

apexart

As Real As It Gets

organized by
Rob Walker

Opening reception:
Thursday, November 15: 6 - 8 pm

On view:
November 16 - December 22, 2012

Featuring work by:

Kelli Anderson
Conrad Bakker
Beach Packaging Design
Matt Brown
Steven M. Johnson
Last Exit To Nowhere

MakerBot Industries
The Marianas (Michael Arcega
and Stephanie Syjuco)
Angie Moramarco
Oliver Munday
Omni Consumer Products

Staple Design
U.S. Government Accountability Office
Ryan Watkins-Hughes
Marc Weidenbaum/Disquiet Junto
Shawn Wolfe
Dana Wyse



Shawn Wolfe, *Gross National Products Presents*, 2012 (detail)

In the savvy 21st century, we view commercial material culture as inauthentic, phony, and less than legitimate. Or at least, that's what we say we think. *As Real As It Gets* puts a different idea on offer by gathering fictional products, imaginary brands, hypothetical advertising and speculative objects, devised by artists, designers, writers, musicians, companies and in one case, a government entity.

Here's the pitch: The ambiguity in the relationship between our selves and our brand-soaked world is exactly what's worth taking seriously, not waving away. When the consideration is filtered through an open and unpredictable mind, anything seems possible, if not exactly plausible: ersatz brands get defictionalized into buyable existence and non-products get shop-dropped onto retail shelves. Imaginary brands and fictional products can become a means of expressing joy, fear, humor, unease, ambivalence — the real stuff, in other words.

The medium is the marketplace. Come browse for yourself. No purchase required.

Rob Walker is a contributing writer to *The New York Times Magazine* and *Design Observer*, and the author of *Buying In: The Secret Dialogue Between What We Buy and Who We Are* and *Letters From New Orleans*. He co-edited, with Joshua Glenn, *Significant Objects: 100 Extraordinary Stories About Ordinary Things* (Fantagraphics: 2012), and co-founded, with Ellen Susan and G.K. Darby, The Hypothetical Development Organization, which was included in the official U.S. exhibition at the 2012 Venice Architecture Biennale.

apexart's exhibitions and public programs are supported in part by the Affirmation Arts Fund, Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Greenwich Collection Ltd., Lambent Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation, and with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and the New York State Council on the Arts.

291 church street
new york, ny 10013
t. 212.431.5270
www.apexart.org