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PIÑATA PARTY

USER GUIDE

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This is a user guide for the production of a Piñata Party. Included in this guide is an explanation of the event, strategies for how to produce your own Piñata Party, and possible reasons for why this event is useful.

What is a Piñata Party?

A Piñata Party is an event where participants are asked to make and create their own piñatas for destruction during a social gathering.

What is our experience?

The idea was initially produced by the artist group It Can Change (which unfortunately seems to have disbanded). In an effort to find events that challenged the relationships between audience and performer, Hideous Beast chose to recreate the event during a rock show. After contacting It Can Change for advice and receiving great suggestions for making a more effective event, we scheduled a two night workshop for making piñatas, booked a few bands willing to play, and spread the word.

For the night of the event we began with a kids piñata party. Children bring wonderful energy that gives a great perspective on the activity. Later on, the "adults" had a go at the piñatas. Before and between bands spectators were asked to destroy piñatas. In collaboration with My Masterpiece Will Be A Burning Museum, a piñata wall was constructed to hide the bands' five guitarists and lead singer back stage until they busted through with candy flying and music blasting, yelling, "You are the candy!"

At times it was difficult to tell who was being watched—the bands, or the audience.



How to organize a Piñata Party

Finding a space // Secure a space for both the event and the workshop. Keep in mind that both are messy and will require some room for swinging at piñatas. There are many ways to envision the scale of your event, so figure out what band(s) will play, how loud they might be, and how rowdy you think your audience is going to get. Booking the bands will be essential for drawing a crowd, but remember that intimate spaces make smaller crowds seem bigger. This can be nice for bashing piñatas because it makes it difficult not to get involved.

Workshop // Provide a time and space to make piñatas. This is not only beneficial in promoting the event; it can also be a place for dialog about the purpose of the event, the origins of the piñata, and techniques for creating piñatas. Remember, piñatas take time to dry and will require working in stages. Have these materials available:

flour
water
balloons
newspaper
cardbord
paint, markers
utility knives

The basics are simple, but here are some sources for information about piñatas and how they are made:

<http://www.makepinatas.com/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pi%C3%B1ata>



Solicitation of participants // The workshop is the first step in getting participants excited about the event, but we also invested some time in making a unique poster and flyer. Most people haven't gone to a concert with a piñata they plan to bash, so highlight the unique opportunity for insane fun that you're creating.

Promotion // Promote the Piñata Party, making clear that those participating should bring a piñata. Your description of the event should include the time, location, and musical acts. Flyer musical venues, social gathering spaces, coffee shops, art galleries, and educational centers.



Equipment // Depending on the band and the size of the event, you may need a PA system. We suggest doing what we did and ask people you know who might be willing to help with equipment setup. Much of the equipment needed is available for rent at fairly low cost. Ask for help. Be resourceful!



The Event // Don't forget the candy!!! Create responsibilities amongst organizers to ensure a smooth event. Somebody should be in charge of the door, asking for a small entry fee to cover the cost of the bands and equipment (\$5, or \$2-3 per band). We also sold the extra screen printed posters we made for the event.

Somebody should take care of making certain the bands are prepared to play. Ask as many friends to document the party as possible, but have at least one who will make it their responsibility.

Lastly, have someone in charge of hanging piñatas and organizing people to participate in bashing them. This should ideally happen while the bands are playing, and can even include the musicians.

Stay on schedule. There's always time afterward to enjoy hanging out, but during the event, be aware of time. Your audience has taken time out of their day so respect that.



Documentation // Collect as much documentation as possible. It's a great idea to start a mailing list for events, and from that list you can email pictures of the event. Post your photos online with a photo-sharing site such as flickr.com, and email the link to all who attended.

Hideous Beast would love to hear about your events, please contact us!