

BOWERY ARTIST TRIBUTE VOL. 3

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Front Cover: Poetry recital and performance by Joe Lewis.
Part of the exhibition "The Manifesto Show" at 5 Bleecker
Street, New York, 1979. Photo: Coleen Fitzgibbon

Back Cover: Marc H. Miller, *Harry Mason, Harry's Bar, 98
Bowery, NYC, ca. 1974*. Color photographs and felt pen
inscriptions on illustration board, 36 x 43 in (91.4 x 109.2
cm). Courtesy the artist

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The Bowery Artist Tribute is made possible by an
endowment from Hermine and David Heller.

(1) Marc H. Miller in his studio
at 98 Bowery, New York, ca.
1974. Courtesy the artist

In her 2010 interview for the Bowery Artist Tribute, Mary Heilmann described how the seven years she spent on the south end of the Bowery redefined her conception of an artist's life: "My model for being an artist was this sort of lone person up in a garret," she recalled, "where you work all alone." But her time spent on the Bowery, attending informal loft performances and visiting other artists' studios, "was the beginning of my having a sense that community was an important part of the work."

This social network—provided by the density of artist studios and residences on the Bowery—lured generations of artists to the neighborhood, despite its reputation for homelessness and civic neglect. Painters, photographers, performance artists, musicians, and filmmakers exchanged ideas in the Bowery's lofts, developing new, interdisciplinary practices through this proximity. With the opening of our location at 235 Bowery, the New Museum inaugurated the Bowery Artist Tribute in 2007, a project that records and preserves the rich history of our neighborhood. To date, more than fifty interviews with artists and their family members have been conducted for this project. Our findings are shared through the website boweryartisttribute.org, public programs, a permanent installation in our Resource Center, and through a series of publications, of which this is the third volume.

This edition is published in conjunction with the exhibition "Come Closer: Art Around the Bowery, 1969–1989." Informed by the research and the oral histories collected for the Bowery Artist Tribute over the last six years, this exhibition takes the Bowery as subject, site, and center for creative ingenuity in the 1970s and 1980s. Featuring original artwork, ephemera, and performance documentation by twenty artists who lived and worked on or near

(2) Wynn Chamberlain, *Brand X*, 1969.
Production still showing Ultra Violet in the scene
"Tomorrow's Stars Today." This scene was filmed
in the gymnasium of 222 Bowery, New York.
Photo: © Gianfranco Mantegna, care of the New
York Public Library

the Bowery, "Come Closer" outlines the landscape of the neighborhood, the system of relationships it fostered, and the local and global concerns of its artists. The exhibition will be on view on the Fifth Floor from September 19, 2012, through January 6, 2013.

In many ways, the Bowery Artist Tribute mirrors the routes by which artists first came to the neighborhood. As many lofts were illegal, artists sought other methods to find vacant spaces. Word of mouth was paramount, with information passing from friend to friend through gallery openings, parties, and chance encounters on the street. Today, the Bowery Artist Tribute asks each participating artist to recall their neighbors, friends, and the artists that peopled the neighborhood to deepen our understanding of the unique contribution of this community. Anyone with additional information about artists who have lived or worked on the Bowery, past and present, is encouraged to share it by email (boweryartisttribute@newmuseum.org) or by completing the form on the last page of this publication.

(3), (4) Gray, July 21, 2011.
Performance at the New
Museum. Nicholas Taylor, left,
Michael Holman, right. Photo:
Linda Covello

We are indebted to Hermine and David Heller for funding the research, development, and presentation of this archive, and for providing endowment funds for its future. We are also grateful to a number of individuals who have been instrumental in the research and coordination of these efforts over the past six years, especially Ethan Swan, who manages the project, Eungie Joo, Irving Sandler, NYU fellows Matthew Israel, Jovana Stokic, and Matthew Levy, Travis Chamberlain, Greg Barton, and Ella Strauss. Finally, we owe many thanks to the artists, relatives, and friends who have shared their studios, photographs, and memories of the Bowery.

Lisa Phillips
Toby Devan Lewis Director





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ART ON THE BOWERY

In conjunction with the Bowery Artist Tribute, “Art on the Bowery” is a series of public programs that highlights the cultural history and artistic future of the Bowery, featuring live performance, film and video screenings, and discussion. Most recently, this series revived two projects that had been absent for decades:

On July 21, 2011, the industrial sound band Gray performed at the New Museum, their first concert since 1988. Founded by Jean-Michel Basquiat and Michael Holman in 1979 and later joined by Nicholas Taylor, Justin Thyme, and Vincent Gallo, Gray participated in the burgeoning No Wave scene, performing at the Mudd Club, CBGB, and Hurrah’s. For their New Museum performance, Holman and Taylor developed a multimedia event that combined archival video footage with their churning, heavily textured sound, demonstrating the continued relevance of Gray’s haunting, machine-like ambient music.

On April 9, 2011, the New Museum hosted the first public screening of Wynn Chamberlain’s *Brand X* since 1971. This nearly lost masterpiece of 1960s counter-culture cinema combined an incredible cast of downtown legends including Taylor Mead, Tally Brown, Candy Darling, and Sam Shepard. Chamberlain lived and worked at 222 Bowery throughout the planning and production of *Brand X*, and the building’s converted gymnasium was used as a makeshift soundstage during filming. Following the screening, director Wynn Chamberlain, actor Taylor Mead, and music director Ken Lauber participated in a Q&A session with the audience.

For information on future “Art on the Bowery” programs, please visit the New Museum’s website: newmuseum.org.



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(1) Protesters attempt to stop the destruction of Adam Purple's *Garden of Eden*, ca. 1985. Photo: Harvey Wang

(2) Keith Haring, fragment of work painted and posted in New York City, ca. 1980 (detail). Courtesy Keith Haring Foundation

(3) Barbara Ess, *Untitled*, 1978. Black-and-white photograph with acrylic marker. Courtesy the artist

(5) Christy Rupp, *Rat Patrol*, 1979. Silkscreen on paper. Courtesy the artist

(6) Paul Tschinkel, *Hannah's Haircut*, 1975 (stills). Video, 22:28 min. Courtesy the artist

(4) Dee Dee Ramone, *Loft*, 1975. Marker on paper. Courtesy Arturo Vega



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(7) Arleen Schloss with Hans Scheirl, *Posting of Wednesdays at AS Events on the Bowery*, 1980 (still). Video, 4:46 min. Courtesy the artist

(8) Keith Haring, fragment of work painted and posted in New York City, ca. 1980. Installation view. Courtesy Keith Haring Foundation

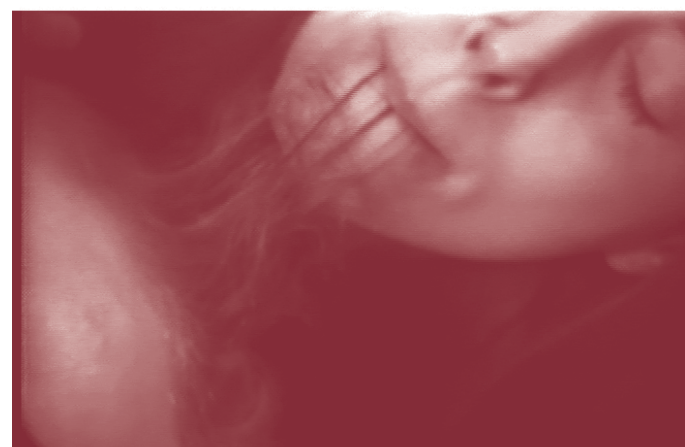
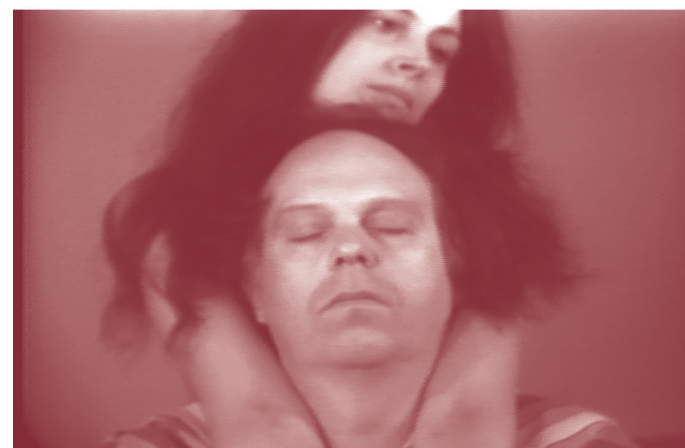
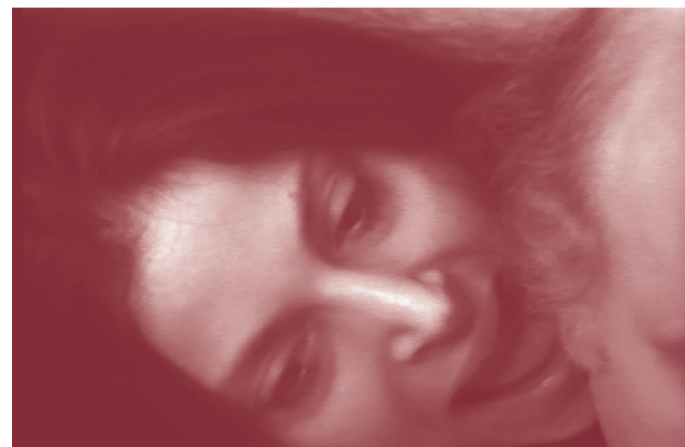


