

THE FREE ART FAIR 2008

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What art piece would you queue for overnight to get for free?

There are probably loads of things I would queue overnight for – but I'll give you one for its magnificent economy: *Torsione* Giovanni Anselmo, 1967–1968. **Maria Chevska** (Artist)

None. I hate queuing and I prefer artworks to be in museums, accessible to the public. **Vicente Todoli** (Director Tate Modern)

There is no more effective antidote to any enthusiastic anticipation I might have for any art event than suddenly realising that (as is increasingly the case) I will have to join a long, slow moving queue in order to experience it!

But... I think if by some timewarp facility I was able to go to see Kurt Schwitters' *Merzbau*, that would definitely be worth waiting for. I imagine sitting on the gloomy spiral staircase of his Hanover apartment, waiting for the artist's return in the company of similar time-pilgrims, periodically pulling in my feet in to allow past his puzzled neighbours who wonder why Herr Schwitters suddenly has so many visitors.

Jeffrey Dennis (Artist)



Artists Anonymous
king w(ron)g
 C-print on aluminium
 30 x 40cm
 2008

The Free Art Fair returns

by Jasper Joffe

The free market is meant to make us free by allowing us to pay for a choice of efficiently distributed commodities. The Free Art Fair is meant to make us free by our giving away what we do best.

Last year we did the first Free Art Fair. We gave away some beautiful art. Some people wanted art so much they slept on the street overnight. Some of these people were overjoyed to get a piece of art they had fallen in love with, by a well knownish artist they had never heard of. Some people were a cartel of students who sold the work they got at an auction to pay for their degree show catalogue. Twenty people took home a bottle of Bob & Roberta's piss. One person was a homeless guy who joined the queue for something to do in the night and sold the painting he got to someone else he'd met in the queue, and used the proceeds to pay for him and a friend to have a night or two in a shelter. One piece ended up in an antique shop in Highgate and the artist bought



the Centre of Attention

Obama löst sein Ticket für den 4. November

Photograph and installation

Dimensions variable

2008

www.thecentreofattention.org

it back. Some of the free collectors are still in touch with the artists whose art they chose. When the queuers came in to ask for their piece of art it felt like we were priests dispensing communion, while flashbulbs popped, and the BBC said could we just do that again as they hadn't quite been ready. Afterwards, in the pub, we were exhilarated by having given it all away.

I don't speak for the artists in The Free Art Fair, they speak for themselves with their art and generosity in giving it away. I want to make the world better, but that sounds silly. What do I know about economics or global warming? Who am I to say, without expertise, how anything should be? Being a spectator, cheering or carping, is the role I am allocated. Perhaps I can alter my diet or change my light bulbs, but anything else is presumptuous, and will be shot down by relativist arguments (everything is as bad as everything else, so why bother?). But as an artist it does seem ok to tackle problems, think about issues above our pay grade (which is usually close to zero) and make suggestions for how to make things better. Perhaps this is



How much is your artwork worth?
Worth a great deal!

Matthew Collings

Edvard Munch on his deathbed sees Jonathan Jones's Guardian article CY TWOMBLY IS THE ONLY GRAFFITI ARTIST I CARE ABOUT (3 June 2008) in a vision taking the form of a peacock, and feels distanced from yet more naive fawning over Twombly, whose 60s stuff has energy, but after that it's just cult drivel for the hardest core bullshitters high culture has yet come up with; and while it's clear Banksy hasn't got much to offer either, Munch wonders if it's wise for Jones to call Banksy's fans "thick"; on the other hand – Munch reflects – yards and yards of blog replies to the article actually were surprisingly thick.

Charcoal, pastel and acrylic on paper
42 x 30cm (of whole sheet, including writing)
2008

because people see what we do but usually can't be sure what we mean.

Making art is work usually without the expectation of being paid for it. So artists must see some point to life besides just the invisible hand of the market shoving them to trade their time for money. Some will say that artists are dreamers and egotists, hoping to win the Turner Prize and become rich and famous. And I'll agree that I and most other artists would like more money and fame (in the sense of people looking and caring about our art) but that's not what we are in it for.

I remember as a child thinking about how depressing it would be to retire. You would be left with the rest of your days and nothing to look forward to. As an artist, I thought, you never had to stop, except perhaps to earn money, and could paint until the day you died, and might even keep getting better. So being an artist could be seen as some ideal way of life, of course in reality it is far from it and involves much uncertainty, worrying, and frustration. Not to mention poverty, jealousy, and other bad stuff. And if I say that we should all be artists,



How much is your artwork worth?

Price: £4000.

Jimmy Conway-Dyer

"Let The Dishes Do Themselves"

Scouring pads, ribbon, mop head, hair, paint, plywood

210 x 120 cm

2008

www.cell.org.uk/artist/jimmyconwaydyer.html

in the sense of doing something because you love it, you will tell me you've heard that before from Beuys or Warhol or Banksy, and nothing has changed, and anyway who would make my Lacoste polo shirts if everyone was busy painting and making videos.

Well I answer: The Free Art Fair puts its money where its mouth is, or something like that. And it relies on the gifts of artists, printers, writers, designers, rentiers, advertising people, and others. They give what they love or value, maybe there is some self interest in the back of their minds, but more obviously at the forefront is the hope and hopefully the reality that art and life have more to offer than just what they cost.

Jasper Joffe, September 2008 (the month Hirst's auction made £100 million and the credit crisis crunched)

What art piece would you queue for overnight to get for free?

I'd queue overnight for so many artworks, it's more a question of what I wouldn't sacrifice sleep for... but I could watch Christian Marclay's *Telephones* (1995) every single day of my life and still feel a little joyful twist in my stomach. **Francesca Gavin**
(Journalist)



How much is your artwork worth?
A lot to me at the time.

Sacha Craddock

Drawing
Pen and ink
19 × 27 cm
2008

Born Free

by Harry Pye

In *An American Life* (the autobiography of Ronald Reagan) the former us President reveals his attempt to break the ice one time when he was negotiating a reduction in nuclear arms with Mikhail Gorbachev. Ronnie knew that Gorbachev liked a laugh so he told him the following gag...

An American and a Russian were having a row about which of them lived in the best country. The American said, 'Look, in my country I can walk into the oval office and I can pound on the President's desk and say, "Mr President, I don't like the way you are running the country," to which the Russian said, "I can do that, too." The American said, "You can?" and his friend said: "Sure, I can go into the Kremlin and pound on the General Secretary's desk and say, "Mr General Secretary, I don't like the way President Reagan is running his country.' Mikhail Gorbachev found this joke very funny and laughed a lot. I guess that maybe the point of the joke is that freedom (rather like madness) is all in the mind.



What is your artwork worth?
Their weight in gold.

