35 ARTISTS RETURN TO ARTISTS SPACE: A BENEFIT EXHIBITION



ARTISTS SPACE

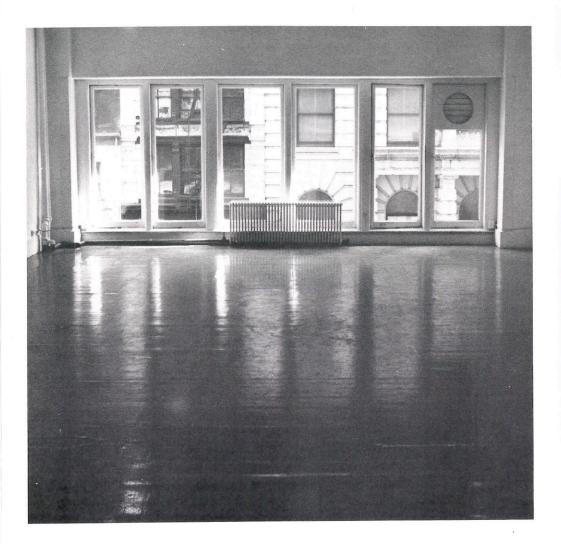
35 ARTISTS
RETURN TO ARTISTS SPACE:
A BENEFIT EXHIBITION

ARTISTS SPACE

December 4-24, 1981

Sponsors
Pam Adler Gallery
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Barbara Toll Fine Arts
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Participating Artists Auste James Biederman Jonathan Borofsky Gary Bower Troy Brauntuch Farrell Brickhouse Gary Burnley Scott Burton Cynthia Carlson Charles Clough R.M. Fischer Hermine Ford Jack Goldstein Don Gummer Mel Kendrick Lois Lane Thomas Lawson Robert Longo Allan McCollum Ree Morton Matt Mullican Judy Pfaff Richard Prince Judy Rifka Walter Robinson David Salle Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt Barbara Schwartz Cindy Sherman Laurie Simmons Charles Simonds Jenny Snider Donald Sultan Anthony Thompson John Torreano



Acknowledgements

It is a rare occasion for Artists Space to look to the past, and though this exhibition represents only a very small percentage of the artists who have presented important and vital exhibitions at Artists Space, it reflects much of what Artists Space is and has been — a serious and informed outlet for new art.

It is a well-known fact that small arts organizations are facing an uncertain future. The current political climate appears to be encouraging an increasingly conservative attitude toward government support of the arts — support that has nurtured some of the most exciting creative statements of the past decade. For organizations, agencies and individuals championing the unknown, the unestablished and the experimental, this is a time of questioning, re-eval-

uation and struggle to survive.

It also seems to be a time of innumerable benefit exhibitions for arts organizations determined to raise funds in order to continue their work. And, Artists Space is no exception. Since it began in 1973, Artists Space has never before organized a benefit exhibition. 35 Artists Return to Artists Space marks our first attempt to generate much needed funds through such an exhibition. All of the 35 participating artists showed at Artists Space at an early and often critical stage in their careers. They now figure among the most innovative and influential artists at work today, and are currently represented by some of New York's most prominent contemporary art galleries. This exhibition has been made possible through the cooperation and generosity of these artists and their dealers. In contrast to most benefit exhibitions, neither the artists nor the dealers have been asked for a donation of a work of art. Through a unique collaborative effort, a contribution will be made to Artists Space for each work of art sold. As a result, this exhibition includes major work by every artist.

I would like to express our genuine gratitude to the artists and their galleries for their enthusiasm and support in making this important exhibition possible and in helping us to realize our financial goal. I have been singularly struck by the affection expressed for Artists Space, the concern for its future and an eager-

ness to help it survive.

Among the many other individuals who have contributed significantly to the success of this undertaking in all its phases, I would like particularly to thank Michael Andre and Unmuzzled Ox, Tara Collins of H.O. Gerngross & Co., Donald Droll, Michael Klein, James Kraft, Katherine and Carl Lobell, Metropolitan Printing, Max Protetch, Paul Shanley, Anne Turyn, Susan Wyatt, Helene Winer and William Zimmer. Michael Klein and Susan Wyatt have been especially valuable in seeing all the details through to completion. William Zimmer, the art critic who writes regularly for the Soho News, responded more than graciously to our invitation to write the catalogue essay. I am very grateful to him for expressing such overwhelming confidence in Artists Space, its past, present and future.

