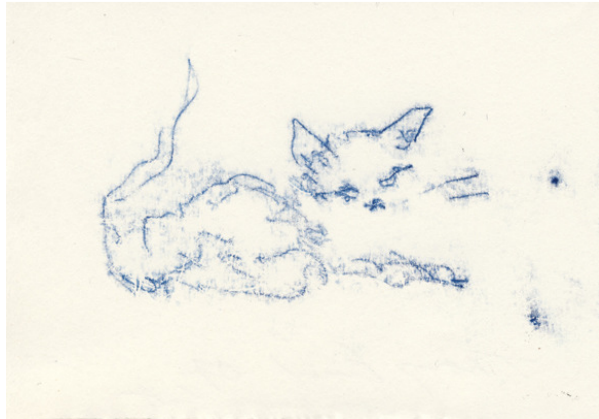


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Art Barter

December 2010



From a past barter: Tracy Emin, Super Loving Cat, 2007.

It is often declared that the upside of a depression, be economic or psychological, is that it promotes creative thought. Art Barter is hard evidence of this claim. Launched last November by London-based curators Lauren Jones and Alix Janta, Art Barter re-examines our current system of exchange, encouraging the trade of art for goods and services, not money.

While the concept itself isn't all that new—Picasso and Modigliani were famous for trading paintings for meals, the Chelsea Hotel accepted art as rent, and Andy Warhol traded his talent for a video camera—Art Barter has expanded the willing artists to include Tracey Emin, Gary Hume, Mat Collishaw, Gavin Turk and more, and added an element of surprise: the unconventional buyer.

In a time when art and the artist have become commodities, appraised by their monetary value, investment strategies and instrumental objectives, Art Barter asks: What is a piece of art worth? A year of psychotherapy or piano lessons? A lifelong supply of milk, cheese and eggs? A trip to the Bahamas? An exhibition...a kidney? At Art Barter, you can buy art with anything, except money. As Tracy Emin, who bartered one of her works for 30 hours of French tuition, explains, "It cuts out the middle man... It's looking at the work, rather than the artist."

That said, if you're partial to prestige, New York's first Art Barter event features Bruce High Quality Foundation, Tom Sachs, Leigh Ledare, Michael Joo, Terence Koh, Bob Gruen, and Tim Barber, among others.

Art Barter New York runs from December 9th to December 12th. Open daily from 12noon-6pm at the NP Contemporary Art Center: 131 Chrystie Street.