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(1) Coleen Fitzgibbon installing the exhibition "Income and Wealth" at 5 Bleecker Street, New York, 1979. Courtesy Coleen Fitzgibbon

(2) Coleen Fitzgibbon, Untitled, 1979. Installation view: "Income and Wealth," 5 Bleecker Street, New York, 1979. Courtesy the artist

(3) X&Y (Coleen Fitzgibbon and Robin Winters), *Gun Money Plate*, 1980. Fragment of wallpaper. Installation view: "The Times Square Show," New York. Courtesy Marc H. Miller

(4) Exhibition view: "The Manifesto Show," 5 Bleecker Street, New York, 1979. Courtesy Coleen Fitzgibbon



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PG. 06

COLEEN FITZGIBBON

5 BLEECKER STREET (1977–79)

Coleen Fitzgibbon (b. 1950) is an active experimental film artist who previously worked under the pseudonym "Colen Fitzgibbon" from 1973–80. A student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and the Whitney Independent Study Program, she studied with Owen Land (aka George Landow), Stan Brakhage, Yvonne Rainer, Carolee Schneemann, Vito Acconci, and worked on film and sound projects for Dennis Oppenheim, Gordon Matta-Clark, and Les Levine. She formed the collaborative X&Y with Robin Winters in 1976, the Offices of Fend, Fitzgibbon, Holzer, Nadin, Prince, and Winters in 1979, and cofounded the New York-based Collaborative Projects, Inc. (Colab) in 1977 (through 1981) along with forty-plus artists.

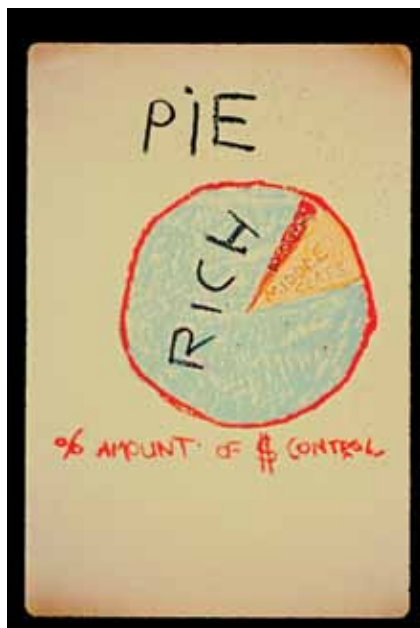
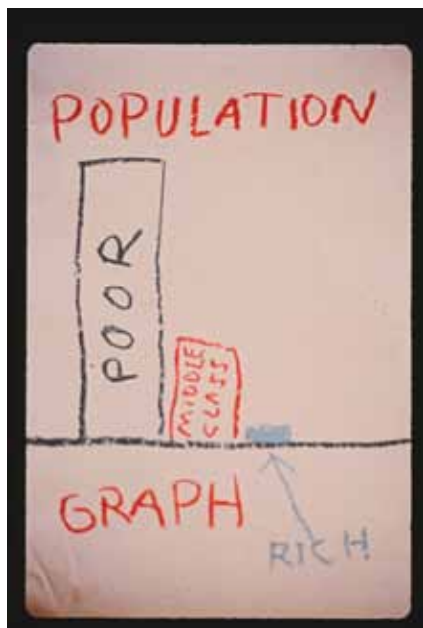
Fitzgibbon has screened her work at numerous international film festivals, museums, and galleries, including the Toronto International Film Festival, Museum of Modern Art, NY, Gene Siskel Film Center, Chicago, Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels, Institute of Contemporary Art, London, Anthology Film Archives, NY, Light Industry, NY, De Appel, Amsterdam, Exit Art, NY, and Subliminal Projects, Los Angeles. Fitzgibbon currently resides in New York City and Montana.

Excerpt from the Bowery Artist Tribute interview with Coleen Fitzgibbon, April 30, 2012. Video available at boweryartisttribute.org.

At 5 Bleecker Street, I started getting involved with Colab. Robin Winters and I had done X&Y in the Netherlands the year before and when I came back all these people I knew from the Art Institute, from Chicago itself, from the Whitney program, and friends of friends who were in the same age group (in our twenties in the early '70s) were in New York. So I got this place at 5 Bleecker—a storefront. It was really great. Robin and I had been doing shows and installations in the Netherlands, but we stopped working together as X&Y and started organizing shows separately—showing our friends and ourselves in our own spaces. He had a loft at 591 Broadway and I had the 5 Bleecker place. I think the first show I did we

actually did sort of in conjunction: I did "Income and Wealth" and Robin did "Doctors and Dentists." After that, I did "The Manifesto Show" with Jenny Holzer and Robin did "The Dog Show." Then I did another show with Barbara Ess, Virginia Piersol, and Jane Sherry called "Just Another Asshole," after their journal.

One reason I came to the Lower East Side was because it was the cheapest place to live. Another reason is from when I was at the Art Institute and they told us that we could invite artists we wanted. One of the people I wanted to invite was Jack Smith—I liked *Flaming Creatures* and *Normal Love*, but I'd never met him so Diego Cortez and I went to New York and tracked him down. It took weeks to find him because he kept moving from place to place—he'd had a place in SoHo where he had sawed down the second floor. Finally, I tracked



(2)

him down to 2nd Street (East 2nd Street between B and C). At that time the Lower East Side was completely bombed out and he was living in this sort of shell surrounded by bigger shells. We went to visit him and when we invited him to Chicago he said, "Sure, I'd love to go." Of course, he never showed up. When I went to do the Whitney program I looked him up right away and went back and asked, "Jack, what happened?" He goes, "Well, you didn't come and get me." So that was it. But because of that we became friends and I worked for him, for free, for about a year, helping him with his films and dusting his glass negatives, and just sitting and smoking with him, as well as roaming around the Lower East Side.

During that period I also made a film called *L.E.S.* I basically roamed around the streets with my camera, first by myself, and then a couple of times with Tom Sigel, and then later with Robin and Betsy Sussler. I forget who else was in the film but a lot of it was me going around taking pictures with a Super 8 camera. It's all shot below 14th Street and above Houston, east of Avenue A, and people were pretty okay with it. I asked people before I filmed them—most of the people I didn't know but I talked to them, the kids were really friendly. Later, I did shoot my neighborhood and people knew me. You sort of learn to ask people if it's okay to shoot, even your neighbors. You want to ask ahead of time because a lot of people are in trouble with the law so they don't want their faces on camera. It is sort of a trust thing—people would ask me where I would show the films. "It's for artists," I'd tell them, and it was, it didn't go further than that. I think living here, you talk to your neighbors, you show them your work (a lot of times they

come in to see the work in your house), you become friends with some of them, and they talk to their friends. I can't think of too many artists that didn't get somewhat involved with the neighborhood. At 5 Bleeker, I knew everyone on my block basically. I knew mostly artists but there were also the Bowery bums, I would get to know them too, they would come in and look at the shows, they had quite a few critiques of the Colab shows that we were doing.

At the time, we were all unhappy that the galleries weren't showing us. But, in retrospect, the financial condition was terrible then, there was no money, the galleries were struggling, most of them were struggling to sell the artists they did have, so how could they take on new artists? We were a slightly antagonistic group in some ways, but not meaning to, it was just in a time of politics. We all grew up with the Civil Rights Movement, Kennedy, women's rights, gay rights, and communes. It was a time when people were trying to work more communally, not only with each other but with the environment they were in. It seemed to come naturally during that period. Maybe by the mid-'80s it had changed quite a bit: there was money coming into the art world, there was more going back to the galleries. But for that brief period, where there wasn't anything else to do anyway, working outside of the art world seemed like a great idea.