Stuart Cumberland

Gold Wrap

Plastic and acrylic on linen
35 x 45 cm
2008

Stuart Cumberland

Black On

Acrylic on linen
40 x 50 cm
2008

www.stuartcumberland.net

There's an old saying, 'If voting changed anything they'd abolish it'. For me this opinion is getting harder and harder to disagree with. I'm just about old enough to remember Michael Foot being the leader of the Labour Party and Maggie Thatcher becoming leader of the Conservatives. Back then the difference between Foot and Thatcher seemed no less enormous than the one between Ronnie and Gorbachev. These days The Labour Party and The Conservative Party constantly accuse each other of stealing ideas off one another. And when Gordon Brown became leader one of the first things he did was invite Baroness Thatcher round to number 10 to ask her advice. How shit is that? Meanwhile The Liberal Party can say what they like because they're not going to get in – As one wag once suggested, why don't they make things more interesting and promise potential voters a giraffe for every garden?

In the late 1940s George Orwell lived in a flat in Islington. It's likely that it was in this flat he began work on his book 1984 and came up with the famous line, 'Big Brother is watching you.' At the time of me writing this (September 2008),



How much is your artwork worth?
It's of great psychological value.

Adam Dant

Which one are you today?

Colour giclee print with hand drawn element

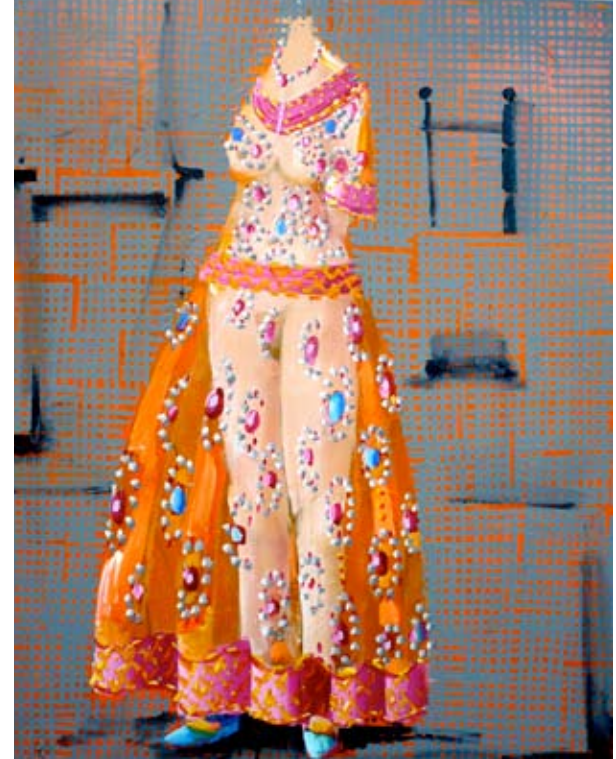
100 x 70cm

2008

www.halesgallery.com

within 200 yards of Orwell's old flat there are apparently no less than 32 CCTV cameras monitoring *everything*. A character in a Woody Allen film was once asked if he was a holocaust denier. He responded with the line: 'No, not only do I know we lost 6 million the scary part is records are made to be broken.' Bad times are just around the corner. That, 'Things can only get better' song that Tony Blair was so keen on is wrong. For instance I feel sure that within 50 years the amount of CCTV cameras watching our every move will have trebled. And I dread to think what will happen to people who don't want to carry I-D cards.

In the first paragraph I said I believed that freedom was like madness ('all in the mind'). I'm now going to change track, get a little personal and talk about some mental health problems I used to suffer from. My reason for doing this is that I want to explain that you can only really enjoy freedom if you've had to fight a bit for it. To be born British is to win the lottery of life. For example I've never had to fight for the freedom to vote, or the freedom of speech or to get free health care etc. I've had



How much is your artwork worth?
A letter of thanks

Stephen Farthing

Study for a Possible Portrait of the Queen of Alaska

Oil and acrylic on canvas

76 x 61 cm

2008

www.stephenfarthing.com

an enormously lucky life compared to millions of others around the world. But you can only write about what you know so what follows is what my fun-size struggles taught me.

Around the age of 18 I had a couple of fits after over indulging. It was no big deal but basically I'd pass out and then shake violently on the pavement for a few minutes. They scared me a bit but I knew I wasn't leading a healthy lifestyle and felt confident that if I cleaned up my act then incidents like that would never occur. It was around about this age I also had my first anxiety attack. Grown ups would advise me to have earlier nights and assured me it was nothing to worry about. But sadly it wasn't quite as simple as that and the attacks would come more frequently and last longer. Some friends would say that they had experienced anxiety attacks the morning before a driving test or before going to the dentist. From what they'd reveal I knew that their experiences were a little different from mine. For example, there seemed to be a logic and rhyme and reason to their feelings of panic. Whereas what I was getting was a sort of sudden wave of fear that



How much is my artwork worth?
 square footage × materials × psychological and
 physical investment = price

Alex Gene Morrison

ERUPTING HEAD

Oil on linen

45 × 40cm

2008

www.axisweb.org/artist/alexgenemorrison

made me feel like I was about to faint, throw up and shit myself all at the same time which would then just drain and depress me. Also I wasn't getting these problems before an exam or something – I was getting them while I was with friends just watching tv. My problems continued to grow and grow. Sometimes I'd be walking down a high street or walking through a park and I'd suddenly fall over and worse, for some unknown reason, for a few seconds I couldn't get up again so I'd just have to lie there. It all felt so embarrassing.

The next annoying problem was I'd be walking and I'd experience a sensation to when you're walking down stairs in the dark and you remember there being more steps than there actually are. An even more peculiar problem then started to occur with annoying regularity. I'd be walking into the kitchen or somewhere and I'd suddenly feel a spider's web on my face. I'd go to wipe it off and I wouldn't be sure if there had been something there or not. And then it would happen again the next day. All of these odd quirks were most likely linked to stress. I'd had a run of bad luck around the age



How much is your artwork worth?
My artwork is worth a couture/high end ready to wear evening dress.

Rose Gibbs

Animals

Ceramic, varnish, oil paint

65 x 45 cm

2008

rosiegibbs@hotmail.com

of 19. Bad things had happened to me and I wasn't on top of things. I believe there is absolutely nothing in the world that can't be talked about. But back then I was keeping everything bottled up.

When I was 19 I left home and went to Art School in Winchester. Around this time I developed two other annoying quirks to add to my collection. 1: Walking into a room and seeing everything spin round as though it were a record. 2: Panicking about desperately needing to go to the toilet and urinate as though I were about to go onstage and make a speech. These two new quirks replaced the falling over and the last step thing but the spider's web nonsense was still going strong. I was, let's be blunt about this, going a bit nuts. And the fact that I couldn't seem to shake off these problems was causing me a great deal of sadness. I didn't really have any friends and in some ways I felt that was a good thing because if anyone were to spend an hour with me they would know I was mad. And as we all know there's nothing to fear apart from being found out.