I can only hope that Artists Space will always have such an impressive and loyal group of supporters.

Linda Shearer Executive Director



Introduction

The title 35 Artists Return to Artists Space has an epic ring to it. It connotes triumphal returns after successes abroad. I can imagine it as the theme of a large painting by Rubens or as a commemorative poem. As a poem, it would ideally have 35 stanzas, each stanza dedicated to an artist from Auste to Torreano. Each stanza would end, 35 Artists Return to Artists Space, and with each repetition the sense of triumph would build.

But returning to the ground, I am not a poet. Rather, I am a writer for a lively newspaper that intrepidly searches out the new everywhere. It seeks tomorrow's household names today. Every journalist has his or her trusted sources. My beat is what's new in the visual arts, and Artists Space is my main listening post. My first *Soho News* column, early in 1977, contained a review of Donald Sultan's Artists Space show. I may be feeling nostalgic, but there's no question Artists Space offers solid fare. The veteran reporter in me commends the artists with a slap on the back.

Yet there is reason to pause amidst the congratulations. Any homecoming is a festive occasion, but this one is for a serious purpose. Each of the artists has conquered the art world in his or her own right, but the fact that they are coming back to Artists Space signals a collective effort.

Even though they may take innovative forms, benefits are undertaken for the purpose of raising money. This benefit is also an irritant. It is a tacit reminder that the arts' relationship to government, a relationship which had been growing and was on its way to prospering, is now dubious at best. The shaky situation gives everyone qualms.

However there is every reason to see the benefit at Artists Space as a genuine blessing. When the monies are coming in and everything's rolling along merrily, the impulse among curators and their audience is to plunge on and exhibit and consider the still newer. This benefit provides an occasion for reflection, for looking back and considering the distance covered in the nine short years of Artists Space's existence.

In front of me as I type sits the impressive roster of artists who have been asked to contribute to this benefit show. Anyone who scans it will be convinced that a great deal of the most important art of our day was launched at Artists Space. It is truly difficult to imagine these artists as the unknown quantities they once were. The list by itself is clinching proof that Artists Space (and by extension most other alternative spaces) is indispensable to the creation of art in America. Hopefully this big benefit show will make an indelible impression and encourage the belief that the funding of alternative spaces is the

soundest way to allocate funds.

I have called Artists Space my main listening post. It leaps over the other alternative spaces, not only because of its record, but also because it is so regal. Regal without being imperial. It is a beautiful gallery and what has come to emblemize its beauty most is an architectural feature which has become something of a symbol: the large oval window looking out over Hudson Street. It is like a vigilant eye. Its rarity attracts you while you're still on the street; it hints that something unusual is occurring inside. But it also betrays that the place has got class. By philosophy and by plain old reflex I'm an admirer of all alternative spaces. The storefronts and the itinerant alternatives are brave and interesting, as well as responsible to local communities, but Artists Space, even while incorporating the often gritty downtown world it serves, is Tiffany's.

Artists Space's beauty is a whole lot deeper than its facade. Its resilient internal structure is what is remarkable and sustaining. It was conceived not for a narrow purpose but out of a democratic imperative. Dance and theater had their publicly-funded showcases, argued Artists Space founders Trudie Grace and Irving Sandler back in 1973, why didn't the visual arts?

A brief survey of Artists Space's essential stance from its founding until now, will underscore what a sturdy and broadbased enterprise it is. From the beginning Grace and Sandler were especially watchful that no single faction or school of

thought be able to dominate. (How firmly this ethical point has been grounded is revealed in this benefit exhibition, a cornucopia of styles and casts of mind.) Yet there is a single thread. Intelligence and that rarer quality, wit, are constantly striven for in Artists Space undertakings.

The space first occupied by Artists Space was on Wooster Street, and in his essay for 10 Artists/Artists Space, a 1979 exhibition at the Neuberger Museum, Sandler describes this first locale as, "one of the most handsome galleries in New York." If one eye was always toward fairness, the other was toward

first-rate professionalism. Appearances do count.

