

apexart

Project proposal
by Antony Hudek (London, England)
Second place with a score of 7.23

The "Incidental Person" was coined by the British artist John Latham (1921-2006) to qualify the status of an artist involved in non-art contexts such as government or large corporations. This exhibition seeks to expand on Latham's original definition of the Incidental Person, to include those persons for whom all aspects of life – political, social, esthetic, professional – are integrated into a unified whole. The new Incidental Person can be an artist, but does not need to be since for her or him meaningful production is not the exclusive property of any one member of society: the Incidental Person can be anyone as long as each of her or his actions partakes of a larger, unified life practice.

The exhibition argues that the Incidental Person stakes out a new position, outside of the 20th-century triad Joseph Beuys-Marcel Duchamp-John Cage. Unlike the latter, the Incidental Person does not seek to solve the "art-life" or "mind-body" problems. Instead, she or he fails to see them as problems at all, since for the Incidental Person art, life, mind, and body cannot be understood in opposition to one another. But this does not mean that the Incidental Person declares that anything can be art, as Duchamp suggested with the readymade. Rather art itself becomes subsumed under a larger, all-inclusive category of motions or things that bear the elusive imprint of Incidentalness. And while the Incidental Person shares Beuys' interest in pedagogy, she or he eschews the self-mythologizing of the avant-garde: if you do not recognize the Incidental Person walking past you in the street, this is probably because you have yet to learn what makes their life-practice Incidental - and vice-versa.

This exhibition would bring together persons formerly known as "artists", "writers", "technicians", and "bureaucrats", who imbue their everyday existence with Incidentalness. In particular, the exhibition would underscore aspects of the Incidental Person's life-work that do not appear obviously "artistic". The exhibition would thus become a pedagogical forum to learn how to recognize and act out the potential behind seemingly disparate gestures, regardless of their professional or aesthetic tags.

Ron Bernstein would design the exhibition's furniture. (If some pieces turn out not to be functional, this does not mean they are necessarily sculpture.) At apexart, Luca Frei would put some of the radical sociological teachings of Albert Meister into practice, ideas laid out in Meister's book (which Frei translated in 2008), "The So-Called Utopia of the Centre Beaubourg".

Raphaële Bidault-Waddington would re-stage her unsuccessful run for mayor of Paris in 2008, using apexart as her campaign headquarters. ("Failure", of course, in no way affects the potency of an Incidental act.) Critical Practice with Neal White would host and moderate the exhibition's online wiki portal, and set up an e-learning center on the subject of Incidental models of organization.

Emma Hedditch would invest apexart with a fully-functional free lending library of women's films selected from the catalogue of her distribution company Cinenova, films that focus on the lives of Incidental Persons. International Festival would organize a celebration to honour one or more Incidental Persons from the past.

Gianni Motti would invite persons of his acquaintance to share their Incidental experiences with apexart visitors. Brian O'Doherty would be asked to re-present his own Incidental work for the National Endowment for the Arts.

Social Practice MFA students from Portland State University with Harrell Fletcher and Jen Delos Reyes would instigate projects involving apexart visitors and passers-by. Barbara Steveni would premiere her long-term project entitled "I Am An Archive", in which she revisits moments from her past as the partner of a well-known artist, namely John Latham.