

# WYSIWYG

A site specific, community interactive installation by Wendy DesChene

January 14, 2011 - February 25, 2011

MAIN GALLERY

Opening reception January 14, 2011 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM



Art League Houston is pleased to announce the opening of WYSIWYG, a site specific, community interactive installation by Wendy DesChene, January 14 - February 25, 2011. The opening reception for WYSIWYG is Friday, January 14, 2011 from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. with an artist talk at 6:30.

WYSIWYG has toured all across the country, and at each and every stop along the way, it grows and morphs into something new, as it responds to the individual venue site and the active participation of its surrounding community. For example, when WYSIWYG visited the Art Academy of Cincinnati, an institution that advocates drawing as the foundation to all creativity, the artist had students draw with her directly on the walls as part of the installation. While in Cincinnati, she also had 200 grade school students visiting from an elementary school

in Kentucky draw their own imaginary creatures. She then enlarged their drawings onto canvas, which were painted by college and high school students in Alabama, and which will become part of the installation at Art League Houston in January. While in Texas, Wendy's show will also open at K-Space Contemporary in Corpus Christi on January 15, 2011.

WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) grew from DesChene's desire to let people experience what she did as an artist creating art. "I wanted art to be more alive to my audience, and I thought about how I could do it. I thought about what I was left with when I had a great art experience and what it boiled ... down to [was] memory."

By letting the audience take part in the actual creation and installation of the artwork, DesChene gives them the opportunity to experience more intense memories, and in doing so makes their understanding of art more alive. Through the use of their old toys, which are dismembered and reconfigured anew, she hopes to let them see the memories of their lives in ways that they never imagined.

Says DesChene "WYSIWYG is a B-Movie Monster, eating away at the gallery walls and Frankenstiened by my own reactions to art materials, audience, environment, and critical reactions to philosophy and art history. The audience it visits, not only helps provide its dismembered parts, but aids in the creation of the electricity that gives it breath."

## **WYSIWYG Community Participants needed!**

Since WYSIWYG began touring in 2004, the artist has worked with thousands of community members, ranging in age from five all the way upwards to 90. While in Houston, DesChene hopes to work with area college students, High School for the Performing and Visual Arts students who participate in Art League Houston's HSPVA Drawing Lab, ALH Healing Art participants, and anyone else who is interested.

Those wishing to volunteer should contact Jill at Art League Houston at 713-523-9530 or at [alh@artleaguehouston.org](mailto:alh@artleaguehouston.org). Installation of the exhibit will begin on Tuesday, January 4 and run through Friday, January 7, 2011.

## **Old Toys and Un-stretched Painted Canvas Needed for WYSIWYG!**

In addition to encouraging community participation, DesChene ask for donations of old stuffed animals and un-stretched painted canvas. Anyone wanting to donate old stuffed animals and/or un-stretched painted canvas to the Art League for this project should drop them off at Art League Houston before January 1, 2011.

## **About the Artist**

Wendy DesChene is a multimedia installation artist who received a B.F.A. from Concordia University in Montreal, and an M.F.A. in Painting from the Tyler School of Art Temple University, in Philadelphia. She also attended the Tyler School of Art Rome in Italy. Since 2004, her site responsive installation, WYSIWYG, has toured the country, with stops at universities, galleries, and art centers in South Carolina, Minnesota, Alabama, Ohio, Florida, Pennsylvania, Texas, and California. Her many residencies include The American Academy in Rome, Italy; the Armory Art Center in West Palm Beach, Florida; and the Vermont Studio Center in Johnson, Vermont, among others. Wendy, a Canadian artist teaches at Auburn University in Alabama. She also lectures extensively at learning institutions and conferences throughout the country.