To implement the ideal of fairness, Artists Space's first year saw a system of artists choosing artists to select exhibitions. There is a certain fascination inherent in this procedure, for artists are thought to be very self-referential when it comes to their preferences in art. Some in the art community accused the selectors of unabashedly selecting their protégés. Sandler and Grace weren't entirely satisfied with this procedure either, so they initiated a process whose numbers astonish me: 650 New York artists, most of them affiliated with galleries, were polled for their opinions of who among them would make the best selectors. This was but the second year of Artists Space and the ballots returned exceeded 400, an indication that Artists Space made broad sense among artists.

Because Sandler and Grace didn't want to leave any stones unturned, any artists shivering in garrets needlessly, as it were, the Unaffiliated Artists File was initiated. Any artist who is a New York State resident can send in slides to potentially attract dealers and curators. The mere fact of the File's existence has served me well on several occasions. Often a sincere young artist will ask my advice on breaking into the art world, and I'll recommend sending slides to the File. Even though it offers no immediate results, the act of submitting slides is a definitive

Helene Winer came out of California to head Artists Space in 1975. She realized the necessity of devising new methods of selection to reflect what was going on in the art world. New issues were emerging clamorously in the mid-1970's and issues can best come to the fore in group shows or theme exhibitions. Often curators or writers, rather than artists, better understand the full import of these new issues. And on occasion during Winer's tenure, Artists Space organized traveling theme shows. One such exhibition, *Pictures* in 1977, first brought the work

of Robert Longo, Troy Brauntuch and Jack Goldstein to New York.

To be responsive to pluralism, a development both welcome and chaotic, Artists Space, during Winer's tenure, began to encompass film, video, and performance. One wondered whether Artists Space was merely reflecting this new diversity or by espousing it, helping to promote it. As a physical space Artists Space contains many rooms; its look reflects a central fact of the art world now, that it is a huge umbrella.

Linda Shearer, who is about to begin her second year as Executive Director of Artists Space, says that the various methods devised by Winer to deal with the heady conditions in the art world will continue and be augmented by new ones. Prior to coming to Artists Space, Shearer was associate curator at the Guggenhein Museum. Going after work of high quality is thus second nature to her, and this museumlike benefit exhibition seems aptly a reflection of this skill.

I wear a Janus face as I survey the list of artists to be in this exhibition. One face looks back to the artist's original show and if the show is seen dimly, I can at least recall the sensation I had on first seeing it. The other face looks forward and tries to anticipate what each artist will contribute to a benefit. I can guess, but I also know I'm going to be surprised. I am also informed that the gallery will be jammed full (Artists Space has many rooms but a room has just four walls) because the artists plan to submit full-size and in most cases new, and therefore important, work.

The Janus face that looks backward is intrigued by the artists' selection by artists, the process of Artists Space's begining years. I find my self deriving satisfaction from two opposite revelations. Sometimes it is remarkable that those tapped seem very much like those who chose them: Mel Kendrick was picked by Dorothea Rockburne, Judy Pfaff was chosen by Al Held, Ree Morton by Nancy Graves. Yet just as remarkable are the far-fetched linkages. Chuck Close chose John Torreano, Sol LeWitt chose Jon Borofsky. With a little reflection one can find good reason for some of these choices, and they put another dimension on art history. The unexpected choices also reveal how wide the capacity is in artists for appreciation of art far different from their own.

Looking at this list I find my memory is telescoped. The art world doesn't seem to skip a beat, the list discloses. For instance I remember Auste in a raucous drawing show here and not much later in the Hamilton Gallery where she seemed very central to the New Wave. I have a similar sense of almost no interval with Gary Burnley's paintings in the round or Anthony Thompson's laconic and peelable swipes of acrylic paint. In both cases it was a fast sense of "haven't we met?" in the Holly Solomon and Hal Bromm galleries respectively.

And there are others with whom my current satisfaction lies in the real robustness they've acquired without any diminution of an original bright idea. Donald Sultan, Mel Kendrick, Cindy Sherman, and Laurie Simmons are among those who re-

veal this broadening.

