

apexart

Gifts go in one direction

July 5 - August 12, 2006

Curated by Alexander Nagel

A selection of gifts given and received by: Eliza Griffiths, Julie Voyce, Stephen Andrews, Paul P., Glenn Ligon, Byron Kim, Paul Ramirez Jonas, Harrell Fletcher, Harriet Sigal, Lisa Sigal, Amy Sillman, Eric Banks, Jutta Koether, Richard Phillips, Inez van Lamsweerde and Vinoodh Matadin



Paul Ramirez Jonas, *Observance (Felix)*, 2004,
12 bottles and rockets
given to Amy Sillman, 2004

OPENING RECEPTION: *Wed July 5, 6 - 8 PM*

Human beings do more than eat and procreate; we make meaning out of things. Gifts isolate and exercise that meaning-generating faculty. The ritual of sacrifice—an offering to a supernatural creative / destructive force, a gift intended to keep cosmic rhythms in motion—is an astonishingly consistent feature of human cultures all over the world. Even before the advent of writing, humans engaged in symbolic activity through the practice of gift-giving. This suggests that there is a deep link between gift practices and the activity of art-making.

How do the two terms, art and gift, define each other? The question was put to a number of artists and non-artists, producing accounts of gifts given and received and a number of reflections on how those gifts relate to artistic practice. Each interview led to the next giver or recipient, who was in turn interviewed, leading to the next, and so on, generating a sequence of art works and non-art objects that show how gifts redefine the boundaries of artistic production, how they relate to other kinds of exchange, and how they move inside and at the edges of the art market. The gift chain that will course through the space of apexart thus prompts reflection on basic definitions—on the definition of the work of art, and on the boundaries of an art-making and art-collecting community.

Alexander Nagel is a writer and art historian who teaches at the University of Toronto.

For further information, please see www.apexart.org/exhibitions/nagel.htm. Gallery hours are Tues - Sat, 11-6.

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291 Church Street
New York, NY 10013
t. 212.431.5270 f. 646.827.2487
info@apexart.org www.apexart.org

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