



TIME TO REFLECT
Danto calls his show
"an act of piety."

Memorial days

Arthur Danto curates a show in remembrance of 9/11 **By Reena Jana**

Three years ago, on the first anniversary of September 11, critic and philosopher Arthur Danto wrote an essay for *The Nation* describing an imaginary exhibition—his selections for "true 9/11 art." The choices were wildly disparate, even oblique: Audrey Flack's watercolors of Montauk fishing boats, for instance, and Robert Zakanitch's paintings of lace—but not one image of planes or burning buildings. On September 7, "The Art of 9/11" opened at Apex

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Ever the distinguished professor, although he's now retired from his philosophy post at Columbia, Danto clarifies what he means by "an act of piety," relating the idea to a passage written by Ludwig Wittgenstein about the grief-stricken brother of



Works by (from left) Robert Zakanitch, Cindy Sherman and Jeffrey Lohn.

art in Tribeca, featuring works by Flack and Zakanitch (as well as others discussed in the essay, including photographer Cindy Sherman, sculptor Ursula von Rydingsvard and installation artist Mary Miss) and curated by Danto himself.

Sitting in his Morningside Heights apartment in late August, surrounded by walls covered with bookshelves and artworks, he admits, "I realize viewers will not necessarily know this is a 9/11 show. But it isn't an ordinary exhibi-

tion. It's more an act of piety." In other words, rather than playing the role of a conventional curator, Danto sees his effort as an imaginative way for him, and the artists involved, to express their reverence for the victims and survivors.

Danto compares such an intuitive, public mourning ritual to the creation of sudden shrines all over the city after the Twin Towers were attacked. In his curatorial state-

ment for the Apex show, he writes that "people respond to tragedy with art... Artists, had they tried to do something in response to 9/11, could not have done better than the anonymous shrine-makers." After the attacks, Danto began to informally survey his artist friends, asking how they responded to the event, directly or indirectly. Works in the show like Lucio Pozzi's photocopies of photographs of smoke, which evoke Minimalism more than terrorism, or Cindy Sherman's photograph of a tragicomic clown may have some viewers scratching their heads. But Danto says of the pieces he chose, "it's the context that infuses them with meaning."

Danto explains that his decision to include close friends, such as a former student (photographer Jeffrey Lohn) and his wife (painter Barbara Westman), is meant to illustrate how personal the experience of grief is. All of the artists he approached agreed to participate when informed he was turning his *Nation* piece into an exhibition, a fact that he attributes not to his relationships with the artists, but to the integrity of the venue. "Apex Art is a nonprofit; if the exhibition were in a commercial gallery, I doubt they would all have agreed," Danto says.

The show's location might also play a part. As Danto points out, Apex is located in Tribeca, not far from Ground Zero. But when asked about the fracas surrounding the Drawing Center's proposed move to the International Freedom Center on the World Trade site and the on going debate about what art and architecture is appropriate there, Danto says that his exhibition is inspired only by his essay and that the timing is "a coincidence, and not necessarily political."

So why stage the show at all, if Danto already made his point in 2002? "Steven Rand [founder and director of Apex] had been asking me to curate a show for some time, and this just seemed right," Danto says. He adds, "People will decide for themselves how to respond to the show. But the fourth anniversary of September 11 certainly marks a good time to reflect."

"The Art of 9/11" is at Apex Art through Oct 15 (see Elsewhere).

Listings

IF YOU WANT TO BE LISTED

Submit information by mail, e-mail (art@timeoutny.com) or fax (646-432-3160) to **Emily Weiner**. Include details of event, dates, times, address of venue with cross streets, nearest subways, telephone number and admission price, if any. **Deadline is 6pm on Monday, ten days before publication date.** Incomplete submissions will not be included, and listings information will not be accepted over the phone.

HOW TO USE THIS SECTION

The following is a selection of this week's exhibitions and events. For more museums, see the Around Town, Museums section.

★=Recommended

Museums & Institutions

Asia Society

725 Park Ave at 70th St (212-288-6400). *Subway: 6 to 68th St-Hunter College. Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. \$10, students and seniors \$7, children under 16 accompanied by an adult and members free. Fri 6-9pm free.* "Images of the Divine." More than 50 sculptures from the collection of John D. Rockefeller III are on view, including heads of the Buddha and carved depictions of Vishnu from Indonesia, Thailand, Burma and Cambodia by early Indian traders and missionaries. Curated by Adriana Proser. Through Jan 8, 2006.

Brooklyn Museum

200 Eastern Pkwy, Prospect Heights, Brooklyn (718-638-5000). *Subway: 2, 3 to Eastern Pkwy-Brooklyn Museum. Wed-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat, Sun 11am-6pm; first Saturday of each month 11am-11pm. \$6, students and seniors \$3, members and children under 12 free; first Saturdays 5-11pm free.* **Mothership 1: Sistah Paradise's Great Wall of Fire Revival Tent** (an installation by **Xenobia Bailey**). This towering 10-foot-tall, 5-foot-wide sculpture combines colorful bead work, crochet and other materials to underscore craft traditions and contemporary symbols of African heritage. Through Jan 5, 2006.

El Museo del Barrio

1230 Fifth Ave between 104th and 105th Sts (212-831-7272). *Subway: 6 to 103rd St. Wed-Sun 11am-5pm. \$6 suggested admission, students and seniors \$4, members and children under 12 free.* "El Museo's Biennial: The (S) Files/The Selected Files." This exhibition showcases cutting-edge art being produced by Latino and Latin American artists in the New York area. Familiarize yourself with some 40 rising talents including **David Antonio Cruz, Delia Gonzalez and Gavin Russom, and Adria Marquez**. Through Jan 29, 2006.

The Frick Collection

1 E 70th St at Fifth Ave (212-288-0700). *Subway: 6 to 68th St-Hunter College. Tue-Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 1-6pm. \$12, seniors \$8, students \$5. No children under 10. Wednesdays in September, visitors who men-*

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