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(1) Miller, Ringma, and Hoppe, *Bettie and the Ramones at CBGB*, 1978. Installation view: "Punk Art," Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, DC. Photographs: Miller/Ringma; oil on canvas: Curt Hoppe. Courtesy the artists

(2) Curt Hoppe, Marc H. Miller, and Bettie Ringma with *Marc and Senator George McGovern*, 1979. Part of a Miller, Ringma, and Hoppe collaboration. Courtesy the artists

(3) Curt Hoppe, *Di Palo's on Grand St.*, 1984. Oil on canvas, 36 x 48 in (91.4 x 121.9 cm). Private collection

(4) Curt Hoppe in his studio with selections from the "Persons of Interest" portrait series, 2012. Photo: Elisabeth Bernstein



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PG. 08

CURT HOPPE

98 BOWERY (1975–PRESENT)

For four decades, the portraits of Curt Hoppe (b. 1950) have captured, through photography and painting, the hustle, grit, and beauty surrounding him. Hoppe arrived in New York at the age of eighteen, moving first to a Lower East Side tenement on the edge of Tompkins Square Park before finding his Bowery loft in 1976. At 98 Bowery, Hoppe began collaborating with his neighbors Marc H. Miller and Bettie Ringma, executing large, meticulously detailed paintings of their "Paparazzi Self-Portraits"—snapshots Miller and Ringma had taken of themselves with celebrities such as Andy Warhol, Angela Davis, John Cage, and the Ramones. Through this project, Hoppe met the publisher Al Goldstein and began making illustrations for his weekly pornographic magazine, *Screw*. In the 1980s, Hoppe began documenting the buildings and streetscapes of Little Italy, preserving slivers of the city that have since disappeared. In 2008, he began exhibiting the series "Girls of Action"—portraits of female musicians, wrestlers, and burlesque performers. His most recent series, "Persons of Interest," documents Hoppe's longstanding community of artists and neighbors, including Clayton Patterson, Penny Arcade, Diego Cortez, and Richard Hambleton. Hoppe's work has been exhibited in one-person and group exhibitions in the United States and Europe, and he is represented by Woodward Gallery, NY.

Excerpt from the Bowery Artist Tribute interview with Curt Hoppe, May 23, 2012. Video available at boweryartisttribute.org.

I used to go around the corner to Millie's where I'd get my cigarettes in the morning or a hot meatball hero for lunch. I'd go down to Betty's in Chinatown on Sundays for the *New York Times*; they knew me down there and Betty herself was a real treat to look at. Through the transitions, through the years of all the change, Millie's closed, so did the Korean grocery store where I met an Egyptian guy who, if I didn't show up regularly, would say "Where have you been? I haven't seen you." Now, I'm down to going to Duane Reade for my cigarettes, where they don't give a shit who I am and if I don't show up for three weeks they're not going to say

"Oh, I haven't seen you." So, I find that kind of thing sort of depressing. I miss the old Mom and Pop stores. At least you've got a few artist holdouts that were there early on in the fight when the loft law was passed and got coverage—that was back in 1982.

I was fortunate enough to have two neighbors upstairs, Marc H. Miller and Bettie Ringma, and they were doing something kind of interesting with photography. They would take photographs of themselves with famous people and called them "Paparazzi Self-Portraits." I always wanted to come up with things to make them better, somehow, weaseling my way in. I friended them, just like you would on Facebook, but by knocking on the door. I said "I could reproduce what you're doing on canvas, it would make it much bigger, better,

(5) Curt Hoppe in front of the 5 Centre Market Place location of John Jovino Gun Shop, 1977. The building was also the former home of the photographer Weegee. Courtesy Curt Hoppe



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more grand." So I started doing paintings of the "Paparazzi Self-Portraits" and we'd get the people to sign the paintings—it gave us an entrance to the people in the paintings.

The best one was with Senator McGovern based on a simple snapshot of Marc shaking hands with him. I remember McGovern was wearing this blue corduroy suit with a big '70s look. We wrote him a nice letter, we included photographs of the painting, explaining the whole thing, and we wanted him to know how honored we'd be to come down just for him to sign the painting and interview him. We all piled into the car, dragged the painting down to Washington, DC, and went to Senator McGovern's office. I got dressed up. I wore a suit. McGovern looks at the thing and doesn't know what to make of it. It's not flattering, it's just a picture of the two of them shaking hands in front of an American flag, and there was something about the space program on one side—a poster or something. So, McGovern starts going through the whole thing, he's like, "Well, this is a part of the space program, very good."

And I said, "Oh, I was a McGovern supporter during the Vietnam War." He goes, "Yeah, we put up a good fight then," and so on. Meanwhile, the guy who videotaped the whole thing, Paul Tschinkel, caught McGovern's aide on the side looking at this thing and ready to go, "These guys are just full of shit." You can see it in the guy's face, "This is the biggest crock of shit I've ever seen in my life."

I only paint things I like, if I don't like it I can't do it. They're romantic. Like Little Italy—there used to be Luna Restaurant. It was a real dump, but it was kind of a cool dump. I used to go down there back in '68, even. A friend of mine brought me down to Little Italy and said, "You've got to go to this place, they have these baked clams." I remember it was this same guy, "Eh, whadya want? Baked clams?" He had the voice because he sold fireworks, "Fireworks! Fireworks!" when he was a kid, that's how a lot of those guys did it. Luna had these blue walls and they painted it with shiny, glossy enamel. Nobody paints glossy walls—and the paint was put on so many times, it was



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thick, thick, thick paint. On the molding around it you could see the drips. I can still see it in my head. Now it's changed. There was a pizza place next to it called Casa Bella Pizza, and one time I was sitting there (this was when cigarettes were cheap, they were a couple of bucks or something) and I put my money in something else you don't see any more—a cigarette vending machine—and I was having a hard time with it. It just so happened that there was a guy in there named John Gotti, and he went and slammed the vending machine and the cigarettes came out. I said, "Thank you very much, that was great." And he said, "Sometimes it's nice to be nice." Isn't that funny? That's a true story. I got a bunch of them.

To me, moving to the Bowery was like joining the French Foreign Legion. You were living on the edge because you wanted freedom. If I was a kid these days I wouldn't be moving to the Bowery. I got news for you: once a month, on

Saturday, I take my wife, my mother-in-law, and my brother-in-law out and we meet on Broadway in Queens. I like the food there, there's a great Greek restaurant. I get on the N train. I watch all these people inundating my neighborhood on the weekends while I can't wait to get out and go to Queens for a day. There are plenty of things to do there. I guess they don't see the beauty in where they are at the moment.



(1)

PG. 10

JOE LEWIS

221 MOTT STREET (1968–71)

217 MOTT STREET (1976–89)

Joe Lewis (b. 1953) is a non-media-specific post-studio artist, administrator, community developer, and activist. From a young age, Lewis sang and performed with his father, Joe Lewis, Sr., at Vietnam War protests, labor union demonstrations, and for the Rainbow Coalition. As a teenager, this hybridization of social activism and creative activity led Lewis to street theater and he began working with a group affiliated with the Young Lords Guerrilla Theatre. In 1978, Lewis cofounded Fashion Moda with the artist Stefan Eins. Fashion Moda was an alternative arts space located in the South Bronx. As director, Lewis curated and mounted more than thirty-five exhibitions and 120 performance events nationwide, including “Events: Fashion Moda” (1980) at the New Museum.

Lewis earned a Bachelor’s degree in art from Hamilton College in New York and a Master’s in fine arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art. As an arts administrator, Lewis was Project Coordinator and Project Manager for the Jackie Robinson Foundation in New York, Dean of the School of Art and Design at Alfred University, and is presently Dean of the Claire Trevor School of the Arts at UC Irvine.

As a visual and performing artist, Lewis has had numerous solo exhibitions of his work both nationally and internationally. He is the recipient of several awards, commissions, and fellowships, including an Award of Excellence from Communication Arts, several grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, a Ford Foundation Fellowship, and a Thomas J. Watson Fellowship.

Excerpt from the Bowery Artist Tribute interview with Joe Lewis, April 16, 2012. Video available at boweryartisttribute.org.

I left home when I was twelve years old. I hung out on the Lower East Side and Tompkins Square Park with the Diggers, and at the Psychedelicatessen. I sold the *East Village Other*, an alternative newspaper, on the street. I was really lucky because I landed in a group of political activists as a teenage runaway. Those folks were much more interested in social change than they were in methamphetamine hydrochloride or heroin, which was definitely part of that scene too. I mean, we did do our share of psychedelics, pot, and wine but it was really very tame compared to the other things that were going on at that time. The Lower East Side became a treacherous place during the autumn after the Summer of Love because “free

love” and “turn on - tune in - drop out” (the anthems of the do-your-own-thing generation) became overshadowed by meth culture. And meth culture was not about peace and love. It was more about mental and physical brutality.

I was always enrolled in school during those times but rarely attended until my junior and senior years of high school when I lived in a storefront at 221 Mott Street. I made it through high school and was accepted to Hamilton College. In '75, I graduated Hamilton, won a Watson Fellowship, and began a series of paintings exploring jungle landscape color theory. I was interested in comparing and contrasting coloration in jungles at different longitudes and latitudes in Asia and Central and South America. Then I spent six months in Europe looking at the European master landscape painters.

