Cambridge Art Prize Winner Offers Free Art—If You Can Find It!

Warren Croce preparing to hide artwork.

Belmont artist Warren Croce, , winner of the Cambridge Art Association's 2014 National Prize for Best Mixed Media Piece, is promoting his work by hiding a piece each month in a Boston area business—and offering residents clues to find the work—which finders may then keep.

Croce's first "hunt" began in February; the third will start next week. Typical clues, available on Croce' Facebook page or via his newsletter , include maps of the general vicinity and a photo from inside the business where the art is hidden, according to a recent media release. The only "payment" is to post on Croce's Facebook page.

In February, Croce gave away "Three Wise Monkeys: See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil, " a series of acrylic monkey faces sprayed on board with newspaper clippings strategically pasted over their eyes, ears, and mouths, found at L'Aroma

Café in West Newton, MA. His second giveaway was a triptych of face, found at the Bourbon Coffee in Cambridge.

“I like giving art away,” Croce says. ” I love the joy people get from finding a piece of my artwork. Hey, you only get back from this life what you put into it.”

Trey Klein, who found the piece at L’Aroma Cafe, said “This was a fun game and these pieces are awesome.”

Llan Levy, who found the piece at Bourbon Coffee in Porter Square, called the hunt “Food for the soul.”

Some “hunters” have posted photo series or chronological poem-like accounts of their searches on Croce’s Facebook page.

Croce’s winning Cambridge Art Associate piece, called “There is nothin’ like a dame,” is comprised of twelve 1950‘s album covers glued onto board with a Madmen-esque figure painted over them in acrylic, pastel, and gel. The exhibition runs until June 26.

—Anita M. Harris

Anita Harris is an author, photographer and communications consultant based in Cambridge, MA.

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