How much is your artwork worth?
£4500

Luke Gottelier
Woman with tits
Oil and pencil on canvas
122 x 107cm
2002

luke@gottelier.co.uk

Around the age of 20 I really started to booze. I discovered that if I drank three tins of white lightning cider in the afternoon before going out I could then bounce along to the student union and keep boozing and before too long I'd forget all about spider webs on my face, missing steps, falling over and I was free! There was a downside however. Whereas before I was known as that bloke who walked along the corridors, who never went out etc. Now I was beginning to be known as that drunk bloke who'd turn up and act like a berk. But as I didn't really have any friends to lose I must admit I wasn't that bothered. Whereas before I worried terribly about people finding out about my quirks I now couldn't give a flying fuck. I was a mess. But I was a free mess. I think I was kind of in love with alcohol. At the end of the first year and the beginning of the second year I'd been bullied quite a bit. This had never happened to me before. I'd come into my space and find my work in the bin. Annoying people would run up to me and say something offensive and run off. It seemed as though you could say anything you liked about me and that it would be fine. Going



How much is your artwork worth?

It depends on how many times you remember my work, and then how much the wall is worth. Whether you want to do almost as much work as I have in order get something from my work is also a question, I think my work is effortless to absorb and the 'message' simple and surprising.

Alex Hamilton

Fourth Plinth 3

Gouache, pastel, charcoal pencil, pen and ink, pit pen, airbrush, photocopy of photo of Fourth Plinth with sculpture, on 165 Canson watercolour paper

84 x 116 cm

2008

www.alex-hamilton.com

to the pub seemed to be the best way of handling it. I had always thought that Art School would be the place you would be free to do whatever you liked. But in Winchester if you did anything even remotely interesting you would be sneered at for being a weirdo and it would be held against you for years.

A year went by I found that alcohol meant I could do things I hadn't been able to do for years. For example one morning I drank a medium size bottle of whisky and then went to see a Harold Pinter play and really enjoyed it. One time I was back at my parents and my mum caught me drinking some cider. 'It's 9a.m.' she said. 'You're worse than the winos in the park.' She was right, but I couldn't see it then. All I cared about was being free. I could walk through a park, get on a bus, walk through an estate, get on a tube, go to a cinema – finally I could do all the things I'd been denied for years.

Artworld life makes it even easier to develop alcohol dependency. For instance in 2000 I was working in the bookshop at Tate Britain's Intelligence show. It wasn't a hit show, attendances were so bad that our days were being



How much is your artwork worth?

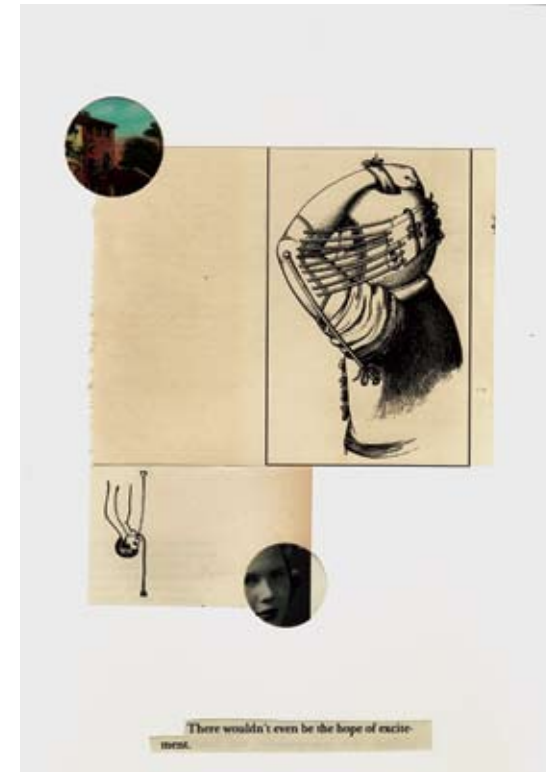
N/A

Peter Harris

*A4 piece of paper touched by Damien Hirst
and signed by Peter Harris*

www.peterharrisart.co.uk

cut. I remember one of the artists in the show apologizing to me. Saying he felt so bad that the show's unpopularity meant the part-time staff were all losing money. I tried to make him feel better by telling him we were getting free bus rides, which we were. At 6p.m. 'The Art Bus' would pick me up outside Tate Britain and drop me off outside the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square I would then walk straight to Fareham street in Soho and start enjoying the generous hospitality of the organizers of Fig-1. Each week they would hand out free Becks beers from 6p.m. till about 9p.m. My friends and I would drink as much as we could until they ran out at which point we'd go straight to the pub next door and drink till closing time. Inside the pub we would meet other 'artists' who'd tell us about other 'art events' that were also generous with the beers. In an astonishing contrast to the way I was treated at art school, when I began working at the Tate book shop I found kindred spirits who would support and encourage me. At first this was shock, I remember telling one person at work that a particular venue had agreed to put on an event I wanted



How much is your artwork worth?
The market cost of this piece is US\$1200.

Pablo Helguera

"There Wouldn't Even Be the Hope of Excitement."

Collage on paper

30.5 x 23 cm

2008

www.pablohelguera.org

to organize. She told everyone in the room and they all cheered. I felt so moved, surprised and happy by their response I quickly left the room and burst into tears.

My workload in the year 2000 was getting a bit over the top. Aside from working at the Tate three or four days a week, over a twelve month period I curated six group exhibitions of other people's work (one of which was in Paris), I wrote, edited and published four fan-zines, I interviewed artists for other people's publications, I wrote, produced and co-edited a thirty minute video, I organized four separate screenings of the film and knocked out loads of other gubbins. But it all seemed fine and of course the thing about being permanently pissed is that you never get a hangover. Everything was fine until I had a painful reunion with someone from Winchester I hadn't seen for a few years. I felt really upset about it and it made me really ill.

I had a kind of annoying bad cold that I couldn't shake off for a couple of months, maybe three. The panic attacks came back. I felt like I had a lot of bad hangovers in a row. I started



Saron Hughes

Painting installation 3

Installation/C-type print

Dimensions variable

2008

saronhughes@hotmail.com

getting shaky and sweaty. I had I.B.S. and also urinated blood a couple of times. I threw up a lot. I may have had alcohol poisoning. It may have been a mini breakdown or early mid life crisis. I don't know what it was, but whatever it was it was bloody horrible. I felt like I was dying. I needed to be free of the waves of fear nonsense that were dragging me down again. I needed to be free of bad feelings caused by sour grapes and heartache. I needed to be free of an appalling stomach churning sensation that seemed to be with me from the moment I woke up. For the second time in my life I had gone a bit nuts. One friend suggested to me that alcohol was like a car. You get a new car and every single weekend for years and years you can drive to Scotland and back and it's wonderful. Eventually though the car gets old and it can't go as far as it used to without breaking down. When I was at the wrong college at the wrong time with the wrong people it was justifiable for me to get absolutely completely pissed and try and blank it out. But now it was time to admit alcohol had done all it could for me and it was time to move on.