(1) Lewis, Eastman, and Lewis, 1981. Performance at Inroads, New York. Courtesy Joe Lewis

(2) Joe Lewis, *Where You Gonna Run To?*, 1982. Hand-sewn bikini, bricks, moss, plaster mannequin, dimensions variable. Installation view: "Joe Lewis," ABC No Rio, New York. Courtesy the artist



(2)

(3) Joe Lewis, *Dreadlock Earrings*, 1984. Hair, 18k gold wire, scale, dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist

(4) Exhibition view: "Strike Force: Joe Lewis, Carmen Spera, Jennifer Stein, and Jim Van Kirk," abandoned building, Brooklyn, 1980. Exhibition organized by the Brooklyn Museum. Courtesy Joe Lewis

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So, I'm back to New York in late '76 and get a job as a cocktail waiter at the disco Ones and as a houseboy for Julian Pretto, and get a room at 111 Hudson Street, in the Fine Arts Building. I lived in an office right across the hall from Marcia Tucker's office when she started the New Museum. We used to have cake and coffee on Sunday mornings. Artists Space was on the second floor of that building. I lived there for maybe a year and then moved back to Mott Street.

Even though I studied painting and printmaking in college, I began making performance art. I was always more interested in group activities and people, and I couldn't stand being alone for seventy hours a week—that's what it takes to be a painter. I just couldn't do it.

That's how I met Stefan Eins. I worked with a small performance group of artists (Scott Wardell, Rebecca Smith, Jim Van Kirk, and occasionally Cynthia Yee, Candida Smith, and S. Peter Stevens); we created pieces and performed around town. One of those pieces was titled "Distances: Shape and Expansion of the Universe: Not Built to Scale...." We visualized celestial phenomena like "particles with charm," "celestial curtain/event horizon," and I did the

"Celestial Sweep" and swept around various routes including the entire island of Manhattan with a broom. I asked Stefan if we could install the residue of those performances in his 3 Mercer store space. That was 1977 or so.

Stefan and I started talking about the downtown art scene and how it was very insular and culturally myopic. Those conversations helped Stefan frame Fashion Moda. It was "a big idea" that quickly became much larger than Stefan or me or anyone else involved with it. By the way, no one was beating down my door to help me produce my conceptual performance works or buy the horrible pink putti I was painting. At that time, if you had a solo show before you were fifty you were considered a whiz kid. There were very few opportunities for young artists and even fewer opportunities for artists who weren't white males making minimalist stuff.

A larger "community-cultural-art-making-thing" was happening simultaneously with the development of Fashion Moda. Groups and organizations like Colab, ABC No Rio, Group Material, PADD, etc., were also developing social models, bringing different kinds of

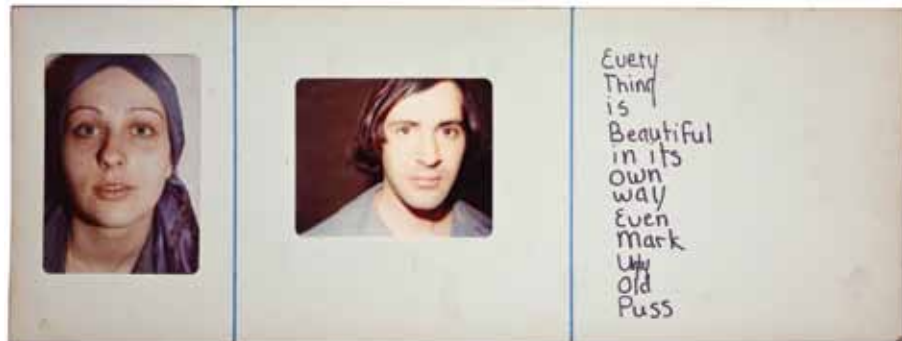
people and ideas together while also trying to dispel fundamental art-world mythologies—like artists needed dealers, museums, and collectors to survive.

The "Events" exhibition at the New Museum, curated by Fashion Moda, exhibited work by artists from California, Guatemala, and New Orleans, and challenged other, more virulent misnomers: "You had to be in New York to be an artist and/or you have to be trained to be a serious artist." A subtext to Fashion Moda's global perspective (the logo was in four languages) was that neither was true; what was important was your desire and tenacity and vision.

Today, I'm the Dean of the Claire Trevor School of the Arts at the University of California, Irvine, recently named the top university less than fifty years old in America, and fourth in the world. I oversee prestigious departments of art, dance, drama, and music with incredible faculty (Yvonne Rainer, Donald McKayle, Robert Cohen, and Nicole Mitchell, respectively) and scary-bright students. And I'm still creating opportunities for people.

There's no rhyme or reason to how I got here from there and no way to chart

my path. I guess it all has to do with people—I used to say that bringing different kinds of people together was my art and not necessarily making objects. One of the hallmarks of all of my administrative assignments has been community outreach, working with community organizations and bringing folks together. In a sense, I'm still doing what I started off doing, in a different arena obviously, but still very much focused on being of service to the community. It's all about community.

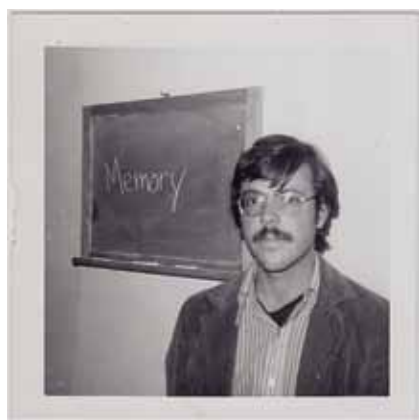


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PG. 12

MARC H. MILLER

98 BOWERY (1969–89)



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Marc H. Miller (b. 1946) is an artist, curator, journalist, and publisher who has been an active participant in the New York art world since he moved here from California to earn a PhD at New York University's Institute of Fine Arts in 1969. In the 1970s, he exhibited at OK Harris and in groundbreaking group shows with a strain of conceptual art that merged his burgeoning curatorial instincts with interactive participatory techniques. Projects like "Draw a Penis and Vagina" invited artistic gestures from bystanders (artists and non-artists alike) that reveal a psychological complexity that belies the seeming simplicity of the idea. By the end of the decade, Miller had entered into a collaborative practice with Bettie Ringma, undertaking conceptual photographic projects and co-curating the "Punk Art Exhibition" in Washington, DC, in 1978—the first exhibition to begin to define the subject. Miller and Ringma's "Paparazzi Self-Portraits" culminated with the addition of photo-realist paintings by Curt Hoppe. In the 1980s, Miller both diversified his formats and expanded his collaborations. He was a columnist for the *East Village Eye*, coeditor with Alan Moore of *ABC No Rio Dinero: The Story of a Lower East Side Art Gallery*, and worked with Paul Tschinkel on "Art/new york," a videotape series on contemporary art. As curator at the Queens Museum of Art he organized exhibitions of contemporary art as well as biographical exhibitions such as "Louis Armstrong: A Cultural Legacy." In the 1990s, Miller founded Ephemera Press, which produced thematic maps of New York covering such topics as the Harlem Renaissance, the Queens Jazz Trail, and, closer to home, the East Village, with art by James Romberger and Marguerite Van Cook. All of Miller's activities are united in a lifelong predilection for telling stories with pictures that resulted in 2009 in the launching of the website 98bowery.com, which brings together the various strands of his life in a personal memoir of his time on the Lower East Side.

Excerpt from the Bowery Artist Tribute interview with Marc H. Miller, July 23, 2008. Video available at boweryartisttribute.org.

I first moved to 98 Bowery in 1969. Carla Dee Ellis and I were part of the first group of people to live in the building after it was converted from a flophouse. I think in its early history they rolled cigars there. We learned about the loft through John Wilmer—who originally found the building but the legalization of the loft took so long that he got discouraged and returned to California. We all came from California, the University of California at Riverside, which, at that time, had a very good art and art history department. One of the people there was Shirley Hopps who was married to the curator Walter Hopps. Shirley was always encouraging students to move to New York and connecting the new batch of students with the ones that had moved there earlier.

