

Phone Booth Book Share

Obsolete street furniture is repurposed into community sharing system



Project author or developer:
Department of Urban Betterment

Where:
US / United States / New York

Website:
gracefulspoon.com/

With smart phones near universal, one might wonder why public payphones still occupy so much sidewalk space. The Department of Urban Betterment's (DUB) Phone Booth Book Share is part of a series of urban interventions that explore obsolete street technology. It might look like a simple repurposing of phone booths into community book shares, but DUB's motto "nascetur ridiculus mus, and a ridiculous mouse will be brought forth" hints at a grander objective. Architect John Locke invokes Homer to argue, "The central office has no brain. The paternalistic top-down strategy of traditional urban planning has been a waste of heroic labors. We can match modest labors with exceptional gains by turning even a few of our neighbors into consciously critical observers."

