

hanging around. And while the word “reinvention” is a bit belabored when it comes to New Orleans, I believe it apt enough in this case.

Desire Market itself is housed in an old wallpaper warehouse. (That's right, there are still thousands of rolls of the stuff right above your head.) Owner Jay (a.k.a. MC Trachiotomy, known to serve fresh pancakes and Bloody Marys to the crowds at his shows) lives in the infamous house next door – the Pearl. It's one of the oldest in the neighborhood, has been in the pages of *Vice Magazine*, and packs a magical legacy that all but guarantees the Desire Market's success. Since the early 90's, Jay has hosted a Sunday speakeasy out back with variety shows (rock, klezmer, drag – often all in the same night), capped by a hot breakfast served to all in the early morning hours. His future plans are for more of the same, but with the market fueling a dinner club/speakeasy diner scene.

Adding food into the mix down here is as natural as anything, music and food being synonymous with New Orleans culture. The mix of junk, art, records, and homegrown produce also reflects the ethos of the neighborhood. Bywater and the surrounding Ninth Ward have been known for years as a low-rent haven for artists. Long-time residents and eager newcomers will happily fight to keep that creative working-class reputation in the face of seemingly inevitable gentrification. Jay and the Desire Market sum up that determination to stay true to radical roots. Hopefully, as the weather in New Orleans swells to sunny days and steamy nights, the market will continue to grow into a fail-safe recipe of music, friends, food, and brew.

DREAM: The Golden Girls
REVIEWER: Sarah Galvin

My memories of being sick as a child all involve Spaghettios, a fluorescent, syrupy fruit drink called Squeeze It, and watching *The Golden Girls*. I didn't understand why all those old ladies lived in one house together, most of the humor was beyond me, and something about the lighting made me claustrophobic. I think the only reason I watched it was because I was too feverish to get out of bed.

Though I now realize the show is hilarious, it still makes me feel disoriented and half-conscious. For this reason I only watch it if it happens to be on at somebody else's house. This happens more often than you'd expect, but the night I dreamed nearly complete, and strangely plausible episode of *The Golden Girls*, I hadn't seen the show in months.

In the dream, it was the day before rent was due in the *Golden Girls* household. It was Rose's turn to collect the rent money, which she stored in her cleavage, as she believed it was good luck. That night, she hosted a tropical cocktail party, which was well-attended. Rose frantically made pitcher after pitcher of margaritas and tried every flavor. Soon she was

giggling and spilling ice everywhere. She leaned forward to scoop up some ice, and the rent money, which was all in cash, fell out of her low-cut dress into the whirring blender.

Embarrassed, Rose pretended as if nothing had happened, but as soon as the guests had left, she began a panicked search for a loan. She visited a series of wealthy friends and relatives. Desperation drove her to ask stranger and stranger people for money. The most memorable included a distant cousin who lived in a mansion with hundreds of canaries, and an uncle with a high-pitched voice and hooks for hands. The dream ended at a moment when things were looking up, but not in a way that suggested a conclusion was near.

After I woke up I lay in bed, reeling from my newfound ability to write sitcoms while asleep. The colors, the lighting, the type of humor – it was as if hypothetical daytime television had been broadcast directly into my brain. I remembered a collection of poetry and photographs I had as a child called *Talking to the Sun*. I didn't understand that unlike my picture books, the images in it were unrelated to the text. I spent hours trying to figure out how the photographs functioned as illustrations for the poems. I knew that this was a book for adults, and thought that if I understood the relationship between the words and the pictures, I would learn what it meant to be an adult.

The *Golden Girls* dream was similarly mysterious, in a way that actual television hadn't been since I was a kid. It was mysterious in the particular way of things that are on the verge of becoming familiar. It's a familiarity that has less to do with understanding a specific thing than familiarity with the context of adult life. As a child I could only imagine the significance of poetry, photography, or *The Golden Girls*. Sometimes the foreignness of dreams reminds me of believing a poem about a delinquent child is directly related to a photo of a stained-glass door, or that there are groups of elderly women in pastel pant suits who can only be seen when I have a fever. I wouldn't say that I'd like to be a child again, but I like to be reminded of the existence of completely unfamiliar contexts.

SHOW: Task + Selected Work by Oliver Herring
SPACE: University Galleries, Illinois State University
WHEN: February 16 – March 28, 2010
REVIEWER: Michelle Grabner

A tunnel of plastic and paper shaped the entrance to the Saturday afternoon TASK event hosted by the German born, Brooklyn-based artist Oliver Herring. In the vast exhibition space comprising Illinois State's University Galleries, a mob of people showed up to execute gestures (“TASKS”) that were casually written on slips of paper. In a gallery-cum-stockroom brimming with arts, craft supplies, and heaps of recycled materials, the participants fulfilling their “task” constructed cardboard thrones, drew

with their elbows, claimed a gallery wall for Peru, flailed on the floor like a turtle on its back, and created a Viking opera.