The reason Carla and I wanted the loft was because she was a painter. She was also the dream California girl, tall and thin with long blonde hair. From the moment she arrived in New York photographers would stop her on the street wanting to arrange photo shoots. Here's a ridiculous '60s story: We were going to picket a Richard Nixon fundraiser, it was a big dinner, and suddenly this guy in a tuxedo comes up and it's Huntington Hartford. He basically turned to Carla and asked, "Are you a model?" She said no, and he said, "You should be" and gave her his card. A couple of days later we went over to his office, he calls up the Ford Agency and voilà, Carla became a model. But her real goal was to paint. She was good, no doubt. She made good use of that loft, doing some really large paintings. I remember one Christmas, I think around 1971, she did about fifty one-foot-by-one-foot square canvases and just churned them out in a couple

(1) Marc H. Miller, from the series "Take A Picture," 1974. Color photographs and felt pad inscriptions on illustration board, each 4 x 10 in (10.2 x 25.4 cm). Courtesy the artist

(2) Marc H. Miller, from the series "Write A Word," 1972. Black-and-white photographs, each 4 x 4 in (10.2 x 10.2 cm). Courtesy the artist

(3) Miller/Ringma, *Bettie and the Talking Heads* from "Paparazzi Self-Portraits," 1977. Color photograph, 3 x 5 in (7.6 x 12.7 cm). Courtesy the artist

(4) Various snapshots of 98 Bowery, New York. Courtesy Marc H. Miller



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(4)

of days. There was Daisy Mae, Elvis (which I have), Mick Jagger, Li'l Abner, just a whole slew of those kinds of Pop images, and she gave them all away as Christmas presents.

Shirley continued to send people from California. In 1972, she sent over a guy named Mike Malloy and he moved in with us. Right away he got a show at OK Harris with a piece called "Insure the Life of an Ant." Basically, it was a little contraption where you could push this instant freezer and kill the ant that was in the box. People would make the decision whether they were going to pay ten cents and save the ant, or push the button. It was pretty controversial at the time. Mike got very good reviews but he was a sensitive kid and he never quite recovered from the antagonism that a lot of people had towards the piece. For me, that work was very liberating, I had never thought about conceptual art or art where people do things. That piece got me going. The first works I made had people responding to words. Then the concept expanded to include having people do drawings, like "Draw Yourself." I always included a little photo of the participants. It just

kept going: there were clay pieces and then I began handing people cameras and having them take photos, it was always people who made the art.

In 1975, I started making what I called "Paparazzi Self-Portraits," which were essentially pictures of me with celebrities. I met Bettie Ringma around that time and she started helping me. At first she took the pictures, then I began taking pictures of her and we became a team. We were walking around one day, this was in 1976, and saw all this action outside of CBGB. We went in and talked to Hilly Kristal, who owned the place, and he gave us *carte blanche* to come in whenever we wanted. It was just a few blocks from our loft and we became regulars. I'd say for maybe two years we were in there three or four nights a week watching this scene explode. We were always taking pictures, mostly of Bettie with all the different punk groups. Then we started selling them through *Rolling Stone*. We took out a little ad, "Bettie Visits CBGB—Punk Portfolio—15 Shots, for \$15."

When I think of those years, I remember always hosting parties and having peo-

ple sleep over. A large loft fosters a big social network. At first, there were huge parties but you learn pretty quick that stuff disappears. So, you begin to get a little more exclusive in terms of who's coming by. The lofts were then, like the paint on the jeans, the identity of being an artist. I guess people still aspire to it, but it was much more attainable at that point. I think I was paying about \$175 a month when I first moved into 98 Bowery. That's what gave you your credentials, having a loft.

(1) Marcia Resnick, Untitled from "Canyon Curb Piece," 1974. Black-and-white photograph, 11 x 14 in (27.9 x 35.5 cm). Courtesy the artist

(2) Marcia Resnick, *Beat Poets at the Bunker* from "Bad Boys: Punks, Poets and Provocateurs," 1980. Black-and-white photograph. Courtesy the artist

(3) Front cover of Marcia Resnick's *Re-visions* (Toronto: Coach House Press, 1978). Courtesy the artist

(4) Marcia Resnick, *Outside – Inside*, 1974. Installation view: 73 East Houston Street, New York. Courtesy the artist



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PG. 14

MARCIA RESNICK

73 EAST HOUSTON STREET (1973–75)

Marcia Resnick (b. 1950) is a New York-based photographer and educator. For more than four decades, she has created pictures that examine the acts of seeing and remembering. An alumnus of Cooper Union and California Institute of the Arts, Resnick's earliest exhibited pieces were black-and-white photographs painted partially with colorful details that explored the subtexts of snapshot imagery. Upon returning to the Lower East Side after graduate school, Resnick embarked on a series that considered the landscape, characters, and clamor of Lower Manhattan. These included unsanctioned public works in which Resnick adjusted the terrain of the city through photographic interventions as well as portraits of her extended community. *Bad Boys: Punks, Poets and Provocateurs*, a forthcoming book of these portraits, will include photographs of Johnny Thunders, William S. Burroughs, John Belushi, and Divine, among others.

Using funds from a National Endowment for the Arts grant, Resnick published three conceptual books of photographs in 1975: *Landscape*, *See*, and *Tahitian Eve*. Her book of staged images about female adolescence, *Re-visions*, followed in 1978.

Resnick has participated in numerous solo and group exhibitions in the US and internationally. Her works are in the permanent collections of institutions including the Museum of Modern Art, NY, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, George Eastman House/International Museum of Photography and Film, Rochester, NY, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Excerpt from the Bowery Artist Tribute interview with Marcia Resnick, July 20, 2012. Video available at boweryartisttribute.org.

I lived on the Lower East Side for a number of years before I went to grad school in California so it was familiar to me and the rents were also very cheap. During my exhaustive search for an apartment, I finally saw an ad in the *New York Times* that a blind landlord had posted. He wanted to find somebody who could write a very convincing letter as to why they should get his set of two apartments with a shared kitchen which, together, were \$140 a month. My winning letter earned me and Pooh Kaye (my classmate from Cooper Union) the privilege of renting them.

The people in the neighborhood were a mix of artists, students, immigrants,

people who lived in group homes, and people who drank a lot. My apartment was on East Houston Street between Elizabeth and Bowery. In the vicinity were rows and rows of "New – Used – We – Buy – Sell" stores. Many seemed like fronts for shadier operations. I remember I bought a practically new black leather Schott motorcycle jacket for \$15. There were stores that sold jewelry as well as all kinds of trade type stuff. My apartment was above one of those stores. Eventually, a couple of those places on my block closed down. In fact, the whole neighborhood went through a period of change.

At the time, I had a car and I had put two mannequins in the back seat. Sometimes, I would park illegally and not get ticketed because the police thought they were real people. My 1963 Chevy Nova gave me mobility



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and made me really popular—everyone liked my car. I decorated it with racy decals and the names of my boyfriends on the hood, and wrote “Marcia The Masher” on the driver’s side. When I drove it, other drivers would honk at me and laugh.

After leaving California, on my way back to New York, I drove across the country with a fellow artist, Jim Welling, photographing people and places. My art career was set in motion when I was chosen to be a 1974 *Life Library of Photography* yearbook discovery. When I lived on Houston Street, I began to do various interior installations by bringing branches and pieces of cement and rocks I found outside into a tiny extra room in my apartment. I did exterior installations with printed photographs like my “Canyon Curb Piece.” I started to paint my photographs with black paint, leaving little areas of the photographic image. I reminisced about my travel experiences, making small reconstructions of the landscapes I had photographed, photographing the reconstructions, and then pairing them with the originals. I also began to sequence the landscape photographs, which all showed a minimal amount of land, as well as arrange my photographs of people, seen from

behind looking at landscapes, in order to make the conceptual books *Landscape* and *See*.

I didn’t start doing the series “Bad Boys” until I had left the neighborhood and would visit it often, like when I went to CBGB. I thought about how men were always photographing women and was curious about the sexual dynamic of a woman photographing men. The males in my world were *enfants terribles*. The punk rockers were always sneering and playing the part of bad boys. For me, a bad boy was someone who had a special charisma and lived on the edge. It was in that context that I considered the word “bad” to actually mean something positive.

I would take pictures of bands playing live but I really enjoyed the kind of control I had in the studio photographing those same musicians. Sometimes, I only had a backstage or an outside-of-the-club opportunity to photograph people, but if I could get them to my studio that was optimum. I wanted to create situations in which there was an equal give and take, both a confrontation and a collaboration. When I was taking a picture, I influenced my subjects’ poses by what I did as they were

influencing my behavior. And I was gratified by these exchanges.

It got to a point where I was photographing everybody, including girls, for that series. “Bad Boys” occupied me for a number of years, through the beginning of the ’80s. I think AIDS brought about the end of the series. AIDS changed everything: it damaged the nightlife scene; it changed the fluidity of communication and the responsiveness between people. Nothing equals that last flourish of activity and life and fluidity.

In my earlier work, I imposed my own personal world onto the busy city that was making a lot of noise around me. I wanted to escape into my memories and incorporate them into my artistic endeavors. I wanted to highlight intimacy in a complicated world. In “Bad Boys,” I began to have exchanges with the people who braved both living and creating in our multifaceted and often overwhelming city of New York.



