

Art essays examples

[Art & Culture](#), [Artists](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In this time of modern living where people's lives are highly dependent on technology, artist Oliver Herring attempts to break social barriers through TASK. TASK is an organized event or party where the former involves more people and strangers, while the latter is hosted for a set of invited people. Here, individuals are asked to write tasks for others and these are pooled into a common TASK Box. In return, participants randomly pick a task and perform it based on his/her own interpretation. Once a task is completed, they return to the TASK Box to write down a new one and pick another task to fulfil.

At the beginning of TASK, a lot of people just usually stand and watch the others. However, its real objective is to draw everybody in to partake in it. The real irresistible part is jumping in and being surprised and challenged with the tasks that one gets to pick. As the activity goes along, a mirage of people are mixed together, doing odd things with each other, and are having fun.

Oliver Herring, an experimental artist born in 1964 in Heidelberg, Germany now living and working in Brooklyn, New York, started TASK in 2002 . He wanted to see individuals open opportunities for spontaneity and creative action. Through the simple directive from the task, they are able to interact with other people outside of the norm. They are able to express themselves, use their imagination, and be open to other people, as this is the only requirement of the activity's structure.

Prior to TASK, Herring has worked on sculptures and performance art pieces. One these was knitting Mylar, a transparent and reflective material, into human figures, clothing, and furniture. It was known that Herring did this to

pay homage to Ethyl Eichelberger, a performance artist who committed suicide in 1991 . Herring was also into participatory performance arts, which he caught in video. He also did photography where he took photos of a subject at every angle and formed a sculpture of that subject using the photos. Herring has won awards for his work. The New York Foundation for the Arts, Artpace, and the Joan Mitchell Foundation has already recognized his works.

Oliver Herrings approach in TASK is unique from among the artists that have been discussed in this course. His genuine desire to engage people and their creativity is its main core. TASK could be his idea, but the results—the improvisational performances, the sculpture pieces, the paintings, drawings, and people’s interactions—are no longer his creations, but they belong to the people. It is quite difficult to say if TASK would stand the test of time.

However, given its versatility and “ ease of use,” other groups have replicated TASK. Educators have even explored using it in the classroom setting.

On hind sight, this is actually what people these days need. Mobile phones, computers, and other electronic gadgets have spoilt people with creative templates. These materials have also confined people’s interaction through social media. TASK is, in fact, a unique and effective way of getting people to genuinely talk, interact, and work together face-to-face. By having simple and basic materials scattered around for use, it livens up the innate human imagination and creativity, as well.

Works Cited

Art21. Oliver Herring. 2005. November 2014. .

oliverherringtask.

What is TASK? 11 July 2008. November 2014. .