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ART

The Art Community

Paint-by-letters at the Caro D'Offay Gallery

Molly Sullivan

Everyone knows a picture is worth a thousand words, but how many words does it take to create a picture? At Caro D'Offay Gallery you need only a few words to describe what you want the picture to look like and the rest will be left up to interpretation as "The Colorist Chess" exhibition opens for public collaboration.

"The Colorist Chess" began as a group of artists receiving emails and phone calls describing what people wanted to see on a wall of panels back in November. "First the submissions gave us words and coordinates only, then we would paint what we thought they meant," explains Caro, the gallery owner. But what started as descriptions of lines and colors soon evolved into a mural that even children became involved in. "One day a child was in here and he started drawing on the bottom of the panels," Caro laughs, "so we decided to open things up a little and let people send in drawings if they wanted."

Tonight they are in a push to finish, as the exhibit is only on display until January 19 and the submissions keep rolling in. David, one of the artists, gets his next assignment to interpret "a pair of luscious lips eating a slice of sunshine in the shape of a pie." Perhaps it will go next to the life preserver that, "A man from Aruba emailed in when he saw those hands in the water," explains a viewer, pointing to the lower left corner.

But while this work is everyone's art, some might wonder what will happen to it in the end. Caro plans to pair up with a charity to auction off the panels. She hopes to raise money for a cancer foundation, creating "a more meaningful event out of this...not just benefiting the gallery, but something else also."

And it seems like she won't have much trouble sparking interest in the pieces as participation has spread all over the country and outside as well. Caro



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hopes that this surprising attention will be the start of something bigger. Not only does she want to continue this more often throughout the year, she also wants to eventually involve other galleries all over the world. "We would be getting one set of words, but everyone would be interpreting it in their own way and it would be great to see what got created." But no matter the interpretation, there is one rule that will remain universal: "You can add anything you want, except your ego."

(2007-01-16)

Also by Molly Sullivan

Maxim-um Attention

Ask most men and they will say that there isn't much that they love more than babes and booze--except maybe football and booze. Unfortunately, Maxim, Coors Light and Coyote Ugly Saloon find this out the hard way during their search for the next Maxim cover girl on Saturday night

(2007-01-09)

Portrait of a Man

Back when Marc Hauser took a photo of a young John Mellencamp with his arm around his grandfather, critics claimed that this was the piece that Hauser would become known for, but he reasons that it just got him a few more jobs. Tonight at his Oculus Gallery opening, everyone gets to see not only that famous photo, but a renewed glimpse into more than thirty years of Hauser's photography

(2006-12-19)

Choose Chomsky

Don't you hate it when you miss your favorite linguist's birthday or when Hallmark doesn't have a "Happy 164th Birthday" card for your favorite anarchist? Well, no need to buy cards for Noam Chomsky or Peter Kropotkin this year for the celebration at Mercury Café, because a little donation towards Midwest Books to Prisoners is all they want for their birthdays

(2006-12-12)

Oopsie Daisy

It's easy to imagine all pre-teen girls who have a kitty diary with "I love (insert name of the most popular twelve-year-old boy)" doodled in purple glitter pen all over it. Luckily for us, we are all now getting a peek inside these precious tomes and other personal stories at the "Oops" reading event at Heaven Gallery in Wicker Park

(2006-12-05)

Anime Marinara