

HYPERALLERGIC

Snarkitecture, Endless Karaoke, and Other Highlights from Ideas City After Dark



Cate Giordano, "Dolly Presley" performance, curated by Eve Sussman, with a plaster, foam, cardboard, and wood band and back up singers

The after-sundown events for this past weekend's Ideas City from the New Museum may have had the least to do with biennial festival's focus on the future of our urban metropolises, but the NightFest definitely had the greatest visual impact.

The Saturday night art frenzy around Mulberry Street had a little bit of everything, from poetry readings to a projection/pipe organ performance in Old St. Patrick's Cathedral to roller skaters. The standout was Snarkitecture's procession of inflatable spheres down Mulberry Street to clog an alleyway. The collaboration between Daniel Arsham and Alex Mustonen often

involves creative space-filling experiments, like carving out a bunch of styrofoam at the Storefront for Art and Architecture or high-end store installations like a forest of tiny cologne towers at Odin, and here a slow parade of people in white jumpsuits moved down Mulberry Street to the sound of a whistle, stacking up sphere after sphere into an inflatable barrier. At the end it was deflated by the sphere guardians leaning into the tower (unfortunately no audience participation was invited in this ritual-like fun).

Along with the art activities on the street was School Nite, an event that took over the Old School on Mott street with individually curated rooms based on wish fulfillment. While a lot of Wish Meme was somewhat disjointed and seemed, probably unintentionally, like experimental school projects, Dolly Presley made it all worthwhile. The performance piece by Cate Giordano, where the artist was dressed as a mix of both Dolly Parton and Elvis Presley, was mesmerizing and totally weird, with an endless stream of karaoke with no breaks, beer in hand, all backed by an unsettling static backing band and singers made from cardboard, wood, and plaster. It peaked during my half hour there with "Suspicious Minds," where the audience decided to throw in the high notes on the refrain. But when the crowd thinned out it got into some weird and surreal territory, when the obsession of this play on the wish fulfillment of a singer who wants to embody the dual stars was downright unnerving.

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