Some time later he had distilled the responses into perfect code, a syllable for each response to the object in question, each with at least a books worth of information (some with many books) describing different uses and meaning. When read individually, in pairs, in sets and as a whole ... sounds were produced; even the simple combinations caused the object to be seen slightly differently.

Sayshun Jay

don't stop continue

Compound vector path

0 x 0cm to ∞ to ∞

2008

Around the time I turned 30 I developed a new addiction: painting. Ideas for painting started to come thick and fast and so for the first time in my life I got a studio. Painting began to be the first thing I thought of when I woke up and the last thing I thought about at night. I started getting quite good at it. I got a bit of pride and self confidence back. When I felt sad it would only last a short time and often it would then result in making a painting which made me happy. I don't feel afraid of anyone or anything anymore. If someone asks me to organize a Staff Turner Prize at Tate Britain or a series of talks at Tate Modern I can do it. I feel free again and it's such a wonderful feeling. I still love to booze and feel glad it's there but I'm not so dependent on it anymore. I believe the key to being an artist is being confident in your own madness. If you repress your strongest thoughts and feelings it causes harm. But if you choose to communicate them, express yourself and basically go out there and be wonderful then people love you for it.

Earlier this year I had a solo show of my paintings in Brazil. I flew there with a friend –



How much is your art work worth?

Over the last week I have been painting and drawing the Pink Panther in very different conditions but with one thing in common – it's for free, and never can be bought for any price. First I drew him on A3 paper with felt pens, my first sketch in designing my piece for the Free Art Fair, then I went out risking life and limb at midnight in the rain, finishing as it was getting light to paint him on a long distance freight train for all to see as he travels back to Hamburg from Sweden free of charge. For the Free Art Fair I will be donating a piece containing the image of the Pink Panther, it could one day be priceless to whoever gets it.

James Tek33 Jessop

Dimensions variable
2008

www.sartorialart.com

it was my first time in a plane for 20 years. When we arrived I felt so happy I found it hard not to jump up and down. My heart was in my mouth and pounding away – but in a good way. And one day on the beach in Rio I felt this astonishing feeling of contentment that I could not remember feeling before. I was so happy it was hard not to cry. The guy who owned the gallery in Brazil told me that regardless if anything sold or not he was happy with my paintings and felt the show was a success. Obviously this was a great thing to be told but somehow I knew it wasn't just the show that was making me feel so released. It wasn't just the company I was keeping. It wasn't just the sun and the sand. It was everything all mixed up together. I am free and I am in love with the world.

What art piece would you queue for overnight to get for free?

The painting I would like is my own *Sorry I broke your vase* (china on canvas) which I now regret selling. **Arthur Smith** (Comedian)



How much is your artwork worth?
I prefer to leave that up to the person who gets it to decide.

Chantal Joffe

Woman with a Beehive

Collage on paper

32 × 50cm

2008

Courtesy the Artist and Victoria Miro Gallery, London

www.victoria-miro.com

Art work or not work?

by Erik Empson

Egon Schiele: ‘The work of art is sacred, too.’
E. F. Schumacher: ‘... there can be nothing
sacred in something that has a price.’

The awe which may have once greeted any one excellent work of art, is today more likely to be generated by the price it fetched when sold than anything to do with the work’s visual affect. How do we account for this apparent reversal?

Art, because of its uniqueness, and because it is the result of irreducible, complex human labour, never fitted into the Marxian conception of value and work – based as it was on factory production and its particular type of discipline. But in escaping that dreary paradigm, artists themselves have long struggled over the problem of authenticity and the commodity form and in so doing sought to challenge the separation between art and life.

Western capitalist societies have gradually overcome the division between mental and



How much is your artwork worth?
How much do you want to pay?

Jasper Joffe

Ka
Oil on canvas
240 x 210cm
2008

www.jasperjoffe.com

manual labour, the time of productive work has been extended beyond the workplace; the production of commodities no longer involves the reduction of the worker to part of the machine, but mobilises their total creative abilities as a social human being. Whether employed or not, whether successful or not, all members of society create and transmit value.

At the same time much of the precariousness, irregularity, flexibility and types of free labour that previously characterised artistic practice has been generalised to all working lives; to make a living today means to mould and shape personhood in a perverse play of changing identities. Conversely, artists' practice has come to involve more and more profane and mundane elements that belong to the business world and have very little to do with art.

All social activity is now imbued with immaterial and affective elements and it is impossible to think of aesthetic communication as an extraeconomic category. The nature of capital has changed; originally mere alienated human labour in quantity, its forms of being have qualitatively proliferated. Finance capital, social



Lee Johnson
Untitled (Tropical Painting)
 Oil and spray enamel on canvas
 180 x 155cm
 2008

capital, creative capital, cultural capital all exercise discrete dispositifs of control over the whole gamut of human social activity even though they are all still the result of the estrangement of human energies into private hands. Thus, whether private or public, work in general is increasing returning to its organic unity with life. Unfortunately this life continues to be, for the most part, unpleasant.

The reason we find the costs of certain works of art so hard to believe is because art, like no other 'commodity', increases its value by being consumed. This has always been true of it no matter the economic system. But today because the consumption is driven by soulless banknotes, aesthetic value and economic value collide into a troubled unity. So long as this approbation is dictated by who has more capital (financial, cultural or otherwise) rather than by the whole society of producers whose energies and activities, sensibilities and inclinations make meaningful art possible, this collision of values cannot be resolved.

One of the current effects of this is the creation of a spectacular gulf between haves and



How much is your art work worth?
My work is worth the time it can buy me in the studio.

Peter Lamb

Digging from the middle ages

Archival digital print on butler finish dibond

160 x 120 cm

2008

www.peterlamb.org

have-nots within the art world, reproducing (albeit seemingly arbitrarily) the wider inequality in society at large. Golden geese artists are a conduit for the primitive accumulation and valorisation of the total aesthetic energies of mankind. And there is no better figure for this expropriation than that obscenity of a diamond encrusted skull. The success of one equals the dispossession of thousands; and seeing no alternative the craven pander to this elitism.

But even in its distorted, profane capitalist integument, the question of what it means to own a piece of art (how the consumption of another's labour augments value), allows us an insight into the immutable and universal nature of what art is.