My recollections are but a partial index of Artists Space vitality, but they also point up that dealers know where to look for the best new talent, not for years hence but for next season. So it isn't facetious when I admit to sometimes having trouble remembering which is the alternative system. A whole generation is being raised on considering alternative spaces as a main road. As such this benefit is a commemoration of change: the great change worked in a lot of people in regarding art. Alternatives have made perceptive viewers disregard the veneer that a commercial gallery gives a work of art. We have a better chance of seeing the essence.

And for artists this benefit commemorates the necessity

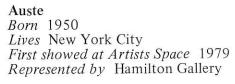
of change and moving on:

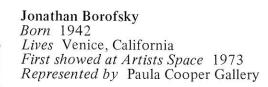
It's a home, though not a dwelling place 35 artists return to Artists Space.

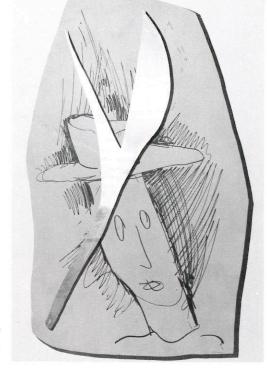
William Zimmer



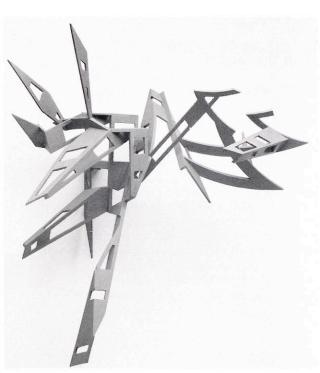
In The Thicket, 1981, oil stick and acrylic on paper, 36" x 53", courtesy of the artist and Hamilton Gallery. Photo by eeva-inkeri







Motor Mind at 2559701, 1978-79, dayglo paint on masonite, sheet aluminum, motor, 70" x 37" Collection of Doris and Charles Saatchi, London. Photo by Geoffrey Clements



Jackknife, 1981, oil on wood, 43" x 43" x 29¾", courtesy of the artist and John Weber Gallery. Photo by D. James Dee

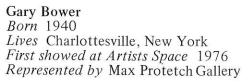
James Biederman

Born 1947

Lives New York City

First showed at Artists Space 1974

Represented by John Weber Gallery

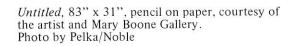




Vessel with Hands, 1981, oil paint on ceramic, 24½" x 14½", courtesy of the artist and Max Protetch Gallery. Photo courtesy of Max Protetch Gallery

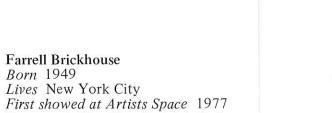


Troy Brauntuch
Born 1954
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1977
Represented by Mary Boone Gallery

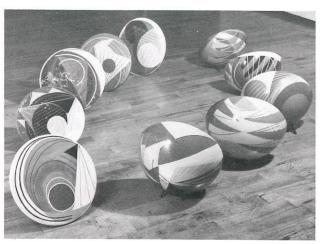




Small Cupola, 1978, wood, 25 5/8" x 25 3/4" courtesy of the artist and Max Protetch Gallery. Photo courtesy of Max Protetch Gallery

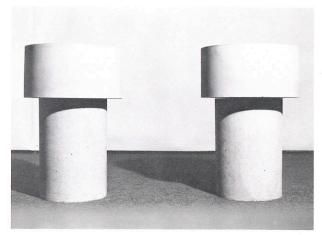


Represented by Max Protetch Gallery



Installation view, 1981, Della Robia glaze on hydrostone, courtesy of the artist and Holly Solomon Gallery. Photo courtesy Holly Solomon Gallery

Gary Burnley
Born 1950
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1979
Represented by Holly Solomon Gallery



Cast Concrete End Tables, A Pair, 1980-81, cast concrete, 24" x 14½", courtesy of the artist and Max Protetch Gallery. Photo courtesy Max Protetch Gallery

Scott Burton
Born 1939
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1975
Represented by Max Protetch Gallery



False Facade from Oberlin (detail), Installation view, 1980, latex wall paint on fiber board, latex, charcoal and acrylic, 15" x 12" each panel, courtesy of the artist and Pam Adler Gallery. Photo courtesy Pam Adler Gallery



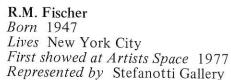
Rookies, 1980, enamel paint on paper, 72" x 88½", courtesy of the artist and Pam Adler Gallery. Photo by Kevin Noble