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(1) Child adding a diving board to Charles Simonds's *Dwelling* at East Second Street, New York, 1972. Courtesy the artist

(2) Passersby examining *Dwelling* at East Houston Street, New York, 1972. Courtesy the artist

(3) Charles Simonds and children working on *Dwelling* at East Second Street, New York, 1972. Courtesy the artist

(4) Charles Simonds, *Dwelling*, 1972. Installation view: East Second Street, New York. Courtesy the artist

(5) Charles Simonds, *Dwelling*, 1972. Installation view: East Houston Street, New York. Courtesy the artist

(6) Charles Simonds, *Dwelling*, 1971. Installation view: Greene Street, New York. Courtesy the artist



(1)

PG. 16

CHARLES SIMONDS

131 CHRYSTIE STREET (1970–77)

Through his site-specific creations of miniature buildings and landscapes, Charles Simonds (b. 1945) has publicly proposed the unification of land, body, self, and house. The foundation of his project “The Dwellings” began in Lower Manhattan, circa 1970. Starting with a window ledge in SoHo, Simonds began to install dwelling places for an imaginary civilization of Little People. Working with a combination of unfired clay and miniature bricks, Simonds installed hundreds of dwellings, first on the Lower East Side, and subsequently in Paris, Venice, Shanghai, and a pre-unification Berlin. While these unsanctioned public works—installed without labels or protective coverings—eventually surrendered to their own fragility and anonymity, through the installation process, Simonds developed deep relationships with these neighborhoods, particularly the Lower East Side. Just as “The Dwellings” reflected the possibility and activity of the region—the search for shelter among the decimated landscape—Simonds’s further engagement with community issues was also apparent through his years spent serving on the Board of the Lower East Side Coalition for Human Housing and contributing to play lots and Sweat Equity Projects.

Since 1975, Simonds has been the subject of many solo exhibitions, both nationally and internationally. In 1981, his exhibition “Circles and Towers Growing” was organized by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, after which it traveled to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Fort Worth Art Museum, the Contemporary Art Museum, Houston, the Phoenix Art Museum, the Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. In 1995, La Caixa Foundation in Barcelona organized a mid-career retrospective of his work that traveled to the Jeu de Paume in Paris. In 2003, the Institut Valencià d’Art Modern (IVAM), Spain, mounted a retrospective of his work. His work is in the permanent collections of many public institutions, including the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Musée National d’Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.



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Excerpt from the *Bowery Artist Tribute* interview with Charles Simonds, June 21, 2012. Video available at boweryartisttribute.org.

My work is mostly involved with an imaginary civilization for which I build dwellings. I don't make the people but I make the dwellings where they live. I allowed this fantasy to become an idea entailing my Little People migrating up Greene Street inhabiting stoops, gutters, and window ledges. Along the way, Jeffery Lew asked if I would do one in his gallery, 112 Greene, so I did one inside the gallery and outside on the window ledge. Holly Solomon then opened a space called 98 Greene Street, so I did one on her window ledge. I basically infested the entire length of Greene Street with dwellings.

I'd stand there for the better part of a day with my tweezers, building my dwellings brick by brick, and people would come along. Soon, all the truckers and the people who worked in what were mostly rag factories knew me as this guy with his Little People. They became very invested in the Little People—they would check each morning on the dwellings and would tell me all sorts of stories about what went on with them the night before. The fantasy was already pretty yeasty, I would say.

I realized that what I'd like to do, and I did this very programmatically and consciously, was to take a community, a given geography, and a given group of people, and work over a period of time to see if I could infest a neighborhood with a fantasy—one that sort of wafts through the neighborhood so people will have a kind of daily fantasy

to change their perspectives on things. I was living on Chrystie Street, on the edge of what was a fairly coherent neighborhood (Avenues A to D, 14th Street to Houston Street), as well as near vacant lots and whatever else, it was a very interesting neighborhood. I went to Avenue C between 8th and 9th Streets, sat down in the gutter, and started to make a dwelling. It was like an explosion of people. Everybody came and brought their friends and it went on and on and on. We were having such a great time. I said, "Well, this is cool, I think I've got a good place to be." From about 1970 to 1977, I made something like 300 dwellings in that community. In the process, I got very involved in the community, which had many other issues aside from my Little People. I became a member of the Board of the Lower East Side Coalition for Human Housing, worked on a community play lot, La Placita, and other community organizing ventures.

I think it would be vainglorious to think that the Lower East Side was particularly worse than anywhere else or better than anywhere else at that time. I will say though, the time that I worked there, many people thought it was a terrible, terribly dangerous place. It was a terrible, dangerous place, but everybody knew everyone, so you knew who was trouble and who the undercover cops were. I remember one instance of working in a vacant lot and some kids said they wanted to set one of the stripped cars on fire. "Well," I said, "if you set that car on fire it's going to blow smoke right where I'm working, so if you've got to do that can you go down and do that other one." So they went and did the other



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one. And this appears in a film as if it's some dramatic moment, but this was everyday fare. The police didn't care. The police, or whoever might want to stop you, had much worse things to deal with than some jerk making dwellings for Little People that you can't see. It is interesting to me how the city has changed, and not thanks to Giuliani or Bloomberg or whoever else. It's the level of control I object to. I preferred the wildness, although it was horrible to see some guy OD'-ing and being dragged with his testicles in ice cubes to a firehouse or clinic. There were many horrible things, but there were so many vibrant things: hope springing eternal; people trying to do good things and have a sense of community.

That was very powerful. On the Lower East Side when I worked on a play lot, I'd ask, "Where's the hammer?" and I'd see seven kids race to the other side of the lot to be the first one to get my hammer. Everybody was just trying to do their thing and to help each other, it was very nice.



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(1) Eve Sonneman, *Spring Street Girls*, New York, 1971. Gelatin silver print, 4.6 x 13.4 in (11.8 cm x 34 cm). Courtesy the artist and Nohra Haime Gallery, New York

(2) Eve Sonneman, *Coney Island*, 1974. Black-and-white and C-type color print, 18 x 22 in (45.7 x 55.9 cm). Courtesy the artist and Nohra Haime Gallery, New York

(3) Eve Sonneman, *Fantasy Acrobat on Jupiter*, 1996. Polaroid sonnegram on aluminum, 30 x 22 in (76.2 x 55.9 in). Courtesy the artist and Nohra Haime Gallery, New York



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PG. 18

EVE SONNEMAN

98 BOWERY (1972–90)

An introduction to photography course, taken during her final term at the University of Illinois, set Eve Sonneman (b. 1946) on a creative path that has encompassed photography in black and white and color, oil painting, and watercolors. During her graduate studies at the University of New Mexico, Sonneman began creating diptychs, in which sequential photos were printed side by side, sharing narrative fragments that baffle and fuel the imagination. In her own words, quoted by poet David Shapiro in the catalogue of her mid-career retrospective at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts in 1980, her photography responds to “gesture and innuendo and small changes.”

In addition to her career in photography, Sonneman works in paint, making large abstractions, watercolors, and painted objects. Her distinctive, highly personal form of pointillism has been characterized by the critic Klaus Kertess as “teeming with tiny, obsessively made, evanescent rings congealing into a delicate and fugitive, floreate dew.”

Sonneman participated in the 1977 Documenta and in the biennials of Venice, Paris, Strasbourg, and Australia, has published seven books, and has been the subject of eighty-six solo exhibitions. Her work is represented in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, NY, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Centre Pompidou, Paris, the Art Institute of Chicago, and over thirty other museums around the world. Sonneman was with the Leo Castelli Gallery from 1976 until 1990 and is now represented by Nohra Haime Gallery in New York.

Excerpt from the Bowery Artist Tribute interview with Eve Sonneman, July 26, 2012. Video available at boweryartisttribute.org.

My Master's thesis was about the passage of time, something that I've been curious about and involved with for all these years. My teacher in graduate school said: “Whatever you're doing, when you leave graduate school, start at the top.” And to me, that meant take the pictures to the Museum of Modern Art, so that's what I did. I came to New York and took my pictures to the Modern, and John Szarkowski and Peter Bunnell loved them. They put me in a three-person show and bought several of the pictures. That was the beginning of my career as a professional photographer.

They did say to me, “Eve, you seem a little bit shy to be a New York photographer, we're going to give you the num-

ber of an older professional photographer who will be your mentor.” So they gave me the number of Diane Arbus and I went to meet her. She loved my pictures and we got along great. For two years she helped me edit and helped me see that my work wasn't really commercial. She helped me concentrate on fine arts photography.

