

For Immediate Release

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SECRET PROJECT ROBOT

INSTITUTE FOR THE LIVING ARTS:
CONNECTING COMMUNITIES THROUGH ART,
PERFORMANCE, CONVERSATION AND ACTION

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Good Children Gallery Takeover!!

Jessica Bizer, Stephen Collier, Generic Art Solutions, Brian Guidry, Jayme Kalal, Srdjan Loncar, Daphne Loney, Sophie Lvoff, Malcolm McClay, Aaron McNamee, Lala Raščić, Christopher Saucedo, Nina Schwanse, Dan Tague
curated by Laura Blereau

May 10 – June 7, 2014

Opening Reception

Saturday, May 10, 7:00 – 10:00 PM

Public Program during Bushwick Open Studios Weekend

Saturday, May 31, 3:30-5:00 PM

Is St. Claude Avenue Louisiana's answer to Bushwick?

An open discussion moderated by Laura Blereau about creating new spaces for art and ideas in the New Orleans community. Featuring artist's talks by Dan Tague and Christopher Saucedo, two founding members of Good Children Gallery; a screening of the video "Posing Process" by Lala Raščić; and a presentation on artist-run spaces by Amy Mackie, an independent curator and writer based in New Orleans.

Gallery Hours

Saturday and Sunday: 3:00 – 7:00 PM and By Appointment

Mon – Fri: By Appointment

Part manifesto, part showcase, "Takeover!!" presents work by fourteen members of Good Children Gallery, a curatorial space in New Orleans founded in 2008. Rooted in the city's recent climate of radical transformation, the exhibition chronicles a movement entirely organized by artists.

"About five years ago, artists started curating shows regularly in New Orleans," explains Christopher Saucedo, a founding member of Good Children. "As curators it was not just our own artwork we were pushing to a dealer, but suddenly we could define the broader aesthetic possibilities using the artwork of others. This was a big shift in the ego driven 'my artwork is better than yours' status-quo. Now we all had both the opportunity and the responsibility to see the bigger picture, which has made a world of a difference."

The collective Good Children is a forerunner of the many artist residency programs, pop-up exhibitions, studios and co-op galleries that have since flourished in the Bywater neighborhood. Privately run and open freely to the public, the gallery strategically generates exhibitions that widen the frame of reference for artists who have studios and homes in the Upper Ninth Ward. Located in a zone frequently cited for its post-Katrina revitalization, the gallery is culturally positioned in an area of the city that has long been a stronghold of grassroots activism.

Following an unprecedented influx of visual artists and the emergence of Prospect New Orleans, an international arts biennial, the regional demand for contemporary exhibition spaces has boomed. Now, all year round, whether recognized by the biennial or not, artists who have the means to do so are writing their own curatorial agenda. In this environment, Good Children has led a surge in local exhibitions at artist-run spaces, which serve the community by closing gaps left open by underfunded museums, non-profits and commercial galleries.

The salon-style hanging of "Takeover!!" invokes the tradition of artist-organized group displays, such as the first Impressionism exhibition in Paris and those of the Salon des Indépendants. Featuring nearly fifty artworks, the exhibition also includes a selection of artists' writings and letters of protest addressed to the New Orleans Contemporary Art Center. An institution founded in 1976 by an earlier generation of artists, the CAC symbolizes an established system, even if it is

somewhat dysfunctional. The letters explain a series of controversial staff resignations in 2012 at the museum, which was prompted by the CAC's bungled exhibition "Spaces: Antenna, The Front, Good Children Gallery". These texts not only illuminate the artists' frustration with the museum, but they also reaffirm the general objectives of self-run art galleries in the Bywater.

The energy of Bushwick is easily comparable to scene on St. Claude Avenue in New Orleans. The voices of younger artists are amplified, along with that of newcomers. Yet in recent years, the level of accessibility and professionalism in the Bywater has risen to the point of rivaling the local offerings at arts institutions with public funding. The idea of such an eclipse has stirred a new generation of debate on the role museums play in the regional support of contemporary art practice.

Among the co-op structure's many advantages are the global and national perspectives of its members, and the network of exchange fostered in off-site exhibitions hosted by like-minded artist collectives. For example, the exhibition of Good Children Gallery artists at Secret Project Robot is one such reciprocal arrangement. In March 2011, Good Children organized a show in New Orleans curated by the collective Live With Animals. That exhibition, "Be Love: Happily Ever After, A Glimpse of the Post-Apocalyptic Future", included the work of three New York artists: Raul de Nieves, Erik Zajecskowski and Rachel Nelson.

A fully illustrated guide accompanies "Takeover!!", and will be available May 10 at the gallery and online. A panel discussion featuring guests from New Orleans will take place at 3:30 PM, May 31, during Bushwick Open Studios weekend.

For images and more information, please visit

www.secretprojectrobot.org

www.goodchildrengallery.com

Directions to Secret Project Robot

Nearest subway is the L to Morgan Ave or Jefferson St in Bushwick, Brooklyn

389 Melrose Street is located between Knickerbocker and Flushing/Irving

Secret Project Robot is a 501c3 non-for-profit artist run exhibition space that was founded in 2004. It an experimental space gravitating around the idea that art should be experienced and lived daily.