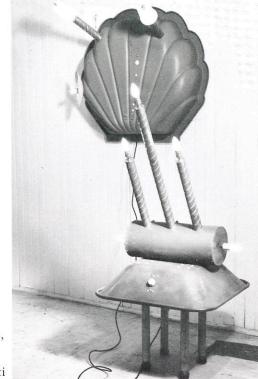
Cynthia Carlson
Born 1942
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1974
Represented by Pam Adler Gallery

Charles Clough Born 1951

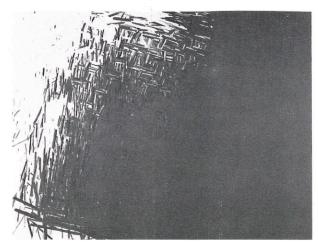
Lives New York City

First showed at Artists Space 1976 Represented by Pam Adler Gallery





Seaside Resort Lamp (wall piece), 1981, plastic, brass, light bulbs, 36" x 42" x 42", Low Tide (floor piece), 1981, steel, brass, light bulbs, 5' x 3' x 3', courtesy of the artist and Stefanotti Gallery. Photo by R. M. Fischer



Untitled, 1980, oil on canvas, 70" x 94", courtesy of the artist and Barbara Toll Fine Arts. Photo by Michael Tropea

Hermine Ford Photo by Born 1939

Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1976

Represented by Barbara Toll Fine Arts



Jack Goldstein
Born 1945
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1977
Represented by Metro Pictures

Don Gummer

Represented by

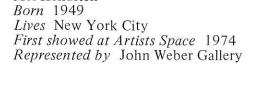
Born 1946
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1974

Sperone Westwater Fischer

Untitled, 1981, acrylic on canvas, 48" x 60", courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures. Photo courtesy Metro Pictures



Silk Circle, 1981, painted wood and silk, 66" x 68½" x 13½", courtesy of the artist and Sperone Westwater Fischer. Photo by Alan Zindman



Mel Kendrick



Hucklebuck, 1981, painted wood, 76" x 55½" x 20½", courtesy of the artist and John Weber Gallery. Photo by Linda Davenport

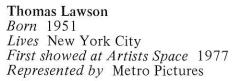


Untitled, 1981, oil on graphite on canvas, 60" x 75", Private Collection. Photo by Roy M. Elkind

Lois Lane
Born 1948
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1974
Represented by Willard Gallery



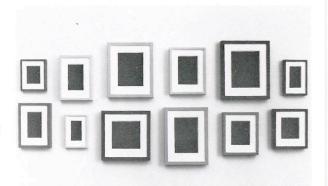
Battered Body in Freezer, 1981, oil on canvas, 48" x 48", courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures.





Untitled, 1981, charcoal and graphite on paper, 62" x 72", Collection of Robert and Doris Hillman, New York. Photo by Pelka/Noble

Allan McCollum
Born 1944
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1977



Installation view of 12 Untitled paintings, 1981, acrylic on wood, museum board, dimensions variable, courtesy of the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery. Photo courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery

Ree Morton
Born 1936
Died 1977
First showed at Artists Space 1973
Estate represented by Max Protetch
Gallery



Regional Piece (number 6), 1976, oil on wood with celastic, two panels, each 20" x 50", courtesy of the estate of the artist and Max Protetch Gallery. Photo by Nicki McNeil



Matt Mullican
Born 1951
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1976
Represented by Mary Boone Gallery

Untitled, 1981, sign paint on paper, 60" x 42", courtesy of the artist and Mary Boone Gallery. Photo by Pelka/Noble



Judy Pfaff
Born 1946
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1974
Represented by Holly Solomon Gallery

Magic, 1981, contact paper collage on mylar, 89" x 45", courtesy of the artist and Holly Solomon Gallery. Photo by D.James Dee

Richard Prince
Born 1949
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1980
Represented by Metro Pictures



Untitled, 1981, color photograph, 27¼" x 40", courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures. Photo courtesy Metro Pictures



Pretty in blue: Girls and Boys, 1981, acrylic and modelling paste on canvas, diptych, 72" x 48" each, courtesy of the artist and Brooke Alexander, Inc. Photo by Eric Pollitzer

Judy Rifka artist and Born 1945
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1975
Represented by Brooke Alexander, Inc.