Art is the self-valorisation of society, and a key to the nature of sociability itself. That concatenation produces more value rather than less, is itself the very possibility of society.

Ultimately, economic systems are successful only because of the energies that are invested in them. Capital is not dynamic, people are, and art is the key to the perpetual motion of society. This is why it is sacred. The excess intrinsic to



How much is your artwork worth?

My work is pretty much priceless, it is hard to put a price on something that only exists because you have conceived and produced it. Of course work does get sold, because otherwise I wouldn't be able to get into my studio and also because I need to eat. Selling work doesn't make me sad because I like the idea of someone who appreciates it having it and looking at it. What I don't like the idea of is art being traded and then stacked up in a vault like some kind of lifeless commodity.

Cathy Lomax
Broiderie Anglais
 Oil on linen
 81 × 56cm
 2008

www.transitiongallery.co.uk

the value of art yet so debased by the art market can be recovered. And that would mean that to enjoy art would also be to profit from it; having pleasure not squandering but augmenting the wealth of social experience. The difficulty is new, but the solution an old one. Society's problem is not that it produces a surplus but what it does with it.

What art piece would you queue for overnight to get for free?

There are many works of art I would queue for overnight. In terms of the sleep deprivation : value ratio, I would probably go the longest for the 3 *Battle of San Romanos*, I have fervently loved them since I was a child. **Tara Cranswick** (V22 Collection)

There are lots of works I'd queue for, or wade through a river of shit, or swap a baby, or anything else to get for free – or at least a price I can afford (which is 0–\$50, in reality). Top on my list would be anything by Dan Attoe. His work breaks my heart. I could spend my life looking at one of his paintings, and do little else, but still feel intellectually fed. Other than Dan, here are a few artists I'd love to collect: Amie Dicke, John Kleckner, Pinar Yolacant (it's no accident that they are all almost Peres Projects people. It's my favorite gallery. I did more than queue, I moved to Berlin largely because they are there.) Otherwise, I love lots of artists. I'd own a lot of art – if I could. But Dan's work does something else to me, it reminds me of ever other art form I love – literature and country music. It's all there. I really hate my life when I realize that I'll never own one of his paintings.

Ana Finel Honigman (Journalist)



How much is your artwork worth?
My artwork is worth doing.

Amanda Loomes

Replacement – Personnel VI

Digital C-type print

61 × 45cm

2007

(Image from work undertaken at the international law firm Clyde and Co.)

www.amandaloomes.net

An interview with Lewis Hyde, author of *The Gift*

When I talked to Alex Hamilton about being in last year's Free Art Fair he gave me a copy of *The Gift*, insisting it was highly relevant. He was right. Lewis Hyde is a poet, essayist, translator, and cultural critic. His 1983 book *The Gift* illuminates and defends the non-commercial portion of artistic practice. Zadie Smith described it as, 'A manifesto of sorts for anyone who makes art [and] cares for it.' Hyde is currently at work on a book about our 'cultural commons,' that vast store of ideas, inventions, and works of art that we have inherited from the past and continue to produce. His UK publisher Canongate has kindly donated 200 copies of his books to give away at The Free Art Fair. More information on Lewis Hyde can be found at www.lewishyde.com

J. JOFFE Why is art a gift?

L. HYDE My position is actually a little more nuanced than the question implies. Works of art can be gifts or commodities (or anything else!)



How much is your artwork worth?

It's worth my heart and mind together. This piece has a Roman history and indeed has travelled from Roma to London.

Marta Marce

Tres angulos

30 x 35 cm

Spray paint on wood

2008

www.martamarce.com

depending on how we treat them. They exist in many economies. The argument of my book, however, is that only the gift economy is essential; where there is no gift, there is no art.

There are several lines of thought behind that assertion. One has to do with talent or inspiration. Both of these are things that we cannot have by our own efforts. We can, of course, prepare the ground, and we can school a talent, but these are secondary labors. Before them something else must happen that cannot be produced by the human will or ego. ‘Not I, not I, but the wind that blows through me,’ wrote D.H. Lawrence.

There is much more to say, of course – I’ve written several hundred pages on this question!

J.J. To quote your excellent question: If art is essentially a gift, how does the artist survive in a society dominated by the market?

L.H. There are many ways to survive. One, of course, is to find a gift economy that reflects and responds to the economy of the creative spirit. This might mean simply having a gang of friends who exchange work, criticisms, and



How much is your artwork worth?
Real art is not for sale!

Bruce McLean
'possibly a nude by a coalbunker'
Riverside Studios
1983

encouragement amongst themselves. On a more organized level it might mean having institutions that support the gifts of the gifted outside the market. Sir Isaac Newton was supported that way; so was James Joyce.

More commonly one needs to think of dividing the work of art from the work of making a living. William Carlos Williams was a doctor and a poet; in this case, the doctor was the poet's patron. To take a more humble example, when I started out I worked nights at a hospital; I made no real money from my writing until I was almost 40. The hospital work took the burden off the writing – I didn't have to earn money there, and thus could do whatever I wanted.

J.J. In *The Gift* you use folk tales, poetry, and the lives of artists to drive your narrative; which story or fairytale describes your own life?

L.H. Hard to say! Maybe 'The Shoemaker and the Elves.' One thing I like about that story is the way the shoemaker holds off figuring out who's helping him. Young artists sometimes need a certain guardedness and privacy.



How much is your artwork worth?
This work is worth the journey to the farthest reaches
of the river Caroni and back.

Stephen Nelson

Horn thing
Mixed media
17 x 13 x 10 cm
2008

www.manandeve.co.uk

J.J. *The Gift* was first published in 1983, have economic/cultural changes occurred in that time which impact your arguments?

L.H. The fall of the Soviet Union unleashed an era of market triumphalism. For most of my youth there was an international tension between US capitalism and Soviet communism; when the latter failed there began to be claims that the former had some sort of ahistorical and transcendent standing. Gift economies, of course, belong to neither category, and it may be that consciousness of that fact is even more necessary now that the protocols of capitalism are more than ever presented as eternal verities.

J.J. In *The Gift* I enjoyed your example of underwear producers manufacturing demand from children by putting superheroes on their pants. I remember having some Superman ones that I really liked. But is there anything wrong with the sheer variety and cunning of the products produced by multinationals, don't they enrich our world in both senses of the word?

L.H. Yes of course. But there is a distinction to be made between the product and the way the



How much is your work worth?
More than a footnote I hope.

The House of O'Dwyer

Untitled (Everything). From the *Truffle Painting Series* 2008

Acrylic glitter, aluminium paint on board.

75 × 95 cm

2008

www.freewebs.com/thehouseofodwyer

product is marketed. The old word ‘usury’ now means the crime of charging too much interest; its room meaning, however, has to do with commercializing human mutual aid and affection. It means trying to make money from the people who should be your kin.

