

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Free Biennial

OVER 200 ARTISTS IN THE FIRST FREE BIENNIAL, APRIL 2-30, 2002, NEW YORK.

CONTACT: SAL RANDOLPH 212-219-9328 info@freebiennial.org

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NEW YORK. Thursday, March 7, 2002. Over 200 artists from around the world are joining to create the first Free Biennial which will take place in New York during the month of April, 2002 (April 2-30).

The Free Biennial is an open exhibition of nonmonetary (free) artwork which will take place throughout the public space of greater New York, as well as on the internet, by broadcast, mail and telephone.

Among more than 200 participating artists are Peter Coffin, Rainer Ganahl, Joy Garnett, Kenneth Goldsmith, Ellen Harvey, Jenny Marketou, Patrick Meagher, Simon Morris, Christopher Musgrave, and Will Pappenheimer, curator/artists Coralee Lynn Rose, Jonathan Van Dyke and Gavin Wade, sound artists Erik Belgum, Calum Stirling, and W. Mark Sutherland, internet artists Robert Cottet, Antoine Moreau, Eryk Salvaggio, Stanza and Jaka Zeleznikar, poets Michael Coffey, Craig Dworkin, Richard Kostelanetz, Loudmouth Collective, and Aram Saroyan, novelist Michael Cunningham and critics Hannah Higgins and Marjorie Perloff.

Artworks, many created especially for the Free Biennial, will include public installations, performances, interactions & interventions, broadcasts, giveaways, studio & apartment shows, flash movies, downloads, net art, video screenings and listening salons. Artists are participating from New York, across the United States, and from countries around the world including Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Romania, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

"The public space of the city offers an exciting context for making art," says organizer Sal Randolph. "Artists have responded with projects that infiltrate and enliven the visual environment of streets and sidewalks, and which intervene in the power structures we take for granted in urban life."

The Free Biennial extends the idea of public space to include the broadcast airwaves, the mail and telephone systems, and the internet. "It is not surprising," says Randolph, "that a third of the works in the Free Biennial make use of systems and infrastructures which enable communication. Internet pioneers in particular have claimed the internet and the web as public space. Nonmonetary art forms thrive in that kind of intellectual and political environment."

"Nonmonetary, in this context, means that no money changes hands," explains Randolph, "but the 'free' in Free Biennial implies more than that. The art biennials we usually see are all about control -- about selecting and regulating what we experience. And there's an anxiety that always underlies control: the fear that we can't bear to be free. The deepest democratic ideals of our country protect our civil liberties, our freedom of speech and expression. It is up to us as citizens to find ways to not only tolerate that freedom, but to celebrate it."

More information about Free Biennial artists, projects and events can be found at www.freebiennial.org.



Simon Morris: The Free Urban Library in Central Park, New York

On Saturday 16 February 2002 I climbed a tree in Central Park and tied a book to its branches. The book is wrapped in several ziplock bags to protect it from the weather. It is a free book which belongs to whoever finds it. Please exchange the book you find in the branches of this tree for a book of your choice and record your submission in the notebook provided as a bibliographical reference.



Will Pappenheimer: Artists Ephemera

Often when artists make work, parts of their sculptures, paintings or performances get separated or go by the wayside. This is an online collection of such a "leftovers" from well-known artists works. This image is of an escaped and broken ping pong ball from "Theories, Models, Methods, Approaches, Assumptions, Results, and Findings," by Damian Hirst.



Glowlab Collective: Open Lab [01]

culture v. 1. to cultivate. 2. to grow living matter in a specially prepared nutrient medium.

A recent project of Brooklyn artist Christina Ray and musician Krou (Patrick Krouchian), Glowlab is presenting its first group show, featuring the work of 14 artists, musicians and writers. Image: Heidi Cody



Calum Stirling: Modelcitizen

UK-based artist and sound designer will give away 50 copies of his Modelcitizen CD and make the tracks available for free download on the Modelcitizen website. His work will also be featured at the Free Biennial Listening Salon.



Peter Coffin: Barcode Piece

People can download the barcode stickers for free, print them out onto standard sticker labels and then apply them individually to consumer products. The cash register scanner will read a four letter text (have, take, give, want, lose, need) from the barcode instead of a price and in effect poetically disrupt the purchase.



Antoine Moreau: L'Arbitraire

Huit points d'entrée dans une boucle de 216 couleurs, en défilé continu de 2 secondes en 2 secondes. Une partition aléatoire horizontale ou verticale selon le rapport PHI (Règle d'or). Le clic de votre souris sur les couleurs vous permet de jouer de ces éléments pour créer avec l'intervention du hasard électronique des compositions d'une infinie variété.

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PREVIEW

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FREE BIENNIAL to take place April, 2002

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Friday, February 1, 2002

NEW YORK. This spring New York will host a different kind of art biennial, The Free Biennial.

The Free Biennial is an exhibition of free art in public spaces, open to any artist who wishes to participate. It will be held in New York during the month of April, 2002 (April 2 – April 30, 2002).

Functioning both as an exhibition, and as a situational artwork, The Free Biennial is a project of artist Sal Randolph who says: "It's an experiment in presenting a show which is completely democratic and unedited. There's always an element of the unpredictable when you open the doors."

In an increasingly crowded field of international art expositions, the Free Biennial offers a new artistic situation, both for the viewer and the participating artist. For the artist, the Free Biennial eliminates the selection process – the curator as gatekeeper or filter. It puts the question of participation in the hands of the artist, and throws open the question of value.

For the viewer, the safety of traditional curatorship and spectacle is removed, allowing an experience which is more direct, raw, and intimate. The city is transformed into a place of potential where any encounter could be an artistic one. Armed with a map and the idea that art might be anywhere, the viewer is invited to step into the shoes of what Baudelaire and the Situationists called the flâneur, the wanderer, ready to experience anything.

"It's a new way of looking at public space," says organizer Sal Randolph. "We've gotten used to seeing public space as either institutional or commercial. Here is a way for artists and viewers to operate together as citizens, engaged with the life of the city. It holds out possibility for the values of generosity and civility, which we are so in need of at this time."

"There's plenty of free artwork out there," Randolph adds, "but there's very little context in which to show it. It's one of the hidden art movements of our time. This show aims to provide a context which will make the underground gift economy of art more visible."

Randolph's other recent projects have included "Free Words" in which 2,000 copies of a free book are being infiltrated into bookstores and libraries worldwide (for more information: <http://www.freewords.org>).

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ABOUT THE ORGANIZER

SAL RANDOLPH

Poet and art critic Eileen Myles has said, "Sal's project converges at the root of money and postmodern art and avant garde friendship," and the Boston Globe reported, "Randolph deliberately sets out not so much to challenge the viewers ideas about art, but her own... when put together, all this anti-art turns into provocative art."

Sal Randolph is a graduate of Harvard University, and a resident of New York. She is a poet and DJ as well as a visual artist and has received a Massachusetts Fellowship in poetry. She exhibits regularly at the Silas-Kenyon Gallery/Schoolhouse Center in Provincetown, Massachusetts.

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