Untitled, 1981, spray enamel on paper, 22" x 28", edition of 15, courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures. Photo courtesy Metro Pictures





David Salle
Born 1952
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1976
Represented by Mary Boone Gallery

Untitled, 1981, acrylic on paper, 40" x 26", courtesy of the artist and Mary Boone Gallery. Photo by Bevan Davies



Thomas Lanigan-Schmidt

Born 1948

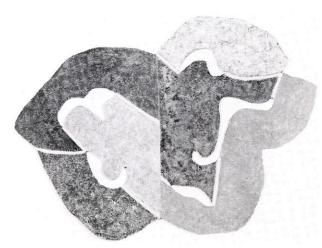
Lives New York City

First showed at Artists Space 1974

Represented by Holly Solomon Gallery

Grace and Original Sin/Saints and Sinners (Two Seconds Before the End of the World) installation view, 1973-79, mixed media, courtesy of the artist and Holly Solomon Gallery. Photo by D. James Dee

Barbara Schwartz
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1975
Represented by Willard Gallery



Wapato, 1981, casein on handmade paper over wire lath, 72" x 100" x 8', courtesy of the artist and Willard Gallery. Photo by Roy M. Elkind



Untitled, 1981, color photograph, 2' x 4', edition of ten, courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures. Photo courtesy Metro Pictures

Cindy Sherman
Born 1954
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1976
Represented by Metro Pictures



Family Collision, 1981, black and white photograph, 16" x 20", edition of ten, courtesy of the artist and Metro Pictures. Photo courtesy Metro Pictures

Laurie Simmons
Born 1949
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1979
Represented by Metro Pictures



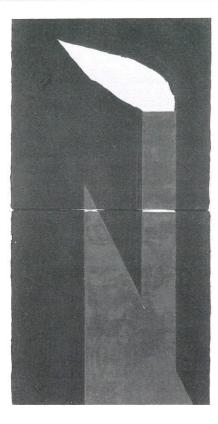
People Who Live in a Circle, 1972, clay and sticks, 12" x 18" d. (bricks ½" long), Collection Museum of Modern Art, New York, (This piece was included in Charles Simonds' 1974 show at Artists Space). Photo by Rudolph Burkhardt

Charles Simonds
Born 1945
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1974

Jenny Snider
Born 1944
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1977

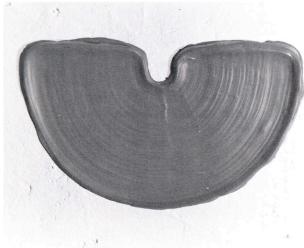


Hill Pushed Back (detail, one panel), 1978, oil pastel on paper on canvas, 6 panels, 48" x 24", courtesy of the artist. Photo by Jenny Snider



Donald Sultan
Born 1951
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1977
Represented by BlumHelman Gallery

Yellow Iris/Smoke Stack, May-June 1981, tar, plaster and oil on vinil asbestos tile on masonite, 2 panels, 97¾" x 49¼", courtesy of the artist and BlumHelman Gallery. Photo by Roy M. Elkind



Untitled, 1979, acrylic, 4¾" x 7¾" x ½", courtesy of the artist and Hal Bromm Gallery. Photo courtesy Hal Bromm Gallery

Anthony Thompson
Born 1938
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1979
Represented by Hal Bromm Gallery



Irish Cross, 1981, glass jewels and silicon glue on solid wood, 31½" x 31½", courtesy of the artist and Hamilton Gallery. Photo by Pelka/Noble

John Torreano
Born 1941
Lives New York City
First showed at Artists Space 1974
Represented by Hamilton Gallery

Note: Pieces illustrated in this catalogue are not necessarily those included in the exhibition. Dimensions are listed in the following order: height, width, depth.

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A Organized by Janelle Reiring

FOUR ARTISTS Organized by Thomas Lawson

ARTISTS DRAW Organized by Donald Sultan

SEVEN TORONTO ARTISTS Organized by Ragland Watkins

Architecture: SEQUENCES Organized by Bernard Tschumi

SELECTIONS From the Unaffiliated Artists File Organized by Linda Shearer

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