

## Found Object Installations

My house at 4326 Douglas Street became a 'canvas' for an art installation more than once as I saved odd scraps from neighborhood trash piles or from catering extravagance and made them into something interesting.

Someone thought these broken chair pieces should be trashed, but I saw a butterfly...

The lips of the rich have touched these bottles of highbrow sparkling water, but I filled them with colored liquid and 'planted' them in my garden for a little winter color.

## Pink Fabric Installation

Out of the extravagance of a high-class DC social event that I was part of as a waiter, I saved a bundle of pink fabric that had been used as draping inside the event tent. In the spirit of found object installation, I put it to use as shown on my house at 4326 Douglas Street.

The invitation email:

Friends. Three years ago or so I saved some pink fabric from the DC Opera Ball (which the company I work for caters) and am finally planning to put it to use in a small installation/decoration project for the porch of my house. So if you're feeling crafty, come over this Monday night June 26 around 6:30 or 7 to 4326 Douglas Street NE DC and help me do this. I'd really like a couple of helpers, since I'm not sure I can accomplish it by myself, and if more of you come then it'll be like a party. There might even be some food around, something sweet to drink for sure. And can anyone bring a

scissors or two? Let me know if you plan to come so that I can plan. If you've never been to my house ask how to get there. One last note: I'll be taking pictures and video to document the experience, so you can be part of a real live art event! :) peacejoelapp.

The process:

I started about six o'clock that night with getting materials together, amassing tools, etc. I had a good idea of what I wanted to do already, though I wasn't completely happy with my thoughts. It was that spell where it rained for like a week straight in DC, so I dragged all my stuff up from the basement through the rain onto the front porch. Friends Brian and Eugene came soon, and we spent the next couple of hours, cutting fabric and weaving it through the porch rails, hanging it from the 'clothesline.' It turned out that the small squares of fabric we cut to hang did not have enough weight to keep the top clothespins sticking straight up like I had envisioned, so we ended up clipping clothespins onto the bottom of each hanging piece for extra weight. Brian and Eugene left sometime after dark, then, and I stayed up until about 2 making the little flags to put in the yard. I made about thirty of these, as I recall, bending strips of yellow wire for the frame and then hot-gluing the strips of fabric to the wire. Ended up putting them out in a tightening spiral centered on a tree in my side yard, a pattern I was happy with.

The results:

For a short video about the project posted on YouTube.com click here, or if the link doesn't work go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GI8WY9q8sJo>.

The wrap-up email:

Brian and Eugene- the art project turned out fine then. after you guys left I stayed up making thirty little wire stands with little pink 'flags' attached to them, and put them out in the yard. was going to go random, but ended up doing a tightening spiral around the tree. ended up in finishing around 2 or so, I think, and had get up at 5 next morning to go to work! ah well, when I get it in my head to finish something I like to finish it.

unfortunately, two days later when I came home from work some kids (or at least I assume it was some kids) had torn all the flags out of the lawn. luckily I gathered most of them up from nearby on the street, etc. was going to put them all up again to see if they'd stay longer the second time, but by then it was the end of the week and my neighbors (who basically own the house) came home and asked me to take it all down. I was a little put out at that, but in the end I got to do it and took the pictures of it that I wanted to take (documentation) and so it was a success.

a good education that public art really is public, i.e. it's out there in a space that's not a gallery, that's uncontrolled space and you have to think about security issues and how it will be received by the public.

showed those pictures and some other documentation at a little local arts organization exhibit that week. some people impressed, others not sure what I was thinking. guess not everyone thinks or sees the world the way I do. people asked me why the pink, or why did you do it, and I think it should be obvious that I was just playing with a resource (fabric) that I happened to get ahold of and putting it out there in a fun and (hopefully) pleasing way. (but I guess not everyone was pleased.) it helped to be able to talk about "The Gates" project up in NY, but some folks hadn't even heard of that.

so've attached some pictures of the finished project. thanks for helping me out! I really do appreciate the effort you both put in on a weeknight to come over and dig in. simply wouldn't have gotten it done without you. peaceJoe.