

countries, who sent images to the gallery via email. Displayed in the gallery on monitors and printed out thumbnail size and mounted on the walls, the work makes commentary on this time by communicating the irony between the generally mundane nature of the images and the vanguard nature of the technology.

The unwittingly large pool of artists and audience enabled by the form and content of *MPPS* also distinguishes the projects of the San Francisco Bureau of Urban Secrets. A nonprofit visual arts "studio" begun by Jeannene Pryzblyski, SF/BUS is dedicated to developing conceptually based and collaborative art about the city of San Francisco. Pryzblyski believes that "running a space can become the space running you," which has fueled her desire to work in public spaces and for SF/BUS's projects to be immersed in locality at every level. Pryzblyski's work tends to involve a great hybrid of people across occupational strata, and her process-based projects consistently challenge boundaries and raise questions concerning who is artist, who is audience and who conspires to be part of the work's creation.

Pryzblyski also likes the idea of appropriating elements from a variety of art practices as means to rediscover play. Her eclectic methodologies include such participatory elements as questionnaire-style postcards, which she considers "the space where the story opens up." For her ongoing mail art and mapping project, *A Deeply Subjective Survey of Urban Goodness* (created with Mitche Manitou) Pryzblyski has the goal to survey every resident of San Francisco. The work is an extension of her interest in encouraging a broad-spectrum involvement in her projects by people who may not know they're involved, a process inspired by the work of Mierle Laderman Ukeles. Pryzblyski's choice of the city as a curatorial venue has to do with its constant motion, which for her, provides contingency and becomes a metaphor for her belief that you can never take a fixed position or you risk becoming part of what you critique.

In the context of these more mutable venues, it is meaningful to consider the curatorial practices and recent projects of Karen Moss, director of exhibitions and public programs at the San Francisco Art Institute. During the late 1980s Moss became interested in artists' work with interactive models and aesthetic stances that counteracted the hypercommodification of the time. As a curator and educator she shares a commitment to creating relationships between artists and audience, and this has motivated her to consistently create exhibitions that include artists residency and public education aspects. Her interest is to use the interactions between artists, the community and the social space of the gallery to create context for the work, and it follows that she is attracted to such artists as Felix Gonzalez-Torres or Rirkrit Tiravanija, whose work is simultaneously conceptual, accessible and raises questions through its ephemerality. She acknowledges that her multi-tiered projects like *Touch* and *Topographies* fulfill her interest in creating context and engaged relationships with the public, and that her ideas are not a radical departure from existing curatorial approaches. Rather, they are based on the artistic methodologies of the 1960s and 1970s, and ideologically reframed by new media and the impact of globalization.

It seems remarkable that the desire for alternative spaces and vanguard curatorial practices has persisted as "new" since 1970, when Tom Marioni created the

Museum of Conceptual Art (MOCA) as a space for the presentation of "performance sculpture." The motivation propelled by this desire is meaningful because it has continually fueled the progression of styles, spaces and perception. This aspiration also reinforces the fundamental belief that to create work of consequence, artists (or art spaces) must be of their own time, as well as the ancient maxim that "there's nothing new under the sun but there's lots of old things we don't know."

Terri Cohn is a contributing editor to *Artweek*.



Top: *A La Carte: A Roving Exhibition with Art for Popsicle Prices*, installation view. (Photo courtesy of Pofid, San Francisco); bottom: *Topographies*, 2004, installation view, at Walter and McBean Galleries, San Francisco Art Institute. (Photo: Erez Golan.)

