

People For a Better Tomorrow: Finishing School **By Debbie Hallett**

Finishing School's Take Something/Leave Something #1 exhibition consisted of four interactive tables placed throughout Riverside. One table was placed within the gallery and the other tables were located at coffee shops and public spaces. This dynamic project encouraged viewers to interact with the piece and, in essence, become part of the creation and maintenance of the art project itself.

The table within the gallery initially featured several random objects, and gallery visitors who wished to participate were encouraged to take something and/or leave something. The few random objects soon multiplied into a plethora of artifacts and items contributed by audiences. Some of the objects were donated spontaneously, as viewers reached into pockets to pull out loose change or sticks of gum. Other viewers, however, visited the piece with the explicit intention of contributing to the table and therefore brought items and objects designed to strategically impact the exhibition. The project served as an intermediary visual communication device, allowing viewers to exhibit and express pieces of themselves via the public installation. The piece is particularly noteworthy for its persistent transitory nature and ultimately evokes feelings of both flux and optimism as it is continually made and remade via audience participation.

