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Posted at 11:34 AM ET, 10/25/2011

## The arm as art gallery

By [Maura Judkis](#)

The space is small, but the rent is free at a Los Angeles art gallery that has opened in a surprising place: on two guys' forearms.



(Lara Bank - Sea and Space)

John Barlog and John Burtie each tattooed a small frame on their left forearm, and through their "Open Arms" project, provide a small public exhibition space for artists to show work. They've accepted proposals for painting, drawing, sculpture, and even film. But running an art gallery on your arms means keeping temporal works of art safe — which makes showering difficult — and rejecting some art that would be difficult to justify.

"We've had people ask to break our arms or cut into our skin or put permanent tattoos, and that's not something we can do," say the

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Johnz, as they preferred to be called in a profile in [LA Weekly](#). "We have two basic rules: the piece cannot physically harm the arms, and the artist can't damage the space."

The Johnz told LA Weekly that they got the tattoos in 2007. They take their role as gallerists of the Traveling Open Art Display (TOAD) very seriously, whether it's a planned proposal submitted through their Web site, [Your Art on Our Arms](#), or a friend who draws on their forearm during a party. Though many proposals involve both arms, they accept spontaneous proposals for just one arm, when the pair are separated.

Previous installations have included a bridge built from one arm to the other, a patch of lawn and an egg strapped on, a painful-looking series of hickies, chocolate paint, and a film, "C'etait un Rendez-vous" by Claude Lelouch, screened on their flesh.



"Arm Candy (Hickies)," by Adriana Yugovich. (Lara Bank - Sea and Space)



Film screening on arms: "C'était un Rendez-vous" by Claude Lelouch. (Lara Bank - Sea and Space)



"Egg on Arm," by Clay Chaplin. (Lara Bank - Sea and Space)





"Yard," by Lara Bank. (Lara Bank - Sea and Space)



"Yard" and "Egg on Arm." (Lara Bank - Sea and Space)