

## BERTHA AND KARL LEUBSDORF GALLERY

132 East 68th Street New York, NY 10065

### Shows that Matter: The Generation-Defining Times Square Show, Restaged By Alanna Martinez

October 22, 2012

What: "Times Square Show Revisited"

When: September 14–December 8, Tuesday–Saturday 1– 6pm

Where: Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Art Gallery at Hunter College, The Times Square Gallery, 695 Park Avenue, New York

Why this show matters: In 1980 the artist group Collaborative Projects, Inc. staged an exhibition in four stories of a Times Square building on 7th Avenue, the basement of which was a former massage parlor. The location was perfect for the transformative performance, installation, video, painting, and otherwise uncategorized work that filled it in the month-long show, including pieces by a then-youthful crew of artists like Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring, Jenny Holzer, Jack Smith, Kiki Smith, and many others who have since been embraced by blue-chip galleries and are widely collected.

Hunter College Art Galleries takes a look at the influential event by rehanging work from nearly 40 of the original artists, along with photographs and ephemera from the music, fashion, and performance that, together, amount to a poignant tribute to the DIY spirit of the seminal show.

The exhibition's curator, Shawna Cooper, describes the art scene at the time as a divided landscape between exclusive commercial spaces and younger artists whose presence was widespread but underrepresented in the gallery scene, in an essay for the show's



website. Their work was generally more lowbrow, and directly addressed social and economic issues at the forefront of their own living experiences in repurposed industrial lofts and studios on the cusp of broken New York neighborhoods. The grit of the seedy businesses that made up Times Square at the time were reflective of, making it an ideal location for the show, along with the raw space available in the area.

The collective nature of the group show, which brought together graffiti artists like Fab 5 Freddy with other burgeoning art scenesters like Alan Moore of ABC No Rio, merged disparate styles influenced by a rejection of commercial art endeavors and a desire to put artists in charge of their projects. Tom Otterness, one of the original participating artists, says in his first hand account on the Times Square Revisited show website, "I think within the art world context the TSS [Times Square Show] was against art about art." He added the motive for the show was "definitely that drive to get out of the art world . . . to bring content back in and to bring in a kind of visual language that the average person could understand, read, and speak."

<http://www.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/833098/shows-that-matter-the-generation-defining-times-square-show>