

Murray Guy is pleased to present an exhibition of three distinct bodies of work that use photography as a tool for the investigation of urban change, historical representation, and social experience.

Matthew Buckingham's *Peace and Anarchy, 2004-09*, is a series of paired photographs and short texts that examine the history and use of common symbols or signs, particularly those that appear as graffiti in urban areas. Each of the photographs depicts a symbol in-situ while the written component of the work traces out the development and early usage of that sign. In each case, the chronicle ends at the point where the symbol enters wider public awareness, allowing the spectator's personal associations, familiarity, and memories to take over.

In the early 1970s, Gordon Matta-Clark began a series of 'building cuts' he would later call *Bronx Floors*. Using a handsaw he would cut away a rectangular section of the floor of a derelict apartment building and reveal the space, or spaces, below. The object was removed and displayed in a gallery setting, and the hole was often photographed accentuating its edges and producing a frame within the frame. In a contemporaneous, yet lesser-known photographic series, Matta-Clark's inclusive approach to art making is represented by a fascination with the growing graffiti culture in New York. Overlapping markings made up of names, drawings, and numbers almost entirely cover the surface of the walls. The camera frames various modes of public address; the images produced are cutouts from an urban space that suggest a collective narrative. The specificity of location or architecture is less significant than the radical act of signing a wall, which Matta-Clark reenacts by airbrushing in color over some of the black and white prints.

Nearly thirty years later, Zoe Leonard produced a small series of photographs of boarded doorways and bricked up windows. While observing the transformation of her neighborhood, she focused on the altered surfaces of shuttered building facades, the superfluous stoop and windowsills; forms without function. From the vestiges of a threshold and the distorted outline of a window, new possibilities arise, framing time and space, and marking the difference between lived experience and its representation. These buildings are a physical manifestation of the city – the silent observers of change, movement, and time. Throughout her practice, Leonard insists on a more considered method of looking and recording: "Perhaps everything the viewer needs to know is in the frame."

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