



Art | Reviews

“Phantom Captain”

Davy Rothbart/
Found magazine,
Traveling Found
Installation



★★★★★

apexart, through Nov 25 (see Soho)

Curator Andrea Grover is best known for turning a derelict Houston church into a thriving moving-image and art center called the Aurora Picture Show. Now she ushers the work of literally thousands of artists (many of them Web-based) into the modest space of apexart for “Phantom Captain: Art and Crowdsourcing.” The show explores the aesthetic possibilities of “crowdsourcing,” a term coined to describe cooperative labor performed in the service of corporations (think eBay). Each work presents a different model of art made by a mob.

Davy Rothbart, editor of *Found* magazine, which publishes found ephemera, has edited hundreds of its submissions into a wall-sized collage that includes to-do lists, Mad Libs, photographs, and an assortment of love notes and greeting cards, all

weathered and likely long-forgotten by their original authors. Allison Wiese updates MoMA’s 1977 *Artist’s Cookbook* with a gridlike display of recipes for unexpected dishes, submitted by artists active in 2006, like sautéed dove (by Michael Rich) or Coca-Cola cake (by Jay Stuckey).

The Internet-based projects here are the most authentically group-generated; paradoxically, they also point out the persistence of individuality as an ethos among artists. The dozens of snapshots in Harrell Fletcher and Miranda July’s *Assignment #30: Take a Picture of Strangers Holding Hands* (from the website Learning to Love You More) deviate from guidelines like “no smiling” and “picture must include faces.” The variation of the photographs reveals a productive tension between personal expression and mass collaboration that runs throughout this show.—*Lauren Cornell*

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apexart

291 Church St between Walker and White Sts (212-431-5270). Tue–Sat 11am–6pm.

* “Phantom Captain: Art and Crowdsourcing.” The term crowdsourcing describes a distribution of labor to a large, geographically dispersed population (an increasingly common corporate practice). Through sites like Wikipedia and YouTube, artists have been doing it too: In this show, participants (**Jeff Howe**, **Harrell Fletcher** and **Miranda July** among them) create communal artworks of “distributed creativity,” each made in collaboration with 10–10,000 other Web surfers (see Reviews). Through Nov 25.