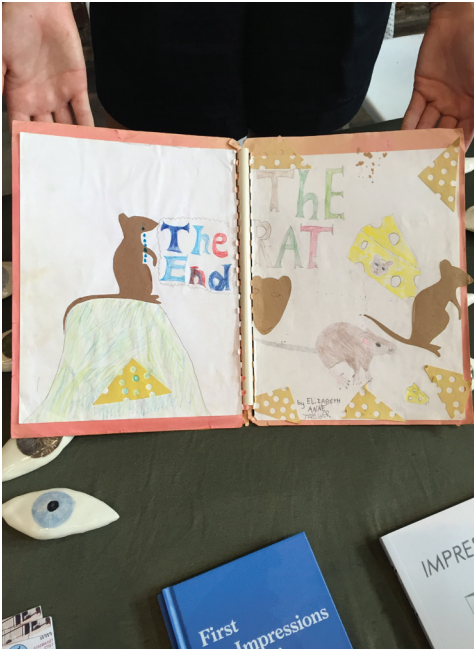


ARTNEWS

At SculptureCenter Block Party, Dads and Rats, Books and Bands

By John Chiaverina - August 26, 2015



Elizabeth Jaeger's The Rat.
JOHN CHIAVERINA/ARTNEWS

There were a lot of strollers at the **SculptureCenter block party** last Saturday in **Long Island City** in New York. It felt like the perfect place to be a weekend dad: feed the kids some cotton candy, subject them to loud art-rock music, then get them back home by dinner, crying and in the middle of a sugar crash.

The block party—presented in collaboration with the **Purves Street Block Association**—happened on a sunny afternoon, and when I walked in, the band **Dog Man** was playing a set of sludgy rock music to a couple people. A lot of the crowd was inside, behind the stage, checking out art and activity booths and yelling at each other in an attempt to be heard over the band's din.

In addition to selling zines (like the important *One Hit Under God* by Jesse Spears), **Lele Saveri**—the curator behind the **8-Ball Zine Fair** and the late **Mud-dguts Gallery** in Brooklyn—had a booth with some crucial DIY supplies. On site were a photocopy machine and a full-on screen-printing setup, where partygoers could make their own shirt. There was only one design they could choose from, but it was a doozy: a flaming Xerox logo, probably a reference to the adjacent photocopy machine.

The price was right. "If you do it yourself, it's free. If you buy one that's already made from us, then you pay for it," Saveri said. The artist **Nick DeMarco** was game, but Saveri and company had a hard time finding an XL shirt to fit the man. "I guess I'm too large and in charge," DeMarco joked, right before Saveri found one final XL deep in the mix. He gamely proceeded to screen print with black ink while wearing all white.

The folks behind the **Brooklyn project space WHERE** were dishing out cotton candy in lab coats. A pre-event press release from the group stated that "in competition, we will each absorb a different activating material, then face off to produce a better, or shall we say more interesting, finished product." What does that mean? I'm not sure, but I did hear a representative from WHERE say "drunk wins, drunk always wins." The cotton candy was good!

Artist **Elizabeth Jaeger**, who co-runs Peradam, brought something all-ages appropriate to her publishing group's table, namely a book she made at the age of seven about her pet rat, called, simply, *The Rat*. The book is lovingly hand assembled, incorporating collage, documentation, and some good-old-fashioned rat facts. "This is Peradam's oldest and newest edition," Jaeger said, quoting me a steep \$3,300 to take home the book. Let's hope this gets a proper reissue soon!

Elsewhere, something called **LAZY MOM** (artists **Josie Keefe** and **Phyllis Ma**) had a photo booth set up, complete with wacky sandwich costumes that kids (and adults) could slide into. The idea was to "dress up like a picnic," according to Keefe.

Theirs wasn't the only kid-friendly photo booth on the premises, however. **Amanda Jasnowski** was working on a plush-centric booth that she called #makeyourownsculpture. Were the two booths in competition? "No, no, not competition," Keefe said. "We're actually buddies, so, it's all in good fun." After all, the spirit of the day was fun—just ask all the dads in attendance.