The anatomy to Herring's conceit is simple. He writes that "All TASK structures, events, parties, and workshops rely on the same basic infrastructure: a designated area (usually but not necessarily made from construction paper), a variety of props and materials (cardboard, plastic bags, pencils, tables cling wrap, tape, markers, ladders . . .), and the participation of people who agree to follow two simple, procedural rules: to write down a task on a piece of paper and add it to a designated 'TASK pool,' and, secondly, to pull a task from that pool and interpret it any which way he or she wants, using whatever is on- (or potentially off-) stage. When a task is completed, a participant writes a new task, pulls a new task, and so on."

Herring's TASK enterprise is driven by the same social impulse and the desire to democratize art and the process of its making that fueled Winnipeg's Royal Art Lodge in the mid 90s, as well as what drives the Bruce High Quality Foundation (BHQF) today. The free school and collective currently receiving abundant press for challenging the staid New York Art world with many independent projects and insertions into the 2010 Whitney Biennial and PS 1's recent 1969, BHQF "aspire[s] to invest the experience of public space with wonder, to resurrect art history from the bowels of despair, and to impregnate the institutions of art with the joy of man's desiring." TASK carries the same albeit less hubristically articulated yearnings: "a platform for people to express and test their own ideas in an environment without failure and success."

TASK and BHQF value the foundational impulse to create in a social environment, establishing influence solely in the act of participation and rejecting traditional and hierarchical measures of qualitative evaluation. Although participatory and collective artmaking activities alone do not kindle the flames of institutional critique, I argue that both TASK and BHQF, sporting their ironic titles, carry powerful critical subtexts. This is especially true with TASK, located down the hall from university studios and classrooms.

Here, context saves TASK from becoming yet another creative playgroup that craves attention from those it claims to reject. TASK calls into question the criteria endorsed by art professors teaching studio classes just steps away from a gallery filled with the detritus of the TASK party. In addition to video monitors featuring video documentations of the one-day event and the many hundreds of "tasks" scrawled out on slips of paper and pinned to the wall, the densely cluttered and graffiti-covered exhibition space also tucks in examples of Oliver Herring's esteemed artwork. Life-size photosculptures occupying Plexiglass vitrines; large, framed photographs depicting exhausted portraits of strangers' faces, stained after hours of spitting colored dye; and a program of stop-motion videos are negotiated within the byproduct of the TASK event.

Adjacent to the main gallery is a projection room installed with hay bales functioning as seats. Fittingly, a series of Herring's short videos underscored his exhaustive interest in the visual manifestation of social interaction. In these vignettes, contrary to the disarray and confused energy evoked by TASK, are attempts at pointing the camera at controlled exchanges of physical interactivity. For example, an impromptu dance between two strangers was a welcoming illustration of refinement, contrasting the residue of base creativity that permeated the gallery.

Herring writes, "in theory, anything becomes possible. The continuous conception and interpretation of tasks is both chaotic and purpose-driven. It is a complex, ever-shifting environment of people who connect with one another through what is around them." The critical implications of TASK are also compelling, although Herring is careful not to fully articulate his involvement with critique. But more profoundly still, this project argues for the direction of creativity as illustrated in Herring's artwork, relishing both performance and image, interactivity and display. Conversely, Herring's TASK parties fuel unfettered social creativity and fun

REVIEW: The Port Huron Project by Mark Tribe
WRITER: Bert Stabler

"You must go into the churches and tell the churchmen you heard they followed the one who wanted to bring good news to the poor. Tell them you heard they taught love and nonviolence. Tell them that you heard they worshipped the one who said the world belongs to all peoples. Tell them that you wait for their answer, and that answer must be action." – Stokely Carmichael, "Let Another World Be Born" (1967)

This speech is one among six Vietnam-era New Left anti-war speeches chosen by artist Mark Tribe for staged public re-enactment between 2006 and 2008. (The others are by Coretta Scott King, Angela Davis, Cesar Chavez, Paul Potter (of Students for a Democratic Society, or the SDS), and Howard Zinn.) Titled "The Port Huron Project" after the SDS's 1962 Port Huron Statement, the work's aim was not only to represent these speeches to contemporary audiences in the moment (all were staged at the original sites), but also to create a media event around the speeches. They were distributed online, shown at screenings, exhibited in art spaces, and at one point, broadcast on a large screen in Times Square, complete with text crawl, graphics, and closed captions. Now all six can be seen on Tribe's website and in a new, tastefully spare 72-page book, in which the other formats of the speeches are judiciously represented. Those include the original black-and-white incarnations, the small camera-laden crowds at the re-enacted speeches, billboard images, the Times Square spectacle, and the multi-angle projections at the Creative Time Foundation curated by Nato Thompson, who also co-authored the Port Huron Project catalog. The politicized re-enactment genre may have begun in the 1970s, with events such as the artist collective Ant Farm's recreation of the Kennedy assassination. Thompson's catalog essay mentions public works by