

**Press release:*****The Future of the Reciprocal Readymade  
(The use-value of art)***

March 17 - April 17, 2004

Opening reception: Wed, March 17, 6-8 pm

**curated by:****Stephen Wright** (art critic, Paris)*Artists and collectives:*

The Yesmen (Paris)

The Atlas Group (Beirut)

Critical Art Ensemble (New York)

Bureau d'études (Paris)

xurban.net (Istanbul)

AAA.Corp (Saint Etienne)

Grupo de Arte Callejero (Buenos Aires)

AAA.Corp, *Transmission Tour*  
Sound and radio mobile studio

**Gallery talk:** on the use-value of art, presented by Stephen Wright with the participation of Bureau d'études, Atlas Group, Grupo de Arte Callejero, Yesmen and special guests  
Sat, March 20, 3:00 pm

**Gallery talk:** AAA.Corp  
Wed, March 24, 6:30 pm

In a late text, Marcel Duchamp refers to what he calls the "reciprocal readymade," a radically new, yet subsequently neglected genre, which he defines through an example: "Use a Rembrandt as an ironing-board." More than a facetious mockery of use-value, Duchamp points to the symbolic potential of recycling art – and artistic tools, competencies and perceptions – into the general economy of the real (unlike the standard readymade, which recycles the real into art).

But what happens when art crops up in the everyday, not to aestheticize it, but to inform it? Well for one thing, it suffers from – or benefits from – an impaired artistic visibility: we see something, but we are not sure that what we are seeing is art. Yet in forsaking its coefficient of artistic visibility, art gains a renewed coefficient of efficacy in the real, for rather than being bracketed off in the symbolic realm as mere "art," it is free to deploy its full visual potential. This is of immeasurable importance because – artworlders' extravagant claims notwithstanding – it is by now all too clear that "art," far from being an agent for social change, can actually end up being a significant factor in curbing change and defusing world-transforming energies. Many artistic collectives are now working outside the confines of the artworld, laying no particular claim to whatever it is they do as art, trading visibility for political efficacy, extraterritoriality and reciprocity, prefiguring an unforeseen future for the reciprocal readymade and indeed a renewed use-value for art at large.

In one way or another, the seven collectives whose work is brought together in this walk-in toolbox – The Yesmen, The Atlas Group, Critical Art Ensemble, Bureau d'études, xurban.net, AAA.Corp, Grupo de Arte Callejero – all confront an operative paradox: though informed by art-related skills, their practices are a form of stealth art, infiltrating spheres of world-making beyond the scope of work operating unambiguously under the banner the art.

A full color brochure containing an essay by Stephen Wright will be available free of charge.

Please contact **apexart** for further information.

*Gallery hours are Tuesday to Saturday, 11-6.*

**apexart**'s exhibitions and public programs are supported in part by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Peter Norton Family Foundation, and with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State agency. Additional support for this exhibition was provided by the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in New York.

t. 212 431-5270

f. 212 431-4447

info@apexart.org

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