGN**', over 60 artists, from New York and beyond, creatively engage the street, using ideas, imagination, humor, and politics to encourage its residents, workers, and visitors to experience it anew.

Projects include the ephemeral – real and imagined gay love letters left on a bench, dollar bills planted in an exploration of the gift, or handmade sculptures of dying silkworm moths on walls and signs – and the spectacular – video projections on windows of the street's bawdy, protest history, an alternative election campaign or a satirical costumed race for the Arctic. It includes the simply odd –public napping, wearable sculptures in crochet and campy frills – and the oddly simple – tributes, through tour and installation, to the ordinary brick or to manholes, or a shamanic cleansing of the street by an artist with a broom.

"We invited artists to explore the freedoms of the public realm and find imaginative apertures in it," say guest curators, **Erin Donnelly** and **Radhika Subramaniam**. "In 14th Street, we had a site uniquely calibrated to encourage art that manifests the signs of our times while also being a signpost toward future possibilities." "*Art in Odd Places* continues New York's tradition of grassroots artistic collaboration with grand ambitions," says **Ed Woodham**, Director of Art in Odd Places.



Photo credit: Areum Lee

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

Has there ever been a time more preoccupied with signs? With the storm clouds of war, orange alerts, signs of peace, debris lines on levees, with the indices of economic collapse, and wavering graphs of recovery, with inventories of emissions and ecological footprints, with the daily mirrors of advertising, the shifting rhetorics of impending change, and the ubiquitous icons of electronic communication? With every index has come an interdiction, of fashion or fear or both, a circumscription of daily life as we have known it. Yet, this seemingly vulnerable world of ours, surrounded by signs, still throbs and clamors in disagreement and debate.

What is the role of the artist in this landscape of omens and portents, in a world as fragile and volatile as it is relentlessly humdrum and resilient, in a public realm where boundaries of civility and intimacy are continually being re-configured? These questions are answered, and others asked, by the artists of Art in Odd Places 2009. Signs are worn, dropped and projected. Interventions are tender and bold. They span the length of the street from east to west or address themselves to a specific location. But they repeatedly stretch the canvas of our perceptions of what we (can) see and what we (can) do.

On 14th Street, the entire history of New York unfolds itself. The street walks the tightrope of all dichotomies – uptown/downtown, high/pop culture, gentrification/labor protest, boutique culture/burlesque – and the specters of all these conflicting identities find their way into the artwork produced this year. The forgotten histories revived and the idiosyncratic trajectories followed by these artists are all invitations to take a very different kind of city stroll. This time, it is in an artistic and critical dialogue with public space that helps tread a new footpath through those public realms that have begun to seem thoroughly fettered but still indisputably belong to us.

Erin Donnelly and Radhika Subramaniam

FACT SHEET for AiOP 2009: SiGN

WHO: Sixty plus artists and performers from around the world.

Guest curators: Radhika Subramaniam and Erin Donnelly. Directed by Ed Woodham.

Collaborating Organizations are *openhousenewyork*, School of Visual Art's Public Art Residency, Pratt Manhattan Gallery, free103point9's *Radio Festival NYC 2009*, Theaterlab, Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts and ArtLog.com.

WHAT: Art in Odd Places 2009: SiGN is the 5th annual NYC festival featuring tours, performance, interventions, installations, video and more in public spaces. For more history, visit the website.

WHEN: October 1 to October 26, 2009; for schedule, visit www.artinoddplaces.org.

Press Preview: Thursday, October 1, 3pm (Gavroche Restaurant, 212 W. 14th St. RSVP aiop2009@gmail.com).

Opening Reception: Thursday, October 1, 6-9pm (Theaterlab, 137 W. 14th Street. RSVP: aiop2009@gmail.com) Featuring Roland P. Young, sound philosopher, musician, and composer. www.rolandpyoung.com.

Panel Discussion: Thursday, October 15, 7pm "At Odds: The Law and Public Art". With Amy Guggenheim, filmmaker/writer, Sergio Muñoz Sarmiento, CLANCCO, Christina Ray, Glowlab and Leon Reid IV, artist. In collaboration with Pratt Manhattan Gallery (144 W 14th St, 2nd Floor).

WHERE: 14th Street, Avenue C to the Hudson River, New York City.

Subways: 4, 5, 6, L, N, Q, R, W to Union Square; 1, 2, 3, A, C, E, F, V to 14th Street. L to First Avenue, Third Avenue, Union Square, Sixth Avenue, and Eighth Avenue.

Maps are available at Rags A Go-Go, 218 W. 14th Street; Arties Hardware, 140 W. 14th Street, Gavroche, 212 W. 14th Street; 14th Street Y, 344 E. 14th Street, and Otto's Shrunken Head, 538 E. 14th Street.

WHY: *Art in Odd Places (AiOP)* aims to present art that stretches the boundaries of communication in the public realm by presenting artworks in all disciplines outside the confines of traditional public space regulations. AiOP reminds us that public spaces function as the epicenter for diverse social interactions and the unfettered exchange of ideas. AiOP is a project of GOH Productions. www.gohproductions.com.

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