A few years after the show at the Modern I was reading *Artforum* and there was a tiny ad that read, “Sol LeWitt, Pat Steir, and Carl Andre are starting a company called Printed Matter, and we are looking for artists' books.” And I thought, “Hmm, I've got this box of my favorite pictures.” So I sent them in and that work became my first published book, *Real Time*. I was as thrilled as could be! When you're a photographer, especially a young one, and you have a book, it puts you on the map. It means that people have you on their shelves. You're



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in their bookcase, you're in their house! In those days, there were no photography galleries. Being a photographer at that time meant being poor. You were very much at the bottom of the scale in terms of what people were thinking about. It was definitely thought of as something separate from the art world. But this also made it wonderful because photographers got together and talked to one another in a very poetic and meaningful way, and I could become friends with some of my heroes. I feel very fortunate that I was in New York then, everyone had time to get together and everyone had time to party. There were lots of parties on the Bowery and lots of parties in Lower Manhattan, it was a beautiful time in my life.

I got my Bowery loft from Paul Tschinkel, a video artist. It was very inexpensive—I had a whole, building-long loft at 98 Bowery for \$400 a month. In those

days, that was really a good bargain. I had a huge space and the only downside was that the street life was a little bit gritty and dangerous. I remember one winter, opening the door and a bum collapsed dead on top of me. I mean, there were a lot of bums—the Bowery was not a glamorous place like it is now. There were no clubs, no restaurants, but many artists living there and it was a place where you could live cheaply.

I had a darkroom there. I spent all my time in my black-and-white darkroom. And once I got to the Castelli Gallery, Leo insisted that I didn't turn down any shows. But there was a huge demand for my work, so some years I was personally making prints for seven or eight shows in different cities, it was a lot for one person. It was a huge commitment—I was in the darkroom most of the time. I taught myself color printing,



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because that wasn't part of my education, and I worked in Cibachrome—it was a huge amount of work.

Sadly, after working with Cibachrome in my own darkroom for twelve years, I developed a rasp in my throat. I went to the doctor and he said, "Eve, if you want to continue talking, you better stop." Even though I wore a mask in the darkroom, it was a very toxic material. Shortly after, Cibachrome went off the market and became unavailable. That was when I stopped developing my own pictures. It's sad, because I loved the black-and-white darkroom—it was very womb-like and wonderful. It was a magical experience.

I was on the Bowery when the first gallery opened in SoHo. Suddenly there were lots of galleries as well as many other kinds of things taking over the art world: real estate, restaurants, bou-

tiques. It all changed. And then there was a little note under the door: "Eve, your rent is being doubled because of the popularity of SoHo." Then it was time to go! I had a loft in Chelsea for a while but eventually there was another note under the door: "Eve, your rent is being tripled because of the popularity of Chelsea." That's when I bought this place. I have been working in this studio for eleven years. It's fascinating to work here in the theater district, so close to Lincoln Center. I meet so many directors, producers, and people in film. It's an experience that has definitely enriched my soul.

(1) Arturo Vega's painting *You Fuckin' Ass* on East Second Street, New York, ca. 1991. Courtesy the artist

(2) Arturo Vega painting a Ramones backdrop, ca. 1977. Courtesy the artist

(3) Arturo Vega, *Silver Dollar*, 1973. Silkscreen on canvas, 36 x 48 in (91.4 x 121.9 cm). Courtesy the artist

(4) Arturo Vega, *Photo Booth Self-Portraits*, ca. 1974. Black-and-white photographs, 8 1/4 x 2 in (20.9 x 5.1 cm). Courtesy the artist



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PG. 20

ARTURO VEGA

EAST 2ND STREET & BOWERY (1973–PRESENT)

Arturo Vega (b. 1947) began his creative affair with rock 'n' roll in 1967, spending the Summer of Love in San Francisco and performing musical theater in Mexico City. After starring in a production of *Your Own Thing* and touring colleges in northern Mexico with a production of The Who's rock opera *Tommy*, Vega relocated to the United States in 1971. A meeting with his upstairs neighbor's boyfriend led him to a twenty-two-year career as artistic director, guardian, and close friend to the Ramones, creating their logo, t-shirt and stage designs, as well as much of the artwork that adorns their album covers. Both Joey Ramone and Dee Dee Ramone lived with Vega in his Bowery loft. Of the band's 2,263 concerts, Vega missed only two. Concurrent to his collaboration with the Ramones, Vega has had a diverse practice as a visual artist, working primarily in serial paintings, silkscreen, and collage. His work has been in a number of national and international exhibitions, including 1978's landmark "Punk Art Exhibition" at the Washington Project for the Arts, Washington, DC, and "PUNK. No one is innocent" at the Kunsthal Wien, Austria. In the fall of 2012, a mid-career retrospective of his work will open at La Casa Redonda and La Estación Gallery in his hometown of Chihuahua, Mexico.

Excerpt from the Bowery Artist Tribute interview with Arturo Vega, October 11, 2010. Video available at boweryartisttribute.org.

I'm truly a child of the '60s. I spent the Summer of Love in San Francisco. I had already taken a lot of acid and other drugs of that type. Nothing was very new, fresh, scary, or out of this world for me. I thought I wanted to be a movie director, so I came to New York to see if I would like it. I never tried to explain it or understand it but I felt completely at home. I used to work on 42nd Street, at Orange Julius, from eleven o'clock at night to seven o'clock in the morning. Sometimes I would take acid at five in the morning so when I got out of work I was really flying. I would walk into the Sunshine Hotel because I loved the black-and-white tiles, and the way the sun shone on them. I would try to

go to the shelters to get breakfast or something but they would never let me in, I guess they know their regulars. I would walk all the way to the Brooklyn Bridge, spend some time on the bridge, come home, listen to some music, and then go to sleep at around three or four o'clock in the afternoon.

When I moved to the Bowery in 1973, it was still the Bowery, 100 percent. It was a place where you ended up when everything went wrong, sometimes because of your own actions and sometimes because you were just a sick individual. It was like hell. What really made a huge difference for me, as far as my comfort here, was having the loft. I had two apartments in Mexico City before I moved to New York, but I never had the beauty of this wide-open space. It didn't matter what I went through—if I had to step on frozen bodies or make



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sure I wasn't stepping on vomit, which happened a lot—once I was in the loft it was very, very comfortable.

I met the Ramones because I was living in this building. My door is always open and one day this guy just opens my door—"Hi, I'm Dee Dee." "Oh, hi Dee Dee, what's up?" "Well, I come see this girl that lives above you, and every time I walk by your door, you're listening to the kind of music that I like, so I'm wondering who you are." I was doing the "Supermarket" paintings at the time. I remember one day he goes, "Why are you doing that?" I said, "It's a painting." He said, "Art?" I said, "Maybe, I'm not sure, I hope so." And he says, "Well, art isn't that important anyway." He kept telling me, "Me and my friends from Queens are putting a band together. And since I am Dee Dee Ramone, and it's my band, the other

guys are going to be Johnny Ramone, Joey Ramone, and Tommy Ramone. We're going to be the Ramones."

By then, I had two new building mates; one of them had founded the East Village Children's workshop, teaching young, mostly Puerto Rican, boys and girls photography and art. I remember she said, "Arturo, you're pretty creative, I think you would love to silkscreen." So that's how I learned how to silkscreen. I think the first ones were very Warhol-like. I realized I was a little late, coming from Chihuahua, Mexico. I was like twenty years behind Warhol, but my sensibility was kind of Pop. Of course, that silkscreen printing knowledge turned out to be very important because when the Ramones started going out on the road, to California or the UK, the record company or promoter didn't want to pay for my airfare, only

the band's, but the band wanted me to be there. They would say, "Arturo has to come." "Well, we can't pay." So I said, "I know how to silkscreen, let's make some Ramones t-shirts," to pay for my expenses.

Dee Dee and I used to print them and Joey would hang them. Oh, the smell, the people from the next building would be like, "Arturo, you're printing again, I'm getting a headache." But no one would say anything to the cops or the landlord. Every now and then, someone upstairs would call because of the parties, the noise, it was nonstop here, and the fire department would come. Even the fire department would be like, "Oh, boys, just keep it quiet." It was different. Freedom—that's what it was all about here. That's what it meant being here. Now, you can't take the garbage out because the neighbors

go, "Arturo, it's not garbage day." It was all about freedom, that's what it was. I've always said, what makes me free makes me happy. And living here I was free.

