

'A.N.T.H.R.O.P.O.C.E.N.E.'

It is always a delight when a gallery assembles thoughtful works (19 of 32 participating artists are gallery artists) to address a serious subject matter. With 55% of the works dated 2015, this newsworthy theme clearly resonates this gallery's orbit. Later this spring, geologists will meet to determine whether the Anthropocene (the 'era of man') ought to follow the Holocene or replace it altogether, and which stratigraphic markers substantiate their decision.

Coinciding with COP21's closure, this exhibition takes Earth's remaining natural resources and manmade stuff as its starting point, as echoed atop the stairs in José Maria Sicilia's bronze memo, 'We have what's left.' Coherently organized, each of six rooms can be seen as explorations of one of five elements (earth, water, void, fire, air), five senses (touch, sound, taste, smell, sight), three phases (solid, liquid, gas), or varying ecosystems. In the room that seems to survey sight and air, Susan Collis' record of invisible particles that fell on paper masked by objects shares company with Hreinn Fridfinnsson's vertical line of windblown Ginkgo biloba leaves (a Permian-era plant considered a living fossil) and Thu Van Tran's hazy grey painting evocative of smog. Downstairs, one easily imagines the deafening sounds of bouncing ice balls, imploding glaciers, and hurricane winds evoked by Evariste Richer's massive grid comprised of 1600 online postings of hale sightings, Jorge Méndez Blake's vanishing rendition of Elizabeth Bishop's iceberg poem, and Ryan Foerster's painting altered by Hurricane Sandy.

Delicately interspersed throughout are 'dubious' 'Second Thoughts' (2015), pliable slices of Chaim van Luit's brain, cast in copper. In the room featuring manmade treasures, one finds Milena Bonilla's intriguing library, Vanessa Billy's trashed light bulbs floating in water, and Filip Gilissen's plastic ruins. In the room reminiscent of touch and earth, Adam Henry depicts human life as an imperceptible blip on the geological timeline, Maarten Vanden Eynde displays natural-looking geodes formed from plastic scraps, Nicolás Lamas pairs a 65 million-year old fossil with an iPad, and Ignasi Aballí's photo of engaged hands. There's no shortage here of gems characterizing human beings' impact. Fortunately, this open-ended exhibition avoids 'catastrophe art,' which titillate and distract, as horror flicks do. Like the crowds in Jordi Calomer's 2011 photograph 'L'Avenir', we leave hopeful, inspired to confront our future!

Sue SPAID

Greater New York (Fourth Edition) at MoMA/PSI

LOST INNOCENCE

These days, New Yorkers are sporting a seventies sentimentality, fondly recalling a pre-Giuliani era when Time Square featured porn and gay couples turned heads. Last fall, 'Stonewall,' the controversial dramatization of the 1969 riot that jumpstarted the gay-liberation movement, premiered. Soon after, The New York Times published Ada Calhoun's essay 'My City Was Gone (Or Was It?)', her personal commentary regarding the City's astronomical rents and urban cul-

ture, and a review of 'City on Fire,' Garth Risk Hallenberg's first novel that transports readers to "the gritty, grafted New York City of the 1970s, when ... artists could still afford an apartment." Patti Smith's 2010 memoir 'Just Kids' is still rumored to become Showtime television series.

Most surprisingly, MoMA/PSI's 'Greater New York', which arose in 2000 to rival the Whitney Biennial's authority over 'what's hot and what's not,' pursues this nostalgic glance backwards. By expanding the meaning of 'greater' to include geography and time, this edition hears back to the moment when "MoMA PSI was founded in 1976 as an alternative venue that took advantage of disused real estate, reaching back to artists who engaged the margins of the city." MoMA/PSI's colonizing its own quinquennial suggests that 'Greater New York' doubles as its 40th birthday bash.

