



## Features

# Art Enthusiasts Throng DUMBO, Expecting – and Getting – the Unexpected

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Brooklyn Daily Eagle

DUMBO – Brooklyn’s neighborhood of DUMBO once again reminded art lovers why it is called the “creative capital of New York City” with this year’s D.U.M.B.O. Art Under the Bridge Festival.

‘Expect the Unexpected!’ was the theme for the 12th annual festival, which ran from Friday evening through Sunday, and -- in spite of Saturday’s rain -- participants were not disappointed. Art popped up in the darndest places throughout the neighborhood: fences, nooks, loading docks, street booths, elevators, co-op lobbies and on the waterfront.

Roughly 70 artists were involved in the public projects and about 100 studios were opened to the public. Most attending held a happily expectant attitude, as the line between real life and art became blurred. While peering into a darkened loading dock at a laser-lit hanging foil, human-sized artwork might scamper by out on the street. Cutting-edge video played at the beautiful new Galapagos Art Space, while in a nearby lobby a mandala made of yarn was composed – then swept away.

The line became so blurred that several people gathered around a mousetrap found next to a dumpster in an alley, expecting it to, perhaps, do something. (Alas, it turned out to be simply a mousetrap.)

Much of the art was idiosyncratic and interactive, like “The Clone Corporation,” by Kate Kaman and Joel Erland. This piece transformed the prizes you could grab in a “crane” game of the type usually found in arcades. Instead of plush toys, participants attempted to snag a fetus sculpture.

The lobby at 50 Washington Street held “Succulent Girl Friday” by Allison Berkoy. This gown-bedecked “woman” with a video face had succulent plants for hair and hands. She was called “resilient, prickly, and almost impossible to kill.”

Current, the sponsor of this year’s festival, also provided funding for the monumental “Pachyderm,” by Dan Das Mama and Karen Cusolito, ensconced in the recently opened Manhattan Bridge archway. The work involved curving cables of shifting light and sound, surrounded by video monitors (playing Current TV) and images projected on the arched ceiling and walls.

“Sustenance,” by John Bonafede, took place out on the sidewalk in front of 45 Main Street. In this interactive work a “friar” read scripture to the crowd while a “farmer” peeled potatoes. Then the friar fried the potatoes and served them to the hungry public. An art reviewer from a New York paper enthused, “I’ve seen art, touched art, listened to art and even smelled art – but I’ve never tasted art!”

As it turns out, art is delicious.

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