MARY ABELL
 VITO ACCONCI
 ALICE ADAMS
 STEPHEN AIKEN
 EDWARD ALBERS
 BILLY APPLE
 ARMAN
 MARLENE ARON
 PATTI ASTOR
 HOPE ATHERTON
 MICHAEL BAKATY
 FRED BAKER
 AMIRI BARAKA
 STEPHEN BARKER
 BURT BARR
 BILL BARRETT
 FRANCES BARTH
 BELA BARTOK
 JOE BASCETTA &
 CAROLE REIDFORD
 MICHELE BASORA
 JEAN – MICHEL
 BASQUIAT
 TOM BAYLEY
 DAVID BECKER
 LYNDA BENGLIS
 ELISABETH BERNSTEIN
 JAKE BERTHOT
 GEOFFREY BIDDLE
 RODDY BOGAWA
 BRUCE BOICE
 ANDREW BOLOTOWSKY
 ILYA BOLOTOWSKY
 PETER BOYNTON
 GLENN BRANCA
 BRUCE BRECKENRIDGE
 BRECKER BROTHERS
 GLORIA GREENBERG
 BRESSLER
 MARTIN BRESSLER
 TOM BRONK
 JAMES BROOKS
 CLAUDE BROWN
 VIRGINIA BUCHAN
 IAN BURN
 HARRISON BURNS
 WILLIAM S.
 BURROUGHS
 DAVID BYRNE
 PETER CAIN
 SAM CADY
 PAT CARYI
 LAWRENCE CALCAGNO
 JOHN CAMPO
 DOMENICK
 CAPOBIANCO
 ELIZABETH CASTAGNA
 WYNN CHAMBERLAIN
 JAMES CHANCE
 MICHELLE CHARLES
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 MICCI COHAN
 ARCH CONNELLY
 JOHN COPLANS
 LINUS CORAGGIO
 LOUIS CREMMINS
 STANLEY CROUCH
 MARK DAGLEY
 JAMIE DALGLISH
 PETER DEAN
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 JOSEPH DE GIORGIO
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 JOHN DUFF
 LORETTA DUNKELMAN
 JEAN DUPUY
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 BARBARA EDELSTEIN
 BRUCE EDELSTEIN
 CARMEN EINFINGER
 CHARLES EISENMANN
 ELIOT ELISOFON
 CARLA DEE ELLIS
 MITCH EPSTEIN
 BARBARA ESS
 INKA ESSENHIGH
 SCOTT EWALT
 ROYA FARASSAT
 ROBERT FEINTUCH
 ALAN FINKEL
 JANET FISH
 COLEEN FITZGIBBON
 ROLAND FLEXNER
 CAIO FONSECA
 GONZALO FONSECA
 ROBERT FOSDICK
 STEPHEN FOSTER
 BRENDAN FOWLER
 RICHARD J.
 FRANCISCO

JAN FRANK
 MARY FRANK
 ROBERT FRANK

CHRIS FRANTZ

WARNER FRIEDMAN
 ROBERT FRIPP
 DIETER FROESE
 DOROTHY GALLAGHER
 MARILYN AND
 ARNOLD GANELES
 FRANK GARDNER
 JOAN GARDNER
 DAVID GEERY
 SANDY GELLIS
 EVA GETZ
 STEVEN GILBERT
 JANET GILLESPIE
 MAX GIMBLETT
 JOHN GIORNO

TINA GIROUARD
 PHILIP GLASS
 MICHAEL GOLDBERG
 NAN GOLDIN
 GAIL GOLDSMITH
 BRENDA GOODMAN
 GUY GOODWIN
 SAM GORDON
 ADOLPH GOTTLIEB
 TERENCE GOWER
 DAN GRAHAM
 RALPH GRANT
 JOANNE GREENBAUM
 JAN GROOVER
 BARBARA GROSSMAN
 (BOWERY GALLERY)
 ERNEST GUSELLA
 FRED GUTZEIT
 HANS HAACKE
 RICHARD HAMBLETON
 HARMONY HAMMOND
 HISAO HANAFUSA
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SANDY HOFFMAN
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 BOB HOLMAN (BOWERY
 POETRY CLUB)
 MICHAEL HOLMAN
 HAAVARD HOMSTVEDT
 ETHELYN HONIG

CURT HOPPE

SAMANTHA HOWARD
 JANINE HUMPHRIES
 BRYAN HUNT
 ROBERT INDIANA
 WILL INSLLEY

ANGELO IPPOLITO
 GERALD JACKSON
 TONY JANNETTI
 JIM JARMUSCH
 HETTIE JONES

KELLIE JONES
 LISA JONES
 CARTER JONES
 BRAD KAHLAMER
 CHERYL KASS
 ALEX KATZ
 WILLIAM KATZ
 LENNY KAYE
 POOH KAYE
 SOPHIE KEIR
 RAY KELLY
 TOM KENDALL
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 JULIUS KLEIN
 JOANNE KLEIN
 KEN KOBLAND
 STEVEN KRAMER
 MELISSA KRETSCHMER
 BARBARA KRUCHIN
 MARGARET KRUG
 KEN LAUBER
 SUZANNE LAVELLE –
 DIMMLER
 GERALD LAING
 RONNIE LANDFIELD
 DICKY LANDRY
 JUNE LEAF

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JOE LEWIS

SOL LEWITT

DORIS LICHT
ROY LICHTENSTEIN

MAYA LIN
LUCY LIPPARD
RO LOHIN
ANDREA

LONGACRE – WHITE
ANDREW LORD
AL LOVING
WYN LOVING
CHRIS LUCAS
CYNTHIA MACADAMS
JAY MAISEL
MIKE MALLOY
ROBERT MANGOLD
ROBERT

MAPPLETHORPE
BRICE MARDEN
FRANCO MARINAI
RALPH MARTEL
ALFRED MARTINEZ
LUCIANA MARTINEZ
DE LA ROSA
MARK MASTROIANNI
GORDON MATTA-CLARK
DINAH MAXWELL
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STEVE MCCULLUM
DAVID McDERMOTT
PETER MCGOUGH
MEDRIE MCPHEE
CHARLES MEYERS
MARC H. MILLER

KATE MILLETT
GEORGE MINGO
AHZHA COHEN MOORE
ALAN MOORE

(JOHN) VINCENT MOORE
JIM MONTE
MALCOLM MORLEY
ANNETTE MORRIS
AMY MOUSELEY
STEVE MUMFORD
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ANNIE RUSSINOF
ROBERT RYMAN
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JACK SILBERMAN
CHARLES SIMONDS
E. JAY SIMS
LUCY SKAER
LOUISE P. SLOANE
HUNT SLONEM
ROBERT SLUTZKY
PHILIP SMITH

RICHARD SMITH
STEVE SMULKA
JOAN SNITZER
DASH SNOW
STAN SOBOSSEK
STANLEY SOMERS
EVE SONNEMAN
NICHOLAS SPERAKIS
ANYA SPIELMANN
DARCY SPITZ
TERRY STEADMAN
ALAN STEELE
CAROL STEEN
GLEN STEIGELMAN
CHRIS STEIN
RUDI STERN
KERRY STEVENS
TODD STONE
CARL STUCKLAND
JANE SUAVELY
BILLY SULLIVAN

LIZ SWOPE
PAULA TAVINS
AL TAYLOR
DONNA TAYLOR
NICK TAYLOR
WAYNE TAYLOR
BOB THOMPSON
SAM THURSTON
JULIUS TOBIAS
YUJI TOMONO
KON TRUBKOVICH
PAUL TSCHINKEL
CY TWOMBLY
JACK TWORKOV
ALAN UGLOW
LYNN UMLAUF
MICHAEL USYK
FRITZ VAN ORDEN
ARTURO VEGA
J. FORREST VEY
FRANK LINCOLN VINER
JOAN WALTERMATH
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GRACE WAPNER
ANNE WATSON
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TINA WEYMOUTH

JOHN WILLENBECHER
WILLIAM T. WILLIAMS
ANN WILSON

GAVIN WILSON
KEVIN WIXTED
CHRISTOPHER WOOL
JIMMY WRIGHT
AHMED YACOBI
CARRIE YAMAOKA
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The Bowery Artist Tribute is an ongoing project.

The New Museum welcomes additional information about artists who have lived or worked on the Bowery, past and present.

Please return the form below to the New Museum:
235 Bowery
New York, NY 10002
USA

Or by email:
boweryartisttribute@newmuseum.org

ARTIST'S NAME

ARTIST'S ADDRESS ON/NEAR THE BOWERY

DATES THAT THE ARTIST OCCUPIED THIS ADDRESS

ARTIST'S (OR ESTATE) CONTACT

PHONE

EMAIL

ADDRESS

YOUR CONTACT (if different than artist)

PHONE

EMAIL

ADDRESS



HAROLD + I ARE WAITING
FOR 8' AM READY TO
OPEN UP FOR BUSINESS



I AM WIPING THE BAR



I AM POURING A GLASS
OF WINE



I AM LISTENING TO A
CUSTOMERS STORY.



I AM RINGING UP A SALE
ON MY REGISTRAR.



I AM TAKING A LITTLE REST
IN THE STORE ROOM



I AM BRUSHING DOWN
MY CAT TOMMY



CARRYING OUT A CASE
OF BEER.



I AM CALLING UP FOR AN
ORDER OF BEER FROM
THE BREWARY.