

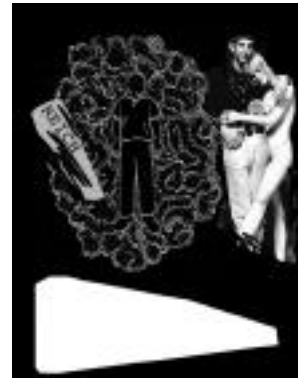
Press release:

Shadow Cabinets in a Bright Country

Curated by:
Ted Purves

September 5- October 5, 2002

Opening reception: Thursday, September 5, 6-8 pm

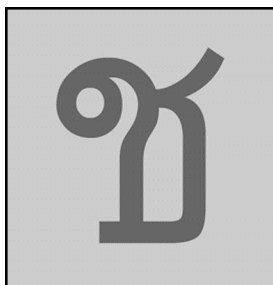


It Can Change, *F**k Amerika*,
2002 collage

There has been a distinct rise of artist-initiated projects which have at their core a structure of dispersal which seeks to connect audiences to useful goods and services. It is interesting that this arising has occurred at the same time that our national government has abandoned somewhat similar projects and responsibilities. For the September exhibition at **apexart**, 5 artists' groups will use the space as a base of operations to carry out social projects that seek to either fill holes left in the social sphere by the retreat of government interest and support or to identify new areas of social need and create projects to address them. They will offer free food in Soho, public hearings on New York City's secretive garbage disposal policies, a fully operational orgone accumulation box, socially progressive aerobics classes and instructions in foreign languages. The projects will also utilize the distribution and collection of surveys and will make available booklets and pamphlets with free information for an informed citizenry.

The exhibition takes its name from the term "shadow cabinet", an instrument used by political parties that are not in power to model alternatives of the ruling government. Though largely powerless, shadow cabinets craft a vision of what might happen in the halls of power if the tables were somehow turned. They are a glimpse of the might-have-been and the perhaps. Within our contemporary society, the "bright country" of the title, the retreat of government from the responsibilities of public service was in many ways heralded in by the former President Bush's call for a "thousand points of light." This, essentially a request for voluntary action in the face of a full scale governmental retreat, was a benign and pleasant face to put on what amounted to a massive divestment. Since shadow cabinets essentially work through the creation of metaphoric and symbolic alternatives rather than real political power, they are an apt model for artistic overlay and occupation.

The artists' projects include: *Garbage Problems* by Brooklyn-based Center for Urban Pedagogy, *Orgone/Phood*, by It Can Change (San Francisco), *Who Made This In China* by Marksearch (Oakland), *Learning Thai: A Language Reform* and *Aerobic Lessons* by Nuts Society (Bangkok) and *Strategies* by Temporary Services (Chicago).



Nuts Society, *Learning Thai: a Language Reform*, 2002

A color brochure containing an essay by Ted Purves will be available free of charge. Please contact apexart for further information.

Hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 11-6.

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