That was my complaint about those underpants: the company marketed them by inserting its advertising into the space between children and parents.

J.J. You are working on a book *In Defence of Cultural Commons*, could you say a little about what that phrase means?

L.H. By ‘cultural commons’ I mean that vast store of unowned ideas, inventions and works of art that we have inherited from the past and that we continue to create. The term ‘commons’ traditionally referred to woods, streams, and fields that were used in common – in the English case up until the early nineteenth century, when most were finally enclosed, that is to say, fenced and converted into private land. Many of us believe that we are currently witnessing a second enclosure, the enclosure of the commons of



How much is your artwork worth?

I'm represented by Sartorial Contemporary Art and I think if you bought this triptych from them it would cost about 6 grand. They'd get half and then me, Marcus and Rowland would get a grand each. Obviously I'd have to pay tax on that. Each painting took us 2 to 3 days to make. I spent about £70 on materials and canvas and I'll probably have to spend a bit more on transport or something. In a sense, giving this away is a bit like me and two friends giving up a whole weekend to paint and decorate a complete stranger's living room.

Marcus Cope, Harry Pye and Rowland Smith

Three Figures Standing in front of Three Figures at the Base of the Crucifixion

Acrylic on canvas

122 x 91cm (each painting)

2008

www.sartorialart.com

the mind. Many things that we once thought belonged in the public domain are now disappearing into private hands – from aboriginal healing knowledge to the human genome. My book sets out to describe the space of this enclosure, and explain why it is worth resisting.

J.J. How does free music downloading relate to the idea of cultural commons?

L.H. There are two possible questions here, one having to do with ‘free music’ in the sense of music that nobody owns (an old folk song, for example) and one having to do with music that is protected by copyright and nonetheless gets downloaded as if it weren’t. I presume that the question points toward this latter case, and thus carries a deeper question about copyright.

I myself am neither a copyright minimalist nor a maximalist. Minimalists believe we should get rid of it, or thin in out radically; maximalists believe creators should have a perpetual right of ownership. In between we find the idea of a ‘limited term’ as, for example, in the earliest copyright law, the 1710 Statute of Anne, which gave authors a right to their work for twenty-



How much is your artwork worth?
Slightly less than Robinho!

Danny Rolph
Konversation 5
Mixed media on canvas
25 x 20 cm
2008

www.dannyrolph.com

one years (once renewable if the author lived). The thing to note about this law is not so much its ownership right as the fact that it places an outer limit on ownership and by doing so brings the public domain into being.

What makes a question about ‘free music downloading’ hard to answer is that the maximalists have been eating away at the ‘limit’.

In my country copyright is now essentially perpetual, the limit being so long as to be almost no limit at all. To abide by the law, therefore, means to participate in the destruction of the public domain.

So, this is a complicated business, and there is no easy answer. If I had to give a short reply it would be this: buy a guitar and make your own music.

J.J. What do you think about the availability of free pornography on the internet, is this an example where something given away is not a gift but a poisoned apple?

L.H. Gifts make a connection between the giver and the receiver, and for that reason some gifts must be refused.



How much is your artwork worth?

English Heritage currently control access to this nation's (and arguably the world's) greatest work of Art – which also is a serious contender for the greatest ever: sculpture, architecture, sacred site, mathematical instrument or astronomical observatory. I am talking about the big one here – the mother and the father load: STONEHENGE.

Now semi-isolated by dull English B roads and vandalized by a crude tunnel and ‘English Heritage’ shop selling tack. Further insult is added to injury, as one also has to pay eight pounds to be given the privilege of being supermarket processed around these great stones – whilst oddly uniformed staff and CCTV presumably watch you don't set up a separate franchise?

Stonehenge is priceless and should be free at the point of entry. I have therefore decided to give Stonehenge back to the nation. In a gesture of further largesse I will be giving away an ice sculpture containing a myriad of representative Stonehenge sarcens and trilithons. In addition I have also buried a very powerful and potent object within the vicinity of the Henge – clues to the location are to be found in one of the representative images floating within the ice sculpture – good hunting. Viva Merlin! Viva Stonehenge!

Martin Sexton
‘FREE Stonehenge’

www.martinsexton.co.uk

J.J. We seem to be living in a time of the total victory of capitalism either in an authoritarian model such as China, or a democratic one such as America, but there seems little prospect of any alternative system of wealth distribution.

Is capitalism's victory final?

L.H. Perhaps, but there are many kinds of capitalism, as your question indicates. I recommend a book called *Capitalism 3.0: A Guide to Reclaiming the Commons*, written by Peter Barnes.

J.J. In contemporary societies what would you say are working examples of alternatives to capitalism?

L.H. Much of what is happening on the internet – as Wikipedia, for example. Or the kind of thing described by Yochai Benkler in a wonderful essay (available on the web) called ‘Coase’s Penguin, or Linux and the Nature of the Firm.’ Or much of the work being done by non-governmental agencies. Or philanthropic enterprises like one I helped to found in New York called ‘Creative Capital’ (we give money to artists).



How much is your artwork worth?
My toenail clippings are worth their weight in gold.

Bob & Roberta Smith

I'd like to do a performance where I cut my toenails and then give them out to all my fans.

www.bobandrobertasmith.zxq.net

J.J. Watching the Olympics I was struck by the way sport at the highest level can be very beautiful. Do you think sport is something that shows that commodification of human activity works, as these exceptional performances may be motivated by the desire for the money that results from Olympic glory?

L.H. Here I have the same answer as I had above in regard to art: sport can be treated as a gift or as a commercial endeavor, and can clearly survive when these two are mixed. Only the gift economy is essential, however; where there is no gift, there is no sport.

J.J. Do you think that financial success corrupts the practice of the artist?

L.H. Not necessarily. Awareness is what matters – awareness of the nature of one's practice, of one's debts, and of one's audience.

J.J. The Free Art Fair attempts to say that art is worth more than just its market price. Is this a futile gesture or does it make any sense?

L.H. Read my book!



How much is your artwork worth?

It's important particularly in project like the free art fair, not to talk about price. All artworks are worth the same. It's only when you introduce ownership that 'what it's worth' is an issue. The idea of possession is represented in the art world as a 'collection'. Demand for artist work has often everything to do with its financial value and nothing to do with its artistic value. This is not to say that there are not serious collectors buying work they like and believe in, there are, but you can't separate that desire, however noble it is, from the idea of possession. But we live in a culture where the currency of art and ideas are locked into financial rather than use value. The true currency of art is currency. Maybe there should be an art fair where all the work is destroyed at the end.

Terry Smith

Welcome Mat

Welcome mat with graphite

45 x 30 cm

2007

www.arts.clara.net

J.J. Which work of art would you queue up overnight to own?

