

*Something Possible Everywhere: Pier 34, NYC 1983-84* is the first exhibition to revisit the extraordinary place and time when David Wojnarowicz and his friends and peers including Jane Bauman, Mike Bidlo, Keith Davis, Steve Doughton, John Fekner, David Finn, Jean Foos, Luis Frangella, Valeriy Gerlovin, Judy Glantzman, Alain Jacquet, Kim Jones, Rob Jones, Ruth Kligman, Stephen Lack, Liz-N-Val, Bill Mutter, Michael Ottersen, Rick Prol, Russell Sharon, Kiki Smith, Huck Snyder, Betty Tompkins, and Ruth Zwillinger among many others, effectively seized a city-owned pier and filled it with art. Andreas Sterzing's remarkable photographs, along with related images by Peter Hujar, Marisela La Grave, and Dirk Rowntree, document how these artists turned the Ward Line shipping terminal at the foot of Canal Street, into a series of makeshift art galleries and studios.

Accompanying Sterzing's photographs are over 75 paintings, drawings, and sculptures, made by the many artists who worked on the pier. Sadly, the building was demolished and almost all of the art made on the pier no longer exists, but the presence of contemporaneous work in the exhibition makes tangible something of the physicality of the waterfront art and its larger aesthetic context.

The numerous artists who worked on Pier 34 crossed generations, from established figures like Alain Jacquet and Ruth Kligman, to emerging artists like Steven Doughton and Rhonda Zwillinger. They utilized a variety of media and styles, from the performance art of Kim Jones and Paolo Buggiani, to the expressionism of Judy Glantzman and Stephen Lack. This diversity and the site-specificity of works by artists like John Fekner and Teres Wydler, challenges the stereotypes of the 1980s art scene as marketdriven and conservative with a turn toward easel painting. Indeed, the chief instigators of the Pier 34 experiment, Wojnarowicz and Bidlo, self-consciously saw the site as anti-commercial.

As rumors spread in the spring of 1983 of what was happening on the waterfront, Bidlo and Wojnarowicz released a statement to friends in the press that explained their resistance to the gallery system and the aim to create an opportunity for anyone "to explore any image in any material on any surface they chose. It was something no gallery would tolerate..." Above all, they claimed that Pier 34 forged a community: "People who lived in this city for years said it was the first time they experienced fulfillment in terms of contact with the art scene and strangers." (1)

(1) Mike Bidlo and David Wojnarowicz, "Statement," The David Wojnarowicz Papers at the Fales Library and Special Collections, New York University. It was published in *Benzene*, Fall/Winter, 1983-84, no page numbers.

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