

FREE STORE

*Come to the Free Store, where
everyone has currency!*

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FREE STORE OPENS IN DOWNTOWN MANHATTAN AND OFFERS VISITORS A PRICELESS EXPERIENCE

Storefront Art Exhibition Created to Distribute and Collect Everyday Goods at No Cost in
the Heart of New York City's Financial District

Press Preview, Thursday, February 19, 5PM at 99 Nassau Street NYC

NEW YORK, NY (January 27, 2009) – Artists Athena Robles and Anna Stein will present *Free Store*, an exhibition and non-commercial storefront installation, in lower Manhattan. Part cultural pop-up shop, part second hand boutique, the project is a networking model of economic sustenance that can be used in cities worldwide. This first Global Free Store will open on Thursday, February 19th and remain open until Sunday, March 22nd.

As evidenced by record lows in consumer confidence in January, consumers have had to curb spending habits, yet still find ways to maintain their lifestyle. *Free Store* demonstrates how community and mutual support can be used to fulfill some of these needs.

How *Free Store* Works

Free Shopping

Using the barter and exchange system, visitors can give something useful or get something useful at *Free Store*. Located at 99 Nassau Street (between Fulton and Ann Streets), blocks away from Wall Street, *Free Store* will accept donations of items such as books and clothing, offer these items for the taking, and stock a few items produced in-house by the artists.

One World Currency

Free Store will distribute World Bills, a global currency that potentially could be used at any free store in the Global Free Store chain. Contributors to *Free Store* will receive World Bills for goods and services donated to the store. They can then use these bills to trade with other participants or in future free stores in this series.

(more)

Events and Performances

Free Store will host special events by invited curators Felicity Hogan, Edwin Ramoran, Julie Sengle and Herb Tam. These events include a curator's talk, open office hours for artists to get feedback on their work, and interactive artist performances.

"Alternative and generous systems such as bartering have long been used in times of financial hardship," said the artists Athena Robles and Anna Stein. "Artists, in particular, are familiar with having to be creative to make ends meet and have functioned on generous systems, especially artist-to-artist. *Free Store* aims to broaden this circle of trust and exchange by including the general public."

About the Artists

Artists Athena Robles and Anna Stein (aka Double A Projects) work in collaboration, bringing together their sculptural practices using historical and cultural references, public space and paper media. Their project *Counter Culture Cash: Local Currency in Jamaica, NY* examined counter culture systems and was featured on artnet.com. In addition, work by Robles and Stein was exhibited at Fountain Art Fair in Miami, Front Room Gallery in Brooklyn, and University of Massachusetts Gallery.

Individually, they have shown at the Contemporary Museum in Honolulu, American Museum of Natural History, NY; NURTUREart, Brooklyn, NY; the New Museum of Contemporary Art, NY; and Residencia Corazón in La Plata, Buenos Aires, among other locations.

Hours and Location

Free Store is located at 99 Nassau Street, New York, NY (between Fulton and Ann Streets). The store will be open from February 19 to March 22, 2009 with a grand opening reception on Thursday, February 19, from 6–9PM.

Exhibition hours are Thursday–Saturday, 12–7PM; Sunday 12–5PM and by appointment.

To get there by subway, take the 4, 5, 6, J, M, Z to Brooklyn Bridge-City Hall or Fulton/Broadway-Nassau Street; or A, C, 2, 3 to Broadway-Nassau Street.

The September  **th Fund**

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Free Store Events

February 19 to March 22

Curatorial Project: *All is One, One is All*

Curator Felicity Hogan brings together three artists whose artwork and performances embody the humanistic and egalitarian concepts of the *Free Store*. *Everyone is an Artist* by Tattfoo Tan will be on view in the store and takes the form of a free printed poster with DIY instructions that demystify the artmaking process. At the grand opening on February 19th, Miwa Koizumi's *NY Flavors Ice Cream Stand* installation will be serving neighborhood-flavored ice cream influenced by the "tastes and smells from New York City's different tribes." Finally, Min Oh will perform an interactive piece on Friday, March 20th, combining live and recorded action, projection, graphics and video.

Sundays 2–5PM

In-House Curator Event: *Never as Good as the First Time*

Edwin Ramoran, director of exhibitions and programs at Aljira, a Center for Contemporary Art, will host "first contact" office hours for artists and curators he has never met in person or who have never before presented a proposal to him. Sign up for a 15 minute one-on-one session with Mr. Ramoran to introduce your work or curatorial proposal and to get professional development advice. To inquire about appointments, contact doubleaprojects@gmail.com.

Tuesday, March 3

2–5PM

Special Edition of the In-House Curator Event, *Never as Good as the First Time*, with Edwin Ramoran

7PM

Curator's Talk: *Strategic Planning for a New Era*

Exit Art's associate curator Herb Tam will lead a strategic planning session with audience members in an effort to find a way forward for the New York art environment in the current economic quagmire.

Saturday, March 14

Collaborations

Free Store welcomes curator Julie Sengle who will engage visitors and contributors for feedback and store items through the duration of the show, a project that will culminate in a surprise event on March 14th.

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