While crowdsourcing is nothing new in the age of social media madness, SPECTRE Arts in Durham has taken it to new heights with its insanely cool Instagram project called #Instajams. #Instajams began last May, with a candid black and white shot in a tattered-frame filter of a young boy and an elderly man on a New York subway, taken by Brooklyn photographer Ben Gancsos. The Instagram account has since accumulated more than 500 photos.

Artists of various media, selected monthly, are asked to post at least once a day to the visual and performing arts venue's Instagram page, with the hashtags #takeitaway, #instajams and #spectrearts. At the end of the year, Spectre will select the best images from the project, print them and sell them in the gallery at their annual "20-Buck Chuck" show.
Part of being an art space is finding cool ways to engage with people," says Alicia Lange, director of Spectre Arts. "We wanted to show art in a different sort of venue. Since social engagement online is so fun and crazy and cool right now, we said this would be a cool way to have virtual gallery."

Recent pictures include an artful disarray of Pabst Blue Ribbons on Independence Day, a hula girl hood ornament and a side street view of a highway as an artist awaits assistance for his broken down car.

So far the project has been to China, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles and North Carolina, to name a few. The featured artists range from textile designers to landscape architects to advertising executives.

As for how to take the perfect Instagram picture, Lange's approach is simple: "Think less, see more," she advises. "People kind of overanalyze things a little bit." She also says the most memorable Instagram pictures are the ones paired with a brilliant title.