L.H. Bill Viola's video, 'The Greeting' (based on Jacopo da Pontormo's great Mannerist painting 'The Visitation,' which portrays the joyous moment at which Mary tells her cousin Elizabeth that she is expecting a child). And I'd like Bill Viola to come and install it in my home after I've spent all night waiting.

What art piece would you queue for overnight to get for free?

I would queue for weeks, months, more, and be happy to do so, if I could get my hands on pretty much anything by Ceal Floyer but especially, and in particular, and certainly at the top of my list, would be her *Helix (2) 2002*. Failing that would be *Helix 2002* or *Helix 2003*. But, you know, pretty much all her stuff is genius.
Russell Herron (Artist)

In Brazil I was in my early 20s and went to see a show of Bacon, Giacometti, and De Kooning. That was the key factor in making me decide to become an artist once and for all. I was always torn between my two loves, physics and art. The work of Bacon and Giacometti made my bowels and stomach turn and I knew that it was love. Bacon's triptych with a man sitting in an imaginary background, line up, stays in my mind. It was in the Museum of Art, Sao Paolo, and I will never forget it and would queue up for that painting. **Gretta Sarfaty Marchant** (Artist and Gallerist)

At the moment one of Yona Friedman's *Space-Chains* models.
Ian Kiaer (Artist)



How much is your artwork worth?

It varies a lot. I give quite a lot away, depending on how much pleasure someone gets from it, but it's my living too, so I've had to get better at selling. It's linked to how I value myself and that varies all the time!

The Tesco's finest answer? About 6k.

Geraldine Brigid Swayne

Spoilt Victorian Child

Oil on unstretched canvas

450 x 450 cm

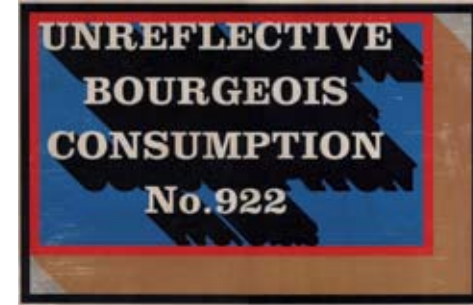
2008

www.theaquariumonline.co.uk

Performance Artists

Laura Wilson, Frog Morris, Lee Campbell, Mark Dean Quinn, Dora Wade, Adrian Lee, Jenny Baines, Calum F. Kerr, Jordan McKenzie, Charlotte Young, Victoria Melody, Alex Staiger, Peter Bond, Daniel Lehan

Lee Campbell and Frog Morris curated a selection of performance artists to roam around the opening night of The Free Art Fair. Buskers and people in strange masks and headgear. Princess Penang dispensing her own brand of spiritual healing. Daniel Lehan protesting with his unusual signs and billboards. Lee Campbell leading chants and action with his megaphone, by a group called The Free Choir where volunteers will be creating walls of sound, choirs singing songs with the word 'Free' in them. Also an sms Art Exhibition, a collection of artworks stored as picture messages on a mobile phone by Mark Quinn, Stewart Whitehead and Frog Morris distributed for free using Bluetooth. Jordan McKenzie making a comment on the British love (and hate) of queues on the closing



How much is your artwork worth?
£1000

Chris Tusic
Unreflective Bourgeois Consumption No. 922
Pigment and paint on wood
27 x 41 cm
2008

www.christosic.co.uk

giveaway. Adrian Lee as a rabbit in a suit giving away balloons.



Lee Campbell, *Fall and Rise* performance at Whitstable Biennale 2008.

What art piece would you queue for overnight to get for free?

I'd queue up overnight for Paolo Uccello's *Battle of San Romano*
Flora Fairbairn (Curator)

Leaving aside monetary considerations, which would make the list unfeasibly long obviously, I'd queue for a Matisse, especially of the relatively austere Piano Lesson or Goldfish variety. An early, slightly painterly Frank Stella like the bluey grey one the Tate's got. Manet's Balcony. A Winifred Nicholson still life. An early, painterly Robert Ryman, especially one with a prominent signature. An early pop Lichtenstein from his first show at Leo Castelli, before his technique became too slick. A Cezanne still life with plenty of unfinished bits. And a Francis Bacon. I don't know how I forgot that. I left out Fra Angelico's large Annunciation and Piero Della Francesca, less because of the fresco issue than because I think everyone should own them. Like trains and water. **John Moseley** (Poet)



How much is your artwork worth?
 As much as you think.

Gavin Turk
Fruit Stickers

info@gavinturk.com

FAQ

all you need to know

Q: How do I get my hands on a piece of art? (*please read this carefully to avoid disappointment!*)

A: You come to the Free Art Fair, look around and decide which piece you would like. On Sunday 19th October at 6p.m. you come back to 19 New Quebec Street and tell us which piece you want.

There will be probably be a long queue, in order to avoid groups of people ganging up and to give people further back a chance, the order in which the first 20 people in the queue get to choose will be determined by a random draw.

After that, if you are the first person in the queue to ask for a piece then it's yours. If that piece is taken you get one more choice, if that one's taken, then you've had your chance and it's off to the back of the queue. We won't tell you what's gone till the end, because we want people to take something they really want not just anything they can get! All you have to do is take it home that day. We do not provide transport and all work must be collected on the day (if not you can't have it!). We recommend you may need to arrive before 6p.m. to be first in the queue.

Q: Why this way?

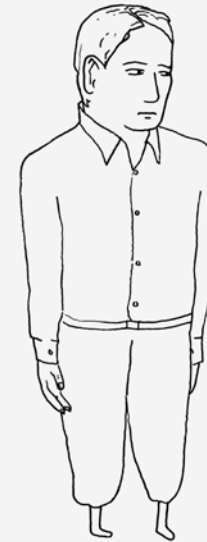
A: We want people to choose something they really love and not just queue for ages to get anything that's going. The draw to determine what order the first 20 people go in, means that people have to commit to a piece of work and means more people have a chance of getting something they really love.

Q: Why are you giving away the art?

A: Because it seems like a nice idea. The people who want it the most, not only those that can afford it, will be able to own a great piece of contemporary art. It offers an alternative to the market frenzy which we see at this time of year, and opens a debate about the value of art.

Q: Who are these artists?

A: They are all artists whose work we love and are include some of



Artist, too big for his boots

How much is your artwork worth?

The answer to this question is extremely complex and touches upon the very pillars of our society.

The answer is fluid and impossible and probably comes close in: it is worth a lot.