YESTERYEAR ARTISTS

As a result of this land grab, visitors are invited to revisit Richard Artschwager's permanent ceiling-lamp installation, Alvin Bathrop's 'pier cruising' shots, Scott Burton's over-sized anti-furniture, Roy Colmer store-front photos, Jimmy DeSana's 'one-minute' sculptures, fourteen curious Lebbeus Woods drawings, and historic films by Chantal Akerman, Rudy Burckhardt, Shirley Clarke, Terry Fox, and Jack Smith.

The day I visited, I watched an early-seventies Lizzie Borden film that made me realize her influence on Ryan Trecartin. And painter James Nares' mesmerizing wrecking ball video from 1976 should shake up Miley Cyrus fans! In a scene reminiscent of Grand Central Station, doz-

ens of figurative sculptures (local favorites like John Ahearn, Charles Ahearn, Rina Banerjee, Huma Bhabha, Mary Beth Edelson, Red Grooms, Tony Matelli, Judith Shea, and Kiki Smith) occupy a large gallery. Yet another homage to yesteryear artists, two billboard-size Louise Lawler prints occupy facing walls in the building's biggest gallery now doubling as a performance theatre. Adding to New York's apartment woes, Glenn Ligon recollects his 1960-2007 residences, as stained by racism.

Initially, this wistful curatorial re-mix felt more like a quixotic quest for some lost innocence. But I now sense that these four curators are not only celebrating four decades of MoMA/PSI greatness, but this show lures those searching for the new (like recently arrived millennials) to discover what's long past, and thus out of view.

Of particular interest here are 57 Henry Flynt photographs of SAMO tags from 1979, years before Jean-Michel Basquiat became famous. Four Barry Le Va drawings, dating from 1981 to 1991, provide topographical memories for imaginary sculptures that probably haven't been, but could be constructed. Nancy Shaver's recent assemblages and orderly sprawls look remarkably fresh, as does Mary Beth Edelson's 'Hall to the Feminists Who Produced the Revolution' (1971-2012), installation of winged-women artists juxtaposed with three goddess-inspired photographs from the seventies. Twelve photographs by 85-year old Rosalind Fox Solomon feature three decades of New York stories. Blocking access to Collier Schorr's photos of a male ingenue is Park McArthur's humorous fabric 'restraint,' a straight-jacketed seemingly adapted for unstraight sex. Gedi Sibony channels the still-living

Robert Ryman, while Lutz Bachner scores points for wacky works.

Newer names offer 'high energy.' Lorreta Fahrenholz's intriguing video 'Ditch Plains', which was apparently shot in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, captures New Yorkers' generosity. Fashion abounds: from 90s DIY darling Susan Cianciolo to arty upstarts like Eckhaus Latta, Stefanie Victor, and Slow and Steady Win the Race to Stewart Uoo's fashion-embedded objects and Eric Mack's fabric wall works. 'Kiosk,' a shop within the show displays hundreds of specialty items, hand-selected from the world's stores. Ajay Kuran's day-glow cityscapes erected from e-cigarettes, candy, and LED lights back in a black gallery, surrounded by several notable artists' paintings. Inspired by capital, Angie Keeler ties her artwork prices either to real-estate values or her personal debt. Her projected waterfall flows out or in, depending on cumulative prices of commodity futures trading globally, periodically stopping to gather data and correct its direction. Amy Brenner's free-standing screens take the cake as they transform yesterday's trash into today's treasures.

This exhibition affirms Ada Calhoun's point: "If you're complaining about the East Village, or New York in general, being dead, I think it's worth considering the possibility that, yes, it is over – for you. But for plenty of others, the city is as full of potential and magic as it was in 1977. Or 1964. Or 1992."

Sue SPAID

'Greater New York' (Fourth Edition) through 7 March at MoMA/PSI, 22-25 Jackson Ave. at the intersection of 46th Ave., Long Island City, NY, USA. momapsi.org



Amy Brenner, 'Dressing Room', 2015, urethane foam and resin, gypsum, pigment, found objects