

Excerpt from
The Ladies Aide Society Invites You To A Poverty Party To Benefit the Foundation For Ethical
Art and Culture

by
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The Ladies Aide Society Invites You To A Poverty Party To Benefit the Foundation For Ethical Art and Culture was created specifically for gallery spaces to question the process of making and selling art. The show blurs the line between artist and audience member, inspiring a dialogue about who art is for and at what cost it can exist. The original production was created by Wreckio Ensemble for the chashama theater residency at their 42nd Street storefront space. It ran at chashama from July 8-12, 2008 for a total of eight performances. The show then toured to Thisisnotashop Gallery in Dublin, Ireland from July 23-August 2, 2008 for a total of eight performances. There were 24 characters and four actors.

SCENE FOUR

An actor throws on a blazer and becomes, TAYLOR SWEET, a beautiful, but serious News Anchor. Taylor climbs behind a desk and speaks to the camera.

TAYLOR

I'm Taylor Sweet and these are Today's Top Headlines: The stock market took its largest plunge in two years; erasing any hopes of the U.S. Economy recovering in the near future. Oil prices hit a record high topping of at \$141 a barrel. Another levee in Missouri, which was holding back the floods from the Mississippi River, broke early Friday morning destroying about 3,000 acres of agricultural land and a few dozen homes. Three New York City police officers were acquitted yesterday after allegedly shooting an unarmed 17 year old African American male 37 times. This just in: breaking news regarding the security of our nation! It seems notorious art terrorist, Auton, has struck again, this time sneaking a framed painting into NYC's Museum of Elite Art. Melissa Doyle is already at the scene with more on this breaking story.

(On the other side of the gallery, another actor appears in a blazer, holding a microphone and becomes MELISSA DOYLE, an overly perky reporter. She reports on location from the Museum of Elite Art.)

MELISSA

Thank you Taylor. As you would expect emotions are high here at the museum where officials have just removed a framed painting, one that many are referring to as "imitation art", from its exclusive walls. The controversial painting hung for five days in the museum before anyone on the museum's staff noticed it. This is clearly the work of the infamous prankster, known only as Auton; a character who has been terrorizing America's most prestigious arts institutions with his infiltration of guerilla art for months now. Executive Director of the museum, Agnes Van der Geld, is here now with me. Agnes how did this happen?

(During the above monologue the actress playing Taylor Sweet, has removed her blazer and tied an "artsy" scarf around her neck becoming AGNES VAN DER GELD, she slinks up to Melissa.)

AGNES

Melissa the museum has a long history of keeping this kind of non-art off of its walls. We want our patrons to know that we will only continue to display the most illustrious, the most anodyne, the most pallid of art. America is behind us, this vicious attack on our cultural cachet will not be taken lightly.

MELISSA

Agnes, can you tell us the content of the painting?

AGNES

I have not actually seen the piece myself, but I can tell you it is unequivocally not art.

MELISSA

And you would certainly know. I'm Melissa Doyle, live from the Museum of Elite Art. Back to you Taylor.

SCENE FIVE

THE BARKER jumps up onto a stage or raised platform. He wears a brightly colored jacket, bowler hat, has a cassette player tied around his waist and carries a makeshift spot light. He hits play on the cassette player and carnival music plays.

BARKER

Hurry, Hurry! Step this way. We've got the show, if you've got the dime. See the strangest freaks, from the furthest corners of America, living and breathing in front of you today! Gaze your eyes on the man with two faces, born from natural parents just like you or me, he is part conceptual artist, part corporate whore!

(He shines his light on the MAN WITH TWO FACES, who shows off his two faces and then poses.)

Watch in amazement as he challenges your understanding of life, death and human existence, then transforms that experience into a neo-modern table lamp for Target, a designer handbag for Prada and an animated feature turned Broadway musical for Disney. But that's not all...Inside this tent is a sight so horrifying, so frightening, so shocking that I must warn you; ladies you may faint, gentlemen you may need to cover your eyes...behold the avant-garde performance artist!

Look only for a moment and be careful never to look her directly in the eye, she will corrupt your mind with her radical politics, seduce you with her ambiguous sexuality and perform mind altering tricks through her use of non-traditional narrative.

(He shines his light on the AVANT-GARDE PERFORMANCE ARTIST who performs a series of interpretive gestures.)

Observe how she balances delicately on the high wire, if she leans too far to the right she will fall into the fiery pit of commercialism and land in a Las Vegas production of her own show, but if she leans too far to the left she will plunge into the shark infested waters of a congressional hearing and lose her government funding. And finally the stars of our freak show fantasia, they share a love so perverse it can only exist in the most capitalist of countries, the most depraved of democracies. She is seven feet tall, weighs 400lbs and has a net worth of 1.25 trillion dollars; he is only 25 inches and fits in her pocket. Ladies and gentleman, America's happiest couple, Ms. Forbes 400 and sitting comfortably in the palm of her hand, Mr. Government Official.

(He shines his light on the couple and they kiss.)

How does it work you ask me, what is the secret to their happy marriage? Well, all I know is that he doesn't fuck her and she doesn't fuck him, but they both love screwing the American public. And I am your compère, your master of ceremonies, your ringleader to this sideshow spectacular...Mr. AbraAmerica. A sleight of hand, a flick of wrist, you're looking here, while here you've missed.

(Magic Trick: He pulls a series of handkerchiefs out of his sleeve: red, blue, white. He juggles them. They transform into new handkerchiefs: blue stars, red and white stripes, until eventually they transform into an American flag.)

The hand is quicker than the eye, the politician slicker than his lie, I learned my tricks from the slyest sort: legislative, executive and the court. So don't blink, don't flinch, don't look away in fear....keep your eye on the flag-

(Magic trick: The American flag goes up in flames and disappears.)

-as your rights disappear.