Markus Vater

Artist, too big for his boots

Ink on paper

84 x 59cm

2008

www.markusvater.com

Britain's best known and most promising artists All the artists have been selected on the strength of their work in order to make a fantastic show. Some of them are famous like Gavin Turk and Stella Vine. Some have work in the Tate Gallery like Bruce McLean and Bob & Roberta Smith. Some are well known as art critics but are also passionate artists like Matthew Collings and Sacha Craddock. Many show with mega galleries like Chantal Joffe, Artists Anonymous, and many others. A large number are up and coming young artists with work in the Saatchi Collection like James Jessop or Marta Marce. Some are big in Europe like Terry Smith and Centre of Attention who have both been in the Venice Biennale. Some of the artists are new and unsullied by success.

Q: Are they just giving away a piece of paper with a scribble on?

A: No, not unless that's what they do anyway. All the artists are showing a serious piece of work because we want to put on a great show.

Q: What unusual things are you giving away?

A: Bob & Roberta Smith will be giving away his toenail clippings, last year he distributed 20 bottles of his piss in the tradition of Manzoni. Other artists are making installations and specific works for the show. Harry Pye has made triptych with his friends based on Francis Bacon's trio. Jasper Joffe will be giving away a painting of about three meters in size so the person taking it will need a large van.

Q: Shouldn't the artists get paid for their hard work?

A: Well, we believe that it is great if artists are well rewarded for their art. Most artists earn very little money from their work and that is bad. The Free Art Fair is not saying art is worthless. It is saying art is worth more and about more. Most artists don't become artists to get rich, though it's nice if it happens, they do it for various reasons often including that they love art.

Q: What else are you giving away?

A: We will be giving away 2000 copies of *The Free Art Fair Handbook*, designed by Paulus M. Dreiholz, each one will be customized with a hand-written 'free' on it. Some will be 'freed' by the artists in the fair.



How much is your artwork worth?

I'd like to think that my art work will bring you some enjoyment, or be something you could get lost in thinking about for a wee while, something that mirrors the light and the dark, something to reflect on, perhaps even something very sad, but hopefully uplifting at the same time.

As far as the monetary value goes, if you need to sell it one day, I hope it will bring you a small fortune, and help you to have a cosy old age, watching *Murder She Wrote* with a lovely box of fudge, and not be worrying about the gas bill, perhaps with a nice sea view, like Gracie Fields on the Isle of Capri.

Stella Vine

'Holy water cannot help you now'

Acrylic on canvas

214 x 183cm

2005

www.stellavine.com

Canongate are giving away 200 copies of Lewis Hyde's books. He is the author of *The Gift* and has done an interview for the handbook.

We will also have copies of *Art World Magazine* and *The Other Side* magazine, two of our sponsors.

What art piece would you queue for overnight to get for free?

Sarah says the *Winged Victory of Samothrace* (The Louvre) and for me Gerhard Richter's *Atlas*, if that isn't being greedy.

Kit Wise (Artist)

Any painting by Christopher Wool. **Jaime Gili** (Artist)

Thank you for your interest in Frieze. Unfortunately neither Matthew or Amanda can recommend artists, art works or galleries as it represents a conflict of interest.

Matthew Slotover & Amanda Sharp

(Directors Frieze Art Fair)

I would queue overnight for anything by Sarah Lucas especially her kebab on the table piece – *Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab* and any of her chicken pieces with fluorescent tubes or her mattress piece *Au Naturel. Croccioni* 2000 by Rebecca Warren, cos it made me burst out laughing thinking about how absurd it is to wear heels and live on plinths. And for more recent work I would queue for a floor or hanging piece by Karla Black, cos she's as good as Eva Hesse. Bit feminine today – but there we are!

Soraya Rodriguez (Director Zoo Art Fair)



How much is your work worth?
It's worth what it has cost.

Michael Ward

London Plane (detail)

Ink and watercolour on paper

180 x 150cm

2008

Who does what

Jasper Joffe, jasperjoffe@hotmail.com thought of the idea and is responsible if it all goes wrong.

Myriam Blundell myriam_blundell@kontemporaryart.com knows great people and moves and shakes them to help with the fair.

Paulus M. Dreibholz and **Wolfram Wiedner** twist and tweak points and pixels until it looks just right (or left).

Nicolas Berthelot sees and adjusts values so you can see colour.
nicolas.berthelot@meduse.fr

Manon Janssens helps with getting the message out.

Kristian Kis and **Roz Hanna** at **Coverdale Davis** relate to the public through the press www.coverdaledavis.com

Louise Sheerin and **Simon Loomes** through **The Portman Estate** provide the property.
www.portmanestate.co.uk

Harry Pye helps find artists and ideas harry_pye@hotmail.com.

Karim at **Potassium Store** helps and advises
www.potassiumstore.co.uk

Kath Boon at **Art World** says yes.

Many people invigilate the spaces and answer questions.

The Other Side gang join in.

Cherry Haynes and all the nice people at **Calverts** print our handbook.
www.calverts.coop

The artists do their **art**, which is what it is all about.

Many people help, not all are thanked.

Lee Campbell (www.myspace.com/leejcampbell) and **Frog Morris** (www.frogmorris.com) perform miracles of curating performers.

Henrik Potter and **Philip Ginsberg** fair manage. And volunteers (we all are!) make sure the art is not freed too soon.

What art piece would you queue for overnight to get for free?

A Warhol *oxidation* (piss) painting.

Matthew Higgs (Artist, Curator, Writer, Publisher)

I would do it for one of Niki de Saint Phalle's *Shooting* paintings: violence, game and creativity, what a powerful combination. Plus she started doing them in the year I was born.

Klarita Pandolfi (Artist)



What is your artwork worth?

An object is worth the lengths to which you are prepared to go to get it.

Douglas White

Counsel

Found vandalised recycling bins

170 x 240 x 155cm

2006

www.paradiserow.com

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Charlie Woolley

I Built My House on Sand (installation view)

Shoobox Guitars – Electric Glam Black SE & Electric Glam Gold SE

Shoobox, glitter, elastic bands

86 × 14.5cm

2008

Courtesy David Risley Gallery

www.davidrisleygallery.com

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Sacha Craddock, Stuart Cumberland, Adam
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Jasper Joffe, Peter Lamb, Cathy Lomax,
Amanda Loomes, Marta Marce, Bruce
McLean, Alex Gene Morrison, Stephen
Nelson, House of O'Dwyer, Harry Pye, Danny
Rolph, Martin Sexton, Bob & Roberta Smith,
Terry Smith, Geraldine Swayne, Chris Tomic,
Gavin Turk, Markus Vater, Stella Vine, Michael
Ward, Douglas White, Charlie Woolley

The Free Art Fair 2008, 13–19 October 2008, <http://freeartfair.com>

14, 19, 21 New Quebec Street and 5, 8, 16 Seymour Place, Portman Village, London W1H
Nearest Tubes: Marble Arch, Edgware Road, +44 (0)7957 136 066

Opening hours: Monday to Sunday, 11a.m.–6p.m.



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